



# 2024 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan

January 2024





**Begin the day at a park, trail, natural area or recreation program.**

“Parks are so much more than collections of grassy lawns to lay on or benches from which to people-watch. Parks serve an irreplaceable role in developing and preserving our sense of community and pride in where we live. They bring...



# Acknowledgements

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...people together, inspire commerce, and spread an appreciation for the splendor of nature.”

~ Jerah Smith, Communications Fellow for American Planning Association’s Great Places in America program

Adopted by Sammamish City Council on December 12, 2023 via resolution.



# Executive Summary

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan is a six-year guide and strategic plan for managing and enhancing park and recreation services in Sammamish. It establishes a path forward for providing high quality, community driven parks, trails, open spaces, and recreational opportunities. The Plan addresses departmental goals, objectives and other management considerations toward the continuation of quality recreation and cultural services to benefit the residents of Sammamish.

## Park & Recreation System Overview

The Sammamish Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department serves as the community’s key resource for providing parks, trails, recreation facilities, and community events. The Department supports tourism and economic development – providing an enhanced quality of life for its residents. Thousands of participants and visitors join the many activities offered each year. In the Sammamish park and recreation system, there are 15 City-owned parks, 674 acres of parks and open space, 20 miles of trails, the Community & Aquatic Center (operated by the YMCA), and the Teen Center (operated by the Boys and Girls Club). The system of parks supports a range of active and passive recreation experiences. In addition, the City provides athletic fields, sport courts, spray park, and lakefront water access, among other amenities.

Additionally, recreation amenities available within Sammamish are a major community asset and support the physical, mental, and social health of community members. Sammamish residents also can access other nearby parks, trails, open spaces, and recreational facilities provided by the cities of Issaquah and Redmond, King County, Lake Washington School District, Issaquah School District, and other entities.

This Plan was developed with the input and direction of Sammamish residents. The Plan inventories and evaluates existing park and recreation areas, assesses the needs for acquisition, site development, and operations, and offers specific policies and recommendations to achieve the community’s goals.

New investments in parks and recreation will be necessary to meet the needs of the community, support youth development, expand opportunities for inclusion, provide options for residents to lead healthy, active lives, and foster greater social and community connections. Through a robust engagement process, community feedback can be synthesized into three core, community priorities:

- Maintain existing facilities,
- Develop and improve existing parks, and
- Expand recreation options.





## Future Improvements

### Maintain Existing Facilities

Minor improvements to access, such as providing ramped entrances to playgrounds or stable surface access to site furnishings, are necessary to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensure universal accessibility. Also, a few playgrounds are nearing the end of their useful life and should be replaced as budget allows. In the next six-years, the nature play area at Big Rock North will need upgrades and the design of a new playground at Beaver Lake Park lakeside is proposed. In the next seven to ten years, additional playground upgrades are proposed for Pine Lake and Lower Sammamish Commons. Other improvement projects include field improvements at East Sammamish Park.

### Develop and Improve Existing Parks

Serving existing and future residents will require improvements to existing parks and additional investments in the park, trail, and recreation system. To ensure existing and new parks provide desired recreational amenities and offer safe and accessible opportunities to play and gather, the PROS Plan recommends investments throughout the park system to enhance accessibility, safety, and usability of park features (refer to chapter 10 for more information).

### Expand Recreational Options

Through recent park site master plans, the City is poised to implement phased development of multiple parks that will offer residents a more diverse range of recreational experiences, while creating destinations that attract and engage park users. Proposed improvements to Beaton Hill, Big Rock South, and Klahanie Parks will include the following amenities:

- Inclusive, all-abilities, or creative playgrounds,
- Sport courts, including pickleball,
- Picnic shelters,
- P-Patches (community gardens), and
- Off-leash dog areas.

Additionally, trail connections, including sidewalk and bike lanes improvements, are needed to help link destinations across Sammamish (refer to chapter 6 for more information). Priority trail segments should include linkages that create looped routes, such as a trail between Sammamish Commons and Big Rock Parks that extends to Ebright Park, and that fill gaps in longer routes, such as those along the Plateau Trail (Pipeline Trail).





## Goals & Policies

This PROS Plan includes goals and objectives intended to guide City decision-making to ensure the parks, trails, and open space system meets the needs of the Sammamish community for years to come. These goals and objectives were based on community input and technical analysis. They include:

- **Engagement & Promotion:** Encourage and support active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreational opportunities.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging:** Provide park and recreation opportunities throughout parklands, facilities, and programming that engages all members of the community to the best of their ability.
- **Maintenance & Sustainability:** Maintain Sammamish parks and recreation facilities to ensure longevity of assets, a positive aesthetic and sensory experience, preservation of habitat and natural systems, and safety for park patrons.
- **Climate Resiliency:** Integrate sustainable and proactive policies and practices for addressing long-term environmental changes and the need for emergency preparedness due to climate changes.
- **Trails & Connectivity:** Develop a network of non-motorized recreational trails to expand connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, and public amenities.
- **Parks & Open Space:**
  - Provide a diversified, interconnected network of parks, trails, active recreation facilities, and open spaces that delivers a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities that are easily accessible to the Sammamish community.
  - Design and develop high-quality parks and recreation facilities to ensure the safety and enjoyment of users and maximize recreational experiences.
- **Recreation Facilities & Activities:** Provide recreation opportunities and support partnerships that provide lifelong play, active living, health and wellness, discovery, creativity, and learning for individuals and families.
- **Funding & Operations:**
  - Identify and pursue financing strategies and partnerships for the development and operations of parks and recreation facilities to serve the residents of Sammamish.
  - Provide leadership and management of the park, recreation, and open space system throughout the City.





## Implementing the Plan

The City has built an amazing system of developed parks, trails, and open spaces. In the last decade, the City has been fortunate to add nearly 155 acres into its system. The City currently relies on Park Impact Fees (PIF), Real Estate Excise Taxes (REET), grants, donations, and general funds to finance individual projects or programs. Periodically updating the existing PIF program, which assesses fees on new development to meet the increased demand for parks, will allow the City to obtain future acquisition and development funding from residential development. State and federal grant programs offer additional potential opportunities to leverage available local revenues to fund specific projects. However, the recommendations for park and recreation services noted in this Plan may trigger the need for funding beyond current allocations and

for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities.

Municipalities across Washington have favored the creation of Metropolitan park districts (MPD) to meet the recreational needs of residents, while also being sensitive to the set of demands placed on general purpose property tax funds. The City should examine and study the feasibility of establishing an MPD and conduct an assessment of the legal parameters and political factors affecting the decision to establish a new voter district. Establishing such a funding mechanism will require both political and public support.







# Overview & Introduction

## Purpose of the Plan

The City of Sammamish 2024 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan is an update to the 2018 PROS Plan and incorporates the feedback from an extensive community engagement process conducted in 2023. This Plan creates a vision for an innovative, inclusive, and interconnected system of parks, trails, and open space that promotes recreation, health, and environmental conservation as integral elements of a thriving, livable Sammamish.

The PROS Plan serves as a blueprint for the management, enhancement, and growth of Sammamish's park and recreation system. It assists in guiding decisions related to planning, developing, and maintaining parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities. This Plan also identifies priorities for recreation programs, community events, and cultural activities.

The 2024 PROS Plan provides updated system inventories, community profile, needs analyses, and a comprehensive capital project list to guide future investments. The Plan identifies parks and recreation goals and establishes a long-range plan for the Sammamish park and recreation system, including action items and strategies for implementation over the next six years. The recommendations in this Plan are based on community input, evaluations of the existing park system, operating conditions, and fiscal considerations.

The PROS Plan is part of the City's broader Comprehensive Plan and is consistent with the guidelines established by the Growth Management Act. The PROS Plan is updated every six years in order to remain current with community interests and retain eligibility for state grants through the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), which administers various grant programs for outdoor recreation and conservation efforts.

## Planning Process

This PROS Plan represents the culmination of more than a year-long planning effort and reflects the community's interests and needs for parks, open space, trails, and recreational activities. The planning process, which included a variety of public outreach activities, encouraged public engagement to inform the development of the priorities and future direction of Sammamish's park and recreation system. Community members expressed their interests through surveys, public meetings, stakeholder discussions, online outreach, and tabling activities at community events.

In addition to community engagement, the actions



identified in this Plan are based on:

- An inventory and assessment of the City’s existing park and recreation facilities to establish the system’s current performance and to identify needed maintenance, capital repair, and replacement projects;
- Service level and walkability assessments to quantify the system’s ability to serve current and future residents; and
- Review of on-going and past planning efforts that guide investments in Sammamish’s parks, trails, and open space.

The Plan’s capital improvements section and accompanying implementation strategies are intended to sustain, enhance, preserve, and steward the City’s critical park and recreation infrastructure.

## Park & Recreation System Overview

The Sammamish Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department serves as the community’s key resource for providing parks, trails, recreation facilities, and community events. The Department supports tourism, economic development, and providing an enhanced quality of life for its residents. Thousands of participants and visitors join the many activities offered each year. There are 15 City-owned parks, 674 acres of parks and open space, 20 miles of trails, the Community & Aquatic Center (operated by the YMCA), and the Teen Center (operated by the Boys and Girls Club) in the Sammamish park and recreation system.

### Department Organization

The Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department is committed to protecting the natural beauty of Sammamish through developing a vibrant system of parks, open space, and trails; providing residents of all ages and abilities positive recreational opportunities in clean, safe, and accessible facilities; and preserving the City’s quality of life for future generations.

The Department has 32.51 full-time employees (FTEs) in five divisions: Administration, Park and

## Vision & Mission

Sammamish’s Parks and Recreation system is an integral part of our healthy and sustainable community by connecting people to nature, play and culture.

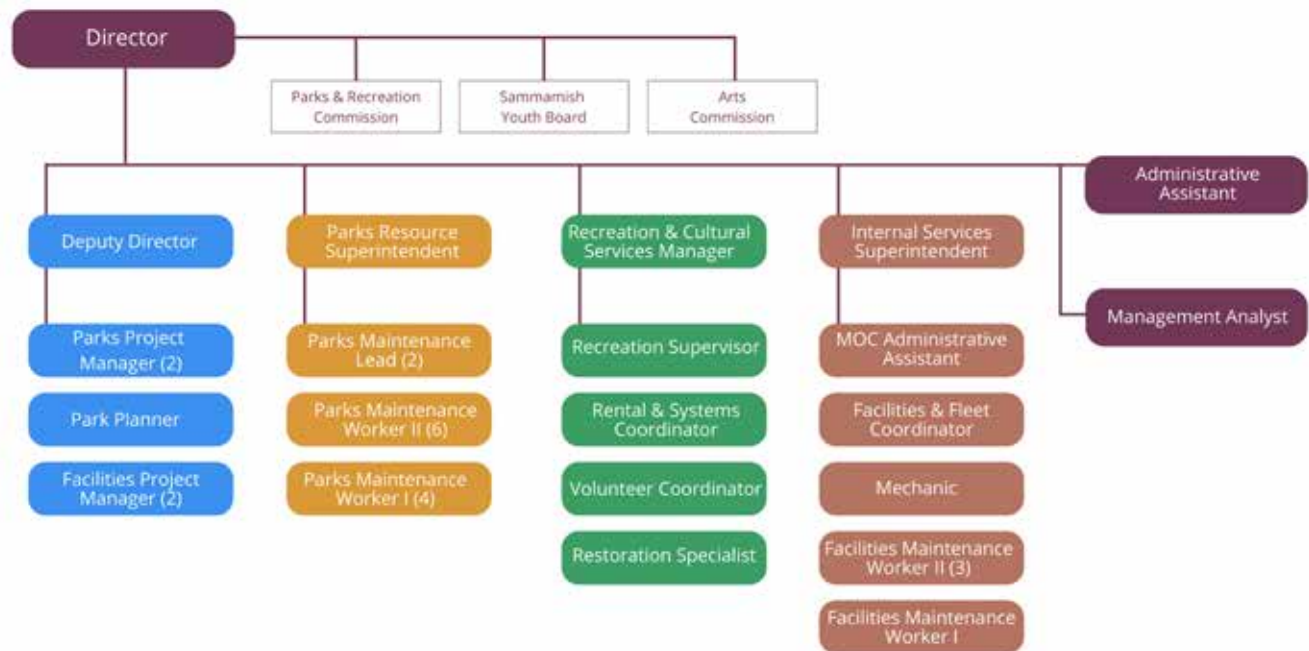
Sammamish’s Parks and Recreation system contributes to the quality of life for the community by creating a legacy of diverse and quality parks, exceptional recreation programs and protected natural resources.

Facility Planning, Recreation, Parks Maintenance, and Facilities.

- The Administration Division includes four FTEs and provides direction and leadership for the Department in implementing the goals and objectives of the City Council.
- The Park and Facility Planning Division of five FTEs supervise and manage both park and capital improvement projects and coordinate short and long-term planning efforts for the park system and city-owned facilities.
- Recreation Division staff coordinate and facilitate the delivery of events and volunteer services throughout the City. This division’s responsibilities include organizing community events such as the annual 4th of July celebration, facility rental bookings, providing lifeguards at Pine Lake Park, volunteer recruitment and scheduling, and administering the Sammamish Youth Board and Arts Commission programs and events. This division also supports cultural events and artistic opportunities/displays for the enjoyment of residents. The division has five FTEs.
- The Parks Maintenance Division of 13 FTEs maintains the parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities throughout the City with a combination of City maintenance staff and contracted services; prepares athletic fields for the various sporting teams; and supports all community special events. Field rental fees help to offset the costs of field maintenance and preparation.



Figure 1. Sammamish Parks & Recreation Department Organizational Chart



- The Facilities Division of 5.5 FTS (some staff positions are shared amongst multiple departments) manages operations and maintenance of existing facilities, irrigation, contract administration for all City maintenance projects, and maintenance of the City’s vehicle fleet.

Additionally, the Parks and Recreation Department plays a vital role in many aspects of community life, with staff support to three commissions related to parks and public art.

### Parks and Recreation Commission

The Parks and Recreation Commission is an advisory group to the City Council and provides input on issues relating to the delivery of parks and recreation services to Sammamish residents. Commissioners are appointed by the City Council for four-year terms that are staggered.

### Arts Commission

Established in 2003, the Sammamish Arts Commission serves as an advisory body to the City Council. The Commission meets monthly, and their role is to advise on matters concerning the promotion and facilitation of public art in the community with the mission of integrating art and culture to create a sense of place, civic identity, and unique character.

### Sammamish Youth Board

The Sammamish Youth Board (SYB) consists of local middle and high school students appointed by the City Council. Their mission is to unite youth, adults, and government to form a relationship that promotes equality and mutual respect. This group also pursues yearly projects of interests that strive to make Sammamish a stronger community.

## Accomplishments Since 2018

The 2018 PROS Plan was a strong guide for City officials, management, and staff in making decisions about planning, acquiring, and developing park and recreation facilities. The following represents a short list of the major accomplishments following the adoption of the 2018 Plan:

- Opened Big Rock Park Central, a 20-acre park, to the public
- Improved vehicular Wayfinding
- Completion of city-wide Athletic Field Study
- Completed Beaver Lake Park and Inglewood Middle School Athletic Field Feasibility Studies
- Adoption of the Klahanie Park Master Plan
- Adopted park site master plans for Beaton Hill Park and Big Rock Park South and initiated park concept design for Notch property
- Acquisition of 65 acres of park land
- Completion of Skatepark repairs at Sammamish Commons upper plaza
- ADA access and improvements at Sammamish Landing Park
- Resurfaced sport courts at East Sammamish Park with pickleball and tennis striping
- Installed permanent Public Art at SE 4th Street
- Additional cultural events hosted for the community
- Designated time at Beaver Lake Lodge for Senior Programming
- Improved promotion of recreation events with Spring, Summer, and Fall Recreation Guides
- Temporary plant salvage facility constructed at Beaver Lake Shop

## Acquired 65 acres since 2018 PROS Plan











## Current Challenges & Future Considerations

As with any citywide strategic planning effort, current community challenges provide a context for developing and assessing strategies for the future. The following macro trends are anticipated to be important priorities over the next decade.

### Equity, Inclusivity, & Accessibility

Maintaining and enhancing social equity across recreational opportunities and facilities should be a core function of municipal park and recreation systems. Through this Plan, the City of Sammamish made a concerted effort to reach out to, connect with, and engage a diversity of local communities. The City endeavored to make all voices welcome during the PROS planning process through direct engagement during various community events and a multi-language community survey conducted in Chinese, English, Hindi, and Spanish. A focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion also carries into adaptive recreation and ongoing accessibility upgrades of parks and amenities. The City must continue to find ways to provide safe and equitable access to parks, trails, facilities, recreational activities, and other services.

### Connectivity & Walkability

Much of the development on the plateau occurred prior to Sammamish becoming a city in 1999. Before incorporation, local development was guided by King County land use, standards, and plans. Consistent with the 2018 PROS Plan, Sammamish residents remain interested in safe walking routes to community destinations and desire improved non-motorized connectivity. Sidewalk and recreational connectivity is one of the core aspects of the Town Center Plan, and trail improvements and the relationships to complete streets, sidewalks, and bike lanes have been cited in other Sammamish plans.

### Continued Investments in the Park & Recreation System

From accessible playgrounds to splash pads to connected trails and natural areas, the range of play experiences offered by the City will need to change and diversify over time. Also, the diversity of the Sammamish community will influence the needs for different or expanded recreational experiences, such as extended family gatherings, community events and social activities, and cultural arts, among others. The demand for new amenities also must be balanced against preserving and maintaining existing parks and natural areas. The development of new amenities may require the use or re-use of existing parkland or more parkland may be required to support the community's evolving, future needs.





Research on recreation also provides information on how park distribution, park proximity, park facilities, and amenity conditions have an impact on people’s desire to engage in physical activity. It will be valuable to re-evaluate current park designs and maintenance policies to ensure barrier-free, engaging park environments and operational efficiencies. The City will continue to play a major role in enabling healthy lifestyles for Sammamish residents and should continue to adapt its park and trail system and recreation opportunities. This will be done, in part, by monitoring changes in community age, cultural interests, and diversity of resident needs.

### **Stewardship & Asset Management**

Established park systems require ongoing maintenance in order to safely and effectively serve the community. Public recreation providers across the country consider maintaining existing park facilities to be a key management issue. Poorly maintained assets – from benches to playgrounds to sport fields – can fail, either structurally or operationally, posing safety risks and reducing their recreational value. Aging infrastructure also may fail to meet community expectations or need capital upgrades to adapt to changing community interests. However, recreation providers often struggle to establish adequate funding mechanisms for routine and preventative maintenance, repair of facilities, as well as the major rehabilitation of existing outdoor recreation facilities at the end of their useful life.

This Plan includes a condition assessments of City parks to provide a baseline of current conditions to inform facility, maintenance, and operations policies and improvements. The continued, proper maintenance of recreation assets will prevent deterioration, thereby reducing long-term capital and operating costs, maintaining safety, improving public perception, and facilitating extended community use.

### **Climate Vulnerability, Adaptation, & Resilience**

Regional climate change models project that the Puget Sound area will see warmer temperatures, shifts in seasonal precipitation patterns with a decrease in summer precipitation, increases in extreme storm events, and increases in the exposure to droughts and wildfires. Enhancing native vegetation, planting more trees, reducing energy and water use, and finding more sustainable materials to use in construction of park amenities will play a role in the City’s overall efforts. Also, coordinated efforts to link multimodal transportation options to an expanding trail network and linking parks to transit and other community destinations will improve livability and reduce vehicular trips. Adapting to the impacts of climate change could include a review of tree species mix for increased diversity and resilience, as well as community health services in the form of providing heating/cooling stations during extreme weather events.

## Guiding Documents

This PROS Plan is one of several documents that comprise Sammamish’s long-range planning and policy framework and follows on a series of adopted plans directing the future of the City of Sammamish. While not all City planning efforts directly involve park and recreation issues, Sammamish has clearly recognized the importance of its park, recreation, and open space system for a sustainable and healthy future of the community.

The role of some of these adopted plans should be emphasized as part of the local trend for parks, recreation, and open space in Sammamish. To highlight the importance of certain plans, statements from the Town Center Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and the Sustainability Strategy are repeated below.

- City of Sammamish Sustainability Strategy: The City seeks to become an environmentally and economically sustainable community and to make the community an even better place to live, work, and play.
- Sammamish Town Center and Infrastructure Plan: The core mixed-use area centers on outdoor spaces that are defined by buildings and their proportion to streets and openings with walkability as a key component and a “green spine” concept that connects a public open space system to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Sammamish Comprehensive Plan: The overarching goal in the Parks Element of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a network of parks, trails, athletic fields, and open spaces that deliver a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities to the Sammamish community. The City is currently undergoing its ten-year update of its Comprehensive Plan (Envision Sammamish 2044), which started in May 2022 and targets December 2024 for final plan adoption.

Other plans that provide guidance for City investments in parks, trails, and natural areas include the Land Acquisition Strategy, Urban Forestry Management Plan, and ADA Transition Plan.

## Adopted Park Master Plans

In addition to citywide planning, the City has adopted specific park development plans for converting acquired parkland into public parks, upgrading existing parks, and prioritizing athletic field improvements to continue to provide quality park and recreation services to the community. These include the following.

- Athletic Field Study – Inglewood Middle School Athletic Field Improvements
- Beaton Hill Park Master Plan
- Beaver Lake Park Master Plan
- Beaver Lake Preserve Management Plan
- Big Rock Park North and Central Master Plan
- Big Rock Park South Master Plan
- East Sammamish Park Master Plan
- Evans Creek Preserve Management Plan
- Klahanie Park Master Plan
- Sammamish Commons Master Plan

## Plan Contents

The remainder of this Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan is organized as follows:

- Chapter 2: Community Profile – provides an overview of the City of Sammamish and its demographics.
- Chapter 3: Community Engagement – highlights the methods used to engage the Sammamish community in the development of the Plan.
- Chapter 4: Classifications & Inventory – describes the inventory and classifications for each park and preserve within the park system.
- Chapters 5: Parks & Open Space – describes community feedback, trends, local needs, and potential improvements for parks and open space.
- Chapter 6: Trails – describes community feedback, local interests, and potential improvements for the recreational trail network.
- Chapter 7: Recreation & Events – describes community feedback, trends, local needs, and potential improvements for recreation activities, facilities, and events.
- Chapter 8: Operations – describes a range of operation functions and staffing needed for park system management.
- Chapter 9: Goals & Objectives – provides a policy framework for the park and recreation system grouped by major program area.
- Chapter 10: Projects & Implementation Strategies – describes a range of strategies to consider in the implementation of the Plan and details a 6-year program for addressing park and facility enhancement or expansion projects.
- Appendices: Provides technical or supporting information to the planning effort and includes a summary of the community survey, stakeholder notes, funding options, among others.



# BENEFITS OF PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

A number of organizations and non-profits have documented the overall health and wellness benefits provided by parks, open space and trails. The Trust for Public Land published a report called *The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space*. This report makes the following observations about the health, economic, environmental and social benefits of parks and open space:

- Physical activity makes people healthier.
- Physical activity increases with access to parks.
- Contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health.
- Value is added to community and economic development sustainability.
- Benefits of tourism are enhanced.
- Trees are effective in improving air quality and assisting with stormwater control.
- Recreational opportunities for all ages are provided.



## Physical Activity Benefits

Residents in communities with increased access to parks, recreation, natural areas and trails have more opportunities for physical activity, both through recreation and active transportation. By participating in physical activity, residents can reduce their risk of being or becoming overweight or obese, decrease their likelihood of suffering from chronic diseases, such as heart disease and type-2 diabetes, and improve their levels of stress and anxiety. Nearby access to parks has been shown to increase levels of physical activity. According to studies cited in a 2010 report by the National Park and Recreation Association, the majority of people of all ages who visit parks are physically active during their visit. Also, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that greater access to parks leads to 25% more people exercising three or more days per week.



## Community Benefits

Park and recreation facilities provide opportunities to engage with family, friends, and neighbors, thereby increasing social capital and community cohesion, which can improve residents' mental health and overall well-being. People who feel that they are connected to their community and those who participate in recreational, community and other activities are more likely to have better mental and physical health and to live longer lives. Access to parks and recreational facilities has also been linked to reductions in crime, particularly juvenile delinquency



## Economic Benefits

Parks and recreation facilities can bring positive economic impacts through increased property values, increased attractiveness for businesses and workers (quality of life), and through direct increases in employment opportunities.

In Washington, outdoor recreation generates \$26.2 billion in consumer spending annually, \$7.6 billion in wages and salaries and \$2.3 billion in state and local tax revenue. Preserving access to outdoor recreation protects the economy, the businesses, the communities and the people who depend on the ability to play outside. According to the Outdoor Recreation Economy Report published by the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation can grow jobs and drive the economy through management and investment in parks, waters and trails as an interconnected system designed to sustain economic dividends for citizens.

# 2



## Snapshot: Sammamish Today

This chapter offers a brief overview of the City of Sammamish and its demographics.

### Community Profile

#### Location

Sammamish is a city of approximately 68,300 residents located in a picturesque region of King County, Washington, approximately 20 miles east of Seattle. Situated between Lake Sammamish to the west and the forests of the Cascade Mountain foothills to the east, Sammamish is composed of primarily single-family subdivisions interspersed with forests, open spaces, and lakes. The City includes a town center along 228th Avenue, as well as three smaller commercial business and office nodes. Nearby communities include Issaquah to the south, Redmond to the northwest, and unincorporated Union Hill – Novelty Hill to the north.

#### Economy

Sammamish is primarily a residential community, and the City itself does not have many major employers. Most residents commute to nearby cities, such as Redmond, Bellevue, and Seattle, for employment opportunities. However, neighboring cities – home to

major technology and biotechnology corporations, including Microsoft, Amazon, T-Mobile, and Expedia – provide a wealth of employment opportunities for Sammamish residents. The greater Seattle area also has numerous healthcare, finance, education, and professional service employment opportunities.

#### History

The Sammamish area in Washington State has a rich history of Native American tribes who inhabited the region for thousands of years before European settlement. The two prominent Native American tribes associated with the Sammamish area are the Snoqualmie (Sduhubš) and the Duwamish (Dkhw'Duw'Absh). Both tribes are part of the greater Salish cultural and linguistic group, and their traditional territories extend throughout the Puget Sound region. Their communities thrived in the area, relying on the abundant natural resources such as fish, game, plants, and other materials from the environment.



Incorporated on August 31, 1999, Sammamish emerged from a rural community with a rich history of logging and farming. Early European trappers and settlers came to the region for its proximity to Puget Sound, fertile farmland, and wealth of natural resources, then claimed land under the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850. In the early 20th century, the area was predominantly rural and sparsely populated, with its first major development being the construction of the East Lake Sammamish Parkway in the 1930s, connecting the region to neighboring cities.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the population in Sammamish began to grow rapidly due to its natural setting, quality schools, and proximity to technology hubs like Redmond and Bellevue. This influx of residents led to significant urbanization and the transformation of farmlands into residential neighborhoods.

The City's incorporation in 1999 was a pivotal moment, granting Sammamish local governance and the ability to chart its own course. In the decades

since, Sammamish has seen significant residential development and has nearly doubled in population through growth and annexation, yet the city has been able to proactively preserve green spaces, develop parks, support local businesses, and maintain a sense of community.

## Demographic Profile

Today, the City of Sammamish is an affluent, family-friendly community. More than half of households have children under 18, and 30% of the population is under 18. Sammamish is an increasingly diverse community, where over one-third of residents identify as Asian. The City's residents are well educated and have high rates of employment and income. The City's population has doubled between 2000 and 2023 and has continued to grow, though at a more moderate rate since 2020.



Figure 2. Population Characteristics: Sammamish, King County and Washington

Demographics	Sammamish	King County	Washington
<b>Population Characteristics</b>			
Population (2023) <sup>1</sup>	<b>68,280</b>	2,347,800	7,951,150
Population (2010) <sup>2</sup>	<b>45,780</b>	1,931,249	6,724,540
Population (2000) <sup>3</sup>	<b>34,104</b>	1,737,034	5,894,121
Percent Change (2000-23)	<b>100.2%</b>	35.2%	34.9%
Persons w/ Disabilities (%) <sup>4</sup>	<b>4.2%</b>	9.7%	12.7%
<b>Household Characteristics <sup>4</sup></b>			
Households	<b>21,930</b>	902,308	2,931,841
Percent with children	<b>54.0%</b>	28.4%	30.4%
Median Household Income	<b>\$195,648</b>	\$106,326	\$82,400
Average Household Size	<b>3.03</b>	2.44	2.55
Average Family Size	<b>3.24</b>	3.07	3.1
Owner Occupancy Rate	<b>84.6%</b>	56.6%	63.6%
<b>Age Groups <sup>4</sup></b>			
Median Age	<b>39.2</b>	37.1	37.9
Population < 5 years of age	<b>6.1%</b>	5.6%	5.9%
Population < 18 years of age	<b>29.6%</b>	20.2%	22.1%
Population 18 - 64 years of age	<b>62.6%</b>	66.7%	62.4%
Population > 65 years of age	<b>7.8%</b>	13.1%	15.5%

Sources:

\*1: Washington State Office of Financial Management, April 1, 2023 Population of Cities, Towns and Counties.

\*2: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.

\*3: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census.

\*4: U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

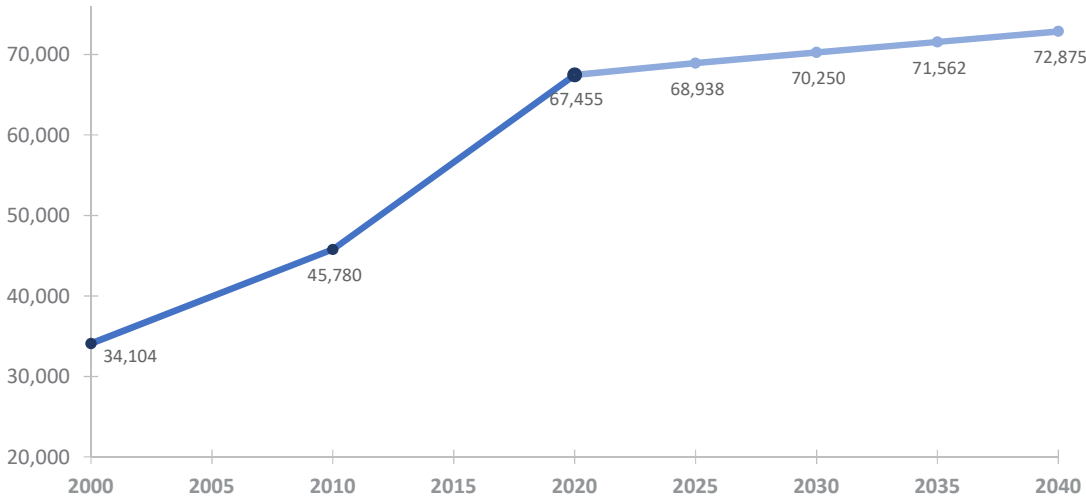
## Embracing Growth

Since its incorporation in 1999, Sammamish has experienced remarkable growth from a rural community of just over 34,000 residents in 2000 to a thriving suburban city of 67,455 residents in 2020 (Figure 3). A large amount of this growth can be attributed to a series of annexations, the most recent of which was the Klahanie Annexation in 2016, which added an estimated 10,989 residents to Sammamish’s population. Additional neighborhood annexations include Mystic Lake (2016), Aldarra-Montaine (2010), Ravenhill (2010), Camden Park (2009), and Rosemont (2009). The City’s allure lies in its promise of a high quality of life, excellent schools, and proximity to job opportunities in the neighboring technology hubs of the Seattle metropolitan area. To accommodate this growth, previously undeveloped areas have been thoughtfully transformed into well-planned residential neighborhoods, offering a diverse range of housing options.

Utilizing forecast data from the in-progress Comprehensive Plan update, Sammamish is expected to grow to approximately 72,875 people by 2040. As the community continues to evolve, the City’s planners will turn to data from the Land Use Vision 2050 planning effort for updated growth forecasts.

Sammamish’s growth poses critical considerations for the City’s park and recreation facilities. As the population expands, existing facilities will need to be assessed for their capacity to meet future needs effectively. The development of vacant land within the city may reduce potential locations for park and open space acquisition, necessitating careful planning to ensure residents can continue to enjoy sufficient, conveniently located parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities, while the community thrives and grows. Sammamish’s journey from a modest rural setting to a bustling suburban community calls for proactive and adaptive planning to sustain a vibrant and enjoyable environment for its expanding population.

Figure 3. Population Change – Actual and Projected: 2000 – 2040



**98% population increase\* (2000-2020)**

\* through growth and annexations

**54% households with children**

**Increased diversity (2000-2020)**



## A Family-Friendly Community

Sammamish has a population that reflects a community where families thrive. The city’s demographic makeup underscores its appeal to families, with a significant number of youth and parent-age adults. Over half of Sammamish households (54%) include children under the age of 18, and children and young adults make up over 35% of the City’s population. Also, while Sammamish has large numbers of youth and parent-age adults, it is home to relatively few residents between 20 and 34 or over 65 (Figure 4).

Children under five years, who are potential users of preschool and tot programs, as well as park facilities like playgrounds and trails (in strollers), make up 6.1% of the population. These individuals are also future participants in youth activities. Children between five and 14 years of age represent current youth program participants. About 17% of the City’s population is in this age range. Teens and young adults, age 15 to 24 years, are in transition from youth program to adult programs and participate in teen/young adult programs where available. Members of this age group are often seasonal employment seekers. Approximately 12% of Sammamish’s residents are teens and young adults.

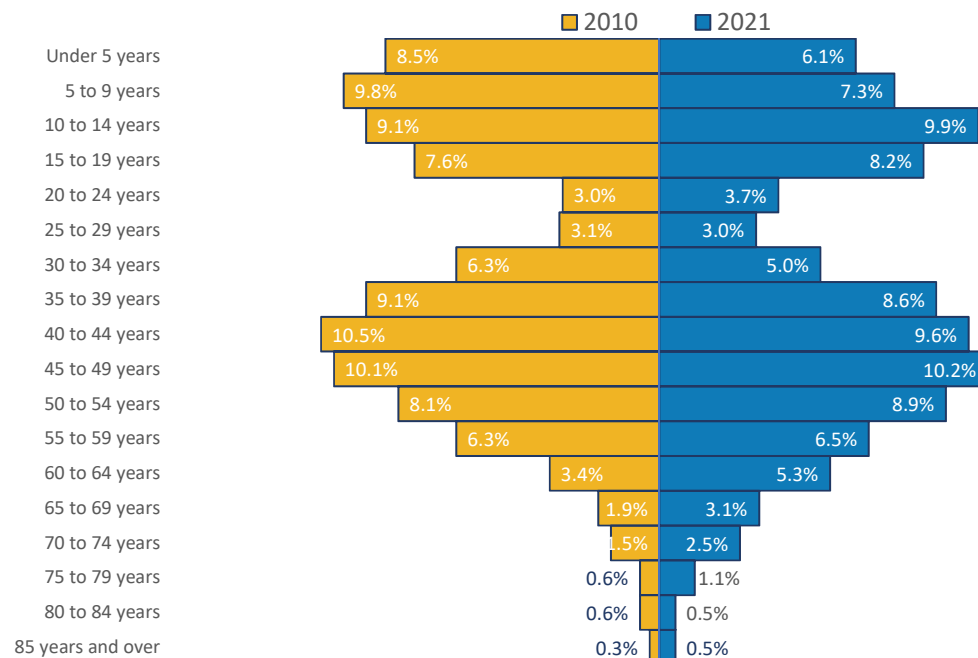
Sammamish is also home to a relatively high percentage of parent-age adults. Approximately 8% of residents are between 25 to 34 years of age,

representing individuals who are entering long-term relationships and establishing families. Additionally, 37% of the population is between 35 and 54 years of age. These residents, who range from those with young children to empty nesters, enjoy a wide range of adult programs and park facilities. This age group also represents the City’s largest 20-year age group, making up 37% of the overall population.

Older adults, ages 55 years plus, make up 20% of Sammamish’s population. This group represents users of adult and senior programs. These residents may be approaching retirement or already retired and may be spending time with grandchildren. This group also ranges from very healthy, active seniors to more physically inactive seniors.

Sammamish’s high percentage of families also is reflected in its household demographics. In 2021, the average household in Sammamish was 3.03 people, higher than the state average of 2.55 people. The average family is also larger, at 3.24 people. Of the 21,930 households in the City, 54% included children under 18, and only 10% were individuals living alone. Additionally, most City households own their home (85%), which is significantly higher than the average throughout King County (43%). This high level of owner-occupied units reflects high relative income of residents and the predominantly single-family housing stock available in Sammamish.

Figure 4. Age Group Distributions: 2010 & 2021



## Increasing Racial & Language Diversity

As it plans for future park and recreational opportunities, the City should consider how to best meet the recreational needs of all community members.

Over the past two decades, Sammamish has experienced a remarkable increase in diversity. The proportion of residents identifying as White decreased by approximately 30% between 2000 and 2021, including a 17.5% decline since 2010, indicating a more diverse community (Figure 5). This transformation is primarily attributed to a significant rise in the number of residents identifying as Asian, who now represent about 33% of the population.

Adding to the City’s multicultural makeup, about 6% of residents identify as two or more races, 3.5% as Hispanic or Latino of any race, 1.6% as Black or African American, and 0.6% identified with races not listed in the American Community Survey options.

Figure 5. Changes in Racial Identification - 2010 to 2021

Racial Identification	2010	2021
White	75.5%	58.0%
Two or more races	3.0%	5.9%
Some other race	0.7%	0.6%
Asian	19.4%	33.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%	0.5%
Black or African American	1.0%	1.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Island	0.1%	0.1%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	3.4%	3.5%

Disparities may exist in park and recreation program usage among different racial and ethnic groups. By working to provide equitable and high-quality recreational opportunities, the City can support recreational access for all community members.

Embracing the community’s increasing diversity also means acknowledging language diversity within Sammamish. Approximately 35% of residents speak a language other than English at home, with 8.5% reporting speaking English ‘less than very well’. Many of these individuals speak Asian languages, such as Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese), Vietnamese, or Korean. Sammamish’s linguistic diversity adds richness to the city’s cultural fabric and calls for



accessible and inclusive communication in public services, including parks and recreation programs.

People of color and residents who speak languages other than English may face barriers in accessing parks, recreation facilities, and activities. The City’s planning for future park and recreational opportunities should prioritize inclusivity and consider how best to meet the diverse recreational needs of its growing and vibrant community. Inclusion will not only enhance social cohesion, but also enrich the community’s overall well-being and quality of life.

## A Well-Educated, Prosperous Community

Sammamish stands out as a community with a highly educated and prosperous population. In 2021, 98% of residents over 25 years of age held a high school degree or higher, surpassing the statewide average of 92%. Moreover, 76% of Sammamish residents had attained a bachelor’s degree or higher, far exceeding statewide rates of 37%. This high level of education is reflected in the City’s workforce, where residents are employed in a wide range of industries, with 17% working in the professional, scientific, and management sector, 17% in education and healthcare, and another 14% in retail trade. Several other sectors, including manufacturing, arts and entertainment, and finance and insurance, each employ between 6% and 8% of workers.

The City’s robust economy and well-educated workforce have contributed to its low unemployment rate of 2.6% in 2021, which is significantly lower than county (4.6%) and statewide rates (5.1%). Two-thirds





of adults over 16 years of age are employed. The Puget Sound Regional Council estimates that Sammamish had 8,776 covered employment positions in 2022, with over half (51%) in the service sector and 19% in education.

Sammamish's income levels further highlight the community's prosperity. In 2021, the median household income reached \$195,648, surpassing the median income for King County households substantially by \$89,322. Approximately 82% of Sammamish households fall within higher income brackets (\$100,000 and greater), a significantly higher percentage compared to the county average (53%). These favorable socioeconomic conditions have positive correlations with the community's health and well-being. Higher income households typically have an increased capacity to pay for recreation and leisure services and often face fewer barriers to participation.

However, it is essential to consider the needs of lower-income residents as well, who may encounter barriers to physical activity due to reduced access to parks and recreational facilities, a lack of transportation options, a lack of time, and poor health. Lower-income residents may also be less financially able to afford recreational service fees or to pay for services, like childcare, that can make physical activity possible. Although Sammamish has a relatively low percentage of households earning less than \$25,000 annually (4.4%) and families living below the poverty level (3.7%), the City should continue to promote inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that all residents can benefit from the City's diverse and enriching recreational offerings.

## A Community of Healthy, Active Residents

Sammamish residents enjoy a relatively good level of health, with only 4.2% (2,790 persons) of the population reporting a disability that interferes with life activities, which is significantly lower than county and state averages (10% and 13% respectively). This positive health profile can be attributed, in part, to the City's relatively small number of seniors. Maintaining a park system that caters to residents of all abilities is essential for complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring inclusivity. Sammamish should consider community needs to create inclusive and accessible parks, facilities, activities, and communications – enabling everyone to participate in recreation activities.

A community's overall health directly impacts its residents' engagement in recreational and physical activities. Access to appropriate and convenient green spaces, recreational opportunities, and active transportation facilities plays a vital role in encouraging an active lifestyle. While specific health data for Sammamish is not readily available, the 2023 County Health Rankings indicate that King County, where Sammamish is located, ranks as the second healthiest county in Washington. This ranking reflects positive health outcomes and factors, such as health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment.

In King County, approximately 76% of adults aged 20 and older engage in leisure-time physical activity, surpassing the rates for both Washington State and the U.S. Furthermore, an impressive 98% of King County residents have access to adequate exercise opportunities, including parks or recreation facilities, significantly higher than the national (84%) and statewide (86%) averages. This suggests that the County ensures ample distribution of places for residents to participate in physical activities, making it easier for Sammamish residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles. As the community continues to prioritize health and well-being, fostering a supportive environment with accessible recreational opportunities is crucial in maintaining the good relative health of Sammamish residents.

### Sources:

Washington State Office of Financial Management, April 1, 2023 Population of Cities, Towns and Counties.  
U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.  
U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census.  
U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



# 3







# Community Engagement Process

This chapter highlights the methods used to engage the Sammamish community in the development of the PROS Plan.

Community engagement played an essential role in developing the 2024 PROS Plan. Several outreach methods were used to connect with the community, seek their input, and provide information about the Plan through convenient online and in-person activities. Public outreach methods were varied and extensive, including:

- One random-sample statistically valid mail survey in Chinese, English, Hindi, and Spanish
- Online community-wide survey in Chinese, English, Hindi, and Spanish
- One virtual public meeting and one in-person public meeting
- Tabling and outreach at six community events and in coordination with other on-going City planning efforts
- Three small group stakeholder discussions
- Meetings with the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council
- Sammamish city website with plan information and feedback opportunities
- Multiple social media postings, flyers at park kiosks, email notifications, and City newsletter articles

## Community Survey

A community-wide survey was conducted to assess the recreational needs and priorities of Sammamish residents. The survey was available in Chinese, English, Hindi, and Spanish and the cover letter accompanying the printed mail survey was written in

all languages and included unique QR codes to access each in-language survey online. The City mailed 2,500 surveys to randomly chosen households in Sammamish on March 28, 2023, of which 450 surveys were completed and returned (18% response rate, 4.5% margin of error). Online versions of the survey in all four languages were posted to the City's website on March 30th. An additional 311 surveys were completed from the general, community-wide online survey. In all, 761 surveys were collected, which included ten surveys in Chinese and one in Spanish.

Information about the survey was promoted through several channels, including on the City's website, through multiple social media postings, the City Newsletter, and through direct outreach to stakeholder group participants. The survey was closed on May 26, 2023.

The survey measured current levels of satisfaction and which facilities were primarily being used by residents. Residents were asked about future improvements and the types of recreational amenities they would like to see considered for the park system. Survey respondents were asked about:

- Performance and quality of programs and parks;
- Usage of City parks and recreation facilities;
- Overall satisfaction with the value of services being delivered by the City;
- Opinions about the need for various park, recreation, and trail improvements; and
- Priorities for future park and recreation services and facilities.

Significant survey findings are noted below, and a more detailed discussion of results can be found in the needs assessment chapters covering parks and open space, trails, and recreation (Chapters 5 - 7).

#### Major Survey Findings:

- **Livability:** Nearly all respondents (97%) feel that public parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Sammamish.
- **Usage:** Park visitation is high, with 76% of respondents visiting parks or recreation facilities at least once a month. Respondents visit local parks and recreation facilities for a variety of reasons, but the most popular reason is to walk or run (86%). More than half of respondents visited for relaxation (60%). Slightly more than one in three respondents visited for fitness or exercise, to attend community events or concerts, to walk a dog, or use a playground.

- **Park Amenity Priorities:** When asked to rank specific types of improvements, respondents identified conducting maintenance on existing facilities as their top priority, followed closely by developing a network of connected trails. Respondents also prioritized a variety of potential improvements: walking and hiking trails (88% rated as a high or top priority), restrooms in parks (81%), providing lifeguards at Pine Lake Beach in the summer (65%), more community events (63%), and all-abilities, inclusive playgrounds (55%).
- **Acquisition Priorities:** The survey asked a follow-up question asking residents to rank their priorities for future land acquisition. Overall, respondents rated acquiring land for passive recreational uses, like walking trails and wildlife viewing, as their top priority. Acquiring land to preserve habitat was the second highest priority.

The complete survey summary is provided in Appendix B.

## Virtual Public Meeting

The City held a virtual public meeting on May 25, 2023, using Zoom to share information about the PROS Plan update and gather feedback from community members to help inform further development of the Plan. A total of 19 people attended the meeting, which consisted of a presentation, live polling and facilitated breakout discussions. The presentation included an overview of the PROS Plan and the importance the community plays in the planning process, described the current inventory of parks and recreation facilities, and reviewed the preliminary survey results. Polling questions and breakout rooms were used to solicit input and feedback from participants. The City promoted the meeting through a postcard mailing in four languages to all Sammamish addresses, multiple community events, social media posts, and flyers at City parks.

#### Online Open House Highlights:

- The two top priorities identified by participants were expand the variety of recreational options, such as climbing walls, pickleball, bike skills/pump track, disc golf, etc. (31%) and improve access to park sidewalks, trail connections, safe routes to parks (25%).
- The top favorite things about Sammamish parks and open spaces identified by participants were trails in parks or linking parks, access to water and lakes, spaces for gatherings, performances or art, and covered areas for picnics or recreation.





**BIG IDEAS:**  
Get INVOLVED!

2023 is an important year for Sammamish. Big plans are underway, and we want to hear from you! What are you interested in? Find a topic (or several!) that's meaningful to you and then go to [sammamish.us/BigIdeas](https://sammamish.us/BigIdeas) to sign up. It's that easy! We're excited to work together to shape Sammamish for generations to come.

- Sammamish's Future
- Climate Action
- Planning Major Parks
- Housing
- City Finances
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Transit
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging
- Parks & Recreation

[sammamish.us/BigIdeas](https://sammamish.us/BigIdeas)

- Other interests include all-inclusive play opportunities, trail connections, and more/new sports activities and facilities (i.e., splash pad, pickleball, volleyball).

A summary of responses for the first public meeting is provided in Appendix C.

## In-Person Public Meeting

On September 6, 2023, the City of Sammamish Parks and Recreation Department hosted an in-person open house from 5 - 7 p.m. in the Sammamish City Hall lobby. The primary objectives were to provide the public with updates on the PROS Plan's progress and to invite the community to actively participate in the prioritization of potential projects and the future direction of Sammamish parks. Approximately 60 people attended the open house, which featured a welcoming booth at the City Hall Plaza entrance and eight staffed display boards in the City Hall lobby. Key suggestions voiced by attendees included:

- Interest in adding more sports courts or facilities in Sammamish parks, such as an outdoor city pool, a disc golf course, more designated pickleball courts, and facilities for slacklining;
- More parking at Pine Lake allow better lake access;
- More parking in popular parks;
- More open greenspaces and trails for walking; and
- Safe trail connection between Big Rock Park and City Commons.

A summary of responses for the second public meeting is provided in Appendix D.



## Community Event Tabling

City staff conducted a series of tabling activities at community events and festivals. Tabling occurred between May and September to build awareness of the PROS Plan and solicit input on recreation options and preferences.

## Stakeholder Discussions

The City of Sammamish conducted three stakeholder group discussions in April 2023 as part of their efforts to engage the community in the early stages of the 2024 PROS Plan update. The City identified three stakeholder interest areas to be represented at the interviews – Environmental, DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging), and Athletics – and conducted outreach to individuals representing each area to participate in the group discussions.

The outreach consisted of an initial email invitation to several individuals and organizations to solicit interest and follow-up emails to confirm the meeting date and time with interested parties.

Stakeholders shared their aspirations for parks, recreation, and open space, and provided ideas on possible improvements during the listening sessions – including interests they would like to see addressed in the PROS Plan. While each group had different responses to many of the questions, several interests held by all groups emerged. Key themes shared across groups include:

- Prioritize expanding and caring for park lands, habitats, and wildlife;
- Inform, educate, engage, and partner with the community;
- Improve and update the parks system to increase availability and better serve a changing community;
- Keep facilities and programs operated by partners affordable, convenient, and safe for all to use; and
- Provide events, facilities, and athletics tailored to specific groups.

Specific recommendations are incorporated in the needs assessment sections (Chapters 5 – 7), and a full summary is provided in Appendix E.

## Commission Meetings

The Parks & Recreation Commission provided direct and frequent guidance on the planning process and feedback on the draft plan during several meetings throughout 2023. The first session occurred on February 1, 2023, shortly after the planning project was started. The Commission discussed the update and provided their perspectives on specific challenges and opportunities to consider. The Board discussed the draft PROS Plan during sessions in November and December 2023.



## Other Outreach

In addition to the direct outreach opportunities described above, the Sammamish community was informed about the planning process through a variety of media platforms. The following methods were used to share information about the project and provide opportunities to participate and offer their comments:

- City website home page
- PROS Plan project page
- Email outreach through the City's distribution list and through partner organizations
- Social media via Instagram and Facebook
- Media releases
- Project flyers posted at park and preserve entry kiosks
- Announcements at Council and Planning Commission public meetings







# Classifications & Inventory

**This chapter describes the park classification system and provides an overview of the parks and open spaces in and near Sammamish.**

The City of Sammamish manages over 674 acres of parks and open space lands, providing public waterfront access, active recreational facilities for team and individual sports, playground equipment at eight parks, and more than 20 miles of walking paths and trails.

## Park Classifications

Parkland is classified to assist in planning for the community's recreational needs. The classifications also reflect standards that inform development decisions during site planning, in addition to operations and maintenance expectations for the level of developed facilities or natural lands. The Sammamish park system is composed of a hierarchy of various park types, each offering recreational opportunities and natural environmental functions. Collectively, the park system is intended to serve the full range of community needs.

Classifying parkland by function allows the City to evaluate its needs and to plan for an efficient, cost effective, and usable park system that minimizes conflicts between park users and adjacent uses. Several factors are considered when classifying parks:

- Specific needs in neighborhood, service area, or community;
- Suitability of a site for a particular use;
- Cost and effort of development;
- Possibility for public-private partnerships; and
- Operating and maintenance costs.

Each park classification defines the site's function, expected amenities, and recreational uses. The classification characteristics serve as general guidelines addressing the size and use of each park type. The following seven classifications are in effect in Sammamish and are defined as follows.



## Community Park

Often the most-visited type of park in the City's system, a community park is typically 15 to 60 acres in size and serves larger geographic areas, typically within a two- to five-mile travel distance from the park. Many visitors drive to these parks, and parking is provided. In areas without neighborhood parks, community parks also can serve as local neighborhood parks. Community parks offer programmed activities, as well as passive, unstructured recreation. Amenities may include athletic fields, skate parks, play courts, spray parks, swimming beaches, fishing piers, children's play areas, off-leash dog areas, individual and group picnic shelters, trails, natural areas, and community gardens. Athletic fields may be natural, synthetic turf, or a combination of surfaces, with or without field lighting. Because of the variety of recreation opportunities and the large number of people served, community parks require support facilities such as restrooms, parking lots, and maintenance facilities.

## Neighborhood Park

A neighborhood park is typically 5 to 15 acres in size, depending on a variety of factors including neighborhood need, physical location, and opportunity. Neighborhood parks are intended to serve residential areas within close proximity (up to ½-mile walking or biking distance) of the park and should be geographically distributed throughout the community. Neighborhood parks can be either owned and maintained by the City as public parks or by local homeowner associations as private parks serving the residents of specific homeowner associations. Topography and population density can influence the location of a neighborhood park. Access to neighborhood parks is mostly pedestrian, and park sites should be located such that people living within the service area can reach the park safely and conveniently. Connecting and frontage streets should include sidewalks or other safe pedestrian access. Neighborhood parks should be located along road frontages to improve visual access and community awareness of the sites. Additionally, street plans should encourage maximum connectivity and public access to park sites. These parks offer both active and passive recreation on a limited scale, but they are used primarily for unstructured recreational activities. Amenities may include children's playgrounds, open space, trails, picnic areas, small facilities for active recreation, open lawn areas, and gathering spaces. Support facilities may include restrooms and off-street parking.

## Mini Park

Also called 'pocket' parks, mini parks are small parks on public or private land that offer green space, outdoor seating areas, small playgrounds (such as a tot lot), and sometimes artwork. Currently, the City does not have any mini parks. Because of their small size and limited recreational opportunities, mini parks are not feasible for the City to develop at this time. However, many private subdivisions have developed and maintain private mini parks, tot lots, and small recreational spaces, typically ranging from 0.5 to 5 acres in size, which provide recreational resources to residents of specific homeowner associations.

