



CITY OF TROUTDALE

"Gateway to the Columbia River Gorge"

AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL – WORK SESSION

Troutdale City Hall - Council Chambers
219 E. Historic Columbia River Hwy. (Lower Level, Rear Entrance)
Troutdale, OR 97060-2078

Tuesday, September 15, 2015 – 7:00pm

Mayor

Doug Daoust

City Council

David Ripma
Eric Anderson
Larry Morgan
Glenn White
Rich Allen
John Wilson

City Manager

Craig Ward

1. Roll Call
2. Discussion: Recreation and Parks District, new information. Mayor Daoust
3. Adjourn

Doug Daoust, Mayor

Dated: _____

9/8/15

Further information and copies of agenda packets are available at: Troutdale City Hall, 219 E. Historic Columbia River Hwy., Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.; on our Web Page www.troutdaleoregon.gov or call Debbie Stickney, City Recorder at 503-674-7237.

The meeting location is wheelchair accessible. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to: Debbie Stickney, City Recorder 503-674-7237.

Economics of Parks and Recreation

Livability and community vibrancy attract new development, large employers and their living-wage jobs. Building parks, having greenspaces, trails, and other community assets support those outcomes as well, while also improving livability and health, according to the Trust for Public Lands.

Eco-tourism, cultural events, and recreation, are important drivers for the local economy, too. It all increases property values, supports local businesses, expands job opportunities, and boosts local services – everything from education to top tier health care.

The Trust for Public Land's Center for City Park Excellence has identified seven ways in which cities derive economic benefit from their parks:

- Property value
- Tourism
- Direct use
- Health
- Community cohesion
- Clean water
- Clean air



“Parks and open space outside of cities produce economic benefits as well,” according to The Trust for Public Land. “Parks attract non-resident visitors who put new dollars into local economies. Proximity to parks and open space enhances the value of residential properties and produces increased tax revenues for communities. Open space captures precipitation, reduces storm water management costs, and by protecting underground water sources, open space can reduce the cost of drinking water up to ten-fold.

How much parkland and open space is enough for a city?

The national standard, created in the early 1960s, used to be 10 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. However, that changed in the 1990s when the National Recreation and Park Association suggested that each city create its own standards to reflect growth patterns, said Bill Beckner, the association's research director, in a Jan. 2014 article on Tampabay.com

Beckner said the reason for the change was it had become impossible for many smaller built-out cities with no more room for growth to meet the 10-acres-per-1,000 standard. On the flip side, cities that surpassed the standard saw their citizenry balk when the cities tried to acquire more parkland. Now many cities set their own guidelines.

So how do the cities in East Multnomah County measure up?

Gresham — This city of approximately 109,400 people has 27 parks spanning more than 300 acres and boasts 840 acres of natural areas. That's about 2.7 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, or 7.68 acres of natural areas per 1,000.

Troutdale — Nestled along the scenic Sandy River, Troutdale has 14 developed parks and an undeveloped one totaling nearly 71 acres. It also owns almost 100 acres of natural areas and maintains another 85 acres that it does not own, for a total of 258.18 total acres in Troutdale's parks and natural areas system.

With almost 16,500 residents, that's a bit more than 4 acres of parkland per 1,000 people, or about 15.5 acres of natural areas per 1,000.

Fairview — This town of less than 9,200 people has 25 parks totaling approximately 443 acres, including a charming network of pocket parks in Fairview Village. That adds up to a whopping 49 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Wood Village — A small hamlet of nearly 4,000 people, Wood Village has one 21-acre park as well as 25 community garden plots all within one-square mile. This is roughly 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Each city has its own parks department that maintains the parks within its city limits. General fund dollars, typically from property taxes, are the main source of park funding, although park system development charges, intergovernmental revenue and grants also help out. Some cities, like Troutdale, also have a park improvement fund to expand parks and greenways. Money for Troutdale's park improvement fund comes from system development charges paid by new residential development and interest income.

We can all agree residents should have access to these parks and open spaces to enjoy the trails, picnic areas, and other recreational opportunities.

