

PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, AND TRAILS ELEMENT

GOAL

Provide a high quality comprehensive park, recreation, open space, and trails system to meet the short- and long-term needs of current and future Renton residents.

Objective P-A: Provide park and recreational facilities throughout the City, maximizing public access to and involvement in a variety of leisure and cultural activities.

Policy P-1. The parks system should include a variety of park types including neighborhood, community, regional, and linear parks; trails; open space; and special use areas to meet standards included in the Long Range Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan.

Policy P-2. Parks, recreation, open space and trails facilities should be provided based on surveys of user demand and adopted standards.

Policy P-3. Develop a variety of active and passive facilities in a coordinated system of neighborhood and community parks.

Policy P-4. Equitably distribute parks and recreation by type throughout the City.

Policy P-5. Provide geographically dispersed community centers to meet residents' needs for indoor recreation, athletic instruction, arts, meeting space, and special activities.

Policy P-6. Maintain and develop underdeveloped public rights-of-way for public access and passive recreation where appropriate.

Policy P-7. Connect parks, neighborhoods, schools, open space and activity areas together through a coordinated system of trails and open space.

Policy P-8. Invest in park development in the following priority order.

- a.) Partially developed parkland
- b.) Undeveloped land in the park system
- c.) Park system expansion

Consider the proximity of lands to population centers, growth trends, access, and land suitability.

Policy P-9. Areas of the Renton city limits and the PAA that are experiencing rapid growth, are underserved, or currently lacking recreational services should be prioritized for new investment.

Policy P-10. Obtain the land necessary to provide a broad range of recreational opportunities throughout the community to meet present and future needs.

Policy P-11. To help satisfy Level of Service (LOS) needs identified in the Long Range Park, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan, place a high priority of transferring King County parklands to the City of Renton upon annexation, when they are contiguous with the City boundary, or when a clear benefit to the citizens of Renton can be demonstrated. Establish King County's share of costs to bring parks up to acceptable standard.

Policy P-12. Inform the public and promote parks and recreational activities by disseminating information from a variety of sources including:

- Marketing brochures
- City website
- Electronic readerboard
- Newsletters
- Schools
- Utility billing
- Renton Riches brochure

Policy P-13. Acquisition of parkland should occur far in advance of its actual need.

Policy P-14. Place high priority upon purchasing as parkland, properties or easements for waterfront access.

Policy P-15. Actively seek funding from a variety of sources to help implement a park acquisition and development program.

Policy P-16. Develop a park endowment program to enable financial contributions.

Policy P-17. Encourage private donations of properties where public access is anticipated or planned and where consistent with the Long Range Park, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan.

Policy P-18. Conversion of public parkland to non-recreational use should be discouraged except when the following criteria are met:

- a) Substitution of suitable land or facilities elsewhere of greater or equal value than the property sold can be accomplished,
- b) When proceeds from conversion would satisfy or partially reimburse debt accrued for prior park property or park facility purchases,
- c) Existing parcel size and considerations are not appropriate, or
- d) Current location is inappropriate.
- e) To ensure there is no net loss in public recreational benefits to the City, the disposition of surplus park lands or facilities must result in:
 1. The addition of property of a greater or equal value to the property sold,
 2. The sale price must be used for the acquisition of additional park or recreation property at fair market price, or
 3. Development of existing park property.

Policy P-19. Land on water frontage should be discouraged from conversion.

Policy P-20. Encourage Metro to provide public transportation to community and regional park facilities so that equal opportunity for involvement in park programs and facilities will be available to residents.

Policy P-21. Develop and operate aquatic facilities.

Policy P-22. Accessory commercial enterprise operations in parks should be subservient to the parks purpose, provide incidental services to park users and enhance the amenities of the park environment.

Policy P-23. Major recreational facilities such as the Maplewood Golf Course may be developed as enterprise operations providing a self contained operation, significant specialized recreation amenities, retail and service components, cost covering user fees, and provide a significant public benefit.

Policy P-24. Reinvest profits from enterprise funded recreational facilities into the expansion, maintenance, and operation of the facility.

Objective P-B: Provide well-designed, constructed, maintained, and operated parklands and facilities in a manner that is responsive to the site and balances the needs of the community.

Policy P-25. Prior to park development, budget adequate funding for staffing needs based on public usage of facilities.

Policy P-26. Prior to park development, budget adequate funding for the long-term maintenance and operation in order to maintain asset safety, function, value and aesthetics.

Policy P-27. Design and construct indoor and outdoor facility spaces including supporting spaces to be accessible to individuals and organizations with consideration given to physical capabilities, skill levels, age groups, income levels, and activity interests.

Policy P-28. Design and develop large capacity facilities utilizing high quality, durable materials that require low maintenance to minimize facility maintenance and operation costs.