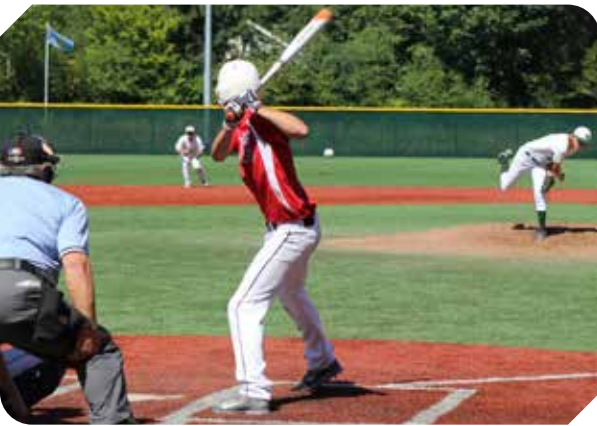






### Special Use Park

Special use facilities include single-purpose recreational areas or stand-alone sites designed to support a specific, specialized use. This classification may include boat ramps; golf courses; sites of historical or cultural significance, such as museums, historical landmarks and structures; and public plazas in or near commercial centers. Specialized facilities may also be provided within a park of another classification. No standards exist or are proposed concerning special facilities, since facility size is a function of the specific use.



### School / City Partnership Park

A school / City partnership park combines school and City resources to provide recreational amenities that benefit both the broader community and the school. Size and service area vary with each site. In general, elementary and middle schools provide resources similar to those of a neighborhood park, while high schools provide resources similar to those of a community park.



### Preserves / Open Space

Preserves are natural areas intended for urban tree and habitat preservation, while allowing public access and limited passive use. Sites typically contain sensitive areas such as wetlands, streams, and steep slopes, which also provide habitat for wildlife. These sites may serve as trail corridors, and low-impact or passive activities, such as walking and nature observation may be allowed, where appropriate, along with limited support facilities, such as parking and restrooms. Open space is land set aside to protect natural resources and/or create breaks from development. Open space is not developed and not geared toward recreational use. Size varies with each property for preserves and open spaces.

### Trails

This Plan details recreational trails. Trail corridors that include sidewalks and bicycle lanes or those within the right-of-way are addressed separately in the Transportation Master Plan. Chapter 6 provides more detail on the system for recreational trails in Sammamish.



## Facility Inventory

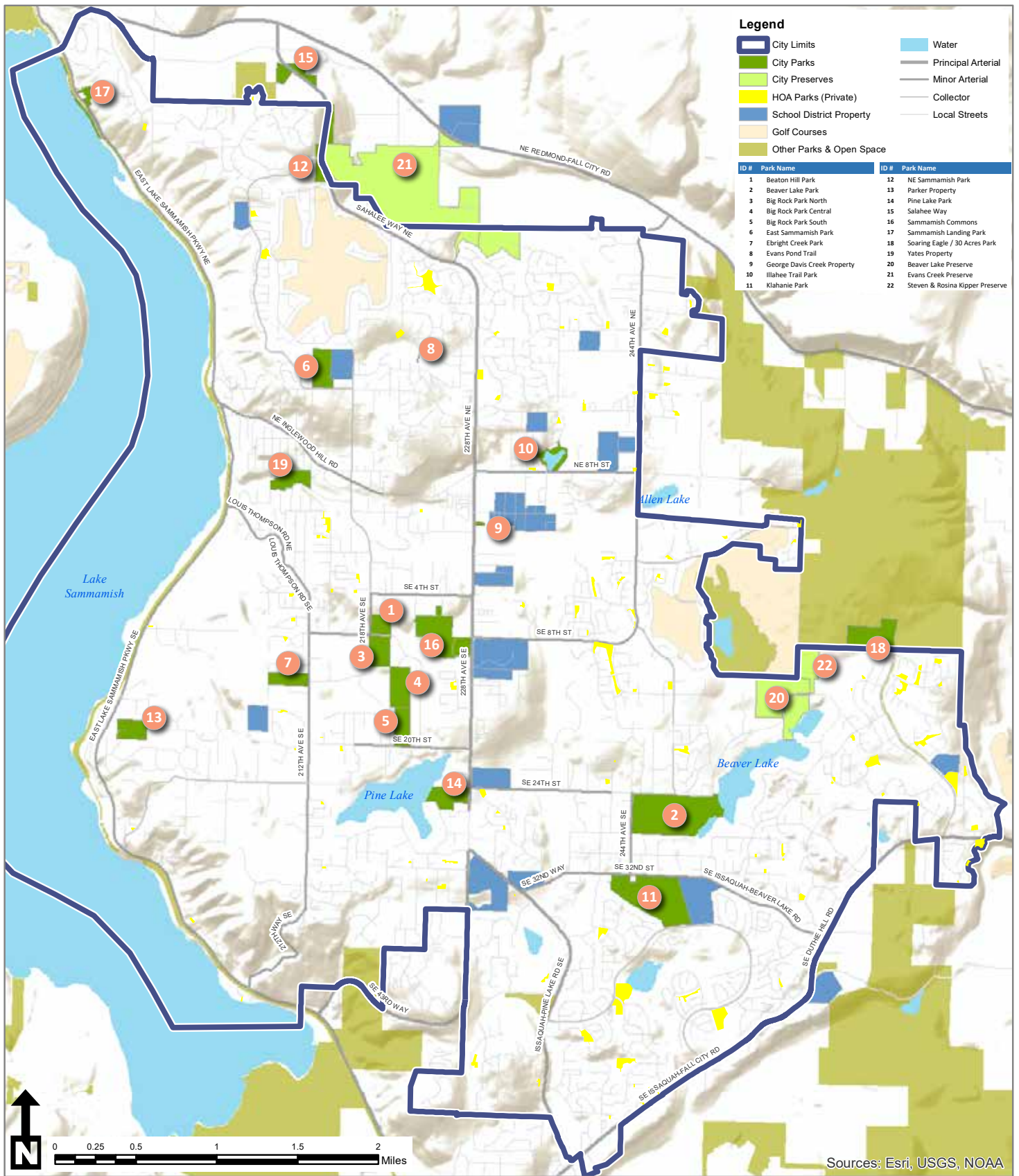
The City of Sammamish provides and maintains a growing system of parks that supports a range of active and passive experiences. The park and open space inventory identifies the recreational assets within the City.

Sammamish’s park system has 15 parks and over 674 acres of parkland, preserves, and open space. The following table summarizes the current land inventory in Sammamish. The map on the following page shows the location of existing parks and open spaces within the City.

Figure 6. Existing Inventory of City Parks & Open Spaces

Park Type / Name	Classification	Status	Acreage
<b>Community Parks</b>			
Beaton Hill Park	Community	Undeveloped	9.3
Beaver Lake Park	Community		79.2
Big Rock Park Central	Community		20.3
Big Rock Park North	Community		16.0
Big Rock Park South	Community	Undeveloped	14.8
East Sammamish Park	Community		18.8
Klahanie Park	Community		64.1
Pine Lake Park	Community		19.0
Sammamish Commons	Community		27.0
Sammamish Landing Park	Community		10.4
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>			
Ebright Creek Park	Neighborhood		12.3
Northeast Sammamish Park	Neighborhood		5.7
Parker Property	TBD / Neighborhood	Undeveloped	14.9
Yates Property	TBD / Neighborhood	Undeveloped	14.2
<b>Open Space / Natural Areas</b>			
30 Acres Park	Open Space		29.9
Evans Pond Trail	Open Space		0.1
George Davis Creek Property	Open Space		0.7
Illahee Trail Park	Open Space		12.7
Salahee Parcels (adj Evans Creek Pres.)	Open Space		6.8
Salahee Way	Open Space		11.1
<b>Preserve / Natural Areas</b>			
Beaver Lake Preserve	Preserve		55.7
Evans Creek Preserve	Preserve		213.2
Steven & Rosina Kipper Preserve	Preserve		17.1
<b>Total City-Owned Park Acres</b>			<b>673.5</b>
<b>School / City Partnership Park</b>			
Eastlake Community Fields			6.8
Inglewood Middle School Community Fields			7.9
<b>Total Partnership Park Acres</b>			<b>14.7</b>





Map 1: Existing Parks & Preserves

## City Open Space Preserves

### Evans Creek Preserve

The 213-acre Evans Creek Preserve offers wildflower meadows, wetlands, wildlife, forested uplands, and 3.5 miles of pedestrian-only loop trails. This property was purchased in 2000 and named in 2002. Phase I construction was completed in September 2011 and included the 10-stall lower parking lot, restrooms and over 2 miles of trails. Phase II includes an upper parking lot and an additional mile of trail connecting this parking lot to the existing trail system. The majority of the trails were built by volunteers under the supervision and support of the Washington Trails Association. Local volunteers are actively restoring portions of the forest and have planted more than a thousand native plants. Additionally, the City has joined Bee City USA and works create safe habitats and encourage pollinator conservation throughout Sammamish.

### Beaver Lake Preserve

Beaver Lake Preserve, a 56-acre site located northeast of Beaver Lake Park, was purchased in 2002 through a Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office grant. The property is divided by West Beaver Lake Drive SE. With the addition of the Steven & Rosina Kipper Preserve property, Beaver Lake Preserve now connects to Soaring Eagle Park, and the acquisition of this property was critical to ensure connectivity between existing natural resources. The Beaver Lake Preserve Management Plan envisioned park improvements to occur in several phases. Phase I was completed in 2008 and included 1.35 miles of trails, a ten-car gravel parking lot, and other amenities such as a trailhead kiosk, a portable restroom with enclosure, and park signage. Trail work during Phase I included a forested loop trail and connections to nearby Soaring Eagle Park and Hazel Wolf Wetlands Preserve. Phase II improvements were completed in 2017 and consisted of additional trails (approximately .75 miles) to the north of Beaver Lake Drive SE to close an existing trail loop as well as a trail extension to Beaver Lake. Other improvements included restoration to the south meadow, two picnic tables, viewing overlooks, habitat enhancement, and park signage.

### Steven & Rosina Kipper Preserve

The 17-acre Steven and Rosina Kipper Preserve was purchased by the City in 2007 to connect Beaver Lake Preserve to Soaring Eagle Park. In the summer of 2012, a new bridge was built across a small stream that runs perpendicular to existing trails.







## City Facilities

### **Sammamish Community & Aquatic Center (YMCA)**

The Community & Aquatic Center, opened in 2016, is a partnership project between the City and the YMCA. The Center has a 6-lane, 25-yard lap pool, a 3,300 square foot leisure pool, a spa, two gymnasiums, a jogging track, fitness space, group fitness rooms, a break room, a family center room, meeting spaces, child watch areas, administration offices, and service areas. The YMCA operates a variety of classes and programs from this site. As part of their partnership with the city, the YMCA contributed \$5 million towards the project costs. They also furnished and equipped the facility and are responsible for all operating expenses, ongoing maintenance, and capital replacement costs.

### **Beaver Lake Lodge**

Located on the north side of Beaver Lake Park, this rustic log cabin-styled facility is surrounded by open grass areas and large evergreen trees, while overlooking the lake. The 1930's Depression-era lodge that was once part of a larger resort community has an 1,850 square foot main room that accommodates 150 people seated and has a gas fireplace. The commercial kitchen includes a convection oven, stove top/oven, and double-size refrigerator. The lodge is available for short- and long-term rentals. Lastly, senior activities are accommodated at the Lodge on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:00am to 2:00pm.

### **Beaver Lake Pavilion**

This 2,500 square foot, open-air facility boasts high ceilings, a lake view, and a stone fireplace. Six picnic tables and a barbecue grill are available. The pavilion can be reserved and rented and accommodates up to 100 guests.

### **Sammamish Teen Center (Boys and Girls Club)**

The center is located at the corner of 228th and NE 8th Street and is operated by the Boys and Girls Club. The 10,466 square foot site provides member-based summer and school year programming for youth in grades kindergarten to 12.

### **Reard House**

The Sammamish Heritage Society (SHS) has led restoration work on the Reard House, a 19th century farmhouse, located at Big Rock Park Central. Renovations to date include re-building the kitchen wing and addition, adding a new roof, siding, painting, and various interior renovations. The house was designated a Landmark in 2011, and the historic house will be open to the public when the interior renovations are complete. The first floor will include a museum and community meeting space, while the second floor will be used for SHS office space and artifact storage.

### **Central Washington University – Sammamish Campus**

The City of Sammamish owns a 30,762 sq ft structure located on 228th Ave SE that is leased to Central Washington University for use as a satellite campus. This building is on a major roadway and centrally located in the community



## Other Recreational Lands

### School Grounds

Sammamish is served by two public school districts: the Lake Washington School District and the Issaquah School District. Taken together, there are 13 schools within Sammamish City limits and another four just outside City limits. Eastside Catholic, a private school, is also inside City boundaries. Most elementary schools have outdoor playground equipment, small grass or dirt play fields, basketball hoops, and markings for playground games, such as hopscotch. These amenities are similar to those offered by a neighborhood park. Middle and high schools have the same kind of programmed sport fields common in community parks. The City has partnered with the Lake Washington and Issaquah School Districts to upgrade athletic fields with synthetic turf and lights to expand play opportunities.

### Eastlake Community Fields

An interlocal agreement between the City and the Lake Washington School District allowed for the City to convert existing natural turf fields to synthetic turf and add lighting. Eastlake Community Fields 1 and 2 were converted to synthetic turf in 2006 and resurfaced in 2016. Field 3 was converted to synthetic turf in 2013 and resurfaced in 2023. This change allowed for multiple sports to be played on the fields year-round, while securing field time for community use.

### Inglewood Middle School Community Fields

An additional partnership project with Lake Washington School District further increases athletic field availability on the plateau. Athletic field improvements at Inglewood Middle School will convert the underutilized natural grass softball field, baseball field, multi-purpose field, and track into a facility with synthetic turf multi-purpose fields and lights, a new restroom with storage, perimeter fencing and netting, spectator furnishings, stormwater improvements, landscaping, and irrigation. The project is budgeted for and anticipated project completion is late 2024.

### Skyline Community Fields

The Skyline Community Fields were renovated in 2017 with the removal and replacement of the multi-purpose synthetic turf field surface, installation of a

new elastic layer pad system, replacement of sections of damaged chain link fencing fabric, irrigation system improvements, and the installation of new soccer goals. The Issaquah School District oversees the scheduling of these fields.

### State Parks

#### Lake Sammamish State Park

Lake Sammamish State Park is a 531-acre day-use park with 6,858 feet of waterfront on Lake Sammamish. The park offers paved walking paths, compacted dirt trails, and gravel multi-use bicycle/hiking trails. Kayak pedal boat and stand-up paddleboard rentals are available in the summer through Issaquah Paddle Sports. There are also boat ramps to the lake, a bathhouse with dressing rooms, sand volleyball courts, two children's play areas, horseshoe pits, baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, and wildlife viewing opportunities. This park is located southwest of Sammamish city limits and is maintained and operated by the State of Washington.

### County Parks

#### Soaring Eagle Park

Soaring Eagle Regional Park is 769 acres of mature forests, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. Soaring Eagle sits above Patterson Creek on the edge of the Sammamish Plateau along the western flank of the Snoqualmie River Valley. Soaring Eagle Regional Park features 12 miles of trails that are regularly used by hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians.

#### Duthie Hill Park

Duthie Hill Park is 120 acres of dense evergreen forest located on the Sammamish Plateau and southeast of Sammamish city limits. It is connected to more than 2,000 acres of public open space that includes Grand Ridge Park, Mitchell Hill Forest, and Preston Ridge Park. A 6-mile network of rolling cross country singletrack trails forms a four-leaf clover shape around the park, with a 2.5-acre central clearing serving as the hub.

#### Marymoor Park

Marymoor Park is located on the north end of Lake Sammamish in Redmond and is King County's largest, oldest, and most popular park. More than 3 million visitors experience the park's 640 acres annually.



Recreational activities include sports facilities, rock climbing, a 40-acre off-leash dog park, and a velodrome. This park also includes the Sammamish River Trail, a paved regional biking and walking trail.

### **East Lake Sammamish Trail**

The East Lake Sammamish Trail is an 11-mile recreational rail trail that is maintained by King County. The trail runs through Sammamish along the eastern shore of Lake Sammamish and provides a north-south regional connection for residents by providing a paved trail to Marymoor Park in the north and Gilman Boulevard to the south in Issaquah.

## **Golf Courses**

### **Sahalee Country Club**

Sahalee is a private member owned country club. Sahalee was designed by noted golf course architect Ted Robinson, with later renovations by Rees Jones. The all-weather, year-round course is tree lined with narrow fairways. Sahalee's 27-holes consist of three 9-hole courses of equal caliber (the North, South and East course); any two of which can be combined to a standard 18-hole course. In 2001, the clubhouse was replaced with a new 43,000 square foot facility including expanded dining and locker room facilities. Sahalee hosts private events such as weddings, receptions, fundraisers, birthday parties, and meetings.

### **The Plateau Club**

Opened in 1997, the Plateau Club is a private, membership-based country club with an 18-hole championship golf course. It has a two-story, 37,500 square foot clubhouse with a variety of dining and recreational amenities. A fully equipped recreation center with a competition-sized swimming pool, tennis courts, and fitness center are available to members. The recreation facility offers many amenities including a fitness room, fitness studio with low-impact floors for group classes and other activities, a childcare center, massage rooms, and men's and women's locker rooms each with their own steam room. Seasonal programs include competitive swim team, lessons, lap sessions, parties, and special events for all age groups. Two outdoor tennis courts include practice walls and ball machines for year-round play, in addition to enabling seasonal programs such as junior camps, tennis mixers, family tournaments, and ladies' nights.

## **Other Open Space**

### **Hazel Wolf Wetlands Preserve (Forterra)**

This 116-acre preserve is owned and managed by Forterra, the Seattle region's largest land trust and conservation organization. The forested site includes the headwaters for Evans Creek and Laughing Jacobs Creek. The property includes 1.7 miles of trail that connects to Beaver Lake Preserve and Soaring Eagle Park.

### **Private HOA Parks & Open Space Tracts**

Private homeowner associations (HOAs) parks contribute to the City's total park acreage, providing small-scale recreation opportunities for certain subdivisions. Private HOA parks provide another 112 mini parks across the city, totaling 93 acres. Private HOAs also provide over 1,600 acres of additional open space tracts. Although these private parks are not open to the general public, they are still considered an important element of the parks system. The City should remain committed to providing neighborhood parks, especially for those residents not affiliated with private homeowner association amenities and resources.

## **Nearby City Park Systems**

### **City of Redmond**

The City of Redmond has an extensive park and trail system including 52 parks comprising 1,358 acres of land in a variety of neighborhood, community, and resource parks. There are 59 miles of public trails in Redmond, of which 39 miles are owned and operated by the City. The City also provides a range of recreation programs and operates several facilities including community centers, a teen center, and pool.

### **City of Issaquah**

The City of Issaquah operates over 1,600 acres of parks and open space and over 200 miles of recreational trails. The Parks and Recreation Department offers year round cultural and recreational activities at the Issaquah Community Center; swimming programs at the Julius Boehm Pool; active recreational opportunities and programs; neighborhood parks with children's playgrounds; and special community facilities such as the Pickering Barn.

# 5



## Parks & Open Space

This chapter describes community feedback, trends, local needs, and potential improvements for the City's parks and open space.

### Park & Recreation Trends

A review of several recognized park and recreation resources provide a background on national, state, and regional trends, market demands, and agency comparisons. These outdoor recreation trends, combined with community interests in parks, trails, and open space and an assessment of current conditions and levels of service, help identify and shape recommendations for park system improvements. Examining current recreation trends can help inform potential park and recreation improvements and opportunities that may enhance the community and create a more vibrant parks system as it moves into the future.

The following national and state data highlights some of the current park usage trends and may frame future considerations for Sammamish's park system. Additional trend data and summaries are provided in Appendix F.

- 90% of U.S. adults believe that parks and recreation is an important service provided by their local governments. <sup>(1)</sup>
- 84% of U.S. adults seek high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live. <sup>(1)</sup>



*“More new and different things not already here, such as splash pads, more water access and docks for swimming, maybe on Beaver Lake if possible. And more water fillers, tables to sit.”*

- Survey respondent



- Running, jogging, and trail running are the most popular outdoor activities across the nation, based on levels of participation, followed by hiking, fishing, biking, and camping. <sup>(2)</sup>
- The outdoor activity categories with the highest growth rates among kids included backpacking, snowshoeing, canoeing, climbing, and off-road triathlon. <sup>(2)</sup>
- A significantly higher percentage of seniors (ages 55+) are participating in outdoor recreation. In 2022, the senior participation rate hit a record high of 35% and is rising. <sup>(2)</sup>
- Walking ranked as the top activity by participation rate (94%) in Washington State. <sup>(3)</sup>
- Participation nearly doubled for pickleball in 2022, increasing by 85.7% year-over-year. In 2022 for the first time in over seven years, every racquet sport increased its total participation number compared to the previous year. <sup>(4)</sup>
- Wildlife viewing and paddle sport participation increased statewide by 28% since 2017. <sup>(5)</sup>
- Nationally, outdoor recreation economic activity increased 19% from 2020 to 2022, while the overall U.S. economy only saw a 5.9% increase. <sup>(6)</sup>

A draft 2023 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan (SCORP) is currently being reviewed by the National Park Service before formal adoption. The SCORP is a five-year statewide recreation plan published by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). The SCORP is designed to determine outdoor recreation issues and opportunities and helps explore local park and recreation planning strategies. It includes valuable data on current trends in recreation participation and demand in Washington.

Since the 2018 SCORP, the Recreation and Conservation Office has implemented strategies to improve grant equity over the past years by revising

Sources:

- (1) 2022 American Engagement with Parks Report, National Recreation and Park Association
- (2) 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report, Outdoor Foundation
- (3) 2018-2022 Recreation and Conservation Plan for Washington State
- (4) 2023 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report, Sports and Fitness Industry Association
- (5) 2022 Assessment of Resident Demand, Washington State 2023 Recreation & Conservation Plan (draft)
- (6) 2022 Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account data, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

# 97%

**of survey respondents feel that local parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Sammamish.**

In Washington, outdoor recreation is among the state’s largest economic sectors, providing livelihoods for thousands of workers across the state. More jobs in Washington depend on outdoor recreation (138,000) than the aerospace industry (78,000).

In Washington, outdoor recreation generates \$26.2 billion in consumer spending annually, \$7.6 billion in wages and salaries, and \$2.3 billion in state and local tax revenue. The OIA Washington report states that “Communities across Washington recognize that outdoor recreation supports, contributes to a high quality of life and – perhaps most importantly – attracts and sustains employers and families.”

- Outdoor Industry Association (OIA)

grant evaluation criteria and incorporating new tools to lower barriers to accessing funding. Equitable access to meaningful outdoor recreation experiences is now a central pillar of the outdoor recreation community. In the last five years, RCO completed several studies that highlight the multiple benefits and linkages between outdoor recreation, public lands conservation, and these critical determinants of equity. These studies document the physical and mental health, environmental and economic returns on investing in outdoor recreation opportunities, and public lands conservation and serve to guide grant evaluations for funding park and recreation improvements.

In addition to other SCORP planning elements, RCO conducted a Recreation Provider Survey in early 2022 and compiled responses of typical issues, challenges, and priorities facing Washington State cities, counties, and districts providing park and recreation services. The following list offers a snapshot of management priorities impacting local agencies and guided by local public demands for outdoor recreation facilities.

1. Expanding community trail systems
2. Connecting regional trail systems
3. Renovating aging infrastructure
4. Expanding the amount of public lands
5. Developing nature-based parks

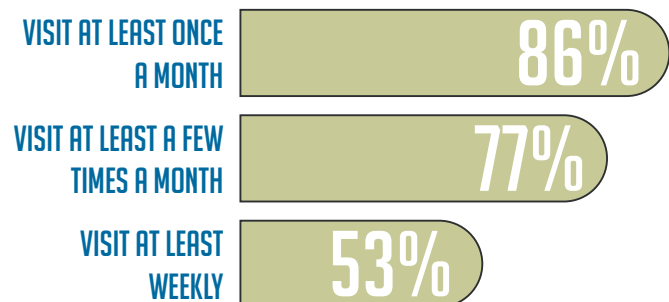
## Community Feedback

### Community Survey Results

The community survey confirmed that Sammamish residents strongly value their local parks, recreation options and open space opportunities. Virtually all survey respondents (97%) feel that local parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Sammamish. Residents of all ages value parks and recreation similarly – there were no significant differences between age groups.

Respondents were asked how often they visit a City park or open space in a typical year. Over half of respondents (53%) visit at least once a week, if not every day. Another 32% visit one to three times per month. Survey respondents showed a high use of parks regardless of age and location of residence. Respondents with children in the home visit significantly more often than respondents without children at home.

Figure 7. Frequency of Visitation





## Trends in Playgrounds

Sammanish residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities and park playgrounds are an important element in outdoor recreation. Reported in Landscape Architect magazine, the top five playground industry trends for 2021 were compiled from data and feedback from parks professionals, landscape architects, and educators.

1. **Inclusive Playgrounds**, increasingly popular over the last few years, have been evolving beyond meeting basic ADA guidelines. Designers are seeking to expand accessible playground equipment, consider multi-generational play, and leverage inclusive play to help overcome societal barriers.
2. **Rope-based Playgrounds**, climbers and playground nets provide a technique for working around natural environments and unusual topography. Their flexibility in placement offers more options for connecting with the landscape rather than working around difficult topography.
3. **Outdoor Fitness** has increased importance during the COVID-19 pandemic as many gyms and indoor fitness centers closed and forced more people to seek outdoor options. Outdoor fitness spaces are being increasingly integrated into park and trail designs to encourage health and physical fitness for all ages.
4. **Outdoor Learning** has been implemented during the pandemic to replace or supplement indoor classrooms. Outdoor classrooms can encourage activity in children to counteract the reduction in recess time due to hybrid class schedules and remote learning. Seating, tables, shelters, hand sanitizer stations and other outdoor products are helping create outdoor classrooms.
5. **Human-powered Play** engages users to provide physical energy to “power-up” the activity, such as turning a handle, pressing foot pedals, rotating wheels. These products often relate to sensory experiences like lights and music, story-telling, or social games.

Spurred on by the social distancing of the pandemic, these five trends in playground design and development point to more human-to-human interactions that reinforce the value of social connections, even in a physically distanced environment.



Respondents visited local parks and preserves for a variety of reasons in the past year, but the most popular reason was to walk or run (86%). More than half of respondents visited for relaxation (60%). Slightly more than one in three respondents visited for fitness or exercise, to attend community events or concerts, to walk a dog, or use a playground, see Figure 8.

The survey presented a list of 27 park and recreation services and facilities and asked respondents to rank the priority for future development of each type of service, see Figure 9.

Figure 8. Main Reasons for Visiting Local Parks or Preserves

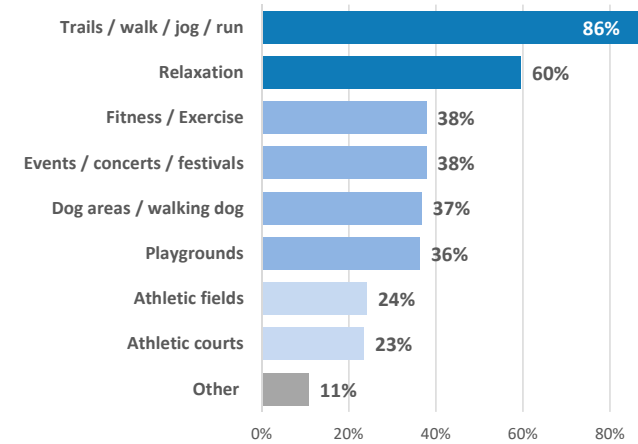
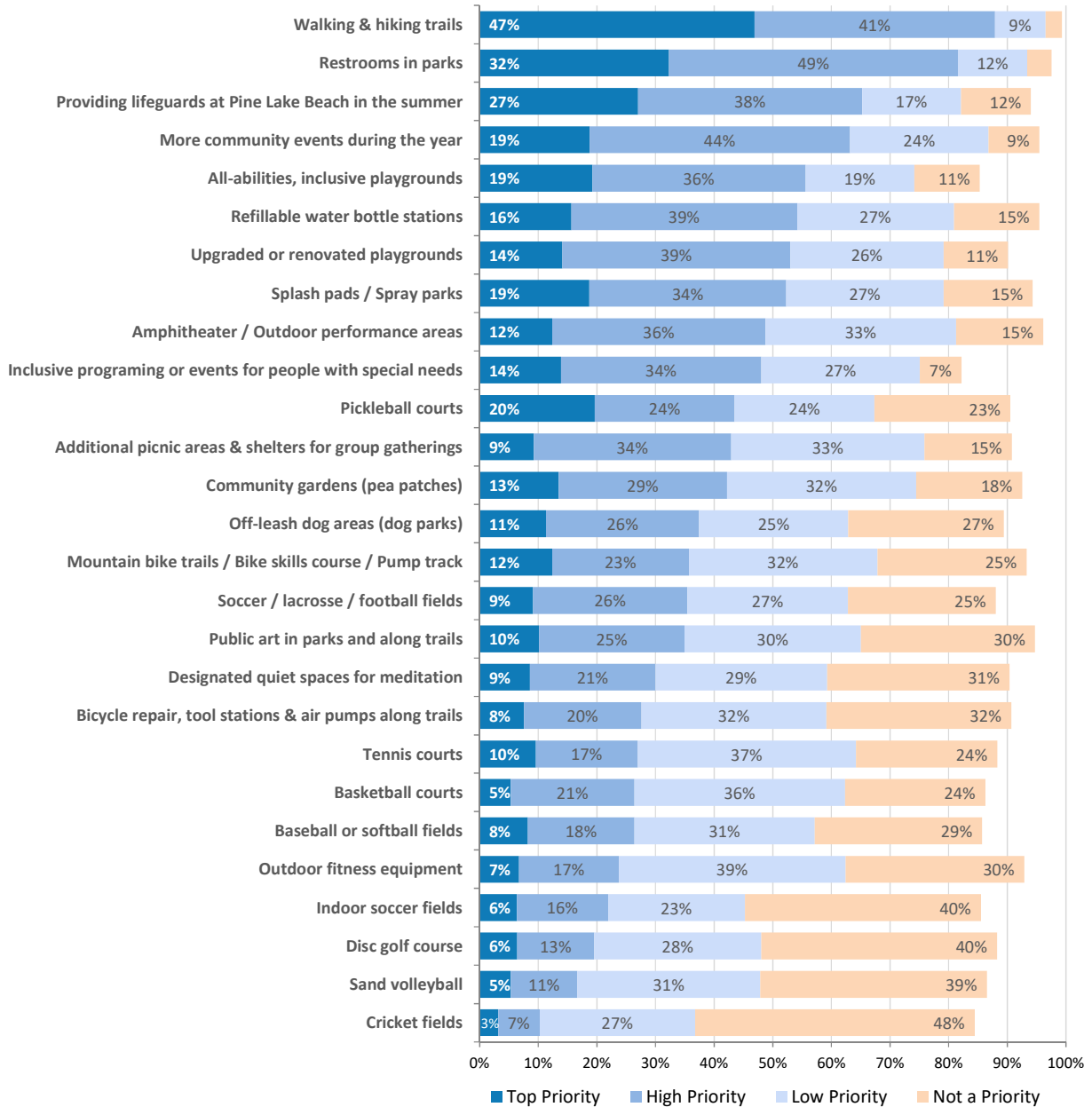


Figure 9. Priorities Park & Recreation Amenities







修建四季皆可以使用的公园设施，尤其是冬天和雨天也可以使用的设施 (Build park facilities that can be used in all seasons, especially in winter and rainy days).”

- Survey respondent



Be resourceful in optimizing the use and potential for current parks, trails, etc. (i.e., cover basketball courts so can use year-round). We don't need to spend more money, just make the best use of what we have so we can have time to enjoy it.”

- Survey respondent

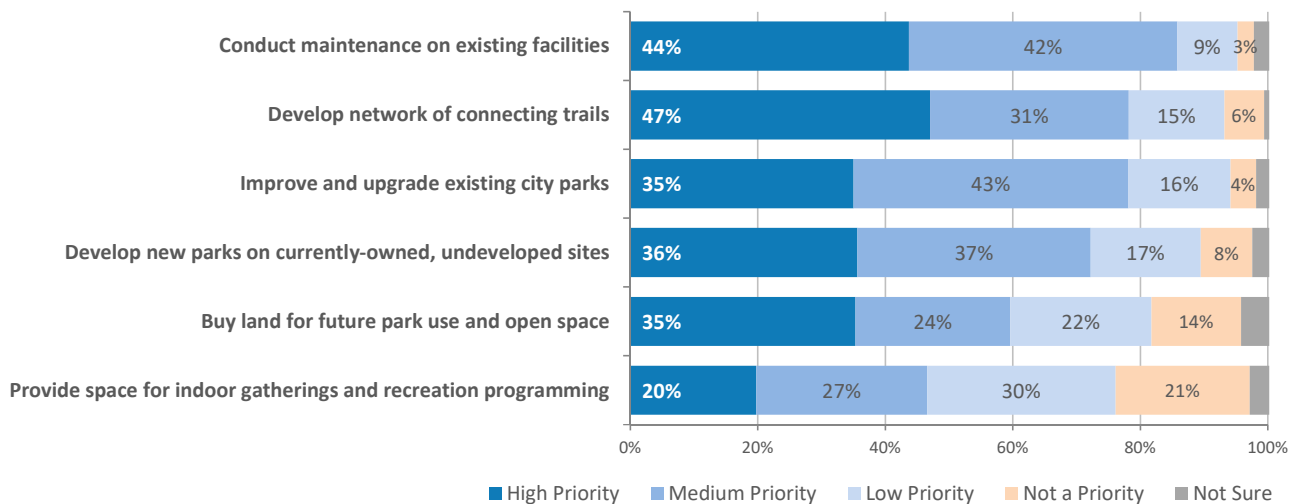
In general, facilities built for a single purpose (e.g., a sport) tended to rank lower on respondents' priorities. The lowest priority amenities included cricket fields, sand volleyball, disc golf, and indoor soccer fields. Pickleball courts are a notable exception to this trend, with 44% of respondents ranking them as a high or top priority. Respondents with children in the home were more likely than those without to prioritize additional picnic areas, upgraded playgrounds, athletic fields, sports courts (except pickleball), mountain bike trails, splash pads, community events, and lake lifeguards.

Respondents were asked to rank a list of potential citywide park system investments and identified conducting maintenance on existing facilities as their top priority, followed closely by developing a network of connected trails, see Figure 10.

When asked about their priorities for future land acquisition, respondents rated acquiring land to preserve habitat and for passive recreational uses, like walking trails and wildlife viewing, as top priorities. In open ended comments, residents frequently expressed a desire to preserve the natural beauty of Sammamish, including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat, and a concern about increased development.

Additional open-ended comments provided more insight on community interests. Community members have a strong desire for affordable and diverse recreational facilities in Sammamish. Suggestions included improving existing playgrounds, building parks with year-round usability, creating splash parks, and improving access to swimming pools and lakes, and constructing more sports courts for basketball and pickleball. The community also called for affordable recreational programs for various age groups and interests, including teens and seniors.

Figure 10. Priorities for Future Citywide Park Improvements



## Stakeholder Discussion Sessions

Three stakeholder group discussions conducted in April 2023 engaged specific representatives of the community in the early stages of the 2024 PROS Plan update, and each session included participation from members of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The City identified three stakeholder topic areas to be represented at the interviews—Environmental, DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging), and Athletics. While each group had different responses to many of the questions, several common interests held by all groups emerged. Key themes shared across groups include:

- Improve accessibility and access to parks, recreation, and open spaces;
- Prioritize expanding and caring for park lands, habitats, and wildlife;
- Inform, educate, engage, and partner with the community;
- Improve and update the parks system to increase availability and better serve a changing community;
- Keep facilities and programs operated by partners affordable, convenient, and safe for all to use; and
- Provide programming, events, facilities, and athletics tailored to specific groups.

# 51%

of respondents said their use of parks increased during the pandemic



Add dedicated pickleball courts since it is the fastest growing sport in the USA.”

- Survey respondent



Inclusive (for all abilities) parks and art especially for those with sensory or vision limitations.”

- Survey respondent

Figure 11. Representation of Participating Stakeholders

Environmental Interests	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging	Athletic Interests
Samamish Stewards	The Garage Teen Center	Eastlake Little League
Trails	Samamish Chinese School	Skyhawks Sports Academy
Samamish Botanical Garden Society	Indian American Community Services	Northwest Disc Golf
Washington Native Plant Stewards	Vedic Cultural Center	Pickleball
	Open Doors for Multicultural Families	
	CrossPath Counseling	
	Parent of a child with activity limitations	

## Public Meetings

The City of Sammamish hosted two public meetings (one virtual and one in-person) to gather community feedback and identify gaps or deficiencies in the park system. Between the two meetings, participants identified connecting trails as a primary interest.

The top priorities identified by participants during the first meeting were trails in parks or linking parks (29%), access to water and lakes (16%), spaces for gatherings, performances, or art (15%), and covered areas for picnics or recreation (15%).

When asked about the most important features to consider when building and expanding the park system, virtual open house participants noted the following:

- Improve access to parks (sidewalks, trail connections, safe routes to parks);
- Provide more indoor space for activities and classes run by programming partners; and
- Connect and expand trails by buying additional land or easements or using road right-of-way.



Participants at the second public meeting showed substantial interest in expanding recreation opportunities, particularly in Beaton Hill Park phase I, Big Rock South Park phase I, and trail connections to fill gaps, as indicated by the 56 out of 82 dots placed under “Expand Recreation Opportunities” on visual displays. Additionally, participants expressed interest in the following:

- A disc golf course in Big Rock Park;
- More designated pickleball courts in Big Rock Park;
- An outdoor city pool;
- Facilities for slacklining;
- More parking at Pine Lake to allow better lake access; and
- More parking in popular parks, specifically Big Rock Park.

## Common Themes from Community Outreach

Considering the community feedback from the survey, public meetings, and stakeholder focus group discussions, a number of core themes and interests emerged.

### Take Care of What You Have

- Renovate and upgrade existing parks
- ADA compliance – barrier removal
- Preserve and maintain natural areas

### Continue to Build System

- Develop existing park sites
- Trail system expansion and connections
- Improve and expand water access options
- Add more user conveniences, including restrooms, parking, and signage

### Expand Recreational Opportunities

- Facilities for pickleball, community gardens, and off-leash dog areas
- Playground upgrades, including all-inclusive play
- Additional public art and events



Falta de espacios techados en invierno para protegernos de lluvia (Lack of covered spaces in winter to protect us from rain)."

- Survey respondent



First of all, I think the city's park maintenance is excellent! The parks can get too crowded with not enough parking (especially Pine Lake Park)."

- Survey respondent



Have more connections between parks so that people can walk or ride between parks. Current parks are in general too small so that we cannot spend a full day there."

- Survey respondent



Build some scattered small low-maintenance neighborhood 'parklets' on unused or underutilized small plots of land."

- Survey respondent



More community events for teens. Maybe a pump track."

- Survey respondent

## Park Conditions Assessment

The overall condition of park infrastructure and amenities is one measure of park adequacy and assurance of public safety. Proper stewardship of park infrastructure requires developing a long-term maintenance and capital plan that ensures the safety of park users, aligns with community needs, and allocates limited funding resources properly. General park infrastructure includes walkways, parking lots, restrooms, drainage and irrigation, lighting systems, and vegetation. Amenities include picnic shelters, play equipment, site furnishings, sports courts, sports fields, and other recreational assets. Deferred maintenance over a long time period can result in unusable amenities when perceived as unsafe or undesirable by park patrons. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines also provide a measure of acceptable condition.

The current conditions of the Sammamish park system were assessed to identify existing site maintenance issues and opportunities for future capital improvements. The assessment included a review of general park infrastructure and amenities. The following conditions assessment matrix (Figure 12) summarizes the results of these assessments. These assessments inform developing project prioritization strategy for park improvements, identifying funding strategies, and updating the six-year Capital Improvements Plan.

The matrix on the following page indicates the types of amenities within each park facility, and park infrastructure and amenities are rated based on the following scale:

**1 – Good Condition:** Generally, amenities in ‘good’ condition offer full functionality and do not need repairs. Good facilities have playable sports surfaces and equipment, working fixtures, and fully intact safety features (railings, fences, etc.). Good facilities encourage area residents to use the park but may have minor cosmetic defects.

**2 – Fair:** In general, amenities in ‘fair’ condition are mainly functional, but need minor or moderate repairs. Fair facilities have play surfaces, equipment, fixtures, and safety features that are operational and allow play, but have deficiencies or periods where they are unusable. Fair facilities remain essential amenities for the community but may slightly discourage the use of the park by residents given the current condition.

**3 – Poor:** In general, amenities in ‘poor’ condition are largely or completely unusable. They need significant repairs to be functional. Some examples include athletic fields that are too uneven for ball games, irreparably broken features, buildings that need structural retrofitting, etc. Poor facilities may present safety issues if left open or operational and discourage residents from using the park.

Good conditions should be the goal for the management and stewardship of park facilities. Where infrastructure or amenities are rated as ‘fair,’ strategies should be developed for repair or restoration. Park features, structures, amenities, or landscapes rated as ‘poor’ should receive immediate attention and be prioritized for near-term maintenance, capital repairs, or a new capital project. Facilities in poor condition should also be evaluated and taken out of operation if they are deemed unsafe. In general, the amenities in Sammamish parks are in good condition. Some improvements in providing universal access, removing architectural barriers, and ensuring compliance with ADA guidelines should be considered, as upgrades and capital repairs are scheduled in older parks and facilities.

Detailed information for each park site and enhancement recommendations are noted in Appendix A for the parks visited.

Highlights from park conditions observations follow the conditions matrix and include suggestions for improvements that also informed the preparation of the six-year Capital Improvements Plan.



Figure 12. Park and Facility Condition Assessment Matrix

Site Name	Classification	Recreation Amenities										Site Amenities								Park Structures					Vegetation			ADA Compliance*
		Playgrounds	Sports Courts	Baseball / Softball Fields	Pathways / Trails	Lakefront/Swimming Beach	Skate Park	Site Furnishings	Lighting (Y/N)	Signage	Parking Areas	Restrooms	Picnic Shelters	Kiosks	Boat Ramp	Pier	Concession Building	Natural Turfgrass	Park Trees	Landscaped Beds	Natural Areas							
	<b>Park Site Average</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>							
30 Acres Park (undeveloped)	Open Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-							
Beaver Lake Park	Community Park	2	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	2	1	1	1							
Beaver Lake Preserve	Preserve	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2							
Beaton Hill Park (undeveloped)	Community Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Big Rock Park Central	Community Park	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1							
Big Rock Park North	Community Park	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	2							
Big Rock Park South (undeveloped)	Community Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
East Sammamish Park	Community Park	2	1	2	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1	1							
Eastlake Community Fields	School / City Partnership Park	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	2	1	2							
Ebright Creek Park	Neighborhood Park	1	1	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1							
Evans Creek Preserve	Preserve	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2							
Evans Pond Trail	Open Space	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1							
George David Creek Park (undeveloped)	Open Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Illahee Park Trail	Open Space	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2	1	2							
Klahanie Park	Community Park	2	-	2	2	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	2							
Northeast Sammamish Park	Neighborhood Park	2	2	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	2							
Parker Property (undeveloped)	TBD / Neighborhood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Pine Lake Park	Community Park	2	2	2	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	1	2	2	-	2							
Salahee Way Property (undeveloped)	Open Space	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
Sammamish Commons	Community Park	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	Y	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	1							
Sammamish Lower Commons	Community Park	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	Y	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1							
Sammamish Landing Park	Community Park	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	-	2							
Yates Property (undeveloped)	TBD / Neighborhood	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							
<b>Average:</b>		<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>								

**Park & Facility Condition Assessment**

**RATING SCALE**

**Playgrounds:**

1	In good condition: no drainage issues; 0-10% material deterioration safety surfacing with a border at the site.
2	In fair condition: drainage issues; 10-25% material deterioration; some small compliance issues that could be spot fixed.
3	In poor condition: drainage issues; 25% or greater material deterioration; needs repair or replacement (but workable).

**Paved Courts:**

1	In good condition: no cracks in surfacing; fencing is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes/passages; painting and striping are appropriately located, whole, and uniform in color.
2	In fair condition: hairline cracks to ¼", surfacing required; fencing has minor protrusions, or holes/passages that do not affect game play; painting and striping have flaking or color fading.
3	In poor condition: horizontal cracks more than ½" wide, surfacing required; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects; painting and striping are patchy and color has faded dramatically.

**Signage:**

1	In good condition: a signage system for the site, appropriate signs, no damaged signs.
2	In fair condition; multiple signage system within one site, a few damaged signs (0-10%), need maintenance.
3	In poor condition; multiple signage systems within one site, signs that are not legible from a reasonable distance, some damaged signs (10-25%), old logos, deteriorated materials, no signage.

**Public Art:**

1	In good condition: no vandalism; no signs of weathering.
2	In fair condition: minor signs of weathering or wear.
3	In poor condition: metal leaching/concrete efflorescence/paint peeling/wood chipped or carved into or warping; vandalized.

**Park Structures (Restrooms, Picnic Shelters, Etc.):**

1	In good condition: roof has no leaks; floor shows little sign of wear; finishes are fresh with no graffiti or vandalism; all elements are in working order.
2	In fair condition: roof shows signs of wear but is structurally sound; floor shows some wear; finishes show some wear with some marks or blemishes.
3	In poor condition: roof leaks or otherwise needs repair; floor show significant wear and is difficult to maintain; finishes are dull or discolored, have graffiti, or are not easily maintained; some elements not working or in need of repair (e.g., non-functioning sink).

**Park Trees:**

1	In good condition: trees overall have good form and spacing; no topping; free of disease or pest infestation; no vandalism; no hazard trees.
2	In fair condition; some crowding may exist but overall health is good; less than 5% of trees show signs of topping, disease or pest infestation; vandalism has not impacted tree health (graffiti, not girdling).
3	In poor condition; Form or spacing issues may exist; evidence of disease or pests; vandalism affecting tree health; some hazard trees or trees in danger of becoming hazard trees.

**ADA Compliance:**

1	Appears to comply with ADA standards.
2	Some items appear to not comply, but could be fixed by replacing with relative ease.
3	A number of park assets appear not to comply, including large-scale items like regrading.

**Sport Fields:**

1	In good condition: thick grass with few bare spots; few depressions; no noticeable drainage issues, proper slope and layout; fencing if present is functional, free of protrusions, and free of holes.
2	In fair condition: grass with bare turf areas in high-use locations, some drainage issues in overuse areas, slope is within one percent of proper field slope, infields have grading problems (bump) at transition to grass and have no additive, may not have proper layout and/or orientation, fencing if present has minor protrusions, or holes/passages that do not affect game play.
3	In poor condition: bare areas throughout the year, uneven playing surface that holds water in certain places, drainage issues, slopes not uniform and/or more than one percent from proper field slope, improper layout and/or orientation; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects.

**Pathways / Trails:**

1	In good condition: surface generally smooth and even; proper width and material for type of pathway; proper clearances; minimal drainage issues.
2	In fair condition: uneven surfaces in places; some drainage issues; some cracking; narrow widths in some places.
3	In poor condition: uneven surfaces; inadequate width; significant cracking or heaving; clearance issues.

**Turf:**

1	In good condition: lush and full, few weeds, no drainage problems.
2	In fair condition: some bare spots, some drainage problems.
3	In poor condition: irrigation problems, bare spots, weeds, soil compacted.

**Site Furnishings:**

1	In good condition; not damaged; free of peeling or chipped paint; consistent throughout park. Trash receptacles, drinking fountain, picnic tables, benches on paved surface.
2	In fair condition; 0-20% furnishings are damaged and require replacing parts; some peeling or chipped paint; furnishings are not consistent, but are operational.
3	In poor condition; 20% or more are damaged and require replacing parts; significant peeling or chipped paint; multiple styles within park site require different maintenance.

**Parking Areas:**

1	In good condition: paving and drainage do not need repair; pavement markings clear; pathway connection provided to facility; proper layout.
2	In fair condition: paving needs patching or has some drainage problems; has wheel stops and curbs.
3	In poor condition: surfaces (gravel, asphalt, or concrete) needs repair; uneven grading; limited signage; no delineation for vehicles.

**Natural Areas:**

1	In good condition: barely noticeable invasives, high species diversity, healthy plants.
2	In fair conditions: Noticeable invasives, fewer species but still healthy.
3	In poor condition: Invasives have taken over, low diversity, unhealthy plants.

**Amphitheater/Stage:**

1	In good condition: paving, stage and stair materials have little to no cracking or peeling; vegetation that is present is healthy; seating and other furnishings show modest signs of wear; views to stage from all seating vantage points.
2	In fair condition: paving, stage and stair materials have some cracking or peeling; vegetation that is present is healthy, but some soil compaction might be present; seating and other furnishings show signs of wear, but are still usable; stage orientation not be ideal for all viewers.
3	In poor condition: paving, stage and stair materials have significant cracking or peeling; vegetation is unhealthy (pests, disease, topped trees), compacted soil; seating and other furnishings need repair or replacement; redesign of space is needed for proper viewing and access.

**Landscaped Beds:**

1	In good condition: few weeds; no bare or worn areas; plants appear healthy with no signs of pest or disease infestation.
2	In fair condition: some weeds present; some bare or worn spots; plants are still generally healthy.
3	In poor condition: many weeds present; large bare or worn areas; plants show signs of pests or disease; compacted soils.



## Park Conditions Summary

### Park Infrastructure

#### Park Structures

Community buildings, picnic shelters, overlooks, storage sheds, historic houses, tree houses, and restrooms comprise an array of the park structures situated in Sammamish’s developed and undeveloped parks. A thorough architectural and engineering review of the conditions of these structures is not part of this planning effort. However, park structures should be regularly inspected to evaluate the need for repairs and, eventually, to plan for future replacement.

There are a variety of design languages used in these structures, which is appropriate as they are well-fitted to their individual sites. The modern overlooks and picnic shelters at Sammamish Commons are sharp, contemporary, and a complementary contrast to the surrounding natural landscape. Other, more traditional park picnic shelters nestle well in the bucolic landscapes at parks like Ebright Creek, Beaver Lake, East Sammamish, Sammamish Landing, and Pine Lake.

Standing out from other Sammamish park structures, the treehouse at Big Rock Park Central is a jewel of an experience, and a treasure for local residents and visitors alike.

#### Restrooms & Portable Toilets

Existing restrooms at community parks appeared in good condition. As some structures continue to age and their plumbing systems require more frequent repairs, upgrades and potential replacements should be considered, particularly in community parks that provide large team sports facilities and host heavier use.

For many sites, precast restroom facilities are functioning well and offer a warm, clean addition to the overall park experience (e.g., Sammamish Landing, Big Rock Central, and Ebright Creek Parks), while in some older parks, the restroom buildings are more functional in nature and appearance (e.g., Klahanie Park).

Restroom design in new parks and at trailheads should consider the need for equity and inclusion by incorporating unisex restrooms, particularly for smaller facilities that don’t include “family” stall

options. Trailhead restrooms should be gender neutral to allow for more flexible access and use by trail users. Additionally, where portable restrooms are required, adding an accessible restroom can make it so that all users can use these facilities in compliance with ADA guidelines.

#### Pathways & Pavement

Sammamish’s parks have a variety of walking opportunities on different types of trails and pathways, with a particular abundance of natural area trails. Additional opportunities exist to enhance existing pathways through parks to connect site amenities more effectively and equitably. At Illahee Pond, for example, the path is spalling and deteriorating in several locations. In some parks, paved pathways could be added to connect to a selection of picnic tables and/or barbecues isolated in lawn areas to provide ADA-compatible access routes.

Signage and wayfinding could also be updated to include travel times and to reflect changes in conditions or terrain, so users can find trail segments that work for their abilities and do not find themselves in situations that exceed their capabilities.

#### Footbridges, Piers, & Boardwalks

Footbridges, piers, and boardwalks appear in good condition, though some—such as at Ebright Creek Park and at Sammamish Landing – should be studied in more detail to understand whether there should be a plan for replacement within a future Capital Improvements Plan update or whether their structural components are sound, and a decking replacement will suffice. There also are smaller footbridges, like those in the wetland area of Beaver Lake Preserve, that require small scale maintenance to stabilize their anchor points.

More significantly, the wind and water wear on the dock at Sammamish Landing Park requires a specialized assessment and approach for how to stabilize this public amenity with significant erosion occurring near the dock’s abutment.

Regular inspection of these park infrastructure elements by specialized professionals (i.e., marine structural engineer) should be scheduled. Separately, the City should continue to monitor, and address as necessary, locations where surfacing changes between wood decking and pavement to watch for lips, gaps, or barriers to access.



Pine Lake Park



Sammamish Landing

## Parking

Parking areas were generally in good condition. Some parks' parking areas had accessible stalls, but they lacked painted travel aisles or signage, or the designated spaces were not the closest ones to the park's entrances as recommended in ADA guidelines. Paint and pavement management should be ongoing to ensure optimal conditions for vehicle and pedestrian use. In some cases, portions of the asphalt parking surface may need to be replaced with concrete to achieve the ADA-required grades.

## Signage & Wayfinding

The City of Sammamish recently has invested in an appealing, consistent signage program. On-street signage clearly directs users to many park destinations, and entry signage is often clear and consistent creating a visual "brand" for the parks. While the system still contains a wide variety of signs, markers, and monuments from previous years, the City should continue to upgrade these elements for enhanced consistency across the entire park system, as funding allows. Additionally, the City should extend the visual language established at entry signs to secondary and non-vehicular entrances to parks, preserves, and trails.

Signage at Eastlake Community Fields, Lake Washington School District facility, needs more clear wayfinding. The City should coordinate with the District for improved signage to clarify the boundaries between the adjacent high school and the community fields, as well as the paths between the fields and parking lots.

## Park Amenities

### Site Furnishings

Common site furnishings provided in public parks include benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, bike racks, and trash and recycling receptacles. In the Sammamish park system, consistency has improved for park benches and picnic tables, but other site furnishings still have a high degree of variation creating a visually diverse language between parks that may cause challenges for maintenance staff when repairs are needed.

At least one-half of the benches and picnic tables in each park should be ADA-compliant, which would require benches with backs and armrests and in locations on accessible routes with a place for a wheelchair to park in line with the bench. Picnic tables should provide room for wheelchair seating and be on accessible routes as well. Similarly, barbecues should allow for ADA access and use.

