

## **RESOLUTION #22-691**

### **A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF TWISP, WASHINGTON, ADOPTING THE COMPREHENSIVE PARKS & RECREATION PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Twisp performs comprehensive parks and recreation planning in order to guide and support future park and recreation programming and parks capital improvement budgets and to maintain eligibility for grants from the Washington State Recreation Conservation Office (RCO); and

**WHEREAS**, the RCO requires that the Town's Parks and Recreation be updated every 6 years, be adopted by resolution of the Town Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town has commissioned its Parks and Recreation Commission to update the Parks & Recreation Plan and has prepared an updated Plan that meets the Town's needs and complies with the RCO's requirements; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parks & Recreation Commission have sought and provided opportunities for the public to review and provide comment on the Plan, through multiple media outlets, publicly noticed meetings and survey formats; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parks & Recreation Commission have completed review and modification of the Plan and have forwarded the Plan to the Town Council for adoption;

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF TWISP, WASHINGTON,  
DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The Parks & Recreation Plan, dated April 2022, is hereby adopted as the Parks & Recreation Plan for the Town of Twisp.

Section 2. A copy of the Plan, in the form adopted by this resolution, shall be authenticated and recorded by the Town Clerk along with this resolution and shall be filed in the office of the Town Clerk for use and examination by the public.

Section 3. Effective Date. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon passage by the Twisp Town Council.

**PASSED** by the Town Council this 24<sup>th</sup> day of May 2022

**APPROVED:**

  
Soo Ing-Moody, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Randy Kilmer, Clerk/Treasurer

2022

# Town of Twisp Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan



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## **Acknowledgements**

This plan was compiled, prepared, drafted, and written by volunteer members of the Town of Twisp Parks and Recreation Commission. The Commission was originally established in 1996 and modified in 2015 by Ord. 687. It is composed of a voluntary board of citizens who advise Town of Twisp Town Council on plans and updates related to parks and recreation.

The duties of the Parks and Recreation Commission are as follows:

- (1) Provide recommendations to the town council for review and periodic updating of the town's comprehensive plan;
- (2) Advise the town council and mayor regarding the general planning of all parks, recreational facilities, and recreational programs of the town of Twisp. The commission may advise and make recommendations regarding entering into written contracts with the United States, the state, county, or city, town, park or recreation district or other entity or organization for the purpose of conducting a recreational program or exercising any duty of this chapter;
- (3) Cause the preparation and conveyance of reports to the Town Council, including findings of fact and recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Commission;
- (4) Such other related duties as requested by the mayor, town planner or the town council, or as prescribed by ordinance or the laws of the state of Washington. (Ord. 687 § 6, 2015)

## **2022 Parks and Recreation Commission Members**

Sarah Schrock  
Nick Hershenow  
Sandy Liman  
Steve Kern  
Jim Brennan

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This is an update and revision of the 2014 Twisp Trails and Recreation Plan, which in turn drew heavily upon the 2014 Twisp Non-Motorized Recreation Plan. This Plan incorporates goals and priorities for town parks as well as trails, while maintaining the Town's eligibility for State Recreation and Conservation (RCO) Grants. This update emphasizes a comprehensive approach to parks and open space planning for the Town as it develops, as well as prioritizing trails to connect recreational spaces and facilities within town and throughout the valley.

The Town of Twisp, in the heart of the Methow Valley on the eastern flank of the Cascades, boasts a unique townscape and artistic identity that draws from the natural beauty of its surroundings, a rich agricultural legacy, many and varied recreational opportunities, and a favored location at the confluence of the Twisp and Methow Rivers. These free flowing, wild rivers create more than four miles of shoreline within town limits and are an important focus of efforts to restore salmon and steelhead in the Upper Columbia Basin.

Twisp has a population of close to 1,000, including many retirees as well as many young families. A large number of people in the unincorporated areas surrounding Twisp consider it "their town". The traditional economic base of agriculture, extractive industries, and manufacturing has shifted over the past several decades to a mix of services, tourism, arts, and Internet-based work, though family ranches and small produce farms remain part of the fabric of the landscape. In general, many residents and visitors are drawn to an active, outdoor lifestyle and the small-town intimacy found in Twisp.

### **Recreational Access**

Close to town are large tracts of public lands, both State and Federal lands. These lands provide unparalleled access for outdoor recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, skiing, dirt biking, fishing, rafting and kayaking, and water sports. However, very little direct pedestrian access from town exists to nearby trail systems.

Just north of Twisp, Methow Trails, a private non-profit trails association, manages the nation's largest groomed cross-country trail system, as well as a system of summer trails. Many of these trails cross private land on owner-permitted easements. To the east, the Loup Loup Ski Bowl offers downhill skiing and tube sledding in the winter and is expanding access to mountain biking in the summer. Linkages to these trail networks are a priority. The TWIN trail that would link Winthrop to Twisp and to much of the regional trail system is now the top priority of Methow Trails.

### **Summary of Recent Past Recreational Planning Efforts**

Twisp created a Parks and Recreation Commission by ordinance in 1996. Beginning in 2008-2009, a concerted effort was made to prioritize and develop recreational facilities, trails, and pedestrian and bicycle routes through and around town.

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan calls on the Park and Recreation Commission of the Town to assist the Town Council in developing community-driven plans for recreational opportunities in Town. The Plan also states: "In addition to the pedestrian and bicycle routes recommended in the Past Transportation Element, a comprehensive trail system will also help create a sense of community by connecting parks, neighborhoods and natural areas while providing recreation and enjoyment for residents and visitors."

