

# Chapter 10

## PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

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### INTRODUCTION

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element serves as an expression of the community’s goals, objectives, needs and priorities for recreation planning. In all communities, recreation provides important personal *and* social outlets. Park, recreation and open space facilities are common areas that University Place residents, as well as visitors, can enjoy. They can promote physical health and social/mental wellness by providing physical activity, making neighborhoods safer, building communities, and fostering social interactions. Parks provide places for exercise, sports, children’s

playgrounds, relaxation, and community gatherings. These areas also enhance the aesthetic qualities of the community. They serve as important community centers and are among the most heavily used and enjoyed places within University Place.

As with other facilities and services provided by the City, planning for park, recreation and open space facilities must be conducted to address the changing demands that occur with growth. When the population increases, the demand placed upon existing facilities may increase, as well. As such, park, recreation and open space areas and facilities may need to be enhanced or expanded to meet the growing needs. Adequate land must be set aside for these purposes, and capital funds must be made available to develop the facilities. This Element is intended to ensure that provisions will be made to prepare for future needs so that the citizens of University Place will continue to enjoy a high level of park, recreation and open space services into the future.

### ***ORGANIZATION OF THE PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT***

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element is divided into five sections. The Introduction section summarizes the intent for the Element, its organization and its relationship to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The second section summarizes applicable planning requirements. The third section provides a PROS vision, mission statements and a summary of issues and challenges. The fourth section summarizes existing facilities and references proposed facilities explored in detail in the PROS Plan. The final section provides goals and policies supportive of meeting University Place's long-term park, recreation and open space needs. These relate to:

- Planning and Implementation
- Acquisition and Finance
- Community Involvement
- Access to parks
- Facility Development and Maintenance
- Human Resources
- Historical and Cultural Resources
- Parks, Open Space and Greenbelts
- Civic Facilities

### ***RELATIONSHIP TO PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN***

On February 18, 2014, the University Place City Council adopted Resolution No. 745, thereby adopting an updated University Place Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The 2014 PROS Plan and amendments thereto are hereby incorporated by reference and considered to be a component of this PROS Element and Comprehensive Plan.

The PROS Plan provides specific guidelines for meeting the recreational needs of a changing community. In conjunction with the Capital Facilities Element Capital Improvements Plan, it makes recommendations concerning property and facility improvements necessary to provide recreational opportunities in the future. It serves as a road map and strategic planning tool for making parks, open space, facility and

recreational program decisions over a minimum six-year, and sometimes longer-term, planning horizon. The PROS Plan identifies the actions the City should implement to satisfy the expectations of the community. It includes recommendations that provide guidance for making land acquisitions and protecting open spaces, and improving and establishing new facilities. The PROS Plan also serves as a resource and planning guide for the Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Parks Maintenance and Recreation staff.

The PROS Plan is divided into seven sections:

- Introduction
- Community Profile
- Community Opinion
- Mission Goals and Objectives
- Park Facilities and Recreation Services Inventory
- Situation and Needs Assessment
- Funding and Plan Implementation

Rather than repeat the information contained in the PROS Plan, this Element will reference the PROS Plan and focus primarily on goals and policies.

## **STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT***

The Washington State Growth Management Act identifies the following planning goal:

“Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.” [RCW 36.70A.020(9)]

The GMA also identifies mandatory and optional Plan elements. [RCW 36.70A.070 and .080]. A Park and Recreation Element is a mandatory Plan element that must, at a minimum, implement, and be consistent with, the Capital Facilities Plan Element as it relates to park and recreation facilities. [RCW 36.70A.070(8)]. The Element shall include:

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

### ***PIERCE COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES (CPP)***

*The Pierce County Countywide Planning Policies include a policy on Natural Resources, Open Space, Protection of Environmentally-Sensitive Lands, and the Environment. Open space, for the purpose of this policy, includes parks, recreation areas, greenbelts/natural buffers, scenic and natural amenities or unique geological features or unique resources. This policy directs University Place to:*