The wave-style bicycle racks often found in Sammamish parks do not easily accommodate the diversity of bikes in Pacific Northwest communities. Users often prefer stand alone "staple" racks that have two points of attachment for locks and that can accommodate a wider range of bikes like e-bikes, adaptive-bikes, cargo bikes, and long-tail bikes. The Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) Bicycle Parking Guidelines provides additional guidance on this.





East Sammamish Park



Sammamish Commons - Lower

Trash and recycling is not consistent within and between parks across the system. Given the range of parks and the presence of wildlife in the area, a consistent, wildlife-proof waste management system will protect both users and wildlife from unwanted interactions.

For future park improvements and prior to implementing new master plans for undeveloped parks, the City should formalize a standard design, style, and color for benches, picnic tables, bike racks, trash and recycle cans, which can be documented in a portfolio that park designers can reference.

### Play Equipment

Play equipment has been installed over many years, and some equipment parts are showing signs of wear, while other play structures are brand new. The City has a good program of replacing playgrounds on a cyclical basis and upgrading these facilities, so that they remain in good repair. Play equipment was visually noted if there was a transfer platform allowing ADA access; however, this assessment was not equivalent to an in-depth equipment inspection. Play structures should be scheduled for regular inspection by a staff member with CPSI certification to track safety and identify repair needs.

The play areas were largely noted as post-and-platform style play areas, and the City should consider adding more diverse and/or signature play experiences as equipment is replaced and upgraded. Net climbers, neurodivergent play environments, accessible play equipment, and basket swings have

proved valuable additions to Sammamish's peer cities.

Access to playground areas was generally barrier-free, but maintenance of engineered wood fiber as an accessible surface is likely compromised.

### Play Safety Surfacing

Many playground areas are surfaced in engineered wood fiber. Periodically, an evaluation should be conducted to assess the depth and condition of play area safety surfacing to ensure adequate depths for the engineered wood fiber and to ensure that it is adequately maintained to meet impact attenuation standards. The poured-in-place rubber at Pine Lake Park has separated from its base and can be lifted up by users. This should be reset and bonded to the underlying concrete base or replaced.

To reduce maintenance and testing obligations, transitioning to a higher level of accessible play surfacing in parks will create more universal opportunities for park users. Poured-in-place surfacing, tiles, and turf avoids the development of cracks and creates smooth surfaces for wheelchairs, strollers, and walkers.

### Sports Fields & Courts

Sport courts are in good condition following recent resurfacing, with some exceptions. The basketball court in Pine Lake Park had drainage challenges from above, where surface water flows across the court. The tennis courts at East Sammamish Park are not ADA accessible. Sport fields generally were in



good condition, but the City may want to consider upgrading some of the infields used by upper levels of little league and/or recreational baseball/softball to synthetic turf to accommodate intensive use during the spring season.

### Off-Leash Areas

The off-leash dog park area at Beaver Lake Park appears to be well used; however, it is not fully ADA accessible. In addition to being healthy exercise spaces for dogs, off-leash areas serve as social spaces for dog-owners and have value in creating a potential advocacy group for Sammamish’s parks. Throughout the site assessments, it was clear that managing for off-leash dogs (and waste) is a challenge despite signage at most parks discouraging off-leash use. Additional dedicated off-leash areas may mitigate some of this operational and interpersonal challenge.

## Landscape/Environment

### Stream Corridors

Sammamish has demonstrated clear efforts in protecting and restoring woodlands and riparian corridors. The Sammamish Stewards have several active restoration planting projects in parks and preserves. Signage conveys the areas where restoration planting is occurring and helps inform the community about the intention of the riparian plantings. More native, canopy trees are recommended for areas along stream corridors, especially where the stream is near paved surfaces or collects urban runoff.

### Forest Canopy & Park Trees

Overall, the ornamental and native trees in the park system are in very good condition, except at Pine Lake Park where laminated root rot has affected dozens of trees, resulting in recent tree removals. A tree replacement program will be important to maintain the forested character of this park and should be implemented following guidelines from the Urban Forestry Management Plan. For replacement trees, tree species native to the Pacific Northwest, mixed with tree species from the central Oregon Cascades climate region, should be planted to mitigate for the effects of climate change. At the Upper Sammamish Commons Plaza, the metal tree grates should be removed before the trees begin growing into the metal, causing damage to both.

### Natural Turf Grass

Natural turf grass management appears adequate to maintain sport fields and mown grass areas within parks. Grass fields for organized sports require a higher level of maintenance to ensure safe and continual team play during the various sport seasons. Typically, these athletic fields with natural grass must be fertilized and mown more often than typical open grass areas in parks. Field areas with sand-based turf grass may require even more nitrogen-based fertilization frequencies since sand does not retain the nitrogen for root uptake well. Drainage improvements may be warranted in the multi-use fields at Klahanie Park and ballfields at Pine Lake Park, Beaver Lake Park, and East Sammamish Park.



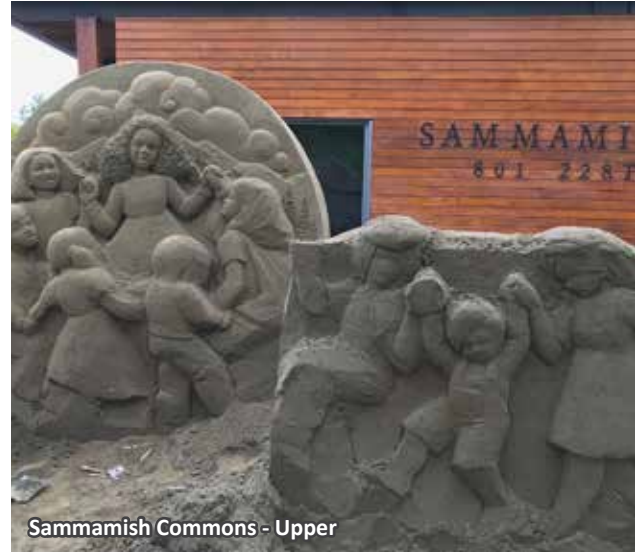


Park standards can be established that specifically identify the tolerance for weed growth within natural grass sports fields and the approved methods for weed control in the public arena. Timing and notification methods should also be incorporated into adopted park standards to ensure appropriate communications and safe application and public use.

Additionally, identifying the different grass turf zones (e.g., irrigated grass areas and unirrigated grass areas) can help with public awareness and expectations about turf grass management related to levels of maintenance and the anticipated schedules for mowing and fertilizing.

### ADA Compliance

As with many older parks, some architectural and design barriers were present in the park system. Updating and providing ADA accessibility and compliance within federal guidelines are part of Sammamish’s regular capital repair schedule and ADA Transition Plan, such that the City is ensuring reasonable recreational access to playgrounds, picnic areas, restrooms, beaches, boardwalks, parking, and other amenities. The park system has some ADA compliance issues related to park access at parking areas, insufficient travel aisles from accessible parking spaces, missing tactile warning strips, and missing signage. Barriers to access also exist at playgrounds, tennis courts, and the off-leash dog park, as well as non-compliant benches and barbecues.



Standards for site furnishings, such as benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, bike racks, etc., can be instrumental in ensuring consistent ADA compliance and streamlined maintenance and repairs. The City should continue to implement the ADA Transition Plan (adopted in 2021) to address known deficiencies. Whenever possible, the City should seek to consult with disabled park users to better understand their experiences and to make improvements tailored to their needs.

### Safety Considerations

Park safety conditions were generally good throughout the park system. Much of the park layouts and landscapes appear to meet basic Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles of good visibility and overall positive perceptions of public safety. Natural areas and forests, in particular, offer a balance between native vegetation management and good safety sight lines.

### Public Art Installations

A variety of diverse and interesting art installations add character and uniqueness to the City’s public spaces and parks. Public art should continue to be incorporated into new and existing parks and trails to promote creative place-making, evoke historical events, foster local identity, and engage local interest.

## Park Design & Development

### Master Planning/Site Development & Enhancements

Master planning for Big Rock Park South, Beaton Hill Park, the Notch property, and Klahanie Park is either in process or has recently been completed. The community already has invested substantial time and energy into planning these parks. Phased park development and master plan implementation should be completed at the earliest possible time, so that community momentum and support for these projects is not lost. The City should consider trail openings on parcels to mitigate long park opening wait times when possible. Future master plans for the Yates and Parker properties should be conducted to explore how their unique sites provide additional value and recreation experiences to the Sammamish park system.

### Adopted Park Master Plans

In addition to citywide system planning, the City has adopted specific park development plans for converting acquired parkland into public parks, upgrading existing parks, and prioritizing athletic field improvements to continue to provide quality park and recreation services to the community. Summaries of these plans and studies follow.

**Beaton Hill Park Master Plan:** The master plan for Beaton Hill Park, adopted in October 2023, is designed to capture the expansive view from the north end of the park. The trails, picnic areas, and gathering areas are intended to create a unique and accessible experience through the park to connect to outdoor recreation amenities. Proposed park improvements include two parking lots, four pickleball courts, a 40-plot community garden (P-patch), off-leash dog area, picnic shelters, wetland boardwalk, nature trails, picnic tables, benches, and open grass lawn. A fully-accessible play area integrated into the hillside combines natural and structural elements. Natural forest areas will be preserved, and the existing stream corridor will be enhanced with native plantings. Public art elements providing a sense of discovery or whimsy may be added along trails or in the landscape. Interpretive signage will be added to highlight the natural environment and/or history of the site.



Acquire more land for “Big Rock” like parks.”

- Survey respondent



Continue to develop parks like the Big Rock Park with lots of walking trails, tree preservation, pea patch area, and natural play features for kids. City has missed opportunities to secure open park space along Lake Sammamish and that should have been prioritized before all lots built and costs escalated.”

- Survey respondent







**Big Rock Park South Master Plan:** The Big Rock South Master Plan, adopted in October 2023, is designed to reinforce the passive, natural environment of the property, while allowing more flexible uses for all ages and abilities. A major component of the master plan is the adaptive re-use of the existing structures (e.g., barn, residence, and pool house) to support community uses. The old garage is replaced with a new picnic pavilion. The newer garage is proposed to be converted to maintenance storage and restrooms. The 15-acre site will retain its central pond and existing forested area and support wetland restoration and stormwater management. Other proposed improvements include a parking lot, universal play areas, open grass meadow (for event space), garden areas (pollinator and sensory), a central picnic pavilion, small picnic shelter, picnic tables, benches, paved trails, and nature trails with a connection to Big Rock Central Park to the north. An optional space for 9-hole disc golf course combined with Big Rock Central Park would be located in the northern forested area.



**Klahanie Park Master Plan:** The Klahanie Park Master Plan, adopted December 2022, focuses on the protection of Queen’s Bog, while still allowing a diverse range of recreational opportunities. Park improvements include upgrading the existing entrance and parking lot, reconfiguring the existing sports fields, and adding a community green. A new community garden would provide 35-45 plots, including ADA accessible plots, and include a tool and storage shed, along with picnic and seating space. A large play area is centrally located and designed for all ages and abilities with both inclusive play equipment and natural play elements. A picnic area and relocated restroom support recreation, events, and activities. The trail system connects the regional trail to the paved loop trail within the park. A small pocket park would sit within the existing open space along the Williams Gas easement and would provide seating, picnicking, and a small grass lawn, and would be developed in partnership with the Klahanie HOA.

**Athletic Field Study:** The 2020 Athletic Field Study was intended to guide the prioritization of future sport field improvement projects that increase overall playing time, while emphasizing cost saving measures. The Study assessed the existing inventory of fields owned by the City, Lake Washington School District, Issaquah School District, and the few private fields. The Study examined the seasons of use, types of fields used for different sports, ages of users, and degree of use by sport. The general recommendations for sports fields from the 2018 PROS Plan were integrated into specific facility recommendations. The top four priority upgrades were identified as Inglewood Middle School, Beaver Lake Park, East Sammamish Park, and Blackwell Elementary.



Create turf fields with lights for our field-based sports kids (grass fields are unusable 9 months of the year!)"

- Survey respondent

84%

Households within 2 miles of a community park

## Inclusion & Universal Access

Across the country, local municipalities and park and recreation providers with older public infrastructure have been upgrading their facilities to comply with the outdoor recreation guidelines for universal access and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The removal of existing architectural barriers in park facilities has been ongoing and should continue until renovations, upgrades and newer construction provide barrier-free access to all users. Access and inclusion in public parks extends beyond the physical amenities and incorporates considerations of language, technology, wayfinding, program equity, and equitable geographic distribution of facilities.

Park and recreation agencies are in a unique position to champion efforts that advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). By assuring representation of diverse life experiences and voices, park and recreation professionals will better reflect the communities their agencies serve. Inequity is the ultimate challenge facing the nation, and park and recreation agencies can make a profound difference.





## Park Distribution – Gap Analysis

Understanding the known gaps in the park system and evaluating the City’s existing levels of service for parks will provide a foundation for strategic planning to ensure that tomorrow’s residents have equitable access to a balanced distribution of parks, trails, and recreation amenities to stay healthy and active.

To better understand the distribution of existing recreation amenities and where acquisition efforts should be considered, a gap analysis of the park system was conducted to examine and assess the community’s current access to various recreation opportunities across the City.

The gap analysis used travelsheds for each park classification and calculated travel distances along the road network starting from known and accessible access points at each park:

- For neighborhood parks, travelsheds were derived using a ¼-mile primary and ½-mile secondary service area with travel distances calculated along the road network starting from known and accessible access points at each park.
- For community parks, travelsheds were derived using ¼-mile, ½-mile, 1-mile and 2-mile travel distances to acknowledge that these park types (including athletic fields) serve a wider array of users and driving to such sites is typical.
- For homeowner association (HOA) parks, travelsheds were derived using ¼-mile and ½-mile distances, and then these travelsheds were trimmed to the boundaries of the subdivision to reflect a more accurate catchment area for these private parks.
- Composite maps of all three park classifications illustrate the entirety of active-use parks to the ½-mile travelshed.

Maps 2 through 5 illustrate the application of the distribution criteria from existing parks. Areas in white do not have a public park within reasonable distance of their home (½-mile). The illustrated ‘travelshed’ for each existing Sammamish park highlights that certain areas within the City do not have the desired proximity to a local park. Gaps between these service areas constitute “unserved” neighborhoods.

Striving to provide a neighborhood park within a reasonable distance (e.g., ½-mile) may require acquiring new park properties in currently underserved locations or improving multi-modal transportation connections to allow residents to safely and conveniently reach their local park.

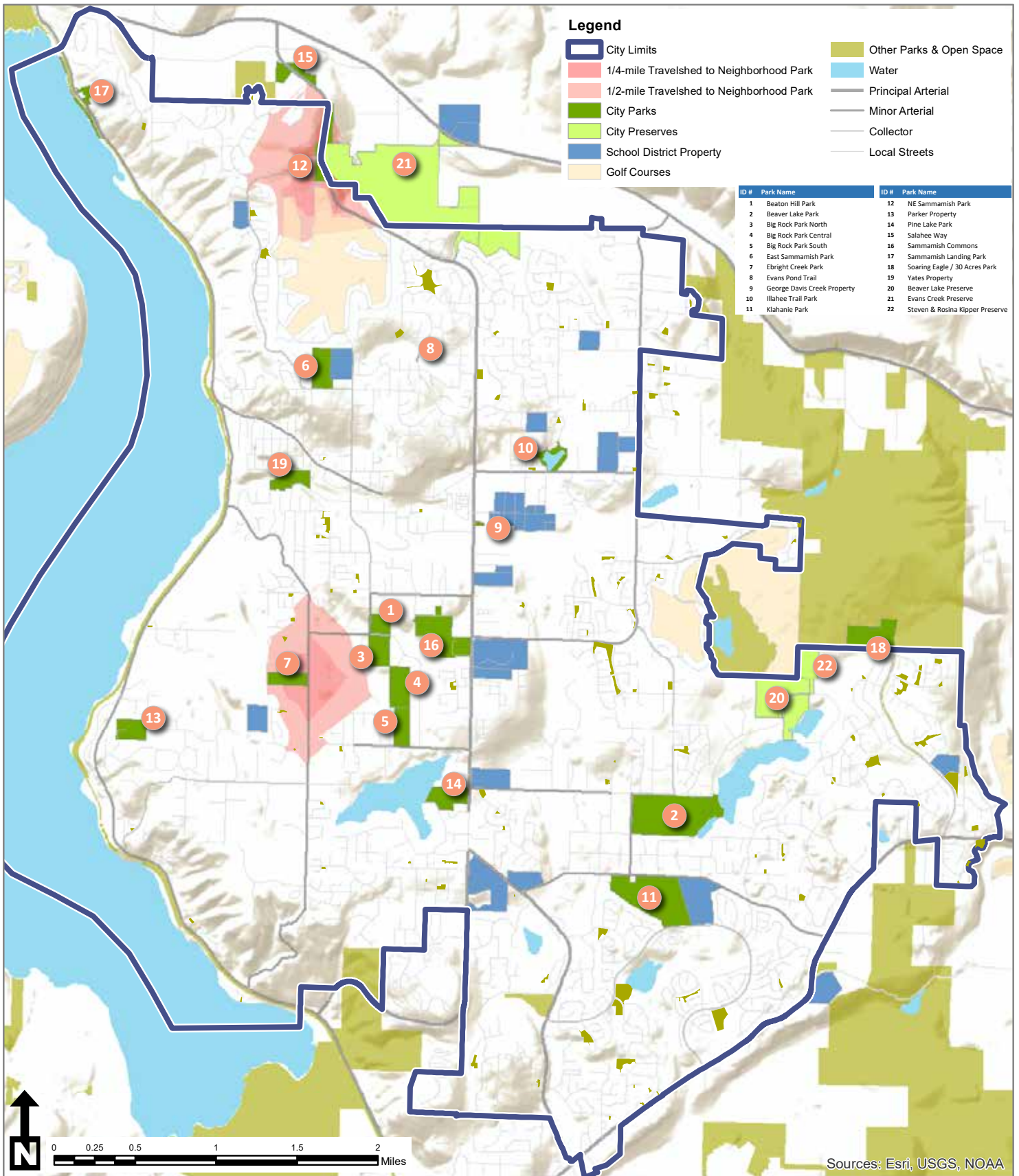
The mapping of park distribution and ‘travelsheds’ helps to illustrate the underserved parts of Sammamish. Areas of north, northeast, south, and southwest Sammamish have limited access to public parks or open space as indicated by white areas on Map 5. These areas of the City should be targeted for future acquisitions to help create more equitable access for all residents. While these generalized acquisition areas do not identify a specific parcel(s) for consideration, the area encompasses a broader region in which an acquisition would be ideally suited. These acquisition targets represent a long-term vision for improving parkland distribution in Sammamish and should be pursued in accordance with the City’s 2017 Land Acquisition Strategy.

Gap analysis modeling also assessed the distribution of various recreation amenities, including playgrounds, sport fields, sport courts, and trails, among others. Maps 6 through 13 illustrate the geographic distribution of these amenities, and this information is helpful in future park planning to improve access to the variety of recreation options desired by the community.



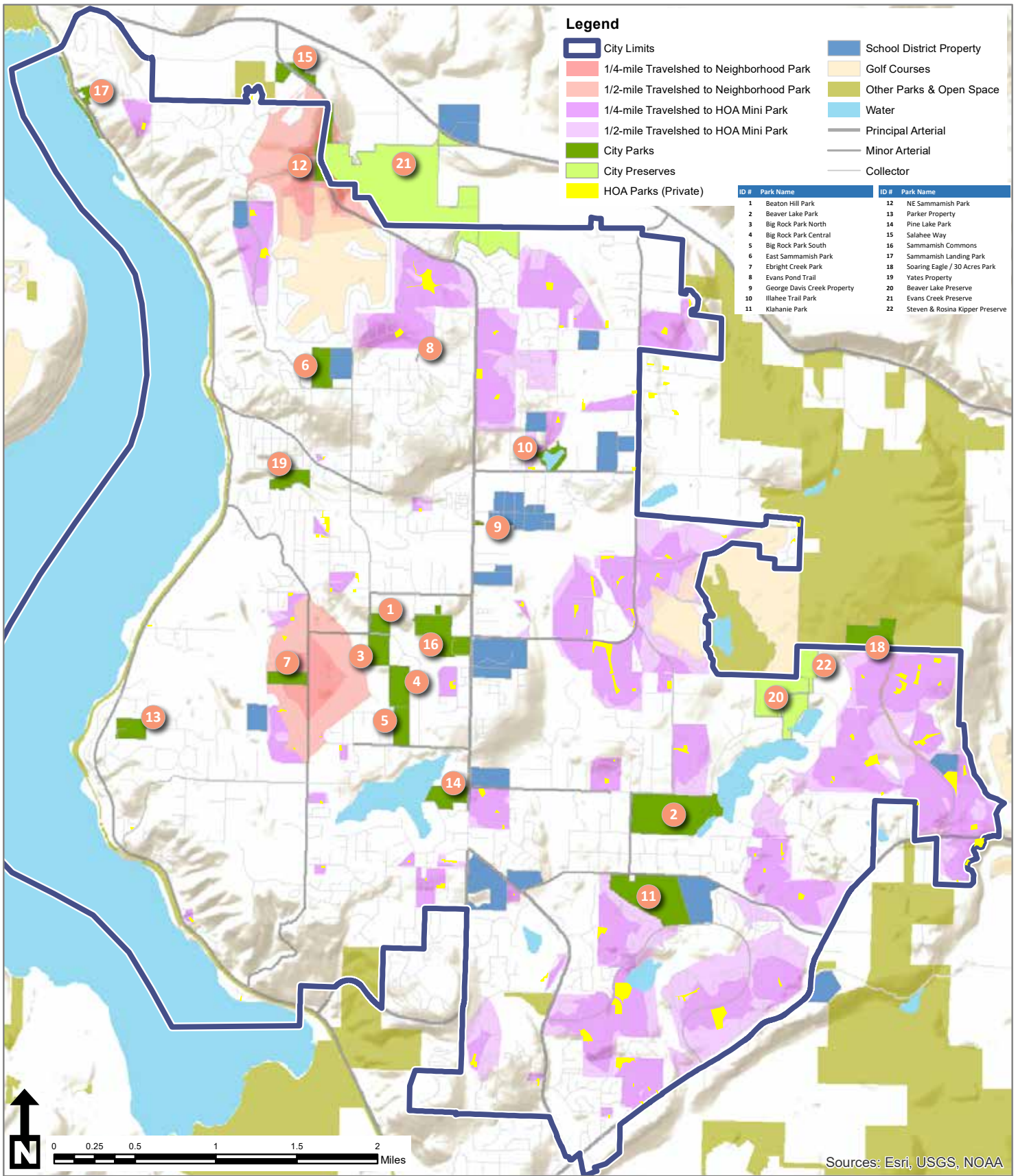
多样化的playground，不是千篇一律的设施 (Diverse playgrounds, not cookie-cutter facilities).”

- Survey respondent

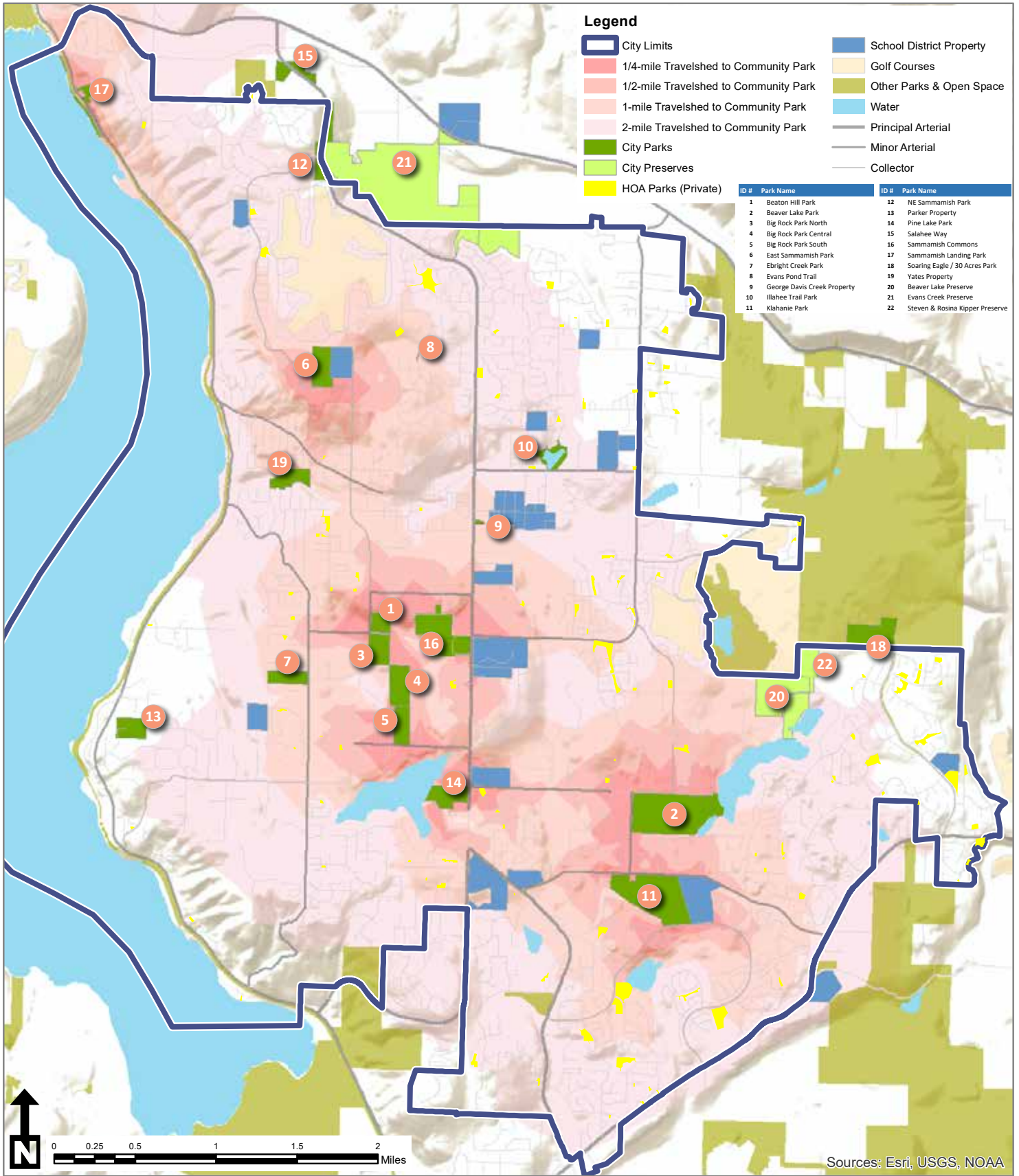


Map 2: Travelsheds for Neighborhood Parks (1/4- & 1/2-mile)



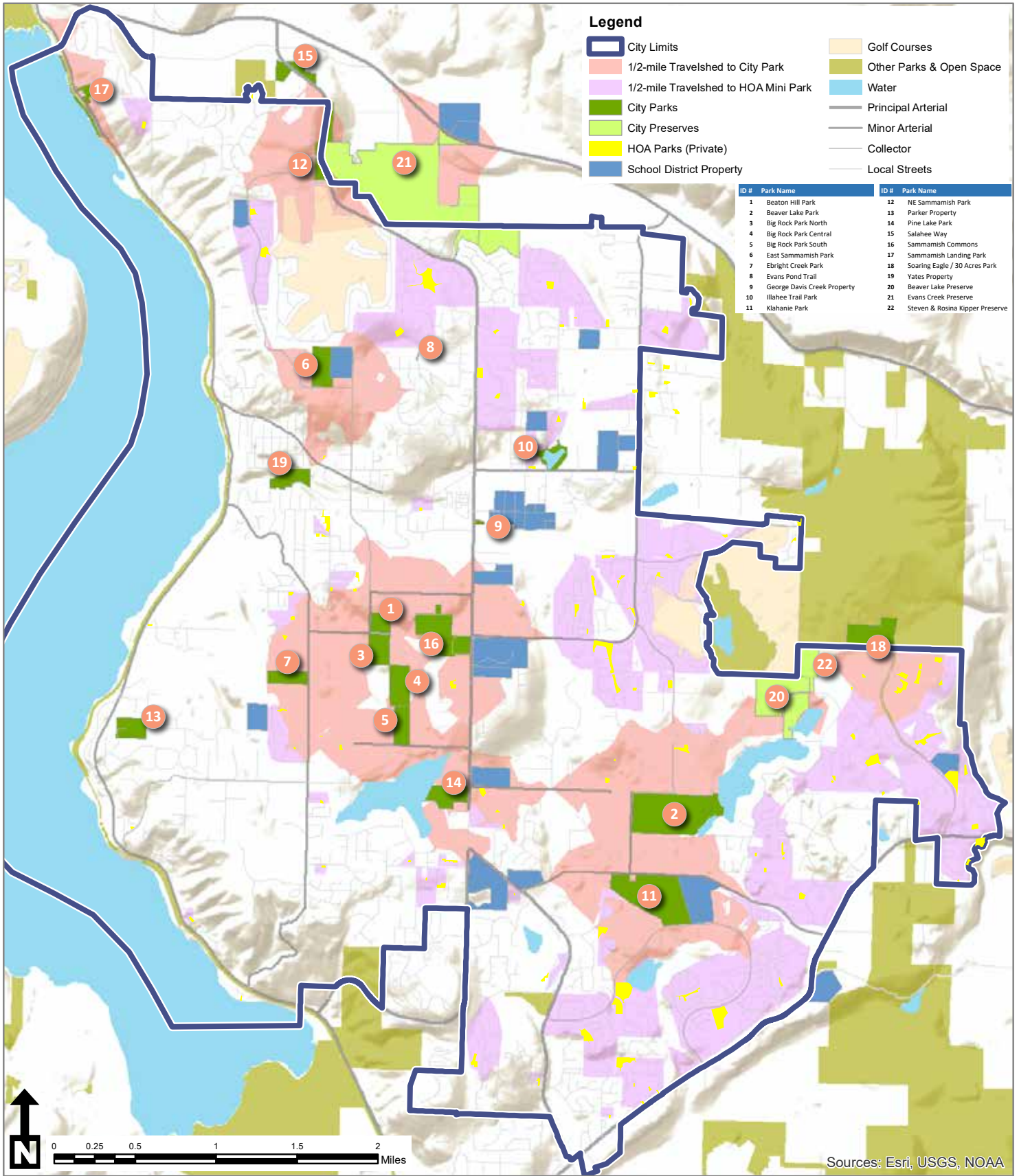


Map 3: Travelsheds for Neighborhood & HOA Parks (1/4- & 1/2-mile)



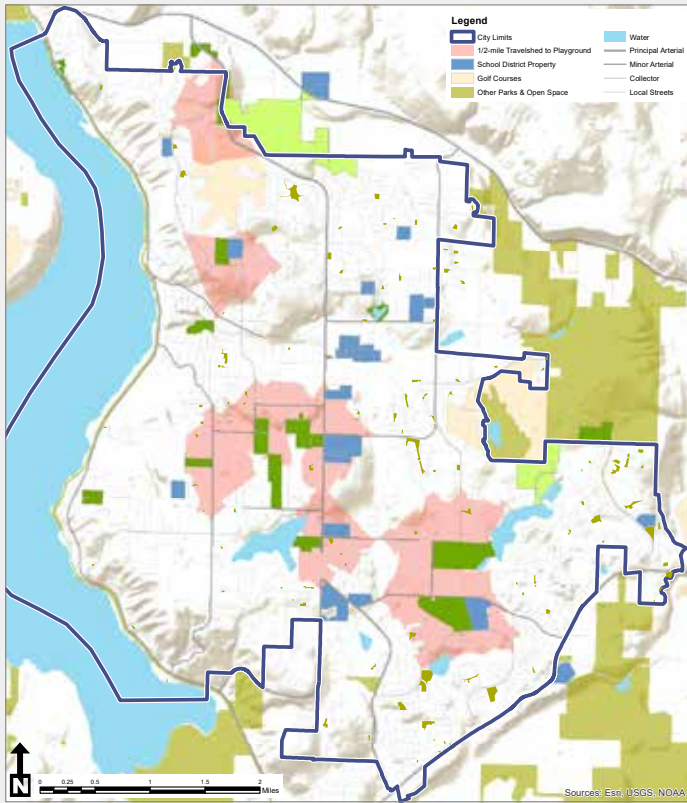
Map 4: Travelsheds for Community Parks (1/4, 1/2, 1 & 2-miles)



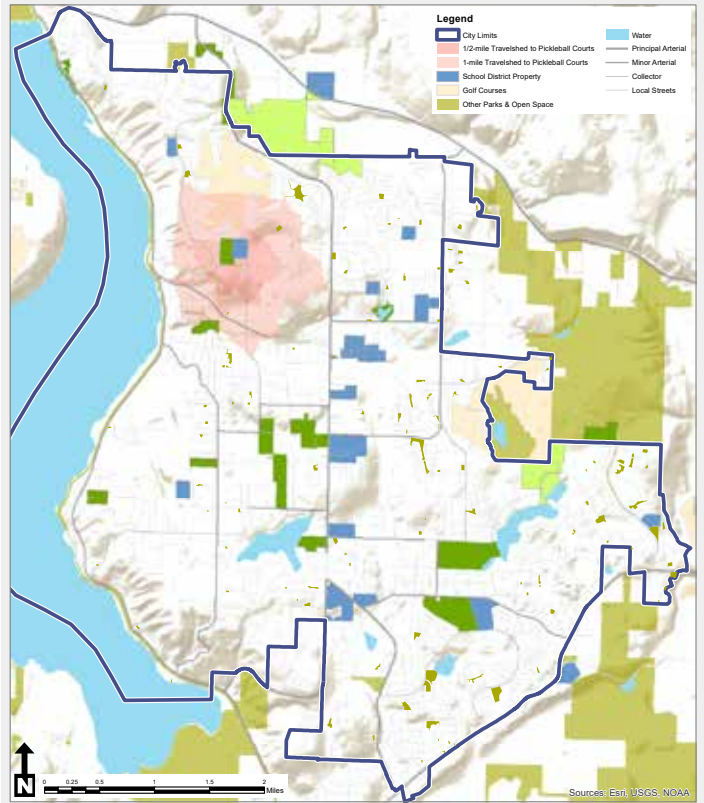


Map 5: Travelsheds for City Parks and Preserves and HOA Parks (1/2-mile)

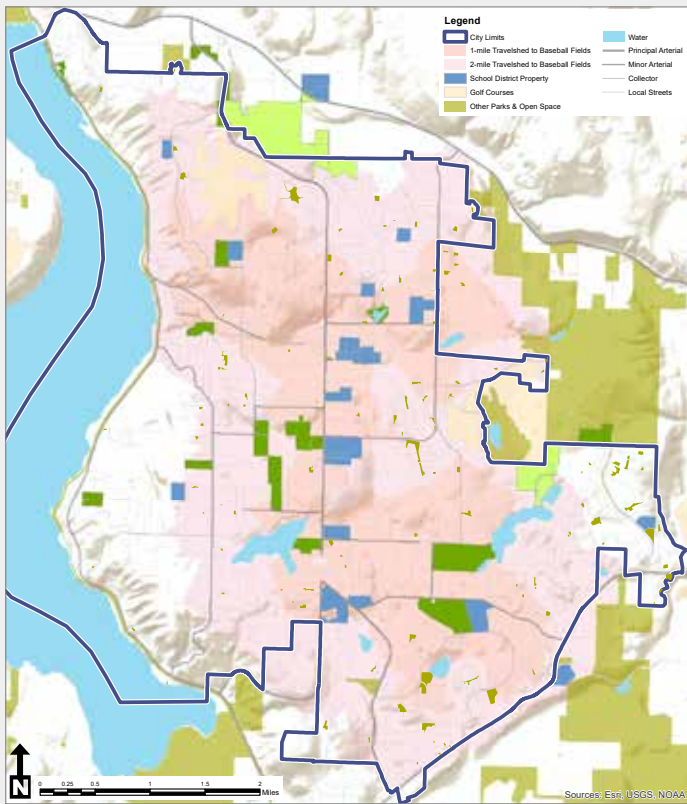
### Travelsheds: Playgrounds (½-mile)



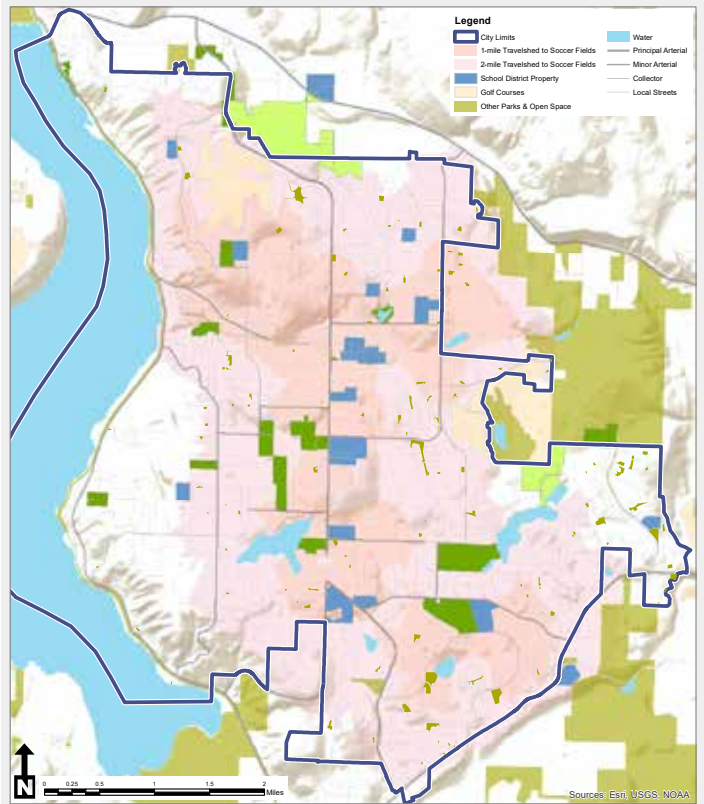
### Travelsheds: Pickleball Courts (½- & 1-mile)



### Travelsheds: Baseball/Softball Fields (1- & 2-mile)

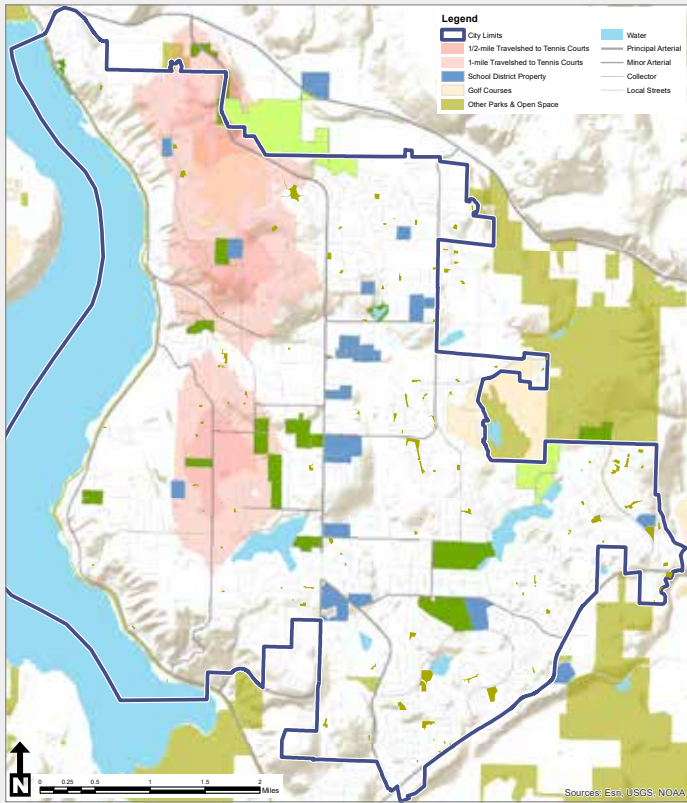


### Travelsheds: Soccer Fields (1- & 2-mile)

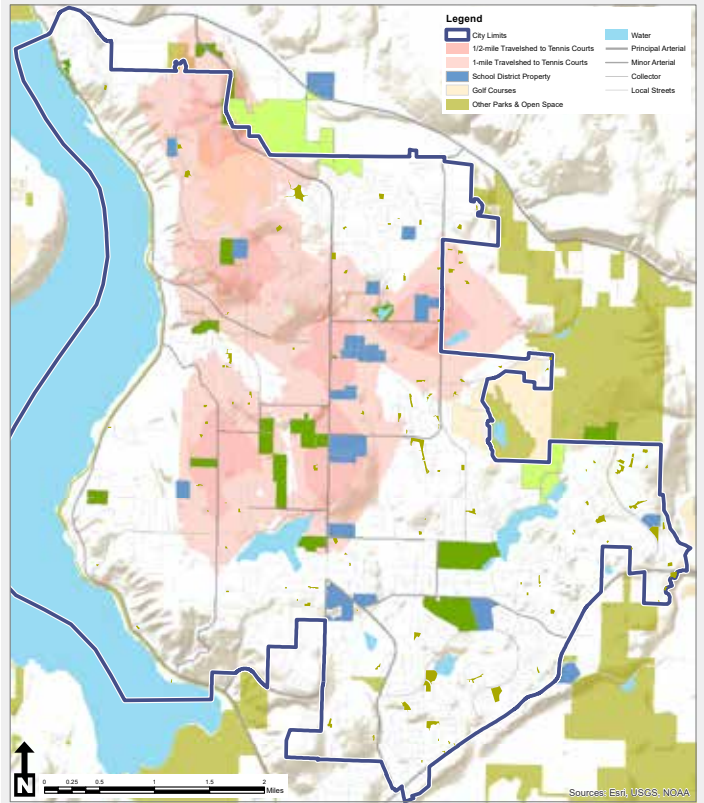




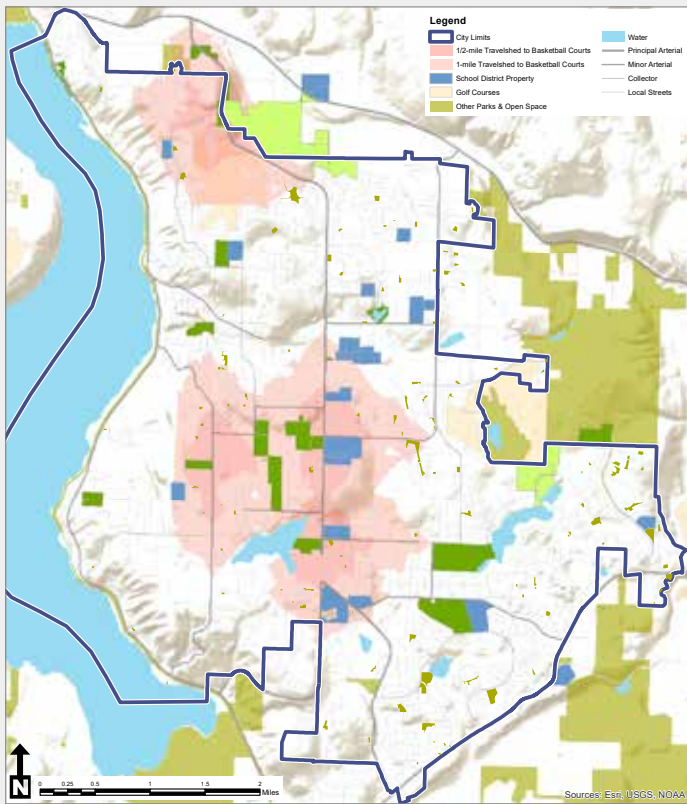
### Travelsheds: Tennis Courts (½- & 1-mile)



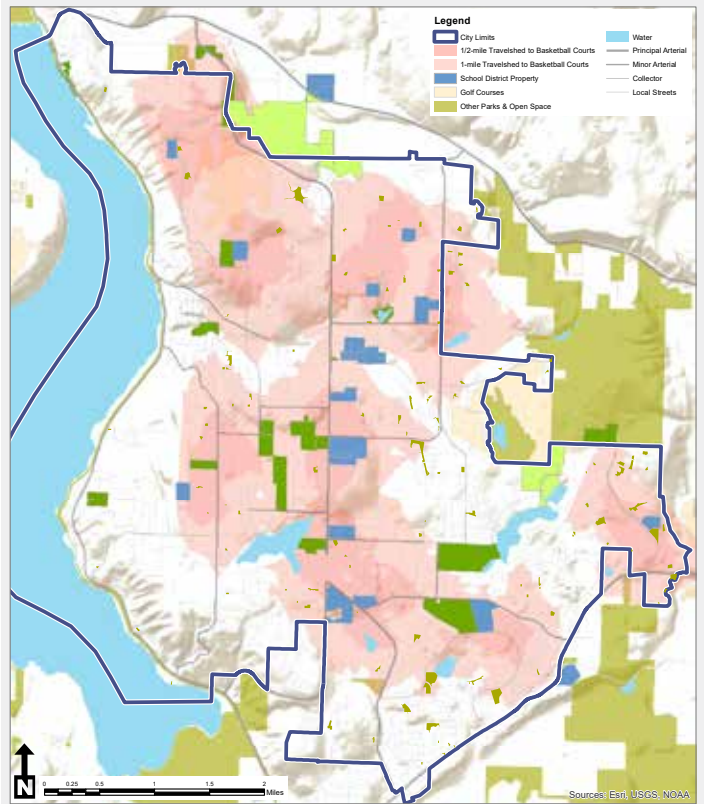
### Travelsheds: Tennis with Schools (½- & 1-mile)



### Travelsheds: Basketball Courts (½- & 1-mile)



### Travelsheds: Basketball with Schools (½- & 1-mile)



# Levels of Service

Service standards offer a benchmark for measuring how well the City is meeting the expectations for the provisions of parks, open space, and outdoor recreation facilities for the community. As guidance for assessing current quantities and qualities of parklands and facilities, the level of service (LOS) in Sammamish can be compared to other agencies across the country. The traditional measurement focuses on acres of parkland for the population. While this standard should not be used exclusively, it can offer a starting point for examining a number of more customized and diverse approaches to evaluating the City’s current service levels through a variety of metrics.

## National Recreation & Parks Association Agency Performance Review

The 2023 National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Agency Performance Review and accompanying Park Metrics provide comprehensive park and recreation-related data to inform park and recreation professionals and key stakeholders about the state of the industry. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review presents data from more than 1,000 unique park and recreation agencies across the United States, as reported between 2020 and 2022. This data provides guidance to inform decisions and demonstrate the full breadth of service offerings and responsibilities of park and recreation agencies across the United States. This comparison of nationwide data with the City of Sammamish can provide guiding insights rather than target benchmarks.

The NRPA data is used to compare different park and recreation providers in communities across the

country; however, the Park Metrics database relies on self-reporting by municipalities. Some agencies only include developed, active parks, while others include natural lands with limited or no improvements, amenities, or access. The comparative standards in the table on the following page should be viewed with this variability in mind.

Figure 13 provides the nationwide comparison coupled with aggregate data of jurisdictions with a similar population size to Sammamish. In most of the listed categories, the City’s provision of parks and recreation is well within the range of other agencies in terms of residents per park, parkland per 1,000 residents, annual operating expenses, annual operating expenses per capita, and operating expenses per acres of parkland.

However, the number of full-time equivalent (FTEs) employees and the FTE ratio to population is much lower than comparable agencies, which affects the ratio of operating expenses per FTE. In this category, the degree of seasonal employees, contracted recreation programmers, and outside contracted work may cause some data variability. Separately, the Agency Performance Report indicated recent increases in staffing and volunteers for park and recreation agencies showing that numbers of authorized full-time positions have steadily rebounded since 2011.

The higher capital budget spending for Sammamish is reflective of the City’s larger park investments in recent and current park development projects – a clear sign of an expanding park system.

**50%**  
Acreage increase in City parklands since 2010

Figure 13. 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Comparison

NRPA Metric	All Agencies	Jurisdictions 50,000 to 99,999	Sammamish
Residents per Park (by jurisdiction size)	2,287	2,240	2,969
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents	10.8	11.2	9.9
Miles of Trails	15	19	21.3
Park & Recreation Staffing (FTEs)	51.5	75.8	32.51
FTEs per 10,000 Residents	8.9	11.1	4.8
Annual Operating Expenses (Parks & Facilities)	\$5,500,000	\$8,005,757	\$5,324,370
Operating Expenses per Capita	\$94.77	\$120.70	\$77.98
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$7,388	\$9,108	\$7,906
Operating Expenses per FTE	\$105,484	\$108,035	\$177,479
Five-year Capital Budget Spending	\$10,000,000	\$16,815,000	\$45,927,947



## Acreage-based Approach

The NRPA Agency Performance Review provides a comparative of parkland acreage metrics across a range of jurisdiction population sizes. Parkland refers to both maintained parks and open space areas, such as green spaces and courtyards. The current population of Sammamish fits within the category of communities between 50,000 to 99,999 people. For that population category, the median is 11.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.



**Increase number of pickleball courts, access to the lakefront beach, increase bike paths.”**

- Survey respondent

Figure 14. NRPA Park Acreage Metrics by Jurisdiction Size

	All Agenices	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	More than 250,000
Median	10.8	13.0	11.3	11.2	8.9	10.1
Lower Quartile	5.3	6.0	5.9	5.0	4.5	5.2
Upper Quartile	18.4	21.1	17.9	17.3	17.1	17.7

The current parkland acreage per 1,000 residents in Sammamish is 9.9, which is slightly lower than the median for comparably-sized communities. However, the acreage-based measurement of parkland for Sammamish has improved since the 2018 PROS Plan, increasing from 9.8 acres per 1,000 population. Since 2018, the City has added 65 acres to the park system, representing a 10% increase in parkland acreage since the 2018 PROS Plan.

Consideration of only City parkland in reviewing overall service levels across Sammamish offers a limited perspective. Over 96 acres of parkland exists in the form of private homeowners’ association (HOA) park sites. Although these facilities are only available to members of the HOA, they provide some basic close-to-home outdoor recreation amenities for those residents. The following comparison accounts for those acres to show a more complete picture of the broader community park system. The comparison also segments active-use park acreage (community and neighborhood) and developed active-use park acreage to view service levels in more fine resolution.

As noted above, Sammamish currently provides a service level of 9.9 acres per 1,000 population for City-owned parklands, and the community-wide service level increases to 11.3 acres per 1,000 when HOA parks are included. Considering the public, City-owned active-use parks, the current service level for Sammamish is 4.8 acres per 1,000 residents. Also, approximately 40% of the current park inventory is developed, resulting in a current level of service for developed parks as 4 acres per 1,000 population. The recently completed park site master plans for several undeveloped parks and the pending phased development of those properties will significantly enhance the City’s level of service in the coming years.

Figure 15 Current Levels of Service by Acreage

LOS Metric	Measurement	
Current Population (2023)	68,280	
<b>Parkland Acreage</b>	<b>City only</b>	<b>City + HOA</b>
Total Parkland Acreage	673.6	769.2
Active Parks* Acreage	326.2	421.8
Developed Active Parks Acreage	272.9	368.5
<b>Level of Service</b>	<b>City only</b>	<b>City + HOA</b>
Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Population	9.9	11.3
Acres of Active Parks* per 1,000	4.8	6.2
Acres of Developed Active Parks per 1,000	4.0	5.4

\* Community & Neighborhood Parks

## Investment-based Approach

Another method for assessing park level of service examines the investment in parks and facilities using population and budget allocations. The NRPA data provides a comparison of annual operating expenses with other agencies and jurisdictions with similar population sizes. Applying the City’s 2023 budget data for the Park, Recreation, and Facilities Department (expenditures of \$5,324,370, which exclude line items for recreation programming, arts, and culture), the operating expense per capita is \$77.98 per resident, which falls below the \$94.77 median for all agencies and the \$120.70 median for park providers in cities with 50,000 to 99,999 residents, see Figure 16. With 674 acres of parkland (developed and undeveloped sites), Sammamish’s operating expenses per parkland acre equates to \$7,906, close to the median expenditures of all agencies in aggregate, but below the \$9,108 per parkland acre by other similarly sized jurisdictions.

Looking at the provision of recreation amenities within the park system provides another perspective on the adequacy of park service delivery. From the NRPA Park Metrics data, eight amenities were compared with the median values from an aggregate of all agencies across the country, as well as from similarly sized jurisdictions to that of Sammamish, see Figure 17. The comparisons indicate that Sammamish is not significantly deficient in baseball fields, dog parks, or skate parks. However, the City provides fewer playgrounds, softball fields, and sport courts than the median of agencies reporting. Also, based on the mapping analysis provided earlier in this chapter, several areas of Sammamish do not have easy access to existing recreational amenities, and residents must drive to access various activities.

Figure 16. NRPA & Sammamish Operating Expense Metrics

NRPA Metrics	All Agencies	Jurisdictions 50,000 to 99,999	Sammamish
Annual Operating Expenses (Parks & Facilities)	\$5,500,000	\$8,005,757	\$5,324,370
Operating Expenses per Capita	\$94.77	\$120.70	\$77.98
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$7,388	\$9,108	\$7,906

Figure 17. NRPA & Sammamish Metrics by Amenity Type

Amenities	50,000 to 99,999		
	All Agencies	50,000 to 99,999	Sammamish
Median Acres per 1,000	10.8	11.2	9.9
Median Trail Miles	15	19	21.3
Amenity	Number of Residents per Amenity		
Playgrounds	3,759	3,779	7,587
Baseball (youth)	6,863	7,237	6,828
Soccer (youth)	7,228	7,207	17,070
Dog Parks	43,532	54,119	68,280
Skate Parks	53,144	62,927	68,280
Tennis Courts (outdoor)	5,860	5,577	13,656
Pickleball Courts (outdoor)	13,922	11,150	17,070
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	7,404	8,790	27,312



Larger playground / more playground equipment for Sammamish Commons Park. The playground is not as equipped as Ebright Creek Park or Pine Lake Park for example, despite the large number of kids that play there. It’s a popular park especially during the summer with families/kids due to the water fountain play area so I feel you’ll get more bang for the buck upgrading that park / playground equipment. That said, we love that park (and all other surrounding parks!) so thank you for all that you do to maintain and keep it safe and clean.”

