



City of Maple Valley

Parks, Recreation, Cultural & Human Services Plan

February 2014

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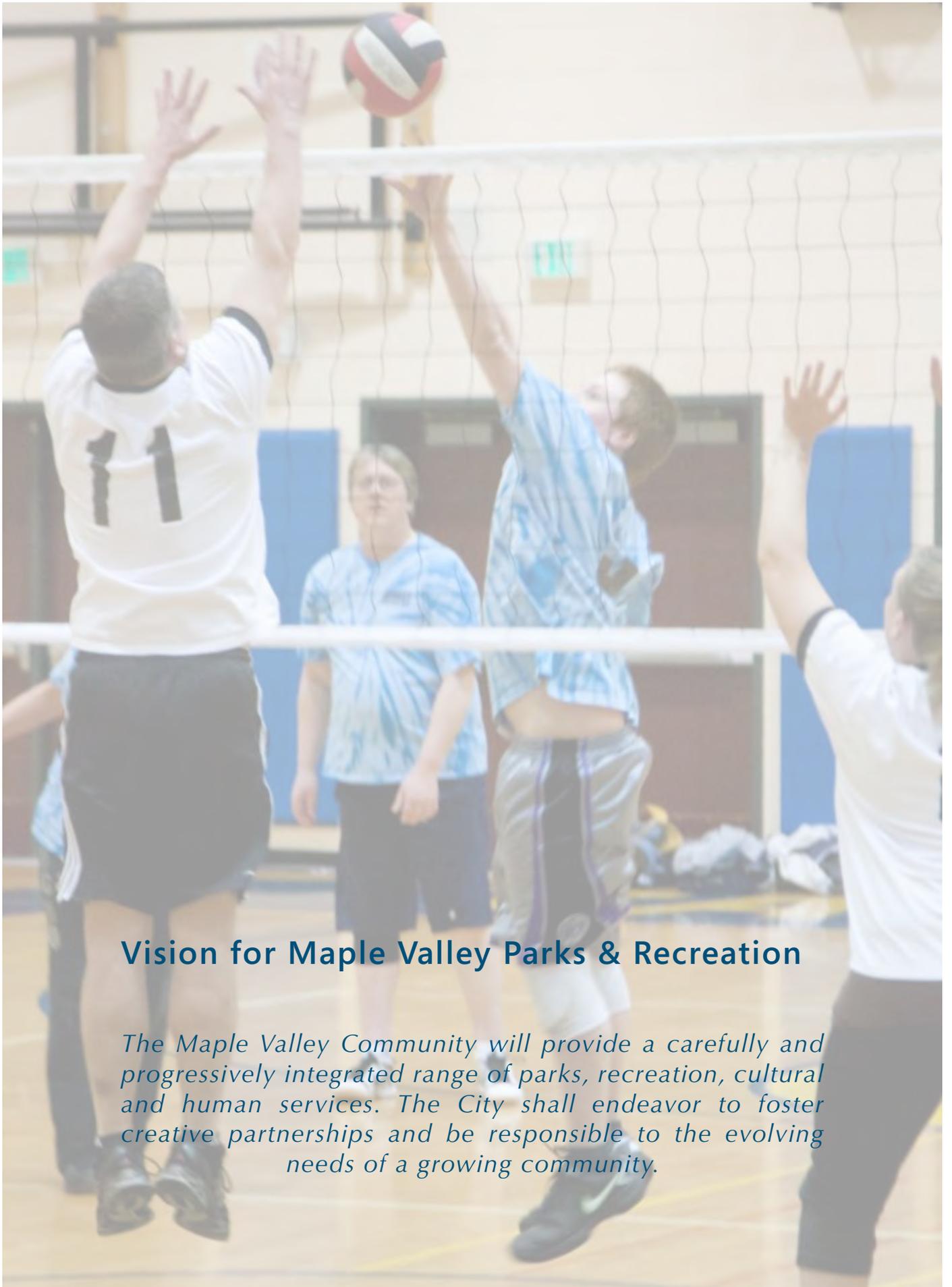
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Vision for Maple Valley Parks & Recreation

The Maple Valley Community will provide a carefully and progressively integrated range of parks, recreation, cultural and human services. The City shall endeavor to foster creative partnerships and be responsible to the evolving needs of a growing community.



Executive Summary

This Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan is a six-year guide and strategic plan for managing and enhancing park, recreation and cultural services in Maple Valley. It establishes a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, greenspaces and recreational opportunities. The Plan provides a vision for the City's park and recreation system, proposes updates to City service standards for park and facility classifications and addresses departmental goals, objectives and other management considerations toward the continuation of high-quality recreation opportunities to benefit residents of Maple Valley.

This Plan was guided with input and direction of city residents and the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Plan inventories and evaluates existing park and recreation areas, assesses the needs for acquisition, site development and operations and offers specific policies and recommendations to achieve the community's goals.

Community Vision

Through the community involvement efforts associated with this Plan, a vision for the future of the City's park system was validated:

The Maple Valley Community will provide a carefully and progressively integrated range of parks, recreation, cultural and human services. The City shall endeavor to foster creative partnerships and be responsible to the evolving needs of a growing community.

This vision provided the foundation for the goals, objectives, recommendations and guidelines found throughout the Plan.

Maple Valley's Park & Recreation System

The City of Maple Valley currently provides over 320 acres of public parkland and recreation facilities distributed among 9 parks, special facilities and natural areas. This system of parks supports a range of active and passive recreation

experiences. In addition, the City provides a skate park and approximately 3 miles of trails within its parks.

Maple Valley residents also can access additional parks, trails, open spaces and recreational facilities provided by King County, the Tahoma School District and other entities. Also, the Greater Maple Valley Community Center is a local gathering place for the community that offers programs and services for families, youth and seniors. The Center is operated by a non-profit organization with support from the City.

Recreation services are available to Maple Valley residents through a wide range of public and private recreation, health and fitness providers and facilities. The City has established partnerships with area service providers including the Tahoma Learning Community and the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, as well as other private and non-profit groups, to provide as wide a range of programs and services as possible to the community.

Maple Valley is a maturing young city with many families with children. New investments in parks and recreation will be necessary to meet the needs of the community, support youth development, provide options for residents to lead healthy, active lives and foster greater social and community connections.

Goals & Policies

This Plan includes goals and objectives intended to guide City decision-making to ensure the parks and recreation system meets the needs of the Maple Valley community for years to come. These goals and objectives were based on community input and technical analysis. They include:

- **Community Involvement & Information:** Encourage and support public involvement in park and recreation issues.
- **Parks & Natural Areas:** Acquire and develop a high-quality, diversified system of parks, recreation facilities and natural areas that provides equitable access to all residents.
- **Trails:** Develop a network of shared-use trails and bicycle and pedestrian corridors to enable connectivity between parks, neighborhoods and public amenities.

- **Recreation Facilities & Programming:** Facilitate and promote a varied and inclusive suite of recreation programs that accommodate a spectrum of ages, interests and abilities.
- **Culture & Heritage:** Bring residents together and foster community pride, identity and livability through facilities and community events.
- **Human Services:** Have the resources and opportunities necessary to meet the basic physical, economic and social needs of the community.
- **Maintenance & Operations:** Provide a parks and recreation system that is efficient to maintain and operate, provides a high level of user comfort, safety, and aesthetic quality and protects capital investments.
- **Design:** Provide high-quality care for play structures and surfaces and maintenance of trails, parks and recreation facilities throughout the City.
- **Administration & Management:** Provide clear and direct leadership that supports and promotes the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Department to the community, stakeholders, partners and City Council.

Level of Service Standards

This Plan proposes adjustments to the City's service standards for parks and recreation facilities to achieve community goals within projected resources. These standards include:

- **Community Parks:** This Plan proposes a reduction in the acreage standard for community parks to 6 acres per 1,000 people to emphasize the relative importance of community parks within the park system. The City currently is not meeting this standard, and it will need to acquire an additional 47 acres of parkland to meet the needs of future residents.
- **Neighborhood & Pocket Parks:** This Plan reduces the existing neighborhood park standard to 2.5 acres per 1,000 people. The City does not currently meet this standard, and additional park acreage will be needed to serve future residents and provide neighborhood parks in currently unserved areas.
- **Greenways & Trails:** This Plan does not include numeric standards for greenways, but rather proposes protection of critical natural areas through existing regulations. Acquisitions should be focused on greenway properties necessary to create critical connections in the greenway

and trail system. Similarly, trail acquisition and development priorities are designed to provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle system, connecting neighborhoods to commercial areas and other key destinations, rather than toward meeting a population-based standard.

- **Specialized Recreation Facilities:** This Plan includes standards for baseball, softball and soccer fields designed to reflect community needs and potential supply of athletic fields. The proposed field standard for each of the three types of ball fields is 1 field per 5,000 people.

Future Improvements

The City of Maple Valley is anticipated to grow to approximately 26,700 residents over the next ten years. Serving existing and future residents will require improvements to existing parks and expansion of the park, trail and recreation system. The 6-year Capital Facilities Plan proposes approximately \$15.6 million of investment in acquisition, development and renovation of the parks system over the next six years and identifies additional investment priorities for the future.

Figure ES1: Capital Facilities Plan Summary by Classification & Type

Park Type	Acquisition	Development	Renovation	Sum
Park	\$ 3,540,000	\$ 10,975,000	\$ 970,000	\$ 15,485,000
Greenway			\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000
Trail		\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
Special Facility		\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
TOTAL	\$ 3,540,000	\$ 11,095,000	\$ 999,000	\$ 15,634,000

To ensure existing parks provide desired recreational amenities and opportunities, the Plan includes investments in the development and improvement of neighborhood and community parks. For example, development of Summit Park will greatly expand park access and resources for the community as a whole. At Lake Wilderness Park, major improvements, such as dock replacement, swim beach enhancements and beach house remodel, will prepare this popular park for enjoyment for decades to come. The Plan also proposes smaller improvements throughout the park system to enhance accessibility, safety and usability of park features.

program to ensure sufficient land for outdoor recreation as City population grows. It identifies target acquisition areas to secure community parkland and fill gaps in neighborhood park access.

The Plan includes a significant land acquisition

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INTRODUCTION & PROFILE

Plan Overview

The City of Maple Valley began an update of its previous Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan in October 2013 to provide a logical framework for the management and growth of the City's park system. As a six-year guide and strategic plan for enhancing park and recreation services, the Plan establishes a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreational opportunities throughout Maple Valley. The Plan provides a vision for the City's park and recreation system, proposes updates to City service standards and addresses departmental goals, objectives and other management considerations toward the continuation of quality recreation opportunities, programs and facility enhancements to benefit the residents of Maple Valley.

This Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services (PRCHS) Plan was developed with the input of Maple Valley residents through public meetings and a community survey and was guided by the direction of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Plan inventories and evaluates existing park and recreation areas, assesses the needs for acquisition, site development

and operations and offers specific policies and recommendations to achieve the community's goals.

Vision for the Future

The previous PRCHS Plan offered a future vision of Maple Valley that was an outgrowth from resident feedback regarding their interests, needs and preferences for parks and recreation services. This vision remains relevant today as a guiding force for City efforts.

The Maple Valley Community will provide a carefully and progressively integrated range of parks, recreation, cultural and human services. The City shall endeavor to foster creative partnerships and be responsible to the evolving needs of a growing community.

This vision provides the foundation for the goals, objectives, recommendations and guidelines in the following chapters within this Plan.

Parks & Recreation System Overview

Residents of Maple Valley benefit from a diverse array of natural areas, public and private parks and recreation facilities in and around the City. Maple Valley has over 700 acres of park and open space lands located within the City and in the immediate vicinity; this includes lands owned by the City, King County, Tahoma School District, private organizations and homeowner associations.

The City owns and maintains one active-use park (Take-A-Break), one special facility (Lake Wilderness Golf Course), one natural open space area (Fernwood Natural Area), and four undeveloped parks (Henry's Switch Park, Summit Park, Legacy Site, and the 216th Ave Park site). In addition, King County transferred ownership of Lake Wilderness Park to the City in 2003. Also in 2003, the City began offering its own recreation programs, while looking for partnership opportunities with local, commercial and non-profit groups to offer a wider range of services to the community. Demand for services has been strong, and the number of City programs has since dramatically increased.

In addition to offering recreation programs through its own Parks and Recreation Department, the City has established partnerships with area service providers including the Tahoma Learning Community (TLC) and the Greater Maple Valley Community Center (GMVCC), as well as private vendors to provide a wide variety of programs and services to the community.

Maple Valley is not staffed as a full-service city and contracts for many of its services to help control costs and operate within its budget. The City staff has increased slightly (7%) from 38.2 authorized positions in 2006 to 40.0 authorized positions in 2014. This essentially unchanged staffing level increase of 4.7% has occurred during a time when the population has increased by 4,770 or 25% from 19,140 in 2006 to 23,910 in 2013.

The primary services provided by the Parks and Recreation Department can be categorized as follows:

- Parks Administration: responsible for the administration of all parks and recreational facilities and for the overall planning for the department.
- Parks Maintenance: responsible for maintaining, repairing, and making improvements to all parks and recreation facilities.
- Facilities: responsible for promoting and marketing the Lake Wilderness Lodge and all City owned park facilities, scheduling events and for overall event coordination of private rental events.
- Recreation: responsible for providing all City offered recreational programs, services and special events. The department works with appropriate partners to provide recreation amenities, as feasible.
- Lake Wilderness Golf Course: City staff works with a contracted service provider to manage the 18-hole golf course and an associated restaurant, bar and banquet facility.

Parks and Recreation comprises 11.8% of the City's 2014 Budget. The Parks and Recreation Department currently employs 6 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, with 8.25 FTEs budgeted for 2014. Expenditures in 2013 were \$1,824,676 with proposed 2014 budget of \$1,932,248 representing a 7.8% increase. Operations and capital improvement are funded from a variety of sources including the general fund, park impact fees, real estate excise taxes, grants and user fees.

The City of Maple Valley uses the Park Development Fund to account for special property tax levies, park impact fees and contributions from developers restricted for park capital improvements. The City also has an enterprise fund, The Lake Wilderness Golf Course Fund, which accounts for the revenues and expenses of the Lake Wilderness Golf Course. The property was acquired in November 2006 to save it from the threat of development and preserve it as open space. Golf Course operations have improved since 2010 to reduce the amount of General Fund subsidy. For 2014, a subsidy of \$24,942 is budgeted.



Review of Other Community Plans

The City has produced and updated a range of planning documents and studies since incorporation. To a varying degree, each has had impact on parks, recreation, cultural and human services within the City. Several community plans were reviewed for past policy direction and goals as they pertain to the provision and planning for parks, trails and recreation in Maple Valley. The development of each involved public input and final adoption by their respective responsible legislative body. A summary of each of these is listed below:

Maple Valley Revised Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan (2007)

The 2007 PRCHS Plan update built upon the City's first parks plan prepared in 1999. The 2007 update revised the demographic and community changes over those seven years and included an existing inventory assessment, community outreach and evaluation of future park and recreation needs.

Maple Valley Comprehensive Plan (2008)

The Comprehensive Plan establishes the policy framework for land use, housing, transportation and public services in Maple Valley. The policies guide the future of development and influence the provision of parks and protection of natural areas. The Parks and Recreation Element within the comprehensive plan synthesizes content from the 2007 PRCHS Plan, amends service standards and includes a 10-year capital facilities plan to further grow the City's park system.

Maple Valley Strategic Priorities & Economic Development Recommendations (2007)

The Strategic Priorities and Economic Development Recommendations is a guiding document for the development of a citywide economic development plan aimed at increasing the economic vitality and quality of life in Maple Valley. Two of the six priorities identified in these recommendations are

directly related to the City's park system:

- #4) "Preserve the strong sense of community and maintain a high quality of life"
- #5) "Complement and enhance our natural surroundings through environmentally-friendly economic activity and development"

Maple Valley Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2013)

This plan provides information and guidance on existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout Maple Valley. It addresses the non-motorized elements within the Maple Valley Comprehensive Plan and proposes projects and programs to enhance the system of alternative transportation within the City. The plan identifies three broad goals for the planning, design and coordination for pedestrian and bikeway connections across the City.

Lake Wilderness Park Master Plan (2007)

Prepared in 2007, this site master plan provides a layout of the entire Lake Wilderness Park and the Lodge. The master plan addresses recreational programming for the park's growing number of visitors. Proposed improvements include a new dock and remodeled bathhouse at the swimming beach, new trails and waterfront promenade, amphitheater and band-shell, improvements to the Lodge rental facilities, shoreline enhancements and low impact development stormwater features.

Summit Park Master Plan (2010)

The master plan established a design blueprint for the future development of the site. Conceived as a three phase project, the planning improvements to the site include ballfields, tennis courts, basketball court, playgrounds, skate spot and parking. The master planning process identified the challenges, opportunities, constraints and cost allowances for project implementation.

Legacy Site Planning Study (2005)

This site planning study was led by a project citizen advisory committee, which concluded in 2005. The report provides a blueprint for the future use of this 54-acre site, and it discusses the site’s history, findings and conditions related to the potential development of the site, recommendations for future development and potential strategies for implementing the CAC’s recommendations.

King County Open Space Plan (2010)

This plan provides demographic characteristics, open space and park definitions, an inventory of park and recreation facilities, standards, goals and objectives, recommendations and funding alternatives.

King County Regional Trails Map

This illustrative brochure identifies existing and planned regional trail corridors. The two corridors that are located in Maple Valley are the Cedar to Green River Trail (includes Lake Wilderness Trail) and the Cedar River Trail.

Green to Cedar Rivers Trail Feasibility Study (2012)

This feasibility study is a high level overview that is intended to identify key considerations for future development of two trail corridors. The Green to Cedar Rivers Trail and Covington Highlands Trail are proposed to connect from the Green River to the existing Cedar River Trail, and between the Soos Creek Trail and the Green to Cedar Rivers Trail. The plan identified a preliminary preferred alignment for these trails, as well as opportunities and constraints for trail development. Maple Valley is located at the center of these two trail alignments, and when completed, these trails will significantly enhance regional trail connectivity.

King County Framework Policies for Human Services (2007)

The purpose of this plan is to identify goals,

clarify roles and establish general priorities for providing human services in the County.

Community Profile

Incorporated in 1997, Maple Valley is a relatively young city, which has experienced rapid growth over the past 15 years. The City is home to many families with children. Maple Valley’s residents are generally well-educated and have high incomes. While the city is predominately white, the population of communities of color has increased over the past decade.

Population

The City of Maple Valley experienced significant growth in the past 40 years, with a 6,380% change from 1970 to 2010 (see Figure 1). The City experienced rapid population growth after incorporation in 1997, when the population was approximately 7,450. According to the 2010 Census, the City of Maple Valley grew by 60% between 2000 and 2010 to a population of 22,684. The City currently projects a build-out population of 26,700.

Maple Valley has grown more quickly than King County as a whole, where the population increased 11.2% between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 1. Population Change - Actual & Projected: 1970 - 2030

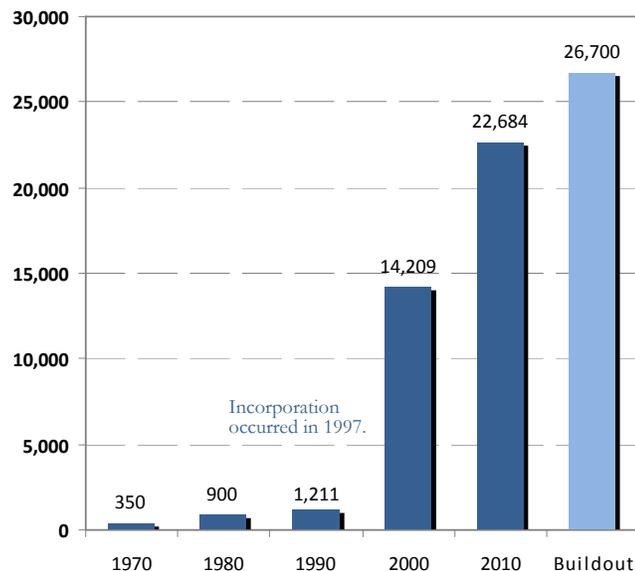




Figure 2. Population Characteristics: Maple Valley, King County & Washington

Demographics	Maple Valley	King County	Washington
<i>Population Characteristics</i>			
Population (2000)	14,209	1,737,034	5,894,121
Population (2010)	22,684	1,931,249	6,724,540
Percent Change (2000-09)	60%	11.20%	14%
Communities of Color	14.20%	31.30%	22.70%
Persons w/ Disabilities (2012)	1,550	185,464	814,944
Persons w/ Disabilities (%)	6.60%	9.50%	12.10%
<i>Household Characteristics</i>			
Households	7,679	789,232	2,620,076
Percent with children	80.20%	29.20%	64%
Median Income (2012)	\$93,493	\$69,346	\$57,966
Average Household Size	2.95	2.4	2.51
Average Family Size	3.3	3.05	3.06
Home Ownership Rate	84.70%	59.10%	64.00%
<i>Age Groups</i>			
Median Age	34.2	37.1	37.3
Population < 5 years of age	8.80%	6.20%	6.50%
Population < 18 years of age	34.40%	21.40%	23.50%
Population 18 - 64 years of age	59.00%	67.70%	64.20%
Population > 65 years of age	6.60%	10.90%	12.30%

Age Group Distribution

The City of Maple Valley has a younger population compared to King County. Over one-third (34.4%) of Maple Valley residents are youth up to 19 years of age, 50.9% are 20 to 55 year olds, and 14.5% are 55 and older. The median age of City residents is 34.2 – younger than King County (37.1), the State of Washington (37.3) and the nation (37.2).

The City’s largest “20-year” population group is comprised of 30- to 49-year-olds, representing 35.3% of the population in 2010.

The following breakdown is used to separate the population into age-sensitive user groups.

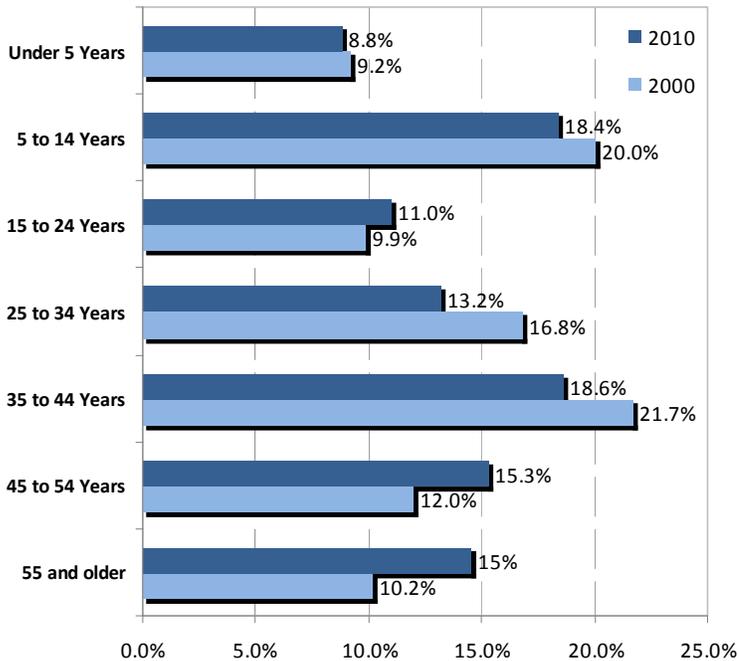
- Under 5 years: This group represents users of preschool and tot programs and facilities, and as trails and open space users, are often in strollers. These individuals are the future participants in youth activities.
- 5 to 14 years: This group represents current youth program participants.
- 15 to 24 years: This group represents teen/young adult program participants moving out of

the youth programs and into adult programs. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers.

- 25 to 34 years: This group represents involvement in adult programming with characteristics of beginning long-term relationships and establishing families.
- 35 to 54 years: This group represents users of a wide range of adult programming and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters.
- 55 years plus: This group represents users of older adult programming exhibiting the characteristics of approaching retirement or already retired and typically enjoying grandchildren. This group generally also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

Figure 3 illustrates the age distribution characteristics of these cohorts with a comparison to 2000 Census data.

Figure 3. Age Group Distributions: 2000 & 2010



Race & Ethnicity

In 2010, Maple Valley was 85.8% White, 4.5% Asian, 2.1% African American, 0.5% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 0.4% Pacific Islander, 1.7% other race, and 5% from two or more races. Just over 5.7% of people identified as Hispanic or Latino of any race. This was an increase (8.2%) in the percentage of communities of color since 2000.

According to the 2012 American Community Survey, approximately 8% of Maple Valley’s population speaks a language other than English at home, although 75% of this group also speaks English very well. This is a lower of percentage of people than in King County (24.8%) but higher than Washington as a whole (17.5%).

Household Characteristics

The 2010 average household size in the City of Maple Valley was 2.95 people, higher than the state (2.67) and national (2.51) average. Average household size remained the same since 2000. The average family size in Maple Valley is larger, at 3.3 people. Of the 7,679 households in the City, 80% have children under 18, 67% were married couples living together, 13% had a single head of household and 19.8% were non-families.

Income & Poverty

According to the 2012 American Community Survey, the median household income in the City of Maple Valley was \$93,493. This figure is \$24,000 (36%) higher than the median income for King County residents, \$35,527 (61%) higher than residents of Washington and \$42,122 (82%) higher than the average across the United States. The median household income in Maple Valley has increased by 39% (\$26,334) since 2000.

At the lower end of the household income scale, approximately 8.5% percent of Maple Valley households earn less than \$25,000 annually, which is significantly fewer than households of King County (17%), the State of Washington (20.1%) and the United States (23%). On the other end, 46% of City households have household incomes in the higher income brackets (\$100,000 and greater), greater than the county (33.6%), state (24.4%) and national (21.9%) figures.

In 2012, 4.5% of Maple Valley’s families were living below the poverty level. The poverty threshold was an income of \$23,550 for a family of four. This percentage is much lower than the statewide (9.3%) and national (10.5%) levels. A review of subgroups shows that poverty affects 6.5% of those under 18 and 3.8% of those 65 and older, which is lower than statewide and national figures. The percentage of local families accessing



food stamp or SNAP benefits (4.8%) is also much lower than state and national averages (14.3% and 13.6%, respectively).

Employment & Education

The 2012 work force population (16 years and over) of Maple Valley is 17,066. Of this population, nearly three quarters (74%) is in the labor force, while one quarter (26%) is unemployed or otherwise not in the labor force. The primary occupation of the working population is management, professional and science occupations at 45.2%, while sales, office and service occupations comprise an additional 37.3% of the workforce.

On average, Maple Valley residents have higher educational attainment than residents of Washington in general. According to the 2012 American Community Survey, 33.5% of City residents over age 25 had earned a Bachelor's degree or higher (23.2% having a Bachelor's degree and 10.3% having a Graduate degree), as compared to 31.5% statewide. Additionally, 96.2% of City residents have a high school degree or higher, which is 6% higher than the statewide average.

Persons with Disabilities

The 2012 American Community Survey reported 6.6% (1,550 persons) of Maple Valley's population 5 years and older as having a disability that interferes with life activities. This is lower than state and national averages (12.1% and 12.2%, respectively). Among residents 65 and older, the percentage rises to 42.3%, or 755 persons, which is on par with percentages found in the general senior population of Washington State.

Contents of the Plan

The remainder of the Maple Valley Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan is organized as follows:

- Chapter 2: Public Involvement – highlights the methods used to engage the Maple Valley community in the development of the Plan.
- Chapter 3: Inventory & Recreational Resources – describes the existing park and recreation system in the City and highlights recreational resources located within or near Maple Valley.
- Chapter 4: Goals & Objectives – provides a policy framework for the parks and recreation system grouped by major functional or program area.
- Chapters 5: Needs Assessment & Recommendations – discusses survey results, community feedback and other recreation trend data and provides context to the identification of potential park, trail and recreation system enhancements.
- Chapter 6: Capital Facilities Plan – details a 6-year program for addressing park and recreation facility enhancement or expansion projects.
- Chapter 7: Implementation Strategies – describes a range of strategies and alternatives to consider in the implementation of the Plan.
- Appendices: Provides technical or supporting information to the planning effort and includes a summary of the community survey, public meeting notes, funding alternatives, among others.

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

Community input played a crucial role in establishing a clear planning framework that reflects current community priorities. Residents voiced their interest for the future of parks and recreation programs in Maple Valley and offered significant feedback in the development of this Plan. Public outreach methods included:

- A telephone and targeted online community survey
- 2 public open house meetings
- 4 Parks & Recreation Commission meetings

Throughout this process, the public provided information and expressed opinions about their needs and priorities for parks, trails and recreation services in Maple Valley. This feedback was important in preparing and organizing policy statements and prioritizing the capital facilities project list contained within this Plan.

Community Survey

The Maple Valley Parks & Recreation Department contracted for the administration of a community survey to inform the development of this PRCHS Plan. The purpose of the survey

was to gather input to help determine park, trail and recreation priorities of the community. In collaboration with staff, the project team designed a 14-question survey to assess residents' recreational needs, preferences and priorities.

The survey was conducted using a mixed-mode sample design that combined telephone and on-line data collection. A total of 481 adult (18+) residents of Maple Valley were interviewed between December 7-17, 2013 (253 via telephone and 228 on-line). The questionnaire was the same for both modes. The data from both modes were combined into a single data set. The only significant difference in this survey was that the on-line sample was younger than the telephone sample. The combined data were statistically weighted by age and gender to align the sample with the most recent census data.

Survey respondents were asked about:

- Their use of city parks and recreation behavior
- The current quality and quantity of recreational opportunities in Maple Valley
- Priorities for expanded recreational opportunities
- Willingness to support public funding of expanded recreational opportunities

Major survey findings are noted below, and a more detailed discussion of results can be found in the needs assessment (Chapter 5). The survey instrument and a summary of the response data are provided in Appendix B.

Major Findings

Maple Valley residents are very satisfied with parks, trails and recreation programs in the City.

- Parks seen as “essential” to quality of life.
 - 7 in 10 respondents said that parks and recreation are “essential to the quality of life” in Maple Valley
- Maple Valley Parks got a “B-” grade for overall quality, while maintenance and upkeep received a “B”.
 - 71% graded quality “A” or “B”
 - 79% graded maintenance and upkeep “A” or “B”
- Respondents were active users of parks and recreation facilities.
 - 91% lived in a household in which at least one member participated in recreation activities offered by local organizations.
 - 61% participated in at least 3 such activities.
- Sports facilities topped the wish list for expanded recreational opportunities.
 - Fields for baseball (17%), soccer or football (14%) and indoor basketball courts (12%) were 3 of the top 4 facilities named in an open-ended question.
- Highest priority was on maintaining existing parks and protecting open space, with moderate support for expansion.
 - 6+ in 10 put a high priority on maintaining parks and protecting spaces
 - 4 in 10 prioritized expansion projects, like new parks or a community center
 - 1 in 3 prioritized ambitious projects, like acquiring land or expanding trails
- Given a choice between raising taxes to develop a facility in Maple Valley vs. not having such a facility in the city, majorities supported more taxes for 3 of 5 facilities tested.
 - An active use parks that include playgrounds, sport courts & fields (59%)
 - Trails and safe routes to parks (56%)
 - A community center with aquatics and fitness facilities (52%)

Open House Meetings

Community members were invited to two public open house meetings to offer direct comments and feedback about the future of parks, trails and recreation opportunities in Maple Valley. The intent was to elicit feedback from residents on the future vision for parks and recreation, explore program and facility opportunities and identify local recreational needs. The meetings were held on November 13, 2013 and January 8, 2014. The City’s website, e-mail announcements and local newspapers were used to publicize the event (see the ‘Other Outreach’ section below). The meetings lasted two hours each, and summaries from the meetings are provided in Appendix C.

Parks & Recreation Commission Meetings

The Parks and Recreation Commission acted as a project task force over the development of this PRCHS Plan update. They provided feedback on the planning process and goals during 4 regularly scheduled sessions. The Commission discussed the plan update process and provided their thoughts on the current state of Maple Valley’s parks and recreation programs. They also guided the development of the community survey, provided direction on goals and offered insights based on their understanding of the community and the needs of local stakeholders and program users.

Other Outreach

In addition to the direct outreach opportunities noted above, a project webpage was posted on the City’s website to provide background information, meeting announcements and project materials such as meeting notes. In advance of each public meeting, the City posted a project webpage update and provided media announcements to local outlets. News articles and sample promotional material are located in Appendix D.



3

INVENTORY & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

This chapter is segmented into three sections. The first section defines the various facility classifications in use in Maple Valley. The second is an inventory of existing facilities, and the third is a summary of other recreational opportunities available within the greater Maple Valley region.

Parkland Classifications

Parkland is classified to assist in planning for the community’s recreational needs. The Maple Valley park system is composed of a hierarchy of various park types, each offering recreation and/or natural area opportunities. Separately, each park type may serve only one function, but collectively the system serves the full range of community needs. Classifying parkland by function allows the City to evaluate its needs and plan for an efficient, cost effective and usable park system that minimizes conflicts between park visitors and adjacent uses. The classification characteristics are meant as general guidelines addressing the intended size and use of each park type.

The previous PRCHS Plans used a set of seven classifications to segment and describe the Maple Valley system. This Plan streamlines and

consolidates the classifications to more directly align with the City’s recreational land holdings and simplify the parkland typology. The following four classifications are proposed for Maple Valley and are defined as follows.

- Community Parks
- Neighborhood & Pocket Parks
- Special Facilities
- Greenways & Natural Areas

The table below shows how the parkland classifications were reorganized. Specifically, regional and community parks were combined into the community park category; special use and plazas were grouped as special facilities; and linear parks and open space were grouped as greenways and natural areas.

Figure 4. Proposed Parkland Classification Adjustments

Existing Classifications	Proposed Classifications
Regional Community	Community
Neighborhood	Neighborhood & Pocket
Special Use Areas Urban Plazas & Squares	Special Facilities
Natural Open Space Areas Linear Parks & Trails	Greenways & Natural Areas

Community Parks

Community parks are larger sites developed for organized play, contain a wider array of facilities and, as a result, appeal to a more diverse group of users. Community parks are generally 15 to 80 acres in size, should meet a minimum size of 15 acres when possible and serve residents within a 1 - 2 mile drive, walk or bike ride from the site. In areas without neighborhood parks, community parks can also serve as local neighborhood parks.

In general, community park facilities are designed for organized or intensive recreational activities and sports, although passive components such as pathways, picnic areas and natural areas are highly encouraged and complementary to active use facilities. Developed community parks typically include amenities such as water access, court sports (basketball, tennis), covered activity areas, soccer and/or baseball fields and bike and pedestrian trails. Since community parks serve a larger area and offer more facilities than neighborhood parks, parking and restroom facilities should be provided.

Neighborhood & Pocket Parks

Neighborhood and pocket parks are generally considered the basic unit of traditional park systems. Neighborhood parks are small park areas designed for unstructured, non-organized play and limited active and passive recreation. Pocket parks are smallest sites used to address limited or isolated recreational needs and typically only provide a small tot lot or other limited amenities. The primary distinction between these two park types is that of usable, functional recreation space. Maple Valley's standing policy is that these parks are provided for and maintained by private entities and homeowner associations as new residential construction occurs throughout the City.