Policy P-29. Utilize low maintenance materials and other value engineering considerations that reduce care and security requirements, while retaining natural conditions.

Policy P-30. Construction of new building facilities and retrofitting of existing buildings should consider the following elements:

- Sustainable sites
- Water efficiency
- Energy and atmosphere
- Materials and resources
- Environmental quality
- Design excellence

Policy P-31. Encourage the use of low maintenance plant materials that provide year-round color and textural interest.

Policy P-32. Implement the provisions and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other design and development standards that will improve park facility safety and security features for department personnel and the public.

Policy P-33. Develop, budget and implement safety standards, procedures and programs for department personnel that provide proper training and awareness.

Policy P-34. Define and enforce rules and regulations concerning park activities and operations that will protect department personnel and the public. The City Attorney should be consulted regarding verbiage to be included in rules and regulations and on signage pertaining to safety.

Policy P-35. Develop adopt-a-park programs, neighborhood park watches, park police patrols, and other innovative programs that will increase safety and security awareness and visibility.

Policy P-36. Renovate parks and facilities in a manner that will provide safety and accessibility to all users, conserve the use of energy and other resources, and maximize efficient maintenance practices.

Policy P-37. Monitor existing parks and facilities to ensure that acceptable standards for safety and performance are met.

Policy P-38. Establish funding to permit the orderly, on-going repair and rehabilitation of existing parks and facilities.

Policy P-39. Conserve energy, water and other natural resources, and practice efficient and environmentally responsible maintenance and operation procedures.

Policy P-40. Establish a maintenance management plan to the approved maintenance standards.

Policy P-41. Steward the City's open space network to protect the City's natural character and sustain its urban forest resources.

Policy P-42. All parks development should be undertaken in a way that considers the impact of traffic, noise, litter, glare, light, and hours of operation on adjacent areas.

Objective P-C: Define implementation strategies and the Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Policies through development of a long-range functional plan.

Policy P-43. Develop, adopt and implement a Long Range Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan to include the following (components):

- Comprehensive inventory of existing facilities within the Renton City limits and the Potential Annexation Area (PAA)
- Recreational Demand
 - Analysis of trends
 - List of recreation service providers in Renton
 - Random household surveys and analysis
 - Public workshops/meetings
- Park and facility needs assessment
- LOS (Level of Service) standards/development criteria – develop LOS standards and periodic evaluation
- Recommended service levels
- Natural resource element
- Action plan/Capital facility plan (Implementation Plan)
- Inventory of proposed facilities to accommodate population growth
- Strategies for funding improvements

Policy P-44. Periodically update Long Range Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan to maintain compliance with granting agencies.

Policy P-45. Provide a Long Range Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan that is flexible and can respond to changes in user population or recreational preference.

Objective P-D: New park and recreational services shall support population growth concurrently with new development.

Policy P-46. The City of Renton shall adopt, implement and maintain an impact mitigation system for new residential development upon the City's parks/recreation facilities, open space, and trails system.

Policy P-47. Impact fees collected by King County for development in the Potential Annexation Area (PAA) should be set aside for eventual use by the City of Renton to provide parks/recreational facilities serving the area.

Policy P-48. Impact mitigation shall be collected to help offset cost of acquisition, improvement, and development of the City's park system.

Policy P-49. Impact mitigation may occur using fees, land dedication, or facilities based on the following criteria:

- a. Developer-constructed public trails, public on-site park and recreational facilities, and/or developer-constructed public off-site facilities (in a nearby park) may be considered for mitigation if the facility is built to City parks construction and maintenance standards.

- b. Dedication of land for parks or open space purposes, including wetlands, shorelines areas, or sensitive areas only will be considered if such dedication satisfies a specific recreational need of the City.
- c. The developer can elect to pay a fee based upon a formula.
- d. The developer can propose a combination of alternatives that is satisfactory to the City, and satisfies a portion of the needs as identified in the Long Range Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan.
- e. Contributions of land could be combined through multiple developments to meet the minimum standards for facilities as established by the Long Range Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan.

Policy P-50. Level of Service standards, as identified in the adopted Long Range Comprehensive Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan, will be used to determine proportional costs of park system mitigation for new development.

Objective P-E: Conserve, enhance, and create a variety of open space, wildlife, and natural resource areas.

Policy P-51. Expand the open space network as population and employment densities increase.

Policy P-52. Multiple uses of public open space should be provided. Interconnect the open space network. Include lands such as active and passive parks, schools, public open space, trails, private open spaces and native vegetation easements with public access easements, utility rights-of-way, waterways, and unusual open spaces (areas of protected habitat).