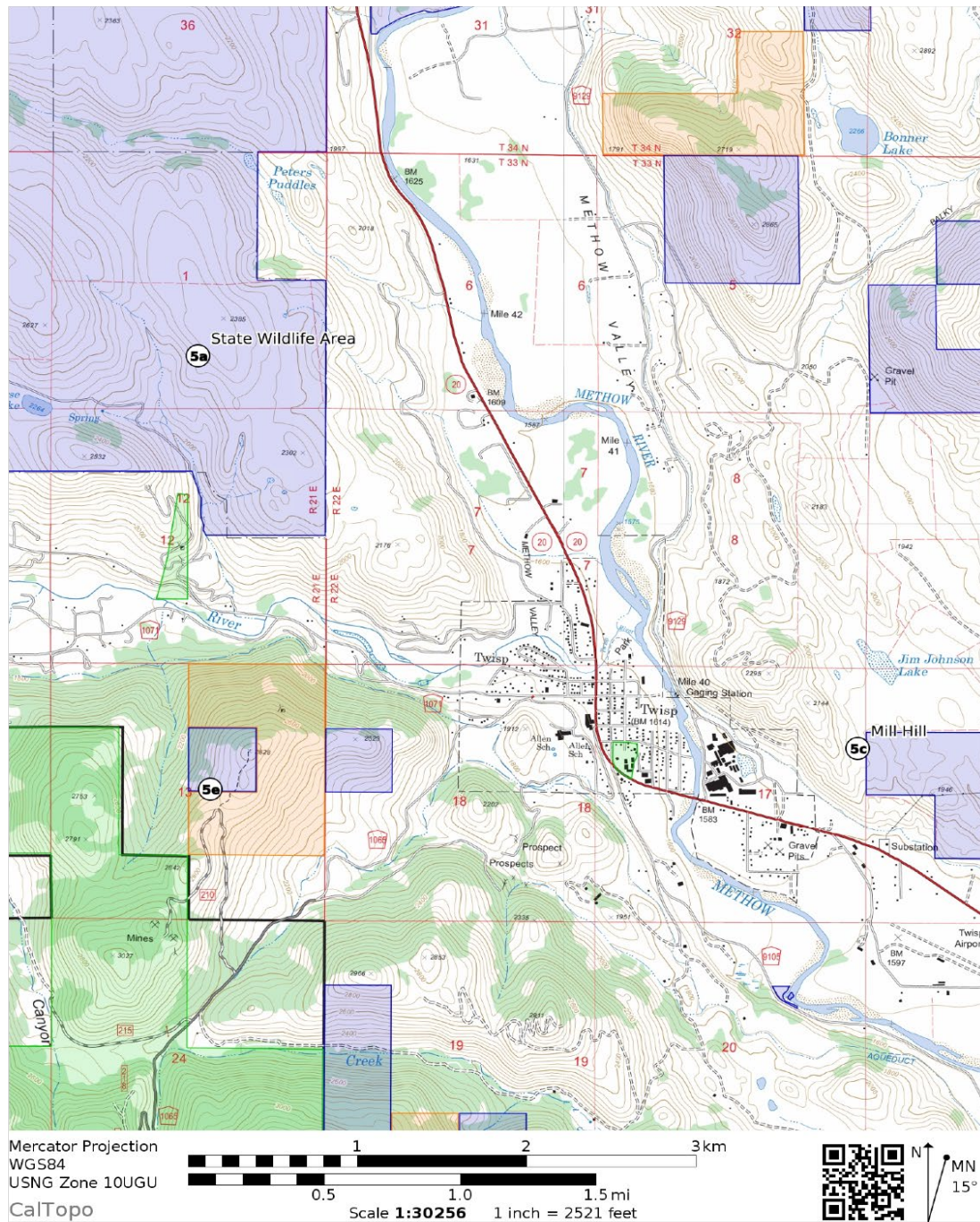
A 2010 update to the Plan added:

"Twisp has an opportunity to obtain a strong recreation base comprised of parks and trail systems. [To fulfill those opportunities], It will be important to acquire new properties for recreation and open space and to establish new programs to accommodate growth and changing needs."

In 2009, the Wagner Mill site on the east side of the Methow River was rezoned as Commercial-Riverfront, which includes a requirement in all development proposals to include a right-of-way or easement for public access along the entire river shoreline. This development requirement provides a mechanism for establishing a trail system that has been envisioned in two complementary plans: 1) the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (2014), providing an analysis and master plan of existing and recommended pedestrian and bicycle routes, including sidewalks and bike lanes, and a blueprint for a non-motorized trail system, and 2) the Trail and Recreation Plan (2014), further refining and prioritizing those plans.

This comprehensive parks and recreation plan expands upon previous trail emphases, but also includes upgrades to existing parks, a new aquatics center, a recreation center, and open space plans.

## Town of Twisp and surrounding public recreational land



## Chapter 2: Mission, Goals, and Objectives

In addition to trails, this plan continues to focus on improvements to town parks, as well as several new goals, reflecting changing needs and demands of a growing and diverse population. **A comprehensive vision of the plan is of a designated trail/route linking Twisp Park at the north end of town with the Sports Complex at the south end.**

These goals and objectives include some that are more aspirational or long-term and others that could be more quickly and easily realized through small community volunteer efforts. Community partnerships are critical for implementation., which is also, of course, dependent on funding availability and/or volunteer initiative.

The Town needs to be proactive in protecting and acquiring connection and access. Undeveloped rights of way and vacant lands that have provided pedestrian access should be part of the Town's budgeting cycles for easement and acquisition. A separate parks and open space fund should be considered to implement the goals of this plan.

