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This Comprehensive Plan is designed to provide general policy guidance for the growth and development of the Anacortes Parks & Recreation Department.

Anacortes is situated in the Puget Trough of northwest Washington. The Trough, known in part as Puget Sound, is a lowland scoured by glacial action during the Pleistocene epoch. Many islands are scattered throughout the saltwater Sound. Puget Sound lies between two mountain ranges; the Olympic Mountains to the west and the Cascade Mountains to the east. Anacortes is part of a dramatic setting near the San Juan Islands, Canadian Gulf Islands and other Puget Sound islands which lie north and south of the city.

The City of Anacortes is in Skagit County, Washington, 80 miles north of Seattle and 90 miles south of Vancouver, British Columbia. Anacortes is on Fidalgo Island north of Whidbey Island and connected by bridges to the mainland across Swinomish Channel. Anacortes is reached by Highway 20, 16 miles west of Interstate 5 at Burlington. The City occupies the north portion of Fidalgo Island and is bordered on three sides by saltwater shoreline; Burrows Bay, Rosario Strait, Guemes Channel and Fidalgo Bay. The southern edge of Anacortes is mainly Anacortes Community Forest Land, a forest preserve with lakes, streams and trails crowned by Mt. Erie. Anacortes City limits range from sea level to the summit of Mt. Erie at 1,270 feet.

Anacortes has relatively mild yearly climate tempered by coastal conditions. Prevailing winds in Spring and Summer provide drying and drought conditions, while in the Fall and Winter prevailing southwest winds bring winter storms and rain. Occasional northeast winds produce dry, cold temperatures in winter and dry warm temperatures in summer. The mean average summer temperature is 64 degrees and the mean average winter temperature is 40 degrees. Average annual rainfall is 26 inches, 10 inches less than Seattle. Snowfall averages 3 inches.

Canadian Gulf Islands and other Puget Sound islands which lie north and south of the city.

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Anacortes: accessible island, moderate climate

The population of Anacortes in 2007 was 16,400. The Fidalgo and Guemes Islands population (which is generally the area that the City of Anacortes serves for park and recreation purposes) was 23,026. Thus an additional 6,626 people live outside of Anacortes but rely in large part on City Park and Recreational Services. Approximately 75 percent of the service area residents live within the Anacortes City limits while 25 percent live outside the City limits. The following table estimates population for the City of Anacortes and the surrounding Parks and Recreation service area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anacortes City Limits</td>
<td>16,400</td>
<td>19,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Residents in Service Area*</td>
<td>6,626</td>
<td>7,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>23,026</td>
<td>26,651</td>
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*Assuming 80/20 urban split established in the countywide planning policies is achieved.

Parks/Rec service area extends beyond city limits
Introduction

Through visionary efforts, the early citizens of Anacortes gave residents and visitors to the community a wonderful gift. Their forethought preserved many hundreds of acres of native woodland. This landscape creates a powerful legacy of respect for the natural environment and also serves as a commitment of stewardship to the environment and to the community. This legacy is expressed in the volunteerism which helped build Causland Memorial Park and is manifest today in the development of Volunteer Park. The volunteer efforts of individuals and civic associations are deeply rooted in the community.

This Parks and Recreation Plan also reflects the effort of volunteers spending many hours discussing issues, researching opinions, discussing options, studying maps, preparing policies and imagining the future. There is a common thread - from early residents’ land conservation, to today’s efforts - of a community shaping its future and offering a carefully planned Parks and Recreation vision to ensuing generations.

Park, open space, and recreation planning is an opportunity to improve the quality of life of a community and to evaluate performance. It is also an opportunity to hear from residents regarding types of facilities they need and the types of recreational programs they desire. The planning process is also an opportunity to respond to changing recreational needs, to collectively brainstorm on issues, and to introduce a new vision. The purpose of this plan is to guide public decision-making on these issues and visions.
Chapter 1: Existing Parks & Recreation System

Ace of Hearts Rotary Park ("H" Avenue and 38th Street) is a 5-acre park currently under construction that will ultimately feature an off-leash fenced dog park, a little league/fastpitch field, a walking path, a basketball half court and other amenities.

Alice Parchman Newland Park ("R" Avenue) is a 10-acre linear park and street median developed along the "R" Avenue access road from Highway 20 into Anacortes waterfront industries and recreation areas. The park serves as a walking corridor with views of Fidalgo Bay and Mt. Baker.

Ben Root Skate Park is a concrete skate park located on the north end of the Alice Parchman Newland Park.

Cap Sante Park (South end of "W" Avenue) is a 37-acre forested promontory at the eastern edge of Anacortes. It is primarily a viewpoint overlooking the marina, the City of Anacortes, March Point, Fidalgo Bay and the Cascades. A remnant of an amphitheater is located on the east bank of the park.

Causland Memorial Park (8th Street and "N" Avenue) was built in the 1920s by Louis LePage and is on the National Register of Historic Places. A portion of the park is dedicated to Anacortes veterans from World War I to the Vietnam War. The 2-acre park is unique in its use of decorative rock and black and white mosaic for structures and walls. Low, serpentine mosaic walls surround the park, and a bandstand, amphitheater and terraces are similarly made of colored pebble and rock mosaic. Other park features include picnic tables, mature ornamental plantings, a small grassy lawn and many terraces. The park is visited frequently by tourists enthralled by its lovingly detailed decorations.

Clearidge Park (Blakely Place) is a .8-acre partially developed park near the Anacortes Airport with two tennis courts and a basketball court. It was given to the City as part of the subdivision process as homes were developed in the west side of Anacortes.

The Depot (7th Street and "R" Avenue) is a 5.75-acre site generally triangular in shape and located two blocks east of Downtown Anacortes. The site houses a number of historic and natural attractions including: The Depot Building, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and houses the Depot Arts Center; the W.T. Preston, a large sternwheeler, and the Maritime Heritage Center, a facility constructed in 2005 and dedicated to presenting information on Snagboat heritage; a seasonal farmers market; the Altair-Americus Memorial; a train house; a box car; a madrona grove; and two wetlands.

Kiwanis Waterfront Park is a 2-acre natural park located west of the Guemes Ferry Dock. It features day parking, a paved path, beach access, benches, and picnic tables.

Mt. Erie (South Anacortes off Heart Lake Road) is a 160-acre park. It includes the summit of Mt. Erie,
the highest point of Fidalgo Island. There is a small parking area and a paved road to the top of Mt. Erie. It is a popular area for tourists, mountain climbers and hikers. Trails on the mountain connect to the surrounding Anacortes Community Forest Lands.

“N” Avenue Park (2nd Street and “N” Avenue) is .4 acres of undeveloped street-end park land with views to Guemes Channel.

Roadside Park (Jackson Avenue) is a .3-acre street end with views of Guemes Channel.

Rotary Park (Market and “T” Avenue) is a 1.5-acre linear park located on the north and east edge of the Cap Sante Boat Haven at the base of Cap Sante. Rotary Park has a trail out to the Cap Sante breakwater, parking, picnic tables and a shelter.

Volunteer Park (14th Street and “H” Avenue) has been largely a volunteer effort. There are approximately 24 acres of developable space, 15 acres of which are leased from the school district. The Marguerite and Don Daniels Field is a little league sized baseball and fastpitch field with an artificial turf surface. Alton B. Daniels Field and Volunteer Field are regulation sized baseball fields. All three fields have lights, seating, press boxes and scoreboards. Kiwanis Meadows is a newly constructed youth soccer and football field at Volunteer Park, which is surrounded by a paved walking path. There is a playground, basketball court and covered picnic shelter adjacent to Kiwanis Meadows. There are 45 acres of wetlands and open space and a 9-acre area called the Rice Complex that contains a football/soccer field and a 400-meter surfaced track.

