

LANE COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

www.lanecounty.org/parks/masterplan.htm



LANE COUNTY PARKS VISION STATEMENT

Lane County Parks will be recognized for providing thriving natural areas, accessible and well-maintained facilities, and a variety of recreational opportunities in a fiscally responsible manner.

BACKGROUND

The Lane County Parks and Open Space Master Plan was first adopted in January 1981. The Plan is a component of the County General Plan and Rural Comprehensive Plan. Now 24 years old, an update is long overdue. The population has grown 17.3% (1980-2000 Census), and the County has experienced demographic shifts and corresponding changes in the dynamics of demand for parks, recreation, and open space. Financial realities at the state and local level and within County government have concentrated public service priorities on basic health and safety, with major impacts on Parks Division operations, which have in many respects been forced into a reactive mode in making outdoor recreation available. In the absence of a plan that reflects current conditions and anticipates the future, it has been difficult for the Parks Division to perform strategically and to stabilize funding. Maintaining existing facilities alone has been a challenge. Meanwhile, the population continues on a steady climb (averaging about 1.7% per year), ensuring that demand for recreational open space will continue to grow.

An updated Plan is crucial for the County Parks Division to work toward financial stability and provide adequate recreational facilities to meet public demand. Recreation is a key tourism component, and therefore is important to the County's economic development. And by providing a place to exercise and enjoy clean air, parks promote a healthy population.

For all of these reasons, an updated County Parks and Open Space Master Plan is not only prudent but a necessary ingredient in County government efforts to continue to promote a healthy and high quality of life for Lane County citizens and visitors.

PURPOSE

The purpose of adopting a new Lane County Parks and Open Space Master Plan is to:

- replace the outdated 1980 Lane County Parks and Open Space Master Plan;
- comply with related state and local laws;
- forecast and document public need and demand for recreation and open space resources;
- develop corresponding goals, policies, and recommendations, consistent with the Parks Division Vision Statement, to help meet this demand for the next 20 years;
- market Lane County Parks to potential new users and financial sources; and
- be a working document that serves as both a reference and a compass for Lane County Parks Division and other public and private interests working with the Division.

OVERALL PLAN CONCEPT

The Master Plan update will document the condition of the existing 71 County Parks, analyze needs and issues, and set forth goals, policies and recommendations. The Plan will incorporate:

- Parks Division knowledge and participation in Plan development;
- statistical data regarding population demographics and recreational preferences, primarily from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's 2003-2007 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP);
- inventory data of parklands, facilities, and amenities; and
- public outreach employing a variety of methods.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

We Want To Hear From You. County staff are using several outreach methods to make the most of a lean budget to offer opportunities for public participation. The web site provides a description of how and when the public can provide comments.

Focus Group Process

Staff is currently reaching out to parks and open space interests through "Focus Group" meetings, telephone calls, email, and written correspondence. If you would like to participate either as an organization or individual, here's how you can do so:

1. Please complete a QUESTIONNAIRE. Comments are due by **APRIL 8, 2005**.
2. Meetings are being held with local organizations. Meetings are being scheduled through approximately **March 30, 2005**. If you would like more information about these meetings, please call 541-682-6935.

Deadline for Comments

We would like to receive these first round of comments (including completed questionnaires) by **April 8, 2005**. Written comments may be submitted at meetings, by mail, or email.

You can also complete a short "User Survey". The survey is available on the web or on request from the contact information below.

All comments are welcome and will be placed in the public record.

Future Opportunity to Comment

Once the 1st draft is available for your review (targeted for Spring or Summer 2005), it will be published on the web site, a notice will be mailed to organizations and individuals who requested to be on the mailing list, and comments will be taken for about 3 weeks. Then a 2nd draft will be published and presented at public hearings for proposed adoption. Additional details about the process are on the web site.

Questions? Or, to Get On The Mailing List:

Email: celia.barry@co.lane.or.us, or

Call: 541-682-6935, or visit the web site at www.lanecounty.org/parks/masterplan.htm