The 'recommended actions' are summarized here. Most are discussed in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

The goals and objectives are guided by the following mission statement and principles:

### **Mission Statement:**

***Establish and maintain a diverse system of parks, trails, and recreational facilities to meet the needs of town, valley residents, and visitors for year-round recreational opportunities.***

### **Guiding Principles**

1. Recreation, including physical exercise, group activities, and connection with the natural world is essential to health, happiness, and strong community.
2. Well-cared for recreational assets will stimulate the local economy by increasing tourism revenue, by encouraging the private sector to invest locally, and by adding value to adjacent housing and other development.
3. Both active and passive recreational spaces and facilities should be provided, serving a variety of users with varying needs.

4. While the Town of Twisp owns and is committed to maintaining town recreational and park amenities, it must be recognized that many of these assets are used by and benefit the broader Methow Valley community. Therefore, where appropriate, a regional approach for long-term operations, funding, and development must be sought.
5. Respect for privacy and property ownership for landowners who own land adjacent to planned trails or facilities or where easements, right-of- ways, or acquisitions are required for development, should be maintained through open communication and collaborative approaches.

**GOAL 1 Maintain and improve existing town park facilities and create new facilities where appropriate and sustainable.**

**Objective 1.1.** Improve function and maintenance of existing facilities.

Recommended Actions

- Hire a seasonal maintenance person
- Organize a volunteer work corps to assist in the maintenance of town parks
- Replace/rebuild the playground in Twisp Park

**Objective 1.2.** Develop new park amenities and expansions

Recommended Actions

- Complete Phase I of Sports Complex
- Assess Phase II for any possible modifications
- Build restrooms in Twisp Park
- Make improvements in Maves Memorial Park (Glover Street)
- Other possible park improvements (for Twisp Park, Sports Complex, or other town-owned property):
  - an outdoor climbing/bouldering structure
  - skateboard park
  - pump track
  - community gardens.
- Develop river access points that may include signage, trail linkage, pocket parks, and/or boat launches and ramps.

**Objective 1.3:** Create more indoor recreational opportunities.

Recommended Actions

- Support and advocate for the building of a Recreation Center to increase indoor recreation options, especially during winter months and smoky summers.
- Support and advocate for the remodeling/rebuilding of the Wagner Pool, with expanded seasonal operation, ideally integrated with the Recreation Center.

**GOAL 2:** Continue to develop Town trail system for recreation, connectivity, and access to public spaces.

**Objective 2.1:** Develop new and existing town trails and pedestrian connectors, with a special emphasis on river access and on developing a designated north end to south end Twisp trail/route. Existing informal connectors through formal agreements, easements, and/or right of ways when necessary to tie existing and proposed facilities together.

Recommended Actions (specific trail recommendations are found in Chapter 4)

- Organize work crews of local volunteers and build trails! (Possibly with assistance from organizations such as Methow Trails and the Trails Collaborative).
- Seek grant opportunities to help build any projects that may require more substantial funding.
- Establish formal agreements, easements, and/or right of ways when necessary to ensure continued public access to informal connector trails.

**Objective 2.2:** Develop recreational and commuter trail links to nearby public (and possibly private) lands.

Recommended Actions

- Coordinate with Methow Trails to ensure in-town connectivity to proposed TWIN trail
- Work with landowners to obtain and ensure access/easements across private land to adjacent public lands
- Work with Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, Methow Trails, and other organizations on regional connections

**GOAL 3.** Encourage year-round use of existing facilities.

**Objective 3.1:** Coordinate with local and regional partners to develop new year-round programs, activities, and attractions.

Possible Actions

- 'Winter Festival' partnering with the Loup, Ski Shop, Methow Trails.
- X country ski trail at the Sports Complex
- Summer concerts in the park with Cascadia and Methow Arts.
- Walking/running groups w/ Family Health Centers and Aero Methow.
- Partnerships with youth sports clubs
- YMCA, Boys and Girls clubs.
- Public art through Methow Arts and Confluence Gallery.

**GOAL 4.** Help develop stable operational and maintenance funding for those recreational facilities used regionwide (swimming pool, rec center, sports complex etc., river access).

**Objective 4.1:** Work with local community groups to assess the support for and study the creation of a Recreation District that would coordinate and more reliably and equitably fund regional recreation facilities.

- Form a committee with Council representation.

**Objective 4.2:** Participate in Regional and Statewide planning for river trails, access plans, and safety programs.

- Whitewater/river safety programs and educational resources
- Boat launch and hand craft launches
- White water course

## Chapter 3: Inventory and Recommendations for Improvements of Existing Parks, Trails, and River Access Points

This inventory of parks and trails provides a starting point from which improvement needs can be identified. Included in the inventory are facilities owned and operated by the Town of Twisp, as well as others operated by organizations such as the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation and TwispWorks.

While the permanent population of the Town of Twisp is just under 1,000 residents, it is important to note that amenities in Town serve a wider population in the Methow Valley. For example, the Wagner Memorial Swimming Pool, Twisp Commons Park, Sports Complex, and Twisp Park are regularly used by regional visitors and residents of the entire valley.

### 1. Parks

#### 1a. Twisp Park

**Location:** At the north end of Lincoln Street, adjacent to the confluence of the Twisp and Methow Rivers.



**Size:** 130,680 sq ft developed, 3 acres riparian/beach

**Activities:**

Nature trail, picnic area, playground, open field space, swimming, basketball and pickleball, beach and river access, public gathering, bandstand

**History:**

The approximately 6-acre site, at least 4 acres of it in lawn and mature trees, was donated in 1963 to the Town by the Webb family, who homesteaded here early in the century. The property was the site of the Town's first water well and once hosted a federal Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp. The Wagner family, who owned the mill in town, provided heavy equipment that improved the park grounds and protected it from future flood damage. Donations of time, equipment, and materials from these and many other benefactors have created a valuable recreational asset in this park.

