

6.0 ANALYSIS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Identifying the demand for park and recreation facilities and programs is an important element in the planning process. It is also one of the most difficult tasks to assess because so many different variables influence recreation user participation and demand. The process that identifies needs includes the following:

1. The City of Longview Park Level Service Standards (LOS) determining deficiencies throughout the seven park classifications.
2. Citizen survey conducted specifically to determine opinions regarding operations, development, and capital needs.
3. Citizen and user group input provided at public meetings of the Parks and Recreation Board, Visual Arts Commission, Golf Advisory Committee, Community Open Houses, and City Council.
4. Sections of the City of Longview 2006 Comprehensive Plan that relates to parks and recreation.
5. Observations and analysis by the Parks and Recreation Department staff regarding demands, changing demographics, deficiencies, opportunities, and emerging issues.
6. Review of related plans from other city departments and outside organizations, and previously adopted plans such as the 2000 and 2009 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.
7. An inventory of accomplishments and assessments of how specific land acquisitions and park projects have answered previously identified needs and identified growth since the 2009 plan.
8. Assessment of need for facilities restoration and renewal based on the capital asset inventory replacement plan.

6.2 ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE 2009 PLAN

To assess current needs and determine reasonable expectations and strategies for meeting those needs, it is helpful to reflect on accomplishments since the 2009 plan. The accomplishments listed represent significant progress in meeting those needs. Some of the accomplishments located within the park system were made possible as a partnership between City departments, youth athletic groups, volunteer groups and citizen grants provided by the City such as the Neighborhood Park Grant Program as well as the Kuntz Family Trust Fund Grant Program. However, as the population increases, demographic changes occur, new issues emerge, economic downswings/upswings occur, and historic needs remain; ongoing evaluation is required.

PARK AND FACILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **7th Ave Park**
 - Replacement playground equipment installed
 - Removal of berm for safety on north end of property
 - Extended dugouts and pitching area at softball fields
 - Irrigation system for two soccer fields installed
 - Installed t-ball softball field
 - Portable restroom enclosure
 - Permanent storage facility
- **Altrusa Park**
 - Park developed
 - Basketball court installed
 - Benches
 - Solar lighting
 - Playground installation
 - 1.3 mile gravel trail along dike
- **Archie Anderson Park**
 - Basketball court lighting installed
 - Removal of 3 baseball fields, dugouts, and structures to turn into open play space
- **Cloney Park**
 - Skate park ramp geometric graphic art project installed
 - Benches and picnic table installed
 - Installation of bleachers
- **Community Gardens - 32nd Avenue Site**
 - Park signage
 - Irrigation installed
 - Fence around entire park and gate entrances
- **Gerhart Gardens Park**
 - Installation of picnic shelter
 - Off leash dog area for large and small dogs
 - Gravel path
 - New swing set
- **John Null Park**
 - New playground installed
 - Painted pickleball court lines
- **Kellogg Park**
 - Enlarged size of play structure
 - Installed replacement parts
- **Lake Sacajawea Park**
 - New concrete bridge constructed over Washington Way with enlarged pathways under bridge
 - Playground installed at Hemlock Plaza
 - Stolen memorial plaques were reinstalled with granite
 - LED path lights were upgraded
 - Automated irrigation from Washington Way to Hemlock on Kessler side
 - Automated irrigation from Washington Way to Louisiana on Nichols Side
 - Japanese Island received path upgrades and upgraded water feature
 - Installed a new fountain on the north end of the Lake

