

Chapter 9
Parks
&
Recreation
Element

PARKS AND RECREATION

PURPOSE AND INTENT

The Parks and Recreation Element directs the next 20 years of parks, trails, and open space acquisition and development. The element reflects public input received from a community-wide survey, community comments, and a level-of-service analysis for the park and recreation needs of Zillah residents. The adopted mission of the Zillah Parks and Recreation Division is to “provide and promote community leisure, recreation and cultural opportunities for all citizens of Zillah”.

The following Goals and Policies reflect the community’s belief that parks, trails, and open spaces are places to improve public health, protect environmental and cultural resources, and encourage community gathering and learning -- fundamental components of what makes Zillah a great place to live, work, and visit. The Goals and Policies provide long-term guidance for maintaining, enhancing, and providing additional high-quality park and recreation opportunities to improve the quality of life for Zillah’s residents and visitors. The Park and Recreation Element Analysis following the Goals and Policies describes the applicable regulatory framework, inventories Zillah’s existing park and open space resources, analyzes park and open space demands and needs, and provides a funding framework for parks maintenance and acquisition.

Washington’s Growth Management Act (GMA)

According to the GMA (RCW 36.70A.070 (8)), local jurisdictions are required to include a parks and recreation element in their comprehensive plan. As stated in the statute, the element must implement and be consistent with the parks and recreation facilities identified in the Capital Facilities Element. The element must also include three components:

- Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a 10-year period;
- An evaluation of facilities and service needs;
- An evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreational demand.

This Plan is intended to meet these directives. It estimates park, trails, and open space demand through 2040, identifies park facility service levels and needs to meet anticipated demand, and identifies opportunities for intergovernmental coordination. This Plan is being adopted as part of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan update and serves as the foundation for the analysis and policy guidance found within.

Washington Recreation and Conservation Office

A significant source of grant funding for parks and recreation in the State of Washington is the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). RCO oversees parks and recreation planning throughout the

state. Through its grant program and ongoing planning activities, RCO seeks to enhance and maintain statewide opportunities for recreation, protect the best of the state's wild lands, and contribute to the State's efforts to recover threatened and endangered salmon species.

The RCO program provides leadership, funding, and technical assistance to help communities plan for, and implement, parks and recreation projects. These projects may include trails, playfields, and other park facilities. In addition, the program helps to protect and restore the State's important habitats and biological heritage through open space protection and conservation.

Countywide Planning Policies

The Yakima County Countywide Planning Policies require the identification and protection of local open space in comprehensive plans. The Yakima County Countywide Planning policies state "When determining land requirements for urban growth areas, allowance will be made for greenbelt and open space areas and for protection of wildlife habitat and other environmentally sensitive areas. [RCW 36.70A.110 (2)] (A.3.7.) This requirement encourages policies that establish programs that contribute to the protection and stewardship of open space lands and corridors.

PARK PLANNING PROCESS

Building on past parks and recreation planning efforts by the City, this element provides a long term vision for Zillah's park, trail and open space resources. It analyzed the current system of parks, trails (sidewalks), and open space; identified park and recreation needs in the community; and recommended a future system of parks, trails, and open space for 20 years. It is intended to be updated regularly to address evolving community needs and resources.

As part of the Park Element, the city shows a commitment to a long standing relationship between the City of Zillah, Zillah School District, and the property owners within the community. The City has signed an agreement with the Zillah School District that allows community access to school district property for purposes of recreation adding approximately 30 acres of open space/recreational areas for community use.

PARKS INVENTORY

The City of Zillah owns and maintains several parks and open space areas and special use area such as historic/ cultural facilities. These areas provide a variety of recreational opportunities for Zillah citizens and are defined in detail. Table 9-2 presents a summary of existing park and open space resources in Zillah. Figure 9-1 depicts the location of parks and open space areas owned by both the City of Zillah and other entities. Figure 9-2 shows the location of sidewalks in Zillah.