## **Recreational Facilities at this Site:**

Wagner Memorial Swimming Pool: Originally built in 1967 with donated funds from the Wagner family, the pool was renovated in 2001 and again in 2016. RCO provided funding for the 2001 renovation and the Friends of the Pool provided 2016 funds through donations. It is the only public pool in the Methow Valley.

The pool hosts several successful programs that are thriving because of the 2001 infusion of capital from RCO, annual \$15,000 disbursement payments from the Wagner Trust, and the active support of the Friends of the Pool who have raised over \$400,000 to support the maintenance of the pool since 2004. The Methow Valley Killer Whale Swim Club uses the pool for its swim season and has had over 100 members in each of the past six years competing in the regional swim meets. In addition to swim team, a successful aerobics and lap swim program, the pool's swim lesson sessions are generally near capacity. This pool is considered by residents and visitors to be one of the jewels of the valley.

**Assessment:** A 2019 condition assessment of the Pool was conducted by Terracon, an international pool consultancy through funds made available via Friends of the Pool with a grant from the Methow Fund. This assessment identified a range of out-of-date safety and code infractions. These issues, coupled with the age of facility, on-going cracking of the shell of the structure, and expanded needs of the community, point to the very near-future need for an updated facility to serve current and future swimmers. A 2019 public survey by Friends of the Pool showed great interest in a year-round pool option and the majority of swimmers enjoy the current location. Other offerings like adult swim lessons, expanded lap swim, and private rentals could be added to the current programming.

Picnic Shelter: The Webb family and the Kiwanis built the shelter in 1991 and have maintained it as a quality structure just a few yards from the river (protected by a levee).

Cascadia Band Shell: In 1995, the local non-profit organization Cascadia built the band shell to host musical and theatre events in the open-air. The band shell has been the setting for the annual the Methow Arts "Arts in the Park", many Cascadia-sponsored concerts and Merc Playhouse productions, and other gatherings and events.

**Assessment:** The Bandshell is in need of electrical/sound and light modernization as well as structural upgrades. These improvements are included in the current Town Capital Facilities Plan.

Basketball Courts & Playground: In 2005 the Town completed the installation of safe children's playground equipment, installed accessible paths and parking, and constructed a new basketball area using RCO funding.

**Assessment:** The backboards and court surface are in need of repair. Current use of the basketball court is high and includes skateboarders and small children on bikes (who also

frequently use the adjacent parking area. This points to the need for another facility to accommodate other uses.

#### Beach Access

Sand and cobble and beaches with meandering channels and a great swimming hole.

#### Parkland Open Space

Mature Ponderosa pines and well-maintained, and well-used, lawn adjacent to the Confluence of Methow and Twisp Rivers.

Children's Playground: The playground was built with help from the Kiwanis in the early 2000s. It is well-used and enjoyed by many children and families but is in need of an upgrade or replacement.

**Condition Assessment:** The playground equipment is aged and is only suited for young children. More varied and challenging structures appropriate for a variety of ages and abilities should be considered.

**Recommendation:** A Master Plan for Twisp Park (or for all the town parks) should be considered, given its growing use and piecemeal development over time. A master plan could achieve better layout of programmed spaces and determine which improvement projects are appropriate and achievable for the park, including a skate park, pump track, new band-shell, remodeled pool and/or bouldering rock area.

### 1b. Twisp Commons Park

**Location:** Adjacent to the Methow Valley Community Center (MVCC) between Highway 20 and Johnson Street.

Size: 29,500 sq ft



Twisp Commons Park - Photo from Google Earth

**Activities:** A passive park with native plantings and sculptures use for community gatherings, market overflow, picnics, and repose.

**History:** This is the site of the original tennis courts for the Twisp High School. This property was converted in the early 2000's with volunteer labor and financial contributions into its current use as a community gathering area, using native plantings and grassy areas with modern irrigation.

**Recreational Facilities at this Site:** Twisp Commons Park provides respite and picnic space for Farmer's Market goers and can be used for other activities related to

the Farmer's Market or as a meeting spot for young families walking around town. The plantings are maintained by volunteers.

**Recommendations:**

- Sign for Twisp Commons Park
- Clarify long-term maintenance of perennial garden with volunteers
- Refurbish sand box/play features
- Continue to support artwork installations

**1c. Maves Memorial Park**



**Location:** 135 South Glover Street, downtown.  
**Size:** 4,500 sf

**Activities:** Downtown green space and visitor rest stop.

**History:** Dr. Maves established a popular dental practice on Glover Street. After his passing, his family donated the lot next to his practice to the Town for a pocket park.

**Recreational Facilities at this Site:** Mature shade trees, bench, dog sanitation station, small grassy area.

**Assessment and Recommendations:**

Despite its central location this park does not see a lot of use. A few modest improvements could make it a more appealing place, consistent with the original goal of creating a quiet and restful wayside. These could include:

- Picnic table/benches
- artwork/sculpture
- mural on adjacent building

**1d. Twisp Sports Complex (Airport)**

**Location:** Twisp Airport Road southeast of Twisp, 1.35 miles from the intersection of Highway 20 and Glover Street.



**Size** 10.1 Acres

**Activities:** Baseball field, soccer field, walking/running on perimeter ½ mile track, dog walking, open space.

**History:** The municipal airport property was annexed by the Town, although it is not contiguous with the town boundary. The area on the south side of the runway had been used for many years up through the 1980's for different community events such as horse races, vehicle racing, and other competitions. The Kiwanis and other com-

munity members provided labor and materials to construct a league-sized baseball field and soccer field at this site. The airport's improvement club has developed a grassy camping area for visiting pilots and a grass landing strip for gliders on the north side of the runway.

