



A Parks Plan for All

Hood River Area

**Multi-Jurisdictional Parks,
Recreation & Open Space Plan**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Multi-Jurisdictional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan is intended to serve as the guiding recreation plan for the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District, the City of Hood River and Hood River County. The Port of Hood River and Hood River County School District, along with several conservation organizations, were integral partners and contributors to the plan. The Hood River area continues to grow and face development pressures, and this Plan aims to reflect current community interests and recreational opportunities.

This Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan creates a vision for an cooperative, inclusive and interconnected system of parks, trails and open spaces that promotes outdoor recreation, health and environmental conservation as integral elements of a thriving, livable Hood River. The Plan will establish a path forward to guide the efforts of the District, City and County in providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreational opportunities.

This Plan was developed with the input and direction of Hood River area 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.

HOOD RIVER AREA'S RECREATION SYSTEM

A wide variety of parks, trails, recreation facilities and open spaces exist in the greater Hood River area for local residents and visitors to enjoy. These park and recreation facilities are provided through intergovernmental cooperation and partnerships between the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District, City of Hood River, Hood River County, the Port of Hood River and Hood River County School District. In addition, Federal and State lands are within the region for public use and contribute to the quality of life and outdoor recreation for the Hood River area.

The significant wealth of outdoor recreation activities, including water sports in the Columbia River Gorge, field and court sports in active-use parks, and camping and trail activities in natural areas, provide valuable resources to residents and draw numerous outdoor adventure enthusiasts to the region. The partnering agencies seek to enhance the parks and recreation facilities for community residents and visitors and actively collaborate to maintain and enhance the high quality of life in the Hood River area.

With development and projected population growth, continued investments in parks and recreation will be necessary to meet the needs of the community, support youth development, provide options for residents to lead healthy, active lives and foster greater social and community connections.

In all, the partnering agencies manage over 1,650 acres of parkland. The majority of this property is categorized as regional parks (68%), which includes more direct recreational lands within federal, state, and county forestland and campgrounds. In considering the distribution of ownership of parklands, the County provides the highest amount of acreage for outdoor recreation through its campgrounds and day use areas in its forestlands providing 41% of the parkland acreage. The U.S. Forest Service's 460 acres of regional park facilities covering campgrounds, Lost Lake and Wells Island provide 28% of the parkland facility acreage. The Port of Hood River's 63 acres of park facilities provide 3.8% of the valley's outdoor recreational space. HRVPRD's 36.5 acres comprise 3.6% of the overall recreational acreage. The City of Hood River covers 2.3% with its 38.5 acres of parks and open spaces. Other providers contribute an additional 312 acres for 18.9% of park facilities.

STRATEGIC GOALS & POLICIES

This Plan includes a series of goals intended to guide decision-making by the partnering agencies to ensure the parks and recreation system meets the needs of the Hood River area community for years to come. These goals and policies were based on community input and technical analysis. They include:

Parks: *Park providers in the Hood River area provide and maintain adequate parkland to provide diverse recreational experiences and meet current and future community needs.*

- **Parkland Acquisition:** Acquire additional parkland necessary to serve the Hood River area's current and future population based on adopted service levels.
- **Neighborhood and Community Parks:** Improve park sites to provide a diverse range of active and passive recreational experiences.
- **Riverfront Regional Parks:** Maintain and enhance riverfront parks to connect residents with the water and provide unique recreational experiences.
- **County Regional Parks:** Provide opportunities for residents and visitors to experience – on a day or overnight basis – minimally developed parks that promote a connection to nature.

Open Space and Natural Areas: *Hood River County's parks system includes areas that provide ecological, scenic, and recreational value for generations.*

- **Open Space:** Provide opportunities for residents to connect with nature.
- **Natural Area Restoration and Management:** Manage areas within parks to protect and enhance their ecological value.

Recreation: *Recreation programs and facilities enhance residents' quality of life and offer opportunities to learn, play, and connect.*

- **Recreation Programs:** Provide a variety of recreational programs that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Aquatics Facilities:** Provide opportunities for aquatic recreation through the area's pools and riverfront facilities.
- **Indoor Recreation Facilities:** Provide indoor spaces for individual and group recreation, educational classes, and community events.
- **Specialized Facilities:** Establish and operate specialized facilities to respond to identified public needs, as appropriate.
- **Sport Fields and Court Facilities:** Provide a system of sport fields and courts to serve the needs of the Hood River area community.

Trails: *Hood River County's comprehensive trail system promotes active lifestyles by providing non-vehicular connections to nature, parks, schools and other community destinations, while balancing recreational needs with other community goals and being sensitive to farm and forest uses.*

- **Urban and Regional Trails:** Develop, enhance and maintain multi-use trails that provide safe opportunities to recreate and to connect to major destinations within urban areas and throughout the greater Hood River area.
- **Primitive Trails:** Provide a sustainable system of recreation trails to provide access to motorized and non-motorized outdoor recreation and connections to the region's public forest lands for residents and visitors to the area.

Administration: *Public park and recreation providers efficiently and effectively meet community needs, while stewarding the community's investment in parks and recreation facilities.*

- **Community Involvement:** Encourage and support transparency in planning processes that promotes active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreation.
- **Planning:** Proactively plan for the development and management of the park and recreation system to guide future actions.
- **Asset Management:** Actively manage the Hood River area's park and recreation assets to ensure consistent service delivery, reduce unplanned reactive maintenance, and minimize economic, public safety, and environmental risks.
- **Partnerships:** Pursue and maintain effective partnerships to plan, provide, maintain, and operate parks and recreation facilities and programs and maximize opportunities for public recreation.
- **Funding Resources:** Pursue diverse funding sources necessary to provide a sustainable and secure future for the Hood River area's park and recreation system.

FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

According to the State's certified population estimate¹ for Hood River County, the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District currently serves a population of approximately 24,100 residents. According to the State's 2020 Coordinated Population Forecast², the District's population is expected to grow approximately 13% over the next 20 years, bringing an additional estimated 3,130 residents to the area. Nearly all of this growth is expected to occur in the Hood River urban growth boundary. Serving existing and future residents will require improvements to existing parks, expansion of the park system, expansion of the path and trail network and renovation of recreation facilities. The capital project list proposes significant investments in acquisition, development and renovation of the parks system over the next ten years.

Oregon State Parks published A Guide to Community Park and Recreation Planning for Oregon Communities in 2019 to assist local governments in considerations about levels of service and park system standards. Utilizing the State guidelines and through discussions with the partnering agencies, proposed numeric service levels and watershed ranges are noted on page 73, and these proposed standards distinguish between urban and rural areas. Service standards are not recommended for trails, since the goal of the trail network is more related to community connectivity and access, rather than a per capita distance measurement. Standards are not proposed for open spaces, due to the uniqueness and special characteristics of those sites. Also, measuring performance by acreage or acreage per capita alone does not provide a comprehensive examination of the overall park system.

To ensure existing parks provide desired recreational amenities and offer safe and accessible opportunities to play and gather, the Plan recommends investments in the development and improvement of neighborhood and community parks. For example, the future development of Hood River's westside will trigger the need for several parks to accommodate the growing needs in that area. The Plan also proposes smaller improvements throughout the park system to enhance ADA accessibility, safety and usability of park amenities.

The Plan identifies the need for targeted acquisitions to ensure sufficient land for outdoor recreation as population grows, and it identifies target acquisition areas to secure community parkland, gain access rights along key trail corridors and fill gaps in core park access. However, opportunities to acquire large park sites will become more difficult as Hood River nears its projected build-out, so acquisition of a greater number of smaller parcels may be needed to meet the service standard.

The importance for enhanced connectivity for walking and biking has been expressed through public feedback and is endorsed in existing City, County and HRVPRD planning documents. The Plan proposes the continued development of paths and trails in the Hood River urban area, and many of these connections will help fill existing gaps in the path and trail network to make a more connected and comprehensive system. Connecting the gaps in the Indian Creek Trail and growing the Westside Trail are priorities to improve trail access. A longer-term idea includes secure rights for a Mount Hood Railway Trail that connects

¹ Portland State University Center for Population Research, 2019 Certified Population Estimates

² Portland State University Center for Population Research, June 30, 2020

Hood River through the Powerdale site and link to the upper valley. Creating this regional trail could provide the missing link between existing local, county, state and federal trail systems and result in a truly multi-jurisdictional recreational trail/pathway system.

Expanded recreational and community programming has been an identified need through this planning process. HRVPRD, in partnership with the school district, should continue to focus on programs that are in high demand or serve a range of users, while continuing to monitor local and regional recreation trends to ensure local needs and interests are addressed by program offerings. However, the number and types of activities that can be offered are limited by a lack of facility capacity and staffing. Additionally, HRVPRD should place a significant focus toward the replacement of the Aquatic Center, given its age and operational challenges, and act on one of the options outlined in the 2017 feasibility study to renovate or replace the pool. A close look at financing alternatives and partnership opportunities will be necessary to offset development and operational costs.

Partner Agency Recommendations

City of Hood River

- Coordinate with HRVPRD to acquire up to three neighborhood parks and one community park to serve the westside of Hood River
- Plan for the acquisition and development of several trail corridors, including Westside Trail, Henderson Creek Trail and Ridgeline Trail
- Upgrade and enhance park amenities, ADA accessibility, and parking at existing parks

Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District

- Coordinate with the City to acquire up to three neighborhood parks and one community park to serve the westside of Hood River
- Renovate or replace the Aquatic Center
- Partner with the school district and the local faith community for sport field improvements
- Upgrade and enhance park amenities, ADA accessibility, and parking at existing parks

Hood River County

- Develop site improvements at the Powerdale Day Use Area
- Consider parking and trailhead improvements at the Post Canyon Mountain Biking Area
- Upgrade and enhance park amenities, ADA accessibility, and parking at existing parks

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

A number of strategies exist to improve park and recreation service delivery for the Hood River area; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. The recommendations for park and recreation amenities noted in this Plan will trigger the need for funding beyond current allocations and for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities. Given that the operating

and capital budgets of the park and recreation providers are limited, additional resources will be needed to leverage, supplement and support the implementation of proposed policies and projects. The following implementation strategies are presented to offer near-term direction to realize these projects and as a means to continue dialogue between the City, County and District, local residents and other community partners.

Partner Coordination & Collaboration

Close agency cooperation will be imperative as local agencies move to implement several parks and recreation planning efforts, like the Westside Concept Plan Report, Recreation Trail System Master Plan and County Bicycle Plan, all of which support a healthy, connected community that involves parks, trails and open space elements. Coordination between the Public Works and Community Development departments can enhance and support the implementation of the proposed trail and bikeway network through integrated development plan review and transportation project planning.

Volunteer & Community-based Action

Volunteers and community groups already contribute to the improvement of parks and trails across the Hood River area. Volunteer projects include trail building, tree planting and park clean-ups, among others. The partnering agencies should consider the development of an Adopt-A-Trail program where volunteers can assist with maintaining, enhancing and monitoring local trails. HRVPRD also should consider organizing and leading the development of a revolving list of potential small works or volunteer-appropriate projects.

Park and Recreation District Funding

The Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District is a Special District defined by state statute. Funding for the HRVPRD comes from a property tax based general fund, system development charges (SDCs), and additional grants and revenue generated from the Aquatic Center. HRVPRD has a total district rate of \$0.34 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Revenue from the district rate funds HRVPRD, and other sources help fund parks throughout Hood River County. The HRVPRD had a Park and Recreation District bond rate of \$0.09, but this was retired in 2018. Hood River's district rate is among the lowest in the state. By comparison, Bend has a total district rate of \$1.63 per \$1,000 of assessed value. At its current rate, the District would be unable to expand staffing for a renovated aquatic center or provide additional operational resources to park and trail development and maintenance. One option for consideration would be to reform the district at a higher levy rate to accommodate the growing demands on the agency. This option will require additional vetting to explore the funding potential, impacts to other taxing jurisdictions and voter willingness to support the proposal.

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are increasingly necessary for local agencies to leverage their limited resources in providing park and recreation services to the community. 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, County and HRVPRD have existing partners and should continue to explore additional and expanded partnerships to help implement the Plan.



1 | OVERVIEW & PROCESS

PURPOSE OF PLAN

This Multi-Jurisdictional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan is intended to serve as the guiding recreation plan for the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District, the City of Hood River and Hood River County. The Port of Hood River and Hood River County School District, along with several conservation organizations, were integral partners and contributors to the plan. The Hood River area continues to grow and face development pressures, and this Plan aims to reflect current community interests and recreational opportunities.

This 2020 Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan creates a vision for an cooperative, inclusive and interconnected system of parks, trails and open spaces that promotes outdoor recreation, health and environmental conservation as integral elements of a thriving, livable Hood River. The Plan will establish a path forward to guide the efforts of the District, City and County in providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreational opportunities.

The Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan considers the park and recreation needs of residents across the Hood River Valley. It provides updated inventories, demographic conditions, needs analyses, management considerations and capital project phasing. The Plan establishes specific goals, recommendations and actions for developing, conserving and maintaining high-quality parks, trails, facilities and open spaces across the Valley.

It is a document that will guide elected and appointed officials, management and staff from the District, City, County, Port and School District when making decisions or taking actions regarding planning, acquiring, developing or implementing parks, trails, open space or recreational facilities. The Plan is intended to be updated periodically to remain current with the community's recreational interests.

PLANNING AREA

Hood River County is located on the northern edge of the Oregon border, framed between the shoreline of the Columbia River to the north and the foothills of Mt. Hood to the south. The Hood River Valley is approximately 40 miles east of Portland, connected by Highway 30 / Interstate 84, which traverses the northern portion of the County. The Hood River, a tributary to the Columbia River, flows northward along the eastern edge of the City of Hood River and forms a spine to connect the mid- and upper-Valley communities of Odell, Dee and Parkdale.



The planning area for this Plan represents three distinct geographies: Hood River's urban growth boundary, the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District service area and the Hood River County boundary.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

This Multi-Jurisdictional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan is a reflection of the community's interests and needs for parks, recreational facilities and trails. The planning process encouraged and enabled public engagement in the choices, priorities and future direction of the valley's park and recreation system. The Plan project team conducted a variety of public outreach activities to solicit feedback and comments, in concert with a review of the recreation system inventory, level of service review and the current and future needs assessment.

Current community interests surfaced through a series of public outreach efforts that included an open house meeting, focus group discussions, stakeholder interviews, community surveys, online engagement, website content and the project's Technical Advisory Team meetings. An assessment of the park inventory became the basis for determining the current performance of the system to potential standards. An overarching needs analysis was conducted for recreational facilities and programs, parks and trails to assess current conditions and forecast demand accounting for trends and population growth. To guide the implementation of the goals of the Plan, a set of strategies, implementation options, and a list of capital projects are included.

Once adopted, the Plan can become a component of the City's and County's Comprehensive Plans and direct an integrated approach to park system service delivery for the next 10 years.

Oregon Goal 8 On Recreation Planning

Oregon's Statewide Planning Goal 8 states:

“The requirements for meeting such needs, now and in the future, shall be planned for by governmental agencies having responsibility for recreation areas, facilities and opportunities: (1) in coordination with private enterprise; (2) in appropriate proportions; and (3) in such quantity, quality and locations as is consistent with the availability of the resources to meet such requirements. State and federal agency recreation plans shall be coordinated with local and regional recreational needs and plans.”



These elements are reflected in this Plan, which will guide the efforts for the District, City and County.

Local residents are proud of the Hood River area for its sense of small town character and for what has been accomplished in the park system with modest resources, but they also are interested in improvements. This Plan documents those desires and provides a framework for addressing capital development and funding in the near-term.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Community engagement and input played a important role in revealing the current interests in and needs for park and recreation opportunities, which were explored through a variety of methods to gather feedback on the strengths and limitations of existing park and recreational resources available to Hood River area residents. This planning process leaned on the following community outreach methods to provide a baseline of local demand and need:

- Mail & online-based community survey
- 1 community meeting
- 11 stakeholder discussions
- 3 focus Group Discussions
- 12 tabling events
- Social media content & emails

Throughout this process, the public provided information and expressed opinions about their needs and priorities for parks, trails and recreation facilities and programs in the Hood River area. This feedback played a crucial role in updating policy statements and prioritizing the Capital Project List contained within this Plan.

Community Surveys

A mail and online survey was conducted between September - October 2018 to identify general sentiment and demand for parks and recreation facilities. The purpose of the survey was to gather input to help determine park, trail, open space and recreation priorities of the community. The planning project team jointly designed a 16-question survey to assess residents' recreational needs, preferences and priorities.

The mail survey was sent to a random sample of 2,500 households within the boundaries of the District on September 14th, and surveys were collected from to October 31, 2018. Reminder postcards were mailed to the 2,500 households on October 2, 2018. In all, 447 survey responses were received from the mail survey. In addition, an online version of the survey was posted to the District's website and made available to the general public. Information on the online survey was posted on September 19th and closed on October 22nd, 2018. An additional 135 surveys were completed online by members of the general public.

In total, 582 surveys were completed, and the two survey datasets were kept isolated to enable comparisons between the two samples. A summary of community survey results appear in Appendix B, and a highlight of survey responses follows.

Major Findings

District residents strongly value their parks and recreation facilities.

- ◆ Nearly all respondents think parks and recreation are important to quality of life in the Hood River area; 87% of respondents consider them essential.

Residents visit parks, trails and recreation facilities frequently.

- ◆ Nearly two-thirds of respondents visit parks or recreation facilities at least once a week. Nearly all visit at least once per year.

Residents want to see more places to walk and bike and to recreate indoors.

- ◆ In multiple ways, respondents indicated their desire for more urban walking and biking trails, road biking routes, and trail biking routes. Respondents, particularly those who live in Hood River, would also like to see more indoor recreation facilities and programs.

Residents would like to see improvements made to the parks & recreation system, including the Aquatic Center, and are willing to pay more to fund it.

- ◆ A majority of respondents are supportive of building or expanding trails, acquiring more parkland in west Hood River and in the Mid and Upper Valley, acquiring natural areas, replacing the aquatic center and creating a new community center.
- ◆ More than half of respondents said they would vote in favor of bond issues to replace the aquatic center (62%) or expand and develop local trail connections (56%). A majority of respondents (56%) would support a full replacement of the aquatic facility with a new combination aquatic and community center. To support these improvements, nearly half of respondents (48%) would be willing to pay \$10 or more per month, with another 26% willing to pay between \$6 and \$9 per month.

Public Meetings

The project team sought feedback from local residents and program users at a community meeting held at Golden Eagle Park. Summary responses from the meeting is provided in Appendix C.

Community Open House Meeting (June 16, 2018)

The community workshop was held on June 16, 2018, coinciding with the grand opening event of Golden Eagle Park. Stations were set up with displays and interactive activities for people to provide input. The stations provided information about the parks master planning process, the existing parklands and trails, and sought thoughts, ideas and preferences for future parks amenities and activities. Approximately 75 people attended. Activities asked specific questions about the vision for parks and recreation and asked respondents to:

- Select different parks facilities and amenities and locate them on a map,
- Create an imagined park using arts & craft materials, and
- Prioritize 11 different potential park amenities and activities.

The comment forms asked specific questions about the community's vision for parks and recreation. The survey asked participants to:

- Indicate the types of amenities, activities, and programs desired,
- Indicate where additional bicycle and pedestrian trails are needed,
- Indicate how they access parks and rate their experience,
- Indicate how they use their parks, and
- Optional demographic questions.

Comment forms were also available in English and Spanish at tabling events.



Over 1,400 residents provided input to the project - helping shape the direction of the Plan

Stakeholder Interviews

Input about the provision of park and recreation services was sought from specific stakeholders who represent a broad set of user groups. The consultant team interviewed 11 stakeholders to explore how parks and open space are used, and what recreation needs should be considered by the master planning effort. Stakeholders represented residents, non-governmental organizations, local business, Rotary, Community Education, faith communities and activist groups. Stakeholders shared their history and views on the park system with ideas on what's missing and user group needs.

Focus Groups

Three focus groups were conducted at the Aquatic Center in Hood River in August.

- **Wind / Water / Trail Recreation group** - intended to learn and understand how these recreational organizations currently use the parks system and what their key concerns and parks needs are.
- **Sports Fields and Facilities group** - intended to learn and understand how youth and adult sports leagues and organizations currently use the parks systems, the challenges they face in sharing limited facilities, and ideas or preferences for future sports fields and facilities.
- **Latino Community group** – intended to understand the key barriers and needs of the Latino community in the use of parks, fields, and facilities in the Hood River Valley area

Stakeholder comments were often specific to the particular perspective or interest of the stakeholder group. Overall, comments were generally favorable in regard to existing City amenities and the potential for future improvements across the Valley. Stakeholders recognized the limited financial capacity of the partners and were often quick to offer suggestions for potential partnerships or other means to accomplish specific projects. Suggested projects ranged from coordinating the development of trail connections, identifying opportunities to expand sport field capacity, and improving existing park facilities. Specific recommendations are reflected in the Needs Assessment chapter, and stakeholder discussion summaries are provided in Appendix D.

Other Outreach

The Hood River Valley Park & Recreation District website had an existing webpage for the master plan process with updates for the project, along with links to the survey and opportunities to get additional information. An e-newsletter invited the community to the Golden Eagle Park Grand Opening and the June community workshop. HRVPRD used Facebook and Instagram to generate interest in the master plan and its related events. Over 6,400 people were reached and 195 responded to the Facebook event. The local Latino community was specifically engaged through the local Latino radio station, Radio Tierra. HRVPRD also partnered with The Next Door, a local nonprofit providing health and family services for the Latino community, to support outreach and recruitment of participants, in both English and Spanish. Also, staff from the Hood River Valley Park & Recreation District presented information about the plan to the Latinos In Action group to solicit feedback on the best ways to reach and get information from Latinos in Hood River. Project information was also distributed by tabling during 12 summer events throughout Hood River.

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2 | PROFILE & CONTEXT

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Hood River Valley Park and Recreation District serves all of Hood River County, except the City of Cascade Locks. The District's area extends from the Columbia River south to Mount Hood. It includes the City of Hood River, a number of smaller communities, including Parkdale, Odell and Mount Hood, as well as rural agricultural areas. The valley's temperate climate, natural beauty, wealth of recreational opportunities, robust economy, and proximity to Interstate 84 make it an attractive place to visit, live, or locate a business.

History

For thousands of years, Hood River was home to Native Americans, including the Wasco and Klickitat tribes who fished, hunted, and gathered huckleberries, camas and other food and materials from the region.

The Lewis and Clark expedition passed through the area in October 1805. In the decades to come, settlers would travel through the Hood River region on the Oregon Trail, either along the Columbia River or across Mt. Hood on the Barlow Road. Permanent settlement of the fertile valley began in the mid-1850s, when the Coe, Jenkins and Benson families filed land claims under the Oregon Donation Land Act. Conflict between the white settlers and Native tribes led to the Treaty of 1855, which relocated tribal communities to reservations.

The City of Hood River was platted in 1881 at the mouth of the Hood River. Incorporated in 1895, it served as the valley's commercial hub and as an important ferry and rail connection point. Hood River County was formally created in 1908, after settlers in the region passed a statewide initiative to politically separate the valley from Wasco County. The County was named after the Hood River and Mount Hood, both of which are located within its borders.

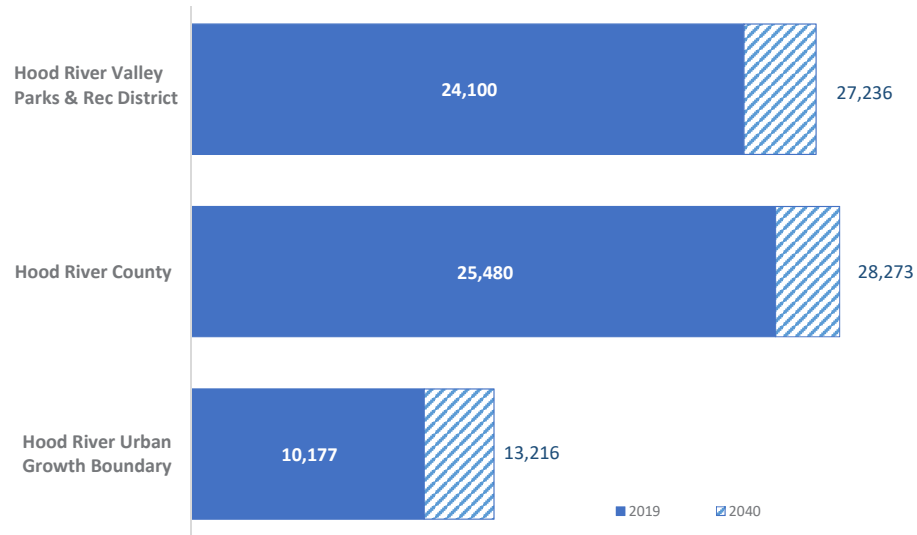
Early settlers planted apple orchards and – after a devastating freeze in 1919 – pears, which flourished in the valley. Improved transportation connections soon solidified the region’s role in agricultural production, facilitating transport to Portland and beyond. In 1922, the Columbia River Highway was opened, greatly improving access between Portland, Hood River, and The Dalles. The Hood River Bridge was completed in 1924, improving access to the Washington side of the Columbia River. Agriculture, timber, the construction of nearby hydroelectric dams, and industrial development along Columbia River drove growth in the valley through the twentieth century.

More recently, the City of Hood River has become a top tourist destination in the Pacific Northwest, thanks in part to its myriad recreational opportunities and scenic vistas. Residents formed the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District in 1988 to continue the operations of the Hood River Aquatic Center. The District’s role has since grown to encompass providing some of the region’s parks, trails and recreation programs.

A Growing Community

The Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District currently serves a population of approximately 24,100 residents. The District’s population is expected to grow by approximately 13% over the next 20 years, bringing an additional 3,130 residents to the area. Nearly all of this growth is expected to occur within the City of Hood River’s urban growth boundary.

Figure 2. Forecasted population growth through 2040



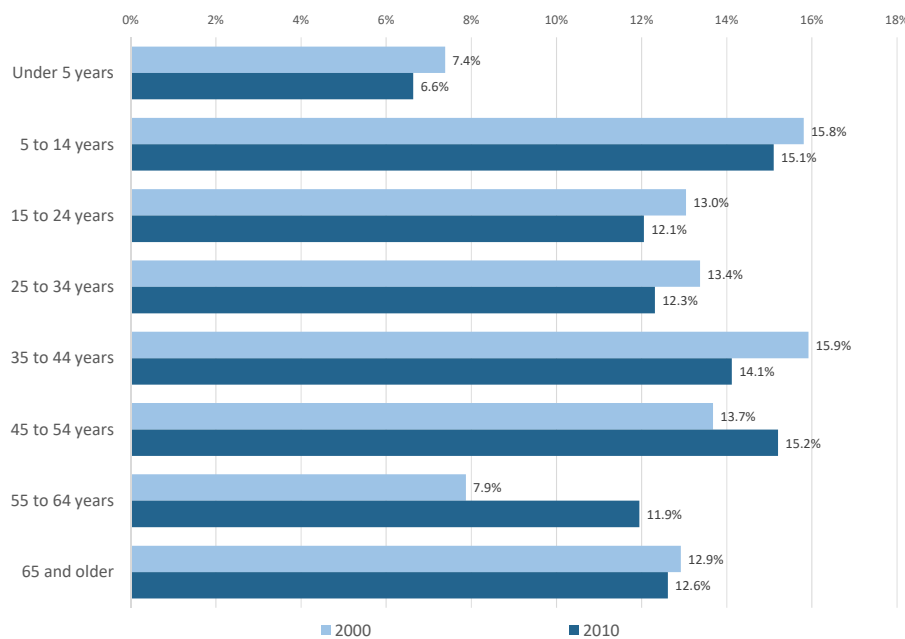
More than one in four households in the District have children, and residents are younger on average (37.8) than residents statewide (38.4). However, this may be changing. Since 2000, the District has seen growth in the percentage of residents over 45 and a decline in the number of children – resulting in an increase of 2.5 years in the median age.