- Survey respondent



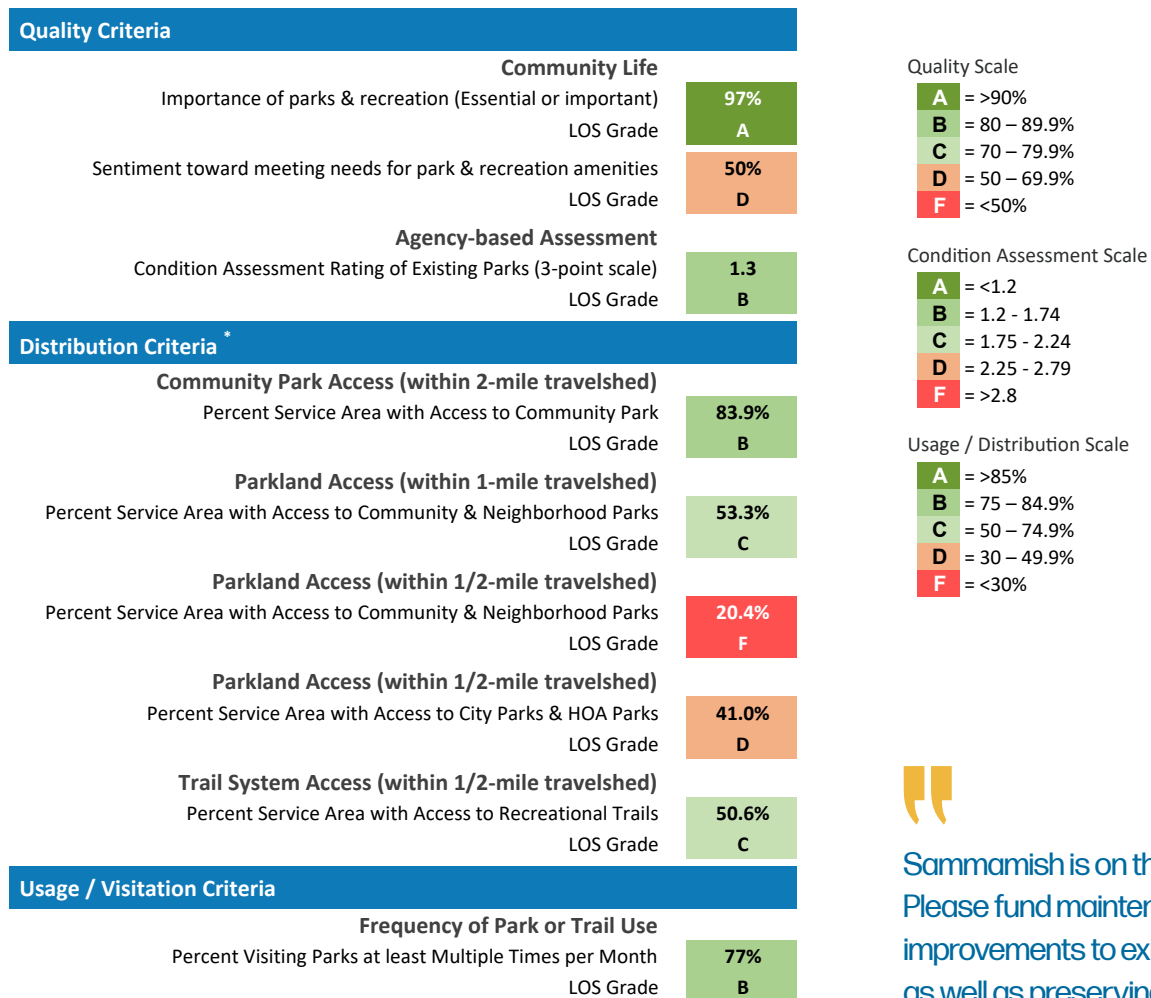
## Recreation & Conservation Office Metrics

The City’s park system also was assessed using the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) level of service metrics provided in their planning manual. In reviewing the park system as a whole, Figure 18 illustrates the current levels of service across different performance measurements. From the community survey results, the frequency of park and trail visitation ranked as the strongest indicator for the park system.

The RCO level of service metrics include distribution criteria to reflect the percent of travelshed coverage for each type of park in the community. Based on the gap assessment mapping, the City’s community

parcs within a 2-mile travelshed cover approximately 84% of Sammamish versus 53% for a combination of community and neighborhood parks to a 1-mile travelshed. Areas outside these community park travelsheds are mostly located along the east and southwest perimeters of the City. Coverage measured as a ½-mile walking distance for either neighborhood or community park was considerably lower, providing access to existing parks for only 20% of the City. The gap analysis conducted for this PROS Plan reinforces the findings from the 2018 Plan to direct the need for new park locations to fill known gaps in parkland distribution.

Figure 18. Levels of Service with RCO Metrics (System-wide)



\* Note: The percentage of land area covered by service area walksheds is a proxy for the population within the residential portion of the city.

SCALE: Excellent Good Fair Limited Poor

Quality Scale  
**A** = >90%  
**B** = 80 – 89.9%  
**C** = 70 – 79.9%  
**D** = 50 – 69.9%  
**F** = <50%

Condition Assessment Scale  
**A** = <1.2  
**B** = 1.2 - 1.74  
**C** = 1.75 - 2.24  
**D** = 2.25 - 2.79  
**F** = >2.8

Usage / Distribution Scale  
**A** = >85%  
**B** = 75 – 84.9%  
**C** = 50 – 74.9%  
**D** = 30 – 49.9%  
**F** = <30%



Sammamish is on the right track!  
 Please fund maintenance and improvements to existing facilities as well as preserving forest/open spaces and new recreational opportunities.”

- Survey respondent



*“Preserve more existing forest but allow more natural walk/bike access.”*

- Survey respondent

## Beyond “Metrics” to Uniqueness

Examining the quantity of parklands and developed park acreage and the level of investment in the park system are merely two approaches for evaluating the current service levels for park and recreation facilities. As the Sammamish park system matures through the acquisition and development of new sites, the City must strive toward a more diverse, unique, and universally accessible suite of outdoor recreation amenities, network of trail connections, and support facilities that provide an enhanced sense of place and quality of life for the community.

The City of Sammamish has conducted several master plans to guide the development of undeveloped parklands. These public design processes for Beaton Hill, Big Rock South, and Klahanie Parks have highlighted the community’s interest in a more varied assortment of recreation experiences. Elevating and highlighting the special landscapes of these park properties on the Plateau will include expanding options for nature experiences, gardening, sports, walking, and accessible play. In meeting these local interests, the City also should ensure an equitable distribution and quantity of the most common amenities, such as playgrounds, picnic shelters, restrooms, sport courts, sport fields, and trails, to help distribute the visitation across many parks and acknowledge that many park users, particularly families, look for a variety of amenities in a park to provide a range of recreational activities for every visit.

## Preserves, Natural Areas, & Open Spaces

Broadly, the City of Sammamish is characterized by a wide range of natural lands, including coniferous forests, shoreline and aquatic habitats, wetlands, and upland corridors, supporting a variety of wildlife and that could be considered for protection as additional open space. These natural areas are significant not only for their size, but also for the diversity of habitat they provide – ranging from shorelines and adjacent wetlands, to streams and riparian areas, as well as upland forested areas. Large portions of the wetlands, floodplains and riparian areas throughout the city are in public ownership or are protected by development restrictions.

The Sammamish community is fortunate to have retained several significant natural areas, with nearly 350 acres of preserves and natural lands managed by the City. These open space properties include forested lands, riparian corridors, wetlands, and steep slopes, and account for 51% of the City’s total parkland inventory.

The City’s parklands include natural areas for outdoor enthusiasts to connect with nature, observe wildlife, enjoy local flora, go birding, and simply walk in the wild. The character of the local landscape may limit the feasibility of passive recreation access, but these conserved lands provide ecosystem services that offer values to the community measured by cleaner water, cleaner air, moderated temperatures, and other environmental benefits.



The three preserves (Beaver Lake Preserve, Evans Creek Preserve, and Steven & Rosina Kipper Preserve) provide extensive natural areas with trails for walking, hiking, and exploring. Parking provides vehicular access, and picnicking and restrooms are available at some access points. As local interests grow for additional outdoor recreation amenities, the undeveloped natural area known as 30 Acres Park should be evaluated for sensitive development that may integrate into the adjacent natural areas (e.g., Soaring Eagle Park and Steven & Rosina Kipper Preserve) and incorporates park amenities and access to accommodate a higher degree of recreational uses without compromising the natural habitat value of the site.

In addition to City-owned natural areas, other land managers provide significant natural lands and outdoor recreation opportunities within and adjacent to city limits. Three county parks lie at the edges of Sammamish: Marymoor Park, Soaring Eagle Park, and Duthie Hill Park. King County also owns and manages two preserved natural areas in close proximity to Sammamish: Evans Crest Natural Area and Patterson Creek Natural Area. Lake Sammamish State Park provides waterfront access to the southern end of Lake Sammamish with beachfront and boat launch facilities. These public park and open space lands provide 1,744 acres of outdoor recreation within reach of most residents. Other open spaces include privately-owned homeowners association (HOA) properties designated as open space tracts and the Hazel Wolf Wetlands Preserve owned by Forterra.

## Natural Area Preservation

While the City has acquired a number of significant natural areas for long-term protection as public open space, additional opportunities to protect key parcels may arise in the future. Preserving some of the remaining high value natural resources as the City develops can provide significant community, environmental, and economic benefits. Particularly high value resources, or those that create important wildlife and recreation connections within the existing park system, should be prioritized for preservation, potentially in partnership with community organizations.

## Natural Green Infrastructure

Sammamish's natural resources are a critical component of the City's green infrastructure, which provides important ecosystem service functions. The City's urban forest, streams, wetlands, and vegetated natural areas help manage stormwater, protect air and water quality, and prevent erosion. Wetland restoration, visible stormwater features that collect the nitrogen and detain it prior to reaching the wetlands, and educational signage and design elements could improve watershed health and inform visitors about the impacts of pollutants (e.g., dog waste, pesticides, and herbicides) and encourage more environmentally friendly choices. Through interdepartmental coordination, the City should explore opportunities to enhance existing and future sites to serve multiple public purposes, as appropriate. This may reduce the City's demand for built infrastructure, such as stormwater conveyance and detention capacity, reduce risks from natural hazards like landslides and floods, and protect the quality of Lake Sammamish, Beaver Lake, and Pine Lake for generations to come.

## Productive Landscapes

The City also could consider locating additional demonstration native, herb, or sensory gardens in larger parks. Interpretive signage could provide educational opportunities, while partnerships with school districts could foster food-focused educational programs. Gardens could be developed and maintained in partnership with community organizations or educational programs, such as the Sammamish Stewards, Sammamish Botanical Garden Society, and Environmental Horticulture program at Lake Washington Institute of Technology.

## Interpretive Signage

The City's parkland includes a diverse array of habitat and is home to a variety of urban wildlife. Opportunities exist for interpretive education and signage throughout the City's park system. The installation and integration of interpretive signage that reflects Sammamish's history, culture, natural assets, and wildlife populations can enable programmed or self-guided outdoor learning and support other types of passive recreation, such as viewpoints and wildlife viewing areas.

# 6



## Recreational Trails



Provide bike racks in all parks.”

- Survey respondent

This chapter describes the recreational trail system and provides an overview of trail classifications and existing and conceptual trail corridors.



*“Link the parks with a trail, so you don't have to walk the streets to connect”*

- Survey respondent



Trails are critical links in Sammamish’s active transportation network – connecting people to parks, schools, and other key destinations and creating opportunities for active lifestyles. Recreational trails are critical infrastructure for a healthy and livable community, promoting alternatives to vehicle use. Completing and expanding trail system connections was identified as one of the highest capital project priorities during the community engagement process, and walking was the top recreational activity for Sammamish residents.

## Trail Trends

Walking and hiking continue to be the most popular recreational activities nationally and regionally. Furthermore, national recreation studies have consistently ranked walking and hiking as the most popular forms of outdoor



recreation over the last ten years, and summaries of recreation trends are provided in Appendix F.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted outdoor recreation activities, including trail use. Local and regional park and recreation agencies that managed trail systems were pressed to adapt to heavy usage and crowded trailhead parking, as many people shifted their daily exercise routines to outdoor activities, such as walking and bicycling.

The 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends report from the Outdoor Foundation found that hiking is the most popular outdoor activity. There were 881,000 new hikers in 2022. Hiking is considered one of the “gateway activities” that serve to initiate participation in other outdoor recreation activities. Running has the highest average outings per runner (54 per year). The annual growth for biking (all categories: road, BMX, mountain) was surveyed at 22.9% or 54.7 million cyclists. Notably, the 2022 version of this report shared that the number of seniors, ages 65 and older, participating in outdoor activities grew by 16.8% between 2019 and 2021. Trails are essential infrastructure for these and other outdoor recreation activities.

The 2023 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan (SCORP) has adopted statewide priorities and goals to guide conservation and outdoor recreation development. Top priorities include providing meaningful access to outdoor recreation for a broad group of users and supporting healthy, adaptable, and connected communities where outdoor recreation users are connected to recreation destinations with a safe, accessible spectrum of multi-modal transportation options.

In the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office’s 2022 Recreation Provider Survey, park and recreation agencies across the state reported that their top five trail-related management priorities were:

- Managing existing trails,
- Planning and coordination with partners,
- Providing connections between existing trails,
- Re-routing or improving trails to modern, sustainable design, and
- Creating new opportunities for non-motorized trail users.

Other trail-related priorities facing park and recreation providers for the next five years noted by the RCO included:

- Improving parking capacity at trailheads;
- Expanding capacity and connecting trail systems;
- Acquiring additional trail corridors;
- Improving safety and security at trailheads; and
- Completing ongoing planning and permitting processes.

Additionally, with the rapid increase in electric-assist mobility and the potential for user conflicts due to increased speeds, Sammamish will want to stay abreast of best management approaches for ensuring safety for all trail users and how best to promote trail etiquette on shared-use trails.



According to The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) 2022 report on Engagement with Parks, more than 25% of survey respondents - over 86 million people - are unable to walk to a park or recreation facility. Access to outdoor recreation is a key value to trails and trail connectivity.





The City should put top priority to acquiring land and/or easements to complete the Emerald Necklace and other connecting trails such as between Big Rock Park and Sammamish Commons and from the Plateau down to Lake Sammamish such as parallel to 212th Ave SE (Snake Hill) and through Providence Pt parallel to Laughing Jacobs Creek. Work with owners/HOAs, the benefit of trail easements through open space tracts, storm detention tracts, and private lands inside and outside of the City.”

- Survey respondent



Expend some time & money to better interconnect parks via trails, completed sidewalks, etc.”

- Survey respondent



Provide improved access for people using mobility devices.”

- Open house participant



Link the parks with a trail so you don't have to walk the streets to connect.”

- Survey respondent

## Community Feedback & Insights

As noted in previous chapters, feedback from the community survey, event tabling, and public meetings provided a wealth of local insights on current usage and interests in various recreation amenities, including trails. The most popular amenities used during park visits are trails for walking, jogging, and running (86%), which has increased by 10 percentage points in the past six years. In the 2018 PROS Plan, community members also identified trails as a top priority for the park system, and the main reason for visiting parks was for trail walking, jogging, and/or running (76%).

The community survey asked residents to prioritize a variety of potential improvements to the park system. Based on combined responses from the mail and online survey, walking and hiking trails were identified as the top priority, with 88% of respondents rating trails as a top or high priority.

In a forced ranking survey question listing six potential park system investments, developing a network of connected trails was the second highest priority, which followed conducting maintenance on existing facilities.

Also, survey respondents were asked to describe one improvement for the park and recreation system. Over 500 specific comments were collected, and multiple write-in comments identified a need for interconnected trails that link neighborhoods and parks – making it safe and convenient for biking, running, and walking. There is a desire to minimize traffic and increase accessibility through the expansion and improvement of trails, sidewalks, and multi-use paths.

Community feedback from both public meetings echoed the responses from the community survey, and participants identified trails as a top priority, along with improving access to parks via sidewalks, trail connections, and other safe routes.

## Trail Classifications

The Sammamish recreational trail classification system is based on a tiered network and includes four primary trail categories: Regional, Connector, Park/Local, and Water Trails. The differences between trail classifications are based on the purpose and intensity of use, which influences the trail width, material, and recommended support facilities.

### Regional Trails

Regional trails act as the spine of the trail network and provide major connections to adjacent communities and significant natural features, such as rivers and streams, public facilities, and areas of interest. These trails extend beyond city limits and serve as extended recreational corridors and may be identified as regional trails in the King County trail network. Regional trails are paved, multi-use routes that accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and skaters and are typically separated from the public road right-of-way (ROW) for exclusive use. In cases where there is not sufficient ROW for a separated trail, sidewalks may be widened to function as segments of regional trails. Regional trails are typically between 12' and 18' wide, and these corridors should provide the highest level of trail amenities, including trailheads, parking, signage, and restrooms. Trail width may be reduced depending on specific site conditions, such as environmental constraints or slopes. The East Lake Sammamish Trail is a regional trail.

### Connector Trails

Connector trails provide recreational benefits by linking regional trails, as well as important land uses and areas of interest, often within a neighborhood and typically along a street right-of-way. They also

create recreation loops to parks, natural areas, and other environmental destinations. These trails support regional trail corridors and serve smaller residential, commercial, and employment areas. Connector trails are typically between 8' and 12' wide and are often paved, multi-use corridors that can be located on- or off-street.

### Park / Local Trails

Park trails are interior loops or point-to-point routes within parks or preserves and include paved or unpaved walking paths, rustic hiking trails, or equestrian trails. Local trails are used as neighborhood linking trails. These multi-use trails can be paved or soft surface and located within a public easement or public right-of-way. Depending on use, location, and underlying conditions, the trail surface material may be concrete, asphalt, gravel or crushed rock, native soil, forest duff, or wood chips. Examples of park and local trails include Big Rock Park and Lower Commons.

### Water Trails

A water trail is a network of access points, resting places, and attractions for users of human-powered watercraft on lakes and rivers. Water trails enable people to personally explore the City's natural and cultural heritage from a distinctly unique vantage point – one of “sitting on” the water – and bring the user into contact with the ecology of the trail corridor. The design of launch facilities should provide adequate parking and other support amenities, including pedestrian access, protected sand beach, and functional elements such as signing, seating, and waste receptacles. Lake Sammamish is part of the Lakes-To-Locks Water Trail.

Figure 19. Sammamish Trail Classifications

Classification	Function	Use Type	Users	Surfacing	Width
<b>Regional Trail</b>	Major connections through community and beyond	Multi-use	Pedestrians, cyclists, skaters. Equestrians (where feasible)	Asphalt, concrete, boardwalk.	12-18'
<b>Connector Trail</b>	Connects parks, trails, neighborhoods and destinations	Multi-use	Pedestrians, cyclists, skaters.	Asphalt, concrete, boardwalk. Gravel, possible.	8-12'
<b>Park / Local Trail</b>	Interior loops or point-to-point routes in public spaces.	Multi- or single use	Pedestrians, cyclists, skaters. Equestrians (where feasible)	Asphalt, concrete, boardwalk; gravel, native soil, forest duff, wood chips also possible.	2-10'
<b>Water Trail</b>	Water-based recreation & travel	Watercraft	Boaters, sailors, & paddlers	Water bodies	N/A



## Existing Trail Inventory

The City of Sammamish, King County, and neighboring communities have created a growing system of regional and connector trails with linkages to each other. Clear recognition by the County and cities that trails provide valuable infrastructure is demonstrated by the commitment to continue to connect communities and destinations with trails. A more fully developed network of trails and pathways to connect important destinations will help create a more walkable Sammamish.

In addition to its own trail network, Sammamish has several County-owned trails within or near to Sammamish city limits, including the East Lake Sammamish Trail. In total, Sammamish has approximately 45 miles of recreational walking or biking trails dispersed across the community.

### City Park Trails

Developed City parks provide paved and soft-surface trails to connect the outdoor recreation amenities within each park and offer circuits for walking through natural areas. These City park trails also provide access points into adjacent neighborhoods.

### East Lake Sammamish Trail

The regional East Lake Sammamish Trail runs the extent of the western edge of the City of Sammamish along the east side of the Lake. King County owns and manages this regional trail that follows a historic railroad route along the eastern shore of Lake Sammamish within the cities of Redmond, Sammamish, and Issaquah. The trail has undergone recent redevelopment and improvement projects designed to increase accessibility and environmental sustainability.

Beyond the borders of Sammamish, the trail intersects the Issaquah-Preston Trail in Issaquah near I-90, which provides a connection east to the Mountains to Sound Greenway. In Redmond, an intersection with the Marymoor Connector Trail leads to the Sammamish River Trail. The East Lake Sammamish Trail also is part of the Locks to Lakes Corridor, a 44-mile-long regional trail corridor that connects the Burke-Gilman Trail, Sammamish River Trail, Marymoor Connector Trail, and Issaquah-Preston Trail, linking Seattle to the Eastside and the Cascade Foothills.

Figure 20. Sammamish Trail Inventory

Trail Location	Mileage
Beaver Lake Park	2.4
Beaver Lake Preserve	2.4
Big Rock Park Central	1.8
Big Rock Park North	1.6
East Sammamish Park	0.5
Ebright Creek Park	1.1
Evans Creek Preserve	4.1
Illahee Trail Park	0.5
Klahanie Park	1.3
Northeast Sammamish Park	0.2
Pine Lake Park	0.6
Plateau Trail	3.2
Sammamish Commons	1.2
Sammamish Landing	0.3
<b>Total City Trails</b>	<b>21.3</b>
East Lake Sammamish Trail	7.3
Other / ROW Routes	16.6
<b>Total Trails</b>	<b>45.1</b>



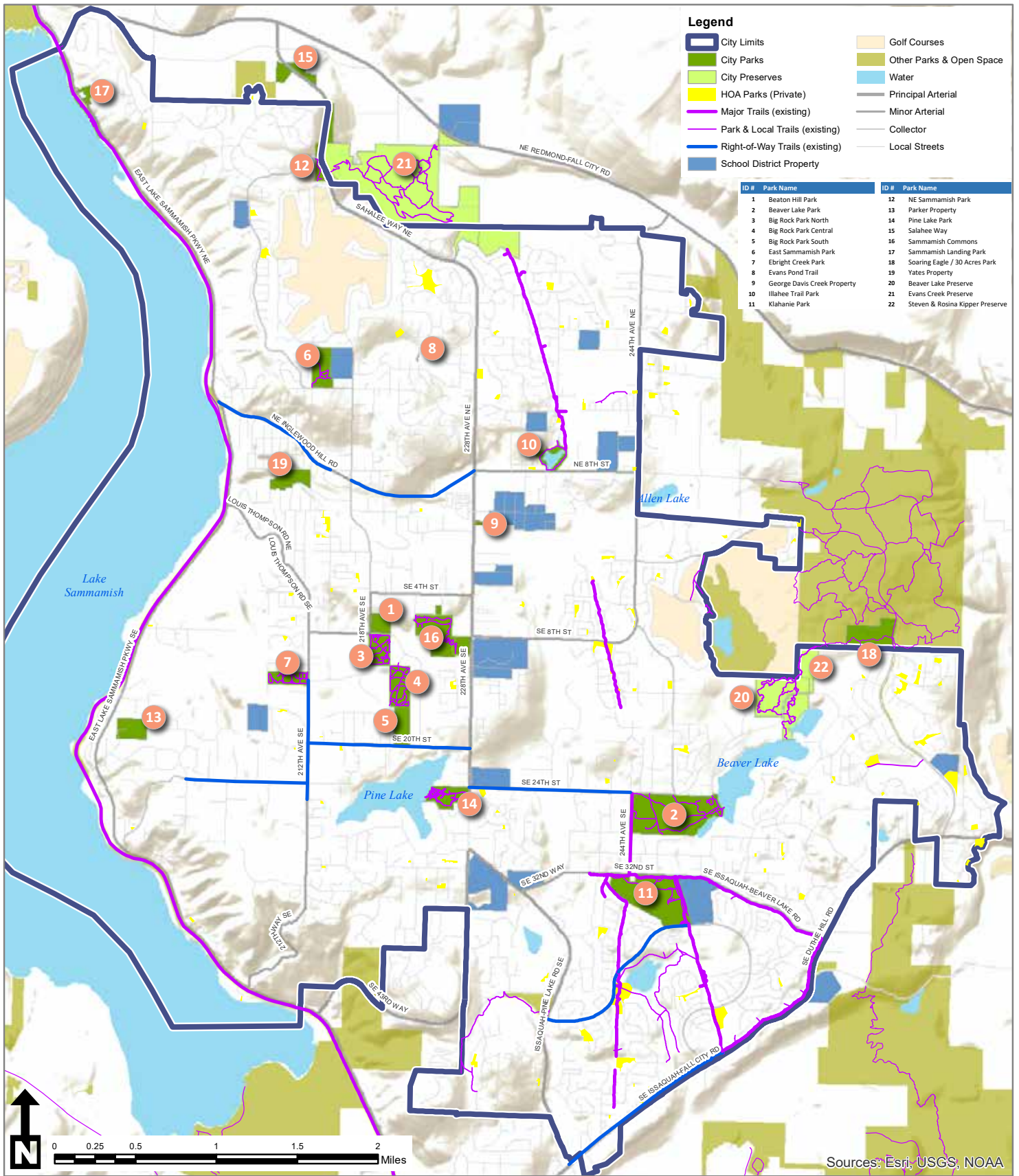
Provide more opportunities for all ability access to a wider variety of park experiences i.e. more benches closer together along trails, walkways, etc. to serve the aging population.”

- Survey respondent



Acquire land to provide a connecting trail between the city center and the Big Rock Park areas.”

- Survey respondent



Map 14: Existing Recreational Trails



# Trail System Planning & Assessment

## Citywide Trail Planning

Expanding Sammamish’s network of trails will enhance access for all community members and support sustainability goals around reducing vehicle dependence. Citywide planning for the trail network relies on coordination between transportation engineering and park planning functions within the City organization. This PROS Plan, the Transportation Master Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan work together to identify local needs and recommendations to expand and improve on-street and off-street trails, pathways, and connections.

In 2020, the City released an updated draft Transportation Master Plan that includes an inventory of gaps and barriers to pedestrian and bicycling access across the city, and the project gathered public feedback to help identify the priorities for walking, biking, and other non-motorized improvements. One popular trail concept is the Emerald Necklace, a vision for an approximately 28-mile greenbelt encircling Sammamish. The City of Sammamish is currently undergoing its ten-year update of its Comprehensive Plan (Envision Sammamish 2044), which targets December 2024 for final plan adoption and will include an updated transportation system element.

## Regional Trail Planning

The King County Open Space Plan (OSP) was updated in 2022, and its goals are to improve regional trails and mobility, ensure that essential connections are completed, and existing trails are maintained. As part of the Capital Improvement Plan, the OSP recommended an evaluation and update of the Regional Trails Needs Report (RTNR) to respond to changing conditions and needs, provide a viable capital development program, and remain eligible for grant opportunities. The RTNR provides guidance for developing King County’s components of the overall Regional Trails network. Continued long term planning seeks to coordinate planning, design, implementation, and maintenance of the regional trail network and ensure connections with other local trails.

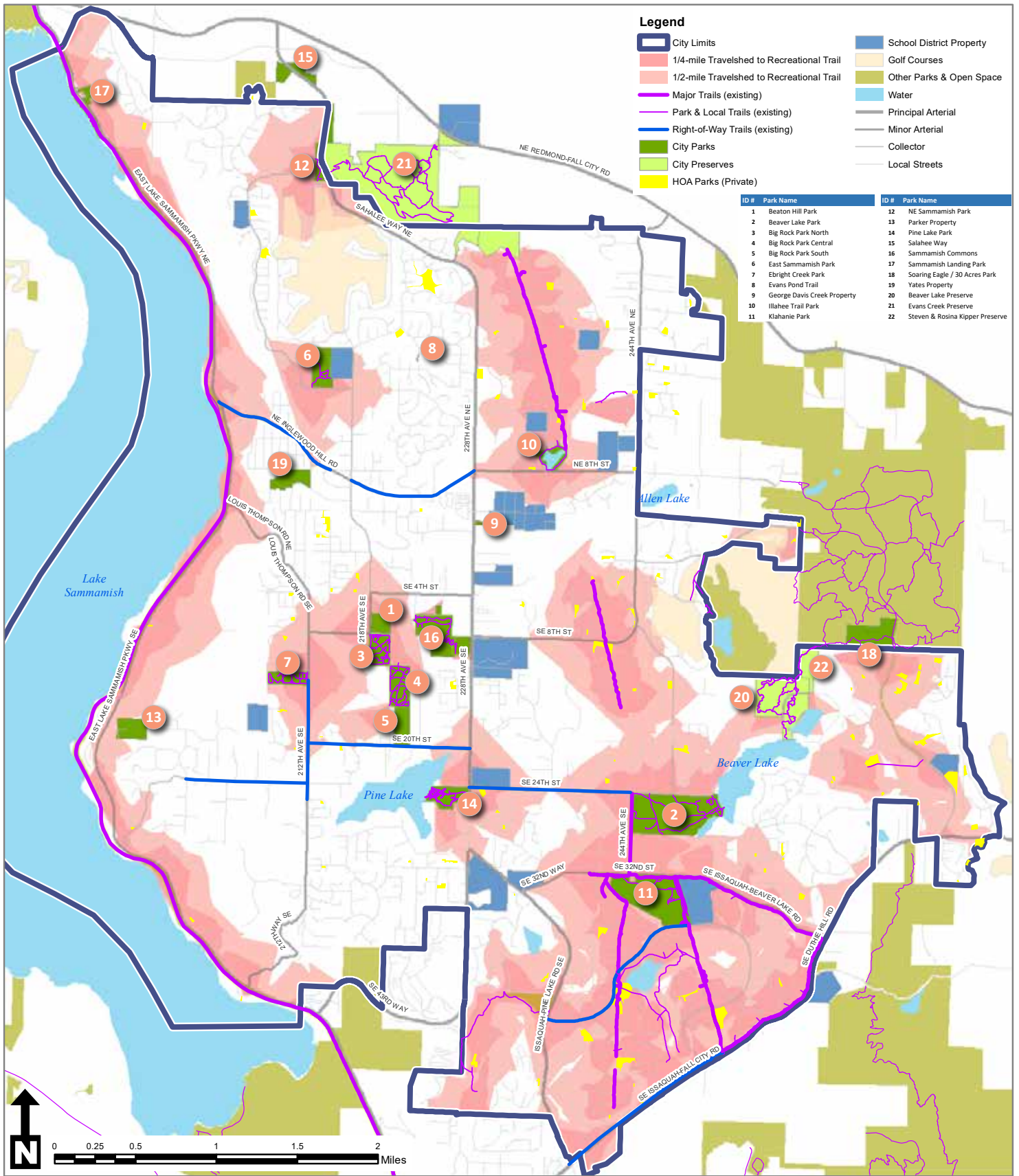
The Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust continues to work toward a dedicated trail and greenway system extending from the Cascades to Puget Sound. Sammamish is within the Greenway, although the actual trail alignment is south of city limits.

The Leafline Trails Coalition envisions an interconnected network of shared use trails across the Central Puget Sound region to improve health, community, quality of life, mobility, and access for all. The Coalition is made up of more than 50 members, including businesses, community organizations, and government agencies across King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. Leafline members maximize their collective impact by creating a shared map vision for trails, enhancing the trail visitor experience, promoting awareness of the Leafline’s trails, and advocating to fill gaps in the trails network.

## Trail System Gap Analysis

A gap analysis was conducted to examine and assess the accessibility of existing recreational trails. As with the parkland analysis, travel distances were calculated along the road network starting from each existing trail segment’s known access points. Local trails within parks were also depicted. “Travelsheds” were calculated with ¼-mile, ½-mile and 1-mile distances for major trails (e.g., East Lake Sammamish Trail, Plateau Trail) and ¼-mile and ½-mile “travelsheds” for the remainder. Map 15 illustrates the citywide distribution of recreational trails and the relative access to these corridors within reasonable travel walksheds. Approximately 50% of the City has access to regional and recreational trails, including park trails and the East Lake Sammamish Trail within a ½-mile.

Similar to transportation planning, recreational trail planning should be geared toward connectivity as a system performance metric, rather than mileage. Only considering a mileage standard for paths within the Sammamish park system will result in an isolated and inadequate assessment of community needs with little consideration for better trail connectivity. This Plan recommends a connectivity goal that re-states and reinforces the desire to improve overall connections across the City to enhance off-



Map 15: Travelsheds for Existing Recreational Trails (1/4- & 1/2-mile)



street linkages between parks, schools, and major destinations, as feasible. The use of policies and objectives is more appropriate for the expansion of the trails network with a focus on connectivity, rather than the use of a per capita distance metric (e.g., miles per 1,000 population). Therefore, this Plan does not propose a mileage-based trail facility standard. To be clear, the proposed exclusion of a mileage-based standard for trails does not diminish the importance of continuing to expand and grow the trail network; the intent is merely to orient the City's efforts toward a policy-based approach of trail connectivity.

## Trail System Design Considerations

Trail systems may include different types of trails for different conditions and needs. Guidelines for trail planning and developing trail design standards can help create a unified trail system that directs appropriate establishment of new trails and guides maintenance and upgrades for existing trails. Establishing and reinforcing a recreational trail classification enables a framework for trail design and facilitates the prioritization of proposed trail enhancements and development.

### Access & Alignments

The future growth of the trail network will need to be a balance between alignments that are optimal from trail users' trail experience and connectivity perspectives, and those that are practical from cost, regulatory, and availability perspectives. Future consideration should be given toward finding alignment options that can accommodate different trail use types (i.e., commuter vs. recreational/destination oriented), as well as potentially interim solutions that rely on wider sidewalks to serve trail users or routes that utilizes existing or planned sewer, stormwater, or utility corridors. Accommodating alignments for local, neighborhood trails as connections to regional, shared-used trails or major park trails is important for providing access and reducing the sole reliance on trailheads for providing access to the trail network. The Conceptual Recreational Trail System map (Map 16) indicates potential alignments that can vary depending upon landowner willingness, along with environmental constraints and design considerations.

## Access & Trailheads

Safe, convenient entryways to the trail network expand access for users and are a necessary component of a strong, successful system. A trailhead typically includes parking, kiosks, and signage and may include site furnishings such as trash receptacles, benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, bike repair stations, and bike racks. Regionally, more recent trailhead installations have added electric bike charging stations to support expanding alternative modes of transportation. Trailheads may be within public parks and open space or provided via interagency agreements with partner organizations (e.g., county, school district, etc.) to increase use and reduce unnecessary duplication of support facilities. Specific trailhead designs and layouts should be created as part of planning and design development for individual projects and should take into account the intended user groups and unique site conditions.

### Areas of Respite

Beyond trailheads that can provide access to the trail with support amenities, rest areas along trail segments can enhance the trail user's experience to enjoy the natural settings and/or urban dynamics of the trail's environment. Areas of respite are usually available within developed parks connected to the trail system, but longer sections of trails between trailheads and parks could offer places to rest, stop and chat, enjoy wildlife viewing, or meet-up with fellow trail users. Differentiated from trailheads, these 'rest stops' can simply offer pull-offs with benches or picnic tables, observation or viewing platforms, or interpretive signs. These sites also should be included in the emergency response system with an identifying code to provide locator information.

### Trail Development Limitations

One underlying principle of the recreational trail system is to enable the placement of trails within or close to natural features to provide access to the City's unique landscapes, as well as accommodate outdoor recreational access to creeks, hillsides, and woodlands. The future planning and design of trail routes through natural areas should be based on sensitive and low-impact design solutions that offer appropriate levels access that also protect the natural resource and provide for a positive experience for trail users. The determination of future trail alignments

should carefully balance public recreational access with natural resource and natural hazards planning and protections, in part to meet local land use policies, as well as Washington State requirements.

## Trail System Design

The primary purpose of recreation trails is to provide a recreational experience. Whenever feasible, recreational trails should be located off-street; however, streets should be used in order to complete connections wherever necessary. The following are sound tenets of recreational trail system design compiled from numerous national, state, and regional sustainable trail guidelines.

- Develop a high-quality system of multi-use trails that connect significant local landscapes, public facilities, neighborhoods, and the Town Center.
- Create a network of single- and multi-use trails for walking, running, and cycling to promote connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, and public amenities or destinations.
- Provide a comprehensive trail system that will connect the recreational trail systems and non-motorized transportation systems, including sidewalks and bike lanes.
- Increase connectivity between parks and trails and prioritize the creation or completion of loops that provide a range of recreation options and experiences.
- Integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the land development review process.
- Require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate the trail as part of the project. Sensitive area buffers within proposed subdivisions and short-plats shall be widened to accommodate additional open space and a public easement for future trails.
- Require the installation of safe, convenient, and dedicated pedestrian paths by new development where minimizing travel distance has the potential for increasing pedestrian use.
- When possible, trails should be constructed prior to or concurrent with development or with the improvement of public facilities.
- Work with state, county and local agencies, utilities and private landholders to secure trail corridors and access to complete the recreational trail system through methods including land dedication, purchase, use of vacated rights-of-way, land donations, public easements, or use agreements.



## Trails for Walkable Communities

Parks are known to contribute to a healthier community by providing accessible outdoor recreation particularly through the inclusion of walking trails. Getting to a park by foot or bike can also offer a healthier option than driving a car. In the NRPA publication *Safe Routes to Parks*, the elements of walkable, healthy community design are outlined as convenience, comfort, access and design, safety, and the park itself. Sidewalks, bikeways, and trails should provide an integrated alternative transportation system for residents to access parks and other destinations within their community. As further emphasis for the importance of a walkable community to promote public health, the Surgeon General has issued a Call to Action to “step it up” and promote more walking and build a more walkable world. A more connected network of trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes with links to public transit also provides economic values.





## Trails for Aging Populations

Today's active seniors are looking at retirement age differently, as many are retooling for a new career, finding ways to engage with their community, and focusing on their health and fitness. It will be critical for Sammamish's park and recreation system to take a comprehensive approach to the City's aging population needs. Accessibility and barrier-free parking and paths, walkability, and connectivity will be paramount to future planning. Providing experiences for today's older adults includes not only active and passive recreation, but also the type of equipment needed to engage in certain activities. Trails provide the infrastructure for the most popular and frequent outdoor recreation activity of older adults: walking.

## Trail Signs & Wayfinding

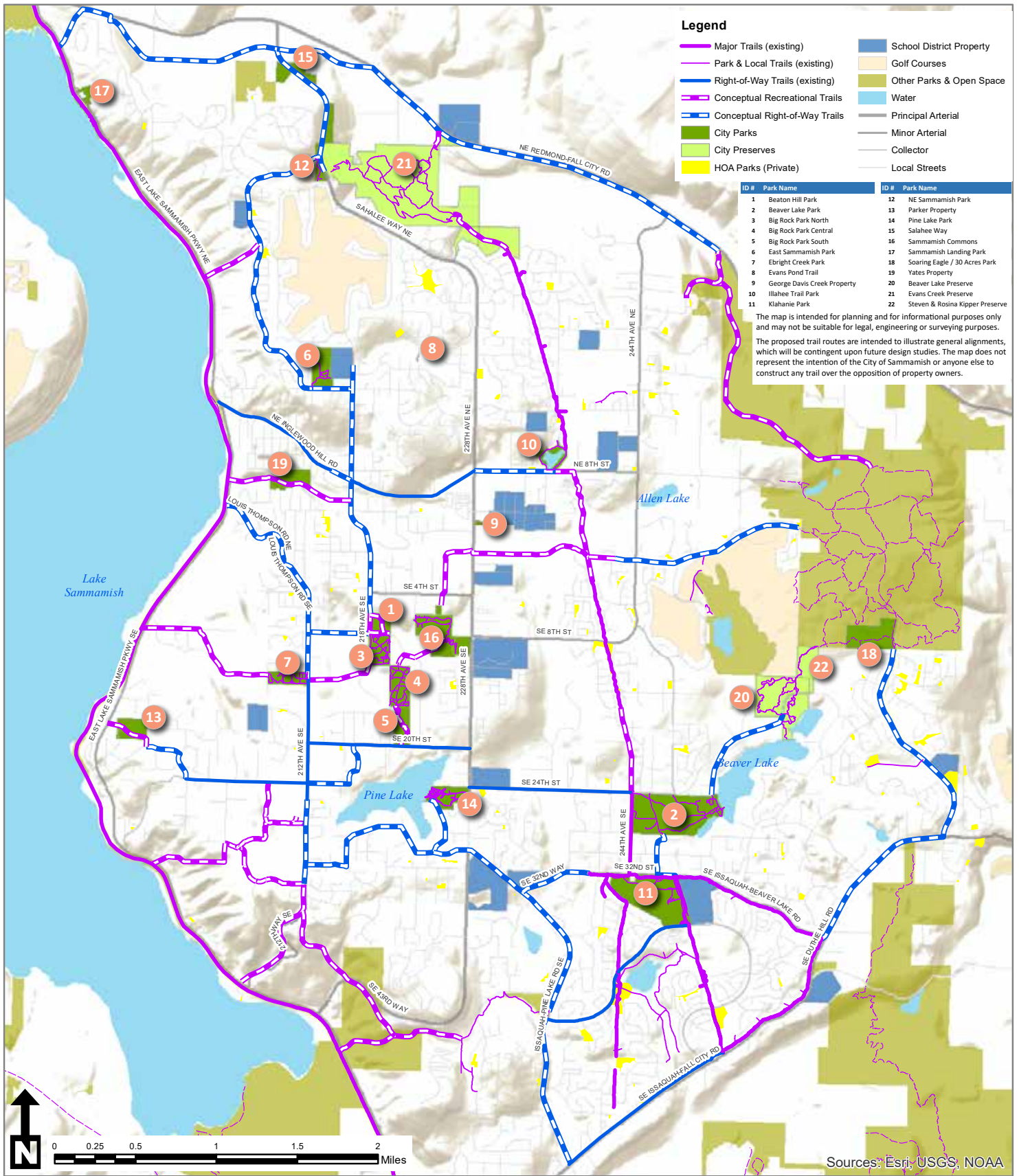
Enhanced signage and consistency in brand identification could increase awareness for residents and visitors of nearby recreational opportunities, and coordinated signage plays a crucial role in facilitating a successful trail system. A comprehensive and consistent signage system is necessary to inform, orient, and educate users about the trail system itself, as well as appropriate trail etiquette. Such a system of signs should include trail identification information, orientation markers, safety and regulatory messages, and a unifying design identity or element for branding. The following signage types should be consistently implemented throughout the network:

- Directional and regulatory signs;
- Trail user etiquette;
- Hierarchy signs;
- Continuous route signage for route identification and wayfinding;
- Mileage markers or periodic information regarding distance to areas of interest;
- Warning signs to caution users of upcoming trail transitions or potential conflicts with motor vehicles;
- Interpretive information regarding ecological, historical, and cultural features found along and in proximity to the trail; and
- QR codes to provide links to additional information.

Also, the installation of kiosks at trailheads is a best practice that should continue and provides important trail information, while reinforcing the visual brand of the Sammamish trail experience.

## Ongoing Maintenance

Following trail construction, ongoing trail monitoring and maintenance will keep the trails functioning as designed, while working to protect capital investments throughout the trail network. Future trail renovation projects should be included in the Capital Improvement Plan as a means to identify and secure appropriate resources for needed enhancement. Additionally, the City should maintain and expand their connection to and communications with the robust network of local volunteers to provide support with trail building and maintenance, as appropriate.



Map 16: Conceptual Recreational Trail System





Connect our parks together so that we can park at one park and walk through to as many as possible without getting back in my car.”

- Survey respondent



Include planning for people with mobility challenges from the beginning. Too often we hear that access is coming in a later phase. Flip the process-provide ramps and paved trails first. Will folks complain that they have to wait for years for stairs and gravel paths?”

- Survey respondent



Work with King County to see an increase in safety and crime prevention efforts, especially on trails and in parking lots.”

- Stakeholder group participant





# 7



Organize more concerts, arts, and promote different activities.”

- Open house participant







# Recreation & Events

This chapter describes the trends, local needs, and potential improvements for recreation activities, facilities, and events.

The recreation facilities, offerings, and events available within Sammamish are a major community asset and support the physical, mental, and social health of community members.

Various recreation options are available through a range of public and private recreation, health and fitness providers and facilities. The City currently provides nearly all programming through partnerships and program contractors and does not directly provide a full suite of 'traditional' recreation offerings. The City of Sammamish owns two major community facilities: the Sammamish Community & Aquatic Center and the Teen & Recreation Center, and both are operated by partner organizations.

## Recreation Trends

The following national and state data highlights some of the current trends in recreation and may frame future considerations in Sammamish’s recreation offerings, events and partnerships. Additional trend data are provided in Appendix F.

- Nationwide, 82% of U.S. adults believe that parks and recreation are essential. <sup>(1)</sup>
- 72% of survey respondents indicate that having a high-quality park, playground, public open space or recreation center nearby is an important factor in deciding where they want to live. <sup>(1)</sup>
- Nearly all (93%) park and recreation agencies provide recreation programs and services. The top five most commonly offered programs include holiday or other special events (65%), educational programs (59%), group exercise (59%), fitness programs (58%), and day or summer camps (57%). <sup>(2)</sup>
- More than eight in ten agencies provide themed special events (90% of agencies), team sports (87%), social recreation events (88%), youth summer camps (83%), fitness enhancement classes (82%), and health and wellness education (80%). <sup>(3)</sup>
- America’s children are spending more time outdoors over the past decade, and the COVID pandemic accelerated that trend. Overall, the percentage of children participating in outdoor recreation was high in 2021, at just over 70%. <sup>(4)</sup>
- Over the past two years, participation rates are up across the board for America’s youth, with strong growth in participation by girls (4.9% higher for girls ages 6 to 12, and 5.3% higher for girls 13 to 17). <sup>(4)</sup>
- Yoga continued to have one of the largest gains in fitness activities. <sup>(5)</sup>
- Activities with the highest 5-year increase in participation include indoor climbing (13%) and pickleball (12%). <sup>(5)</sup>
- Nearly all park and recreation providers in the U.S. experienced a decline in revenue in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As early as May 2020, most providers had to close facilities temporarily in accordance with health and safety directives. Nearly half also furloughed or laid off staff due to the funding and facility impacts of the pandemic. <sup>(6)</sup>

- Research from the US Bureau of Economic Analysis shows that arts and culture drive 4.2% of the US gross domestic product (GDP), generating \$ 876.7 billion in 2020. In Washington State, this sector beats the national GDP, providing 9.4% of the State’s GDP. Both in Washington and nationally, arts and culture surpass construction and education services in contribution to the GDP. <sup>(7)</sup>
- People who say their neighborhood has easy access to quality arts and cultural activities tend to be more satisfied, identify more with local lifestyle and culture, and invest more time and resources in their communities. <sup>(8)</sup>

Recreation Management magazine’s 2022 Report on the State of the Managed Recreation Industry summarizes information provided by a wide range of professionals working in the recreation, sports, and fitness industry. Regarding program options, respondents from community centers, park departments, and health clubs reported that they plan to add programs over the next few years. The ten most commonly planned program additions were:

1. Mind-body balance programs
2. Fitness programs
3. Group exercise programs
4. Educational programs
5. Arts and crafts programs
6. Teen programs
7. Functional fitness programs
8. Performing arts programs
9. Environmental education
10. Holidays and other special events

### Sources:

- (1) American Engagement with Parks Survey
- (2) 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review
- (3) 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review
- (4) 2022 Outdoor Participation Report
- (5) 2022 Sport & Fitness Industry Association Sports, Fitness, And Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report
- (6) 2020 State of the Industry Report
- (7) US Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2022
- (8) Knight Foundation Community Ties survey Community Ties Final (knightfoundation.org). Builds off Soul of Communi-ty Longitudinal Study (2008-2010) conducted by the Knight Foundation found key drivers of community attachment to be social offerings, openness, and aesthetics. <https://knightfoundation.org/sotc/overall-findings/>



According to the 2022 Outdoor Participation Report, published by the Outdoor Foundation, just over half (54%) of Americans ages 6 and older participated in outdoor recreation at least once in 2021. The outdoor participant base has increased 6.9% since the COVID pandemic began in early 2020.

Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic required many respondents to either put programs or services on hold (82%) or cut programs or services entirely (34%). Additionally, many respondents have had to rethink their programming portfolios. Two-thirds of respondents (67%) had added online fitness and wellness programming as of May 2020, 39% were involved in programs to address food insecurity, and one in four was involved in programs to provide educational support to out-of-school children.

## Community Feedback & Insights

Participants of both open houses and stakeholder group discussions offered feedback on recreation programs, facilities, and cultural activities. During the online open house, space for gatherings, performances, or art was listed in the top three for favorite things about Sammamish's parks and open spaces. Other community feedback included the following:

- Include art-making facilities and programming for the community with a focus on those with special needs;
- Expand partnering between the City, organizations, schools, and the public to understand the programs desired by youth or seniors, help the community engage in nature stewardship, attract new programming partners, or host new events; and
- Become a program provider in the future and expand programming tailored to the needs and interest of seniors, people with disabilities in different age groups, and kids.



Promote activities within existing facilities by utilizing the current infrastructure, such as marathons and other events.”

- Open house participant

## Recreational Offerings

The City of Sammamish has a unique approach to providing recreation programs and services that is based on partnerships and agreements with other community-based recreation providers or through contract with independent instructors for services. The City operates as a Contract City and contracts major services such as for Police and Fire and Recreational Programming is no different. The City sees this as the most viable model for the community and one that limits the role of the Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department to offering special events and coordinating the services of other organizations and individuals. The Department also operates an open swim beach at Pine Lake Park with season life guards.

The Department coordinates and promotes a wide variety of programs, services, and facilities that are being provided by other organizations. The largest of these are the YMCA and Boys & Girls Club. The Department has a variety of parks and recreation facilities that are geographically spread across the city. This includes both indoor and outdoor facilities, parks, athletic field complexes, and specialty facilities.

## Special Events

Special events are the main recreation program area directly offered by the City of Sammamish. In addition to these events, a large number of special events also are provided by other organizations, in partnership with the City of Sammamish. Most City events focus on holiday celebrations, youth, and cultural events, and many of the co-hosted events are centered around the arts, outdoor recreation, or holiday events.



Be aware of aging population and needs – Easy access, clean & functional restrooms, security, pets, well maintained, and connected trails.”

- Survey respondent



Figure 21. Special Events throughout the Year (2022-2023)

Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Frosty Fest	Bark in the Park	Concerts in the Park	Dandia and Garba Night*
Lunar New Year	Earth Day	Farmers Market*	Namaste India*
Volunteer Appreciation Event	Eggstravanga*	Fourth on the Plateau	Nightmare at Beaver Lake - Movies
Volunteer Events	Farmers Market*	KidsFirst! Performances	Pumpkins on the Plateau
	Pride Flag Raising	National Night Out*	Solar Eclipse Viewing*
	Rig-A-Palooza	Shakespeare in the Park	
	Treehouse Open Houses	Treehouse Open Houses	

\* Note: Hosted by partner organization

Community and special events should continue to be an area of emphasis. Special events draw communities together, attract visitors from outside the community, and are popular with residents. However, due to resource requirements of coordinating special events, the overall number of events should continue to be carefully managed. This will ensure the City can adequately invest in

and maintain high-quality events. The City has been successful having other community groups act as funders and organizers of many community-wide events. As the City assesses the need for additional, or a different mix of, community events, it should continue to pursue sponsorships to offset costs for future activities.



## Recreation Programs & Activities

The City relies on other providers for most of its recreation services. The YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club are the primary providers of most programs and services that are associated with indoor recreation, aquatics, fitness, athletics, and youth services. There are also a significant number of youth sport organizations that serve the needs of the community. In addition to the programs offered by other organizations, the City contracts directly with some individuals and businesses for a small number of programs that are promoted directly in the City’s Recreation Guide. The following is a list of the primary providers of recreation services.

Figure 22. Recreation Program Partners & Providers

Boys and Girls Club	Issaquah Dance Theater Inc.	Sammamish Library
Camp Fire USA	Issaquah FC	Sammamish Little League
DC Speed Sports	Issaquah Lacrosse Club	Sammamish Saddle Club
Eastlake Little League	Issaquah Swim Team	Sculptor Fitness
Eastlake Youth Football Association	Karate West	Skyhawks
Eastlake Youth Lacrosse	Lake WA Youth Soccer Association	Skyline Youth Football Association
Friends of Lake Sammamish State Park	Lake Washington School District	Skyline Youth Lacrosse
Girl Scouts of Western Washington	Positive Ally	True Martial Arts
Glass House Dance	Sammamish Boys & Girls Club	World Tae Kwon Do Center
Indian American Community Services	Sammamish Community YMCA	

There are significant other providers of a variety of recreation programs and services. The communities that border Sammamish all have strong park and recreation departments with considerable indoor and outdoor space for a wide range of recreation programs and services. Beyond these providers, there are numerous private providers within the east Seattle region including dance studios, martial arts studios, fitness centers, and specialty facilities such as tennis facilities and gymnastics studios.

### Senior Drop-in Program

In 2023, the City of Sammamish initiated a new cross-cultural program specifically designed for local seniors. The year-round program takes place at the Beaver Lake Lodge on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays for a four-hour period in midday, and the program provides a space for seniors to engage in activities that promote social, physical, and mental well-being. Sammamish seniors can drop in anytime during the open hours and participate in a diverse



Coordinate with the YMCA and other recreational providers to leverage the City’s outdoor spaces and offer more programs in parks.”

- Open house participant

array of experiences, such as exercise classes, creative arts, outdoor activities, informative workshops, and nutritious lunches.

### Athletics & Sport Fields

As noted above, the City is not a direct provider of sport programming, but the City does offer synthetic turf and natural turf fields for rent. These fields can accommodate baseball, softball, football, soccer, lacrosse, and cricket. Synthetic turf fields are available for year-round use, while natural turf fields are available March through October.