They are generally 0.5 - 6 acres in size, depending on a variety of factors including neighborhood need, physical location and opportunity. These parks are intended to serve residential areas within close proximity (ranging from ¼- to ½-mile walking or biking distance) and should be geographically distributed throughout the community. Access to these parks is mostly pedestrian and bicycle, and they should be located

such that people living within the service area can reach the park safely and conveniently. Park siting and design should ensure visitors do not have to cross a major arterial street or other significant natural or man-made barrier to get to the site, unless safe pedestrian crossings are provided. Neighborhood and pocket parks should be located along road frontages to improve visual access and community awareness of the sites. Connecting and frontage streets should include sidewalks with a safe crossing nearby. Additionally, street plans should encourage maximum connectivity and public access to park sites. Locating neighborhood and pocket parks adjacent to other park system components, such as recreational trails, is also desirable.

Generally, developed neighborhood and pocket parks may include amenities such as pedestrian paths, picnic tables, benches, play equipment, a multi-use open field for informal play, sport courts or multi-purpose paved areas and landscaping. Restrooms are not provided due to high construction and maintenance costs. Parking is also not usually provided; however, on-street, ADA-accessible parking stall(s) may be provided.

School grounds in Maple Valley play a limited role in its overall park system. While school sites may offer an open field or play equipment, daytime access is restricted by school use and limited for security concerns. School facilities do provide access to recreational opportunity, but that access is limited and priority is given to the student population.

Special Facilities

Special facilities include single-purpose recreational areas or stand-alone sites designed to support a specific, specialized use. This classification includes stand-alone sports field complexes, golf courses, recreation centers, sites of historical or cultural significance, such as museums, historical landmarks and structures, and public plazas in or near commercial centers. Specialized facilities may also be provided within a park of another classification. No standards exist or are proposed concerning special facilities, since facility size is a function of the specific use.



Greenways & Natural Areas

Greenways provide green connections between parks, schools, natural areas and other destinations. Greenways provide for connected or linked open space corridors that can support broader ecological functions than stand-alone properties. Greenways may serve as trail corridors, and provide for low-impact or passive activities, such as walking and nature observation.

Natural areas are individual tracts of open space that are not connected to a larger greenway network. These lands are usually owned or managed by a governmental agency, which may or may not have public access. This type of land often includes wetlands, steep hillsides or other similar spaces. In some cases, environmentally sensitive areas are considered as part of greenways

or natural areas and can include wildlife habitats, stream and creek corridors, or unique and/or endangered plant species.

No standards exist or are proposed for greenways and natural areas.

Facility Inventory

The park and open space inventory identifies the recreational assets within Maple Valley. The City directly provides over 320 acres of public parkland and recreation facilities distributed among 9 parks, special facilities and natural areas.

Figure 5. Existing Inventory: City-owned Parklands by Type

Park Name	Current Classification	Status	Acreage
Lake Wilderness Park	Community Park	Developed	89.38
Summit Park Site	Community Park	Undeveloped	23.97
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>113.35</i>
Take-A-Break Park	Neighborhood Park	Developed	1.92
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>1.92</i>
Lake Wilderness Arboretum	Special Facilities	Partially Developed	25.06
Lake Wilderness Golf Course	Special Facilities	Developed	106.40
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>131.46</i>
216th Avenue Site	Greenway & Natural Area	Undeveloped	5.17
Fernwood Natural Area	Greenway & Natural Area	Undeveloped	5.96
Henry's Switch Site	Greenway & Natural Area	Undeveloped	15.54
Legacy Site	Greenway & Natural Area	Undeveloped	50.37
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>77.04</i>
Total Acreage			323.77

NOTE: Classifications are not intended to limit future design & development options.

Additionally, private parks and open space tracts contribute significantly to the overall park system in Maple Valley. The following table summarizes the existing private parks in Maple Valley.

Figure 6. Existing Private Parks & Open Space Lands by Type

Park Name	Classification	Status	Acreage
Barklay Woods Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	0.28
Belmont Woods Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	2.97
Cedar Downs Div No. 3 Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	1.97
Cherokee Bay Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	4.50
Deer Ridge Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.33
Diamond Hills Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	1.43
Eastwood Forest Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	9.81
Elk Run Div No. 6 Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.17
Elk Run Div No. 7 Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.28
Fernwood Estates Div No. 2 Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	1.21
Glacier Trails Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.05
Glacier Valley Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.11
Glacier Valley Phase 1 Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	0.84
Highlands at Cedar Downs #1	HOA Park	Developed	0.55
Highlands at Cedar Downs #2	HOA Park	Developed	0.15
Hotson Estates Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.05
Lake Forest Estates Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	0.71
Lake Forest Estates Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	2.33
Lakeside Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.72
Maple Glen Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.12
Maple Ridge Highlands Park #1	HOA Park	Developed	0.50
Maple Ridge Highlands Park #2	HOA Park	Developed	0.10
Maple Ridge Highlands Park #3	HOA Park	Developed	0.20
Maple Woods Park #1	HOA Park	Developed	1.10
Maple Woods Park #2	HOA Park	Developed	0.38
Maple Woods Park #3	HOA Park	Developed	2.34
Maple Woods Park #4	HOA Park	Developed	1.27
Meadows at Rock Creek Div No. 2 Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.43
Meadows at Rock Creek Phase 1 #1	HOA Park	Developed	0.62
Meadows at Rock Creek Phase 1 #2	HOA Park	Developed	0.73
Meadows at Rock Creek Phase 1 Pathways	HOA Park	Developed	0.68
Meadows at Rock Creek Phase 2 & 3 Pathways	HOA Park	Developed	0.12
Morningview Place Park #1	HOA Park	Developed	0.28
Morningview Place Park #2	HOA Park	Developed	0.20
Patrick's Faire Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	1.40
Rosewood Parke Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	3.88
Sawyer Crest Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.48
Sun Ridge at Elk Run 4 Div No. 3 #1	HOA Park	Developed	0.51
Sun Ridge at Elk Run 4 Div No. 3 #2	HOA Park	Developed	0.09
The Mews at Lake Wilderness Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	0.27
Valley Green Div No. 3 Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	1.55
Valley Meadows at Maple Valley Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	1.77
Water Gardens East	HOA Park	Developed	1.21
Water Gardens West	HOA Park	Developed	1.63
Wilderness Hollow Div No. 2 Open Space	HOA Park	Developed	0.80
Woodridge Phase 1 Park	HOA Park	Developed	0.12
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>51.22</i>
Elk Run Golf Course	Special Facility	Developed	145.23
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>145.23</i>
Multiple Sites	Natural Areas Tracts	Undeveloped	144.90
<i>Subtotal</i>			<i>144.90</i>
Total Acreage			341.35



Through its policy of requiring new developments to provide neighborhood parks and set aside open space tracts, residents of Maple Valley have benefitted from an expanded network of recreational lands and natural areas. The private parks and open space tracts complement the existing public parklands. In total, over 196 acres of private open space (excluding Elk Run golf course) have been set aside to date, with approximately 76% as greenway or natural areas.

Overall, residents of Maple Valley have access to over 700 acres of public and private lands, which include City facilities, private parks, private facilities and the recreational portions of local school properties. This accounting excludes the King County owned natural areas along the City's eastern border.

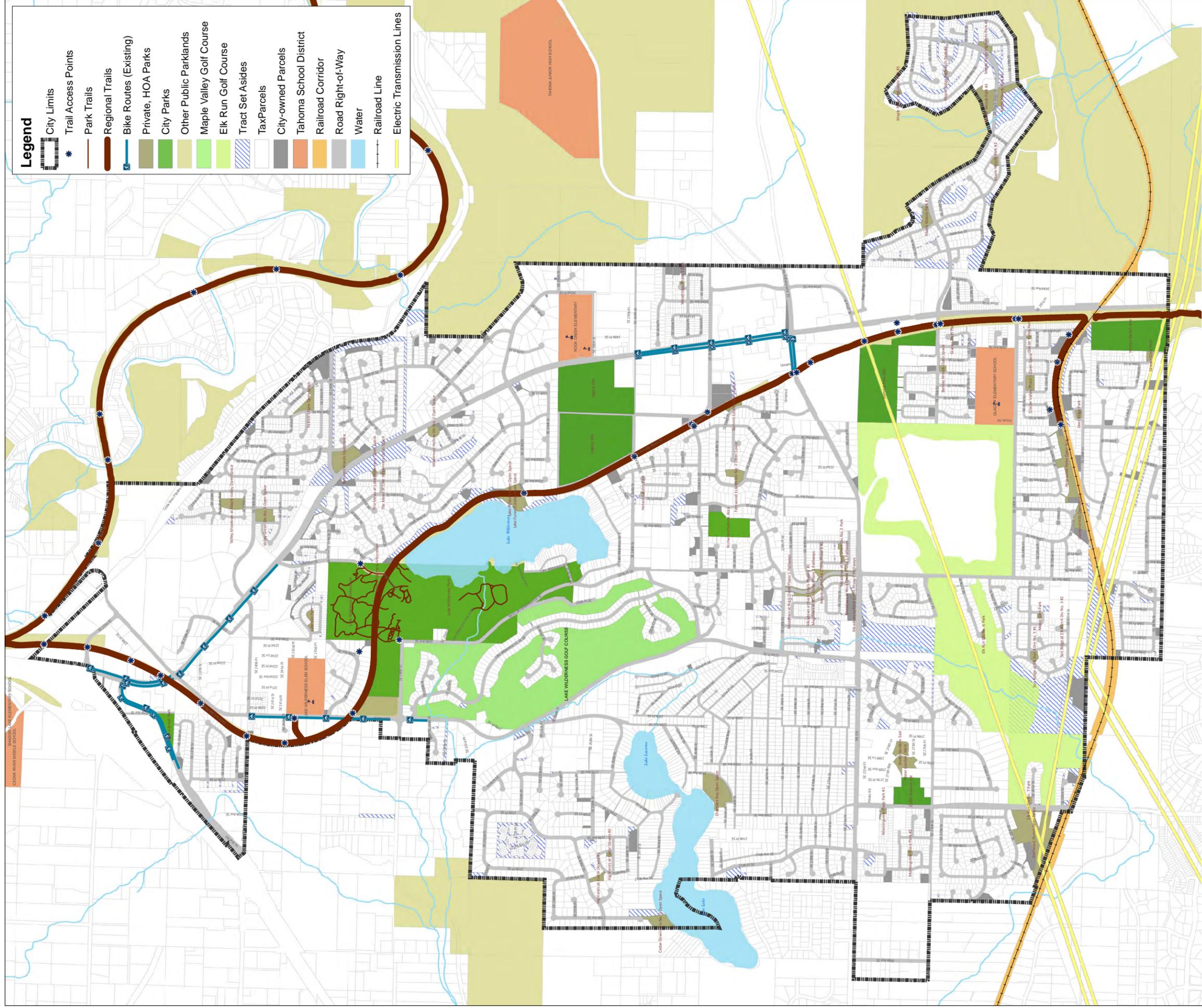
Figure 7. Public & Private Parklands by Type

Parkland Classification	Acreage
Community Park	113.35
Neighborhood Park	1.92
Special Facilities	131.46
Greenway	77.04
School Sites (recreation lands)	39.50
Private HOA Parks	51.22
Private Special Facilities	145.23
Private Open Space Tracts	144.90
Total Acreage	704.62

The following maps show the location of existing parks, trail and recreation areas within the City.

The following section provides site-specific inventory and recommendations for public parklands managed by City of Maple Valley.

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Maple Valley
Parks, Recreation, Cultural & Human Services Plan





Lake Wilderness Park

Located west of Lake Wilderness and east of the Lake Wilderness Country Club and Golf Course.

Nearby Recreational Resources

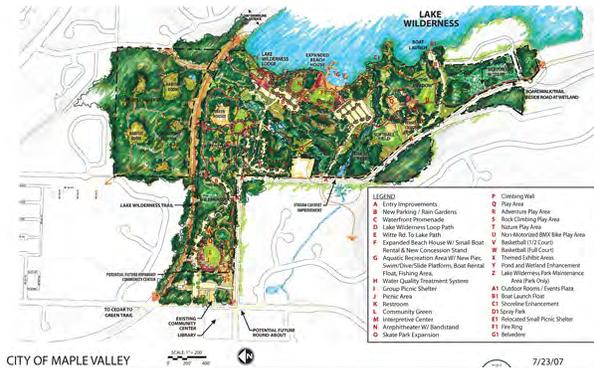
- Lake Wilderness
- Lake Wilderness Elementary School
- Cedar to Green River Trail (Lake Wilderness Trail)
- Lake Wilderness Golf Course
- Greater Maple Valley Community Center & The Den

Amenities

- Lake Wilderness Lodge
- Community Center
- Skateboard park
- Swim beach with pier and seasonal
- Lifeguards
- 2 Restroom facilities
- Boat rentals & boat launch
- Concession stand
- Benches
- Trash receptacles
- 3 picnic shelters with tables and barbecues
- Picnic tables (moveable)
- Drinking fountains
- Walking paths
- Display gardens and fountain
- Horseshoe pit
- Children’s play area with structures
- Softball field
- Multi-use backstop
- 2 main parking lots
- Lawn volleyball court
- 2 outdoor tennis courts
- Grass lawn
- Lake Wilderness Arboretum & greenhouse
- Shade – vegetation and built
- Fishing

Site Management / Design Recommendations

- Remove invasive plants including yellow flag iris (primarily along lakeshore edges) and blackberries.
- Pier structure is outdated and most pilings are rotted; needs maintenance and/or replacement.
- Algal blooms signify nitrogen overload to Lake Wilderness. Recommend using alternative fertilizing strategy and developing an education program regarding lawn & garden care/use of fertilizers to residents and developing an educational partnership to reduce nutrient loading.
- Conduct a site audit and develop an ADA transition plan; Upgrade site furnishings, lifeguard station and changing areas/restrooms to ADA compliance.
- Maintain horseshoe pit and other gravel areas.
- Evaluate for compliance and replace outdated play equipment as needed.



CITY OF MAPLE VALLEY

SCALE 1" = 200'

7/23/07



Summit Park

Located west of Maple Valley Black Diamond Road SE (Hwy 169) south of Kent-Kangley Road and north of SE 276th Street.



City of Maple Valley
Summit Park and Ballfields
FINAL MASTER PLAN

Nearby Recreational Resources

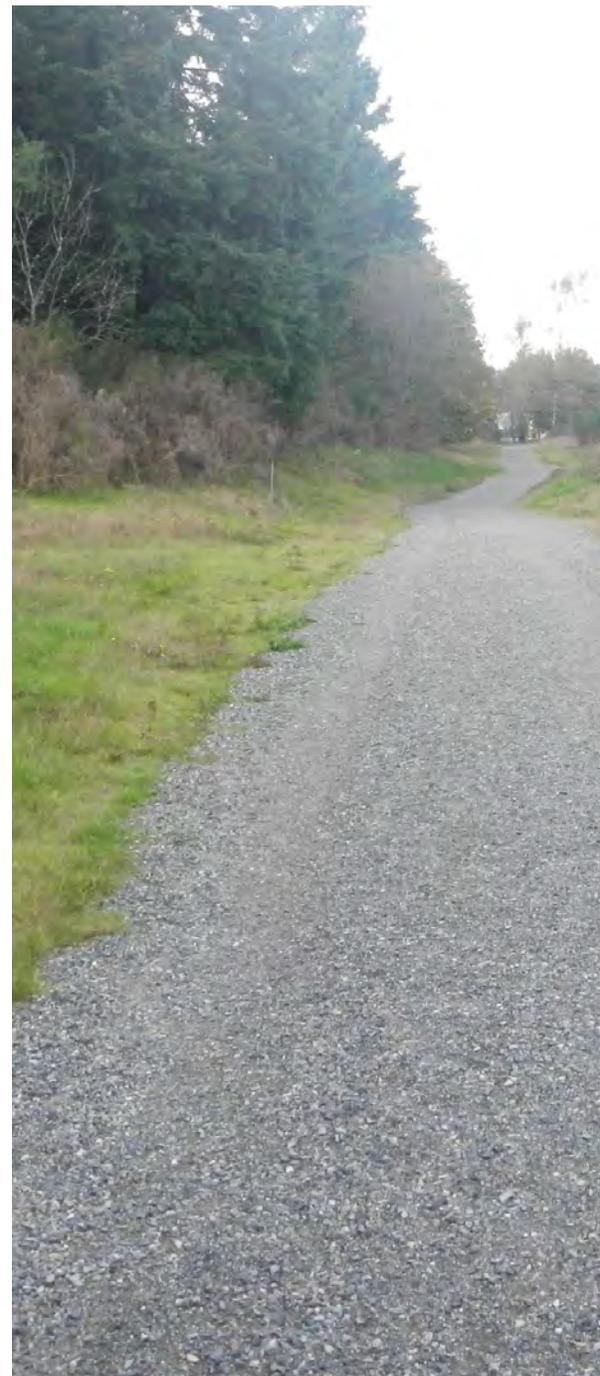
- Green to Cedar River Corridor
- Adjacent Elk Run Golf Course
- Power corridor (potential trails)
- Barklay Woods Private Neighborhood Park
- Glacier Park Elementary School

Amenities

- Current forest - abundant native vegetation
- Accessible location
- Undeveloped – the site has been master planned and will have the following program elements:
 - 2 lighted synthetic soccer/ lacrosse fields
 - 1 lighted synthetic youth softball/baseball field
 - 1 larger lighted synthetic softball/baseball field
 - 1 restroom
 - 2 picnic shelters
 - 2 children’s play areas
 - 3 parking lots (214 spaces)
 - 1 multi-modal trail connecting to the Lake Wilderness Trail
 - 1 fitness trail with built elements
 - 1 basketball court
 - 4 lighted tennis courts
 - 1 non-lighted tennis court
 - 1 ball wall
 - 1 skate spot

Site Management / Design Recommendations

- Currently undeveloped – see Summit Park Master Plan for development guidance.
- Tahoma School District is interested in pursuing shared-use opportunities.



Take-A-Break Park

Located at the SW corner of SE Wax Road and Hwy 169 (west of Post Office).



Nearby Recreational Resources

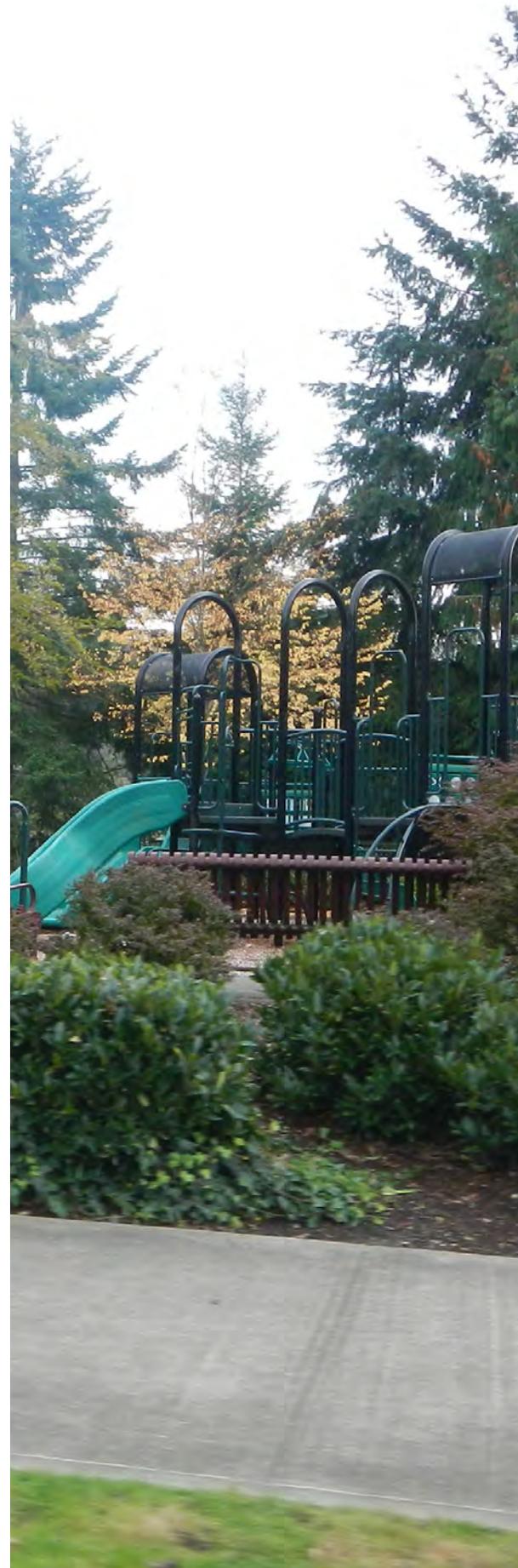
- Cedar to Green River Trail (Lake Wilderness Trail)

Amenities

- Children's play area with play structures
- Open space
- Small grove of established trees
- Walking path
- Picnic table
- Benches
- Sand box area

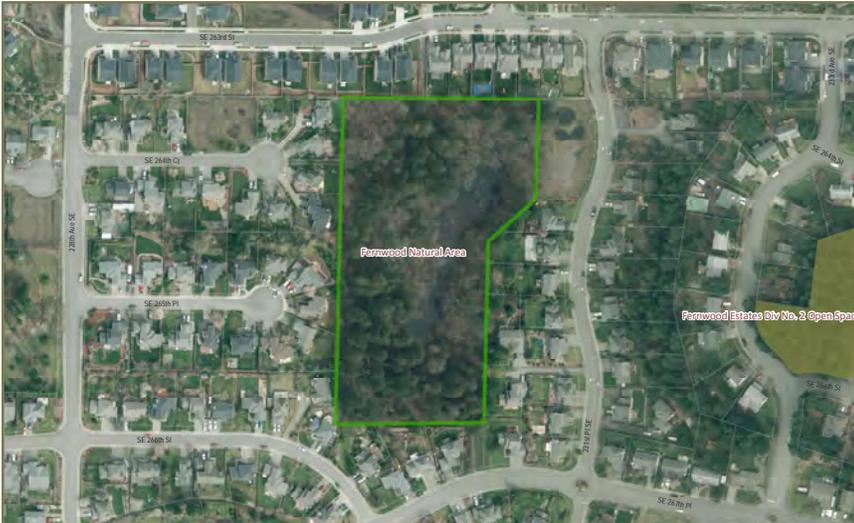
Site Management / Design Recommendations

- None noted; Appears well-maintained.



Fernwood Natural Area

Located west of 231st Place SE between 263rd Street and 267th Place.



Nearby Recreational Resources

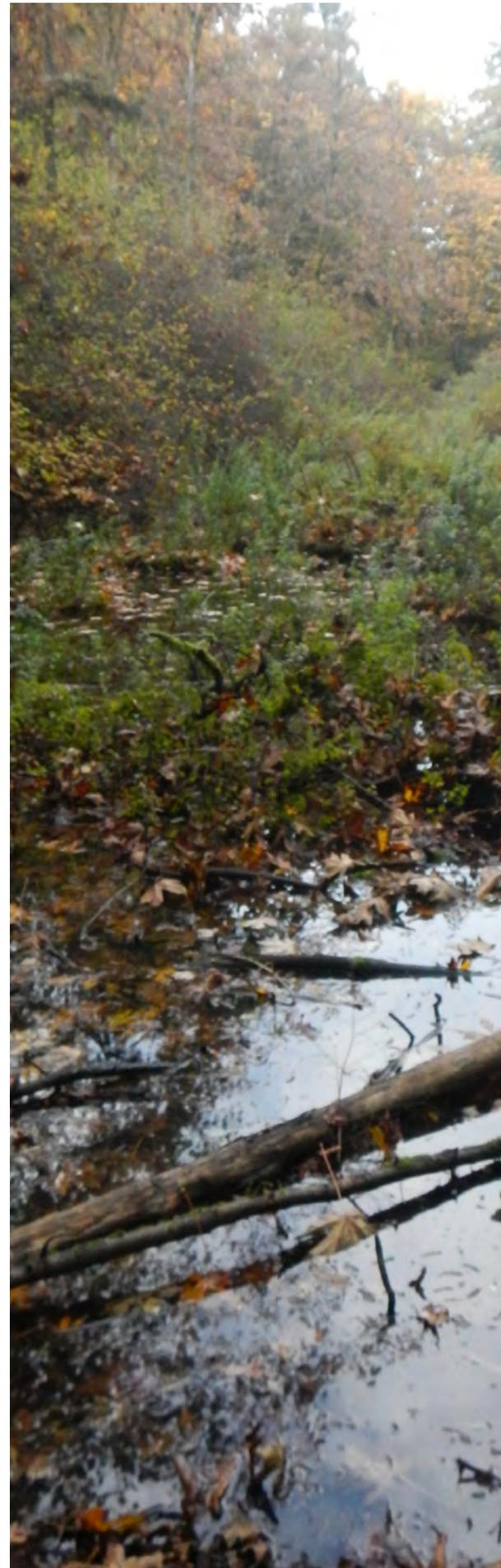
- Lake Wilderness
- Lake Wilderness Elementary School
- Cedar to Green River Trail (Lake Wilderness Trail)
- Lake Wilderness Golf Course

Amenities

- Wooded/shady natural area
- Unpaved walking paths
- Observed marsh/wetland
- Viewing wildlife

Site Management / Design Recommendations

- English Ivy at south entrance to site should be removed and replanted with native plantings.
- Improve signage and access.
- Develop a vegetation management plan.
- Provide trails and interpretive elements.



Henry's Switch Park Site

Located west of Maple Valley Black Diamond Road SE (Hwy 169) south of the rail corridor (south of SE 280th Street) and north of the power corridor (north of SE 288th Street).



Nearby Recreational Resources

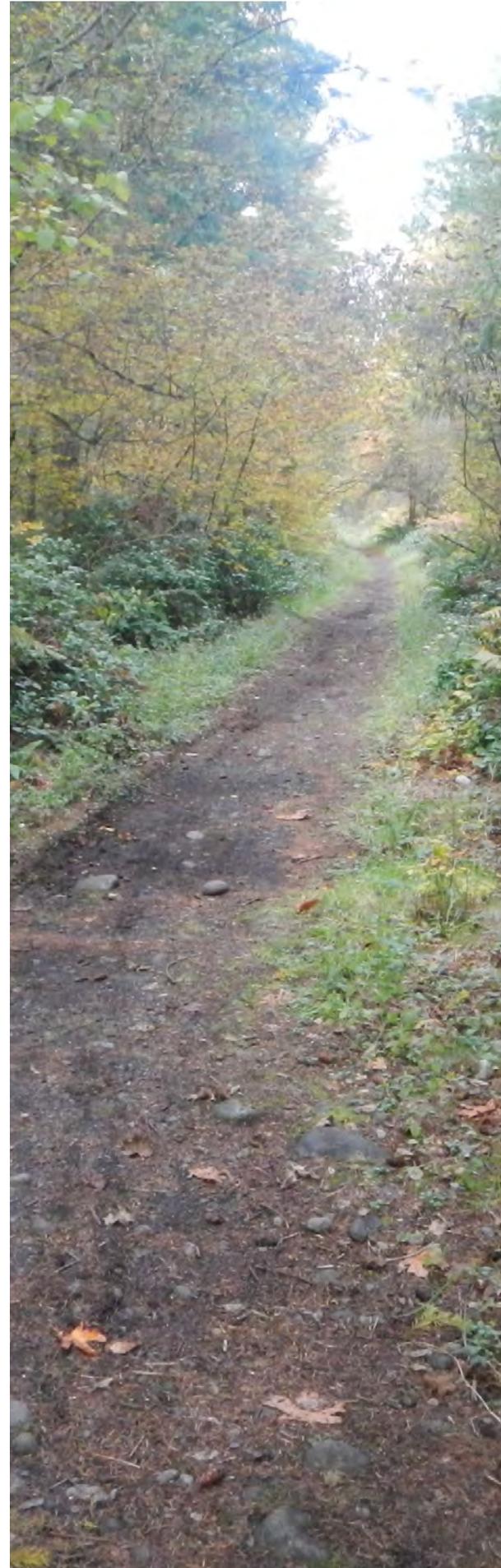
- Green to Cedar River Corridor (Lake Wilderness Trail)
- Sawyer Crest – private neighborhood park
- Power corridor (potential trails)

Amenities

- Abundant native vegetation
- Low level of invasives
- Dirt trail (extension of Lake Wilderness Trail - undeveloped)
- Low-level of compaction

Site Management / Design Recommendations

- Continue Green to Cedar River Trail (Lake Wilderness Trail) development through site.
- Develop and implement long-term site and management plan.
- Connect “upper” neighbors through the site to the regional Lake Wilderness Trail.



Legacy Site

Located east of Lake Wilderness Trail and west of Rock Creek Elementary School along Maple Valley Black Diamond Road..



Nearby Recreational Resources

- Rock Creek Elementary School
- Lake Forest Estates – private neighborhood parks
- Lake Wilderness Park
- Cedar to Green River Trail (Lake Wilderness Trail)

Amenities

- Wooded/shady
- Wildlife viewing
- Hiking

Site Management / Design Recommendations

- Develop long-term site development and maintenance plan that considers utilizing a portion of the property as a community park.
- Develop and connect trails to the western portion of the site near the lake Wilderness Trail.



King County's Lake Wilderness Trail (Cedar to Green River Trail)

Located west of Lake Wilderness and east of the Lake Wilderness Country Club and Golf Course.

Nearby Recreational Resources

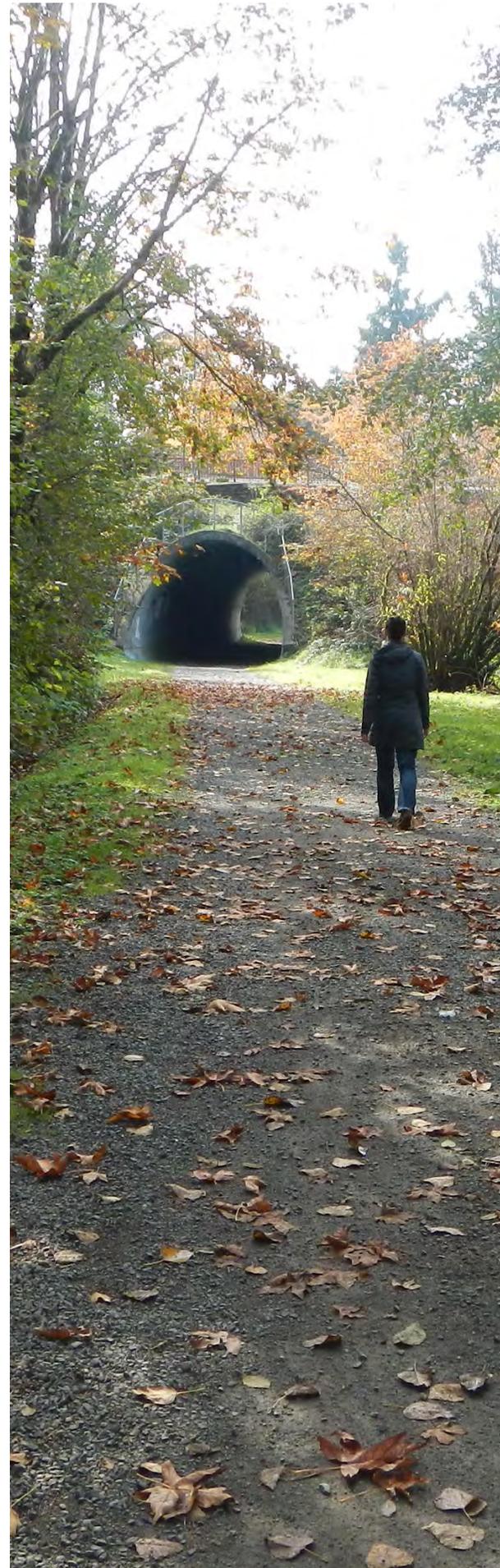
- Lake Wilderness
- Lake Wilderness Elementary School
- Lake Wilderness Park & Community Center
- Lake Wilderness Golf Course
- Wilderness Summit Private Neighborhood Park
- Summit Park
- Glacier Park Elementary
- Henry's Switch Site
- Glacier Valley Phase I Private Neighborhood Park
- Lake Forest Estates Private Neighborhood Park

Amenities

- Gravel pathways
- Tunnels under major road corridors

Site Management / Design Recommendations

- Encourage and partner with King County to pave the trail.
- Coordinate with King County to develop and implement a vegetation management plan to control invasive species.
- Develop a signage and wayfinding program to inform trail users of nearby destinations.





Trails & Neighborhood Greenways

The City of Maple Valley has over 2.6 miles of trails and walking paths located on City parkland. Walking paths exist within developed parks, such as the Lake Wilderness Arboretum and Lake Wilderness Park. Also, King County manages over 8 miles of trails in close proximity to the City along the Lake Wilderness Trail and Cedar River Trail.

Figure 8. Existing Trails

Trail Name	Ownership	Mileage
Lake Wilderness Park	City of Maple Valley	2.66
Cedar River Trail	King County	3.6
Lake Wilderness Trail (CGRT)	King County	4.7

Lake Wilderness Arboretum

The Lake Wilderness Arboretum Foundation developed the Arboretum for the propagation and display of native and cultivated plants, shrubs and trees, assembly of exhibits and production of instructional materials for the enjoyment of its members and the general public. The Foundation has successfully operated the Arboretum with community volunteers since 1965 and the City and the Foundation continue to jointly develop, operate, maintain and cooperatively use the Arboretum for the public’s enjoyment.

Other Recreational Opportunities

King County Park Land

Several large natural areas containing diverse habitats and landscapes in and around Maple Valley have been permanently protected through the King County Natural Resource Lands Program. King County manages these ecological lands to conserve and enhance ecological value and to accommodate passive recreational use that does not harm the ecological resources on the site. Most of the following county properties are outside Maple Valley city limits.

Ravensdale Park

Ravensdale Park is located adjacent to Rock Creek, east of Maple Valley, along Kent-Kangley Road. Owned and operated by King County, the 43-acre park is surrounded by forested hills and provides three baseball/softball fields and an all-weather soccer field. The park has been the center of the community for over 100 years, having its origins as a recreational site for the Ravensdale mining community before becoming a larger King County park. The Gracie Hansen Community Center, a picnic shelter, playground and parking are also part of the park. A master plan was completed in 2008 that outlined future improvements and expansion of recreational facilities. A recent \$650,000 grant (2013) from the state will help expand the versatility of the park’s recreational use through the installation of two new multipurpose fields, as well as other improvements. In November 2013, the Maple Valley City Council passed a resolution to help finance the design and construction of the two synthetic turf fields and committed \$2 million of City funds to the project.

Just east of Ravensdale Park, the 145-acre Ravensdale Retreat Natural Area supports trails that extend along the Rock Creek Valley to Kent-Kangley Road on the eastern side. The trails are regularly used for walking and horseback riding. Parking is available at Ravensdale Park. There is no parking allowed at the gated road off of Kent-Kangley Road.

Rock Creek Natural Area

East of Maple Valley, the 143-acre Rock Creek Natural Area includes a trail system, primarily for walking and nature observation. Trails on the east side of the natural area connect the Cedar River Trail and Seattle’s Pipeline Road and onto Danville/Georgetown (Maple Ridge Highlands) Open Space. The west side has a small trail system on the west side. No trails connect across Rock Creek.

