



CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER  
**PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

July 2020





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# City of Milton-Freewater FACT SHEET

<p><b>MEETING DATE:</b></p> <p>July 13, 2020</p>	<p><b>AGENDA LOCATION:</b></p>	<p><b>ITEM NUMBER:</b></p>
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**DATE:** June 29, 2020

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Steven Patten, Public Works Technician \_\_\_\_\_

**THROUGH:** Brian Steadman, Public Works Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_  
Linda Hall, City Manager \_\_\_\_\_

**ISSUE:** Adoption of Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

**BACKGROUND:** The City was awarded an Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) Local Government Grant. This program is designed to help local governments fund outdoor parks, recreation areas and facilities which are open to the public-at-large and conduct planning processes. The City applied for and was awarded a Small Community Planning Grant to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

The City contracted with Conservation Technix Inc of Portland to write the master plan. The planning process included two open houses, a community-wide survey mailed (and online) to all City residents, six stakeholder meetings and multiple Parks and Recreation Committee meetings.

The draft plan was provided to Parks staff to review and comment. The following comments were received:

- ◆ The City needs a designated dog park
- ◆ The City needs additional walking paths with exercise stations
- ◆ The parking lot by the Golf Course should be paved and painted
- ◆ Need for additional parking lots and improve existing lots
- ◆ Need for equipment replacement

**COMMENTARY/ANALYSIS:** With the master plan in place, the City will be able to leverage the local option tax revenues to apply for additional grant opportunities. Getting the plan in place as soon as possible will benefit both the local tax monies as well as applying for future grants. The plan is expected to be updated as needed to accommodate City growth.

The plan includes an Introduction and Community Profile, identifies goals and objectives, describes the community engagement in the planning process, identifies existing parks inventory, a needs assessment and Capital planning and implementation info.

**BUDGET IMPACT:** This plan should allow the City to be more competitive for grant funding to improve our parks.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Motion to Adopt Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_, a Resolution adopting the City of Milton-Freewater's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a 10-year guide and strategic plan for managing and enhancing park and recreation services in Milton-Freewater. It establishes a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, open spaces and recreational opportunities. The Plan sets a long-range vision for the City with clear action items and strategies for implementation and addresses departmental goals, objectives and other management considerations toward the continuation of quality recreation opportunities to benefit the residents of Milton-Freewater.

This Plan was developed with the input and direction of Milton-Freewater residents. 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.

## MILTON-FREEWATER'S RECREATION SYSTEM

The City of Milton-Freewater currently provides approximately 78 acres of outdoor recreation facilities distributed among ten sites, and the system of parks supports a range of active and passive recreation experiences. The Milton-Freewater community has access to local parks, a community building and aquatic center for close-to-home recreation activities and programming. Within the region, outdoor recreation opportunities are available at a variety of federal, tribal, state and neighboring city-owned public lands and waterways.



The heart of Milton-Freewater's park system is Yantis Park and the Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center. The aquatic center features a 25-meter, six-lane outdoor pool, 170' flume slide, bathhouse, concessions and various support amenities. Sport fields are provided at Yantis Park where the high school uses the ball field and tennis courts. Rotary Sports Complex and Memorial Field combine to provide ballfields and soccer fields for active outdoor recreation programming in the community. Another major recreational facility, the Milton-Freewater Golf Club, is owned and operated by the City under a separate fund. Revenues are primarily generated from user fees for golf and foot golf, along with rental revenue from tenants of the Golf Clubhouse Restaurant.

With new development and projected population growth, continued 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 a series of goals intended to guide City decision-making to ensure the parks and recreation system meets the needs of the Milton-Freewater community for years to come. These goals and policies were based on community input and technical analysis. They include:

- **Community Engagement & Communication:** Encourage and support meaningful community involvement and participation in Milton-Freewater's park and recreation system.
- **Parks:** Provide a system of parks that meets current and future needs for active and passive recreation and enhance the community's environment and livability.
- **Natural Areas:** Preserve distinctive natural areas and features for their scenic and habitat value, as well as their contribution to passive recreational opportunities within Milton-Freewater.
- **Trails:** Engage regional partners and local jurisdictions to develop a coordinated and connected pedestrian, bicycle and off-street trail system.
- **Recreation Programs & Facilities:** Facilitate a variety of recreational services and programs that promote the health, well-being and inclusion of residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Administration:** Develop a parks system that is efficient to maintain and operate, safe and attractive for community members, and that protects the City's capital investment.

## SERVICE STANDARDS

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

- **Parks:** The Plan proposes an acreage standard for parks of 6 acres per 1,000 people to continue to emphasize the relative importance of active parks within the park system. The City currently is meeting this standard, and it will need to acquire an additional 3 acres of parkland by 2030 to meet the needs of future residents. With a revised standard, the City's focus should be to secure adequately-sized properties to design as neighborhood or



community parks to maximize the recreational utility value of those sites for the future. Additionally, the City should prioritize park acquisition and development in underserved areas where households are more than ½-mile from a developed park.

- **Trails:** This Plan does not propose a numeric, mileage-based standard for trails, but rather recommends a connectivity goal that re-states and reinforces the desire to improve overall connections across the City and enhance off-street linkages between parks, major destinations and regional trail routes, as feasible.
- **Special Use Facilities:** Special use facilities include single-purpose recreational areas or stand-alone sites designed to support a specific, specialized use. This Plan does not propose a standard for special use facilities, since these lands are by definition special and unique in what they are, where they are and what they offer (i.e., Milton-Freewater Golf Club). 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 use types are opportunity-driven. In place of a numeric standard, this Plan relies on goals and objectives to guide the planning and provision for such facilities, which in turn provides more flexibility to the City in how it meets the community needs for such facilities.

## FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Milton-Freewater is currently home to approximately 7,145 residents, and its population is expected grow by approximately 15% over the next two decades. Serving existing and future residents will require improvements to existing parks, expansion of the trail network and gradual expansion of the park system. The six-year Capital Facilities Plan proposes approximately \$4 million of investment in acquisition, development and renovation of the parks system over the next six to ten years.

To ensure existing parks provide desired recreational amenities and offer safe and accessible opportunities to play and gather, the Plan includes investments in the development and improvement of neighborhood and community parks. For example, improvements are proposed at Yantis Park to upgrade the restroom, resurface the tennis courts and upgrade the play equipment. Other projects include path repairs at the golf course, focused acquisitions for growth and a tennis court conversion at Freewater Park for multi-purpose sports to include pickleball. The Plan also proposes smaller improvements throughout the park system to enhance ADA accessibility, safety and usability of park amenities.

The importance for enhanced connectivity for walking and biking has been expressed through public feedback and is endorsed in existing City and regional planning documents. This Plan proposes development of paths and trails, and many of these connections will help fill existing gaps in the trail network to make a more connected and comprehensive system. The top two primary directions for the City's trail network should focus on the backbone of a viable future biking and walking system. The Highway 11 corridor that offer the main north-south connection through the City and connecting to other communities and the Walla Wall River with its levee system and greenway setting are both primary alignments for future multi-use trail systems. Within local city parks, creating paved access to all primary amenities is a critical step in providing all-weather access and complying with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Designing



loop walking experiences within parks can enhance the recreational value of the pathways that should be added to public parks.

Expanded recreational and community programming has been an identified interest through this planning process; however, the number and types of activities the City can offer is very limited due to the lack of staffing and indoor facility capacity. The City should continue to work with the school district, community partners, senior center, sports organizations and other recreation providers to plan for and consider how to offer both drop-in and structured programs in sports; art, music and dance; and educational activities for Milton-Freewater residents.

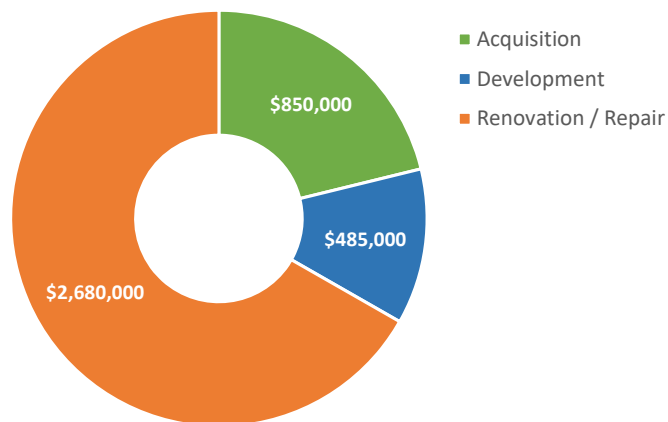
The map on the following page illustrates the proposed trail connections and potential acquisition target areas to consider to fill existing gaps in parkland distribution.

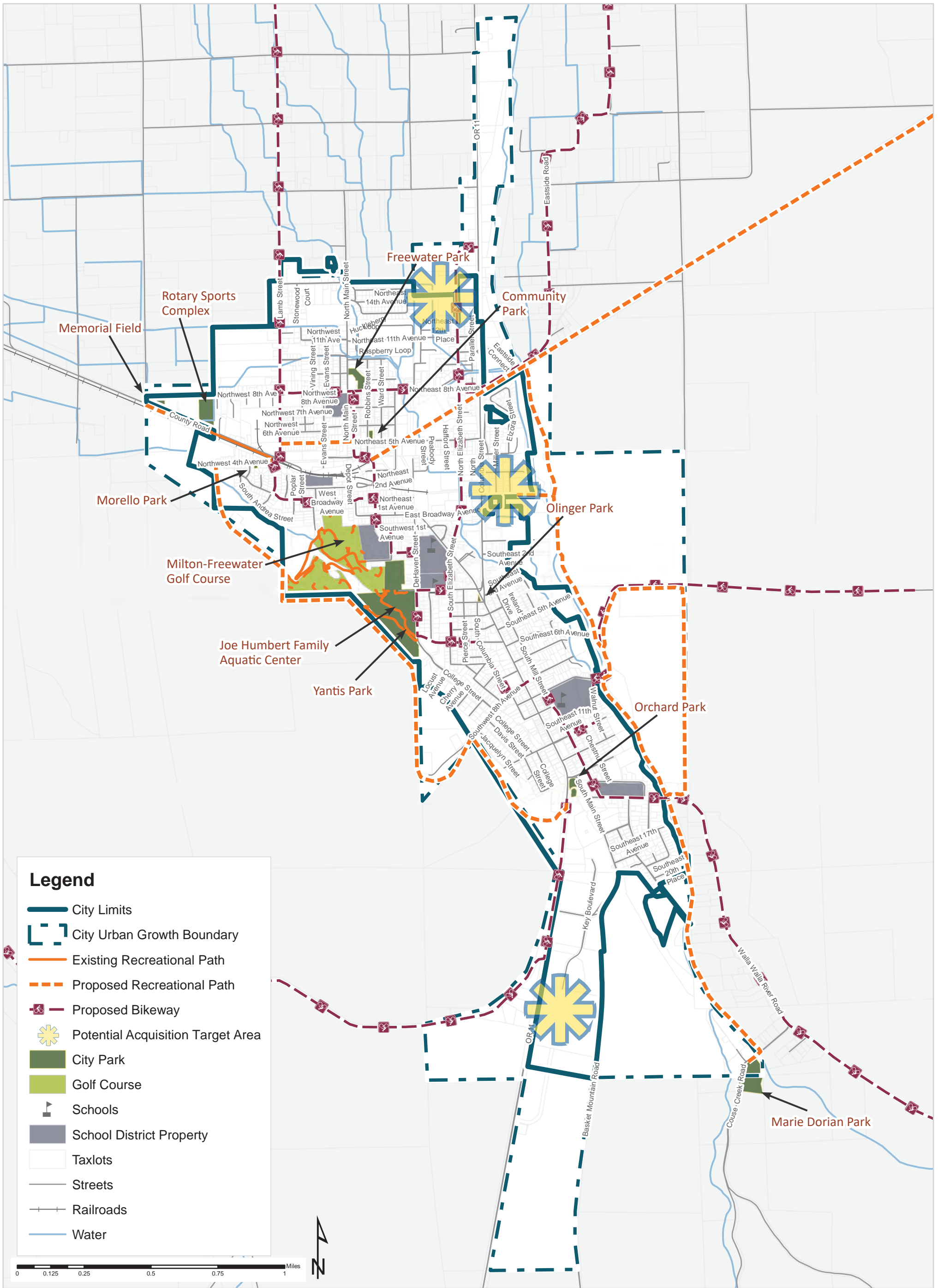
## STRATEGIES

A number of strategies exist to enhance and expand park and recreation service delivery for the City of Milton-Freewater; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. Carrying out this Plan's recommendations for park and recreation services may require funding beyond current allocations for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities. Additional resources will be needed to leverage, supplement and support the implementation of proposed policies, programs and projects. While grants and other efficiencies may help, these alone will not be enough to realize many ideas and projects noted in this Plan. Some strategies include enhanced coordination related to land use and development planning, volunteer and community-based improvement projects and exploring options for local funding, such as a parks utility fee.

The Capital Facilities Plan identifies the park, trail and facility projects considered for the next six years or more. The majority of these projects entail the maintenance, acquisition and development of parks, special recreation amenities and trails. Based on survey results and other feedback, Milton-Freewater residents have indicated an interest in park facility upgrades, enhanced trail connections and maintenance of existing facilities as priorities, and the Capital Facilities Plan is reflective of that desire. The following table summarizes the aggregate capital estimates by park types for the next six years.

Figure ES-1. Potential Projects List Expenditures Summary





Map ES1: Potential Trails & Acquisition Areas





# BENEFITS OF PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

A number of organizations and non-profits have documented the overall health and wellness benefits provided by parks, open space and trails. The Trust for Public Land published a report in 2005 called *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space*. This report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental and social benefits of parks and open space:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and physiological health.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and assisting with stormwater control.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.



## Physical Activity Benefits

Residents in communities with increased access to parks, recreation, natural areas and trails have more opportunities for physical activity, both through recreation and active transportation. By participating in physical activity, residents can reduce their risk of being or becoming overweight or obese, decrease their likelihood of suffering from chronic diseases, such as heart disease and type-2 diabetes, and improve their levels of stress and anxiety. Nearby access to parks has been shown to increase levels of physical activity. According to studies cited in a 2010 report by the National Park and Recreation Association, the majority of people of all ages who visit parks are physically active during their visit. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that greater access to parks leads to 25% more people exercising three or more days per week.



## Social & Community Benefits

Park and recreation facilities provide opportunities to engage with family, friends, and neighbors, thereby increasing social capital and community cohesion, which can improve residents' mental health and overall well-being. People who feel that they are connected to their community and those who participate in recreational, community and other activities are more likely to have better mental and physical health and to live longer lives. Access to parks and recreational facilities has also been linked to reductions in crime, particularly juvenile delinquency.



## Economic Benefits

Parks and recreation facilities can bring positive economic impacts through increased property values, increased attractiveness for businesses and workers (quality of life), and through direct increases in employment opportunities. In Oregon, outdoor recreation generates \$16.4 billion in consumer spending, creates 172,000 direct jobs and results in \$749 million in state and local tax revenue. According to the 2017 Outdoor Recreation Economy Report published by the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation can grow jobs and drive the economy through management and investment in parks, waters and trails as an interconnected system designed to sustain economic dividends for citizens.





# INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The City of Milton-Freewater developed this Parks and Recreation Master Plan to provide a blueprint for the growth, enhancement and management of its park and recreation system. The Plan considers the park and recreation needs of residents across the City. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed with the input and direction of local recreation leaders, stakeholders and residents, gathered through public meetings, interviews and a community survey.

As a ten-year guide and strategic plan for enhancing park and recreation amenities for the community, the citywide Parks and Recreation Master Plan establishes a path forward for enabling and enhancing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, open spaces and recreational opportunities. It updates the City's policies, practices and projects and sets a long-range vision for the City with clear action items and strategies for implementation for the next 10 years. The recommendations in this Plan are based on community input, evaluations of the existing park system, and needs for acquisition, site development and operations. The Plan is intended to be updated periodically to remain current with local interests and maintain eligibility for state-based grants.

## PLANNING PROCESS

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan represents the culmination of a year-long planning effort to define the community's needs for parks, recreation facilities and programs, and trails over the next ten years.



The Parks and Recreation Master Plan reflects the community’s interests and needs for park and recreational facilities, trails and programming. The planning process encouraged and enabled public engagement in the choices, priorities and future direction of the City’s park and recreation system. The Plan project team conducted a variety of public outreach activities. Community members expressed their interests through a community survey, open house meetings, stakeholder discussions and Recreation Committee meetings.

In addition to community engagement, the actions identified in this Plan are based on:

- An inventory and assessment of the City’s existing park and recreation facilities to establish the current performance of the system and to identify needed maintenance and capital repair and replacement projects,
- A level of service and walkability assessment to quantify the system’s ability to serve both current and future residents.

The Plan’s capital facilities plan and accompanying implementation and funding strategies are intended to move the City toward the community’s park and recreation goals while recognizing operational realities.

## OTHER RELATED PLANS

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is one of several documents that comprise Milton-Freewater’s long-range planning and policy framework. The following past community plans provide policy direction and goals relevant to the City’s park, trail and recreation planning.

### City of Milton-Freewater Comprehensive Plan

The City’s 1980 comprehensive plan has had two partial updates since its adoption. The Housing and Public Facilities Plans were updated in 2001. The Economic Element was updated on 2009. The comprehensive plan recognized the importance of open space and recreation facilities to the livability of the community and cited that publicly-owned open space and recreation facilities shall be preserved in the “Public Lands” plan designation. The plan also recognized the value of the view to the Blue Mountains to the east and the water resources of the Walla Walla River. The Frazier Farmstead was a recognized historic resource that should be protected by the city code. The park system inventory included Yantis Park, Freewater Park, Morello Park, Marie Dorion Park and the Milton-Freewater Golf Club. The Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan cited the following priorities for development and program needs, in order of importance:

1. Expand front picnic shelter – Yantis Park.
2. Develop exercise trail – Yantis Park.
3. Place benches on upper nine – Golf Course.
4. Place barbecue fixtures – Yantis and Marie Dorion Parks.
5. Convert Yantis Park Pool to year round facility.
6. Greater emphasis on intramural sports programs in schools through City recreation programs.

7. Access to Walla Walla River at NE 3rd, SW 2nd, SE 12th and SE 14th Avenues.
8. Bicycle lanes built into City streets to make at least a north-south route through the City or a circuit route if possible.
9. Construct a public shooting range to include archery.
10. Acquire area for a new park (to include soccer field) located in the north section of town as the City develops towards the north City limits.

No recreation trail designation was within the city at the time of the 1980 plan. Although the proposed pedestrian transportation improvements identified the construction of a greenway multi-use path on the Walla Walla River levee as a high priority. Public facilities improvements also included the provision of bike lanes on Highway 11 and on the Freeway Highway. The land use plan development concept included the expansion of the central recreation area (Yantis Park) and sufficient additional public land to adequately serve future growth.

## Special Transportation Area Plan and Transportation System Plan (TSP) Update, 2005

The 2005 TSP update focused on the downtown area - its need to maintain through movement on Highway 11 corridor and to ensure a more accessible and safe downtown area. Consideration for enhancing local opportunities for walking and biking examined road crossings and bike lane locations. The TSP suggested the creation of public spaces through pocket parks and greenways as a way to enhance the downtown area and promote pedestrian activity. The future greenspace was intended to encourage pedestrian links between Main Street and adjacent streets and alleys. The TSP also suggested the inclusion of public art into the proposed streetscape improvements in the downtown corridor. In its review of the draft TSP, the Oregon Department of Transportation's technical memorandum noted that "pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be integrated into Downtown design concepts to encourage people to walk or bike to many possible activity areas (e.g. library, City Hall, Church, schools parks, etc.) in Downtown."

## Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan

Over 30 local, regional, state and federal stakeholder entities have worked together to complete this Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan enabled under the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance (RTCA) grant program. These partner agencies collaborated between 2016 and 2018 to identify solutions to the gaps within the existing non-motorized transportation and trail system. The Blue Mountain Region stretches across an area of 2,530 square miles encompassing all of Columbia and Walla Walla counties, but only a portion of Umatilla County. Approximately 78,000 people live within this region. The trails plan recommends that local governments can use the completed plan to adopt identified sidewalk, bike route, and trail recommendations into the transportation and park-recreation elements of their respective comprehensive plans. During the planning process, it became apparent the public's desire for connections throughout the region focused on three areas: recreation along rivers, connections between communities, and access to the region's forests, including the Wooten Wildlife

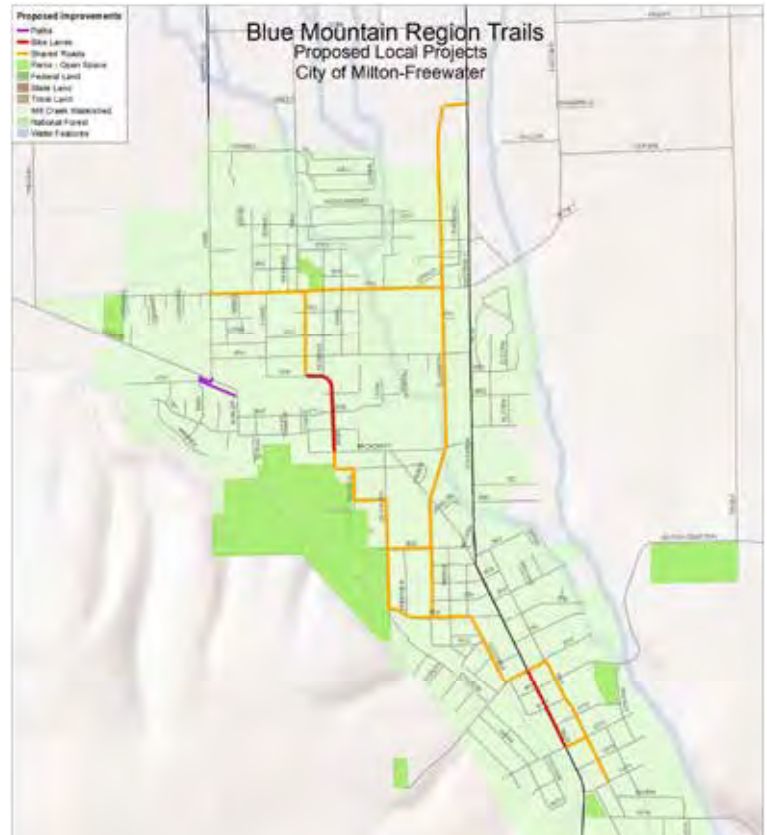




Area and the Umatilla National Forest. The trails plan vision is to “develop a community-driven and locally-supported region-wide network of bicycle and pedestrian routes and non-motorized trails to provide outdoor recreation opportunities, mobility options, and connectivity within the Blue Mountain Region that benefit – health, mobility, quality of life and livability, and economic development and tourism.” The trails plan made specific improvement recommendations that included additional sidewalks, bike lanes, shared roads, paved and unpaved multi-use paths, and increased accessibility. Implementation of the trails plan will increase opportunities for outdoor activities, enhance health and mobility, improve safety, encourage new economic development, and promote a higher quality of life within the region.

The trails plan included recommended capital improvement programs for each jurisdiction targeting specific needed facilities. For Milton-Freewater, capital improvements included 0.17 miles of path improvements for pedestrians, 0.52 miles of dedicated bike lane improvements and 4.23 miles of shared roadway improvements.

Figure 1. Proposed Milton-Freewater Trails from Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan



## Enhancing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

The 2015 Community Council Report, *Enhancing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities*, contains 19 recommendations for enhancing outdoor recreation. Select recommendations that directly relate to Milton-Freewater may include actions that:

- Create a centralized, comprehensive outdoor recreation information portal that maintains an up-to-date inventory of recreational opportunities in the region;
- Promote the physical and mental health benefits of engaging in outdoor recreation opportunities to all populations;
- Connect the public to communities and landmarks via a network of trails in the region;
- Encourage regional outdoor recreation entities to collaborate and/or form partnerships to accomplish common goals and increase on-site usage; and
- Explore recreational opportunities in the Blue Mountain foothills, especially near population centers.



# CONTENTS OF THE PLAN

The remainder of this Parks Master Plan is organized as follows:

- Chapter 2: Community Profile – provides an overview of the City and its demographics.
- Chapter 3: Community Engagement – highlights the methods used to engage the community in the development of the Plan.
- Chapter 4: Goals & Objectives – provides a policy framework for the parks and recreation system grouped by major functional or program area.
- Chapter 5: Classifications & Inventory – describes the existing parks and recreation system in Milton-Freewater
- Chapters 6: Needs Assessment – discusses survey results and recreation trend data and provides context to the identification of potential system enhancements.
- Chapter 7: Capital Planning & Implementation – details a 10-year program for addressing park and recreation facility enhancement along with a range of strategies to consider in the implementation of the Plan.
- Appendices: Provides technical or supporting information to the planning effort.

From the winter 2015 issue of the National Association of Realtors (NAR) magazine, the direct link between how communities are built and grow is tied to health and quality of life. More walkable and bike-able environments with better access to nature and parks have become essential for personal well-being and needs to be integrated into community planning. The NAR articles identify walkable communities as a prescription for better health.

Even the U.S. Surgeon General sounded a call to action challenging communities become more walkable to allow more Americans to increase their physical activity through walking. The Center for Disease Control and its Healthy Community Design Initiative focuses on walkability and the need to better integrate into transportation planning.

The NAR magazine issue also reported on the value of bicycle-friendly communities and the direct tie to healthy and sustainable living. Access to healthy, locally-grown food choices is reported with the value of community gardens and urban food hubs for healthy diets, as well as connection to community engagement.

Realtors have long been aware that housing near a good system of parks and trails will hold strong appeal to buyers. The winter NAR issue illustrates the recognition that community design for healthy living goes beyond the single house location. People want choices, and these healthy community design traits of walking, biking, trails and parks all play an important role in housing prices, sales and re-sales.





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# COMMUNITY PROFILE

## LOCATION

Milton-Freewater is a small city of just over 7,000 residents located in Umatilla County in northeastern Oregon. Highway 11 serves as Milton-Freewater's Main Street and connects the community to Walla Walla, WA, about 8 miles to the north, and to Pendleton, OR, about 30 miles to the south. The city features tree-lined, single family neighborhoods, views of the Blue Mountains, and is flanked the Walla Walla River. The city is surrounded by agriculture, including vineyards, orchards and wheat fields.

## HISTORY

The City of Milton-Freewater began as the towns of Milton (incorporated in 1886) and Freewater (incorporated in 1902). In 1936, the State Line earthquake (5.8 magnitude) hit to the northwest of the area. It damaged local homes, businesses and schools and temporarily affected the water table. In 1950, voters from the two adjoining towns voted to merge, in part to streamline government services, forming the new City of Milton-Freewater in 1951. Since incorporation, the City has grown from approximately 4,000 residents to over 7,000.

## ECONOMY

Milton-Freewater's economy centers on the education and health care industry, as well as agriculture and retail trade. Milton-Freewater has a long history of agriculture – peas in the mid-20th century, tree fruit, wheat, to its burgeoning wine industry today supported by fertile soil, mild winters and a long, sunny growing season.



Approximately six in ten residents over 18 are employed and the remaining 40% are out of the work force, with 5% unemployed. At approximately \$37,370, the median income in the City is nearly \$13,000 lower than that of surrounding Umatilla County. Approximately 20% of residents work in the education and health care industries, and 15% work in agriculture.

## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Milton-Freewater grew steadily through the second-half of the twentieth century, as servicemen returned from World War II and the region’s agricultural production expanded. Today, Milton-Freewater is home to many families with children, as well as older adults, who enjoy the recreational opportunities provided by the City’s parks and open spaces. While the city is predominately white, over 40% of residents identify as Hispanic or Latino and over half of residents speak a language other than English at home. The City’s residents are well educated, though they generally have lower incomes than other state residents. The City’s population has been relatively flat in recent years and is expected to grow modestly over the coming decades.

Figure 2. Population Characteristics: Milton-Freewater, Umatilla County and Oregon

Demographics	Milton-Freewater	Umatilla County	Oregon
<b>Population Characteristics</b>			
Population (2019)	<b>7,145</b>	81,160	4,236,400
Population (2010)	<b>7,050</b>	75,889	3,831,074
Population (2000)	<b>6,470</b>	70,548	3,421,399
Percent Change (2000-19)	<b>10%</b>	15%	24%
Persons w/ Disabilities (%)	<b>15.1%</b>	15.8%	14.6%
<b>Household Characteristics (2013-17)</b>			
Households	<b>2,386</b>	26,976	1,571,631
Percent with children	<b>45.9%</b>	35.1%	29.1%
Median Household Income	<b>\$37,368</b>	\$50,071	\$56,119
Average Household Size	<b>2.92</b>	2.67	2.5
Average Family Size	<b>3.64</b>	3.21	3.05
Owner Occupancy Rate	<b>61.9%</b>	62.9%	61.7%
<b>Age Groups (2017)</b>			
Median Age	<b>33.5</b>	36.1	39.2
Population < 5 years of age	<b>6.0%</b>	7.0%	5.8%
Population < 18 years of age	<b>33.9%</b>	25.7%	21.5%
Population 18 - 24 years of age	<b>11.8%</b>	9.2%	9.0%
Population 25 - 64 years of age	<b>40.5%</b>	50.5%	53.2%
Population > 65 years of age	<b>13.8%</b>	14.6%	16.3%

Sources: Portland State University 2019 Population Estimates  
2010 Census, 2000 Census, 2017 American Community Survey



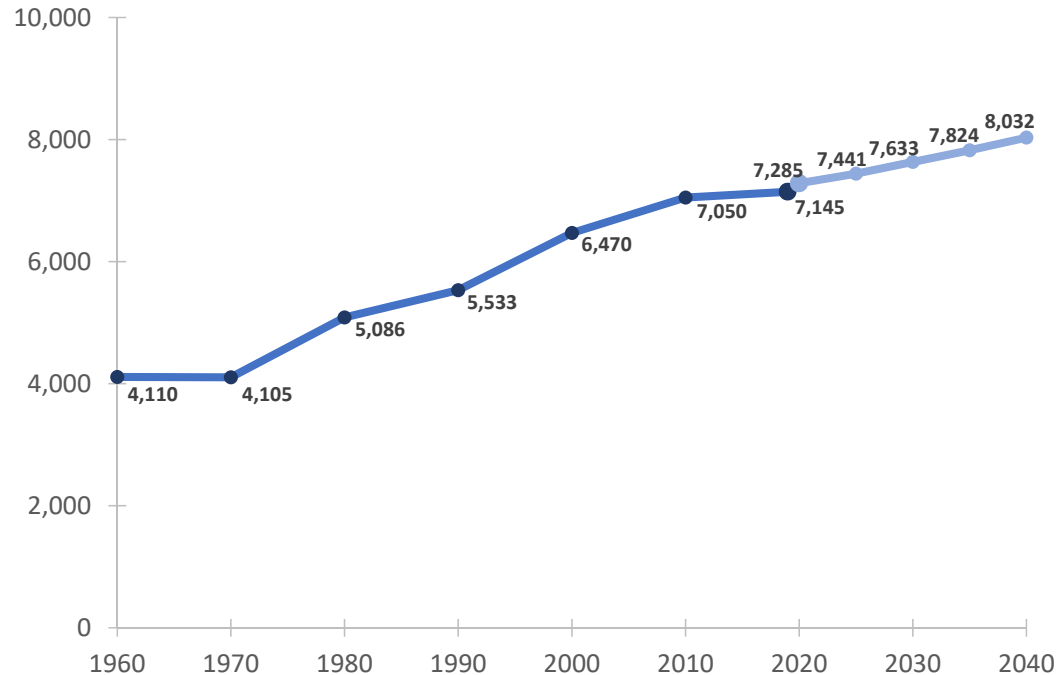
## Population

The City of Milton-Freewater, created in 1951 when the cities of Milton and Freewater merged, has grown over the past fifty years – from just over 4,100 people in 1970 to over 7,000 today. The city is currently home to approximately 7,145 residents (2019) and its population is expected to grow by approximately 15% over the next two decades.