POCKET PARKS

Pocket parks are typically small areas used to provide specific recreation opportunities (e.g., a playground, benches, etc.) for a local population with limited or no convenient access to larger parks (neighborhood, community, etc.). Pocket parks are generally accessed by foot (or other non-motorized means of travel) and do not have designated parking. Pocket parks are generally up to one acre in size.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks are generally considered the basic unit of a park system. These parks provide a variety of recreation opportunities for people living within a ¼ - ½ mile radius of the park that is uninterrupted by a barrier, such as a major road or topographic feature. Neighborhood parks may include landscaped and/or open space areas, but tend to provide developed recreation facilities (e.g. single ball field, single court, in-park trails, picnic areas, etc.). Neighborhood parks include designated parking. These parks tend to be 1 to 10 acres in size.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks serve a broader purpose and population base compared to neighborhood parks. These parks may meet both developed (i.e., constructed) recreation, as well as open space needs. Community parks are meant to provide recreation opportunities to people living within a 1 ½ mile radius and typically have designated parking for users, although non-motorized access and connections are encouraged. The level of development in a community park may range from light use (e.g., single use soft surface trails, picnic sites, and non-delineated play fields, etc.) to high (e.g., multiple delineated ball fields, multiple sports courts, paved trails, group picnic shelters, etc.). Community parks may include special recreation facility features, such as a boat launch, ice rink, or swimming pool. These parks tend to be 10 to 50 acres in size, but can be smaller if the park supplies a community recreation need.

TRAILS

In general, a trail is a land or water corridor that provides recreational, aesthetic, transportation, or educational opportunities to motorized or non-motorized users of all ages and abilities. Types of trails include local trails and regional trails. Local trails are in-park trails (single or multi-purpose hard surface trails) that emphasize safe travel between parks or other community features. Regional trails are single or multi-purpose hard or soft surface trails that cross community boundaries and connect significant regional destinations.

OPEN SPACE

Open space areas tend to be set aside for the preservation of natural/significant resources, remnant landscapes, or as visual buffers. These areas may also serve important ecological functions that would be lost in more highly developed park environments. While recreation use is not necessarily precluded in open space areas, appropriate uses tend to be limited to those activities that do not require highly developed facilities (e.g. bird watching, nature appreciation, walking/hiking, etc.). Open space lands can be managed for their natural or visual resource values.

Introduction

DEMAND AND NEED ANALYSIS

Demand and needs were estimated based on two sources: (1) level-of-service (LOS) standards commonly used to measure the amount and quality of a public service or facility that should be provided to meet a community's adopted goals or standards; and (2) existing sources of statewide and regional population/demographic trends and recreation participation estimates and demand.

Level of Service (LOS) Standards

In park, recreation, trail, and open space planning, local jurisdictions establish the number and type of park facilities, trails, and open space resources that are necessary to adequately serve the needs of their citizens. LOS standards allow jurisdictions to measure progress toward meeting established targets over time. By periodically comparing current levels of performance with established LOS standards, Zillah can determine if it is progressing toward their goals.

Table 9-1 Park Type/ LOS Standard

Type of Park	Distance
Pocket	1/4 mile (5-minute walk) to a pocket park
Neighborhood	1/3 mile (10-minute walk) to a neighborhood park
Community	¾ miles (5-minute bike ride) to a community park
Regional	No recommended LOS radii (City is not expected to provide regional parks)
Non-Motorized Trails	Continuous network of sidewalks and trails throughout the City

Source: The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

Open Space

The area between I-82 and the Yakima River contains wetlands that provide wildlife habitat. A small portion of this area is within the City limits, and the City has designated areas southwest of I-82 as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. It also designated three areas of wetlands. The wetland areas located near Meadowlark Lane in northeast Zillah have been donated to the City for environmental studies.

The area southwest of I-82 is likely to remain in open space due to lack of access. If it should become accessible, the City will adopt regulations to protect fish and wildlife conservation areas prior to allowing new development in that area (Resolution No. 760, September 27, 1993). Outside the City limits, the area between the I-82 freeway and the Yakima River provides additional wildlife habitat. Development is also restricted here by lack of access.