Washington Park (Sunset Avenue). This 220-acre park juts into Rosario Strait on the western edge of Anacortes, offering outstanding marine views. The park has a day use area and overnight camping facilities. At Sunset Beach, on the north shore, there is a boat launch, restrooms, picnic shelters, playground and open play area. There are 75 campsites, restrooms, showers and laundry services in the overnight area. Picnic sites and car pullouts provide beach access along Green Point, the west shoreline. A 2.2-mile loop road provides access to several shoreline areas and a viewpoint of Burrows Bay. The loop road is used by cars, cyclists, joggers and walkers.
John and Doris Tursi Park (West 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue) features a small pond and open, covered log structure, plus playground equipment including a climbing area, swings and a slide.

29th Street Playground (29th Street and “Q” Avenue) is a half-acre playground on “Q” Avenue. There is children’s play equipment and a community garden on the site.

Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL). Anacortes owns approximately 2,800 acres of Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) in several large tracts. These include Little Cranberry Lake, Heart Lake (the former State Park lands were acquired in 2002), Whistle Lake and Mt. Erie. The Forest Lands are within the city limits and include forests, lakes, streams, wetlands and meadows. Fifty miles of trails provide public access to and through the Forest Lands. A full-time forest manager, trail maintenance worker and seasonal maintenance crews are employed by the Parks and Recreation Department to manage the land and maintain trails and facilities.

The Forest Lands Comprehensive Plan covers management units, use zones and critical habitat areas. The Forest Advisory Board, five members appointed by the Mayor and City Council, oversees the implementation of the management plan and develops policies. A trail committee representing various user groups has developed trail and user group policy and has suggested trail etiquette to encourage responsible use of the forest lands. A Conservation Easement Program was initiated in 1998 whereby one acre of land is protected in the ACFL for every $1,000 donated. The easements protect the land from logging, mining and development. To date more than 1,500 acres have been conserved by this program. Donations are placed in the Forest Endowment Fund and interest earnings shall be used for the support and enhancement of the Forest Lands as budgeted by the City Council with the advice of the ACFL Advisory Board.

There are three main areas of the Anacortes Community Forest Lands: Little Cranberry Lake, Whistle Lake and Heart Lake.

Little Cranberry Lake Forest Lands (off of Georgia Avenue). This area includes approximately 703 acres around Cranberry Lake. The site is a largely undeveloped Anacortes Community Forest Land maintained by the Parks Department. Five public street ends provide public access to trail heads, and limited parking.

Whistle Lake Forest Lands and Mt. Erie include approximately 1604 acres, also part of the former City watershed. Whistle Lake has limited access, but there is a trail to and around it.

Heart Lake Forest Lands is an 80-acre Community Forest Land holding at the north end of Heart Lake plus approximately 452 acres that were formerly Heart Lake State Park and were transferred to City ownership in 2002. A parking area with restrooms provides access for fishing, swimming and boating (gas engines are not allowed).
Chapter 1: Nearby Park Facilities Under Other Ownership

There are other significant parks in and around Anacortes which are not owned or operated by the Anacortes Parks and Recreation Department. These help meet the needs of the community and we believe must be considered when looking at the overall parks and recreation needs of the community.

**Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center** is owned and operated by the Fidalgo Park and Recreation District, created for this single purpose. The pool is Olympic regulation size, 25 meters, six-lane and barrier free. In addition, showers, weight rooms, lockers and exercise rooms are available. The District has funded its operations on three-year levy cycles.

**School House Park** is a four-acre Skagit County Parks facility on Guemes Island that offers a youth baseball field, basketball court, playground and a tennis court.

**“O” Avenue Beach** is an area on the Guemes Channel at the terminus of “O” Avenue and 2nd Street between the Port of Anacortes’ former transit shed (currently used for Port offices and public events) and Curtis Wharf. The Port’s plan includes cleaning up and improving the shoreline, creating a public path to the beach, shoreline plantings, low impact stormwater techniques and a viewpoint terrace next to Curtis Wharf. The adjacent Lone Tree Park will also be improved by the Port. Work will begin in the summer of 2009.

**Sharpe Park** is a 75-acre Skagit County Park that offers trails, picnicking, portable restroom, saltwater vistas and an open grass area. Montgomery-Duban Headlands Park is a 37 acre park adjacent to Sharpe Park with trails and ¾ mile of shorelines. It is operated by Skagit County Parks and Recreation.

**School House Park** is a four-acre Skagit County Parks facility on Guemes Island that offers a youth baseball field, basketball court, playground and a tennis court.

**Seafarers’ Memorial Park** is a 1.5-acre park developed and owned by the Port of Anacortes. Located on Fidalgo Bay just south of the Cap Sante Boat Haven at the east end of Seafarers’ Way, it provides views of Mount Baker and the refineries on March’s Point, as well as an area for hand-launching small craft. A public building is used by the City’s youth sailing program and by the public for community events and meetings. There are several picnic tables and a large grassy area with pathways.

The park is included in an extensive environmental cleanup that will begin in the summer of 2009. After restoration of the park and marine area, it will have a new shoreline with native landscaping, a permanent dock for hand-launched boats and improved public access.

**The Port of Anacortes** adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2008 that included significant community input, particularly in the general vicinity of the Cap Sante Boat Haven. The Port’s plan includes a variety of public access points to the waterfront, as well as a Waterfront Loop trail that will connect with the Tommy Thompson Trail and the proposed Guemes Channel Trail.

**Deception Pass State Park** is a 4,134-acre marine and camping park with 77,000 feet of saltwater
shoreline, and 33,900 feet of freshwater shoreline on three lakes. Rugged cliffs drop to meet the turbulent waters of Deception Pass. The park is outstanding for breathtaking views, old-growth forests and abundant wildlife.

**Lake Erie and Campbell Lakes** are within a few minutes of Anacortes, and although they have limited public access and facilities, they are available and used by many.

**San Juan Passage**, an approximate 100-house development in the Ship Harbor area, will be adding three parks that will be available to the public. The parks will provide views of Guemes Channel along with an access trail to the Guemes Channel Trail.

**Guemes Mountain** is a preserved area on Guemes Island that is made up of a variety of public and private lands with the allowed uses currently being discussed by the various parties involved.

**Schools and School Grounds** provide play areas and active recreation opportunities for children of Anacortes and Fidalgo Island. Though these are not managed by the Anacortes Parks Department, they are among the recreational assets of the community and can be considered park assets. Anacortes High School has three multi-use soccer/football fields and two dedicated football/soccer fields along with an all-weather running track.

The Middle School has six tennis courts. The elementary schools contribute numerous fields, three of which are useable for minor league and recreational level softball play (one at Island View and two by the Middle School tennis courts). There is a little league / youth fastpitch / adult softball field at Island View School. Mt. Erie, Fidalgo, Whitney and Island View Elementary schools provide play areas for small children. The City of Anacortes has an existing Interlocal Agreement with the Anacortes School District to share athletic facilities.

**Similk Beach Golf Course** is a privately owned 18-hole golf course open to the public.

**Swinomish Channel Boat Launch** is located on the Swinomish Channel under Highway 20 and is operated by Skagit County Parks and Recreation.

**Young’s Park** is a 13-acre Skagit County waterfront park on Guemes Island that includes picnicking and saltwater access.

The Anacortes Parks and Recreation Department offers diverse community-wide programs to fulfill the recreational needs of youth, adults and, seniors.
Chapter 1: Recreation Programs

The Quarterly Menu has become the main communication tool for the Parks and Recreation Department. It features information about department sponsored recreation programs and special events as well as information about Washington Park; Forest Lands activities including volunteer days, information regarding forest use, safety, and upcoming meetings; and Friends of the Forest sponsored hikes and fundraising events.