Dorre Don Natural Area

Dorre Don Reach Natural Area is located northeast of Maple Valley along the Cedar

River, approximately River Mile 15.5 to 17.1. The natural area's lowlands include floodplain, a side channel, wetlands, and cottonwood-dominated riparian forest. At upland elevations, a fairly mature second-growth coniferous forest grows on both sides of the river. Walking and wildlife watching occur along the Cedar River Trail and a few small informal trails that lead off the Trail, west of a trail bridge across the river.

Black Diamond Natural Area

Black Diamond Natural Area located outside of Black Diamond contains 645 acres that are managed as three geographic units: Ravensdale Creek, north of Black Diamond; Crisp Creek, southwest of Black Diamond; and Icy Creek, southeast of Black Diamond. The Ravensdale Creek area has a lake, the creek, and a few large wetlands with a forested buffer; most of the site is young forest or shrubs. Existing trails are for non-motorized use. King County Parks' Green-to-Cedar River Regional Trail is planned for future development west of Ravensdale Creek. The Crisp Creek area contains steep forested slopes along Crisp Creek. The Icy Creek area is located along the Green River containing stands of young and mature forest and located adjacent to lands managed by Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Henry's Ridge Open Space

The Henry's Ridge Open Space is adjacent to the Danville-Georgetown Open Space combining 600 acres of protected natural area, east of Maple Valley. The Henry's Ridge forestlands contain trails used primarily by mountain bikers but open to all non-motorized trails users. King County recently conducted an open space trail planning effort for long-term trail improvements and usage by hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers for both Danville-Georgetown Open Space and Henry's Ridge Open Space. Trail signage improvements are one of the proposed enhancements.

Cedar River Trail

The Cedar River Trail (CRT) follows the Cedar River from where it enters Lake Washington in the City of Renton upriver to the community of Landsburg at the boundary of the City of Seattle's Cedar River Watershed. At 17.3 miles in length the CRT is a paved, off-road trail for the first 12.3 miles, and features a soft surface for the last five miles. The trail follows a historic railroad route between the river and State Route 169 and passes through or near Renton, Maplewood, Cedar Mountain, Maple Valley and Rock Creek. Between Renton and Maple Valley the CRT is popular with bicyclists and skaters and provides both recreational and nonmotorized commuting opportunities.

Lake Wilderness Trail

The Lake Wilderness Trail, also known as the Cedar to Green River Trail, is a 3.5-mile, soft-surface rail trail passing through central Maple Valley. The trail is owned and managed by King County and is the core trail spine linking the Maple Valley community together.

Athletic Facilities

The ideal types of recreational facilities are those that are well developed and designed to meet a particular function. The following represent the dimensional and amenity standards appropriate to each specific facility type:

- Regulation Baseball Fields - Field dimensions: 320' + outfields, 90' baselines, grass or synthetic infield; permanent backstop and support facilities
- Youth Baseball/Softball Fields - Field dimensions: 200' + outfields, 60' baselines, dugouts. Grass or synthetic infield not required; permanent backstop and support facilities
- Regulation Softball Fields - Field dimensions (Slow-pitch): 250' minimum-women 275' minimum-men outfields, 65' baselines, (fast pitch) 225'; skinned infield; permanent backstop and support facilities
- Multi-Use Backstops - Field dimensions: 150' + outfields, all grass field and backstop only
- Regulation Soccer Fields - Field dimensions: 195' x 225' or 330' x 360', grass or all weather surfacing; permanent or portable goals; youth



soccer is most often played on available turf regardless of the size

- Football Fields - Field dimensions: 160' x 360'; permanent goals
- Tennis Courts - Appropriate dimensions, fenced and surfaced with a color coat

In addition to park and open space lands, several recreation and athletic facilities exist within the City. Figure 9 lists these facilities by type and ownership.

Figure 9. Existing Inventory of Recreation Facilities

	Facility Type								
	Regulation Baseball	Youth Baseball ⁽¹⁾	Regulation Softball	Regulation Soccer	Youth Soccer ⁽¹⁾	Football	Multi-Purpose Backstops	Tennis Courts	Gymnasiums ⁽²⁾
City of Maple Valley	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	-
King County	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tahoma School District	-	6	-	-	7	-	7	-	4
Private	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	0	6	1	0	7	0	8	2	4

NOTES:

(1): Fields at Tahoma School District elementary schools are multi-use and are available for youth baseball and soccer

(2): Gymnasiums are small and not suited for more than elementary-age use

Overall, the Tahoma School District is the primary field provider, with field scheduling coordinated by the Tahoma Sports Council. City recreation programs, private and non-profit groups provide programming. The sport field shortage is largely a result of low inventory and limited land base, but other complicating factors exist, such as poor field conditions, scheduling conflicts and use of fields by regional teams. As greater field demand is created with growth, the City should take a leadership role in addressing the provision of field space and coordination with the School District and leagues.

Recreation Programming

Recreation services are available to Maple Valley residents through a wide range of public and private recreation, health and fitness providers and facilities.

Aquatic facilities are accessible within a five to 25 minute drive at the Covington, Kent Meridian or Renton aquatic centers or several different YMCAs. Adult fitness opportunities range from

private specialized women’s and cross-training facilities to facilities and programs offered by YMCAs and public park and recreation providers. Boys and Girls clubs are known for their youth programming offered through a variety of schools and community centers to enhance learning, fitness and social development of school age children. Youth and adult sports leagues offer individual sport team experiences that require fields, courts or gyms that are distributed in various locations, mostly outside of Maple Valley. Senior programming and age-specific facilities are available, but they are dispersed across multiple locations and are separated from intergenerational uses.

With the ability to search out, travel to and afford the desired recreation services, Maple Valley residents can find most of the opportunities they may need. However, no single facility within Maple Valley provides the full range of recreation and fitness opportunities, programs or facilities to accommodate the recreational needs of residents across all generations, income levels or for the entire family.

In 2003, the City began offering recreation programs. Demand has been strong, and the

number of programs has dramatically increased. The City is currently reaching its limits in its ability to offer new program due to facility and staffing limitations. The City has established partnerships with area service providers including the Tahoma Learning Community (TLC) and the Greater Maple Valley Community Center (GMVCC) as well as other non-profit groups to provide as wide a range of programs and services as possible to the community.

Lake Wilderness Lodge

The Lake Wilderness Lodge, built in the 1950s, is owned and operated by the City of Maple Valley. The Lodge is a multi-purpose facility that is used for special events, meetings and certain recreation classes. The Lodge can be rented for weddings, receptions, conferences or other events, and it offers a spectacular view of the lake from all three floors. Originally designed as a resort lodge, the building has been remodeled over the years to expand its use and improve accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The open interior design is well suited for conferences and gatherings, but the Lodge offers limited space and lacks sufficient acoustic dampening for the building to be more heavily programmed for indoor recreation or classes.

Greater Maple Valley Community Center

The Greater Maple Valley Community Center (GMVCC) was started in 1976 as a senior center, through the efforts of area residents. The physical building was constructed in 1979 on 2 acres of land within the King County-owned Lake Wilderness Park. The GMVCC now contains a 3,000 square foot hall and full service kitchen providing up to a 200-person occupancy capacity with additional smaller rooms (for 5 to 15 people) for added programming or rental uses. The Den Youth Center accommodates up to 175 guests with a game room, café area, and common dance floor area. The GMVCC serves the areas of Maple Valley, Hobart, Ravensdale and unincorporated King County within the Tahoma school district (90 square miles).

GMVCC programming has long focused on human services that range from social to educational and recreational activities. Currently, the GMVCC has 11 full time employees and provides intergenerational programming, based on a model of strength and prevention. The Center provides general community services, events and referral information as well as specific services for youth, teens and seniors. Senior services include a senior center, health & fitness programming, mental health counseling and referrals, nutritional lunch and meals on wheels, and social activities and events. Youth and Teen services include outreach counseling, teen drop-in center, summer trips, and special events. The GMVCC also partners with other community services and organizations to provide home school support, an autism support group, alcoholics anonymous, foster parent connections, and similar social services.

The GMVCC also provides staff support and technical assistance to the Maple Valley Youth Council. The facility is utilized by social and local organizations including Valley Cities Counseling, Visiting Nurse Services and King County Youth Probation, the local chapter of the AARP, Covington Quilters, and various parent support groups.

Tahoma Learning Community

The Tahoma Learning Community is a collaborative partnership between business, schools, and community that aims to enhance intergenerational life-long learning.

Operating out of ten different locations from elementary school classrooms, middle and high school gyms and the support services building, the Tahoma Learning Center offers enrichment programs for the community within the Tahoma School District. Summer programming offers expanded activities for youth including day camps for tennis, robotics, flag football, cheerleading, track & field, wrestling, soccer, dance team, as well as classes on art, music and cooking. TLC also provides registration for Skyhawks Summer Camps' half-day and full day youth sports camps for basketball, tennis, golf, volleyball, lacrosse, flag football and multi-sport options.



Community Education categories include the following:

- Adult Education: includes dog obedience classes, boater education, personal finance
- Arts and Crafts
- Dance: adult tap dance class
- Special Events: father/daughter dance, ski/snowboard trips
- Sports: Tae Kwon Do (at CRMS multi-purpose room), girls/boys basketball rec league
- Youth Education: mad science, musical instrument lessons

Within the City of Maple Valley, TLC offers programs primarily at Glacier Park Elementary School.

Private Fitness

Several private fitness clubs are located in or near Maple Valley. These facilities vary in their offerings and clientele, and their strength in the marketplace is an indicator that the greater Maple Valley community seeks out and has a need for fitness-related activities and programs. The following facility descriptions represent a sample of nearby providers.

The Little Gym of Maple Valley
27317 Maple Valley Black Diamond
Road, Suite A106
Maple Valley, WA 98038
www.tlmaplevalleywa.com

The Little Gym of Maple Valley takes a holistic approach to skill development. Their philosophy is based on three core tenets: “Get Moving” to foster flexibility, strength, balance and coordination; “Brain Boost” to nurture listening skills, concentration and decision making; and “Citizen Kid” to promote sharing, teamwork, cooperation and leadership abilities. They offer infant and toddler early development classes, youth classes in gymnastics, dance and karate. The center offers day camps and is a venue for parties.

Tahoma Athletic Club
23836 222nd Place SE
Suite 200
Maple Valley, WA 98038
www.tahomaclub.com

A private Maple Valley fitness club providing fitness training, nutritional coaching, classes and programs for adults. Memberships include 12-18 month terms, month-to-month, and student or temporary options. Personal training, group exercise classes, tanning booths, fitness equipment and child care are provided.

Covington Aquatic Center
18230 SE 240th Street
Covington, WA 98042
www.covingtonwa.gov/cac

A public pool facility offering a variety of recreational opportunities for all ages including recreational swims, water exercise classes, swimming lessons, special events and swimming pool rentals. Full-sized pool with six lanes, diving board, water slide, locker/restrooms this 1.25-acre special facility is owned and operated by the City of Covington Parks and Recreation Department. Users can pay per visit or obtain 3 or 12-month memberships.

MV Crossfit
23130 224th Place SE
Suite 103
Maple Valley, WA 98038
www.maplevalleycrossfit.com

A private athletic training facility for adults at any level committed to serious workouts and cross training. Membership options include unlimited monthly use rates, teens and student rates, drop-in fees and limited term pricing. Coaches and personal trainers are optional with classes and individual workouts provided.

Crossfit Basic
30741 3rd Ave.
Black Diamond, WA 98010
www.crossfitbasic.com

Crossfit facility and program focuses on a core strength and conditioning fitness program customized to individual adult goals. Fitness equipment, exercise classes and personal trainers are part of the facility.

Fitness 19
23770 Witte Rd SE,
Maple Valley, WA 98038
www.fitness19.com

Operating as Maple Valley Fitness, this private facility offers services include cardio equipment, free weights & circuit training, personal training, tanning, and a kids room. Memberships can be purchased on a monthly basis without a required long-term contract.

Thrive Community Fitness
27411 Maple Valley Hwy,
Maple Valley WA 98038
www.Thrivecf.com

The Thrive facility contains an equipment room, exercise classroom, kids play room, sauna, health bar and locker room and provides personal trainers, individual workout options and exercise classes programmed throughout the week. Facility use is available at two different membership levels requiring an initiation fee, term commitment and monthly rate payments.

Maple Valley Dance Expressions
23730 Maple Valley Hwy. SE
Maple Valley WA 98038
www.mvdanceexpressions.net

Maple Valley Dance Expressions offers youth and adult dance instruction for a variety of forms including ballet, jazz, hip hop, tap and Scottish. They host an annual dance recital to showcase students' efforts.

LA Fitness
27245 172nd Avenue Southeast
Covington, WA 98042
www.lafitness.com

The Covington LA Fitness facility contains an equipment room, exercise classroom, court facilities, pool, sauna, juice bar and kids klub and provides personal trainers, individual workout options and exercise classes programmed throughout the week. Memberships can be purchased on a monthly basis without a required long-term contract.



4 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Overview

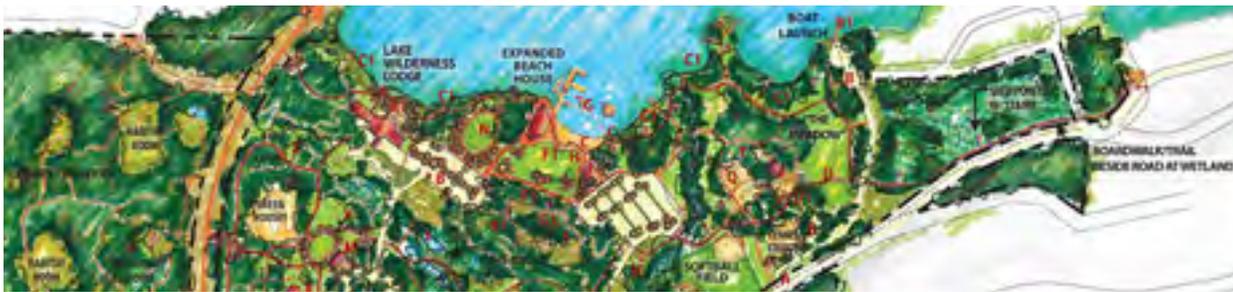
The goals and objectives described in this chapter define the park and recreation services that Maple Valley aims to provide. These goals and objectives were derived from input received throughout the planning process, from city staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission and community members.

Goals & Objectives

The Growth Management Act (GMA) adopted by the Washington State Legislature in 1990 provided a new foundation for land use planning in selected cities and counties throughout the state, including King County and the City of Maple Valley. The GMA's purpose is to help communities deal efficiently with the challenges of growth to ensure their long-term sustainability and high quality of life. It identifies 14 planning goals to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations (codified in Chapter 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington). Four of these goals directly affect the development and implementation of this plan.

- “Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.” RCW 36.70A.020(9)
- “Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.” RCW 36.70A.020(10)
- “Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.” RCW 36.70A.020(13)
- “Carry-out the goals of the Shoreline Management Act with regards to shorelines and critical areas.” RCW 36.70A.020(14)

Furthermore, the Maple Valley Comprehensive Plan, the previous park system plan and county-wide planning policies provide a framework for this PRCHS Plan. A goal is a general statement describing an outcome the City wishes to provide. Goals typically do not change over time unless community values shift. Objectives are more specific, measurable statements that describe a means to achieving the stated goals. Objectives may change over time. Recommendations are specific actions intended to implement and achieve the goals and objectives and are contained in Chapters 5 and 6 of the Plan.



Active Use Parks

Goal

Maple Valley's park system meets local recreation needs, supports the health and well being of residents, and enhances the environmental and visual quality of the community.

Policies

1. The City shall encourage the private ownership, development and management of neighborhood parks within all new residential subdivisions to provide residents with nearby opportunities for unstructured recreation.
2. The City shall strive to provide and maintain a developed community park within a 1.5 mile travelshed of all residents to provide multi-use recreation areas.
3. The City shall endeavor to provide special facilities and use areas to accommodate a variety of recreation uses, such as golf courses, sport field complexes, sites for community centers, etc.
4. The City shall support the preservation and improvement of state, county and municipal parks, trails and facilities that provide park and recreational opportunities to City residents.

Actions/Objectives

- Pursue private development, dedication or acquisition of parkland in deficient areas, as identified in this Plan.
- Evaluate acquisition opportunities based on criteria such as appropriateness for park use and potential contribution to level of service, connectivity, preservation and scenic or recreational opportunities for residents.
- Consider the acquisition of additional neighborhood parklands in areas with a noted deficiency and where redevelopment is unlikely in the foreseeable future to fill existing distribution gaps and provide equitable access to active parklands.
- Pursue low-cost and/or non-purchase options to preserve open space, including acquisition of surplus properties, conservation easements and development covenants.
- Require dedication and development of a local neighborhood park as a condition of approval for subdivisions of four (4) or more lots. The City may accept fees in lieu of development if such mitigation is not practical (see "Funding").
- Require that development of recreational amenities conform to the City's minimum guidelines and the general needs outlined in this Plan.
- Develop park sites based on master plans, management plans, or other adopted strategies to ensure parks reflect local needs, community input, recreational and conservation goals and available financial resources.
- Endeavor to partner to finance, phase and implement the master plans for Lake Wilderness Park and Summit Park.
- Coordinate with King County to plan for the development and management of County-owned parks, trails and open space areas within or nearby the City.
- Develop food access policies to consider and address how parklands can be used to grow food (e.g., community gardens)



Natural Area Preservation and Restoration

Goal

Maple Valley's natural areas are protected, support healthy habitat and native wildlife, and provide opportunities for residents to experience nature.

Policies

1. The City shall endeavor to preserve significant natural areas to provide opportunities for residents to recreate and connect with nature and to meet habitat protection needs.
2. The City shall strive to manage City-owned natural areas to protect and enhance their ecological health, sensitive habitats and native species.

Actions/Objectives

- Pursue opportunities to protect high value resources, or those that create important wildlife and recreation connections, through public acquisition or protection through a Native Growth Protection Easement, as they become available.
- Actively work to improve the condition of City-owned natural areas through invasive species removal and planting of native species.
- Actively pursue and coordinate in efforts to improve the health and functioning of local water bodies, especially Lake Wilderness.
- Explore lawn and pest management strategies that maintain and strengthen the ecological health of downstream systems and water bodies.
- Pursue opportunities to provide appropriate public access (e.g. trails, viewpoints and wildlife viewing areas) within natural areas to support passive recreation and environmental education.
- Explore opportunities to convert underutilized active recreation areas to natural areas.
- Pursue opportunities to engage community volunteer groups in the management and restoration of natural areas.



Trail & Pathway System

Goal

Maple Valley's system of interconnected shared-use paths, trails, sidewalks and pedestrian and bicycle corridors connect residents to parks, schools, and key destinations throughout the city. The City's trail and pathway system builds upon the existing Cedar to Green River Trail and integrates with the city's active transportation network to ensure safe, convenient and accessible transportation options for the community.

Policies

1. The City shall develop a network of shared-use trails and neighborhood greenways that connect within and between parks, nearby neighborhoods, key community destinations, and major pedestrian and bicycle routes identified in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.
2. The City shall develop and implement a network of neighborhood greenways that increase access to parks and greenspace through the City's existing paved and unpaved facilities, greenways, forested paths and facilities along the City's roadway network.
3. The City shall ensure the City's trail and pathway network is accessible, identifiable, convenient and safe for users of all ages and abilities.

Actions/Objectives

- Support coordinated implementation of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan in partnership with Public Works and Community Development to provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicyclist network.
- Coordinate with King County and other local jurisdictions to provide a regional trail network, to include the extension of the Lake Wilderness Trail and establishment of the Covington Highlands Trail and the Tri-Cities Trail, and connect the City's trail and pathway system to regional trails.
- Partner with local utilities, public agencies and private landowners to secure trail easements and access to open space for trail connections.
- Require development projects along proposed designated trail routes to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.
- Seek opportunities to develop east/west pathway, trail and sidewalk connections to complement the north/southeastern route provided by the Cedar to Green River Trail.
- Design future and improved trails to accommodate some or all of the following uses as appropriate: hiking, cycling, running and horseback riding.
- Provide trailhead accommodations, as appropriate, to include parking, signage, restrooms and other amenities.
- Develop clear and consistent wayfinding signage and information materials for trails and associated facilities.
- Develop guidance for homeowner associations adjacent to powerline corridors about what activities and improvements could be installed in those rights of way.



Recreation Facilities

Goal

Maple Valley's sports fields, courts and other recreation facilities provide high-quality places for children, teens, adults and seniors to recreate and play.

Policies

1. The City shall provide a diversity of recreational facilities, including sports fields, courts and specialized facilities (e.g. golf courses, skateparks, off-leash areas, pea patches) to meet a wide range of community needs.
2. The City shall endeavor to develop recreation facilities that provide maximum flexibility for current uses and can be adapted for emerging sports.
3. The City shall explore options with the community for developing enhanced facilities for all age groups.
4. The City shall collaborate with sport groups, the Tahoma School District and other providers to facilitate the development of a variety of affordable recreation facilities and options for residents of all ages.
5. The City shall maintain and manage recreation facilities to ensure the safety and enjoyment of participants and protection of the City's capital investment.

Actions/Objectives

- Consider local needs, recreational trends and availability of similar facilities within the City and region when planning for sports fields, courts and specialized recreational facilities, such as skateparks and indoor recreation centers.
- Encourage the development of recreation and specialized facilities that generate revenues to offset the cost of their operation and maintenance.
- Continue and expand partnerships with King County, the Tahoma School District, local organizations, and other regional providers to ensure coordinated planning, support the availability of recreation facilities and explore further joint-use opportunities.
- As the City grows, examine the need for additional community recreation facility space to meet indoor recreation needs for recreation, educational classes, community and cultural events and meeting space. As necessary, explore opportunities to develop additional indoor multi-use recreation space, in partnership with other organizations, agencies or nearby communities.
- Undertake a feasibility study to identify capital and operating costs and impacts prior to the acquisition and development of a recreation center or special facility.
- Encourage private development and operation of recreational facilities or programs that meet identified public need and the City's recreational objectives.
- Aim to develop sufficient sports fields to meet the recreational needs of Maple Valley residents. This Plan recommends a level of service standard for sports fields of:
 - Baseball Fields: 1 field per 5,000 residents
 - Softball Fields: 1 field per 5,000 residents
 - Soccer Fields: 1 field per 5,000 residents
- Evaluate opportunities to include sports fields, courts and specialized facilities in the development of new community parks. Establish

- minimum design standards for game and practice fields.
- Explore opportunities to use existing and new sports fields most efficiently, such as through multi-use design, synthetic turf surfacing, lighting and effective scheduling.
- Develop and maintain field use policies, agreements and fees to ensure responsible field stewardship and cost recovery.
- Partner with the Tahoma School District or an alternate organization to manage coordination of field scheduling of City and school district fields.
- Explore opportunities to partner with adjoining cities and King County to provide a tournament level field complex.



Recreation Programming

Goal

The City of Maple Valley offers residents a diverse array of recreational activities and programs that promotes the health and well-being of residents of all ages, abilities and interests.

Policies

1. The City shall encourage the expansion of engaging, affordable and safe recreation programs and healthy alternatives for leisure time.
2. The City shall foster positive, collaborative relationships with recognized athletic and recreational providers and organizations to provide recreational programs.

Actions/Objectives

- Monitor local and regional recreation trends to ensure community needs and interests are addressed by available programming.
- Continue and enhance partnerships with the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, the Tahoma School District, private and non-profit agencies, private fitness clubs and local businesses to provide recreation services to the community.
- Look to develop and offer recreational programs for participants of all ages with special needs and support inclusion opportunities in all programs, when feasible.
- Continue and enhance partnerships with local sports organizations to provide sports programs for all ages.
- Enhance the diversity of recreation programs offered, in partnership with other recreation providers and organizations, focusing on programs that are in high demand or serve a range of users.
- Evaluate and improve recreational services and programs to meet identified cost recovery goals.



Cultural & Heritage

Goal

Maple Valley's parks, recreation facilities and community events bring residents together and foster community pride, identity and livability.

Policies

1. The City shall work with the community and recognized organizations to foster a greater number and variety of cultural events and support community celebrations.
2. The City shall seek opportunities to support heritage facilities within City limits.

Actions/Objectives

- Continue to offer community events, such as movies, concerts and picnics in the park, to provide opportunities for social engagement and bring families and neighbors together.
- Continue to coordinate – and offer programs related to – culture, heritage and the arts.
- Support the goals and initiatives of the Public Arts Commission; Identify appropriate locations within parks and greenways for the installation of public art.
- Provide limited financial support to the Maple Valley Historical Society to continue coordinating projects dedicated to preserving historical sites, buildings and area history.
- Reflect the city's identity by incorporating art, history and culture into the park and recreation system.



Human Services

Goal

All members of the Maple Valley community have the resources and opportunities necessary to meet their basic physical, economic and social needs and to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Policies

1. The City shall support opportunities for residents to engage in social, educational, justice, and health programs, in partnership with community agencies.
2. The City shall partner with the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, Maple Valley Food Bank & Emergency Services, King County, the Tahoma School District and community organizations to provide social, educational and health programs that enrich residents' lives.

Actions/Objectives

- Convene and coordinate regional efforts to provide human services in Maple Valley in partnership with the GMVCC, King County and other service providers..
- Assist with the funding for the capital improvement and operation of the Greater Maple Valley Community Center as City funding allows.
- Support the continuation of community partnerships associated with the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, which together provide family, youth, and senior adult programs, including substance abuse/youth violence prevention and related efforts.
- Support the Maple Valley Food Bank and Emergency Services to help low income households meet their basic needs, such as hunger and housing issues.
- Coordinate with the Tahoma Learning Community so Maple Valley residents have access to opportunities and resources for life-long learning.
- Continue to assist in funding other human services programs on a project-by-project basis.
- In coordination with the Greater Maple Valley Community Center, consider contingency planning for the provision of human services affected by natural disasters, severe weather and changes to funding and/or community needs.



Planning & Community Involvement

Goal

Members of the Maple Valley community are actively engaged in the planning, design and stewardship of the City's parks, recreation facilities, and cultural and human services.

Policies

1. The City shall encourage and support active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreation.
2. The City shall develop and maintain system-wide and site-specific plans for the development and management of the park and recreation system to guide future actions.

Actions/Objectives

- Support the Parks & Recreation Commission as the forum for public discussion of parks and recreation issues.
- Involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning, design and recreation program development to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding and build public support.
- Survey, review and publish local park and recreation preferences, needs and trends at least once every six years.
- Continue to promote and distribute information about parks and facilities, recreational activities, education programs, community services and events, and volunteer activities provided by the City and partner agencies and organizations.
- Update this comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan periodically to ensure facilities and services meet current and future needs.
- Prepare master plans for park sites prior to development or major improvement to ensure development meets community needs, is within available resources and is consistent with the City's park and recreation objectives.
- Periodically update the capital facilities plan and develop prioritization criteria to address facility improvement needs.
- Develop and maintain a financial plan that assists the City in obtaining and managing funds for capital improvements, maintenance and operations



Site Design, Development & Management

Goal

Maple Valley's park and recreation system is efficient to maintain and operate, and provides a high level of user comfort, safety, aesthetic quality and protects the public's capital investment.

Policies

1. The City shall endeavor to design, develop and manage the City's park sites and facilities to ensure the safety and enjoyment of users, maximize recreational experience and minimize maintenance and operational costs.
2. The City shall strive to reduce barriers to participation and ensure facilities and programs are accessible and welcoming to all users.
3. The City shall provide informative, convenient, and consistent signage, communication and informational materials to help residents fully utilize the City's recreational resources.

Actions/Objectives

- Develop and implement land use guidelines, site criteria and design standards for each park type.
- Design future improvements to parks, recreation facilities and trails to offer universal accessibility for residents of all ages and physical abilities and in compliance with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Prepare an ADA Transition Plan to guide priorities to retrofit and renovate existing sites so that they will be brought to current code and guidelines.
- Design, improve and maintain parks and facilities in a manner that will conserve the use of energy and other resources and minimize maintenance needs (e.g. consistency in furnishings and construction materials, use of native vegetation)
- Establish routine inspection and preventative maintenance programs and standards; repair or remove damaged components immediately upon identification.
- Estimate the maintenance costs and staffing levels associated with acquisition, development, or renovation of parks or natural open space areas, and ensure adequate long-term maintenance and operation funding is available prior to action.
- Develop and update asset management plans for major assets to support improved stewardship, reduce costs, and increase maintenance and replacement efficiency.
- Encourage and promote volunteer park improvement and maintenance projects from a variety of individuals, service clubs, school groups, churches and businesses.
- Provide public information to educate the community about park stewardship, rules and regulations, and safety.



Funding

Goal

Maple Valley's park, recreation, natural areas, and cultural facilities and programs are supported by varied, dependable and sustainable funding sources.

Policies

1. The City shall use a variety of funding sources to adequately and cost-effectively acquire, develop and maintain park and open space land.
2. The City shall require dedication of parkland, recreational areas, and/or open space or a fee in lieu of dedication in conjunction with all new residential development, consistent with the requirements of the City's Development Regulations.

Actions/Objectives

- Maintain general fund support of parks, recreation programs and maintenance.
- Pursue traditional and alternative funding sources for parks, facilities and programs to include private donations, partnerships, sponsorships, state and federal grant sources, dedicated local taxes and local bonds or levies.
- Manage and update the Park Impact Fee program to ensure new development contributes its proportional share toward the provision of community park lands and facilities to meet adopted service standards.
- Place priority on maximizing grants and other external sources of funding, or inter-agency cooperative arrangements, to develop the City's park resources.
- Utilize voter-approved initiatives, such as general obligation bonds and serial levies, to finance future acquisitions, programs, facilities and maintenance.
- Consider developing rental facilities, such as reservable picnic areas or sports fields, to meet community needs and generate additional operating resources.
- Update use and rental fees on a periodic basis to reflect market rates.



Administration

Goal

Maple Valley's Parks and Recreation Department coalesces the community and stewards its human, social and physical capital and resources to expand recreational opportunities for City residents.

Policies

1. The City shall provide clear leadership for the development and management of the park and recreation system.
2. The City shall strive to provide sufficient staff resources to maintain the overall parks and recreation system to the City's standards.
3. The City shall promote volunteerism to engage individuals, groups, organizations and businesses in the planning, development and stewardship of the park and recreation system.

Actions/Objectives

- Develop and document Department policies, strategic priorities and financial objectives to focus the direction of the Department and support funding requests.
- Assess the Department's staffing needs on a regular basis and hire adequate staff to manage the City's park and recreation system.
- Assign staff responsibilities, resources and timeframes in annual work plans as necessary to make progress on the goals and policies of the Plan.
- Continue to allocate staff time and resources to programs and activities that can leverage existing resources (e.g. managing volunteer programs, and partnerships with local schools and organizations, and grant development and administration).
- Use part-time, seasonal, and contract employees for select functions to meet peak demands and respond to specialized or urgent needs.
- Engage volunteers in park and facility education, outreach, maintenance and enhancement.
- Maintain written partnership agreements that specify responsibilities, legal, financial and other terms.



5 NEEDS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The following needs assessment synthesizes and articulates the community's needs for, and vision of, Maple Valley's park and recreation system. This chapter explores and addresses park and recreation activity, facility and programming needs and priorities. It relies heavily on public input from the community survey and public meetings, in addition to site inventories and regional and national recreation trends. The chapter concludes with a detailed discussion of specific, local needs and how they might be considered within the broader system of parks, trails and recreation programming.

By considering the location, size and number of facilities by type and use, along with community interests and priorities, this Plan evaluates the existing and projected demand for park and recreation amenities. This assessment provides a foundation for the six-year capital facilities plan (see Chapter 6), which identifies and prioritizes crucial upgrades, improvements and expansions consistent with the needs expressed by residents.

Recreation Trends

Over the past decade, park and recreation management has trended toward outcome-based management, reflecting the effect on quality of life of those who participate or benefit from parks and recreation opportunities. Outcome-based management is useful in establishing the benefit to the community and to individuals. The level of subsidy for programs has been declining and more "enterprise" activities are being developed, thereby allowing the subsidy to be used where deemed appropriate. Agencies across the United States are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Pricing regimes are more often structured by peak, off-peak and off-season rates. Additionally, more agencies are partnering with private, public and non-profit groups to collaborate on or provide services.

Generally, park and recreation professionals face many challenges including:

- Doing more with less, requiring partnership development
- Partnering between non-profit and public forms of service
- Increasing the quality and diversity of services

- Moving toward a more business-like model while not competing with the private sector
- Increasing parks and open space versus a decreasing ability to maintain it
- Providing support for the socially and economically disadvantaged through programs in areas such as childcare, nutrition, etc
- Increasing responsibility for measurement and evaluation¹

In 2013, the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) issued its first report using PRORAGIS, a geographic information system, to establish industry trends. The 2013 report gathered data from 383 park and recreation agencies across the country and compared changes over the last three years. According to the report, park and recreation agencies typically provide management of park and open space lands and operate recreational facilities and programs. Within these areas of responsibility, some growth occurred from 2010 to 2012 among the agencies participating in the survey, including conducting major special events, maintaining public jurisdiction areas and administering community gardens.

The NRPA report indicated that public park and recreation service providers continue to suffer from reduced funding levels. Agencies receiving higher funding levels generally experienced greater reductions, while smaller agencies (in smaller communities) were more stable over

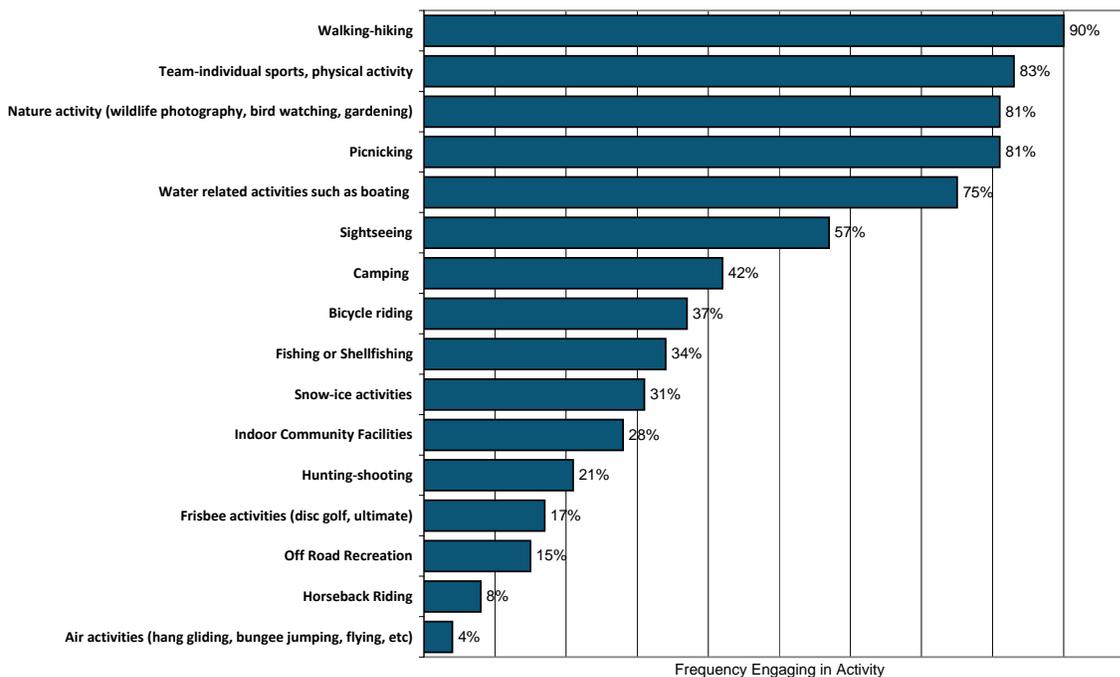
the last three years. Recreation programming experienced a significant drop in attendance from 2010 to 2011. While a slight rebound had begun in 2012, the NRPA 2013 report indicates that program offerings have declined in every major category since 2010.