Policy P-53. The function of the open space network should:

- Protect land resources
- Provide relief from urban development (air pollution, heat islands, noise, erosion crowding, flooding, etc.)
- Maintain a habitat for wildlife
- Provide physical access and visual connection within the City
- Define the form of the City
- Provide for educational opportunities
- Provide a diversity of natural resources
- Protect and encourage threatened and endangered species of plants and animals
- Provide public access to creeks, rivers, and lakes.

Policy P-54. Where feasible, encourage public access into public open space areas. Public use of open space should be provided at a level that is suited to protecting the natural resources of the area.

Policy P-55. Where feasible, encourage educational opportunities in public open space areas.

Policy P-56. Structures should be minimized within public open space areas.

Policy P-57. Develop inventories and management plans for open space and natural areas.

Policy P-58. Provide funds for native vegetation and other habitat enhancements to encourage appropriate wildlife on existing open space lands where consistent with the recreational use of the area.

Policy P-59. Acquire open space that has the following features:

- a. Can fill a gap or connect the existing open space network
- b. Is environmentally sensitive or unique
- c. Provides wildlife habitat
- d. Can protect natural resource areas
- e. Is archeologically significant
- f. Provides relief from urban development

Policy P-60. Increase public awareness of, and appreciation for, specific natural features through education and interpretive programs.

Policy P-61. Incorporate utility, storm drainage, and other public lands into the open space system through cooperative use agreements.

Policy P-62. Undeveloped portions of Residential Low Density areas may be considered for designation of trail easements or other public benefits through agreements with private parties.

Objective P-F: Create a walkable community by developing and maintaining a comprehensive trails system that provides non-motorized access throughout the City, maximizes public access to parks, schools, and open space areas, connects to regional trail systems, and provides increased recreational opportunities for the public.

Policy P-63. The trail system should serve local and regional users and be linked to the regional trail system.

Policy P-64. Trails should provide for the needs of a diverse population of users including groups such as adults, children, seniors, workers, the disabled and other people engaging in either passive and/or active pursuits including:

- a. pedestrians,
- b. recreation bicyclists,
- c. joggers/runners,
- d. in-line skaters,
- e. bicycle commuters
- f. canoeists and kayakers, and
- g. hikers.

Policy P-65. The trail system should be recognized and maintained by the City as distinct from informal or private pathways.

Policy P-66. Informal or private pathways should form a secondary system with linkages to the public system. These trails should be developed and maintained under joint public/private partnership.

Policy P-67. Linkages should be provided with surrounding communities within major regional corridors such as the Cedar River, Green River, the Lake Washington Loop, and the Soos Creek Trail.

Policy P-68. Within the City, linkages should be provided among residential areas, employment areas, centers, and recreation areas.

Policy P-69. Integrate Renton's recreational trail needs into a comprehensive trail system serving both local and regional users.

Policy P-70. Plan and coordinate appropriate pedestrian and bicycle commuter routes along existing minor arterial and collector arterial corridors.

Policy P-71. Trails should be developed in tandem with motorized transportation systems, recognizing issues such as safety, user diversity, and experiential diversity.

Policy P-72. Provide foot/bicycle separation wherever possible; however, where conflict occurs, foot traffic should be given preference. (See Transportation Element.)

Policy P-73. Provide adequate separation between non-motorized and motorized traffic to ensure safety. (See Transportation Element.)

Policy P-74. Put major emphasis on establishing a "macro" system of trails while identifying critical missing links in the existing functional system.

Policy P-75. Address "micro" level trails and fill gaps in existing trail patterns where appropriate.

The adopted Long Range Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Plan shall be coordinated with and be an integral component of the City's on-going transportation planning activities.

Policy P-76. As appropriate, encourage the use of existing utility corridors for trail purposes and secure trail easements.

Policy P-77. Furnish trail systems with appropriate trailhead supporting improvements that include interpretive and directory signage, rest stops, drinking fountains, bicycle racks, landscaping, parking, loading areas, water, and other services.

Policy P-78. Where appropriate, locate trailheads at or in conjunction with park sites, schools or other community facilities to increase local area access to the trail system and to reduce duplication of supporting improvements (e.g. parking).

Policy P-79. Provide opportunities for the public to access, via Lake Washington, the “Lakes to Locks” regional water trail system.

Policy P-80. Design and develop trail improvements to a standard that is easy to maintain and easy to access by maintenance, security and other appropriate personnel, equipment and vehicles.

Policy P-81. Ensure development adjacent to trails is designed to minimize impacts to and enhance trails.

Policy P-82. Trail routes on private lands are not classified as official trails until the City has legal use authority.

Policy P-83. Trail alignments should take into account soil conditions, slope, surface drainage and other physical limitations that could increase construction and/or maintenance costs.