Non-departmental organizations that have submitted information in the Quarterly Menu include but are not limited to: Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center, Senior Activity Center, Boys and Girls Club, The Dance Center, Soo Bahk Do, Anacortes Community Maritime Center, American Red Cross, Co-Op Preschool, After School Arts Program, and Senior College.

Youth recreational activities include an extensive offering of youth sports leagues and camps, a seasonal small boating program (sailing and kayaking) and various recreational classes including but not limited to: toddler play group, pee wee sport program, bowling, golf, and tennis.

Adult activities include several recreational drop-in sport programs as well as a Co-ed Softball League and various recreational classes including but not limited to: Tai Chi, Dog Obedience, Yoga, and a 50 and Older Kayak program. Special Programs and Events include seasonal parties or celebrations, school vacation activities, special youth events and family events. Examples include a Daddy Daughter Dance, Kids-R-Best Fest, Breakfast with Santa, Spring and Summer Break Fun Weeks and special road and trail run events.

Other Program Offerings
The City of Anacortes contributes an informative newsletter to The Quarterly Menu with information on recent city projects, Library programs and Museum events as well as information about Police, Fire, Sanitation, and Public Works.

The Anacortes Museum and Anacortes Public Library offer many programs and events. The Museum offers regular exhibits in its Carnegie Gallery and also operates the W.T. Preston and Maritime Heritage Center. The Library offers regular Jazz performances on Sunday afternoons many special events for children and adults.

The Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center, under the direction and ownership of the Fidalgo Park and Recreation District, sponsors fitness classes for all ages. Swimming activities, exercise classes and fitness equipment are available. Friends of Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center encourages public use and distributes program and pool information. The Fitness Center organizes aerobic classes, strength building, self-defense and weight training.

The Boys and Girls Club of Anacortes offers extensive afterschool, weekend and summer programs for children of all ages.

The Anacortes Senior Activity Center, through Skagit County Senior Services, offers a variety of programs for seniors.

Privately owned health clubs also serve the fitness and weight training needs of residents on Fidalgo Island. These businesses operate on a for-profit basis and are not subsidized by any governmental agency.

A variety of privately organized youth recreational activities are offered locally. They include Little League baseball, American Legion baseball, youth football, wrestling, AAU Basketball, and other programs.
The privately owned Dance Center provides a variety of dance classes to participants of all ages and abilities. Classes are offered year-round and at various times throughout the day.

The Anacortes School District’s After School Arts Program (ASAP) offers sessions of art offerings three times a year for any student grades K-6. A host of ever changing classes sponsored by the Anacortes School District include such things as dance, mosaic, drawing, knitting, guitar, digital photography, yoga, theatre, jewelry, painting, and art starts for K-2.

A second ASAP program offers strings instruction for grades 3-12, at three levels, for students wanting to play violin, cello or viola.

A third program offers week long art camps during conference weeks and summer vacation.

The Anacortes Community Maritime Center offers many programs and project classes that provide residents the opportunity to learn more about the marine trade of building and maintaining boats. Classes have included general boat maintenance, boat building, and trip and tour information.

The Anacortes Senior College is an all volunteer organization that offers courses to anyone aged 50 years or older. Classes are six weeks long, meeting once a week for two hours with three sessions per year. The classes generally meet in the afternoon at the Anacortes Middle School.

The Port of Anacortes also sponsors public programs, many of which relate to marine activities. An annual Waterfront Festival is co-sponsored by the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce and the Port of Anacortes. Activities include vessel tours, safety displays, music, art fair and boat show.

The Port sponsors a summer concert series as well as in-water boat shows. An annual salmon derby is held at the Cap Sante Boat Haven and the Port sponsored the annual Trawler Fest in 2008 and 2009, with future years looking likely.
Chapter 2: Public Involvement Process

The adoption of the Anacortes Parks and Recreation Plan is an undertaking which brings past documents and current opinions into a single planning document, a process required by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to qualify for grant funding. It is also recommended by the State’s Growth Management Act.

This process started with the creation of a Steering Committee comprised of members of the City Council, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, Forest Advisory Board and Arts Commission. Three public input meetings regarding Recreation Programs, Parks and Facilities and the Anacortes Community Forest Lands were held at the Fidalgo Center on May 17, 24 and 31, 2007.

Applied Research Northwest was hired to conduct a telephone survey in the summer of 2007. Three hundred households in Anacortes were contacted and asked approximately 25 questions about the Parks, Recreation Programs and Forest Lands based in part on the ideas and issues brought up at the public meetings held in May.

A draft plan was compiled by the Steering Committee and staff based on the public hearings and survey results. The draft plan was brought to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission in March of 2008 for review by Commissioners and to take public comment. Subsequent meetings were held by the Anacortes Planning Commission and the Anacortes City Council, with the final plan formally adopted by the City Council.
Chapter 3: Park Needs & Standards

Developing standards / guidelines for the type and quantity of park and recreation facilities needed is approached in a variety of ways by each community. These standards are meant to serve as a guide for local planning agencies to best serve the needs and desires of their communities.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has developed a standards and guidelines publication that defines the standards in the following way:

- a national expression of minimum acceptable facilities for the citizens of urban and rural communities.
- a guideline to determine land requirements for various kinds of park and recreation areas and facilities.
- a basis for relating recreational needs to spatial analysis within a community-wide system of parks and open space areas.
- one of the major structuring elements that can be used to guide and assist regional development.
- a means to justify the need for parks and open space within the overall land use pattern of a region or community.

NRPA standards are developed to address average recreation service based on population (e.g. one facility/5,000 residents) or service radius (recommended distance from the park or facility). Suburban or rural cities generally use the population related standards, while dense cities may use the service radius method.

In the development of this plan it was determined that Anacortes is a unique community with significant resources that do not fit into existing NRPA park classifications. The emphasis of this plan is the integration of all public resources, not just those owned or operated by the city, so we will use the standards of specific needed facilities.

We limited that list to quantifiable items (ball fields, play equipment, etc.) rather than general park references (neighborhood parks, waterfront parks, etc.). These facilities will at times make up a park, but they may also be on school grounds or some other piece of property.

We feel that if we meet specific facility needs, the location, size, etc. of the parks that house them will fall into place. For these planning purposes then it is generally assumed that additional park amenities may be needed for any of the listed elements (for example ball fields may need parking lots, drinking fountains, benches, picnic tables, restroom facilities, etc.)

The following charts show what the Anacortes recreation demand is and how it is being/will be met now and in the future. Population estimates (from Table 1) are used for the analysis. These firmly established Anacortes Level of Service Standards consider the historical provision of facilities in the community adjusted by public input.
Table 2. Parks Facility Demand and Projects Needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Standards</th>
<th>NRPA Minimum Standard</th>
<th>City of Anacortes Standards</th>
<th>2007 City of Anacortes Demand</th>
<th>2007 Additional Service Areas Demand</th>
<th>2007 Total Demand</th>
<th>Current Inventory (includes schools)</th>
<th>2007 Unmet Need</th>
<th>2018 City of Anacortes Demand</th>
<th>2018 Additional Service Areas Demand</th>
<th>2018 Total Demand</th>
<th>2018 Unmet Need</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Baseball Fields</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 7,500 pop.</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.0*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.55</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth League Baseball Fields</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.5*</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fastpitch Fields</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1.5*</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>3.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football Fields</td>
<td>1 per 20,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 10,000 pop.</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
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<td>Soccer Fields</td>
<td>1 per 10,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tennis Courts</td>
<td>1 per 2,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 2,000 pop.</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>9.65</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>13.32</td>
<td>3.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outdoor Basketball Courts</td>
<td>1 per 5,000 pop.</td>
<td>1 per 4,000 pop.</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>6.67</td>
<td>2.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>No NRPA standard</td>
<td>1 per 1,500 pop.</td>
<td>10.93</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>12.86</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>17.76</td>
<td>8.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smooth Surfaced Walking Paths</td>
<td>No NRPA standard</td>
<td>1 mile per 2,000 pop.</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>11.61</td>
<td>7.07</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>9.65</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>13.32</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covered Picnic Shelters</td>
<td>No NPRA standard</td>
<td>1 per 3,000 pop.</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Leash Dog Areas</td>
<td>No NPRA standard</td>
<td>1 acre per 7,500 pop.</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Baseball, fastpitch and Little League fields with lights are counted as 1.5
Chapter 3: Facility Standards

The following summary of facility types and their counterparts in the Anacortes Park system recapitulates Table 2 in greater detail. It also summarizes the recommended improvements or the approach to further development consistent with public input and staff and Advisory Commission direction. Elements of the recommendations for improvements can be found in the Action Plan/Capital Improvement Plan in Part 7.