Washington State Outdoor Recreation Trends

The Washington Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) document guides decision-makers in better understanding statewide recreation issues and is required to help maintain Washington’s eligibility for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars.

The draft 2013 Washington SCORP confirms that outdoor recreation is still an integral part of life for most Washington residents; 90% participating in the most popular category of activities, such as walking and hiking, and demonstrating the pervasiveness of an outdoor recreation culture in the state. Significant increases in rates of participation in outdoor recreation activities since 2006 indicate the importance of continued state and local investment in outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.

Figure 10 Participation Rates in the 2013 SCORP Outdoor Activity Categories.



¹ van der Smissen

The participation rates confirm that outdoor recreation is an integral part of life in Washington's communities and a pervasive value in the Pacific Northwest. Research indicates that nature and outdoor recreation have a significant positive impact on both physical and mental health. Washington's economy also benefits directly and indirectly from outdoor recreation through consumer spending, tax revenue and jobs. To maximize the value of these benefits, the SCORP identifies the issues that affect participation, supply and demand. In the draft 2013 SCORP, the greatest challenges among recreation providers over the next five years are anticipated to be:

- Increasing state population
- Changing demographics
- Unpredictable funding for facility development and maintenance
- Access to outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities

As part of the SCORP update process, local park and recreation providers were surveyed on the relative importance of key issues. These issues were then grouped into identified regional zones within the state to highlight any unique needs for each geographic zone. While some differences in ranking occurred, most regions shared top issues due to the economic slowdown and the political climate regarding taxes.

- **Creating new partnerships** is an important issue acknowledged by many providers to allow for the pooling of resources and/or sharing of costs.
- **Maintenance of existing public parks** and/or recreation facilities continues to face funding challenges and increased pressure to provide for growing populations or new user groups.
- **Increasing public access** is an important concern among recreation providers who work to keep facilities open and available as well as accommodate a diverse public.

From the draft 2013 SCORP, the broadest recommendation for all areas across Washington is to continue the investment in outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities as the foundation for fulfilling the needs and expectations for the benefit of both residents and the natural environment.

Sports Trends

The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) reported on participation levels in 47 sports indicating that 32 sports experienced growth during 2012. Highlights from the 2013 NSGA participation survey include:

- Indoor gaming activities increased by an average of 11%.
- Fitness sports each increased about 5%.
- Team sports showed mixed results with participation lagging in basketball, baseball, ice hockey and soccer and increases in lacrosse, softball and volleyball.
- Tackle football experienced the largest team sport drop of nearly 13% decline in participation. Over half the decline was in the 7-11 age group of those who might participate on an infrequent basis.
- Female participation in 40 of the 47 sports and activities has increased, compared to only 11 sports showing increased male participation.

Overall, the trends show that participation in many sports is rebounding following the recession of 2008, although some sports continue to struggle to attract new participants.

Outdoor Recreation & Nature-Based Activities

The National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) is a comprehensive survey that has been collecting data and producing reports about the recreation activities, environmental attitudes and natural resource values of Americans since the 1980s. The core focus of the NSRE is on outdoor activity participation and personal demographics. The most recent NSRE reports that the total number of people participating in outdoor activities between 2000 and 2007 grew by 4.4%, while the number of days of participation increased by approximately 25%. Walking for pleasure grew by 14% and continues to lead as the top favorite outdoor activity.

Nature-based activities, those associated with wildlife and natural settings, showed a discernible growth in the number of people (a 3.1% increase) and the number of days of participation. Americans' participation in nature-based

outdoor recreation is increasing with viewing, photographing, or otherwise observing nature clearly measured as the fastest growing type of nature-based recreation activity.

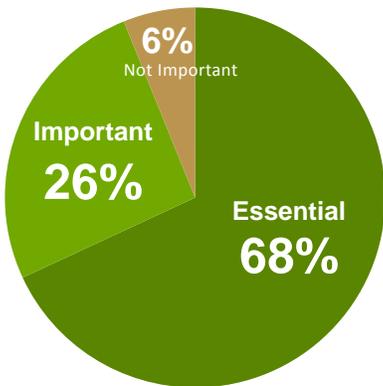
Community Survey Highlights

Contribution of parks to quality of life

Seven in ten respondents said that parks and recreation are “essential to the quality of life” in Maple Valley. Residents who participate in a greater variety of recreational activities, visit multiple parks or visit parks on a more regular basis were more likely, by 6 to 10 percent, to respond that parks are “important” or “essential” to quality of life in Maple Valley.

A majority of every demographic group said they consider parks “essential” to quality of life. Even among respondents who were light users of existing parks and recreation programs, majorities rated them as “essential”.

Figure 11. Importance of Parks to Quality of Life



Participation in recreational activities

Maple Valley residents are fairly active recreators and city park users. Over nine in ten of the households surveyed reported participating in at least one of the seven recreation activities listed in the survey. At least 37% reported that some household member participated in each activity

listed. Nearly all (98%) reported visiting at least one of eight city facilities in the last year. The average number of facilities visited was five and the average number of visits in the last year was twelve. Almost two-thirds of respondents made nine or more visits to a city facility last year.

Respondents between the ages of 35 and 50 and couples with children in the home were the most active and frequent users of city parks and school facilities. These groups were also the most likely to have a household member that participates in youth sports (approximately 57%), as compared to other age groups and household types (household participation for other groups ranged from 10-28%). Older adults and single-headed households were the most likely to participate in programs offered by community centers (47 to 57%, compared to 30 to 41% for other groups). Participation in activities held by public agencies and homeowners associations were similar across all age groups and household types.

Figure 12. Number of city parks visited annually

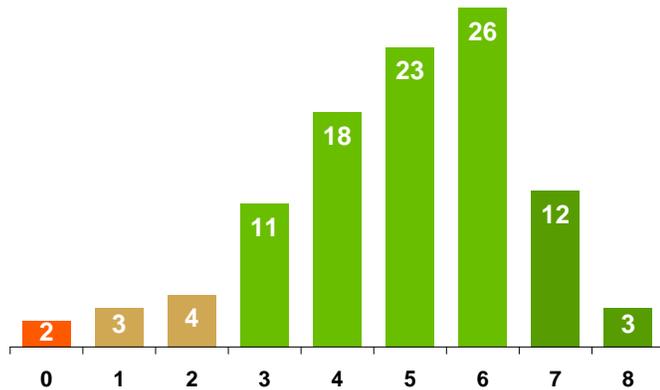
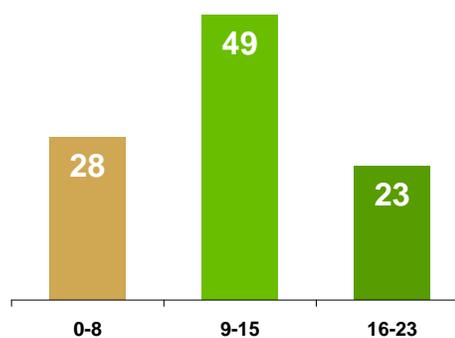


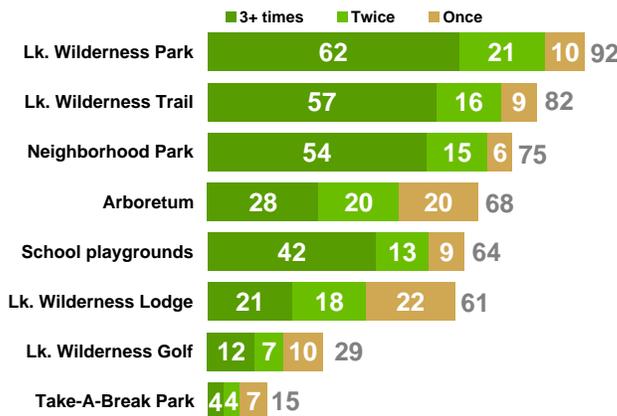
Figure 13. Number of visits to city parks annually



Residents who are active in recreational activities showed very high usage of City parks and programs (85-89%).

Wilderness Park and Trail were the most frequently visited park facilities. Couples with children in the home and frequent or multiple park users were the most likely to use these facilities, with 73 percent visiting three or more times per year. Neighborhood parks, the Arboretum, school playgrounds and Lake Wilderness Lodge were visited at least once in the last year by the majority of residents.

Figure 14. Frequency of visits to City parks and facilities



Visitation at the City’s indoor and outdoor recreation facilities has increased significantly since 1999. In a survey completed for the 1999 Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan, fewer residents had visited Lake Washington Park (75% total), Lake Wilderness Trail (66%), school sites (48%), the Arboretum (34%), and the Lake Wilderness Lodge (23%).

When asked why they do not visit parks more often, approximately one in three respondents cited a ‘lack of time’. This reason was more common among single headed households with children (44%) and least common among senior residents (16%). The most commonly cited reason for seniors was health concerns.

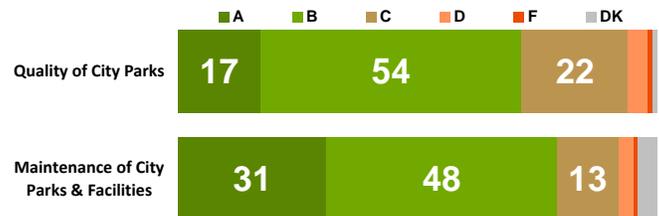
Satisfaction with existing parks

According to the Community Survey (2012), Maple Valley residents rated their satisfaction with the City’s Parks and Recreation Department at 7.5 out of 10 (mid-range for services surveyed). Community events, including Movies in the

Park and Maple Valley Days had the highest satisfaction ratings of all City services, at 8.3 out of 10. Among park services, residents had the high satisfaction with the cleanliness of parks (7.9 out of ten); events, activities and programs (7.9); and facilities (7.4).

Similarly, residents surveyed for this Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan gave Maple Valley Parks a “B-” grade for overall quality, while maintenance and upkeep received a “B”. Over 70 percent of households surveyed rated the quality of city parks as an “A” or “B”, while nearly 80 percent rated maintenance and upkeep an “A” or “B”. Ratings of overall park quality were similar across all age groups, genders and household types, with majorities rating overall quality as a “B” on an A to F scale. Nearly one in three respondents rated the quality as a “C” or poorer, signaling a potential need to address park deficiencies.

Figure 15. Park Quality and Maintenance Ratings



There appears to be a relationship between perceived quality of the park system and desire for more park and recreation facilities and programs. Residents who gave parks lower quality grades were also likely to think that the City does not have enough parks and recreation facilities. Conversely, those who felt Maple Valley has the ‘right amount’ of parks and programs generally also have the park system high grades for quality.

Park and recreation system priorities

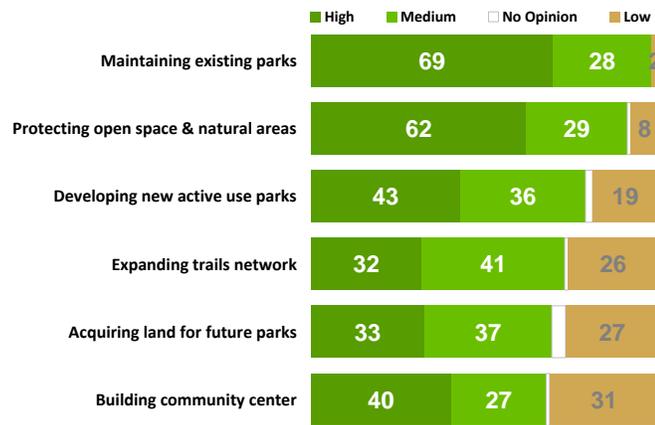
Maple Valley residents were asked to rate the priority of a variety of park and recreation services for city funding. Respondents placed the highest priority was on maintaining existing parks and protecting open space, with moderate support for expansion. More than six in ten placed a high priority on maintaining parks and protecting

spaces. Four in ten prioritized expansion projects, like new parks or a community center. Residents were split on the priority for spending city funds to acquire additional land or expand trail networks.

- **Protecting open space and natural areas:** More than six in ten residents surveyed felt protecting open space and natural areas should be a high priority for use of city funds. An additional 29 percent rated it a medium priority. Support was relatively consistent across all ages, genders, household types, and park users.
- **Acquiring land for future parks:** Residents were split on whether acquiring land for future parks should be a priority for City investment – 33 percent rated it a high priority; 37 percent a medium priority, and 27 percent a low priority. Although this split was relatively pervasive between surveyed groups, those who felt parks were not important to the City’s quality of life and those who believe the City already has enough parks rated acquiring land as a low priority more frequently than other groups.
- **Maintaining existing parks:** Nearly seven in ten respondents felt maintaining existing parks should be a high priority for investing city funds, making it the highest priority across included services and programs. An additional 28 percent of respondents rated maintenance as a medium priority. Support for maintaining existing parks was consistent across surveyed groups.
- **New active use parks:** Overall, more than four in ten residents surveyed felt developing new active use parks that include sports fields should be a high priority for city investment. An additional 36 percent rated it a medium priority. Residents between 36 and 50 years of age and couples with children in the home were between about 10 and 30 percent more likely to cite a need for additional active use parks.
- **Community centers:** Four in ten respondents felt building a community center with aquatics and fitness facilities should be a high priority for city funds. An additional 27 percent rated it as a medium priority. Women were more likely than men to rate a community center as a high priority (50 percent vs. 30 percent). Residents between 36 and 50 years of age and couples with children in the home were between about 5 and 15 percent more likely to rate a new community centers as a high priority, compared to other groups.
- **Trail network:** Residents were split on whether expanding the recreational trail network should be a City priority for investment. Approximately 32 percent considered it a high priority, 41

percent a medium priority, and 26 percent a low priority. Support was lowest among residents over 65 years of age and infrequent park users.

Figure 16. Park Quality and Maintenance Ratings



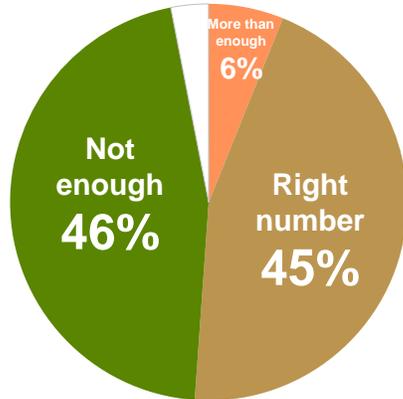
Use of tax money

Four in ten respondents felt the City of Maple Valley uses tax payer money responsibly when providing park and recreation services; another 35 percent responded “do not know”. Agreement that taxpayer money is used responsibly increased with age, from 26% among those 18 to 35 to 64% among those over 65 years. However, younger residents were more likely to respond that they did not know or had no opinion. Frequent park users, those who visit multiple parks, and those who gave the park system high grades for quality were slightly more likely to respond that the City uses taxpayer money wisely. Those who rated parks essential were less likely to be satisfied (37%) than those who said something less than essential (49%).

Need for facilities and programs

Respondents were evenly divided over whether Maple Valley has “not enough parks and recreation programs” to meet the needs of the community (46%) or “about the right number” (45%). In general, residents between 36 and 50 years of age and couples with children in the home were most likely to respond that Maple Valley needed additional park and recreation facilities and programs.

Figure 17. Adequacy of park facilities and programs



When asked whether the number of parks and recreation programs in Maple Valley meets the needs of the community, residents under 65 years of age (44 to 52%) were much more likely than those over 65 (27%) to feel that there are “Not enough parks and recreation programs...”. In addition, the majority (54%) of couples with children in the home responded that there are not enough parks and recreation programs, while couples without children and single-headed households predominantly responded that there are about the right number or more than enough parks and programs.

Residents who participate in a greater variety of recreational activities, visit multiple parks or visit parks on a more regular basis were more likely, by 7 to 22 percent, to feel Maple Valley needs more parks and recreation programs to adequately meet community needs.

Younger (ages 18-35), single-headed households with children and less frequent park users were more likely to respond “Don’t Know” when asked whether the City has adequate park and recreation facilities and programs. This may present a

potential opportunity for the City to target education and outreach programs to these groups.

Facilities

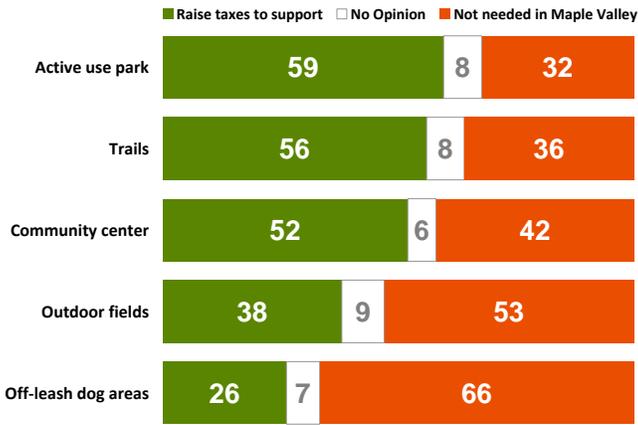
Residents were more likely to feel Maple Valley needs expanded recreational facilities (trails, fields, indoor facilities, etc) than additional parks and programs. When asked an open-ended question, 72 percent of respondents listed a specific park amenity they would like to see provided or expanded in Maple Valley. Common responses included fields for baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and football (31% overall; common among frequent and active users as well as households with children) and trails (14% overall; common across all age groups). Indoor sports and exercise facilities were frequently mentioned by residents over 50 years of age. More specialized facilities, including off leash dog areas, wildlife watching facilities, gardening and cultural classes were mentioned by between 5 and 10 percent of respondents.

When given a choice between raising taxes to develop certain recreation facilities in Maple Valley versus not having a facility in the city, majorities supported more taxes for three of the five facilities tested:

- An active use parks that include playgrounds, sport courts & fields (59%);
- Trails and safe routes to parks (56%);
- A community center with aquatics and fitness facilities (52%).

These types of facilities have remained consistent priorities for new facilities over the past fifteen years. A pool/indoor recreation center, trails, active use parks and sports fields were frequently cited by residents in both the 2012 Community Survey and 1999 Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services survey.

Figure 18. Support for additional investment



For each of the five facilities tested, those who were dissatisfied with city’s use of tax dollars for parks were more likely than were those satisfied to support increased taxes to develop that experience in Maple Valley.

- Active use parks (63% vs. 59%)
- Trails and safe routes to parks (58% vs. 50%);
- Community center with aquatics and fitness (57% vs. 50%);
- Sports fields (45% vs. 39%);
- Off-leash dog areas (35% vs. 21%)

In 1999, 66 percent of residents were willing to increase their property taxes to support additional acquisition and development of Maple Valley’s parks. This percentage has declined over the past fifteen years, though the park system has expanded.

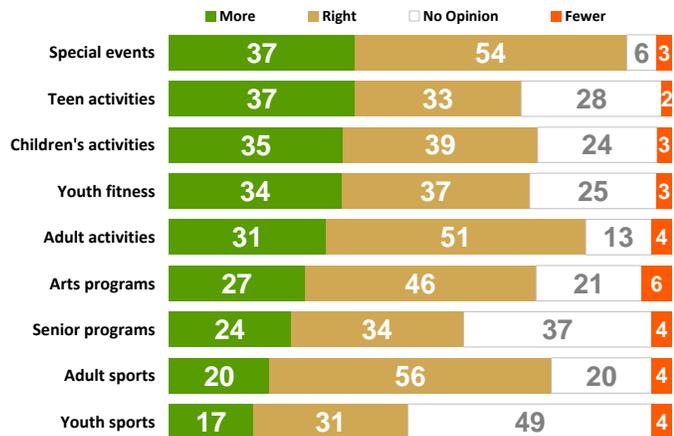
Activities

Respondents were generally divided over whether Maple Valley needs more recreation activities. For 8 of 9 activities listed, more people said Maple Valley had “about the right amount” than said the city “needs more” - although the margins were often close, see Figure x. A relatively high proportion of respondents said they had no opinion.

Approximately 30 to 40 percent of residents felt the city has the right number of youth-oriented activities, including children’s activities, youth fitness, youth sports, and teen activities. Residents age 36 to 50 and couples with children in the home demonstrated the highest support for additional youth-oriented activities. About 44

percent of seniors (over age 65) responded that the city needs more senior programs. Younger residents were more likely to respond “don’t know”. More than half of residents surveyed said there were the right number of programs for adult sports, adult activities, and special events.

Figure 19. Adequacy of recreation activities





Local Needs & Considerations

Parks & Recreation: The Foundation of a Strong Community

Community. It is why people moved to Maple Valley, why businesses invest here and why families are raised here. Together, the people of Maple Valley make each other more connected, engaged and active. As Maple Valley slows its building and starts its graceful maturation, the Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services that the community provides are making the City a stronger community. Whether through physical connections like trails and greenways, community connectors like cultural programs, or people connectors like senior programs and recreation programming, the City's Parks and Recreation Department stewards Maple Valley's essential civic infrastructure, making the City strong and responsive.

Parks

Parkland Gap Analysis

To better understand where efforts for potential acquisition should be directed, a gap analysis of the park system was conducted to examine and assess the current distribution of parks throughout the City. The analysis reviewed the locations and types of existing facilities, land use classifications, transportation/access barriers and other factors as a means to identify target areas representing service gaps. In reviewing parkland distribution and assessing opportunities to fill identified gaps, residentially zoned lands were isolated, since neighborhood and community parks primarily serve these areas. Additionally, primary and secondary service areas were used as follows:

- Community Parks: ½-mile primary & 1-mile secondary service areas
- Neighborhood & Pocket Parks: ¼-mile primary & ½-mile secondary service areas

Map 3 on page 59 illustrates the application of these distribution criteria. The gap analysis also reviewed the need for parkland after considering the existing private homeowner association parks, along with the distribution of private condominium or apartment complex recreation common areas. Map 3 highlights how the public neighborhood parks and private parks enhance the overall coverage of parklands in Maple Valley. It should be noted that the park walksheds for the private parks were restricted to the actual homeowner association boundaries of the respective parks.

Gaps in parkland distribution appear in four main areas of the city:

- Southwestern section near Elk Run Golf Course
- Western section north of Lake Lucerne
- Northeastern section north of Rock Creek Elementary
- City center near Fernwood Natural Area

The greatest documented need is for additional community parks to improve overall distribution and equity, while promoting active use recreational spaces that can accommodate field sports, court sports and open play. When the Summit Park project is constructed, much of the southeastern area of the City will have reasonable access to a community park.

While the targeted acquisition areas do not identify a specific parcel(s) for consideration, the area encompasses a broader region in which an acquisition would be ideally suited. These acquisition targets represent a long-term vision for improving parkland distribution throughout Maple Valley.

Community Parks

As the City's only developed community park, Lake Wilderness Park is the workhorse of Maple Valley's park system. The park provides water access with a beach and beach house, sport fields, tennis courts, playground, trails and the Lodge. The park was master planned in 2007 to guide future development and renovation efforts. The City should focus its energy in the near term toward the replacement of the

dock and improvements to the beach front and beach amenities. Additionally, during the site assessment of the park, the need was noted for minor upgrades to ensure universal accessibility. Minor improvements to access for site furnishings are necessary to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Also, the City should evaluate the play equipment for code compliance and replace outdated equipment as appropriate. The recommendations in the Inventory chapter provide additional site-specific suggestions.

The future development of Summit Park will significantly expand recreation facilities in Maple Valley. The site was master planned to include several athletic fields, a skatepark, playgrounds, among other amenities. With the passage of a voter-approved bond in 2013, the Tahoma School District is pursuing the acquisition of an adjacent 35 acres for a future high school. The school district and the City have begun conversations about the potential for joint development and/or shared use arrangements between these two properties. Summit Park, as master planned, will greatly improve access to sport fields and will help alleviate some of the existing deficit of fields. In its discussions with the school district, the City should aim to maintain the placement of sport fields at the site and ensure community-wide access to the fields. The City should also include in the discussion about Summit Park expanded access to the District's school gymnasiums for community recreation, since the lack of adequate indoor facilities is the primary limitation restricting the growth and provision of recreation programs in Maple Valley.

The Legacy site (Maple Valley Place) has been discussed as a potential location for a civic center and city hall. This large, wooded site has both access along SR-169 and the Lake Wilderness Trail. However, there are competing community interests at play with the Legacy site. On one hand, the community conducted a broad planning effort to bring a cohesive vision to the City Council that prioritizes a number of program elements and proposes the highest and best use for the site. On the other hand, there is still a strong desire in the community to protect the remaining forested parcels for habitat and open space uses. As supported in the 2005 report to Council, the western portions of the site, closest

to Lake Wilderness Park and the Lake Wilderness Trail, should be protected, and a means of creating pedestrian and bicycle access down the slopes should be studied and implemented. This "local face" connection would make a strong pedestrian and bicycle link between Rock Creek Elementary and the regional amenity of the Lake Wilderness Trail. This also is an important linkage in the City's proposed neighborhood greenway network. Similar to the Maple Valley Library, developed by King County, the Legacy site should seek to minimize its development footprint and preserve as much as the remaining "green infrastructure" of the existing forest at the site.

Another opportunity may exist to add community parkland to the City's inventory. With the recent annexation of the King County owned "Summit Place" into the City and the pending sale of a portion of that land to the Tahoma School District, the future of the Elk Run Golf Course may be in question. This presents an opportunity for the City to consider purchasing a portion of the golf course and convert it to multi-use active park space. Doing so would also provide the land base for future development of sport fields, as well as improve parkland access to residents in the southwestern portion of the City.

Neighborhood Parks

Maple Valley's current policy is to require new residential developments to develop and maintain their own neighborhood and pocket parks. As a result, the City only has one neighborhood park, Take-A-Break Park, under its direct management. This park is relatively new and requires no significant renovations at the present, other than periodic maintenance.

Across the City, there are 38 small, private parks to serve residents of specific subdivisions or homeowner associations. These private parks offer a range of amenities, from small playgrounds to basketball and tennis courts to water access. Although these private parks are well-distributed across the City, several gaps exist as was discussed above. Also, residents who live in park deficient areas generally are outside the subdivision or homeowner association boundaries for these parks and are effectively unserved and have little access

to local recreation opportunities. Filling these gaps in service equitably will require flexibility.

The Fernwood Natural Area is located within one of the primary gap areas. This is a small property with a towering second-growth overstory that mixes with a rich upland and riparian understory surrounding a central wetland. While this site will not function as a traditional neighborhood park, opportunities exist to make improvements to this site, such that access is improved and it can serve as the proxy park for its immediate neighborhood. Planting restoration and vegetation management would help make the site more inviting and accessible to users and an outdoor amphitheater with benches might invite naturalist programming and outdoor education to the site.

Another small site near an existing gap area is the 216th Avenue site. This site could be developed as a small neighborhood park, but a site assessment should be conducted to determine the extent of wetlands onsite, along with a study of opportunities and constraints. The City should also consider selling the property and purchasing a portion of the Elk Run Golf Course to serve as a future community park for the wider area of southwestern Maple Valley.

In the parkland gap areas where new residential development is unlikely in the foreseeable future, the City should consider either acquiring properties to serve as neighborhood parks or explore the idea to utilize existing, City-owned stormwater facilities as multi-purpose facilities. Maple Valley has generally well-draining soils, and opportunities may exist to convert certain stormwater facilities to dual use and allow limited recreation on them. Map 5 on page 75 identifies some candidate stormwater facilities for recreation retrofits. These sites could accommodate small terraced play areas, pathway connections and interpretive elements.

Sport Fields

As discussed in the 2007 PRCHS Plan, a significant shortage of playable sport fields exists within Maple Valley, and the inventory has remained unchanged.

The Tahoma School District is the primary

field provider, with field scheduling coordinated by the Tahoma Sports Council. City recreation programs, private and non-profit groups provide programming. The sport field shortage is largely a result of low inventory and limited land base, but other complicating factors exist, such as poor field conditions, scheduling conflicts and use of fields by regional teams.

Nearly 2,800 youth participate annually in youth athletics, which includes league-based soccer, football, lacrosse, baseball/softball as well as City-sponsored peewee soccer and T-ball. This figure excludes the demand for fields from adult sports, such as soccer and softball.

There is a significant shortage of youth baseball, softball and soccer fields. The existing fields are suitable only for youth practice and cannot be used year-round. Upgrading the existing multi-use fields throughout the community could alleviate a portion of the deficit of fields; however, significant land base must be made available to provide the identified number of future fields.

In November 2013, the Maple Valley City Council agreed to contribute \$2 million to help address this issue and support King County's construction of turf fields at Ravensdale Park. The addition of these fields will help improve the current demand, but a shortage will remain. The City has master planned the Summit Park site to include sport fields to meet this community need, but the City is now in discussions with the school district about the shared development and/or shared use of field space at Summit Park - as part of a larger, coordinated campus for the new high school planned for the adjacent property to the west.

As greater field demand is created with growth, the City should take a leadership role in addressing the provision of field space and coordination with the school district and leagues. The City should also search for additional land for sport fields, most likely as an element to a new community park serving residents of the southwestern portion of the City.

Other Active Outdoor Interests

In addition to acquiring and developing multi-purpose community parks or engaging the development community for the provision of neighborhood and pocket parks, new park amenities or facilities could be considered for development within existing parks or as components of future sites.

Spraygrounds: Spraygrounds are water play features that are very popular and provide a means of integrating aquatics into parks at a relatively low cost. Maple Valley should consider at least one sprayground in a community park or as component of the swim area/beach renovation to Lake Wilderness Park, as noted in the master plan, when the timing is right for implementation of that phase.

Skateboard/BMX Facilities: As currently planned in the Summit Park master plan, the City should install a new skatepark to replace the existing skatepark located next to the Community Center. It has been noted by skaters and staff from the GMVCC that the existing facility is less than desirable due to its location and poor visibility for surveillance. A future facility should be designed with the input of local skaters, and should be suitable for development in phases.

Off-Leash Dog Area: An off-leash dog area provides a location where residents can exercise dogs. A one- to two-acre site should be considered for future development of an off-leash dog area in a location away from natural resource areas. Ideally, a dog park would be a component to a larger community park, where infrastructure (parking, restrooms, garbage collection) exists and supports multiple activities. Also, areas under the powerline corridors could be explored for potential candidate sites. Maple Valley should look to partnership opportunities in the development of an off-leash area; communities throughout the Northwest have relied on grassroots or non-profit organizations for the on-going operations and maintenance of such facilities.

Community Gardens & Pea Patches: Gardening is a popular activity statewide,

with 58% of residents reporting participation. Community gardens provide common space for residents to grow fruits, vegetables and flowers. Gardens have been shown to increase healthy food consumption, while providing opportunities for active living, social interactions and lifelong learning. Community gardens are becoming more popular park amenities in urban environments, where residents may have limited outdoor space resulting from reduced lot sizes. Gardens are also popular with a diverse range of residents.

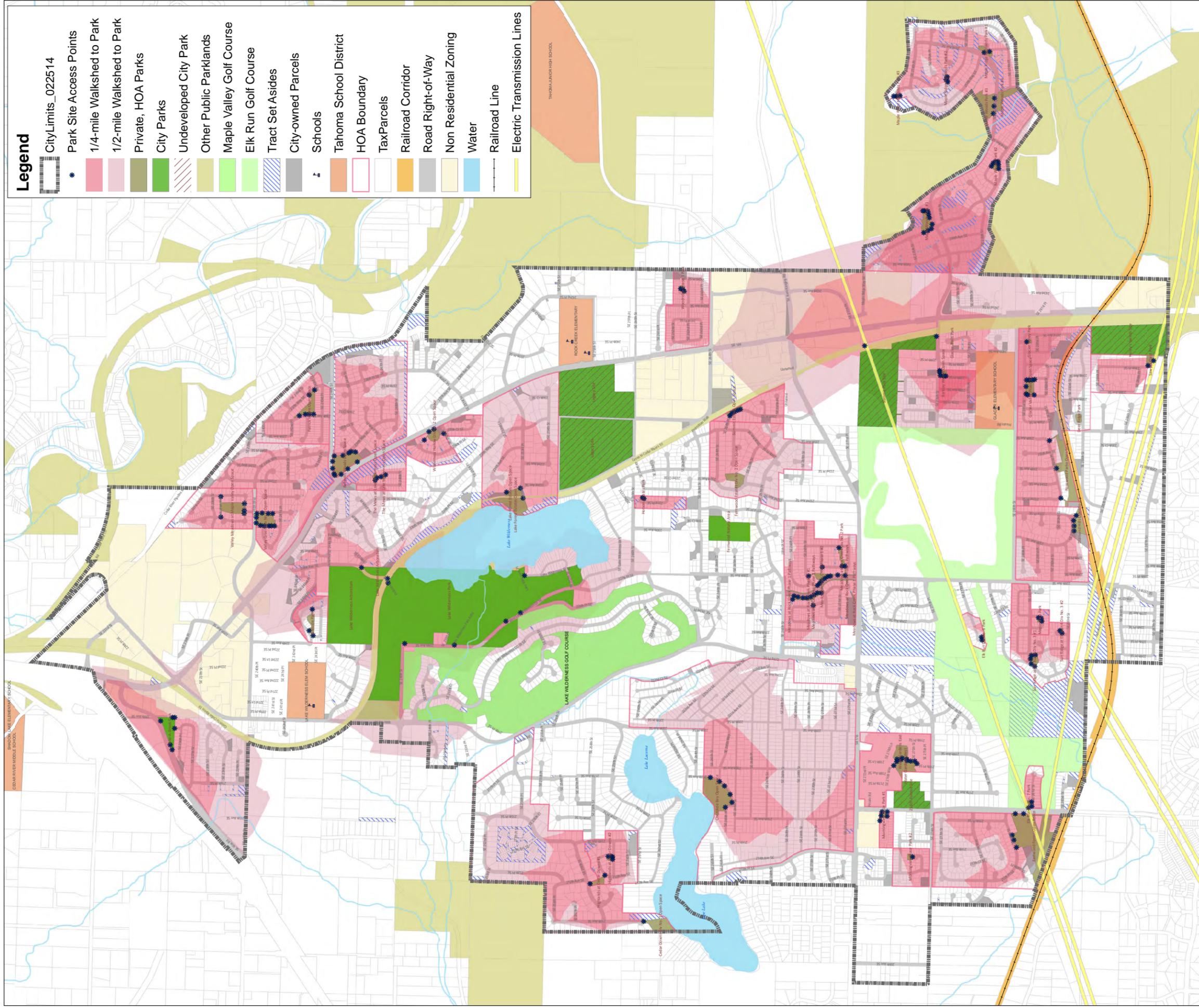
Trails & Neighborhood Greenways

Maple Valley is fortunate to have two major regional trails pass through or near the City. As more residents adopt active lifestyles, these trails offer an unparalleled recreation opportunity. Through continued coordination and discussions with King County, Covington and Black Diamond, the City should seek ways to facilitate the improvement to or expansion of the regional trail network via the proposed Tri-Cities Trail. Additionally, paving and upgrading the Lake Wilderness Trail will create a more prominent active transportation and recreational spine through the core of the community that is significantly more user friendly. This trail currently abuts four City-owned park properties, and future linkages from these sites to the trail will further improve the access to, and functionality of, the trail.