- **R.A. Long Park**
 - Relocated R.A. Long bust to front of Library
 - Shay Locomotive donated to the City
 - Shay shelter and protective fence installed
 - Upgraded holiday light displays
 - Approved plan for plaza upgrade
 - Fountain donated
- **Roy Morse Park**
 - Fences extended on fields 1 and 2
 - Bathrooms repainted
 - Disc golf course designed and installed
 - Batting cage at Babe Ruth
- **Rotary Park**
 - Painted pickleball court lines
- **Mint Valley Golf Course**
 - New golf manager contract
 - Approval for the construction of a 30 cart storage facility
 - Replacement of flood pump station
 - Added range targets and goal posts on driving range
 - Constructed new tee on 7
 - Installed safety hedges, planted new trees, and removed dead trees
- **Vandercook Park**
 - Painted pickleball court lines
 - Shuffleboard court
 - Removed bathroom facility that was in disrepair
- **Windemere Park**
 - Installed playground replacement parts
- **Elks Building**
 - Installed rock wall
 - Roof drainage
 - New windows
 - Outdoor garden area
- **Bronze Sculptures**
 - 7 Outdoor bronze sculptures donated by Longview Outdoor Gallery
 - Continued maintenance and repair
- **McClelland Center**
 - New roof installed
 - New floor replacement in small room
 - Landscaping to mitigate against vandalism
 - Upgraded facility drainage
- **Recreation Administration Building**
 - Painted front office area
 - Storage shed relocated from Archie Anderson Park
- **Senior Center**
 - Kitchen remodel
 - HVAC system installed
- **Woman's Club Building**
 - New flooring
 - Add two additional oven in kitchen

RECREATION PROGRAM AND SERVICE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recreation Programming

Longview Recreation strives to meet the recreational needs of our community and to be the “leader for healthy living” for Longview residents.

The following programs were created to meet the emergent interest in family events:

- \$5K run series
- Firecracker Fun Run
- Electric Shamrock Run
- Moonlight Run
- Pumpkin Pi Run - a 3.14159... mile run
- Movies at the Lake
- Mud Play Day
- Extreme Machines

The following programs were created to meet the increasing interest in adult sports:

- Flag Football Leagues
- Disc Golf Tournament
- Disc Golf League
- Adult Soccer League

The Turkey Trot Fun Run is a growing family tradition. Participation has increased from 316 participants in 2009 to over 800 in 2015. That’s a 153% increase.

The annual Kids Fish-In encourages kids to pursue fishing and get outside. Over 2,500 kids have received fishing poles from 2009 to 2015.

Engaged an average of 12,000 youth, family, teen, adult annually in enrichment, education and physical fitness classes and activities

Annual attendance neared 16,000 at free family special events like Concerts at the Lake, Movies in the Park, Earth Day, Mud Play Day, and Extreme Machines.

Facility rental revenue has increased 77% in the last 6 years, bringing in over \$77,000 in revenue in 2015.

People & Partnerships

Recruited and trained over 300 volunteers, annually, each donating time and expertise to assist in the successful implementation of programs and events.

Collaborate with over 80 businesses and agencies annually to bring quality recreational opportunities to the Longview community.

Established strong collaboration with Youth & Family Link and the YMCA to promote healthy lifestyle opportunities. The three organizations sponsored their first joint event in May 2015, Passport to Healthy Families, with future collaborative events planned for 2016.

Sponsorships & Funding

- Since 2009, the department has received \$261,263 in cash from grants and sponsorships.
- The ACHIEVE Grant awarded \$30,000 to the department to assist in combating childhood obesity and chronic disease.
- Fibre Federal Credit Union contributed \$6,000 to updating the Elks Teen Center.
- Ashkicker contributed \$10,700 to the department to purchase a STEM lab & a Rock Wall for the Elks Teen Center.
- NRPA and Walmart Foundation granted Longview Recreation of \$35,000 to provide for summertime Playground Summer Meals Sites and Organ Wise Nutrition curriculum.
- Title sponsorships for family events have increased. These sponsorships packages offer businesses the opportunity to market their product to a captured audience of 16,000 while providing financial support for recreational programs. The top title sponsored events include:
 - Kirkpatrick Concerts at the Lake
 - Comcast Movies in the Park
 - Comcast Breakfast with Santa
 - Comcast Turkey Trot

Businesses and organizations are now reaching out to the department to partner for programs. This is a great way for businesses to support recreational efforts while aligning their brand to something that is family friendly and fun.

6.3 ASSUMPTIONS

As staff addresses demands for the next 6-years, there are assumptions that need to be addressed. These assumptions will act as a basis for some of the decisions that will be made affecting this plan. Some of these reflect changes from the 2009 plan.