Milton-Freewater experienced its strongest period of recent growth between 1990 and 2000, when annual growth was approximately 1.7% per year. Growth has slowed in more recent decades, to less than 1% annually. Milton-Freewater makes up about 9% of the population of Umatilla County and is projected to contribute proportionally to the County's population growth over future decades.

Portland State University's Population Research Center projects a 2025 population of 7,441 for the City of Milton-Freewater, growing to 7,633 people by 2030.

Figure 3. Population Change – Actual and Projected: 1960 - 2040



Milton-Freewater's population has a median age of 33.5 (2017) and a high percentage of families with children (42%). This has important implications for park and recreation needs. Young adults between 5 to 24 years old make up the city's largest 20-year population group, comprising 39.6% of the overall population in 2017.

- Youth under 5 years of age make up 6% of Milton-Freewater's population, see Figure 3. 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.
- Children 5 to 14 years make up current youth program participants. Approximately 22.5% of the city's population falls into this age range.



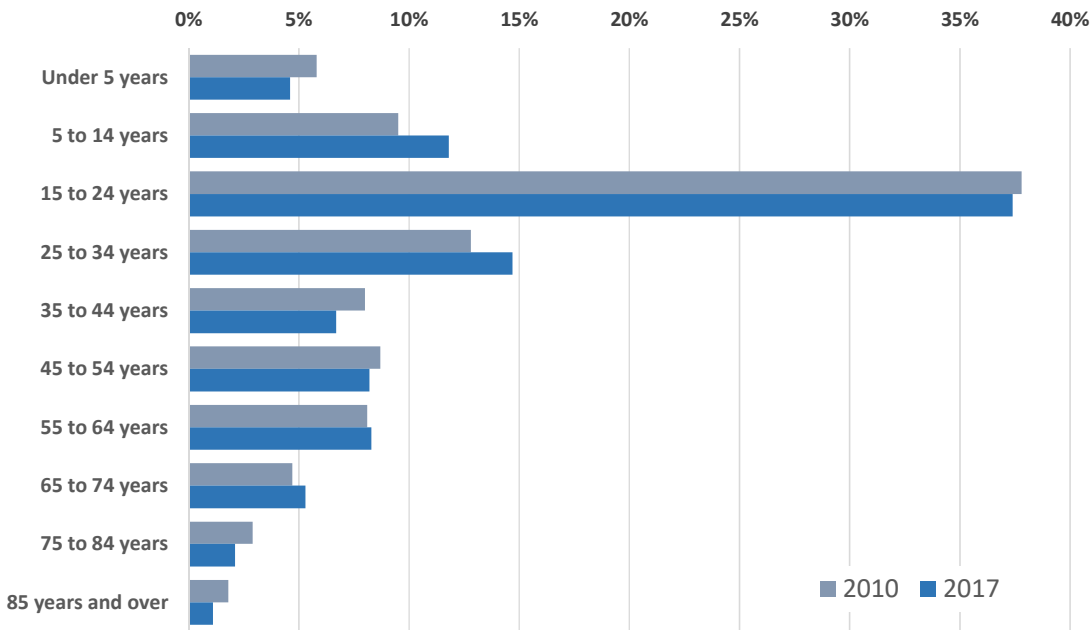
- Teens and young adults, age 15 to 24 years, are in transition from youth program to adult programs and participate in teen/young adult programs where available. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers. About 17% percent of Milton-Freewater’s residents are teens and young adults.

While approximately 46 percent of Milton-Freewater’s residents are youth and young adults up to 24 years of age, 32% are 25 to 55 year olds, and 23% are 55 and older.

- Adults ages 25 to 34 years are users of adult programs. Only about 5% of residents are in this age category. These residents may be entering long-term relationships and establishing families. More than 42% of households in the city are families with children.
- Adults between 35 and 54 years of age represent users of a wide range of adult programs and park facilities. Their characteristics extend from having children using preschool and youth programs to becoming empty nesters. This age group makes up 26% of Milton-Freewater’s population.
- Older adults, ages 55 years plus, make up approximately 23% of Milton-Freewater’s population. This group represents users of adult and senior programs. These residents may be approaching retirement or already retired and may be spending time with grandchildren. This group also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

The city’s median age (33.5) has remained relatively constant over the past two decades and is much lower than that of Umatilla County (36.1) and Oregon (39.1).

Figure 4. Age Group Distributions: 2010 & 2017



## Race & Ethnicity

In 2010, Milton-Freewater was 71% White, less than 1% Asian, African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander, 25% some other race, and 2.5% from two or more races. Over 43% of people identified as Hispanic or Latino of any race.

According to the 2017 American Community Survey, half of Milton-Freewater’s population speaks a language other than English at home (predominantly Spanish) and

25% speak English less than very well. This is a higher percentage of people who speak a language other than English at home than in Oregon as a whole (15%). The City should consider how it could best provide recreational opportunities, programs, and information that are accessible to, and meet the needs of, all community members.

## Household Characteristics

In 2017, the average household in Milton-Freewater was 2.92 people, higher than the state (2.5) average. The average family is larger, at 3.64 people. Of the 2,386 households in the city, 46% were families with children under 18, and 30% were individuals living alone.

## Employment & Education

The 2017 work force population (16 years and over) of Milton-Freewater is 4,966 (70%). Of this population, sixty percent is in the labor force, 5% is unemployed, and 40% is not in the labor force. Nearly 20% of Milton-Freewater's employed residents work in the education and health care industry, whose major employers include the Milton-Freewater Unified School District and Blue Mountain Community College. Agriculture, retail trade and the arts, entertainment, recreation and hospitality sector also employ a large percentage of local workers and (15%, 14%, and 11%, respectively) also contribute significantly to the local economy.

According to the 2017 American Community Survey, 89% of City residents have a high school degree or higher, higher than the statewide average (86%). Less than 2% of Milton-Freewater residents have a Bachelor's degree, while 46% have some college education, similar to rates across Umatilla County.

## Income & Poverty

A community's level of household income can impact the types of recreational services prioritized by community members as well as their willingness and ability to pay for recreational services. Perhaps more importantly, household income is also closely linked with levels of physical activity. Low-income households are three times more likely to live a sedentary lifestyle than middle and upper-income households, according to an analysis of national data by the Active Living by Design organization.

In 2017, the median household income in Milton-Freewater was \$37,368. This income level was nearly \$13,000 (25%) lower than the median income for Umatilla County residents.

At the lower end of the household income scale, approximately 32% percent of Milton-Freewater households earn less than \$25,000 annually, relatively more households than in Umatilla County (24%), the State of Oregon (21%), and across the United States (23%). In 2017, 24% of Milton-Freewater's families were living below the poverty level. The poverty threshold was an income of \$24,600 for a family of four. This percentage is significantly higher than the countywide (13.5%) and statewide (9.8%) levels. Poverty affects 45% of youth under 18 and 21% of those 65 and older. The percentage of local families accessing food stamp or SNAP benefits (30%) is also higher than the state average (18%).



Lower-income residents can face a number of barriers to physical activity including poor access to parks and recreational facilities, a lack of transportation options, a lack of time, and poor health. Low-income residents may also be less able financially able to afford recreational service fees or to pay for services, like childcare, that can make physical activity possible.

Higher income households have an increased ability and willingness to pay for recreation and leisure services, and often face fewer barriers to participation. Approximately 13 percent of City households have household incomes in the higher income brackets (\$100,000 and greater), lower than in the county (21%) and the state (31%).

## Persons with Disabilities

The 2017 American Community Survey reported 15% (1,060 persons) of Milton-Freewater's population 5 years and older as having a disability that interferes with life activities. This is on par with county and state averages (both 14%). Among residents 65 and older, the percentage rises to 55%, or 946 persons, which is higher than percentages found in the general senior population of the State of Oregon (37%). It signals a potential need to design inclusive parks, recreational facilities, and programs. Planning, designing, and operating a park system that facilitates participation by residents of all abilities will also help ensure compliance with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## Health Status

Information on the health of Milton-Freewater's residents is not readily available. However, Umatilla County residents rank as some of the healthier residents in Oregon (16th out of 36 counties), according to the County Health Rankings.

However, approximately 19% of Umatilla County adults age 20 and older report getting no leisure-time physical activity – higher than the statewide average of 15%. In Umatilla County, 60% of residents have access to adequate physical activity opportunities, which is significantly lower than the 88% average for all Oregon residents. This suggests a need for additional places where residents can participate in physical activity, including parks, trails, and public or private community centers, gyms or other recreational facilities. Approximately 32% of Umatilla County adults are overweight or obese, compared to 26% of Oregon adults.

According to the County Health Rankings, Umatilla County ranks in the top half (15th of 36 counties) compared to all Oregon counties for health outcomes, including length and quality of life, and health factors like health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment.





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement and feedback played an important role in establishing a clear planning framework that reflects current community priorities. A variety of public outreach methods were used, including:

- Direct mail and online survey
- Two community meetings
- Group and individual stakeholder discussions
- Website content & social media postings
- Recreation Committee sessions

Throughout this planning process, the public provided information and expressed opinions about their needs and priorities for parks, trails and recreation facilities and programs in the community. This feedback played a crucial role in updating policy statements and prioritizing the capital facilities project list contained within this Plan.

### COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The City of Milton-Freewater contracted for the administration of a community survey as a component of this plan to gather input to help determine park, trail and recreation priorities of the community. The survey was conducted as a mail survey and an online survey. In all, 231 survey responses were received.

The 15-question survey was mailed to 1,356 addresses on June 24, 2019. An online version of the same survey was prepared and posted to the City's website. Information about the



survey was provided on the City's website home page and on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan project page. It was promoted via multiple Facebook announcements and during a public open house meeting held on August 7, 2019 that served as the first public meeting for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Open house attendees were encouraged to take the survey online with a laptop provided at the meeting. The survey was closed on August 9th, and preliminary data were compiled and reviewed.

Survey respondents were asked about:

- Performance and quality of programs and parks
- Usage of City parks and recreation facilities
- Overall satisfaction with the value of services being delivered by the City
- Opinions about the need for various park, recreation and trail improvements
- Priorities for future park and recreation services and facilities

Major survey findings are noted below, and a more detailed discussion of results can be found in the needs assessment (Chapter 6). A complete summary of survey findings appears in Appendix A.

## Major Findings from Survey

*Milton-Freewater residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities:*

- Nearly all respondents (99%) think parks and recreation are important to quality of life in Milton-Freewater.

*Residents visit parks frequently:*

- Nearly 70% of respondents visit parks or recreation facilities at least once a month.
- More than eight in ten respondents have visited Yantis Park (99%) and the Aquatic Center (86%), approximately 75% have visited the Marie Dorion Park, Orchard Park, Rotary Sports Complex and the Gold Course.
- The most popular activities are for trails, family gatherings, relaxation, and participating in festivals or celebrations.

*Residents are generally satisfied with existing parks and recreation facilities:*

- A large majority of respondents (74%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the value they receive from the City of Milton-Freewater for parks and recreation amenities.
- More than 90% of respondents rated the condition of Emma's Place and the Golf Course as excellent or good
- However, over half of residents said they would visit parks more often if the City addressed safety concerns, maintenance issues, accessibility issues and crowding.

*Residents would like to see improvements made to the park and recreation system:*

- A large majority of survey respondents think that Milton-Freewater does not have enough neighborhood walking and biking trails (71%).
- Respondents were somewhat split on the adequacy of parks, picnic areas, and recreation programs.
- Notably, a large majority of respondents (80% or more) were supportive of expanding and improving multi-use walking and biking trails, community events or festivals, and picnic areas or shelters for group gatherings.

## OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS

The project team sought feedback from local residents and program users at two public meetings. The City's website, social media and local news media were used to publicize the events and encourage participation. Summary responses from each of the meetings are provided in Appendix B.

### Community Workshop #1

Community members were invited to the first open house for Milton-Freewater Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Tuesday, August 7, 2019 from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at Milton-Freewater Community Building. Approximately 20 people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment.

As the first of two public sessions for the Plan, the workshop was organized in a series of "stations". Each station included informational display boards, and some stations included activities for people to provide input. These displays included project overview, summary of park and outdoor recreation assets, park and trail maps, and ideas about investing in future recreation amenities. Attendees were encouraged to talk to project team members, record their comments and complete the online survey, which was available on laptop computers provided at the meeting. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify general needs and interests for park and recreation in Milton-Freewater.

### Community Workshop #2

Community members were invited to the second open house for Milton-Freewater Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Thursday, September 25, 2019 from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at the Milton-Freewater Library. The project team prepared informational displays covering the major themes of the Master Plan. These displays included Project Overview, Survey Highlights, Parks & Outdoor Recreation, Trails & Connections, Recreation Investments, and Parks Maps. Based on attendee interests, a group discussion was facilitated about local interests and needs for the parks, trails and recreation system. Fourteen people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment.

## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS

Interviews with internal and external stakeholder were conducted to more broadly assess the opportunities for park system enhancements, partnerships and coordination. Stakeholders were identified by City staff based on their past coordination with the City and their involvement or interest in the future of Milton-Freewater's parks, programs or trail facilities. The stakeholder meetings were held between August and September 2019, and the following organizations or representatives provided insight to the Plan:

- Milton-Freewater School District
- Milton-Freewater Downtown Alliance
- Recreation Committee
- Two City Council members
- Milton-Freewater City Manager



Attendees offered a variety of suggestions on how to improve the City's park and recreation system. Comments ranged from the need for pool renovations to access to indoor facilities for programs to trail projects to specific park amenities. Participants also encouraged greater coordination and collaboration with Umatilla County and regional partners on a regional trail network and a trail corridor along the Walla Walla River. The following list illustrates the range of comments:

- Milton-Freewater parks and recreation facilities have great bones, but they are starting to age. The City needs to find ways to keep up with funding to help improve and repair assets on a more regular basis.
- Continue to pursue a Riverwalk Trail to accommodate walking and biking path along the river.
- Promote sport fields and options for tournaments to capitalize of local investments for recreation; Milton-Freewater could use these amenities to capture tourist dollars in support of hotels, RV sites, restaurants.
- Explore options for winter recreation options with an indoor facility.
- The City should do more marketing. Work toward enabling things that attract people to the area. Get the people here, then the businesses will follow.
- Consider options for more festivals (multi-day) with vendors, music, food, maybe volleyball or horseshoe tournaments, car show, etc.

Specific recommendations are incorporated in the Needs Assessment chapter, and a full summary is provided in Appendix C.

## RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

The Recreation Committee provided feedback on the Plan during two regularly scheduled public sessions. The first session occurred on August 6th soon after the planning project was initiated. The Committee discussed the update and provided their perspectives on a vision for the system, parks and programs, specific challenges, opportunities and potential community partnerships. City staff provided project updates to the Committee during subsequent, regularly-scheduled meetings.

## OTHER OUTREACH

In addition to the direct outreach opportunities noted above, the Milton-Freewater community was informed about the project and opportunities to participate and offer comments through the City's website and social media. A project webpage was posted on the City's website to provide background information and meeting announcements. The page was updated periodically to keep residents informed of progress and alerted to opportunities for involvement during the process.





This chapter outlines the goals and objectives that were created during the parks planning process. The vision set of goals and objectives are intended to address the community's needs.

- Goals represent the general end toward which an organizational effort is directed. They identify how a community intends to achieve its mission and establish a vision for the future.
- Objectives are measurable statements, which identify specific steps needed to achieve the stated goals.

The Capital Facilities Plan outlines project-specific recommendations - specific steps needed to achieve the Milton-Freewater Parks and Recreation Master Plan goals.

## GOALS

The goals and objectives described in the following section define the park and recreation services that the City of Milton-Freewater aims to achieve based on its community's needs. They are built on the foundation of input from the community, stakeholders and staff during this planning process.

Also, the Plan's goals align with the National Recreation and Parks Association's Three Pillars, which are foundational concepts adopted by the national organization in 2012. These core values (below) are crucial to improving the quality of life for all Americans by inspiring the protection of natural resources, increasing opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating, and empowering citizens to improve the livability of their



communities.

- **Conservation** – Public parks are critical to preserving our communities’ natural resources and wildlife habitats, which offer significant social and economic benefits. Local park and recreation agencies are leaders in protecting our open space, connecting children to nature and providing education and programs that engage communities in conservation.
- **Health and Wellness** – Park and recreation departments lead the nation in improving the overall health and wellness of citizens, and fighting obesity. From fitness programs, to well-maintained, accessible, walking paths and trails, to nutrition programs for underserved youth and adults, our work is at the forefront of providing solutions to these challenges.
- **Social Equity** – We believe universal access to public parks and recreation is fundamental to all, not just a privilege for a few. Every day, our members work hard to ensure all people have access to resources and programs that connect citizens, and in turn, make our communities more livable and desirable.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

### Goal 1: Encourage and support meaningful community involvement and participation in Milton-Freewater’s park and recreation system.

- 1.1 Support the Recreation Committee as a City advisory body and the forum for public discussions of parks and recreation issues.
- 1.2 Involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation planning, facility design and recreation program development to gather community input, facilitate project understanding and support, and ensure facilities and programs meet community needs.
- 1.3 Develop and coordinate volunteer and stewardship projects to involve a variety of individuals, schools, service clubs, faith organizations and businesses in the development and beautification of the City’s park system.
- 1.4 Provide easily accessible information about the City’s parks, trails, recreational opportunities, community events and volunteer activities to increase resident awareness.
- 1.5 Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan every ten years to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs and desires of the community.

# PARKS & NATURAL AREAS

## **Goal 2. Parks: Provide a system of parks that meets current and future needs for active and passive recreation and enhance the community's environment and livability.**

- 2.1 Proactively acquire and develop parklands identified within this Plan, in both developed and undeveloped areas, to provide a high-quality, diverse system of parks to serve current and future residents.
- 2.2 Acquire and develop parklands necessary to provide a level of service standard of 6 acres of parks per 1,000 residents.
- 2.3 Prioritize park acquisition and development in underserved areas where households are more than ½-mile from a developed park; Pursue long-term parkland acquisitions within the UGB in identified parkland opportunity areas.
- 2.4 Identify and prioritize lands for inclusion in the parks system based on their:
  - Contribution to desired level of service and park access
  - Adequacy of the site to accommodate the recreational needs of the intended service area.
  - Physical suitability of the site for recreational use.
  - Location of the site with respect to the intended service population.
  - Unique attributes of the site such as water features, natural vegetation and varied topography.
- 2.5 Ensure new parks are provided in concert with new development.
- 2.6 Coordinate with Umatilla County and other recreation organizations for the planning of nearby regional recreational areas that would benefit City residents.
- 2.7 Explore partnership with local utilities, public agencies and private landowners for easements for parkland, trail corridors and recreation facilities.

## **Goal 3. Natural Areas: Preserve distinctive natural areas and features for their scenic and habitat value, as well as their contribution to passive recreational opportunities within Milton-Freewater.**

- 3.1 Work to preserve high resource value, significant or connected natural resource areas through partnerships with public agencies, acquisition or other protection (e.g., conservation easements).
- 3.2 Coordinate with Umatilla County and private landowners to preserve and restore natural areas along the Walla Walla River for environmental and recreational use.
- 3.3 Pursue opportunities to provide or enhance appropriate public access (e.g. trails, viewpoints and wildlife viewing areas) within natural areas to support passive recreation and environmental education.
- 3.4 Develop partnerships with land trusts and private entities that have an interest providing recreation opportunities and/or natural resource protection and preservation.





## TRAIL NETWORK

### Goal 4. Trails: Engage regional partners and local jurisdictions to develop a coordinated and connected pedestrian, bicycle and off-street trail system.

- 4.1 Develop a network of shared-use trails for recreational, pedestrian and bicycle users to connect parks, neighborhoods, schools and public amenities; Design and construct trails to serve a variety of users at varying skill levels.
- 4.2 Strive to provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to all new and existing park and open space areas.
- 4.3 Coordinate trail system planning and development with the City's Transportation System Plan and the Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan in an effort to provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle network.
- 4.4 Coordinate and partner with public agencies, local utilities and private landowners to secure trail easements and access to open space for trail connections.
- 4.5 Coordinate with the Community Development Department and integrate the siting of proposed trail segments and on-street improvements into the development review process: Require development projects along designated trail routes be designed to accommodate planned trail segments.
- 4.6 Provide trailhead accommodations, such as parking, wayfinding signage and other amenities, as appropriate.
- 4.7 Implement trail, route and wayfinding signage for trails and associated facilities, informational maps and materials identifying existing and planned trail facilities.

## RECREATION SERVICES

### Goal 5. Recreation Programs & Facilities: Facilitate a variety of recreational services and programs that promote the health, well-being and inclusion of residents of all ages and abilities.

- 5.1 Leverage City resources by forming and maintaining partnerships with other public, non-profit and private recreation providers to deliver recreation services and secure access to facilities for community recreation.
- 5.2 Continue to maintain and pursue improvements to the Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center to ensure the safety of the facility, improve energy efficiency and extend its useful life, at a minimum.
- 5.3 Provide and promote special events, such as festivals, concerts or movies in the park, farmers markets, and historic or cultural activities that are organized by community groups, schools, or organizations.
- 5.4 Continue to support the Senior Center so that seniors engage in social, recreational, educational, nutritional and health programs.



- 5.5 Partner with the Milton-Freewater School District for continued access to existing facilities (e.g. schools gymnasiums, tracks, fields) for community recreational use. Explore opportunities to co-develop facilities on school property or property adjacent to schools.
- 5.6 Enhance partnerships with the Milton-Freewater School District and non-profit providers to expand community access to indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.
- 5.7 Consider evolving trends and changes in demographics to meet the needs of diverse users, including under-served residents who may have limited access to recreation.
- 5.8 Establish and operate specialized recreational facilities (e.g. sport fields and courts, off leash dog areas, skateparks, community gardens) to respond to identified or emerging public needs, as appropriate.
- 5.9 Partner and coordinate with local user groups and organizations to plan for, develop, and manage specialized facilities.

## ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT

### Goal 6 Administration: Develop a parks system that is efficient to maintain and operate, safe and attractive for community members, and that protects the City's capital investment.

- 6.1 Develop and manage a citywide system of parks, trails, and recreational facilities in a planned manner consistent with community goals and available resources.
- 6.2 Stay current with the progress of and advancements in parks, recreation, maintenance and operations best practices and applicable legal requirements.
- 6.3 Use part-time, seasonal, and contract employees for select functions to meet peak demands and respond to specialized or urgent needs.
- 6.4 Maintain an inventory of assets including their condition and expected useful life.
- 6.5 Establish park maintenance standards and regularly inspect, maintain, and repair or replace park facilities and infrastructure to ensure safe use, reduce unplanned reactive maintenance and protect public investment.
- 6.6 Plan for and finance deferred maintenance projects and upgrades to ensure a safe, secure and accessible park infrastructure.
- 6.7 Design and maintain parks and facilities to comply with ADA requirements and offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels and ages.
- 6.8 Identify and secure appropriate funding sources, such as system development charges, user fees, bonds and levies, private donation, sponsorships, and state and federal grant sources, to adequately support the acquisition, development and maintenance of parks and facilities.
- 6.9 Review and adjust the Systems Development Charge rate periodically to allow the City to expand and develop its parks system while meeting its park goals and objectives.
- 6.10 Consider adopting a Parks Utility Fee to provide a dedicated funding source for operations and maintenance.
- 6.11 Consider the maintenance and staffing costs necessitated by the acquisition, development or renovation of parks or open spaces, and pursue operational funding that adequately supports system expansion.



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The Milton-Freewater community has access to local parks, a community building and aquatic center for close-to-home recreation activities and programming. Within the region, outdoor recreation opportunities are available at a variety of federal, tribal, state and neighboring city-owned public lands and waterways.

The heart of Milton-Freewater's park system is Yantis Park and the Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center. The aquatic center features a 25-meter, six-lane outdoor pool, 170' flume slide, bathhouse, concessions and various support amenities. The outdoor pool facility is used continuously from the end of the school year in June through the beginning of school in August. In the summer of 2019, the pool facility was closed due to an unexpected problem with paint that was failing to adhere to the pool lining. Since community recreation is greatly enhanced by the services provided by the pool, renovation is expected to be implemented as soon as feasible.

Another major recreational facility, the Milton-Freewater Golf Club, is owned and operated by the City under a separate fund. Revenues are primarily generated from user fees for golf and foot golf, along with rental revenue from tenants of the Golf Clubhouse Restaurant. Located west of Catherine Street in the west-central part of the city, the 35-acre course offers an 18-hole, par 60 golfing experience. In 2016, the 18-hole foot golf course was added as an option recreational activity. The clubhouse offers food, beverages, golf cart rental and golf cart storage.

Milton-Freewater also has a range of local park facilities that provide a mix of playground, picnic places and sport fields to contribute to the community's outdoor recreation opportunities.



Sport fields are provided at Yantis Park where the high school uses the ball field and tennis courts. Rotary Sports Complex and Memorial Field combine to provide ballfields and soccer fields for active outdoor recreation programming in the community.

Marie Dorian Park provides over five acres of natural area situated along the Walla Walla River with a steep bluff overlooking the city. The site was a former water facility, and the historic powerhouse building has been adapted for use as a shady picnic shelter. A swing set, picnic tables, shade trees open lawn area and staircase to the overlook and memorial obelisk offer passive recreation activities. Parking and restrooms are also provided.

Community Park, a small site adjacent to the community center, has a new accessible playground with an open grass area, shade trees and benches. Other small park properties offer limited green space, but they provide other values, such as the site for the Farmer's Market in Orchard Park and the welcome to Milton-Freewater sign at Olinger Park. Morello Park, tucked behind a well house, has a small, old play structure that should be replaced.

## CLASSIFICATIONS

Classifying parkland based on its characteristics and recreational offerings can help ensure the total park system meets a community's recreational needs. The planned Milton-Freewater 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 will serve 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 users and adjacent uses.

As a small but growing city, the classifications are intended to provide a framework regarding the usage and utility of existing and future sites. The following four classifications are in effect in Milton-Freewater and are defined as follow:

- Community Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Special Use Facilities
- Natural Areas / Open Space



## Community parks

Community parks are large sites developed for organized play, contain a wide array of facilities and, as a result, appeal to a more diverse group of users. Community parks are generally 10 to 30 acres in size and serve residents within a 2-mile drive, walk or bike ride from the park. 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 sport courts (basketball, tennis), covered activity areas, soccer and/or baseball fields and bike and pedestrian trails.

## Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks generally are considered the basic unit of traditional park systems. They are small parks designed for unstructured, non-organized play and limited active and passive recreation. They may range from 0.5 to 4 acres in size, depending on a variety of factors including neighborhood need, physical location and opportunity. To accommodate a typically desired amount of recreational amenities and open areas a minimum size of 1.5 acres is recommended, if possible. Neighborhood parks are intended to serve residential areas within close proximity (up to ½-mile walking or biking distance) of the park and should be geographically distributed throughout the community. Park siting and design should ensure pedestrians do not have to cross a major street or other barrier to get to a neighborhood park, unless safe crossings are provided.

## Special Use Areas

Special use facilities include single-purpose recreational areas or stand-alone sites designed to support a specific, specialized use. This classification includes community centers, golf courses and sites of historical or cultural significance, such as museums, historical landmarks and structures. 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.

## Natural Areas

Natural areas are undeveloped lands primarily left in a natural state with only modest improvements for recreation uses. These conserved open spaces are usually owned or managed by a governmental agency and may or may not have public access. Natural areas may provide trail corridors, and offer low-impact or passive activities, such as walking or nature observation, where appropriate. No standards exist or are proposed for natural resource areas or open spaces.

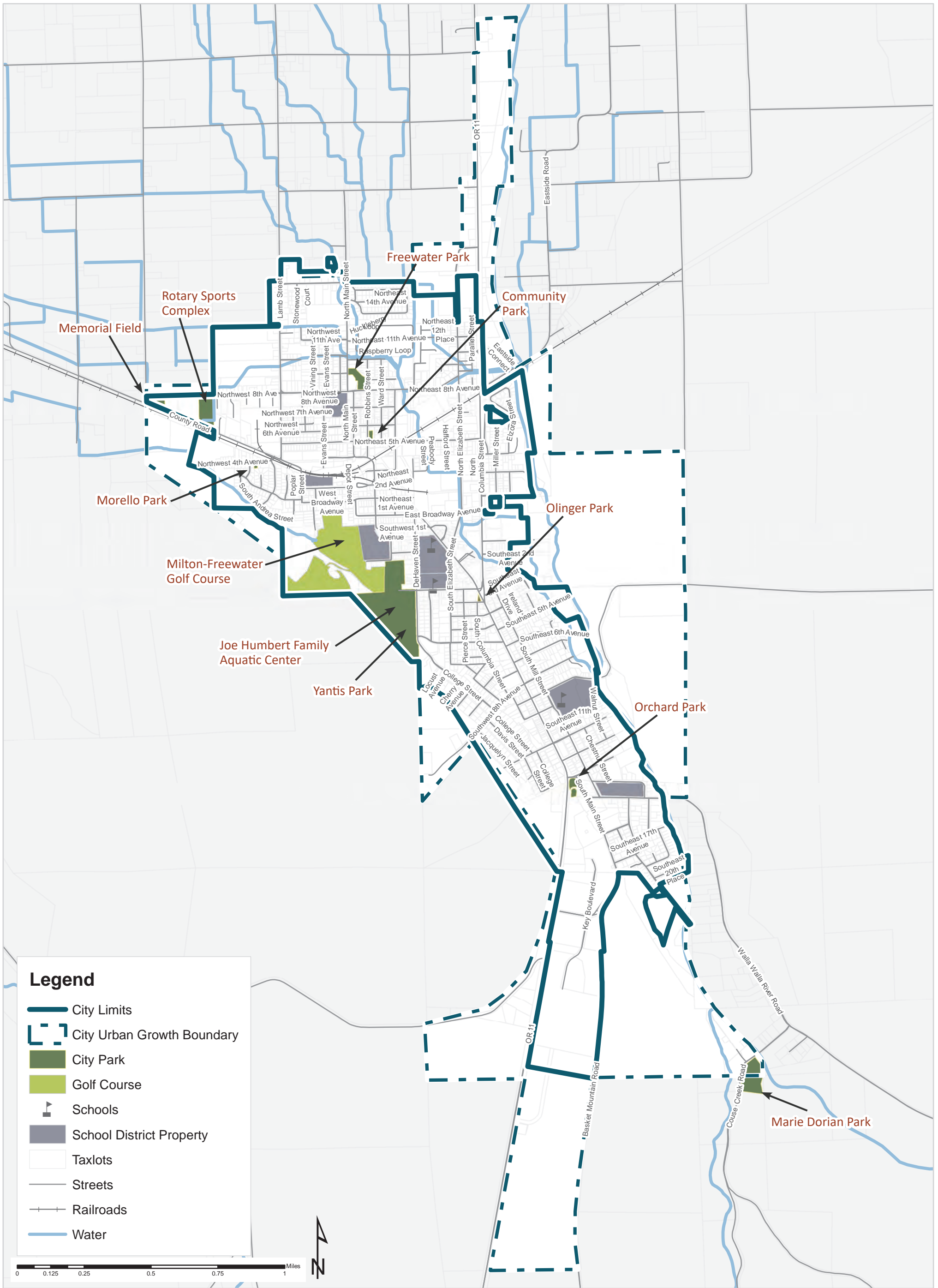


## INVENTORY SUMMARY

Together, the public parklands in Milton-Freewater provide 42.8 acres of outdoor recreation facilities. With the inclusion of the 35.1-acre public golf course, the City provides 77.9 acres of outdoor recreation lands in its system. The City also maintains City Hall, the library and two fire stations.