**Off-Leash Dog Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NRPA Standard:</th>
<th>No NPRA standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Facility Ratio:</td>
<td>1 Acre per 16,400 Population (Anacortes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Acre per 23,026 Population (Total service area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Standard:</td>
<td>1 Acre per 7,500 Population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation: The Parks Department should complete the off-leash area at Ace of Hearts/Rotary Park and continue to look for other sites that will allow dogs off-leash. Preferably at least one location should have water access.

**Youth league baseball fields**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NRPA Standard:</th>
<th>1 Field per 5,000 Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Facility Ratio:</td>
<td>1 Field per 6,560 Population (Anacortes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Field per 9,210 Population (Total service area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Standard:</td>
<td>1 Field per 5,000 Population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation: There are 2.5 Little League fields (Storvik and Island View) in Anacortes. Storvik has lights and is counted as 1.5 fields. A Little League field at Ace of Hearts Rotary Park is under construction and when completed will fill our current needs.

**Fastpitch fields**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NRPA Standard:</th>
<th>1 Field per 5,000 Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existing Facility Ratio:</td>
<td>1 Field per 10,933 Population (Anacortes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Field per 15,350 Population (Total service area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended Standard:</td>
<td>1 Field per 5,000 Population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendation: The Marguerite and Don Daniels Field is a newly constructed synthetic turf field designed for fastpitch. Fastpitch also has access to the little league fields at Storvik, Island View and the field under construction at Ace of Hearts Rotary Park. This should satisfy the demand for fastpitch fields.
**Football fields**

- **NRPA Standard:** 1 Field per 20,000 Population
- **Existing Facility Ratio:** 1 Field per 8,200 Population (Anacortes)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 Field per 10,000 Population

Recommendation: There are currently 2 football fields (War Memorial Field and Rice Field) in Anacortes. No new football fields are needed at this time, although improvement to the surface of either field would increase usability. If a cooperative arrangement with the Anacortes School District to help those improvements occur were possible, it should be explored.

**Soccer fields**

- **NRPA Standard:** 1 Field per 10,000 Population
- **Existing Facility Ratio:** 1 Field per 4,100 Population (Anacortes)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 Field per 5,000 Population

Recommendation: There are four soccer fields available in Anacortes (two at Smiley's bottom, one at Storvik Park, and newly constructed Kiwanis Meadows at Volunteer Park). Both Storvik and Kiwanis Meadows have amenities. These fields are not regulation sized. There has been an expressed desire for a regulation soccer “pitch” in Anacortes.

**Tennis courts**

- **NRPA Standard:** 1 court per 2,000 Population
- **Existing Facility Ratio:** 1 court per 1,640 Population (Anacortes)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 court per 2,000 Population

Recommendation: There are currently six courts at the Middle School (Anacortes School District owned and maintained), two courts at Clearidge (city owned and maintained), and two courts at Fidalgo School (Anacortes School District owned and maintained). We should do what we can to maintain the existing inventory, improve access to courts and amenities at Clearidge and locate two courts with lights at some future location. We should also support efforts to provide a covered or indoor tennis facility to serve the needs of local residents.

**Outdoor Basketball courts**

- **NRPA Standard:** 1 Court per 5,000 Population
- **Existing Facility Ratio:** 1 Court per 4,100 Population (Anacortes)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 Court per 4,000 Population
Recommendation: We currently have four courts (two at Storvik Park, one at Whitney School and one at Clearidge). We should maintain our existing inventory and explore the possibility of a covered outdoor facility. We should work with the School District to improve their outdoor facilities and add courts as opportunities present themselves.

**Play Structures**

- **NRPA Standard:** No standard
- **Existing Facility Ratio:**
  - 1 Structure per 1,822 Population (Anacortes)
  - 1 Structure per 2,558 Population (Total service area)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 Structure per 1,500 Population

Recommendation: There are currently nine publicly available play structures in and around Anacortes (29th Street Playground, Storvik Park, Washington Park, Shugarts Playground, Guemes Island, Island View School, Whitney School, Mt. Erie School and Fidalgo School). Play structures are needed in the Northern Pacific Addition. We should maintain/improve our existing inventory and add structures as opportunities arise and population growth continues.

**Smooth Surfaced Walking Paths**

- **NRPA Standard:** No standard
- **Existing Facility Ratio:**
  - 1 mile per 2,320 Population (Anacortes)
  - 1 mile per 3,256 Population (Total service area)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 mile per 2,000 Population

Recommendation: There are currently 6.67 miles of Smooth Surfaced Walking Paths in and around Anacortes (Thompson Trail 3.92, Washington Park 2.2, Storvik Park .25, Rotary Park .3). A multi-use trail along Guemes Channel should be a high priority project as identified by our telephone survey and the City of Anacortes 2007 Comprehensive Plan. This should connect to the Thompson Trail. The Anacortes Transportation Plan (October 2007) provides four broad policies to support and encourage bicycling and walking in Anacortes. Policy 3.1a: Provide all residents and visitors to Anacortes with a safe, efficient and accessible transportation system that allows them to walk and bicycle with independence and comfort. Policy 3.1b: Support and enhance a healthy environment and ecosystem by providing safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian facilities which will help accomplish this. Policy 3.1c: Support and encourage bicycling and walking by integrating transportation and land use decisions to protect and enhance a development pattern of a human scale city. Policy 3.1d: Allow all residents and visitors to Anacortes to safely use public transportation corridors for bicycling and walking (except where prohibited by law).

**Covered Picnic Shelters**

- **NRPA Standard:** No standard
- **Existing Facility Ratio:**
  - 1 Shelter per 3,280 Population (Anacortes)
  - 1 Shelter per 4,605 Population (Total service area)
- **Recommended Standard:** 1 Shelter per 3,000 Population

Recommendation: There are currently five covered picnic shelters in and around Anacortes (Washington Park upper beach, Washington Park lower beach, Rotary Park, Bowmans Bay and Rosario Beach). There will be a need for one additional reservable picnic shelter that needs to be located where there is parking and a restroom. This could fit in as part of any development of the Heart Lake area.
Chapter 4: Parks & Recreation Opportunities

The following section of this plan identifies parts of Anacortes, called “opportunity areas,” where comprehensive planning and development should contribute to new park and recreation amenities and activities.

Many ideas were brought forward in public meetings held in the spring of 2007, and addressed in a subsequent telephone survey of city residents. These included expanded walking paths; recreational activities for adults; a small boat center; a multi-purpose indoor recreational facility; and covered lighted tennis courts.

Walking Paths and Corridors Connections: Loop trails, walks and pathways

The City of Anacortes has a wealth of parks, open spaces, school grounds and other public facilities and grounds. It is desirable to extend public parks and other public facilities by linking them to each other through open space corridors, walkways, trails and other accessible means. Linking the system enhances the benefit and function of each park and public property and allows a convenient and safe means of park access by community residents.

