

Chapter 5: Capital Improvement Program

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Fall City Metropolitan Park District (FCMPD) lists the land acquisition, development, renovation, and restoration projects for the next six years. The CIP for 2010 – 2015 is included in Appendix A. The CIP is listed according to the year of anticipated implementation and includes the anticipated funding source. The program includes acquisition and capital projects submitted, or anticipated to be submitted, to agencies for grant funds such as the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

Capital Investment Concepts

FCMPD should pursue the following general policies concerning the use of capital resources in the development of park and recreation properties

FCMPD Properties

The Park District should:

- Complete development and retain responsibility of sites which have unique regional or special characteristics and which can provide broad user benefits.

Other Agency Properties

FCMPD should assist other agencies in:

- The joint use or extended operation of facilities which have common benefits, particularly the after-hour and weekend use of school district athletic fields and courts,
- The joint development of lands or sites which may support multiple use activities, particularly waterfront beaches, trails and picnic facilities and
- The development of existing facilities to competitive standards and service capacities, especially all kinds of athletic fields and courts.

Otherwise, FCMPD park and recreation facility needs will be greater than has been estimated in this report.

Use Rights

FCMPD should pursue special use agreements, easements, leases, package use and maintenance contracts and any other innovative terms which can obtain land use rights at the least possible cost. FCMPD should purchase land only when a site is in danger of being used or altered in a manner that will not conform to local long-range plans.

Most unique environmental areas and landforms are or can be protected by local and state land use regulations and will not be lost to inappropriate uses or developments. Consequently, the objective is to obtain the right to use, not the cost of owning, valuable park and recreation land.

Cost/Benefit Approach to Decision-Making

A cost/benefit approach should be adopted, as a basis for deciding how limited FCMPD financial resources are spent on park and recreation needs. General funds and monies obtained from general obligation bonds or other general revenue sources should be used for park activities, which benefit the largest possible number of users.

FCMPD residents should decide as directly as possible what park or recreational services they want and are willing to pay to obtain. The decision process must be as direct as possible to match financing proposals or charges with benefits, and actual services with financial promises.

The financial marketplace may determine the activities and areas which will receive park and recreation services in the most equitable fashion. In the final analysis, residents should get the park and recreational facilities and services they are willing to pay for.

Project Selection Criteria and Process

As stated above, Fall City residents should decide as directly as possible what park or recreational services they want and are willing to pay to obtain. Although Community Plans provide policy and location guidance at a community level, overall project selection, whether emanating from a community plan, or from the FCMPD itself should be judged in an equitable and fair manner. The following criteria, in order of importance, will be used to judge and select a project:

- The project should provide opportunities for partnerships. Partnership opportunities with other jurisdictions such as school districts, other governmental agencies, community groups. Through inter-local agreements, FCMPD should strive to develop facilities on existing publicly owned property. Site improvements, which offer a joint or shared use, are preferable.
- The site itself must eventually be accessible to the public. Park sites, which have good accessibility by public roads, access to transit and needed utilities in place, are preferred. The site should not be unreasonably restricted by environmental, legal, permitting, legislative or political constraints.
- The area of Fall City in which the new park or project is contemplated should be under served or not have a facility available. Plan Areas should be targeted for new parks and or park improvements when there are no other parks in the area, where the citizens are under served, where ownership issues are easily resolved and the costs to develop and maintain the site are financially feasible. The facility within the site should be in heavy demand or projected for heavy demand by the community.
- The project may provide regional recreation opportunities.

- Regional parks provide opportunities and amenities that serve large segments of the population, are not readily available at other sites, and provide unique services like accessibility to water, high competition athletic facilities, family picnic areas, community centers, camping facilities and specialty parks (such as equestrian facilities and arboretas).

Identification of capital facility projects and land acquisition is accomplished as part of FCMPD's Capital Facilities Plan and budget development. FCMPD employs the following methodology:

- The need for new park and recreation opportunities is determined by the population forecast for the Fall City.