But are city park departments the best way to care for this public land? Perhaps a special district would provide more stable and efficient funding. That is what we would like to explore.

Why Special Districts

Exactly, what is so special about special districts?

In short, the answer is focused service with stable funding. When people want new services or a higher level of an existing service, they can form a district to fund them. For example, according to the website All Things Political, Oregon has approximately 65 special districts that provide everything from fire protection to cemetery services to parks and recreation.

Generally, special districts are considered a form of government that provides a service to a defined geographic area.

In Oregon, special districts are called local service districts and are defined under ORS 174 as "(A) An entity created by statute, ordinance or resolution for the purpose of giving advice only to a local government; (B) An entity created by local government for the purpose of giving advice to local government and that is not created by ordinance or resolution, if the document creating the entity indicates that the entity is a public body; and (C) Any entity created by local government other than an entity described in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, unless the ordinance, resolution or other document creating the entity indicates that the entity is not a governmental entity or the entity is not subject to any substantial control by local government.

The state has a separate chapter dedicated to parks and recreation districts.

Special districts have a well-defined area where the focused service is delivered. Such districts localize costs and services by allowing citizens to get the service they want at a price they are willing to pay. By pooling resources, different entities that provide a similar service on their own can join forces to deliver the same service – or an even better service – for less cost.

To fund the service or services those within a special district want, the district can impose debt, taxes, levy assessments or charge fees for their services. They can enter into contracts and employ workers.

And they accomplish a lot. They can build public facilities, whether it's a sewage plant or a community center, and they can provide in-demand services, ranging from recreation programs to mosquito control.

Because special districts are autonomous entities, they are accountable only to the voters and landowners they serve within the district. However, states do oversee special districts to ensure they follow state laws related to public meetings, bonded debt and elections.

Exactly how a district is funded is up to the citizens within its boundaries.

Before a special district can be formed, a feasibility study is needed to determine the viability of the concept behind the district before it can move forward. Everything from financial implications to community support could be determined in such a study.

In 2010, the city of Gresham contracted with The Trust for Public Land to conduct a parks feasibility study of various ways to fund the city's parks services, and recommended polling residents on four methods, including a park district. In the end, the study recommended that Gresham "organize an intensive public education and awareness campaign within the city to raise support for the concept of a park and recreation district that would potentially include the other cities within East County. ... the concept of a park and recreation district garnered more support than the others, and it is our recommendation that the City focus on educating voters on the details and merits of a park and recreation district."

In addition, the study "recommends that the City continue -- and increase -- work with leaders in Troutdale, Fairview, and Wood Village to coordinate efforts on public education and awareness of the needs and the ability of a park and recreation district to begin to satisfy those needs."

According to Gresham's parks feasibility study, the most common funding options in Oregon are as follows:

1. Property Tax, or Local Option Levy, for either operation and maintenance or capital projects. An operation levy may be imposed for a maximum of five years, while a capital project levy may be imposed for the lesser of the useful life or ten years. A simple majority of voters must approve the local option levy at either a general or primary election. Additionally, in the recent May, 2010 primary election, Measure 68, which allows school districts to issue bonds for capital improvements, was passed by voters. This has the potential for collaboration between the City and the School District in that school districts will now have the capability of bonding to purchase lands for recreation and athletics. It's becoming increasingly common for cities and school districts to share fields.

2. General Obligation Bond proceeds that may be used for land acquisition or park and open space capital projects, but not for operation and maintenance purposes. A general obligation bond must be approved by a simple majority of voters at either a general or primary election.

More Complex Funding Options to Implement in Oregon

3. Park and Recreation Districts may levy property taxes and issue general obligation bonds. Formation of a park and recreation district requires petition to the County Commissioners by 15% of registered voters within the proposed district. A simple majority of voters must approve district bonds, but the district can authorize an annual property tax levy without a vote, based on the permanent rate established at the district's formation.

