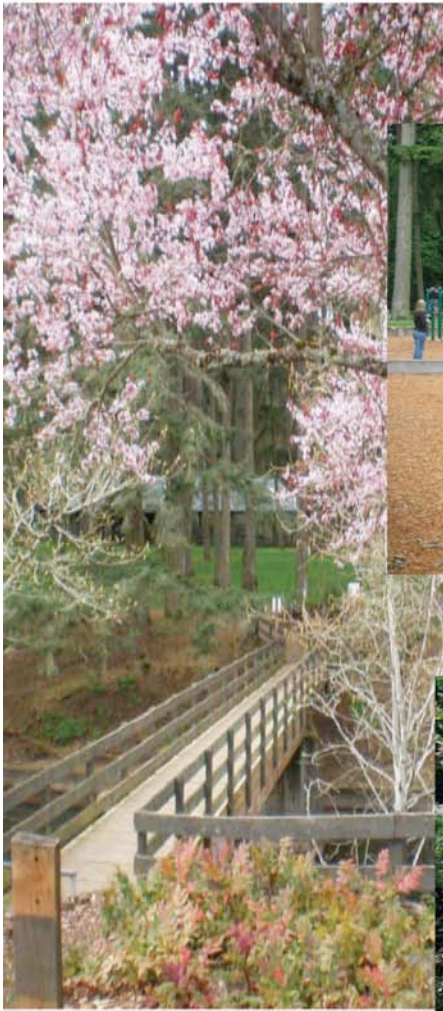


City of Silverton Parks and Recreation Master Plan



September 8, 2008

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Silverton is a fast growing community that is positioning itself for the future by preparing a number of citywide master plans including a downtown revitalization plan, and most recently this parks and recreation plan. A major goal of these plans is to build on Silverton's historic homes and buildings, natural features including Silver Creek, small-town atmosphere and friendliness, and tourist attractions including The Oregon Garden and nearby Silver Falls State Park.

In October 2007, the City of Silverton began a planning process to update the 2002 Silverton Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Working as a project team, city staff provided guidance to the planning program and collaborated with the consulting group from David Reed & Associates.

A sixteen-member Master Plan Advisory Committee worked with the staff and consulting team to craft a vision statement, goals and policies for the plan. The Committee also reviewed and commented on all benchmark reports and was instrumental in shaping the plan's recommendations.

Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this plan is to provide a new vision and framework for Silverton to value and invest in its quality of place. Parks, greenspaces, and recreation are viewed as essential for maintaining a sense of community, health and well-being, and prosperity.

The plan is intended to be a comprehensive document with a timeframe of twenty years. Specific objectives include the following:

- To position Silverton to build on its historic, cultural, and landscape heritage, as well as its special charm and friendliness
- To establish clear policy direction and priorities for upgrading and maintaining existing recreation facilities, closing gaps in services, and meeting park and open space needs in growth areas
- To create and maintain a “green infrastructure” system of connected parks and greenspaces that capitalize on “opportunity areas” – moving away from automobile-based planning to community-oriented public spaces
- To protect, restore and enhance Silverton's significant natural resources, habitats, and open spaces
- To connect adults, families, and children with nature and fulfill needs for recreation and play, and outdoor education
- To establish a framework for implementing the plan including management strategies and funding options

If these objectives are accomplished, Silverton will not only excel in becoming an exceptionally livable community, it will continue to position itself as an integral part of a growing, vibrant recreation-tourism region.

Core Values

Core values are the beliefs and sensibilities of Silverton residents concerning important qualities of the community. These values provide direction for the master plan including goals and policies and specific recommendations.

Silverton's Core Values

Rich history and tradition, historic charm

Celebrating history and the arts, historic buildings

Sense of community, friendliness and safety

Strong town character; surrounding rural landscape

Walkability, human scale, connectivity

Protecting natural beauty

Silver Creek, ridgelines, forested hills,
scenic views, trees and tree canopy

Large greenspace areas

Coolidge & McClaine Park, Pettit Property,
Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park
The Oregon Garden

Downtown greenspace along Silver Creek

Compact community and downtown

Raising children in a safe, livable community

Community health and well-being

Land use integrated with parks and open space

Volunteers are a community resource

Vision Statement

The *Silverton Vision Statement* reflects shared core values and aspirations of the community. Describing a preferred future excites the imagination and provides direction not only for parks and recreation planning, but also can help guide other community planning policies and decisions.

Silverton Vision Statement

Silverton is Oregon's Garden City and one of the gateways to Silver Falls State Park. A vibrant and compact community surrounded by pastoral landscape, Silverton is a special town that has maintained its charm, friendliness, and natural beauty.

Hillsides, wetlands, and natural habitats are protected by a system of connected greenspaces that guide urban growth and foster livability. Silverton's tree canopy reinforces the community's values and character while purifying the air and providing wildlife habitat. The heart of Silverton is its vibrant and inviting downtown. With Silver Creek as its centerpiece, the rich history, superior design and traditional architecture create a downtown where people live, work, shop, and play.

Silverton is a walkable and bicycle-friendly place that enhances a sense of neighborliness and community, reduces reliance on the automobile, and eases traffic congestion and air pollution. Parks, scenic vistas, natural habitats, farms and forestlands define the City's boundaries.

Silverton places a high priority on community health and well-being by ensuring access to nature and recreation for all ages, and celebrating the arts and its artists. As a livable and welcoming community, Silverton is a major destination area and vital part of a thriving tourism region.

Goals and Policies

Eight goal statements emerged from the community visioning process. The goals describe preferred outcomes that would be achieved by implementing the vision statement. Policies were prepared for each of the goals, providing direction for implementing the vision and goals. While 57 policy statements are included in the master plan, those considered to be of highest importance are included in this summary.

Green Infrastructure

Goal 1: To develop a Green Infrastructure Network that protects and preserves Silverton's character and natural assets, and meets community and neighborhood needs for parks, open space, and recreation opportunities.

Policies:

- 1.1 Incorporate a Green Infrastructure concept into the Silverton Comprehensive Plan and other planning efforts, including elements of greenspace such as public parks, natural areas, private and public open space, greenways, wetlands, upland, and other habitats.
- 1.2 Assure neighborhood parks serve all major neighborhoods, and larger community parks are strategically located to provide a balance of parks, open space, and recreation facilities including sports fields.
- 1.3 Silver Creek corridor will be managed as a greenway link and for wildlife habitat.
- 1.4 Foster community identity and pride by promoting the Greenspace Vision Diagram.

Land Use and Growth Management

Goal 2: To shape and guide future land use patterns and new development to maintain a sustainable community.

Policies:

- 2.1 Silverton's heritage and character will shape the course of change and development rather than new development shaping the character of the community.
- 2.2 New subdivisions will be required to meet neighborhood park and open space needs through the development review process and Parks System Development Charges, and other development code requirements as defined in the master plan.
- 2.3 Assure subdivision policies protect and connect resource areas such as steep slopes and natural drainages, provide adequate and suitable parks and open space, and require sound stormwater management practices that make use of natural processes and systems.
- 2.4 Assure Park SDCs and other exactions are sufficient to meet park and greenspace needs created by new development.

Connectivity

Goal 3. To create a linked network of parks, natural areas, open space, commercial and employment areas, downtown, and other special areas, incorporating sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, and public multi-use pathways to connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, natural landscapes, and the downtown core.

Policies:

- 3.1 Provide connectivity for each area of Silverton to ensure pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle access to schools, parks, employment, and recreational areas (Policy #2a Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.2 Emphasize incentives and develop positive relationships with property owners in all efforts to develop greenspace connectivity; work to attain mutual goals and objectives.

- 3.3 When barriers to connectivity exist, use creative solutions that maintain linkages and values while respecting private property.
- 3.4 Silver Creek corridor will serve as a multi-use trail, as identified in the Downtown Master Plan and Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans (Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.5 Where feasible, utilize the rail line right-of-way for a multi-use trail system, as identified in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans (Silverton Transportation Plan).

Recreation and Education

Goal 4. To assure recreation and education opportunities are available to promote community well-being, health, and wellness.

Policies:

- 4.1 Continue to work with Silverton Hospital, Silverton Together, and others to maintain community health and well-being.
- 4.2 Provide enriching family experiences and support youth development, adults, seniors, and persons with disabilities through parks and recreation opportunities.
- 4.3 Provide adequate recreation facilities to support and accommodate recreation needs; work with schools to provide joint use of sports facilities.
- 4.4 Support the arts and preserve Silverton’s cultural heritage; incorporate art in the design and development of parks and public greenspaces.
- 4.5 Increase awareness of the need for resource stewardship.
- 4.6 Encourage exercise and healthy lifestyles, provide space for outdoor activities, create places of solitude and respite, and connect people with nature.

Tourism and Economic Development

Goal 5. To sustain a healthy, prosperous, and diversified economy by maintaining a Green Infrastructure ethic.

Policies:

- 5.1 Work with local businesses to invest in Silverton’s parks, recreation, and greenspace program to help the community’s economy thrive and prosper.
- 5.2 Support and complement The Oregon Garden through adjacent trails and trailheads with educational and interpretive information, and nature enjoyment opportunities such as birding.
- 5.3 Promote Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park as a regional water-based recreation attraction.
- 5.4 Assure downtown greenspace, Coolidge & McClaine Park, Silverton Community Swimming Pool, and civic functions such as the library and city hall are included in implementing the Silverton Downtown Plan, including creek revitalization and protection.
- 5.5 Promote downtown as a place for community celebrations, including development of adequate and viable space for community gatherings.
- 5.6 Protect scenic views and vistas and provide infrastructure to access and enjoy them.

Sustainability

Goal 6: To incorporate sustainability concepts when making decisions about park and open space land acquisition, park development, park usage, recreation programs, maintenance programs and practices, and other activities related to the provision of park facilities and delivery of recreation services.

Policies:

- 6.1 Provide leadership for the City of Silverton’s employees and citizens to understand importance of sustainable concepts and practices in the work place, in public spaces, and in the home.
- 6.2 Maintain and strive to improve habitat conditions and ecosystem functions within city parklands and other city-owned open space and resource lands.

- 6.3 Integrate environmental, economic, cultural, financial, historic preservation, and social equity considerations as components of parks and recreation planning, development, provision, and maintenance of facilities and services.
- 6.4 Educate and promote removal of invasive, non-native vegetation and habitat restoration on public and private lands.
- 6.5 Promote use of natural systems and practices for stormwater management, with emphasis on cleansing and filtering urban runoff.
- 6.6 Promote recycling in all parks and public spaces, especially during festivals and special events.

Community Partnerships, Volunteers, and Public Engagement

Goal 7: To strengthen and maintain community partnerships and volunteerism, and actively involve the community in implementing the master plan.

Policies:

- 7.1 Maintain a strong and active volunteer program with opportunities for citizens to become actively involved in programs such as habitat restoration and other projects, and to develop a sense of community pride.
- 7.2 Provide leadership and active involvement of the community in implementing and continual refinement of the green network design, strategies, code provisions, and practices.
- 7.3 Promote and facilitate outdoor classrooms; work closely with schools.
- 7.4 Formalize partnerships through inter-governmental agreements to meet mutual goals and objectives of all parties.
- 7.5 Explore self-policing options when addressing behavioral issues, for example hiring skaters to help enforce safety and park rules at a skatepark.

Quality Services

Goal 8: To achieve the highest possible level of excellence in the planning, design, and management of parks, natural areas, and open spaces, and to facilitate recreation programs and services that enrich the community.

Policies:

- 8.1 The City should take a leadership role in the provision of recreational activities and programs, working cooperatively with others to ensure needs of all sectors of the community are met and gaps in services are minimized.
- 8.2 Direct resources toward unmet recreation needs of particular age groups and target populations; for example responding to the need for a skatepark.
- 8.3 Maintain a viable park, recreation, and greenspace system through a business approach including creative and alternative financing, resourcing, and partnering.
- 8.4 In managing public natural areas and open spaces, target resources on degraded habitats and natural ecosystems with proactive adaptive management.
- 8.5 Make maintenance management a high priority to assure parks, open space, and recreation facilities are clean, safe, functional, and have ecological integrity.
- 8.6 Maintain superior and creative design in all parks, open space, and natural areas with emphasis on use of natural materials and sustainable, “green maintenance” practices.
- 8.7 Support and work collaboratively with other providers to facilitate high quality community recreation programs, and provide sufficient public information on programs and services.
- 8.8 Assure adequate staffing and organizational structure to provide professional direction for the parks and recreation program, and to effectively implement the master plan.

Overview of Silverton Parks and Recreation Management

The City of Silverton’s Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining 247 acres of parkland, a community swimming pool, and a community center. Approximately

26 acres of the inventory consists of developed parks and greenspace including a community park, public greenway and path along Silver Creek, and two neighborhood pocket parks. One Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff person is assigned to park maintenance, with seasonal support. As Silverton continues to grow, existing parks are used more, added demands are placed on the City to provide operational support for community needs such as special events and festivals, and new parks are being acquired and developed. As a result, there is a strain on staff capacity and resources not only to maintain existing parks at a high level, but also to absorb maintenance and operations of additional parks and facilities such as the new senior center that will soon be constructed.

Through dedication and commitment of existing staff, recreation facilities and parks are maintained in good condition, and a rising concern is how to bring additional parks and facilities on line without additional staff and increased support.

At the same time, the Silver Falls School District is experiencing similar stress on its staff and resources, assuming responsibility for maintenance and operations of sports fields and facilities as the de facto provider of a major part of Silverton's community recreation program. Many of the existing outdoor sports fields are in poor condition and need major renovation.

A wide variety of recreation programs, services, and events are provided through the collective efforts of non-profit agencies, community groups and clubs, businesses, volunteers and vendors, and the Silver Falls YMCA. Findings from the master plan process suggest Silverton is reaching a tipping point in the size, scope, and current management and organization of recreation service delivery. Multiple indicators of programmatic stress are evident including gaps in recreation programs for youth, seniors, and Hispanic families.

No City Council-appointed advisory board exists to help oversee the parks and recreation programs and to recommend or weigh in on policy decisions. Oversight and management of a growing volunteer program is an added responsibility of an already thin City staff.

Community Profile

Service Area and Population

Silverton's service area includes a large region of approximately 18,000 residents, including several rural communities. Both the school district and library district serve this area as well as Silverton's parks, facilities, recreation programs, and special events.

Estimated population of Silverton in 2007 was 9,205, with rapid growth in the last several years and a 63% increase since 1990. The City's Wastewater Master Plan estimates a future population of 14,400 by 2030.