Figure 5. City-owned or Operated Park Facilities Inventory

Park	Classification	Acreage
Yantis Park	Community	28.23
Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center	Community (part of Yantis Park)	
Community Park	Neighborhood	0.3
Freewater Park	Neighborhood	1.79
Marie Dorian Park	Neighborhood	5.66
Morello Park	Neighborhood	0.15
Olinger Park	Neighborhood	0.12
Orchard Park	Neighborhood	1.15
Memorial Field	Special Use	1.35
Milton-Freewater Golf Course	Special Use	35.08
Rotary Sports Complex	Special Use	4.07
<b>Total Park Acreage</b>		<b>77.9</b>
<b>Park Acreage w/o Golf Course</b>		<b>42.82</b>



**Map 1: Existing Parks & Open Spaces**





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## OTHER RECREATION PROVIDERS

### Milton-Freewater Unified School District

Milton-Freewater Unified School District serves approximately 2,000 K-12 students in three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and an alternative school. The school district provides extra-curricular activities in music, sports and after-school programs. The school district's indoor facilities include three full gyms, one gym outside city limits and one partial cafeteria/gym. Each school sport conducts a week-long summer program. Outdoor sports facilities include baseball, football, track, soccer and basketball. Outdoor recreation facilities are outlined in the figure below.

Figure 6. Milton-Freewater School District Outdoor Sports Facilities

School Name	Ballfields	Soccer	Football Track	Outdoor Basketball
Olinger Elementary School	2	1		
Ferndale Elementary School*	1	1		
Freewater Elementary School*		1		
Central Middle School*	1	2		2
McLoughlin High School	**		1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

\* Sports fields are informal, multi-purpose  
 \*\* HS uses Yantis Park ballfield & tennis courts

### Umatilla County

Umatilla County owns and operates Harris Park along the South Fork of the Walla Walla River. Located 14 miles southeast of Milton-Freewater, the county park features an extensive hiking trail, campground with campsites equipped with water, electricity, picnic table and fire/grill ring, large covered shelter and a sand volleyball court. Harris Park's day-use area offers riverfront access, fishing, picnicking, BBQ grills, small picnic shelter, playground, horseshoe pits and a sand volleyball court. The park is open from March to November. The U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages the three-mile stretch of the south fork of the Walla Walla River that runs from Harris Park boundary to the Umatilla National Forest's west boundary. This section of land is designated as an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC) to protect the riparian ecosystem. Harris Park is an entrance to the ACEC for hikers, horseback riders, trail bikers and hunters who use the public lands.

### State

W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area encompasses approximately 17,000 acres with sections in Columbia, Garfield and Walla Walla counties. Managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, these wildlife areas provide critical habitat for a variety of wildlife species. Camp Wooten is an environmental learning center located on WDFW land



and operated by the State parks and Recreation Commission. Originally a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) site, Camp Wooten is the largest environmental learning center in eastern Washington. Located along the Tucannon River, the center is available for group use and accommodates 240 overnight guests through a combination of lodging, RV and tent camping. Open from March to October, recreational activities include swimming, hiking, biking, wildlife watching, canoeing, fishing, archery, tennis, basketball and softball.

Camp Wooten, a state park amenity, sits on 40 acres including a lake, 17 cabins, a cafeteria, a swimming pool, canoes, an archery range, horse paddocks, interpretive trails and access to the Tucannon River.

## Federal

Fort Walla Walla, originally established as a U.S. Army fort in 1856, contains 640 acres of military uses and 640 acres of hay and timber resources. In 1921, the fort and property were turned over to the Veterans Administration, retaining 15 original buildings from the military era. Currently, the complex contains a park, museum and Jonathon M. Wainwright Memorial VA Medical Center. The Fort Walla Walla Museum hosts kids summer camp programs and Fort Walla Walla Days, a two-day celebration in June featuring re-enactments of the fort and region's history. A portion of the former military property was dedicated as a city park, which owned and operated by the City of Walla Walla.

The US Army Corps of Engineers operates the off-stream reservoir, named Bennington Lake, which provides miles of hiking and equestrian trails outside Walla Walla. The Mill Creek channel runs for six miles through the City of Walla Walla. The USACE provides recreational facilities at Rooks Park, Mill Creek Trail and the Bennington Lake Recreation Area that offer more than 20 miles of recreation trails. These recreation areas cover over 611 acres creating the largest public open space in the Walla Walla Valley.

The Umatilla National Forest covers 1.4 million acres in the Blue Mountains of northeast Oregon and Southeast Washington. Outdoor recreational opportunities include camping, fishing, hunting, wildlife watching, skiing, OHV riding and rafting. The Bluewood Ski Area is within the Umatilla National Forest in Washington, operating under a special permit. More than 20 percent of the national forest is classified as wilderness.

McNary Wildlife Refuge was established as mitigation for the construction of the McNary Dam. The refuge is managed as part of the Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The 15,000 acres of sloughs, ponds, streams, islands and upland steppes and cliffs support dense concentration of waterfowl and is on the Pacific Flyway. A two-mile interpretive trail and bird blind are accessed from the McNary Environmental Education Center. Wildlife observation, hiking & horseback riding, boating, fishing, environmental education and hunting are activities support on the Refuge.

## Other Recreational Opportunities

- The cities of Pendleton, College Place and Walla Walla are in close proximity to Milton-Freewater and provide a variety of outdoor recreation amenities, along with recreation programs, classes and events.
- The Frazier Farmstead Museum, named for W.S. Frazier the community's founder, features a 1892 house filled with antique furnishing, an 1918 barn, carriage house and other structures that were part of the working farm. The museum is opened seasonally and operated by the Milton-Freewater Area Historical Society.
- The Walla Walla YMCA has a pool, weight room, three basketball courts, four racquetball courts, a non-standard track and climbing wall. This YMCA provides day-long summer camp programming for Milton-Freewater youth at the Central Middle School for ages from kindergarten through 12 years old.
- Wildhorse Resort & Casino operates an 18-hole, championship golf course located in the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Located on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the casino and resort offers lodging, gaming and entertainment.
- Bluewood Ski Resort located in southeastern Washington offers over 400 skiable acres in the Blue Mountains. The ski resort is just over 20 miles from Dayton.
- Blue Mountain Land Trust has obtained 11 conservations easements across private lands in the region and is considering facilitating public access agreements for trails.



# YANTIS PARK

28.2 acres

DeHaven Street

Community Park

## Amenities

- Parking (2 lots)
- Restrooms
- Bandshell
- Picnic shelters
- Tennis Courts
- Ballfields
- Aquatic Center (currently closed)
- Playground
- Horseshoe pits (2)
- Overlook/viewpoint shelter
- Picnic tables
- Paved paths
- Benches
- Volleyball posts (no net)
- BBQ grills
- Concession building
- Grandstands
- Swing sets
- War memorial

## Design Opportunities

- Consider converting tennis courts into a multi-sport court with 8-court pickleball overlay.
- The large playground area lacks shade for summer play. Equipment surfaces can get too hot for safe use. Add shade structures.
- Playground structures are showing age and should be scheduled for major upgrades or replacement soon.

## Management Considerations

- Existing 5-tiered bleachers by tennis courts should have safety railing added to meet international building code.
- Playground area should have coarse sand removed and replaced with approved fall safety surfacing such as engineered wood chips.
- Tennis court surfaces are cracked enough to affect play. Needs to be resurfaced.
- Playground ‘ziplines’ are missing essential pieces – repair or replace with similar structures.
- Set of 6 strap swings is missing one swing and should have replacement to complete the set.
- Overlook/viewpoint is subject to trash, broken glass and graffiti and should be maintained and repainted more regularly.







## ROTARY SPORTS COMPLEX

4.1 acres

Special Use Facility

Prunedale Road

### Amenities

- Irrigated sports fields: baseball, softball & soccer fields
- Parking
- Shade trees
- Fencing
- Storage structure
- Park sign

### Design Opportunities

- South section of open irrigated grass and shade trees has room for some traditional park amenities that could add more recreational value. Consider adding picnic shelter, playground and, perhaps a perimeter paved path around the sports complex.

### Management Considerations

- Handicapped parking spaces require ADA-compliant signs to designate their exclusive use. Add signs to the 3 spaces.





## MEMORIAL FIELD

1.4 acres

Special Use Facility

Corner of County and Winesap Roads

### Amenities

- Soccer field
- Park sign
- Fencing

### Design Opportunities

- Consider delineating space for designated parking using the adjacent city property.

### Management Considerations

- Consider adding a dog waste bag dispenser, since it is apparent that some dog owners use the field and do not pick up their dog's waste.







## COMMUNITY PARK

0.3 acres

Robbins Street & NE 5th Avenue

### Amenities

- New ADA playground (Emma's Place)
- Rubber tiled fall safety surfacing
- Parking (interior of block & on street)
- Irrigated Open Grass Lawn
- Shade trees
- Benches at Bus Stop on corner

### Design Opportunities

- New play equipment will get too hot for enjoyable play during the summer. The addition of shade structures or large shade trees are desirable.
- Consider a signage system for all city parks that uses a consistent theme of colors, logos, sizes, and materials to help identify all public parks in the system.

### Management Considerations

- None noted

## Neighborhood Park





## FREEWATER PARK

1.8 acres

Neighborhood Park

NE 8th Avenue between N. Main & Robbins Streets

### Amenities

- Restrooms
- Skate park
- Playground
- Tennis court
- Basketball hoop (in tennis court)
- Swing set (2-strap & 2-toddler)
- Shade trees
- Irrigated open grass lawn
- Concrete pads for picnic tables (4)
- BBQ grill
- Lighting

### Design Opportunities

- Consider more shade trees &/or shelter structures for playground area, skate park and picnic sites. Hot summer days can limit park use when there are no amenities for shade and rest.
- Recreational amenities are not universally accessible since park has no paved pathway system. Restrooms and playground should have ADA-compliant access added.
- Tennis court surface is unplayable due to cracks & missing net. Consider resurfacing and converting to a multi-sport court.

### Management Considerations

- Remove dying black locust near park corner (between swings & restroom).
- Fall safety surfacing at playground is not adequate and does not meet current safety standards. Remove existing coarse sand, excavate play pit to 18-24" and add engineered wood chips or other approved safety surfacing to provide adequate fall zones beneath all play equipment, including swing set.
- Replace toddler seats at swing set.
- No picnic tables were present in the park although concrete pads (for tables?) were existing. Add picnic tables back into park.







## MARIE DORIAN PARK

5.7 acres

Neighborhood Park

Couse Creek Road along the Walla Walla River

### Amenities

- Parking
- Shelter (1928 powerhouse)
- Restrooms
- Swings (2-strap)
- Picnic tables
- Bench
- Drinking fountain (inoperable)
- Irrigated open grass lawn
- Shade trees
- Trail of the Pioneers (steps uphill)
- Mural (on retaining wall)
- Marie Dorian historic interpretive sign
- Hilltop memorial structure/viewpoint
- Walla Walla River frontage
- 'Flood' wall
- Wellhead
- 2-rail fence

### Design Opportunities

- Creating legitimate streamside access to replace the user-made path scramble to the Walla Walla River's edge could add considerable appeal to the park and its potential activities.

### Management Considerations

- Swing set should have approved fall safety surfacing installed beneath the swings to meet current play safety standards.
- Marie Dorian interpretive sign has faded and warrants a replacement.
- Yellowjacket wasp nest in railing along Trail of the Pioneers stairway, just below uppermost landing. Nest should be sprayed to remove safety hazard to visitors.
- Mural could use a repainting as sections are fading.





## MORELLO PARK

0.2 acres

NW 4th Avenue

Neighborhood Park

### Amenities

- Irrigated grass lawn
- Play equipment (old & failing)
- Fence

### Design Opportunities

- Located behind wellhouse #6, this small park has limited visibility and little appeal. No park identification sign, no trees, no paved path (ADA access to play equipment) and inadequate play safety surfacing.
- Consider a complete renovation/update.

### Management Considerations

- None noted.







## OLINGER PARK

0.1 acres

Neighborhood Park

Corner of South Main Street & Southwest 3rd Avenue

### Amenities

- “Welcome to Milton-Freewater” sign
- Park ID sign (rock)
- Pine trees (3)
- Red maple (chlorotic)
- Irrigated grass

### Design Opportunities

- No recreational amenities are provided on this ‘park’ site. Consider adding a bench.

### Management Considerations

- Test soil to determine pH and soil fertility to diagnose treatment for chlorotic red maple. Treat accordingly.





## ORCHARD PARK

1.2 acres

Corner of S. Main & SE 14th Avenue

### Amenities

- Restrooms
- Parking (undefined gravel area)
- Picnic tables (3)
- Gazebo
- Bench (memorial)
- Shade trees
- Open lawn
- RV holding tank dump station
- Irrigation
- Memorial bricks @ park sign
- Memorial Highway sign & planter

### Design Opportunities

- Shade (trees or structures) would make the picnic tables more desirable. Site is very noisy and surrounded by high traffic roads so improvements are unlikely to draw more use. Restrooms are often used by travelers.
- Consider adding a picnic shelter and more shade trees to create a travelers' rest stop, if desired.

### Management Considerations

- Open grass areas are irrigated and in good condition. Shade trees are relatively healthy considering age and climate.
- Park sign is not visible from entrance locations due to orientation and interior location. Consider adding one of two park signs that identify the park where vehicles enter.

### Neighborhood Park







# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The planning process assesses park and recreation activity, facility and programming needs and priorities and relies heavily on public input, park inventory conditions and gives consideration to state and national recreation trends. This planning assessment concludes with a detailed discussion of specific, local needs and how they might be considered within the broader parks, trails and recreation system with an eye toward fiscal responsibility and funding constraints.

By considering the location, size and number of facilities by type and use, along with community interests and priorities, this plan evaluates the current and future demand for park and recreation amenities. The six-year Capital Facilities Plan which identifies and prioritizes crucial upgrades, improvements and expansions is founded on this work of assimilating the park system assessment, safety and maintenance priorities and the needs expressed by residents.

## TRENDS & PERSPECTIVES

The following summaries of state trends and local insights reflect potential recreational activities and facilities for future consideration in Milton-Freewater's park system. Examining current recreation trends can help inform potential park and recreation improvements and opportunities that may create a more vibrant parks system as it moves into the future. Additional trend data and summaries are provided in Appendix D.



## NATIONAL RECREATION TRENDS

### State of the Managed Recreation Industry Report

Recreation Management magazine's 2018 State of the Managed Recreation Industry Report summarizes the opinions and information provided by a wide range of professionals working in the recreation, sports and fitness facilities. The 2018 report indicated that many (86.6%) recreation, sports and fitness facility owners form partnerships with other organizations, as a means of expanding their reach, offering additional programming opportunities or as a way to share resources and increase funding. Local schools are shown as the most common partner (61.3%) for all facility types. Parks and recreation organizations (95.8%) were the most likely to report that they had partnered with outside organizations.

Park system professionals reported plans to add features at their facilities. The top 10 planned features for all facility types include:

1. Splash play areas (23.6%)
2. Synthetic turf sports fields (17%)
3. Fitness trails and/or outdoor fitness equipment (16.4%)
4. Fitness centers (16.3%)
5. Walking/hiking trails (15.5%)
6. Playgrounds (15.2%)
7. Park shelters (13.6%)
8. Dog parks (13.5%)
9. Exercise studios (12.9%)
10. Disc golf courses (12.9%)

Respondents from community centers, parks and health clubs were the most likely to report that they had plans to add programs at their facilities over the next few years. The 10 most commonly planned program additions in 2018 include:

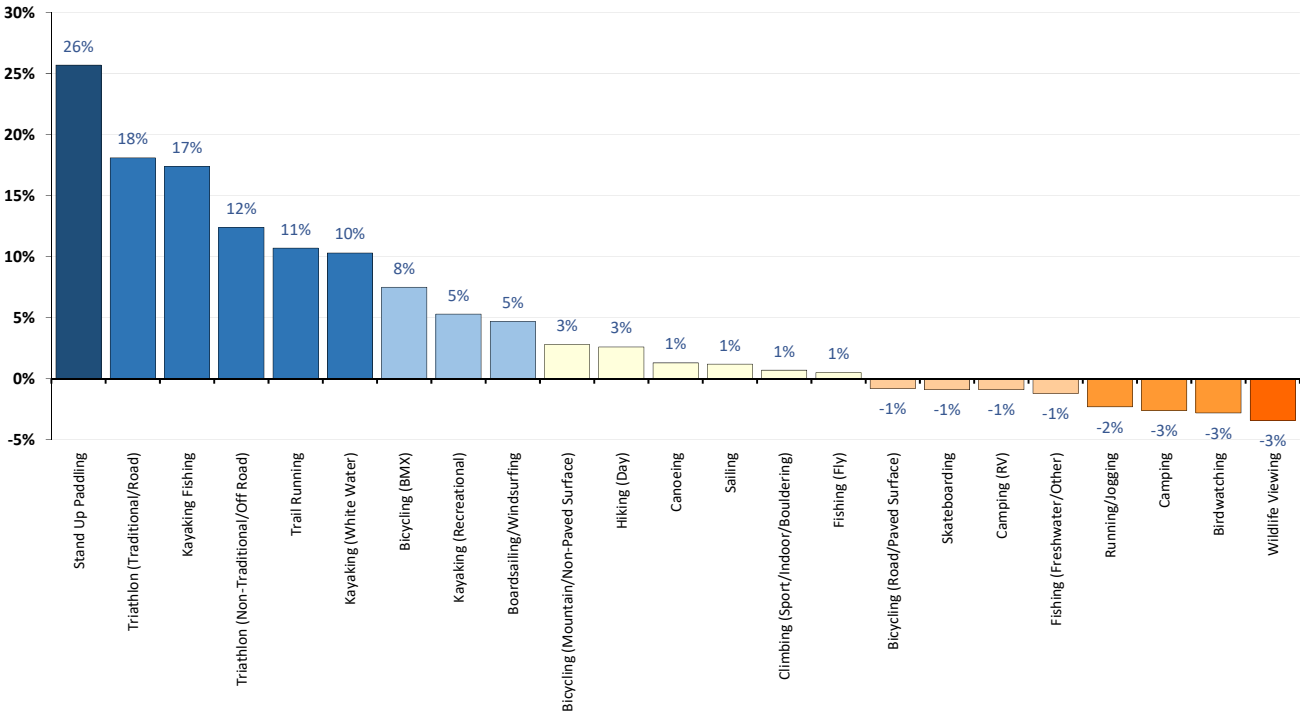
1. Fitness programs (planned by 25.9% of those who will be adding programs)
2. Educational programs (25.7%)
3. Mind-body balance programs (23.3%)
4. Teen programs (22.7%)
5. Environmental education (20.7%)
6. Day camps and summer camps (20.3%)
7. Special needs programs (18.9%)
8. Adult sports teams (18.5%)
9. Holidays and other special events (18.3%)
10. Individual sports activities (17.5%)

# Outdoor Participation Report

According to 2018 Outdoor Participation Report, published by the Outdoor Foundation in Boulder, Colorado, more than 146.1 million Americans (49%) participated in an outdoor activity at least once in 2017. These outdoor participants went on a total of 10.9 billion outdoor outings, a decrease from 11.0 billion in 2016. Participation in outdoor recreation, team sports and indoor fitness activities vary by an individual’s age. Recent trend highlights include the following:

- Twenty percent (20%) of outdoor enthusiasts participated in outdoor activities at least twice per week.
- Running, including jogging and trail running, was the most popular activity among Americans when measured by number of participants and by number of total annual outings.
- Nineteen percent (19%) outdoor participants lived in the South Atlantic region of the US, making its population the most active in outdoor activities.
- Walking for fitness was the most popular crossover activity where 45.8% of all outdoor participants also walked.
- Data shows that adults who were introduced to the outdoors as children were more likely to participate in outdoor activities during adulthood than those who were not exposed to the outdoors as children.
- The biggest motivator for outdoor participation was getting exercise.

Figure 7. 3-Year Change in Outdoor Recreation Participation of Youth (6-24)



Favorite activities and participation rates range with demographics. In 2017, the average participant had 15 years of experience enjoying outdoor recreation. The data shows, as would be expected, that the amount of experience increased as the participant aged. Those ages 45 and up averaged 25 years as outdoor participants.



## STATE RECREATION TRENDS

The 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), entitled *Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: Responding to Demographic and Societal Change*, constitutes Oregon’s basic five-year plan for outdoor recreation. As part of developing the SCORP, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) conducted a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their 2017 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, as well as their opinions about park and recreation management. The top three activities with the largest annual user occasions include walking on local streets / sidewalks (313 million); walking on local trails / paths (113 million); and Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas (78 million).

Figure 8. User Occasions for Oregon Residents in Outdoor Activities

Activity	Total (millions)
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	313
Walking on local trails / paths	113
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	93
Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas	78
Taking your children or grandchildren to a playground	57
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	55
Bicycling on roads, streets / sidewalks	51
Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	44
Jogging / running on streets / sidewalks	37
Bicycling on paved trails	26

The survey also asked about priorities for local community needs revealing the top six (6) local (close to home) needs as

- Cleaner restrooms.
- Soft surface walking trails.
- More restrooms.
- Playgrounds with natural materials (Natural Play Areas).
- Nature and wildlife viewing areas.
- Public access to waterways.

Outdoor recreation participants were asked what their local parks and recreation agency could do to improve/increase participation and value. Across the state, providing more free-of-charge recreation opportunities was the most important action, with ensuring clean and well-maintained parks and facilities, and developing walking / hiking trails closer to home also high in importance.

OPRD also conducted a statewide survey of Oregon public recreation providers to determine outdoor recreation funding priorities was for community trail systems; restrooms; children’s playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses; picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups; trails connected to public lands; and picnicking / day use and facilities. Adequate



funding was lacking by most park and recreation providers for renovation, rehabilitation; updating facilities for universal access (ADA compliance); growing homeless population pressures, responding to new recreation trends and technology. In many cases, park and recreation providers were concerned that inadequate funding would increase safety and security issues associated with public use of park and recreation facilities and services.

## Health Benefits of Outdoor Recreation Participation

Using the Outdoor Recreation Health Impacts Estimator tool, researchers were able to calculate the cost of illness saving associated with Oregon's participation in outdoor recreation activities. The study recognizes that the largest predictor of a community's health is not the accessibility or quality of clinical care, but rather the social, economic, and physical conditions in which people live. Thus, park and recreation providers are key contributors to shaping the physical environment of their community and its health and well-being as the report concludes:

“Community development / design and transportation planning significantly affect the health of people attempting to engage in daily physical activity to meet recommended levels for a healthy lifestyle. Collaboration between health, transportation, and parks and recreation providers, among others, has the potential to significantly influence community health and may be a cost-effective health prevention strategy for the state of Oregon.”

## LOCAL TRENDS

Nearly all survey respondents (94%) expressed their values about the importance of parks and recreation to their quality of life in Milton-Freewater. Significant majorities of survey respondents (more than 70%) visit their parks at least once a month and expressed satisfaction with their park and recreation system. Survey data show that maintaining existing parks and trails, providing new and unique park facilities as the city continues to grow and providing recreation programs for children were high priorities. Completing a trail system to connect the community to a more regional network was also ranked as an important future improvement. Survey respondents cited the need for more walking and biking trails that integrate with downtown access and the need for more river access.

In addition to the community survey feedback, stakeholders who were interviewed during the planning process identified some key future improvements to be pursued in the near future for Milton-Freewater's park system. Key park system developments highlighted the need for more mobility and connections through trails, sidewalks and bike lanes. Key recreational access included creating riverfront access to the Walla Walla River and its levee system as a potential public trail. Safe public access to Marie Dorion Park to allow walking and biking connections to the park would also be desired as part of the regional riverfront trail system.

The Milton Freewater Golf Course is in need of an irrigation system update and repairs to its cart paths. These more significant capital improvements typically go beyond the operating budget for the course.






While a network of trail connections ranked highly for Milton-Freewater’s community, many expressed the need to ensure that the existing system is well cared for before additional amenities and infrastructure is created. Any new additions to the system should be adequately funded for ongoing maintenance before becoming dedicated as public parks, trails or open space.

## PARK CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The condition of park infrastructure and amenities is a measure of park adequacy and a required assurance of public safety. General park infrastructure may include walkways, parking lots, park furniture, drainage and irrigation, lighting systems and vegetation. Deferred maintenance over a long period can result in unusable amenities when perceived as unsafe or undesirable by park patrons.

The existing conditions within parks were assessed to identify issues and concerns and opportunities for future improvements. The condition assessment matrix shown on the below summarizes the results of these assessments and can be used to help prioritize needed park improvements. The matrix uses a rating system that ranks the condition of the park element based on the following scale:

-  **1 – Good Condition:** In general, amenities in good condition offer full functionality and do not need repairs. Good facilities have playable sports surfaces and equipment, working fixtures, and fully intact safety features (railings, fences, etc.). Good facilities may have minor cosmetic defects. Good facilities encourage area residents to use the park.
-  **2 – Fair:** In general, amenities in fair condition are largely functional but need minor or moderate repairs. Fair facilities have play surfaces, equipment, fixtures, and safety features that are operational and allow play, but have deficiencies or time periods where they are unusable. Fair facilities remain important amenities for the neighborhood but may slightly discourage use of the park by residents.
-  **3 – Poor:** In general, amenities in poor condition are largely or completely unusable. They need major repairs to be functional. Poor facilities are park features that have deteriorated to the point where they are barely usable. Fields are too uneven for ball games, safety features are irreparably broken, buildings need structural retrofitting, etc. Poor facilities discourage residents from using the park.

Generally a feature with a rating of “3” should have higher priority for resolution through maintenance, capital repairs or as a new capital project. Park amenity conditions were also averaged across park elements to indicate which types of elements are in greater need for significant upgrades, renovations or overall improvements. Based on this assessment, the City’s aquatic center, playgrounds, sport courts, site furnishings, and ADA accessibility are in the greatest need of rehabilitation or repair.

Park Name	Acres	Recreation Amenities										Site Amenities				Park Structures				Vegetation			ADA	Comments	
		Playgrounds	Paved Courts: Basketball	Paved Courts: Tennis	Soccer Fields	Baseball / Softball Fields	Pathways / Trails	Aquatic Center	Skate Park	Horseshoe Pits	Site Furnishings	Lighting (Y/N)	Signage	Parking Areas	Public Art	Restrooms	Picnic Shelters	Amphitheater / Stage	Concession Building	Turf	Park Trees	Natural Areas	Compliance*		
Community Park	0.3	1.50	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	Pavement uneven. Benches need painting. Drinking fountain not working.	
Freewater Park	2.5	2.09	3	3	3	-	-	1	2	Y	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	3	3	Pathways lacking. Approved playground safety surfacing needed. Non-ADA compliant.	
Golf Course	35.1	1.17	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	N	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	18-hole golf course and foot golf course.	
Marie Dorian Park	3.5	1.64	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	N	1	1	1	-	1	2	-	-	1	2	1	3	3	Poor ADA access/compliance. Powerplant/shelter roof is aging. Broken drinking fountain. Swing set without safety surface. Formal access to river needed.	
Memorial Field	1.4	1.40	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	N	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	2	Parking area should designate spaces.	
Morello Park	0.15	2.20	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	N	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	3	3	Broken drinking fountain. Well #6 building limits visibility into park. Playground safety surface lacking. Falling play structure.	
Olinger Park	0.1	1.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	N	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	No amenities. Should not count as a pocket park. Used for "welcome" sign for city. Chlorosis on maple tree.	
Orchard Park	1.2	1.57	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	N	1	-	2	1	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	3	3	No ADA-compliant pathways to connect amenities/site furnishings.	
Rotary Sports Complex	4.1	1.22	-	-	-	1	1	1	3	N	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	1	Bleachers (5-tiered) lack safety rails	
Yantis Park	28.2	1.35	2	2	2	-	1	1	2	Y	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	Tennis court surface cracking. 5-tiered bleachers lack safety rails. Aging play equipment Approved play safety surfacing needed. Pathways do not connect all amenities. Plumbing in shelters needs replacement	
Joe Humbert Aquatic Center	-	1.25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	Aquatic center had closed due to water quality issues.
Average Rating		2.4	2.5	2.5	1	1	1.5	3	1	1	2.1	-	1.1	1.3	1	1.4	1.3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2.2	

Ratings: 1= good; 2=fair; 3=poor

\* Note: Does not constitute a comprehensive ADA assessment of every park element

Figure 9: Conditions Assessment Matrix

**Park & Facility Condition Assessment**

**RATING SCALE**

**Playgrounds:**

1	In good condition: no drainage issues; 0-10% material deterioration safety surfacing with a border at the site.
2	In fair condition: drainage issues; 10-25% material deterioration; some small compliance issues that could be spot fixed.
3	In poor condition: drainage issues; 25% or greater material deterioration; needs repair or replacement (but workable).

**Paved Courts:**

1	In good condition: no cracks in surfacing; fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages; painting and striping are appropriately located, whole, and uniform in color.
2	In fair condition: hairline cracks to ¼", surfacing required; fencing has minor protrusions, or holes/passages that do not affect game play; painting and striping have flaking or color fading.
3	In poor condition: horizontal cracks more than ½" wide, surfacing required; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects; painting and striping are patchy and color has faded dramatically.

**Sports Fields:**

1	In good condition: thick grass with few bare spots; few depressions; no noticeable drainage issues, proper slope and layout; fencing if present is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes.
2	In fair condition: grass with bare turf areas in high-use locations, some drainage issues in overuse areas, slope is within one percent of proper field slope, infields have grading problems (bump) at transition to grass and have no additive, may not have proper layout and/or orientation, fencing if present has minor protrusions, or holes/passages that do not affect game play.
3	In poor condition: bare areas throughout the year, uneven playing surface that holds water in certain places, drainage issues, slopes not uniform and/or more than one percent from proper field slope, improper layout and/or orientation; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects.

**Pathways / Trails:**

1	In good condition: surface generally smooth and even; proper width and material for type of pathway; proper clearances; minimal drainage issues.
2	In fair condition: uneven surfaces in places; some drainage issues; some cracking; narrow widths in some places.
3	In poor condition: uneven surfaces; inadequate width; significant cracking or heaving; clearance issues.

**Skate Park:**

1	In good condition: little to no signs of cracking; little or no erosion; elements target a diversity of age groups.
2	In fair condition: some cracking, but still usable; furnishings (i.e. - metal rails) might need spot fixes.
3	In poor condition: parts of the structure are damaged or deteriorated, chipped off or broken; edges of the structure are eroded possibly causing safety issues; elements target a specific / narrow age range.

**Spray Park:**

1	In good condition: spray pad has little or no cracking; spray furnishings have little or no damage; no vandalism; good drainage.
2	In fair condition: spray pad has some cracking; spray furnishings have signs of wear, but are in working condition; color fading.
3	In poor condition: drainage issues with clogging or sinking pad; large cracks; spray furnishings broken.

**Site Furnishings:**

1	In good condition; not damaged; free of peeling or chipped paint; consistent throughout park. Trash receptacles, drinking fountain, picnic tables, benches on paved surface.
2	In fair condition; 0-20% furnishings are damaged and require replacing parts; some peeling or chipped paint; furnishings are not consistent, but are operational.
3	In poor condition; 20% or more are damaged and require replacing parts; significant peeling or chipped paint; multiple styles within park site require different maintenance.

**Lighting:**

Y	Yes.
N	No.