**Recreational Facilities at this Site:** Ball fields, camping area, flying instruction, glider events and other aviation activities.

**Assessment:** The demand for more sports fields is growing with the influx of new families to the region and growth of organized sports in the valley. To respond to that need, the Town applied for and received RCO funding in 2018 to expand and redevelop the sports complex. The main focus of Phase 1 of this construction, currently underway, is the construction of a baseball field and a soccer field.

#### **Recommendations and Considerations:**

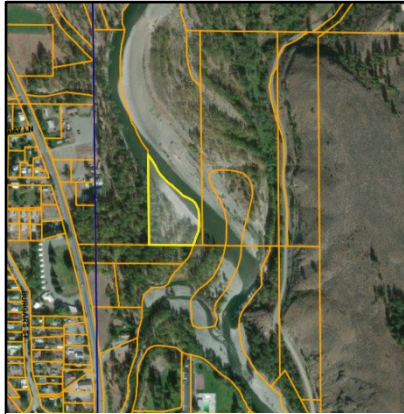
Phase II – Re-evaluate goals and design. Some possibilities:

- Assess feasibility of a Skate Park and/or Pump Track, including whether these should be built here or in Twisp Park
- Consider Winter x country ski trail
- Maintain the perimeter trail for ½ mile track
- Establish an off-leash dog area
- Consider feasibility of a site for a valley-wide Recreation/Aquatics Center

#### **1e. Aaron Johnson Park**

**Location:** Just north of the confluence of the Twisp and Methow Rivers and behind the Community Covenant Church. The property lies on both sides of the Methow River.

**Size:** 3 acres



Aaron Johnson Open Space -  
Photo from Okanogan County  
Map Sifter

**Purpose:** Open space, nature preserve, riparian area, beach access.

**History:** This property, formerly the site of an Indian village and later a fish hatchery, was donated by the Johnson family for open space and recreation purposes. Over the years, some of this area, which is within the active floodplains of the two rivers, has been altered if not lost due to erosion and flooding.

**Recreational Facilities at this Site:** This property offers a great riparian habitat conservation opportunity within the floodplains of two rivers. Some people walk the area and access the Confluence swimming hole from this side (there is an informal, unmaintained user path), but it's not commonly recognized as public property.

**Assessment and recommendation:** Further development is not recommended, since this is a natural floodplain area subject to deposition and bank erosion from both the Twisp and Methow Rivers. However, access could be better clarified. And a recent proposal by the Yakama Nation would, pending Town approval and the acquisition of grant monies, enlarge this property by about 9 acres, while initiating a bank stabilization effort. This project, if realized, would open new opportunities for trails and other amenities consistent with fisheries/river restoration goals.

## **Other Properties (non-town-owned):**

### **1f. Methow Salmon Recovery Ponds**

The Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF) initiated efforts to protect and enhance the area now known as the Salmon Recovery Project in 2002, using grants from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to acquire two parcels along the Twisp River just west of the Town boundary at Borchard Lane. "Twisp Ponds" now includes more than 20 acres of restored riparian area, a system of dikes, ditches, and ponds where juvenile salmon are reared and monitored, nature trails, and public art (sculptures) installed in cooperation with Methow Arts. Though the property is intended primarily as a wildlife refuge, with an emphasis on habitat preservation rather than recreation, the trails are well-used by locals, and the Foundation, school groups, and others use the area for outdoor education. The trails are accessible from public streets and walkable from town. A small parking lot/trailhead is located along Twisp River Road.



6 Salmon Recovery Rearing Bonds - Photo from Google Earth

## 1g. TwispWorks

**Location:** Situated along Glover Street, Highway 20, and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

In 2008 the Town created the Twisp Public Development Authority (PDA) for the purpose of purchasing 6+ acres of Forest Service property (former ranger district grounds). The Twisp PDA was successful in purchasing the property and securing it for community uses in 2009. A master plan completed in July 2010 was the result of almost two years of public input and focus group work.

The growth and evolution of the Twisp Works campus over the past ten years has been impressive. Among current amenities:



Twisp Works Campus. Open space, community plaza, splash pad, and bandshell

- 1) 17 buildings which now serve as public gathering spaces or are leased to local artists, small business, the local newspaper, radio station, and a small preschool/daycare.
- 2) the central plaza that includes lawn, gardens, covered stage, splash pad, and public art.
- 3) South green space that includes a firepit, storm-water detention, and landscaping
- 4) Native garden which hosts a formal garden designed with native plants, local art, Native-American pit house and interpretive centers.
- 5) Highway 20 greenbelt with many large shade and ornamental trees, creating an inviting and intriguing entrance to downtown Twisp.

## 2. Trails

**2a. Twisp Ponds (Methow Salmon Recovery)** – A small network of footpaths (a little over a mile total) winds among the ponds and through the cottonwoods, accessing the Twisp River at several locations. These trails connect to the parking area on the Twisp River Road and also to Borchard Lane in Twisp (pedestrian access only, no public parking).

**2b. Riverside Trail – Twisp Park and Hottel Property** – This recently constructed (in part) trail was a priority in the 2014 plan. It follows the riverbank through Twisp Park and the adjoining Hottel Property, then turns west to skirt an apartment complex and connect to Methow Street. It has suffered some damage from recent high-water flows and bank erosion here remains a concern.