The City of Anacortes, through its street system, has the beginnings of this type of linkage. However, in many areas, sidewalks do not exist or exist on only one side of the street and thus do not take full advantage of the public right of way. In most cases where linkages are desirable, there appear to be sufficient rights of way to accommodate a walkway or trail.

Many new standards and recommendations for non-motorized connections are contained in the City of Anacortes 2007 Transportation Plan.

City-wide trails can link many open space areas and are considered different from the Community Forest Land nature trails. The Forest Land trails provide important nature reserve access while the connecting trails can provide links to many community services.

A loop trail system is a community-wide link for neighborhoods, schools and commercial centers. Loop trails can be designated for walking routes and bicycle links off of busy city streets. School grounds should be included in loop trails to encourage student bicycle access. Bicycle commuters or bicycle/ferry travelers often prefer direct routes with vehicular traffic. However, alternatives for recreational bicyclists and children are important and can be accommodated on existing low traffic volume streets and dedicated bike/walking paths.

In our recent telephone survey, 85 percent of respondents said they had gone walking or hiking as a recreational activity in the past year. Walking corridors are valuable assets.
are valuable assets for city residents. The Tommy Thompson Trail is a popular destination for walkers and 59 percent of those surveyed said expanding the Trail is very or extremely important.

Improved sidewalks provide a safe way for residents to walk between neighborhoods, parks and recreation facilities and commercial venues. Trail corridors like the Thompson Trail can serve as a recreational destination for walkers, bikers and others and as a link for non-motorized commuters. The City’s goal to connect the Thompson Trail to a future trail along Guemes Channel from downtown to the State Ferry and on to Washington Park would be an important feature for improved recreational opportunities for walkers and bikers. It would also offer a non-motorized option for travel from downtown to the west end of the island and a safe corridor for walkers of all ages.

Recommendation: The Parks Department should work closely with other City Departments to do all it can to secure walking paths and connecting corridors within the City and around the County. A particular emphasis should be the pursuit of a waterfront trail connecting the Depot Arts Center to Washington Park. The Parks Department should also work to get bike racks installed where appropriate to assist those interested in non-motorized forms of transportation. Whenever possible, level routes and curb cuts should be incorporated to assist people with disabilities.

**Guemes Channel Trail**

The City is proposing to build a trail to expand the Tommy Thompson Trail from its current downtown location all the way out to Washington Park along the Guemes Channel. This is a long term project that will be done in phases. Phase one will add a trail from the cul de sac at Edwards Way east for approximately .5 mile. Other phases will be constructed as planning is completed and as funding and land and/or easements are acquired.

**Small Boat Center**

The idea of a small boat center located on the water that could store hand-launch craft for sailing, kayaking, rowing and canoeing resonates with many organizations and individuals in the community. It could serve as an educational and recreational center. Possible locations suggested for a center include but are not limited to Rotary Park with launching at the Cap Sante Boat Haven, Seafarers Memorial Park or a facility on Fidalgo Bay that might be constructed in conjunction with a private shoreline development. The telephone survey commissioned by the City and conducted over the summer of 2007 found 35 percent of respondents somewhat or highly likely to use a small boat center. Small boat facilities in several locations are included in the Port of Anacortes Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendation: The Parks Department should work closely with other City Departments, the Port of Anacortes and the Small Boat Center community group to do all it can to assist local efforts to create a small boating facility or facilities on Fidalgo Bay. Rotary Park or other park property may be able to accommodate a small boat center. This center could in turn serve as a downtown stop for kayakers traveling on “water trails” in the Puget Sound.
Indoor Multipurpose Athletic Field
The prospect of an indoor multipurpose athletic field that could be used by all ages for soccer, football, baseball, fastpitch or lacrosse was introduced to residents via the telephone survey. Thirty percent of respondents said they or a member of their household were somewhat or highly likely to use such a facility. The location of a facility like this and funding options would have to be explored.

Covered Lighted Tennis Facility
At the public meetings held in the spring of 2007 attention was called to the wish for a covered or possibly indoor tennis facility in Anacortes. This topic was included in the telephone survey and 25 percent of respondents commented that they were somewhat or highly likely to use a covered lighted tennis facility. A location for an indoor tennis facility was not identified.

Recommendation: The Parks Department should monitor private interests in an indoor or covered tennis facility and help where possible to assist with the location, building and operation of such a facility.

Off-Leash Dogs
Many respondents to the survey noted that dog walking is a popular recreational activity. Out of that has come a discussion about opening places for dogs to walk off-leash in the city parks. There is currently a temporary off-leash dog park near downtown and a larger off-leash area at Ace of Hearts/Rotary Park.

Recommendation: The Parks Department should complete the off-leash area at Ace of Hearts/Rotary Park and continue to look for other sites that will allow dogs off-leash. Preferably at least one location should have water access.

Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve
The recent acquisition of the Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve (SHIP) by the City of Anacortes from the Port of Anacortes and the approval of permits for the construction of the SHIP interpretive trail are an incredible opportunity that the Parks Department must take advantage of.

Recommendation: Continue to move forward with detailed construction drawings and bid package to get the project put out to bid. Continue efforts with Washington State Ferries and adjacent development to secure access on either end of the trail. Ensure that any improvements made to the area are very sensitive to this Critical Area and are of the highest quality possible. Adopt a policy statement that recognizes the purpose of SHIP as to protect the wetland and marine ecosystems, to educate students and the general public about the wetlands ecosystems and to provide appropriate public access to the shoreline and natural areas at Ship Harbor. Develop a management plan for SHIP.

Inclusion of Art in Public Spaces
The issue of Art in public spaces was raised during the formation of this document by representatives from the City of Anacortes Arts Commission.

Recommendation: The Parks Department in conjunction with the Arts Commission should work closely with other City Departments and other public entities to help get public art installations incorporated into new designs and installed at existing facilities.
Depot Arts Center

There is an adopted master plan for the Depot Arts Center. Implementing that plan should be actively pursued so that the space can be further developed into a public area that could better accommodate the farmers market as well as hosting outside public performances. The wetland area should be improved and connections throughout the area should be encouraged.

Disc golf / Pickleball

The possibility of providing areas for disc golf and pickleball were identified as areas of interest to some. The Parks Department should work with those user groups to explore potential locations for such activities. A possible location for a pickleball court might be some of the unused space in Storvik Park where the shuffleboard courts are currently located. Volunteer Park is a possible location for a disc golf area but needs much further review. School District locations might also be considered for these activities.

Heart Lake

A master plan for the Heart Lake area should be developed that is consistent with the management plan that has been approved. This might represent an area where the need for an additional reserveable covered picnic shelter may be able to be addressed. This could also include restoration of some of the shoreline along with other issues raised through our normal public planning process.

Accessibility Improvements

The Parks Department should continue its efforts to make facilities and areas accessible to as many individuals as reasonably possible whenever it can, and work with groups representing citizens with disabilities.
Chapter 5: Goals & Policies

GOAL 1: Provide a range of high quality and easily accessible park and recreational areas, facilities, and opportunities that will serve all age groups, recreational interests and ability levels.

POLICY:
(a) Provide park areas that are convenient to and accessible by all residents of Anacortes.
(b) Provide programs for as many people of diverse ability, age, and gender as our resources allow.
(c) Provide facilities and activities that are accessible per ADA standards and are sensitive to issues of universal accessibility in spirit.
(d) Provide a balance of both active and passive recreation opportunities that encourage active lifestyles, facilitate lifelong participation and generate a respect for the natural environment.
(e) Develop a comprehensive multi-purpose trail system to serve recreational and non-motorized transportation functions for a wide variety of users.
(f) Improve the arterial street system in the City to make provision for bicycle and pedestrian connections.
(g) Support and encourage the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Management Plan’s provisions for the maintenance of a trail system for recreational users.
(h) Develop a long range master plan for the provision of recreational programs and services.