- Eastlake Community Fields, artificial turf
- Beaver Lake Park, natural turf
- East Sammamish Park, natural turf
- Klahanie Park, natural turf
- Pine Lake Park, natural turf
- All Lake Washington School District Fields within city limits of Sammamish

The 2020 Athletic Field Study is guiding the prioritization of future sport field improvement projects that are intended to increase field capacity, while emphasizing cost savings. The City should continue to implement the recommendations from the Athletic Field Study and proceed with field improvements for Inglewood Middle School, Beaver Lake Park, East Sammamish Park, and Blackwell Elementary, as need is demonstrated and funding allows.

## Recreation Facilities

The City has a variety of recreation facilities that are utilized for recreation programs and services. The primary indoor recreation facilities are owned by the City but operated and programmed by other organizations. The majority of outdoor recreation programs and events occur at Sammamish Commons.

### Sammamish Community & Aquatic Center

The Sammamish Community and Aquatic Center is a two-story building located on the Sammamish Commons campus, adjacent to the Sammamish Library and City Hall. The Center is operated by the YMCA and includes a 6-lane, 25-yard lap pool, a 3,300 square foot leisure pool, a spa, two gymnasiums, a jogging track, fitness space, group fitness rooms, a break room, a family center room, and meeting spaces.

### Sammamish Teen & Recreation Center

The Boys & Girls Clubs of King County operates the Teen and Recreation Center and provides after school and summer camps for local youth, grades kindergarten through 12th. The Club also offers year-round youth sport options, including basketball clinics, cross country, flag football, soccer, and volleyball.

### Rental Facilities

The City also offers three facilities available for events, private parties, meetings, or special group visits.

#### Beaver Lake Lodge

The Lodge is available to rent year-round and offers an enclosed venue with log cabin charm and space to accommodate groups up to 150. The 1,850 sq. ft. main room overlooks Beaver Lake and has a gas fireplace. The kitchen includes a convection oven, stove top/oven and double-size refrigerator.

#### Beaver Lake Pavilion

Also available for rent year-round, the Pavilion is an open-air space with a view of the lake and accommodates groups up to 100. This 2,500 sq. ft. facility has high ceilings and a stone fireplace. Picnic tables and a barbecue grill also are available.

#### Treehouse

Undoubtedly the most unique facility within the Sammamish park system, the Treehouse at Big Rock Central was constructed around four existing, landmark western red cedars. It includes a suspension bridge, lookout, and meeting room. Public visitation is limited to help preserve the integrity of the structure and protect the trees. The Treehouse is open four times per month from March through October. Viewing and visitation is for a 20-minute timeslot session, and a maximum of 25 people are allowed in each session.

#### Picnic Shelters

The City of Sammamish also offers five picnic shelters for reservations March through September.

- Beaver Lake Park
- East Sammamish Park
- Ebright Creek Park
- Lower Commons Park
- Pine Lake Park



Offer more for teens and seniors; partner with schools, and library. @ new big rock-ropes courses, maker space, events- private and public, volunteer center.”

- Survey respondent





## Arts & Culture

In 2003, the City of Sammamish formed an Arts Commission to support a variety of public art activities and goals on behalf of City Council. In 2018, staff from the Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department were assigned to support the Commission, whose mission is to integrate art and culture to create a sense of place and civic identity in Sammamish.

The Commission has led and promoted a variety of activities in the City to expose local residents to arts and culture. These programs and activities include the Arts Showcase, Shakespeare in the Park, temporary art exhibits, artist receptions and other events such as sand sculptures and Lego build activities.

The City's public arts collection includes a variety of locally-known artists, a variety of media and varying degrees of public access. The City's current inventory of public art contains approximately 50 works,

including paintings, works on paper, photography, fiber arts, sculpture, and installations in various sizes. Examples of public art include the Confluence Sculpture and the Four Seasons mosaic mural in the Sammamish Commons Plaza, and the Synergy Rising Sculpture on the SE 4th Street. Additionally, the City and the Arts Commission supported a utility box wrap project to highlight local history across Sammamish. To date, 29 boxes at 11 locations have been installed.

To further develop a future workplans and strategy, the City should consider developing an Arts & Culture Strategic Plan to provide a framework to foster the expansion and promotion of arts, culture, and heritage in Sammamish.



“Opportunities for teen recreation.”

- Survey respondent



“Provide youth recreational programs and spaces for ages 10-17 years old (middle school-high school). Places for teens who don’t drive to congregate and socialize in a responsible healthy manner on the Issaquah school district side on the plateau.”

- Survey respondent

## Future Programming

The City’s current programming philosophy is to utilize other organizations and providers as the primary sources for most recreation services. In recent years, the City has taken a stronger role in coordinating recreation services, coordinating with providers, and promoting recreation offerings. Staff periodically should request and review participant data from providers to stay abreast of class and program utilization and consider the available program mix. One consideration to promote engagement and add revenue is to add concessions seasonally to some parks. Temporary mobile stands, such as coffee carts or food trucks, could add variety with minimal effort and investment.

If opportunities are created for additional indoor or classroom space, the City should consider how to partner to expand the quantity and breadth of youth and adult programs offered. In particular, the City should consider how to accommodate indoor programming for the gymnasium at Central Washington University if the space is underutilized. Additionally, if the Sammamish Teen and Recreation Center would no longer be utilized by the Boys & Girls Club, the City strongly should consider utilizing facility for similar recreation programs, either provided by another organization or directly by the City. Such a transition to City-run programming would require additional full-time staff and a substantial number of part-time program staff, in addition to other operating costs. Comments from public outreach indicate a latent demand for additional and lower cost program options for youth, adults and seniors. An alternative approach is to negotiate with Redmond, Issaquah, or both for City-supported recreation program registration fee reductions to subsidize the costs of participating in programs provided by adjacent

communities. The City should continue to work with partners to add summer programs which provide educational opportunities of the outdoors, natural habitat, and ways to achieve climate resiliency.

## Communications & Marketing

Feedback from the community survey suggested an on-going, limited awareness of the recreation options and amenities available to Sammamish residents. The City should continue to take a strong role in coordinating and promoting recreation services to improve awareness and inclusion for residents. The City’s newsletter, website, and Facebook page were noted as the three ways survey respondents would prefer to learn about Sammamish’s parks, programs, and events. Stronger marketing efforts will be needed to inform and promote the recreation programs that are available and should focus on the following areas:

- Website enhancement to better promote programs and services in addition to the periodic program guide, including searchable program offerings and services offered by other providers;
- Social media, email, flyers, and signage promotions of program registration options;
- Continued cross marketing and/or promotional opportunities with other organizations, such as the two school districts, Sammamish Library, and others; and
- Using appropriate communication channels to effectively market to various demographic segments.

There must be a strong recognition of the different demographic markets that have to be served. The youth, senior and family populations in the area should be specifically addressed, as should the different ethnic groups.





# Operations

This chapter describes a range of operation functions and staffing needed for the on-going management of Sammamish's park and open space system.



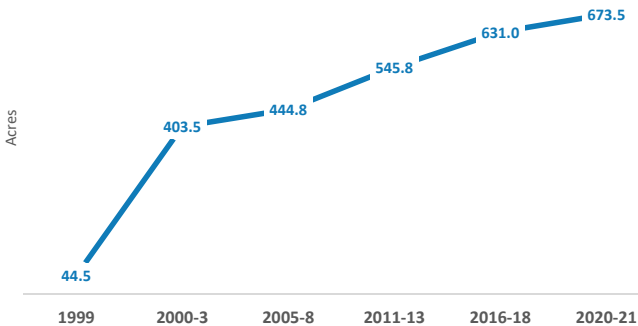
## Parks Operations

The Parks Maintenance Division maintains the parks, trails, open spaces, and recreation facilities throughout the City; the Division has been growing gradually through the years as the City has expanded its inventory of park and open space lands. This work group provides oversight and direct supervision of in-house park operations including maintenance of trails, athletic fields, play areas, landscaping, park buildings and structures; irrigation and lighting; and small repair, maintenance, and minor capital improvement projects. Operations staff provide support for all recreation and volunteer events, including set-up and take-down of equipment (portable stage), canopies, litter and garbage, and any other special equipment needed. They manage

a variety of contracted maintenance services and coordinate with the Facilities Department for work on in-house repairs and small projects. The Parks Superintendent consistently works with the Planning Division to provide support and guidance in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of capital projects. Lastly, the Maintenance Division provides support to the Public Works Department during inclement weather.

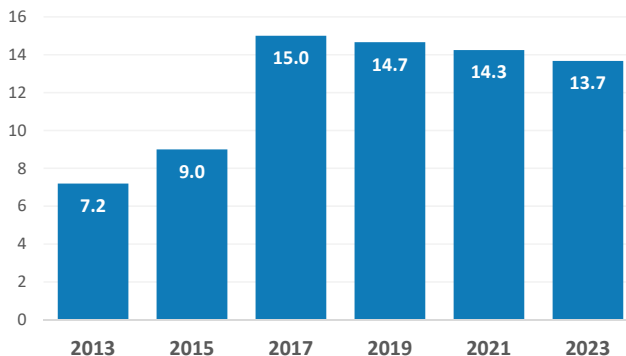
The City of Sammamish has been investing heavily in the development of its park resources. Since the City took over park and recreation services from King County in 1999, the Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department has grown from six full time employees (FTEs) and two seasonal employees to the current staffing allocation of 32.51 FTEs. In 2003, the maintenance staff was managing more than 400 acres of parklands. Today, the parkland inventory approaches 700 acres with almost 300 acres of community and neighborhood park acreage.

Figure 23. Park Acreage Growth



As growth of the City’s park facilities is expected to continue, park resource staffing will be required to meet the demands of new facilities and maintain existing parklands and amenities simultaneously.

Figure 24. Park Operations & Maintenance FTEs Over Time



The current staffing level of parks operations includes one superintendent, two lead workers, ten full time maintenance workers and eight 6-month seasonal workers. The department relies on contracted services, such as janitorial and landscaping, in order to keep up with the maintenance demands of City parks. According to the Parks Superintendent, the labor force is not able to keep up with the capital replacement projects, such as projects related to drainage, irrigation, plumbing, turf, boardwalks, docks, playgrounds, and parking lots. While the public perception of park appearances is very satisfactory, the underlying backlog of capital repairs and replacements will become a growing burden on the system if labor resources are not increased.

## Parks as Community Infrastructure

Park and recreation opportunities were ranked as “essential” or “important” to the quality of life in Sammamish by 97% of survey respondents. When asked to rank the potential park system improvements in the community survey, the top priority cited by respondents was conducting maintenance on the existing facilities.

The 2021-2022 Goals and Relationships to Council Priorities identified parks as a critical element in community livability: parks are to be maintained in a safe, ready-to-use, pleasing condition; regular maintenance, routine inspections, monitored performance of maintenance contractors, and repairs should be conducted as soon as needed.



## Comparative Assessments

While each park and recreation agency has its own unique role and set of responsibilities within its community, comparisons between agencies may help explore where opportunities could exist for adjustments. The following national comparisons through NRPA’s park and recreation agency data offer a broad-brush comparison. A second set of comparisons look closer to agency providers’ performance metrics for a selection of eastern cities of the Seattle metropolitan area.

### NRPA Agency Performance Metrics

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) 2023 Agency Performance Review allows for comparisons of park and recreation agency staffing and operations from across the country. Staffing levels can differ by size of jurisdiction, extent of agency roles, and responsibilities, with the median of provider data indicating 51.5 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) with a mix of both full and part-time staff. Staffing levels expand rapidly as the size of the population served by the agency increases. The median number of FTEs on staff correlates with the number of parks maintained, the acres of parks maintained, operating expenditures, and population served. Agencies that serve areas with greater

population density tend to have more FTEs per capita due to higher levels of use within the park system.

Agencies serving areas with 50,000 to 99,999 people have a median of 75.8 FTEs. The City of Sammamish fits within this population range category. The current budgeted Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department FTEs for 2023-2024 are 32.51 staff. Comparing the number of FTEs per 10,000 residents, NRPA reports a median 8.9 FTEs per 10,000 for all agencies reporting and a median 11.1 FTEs for population sizes between 50,000 to 99,999 residents. The City’s park staffing ratio is 3.9 FTEs per 10,000 residents. This difference is reflective of the Department’s effective use of outside contractors for selected maintenance operations and recreation programming.

The NRPA comparison reveals an emphasis on strong park resource staffing. Operations and maintenance are the primary responsibility of park and recreation professionals, according to the NRPA Performance Review report. Operations and maintenance typically comprise 46% of staffing based on the NRPA Agency average. For the City of Sammamish, operations and maintenance of park resources consists of 54% of staffing allocations. Capital development staffing is also higher for Sammamish, 11% compared to 3% for all agencies, as it continues to invest in its growing park system.

Figure 25. NRPA Metrics: 2023 Agency Performance Review: Staffing

NRPA Metric	All Agencies	50,000 to 99,999	Sammamish
Acres of parkland per 1,000	10.8	11.2	9.9
Trail miles	15	19	21.3
Park & Recreation Staffing (FTEs)	51.5	75.8	32.51
FTEs per 10,000 residents	8.9	11.1	4.8
Annual Operating Expenses (2022)	\$5,500,000	\$8,005,757	\$6,669,480
Operating Expenses per Capita	\$94.77	\$120.70	\$100
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$7,388	\$9,108	\$9,903
Operating Expenses per FTE	\$105,484	\$108,035	\$205,152

Figure 26. Responsibilities of Agency Staff

Work Responsibilities	NRPA	Sammamish
	Agency Median	% FTE
Operations/Maintenance	46%	54%
Recreation	30%	19%
Administration	17%	15%
Capital Development	3%	11%
Other	4%	-

## Regional Cities Comparisons

Similar to the NRPA performance review, variations across park and recreation providers can depend on a number of factors including population, land mass, budget size, services offered, agency organization, and more. To provide a more regionally specific review, park and recreation metrics were gathered from several cities east of Seattle and closely neighboring Sammamish. The comparison offers a look at population sizes, parkland acreages, staffing, operating expenditures, trail miles, and open space. For Sammamish, the annual operating expenditure of \$100 per capita is well within the range of other similar cities' investments. The number of FTEs for Sammamish (32.51) is less than other providers resulting in the ratio of FTEs per 10,000 residents (3.9) being lower as well. Annual operating expenditures and the operating expenditures per acre of parkland fall within the range of comparable jurisdictions. Operating expenditures per employee are higher for Sammamish likely due to the effective use of outside contracts, which are not separated out in this high-level evaluation.



Figure 27. Comparison to Nearby Jurisdictions

Park System Characteristic	Sammamish	Redmond	Issaquah	Bothell	Edmonds	Maple Valley
Population (2023 OFM)	68,280	77,490	41,290	49,550	43,370	29,250
Parkland acres	673.5	1,351	1,654	403	262	370
City-owned/Core park acreage	326.1	317.8	223	181.7	129	247
Acres of parkland per 1,000	9.9	17.4	40.1	8.1	6.0	12.6
Open space acres	347.4	1,033.4	1,428	221.3	75.6	124
Trail miles	21.3	15.3	15.7	-	7.4	10
Park & Recreation Staffing (FTEs)	32.51	64.72	37.25	16	27.5	13.5
FTEs per 10,000 residents	4.8	8.8	9.3	3.4	6.4	4.6
Annual Operating Expenses (2022)	\$6,669,480	\$9,466,554	\$10,297,429	\$5,152,140	\$4,682,914	\$4,586,590
Operating Expenses per Capita	\$100	\$122	\$249	\$104	\$109	\$157
Operating Expenses per Parkland Acre	\$9,903	\$7,006	\$6,226	\$12,784	\$17,874	\$12,396
Operating Expenses per FTE	\$205,151.65	\$146,269	\$276,441	\$322,009	\$170,288	\$339,747

With an annual budget identified for professional services rendered in the park system (\$695,200 budgeted in 2023), the City is able to keep the total number of FTE's relatively low compared to the total parkland acreage. By defining the scope of specific tasks: landscaping, custodial, fencing, dock repair, pressure washing, mulching, and parking lot maintenance, Sammamish can more readily track where services are needed and how resources support park operations.



## Future Staffing Needs

As the City’s park system grows to include new park development and expands the opportunities within existing park facilities, the capacity of the operations staffing may need to respond with additional FTEs. As discussed previously, the current workforce is unable to keep up with the larger capital replacement needs, and the backlog is growing. The support infrastructure for providing a labor workforce (office space, motor fleet, parking, locker space) is already constrained with no additional room to accommodate another employee. In addition, the park system requires seven days per week coverage during the busier April to September season. Ideally, five FTEs on any given day can keep the operations functioning. A staggered work week can be a challenge, and weekend coverage can be more difficult for staffing.

Sammamish will be pursuing a significant capital improvement plan to upgrade existing parks and add new parks or park amenities to the system. If all proposed projects are implemented within the projected timeline, new park operations staffing will need to coincide with completed park projects.

The asset management program used by park operations to track labor hours provides valuable data for helping to predict future staffing needs. Tracking data for labor conducted at Klahanie Park indicates approximately 831 annual hours of maintenance are spent to keep up the park site.

Figure 28. Klahanie Park – Existing Park Tasks & Hours

Existing Park Tasks	Annual Hours
Administrative	32
Turf Outfields	216
Turf Soccer Fields	367
Infields	204
Park Amenities	44
<b>Current Annual Labor</b>	<b>831</b>

With the full development of Klahanie Park’s master plan the future park tasks can be predicted based on the typical time tracked for various labor tasks. The future park is predicted to require 1,077 annual hours of typical labor to ensure a safe and enjoyable park experience.

Figure 29. Klahanie Park - Future Park Tasks & Hours

Future Park Tasks	Annual Hours
Administrative	32
Turf Outfields	216
Turf Soccer Fields	367
Community Grass	90
Synthetic Turf	210
Park Amenities	194
<b>Future Annual Labor</b>	<b>1,077</b>

Looking at a proposed new park to predict labor needs, Beaton Hill Park was evaluated based on its master plan build out. Once all phases are completed, Beaton Hill Park should require approximately 1,696 hours of labor annually. This amount of time would trigger at least one additional FTE to meet the labor needs of the park.

Figure 30. Beaton Hill Park - Future Park Tasks & Hours

Park Tasks	Annual Hours
Administrative	32.0
Daily Operations and Maintenance	863.0
Landscape and Turf MTC	120.0
Structures and Amenities	215.5
Trails and Hardscapes	123.8
Nature Trails	342.0
<b>Total Hours for Developed Park</b>	<b>1,696.3</b>

Sammmamish already predicts its maintenance and operations needs in the process of budgeting for capital projects and ongoing revenues and expenditures, and these predictions are coordinated with capital project implementation to ensure smooth integration of park operations with park system growth.

## Other Operations Considerations

### Role in Climate Resilience

Park operations across the country have been changing their approach to park maintenance as a response to the need for water conservation, flood resilience, stormwater best management practices, and forest restoration. Cities realize that their park system plays an important role in helping to provide contributions to climate resilience through reducing heat islands, cooling waterways, protecting habitat, and many other ecosystems services.

For Sammamish, irrigation water is one of the largest utility costs to the parks operations budget. This variable warrants developing further methods for conserving water through a more refined and sophisticated irrigation infrastructure and intentional limits to where natural grass is needed or can be reduced. The water district is discontinuing their discounted rate for City parks, which will push costs higher for irrigation. In the face of hotter summer temperatures, being proactive about the irrigation program will be necessary.

Community forestry and the expansion of more shade trees in parks is an active pursuit of the City. Continuing this support for a more complete urban canopy will be essential as Sammamish continues to face development pressure. Parks and natural open spaces should be managed to restore, maintain, and where feasible, expand the canopy coverage for the City to meet the vision and goals outlined in the Urban Forestry Management Plan.

### Capital Repairs & Replacements

As mentioned above, park operations are facing an increasing backlog in capital replacements. As park amenities and infrastructure age, repairs and replacements are needed to ensure smooth, uninterrupted service for park users. Additionally, as physical amenities age, they tend to require more attention and more staff time to keep in safe conditions. Keeping up with capital replacements can save staff time by reducing repetitive repairs. The adoption of park standards for site furnishings, as mentioned earlier in this Plan, also can simplify repairs and replacements and ensure compliance with the guidelines for meeting ADA requirements.

### Staff Training

Keeping up with changing standards, new regulations, and technology is an ongoing need. Irrigation systems are increasingly more complicated, and training is needed to ensure effective use of those systems. Climate resilience requires increasing understanding for all those who execute new practices in grounds maintenance, tree care, habitat conservation, energy consumption, and more. OSHA issues new rules for ensuring occupational health and welfare in outdoor conditions of excessive heat, sun exposure, wildfire smoke. Protective equipment, required work breaks, and other safety measures may trigger the need for training for all maintenance workers. The conversion of natural grass sports fields to synthetic turf will reduce regular maintenance hours, but will also require training for managing the surfacing to ensure its longevity. Training is essential for staff to be able to integrate new procedures effectively. Sammamish's Parks Maintenance Division staff leaders work to follow these trends to remain current and provide their employees with necessary training.



## Goals & Actions

The goals and objectives described in this chapter define the recreation and park services that Sammamish aims to provide.

These goals and objectives were derived from input received throughout the planning process, from city staff, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and community members.

The Growth Management Act (GMA) provided a foundation for land use planning in selected cities and counties throughout the state, including King County and the City of Sammamish. The GMA's purpose is to help communities manage efficiently with the challenges of growth to ensure their long-term sustainability and high quality of life. It identifies 14 planning goals to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations. Four of these goals directly affect the development and implementation of this plan.

- “Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural

resource lands and water, and develop parks.” RCW 36.70A.020(9)

- “Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.” RCW 36.70A.020(10)
- “Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.” RCW 36.70A.020(13)
- “Carry-out the goals of the Shoreline Management Act with regards to shorelines and critical areas.” RCW 36.70A.020(14)

Furthermore, the Sammamish Comprehensive Plan, the previous PROS Plan, and regional planning policies provide a framework for this PROS Plan.

The goals and objectives that follow are organized by topic and are not provided in a particular hierarchy or order of significance.





## ENGAGEMENT & PROMOTION

### Goal 1: Encourage and support active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreational opportunities.

- 1.1 Involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning and design and recreation program development in order to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding, and engender public support.
- 1.2 Continue to support and promote the Parks & Recreation Commission as the forum for public discussion of park and recreation issues.
- 1.3 Conduct periodic joint sessions between the Parks & Recreation Commission and other standing City boards, such as the Planning and Arts Commissions, and with the City Council to improve coordination and discuss policy matters of mutual interest pertaining to recreational resources, opportunities, and funding.
- 1.4 Encourage and promote volunteer park improvement and maintenance projects from a variety of individuals, service clubs, local non-profits, faith organizations, and businesses.
- 1.5 Develop and expand volunteer programs for office and highly skilled volunteers, including the continued development of internships and creation job-shadowing opportunities.
- 1.6 Continue to use a variety of methods and media to publicize and increase resident awareness about recreational opportunities, as well as opportunities to provide input into park planning projects available in local neighborhoods and citywide.
- 1.7 Advance diversity, equity, inclusion in, and access to the City's system of parks, natural areas, events, and facilities through continued outreach and communications.
- 1.8 Communicate the value of the City's investment in parks, open spaces, and recreational opportunities.
- 1.9 Regularly update the City website and mobile interface to provide easy access to information about parks, trail routes, activities, events, and maps, along with ensuring the website follows best practices for accessibility and inclusion.
- 1.10 Provide opportunities for parks and recreation service users to give real-time feedback on quality, maintenance issues, availability, and accessibility of parks and recreation services through apps, City website, public forums, or other means.





## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING

### **Goal 2: Provide park and recreation opportunities throughout parklands, facilities, and programming that engages all members of the community to the best of their ability.**

- 2.1 Develop a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging policy that removes accessibility barriers (socio-economic, language, physical, geographic, transportation) to activities, facilities, parks, and trails consistent with the citywide DEIB program. (Resolution R2022-963).
- 2.2 Provide programming and services, as well as accompanying communications and marketing materials that reflect city goals around Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging.
- 2.3 Design and maintain parks and facilities to offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical abilities, skill levels and age - beyond compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design.
- 2.4 Pursue opportunities for alternative outreach and education to diverse groups, such as piloting youth parks stewardship programs, and active communication through faith-based groups and non-profit organizations that work with minority and underserved communities.
- 2.5 Explore unique and/or specialized recreational amenities that expand the range of outdoor play experiences beyond the traditional options.
- 2.6 Have intentional engagement with diverse community groups to understand their recreational desires and partner with them to create new, diverse events and community celebrations.
- 2.7 Identify appropriate locations within parks and public spaces for the installation of public art, interpretive signs, or cultural displays, while ensuring that these features are incorporated through a diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging lens.



## MAINTENANCE & SUSTAINABILITY

### **Goal 3: Maintain Sammamish parks and recreation facilities to ensure longevity of assets, a positive aesthetic and sensory experience, preservation of habitat and natural systems, and safety for park patrons.**

- 3.1 Maintain all parks and facilities in a manner that keeps them in safe and attractive condition; repair or remove damaged components expeditiously upon identification.
- 3.2 Maintain an inventory of assets and their condition; update the inventory as assets are added, updated, or removed from the system; periodically assess the condition of park and recreation facilities and infrastructure.
- 3.3 Standardize park furniture (trash cans, tables, benches, fencing) to reduce inventory costs and improve appearance of, and maintain consistency within parks.
- 3.4 Incorporate sustainable development and green building practices into park design and construction, including green demolition and disposal practices, use of local and recycled products when feasible, and incorporation of low-impact development techniques (such as green roofs, solar solutions, etc.).
- 3.5 Conserve and reduce water use through design and renovation of parks including minimizing wide expanses of green lawn to reduce irrigation needs, utilizing gray-water methods where appropriate and safe, installing drought-tolerant plantings, and designing water features to recirculate.
- 3.6 Utilize, as appropriate, native vegetation for landscaping in parks to minimize maintenance requirements, and control invasive vegetation through removal and other environmentally responsible means.
- 3.7 Maintain and support the plant salvage program to facilitate ecological restoration and public landscaping within the City of Sammamish.
- 3.8 Incorporate sustainable practices into park maintenance procedures by reducing use of pesticides and herbicides in accordance with the City's Integrated Pest Management Policy, maintaining equipment in good working order, purchasing green maintenance equipment when feasible, replacing existing lighting fixtures with high-efficiency fixtures, and keeping systems (irrigation, lighting, HV AC, etc.) updated and fully functional for maximum performance and efficiency.
- 3.9 Provide maintenance and operations support for recreation programs, special events, and other city-sponsored activities.
- 3.10 Promote environmental learning through interpretive signage programs in City parks and preserves, including native plant identification signs in and around restoration projects in city parks.
- 3.11 Promote sustainability with users by encouraging waste minimization, litter control, and recycling/composting.
- 3.12 Steward waterfront and shoreline properties with the goal of protecting and enhancing critical shoreline habitat, while preserving safe water access for recreational use.





## CLIMATE RESILIENCY

### **Goal 4: Integrate sustainable and proactive policies and practices for addressing long-term environmental changes and the need for emergency preparedness due to climate changes.**

- 4.1 Support the implementation of the Urban Forest Management Plan and the management practices to ensure the long-term health of the urban forest.
- 4.2 Utilize, as appropriate, native and lower-resource requiring vegetation for landscaping in parks and City-owned properties to minimize maintenance requirements and control invasive vegetation through removal and other environmentally responsible means.
- 4.3 Design new and renovated facilities using appropriate technology, construction materials, and maintenance procedures to gain cost efficiencies and conserve resources.
- 4.4 Use recreation facilities in support of the City's emergency preparedness planning to serve as heating or cooling centers, distribution centers, and/or emergency gathering centers.
- 4.5 Work cooperatively with property owners and developers to preserve habitat and native vegetation, especially where these lands are part of a connected natural resource.
- 4.6 Develop approaches to protect larger tracts of privately held forest lands via conservation easements, acquisition, property tax reduction, or other means, as resources allow.
- 4.7 Preserve and enhance natural areas within parks to help increase and secure future tree canopy coverage.
- 4.8 Develop a tree canopy plan for individual parks that accounts for tree replacement planting, identifies opportunities for native canopy shade trees in existing parks, and promotes shade trees in developed or paved urban parks and plazas to reduce heat islands, increase resiliency, and cool stormwater runoff.
- 4.9 Identify and pursue opportunities to develop climate resiliency demonstration projects in the park system.
- 4.10 Continue to implement the Integrated Pest Management program to assess and mitigate urban forest health issues.
- 4.11 Care for the urban forest in parks using best available science as guided by best management practices advised by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA).
- 4.12 Formalize ongoing training for City staff working in urban forestry and support ISA certification.
- 4.13 Establish a formal interdepartmental working team (PRF, PW, DCD) for training for construction site management practices.
- 4.14 Enhance processes for successful tree establishment, including planting techniques, soil amendments, mulching, and options for watering in remote locations.



## TRAILS & CONNECTIVITY

### Goal 5: Develop a network of non-motorized recreational trails to expand connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, and public amenities.

- 5.1 Integrate the planning for and prioritization of recreational trails with the City's Transportation Master Plan, utilizing the classifications and conceptual alignments provided within this Plan.
- 5.2 Periodically review and coordinate for revisions, as appropriate, to the Public Works Standards pertaining to trails to ensure consistency with this Plan and to meet typical design requirements for recreational trails.
- 5.3 Connect and coordinate the City's recreational trail and bicycle network with King County's regional trail system.
- 5.4 Provide key connections to regional trails by continuing coordination with King County and other regional partners to complete the Emerald Necklace Trail system.
- 5.5 Integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the development review process; require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.
- 5.6 Establish a maximum spacing standard for trail linkages within new residential developments, such that multiple entry points to a trail corridor are provided to improve access and convenience for residents.
- 5.7 Expand the system of off-street recreational trails by utilizing parks, utility corridors, and sensitive areas as appropriate.
- 5.8 Work with local agencies, utilities, and private landholders to secure trail easements and access to open space for trail connections.
- 5.9 Continue to identify, catalogue, and map trail easements granted to the City but not currently in use.
- 5.10 Provide trailhead accommodations, as appropriate, to include parking, wayfinding signage, benches, restrooms, and other amenities.
- 5.11 Design and construct new trails with consideration of and attention to users' safety and a priority to accommodate multiple trail uses, when appropriate.





## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

**Goal 6: Provide a diversified, interconnected network of parks, trails, active recreation facilities, and open spaces that delivers a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities that are easily accessible to the Sammamish community.**

- 6.1 Proactively seek parkland identified within this Plan, in both developed and undeveloped areas, to secure suitable locations for trail connectivity, new parks, and open spaces.
- 6.2 Utilize guidelines from the Land Acquisition Strategy and prioritize lands for inclusion in the parks and open space system based on factors such as contribution to level of service, connectivity, geographic distribution, preservation, and scenic or recreational opportunities for residents.
- 6.3 Utilize the resources of national, regional, state, and local conservation organizations, corporations, non-profit associations, and benevolent entities to identify and partner in the acquisition of land for park and recreation needs.
- 6.4 Coordinate with the Department of Community Development for Parks, Recreation, & Facilities Department staff review and comment on development proposals to improve park siting and community planning; update the development code as necessary to accommodate development review for park infrastructure.
- 6.5 Continue to explore opportunities to work with land developers for parkland set-asides, strategic trail connections, and the potential for parklands to be deeded to the City.
- 6.6 Evaluate opportunities to acquire lands declared surplus by other public agencies for park and recreation use, if such land is located in an area of need or can expand an existing City property.
- 6.7 Periodically coordinate with King County and adjacent cities to strategize for the acquisition of parks and open spaces within or in close proximity to the Sammamish urban growth boundary.
- 6.8 Continue to implement and improve the wayfinding and signage system to include directional signs to and within parks and trails and interpretive signs highlighting natural systems (e.g., habitat, wildlife), community, and history.



## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

### Goal 7: Design and develop high-quality parks and recreation facilities to ensure the safety and enjoyment of users and maximize recreational experiences.

- 7.1 Design and maintain parks and facilities to offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels, and age as appropriate; assess planned and existing parks and trails for compliance with the adopted Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design for requisite upgrades.
- 7.2 Implement the recommendations of the ADA Transition Plan for all Sammamish parks and recreation facilities to include updates to playgrounds and other highly-utilized park amenities.
- 7.3 Develop park sites based on master plans, management plans, or other adopted strategies to ensure parks reflect local needs, community input, recreational and conservation goals, and available financial resources in consideration of potential impacts to nearby or adjacent neighbors to the park development project.
- 7.4 Provide amenities such as restrooms, lighting, seating, drinking fountains, refillable water bottle stations, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, and shelters when possible, feasible, and appropriate to extend hours of use and service quality.
- 7.5 Continue to partner with the local school districts and other providers to convert natural-turf fields to synthetic-turf fields with lights.
- 7.6 For athletic field development, prioritize conversion of existing natural turf to synthetic turf fields (with lights when possible) to increase playability and to serve multiple athletic programs.
- 7.7 Perform other field improvements including the installation of under-drainage systems at all natural turf fields to improve athletic field playing surfaces and reduce the number of rain-outs and the time required for turf rehabilitation.
- 7.8 Explore opportunities to partner with local organizations to develop and manage specialized facilities, ensuring continued public use and community benefit.
- 7.9 Consider the development of specialized facilities that generate revenues to offset the cost of their operation and maintenance.
- 7.10 Plan for sport fields, courts, and specialized recreational facilities (e.g., off-leash dog areas, disc golf, pump track, etc.) with consideration of local needs, partner support/capacity, recreational trends, and availability of similar facilities within the City and region.
- 7.11 Plan for a range of play types, universal access, and a phasing plan when replacing or upgrading playground equipment. Identify partnerships, grants, sponsorships, and other funding opportunities for playground replacement projects.
- 7.12 Integrate public art, in partnership with the Arts Commission, and park design from the onset of facility planning to create compelling, engaging, and captivating public places; prioritize experiences that are interactive and allow for dynamic sensory exploration.





## RECREATION FACILITIES & ACTIVITIES

### **Goal 8: Provide recreation opportunities and support partnerships that provide lifelong play, active living, health and wellness, discovery, creativity, and learning for individuals and families.**

- 8.1 Recognizing that the City does not have to own and operate all the recreation facilities that it utilizes for recreation programs and services, actively pursue the establishment of equity partnerships to develop or expand indoor recreation facilities.
- 8.2 Leverage City resources by forming and maintaining partnerships with other public, non-profit, and private recreation providers to deliver recreation and cultural services and secure access to existing facilities for community recreation.
- 8.3 Enhance partnerships with local school districts to maximize public use of recreation facilities on school sites, especially athletic fields and gymnasiums, and to encourage provision of community education programming at schools.
- 8.4 Continue to support special events, festivals, concerts, and cultural programming to promote arts, health and wellness, community identity, tourism, the benefits of recreation, and to foster civic pride.
- 8.5 Explore options to expand the City's role as a provider of recreation programs and services and increase programming to meet changing demographics and growing community needs.
- 8.6 Support the goals and initiatives of the Arts Commission; support the installation of permanent art pieces in public spaces, including City Hall and parks.
- 8.7 Continue to support partnerships with the Arts Commission and local arts organizations and provide for the promotion and delivery of cultural arts programs in Sammamish.
- 8.8 Continue to coordinate with public, private, and non-profit providers, such as organized sports leagues, to plan for projects to expand athletic field facilities.
- 8.9 Continue to evaluate field usage data and modify and review field scheduling processes to maximize community use and ensure system-wide coordination.
- 8.10 Continue to coordinate field scheduling with leagues and school districts to ensure a balanced use of fields during peak and non-peak seasons. Peak season field utilization rates should be at or above 70 percent on all fields when conditions allow.
- 8.11 Examine the need for additional community facility space to meet indoor recreation needs for athletics, recreation classes, arts, cultural programming, and meeting space.



## FUNDING & OPERATIONS

### **Goal 9: Identify and pursue financing strategies and partnerships for the development and operations of parks and recreation facilities to serve the residents of Sammamish.**

- 9.1 Seek funding for new parks and facilities and renovations through a variety of sources including capital reserves, real estate excise tax, bonds or levies, special districts, private donation, sponsorships, partnerships, state and federal grant sources, among others.
- 9.2 Periodically review and update the Park Impact Fee rates and methodology and utilize impact fees to accommodate growth through the expansion of the parks system.
- 9.3 Actively pursue the establishment of equity partnerships to develop or expand indoor recreation facilities. Equity partnerships may include capital development, operations, and service delivery.
- 9.4 Establish and maintain a fee policy for facility use and rental rates that supports the direct operational requirements of the facility and market demand for use; consider cost-recovery goals for each facility.
- 9.5 Establish a pricing strategy for rented facilities that aligns with comparable market rates and supports cost recovery of maintenance and operations costs associated with those facilities.
- 9.6 Update and adopt a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) every two years to remain current with local recreational interests and account for the capital needs of the parks and recreation system.

### **Goal 10: Provide leadership and management of the park, recreation, and open space system throughout the City.**

- 10.1 As the park system expands, provide sufficient financial and staff resources to maintain the overall parks and recreation system to high standards.
- 10.2 Maximize operational efficiency to provide the greatest public benefit for the resources expended, including potentially considering contracted services for landscaping, waste management, or other needs.
- 10.3 Use parks and recreation staff, when prudent and appropriate, to provide project cost savings by designing, managing, and constructing capital projects in-house, and making minor repairs and other park improvements.
- 10.4 Promote professional development opportunities for staff, Parks & Recreation Commission members, and key volunteers.
- 10.5 Periodically evaluate user satisfaction and statistical use of parks, facilities, and programs, including trail counts.





# Capital Projects & Implementation

This chapter describes a range of strategies to consider in the implementation of the Plan and details a 6-year program for addressing park and amenity enhancement projects.

## Key Project Recommendations

The following is a summary of key project recommendations which will require commitment from the City and its residents for the continued support of a healthy park and recreation system that preserves and enhances the safety, livability, and character of the community.

### Park Development & Enhancements

Through recent park site master plans, the City is poised to implement phased development of multiple parks that will offer residents a more diverse range of recreational experiences, while creating destinations

that attract and engage park users. Proposed improvements to Beaton Hill, Big Rock South, Klahanie, and East Sammamish Parks will include the following amenities – expanding recreation options in Sammamish:

- Inclusive, all-abilities, or creative playgrounds
- Gardens (pollinator and sensory)
- Trails (accessible and soft surface)
- Sport courts, including pickleball
- Picnic shelters
- P-Patches (community gardens)
- Off-leash dog areas

Proposed park improvements also will continue to implement the capacity-enhancing recommendations of the Athletic Fields Study to include the following:

- A synthetic turf and field overlay project at Inglewood Middle School will upgrade the existing football field and add a second multi-purpose field with synthetic turf and lights. The project also will include a restroom, a soccer/lacrosse overlay, new field drainage and irrigation.
- At Klahanie Park, the baseball infield will be converted to synthetic turf and the cricket field limits will be expanded.
- Infield synthetic turf conversion of two baseball fields at East Sammamish Park, in addition to infield/outfield drainage improvements, and natural turf replacement.
- Sport fields #1 and #2 at Eastlake Community Fields will be renovated with a synthetic turf and infill replacement.

A few playgrounds are nearing the end of their useful life and should be replaced. In the six-year capital plan, a new playground lakeside at Beaver Lake Park is proposed. In the next seven to ten years, additional playground upgrades are proposed for Pine Lake Park. Other Improvement projects include a parking lot expansion, a new restroom, and shoreline improvements at the lakeside of Beaver Lake Park.

## Trail Connections

Trail connections, including sidewalk and bike lanes improvements, are needed to help link destinations across Sammamish. Acquiring additional land, easements, and/or rights-of-way for the expansion of the trail network are necessary and should be coordinated with the Public Works Department. Priority trail segments should include a linkages that create looped routes, such as a trail between Sammamish Commons and Big Rock Park properties that extends to Ebright Park, and that fill gaps in longer routes, such as those along the Plateau Trail (Pipeline Trail). A trail connection between Soaring Eagle Regional Park and Evans Creek Preserve that aligns with the Emerald Necklace trail corridor should be coordinated with King County. The City also should continue to review, comment, and coordinate with the Community Development Department on local subdivision and site development projects to facilitate the inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle routes that connect to the conceptual trail network.







## ADA & Other Accessibility Enhancements

Minor improvements to access, such as providing ramped entrances to playgrounds or stable surface access to site furnishings, are necessary to conform to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensure universal accessibility. The CIP includes upgrades and improvements to remove barriers and improve universal access. In general, the City should implement its ADA Transition Plan and make improvements to existing parks as needed to ensure proper maintenance, usability, and quality of park features and grounds.

## Acquisitions to Fill Park System Gaps

The City should continue to utilize its Land Acquisition Strategy and budgeted funds to secure additional acquisitions to address existing and projected gaps in park services across Sammamish. To implement the acquisition program, the City may need to actively search for potential locations and property owners to secure future park sites, ahead of or concurrent with anticipated new development. Additionally, the City should continue to coordinate with local residential developers to include public parks in new subdivisions and consider tools, such as park impact fee credits, to facilitate the process.

development of sites currently owned by the City should be pursued in alignment with any restrictive covenants and following a master planning process to determine the desired level of programming, activities, and improvements at each property. These future parks will improve the distribution of recreational access in Sammamish.



## Wayfinding & Signage

Parks, trails, and other public open spaces are the primary opportunities for unifying an urban environment into a cohesive, accessible, and connected community through an identifiable wayfinding program. Sammamish has begun to implement an overall wayfinding and signage program, and the City should install additional, graphically-unified signs to help users navigate the outdoor recreation experiences offered by the City. Signage should be installed at key trail nodes and at all City parks (primary and secondary entry points); signage should include directional and mileage information, site and system maps, unique features, and user etiquette information.



## Implementation Tools

A number of strategies exist to enhance and expand park and recreation service delivery for the City of Sammamish; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. A strong community will is necessary to bring many of the projects listed in this Plan to life, and the Sammamish City Council has demonstrated its willingness in the past to support parks and recreation, new land acquisitions and a high quality of life.

The recommendations for park and recreation services noted in this Plan may trigger the need for funding beyond current allocations and for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities. Given that the operating and capital budget of the Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department is finite, additional resources may be needed to leverage, supplement, and support the implementation of proposed objectives, initiatives, and projects. While grants and other efficiencies may help, these alone will not be enough to realize all ideas and projects noted in this Plan. The following recommendations and strategies are presented to offer near-term direction to realize these projects and as a means to continue dialogue between City leadership, local residents, and partners. The tools presented only capture development of the capital improvements and not the long-term operations of the new assets.

Additionally, a review of potential implementation tools is included as Appendix G, which addresses local financing, federal and state grant and conservation programs, acquisition methods and others.

### Enhanced Local Funding

According to the City budget, Sammamish maintains reserve debt capacity for local bonds and voter approved debt, and the City currently holds no debt according to the 2023-2024 Budget. The potential to bundle several projects from the Capital Improvements Plan or take advantage of unforeseen opportunities, such as acquisitions, may warrant a review of debt implications and operating costs for the City, along with the need to conduct polling of voter support for such projects.

### Park Impact Fees & Real Estate Excise Tax

Park Impact Fees (PIF) are imposed on new development to meet the increased demand for parks resulting from the new growth. PIF can only be used for parkland acquisition, planning and/or development. They cannot be used for operations and maintenance of parks and facilities. The City of Sammamish currently collects impact fees, but the City should review its PIF ordinance and update the methodology and rate structure, as appropriate, to be best positioned to obtain future acquisition and development financing from the planned growth of the community. The City should prioritize the usage of PIF to secure new park properties and finance park or trail development consistent with the priorities within this Plan.

The City currently imposes both of the quarter percent excise taxes on real estate transactions, known as REET 1 and REET 2. The REET 1 and 2 must be spent on capital projects listed in the City's capital facilities plan element of their comprehensive plan. Eligible project types include planning, construction, reconstruction, repair, rehabilitation or improvement of parks, recreational facilities and trails. Acquisition of land for parks is not a permitted use of REET 2. REET is used for other City projects, such as facility construction and public works projects, and may be used to make loan and debt service payments on permissible projects. Through annual budgeting and with discussions with City Council, the Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department should continue to seek access to REET funds and use the Capital Improvements Plan to compile compelling projects that are desired by the community and enhance the overall park system.

### Conservation Futures

King County assesses the maximum allowable excise fee of \$0.0625 per \$1,000 assessed value to fund the Conservation Futures program and provides cities a venue to access these funds through a competitive, local grant process. The City should continue to submit grant applications for the purchase of land to support open space projects and improved linkages to expand the trail network.



## Metropolitan Park District

Metropolitan park districts (MPD) may be formed for the purposes of management, control, improvement, maintenance, and acquisition of parks, parkways, and boulevards. Municipalities across Washington have favored the creation of MPDs to meet the recreational needs of residents, while also being sensitive to the set of demands placed on general purpose property tax funds. The City should examine and study the feasibility of establishing an MPD and conduct an assessment of the legal parameters (governance models, boundaries, staffing, tax level authority, prorationing, tax limitation implication, etc.) and political factors affecting the decision to establish a new voter district.

## Parkland Donations & Dedications

Additional parkland donations from private individuals or conservation organizations could occur to complement the acquisition of park and open space lands across the city. The City's Land Acquisition Strategy accounts for the potential for donations as a tool to further its property acquisition goals. Gift deeds or bequests from philanthropic-minded landowners could allow for lands to come into City ownership upon the owner's passing or as a tax-deductible charitable donation.

Property dedication for park use by a developer could occur in exchange for Park Impact Fees or as part of a planned development where public open space is a key design for the layout and marketing of a new residential project. The Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department should vet any potential dedications to ensure that such land is located in an area of need and can be developed with site amenities appropriate for the projected use of the property.

## Grants & Appropriations

Several state and federal grant programs are available on a competitive basis, including WWRP, ALEA, and LWCF, all of which are further detailed in Appendix G. Pursuing grants is not a cure-all for park system funding. Grants are both competitive and often require a significant percentage of local funds to match the request to the granting agency. This can be as much as 50% of the total project budget, depending on the grant program. Sammamish should continue to leverage its local resources to the greatest

extent feasible by pursuing grants independently and collaborating with other local partners.

Appropriations from state or federal sources, though rare, can supplement projects with partial funding. State and federal funding allocations are particularly relevant on regional transportation projects, and the likelihood for appropriations could be increased if multiple partners are collaborating on projects.

## Internal Project Coordination & Collaboration

Internal coordination with the Public Works and Community Development Departments can increase the potential of discrete actions toward the implementation of the proposed trail and path network, which relies heavily on street right-of-way enhancements, and in the review of development applications with consideration toward potential property acquisition areas, planned path corridors, and the need for easement or set-aside requests. However, to expand the extent of the park system and recreation programs, additional partnerships and collaborations should be considered.

## Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are increasingly necessary for local agencies to leverage their limited resources to provide community parks and recreation services. Corporate sponsorships, health organization grants, conservation stewardship programs, and non-profit organizations are just a few examples of partnerships where collaboration provides value to both partners. The City has existing partners and should continue to explore additional and expanded partnerships to help implement these capital project recommendations.

## Volunteer & Community-based Action

Volunteers and community groups already contribute to the improvement of park and recreation services in Sammamish. Volunteer projects include wildlife habitat enhancement, invasive plant removal, and tree planting, among others. Sammamish should maintain and update a revolving list of potential small works or volunteer-appropriate projects for the website, while also reaching out to civic groups and the local school districts to encourage student projects.

While supporting organized groups and community-minded individuals adds value to the Sammamish parks and recreation system, volunteer coordination requires a substantial amount of staff time. Additional resources may be necessary to enable a volunteer coordinator to more fully utilize the community’s willingness to support park and recreation efforts.

### Other Implementation Tools

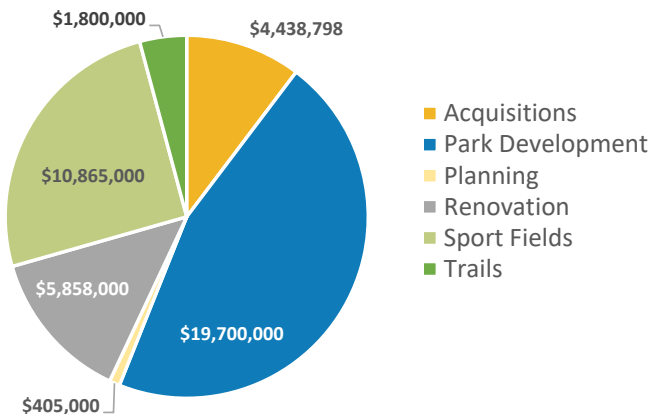
Appendix G identifies other implementation tools, such as voter-approved funding, grants, and acquisition tactics that the City could utilize to further the implementation of projects noted in the Capital Improvements Plan projects List.

## Capital Improvements Plan

The Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) identifies capital park, trail, and open space projects considered for the next six years. It assigns proposed time frames and estimated costs for specific projects. The majority of these projects entail the maintenance, acquisition, and development of parks, recreational amenities, and trails. Based on survey results and other feedback, Sammamish residents have indicated an interest in park facility upgrades and enhanced trail connections as priorities, and the Capital Improvements Plan is reflective of that desire.

Figure 31 summarizes the aggregate capital expenditures by project category for the next six years.

Figure 31. 6-Year Capital Improvements Plan Expenditures



The Capital Improvements Plan on the following page provides brief project descriptions and sequencing to assist staff in preparing future capital budget requests.

Overall, the current costs for projects identified in the six-year CIP total over \$43 million. As projects are phased over the next six or more years, the planning-level project costs have been inflated at an increase of 3.5% annually. The proposed project list focuses primarily on improving existing facilities through timely repairs, replacements, and upgrades to ensure an ongoing, healthy, and safe recreation system for Sammamish.



# CIP

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# Appendix A:

# Park Site Assessments

## 30 Acres Park

### Open Space

SE 9th Way and Trossachs Blvd SE  
30 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- None noted

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- The site's entrance and adjacency to King County's Soaring Eagle Park makes it feel experientially connected to that park.



### AMENITIES

None



# Beaver Lake Park

## Community Park

Lakeside Location: 25101 SE 24th St  
Athletic Field Location: 2526 244th Ave SE  
79.2 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Near the fields, is there an opportunity to deprive some of the asphalt between the fields and install a rain garden ringed by benches to manage stormwater/local flooding.
- Consider upgrading the softball infields to synthetic turf for all season play.
- Near the lakeside, close and replant the roundabout cut-through or install bollards to discourage vehicle impacts on the planting and irrigation.
- At west park area, the 'bosque' of purple leaf plum trees in the central plaza near the ball fields is failing. When/if master plan moves forward with redesign of this area, ensure future tree plantings a better chance of success with more soil space for roots and selection of hardier and longer living tree species.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Upgrade the playground at the west end of the site and add a more diverse set of experience.
- Improve spot drainage on infields and outfields, or replace entire subsurface drainage and irrigation.
- Bring BBQs into ADA compliance.
- Add ADA push bars and an accessible route of travel to the dog park.
- Remove blackberries and other invasive plant species from the wetlands under power lines.
- Consider formalizing disc golf or mountain biking within the wetland areas to invite active uses and users.
- Upgrade accessible parking stall grades, signage and striping to meet code requirements at both east and west activity areas.
- Add ADA crossing tactile warning strips where paths cross the parking lot.
- Repair lifted and cracking paths near the walk to the large totem pole.
- Upgrade the wetland crossing near Beaver Lake Lodge.
- Add minor fill within the wetland trails including at the pedestrian bridge abutment.
- Entrance drive at east park area needs fresh marking paint application for directional arrows and crosswalks.
- Signs for handicapped parking in the east park area are mounted below the 60" minimum recommended height.
- Within picnic shelters with multiple picnic tables, at least half of those tables should be ADA compliant by providing space for a wheelchair.
- Park benches are often offset from the trail and located on concrete pads that are not even with trail surfacing. These benches are not ADA compliant.
- Picnic tables are located in lawn areas (off trail pavement) and lack seating for wheelchairs. At least 50% of picnic tables within each park should be ADA compliant.
- Consider programming options to more fully utilize the Lodge at Beaver Lake.
- Replace existing parking lot wood light poles at lakeside parking lot.



### AMENITIES

- Baseball fields (3)
- BBQs (2)
- Benches (14)
- Bike rack
- Dog park
- Dog pots (9)
- Drinking fountains (3)
- Hot coal bins (2)
- Kiosk
- Lakefront
- Maintenance building
- Park entry signs (2)
- Parking lot
- Picnic pavilion
- Picnic shelter
- Picnic tables (15)
- Playground
- Restroom building
- Shore launch
- Swim beach
- The Lodge
- Trails (asphalt, gravel, & soft surface)
- Trash receptacles (5)

# Beaver Lake Preserve

## Preserve

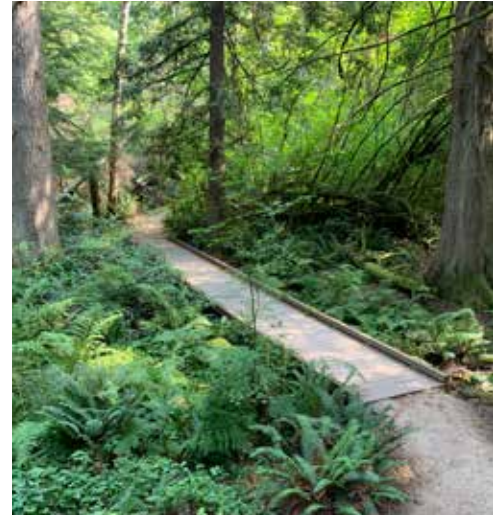
1400 W Beaver Lake Dr SE  
76 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- A pathway to provide access to the lakefront would greatly enhance the variety of views and trail experiences. Some type of waterfront access could also allow for fishing.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider adding distances and times on the orientation map and trail intersection maps.
- Repair/replace broken spray pad nozzles.