## Connectors

Informal connector paths facilitate a walkable, bikeable town environment that should be further developed and formalized. These paths are often located at dead-end streets or through vacant lots. Some are rights-of-way and others pass through private property, with public passage permitted, or at least not hindered, by the landowners.



**2c. May Street to Community Center**. Town right of way and private ownership. This is a well-used neighborhood connector to town. A portion of it passes through private land.

**Assessment:** Acquisition or right-of-way should be prioritized as this path is a critical connector.



**2d. Methow St Connector 1** Town right-of-way. Pedestrian/ bicycle connection from dead-end Methow St. to highway behind TwispWorks and Cascade Pipe. Corridor could benefit from beautification and smoothing out of the pathway.



**2e. Methow-Canyon St Connector 2** Town right-of-way. Pedestrian paths connecting Methow St dead-ends and complex between Methow and Canyon St. **Assessment:** This connector path is not clearly established and has fallen into disuse. A volunteer work crew could clean it up and build a well-defined and well-graded path.



**2f. Underpass at Hwy 20 Methow River Bridge** DOT right-of-way and private (American Legion property). De facto connection beneath highway bridge.

**Assessment:** Formal designation and development of this connector could get pedestrians and bicyclists from one side of the highway to the other without exposure to traffic. It could also be incorporated into other potential trails and routes.

### 3. River Access Points

The free-flowing Twisp and Methow Rivers are beautiful natural corridors that define the layout of the town. They offer recreational fishing, swimming, floating, wildlife viewing and habitat, and great scenic qualities.

There are several street ends, alleys, and other publicly owned properties that have potential to be established as small pocket parks, pedestrian pathways, or river access points. These spots are not clearly identified and whatever use they receive is informal or unrecognized. Some are encroached upon by adjacent property owners, creating an unwelcoming environment to the general public who should otherwise have access to these areas. As with the in-town connectors, it is important that Twisp does not vacate or allow encroachment by nearby residents of public rights-of-way to the rivers, consistent with the Town of Twisp Shoreline Management Plan.

#### **Recommendations for river access points:**

Formalize access points through signage. Official designation of river access points is one of the priorities this plan. Publicly owned river access points should be formally recognized through small signage and in some cases some development of seating or water entry, depending on local neighborhood interest. Locals use neighborhood spots where rights-of-way terminate at the river and these areas should be recognized. Signage could be a simple icon or symbol indicating that public access is allowed, for example:



#### Boat ramp access should be considered

River use has increased in recent years. While the State Department of Fish and Wildlife have developed access sites throughout the Methow River, currently there is no put-in site for larger watercraft (rafts, drift boats) in Town limits and only one official river access, at Twisp Park.

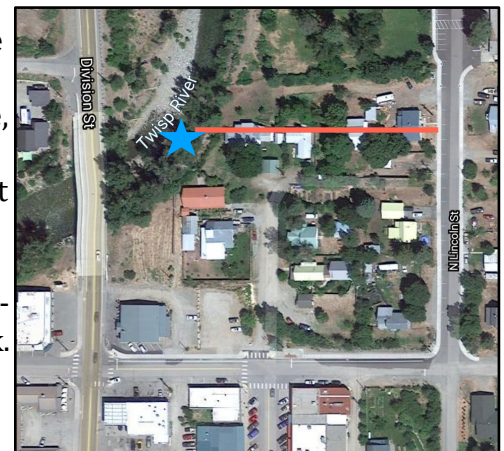
**3a. Twisp River Burger Street Access Point** - North and South of the Twisp River is a Town right-of-way along where an old bridge was located. On the south side the right-of-way becomes Magers St, and on the north, Ainsworth.

**Assessment and Recommendation:** The site is currently used as informal pedestrian access for river wading and viewing. The 2014 Plan pointed to this as a potential location for a pedestrian river bridge. If a need for future pedestrian crossing is established, this site could be utilized. For now, public access should be clarified with small signage.



**3b Massey Wills Lane from Lincoln Street to Twisp Riverbank** - Two town access rights-of-way converge at the edge of Twisp just east of the Highway 20 Bridge behind stormwater area. The longer of the two, Massey Wills Lane, runs east terminating at Lincoln Street where it enters the Twisp Park. Massey Wills Lane is currently not used except for access to two properties on its west end.

**Assessment and Recommendation:** The 2014 plan identified this pathway as a natural connection to the Twisp Park. Such a connection, and any development of the riverbank, such as a small bench, would primarily serve the local neighborhood and would require neighborhood support and initiative.



**3c. Old Utility Bridge north of the Highway 20 Bridge and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Terminus** - This terminus provides informal access (through private property, with access explicitly permitted by the property owner) to a small beach area accessible during low water. It also accesses the old utility bridge (water line) that cross the Methow here.

**Assessment and Recommendation:** This rocky but not very steep shoreline is a possible location for more developed river access, a pocket park, and small craft riverside landing/put-in.



The water line bridge also presents a possible opportunity for a pedestrian river crossing separate from the Highway Bridge. This could make sense in the event of trail development (Lloyd Trail or other) on the east bank of the Methow River and other possible future connections. Infrastructure upgrades to the water the line should consider a dual-purpose bridge.



**3d. 2nd Avenue Terminus** – The terminus of this street at the Methow River is just south of Twisp Park and the riverside trail (1b). It is flanked by private property on each side. The steep, vegetated bank, with private property on either side, make any development problematic.