- Develop a plan for the provision and designation of open space considering a number of factors, including the following:
  - Open space is defined in conjunction with recreation and facilities;
  - Open space and environmentally sensitive lands that create linkages across jurisdictional boundaries and coordination with these entities;
  - Encourage open space cluster design; and
  - Encourage natural buffering as part of development design.
- Consider making the following uses of open space:
  - Recreational areas, including parks (golf courses, picnic areas, bicycle, equestrian, and walking trails) and general recreation;
  - Uses as considered on a case-by-case basis; and
  - Uses derived from community definition (i.e., greenbelts).
- Encourage new housing to locate in a compatible fashion (i.e., clustered design) with open space designations or outside of designated open spaces.
- Regulate open space through tools such as:
  - Zoning and subdivision ordinances, including but not limited to cluster and minimum lot size zoning, overlay zones and adequate off-site public facility regulations;
  - Development impact fees for park and open space acquisition;
  - Dedication of land or money in-lieu of land;
  - Designation of open space corridors;
  - Wetlands, shorelines, floodplain or other environmentally sensitive lands ordinances; and
  - Development agreements.
- Cooperatively inventory existing and potential open space by creating local and regional planning inventories.
- Authorize the following methods of retention of open space land or wildlife corridors:
  - Public acquisition of property in fee simple or through development easement acquisition;
  - Private acquisition with covenants, conditions and/or restrictions limiting the use of the property to open space; and
  - Alternatives to public purchase;
  - Retention of existing open space through required open space preservation; and preserving, and enhancing significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.

## **LOCAL PLANNING CONTEXT**

### ***PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ASPIRATIONS***

*Looking ahead 20 years...*

**Park, recreation and open space areas are found throughout the City.**

*Additional park, recreation and open space areas have been acquired and improved or preserved by the City, especially in underserved neighborhoods. The City, school districts, private partners and citizens continue to collaborate in sponsoring a wide variety of recreational events in an array of public places, including the Curran Apple Orchard Park. Residents enjoy a community center, civic center, public access to the shoreline, and a variety of recreation programs and activities for children, youth, adults, and senior citizens. Community members enjoy community gardens and other features and facilities that support healthy lifestyles.*

**Care has been given to preserve elements of the natural environment.**

*Areas of open space and forested groves within Chambers Creek Canyon, Adrianna Hess Wetland Park, Paradise Pond Park, Colegate Park, Homestead Park, the Leach Creek drainage and in other locations have been preserved where possible through public/private collaboration. University Place continues to promote the value of the natural environment by inventorying and monitoring the elements that define the city's green character, including forested parks and open space.*

**MISSION STATEMENT – PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN**

*Provide a full range of park, recreation and open space facilities and programs in accordance with the needs and desires of the community. Act as a coordinator of local interests where facilities are provided by many other agencies; and perform as a facilitator where unique acquisition or development opportunities may occur which could be implemented or operated by other agencies.*

**MISSION STATEMENT – PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

*Enrich our quality of life through developing a comprehensive parks & recreation system that preserves and protects our natural resources and provides a variety of leisure time opportunities to meet the diverse and dynamic needs of our community.*

**MAJOR ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

- University Place's limited tax base constrains the City's ability to acquire, develop, and maintain parks.
- Residential, commercial, mixed use, and industrial development continues in University Place, increasing the demand on existing park facilities. The ratio of City-owned and managed park and open space land to population is low compared to national and regional standards.
- University Place has some distinctive natural features worth preserving. These include the Puget Sound shoreline, Chambers Creek Canyon, Morrison Pond wetlands, and major creek corridors (Chambers, Leach and Peach creeks).
- University Place does not have a sufficient pedestrian or bicycle trail system to connect residential and commercial areas with parks and public facilities.
- Chambers Creek Properties, owned by Pierce County, continues to be redeveloped to provide and support recreational opportunities and facilities. Additional trails,

shoreline access and a boat ramp are planned for construction. Other major projects, possibly including lodging, conference facilities, commercial businesses and an additional golf course, may be considered in the future.