- School facilities within the city contribute to meeting identified park needs. School playgrounds, play equipment, gymnasiums, auditoriums, sport fields, and open space are used by residents when school is not in session. While there is limited access that restricts use, partial credit needs to be acknowledged in meeting planning targets for facility use. School facilities are not counted toward meeting city park and trail acquisition requirements.
- County, Port of Longview, and City of Kelso facilities, and other adjacent cities to a lesser extent, contribute to meeting city needs. County facilities located in close proximity to the city, such as Riverside Park, Willow Grove Park operated by the Port of Longview, and Kelso facilities such as the Catlin Spray Park and river trails provide facilities used by Longview residents.
- Schools, private entities, and the library provide recreational activities throughout the city, but the City of Longview has the only municipal Recreation Division in Cowlitz County. So although the division's goal is to meet the recreational needs of the citizens, the division also

has to plan for the greater community with regard to scope, participation, impact, and timeliness.

- Demographics are changing and affect needs. Resident population will grow from 34,660 in 2000 to an estimated 41,505 by 2022. Needs will change dramatically as the city plans for an additional 6,845 people. Needs identified reflect this growth, and changing demographics include: 1) upward median age, 2) reduced persons per household, 3) significant percentage increase in 65+ populations.
- Facility planning needs and demand can partially be addressed by use of appropriate technology and upgrades. Efficiencies are gained by the restoration and modernization of selected existing facilities in concert with new facilities planning designed to increase capacity. The limited and thoughtful use of sport turf, lighting and all weather structures can greatly increase the capacity and use for selected facilities. With land values significantly escalating, technology and upgrades can provide a cost efficient method for expanded capacity with reduced land acquisition costs.

6.4 PUBLIC INPUT

COMMUNITY SURVEY INPUT

The Parks and Recreation Department constructed a survey with the help of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board that was placed on the City's website in October of 2015 (Appendix A). Newspaper articles, radio announcements, fliers, posters, emails, Facebook posts, and other methods were used to notify residents and non-residents to complete the survey. There were 739 responses received. Staff wanted to receive opinions for everyone who uses park and recreation services, so there was no attempt made to restrict responses to just Longview Residents. To determine residency, two questions were asked regarding whether the respondents lived in city limits and how long they had lived there. 492 respondents (73%) stated that they lived within city limits with 66 failing to answer the question, and more than 50% of the respondents having lived in Longview for 15 or more years.

After analyzing the park section responses, there are major themes that are worth noting:

- By far, the most visited park by respondents is Lake Sacajawea Park (91%), Roy Morse Park was second, then a close race for third with John Null Park having only 8 more responses than 7th Avenue Park.
- The top three reasons that respondents use the park system; enjoying being outdoors in nature, to walk trails and paths, and to play on playgrounds.
- 84.4% of respondents rate natural open space in the community important or very important
- 74% would rate the physical condition of the parks as good to excellent, while 23% would say fair/satisfactory, 3% would say the condition is poor.

- When asked what they would most like the city to choose as potential park improvements the top three priorities were 1) Upgrades to Park Restrooms, 2) Walking/Biking Trails, 3) Playgrounds
- Respondents were asked to report what their level of support would be for potential projects that the department could make. The most supported improvement was upgrading or installing park restrooms (90%), then an almost tie for second most support with improvements at upgrade existing neighborhood parks (84.8) and developing multipurpose bike/walking trails (84.1%).
- When asked what the reason would be for seldom or never using City Parks, 76% of answerers said the question did not apply because they use the parks, but the top reason at 7.5% (30 respondents) was that they felt unsafe. 11 responders specifically wrote in that the bathrooms (lack of, upkeep, maintenance) were the reasons they did not use the City parks.
- The top three underserved neighborhoods chosen by surveyors, Highlands (27%), Downtown (28%), and West Longview (23%), coincide with neighborhoods indicated on the map (Figure B) that the City has identified as areas of deficiency.
- If given the choice to specify the exact park respondent's tax dollars could improve, the top three would be Lake Sacajawea (60%), Roy Morse Park (21%), and 7th Avenue Park (15%).
- 243 surveyors chose to comment in the open-ended section about any thoughts, ideas, or concerns about parks. Restrooms, safety, trails, playgrounds, and water parks were the main themes found in the comments.