**3e. Burton Street Terminus** – The Burton and Riverside Streets neighborhood has been one of the fastest growing in recent years, with many young families. At the junction of these two streets is a Town right-of-way which extends to a low bluff on the Methow River.

**Assessment and Recommendation:** Given the lack of river access/public parks in the south end of Twisp, this site could be a priority for establishing formal public access and development of a small riverside pocket park. This could be a simple overlook with signage and a bench or picnic table. At low water the site provides access to a large gravel bar along the river.

**3f. Neighborhood Pocket Parks** - We have no specific proposal at this time, but the general concept should be under consideration for every neighborhood in Twisp, particularly those that are far from existing parks. Some might be incorporated into some of the above river access points, others might be a simple common open space, with benches or picnic table, for people to stroll to and meet within neighborhoods.

## Chapter 4: New Trails and Connectors

### General Trails Priorities

Previous public input, as well as discussion on the parks and recreation commission, has consistently supported paths and trails that:

- Enhance path and trail connectivity and pedestrian safety within town limits and to regional trail systems and public lands.

- Provide a system of access points to rivers and other natural areas
- Can be constructed with minimal expense, whenever possible by largely volunteer labor.

***Again, a comprehensive vision of this plan is of a designated trail/route linking Twisp Park at the north end of town with the Sports Complex at the south end. Several of the trails described in this section could help tie this route together.***

#### **4a. West Bank Methow River Path (2014 Phase II)**

This was a 'Phase II' priority in the 2014 Plan, but no action was taken.

From the Hwy 20 Bridge, going south along the west bank of the Methow River, there is a lightly-used path (more of a route) along the river flood plain to access the beach and swimming hole (known to some as the 'Meathole') at the bend in the river.

A more defined and permanent pedestrian path could be constructed through state (DOT) and river right-of-way, and along the edge of private property above the normal floodplain.



This would, of course, require the support and participation of landowners, some of whom have concerns, based on current usage, about littering, dog waste, and overnight use of the area. In this broad floodplain the boundary between private property and river right-of-way is not necessarily clear. A survey might be necessary. This trail could connect to the pedestrian path on the south side of the highway bridge. It could also pass under the highway bridge (connector 2d) and through a corner of the American Legion property to connect with Bridge Street.

This path would link Burton Street/Riverside Avenue area to Twisp Airport Road and the town Sports Complex (located at the Twisp Airport). It could pass through Town and Okanogan County property (the edge of the recycling/transfer station) from an undeveloped subdivision. In terms of connectivity and pedestrian/bicyclist safety, this is a high priority connector, linking two currently disconnected sections of 'Soha' (south of Hank's) and optimizing pedestrian and safe bicycle access to the Sports Complex.



This riverfront trail along the east side of the Methow River was a high priority in the 2014 Plan, but easements for trail development were never obtained and these plans were eventually abandoned. However, we are including the concept as part of the overall vision of this Plan, in the hope that discussions with the landowner might be reinitiated at some point. Certainly, continued interest exists to formalize a trail that follows the east side of the Methow River as a riverfront trail. The site is privately-owned land that is zoned mixed use, waterfront, and could have housing and/or commercial interests. Potential connections include: the Twisp/Winthrop eastside road, Confluence Overlook, and Mill Hill (see Chapter 5). The trail could also connect to any future development of a 5<sup>th</sup> street pedestrian bridge (3c below).



#### **4d. Schoolhouse Bluff Overlook**

The rocky outcrop overlooking town above the Isabella Ridge development provides great views of Twisp, the Methow Valley, and the Sawtooth and Cascade Ranges. It is entirely on private land. Development pressure of neighboring sub-divisions is high. Though no current action is recommended, the landowner has expressed openness to potentially developing, though not in the immediate future, a low-impact public overlook and access trail.



## **Chapter 5. Regional Trails and Open Space Opportunities**

Near Twisp are large parcels of state and federal public lands that provide year-round open space and recreation. Twisp should participate in any regional planning efforts to identify opportunities for future trails and connections from town facilities and neighborhoods to regional public lands. Current efforts and organizations include: The Trails Collaborative, Methow Trails, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, and Washington Trails Association, along with public land managers.

Following is a list of nearby public and private lands that offer the potential for enhanced bicycle/pedestrian use and connectivity.

#### **5a. WDFW Big Buck Wildlife Area**

Methow Trails TWIN trail connecting Twisp and Winthrop could provide a spur connection to WDFW lands.

#### **5b. DNR trust land north of Hwy 20**

On the east side of town and north of highway 20 is a 200-acre parcel of DNR land which was recently proposed (and later withdrawn) for a land exchange. This is the largest tract of public land immediately adjacent to Twisp and could provide a location for a recreational loop trail with easy pedestrian access from town. This could be a great asset to the town and particularly to adjacent neighborhoods in south Twisp. However, it is entirely

surrounded by private land; any public access would have to be established through support of and collaboration with at least one of the neighboring landowners.

#### **5c. State Wildlife, BLM, and USFS lands between Lookout Mt Rd (White Ranch) and Elbow Canyon/Poorman Ck Road**

This half-open, half-forested ridge with dirt roads, trails, and big views – of town, the Twisp River Valley, and the Sawtooth Range and Cascade Crest – has large, contiguous tracts of State Wildlife, BLM, and Forest Service Land that receive relatively light use despite close proximity to town, due to lack of convenient public access. As the largest tract of public land close to Twisp, this area should be part of any discussion about non-motorized connectivity to nearby scenic and recreational opportunities.