Figure 3. Population Characteristics: HRVPRD, City of Hood River, Hood River County, Oregon

Demographics	City of Hood River	HRVPRD	Hood River County	Oregon
Population Characteristics				
Population (2019)	8,305	24,100	25,480	4,236,400
Population (2010)	7,167	21,202	22,346	3,831,074
Population (2000)	5,831	19,296	20,411	3,421,399
Percent Change (2000-19)	42%	25%	25%	24%
Persons w/ Disabilities (%)	9.5%	9.8%	10.6%	14.7%
Household Characteristics (2012-16)				
Households	3,070	7,711	8,213	1,545,745
Percent with children	27%	24%	24%	26%
Median HH Income	\$47,967	\$57,926	\$56,581	\$53,270
Average Household Size	2.41	2.69	2.66	2.52
Average Family Size	3.18	3.34	3.3	3.07
Owner Occupancy Rate	48.40%	64.52%	64.60%	61.40%
Age Groups (2010)				
Median Age	36.3	37.8	38.0	38.4
Population < 5 years of age	7.9%	6.6%	6.7%	6.2%
Population < 18 years of age	25.9%	26.3%	26.0%	22.6%
Population 18 - 64 years of age	61.4%	61.1%	61.4%	63.5%
Population > 65 years of age	12.7%	12.6%	12.6%	13.9%

Sources: Portland State University Center for Population Research, 2019 Certified Population Estimates
 U.S. Census, 2010 Census, 2000 Census, 2012-2016 American Community Survey

Figure 4. Age of residents



Unlike many places across Oregon, the District's population has become less diverse over the past 15 years. In 2000, the percentages of residents who identified as "White" alone was 78%; this percentage climbed to 83% in 2010 and 89% in 2016. However, one in three residents identified as Hispanic or Latino in 2010, and approximately 27% of residents speak Spanish at home. This may mean that some residents could benefit from Spanish-language park and recreation information.

Economy

Hood River County's diverse economy is built on agriculture, tourism and recreation, and high-tech manufacturing. These industries provide economic stability, potential for growth, and opportunities to attract and retain skilled employees from local communities and around the world.

Major economic sectors:

- **Agriculture:** The Hood River Valley is known world-wide for its tree fruit agriculture. Its climate and fertile soils make it an ideal location for growing pears, apples, peaches and cherries. Production and associated packaging, distribution and manufacturing form the foundation of the region's economy.
- **Tourism and Recreation:** Hood River County is a premier tourist destination in the Northwest and nationwide, thanks to its proximity to the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area and Mount Hood. The Columbia River, with its consistent Gorge winds, attracts windsurfers and kiteboarders from around the world. The forested flanks of Mount Hood offer year-round recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, camping, and snow sports. More recently, the valley's picturesque farms, wineries and breweries have become tourist destinations in their own right. The region's robust tourism industry fuels its hospitality, retail and service industries.
- **High-tech manufacturing:** Since the 1980s, Hood River has seen the birth of a high-tech manufacturing industry focused on the design and development of windsurfing components and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drones). Engineering companies like Insitu, a subsidiary of the Boeing Company, and Hood Technology have now become some of the region's largest employers.

More generally, Hood River County's residents are employed in sectors as varied as education and health care (21%), agriculture (14.6%), retail (10%), manufacturing (9%), arts and entertainment (9%) and many other sectors. Approximately two of every three residents over 18 are employed, though 3% are unemployed, and the remaining 35% are out of the work force. Median household income, at nearly \$58,000, is over 9% higher than the average for residents statewide. Residents are generally well-educated; over 80% of those over 25 years of age have completed a high school degree, and 55% have some college or higher-level education.

CURRENT MACROTRENDS & ISSUES

Myriad of issues and challenges face the Hood River area, its park and recreation providers and community members, ranging from national health trends to localized equity issues. The following macrotrends are anticipated to be important priorities over the next decade.

Place-Keeping & A Sense of Community

Hood River area residents have voiced an interest for additional gathering places and spaces to celebrate the Valley's heritage, culture and diversity. The waterfront offers an important and identifying focal point for the community, but further 'up' the valley and on the westside, distinctive public parks are limited. Additional future parks could serve to help build a sense of community for those residents farther from the city center. Local park and recreation agencies should continue to collaborate on facility design elements, signage and maintenance standards to help create a shared identity for park spaces and reinforce a sense of community.

Obesity Epidemic

The nation is facing an obesity epidemic that has prompted the U.S. Surgeon General to issue a call to action to the parks and recreation profession. His call is to "reclaim the culture of physical activity" in our country. Scientific research now indicates that walking a minimum of 22 minutes a day can greatly decrease one's chances of acquiring diabetes or heart disease. These two health issues cause 70% of deaths in the U.S. and account for over \$1 trillion in costs.

This call to action is now re-emphasizing the preventative side of health where the costs are much lower. Despite the array of outdoor recreation opportunities and the existing aquatic center facility, the system of parks and trails in the Hood River area still includes several barriers that prevent residents from potentially reaching these goals. This multi-jurisdictional plan makes specific recommendations on how the local agency partners can reduce barriers within the Valley's recreation infrastructure and support improved access to safe and accessible places to walk, bike and play.

Aging Population

The challenges of planning for an aging population have been affecting communities across the country. 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 the Valley's park and recreation providers to take a comprehensive approach to their aging populations' needs. Accessibility and barrier-free parking and paths, walkability and connectivity will be paramount to future planning. Providing programming for today's older adults includes not only active and passive recreation, but also the type of equipment needed to engage in certain activities.

Social Equity

Much has been written lately about this subject. Maintaining social equity across programs and facilities can be difficult enough in communities with stable demographics. In the Hood River area, shifts in population demographics and the need for affordable housing will create the challenge to keep up with local changes. The valley's park and recreation providers must continue to find ways to provide complete and safe access to parks and facilities and strive to ensure that all of the valley's residents have equitable access to its resources, services and programs.

Park Facilities & Park Conditions

While park settings tend to have a wide range of facilities to encourage physical activity, research has revealed there are specific amenities that promote higher levels of activity. Park users engage in higher levels of physical activity in parks that have playgrounds, waterfront, sport facilities and trails. The condition of the park and its facilities also determines its use. Park aesthetics and amenities are important to usage patterns. Also, a user's perception of personal safety is a determining factor in how one uses and feels in and around parks and open spaces.

Research on recreation also provides information on how park distribution, park proximity, park facilities and conditions have an impact on people's desire to engage in physical activity. It may be valuable to re-evaluate current park designs and maintenance policies to ensure barrier-free, engaging park environments and operational efficiencies. Local agency partners must each play a role in enabling healthy lifestyles for valley citizens by modifying and adapting their parks and trail system and recreation programming.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

This Multi-Jurisdictional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan is one of several documents that comprise Hood River's long-range planning and policy framework. Past community plans and other relevant documents were reviewed for policy direction and goals as they pertain to the provision and planning for parks, recreation and trails opportunities across the Hood River area. The development of each plan or study involved public input and adoption by their respective responsible legislative body. The following list of plans was reviewed, and summaries for each appear in Appendix F.

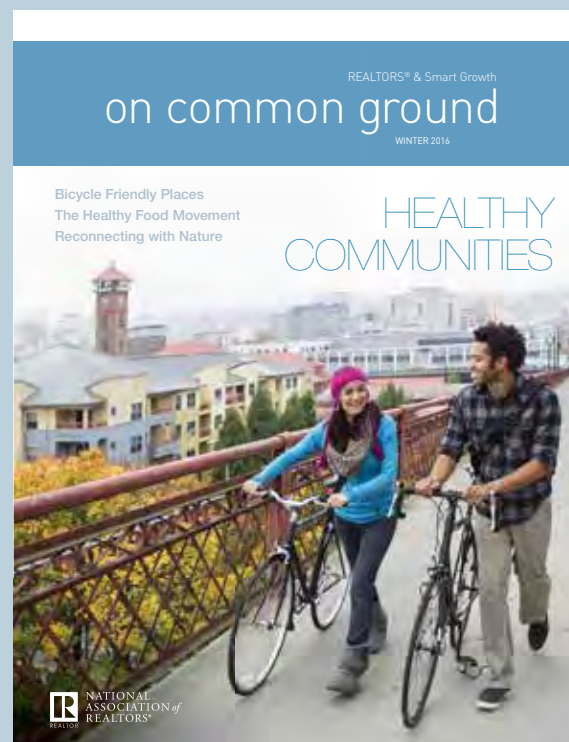
- Hood River Valley Parks & Recreation District Master Plan
- City of Hood River Comprehensive Plan
- Hood River Westside Concept Plan Report
- University of Portland - City of Hood River Housing
- Hood River County Comprehensive Plan
- Hood River County Bicycle Plan
- Hood River County Forestry Department Recreation Trail System Master Plan
- Hood River County School District Athletic Facilities Master Plan
- Port of Hood River 2014-2018 Strategic Business Plan

From the winter 2015 issue of the National Association of Realtors (NAR) magazine, the direct link between how communities are built and grow is tied to health and quality of life. More walkable and bike-able environments with better access to nature and parks have become essential for personal well-being and needs to be integrated into community planning. The NAR articles identify walkable communities as a prescription for better health.

Even the U.S. Surgeon General sounded a call to action challenging communities become more walkable to allow more Americans to increase their physical activity through walking. The Center for Disease Control and its Healthy Community Design Initiative focuses on walkability and the need to better integrate into transportation planning.

The NAR magazine issue also reported on the value of bicycle-friendly communities and the direct tie to healthy and sustainable living. Access to healthy, locally-grown food choices is reported with the value of community gardens and urban food hubs for healthy diets, as well as connection to community engagement.

Realtors have long been aware that housing near a good system of parks and trails will hold strong appeal to buyers. The winter NAR issue illustrates the recognition that community design for healthy living goes beyond the single house location. People want choices, and these healthy community design traits of walking, biking, trails and parks all play an important role in housing prices, sales and re-sales.



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 in 2005 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 physiological 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.



SOCIAL & 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 Oregon, outdoor recreation generates \$16.4 billion in consumer spending, creates 172,000 direct jobs and results in \$749 million in state and local tax revenue. According to the 2017 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.



3 | INVENTORY

The Hood River area provides a wide variety of parks, trails, recreation facilities and open spaces for local residents and visitors to enjoy. These park and recreation facilities are provided through intergovernmental cooperation and partnerships between the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District, City of Hood River, Hood River County, the Port of Hood River, and Hood River County School District. In addition, Federal and State lands are within the region for public use and contribute to the quality of life and outdoor recreation for the Hood River area.

The outdoor recreation activities within the boundaries of the District, including water sports in the Columbia River Gorge, camping and trail activities in natural areas, provide valuable resources to residents and draw numerous outdoor adventure enthusiasts to the region. The Hood River area park agencies seek to enhance the parks and recreation facilities for community residents and visitors and actively collaborate with its other recreation facility partners to maintain and enhance the high quality of life in the valley.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

Parkland is classified to assist in planning for the community's recreational needs. The park system provided by the Hood River Valley Park and Recreation District and its partners is composed of a hierarchy of park types offering different active or passive recreation and/or natural area opportunities. While each park facility may serve only one function, collectively the system is intended to serve the full range of community needs. Classifying parkland allows the park and recreation providers to evaluate those needs and to plan for an efficient, cost effective and coordinated park system. Classifications are not meant to be static and they can change over time as conditions change. While the classifications are guidelines for identifying the targeted sizes, use, and amenities for each park type, acquisition opportunities and site characteristics will also influence park development.

The following types of park facilities are used to classify the Hood River area collective park system:

- Neighborhood Park
- Community Park
- Regional Park
- Trail
- Facility
- Undeveloped Open Space
- Other Community Partners
- School District Property

Park Classification	Definition
Neighborhood	Accessible recreation close to residents; smaller in size; variety of amenities; walkable; may have parking & restrooms; may include play area, sports courts, fields, picnic facilities, sitting areas, pathways; current inventory ranges in size from 0.2 to 2.9 acres; recommended size range is 0.7 to 5 acres
Community	Larger in size (mid-size); serves wider base than neighborhood park; typically supports groups activities, restrooms, parking; amenities above plus group picnic, amphitheater, family play destination; current inventory ranges in size from 2.5 to 4.6 acres; recommended size range is 2 to 20 acres
Regional	Typically large size; variety of active & passive recreation uses; attracts visitors; event attractions; current inventory ranges in size from 2.5 to 320 acres; recommended size depends on acquisition opportunity and site characteristics
Trails	Non motorized recreation and transportation networks generally separated from roadways. Accommodates multiple or shared uses.
Facility	May provide a single or dedicated use, such as an aquatic center. Accommodate highly organized activities and provide economic as well as social and physical benefits. May have highly specialized management requirements.
Undeveloped/Open Space	Land not designated for specific park use & could be reclassified in future based on planning, design & development; does not have permanent facilities but may have temporary facilities or some maintenance; areas may include open space that serves passive outdoor recreation & trails or provide access to water based activities and may include natural riverbanks, but does not generally include developed facilities. (e.g. Eliot Park, Morrison Park, Waucoma Park, Hook, Spit, Hook Island Park)
Other Community Partners	Private schools or churches with sports fields used for public recreation by use agreement & programming (St. Mary's); Other community facilities (e.g. Georgiana Smith, Bowe Addition).
School District Property	School playgrounds, sport court and sport fields, as well as indoor gyms. Some of these facilities may be open for public use outside of school hours.

PARK INVENTORY BY OPERATOR

City of Hood River Parks & Facilities

The City of Hood River maintains parks and open spaces within city limits that can accommodate a range of casual recreation activities and planned group events. Park facilities vary in size and amenities to provide small seating areas such as Overlook Park, the smallest public space, to Waterfront Park, a regional attraction with play features, amphitheater, beach, picnic shelters, restrooms and waterfront trail. A total of 38 acres of parkland and recreational space and approximately 3 miles of trails are managed by the City for its residents and visitors to the area.

This Master Plan does not serve as an inventory of Statewide Goal 5 resources: Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources. This plan is not intended to identify, assess, designate or protect Goal 5 resources such as wetlands, riparian areas, fish habitat, wildlife, habitat, significant natural areas, open space, cultural areas, or historic resources.

Facility	Classification	Size
Children's Park	Community	1.24 acres
Collins Fields (in Jackson Park)	Community	2.60 acres
Eliot Park	Undeveloped/Open Space	11.90 acres
Friendship Park	Neighborhood	0.90 acres
Hood River Waterfront Park	Regional	6.40 acres
Jackson Park	Community	2.50 acres
Mann Park	Neighborhood	0.86 acres
Memorial Overlook Park/Rose Garden	Community	0.20 acres
Montello Park	Neighborhood	0.28 acres
Morrison Park	Undeveloped/Open Space	4.78 acres
Overlook Park	Neighborhood	0.04 acres
Rotary Skatepark (Jaymar)	Neighborhood	2.93 acres
Tsuruta Park	Neighborhood	1.01 acres
Tsuruta Tennis Courts	Facility	1.10 acres
Waucoma Park	Undeveloped/Open Space	0.71 acres
Wilson Park	Neighborhood	1.05 acres
	Subtotal	38.50 acres

Facility	Classification	Size
2nd Street Stairs	Trail	0.2 miles
Hood River Waterfront Trail	Trail	2.8 miles
	Subtotal	3.0 miles

HRVPRD Parks & Facilities

The Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District owns and operates the aquatic center, owns several parks, and partners with other providers to operate seven park facilities ranging in size and amenities. The Rotary Skate Park is an exceptional facility that draws visitors from outside Hood River to enjoy the amenities of skate and bike features.

HRVPRD manages 48 acres of park and recreation facilities. The Indian Creek and Westside Trails help connect residents to recreational opportunities to walk and bike with 4.7 miles of trails provided by HRVPRD.

Facility	Classification	Size
Aquatic Center	Facility	1.35 acres
Barrett Park	Undeveloped/Open Space	32.16 acres
Culbertson Park	Neighborhood	0.72 acres
Hazelview Park	Neighborhood	0.43 acres
Odell Park	Neighborhood	1.83 acres
Subtotal		36.49 acres

Facility	Classification	Size
Indian Creek Trail System	Trail	3.3 miles
Westside Trail	Trail	1.4 miles
Subtotal		4.7 miles

HRVPRD manages and operates Golden Eagle Park, a county owned park.

HRVPRD manages and operates Rotary Skate Park and Morrison Park, city owned parks.

County Parks & Facilities

Through their parks, forest lands, reservoirs, trails and fairgrounds, Hood River County provides extensive regional outdoor recreation facilities within the Hood River Valley. Toll Bridge and Tucker Parks provides seasonal campgrounds and riverbank fishing access. Kingsley Reservoir (temporarily closed for reservoir expansion) and Powerdale Day Use Areas, Punchbowl Falls and the Post Canyon Mountain Bike Staging Area offer access to an extensive network of trails for local residents and visitors. Additionally, the County Fairgrounds hosts events and activities from April into December with the county fair occurring in late July. Altogether, the County provides over 682 acres of community, regional and special use park facilities within Hood River County.

Facility	Classification	Size
County Fairgrounds	Facility	20.00 acres
Golden Eagle Park	Community	4.56 acres
Kingsley Reservoir Day Use Area	Regional	320.00 acres
Oak Grove County Park	Community	2.50 acres
Panorama Point County Park	Regional	11.50 acres
Powerdale Day Use Area*	Regional	100.00 acres
Punchbowl Falls	Regional	103.00 acres
Ruthon County Park	Neighborhood	1.50 acres
Toll Bridge Park	Regional	84.00 acres
Tucker Park	Regional	35.50 acres
Subtotal		682.56 acres

* Only 20 acres are legally accessible for recreation.

Facility	Classification	Size
Post Canyon Mountain Bike Area	Trail	60.0 miles
Subtotal		60.0 miles

School Facilities

The Hood River County School District and two private schools in the Hood River Valley provide indoor and outdoor athletic facilities available for use for the public and leagues when not being scheduled for school programs. The sport fields, courts and gyms contribute to the overall recreational opportunities for youth team sports leagues in the community. Baseball, softball, soccer/lacrosse, general recreation and football fields are included in the school district inventory, as well as tracks, tennis and basketball courts. Wy'East Middle School and the District's elementary schools also have indoor gyms that can be reserved for outside use during non-school hours when not being programmed by the school. In all, school facilities contribute 43 recreation fields, courts and gyms to the overall park and recreation system.

Facility Name	Type	Acres	Baseball/Softball	Soccer/Lacrosse	Recreational Field	Football	Track	Tennis Courts	Basketball	Gymnasium
Hood River High School	HRCSD	35.0	2		1	1	1			
Hood River Middle School	HRCSD	5.5				1	1			
Wy'East Middle School	HRCSD	20.0	1	2		1	1			2
Parkdale Elementary School	HRCSD	5.0	1	2				2	1	1
Westside Elementary School	HRCSD	15.9	2	3						1
Mid-Valley Elementary School	HRCSD	7.8	2		1				1	2
May St. Elementary School	HRCSD	2.5	1	1					1	1
Pine Grove Early Childhood Dev.	HRCSD	2.5	2						1	1
Horizon Christian School	Private	8.4		2						
Subtotal		102.5	11	10	2	3	3	2	4	8

Port Parks & Facilities

The Port of Hood River supports outdoor recreation that leads to economic benefits for the Hood River community. The Port manages six sites: Nichols Boat Basin, Event Site, the Hook, Marina Park (including the Green and pathways), Marina Basin and the Spit. Over 63 acres of outdoor recreation spaces and facilities serve to enhance the opportunities for passive recreation and casual uses and support more organized events and regional celebrations. These in-water and riverside amenities are a critical piece to the water-based recreation activities in Hood River and help draw international visitation to the region.

Facility	Classification	Size
Boat Basin (Nichols)	Regional	4.60 acres
Event Site	Regional	5.50 acres
Hook	Undeveloped/Open Space	3.80 acres
Hook Island Park	Undeveloped/Open Space	4.50 acres
Marina Basin	Regional	22.00 acres
Marina Green	Regional	2.50 acres
Marina Park	Regional	15.50 acres
Spit	Undeveloped/Open Space	4.70 acres
Subtotal		63.10 acres

Facility	Classification	Size
Marina Paths	Trail	0.5 miles
Subtotal		0.5 miles

State Lands

Oregon State Parks and Recreation provides several outdoor recreation facilities within the county for residents and visitors to the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Starvation Creek State Park, Viento State Park and Campground, Wygant State Natural Area, and Koberg Beach State Recreation Site offer opportunities to hike to dramatic overlooks, explore the river’s edge along the Columbia, camp at the base of Gorge trailheads and enjoy the geologic displays of the Gorge’s landscape. In addition to specific sites, the Historic Columbia River State Highway Trail travels for 13 miles - connecting to some of the Columbia Gorge state recreation facilities.

Facility	Amenities
Starvation Creek State Park	Picnicking, trailhead for HCRHS trail
Viento State Park	Seasonal campground, water sports, HCRSH trail
Wygant State Natural Area	Trail
Koberg State Recreation Site	Swimming, fishing, boating
Historic Columbia River State Hwy Trail	13 mile paved hike/bike trail along Columbia Gorge

Federal Lands

U.S. Forest Service manages the Mount Hood National Forest, which has expansive recreational opportunities within easy reach of Hood River area residents. The most proximate camping, hiking and fishing are available at the four campgrounds, noted below. Those campgrounds located adjacent to water resources accommodate fishing, camping, hiking, picnicking in a wilderness setting. Nottingham and Sherwood campgrounds are located just off Route 35 along banks of the East Fork of Hood River and are within close proximity to hiking trailheads. Wells Island, located in the Columbia River off the shores of Hood River, is only accessible by boat and hosts a natural area with a beach for day use. These regional park facilities within the Hood River Valley offer over 460 acres of natural areas for outdoor recreation.

Facility	Type	Size
Kinnickinnick Campground	Regional	104 acres
Lost Lake	Regional	290 acres
Nottingham Campground	Regional	10 acres
Sherwood Campground	Regional	3.5 acres
Wells Island	Undeveloped/Open Space	53.3 acres
Subtotal		460.8 acres

In addition to the USFS facilities listed above, the Mount Hood National Forest also contain three wilderness areas with acreage that overlaps into Hood River County. Portions of these three wilderness areas also are within the federally designated Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Protected in their natural conditions, these forest lands offer extensive hiking, backpacking and equestrian trails. Over 526 miles of trails traverse through the USFS wilderness areas.

Other Providers	Type	Size
Badger Creek Wilderness Area	Regional	14,490 acres
Mark O. Hatfield Wilderness Area	Regional	46,437 acres
Mt. Hood Wilderness Area	Regional	27,554 acres
Subtotal		88,481 acres
Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area	Regional	33,856 acres

Private / Other Park & Recreation Facilities

The provision of recreation lands in the Hood River area goes beyond the public agencies that own and manage public lands for community enjoyment. Several privately owned parks and recreation facilities are open for public use. Some are available by reservation for fee-based use such as the sports fields at Horizon Christian School and St Mary's Church. Other facilities support outdoor recreation and park amenities through non-profit or philanthropic provision, such as Columbia Land Trust's ownership along the Powerdale Corridor. Together, these other providers contribute 310 acres to the Hood River area park system.

Facility	Classification	Size
Bowe Addition	Neighborhood	0.40 acres
Columbia Land Trust	Undeveloped/Open Space	293.80 acres
Georgiana Smith Park	Neighborhood	0.50 acres
Hutson Museum area	Special Use	3.50 acres
Parkdale Community Center	Facility	0.44 acres
Parkdale Community Center Park	Neighborhood	1.46 acres
St. Mary's Catholic Church	Community	11.73 acres
Subtotal		311.83 acres

INVENTORY SUMMARY

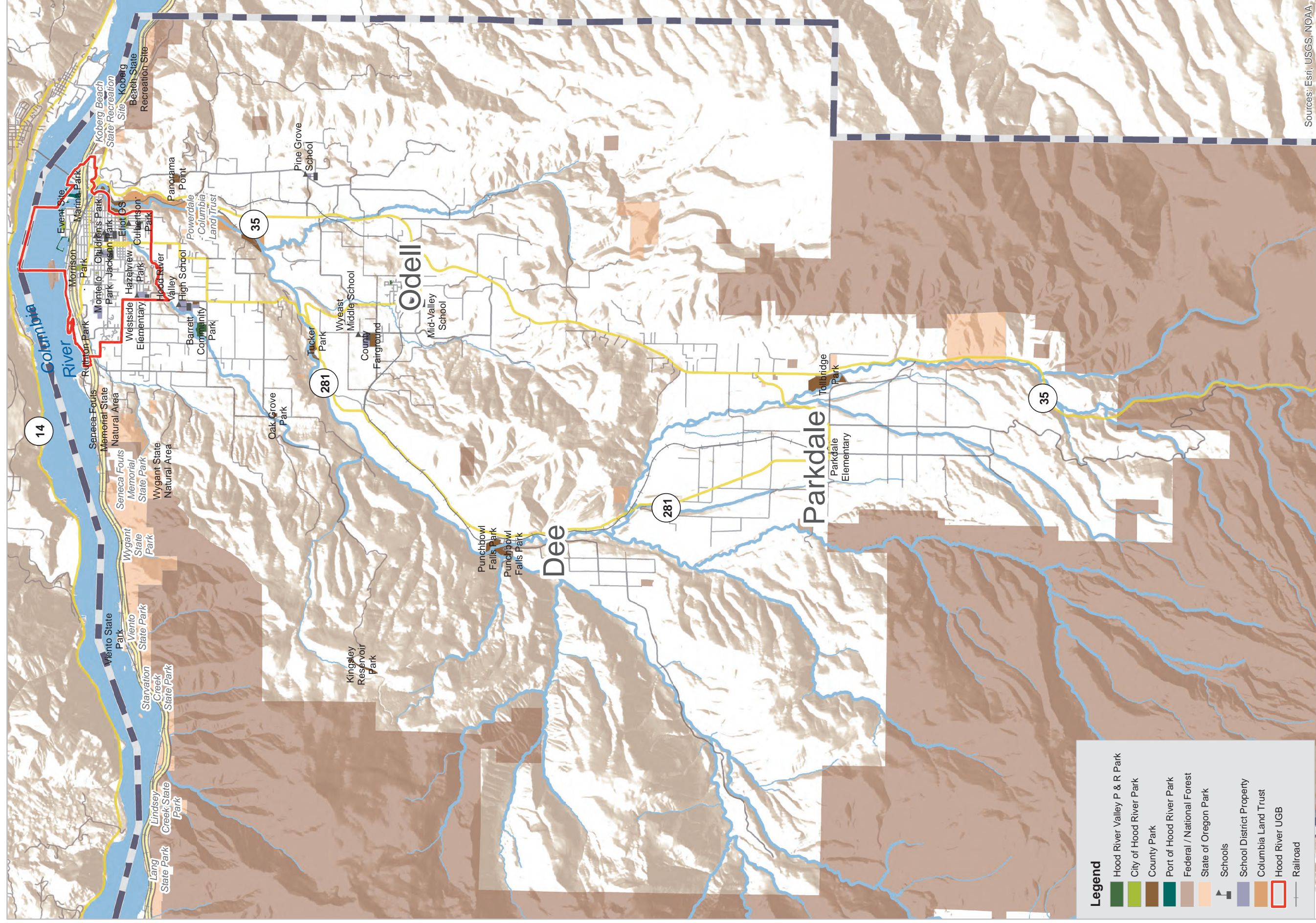
In all, the partnering agencies manage over 1,650 acres of recreation land and open space. Seen as one network of park system facilities, the composite inventory on the following page illustrates the extent of park provision by facility ownership and operator. If state and federal recreation sites are segmented, seven different ownership categories exist to form the compilation of parks, trails and open spaces serving the Hood River community.

