

## INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2004, the City of Medford began updating the Leisure Services Plan to address park, recreation, and service needs for next 20 years. This plan describes a strategy for meeting these future community needs. It assesses the public demand for park and recreation facilities, establishes policies and guidelines for park planning and development, identifies general locations of future parks and trails, recommends improvements to existing facilities, and describes a financing strategy to implement priority recommendations.

In the past, the City has shown great vision in acquiring and developing park and recreation facilities that have become major assets in the community. Facilities such as the Bear Creek Greenway and Bear Creek Park are considered jewels in Medford, attracting residents from all parts of Jackson County. In addition, through a cooperative effort with the Medford School District, the City has developed one of the best neighborhood school-park systems in the Northwest.

As Medford grows, the City will need to meet future financial challenges in order to acquire new park and open space sites, develop facilities and trails, and adequately maintain the park system. Simultaneously, programs and services will need to be expanded to meet increasing community needs. This plan provides guidance on how to implement these recommendations while developing an interconnected and accessible park system.

### 1.1 PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The planning process for updating the City's Leisure Services Plan was made up of three steps; the Leisure Services Planning process, the Parks & Recreation SDC Methodology Update, and the Final Leisure Services Plan adoption.

#### Leisure Service Planning Process

- **Phase I:** To establish a framework for the plan, Phase I included an inventory and analysis of existing recreation resources in the Medford planning area. This information incorporated a community profile, a review of population growth patterns, an inventory of the City's existing parks and recreation facilities, and an analysis of park and recreation operations, maintenance, and programs.
- **Phase II:** A comprehensive assessment of recreation needs in the Medford area began by measuring public opinion, recreation

#### **Leisure Services Plan Development:**

1. *Leisure Service Planning Process*
2. *Parks SDC Methodology Update*
3. *Final Leisure Services Plan adoption*

patterns, and perceived needs through a community workshop, city-wide recreation survey, and sport group questionnaire. From this information and with input from an advisory committee, needs were determined for park land, open space, and recreation facilities.

- **Phase III:** In Phase III, recommendations were developed for improving existing parks and acquiring and developing new parks, trails, and recreational facilities. In addition, strategies were proposed to bring administration, maintenance, and programming in line with community expectations.
- **Phase IV:** The last phase involved creating an action plan to implement recommendations and a financing strategy for funding priority improvements.

### **Parks and Recreation System Development Charges Methodology Update**

**Phase I:** In October of 2005, Don Ganer & Associates, Inc. developed a System Development Charge fee of \$5,528/single family residence based on a project list from MIG's Leisure Services Plan resulting in a SDC fee roughly twice as large as the community was willing to support.

**Phase II:** Parks & Recreation staff developed a greatly reduced project list (totaling \$27,822,500) supporting an SDC fee of \$2,544. Council adopted this project list in a 25-year SDC Capacity Improvements Plan, and adopted a three year stepped SDC fee increase graduated up to the \$2,544 amount.

### **Final Leisure Service Plan**

**Phase I:** Park staff then merged the collective work of the two year process with the adopted 25-year plan into a Final Leisure Services Plan

**Phase II:** Incorporation of this Final Parks, Recreation and Leisure Services Plan Update into the City of Medford Comprehensive Plan through a plan amendment is the final step of this process.

## **1.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

To develop a solid foundation for the Leisure Services Plan, the planning process involved input from several public involvement



activities and review by an advisory group. Medford residents contributed to the development of the plan through three public involvement venues:

- **Recreation Survey:** A city-wide survey of public attitudes, recreation interests, and recreation participation was conducted in Fall 2004. A survey sample of 438 responses was obtained from the four quadrants of the City.
- **Community Workshop:** Sixteen people attending a community workshop on September 14, 2004, to discuss their vision for parks, recreation facilities, and programs in Medford.
- **Sports Group Survey:** Organizations providing sports leagues in Medford were asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding the number of teams and players in the league, season of play, and field requirements. The sports group survey obtained information regarding 27 different programs for adults and youth provided by both the City and private providers in Medford. This data was used to determine sports field and facility needs.

In addition to the public involvement activities, a Steering Committee, consisting of key City staff and citizens representing a variety of community interests, met regularly throughout the planning process. This group provided advice and insight by discussing critical issues facing Medford parks and recreation and by reviewing key reports in the development of the Plan. Similarly, the Parks and Recreation Commission also provided direction during the planning process.

### 1.3 REPORT ORGANIZATION

The Leisure Service Plan is organized into seven chapters and seven appendices:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction** describes the purpose of the report, the planning process, the public involvement activities, and the organization of this document.
- **Chapter 2: Community Profile** discusses the profile of Medford that provides the framework for the Plan. This includes a discussion of the planning area, the regional context, natural features, climate, and demographic characteristics.
- **Chapter 3: Existing Parks and Facilities** summarizes the park and facility inventory and analyzes the City's park land according to a park classification system.



- **Chapter 4: Needs Assessment** presents methodology overview and results of the facility needs assessment process.
- **Chapter 5: Planning Policies and Guidelines** introduces the goals and policies that will guide the implementation of this Plan. This chapter also presents guidelines for the design and development of parks and facilities.
- **Chapter 6: Strategies** identifies the anticipated methods for improving the existing parks system and the goals for the acquisition and development of new sites and specialized facilities. It also introduces strategies for recreation programming and the administration and maintenance of parks and facilities.
- **Chapter 7: Implementation Strategy** identifies potential funding sources and financing strategies for priority capital improvements, programs, and projects.
- **Appendix A: City of Medford Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Areas** provides a summary description of existing City parks, along with their facilities and significant natural areas.
- **Appendix B: Parks and Facilities Provided by Others** describes the park and recreation resources owned by other public and private entities that attract people to the Medford Planning Area and surrounding region.
- **Appendix C: Sports Facility Inventory** contains a detailed inventory of sports fields, gymnasiums, and pools in Medford.
- **Appendix D: Recreation Demand** includes an account of all public involvement results.
- **Appendix E: Park and Facility Needs Assessment** presents the analysis of park land and recreation facilities used in the identification of community needs for these resources.
- **Appendix F: Priority Maintenance Projects** lists projects identified by Maintenance Staff as significant maintenance projects that have been deferred over the last 3-4 years.
- **Appendix G: Opinion of Probable Costs** lists MIG's estimated costs for all projects identified by maintenance staff as Priority 1.

The appendices are published under a separate cover.