For example, the population growth expected by the Fall City and its surrounding area may result in a need for an additional boat ramp within the six year planning horizon.

- If viable projects cannot be found, or if more projects are needed to support new population growth the projects listed in the plan will be used.
- In the case where methods listed above will not provide enough projects, the Board, and staff, in conjunction with input from the community advisory boards and the public, will identify additional projects.
- The list of proposed projects will be forwarded to the FCMPD Board of Commissioners who will hold at least one public hearing on the proposed project list. After consideration of the comments received from the public hearings, the Commissioners will approve a final draft of the project list and will pass a final resolution on the project list for inclusion in the proposed Capital Facilities Plan and budget.

Funding Strategies

Using the strategies described above, funding sources should generally be matched to specific needs to avoid duplication and take advantage of each fund's specific possibilities. For example:

Park and recreation program services

Fees and charges should be used to finance program services to the maximum extent possible and practical to provide cost/benefit equities and efficiencies. The following policies address the use of user fees and other charges for parks services and facilities:

The following types of fees may be charged for recovery of the costs of recreation and parks services:

- User fees - for the use of a facility or participation in an activity.
- Permit and reservation fees - for permission to conduct certain public and/or restricted access activities on park land, in park-owned facilities or using tangible public property without consuming or injuring it in any way.
- Admission fees - for attendees at special performances or events which require high cost talent, equipment and extra supervisory and maintenance personnel or where the proceeds are used to provide FCMPD activities.
- Sales fees - where unconditional ownership of merchandise or services passes from the District to the user
- Special service fees - for supplying extraordinary articles, commodities, activities or services
- Vending permit fees - for the privilege of selling goods and services on park property
- Leases - may be issued for certain private land uses when such leases meet the operational and financial needs of FCMPD. These agreements (including licenses) may be created in order to participate in the development of enterprise facilities in cooperation with private sector interests, to maintain property and improvements or to allow for the more efficient and effective use of "public" resources or for similar purposes.

The general benefit of services must mitigate any impact created by the imposition of fees and collection of fees must be reasonably accomplished, practical and economical. Charging fees is intended as an equitable method of recovering costs of recreation and parks services.

The amount of each fee should be set in consideration of the following:

- The goal is to cover direct costs, department administration and support costs, and indirect costs incurred by FCMPD in making the service or facility available.
- Fees should be within the range of fees set by other public or private agencies for the similar service, facility, or opportunity provided in the area.
- When not fully self-supporting, facility and program fees of like kind shall be subsidized equally.
- A portion of each fee should be dedicated to a capital reserve fund for capital improvements related to future major repair and replacement needs of the facility where the fee is collected.

- FCMPD may charge a non-resident fee that is different from resident fees. If such a fee is established, the non-resident fee may not be more than twice that charged to residents. When considering the imposition of non-resident fees, the additional administrative costs associated with collecting such a fee should be addressed.

FCMPD staff will annually review fees, and will recommend appropriate adjustments to the Board of Commissioners.

Facility Operation, Maintenance and Minor Construction

General funds should be used to pay operation and maintenance costs for facilities and activities which cannot be financed with fees and charges or financed with other funding methods. General funds are flexible and can be adjusted to meet annual programming variations or priorities.

Recreational Facility Development

Recreational facilities, athletic courts and fields in particular, are important to FCMPD's park and recreational programs. Bonds and other fixed forms of financing should be used to pay for the development of parks, trails and other facilities that residents assigned high priorities in the survey. Recreational facilities should be financed with general funds, excise tax revenues and other more flexible sources of financing.

FCMPD should investigate the possibility of implementing a wide range of joint recreational facility developments with the Snoqualmie Valley School District where the District may finance acquisition and development costs using school facility development bonds, and FCMPD may finance annual operating and maintenance needs using service charges and general funds. Joint venture agreements could better match costs/benefits with users, avoid duplication, save cost, increase service and allow each agency to make the best use of available funds.