Policy P-84. Whenever possible, recreation trails should not be part of a street roadway.

Policy P-85. Trails should be looped and interconnected to provide a variety of trail lengths and destinations.

Policy P-86. The functions of railroad and utility rights-of-way should be assessed. Abandoned utility and/or railroad rights-of-ways should receive high priority for designation and acquisition of trail and/or corridors.

Policy P-87. Incorporate utility, storm drainage, and other public lands into the trail system through cooperative use agreements.

Policy P-88. Develop and maintain comprehensive trails systems, which provide non-motorized access throughout the City, maximize public access to open space areas, and provide increased recreational opportunities for the public. (See Transportation Element Objective T-K.)

Objective P-G: Provide opportunities for public participation in recreational services and programs that are creative, stimulating, educational, proactive, and healthy and reflect the needs and interests of the community.

Policy P-89. Provide recreational activities specific and appropriate for each age group.

Policy P-90. Provide outdoor space for community and civic events, public gatherings, programmed activities, and entertainment.

Policy P-91. Develop a balanced system of recreational opportunities that is diverse, comprehensive, and enriching to a variety age groups and abilities.

Policy P-92. City of Renton residents should be given priority or preference in registering for recreational programs and use of park facilities.

Policy P-93. Non-resident fees should be considered to help offset City expenses for park and recreational services and facilities.

Policy P-94. Make park facilities and recreational programs available to non-residents where this will not restrict or will enhance enjoyment of recreation opportunities for City of Renton residents.

Policy P-95. Encourage and promote a comprehensive, diverse and enriching public art program throughout the City, including the display of a variety of artwork in public places and buildings.

Policy P-96. Provide a balance of recreational facilities for competitive skill levels and income groups.

Policy P-97. Work with the arts community to utilize local resources and talents to increase public awareness of artwork and programs.

Policy P-98. Support successful collaborations among the Municipal Arts Commission, business community, service groups, schools, arts patrons, and artists to utilize artistic resources and talents to the optimum degree possible.

Policy P-99. Aquatic facilities should provide recreational and instructional uses that are available to a variety of age groups and abilities.

Policy P-100. Encourage the development, maintenance, and operation of a variety of year-round, multi-use indoor facilities, including but not limited to teen centers, senior centers, and activity, neighborhood and community centers to meet differing age and skill levels, and community interests and needs.

Policy P-101. Provide special indoor and outdoor cultural and performing arts that enhance and expand music, drama, dance, visual arts and other audience and participatory opportunities.

Policy P-102. Provide indoor space to accommodate arts and crafts, music, video, classroom instruction, day care, latchkey, physical conditioning, gymnasiums, recreational courts, eating and healthcare, and meeting facilities.

Policy P-103. Provide arts and crafts; classroom instruction in music, dance and arts; physical conditioning and healthcare; day care; latch key and other program activities.

Policy P-104. Provide soccer, baseball, softball, basketball, volleyball, tennis, and other instruction and participatory programs for a variety of age groups.

Policy P-105. Provide nature interpretation programs to increase awareness, understanding and appreciation of Renton's wildlife and natural resource areas.

Policy P-106. Provide geographically dispersed recreation opportunities, using City-owned facilities, school district facilities and other non-profit agency facilities.

Objective P-H: Develop and expand public and private partnerships to maximize recreational opportunities.

Policy P-107. Develop partnerships with school districts and non-profit agencies to provide indoor recreation, athletic instruction, arts, cultural activities and facilities, meeting space, active outdoor recreation and special activities.

Policy P-108. Work closely with school districts focusing on school areas with attendance in the City and PAA to make optimum use of school district facilities for recreation, to provide effective recreational programs and to develop and maintain joint-use facilities for the mutual benefit of the City and the participating district.

Policy P-109. Partner with non-profit agencies, King County, the State of Washington, the Federal government and other public and private service providers to meet the cultural, recreational, social, and environmental programs and space needs of the City.

Policy P-110. Partner with neighboring cities in planning for sub-regional park facilities.

Policy P-111. Partner with neighboring cities in land acquisition, design, development, and maintenance costs for sub-regional park and recreation facilities where there is a need identified in the Long-Range Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan.

Policy P-112. Coordinate with the school districts, non-profit agencies, and other jurisdictions on short and long-range park/recreational facilities planning, acquisition, development, and facility utilization.

Policy P-113. Where appropriate, formalize partnerships through joint-use agreements.

Policy P-114. Coordinate volunteer efforts with businesses, non-profit organizations, and community organizations.

Policy P-115. Continue as the primary coordinating agency between the City and the state, county, and school district for recreation.

Policy P-116. Coordinate with other governmental agencies and private organizations to provide a connected open space system for the City and surrounding region.