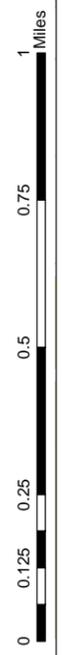
As with parklands, a gap analysis was conducted on the existing trail network. Walkshed were generated using known access points to trails, and Map 4 on page 61 illustrates those areas that have reasonable access to recreational trails.

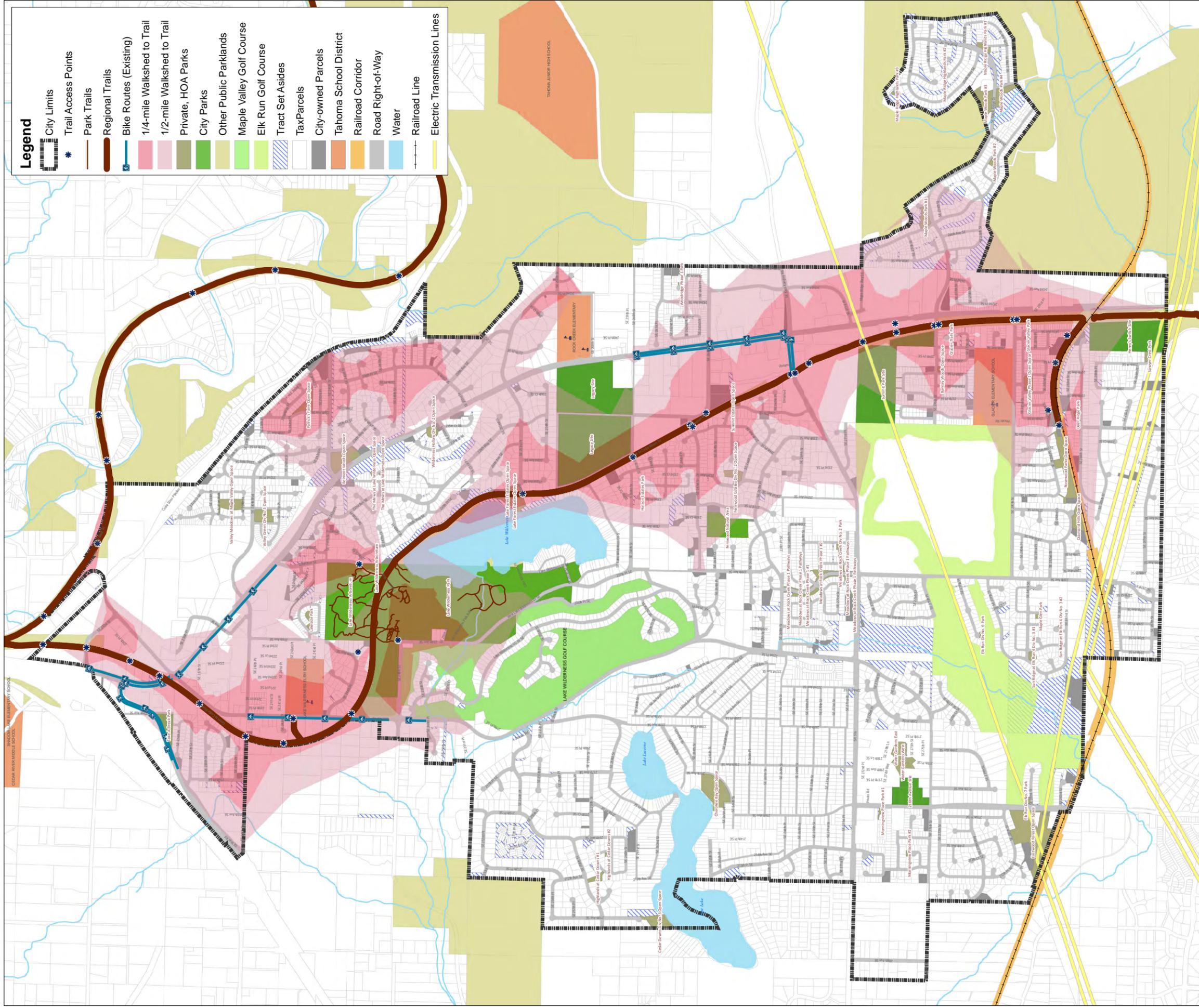
The on-street bike route in the City's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan supplements the recreational trail system by providing linkages and offering connections where off-street connections are presently unfeasible.

Additionally, neighborhood greenways are becoming an increasingly popular way to connect residents with neighborhood destinations like schools, parks and community centers.

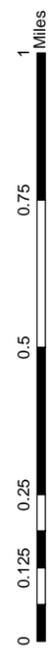


Maple Valley
Parks, Recreation, Cultural & Human Services Plan





Maple Valley
Parks, Recreation, Cultural & Human Services Plan



Neighborhood greenways make smart, strategic, cost-effective retrofits to the existing public rights-of-way to increase public access to Maple Valley's parks and greenspace assets. Low-volume streets are made more pedestrian and bicycle friendly through additional traffic calming measures. Wayfinding helps residents navigate to destinations, and landscaping provides contact to nearby nature.

In many ways, Maple Valley's neighborhoods are ideally suited to neighborhood greenways. The hierarchical street network leaves a great number of streets that have a very low volume of traffic. Additionally, smart local planning has left pedestrian and cyclist connections between subdivisions and adjacent schools or parks. This, coupled with the spine of Lake Wilderness Trail, has established the bones of an excellent, interconnected, all ages and abilities network for the entire city within relatively close proximity. A series of neighborhood greenways are proposed as shown on Map 6 on page 77. These routes primarily utilize low volume streets, but they also suggest the use of City-owned stormwater facilities or neighborhood parks as connections and throughways to provide efficient linkages and to activate these facilities.

Natural Areas & Stewardship

Maple Valley is fortunate to have secured several significant natural areas across the City, in addition to receiving Lake Wilderness Park with its extensive lakefront and shoreline. The greenway network includes wildlife habitat, creek corridors and vistas, which create unique connections as habitat for birds and other wildlife, as well as areas for special and/or endangered plant species to thrive. The network includes areas protected by the Critical Areas Protection Regulations, those under Native Growth Protection Easements, and incorporates privately-held subdivision open space tracts. While many of the City-managed sites do not currently accommodate formal, public access, many of these properties will serve as destinations or access points along future trail corridors.

In addition to protecting habitat and maintaining ecologic benefits (e.g., stormwater management

and air quality), the greenway system provides educational and stewardship opportunities and is the primary framework for off-street recreational trails. The greenway network provides access to nature for passive recreation (including opportunities for viewpoints and wildlife viewing areas), relaxation and serves as both intermediate and ultimate destinations within a future trail network. The installation and integration of interpretive signage that reflects Maple Valley's unique history, natural assets and wildlife populations may enable programmed or self-guided outdoor learning.

Water quality is also an important aspect to local stewardship. The health of Lake Wilderness' water is just as important as its stunning setting. In many water bodies, high levels of nitrogen - often from runoff flowing into lakes - have accelerated the growth of harmful algae. This affects the health of the lake and, in extreme instances, can limit the use of the lake for the community. The City should be a leader in integrated pest management and organic lawn care practices to limit the runoff of nitrogen into the lake, and could use these best practices to make other Maple Valley residents aware of their impacts on these receiving water bodies through the use of educational signage and by offering classes.

Future expansion of the City's greenway network should be focused toward locations that support the expansion of the trail network. In other locations, the City should continue to require the holding of critical areas as common areas or tracts, and, whenever possible, include public access easements or rights over those tracts to allow for future trail connections for public use.

Recreation Facilities & Programming

The City began offering recreation programs in 2003. Demand has been strong, and the number of programs has dramatically increased. The City has reached its limits in its ability to offer new programs due to facility and staffing limitations. The City has established partnerships with area service providers including the Tahoma Learning Community (TLC) and the Greater Maple Valley Community Center (GMVCC), as well

as other non-profit groups to provide as wide a range of programs and services as possible to the community.

As was described in the 2007 PRCHS Plan, the primary obstacle regarding the provision of recreation programming is the lack of centralized, indoor facility space. Programs and classes are offered wherever space can be found, which includes school gymnasiums, the Community Center and the Lake Wilderness Lodge.

Maple Valley's recreation services are a major community asset and support the physical, mental and social health of the community. The City currently offers a variety of programming, including fitness, sports, day camps, creative movement and a variety of other programs and special events for all ages. To continue to provide attractive, responsive and productive programs, the City should continue to:

- Enhance the diversity of programs offered, focusing on programs that are in high demand or serve a range of users
- Meet the needs of diverse users, including at-risk communities or those with special needs
- Improve the accessibility of programs, by holding classes and activities at locations throughout the community and maintaining affordable rates
- Monitor local and regional recreation trends to ensure community needs and interests are addressed by available programming

Given limited resources and the availability of recreational providers in the region, the City should continue to expand partnerships with the School District, GMVCC, private fitness clubs and the local businesses to provide recreation services. The City should also promote and coordinate recreational opportunities provided by its partners to help connect residents with options to learn and recreate.

However, to achieve these programming objectives, the City must secure additional indoor recreational space. The construction of a new, expanded community center to replace the facility that GMVCC is currently using has been a long discussed potential. Expanding indoor recreation space is a high priority because of the community's need for additional human services and flexible indoor recreational space. The City

should continue to explore the potential to site and finance an indoor facility and should consider conducting an indoor recreation feasibility study to explore the options of siting, sizing, programming needs and local partnerships; such an effort could help focus a community discussion about what could be included in a new facility, its projected costs and the community willingness to support such an endeavor.

Cultural Activities & Heritage

Community Events

The City of Maple Valley, along with community sponsors, host a number of significant community events each year. These family-friendly events attract residents to Lake Wilderness Park to experience the City's arts, culture and heritage, and provide unique opportunities to spend time with family, friends and neighbors. Combined, over 15,000 people attended events in 2013, which include the following:

Maple Valley Days: Maple Valley Days is an annual community festival held in Lake Wilderness Park. The event, which has been held for over 60 years, features food and vendor booths, a parade, carnival rides, and other activities. The event attracts between 10,000 and 15,000 visitors each year.

Music in the Park: The Music in the Park concert series consists of five live concerts held at Lake Wilderness Park's natural amphitheater setting. This popular concert series has become a favorite way for friends and families to spend warm summer evenings together.

Independence Day Family Picnic & Fireworks: The annual Independence Day Family Picnic, concert and fireworks display is Maple Valley's largest community event of the summer attracting over 2,500 residents to Lake Wilderness Park. There are activities for all ages including live music, food for purchase, classic picnic games and contests, interactive activities and the popular Homemade Pie Baking Contest.

Kids' Festival: The annual Kids' Festival attracts over 2,500 children and adults of all ages. The festival features free hands on activities and crafts, children's games, a bicycle challenge, interactive entertainment shows, food for purchase, inflatable toys, water activities and more.

Hooked on Fishing: This annual event celebrates the opening day of trout season and is held the last Saturday in April each year on Lake Wilderness. The event has been held for over 10 years and features overnight tent camping in Lake Wilderness Park, a fishing derby and breakfast.

Family Night: Concert & Movie Under the Stars: This late August event includes a outdoor concert and family-friendly movie, projected on a large inflatable screen. This event generally attracts 1,500 to 2,000 people.

Holiday Lights Celebration: The Holiday Lights Celebration at Lake Wilderness Lodge and Arboretum is the largest display of holiday lights in Maple Valley. Each year, over 1,000 residents and visitors come to experience the thousands of decorative lights, caroling and live music performances, children's crafts and pictures with Santa, and other activities.

These community events rely on the support of community businesses and organizations, which provide significant financial contributions. As the City grows, additional community events during the spring and summer and at other new community park locations could provide additional opportunities for residents to experience art, music and culture and connect with their community.

The Greater Maple Valley Community Center also hosts a variety of community events, including Family Night activities once a month and popular special events such as the Community Egg Hunt, Trick or Trucks, the Clothing Exchange. Many of these programs are currently operating through community sponsorships due to limited availability of City funding.

Arts

In 2013, the City of Maple Valley formed the Maple Valley Public Arts Commission to "provide leadership to foster cultural opportunities and arts education, improve the quality of life and enhance the aesthetic environment through public art, promote Maple Valley as a creative center for arts experiences, activities and commissions, and provide recommendations to the City Council on matters of the arts in the Maple Valley community." Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor, with confirmation by the City Council.

The Commission was created to support a variety of public art activities and goals on behalf of the City. In particular, the Commission will "support successful collaborations between the business community, service groups, arts organizations, schools, citizens and artists in regards to the selection, placement, maintenance, and enjoyment of public art". In service to this goal, the Commission is responsible for advising City Council on the planning, selection, acquisition, placement, and maintenance of a public art program. The Commission has been tasked with preparing and recommending a maintenance plan for the use of funds accumulated in the art conservation reserve account. As it enters its first full year of existence, the Commission will clarify short and long-term strategic priorities.

The Maple Valley Creative Arts Council, a local non-profit organization, is "dedicated to the promotion and appreciation of the arts in the Maple Valley community and schools as a source of inspiration and education to enhance the quality of life for everyone. The Arts Council's immediate goal is to cultivate stronger partnerships with schools, businesses and greater community, specific to youth and citizens in the areas of visual and performing arts." The Arts Council holds an annual Arts Festival during Maple Valley Days. The City of Maple Valley could pursue enhanced partnerships with the Creative Arts Council to expand residents' opportunities in the visual and performing arts.

History and Heritage

The Maple Valley Historical Society, is a non-profit and all volunteer organization. The goals of the organization are “to teach people about the history of the Greater Maple Valley area, provide a means for people to do research on their heritage, and to showcase the history of the area.” The Historical Society was formed over 35 years ago and now maintains three museums with displays of the past:

- The King County Landmarked original Maple Valley School, which houses the main photo collection of the Society; displays of the lives of early Maple Valley residents; displays on the history of the Tahoma School District; and the primary offices of the Society;
- The Gibbon-Mezzavilla General Store, which is the restored original store of the Greater Maple Valley area. The City of Maple Valley owns this site.
- The Fire Engine museum houses the restored 1926 Howard Cooper Fire Engine which was the original Fire Engine used by Fire District 43 Volunteers. In addition to the Howard Cooper, there are displays depicting the early years of the Fire District. The Fire Engine Museum property is also owned by the City of Maple Valley.

The Society also provides a History Treasure Box curriculum for third graders in the Tahoma School District; free public programs five times each year at various locations in the Greater Maple Valley area; and publishes periodicals and books about local history.

The Society has developed a great working relationship with the City of Maple Valley. Since the City’s incorporation in 1997, the City has strived to keep the area’s Historical roots in perspective while still growing and changing. The City’s vision statement specifically states that “maintaining historic connections with the area’s rural past” is necessary. To that end, the City has provided financial support for the ongoing utility costs and insurance for the Gibbon-Mezzavilla General Store and the Fire Engine museum that reside on their property.

The Historical Society has a need for additional display, storage and office areas to fulfill their mission of collecting, preserving, educating and promoting the history of the Greater Maple

Valley area. A 5,000 square foot or larger, two-story facility would provide adequate space for with separate storage, display and office areas. The Society particularly needs additional storage space for documents, books, artifacts, and large equipment, such as tractors, farm implements, black smith shop memorabilia, etc. Ideally a future site would be situated between the Gibbon-Mezzavilla General Store and Witte Road.

Human Services

There is growing demand for the GMVCC and its senior and youth services. According to comparative US Census data, the senior population within Maple Valley more than doubled between 2000 and 2010, indicating a growing need for senior services. The population of youth under 19 also grew substantially, by 53 percent, during this time period.

However, the GMVCC facility is too small to meet the scheduling demands for the range of programming needs across youth, family and senior groups. The facility does not include a gym, fitness or exercise equipment, sports courts or swimming pool, limiting recreational opportunities. The facility has inadequate electrical service to meet current needs for classes or gathering places with computer uses. The “Den” is too small to accommodate significant teen activities or events. The nearby skate park is poorly located and too small to generate positive user interactions and valued recreational activity.

In addition, the GMVCC is a non-profit organization that does not generate sufficient revenues to cover its operational services. Funding support from philanthropic sources and governmental agencies has been steadily declining and GMVCC has been operating at a deficit since 2008. The reduction in operating funds resulted in the elimination of three (3) FTE’s in 2013. As a result, Children and Family programs were recently temporarily suspended. Some limited programs and events have continued through community organization sponsorships, though these organizations may not be able to provide permanent operations support.



Standards & Levels of Service

A level of service (LOS) review was conducted in addition to and in support of the gap analysis as a means to understand the distribution of parkland acreage by classification and for a broader measure of how well the City is serving its residents with access to parks, trails and greenways. Service standards are the adopted guidelines or benchmarks the City is trying to attain with their parks system; the level of service is a snapshot in time of how well the City is meeting the adopted standards.

As noted in the inventory chapter, the City owns approximately 320 acres of parks and greenways. An addition 198 acres of private parks and open space tracts also exists within Maple Valley. Also as noted in the inventory chapter, this Plan proposes a consolidation of service standards for the different parkland categories. Using the standards from the 2007 PRCHS Plan, the following table shows how the acreage-based standards would translate to the proposed classifications, without changing the previously adopted standards.

Figure 20. Existing Standards by Classification

Prior Classification	Service Standard	Proposed Classification	Service Standard
Neighborhood	3.3 acres/1,000	Neighborhood & Pocket	3.3 acres/1,000
Community	3.99 acres/1,000	Community	12.97 acres/1,000
Regional	8.98 acres/1,000		
Special Use Areas	10.21 acres/1,000	Special Facilities	10.21 acres/1,000
Linear Parks	3.32 acres/1,000	Greenways & Natural Areas	11.39 acres/1,000
Natural Open Space Areas	8.07 acres/1,000		
	37.87		37.87

Figure 21 shows the existing, adopted standards for recreation facilities - trails and sport fields. A current deficit of 14 fields and 15 miles of trails exist based on the existing standards.

Figure 21. Recreational Facility Standards

Facility Classification	Service Standard
Baseball Fields	1 per 3000 - 5000 pop.
Softball Fields	1 per 2500 - 5000 pop.
Soccer Fields	1 per 2500 - 5000 pop.
Pathways & Trails	0.97 miles/1000 pop

Using the service standards from the previously adopted plan, Figure 22 illustrates the current level of service for different parklands, along with current surpluses or deficits to those existing service standards. It should be noted that the table includes all parkland acreage, both developed and undeveloped properties, plus the Lake Wilderness Golf Course.

Figure 22. Current Levels of Service at Existing Standards (City lands)

Type	Existing Standard	Current Inventory*	Current Level of Service	Current (2013) Surplus / (Deficit)
Community	12.97 ac/000	113.35	4.74 ac/000	(196.76)
Neighborhood & Pocket	3.3 ac/000	1.92	2.01 ac/000	(76.98)
Special Facilities	10.21 ac/000	131.46	11.57 ac/000	(112.66)
Greenways & Natural Areas	11.39 ac/000	77.04	9.56 ac/000	(195.29)
	15.48 ac/000	323.77		(581.7)

* NOTE: Current Inventory column includes currently undeveloped sites (City owned only)

At approximately 323 acres, the current, overall level of service for the City of Maple Valley is 13.5 acres per 1,000 people, which is far below the adopted standard of 37.9 acres per 1,000 from the previous plan. Based on today's inventory and existing standards, a deficit of 582 acres exists today when looking solely at City-owned land.

Even with the inclusion of privately-held parks and open space tracts and the Elk Run Golf Course, the City has a combined acreage deficit of nearly 240 acres - most of which is within the community park classification (now shown as the combination of 'community' and 'regional' categories from the previous plan).

Figure 23. Current Levels of Service at Existing Standards (All lands)

Type	Existing Standard	Current Inventory*	Current Level of Service	Current (2013) Surplus / (Deficit)
Community	12.97 ac/000	113.35	4.74 ac/000	(196.76)
Neighborhood & Pocket	3.3 ac/000	53.14	2.01 ac/000	(25.76)
Special Facilities	10.21 ac/000	276.69	11.57 ac/000	32.57
Greenways & Natural Areas	11.39 ac/000	221.94	9.56 ac/000	(50.39)
	15.48 ac/000	665.12		(240.4)

* NOTE: Current Inventory column includes currently undeveloped sites and private parklands

The use of numeric standards is a limited tool to assess how well the City is delivering park and recreation services, since the numeric values

alone neglect any recognition for the quality of the facilities or their distribution (i.e., the ease to which residents have reasonable, proximate access

to park sites).

While public ownership of a broad range of recreation lands is crucial to the well-being of the city, the simple use of an overall acreage standard does not match with the citizen input received during this planning process. Residents were particularly interested in the availability of trails and active use parks (community parks) within a reasonable distance from their homes. To more appropriately measure and target toward that desire, the service standards, and the resulting service snapshot, were re-evaluated and re-aligned during the development of this Plan.

One consideration is the future, planned use of Summit Park. At the present, the City owns this approximately 24-acre site and intends to build a community park with sport fields. Ongoing discussions with the Tahoma School District may alter the future of this site in terms of its layout and potential recreational amenities.

Another pending consideration is that of the future of the Legacy site. This 50-acre wooded property may be the site of a future city hall or civic campus, in addition to providing community park elements and retained forested open space.

Following a review of the existing inventory along with potential development projects (i.e., Summit Park and Legacy site) and potential parkland acquisitions or private development, the projected park deficit for both community and neighborhood park classifications remains high. Therefore, this Plan proposes to reduce both standards to better align with existing and potential parkland resources. The proposed standard for community parks is reduced to 6 acres per 1,000 from 12.97 acres per 1,000 people. The proposed neighborhood park standard is

reduced to 2.5 acres per 1,000 from 3.3 acres per 1,000 people.

This Plan also proposes the elimination of numeric standards for greenways and special facilities. While numerical planning standards are common for helping to determine a desirable number of neighborhood parks per thousand residents, they do not translate easily to greenways because of the uniqueness of the land base itself. Additionally, the City has provided strong leadership in requiring developers to set aside tracts of land through its critical areas regulations. At the present, approximately 151 acres of protected lands have been set aside as privately held open space tracts via the platting and land development process. The inclusion of future, protected critical areas and creek corridors as part of the broader greenway network further clouds the relevance of a numeric standard for greenways or natural areas. While it is still important for the City to protect sensitive lands to set them aside as part of a greenway system, priority should be focused toward either the acquisition of or negotiation for additional, adjacent greenway lands to ensure sufficient property is available to accommodate trail connections and habitat linkages.

This Plan proposes the elimination of the special facilities standard, since these parklands are by definition special and unique in what they are, where they are and what they offer. A numeric standard for such lands does not reflect either the existing special use resource or the potential to secure or develop future special facilities; these park types are opportunity driven.

The following table illustrates the affect to levels of service based on the proposed, revised standards.

Figure 24. Proposed Standards & Levels of Service by Park Type

Type	Proposed Standard	Inventory *	Projected Additions	Projected (2025) Surplus / (Deficit)
Community	6 ac/000	113.35	25	(21.85)
Neighborhood & Pocket	2.5 ac/000	53.14	10	(3.61)
Special Facilities	--- ac/000	276.69		---
Greenways & Natural Areas	--- ac/000	221.94		---
	8.5 ac/000	665.12		(25.5)

As with greenways, numeric standards for trails are not an optimal guideline. The greater intent of a trail network is more related to community connectivity and access, rather than a per capita distance measurement. The previous plan established a mileage standard on 0.97 miles per 1,000 people for trails, which as noted above results in a current deficit of 15 miles of trails and a projected (2025) deficit of 18 miles per 1,000.

As noted in the Goals chapter, the provision of trails should be toward maximal connectivity from the core community trails (i.e., Lake Wilderness Trail spine) to neighborhood greenways, downtown and other community destinations. The use of policies and objectives is more appropriate for the expansion of the trails network with a focus on connectivity, than the use of a per capita distance metric. Therefore, this Plan proposes the elimination of the trail facility mileage standard. To be clear, the proposed elimination of a mileage-based standard for trails does not diminish or reduce the importance of or value in continuing to expand and grow the trails network; this proposed adjustment is merely to re-orient the City’s efforts toward a policy-based approach to trail connectivity.

Regarding sport fields, these standards were re-assessed during the preparation of the Parks and Recreation element of the Comprehensive Plan in 2008. Based on community feedback and the fact that no changes to the sport field inventory have occurred since 2008, this Plan recommends retaining the existing standards for the three sport field categories. The pending development of synthetic turf fields at Ravensdale Park will greatly improve field availability for local teams.

Figure 25. Projected Levels of Service by Field Type

Type	Existing Standard	Current Inventory	Current (2013) Surplus / (Deficit)	Future (2025) Surplus / (Deficit)
Baseball Fields	1 fields/5000 people	0	(5)	(6)
Softball Fields	1 fields/5000 people	1 field	(4)	(5)
Soccer Fields	1 fields/5000 people	0	(5)	(6)

The proposed capital projects noted in the next chapter ameliorate some of the projected acreage needs and aims to improve service levels toward the future satisfaction of the proposed, revised standards.



6 CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN

The following Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) lists all park and facility projects considered for the next six years. The majority of these projects entail the acquisition and development of community parks and sport fields, renovating or repairing existing facilities and expanding trail connections. The following table summarizes the aggregate capital estimates by park types for the next six years.

Figure 26. Capital Facilities Plan Expenditures Summary

Park Type	Acquisition	Development	Renovation	Sum
Park	\$ 3,540,000	\$ 10,975,000	\$ 970,000	\$ 15,485,000
Greenway			\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000
Trail		\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
Special Facility		\$ 60,000		\$ 60,000
TOTAL	\$ 3,540,000	\$ 11,095,000	\$ 999,000	\$ 15,634,000

The following CFP project list provides brief project descriptions and priority ranking to assist staff in preparing future capital budget requests.

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**Maple Valley PRCHS Plan
6-Year Capital Facilities Plan
2014-2019**

Park Type	Park Site	Project Description	Activity	Priority	Funding	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020+	Sum	
Community	Lake Wilderness Park	Replace existing dock	R	1	GF, REET	\$ 525,000							\$ 525,000	
		Signage & wayfinding	D	3	GF, REET				\$ 20,000					\$ 20,000
		Play Equipment upgrade	R	2	GF, REET				\$ 60,000					\$ 60,000
		Additional parking	D	1	PIF, REET, Gr, TBD	\$ 300,000								\$ 300,000
		Beach house remodel	R	1	PIF, REET, TBD		\$ 250,000							\$ 250,000
		Swim beach phase	D	2	PIF, REET, Gr, TBD				\$ 2,000,000					\$ 2,000,000
		Lodge repairs	R	2	REET, GF	\$ 50,000				\$ 50,000				
Community	Summit Park	Site Design	D	1	PIF, REET		\$ 125,000						\$ 125,000	
	Summit Park	Park construction	D	1	PIF, REET, Gr, TBD			\$ 8,500,000					\$ 8,500,000	
Greenway	Fernwood Natural Area	Vegetation management plan, Improve trails wetland stewardship; Restoration plantings	R	2	GF		\$ 20,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,000			\$ 29,000	
		Shelter/overlook & environmental interpretive panels	D	3	PIF, REET, Gr					\$ 15,000				\$ 15,000
Neighborhood	216th Avenue Park	Site evaluation/assessment	D	2	GF		\$ 5,000						\$ 5,000	
	216th Avenue Park	Park master plan concept	D	3	PIF, REET			\$ 10,000					\$ 10,000	
Renovation	Systemwide	Repair, Renovation & ADA Compliance audits and upgrades	R	2	GF		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000		\$ 35,000	
Trail	Develop Neighborhood Greenway Plan	Develop a final neighborhood greenways plan with a prioritized implementation tool kit	D	2	REET, GF		\$ 20,000						\$ 20,000	
	Implement N'hood Greenway Improvements	Install signage, wayfinding and traffic calming as recommended in the neighborhood greenways plan	D	2	REET, GF, Gr		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 30,000	
Trail	Lake Wilderness Trail Access improvements	Create LWT Access improvements at SE 260th street adjacent to the legacy site	D	3	PIF, REET, Gr						\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000	
Community	Community Park Acquisition	Acquire 20-40 acres (Gap Area #4)	A	1	PIF, TBD, Gr		\$ 3,500,000						\$ 3,500,000	
Neighborhood	Neighborhood Park Evaluation	Assess gap opportunities for either purchasing property or converting existing stormwater properties to parks	A	3	PIF, Gr		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000			\$ 40,000	
Special Facility	Indoor Recreation Center Study	Feasibility study	D	2	GF, REET		\$ 60,000						\$ 60,000	
						\$ 875,000	\$ 4,005,000	\$ 8,540,000	\$ 2,153,000	\$ 36,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 15,634,000	

Code Funding Source

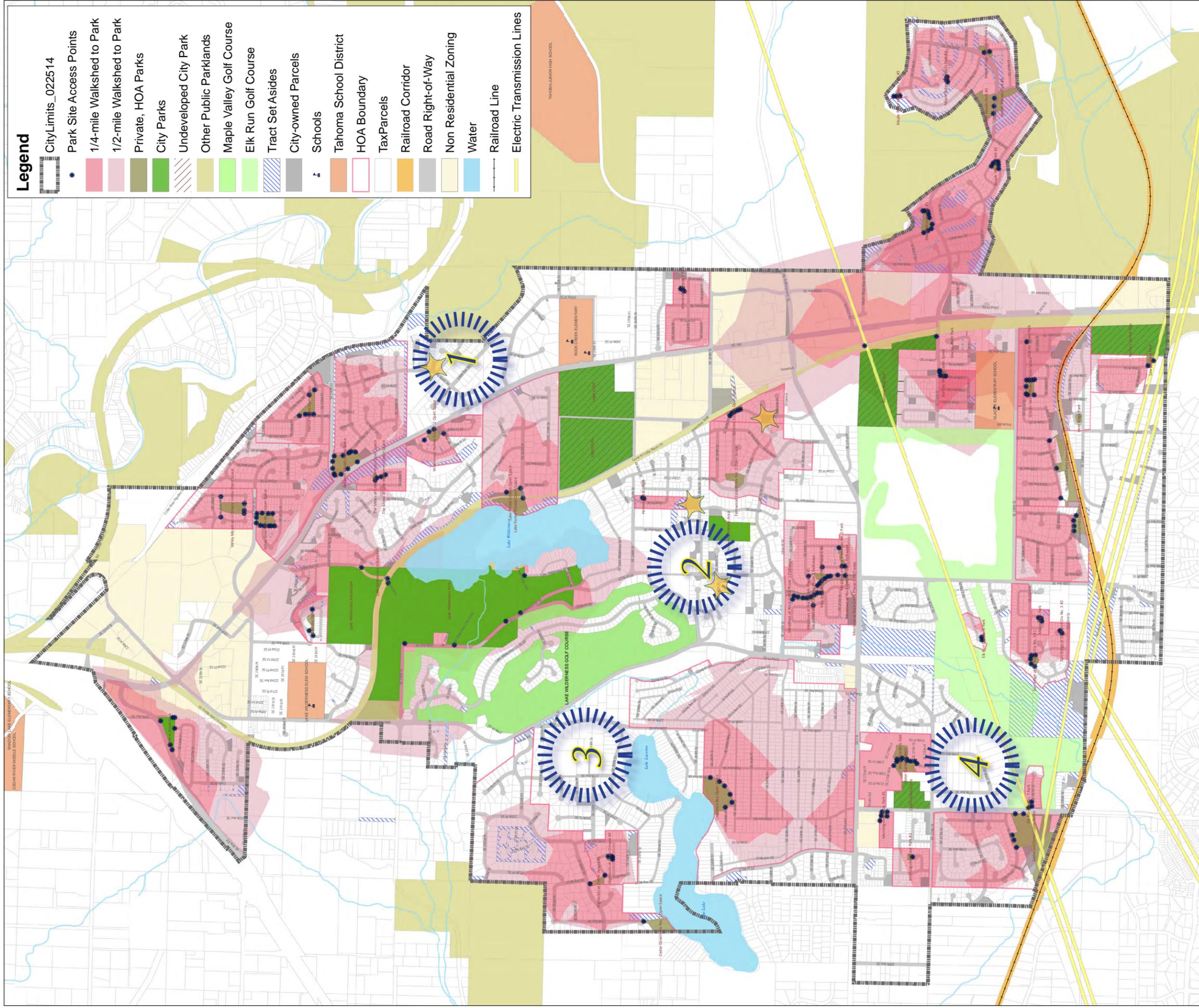
- PIF Park Impact Fees
- REET Real Estate Excise Tax
- Priv Private funds; Dedications; Donations
- Gr Grants
- GF General Fund / Local Share
- TBD To Be Determined: Other funding sources needed for replacement, rehabilitation and general maintenance

Code Activity

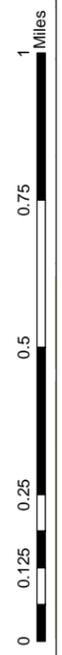
- A Acquisition
- D Development
- R Renovation / Repair

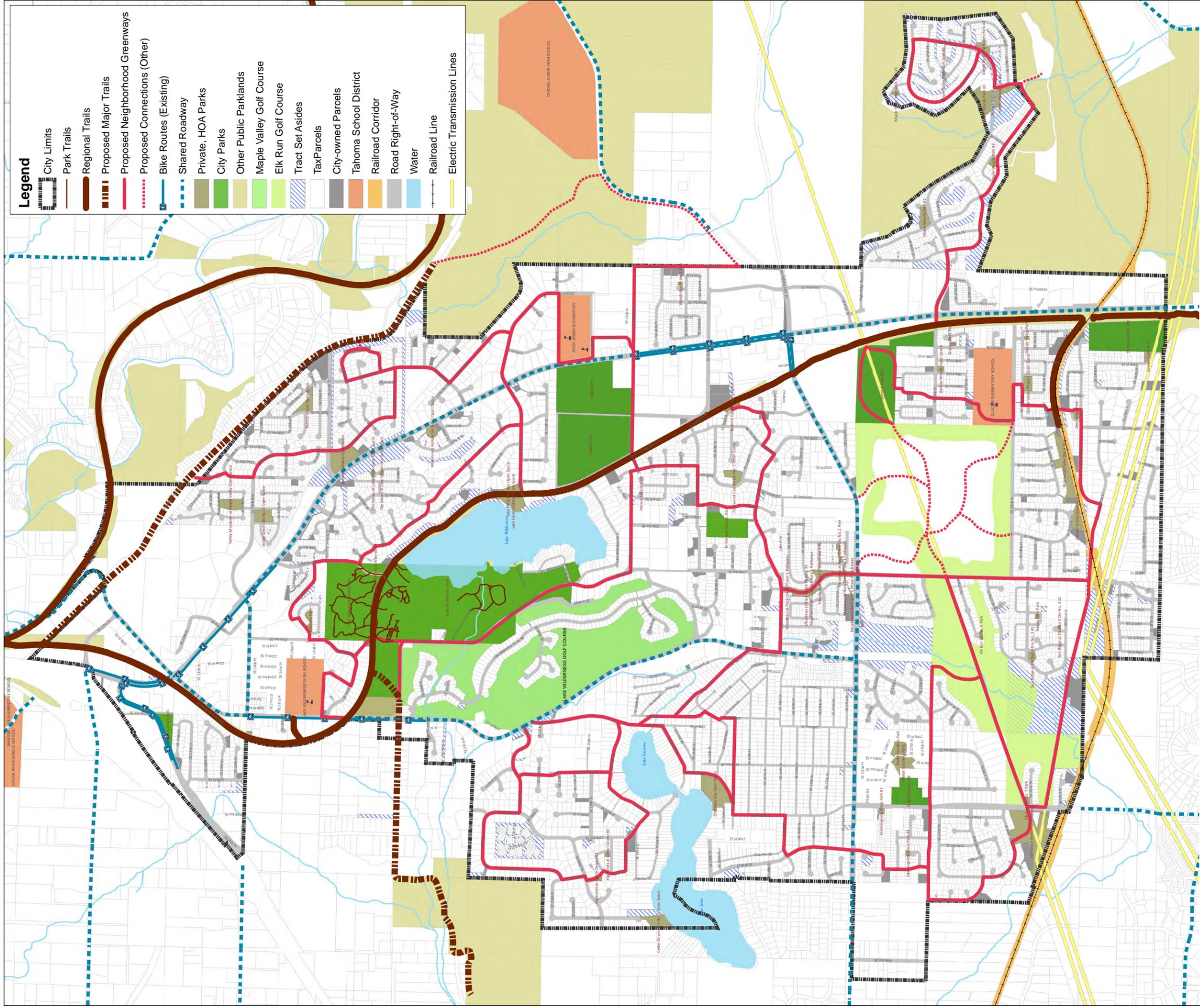
Code Priority

- 1 High Priority
- 2
- 3

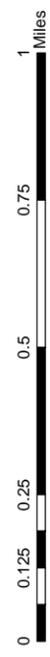


Maple Valley
Parks, Recreation, Cultural & Human Services Plan





Maple Valley
Parks, Recreation, Cultural & Human Services Plan



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7 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Implementation in Context

A number of strategies exist to improve park and recreation service delivery in Maple Valley; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. A strong community will is necessary to bring many of the projects listed in this Plan to life. The following considerations are presented to offer near-term direction on implementation and as a means to continue dialogue between the City, its residents and its partners.