Urban Landscape Features

Located in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, Silverton has a distinctive landscape character with forested ridgelines along Silver Creek that winds through the heart of the city, and prominent hillsides in the southeast part of the community. Silver Creek is designated as a protected stream for salmon and trout rearing, as well as migration.

The regional landscape has pastoral qualities that also define the area. These natural qualities and historic homes and buildings create a special ambience that is highly valued by Silverton residents.

Historical and Cultural Resources

The historic core of downtown Silverton is a nationally registered Historic District, with storefront character from the 1890s to the 1940s. Presence of a well organized and developed artist community is reflected in art galleries and craft shops, as well as an art mural project including wall paintings depicting local stories, landmarks, and American values. A large number of festivals and community events celebrate Silverton's heritage and sense of community.

Community Priority for Health and Well-being

Community wellness has historically been a high priority in Silverton, as evidenced by 100 years of service provided by Silverton Hospital, rated as one of the top 100 small hospitals in the country. Silverton Together, Silver Falls YMCA, Silver Falls School District, the Silverton Art Association, Silverton Area Seniors, and others provide a variety of recreation programs and services for youth, families, and senior adults.

Land Use Planning

Over the last several years, the City of Silverton has been undergoing a robust and comprehensive land use planning effort, engaging policy makers, community leaders, citizens, and business groups. Key parts of the Silverton Comprehensive Plan have been updated, the Downtown Master Plan provides a new vision and guide to revitalize the historic heart of the city, the Transportation System Plan has been updated, and a long range Wastewater System Plan has been developed. Combined with this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Silverton will be solidly positioned to respond to future growth and development in the most effective, efficient, and sustainable manner.

Regional Recreation and Tourism

The Oregon Garden and Silver Falls State Park are nearby regional attractions that are a significant part of Silverton's community context and economy. Under a lease agreement with the City of Silverton, The Oregon Garden is a showcase botanical garden with meeting and educational facilities, and a resort hotel is under construction at the site. Silver Falls State Park is the largest state park in the state and receives an annual attendance of over one million visitors.

Planning Process

Methodology

City staff and a 16-member master plan advisory committee provided guidance for the master plan project. The consultant team performed major planning tasks and prepared discussion papers for review and comment at key milestones. These tasks included:

- **Greenspace System Analysis** – analysis of the existing park and open space system in terms of distribution, connectivity, resource protection, and accessibility to the public
- **Physical Conditions Assessment** – assessment of physical conditions of existing parks, recreation and sports facilities to determine maintenance, safety, functional capabilities
- **Needs Assessment** – identifying strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats to parks, open space, recreation facilities, recreation programs and services
- **Community Involvement** -- engaging residents in a number of different ways to identify aspirations, sensibilities, and perceived recreation needs
- **Management and Organization Analysis** – assessment of the existing organizational structure, staffing level, and resource support for managing and operating the parks and recreation program
- **Policy Framework** – identifying strategic issues and core values of the community, preparing a vision statement and goals and policies
- **Master Plan Recommendations** – a vision diagram of future parks and open spaces, a classification scheme for organizing a green infrastructure system, a master plan report, list of capital improvement projects, and an action plan including strategies and actions

Community Outreach

A “triangulation of methods” approach was used to offer a variety of opportunities for community participation in the planning process. Common themes emerged from each of these approaches, including the following outreach efforts.

- **Master Plan Advisory Committee** – appointed by the Mayor to assist City staff and the consultant, with review and comment on all deliverables including the master plan report
- **Stakeholder Interviews** – 23 interviews conducted with stakeholders identified by staff
- **Roundtable Meetings** -- two roundtable meetings conducted with recreation providers including the sports community and school district representatives, Silver Falls YMCA, Silverton Together, Silverton Art Association, and Silverton Area Seniors
- **Community Vision Workshop** – 25 citizens identified community planning issues, generated a list of core values and beliefs, and developed a common vision and goals
- **High School Focus Group Meetings** – 27 high school students created a list of core values, common goals, and priorities
- **Representative Mail Survey** – a mailed survey to a randomly selected group of residents who are representative of the demographic profile of Silverton

Key Findings and Issues

Supported by a number of findings, an overarching issue and eight strategic issues were gleaned from the extensive community outreach and needs assessment process. These issues form the framework for the vision, goals and policies, and recommendations of the master plan.

OVERARCHING ISSUE: Silverton is a special community and residents want to maintain its charm, human scale, natural beauty, and livability.

Highly valued are Silver Creek, historic Coolidge & McClaine Park, ridgeline greenspace, historic downtown, schools, and sports facilities. Art murals and galleries, celebrations and festivals, and community health and well-being rank high in importance. The Oregon Garden is a major asset and tourist attraction.

Issue 1. Rapid growth is beginning to shape the character of Silverton and threaten its special qualities.

Residents want public greenspace effectively incorporated into new developments, but current trends are toward either private common areas that are not accessible to the general public, or very small public park sites that do not fulfill neighborhood park needs. As a result there is a major deficiency of neighborhood and community parkland. Little guidance exists for integrating land development and conservation goals into community policy and decision-making.

Issue 2. Silverton lacks a system of parks and greenspaces, although major elements are in place.

The Silver Creek greenway near downtown lays the groundwork for a system concept – historic Coolidge & McClaine Park, swimming pool, library, City Hall, historic flourmill site, and Town Square Park – all connected with a multi-use, off-street trail. The Pettit property adjacent to The Oregon Garden has potential as a demonstration urban natural area; Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park could become a regional waterfront park. Large school sites are strategically located in areas unserved by neighborhood parks, and have potential for joint school-park use.

Issue 3. Weakest element of Silverton’s greenspace system is the lack of connectivity.

Linkages between parks, schools, and open spaces are almost non-existent except for the Silver Creek greenway near downtown. As the Silverton Transportation Plan finds, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is lacking with major barriers such as rail lines, Silver Creek, major thoroughfares, and ridgelines. A pedestrian and bicycle friendly, “walkable” community is a high priority of residents.

Issue 4. For its size, Silverton has extraordinary opportunities to meet recreational and greenspace needs.

Silverton’s natural landscape is rich and varied including the Silver Creek corridor extending through the heart of the community, scenic hillsides, wetlands, and woodlands, providing opportunities for walking and fitness, nature enjoyment, river recreation, scenic enjoyment, and environmental education for youth – all considered to be high priorities in terms of recreation

trends and needs. These are all ingredients for creating a “quality place” that can help the community achieve economic prosperity, sense of community, and well-being.

Issue 5. Overall, Silverton parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces are well maintained and in good condition.

Dedicated staff takes pride in maintaining parks, facilities, and open spaces in good condition, and with the exception of the community center, they are functional and accessible. Most shortcomings are due to shortage of staff, lack of professional design and planning, and absence of maintenance management plans and guidelines. Coolidge & McClaine Park is used beyond its carrying capacity. At the swimming pool and Silverton Reservoir, runoff from parking lots is not filtered, and there are major infestations of noxious vegetation in some areas of parks and open spaces.

Issue 6. Silverton’s recreation facilities are costly to maintain, and are not designed to meet today’s recreational needs.

The Community Swimming Pool is almost 70 years old, and even though recently renovated and upgraded, it does not reflect the trend toward leisure pools that are designed for family water play. The Community Center is an old armory constructed in 1925, and offers very little opportunity to provide community recreation programs and activities. These facilities are maintained at a high cost per participant.

Issue 7. Silverton’s dedicated City staff, volunteers, non-profit groups, and businesses reflect a remarkable “can-do” spirit.

The School District, Silver Falls YMCA, Silverton Together, and large number of volunteers, vendors, and businesses provide a variety of community recreation programs and services including recreational sports activities, art classes, and aquatics programs. Community celebrations, events, and festivals bring families and the community together and draw large numbers of visitors from the region. Volunteers have been involved in major efforts to remove non-native vegetation from trees in Coolidge & McClaine Park, and restore riparian habitat along Silver Creek.

Issue 8. Indicators of programmatic and organizational stress are surfacing in the community.

Silverton is reaching a tipping point in terms of matching the community’s expectations for quality parks and recreation services with the capacity and capability of providers. Unrealistic demands are placed on City staff, and there is a general lack of oversight and leadership to coordinate, direct, and effectively administer the large number of recreation and sports programs that are offered in the community. Indicators of programmatic stress include tension among partners over mission and goals, perceptions of disproportionate commitment of resources, gaps in services (e.g. for youth recreation), crisis management, volunteer burnout, and lack of integrated decision-making and coordination.

Highlights of Recommendations

Summarized here are master plan recommendations for implementing the vision statement, goals, and policies that emerged from the planning process. These recommendations respond to community park and recreation needs as identified through extensive public involvement, and an assessment of existing and future opportunities as well as physical conditions of sites and facilities.

Vision Diagram for Parks, Greenspaces, and Recreation Facilities

The *Vision Diagram* is a graphic image of the existing and recommended parks and open space system (see Map 3). The “Green Infrastructure” urban planning concept was the overarching framework for organizing the preferred system. This concept views parks, open spaces, natural areas, and linkages as key components of a “greenspace” system – with functions that are considered as essential as public streets and utilities.

Classification System and Definitions

The *Classification System* in Appendix A provides a comprehensive framework for planning, development, and management of a Green Infrastructure system, summarized here.

PARKS AND GREENSPACES

- Neighborhood Park
- Joint School-Park
- Community Park
- Natural Area Greenspace
- Silver Creek Greenway
- Private Common Area & Open Space
- Special Use Area

SPORTS FACILITIES

- School Sports Fields and Gyms
- Community Sports Complex

RECREATION and SPECIAL USE FACILITIES

- Senior Center
- Recreation Center
- Silverton Community Swimming Pool
- Skatepark
- Dog Park

TRAILS

- Multi-use Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails
- Nature Trails

The *Project List* in Appendix B includes recommended improvements to the existing greenspace system and proposals for a future system that provide direction for implementing the vision statement, goals, and policies of the plan. If the system is organized in this manner, Silverton’s park and recreation needs will be met in an efficient and effective manner, and incremental improvement and additions can be made systematically and in a feasible progression.

Improvements to Existing Parks and Greenspaces

Silverton's park and recreation opportunities can be substantially increased through these enhancements and improvements to existing parks and greenspaces (more detail is provided in the master plan report).

Coolidge & McClaine Park Renovation, Town Square Improvements, Silver Creek Greenway. Renovation and rehabilitation should continue as a high priority so that Coolidge & McClaine Park can become highly functioning as a downtown park, and its assets well protected and maintained. Enhancements should be made to Town Square so that it functions as a gateway including an information kiosk, historical information, and interpretive displays. The City-owned open space along Silver Creek should become a model demonstration greenway project, including riparian restoration and state of the art biofiltration methods with interpretive information describing how to protect water quality of Silver Creek. Creek access should also be provided for non-motorized recreation use including kayaks, canoes, and tubes.

Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park Development. A loop nature trail, expanded picnic facilities for families and large groups, a designated swimming area, and enhancements to restroom facilities and parking should be made so that the marine park will function as a regional waterfront park. A park host program should be created to assist in management and oversight of the park. Feasibility for kayaks and canoes to access the creek below the dam should be studied.

Pettit Natural Area Demonstration Urban Natural Area. This large, undeveloped natural area was recently acquired by the City and is located adjacent to The Oregon Garden. The site should become a demonstration urban natural area with trails and interpretive facilities that complement the gardens and serve as educational opportunities for area schools.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Greenway Opportunity Area. A sizable, intact riparian forest is located along Silver Creek at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant. Opportunity exists to provide creek access and open space as a major node and demonstration greenway along Silver Creek.

Pioneer Village Park Development and Lincoln Street Park Adopt-a-Park Program. Pioneer Village Park is a small, recently acquired park site that should have a high priority for development because of rapid build-out in the southeast part of Silverton. The Lincoln Street playground should be the first Adopt-a-Park program to help offset maintenance costs for this small site, and set a precedent for any future sites that do not meet standards for maintaining a suitable economy of scale.

Improvements to Existing Recreation Facilities, Sports Facilities

Silverton's recreation facilities (swimming pool, community center) are largely deficient due to their design and age, and therefore substantial investment in these facilities is not recommended, at least in the short term. Partnering with the School District to upgrade existing sports facilities is a more immediate need.

Community Outdoor Sports Facility Renovations. Existing sports fields at Robert Frost and Mark Twain schools are in need of renovation, and it is recommended that the City partner with the School District in upgrading and restoring these facilities to meet needs for outdoor sports activities. According to representatives of the sports community, approximately 70% of the community's sports facility needs would be satisfied with renovation of the existing fields and construction of the new community sports complex (see below).

Silverton Community Swimming Pool Feasibility Study. Although the pool was recently upgraded and renovated including a cover for year-around use, it still functions largely as a traditional pool and lacks opportunities for family water play. A feasibility study is recommended in the future to explore options for providing more water play opportunities, either at the existing pool or at a future location, and perhaps in collaboration with other community partners.

New Parks and Greenspaces

As concluded in the system analysis, Silverton has excellent opportunities for improving the public greenspace system, and correcting deficiencies in neighborhood and community parkland.

Silver Creek Greenway Feasibility Study. Flowing through the heart of Silverton, Silver Creek is recommended as a future greenway to support habitat protection and restoration, connect parks and greenspaces, and where feasible provide opportunities for pedestrians and bicycles. A feasibility study is recommended to evaluate viable options and directly involve landowners in any proposed recommendations.

Viewshed Protection Opportunity Area. On the southern edge of the undeveloped ridgeline east of S. Water Street, a Viewshed Protection Area is identified as a potential area to create conservation easements, viewpoints, and forest protection by working with property owners and others. A community Land Trust is recommended to facilitate negotiations and create opportunities for gifts, donations, and living trusts.

Proposed Community Park. A new 30 to 50-acre community park is recommended for acquisition and development east of Abiqua Heights to meet not only future needs, but also fulfill a shortfall of parkland for community-wide and neighborhood use and reduce current impacts to Coolidge & McClaine Park. Proposed location on the Vision Diagram is conceptual only and not site specific.

Proposed Neighborhood Park. A new neighborhood park is recommended in the Steelhammer Road area, a large area unserved by existing parks. A seven-acre tract of undeveloped school land is recommended for acquisition and development, assuming the land is not desired for a new school.

