

Parks Master Plan
Email Comments as of April 15

PARKS

One issue of concern for us downtown (Esther Short Park) is the number of skaters that violate city ordinances against skating in our downtown parks — Esther Short and Turtle Place, for examples, in addition to their illegal use of private property. When asked, these violators often cite two issues: skate parks are unsafe from gang activities and bullying; skate parks are located too far away the city center to use. I'd urge you to consider making the existing parks safer and consider expanding skate parks into areas where skaters can access them more easily. I don't know where all the skate parks are located, but if you have a map/grid, perhaps you can see where the gaps exist and consider plugging where you see a major gap. And, if you do consider developing additional skate parks — please be sure to do so only with local resident input as, the last thing we need is a skate park located in a residential area where the boards can be heard day and night slamming on pavement. There are industrial areas and buffer greenspace areas downtown where placing such a skate park would not be a residential or small business disturbance and I'd urge you to consider these kinds of locations. Call me if you have questions.

My biggest concern for parks is that there is a safe walking route to the park for the kids/families to get there, which means sidewalks. For those not close enough to walk, enough parking for several cars at one time. Otherwise, they tend to park where it is dangerous.

Thank you for your email and I have already did your survey and helped in the search for the County Parks. I will add by law, Counties only purchase lands and once you are annexed into the City do you get a fully developed park. For years we have watch the County sell the land that were deemed for future parks. 'Parks are not a need!!' The Budget money should not fund these to fully developed parks nor should these be maintained by those doing time. One should check out the RCW that govern parks and what the counties can do. Also the liability of those they make an agreement for maintenance, such as soccer groups or neighborhood assn. Beside it's been a proven fact and history, these places are where drug dealers go.

Regarding the Comprehensive Plan for Parks. 1)You need to hire a lot more boots on the ground, i.e., maintenance and grounds keepers. You need blue collar workers to provide the services to the community by keeping up the parks that you already have, and improving hiking and biking trails, and extending them where it makes sense to do so, to connect the major parks throughout the county. (Use Whatcom County as a fine example to pattern after. Whatcom is much smaller in population, yet has highly developed and well maintained trail system and really nice parks). 2)You should NOT sell any lands that are currently owned by parks. Whatever you paid for them when you bought them was a bargain compared to what you would have to pay now or in the future. I feel compelled to let you know that the county park I visit daily, Lucia Falls Park, is uncared for and in terrible shape. There is invasive species (ivy) taking over the entire wooded areas, climbing the trees, and generally killing off native plants. It just looks like hell. Limbs have been down for months even years in some areas there, with no apparent effort to even move them to the side. The signage is falling apart. The trails appear unkempt, no new media having been added since before the Great Recession started. Charlie's untimely death didn't help matters any. But Clark County Parks has dropped the ball, at just simply keeping the park neat and in presentable condition. Its not uncommon to see men fishing in the rocks just beneath the falls, totally illegal, with none trying to stop them. It's sad, the poor condition that this beautiful park has sunk. I also have had occasion to walk past a park in the Minnehaha area that appears to be totally unimproved, been that way for twenty years, as long as I remember. But there has been housing development all around it. Yet there it sits, a nice wooded area, perfect for a picnic area, yet with really no improvement whatsoever, for a decade or more. There is no way around it, these examples, and I'm sure there are many more, are a disgrace for the entire community. I realize the certain ideologues control the county for now, and have set out to starve your budget, and it seems to be working. But when something like this happens, you have to spread the word that you need more budget not less, but in the meantime, you got to get back down to the basics and provide the fundamentals, which is really what 80% or more of folks want anyway. Boots on the ground—maintenance and grounds keepers.

We think you should put the fee back on Lewisville park, because it was kept up better then.It is a shame to let a nice park like this go down hill, and it seems like there has been more vandalism since they took it off.

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PARKS (CONT'D)

I would like to see: A) Maintenance of existing parks before building new ones. B) more off leash parks. I think the one of 18th in east Vancouver is County, but it is used by hundreds of people every week. C) more parks dedicated to high density housing, i.e. apartments or R-* developments. D) a dedicated lap pool on the east side. E) a dedicated tennis center on the east side F) low maintenance grass seed (Korean grass) that never needs mowing.