**Signage:**

1	In good condition: a signage system for the site, appropriate signs, no damaged signs.
2	In fair condition; multiple signage system within one site, a few damaged signs (0-10%), need maintenance.
3	In poor condition; multiple signage systems within one site, signs that are not legible from a reasonable distance, some damaged signs (10-25%), old logos, deteriorated materials, no signage.

**Parking Areas:**

1	In good condition: paving and drainage do not need repair; pavement markings clear; pathway connection provided to facility; proper layout.
2	In fair condition: paving needs patching or has some drainage problems; has wheel stops and curbs.
3	In poor condition: surfaces (gravel, asphalt, or concrete) needs repair; uneven grading; limited signage; no delineation for vehicles.

**Public Art:**

1	In good condition: no vandalism; no signs of weathering.
2	In fair condition: minor signs of weathering or wear.
3	In poor condition: metal leaching/concrete efflorescence/paint peeling/wood chipped or carved into or warping; vandalized.

**Park Structures (Restrooms, Picnic Shelters, Concession Building):**

1	In good condition: roof has no leaks; floor shows little sign of wear; finishes are fresh with no graffiti or vandalism; all elements are in working order.
2	In fair condition: roof shows signs of wear but is structurally sound; floor shows some wear; finishes show some wear with some marks or blemishes.
3	In poor condition: roof leaks or otherwise needs repair; floor show significant wear and is difficult to maintain; finishes are dull or discolored, have graffiti, or are not easily maintained; some elements not working or in need of repair (e.g., non-functioning sink).

**Amphitheater/Stage:**

1	In good condition: paving, stage and stair materials have little to no cracking or peeling; vegetation that is present is healthy; seating and other furnishings show modest signs of wear; views to stage from all seating vantage points.
2	In fair condition: paving, stage and stair materials have some cracking or peeling; vegetation that is present is healthy, but some soil compaction might be present; seating and other furnishings show signs of wear, but are still usable; stage orientation not be ideal for all viewers.
3	In poor condition: paving, stage and stair materials have significant cracking or peeling; vegetation is unhealthy (pests, disease, topped trees), compacted soil; seating and other furnishings need repair or replacement; redesign of space is needed for proper viewing and access.

**Turf:**

1	In good condition: lush and full, few weeds, no drainage problems.
2	In fair condition: some bare spots, some drainage problems.
3	In poor condition: irrigation problems, bare spots, weeds, soil compacted.

**Park Trees:**

1	In good condition: trees overall have good form and spacing; no topping; free of disease or pest infestation; no vandalism; no hazard trees.
2	In fair condition; some crowding may exist but overall health is good; less than 5% of trees show signs of topping, disease or pest infestation; vandalism has not impacted tree health (graffiti, not girdling).
3	In poor condition; Form or spacing issues may exist; evidence of disease or pests; vandalism affecting tree health; some hazard trees or trees in danger of becoming hazard trees.

**Landscaped Beds:**

1	In good condition: few weeds; no bare or worn areas; plants appear healthy with no signs of pest or disease infestation.
2	In fair condition: some weeds present; some bare or worn spots; plants are still generally healthy.
3	In poor condition: many weeds present; large bare or worn areas; plants show signs of pests or disease; compacted soils.

**Natural Areas:**

1	In good condition: barely noticeable invasives, high species diversity, healthy plants.
2	In fair conditions: Noticeable invasives, fewer species but still healthy.
3	In poor condition: Invasives have taken over, low diversity, unhealthy plants.

**ADA Compliance:**

1	Appears to comply with ADA standards.
2	Some items appear to not comply, but could be fixed by replacing with relative ease.
3	A number of park assets appear not to comply, including large-scale items like regrading.



## OVERALL ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

### General Parks

- Restrooms and playground equipment in some parks are much older and should be scheduled for replacement to ensure compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and universal access.
- Few parks have paved paths that connect to all recreational amenities, resulting in barriers for park users with limited mobility.

### Sports Fields

- Generally, turf management has been good and grass fields are holding up well.
- Some ADA access to amenities, particularly to spectator viewing areas is limited and should be accommodated.
- Tiered bleachers should all have safety railing to meet International Building Code standards and public safety.

### Landscape Conditions

- Overall, grass turf management is good. Irrigation seems to be effective to provide for dense grass lawns that hold up to sports play and general park use.
- Trees are in good condition for the challenging climate. Parks should have a tree planting plan to ensure the continuation of desirable amounts of shade and comfort are sustained as some trees age, die and are removed.

### Wayfinding & Signage

- Signs used to identify each park are not uniform and many are not visible from approaching vehicles or pedestrians. The park system would benefit from a unified approach to park signage that provides the park's name and perhaps some information about who to contact/notify for information or communications.

### Pavement & Amenities Conditions

- Tennis courts have aged, and surfaces are too cracked to accommodate play. Based on current use and potential future demand, resurfacing should be scheduled or some consideration should be given for alternative recreational uses for the court areas, such as pickleball or multi-sports courts.
- Playgrounds are mostly surfaced with coarse sand, which is not an approved fall safety surface. These playgrounds should have the sand removed, the pits excavated and new current safety fall surfacing materials (such as engineered wood chips) installed.
- Basketball court areas could benefit from the addition of painted lines defining free throw zones, etc.

### Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance

- Most playgrounds were not ADA-compliant due to lack of access paths and curbed edging.
- Handicapped parking stalls should be signed in compliance with ADA standards and marked with painted travel aisles to the accessible entry routes.
- More park amenities should be connected with paved paths for universal and all-weather access.
- Restrooms lack ADA signage.



## ACTIVE SPACES & PLACES

In addition to the City's developed park facilities with playgrounds and sports fields, the Milton-Freewater Golf Course provides "footgolf", a soccer-based version of 18-hole golf that expands the recreational uses and options for the golf course. The skate park at Freewater Park provides a variety of skateboarding and BMX bike features. The Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center features an outdoor pool and water slide and provides swim lessons and water-based recreation throughout the summer.

Milton-Freewater also has a local farmer's market in Orchard Park, the Cinco de Mayo celebration in Yantis Park and other events, such as the Downtown Fiesta and Street Dance that use public spaces in the city. The Frazier Farmstead Summertime Festival, the annual Logs to Frogs chainsaw carving extravaganza, and the annual Country Classic / Milton-Freewater Rocks Festival engage the community in food and fun activities. Seasonal parades, 4H/FFA shows, music and dance events fill the community calendar with many of options for getting out and experiencing community, arts, culture, food and recreation.

Milton-Freewater is within easy reach of a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. Bicycling, hiking, skiing, camping, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling and water sports on the Walla Walla, Columbia and Snake Rivers are among the area's biggest attractions. Its location in northern Umatilla County places it within minutes of the Washington state line and just 10 miles south of Walla Walla. Located near the Blue Mountains, Milton-Freewater residents are within reasonable access to extensive natural areas for camping, hiking fishing and hunting.

## Community Parks

Yantis Park is the focal point for the range of community park recreational amenities with its mix of sports fields, sports courts, playgrounds, trails, picnic shelters, stage and natural areas. The community park's service area is not restricted to walking distance as many park users come from further away to participate in sports activities, family gatherings, events and general recreation.

## Neighborhood Parks

With six neighborhood parks, smaller park spaces help distribute outdoor recreation opportunities in Milton-Freewater's park system. Freewater Park provides the most variety of recreational options with its skate park, tennis court and playground. The other smaller parks contain limited play equipment, if any, and fewer site furnishings.

As opportunities arise, future neighborhood park locations should be planned for locations where residents do not currently have public park choices. Primarily in the eastern portion of the City, gaps in service coverage shown through the mapping analyses should guide the determination of feasible locations for future park sites.

## TRAILS & LINKAGES

The highest outdoor recreational concern expressed in the community survey focused on the need for neighborhood walking and biking trails. The majority of survey respondents (71%) felt that Milton-Freewater did not have enough connections and safe places to walk and bike. Over 80% of respondents were supportive of expanding and improving multi-use walking and biking trails. The City's Special Transportation Area Plan and Transportation System Plan Update in 2005 recommended improvements that created a safer and more accessible downtown and worked to provide more opportunities for safe travel along the Highway 11 corridor. The need for a more walkable community has been recognized since the City's 1980 Comprehensive Plan that cited the need for bike lanes within the city and a trail greenway corridor along the Walla Walla River and bike/pedestrian improvements along the Highway 11 corridor.

### Recommendations for the Trails Network

The top two primary directions for the City's trail network should focus on the backbone of a viable future biking and walking system. The Highway 11 corridor that offer the main north-south connection through the City and connecting to other communities and the Walla Wall River with its levee system and greenway setting are both primary alignments for future multi-use trail systems.

Within city limits and connecting south to Marie Dorian Park, sidewalks, bike lanes and, where feasible, off-street multi-use pathways should be added to enhance connectivity across the community and provide healthy walking opportunities for the residents.

The Blue Mountain Regional Trails Plan identified specific capital improvements for Milton-Freewater that included 0.17 miles of path improvements, 0.52 miles of dedicated bike lane improvements and 4.23 miles of shared roadway improvements. These recommended trail plan improvements should be woven into the City's transportation improvements planning. Coordination should continue with the regional trail planning advocates to pursue local and regional connections to realize the vision of the Blue Mountain Regional Trails Plan.

Within local city parks, creating paved access to all primary amenities is a critical step in providing all-weather access and complying with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Designing loop walking experiences within parks can enhance the recreational value of the pathways that should be added to public parks.

## RIVERFRONT ACCESS & GREENWAYS

Physical access to the Walla Walla River and its tributaries could greatly enhance the recreational opportunities for Milton-Freewater residents. Riparian buffers – restored and conserved in a natural condition – along all rivers and streams serve vital ecological functions and provide critical floodplain value. The natural corridor can also help to link trail connections and offer linear greenways for access to open space where parklands are scarce. While the Columbia River provides more distant water-based recreational options,



better access to local waterways in and near Milton-Freewater can provide opportunities for public enjoyment, summer heat relief, environmental education and park-like activities.

## Recommendations for Riverfront Access

The City should pursue public access to the Walla Walla River at NE 3rd, SW 2nd, SE 12th and SE 14th Avenues (as previously outlined in the 1980 Comprehensive Plan) and at Marie Dorian Park.

The future possibility of a multi-use trail along the levee of the Walla Walla River offers the potential to trigger significant benefits for the community. Riverfront trail systems in other communities across the country have served to revitalize and invigorate downtown areas, business development and residential growth. Linking a riverfront trail to key points and destinations through the City with side trails, sidewalks and bike lanes can provide added value to the creation of trailheads and nodes along the potential levee trail alignment.

## RECREATION FACILITIES & PROGRAMS

### Outdoor Sport Courts

Basketball and tennis courts are available in Yantis Park and Freewater Park. Both sets of tennis courts are showing surface cracking that may already affect the playability of the courts. Outdoor basketball half-courts are provided within the City's park system located at Yantis Park and Freewater Park.

Milton-Freewater currently has no pickleball available within public parks. Outdoor pickleball should be considered as part of future park improvements, if desired by residents. Converting the tennis court at Freewater Park could provide for a multiple sports court layout to encourage more use across a range of ages.

### Sport Fields

Yantis Park, Memorial Field and Rotary Sports Complex, in addition to school district facilities, provide sport fields for community and league use. The City currently works in support of the school district, various youth leagues and organizations with regard to field access and scheduling. Community sports leagues that serve the local community include Milton-Freewater Little League, Milton-Freewater Youth Football and a range of youth sport options provided by the school district.

Through coordination and support of the school district and local leagues, Milton-Freewater could become a host city for soccer and softball tournaments, especially with the recent completion of new school district fields. To draw from a wider area, the City could coordinate with the cities of Walla Walla and College Place for multi-city tournaments.



## Indoor Recreation Facilities & Programs

Indoor recreation facilities are highly valuable during the school year when outdoor fields and facilities support limited uses due to weather conditions. Coordination with the school district is an essential element for providing community and youth recreation programming. Coordinated programming across the school district, city recreation and outside recreation leagues, clubs and other organizations may warrant the designation of a recreation programming staff person to better utilize the available spaces to capture more recreational, cultural and educational programming opportunities.

The City should continue to coordinate with the school district on development of indoor gymnasium spaces to make them available to the general public. An agreement should be developed between the City and school district that details joint use responsibilities and policies, including financial and maintenance responsibility. The possibility of the school district funding a recreation staff position to coordinate programming across both school and park facilities year round could be explored.

## IDENTITY & MAINTENANCE

### Information on Recreational Opportunities

The City should continue to enhance its website to provide information on local and regional park and recreation opportunities and community events. The City should continue to strengthen existing partnerships with local businesses, sport leagues, the school district and the Milton-Freewater Downtown Alliance to facilitate the promotion and distribution of information to the community.

### Wayfinding

The City of Milton-Freewater can benefit from enhanced wayfinding and signage in support of seamless navigation across the City. Better signage and consistency in brand identification could increase awareness for residents and visitors of nearby recreational opportunities or regional trails. Better signage in conjunction with publicly available maps of parks and trails can also improve the enjoyment and understanding of the parks system and encourage visitors to experience more sites within the City. Printed or online mapping and marketing information should be shared with new Milton-Freewater residents as part of a welcome package to help orient them to their new community.

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### Maintenance & Renovation

Certain aging amenities and facilities in the park system were rated as being in fair condition. Playground areas, site furnishings and paved court surfaces ranked in less than “good” condition, which warrants needs for renovation, repair or replacement. Many amenities were ranked in less than “good” condition due to lack of ADA-accessibility.



Architectural barriers or lack of durable (ADA-compliant) pathways to picnic tables, park benches, playground areas and other recreational amenities need to be addressed. The capital facilities plan targets those elements that are in poor condition.

Parks operations could integrate an asset management program that continues to track, identify and repair/replace park assets. By tracking the age of various park improvements, the City is has some predictability for when aging structures will likely need replacement.

The Aquatic Center was closed during the summer of 2019 due to poor adhesion of its recent painting application. The City's 2019 budget identifies the need for capital repairs to the pool and the need to retain this valuable recreational service to the community.

## Universal Accessibility

The conditions assessment identified a number of barriers in parks where ADA compliance has not been met. As part of the capital repair program, these barriers, such as the need for playground ramps or benches and tables linked with paved pathways, should be addressed.

## Leveraging & Volunteer Development

Volunteer time and talent contributing to Milton-Freewater's park system is a key enhancement to limited resources for local governments. However, the recruitment and retention of valuable volunteers requires effort and commitment of some resources to manage and capture a quality volunteer program. While such a program is not free, trained and respected volunteers can net many hours of labor and result in overall enhancement of the parks system. Volunteers help encourage a sense of ownership and pride with trails, parks and recreation programming to set the standard for community engagement. The City may want to look to the school district and/or the Milton-Freewater Downtown Alliance to consider how best to coordinate the resource of volunteer energy and participation in planning and implementing events, programming and activities within park and recreation facilities.

## Design Continuity & Standards

The adoption and implementation of updated design standards for City parks will create a consistency in the methods used to maintain, repair and replace park amenities as they become worn or are damaged. Park benches, trash receptacles, picnic tables and signage can be consistent across all parks without impacting the potential to create unique spaces and individual park identities. This consistency can make the system more efficient to maintain and improve aesthetic appeal and safety.

If the City should be presented with community or privately donated park or open space properties or amenities, having an adopted set of design standards can help guide the decisions for accepting and dedicating any private donations prior to city ownership.

Any privately-constructed parks should be required to provide standardized park amenities if they are intended to be dedicated to city ownership. The City's park design and maintenance criteria should be required for new parks to ensure quality and

consistency of park amenities. Milton-Freewater should prepare and adopt design standards to be applied to site development at the time of development review. Such standards could also outline minimally-acceptable maintenance requirements.

## **PARK DISTRIBUTION – GAP ANALYSIS**

To better understand where acquisition efforts should be considered, a gap analysis of the park system was conducted to examine and assess the current distribution of parks across 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 preliminary acquisition target areas. 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 parks: ¼-mile primary & ½-mile secondary service areas

Maps 2 through 4 illustrate the application of the distribution criteria from existing parks. Areas in white do not have a public park within reasonable walking distance of their home. The illustrated ‘walkshed’ for each existing Milton-Freewater park highlights that certain areas within the city do not have the desired proximity to a local park.

These maps show that much of the City has walking access to parklands with varying degrees of distance from a ¼- to ½-mile from their homes. Residential areas along the City’s eastern edges are not within easy walking distance. The lack of park amenities in Orchard Park, the lack of safe walking/biking access to Marie Dorian Park and the limited desirability of crossing the highway as a pedestrian may further reduce those areas shown as “walksheds” to local parks. School locations on the east side of Highway 11 may help alleviate the need for recreational amenities for those residents who cannot readily walk to a nearby park.

Resulting from this assessment, potential acquisition areas are identified for future parks (Map 5) and are noted in the Capital Planning chapter. The mapping targeted three sites for future parks for the near- to long-term:

- Acquisition Area A (NE 11th Avenue, west of Hwy 11)
- Acquisition Area B (East of S Columbia Street, near Broadway Avenue)
- Acquisition Area C (Hwy 11 near County 643 Road)

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 across Milton-Freewater. As the City grows into its growth boundary or into areas not currently served by parks, the City should re-examine the specific needs for parks or open space and with reference to park system standards.



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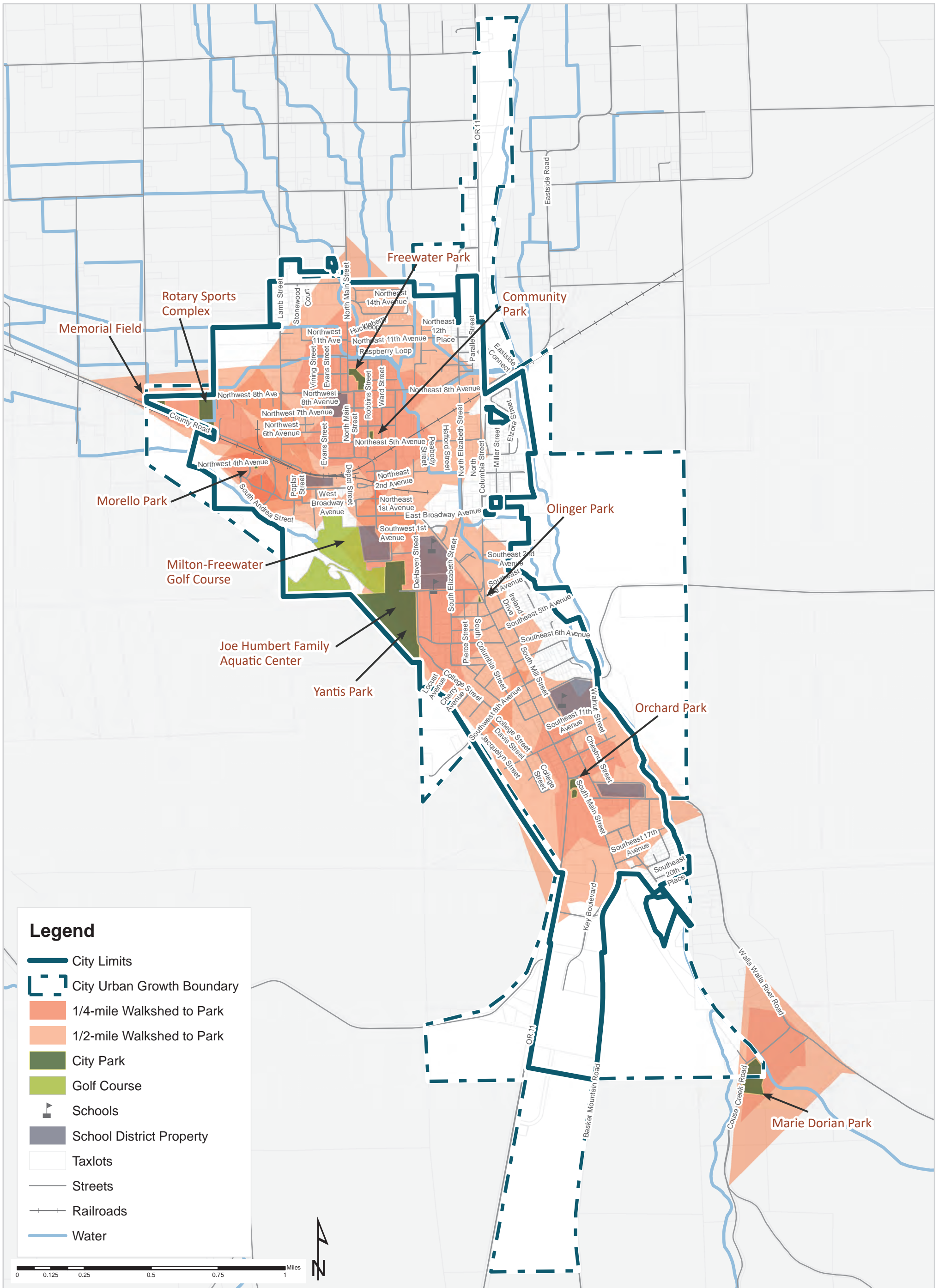
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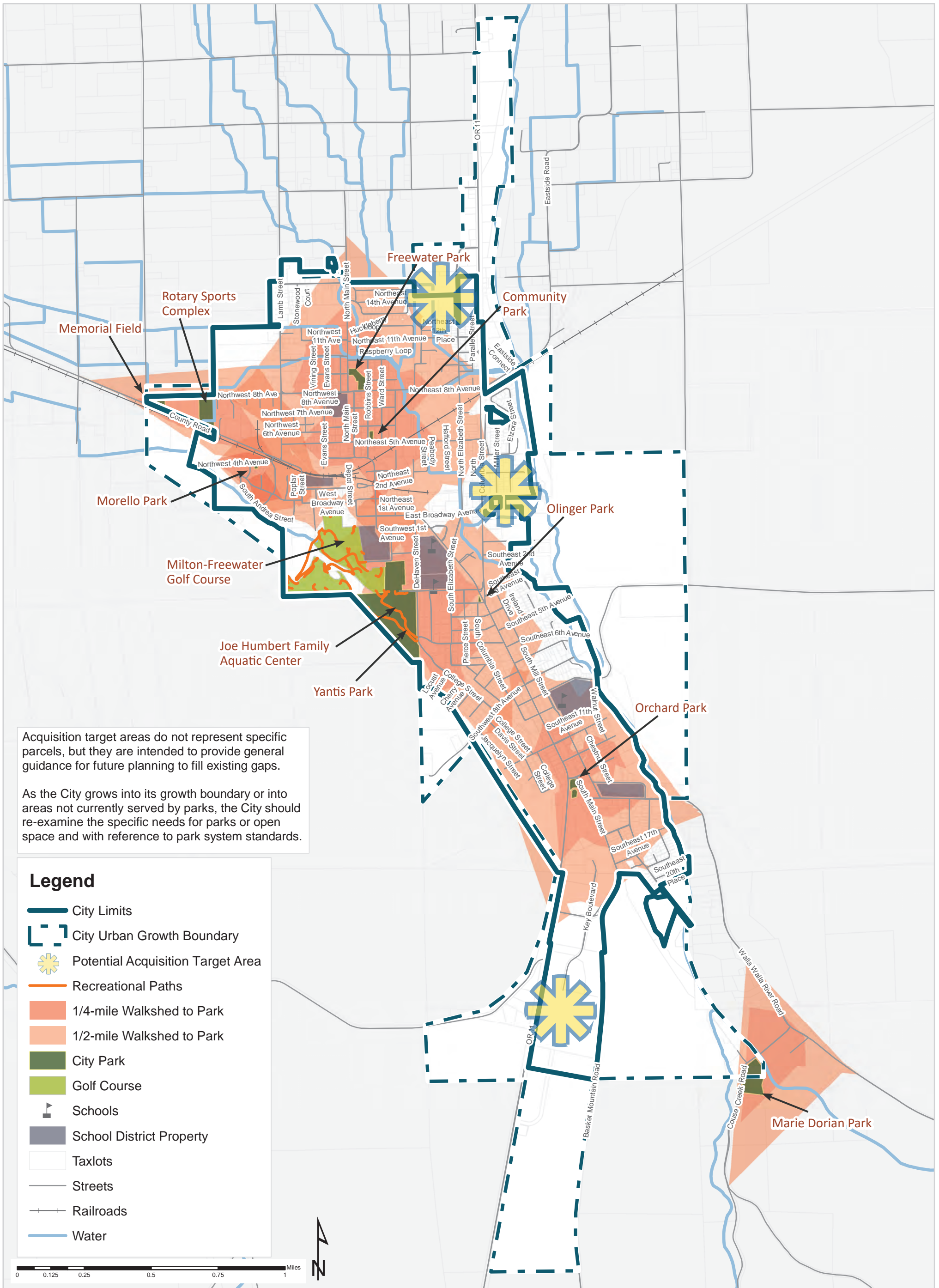


**Map 4: Park Walksheds**  
 All Parks (1/4 & 1/2-mile distances)





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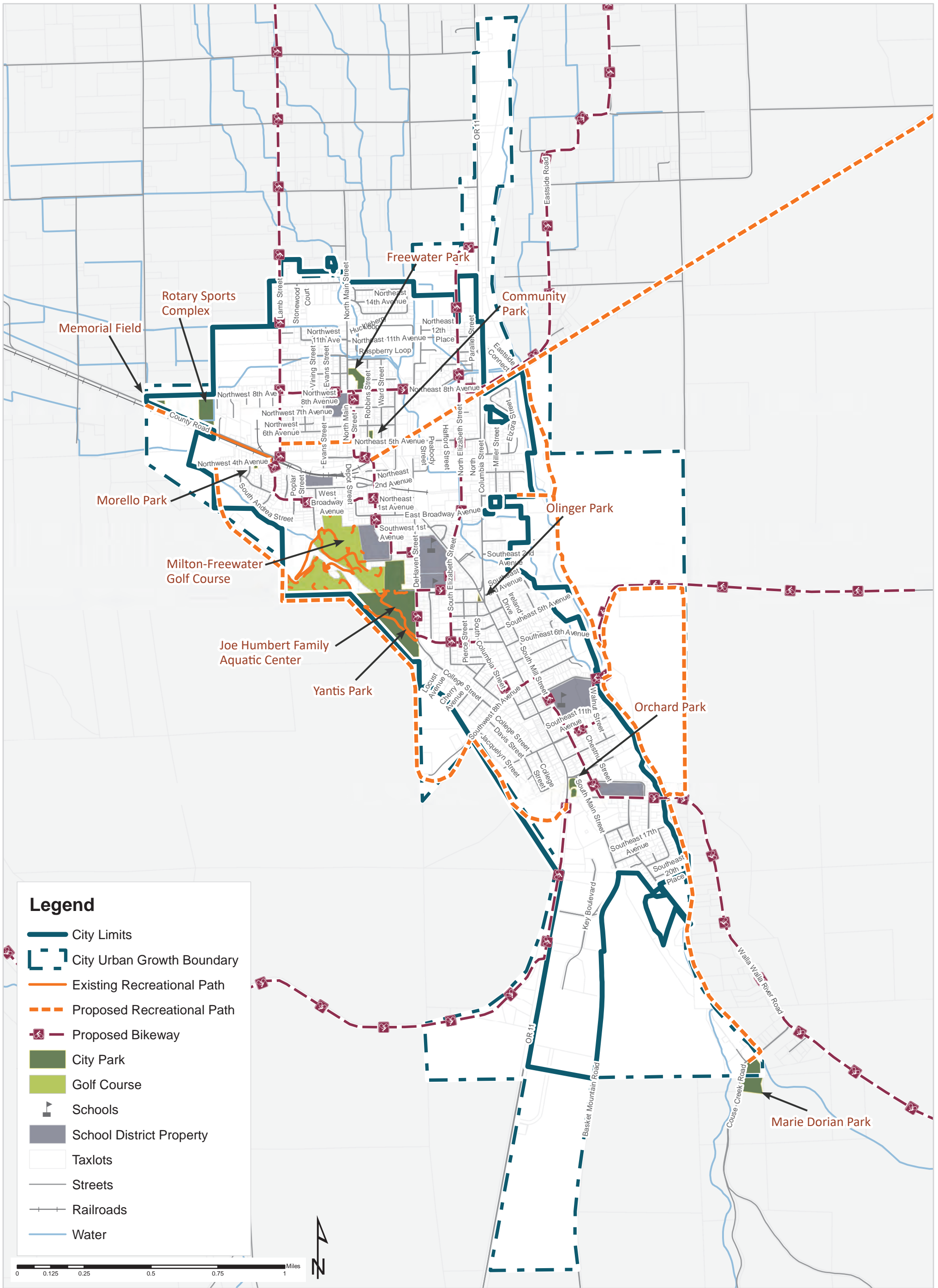
Map 5: Potential Acquisition Target Areas





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Map 6: Potential Recreational Trails





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# COMPARATIVE PARK PROVIDERS

Milton-Freewater last planned for its park system in its 1980 comprehensive plan. The plan acknowledged that city residents have access to some exceptional regional recreation opportunities from the Blue Mountains, the Umatilla and Wallowa Whitman National Forests, the Columbia River, and the recreation and cultural resources in the nearby City of Walla Walla.

Within Milton-Freewater, City-owned public parks and school facilities provide local resources for outdoor recreation. As part of this park system plan, a brief comparison to other park systems was explored with both national trends and comparable cities to assess where Milton-Freewater should focus its resources in the coming years.

## Park Staffing Levels

As a starting point, the National Recreation and Park Association’s Park Metrics data compiles the typical number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees with the size of the park and recreation agency jurisdiction. Figure 10 below shows the median staffing for cities less than 20,000 residents to be 10.5 FTEs per 10,000 residents.

Figure 10. Park and Recreation FTEs per 10,000 Residents (by Jurisdiction Population)

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	Over 250,000
<b>Median</b>	7.3	<b>10.5</b>	8.5	7.6	5.7	4.3
<b>Lower Quartile</b>	3.7	<b>5.3</b>	4.6	3.8	3.1	1.7
<b>Upper Quartile</b>	14.9	<b>20.8</b>	17	13.9	11.3	7.6

Milton-Freewater’s current allocation of park staffing (exclusive of aquatic center) is 2.31 FTEs according to the 2019 adopted city budget. Parks maintenance is managed under the Public Works Department and conducts support and maintenance of City-owned parks and public building landscapes. City park staff maintain Yantis Park, Marie Dorion Park, Freewater Park, Morello Park, Orchard Park, Rotary Sports Complex, Memorial Field, City Hall, Library, and two fire stations. The Aquatic Center is staffed with 5.03 FTEs who are all seasonal, temporary employees. Falling in the lower quartile of comparative communities, Milton-Freewater could consider some judicious additions to its park staff. Interviews with key stakeholders identified the potential value of the addition of a school district-funding position to coordinate the year-round needs for recreational programming across school, park and other city-owned facilities, both indoor and outdoor.

## Comparable Cities Parkland Levels

Further exploration compares total population and land areas with parklands and number of park facilities with five other comparable cities in Washington and Oregon. In this comparison, Milton-Freewater is a smaller city with a smaller land base and lower median household income. Each community has its own unique range of characteristics relative to population density, land base, parkland acreage and number of parks. Despite these



differences, the City’s park system fits within the middle range of park service provision with its 10.9 acres of parklands per 1,000 population. It should be noted that the parkland acreages reported by other cities have highly variable levels of facility development and public access since jurisdictions may or may not report their conserved open spaces as parks.