Proposed Joint School-Park. Through a cooperative agreement with the School District, a joint school-park is recommended at Mark Twain Middle School where a large oak grove exists and picnic facilities and a new playground are recommended. A small adjacent area on the northwest corner of the school is recommended for acquisition to buffer adjacent industrial use.

New Community Recreation Facilities

The City recently acquired 13 acres of undeveloped school land adjacent to Robert Frost School. This acquisition provides an excellent opportunity to develop a community recreation complex, including special use facilities. The site is very accessible to the community and within close proximity to downtown.

Silverton Senior Center and Future Recreation Center. The new senior center will soon be constructed adjacent to Robert Frost School. A new community recreation center is recommended as a future phase of the senior center in order to create a critical mass and full-service community recreation complex at one location. The center would include a multi-purpose gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms, a fitness-wellness center, concessions, and amenities.

New Skatepark. A skatepark is also recommended as a part of the community recreation complex adjacent to Robert Frost School, with active involvement of youth in the design.

Dog Park Acquisition and Development. A fenced dog park is recommended on the vacant western edge of the school site, with acquisition of one acre of land from the School District that would become an addition to the community recreation complex.

New Community Sports Complex – Phase 2

New community sports fields at the Pine Street High School campus represent an initial phase of a potential, full-service community sports complex that could accommodate league and tournament play. It is recommended that the City cost-share with the School District in constructing a future phase of the complex, meeting not only outdoor sports facility needs, but also attracting visitors to Silverton. Lighted fields and spectator facilities would be required to meet these needs.

Trail System Recommendations

While a comprehensive trail system was not part of the scope of the master plan, a framework was created for connecting parks and greenspaces, schools, and other major features of Silverton, with the following recommendations.

Multi-use Trail Corridors. The basic structure of a trail system incorporates recommendations in the Silverton Transportation Plan, including a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trail along Silver Creek and connecting with a multi-use trail along the existing rail line and an abandoned rail line west of Mark Twain School. Connections between Mark Twain School and the two high schools are also recommended, as proposed in the Transportation Plan. Footbridges across Silver Creek are also part of the Transportation Plan recommendations.

The master plan recommends connections between Coolidge & McClaine Park, The Oregon Garden, and the Petitt Property, and extending a multi-use trail from “C” Street to the Wastewater Treatment Plant along Silver Creek. Regional connections along major highways as recommended by the Transportation Plan are also included – including a connection to Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park. Future roadway connections east, west and northside would provide multi-modal connection opportunities.

The greenway feasibility recommended in the section above should include a trails feasibility study to evaluate viable options and directly involve landowners in any proposed recommendations.

Recreation Programs and Services

It is recommended that the City explore options for improving recreation programs and services, including more leadership responsibility assumed by the City of Silverton itself. In addition to possible organizational and administrative adjustments outlined in the next section (Management and Operations), these recommendations are included.

Respond to Community Recreation Needs and Trends. Recent research indicates trends in recreation needs for Oregonians include providing programs for an aging and more diverse population, connecting youth with nature, and addressing a crisis in Oregonians’ physical activity that is leading to health problems.

Similar trends were underscored for Silverton residents through the master plan process, identifying gaps in community recreation programs and services for youth, seniors and adults, and Hispanic families. Given these gaps and recreation trends, these are examples of programmatic areas where community partners should consider working together to place more community emphasis and priorities.

- Increase health and fitness opportunities, improve community walkability
- Connect youth, families, and seniors with nature and expand outdoor recreation opportunities, such as access to Silver Creek and the Pettit property
- Recognize and support diversity, work with local groups such as Hispanas Unidas
- Improve and expand community recreation facilities and sports fields

Conduct Systematic Recreation Needs Assessments. It is recommended that the City take the initiative to work with service providers and conduct periodic recreation needs assessments to identify gaps in services, identify satisfaction levels, and determine priorities. These efforts can then be coordinated with the Community Opinion Survey administered periodically by the City. (A process for conducting routine needs assessments is included at the end of the master plan). With the City's leadership, it is timely for recreation providers to evaluate existing programs and determine in what strategic ways community recreation programs can be adjusted to address these trends and needs.

Formalize Community Partnerships. In large part, collaboration among providers has been done on an informal and as-needed basis. Given increasing recreation demands and needs of the community, it will become increasingly important to develop formal agreements that provide improved coordination, planning, and management, fulfill organizational missions and goals, and offer more effective recreation services to the community. The City should assume leadership in implementing this recommendation.

Improve Information Distribution. Due to the number of recreation providers and wide variety of programs, many residents either have limited information or are confused with the recreation programs and services that are offered. By preparing and distributing a recreation program guide, residents could find in one information piece all of the activities and services.

Management and Operations

The master plan assessment highlighted the outstanding leadership role, dedication, and accomplishments of City staff in shaping the current structure and framework for meeting Silverton's park and recreation needs. Indeed, given its size, it is remarkable that Silverton has such an excellent foundation for creating a high quality park and recreation system. At the same time, increasing community demands are exceeding the current level of staff support, existing organizational structure, and available resources.

The following recommendations are highlighted as essential for Silverton to transition from its current management and leadership approach to one that can begin to implement the master plan. The full set of recommendations is outlined in the Strategies and Actions section of the master plan, and additional recommendations are included at the end of the master plan document.

Create a New Organization Structure. It is recommended that the City create a new organizational structure to begin immediately implementing the master plan. Initially, this could take the form of a new coordinator within the Public Works Department to oversee maintenance and operations and provide direction to the program.

However, this does not resolve the dilemma of a fragmented community recreation program, and the organizational capability and capacity to implement the numerous strategies and actions recommended in this plan. For this reason, it is recommended that the City explore alternatives for preferred long-term administration of the program, including:

- New division within the Public Works Department
- New City Parks and Recreation Department
- Parks and Recreation District (using boundaries of the library or school district)

Appoint a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. Appointment of a formal parks and recreation committee is recommended to advise the City Council on matters of policy and to help guide and support the program.

Develop a New Partnership Agreement with the School District. Clearly, both the City and the School District recognize the community benefits in developing a more collaborative relationship. A new agreement is needed to establish an equitable way for the community to use school facilities for after-school sports programs, and in some cases for satisfying unmet neighborhood park and open space needs.

Develop Maintenance Management Plans. Formal maintenance management plans are recommended to provide a systematic course of action to avoid deferred maintenance and maintain facilities and parks in good condition. Site-specific management plans should be prepared for natural areas, since they have requirements that go well beyond grounds and facility maintenance. Often, local professionals and specialists will volunteer to draft these plans with an understanding of the science and management requirements that can “nudge” natural habitats with strategic restoration goals and strategies, as well as recommend public uses most suited to fragile landscapes.

Assess Health of Tree Canopy in Coolidge & McClaine Park. The master plan considers Coolidge & McClaine Park as a historic and vibrant downtown park that should continue to accommodate community events and celebrations. However, given the significant tree canopy in the park, an arborist should be retained to assess health and conditions of the Douglas-fir trees and make recommendations on the desired carrying capacity of the park.

Develop a Formal Volunteer Program. Current volunteer efforts do not reach full potential because of staff shortfall to oversee and manage. It is recommended that a Green Volunteer Program be created and a recognition component developed. A work plan should be prepared with a list of potential projects for local civic groups, clubs, and others. Trail construction and maintenance, and invasive vegetation removal are two of the most popular volunteer programs.

Prepare a Gift Catalogue. Gift catalogs have been most valuable for obtaining gifts and donations. The value of the catalog is to not only develop priorities that match departmental goals and strategies, but through pictures and text a potential donor can be inspired to make a commitment.

Help Facilitate Creation of a Local Land Trust. Non-governmental organizations such as a Community Land Trust have proven most effective in helping protect viewsheds with public access opportunities in undeveloped ridgeline and hilltop areas, and using methods such as conservation easements, fee simple acquisition, gifts and donations, and living trusts.

Establish an Adopt-a-Park Program. An adopt-a-park program is recommended for Lincoln Street Park because of its size and high cost to maintain. This should also become the proto-type should any of the several private common areas become abandoned and the City is requested to maintain them by default.

Strategies and Actions

To facilitate implementation of the master plan, strategies and actions are recommended for each of the eight goals outlined in the master plan. The list is not prescriptive, but represents a conceptual framework for a work program that can be adjusted to availability of funds and opportunities, and annual City goals and priorities.

In this context, these strategies and actions should be viewed as an organized array of potential recommendations, continuously evaluated and refined based on feasibility and resource capabilities. In particular, these recommendations are intended to provide an action plan to help keep pace with rapid growth and development that is occurring in Silverton.

GOAL 1: Develop a Green Infrastructure Network

- 1.1 Adopt the recommended Park and Greenspace System Classification and use as guidelines for planning, managing, and maintaining parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities.
- 1.2 Establish a community education program to help implement the Greenspace Vision Diagram including brochures, maps, posting on the City's web site, and celebrate milestones.
- 1.3 Create and work with a Community Land Trust to protect viewsheds with public access opportunities in undeveloped ridgeline and hilltop areas, exploring methods such as conservation easements, fee simple acquisition, gifts and donations, and living trusts.
- 1.4 Conduct a feasibility study for implementing the Silver Creek Greenway and Multi-use Trail, including greenway management and habitat protection goals.
- 1.5 Manage existing City greenway properties as a demonstration area to help implement the Silver Creek Greenway concept.
- 1.6 Work with the Pudding River Watershed Council to help protect and restore riparian habitat along Silver Creek.
- 1.7 Work with landowners and provide information/education on habitat protection and restoration along the Silver Creek Greenway.
- 1.8 Develop the Pettit property as a demonstration urban natural area, and develop a trail system and interpretive program.
- 1.9 Work with local scientists and professionals to help refine and implement the Greenspace Vision Diagram, by continued assessment of the condition and health of Silverton's urban ecosystems, including vulnerability analysis.

GOAL 2: Guide Land Use and Manage Growth

- 2.1 Amend the Silverton Comprehensive Plan, incorporating the Green Infrastructure concept and policies into Chapter 4: Open Space, Natural and Cultural Resources.

- 2.2 Continue to implement riparian setback and steep slope requirements and evaluate their effectiveness.
- 2.3 Work with the development community to foster and promote green infrastructure design in new subdivisions; use an incentive-based approach to the greatest degree possible and avoid dedication of neighborhood parkland and open space that does not meet standards and guidelines of the master plan.
- 2.4 Establish a recognition and awards program to acknowledge local development projects that achieve design excellence and promote Green Infrastructure concepts.

GOAL 3: Create a Linked Greenspace Network

- 3.1 Conduct a feasibility study for implementing multi-use trails along rail lines, in addition to the Silver Creek feasibility study (Strategy #1.4).
- 3.2 Actively involve property owners in all feasibility studies for implementing Green Infrastructure concepts and multi-use trail plans.
- 3.3 Establish a Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee representing key public and private sector representatives to coordinate and implement the proposed linked network of Green Infrastructure, commercial and employment areas, downtown and other special areas.
- 3.4 Connect The Oregon Gardens, Pettit property, Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park, and other significant landscape features and recreation amenities in the Green Infrastructure Network.
- 3.5 Develop a Comprehensive Trails Plan including on-street and off-street trails and pathways, implementation strategies, and proposed funding options.

GOAL 4: Assure Recreation and Education Opportunities are Available

- 4.1 Develop intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with the City and non-profit agencies, the business community, schools, and other organizations to facilitate meeting recreational and outdoor sports needs of the community.
- 4.2 Evaluate the current organizational structure and explore options for improving the planning, administration, and management of community recreation programs, and include operations and management of the Community Swimming Pool.
- 4.3 Develop a periodic community recreation needs assessment to identify gaps in services, involve major partners, and coordinate with the Silverton Community Opinion Survey.
- 4.4 Review recreation research and trends (aging population, connecting youth with nature, increasing population diversity, Oregon's physical activity crisis) and work with providers to evaluate and improve existing recreation programs.
- 4.5 Prepare and distribute a quarterly recreation program guide that provides information on all community recreation activities and services, including programs offered at the swimming pool, and list schedules and locations.
- 4.6 Develop a funding strategy and construct a recreation center as second phase of the new senior center.
- 4.7 Conduct a feasibility study to add family water play and amenities to the existing swimming pool and/or alternative locations and design of a new leisure pool in partnership with others.
- 4.8 Acquire undeveloped 0.9 acres for a fenced dog park on the west side of the Robert Frost Elementary School site.
- 4.9 Develop a funding strategy and construct a skatepark, preferably on the 13.35 acres of undeveloped school land adjacent to Robert Frost Elementary School.
- 4.10 Cost share with the School District to construct a full-service community sports complex suitable for league and tournament play including lights, concessions, bleachers and amenities such as picnic and play areas.
- 4.11 Cost share with the School District to renovate, upgrade, and maintain outdoor sports facilities at Mark Twain Middle School and Robert Frost Elementary School.
- 4.12 Develop a relationship and mechanism with the Art Association to incorporate art in the design of new parks and in renovations of existing parks.

- 4.13 Work with Non-Government Organizations (NGO's), schools and volunteers to expand and coordinate outdoor education programs for youth and adults.
- 4.14 Develop loop trails that are conducive for short hikes and have multiple outdoor education opportunities.
- 4.15 Develop educational interpretive displays in key locations within the parks system.

GOAL 5: Maintain a Green Infrastructure Ethic to Sustain a Healthy Economy and Tourism

- 5.1 Collect and share national studies that illustrate monetary, personal health, and social values that are attributed to a progressive parks, recreation and healthy green infrastructure system.
- 5.2 Connect The Oregon Garden with the Silverton Trail System, and through proper signage and trailheads encourage and welcome visitors to the downtown core.
- 5.3 Make enhancements to Town Square to function as a downtown gateway including an information kiosk, historical information, and interpretive displays.
- 5.4 Working with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee, develop a work plan and strategies to improve the walkability of Silverton, promote local businesses, and make it more visitor friendly.
- 5.5 Develop public information on benefits of Silverton's Green Infrastructure program to promote the community as a sound place for businesses and families to locate.
- 5.6 Develop Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park as a regional waterfront park, and develop a loop trail system, improved parking, and interpretive program.

GOAL 6: Incorporate Sustainability Concepts in Decision-making

- 6.1 Create a Sustainability Advisory Committee to review the City of Silverton's services and how they can be improved to meet sustainability goals; e.g. to encourage an employee ethic that could be transferred to the community as a whole. Appoint a staff member as coordinator.
- 6.2 Develop a strategic plan to implement core sustainable actions for maintaining parks and public facilities, including a robust recycling program.
- 6.3 Create a staff training and education program for sustainable practices.
- 6.4 Develop alternative transportation initiatives for City staff.
- 6.5 Develop an organized volunteer program for invasive vegetation removal and appoint a City staff member as coordinator (Strategy 7.1).