RE: Fazio Neighborhood park,

We have noticed that signs have been set along NW 21st Avenue by this park, advising park visitors (and others) not to park on the pavement. Well, that's great and it's certainly safer than parking there and trying to get your children out with traffic close by, so where are they going to park?

We suggest that a parking area be made out of the southernmost part of the park, adjacent to NW 96th Street. Access would be from NW 21st Ave to NW 95th Street and NW 23rd Ct. There could easily be room for 6-8 vehicles.

PS. Many vehicles daily are ignoring the signs to "do not park on pavement".

Re: Sorenson Neighborhood Park (Felida)

The Great Clark County Parks 2005 levy promised the development of county parks, which included Sorenson Neighborhood Park. We want to know the current schedule for completing the parks, since 2012 wasn't possible. In March 2014, our e-mail was answered by Heath Henderson, David Madore, and Jeff Mize. Heath Henderson said that all of their staff are excited to continue building the parks and it is a very rewarding process for the staff to see the neighborhoods appreciate their new parks. Sorenson Park is slated for 2016. Help make this plan work. Sorenson Park has gone through the master-planning process (2011) and the next step is to initiate the design process. As a voter and as a neighbor to Sorenson Park (Felida neighborhood) for 28 years, we are committed to seeing this park developed. Your help is truly appreciated by many families. Florence (Flossie) B. Wager believed in our parks, too.

Thank you for accepting our comments on Clark County's comprehensive parks plan update. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the process and request that you please place us on any notice list involving the County's parks plan update process. We own property located at 7703 NE 129th Street Vancouver, WA 98662, adjacent to land designated for the Curtin Creek Community Park within the Greater Clark Parks District. We believe that the parks plan update is an appropriate time for the County to reconsider the future use of the Curtin Creek Community Park. The 38.5 acre parcel was originally designated for a future community park. But today, a significant portion of the property is now being used for a wetland enhancement and compensatory mitigation site, subject to a perpetual conservation easement to protect and maintain the ecological functions of the area. There is also a fire station on the property. Given the change in use of this property, we believe it is no longer suitable for a community park, which is a high-intensity use requiring a large, permanent footprint.

At this point, it seems better appropriated for a different use. We suggest that the County re-designate the Curtin Creek land from community park to a natural area as a part of the comprehensive parks plan update. A natural area or open space designation is consistent with the long-term protection of the wetland enhancement and mitigation site. A natural area park is managed for both natural and ecological value and light-impact recreational use, which provides for nature-based recreation like bird-watching and low-impact environmental education activities to the extent such activities are consistent and compatible with the restrictions and goals of the required conservation easement. Further, designating the land as a natural area park effectively places the land into reserve for future mitigation projects, which in turn provides the County with its own banking mechanisms for future public works projects. Using this land for dual purposes offers a long-term opportunity for the County that would otherwise be unavailable. Also, there simply is not the demand for a community park in this area, as indicated by the lack of funding and lower than average population growth in this area of the county. The designated park land is also not very visible or accessible from the road given the fire station is in front of the property and the fact that other park sites may be more accessible to higher population densities and be more appropriate. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to discussing these comments with you further. We believe there are opportunities to work collaboratively to address the future use of the Curtin Creek park site.

Parks Master Plan
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PARKS (CONT'D)

Just took the parks survey and have additional comment. I would prefer there be a charge for parking and access to Vancouver Lake and other parks (like there used to be) because it feels unsafe to go there. We bring our kayaks and no longer feel we can park car with expensive car top carrier in the parking lot. Lots of untrustworthy people hanging out now. It used to be much safer place to go, especially as women. Also, that might help with how much we have to spend on parks. Thanks.

I noticed the time was running out on sending in comment on the Clark County Parks Comp Plan. I just wanted to highlight Foley Community Orchard in the Felida neighborhood park. The partnerships between, then VCP, Clark Public Utilities and Urban Abundance. Its long term partnerships between public agencies and volunteer driven nonprofits. Here is a well written article about the project:

<http://www.columbian.com/news/2014/sep/03/volunteers-pick-pounds-of-parks-pears/>

We look forward to discuss how Urban Abundance can partner with CCP in the future to develop more Community Orchards.

