

Contact:

Donna Gaukler, Director  
[gauklerd@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:gauklerd@ci.missoula.mt.us)  
(406) 552-6268

600 Clegg Lane  
Missoula, MT 59801  
[www.missoulaparks.org](http://www.missoulaparks.org)



## MISSOULA PARKS AND RECREATION PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release through March 5, 2024

### **Parks and Recreation to host master parks plan open house**

**Residents invited to share priorities for parks, recreation, open space and trails**

Missoula Parks and Recreation is developing a new Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Comprehensive Master Plan (PROST) to guide parks and recreation services for the next 10 to 15 years. Parks and Recreation Director Donna Gaukler invites residents to an open house on Tuesday, March 5, to learn more about the planning process and share their ideas for the future of Missoula's public spaces and recreation programs.

"We want to know what matters most to residents, from playgrounds and sports facilities to trails, trees, and open spaces. We hope you'll join us in envisioning an active, healthy future by sharing your priorities for Missoula's favorite green spaces and recreation programs," Gaukler said.

The open house will feature activities for all ages and light refreshments. It meets from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Missoula Public Library, 4th floor, Cooper Room B. Free parking is available in the library lots and on-street after 5 p.m.

In addition to the open house, residents can participate in PROST planning at these upcoming events:

**Mobile Listening Sessions:** Drop by the Missoula Public Library February 26 through March 1, from 3:30-5:30 p.m., to meet Parks staff and PROST working group members and share your ideas.

**Act III Workshops:** Theater workshops for adults 55+ on February 27 and March 14 to envision priorities for parks and recreation; RSVP at [www.missoulaparks.org/prost](http://www.missoulaparks.org/prost).

**Paint Your Parks Workshops:** Inclusive painting workshops with a focus on LGBTQIA+ perspectives on March 29, March 30, and April 12; RSVP at [www.missoulaparks.org/prost](http://www.missoulaparks.org/prost).

**Community Survey:** Take a brief online survey opening March 5 on priorities for parks and recreation at [www.missoulaparks.org/prost](http://www.missoulaparks.org/prost).

Gaukler says the PROST planning process will include public outreach throughout the spring and summer to ensure the plan reflects the community's needs and values. "This is our community's plan—your voice and lived experiences are critical to creating the vision and guiding decision-making. Community collaboration makes all the difference in creating an inclusive, resident-driven PROST Master Plan."

The new PROST plan will update the 2004 Comprehensive Master Parks Plan to account for changing community needs, projected growth and service gaps. The new plan establishes the vision, goals, and strategies to guide the department long-term, Gaukler added. Throughout the planning process, the City will apply its three strategic lenses of climate change and resilience, equity and access, and housing.

The City used a competitive process to select Blue Point Planning as a consultant to analyze current park assets, programs, and service levels. Blue Point will also develop a strategic implementation plan for adding and enhancing future community assets and services. In addition, Parks and Recreation has contracted with the University of Montana for public engagement leadership, assistance, and a statistically representative survey.

Learn more and RSVP for events at [www.missoulaparks.org/prost](http://www.missoulaparks.org/prost). For questions or additional information, contact Open Space Program Manager Zac Covington [via email](mailto:via email) or at 406-552-6267.