Given that the operating and capital budgets for the Department are limited, the implementation measures identified below look primarily to non-General Fund options. Additionally, a review of likely funding options is attached as Appendix E and includes local financing, federal and state grant and conservation programs, acquisition methods and others.

Volunteer & Community-Based Action

The public process for this Plan has demonstrated that residents want to be involved in improving the City's park system and want to have their energies guided through coordination with the Department. Community sponsored park clean-ups, beautification and planting projects, and park patrols should be considered to engage citizens and create a stronger sense of community pride and ownership in park facilities. The parks program can benefit from on-going coordination and involvement from the Maple Valley Rotary, local scout troops and other area service and civic groups. The City should also prepare a revolving list of potential small works or volunteer-appropriate projects to post on its website, while also reaching out to the high school to encourage student projects.

Partner Coordination & Collaboration

Specific projects and goals identified in this Plan demand a high degree of coordination and collaboration with other city divisions and outside agencies. Internal coordination with the Public Works and Community Development departments can increase the potential toward the implementation of the proposed trail and neighborhood greenways network, which will rely on ensuring connectivity within and to adjoining subdivisions. Coordination with the Community Development Department will be crucial in reviewing development applications with consideration toward potential parkland acquisition areas and for easement or set-aside requests. Coordination with the Public Works Department also is necessary to explore the potential of repurposing certain stormwater facilities to serve a secondary role as recreational areas. However, to more fully extend the extent of the park system and recreation programs, additional partnerships and collaborations should be sought.

The City should discuss the terms of and prepare an interlocal agreement with the Tahoma School District to formalize the use of District gymnasiums and other facilities for recreation programs and classes. Additionally, an interlocal agreement should address and detail the roles and responsibilities for the development, maintenance and use priorities regarding the development of the Summit Park site.

Maple Valley should explore partnership opportunities with regional health care providers and services, such as MultiCare, Valley Medical and the King County Health Department, to promote wellness activities, healthy living and communications about the benefits of parks and recreation. For example, this group could more directly cross-market services and help expand resident understanding of local wellness options, and they could sponsor a series of organized trail walks throughout Maple Valley as a means to expand public awareness of local trail opportunities and encourage residents to stay fit.

The City should continue to facilitate discussions with local youth leagues and staff from King County, Covington and Black Diamond and the Tahoma School District for the purposes of sport field planning and financing a multi-field complex. A complex of four fields or more could provide field rental revenue, as well as additional tourism revenue, from leagues or sport clubs interested in hosting tournaments.

The City should reach out to the property owners of certain private open space tracts that were set aside through the land development process for the potential to utilize some of these lands for trail or neighborhood greenway linkages.

Local Funding

Although a variety of approaches exist to support individual projects or programs, the broader assessment of community needs suggests that additional, dedicated funding may be required to finance upgrades to and growth in the parks system. In 2013, City Council committed to pursuing a capital bond to primarily support the development of Summit Park. Depending on the outcome of the negotiations with the Tahoma School District regarding the future development of that site, City Council will need to reassess the scope of a bond and strategize for the implementation of parks and recreation related civic infrastructure.

Also, a levy or levy lid lift could be used to fund ongoing operating expenses, expand recreation program offerings and/or offset the maintenance deficit created by the transfer of the Lake Wilderness Park and Lodge from King County. A levy could be structured to maximize voter support to include additional park development, trail development, waterfront improvements at Lake Wilderness and general park amenity upgrades. This will require additional effort by the Parks and Recreation Commission to compile a specific funding package, along with an assessment of potential revenue, political willingness and potential voter support. Based on the 2014 Budget, the City has ample debt capacity available to it to finance these improvements.



Park Impact Fees

Park Impact Fees (PIF) are imposed on new development to meet the increased demand for parks resulting from the new growth. PIF can only be used for parkland acquisition, planning, and/or development. They cannot be used for operations, maintenance or repairs of parks and facilities. The City of Maple Valley currently assesses impact fees, but the City should review its PIF ordinance and update the methodology and rate structure as appropriate to be best positioned to obtain future acquisition and development financing from renewed residential development. Once revised, the methodology and rates should be forwarded to City Council for review and approval. The City should prioritize the usage of PIF to secure additional community parkland and consider the potential to match PIF with a councilmanic or voter-approved bond to have the requisite capital to purchase key properties and develop new community park amenities.

Grants

Several state and federal grant programs are available on a competitive basis, including WWRP, ALEA, USDA, SAFETEA-LU. Pursuing grants is not a panacea for park system funding, since grants are both competitive and often require a significant percentage of local funds to match the request to the granting agency, which depending on the grant program can be as much as 50% of the total project budget. Maple Valley should continue to leverage its local resources to the greatest extent by pursuing grants independently and in cooperation with other local partners.

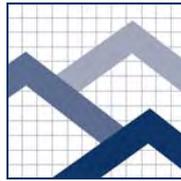
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Appendix B: Community Survey Summary



MAPLE VALLEY PARKS & RECREATION

**Community Survey:
Performance and Priorities**

December 2013



ELWAY RESEARCH, INC.



MAPLE VALLEY PARKS & RECREATION
**Community Survey:
Performance and Priorities**

December 2013

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MAPLE VALLEY PARKS & RECREATION

Community Survey: Performance and Priorities

December 2013

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of a telephone survey conducted on behalf of the City of Maple Valley Parks and Recreation Department. The survey was conducted to inform the process to update Maple Valley's Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan Update.

The survey was conducted by telephone and on-line. A total of 481 adult (18+) residents of Maple Valley were interviewed between December 7-17, 2013: 253 via telephone and 228 on-line. The questionnaire was the same for both modes.

Survey respondents were asked about:

- Their use of city parks and recreation behavior;
- The current quality and quantity of recreational opportunities in Maple Valley;
- Priorities for expanded recreational opportunities; and
- Willingness to support public funding of expanded recreational opportunities.

Demographic information was also collected so as to compare and contrast answers.

The survey was administered by Elway Research, Inc. The questionnaire was designed in collaboration with Conservation Technix, Inc., and staff of the Parks and Recreation Department.

The report includes Key Findings, followed by annotated graphs summarizing the results of each question. The full questionnaire and a complete set of cross-tabulation tables are presented in the appendix.

METHODS

SAMPLE:	481 residents of Maple Valley.
FIELD DATES:	December 7-17, 2013
TECHNIQUE:	Mixed mode: 253 adults were interviewed via live-interviewer telephone survey; 228 residents completed the same questionnaire on-line.
DATA COLLECTION:	<p>Calls for the telephone survey were made during weekday evenings and weekend days. Trained, professional interviewers under supervision conducted all interviews. Up to 8 attempts were made to contact someone at each telephone number. Questionnaires were edited for completeness, and a percentage of each interviewer's calls were re-called for verification.</p> <p>Households for which no telephone number was available were mailed a letter from the mayor asking a designated adult in the household to take the survey on line.</p> <p>Virtually every household in the city was either called or received a letter invitation to participate.</p>
MARGIN OF ERROR:	$\pm 4.5\%$ at the 95% confidence interval. That is, in theory, had all households been interviewed, there is a 95% chance the results would be within $\pm 4.5\%$ of the results in this survey.

It must be kept in mind that survey research cannot predict the future. Although great care and the most rigorous methods available were employed in the design, execution and analysis of this survey, these results can be interpreted only as representing the answers given by these respondents to these questions at the time they were interviewed.

Mixed-Mode Survey Method

This survey was conducted using a mixed-mode sample design that combined telephone and on-line data collection.

The most recent census data indicates 7679 households in the City of Maple Valley. We obtained contact information for 6980 households, including 4688 telephone numbers and 2292 addresses but no telephone numbers.

All 4688 telephone numbers were called up to 8 times or until someone answered and either agreed or refused to be interviewed. Some 439 numbers were determined to be not a working residential line, leaving a total of 4249 available numbers. We placed a total of 16,562 calls and reached 1070 qualified contacts.

The 2292 households for which we had no telephone number were mailed a letter from the city manager asking a designated adult¹ in the household to log on to our survey website and complete the questionnaire on-line. Each household was sent a thank you/reminder post card one week after the initial mailing.

The telephone survey resulted in 253 interviews, for a *completion rate*² of 6%, and a *cooperation rate*³ of 24%.

The on-line survey resulted in 228 completed questionnaires for a completion rate of 10%.

The data from both modes were combined into a single data set. The only significant difference in this survey was that the on-line sample was younger than the telephone sample. The combined data were statistically weighted by age and gender to align the sample with the most recent census data.

Research literature indicates that telephone respondents tend to give more positive responses than on-line respondents, particularly to rating scale items where on-line respondents are typically less likely to give the highest rating than are telephone respondents. In this survey, web respondents gave somewhat lower grades for quality and upkeep of parks in the city, were less likely to have an opinion about future needs, and were generally less likely to have an opinion about supporting higher taxes to expand facilities.

Because of this mode differential, it is often argued that the inclusion of an on-line survey in addition to the telephone sample produces a more representative result than either a telephone or web sample alone would have produced.

¹ Instructions were that the survey be completed by the adult (18+) in the household with the most recent birthday. This is a common practice to randomize respondents.

² The *completion rate* is the percentage of completed interviews by the total number of telephone numbers dialed. It includes non-working numbers and numbers where no one answered the call.

³ The *cooperation rate* is the percentage of completed interviews by the number of qualified respondents contacted.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

In interpreting these findings, it is important to keep in mind the characteristics of the people actually interviewed. This table presents a profile of the 481 respondents in the survey, by survey mode. The column “Raw Total” is the combined total of the on-line + phone survey.

“Pop. Est.” is the population estimate from the 2010 census. The combined survey data were statistically adjusted to more closely match the population estimates. The shaded column “Adj. Sample” displays the adjusted sample, which was used for the analysis in this report.

Note: Here and throughout this report, percentages may not add to 100%, due to rounding.

Comparison of Sample Profiles By Survey Mode

		PHONE	ON-LINE	RAW TOTAL	POP. EST.	ADJ. SAMPLE
AGE	18-35	7%	23%	14%	28%	26%
	36-50	43%	50%	47%	40%	42%
	51-64	23%	19%	21%	22%	22%
	65+	24%	8%	16%	10%	10%
	No Answer	3%				
GENDER	Male	42%	41%	42%	48%	48%
	Female	58%	59%	58%	52%	52%
HOUSEHOLD	Couple with children	48%	55%	51%	48%	54%
	Couple with no children	32%	28%	30%	28%	29%
	Single with children	4%	6%	5%	9%	5%
	Single with no children	15%	12%	12%	15%	12%
	No Answer	1%				1%

In addition to the demographic questions, respondents were asked about their recreation behavior and visits to Maple Valley Parks. As the graphs on the following page indicate, Maple Valley residents are fairly active recreationists and city park users.

- 91% of the households reported participating in at least one of the seven recreation activities listed in the survey. At least 37% reported that some household member participated in each activity listed.
- 98% reported visiting at least one of eight city facilities in the last year. The average number of facilities visited was five and the average number of visits in the last year was twelve. Almost 2/3 of respondents made nine or more visits to a city facility last year.

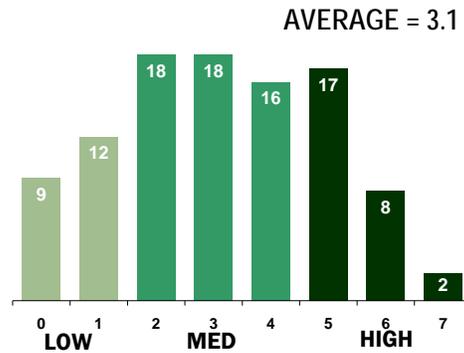
As would be expected, recreation behavior and park usage was related to opinions about park performance and priorities. Indices were constructed out of these variables and used to analyze the survey findings. These are displayed on the following page.

RECREATION AND PARK VISITS

Recreation Activities

Participation in recreation activities offered by 7 different organizations. Number of activities participated in by someone in the household.

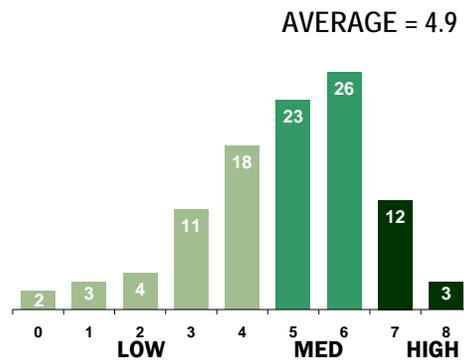
- Number of activities was collapsed into an index of:
 - Low (0-1 activities) 21% of sample;
 - Medium (2-4) 52%;
 - High (5-7) 27%.



Number of City Parks Visited

Number of parks visited in the last year.

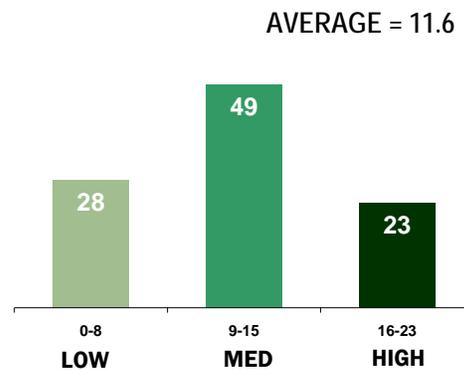
- Total number of parks visited was collapsed into an index of:
 - Low (0-4 parks) 37% of sample;
 - Medium (5-6) 49%;
 - High (7-8) 14%.



Number of Visits to a City Park

Total number of visits to any city park.

- The total number of visits to a city park was collapsed into an index of:
 - Low (0-8 visits) 28% of sample;
 - Medium (9-15) 49%;
 - High (16+) 23%.



KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ **Parks seen as “essential” to quality of life.**
 - 7 in 10 respondents said that parks and recreation are “essential to the quality of life” in Maple Valley
- ◆ **Respondents were evenly divided over whether Maple Valley has “not enough parks and recreation programs” to “meet the needs of the community” (46%) or “about the right number” (45%).**
- ◆ **Maple Valley Parks got a “B-” grade for overall quality, while maintenance and upkeep received a “B”.**
 - 71% graded quality “A” or “B”
 - 79% graded maintenance and upkeep “A” or “B”
- ◆ **Respondents were active users of parks and recreation facilities**
 - 91% lived in a household in which at least one member participated in recreation activities offered by local organizations.
 - 61% participated in at least 3 such activities.
- ◆ **Respondents visited 5 parks last year on average and averaged 12 visits per year to local parks.**
- ◆ **Sports facilities topped the wish list for expanded recreational opportunities.**
 - Fields for baseball (17%), soccer or football (14%) and indoor basketball courts (12%) were 3 of the top 4 facilities named in an open-ended question.
- ◆ **Plurality thought that the city used taxpayer money wisely on parks and recreation.**
 - 4 in 10 said their money was used wisely; 1 in 4 said unwisely and 1 in 3 had no opinion.
 - People who used the parks more regularly were slightly more likely to be satisfied with the expenditures than those who used them less frequently.
 - Those who rated parks essential were less likely to be satisfied (37%) than those who said something less than essential (49%).



- ◆ **Respondents were generally divided over whether Maple Valley needs more recreation activities**
 - For 8 of 9 activities listed, more people said Maple Valley had “about the right amount” than said the city “needs more” - although the margins were often close.

- ◆ **Highest priority was on maintaining existing parks and protecting open space, with moderate support for expansion**
 - 6+ in 10 put a high priority on maintaining parks and protecting spaces
 - 4 in 10 prioritized expansion projects, like new parks or a community center
 - 1 in 3 prioritized ambitious projects, like acquiring land or expanding trails

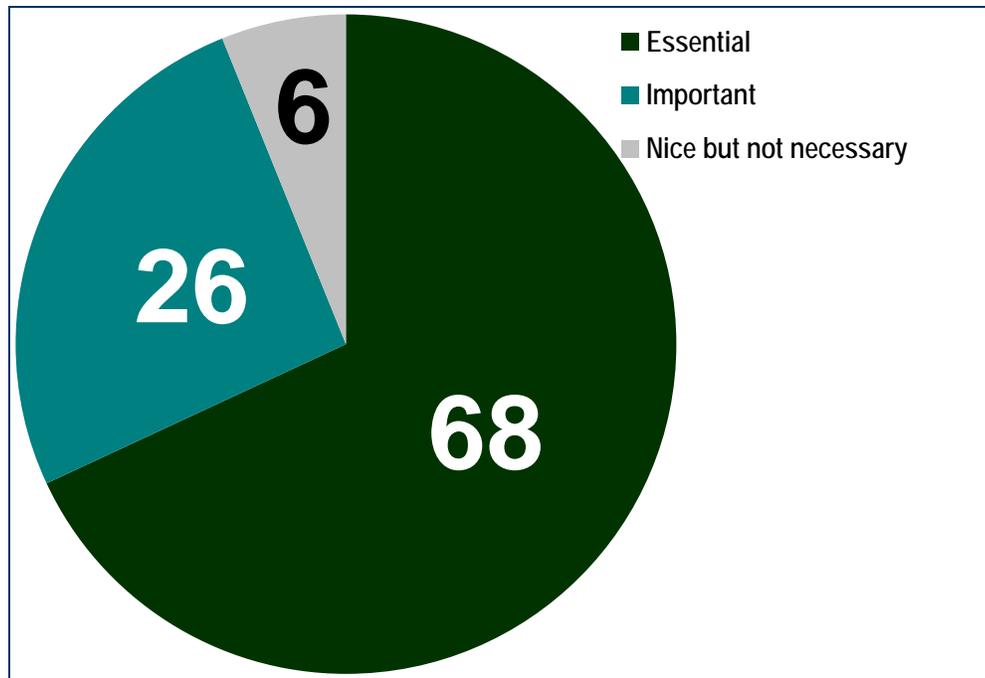
- ◆ **Yet, given a choice between raising taxes to develop a facility in Maple Valley vs. not having such a facility in the city, majorities supported more taxes for 3 of 5 facilities tested:**
 - An active use parks that include playgrounds, sport courts & fields (59%);
 - Trails and safe routes to parks (56%);
 - A community center with aquatics and fitness facilities (52%).



FINDINGS

Major findings are presented in the following section in the form of annotated graphs and bullets. The full results are appended in detailed cross-tabulations.

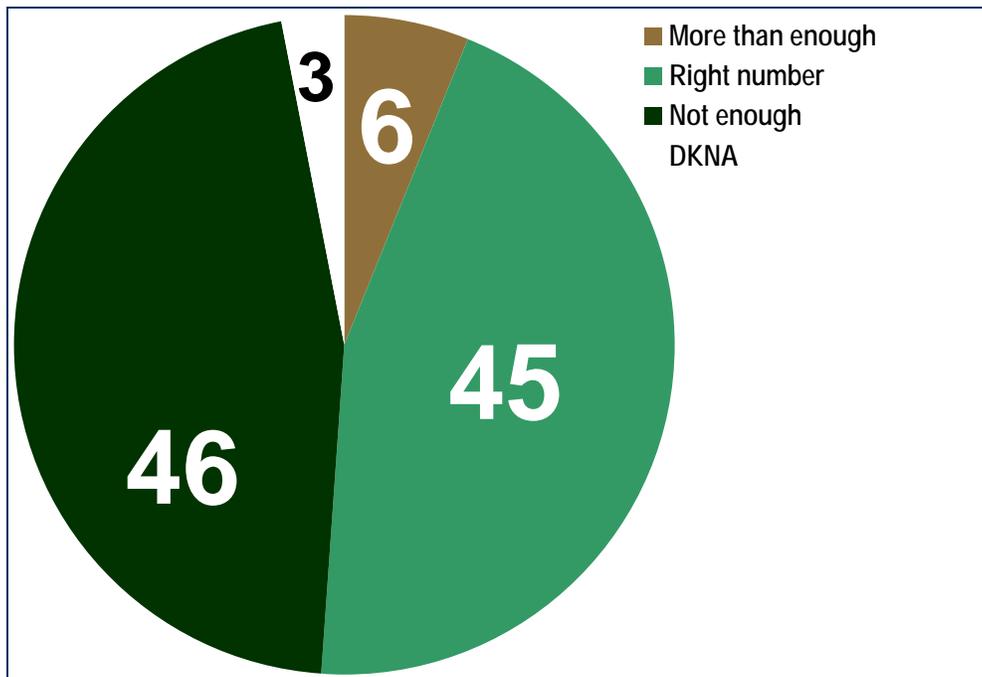
Parks Highly Valued in Maple Valley



Q1 When you think about the things that contribute to the quality of life in Maple Valley, would you say that city parks and recreation opportunities are...Essential to the quality of life here...Important, but not essential...or Nice to have, but not really necessary for the quality of life.

- ◆ **Nearly 7 in 10 respondents said that parks and recreation opportunities are “essential to the quality of life here.”**
 - A majority said “essential” in every demographic category of the sample
 - Even among respondents who were light users of existing parks and recreation programs, majorities rated them as “essential”:
 - 54% of those at the low end of the activities index;
 - 53% of those who visited the fewest number of parks; and
 - 56% of those with the lowest number of park visits.

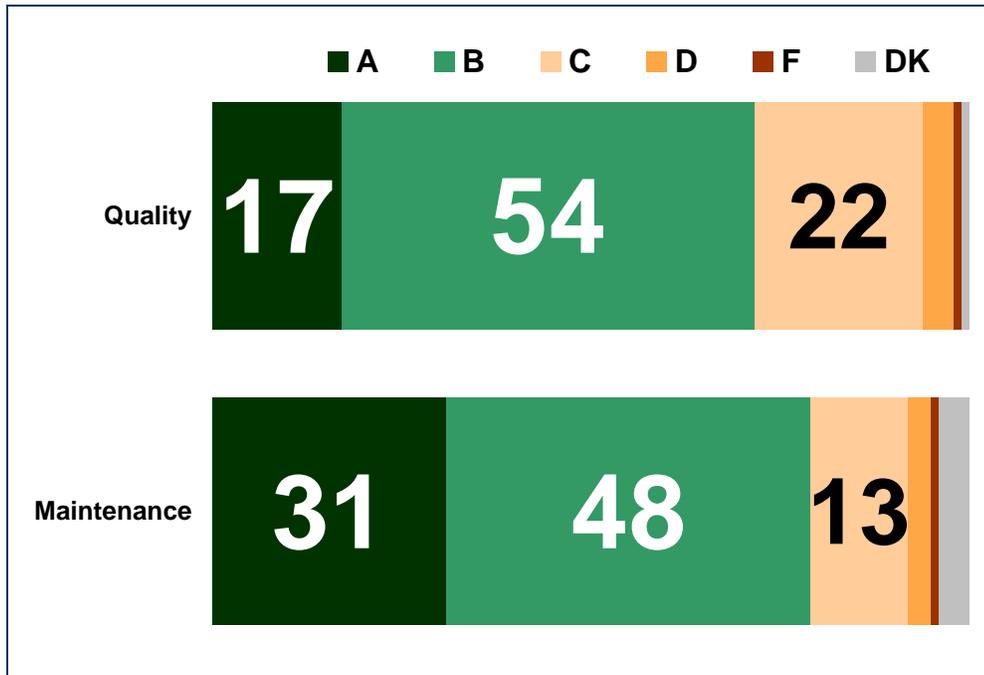
Number of Parks in Maple Valley? Not Enough to “Right Amount”



Q2 First, when it comes to meeting the needs of the community, would you say there are...

- ◆ Respondents were evenly divided over whether Maple Valley has “not enough parks and recreation programs” to “meet the needs of the community” (46%) or “about the right number” (45%)
- ◆ Most likely to say “Not Enough” were:
 - People age 36-50 (52%)
 - Couples with children at home (54%)
 - Frequent users of existing parks (51% of those who visited the most city parks)
 - 68% of those who gave the parks a grade of C, D, or F
- ◆ Most likely to say “About the Right Number” were:
 - Over 65 years of age (58%)
 - Infrequent users of existing parks (50% of those with the fewest park visits)

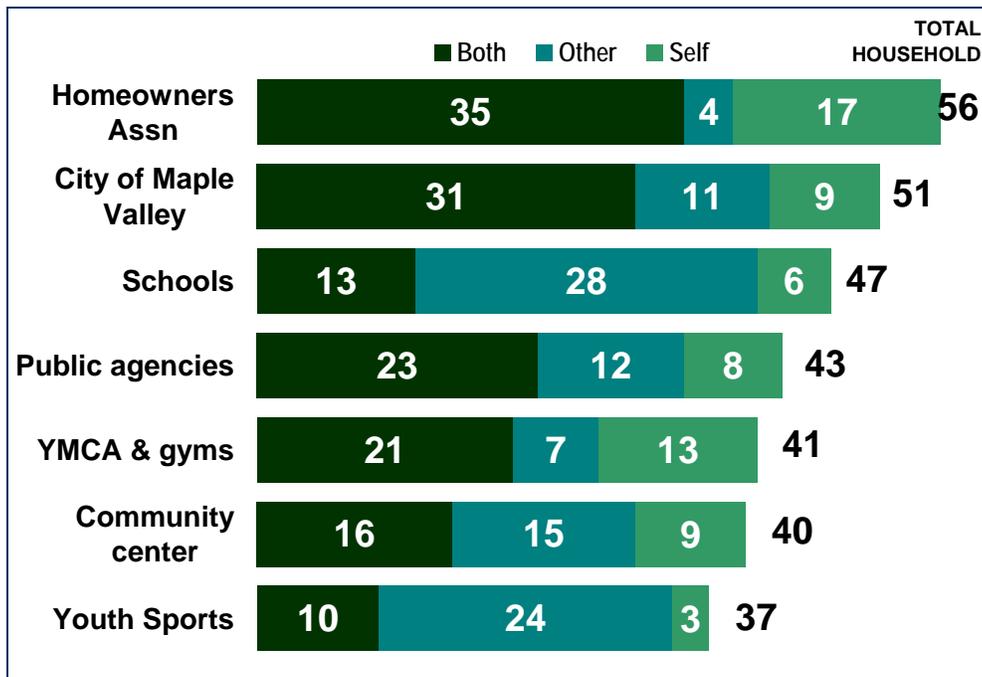
7 in 10 Grade Quality of Parks “A” or “B” 8 in 10 for Maintenance and Upkeep



Q3/Q7 How would you rate the Quality of parks in town?... The City of Maple Valley currently manages three properties: Take-A-Break Park, Lake Wilderness Park & Lodge and the Lake Wilderness Golf Course. How would you grade the maintenance and upkeep of city parks in Maple Valley?

- ◆ **“Grade Point Average”**
 - “B–” for Quality (2.81)
 - “B” for Maintenance and upkeep (3.09)
- ◆ **Most likely to give an “A” grade for quality:**
 - People over age 65 (32%)
 - Women more than men (23% vs. 12%)
- ◆ **“A” grades went up with number of different activities engaged in by the household (Q4), but not with number of parks visited or total number of visits.**
 - 24% of those whose household engaged in the highest number of activities gave an “A” grade, compared to 15% of those who engaged in the fewest and those in the middle of the range.
 - 12% of those who visited the most parks gave a “A” compared to 17% who visited the fewest.
 - 17% of those with the highest number of parks visits gave an “A” compared to 16% with the fewest visits.

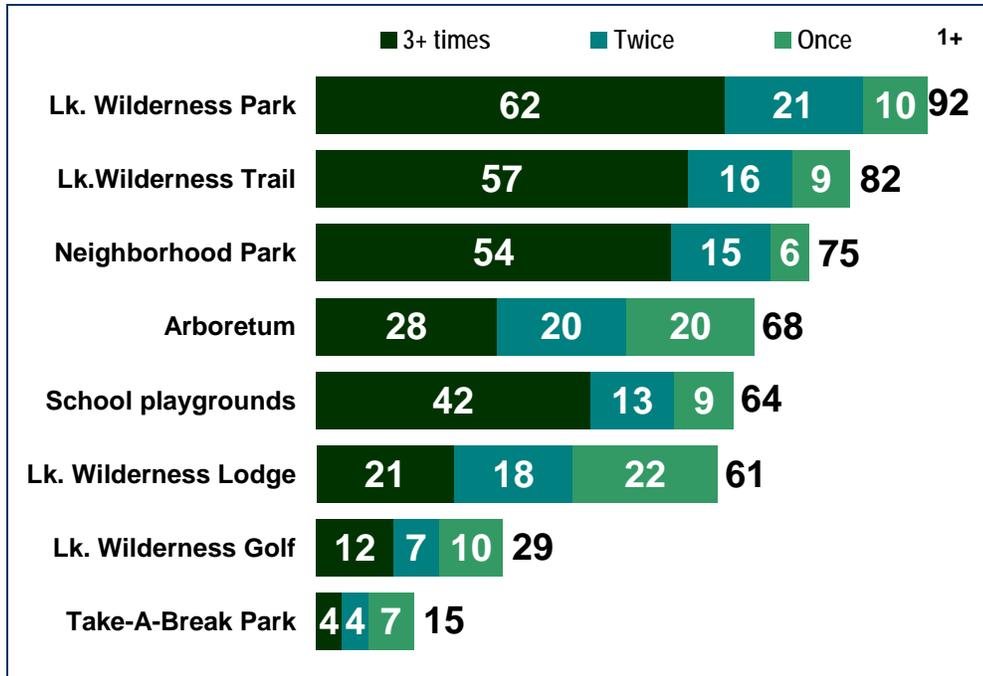
Residents Take Advantage of Wide Array of Recreation Programs, Facilities.



Q4 Do you or members of your household participate in recreation activities offered by the following organizations?

- ◆ **Participation in multiple groups' activities high:**
 - Respondents participated in an average of 3.1 of these activities
 - 90% reported participating in an activity at one or more of these programs
 - 61% participate in at least 3 of these organizations' activities
 - 27% participate in 5 or more.
- ◆ **Couples with children were the most likely to participate in:**
 - School programs (72%)
 - City programs (58%)
 - Youth sports (57%).
- ◆ **Most likely to participate in City programs were:**
 - People age 36-50 (59%)
 - Couples with children (58%).
- ◆ **Least likely to participate in City programs were:**
 - Single (37%) vs. 44% of couples with no children and 58% of couples with children at home
 - Age 51-64 (42%).

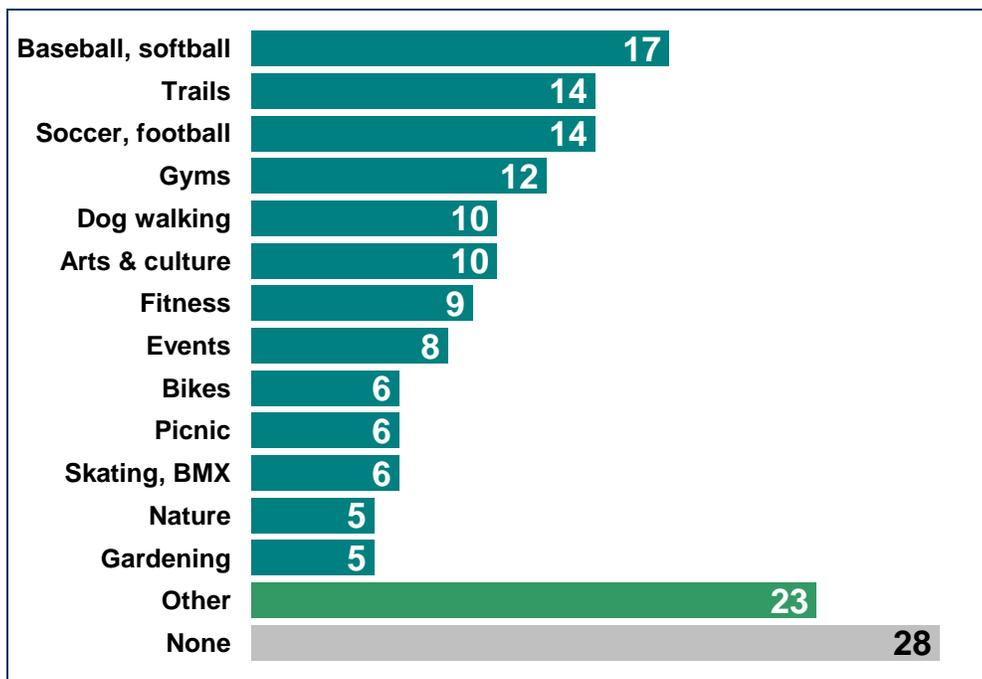
Residents Visit Parks Frequently



Q5 Over the past year, how many times, if at all, have you visited any of the following?