What happened to the gazebo that was supposed to be built at Covington Park off NE 94th Avenue? We lost out on part of the park when NE 90th Avenue had to be extended from NE 68th Street through to NE 71st Street, did we lose this too? Thank you

Is it true we already have over 7,000 acres set aside for park land ????? enough already, socialist programs only work ,until you run out of other people's MONEY!!!!

As a resident of the West Minnehaha neighborhood, I can attest to the desirability of these "pocket" parks as our grandchildren have grown up using them and making them a priority stop whenever they visit us from their home in Snohomish. Keep up the good work!

I am concerned, however, about their maintenance and their susceptibility to tagging and other destructive activities. Knowing Park personnel are stretched thin, I suggest that you promote volunteer assistance through the neighborhood associations for basic upkeep (such as weeding and picking up wind-downed branches) and security (security patrols such as Neighborhood Watch and maybe videocam surveillance so police can be notified of problem activity). Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

A disc golf course would be great! I currently pay Oregon State Park fees because I play at Dabney, Rooster Rock, Mclver, Champoeg, etc. I would love to make such contributions to the Clark County Parks if there were courses to play.

I am the field scheduler and administrator for Salmon Creek Soccer Club. We serve about 1000 children each year from the county. With the formation of many new sports such as flag football, ultimate frisbee, and lacrosse competition for school fields is at an all time high. We are struggling to find place for our players to practice without destroying the fields that they have to play on. Numbers of soccer players each season is also going up and finding enough fields to accomodate all of the games each weekend is difficult. Especially with the league shortening our season and adding double headers. I believe that working on improving the drainage in the fields that we have and creating some new fields, the young soccer players in the community would be well served. Many sports can play anywhere there is a flat patch of grass but soccer is harder. We need space of a specific size and certain types of grass hold up to the abuse of cleats better. I hope that you will take this into consideration when developing your long range plan and help the youth soccer players here in Clark County.

There is a VERY large, and growing, interest in Clark County, an surrounding areas, for Pickle Ball. This sport is so popular that Firstenburg Community Center has expended the number of courts availability and times to accommodate the growing interest. Washougal recently converted old tennis courts that were not being used into 6 Pickle Ball courts and they are being used every day by large numbers of players. Clark County is the home of The Columbia River Pickle Ball Club that was form just a few years ago and has tripled in members and has hosted several sanctions tournaments drawing players as far away as Phoenix and Northern California. I would like to suggest that the County provide more Pickle Ball courts, or re-vamp old un-used tennis court, into Pickle Ball Courts. If you would like more information regarding the size and scope of Pickle Ball in Clark County, you can contact Michael Wolfe at wolfemike@aol.com. Mr. Wolfe has been instrumental in promoting Pickle Ball in Clark County. At the moment the Pickle Ball enthusiast in Clark County are playing where ever they can find available courts.

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TRAILS

Trail maintenance for hikers, bicycles, and horses are my main concern. And bathrooms!

I would like to see more natural areas that horseback riding is allowed in such as Whipple Creek Regional Park and allow a trail obstacle use area at the west side of fairgrounds park. there is one already submitted to the county for the property that joins Whipple Creek Regional Park east of 11th Ave making it possible for all users to learn how to use the trails correctly. Not all children play ball. some enjoy nature and can learn better from the natural environment please consider more connecting horse trails that can be used to enjoy nature. this allows many elder people to get outside and exerise. More parking areas that are graveled and larger for trailers to use. maintain exsisting trails for the future. save wooded areas and plant more for the future. Maintain the Mill area at Whipple creek. allow the restoration of the old bridge Mill & water wheel and the Gazebo area which already are in the park. support a restroom area for the Whipple Creek Regional Park users. please consider a larger parking area as our trailers are larger now and more people walk at the park also need parking. keep things rustic but safe and maintainable, no pavement at all. Interconnecting trails at Daybreak for equestrian use would also help natural trails, less pavement and concrete.