#### **5d. Confluence Overlook:**

Directly across the Methow River from the swimming hole at the confluence of the Methow and the Twisp rivers sits a piece of town property with potential for enhancement. This is a beautiful river overlook atop a bedrock outcrop. It is also an old dump site (still, unfortunately, occasionally used for that purpose) that would require professional clean-up. On either side below the outcrop are choice riparian areas (town property to the south, Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation to the north). However, the access off the overlook down to both of these areas is steep, and parking would be problematic because of the location at a tight bend in the East County Road. Still, this site has great potential, especially if a pedestrian/bicycle route from town could be developed (a connection to trail 3c).

#### **5e. TWIN Trail**

The trailhead for a regional commuter trail proposed by Methow Trails would be located in or near the north limits of the Town. If this trail becomes a reality, coordination for in-town connectors should be evaluated and developed in tandem with this regional effort.

## **Chapter 6. Demand and Need**

### **Public Involvement**

The community has a longstanding history of philanthropy and volunteerism with partners including local businesses, Kiwanis, Friends of the Pool, Outward Bound, Americorps, and Methow Arts. These partnerships have provided in-kind labor, materials, or initial investment in many projects as well as ongoing maintenance and upgrades.

A 2010 public survey identified a strong need for improved non-motorized pathways and a comprehensive trail system connecting neighborhoods, parks, public facilities, commercial districts, and natural areas. Detailed results of this survey are summarized in Appendix \_\_\_\_.

In 2013, members of the community created the Friends of the Trail. This informal group held public meetings to encourage community members to provide input on priorities for recreational facilities and non-motorized routes. Results were subsequently incorporated in the 2014 Trails and Recreation Plan.

In 2018 Methow Trails conducted an online survey with 1500 respondents. The result showed that a connecting trail between Winthrop and Twisp is the top trails priority of the larger Methow Valley Community.

In the summer 2019, Friends of the Pool, a local non-profit, conducted an online survey to elicit feedback from the community on future planning for the Wagner Pool. There were 150 respondents. Results indicated widespread support for current programs, desire for more programming including adult lessons and adult masters swim, support for a covered pool, either seasonally or year-round, and support for the creation of recreation district and a recreation center for year-round use.

Public input to 2022 Draft Plan Comments from the public, both conversationally and formally submitted, have been received by the Parks and Recreation Commission throughout the process of developing this plan. We have done our best to communicate with land-owners whose support and cooperation is necessary. We have done two bicycle tours where members of the public could see firsthand the park and trail improvements the Plan proposes. The Methow Valley News has published several long articles summarizing the Plan in detail and soliciting public comment. This been submitted either through the town website or in person at our meetings. A two-page summary of the Plan has also been made available to the public on the town website and in the newspaper.

There will be further opportunities for public comment as the Town Council considers the adoption of this Plan.

## **2022 PLAN PRIORITIES**

Public input is needed in order to establish priorities and ultimately act upon aspects of this Plan. However, regardless of the priorities that are established in this plan, whatever aspects are ultimately enacted are dependent on level of public interest and individual and group initiative.

The Parks and Recreation is highlighting the following priorities:

## **Trails**

1. Riverside Avenue – Airport Road (Sports Complex) connector.
2. Methow Street connector improvements.
3. May Street/Community Center connector (secure land or easement).
4. Bridge St terminus to west side Hwy 20 bridge (pedestrian-safe connector underneath bridge.)
5. West Bank Methow River to ‘Meathole’ path.
6. Trails on DNR lands north of the highway.
7. Adoption of a general policy of integrating safe multi-modal trails into all town infrastructure improvements – road upgrades, sidewalks and street paving should be designed to support the build-out of alternative routes for bicyclists, pedestrians, and alternative modes of transportation such as scooters and electric powered bikes from one end of town to the other.
8. Ideas on links to develop or enhance connectivity to nearby open space/public lands.

## **Parks and Facilities**

1. Neighborhood/pocket parks, especially in neighborhood that are far from Twisp Park and growing (such as Riverside/Burton Street and Old Schoolhouse Hill/May Street).
2. More clearly delineated and signed river access, especially Burton St terminus and 5th Avenue terminus.
3. Twisp Park improvements. Develop a Master Plan for Twisp Park, considering the following amenities:
  - restrooms
  - playground reconstruction
  - bandstand reconstruction
  - skate park
  - pump track
  - climbing/bouldering rock structure
  - Rebuild (or, more likely, relocate) Wagner Memorial Pool.
4. Sports Complex developments
  - Revisit Phase II plans in light of current use and other developments.
  - off-leash dog park?

- X-country ski trail?
5. Mavis Park improvements
    - Public art/sculpture
    - Picnic table/bench
  6. Community Garden.
    - There has been some community interest expressed in this concept, though no potential site is identified in this Plan.
  7. Year -round aquatic center and recreation center
    - Establishment of recreation district
    - Site acquisition/feasibility

## **Chapter 7: Capital Improvement/Funding Strategies**

The Town of Twisp has long recognized the economic, public health, social, and ecological values of enhancing existing recreation and open space opportunities and developing new ones. Certainly, funding constraints have slowed these developments in the past. The Town needs to consider a variety of funding options and prioritize the goals and objectives of this Plan to match current economic realities, focusing on those projects and strategies which can attract grant funds, or which depend mainly on volunteer initiative and labor and would require minimal monetary investment.

Among possible funding strategies:

- Formation of Parks and Recreation District to create a wider funding base.
- Grants – State, Federal, Private Foundation
- Non-profit Partners (Kiwanis, Rotary, Friends of the Pool, Senior Center, Methow Trails, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance)
- Business Sponsors
- Town budget support where appropriate
- Volunteer labor and in-kind gifts
- Charitable donations

## Maps