Figure 11. Parkland Comparisons across Similar-sized Cities in Washington & Oregon

City	Population 2010	Population 2019	Land Area	Density (pop./sq.mi.)	Parkland Acreage	Number of Parks	Parklands LOS (ac/1,000)	Median Household Income
<b>Milton-Freewater</b>	<b>7,050</b>	<b>7,145</b>	<b>1.99</b>	<b>3,590</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>\$41,354</b>
Ridgefield, WA	4,763	8,357	7.08	1,180	182.0	22	21.8	\$93,958
Gladstone, OR	11,497	12,244	2.4	5,102	139.1	17	11.4	\$57,652
Port Orchard, WA	11,144	14,389	7.24	1,987	67.7	10	4.7	\$67,750
Sandy, OR	9,570	11,326	3.14	3,607	153.0	16	13.5	\$64,057
Washougal, WA	14,095	16,049	5.42	2,961	85.8	19	5.3	\$76,998

\*Figures based on 2010 Census unless otherwise noted.

The population density for the comparable cities was across a broader range than Milton-Freewater’s current 3,590 (population per square mile) population density. Over the next decades, the community is not expected to grow significantly, thus, population density may stay within the parkland comparison above.

## Park Operating Expenditure Comparisons

The NRPA 2018 Agency Performance Review compares park and recreation providers across the country to help assess current trends in agency budgets, staffing, facilities and levels of service. A review of those agencies that serve populations under 20,000 residents reveals the median for annual operating budgets reported per capita, per employee and per park acre. Parkland acres and facility provision are also captured in the NRPA report.

Figure 12. NRPA Typical Performance Measures for Jurisdictions Under 20,000 Population

For Agencies Serving <20,000	Median Value
Annual operating \$\$	\$1,010,000 per year
Annual operating \$\$	\$91,483 per employee
Annual operating \$\$	\$96 per capita
Park/non Park sites	\$7,196 per acre
Parks & OS	40.60% operating expense split
Recreation Programs	46.30% operating expense split
One park for every	1,231 residents
Park land acres	11.8 per 1,000
Tennis courts	2,500 residents/court
Basketball courts	3,975 residents/court
Youth baseball	3,378 residents/field
Recreation center	9,250 residents/center
Community center	10,000 residents/center
Senior center	13,237 residents/center



In comparison, Milton-Freewater has spent an average of \$107,800 over the last four years in their parks operating budget. In 2019, park operating expenditures averaged \$2,792 per acre of parkland. The City spends approximately \$16.73 per capita annually for park operations. Residents per park in Milton-Freewater equates to 714.5 residents per park comparing favorably to the national average of 1,231 residents per park.

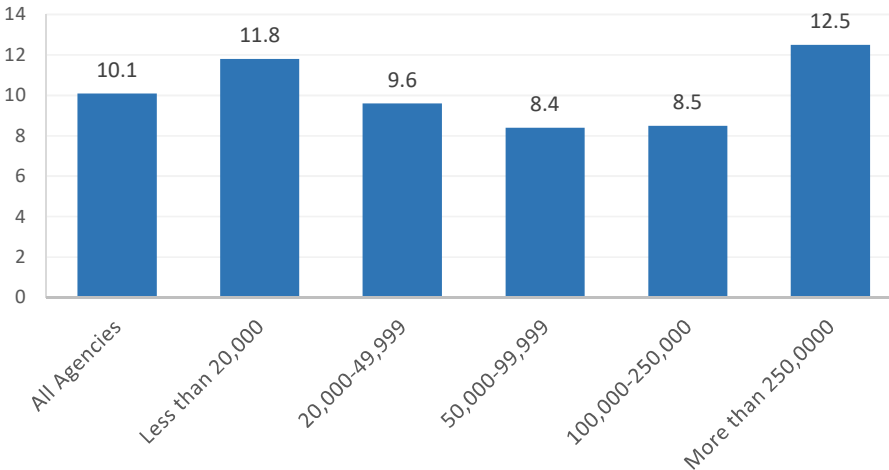
The NRPA data provides a look at the typical park and recreation agency’s staffing allocation for park operations and recreation programming. Park operations often comprises 40.6% operating expense for staffing compared to 46.3% for recreation programming. The City general fund budget provides for operating funds for parks, public buildings, the community building and the aquatic center. The golf course operates under a special fund and is intended to have its expenditures fully funded by its revenues.

To help coordinate Milton-Freewater’s recreational opportunities, more active recreation programming may need to be staffed, perhaps in a joint agreement with the school district. Park operations can continue to focus on needed updates across the City’s park facilities as they age and wear. Milton-Freewater will want to be intentional about its need for providing recreation programming and any associated potential staffing expenditure.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE ASSESSMENT

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. A level of service (LOS) review was conducted 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.

Figure 13. NRPA Acres of Parkland per Resident





For communities under 20,000 population, the median parkland acreage LOS is 11.8. For all agencies reporting across the country the median is 10.1 acres per thousand. At approximately 77.9 acres, the current overall level of service for the City of Milton-Freewater Parks is 10.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 people (based on 2018 population of 7,145 residents). This acreage provision falls within the national average for parklands in a community.

The Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides guidelines for setting standards for a community’s park system to ensure the provision of proposed level of service for the community. While these statewide guidelines provide a framework for evaluating jurisdictional resources, it is recognized that individual jurisdictions will need to develop their own service standards that reflect their unique conditions, resources and needs.

The recommended total parkland acres site guideline for local park and recreation jurisdictions in Oregon is 6.25 to 12.5 acres per 1,000 population, which represents a minimum acreage that should be exceeded when possible. The Oregon SCORP acknowledges that acreage alone does not assure a well-balanced park system.

Figure 14. Current Levels of Service for Milton-Freewater

Parkland Acreage (by Type)	Active-Use Parks Only		All Parklands (incl Golf Course)	
Community & Neighborhood Parks	42.8 acres			
Golf Course			35.1 acres	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42.8 acres</b>		<b>35.1 acres</b>	
Level of Service	2020	2030	2020	2030
Proposed Service Standard	6.0 ac/1,000		N/A	
Effective Level of Service based on total acreage (acres/1,000 residents)	5.99	5.61	10.90	4.60
Net LOS to Standard (acres/1,000 residents)	(0.01)	(0.39)		
Performance to Standard	100%	93%		
Acreage surplus (deficit)	(0.07)	(3.00)		

In reviewing the NRPA and Oregon SCORP guidelines, an acreage standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents is proposed for active-use parks, which excludes the golf course. The above level of service assessment shows that Milton-Freewater does not need additional acreage in its park system today; however, as the City grows, approximately 3 additional acres of parkland should be secured in the future.

This quantitative assessment is only one of many considerations for the updating and assurance of adequate services for parks and recreation. Maintaining all current infrastructure, updating outdated and aging amenities, improving existing recreational facilities and planning for future opportunities should all be considerations to be combined with public inputs on current and future needs for a healthy, safe and valuable park and recreation community.

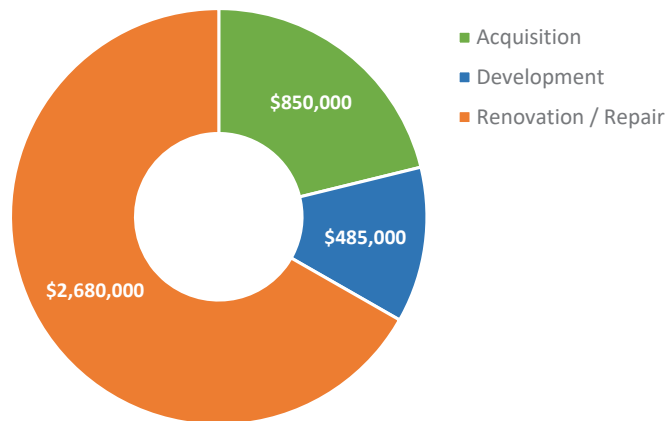
The proposed capital projects noted in the next chapter ameliorate the current and some projected infrastructure needs and maintain service levels to meet the proposed standard.



# CAPITAL PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

The following Capital Facilities Plan identifies the park, trail and facility projects considered for the next six years or more. The majority of these projects entail the maintenance, acquisition and development of parks, special recreation amenities and trails. Based on survey results and other feedback, Milton-Freewater residents have indicated an interest in park facility upgrades, enhanced trail connections and maintenance of existing facilities as priorities, and the Capital Facilities Plan is reflective of that desire. The following table summarizes the aggregate capital estimates from the 2020-2026 CFP by park type. A full CFP project list follows.

Figure 15. Potential Projects List Expenditures Summary





# KEY PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of key project recommendations, which will require commitment from the City and its residents to continue to support a healthy park and recreation system that preserves and enhances the safety, livability and character of the community.

## Trail Connections & Linkages

Recreational path and trail connections, improvements and relationships to streets, sidewalks and bike lanes have been cited in other Milton-Freewater plans and by participants to the development of this Plan. The City should continue to coordinate trail-related projects with transportation system planning or related public works projects. The Highway 11 corridor and the Walla Walla River corridor are both primary alignments for future multi-use trail systems. Also, the City should pursue additional trail segments and connections, as appropriate, in an effort to link existing and planned parks.

## Park Upgrades & Enhancements

Taking care of the existing park system always ranks highly in public priorities for park and recreation providers. Repairing and replacing damaged or aging facilities should be an ongoing practice. The capital facilities plan cites some specific replacements for the near future, including sport court repairs, pathway repairs and play equipment replacement.

The City should also consider adding the following recreation features to expand recreational opportunities beyond the named projects noted in the CFP, as funding allows:

- Shade structures and/or well-sited shade trees for playgrounds
- All-inclusive playgrounds
- Nature playgrounds and with unique features
- Picnic shelters
- Outdoor fitness areas
- Multi-sport courts

A general consideration for the public is to create a park system that provided year-round facilities for all ages and all abilities to gather and recreate in diverse range of safe, clean and well-maintained park facilities that also balance fiscal stability.

## ADA & Other Park Enhancements

Minor improvements to access, such as providing ramped entrances, for site furnishings are necessary to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensure universal accessibility. Also, the City should evaluate the play equipment and its signage for code compliance and replace outdated equipment as appropriate. The Capital Facilities Plan includes a line item for covering small upgrades and improvements to remove barriers and improve universal access. In general, the City should make improvements to existing parks as needed to ensure proper maintenance, usability and quality of park features and grounds.



**Milton-Freewater PROS**

**6-Year Capital Facilities Plan**

2020-2026

Park Type	Park Site	Project Description	Activity	Priority	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026+	Sum
Community	Yantis Park	Restroom upgrade	R	2					\$ 150,000			\$ 150,000
		Tennis Courts resurfacing	R	1		\$ 120,000						\$ 120,000
		Playground equipment replacement/upgrade	D/R	3							\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000
		Overlook loop trail - to Golf Course	A/P	3						\$ 75,000		\$ 75,000
Neighborhood	Freewater Park	Tennis court conversion (multi-sports court)	D	1		\$ 75,000						\$ 75,000
		Connecting pathway system	D	1			\$ 50,000					\$ 50,000
		Restroom renovation - ADA upgrade	R	2				\$ 80,000				\$ 80,000
Neighborhood	Marie Dorian Park	Riverfront access improvements	D	2					\$ 250,000			\$ 250,000
		Restroom renovation - ADA upgrade	R	2				\$ 60,000				\$ 60,000
Sports Fields		Bleacher safety rails - retrofit/replacements	R	1		\$ 40,000						\$ 40,000
		Restroom renovation - ADA upgrade	R	3					\$ 80,000			\$ 80,000
Trail	Walla Walla River	Levee public access easement	A	2		\$ 40,000	\$ 25,000					\$ 65,000
		Trailhead/riverfront acquisition	A	2			\$ 120,000		\$ 120,000		\$ 120,000	\$ 360,000
Special Use	Yantis Park Aquatic Facility	Pool liner - renovation	R	1	\$ 265,000							\$ 265,000
Special Use	Golf Course	Trail and golf cart path repairs	R	2				\$ 600,000				\$ 600,000
		Irrigation system replacement	R	2			\$ 1,200,000					\$ 1,200,000
Neighborhood	Future Park Acquisition	Neighborhood park acquisition	A	3							\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000
Systemwide	ADA-compliance upgrades	Play area ramps, paved paths, curb cuts, etc.	R	1		\$ 10,000		\$ 15,000				\$ 25,000
	Minor repairs/replacement	Playground safety surfaces	R	1	\$ 30,000		\$ 15,000		\$ 15,000			\$ 60,000
					<b>\$ 295,000</b>	<b>\$ 285,000</b>	<b>\$ 1,410,000</b>	<b>\$ 755,000</b>	<b>\$ 535,000</b>	<b>\$ 155,000</b>	<b>\$ 580,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,015,000</b>

**NOTE:**

This CFP identifies planning-level cost estimates and does not assume the value of volunteer or other non-City contributions. Detailed costing may be necessary for projects noted. This CFP is not an official budget and intended as a guiding document for City staff in the preparation of departmental budgets

**Code Activity**

- A Acquisition
- D Development
- R Renovation / Repair
- P Planning

**Code Priority**

- 1 High Priority
- 2 Medium
- 3 Low Priority



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## Recreation Programming

The City should continue to foster agreements or partnerships with potential programming partners and contract vendors as it considers its role in providing for a variety of recreation services within the community. There should be clearly identified areas of programmatic responsibility to ensure that there is not overlap in resource allocation or that gaps in services are not present. The City should also match its programming efforts with available staff and financial resources, recognizing that increasing the role of the City in providing programs may require an increase in full and part-time staff.

## Wayfinding & Signage

Parks, trails and other public open spaces are the primary targets for enabling a cohesive, accessible and connected community through an identifiable wayfinding program. As the city grows, Milton-Freewater should pursue an integrated wayfinding and branding program that includes both visual graphic standards and site furnishing standards. Colors, sign types and information can help park and trail users navigate the outdoor recreation experiences offered by the City.

## Communications

To broaden public awareness, the City's website should be expanded to facilitate quick links to popular destinations and be designed with mobile users in mind, either through a mobile-friendly site or a web-based application. The website should include easy-to-access park system and facility maps, trail maps and an up-to-date listing of park sites and amenities to enhance the experience of the on-the-go user. The City should consider introducing and utilizing QR codes or comparable technology on signage as a means to share with or receive information from visitors about maintenance, restoration or monitoring data.

# IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

Carrying out this Plan's recommendations for park and recreation services may require funding beyond current allocations for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities. Additional resources will be needed to leverage, supplement and support the implementation of proposed policies, programs and projects. 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.

Additionally, a review of potential implementation tools is attached as Appendix E and includes local financing, federal and state grant and conservation programs, acquisition methods and others.



## Partnership & Collaborative Projects

Specific projects and goals identified in this Plan demand a high degree of coordination and collaboration between the City and outside agencies.

Internal coordination with city staff can increase the potential of discrete actions toward the implementation of the proposed trail and path network, which relies heavily on street right-of-way enhancements, and in the review of development applications with consideration toward potential parkland acquisition areas, planned path corridors and the need for easement or set-aside requests.

The City should schedule periodic sessions and facilitate discussions with local youth leagues and staff from the Milton-Freewater School District for the purposes of sport field planning, consideration for additional field space and coordination for tournaments or other hosted events to utilize shared sport facilities.

## Future Development

With the recent and projected growth in residential development in Milton-Freewater, the City should encourage open space and recreational elements be included within future private residential development and trails and sidewalk connections linking new subdivisions to existing or planned open space or park lands.

## Volunteer & Community-Based Action

Community sponsored park clean-ups, beautification and planting projects should be considered to engage citizens and maintain a strong sense of community pride and ownership in park facilities. Milton-Freewater also could prepare and update a revolving list of potential volunteer-appropriate projects for the website, while also reaching out to the high school to encourage student projects.

## Parks Utility Fee

A parks utility fee is an ongoing fee (often billed monthly) that provides revenue for the needs of the park system. When charged by a city, such a fee can be an additional line item on an existing utility bill. The revenue earned can be used for both operational and capital needs, and it can be pledged to the debt service of revenue bonds. Establishment of a parks utility fee in Oregon requires compliance with legal requirements at both state and local levels. Several jurisdictions across Oregon have implemented and utilized a parks utility fee as supplemental funding to maintain and enhance their park systems. Milton-Freewater could consider enacting a parks utility fee for the purpose of providing for the operation and maintenance of parks and facilities within the City and to ensure adequate resources are available for the sound and timely maintenance of existing recreation amenities.

## System Development Charges

Park System Development Charges (SDCs) are fees paid by new development to meet the increased demand for parks resulting from the new growth. SDCs can only be used for



parkland acquisition, planning and/or development. They cannot be used for operations and maintenance of parks and facilities. The City currently assesses SDCs for water and sewer. SDCs can be charged on new residential development to assist with the cost of improvements needed to accommodate new growth. If the City chooses to expand its SDC program to include SDCs for parks, then the City should prioritize the SDCs to secure new park properties and finance park or trail development consistent with the priorities within this Plan.

## **Grants & Appropriations**

Several state, federal and private grant programs are available on a competitive basis, including those offered by the Oregon State Parks & Recreation Department (such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund). 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. Milton-Freewater should continue to leverage its local resources to the greatest extent by pursuing grants independently and in cooperation with other local partners. Appropriations from state or federal sources, though rare, can supplement projects with partial funding. State and federal funding allocations are particularly relevant on regional transportation projects, and the likelihood for appropriations could be increased if multiple partners are collaborating on projects.

## **Public-Private Partnerships**

Public-private partnerships are increasingly necessary for local agencies to leverage their limited resources in providing park and recreation services to the community. Corporate sponsorships, health organization grants, conservation stewardship programs and non-profit organizations are just a few examples of partnerships where collaboration provides value to both partners. The City has existing partners and should continue to explore additional and expanded partnerships to help implement these Plan recommendations.

## **Parkland Donations & Dedications**

Parkland donations from private individuals or conservation organizations could occur to complement the acquisition of park and open space lands in Milton-Freewater. Gift deeds or bequests from philanthropic-minded landowners could allow for lands to come into City ownership upon the death of the owner or as a tax-deductible charitable donation. Parkland dedication by a developer could occur in exchange for Park SDCs or as part of a planned development where public open space is a key design for the layout and marketing of a new residential project. Any potential dedication must be vetted by the City to ensure that such land is located in an area of need or can expand an existing City property and can be developed with site amenities listed in Appendix F.

## **Other Implementation Tools**

Appendix E identifies other implementation tools, such as grants and acquisition tactics, that the City could utilize to further the implementation of the projects noted in the CFP.



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# APPENDIX A COMMUNITY SURVEY



**To:** Steven Patten, Public Works Technician  
**From:** Steve Duh, Conservation Technix, Inc.  
**Date:** August 28, 2019  
**Re:** **City of Milton-Freewater Parks and Recreation Master Plan**  
Community Survey Summary Results

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Conservation Technix is pleased to present the results of a survey of the general population of the City of Milton-Freewater that assesses residents' recreational needs, preferences and priorities.

### **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

In close collaboration with City staff and the Milton-Freewater Recreation Committee, Conservation Technix developed the 15-question survey that was estimated to take approximately ten minutes to complete.

The survey was mailed to 1,356 addresses on June 24, 2019. An online version of the same survey was prepared and posted to the City's website. Information about the survey was provided on the City's website home page and on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan project page. It was promoted via multiple Facebook announcements and during a public open house meeting held on August 7, 2019 that served as the first public meeting for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Open house attendees were encouraged to take the survey online with a laptop provided at the meeting. The survey was closed on August 9<sup>th</sup>, and preliminary data were compiled and reviewed. In all, 231 survey responses were received.

This report includes findings on general community opinions. Since the survey was open to the general public and respondents were not selected through statistical sampling methods, the results are not necessarily representative of all City residents.

Percentages in the report may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



## KEY FINDINGS

### Milton-Freewater residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities.

Nearly all respondents (99%) think parks and recreation are important to quality of life in Milton-Freewater.



When asked differently about the value and usage of parks and recreation facilities, nearly all respondents (94%) noted that parks and recreation are important to quality of life in Milton-Freewater. Only 14 respondents feel that parks and recreation facilities do not play a role in their household.



### Residents visit parks frequently.

More than 70% of respondents visit parks or recreation facilities at least once a month. More than eight in ten respondents have visited Yantis Park (99%) and the Aquatic Center (86%), approximately 75% have visited the Marie Dorion Park, Orchard Park, Rotary Sports Complex and the Gold Course. The most popular activities are for trails, family gatherings, relaxation, and participating in festivals or celebrations.

### Residents are generally satisfied with existing parks and recreation facilities.

A large majority of respondents (74%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the value they receive from the City of Milton-Freewater for parks and recreation amenities. More than 90% of respondents rated the condition of Emma's Place and the Golf Course as excellent or good. Freewater Park, Morello Park and the Tennis Courts were rated less favorably. However, over half of residents said they would visit parks more often if the City addressed safety concerns, maintenance issues, accessibility issues and crowding.

### Residents would like to see improvements made to the parks & recreation system.

A large majority of survey respondents think that Milton-Freewater does not have enough neighborhood walking and biking trails (71%). Respondents were somewhat split on the adequacy of parks, picnic areas, and recreation programs. Notably, a large majority of respondents (80% or more) were supportive of expanding and improving multi-use walking and biking trails, community events or festivals, and picnic areas or shelters for group gatherings.



**DIFFERENCES BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS**

The table below summarizes key differences between respondents of different demographic groups.

*Note: The survey did not include a representative sample of residents. Results are for informational purposes only.*

Age	
<p><b>20 to 55</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most frequent users of parks &amp; recreation facilities</li> <li>• More likely to have children in the home</li> <li>• Tend to be less satisfied with the value provided by Milton-Freewater’s parks</li> <li>• More likely than older residents to prioritize developing new parks or acquiring new parklands</li> <li>• More supportive of adding the active use activities listed, such sports courts/fields, splash pads, skate parks, indoor fitness equipment, disc golf, and gyms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Over 55</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tend to be less frequent users of parks</li> <li>• Tend to be more satisfied with the value provided by Milton-Freewater’s parks</li> <li>• More likely to prioritize maintaining existing parks over other offerings</li> <li>• Stronger preference for newspapers as a communication method</li> </ul>
Children in Household	
<p><b>0 kids</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More likely to be older adults</li> <li>• More likely than those with children to cite not knowing what is offered as a reason why they do not use parks more often</li> <li>• Less frequent users of parks</li> <li>• Greater interest in trails and fitness as reasons to visit parks</li> </ul>	<p><b>1 – 3 kids</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More likely to be frequent visitors of parks</li> <li>• More likely to cite crowding, safety, maintenance issues, or lack of desired programs or equipment as reasons why they do not visit more often</li> <li>• Most likely to visit parks to use playgrounds and sport fields or attend family gatherings</li> <li>• More likely to support active-use improvements than those without children at home</li> <li>• Stronger preference for school flyers and social media as a communication methods</li> </ul>
Location	
<p><b>North of SW 2nd Ave / SE 3rd Ave</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placed a higher priority on basketball courts and indoor fitness facilities</li> <li>• More likely to cite being too busy to go to parks</li> <li>• Placed a higher priority on acquisitions for future parklands and expanding trail networks</li> </ul>	<p><b>South of SW 2nd Ave / SE 3rd Ave</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More likely to feel that there are not enough trails</li> <li>• Placed a higher priority on maintaining existing parks</li> <li>• Tend to be more satisfied with the value provided by Milton-Freewater’s parks</li> </ul>

## FULL RESULTS

### How much do residents value parks and recreation?

Nearly all respondents (99%) feel that local parks, recreation options and open space opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Milton-Freewater. Eight in ten feel that they are essential; while an additional 18% believe that they are important to quality of life, but not essential. Less than 1% of respondents believe parks are “more of a luxury that we don’t need”.

No significant differences were noted in responses by the three demographic subgroups.

1. When you think about the things that contribute to the quality of life in Milton-Freewater, would you say that public parks and recreation opportunities are...

Response options	Percent	99%
Essential to the quality of life here	80.0%	
Important, but not really necessary	18.6%	
More of a luxury that we don’t need	0.5%	
Don’t know	0.9%	

### Are residents satisfied with the value they receive from the City of Milton-Freewater?

A large majority of respondents (74%) are somewhat to very satisfied with the value they receive from the City of Milton-Freewater for parks and recreation amenities. However, a small share of respondents (18%) are either somewhat or very dissatisfied.

Respondents under 35 and those with two or more children tend to be less satisfied with the value provided by Milton-Freewater’s parks than older residents.

4. Please rate your satisfaction with the overall value your household receives from Milton-Freewater for parks and recreation amenities.

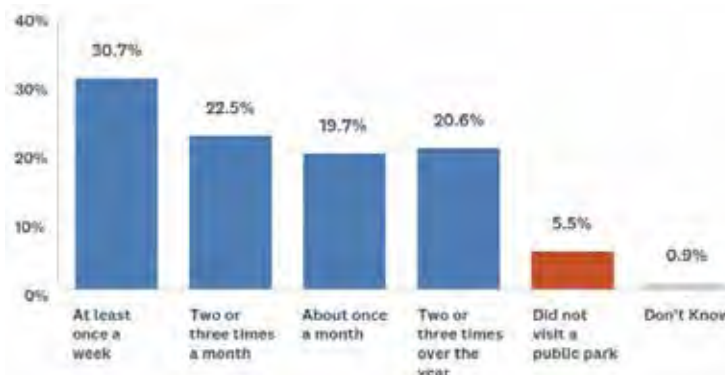


### How often do residents use Milton-Freewater’s parks & recreation facilities?

Respondents were asked how often they, or members of their household, visited a park and recreation facility in Milton-Freewater over the past year. Respondents tend to visit frequently, with 73% visiting a park at least once per month. Approximately 30% visit at least once a week and another 42% visit one to three times per month. About one in five visit just a few times per year.

As compared to other age groups, adults under 55 are the most frequent users of Milton-Freewater’s parks. Respondents without children tend to be less frequent users of parks.

5. How many times over the past year have you or members of your household visited a park or recreation facility in Milton-Freewater?





### Which parks & recreation facilities do residents visit?

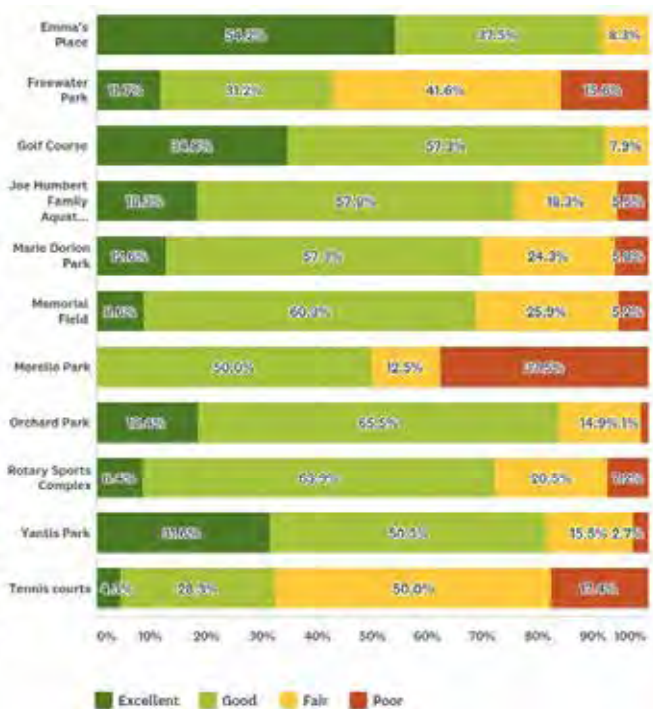
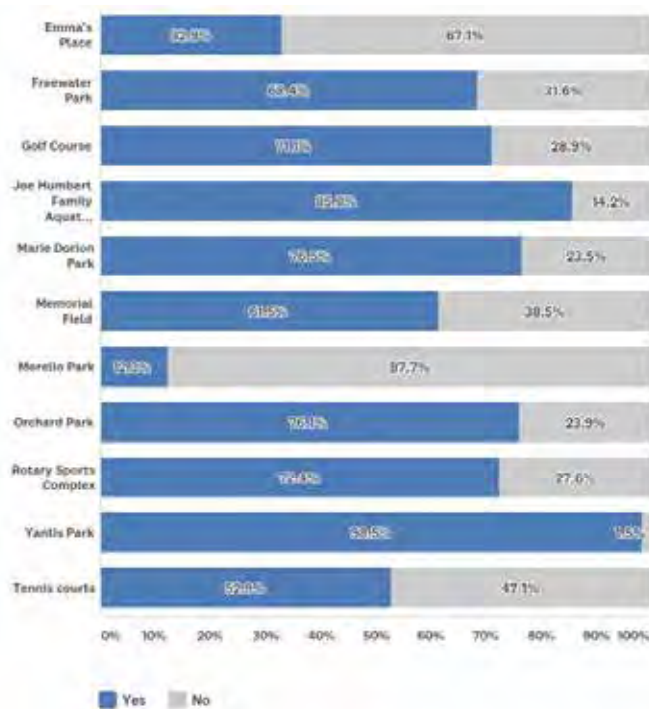
The City asked respondents which developed parks and recreation facilities they, or members of their household, have visited. More than eight in ten respondents have visited Yantis Park (99%) and the Aquatic Center (86%), approximately 75% have visited the Marie Dorion Park, Orchard Park, Rotary Sports Complex and the Gold Course. Smaller parks and the tennis courts were visited less often.

### How would residents rate the condition of parks and facilities they have visited?

Of the respondents who have visited city parks and facilities, more than nine in ten gave a condition rating of excellent or good for Emma's Place (92%) and the Golf Course (92%). Respondents rated the conditions of Freewater Park, Morello Park and the Tennis Courts less favorably, with less than half rating these parks as being in excellent or good condition.

6a. Please indicate if YOU or any member of your HOUSEHOLD has used any of the following developed parks or recreation facilities listed below.

6b. For those you marked with a YES... please indicate how you would rate the condition of the park or recreation facility.





### Why do residents visit parks?

Milton-Freewater respondents visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons. The most popular activities for visiting parks are for trails (59%), family gatherings (54%), relaxation (51%), and participating in festivals or celebrations (51%). Other frequent responses for visiting parks are for fitness (46%), swimming (46%), and playgrounds (53%). Fewer visited to use the skate park (2.9%) or volleyball court (1.4%). In addition, six respondents (2.9%) wrote in that they visit parks to walk or play with their dogs.

Respondents aged 20 to 44, who were also the most likely to have children in their household, were the most likely to visit for playgrounds, swimming, family gatherings, and sport fields.

7. What would you say are the main reasons you visited Milton-Freewater parks and open spaces in the last year?

Reason	Percent
Trails (walk / run / bike)	58.9%
Family gatherings / picnics	54.1%
Festivals / celebrations / music concerts	51.2%
Relaxation	51.2%
Fitness	45.5%
Swimming / Aquatics	45.5%
Playgrounds	42.1%
Sport fields	28.7%
Golf	25.8%
Organized program or activity	19.6%
Wildlife viewing	15.8%
Tennis court	12.0%
Skate park	2.9%
Walking dogs (write-in only)	2.9%
Farmers Market (write-in only)	2.4%
Volleyball	1.4%

*Note: Write-in "Other" responses which fit clearly into defined answer categories were included in those categories.*

### Why don't residents visit more often?

When asked why they do not visit Milton-Freewater's parks and recreation facilities more often, many respondents responded that they do visit (34%), are too busy (28%) or have other reasons (19%, write-in) suggesting that further improvements would not increase their usage of parks.

However, nearly half of the responses included reasons that could be addressed by the City, including safety concerns (17%), lack of desired equipment (15%), maintenance issues (11%), accessibility issues (5%), and crowding (4%).

Respondents also noted that existing parks are too far from their home (6%). Other respondents stated that they either use other facilities (12%) or do not know what is offered in Milton-Freewater (6%).

8. Please CHECK ALL the reasons why your household does not use City of Milton-Freewater parks or recreation facilities more often.