- Additional amenities are needed in existing parks and open space areas. The City lacks a substantial Community Activity Center for citizen use and enjoyment.

## **PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE FACILITIES EXISTING AND PROPOSED**

Existing park, recreation and open space facilities are summarized below in **Table 10-1**. The locations of these facilities are shown on the Park and Recreation Properties map in **Figure 10-1**. Additional detail is provided in Section V of the PROS Plan, which categorizes park, recreation and open space facilities and summarizes existing park facilities and recreation services.

Section VI of the PROS Plan provides a situation/needs assessment that analyzes existing levels of service and capacities. It identifies gaps between these measurements and projected future demand for parks, recreation and open space facilities and services.

Proposed park, recreation and open space improvements are listed in the Capital Facility Element's Six-Year Capital Improvements Plan. Funding options for recommended projects are explored in Section VII of the PROS Plan.

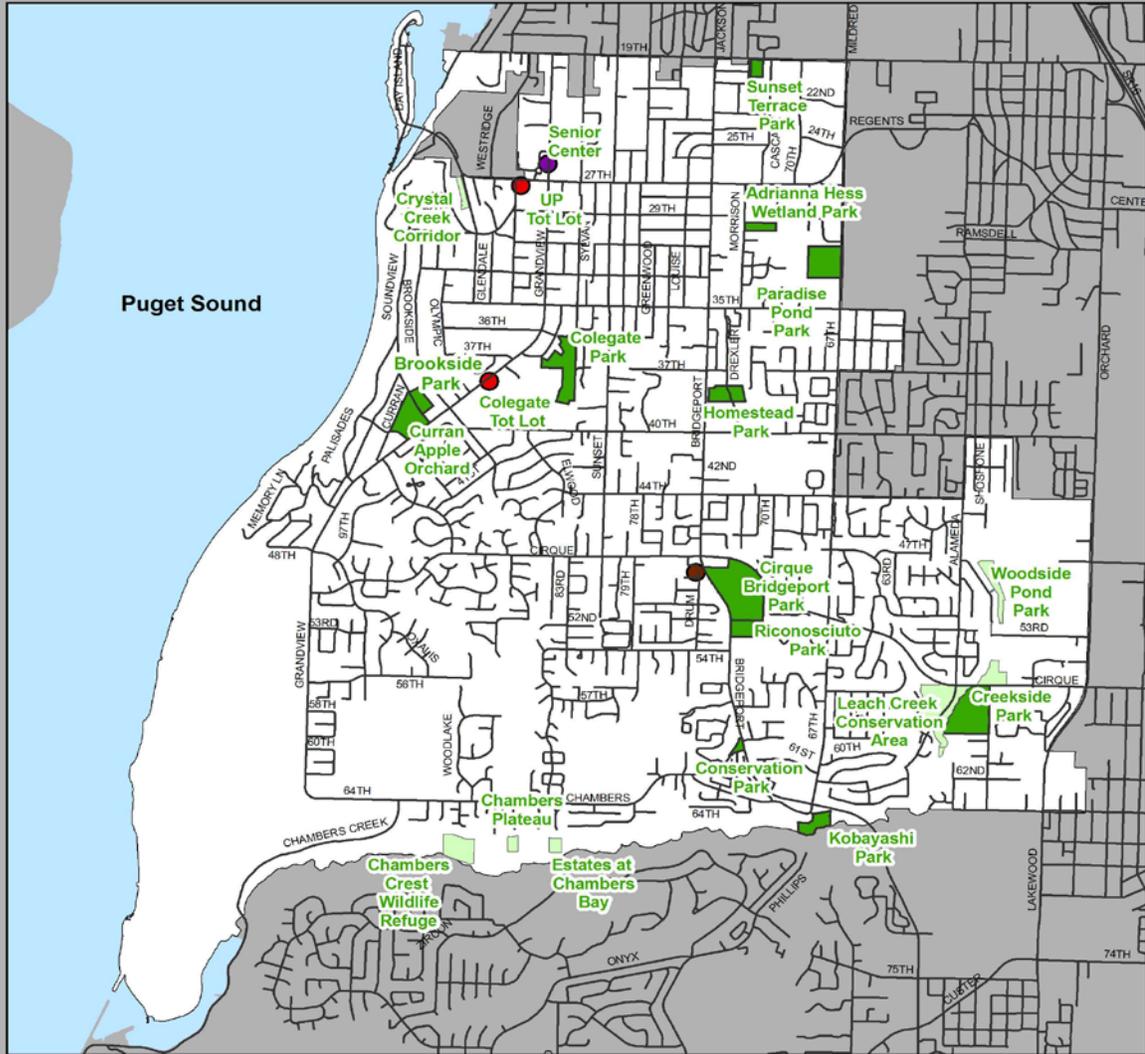
Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.160, University Place has identified an open space corridor that consists of lands in the vicinity of Chambers Bay, Chambers Creek and Leach Creek. These lands extend from the Puget Sound shoreline and Chambers Bay through the Chambers Creek Canyon and along Leach Creek to the Fircrest boundary. The cities of University Place and Lakewood, and Pierce County, are working cooperatively to develop the Chambers-Leach Creek trail system, which will connect to a Fircrest open space corridor trail system to the north and Pierce County Chambers Creek Properties to the south and west.