- ◆ **Respondents averaged 12 visits a year (11.6) to at least one of these parks, lead by:**
 - Wilderness Park: 62% visited 3 or more times last year;
 - Wilderness Trail: 57% visited 3 or more times;
 - Neighborhood park: 54% visited 3 or more times.
- ◆ **Average number of visits last year by age:**
 - [age 18-35] = 12 visits
 - [age 36-50] = 13 visits
 - [age 51-64] = 10 visits
 - [age 65+] = 9 visits
- ◆ **Asked why they did not visit local parks more frequently**
 - 32% cited lack of time
 - 11% cited lack of amenities
 - 9% said it was because they did not have children
 - 7% said it was inconvenient to do so
 - 5% cited personal health issues
 - 4% said they were unsure of the location of parks
 - 4% said it was because pets were not allowed.

Sports Facilities Top Long List of Desired Recreational Opportunities



Q8 Are there types of recreational opportunities you think the city should expand or improve in Maple Valley?

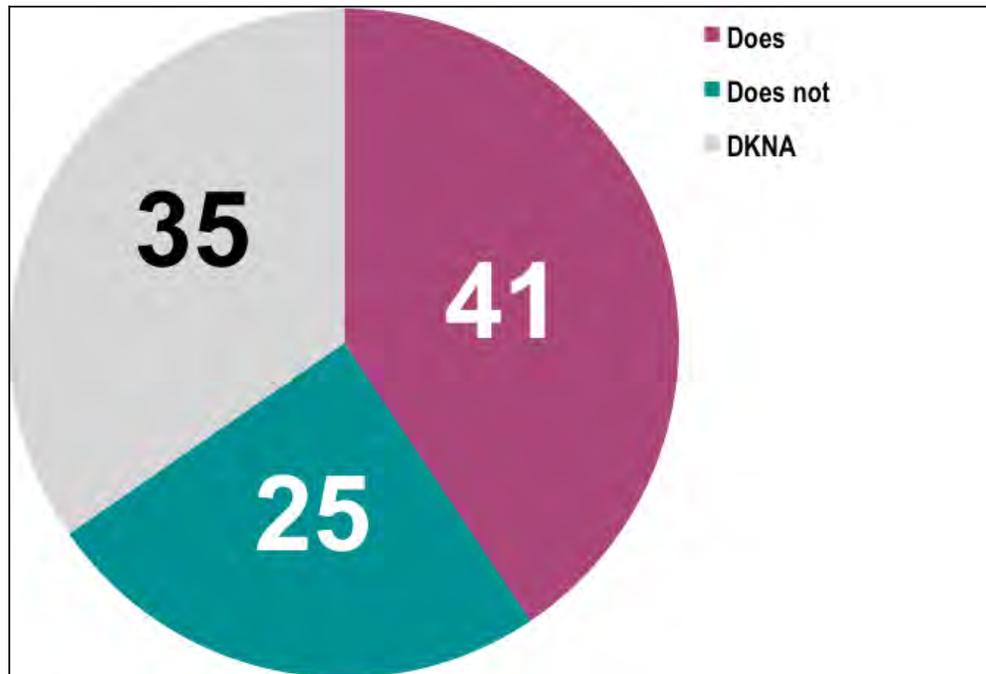
- ◆ **In response to an open-ended question, respondents named organized sports facilities as 3 of the top 4 recreational opportunities they think the city should expand:**

- 17% mentioned baseball or softball fields
- 14% mentioned fields for soccer, lacrosse, or football
- 12% mentioned indoor facilities for playing basketball

- ◆ **In all, 72% named at least one candidate for expansion.**

- 23% volunteered a number of other possibilities, including Swimming pool (indoor & outdoor); golf course; a YMCA – each with less than 2% mention.

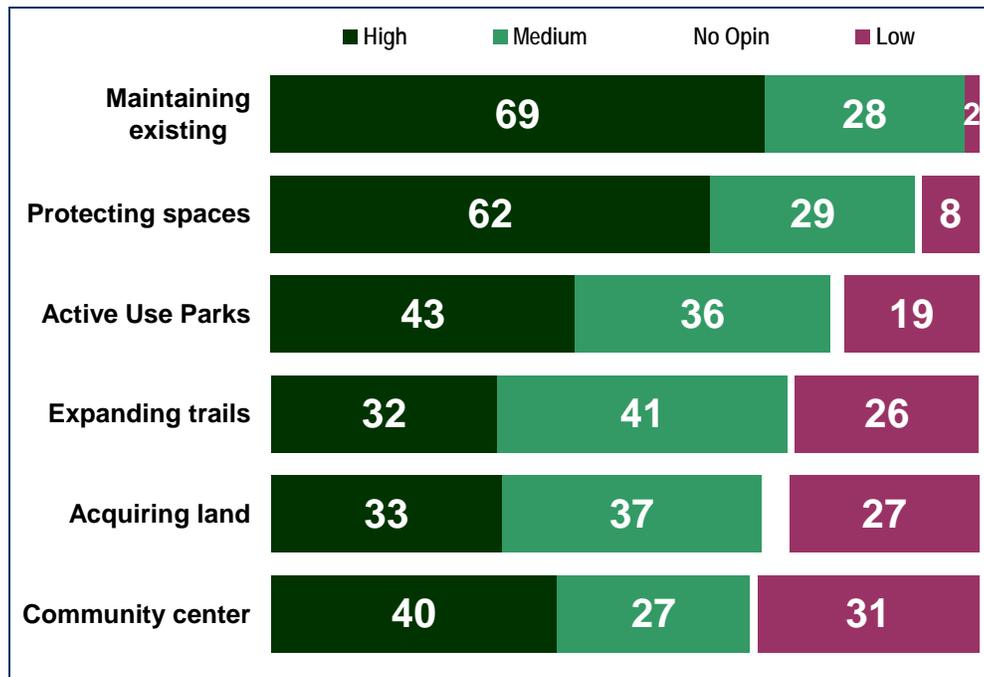
Plurality Satisfied With Use of Taxes



Q9 The City of Maple Valley provides some trails, parks, and recreation services. Would you say that the City uses taxpayer money wisely for parks, trails and recreation services, or not?

- ◆ **Satisfaction with taxes spent on recreation services goes up with usage:**
 - 46% of those highest on the activity index were satisfied compared to 34% of those at the low end of the index (40% of whom had no opinion).
 - 43% of the most frequent park visitors were satisfied, compared to 37% of those who visited the least number of parks (44% of whom had no opinion).
 - 46% of those with the most total visits were satisfied, compared to 42% of those with the fewest number of visits and 38% of those in the middle (40% of whom had no opinion).
- ◆ **Evaluation of city expenditures was related to opinions about parks:**
 - Those who rated parks essential were less likely to be satisfied (37%) than those who said something less than essential (49%).
 - Those who thought the city had enough parks already were more likely to be satisfied than those who thought the city needed more parks (51% vs. 35%).
 - Those who gave city parks a "A" grade were more likely to be satisfied than those who gave a "C" or lower (50% vs. 34%).
- ◆ **1 in 3 (35%) had no opinion. Least likely to have an opinion were:**
 - 18-35 year olds (46% vs. 31% of those over 35);
 - Those saying parks were "Essential" (37% vs. 28% of others);
 - Those grading parks "C" or lower (44% vs. 31% who gave "B" or "A").

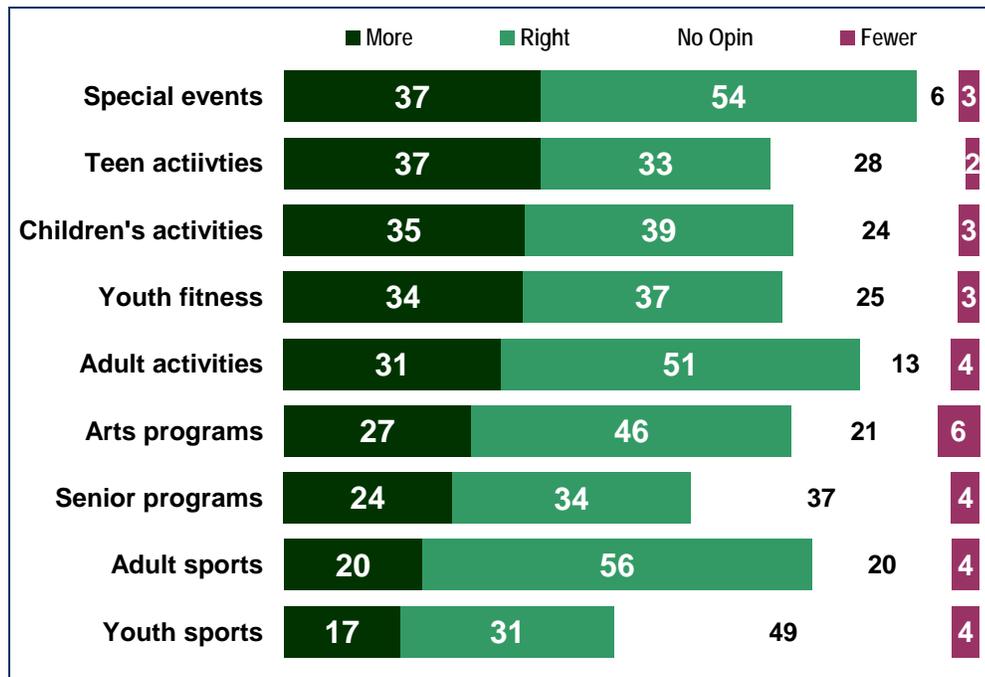
Highest Priority Put on Maintenance, Protecting Open Space



Q10 As I read a list of recreation services and programs, tell me whether you think that should be high priority, medium, or low priority for city funds.

- ◆ **There was a clear preference for maintaining existing parks, and protecting open space, but moderate support for expansion:**
 - 6+ in 10 put a high priority on maintaining parks and protecting spaces
 - 4 in 10 prioritized expansion projects, like new parks or a community center
 - 1 in 3 prioritized ambitious projects, like acquiring land or expanding trails
- ◆ **Support for expansion tended to come from highest users.**
 - Of those who participate in the most organizations' activities:
 - 57% put a high priority on new parks;
 - 50% put a high priority on a new community center.
 - Of those who visited the highest number of parks:
 - 59% put a high priority on new parks;
 - 42% put a high priority on expanding trails.
 - Of those with the highest total number of visits:
 - 53% put a high priority on new parks
- ◆ **Those who graded park quality lowest (C-F) most highly valued:**
 - New parks (64%, vs. 36% of others)
 - Acquiring land (48%, vs. 27% of others)

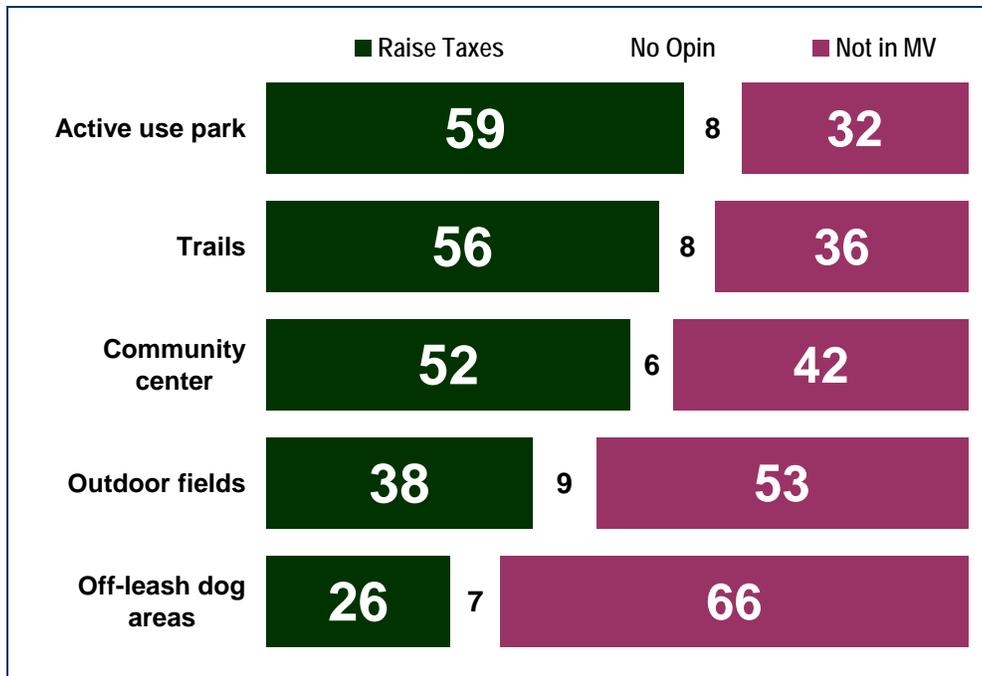
Residents Generally Divided Over Whether Maple Valley Needs More Recreation Activities



Q11 Next I am going to read a list of recreation activities that are available in Maple Valley to some degree. For each one, tell me whether you think Maple Valley Needs More of this type of activity...has About the Right Amount, or has Too Much Already.

- ◆ **Respondents not convinced that more recreational opportunities are needed.**
 - For 8 of 9 activities listed, more people said Maple Valley had “about the right amount” than said the city “needs more” - although the margins were often close.
- ◆ **There was a relatively high proportion of respondents with no opinion for all but one of these items. A way to gauge potential support, therefore, is to look at the proportion who said the city already had enough of various activities.**
 - The lowest number saying there were enough already were almost all youth-oriented programs:
 - Only 3-4 in 10 said there was the right number of teen activities, children's activities, youth fitness, youth sports, and senior programs, versus
 - More than half, on the other hand, said there were the right number of programs for adult sports, adult activities, and special events.

Majority Support Tax Funding for 3 New Programs



Q12 There may be some park and recreation experiences that are limited or not available in Maple Valley, but are available in neighboring communities. I am going to read a list of some examples. If it came down to a choice between increasing taxes to develop that facility in Maple Valley versus not having that in Maple Valley, which would you choose?

- ◆ **Given a choice between raising taxes to develop a facility in Maple Valley vs. not having such a facility in the city, majorities supported more taxes for 3 of 5 facilities tested:**
 - An active use parks that include playgrounds, sport courts & fields (59%)
 - Trails and safe routes to parks (56%)
 - A community center with aquatics and fitness facilities (52%)
- ◆ **For each of the five programs, those dissatisfied with city's use of tax dollars for parks were more likely than were those satisfied to support increased taxes to develop that experience in Maple Valley :**
 - Active use parks (63% vs. 59%)
 - Trails and safe routes to parks (58% vs. 50%);
 - Community center with aquatics and fitness (57% vs. 50%);
 - Sports fields (45% vs. 39%);
 - Off-leash dog areas (35% vs. 21%).Discussion

DISCUSSION

Maple Valley residents clearly value the recreational opportunities in their community. Seven in 10 survey respondents said that the parks and recreational opportunities in Maple Valley are “essential to the quality of life here.” Only 6% said that such opportunities were not necessary.

This is not vicarious appreciation. A remarkable number of residents take regular advantage of these opportunities: 9 in 10 households participate in activities offered by various organizations, from homeowners associations to youth sports. Survey respondents reported visiting an average of 5 city parks in the last year, for an average of 12 visits. Lake Wilderness Park and Trail, and neighborhood parks are especially popular.

City parks get good grades for overall quality (“B-”) as well as for maintenance and upkeep (“B”), and citizens are generally satisfied that their tax dollars are being spent “wisely” when it comes to parks and recreation. By a 5:3 margin, more people said their taxes are being used “wisely” than not. The relatively large proportion with no opinion on that questions (1 in 3), indicates that a significant portion of the population is not aware of the Parks & Recreation Department’s activities and services.

The picture of community priorities for the future is somewhat mixed. On one hand, residents appear unconvinced that the city needs more recreational opportunities. For eight out of nine “recreation activities available in Maple Valley to some degree,” more respondents said the city has “about the right amount” than said the city “needs more of this type of activity.” There was no majority who said the city needs more of any of the nine activities on the list.

In a direct question about priorities for city funds, two items of six listed had a majority rating it a “high priority”: maintaining existing parks and protecting open space and natural areas. The other four items, which used more active terms – like “developing,” “building,” “expanding” and “acquiring” – failed to achieve a majority who rated them as high priority.

Then, when asked whether they would support an increase in taxes to develop certain recreational opportunities in the city, majorities said they would support tax increases to develop three of the five facilities listed. The three were: 1) active use parks; 2) trails and safe routes to parks; and 3) a community center with aquatics. None of these three were rated as a high priority in the earlier question, and all three had significant “low priority” ratings.

What to make of these apparently mixed signals? One clue is that the activities and facilities were described somewhat differently in different questions. It could be that the specificity, context and attributes in one question elicited a response difference from the description in another question. In addition, asking whether

something should be a high, medium or low priority is not exactly the same thing as asking whether one would support a tax increase to develop it.

The propensity for support to vary with wording changes also suggests that residents' positions on these items are generally not as well thought out as they could be. A position that has been more thoroughly considered would be unlikely to move so much when a slightly different question was asked. The specific proposals and concepts introduced in this survey may be new to a significant proportion of the population. They will need time and information to consider.

Recalling that 7 in 10 consider parks to be essential to the quality of life, these results can most prudently be interpreted as indicating a reservoir of latent support for development of recreational opportunities. People value parks and the recreation opportunities, take advantage of them, and appear willing to support the development of more. The openness of most respondents to tax increases to develop recreation facilities may be the strongest indicator that residents are willing to be convinced.

The fact that 1/3 of respondents had no opinion about city expenditures for recreation also supports the conclusion that a significant portion of Maple Valley residents are not aware of the function and activities of the Parks and Recreation Department. Many seem unaware of what the city government does to make recreation opportunities available.

A community conversation about the future of recreation opportunities in Maple Valley therefore should be sure to include a discussion of city government's role in realizing that future.



APPENDIX





TOPLINE DATA

SAMPLE	<u>481 Maple Valley Adults (age 18+)</u> 253 via telephone 228 on-line
MARGIN OF SAMPLING ERROR	±4.5% at the 95% level of confidence
FIELD DATES	Dec, 7-17, 2013
GENDER	MALE...48% FEMALE...52%
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The data are presented here in the same order as the questionnaire• The data from the telephone and on-line survey are combined• The figures in bold type are percentages of respondents who gave each answer.• The findings have been statistically weighted to bring age and gender in line with the population• Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.	

1. These first questions are about parks and recreation. When you think about the things that contribute to the quality of life in Maple Valley, would you say that city parks and recreation opportunities are...
 - 68** Essential to the quality of life here
 - 26** Important, but not essential
 - 6** Nice to have, but not really necessary for the quality of life
 - 0** NO OPIN
2. The next questions are about the number and the quality of for parks, trails and recreation programs. First, when it comes to meeting the needs of the community, would you say there are...
 - 6** More than enough parks and recreation programs in the City of Maple Valley
 - 45** About the right number
 - 46** Not enough parks and recreation programs in the City of Maple Valley
 - 3** NO OPIN
3. How would you rate the Quality of parks in town? Using a letter grade as they do in school, would you give the quality of Maple Valley parks a grade of...
 - 17** A for Excellent
 - 54** B for Good
 - 22** C for Satisfactory
 - 4** D for Unsatisfactory
 - 1** F for Poor
 - 1** NO OPIN

4. Do you or members of your household participate in recreation activities offered by the following organizations?

ROTATE	SELF	OTHER	BOTH	NONE
1. Home owners associations	17	4	35	45
2. The City of Maple Valley	9	11	31	49
3. Public or private schools, including the Tahoma Learning Community	6	28	13	52
4. Public agencies other than City of Maple Valley, such as Kent or Covington or King County.....	8	12	23	57
5. Youth sport organizations, like little league & youth soccer	3	24	10	63
6. Greater Maple Valley Community Center	9	15	16	60
7. The YMCA, or private fitness centers, and the like	13	7	21	59

5. Over the past year, have you visited any of the following? [READ EACH]

5.1. IF YES: have you visited that park once? Two or Three Times? More than 3 times in the last year

ROTATE	NOT VISITED	VISITED ONCE	2-3 TIMES	3+ TIMES
A. Lake Wilderness Park	6	10	21	62
B. Lake Wilderness Trail.....	18	9	16	57
C. Small neighborhood park closest to your home.....	24	6	15	54
D. School playgrounds or sports fields	36	9	13	42
E. Lake Wilderness Arboretum	33	20	20	28
F. Lake Wilderness Golf Course.....	72	10	7	12
G. Lake Wilderness Lodge	38	22	18	21
H. Take-A-Break Park	85	7	4	4

6. What are some reasons you don't visit local parks more frequently? [DATA AT END]

7. The City of Maple Valley currently manages three properties: Take-A-Break Park, Lake Wilderness Park & Lodge and the Lake Wilderness Golf Course. How would you grade the maintenance and upkeep of city parks in Maple Valley? Using a letter grade again, would you give them an...

ROTATE TOP/BOTTOM [A-F]

- 31** A for Excellent
- 48** B for Good
- 13** C for Satisfactory
- 3** D for Unsatisfactory
- 1** F for Poor
- 4** NO OPIN



8. Are there types of recreational opportunities you think the city should expand or improve in Maple Valley? [DO NOT READ LIST – RECORD ALL THAT APPLY]

- 17 Playing baseball or softball
- 14 Walking & hiking trails
- 14 Playing soccer / lacrosse / football
- 12 Gymnasiums for indoor sports, like basketball or volleyball
- 10 Off-leash dog opportunities
- 10 Arts, dance, music & cultural classes
- 9 Access to indoor fitness & health equipment
- 8 Community events and festivals
- 7 Bike riding
- 6 Picnicking
- 6 Skateboarding or BMX
- 5 Nature / wildlife watching
- 5 Gardening , P-Patches, Horticulture
- 23 OTHER _____
- 28 NO ANSWER

9. The City of Maple Valley provides some trails, parks, and recreation services. Would you say that the City uses taxpayer money wisely for parks, trails and recreation services, or not?

- 41 DOES
- 25 DOES NOT
- 35 NO OPIN

10. As I read a list of recreation services and programs, tell me whether you think that should be high priority, medium, or low priority for city funds.

ROTATE	HI	MED	LOW	DK
1. Maintaining existing parks	69	28	2	0
2. Protecting open space and natural areas.....	62	29	8	1
3. Developing new active use parks that include sport fields.....	43	36	19	2
4. Building a community center with aquatics and fitness facilities	40	27	31	1
5. Acquiring land for future parks	33	37	27	4
6. Expanding the recreational trails network	32	41	26	1

11. Next I am going to read a list of recreation activities that are available in Maple Valley to some degree. For each one, tell me whether you think Maple Valley Needs More of this type of activity...has About the Right Amount, or has Too Much Already. The first one is...

ROTATE	NEED MORE	ABT RIGHT	TOO MUCH	DK /NA
1. Teen activities, such as drop-in facilities, field trips, and camps during school breaks.....	37	33	2	28
2. Special events, such as concerts, festivals, movies and community fun runs	37	54	3	6
3. Children's activities, such as supervised after-school and summer programs, & instructional sports programs.....	35	39	3	24
4. Youth fitness programs	34	37	3	25
5. Adult activities, such as health and fitness, yoga, arts, and educational classes.....	31	51	4	13
6. Youth sport programs, such as basketball, baseball/softball, soccer.....	31	49	4	17
7. Instructional arts programs, such as music, dance, art.....	27	46	6	21
8. Programs for adults 55 and over, such as classes, trips, and drop-in activities.....	24	34	4	37
9. Adult sports leagues, such as basketball, volleyball, softball, soccer.....	20	56	4	20

12. There may be some park and recreation experiences that are limited or not available in Maple Valley, but are available in neighboring communities. I am going to read a list of some examples. If it came down to a choice between increasing taxes to develop that facility in Maple Valley versus not having that in Maple Valley, which would you choose?

ROTATE	INCRS TAXES	NOT IN MV	DK/NA
1. Active use parks that include playgrounds, sport courts & fields	59	32	8
2. Trails and safe routes to parks	56	36	8
3. A community center with aquatics and fitness facilities	52	42	6
4. Outdoor sport fields with all-weather turf.....	38	53	9
5. Off-leash dog areas.....	26	66	7



13. I have just a few last questions for our statistical analysis. How old are you?

- 26** 18-35
- 42** 36-50
- 22** 51-64
- 10** 65+

14. Which of these best describes your household at this time?

- 54** Couple with Children at Home
- 29** Couple with No Children at Home
- 5** Single with Children at Home
- 12** Single with No Children at Home
- 1** [NA]

Thank you very much. You have been very helpful.

Q6: REASONS FOR NOT VISITING PARKS MORE FREQUENTLY

- 32** Lack of time
 - 16** Use local parks regularly
 - 11** Lack of Amenities/Activities/Soccer/Tennis
 - 9** No Children/Children are older/Grown
 - 7** Inconvenient/Too Far
 - 5** Health Issues/Old Age
 - 5** Need More Parks
 - 4** Unsure of locations
 - 4** Can't bring pets/Dogs
 - 2** Too Crowded
 - 2** Parking Issues
 - 2** Prefer other parks to local ones
 - 2** No Reason to go
 - 1** Bad Weather
 - 1** Have a private park available
 - 1** Don't Feel Safe

 - 2** Other Positive Mention
 - 3** Other Negative Mention
 - 7** Other Mention
 - 4** Refused/Don't Know/Not Sure
-



P.O. Box 320 • 22017 SE Wax Road • Maple Valley, WA 98038

Phone: 425-413-8800 • Fax: 425-413-4282

December 5, 2013

Dear Maple Valley Resident:

The City of Maple Valley is planning for the future and is conducting a survey to learn more about our residents' priorities for and use of parks and recreation facilities. Your household was chosen at random to participate. For this study to be representative, it is important that we hear from your household.

The survey is online. To take the survey just type this address into your internet browser:

<http://elway.MV.sgizmo.com/s3/>

We're trying to get a scientifically representative sample, so we ask that the survey be completed by the person in your household with the most recent birthday and who is age 18 or older. The survey is being conducted by Elway Research Inc., a highly-respected independent research firm. Elway will collect and tally the results and prepare a written summary analysis for the city. Your answers will remain anonymous and confidential, and no one in city government will see your individual responses. Summary results will be published within a few weeks.

We hope you will share your thoughts and let us know what you think. We know how busy you are, so we appreciate you taking the time to help shape the future of your city. If you have questions, please contact Parks and Recreation Department Director, Greg Brown, at (425) 432-9953 or greg.brown@maplevalleywa.gov.

Sincerely,



David W. Johnston
City Manager



REMINDER POST CARD

Maple Valley Resident:

Last week we sent you an invitation to take part in a survey about the future of parks and recreation in Maple Valley.

If you have already completed the survey, *Thank You!*

If you have not already done so, please log on to the website below and take the survey today. We have to end the survey soon.

Your response is critical. You were selected at random to participate in this survey. In order for the survey to be representative of Maple Valley residents, it is important that you complete the survey.

Thank you for your cooperation in this important study.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stuart Elway".

Elway Research, Inc.
206/264-1500x1 elway@elwayresearch.com



TAKE THE SURVEY TODAY

Go to: <http://elway.MV.sqizmo.com/s3/>

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Appendix C: Public Meeting Notes



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER: #C-13-1042 ISSUE DATE: November 18, 2013
 PROJECT NAME: Maple Valley PRCHS Plan

RECORDED BY: Steve Duh & Amanda Bailey
 TO: FILE
 PRESENT: Members of the Public
 Staff from Maple Valley Parks & Recreation
 Members of the Maple Valley Parks & Recreation Commission
 Project Team Members from Conservation Technix & SvR

SUBJECT: PRCHS Open House Meeting Notes (11/13/13)

Community members were invited to an open house on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lake Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley. As the first of a series of public meetings for the Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan update, the project team prepared informational displays covering several major topics within parks and recreation. These display stations included Parks, Recreation Facilities, Playgrounds, Safe Access To Parks, Passive Recreation, Environmental Stewardship, Access & Engagement for All Users, Facility Partnerships, Recreational Programming and Cultural Activities. City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission members and project team staff engaged with participants to explore current issues, needs and interests related to park and recreation services.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS PER DISPLAY STATION

Parks

- There is a need for more sports fields (especially soccer fields) for tournament potential and revenue generation, more playgrounds to serve a changing Maple Valley and more gathering spaces for all.
- Visit Maple Woods Park for reference and inspiration to a good park space for a neighborhood.
- Dissatisfaction shown with the Parks and Recreation Department's attention to trash; would like to see trash picked up more frequently in the summer, increase in number of trash cans and strategically place in locations along paths and places where garbage would accumulate.

-- Additional comments --

- Need for better Parks marketing
- Baseball & soccer fields
- Fields for sport leagues - soccer, baseball, lacrosse; money for community and parks
- Splash park (4x)
- Dog park (3x) - consider a time share dog park (i.e., off leash allowed at certain hours)
- Permaculture food forest (beacon hill food forest example)
- Pea patch (3x)
- Local business sponsorships - placards, 'donated by' signs
- Rock wall
- More playgrounds
- Leave the Legacy site undeveloped



PRCHS Open House Meeting Notes (11/13/13)

Maple Valley PRCHS Plan

Project Number #C-13-1042

Page 2

Recreation Facilities

- Community recreation priorities include hiking, biking, passive outdoor activities.
- Would like to see a variety of amenities offered by Parks & Rec.
- Be mindful of those with disabilities when designing places and selecting activities.

-- Additional comments --

- Input on skate park - open, public meeting to look at planning skatepark - contractor Grindline
- Want a bigger skatepark (Summit Park) - with lights
- Indoor facility / gymnasium (2x)
- Indoor walking/jogging track
- Parkour park (Gasworks)
- Need a fun party play space

Playgrounds

- The community wants to see more playgrounds available to kids in Maple Valley; a preference made to rubber tile mats, climbing walls and swings.
- Examples to refer to at Lake Meridian in Kent and Les Grove Park in Auburn.
- Would like to see a diversity of park types in Maple Valley, including spray parks, bike skills parks and playgrounds.

Safe Access To Parks

- It would be easier to walk or bike to Maple Valley parks if it felt less car dependent, gaps were filled in sidewalk locations, stroller safety was accommodated, safe pedestrian connections were made, bike paths were continuous and commercial zones had required bike parking standards.
- Bike Parade around Maple Valley Event.
- The Lake Wilderness Trail is a highly-utilized trail in the community and is appreciated; would like to see guardrails added near eroded bank for better stabilization
- Would like to see Lake Wilderness Trail access to Lake Wilderness for fishing opportunity
- Additional, lateral connections off Lake Wilderness Trail to increase access – especially needed at the north end of the city.
- Would like to see trail connection from Four Corners to Black Diamond and pavement added instead of just gravel.
- Maple Valley is missing a trail connecting to/across the Cedar River to the Cedar River Trail as well as missing other walkable networks that feel safe.
- Non-motorized route northbound 169 from 516 to end of town.

-- Additional comments --

- Create a 20K loop trail event (bike/run)
- Sidewalk with fence along MV Highway
- Bike share program
- Connect gaps in sidewalks
- Sidewalks and bike lanes to parks

PRCHS Open House Meeting Notes (11/13/13)

Maple Valley PRCHS Plan

Project Number #C-13-1042

Page 3

Environmental Stewardship

- Maple Valley could better steward its natural resources by preserving more open space in the city, by implementing and enforcing a real tree retention – not a replacement policy, and by planting trees that serve a purpose other than lumber – i.e. – food production.
- Would like to see environmental programming such as a wild edible course, permaculture and/or forest restoration.
- To promote nearby nature, the City could better promote the pipe line trail on the south side of Cedar River.

Access & Engagement For All Users

- ADA users should have special needs play equipment and access to all amenities.
- Older adults should have peaceful viewing areas, enjoy scenery, have safety and places to sit and watch kids play.
- Teens should have a skate park and an indoor recreation center; they need more places to hang out or gather in general.
- Underserved populations should have affordable activities.

Facility Partnerships

- Existing partnerships should be expanded upon
- The City should keep partnering with the Greater Maple Valley Community Center.
- Greater Maple Valley Community Center should offer children and family programs/activities and needs funding.
- Mixed responses on whether an indoor recreation center should partner with the YMCA.

Recreational Programming

- The City of Maple Valley Parks & Recreation Department should connect organizations to streamline communication and organize programming options based on needs and desires to become more cost effective.
- Some understand the need for funding while others do not like having to pay annual fees for use of the Community Center.
- Would like to see the Community Center serving a wider age range.
- There is a lack of indoor recreation space (i.e. –volleyball, badminton, running, basketball, swimming).
- The City should actively recruit race/activity promoters (mountain bike races, cyclo-cross, x-terra, muddy buddy) to bring in hundreds of participants and spectators.
- Additional program desires include parent education classes, toddler times, teen babysitting classes, children/parent swim times and after-school programs for kids.
- Specific populations/age groups that need access to additional programs include the special needs population, families and adults.

-- Additional comments --

- Kids activities - sports, classes; Keep providing them and adding more
- Funding by weddings, events - now some competition; how to respond?
- Funding by golf course



PRCHS Open House Meeting Notes (11/13/13)

Maple Valley PRCHS Plan

Project Number #C-13-1042

Page 4

- More teen programs for 12-18 year olds - art, music, theater
- Programs for youth with autism and other special needs
- Programs for adults with special needs

Cultural Activities

- In order to bring cultural activity/programming to Maple Valley, the City should look for private recreation promoters for outdoor activities and utilize the trails the city has already.

-- Additional comments --

- Amphitheater at Lake Wilderness Park and Summit Park
- Cultural and attractions to keep people in town; attract others (i.e., tournaments, cultural events)
- Be mindful of cultural diversity

Every effort has been made to accurately record this meeting. If any errors or omissions are noted, please provide written response within five days of receipt.

-- End of Notes --

cc: Greg Brown
Amanda Bailey
Brice Maryman
File



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER: #C-13-1042 ISSUE DATE: January 9, 2014
 PROJECT NAME: Maple Valley PRCHS Plan

RECORDED BY: Steve Duh & Amanda Bailey
 TO: FILE
 PRESENT: Members of the Public
 Staff from Maple Valley Parks & Recreation
 Members of the Maple Valley Parks & Recreation Commission
 Project Team Members from Conservation Technix & SvR

SUBJECT: PRCHS Open House #2 Meeting Notes (01/08/14)

Community members were invited to an open house on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lake Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley. This was the second of two public meetings for the Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan update, and the project team prepared informational displays covering several major topics within parks and recreation. Display stations included Parks, Recreation, Trails, Culture and Alternative Recreation. City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission members and project team staff engaged with participants to explore current issues, needs and preliminary recommendations related to park and recreation services.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS PER DISPLAY STATION

Parks

- Acquire part of golf course in future for a park.
- Keep/purchase the Elk Run Golf Course (protect the option to keep it as a golf course)
- Explore having the future school built around the Elk Run golf course
- Future access into Summit Park in northeast corner of site / Potential new road on northern part of Summit Park
- When will the City develop or do something with the property at 216th Avenue?