After analyzing the recreation section responses, there are major themes that are worth noting:

- The primary reasons that respondents use recreation programs are a tie between special events and for exercise and getting healthy, followed closely by participating in family events.
- The most notable reason that some respondents seldom use or never use recreation programs is because the times programs are offered are not convenient. This is something that staff can use to plan for the future to allow for additional participation.
- 93% of surveyors have an overall satisfaction rate of recreation services.
- The highest rated activity that respondents take part in is running, walking, hiking, or biking followed secondly by visiting natural areas and/or wildlife observing.
- When asked to check all the ways that respondents received information about recreation activities, there was no single answer that stood out. This means that a wide array of marketing strategies still proves the best way to reach the customer base.
- There were 88 responses to the open-ended section about recreation to provide comments, thoughts, or ideas. There are many things that staff will be able to use to plan for the next six years to meet the needs of the users of the programs. Many respondents spoke to the running events and the need for additional paths and trails around the area.

After analyzing the funding section responses, there are major themes that are worth noting:

- 90% of respondents would be willing to vote for a levied bond for \$0.10 on every \$1,000 of property tax for park and recreation facilities.
- Once again, restrooms, trails, and upgrades to neighborhood parks were the top three projects that respondents would be willing to support with tax dollars.
- When seeking grants, the highest priority was again restrooms and a city wide trail system, followed closely by an indoor pool facility.
- When asked if respondents would rather support upgrading existing parks or support new installation/construction, almost 60% would support doing both followed by 31% willing to support upgrading current facilities. Only 7% would support only focusing on new installations or construction.
- Surveyors stated that the top facilities that members use for recreation programs outside of the City of Longview are neighboring city's parks and trails and state or national parks, followed by the use of public school facilities and Lower Columbia Community College.
- In the final open-ended comment area, 92 responses were gleaned. Many of the themes touched upon again were restrooms, safety, trails, and pools/water play facilities.

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE INPUT

During the public input process, the Parks and Recreation Department held two Community Open Houses. One was in conjunction with a Highlands Neighborhood Association meeting and the other commenced after a Park and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting.

On October 26, at the Highlands Community Center, twelve people attended the Community Open House. They were asked, "What would a perfect park system look like?" Many of responses related to family friendly spaces such as picnic shelters and playgrounds and the other responses involved safety such as open available restrooms and better lighting. When asked, "What would make the City of Longview Parks better?" The themes from the previous question were congruent, people wanted safer parks, less homeless, updated and open restrooms, more lighting, landscaping for security, and more walking paths. The whole group agreed that a water park, such as a pool or spray park, would give people a place to go in the summer to cool off. Additionally, the group from the Highlands wanted more activities for those who are unable to travel. Suggestions for neighborhood activities included farmers markets, recreation programs, and special events/holiday events in the Highlands. The three themes they chose to tie everything together was 1) Safety 2) Active/Healthy 3) Cohesive Community.

On November 16, at the Woman's Club Building, ten individuals attended the Community Open House. This group was asked, "How would you describe Longview parks?" The group answered that they were diversified as in there is something for everyone, beautiful, well maintained, and clean. We then asked the group, "What does Parks and Recreation do best?" The answers included helping clean up after the Go 4th Festival, maintenance of the parks, concerts/movies, dance classes, activities for kids, the community gardens, and the fact that the City wants to continue to be better. The next question we ventured to ask was, "If there were multi-millions available for park projects, what would you suggest?" The group wanted more activity space that could be used year round such as

turfed sports complexes, covered picnic areas, indoor pool, covered playgrounds, and public batting cages. The final question asked was, "What needs immediate action?" Their answers were congruent with the findings during the survey as well as the previous open house. They replied safer parks, upgraded or more bathrooms, and additional access to power and water for activities.

6.5 BOARD & COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Mint Valley Golf Advisory Committee

The Golf Advisory Committee met in January of 2016 to provide recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan. The committee presented the following four recommendations:

Pro Shop Deck Extension

The committee felt the Pro Shop Deck Extension project should be high on the priority list for Mint Valley Golf Course. This project would allow for additional covered outdoor seating and larger event space. The project would require raising the foundation of the Pro Shop that is currently built upon a slab and replacement of the roof that was damaged in the December 2015 Windstorm. The committee felt this project would aid in revenue generation for the course, as well as aid in enticing additional golfers and non-golfers to the course.