Agency	Acres	%
City of Hood River	38.5	2.3%
Port of Hood River	63.1	3.8%
HRVPR District	36.5	2.2%
Hood River County	682.6	41.3%
USFS Recreation Lands*	460.8	27.9%
Other Providers	369.4	22.4%
Subtotal	1,650.9	100.0%

* As per table: campgrounds, lakeside & Wells Island

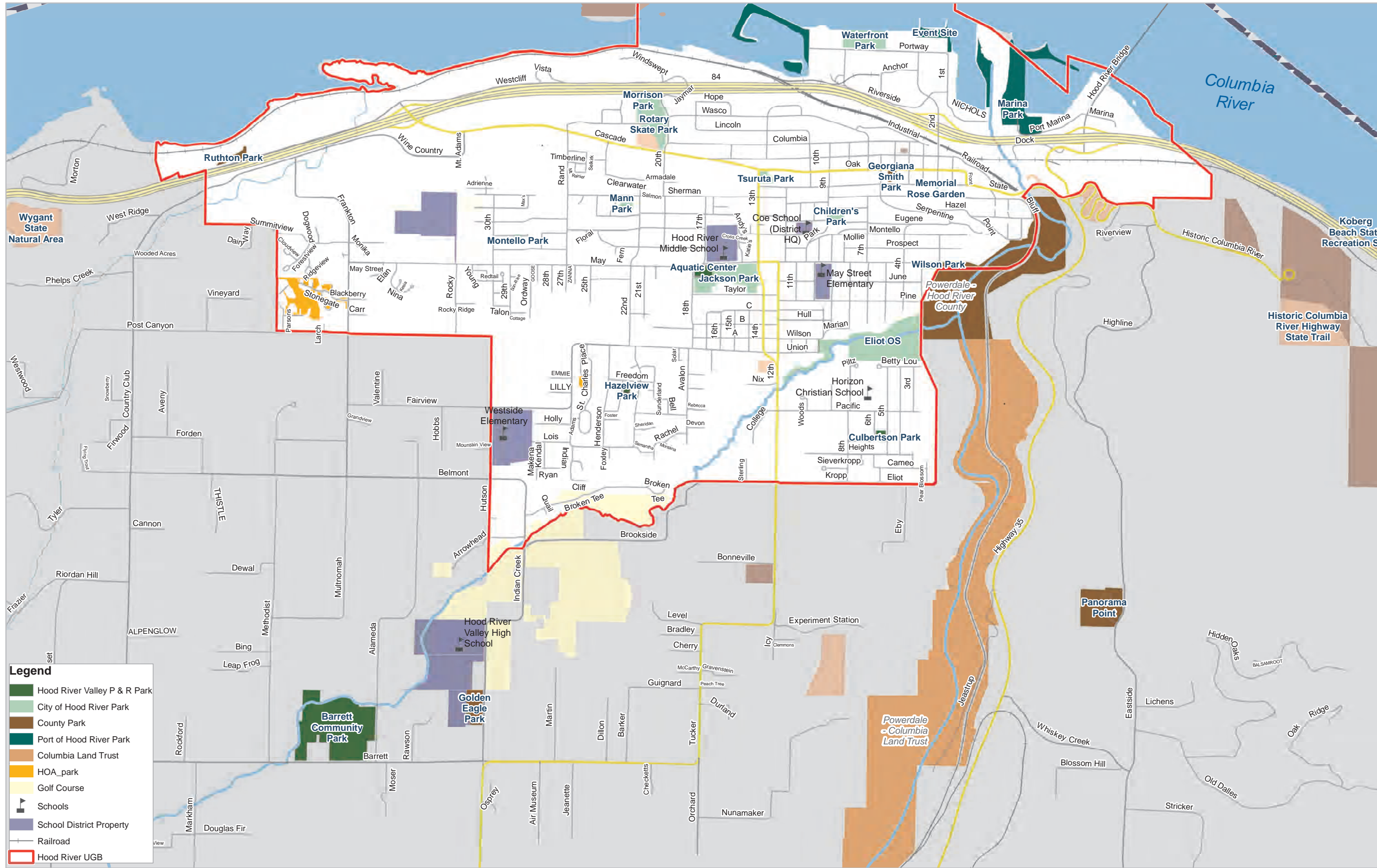
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Map I: Existing Parks & Open Space - Countywide

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Map 2: Existing Parks & Open Space - Urban Area

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A photograph of a woman and a child swimming in a pool. The woman is on the right, wearing glasses and a dark swimsuit, looking towards the child. The child is on the left, wearing a blue life preserver and goggles, swimming towards the woman. The water is clear and blue.

4 | VISION & GOALS

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

The goals and policies described in this chapter define the park and recreation services that the partner agencies provide and aim to achieve. These goals and policies were derived from input received throughout the planning process, from agency staff and elected officials. Taken together, the goals, policies, and strategies provide the framework for this Plan.

- A **goal** is a general statement describing an outcome the agencies wish to provide. Goals typically do not change over time unless community values shift.
- **Policies** are specific directives to implement and achieve the goals.
- **Strategies** are listed for each policy to provide added guidance.

Vision

This vision statement was created collaboratively by partnering park and recreation providers and will guide the efforts of the plan:

Collaboratively plan, build, and sustain a system of parks, trails, and programs that aspire to provide superior recreational opportunities for residents of and visitors to Hood River County.

Guiding Values

The guiding values of this plan, which align with the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) Three Pillars, are as follows.

- **Health & Wellness** -- We value the role parks and recreation plays in improving health and wellness.

- Conservation -- We value open space, connecting children to nature, and engaging communities in conservation practices.
- Social Equity -- We value accessibility of local parks and recreation to all residents and visitors.

Agency Roles for Goals & Policies

The demand for quality park and recreation opportunities continue to grow in the Hood River Valley with little regard to who provides services, yet the partnering agencies provide overlapping and complementary efforts to meet their respective recreation missions.

For each goal, a leadership, partnership or advocacy role is suggested to identify the level of involvement and commitment of each agency.

- **Leadership** role (L) indicates a primary responsibility for an action. Where more than one leadership entity is identified, the role generally relates to the assets owned by an entity.
- **Partnership** role (P) indicates more of a coordination responsibility.
- **Advocacy** role (A) indicates one of supporting and encouraging actions led by another organization. Advocacy actions or resources are determined on a case by case basis by each organization.

Given that the goal is cooperative efforts to optimize facility development and management, each agency will be responsible for setting their individual priorities and implementation plans. These goals and strategies do not obligate any agency to participate in any development or program.

Nor do these goals constitute an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Hood River or Hood River County, or their associated Goal 8 or Goal 5. This document may be adopted as a Background Report in connection with potential future amendments to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Hood River or Hood River County and associated goals. In the event of any inconsistency between the Comprehensive Plans of the City of Hood River or Hood River County, the Comprehensive Plans of each respective jurisdiction shall control.





GOAL I: PARKS

Park providers in the Hood River area provide and maintain parkland to provide diverse recreational experiences and meet current and future community needs.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 1.1 Parkland Acquisition. Acquire additional parkland necessary to serve the Hood River area’s current and future population based on adopted service levels.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Partner with other agencies to acquire suitable land for new parks to serve current and future residents. Evaluate acquisition opportunities based on their potential to improve existing levels of service, connectivity, and recreational opportunities.	L	L	L	-	P	-
b. Prioritize park acquisition in underserved urbanized areas where households are more than ½-mile from a developed park.	L	L	-	-	-	-
c. Require that new development in the urban growth area provide system development funds or parkland for future parkland needs.	L	L	-	-	-	-
d. Evaluate opportunities to acquire parklands declared surplus by other public agencies.	L	L	P	P	-	P
e. Pursue low-cost or non-purchase options to preserve open space, including the use of conservation easements and development covenants.	L	L	P	-	-	P
Policy 1.2 Neighborhood and Community Parks. Improve park sites to provide a diverse range of active and passive recreational experiences.	●	●				
Strategies						
a. Prioritize neighborhood park development in urbanized areas where service deficiencies exist (i.e., where households are more than ½-mile from a developed park) over areas that are currently served.	L	L	-	-	-	-
b. 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.	L	L	-	-	-	-
c. Design and develop park sites and facilities to maximize recreational value and experience, while minimizing maintenance and operational costs.	L	L	-	-	-	-
d. Require that new development provide system development funds or develop new parks consistent with this Plan and the applicable jurisdictional standards for parks and recreation facilities.	L	L	-	-	-	-



GOAL I: PARKS

Park providers in the Hood River area provide and maintain parkland to provide diverse recreational experiences and meet current and future community needs.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
e. Require plan review, final inspection and acceptance (including as-built drawings) of all developer-provided park projects installed.	L	L	-	-	-	-
Policy 1.3 Riverfront Regional Parks. Maintain and enhance riverfront parks to connect residents and visitors with the water and provide unique recreational experiences.	●	●	●	●		●
Strategies						
a. Improve river access and encourage water-and nature oriented activities along the Columbia and Hood Rivers.	P	L	L	L	-	A
b. Along the City’s working waterfront, encourage compatible development with existing parks and recreation infrastructure and investments.	A	L	A	L	-	-
c. When developing or improving waterfront parks, consider opportunities to restore degraded shorelines, increase native riparian vegetation and other habitat features, and provide for additional pervious surfaces and green infrastructure.	-	L	L	L	-	A
Policy 1.4 County Regional Parks. Provide opportunities for residents and visitors to experience – on a day or overnight basis – minimally developed parks that promote a connection to nature.	●	●	●			
Strategies						
a. Provide day-use areas and waterfront access, with appropriate developed recreational amenities (e.g. picnic areas, nature play, trails) in all County parks to support use by a broad cross-section of the community.	A	-	L	-	-	-
b. Where campgrounds are provided, offer a variety of camping types, including hiker/biker sites, tent sites, RV, and group sites.	-	-	L	-	-	-
c. Maintain and improve support facilities, such as restrooms and showers, to provide a quality user experience.	A	-	L	-	-	-
d. Evaluate campground fees balancing cost-recovery and affordability for financial sustainability.	-	-	L	-	-	-



GOAL 2: OPEN SPACE & NATURAL AREAS

Hood River Area’s parks system includes areas that provide ecological, scenic, and recreational value for generations.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 2.1 Open Space. Provide opportunities for residents to connect with nature.	●	●	●	●		●
Strategies						
a. Provide wildlife and open space connections within public parks and open spaces.	L	L	L	L	-	L
b. Develop opportunities for passive and active recreation on the banks of the Columbia River and Hood River.	A	A	L	L	-	L
c. Explore opportunities to protect and provide appropriate public access (e.g. trails, viewpoints, wildlife viewing areas, and boat landings) to locations with ecological or scenic value that support passive recreation, interpretation, and environmental education.	L	L	L	P	-	L
Policy 2.2 Natural Area Restoration and Management. Manage areas within parks to protect and enhance their ecological value.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Improve the condition of natural areas in parks through restoration efforts, including invasive species removal, planting of native species, and improvement of hydrological conditions.	P	L	L	P	-	L
b. Develop and enhance partnerships and programs for environmental stewardship in area parks and natural areas.	L	A	L	L	-	L
d. Consider protecting other natural resource areas through acquisition or other protection measures (e.g. conservation easements)..	P	A	L	P	P	L



GOAL 3: RECREATION

Recreation programs and facilities enhance residents' quality of life and offer opportunities to learn, play, and connect.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 3.1 Recreation Programs. Provide a variety of recreational programs that promote the health and well-being of residents of all ages and abilities.	●	●	●	●	●	
Strategies						
a. Expand the quantity, diversity, and inclusivity of recreational programs offered, as well as expanding partnerships with other providers and organizations.	L	A	-	A	L	-
b. Improve program accessibility by holding classes and activities at locations throughout the community, providing scholarships, and ensuring ADA compliance.	L	-	-	-	L	-
c. Evaluate and improve recreational services, programs, and fees to meet identified cost recovery goals.	L	-	-	A	L	-
d. Monitor local and regional recreation trends to ensure community needs and interests are addressed by available programming.	L	A	-	A	L	-
e. Promote recreational opportunities provided by partners to help connect residents with options to learn and recreate.	L	A	A	A	L	-
f. Partner with local sport organizations to provide sports programs for youth and adults.	P	P	-	-	P	-
Policy 3.2 Aquatics Facilities. Provide opportunities for aquatic recreation through the area's pools and riverfront facilities.	●	●	●	●	●	
Strategies						
a. Pursue improvements to the Aquatic Center to ensure the safety, improve energy efficiency, and extend its useful life.	L	A	-	-	A	-
b. Explore options to replace the Aquatic Center with a modern facility, potentially in partnership with other organizations or agencies, to increase capacity and offer an improved user experience.	L	A	-	-	A	-
c. Maintain and enhance swimming facilities and programs at existing riverfront sites.	A	P	L	L	-	-



GOAL 3: RECREATION

Recreation programs and facilities enhance residents’ quality of life and offer opportunities to learn, play, and connect.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 3.3 Indoor Recreation Facilities. Provide indoor spaces for individual and group recreation, educational classes, and community events.	●	●			●	
Strategies						
a. Explore options to provide additional indoor facility space for athletics, recreation and educational classes, and community events. Assess the financial and operational feasibility of any new community center or other indoor recreation facility prior to development.	L	A	-	-	P	-
b. Expand partnership opportunities for joint facility acquisition, development, operations, programs, and maintenance.	L	A	-	-	L	-
Policy 3.4 Specialized Facilities. Establish and operate specialized facilities to respond to identified public needs, as appropriate.	●	●	●	●	●	
Strategies						
a. Consider local needs, recreational trends, and availability of similar facilities when planning for specialized recreational facilities.	L	P	P	P	P	-
b. Provide multi-purpose facilities for alternative or emerging sports to offer residents a diverse range of recreational experiences.	L	A	L	P	L	-
c. Consider siting an additional off-leash area at a suitable site.	L	P	-	-	-	-
d. Explore opportunities to partner with local organizations to develop, manage, and program specialized facilities.	L	A	L	P	P	-
e. Encourage the development of specialized facilities that generate revenues to offset the cost of operations and maintenance.	L	A	L	L	L	-



GOAL 3: RECREATION

Recreation programs and facilities enhance residents' quality of life and offer opportunities to learn, play, and connect.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 3.5 Sport Fields and Courts. Provide a system of sport fields and courts to serve the needs of the Hood River community.	●	●	●		●	
a. Enhance maintenance, investments and safety of sport fields and courts to better serve recreation users and extend playing seasons.	L	L	-	-	L	-
b. Use existing sites more efficiently and/or acquire additional space to meet capacity needs.	L	L	P	-	L	-
c. Consider resurfacing existing or new sport fields to artificial turf to allow more intensive use of field space, extend field seasons, and limit play cancellations.	L	A	-	-	L	-
d. Evaluate opportunities to include sport fields and courts in the development of new community parks.	L	P	-	-	P	-
e. Consider installation of sport field and court lighting to extend play opportunities.	L	L	-	-	L	-
f. Work with the ecumenical community to identify opportunities to partner on enhancing fields, park features, and accessibility to the community.	L	A	A	-	P	-
g. Study development of a larger sports field complex or tournament site, to increase field capacity and serve as a regional destination.	L	A	A	-	P	-
h. Assess field usage policies and rates on a regular basis to ensure they continue to meet the needs of field providers, user groups, and neighbors.	L	L	-	-	L	-



GOAL 4: TRAILS

Hood River County’s comprehensive trail system promotes active lifestyles by providing non-vehicular connections to nature, parks, schools and other community destinations, balancing recreational needs with other community goals and being sensitive to farm and forest uses.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 4.1 Urban and Regional Trails. Develop, enhance and maintain multi-use trails that provide safe opportunities to recreate and to connect to major destinations within urban areas and throughout the greater Hood River area.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Develop, improve, and acquire a network of shared-use pedestrian and bicycle routes and trails to provide connections within and between parks, schools, nearby neighborhoods, and community destinations in urban areas.	L	L	-	L	A	-
b. Coordinate trail system planning and development with adopted Comprehensive Plans, Transportation System Plans and other specific plans to provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicyclist network.	P	L	L	P	-	P
c. Complete and connect the three segments of the Indian Creek Trail in the lower Hood River Valley.	L	P	-	A	-	-
d. Continue efforts to plan, design and develop the Powerdale Corridor Trail, as envisioned in the Powerdale Recreation and Access Plan.	P	P	L	-	-	L
e. Pursue opportunities to enable a rail-with-trails or rails-to-trails corridor to Parkdale.	L	P	L	-	-	P
f. Explore options to improve pedestrian and cyclist access from the City of Hood River to the Mark O’Hatfield Trailhead on the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail.	P	P	L	-	-	-
g. Provide trailhead accommodations, as appropriate, to include parking, signage, restrooms and other amenities.	L	P	L	L	-	-
h. Develop and implement standards for trail development and maintenance, signage, wayfinding signs, and maps and materials.	L	L	L	P	-	P
i. Partner with local utilities, public agencies and private landowners to secure trail easements, public access easements over utility easements as appropriate, and access to open space for trail connections.	L	L	L	-	P	P
j. Partner with regional non-profit trail organizations for opportunities to engage trail users for volunteer labor support for projects.	L	A	L	P	-	P
k. Explore the feasibility of constructing the Valley Loop Trail, connecting the City of Hood River to the Northwest, Middle Mountain, and East Trail Management Areas.	P	A	L	-	-	-



GOAL 4: TRAILS

Hood River County’s comprehensive trail system promotes active lifestyles by providing non-vehicular connections to nature, parks, schools and other community destinations, balancing recreational needs with other community goals and being sensitive to farm and forest uses.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 4.2 Primitive Trails. Provide a sustainable system of recreation trails to provide access to motorized and non-motorized outdoor recreation and connections to the region’s public forest lands for residents and visitors to the area.	●	●	●			●
Strategies						
a. Manage and maintain a system of off-road routes (trails and forest roads) that is aligned with the County Master Trail Plan for hiking, mountain biking, equestrian, and off-highway vehicle use that is sensitive to the needs for forest management and in cooperation with trail user groups and partners.	A	A	L	-	-	-
b. Implement best practices for design construction and management of off road trails, including parking, trail signage standards, and restrooms as appropriate.	-	-	L	-	-	-

GOAL 5: ADMINISTRATION

Public park and recreation providers efficiently and effectively meet community needs, while stewarding the community’s investment in parks and recreation facilities.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 5.1 Community Involvement. Encourage and support transparency in planning processes that promotes active and ongoing participation by diverse community members in the planning and decision-making for parks and recreation.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning, design and recreation program development to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding and build public support.	L	L	L	L	A	A
b. Identify underrepresented segments of the community and work to improve their access and ability to participate in park planning and decision-making.	L	L	L	L	P	A
c. Periodically survey using statistically valid measures, review, and publish local park and recreation preferences, needs and trends.	L	P	P	P	-	-



GOAL 5: ADMINISTRATION

Public park and recreation providers efficiently and effectively meet community needs, while stewarding the community’s investment in parks and recreation facilities.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 5.2 Planning. Proactively plan for the development and management of the park and recreation system to guide future actions.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Update this Plan periodically to ensure park and recreation facilities and services meet current and future needs.	L	L	L	P	P	P
b. Assess park and facility conditions and develop prioritization criteria to guide capital improvement plans.	L	L	L	L	P	P
c. Update zoning and land use development codes to align with and implement the recommendations of this Plan as allowed per applicable local or state law.	A	L	L	-	-	-
d. Prepare master plans for park sites prior to development or major improvement to ensure development meets community needs, is within available resources and is consistent with local park and recreation objectives.	L	L	L	L	P	L
e. Plan and design future improvements to parks, recreation facilities and trails in compliance with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act and with universal accessibility in mind.	L	L	L	L	L	L
f. Require development projects along designated trail routes to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.	P	L	L	-	-	-

GOAL 5: ADMINISTRATION

Public park and recreation providers efficiently and effectively meet community needs, while stewarding the community’s investment in parks and recreation facilities.


	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
Policy 5.3 Asset Management. Actively manage the Hood River area’s park and recreation assets to ensure consistent service delivery, reduce unplanned reactive maintenance, and minimize economic, public safety, and environmental risks.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Create and maintain a standardized and systematic inventory and assessment of park system infrastructure, including quantity, location, condition, and expected useful life.	L	L	L	L	-	-
b. Cooperatively establish park maintenance standards and a routine preventative maintenance and inspection program to ensure parks, facilities and equipment are maintained and safe.	L	L	L	L	-	-
c. Monitor the costs of maintaining park and recreation facilities and infrastructure to inform budgeting and long-term financial planning.	L	L	L	L	L	L
d. Develop and update asset management plans for major assets to support improved stewardship, reduce costs, and increase maintenance and replacement efficiency.	L	L	L	L	L	L
e. Establish a consolidated volunteer management program to expand participation, facilitate improvements and supplement existing investments and maintenance.	L	A	L	P	P	P
f. Estimate the maintenance costs and staffing levels associated with development or renovation of parks, recreation facilities, trails, and natural open space areas, and ensure adequate long-term funding is available.	L	L	L	L	L	L
Policy 5.4 Partnerships. Pursue and maintain effective partnerships to plan, provide, maintain, and operate parks and recreation facilities and programs and maximize opportunities for public recreation.	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategies						
a. Continue to explore opportunities to share resources and avoid operational redundancies in the care and maintenance of recreational facilities.	L	L	L	L	L	A
b. Assess current service delivery models and partnerships to identify opportunities to better meet community needs and forward the missions and best interests of the various public park and recreation providers in the Hood River area.	P	P	P	P	P	P
c. Create, use, and maintain written partnership agreements that specify roles and responsibilities as well as legal, financial and other terms.	P	P	P	P	P	P
d. Maintain and enhance partnerships with the Hood River School District to ensure coordinated long-range planning, support the availability of sports fields and indoor facilities, encourage provision of community recreation and education programs at schools and explore further joint use facilities.	L	A	P	-	L	-
e. Establish cooperative agreements between providers to define sports field and court planning, acquisition, development, improvement, maintenance and operations responsibilities; as well as clarify scheduling, decision-making and revenue sharing objectives and structures.	P	P	-	-	P	-

GOAL 5: ADMINISTRATION

Public park and recreation providers efficiently and effectively meet community needs, while stewarding the community’s investment in parks and recreation facilities.

	HRVPRD	City of Hood River	Hood River County	Port of Hood River	Hood River School District	Conservation Organizations
f. Coordinate with private and non-profit providers, such as sport leagues, to plan for projects to expand facilities for athletic fields, courts and other specialized facilities.	L	A	P	L	L	-
g. Encourage opportunities for private enterprise to develop and operate recreational facilities or programs that meet identified public need and recreational objectives, as well as complement existing and planned investments in park and recreation infrastructure.	L	A	L	L	A	-
h. Promote volunteerism to involve individuals, groups, organizations and businesses in the planning, development and stewardship of the park and recreation system.	L	A	L	L	L	L
i. Collaborate with adjacent landowners, including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD), local trail groups, and private landowners, for the planning, development and management of a regional off-road trail system.	-	-	L	-	-	-
j. Acquire voluntary landowner agreements (LOA) for the management of trails and/or purchase of trail easements (from willing sellers) where needed.	A	-	L	-	-	-
Policy 5.5 Funding Resources. Pursue diverse funding sources necessary to provide a sustainable and secure future for the Hood River area’s park and recreation system.	●	●	●	●	●	●
a. Maintain existing funding options (e.g. system development charges, general fund support, fees and charges) for parks and recreation acquisition, development, maintenance and operations.	L	L	L	L	L	L
b. Pursue alternative funding options and dedicated revenues for the acquisition and development of parks and recreation facilities, such as through private donation, sponsorships, partnerships, state and federal grant sources, among others.	L	L	L	L	L	L
c. Assess HRVPRD’s capacity for an expanded role as park and recreation provider and consider voter-approved options to increase the levy rate to provide services as requested by the community.	L	A	A	A	A	-
d. Monitor the condition, investment needs and usage rates of fields and courts to inform maintenance and capital improvement plans.	L	A	-	-	L	-
e. Update field usage fees periodically and when significant field improvements are made to address cost recovery and equity objectives.	L	L	-	-	L	-
f. Utilize voter-approved initiatives, such as bonds and serial levies, to finance future improvements.	L	P	P	P	-	-
g. Consider the formation of a non-profit or private parks foundation to provide financial support and fundraising for the parks and recreation agencies serving the Hood River area.	L	A	P	A	A	A
h. Update use and rental fees on a periodic basis.	L	L	L	L	L	-
i. Consider developing additional rental facilities, such as reservable picnic areas, sports fields/courts, specialized facilities, wedding sites and community spaces, to meet community needs and generate additional operating resources.	L	A	L	L	L	-





5 | PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Parks and open spaces are the foundation of the outdoor recreation system for the Hood River area. Local parks provide residents with a variety of active and passive recreational amenities. They offer places where people can spend time with friends and family, exercise, ride the wind, play and relax, and explore the valley’s landscape, wildlife and natural history.

PARK & OPEN SPACE TRENDS

Top Outdoor Recreation Activities

Nearly all (95%) Oregonians participate in at least one outdoor recreation activity in 2017. Close-to-home activities, which require limited travel time, were the most popular. These included walking, bicycling and jogging on local streets or sidewalks; walking on local trails or paths; sightseeing; relaxing, hanging out, or escaping heat and noise; dog walking; and taking children to a playground. Most Oregonians visit local or municipal parks, followed by State parks, forests or game lands. National parks, forests, and recreation areas were third. County parks, private parks, and other areas are less frequented. A more detailed discussion of recreation trends appears in Appendix G.

Figure 5. Participation Rates of Top Activities for Oregon Residents (SCORP)

Activity	% of Population Participating	
	State-wide	Region 2**
Walking on local streets or sidewalks*	83%	69%
Walking on local trails or paths*	74%	62%
Sightseeing, driving or motorcycling for pleasure	59%	55%
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat, noise, etc.*	59%	53%
Beach activities	57%	56%

* These activities are also the most popular statewide based on total number or user occasions per year.

** Region 2 includes Hood River County

Within the Hood River area, residents most frequently use parks to walk, run, or get exercise. Residents also frequent parks for community events, picnics, playgrounds, and to experience nature. See Appendix G for more detailed information on local recreation needs and preferences.

Reasons for participation

Within Oregon Region 2, which includes Hood River County and the northern Willamette Valley, residents that participate in outdoor recreation activities indicate that improving their physical and mental health, preserving open space, and enhancing community desirability were the most valued benefits of parks and recreation services.

Areas for improvement

According to surveys conducted by Oregon State Parks, residents of Hood River County and the broader Region 2 park planning area prioritize improvements to dirt or other soft surface walking trails, public access to waterways, playgrounds with natural materials (nature play areas), off-street bicycle pathways and nature or wildlife viewing areas. In a local survey conducted for this Plan, Valley residents also prioritized safe pedestrian and bicycle connections, community or aquatic center improvements, and the creation of natural play areas.

Park & Recreation Management

In addition to providing parks that meet the needs of local residents, many park providers nationwide and across Oregon are experiencing common trends in park and recreation management. These trends include a focus on:

- **Asset management:** Public recreation providers across Oregon consider asset management of existing park facilities to be a key management issue. In particular, providers are working to establish adequate funding mechanisms for routine and preventative maintenance and repair of facilities as well as the major rehabilitation of existing outdoor recreation facilities at the end of their useful life.
- **Partnerships:** Nearly all park and recreation organizations nationwide (96%) partner with other organizations as a means of expanding their reach and programming opportunities, or as a way to share resources and increase funding. Local schools are the most common partner. (2018 State of Managed Recreation Industry Report)
- **Parks as green infrastructure:** Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces that protects natural ecosystem functions and environmental health and provides associated benefits, such as clean water, clean air, and recreational opportunities to communities. Local, regional and statewide parks and open spaces are important elements of a green infrastructure network and can contribute to the connections and corridors that are vital for biodiversity, flood reduction, air and water quality, wildlife habitat, resilience and the ability of communities to adapt to a changing climate. Planning a green infrastructure network is best accomplished in direct correlation with planning for a park, trail and open space network.

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

During the summer of 2018, consultant landscape architects assessed the existing conditions of selected park facilities to identify issues, concerns and opportunities for future improvements. This assessment identified several maintenance and facility improvements needed to ensure the Hood River area's park and outdoor recreation facilities remain safe and attractive for residents and visitors.

Park conditions were rated based on a numerical scale, see Figure 6 below, which provides a generalized evaluation of the need for repairs, replacement or other attention for a range of park amenities. Overall, the selected sites scored an average 1.72 – indicating conditions are generally good to fair – though the system will need continuing repairs and replacement to maintain the safety, functionality, and attractiveness of parks and facilities.

Figure 6. Rating Scale Definitions for Site Conditions Assessment

1	GOOD In general, amenities are in GOOD condition. They 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 may have minor cosmetic defects. Good facilities encourage area residents to use the park.
2	FAIR In general, amenities are in FAIR condition. They are largely 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 time periods where they are unusable. Fair facilities remain important amenities but may slightly discourage use of the park by residents.
3	POOR In general, amenities in POOR condition are largely or completely unusable. They need major repairs to be functional. Poor facilities are park features that have deteriorated to the point where they are barely usable. Fields are too uneven for ball games, safety features are irreparably broken, buildings need structural retrofitting, etc. Poor facilities discourage residents from using the park.