**Table 10-1  
Park, Recreation and Open Space Facilities**

<b>Parks/Facilities</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Acres*</b>
<b>Mini Parks</b>		
Drum Basketball Court	Basketball Court	0.5
Colegate Playground	Playground	0.5
UP Tot Lot**	Playground	0.5
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>		
Sunset Terrace Park	Field, Playground	5.6
<b>Community Parks</b>		
Cirque Bridgeport Park	Fields, Playground, Skate Park, Restrooms	22.0
<b>Open Space/ Natural Areas</b>		
Chambers Crest Wildlife Refuge	No Public Access, Wildlife Corridor	7.5
Riconosciuto Property**	No Public Access	5.0
Conservation Park	Green Space	1.5
Pemberton Creek Open Space	No Public Access, Wetland, Wildlife Corridor	4.9
Leach Creek Conservation Area	No Public Access, Wetland, Wildlife Corridor	14.8
Adrianna Hess Wetland Park	Meeting Rooms, Wetland, Bird Watching	2.0
Woodside Pond Nature Park	No Public Access, Wetland, Wildlife Corridor	3.6
Creekside Park	Open Space, Wetland, Wildlife Corridor	15.0
Colegate Park	Informal Trails and Open Space	12.0
Paradise Pond Park	Open Space, Wetland, Bird Watching	9.5
Brookside Park	No Public Access, Wetland	2.6
Crystal Creek Corridor	Stream Corridor, Wetland	1.7
<b>Special Use Facilities</b>		
Senior/Community Center	Meeting Rooms, Kitchen	0.5
Curran Apple Orchard Park	Orchard, Playground, Band Stand	7.3
City Hall	Meeting Rooms, Kitchen	2.4
Homestead Park	Open Green, Gardens, Trails, Information Kiosk	4.8
Kobayashi Park	Open Green, Trail, Fishing, Wildlife Corridor	5.5
<b>Total*</b>		<b>129.7</b>

\* Area is Approximate \*\* Names are Placeholders

**Figure 10-1  
Parks and Open Space**



- Park
- Open Space
- Tot Lot
- Senior Center
- Sports Court



Scale  
1:40,000

University Place  
Planning and Development Services

# GOALS AND POLICIES

This Element contains the parks, recreation, and open space goals and policies for the City of University Place. The following goals represent the general direction of the City related to parks, recreation and open space, and the policies provide more detail about the strategies and other steps needed to meet the intent of each goal.