GOAL 7: Strengthen and Maintain Community Partnerships, Volunteers, and Public Engagement

- 7.1 Create a Green Infrastructure Volunteer program and include a recognition component.
- 7.2 Facilitate forming non-governmental organizations such as a Land Trust that will partner with the City to implement the Green Infrastructure program.
- 7.3 Develop a Volunteer Work Plan with a list of projects for local civic groups, clubs, and others.
- 7.4 Develop a gift catalog for the community to help fund specific needs.
- 7.5 Focus work parties on trail construction and maintenance as well as invasive vegetation removal – projects that have proven to have high community support.
- 7.6 Develop a cooperative program between the City and School District to engage students in outdoor classroom projects that help connect youth with nature.
- 7.7. Establish a resident park host program at Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park to help enforce park regulations.
- 7.8 Integrate community gardens into existing parks and open space sites.

GOAL 8: Provide High Quality Services and Fill Gaps

- 8.1 Create a new organizational structure and staff responsibilities to immediately begin implementing the City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.
- 8.2 Explore alternatives for preferred park and recreation administration, including a City Parks and Recreation Department, a Park and Recreation District (with similar boundaries to the Library and/or School District), or expand responsibilities within the City's existing organizational structure.
- 8.3 Appoint a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Citizen Advisory Committee to help guide the program and advise the City Council.
- 8.4 Develop an agreement with the School District to establish a partnership for community use of school lands and outdoor sports facilities.
- 8.5 Designate Mark Twain Middle School as a Joint School-Park and acquire oak grove from the School District for neighborhood park use; also acquire adjacent private land (1.4-ac triangle).
- 8.6 Acquire and develop a 30-50 acre new community park east of Abiqua Heights.
- 8.7 Hire an arborist to conduct a study of trees in Coolidge & McClaine Park and recommend a management program that establishes limits of use for community events and celebrations.
- 8.8 Acquire 7-acre Steelhammer Rd undeveloped site from the School District, and develop as a neighborhood park.
- 8.9 Develop an adopt-a-park agreement with the Lincoln Street Park neighborhood to serve as the pilot for the City to disengage from primary responsibilities for small, inefficient parks. Should homeowners in other neighborhoods discontinue maintenance responsibility for private common open space and parks in the future, use the Lincoln Street Park model as the preferred alternative to the City accepting responsibility for these areas by default due to their high cost.
- 8.10 Develop maintenance management plans for all City parks and open spaces.
- 8.11 Develop management plans for natural areas with specific policies, goals, and management practices that give special attention to habitat protection and restoration, as well as recreation uses suitable to the site and its vulnerabilities.

Introduction

In October 2007, the City of Silverton began a planning process to update the 2002 Silverton Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Working as a project team, city staff provided guidance to the planning program and collaborated with the consulting group from David Reed & Associates.

A sixteen-member Master Plan Advisory Committee worked with the staff and consulting team to craft a vision statement, goals and policies for the plan. The Committee also reviewed and commented on all benchmark reports and was instrumental in shaping the plan’s recommendations.

A. Purpose and Objectives of this Plan

The purpose of this plan is to provide a new vision and framework for Silverton to value and invest in its quality of place. Parks, greenspaces, and recreation are viewed as essential for maintaining a sense of community, health and well-being, and prosperity.

The plan is intended to be a comprehensive document with a timeframe of twenty years. Specific objectives include the following:

- To position Silverton to build on its historic, cultural, and landscape heritage, as well as its special charm and friendliness
- To establish clear policy direction and priorities for decision-making, including upgrade and maintenance of existing recreation facilities, closing gaps in services, and meeting park and open space needs in growth areas
- To create and maintain a “green infrastructure” system of connected parks and greenspaces that capitalize on “opportunity areas” – moving away from automobile-based planning to community-oriented public spaces
- To protect, restore and enhance Silverton’s significant natural resources, habitats, and open spaces
- To connect adults, families, and children with nature and fulfill needs for recreation and play, and outdoor education
- To establish a framework for implementing the plan including management strategies and funding options

If these objectives are accomplished, Silverton will not only excel in becoming an exceptionally livable community, it will continue to position itself as an integral part of a growing, vibrant recreation-tourism region.

B. Brief History of Silverton's Parks and Recreation Programs

In 1909, prominent bankers Ai Coolidge and Jake McClaine donated the large, densely wooded 8.5-acre tract of land along the banks and hillside of Silver Creek near the center of town to be used as a public park. Coolidge & McClaine Park quickly became a popular gathering place for weekend picnickers and overnight tourist auto campers. The proximity to the creek made the park a prime spot for fishing and swimming as well. Almost immediately the handsome stone entryway was erected, which still exists today.

In 1939, Silverton voters passed a bond measure for sewer improvements and the construction of a “modern” swimming pool. The City provided \$18,000 and a federal Works Project Administration project provided the labor. The pool was said to be constructed “for young people” and was opened to the public in 1940.

In 1942, the Fischer Flour Mill was demolished and the City purchased the land. Work began on the East Bank Park (Silver Creek) in 1981 when the old Fischer Mill foundation was back-filled and laid with brick. In 1983, picnic benches were installed and paved walkways added. Once covered with blackberry vines, materials were donated by Silverton Rotary and local lumber companies, and the local Boy Scouts and high school students volunteered labor.

In 1960, Silverton Reservoir was created on Silver Creek above the town for the purpose of flood control and water supply. Development of a marine park on the 60-acre lake has been supported through grants from the State Marine Board, and the Silverton Lions Club constructed the fully accessible fishing pier as a community project.

The Silverton Civic Center Park Committee, formed in 1993, coordinated efforts to build Town Square Park on Silver Creek using donations, volunteer labor, and non-tax funds. The Silverton Zenith Women's Club spearheaded the fundraising and volunteer activities. Originally the site of the largest blow pipe company in Oregon, it was purchased by the City in 1992. The City funded a new parking lot and historically compatible restroom in 1998.

In 1994, the City of Silverton signed a 99-year lease with the State of Oregon for use of the National Guard Armory as a community center.

In 1995, Silverton was selected by the Oregon Association of Nurserymen as the site of The Oregon Garden, a showcase botanical garden and tourist attraction. Subsequently, the City purchased the 140-acre site and formed a partnership with The Oregon Garden Foundation to construct the gardens and facilities. The City created a series of ponds for treated wastewater, thus avoiding offloading effluent into Silver Creek during the summer. The Oregon Garden Foundation leases the property from the City, and Moonstone Management operates the garden and facilities on behalf of the foundation through a long-term management agreement with the City. The agreement is part of the recent sale of 11 acres to Moonstone for the purpose of constructing a resort hotel within The Oregon Garden complex.

In 2000, Michael Overfield donated and installed a covered footbridge to connect S. Water Street with Town Square Park.

In 2002, the City acquired an 80-acre site adjacent to The Oregon Garden. Known as the Pettit property, it includes a small lake and natural habitat.

According to noted photographer and Silverton historian June Drake, Silverton's residents have always been athletically inclined. In the early 1890s Silverton sponsored several baseball teams. The ballpark was on West Hill near where the water tower is located, but often there would be pick-up games on Main and Water Streets. The Silverton Red Sox, a semi-professional baseball team, was formed in 1936 and was sponsored by the Silver Falls Timber Company, whose employees made up the team. Red Sox games were a main source of entertainment for Silverton residents.

The Silverton Area Seniors program grew out of the Meals on Wheels program established in 1955, and Silverton was the first Oregon city to have a Meals on Wheels program. Ruth Cock worked with the Silverton Meals on Wheels founder Harry Vetter, who wrote the bill that became law. In 2007, the City received an \$800,000 federal grant to construct a senior center, and a site for the building was acquired adjacent to Robert Frost School through a purchase from the school district.

In 1997, the City of Silverton recruited the Silver Falls YMCA to begin offering various youth recreation programs for the community. The City contributed \$15,000 and Silverton Together provided \$20,000 for the "Y" to start the year. The YMCA also assumed responsibility for managing and operating the Silverton Community Swimming Pool.

Silverton is also known for its numerous festivals and special events, including the Fine Arts Festival and Homer Davenport Days.

C. Parks and Recreation Management Overview

The City of Silverton Public Works Department is responsible for the management, development, and operations and maintenance of 247 acres of parks and open space, and three recreation facilities including:

- Silverton Community Center (contracted services)
- Silverton Community Swimming Pool (contracted services)
- Silverton Senior Center (under construction in 2008)
- Coolidge & McClaine Park and downtown greenway sites along Silver Creek
- Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park
- Pettit Property (natural area)
- Lincoln Street Pocket Park
- Pioneer Village Pocket Park (recently acquired)
- Park acquisition, planning, and development
- Park maintenance and operations
- Trail planning, development, and maintenance

Park Acquisition, Planning, and Development

The City of Silverton Community Development Department assists Public Works staff in planning, park acquisition, and development responsibilities. These include citywide planning and improvements, additions, and expansion of existing parks and trails, and preparation of grant applications. Examples of recently completed accomplishments or currently active projects include:

- Master planning, renovation, and improvements to Coolidge & McClaine Park, including Phase 1 new playground equipment and a grant application for Phase 2 continued renovation (\$305,000 plus \$204,000 local match)
- Planning and design of the new senior center (\$800,000 grant plus \$200,000 local match)
- Improvements to the Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park
- Renovation, pool cover, and improvements at the Silverton Community Swimming Pool (\$1,700,000 G.O. bond)
- Gymnasium floor renovation at the Silverton Community Center
- Dedications and easements for trail connections and pathways
- Acquisition of Pioneer Village Pocket Park
- New Silverton Downtown Master Plan
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (this document)

Residents recently approved a school bond program that includes funds to construct the first phase of a community sports complex at the new Silverton High School.

Parks and Recreation Facility Management and Operations

The Public Works Department maintains parks and recreation facilities including building repair and maintenance, and park maintenance including restroom cleaning, litter pickup, mowing, playground inspections, painting, and carpentry. Under contract with the City, the YMCA manages the swimming pool with oversight provided by the City Manager. The Public Works Department is responsible for the pool's water quality management. Currently there is one Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) assigned to park maintenance, with seasonal support.

Sports Facilities and Recreation Programs, Classes, and Services

The Silver Falls School District is the major provider of youth sports programs and provides for community use of school playgrounds, sports fields, and gyms. The City currently has a limited intergovernmental agreement with the School District for public use of school grounds to provide areas for after-school organized sports activities.

Major providers of community recreation programs and classes are the Silver Falls YMCA and the Silverton Art Association, assisted by Silverton Together (a non-profit community organization). The City supports both the YMCA and Silverton Together with offices in the Community Center, and the YMCA is responsible for scheduling building and park reservations.

In the past, volunteers have managed the Silverton Area Seniors program (under contract with the City and the Masonic Lodge), which will transition to a new senior center currently in the planning and design stages.

Community festivals and celebrations are a hallmark of Silverton, and volunteer organizations and non-profit groups work with Silverton Together and the City to sponsor and facilitate these annual events.

D. Related Planning Efforts and Integration

Over the last several years, the City of Silverton has been undergoing a robust and comprehensive planning effort. Policy makers, community leaders, citizens, and business groups have been engaged in preparing these adopted plans:

- Silverton Downtown Master Plan (2007)
- Silverton Transportation System Plan (2007)
- Silverton Wastewater System Facility Master Plan (2007)
- Silverton Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2002)
- Silverton Comprehensive Plan (initially adopted in 1979 and last updated in 2002)

In 2007, a master plan was also prepared for Coolidge & McClaine Park. These plans have provided key information that has been integrated into this planning process. Combined with the Park and Recreation Master Plan, the City of Silverton will be solidly positioned to respond to future growth and development in the most effective, efficient, and sustainable manner.

E. Planning Approach

For this master planning process, a collaborative approach was used to achieve a blend of the consultant's expertise with professional capabilities and experience of City staff, combined with local knowledge and institutional history of the Master Plan Advisory Committee and community members. Key components of the planning process included:

Greenspace System Analysis

- Analysis of Silverton's parks and open space system, applying concepts of "Green Infrastructure" by examining physical and ecological qualities of the urban landscape
- Findings generated for greenspace distribution, connectivity, protection, and accessibility
- "Opportunities and Deficiencies Map" with graphic analysis

Physical Conditions Assessment

- Inventory and conditions assessment of parks, recreation facilities, and off-site considerations, with numerical scoring using evaluation criteria
- Interviews with school district staff and coaches for inventory and analysis of community sports facilities

Needs Assessment

- Community Profile Report – demographics, population projections, relevant plans
- Roundtable meetings with recreation providers and school district representatives to identify community recreation and sports needs
- Recreation Programs and Services analysis – strengths and weaknesses
- Research of recreation trends and statistics related to community health and well-being

Community Involvement

- Interviews with community stakeholders
- Community Vision Workshop
- Survey of statistically representative sample of Silverton residents (mail)
- Roundtable meetings with recreation providers and school district representatives
- Focus group meetings with Silverton High School students
- Six meetings with Master Plan Advisory Committee for community engagement

Management and Organization Analysis

- Current staffing and management organization
- Current finance and funding methods to support system sustainability
- Current Parks System Development Charges analysis and issues identification
- Analysis of alternatives for park and recreation management and service delivery

Policy Framework

- Identification of major findings and strategic issues
- Vision statement, reflecting the core values of Silverton residents
- Goals and policies to fulfill the vision and provide direction for the master plan

Master Plan Recommendations

- Vision diagram to achieve an interconnected network of parks and greenspaces
- Classification system and definitions to organize the Green Infrastructure system
- Master Plan report and recommendations, including a list of capital improvement projects
- Action Plan for implementing the plan including management and organization strategies, capital improvements and costs, funding sources, and timeframe
- Parks SDC Methodology Report and recommendations (separate document)

Vision, Goals and Policies

The community vision workshop, other public outreach efforts, and findings and strategic issues from the planning analysis provided the basis for creating a vision statement, goals, and policies for the master plan. In this way, a framework emerged to provide direction for preparing master plan recommendations and an action plan including implementation strategies.

