Parks&Recreation
City of Missoula • 600 Cregg Lane • 721-PARK

Missoula Parks and Recreation
Guiding Principles, Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals
January 2013

Guiding Principles

- We believe that Parks and Recreation services and infrastructure are essential to quality of life and promote health and wellness in the community.
- We recognize our responsibility as stewards of our conservation lands.
- We believe that the natural character and environment of Missoula should be preserved and maintained and that all citizens should have access to natural environs.
- We believe that recreation develops social capital and that all Missoula citizens have a right to quality recreational opportunities and facilities.
- We believe that everyone – and in particular children - should be formally introduced to Parks and Recreation services.
- We believe that all people should feel safe and welcome and valued in Parks and Recreation facilities and programs.
- We believe that Parks:
    - Contribute to a feeling of well-being and provide opportunities for releasing tensions;
    - Can help combat obesity through exciting and attractive facilities;
    - Get citizens of all ages outdoors, connecting with nature, and having FUN;
    - Help define the character of Missoula.
- We believe that healthy urban forests contribute to clean air and water; cool the urban area and contribute to slowing climate change; add beauty, color and historic context to the urban environment; and for the conservation of those Forests, should be diverse in species and age class.
- We believe that healthy riparian areas and wetlands are essential to clean water, wildlife, flood plain storage, and for providing recreational and education opportunities.
- We believe that quality parks and recreation opportunities are drivers of economic development and vitality in the community.
- We believe that Missoula should be a recreation destination and a regional sports capital.
- We believe that people should have convenient, active transportation options and be able to travel in a safe and efficient way throughout Missoula.

- We believe that it is important that all Parks and Recreation Board and Staff engage in conducting research and asking critical questions to determine priority goals.

- We believe that continual assessment, adaption, innovation, partnering, and advocacy with appropriate fiscal resources and efficient and effective resource allocation – leads to sustainability of Parks and Recreation services and facilities.
- We believe an informed Council and an educated citizenry will better understand and therefore be more likely to support our shared responsibility for the upkeep and maintenance of their public assets (lands and facilities)
- We believe a well informed, educated and empowered citizenry will be better stewards of their public lands and facilities and advocates for the visions and guiding principles of Parks and Recreation.

Vision

Parks and Recreation services are considered essential to our quality of life and valued as vital components to a healthy community.

Mission

Missoula continues to provide a unique and distinctive recreational experience through implementation and adaptation of approved Plans. Within the next 3-5 years, the Parks Board and Staff will have moved significantly and measurably in implementation of those Plans including the Master Parks Plan, the Open Space Plan, the Trail Plan, Conservation Lands Management Plan and specific site plans.

Goals and Directing Objectives (Within the next 1-3 years)
Priority One for 2013 – Engage in tasks necessary to obtaining funding required to appropriately maintain the existing infrastructure a AND begin development of Fort Missoula Regional Park (see Goals 1d and Goal 4)

Goal 1a: Parks and Recreation has acquired/protected additional Open Space Cornerstone properties in underserved areas.
Directing Objective
1. Focus on partnerships in Mullan area and the North Hills.

Goal 1b: Tail gaps are closed (BBT, Kim Williams, North Riverfront, Missoula to Lolo progress, Milwaukee).
Directing Objectives
1. Partner with the County in planning, specific expertise, and coordination.
2. Acquire easements and funding to move ahead in filling t5he gaps.

Goal 1c: Based on identified need:
- **Park land is acquired in underserved neighborhoods;**
- **Underdeveloped Parks are developed as appropriate;**
- **Development and renovation in Parks are prioritized.**

Directing Objectives
1. Work with partners toward acquisition – F2F.
2. Create an inventory and ranking of Park renovation and development needs.
3. Work with Neighborhood Councils toward more neighborhood level Park Plans.

Goal 1d: The Fort Missoula Regional Park Plan is well along in its implementation.
Directing Objectives
1. Optimize America's Great Outdoors federal program designation as a "Signature Park Project".
2. Continue to work with partners, sponsors and donors including FMRP and FMP.
3. Work with Mayor, Council Members, Civic Leaders, Partners and the general Public (through public opinion polling), to gain support for a June 2014 bond issue, mill levy, or other funding to support at least Phase One development (multi use sand turf sports fields) of FMRP per the Master Plan as adopted by Council in Dec 2008. (See Goal 4, Objective #7)

Goal 2: Parks and Recreation has developed and successfully implements a comprehensive Communication and Education Plan that includes measurable outcomes in the following areas:
- **Funding**
- **Stewardship and responsibility**
- **Land acquisition and facilities**
- **Partnerships**

Directing Objectives
1. Identify Target audiences; timing; messages; appropriate format.
2. Work toward the following specific objectives:
   - Communications development workshop
   - Research of existing successful communication plans and approaches.
   - Identify key messages throughout the year.
3. In February 2012, Park Board will appoint a subcommittee to develop a specific plan to assist with obtaining funding from the City Council.

Goal 3: Partnerships are aligned with strategic goals and values to achieve efficiency in facilities, services, time, and efforts and enhance and leverage resources.

Directing Objectives

1. Maintain and support existing partnerships.
2. Identify future partnerships to achieve adopted projects/program iniatives.
3. Develop and set partnership expectations for Board, staff and partners through written agreements.
4. Advance the following partnerships:
    - Develop By-laws; Parks and Recreation representation; and services agreement on fund use with Friends of Missoula Parks.
    - Develop inter-local agreement related to use of gyms, fields, and education programs with Missoula County Public Schools and other Schools in the area.
    - Provide leadership and coordination for special interest groups including soccer, youth activities, arts, stewardship, etc.
5. Facilitate training and development for partners.

Goal 4: Parks and Recreation has sustainable, predictable funding.

Directing Objectives

1. Continue to explain and advocate for the Park District as a predicable funding source.
2. Successfully advocate for annual CIP funding.
3. Establish a Tree Trust Fund.
4. Continue to evaluate increasing costs of recovery rate in terms of impact fees and admissions. Where appropriate, recover costs by charging for use by other Departments and identified user groups.
5. Increase the number of informed volunteers.
6. Explore possibilities related to the following:
    - Local sales tax.
    - Restaurant/hotel “tax”.

7. Work with Mayor, Council Members, Civic Leaders, Partners and the general Public (through public opinion polling), to gain support for a June 2014 bond issue, mill levy, or other funding to address the need for sustainable funding for existing infrastructure. Specific tasks may include participation in the Renovation, Replacement and Improvements Plan process, meeting with leaders to learn what combination of projects is necessary to gain their and public support, what concerns and questions need to be addressed in order to be successful in acquiring funding necessary to implement a reasonable RRI plan. (See Goal 1d, Objective #3)

Goal 5: Parks and Recreation has identified and established alternative funding mechanisms.

Directing Objectives

1. Continue to evolve Friends of Missoula Parks. Expand the Foundation approach to include endowments as part of the process.
2. Evolve Partners in Parks to include scholarships to operations and endowments.
3. Continue to seek grants with the acknowledgment that operations and maintenance are part of the long term picture.
4. Market the license plates statewide.
5. Move ahead with exploring “naming rights” where it makes sense.
6. Work with local government to develop an incentive savings program where savings would be returned to Parks/ Recreation.
7. Explore bonding with the City.
8. Create a Task Force that explores cost sharing.