The consultant landscape architects also completed a more detailed evaluation, included in Appendix A, which evaluated each park amenity type (e.g. playgrounds, structures, landscape, turf, pavement) based on the above rating scale. The matrix in Figure 7 summarizes the results of this assessment. Park amenities and features rated with a “3” (in red) are in poor condition and repair, replacement, or removal is warranted in the immediate or near future to ensure safe enjoyment and use.

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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 1/4"; 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 1/2" wide; surfacing required; fencing has large protrusions, holes/passages or defects; painting and striping are patchy and color has faded dramatically.

Sports 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.

Skate Park:

1	In good condition: little to no signs of cracking; little or no erosion; elements target a diversity of age groups.
2	In fair condition: some cracking, but still usable; furnishings (i.e., metal rails) might need spot fixes.
3	In poor condition: parts of the structure are damaged or deteriorated, chipped off or broken; edges of the structure are eroded possibly causing safety issues; elements target a specific / narrow age range.

Spray Park:

1	In good condition: spray pad has little or no cracking; spray furnishings have little or no damage; no vandalism; good drainage.
2	In fair condition: spray pad has some cracking; spray furnishings have signs of wear, but are in working condition; color fading.
3	In poor condition: drainage issues with clogging or sinking pad; large cracks; spray furnishings broken.

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.

Lighting:

Y	Yes.
N	No.

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.

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.

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, Concession Building):

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).

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

A system-wide examination helps consider the needs for design improvements, universal access, safety and connections. The following narrative highlights site conditions in the Hood River area based on the conditions assessment, Figure 7. This overview is categorized by overarching and related characteristics.

ADA Accessibility

As is common in older parks, the Hood River area's park system has some accessibility barriers. Although a detailed ADA Conditions Assessment was not conducted as part of this planning process, it was apparent that Hood River Valley park system has ADA compliance issues with park access at parking areas, barriers to access into playground areas, as well as non-complaint benches and picnic tables in inaccessible locations. Transition zones from park pathways to parking and traffic areas often did not have tactile warning strips to alert the visually impaired about entering traffic zones. Park amenities are not always accessible through an ADA-compliant pathway surface. Many of these issues are discussed in greater detail in the amenity-specific sections below.

Some park facilities, such as the county's Punchbowl Falls site, are rustic and in remote locations. Upgrading these facilities to accessible sites may be cost-prohibitive and technically infeasible. The plan recommends that accessible rustic park opportunities be considered during future park planning and development work.

ADA accessibility and compliance should be part of a regular capital repair schedule to ensure the updating of older pavement, parking, playgrounds, picnic amenities, restrooms and recreational elements. Park and facility providers should develop an ADA Compliance Checklist to identify and prioritize these deficiencies and develop a methodology for bringing all their parks into compliance with federal guidelines. Improvements should be made as needed and reviewed in each subsequent budget cycle.

Playgrounds

When designing any playground upgrades, park providers should consider recent design trends including inclusive play features and nature play areas that use non-traditional play elements constructed of natural materials.

Providers should repair or replace safety surfacing beneath playground equipment on a regular basis. When replacing play safety surfacing, providers should also address surfacing containment methods that lack transition zones for ADA access. All playgrounds should be part of the ADA compliance review for the valley's ADA transition plan to ensure future upgrades meet guidelines for universal accessibility.

Sport Courts & Fields

The condition assessment noted a need for improvements to existing sports courts and fields, including field renovations, pavement repairs, and gate replacements. Additionally, some sites could benefit from improved support amenities, such as signage, fencing, restrooms, storage buildings, and concession buildings. Field lighting was also noted as a potential improvement to extend use time.

Site Furnishings

Standards for park furnishings, such as benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, bike racks, trash receptacles and other common amenities used throughout the park system, can be instrumental to achieving a uniform user experience and streamlined maintenance and repairs. The plan recognizes that each park provider may have preferred site furnishing manufacturer and that the age and condition of site furnishings throughout the system varies. The providers should consider adopting a unified standard for park site furnishings to allow for cross-park and cross-jurisdictional repair and replacement which can reduce the time and cost of repairs; and to provide a more consistent look to public parks.

In addition, the assessments noted some places where a bench, table or bike rack was not accessible due to the lack of stable surfacing, making the site furnishing less accessible and not ADA compliant. While the conditions focused on site furnishings that needed repair, replacement or additions, ensuring that any new amenities also meet ADA compliance is important. Standards and guidelines for accessible design include accessible routes, heights and fixtures on various furnishings, spacing requirements and elements of design. More information is available from the U.S. Access Board and through the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) 2009 Outdoor Developed Area Guidelines.

Pavement & Pathways

In general, pavement maintenance should address cracks and root upheavals, as well as seams where different pavement types meet (curbs, bridges, sidewalk-to-trail, boardwalks, path to play areas, etc.) and have a tendency to settle at different rates creating barriers to universal access. Certain paved park features require specific maintenance, including:

- Paved trails in natural areas should undergo regular inspections to ensure the identification of potential erosion and surface wear. Common challenges to natural area trails, such as root upheavals, cracking, slumping and eroded edges, can sometimes be addressed more readily if treated early.
- Paved sport courts should be regularly repainted to ensure retention of functional court play.
- Paved parking areas should be regularly repainted to delineate parking stalls and crosswalks.

Visitors to some parks, including the Hood River Waterfront Park, are creating informal paths through heavy or repetitive use, suggesting the need for improved circulation and pathway design in the park. In addition, multiple parks as noted in the ADA Accessibility section lack defined access pathways and connections to amenities in the park.

Trees & Landscape Areas

In general, the trees and landscapes in Hood River area parks show signs of wear. Additional maintenance would allow plantings to recover from heavy park use.

- Shrubs and other low vegetation should be pruned to avoid blocking pathways, trails, stairs, signage, benches, picnic tables, and other park furnishings and equipment.
- Vegetation should also be managed to maintain visibility within the park, see the Safety and Crime Prevention section below.
- Landscaped areas should be managed to control weed growth, particularly of poison oak, a noxious plant common to the Hood River valley.

Buildings & Structures

Hood River Valley park and recreation facilities include a variety of structures of variable ages. Many of the system's restrooms, retaining walls, dugouts, and other miscellaneous structures need repairs. Some structures are no longer providing value to the system and could be removed. In some parks, additional picnic shelters and maintenance storage buildings could enhance park functionality. In addition, the existing barn at Barrett Park could be repurposed for storage or renovated for community use.

Parking & Access

Since many Hood River area residents must drive to reach outdoor recreation facilities, parking is an important part of providing adequate park and recreation service. The need for parking improvements is noted in Figure 7. Suggestions for improvement include new or expanded designated parking areas, parking space delineation, formalized trailheads, additional park entries and/or improved park entrance designs.

Wayfinding, Identity & Signage

Hood River area park and recreation providers should adopt a clear and unified wayfinding system to provide effective and accessible information to orient the user (i.e., locational signage and directional navigation signage) and establish a consistent identity. Such a system will ensure efficient use of the Valley's parks, trail and open spaces and convey safety to the user.

A coordinated wayfinding and signage system will help park and trail users understand where they are, what they might need to know, how to get more information and who the provider is.

Park signage should clearly state the name of the park visitors are entering. It should also identify the park provider, to differentiate parks from school or private properties; allow park users to communicate any concerns to the correct provider; and to offer visitors a way to access additional information (e.g., contacts, volunteering, other facilities, etc.).

The wayfinding system should employ consistent visual graphic standards and a coordinated hierarchy of sign types and sizes. While there are some basic trail locational signs at several trailheads, there is system-wide need for better signage coordination and visibility. Signs, symbols, mapping, color, standardized site amenities combined with good design of the physical environment (i.e., trail or park) will improve user access and help them stay comfortably oriented.

An effective wayfinding system not only provides directional and locational information to the user. Through a combination of materials, color, sign types, unified font designs, and coordinated site furnishings (benches, bollards, drinking fountains, etc.), The wayfinding system can create a strong brand and a unique sense of place for Hood River area's park system. This, in turn, can enhance residents' sense of ownership and stewardship of their local parks, trails and open spaces.

Slopes, Drainage & Irrigation

The Hood River valley has dynamic topography with naturally occurring steep slopes that can create both opportunities and challenges for park design. The park condition assessments noted numerous steep slopes along urban trail sections of the Indian Creek Trail in need of stabilization or demarcation to prevent safety hazards. Providers should also work to assess drainage issues to improve usability of sites in wet weather and prevent water related damage to landscapes and facilities.

Irrigation of sport fields and high-use community parks will extend the usability of these recreation facilities. Though irrigation is present at only select park sites, providers should assess and monitor existing irrigation systems to ensure proper working condition and the efficient use of potable water. In particular, Odell Park (HRVPRD-owned) could benefit from irrigation adjustments or repairs.

The plan also recommends irrigation improvements to existing sport fields on school sites. Modernized irrigation will expedite field recovery and extend playing time for school teams, recreational leagues, and competitive programs. School facilities used for youth athletics are identified in the inventory, but capital project costs are not included in this plan.

Safety & Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

Although many of the system's parks and landscapes meet basic CPTED principles (e.g. provide good visibility; provide overall positive public perceptions of safety based on community survey results), some parks could benefit from safety improvements. In particular, providers should manage vegetation to allow greater visibility and work with local transportation departments to add crosswalks at trail crossings of streets.

New Park Amenities

Future site designs or master plans should consider the need for additional park amenities, including benches, picnic areas, sports courts, overlooks, water fountains, fencing, public art, murals and signage. Designing a coordinated system of wayfinding and signage across all providers and gradually integrating through capital projects and repairs could be an economical approach to effective identification of facilities and communication of outdoor recreation opportunities and general park rules.

PARK PROXIMITY & DISTRIBUTION

GAP ANALYSIS

Hood River Valley residents are fortunate to have access to great parks, recreation facilities and the Columbia River. Through thoughtful planning, the HRVPRD and the City and County of Hood River have secured several park sites over the years and a strong core system of parks and open spaces exists today. However, projected population growth and residential development, particularly within the City of Hood River's urban area, will place further pressure on access to recreational lands. Understanding the gaps in the park system and re-visiting the service standards will provide a foundation for strategic planning to ensure that tomorrow's residents have access to an equitable and distributed system of parks, trails and amenities to stay healthy and active.

Community Access to Parks

In 2014, the Trust for Public Lands produced the *City Park Facts Report*, which defined park access as the ability to reach a publicly owned park within a half-mile walk on the road network, unobstructed by freeways, rivers, fences and other obstacles. This metric can be evaluated by using a geographic information system (GIS) and Census data to determine the percentage of households that are within walking distance from a park or the geographic area that is within walking distance of an existing park. Walking distance is most commonly defined as a half-mile or a ten-minute walk. Of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. that have explicit distance-based distribution goals, over 60% use a half-mile measurement.

Determining the 'walksheds' for a community's existing parks can reveal gaps where residential areas have no public parks within reasonable walking distance. These gaps help illustrate need for improved park access, and identified gaps within the park system can become targets for future parkland acquisition.

To better understand where park providers should direct acquisition efforts, a gap analysis of the park system was conducted to examine and assess the current distribution of parks throughout Hood River County, including areas within the City of Hood River. The analysis reviewed the locations and types of existing facilities, land use classifications, transportation/access barriers and other factors as a means to identify preliminary acquisition target areas. In reviewing parkland distribution and assessing opportunities to fill identified gaps, residentially zoned lands were isolated, since neighborhood and community parks primarily serve these areas.

Given the mix of urban and rural residential areas within the Hood River area, this analysis used a range of park service areas to identify underserved areas:

- For neighborhood parks, walksheds were defined 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, walksheds were derived using the same ¼-mile and ½-mile service areas. However, since community parks also serve a wider array of users and driving to such parks is typical, 1-mile and 2-mile service areas were also used for this analysis.
- For regional parks, service areas were derived to capture a 5-mile driving distance – calculated in 1 mile intervals.

Maps 3 through 7 illustrate the application of the distribution criteria from existing neighborhood, community and regional parks. The illustrated ‘walkshed’ or service area for each existing Hood River area park demonstrates the areas within the community that have the desired proximity to a local park. Gaps between these service areas constitute “unserved” neighborhoods. Undeveloped open spaces and facility classifications were not included in the walkshed analysis.

City of Hood River

Within the urban growth boundary, 58% of residentially zoned land is served with reasonable access to an urban park. Gaps in parkland distribution appear in four main areas of the Hood River urban area:

- West Hood River, north of Westside Elementary School
- West Hood River, northwest of 30th Street and Sherman Avenue
- West Hood River, Frankton Road area near Summitview Drive / W Prospect Avenue
- Hood River, northeast of Indian Creek Golf Course

Meeting this Plan’s goal to provide a neighborhood or community park within a reasonable walking distance (e.g., ½-mile) of City residents will require:

- acquiring new park properties in currently under-served locations,
- improving multi-modal transportation connections to allow local residents to safely and conveniently reach their local park, and
- exploring opportunities to acquire lands adjacent to school sites or consider using school sites as surrogates for local neighborhood parks.

The City may explore the possibility of acquiring and developing more smaller parks within a shorter walking distance from residences than the general recommendation of three or four neighborhood parks within a ½-mile of residences.

Mid and Upper Valley Communities

Within the Mid and Upper Valley’s residential communities of Odell, Parkdale and Dee, this Plan recommends providing walkable access to a neighborhood, community, or regional park or a school district facility. In these communities, Map 6 identifies the walksheds of existing parks and unserved residential areas, as well as residents who rely on school district facilities to meet their local recreational needs.

In Parkdale, Toll Bridge Park is the nearest public park, but due to the location of park entrances along Toll Bridge Road, the ½-mile walkshed area does not extend into the core residential area of that community. Parkdale Elementary School serves as the community's active use 'park' with ball fields, sport courts and a playground. In Odell, Odell Park serves about a third of the community with walkable park access. The areas west of Mid Valley School and east of Wy'east Middle School represent existing gap areas for future consideration for targeted acquisitions. In Dee, residents have driving access to Punchbowl Falls Nature Park. Their nearest 'active' use area is Parkdale Elementary School. The extensive coverage of farm use and forest use zoning in the Mid and Upper Valley will limit opportunities to expand recreational lands. As such, the HRVPRD should work to expand existing parklands and acquire land adjacent to school sites to provide improved park access for Mid and Upper Valley communities.

Valley-wide

Aside from active use parks, community residents expressed a desire for access to natural areas for outdoor recreation. The Valley's unique natural features – its forested areas, rivers, and waterfalls – along with its existing public lands create opportunities to provide all residents with nearby access to active and passive nature-based recreation. This Plan proposes that all HRVPRD residents should be within a 5-mile driving distance of a natural park, such as those provided by County parks as well as state and federal agencies. Map 7 illustrates areas that are currently within the 5-mile service area of existing natural areas or parks that provide access for public outdoor recreation. No existing gaps are identified for the Mid and Upper Valley area using the 5-mile driving distance.

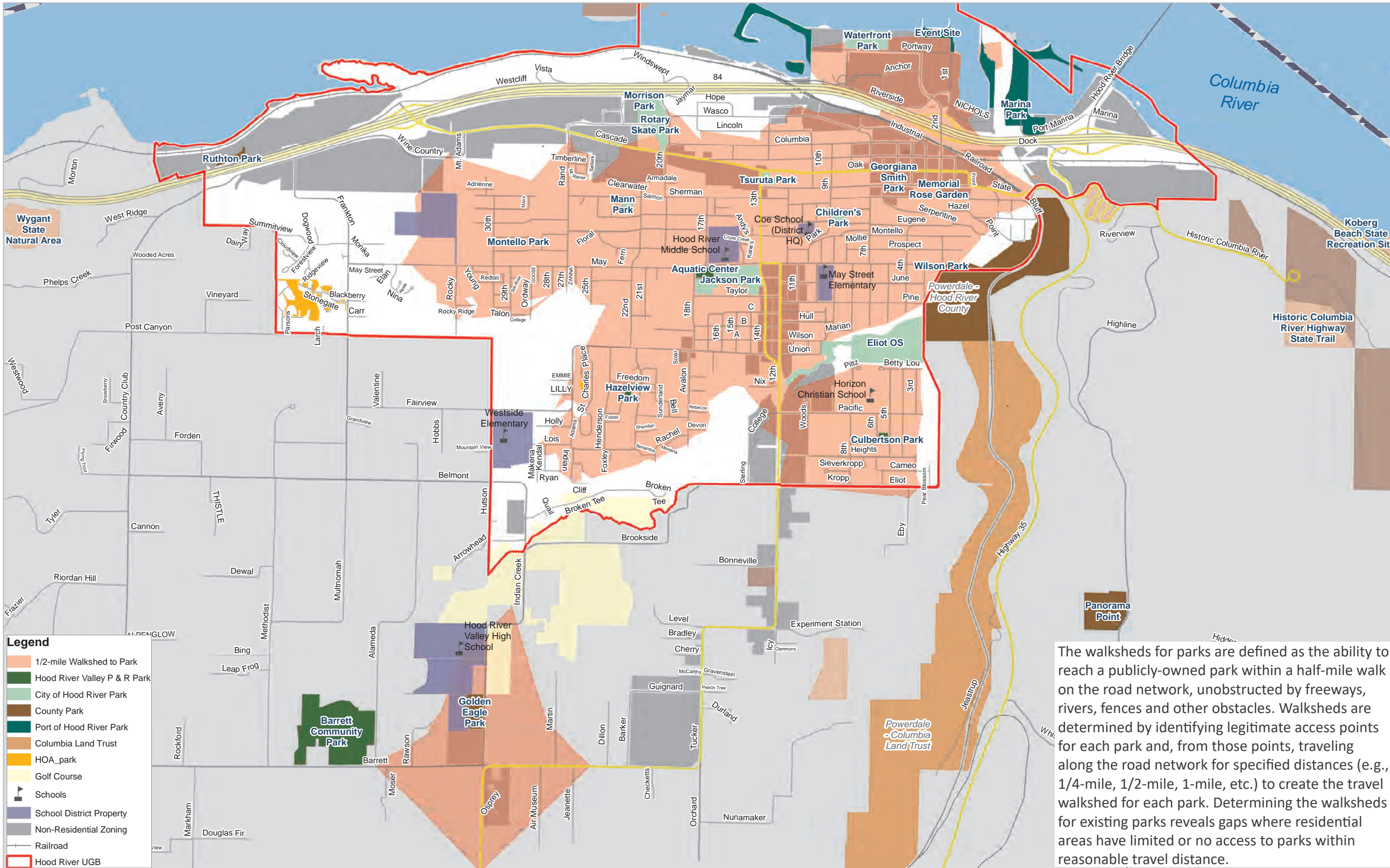
Future Acquisition Areas

As a result of this gap assessment, potential acquisition areas are identified for future parks and are noted in the Capital Planning chapter of this Plan. One of the greatest documented needs is for additional neighborhood and community parks to improve overall distribution and equity, while promoting active-use recreational spaces that can accommodate field sports, court sports and open play.

From that walkshed mapping, primary target locations (shown outside existing park walkshed in white areas) should be the focus of acquisition efforts to ensure adequate provision of outdoor recreation facilities and equity in distribution for Hood River area residents (See Map 8). While the targeted 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 throughout Hood River.

As Hood River area develops and acquisition opportunities diminish, the HRVPRD and its partners will need to be prepared to take advantage of acquisition opportunities in strategic locations to better serve residents.

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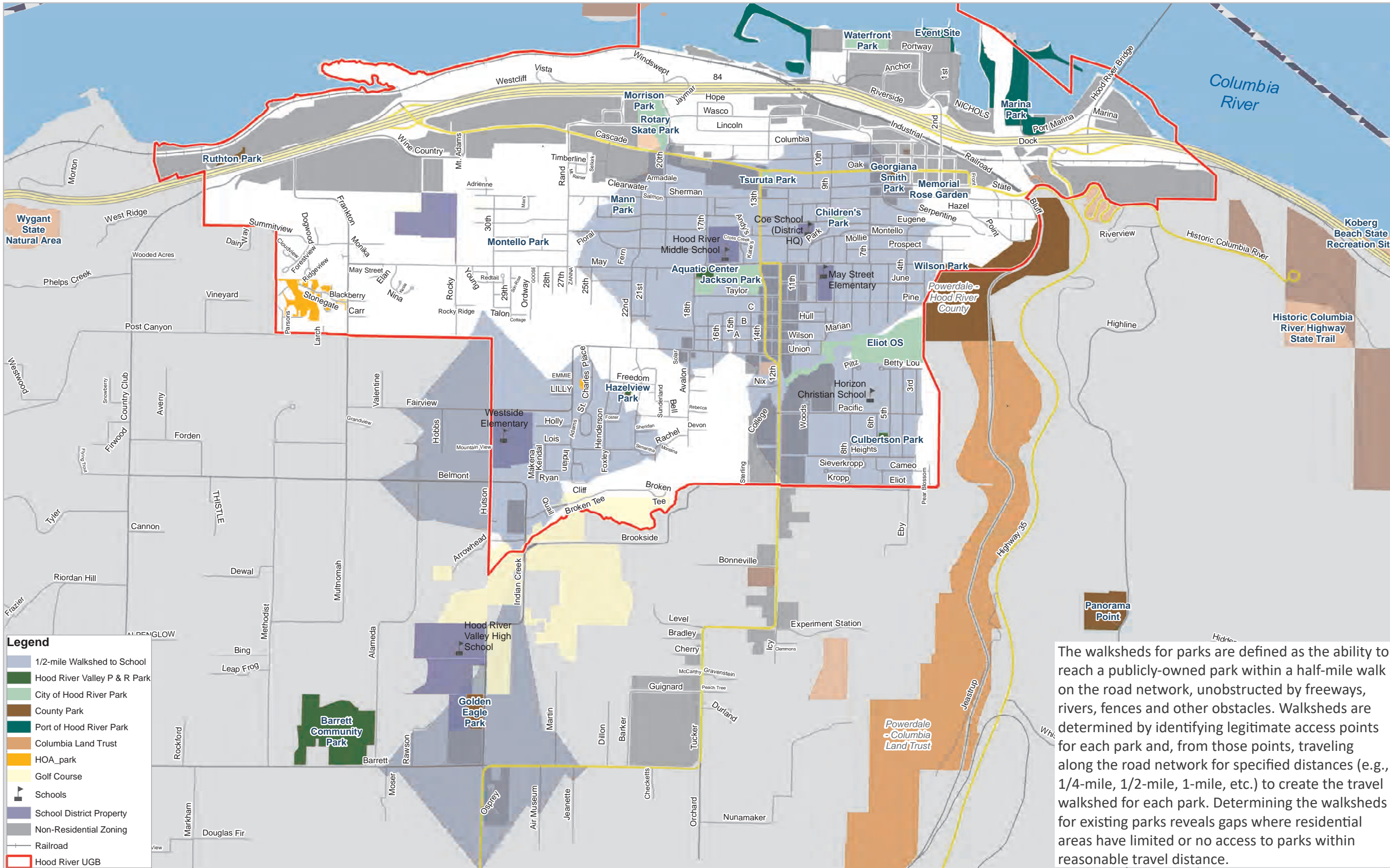


- Legend**
- 1/2-mile Walkshed to Park
 - Hood River Valley P & R Park
 - City of Hood River Park
 - County Park
 - Port of Hood River Park
 - Columbia Land Trust
 - HOA_park
 - Golf Course
 - Schools
 - School District Property
 - Non-Residential Zoning
 - Railroad
 - Hood River UGB

The walksheds for parks are defined as the ability to reach a publicly-owned park within a half-mile walk on the road network, unobstructed by freeways, rivers, fences and other obstacles. Walksheds are determined by identifying legitimate access points for each park and, from those points, traveling along the road network for specified distances (e.g., 1/4-mile, 1/2-mile, 1-mile, etc.) to create the travel walkshed for each park. Determining the walksheds for existing parks reveals gaps where residential areas have limited or no access to parks within reasonable travel distance.

Map 3: Park Walkshed Map (Urban Area)

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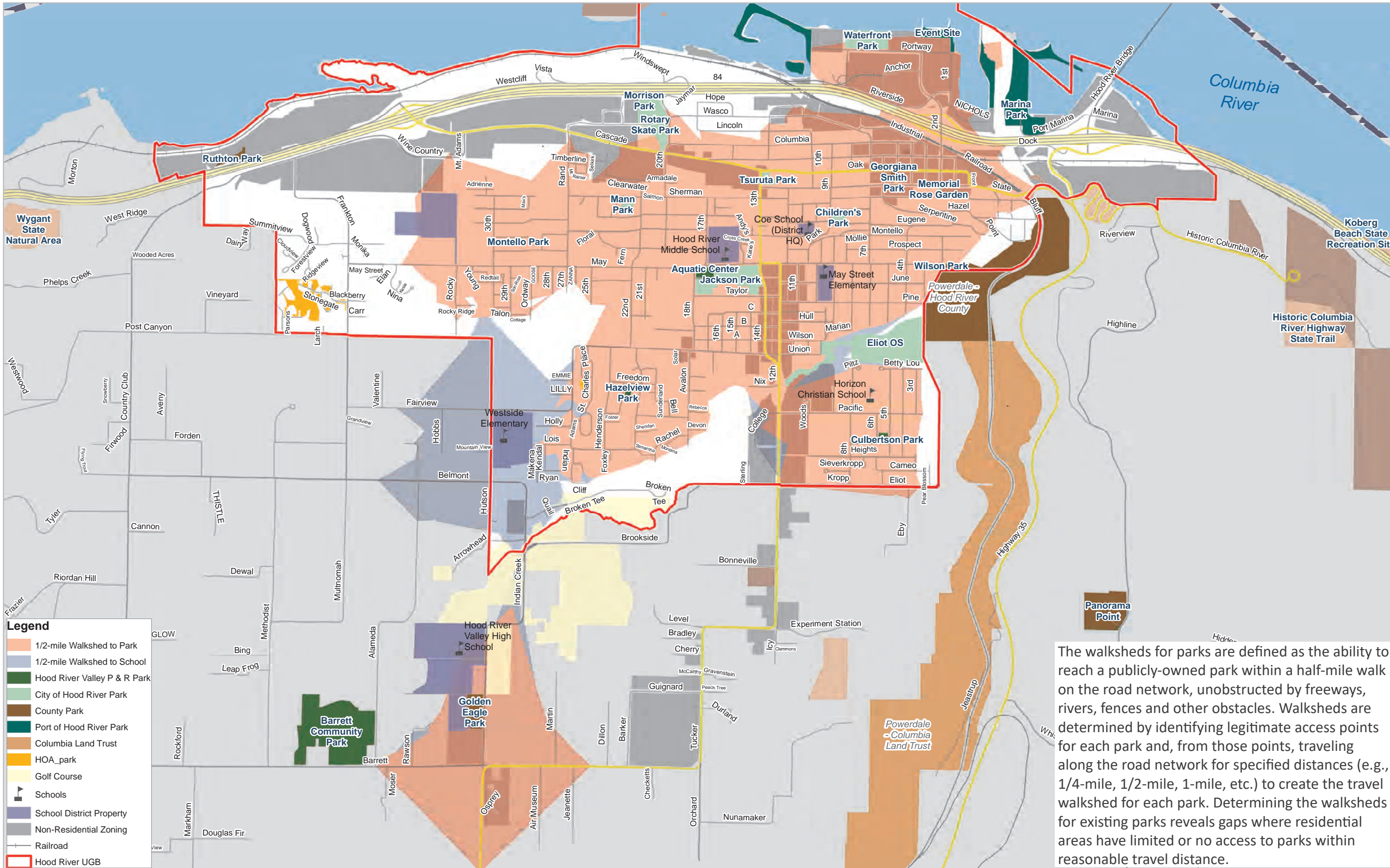
Legend

- 1/2-mile Walkshed to School
- Hood River Valley P & R Park
- City of Hood River Park
- County Park
- Port of Hood River Park
- Columbia Land Trust
- HOA_park
- Golf Course
- Schools
- School District Property
- Non-Residential Zoning
- Railroad
- Hood River UGB

The walksheds for parks are defined as the ability to reach a publicly-owned park within a half-mile walk on the road network, unobstructed by freeways, rivers, fences and other obstacles. Walksheds are determined by identifying legitimate access points for each park and, from those points, traveling along the road network for specified distances (e.g., 1/4-mile, 1/2-mile, 1-mile, etc.) to create the travel walkshed for each park. Determining the walksheds for existing parks reveals gaps where residential areas have limited or no access to parks within reasonable travel distance.