The Yakima County Trails Plan, updated in 2014, proposes trails or corridors connecting Zillah to Upper and Lower Valley cities along the I-82 corridor, and to Toppenish via the N. Meyers Road corridor. Specifically, the Yakima County Trails Plan recommends supporting the identification and development of the Granger to Zillah Rail Corridor.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Local parks and recreation facilities are provided by the City of Zillah and the Zillah School District. The City of Zillah owns and operates eight City parks which are used for many types of outdoor recreational

activities. Encompassing approximately 11 acres, Zillah's eight City parks are Loges Park, Adams Park, Shelley Park, Stewart Park, Pond Park, Teapot Dome Gas Station, Cal Ripken Fields and Kreiger Park. Table 9-2 below lists the ownership and characteristics of the parks and recreation facilities in the Zillah.

The City of Zillah and the Zillah School District entered into an Inter-local agreement to provide shared use of facilities on an as needed and as-approved basis between the parties for the benefit of the Citizens of the City of Zillah.

Figure 9-1 Zillah Parks & open space

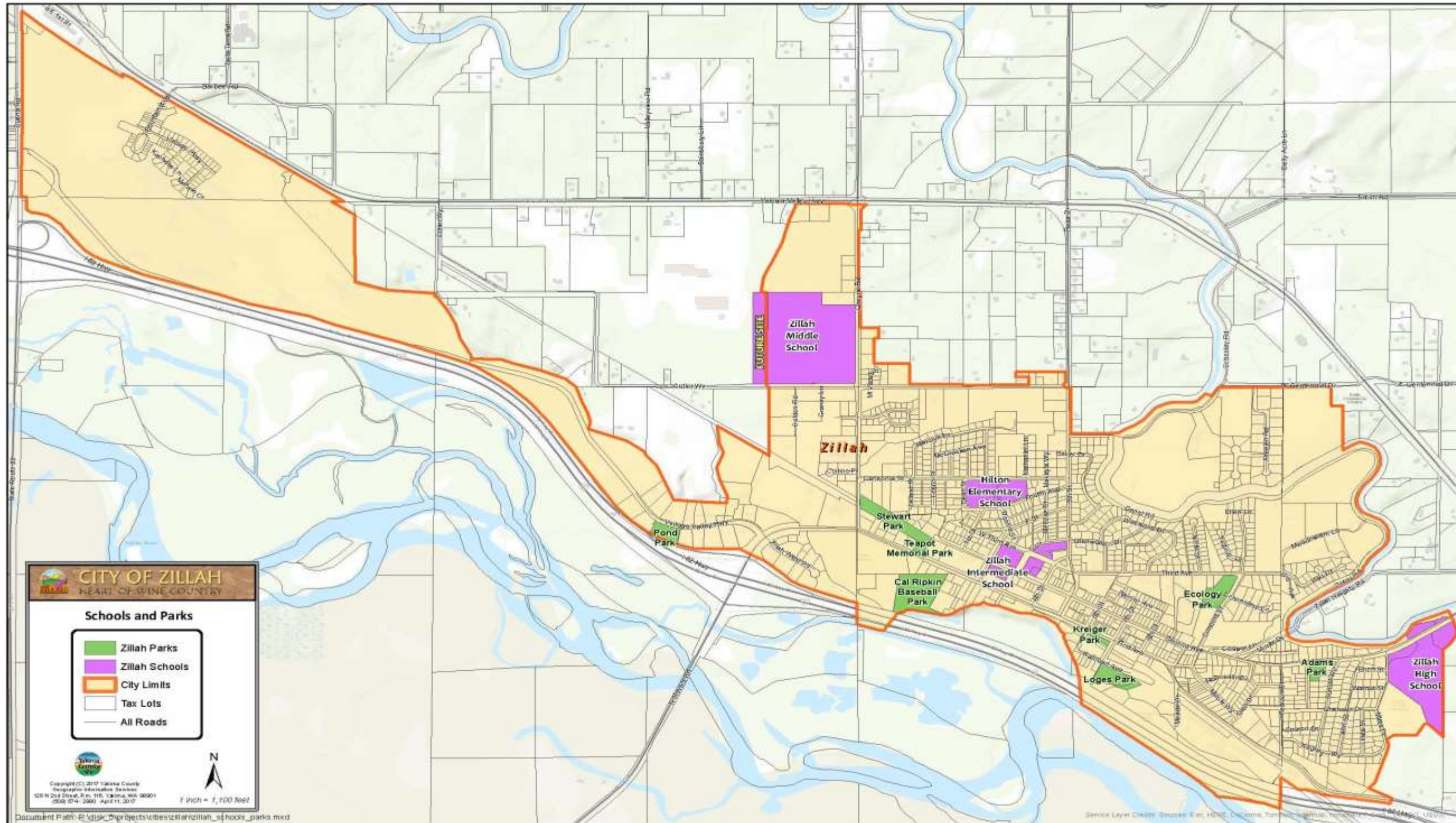


Figure 9-2 City of Zillah Sidewalks

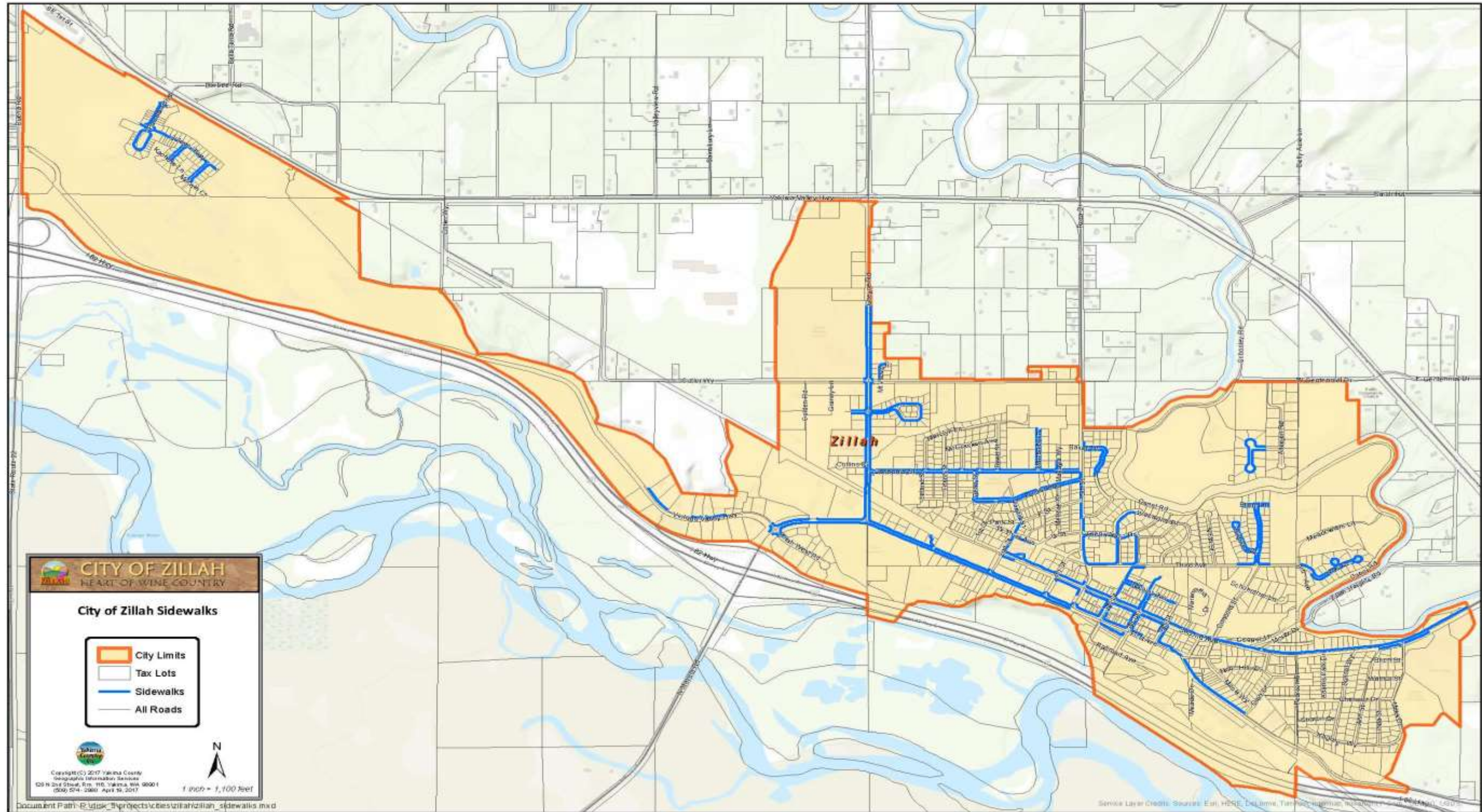