## ***PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION***

### **GOAL PRO1**

**Maintain and continue to develop a high quality, diversified park, recreation and open space system that benefits citizens of various ages, incomes and physical abilities.**

#### **Policy PRO1A**

Identify, acquire, and preserve a wide variety of lands for park and open space purposes, including:

- Natural areas and features with outstanding scenic or recreational value, or wildlife preservation potential;
- Lands that provide public access to shorelands and creeks;
- Lands that visually or physically connect natural areas, or provide important linkages for recreation, plant communities, and wildlife habitat;
- Lands valuable for recreation, such as athletic fields, trails, fishing, swimming or picnic activities;
- Lands that provide an appropriate setting and location for community center facilities;
- Park land that enhances the surrounding land uses;
- Land that is presently available, or that, if not preserved now, will be lost to development in the future;
- Land that preserves significant historical areas and features.

#### **Policy PRO1B**

Ensure a fair geographic distribution of parks, playgrounds, and related recreation opportunities within walking distance of, and conveniently accessible to all, residents via safe sidewalks, pathways and trails.

#### **Policy PRO1C**

Evaluate traffic, noise, parking, lighting and other impacts on surrounding land uses when considering sites for acquisition and in developing park sites.

**Policy PRO1D**

Encourage improvement and use of underutilized publicly owned properties for park, recreation and open space purposes that meet the needs of a diverse community in terms of needs and interests.

**Policy PRO1E**

Encourage development of inter-generational / multi-purpose indoor and outdoor active recreation facilities and programs that are responsive to community needs and interests and based on the demand for recreation programs.

**Policy PRO1F**

Require new and substantially modified residential development to provide open space and recreation facilities to serve the intended residents. Encourage, and where appropriate require, public plazas and other usable open space in commercial and mixed use projects that includes seating and other improvements that enhance their function as community gathering places. Consider the use of incentives to help achieve the policy objectives.

**Policy PRO1G**

Improve bicycle access and safety throughout University Place. Provide new bicycle lanes or trails and other supportive facilities when streets or transportation facilities are constructed or improved.

**Policy PRO1H**

Develop pedestrian trails along creeks and saltwater shoreline where feasible and not detrimental to wildlife and other aspects of the environment. Develop interpretive trails and other pedestrian pathway connections between parks and open space surrounding wetlands, ponds and other water features, for example Adrianna Hess Wetland Park and Paradise Pond Park. Continue supporting development of the Chambers Creek trail in order to achieve a regional trail system that connects trails within the City of Fircrest to the Puget Sound shoreline at Chambers Creek Properties via the Leach Creek corridor and Chambers Creek Canyon.

**Policy PRO1I**

Coordinate development of parks, open space, pedestrian walkways, bike paths, water trails, and an urban connected on-street and off-street trail system with the area's unique open space settings including wetlands, creeks, greenbelts, and other environmentally sensitive or historic sites.

**Policy PRO1J**

Provide adequate Community Center facilities for youth and adults based on community support and funding capacity.

**Policy PRO1K**

Encourage development of community oriented enrichment programs that are responsive to community needs and promote community support.

### **Policy PRO1L**

Enhance recreation opportunities for University Place by partnering with other cities, non-profit groups, local businesses, other government agencies and the University Place School District.

## **ACQUISITION AND FINANCE**

### **GOAL PRO2**

**Acquire and finance a comprehensive park, open space and recreation system through a variety of methods that distribute costs equitably among those who benefit.**

#### **Policy PRO2A**

Use the Capital Facilities Element Capital Improvement Program to prioritize parks, recreation, and open space funding.

#### **Policy PRO2B**

Preserve parcels identified as potential parks, open space, and trails using a variety of methods, including regulations, park impact fees, incentives, trades, and the purchase of lands or easements.

