

MEDFORD PARKS & RECREATION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council, via Bill Hoke – City Manager Pro Tem

FROM: Brian Sjothun, Parks & Recreation Director *BS*

RE: Urban Growth Boundary Impacts on Leisure Services Plan

DATE: July 6, 2015

The Medford Parks and Recreation Department and Commission have been actively participating and providing comments to the Planning Commission and staff regarding the proposed Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion. This communication provides Council with information regarding how the current proposal could impact the Leisure Services Plan.

Prescott Park and Chrissy Park

The inclusion of both parks within the City of Medford UGB is contained within different planning documents. The 1,877 combined acreage for these parks is currently recommended for inclusion by the Planning Commission. This inclusion into the UGB would allow the Department to implement the approved master plans for the specified sites through the City of Medford process instead of Jackson County. Additionally, the inclusion would also assist in streamlining the process for development and enhance continuity with other facilities being developed inside the UGB. The ability to follow already established City standards would be another benefit to the Department and park users.

The recommendation for inclusion is referenced in the following documents:

City of Medford – Comprehensive Plan – Regional Element (page 8)

- Medford owns two large wildland parks that presently lie outside its Urban Growth Boundary: Prescott Park (1,740 acres) and Chrissy Park (85 acres). The City intends ultimately to incorporate these into its corporate limits to enable Medford to exercise jurisdictional authority over the parklands and to enable extension of supporting basic infrastructure. Medford and Jackson County each believe parks are best managed by their own jurisdictions. This Regional Plan places both city-owned parks under municipal jurisdiction.



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City of Medford – 2015-20 Strategic Plan – (page 21)

- Goal 8: Provide recreational activities and opportunities to improve the lives of Medford residents.
 - Objective 8.1: Ensure that long-term plans are adopted that identify where land is needed for parks and pedestrian/bicycle trail systems throughout the City.
 - Action 8.1b: Pursue the inclusion of Prescott and Chrissy Parks into the City's Urban Growth Boundary.

MD-5 – Inclusion of 180 Acres

On June 11, the Planning Commission approved a recommendation to Council that would add 180 acres (includes buildable and non-buildable land) between Cherry Lane and Barnett Road and east of the existing UGB. This recommendation has a favorable impact to the Leisure Services Plan and in particular the Trails Plan component.

The City obtained 7.24 acres in 2013 to serve as a future trailhead and connection for the Larson Creek Greenway Trail. This trail would extend from just north of the proposed commercial core are of the SE Area Plan to Chrissy Park and eventually to Prescott Park. The proposed inclusion of the 180 acres would aid greatly in developing this trail/transportation system that is highlighted in the following documents:

Greater Bear Creek Valley Regional Problem Solving Agreement (page 14)

- Transportation
 - Identify a general network of locally owned regionally significant north-south and east-west arterials and associated projects to provide mobility throughout the Region.
 - Designate and protect corridors for locally owned regionally significant arterials and associated projects within the RVMPO to ensure adequate transportation connectivity, multimodal use, and minimize right-of-way costs.

City of Medford – Transportation System Plan – Introduction and Executive Summary (pages 1-20)

- Strategies
 - Complete Bear Creek Greenway path, the Larson Creek Greenway path ... and identify other opportunities for multi-use paths.

City of Medford – Comprehensive Plan – Regional Element (page 27 & 28)

- Efficient Accommodation of Identified Land Needs
 - MD-5 will provide a direct urban connection with Chrissy Park as an open-space/park use specific urban reserve.
- ESEE Consequences
 - ... Social benefits from direct urban connections to Chrissy Park are also important and valuable social consequence.



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City of Medford – Leisure Services Plan – Planning Policies and Guidelines (pages 51-54)

- Policy 1-D: The City of Medford shall provide park land and facilities conveniently located and economically accessible to all members of the Community:
 - Implementation 1-D (4): Implement the Southeast Medford Area Plan Map with regards to greenway trails, parks, and recreation facilities.
- Policy 3-B: The City of Medford shall seek to acquire natural and other corridors to link parks and open space throughout the community.
 - Implementation 3-B (2): Acquire missing links in corridors and parcels that are contiguous to other public open spaces to provide maximum benefits for recreation wildlife.
- ESEE Consequences
 - ... Social benefits from direct urban connections to Chrissy Park are also important and valuable social consequence.

MD-2

This area of Medford has been identified by the Parks and Recreation Commission as a high priority for public parks and open space. The current Leisure Services Plan also identifies the area as a site for a potential community or neighborhood park. In June 2014, the Commission reviewed several sites in this area and requested that staff work to acquire identified vacant land. Staff engaged the Trust for Public Lands (TPL) to negotiate and acquire the sites on behalf of the City. The TPL was unsuccessful in attempts to purchase land because the asking price per acre was greater than what the land would appraise.

Coker Butte Development LLC, (CBD) owns 210 acres within the proposed MD-2 area for inclusion. CBD and the Medford Parks and Recreation Foundation entered into a Gift Pledge Agreement on February 18, 2015. This agreement would provide the Foundation a donation of 23.5 acres of open space within the development at no cost. This donation is contingent upon the property being included within the proposed UGB expansion. If included, this property would come to the City of Medford at no cost and would fulfill the goal of acquiring future park land within this service area.

The goals identifying the need for a park site within MD-2 include the following:

City of Medford – 2015-20 Strategic Plan (page 21)

- Goal 8: Provide recreational activities and opportunities to improve the lives of Medford residents.
 - Objective 8.1: Ensure that long-term plans are adopted that identify where land is needed for parks and pedestrian/bicycle trail systems throughout the City.
 - Action 8.1a: Fulfill identified land needs when properties are proposed for development.
 - Action 8.1c: Locate parks and facilities in underserved areas.
 - Action 8.1d: Review all high need areas as outlined in the Leisure Services Plan for future park sites and potential acquisition.



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City of Medford – Leisure Services Plan – Planning Policies and Guidelines (page 52)

- Policy 1-D: The City of Medford shall provide park land and facilities conveniently located and economically accessible to all members of the Community:
 - Implementation 1-D (1): Locate parks and facilities in underserved areas.

MD-7 & 8

As with the case with MD-2, this area has also been identified by the Parks and Recreation Commission as a high priority for public parks and open space and was reviewed as part of June 2014 review.

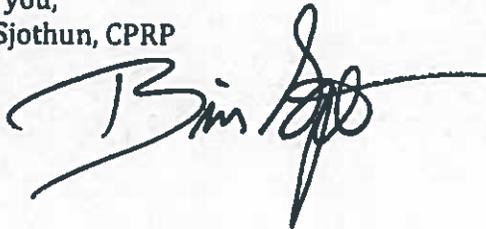
On June 2, the Commission reviewed a presentation from a land-use consultant who represents the property owners in this area. The presentation outlined the potential for several new park sites that would be donated to the City as part of the open space requirements. The Commission wished to express their support to the Council for consideration of inclusion for these properties. The goals and plans that support such consideration for this area are the same as stated previously for MD-2.

Conclusion

Staff has reviewed several of the proposals which have been previously submitted by property owners for consideration to the Planning Department and Planning Commission. We have not reviewed all of the areas in order to determine potential impacts on the Leisure Services Plan. However, from what we have reviewed it appears that the recommendation of the Planning Commission to the Council on the UGB amendment would serve to implement various policies, strategies, goals and objectives of the City-adopted documents identified above.

This memorandum is to serve as information for Council regarding the potential impacts to the Leisure Services Plan and how they relate to this and other planning and goal-setting documents that have been previously approved by Council.

Thank you,
Brian Sjothun, CPRP



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