Parks, Natural Areas and Trail Development

Parks and trails benefit the largest percentage of the population and will probably be easier to obtain voter approval on bond issues than other more specialized park and recreational uses. General obligation bond packages could be put together to finance regional park, natural area and trail acquisition and development proposals contained within the development plan. The bond offering could also contain proposed recreational facilities for which there are major demands and likely to be broad based support.

When necessary and appropriate, General or Revenue Bonds could be used to purchase sites when opportunities require fast action, or to match possible State of Washington Recreation Conservation Office (RCO), the National Park Service's Heritage and Conservation Resource Service (HCRS), the Washington Department of Natural Resource's Aquatic Lands Enhancement Act (ALEA) or other state or federal grants for park and trail developments which may be available on an occasional basis.

Special Developments

A number of the proposed projects in the development program represent unique facilities which may not be easily financed with conventional funding methods. FCMPD should explore the opportunities which may be available for the development and funding of joint public/private facilities at these locations with private property owners or developers. Joint ventures could save costs, reduce annual program requirements and provide Fall City residents park and recreational services and facilities which may not be available or provided otherwise in Fall City.

Content and Management of Inter-Local Agreements

- All Inter-local agreements for the transfer of responsibilities, funds or ownership regarding park facilities, programs or land, shall be made available for review by the Board of Commissioners prior to execution. This review is not intended to impede the execution of any such agreement.
- District Staff shall provide an annual report to the Board of Commissioners detailing the status of all inter-local and interagency agreements regarding parks.
- In inter-local agreements addressing joint sharing of facilities or programs, there shall be a provision that user fees, license or permit fees, parking fees or other charges shall be the same for all users and consistent with the other user fee policies of this Plan.

Funding Source Options

A creative and diversified strategy is critical in today's challenging financial environment. FCMPD must have a sound financial plan to acquire property, develop property, maintain existing parks, and fund parks and recreation programs. The following list is just some financial methods to fund parks and recreation, but some of the methods have restrictions on how the funds can be used.

- User Fees – Fees collected to use/rent facilities or to participate in programs or events
- Property Taxes
- Donations – Donations may come in many different aspects; cash, land, services, labor and equipment. Donations may come from a private group or individual, companies, or non-profit organizations.
- Grants — Funds from grants can come from either private foundation or government agency and usually require a match of some sort.
 - A major source of government grants in Washington is the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).
 - BFP Boating Facilities Program
 - LWCF Land and Water Conservation Fund
 - NOVA Non-Highway Roads
 - NOVA Non-Motorized
 - NOVA Off-Road Vehicles
 - WWRP Habitat Conservation – Critical Habitat, Natural Areas, State Lands Restoration, and Urban Wildlife Habitat
 - WWRP Outdoor Recreation – Local Parks, State Lands Development, State Parks, Trails and Water Access
 - WWRP Riparian Protection Account
 - ALEA Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
 - FARR Firearms and Archery Range Recreation
 - NRTP National Recreation Trails Program
 - WWRP Farmlands Preservation Account
 - YAF Youth Athletic Facilities Program

- General Obligation Bonds- requires supermajority of 60% approval of 40% of the voters who voted in last election. These bonds are typically used for capital projects.
- Revenue Bonds: No vote of public is needed. Operation funds are used to pay on the bonds as per State of Washington Law.
- REET: Real Estate Excise Tax can only be used for capital projects (acquisition, development, and renovation) and requires a 1 to 1 match.
- Reserves: Funds accumulated over time that may be used when commissioners vote on their use.
- Partnerships and Sponsorships
- Conservation Futures: Program administrated by King County Parks to help local agencies and non-profit organizations acquire various types of open space in King County.
- Impact Fees: Collected and distributed by King County and must relate to improvements of the new development.
- Leases: Either for space or land.