A. Core Values

These core values are important to Silverton residents:

Silverton's Core Values

Rich history and tradition, historic charm

Celebrating history and the arts, historic buildings

Sense of community, friendliness and safety

Strong town character; surrounding rural landscape

Walkability, human scale, connectivity

Protecting natural beauty

Silver Creek, ridgelines, forested hills,
Scenic views, trees and tree canopy

Large greenspace areas

Coolidge & McClaine Park, Pettit Property,
Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park
The Oregon Garden

Downtown greenspace along Silver Creek

Compact community and downtown

Raising children in a safe, livable community

Community health and well-being

Land use integrated with parks and open space

Volunteers are a community resource

B. Vision Statement

The *Silverton Vision Statement* reflects shared core values and aspirations of the community. Describing a preferred future excites the imagination and provides direction for not only for parks and recreation planning, but also can help guide other community planning policies and decisions.

Silverton Vision Statement

Silverton is Oregon's Garden City and one of the gateways to Silver Falls State Park. A vibrant and compact community surrounded by pastoral landscape, Silverton is a special town that has maintained its charm, friendliness, and natural beauty.

Hillsides, wetlands, and natural habitats are protected by a system of connected greenspaces that guide urban growth and foster livability. Silverton's tree canopy reinforces the community's values and character while purifying the air and providing wildlife habitat. The heart of Silverton is its vibrant and inviting downtown. With Silver Creek as its centerpiece, the rich history, superior design and traditional architecture create a downtown where people live, work, shop, and play.

Silverton is a walkable and bicycle-friendly place that enhances a sense of neighborliness and community, reduces reliance on the automobile, and eases traffic congestion and air pollution. Parks, scenic vistas, natural habitats, farms and forestlands define the City's boundaries.

Silverton places a high priority on community health and well-being by ensuring access to nature and recreation for all ages, and celebrating the arts and its artists. As a livable and welcoming community, Silverton is a major destination area and vital part of a thriving tourism region.

C. Goals and Policies

Goal Statements describe preferred outcomes that would be achieved by implementing the Vision Statement. *Policy statements* are guiding principles that respond to the goals, and once adopted by elected officials provide policy direction for implementing the vision and goals.

Green Infrastructure

Goal 1: To develop a Green Infrastructure Network that protects and preserves Silverton’s character and natural assets, and meets community and neighborhood needs for parks, open space, and recreation opportunities.

Policies:

- 1.1 Incorporate a Green Infrastructure concept into the Silverton Comprehensive Plan and other planning efforts, including elements of greenspace such as public parks, natural areas, private and public open space, greenways, wetlands, upland, and other habitats.
- 1.2 Assure neighborhood parks serve all major neighborhoods, and larger community parks are strategically located to provide a balance of parks, open space, and recreation facilities including sports fields.
- 1.3 Private parks and common open space shall not be considered as substitutes for neighborhood park and open space requirements.
- 1.4 In areas underserved by parkland, work with the Silver Falls School District so that school sites have dual functions for open space and recreation.
- 1.5 Silver Creek corridor will be managed as a greenway link and for wildlife habitat.
- 1.6 Protect and restore riparian habitats of Silver Creek and its tributaries and other drainages.
- 1.7 Explore creative ways to protect significant landscapes and valuable ecosystems without changing property ownership structure.
- 1.8 Foster community identity and pride by promoting the Greenspace Vision Diagram.

Land Use and Growth Management

Goal 2: To shape and guide future land use patterns and new development to maintain a sustainable community.

Policies:

- 2.1 Silverton’s heritage and character will shape the course of change and development rather than new development shaping the character of the community.
- 2.2 New subdivisions will be required to meet neighborhood park and open space needs through the development review process and Parks System Development Charges, and other development code requirements as defined in the master plan.
- 2.3 Assure subdivision policies protect and connect resource areas such as steep slopes and natural drainages, provide adequate and suitable parks and open space, and require sound stormwater management practices that make use of natural processes and systems.
- 2.4 Assure Park SDCs and other exactions are sufficient to meet park and greenspace needs created by new development.

Connectivity

Goal 3. To create a linked network of parks, natural areas, open space, commercial and employment areas, downtown, and other special areas, incorporating sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, and public multi-use pathways to connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, natural landscapes, and the downtown core.

Policies:

- 3.1 Provide connectivity for each area of Silverton to ensure pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle access to schools, parks, employment, and recreational areas (Policy #2a Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.2 Emphasize incentives and develop positive relationships with property owners in all efforts to develop greenspace connectivity; work to attain mutual goals and objectives.
- 3.3 When barriers to connectivity exist, use creative solutions that maintain linkages and values while respecting private property.
- 3.4 Silver Creek corridor will serve as a multi-use trail, as identified in the Downtown Master Plan and Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans (Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.5 Where feasible, utilize the rail line right-of-way for a multi-use trail system, as identified in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans (Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.6 Develop a pedestrian system of sidewalks and pathways to provide safe, attractive, efficient, and accessible routes that allow pedestrians to travel from residential areas to schools, parks, commercial areas and major employment centers (Policy #2d Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.7 Develop a bikeway system of bike lanes, shared roadways, and multi-use paths that allows bicyclists to travel from residential areas to schools, parks, commercial areas and major employment centers (Policy #2e Silverton Transportation Plan).
- 3.8 Support efforts to implement regional off-street regional trail connections between Silverton and surrounding communities (Policy #2f Silverton Transportation Plan).

Recreation and Education

Goal 4. To assure recreation and education opportunities are available to promote community well-being, health, and wellness.

Policies:

- 4.1 Continue to work with Silverton Hospital, Silverton Together, and others to maintain community health and well-being.
- 4.2 Continue to provide leadership and direction with community opinion surveys and conduct periodic community recreation needs assessments.
- 4.3 Provide enriching family experiences and support youth development, adults, seniors, and persons with disabilities through parks and recreation opportunities.
- 4.4 Provide adequate recreation facilities to support and accommodate recreation needs; work with schools to provide joint use of sports facilities.
- 4.5 Support community events, festivals, and celebrations.
- 4.6 Support the arts and preserve Silverton's cultural heritage; incorporate art in the design and development of parks and public greenspaces.
- 4.7 Foster education and enjoyment of "nature's classroom" by creating information and interpretive opportunities throughout parks and public places.
- 4.8 Increase awareness of the need for resource stewardship.
- 4.9 Encourage exercise and healthy lifestyles, provide space for outdoor activities, create places of solitude and respite, and connect people with nature.

Tourism and Economic Development

Goal 5. To sustain a healthy, prosperous, and diversified economy by maintaining a Green Infrastructure ethic.

Policies:

- 5.1 Attract and support businesses, vendors, and visitors.
- 5.2 Work with local businesses to invest in Silverton's parks, recreation, and greenspace program to help the community's economy thrive and prosper.
- 5.3 Support and complement The Oregon Garden through adjacent trails and trailheads with educational and interpretive information, and nature enjoyment opportunities such as birding.
- 5.4 Promote Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park as a regional water-based recreation attraction.

- 5.5 Assure downtown greenspace, Coolidge & McClaine Park, Silverton Community Swimming Pool, and civic functions such as the library and city hall are included in implementing the Silverton Downtown Plan, including creek revitalization and protection.
- 5.6 Promote downtown as a place for community celebrations, including development of adequate and viable space for community gatherings.
- 5.7 Protect scenic views and vistas and provide infrastructure to access and enjoy them.

Sustainability

Goal 6: To incorporate sustainability concepts when making decisions about park and open space land acquisition, park development, park usage, recreation programs, maintenance programs and practices, and other activities related to the provision of park facilities and delivery of recreation services.

Policies:

- 6.1 Provide leadership for the City of Silverton's employees and citizens to understand importance of sustainable concepts and practices in the work place, in public spaces, and in the home.
- 6.2 Maintain and strive to improve habitat conditions and ecosystem functions within city parklands and other city-owned open space and resource lands.
- 6.3 Encourage the community to integrate sustainable practices when using parks and other open space and resource lands.
- 6.4 Integrate environmental, economic, cultural, financial, historic preservation, and social equity considerations as components of parks and recreation planning, development, provision, and maintenance of facilities and services.
- 6.5 Educate and promote removal of invasive, non-native vegetation and habitat restoration on public and private lands.
- 6.6 Promote use of natural systems and practices for stormwater management, with emphasis on cleansing and filtering urban runoff.
- 6.7 Promote recycling in all parks and public spaces, especially during festivals and special events.

Community Partnerships, Volunteers, and Public Engagement

Goal 7: To strengthen and maintain community partnerships and volunteerism, and actively involve the community in implementing the master plan.

Policies:

- 7.1 Maintain a strong and active volunteer program with opportunities for citizens to become actively involved in programs such as habitat restoration and other projects, and to develop a sense of community pride.
- 7.2 Bring together people with different perspectives to promote local commitment to the Green Infrastructure Initiative.
- 7.3 Provide leadership and active involvement of the community in implementing and continual refinement of the green network design, strategies, code provisions, and practices.
- 7.4 Promote and facilitate outdoor classrooms; work closely with schools.
- 7.5 Foster sustainable community partnerships and an active core of volunteers by making citizen engagement a major priority in terms of public policy.
- 7.6 Formalize partnerships through inter-governmental agreements to meet mutual goals and objectives of all parties.
- 7.7 Explore self-policing options when addressing behavioral issues, for example hiring skaters to help enforce safety and park rules at a skatepark.

Quality Services

Goal 8: To achieve the highest possible level of excellence in the planning, design, and management of parks, natural areas, and open spaces, and to facilitate recreation programs and services that enrich the community.

Policies:

- 8.1 The City should take a leadership role in the provision of recreational activities and programs, working cooperatively with others to ensure needs of all sectors of the community are met and gaps in services are minimized.
- 8.2 Direct resources toward unmet recreation needs of particular age groups and target populations; for example responding to the need for a skatepark.
- 8.3 Maintain a viable park, recreation, and greenspace system through a business approach including creative and alternative financing, resourcing, and partnering.
- 8.4 In managing public natural areas and open spaces, target resources on degraded habitats and natural ecosystems with proactive adaptive management.
- 8.5 Make maintenance management a high priority to assure parks, open space, and recreation facilities are clean, safe, functional, and have ecological integrity.
- 8.6 Maintain superior and creative design in all parks, open space, and natural areas with emphasis on use of natural materials and sustainable, “green maintenance” practices.
- 8.7 Support and work collaboratively with other providers to facilitate high quality community recreation programs, and provide sufficient public information on programs and services.
- 8.8 Assure adequate staffing and organizational structure to provide professional direction for the park and recreation program, and to effectively implement the master plan.

Community Profile

This section provides an overview of Silverton’s community profile including its socio-economic, historical, cultural, and physical fabric. Growth trends, regional attributes, and land use planning framework are also examined as context for preparing the parks and recreation master plan.

A. Historical Context

Silverton was incorporated in 1885. Recognized as a trading and banking center in its early days, it was said to rank among the most progressive towns in western Oregon. By 1921 Silverton industries included the Fischer Flour Mills on South Water Street, and a sash and door plant – both using power by damming Silver Creek. The Silver Falls Timber Company was once the largest sawmill of its kind in the world. Metal piping was also a major industry, and metal covers on Silverton Streets and sidewalks bear the legendary “Eastman Brothers Metal Works.”

In the 1930s, nearby Silver Falls State Park was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and President Franklin Roosevelt designated it as one of his largest National Recreational Demonstration Projects. The park was considered for national park status in 1926 and 1935, but was rejected because “logging had scarred the area with thousands of stumps.”

Today, Silverton is clearly a community in transition. A robust timber industry has been replaced by agriculture including seed, nursery, and Christmas tree operations, as well as vegetables and vineyards. With close proximity to Silver Falls State Park and The Oregon Garden including a destination hotel under construction, classic Victorian homes converted to bed-and-breakfast operations, a downtown historic district, strong arts community and a large number of festivals – Silverton is undergoing a shift in its socio-economic profile including a growing visitor economy.

B. Natural, Open Space, and Scenic Resources

Silverton is located in east Marion County at the edge of the Willamette Valley and in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, 14 miles east of Salem and 14 miles from Silver Falls State Park. The regional landscape is referred to locally as Silverton Hills, a rolling topography that gives Silverton much of its scenic interest and natural beauty, providing in-city views of Mt. Hood and the Cascade Mountains.

Silver Creek flows from Silver Falls State Park and forms a natural spine through the heart of the community including historic downtown. Regionally, rich soils support a variety of agricultural uses that provide a distinctively rural setting and context, including areas within the urban growth boundary that are outside the city limits.

These contrasting landscape features and the tree canopy along streets and in residential neighborhoods, riparian areas of the creek corridor, and forested hillsides collectively give Silverton a strong landscape character that contributes to its ambience and complements historic homes and the downtown historic district.

Silver Creek, Ridges and Hilltops

Silver Creek and parallel ridgelines are the prominent features within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Along with Abiqua Creek, the two waterways drain the urban area and empty into the Pudding River, a tributary of the Willamette River.

The ridgeline south of the creek has kept much of that part of the riparian floodplain intact, and the City's setback requirements have prohibited development in the floodway and riparian fringe in the more developable areas. The exception is the historic downtown area where buildings are located along the riverbank.

The Silverton Comprehensive Plan identifies steep and heavily forested slopes in the southern part of the UGB as unsuitable for development and considers these areas as having open space value. Slopes greater than 15 percent must comply with special development requirements of the zoning ordinance. The Comprehensive Plan includes these statements concerning scenic views:

“Hilltops and ridges such as those along East Main Street, Reserve Street, and Evans Valley Road in the East Hill provide exceptional scenic views of the Cascades, especially Mount Hood (Figure 5).”

“In the southern area of the UGB, beautiful views of the Cascades and the Silverton Hills are available on the north side of Eureka Avenue from Woodland Drive to Edison Road and Victor Point Road (Figure 5).”