Trails & Linkages

- Improve crossing safety at SE Kent Kangley Rd and Maple Valley Black Diamond Rd SE
- New light (Maple Valley – Black Diamond Rd.) northeast of Summit Park
- Need sidewalks as part of “shared road” to Lake Wilderness Park
- Connect proposed neighborhood greenways to Lake Wilderness Golf Course
- Connect SE 253rd Place in proposed neighborhood greenway
- Provide signs on trails pointing to mountain bike trails at Henry’s Ridge Open Space (King County)
- Develop WT Trail connection south to & with Black Diamond
- Power Lines:
 - Adjacent HOA would be happy to have a trail under the power lines (in area of SE 286th St & 236th Ave SE)
 - It would be helpful for the City to develop guidance on how/ what can be installed under power lines. (e.g. dog park, p-patch, wildlife habitat, Frisbee golf, etc...)
- Henry’s Switch Site:
 - No housing development here



PRCHS Open House #2 Meeting Notes (01/08/14)

Maple Valley PRCHS Plan

Project Number #C-13-1042

Page 2

- Bridge across to train tracks to get from the south side neighborhoods to Lake Wilderness Trail
- Trails that are easy/medium difficulty that are marked on a map
- Trail planning should include regional coordination
- Non-motorized route northbound 169 from 516 to end of town

Recreation & Human Services

- Community center isn't "cool" for many teens. Make it aesthetically pleasing
- Plan should help bring together separate efforts (HOAs, school, trails, orgs, etc)
- In future, can City help coordinate different parks and rec efforts?
- Need for dementia respite care, also for tuberculosis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's, special populations; Relief for care provider
- Need to provide plan and prioritize the community's human service needs, i.e. senior center, drug/alcohol intervention

Every effort has been made to accurately record this meeting. If any errors or omissions are noted, please provide written response within five days of receipt.

-- End of Notes --

cc: Greg Brown
Brice Maryman
File

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Appendix D: Outreach Materials

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Where Community and Nature Unite
Away from it all...In the middle of everything

News & Updates

November 7, 2013
City of Maple Valley to Consider Sign Code Amendment
On December 4, 2013, the Maple Valley Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to take comment regarding proposed amendments to the Sign Code.

October 30, 2013
Help Shape the Future of Maple Valley's Parks and Recreational Facilities and Programs
The City of Maple Valley is seeking public input about the future of parks, recreation, cultural and human service programs and services in the City.

[More News & Notices](#)

Meetings & Events

- City Council Special Meeting**
November 12, 2013 7:00 PM
- PRCHS Plan Update Open House**
November 13, 2013 6:30 PM
- Parks & Recreation Commission Special Meeting**
November 13, 2013 6:30 PM
- Parent's Night Out**
November 16, 2013 6:00 PM

[Calendar](#)

One of the 10 Best Towns for Families
2011 - Family Circle Magazine

Video Tour of Maple Valley

Welcome

Education

Quality of Life

Real Estate & Relocation

Business & Industry

Special Attractions

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Parks, Recreation, Cultural, and Humans Services Plan Update

"Help shape the future of Maple Valley's parks and recreational facilities and programs."

The Parks and Recreation Department is updating the City's six-year comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services (PRCHS) Plan to reflect the community's current priorities and vision. The plan update will guide the City's efforts and establish a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreation services throughout Maple Valley.

The PRCHS Plan will include a vision and goals for the City's park and recreation system, a priority improvement projects, and implementation strategies for parks, natural areas, trails and recreation programming. The Plan was last adopted in 2007, and significant changes to economic conditions warrant a fresh look at priorities and expectations. The plan update will also help the City remain eligible for state and federal grants.

Key questions include:

- What is the City doing well and what improvements should be made for parks and recreation facilities and programs?
- What are your priorities?
- What legacy should we leave for future generations?
- How can we best serve the community with limited resources?

Citizen input is absolutely crucial to make sure program goals and priorities are consistent with community needs and desires. There will be several opportunities for you to participate, including a telephone survey, an online survey, public meetings and community stakeholder discussions. This process gives the City an excellent opportunity to identify ways in which to best serve the recreational needs of our growing community over the coming 6 to 10 years.

[2007 Parks, Recreation, Cultural, and Humans Services Plan \[PDF\]](#)

UPCOMING OPEN HOUSE – NOVEMBER 13TH

The City is hosting an open house to seek public input about the future of parks, recreation, cultural and human programs and services in the City. Please join the project team to explore the opportunities for enhancing the value of parks, trails, natural lands and recreational programming.

The Open House will be on November 13, 2013 beginning at 6:30pm at the Lake Wilderness Lodge, 22500 SE 248th Street, Maple Valley. [Driving directions \[PDF\]](#)



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▼ Parks & Recreation

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- Department Goals
- Activities, Classes, and Programs
- Special Events at Lake Wilderness Park
- Parks and Trails
- Facility Rentals
- Lake Wilderness Lodge
- Lake Wilderness Beach Program
- Lake Wilderness Golf Course
- Lake Wilderness Golf Course Citizen Task Force
- ▶ Parks, Recreation, Cultural, and Humans Services Plan Update





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Parks, Recreation, Cultural, and Humans Services Plan Update

“Help shape the future of Maple Valley’s parks and recreational facilities and programs.”

PRCHS PLAN UPDATE OPEN HOUSE

An open house will be held on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lake Wilderness Lodge, 22500 SE 248th Street, Maple Valley.
[Driving Directions](#) [PDF]

The Parks and Recreation Department is updating the City’s six-year comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services (PRCHS) Plan to reflect the community’s current priorities and vision. The plan update will guide the City’s efforts and establish a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreation services throughout Maple Valley.

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Community Open House Summary

Community members were invited to an open house on Wednesday, November 13, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at Lake Wilderness Lodge to offer direct comments and feedback about the future of parks, trails and recreation opportunities in Maple Valley. The project team prepared informational displays covering several major topics for parks and recreation services. City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission members and project team staff engaged with participants to explore current issues, needs and interests related to park and recreation services.

November 13, 2013 public meeting materials:

- [Summary Meeting Notes](#) [PDF]
- [Informational Display Boards](#) [PDF 4.4MB]

Short web videos related to Parks & Recreation:

- [Themes from the Book "Last Child in the Woods"](#) - 5:00 min video
- [Portland's Bike Boulevards Become Neighborhood Greenways](#) - 6:55 min video
- [The Magnificent Bioswales & Stormwater Treatment Along the Indy Cultural Trail](#) - 2:02 min video
- [Healthy Parks Healthy People](#) - 5:54 min video
- [Benefits of Urban Forests](#) - 5:38 min video

[2007 Parks, Recreation, Cultural, and Humans Services Plan](#) [PDF]

Check back soon for more information about public meetings and progress updates.

Home > Community News > News

Help Shape the Future of Maple Valley's Parks and Recreational Facilities and Programs

Retry Comments Print Font Size
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Posted: Monday, November 4, 2013 8:58 pm

0 comments

Open House Announced for November 13th at Lake Wilderness Lodge

The City of Maple Valley is seeking public input about the future of parks, recreation, cultural and human service programs and services in the City. Please join the project team to explore the opportunities for enhancing the value of parks, trails, natural lands and recreational programming at the upcoming open house on **November 13, 2013 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Lake Wilderness Lodge, 22500 SE 248th Street, Maple Valley.** The open house will launch the public conversation on the parks plan update.

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Great Rates!!
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or Email
Advertising@voiceofthevalley.com

The Parks and Recreation Department is updating the City's six-year comprehensive Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services (PRCHS) Plan to reflect the community's current priorities and vision. The plan update will guide the City's efforts and establish a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreation services throughout Maple Valley. The PRCHS Plan will include a vision and goals for the City's park and recreation system, a list of priority improvement projects, and implementation strategies for parks, natural areas, trails and recreation programming.

Citizen input is absolutely crucial to make sure program goals and priorities are consistent with community needs and desires. There will be several opportunities for residents to participate, including a telephone survey, an online survey, and two public

open houses. This process gives the City an excellent opportunity to identify ways in which to best serve the recreational needs of the community over the coming 6 to 10 years. The open house will provide a variety of ways to gather and record your feedback. Activities will be available for children to participate in sharing their ideas as well.

The Maple Valley Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan is the primary guide used by the City for developing and managing parks, trails, open spaces and recreation facilities. The Plan creates a framework for fulfilling the Maple Valley Community's vision to "provide a carefully and progressively integrated range of parks, recreation, cultural and human services." Completion of the Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan update is targeted for early next year.

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Local writer, Kathleen Keir, retells the delightful story **Bird with the Broken Wing**. The story was one of many stories handed down from her grandma, who enjoyed telling stories to her children and grandchildren so very many years ago. If you would like one these wonderful books he is how you get one. Books are only \$11 including tax.
Buy directly from Kathleen and get her signature as well!
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Katie's Place: 100+ more subscription contributions
Books: America's Wildlife Stories & Poems - Hawk, Wren

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MAPLE VALLEY RESIDENTS URGED TO COMMENT ON PLAN FOR PARKS AND RECREATION

Story Comments Print Font Size:

0 0 0 0

Posted: Friday, January 3, 2014 11:31 am

0 comments

Open house announced for January 8th at Lake Wilderness Lodge

Members of the community are being asked to review a comprehensive plan that will guide decisions about parks, trails, greenways and recreation services in Maple Valley for many years to come.

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The City of Maple Valley is seeking public input about the future of parks, recreation, cultural and human service programs in the City. Please join the project team to explore the opportunities for enhancing the value of parks, trails and recreational programming at the upcoming open house on January 8, 2014 beginning at 6:30pm in the Lake Wilderness Lodge, 22500 SE 248th Street, Maple Valley.

The purpose will be to review the preliminary findings and recommendations of a new parks and recreation system plan to be presented to City Council later this winter. Residents of all ages are invited to comment on findings to date, review recommendations and give additional input about the planning, design and future direction of the city park, trail and recreation system.

This is the second of two public meetings being held as part of the public planning process. The planning team is wrapping up the work started in the fall, including a community survey and inventory of current parks and recreation facilities.

"We look forward to sharing our vision of a citywide system of parks, trails and other facilities that can meet the needs of Maple Valley's growing population over the next 10 years and beyond," said Greg Brown, Parks & Recreation Director. "Parks & Recreation Commission members and project staff will be at the meeting to answer your questions and listen to your feedback."

Survey results indicate that Maple Valley residents are satisfied with parks and recreation services and placed the highest priority on maintaining existing parks and trails when asked to compare with other priorities, such as protecting open space, developing trails, acquiring land and building a new community center.

Sports facilities topped the wish list for expanded recreational opportunities. Fields for baseball, soccer or football and indoor basketball courts were 3 of the top 4 facilities named in an open-ended question. The community interest in additional active use parks ranked highest with regard to potential voter support.

"At the open house, we'll want to hear from the community about these and other priorities," said Brown. "This is a crucial opportunity for citizens to bring forward issues, ideas and concerns they wish to see addressed in strategies and projects that are proposed for adoption."

"Your voice is important," he continued. "Based on public demand and anticipated growth, we will be setting the tone and vision that will influence the quality of life in Maple Valley for many decades to come."

If you have questions or want more information about the open house or the Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Human Services Plan, please contact Greg Brown at (425) 432-9953 or e-mail him at greg.brown@maplevallewa.gov

More information about the plan is also available at <http://www.maplevallewa.gov/index.aspx?page=110>

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Local writer, Kathleen Kear, retells the delightful story **Bird with the Broken Wing**. The story was one of many stories handed down from her grandma, who enjoyed telling stories to her children and grandchildren so very many years ago.

If you would like one of these wonderful books here is how you get one. Books are only \$1! (includes tax)

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NEWS

City of Maple Valley to host open house on parks, recreation, cultural and human services plan update

Dec 28, 2013 at 10:00AM updated at 12:37PM

The city of Maple Valley will host an open house on the parks, recreation, cultural and human services plan update at 6:30 p.m. on Jan. 8.

The open house will be held at Lake Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley.

The Parks and Recreation department is updating the six year plan, which will guide the city's vision for those services, including prioritizing projects.

The plan was last updated in 2007.

Residents are invited to come and offer their feedback on the plan.

For more information about the update visit maplevalleywa.gov.



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Appendix E: Funding Alternatives

Local Funding Options

The city of Maple Valley possesses a range of local funding tools that could be accessed for the benefit of growing, developing and maintaining its parks and recreations program. The sources listed below represent likely potential sources, but some also may be dedicated for numerous other local purposes which limit applicability and usage. Therefore, discussions with city leadership is critical to assess the political landscape to modify or expand the use of existing city revenue sources in favor of park and recreation programs.

Councilmanic Bonds

Councilmanic bonds may be sold by cities without public vote. The bonds, both principal and interest, are retired with payments from existing city revenue or new general tax revenue, such as additional sales tax or real estate excise tax. The state legislature has set a maximum debt limit for councilmanic bonds of 1½% of the value of taxable property in the city. In November 2013, the Maple Valley City Council agreed to issue a \$1.6 million bond to support King County for the installation of synthetic turf sport fields at Ravensdale Park.

General Obligation Bond

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=84.52.056>

For the purposes of funding capital projects, such as land acquisitions or facility construction, cities and counties have the authority to borrow money by selling bonds. Voter-approved general obligation bonds may be sold only after receiving a 60 percent majority vote at a general or special election. If approved, an excess property tax is levied each year for the life of the bond to pay both principal and interest.

Excess Levy

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=84.52.052>

Washington law allows cities and counties, along with other specified junior taxing districts, to levy property taxes in excess of limitations imposed by statute when authorized by the voters. Levy approval requires 60 percent majority vote at a general or special election.

Regular Property Tax - Lid Lift

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=84.55.050>

Cities are authorized to impose ad valorem taxes upon real and personal property. A city's maximum levy rate for general purposes is \$3.375 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Limitations on annual increases in tax collections, coupled with changes in property value, causes levy rates to rise or fall; however, in no case may they rise above statutory limits. Once the rate is established each year, it may not be raised without the approval of a majority of the voters. Receiving voter approval is known as a lid lift. A lid lift may be permanent, or may be for a specific purpose and time period.



Sales Tax

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=82.14>

Washington law authorizes the governing bodies of cities and counties to impose sales and use taxes at a rate set by the statute to help “carry out essential county and municipal purposes.” The authority is divided into two parts. Cities may impose by resolution or ordinance a sales and use tax at a rate of ½% on any taxable event within their jurisdictions. Cities may also impose an additional sales tax at a rate up to ½% on any taxable event within the city or county. In this case, the statute provides an electoral process for repealing the tax or altering the rate. The city of Maple Valley imposes their portion (0.8415%) of 8.6% to all taxable sales, except for restaurants, taverns and bars sales where the sales tax is 9.2% (MVMC 3.05.010B).

Impact Fees

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=82.02.050>

Impact fees are charges placed on new development as a condition of development approval to help pay for various public facilities the need for which is directly created by that new growth and development. Counties, cities, and towns may impose impact fees on residential and commercial “development activity” to help pay for certain public facility improvements, including parks, open space and recreation facilities. Funds received must be spent on approved capital projects within 10 years of collection. Maple Valley adopted a park impact fee ordinance in 2009 (Ch 16.45, Park Impact Fees, MVMC). The park impact fee amount is \$2,754 per residential dwelling unit.

Real Estate Excise Tax

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=82.46.010>

Washington law authorizes the governing bodies of counties and cities to impose excise taxes on the sale of real property within limits set by the statute. This authority may be divided into three parts relevant to park systems.

1. A city or county may impose a real estate excise tax (REET 1) on the sale of all real property in the city or unincorporated parts of the county, respectively, at a rate not to exceed ¼% of the selling price to fund “local capital improvements,” including parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, water systems, bridges, sewers, etc. Also, the funds must be used “primarily for financing capital projects specified in a capital facilities plan element of a comprehensive plan . . . “
2. A city or county may impose a real estate excise tax on the sale of all real property in the city or unincorporated parts of the county, respectively, at a rate not to exceed ½%, in lieu of a ½% sales tax option authorized under state law. These funds are not restricted to capital projects. The statute provides for a repeal mechanism.
3. A city or county – in counties that are required to prepare comprehensive plans under the new Growth Management Act – are authorized to impose an additional real estate excise tax (REET 2) on all real property sales in the city or unincorporated parts of the county, respectively, at a rate not to exceed ¼%. These funds must be used “solely for financing capital projects specified in a capital facilities plan element of a comprehensive plan.”

The City share of the real estate excise tax is two one-quarter percent amounts (0.5%) that are restricted for capital projects per RCW 82.46. The amount is paid by the seller as part of the real estate sales transaction. Revenues collected by this tax are deposited in a special capital improvement fund according to MVMC 3.10.10. Since REET collections are directly tied to the frequency and valuation of real estate transactions, this funding source is widely variable with local real estate conditions.

Real Estate Excise Tax - Local Conservation Areas (King County)

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=82.46.070>

Boards of County Commissioners may impose, with majority voter approval, an excise tax on each sale of real property in the county at rate not to exceed 1% of the selling price for the purpose of acquiring and maintaining conservation areas. The authorizing legislation defines conservation areas as “land and water that has environmental, agricultural, aesthetic, cultural, scientific, historic, scenic, or low-intensity recreational value for existing and future generations...” These areas include “open spaces, wetlands, marshes, aquifer recharge areas, shoreline areas, natural areas, and other lands and waters that are important to preserve flora and fauna.” King County does not currently assess a Conservation REET.

Conservation Futures Tax (King County)

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=84.34>

The Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) is provided for in Chapter 84.34 of the Revised Code of Washington. King County imposes a Conservation Futures levy at a rate of \$0.0625 per \$1,000 (6 ¼%) assessed value for the purpose of acquiring open space lands, including green spaces, greenbelts, wildlife habitat and trail rights-of-way proposed for preservation for public use by either the county or the cities within the county. General open space criteria are listed in KCC Section 26.12.025 and are similar to the public benefit rating system identified in the Current Use Taxation program operated by King County. Funds are allocated annually, and cities within the county, citizen groups and citizens may apply for funds through the county’s process. The CFT program provides grants to cities to support open space priorities in local plans and requires a 100 percent match from other sources.

Federal & State Grants and Conservation Programs

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

National Park Service

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, also known as the Rivers & Trails Program or RTCA, is a technical assistance resource for communities administered by the National Park Service and federal government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space and develop trails and greenways. The RTCA program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of NPS in communities across America. <http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/rtca/>.

Community Development Block Grants

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

These funds are intended to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate income persons. King County administers CDBG funds on behalf of the King County CDBG Consortium. The Consortium is established under interlocal cooperation agreements between the County and 34 cities and towns and has a Joint Recommendations Committee to advise King County on CDBG funding and program guidelines decisions.



North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants Program

US Fish & Wildlife Service

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989 provides matching grants to organizations and individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetland conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico for the benefit of wetlands-associated migratory birds and other wildlife. Two competitive grants programs exist (Standard and a Small Grants Program) and require that grant requests be matched by partner contributions at no less than a 1-to-1 ratio. Funds from U.S. Federal sources may contribute towards a project, but are not eligible as match. <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm>.

The Standard Grants Program supports projects in Canada, the United States, and Mexico that involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats. In Mexico, partners may also conduct projects involving technical training, environmental education and outreach, organizational infrastructure development, and sustainable-use studies.

The Small Grants Program operates only in the United States; it supports the same type of projects and adheres to the same selection criteria and administrative guidelines as the U.S. Standard Grants Program. However, project activities are usually smaller in scope and involve fewer project dollars. Grant requests may not exceed \$75,000, and funding priority is given to grantees or partners new to the Act's Grants Program.

Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

www.nrcs.usda.gov/PROGRAMS/wrp/

The WRP provides landowners the opportunity to preserve, enhance and restore wetlands and associated uplands. The program is voluntary and provides three enrollment options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and 10-year restoration cost-share agreements. In all cases, landowners retain the underlying ownership in the property and management responsibility. Land uses may be allowed that are compatible with the program goal of protecting and restoring the wetlands and associated uplands. The NRCS manages the program and may provide technical assistance.

Forest Legacy Program

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

This program provides funds to acquire permanent conservation easements on private forestlands that are at risk of being converted to non-forest uses such as residential or commercial development. Congress established the program in 1990, and DNR is the lead state agency for the program in Washington State. The program is intended to preserve "working forests," where forestlands are managed for the production of forest products and where traditional forest uses are encouraged. These uses will include both commodity production and non-commodity values such as healthy riparian areas, important scenic, aesthetic, cultural, fish, wildlife and recreation resources, and other ecological values. Historically, the program focus has been on the I-90 Highway Corridor east of Puget Sound within the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway area. This program may be applicable to properties within the unincorporated urban area with working forest lots.

Recreation and Conservation Office Grant Programs

Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office

www.rco.wa.gov

The Recreation and Conservation Office was created in 1964 as part of the Marine Recreation Land Act. The RCO grants money to state and local agencies, generally on a matching basis, to acquire, develop, and enhance wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Some money is also distributed for planning grants. RCO grant programs utilize funds from various sources. Historically, these have included the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, state bonds, Initiative 215 monies (derived from unreclaimed marine fuel taxes), off-road vehicle funds, Youth Athletic Facilities Account and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)

This program, managed through the RCO, provides matching grants to state and local agencies to protect and enhance salmon habitat and to provide public access and recreation opportunities on aquatic lands. In 1998, DNR refocused the ALEA program to emphasize salmon habitat preservation and enhancement. However, the program is still open to traditional water access proposals. Any project must be located on navigable portions of waterways. ALEA funds are derived from the leasing of state-owned aquatic lands and from the sale of harvest rights for shellfish and other aquatic resources.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)

The RCO is a state office that allocates funds to local and state agencies for the acquisition and development of wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Funding sources managed by the RCO include the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. The WWRP is divided into Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts; these are further divided into several project categories. Cities, counties and other local sponsors may apply for funding in urban wildlife habitat, local parks, trails and water access categories. Funds for local agencies are awarded on a matching basis. Grant applications are evaluated once each year, and the State Legislature must authorize funding for the WWRP project lists.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides grants to buy land and develop public outdoor facilities, including parks, trails and wildlife lands. Grant recipients must provide at least 50% matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions. Grant program revenue is from a portion of Federal revenue derived from sale or lease of off-shore oil and gas resources.

National Recreational Trails Program

The National Recreational Trails Program (NRTTP) provides funds to maintain trails and facilities that provide a backcountry experience for a range of activities including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, motorcycling, and snowmobiling. Eligible projects include the maintenance and re-routing of recreational trails, development of trail-side and trail-head facilities, and operation of environmental education and trail safety programs. A local match of 20% is required. This program is funded through Federal gasoline taxes attributed to recreational non-highway uses.



Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) Program

The YAF provides grants to develop, equip, maintain, and improve youth and community athletic facilities. Cities, counties, and qualified non-profit organizations may apply for funding, and grant recipients must provide at least 50% matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions.

Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund

Grants are awarded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for acquisition or restoration of lands directly correlating to salmon habitat protection or recovery. Projects must demonstrate a direct benefit to fish habitat. There is no match requirement for design-only projects; acquisition and restoration projects require a 15% match. The funding source includes the sale of state general obligation bonds, the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and the state Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund.

STP/CMAQ Regional Competition

Puget Sound Regional Council

<http://psrc.org/transportation/tip/selection/>

Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds are considered the most “flexible” funding source provided through the federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). Many types of projects are eligible, including transit, carpool/vanpool, bicycle/pedestrian, safety, traffic monitoring/management, and planning projects, along with the more traditional road and bridge projects. The purpose of the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program is to fund transportation projects or programs that will contribute to attainment or maintenance of the national ambient air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide and particulate matter. The two goals of improving air quality and relieving congestion were strengthened under SAFETEA-LU by a new provision establishing priority consideration for cost-effective emission reduction and congestion mitigation activities when using CMAQ funding. The King County Growth Management Planning Council serves as the countywide board in the allocation of some federal transportation grant funds to projects within King County, through the Puget Sound Regional Council.

King County Grant Exchange

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/pi/grants.htm>

The Grant Exchange is a clearinghouse of grant and technical assistance programs offered by the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks with the goals of protecting and enhancing the environment, increasing community stewardship, and providing expertise and consultation to projects. Grants and technical support are an important way in which King County increases opportunities for community stewardship of natural resources. These funds are leveraged by developing and strengthening partnerships with community organizations and local governments. On average, every dollar invested through grants is matched by three dollars in cash and in-kind contributions.

Wild Places in City Spaces

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/pi/grant-exchange/wildplaces.htm>

Wild Places in City Spaces provides grants up to \$10,000 to volunteer organizations, community groups and government agencies for projects reforesting urban areas and restoring habitat within the urban growth area of King County. Funds are available under the Urban Reforestation and Habitat Restoration Grants Program. Grants support projects to reforest urban areas, remove invasive non-native plant species or provide wildlife habitats.

Natural Resource Stewardship Network

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/pi/grant-exchange/NRSN.htm>

The Natural Resource Stewardship Network assists urban forestry and watershed stewardship projects and provides grants and technical assistance to projects that involve communities and youth in improving neighborhood green spaces and forests. Grants of up to \$20,000 are available for projects within the urban growth area of King County that enhance, protect and manage urban forest, soil and water resources and will reimburse up to 50% of labor and materials costs. Inner-city and low income communities receive priority for support. Funds are provided by the King County Forestry Program and the King Conservation District.

WaterWorks Grants

<http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/pi/grant-exchange/waterworks.htm>

Individual grants up to \$50,000 are available for community projects that protect or improve watersheds, streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands and tidewater. Projects must have a demonstrable positive impact on the waters of King County and provide opportunities for stewardship. A minimum of 10 percent cash match is required for awards more than \$2,500.

King County Youth Sports Facilities Grant (YSFG)

The Youth Sports Facilities Grant Program is intended to facilitate new athletic opportunities for youth in King County by providing matching grant funds to rehabilitate or develop sports fields and facilities. The maximum award is \$75,000 and projects should be located on public land or have public access for the proposed youth sports use.

Other Methods & Funding Sources

Metropolitan Park District

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=35.61>

Metropolitan park districts may be formed for the purposes of management, control, improvement, maintenance and acquisition of parks, parkways and boulevards. In addition to acquiring and managing their own lands, metropolitan districts may accept and manage park and recreation lands and equipment turned over by any city within the district or by the county. Formation of a metropolitan park district



may be initiated in cities of five thousand population or more by city council ordinance, or by petition, and requires majority approval by voters for creation.

Park and Recreation District

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=36.69>

Park and recreation districts may be formed for the purposes of providing leisure-time activities and recreation facilities and must be initiated by petition of at least 15% percent of the registered voters within the proposed district. Upon completion of the petition process and review by county commissioners, a proposition for district formation and election of five district commissioners is submitted to the voters of the proposed district at the next general election. Once formed, park and recreation districts retain the authority to propose a regular property tax levy, annual excess property tax levies and general obligation bonds. All three require 60% percent voter approval and 40% percent voter turnout. With voter approval, the district may levy a regular property tax not to exceed sixty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value for up to six consecutive years.

Public Facilities District

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=35.57>

Public facilities districts may be formed to develop, redevelop, own and operate regional centers, such as convention, conference or special event centers that serve a regional population and cost at least \$10 million. A public facilities district may be created by the legislative authority of any town or city in a county with a population of less than one million or by agreement of the legislative authorities of contiguous towns or cities in a county or counties with less than one million population. The district must have boundaries coextensive with the boundaries of the town, city or group of towns and cities that create the district. PFDs governed by a five-member board appointed by the city legislative authority, or by a seven-member board appointed by the combined cities and towns. They may also charge a tax of not more than one cent on twenty cents on admissions charges to the regional center and a tax of not more than ten percent on parking charges at facilities owned or leased as part of a regional center. The district may also sell general obligation bonds and revenue bonds for authorized purposes. Voter approval requires sixty percent majority.

Business Sponsorships/Donations

Business sponsorships for programs may be available throughout the year. In-kind contributions are often received, including food, door prizes and equipment/material.

Interagency Agreements

State law provides for interagency cooperative efforts between units of government. Joint acquisition, development and/or use of park and open space facilities may be provided between Parks, Public Works and utility providers.

Private Grants, Donations & Gifts

Many trusts and private foundations provide funding for park, recreation and open space projects. Grants from these sources are typically allocated through a competitive application process and

vary dramatically in size based on the financial resources and funding criteria of the organization. Philanthropic giving is another source of project funding. Efforts in this area may involve cash gifts and include donations through other mechanisms such as wills or insurance policies. Community fund raising efforts can also support park, recreation or open space facilities and projects.

Acquisition Tools & Methods

Direct Purchase Methods

Market Value Purchase

Through a written purchase and sale agreement, the city purchases land at the present market value based on an independent appraisal. Timing, payment of real estate taxes and other contingencies are negotiable.

Partial Value Purchase (or Bargain Sale)

In a bargain sale, the landowner agrees to sell for less than the property's fair market value. A landowner's decision to proceed with a bargain sale is unique and personal; landowners with a strong sense of civic pride, long community history or concerns about capital gains are possible candidates for this approach. In addition to cash proceeds upon closing, the landowner may be entitled to a charitable income tax deduction based on the difference between the land's fair market value and its sale price.

Life Estates & Bequests

In the event a landowner wishes to remain on the property for a long period of time or until death, several variations on a sale agreement exist. In a life estate agreement, the landowner may continue to live on the land by donating a remainder interest and retaining a "reserved life estate." Specifically, the landowner donates or sells the property to the city, but reserves the right for the seller or any other named person to continue to live on and use the property. When the owner or other specified person dies or releases his/her life interest, full title and control over the property will be transferred to the city. By donating a remainder interest, the landowner may be eligible for a tax deduction when the gift is made. In a bequest, the landowner designates in a will or trust document that the property is to be transferred to the city upon death. While a life estate offers the city some degree of title control during the life of the landowner, a bequest does not. Unless the intent to bequest is disclosed to and known by the city in advance, no guarantees exist with regard to the condition of the property upon transfer or to any liabilities that may exist.

Gift Deed

When a landowner wishes to bequeath their property to a public or private entity upon their death, they can record a gift deed with the county assessors office to insure their stated desire to transfer their property to the targeted beneficiary as part of their estate. The recording of the gift deed usually involves the tacit agreement of the receiving party.

Option to Purchase Agreement

This is a binding contract between a landowner and the city that would only apply according to the conditions of the option and limits the seller's power to revoke an offer. Once in place and signed, the Option Agreement may be triggered at a future, specified date or upon the completion of designated conditions. Option Agreements can be made for any time duration and can include all of the language pertinent to closing a property sale.

Right of First Refusal

In this agreement, the landowner grants the city the first chance to purchase the property once the landowner wishes to sell. The agreement does not establish the sale price for the property, and the landowner is free to refuse to sell it for the price offered by the city. This is the weakest form of agreement between an owner and a prospective buyer.

Conservation and/or Access Easements

Through a conservation easement, a landowner voluntarily agrees to sell or donate certain rights associated with his or her property (often the right to subdivide or develop), and a private organization or public agency agrees to hold the right to enforce the landowner's promise not to exercise those rights. In essence, the rights are forfeited and no longer exist. This is a legal agreement between the landowner and the city that permanently limits uses of the land in order to conserve a portion of the property for public use or protection. The landowner still owns the property, but the use of the land is restricted. Conservation easements may result in an income tax deduction and reduced property taxes and estate taxes. Typically, this approach is used to provide trail corridors where only a small portion of the land is needed or for the strategic protection of natural resources and habitat. Through a written purchase and sale agreement, the city purchases land at the present market value based on an independent appraisal. Timing, payment of real estate taxes and other contingencies are negotiable.

Park or Open Space Dedication Requirements

Local governments have the option to require developers to dedicate land for parks under the State Subdivision Law (Ch. 58.17 RCW) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) (Ch. 43.21C RCW). Under the subdivision law developers can be required to provide the parks/recreation improvements or pay a fee in lieu of the dedicated land and its improvements. Under the SEPA requirements, land dedication may occur as part of mitigation for a proposed development's impact.

Landowner Incentive Measures

Density Bonuses

Density bonuses are a planning tool used to encourage a variety of public land use objectives, usually in urban areas. They offer the incentive of being able to develop at densities beyond current regulations in one area, in return for concessions in another. Density bonuses are applied to a single parcel or development. An example is allowing developers of multi-family units to build at higher densities if they provide a certain number of low-income units or public open space. For density bonuses to work, market forces must support densities at a higher level than current regulations.

Transfer of Development Rights

The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based planning tool that allows land owners to trade the right to develop property to its fullest extent in one area for the right to develop beyond existing regulations in another area. Local governments may establish the specific areas in which development may be limited or restricted and the areas in which development beyond regulation may be allowed. Usually, but not always, the “sending” and “receiving” property are under common ownership. Some programs allow for different ownership, which, in effect, establishes a market for development rights to be bought and sold.

IRC 1031 Exchange

If the landowner owns business or investment property, an IRC Section 1031 Exchange can facilitate the exchange of like-kind property solely for business or investment purposes. No capital gain or loss is recognized under Internal Revenue Code Section 1031 (see www.irc.gov for more details).

Current (Open Space) Use Taxation Programs

Property owners whose current lands are in open space, agricultural, and/or timber uses may have that land valued at their current use rather than their “highest and best” use assessment. This differential assessed value, allowed under the Washington Open Space Taxation Act (Ch.84.34 RCW) helps to preserve private properties as open space, farm or timber lands. If land is converted to other non-open space uses, the land owner is required to pay the difference between the current use annual taxes and highest/best taxes for the previous seven (7) years. When properties are sold to a local government or conservation organization for land conservation/preservation purposes, the required payment of seven years worth of differential tax rates is waived. The amount of this tax liability can be part of the negotiated land acquisition from private to public or quasi-public conservation purposes. King County has four current use taxation programs that offer this property tax reduction as an incentive to landowners to voluntarily preserve open space, farmland or forestland on their property. More information is available at http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/Prop_Tax/OpenSpace.pdf or <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/stewardship/sustainable-building/resource-protection-incentives.aspx>.

Other Land Protection Options

Land Trusts & Conservancies

Land trusts are private non-profit organizations that acquire and protect special open spaces and are traditionally not associated with any government agency. Forterra (formerly called the Cascade Land Conservancy) is the regional land trust serving the Maple Valley area, and their efforts have led to the conservation of more than 234,000 acres of forests, farms, shorelines, parks and natural areas in the region (www.forterra.org). Other national organizations with local representation include the Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land and the Wetlands Conservancy.

Regulatory Measures

A variety of regulatory measures are available to local agencies and jurisdictions. Available programs and regulations include: Critical Areas Ordinance, Maple Valley; State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA);



Shorelines Management Program; and Hydraulic Code, Washington State Department of Fisheries and Department of Wildlife.

Public/Private Utility Corridors

Utility corridors can be managed to maximize protection or enhancement of open space lands. Utilities maintain corridors for provision of services such as electricity, gas, oil, and rail travel. Some utility companies have cooperated with local governments for development of public programs such as parks and trails within utility corridors. Two utility corridors slice through southern sections of Maple Valley providing linear opportunities for parks, trails and connections to neighborhoods.