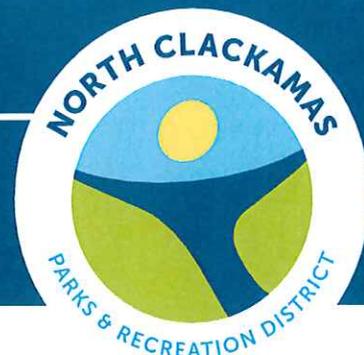
Council-Mandated Funding Options (without a public vote)

4. Park Utility Fees are usually assessed on raterpayers' utility bills, for parks, open space and maintenance. Currently, Medford is the only city in Oregon to use this fee. City Park and Recreation Fees could be assessed or increased to generate more revenue for parks, trails and open space. However, any new assessment or increase to the fees must be balanced against the affordable provision of park and recreation services to the City's residents, and the cost of establishing a collection system.

5. System Development Charges (or SDCs) are used to construct new public facilities that allow for community growth, and to pay for debt on previously constructed growth-related facilities. The City has a Parks Improvement Fund that accounts for projects to expand or improve public parks funded with revenues from SDCs, grants, and previous bond measures. Expenditures are for capital improvements to existing parks, and other hiking trail projects, and acquisition of land for open spaces. SDCs are applied to all new development, but the fees can only fund capacity enhancement projects that are needed as a result of the development.

FACT SHEET

ncprd.com



NORTH CLACKAMAS PARKS & RECREATION DISTRICT

MISSION: To enrich community vitality and promote healthy living through parks and recreation.

VISION: Enhancing and connecting your community by providing exceptional parks and recreation opportunities for all.

DISTRICT SPECIFICS

- NCPRD is a service district of Clackamas County formed in 1990 by a citizen-driven effort. Voters approved the formation of the District because they saw the need for greater parks and recreation services in the north end of Clackamas County.
- The District serves more than 116,000 residents and includes the cities of Happy Valley, Milwaukie, a small portion of Damascus, and a large area of unincorporated Clackamas County.
- The District, about 36 square miles, is defined by the Clackamas River to the south, the Willamette River to the west, the Multnomah County line to the north and Happy Valley's border to the east.
- NCPRD has a dedicated tax base of \$0.5382 per \$1,000 of assessed value which generates approximately \$5.2 million annually. This is the lowest parks district tax rate in the state - here are comparisons: Tualatin Hills Parks & Recreation District, \$1.31; Bend Metro Parks & Recreation District, \$1.46; Willamalane Parks & Recreation (Springfield), \$1.9732.
- NCPRD employs 37 full-time employees along with hundreds of seasonal employees and volunteers.
- The Clackamas County Board of Commissioners serves as the NCPRD Board of Directors. Other governance and advisory boards include the NCPRD District Advisory Board (DAB), NCPRD Budget Committee and the Milwaukie Center Community Advisory Board.

NCPRD MASTER PLAN

- This guidance document includes goals, visions and recommendations to meet the parks and recreation needs of the District. The current plan was approved in 2004. NCPRD is currently updating the Master Plan, which includes an extensive community involvement process. It will shape the District's path for the next decade.

PARKS, FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

- The District offers more than 38 parks, 25 natural areas, 15 miles of trails including the 6-mile Trolley Trail, Mount Talbert nature Park and three facilities: Hood View Sports Complex, the Milwaukie Center and the North Clackamas Aquatic Park.
- North Clackamas Aquatic Park serves more than 250,000 visitors annually.
- The Milwaukie Center provides 73,000 Meals on Wheels, 14,000+ bus rides, and more than 300 recreation and educational offerings annually.
- NCPRD maintenance staff members oversee more than 667 acres and provide operational support for District-wide programs and events.
- The natural resources program manages natural resources within District parks and includes an impressive array of features including: wetlands, forests, salmon-bearing creeks and Oregon White Oak habitats.

RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- NCPRD offers a wide range of recreation and educational offerings, ranging from swimming lessons and art/music/dance classes to special events, health/fitness classes and senior programs.
- More than 3,500 participants annually enroll in classes, programs and special events.