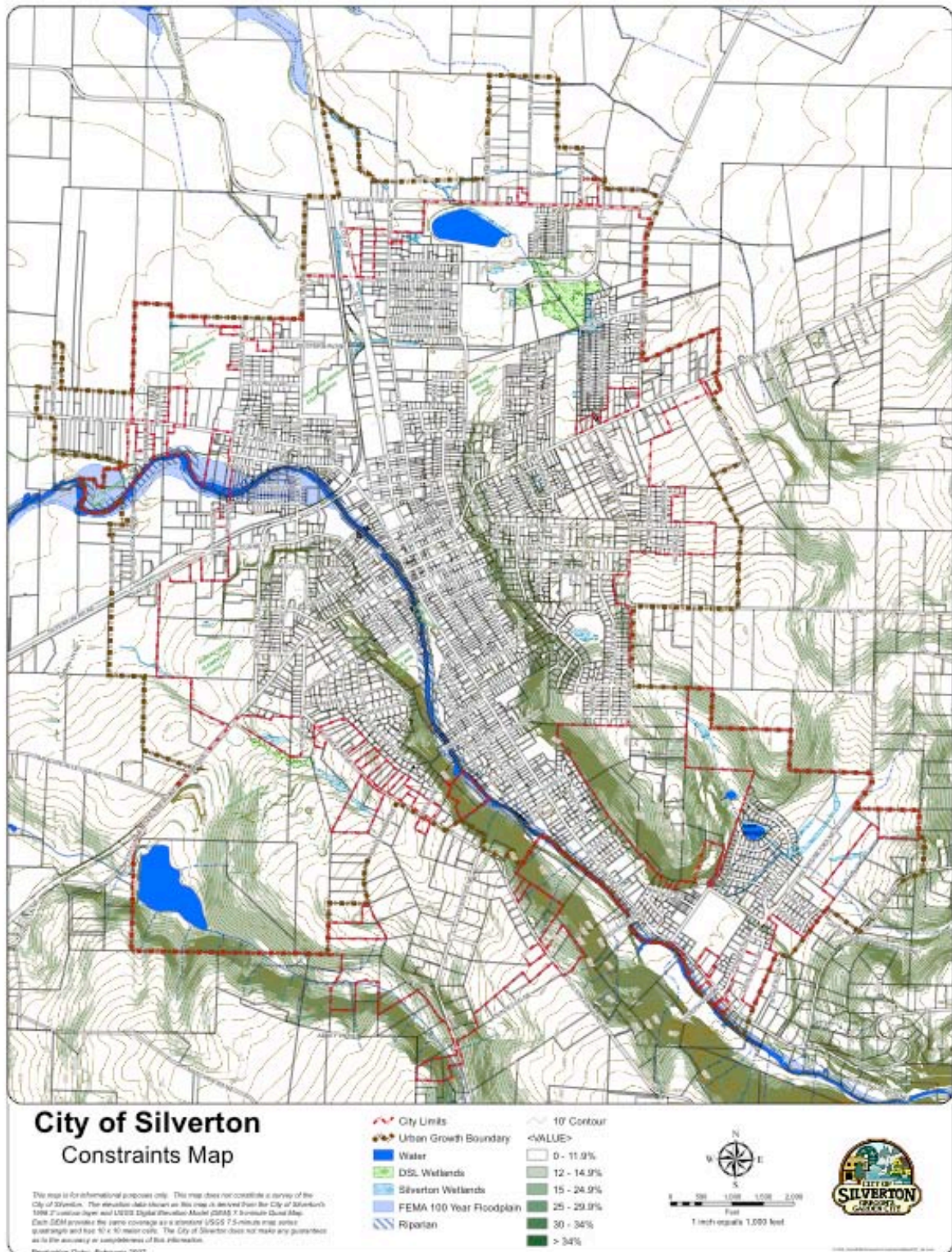
A “Resource Constraints Map” was prepared in February 2008, with 10 ft. contours illustrating five values from 0-34% slopes, and all slopes above 34% (see Map 1). The Silverton Development Code was recently revised with new steep slope standards permitting development on larger lots up to 35%. The City has contracted with the Oregon Department of Geology to conduct an analysis of steep slopes, including locations of historic landslides and vulnerability locations.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat, Wetlands

The Comprehensive Plan identifies the Silver Creek riparian zone as the most extensive fish and wildlife habitat within the UGB. State wildlife biologists indicate the creek corridor is habitat for many bird species, deer, pheasant, red fox, and beaver. No rare or endangered species are known to inhabit the planning area.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife inventoried Silver Creek in July 1993 and found the lower two-mile reach of the creek is a migratory route for winter steelhead and cutthroat trout. Consequently, the stream is classified as “salmonid” with respect to the Department of Environmental Quality's established water quality standards, and is protected for salmon and trout rearing, as well as migration.

Map 1: Silverton Resource Constraints



The City's 2008 "Resource Constraints Map" includes a Local Wetland Inventory that was conducted by Shapiro and Associates in 2000, indicating a large concentration of wetlands near Webb Lake in the northern part of the City, as well as wetlands along the abandoned rail line south of Webb Lake, on the Oregon Gardens site, and in the southeast part of the City near Pioneer Drive. Webb Lake is a former log pond, approximately 11 acres in size.

Comprehensive Plan Open Space Policies

The Silverton Comprehensive Plan includes these open space policies:

- Preserve open space through: public land acquisitions, maintaining and developing parkland and school grounds; setbacks; and limiting development in natural hazard areas;
- Examine public surplus land including street ROW for potential open space before disposition;
- Encourage multiple use of existing open space resources;
- Improve and preserve wildlife habitat along Silver Creek to protect fish, wildlife, and riparian vegetation; and
- Preserve agricultural land uses within the UGB until the public facilities and services needed for urban development are available.

C. Historical and Cultural Resources

The historic core of downtown Silverton is a nationally registered Historic District, with storefront character from the 1890s to the 1940s. The area encompasses seven acres and five blocks in area and contains 44 buildings.

Presence of a well organized and developed artist community is reflected in several art galleries, and an art mural project including large murals depicting local stories, landmarks, and American values. The annual Silverton Fine Arts Festival is a major community celebration, and a large number of other festivals and community events celebrate Silverton's heritage and sense of community.

The Silverton Country Museum features artifacts and historical exhibits from early settlement days. The Silver Falls Library District serves 17,000 residents in the Silverton region, and the library in Silverton has a collection of 150,000 volumes; adult, youth, and children's programs; and computers with Internet stations. The Silver Falls School District also serves the greater Silverton region, including eight rural communities.

D. Parks, Playfields, and Recreation Facilities

Parkland and Greenspaces

Within the developed part of Silverton, the City maintains an approximate total of 18 acres of parkland, mostly in Coolidge & McClaine Park located within a linear greenway including smaller park nodes along Silver Creek near the downtown. One very small park, Lincoln Street Park, serves an older neighborhood, and a larger 2-acre park site was recently acquired in the Pioneer Village subdivision.

Another 140 acres encompasses a municipal lake and parkland at the Silverton Reservoir Marine Park near the edge of town. The City also owns 80 acres of undeveloped land (Pettit property) adjacent to The Oregon Garden, and an adjoining 9-acre tract that is mostly wetland.

Recreation Facilities

Near the downtown, the City maintains a two-story community center (former National Guard Armory) that is leased from the State. A Community Swimming Pool is also within close proximity of downtown, within the greenway of Silver Creek.

Private Common Areas

Private common areas maintained by others are located in several developments and range in size from less than an acre to 16 acres. Two of the sites have small lakes, and Webb Lake is a former log pond that is also part of a private common area. Facilities range from small landscaped areas and water features to park amenities and playgrounds.

Public Schools

The Silver Falls School District maintains approximately 64 acres of school land that is available for community recreation and open space purposes including sports fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playgrounds. A recent bond program will fund new sports facilities at the new high school, designed to function as the first phase of a community sports complex. Six school gyms are also available for after-school community adult and youth recreation activities.

Park Planning and Development

The City recently engaged residents in a public process to develop a plan for renovating Coolidge & McClaine Park. The playground was subsequently upgraded with new equipment purchased by the City, and a grant application was recently submitted to complete the remaining restoration work and new improvements.

E. Urbanization, Growth and Development

Land Use Patterns

Urban development in Silverton is largely contained around the central core, except for a linear area of residential use along the Silver Falls Highway where ridgelines and Silver Creek limit more expansive development.

Statistics from the 2002 Comprehensive Plan indicate most of the city's existing land use consists of residential development or is land used for public purposes such as schools, parks, and government services including water and sewage treatment facilities.

Commercial development is concentrated along regional roadways that access the City from the north and west, and within the downtown area. Industrial development is primarily located in a large industrial park in the northeast part of the city, and along the railroad.

Aside from compact development and concentration of industrial and commercial development, the most significant pattern of land use is the geographic distribution and size of public school lands. Large campus sites are located in all but one quadrant of the city, and in some cases parts of the school grounds function as neighborhood or community open space.

Parkland and public open spaces are concentrated in one area along Silver Creek near the downtown, with the exception of a few common open space areas in new subdivisions, The Oregon Garden, and the Pettit property. Comprehensive Plan findings on urbanization noted likelihood that the School District would be selling or exchanging excess land to improve school capacities and location.

For the most part, these patterns have remained relatively consistent over the past few years, with a few exceptions. Residential land for multi-family use has increased significantly, and recent City acquisitions of The Oregon Garden and adjacent Pettit property across from the sizable Robert Frost Elementary School have created a large complex of land for public and educational purposes. The new Pine Street high school campus is also a major land use change in northwest Silverton.

The rail corridor, Silver Creek, and some drainages are linear features of the City that have potential for providing connectivity among neighborhoods, the downtown, and public open space and school sites.

The Comprehensive Plan encourages mixed-use development at identified nodes to promote a more sustainable development pattern, by providing a variety of housing choices located in close proximity to supporting commercial development.

Urban Growth and Development

Residential growth in Silverton has been substantial over the past eight years, remaining fairly consistent until 2005, when a spike of 206 permits was granted. Residential permits totaled 616 from 2000-2007. During this period, the City acquired one small neighborhood park (Pioneer Village) as a part of the subdivision exaction process.

By agreement with the City, Marion County is responsible for regulating land use in the UGB outside the City limits, and coordinates its decisions with the City and its growth management policies.

F. Land Use Planning

Over the last several years, the City of Silverton has been undergoing a robust and comprehensive land use planning effort, engaging policy makers, community leaders, citizens, and business groups. Key parts of the Comprehensive Plan have been updated, the Downtown Master Plan provides a new vision and guide to revitalize the historic heart of the city, the Transportation System Plan has been updated, and a long range Wastewater System Plan has been developed. Combined with this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Silverton will be solidly positioned to respond to future growth and development in the most effective, efficient, and sustainable manner.

Silverton Comprehensive Plan

The City of Silverton’s Comprehensive Plan was adopted in July 1979 and last revised in August 2002. The most recent revisions include chapters on Urbanization and Housing, and the Transportation chapter was revised in 2000. The Open Space, Natural and Cultural Resources chapter has not been revised since 1986.

Future Action #2 calls for the City to develop a program for parkland acquisition in newly developing areas, including possible dedication of land or contribution to a parkland fund by subdivision developers.

Silverton Downtown Master Plan

The central theme of the Downtown Master Plan is to create a vital downtown through integration of historic urban design elements, mixed use, great streets, and public access to Silver Creek. The vision for downtown includes a cantilevered creek walk, a lively downtown core with sidewalk cafes, awnings, historic signage, and historic ornamental streetlights.

Two locations are targeted for public plazas – the High Street Plaza at the intersection with Water Street, providing visual and physical access to the creek and serving as a place for events, vendors, and festivals; and the Silver Creek Overlook located at Lewis and Water Street to provide visual access to Silver Creek and provide space for an informational kiosk.

Silverton Transportation Plan

The Silverton Transportation System Plan identified needs for a “safe, efficient and interconnected system for recreational-based pedestrian and bicycle trips” including “home-to-park” and “exercise trips.” These gaps in the pedestrian and bicycle network were identified:

- Arterial and collector streets in Silverton provide a limited sidewalk inventory. There are limited connections and only intermittent sidewalks connecting to downtown.
- The pedestrian system has significant barriers (creek, railroad) that contribute to poor pedestrian connectivity throughout the City.
- Lack of safe bicycle facilities and gaps in the system cause the most significant problems for bicyclists traveling to and from downtown Silverton.
- Need to connect bicycles and pedestrians with schools, parks, and activity centers.
- Need for regional bikeway connections (Reservoir Park, Rogers Wayside Park).

Abandoned rail lines are identified as good opportunities for available ROW to develop several off-street, generally recreational focused, multi-use trails that will create a connected pedestrian and bicycle system throughout Silverton. Additionally, creekside trails adjacent to Silver Creek have been identified that provide connections to Coolidge & McClaine Park, the library, and other recreational destinations.

Both the Pedestrian Master Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan include projects to create two multi-use trails, with HIGH priority:

- (1) Rail Line Off-street Path – from C Street to Hobart Rd
- (2) Silver Creek Off-street Path – from Charles Ave. to Peach Street

The Bicycle Master Plan also includes regional projects:

- (1) Regional Bikeway Connection – From Silverton City Limits to Reservoir Marine Park
- (2) Regional Bikeway Connection – From Silverton City Limits to Rogers Wayside Park

Silverton Wastewater Master Plan

To establish future flow and loading projections and determine requirements for the City’s wastewater infrastructure, six approaches were taken to estimate the 2030 Silverton residential population. A blended approach was taken, with a population projection of 14,400 for the year 2030.

During summer months, most of the City’s treated wastewater is pumped to The Oregon Garden for irrigation of landscaping and maintenance of wetlands. Future sewer lines and lift stations are being considered as part of the process for completing the master plan.

G. Demographic Profile

Population

Silverton’s estimated population in 2007 was 9,205, as certified by Portland State University’s Population Research Center. Since 1990, Silverton’s population has grown 63% (see Table 1). The City estimates that the population will be approximately 14,400 in 2030 (Wastewater Master Plan, 2007).

Table 1: Silverton Population Growth 1990-2007

| 1990 | 2000 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 5,635 | 7414 | 8,230 | 8,915 | 9,205 |

Source: Population Research and Census, Portland State University

With eight surrounding rural communities, for planning purposes it is important to consider the regional population (approximately 18,000) as the service area. Both the Silver Falls Library District and the Silver Falls School District serve the Silverton region.

Age Distribution

According to 2007 estimates by the Oregon Economic Development Association, children and youth under 19 years of age constitute 33.8% of Silverton’s population, and older adults and seniors 60 years and older make up 15.6% (see Table 2). For age groups that characteristically participate in recreation activities at high rates, these two segments of the population total almost 50%. As the Baby Boomers age, the percentage of older adults will continue to grow.

Table 2: Silverton Population Age Distribution – Silverton, Oregon 2007

| Age Groups | Percent |
|---------------|---------|
| Under 4 years | 8.1 |
| 5-9 years | 8.4 |
| 10-19 years | 17.3 |
| 20-29 years | 12.2 |
| 30-39 years | 12.9 |
| 40-49 years | 14.1 |
| 50-59 years | 11.3 |
| 60-64 years | 4.1 |
| 65 and over | 11.5 |

Source: Oregon Economic Development Association

Gender

The 2007 estimate for Silverton indicates a higher percentage of females (52.2%) than males (47.8%). Silverton’s female population is somewhat higher than the national and state percentage (50.8% and 50.4%).