GOAL 2: Increase the opportunities for public access to and enjoyment of the shorelines of Anacortes, including both physical and visual access.

POLICY:
(a) Place high priority on completing the multi-use trail along Guemes Channel from the Depot Arts Center to Washington Park with links to other natural areas including the ACFL and Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve.
(b) Work with the Port of Anacortes to develop and interconnect Cap Sante Boat Haven and surrounding areas including:
   i. Continuing to support transient moorage facilities.
   ii. Developing a public fishing pier.
   iii. Enhancing landscaping, roadways, and pedestrian walkways.
   iv. Developing a small boating facility.
(c) Maintain a public boat launch adjacent to the downtown areas.
(d) City owned rights-of-way or street ends that afford access to, or views of, marine shorelines should be evaluated for suitability as street end parks and/or wildlife corridors and developed as such if appropriate.

GOAL 3:  
Provide parks, open space, recreation facilities, and a comprehensive recreation services program to the citizens of Anacortes in well-run, economical and cost-effective manner.

POLICY:
(a) Develop safe, high quality facilities that serve multiple purposes and functions whenever appropriate.
(b) Avoid duplication of recreation programming with non-departmental organizations unless the demand for additional programs exceeds the supply.
(c) Manage recreation programs on an economically sound basis, evaluating the need for fees on a case-by-case basis.
(d) Provide leadership for all park and recreation activities in Anacortes by assisting other agencies, groups and individuals in their efforts to improve their quality of life. Act as a catalyst to help special interest groups organize and run their own programs, especially when for the benefit of local residents.
(e) Foster and promote stewardship of the Anacortes Park and open space system.
(f) Place planning emphasis on the development of a linked system of parks and open spaces.
(g) Broaden the public understanding of parks to include sidewalks, boulevards, street ends and open space on other public properties.
(h) When developing acquisition plans for new parks consider and provide for maintenance and operations costs.
(i) Prepare master plans for development or improvement of existing parks based upon real needs.
(j) Employ “best management practices” in hiring and training park department employees.
(k) Ensure that each employee knows they she or he will be expected to contribute to the team effort by suggesting ways that we can improve our services.
(l) Consistently exceed customer expectations in the delivery of services and programs: Provide information and schedules in a timely manner. Return calls and answer questions as they are presented. Provide opportunities for participants to evaluate programs and events.
(m) Recruit, involve, and utilize volunteers in the planning and delivery of park and recreation programs.

GOAL 4:
Engage the public in decisions about planning, acquisition, development and management of the park and recreation facilities and programs.

POLICY:
(a) Maintain a public feedback system to ensure the community’s awareness of and involvement in such issues as changes in recreation interests, park maintenance, city operations and services, etc.
(b) Utilize the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and Forest Advisory Board’s monthly meetings to hear public comments and take feedback on community interests and concerns.

(c) The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission will advise the City Council regarding the management of the Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve. The Commission shall receive input from a subcommittee made up of interested community members who should have representation from environmental
educators, the Shannon Point Marine Research Center, Evergreen Islands, Friends of the Forest, Anacortes School District, Samish Nation, Washington State Ferry System and others as appropriate.

(d) The ACFL Advisory Board will advise City Council on management of all of the lands that formerly comprised Heart Lake State Park, as well as Mt. Erie including the summit; and the area around Little Cranberry Lake dedicated in 1964 by City Council as Little Cranberry Lake Park.

(e) Use a variety of modalities to communicate with the public including direct mailings, the City of Anacortes website, the government access television channel, e-mail lists, local popular press, local radio station, etc.

GOAL 5:
Develop and implement parks maintenance procedures that enhance the quality and durability of our park facilities.

POLICY:
(a) Provide a high level of maintenance for all City facilities appropriate to the needs of the park.
(b) Develop specific maintenance plans for some areas of the park system that address staffing priorities, equipment needs, etc.

GOAL 6:
Ensure adequate funding sources for parks and recreation planning, development, management and maintenance and maintain a plan for capital improvements to guide capital expenditures.

POLICY:
(a) Prepare, maintain and implement a comprehensive park, recreation and open space plan that fulfills the requirements of state and local granting agencies.
(b) Pursue grant funding as appropriate to acquire and develop parks facilities and recreation programs.
(c) Establish an operating budget that addresses the public demand, needs and interests as expressed in public opinion surveys.
(d) Develop a fees and charges policy for residents of the City of Anacortes that is based on the ability to pay with costs shared between the City and the user.
(e) Work with Skagit County to develop a specific approach to meeting the needs of those people living outside the City limits but likely to utilize City park and recreation services.
(f) Require new subdivisions to provide impact fee payments to the City.
(g) Adjust park impact fees to keep park facilities current with growth.
(h) Foster partnerships and cooperative efforts with other agencies, jurisdictions, citizen groups and volunteers in planning for parks, recreation and open space opportunities.
(i) Continue to promote close working relationships with the Anacortes School District, Skagit County, the Port of Anacortes and others who provide recreation programs and services including jointly funding projects where appropriate.

GOAL 7:
Design, construct and manage parks facilities and programs with sensitivity to the protection and restoration of environmental resources and natural habitats.

POLICY:
(a) Ensure that all park projects comply with the City’s Critical Areas, Tree Preservation and Shoreline regulations.
(b) Include greenbelts in new park development or park redevelopment where appropriate; these greenbelts should include pedestrian connections, wildlife corridors and park / forestland buffers wherever practicable and reasonable.
(c) Provide recreational opportunities while preserving and enhancing the resource value of each site (natural, cultural, historic, recreational, etc.).

(d) Promote stewardship of native habitat for wildlife and native vegetation where the choice contributes to habitat value in parks or areas of parks with natural lands, especially for sensitive habitats and habitats that are in decline.

(e) Maintain or improve the functional integrity of water-courses, wetlands, bodies of water and their shores by keeping them in their existing natural condition where appropriate or restoring them as appropriate.

(f) Continue to support the ACFL Conservation Easement Program until all eligible acres have conservation easements.

(g) Continue to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides and to test the use of less toxic alternatives, particularly in areas immediately adjacent to waterways and wetlands.

(h) Continue program to remove non-native invasive plant species from parks, the ACFL and city green spaces.

(i) Increase recycling collection, purchase recycled products and promote energy conservation in parks facilities.

(j) Purchase alternative fuel vehicles and equipment when appropriate for parks maintenance needs.

(k) Take measures to minimize storm water runoff from park grounds using Low Impact Development (LID) when appropriate.

(l) For storm water discharge from Anacortes Parks, provide treatment that effectively reduces or eliminates trash, oil, toxicants and fecal bacteria being discharged to marine water of Puget Sound when appropriate.

(m) Review and implement environmentally sound practices wherever reasonable. This could include looking at water consumption, electrical power consumption, paper use, fertilizer use, herbicide use, gas consumption, etc.
Chapter 6: Park Funding Options

Funding and Financing Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs

Without a strategy for funding its development, the vision of a park and recreation system remains only in the imagination.

Often park and recreation facilities and programs are viewed as nonessential when compared with public safety, transportation and utility needs. In a household budget, parks may compare with vacation and entertainment funds, while the police and fire services may compare with the mortgage payment and weekly food budgets. Some things are essential, others can be thought of as optional. However, the health of a community often is reflected in its quality of life. The quality of life is often related to the community’s environment, parks, open space, trails systems and recreational opportunities.