Large Capital Improvement Planning

The committee noted that within the coming years, both the retaining wall on #17 green and the outdated hydraulic irrigation system will need to be replaced. The committee advised staff to begin planning for the future undertaking of such large projects and to proactively prepare in the event that either project were to fail. These two projects are imperative to the future longevity and operation of the course.

Equipment Wash Station

The committee, with the support of the maintenance staff, understands the need for an equipment wash station as a facility improvement due to regulations placed upon washing equipment. This project would allow for a separate area located at the maintenance yard where staff would clean off machinery as well as allow for a separation of oil/debris and water.

Middle School Golf Program

A pilot program was launched at Monticello Middle School in 2015 with assistance from maintenance staff, golf course manager, and volunteers from the men's club. The group facilitated introductory golf lessons within the physical education program at the school. This generated interest in sustaining a youth golf program in a safe, fun, and educational environment. The program was successful and all involved saw value in the lessons. The Middle School Golf Program should be continued and expanded.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board met in January 2016 to provide recommendations for department operations and priorities for the Comprehensive Plan. The board fully supported the department recommendations. In addition, the following are the board's recommendations for the next six years:

Restroom Facility Upgrades

The board agreed with the department and community response to the comprehensive plan survey that the restroom facilities at the Lake and other parks should be removed and/or replaced. The suggestion was for something more vandal resistant and family friendly.

Partnerships

The board agreed that the department works well with community partners. As operational dollars dwindle, the board recommends continuing to seek out partners that align with the department mission to share costs and diminish duplication of services within the City.

Path and Trail Connectivity

The board placed path and trail connectivity as a high priority focus point when pursuing projects or seeking grant funding. The board recommends partnering with the dike district which will aid in allowing for the city to meet the level of service standard while reducing the deficiency in trail mileage. The board noted that connectivity within the community will greatly increase the quality of place.

Interactive Splash Park

The board concurred with survey respondents that an interactive splash park at a central location positioned away from high traffic areas would be a benefit to the citizens. There was discussion of locating a splash park at Lake Sacajawea or Archie Anderson Park with the realization that both parks have either a Historic Preservation or Master Plan that do not currently include this type of amenity.

Birth to 5 Year Old Programming

The board recommended focusing additional efforts towards what they believe is an under represented demographic within the current programming. The board would like the Recreation Division to add in more classes for this age group as a way to generate revenue and keep young families within the programs.

Course Cancellation Investigation

The board reiterated what some of the survey respondents touched upon with regard to displeasure in recreation class/course cancellations. The board would like to direct staff to explore marketing or sponsorship avenues to diminish the amount of classes currently cancelled due to lack of participation. They see value in the current programs, and understand that if a class is new it might need to be built up in reputation and additional marketing needed for better participation.

Community Center

The board agreed that the idea of a Community Center would allow for expanded program areas and additional access to resources. The suggestion was for a centrally located community center for families that would have affordable access to a pool, other amenities, and add value to quality of life.

#17 Green at the Golf Course

The #17 green at the golf course was discussed as a high priority. The board discussed the possibility of the retaining wall deteriorating and the potential of losing the green if it does fail. The board understands the importance of the course as a park and would like to direct staff to investigate proactive options.

The board discussed how the priority of the above listed projects would be decided. The board agreed that any project that increased the safety and the security of parks and amenities should be a top priority. Additionally, the board agreed the second priority should be to upgrade the existing parks the City currently maintains before putting efforts into new projects.

Visual Arts Commission

The Visual Arts Commission met in January 2016 to discuss the department's goals and objectives pertaining to the enhancement of the arts within the City of Longview. In addition to supporting the goals and objectives, the commission supports the department recommendations to add more holiday displays and add more artistic elements into the park system along with the downtown corridor. The commission suggested starting with the Go 4th Holiday as the City already has an extensive celebration for this date could greatly add to the festive atmosphere. Lastly, the commission concurred that the totem pole located at Commerce and Broadway may need additional maintenance or replacement within the next six years depending on the condition. Staff was asked to work directly with the tribal groups within the area to determine the corrective next steps.