Map 4: Park Walkshed Map (Schools only)

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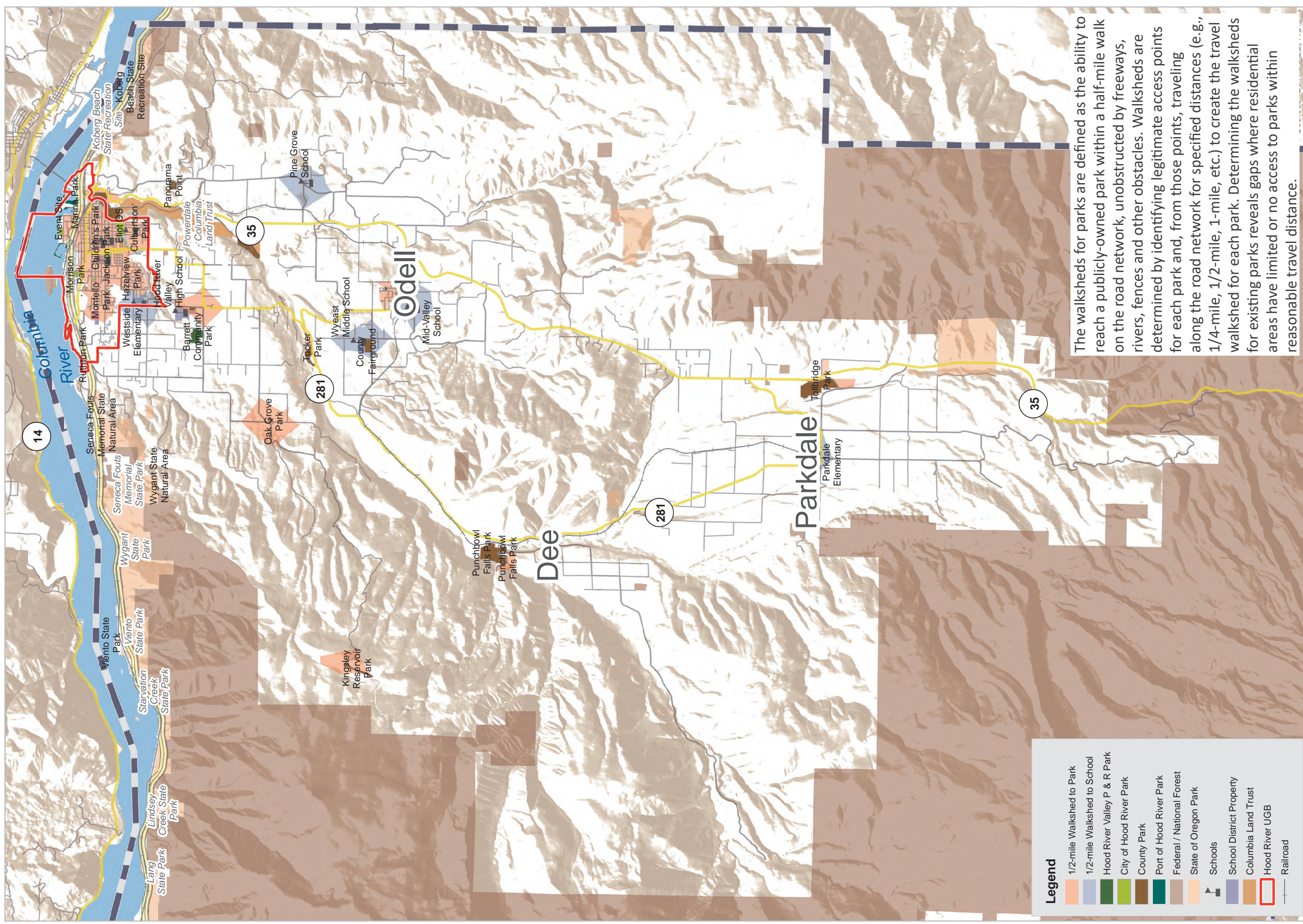
Legend

- 1/2-mile Walkshed to Park
- 1/2-mile Walkshed to School
- Hood River Valley P & R Park
- City of Hood River Park
- County Park
- Port of Hood River Park
- Columbia Land Trust
- HOA park
- Golf Course
- Schools
- School District Property
- Non-Residential Zoning
- Railroad
- Hood River UGB

The walksheds for parks are defined as the ability to reach a publicly-owned park within a half-mile walk on the road network, unobstructed by freeways, rivers, fences and other obstacles. Walksheds are determined by identifying legitimate access points for each park and, from those points, traveling along the road network for specified distances (e.g., 1/4-mile, 1/2-mile, 1-mile, etc.) to create the travel walkshed for each park. Determining the walksheds for existing parks reveals gaps where residential areas have limited or no access to parks within reasonable travel distance.

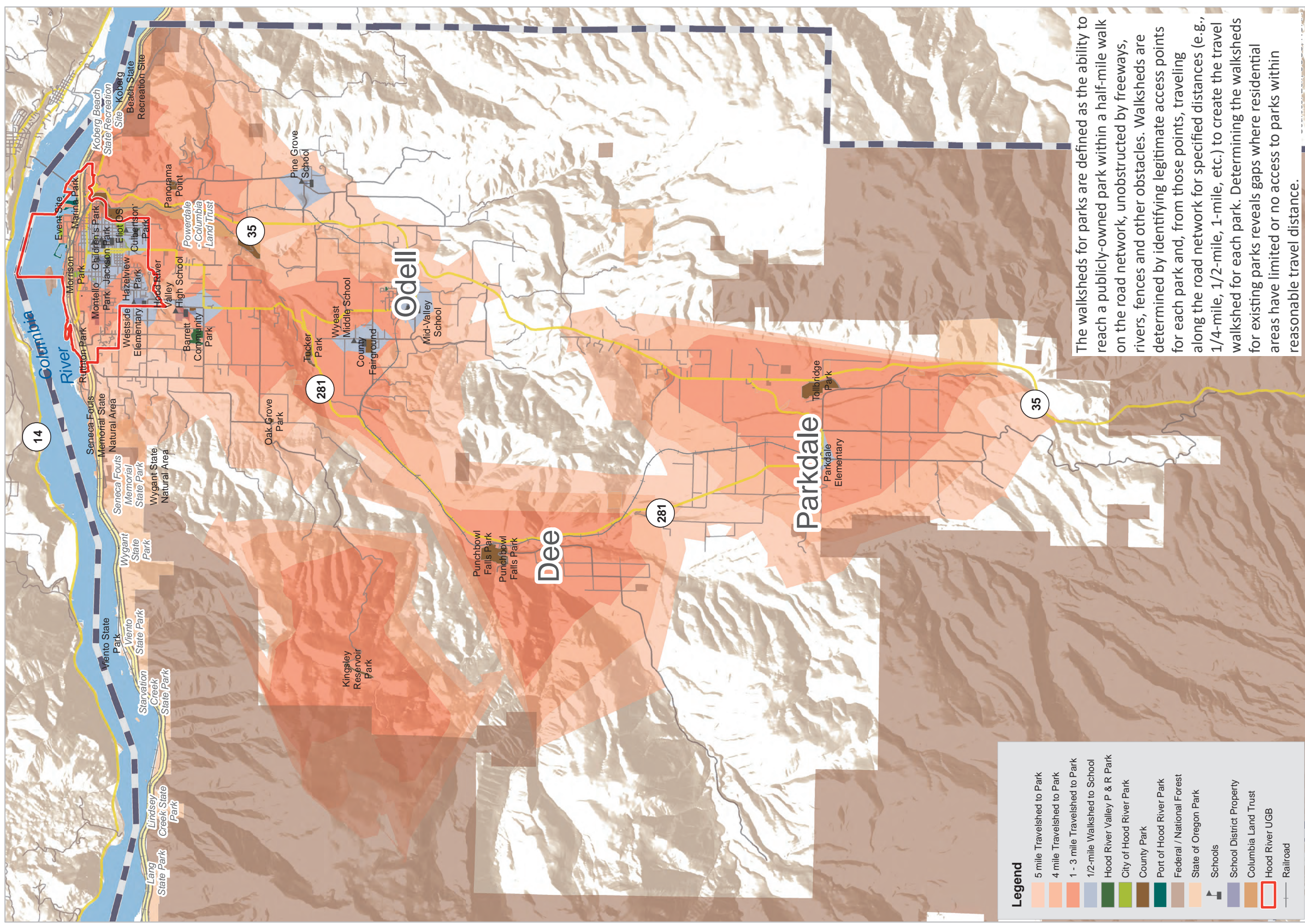
Map 5: Composite Park Walkshed Map (Urban Area)

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Map 6: Park Walkshed Map (1/2 mile)

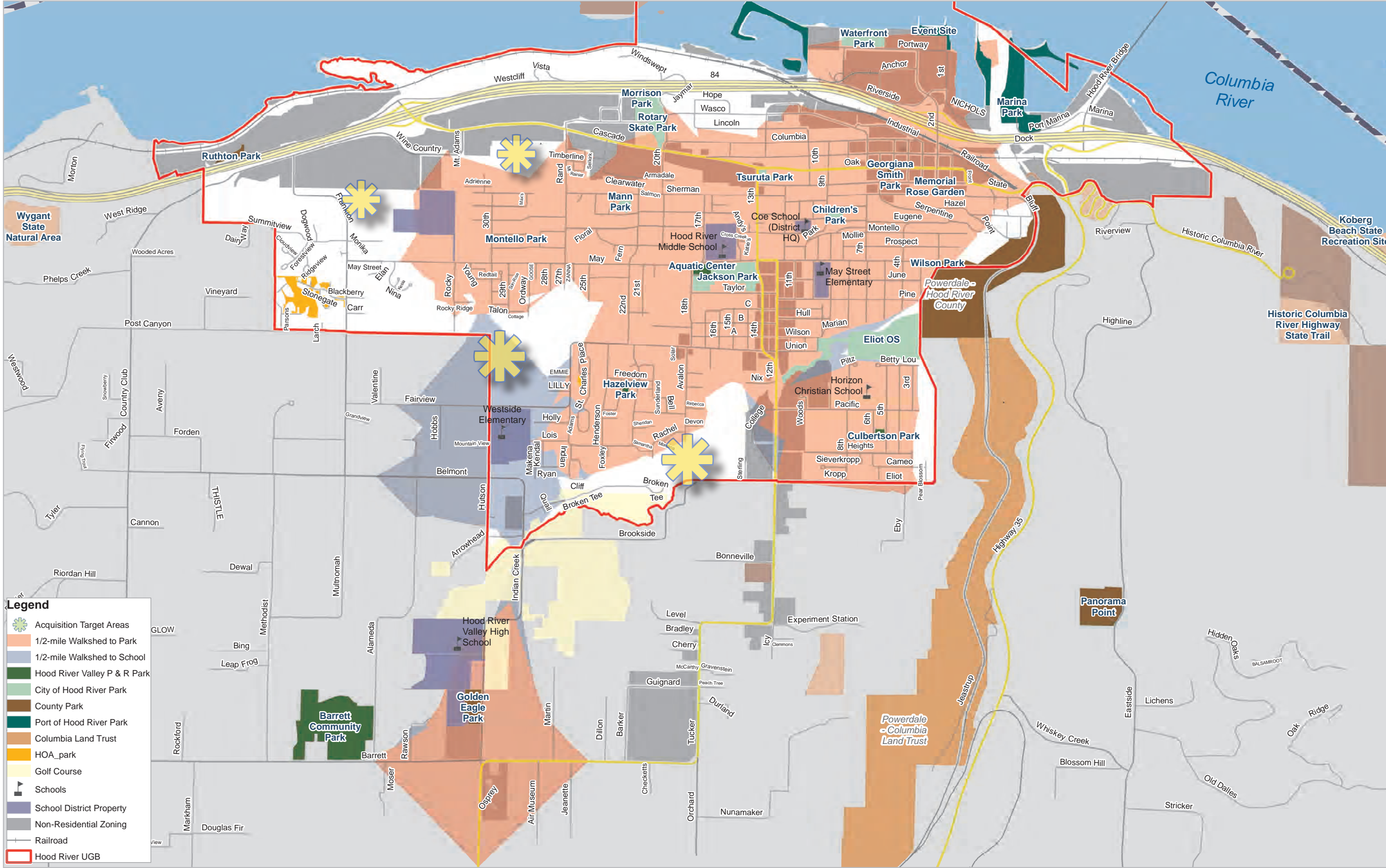
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The walksheds for parks are defined as the ability to reach a publicly-owned park within a half-mile walk on the road network, unobstructed by freeways, rivers, fences and other obstacles. Walksheds are determined by identifying legitimate access points for each park and, from those points, traveling along the road network for specified distances (e.g., 1/4-mile, 1/2-mile, 1-mile, etc.) to create the travel walkshed for each park. Determining the walksheds for existing parks reveals gaps where residential areas have limited or no access to parks within reasonable travel distance.

Map 7: Park Walkshed Map (5 mile)

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Legend

- Acquisition Target Areas
- 1/2-mile Walkshed to Park
- 1/2-mile Walkshed to School
- Hood River Valley P & R Park
- City of Hood River Park
- County Park
- Port of Hood River Park
- Columbia Land Trust
- HOA_park
- Golf Course
- Schools
- School District Property
- Non-Residential Zoning
- Railroad
- Hood River UGB

Map 8: Target Acquisition Areas (Urban Area)

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FRAMING SERVICE STANDARDS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

In addition to and in support of the gap analysis, a level of service (LOS) review was conducted as a means to understand the distribution of parkland acreage by classification and for a broader measure of how well the partnering agencies (City, County and HRVPRD) are serving residents with access to parks and open space. Service standards are the adopted guidelines or benchmarks the agencies are trying to attain with their parks system; the level of service is a snapshot in time of how well the agencies are meeting the adopted standards.

The use of service standards for parks and recreation has a long history. Standards have been widely applied in park systems across the country as a means to benchmark where a community is and target where it wants to be with regard to the provision of parks, open space, trails and facilities.

The use of numeric standards, typically framed as parkland acres per capita, have become tradition for parks agencies, in part, tied to dated publications from the National Recreation and Park Association, which are no longer in favor. Locally, the three primary park and recreation providers in Hood River area do not currently have adopted standards for their individual park system or the combined park systems. Typically, jurisdictions link their level of service standards with a funding source to help finance the growth of the system. In Oregon, system development charges are a common funding tool for this purpose. The HRVPRD currently links its system development charges to the capital needs required to maintain the current “realized” level of service as the District’s population grows. The use and application of standards continues to evolve and mature, and this Plan aims to evaluate the current level of service and offer recommendations to set locally-appropriate standards (see Figure 10).

This evaluation seeks to illustrate how the combined park system and each of the contributing providers measure up to park systems across the country with comparable population sizes, population densities and parkland acreages. This assessment also provides the future direction for ensuring adequate provision of parks for the community based on current and potential future gaps in this community infrastructure.

National & Regional Comparables

As part of the assessment of current and projected performance of the Hood River area park system, some comparison with current national information on standards and comparables has been compiled.

2015 National Recreation and Park Association Field Report

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) prepared a report in 2015 using their Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and Geographic Information System (PRORAGIS) database that reflects the current levels of service of park agencies across the country based on population density per square mile. The table below indicates the range of acres per 1,000 population from jurisdictions with less than 500 residents per square mile up to urban communities with over 2,500 persons per square mile.

It should be noted that diverse approaches are used to classify park lands when applied to meeting a level of service standard. Since the PRORAGIS 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 below should be weighed with this variability in mind. Hood River area parklands were compared for each jurisdiction and combined as if a unified park system with and without the extensive natural areas in the comparative park acreages total.

Figure 8. National Level of Service Data by Population Density per Square Mile

	All Agencies	Population Density per square mile			
		Less than 500	500 to 1,500	1,501 to 2,500	Over 2,500
Lower Quartile	4.5 ac/1000	4.8 ac/1000	6.3 ac/1000	7.5 ac/1000	3.3 ac/1000
Median	9.9 ac/1000	9.9 ac/1000	12.1 ac/1000	12.9 ac/1000	6.4 ac/1000
Upper Quartile	17.5 ac/1000	17.3 ac/1000	19.9 ac/1000	20.6 ac/1000	13.5 ac/1000

According to the State’s certified population estimate for Hood River County, the Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District currently serves a population of approximately 24,100 residents. In reviewing the PRORAGIS data, the Hood River area’s level of service would be above the median (in the upper quartile) for low density communities with nearly 30 acres per 1,000 population of total ‘core parks’ consisting of neighborhood, community and regional park classifications. If all parklands are combined, as may be with many reported communities across the spectrum, the Hood River area has significant parklands due to the extent of regional parks, county campgrounds, waterfront and open space. In that context, the Hood River area would well exceed the ratio of acres per 1,000 residents with 68 acres per 1,000.

Figure 9. Hood River Valley Population Density and Parkland Acreage per 1,000 Population

	Population	Land Area (acres)	Density (pop./acre)	Land Area (sq.mi.)	Population Density per sq.mi.	Total Parkland (acres)	Parklands ac./1,000 residents	Core Park Acreage	Acres/1,000	Active Use Park Acreage	Acres/1,000
Hood River Valley	24,100	340,019	0.1	531.3	45	1,650.9	68.5	718.8	29.8	68.0	2.8
Hood River UGB	10,177	2,304	4.4	4.0	2,519	450.3	44.2	81.9	8.0	57.7	5.7

Core Park acreage includes neighborhood, community and regional park classifications; Active Use include only developed neighborhood and community parks.

Segmenting the acreage data by classification for the population center of the Hood River urban growth boundary (UGB) helps paint a more focused picture of level of service. Within the UGB, the current level of service also would be above the median (in the upper quartile) for a medium density community with approximately 44 acres of total parklands per 1,000 population; however, the level of service drops significantly to 8 acres per 1,000 residents when looking only at ‘core parks’ as described above. The level of service declines further to 5.7 acres per 1,000 residents as the inventory is filtered to remove undeveloped sites and include only developed neighborhood and community parks.

Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Oregon SCORP provides guidelines for setting standards for a community’s park system to ensure the provision of proposed level of service for the community. These guidelines were developed after a review of former NRPA guidelines, results from a

statewide survey of Oregon’s public park and recreation providers, and a benchmarking report completed for the Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA). While these statewide site guidelines provide a useful framework for evaluating jurisdiction resources, it is recognized that individual jurisdictions will need to develop their own service standards that reflect their unique conditions, resources and needs.

The recommended total parkland acres site guideline for local park and recreation jurisdictions in Oregon is 6.25 to 12.5 acres per 1,000 population, which represents a minimum acreage that should be exceeded when possible. According to the SCORP, in meeting the 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 population total parkland site guideline, park planners should consider each of the relevant park classification types, which have their own unique function and service radius within the jurisdiction.

Recommended Level of Service for Hood River Providers

The Oregon SCORP acknowledges that acreage alone does not assure a well-balanced park system. Parks should be planned and developed with a balance of facilities for each park site. Suggested quantities of specific facilities, from sports fields to picnic tables, for populations within local jurisdictions are included in the SCORP guidelines.

Utilizing the Oregon SCORP guidelines and through discussions with the partnering agencies, proposed numeric service levels and walkshed ranges are noted in Figure 10. These proposed standards distinguish between urban and rural areas and are segmented by classification. Service standards are not recommended for trails, since the goal of the trail network is more related to community connectivity and access, rather than a per capita distance measurement. Also, standards are not proposed for open spaces, due to the uniqueness and special characteristics of those sites.

Figure 10. Recommended Level of Service for Hood River Agency Partners (Based on recommended OR LOS Guidelines 2013-17)

Classification / Location	Current Inventory *	Current LOS (2019)	OR LOS Guideline Range	Projected 2040 LOS **	Proposed LOS Standard	Proposed Walkshed Standard
Neighborhood Park			Range			
Inside UGB / Unincorporated	10.25 ac.	1.01 ac./1000	1-2 ac./1000	0.78 ac./1000	2.0 ac./1000	1/2-mile
Rural	3.29 ac.	0.14 ac./1000		0.12 ac./1000	0.2 ac./1000	1-mile
Community Park						
Inside UGB	6.34 ac.	0.62 ac./1000	2-6 ac./1000	0.48 ac./1000	2.0 ac./1000	2 miles
Rural	7.06 ac.	0.29 ac./1000		0.26 ac./1000	2.0 ac./1000	5 miles
Regional Park						
Inside UGB	57.74 ac.	5.67 ac./1000	5-10 ac./1000	4.37 ac./1000	5.0 ac./1000	5 miles
Rural	654 ac.	27.14 ac./1000		24.01 ac./1000	20.0 ac./1000	10 miles
Trails, Pathways & Bikeways						
Inside UGB	8.76 mi.	0.86 mi./1000	0.5-1.5 mi./1000	0.66 ac./1000	N/A	1/4-1/2 mile
Rural	60 mi.	2.49 mi./1000		2.20 ac./1000	N/A	
Undeveloped/Open Space						
Inside UGB	36.15 ac.	3.55 ac./1000	N/A	2.74 ac./1000	N/A	
Rural	85.46 ac.	3.55 ac./1000		3.14 ac./1000	N/A	

* Excludes state and federal lands, schools (public & private) and Other Community Partners

** Projected LOS column calculates the level of service of the current inventory against the projected 2040 population

While this plan proposes to treat the Hood River area park and recreation system holistically across all public land ownership, some consideration of the different contributing jurisdictions is warranted. Parklands for outdoor recreational pursuits are provided by a number of local, regional, state and federal agencies in the valley. Each land owner may have different primary purposes for their land and goals for its use but public access and outdoor recreation fits within their land management policy. Examining the land ownership across the park system reveals that the bulk of the outdoor recreation land acreage is provided by Hood River County and USFS Forest Service. If acreage were the sole measure for adequate park provision, Hood River would be well established. However, the forest and natural lands provided by the county and federal agencies are generally not developed for typical park use. Their facilities are more remote, and the amenities are limited and minimal. The options for outdoor recreation in these natural lands are geared for those wanting to hike, backpack, hunt, fish and camp. Of the 682 acres of land managed by the county, only a small portion of that acreage actually has some campground and day use facilities. Measuring performance by acreage alone does not provide a comprehensive examination of a park system.

GOING BEYOND ACREAGE STANDARDS

Using a service standard for park acreage tied to a community's population provides a common measure for guiding the amount of desired parkland. However, the acreage of parkland per capita provides only a limited measure of the value of recreational access and park amenities in demand for public uses. Future population growth will continue to increase pressure on the availability of large, developable tracts for purchase as future, active use parks. As the park system matures with increasing residential density, other assessment techniques should be incorporated going forward to gauge the community's need for additional lands, facilities and amenities, which include the following.

- Park pressure
- Variety / type of park amenities
- Condition of park amenities

Park Pressure

Park pressure refers to the potential demand on a park. One method of exploration examines the proximity of residential populations to a park and assumes that the residents in a 'parkshed' use the park closest to them and that people visit their closest park more often than those farther away. Using GIS, the 'parkshed' is defined by a polygon or a park service area containing all households having the given park as their closest park. The population within this park service area can then be calculated, providing an estimate of the number of nearby potential park users. The acreage of the subject park is then used to calculate the number of park acres available per 1,000 people within the parkshed. These values can be compiled using data from the forthcoming Census 2020, whereby population data from census blocks can be aggregated into each parkshed to determine the total population and the population density relative to each park and its parkshed.

This measure of probable park use and population pressure identifies the adequacy of the park land (in acres per 1,000) rather than simply the location and 'walkability' determined by the park accessibility metric. Depending on the amenities and attractions within the park, the higher the population within a parkshed will result in greater the use and potential increased maintenance and wear and tear.

The areas along the waterfront and limited number of sports fields were noted as places where overcrowding or overuse are becoming factors in park user experiences. Upkeep of facilities can be more intensive to maintain acceptable quality for grass areas, landscapes, clean restrooms and safe conditions as wear and tear increase with heavy use. The waterfront along the Columbia River is a national attraction for wind/water-based sports in addition to being a very scenic location for residents and visitors in the Gorge. This visitation pressure goes beyond the "parkshed" as defined by proximity to residential populations.

Park Amenity Mix

Providing unique outdoor experiences, while working to fulfill basic recreational park amenities, will result in parks with a variety of amenities. The variety and location of amenities available within a community's parks and recreational facilities will create a range of different preferences and levels of park usage by residents. Park systems should ensure an equitable distribution and quantity the most common amenities like playgrounds, picnic shelters, restrooms, sports courts, sports field and trails to help distribute the potential usage of load on individual parks. Park planners should also consider that many park users, particularly families, look for a variety of amenities in a park that will provide a range of outdoor recreation activities for every visit.

Park Amenity Condition

In addition to understanding the quantity of park amenities, communities must also assess the condition of each park's general infrastructure and amenities. The condition or quality of park amenities is a key measure of park adequacy and a required assurance of public safety. General park infrastructure may include walkways, parking lots, restrooms, drainage and irrigation, lighting systems and vegetation. Amenities can 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 can also provide a measure of acceptable condition. Older park facilities may lack universal accessibility limiting the value of the recreational assets by inadvertently excluding some park users.

The assessment of park conditions for Hood River Valley indicated a need to renovate and update some existing amenities, address universal access for park recreation features and added value to be gained from upgrading and enhancing areas within the existing park facilities. The Oregon SCORP places a priority on ensuring there are accessible routes for seniors as well as ADA compliance in public parks and other facilities.



Photo credit: Kyle Ramey



The Hood River area’s parks, pools and facilities provide an array of options for field sports, court sports, aquatics and other recreational activities. The Hood River Valley Park and Recreation District partners with the City of Hood River, Hood River County School District, Hood River County Forestry Department, local sport leagues and private entities to provide current opportunities. These partnerships will be continue to be critical in the future as HRVPRD works to provide the recreation facilities and programming necessary to meet diverse community needs.

MAJOR TRENDS IN RECREATION

The following trends in recreation facilities and programming were compiled from the National Park & Recreation Association (NRPA) and from parks and recreation practitioners:

- **Providing facilities and programs to meet the needs of residents of all ages:** Providers are modifying facilities and program offerings to match community needs and participation trends. For example, according to the 2018 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report, children and teens, ages 6 to 17, who tend to be more active overall, focus on team sports and outdoor activities. Adults between 20 and 40 are more likely than the other generations to participate in water sports, such as stand up paddling, boardsailing and surfing. Adults over 55 prefer fitness activities, especially low impact activities such as aquatic exercise, cycling, and walking.
- **Expanding opportunities for families to recreate together or at the same time:** Many providers are offering programs that appeal to the family unit or parent/child programs. Some are bundling programs for youth and adults so classes are offered at similar times.
- **Offering programs that meet the needs of working families:** Including programs, such as camps, for youth after-school, during non-school days and during school breaks to provide engaging care options for youth with working parents.

- **Adapting programming to promote equity and inclusion:** To ensure more equity and inclusion, more activities are being adapted for participants who have disabilities or with universal accessibility as the goal. Providers are also introducing programs oriented towards specific language or ethnic groups.
- **Providing program options at various times, levels of commitment, and costs to improve the accessibility and utilization of programs:** Many providers are diversifying the times and days programs are offered and are allowing participants to choose from a range of drop-in, single day reserved, and multi-session programs. Providers' cost options may include peak and off-peak rates; pay-as-you-go classes; and focused subsidies.
- **Adding adult fitness equipment and classes:** Many providers are identifying weight, fitness, and group exercise studio space as the most needed additional space in their recreation facilities.
- **Expanding partnerships with recreation, education and health providers:** Recreation agencies are forming strategic alliances with health, social services, and educational agencies to offer more comprehensive health and wellness programs. Agencies are also expanding partnerships with private, public and non-profit groups to develop and manage recreation facilities and to diversify program offerings.
- **Shifting planning and management approaches to better meet current needs:** Recreation providers using varied strategies to try to meet evolving community needs. For example, providers are increasingly using information technology solutions to track and report on program usage and other trends. Providers are also shifting to agency-wide approaches to recreation planning and service management and away from geographic zone management. To cost-effectively provide desired levels of service, providers are rethinking space allocation in recreation facilities and exploring strategies to reduce operating costs of existing facilities or expand revenue generation – including by prioritizing amenities that are multi-purpose or are 'low cost, high occupancy'.

