

Chapter 1: Introduction

OUR VISION

A vibrant integrated park system serving the needs and interests of our diverse community.

OUR MISSION

Serve the citizens of the Fall City Metropolitan Park District. Provide a forum for defining the scope and nature of the Fall City community's public parks. Work in partnerships to maintain our facilities, insure our parks are available to all, and that all feel welcome to enjoy our parks. We enhance our quality of life by providing parks that will sustain diverse recreational activities for visitors of all ages and interests. The safety, security, and health of our visitors are of paramount importance.

OUR GOALS

1. Maintain public ownership of the existing park and trail system within the District.
2. Preserve local trails, open spaces, and natural environment in a manner consistent with the area's historic significance, cultural background, and rural character.
3. Advocate that all parks and facilities within the District be adequately maintained to provide a safe and rewarding recreational environment and experience.
4. Use park spaces and facilities as models of land stewardship and environmental responsibility.
5. Provide opportunities for community education and involvement through volunteer projects, programs, and events.
6. Provide opportunities that enhance and inspire quality of life, good health, and a sense of wellness.
7. Enhance and expand recreational opportunities for residents within the District.
8. Encourage partnerships and cooperative arrangements with state, local, and tribal governments, private organizations, businesses, special interest groups, and citizens to increase cost effectiveness of efforts toward park land acquisition, improvements, and operational expenses.

INTRODUCTION

The Fall City Metropolitan Park District (FCMPD) is a municipal corporation formed by a special election in February of 2009. The district is located in eastern half of King County and its local service area is primarily north from greater Redmond and Carnation to Snoqualmie to the south, west from the Sammamish plateau to the Cascade foothills to the east. Certain features within the FCMPD such as the Snoqualmie River, the Snoqualmie Valley Trail, and the equestrian riding arena at Fall City Park have a much wider regional service area that draw from all areas of the County and beyond.

The FCMPD covers approximately 27.50 square miles (17,600 acres) and is comprised of rural and resource lands. Rural Residential Use (ranging from one dwelling unit/2.5 acres to one dwelling/10 acres) predominates. Other permitted uses include commercial uses and office uses to serve the community. The Rural Area also includes lands designated and zoned for agriculture, forestry, and mineral extraction. The FCMPD has one rural commercial center and includes the entirety of Fall City (an unincorporated area with residential zoning of four dwelling units/acre), King County Fire District No. 27, and together with surrounding neighborhoods. In 2009, there were 3,775 registered voters within the District.

The rural town of Fall City, located at the confluence of the Raging River and the Snoqualmie River is known for its spectacular natural setting. The Snoqualmie River meanders majestically through a broad pastoral valley, flanked by steep wooded hillsides and the snow-capped peaks of the Cascade Mountains. Fall City is one of three rural towns specifically designated by King County. The rural town designation recognizes the historical development of an unincorporated rural area that includes a commercial center and has a higher density residential settlement pattern than the rest of the rural parts of the County.

The FCMPD Comprehensive Plan (Plan) is influenced by King County plans and regulations. The Plan must be consistent with these policy documents and codes, which seek to balance growth and environmental protection. King County plans which provide this direction include:

Comprehensive Plan, 2008

Open Space System: Parks, Trails, Natural Areas and Working Resource Lands, 2004;

Regional Trail Inventory and Implementation Guidelines, July 2004;

Fall City Trail Feasibility Study, May 2001;

Fall City Subarea Plan, adopted June 2000

The Fall City area experiences gradual growth and gradual changes in character. The choices that confront the Fall City community at the present time are significant, and could dramatically alter the character and quality of park, recreation, and open space facilities and services if not adequately planned. This document outlines the choices that are available and the means for implementing preferred actions of most benefit to Fall City area residents.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this planning effort are to:

- Define the setting - within which park, recreation, and open space facilities should be provided within Fall City.
- Inventory - existing public and private park and recreational facilities that have been developed to-date within Fall City.
- Forecast demand - for future park and recreational facilities and services, particularly facilities and services that may be provided by FCMPD.
- Identify appropriate roles - and services that should be undertaken by FCMPD to meet critical recreational facility and programming needs.
- Develop plans - for resource conservancies, parks, trails, recreational fields and courts, community centers, and other special use and supporting facilities necessary to meet community demands - particularly for projects that may be undertaken and sponsored by FCMPD.
- Determine costs - involved in providing the park and recreational projects identified above, particularly the possible use of innovative financing tools or methods.
- Survey public opinion - to determine which issues are most important to Fall City residents, and which methods are most preferred for financing or realizing the plan's development.
- Define an implementation program - outlining the actions necessary to realize the development of the FCMPD Comprehensive Plan.

Approach

This plan analyzes the supply, demand, and need for public and recreation facilities and services within the Fall City. The inventories include a comprehensive assessment of public and private facilities within Fall City. The development strategies proposed for the Fall City Metropolitan Park District (FCMPD) are the result of this comprehensive analysis. Generally, the proposed strategies recommend focusing resources where park and recreation needs are most critical, and where the efforts will be most effective.

Public involvement

- The planning process - was overseen by the President of FCMPD with the assistance of the FCMPD Commissioners.
- A “Tell Us What You Think” comment card was distributed in June 2009 during the community’s annual celebration event, Fall City Days, and the FCMPD received responses which were taken under consideration while developing this plan.
- An on-line survey was run from November 15th 2009 through March 1st 2010 which generated over 700 responses. 36% of the responses were from residents that live within the District, 57% were from outside of the District, and 7% were uncertain whether they lived inside or outside of the District.
- Both the comment card and on-line survey were posted on FCMPD’s website in a manner where respondents could send in their responses electronically. Copies of additional survey inputs were made available at Board meetings.
- Several Regular Park Board Meetings and Special Single Topic Park Board Meetings were conducted during the planning process to review inventory findings, estimate demand, propose plan and financial particulars, and develop the proposals contained within this plan.
- Comprehensive Plan Open House public meetings with exhibit displays were held at the Fall City Library in April 2010 and at the Fall City Fire Station in May 2010 to provide information and conduct additional surveys of interested residents.
- General meetings were held monthly for the 15 months prior to the plan adoption.
- A number of Public Service Announcements (PSA’s) were included in the Fall City monthly “*Fall City Neighbors*” monthly newsletter.

The proposals outlined within this document represent the consensus opinions developed during the workshop sessions and incorporate public comments from surveys as well as direction of the FCMPD Board of Commissioners.

Documentation

The comprehensive plan report is organized into five (5) chapters dealing with major topic issues and accompanying appendices.

Interpretation

This FCMPD Comprehensive Plan is one of a series of plans for the Fall City. This plan does not address directly the same issues that are the subject of other plans; however these other plans may have relevance to the implementation of the objectives, concepts, and proposed projects contained herein.