Parks & Recreation Department
Standard Operating Procedure

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Authorization and Review

Director Parks & Recreation _____ Date: 4/21/16

Superintendent _____ Date: 4/21/16

The City of Medford Comprehensive Plan and Medford Parks and Recreation Leisure Services Plan include environmental sustainability as a core value in the maintenance and preservation of natural and developed resources. Further, these plans recognize that integrating and continuously improving sustainable best practices in all phases of management is an integral part of operational excellence. This policy defines the initiatives, standards, and responsibilities Medford Park and Recreation Department (MPRD) employees are to follow, and permanent steps to integrate sustainable practices in the planning, design, development, use, and management of MPRD parks and facilities where financially feasible. MPRD employees are encouraged to integrate sustainable practices in their daily duties and activities

Key sustainability initiatives identified by Medford Parks and Recreation include:

Integration of Sustainable Practices

MPRD staff should be educated and trained on awareness and implementation processes related to creating and maintaining a sustainable park system. The intention is to develop and integrate sustainable best practices in MPRD culture and in decision making processes. This integration process includes the design and development of new properties, the maintenance of existing parks and facilities, the procurement of sustainable materials/supplies and the activities of occupants of such properties.

Water Quality and Consumption

Parks and recreational facilities require significant amounts of water to support recreation programming and green space. The accompanying discharge of waste water and storm water runoff also contributes to the MPRD impact on the environment. Staff should look to design, maintain, and make improvements that minimize water use and waste whenever possible in a manner that provides safety, sanitation, and health of MPRD staff, patrons and assets.

Chemical Use

Parks and recreational facilities also require chemicals to operate, clean, maintain, and protect persons and properties. The use of cleaners, lubricants, fertilizers, pesticides, pool water sanitizers and many other chemicals have an impact on the environment. MPRD employees who utilize such products are expected to be knowledgeable, responsible and maintain appropriate licensing associated in their use. Publicly licensed pesticide applicators are required follow procedures lined out in department policy PAR-10-01, Integrated Pest Management. Reduction in chemical use or conversion to less toxic chemicals that minimize environmental impact without compromising health and safety is encouraged. Chemical use should be addressed during the design phase of renovations, replacements, and new construction in a manner that minimizes or eliminates their use where financially feasible and practical.

Energy Conservation

Controlling and minimizing electrical and natural gas/fossil fuel consumption is a fundamental characteristic of a sustainable organization. Consumption measures that reduce dependency on traditional energy sources should be investigated and implemented by staff and design professionals when operating existing systems and designing new properties where economically feasible. Employees are expected to take actions that minimize energy use such as turning lights out, closing exterior doors and windows when appropriate, minimizing vehicle usage, etc. Alternative energy generation systems that replace grid-sourced power should be investigated and integrated when feasible and practical. City of Medford construction and planning staff should remain knowledgeable of new energy efficiency technologies appropriate for MPRD properties as they evolve.

Climate Protection/Air quality

Reducing carbon emissions and overall carbon footprint is a fundamental characteristic of a sustainable organization. MPRD has a commitment to reduce carbon footprint through reductions in fuel consumption and procurement of efficient vehicles and equipment. To offset carbon footprint, MPRD will add additional trees to parks and right-of-way areas and track tree loss while striving to ensure a net gain in tree density.

Public Health & Nutrition

When possible, MPRD shall incorporate strategies that promote public health and nutrition. Promoting community gardens and locally grown foods/organic foods is essential in a sustainable community. MPRD has a commitment to increase community gardens in City of Medford Parks and city owned properties thus increasing the opportunities for public education on gardening and nutrition.

Waste Reduction

The volume and toxicity of waste generated by an organization is a primary contributor to environmental degradation, and improvements made to minimize waste are a critical component of sustainability. MPRD operations are to maximize recycling opportunities where possible, including engaging patrons by making recycling options convenient. Also, new construction and renovations should include designs that promote and improve the convenience of trash and recycling separation. The purchasing and stocking of disposable materials and supplies that unnecessarily contribute to the waste stream should be avoided when possible.

Purchasing

Purchases of goods such as materials and supplies should consider the use of products produced from recycled materials, products that are considered recyclable, or are procured locally in a manner that minimizes transportation while adhering to the City of Medford purchasing and contracting rules.

Ecosystem Management

MPRD manages several properties which are classified as natural areas, either as stand-alone properties or adjacent to developed park lands. These properties differ in location, vegetation type, wildlife habitat, fire fuel loads, user impact, etc., and therefore require varying strategies to maintain or

improve health, diversity, and sustainability. Two of these properties have separate management plans that address management strategies and sustainability; Prescott Park and IOOF Cemetery. MPRD maintenance activities shall follow regulatory ordinances, rules, statutes and management plans when managing these lands. Sustainable improvement projects and ongoing management practices should focus on improving water quality, biodiversity of native species, habitat, site health and safety. Dead matter fire fuels should be managed in a manner that reduces catastrophic fire risk while maintaining site soil qualities. Vegetation and forest stand health should be optimized, with various age classes and appropriate species diversity strengthened. Wildlife habitat should be accommodated and improved to provide a diversity of species within the native food chain. Invasive and noxious plant species should be managed to favor the establishment of native species. Disturbed areas of park construction sites should be managed to eradicate invasive and noxious weed species during and following construction activities.