Table 9-2. City of Zillah and Vicinity: Parks and Recreational Facilities

Name of Park or School	Loges Park	Shelley Park	Adams Park	Krieger Park	Stewart Park	Teapot Dome Gas Station Park	Cal Ripken Fields	Pond Park
Total Site Acreage	3.0	0.3	0.9	0.9	2.4	0.5	3.0	1.5
Baseball/Softball/Football/Soccer Fields	No						Yes	
Open Play Fields	Yes		Yes		Yes		Yes	
Tennis/Basketball/Other	2 tennis w/lights							
Picnic Tables	Yes	4*		Yes	Yes			Yes
Picnic Shelters	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes			Yes
Wetland/Marsh	Yes + pond							
Playground Equipment	Yes	Yes	Yes (tires)					
Interpretive Facility/Kiosk	No			Notice board		Yes		
Nature or Fitness Trails	No							
Restrooms	2 + bathhouse				Yes	Yes		
Handicapped Accessible Facilities	Yes					Yes		
Irrigated	Yes	Hand hoses, sprinklers	Sprinklers	Sprinklers	Sprinklers	Yes	Sprinklers	

Name of Park or School	Loges Park	Shelley Park	Adams Park	Krieger Park	Stewart Park	Teapot Dome Gas Station Park	Cal Ripken Fields	Pond Park
Water Fountain				Yes	Yes	Yes		
Parking	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Other:	Outdoor swimming pool, wading pool, Lion's Cook Shack, BBQ		BBQ	Stage	Near relocate Teapot Dome, cook shack	Information kiosks and historic Teapot Dome Gas Station		Fountain, large water feature, BBQ

Source: Huibregtse, Louman Associates, Inc., City of Zillah Capital Facilities Plan, 2012.