LOCAL FEEDBACK & INTERESTS

As a part of the master plan process, community input guided the understanding of local interests and needs for recreation programming.

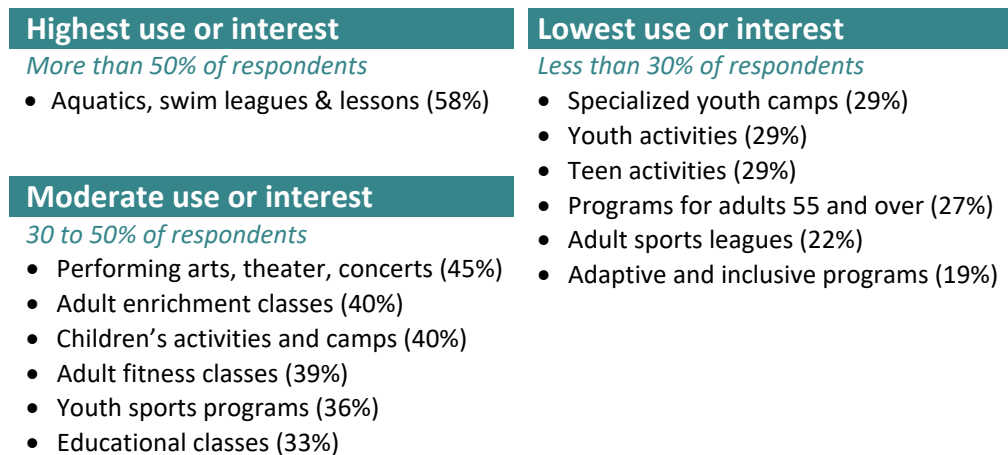
More than half of community survey respondents have used, or have an interest in using, aquatics and swim lessons/leagues. Between 33% and 45% of respondents indicated an interest or use in performing arts, community theater or concerts, adult enrichment and educational classes, and children's and youth activities, ranging from sport programs to summer camps. Respondents between 20 and 54 indicated that their needs were not met for adult sport leagues and adult fitness classes by larger percentages than average. Activities that are directed at specialized groups (adaptive programs and those targeted at teens and older adults) had the lowest use and also had the most respondents who felt their needs for these programs were unmet.

The community's priorities for enhancing or expanding recreation programs included:

- Adult enrichment classes
- Adult fitness & health/wellness
- Youth/teen camps, specialized recreation programs
- Education

- Sport programs – adult and youth
- Community Events
- After-School/Summer Camps

Figure 11. Interest and Use of Recreation Program Types from Survey



Community members were more likely to participate in - and support expansion of - programs that match the demographics of themselves or their families. For examples, older adults participate in and believe there should be more programs for adults 55 and over. Similarly, adults age 35 to 55 - who are most likely to have children at home - are more likely to feel more youth and teen programs are needed.

Community members encouraged recreation providers to consider ways to improve the geographic and financial accessibility of programs and expand marketing of activities.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT OFFERINGS

Recreation providers in the Hood River area have a unique approach to programs and services that is based on partnerships and agreements between public and community-based recreation providers and contracts with independent instructors for services. HRVPRD principally partners with the Hood River County School District to provide recreation facilities and programs within the HRVPRD boundary. For years, residents of the Hood River area have benefitted from athletic fields, sport courts, indoor recreation facilities and recreation programming provided by the School District. The use of school district facilities has enabled a much higher level of service for sports and programs than would otherwise be possible and truly highlights the depth of cooperation required to provide a full range of recreational facilities for the Hood River area. Neither the City of Hood River nor Hood River County directly provide recreation classes or programs.

Aquatics

The Hood River Valley Park and Recreation District is the primary provider of indoor, water-based sports and instruction. An ongoing priority is the operation and maintenance of the Hood River Aquatic Center. HRVPRD offers aquatic programs and swim lessons as well as providing space for high school water polo teams and swim masters.

Hood River Aquatic Center

The Hood River Aquatic Center is a full service, multi-purpose, high demand facility that is used for aquatics, recreation programs and events, and rentals. The pool area is enclosed with a removable tension fabric supported on a metal structure, which allows for year-round use and the ability to seasonally open part of the structure. The center offers the following amenities:

- 25 yard by 25 meter lap pool, including slide & rope swing
- Therapy pool
- Children's wading pool
- Party room for birthday parties and meetings
- Locker rooms

The Aquatic Center is the only indoor, year-round public pool in the region, and it attracts visitors from across the Hood River County and the Columbia Gorge. The center accommodates many of the region's aquatic recreation programs and has been heavily used for years. However, a significant demand for indoor pool facilities and programs remains and stakeholders note a need for additional capacity for meets and events. In addition, the pool and its mechanical equipment is nearing the end of its service life. The original pool was constructed in 1948, and many of the pool's mechanical components in use today date back seven decades.

In 2017, the HRVPRD commissioned a feasibility study to evaluate the condition of the existing facility and explore options for facility renovations. Due to the age of this pool, the District should continue to monitor the performance of the mechanical systems, decking and pool lining and act on one of the options outlined in the recent feasibility study to renovate or replace the pool.

A recent community survey suggests a strong public interest in renovating the Aquatic Center and having access to additional recreation program offerings, especially for youth, teens and seniors. The community survey included a question that asked residents whether they would support replacing the Aquatic Center. A majority of respondents (59%) would support a full replacement of the facility with a new combination aquatic and community center, the most expensive option offered. Approximately one-third of residents would support a partial replacement of the pool building and enclosure and/or the addition of a recreation pool.

In exploring options for a pool replacement, stakeholders and community members also expressed desires to increase the overall size of the pool and potentially add a leisure pool. Leisure pools continue to represent the strongest trend in aquatics. Such pools incorporate slides, lazy rivers (or current channels), fountains, zero depth entry and other water features into a pool's design has proved to be extremely popular for the recreational user.

Leisure pools appeal to the younger kids (who are the largest segment of the population that swims) and to families. These types of facilities are able to attract and draw larger crowds and people tend to come from a further distance and stay longer to utilize such pools. This all translates into the potential to sell more admissions and increase revenues. It is estimated conservatively that a leisure pool can generate up to 30% more revenue than a comparable conventional pool and the cost of operation, while being higher, has been offset through increased revenues.

Given the substantial cost associated with a major pool renovation or replacement, stakeholders also suggested considering design and programming decisions that could maximize the economic benefit of the facility, as well as including a broader range of recreation services and café or retail spaces to increase the appeal, use and revenue-generating capacity of the facility. Nationally, providers are moving from designing aquatic centers as stand-alone facilities that only have aquatic features to providing a more full-service recreation center with fitness, sports and community based amenities. This change has allowed for a better rate of cost recovery and stronger rates of use of the aquatic portion of the facility as well as the other “dry side” amenities.

HRVPRD Aquatics Programs

HRVPRD has a strong aquatics program, with an emphasis on lessons, competitive and recreational swimming, water exercise, and health and safety programs. The Aquatics program offers open and lap swim, along with youth and adult swim lessons, lifeguard training and water aerobics. The Center also accommodates kayak practicing, and the District partners with the Community Ed program for a summertime swim bus for Mid and Upper Valley youth. The Aquatics Program generates more than \$300,000 in revenue for the HRVPRD, which represents about half of the cost to operate the facility.

As noted in the Aquatic Center Feasibility Study, the more traditional aspects of aquatics (including swim teams, instruction and aqua fitness) remain a central offering of most aquatic centers. Many communities offer youth swim lessons to address the life safety concerns of not knowing how to swim. Competitive swimming programs for youth, high schools, and masters – whether offered through USA Swimming or community based organizations continue to be an important offering. Aqua fitness, from aqua exercise to lap swimming, has enjoyed strong growth during the last decade as people have recognized the benefits of water-based exercise.

HRVPRD’s Aquatics program generally meets the community’s needs and will not likely require significant future changes. Youth and masters swim program participation has been steady to slightly increasing over recent years. The capacity of the pool itself is a limiting factor for program scheduling. Moving forward, the breadth and continuity of aquatics programming should be weighed against the physical needs of the pool and its infrastructure and its ability to provide a safe user experience.

Sports Fields

The Hood River County School District and two private entities own an inventory of sports fields that are, to varying degrees, available for use by community sports organizations for leagues, clinics and summer programs after school programming needs are met. The Hood River County School District (HRCSD) currently provides fields appropriate for a variety of sports, including 11 fields suitable for baseball and softball, 8 fields for soccer or lacrosse, 3 football fields, 3 track facilities and 2 general recreation fields. An additional 2 baseball/softball fields and 1 soccer/lacrosse field are provided by St Mary's Catholic Church and the Horizon Christian School provides 2 soccer/lacrosse fields. The City of Hood River also provides 1 baseball/softball field at Collins Field in Jackson Park. Combined, the sports fields and sports courts result in over 116 acres of outdoor recreation facilities provided by the three educational or religious institutions and local municipal government.

Existing Facility Needs

Proactively addressing sports field conditions that may limit viability and extended use, the Hood River County School District conducted an assessment of its athletic facilities in a 2017 Athletic Facilities Master Plan. The Master Plan identified a number of significant improvements to all seven schools examined. Types of improvements included synthetic turf, all-weather track surfacing, lawn reconstruction and renovation, new sidewalks and paths, fencing for sport facilities, and field lighting.

Through the Master Plan, the School District identified over \$16 million in proposed future improvements to its facilities. The proposed improvements include creation of new tennis courts and Pickleball courts. While the proposed improvements would not add new sports fields to the Valley inventory, the proposed improvements to surfacing, irrigation, and lighting would extend available opportunities for field use. Initial phases of the planned improvements were budgeted and designed for construction in 2018.

Additional Field Capacity

Based on public and stakeholder feedback, Hood River Valley's existing and popular sport programs may exceed the capacity of current fields. With projected future population growth and growing participation in team sports, HRVPRD, the School District, local sports organizations and other recreation providers will need to partner more actively to maintain existing field resources, use existing sites more efficiently and effectively and/or acquire and develop additional field space to meet demands.

Stakeholders and sports leagues also noted a need for additional indoor or covered facility capacity for winter-season play of lacrosse and soccer programs. Indoor gym time is often fully booked and is unable to support additional sport growth. In addition, the Valley currently lacks a larger field complex or tournament site, which could increase field capacity and serve as a regional destination.

Court Sports

The Hood River County School District currently provides courts for tennis at Parkdale Elementary School and basketball at several elementary schools. Basketball can also be played in indoor gyms available at the elementary schools. Outdoor tennis courts are

located at Golden Eagle Park and the Tsuruta Tennis Courts in Jackson Park, as well as Oak Grove Park.. Future tennis courts are planned for at the High School. Outdoor basketball courts are also found at Culbertson Park, Golden Eagle Park, Montello Park and several other sites. Pickleball courts can be set up in indoor gyms, and new outdoor courts are available at Golden Eagle Park.

The Hood River Valley has seen increasing interest and participation in some court sports in recent years. The summer tennis league, which serves about 140 youth, has been consistently full, triggering the initiation of a fall league. The addition of pickleball courts has allowed dramatic participation increases. While pickleball participation is dominated by older adults, the league is seeking more youth participation.

The inclusion of tennis, basketball (full court), or volleyball courts should be considered in the planning and development of future community parks or community centers. Half-court basketball courts may also be appropriate for neighborhood parks, particularly in underserved areas or where there is expressed neighborhood interest. Pickleball is a growing sport that should be considered in the mix of facilities provided in future parkland development. New pickleball facilities should be lit and designed to avoid wind exposure to support longer daily use. Generally, new pickleball facilities can be successful when located in groups of four courts or more to allow for the natural social interaction that accompanies the sport.

Alternative Sports

Providing facilities for alternative or emerging sports, such as skateboarding, BMX, mountain biking, climbing and parkour, can offer residents a more diverse range of recreational experiences, while creating destinations that attract local and regional visitors. Hood River currently has an outdoor, concrete skatepark located in Rotary (Jaymar) Park and an asphalt pump track at Golden Eagle Park. Opportunities and facilities for other alternative sports should be considered as new parks are designed and developed.

Water-based recreational activities such as wind and kite surfing at the waterfront in Hood River have generated a broad-reaching attraction for enthusiasts looking for steady wind power for their water sports. While most of the water recreation related facilities are managed by the Port, the recreational use could be enhanced by local providers offering related programming or early instructional water-based activities. Outdoor recreation businesses in the Hood River community benefit from the close proximity of the rivers, forests and mountains that provide venues for mountain biking, backpacking, skiing (downhill and cross country) snowshoeing, rock climbing and similar outdoor activities. Park and recreation providers can partner with local businesses to run classes that provide an introduction to these outdoor sports and broaden the outreach to new participants.

Recreation Programs

The Hood River County School District Community Education program is the primary provider of recreation programs in the Hood River Valley and has served the community for 45 years. The Community Education program operates as an enterprise fund, with staff and program costs covered through fees, sponsorships and other sources. The program

includes four pre-schools, youth recreation, adult special interest classes, sports programs, after school care and events (such as Families in the Park and Movies in the Park).

Due to budget constraints and hiring requirements within the school district, Community Ed has been unable to bring in additional staff to help run the program, despite community interest in expanded programming choices. Two staff operate nearly \$1 million program of preschool, after care and recreation programs. For summer day camps, the program utilizes a college graduate and high school age teens to help staff the program.

Youth Recreation

Youth programs provide opportunities for recreation, socialization, community involvement, leadership development and education for youth 18 years and younger. Youth programs include preschool, summer day camps, and enrichment programs, and these offerings are focused to meet the diverse needs of youth in the Hood River area community. The current programming for all youth programs (except aquatics) is operated through Community Ed, and many of the programs occur within School District facilities. Community Ed also works with third-party vendors as contractor-led programs for specialized programs, such as maker space, art and hobbies.

Youth Sport Programs

The Hood River County School District's Community Ed program is the primary provider of youth sports and coordinates a range of youth sport options, including soccer, football, tennis, golf, lacrosse, basketball, pickleball, among others. Hood River Little League organizes the local little league, softball and t-ball programs. They use fields at St Mary's Catholic Church and at the following schools: May Elementary, Mid Valley School Elementary and Parkdale Elementary.

In addition to School District programs, a variety of sports organizations use the sports fields and courts to offer youth soccer, ultimate Frisbee, youth baseball/softball, youth tennis and youth lacrosse leagues.

Adult Programs & Special Interest Classes

Community Ed also offers classes and programs for adults, which range from arts and crafts, general interest and adult co-ed recreational soccer through Gorge Soccer. Currently, adult fitness classes are not provided by HRVPRD or Community Ed and are only available in private gyms in Hood River.

Going forward, HRVPRD should explore options to provide adult fitness and recreation programs, especially if the future renovation of the Aquatic Center accommodates adequate space for cardio and fitness equipment and studios/classrooms. This could be accomplished through a combination of staff-led programs and contractor-led programs, with a goal of providing quality programming at an affordable rate.

The Hood River Valley Adult Center, a local non-profit community center, serves Hood River County seniors with a variety of services, activities and special events. Local seniors can participate in a number of activities, including exercise classes, tai chi, Zumba, dances, games, and more. The center coordinates deliveries for Meals on Wheels and encourages volunteerism. The center also provides a range of trips, with recent excursions to New Orleans and Las Vegas and a planned trip to Ireland. The center also has a thrift store and provides options for room rentals.

Special Events

The Hood River County School District offers two series of community events each year, 1) Families in the Park, which has been running since 1982 with weekly concerts and performances during August; and 2) Movies in the Park, a weekly outdoor movie in July and August. Both series of events take place at Jackson Park.

There are many other events that occur throughout the year that are organized and led by other agencies and groups. Many celebrate the rich agricultural heritage of the county or its cultural and recreational amenities. These events include:

- Hood River Foodie February
- Hood River Music Month
- Hood River Valley Blossom Time
- Hood River Hard-Pressed Cider Fest
- Roy Webster Cross-Channel Swim
- Hood River Hops Fest
- Hood River Valley Harvest Fest
- Hood River Holidays

PROGRAM EXPANSION & MANAGEMENT

Expanding beyond the existing suite of offerings presents a different opportunity and challenge. Hood River County is geographically spread out – making it slightly more difficult to serve mid and upper valley residents with robust programming. The Community Ed program has made an effort to provide programming to Parkdale and Odell, especially for after school or school break programming, and to serve those areas that have concentrations of low-income, multi-family or highly diverse communities. More significantly, this program area is limited by a lack of staff resources. The school district and HRVPRD should continue to explore opportunities expand or re-formulate their partnership to provide youth programming. While Community Ed is a legacy program for the School District and has been locally supported for 45 years, it also is not the core mission of the school district, and its position has been threatened by past budget discussions.

Recommendations

Based on the analysis of existing programs and the input received from the public, the following are basic recommendations for future recreation programs and services.

Aquatics

- Explore options to replace the Aquatic Center with a modern, expanded facility.
- Continue to stress aquatic programming, especially learn to swim classes for children, as a primary program area. Aquatic exercise programs should also continue to be emphasized.

With the competitive orientation of the pool, continuing to encourage swim and water polo team use will be critical.

- The District should consider options to expand water safety instruction and explore partnerships with City departments, such as police or public works, and outside agencies to provide CPR, First Aid and in-water rescue training for their staff. The Aquatics program should continue to explore ways to expand water safety education to the community through swim lessons, camp programs and certifications.

Sports Fields & Courts

- The Hood River County School District, HRVPRD, and other partnering agencies should continue to monitor the condition, investment needs and usage rates of various field and court facilities to best plan for long-term maintenance and capital needs. Field usage policies should be reassessed on a regular basis to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the various user groups and potential evolving sports. Field usage fees should also be updated periodically – and when significant field improvements are made - to address cost recovery and equity objectives. Such policies and fees should also address field scheduling for alternative uses, such as festivals, concerts and other community events.

Alternative Sports

- Partner with local businesses and clubs that promote outdoor sporting activities like mountain biking to create training sessions and facilities that help those sports grow in participation. Summer day camps can incorporate biking skill sessions, rock climbing, geocaching and other approaches to encouraging outdoor activities. The instructional programming can also introduce young community members to the region’s great natural resources through field trips that involve the alternative sport activity.

Recreation Programs

- Commit to having HRVPRD take on a stronger role in coordinating and delivering recreation programs and services in the community to ensure the continuity of a broad base of programming options is available. This will require strong communications with other providers to determine roles, tracking of programs offered and number of participants, plus actively promoting the availability of services.
- Future discussions about funding and staffing levels at HRVPRD should include the consideration of assuming the role as recreation program provider for the valley and absorbing most Community Ed programs under the umbrella of the District via a long-term intergovernmental agreement to ensure that school space (indoor gymnasiums, classrooms and fields) are available for recreation programming. For programming continuity for teachers and students, the school district might be best equipped to retain, manage and grow its preschool and after school programs; aligning these programs with the school district also provides consistency concerning human resources matters and requirements (e.g., trainings, certifications, background checks, safety protocols, etc.).
- Develop a Programming Philosophy that details how the District will deliver recreation programs and services in the future. This should be based on the concept that HRVPRD will provide a basic offering of programs and services in a number of key program areas and rely on other organizations and providers as the source for other programs and services.

There will need to be recognition that the Division will need to step-in and provide some programs and services where other providers are not available or cannot adequately serve the needs of the community.

- Develop a Program Plan for recreation services. This plan needs to take into consideration the needs of the community, the role of HRVPRD, and the expectations and role of other organizations and recreation providers in the area. There should be clearly identified areas of programmatic responsibility to ensure that there is not overlap in resource allocation or that gaps in services are not present.
- Act as a “clearinghouse” for recreation programs and services provided by others. This may involve promotion of their activities, coordinating of some programs, and scheduling of facilities.
- Match recreation programming efforts with staff and financial resources. Recognize that increasing the role of the District in providing programs will require an increase in staff and other resources. As a result, the program plan should be developed incrementally with small steps being taken at a time that does not require significant staff or budgetary resources to accomplish.
- Explore options to partner with the library district for unique opportunities to provide recreation, education and social services in programming at other locations.





The Hood River area trail system contains hundreds of miles of hiking trails due to the proximity to extensive regional, state and federal parklands and wilderness areas. Just over eight miles of trails provide connections through the City of Hood River and along the waterfront. These trails are primarily shared use pathways for walkers and bikers. The many miles of trails in county, state and federal public lands primarily accommodate hiking, mountain biking and equestrian uses. One primary focus for Hood River Valley park and recreation providers is to connect the local, shared-use paths to provide access through neighborhoods and public places, while also retaining and improving access to existing recreational trails in natural areas.

Survey respondents ranked trail projects, including developing new trails and extending the Indian Creek Trail, as the top priority for parks and recreation improvements.

LOCAL FEEDBACK & INTERESTS

Similar to national trends for walking and hiking, Hood River area residents identified trails as a top priority in the park system. From the community survey conducted as part of this planning effort, the highest response regarding the main reasons for visiting local parks in the last year was using trails to walk, run or bike (79%). Respondents indicated that the highest unmet needs are for road and trail biking routes, in addition to spray parks/splash pads, indoor fitness facilities and off-leash dog areas. When asked which parks and recreation improvements they would like included in the new plan, respondents ranked trail projects – including developing new trails and extending the Indian Creek Trail – as the top priority.

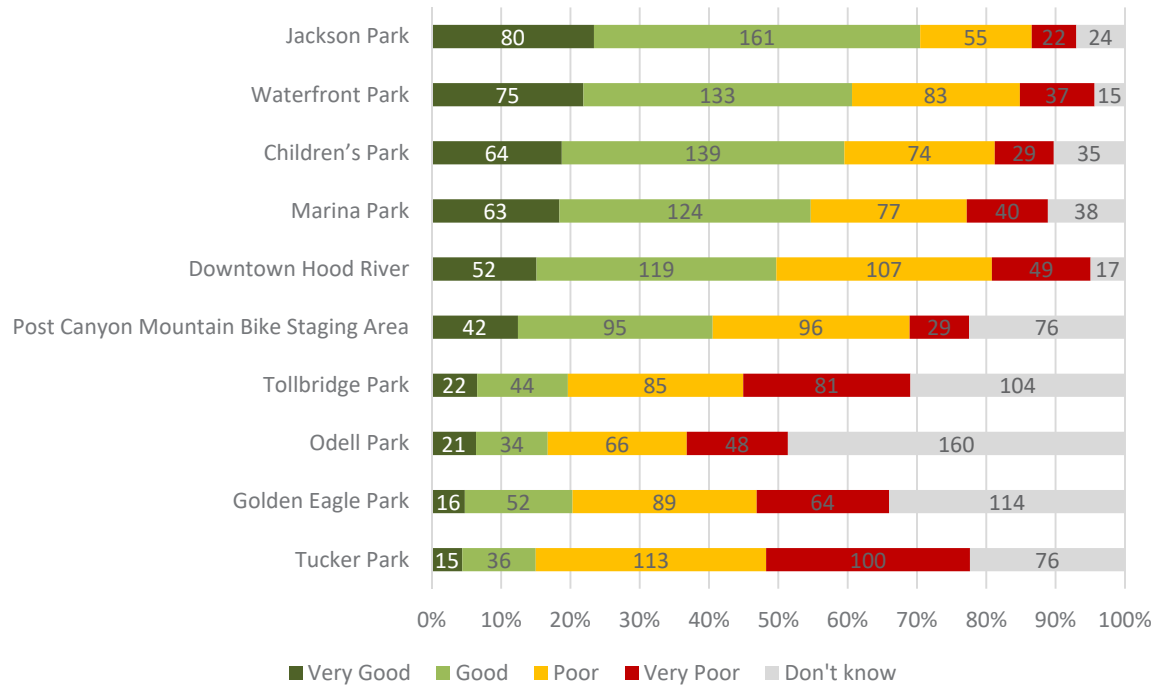
Trail connections and an expanded trail network were a key discussion topic during the June 2018 public meeting and the focus group discussion on wind, water, and trail recreation.

- Trail connections were identified as the most important park feature to add.
- Many people want the Indian Creek Trail connected, citing it will also provide students the ability to ride or walk to school.

- Many advocated for a bike and pedestrian connection from Morrison Park to the Hook and Waterfront area.
- Many people suggested a “rail to trail” route from Hood River to Parkdale.
- Bicycle and pedestrian access to parks in the mid valley area are rated the poorest.

The comment form and online survey in support of the June 2018 meeting also asked about access to different parks and destinations. Commonly cited destinations that would be better served by direct and safe bike/ped trails include the Heights to Downtown, Waterfront Park, Westside area, Indian Creek Trail, schools, and along Hood River to Odell and Parkdale.

Figure 12. Rating the bicycle and pedestrian access to the following locations



Going Beyond Lines On A Map

Trails for Connectivity

As with roadway system and transportation planning, planning for recreational trails should be geared toward connectivity, rather than mileage. Considering only a mileage standard for recreational trails within the Hood River area park system provides a limited and inadequate assessment of need for the community and its plans for growth and better connectivity. This Plan recommends a connectivity goal that re-states and reinforces the desire to improve overall connections across the Hood River UGB and enhance off-street linkages between parks and major destinations, as feasible.

Connecting the Hood River area through bike and pedestrian trails can also enhance the community's sense of place. As part of the Columbia River Gorge and Mount Hood landscape, trails provide a defining connection to the natural environment that has shaped the history and culture of the Hood River community. A connective system of trails for people provides the social and physical infrastructure for enhancing community.

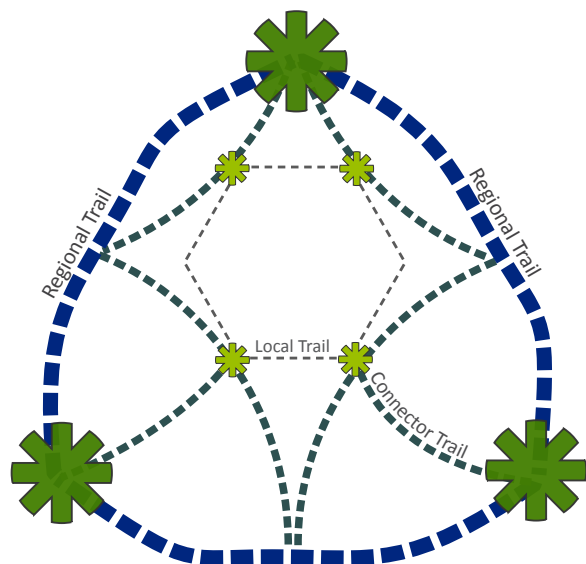
TRAIL STANDARDS

The recommended guidelines for level of service set forth in the Oregon SCORP for miles of trails ranges from 0.5 - 1.5 miles per 1,000 population. The local recreational trails in the Hood River UGB provide a current level of service of 0.86 miles per 1,000, which is within the range of Oregon's guidelines. Including the county trails in Post Canyon increase the countywide level of service to 3.35 miles per 1,000, which exceeds the state guidelines. Recognizing that over 525 miles of primitive trails are provided within nearby USFS lands, the focus of future trail system improvements should be geared toward improving connections within and between Hood River, Odell and Parkdale.

Trail Hierarchy

This plan is intended to reinforce the County Bicycle Plan through the connections provided through off-street trails and pathways. This Plan's focus is primarily on recreation and access to local destinations without replicating the county-designated bike lanes and alternative transportation element. This recreational trails system uses a trail hierarchy (Figure 13) to create a series of interconnected linkages throughout the Hood River Valley and represents a trail framework based on the planned users' volumes and intensity. This hierarchy conceptualizes a circulation network of connected non-motorized routes - ranging from regional and community-wide primary corridors, to secondary neighborhood corridors and minor local spurs. These interconnected linkages enable recreational trail users to create loops or individualized routes and enable community members to connect to their important places depending on desired travel distances or specific destinations.

Figure 13. Trail Hierarchy Concept



The differences between the trail classifications within the hierarchy are based on purpose, intensity of use and connections, rather than on trail width, material or user. Five trail classifications exist within the Hood River Valley network: regional, connector, local, park trails and pathways, and special use trails. The former three trail classes serve as the primary linkages across and through the valley. Park trails and pathways include those segments located wholly on public park and natural area lands. Special use trails encompass the extensive network of hiking, mountain biking and equestrian trails in the natural and forest lands that are within and extend beyond the valley.

