

III. Parks and Recreation Element

The Vision Statement provided in the Introduction of this Comprehensive Plan highlight the community’s desire to foster open space networking, including recreational opportunities, districts, and landmarks, as well as preserve natural features. In particular, the community sees Shelton as:

- A community that protects and enhances its natural setting of forested hillsides, natural valley landscape, streams, wetlands, waterfront, and mountains for the common benefit.
- A community with a sense of community pride evidenced by well-maintained streets, buildings, parks, houses, and yards.
- A community with an open space network linking neighborhoods, business districts, civic landmarks, and recreational opportunities with trails, sidewalks, bike paths, and natural features.

Existing Conditions

The City of Shelton Parks and Recreation Plan is currently being updated with an estimated completion schedule of Spring 2018. Its goals and policies are incorporated into this element (see below), and the plan is hereby incorporated for planning purposes into this Comprehensive Plan as the Parks and Recreation Element.

The City has eleven developed park/recreation sites, including Brewer Park, Callanan Park, Catalyst Park, Johnson Park, Kneeland Park, Overlook Park, Post Office Park, Loop Field, the Huff and Puff Trail, Shelton Skate Park, and Sixth Street Park. Undeveloped park sites include Eagle Point, Vogtlin-Angle Park, and the Northcliff Neighborhood Park, the property dedicated to the City in conjunction with the approval of the Terrace Heights subdivision. Recently, the City acquired approximately 12 acres of land and tidelands on the South side of Oakland Bay/Shelton Harbor known as “Eagle Point” that may serve as a passive use, water access, park in the future.

In addition to the City parks, community residents use the athletic fields and play equipment available at local schools.

Other community facilities that offer meeting rooms to accommodate recreational and community programs include Memorial Hall, and the Mason Transit Transportation-Community Center. Nearby recreational areas include Walker Park (one mile east of Shelton), Mason County Recreation Area and South Mason Youth Soccer Park (2 miles northeast of Shelton), Island Lake Access (1.3 miles north of Shelton), and Arcadia Point Boat Launch (7 miles east of Shelton). The City also offers a variety of youth, teen and adult recreation programs, such as softball, volleyball and basketball.

In addition to the designated City parks, the City is blessed with a wide range of open spaces and undeveloped lands. Many of these areas feature environmentally sensitive areas and are best left in their natural state. Some areas may be suitable for passive recreational activities such as walking, bird watching, etc.

Parks And Recreation Goals And Policies

P1. The City Parks Department shall provide the organizational support and leadership necessary for all staff to excel at the mission of the Shelton Parks and Recreation District.

- P1a. The City shall unify staff through a central mission to excel as a team.
- P1b. The City shall empower and lead department personnel to professional success.
- P1c. The City shall stay engaged in the needs and concerns of the City as it relates to the Parks and Recreation Department issues.
- P1d. The City shall ensure financial integrity of the department that encourages cost savings while sustaining quality service.
- P1e. The City shall seek and create partnerships wherever possible and pursue additional funding sources.
- P1f. The City shall encourage community support through positive and responsive vision and image of the City of Shelton Parks and Recreation Department.
- P1g. The City Parks Department Staff shall provide superior and accessible customer service in a professional, informative, and timely manner.

P2. The City Parks Department shall plan, acquire, and develop a diverse system of quality parks and recreation facilities that are safe, attractive, and accessible to the community.

- P2a. The City shall provide an open and continuing opportunity for the public to participate, comment, and offer direction to the development of recreational facilities, open space, and activities.
- P2b. The City shall acquire and preserve land for coming generations, and develop parks to meet both the existing and future demand including multi-use activities and open space preservation.
- P2c. The City shall analyze existing parks programs and expand them based on public input and available funding.
- P2d. The City shall identify local and regional standards and trends for use in park and facility planning.
- P2e. The City shall engage in ongoing dialogue with county, state, tribal, and federal organizations to assure coordination of policy plans, goals, and objectives.

P3. The City shall develop and funding strategy that takes advantage of all available resources for park acquisition, development, and maintenance.

- P3a. The City should seek broad and creative funding for parks acquisition, development, and maintenance, including grants, utility funds, loans, bond levies, donations, real estate excise tax, impact fees, and any other available sources.
- P3b. The City should continually monitor and analyze facility use and program fees.
- P3c. The City should develop funding strategies that aim to partner public and private resources.
- P3d. The City should seek adequate funding and timely development of park facilities in accordance with the annual budget and capital facilities plan.