Race

Population estimates from the Oregon Economic Development Association show Silverton’s race is predominantly White, 15.3% are Hispanic, 5.3% are Other, 1.9% Multiracial, and 1.6% are American Indian. Silverton’s Hispanic population is larger than the Oregon percentage by over 5%, and will be expected to increase in the future. With increasing diversity of the community, it will be important to target recreation opportunities to emerging populations and celebrate their heritage, recreation, and culture.

Household Income

A high percentage of Silverton’s households has incomes below \$20,000 (18.5%), 33.2% have incomes between \$20,000 and \$50,000, and 48% have incomes above \$50,000. A sizable proportion of households have incomes below the poverty level.

Housing

In 2007, owner-occupied dwellings were 58.7% of the total number of household units. Renter-occupied dwellings made up 41.3%, almost 10% above the State percentage. Silverton has a very small vacancy rate of household units (5.1%) compared with Oregon’s rate of 9.2%.

H. Regional Recreation and Tourism

The Oregon Garden and Silver Falls State Park are regional attractions that are a significant part of Silverton's community context and economy.

Oregon Garden

The Oregon Garden, located on the southwest edge of Silverton inside the city limits, is a 140-acre demonstration public garden created by the Oregon Association of Nurserymen and the City of Silverton in 1997. The City of Silverton owns the land and the Oregon Garden Foundation and Moonstone Garden Management, Inc. are responsible for the garden's operations. Moonstone recently acquired a part of the site for a resort hotel, now under construction.

Features of the garden include specialty gardens and features, a visitor center including gift shop and garden café, classrooms, banquet hall, conference facilities, and a large pavilion that can accommodate up to 1,200 persons. Special events include summer concerts, community festivals, and special events such as quilt shows. The Oregon Garden also offers a grant-supported environmental education program for fifth grade students, which is available to all Oregon schools for one visit per school year.

Using treated wastewater from the City, the Garden reuses wastewater for irrigation of the gardens, providing waterfowl and amphibian habitat where a series of ponds were created. This allows the City to avoid offloading effluent into Silver Creek during summer months.

Gordon House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and moved from Wilsonville, is located on the grounds and is open to the public.

The City's acquisition of the adjoining 80-acre Pettit property – a forested landscape with a 20-acre lake – functions as a significant community open space site and demonstrates the strong partnership with The Oregon Garden.

The garden attracted 40,000 visitors in 2005. Silverton bills itself as "Oregon's Garden City."

Silver Falls State Park

Located 14 miles southeast of Silverton, 9,000-acre Silver Falls State Park is the largest state park in Oregon, with 14 waterfalls that range in height from 27 to 178 feet. The park has extensive visitor facilities including a historic lodge, modern conference center, and a variety of camping options.

The park receives nearly a million visitors a year, roughly twice the annual visitation at Crater Lake, Oregon's only national park. Crater Lake generated nearly \$28 million in visitor spending in 2006, according to a National Park Service study. Tourist expenditures supported approximately 641 jobs in the region worth \$9.8 million in annual salary, not counting the parks payroll. Silverton bills itself as "The Gateway to Silver Falls."

Community Needs

This section identifies Silverton’s park, greenspace, and recreation needs. Extensive public outreach helped identify community needs as perceived by residents. The current system of parks and greenspaces was analyzed as well as future opportunities, conditions of existing parks and recreation facilities were identified, and strengths and weaknesses of recreation programs and services were examined. The current structure for management and operations was also evaluated. Current recreation trends were examined to gauge future needs. Results of the assessments were synthesized and distilled into findings and issues, outlined in Chapter 5.

A. Community Outreach

A “triangulation of methods” approach was used to offer a variety of opportunities for community participation in the planning process. Rather than rely on a community survey, it was considered more valid to engage residents in several ways to identify aspirations, sensibilities and perceived recreation needs. In this way given the size of the community, common themes emerged and were validated through iteration.

Master Plan Advisory Committee

A sixteen-member advisory committee was appointed by the Mayor to assist City staff and the consultant in the planning process. The committee met six times to review and comment on background reports, discussion papers, and draft plan recommendations. All meetings were open to the general public.

Stakeholder Interviews

Early in the planning project, 23 interviews were conducted with stakeholders identified as key knowledgeable in the community and selected by City staff.

Roundtable Meetings

Two roundtable meetings were conducted with recreation providers including the sports community and School District representatives, Silver Falls YMCA, Silverton Together, the Silverton Arts Association, and the Silverton Area Seniors.

Community Vision Workshop

The community vision workshop was attended by 25 residents who identified community planning issues, generated a list of core values and beliefs, and developed a common vision and goals, including specific priorities.

High School Focus Group Meetings

Three focus group meetings were held with 27 high school students, including a combination of the student leadership team and students randomly selected by school staff. The format was the same as the community vision workshop, creating a list of core values, common goals, and priorities.

Representative Mail Survey

A demographic profile for Silverton was purchased from a list company, and a randomly selected focus group was selected by phone and mail. However, the desired participation could not be achieved for a representative focus group meeting. As an alternative, the selected individuals completed a community survey by mail, using the same questions for the community vision workshop.

Major Community Outreach Findings

Major issues, concerns, and needs emerged through efforts to engage Silverton residents in the master planning process, and the results are summarized in these findings.

Finding 1: *Rapid growth is shaping the character of the community*, rather than Silverton’s heritage and special character guiding the course of new development and change. Residents want greenspace effectively incorporated into the community.

Finding 2: *New subdivisions are deficient in public parks and open spaces*, and private common areas have shortcomings in meeting neighborhood park and recreation requirements.

Finding 3. *Residents place a high priority on retaining the special character and charm of the community* – highly valued are historic Coolidge & McClaine Park, Silver Creek, ridgeline greenspace and scenic views, historic downtown, and existing school sites and sports facilities.

Finding 4. *Multi-use trails and pathways are important* for health and fitness, connecting neighborhoods and maintaining a sense of community, providing access to nature, and reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.

Finding 5. *School grounds and sports facilities are valued* for after-school, community use, requiring a stronger partnership and formal agreement between the City and School District.

Finding 6. *Playable and well-maintained sports facilities are needed* to support a high demand for youth sports programs; existing school playfields need renovating and upgrading.

Finding 7. *Recreation opportunities are lacking for youth*, and a skatepark ranks high as a needed recreation facility. Also ranking high is the need for a designated off-leash site for dogs.

Finding 8. *The Silverton Community Center is not functional as a recreation center in its present condition*; it is a former National Guard Armory constructed in 1925.

Finding 9. *The Silverton Community Swimming Pool is a traditional pool with a design that limits use for water play and family aquatic activities*, although the facility was recently renovated and a new cover provides year-round usability.

Finding 10. *Volunteer participation in Silverton is at a high level; however, volunteer burn-out is a concern.* A large number of community celebrations, special events, and the arts are strong traditions that contribute to Silverton’s livability.

B. System Inventory

Given its size, Silverton has a substantial network of parks, recreation facilities, and programs. Since 1909 and the donation of Coolidge & McClaine Park, Silverton residents have found ways to create major elements of a comprehensive parks and recreation system.

City of Silverton – Parks, Greenspace and Recreation Facilities

The City of Silverton owns and maintains approximately 247 acres of parkland and greenspace (see Table 3). Sizable areas include a large municipal lake with waterfront park facilities, and a recently acquired natural area (Pettit property) adjacent to The Oregon Garden. The heart of the City’s greenspace system is the linear public open space along Silver Creek near the downtown, which includes historic Coolidge & McClaine Park. Additionally, the City maintains two small sub-neighborhood parks.

Recreation facilities managed by the City include a community center, originally designed as a National Guard Amory and leased to the City, and a community swimming pool originally constructed in 1939. A new senior center is in the planning and design stage.

**Table 3: City of Silverton
Parks, Greenspaces, and Recreation Facilities**

| Site or Facility | Classification | Size | Comment |
|--|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Coolidge & McClaine Park</i> | Community and Downtown Park | 8.3 ac | Silverton’s historic and central park; Douglas-fir canopy, large group shelter, upgraded playground; part of Silver Creek greenway and site of large festivals near downtown |
| <i>Silver Creek “Parks”</i> • <i>Old Mill Park</i> • <i>Town Square Park</i> | Downtown Greenway | 7.7 ac | Linear downtown open space connecting “park nodes”, library, City Hall, downtown |
| <i>Pioneer Village Park</i> | Pocket Park | 2 ac | Undeveloped park site serving new subdivision |
| <i>Lincoln Street Park</i> | Pocket Park | 0.3 ac | Small playground |
| <i>Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park</i> | Regional Park | 60 ac lake 140 ac total | Functions as regional waterfront park; accessible fishing dock, boat ramps, non-motorized boating only; restroom and trails |
| <i>Pettit Property</i> | Natural Area | 20 ac lake 80 ac total | Adjacent to The Oregon Garden; no access; representative Silverton natural landscape |
| <i>Wetland Area</i> | Natural Area | 9 ac | Lowland and wetland adjoining Oregon Garden |
| <i>Silverton Swimming Pool</i> | Community Pool | 25-yd pool & two shallow-water pool areas | Older traditional pool upgraded w/winter cover, new bathhouse, small zero-depth pool |
| <i>Silverton Community Center</i> | Community Facility | 11,000 s.f. | Offices for community nonprofits, gym, limited recreation use; jazzercise program |
| <i>Silverton Senior Center</i> | Senior Center | 5,000 s.f.; part of 13.5-acre site | Potential for first phase of a larger community recreation center |

Other Greenspaces

The Oregon Garden and Rogers Wayside County Park are not owned by the City of Silverton, but are an integral part of the community’s greenspace system.

The Oregon Garden

Located within the city limits of Silverton, The Oregon Garden is a major tourist attraction leased by the City to the Oregon Garden Foundation. The 140-acre site includes twenty display gardens, and visitor and educational facilities designed for large meetings and group functions. A 100-room resort hotel is adjacent to the gardens.

Rogers Wayside County Park

Marion County owns and maintains a 5.6-acre wayside park across from The Oregon Garden. Silverton youth and a local bikeshop owner constructed the BMX track on this site, and the Silverton Kiwanis Club donated materials and constructed the picnic shelter.

Private Common Areas

Seven common areas are owned by lot owners or Homeowner Associations, and range in size from 17 acres in the Webb Lake development to less than an acre in Oak Knoll Estates (see Table 4). Abiqua Heights is the most developed area, including landscaped grounds, small lake, playground, and walkways. Other common areas function as common open space required by the development code, or are areas unsuited for development.

Table 4: Private Common Open Spaces

| Site or Facility | Size | Description |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| <i>Abiqua Heights</i> | 7.6 ac | Owned by homeowners; functions as a private neighborhood park with small lake, playground, basketball court, benches, overlook; public use not permitted except for walkways |
| <i>Hawthorne Village</i> | 1.1 ac | Common area and walkway overseen by each lot owner. |
| <i>Lake Pioneer</i> | 2.6 ac | Small lake and strip of common area owned and maintained equally by lot owners |
| <i>Oak Knoll Estates</i> | 0.5 ac | Small landscaped pond and overlook for common use of Association members |
| <i>Silverton Station</i> | 1.0 ac | Private landscaped common area |
| <i>Silver Street Townhouses</i> | Unknown | Play areas, common garden and patio/storage areas for use of owners and their guests |
| <i>Webb Lake Development</i> | 16.6 ac including the lake | Former log pond, 2 acres of common open space, and wetland area |

Silver Falls School District – Community Sports Facilities and Open Space

The Silver Falls School District maintains five developed school sites, and owns one undeveloped site (see Table 5). These sites are all geographically distributed throughout the community. Most of the campuses are large in size and the school grounds, playfields, playgrounds, and gyms are generally open to the community and used extensively for after-school recreation and sports activities. Some school sites include open space and natural areas. A large number of community organizations and clubs use school facilities for youth and adult sports activities.

New sports fields planned at the Pine Street high school campus have potential for becoming the first phase of a major community sports complex including soccer, baseball, and multi-use fields, as well as infrastructure for restrooms, lighting and concessions in a future phase.

Table 5: Silver Falls School District School Sites and Sports Facilities

| School | Facilities | Size | Comment |
|--|--|--|--|
| <i>Eugene Field Elementary School</i> | Greenspace area for after-school rec., gym, playground | 1-ac playground; .3-ac playfield | Older school; long-term may be sold and converted to mixed use |
| <i>Robert Frost Middle School</i> | Little League fields, softball field, soccer fields, gym; large open space areas | 2-ac playground; 6-ac playfield 11-ac o. space | Large school site; City recently acquired 13 acres for senior center |
| <i>Mark Twain Middle School</i> | Little League field, softball field, soccer fields, gym, oak grove | 1-ac playground; 7-ac playfield 5-ac o. space | Undeveloped |
| <i>Silverton High School</i> Pine Street Campus | New soccer fields, baseball fields, gyms, multi-use fields | 18 ac sports fields | Bond-supported community sports fields in planning stage @ new high school |
| ----- Schlader Street Campus | Varsity fields, tennis courts, soccer fields, gyms, stadium, track | 12 ac sports fields | When the new high school is completed, some fields may be available for community use. |

Community Recreation Programs and Services

The City of Silverton is not a direct provider of recreation programs. The major providers of community recreation are the Silver Falls YMCA, Silver Falls School District, Silverton Area Seniors, Silverton Arts Association, and Silverton Together (see Table 6). A large number of volunteers, local vendors, community organizations and clubs form a multi-faceted partnership that offers a wide variety of recreation classes, activities, programs, and special events.

The City of Silverton is a major partner that supports community recreation programs by providing support services, offices for non-profit groups in the community center, and use of parks and facilities including two buildings operated by the Art Association in Coolidge & McClaine Park.

Silver Falls YMCA – Recreation Programs and Services

For the past several years, the YMCA has provided community recreation programs and has been responsible for managing the Silverton Community Pool, under agreement with the City of Silverton. The “Y” provides youth and family recreation programs including after-school enrichment and youth sports programs, which take place at schools or the community center where the offices are located.