#### **Policy PRO2C**

Encourage development designs that create, preserve and maintain open space accessible to the general public.

#### **Policy PRO2D**

Acquire and develop parks and trails with public funds, shared use of transportation rights-of-way, and dedications from large residential and commercial developments.

#### **Policy PRO2E**

Support development of additional park, recreation and open space facilities to satisfy increased demand and mitigate impacts resulting from residential development by requiring payment of park impact fees, land dedication, construction of on-site or off-site park improvements, or other effective mitigation measures.

#### **Policy PRO2F**

Take advantage of all outside sources of funding and assistance, including county, state and federal agency programs, and volunteer donations, for park and recreation projects and programs.

#### **Policy PRO2G**

Encourage private business and service organizations to develop recreational opportunities for neighborhoods and for the community. Where appropriate and economically feasible, the City should support specialized facilities and special interest recreational facilities that are also of interest to the general population.

### **Policy PRO2H**

Continue the City's commitment to build and maintain parks and recreation facilities to meet established level of service standards.

### **Policy PRO2I**

Evaluate acquisition opportunities against the following criteria to mitigate City risk and clearly measure benefits to the City:

- How well the acquisition responds to an urgent need or opportunity;
- Whether the acquisition is necessary to fulfill a legal, contractual or other requirement;
- Whether the acquisition is consistent with the PROS Plan, Comprehensive Plan and any other applicable plans;
- How the opportunity responds to health and safety issues;
- What would be the costs and potential funding opportunities;
- The level of public support for the acquisition;
- Whether the project is ready;
- What the implications would be from deferring or postponing acquisition;
- What the benefits would be to other capital projects, existing parks, systems, facilities, services or service deliveries;
- What the impacts would be to maintenance and operations;
- How many City residents would be served and in what area; and
- Whether the acquisition would provide pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle accessibility.

## ***COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT***

### **GOAL PRO3**

**Invite, encourage, and involve the entire community, including the business community and other private entities, public agencies, and not-for-profit or volunteer organizations to participate in planning and developing parks and recreational services and facilities.**

#### **Policy PRO3A**

Encourage citizen involvement in all aspects of the City's parks and open space selection, development, and day-to-day use.

#### **Policy PRO3B**

Identify lands of regional significance for preservation as parks or open space through a process involving University Place residents, landowners and conservation groups, other cities and other government agencies.

#### **Policy PRO3C**

Continue to inform people about parks and recreation activities and programs through the City's newsletter, webpage, cable access, brochures and other means.

### **Policy PRO3D**

Promote collaboration among various public agencies and private entities in developing and using the community's recreational and cultural capabilities. Secure funding from these agencies and entities and support shared use of facilities to help meet the community's recreational and cultural needs.

### **Policy PRO3E**

Encourage donations of park and open space land and improvements that help implement the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. Review these potential donations for suitability in light of City priorities and long-term maintenance obligations. Encourage donations and support, including sponsorships, for recreation programs.

### **Policy PRO3F**

Promote a close working relationship between the City and local schools to provide the best possible level of park and recreation service. Encourage shared use of school buildings and playfields for community-oriented recreational programs, and employ cooperative agreements on maintenance to achieve cost savings for the City and schools.

### **Policy PRO3G**

Utilize interlocal agreements and other formal and informal agreements with schools to secure community access to recreational facilities and programs that will help meet long-term recreational programming needs.

### **Policy PRO3H**

Encourage cooperation between public and private groups for planning and use of recreational facilities. Draw support from volunteer groups, private community clubs, and businesses that operate facilities and recreation programs. Cooperate with these groups to extend opportunities for local residents and employees and reduce duplication. Take advantage of mutual support and partnerships to increase the success of grant applications for facilities and establish funding and staffing for programs that cannot be provided with City funding.