6.6 DEPARTMENT & COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Restroom Upgrades

Department staff would concur with survey results and community open house respondents with regard to condition of the restrooms. The age of the facilities as well as the manner with which they are laid out are no longer effective for park patron usage. The restrooms should be a priority, whether by seeking grants or Capital Improvement Program dollars.

Neighborhood Parkland Recommendations

Both in the survey and in the map that includes areas served by parks, West Longview, Columbia Heights, and Downtown are identified as three areas that are underserved by park lands. Once locations can be identified, land should be acquired, a plan should be created, and then park developed to serve residents within those locations.

Community Center for Programs

Department staff works well with community partners to provide locations for recreation programs. The McClelland Center and Woman's Club buildings work dual purposes for recreation programs and facility rentals. Due to the demand put on community partners and the availability of space at our own facilities, a community center should be explored as an option in the future. This would allow for expansion of programs and provide a single location for recreation and park resources.

Park Concessionaires

During 2015, the City of Longview allowed for two park concessionaires at Lake Sacajawea. One concessionaire was for food and the other was for non-motorized boating. Both operations were a success for the vendors and for the City as well as a benefit for the citizens. The City should explore options to provide additional vendors at the lake and at other facilities throughout the City.

Utilize Downtown

The Recreation Division would like to work with downtown businesses for events on Commerce Avenue. As an example, the City of Portland provides for Sunday Parkways where

streets are closed to vehicular traffic and enables users to walk, bike, and use other active transportation all while fostering civic pride, stimulating economic development, and allowing for exposure. The proposal would be to temporarily close down a section of Commerce and allow for the businesses to move items outside or restaurants to sit patrons outdoors for the afternoon with the potential to have an outdoor movie in the evening.

Pocket Parks

Currently there are no locations downtown to sit and be in nature. Downtown has been identified as being deficient in parkland. A pocket park where downtown patrons could have lunch and where a food truck concessionaire could be stationed should be explored as an option. As an addition to this pocket park, a public restroom facility downtown could also be proposed to provide additional public amenities which in turn provides for a greater user experience for visitors.

More Community Events

Events such as the Concerts in the Park series, Movies in the Park, and the Extreme Machine event have proven to be very successful for the city and provide for tourism and a greater sense of quality of place. The City should continue to seek out sponsorships and donations to provide for large scale events for citizens of all ages.

Adult Music Event

Events for adults 21 years of age or older have been popping up in cities across the nation and have become a successful trend in recreation programming. The City should pursue locations, such as the Mint Valley Golf Course, to hold a music festival event that would allow for beer and wine.

Holiday Displays

The City does an amazing job during the winter holidays to add visual appeal to the lake, the civic circle, and downtown. The City should procure additional holiday banners such as Veterans Day banners for the Civic Circle due to the historical nature of the park. The City should also work with the Downtown Partnership to purchase additional seasonal banners for downtown. There are other places such as sports complexes that could benefit with welcome banners. These banners not only look good but provide for a sense of community pride.

Artwork and Sculptures

The Longview Outdoor Gallery has beautified the downtown corridor. As donations or money allows, additional art installations should be added throughout the park system. Many playgrounds can play dual purpose of serving as a play space as well as sculptural art. The City would benefit from adding in creative pieces throughout the town and park generating a more exciting and vibrant place to live.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment

As obesity and inactivity rises, many citizens turn to parks as an inexpensive way to get active. A free amenity that could help and is always available would be the introduction of fitness stations into a trail or park system. This will not only allow for patrons to use the equipment, but it can also increase the frequency and the duration for which people could use the park. These park amenities attract all ages and walks of life and are a way to enjoy exercising outside.

Water and/or Spray Park

Throughout the survey and at both community open houses, everyone indicated that a park amenity that included some sort of water play would be highly utilized. Whether it is an interactive spray park or a wading pool to sit and cool off, previous surveys and online polls show this feature as a need for the community.

