CHAPTER 7 PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

7.1 Plan Context

The City of Sequim's approach to parks and open space planning is guided by the 2022 Sequim Parks and Open Space Plan. This Plan serves as a blueprint for park and open space improvements, aiming to address current needs and anticipate future demands. It outlines strategies for enhancing existing parks, developing new recreational facilities, and preserving natural areas. This Chapter has been informed by the 2022 Parks and Open Space plan and has been augmented to ensure compliance with Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for parks planning.

7.2 Goals and Policies

This Chapter is complementary to other chapters of the Comprehensive Plan, and many of the policies identified in this Chapter may be included or further refined in other chapters. This Chapter considers the following aspects of Parks and Open Space:

- Community Engagement and Communications.
- Parks and Open Spaces.
- Trails.
- Site Design and Operations.
- Administration and Management.

7.2.1 Community Engagement and Communications

The City is committed to working with residents, volunteers, and local organizations to plan, improve, and promote parks and programs. By supporting open communication and strong partnerships, Sequim aims to build a parks system that reflects community needs and encourages pride and participation.

GOAL POS-1
Encourage and support public involvement in park and recreation issues.

Policy POS-1.1
Involve residents and stakeholders in park and recreation facility planning and design and recreation program development to solicit community input, facilitate project understanding and engender public support.

Policy POS-1.2
Encourage and promote City-sponsored and coordinated volunteer park improvement and beautification projects from a variety of individuals, service clubs, school groups, churches, businesses and non-profit organizations.

Policy POS-1.3
Support the Parks, Arbor and Recreation Board as the forum for public discussion of parks and recreation issues.

Policy POS-1.4
Conduct periodic joint sessions when determined necessary between the Parks, Arbor and Recreation Board (PARB) and other standing City boards, such as the Planning Commission,

Arts Commission, and with the City Council to improve coordination and discuss policy matters of mutual interest pertaining to recreational resources, opportunities, and funding.

Policy POS-1.5
Continue to communicate park news, recreation programs, festivals, and events. Use a variety of methods and media to increase public awareness of local and citywide recreational opportunities.

Policy POS-1.6
Create and maintain a park and trail facilities map and coordinate with local trails and tourism organizations to distribute online and print materials.

Policy POS-1.7
Develop a coordinated sign program, with consistent branding and maps, which provides a user-friendly guide to the location of parks, trails, and park amenities.

7.2.2 Parks and Open Spaces

Sequim envisions a park and recreation system that inspires and connects people of all ages and abilities. By blending vibrant spaces for play, quiet places for reflection, and trails for recreation and mobility, the City is building a future where parks are at the heart of community life. Every new field, plaza, and open space will help create a healthier and more vibrant Sequim for generations to come.

GOAL POS- 2
Provide a diversity of park and recreation facilities and a balance of opportunities for both passive and active recreation and that meets the needs of different age groups, abilities, and interests.

Policy POS-2.1
Develop recreation facilities that provide sites for special events, sports tournaments and athletic events, which can be sources of tourism and an economic benefit to the City of Sequim.

Policy POS-2.2
Program, improve and maintain Sequim's community parks and trails to serve the greater Sequim- Dungeness Valley as a regional draw for recreation and park activities.

Policy POS-2.3
Explore options to upgrade and expand athletic fields and park amenities to provide extended year-round use.

Policy POS-2.4
As suitable land and funding become available, secure locations for new parks and open spaces, with a focus on underserved areas of the City.

Policy POS- 2.4A
Locate neighborhood parks within walking distance (1/2-mile) of existing and proposed neighborhoods with passive and informal active open space.

Policy POS-2.4B
Integrate small, special use parks and plazas that serve residents within a 1/4-mile radius and visitors to downtown into the City's urban fabric to meet specific open space needs, such as providing respite, play for children, and specialized activities for all ages.

Policy POS-2.5
Identify and prioritize lands for inclusion in the parks and open space system based on factors such as contribution to level of service, connectivity, preservation and scenic or recreational opportunities for residents.

Policy POS-2.6
Designate and retain wetlands, stream corridors, floodplains, and other areas that provide essential habitat for priority plant or wildlife species as passive open space, such as the Johnson and Bell Creek corridors.

Policy POS-2.7
Acquire land for open spaces and trails through municipal, state and federal programs, such as stormwater management and wildlife/wetland protection.

Policy POS-2.8
Work with nonprofit groups (e.g., North Olympic Land Trust, Peninsula Trails Coalition), local tribes (e.g. Jamestown S'Klallam), agencies, utilities, and private landowners to secure conservation and trail easements and improve access to open space and trail connections

Policy POS-2.9
Partner with internal City departments and outside agencies to identify opportunities to coordinate and accommodate dual use of lands associated with parks, public utilities, green infrastructure, stormwater and active transportation projects.