## **ACCESS TO PARKS**

### **GOAL PRO4**

**Encourage the provision of safe, affordable and convenient access to recreational lands, facilities, and programs.**

#### **Policy PRO4A**

Locate major recreational facilities that generate large amounts of traffic on sites adjacent to arterials that include pedestrian, bicycle and transit route facilities that support accessibility for a wide spectrum of users.

#### **Policy PRO4B**

Provide safe parking at parks and recreational facilities that commonly draw crowds that arrive by automobile or bicycle.

### **Policy PRO4C**

Provide recreational opportunities free from unlawful discrimination and other barriers to participation. At a minimum, meet or exceed Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

### **Policy PRO4D**

Provide park and recreational facilities that will be accessible to all segments of the population through: sensitive modification of features to improve accessibility; installation of benign and supportive features such as well-designed railings, benches and other seating with arms, and protective cover from the elements; and application of the following universal design principles when there is an opportunity to do so:

- Equitable Use -- The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities;
- Flexibility in Use -- The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities;
- Simple and Intuitive Use -- Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level;
- Perceptible Information -- The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities;
- Tolerance for Error -- The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions;
- Low Physical Effort -- The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue; and
- Size and Space for Approach and Use -- Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

## ***FACILITY DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE***

### **GOAL PRO5**

**Create, maintain, and upgrade park, recreational, and cultural facilities to respond to changing uses and recreation trends and improve operational efficiency.**

#### **Policy PRO5A**

Periodically review park and recreation facilities to determine if the public's needs are being met and to make changes as necessary to meet those needs effectively and efficiently. Review park and recreation staffing, programming and operations periodically to evaluate safety, efficiency and gaps between actual and desired levels of service.

#### **Policy PRO5B**

Encourage volunteer and civic groups to take part in appropriate stewardship of public parks and recreation resources, including periodic maintenance and improvement of park facilities.

**Policy PRO5C**

Provide clean, safe, and attractive parks for public use through a maintenance program that matches the intensity of use and character of the park and facilities.

***HUMAN RESOURCES***

**GOAL PRO6**

**Develop training and support for a professional parks and recreation staff that effectively serves the entire community.**

**Policy PRO6A**

Encourage teamwork through communications, creativity, positive image, risk-taking, sharing of resources, and cooperation toward common goals.

***HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES***

**GOAL PRO7**

**Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites and structures that have historical or cultural significance.**

**Policy PRO7A**

Seek opportunities to identify, commemorate and preserve the City's historical and cultural resources.

**Policy PRO7B**

Enhance the cultural environment in the community by promoting the creation and placement of art in various public venues throughout the City.

**Policy PRO7C**

Once identified, designate significant historical and cultural resources for preservation and enhancement.

**Policy PRO7D**

Encourage public education programs regarding historic, archaeological and cultural land sites and structures as a means of raising public awareness of the value of maintaining these resources.

**Policy PRO7E**

Coordinate and cooperate with local, state and national historical and cultural preservation organizations to achieve community goals and objectives.

## ***PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND GREENBELTS***

### **GOAL PRO8**

**Develop parks, and maintain parks, open spaces and greenbelts, recognizing that these are an integral part of the City's infrastructure, character and quality of life.**

#### **Policy PRO8A**

Preserve greenbelts so that the expanse and intensity of development is tempered by natural features found in the community, and so that wildlife habitat and corridors are maintained and enhanced.

#### **Policy PRO8B**

Encourage the connection and linkage of parks, open spaces and greenbelts.

#### **Policy PRO8C**

Provide usable open space in the Town Center, mixed use and commercial areas.

## ***CIVIC FACILITIES***

### **GOAL PRO9**

**Provide a range of spaces and places for civic functions such as public meetings, ceremonial events, and community festivals. Explore partnerships with the private sector to help achieve this goal.**

#### **Policy PRO9A**

Create public spaces throughout the City.

#### **Policy PRO9B**

Encourage the inclusion of public art.

#### **Policy PRO9C**

Encourage community volunteerism in public beautification projects.