One thing I didn't have a chance to comment on in the survey is lack of parking at some trails. I don't know if it is Clark County Park or not, but there is a newer trail head on Fruit Valley Road near Vancouver Lake. When they last improved this trail head they closed off street parking. I still don't understand why that was done. The trailhead isn't really within walking distance of many homes and they got rid of the parking. ?????? Also restrooms are very important to us older people. I hate to admit it, but I have sometimes had to find a tree while out walking on some of the trails. I really try to make sure I am not offending anyone, but I fear getting cited for indecent exposure.

I'd like to see more available single track mountain bike trails in the parks. I have no problem going and helping with trail work at various parks if that would help. Having trails closer to home makes it easier to get the whole family out riding and we all like more rugged trails than the current wide gravel paths. A bike park in the county would be an awesome idea to get everyone out as well. Something like what Castle Rock has.

It has come to my attention there are some upcoming open forums on use of open spaces for parks. I may not be able to attend any of them due to my work schedule. So I wanted to express my interest in the need for BMX tracks to be included in the design of any parks. Someone may recall that a Vancouver resident & bmx racer has done some extensive communication with the Parks Department in the past in regards to this very topic . He did spark an interest and we were going to get the go ahead for the space located out off Andresen but we were told the grant fell through. The sport of BMX racing is & has been a very family friendly sport and would go over quite well in our neighboring communities.

Hi!

I read with great interest the article on Updated Parks Plan in the Works in the Columbian newspaper. I have completed the survey and I appreciate the opportunity you give us to share feedback/priorities.

I want to bring to your attention that the trail by the Quarry off on 192 Ave, just north of SR 14 (exit 10) is very nice but incomplete. Can the extension of the walking/bicycling trail to Goodwin Street (new Breckenridge subdivision) and connecting NW 18th Ave. (also SE 40th St) be considered in Clark County plan? It will create a complete great walking loop, great for those who want walking and exercising.

We had a very successful HOA meeting last Saturday and our members supported this concept wholeheartedly. I would be more than happy to meet with you in person to explain further. Thank you very much.

TRAILS (CONT'D)

I completed the online survey and attended the Camas open house where I put some dots on the boards, but I did not fill out a comment card. On both the survey and the boards, I voiced my preference for trails and open space as a priority over other facilities such as sports fields. These comments provide further information on my preferences as the County updates its parks plan.

I would like the updated parks plan to provide for acquisition of new regional park land and open space and development of walking and hiking trails. I walk for exercise and would like more natural areas to walk in, like those I enjoy at Lacamas Park. When I am in that park, I enjoy walking along the water, hearing the birds singing, and seeing what native plants are in bloom. In addition to my enjoyment, the park provides habitat for wildlife. Having habitat for wildlife in parks results in more wildlife in neighborhoods and backyards, such as my backyard where I have bird feeders. I think it is important to have a network of trails and open space for wildlife and for people to enjoy nature.

I live close to Lacamas Heritage trail and would walk there more but the parking lot is often full. It would be nice to have more areas like it and Lacamas Park in Clark County. It would also be nice if there was more interconnection between parks and trails for better movement of wildlife and so those areas don't become isolated islands surrounded by development. Whipple Creek is also a nice park to enjoy nature in but unfortunately horses turn the trails into a muddy mess. I don't think the County needs to provide more places for riding horses, which are owned by a small percentage of County residents. Mountain biking also needs to be limited so trails aren't torn up by their tires. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the parks plan update.

Good morning,

I missed the open houses.

I would just like to say as a horse trail rider and hiker, my family and I hope all future projects include multi use trails and horse trails.

Thank you for all that is done to encourage a love of nature and enjoying this beautiful land.

Hi, I would like to see the bike path completed between Battle Ground Lake State Park and Battle Ground. There is a beautiful path started from Battle Ground Lake that dead ends in the middle of nowhere. In the Battle Ground area, there are few paths for walking or bicycling, in fact, other than Lewisville Park there are absolutely no county parks close to Battle Ground, third largest city in Clark County. To complete this path would give residents access to Battle Ground Lake, one of the treasures in Clark County. Currently we have to drive to the Lake or ride on county roads with high speed traffic and narrow shoulders. I always dreaded taking my kids for a bike ride to the lake. Not much incentive to get exercise that way! Thanks for reading and I hope you can take some positive action to get this path done. It would be a feather in Clark County's and north county's cap.