Parks and Recreational Facilities Needs

Table 9-3 summarizes the Zillah’s capital improvement program for parks and recreation facilities.

Table 9-3 Parks and Recreation Facilities Priority Rankings

Priority	Proposed Improvements	Year
1	Creation of City Zillah Master Parks Plan (required by 2012)	2017
2	Create Bike and Pedestrian Trails Plan	2017
3	Park Redevelopment Plan - Park/Streetlights	2017
4	Wine Barrel Trash Cans	2017
5	Install new park signs/ install roadway directional signage	2017
6	Tree plantings	2017
7	Install ADA-accessible drinking fountains	2017
8	Develop 1-2 miles of trail (bike/hike)	2018-2022
9	Expand recreational opportunities (programs and activities)	2018-2022
10	Tree plantings	2018-2022
11	Develop pro-active park maintenance program	2018-2022
12	Construct new restroom/ Development of picnic/rest areas	2018-2022
13	Develop BMX/skateboard/rollerblade park/dog park	2018-2022
14	Develop Splash Park (1,000 to 3,000 sq. ft.)	2018-2022
15	Acquire 15 to 20 acres of land for a community park in the northeast area	2018-2022
16	Renovate basketball/ tennis courts	2018-2022
17	Develop 2-4 miles of trails	2022
18	Tree plantings	2022
19	Install ADA accessible drinking fountains	2022
20	Renovate pool for handicap access	2022

Source: Huibregtse, Louman Associates, Inc., City of Zillah Capital Facilities Plan, 2012.