7.2.3 Trails

Sequim's growing trail network opens the door to adventure, connection, and discovery. Whether on foot or by bike, these trails weave through parks, neighborhoods, and open spaces, making it easier for everyone to explore the community and the natural beauty that surrounds it. As a key regional asset, the Olympic Discovery Trail plays a vital role in this network, linking Sequim to neighboring communities and providing residents and visitors with scenic access to the broader Olympic Peninsula.

GOAL POS-3
Maintain and extend a well-connected system of trails and walkways to link park and recreation facilities and other community destinations.

Policy POS-3.1
Connect the community to nature and parks and open spaces through a system of regional and local trails and paths for walking and bicycling.

Policy POS-3.2
Continue to coordinate with Clallam County to support a connected trail network that provides continuous walking and biking access between parks and other key destinations.

Policy POS-3.3
Integrate the siting of proposed trail segments into the development review process; require development projects along designated trail routes to be designed to incorporate trail segments as part of the project.

Policy POS-3.4
Locate trails in areas that are important to preserve as open spaces, such as wooded areas, drainage corridors, shorelines, scenic vistas, and others. Locate trails along drainage corridors, when possible, to do so without degrading the environmental functions and values of the area.

Policy POS-3.5
Provide trailhead accommodations, as appropriate, to include parking, wayfinding signage, restrooms and other amenities.

Policy POS-3.6
Provide connecting multi-modal access to key trailheads located just outside City limits in coordination with county transportation improvements.

7.2.4 Site Design and Operations

Maintaining an efficient park system ensures accessible, safe and sustainable public spaces for the Sequim community.

GOAL POS-4
Maintain and operate a modern, efficient park system that provides a high level of user comfort, safety and aesthetic quality, and protects capital investments.

Policy POS-4.1
Maintain all parks and facilities in a manner that keeps them in safe and attractive condition; repair or remove damaged components immediately upon identification. Track and monitor City maintenance costs of parks, trails, and open space facilities.

Policy POS-4.2
Design and maintain parks and facilities to offer universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels and age as appropriate; in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards for Accessible Design.

Policy POS-4.3
Develop City-owned or maintained 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.

Policy POS-4.4

Design and maintain parks using sustainable, low-impact practices, including native vegetation and consistent materials, conserve water resources, support habitat, and minimize maintenance.

Policy POS-4.5
New parks and upgraded/renovated facilities should consider unique design traits that add to Sequim's sense of place while still meeting the standards for quality amenities and site furnishings that limit maintenance and operations costs.

Policy POS-4.6
Incorporate cultural resources in the design and development of new park and recreation facilities and provide interpretive opportunities where appropriate.

Policy POS-4.7
Encourage the incorporation of public art, interpretative features, and enhanced entry and directional signage in parks, trails, and other public spaces across the city. Collaborate with the Arts Commission as appropriate.

Policy POS-4.8
Limit the use of pesticides for vegetation management in public parks and open spaces as appropriate.

Policy POS-4.9
Develop and utilize specific park master plans for existing and new parks to guide design and improvements, while allowing flexibility on final or ongoing placement and uses.

7.2.5 Administration and Management

To ensure the sustainability of the parks system, it is essential to allocate sufficient resources, secure funding through partnerships and grants, and explore innovative financing options.

GOAL POS-5
Responsibly plan and manage the City's physical, human, and financial resources to ensure the protection of park and recreation facilities as essential public assets.

Policy POS-5.1
Provide sufficient financial and staff resources to maintain the overall parks and recreation system to high standards.

Policy POS-5.2
Continue to allocate staff time and resources to programs and activities that can leverage existing resources (e.g. managing volunteer programs, and partnerships with local schools and organizations, and grant development and administration).

Policy POS-5.3
Update and adopt a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) every two years as part of the budget process to address current recreation interest and park system capital needs.

Policy POS-5.4
Periodically review and update the park impact fee rates and maintain a park impact fee system to help pay for improvements to accommodate growth.

Policy POS-5.5
Pursue alternative funding options and dedicated revenues for the acquisition and development of parks and facilities, such as private donations, sponsorships, partnerships, state and federal grant sources, among others.

Policy POS-5.6
Pursue and maintain public/private agreements to help offset operations and maintenance of park system facilities or the operational cost of providing recreational programs, where appropriate.

Policy POS-5.7
Continue to partner with public, private and non-profit providers, such as organized sports leagues, to plan for projects and expand specialized facilities.

Policy POS-5.8
Explore options for ongoing subsidies to provide access to affordable recreation programs for disenfranchised youth through scholarships and other assistance programs.