Reason	Percent
None / I regularly use local parks or recreation facilities	34.3%
Too busy to go to parks and facilities	27.9%
Other (please specify)	18.4%
Do not feel safe in park or facility	17.4%
Parks do not have the right equipment	15.4%
Use parks or facilities provided by another city or organization	11.9%
Parks and facilities are not well maintained	11.0%
I do not know what is offered	6.0%
Parks and facilities are too far from my home	5.5%
Inaccessible for my physical abilities	5.0%
Parks and sport courts are too crowded	4.0%

*Note: Write-in "Other" responses which fit clearly into defined answer categories were included in those categories.*

Respondents with children at home were more likely to cite that parks and facilities do not offer desired equipment, they have safety concerns, or use facilities provided by other organizations as reasons why they do not visit more often. Respondents without children at home were more likely than those with children to cite being too busy as a reason why they do not use parks more often.



### Do residents think Milton-Freewater needs more parks and recreation opportunities?

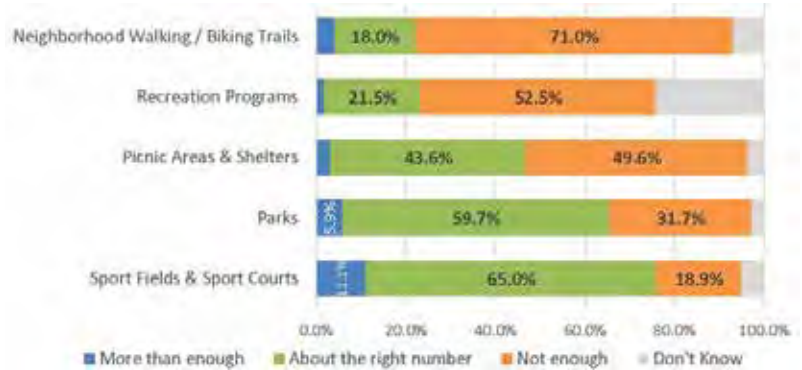
A large majority of survey respondents think that Milton-Freewater does not have enough neighborhood walking and biking trails (71%). Respondents were somewhat split on the adequacy of parks and picnic areas. A slight majority (53%) responded that there are not enough recreation programs. Respondents think there are either the right amount or more than enough sport fields and sport courts (76%).

Respondents with children were more likely than others to think there are not enough sport fields or recreation programs.

Respondents under the age of 35 were more

likely than others to think there are not enough parks, picnic areas or programs. Respondents who live in the northern area were more likely than others to think there are not enough picnic areas.

3. When it comes to meeting the needs of the community, would you say there are...



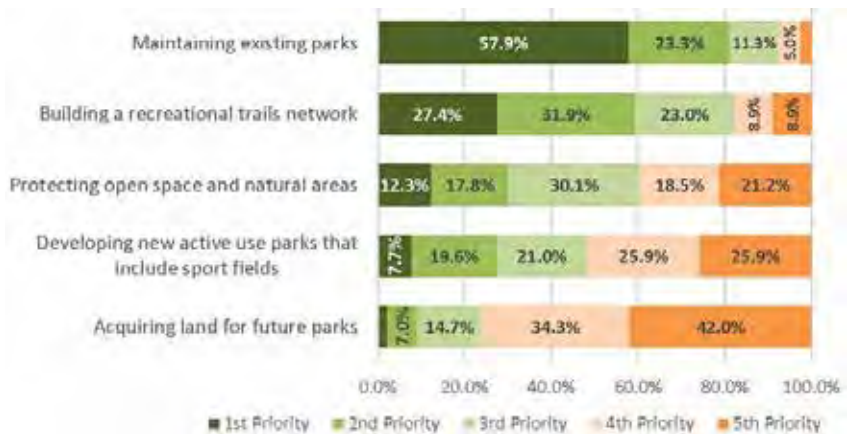
### What park and facility improvements would residents prioritize?

When asked which park and recreation improvements they would like to see the City focus on, nine in ten respondents identified maintaining existing parks as one of their top three priorities, with 58% saying it should be the highest priority. In looking at the sum of the top three priorities, another 82% gave a high priority to building a recreational trail network.

Developing trails and acquiring parkland for the future were higher priorities in the northern area of the city.

Respondents over 55 were more likely than respondents in other age groups to support protecting open space and natural areas. Respondents under 55 were more likely to favor acquiring new parkland and developing active use parks. Respondents without children were more likely than the others to place a higher priority on maintaining existing parks.

9. For the following list, indicate how you would rank the priority for each (1st priority is highest and 5th priority is lowest).

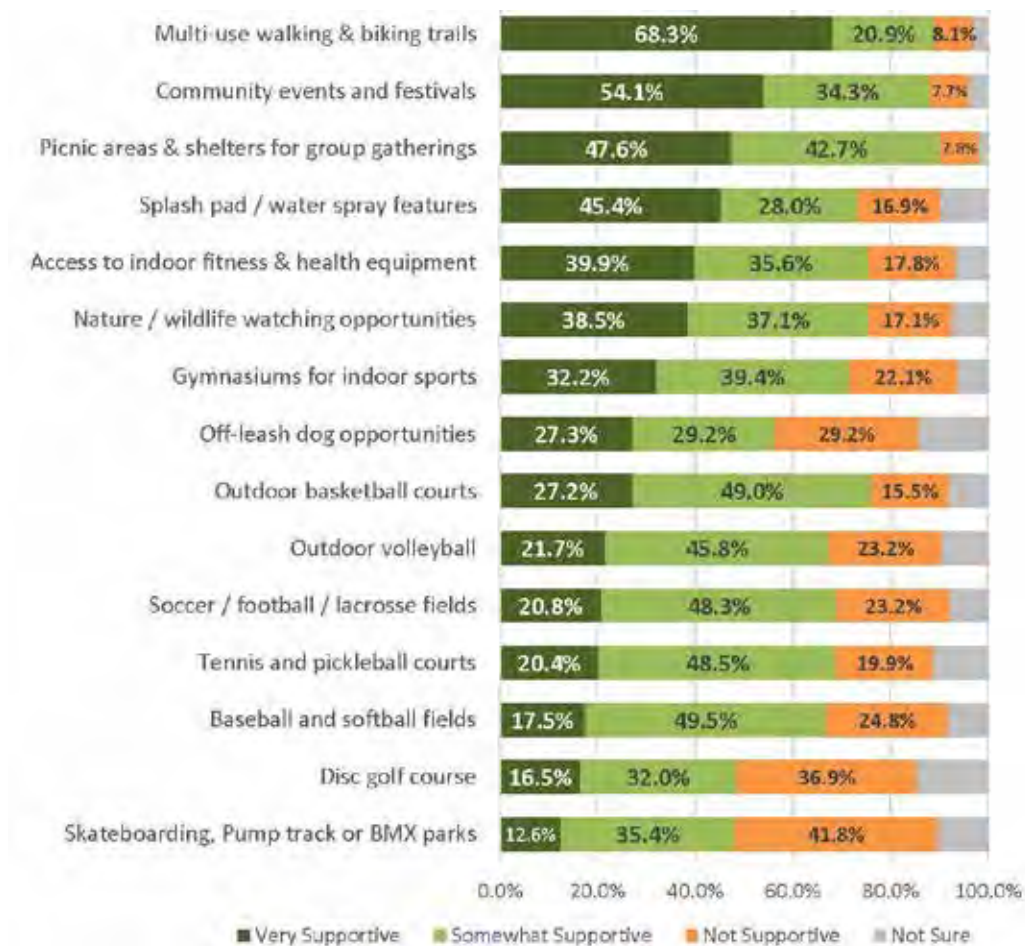


The survey also asked about residents' support for park and recreational improvements. A majority of respondents were very or somewhat supportive of expanding or improving all facilities listed.

A large majority of respondents (88% or more) were supportive of expanding and improving multi-use walking and biking trails, community events or festivals, and picnic areas or shelters for group gatherings. More than half of respondents were very or somewhat supportive of all other improvements listed. Respondents were the least supportive and most undecided on whether the City should provide off-leash dog opportunities, with nearly equal ratings of support and non-support.

Younger respondents were more supportive than older respondents of all active use activities listed, including sports courts and fields, splash pads, indoor fitness equipment, disc golf, and gymnasiums, with the exception of tennis and pickleball which had fairly even support across all age groups. Similarly, respondents with children in their home were more likely to support active-use improvements than those without children at home. Multi-use trails, wildlife viewing and community events areas appealed to respondents of all ages and family sizes.

10. The following list includes park amenities that the City of Milton-Freewater could consider adding to the park system. Please indicate for each whether you would be very supportive, somewhat supportive, not sure, or not supportive.





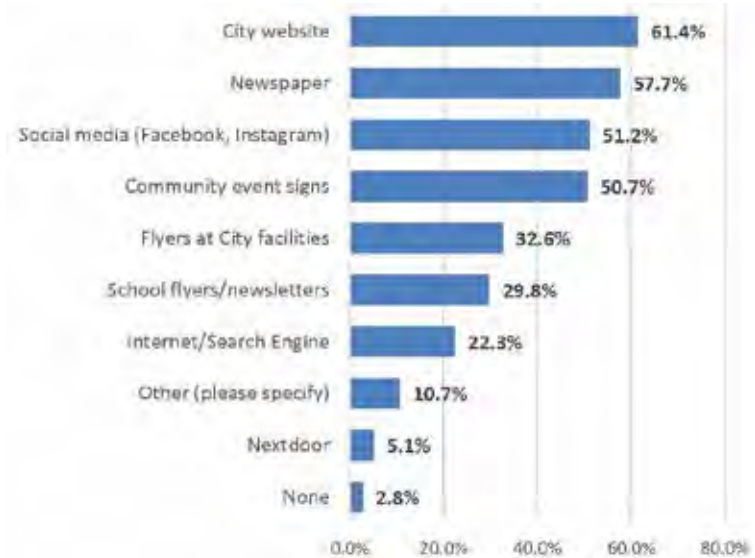
How do residents want to hear about the City’s recreational facilities, programs and events?

Strong majorities of respondents prefer to hear about City parks, facilities and events through traditional channels, such as the City’s website (61%) and the newspaper (58%). Social media and community event signs are also a popular sources.

School flyers and social media announcements are much more popular source of information among respondents under 54 years of age and among households with children at home.

Approximately 11% of respondents also wrote-in that they would like to hear about park and recreation opportunities through other means, such as direct mail to their home via the utility billing.

11. Please check ALL the ways you would prefer to learn about Milton-Freewater’s parks, recreation facilities, programs and special events.





## Demographics

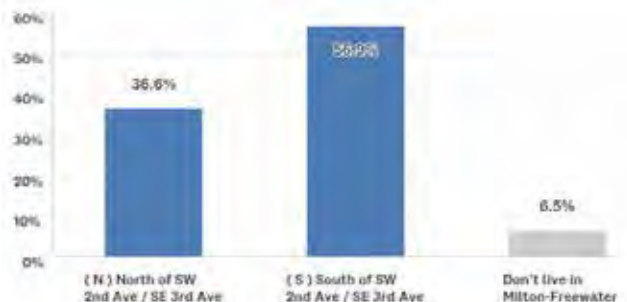
### Age

The largest age group who responded to the survey were 65 and over (48%). Approximately one in five respondents were between 55 and 64 (19%). Respondents were roughly split for those between 20 and 34 years of age (12%), between 35 and 44 years of age (10%), and between 45 and 54 years (10%). Only four survey respondents were under the age of 20.



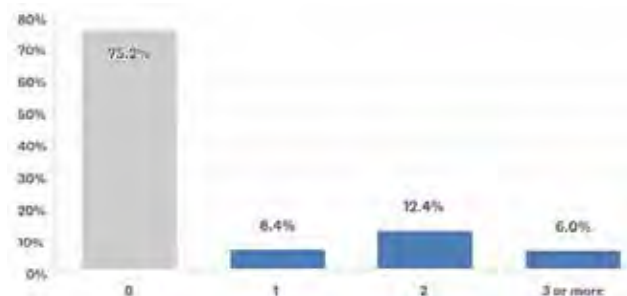
### Location of Residence

Slightly more than half of survey respondents (57%) live in the southern portion of Milton-Freewater. Approximately 37% live in the northern portion of the city. Slightly more than six percent of respondents do not live in Milton-Freewater.



### Number of Children in Household

Three quarters of respondents (75%) have no children in their household. These households tended to include older adults (over age 55). The remaining households have one (6%), two (12%), or three (6%) children in the home.





### ATTACHMENT 1. SURVEY INSTRUMENT



## Community Survey on Park, Recreation & Open Space Preferences

Ayuda a nuestra comunidad  
Conteste la encuesta en el  
siguiente sitio de internet  
[www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com)

Dear Milton-Freewater Community Member:

The City of Milton-Freewater is conducting a short survey to assess the recreational needs of community members to prepare a citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The new Plan will establish a path forward for providing high quality, community-driven parks and recreation amenities throughout the city. The Plan will establish goals and recommend specific projects for the city's park facilities for the next 5-10 years. Final review of the Plan tentatively is set for spring 2020.

Your participation is crucial to the success of this project. The survey consists of 15 questions regarding current use of facilities, preferred activities and support for future improvements. It takes on average about 5 minutes to complete, and residents of all ages are encouraged to participate.



Take the survey now online at [www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com) Thanks in advance for participating!

1. When you think about the things that contribute to the quality of life in Milton-Freewater, would you say that public parks and recreation opportunities are... (check one option)

- Essential to the quality of life here
- More of a luxury that we don't need
- Important, but not really essential
- Don't know

2. Which ONE of the following three statements comes closest to the way you feel about parks and recreation in Milton-Freewater?

- Members of my household use parks and recreation facilities on a regular basis, and I believe that these facilities are important to quality of life.
- Although members of my household do not use parks or recreation facilities frequently, I believe that they are important to quality of life.
- Parks and recreation facilities do not currently play an important role in my household.

3. When it comes to meeting the needs for parks, trails and recreation facilities, would you say there are... (Check only one box in each row)

	More than Enough	About the Right Amount	Not Enough	Don't Know
Parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neighborhood Walking / Biking Trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport Fields & Sport Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnic Areas & Shelter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation Programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Please rate your satisfaction with the overall value your household receives from the City of Milton-Freewater for parks and recreation amenities.

- Very Satisfied
- Very Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Don't Know
- Somewhat Dissatisfied

Take this survey online at the City's website or use the QR code:

[www.mlfreewater.com](http://www.mlfreewater.com)

Or send it back in this self-addressed envelope provided.

Thank you in advance for participating!



5. How many times over the past year have you or members of your household visited a public park or recreation facility operated by Milton-Freewater?

- At least once a week
- Two or three times a month
- About once a month
- Two or three times over the year
- Did not visit a public park
- Don't know

6. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has used any of the following parks and recreation facilities below. If YES, please indicate how you would rate the condition of the park or recreation facility.

Site Name	Have you visited in the past year?		If YES, how would you rate the condition of the park?			
	Yes	No	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Emma's Place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Freewater Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Golf Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joe Humbert Family Aquatic Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marie Donon Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Memorial Field	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mozello Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Orchard Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robbery Sports Complex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yantis Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. What would you say are the main reasons you visited Milton-Freewater parks and open spaces in the LAST YEAR? CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.

- Fitness
- Playgrounds
- Sport fields
- Tennis court
- Volleyball
- Swimming / Aquatics
- Skate park
- Trails (walk / run / bike)
- Family gatherings / picnics
- Festivals / celebrations / music concerts
- Golf
- Relaxation
- Wildlife viewing
- Organized program or activity, such as club, camp or league activity
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Please CHECK ALL the reasons why your household DOES NOT USE City of Milton-Freewater parks or recreation facilities more often.

- Parks do not have the right equipment
- Parks and facilities are not well maintained
- Do not feel safe in park or facility
- Inaccessible for my physical abilities
- Parks and sport courts are too crowded
- Parks and facilities are too far from my home
- Too busy to go to parks and facilities
- Use parks or facilities provided by another city or organization (such as private fitness clubs)
- I do not know what is offered
- None / I regularly use local parks or recreation facilities
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



### Community Survey on Park, Recreation & Open Space Preferences



9. For the following list, indicate how you would rank the priority for each (1st priority is highest and 5th priority is lowest). Circle each ranking number only once.

	1 - High Priority	2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority	3 -Medium Priority	4 <sup>th</sup> Priority	5 - Low Priority
Maintaining existing parks	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Developing new active use parks that include sport fields	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Building a recreational trails network	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Acquiring land for future parks	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>
Protecting open space and natural areas	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>

10. The following list includes park amenities that the City of Milton-Freewater could consider adding to the park system. Please indicate for each whether you would be very supportive, somewhat supportive, not sure or not supportive.

	Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Supportive	Not Sure
Picnic areas & shelters for group gatherings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Multi-use walking & biking trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baseball and softball fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soccer / football / lacrosse fields	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis and pickleball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor basketball courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor volleyball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Splash pad / water spray features	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature / wildlife watching opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skateboarding, Pump track or BMX parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disc golf course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community events and festivals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gymnasiums for indoor sports, like basketball or volleyball	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access to indoor fitness & health equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Off-leash dog opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



11. Please check ALL the ways you would prefer to learn about Milton-Freewater's parks, recreation facilities, programs and events.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City website                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Fliers at City facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social media (Facebook, Instagram) | <input type="checkbox"/> School fliers/newsletters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> NextDoor                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Community event signs     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internet/Search Engine             | <input type="checkbox"/> None                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____              |

12. Do you have other comments or suggestions about Milton-Freewater's parks, programs or events?

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These last questions help us understand whether we have a cross section of the community. It's important that you provide a response to each question. Your answers are confidential.

13. How many children under age 18 live in your household?

- |                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more |

14. What is your age?

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Younger than 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 to 34        | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44        | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and older |

15. Using the map, in which part of Milton-Freewater do you live?

- |   |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ( N ) North of SW 2nd Ave / SE 3rd Ave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ( S ) South of SW 2nd Ave / SE 3rd Ave |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't live in Milton-Freewater         |



**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!**

Your input and insights will be used to help guide the development of the Milton-Freewater Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Save a stamp! Take this survey online from this link or QR code:

[www.mfcity.com](http://www.mfcity.com)

Check the City's website for more information about the citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan.



The City of Milton-Freewater is utilizing the services of a consultant team who specializes in park and recreation planning.

Please return your completed survey in the enclosed return-reply envelope addressed to:

Conservation Technix, Inc.  
PO Box 885  
Orinda, CA 94563



## ATTACHMENT 2. OPEN-ENDED SURVEY RESPONSES

Q7: Open-ended – The main reasons you visited Milton-Freewater parks and open spaces?

- Farmers market
- Farmers market
- walk nature
- water aerobics
- Dog walking
- Farmers market
- Dog exercise
- Do not use
- Skiing
- basketball
- Walking the dog
- Eating lunch
- Farmers market
- Walking the dog
- special events
- walk dogs
- Walking, Walking, and Walking
- meeting friends
- Farmers Market
- pet exercise
- Great grandkids playing

Q8: Open-ended - The reasons why your household does not use City of Milton-Freewater parks or recreation facilities more often.

- Only one in household
- age
- New to city
- Mountains
- Walk 1 hr a day at Yantis Park
- Family needs have changed. Grandkids are gone
- Playgrounds at Yantis Park need a good upgrade
- Don't use

- Too old
- We used to enjoy the Muddy Frog Water Festival
- Pool open only in summer, few walking trails
- Age doesn't allow us to do the park thing like we used to
- Other preferred activities
- Dogs off leash create safety concerns
- Use our own home for family, etc. gatherings
- I'm old
- wheelchair
- I have a pool. I'm a home body
- Golf course does not have the proper sand in bunkers (sand traps)
- Not enough variety of things to do for kids
- 80 years old
- We would be most likely to go to Harris Park - RV'ing
- Very pleasant shady backyard. Use county/state parks for picnics, guess we're loners
- The swimming aquatic center is not enclosed (during winter/fall months it is closed)
- Lack of restrooms
- I ride my motorcycle for hobby
- There is only one walking trail, Yantis Park. We need more an longer walking, running and biking trails
- people having their dogs off leash
- Have to use streets or PVT land because of the lack of trails
- Don't make an effort. Will need to take better advantage of our great parks, etc.
- My kids are older so it's just for sports
- Might use tennis courts but it's locked and only after 3 years of living here did I find out I could check a key out from the city but It's more steps than I'm willing to take to try tennis.
- We don't use Freewater park because of the people that are at the skatepark; feels unsafe for a small child to be in that area
- We wish to use the tennis court by Yantis but always closed, uncomfortable using the one in Freewater park
- Modified swings for disabled children please!
- Age...When my family was growing up we were involved in Swim team for 18 yrs...Little League...and kids played in the park....My husband and I would have enjoyed bike trails by the river....:((
- Age and declining health

**Q10: Open-ended – Park amenities that the City could consider adding to the park system.**

- we have schools with sports areas
- archery course
- pool for adults



- I would love some pickleball courts for one of our fastest growing sports in the USA
- Access to Walla Walla River! Picnic area by river
- Free access to public
- P.E. water safety classes for elementary students (early in pool season or before pool closes in fall/winter)
- Outdoor court for roller skating
- If the city already has any of the above sports opportunities, they should only update and maintain
- Sand in the golf sand traps
- Free community wading pool in Yantis Park for young children
- Levee access please and connect to Walla Walla
- New playground equipment
- golf course - driving range practice area
- I think it is all we can do to maintain parks we have
- Use the band shell
- Cover aquatic center for year round use
- Paths that would allow all age groups to access the natural beauty of the mountains and waters that the community can share with residents as well as travelers that come to spend time here to do the same!!!
- If you guys put in a gym it will put my business out of business.
- We need more areas for sports besides soccer.
- Organization of the city volunteer lead sports so community members have better access to when and where these sign ups and activities are happening.
- Paid Jobs for kids 14-16 yo
- Building a walking/bike path and toddler time
- Walla Walla River Levee walking/biking path
- We need a dog park.
- Let's make use of the wonderful river that runs right through town! We need a safe, paved and well maintained walking trail.
- Previous questions are based on need and I am no longer aware of what kids in particular need. There are some of these things available and I don't see them being used...

Q11: Open-ended – What are the ways you would prefer to learn about Milton-Freewater's parks and facilities.

- City newsletter sent quarterly
- mailer e-bill best
- with utility bill
- Word of mouth
- with any city communication (utility bill, news)
- Mailed city newsletters



- friends and neighbors
- That flier you send to city residents every once in a while
- email
- utility bill
- More community events on new library sign
- advertise other cities
- Bill insert
- billboards/reader boards
- City newsletter and utility bill
- Mail
- City newsletter and utility bill
- newsletter 6 times a year
- City newsletter
- Electronic Library Sign
- Through the newsletter that comes quarterly in with the MF utilities Bill
- Yearly mailer with projected activities and signups for kids sports.
- The UB as well as local paper.

**Q12: Open-ended - Do you have other comments or suggestions for Milton-Freewater's parks?**

- Milton Freewater area has enough parks and recreational areas. They are well maintained and are sufficient for the community - put efforts in attracting new businesses and more industry facilities to stateline.
- Thank you to the City of Milton-Freewater for realizing the importance of parks and trails. Also, we have the beautiful Walla Walla running through our town. We should make it more accessible to the young and old to be able to enjoy and appreciate it.
- Raise money for golfers and advertise golfing events. Promote golf events to come to MF. Get a real manager for golf course
- Fundraising events (fun runs, bakes sales, auction, concerts, etc.) to increase publicity and get citizens to involve.
- There are schools that can provide many of the amenities you are suggesting! There is an overlap! Coordination with the school district is very important!
- I'm sure some folks would want a Disneyland or Orlando. Free of course - sad indeed. Save the cash for boarding up the store fronts
- Not in favor of a bond to finance more land for parks! New sports complex at Grove is enough! Perhaps a survey to see how citizens feel about speeding vehicles, loud mufflers, loud music from vehicles would be helpful. Calling the PD does no good
- Evening / early mornings at Yantis can feel pretty unsafe with the homeless / drug population present. No one at Yantis keeps their dog leashed. It's very annoying. My dog has been attacked twice!
- Yantis Park is kept really nice. We live close. When we walk, we pick up any trash and put in dumpster



- Please repair tennis courts - more racquetball courts. Walking and biking trails along the river would be great
- We cannot afford the current facilities we are taxed for now. The water park needs to charge higher prices. If it cannot pay for itself, close it. I don't use it.
- Use gazebo for small bands such as folk or country or blues on Friday Saturday would draw x-section of people. Use what you have. Most groups would do it for free. Have city police meet greet people
- Seems like costs are far more expensive than they should be, i.e. cost of handicapped park behind community building. Gathering Place "nice project" but what is its use, think maintenance costs for all parks etc. may be excessive!
- We love the MF Golf Course and the club house professional George Gillette. However, the golf cart paths are in need of a good upgrade. Excellent course otherwise.
- The parks for kids by the fire station is never used. A waste of money - bad area
- I do not believe in going into debt on 'wants'. Our schools are more important. Lower electric, water bills are important. Economy is poor - fixed income, retired. Let's get a wind machine and lower our overall cost of electricity
- You need to lower the price of a space for Vendors at functions. They bring much enjoyment to our parks and the high price plus a percentage of what they make at whatever function. Muddy Frog Water was so fun. Games to watch, kids to play, vendors selling things they make as well as many others. Why did you change the name of Muddy Frog Water?
- We have plenty of parks and access to nature, we need activities and events
- City takes excellent care of Yantis Park, but structures need repair
- handicap parking!
- With the additional fields and facilities the schools will soon provide, we are in good shape there, but 2 or 4 pickleball courts would be terrific
- Would love to see and use trails along our river, overlooking our beautiful valley
- We're lucky to have so many park facilities for a small town!
- The parks we have need to be maintained and improved. Freewater Park needs new, updated, safe equipment. The basketball court needs new asphalt. This park seems to attract activities that are not family friendly, even my grandson says that drug activity takes place there. If it is cleaned up, families will visit
- Pool should be tarped nightly even if there was a special rental and guards felt it was too late. Heat needs to be conserved. If no sub available for vacation guarding (example, water aerobics) classes should be extended. Pool rules should be posted on sandwich board or closer to swimmers, not on concession stand wall. Get rid of sand area to keep pool clean (and filters) and install splash pad there.
- Please update the very old, very run down and unsafe playground at my neighborhood park! Morello Park
- I believe that parks are important for the youth of Milton-Freewater. We are new to the area (about 3 years) and I would love to see walking trails for fitness and nature watching
- Hamburger
- Lower the cost for vendors
- Dog park very important, Yantis Park is used all day by dog walkers

- I would love an area for roller skating
- Children's playgrounds specifically Freewater Park is in deplorable condition. It needs a new playground, fenced in. I feel it is ignored since it's in a lower income neighborhood and is the only park with playground in the area which has a large concentration of children
- We truly need newer & better toys at parks. We truly need something positive for kids/teens to do to keep busy throughout life. We very much need our pools updated. Kids during summer spend much of their time there. Thanks
- Great job re: painting building at pool!
- At soccer practice at Rotary Sports Complex, my granddaughter was sprayed upon by an orchard spray truck (whose driver was covered from head to toe!)
- When planned events, parking is limited
- As a childless household, we don't find many parks or programs geared toward our age group and interests. We enjoy art festivals, trails, outdoor theaters, plant sales, flowers, etc.
- We need to clean up the town first! Where is the money coming from. We are being taxed enough now. I am also appalled at the trashy places around town. Do we not have city codes re: cleaning garbage and weeds from property any more or are they just not being enforced?
- Do so without tax increases!
- Our city has amazing parks and programs for a community our size. And everything is well-maintained and well landscaped
- Dog park would be nice
- Police need to monitor aquatic park after 10pm - especially during summer.
- It would be nice to go back to what the city enjoyed "Muddy Frog Water" before a few people on city council changed it to Milton Rocks - not family friendly drinking and boozing weekend. It was never taken to the people of Milton to vote this change. Only the people who care about their dollar want Milton Rocks. A disquieting disappointment!!
- We need a splash pad
- Staff does a great job at the golf course but management doesn't understand the importance of basic needs such as sand in the sand trap. The golf association has provided most of the amenities, but the parks and rec supervisor - none.
- Do the best job supporting what we have. We have some great facilities already, which are very important to the city to attract people. Golf course is especially important to city image!
- I appreciate how well-maintained the city parks are! The swimming pool needs a change in focus (remove the slide and other water features. Keep it simple). A community wading pool (free) in Yantis Park for toddlers would be a wonderful addition
- Develop/encourage more family programs to get all involved both indoor/outdoor participation and to get kids outside and away from use of computers, cell phones, to interact with people in person
- Please fix cart paths at golf course
- Have police patrol parks several times each night
- We love Harris Park/ South Fork Trail / The upper hill behind Yantis. A trail system, access to the river locally would be lovely. We go to WW/CP for BMX, disc golf, Bennington & Rooks/ dog trails park, which is sad. MF is lovely and could capitalize upon so many of its assets



- We would like to see more trees planted and maintained. Also, the playgrounds are full of dilapidated/unusable equipment such as broken zip lines, missing slides, etc. that were once available for children to enjoy
- More walking trails are needed
- We appreciate allowed use by dogs and owners at Rotary Park. Thank you
- Please renew/update restrooms. Ban drug paraphernalia
- It is a shame to have a nice river running through town - no real access whatever. Back in earlier times, they had lots of impromptu parks in floodplain
- The city and community parks are what make Milton Freewater a nice little town for families
- In question #6, Memorial Field, I do not know where that is - be sure each facility has a sign. On the return envelope, you misspelled Milton. On this type of thing, you should be sure to get it right
- Please consider covering aquatic center for year round use and the addition of swimming as a school sport program
- We really need areas for youth after school
- Appreciate the upgrading that is going on now with the passage of the bond
- I would like to see community events brought in from outside organizations, such as concerts (even just some WW groups), food-oriented festivals and robust food truck events, dog shows, etc.
- low maintenance wild flowers-long bloomers
- Please, please, please consider adding a splash pad/park. This would be great for the community. It is free for kids.
- Concert(s) at the Park. One example 5 de Mayo is no longer as used to be. Native tribe shows, Art and Craft displays.
- Recreational activities for Families with young children
- I had thought that the public would be allowed to use the playground at the new Gib Olinger Elementary School, but it is apparently locked unless school is in session, and off limits at that time...had planned to take grandkids there when they came to visit...
- It would be great to have a playground for children that is fenced all the way around with only one entrance and exit. Kids can play and parents don't have to worry about cars or kids running off as easily.
- Open the eyes of your own residents as well as the visitors that come and spend time and money by building pathways that show off the river that supports your community in many ways. I have seen pathways of various types that draw all ages and walks of life by allow them to get out and enjoy via walking , biking and or running safely in many places on our planet .
- We need agreements that allow access to the Walla Walla river that flows through town!!!!
- Let's do more! Advertise better. Keep going.
- We appreciate the city staff's efforts to beautify our community with the wonderful upkeep of Yantis Park and the grounds of City Hall and the library. We especially love the flowers on the light poles each year. We enjoy them, and we are proud to drive guests through town.
- I would LOVE some hiking, biking or walking trails!!
- The pool is open such a short time for the public to swim. Perhaps it could open by 10 or 11 in the morning?