### AMENITIES

- Benches (1 fullback & 6 log)
- Bike rack
- Boardwalks/bridges
- Dog pot
- Kiosk
- Park entry sign
- Parking lot
- Picnic tables (2)
- Portable restroom
- Trails (gravel and soft surface)



# Big Rock Park Central

## Community Park

1516 220th Ave SE  
20.3 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- None noted

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Add small sections of curb to allow for runoff & protection of planting bed.



### AMENITIES

- Benches (7: 3 fullback & 4 backless)
- Bike racks (2)
- Dog pots (2)
- Drinking fountain
- Heritage garden
- Interpretive signage
- Kiosk
- Little free library
- Maintenance garage
- Park entry sign
- Parking lot
- Picnic table
- Restroom
- Trails (concrete, gravel, and soft surface)
- Trash receptacles (3)
- Treehouse

# Big Rock Park North

## Community Park

21805 SE 8th St  
16 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Create/designate an ADA path of travel.
- Hard trail surfacing should be added to connect to picnic areas to provide universal access to some of the tables.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider replacing the engineered wood fiber surfacing with tiles, turf or PIP. Additionally, include PIP underneath and along the sides of the hillside slide.
- Consider staining/waterproofing wood settees.
- Reseed lawn/mounds.
- Oak tree in overlook is dying with greater than 50% foliage loss.
- Oak trees near zipline are dying with greater than 70% canopy loss.
- Small barriers are created where gravel paths meet ramp and bridge/boardwalk pavements, triggering non-compliant ADA access.
- Handicapped signs are mounted on fence, not at minimum 60" height ADA recommendation.
- Handicapped access to parking space lacks tactile warning strip.
- Replace wood stepping pods in zipline play area with stone or faux wood.



### AMENITIES

- Benches (2)
- Bike rack
- Boardwalk
- Dog pots (3)
- Interpretive signage
- Kiosk
- Maintenance barn
- Natural play area
- Park entry sign
- Parking lot
- Portable restroom
- Trails (asphalt, gravel and soft surface)
- Trash receptacles (3)
- Zipline



# East Sammamish Park

## Community Park

21300 NE 16th St  
18.8 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Add an ADA-compliant BBQ and an ADA-compliant picnic table.
- Upgrade the temporary announcer booth.
- The city will soon likely need to replace the playground equipment. Add 2-5 year old play features. Consider adding inclusive play elements and a tot swing or disc swing. Consider replacing engineered wood fiber with tiles, turf or PIP surfacing to reduce maintenance obligations.
- Stripe additional ADA parking stalls to comply with ADA.
- Add paved trail to tennis courts to provide ADA compliance.
- Add deciduous shade/canopy trees to parking lot to fill gaps in existing shade for parking surfaces.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Repair vehicle damage to the paths/lawns.
- Regrade and add drainage to multi-use fields above the ballfields.
- Regrade and resurface gravel path at multi use fields.
- Infill plantings shrubs in existing shrub beds.
- Add age signage at the playground.
- Handicapped signs are mounted too low. Raise to 60" minimum recommended height to meet ADA guidelines.
- Concrete ramp into swing set area does not go deep enough into wood chips. Add more chips, increase ramp length, or shave end of ramp to reduce accessibility barrier.
- Some park benches are located off trail in grass resulting in lack of universal access. Conduct an inventory of all benches to ensure that 50% or more are ADA-compliant.



### AMENITIES

- Baseball fields (2)
- Batting cages (3)
- BBQ
- Benches (7)
- Bike rack
- Dog pot
- Drinking fountains (2)
- Hot coal bin
- Maintenance shed
- Multi Use/soccer field
- Park entry sign
- Parking lot
- Picnic shelter
- Picnic tables (7)
- Playground
- Restroom building
- Sports courts: tennis (2) and Pickleball (4)
- Trails (asphalt and gravel)
- Trash receptacles (4)

# Ebright Creek Park

## Neighborhood Park

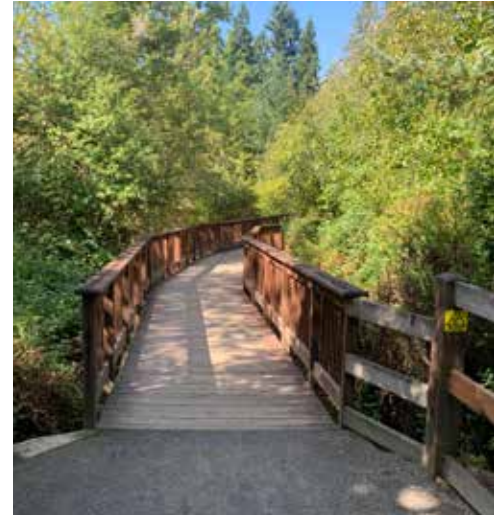
1317 212th Avenue SE  
12.3 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Replace the wave bike rack with staple racks
- Replace engineered wood fiber with tiles or poured in place surfacing. Turf surfacing is not recommended under trees.
- The stormwater management best practice at the parking lot could provide an opportunity to interpret the need for capturing and directing rainfall for protecting water quality.
- Consider incorporating some signage and perhaps pavement markers to illustrate how water is channeled safely into the creek and wetland.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Conduct vegetation management to remove blackberries and other invasives in the creek/wetland.
- Remove ivy as a ground cover given its detrimental impacts on urban forest health.
- Repaint/waterproof the boardwalk. Plan future replacement of the boardwalk.
- Decommission (temporary?) above ground irrigation in the western portion of the site.
- Repair/fill soil ruts on the central portion of the park caused by vehicle damage.
- Remove grass in the parking lot's central drainage to comply with OSHA maximum slopes for mowing or replace with groundcovers/native plants.
- Some park benches are located off trail in grass resulting in lack of universal access. Conduct an inventory of all benches to ensure that 50% or more are ADA-compliant.
- Upgrade the park entry sign to the newer style sign to be consistent.



### AMENITIES

BBQ  
Benches (12)  
Bike rack  
Boardwalks (2)  
Dog pots (2)  
Drinking fountains (3)  
Exercise equipment  
Handball wall  
Hot coal bin  
Kids bouldering climber  
Park entry sign  
Parking lot  
Picnic shelter  
Picnic tables (14)  
Playground  
Recycling receptacles (2)  
Restroom building  
Sport court: tennis (1) basketball hoops (2) mini soccer goals (2)  
Trails (asphalt and gravel)  
Trash receptacles (9)



# Evans Creek Preserve

## Preserve

Lower Parking Lot: 4001 224th Ave NE, Redmond  
Upper Parking Lot: 3650 Sahalee Way NE  
213.2 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Add a rustic railing at the entry stair leading down into the forest
- Replace the wave bike racks with staple racks
- Consider working with Public Works to install a sidewalk connection to Sahalee Way transit stop, and install a new crossing to connect with Northeast Sammamish Park

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Restore/decompact the soil at the tree in the small entry/orientation plaza. Add a small railing or similar to prevent people cutting through and compacting the area again.



### AMENITIES

- Benches (2)
- Bike racks (2)
- Boardwalks (21)
- Dog pots (3)
- Kiosks (3)
- Maintenance building
- Park entry signs (2)
- Parking lots (2)
- Picnic tables (4)
- Portable restroom
- Restroom building
- Trails (gravel and soft surface)
- Trash receptacles (3)

# Evans Pond Trail

## Open Space

Between NE 19th St and 223rd Pl NE near Evans Creek Pond  
0.13 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Add a sign to indicate that this is public park land

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- None noted.

### AMENITIES

Trail with stairs

# Illahee Trail Park

## Open Space

23521 NE 10th Pl  
12.7 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Consider adding an adult exercise circuit, similar to the equipment installed at Ebright Creek Park.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Stabilize or replace spalling asphalt trail
- Grind areas where there has been root upheaval under the asphalt.
- Replant grass embankment with no-mow/low-mow grass alternatives especially where there are steeper grades.
- Improve spot drainage at the informal lawn on the north side of the pond.

### AMENITIES

Benches (3)

Dog pots (3)

Interpretive signage

Trail (asphalt)

Trash receptacles (3)



# Klahanie Park

## Community Park

25000 SE Klahanie Blvd  
64.1 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Implement adopted site master plan.
- Create a paved, accessible route of travel to the baseball fields to match master plan alignment.
- Upgrade the ballfield, restore the infield and add a roof to the dugout.
- Consider whether creating a turf cricket/multiuse field with improved drainage would be of value for the community.
- Add a small picnic shelter near the playground/restrooms.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Very wet grass fields - consider adding subsurface drainage.
- ADA stalls are too sloped and need signage.
- Power wash building roof.
- Existing bleachers are not compliant with International Building Code that dictates safety rails on any bleachers with more than two tiers. Consider adding safety side and back rails or replacing bleachers



### AMENITIES

Baseball field  
Benches (3)  
Cricket pitch (synthetic)  
Dog pots (2)  
Maintenance building  
Multi-use field (grass)  
Park entry sign  
Parking lot  
Picnic tables (3)  
Playground  
Practice cricket pitch (synthetic)  
Restroom building  
Trails (asphalt, gravel and soft surface)  
Trash receptacles (3)

# Northeast Sammamish Park

## Neighborhood Park

21210 NE 36th St  
5.7 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Formalize entry and add several parking spaces to provide some degree of ADA-compliance.
- Add ADA compliant picnic tables
- Improve bike racks: add a consistent concrete pad, consider changing the wave rack to staple racks.
- Improve concrete grade transitions into both the 2-5 year old and 5-12 year old play areas
- Add ADA route to tennis courts
- Work with public works to create a safe crossing across Sahale Way between Evans Creek Preserve and NE Sammamish Park
- The addition of a park identification sign at the base of the 37th Street steps would help with wayfinding to the park.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Upgrade park entry sign to make it visually consistent with other recent City parks.
- Upgrade the railing at the retaining wall near the playground.
- Revise the detailing of the concrete tabs at the benches near the playground.
- Consider upgrading the engineered wood fiber to tiles, turf or PIP
- Repair wheel ruts in the lawn.
- Continue restoring/replanting the understory in the forest.



### AMENITIES

Arbor  
Benches (4)  
Bike rack  
Dog pot  
Drinking fountain  
Half-court basketball court  
Park entry sign  
Parking lot  
Picnic tables (2)  
Playground  
Portable restroom  
Stair to NE 37th Way  
Tennis courts (2)  
Trails (asphalt and gravel)  
Trash receptacles (3)



# Pine Lake Park

## Community Park

2401 228th Ave SE  
19 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Consider upgrading the playground to create a signature play experience adjacent to one of the City's open space jewels (Pine Lake). The experience under the trees could be quite special. Consolidate the 2-5 and 5-12 year old play areas under the trees. Integrate accessible and neurodiverse play experiences.
- Upgrade the ADA experience at the park. Create an accessible route of travel to the lakeshore/dock and ensure there are paths to all experience types (picnic shelters, BBQ, etc).
- Add a park sign/map.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Add gravel to improve drainage and reduce tripping hazards at the wood stairs leading to the lake.
- Add handrails to stairs to comply with ADA.
- Bring ADA signage into compliance at the parking lot.
- Three-tiered bleachers should have safety rails added or be replaced with International Building Code compliant bleachers.
- Crosswalks on loop drive down to shore launch need repainting.
- Shore launch area has two drain outlets that could be a tripping hazard for watercraft activities. Consider how best to reduce hazard and improve safety.
- Follow the forest management plan to respond to the root rot and invasive plants on site.
- Add ADA striping and symbols at the parking lot.
- Provision maintenance staff with permeable pavement vacuum sweepers. Re-set porous pavers on base course and stabilize edges.
- Confirm accessible BBQs meet code.
- Restore plantings at rain gardens.
- Restore poured in place surfacing at the playground so that it adheres to base course.
- Consider fiberglass decking on the entire floating dock for greater durability and ease of maintenance.
- Continue to manage vegetation to have strong sightlines across the site, while also adding infill native plantings.
- Consider removing the climbing rock/wall.
- Improve drainage above the basketball court to divert surface runoff.
- Improve ADA stalls at the lake edge. They are likely the wrong material to achieve ADA required codes.
- Make spot drainage improvements on the baseball infield.
- Install push bars on structures for code compliance.



### AMENITIES

Baseball/multi use field  
Basketball court  
BBQs (3)  
Benches (9)  
Bike rack  
Boardwalk  
Boat launch  
Climbing rock  
Dock  
Dog pots (3)  
Drinking fountains (2)  
Hot coal bins (3)  
Indoor showers  
Maintenance shed (2)  
Park entry signage  
Parking lot  
Picnic shelters (4)  
Picnic tables (22)  
Playground (2)  
Restroom building  
Swim beach  
Seasonal fishing  
Trails (asphalt, gravel and soft surface)  
Trash receptacles (16)

# Sammamish Commons - Upper

## Community Park

801 228th Ave SE  
12 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Consider relocating the existing playground to another area of the upper Commons site. The location behind the basketball net makes children vulnerable to missed basketball shots.
- The stormwater management treatment for the lower parking lot could be interpreted to educate visitors about the value and importance of treated runoff for protecting water quality.
- Depending on potential site impacts to the Lower Commons from the future development of the Town Center, re-assess the location of the spray park as appropriate.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Handicapped signs should be re-mounted to meet ADA guidelines.
- Vacuum clean perconcrete and pervious concrete.
- Remove tree grates in the plaza before the trees start growing into the grate.



### AMENITIES

- 1/2 court basketball court
- ADA ramp
- Benches (10)
- Bike racks (2)
- Dog pot
- Drinking fountain
- Flag pole
- Parking lot
- Picnic tables (4)
- Playground
- Plaza
- Public art
- Restroom building
- Skate park
- Trash receptacles (8)
- View shelter
- Water feature



# Sammamish Commons - Lower

## Community Park

550 222nd Pl  
27 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Upgrade playground to make a compelling city play destination as the Town Center plan is built out.
- Install a permanent restroom at the spray park.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider replacing the engineered wood fiber surfacing with tiles, turf or PIP. Especially adjacent to the water feature.
- Repair/replace broken spray pad nozzles.



### AMENITIES

Accessible route markers  
Benches (8)  
Community garden  
Dog pots (3)  
Garden shed  
Interpretive signage  
Kiosk  
Park entry sign  
Parking lot  
Picnic shelters (3)  
Picnic tables (10)  
Playground  
Portable restroom (2)  
Recycling containers (2)  
Staircase  
Trails (asphalt and gravel)  
Trash receptacles (6)  
Water feature/spray park

# Sammamish Landing Park

## Community Park

4607 E Lake Sammamish Pkwy NE  
10.4 acres

### DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

- Add native, understory ground covers to help stabilize slopes.
- Consider upgrading “wave” bike racks to staple racks.
- Add natural reinforcement (plantings, anchored logs, etc) to shoreline locations that have been impacted by wave actions.
- Add an ADA compliant BBQ.
- Consider adding parking lot shade trees in the parking lot on City-owned property east of the East Lake Sammamish Parkway.

### MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Strengthen/regrade the dock abutment.
- Improve lawn drainage.
- On the shoreward side of the trail, consider replacing ornamental plants with native plantings to improve health of salmon.



### AMENITIES

Access to regional shared use path  
ADA ramp to shore  
BBQs (2)  
Benches (3)  
Bike rack  
Docks (2)  
Dog pot  
Drinking fountain  
Interpretive signage  
Maintenance building  
Outdoor shower/foot wash  
Park entry signage  
Parking lot  
Picnic shelters (2)  
Picnic tables (4)  
Pocket beaches (5)  
Restroom building  
Swim beach  
Trash receptacles (3)

# Appendix B:

## Community Survey Summary



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**To:** Anjali Myer, Director, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department  
**From:** Steve Duh, Conservation Technix, Inc.  
**Date:** June 30, 2023  
**Re:** **City of Sammamish Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan**  
Community Survey Summary Results

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Conservation Technix is pleased to present the results of a survey of the general population of the City of Sammamish that assesses residents' recreational needs and priorities.

## KEY FINDINGS

[Sammamish residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities.](#)

Nearly all respondents (97%) think parks and recreation are important or essential to quality of life in Sammamish. Very few, about 3%, feel they are useful, but not necessary, or not important at all.

[Residents visit Sammamish parks frequently to participate in a range of activities.](#)

Residents of Sammamish frequently use the city's parks and recreation facilities, with over half of respondents (53%) visiting at least once a week, if not every day. In general, residents increased or maintained their use of local parks during the COVID-19 pandemic. The most common reasons for park visits included walking or running, relaxation, fitness or exercise, attending community events or concerts, walking a dog, or using a playground.

[While residents prioritize maintaining existing parks and facilities, they are generally supportive of improving the City's park and recreation system as well.](#)

Residents would like to see the City prioritize:

### **1. Maintaining existing parks, trails, and open spaces.**

In open ended comments, many residents emphasized the importance of maintaining and preserving existing parks, trails, and natural habitats. They advocate for regular clean-up, maintaining well-kept facilities, preserving trees and green spaces, removing invasive species, and ensuring the cleanliness and safety of amenities like restrooms.

### **2. Developing a network of connected trails.**

Community members expressed a need for interconnected trails that link neighborhoods and parks, making it safe and convenient for biking, running, and walking. There is a desire to minimize traffic and increase accessibility through the expansion and improvement of trails, sidewalks, and multi-use paths.

### **3. Improving existing parks.**

When asked to further prioritize specific potential improvements to parks, residents prioritized 1) walking and hiking trails (88% rated as a high or top priority), 2) restrooms in parks (81%), 3) providing lifeguards at Pine Lake Beach in the summer (65%), 4) more community events (63%), and 5) all-abilities, inclusive playgrounds (55%). Based on open-ended comments, community members have a strong desire for affordable and diverse recreational facilities in Sammamish. Suggestions included improving existing playgrounds, building parks with year-round usability, creating splash parks and improving access to swimming pools and lakes, and constructing more sports courts for basketball and pickleball. The community also called for affordable recreational programs for various age groups and interests, including teens and seniors.

### **4. Land Acquisition**

When asked about their priorities for future land acquisition, respondents rated acquiring land for passive recreational uses, like walking trails and wildlife viewing, as their top priority. Acquiring land to preserve habitat was the second highest priority. In open ended comments, residents frequently expressed a desire to preserve the natural beauty of Sammamish, including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat, and a concern about increased development.

## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

In close collaboration with City of Sammamish staff, Conservation Technix developed the 14-question survey that was estimated to take less than ten minutes to complete.

The survey was mailed to a random sample of 2,500 households within the city limits of Sammamish on March 28, 2023, and reminder postcards were mailed to the same 2,500 households on April 18<sup>th</sup>. An online version of the survey was posted to the city's website on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Residents who did not receive a mail survey were able to complete the survey online. The survey was closed on May 26, 2023, and the full dataset was compiled and reviewed.

The survey was available in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Hindi. The cover letter accompanying the printed mail survey was written in all languages and included unique QR codes to access each in-language survey online. Overall, 450 surveys from the random sample mailing were completed and returned (18% response rate, 4.5% margin of error). An additional 311 surveys were completed from the general, community-wide online surveys. In all, 761 surveys were collected, which included ten surveys in Chinese and one in Spanish.

Information about the survey was promoted through several channels, including on the City's website, through multiple social media postings, a citywide mailer, flyers posted at City parks and facilities, and through direct outreach to stakeholder group participants.

Although households were randomly chosen to receive the mail survey, respondents were not necessarily representative of all city residents. Mail survey responses underrepresent residents under 35 years of age and over-represent residents over the age of 65. See Figure 1 below for age demographics for the mail and online surveys, as well as comparative percentages for Sammamish's population. See page 15 for other demographic subgroup data comparisons.

**Figure 1.** Age demographics of survey respondents

Age group	Survey Respondents			Sammamish	
	Mail	Online-only	Combined	All	Over 20
Under 20	1%	4%	2%	32%	--
20 to 34	6%	9%	7%	12%	17%
35 to 44	19%	26%	22%	18%	27%
45 to 54	25%	28%	26%	19%	28%
55 to 64	24%	18%	21%	12%	17%
65 to 74	17%	13%	16%	6%	8%
75 and older	8%	2%	6%	2%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

This report includes findings of community opinions based on the combined responses from the mail survey and online. Each section also notes key differences between different demographic groups and among responses to the online-only survey, where applicable. Percentages in the report may not add up to 100% due to rounding.



## DETAILED FINDINGS

### Usage and satisfaction of parks and recreation facilities

#### How much do residents value parks and recreation?

Virtually all respondents (97%) feel that local parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Sammamish. Eighty-four percent of respondents feel that they are essential; while an additional 13% believe that they are important to quality of life, but not essential, see Figure 2. Only about 3% of respondents believe parks are useful, but not important, or not important. While the sum of responses for ‘essential’ and ‘important’ were similar for the mail and online survey respondents, online respondents more frequently rated parks and recreation opportunities as ‘essential’ to Sammamish’s quality of life.

Figure 2. When you think about what contributes to the quality of life in Sammamish, would you say public parks and recreation opportunities are...

Response options	Mail		Online-only	
Essential to the quality of life here	81%	96%	88%	98%
Important, but not really necessary	15%		10%	
Useful, but not important	3%		2%	
Not important or don't know	<1%		1%	

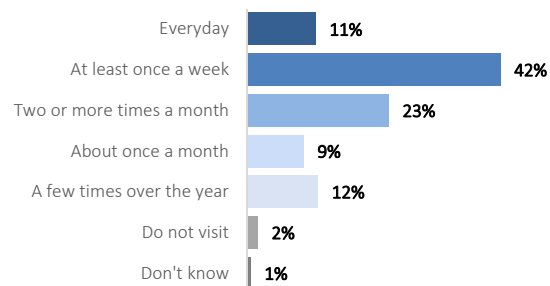
Residents of all ages value parks and recreation similarly – there were no significant differences between age groups. There were also no significant differences based on where respondents live or whether they had children in their home. Online survey respondents were slightly more likely to deem park and recreation opportunities as essential to quality of life than mail survey respondents.

#### How often do residents use City parks and recreation facilities?

Respondents were asked how often they visit a City park or open space in a typical year. Over half of respondents (53%) visit at least once a week, if not every day, see Figure 3. Another 32% visit one to three times per month, while about 12% visit a few times per year. Very few residents (2%) do not visit a park at all.

Survey respondents showed a high use of parks regardless of age and location of residence. Respondents with children in the home visit significantly more often than respondents without children at home. Online respondents reported more frequent use than mail survey respondents.

Figure 3. In a typical year, how often do you visit or use City of Sammamish parks, recreation facilities or open spaces?



### Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

In general, respondents indicated that their use of parks either increased (51%) or stayed the same (30%) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Less than one in five respondents indicated that their use of parks, trails, and open space declined.

Figure 4. How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your use of Sammamish’s parks, trails, and open spaces?

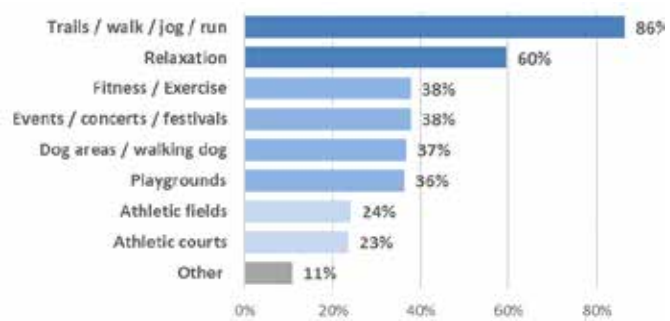


Respondents with multiple children at home were more likely than those with no children or one child to report a decline in park use during the pandemic. There were no significant differences in responses to this question based on age, survey method, or location of residence.

### Why do residents visit Sammamish’s parks and preserves?

Respondents visited local parks and preserves for a variety of reasons in the past year, but the most popular reason was to walk or run (86%). More than half of respondents visited for relaxation (60%). Slightly more than one in three respondents visited for fitness or exercise, to attend community events or concerts, to walk a dog, or use a playground, see Figure 5. Approximately one in four respondents visited to use athletic fields or courts. Eleven percent of respondents identified an ‘other’ reason for visiting parks, such as for swimming, boating, or water access; to enjoy nature; or use a community garden.

Figure 5. What would you say are the main reasons you visited local parks or preserves over the last year? (Check all that apply)



The reasons for visiting city parks and recreation facilities varied slightly between mail and online respondents, with part of the difference attributable to the age group composition between the two. Online respondents were more inclined to visit city parks for family or youth-oriented activities, including playgrounds, sport fields and courts, and community events and festivals. Mail respondents were more inclined to visit for more individual activities including fitness, walking and running, relaxation, and walking a dog.

Many activities, including running and walking, relaxation, dog walking, community events, and using athletic courts, are similarly popular across all age groups.

Respondents with children in their home and those under the age of 54 are more likely to visit parks to visit playgrounds or use sport fields, compared to respondents without children in the home. Residents who live in the southeastern portion of the city (south of SE 8th Street & east of 228th Avenue SE) were more likely than residents of other areas to visit to attend a community event.

Why don't residents visit more often?

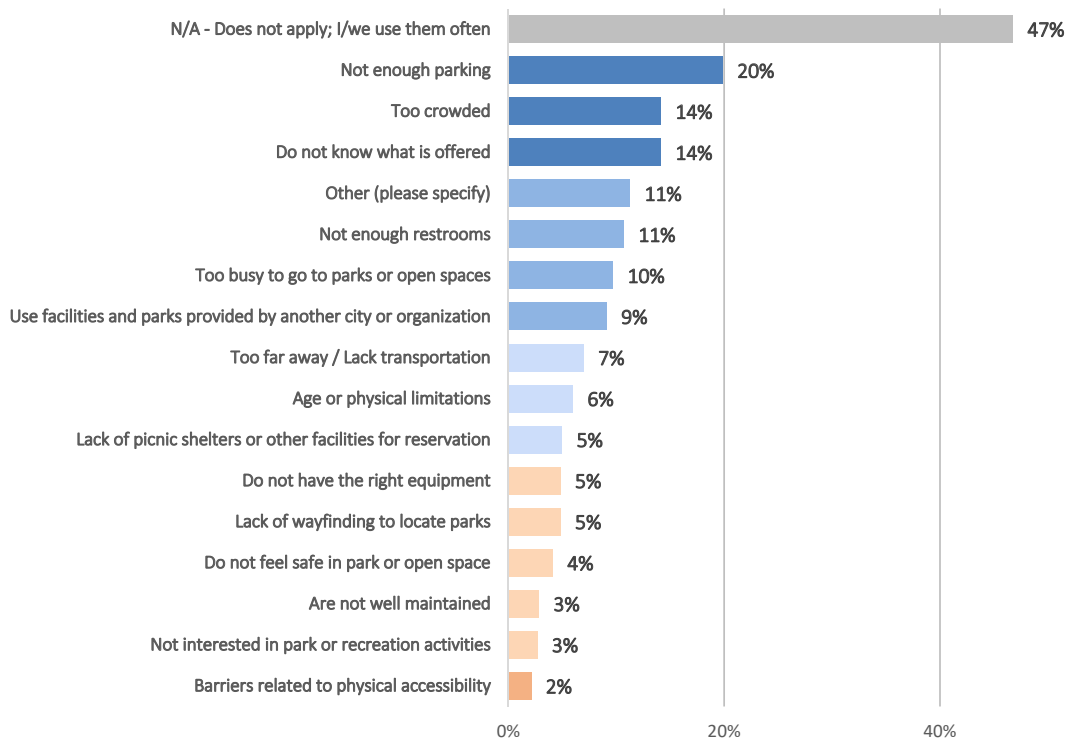
When asked why they do not visit Sammamish's parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces more often, nearly half (47%) responded that they do visit often. Twenty percent of respondents do not visit more frequently because of a lack of parking. Ten to fifteen percent feel parks are too crowded (14%), do not know what is offered (14%), or have insufficient restrooms (11%), see Figure 6.

Some residents are too busy (10%), use parks or facilities provided by other cities or organizations (9%), face age or physical limitations (6%), or are generally not interested (3%), suggesting that further improvements may not increase their use of parks.

Small percentages of respondents noted that parks are too far away (7%), lack facilities for reservation (5%), do not have the right equipment (5%), lack wayfinding (5%), are not well maintained (3%), or have accessibility barriers (2%) preventing them from visiting local parks more often.

In addition, about one in ten respondents wrote in responses citing a lack of well-connected routes for pedestrians and cyclists (e.g. trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes), concerns about off-leash dogs, a lack of desired amenities (such as pickleball courts, synthetic turf fields, and off leash dog parks), a desire for more natural areas, and the weather in their response.

Figure 6. Check ALL the reasons why your household does not use Sammamish's recreation facilities, parks or open spaces or attend City events more often. (Check all that apply)



Online respondents were less likely than mail survey respondents to cite a lack of knowledge about Sammamish's parks and recreation offerings as a reason they do not visit more often. Respondents



under 44 years of age more frequently noted a lack of transportation options and preferred equipment as reasons for not visiting more often. Respondents with children at home were more likely than those without to cite a lack of reservable facilities, a lack of preferred equipment, or being too busy as a reason they do not visit parks more frequently. There were no significant differences in responses based on where respondents live.

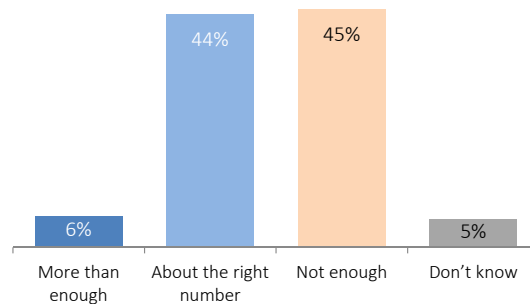
#### Does the number of existing park and recreation amenities meet residents' needs?

Respondents were generally split on whether they feel the City provides enough park, trails, and recreation facilities.

Half of survey respondents feel like Sammamish has more than enough (6%) or about the right number (44%) of parks and recreation opportunities while another 45% feel there are not enough, see Figure 7.

Responses were relatively consistent across age groups and number of children in the home. There were no significant differences between respondents who live in various areas of the City.

**Figure 7.** When it comes to meeting your needs for parks and recreation opportunities, would you say there are...



### Investment Priorities

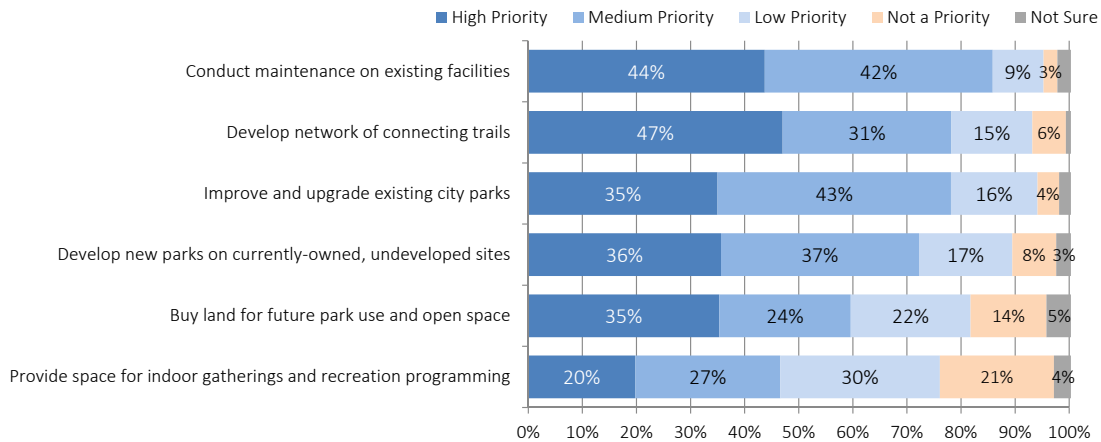
#### What park investments would residents prioritize?

Respondents were asked to rank a list of potential park system investments. In aggregated survey data, respondents identified conducting maintenance on existing facilities as their top priority, followed closely by developing a network of connected trails, see Figure 8A. Improving existing parks and developing new parks on currently owned, undeveloped sites were moderate priorities. Acquiring land for future parks and providing additional indoor recreation space were ranked as the two lowest priorities by respondents.

Respondents to the mail and online surveys differed in their selection of ranked priorities, with mail survey respondents more strongly supportive of maintaining existing parks and online respondents more supportive of expanding trail opportunities, see Figure 8B.

Residents over the age of 65 were more likely than younger residents to prioritize acquiring land for future parks and maintaining existing parks as top priorities. Respondents who live in the southwestern portion of Sammamish (south of SE 8th Street and west of 228th Ave SE) were more likely than residents of other areas to rate developing a network of connected trails as their top priority. There were no significant differences noted based on the number of children in a household.

**Figure 8A/B.** The City of Sammamish must prioritize limited funding to address citywide park system needs. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is a High Priority, Medium Priority, Low Priority, or Not a Priority for your household. *Chart shows combined data from the mail and online surveys.*

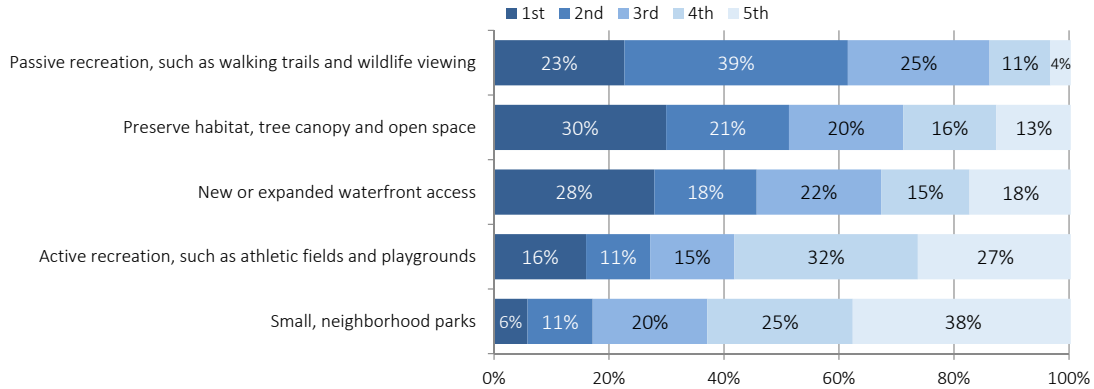


	Mail	Online
<b>Highest</b>	Maintain existing facilities	Develop network of connecting trails
↓	Develop network of connecting trails	Maintain existing facilities
	Improve and upgrade existing City parks	Develop currently owned, undeveloped sites
	Develop currently owned, undeveloped sites	Improve and upgrade existing City parks
	Buy land for future parks and open space	Buy land for future parks and open space
	<b>Lowest</b>	Provide space for indoor gatherings & recreation

The survey asked a follow-up question asking residents to rank their priorities for future land acquisition. Overall, respondents rated acquiring land for passive recreational uses, like walking trails and wildlife viewing, as their top priority. Acquiring land to preserve habitat was the second highest priority, followed by (in declining order) acquiring land for new or expanded waterfront access, for active recreation, and for small neighborhood parks, see Figure 9.

Respondents with children at home were more likely than those without to prioritize buying land for active recreation, such as sports fields or playgrounds. Respondents who live in the northwest portion of the city were more likely than other respondents to prioritize acquiring land for waterfront access. Respondents who live in the northeastern quadrant were more likely to prioritize acquiring land for active recreation. Those who live south of SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street were more likely than those to the north to prioritize buying land to preserve open space.

**Figure 9.** If the City of Sammamish were to acquire additional park land, please rank your land acquisition priorities from 1<sup>st</sup> (highest priority) to 5<sup>th</sup> (lowest priority).



**What park and recreation amenities would residents prioritize adding in Sammamish?**

The survey asked residents to prioritize a variety of potential improvements to the park system. Based on combined responses from the mail and online survey, the following top priorities emerged: 1) walking and hiking trails (88% rated as a high or top priority), 2) restrooms in parks (81%), 3) providing lifeguards at Pine Lake Beach in the summer (65%), 4) more community events (63%), and 5) all-abilities, inclusive playgrounds (55%), see Figure 10.

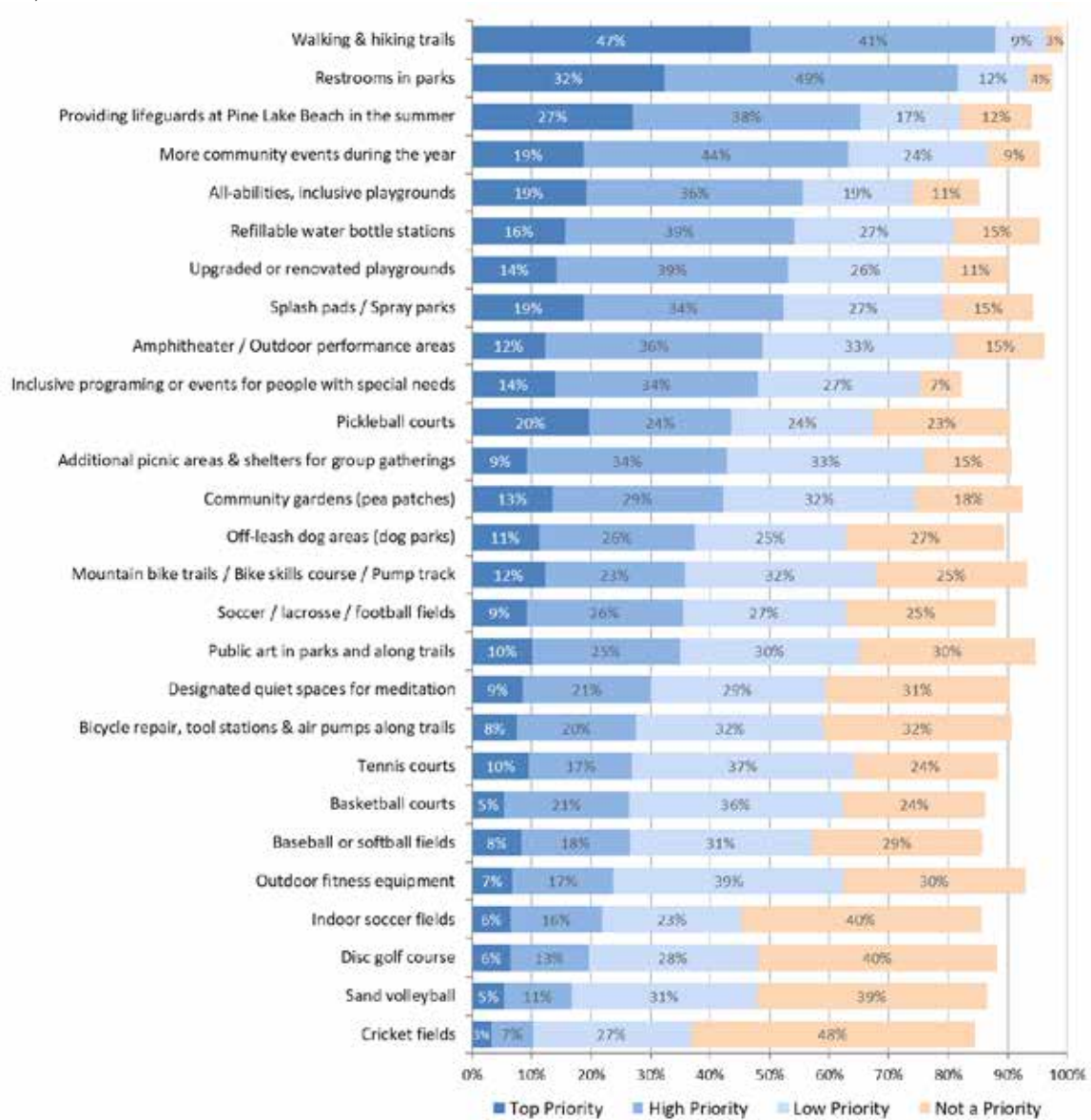
In general, facilities built for a single purpose (e.g. a sport) tended to rank lower on respondents priorities. The lowest priority amenities included cricket fields, sand volleyball, disc golf, and indoor soccer fields. Pickleball courts are a notable exception to this trend, with 44% of respondents ranking them as a high or top priority.

When looking at age groups, respondents tended to be most supportive of adding amenities that support the reasons why they use parks. For example, respondents between the ages of 20 and 44, who are more likely than older residents to visit parks for playgrounds, sports fields, and courts, were also more likely to prioritize adding more of these amenities to the City’s park system. Similarly, amenities that enable recreation enjoyed by all age groups – such as trails, an amphitheater, community events, and lifeguards at Pine Lake Beach – were rated similarly by all age groups.



Respondents with children in the home were more likely than those without to prioritize additional picnic areas, upgraded playgrounds, athletic fields, sports courts (except pickleball), mountain bike trails, splash pads, community events, and lake lifeguards.

Figure 10. The City of Sammamish must prioritize limited funding to address citywide park system needs. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is a Top Priority, High Priority, Medium Priority, or Not a Priority for your household.



[Do residents have specific improvements they would like to see?](#)

Respondents were asked to describe one thing that they would like to see the City of Sammamish do to improve parks, trails, aquatics, and/or recreation programs. While respondents provided over 500 specific comments and ideas, a few themes emerged:

- **Connectivity and Trails:** The community expressed a need for interconnected trails that link neighborhoods and parks, making it safe and convenient for biking, running, and walking. There is a desire to minimize traffic and increase accessibility through the expansion and improvement of trails, sidewalks, and multi-use paths.
- **Park Maintenance and Preservation:** Many residents emphasized the importance of maintaining and preserving existing parks, trails, and natural habitats. They advocated for regular clean-up, maintaining well-kept facilities, preserving trees and green spaces, removing invasive species, and ensuring the cleanliness and safety of amenities like bathrooms.
- **Preservation of natural spaces:** Many comments expressed a desire to preserve the natural beauty of Sammamish, including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat, and a concern about increased development. Additionally, some comments advocated for environmentally friendly practices, such as reducing light pollution, preserving tree canopies, promoting pollinator gardens and bird habitats, and limiting development to protect the natural environment.
- **Recreation Facilities and Amenities:** There is a strong desire for affordable and diverse recreational facilities in Sammamish. Suggestions included improving existing playgrounds, building parks with year-round usability, adding synthetic turf fields for baseball and soccer, creating splash pads and improving access to swimming pools, and constructing more sports courts for basketball and pickleball. The community also called for affordable recreational programs for various age groups and interests, including teens and seniors.
- **Land acquisition and waterfront access:** Many comments expressed a desire for the city to acquire more land for parks and open spaces, particularly along the waterfront of lakes like Sammamish, Beaver Lake, and Pine Lake. There is a call for more public access points to these lakes.
- **Safety and security:** Some comments highlighted concerns about increasing crime rates in Sammamish and encouraged the City to prioritize investing in safety measures and law enforcement presence in parks. Suggestions included installing cameras, improving lighting, and preventing tent encampments.
- **Community engagement and awareness:** There is a desire for the City to improve communication and awareness about available parks and recreational opportunities. Suggestions included sharing information about park offerings, involving community groups, and providing updates on future plans.

A compilation of write-in comments is on file with the Sammamish Parks and Recreation Department.

## Communication preferences

### How do residents want to hear about Sammamish’s parks, programs, and events?

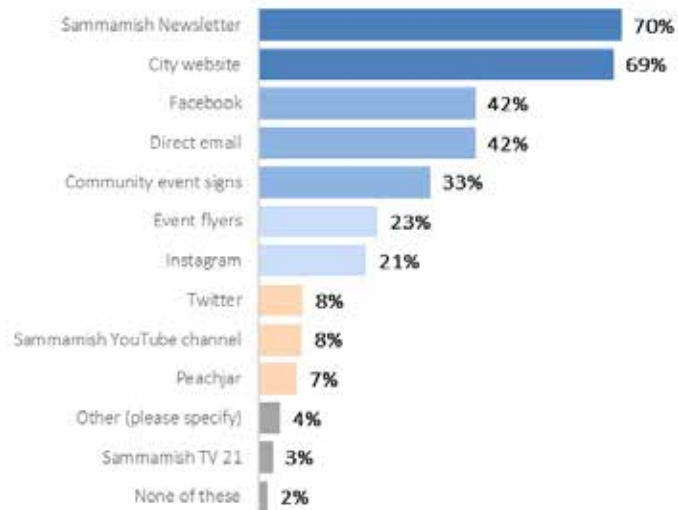
A majority of residents prefer to learn about City parks, recreation facilities, and special events through the Sammamish Newsletter (70%) or the City website (69%), see Figure 11. These methods were popular across all age groups.

Facebook and direct email were also popular ways of learning about Sammamish parks, preferred by 42% of respondents each, though other online and social media formats were less popular. Less than one in four prefer Instagram (21%), Twitter (8%), the Sammamish YouTube channel (8%), or Peachjar (7%).

Community event signs and event flyers were preferred by 33% and 23% of respondents, respectively.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, residents who responded to the online survey prefer online sources of information, notably Facebook, Instagram, and the City’s website as compared to respondents to the mail survey. Residents with children at home were more likely to prefer communication through Instagram and Peachjar than those without children at home. There were no significant differences in communication preferences between residents living in different areas of the city.

**Figure 11.** Please check ALL the ways you would prefer to learn about Sammamish’s parks, programs, and events.



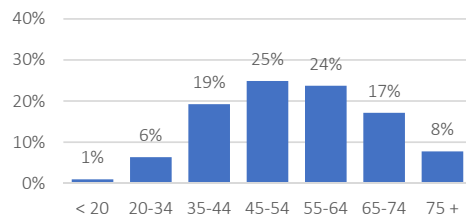


## Demographics

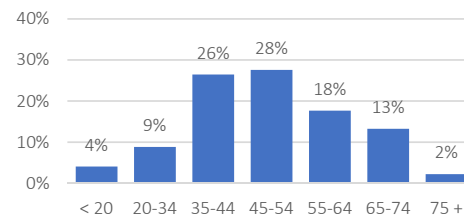
### Age groups

Overall, nearly three-quarters of mail respondents were above 45 years of age (73%). Online-only survey respondents tended to be younger than those who mail respondents with a larger share of middle-age respondents – 54% were between 35 and 55 years and only 15% were over 65.

Mail survey responses



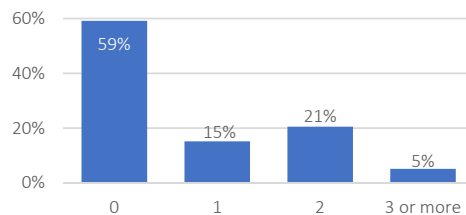
Online-only survey responses



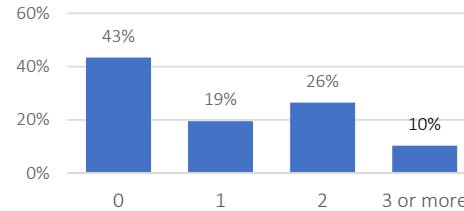
### Number of children in household

The majority (59%) of respondents to the mail survey live in households with no children under 18, while about 40% live in a household with either one (15%), two (21%), or three or more (5%) children. Online-only survey respondents were significantly more likely to live in households with children than respondents to the mail survey – 57% had children in the home.

Mail survey responses



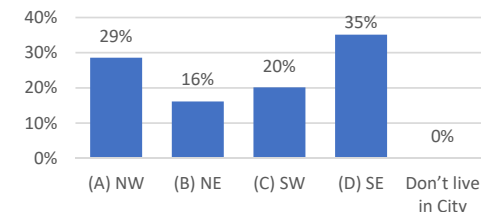
Online-only survey responses



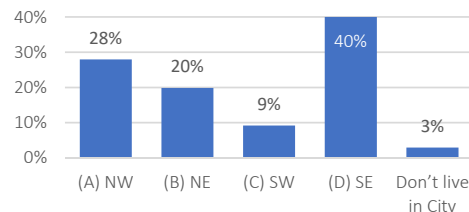
### Location of residence

Nearly all survey respondents live within the City of Sammamish. About half of mail respondents live to the west of 228<sup>th</sup> Ave SE (map areas A and C) and half live to the east (map areas B and D). The largest portion of respondents to the mail survey live in the southeast portion of the City (map area D). Online survey respondents were more likely to live on the east side of SE 228<sup>th</sup> Ave (60%).

Mail survey responses



Online-only survey responses



## ATTACHMENT 1. SURVEY INSTRUMENT



### We're Planning the Future of Sammamish's Parks!

Dear Sammamish Resident:

**Your household has been randomly selected to take this survey to better understand the community's Parks and Recreation needs.** The City of Sammamish is updating its citywide Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. This plan guides managing and enhancing our parks, playgrounds, sport fields, trails and natural areas. It also informs future community activities and events. Your feedback will help make sure parks and recreational opportunities meet the needs of our growing and diverse community.

Please complete the enclosed paper survey and return it in the return-ready envelope provided or use the QR code to take this survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X9BCKLM>. The survey has 14 questions and will only take a few minutes to complete.



尊敬的 Sammamish 居民:

**你们家庭被随机选择参加本项调查，以便更好地理解社区的公园和娱乐需求。** Sammamish 市正在更新其全市范围内的公园、娱乐和开放空间（PROS）计划。本项计划指导对我们的公园、游乐场、运动场和自然空间的管理和加强。该项计划还会对未来的社区活动提供信息。您的反馈将帮助确保公园和娱乐机会符合我们不断发展和多元化的社区需求。

请填写随附的纸质调查问卷，并将填写的问卷用随附的带回邮地址和邮资已付的信封寄回，或使用此处的二维码，在以下网站填写本调查问卷：<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M71ZRN6>。本项调查有 14 个问题，只需几分钟即可完成。



प्रिय Sammamish निवासी:

**आपके परिवार को, समुदाय के पार्क और मनोरंजन की जरूरतों को बेहतर ढंग से समझने के लिए दस सर्वेक्षण में भाग लेने के लिए बेतरतीब ढंग से चुना गया है।** Sammamish शहर अपने शहरी पार्क, मनोरंजन और खुली जगह (PROS) की योजना को अपडेट कर रहा है। यह योजना हमारे पार्क, खेल के मैदानों, क्रीड़ा उद्यानों, पगडंडियों और प्राकृतिक क्षेत्रों का प्रबंधन करेगी और उन्हें बेहतर बनाने में हमारा मार्गदर्शन करती है। यह हमें भविष्य में होने वाली सामुदायिक गतिविधियों और आयोजनों के बारे में अद्यतन भी कराती है। आपकी प्रतिक्रिया हमारी गतिविधियों को बनाने में मदद करेगी कि पार्क और मनोरंजन अवसर हमारे बढ़ते हुए विविध समुदाय की जरूरतों को पूरा करेंगे।

कृपया संलग्न कगज़ी सर्वेक्षण को पूरा करें और रिटर्न रेडी लिफाफे में डाक कर वापस करें या दस सर्वेक्षण को <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SZHSVRM> पर ऑनलाइन पूरा करने के लिए QR कोड का उपयोग करें। दस सर्वेक्षण में 36 प्रश्नों को करने में केवल कुछ ही मिनट लगेंगे।



Estimado(a) residente de Sammamish:

**Su hogar ha sido seleccionado al azar para contestar esta encuesta con el fin de entender mejor las necesidades de Parques y Recreación de la comunidad.** Estamos actualizando el Plan de Parques, Recreación y Espacios Abiertos (PROS) de toda la Ciudad de Sammamish. Este plan guía el manejo y la mejora de nuestros parques, áreas de juego, canchas deportivas, senderos y áreas naturales. También es la base para futuras actividades y eventos de la comunidad. Sus comentarios ayudarán a que los parques y las oportunidades recreativas satisfagan las necesidades de nuestra creciente y diversa comunidad.

Complete the encuesta en papel aquí incluida y devuélvala en el sobre listo para devolver también incluido o use el código QR para completar esta encuesta en línea en <https://es.surveymonkey.com/r/CQBQ995>. La encuesta consiste en 14 preguntas y solo le tomará unos minutos completarla.





## Community Survey on Parks and Recreation

### Dear Sammamish Resident:

The City of Sammamish is updating its citywide Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. We need your help to prioritize projects and identify where the City should focus to keep our parks and programs thriving into the future. As a first step, the City is conducting this short survey to assess the community's recreation needs. We ask that you consider your needs for the future as you evaluate recreation options.

Your opinions are important to the City.

The survey has 14 questions and will only take a few minutes to complete. Use the QR code to take this survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X9BCKLM>



1. When you think about what contributes to the quality of life in Sammamish, would you say that public parks and recreation opportunities are...
  - Essential to the quality of life here
  - Important, but not really essential
  - Useful, but not necessary
  - Not Important
  - Don't know
2. In a typical year, how often did you visit or use City of Sammamish parks, recreation facilities or open space?
  - Everyday
  - At least once a week
  - Two or more times a month
  - About once a month
  - A few times over the year
  - Do not visit facilities / parks / open spaces
  - Don't know
3. How did the COVID-19 pandemic impact your use of Sammamish's parks, trails and open space areas?
  - Use increased during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - Use decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic
  - Use was about the same during the COVID-19 pandemic
4. When it comes to meeting the needs of the community, would you say there are...
  - More than enough parks and recreation opportunities in Sammamish
  - About the right number
  - Not enough parks and recreation opportunities in Sammamish
  - Don't Know
5. What would you say are the main reasons you visited local parks or preserves over the last year? ( Check all that apply. )
  - Events / concerts / festivals / activities
  - Playgrounds
  - Athletic fields
  - Athletic courts (tennis / pickleball / basketball)
  - Trails / walk / jog / run
  - Fitness
  - Relaxation
  - Dog areas / walking dog
  - Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_



Save a stamp! Use the QR code and take this survey online:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X9BCKLM>



Or send it back in the enclosed Return-Reply envelope provided. Thank you in advance for participating!

6. The Sammamish Parks, Recreation & Facilities Department is planning for future park and recreation services. Please indicate what priority you think development of each type of facility should be for Sammamish Parks: the Top Priority; a High Priority; a Low Priority; or Not a Priority at all.