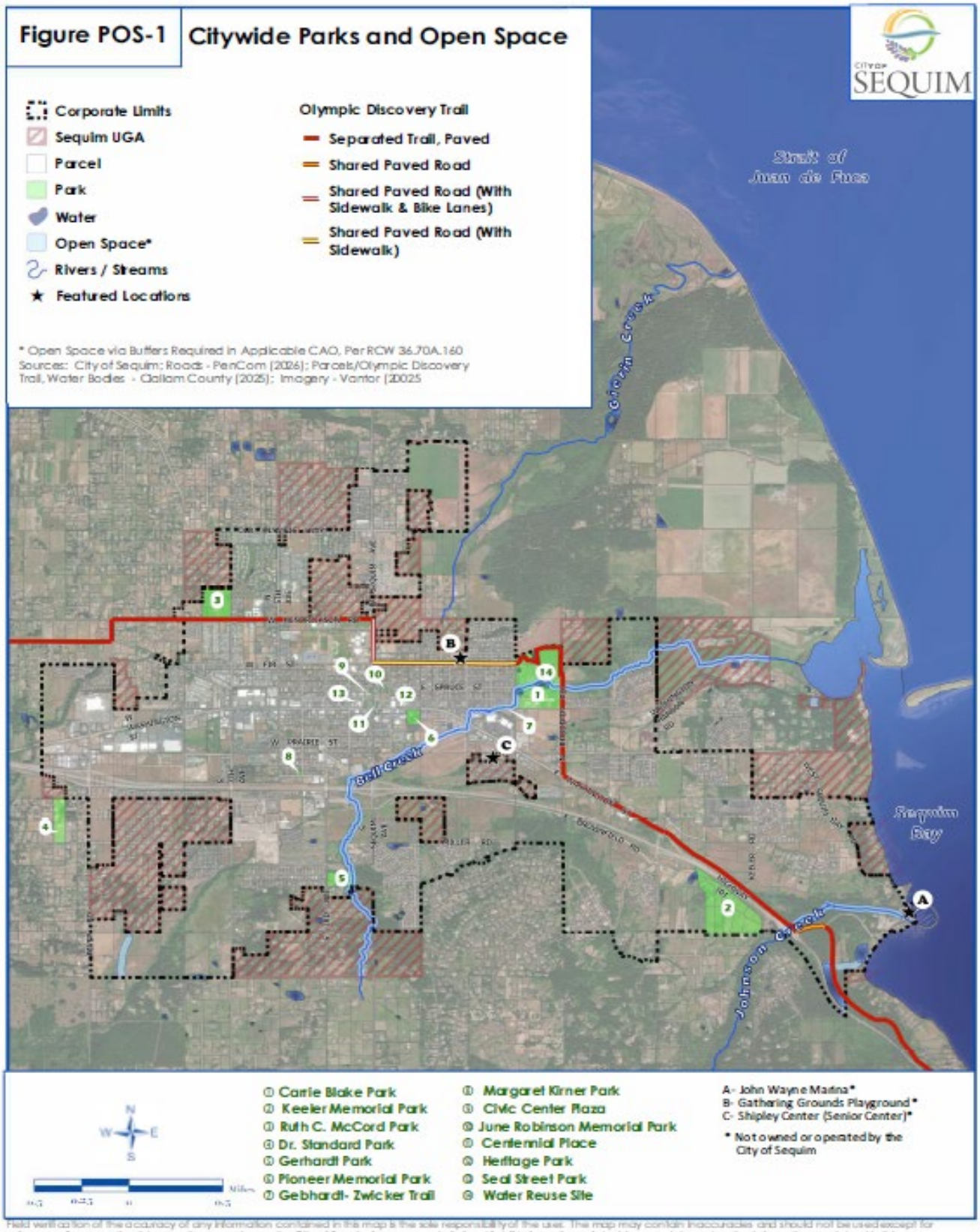
Policy POS-5.9
Explore revisions to the Sequim Municipal Code (SMC) to replace open space requirements for residential developments with an in-lieu fee. If an in-lieu fee is decided, the funds should be designated for public parks and open space acquisition and amenities.

Policy POS-5.10
Consider incentives in development standards to encourage developers to provide pocket parks, plazas, courtyards, and pedestrian connections.

Policy POS-5.11
Promote professional development opportunities that strengthen the core skills and engender greater commitment from Staff, Board members and key volunteers, to include trainings, materials and/or affiliation with the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) and the Washington Recreation & Park Association (WRPA).

Policy POS-5.12
Update the Parks, Open Space and Trails plan periodically to maintain alignment with State grant requirements and funding opportunities.

Figure POS-1 Citywide Parks and Open Space



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