Playful City USA

The City should make it a priority to meet the standards needed to become a Playful City USA again. As cities compete for businesses, economic development, and jobs; cities are also competing for residents. Making the City of Longview more playable will be a key strategy when looking to retain families with young children.

Walkability and Non-Motorized Transportation

The department should work to partner with landowners both private and public to provide for a more walkable city. Trails and routes should be created to act as safe connections to sites throughout town and not just to a specific place, such as the Lake, to recreate. Both types of trails (recreation and transportation) serve their purposes, but allowing for citizens to move throughout the City safely will enable a more accessible and active community.

Large Scale Athletic Events

In recent history Cowlitz County hosted the Ashkicker and Sandblaster races, both of which were very successful. Neither group who hosted these events was able to provide the volunteer manpower and registration capabilities to continue with the events. Longview Parks and Recreation should pursue reorganizing an event of this nature locally as they were both active events and successful with bringing tourists into the community.

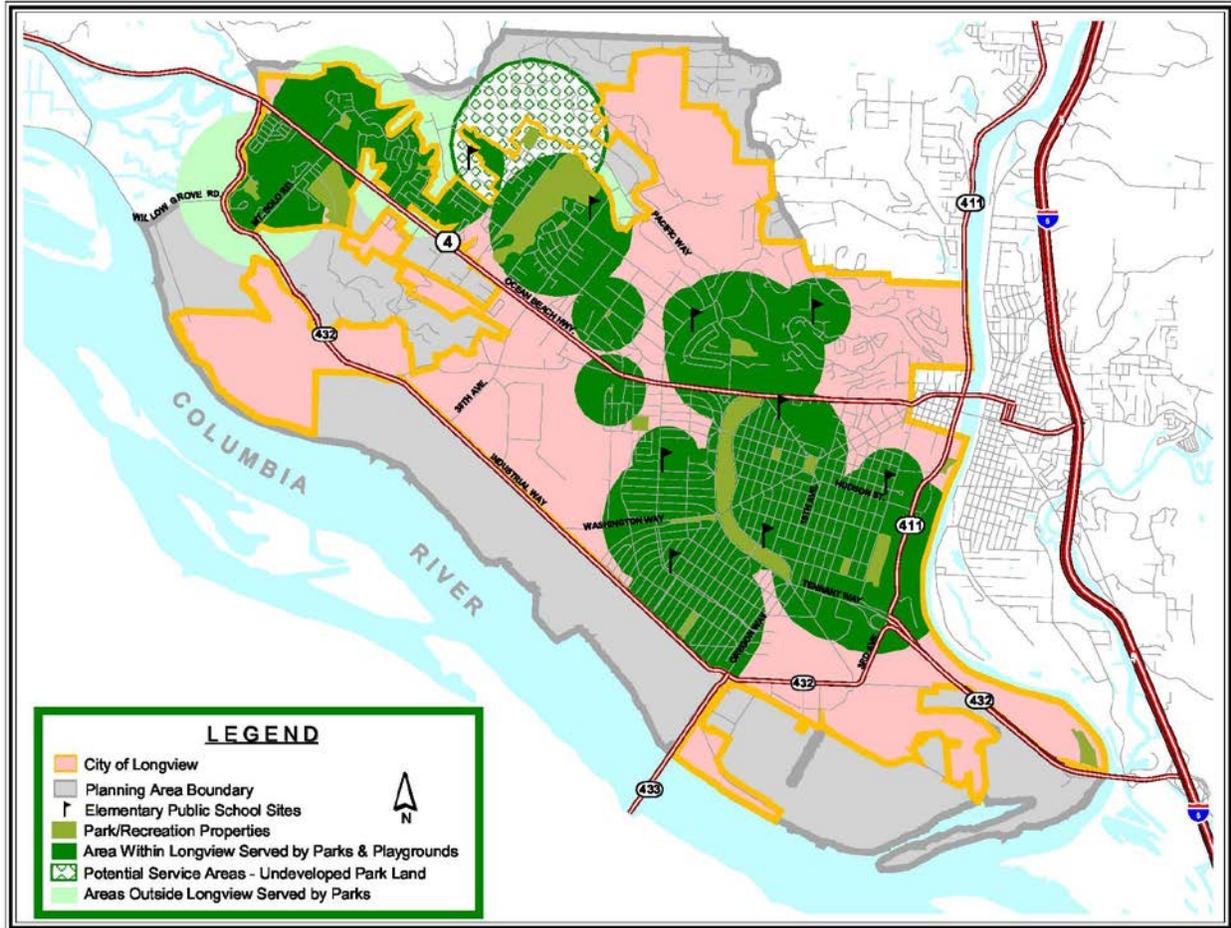
6.7 ADDRESSING DEFICIENCIES

As indicated in the analysis of neighborhood parks, there is a current deficiency of 173 acres and a projected deficiency of 207 acres by 2022 if no further acquisition of park land is pursued. The city is experiencing small developments with coterminous borders leaving areas built out without parks. Efforts need to be made to begin responding to the neighborhood park land deficiency. The Neighborhood Park Service Area Bubble Map, Figure G, shows the city planning area boundary and the neighborhood park service areas. The pink area is Longview City limits with the grey area as the planning area boundary. The map includes elementary schools that allow for public access to the playgrounds outside of the school day. Even with the inclusion of schools play sites with a ½ mile service radius there is still a deficiency. The goal for Class II Neighborhood Parks is to have all areas zoned for housing covered in green by a park service area.

An immediate impact can be made by requiring land owners requesting annexation to include park land, at the current standards, in their development plans. The areas most susceptible to further development include Mt. Solo, Barlow Point, and west and north of the current city limits. The existing Longview Municipal Code addressing minimum standards for park and recreation improvements (Appendix B) was adopted to address the need for park land in new developments. The city should continue to analyze the need for parkland when reviewing subdivision applications. During the application process, the planning commission should take into account the level of standard needed within the development area as well as predetermined neighborhoods identified as deficient of park lands. Ensuring that the municipal code is followed, new developments will address the open space needs and not add to the current park land deficiency. The other option the city