- Our youth need to stay active and out of trouble. Having lots of outdoor and indoor places to play sports may help.
- Updates on things fixed and plans for the future. Ways the community can get involved and help -day of service was such a great community building thing and got my kids involved and was something to take pride in.
- They really need to be patrolled more frequently with stricter laws for people doing drugs and harassing others in them. Even surveillance cameras in parks such as Marie Dorian and the top of Yantis Park- SO MUCH Drug dealing and people doing drugs and leaving their stuff, I've found needles. I worry about my small kids and being alone if I'm there by myself. It would be amazing if the dike was opened up so we could enjoy walking it by the river. (Dayton does this)
- Other communities use parks and rec to organize children sports. I wonder if that would help lighten the load for single sports groups (i.e. soccer, baseball etc.) also I know of a community that runs an after school program( some homework support time and structured play from 3:30-6) through parks and rec.
- We need new play equipment for our kids in Yantis park
- Would really like to see multi-use walking and biking trails developed.
- I would love if there was some sort of toddler play time and also if we could get a bike/walking path
- I would like to have an ice chalet.
- build a new park with playground on the southeast part of town.
- "Our valley needs an indoor pool and recreation center. Boardman Oregon just built a phenomenal one and they have half of our population.
- Expand our pool and make part of it indoors. This would bring year around revenue and attract people from all over the valley.
- I would also like to see biking and hiking trails that are paved, lighted and safe. "
- I think a trail along the levy of the Walla Walla River would be a lot of fun
- "The buildings in Yantis Park look great, but equipment not so much...Parks we have need constant care...
- Shouldn't over extend. Pretty sure bike trails/walking trails are still needed."
- The Rotary Sports Complex never gets weeded. Our family for approx 5 years used to go and weed because it looked so awful. Nobody seemed to care, so we quit. Also, it took forever for them to come fix the sprinklers when they were spraying all over our vehicles. We ended up with water spots on our vehicles and their windows. It is sad that that part is forgotten. It used to look nice there.
- please keep the pool in great shape and running, it is very important to the community. have the season start sooner, and run later, first of June and the last of August.
- Would just like to thank the city workers for taking such good care of Yantis, and Orchard parks. I see them on a regular basis, and they do a very nice job!



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# APPENDIX B

## OPEN HOUSE SUMMARIES



# MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER: # 19-124PLN                      ISSUE DATE: August 8, 2019  
 PROJECT NAME: Milton-Freewater Parks Master Plan

RECORDED BY: Steve Duh, Jean Akers  
 TO: FILE  
 PRESENT: Members of the public  
 Members of the City Council  
 City Staff  
 Project team members from Conservation Technix

**SUBJECT: Citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #1 Notes (August 7<sup>th</sup>)**

Community members were invited to the first open house for Milton-Freewater Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Tuesday, August 7, 2019 from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at Milton-Freewater Community Building. The project team prepared informational displays covering the major themes of the Master Plan. These displays included Project Overview, Parks & Outdoor Recreation, Trails & Connections, and Parks Maps.

Attendees were encouraged to talk to project team members, record their comments and complete a written comment card. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify general needs and interests for park and recreation in Milton-Freewater. Approximately 20 people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following represents a summary of the comments received during the evening meeting.

### Recreation Opportunities (dot tally)

- 10 – splash pad
- 4 – trail connections
- 2 – youth recreation programs
- 2 – playgrounds and newer equipment
- 1 – picnic shelters / gazebos
- 1 – indoor gym and sport facilities (Indoor gym at Freewater School)

### Comments to Question: What one recreational features would you add to City Park?

- A river walk
- Bike and walking paths
- Running, walking and biking trails need to be of length
- Wildflowers; flower bulbs for springtime along highway
- Pool now
- Splash pad and heat pump
- Cover pool for year-round fun and learning to swim



**Citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #1 Notes (August 7th)**

Milton-Freewater Parks Master Plan

Project Number # 19-124PLN

Page 2

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**Other Recreation Opportunities to Consider**

- Adventure/nature play
- Disc golf (2)
- Picnic shelter
- Splash pad / spray park (3)
- Pump track / bike skills
- Community garden

**Written Comments from Trails & Connections Display**

- Needs multi-use trails of various lengths
- Upgrade of river trail for total length of Milton-Freewater
- Add bike lanes on the Harris Park Road
- Add trails around Milton-Freewater
- Provide signage and wayfinding, including directions, history, geology, natural history
- Ask public to wave as they cross highway walk crossings. Have them make eye contact with all drivers for safety
- Do community/group walks

**Map Comments**

- Milton-Freewater as base for outdoor activities to the east in the Blue Mountains: hunting, fishing, hiking, biking, motorcycling, primitive camping
- Fix Milton with flowers, etc.
- Wildflowers along highway and streets if possible both north and south of town along side streets
- ? Splash pad in conjunction with linear water feature (re-use Milton ditch at Yantis Park) deliver “waste water” to golf course irrigation pond?

**Other Comments**

- Lap swimming in pool
- Eliminate sand area near pool to keep pool clean, and provide activities for all ages
- Splash pad is an excellent idea – Rotary wants to help

**Comment Card Responses**

Individual comment cards were completed by attendees, and the summary of those responses follows.

- This is in addition to City Survey. A splash pad is much needed to replace unused sand space at City Pool which tends to wind up in the pool. A working heater in our pool and staffing for the entire summer at our City Pool, please!! Continued planning for walking and bike paths.

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.

cc: Steven Patten  
File



# MEETING NOTES

PROJECT NUMBER: # 19-124PLN                      ISSUE DATE: October 28, 2019  
 PROJECT NAME: Milton-Freewater Parks Master Plan

RECORDED BY: Steve Duh, Jean Akers  
 TO: FILE  
 PRESENT: Members of the public  
               City Staff  
               Project team members from Conservation Technix

**SUBJECT: Citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #2 Notes (October 25<sup>th</sup>)**

Community members were invited to the second open house for Milton-Freewater Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Thursday, September 25, 2019 from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. at the Milton-Freewater Library. The project team prepared informational displays covering the major themes of the Master Plan. These displays included Project Overview, Survey Highlights, Parks & Outdoor Recreation, Trails & Connections, Recreation Investments, and Parks Maps.

Attendees were encouraged to talk to project team members, record their comments and complete a written comment card. City staff and project team staff engaged with participants to identify general needs and interests for park and recreation in Milton-Freewater. Based on attendee interests, a group discussion was facilitated about local interests and needs for the parks, trails and recreation system. Fourteen people attended the meeting to review materials and provide comment.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following represents a summary of the comments received during the evening meeting.

### Recreation Investments (dot tally)

- 6 – Plan and develop river trail and hillside trails
- 3 – Golf course pathway repairs
- 3 – Improve bike lanes and shared bike/car routes
- 2 – Trail wayfinding and signage
- 2 – Replace play equipment at Yantis Park
- 2 – Replace play equipment at Freewater Park
- 2 – Pickleball courts

### Group discussion comments

- A river walk
- Bike and walking paths
- Pickleball courts
- More stuff for seniors – work-out areas
- Bike path to Athena (has foothills and mountains – make the ride more interesting)
- Walking path around golf course, including trailheads and restrooms, benches, used farm equipment and interpretation
- Trails – young people in town are excited about trails and accessing the river

## Citywide Parks & Recreation Master Plan: Open House #2 Notes (October 25th)

Milton-Freewater Parks Master Plan

Project Number # 19-124PLN

Page 2

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- Rim trails – Piper ownership along the west rim; connect the pioneer cemetery with the golf course
- Tim at the Blue Mountain Land Trust could bring the Blues Crews to help weed block the rim trail
- Rail with trail to east
- East side loop; Frazier property would grant permission; at south end of loop could be a historic marker about John Fremont and Kit Carson
- Access along the river along the levee/easements; need research of easements and what it would take to establish public access easements over the canal easements; would need vegetation management to deal with star thistle and puncture vine
- Link local (city) trails to regional trail system; Extend to South Fork Walla Walla to Harris Park
- Provide information for land owners about the desirability of trails and positive impact to property values
- Use 'low hanging fruit' sections to build momentum, such as river levee to Walnut and around the school properties
- Property owners along the rim trails have voiced some willingness for trails
- Access points along west rim trail: 12th, 8th, Maple and Golf Course
- Park on south side of railroad near senior center (Railroad doesn't want to see that as a park)
- Protect rim properties from development to protect views
- Rotary to partner for splash pad, location might be Freewater Park, also maybe add trees, landscaping, and security cameras, make it more attractive
- Maintain Freewater Park and manage undesirable uses – replace basketball hoop, replace asphalt
- Take care of opportunities for little ones too
- Retrofit old tennis court for pickleball
- Add fitness stations along pathway at Yantis Park
- Play equipment at both parks (Yantis & Freewater) needs to be replaced
- Coordinate with Athena, Pendleton & tribes for trail corridor planning

### Comment Card Responses

Individual comment cards were completed by attendees.

- I absolutely want Freewater Park updated and maintained; New asphalt is needed on the basketball/tennis court.
- River trail on levees; examine US Army Corps of Engineers easement agreements
- Trails connecting around and through town; Vision – a central park where cross; Signage (Pioneer cemetery, Fremont trail, mileage); Take advantage of Blue Mountain Land Trust Blues Crews – a crew of volunteers that have experience using folks build trails. Contact Tim Copeland

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.

cc: Steven Patten  
File



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# APPENDIX C

## STAKEHOLDER MEETING NOTES







## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW NOTES

**Project Name:** Milton-Freewater Parks & Recreation Master Plan      **Project No.:** Proj-# 19-124PLN  
**Location:** Interview      **Interview Date:** August 7, 2019      **Time:** 10:00 am  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Stakeholder:** Gary Robertson, MFSD Athletics Director

**Subject:**      **Park and Recreation Opportunities**

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As part of the Park and Recreation Master Plan, public outreach was extended to targeted stakeholders who had significant involvement in the community's activities and recreation facilities. The consultant team interviewed Gary Robertson, the Athletics Director at the Milton-Freewater School District (MFSD) to collect his input on opportunities for recreation in the area and his perspective on how Milton-Freewater and MFDA might collaborate in the future.

The notes below capture the content of Gary's August 7<sup>th</sup> interview.

### District Facilities & Sport Programming Opportunities

- Grove has two new soccer fields coming online, with concessions stand and lighted scoreboard for one field.
- Milton-Freewater could start hosting soccer tournaments. Fields include Grove, Rotary Field, Shockman Field and two at the high school. Walla Walla is out of capacity. The bigger issue for hosting tournaments is the lack of hotels and eateries that are family friendly. People want comfortable places to eat and sleep. Milton-Freewater should partner with Walla Walla to figure out how to coordinate for tournaments.
- Milton-Freewater could also do softball tournaments. MFSD would need enough revenue from tournaments to cover the costs of taking care of the facilities. Fields are heavily used during the school year, but off season is prime for other uses.
- Indoor batting cages could help re-grow the baseball program, and they would be useful to out of town teams who would be here to play tournaments.
- Gary would also consider improvements to the track at Shockman for it to be an AAU track destination for qualifier meets. There are no other high-quality track facilities in the NE Oregon region (incl. Pendleton, Baker City, Ontario and La Grande).
- Gym space exists at three schools, and these are heavily programmed. Accessing gym space in the winter would be tough.



## Interview Notes (continued)

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### Other Comments

- Things for teens – They better like hanging out at Harris Park (County), fishing and hunting; otherwise, there is not much else for them to do.
- Look to Napa/Sonoma as an example. The new AVA classification will create an uptick in wine growing in the area, and the city should capitalize on that. This could help bring in resources/amenities for families and act as a multiplier.
- Consider 3:3 basketball tournaments (Peach Basket in Walla Walla, Hot Shots in Yakima)
- MFSD has a good relationship with the City.
- Rotary Field – if to be used for tournaments, the fencing would need to be replaced.

-- End of Notes --



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW NOTES

**Project Name:** Milton-Freewater Parks & Recreation Master Plan      **Project No.:** Proj-# 19-124PLN  
**Location:** Interview      **Interview Date:** August 7, 2019      **Time:** 9:00 am  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Stakeholder:** Norm Saager, MFDA

**Subject:**      **Park and Recreation Opportunities**

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As part of the Park and Recreation Master Plan, public outreach was extended to targeted stakeholders who had significant involvement in the community's activities and recreation facilities. The consultant team interviewed Norm Saager, the Director at the Milton-Freewater Downtown Alliance (MFDA) to collect his input on opportunities for recreation in the area and his perspective on how Milton-Freewater and MFDA might collaborate in the future.

The notes below capture the content of Norm's August 7<sup>th</sup> interview.

### Observations & Background

The Milton side of the community has been doing well – new school, good parks. The Freewater side is weaker; there are many out of town landlords/owners, schools are closing, and there are limited recreation options

MFDA is working on a several projects. The group is fully volunteer supported. They can use a paid director to dedicate time to the marketing and other efforts.

- Gathering Place – brick sale to close out the project
- Community courtyard concept – 100'x85' lot with plans as small venue for music, food, movies. Could have large chess tables, ping pong, tables/chairs. Activities could include movie nights, food nights, music nights. The idea is to start with a small space in the north of town to help reinvigorate the area and get people used to being there.
- Public Market concept – 3-5 years down the road, but more of a formalized public market that would run 7 days a week with vendor space, canopy, splash pad. A space for families to come together, be outside and shop. Wenatchee public market is an example.
- Thursday Rocks – music

He suggested the project team connect with staff at College Place, WA regarding their development plans for Lions Park.



## Interview Notes (continued)

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### Recreation Opportunities

- Bike rides – Milton-Freewater to Weston – pass through five different biomes/zones.
- Take advantage of the views from atop the trail by the pool; connect it
- Small ski area nearby – it would be great if they could expand for cross country skiing, summertime biking, inner tubing and other year-round activities.

### Other Ideas

- Parks are part of the bigger picture – need to tie together everything Milton-Freewater has to offer. Add signage and do marketing. (Prosser, WA as example – food trucks, wine tasting, music). Milton-Freewater could be the next Sonoma – plan for it.
- Big areas for focused marketing – trails ( hiking and biking ), pool, golf course
- The City should do more marketing. Work toward enabling things that attract people to the area. Get the people here, then the businesses will follow. For marketing, don't just pay for some modest advertising: know the audience, customize the content, etc.
- Bathrooms downtown will be important as more activities get planned for downtown

### For the future

- Grow services with residential growth.
- Plan for growth – not helter skelter:
- Focus on trail connections;
- Enable projects that create spin-off energy and synergies

-- End of Notes --





## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW NOTES

**Project Name:** Milton-Freewater Parks & Recreation Master Plan      **Project No.:** Proj-# 19-124PLN  
**Location:** Phone Interview      **Interview Date:** September 27, 2019      **Time:** 12:30 pm  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Stakeholder:** Susan Dohrmann

**Subject:** **Park and Recreation Opportunities**

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As part of the Park and Recreation Master Plan, the consultant team interviewed Susan Dohrmann, an active community member and member of the Recreation Board, to collect her input on opportunities for local recreation and her perspectives on Milton-Freewater's parks and recreation amenities and operations.

Susan has been in Milton-Freewater since the mid-1980s, and she has served on several boards including the Chamber (past president), Community Development Partnership (secretary), Round Table Committee and Recreation Board. She also serves as a Chamber Ambassador.

The notes below capture the content of Susan's September 27<sup>th</sup> interview.

### General Comments

- We are very fortunate to have sport fields, the parks and the pool
- The community as a whole is very well maintained and looks sharp wherever the City has control over the property.
- Would like to see a walking trail, especially along the river. It could go from the farmstead along the river to the top of the hill, then get on to a bike trail to connect with other places.
- Was devastated the pool didn't work this summer, especially after all the volunteer work and city staff effort to get it ready. Repairing the pool should be a priority.
- The community doesn't seem to use the bandshell at Yantis Park very much. The city needs to get organized to make activities happen and look for more ways to use that space. For example, College Place does Fridays in the Park, and Milton-Freewater can do something similar.
- Not sure of the staff loads or demands to take on activities and programming, since maintenance and landscape care take a lot of energy.
- The city is doing an amazing job with the staff they have, and to take on more projects I really feel would require more staff.
- The Recreation Board needs to have a project to focus on, otherwise attendance is low. Maybe the Board can take the lead in organizing events. They could build on the Thursday night BBQs at the pool with Friday night events at the bandshell. Getting more people to the park and enjoying the park would be great.



## Interview Notes (continued)

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- Also, could look at festivals (multi-day) with vendors, music, food, maybe volleyball or horseshoe tournaments, car show, etc.
- Need to do more promotions to let folks know what they have in the city.

-- End of Notes --



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW NOTES

**Project Name:** Milton-Freewater Parks & Recreation Master Plan      **Project No.:** Proj-# 19-124PLN  
**Location:** Interview      **Interview Date:** August 7, 2019      **Time:** 1:00 pm  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Stakeholder:** Ed Chestnut, City Councilor  
Steve Irving, City Councilor

**Subject:**      **Park and Recreation Opportunities**

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As part of the Park and Recreation Master Plan, public outreach was extended to targeted stakeholders who had unique perspectives on the community's activities and recreation facilities. The consultant team interviewed two city councilors, Ed Chestnut and Steve Irving, to collect their input on opportunities for recreation in the area and thoughts on partners or collaborations for future efforts.

The notes below capture the content of the August 7<sup>th</sup> interview.

### General comments about parks and recreation

- Most important thing is to maintain what we have. Place high value in having nice pool and good golf course – these wouldn't exist without citizen support from decades past.
- Maintenance concern over gifted projects. Sometimes community groups organize to build a project, then want to gift/deed it to the city, but then the city is strapped for the ongoing maintenance costs.
- Long ago the city had a Parks Manager position, and there were issues with the last person in that position, and some on City Council are of the opinion that one bad staffer ruined for all or that the city has gotten by without out that position filled for a long time and it's not necessary. Would like for the plan to look at information about thresholds and standards pertaining to staffing and management staffing to assess whether the city should have that position and what is common for comparable cities.
- Riverwalk Trail – Walking and biking path along the river. Plans have been considered in the past, and the city looked at grant options. The main challenge is that there are many residential parcels along the levee, and those residents are not interested in having a trail with people passing their backyards. Try to find ways to meander through the city from on highway to off highway.
- There are limited opportunities for wintertime recreation for kids. Basketball at the school. The City used to have a YMCA staffer at the park for summer programs, and the Milton-Freewater Area Foundation helped with funding through past grants.



## Interview Notes (continued)

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### Other issues impacting Milton-Freewater

- Milton-Freewater is not along the Cycle Oregon route (too close to WA state line)
- Loss of cannery industry (akin to logging town impacts)
- South Main retail was cut in half by the state highway
- Sykes building vacated – need to find new industry to take space and bring back some jobs
- Many residents are not well informed about the needs for the park system
- New residential development (50+ units) for upper-middle income families planned
- Connection/Linkage to AVA “The Rocks”
- Pea Festival, Apple Festival, Muddy Frog Water Festival – have all run their course. Hard to get volunteers to put on large events. The local trend might be moving away from large events and simply accommodating activity space (i.e. Public market concept from MFDA)

### Project ideas & considerations for new Plan

- Reinforce the side slope of the golf course – at the edge of the #10 green, there is sloughing
- Trail and golf cart path repairs / maintenance
- Golf course has 20-year old irrigation system that needs replacement
- Pickleball – consider re-doing the courts at N Main (near church) to accommodate pickleball
- Upgrade play equipment at Yantis Park (there is some school district donated play equipment in storage at City facility and can be installed)
- Explore the idea of a Parks and Recreation District
- Riverwalk (Pendleton example – their Riverwalk is 1-2 blocks from a main thoroughfare); in Milton-Freewater, it is more like 6-8 blocks away from the highway – visibility and traffic is issue

-- End of Notes --



## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW NOTES

**Project Name:** Milton-Freewater Parks & Recreation Master Plan      **Project No.:** Proj-# 19-124PLN  
**Location:** Phone Interview      **Interview Date:** September 23, 2019      **Time:** 11:30 am  
**Notes by:** Steve Duh  
**Stakeholder:** Linda Hall, City Manager

**Subject:**      **Park and Recreation Opportunities**

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As part of the Park and Recreation Master Plan, the consultant team interviewed Linda Hall, City Manager to collect her input on opportunities for local recreation and her perspectives on Milton-Freewater's parks and recreation amenities and operations.

The notes below capture the content of Linda's September 23<sup>rd</sup> interview.

### General Comments

- Milton-Freewater parks and recreation facilities have great bones, but they are starting to age. The City needs to find ways to keep up with funding to help improve and repair assets on a more regular basis. The recent passage of the local option tax for parks and recreation has been a good step forward.
- Regulations and design requirements have changed over the years, meaning it continues to be more costly to install new features and repair/replace existing ones.
- For the new Parks & Recreation Master Plan, am depending on the Plan to set firm priorities and define where the City should concentrate its efforts when it has the funding to make improvements. The Plan will be a tool to position the City for future grant pursuits.
- The City has a good rapport with MFSD. The school district uses city facilities a lot (baseball, tennis, PE programs, classes), and about 90% of the usage at the baseball field and tennis courts is from the school district.
- The City has struggled with having past volunteer enhancement projects completed and gifted to the city without the City having capacity to absorb the additional maintenance obligations. The Rotary is now energized to move forward with helping fund and install a splash pad, and it has been great to have early discussions with Rotary about maintenance. The Rotary board is also looking to establish a dedicated endowment to fund ongoing maintenance for the splash pad. The new Plan should include language about partner contributions and coordination with the City.
- Consideration will be given to re-instating the Parks & Recreation Director position in the future; it is a goal of Council.
- Regarding recreation programs, it might not be the City's role to lead programs or program coordination going forward. Challenges exist around securing and paying for additional staff positions, and it has even been more challenging to fill part-time or seasonal positions (i.e., pool attendants).





## Interview Notes (continued)

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- It would be good to promote sport fields and options for tournaments to capitalize of local investments for recreation; Milton-Freewater could use these amenities to capture tourist dollars in support of hotels, RV sites, restaurants.
- The most common request for recreation is the need for more walking trails in the community. Others have voiced interest in a covered, year-round pool, but the City does not have the resources for that project idea.

-- End of Notes --

# APPENDIX D

## RECREATION TRENDS



The following summaries from recognized park and recreation resources provide background on national, state and local trends that may reflect potential recreational activities and facilities for future consideration in Milton-Freewater's park system. Examining current recreation trends can help inform potential park and recreation improvements and opportunities that may enhance the community and create a more vibrant parks system as it moves into the future.

## **NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION (NRPA) PRORAGIS**

In 2013, the National Recreation and Parks 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.

## **THE STATE OF THE INDUSTRY REPORT**

Recreation Management magazine's 2017 State of the Industry Report summarizes the opinions and information Recreation Management magazine's 2018 State of the Managed Recreation Industry report summarizes the opinions and information provided by a

wide range of professionals (with an average 21.3 years of experience) working in the recreation, sports and fitness facilities. The 2018 report indicated that many (86.6%) recreation, sports and fitness facility owners form partnerships with other organizations, as a means of expanding their reach, offering additional programming opportunities or as a way to share resources and increase funding. Local schools are shown as the most common partner (61.3%) for all facility types. Parks and recreation organizations (95.8%) were the most likely to report that they had partnered with outside organizations.

Survey respondents from urban communities are more optimistic about positive changes to revenues, while rural respondents are not. In 2018, 41 percent of respondents said that revenues increased from 2016 to 2017, while 11.1% reported a decrease. Looking forward from 2018 to 2019, 50 percent of urban respondents expect revenues to increase, and just 4.3 percent project a decrease.

In last year's report, parks respondents had reported increases in their average operating expenditures with operating costs that grew by 58% between fiscal 2013 and fiscal 2016. After a significant increase in operating expenditures in fiscal 2016, costs have fallen again in 2017, and are expected to rise more steadily over the next two years, though not to the high reported last year. From 2017 to 2018, respondents said they expect their operating expenses to increase by 1.7 percent, followed by a further increase of 4.9 percent projected in fiscal 2019. The greatest decrease (16.8%) in average operating costs from 2016 to 2017 was reported by parks and recreation respondents.

Relative to costs and revenues, few facilities covered by the survey reported that they cover more than 90 percent of their operating costs via revenue. The percentage recovered varied with type of organization with the average percentage of costs recovered for all respondents hovering near 50%. For parks, the cost recovery rate increased from 43.4 % to 43.9 % from 2017 to 2018.

Over the past decades, public parks and recreation departments and districts have faced a growing expectation that facilities can be run like businesses. Many local facilities are expected to recover much of their operating costs via revenues. While this is the business model for for-profit facilities like health clubs, it's a relatively recent development for publicly owned facilities, which have typically been subsidized via tax dollars and other funding sources. Most recreation providers (80.5%) have been taking actions to reduce expenditures. Cost recovery actions typically involve reduction in expenses with improving energy efficiency as the most common action (48.3% of respondents). Increased fees and staffing cost reductions and putting off construction or renovation plans were reported as other common methods for reducing operating costs.

Utilization of recreation facilities has shown steady increases by the majority of respondents. Looking forward, more than half of respondents expect to see further increases in the number of people using their facilities. The expectation is that this trend will continue in the next two years.

This year saw a fairly significant drop in the average number of people employed at the organizations covered by the survey. After several years of steady growth, to a high of 147.6 employees in 2017, the average number of employees dropped by 21.7% in the past year. On average, this year's survey respondents employ 28.2 full-time workers, 39.8 part-



time employees, 44.8 seasonal workers, 43.2 volunteers, and 9.1 employees of some other designation. In 2018, more than three-quarters (77.7%) of respondents said they plan to maintain existing staff levels, up from 57% in 2017.

A majority of respondents (83.2%) require certifications for some of their staff members to help measure and verify specific types of professional knowledge and skill. Of those respondents that require certification, the most common types of certification required included CPR/AED/First Aid (required by 90.3% of those who said they require some staff members to be certified), background checks (83.4%), and lifeguard certification (56.3%).

Over the past five years, the percentage of respondents who indicate that they have plans for construction, whether new facilities or additions or renovations to their existing facilities, has grown steadily, from 62.7 percent in 2013 to 69.5 percent in 2018. Construction plans of all kinds are most common among camps and parks. For camp respondents, 47.1 percent are planning new facilities, 45.9 percent are planning additions, and 60 percent are planning renovations. They were followed by parks, 33.9 percent of whom have plans for new construction, 32.6 percent for additions, and 57.7 percent for renovations.

Parks saw modest increases to their construction budgets from 2016 to 2018, with respondents expecting to see increases of 13.5%. Public organizations saw the sharpest increase to their construction budgets from 2016 to 2018, with an increase of 28.7 percent, from \$3,877,000 in 2016 to \$4,990,000 in 2018.

Parks respondents were more likely than other facility types to include: playgrounds (86.7% of parks respondents had playgrounds); park shelters (80%); park restroom structures (75.6%); outdoor sports courts (74.4%); community and multipurpose centers (58.4%); bike trails (46.4%); skate parks (41.1%); dog parks (38.8%); community gardens (33.7%); disc golf courses (32.9%); fitness trails and outdoor fitness equipment (32.6%); splash play areas (30.7%); golf courses (19.9%); ice rinks (17.6%); waterparks (16.8%); and bike/BMX parks (11.4%).

Park respondents (56.2%) reported plans to add features at their facilities. The top 10 planned features for all facility types include:

1. Splash play areas (23.6%)
2. Synthetic turf sports fields (17%)
3. Fitness trails and/or outdoor fitness equipment (16.4%)
4. Fitness centers (16.3%)
5. Walking/hiking trails (15.5%)
6. Playgrounds (15.2%)
7. Park shelters (13.6%)
8. Dog parks (13.5%)
9. Exercise studios (12.9%)
10. Disc golf courses 12.9%)

Respondents from community centers, parks and health clubs were the most likely to



report that they had plans to add programs at their facilities over the next few years. The 10 most commonly planned program additions in 2018 include:

1. Fitness programs (planned by 25.9% of those who will be adding programs)
2. Educational programs (25.7%)
3. Mind-body balance programs (23.3%)
4. Teen programs (22.7%)
5. Environmental education (20.7%)
6. Day camps and summer camps (20.3%)
7. Special needs programs (18.9%)
8. Adult sports teams (18.5%)
9. Holidays and other special events (18.3%)
10. Individual sports activities (17.5%)

While in general, overall budgets are the top concern for most respondents, equipment and facility maintenance lead the issues of budgetary challenges with staffing as the second most common concern. Marketing, safety/risk management, and creating new and innovative programming are continuing challenges for facility managers. Current concerns on the rise in 2018 include older adult fitness and wellness, legislative issues, environmental and conservation issues and social equity and access.

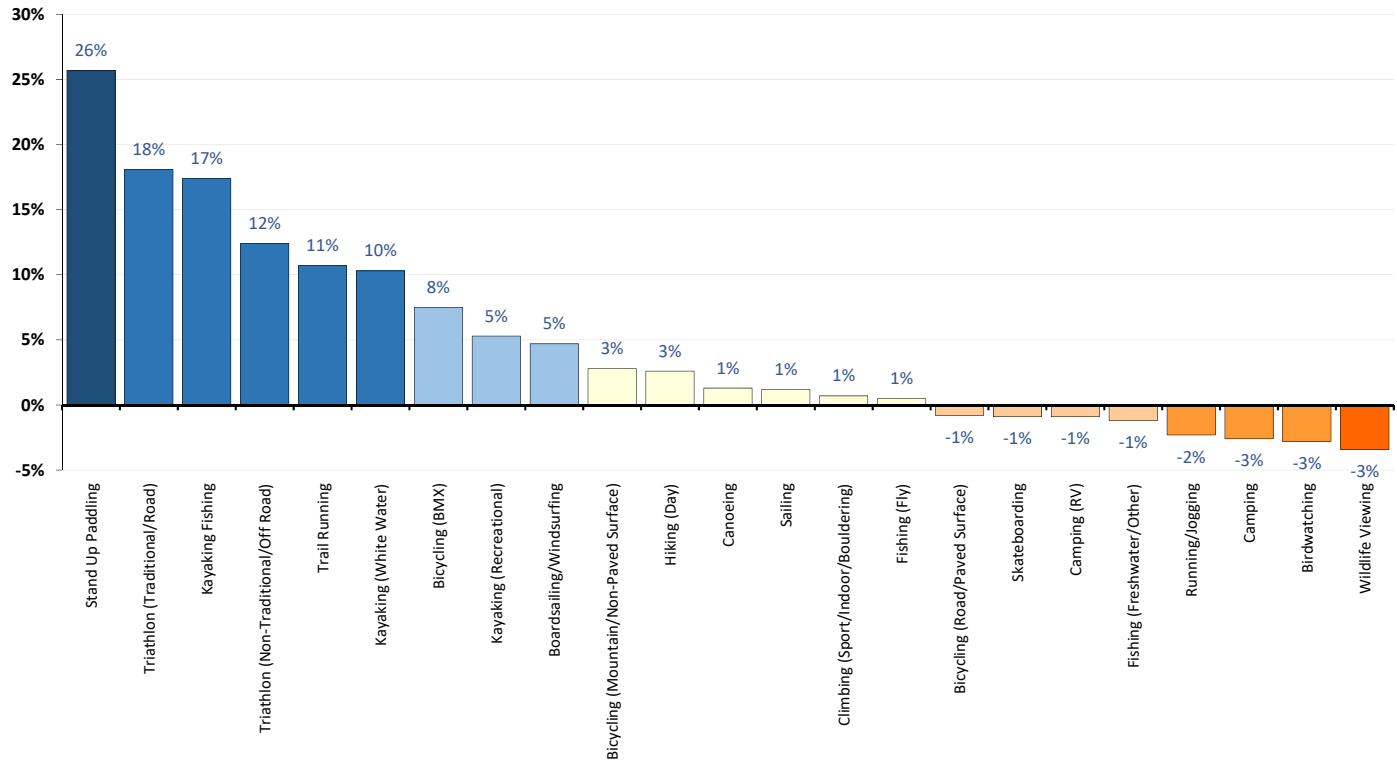
## THE OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION REPORT

According to 2018 Outdoor Participation Report, published by the Outdoor Foundation in Boulder, Colorado, more than 146.1 million Americans (49%) participated in an outdoor activity at least once in 2017. These outdoor participants went on a total of 10.9 billion outdoor outings, a decrease from 11.0 billion in 2016. Participation in outdoor recreation, team sports and indoor fitness activities vary by an individual's age. Recent trend highlights include the following:

- Twenty percent (20%) of outdoor enthusiasts participated in outdoor activities at least twice per week.
- Running, including jogging and trail running, was the most popular activity among Americans when measured by number of participants and by number of total annual outings.
- Nineteen percent (19%) outdoor participants lived in the South Atlantic region of the US, making its population the most active in outdoor activities.
- Walking for fitness was the most popular crossover activity where 45.8% of all outdoor participants also walked.
- Data shows that adults who were introduced to the outdoors as children were more likely to participate in outdoor activities during adulthood than those who were not exposed to the outdoors as children.
- The biggest motivator for outdoor participation was getting exercise.