Trail Classifications

Defining and reinforcing a recreational trail classification establishes a framework for trail design and enables the prioritization of proposed trail enhancements and development. The recreational trail classification system is based on a tiered network and includes five trail categories: regional, connector, local, park trails and pathways and special use trails. While some sections of trail will accommodate higher volumes of traffic and provide regional connections, other sections may rely on the local street network and be designed to link local or neighborhood scale destinations. Trail types are important to plan for to encourage use of the appropriate trail and to discourage the creation of informal trails destroying vegetation and causing erosion. Design details may vary by jurisdiction, width of easements, and other constraints. Trails or trail segments within the City of Hood River may be provided as on-street facilities, such as bike lanes or sidewalks.

Regional Trail

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 the Valley and serve as continuous recreational corridors. Regional trails are paved, multi-use routes that accommodate pedestrians and cyclists 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 10' and 14' wide, and these corridors should provide the highest level of trail amenities, including trailheads, parking, signage, and restrooms. The Historic Columbia River Highway Trail serves as a regional trail across the northern section of the valley. The potential Powerdale Trail / Mount Hood Railroad Trail could serve as a north-south regional trail.

Connector Trail

Connector trails provide recreational benefits by linking to regional trails and important land uses and areas of interest, often within a neighborhood and sometimes in a street right-of-way. They also create recreation loops to public parks, natural areas and other destinations. These trails serve the Hood River community and help connect the trail system to provide needed access and recreational options. The Indian Creek Trail (currently 3.3 miles) and Westside Trail (currently 1.4 miles) are examples of connector trails.

Local Trail

Local trails are located within neighborhoods and typically cover short distances. Local routes can serve several functions. They can provide connection to the regional or connector trails, provide a local recreational loop or provide access to and connect local features such as parks, community centers and schools. Local routes are mostly off-street and are primarily paved, single-use segments. The 2nd Street Stairs (0.16 miles) and Marina paths (0.5 miles) are local trails.

Park Trail

Park trails are interior loops or point-to-point routes within parks, plazas or other public properties and include paved or unpaved walking paths. Depending on use, location and underlying conditions, the trail surface material may be native soil, forest duff, wood chips, gravel or crushed rock, asphalt or concrete.

Special Use Trail

The extensive system of county, state and federal lands that are within the Hood River area or immediately adjacent offer hundreds of miles of off-highway vehicle trails, hiking trails, mountain biking trails, equestrian trails and forest roads that provide recreational destinations. Since these trails do not generally connect through the community, their separate classification helps identify value with a distinct function. Each land management agency has a management plan directing policy and operational practices for these special use trail systems. This plan recognizes these trails as destinations rather than attempting to affect changes in future practices. The 60 miles of back country trails accessed from the Post Canyon Mountain Bike Area are an example of special use trail.

Integrating Design Elements

The Monon Trail, a rail trail heading north almost 17 miles from downtown Indianapolis, illustrates some tools for helping visitors find the trail and find their way along the trail. The combination of a signature color, unified logos and icons, matching site furnishing, and signage styles help identify the location and direction of the trail and its support facilities, as part of a unified navigation system.

At crossroads and trailheads, the bright red colors used consistently in signs and furnishings mark the trail's presence. Kiosks and information signs help located the trail user. Rule signs alert the user to trail behavior expectations and reinforce trail identity. The signage system helps identify place, provide information about trail distances and amenities, locate connections and interpret history and culture.



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Classification	Function	Use Type	Users	Surfaces	Width	Clearance	Amenities
Regional Trail	Provides major connections to adjacent communities and significant natural features, such as rivers and streams	multi-use	Pedestrians, Cyclists, Skaters. Equestrian where feasible	Asphalt, Concrete or Boardwalk.	10 - 16'	Side: 2'-0" Vertical: 10'-0"	Trailhead, Parking, Restrooms, Site Furnishings, Lighting, Signage
Connector Trail	Connects important land uses and areas of interest, often within a neighborhood, typically using street rights of way	multi-use	Pedestrians, Cyclists, Skaters.	Asphalt, Concrete, Boardwalk, or Gravel.	8 - 12'	Side: 2'-0" Vertical: 10'-0"	Site Furnishings, Signage
Local Trail	Provides local connections to features, such as parks, community centers and schools	multi-use	Pedestrians, Cyclists, Skaters.	Asphalt, Concrete, Boardwalk or Gravel.	5 - 8'	Side: 2'-0" Vertical: 10'-0"	Signage
Park Trail/Pathway	Interior loops or point-to-point routes within parks or open space properties, typically paved walking paths.	multi-use	Pedestrians, Cyclists, Skaters.	Asphalt, Concrete, Gravel, Woodchip or Boardwalk.	2.5 - 10'	Varies by use	Site Furnishings, Signage; may include other amenities as elements to overall park design
Special Use Trail	Destination back country trails connecting to extensive natural lands.	multi-use / single-use	Hikers, backpackers, mtn biker, equestrians	Mineral Soil	1.5 - 4'	Varies by use	Trailhead parking, restrooms, signage

Design details may vary by jurisdiction, width of easements, and other constraints. Some trails or trail segments may be provided as on-street facilities such as bicycle lanes or sidewalks.

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RECOMMENDED TRAIL NETWORK

The park and recreation providers of the Hood River area should continue to develop a system of multi-use, recreational trail linkages and, in conjunction with on-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities, seek to complete a comprehensive network of access linking major activity areas and destinations for recreational, as well as alternative transportation, purposes. The following maps conceptualize the recreational trail system, and the on-street linkages should relate to the City Transportation System Plan, Westside Concept Plan Report and Hood River County Bicycle Plan.

The Hood River Valley has an extensive trail system when considering trails and paths offered through all recreation land providers. However, many of those trails are distinctly separate from each system and do not connect to the Valley community who could benefit from better walkability and access to recreational facilities. The 2010 Hood River County Bicycle Plan identified over 620 miles of publicly maintained road in the Hood River County falling under a variety of jurisdictions, including state agencies (93 miles), the cities of Hood River and Cascade Locks (32 miles), the federal government (292 miles) and Hood River County (203 miles). There are many unpaved trails, both single and double-track, open to bicycles. These trails are on County Forest, National Forest, Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation, and private lands that may allow their use.

The county-owned land managed by the County Forestry Department manages over 31,000 acres of forest for optimum revenue from timber production – while protecting wildlife, water quality and recreational opportunities. Four systems of recreation trails exist in separate areas of County ownership. They are the Northwest, Middle Mountain, East, and South Areas. The majority of trails in these areas are designated for multiple-use. This provides opportunities for various user groups to co-exist on many of the trails at the same time. Within these areas it is estimated that there are 429 miles of Off-Highway Vehicle routes which include 149 miles of multiple-use motorized trails (open to all users) and 280 miles of forest roads. The Hood River County Forestry Department Recreation Trail Master Plan established trail management zones and recommendations for existing and proposed trails in the Northwest Trail Area, Middle Mountain Trail Area, East Trail Area, and South Trail Area. While these trail systems are extensive recreational facilities, access is available only via forest roads with often limited available trailhead parking.

The Hood River Westside Concept Plan Report envisions a walkable and bikeable community with on-street and off-street paths connecting neighborhoods to green spaces and services within Hood River. The report builds on designated and existing routes, including the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail, the Westside Community Trail, and routes in the City's adopted Transportation System Plan. Other routes are envisioned to connect activity centers such as the planned parks and schools. The report identifies nine existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and 18 additional pathways, bike lanes and connections. These connections are shown on the proposed Trail Map 12. The proposed routes shown on Map 12 include a combination of recreation trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes to improve connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation proposed a number of conceptual trails in its 2012 plan within Hood River and outside the city boundaries. Connecting the gaps in the Indian Creek Trail continues to be an objective.

The Historic Columbia River State Trail Master Plan calls for a trail connections throughout the Gorge by providing multi-use trail connections between historic segments of the old highway between Hood River and Cascade Locks. The Hood River County Bicycle Plan reinforces this trail connection by aligning the proposed Historic Columbia River Highway Trail through Hood River to connect the gap between Cascade Locks and Mosier trail segments (Wyeth to Starvation Creek, Viento to Mitchell Point, Mitchell Point, and Mitchell Point to Hood River).

The county bike plan also identified two other regional trails: Mount Hood Railway Trail and the Valley Loop Trail. Creating these regional trail systems could provide the missing links between existing local, county, state and federal trail systems and result in a truly multi-jurisdictional recreational trail/pathway system. Other trails from the County Bicycle Plan: (unrated feasibility)

- North of Methodist Road (Methodist to Post Canyon)
- West of Alameda Rd (Multnomah to Alameda)
- East of Alameda Rd (Alameda to High School)
- South of Hutson Rd (to Arrowhead Dr.)
- East of Alameda Rd (Alameda to Indian Creek Trail)
- Henderson Creek Fairview to Rocky Rd)
- Dewal Dr (north to Belmont Dr)

It is recognized that significant challenges exist to bring many of these recreational trail connections to fruition, and coordination with city and county Public Works and Planning Departments will be crucial. Steep slopes and narrow, windy street corridors will make connections especially difficult in the western half of Hood River and to Mid and Upper Valley communities. With this consideration, Hood River area park and recreation providers should aim to accommodate ADA guidelines for trails where it is reasonable.

TRAIL SYSTEM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Alignment

Future trail connections that will someday form a more complete trail network may have proposed alignments that are already established or dedicated for connecting existing trail segments. Some proposed trail extensions may not yet have specific or dedicated locations for the trail alignment. The future growth of the trail network will need to balance between alignments that are optimal from trail user, 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 routing that utilizes existing or planned sewer or utility lines.

As anticipated growth and proposed development moves forward in the neighborhoods west of Hood River, a dedicated trail alignment for the Westside Community Trail must be respected and firmly embedded in the site development review process to ensure a reasonable direction and connections for that connector trail. Alignments for local trails as side connections to regional trails are important for providing access and reducing the sole reliance on trailheads for providing access to the network.

Access & Trailheads

The trail network has expanded gradually over the years, and Valley residents view trail connectivity as a core, community demand. The recreational trails network, in concert with existing on-street bike lanes, provides a patchwork of routes across the Valley. A strong east-west spine will be formed by the Historic Columbia River Highway Trail and a future north-south spine could follow the along the Mount Hood Railway Trail alignment. Limited connections exist to link the entire trail network, and many trails are only partially completed. As the trail system grows, existing trail corridors could benefit by a more comprehensive provision of amenities such as parking, lighting, signage and benches to invite users, which may have an impact on perceived safety or convenience. There is also a need for additional parking and trailheads to lessen localized burdens on the street system and property owners adjacent to trail access points. Trailheads for regional trails will require more amenities than trailheads for local trails.

Safe, convenient and formal 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, seating and bicycle parking. Trailheads may be located on public park land and natural areas or provided via interagency agreements with partner organizations (i.e., Hood River County, Hood River County School District, City of Hood River, Port of Hood River, Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department, U.S. Forest Service) to increase use and reduce unnecessary duplication of support facilities. Specific trailhead design and layout should be created as part of planning and design development for individual projects and take into account the intended user groups and unique site conditions.

Limited Trail Development Opportunities

There may be limited trail development opportunities within the developed neighborhoods in the City of Hood River. Additional trails connections in underdeveloped areas should be incorporated into and required with new development proposals. Some trail connections within the City may have to rely primarily on utilizing sidewalks and bike lanes. In unincorporated portions of the County, opportunities to determine locations for needed community trail alignments can be coordinated with proposed growth and development to avoid missed opportunities for linkages and trail network connections.

Private Property

Within the larger trails network, there often exist small local trail segments that traverse private property and serve as unofficial linkages within neighborhoods. Small connections created by informal user paths can occur on homeowner association lands, across powerline corridors, along sewer alignments and across vacant/undeveloped properties. These informal paths often indicate the need for a local connection. To formalize these connections, negotiations with the property owner is necessary to create the needed linkage or connection access. Official trail alignments will vary depending upon landowner willingness to grant access easements, along with sensitive environmental and physical design constraints.

Where trail alignments are in close proximity to private property, the agency responsible for designing and maintaining the trail should consider design options to mitigate potential impacts. Trail etiquette promoting a “leave no trace” practice and advocating respect for private property should be included in communication and outreach materials regarding trail rules and best management practices.

Natural Areas & Environmental Sensitivity

One underlying tenet of the recreational trail system is to enable the placement of trails within or close to natural areas to provide access to the Valley’s unique landscapes, as well as accommodate outdoor recreational access to rivers, mountains and vistas. The future planning and design of trail routes through natural areas should be based on sensitive and low-impact design solutions that offer controlled access that protects the resource while providing for a positive experience for trail users. Determination of proposed trail alignments should place high priority on natural resource and natural hazards planning and protections, in part to meet local land use policies as well as State of Oregon requirements. Trails may not be expressly prohibited within natural features lands, but some restrictions to the location, development and surfacing may apply. This includes using trail surface types and buffers from the natural features. In addition, constructing a lower classification connector, local or park trail, rather than a major regional linkage, to traverse the resource, further lessens impacts on the natural feature.

Design & Maintenance

Following trail construction, on-going trail monitoring and maintenance will keep the trails functioning as designed, while working to protect capital investments in the network. The operations staff of the responsible agency for the trail should perform routine trail maintenance through the guidance of a trail system operations and maintenance program that outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of staff related to upkeep and communications. The operations program should identify best practices for maintaining the different trail types and their adjacent vegetated corridors. Future trail renovation projects should be included in the subject agency and its partner’s Capital Improvement Plans as a means to identify and ultimately secure appropriate resources for needed enhancement. The trail providers in the Valley should maintain and expand their connection to and communications with the robust network of trail volunteers to aid with minor trail repairs, renovation and upkeep.

Recognizing that trail design trade-offs exist and new standards have been developed, future trail development and upgrades to existing facilities should design for the range of users, considering potential conflicts, especially within high density land uses or high user volume areas. The trail surface type will be chosen based on the type of trail use, setting, natural resource and habitat. Some soft surfaces may need regular grooming to repair erosion and surface wear patterns. On-going vegetation management must be addressed to maintain visibility, trail clearances, perceived safety and enjoyable use.

Trail Signs & Information Kiosks

Signage plays a crucial role in facilitating successful trail use. A comprehensive and consistent signage system is a critical component to the trail network and 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 considered and consistently implemented throughout the network:

- Directional and regulatory signage
- 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

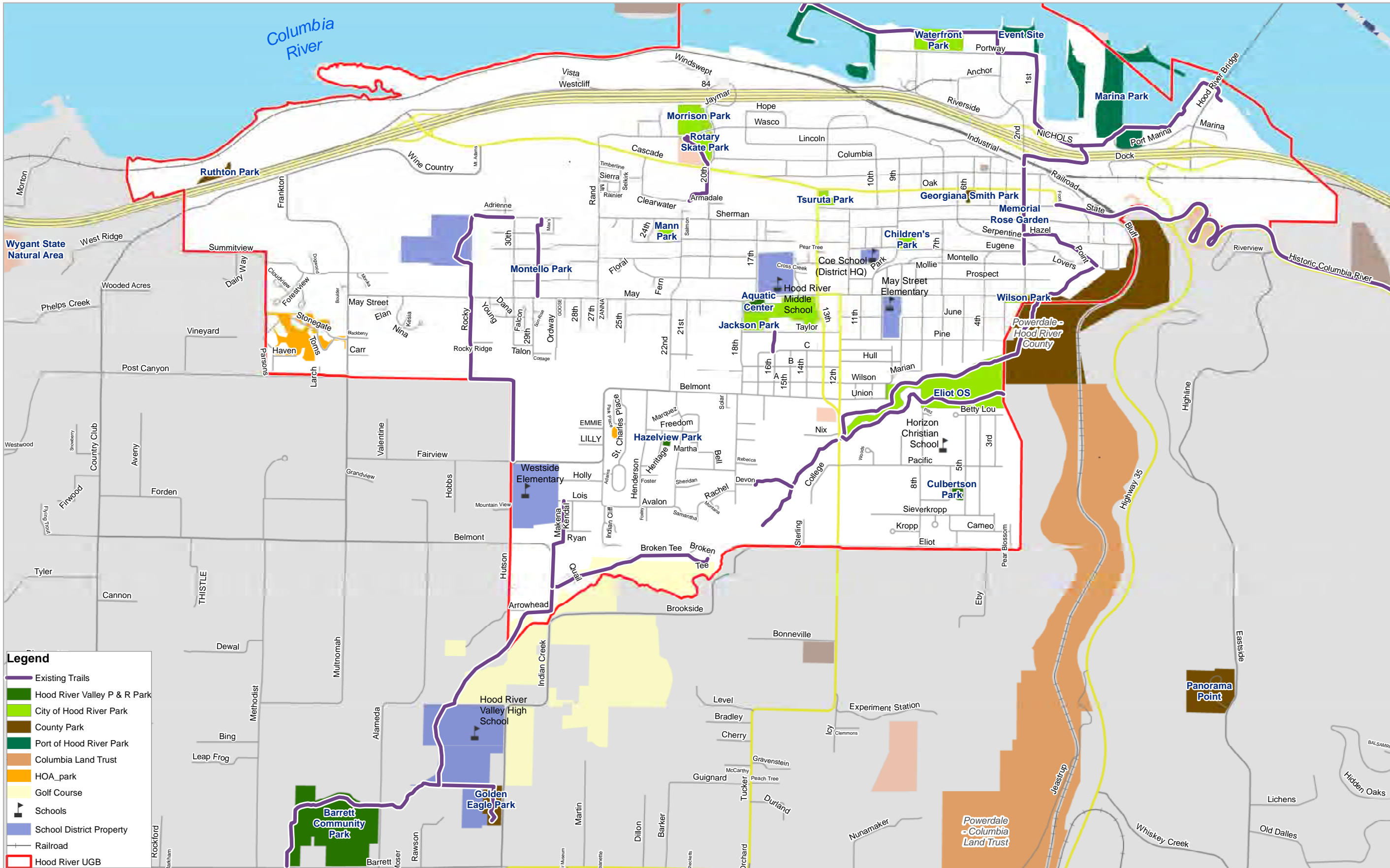
The installation of kiosks at trailheads is recommended to provide important trail information and reinforce the visual brand of the Hood River Valley trail experience. New kiosks that include a trail map and other helpful information about directional and local information should be considered along the regional trails and at each of the recommended trailheads.



Street Crossings

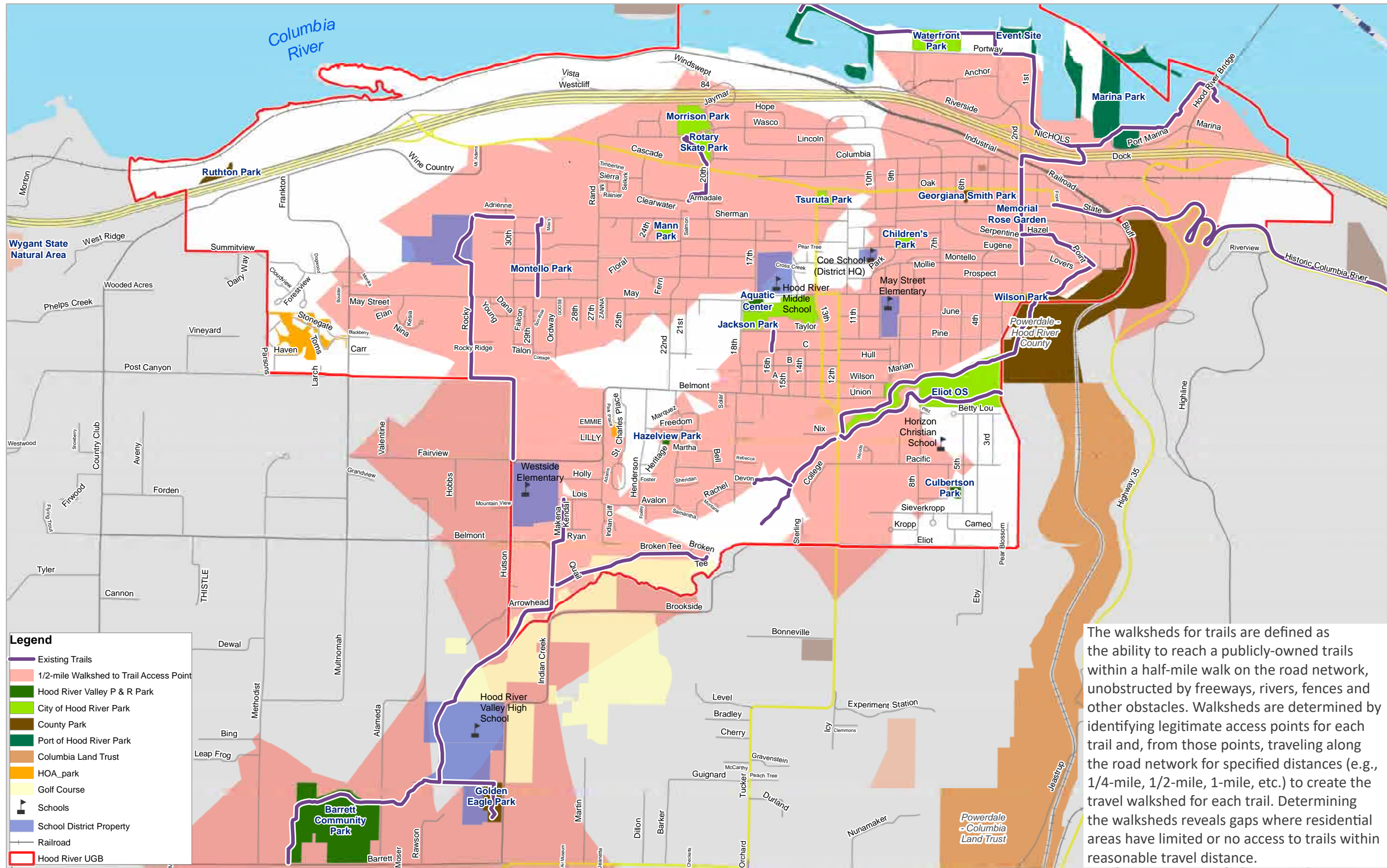
Trails and trail street crossings must be designed to meet applicable standards such as Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards, and other State and Federal guidelines. It is preferable to direct trail users to existing intersections where sufficient crossing protection is provided. If use of an existing intersection is not practical or deemed as safe, options for mid-block street crossings should be reviewed and considered. Where it is not practical to utilize existing intersections, the trail provider should pursue the establishment of user improvements for major intersections and mid-block street crossings. Improvements may include median refuges, striping and signage, user-activated or pedestrian/bicycle detection systems, curb ramps with widths matching the trail width, bollards, curb extensions and other appropriate or required safety measures for trail user safety. Both the 2nd Street Stairs and the Hood River Waterfront Trail were noted as needing crosswalks for sections where the trail crossed vehicular traffic lanes.

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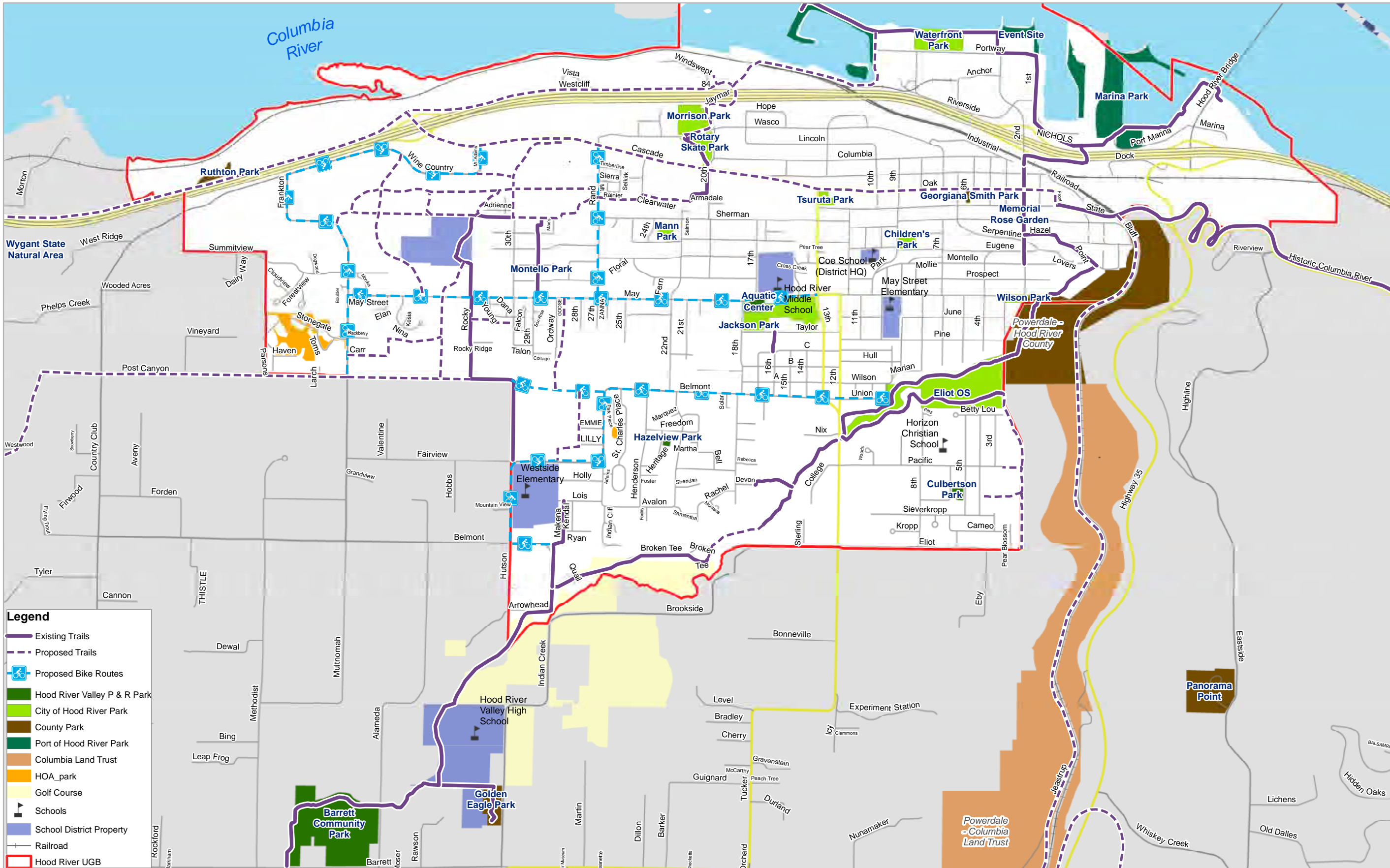
The map is intended for planning and for informational purposes only and may not be suitable for legal, engineering or surveying purposes. Some existing bicycle & pedestrian recreational routes on this map are provided on sidewalks or on streets.