should consider is the purchase of undeveloped land in areas where future development can be anticipated. This is particularly important when the opportunity exists to protect natural areas and environmentally sensitive sites. Staff should complete a land analysis to give direction on capital purchases and possible partnerships with the property owners on future sale of their land.

Figure G - Neighborhood Park Service Area Bubble Map



In addition to the acquisition of tracts of land for parks, there is a need for additional trails available to the community. Partnerships with the Consolidated Diking Improvement District (Appendix C) need to continue similar to what took place between 30th and 38th avenues, 42nd and 48th avenues, and the Altrusa Park Trail. Efforts should be made to continue to create additional trails on top of dikes to connect trails throughout Longview and to those that exist in Kelso. Agreements should be pursued allowing for public trail access to the tops of the dikes are in private ownership. Future trails could include the dike along the Cowlitz River, the continuation of the trail west from 38th Avenue through Mint Valley Golf Course, and other ditches and dikes that currently have vehicle access that could provide dual purpose as a pedestrian/bike trail. Should railways ever become vacated, access to the previous rail beds would also provide excellent trails. The City should pursue partnership through a county wide effort to provide long distance trails to add to the recreational and tourism opportunities of Cowlitz County. Trail development should also be coordinated with the Longview Bicycle Plan and the Cowlitz Regional Trail Plan.

The City has invested time and effort into creating park and trail master plans. When budget allows, phases or amenities within the approved plans should become a priority. To aid in the trail mile deficiency, the City should continue to pursue efforts purchasing land and acquiring easements to connect the missing sections of the Cowlitz River Trail Plan. This effort will not only add trail mileage but also connect the communities regionally as another option for non-vehicular transportation and recreation. The Archie Anderson Master Plan will need to be updated to meet the new and emergent needs within the Highlands Neighborhood community. The current Park Plan provides for amenities that no longer meet the need of park users and now creates an opportunity to update the plan to provide for a successful future. Additionally, steps for implementing the sections of the R.A. Long Master Plan will begin in early 2016. This park is located in a very visible and historic section of town. Upgrades to this park will add to the beauty of the civic circle and bring in additional visitors, recreation programs, and special events.