Facilities

Following is a summary list of park facilities in and around Zillah. For a complete description of these facilities readers are invited to review the adopted Parks and Recreation Plan.

Mini-parks

Mini-parks: green space, usually less than three acres, used primarily by residents residing within a quarter mile for limited passive recreation:

Pond Park	1.54 acres
Krieger	1.08*
Shelly	0.28
Adams Park	0.89
Ecology Park	2.36
Teapot Memorial Park.....	0.43

TOTAL 6.58 acres

* Legal issues that need to be completed regarding ownership

Neighborhood parks

Neighborhood parks are generally three acres or more in size, usually used by neighbors within a half mile radius for picnicking and general recreation:

Stewart Park	5.32* acres
Loges Park & Pool	3.32**

TOTAL 8.50 acres

*Including Civic Center

**Including land on bluff and vacant land to the east

Community parks

Community parks are well developed park space, usually twenty acres or more, with specific recreational amenities that attract visitors from throughout the region. At this time, Zillah does not have a Community park.

“Special Use” Non-city recreation areas

Zillah has five special use parks/areas: Rough estimates

Zillah High School	5.00 acres
Zillah Middle School.....	12.00
City of Zillah Public Works/Cemetery	5.50

Zillah Elementary

4.00

TOTAL 26.50 acres

The demand for public recreational activities in Zillah is growing due to a number of factors. The combination of factors contributing to this increase includes a history of community recreational activity (i.e. football, baseball, and volleyball), a relatively younger population, and a climate conducive to such activities. This high demand for activities can be seen in the heavy use experienced by the city's existing recreation facilities. In terms of specific types of facilities, we have observed the following:

Softball Fields: The softball fields provided by the Zillah School District appear to meet the current community need. Zillah currently has one public baseball field suitable for adult baseball/ softball. It is lighted and is located within the City of Zillah Cemetery.

Baseball Fields: Zillah currently has one public baseball field suitable for adult baseball. It is lighted and is located within the City of Zillah Cemetery. National Recreation Playground Association (NRPA) standards call for 1 unlighted and one lighted baseball field based on population.

Football Fields: The football fields provided by the Zillah School District appear to meet the current community need.

Basketball/Volleyball Courts: Zillah Parks and Recreation relies on existing community indoor basketball/volleyball courts located at school district facilities. While the school district's number of gymnasiums exceeds NRPA standards, Parks and Recreation would benefit greatly from owning its own facilities. The school gyms have limited availability due to staffing requirements and unanticipated last-minute cancellations due to school functions occurring from time to time.

Golf Courses/Driving Ranges: The proposed Zillah Lakes nine-hole course will meet current public need. Local interest in golf has diminished somewhat since the late 1990's and golf course attendance on a regional scale has gradually declined.

Outdoor Swimming Pool: The city has one outdoor pool (Loges). The city is discussing the idea of installing a mini water spray park at Loges Park as an alternative water experience for city youngsters. Based on NRPA standards the pool meets current needs however the pool is not currently in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and has been shut down. Funds are being set aside to start the alterations.

Future Needs

Space and Number of Parks Required

Generally speaking, Zillah meets the recommended ratio of park acreage to resident. Recommended minimums for the amount of park space run between two acres and five acres per 1,000 people depending on the size and purpose of the park or facility.

Nationally, recommendations range from a minimum of three acres for neighborhood parks to 20 to 30 acres for a community park. Zillah Parks and Recreation's inventory also includes mini-parks or pocket parks that are generally smaller than two acres.