When designing a park, an apartment complex or a single family residence, we look at the surrounding properties to gain an appreciation for the setting. Often, we “borrow” elements of the adjacent landscape in the development of the site plan. Off-site trees, for example, can influence the placement and species selection for trees on our property. This “landscape borrowing” mirrors the use of non-park improvements to further the goals of the Parks and Recreation Plan.

Every public project should be perceived as an opportunity to implement a component of the plan. Therefore, funding for park and recreation improvements can be seen as originating from any of the budgets of the many City departments.

The committee putting this plan together wants to send a strong message that the Parks Department should do all it can to maximize every dollar spent on park and recreation improvements. The City must work with the other governmental agencies and private groups in the area to make sure there is not a duplication of services. The committee wants to see the City work with the County to come up with a funding mechanism to meet the needs of those not within the City limits but likely to utilize park and recreation services from the City.

There are many options and alternatives for funding park land acquisition and development. These include a variety of bond and levy measures, state and federal grants, utility taxes and user fees, private donations and volunteer efforts, impact assessment fees or any other creative solution. Many of these options and alternatives typically utilized are described in the following table.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Type</th>
<th>Funding Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City General Fund</td>
<td>City funds from the annual operating budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Improvement Fund</td>
<td>City funds allocated to major capital projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Year Special Levy</td>
<td>A property tax for construction and/or operation levied for only one year. Requires a 60% majority approval of 40% of the voters who voted at the last election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bond Measure</td>
<td>A property tax for the sale of construction bonds. The tax assessment can be levied up to 30 years. Requires a 60% majority approval of 40% of the voters who voted at the last general election.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Councilmanic Bonds</td>
<td>A tax assessment initiated by the City Council. The limit is based in a percent of the total assessed valuation of the city. Seldom used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue Bonds</td>
<td>Revenue from the operation of the facility pays for the capital cost and debt service. Does not require a vote of the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skagit County</td>
<td>Revenue from cooperative projects such as active sports complex or projects with shared responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anacortes School District</td>
<td>Revenue from cooperatively sponsored programs and interlocal use agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port of Anacortes</td>
<td>Revenue from fees collected by Port or from cooperative programs cooperatively sponsored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD Grants</td>
<td>Grants from The Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development for a wide variety of projects. Most are distributed in lower income areas of communities. Grants can be up to 100%. The City has received several HUD grants for non-park related projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOVA Program, (Recreation and Conservation Office)</td>
<td>Grants from the Non-highway / Off-road Vehicle Activities Program administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office. These grants will pay for the planning, acquisition, development and maintenance of off-road vehicle trails as well as education and enforcement. The program was recently amended to cover non-urban bicycle and pedestrian trails. Grants can be up to 100%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic Land Enhancement Fund</td>
<td>This program funded by the State Department of Natural Resources will fund acquisition and development of waterfront parks, public access and environmental protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative 215 Boating Funds</td>
<td>Funds received from boating gas tax are allocated to marine related projects. Up to $150,000 per project is available but a 50% match is required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Legislative Funding</td>
<td>While there currently is no money allocated, it is very possible that the state legislature through a state referendum or through a general appropriation will provide a grant program for park and facility improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LWCF</td>
<td>The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides funding to assist in preserving, developing, and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources including but not limited to parks, trails, wildlife lands, and other lands and facilities desirable for individual active participation. The program is administered locally by the Recreation and Conservation Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Revenue</td>
<td>Revenue from park operations is used to pay for capital projects. Washington Park and Mt. Erie Park are both facilities in the Anacortes park system that generate this type of revenue. For example, Washington Park receives fees from camping sites and boat launch parking. Additionally, revenue from leasing the communications tower sites on Mount Erie is dedicated to park purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Efforts</td>
<td>Volunteers can contribute a great deal in terms of cash, materials, and labor to park improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Transfer Excise Tax</td>
<td>A tax assessed on the sale of property and administered by local counties and cities. Revenue can only be used to finance capital facilities specified in the local government’s Capital Facilities Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates of Participation</td>
<td>A lease-purchase approach in which a city or county sells Certificates of Participation (COP’s) to a lending institution. The city or county then pays the loan off from revenue produced by the facility or from its own general operating budget. The lending institution holds title to the property until the COP’s are repaid. This procedure does not require a vote of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Park Impact Fees</strong></td>
<td>Development fees imposed by a county or city for park land acquisitions and development. Fees charged to developers are typically based upon a set amount per residential unit. This amount is calculated to represent the development’s share of public improvements necessitated by growth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program</strong></td>
<td>Local and tribal governments must provide at least 50 percent matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions. Grant applications are evaluated in eleven categories: critical habitat, farmland, local parks, natural areas, riparian, state lands development and renovation, state lands restoration and enhancement, state parks, trails, urban wildlife habitat and water access. Administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Centennial Clean Water Program</strong></td>
<td>This is a state program administered by the Department of Ecology and financed by a tax on cigarettes. The program is designed to provide grants and loans on projects that will enhance water quality. Typical projects related to parks and open space could include lake restoration, storm water retention, wetland enhancement and other water quality mitigation measures. Grants are available for planning, design and construction up to 70% of the total project cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Utility Tax</strong></td>
<td>Cities or counties can charge a tax on the gross receipts of electric, gas, garbage, telephone, cable TV, water/ sewer, and stormwater service providers. The maximum tax is 6%, unless voters approve a higher rate. Revenue can be used for capital facilities acquisition, construction and maintenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Forestry Grants</strong></td>
<td>The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administers two funding grant programs in the areas of urban forestry. The first is funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration and provides grants to purchase and plant trees. Urban street tree planting programs are sometimes funded by this method. Last year the DNR received $285,000 to distribute. A 25% match is required. The second program is for educational and technical assistance and is funded by the U.S. Forest Service. A local match is also required for this program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ISTEA</strong></td>
<td>The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) provides funding for bicycle transportation facilities, including new or improved lanes or paths, traffic control devices, shelters and parking facilities.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life Estate</strong></td>
<td>This is the donation of a property to a public agency with the provision that the donor may live on the site as long as desired.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>User Fees</strong></td>
<td>Cities, counties, and special purpose districts can charge fees for use of facilities or participating in programs. They are often entrance fees or registration fees. A certain level of service or development may be required to assess park and recreation fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Donation / Foundations</strong></td>
<td>Private donations and foundations are also possible sources of assets and funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Ecology</strong></td>
<td>Grants from the Coastal Zone Management Account. Grants pay 50% and are primarily used for shoreline acquisition and public access.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conservation Futures Levy</strong></td>
<td>Levy revenues based on the State’s Current Use Taxation Law which allows counties to levy a tax of up to 15 cents per $1,000 of assessed property valuation for the acquisition of open space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anacortes Parks Foundation

The Anacortes Parks Foundation, formed in 1995, offers private support to the Parks Department in soliciting and coordinating private contributions as well as assisting with various development projects.

The Foundation has been an invaluable asset to the Parks and Recreation since its inception and the Parks Department needs to do all necessary to maintain and improve that valuable working relationship as appropriate. Through various means the Parks Foundation has contributed approximately $5 million worth of improvements to the park systems around Anacortes.

Recreation and Conservation Office

For 40 years, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), formerly known as the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, has contributed to the state’s recreational qualities and habitat conservation and interpretation through its investment of public funds in parks, trails, water access sites, wildlife habitat, and natural areas.

The RCO administers several grant programs for outdoor recreation and habitat conservation purposes. The RCO grant program requires that funds be spent for specific types of projects. To be considered for funding assistance, most grant programs require that RCO be given assurance that the proposed project will be operated and maintained in perpetuity for the purposes for which funding is sought. Most grant programs also require that sponsors complete a systematic planning process prior to seeking RCO funding.

RCO has grant limits on most of its programs and encourages and often requires sponsors to share in the project’s cost. Grants are awarded by the Committee based on a public, competitive process which weighs the merits of proposed projects against established program criteria.