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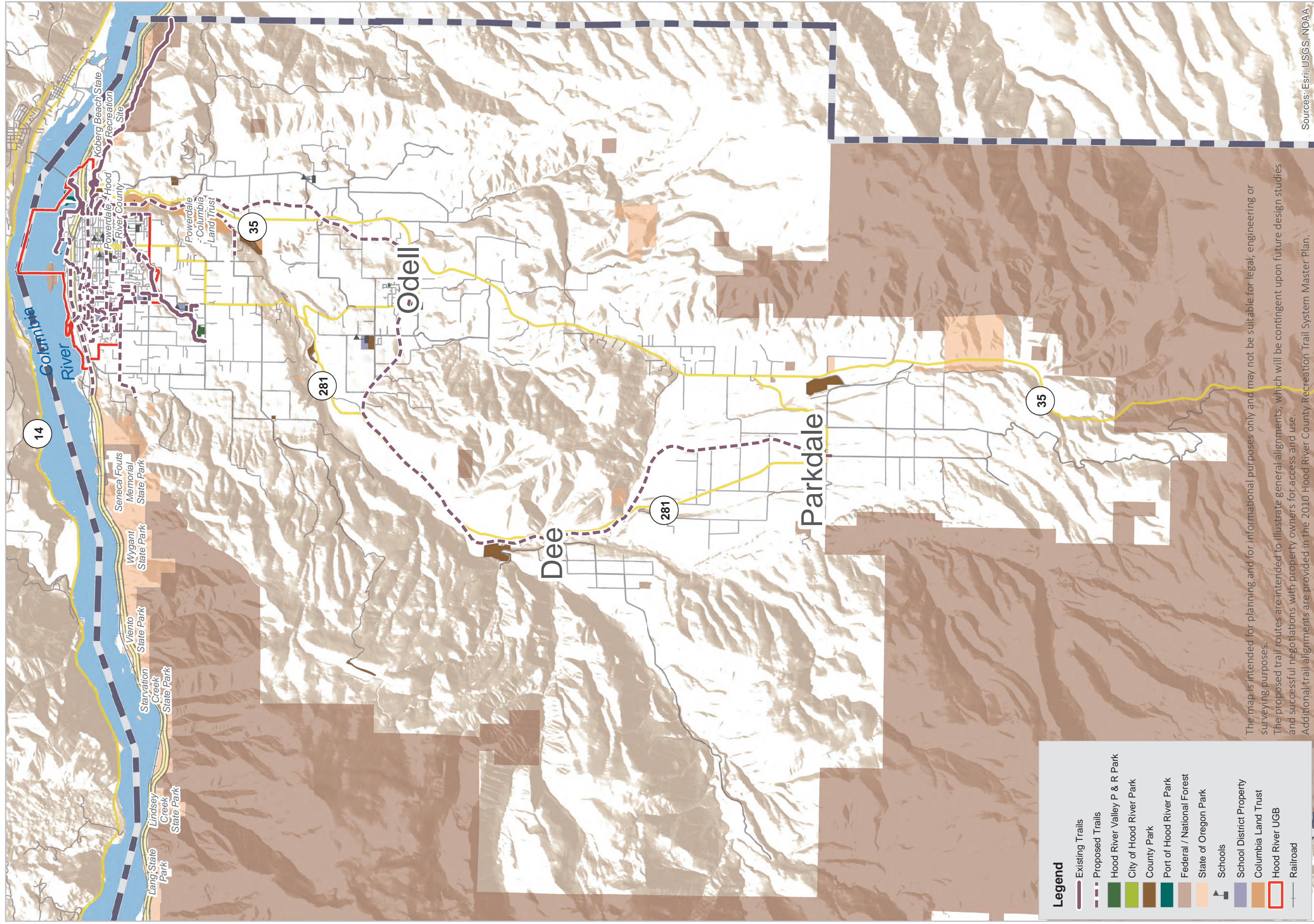


The map is intended for planning and for informational purposes only and may not be suitable for legal, engineering or surveying purposes. The proposed trail routes are intended to illustrate general alignments, which will be contingent upon future design studies and successful negotiations with property owners for access and use. Some proposed trail routes may be sidewalks, bike lanes, or other on-street facilities/markings. The map includes some existing bicycle & pedestrian recreational routes for context, some of which are provided on sidewalks or streets.

Map 11: Proposed Recreational Trails (Urban area)

Proximate to and Within Urban Growth Boundary

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Map 12: Proposed Recreational Trails (County)

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8 | OPERATIONS

The Hood River area park system will need to continue to evolve to meet the demand for outdoor recreation for its current and future populations and provide for enhanced outdoor recreation tourism. Going beyond the coordination guidelines provided through statewide planning Goal 8, the operations of the multiple park and recreation providers may benefit from intentional collaboration and coordination to meet the current and future maintenance demands of the system. As new features are added, new parklands are acquired, and new park sites are developed for growing neighborhoods, the operational staff capacity may need to be expanded to meet the need for administration and maintenance of a larger park system. Across the four primary parkland managing agencies (City, County, HRVPRD and Port) and the school district, more active collaboration may reduce the added financial burdens for an expanded park system.

NATIONAL COMPARISONS

To assess how the Hood River area's park system and related operations compare to other jurisdictions of similar population density, the NRPA PRORAGIS system data was used from the 2017 NRPA Agency Performance Report. The report contains data from 925 park and recreation agencies across the U.S. for the period between 2014 and 2016, and it offers a snapshot view of how Hood River Valley would compare with other peer agencies. It should be noted that not all agencies provide recreation programming and many park systems have differing sizes, locations and standards. The comparison between agencies offers suggestions rather than concrete targets. If the Hood River Valley park and recreation providers wish to make more direct comparisons in the future, their combined data can be entered into NRPA Park Metrics to allow a reporting that compares the Valley's data with the key metrics of park and recreation agencies from across the United States. Using the population of the Hood River Valley Park and Recreation District as the comparative population (24,100), the population density of the District is 44 residents per square mile.

Since a significant portion of the Valley geography is in farm or forest use, the majority of the population centers in and adjacent to the City of Hood River.

According to the NRPA Agency Performance Report, park and recreation agencies serving jurisdictions with populations between 20,000 to 49,999 people have a median of 8.5 FTEs on staff. The typical park and recreation agency (across all population sizes) has 7.3 FTEs on staff for each 10,000 residents living in the jurisdiction served by the agency.

Figure 15. NRPA: Park & Recreation FTEs per 10,000 Residents (by Jurisdiction Population)

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	Over 250,000
Median	7.3	10.5	8.5	7.6	5.7	4.3
Lower Quartile	3.7	5.3	4.6	3.8	3.1	1.7
Upper Quartile	14.9	20.8	17	13.9	11.3	7.6

Agencies also tend to have more FTEs per residents when they serve areas with greater population density. Based on its population density, the Hood River Valley has a very low population density in the category of under 500 persons per square mile used by NRPA for agency and jurisdiction comparisons.

Figure 16. NRPA: Park and Recreation Agency Staffing: FTE by Population

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	Over 250,000
Median	35	10.2	26	49.8	86.7	228.8
Lower Quartile	12.7	5	14	26.5	42	134.9
Upper Quartile	93.4	21.9	52	103.9	159.2	446

As with different agencies, different parks with their own unique characteristics may vary widely in the amount of labor required for annual care. Parks with extensive multi-purpose mown grass fields will demand higher labor hours than parks with natural areas and much smaller mown grass areas. More intensive park labor tasks are typically associated with mowing and janitorial/restroom cleaning. Sport fields require more intensive turf management requiring additional time, equipment and materials to get the job done adequately. Parks without restrooms or irrigated turf grass have significantly lower demands on labor time.

Across the four main park providers, the labor resources identified for operations and maintenance indicated relatively similar full-time equivalent staffing for parkland acreage with the Port facing the highest level - likely due to the intensity of various waterfront activity. Compared to the NRPA agency performance report, the staffing levels for combined parkland operations fall within the reported ranges from agencies across the country. Taken as a summary across the four providers, the Valley park system is below the median for operational staffing resources. Additionally, these resources are segregated into their various agencies and focused on each provider's park land resources. The staffing resources may seem adequate only when combined across the entire park system. As separate providers, each jurisdiction is likely to have shortfalls for various staffing needs.

Collaboration and coordination could help supplement and fill any gaps in labor and expertise for park operations.

Figure 17. Hood River Valley Park and Recreation Provider Staffing Level Comparison

Park Operations Staffing Levels	HRVPRD	City	County	Port	Combined Valley
FTEs	1.0	1.5	1.5	6.0	10.0
Seasonal/Temps	1.4	0.6	0.8	1.4	4.2
Total FTEs	2.4	2.1	2.3	7.4	14.2
FTEs per 10,000	1.02	2.60	0.89	2.92	7.43
Acreage of Developed	17.5	23	135	64	239.5
Acreage of Undeveloped/Future parks	34.16	48	203	0	285.16
Acres (Developed)/FTE	7.17	11.06	60.00	8.67	21.72
Acres (Total)/FTE	31.49	46.07	225.22	8.67	77.86

HOOD RIVER VALLEY ASSESSMENT

With the valley’s unique and varied parkland resources, assured levels of maintenance will continue to be necessary as the park system and intensity of uses continues to grow. The waterfront offers an attraction to visitors seeking specialized wind/water recreation, and its facilities should retain a high level of maintenance and attention as continued and increased use generates additional wear and tear. The extensive forest, mountain and natural areas within and adjacent to the Hood River area will continue to draw more outdoor recreationists who seek to enjoy these resources as access continues to improve.

The fundamental maintenance and operational tasks performed within the park system are similar between the local providers. Mowing, litter clean-up, trash removal, tree-trimming, weeding, mulching and landscape bed maintenance are similar whether in a City park, Port property or County park. The standards and desired level of performance may differ between the agencies, but the required skills and equipment are the same. Less frequent tasks such as power-washing, window cleaning, fall leaf removal and small capital repairs also require similar skills regardless of the park facility. These types of operational tasks could be targets for a level of coordination across the providers in an effort to capture greater efficiencies and realize potential cost savings. In some instances, there may not be significant savings, since the limitation of available local resources (e.g., seasonal labor) may dictate the need to collaborate on a joint approach.

Prior to approaching any joint maintenance collaboration/coordination, each park and recreation provider will need to identify and define their standards for level of care to establish the targeted performance standards for asset maintenance. Whether sharing the maintenance with existing operations crews or outsourcing assigned tasks to private contractors, standards for acceptable work will be required. Defining these standards also will help establish the costs for the different tasks being considered.

The NRPA Agency Performance Report noted trends towards privatization of some elements of park system operations. Partly because of increased employee costs, private

individuals or companies are sought to provide specified services instead of hiring permanent employees. Several functions of park and recreation provision are candidates for privatization. Factors include the following.

- The provider's knowledge of the cost and specifications required for the potentially privatized service. Not being aware of what it costs to do a job and define its specific tasks can lead to unsatisfactory performance, unnecessarily high costs or both.
- The market factors that lead to seeking privatized service providers may also increase the private sector costs. This cost places additional cost pressures on the provider agency.
- A review of internal barriers and constraints to operations, equipment and organization should be conducted to determine if changes in these areas can generate cost savings.

Seasonal staffing for certain time-intensive tasks, such as mowing and janitorial duties, has been limited by the availability of human resources from within the immediate Hood River Valley/Columbia River Gorge region. The requisite on-the-job training for seasonal staff can reduce the efficiency of the permanent staff and result in a slow ramping up of the necessary skills and experience to effectively complete work tasks. With the typical turnover of seasonal staff, this training requirement is recurring and can add a strain to operational efficiency. As quality, local labor resources are limited, there may be potential value to coordinate the seasonal labor that maintains park and outdoor recreation facilities to ameliorate this cyclical labor need.

In addition to general operations and maintenance for a park system in a growing population, Hood River area will need to accomplish a significant amount of capital improvement projects in the next twenty years to meet their service standards and expand their parkland inventory. The renovation or replacement of the aquatic center presents the most immediate capital improvement need.

Additional staffing may be needed for a variety of duties beyond strictly operations and maintenance. According to the PRORAGIS data, park and recreation staff members have duties that span many functional areas (percentages noted below represent the median of agencies across the U.S.):

- Maintenance (31 percent)
- Operations (27 percent)
- Programming (21 percent)
- Administration (17 percent).

To achieve the required level of service, the parks providers could coordinate resources for an on-call consultant park professional to focus specifically on the various capital projects. Collaborating for targeted consulting resources could ease some administrative and procurement time and offer more localized knowledge toward project variables. The on-call consultant(s) could provide service for land-use planning, land acquisition, capital planning/capital budget oversight, project management, and individual park and system master plans. A consultant could also manage the public input processes related to capital development and support the high degree of interaction and collaboration with engineers, contractors, developers, other consultants, city/county departments and permitting governmental entities.

COLLABORATION APPROACHES

Through the Technical Advisory Committee, representatives of the City, County, Port and HRVPRD agreed that potential collaboration and coordination should first start with regular communication. Operations and planning personnel noted that formalizing communication through face-to-face meetings is very valuable for the sharing of immediate, short-term and long-term planning and operational needs within the area. Jurisdictional boundaries overlap, and residents do not actively discern which agency is providing which park or recreation facility. The identification of the maintenance provider does not appear to be critical to the community.

Once the providers meet on a regular basis, the next steps for evaluating potential collaborative operations could include consideration of the following near-term options:

- Compile a phone tree and organizational outline to identify assets and staff that could potentially be shared
- Prepare maintenance demand data on usage and service frequencies to understand base need
- Define maintenance standards that are based on usage and facility/amenity (not ownership)
- Promote communication about how the agencies are collaborating and working together
- Prepare intergovernmental agreement(s) with expected call out times and fee reimbursement schedules

Longer term approaches would examine more extensive inter-agency coordination that would require a more active commitment. Following the Port's example, outsourcing contracts for tree-trimming, portable toilets and landscape bed tasks could be combined as shared contracts with participation from the other providers. Restroom cleaning and servicing contracts could be combined across City, County and District whether by one assigned agency's operations staff or under one private independent contractor. Due to the lower population density and 'remoteness' of Hood River, no single existing contractor appears to have the capacity to perform all the park maintenance operations potentially required. Another option is for the District to lead a shared pooling of resources and staff to implement overlapping maintenance demands. This approach would place the District in the role of facilitating the active coordination of staffing resources as the agencies determine the target operational tasks. Seasonal workers and the limited resources for part-time help is one example where the District could provide valuable facilitation.

With the existing developed parkland acreage of approximately 240 acres, economies of scale are not likely to bring significant savings in the combination of operations and maintenance tasks for the partnering providers. Contracted work will still require management and oversight. If contractors change with each procurement cycle, reliability and satisfactory completion may be variable despite tight specifications on maintenance standards. Combining operational resources should be approached gradually and with careful discernment, since the park system has unique characteristics, and one size does not fit all. Regardless, the value of proactive collaboration and coordination, even in small ways, has the potential to reap rewards for the Hood River area and its park system.

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9 | IMPLEMENTATION

A number of strategies exist to improve park and recreation service delivery for the Hood River area; however, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. The recommendations for park and recreation amenities noted in this Plan will trigger the need for funding beyond current allocations and for additional staffing, operations and maintenance responsibilities. Given that the operating and capital budgets of the park and recreation providers are limited, additional resources will be needed to leverage, supplement and support the implementation of proposed policies and projects. The following implementation strategies are presented to offer near-term direction to realize these projects and as a means to continue dialogue between the City, County and District, local residents and other community partners.

PROJECT-LEVEL OPTIONS

Partner Coordination & Collaboration

Specific projects and goals identified in this Plan demand a high degree of coordination and collaboration between city and county departments and with partnering agencies.

Close agency cooperation will be imperative as local agencies move to implement several parks and recreation planning efforts, like the Westside Concept Plan Report, Recreation Trail System Master Plan and County Bicycle Plan, all of which support a healthy, connected community that involves parks, trails and open space elements. Coordination between the Public Works and Community Development departments can enhance and support the implementation of the proposed trail and bikeway network, which relies heavily on street right-of-way enhancements, and in review of development applications with consideration toward potential parkland acquisition areas, planned trail corridors and the

need for easement or set-aside requests. However, to more fully expand the extent of the park system and recreation programs, additional partnerships and collaborations should be sought.

Close coordination with the Hood River County School District will advance a number of projects in which resources can be leveraged to the benefit of the community. The District should continue discussions with the School District regarding the provision of recreation programs and explore opportunities to marry the Community Education program with the District. Also, coordination with the School District and private fitness vendors should be ongoing to assess the range and type of recreation programs offered regionally and to maximize use of community facilities, such as fields, gymnasiums and other indoor spaces. The District should discuss and prepare an interagency agreement with the School District to advance the potential for shared facility use and development of sport fields and courts serving the Hood River community.

As an active lifestyles community, agencies should explore partnership opportunities with regional health care providers and services, such as Providence Hood River Memorial Hospital and the County Health Department, to promote wellness activities, healthy living and communications about the benefits of parks and recreation. For example, this group could more directly cross-market services and help expand communications about local wellness options, and they could sponsor a series of organized trail walks throughout the Hood River areas as a means to expand public awareness of local trail opportunities and encourage residents to stay fit. For example, other communities in Oregon and Washington have been successful with funding requests to regional hospitals for the development and printing of community walking guides that highlight the health benefits of walking and include trails maps and descriptions.

Developing or strengthening these types of collaborative projects will be essential for reaching the goals of the Plan and meeting the needs of the future park system. Partnerships may allow the local providers to share responsibilities for the financial, acquisition, development, planning and operational activities. Partnerships, like many relationships, require time to develop and establish the mutual values that keep the partners at the table, leverage all accumulated resources and lead to successful project or program implementation.

Volunteer & Community-based Action

Volunteers and community groups already contribute to the improvement of parks and trails across the valley. Volunteer projects include trail building, tree planting and park clean-ups, among others. The partnering agencies should consider the development of an Adopt-A-Trail program where volunteers can assist with maintaining, enhancing and monitoring local trails. The District also should consider organizing and leading the development of a revolving list of potential small works or volunteer-appropriate projects for the website, while also reaching out to the high school to encourage student projects. While supporting organized groups and community-minded individuals continues to add value to the Hood River area's park system, volunteer coordination requires a substantial amount of staff time, and additional resources are necessary to enable a volunteer coordinator position to more fully take advantage of the community's willingness to support park efforts.

Grants & Appropriations

Several state and federal grant programs are available on a competitive basis, including Oregon State Parks, LWCF and FAST-Act. Pursuing grants is not a panacea for park system funding, since grants are both competitive and often require a significant percentage of local funds to match the request to the granting agency, which depending on the grant program can be as much as 50% of the total project budget. The District, City and County should continue to leverage local resources to the greatest extent by pursuing grants independently and in cooperation with 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.

Parkland Donations & Dedications

Parkland donations from private individuals or conservation organizations could occur to complement the acquisition of park and open space lands across the District. Gift deeds or bequests from philanthropic-minded landowners could allow for lands to come into local agency ownership upon the death of the owner or as a tax-deductible charitable donation. Parkland dedication by a developer could occur in exchange for Park SDCs 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. Any potential dedication should be vetted by the District, City or County, as appropriate, to ensure that such land is located in an area of need or can expand an existing property and can be developed appropriately with site amenities meeting the intent of this Plan.

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are increasingly necessary for local agencies to leverage their limited resources in providing park and recreation services to the community. 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 District, City and County have existing partners and should continue to explore additional and expanded partnerships to help implement these Plan recommendations.

SYSTEM-WIDE OPTIONS

Although a variety of approaches exist to support individual projects or programs, the broader assessment of community needs suggests that additional, dedicated system-wide funding may be required to finance upgrades to and growth in the parks system. The inventory and assessment of the park system identified some deferred maintenance to be addressed to ensure the provision of a safe, secure and accessible park system.

Local Funding - Bonds

Based on the community feedback conducted as part of this Plan in support of parkland acquisitions and the renovation or replacement of the Aquatic Center, the pursuit of an aggressive acquisitions program or aquatic facility replacement warrants a review of financing alternatives and debt implications for such large capital expenditures, along with polling of voter support for such an effort. The District should continue to explore its capacity for bonded debt and implications for long-term operating cost implications. Additionally, the agency partners should consider utilizing local debt tools to facilitate acquisitions and land-banking property for future park development.

System Development Charges

Park System Development Charges (SDCs) are imposed on new development to meet the increased demand for parks resulting from the new growth. SDCs can only be used for parkland acquisition, planning and/or development. They cannot be used for operations and maintenance of parks and facilities. HRVPRD currently assesses Parks SDCs, and the District should periodically update the methodology and rate structure, as appropriate, to be best positioned to obtain future financing from residential development. The District should prioritize the usage of Parks SDCs to secure new park properties and finance park or trail development consistent with the priorities within this Plan.

Parks Utility Fee

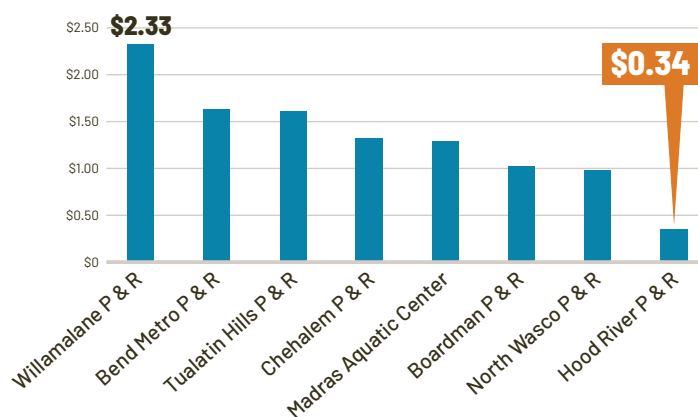
A parks utility fee is an ongoing fee (billed monthly) that provides revenue for the needs of the park system. When charged by a city, such a fee can be an additional line item on an existing utility bill. The revenue earned can be used for both operational and capital needs, and it can be pledged to the debt service of revenue bonds. Establishment of a parks utility fee in Oregon requires compliance with legal requirements at both state and local levels. Several jurisdictions across Oregon have implemented and utilized a parks utility fee as supplemental funding to maintain and enhance their park systems. The City of Hood River could consider enacting a parks utility fee for the purpose of providing for the operation and maintenance of parks and facilities within the City and to ensure adequate resources are available for the sound and timely maintenance of existing recreation amenities.

Park and Recreation District Funding

The Hood River Valley Parks and Recreation District is a classified Special District defined by State statute as outlined in the ORS Chapter 266. A Park and Recreation District is considered to be a “local government” and is a separate legal entity, with a separately-elected governing body, and subject to all the rules associated with any other local government of the State. Funding for the District comes from a property tax, system development charges and additional grants and revenue generated from the Aquatic Center. HRVPRD has a total district rate of \$0.34 per \$1,000 of assessed value, which is among the lowest in the state. For comparison, Bend has a total district rate of \$1.63 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Community discussions about the need to renovate or replace the Aquatic Center and internal discussions about the District's role in partnering with local providers to facilitate improvements and efficiencies for the Valley's park system raise the issue of the District's financial capacity to support or fulfill these efforts. At its current rate, the District would be unable to expand staffing for a renovated aquatic center or provide additional operational resources to park and trail development and maintenance. One option for consideration would be to reform the district at a higher levy rate to accommodate the growing demands on the agency. This option will require additional vetting to explore the funding potential, impacts to other taxing jurisdictions and voter willingness to support the proposal.

Figure 18. Park & Recreation District Rate Comparisons



Other Implementation Tools

Appendix F identifies other implementation tools, such as grants and acquisition tactics, that providers could utilize to further the implementation of the projects noted in the Capital Projects List.

COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

Many of the Plan recommendations will require the continued execution of effective communications and outreach. Promoting the Hood River area's park, recreation and trail system will require broader marketing and outreach that entails a combination of better signage, more public news coverage, enhanced wayfinding, enhanced user maps and information, expanded use of engaging social media, and intuitive website/online resources.

- To enhance residents' awareness of local park and recreation offerings, the partnering recreation providers should:
- Frame services around the goals of health, fitness, activity and safety.
- Provide enhanced maps of parks and trails that are visually appealing and translatable to mobile devices.
- Provide wayfinding signage within the park and trail system to direct residents and visitors to local parks and facilities.
- Continue to improve agencies websites and social media presence to promote events, recreational and education programs, and volunteer activities.

In addition, the District should act as the local hub for information about recreation, programs, events and activities in the community. This may include providing print and web-based information about the benefits of active lifestyles and available recreation resources, but it may also include information about high school sports and other general fitness or health information.



According to the 2017 Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon, nearly 70% of Oregon residents participate in outdoor recreation each year, resulting in \$16.4 billion dollars in annual consumer expenditures.



10 | CAPITAL PLANNING

The Capital Projects List identifies strategic projects to guide the implementation of this Plan, and these significant projects fill current gaps in achieving goals.

The projects were selected based on the need to implement long-standing plans for improvements to meet the goal of improving access to parks and recreation.

- Capital Project lists will be used as guidance by HRVPRD, City of Hood River, Hood River County, and Port of Hood River to develop agency Capital Improvements Plans and budgets.
- Capital Project lists include major improvements only and do not include repair, maintenance, signage, or accessibility (ADA) improvements. Existing facilities will be improved as needed.
- Cost estimates are preliminary estimates for planning purposes only.

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Hood River Area Multi-Jurisdictional Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan Capital Project List

Project	Description	Cost Estimate & Priority			UGB	Participating Agency					Notes
		Acquisition	Planning/Design	Development		HRVPRD	City	County	Port	School	
Urban Neighborhood Park A	Acquire + develop 2-3 acres parkland west of Rand, south of Cascade Ave (Middle Terrace)	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$	In						Consistent with draft H+L5:L21R Westside Plan
Urban Neighborhood Park B	Acquire + develop 2-3 acres parkland east of Frankton, north of May Street (West)	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$	In						Consistent with draft HR Westside Plan
Urban Neighborhood Park C	Acquire+ develop 2-3 acres of parkland, north of Westside Elementary (Upper Terrace)	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$	In						Consistent with draft HR Westside Plan
Trail Connections to Historic Highway	Acquire easements to connect local system to historic highway	\$	\$\$	\$\$							
Rural Community Neighborhood Park	Acquire + develop 2-3 acres parkland in Odell	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$\$							Possibly needed based on population increase in Odell
Westside Trail	Acquire missing easements and develop trail	\$	\$\$	\$\$	In						Finish
Indian Creek Trail	Acquire missing easements and develop trail	\$	\$\$	\$\$	Both						Missing link - Connect to Westside Trail - Possible Extension to Oak Grove
Henderson Creek Trail	Acquire easements and develop trail & riparian corridor adjacent to Henderson Creek from W Cascade Ave to Belmont	\$	\$	\$\$	In						Identified in draft HR Westside Plan
Community Park	Acquire + develop parkland that serves westside of Hood River south of UGB	\$\$\$	\$	\$\$\$	Out						Acquisition of a community park in or adjacent to the UGB may replace the need for acquisition of one of the proposed neighborhood parks
Ridgeline Trail	Acquire easements and develop trail North of Sherman between Henderson Creek and Rand	\$	\$\$	\$\$	In						Identified in draft HR Westside Plan - links into westside trail
Powerdale Day Use Area	Improve road and picnic area	N/A	\$	\$\$	Out						Identified in Master Plan Goals
Powerdale Corridor Trail (pipeline)	Develop safe access to pipeline trail + reestablish washed out connection	N/A	\$	\$\$	Out						Large part of pipeline was washed out in flood. Need safe crossing from Railroad
Mt Hood Rail Corridor Trail	Secure + develop a trail along the Mt Hood Railroad to connect Hood River to Parkdale	\$\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$	Both						Likely would need support from State
Valley Loop Trail	Connect the City of Hood River, the Northwest Area, Middle Mountain, and the East Areas of Hood River County land	\$\$	\$\$	\$\$	Both						
Nichols Boat Dock	Install small boat docks	N/A	\$	\$	In						Identified in Walker/Macy West Edge Trail Plan (2014)
Waterfront/Westside Trail Connection	Trail that connects the westside community trail to the hook	\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$							Trail that connects the westside community trail to the hook
Wyeast MS Field Improvements	Convert to synthetic turf and improve soccer complex	N/A	\$\$	\$\$\$	Out						Identified in HRCSA Athletic Facility Master Plan (2017)
West May Street School District Property Fields	Develop sports fields that will be needed by future School	N/A	\$\$	\$\$	In						Master Plan the 18 acre vacant school district site and locate fields and parking in advance of school development
High School Field Improvements	Add additional tennis courts at Golden Eagle, upgrade JV baseball, update practice field with lacrosse		\$	\$\$	Out						Identified in HRCSA Athletic Facility Master Plan (2017)
Westside Elm Field Improvements	Make field improvements		\$	\$\$	In						Identified in HRCSA Athletic Facility Master Plan (2017)
Dog Park	Develop dog park with access to water		\$	\$							
Faith Community Field Partnerships	Invest in underutilized field space	N/A	\$	\$\$	In						20 acres of field space across 5 church properties have been identified.
Aquatics/Community Center	Replace aging aquatic center with facility with enhanced amenities	N/A	\$\$	\$\$\$\$\$	In						Identified in 2017 Aquatic Center Feasibility Report - Highly rated in survey

1. Capital Project lists will be used as guidance by HRVPRD, City of Hood River, Hood River County, and Port of Hood River to develop agency Capital Improvements Plans and budgets
 2. Capital Project lists include major improvements only and do not include repair, maintenance, signage, or accessibility (ADA) improvements. Existing facilities will be improved as needed.
 3. Cost estimates are preliminary estimates for planning purposes only:

KEY		Estimated Cost	
Priority	High		\$ = 0-100k
	Med		\$\$ = 101k - 500k
	Low	\$\$\$ = 501k - 2m	
		\$\$\$\$ = 2m-5m	
		\$\$\$\$\$ = 5m+	

Figure 19: Capital Projects List

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