P4. The City shall provide a system of safe, clean, and accessible parks and facilities that make effective use of existing natural features that is distributed to provide maximum benefit to the community.

P4a. The City will develop both active and passive use park facilities that are available to as many persons as possible.

P4b. The City shall provide multi-use recreational opportunities, as appropriate, at parks facilities consistent with the intended use of the site.

P4c. The City will make every attempt to locate parks and facilities in all areas of the City for maximum public benefit.

P4d. The City will provide, where appropriate, interpretive information regarding environmental attributes of its parks.

P4e. The City will provide containers for the disposal of waste and recycling at its park facilities.

P4f. The City will provide clear and concise park rules, regulations, hours, fees, and acceptable use/behaviors when appropriate.

P5. The City will promote tourism through provision of appealing parks, entryways, and programs.

P5a. The City will encourage non-city residents to participate in recreation programs.

P5b. The City will design and maintain the City's entryways to provide a positive sense of arrival to visitors.

P5c. The City should explore regional events and programs that promote visitors to the City.

P6. The City will endeavor to connect parks, neighborhoods, and recreation facilities through a system of trails and sidewalks.

P6a. The City will work with other jurisdictions, as possible, to establish linkages and connecting trails.

P6b. The City will work to develop pedestrian access and trails within existing and all future parks.

P6c. The City will work with landowners to identify natural corridors that may be able to serve as trail corridors.

P6d. The City will work to provide trails and pedestrian access that accommodates all segments of the population.

P7. The City will work to preserve and protect its natural resources through the provision of resource management strategies and programs.

P7a. Explore avenues, such as grants, that can help preserve forested areas, hillsides, and slopes.

P7b. The City will work with other entities to establish open space corridors and linkages with other significant regional open spaces.

P7c. The City will work to retain City owned lands, including excess right-of-way, for open space purposes where appropriate.

P7d. The City will promote the use of native and drought tolerant vegetation in the City's parks and open spaces when appropriate for the site. P7e. The City will work to maintain wildlife corridors to provide linkages for wildlife movement between and about wildlife habitat areas.

P8. The City will work to provide access to water for recreational uses.

P8a. The City will work to identify future sites and partnerships to acquire salt and fresh water access in the City.

P8b. The City will utilize a variety of methods to acquire, restore, and preserve Creeks and other water bodies within City limits.

P9. The City will work to promote the cultural and historic features of its parks and facilities.

P9a. The City will work to utilize historic features and events at parks sites to assist in development alternatives.

P9b. The City will provide interpretive signage and markers to provide education regarding cultural and historic events, locations, and happenings.

P10. The City will maintain its parks and facilities in a safe, attractive, and available condition during as much of the year as possible.

- P10a. The City will endeavor to reduce replacement costs and extend the life of facilities and equipment through preventative maintenance.
- P10b. The City will establish and maintain regular maintenance and safety inspections of parks and facilities.
- P10c. The City will endeavor to provide standardized signs, equipment, materials, and other amenities, where feasible, to support maintenance efficiencies.
- P10d. The City will encourage and promote staff training and education opportunities to facilitate professional development.

P11. The City will acquire land for future parks, trails, and open space when such lands are available and affordable to meet the present and future community and user demands and needs.

- P11a. The City will maintain the adopted level of service standard of 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents as a goal, dependent upon funding availability, and adopt a minimum level of service standard of 4 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.
- P11b. The City will prioritize acquisition and development of parkland in underserved areas of the City including: Hillcrest, Beverly Heights, Northcliff, and Springfield Park/Shelton Springs.
- P11c. The City will, when possible, acquire land that will enhance the size of existing City parks.
- P11d. The City will acquire parkland in accordance with the annual budget and capital facilities plan.
- P11e. The City will work with other entities and private landowners to secure the donation of land for parks, trails, and open space, when possible and in the best interest of the City.
- P11f. The City will regularly review potential parks, trails, and open space sites in the UGA as well as related facilities needed to provide the recommended level of service.
- P11g. The City will plan for the location of parks in the proximity of high-density development.

P12. The City will coordinate parks, trails, and open space planning and development with appropriate jurisdictions, organizations, and individuals to maximize opportunities, minimize duplication, and enhance service to the community.

P12a. The City will coordinate the Parks Plan with other elements of the City of Shelton Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations. The location and design of park facilities should further the goals of the Comprehensive Plan whenever possible.

P12b. The City will pursue cooperative planning efforts with Mason County in the UGA to provide parks, trails, and open space in future annexation areas.

P12c. The City will support joint planning, coordination, maintenance, and development of facilities with the Shelton School District as possible