There are five major RCO grant programs: Boating Facilities Program, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Firearms Range Program, and the Non-highway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA).

The RCO funding programs require specific information to be gathered and presented in a planning document. This document reflects agency requirements for recreation planning. To apply in the Urban Wildlife Habitat category of the WWRP, a companion document or insert can be prepared to address habitat and wildlife issues.

Impact Fees

Impact fees are charges assessed on new development to pay for public facilities needed to serve new growth.

The purpose and size of the fees must be reasonably related to the new development which creates the additional demand for public facilities. Impact fees should contribute a proportionate share of the cost and should be used for public facilities.

The state Growth Management Act (GMA) addresses “project improvements” and “system improvements” when describing impact fees. Project improvements refer to improvements as a part of the development itself. Other capital improvements generated by the development which go beyond its borders, such as the local road system linked to the development, are termed system improvements. Impact fees for system improvements need to be spent in conformance with the capital facilities plan included in the comprehensive plan.

The objective of impact fees is not to raise revenue, but to ensure that adequate capital facilities are built. An advantage of an impact fee program is that it distributes the burden of paying for growth-generated public facility costs to those most benefiting. Another advantage is that it allows developers to proceed with projects instead of waiting for public facilities to be constructed at a future date. Finally, an impact fee program allows local government to commit to constructing public facilities in a planned and systematic manner.

Recommendation: Current Parks and Recreation impact fees, $615 per new housing unit, have not been revisited since 1998. The Parks Department should look into adjusting those fees in one or all of the following ways: Updated cost estimates, calculating inflationary figures, re-visiting listed projects, including county residents in fee calculations and asking the County to make a payment for their part of the increased services required.
Chapter 7: Recommended Action Plan

The following are recommended improvements for existing park facilities:

**Ace of Hearts Rotary Park**
- 1) Complete construction of Little League fastpitch and baseball field.
- 2) Complete construction of off-leash dog park, path, plantings, parking, restroom, and other amenities.
- 3) Pursue the possibility of daylighting Ace of Hearts Creek, and improving the adjacent wetland area. The first step in this is to determine if in fact the creek can be daylighted.

**Alice Parchman Newland Park (10 acres)**
- No changes planned.

**Anchor Cove Park (5,700 square feet)**
- No improvements planned.

**Ben Root Skate Park (.5 acre)**
- 1) Work with skaters to construct improvements to the park.

**Cap Sante Park (37 acres)**
- 1) Provide a low automobile curb/railing around the parking area.
- 2) Prioritize removing invasive non-native plants from the park.
- 3) Provide several seating areas near the top view point and at the east end of 5th Street.
- 4) Construct a small interpretive board.

**Causland Park (2.8 acres)**
- 1) Design and construct restroom.
- 2) Restore the bandstand.
- 3) Improve signage.
- 4) Continue improvements to wall in keeping with historical nature of park.

**Clearidge Park (.8 acres)**
- 1) Improve basketball and tennis court amenities.

**Connectors, Pathways and Trails**
- 1) Complete ACFL to Guemes Channel Trail connection through Rockwell easement, Airport property and other areas as appropriate.
- 2) Develop multiple access points from Oakes Avenue north to Guemes Channel Trail.
- 3) Coordinate Skagit County open space/trail corridor system as to location within Anacortes UGA.
- 4) Acquire land and/or easements for Guemes Channel Trail and adjacent shoreline habitats.

**The Depot**
- 1) Implement the master plan.

**Horizon Heights Park**
- 1) Identify current wetlands and buffer restrictions/opportunities.
- 2) Implement plan within permit limitations.

**Kiwanis Waterfront Park**
- 1) Improve native plantings and lawn area.
- 2) Consider formalizing some of the internal informal trails within the park.
Mt. Erie School/Park (0.5 acres)  
1) No improvements planned.

Mt. Erie Park (80 acres)  
1) Construct restroom (consider innovative construction on challenging terrain).  
2) Repair road.  
3) Improve parking arrangements.  
4) Improve signage.

“N” Avenue Park (18,000 square feet)  
1) Complete plan for site (expected to include minor improvements to parking, picnic facilities, replanting of native shoreline plants and address problem of adjacent oil storage tanks).  
2) Construct improvements.  
3) Make necessary improvements to allow for access to Guemes Channel Trail and “O” Avenue beach.  
4) Remove invasive weeds on site as they appear.

Park at Minnesota and West 6th  
1) Complete park improvements as preliminarily designed.

John and Doris Tursi Park  
1) Complete park improvements as approved by Council.  
2) Maintain all plantings to ensure success of naturally planted areas.

Roadside Park (0.3 acres)  
1) Research possibility of connection to future Guemes Channel trail.

Rotary Park (1.5 acres)  
1) Improve a secondary unpaved trail for pedestrian and other access.  
2) Prioritize removing invasive non-native plants from the park.  
3) Improve landscaping and picnic opportunities at south end of the park.  
4) Upgrade planting at end and on beach side by marina.  
5) Construct a small interpretive board.  
6) Consider proposals to use some of the park for small boating facilities.

Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve  
1) Identify additional funding for trail construction.  
2) Finalize plans and build educational pedestrian trail.  
3) Design and install wetland educational interpretive signs.  
4) Develop a management plan for the area.

Shugarts Playground (0.5 acres)  
1) No improvements necessary.

Storvik Park (8.7 acres)  
1) Improve / replace restroom.  
2) Repair parking lots.  
3) Find alternative uses for old croquet court and shuffle board area.  
4) Get all irrigation system working.  
5) Continue to work with the Our Town Our Park
organization to improve new playground area and amenities around it.

Tommy Thompson Trail
1) Plan and construct connections to Guemes Channel trail.
2) Plan and construct connections to other pedestrian paths created along Fidalgo Bay as area develops.
3) Continue tree and shrub plantings along Fidalgo Bay to enhance shade for shore spawning fish.
4) Expand interpretive signage efforts.
5) Continue to enhance signage along the trail.
6) Plan and complete improvements to March’s Point Road terminus of the trail.
7) Continue efforts to install public art along the trail.
8) Work with other agencies to connect trail to Berentson Bridge.
9) Work to remove ivy and other non-native invasive plants along the corridor.
10) Work with other entities to stabilize eroding shoreline.
11) Work to find additional parking for access along the trail including racks for bicycles.
12) Add handicapped parking spaces with trail access.

Volunteer Park (includes Alton Daniels Field, Volunteer Field, Marguerite and Don Daniels Field, and Kiwanis Meadows; 60 acres)
1) Continue to work with the Anacortes Parks Foundation to complete improvements to the Kiwanis Meadows area.
2) Seek funding for improvements.
3) Work with School District to improve pathways around area and make connections between areas.
4) Work to improve wetlands and buffers.
5) Work to install interpretive signage on the shore of the wetlands and coordinate with the Anacortes School District the possible inclusion of signs on the trail around the wetlands.
6) Complete trail connection from ACFL to Volunteer Park.

Washington Park (220 acres)
1) Update master plan to include improvements to the day use areas. This should include improvements to parking areas, pathways, improved picnic shelters, improved turf, improved wetland, restroom, etc.
2) Repair loop road and keep up on those repairs.
3) Improve trail system to balance recreational goals with environmental impact.
4) Improve Burrows Channel look out by accommodating parking and providing viewing site while protecting meadows.
5) Update utility service in camp ground and picnic shelters.
6) Seek funding for master plan improvements. Continue to build Washington Park fund balance for maintenance and capital improvements.
7) Clear out, install interpretive signage and maintain shoreline trail west and north of Sunset Cove.
8) Add handicapped parking spaces where appropriate.
Community Builds a Playground