In 2014, the City of Zillah was estimated to have 3,140 residents. Assuming two acres per 1,000 residents, the City should have 6 acres of mini-/neighborhood parks. In fact, it has 100 percent more than the recommended amount. Zillah does not fare as well in terms of community parks. There are no true community parks within the city limits.

Using population estimates, the overall picture appears to change little by 2040. The city's population is expected to increase roughly to 5,200 which will warrant the addition of one or two mini-/neighborhood parks however measures to create a community park would need to start.

Funding

How to fund future increases in park land is a challenge for any community. At a conservative estimate of \$35,000 per acre, it would cost more than \$2 million just for the land needed to bring the city and the urban area up to NRPA standard. Development and construction of facilities would be an additional challenge. Fortunately, the openness of Zillah's geography and its generally sunny skies temper the need to develop the vast park acreage that the national standards recommend

In the past Zillah Parks and Recreation has drawn its funding from a variety of resources – its own budget, contributions, grants and the incredible generosity of the community, particularly the service clubs. However, most of these revenue sources are unpredictable and dependent on the economics of the time.

Another option is the development fees that the city collects for all new construction, which the State of Washington allows for the purpose of park development. The Capital Facilities Element lists further funding options.

GOALS AND POLICIES TO GUIDE DECISIONS REGARDING FACILITIES

The goals and policies set forth here are a blend of goals and policies carried forward from the Comprehensive plan. These are the benchmarks of the City of Zillah Comprehensive Plan; they allow us to measure our progress in the development and implementation of the plan and enable us to make alterations as needed to meet the community's ever-changing and dynamic nature.

Goals & Policies:

Parks and Recreation Goal #1: Planning for parks and recreation shall provide a wide range of activities to encompass all of the residents' interests and capabilities and to promote the health, safety, and well-being of residents in order to enhance the quality of life.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.1: The City should assess the conditions of existing neighborhood parks, plan and prioritize desired improvements, and identify underserved neighborhoods.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.2: The City should establish, maintain, and periodically update a master plan for each City park. These plans should include:

- a. A description and the vision for the park and the desired use of the facilities;
- b. Maintenance standards;
- c. Management issues; and
- d. Goals and priorities for park use and development.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.3: The City should prepare and implement a capital improvement plan for City Parks. This Plan should include:

- a. Prioritized improvements at City Parks;
- b. Desired new park facilities;
- c. Desired trail improvements;
- d. An assessment of projected revenues and the identification of potential new revenues to support City priorities;
- e. Parks maintenance standards; and
- f. A schedule and funding strategy for the maintenance of existing parks and new parks improvements.

Parks and Recreation Policy#1.4: It is the priority of the City to develop a skate park, add playground equipment to existing parks and create walkways.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.5: The City should actively seek to establish a partnership with the Zillah School District to promote the use of school facilities for parks and recreation activities.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.6: The City should explore the potential to enter into strategic alliances or partnerships with other jurisdictions, agencies, and/or non-profit organizations to improve parks and recreation opportunities available to the community.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.7: The City should seek, to the greatest extent possible, grant funds and private contributions to support implementation of parks plans.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.8: The City should establish a catalogue of desired park improvements such as benches, picnic tables, barbeques, and playground equipment to serve as a resource to families and organizations seeking to make gifts to the community.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.9: The City should evaluate the need for recreation programs in the community and determine what role, if any, the City should play in providing such services.

Parks and Recreation Amendment #1.10: The City may explore the feasibility of selling City owned property to support new improvements to existing parks and/or the acquisition and development of new parks

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.11: The City should explore the feasibility of establishing a full-or part-time parks and recreation management position.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.12: Monies collected specifically for Parks and the capital outlay portion of the Parks budget shall be used to upgrade and replace equipment and develop new facilities at City parks. It will also be used to develop new activities at the parks, as well as provide any needed additional landscaping, such as trees, bushes, sand, or bark, to the City parks.

Parks and Recreation Policy #1.13 The City of Zillah may prepare regulations encompassing rules for parks, such as scheduling, fees, signage listing rules of each park and guidelines for development of new facilities.