	Top Priority	High Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority	No Opinion
Additional picnic areas & shelters for group gatherings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upgraded or renovated playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All-abilities, inclusive playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inclusive programming or events developed for people with special needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restrooms in parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walking & hiking trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Refillable water bottle stations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor fitness equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cricket fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soccer / lacrosse / football fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Baseball or softball fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Indoor soccer fields	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Basketball courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tennis courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pickleball courts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mountain bike trails / Bike skills course / Pump track	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bicycle repair, tool stations & air pumps along trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Splash pads / Spray parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public art in parks and along trails	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community gardens (pea patches)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Off-leash dog areas (dog parks)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disc golf course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sand volleyball	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amphitheater / Outdoor performance areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designated quiet spaces for meditation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More community events during the year, such as Concerts in the Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing lifeguards at Pine Lake Beach in the summer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Community Survey on Parks and Recreation

**7. Please CHECK ALL the reasons why your household does not use Sammamish’s recreation facilities, parks, open spaces or attend City events more often.**

- N/A - Does not apply; I/we use them often
- Age or physical limitations
- Are not well maintained
- Barriers related to physical accessibility
- Too far away / Lack transportation
- Lack of wayfinding to locate parks
- Lack of picnic shelters or other facilities for reservation
- Do not have the right equipment
- Not enough parking
- Not enough restrooms
- Do not know what is available / Lack awareness of City events and programs
- Do not feel safe in park or open space
- Too crowded
- Too busy to go to parks or open spaces
- Not interested in park or recreation activities
- Use facilities and parks provided by another city, organization, or private club
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**8. The City of Sammamish must prioritize limited funding to address citywide park system needs. For each of the following, please indicate whether you think it is a High Priority, Medium Priority, Low Priority, or Not a Priority for your household.**

	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	Not a Priority	Not Sure
Improve and upgrade existing city parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop new parks amenities on currently-owned, undeveloped sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy land for future park use and open space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop network of connecting trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide space for indoor gatherings and recreation programming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conduct maintenance on existing facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**9. If the City of Sammamish were to acquire additional park land, please rank your land acquisition priorities from 1<sup>st</sup> (highest priority) to 5<sup>th</sup> (lowest priority).**

Select each priority only once.

	Select each priority ONLY ONCE. Highest priority → Lowest priority					Don't know/ No opinion
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	
Acquire land for new or expanded waterfront access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land to preserve habitat, tree canopy and open space	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land for passive recreation, such as walking trails and wildlife viewing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land for active recreation, such as athletic fields and playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acquire land for small, neighborhood parks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**10. Please check ALL the ways you would prefer to learn about Sammamish’s parks, programs and events.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City website              | <input type="checkbox"/> Direct email          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sammamish Newsletter      | <input type="checkbox"/> Community event signs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sammamish TV 21           | <input type="checkbox"/> Event flyers          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sammamish YouTube channel | <input type="checkbox"/> Peachjar              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facebook                  | <input type="checkbox"/> None of these         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Instagram                 |  |

**11. If you wanted the City of Sammamish to do just one thing to improve parks, trails, and/or recreation offerings, what would it be?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The following questions help us understand whether we have a cross-section of the community responding to this survey. It’s important that you provide a response to each question.

**12. How many children under age 18 live in your household?**

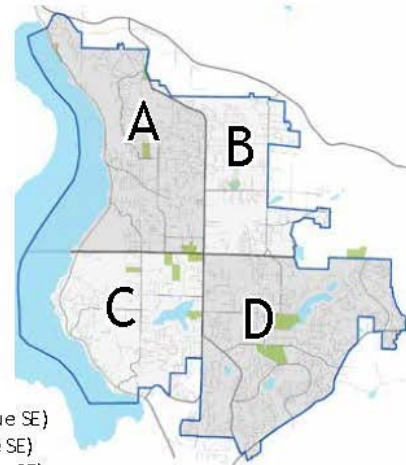
- |                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more |

**13. What is your age?**

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Younger than 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 to 64     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20 to 34        | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and 74    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35 to 44        | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 and older |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 45 to 54        |                                       |

**14. Using the map, in which section of Sammamish do you live?**

- (A) NW Quadrant (north of SE 8th Street & west of 228th Avenue SE)
- (B) NE Quadrant (north of SE 8th Street & east of 228th Avenue SE)
- (C) SW Quadrant (south of SE 8th Street & west of 228th Avenue SE)
- (D) SE Quadrant (south of SE 8th Street & east of 228th Avenue SE)
- Don’t live in Sammamish



**Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!**

Your input will help guide the development of the Sammamish Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

**Save a stamp! Take this survey online with the QR code or at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X9BCKLM>**

Visit [www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us) to learn more about Sammamish’s park system and programming, and to stay up to date on the progress of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space plan.



The City of Sammamish is using the services of a consultant team who specializes in park and recreation planning.

**Please return your completed survey in the enclosed Return-Reply Envelope addressed to:**

Conservation Technix Inc.  
PO Box 12736  
Portland, OR 97212



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# Appendix C:

## Virtual Open House Summary



# 2024 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan Virtual Public Meeting Summary

FINAL

June 22, 2023





# Sammamish PROS Plan Virtual Public Meeting

## Meeting Summary

May 25, 2023 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. | Zoom Meeting

### Presenters

- Anjali Myer, City of Sammamish
- Steve Duh, Conservation Technix
- Chris Hoffman, Consor

### Breakout Room Facilitators

- Steve Duh, Conservation Technix
- Jean Akers, Conservation Technix
- Chris Hoffman, Consor

### Introduction and Background

The 2024 Sammamish Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan is a 6-year guide and strategic plan for managing and enhancing parks, trails, and recreation opportunities for the Sammamish community. The PROS Plan is a part of the City's broader Comprehensive Plan and is consistent with the guidelines established by the Growth Management Act (GMA).

The citywide PROS plan serves as a guiding document that provides specific goals, objectives, and recommendations for developing, conserving, and maintaining high-quality parks, trails, and facilities across the city. The City of Sammamish Parks and Recreation Department held a Virtual Public Meeting on May 25, 2023, using the Zoom platform to share information about the PROS Plan update and gather feedback from community members that will help inform further development of the Plan.

### Notifications

The project team used a variety of methods to promote the May 25<sup>th</sup> Virtual Open House. These included:

- A postcard mailing to all Sammamish addresses (the postcard was translated into 3 languages: Chinese Simplified, Hindi, Spanish)
- Social media posts
- Posting information about the public meeting on the City [website](#)
- Promotion at the City's Earth Day, Rig-A-Palooza, and Farmer's Market events
- Flyers at City parks and facilities

### Meeting overview

A total of 19 people attended the meeting, which consisted of a presentation, live polling, and facilitated breakout discussions. The presentation included an overview of the PROS Plan and the importance the community plays in the planning process. The facilitator shared how the public process

helps to shape the community’s visions for Sammamish parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces. The presentation also described the current inventory of parks and recreation facilities, reviewed the preliminary survey results, and previewed the breakout room topics: Parks/Trails and Recreational Experiences. Polling questions and breakout rooms (both described below) were used to solicit input and feedback from participants. Attendees also made a number of comments via the chat function, and these are provided in Appendix A of this summary.

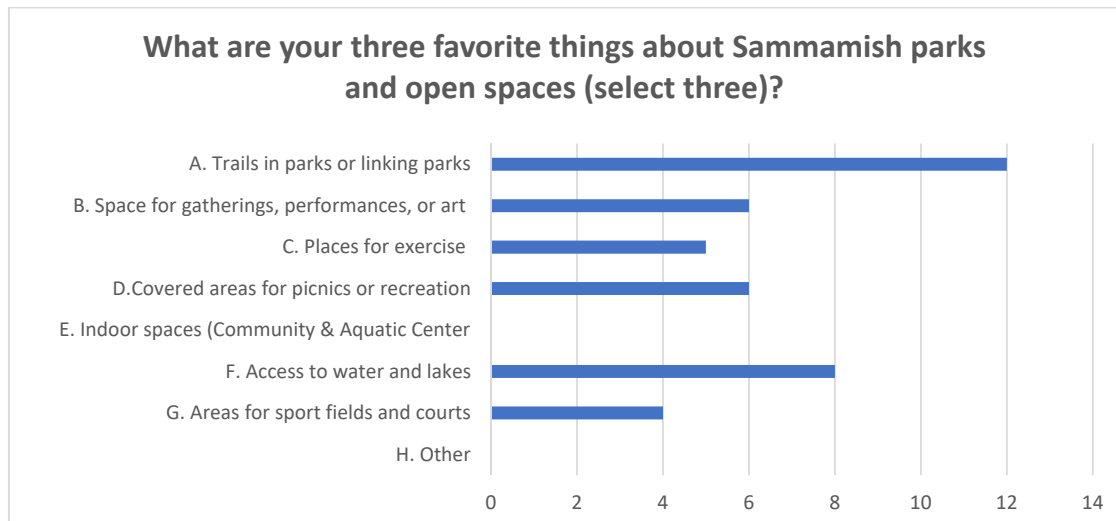
### Polling

The project team asked the following questions using the polling function in Zoom. Attendees could share answers in the chat box if they selected “Other” as an answer.

**1. What are your three favorite things about Sammamish parks and open spaces (select three)?**

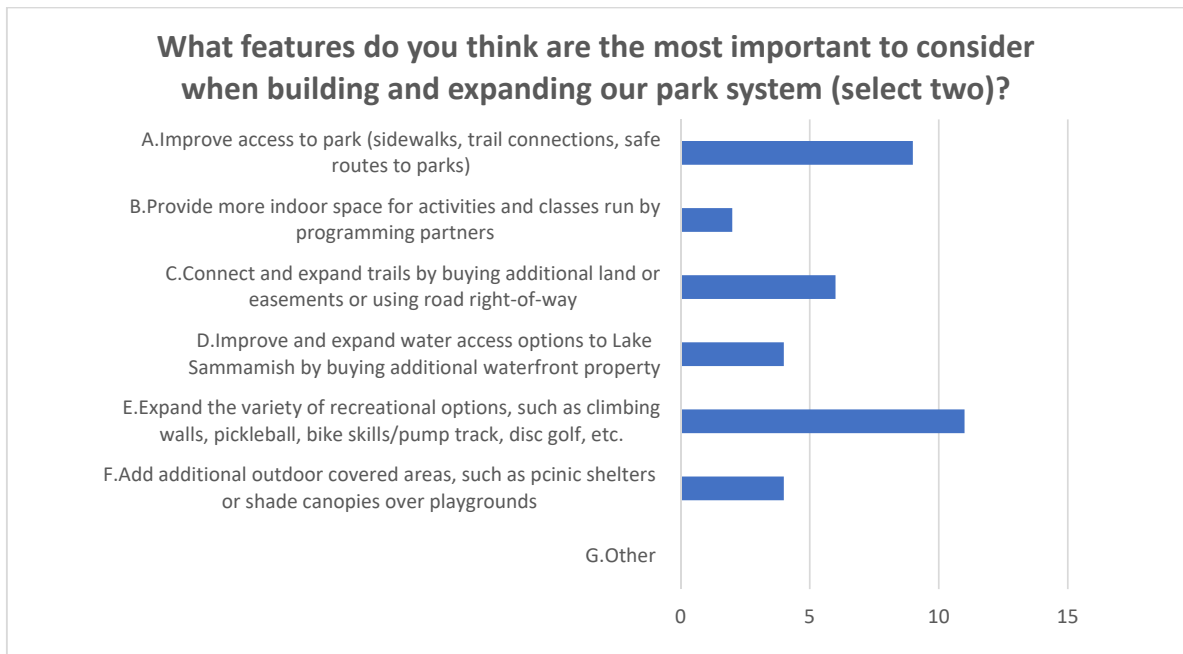
- A. Trails in parks or linking parks
- B. Space for gatherings, performances, or art
- C. Places for exercise
- D. Covered areas for picnics or recreation
- E. Indoor spaces (Community & Aquatic Center)
- F. Access to water and lakes
- G. Areas for sport fields and courts
- H. Other

The three top priorities identified by participants were trails in parks or linking parks (29%), access to water and lakes (16%), spaces for gatherings, performances, or art (15%), and covered areas for picnics or recreation (15%).



2. What features do you think are the most important to consider when building and expanding our park system (select two)?
  - A. Improve access to parks (sidewalks, trail connections, safe routes to parks)
  - B. Provide more indoor space for activities and classes run by programming partners
  - C. Connect and expand trails by buying additional land or easements or using road right-of-way
  - D. Improve and expand water access options to Lake Sammamish by buying additional waterfront property
  - E. Expand the variety of recreational options, such as climbing walls, pickleball, bike skills/pump track, disc golf, etc.
  - F. Add additional outdoor covered areas, such as picnic shelters or shade canopies over playgrounds
  - G. Other

The two top priorities identified by participants were expand the variety of recreational options, such as climbing walls, pickleball, bike skills/pump track, disc golf, etc. (31%) and improve access to park sidewalks, trail connections, safe routes to parks (25%).



### Breakout Room Discussions and Key Themes

The project team hosted two 15-minute facilitated breakout room sessions (three groups of 5 to 7 people for each session) to provide attendees an opportunity to share feedback and ideas in a small group setting. Each breakout room session included three questions. A summary of three breakout room sessions and questions are listed below and organized by key themes as summarized by the project team.



### **#1 What's working well with the Sammamish parks and trail system?**

- The city is doing a great job of keeping all the parks green, clean, and well-maintained.
- There is a recognition of the challenge of connecting trails from the Plateau to the Lake, but there is still significant interest from people to see if that can happen.
- The city is doing a great job of running its volunteer program and supporting those who volunteer.

### **#2 What could the City be doing better?**

- There is a need for more parking in some parks.
- Security is a concern due to recent break-ins at parking lots.
- There is a need for improved pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, particularly Big Rock Park.
- Provide improved access for people using mobility devices.
- The City should provide more communication about existing trails through the City's website or mobile apps that link to platforms, like AllTrails and Strava.
- Ensure there is guidance for people to use parks respectfully.
- It's hard to find covered areas/shelters for picnics in summer, and it would be great to see more of these facilities.

### **#3 What gaps need to be filled in the trail system? What destinations should be connected?**

- Include more community garden plots.
- Provide more/new pickleball and disc golf facilities in parks.
- There is a need for sports courts that can host youth tournaments and gatherings.
- Provide bike racks in all parks.
- There is a need for more parking.
- Create connections to parks from neighborhoods, specifically connecting the Timberland neighborhood to the East Lake Sammamish Trail operated by King County.

### **#4 What kinds of activities would you like to see more of?**

- More sports tournaments.
- Provide more/new sports activities and programs that are compatible with existing facilities and future facilities. For example, separate tennis courts and pickleball courts in different spaces or parks.
- Promote activities within existing facilities by utilizing the current infrastructure, such as marathons and other events.
- Organize more concerts, arts, and promote different activities.
- Create more facilities such as splash pads and cricket fields.
- Create badminton and volleyball courts in parks.
- There is a bouncy surface in a North Bend park that seems very accommodating for kids, which could be an example for Sammamish to emulate.
- Build more bike lanes and provide information/maps for safe routes.

- Include educational signage in parks for city volunteers involved in native plantings.

**#5 What's one new idea for expanding the range of recreational experiences?**

- Ensure that all facilities and programs are inclusive for kids of all ages.
- Coordinate with the YMCA and other recreational providers to leverage the City's outdoor spaces and offer more programs in parks.
- Provide affordable rental spaces within the park system for picnics and gatherings.
- Create splash pads for younger kids, especially in Beaver Lake Park and Klahanie Park.
- Incorporate a zipline, sensory areas, slides, and rope swings into waterfront parks.

**#6 What would you do differently, if anything?**

- Modernize the equipment in parks.
- Ensure a variety of structures/facilities that are inclusive for all ages and groups. Bellevue Downtown Park was given as an example to emulate.
- Extend park hours during winter so people can enjoy longer hours during the off-season.

**Next Steps**

The project team will use the feedback from this public meeting to inform the PROS plan. The City will hold another community meeting in September 2023 where the project team will share and seek feedback on the draft plan. Please visit the City website for updates and ways to stay involved: [News and Events | City of Sammamish](#).

## Appendix A: Comments and Questions from the Participants

- I live in our parks and work as a volunteer in them. They are amazing. Here to learn 😊
- Maybe the city could provide a map. That would be great.
- Can the Notch property connect Big Rock to Town Center somehow? It's such an amazing Park(s)
- Woo Hoo .... the Notch is so important!
- Would love to have a disc golf course in Sammamish!
- Fields with lights!!
- Wild areas to enjoy walking through
- Is it correct that the bike and walking/ running trail along Lake Sammamish is a King Co facility and not a Sammamish facility. Except that Sammamish can increase connectivity.
- Yes, the trail along the lake is a King County managed trail. Sammamish as a City can make connections from our trails to that one.
- Evans Creek is a great location for a short hike that is close by. One issue that limits use is the number of car break-ins. Can security be improved to increase safe use?
- Nature Play Idea is so great for kids, and sensory play is something that might be beneficial for anyone. We could do some educational signage in Parks for the city volunteers who provide native plantings to them and celebrate the support that Parks and Rec provide.
- One more vote for more tennis courts :)
- Curious about more affordable rental spaces for kids' activities (gymnastics, dancing, etc.). At this point, all the activities are in Bellevue, Woodinville - with at least half an hour's drive.
- Is there a master plan for additional park/ recreation activities integrated into the Town Center development?
- Summer outdoor piano
- I would recommend that all parks have a sign with a QR codes to allow someone to find a park or sport that they want to participate in.
- When is the next town center development meeting?
  - <https://www.sammamish.us/projects/town-center/>
- Badminton and volleyball courts
-



# Appendix D:

## In-Person Open House Summary



# 2024 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan In-Person Open House Summary

DRAFT

September 22, 2023



# Sammamish PROS Plan In-Person Public Meeting

## DRAFT Meeting Summary

### Introduction and Background

The 2024 Sammamish Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan is a comprehensive 6-year strategy designed to guide the management and enhancement of parks, trails, and recreational opportunities within the Sammamish community. This plan is an integral part of the City's broader Comprehensive Plan and aligns with the guidelines established by the Growth Management Act (GMA).

The citywide PROS Plan serves as a foundational document, outlining specific goals, objectives, and recommendations for the development, conservation, and maintenance of high-quality parks, trails, and facilities across the city. To engage the community and gather valuable input, the City of Sammamish Parks and Recreation Department conducted an in-person Open House at the Sammamish City Hall. The purpose of this event was to provide a planning process update, summarize and share insights gained from public input to date, and to solicit further input for prioritizing future parks projects.



*A project team member explains the conceptual recreational trail system for attendees at the Open House.*

### Purpose

On September 6, 2023, the City of Sammamish Parks and Recreation Department hosted an in-person open house from 5 - 7 p.m. in the Sammamish City Hall lobby. The primary objectives were to provide the public with updates on the PROS Plan's progress and to invite the community to actively participate in the prioritization of potential projects and the future direction of Sammamish parks.

### Notifications

The project team used a variety of methods to promote the September 6<sup>th</sup> in-person Open House. These included:

- Social media posts
- Posting event information on the City [website](#)
- Promoting the event at the City's Earth Day, Rig-A-Palooza, Farmer's Market events, and the Virtual Public Meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup>
- Promoting the event in the City's September newsletter



## Open House Overview & Format

Approximately 60 people attended the Open House. The event featured a welcoming booth at the City Hall Plaza entrance and 8 staffed display boards in the city hall lobby. The display boards: shared how the public process helps to shape the community's vision for Sammamish parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces; described the current inventory of parks and recreation facilities; summarized public input, including the community survey results; and provide opportunities for participants to provide input on potential projects and improvements. Several engagement activities were included in the display boards:

- **Potential Project Recommendations:** exploring priorities by asking the public to put dots to prioritize what is most important to them.
- **Share your ideas:** writing comments on what is the one thing the City should do to improve the parks & trail system.

Furthermore, attendees expressed their opinions and suggestions by completing comment forms and using sticky notes, which are detailed in Appendix A of this summary.

## Participant Feedback

Participants were encouraged to share their feedback through various means, including talking with the project team, providing written comments on project boards and comment forms, and participating in the dot activity to identify community needs and prioritize potential projects. Key themes and suggestions voiced by attendees included:

- Interest in adding more sports courts/facilities in Sammamish parks. Participants said they'd like:
  - An outdoor city pool
  - A disc golf course in Big Rock Park
  - More designated pickleball courts in Big Rock Park
  - Facilities for slacklining



*Sammamish PROS Plan project booth at the In-person Open House on September 6, 2023.*



*An attendee participates in the display board prioritization activity by placing dots on the projects he would prioritize.*

- Several attendees mentioned more parking is needed in parks. They shared that:
  - More parking at Pine Lake allow better lake access
  - More parking in popular parks, specifically Big Rock Park.
- A few participants recommended enhancing the overall park experience. Specific ideas included:
  - To create more passive recreation opportunities
  - To add more open green spaces and trails for walking
  - To include bathrooms at all park locations
  - To have art-making facilities and programming for the community with a focus on those with special needs
  - To prioritize walking trails, open space, and additional parkland
  - To add a path into Big Rock Park and to provide additional connections to the park
  - To consider extending parks hours until 10-11 pm with lighting for winter use
  - Buying new parkland and keeping it more wild with open spaces, nature trails, lake-front properties, and dog-friendly frisbee golf courses. A good example is the South Fork Landing in North Bend
  - To include bathrooms at all park locations
- One attendee expressed a concern that the Big Rock Park to City Commons has a 20 ft non-sidewalked area that is dangerous to walk along.



*A project team member talks to an attendee about what the City has heard so far.*

For the Potential Project Prioritization activity, the board identified the community priorities reflected from the survey for maintaining existing facilities, improving and upgrading existing City parks, and developing currently owned, undeveloped sites. The board asked participants to identify project priorities within those three categories:

1. Maintain existing facilities
  - a. NE Sammamish and East Sammamish Parks parking & access
  - b. East Sammamish Park playground
  - c. Pine Lake Park inclusive playground
  - d. Citywide ADA access improvements for parks
2. Upgrade/Develop existing parks
  - a. Klahanie Park improvements

- b. Beaver Lake Park beach, parking & playground improvements
- c. Beave Lake Park athletic field expansion
- 3. Expand recreation opportunities
  - a. Beaton Hill Park phase I
  - b. Big Rock South Park phase I
  - c. Parker & Yates properties master plans
  - d. Big Rock Park Central picnic shelter & habitat restoration
  - e. Land acquisition to fill gaps
  - f. Trail connections to fill gaps

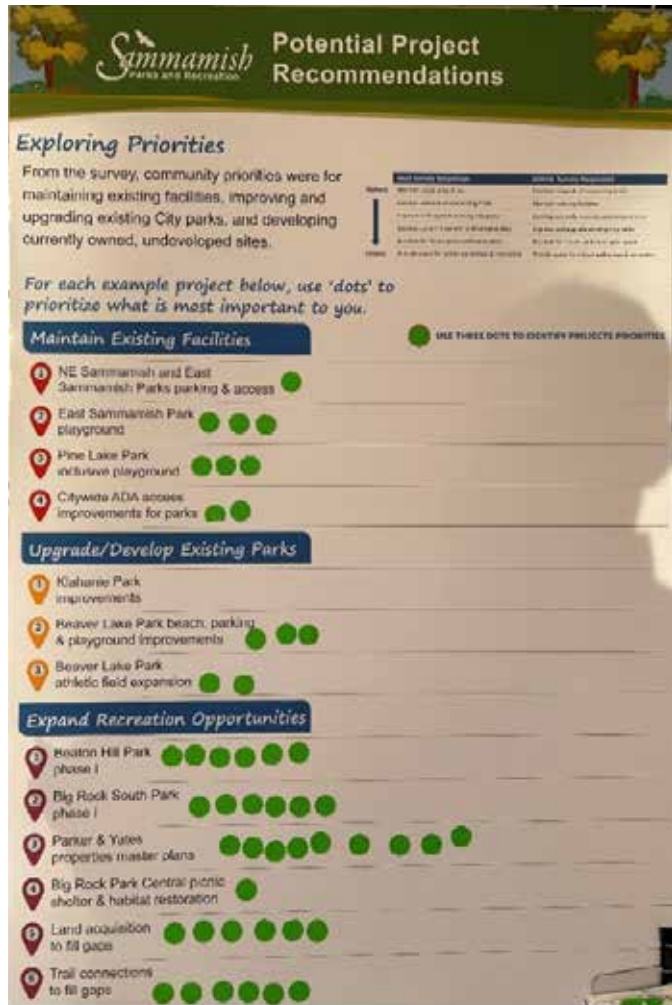
Results from the activity showed substantial interest in expanding recreation opportunities, particularly in Beaton Hill Park phase I, Big Rock South Park phase I, Parker & Yates properties master plans, land acquisition to fill gaps, and trail connections to fill gaps, as indicated by the 34 out of 48 dots placed under "Expand Recreation Opportunities."

For upgrading/developing existing parks, there was some interest in Beaver Lake Park beach, parking & playground improvements and Beaver Lake Park athletic field expansion. However, no dots were placed on Klahanie Park improvements.

For maintaining existing facilities, there was some interest across the options, with specific interest in East Sammamish Park playground and Pine Lake Park inclusive playground, as well as Citywide ADA access improvements for parks.

### Next Steps

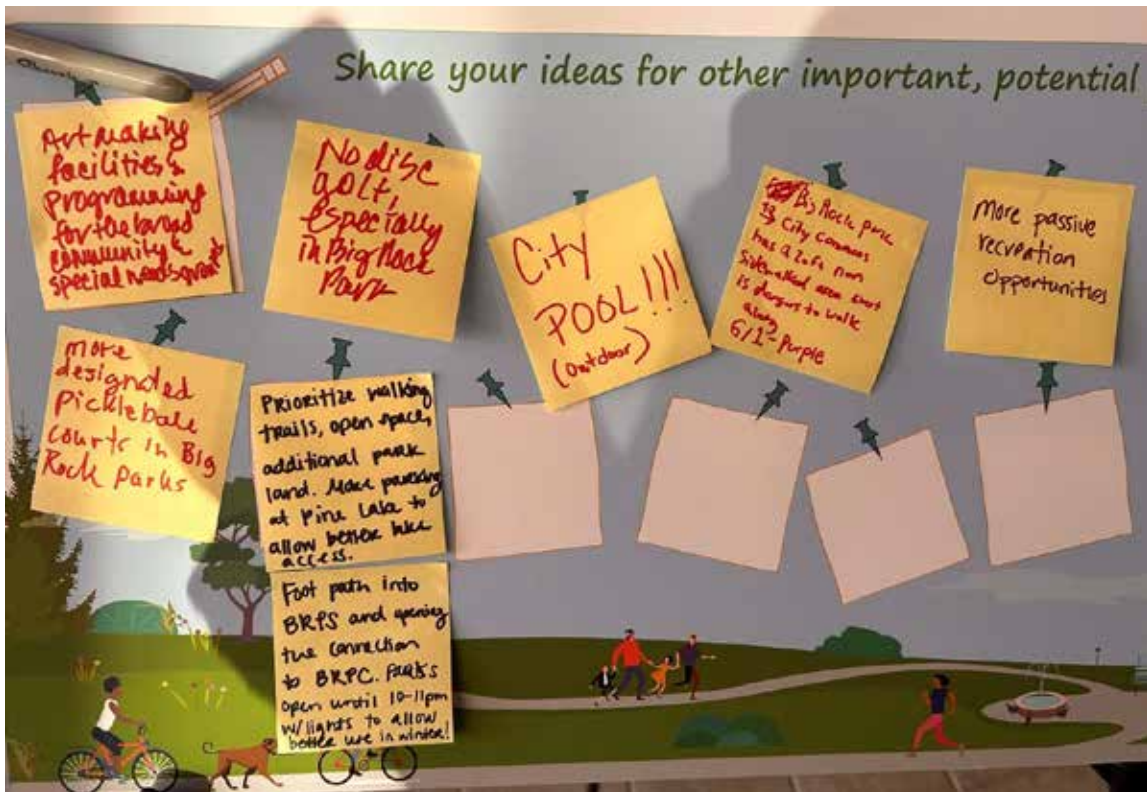
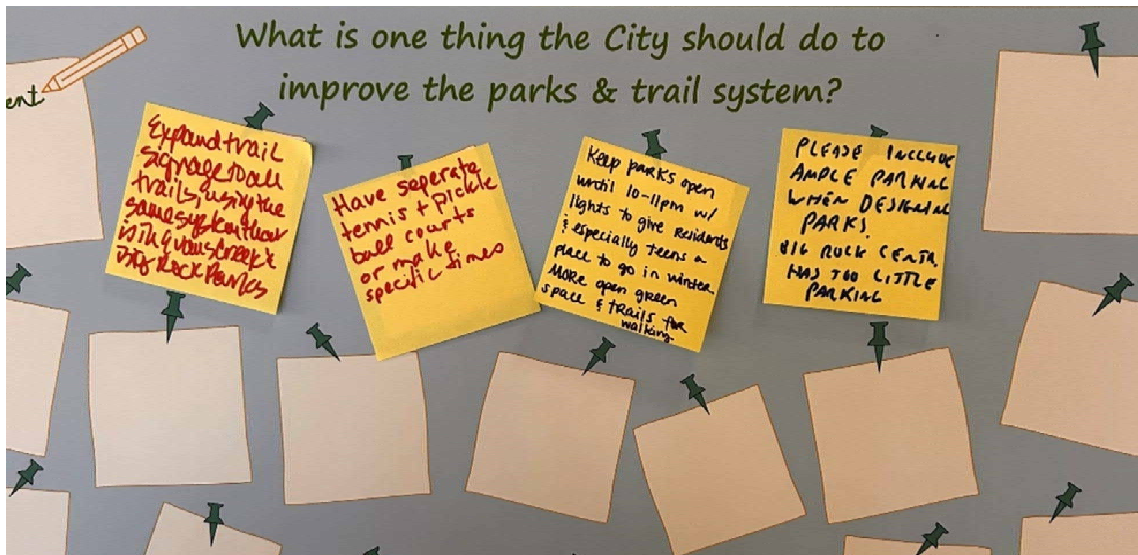
The project team will use the feedback from this Open House to inform the PROS plan. Please visit the City website for updates and ways to stay involved: [News and Events | City of Sammamish](https://www.sammamish.gov/news-and-events).



Results of Potential Project Recommendations activity at the Open House.



Appendix A: Comments from the Participants



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# Appendix E:

## Stakeholder Summaries





# 2024 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan Stakeholder Discussions Summary

FINAL

June 22, 2023



## Community Context and PROS Plan Engagement Overview

The City of Sammamish,<sup>1</sup> located in King County, and has been identified as one of the best places to live in Washington. The developing city of 67,455 people<sup>2</sup> wraps the east side of Lake Sammamish and offers residents an open suburban feel near larger urban destinations. Those who live, work, visit, or recreate in Sammamish can enjoy the restaurants, cultural activities, coffee shops, and parks that contribute to a high-quality of life.

The employment rate in Sammamish is 7.5% which is lower than the statewide average, and the median household income of \$201,370 is more than double the statewide median rate of \$84,247 per household. At 83.3%, the homeownership rate in Sammamish exceeds that of Washington State by over 19%. In addition, the population in Sammamish is far more educated, has considerably less poverty, and is also more diverse than statewide averages. Many families and residents in Sammamish tend to have moderate political views, and the public school system is highly rated. Trends identified within the community profile of Sammamish are expected to continue, and greater diversity and density are expected with ongoing growth.<sup>2</sup>

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) planning process is guided by robust community outreach and set out to learn about community needs and interests. This ensures the City is knowledgeable about how it can best meet the recreational needs of residents in regards to facilities, events, and programming partners. The planning team engaged Sammamish community members to compile an inventory of values, interests, and priorities which were used to provide a baseline of local demand and needs.

Public engagement and feedback opportunities included a community-wide online survey (with a subset of a statistically valid mail survey), stakeholder discussion sessions, a virtual open house, an in-person open house, and public comment received at community events. Community members who participated were invested in the future of Sammamish’s parks and recreation system and offered thoughtful and insightful feedback to help shape development of the PROS Plan. Input from local community members helped build a nuanced understanding of current local recreation needs; desired uses for parks, trails, recreation facilities, and programs; informed updates to policy statements; and helped the City prioritize Parks Capital Improvements.

## Introduction – Stakeholder Discussion Sessions

The City of Sammamish conducted three stakeholder group discussions in April 2023 as part of their efforts to engage the community in the early stages of the 2024 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan Update. The City identified three stakeholder interest areas to be represented at the interviews—Environmental, DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging), and Athletics—and conducted outreach to individuals representing each area to participate in the group discussions. The outreach consisted of an initial email invitation to several individuals and organizations to solicit interest and follow-up emails to confirm the meeting date and time with interested parties. The group discussions were conducted as indicated below:

Group	Date	Time	# of attendees
Environmental	Tuesday, April 18	5:30 – 7 p.m.	11
DEIB	Thursday, April 20	5:30 – 7 p.m.	8
Athletics	Tuesday, April 25	5:30 – 7 p.m.	6

<sup>1</sup> City of Sammamish Data and Community Facts: <https://www.envisionsammamish2044.org/sammamish-today>

<sup>2</sup> Sammamish Census Bureau Community Profile: [https://data.census.gov/profile/Sammamish\\_city; Washington?g=160XX00US5361115](https://data.census.gov/profile/Sammamish_city; Washington?g=160XX00US5361115)

The following organizations and interest groups were represented at the meetings.

#### **Environmental**

- Sammamish Stewards
- Trails
- Sammamish Botanical Garden Society
- Washington Native Plant Stewards
- Sammamish Parks and Recreation Commission

#### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)**

- The Garage Teen Center
- Sammamish Chinese School
- Indian American Community Services
- Vedic Cultural Center
- Open Doors for Multicultural Families
- CrossPath Counseling
- Parent of a child with activity limitations
- Sammamish Parks and Recreation Commission

#### **Athletic**

- Eastlake Little League
- Skyhawks Sports Academy
- Northwest Disc Golf
- Pickleball

### **Meeting Format**

Each of the three meetings were a hybrid format, providing group representatives the ability to participate in-person or online. The meetings began with a welcome by city staff. All participants then introduced themselves. Chris Hoffman, PROS Plan consultant team member, reviewed the agenda, introduced the interview questions, and described the meeting’s ground rules. City representatives provided a brief overview of the PROS Plan. Chris then led each group in a discussion that answered the questions identified on the topic guide. Chris recorded responses to the questions on flip charts and City representatives recorded responses on an online platform for online participants. Each group’s questions were slightly different to address the specific areas of interest of each group. The agendas (with the questions) for each meeting are provided in Appendix A of this report.

### **Summary Results**

The Environmental, DEIB, and Athletics stakeholder groups were asked for feedback on six key topics related to the interests they represented. Participants discussed and provided feedback related to Sammamish parks, trails, and facilities on the following:

1. **Use of PROS:** Ways group members currently engage with or use parks, trails, and facilities,
2. **The City’s Role:** Understanding of the City’s role in managing its parks and open spaces,
3. **Group Priorities:** Issues each group feel are most important for the City to address,
4. **What’s Working:** Things that are going well related to achieving each group’s interests,



5. **Opportunities:** Interest in trails, stewardship, restoration, and conservation collaboration activities, and
6. **Improvements:** Top priorities for improving parks and open spaces.

In addition, the Athletics stakeholder group was asked to share how the makeup of each organization’s participants might evolve over the next six years, and if anticipated changes or growth would change their need for facilities.

### Key Takeaways and Findings

Stakeholders shared their aspirations for parks, recreation, and open space and provided ideas on possible improvements during the listening sessions – including interests they would like to see addressed in the PROS Plan. While each group had different responses to many of the questions, several interests held by all groups emerged. Key themes shared across groups include:

- Improve accessibility and access to parks, recreation, and open spaces;
- Prioritize expanding and caring for park lands, habitats, and wildlife;
- Inform, educate, engage, and partner with the community;
- Improve and update the parks system to increase availability and better serve a changing community;
- Keep facilities and programs operated by partners affordable, convenient, and safe for all to use; and
- Provide programming, events, facilities, and athletics tailored to specific groups.

### Group-Specific Results

Discussion session participant comments clarified community goals, values, and priorities for improving parks, recreation, and open spaces, as well as the outcomes community members would like to see. The following sections provide a summary of the top issues and interests shared by stakeholder groups. The notes for each group are presented in their entirety in Appendix B.

#### Improving Accessibility and Access:

- **All groups** identified the desire to improve access and connections to parks, recreation opportunities, and open spaces.
  - Improving transit and mobility options to create better access to parks was a priority, and **all groups** noted a need for better and more convenient access to the parks system via bus, shuttle, sidewalks, or other new mobility and active transportation options – including better bike access.
  - The **environmental group** identified connecting parks through easements, multiuse trails, and other means that prioritize people and wildlife.
  - **Multiple groups** identified accessibility issues and priorities, and **DEIB stakeholders** would like to see improvements to signage and wayfinding. Ideas included the use of more visuals, universal infographics, improved signage legibility, signs translated into multiple languages, braille, and potentially even images of hands that correlate to American Sign Language.
  - The **athletics and DEIB groups** identified a need to improve access to parks and recreation opportunities by improving sidewalks, trails, parking lots, boat launches, playgrounds and structures, facilities, and events using universal design principles.

### Expanding and Caring for the Sammamish Parks System:

- **All groups** expressed support for growing the number or size of parks in Sammamish.
  - **All groups** would like to see the number of parks, trails, recreation opportunities (both active and passive), and natural space grow. Participants stressed that the City’s ability to support and maintain its expanding parks system, land, and facilities was very important.
  - The **athletics group** noted that athletic space is limited while interest and enrollment in existing programs or more diverse sports offerings grows.
  - The **environmental group** prioritized stewardship and investing in expanding open space through the proactive acquisition of new land. The group also emphasized care, preservation, and restoration of parks for people, native habitats, and wildlife is a top priority.
  - **Environmental stakeholders** would like to see a focus on keeping trees healthy through pruning, protecting, and restoring wooded and natural areas that are faced with invasive species, insects, virus, and climate change.
  - The **environmental group** would also like to see more connected wildlife corridors and the proactive stormwater management of stormwater to reduce pollution and chemicals in parks.
  - The **DEIB group** would like new and existing park amenities, such as trails, to be accessible and reflect a focus on universal design that welcomes people of all ages and abilities.

### Community Relations:

- **All groups** felt community education, service opportunities, and partnerships foster a thriving parks system.
  - The **environmental group** noted that City staff and crews are dedicated, friendly, foster collaboration, and support project ideas community members bring to them.
  - **Environmental group** members also hope to collaborate more with the City on plant selections, addressing climate change, and supporting education of City crews and contractors who provide maintenance.
  - The **DEIB and environmental stakeholders** would like to see more partnering between the City, organizations, schools, and the public to understand the programs desired by youth or seniors, help the community engage in nature stewardship, parks maintenance, attract new programming partners, or host new events.
  - Members of the **athletics and environmental groups** also said that communications priorities involving marketing and awareness building of recreation opportunities should be pursued.

### Improving Parks to Increase Use and Serve a Growing Community with Evolving Interests:

**All groups** noted parks, trails, and open spaces should be safe, welcoming, and engaging places for all.

- **DEIB** stakeholders value cross-cultural programming. There should be a commitment to understanding and addressing changing demographics and community needs as Sammamish grows.
- The **athletics group** would like to see an investment in growing facilities, amenities, and programs for sport – noting a need for new dedicated spaces for pickleball, disc golf, and cricket. A commitment to maintenance of athletic fields, courts, and facilities should be continued.
- **Athletic group** participants hoped to also see a greater diversity of sports in the city and expressed the desire to learn about other sports that may be played in different cultures that aren't currently represented.
- Priorities for new investments in parks, trails, and athletic facilities among members of the **athletics** and **DEIB groups** related to accessible, multiuse, and year-round facilities with adequate lighting. Trails should be suitable for kids, families, seniors, and dog walking.
- The **environmental and DEIB groups** also advocated for investments in new land and facilities like bathrooms, benches, and bike lanes. The group also hopes that investments result in adding a botanical garden, community greenhouse, community gardens for growing food, and a new off-leash dog park.
- **Environmental group** participants hope to see better and more diverse plant selections, including the planting of ornamentals. The group would also like to see park rules and ordinances focus less on prohibiting behaviors and more on positive encouragement.

#### **Affordability, Convenience, and Safety:**

- **All groups** want to keep parks safe, convenient, and affordable to use.
  - **All groups** shared that the limited parking, insufficient lighting, and long waits at existing courts and facilities was inconvenient and deterred use.
  - The **DEIB group** and **athletics group** also would like to see improvements to the reservation system to make it easier to use and ensure all park users have a fair and equitable chance to reserve facilities.
  - The **DEIB group** would like to see improved signage, more indoor and outdoor facilities with capacity suitable for very large groups or smaller gatherings, and more City staff at reservations to help with logistics, parking, and streamlining parking. The group advocated for shuttle services to large events that necessitate overflow parking.
  - **DEIB** and **athletics stakeholders** emphasized the importance of keeping facility use, athletics, and program participation costs affordable through financial assistance or fee waivers so that all community members can enjoy the parks system and the recreation programs offered by partners.
  - **Environmental stakeholders** want the City to work with King County to see an increase in safety and crime prevention efforts, especially on trails and in parking lots. The groups shared an idea that separating bikes or active transportation from pedestrians on trails and walkways may improve safety.

#### **Tailoring Programming, Events, Facilities, and Athletics to Specific Groups:**



- All groups shared that inclusive and welcoming programs and events were a priority, but also want to see tailored activities for specific groups that promote connection, recreation, and community belonging.
  - **All groups** shared that they want to see an emphasis on cultural inclusion through more events that partner with or appeal to diverse ethnic and cultural groups.
  - The **athletics group** prioritized increasing the availability of athletic fields and facilities to better suit existing and growing demand and making sure program offerings were sufficient to keep kids engaged and provide recreation options for all.
  - The **environmental group** would like to see programs that are intergenerational and promote engaging with nature. Both the **environmental** and **DEIB group** advocate for spaces to grow food for personal use or to provide to local food banks.
  - The **DEIB group** would like to see the City become a program provider in the future and hoped to see more programming tailored to the needs and interest of seniors, people with disabilities in different age groups, and kids. One example was a dancing competition.
  - The **athletics group** advocated for a diverse range of sports options that cater towards the interests of aging community members, youth, and people with differing abilities. Sports and recreation programs provide kids with many positive and beneficial experiences and add to the quality of life in Sammamish.

The **athletics group** also provided input on how their organizations might change in the coming years. They shared that the year-round demand for pickleball, disc golf, cricket, and additional fields and facilities to support play time for youth – and people of all ages – is growing. The City is in need of additional or uniquely designed space to meet community needs.

Appendix A: Group Agendas



**Environmental Stakeholder Group Discussion**  
**Tuesday, April 18, 5:30 to 7 p.m.**  
**Agenda**

<b>PRESENTERS:</b>	Janie Walzer	
<b>FACILITATOR:</b>	Chris Hoffman	
<b>TIME</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>
5:30 – 5:45 p.m.	<b>1. Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	Janie/Chris
	1.1. Welcome from the City 1.2. Team and participant introductions	
5:45 – 6:00 p.m.	<b>2. Meeting and PROS Plan Overview</b>	Chris/Janie
	2.1. Topic guide review 2.2. Ground rules 2.3. PROS Plan 2.4. Questions	
6:00 – 6:55 p.m.	<b>3. Discussion/Questions</b>	Chris
	3.1. Topic Guide	
6:55 – 7 p.m.	<b>4. Wrap-up &amp; Next Steps</b>	Janie



**Topic Guide**

1. How do you/your group (organization, club, team, etc.) currently engage with Sammamish parks, trails and facilities?
2. What do you see as the city's role in managing its parks and open spaces for environmental values?
3. What are the most important environmental issues in parks and open spaces?
4. What is currently going well with regards to achieving your interests in parks and open spaces?
5. Are there opportunities for more collaboration in trails, stewardship, restoration, and conservation activities?
6. What is your top priority for improving parks and open spaces?
7. Is there anything else you'd like to share?



**DEIB Stakeholder Group Discussion  
Thursday, April 20, 5:30 to 7 p.m.  
Agenda**

<b>PRESENTERS:</b>	Janie Walzer	
<b>FACILITATOR:</b>	Chris Hoffman	
<b>TIME</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>PRESENTER</b>
5:30 – 5:45 p.m.	<b>1. Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	Janie/Chris
	1.1. Welcome from the City 1.2. Team and participant introductions	
5:45 – 6:00 p.m.	<b>2. Meeting and PROS Plan Overview</b>	Chris/Janie
	2.1. Topic guide review 2.2. Ground rules 2.3. PROS Plan 2.4. Questions	
6:00 – 6:55 p.m.	<b>3. Discussion/Questions</b>	Chris
	3.1. Topic Guide	
6:55 – 7 p.m.	<b>4. Wrap-up &amp; Next Steps</b>	Janie



**Topic Guide**

1. How do you/your group (organization, club, team, etc.) currently engage with Sammamish parks, trails facilities and events?
2. What do you see as the city's role in managing its parks, recreational facilities, and events to ensure they are welcoming to all and meet the diverse needs of the community?
3. What are the most important issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion in parks, recreational facilities, and events?
4. What is currently going well with regards to achieving your interests in parks, recreational facilities, and events?
5. Where should Sammamish consider expanding more inclusive recreation events and facilities?
6. What is your top priority for improving parks and recreational facilities?
7. Is there anything else you'd like to share?







**Athletics Stakeholder Group Discussion**  
**Tuesday, April 25, 5:30 to 7 p.m.**  
**Agenda**

<b>PRESENTERS:</b>	Shelby Perrault	
<b>FACILITATOR:</b>	Chris Hoffman	
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>TOPIC:</b>	<b>PRESENTER:</b>
5:30 – 5:45 p.m.	<b>1. Welcome &amp; Introductions</b>	Shelby/Chris
	1.1. Welcome from the City	
	1.2. Team and participant introductions	
5:45 – 6:00 p.m.	<b>2. Meeting and PROS Plan Overview</b>	Chris/Shelby
	2.1. Topic guide review	
	2.2. Ground rules	
	2.3. PROS Plan	
	2.4. Questions	
6:00 – 6:55 p.m.	<b>3. Discussion/Questions</b>	Chris
	3.1. Topic Guide	
6:55 – 7 p.m.	<b>4. Wrap-up &amp; Next Steps</b>	Shelby



**Topic Guide**

1. How do you/your group (organization, club, team, etc.) currently engage with Sammamish parks, trails, and facilities?
2. What do you see as the city's role in managing its parks and recreational facilities to ensure they meet the diverse needs of the athletics community?
3. What are the most important issues related to athletics in parks and recreational facilities?
4. What is currently going well with regards to achieving your interests in parks and recreational facilities?
5. What could be improved upon with regard to achieving your interests in parks and recreational facilities?
6. What is your top priority for improving parks and recreational facilities?
7. How do you see your organization changing over the next six years? Anticipated growth? Needs for facilities expanding?
8. Is there anything else you'd like to share?



## Appendix B: Group Notes

### Environmental Group Discussion

1. *How do you/your group (organization, club, team, etc.) currently engage with Sammamish parks, trails and facilities?*
  - Education about plants
  - Gardening
  - Restoration projects
  - Walking (with grandkids or dogs)
  - Enjoying natural surroundings
  - Community service opportunities
  - Grow food to provide to food bank
  - Typically use the parks that are closest to where we live
  
2. *What do you see as the city's role in managing its parks and open spaces for environmental values?*
  - Acquire land for parks before it is developed
  - Protect wooded and natural areas against invasives
  - Connect wildlife corridors (can be multi-use)
  - Reduce use of chemicals
  - Educate city crews and contractors
    - Better plant selection and pruning
  - Pass “positive” ordinances (as opposed to telling people what they can't do)
  - Reforest and restore the urban canopy
  - Manage stormwater runoff
  - Encourage planting ornamentals (promote ecological diversity)
  
3. *What are the most important environmental issues in parks and open spaces?*
  - Climate change (ex. Losing old growth cedars)
  - Viruses (need to improve practices to control them)
  - Insects and disease (ex. affecting sword ferns)
  - Managing non-native and invasive species
    - Ivies
    - Blackberries
    - Holly

- Lack of knowledge of nature
  - Phosphate contamination
4. *What is currently going well with regards to achieving your interests in parks and open spaces?*
- Trail system (it's extensive)
  - Land acquisition
  - Connecting parks
  - Willingness to make investments and expand parks
  - Support for different programs in the city
  - Dedicated staff
  - Developing trails in parks that are acquired
  - Listening to the public
  - Staff are accessible (can reach them and talk with them)
  - Supportive of projects brought to them by the community
5. *Are there opportunities for more collaboration in trails, stewardship, restoration, and conservation activities?*
- Safe access to parks
  - Multi-use trail system to connect parks
  - Make connections among parks that are in proximity to one another (through easements; ex. Klallan power line corridor)
  - Address/prevent crime, especially in parking lots and on trails
  - More bathrooms and benches
  - Work together with King County on education and safety
  - Separate bikes and pedestrians on some trails
6. *What is your top priority for improving parks and open spaces?*
- Proper pruning (two votes)
  - Buy land for botanical garden (two votes)
  - Trail connectivity (two votes)
  - Greenhouse (like at Seattle's Volunteer Park)
  - Big off-leash dog park
  - Collaborate with stewards (as advisors for plant selection)
  - Sidewalks near parks
  - 20-acre botanical garden
  - More trails (make accessible)



7. *Is there anything else you'd like to share?*

- City departments (Transportation and Parks) work together
- Include ornamental flowers in parks
- Signage in parks and wayfinding to parks
- Educate community about parks resources

## DEIB Group Discussion

1. *How do you/your group (organization, club, team, etc.) currently engage with Sammamish parks, trails facilities and events?*
  - Cross cultural programs at Beaver Lake Lodge
  - Events (up to 600 people)
  - Family events
  - Trails
  - Sammamish Commons – for gardening, playground, exercise
  - Lower Commons
  - Accessible playground and trails
  - Beaver Lake (because it is accessible)
2. *What do you see as the city's role in managing its parks, recreational facilities, and events to ensure they are welcoming to all and meet the diverse needs of the community?*
  - Provide signage in parks – use symbols, translate into multiple languages, including American Sign Language
  - Provide accessible features for seniors – parking lots, wayfinding to parks
  - Provide events for seniors
  - Include accessible play areas using universal design principles
  - Provide shuttle service to large events
  - Include activities at events that are accessible
  - Streamline reservation system
  - Connect with schools to find out what kids want
  - Provide activities for adults with disabilities
3. *What are the most important issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion in parks, recreational facilities, and events?*
  - Physical access to parks for all (most trails are woodchips, which isn't accessible to all)
  - Universal design
  - Public transportation to parks
  - Cultural events
    - Invite diverse ethnic groups
    - Relevant to different groups (partner with community groups)
  - Changing demographics – understand evolving community needs
  - Invite groups to hold events (outreach)
4. *What is currently going well with regards to achieving your interests in parks, recreational facilities, and events?*
  - Space for cultural events (Beaver Lake Park)
  - Inviting groups to events (to showcase different cultures)
  - Grants
  - Fourth of July Celebration
  - Farmer's Market

- Rig-a-Palooza
- Responsive to community feedback
- Lunar New Year
- Promoting events (with banners)
- Parks are well-maintained

5. *Where should Sammamish consider expanding more inclusive recreation events and facilities?*

- Diversity of attendance at events
- City staff at events – more help with logistics and streamlining parking
- Indoor and outdoor facilities with larger capacity
- Planning for changing/growing community
- Dedicated senior center
- Partnering with providers of adaptive recreation programs – Senior Services at Beaver Lake Lodge is limited
- Dedicated space for seniors (for example, where they can leave puzzles of other current projects)
- Universal design
- Become more of a community partner – direct programming
- More welcoming
- Provide transportation

6. *What is your top priority for improving parks and recreational facilities?*

- More parks
- Become a program provider
- Bigger indoor facility
- Provide free access to low-income individuals and families
- More rental facilities (more options)
- Universal design and accessibility
- Transportation

7. *Is there anything else you'd like to share?*

- Improved signage
- Dancing competition for kids
- Additional community gardens – ability to grow vegetables
- Encourage cultural festivals
  - Events throughout the year
  - Build partnerships with community organizations and non-profits



## Athletics Group Discussion

1. *How do you/your group (organization, club, team, etc.) currently engage with Sammamish parks, trails, and facilities?*
  - Youth Sports (500 participants)
    - Softball and baseball
  - Football – 5 teams
  - Pickleball (no dedicated courts in Sammamish)
    - Play at East Sammamish Park
    - Limited access
    - No organized league
    - Often leave town to play
    - Also play indoors at the YMCA
  - Trails (walking dogs)
    - Soaring Eagle Park
  - Select baseball leagues
  - Disc golf (no opportunities in Sammamish)
    - Closest access is North Bend, Redmond and Bothell
    - Courses can be designed with walking trails
  - Skyhawks – approximately 950 kids in camps (mostly in the summer)
    - 18 months to 5 years old (tots), 6 to 9 years old (mini-hawks), and 9 to 12 years old (Skyhawks)
    - Play on a number of fields throughout the community
    - Provide all our own equipment – just need open space
    - Utilize both school and park facilities
2. *What do you see as the city's role in managing its parks and recreational facilities to ensure they meet the diverse needs of the athletics community?*
  - Make reservations of facilities and fields easy
    - Platforms between the school districts and the City are different
    - Sport court reservations
  - Maintenance
  - Prioritization – providing fair chances to reserve facilities
  - Keeping costs affordable
    - Rental fees
    - Program costs
  - Availability
  - Access to facilities – sidewalks
  - Resurfacing courts
  - Partnerships with organizations for marketing and program awareness
  - Provide space for all sports (specifically cricket)
3. *What are the most important issues related to athletics in parks and recreational facilities?*
  - Access to parks
  - Marketing and awareness (help programs with promotion)

- Growth of community
  - Cost of playing sports – equity
  - Access to space for sports
  - The City’s ability to support and maintain its expanding parks and facilities
4. *What is currently going well with regards to achieving your interests in parks and recreational facilities?*
- Fields are in great condition, well maintained
  - Maintenance
  - Plentiful opportunities to play sports
  - Resurfacing courts to allow for pickleball and tennis courts
  - Trails are in good shape
  - Openness to exploring opportunities for pickleball courts and recognizing there is a need for those courts and generally a need for additional sport facilities.
  - Communications
5. *What could be improved upon with regard to achieving your interests in parks and recreational facilities?*
- More pickleball courts (could include adjustable nets for badminton)
  - Disc golf course
    - Some trees and obstacles are ideal
    - Can be built along trails
  - Long waits at existing courts (especially in the evenings)
  - notifying community members about available recreation opportunities
  - Expose youth to diverse set of sports
  - Show support for sport diversity
6. *What is your top priority for improving parks and recreational facilities?*
- Affordability (two votes)
    - Youth sports
    - Accessibility
  - Year-round opportunities (two votes)
    - Indoor space
    - Lighting
  - Diversity of sports
    - Account for aging community members
  - More courts - consider covered and lit courts (two votes)
7. *How do you see your organization changing over the next six years? Anticipated growth? Needs for facilities expanding?*
- Skyhawks: expanding to year-round, growing tots program, and diversifying sports offerings
  - Pickleball: foresee more youth involvement, and would like to host tournaments some day with dedicated courts
  - Disc golf: participation growing, especially during the pandemic (25-45 is our major demographic)

- Baseball/softball: enrollment is growing and that's expected to continue
  - Softball participation has increased 25% in the last three years
  - Overall program growth is at about 10% annually
  - Expect up to 200 kids from other areas as a result of recent realignment
  - Skills training programs have also grown in popularity
- Growth in individual sports

8. *Is there anything else you'd like to share?*

- Sports help keep kids out of trouble and teach them good life lessons; opportunities to play are important to the community
- More bike lanes are needed
- Sammamish has a reputation as a good place to live for families and kids and recreation is important to maintain that
- Thank you to the city for listening



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# Appendix F:

## Recreation Trends

The following summaries from recognized park and recreation resources provide background on national, state and local park and recreation trends. Examining current recreation trends may inform potential park and recreation improvements and opportunities to enhance programs and services.