Figure D1. 3-Year Change in Outdoor Recreation Participation of Youth (6-24)



Favorite activities and participation rates range with demographics. In 2017, the average participant had 15 years of experience enjoying outdoor recreation. The data shows, as would be expected, that the amount of experience increased as the participant aged. Those ages 45 and up averaged 25 years as outdoor participants.

## SPORTS, FITNESS & LEISURE ACTIVITIES TOPLINE PARTICIPATION REPORT

Prepared by a partnership of the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) and the Physical Activity Council (PAC), this 2018 participation report establishes levels of activity and identifies key trends in sports, fitness, and recreation in the US. The largest focus of activities continues to be toward fitness sports. Winter sports gained the most of all categories, increasing 2% over the last year. The interest in activities has started moving toward outdoor recreation. The top aspirational activity for all age segments was outside, ranging from camping to biking to birdwatching.

Fitness sports/activities continues to have the highest participation rates; having 64% of the US population ages 6 and over engaging in activities like running/jogging, high intensity/impact training, row machines, and swimming. Outdoor activities remained second but was flat from 2016; seeing a increase in day hiking and backpacking, but lost participants in canoeing and adventure racing.

While age clearly affects how often someone participates, what they do can also be age

dependent. Young kids, ages 6 to 17, who tend to be more active overall, focus on team sports and outdoor activities. While Boomers prefer fitness activities, especially low impact such as aquatic exercise, cycling, and walking. Millennials are more likely than the other generations to participate in water sports, such as stand up paddling, boardsailing, and surfing.

Inactivity rates remain higher than 10 years ago despite the promotion of the benefits of an active lifestyle. Over a quarter of the US population (ages 6 and over) did not participate in even the lowest caloric activity in 2017. Trends continue to show how income affects inactivity. Generally, the affluent are getting more active while the less affluent are becoming more inactive.

Despite aspirations to become more active, the biggest influence on engaging more participants is having a friend or family member to take part in the physical activity. First time participation depends on who you are doing it with more than if you have the time.

## **NATIONAL SURVEY ON RECREATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

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 NSRE core focus is on outdoor activity participation and personal demographics. The most recent 2012 NSRE reports 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 percent. 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 (an increase in 3.1% participation rate) and the number of days of participation. American's 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.

## **AMERICANS ENGAGEMENT WITH PARKS SURVEY (FROM NRPA)**

The vast offerings of the local park and recreation agency improve the lives of people throughout our nation. From the fact that Americans on average visit their local park and recreation facilities approximately 29 times a year to the majority of Americans identifying parks and recreation as an important service provided by their local government, the general public is an untapped advocate to spread the public park and recreation story.

This annual study probes Americans' usage of parks, the key reasons that drive their use and the greatest challenges preventing greater usage. Each year, the study probes the importance of public parks in Americans' lives, including how parks compare to other services and offerings of local governments. The survey of 1,000 American adults looks at



frequency and drivers of parks/recreation facilities visits and the barriers to that prevent greater enjoyment. Survey respondents also indicate the importance of park and recreation plays in their decisions at the voting booth and their level of support for greater funding.

Key Findings:

- Americans on average visit their local park and recreation facilities approximately 29 times a year, with 3 in 5 saying their most recent visit was within the past month.
- Three in four Americans agree that the NRPA Three Pillars of Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity represent what they see as the priorities for their local park and recreation agency.
- Nine in 10 Americans agree that parks and recreation are important services delivered by their local government.
- Seven in 10 Americans say they are more likely to vote for local politicians who make park and recreation funding a priority.
- Three-quarters of Americans support increased local government spending for park and recreation agencies with solid support for a nearly 30 percent increase in funding for local park and recreation agencies.

## OREGON STATE OUTDOOR RECREATION TRENDS

The 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), entitled Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: Responding to Demographic and Societal Change, constitutes Oregon’s basic five-year plan for outdoor recreation. The plan addresses five important demographic and societal changes facing outdoor recreation providers in the coming years including:

1. An aging population;
2. An increasingly diverse population;
3. Lack of youth engagement in outdoor recreation;
4. An underserved low-income population; and
5. The health benefits of physical activity.

As part of developing the SCORP, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) conducted a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their 2017 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, as well as their opinions about park and recreation management. This data can help local park and recreation providers better understand public opinions and the preferences of outdoor recreation participants.

Fifty six (56) recreation activities were identified as important recreation activity types. These activities were grouped into eight (8) categories including Non-motorized Trail or Related Activities, Motorized Activities, Non-motorized Snow Activities, Outdoor Leisure and Sporting Activities, Nature Study Activities, Vehicle-based Camping Activities, Hunting and Fishing Activities, and Non-motorized Water-based and Beach Activities. The top three activities with the largest annual user occasions include Walking on local streets / sidewalks (313 million); Walking on local trails / paths (113 million); and Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas (78 million).

Figure D-2. User Occasions for Oregon Residents in Outdoor Activities

Activity	Total (millions)
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	313
Walking on local trails / paths	113
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	93
Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas	78
Taking your children or grandchildren to a playground	57
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	55
Bicycling on roads, streets / sidewalks	51
Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	44
Jogging / running on streets / sidewalks	37
Bicycling on paved trails	26

Figure D-3. Participation Rates for Oregon Residents in Outdoor Activities

Activity	Percent
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	83%
Walking on local trails / paths	74%
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	59%
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	59%
Beach activities – ocean	57%
Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	55%
Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, festivals	50%
Visiting historic sites / history-themed parks	49%
Picnicking	49%
Beach activities - lakes, reservoirs, rivers	40%

Figure D-4. Frequency per Household for Oregon Residents in Outdoor Activities

Activity	Times / Year
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	204
Walking on local trails / paths	75
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	60
Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas	51
Taking your children or grandchildren to a playground	37
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	36
Bicycling on roads, streets / sidewalks	34
Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	29
Jogging / running on streets / sidewalks	24
Bicycling on paved trails	17

The survey also asked about priorities for local community needs revealing the top six (6) local (close to home) needs as

- Cleaner restrooms.
- Soft surface walking trails.
- More restrooms.





- Playgrounds with natural materials (Natural Play Areas).
- Nature and wildlife viewing areas.
- Public access to waterways.

When asked about recreation priorities for dispersed recreation opportunities, survey respondents indicated their top priorities as

- Cleaner restrooms.
- Soft surface walking trails.
- Nature and wildlife viewing areas.
- More restrooms.
- Public access to waterways.
- More places and benches to observe nature and others.
- Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups.

Outdoor recreation participants were asked what their local parks and recreation agency could do to improve/increase participation and value. Across the state, providing more free-of-charge recreation opportunities was the most important action, with ensuring clean and well-maintained parks and facilities, and developing walking / hiking trails closer to home also high in importance.

OPRD also conducted a statewide survey of Oregon public recreation providers to determine outdoor recreation funding priorities for OPRD grant programs and identify top management issues and challenges faced by public recreation providers. The survey showed that across the state within urban growth boundaries, the most important funding need was for community trail systems; restrooms; children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses; picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups; trails connected to public lands; and picnicking/day use and facilities. In rural areas across the state, the most important funding need was for restrooms, RV/ trailer campgrounds and facilities, day-use hiking trails, connecting trails into large trail systems, interpretive displays, and tent campgrounds and facilities (car camping). Creating new park and recreation facilities was the greatest maintenance/management challenge for urban and urban growth areas. Other pressing issues were maintaining existing local parks in the community, addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) issues, and providing safe walking and biking routes to parks and trails. More rural, dispersed setting park providers faced challenges maintaining existing park and recreation facilities. Adequate funding was lacking by most park and recreation providers for renovation, rehabilitation; updating facilities for universal access (ADA compliance); growing homeless population pressures, responding to new recreation trends and technology. In many cases, park and recreation providers were concerned that inadequate funding would increase safety and security issues associated with public use of park and recreation facilities and services.

# APPENDIX E

## IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS



The City of Milton-Freewater possesses a range of local funding tools that could be accessed for the benefit of growing, developing and maintaining its parks and recreation system. The sources listed below represent likely potential sources, but some also may be dedicated for 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 parks and recreation programs.

## LOCAL FUNDING OPTIONS

### General Obligation Bond

These are voter-approved bonds with the authority to levy an assessment on real and personal property. The money can only be used for capital construction and improvements, but not for maintenance. This property tax is levied for a specified period of time (usually 15-20 years). Passage requires a simple majority in November and May elections, unless during a special election, in which case a double majority (a majority of registered voters must vote and a majority of those voting must approve the measure) is required.

### Park Utility Fee

A park utility fee provides dedicated funds to help offset the cost of park maintenance and could free up general fund dollars for other capital project uses. Most city residents pay water and sewer utility fees. Park utility fees apply the same concepts to city parks, and a fee is assessed to all businesses and households. The monthly fee would be paid upon connection to the water and sewer system. Milton-Freewater does not assess a park utility fee.

### System Development Charges

Milton-Freewater currently assesses system development charges (SDC) for water and sewer. SDCs can be charged for new residential development to help finance the demand for park facilities created by the new growth.

## **Fuel Tax**

Oregon gas taxes are collected as a fixed amount per gallon of gasoline purchased. The Oregon Highway Trust Fund collects fuel taxes, and a portion is paid to cities annually on a per-capita basis. By statute, revenues can be used for any road-related purpose, which may include sidewalk repairs, ADA upgrades, bike routes and other transportation-oriented park and trail enhancements.

# **FEDERAL / STATE GRANTS & 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 community resource 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.

## **Urban and Community Forestry Small Projects and Scholarship Fund - Oregon Department of Forestry**

The purpose of the Oregon Department of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program's Small Projects and Scholarship Fund (UCF-SPSF) is to cover the small, yet sometimes prohibitive, administrative and material expenses directly related to community forestry projects encountered by smaller volunteer groups and cities across Oregon. Applications must be received by the end of each quarter for consideration.

## **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. Both are 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.

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.

## **Local Government Grant - Oregon Parks and Recreation**

Local government agencies who are obligated by state law to provide public recreation facilities are eligible for OPR's Local Government Grants, and these are limited to public outdoor park and recreation areas and facilities. Eligible projects involve land acquisition, development and major rehabilitation projects that are consistent with the outdoor recreation goals and objectives contained in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

## **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant - Oregon Parks and Recreation**

LWCF grants are available through OPR to either acquire land for public outdoor recreation or to develop basic outdoor recreation facilities. Projects must be consistent with the outdoor recreation goals and objectives stated in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and elements of local comprehensive land use plans and park master plans. A 50% match is required from all successful applicants of non-federal funds, in-kind services and/or materials.

## **Recreational Trails Program Grant - Oregon Parks and Recreation**

Recreational Trails Grants are national grants administered by OPRD for recreational trail-related projects, such as hiking, running, bicycling, off-road motorcycling, and all-terrain vehicle riding. Yearly grants are awarded based on available federal funding. RTP funding is primarily for recreational trail projects, rather than utilitarian transportation-based projects. Funding is divided into 30% motorized trail use, 30% non-motorized trail use and 40% diverse trail use. A 20% minimum project match is required.

## **Bicycle & Pedestrian Program Grants - Oregon Department of Transportation**

The Pedestrian and Bicycle Grant Program is a competitive grant program that provides approximately \$5 million dollars every two years to Oregon cities, counties and ODOT regional and district offices for design and construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Proposed facilities must be within public rights-of-way. Grants are awarded by the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Project types include sidewalk infill, ADA upgrades, street crossings, intersection improvements, minor widening for bike lanes.



## **Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) - Oregon Department of Transportation**

The FAST Act, which replaced Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) in 2015, provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation projects, meaning states and local governments can move forward with critical transportation projects with the confidence that they will have a Federal partner over the long term (at least five years). The law makes changes and reforms to many Federal transportation programs, including streamlining the approval processes for new transportation projects and providing new safety tools.

## **Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Grant**

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board focuses on projects that approach natural resources management from a whole-watershed perspective. OWEB encourages projects that foster interagency cooperation, include other sources of funding, provide for local stakeholder involvement, include youth and volunteers and promote learning about watershed concepts. There are five general categories of projects eligible for OWEB funding: watershed management (restoration and acquisition), resource monitoring and assessment, watershed education and outreach, Watershed council support and technical assistance.

# **OTHER METHODS & FUNDING SOURCES**

## **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.

### **Meyer Memorial Trust**

The Meyer Memorial Trust seeks opportunities to make program-related investments in Oregon and Clark County, WA. General Purpose Grants support projects related to arts and humanities, education, health, social welfare, and a variety of other activities. Proposals may be submitted at any time under this program, and there is no limitation on the size or duration of these grants.



### Wells Fargo: National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF): Environmental Grant Program

This program builds partnerships with local environmental nonprofits that have projects that focus on strengthening the resiliency of our communities. This includes efforts focused on climate mitigation and adaptation, sustainable agriculture and forestry, water quality, land conservation, and support for building healthy urban ecosystems. The programs operate as a closed RFP, invitation-only process where Wells Fargo engages specific organizations whose work aligns with their giving priorities.

### Kaiser Permanente Healthy Environments - Community Benefit Programs

These programs work with community-based organizations, public agencies, businesses and residents to translate their vision for healthy communities into visible, concrete changes — and ultimately healthier neighborhoods. Kaiser has several assistance programs that encompass support for Environmental Stewardship, Community Health Initiatives, Every Body Walk!, and Physical Activity Guiding Principles.

## 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, school districts, other municipalities and utility providers.

# 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.

## 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 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 (or private organization) that permanently limits uses of the land in order to conserve a portion of the property for public use or protection. 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. 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. The preservation and protection of habitat or resources lands may best be coordinated with the local land trust or conservancy, since that organization will likely have staff resources, a systematic planning approach and access to non-governmental funds to facilitate aggressive or large scale transactions.



## 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](http://www.irc.gov) for more details).

## 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. The Blue Mountain Land Trust is the local land trust serving the Milton-Freewater area. Other national organizations with local representation include the Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land and the Wetlands Conservancy.

# APPENDIX F

## SITE ACQUISITION & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES





## ACQUISITION GUIDELINES

Planning and land acquisition for future parks is a recognized component in land use and urban growth management, since the provision of parks and open space is considered essential to the livability of urban areas. For the recreation resource planner, the land acquisition process is an important task for ensuring the availability of future recreation resources for the majority of the community. The established planning goals for a community's comprehensive plan recognize the development of parks and retention of open space with conservation values as a tool for managing the effects of increased density and fostering livability.

### Distribution Equity (location/gaps)

Equitable distribution of public park facilities is a community goal (articulated in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan). GIS mapping and analysis documented and tracked the existing public park inventory and areas where public parks are lacking in search for park land acquisition targets. Park acquisition should be prioritized in underserved areas where households are more than ½-mile from a developed park.

### Specific Site Suitability for Developed/Active Parks

While existing neighborhood parks may range from 0.5 to 4 acres in size, some basic location and land characteristics influence how accessible, "developable" and convenient a potential site might be for a future public park. Evaluating a potential land parcel should include consideration of the following property features:

- **Access and visibility to the property.** An adequate amount of public right-of-way is needed to allow for creating bike/pedestrian pathways, at a minimum, and either on-street parking or a parking lot for park visitors who must drive a vehicle.
- **Existing publicly owned lands, easements and right-of-way.** Are there existing lands under public ownership that could be converted to public park use? What other public amenities are proximate and complementary to a future park development (e.g., schools, police stations, etc.)?
- **Connectivity to trails, schools, parks, neighborhoods and connectivity of the trail links.** Connections to and from related land uses can add value to a potential park location.

- **Environmental constraints, field assessment (does not include Environmental Assessment level detail), regulatory and permitting requirements and GIS data for critical areas.** Sensitive environmental lands should be protected, but often they are not the best sites for development of recreational amenities for public parks. Protected and conserved lands can provide complementary value to public parks, while the public park land can create a buffer for the conserved land.
- **Topography.** Existing landforms, whether flat or hilly, will influence the park's design and best fit for provision of recreational facilities.
- **Technical analysis of park standards and development costs should be evaluated to help provide realistic site development costs.** For example, existing road improvements within the public right-of-way or lack of public water and sewer may trigger additional park development costs.

Within identified neighborhoods that may lack or have limited access to public parks, potential properties should be evaluated for suitable site conditions for the development of future recreational amenities and/or access to natural resources and water.

#### Neighborhood/Community Park Site Suitability Criteria:

- Access / visibility
- Parcel size / configuration
- Contiguous public land / connectivity
- Extent of sensitive areas
- Cost factors (acquisition, development & maintenance.)
- Compatibility with surrounding uses
- Vacant land preference

#### Trail Site Suitability Criteria:

- Development feasibility
- Continuity / connectivity (“safe routes”)
- Natural, cultural, historic value
- Public ROW access
- Land costs / value

#### Natural Areas Site Suitability Criteria:

- Ecological, cultural, historic value
- Continuity / connectivity
- Public right of way access
- Development pressure (threat of conversion)
- Acquisition costs, donations, grants, third-party support (i.e., land trusts), etc.



## Site-Specific Concerns

Once a targeted park land acquisition has been identified and evaluated with consideration to its potential suitability as a future public park, more specific assessments should be conducted to ensure a measure of known development variables for future park use.

- A boundary survey and review of the title is important to identify an existing encroachments, encumbrances or entitlements that need to be addressed or corrected prior to closing.
- Environmental constraints, such as wetlands, waterways, other sensitive habitats and any associated buffers, should be identified to determine their impact on developable park spaces.
- An environmental site assessment should be conducted to identify environmental conditions that could have resulted from a past release of hazardous substances and determine any potential mitigation requirements to protect public health. Additionally, environmental law typically leaves the burden of responsibility on the property owner, so conducting an environmental site assessment is important to protect the City's liability.
- An archeological assessment to review potential cultural resources may also help bring to light future park development costs and variables.
- Any underground tanks, wells, septic systems and existing structures should be evaluated for the need to remove, decommission, or demolish after closing of land sale.

## Design Standards for Environmental Site Assessment

Considering a current use of a property is typically not sufficient for evaluating potential environmental concerns. For example, a vacant lot may previously have been used for agricultural purposes and may contain pesticide residues in the soil, or a current retail building formerly may have housed an auto repair business with underground tanks. Additionally, properties that are considered low-risk, such as a residence, could have a leaking underground heating oil tank or other concerns. Therefore, conducting an environmental site assessment is an important step in purchasing and managing property.

Prior to purchasing or accepting ownership of a property, the City should conduct an environmental site assessment to determine if contaminated soil, sediment or groundwater could be present. This process typically begins with a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) per ASTM E1527-13 to identify environmental conditions or other business risk issues that could impact site development, pose a liability to the City, or present a risk to human health or the environment. Depending on the results of the Phase I ESA, a subsequent Phase II ESA may be warranted to sample and test soil, sediment or groundwater for the presence of contamination.

For property currently owned by the City, conducting an ESA prior to redevelopment can help to identify issues that could affect building design or result in construction delays.

For property that will be leased by the City, conducting a baseline environmental assessment may be warranted to establish initial conditions prior to the City occupying the site.

## PRESERVING FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

Public outdoor park and recreation areas and facilities are eligible for funding assistance through the Oregon Local Government Grant Program (LGGP). Land acquisition projects must be consistent with the outdoor recreation goals and objectives contained in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) or the recreation elements of local comprehensive plans and local master plans. Acquisition of land and waters for public outdoor recreation areas and facilities, including new areas or additions to existing parks, forests, wildlife areas, open spaces and other similar areas dedicated to outdoor recreation are eligible for assistance through the LGGP. To be eligible in the LGGP, the acquisition procedures set forth by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) should be closely followed. The grant funding program requires a percent match based on the population size of the eligible jurisdiction.

## DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

With planned park upgrades and the potential for development of park acquisitions, Milton-Freewater would benefit from park design and facility standards that help unify the system's amenities, operations and maintenance going into the future. Standards can begin with the adoption of typical bench details and expand to incorporate graphic sign styles, materials, colors and specific site furnishings. With the desire for Milton-Freewater to create a unifying identity and enhance park maintenance efficiencies, guidelines for park standards should be planned, endorsed and implemented.

If the City expands into its urban growth boundary, the acquisition and development of additional parks will be necessary. There may be opportunities to partner with residential development projects for providing new parks to be dedicated to the City upon completion. The establishment of park design and development standards with predetermined requirements for consistency and quality of site amenities would ensure that new parks could readily fit within on-going park operations and maintenance.

All newly developed parks and trails shall adhere to the Final Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas as set forth by the United States Access Board.

### Design Standards for Parks

Public park space should be clearly identifiable and provide a safe and secure environment for outdoor recreation and enjoyment. To help communicate the identity, amenities and uses within the park, some unified design standards should be applied. These standards are intended to help with public access, communication of safety and appropriate behaviors, and efficiency in operations and maintenance without creating a park system of identical "cloned" urban parks. Standardizing the designs for park signage, benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, lighting, bollards, irrigation systems and fencing can allow for easier and less expensive procurement, installation, maintenance and replacement. The visual character of unified park amenities can quickly convey to the park visitor that the space is part of an overall system of public spaces where they are welcome.



While sharing standard site furnishings and signage styles helps unify the system identity, each individual park should have its own unique character. The shape and size of the land, the layout of circulation and location of key features, the styles, types and colors of play equipment, the architecture of restrooms, picnic and other park structures should be specific to that park. Even though each park contains some standardized site furnishings, each park site master plan design should strive to create a sense of place that highlights the character of that park in its local context and for its primary purpose (such as passive park with natural area or active sports-oriented facility).

The following tables highlight the range and considerations of various amenities that may be provided within urban parks (community and neighborhood parks) and can provide guidance for negotiating facility development opportunities in situations when private entities propose park development in-lieu of payment or for other, alternative arrangements, such as density bonuses.

Figure F1. Minimum Site Design Considerations for Neighborhood Parks

Amenity	Considerations - where feasible
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum of 4,000 sq.ft. play area</li> <li>▪ Equipment should be suitable for and developmentally-appropriate for toddlers and elementary school-aged children</li> <li>▪ Playground should be ADA Accessible and play equipment should be ADA Compliant</li> </ul>
Loop Walking Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum 8' wide</li> <li>▪ ADA-compliant surface to accessible elements (benches, tables, play area)</li> <li>▪ Pathway slope not to exceed 5% grade or no more than 8% for more than 30 lineal feet without switchbacks or railings</li> </ul>
Picnic Tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum of 2, Use standard ADA compliant picnic table style</li> </ul>
Drinking Fountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide ADA-compliant standard fixture</li> </ul>
Benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum of 2, Use standard ADA compliant bench style</li> </ul>
Open Turf Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide at least 15% of total lawn area with irrigation, preferably adjacent to the play area</li> </ul>
Trees & Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide shade for portion of playground area</li> <li>▪ New trees and shrubs should be irrigated for a minimum of 2 years until established</li> </ul>
Bicycle Racks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum of 2, with capacity to serve 4 bikes</li> </ul>
Trash Receptacles & Dog Waste Disposal Stations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum of 1</li> </ul>

For community parks, any or all of the following outdoor recreation features should be considered in addition to the same amenities provided in neighborhood parks.



Figure F2. Minimum Site Design Considerations for Community Parks

Amenity	Considerations - where feasible
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Based on types of amenities and their parking quantity requirements</li> <li>▪ Include requisite number of handicapped parking stalls at appropriate locations</li> <li>▪ Consider need for parking provision at multiple access points, where appropriate</li> </ul>
Loop Walking Path	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide a perimeter trail in addition to pathways accessing all major park amenities</li> </ul>
Multiple Access Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide connectivity to neighborhoods and public rights-of-way</li> </ul>
Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide ADA-compliant standardized design facilities</li> </ul>
Picnic Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide minimum of 1 group picnic shelter</li> </ul>
Sports fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Type and quantity dependent on available space and current public demand for each sport facility</li> </ul>
Sports courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Type and quantity dependent on available space and current public demand for each sport facility</li> </ul>
Tree Canopy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Target a 25-45% tree canopy dependent on other park amenities and feasibility</li> </ul>
Open Grass Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Open play area with sun exposure</li> <li>▪ Minimum target of 1 acre</li> </ul>
Natural Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Based on existing and restored environmental characteristics</li> </ul>
Off-leash Dog Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum target of 1 acre</li> <li>▪ Fenced enclosure with double-gate access</li> <li>▪ Provide doggy waste dispenser and trash receptacle at entrance</li> </ul>

Figure F3. Design Considerations for Other Park Amenities

Amenity	Considerations
Picnic Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum of 400 sq.ft.</li> </ul>
Sport field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Practice level for youth soccer, T-ball, baseball and/or softball</li> </ul>
Sport court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ½ court basketball court</li> </ul>
Tennis court	
Alternative recreation court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Such as bocce ball, pickleball, horseshoes, lawn bowling</li> </ul>
Skate spot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 600 to 1,200 sq.ft. with small ramps, bowls or features for beginners</li> </ul>
Disc golf course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Minimum 9 baskets</li> </ul>
Sprayground	
Natural area	
Water feature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Such as a passive water-based amenity that provides a visual focal point, i.e. fountains, ponds, or waterfalls</li> </ul>
Restroom	
Drinking fountain	
Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Automatic Irrigation, Electricity, Water</li> </ul>
Parking	



## Design Standards for Open Space and Natural Areas

Open space and natural areas are primarily intended to conserve places with ecological sensitivity or natural landscape value. Most natural areas have some space where low-impact recreational uses and trails can be accommodated without reducing the environmental integrity of the land or water resource. Since the open space can range from wetlands and riparian corridors to fields and forests, design standards are not applied uniformly across the site. Each natural landscape is treated according to its level of sensitivity, need for conservation/restoration and tolerance for outdoor recreational use. However, where passive recreation opportunities such as trails can be provided, the standardized designs for park benches, picnic tables, signs and other site amenities should be applied.

## Design Standards for Special Use Facilities

Consideration should be given in the design and renovation of any special use facility as to how and how much the site and its amenities should be identifiable within the park system through the application of standardized park signage and site furnishings. For example, a sport field complex could accommodate some of the standardized park benches, picnic tables and signage, but it would also require its own specialized features, such as bleachers, backstops, field lighting, score boards and other equipment, that are unique to the facility. Each master plan design for new facilities should give careful consideration as to how a unique sense of place and identity is conveyed while still communicating that the facility is part of a system of outdoor recreation accommodation provided by the City of Milton-Freewater.

## Design Standards for Trails

A successful trail system is integrated with other transportation alternatives to include a range of trail, sidewalk, bike path and connection opportunities designed to the human scale. The typical recreational trail hierarchy is aligned from regional shared-use trails to local neighborhood paths and park trails. Trail systems can also incorporate specially designated trails for single track mountain biking, primitive hiking and equestrian uses.

Designing the actual physical trail starts with overall purpose of the trail, connecting travelers from one location to another (point A to point B) or through a particular environment (loop trail through a park). With a clear purpose for the trail, an appropriate alignment can then be determined to help provide the desired outdoor recreation experience or transportation value. For example, regional multi-use shared trails should be designed to a minimum width of 10 feet. In expanding urban centers, providing a 16-foot trail width can help accommodate significant bike and pedestrian use as the community grows and linkages to public transit enable increased trail usage. The most heavily used urban trails benefit from the installation of permanent pavement to withstand heavy traffic in a variety of weather conditions.

It should be noted that changes in transportation engineering and trail construction methods may warrant the need to update any trail design standards over time. Trail widths and surfacing types will vary across the trail hierarchy. Site furnishings along the

trail are one method for standardizing trails as part of the outdoor recreation system provided by Milton-Freewater. The same benches, picnic tables, bollards and other site furnishings used throughout Milton-Freewater' park system could be installed along its trails to help unify the sense of place, reduce procurement costs and simplify maintenance.

The unifying standard for Milton-Freewater' trail system can be visually expressed through a designed wayfinding plan. Linked with the graphic character of the park system wayfinding, the trail signage should provide identification, direction, destination, travel information and safety messaging, while clearly reinforcing Milton-Freewater' sense of place.

Trails should be constructed according to City specifications. It is recommended that trail layout and surfacing materials be approved by the City and meet the following general requirements:

- Trail width should be a minimum of 8 feet wide
- Surfacing should be appropriate to the location; paved asphalt or concrete is recommended for upland areas, and wood chip, crusher waste or boardwalks are appropriate in lowland, wet or sensitive areas (City codes shall apply)
- Hard-surfaced trails should comply with ADAAG guidelines for slope and cross-slope; soft-surfaced trails should include properly placed and designed water bars or other surface water management techniques to minimize run-off and erosion.
- Entry signage should be provided at trailheads or access points, and boundary signage should be placed, as appropriate, to demarcate sensitive edges or private property boundaries.
- Trash receptacles should be provided at trailheads.

## **CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED)**

The inventory assessment highlighted an opportunity to consider incorporating crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles to enhance park and trail safety and facilitate the monitoring of park uses and behaviors. CPTED applies four principles that are used to deter criminal behavior in outdoor environments:

- Natural surveillance
- Natural access control
- Territorial reinforcement
- Maintenance

CPTED natural surveillance (“see and be seen”) asserts that sight lines for better visibility can deter undesirable behavior and increase the perceptions of safety and comfort by park patrons. Lowering understory vegetation or raising lower tree branches through intentional vegetation management can provide more clear lines of sight in and around trails and other areas of use. Providing clear visibility and reducing blind corners can also



improve safety by limiting conflicts between different users (e.g. runners, cyclists, dog walkers), where unanticipated encounters may result in crashes or entanglements.

Natural access control in park design is often very subtle. Controlling where vehicles enter and exit park facilities through designed barriers, bollards, boulders, and post and cable fencing can protect park users and minimize park property damage from misguided vehicular traffic. Walkways, lighting, fencing and landscaping provide explicit direction for park users. The flow of users through a park will help decrease the opportunity for crime and improve clarity for the intended park behaviors.

Territorial reinforcement comes through clear demarcation of boundaries. For public parks, those boundaries between public and private lands, safe and unsafe areas, and special use, limited access or reserved sites can be delineated with the appropriate placement of fencing, signs, landscaping or other physical or visual design techniques.

Finally, clearly visible, high-quality maintenance is an important element of CPTED, as well as general public safety. CPTED recognizes the “broken window” theory where neglected and poorly maintained amenities are more attractive targets for vandalism or other criminal activity. Deferred maintenance can also result in park amenities that put users at risk. Broken pavement, worn decking, uneven playing fields and missing play safety surfacing can create injuries. Overall attention to CPTED principles can help ensure safer public park environments.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Consultant’s Guide to Park Design and Development; Park and Recreation Department, City of San Diego, CA

<http://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/pdf/consultantguide.pdf>

Design Standards for Park and Trail Development (Specifications); Park and Recreation Department, City of Bellingham, WA

<http://www.cob.org/government/rules/guidelines/park-design-standards.aspx>

Accessible Recreation Facilities Guidelines - Access Board

<https://www.access-board.gov/attachments/article/1637/outdoor-guide.pdf>

Handbook for Public Playground Safety - National Product Safety Commission

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/325.pdf>



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