## 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review

In the 2023 National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Agency Performance Review and its accompanying Park Metrics share comprehensive park and recreation-related data collected and analyzed to inform park and recreation professionals and key stakeholders about the state of the industry. The 2023 NRPA Agency Performance Review presents data from more than 1,000 unique park and recreation agencies across the United States as reported between 2020 and 2022. These resources provide guidance to inform decisions and demonstrate the full breadth of service offerings and responsibilities of park and recreation agencies throughout the United States. This data can offer a perspective for Sammamish Parks and Recreation to compare their service provision to other agencies across the country. However, every park & rec agency has its own unique characteristics, combination of responsibilities and community composition. This comparison of nationwide data with the City of Sammamish can provide guiding insights rather than target benchmarks. The agency performance report indicated recent trends in staffing and volunteers for park and recreation agencies show that numbers of authorized full-time positions has steadily rebounded since 2011.

### Key Findings & Characteristics

Park facilities and operations vary greatly across the nation. The typical agency participating in the NRPA park metric survey serves a jurisdiction of approximately 45,000 people, but population size varies widely across all responding jurisdictions. The typical park and recreation agency has jurisdiction over 22 parks comprising over 571 acres. When including non-park sites (such as city halls and roadway medians), the median management scale for park agencies increases to 30 sites encompassing 676 acres. Park facilities also have a range of service levels in terms of acres of parkland per population and residents per park. These metrics are categorized by the agency's population size.

#### Park Facilities

The typical park and recreation agency has:

- One park for every 2,287 residents
- One playground for every 3,759 residents
- 10.8 acres of park land for every 1,000 residents in its jurisdiction
- 15 miles of trails for walking, hiking, running and/or biking
- 8.9 full-time equivalent employees per 10,000 residents



Figure F1. Median Residents per Park Based On Population Size

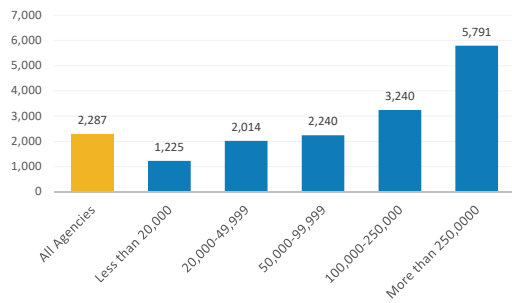
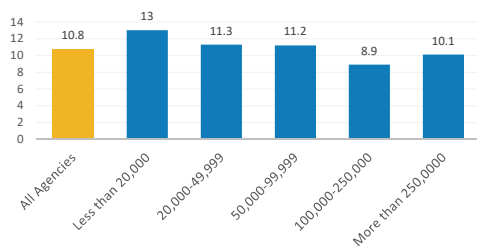


Figure F2. Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents based on Population Size



A large majority of park and recreation agencies provide playgrounds (95%) and basketball courts (86%) in their portfolio of outdoor assets. Most agencies (three in five) offer community and/or recreation centers. Recreation centers (63%) are provided more often than community centers (59%). Senior centers (41%), performance amphitheaters (37%) and nature centers (33%) are also common.

The typical park and recreation agency that manages or maintains trails for walking, hiking, running and/or biking has 15 miles of trails. Agencies serving more than 250,000 residents have a median of 89 miles of trails under their care.

Park and recreation agencies often take on responsibilities beyond their core functions of operating parks and providing recreational programs. Other responsibilities may include tourist attractions, golf courses, outdoor amphitheaters, indoor swim facilities, farmer’s markets, indoor sports complexes, campgrounds, performing arts centers, stadiums/arenas/racetracks, fairgrounds and/or marinas.

### Programming

At least seven in ten agencies provide themed special events (89% of agencies), team sports (86%), social recreation events (88%), youth summer camps (82%), fitness enhancement classes (81%), and health and wellness education (80%).

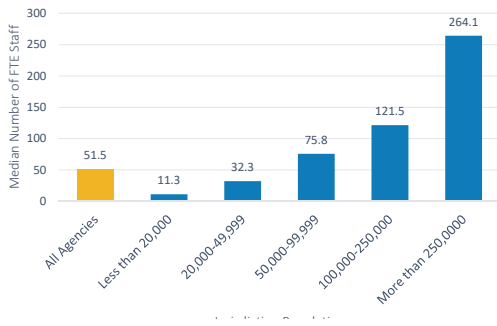
### Staffing

Park and recreation employees are responsible for operations and maintenance, programming and administration. The typical park and recreation agency has:

- 51.5 full-time equivalent staff (FTEs) on payroll
- 8.9 FTEs on staff for every 10,000 residents in its jurisdiction

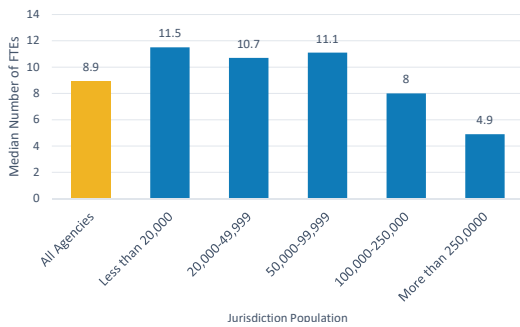
Median FTE counts also positively correlate with the number of acres maintained, the number of parks maintained, operating expenditures, and the population served. For example, agencies that serve populations between 20,000 and 49,999 residents employ an average of 32.3 FTE, while agencies that serve 50,000 to 99,000 people employ an average of 75.8 FTE.

Figure F3. Park and Recreation Agency Staffing: Full-Time Equivalents (By Jurisdiction Population)



Another way of comparing agency staffing across different park and recreation agencies examines number of staff per 10,000 residents. These comparative numbers hold fairly steady across population sizes with the median for all agencies at 8.9 FTEs.

Figure F4. Park and Recreation Agency FTEs Per 10,000 Residents



## Capital and Operating Expenses

For capital expenses, the typical park agency:

- Dedicates about 56% to renovation projects and 30% to new development projects.
- Plans to spend about \$8 million on capital expenditures over the next five years.

For operations, the typical park agency spends:

- \$5.5 million per year on total operating expenses
- \$7,823 on annual operating expenses per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency
- \$94.77 on annual operating expenses per capita
- \$105,484 in annual operating expenditures per employee
- 55% of the annual operating budget on personnel costs, 38% on operating expenses, and 5% on capital expenses not included in the agency’s capital improvement plan (CIP)
- 46% of its operating budget on park management and maintenance, 41% on recreation, and 13% on other activities

## Agency Funding

The typical park and recreation agency:

- Derives 61% of their operating expenditures from general fund tax support, 22% from generated revenues, 8% from dedicated taxes or levies, 3% from other dedicated taxes and 6% from grants, sponsorships and other sources
- Generates \$21.71 in revenue annually for each resident in the jurisdiction

## 2022 State of the Industry Report

Recreation Management magazine's 2022 Report on the State of the Managed Recreation Industry summarizes the opinions and information provided by a wide range of professionals (with an average 21.9 years of experience) working in the recreation, sports, and fitness industry.

### Partnerships

The 2022 report indicated that most (82.3%) recreation, sports, and fitness facility owners form partnerships with other organizations as a means of expanding their reach, offering additional programming opportunities or as a way to share resources and increase funding. Local schools are shown as the most common partner (59.6%) for all facility types. Youth-serving organizations (Ys, JCC, Boys & Girls Clubs) and park and recreation organizations were the most likely to report that they had partnered with outside organizations, at 98% and 94% respectively.

### Revenue Outlook

The year 2020 represented a dramatic departure from the norm, with nearly two-thirds (64.9%) of respondents indicating that their revenues for the year were lower than the previous year. By 2021, the number reporting a drop in revenue fell to 26.7%—still a dramatically different result from most survey years, but an obvious improvement over 2020. At the same time, while only 13.4% of respondents saw their revenues increase in 2020, by 2021, more than half (51.7%) were reporting revenues on the rise again. Respondents were much more optimistic about 2022 and 2023, with 60% indicating they expect to see higher revenues in both years. At the same time, 9.8% still expect revenues to fall in 2022.

### Facilities & Improvements

A majority of park respondents (43%) reported plans to add features at their facilities and were also the most likely to be planning to construct new facilities in the next few years (39%).

The top 10 planned features for all facility types include:

1. Splash play areas (21.4% of respondents with plans to add features are planning to add splash play)
2. Synthetic turf sports fields (19.5%)
3. Playgrounds (17.7%)
4. Fitness centers (15.5%)
5. Park shelters (14.1%)
6. Dog parks (13.6%)
7. Park restroom structures (12.7%)
8. Fitness trails and outdoor fitness equipment (12.3%)
9. Exercise studio rooms (11.8%)
10. Disc golf courses (11.8%)
11. Concession areas (11.8%)

### Programming

Nearly all respondents (96.4%) offer programming of some kind. The top 10 most commonly offered programs include: holiday events and other special events (provided by 57% of respondents); day camps and summer camps (54%); group exercise programs (53%); fitness programs (53%); educational programs (51%); youth sports teams (50%); mind-body balance programs such as yoga and tai chi (43%); arts and crafts programs (41%); adult sports teams (38%); and programs for active older adults (38%).



Respondents from community centers, parks and health clubs were the most likely to report that they had plans to add programs at their facilities over the next few years. The ten most commonly planned program additions were:

1. Mind-body balance programs (29.9%, up from 23.4% in 2021)
2. Fitness programs (27.9%, up from 25.5%)
3. Group exercise programs (27.9%, up from 25.7%)
4. Educational programs (25.9%, up from 20.8%)
5. Arts and crafts programs (21.9%, up from 17.4%)
6. Teen programs (21.9%, down from 23.7%)
7. Functional fitness programs (21.4%, up from 17.8%)
8. Performing arts programs (21.4%, up from 17.4%)
9. Environmental education (20.9%, up from 20%)
10. Holidays and other special events (20.4%, down from 21%)

## General Challenges

Facility managers were asked about the challenges they anticipated impacting their facilities in the future. Generally, overall budgets are the top concern for most respondents including staffing (63%) and their ability to support equipment and facility maintenance needs (50%).

With COVID-19's impact on the wane, we asked respondents to tell us about their top goals for their facilities in the coming year. The most common responses centered around increasing participation and membership, as well as building and renovating facilities. Recruiting and training staff, as well as just "getting back to normal" also made up a large number of the responses.

## 2023 Outdoor Participation Report

According to 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report, published by the Outdoor Foundation in Boulder, Colorado, the outdoor recreation participant base grew 2.3% in 2022 to a record 168.1 million Americans (55%) ages 6 and older. The number of outdoor participants has grown over the last eight years, however, the number of outings per participant declined in 2022 for the first time since the pandemic began in 2020. Key Insights include the following:

### Diversity

The recreational participant base is much more diverse than ever before. New and young outdoor participants are significantly more diverse than the current outdoor base and are accelerating quickly. The participation rate for Hispanic people has increased from 34% in 2015 to 56% in 2022.

### Seniors

A significantly higher percentage of seniors (ages 55+) are participating in outdoor recreation. In 2022, the senior participation rate hit a record high of 35% and rising. This equates to 1 in every 5 outdoor participants and a total of 1 million new participants in 2022.

## Gateway Activities & Growth Trends

Gateway activities, one of the first outdoor recreation activities people participate in at any age, serve as magnets to outdoor activity and commonly lead to more activity in niche categories like backpacking and adventure racing. Gateway activities continue to drive new entrant outings and frequency of participation. Hiking is the most popular activity. Running, bicycling, fishing and camping round out the top five. Running has the highest average outings per runner at 54 per year. Camping has the highest growth rate over the past three years at 29.1% per year.

The outdoor activity categories with the highest growth rates among kids included backpacking, snowshoeing, canoeing, climbing, and off-road triathlon.

## Participation Rate Decline

The frequency of participation is declining across outdoor recreation. In 2013, the average number of outings per participant was 84.6. Over the last ten years, average number of outings has dropped to 71.8 per participant.

Demographics are changing quickly in the U.S. population, and the outdoor recreation market has lagged behind. Park and recreation agencies are recognizing the need for increased diversity in the participant base of park and recreation users. The new and young outdoor participant bases are significantly more diverse than the total participant base, a formula for long-term growth in diversity for outdoor recreation. Monitoring progress on diversity is key to understanding if outreach is being effective.

## 2023 Sports, Fitness & Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report

Prepared by a partnership of the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) and the Physical Activity Council (PAC), this February 2023 participation report summarizes levels of activity and identifies key trends in sports, fitness, and recreation in the US. The report is based on over 18,000 online interviews of a nationwide sample that provides a high degree of statistical accuracy using strict quotas for gender, age, income, region, and ethnicity. The study looked at more than 124 different team and individual sports and outdoor activities, including a section dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 on participation results.

Compared to 2017, activity increased by 9.2% in total participation rates. Activity in the U.S. continues to increase for the fifth consecutive year. In 2022, 77.6% of all Americans, or 236.9 million people participated in at least one activity during the 2022 calendar year.

There were more things to do as outdoor activities thrived, fitness at home became more popular, and team sports started back up after the COVID-19 hiatus. Participation nearly doubled for pickleball in 2022, increasing by 85.7% year-over-year. In 2022 for the first time in over seven years, every racquet sport increased its total participation number compared to the previous year.

In terms of team sports, the overall participation rate approached, but did not exceed, the 2019 rate. Basketball, outdoor soccer, and flag football all posted three-year increases of over 4.5%, with basketball leading the way with a 13% increase since 2019.

Lifestyle activities generally remained very popular. Golf and tennis have grown more than 20% since 2019, and yoga grew more than 10% in that same time period. Trail running and day hiking participation grew for the fifth straight year. However, facility-based fitness activities like elliptical, group stationary cycling, and weight resistance machines, which suffered as clubs were shuttered during COVID, have struggled to return to pre-pandemic levels.

Figure F5. 2021 Total Participation Rate by Activity Category (U.S. population, ages 6+)

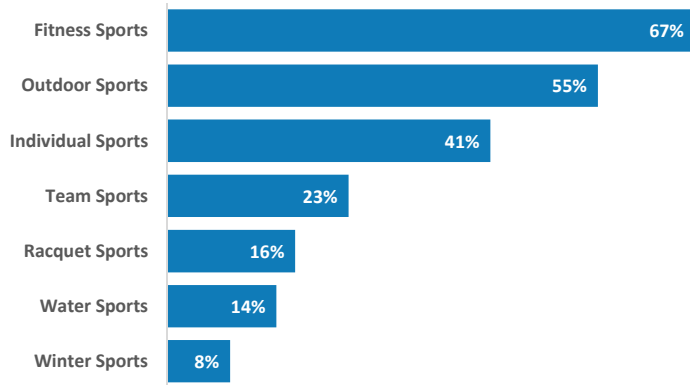
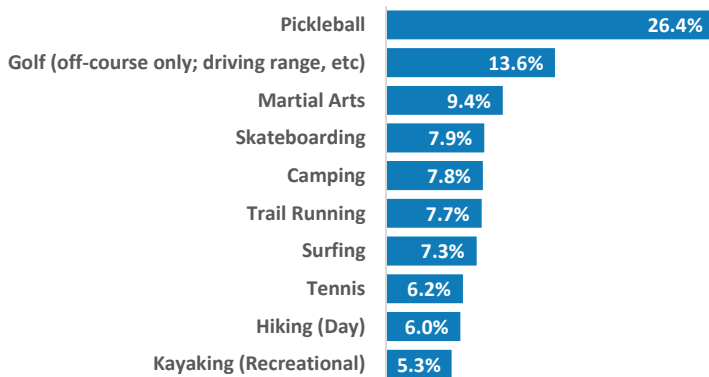


Figure F6. Activities with the Highest 5-year Increase in Participation (average annual growth, 2018-2022)



## Washington State 2023 Recreation & Conservation Plan

The 2023 Recreation and Conservation Plan for Washington State outlines a strategic direction for state investments in the conservation of public lands and the development of outdoor recreation opportunities to help meet the needs of Washington State residents. For 2023, RCO’s thirteenth SCORP builds upon concepts and updates priorities from the 2018-2022 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan. The plan provides a common, statewide vision for public investments in outdoor recreation and public land conservation. It is the key to unlocking critical federal and state funding and serves as a guide for allocating that funding across the state.

The plan identifies four core values that weave through four strategic priorities using a framework of the Outdoor Action Compass. The four core values act as the four cardinal directions: Equity, Resiliency, Connection, and Collaboration. These core values are RCO’s top-tier standards and weave through each of the four priorities, acting as touchpoints for each goal. The core values, strategic priorities, and goals identified in the Outdoor Action Compass will guide the prioritization and distribution of RCO’s funding programs for outdoor recreation and conservation.

Each priority has a series of goals that collectively set a course for addressing the most important outdoor recreation and conservation challenges and opportunities in Washington State. The four priorities are

- Priority 1      Provide meaningful access to outdoor recreation for all
- Priority 2      Protect natural and cultural resources while managing demand
- Priority 3      Demonstrate the essential nature of parks, natural areas and recreation infrastructure
- Priority 4      Support healthy, adaptable and connected communities



The 2023 Washington SCORP conducted assessments of outdoor recreation demand to determine rates of participation across ten activity categories. Twenty outdoor recreation activities showed double-digit increases in participation rates since 2017. Non-motorized trails, nature and wildlife viewing, camping, paddling, winter recreation, and leisure activities in close-to-home parks are consistently cited as the opportunities Washington residents want more access to. Increasingly, residents are looking for close-to-home access to a variety of developed and primitive experiences that enable the integration of nature-based recreation into busy work and family schedules while avoiding crowds and traffic congestion.

The top four activities with the highest rates of participation were consistent across the state: Walking or Using a Mobility Device on Roads or Sidewalks, Walking or Day Hiking or Using a Mobility Device on Trails, Scenic Driving (Sightseeing), and Wildlife or Nature Viewing.

Participation trends since 2017 were measured in the 2022 Assessment of Resident Demand showing increases in participation in most activities:

- Wildlife or nature viewing increased by 28%
- Paddle sports increased by 28%
- Visiting outdoor cultural or historical facility increased by 27%
- Tent camping (undeveloped area) increased by 26%
- Backpacking increased by 25%
- Playing yard games (in a park) increased by 25%
- Snowshoeing increased by 23%
- Tent camping (developed area) increased by 19%
- Hanging out (in a park) increased by 19%
- Mountain biking increased by 18%

Survey participants were asked what types of outdoor recreation opportunities they would like more of. More non-motorized trail access (79 percent of respondents), camping (61 percent of respondents), and winter activities (42 percent of respondents) led the list of higher demanded infrastructure and activities.

Participants were also asked to indicate the most significant motivators that would increase the amount of time they spend recreating outdoors in Washington. The following were the top five identified factors:

- More opportunities near where I live (79.4%)
- Better facilities near where I live (64.2%)
- More parking (58.0%)
- Better neighborhood access (50.7%)
- More information about opportunities and requirements (48.6%)

As part of the assessments and analysis of outdoor recreation trends and needs, RCO surveyed park and recreation providers, public land managers, and non-governmental organizations that provide volunteers to land managers. The survey results aggregate the responses from land management agencies or organizations (federal, state, county, and city/town respondents), land trusts, and private or other (mostly volunteer) organizations.

## Most Important Issues

Participants were asked about the most important issues for outdoor recreation and conservation in their service areas in the next 3-5 years.

- Maintaining existing recreation resources (97.6%)
- Coordination with other organizations that manage outdoor recreation (94.0%)
- Capacity of facilities to serve a growing population (91.6%)

- Adapting to changing user expectations (89.2%)
- Engaging partners for programming; (85.5%)
- Improving access for people with a disability (85.5%)

## Biggest Challenges

Participants were asked about the biggest challenges for their organizations to address the issues they identified. The following are the top five identified challenges:

- Competing demands for limited funds (89.2%)
- Not enough staff capacity (81.9%)
- Ability to raise local funds for projects (78.3%)
- Lack of political or management support (49.4%)
- Ability to create and coordinate partnerships (47.0%)

## Management Priorities

Participants were asked: Looking ahead at demand over the next five years, what types of outdoor recreation sites or activities will be a priority for your agency/organization to provide?

- Expanding community trail systems (79.5%)
- Connecting regional trail systems (79.5%)
- Renovating aging infrastructure (74.7%)
- Expanding the amount of public lands (67.5%)
- Developing nature-based parks (55.4%)

## Trail-related Priorities

Participants were asked about their trail-related priorities for the next 5 years and the themes are as follows:

- Maintaining existing trails (91.6%)
- Planning and coordination with partners (86.7%)
- Providing connections between existing trails (83.1%)
- Re-routing or improving trails to modern, sustainable design (74.7%)
- Creating new opportunities for non-motorized trail users (e.g., hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers) (73.5%)

## Americans Engagement with Parks Survey

This annual study from the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) probes Americans' usage of parks, the key reasons that drive their use, and the greatest challenges preventing greater usage. Each year, the study examines the importance of public parks in Americans' lives, including how parks compare to other services and offerings of local governments. The survey of 1,000 American adults looks at frequency and drivers of parks/recreation facilities visits and the barriers to that prevent greater enjoyment. Survey respondents also indicate the importance of park and recreation plays in their decisions at the voting booth and their level of support for greater funding. Key findings include:

- Eighty-four percent of U.S. adults seek high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live.
- Nearly 3 in 4 U.S. residents have at least one local park, playground, open space or recreation center within walking distance of their homes.

- Nine in ten people agree that parks and recreation is an important service provided by the local government.
- Nearly 3 in 4 adults agree that equity should be an extremely or very important goal for their local park and recreation agency.

People who live near parks and recreation facilities are more likely to be park and recreation users. Individuals living near at least one park are much more likely to arrive at that park by an “active” means (e.g., walking, biking, running), with walking being the most common method of transport. Conversely, 80 percent of U.S. adults who do not live within a walkable distance to parks or recreation opportunities travel to those amenities by car. The typical adult in the United States visits their local parks or recreation facilities every other month. Four main reasons for visiting local parks and recreation facilities stand out: being with family and friends, exercising and being physically fit, taking a break from day-to-day stresses, and being closer to nature. Park and recreation agencies can customize their offerings to the specific needs, wants and desires of their community members by knowing their motivation for visiting parks.

Figure F7. NRPA Park Engagement: Key Reasons for Park Visits

Key Reasons Why We Go to Parks	% of Survey Respondents
To have someone care for my children while I am at work	5%
To learn a skill or craft	13%
to connect with members of my community	22%
To experience excitement/adventure	30%
To be closer to nature	50%
To have a break from day-to-day stresses	52%
To exercise or be physically fit	53%
To be with family or friends	54%

According to the Americans Engagement with Parks report,

“Parks and recreation’s success results from its vast offerings of parks, trail networks and other recreation facilities that deliver critical programs for every segment of a community. Each person’s relationship with parks and recreation is unique. Some people flock to their local park to stay physically fit, meet with friends and family, or reconnect with nature. Others depend on their local park and recreation agency for indispensable services that improve their lives.

But there remains much work to do. One-hundred million people do not live within a walkable distance of at least one park or recreation facility. Further, many survey respondents indicate they have felt unwelcome at a park or recreation facility or say the infrastructure and programming are not inclusive. Parks and recreation is for everyone — regardless of age, income, race, ethnicity, ability, gender identity or sexual orientation. Professionals, advocates and political leaders have the opportunity to narrow any accessibility or inclusivity gaps through greater community engagement and addressing inequitable funding and infrastructure investments that have deprived millions of people of access to parks and recreation.”

## Outdoor Recreation Economy

In November 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released its annual report on the economic impact of the outdoor recreation industry at national and state levels. The gross economic output for the outdoor recreation economy was \$862 billion in 2021, accounting for 1.9% of the gross domestic product that year. Outdoor recreation economic activity showed an 18.95% increase from 2020 while the overall U.S. economy only saw a 5.9% increase. People finding employment in the outdoor recreation industry increased by 13.1% from 2020 to a total of 4.5 million people.



The research group Headwaters Economics, in collaboration with the State Outdoor Recreation Business Alliance, published a report in 2021 on the state of the outdoor recreation economy nationally. The outdoor recreation industry employed nearly 5.2 million people in the U.S. in 2019 and contributed \$459.8 billion to the economy. The report emphasizes that investments in outdoor recreation directly result in visitor spending that supports jobs, businesses, and industries across the country.

## Inclusion & Universal Access

Across the country, local municipalities and park and recreation providers with older public infrastructure have been upgrading their facilities to comply with the outdoor recreation guidelines for universal access and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The removal of existing architectural barriers in park facilities has been ongoing and should continue until renovations, upgrades and newer construction provide barrier-free access to all users. Access and inclusion in public parks extends beyond the physical amenities and incorporates considerations of language, technology, wayfinding, program equity and equitable geographic distribution of facilities.

Park and recreation agencies are in a unique position to champion efforts that advance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). By assuring representation of diverse life experiences and voices, park and recreation professionals will better reflect the communities their agencies serve. Inequity is the ultimate challenge facing the nation, and parks and recreation can make a profound difference.

## Trends in Playgrounds

Across multiple communities, residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities and park playgrounds are an important element in outdoor recreation. Reported in Landscape Architect magazine, the top five playground industry trends for 2021 were compiled from data and feedback from parks professionals, landscape architects and educators.

- 1. Inclusive Playgrounds, increasingly popular over the last few years, have been evolving beyond meeting basic ADA guidelines. Designers are seeking to expand accessible playground equipment, consider multi-generational play, and leverage inclusive play to help overcome societal barriers.
- 2. Rope-based Playgrounds, climbers and playground nets provide a technique for working around natural environments and unusual topography. Their flexibility in placement offers more options for connecting with the landscape rather than working around difficult topography.
- 3. Outdoor Fitness has increased importance during the COVID-19 pandemic as many gyms and indoor fitness centers closed and forced more people to seek outdoor options. Outdoor fitness spaces are being increasingly integrated into park and trail designs to encourage health and physical fitness for all ages.
- 4. Outdoor Learning has been implemented during the pandemic to replace or supplement indoor classrooms. Outdoor classrooms can encourage activity in children to counteract the reduction in recess time due to hybrid class schedules and remote learning. Seating, tables, shelters, hand sanitizer stations and other outdoor products are helping create outdoor classrooms.
- 5. Human-powered Play engages users to provide physical energy to “power-up” the activity, such as turning a handle, pressing foot pedals, rotating wheels. These products often relate to sensory experiences like lights and music, storytelling or social games.

Spurred on by the social distancing of the pandemic, these five trends in playground design and development point to more human-to-human interactions that reinforce the value of social connections, even in a physically distanced environment.

## Parks for Climate Resiliency

Numerous studies have been documenting the contributions of parks and public lands to better climate resiliency. Parks, open space and natural lands can cool urban heat islands, buffer flood impacts, improve water quality and improve air quality. Urban tree canopy in parks can remove air pollution and sequester carbon. Parks and greenways along storm-affected coastlines are being created to help buffer impacts of anticipated flooding due to sea level rise, storm surges, and increased precipitation. Climate resilience strategies involving parks can focus on resilient shoreline development, green stormwater infrastructure and increased tree groves.

As the climate changes, outdoor recreation opportunities and availability can become more inconsistent. Wildfires, flooding, reduced snowpack and other environmental impacts from climate changes can directly and indirectly affect visitor-use patterns. Recreation planners and managers play a role in climate resiliency by protecting vulnerable resources that can impact outdoor recreation opportunities.

## 2019 Special Report on Paddlesports & Safety

In 2019, the Outdoor Foundation produced a report focused on paddlesports data based on a participation survey (over 20,000 online interviews with a nationwide sample of individuals and households). In 2018, 22.9 million Americans (approximately 7.4% of the population) participated in paddle sports. This represents an increase of more than 4 million participants since the study began in 2010. Over the last five years, there continues to be an increase in paddlesports popularity among outdoor enthusiasts, with significant portions of the nationwide growth occurring in the Pacific region.

Recreational kayaking continues to grow in popularity but may be driving some of the decline in canoeing. The popularity of stand-up paddling has soared, increasing by 1.5 million participants over the past five years, though it does not have nearly as high a participation rate as either recreational kayaking or canoeing.

Most paddlers are Caucasian, other racial and ethnic groups are largely under-represented. However, Caucasian participation has remained relatively flat while participation by people identifying as Hispanic or Black/African American has grown by 0.5% to 1% per year since 2013. This growth has led to more than 773,000 new Hispanic paddlers in just six years, signaling the importance and potential of engaging minority groups in paddlesports.

One in eight paddlers have been participating in the sport for 21 years or more. However, many participants – between thirty and sixty percent, depending on the discipline – tried a paddlesport for the first time in 2018. Such high levels of first-time participation may produce longer term growth in paddling, assuming participants continue to enjoy the sport.

Among adult paddlers, most participate for excitement and adventure, for exercise, or to be close to nature. Kayakers, rafters, canoers and stand-up paddlers often enjoy, or would be willing to try, other paddlesports. Many also enjoy similar outdoor “crossover” activities such as hiking, camping, walking, and nature viewing.





# Appendix G:

## Implementation Tools & Tactics

## Local Funding Options

The City of Sammamish possesses a range of local funding tools that could be accessed for the benefit of growing, developing and maintaining its parks and recreation system. The sources listed below represent likely potential sources, but some also may be dedicated for numerous other local purposes which limit applicability and usage. Therefore, discussions with City leadership are critical to assess the political landscape to modify or expand the use of existing City revenue sources in favor of park and recreation projects and programs.

### Councilmanic Bonds

Councilmanic bonds may be sold by cities without public vote. The bonds, both principal and interest, are retired with payments from existing city revenue or new general tax revenue, such as additional sales tax or real estate excise tax. The state constitution has set a maximum debt limit for councilmanic bonds of 1½% of the value of taxable property in the city.

### General Obligation Bond

For the purposes of funding capital projects, such as land acquisitions or facility construction, cities and counties have the authority to borrow money by selling bonds. Voter-approved general obligation bonds may be sold only after receiving a 60% majority vote at a general or special election. If approved, an excess property tax is levied each year for the life of the bond to pay both principal and interest. The state constitution (Article VIII, Section 6) limits total debt to 5% of the total assessed value of property in the jurisdiction.

### Excess Levy – One Year Only

Cities and counties that are levying their statutory maximum rate can ask the voters, at any special election date, to raise their rate for one year (RCW 84.52.052). As this action increases revenue for one-year at a time it is wise to request this type of funding for one-time uses only.

### Regular Property Tax - Lid Lift

Cities are authorized to impose ad valorem taxes upon real and personal property. A city's maximum levy rate for general purposes is \$3.375 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Limitations on annual increases in tax collections, coupled with changes in property value, causes levy rates to rise or fall; however, in no case may they rise above statutory limits. Once the rate is established each year, it may not be raised without the approval of a majority of the voters. Receiving voter approval is known as a lid lift. A lid lift may be permanent, or may be for a specific purpose and time period.

A levy lid lift is an instrument for increasing property tax levies for operating and/or capital purposes. Taxing districts with a tax rate that is less than their statutory maximum rate may ask the voters to "lift" the levy lid by increasing the tax rate to some amount equal to or less than their statutory maximum rate. A simple majority vote of citizenry is required.

Cities and counties have two "lift" options available to them: Single-year/basic or Multi-year.

Single-year: The single-year lift does not mean that the lift goes away after one year; it can be for any amount of time, including permanently, unless the proceeds will be used for debt service on bonds, in which case the maximum time period is nine years. Districts may permanently increase the levy but must use language in the ballot title expressly stating that future levies will increase as allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW. After the initial “lift” in the first year, the district’s levy in future years is subject to the 101% lid in chapter 84.55 RCW. This is the maximum amount it can increase without returning to the voters for another lid lift.

The election to implement a single-year lift may take place on any election date listed in RCW 29A.04.321.

Multi-year: The multi-year lift allows the levy lid to be “bumped up” each year for up to a maximum of six years. At the end of the specified period, the levy in the final period may be designated as the basis for the calculation of all future levy increases (in other words, be made permanent) if expressly stated in the ballot title. The levy in future years would then be subject to the 101% lid in chapter 84.55 RCW.

In a multi-year lift, the lift for the first year must state the new tax rate for that year. For the ensuing years, the lift may be a dollar amount, a percentage increase tied to an index, or a percentage amount set by some other method. The amounts do not need to be the same for each year. If the amount of the increase for a particular year would require a tax rate that is above the maximum tax rate, the assessor will levy only the maximum amount allowed by law.

The election to implement a multi-year lift must be either the August primary or the November general election.

The single-year lift allows supplanting of expenditures within the lift period; the multi-year lift does not, and the purpose for the lift must be specifically identified in the election materials. For both single- and multi-year lifts, when the lift expires the base for future levies will revert to what the dollar amount would have been if no lift had ever been done.

The total regular levy rate of senior taxing districts (counties and cities) and junior taxing districts (fire districts, library districts, etc.) may not exceed \$5.90/\$1,000 AV. If this limit is exceeded, levies are reduced or eliminated in the following order until the total tax rate is at \$5.90.

1. Parks & Recreation Districts (up to \$0.60)  
Parks & Recreation Service Areas (up to \$0.60)  
Cultural Arts, Stadiums & Convention Districts (up to \$0.25)
2. Flood Control Zone Districts (up to \$0.50)
3. Hospital Districts (up to \$0.25)  
Metropolitan Parks Districts (up to \$0.25)  
All other districts not otherwise mentioned
4. Metropolitan Park Districts formed after January 1, 2002 or after (up to \$0.50)
5. Fire Districts (up to \$0.25)
6. Fire Districts (remaining \$0.50)  
Regional Fire Protection Service Authorities (up to \$0.50)  
Library Districts (up to \$0.50)  
Hospital Districts (up to \$0.50)  
Metropolitan Parks Districts formed before January 1, 2002 (up to \$0.50)



## Sales Tax

Paid by the consumer, sales tax is a percentage of the retail price paid for specific classifications of goods and services within the State of Washington.

Governing bodies of cities and counties may impose sales taxes within their boundaries at a rate set by state statute and local ordinances, subject to referendum.

Until the 1990 Legislative Session, the maximum possible total sales tax rate paid by purchasers in cities was 8.1%. This broke down as follows: state, 6.5 cents on the dollar; counties, 0.15 cents; cities, 0.85 cents; and transit districts, a maximum of 0.6 cents (raised to 0.9 cents in 2000). Since then multiple sales options were authorized. Those applicable to Parks and Recreation include: counties may ask voters to approve a sales tax of up to 0.3%, which is shared with cities. At least one-third of the revenue must be used for criminal justice purposes.

Counties and cities may also form public facilities districts, and these districts may ask the voters to approve a sales tax of up to 0.2%. The proceeds may be used for financing, designing, acquisition, construction, equipping, operating, maintaining, remodeling, repairing, and reequipping its public facilities.

Revenue may be used to fund any essential county and municipal service.

If a jurisdiction is going to change a sales tax rate or levy a new sales tax, it must pass an ordinance to that effect and submit it to the Department of Revenue at least 75 days before the effective date. The effective date must be the first day of a quarter: January 1, April 1, July 1 or October 1.

## Business and Occupation Tax

Business and occupation (B&O) taxes are excise taxes levied on different classes of business to raise revenue. Taxes are levied as a percentage of the gross receipts of a business, less some deductions. Businesses are put in different classes such as manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing, and services. Within each class, the rate must be the same, but it may differ among classes.

Cities can impose this tax for the first time or raise rates following referendum procedure.

B&O taxes are limited to a maximum tax rate that can be imposed by a city's legislative body at 0.2% (0.002), but grandfathered in any higher rates that existed on January 1, 1982. Any city may levy a rate higher than 0.2%, if it is approved by a majority of voters (RCW 35.21.711). Beginning January 1, 2008, cities that levy the B&O tax must allow for allocation and apportionment, as set out in RCW 35.102.130.

## Impact Fees

Development impact fees are charges placed on new development in unimproved areas to help pay for various public facilities that serve new development or for other impacts associated with such development. Both cities and counties may impose this tax through legislative action.

Counties that plan under the GMA, and cities, may impose impact fees on residential and commercial development activity to help pay for certain public facility improvements, including parks, open space, and recreation facilities identified in the county's capital facilities plan. The improvements financed from impact fees must be reasonably related to the new development and must reasonably benefit the new development. The fees must be spent or encumbered within ten years of collection. Sammamish currently assesses a parks impact fee.

## Real Estate Excise Tax

Excise tax levied on all sales of real estate, measured by the full selling price, including the amount of any liens, mortgages, and other debts given to secure the purchase. Both cities and counties may impose this tax through legislative action.

Counties and cities may levy a quarter percent tax (REET 1); a second quarter percent tax (REET 2) is authorized. First quarter percent REET (REET 1) must be spent on capital projects listed in the city's capital facilities plan element of their comprehensive plan. Capital projects include planning, acquisition, construction, reconstruction, repair, replacement, rehabilitation, or improvement of parks, recreational facilities, and trails.

The second quarter percent REET (REET 2) must also be spent on capital projects, which includes planning, construction, reconstruction, repair, rehabilitation, or improvement of parts. Acquisition of land for parks is not a permitted use of REET 2. Both REET 1 and REET 2 may be used to make loan and debt service payments on projects that are a permitted use of these funds. The City of Sammamish currently assesses both REETs and uses this funding for various capital project needs.

### **Conservation Futures Tax (King County)**

The Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) is provided for in RCW 84.34. King County imposes a Conservation Futures levy at a rate of \$0.0625 per \$1,000 assessed value to acquire open space lands, including green spaces, greenbelts, wildlife habitat, and trail rights-of-way proposed for preservation for public use by either the county or the cities within the county. Funds are allocated annually, and cities within the county, citizen groups, and citizens may apply for funds through the county's process. The CFT program provides grants to cities to support open space priorities in local plans and requires a 100% match from other sources.

## **Federal & State Grants & Conservation Programs**

### **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program**

The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, also known as the Rivers & Trails Program or RTCA, is a technical assistance resource for communities. The program is administered by the National Park Service and federal government agencies to conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. The RTCA program implements the natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation mission of NPS in communities across America.

### **Recreation and Conservation Office Grant Programs**

The Recreation and Conservation Office was created in 1964 as part of the Marine Recreation Land Act. The RCO grants money to state and local agencies, generally on a matching basis, to acquire, develop, and enhance wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Some money is also distributed for planning grants. RCO grant programs utilize funds from various sources. Historically, these have included the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, state bonds, Initiative 215 monies (derived from un-reclaimed marine fuel taxes), off-road vehicle funds, Youth Athletic Facilities Account, and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

#### **Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)**

This program, managed through the RCO, provides matching grants to state and local agencies to protect and enhance salmon habitat and to provide public access and recreation opportunities on aquatic lands. In 1998, DNR refocused the ALEA program to emphasize salmon habitat preservation and enhancement. However, the program is still open to traditional water access proposals. Any project must be located on navigable portions of waterways. ALEA funds are derived from the leasing of state-owned aquatic lands and from the sale of harvest rights for shellfish and other aquatic resources.

#### **Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)**

Funding sources managed by the RCO include the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. The WWRP is divided into Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts; these are further divided into several

project categories. Cities, counties, and other local sponsors may apply for funding in urban wildlife habitat, local parks, trails, and water access categories. Funds for local agencies are awarded on a matching basis. Grant applications are evaluated once each year, and the State Legislature must authorize funding for the WWRP project lists.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides grants to buy land and develop public outdoor facilities, including parks, trails, and wildlife lands. Grant recipients must provide at least 50% matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions. Grant program revenue is from a portion of Federal revenue derived from selling or leasing off-shore oil and gas resources.

### **National Recreational Trails Program**

The National Recreational Trails Program (N RTP) provides funds to maintain trails and facilities that provide a backcountry experience for a range of activities, including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, motorcycling, and snowmobiling. Eligible projects include the maintenance and re-routing of recreational trails, development of trail-side and trail-head facilities, and operation of environmental education and trail safety programs. A local match of 20% is required. This program is funded through Federal gasoline taxes attributed to recreational non-highway uses.

### **Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) Program**

The YAF provides grants to develop, equip, maintain, and improve youth and community athletic facilities. Cities, counties, and qualified non-profit organizations may apply for funding, and grant recipients must provide at least 50% matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions.

### **Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund**

Grants are awarded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for acquisition or restoration of lands directly correlating to salmon habitat protection or recovery. Projects must demonstrate a direct benefit to fish habitat. There is no match requirement for design-only projects; acquisition and restoration projects require a 15% match. The funding source includes the sale of state general obligation bonds, the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and the state Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund.

## **Puget Sound Regional Council**

### **Surface Transportation Program Funding**

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) helps communities secure federal funding for transportation projects. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (also referred to as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act or IIJA) is the current federal transportation bill. It continues or expands the core funding programs authorized under the FAST Act, while also establishing several new programs for transportation, broadband, drinking water, energy and the environment. Funding is authorized through 2026.

Every two years, the PSRC conducts a competitive grant program to award FHWA Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. For the Countywide STP/CMAQ competitions, the policy focuses on providing transportation improvements to a center or centers and the corridors that serve them. Centers are defined as regional growth and regional manufacturing/industrial centers, centers designated through countywide processes, town centers, and other local centers. Program set-asides include funding for priority non-motorized projects within King County.



## King County Grants

### King County Parks Grants

The voter-approved 2020-2025 King County Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Levy allocates approximately \$110 million over six years for grants for parks, recreation, and open space throughout King County through four program areas. The levy grant programs are supported by Advisory Committees who provide policy guidance and award recommendations to King County Parks.

- **Parks Capital and Open Space:** Funds a broad range of park initiatives, including land acquisition, park planning, and development of passive and active parks (including indoor and outdoor recreation facilities) and local trails. Program goals include protecting lands for public space that would otherwise be lost to future development and expanding recreation facilities to meet the needs of the region's growing population.
- **Aquatic Facilities:** Funds capital projects for new or existing aquatic facilities, including acquisition, planning, construction of new facilities, or renovation or expansion of existing facilities. Program goals include conserving and expanding access to aquatic facilities in King County.
- **Healthy Communities and Parks Fund:** Funds projects and programs that provide new, increased, or enhanced access to recreation, parks, and open space in underserved communities, including investing in capacity-building for community groups. Program goals include reducing disparities and improving the health and well-being of King County residents in marginalized communities by increasing access to recreation, parks, and open space.
- **Open Space - River Corridors:** Funds projects that restore river habitat, reduce risks from flooding, and enhance recreation opportunities. Program goal includes enhancing river corridors in King County for their ecological and recreation benefits.

### King County Youth and Amateur Sports Grants (YASG)

Youth and Amateur Sports Grants (YASG) support fit and healthy communities by investing in programs and capital projects that increase access to physical activity. Funding is only available to organizations serving residents of King County, including non-profit organizations, public schools, park districts, public agencies, tribes and tribal organizations. A small or emerging community organization without 501c3 status is eligible through a partnership with a fiscal agent. Funds can only be used for programs or capital projects that increase access to health-enhancing physical activities.

### WaterWorks Grants

Approximately \$2 million are awarded every two years for organizations carrying out a variety of projects. Non-profits, schools, educational institutions, cities, counties, tribes, and special purpose districts are eligible to apply, and partnerships are encouraged. Projects must have a demonstrable positive impact on the waters of King County and provide opportunities for stewardship. In addition to the WaterWorks competitive grants, water quality project funding is available through King County Council allocated funding.

### King County Cultural Heritage Grants through 4Culture

As the cultural funding agency for King County, 4Culture offers grants and cultural support in three program areas: arts, heritage, and preservation. Program guidelines and grant award amounts vary between the three program areas.

## Other Methods & Funding Sources

### Metropolitan Park District

Metropolitan park districts may be formed to manage, control, improve, maintain, and acquire parks, parkways, and boulevards. In addition to acquiring and managing their own lands, metropolitan districts may accept and manage park and recreation lands and equipment turned over by any city within the district or by the county. Formation of a metropolitan park district may be initiated in cities of five thousand population or more by city council ordinance, or by petition, and requires majority approval by voters for creation.

### Park and Recreation District

Park and recreation districts may be formed to provide leisure-time activities and recreation facilities (parks, playgrounds, pools, golf courses, paths, community centers, arboretums, campgrounds, boat launches, etc.). They must be initiated by petition of at least 15% of the registered voters within the proposed district. Upon completing the petition process and review by county commissioners, a proposition for district formation and election of five district commissioners is submitted to the voters of the proposed district at the next general election. Once formed, park and recreation districts retain the authority to propose a regular property tax levy, annual excess property tax levies, and general obligation bonds. All three of these funding types require 60% voter approval and 40% voter turnout. With voter approval, the district may levy a regular property tax not to exceed sixty cents per thousand dollars of assessed value for up to six consecutive years.

### Park and Recreation Service Area (PRSA)

A quasi-municipal corporation with independent taxing authority whose purpose is to finance, acquire, construct, improve, maintain or operate any park, senior citizen activities center, zoo, aquarium, or recreation facilities; and provide a higher level of park service.

### Business Sponsorships/Donations

Business sponsorships for programs may be available throughout the year. In-kind contributions are often received, including food, door prizes, and equipment/material.

### Interagency Agreements

State law provides for interagency cooperative efforts between units of government. Joint acquisition, development, and use of park and open space facilities may be provided between Parks, Public Works, and utility providers.

### Private Grants, Donations & Gifts

Many trusts and private foundations provide funding for park, recreation, and open space projects. Grants from these sources are typically allocated through a competitive application process and vary dramatically in size based on the organization's financial resources and funding criteria. Philanthropic giving is another source of project funding. Efforts in this area may involve cash gifts and include donations through other mechanisms such as wills or insurance policies. Community fundraising efforts can also support park, recreation, or open space facilities and projects.

## Acquisition Tools and Methods

### Direct Purchase Methods

#### Market Value Purchase

The City purchases land at the present market value based on an independent appraisal through a written purchase and sale agreement. Timing, payment of real estate taxes and other contingencies are negotiable.

#### Partial Value Purchase (or Bargain Sale)

In a bargain sale, the landowner agrees to sell for less than the property's fair market value. A landowner's decision to proceed with a bargain sale is unique and personal; landowners with a strong sense of civic pride, long community history or concerns about capital gains are possible candidates for this approach. In addition to cash proceeds upon closing, the landowner may be entitled to a charitable income tax deduction based on the difference between the land's fair market value and its sale price.

#### Life Estates & Bequests

If a landowner wishes to remain on the property for an extended period of time or until death, several variations on a sale agreement exist. In a life estate agreement, the landowner may continue to live on the land by donating a remainder interest and retaining a "reserved life estate." Specifically, the landowner donates or sells the property to the city but reserves the right for the seller or any other named person to continue to live on and use the property. When the owner or other specified person dies or releases their life interest, full title and control over the property will be transferred to the city. The landowner may be eligible for a tax deduction when the gift is made by donating a remainder interest. In a bequest, the landowner designates in a will or trust document that the property will be transferred to the city upon death. While a life estate offers the city some degree of title control during the landowner's life, a bequest does not. Unless the intent to bequest is disclosed to and known by the City in advance, no guarantees exist concerning the property's condition upon transfer or to any liabilities that may exist.

#### Gift Deed

When a landowner wishes to bequeath their property to a public or private entity upon their death, they can record a gift deed with the county assessors office to ensure their stated desire to transfer their property to the targeted beneficiary as part of their estate. The recording of the gift deed usually involves the tacit agreement of the receiving party.

#### Option to Purchase Agreement

This type of agreement is a binding contract between a landowner and the city that would only apply according to the conditions of the option and limits the seller's power to revoke an offer. Once in place and signed, the Option Agreement may be triggered at a future, specified date or upon completing designated conditions. Option Agreements can be made for any time duration and can include all of the language pertinent to closing a property sale.

#### Right of First Refusal

In this agreement, the landowner grants the city the first chance to purchase the property once the landowner wishes to sell. The agreement does not establish the sale price for the property, and the landowner is free to refuse to sell it for the price offered by the city. This is the weakest form of agreement between an owner and a prospective buyer.



## Conservation and/or Access Easements

Through a conservation easement, a landowner voluntarily agrees to sell or donate certain rights associated with their property (often the right to subdivide or develop), and a private organization or public agency agrees to hold the right to enforce the landowner's promise not to exercise those rights. In essence, the rights are forfeited and no longer exist. This type of easement is a legal agreement between the landowner and the city that permanently limits land uses to conserve a portion of the property for public use or protection. The landowner still owns the property, but the use of the land is restricted. Conservation easements may result in an income tax deduction and reduced property taxes and estate taxes. Typically, this approach provides trail corridors where only a small portion of the land is needed or for the strategic protection of natural resources and habitat. The city purchases land at the present market value based on an independent appraisal through a written purchase and sale agreement. Timing, payment of real estate taxes, and other contingencies are negotiable.

## Park or Open Space Dedication Requirements

Local governments have the option to require developers to dedicate land for parks under the State Subdivision Law (Ch. 58.17 RCW) and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) (Ch. 43.21C RCW). Under the subdivision law, developers can be required to provide the parks/recreation improvements or pay a fee in lieu of the dedicated land and its improvements. Under the SEPA requirements, land dedication may occur as part of mitigation for a proposed development's impact.

## Landowner Incentive Measures

### Density Bonuses

Density bonuses are a planning tool used to encourage a variety of public land use objectives, usually in urban areas. They offer the incentive of being able to develop at densities beyond current regulations in one area, in return for concessions in another. Density bonuses are applied to a single parcel or development. An example is allowing developers of multi-family units to build at higher densities if they provide a certain number of low-income units or public open space. For density bonuses to work, market forces must support densities at a higher level than current regulations.

### Transfer of Development Rights

The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based planning tool that allows landowners to trade the right to develop a property to its fullest extent in one area for the right to develop beyond existing regulations in another area. Local governments may establish the specific areas in which development may be limited or restricted and where development beyond regulation may be allowed. Usually, but not always, the "sending" and "receiving" property are under common ownership. Some programs allow for different ownership, which, in effect, establishes a market for development rights to be bought and sold.

### IRC 1031 Exchange

If the landowner owns a business or investment property, an IRC Section 1031 Exchange can facilitate the exchange of like-kind property solely for business or investment purposes. No capital gain or loss is recognized under Internal Revenue Code Section 1031 (see [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for more details). This option may be a useful tool in negotiations with an owner of an investment property, especially if the tax savings offset to the owner can translate to a sale price discount for the City.

### Current (Open Space) Use Taxation Programs

Property owners whose current lands are in open space, agricultural, or timber uses may have that land valued at their current use rather than their "highest and best" use assessment. This differential assessed value, allowed under the Washington Open Space Taxation Act (Ch.84.34 RCW), helps to preserve private properties as open space, farm, or timberlands. If the land is converted to other non-open space uses, the landowner is required to

pay the difference between the current use annual taxes and the highest/best taxes for the previous seven years. When properties are sold to a local government or conservation organization for land conservation/preservation purposes, the required payment of seven years' worth of differential tax rates is waived. The amount of this tax liability can be part of the negotiated land acquisition from private to public or quasi-public conservation purposes. King County has four current use taxation programs that offer this property tax reduction to incentivize landowners to voluntarily preserve open space, farmland, or timberland on their property.

## **Other Land Protection Measures**

### **Land Trusts & Conservancies**

Land trusts are private non-profit organizations that acquire and protect unique open spaces and are traditionally not associated with any government agency. Forterra (formerly called the Cascade Land Conservancy) is the regional land trust serving the Sammamish area. Its efforts have led to the conservation of more than 234,000 acres of forests, farms, shorelines, parks, and natural areas in the region ([www.forterra.org](http://www.forterra.org)). Other national organizations with local representation include the Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Land, and the Wetlands Conservancy.

### **Regulatory Measures**

A variety of regulatory measures are available to local agencies and jurisdictions. Available programs and regulations include State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA); Shorelines Management Program; and Hydraulic Code, and Washington State Department of Fisheries and Department of Wildlife.

### **Public/Private Utility Corridors**

Utility corridors can be managed to maximize the protection or enhancement of open space lands. Utilities maintain corridors to provide services such as electricity, gas, oil, and rail travel. Some utility companies have cooperated with local governments to develop public programs such as parks and trails within utility corridors.