Table 6: Community Recreation Programs and Activities

| Provider | Role | Description of Program |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Silver Falls YMCA</i> | Direct provider of community recreation and sports programs | After-school enrichment classes, summer camps, youth sports, Triathlon |
| | Responsible for managing the community pool under contract with the City | Lap swim, open swim, swim lessons, fitness and therapy, swim clubs, high school swim team. pool rentals |
| <i>Silver Falls School District</i> | Direct provider of community sports programs | Summer sports camps, tennis tournaments, track & field competition, fitness and weight training, youth sports (soccer, football, baseball, skiing and snowboarding) adult softball, Senior Olympics, wrestling tournaments |
| <i>Silverton Area Seniors</i> | Programs and activities for senior adults | Lunch program, Meals on Wheels, exercise program, day tours, computer access, bookstore, quilt group |
| <i>Silverton Arts Association</i> | Art classes, arts shows, open studio, workshops, Fine Arts Festival and other special events | Silverton Arts Association manages two small buildings in Coolidge & McClaine Park – the Arts Center/Borland Art Gallery, and the Education Center offering arts education programs and workshops for kids, teens, and adults |
| <i>Silverton Together</i> | Designated “Community Progress Team” by Marion Co. Children & Family Svcs; facilitates community collaboration among partners, assists with funding; sponsors events and festivals w/others | Free Fish Day, Celebrate Families Picnic, Cinco De Mayo, Celebration of Cultures, Holiday Celebration, Indoor Park for preschoolers |

Silver Falls School District – Sports Programs

The Silver Falls School District provides a wide range of youth sports programs including summer camps, tournaments and competitions, and fitness and weight training. School facilities also accommodate a large number of youth and adult sports programs through partnership with the Silver Falls YMCA and many other community organizations and clubs. Events such as the Senior Olympics also use school facilities.

Silverton Area Seniors

Growing out of a Meals on Wheels program, the Silverton Area Seniors have been managing a volunteer seniors program at the Masonic Hall for nine years. The City of Silverton has supported the program through a lease agreement. With construction of the new senior center in the near future, the seniors program will transition into a more full service operation.

Silverton Arts Association

The Silverton Arts Association (SAA) has been serving the community with arts and art education for forty years. The SAA has an active membership of over 100 artists, crafts people, and patrons. Art classes for adults, teens, and children are offered at the Education Center, and the Borland Gallery is located in the Art Center. Both centers are located in Coolidge & McClaine Park. SAA sponsors a number of festivals and special events.

Silverton Together

Silverton Together is a non-profit community service organization that promotes and coordinates an organized wellness system for Silverton families and children. Silverton Together facilitates community collaboration among service providers, assists with funding, and sponsors and participates with others in organizing a number of community events and festivals.

C. Greenspace System Analysis

A comprehensive analysis was conducted to assess strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats of Silverton’s parks and greenspaces. Results of this assessment are indicators of community needs with respect to the physical system and its major components.

Park, Open Space, and Greenspace System

The Silverton parks and open space system was analyzed using the concept of “Green Infrastructure” (see Map 2). This approach considers both physical and ecological qualities of the community’s landscape so that parks, open space, school sites, and natural features are viewed as “greenspaces” and the framework for a “Greenspace Network.”

Strengths

Silverton’s existing open space system represents key elements for establishing a comprehensive greenspace network that will help protect community assets and natural resources, and make a commitment to “Green Infrastructure” (see Table 7). The City of Silverton has assembled and improved public greenspaces, worked with others such as The Oregon Garden Foundation, and has aggressively pursued funding alternatives. Community volunteers have been involved in extensive habitat restoration, demonstrating a commitment to protecting greenspace values.

The strong core of the park and open space system is historic Coolidge & McClaine Park and the linear greenspace and pathway along Silver Creek, connecting the library, city hall, community pool, and downtown. Though relatively small in size, the forested park has functioned as the Silverton area’s community gathering place and recreation site for almost 100 years. The historic flourmill site on the creek is memorialized, and the recently completed Town Square site serves as a gateway into the downtown.

Five large public school sites are located geographically throughout the city and have an important role in providing greenspace, playgrounds and sports fields in Silverton’s neighborhoods that lack access to public parks and public open space.

A major strength of Silverton’s greenspace system is The Oregon Garden, a tourist attraction located on a large, picturesque site near downtown. Managed as a demonstration garden and visitor center, and combined with the adjoining City-owned Pettit property including a small lake and surrounding natural area, this is an outstanding greenspace complex.

Table 7: Strengths and Weaknesses – Public Greenspaces

| Strengths | Description |
|--|--|
| Silver Creek Linear Greenspace Downtown | Linear greenspace part of the strong downtown core Demonstration greenway/pathway along Silver Creek Historic features celebrated – Flour Mill |
| Historic Coolidge & McClaine Park | Vibrant downtown park on Silver Creek, forest canopy Community & regional gathering place; site for celebrations Donated in 1909; historic features (entry) City planning and design, grant funding for park renovation |
| Large School Sites | Large sites, geographically distributed throughout most of city Sports facilities, open space, gyms accessible to community Current school policy supports community use |
| Pettit Property Greenspace | Large natural area and small lake representative of the urban landscape in close proximity to downtown, acquired by City |
| Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park | Large, picturesque lake and waterfront park for non-motorized boating and fishing; accessible fishing platform; nature trails |
| The Oregon Garden | Demonstration public gardens, visitor and meeting facilities, environmental education, special events and celebrations, Adjacent resort hotel; regional tourist attraction, City support |
| Volunteer Contributions | Volunteer efforts to remove ivy and restore habitats Volunteer fundraising, donated materials, and development of Town Square site and Coolidge & McClaine Park |
| Weaknesses | Description |
| Deficiency of Public Parks | Lack of neighborhood parks; private common areas mostly small High cost to maintain small parks Growth areas not meeting neighborhood park needs Private common area amenities cannot be used by the public |
| Overuse of Coolidge & McClaine Park | Only one major park; indicators of overuse and ecosystem stress |
| Unclear Role of Public Schools | School grounds and facilities have default role due to lack of parks Community function of schools is not formalized through policy |
| Lack of Connectivity Physical Barriers | Schools, parks and open spaces not connected, other than downtown Roadway barriers, rail lines, Silver Creek, and ridgelines hinder walkability and bicycling |
| Lack of Scenic Views and Uplands | No upland areas and viewpoints part of the public greenspace system Areas identified in Silverton Comprehensive Plan are being lost |
| Silver Creek Potential Not Realized | Silver Creek is more physical barrier than integral part of greenspace Recreation use of Silver Creek not promoted or facilitated |
| Underutilized Greenspaces | City’s recreational and open space sites not fully utilized and accessible – Silverton Reservoir & Marine Park, Pettit Property |

Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park, located in the upper reach of the Silver Creek corridor, provides waterfront recreation opportunities, a fishing platform designed for persons with disabilities, and non-motorized boating opportunities in a very scenic setting. An informal trail extends around a part of the lake.

Community volunteers have demonstrated their interest and commitment to maintain healthy ecosystems, with extensive manual removal of noxious English ivy from the Douglas-fir trees in Coolidge & McClaine Park, and restoring native riparian vegetation along Silver Creek.

Weaknesses

The major weaknesses in Silverton’s public greenspace system are a lack of neighborhood and community parks, and a lack of connectivity between schools, parks, and open spaces (see Table 7).

The City has relied in large part on private common areas owned by homeowners to fulfill neighborhood park and open space requirements, and while they serve some purpose in that regard, they are not accessible to the broader community and are therefore limited in role and function. Additionally, since Coolidge & McClaine Park is the community’s primary park, it is being “loved to death” with large community celebrations and events with potential threats to the site’s ecosystem health (described later under “Threats”).

Physical barriers such as Silver Creek, major thoroughfares, rail lines, and ridgelines impact walkability and bicycling, although the City’s Transportation System Plan recommends a multi-use trail system including off-street routes to address these problems.

School grounds, playgrounds, and playfields function in large part as de facto public parks and open space, yet a lack of clear policy for community use hinders ability of the City and School District to work collaboratively and capitalize on their potential.

Although the Silverton Comprehensive Plan identified significant upland areas as having scenic and open space values, the City’s greenspace system includes none of these areas. Additionally, Silver Creek, Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park, and the Pettit property represent outstanding recreation and open space potential and are underutilized.

Opportunities

Fortunately, many outstanding opportunities exist to correct weaknesses and deficiencies in Silverton’s greenspace system (see Table 8). Since major growth has occurred only within the last several years, much of the city’s natural landscape and habitats are still intact, and the City has boldly acquired, enhanced, and developed several of these areas.

Silver Creek has the potential to function as the spine of the community with greenway and multi-use trail enhancements. Opportunities are available to connect parks, schools, and neighborhoods with a combination of on-street and off-street trails, pathways, and public access easements.

The City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant is located in a bend on the north bank of Silver Creek, and a sizable riparian forest is an opportunity area for public access and open space. Eastward along the creek, riparian habitat is high quality and an opportunity area to acquire land or negotiate easements for greenway and multi-use trail purposes.

Table 8: Opportunities and Threats – Public Greenspaces

| Opportunities | Description |
|--|---|
| Silver Creek Potential Greenway | Outstanding scenic & recreational resource as potential greenway Major role in downtown revitalization, greenway demonstration area Wastewater Treatment Plan is opportunity area for creek access; open space Transportation Plant recommends multi-use trail along Silver Creek corridor |
| Ridgeline and Hillside Open Space | Undeveloped, forested ridgeline and hillside is an Opportunity Area Viewshed protection, conservation easements, trails, forestland protection |
| Connections and Linkages | Multi-use trails along rail lines and Silver Creek corridor Extending pathway south of Coolidge & McClaine Park along Silver Creek Trail easements & access areas along streets ending at Silver Creek Trails along existing City property, e.g. Wastewater Treatment Plant Trails along utility corridors Trail connections to downtown and Oregon Garden/Pettit property |
| Maintain Healthy Urban Ecosystems Natural Area Management | Restoring and providing educational opportunities within inventoried wetlands and other natural areas, including City-owned lands and collaboration with private landowners Volunteer support for restoring natural habitats and ecosystems, building trails (e.g. Silverton Reservoir, Pettit Property) Acquiring representative landscapes, e.g. uplands, wetlands |
| City and School District Collaboration | Community stakeholders indicate timing excellent to formalize a City-School District agreement for community use of school lands and facilities |
| Threats | Description |
| Loss of Natural Open Space, Habitats | Growth and current development patterns threaten opportunities to preserve and acquire last remaining natural open space and viewsheds |
| Loss of Silverton’s Special Character | Growth and development is shaping the character of Silverton’s new housing areas |
| Loss of Park Acquisition Opportunities | Without accelerated parkland acquisition, opportunities will be lost to meet critical needs for neighborhood and community parks |
| High Cost to Maintain Small Parks | Below-standard, small parks create high maintenance costs Economy-of-scale impacts on City can be excessive |
| Traffic Congestion, Air Pollution, Loss of Health Benefits | Without pedestrian and bicycle opportunities, residents will experience increased traffic congestion, few opportunities for fitness and exercise, loss of sense of community |
| Stresses on Existing Parks, Open Spaces, and School Sites | Without an organized system of connected, well functioning and well maintained greenspaces, conditions of these sites will deteriorate, conflicts will develop among potential partners |

A major opportunity area is located along the ridgeline east of South Water Street, with potential for viewshed protection, negotiating scenic and trail access easements, and protecting some of the last remaining forested upland inside the city limits.

Inventoried wetlands, Silver Creek, the Pettit property, and Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park all represent outstanding opportunities for natural area management, habitat restoration, and outdoor education. Current volunteer efforts have potential to be expanded, creating a stronger stewardship and sustainability ethic through hands-on involvement of the community.

Threats

A number of prevailing trends are threats to Silverton establishing a strong and viable greenspace system of parks, open spaces, and natural areas (see Table 8). First and foremost is the loss of natural open space and last remaining significant habitats if growth and development continues to shape the future character of the community.

If an active, creative, and comprehensive approach is not taken to acquire needed community and neighborhood parkland, not only will future residents be deprived of park and recreation benefits, but existing parks and open spaces will be impaired due to overuse and inability to maintain them at high standards. For example, with continued use of Coolidge & McClaine Park beyond its carrying capacity, the tree canopy will be weakened, and natural values impacted beyond their ability to recover.

Benefits of an integrated and connected greenspace system will be foregone if there continues to be dependence on the automobile for transportation, and disparate parts of the open space system continue to function as they are now. Silverton will also lose the opportunity to continue to develop a sense of community and neighborliness.

Additionally, if formal agreements are not established to develop strong community partnerships that enable an integrated and well-maintained greenspace system, conflicts will intensify among managing agencies and it will be difficult to maintain an effective and efficient system.

D. Park and Facility Conditions Analysis

The conditions analysis complemented the system analysis by assessing functional capacity, capability, and quality of each of Silverton's parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities. To achieve objectivity, a survey instrument was used to score each of the components, considering factors such as patron enjoyment and convenience, safety, maintenance and infrastructure condition, resource protection, aesthetics, and design.

Park and Open Spaces

Assessments were conducted for Silverton's five developed parks and open spaces, using an evaluation instrument to rate 17 factors at each site. From this data, strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats were developed.

Strengths

Silverton's parks and open spaces are in good physical condition and reflect a high level of care and maintenance (see Table 9). Parks are clean and safe, and there is little evidence of vandalism or litter. Although park facilities are aging, they have served the community well.

Table 9: Strengths and Weakness – Individual Parks, Open Spaces

| Strengths | Description |
|--|---|
| Parks Maintained Well | Parks & open spaces in good condition, mostly free of litter/vandalism Dog litter bags provided |
| Volunteer and Community Support Exceptional | Civic clubs, businesses, volunteers provide high level of support Donations, labor to upgrade and improve parks and open spaces Habitat restoration in Coolidge & McClaine Park and on Silver Creek |
| Need for Professional Planning Recognized | New master plan for Coolidge & McClaine Park Planning and design for Town Square |
| Park Upgrades and Renovation | New playground installed at Coolidge & McClaine Park; \$505,000 grant application submitted for continued renovation Improvements to Silverton Reservoir & Marine Park |
| Weaknesses | Description |
| Aging Infrastructure | Most park deficiencies due to aging facilities Some infrastructure at end of useful life Lack of planning and design |
| Park Overuse and Under-use | Coolidge & McClaine Park overused; loss of understory vegetation Silverton Reservoir & Marine Park underutilized; parking constraints; lack of formal trail development, poor signage |
| Sign Clutter, Design Weaknesses | Signs fastened to trees in Coolidge & McClaine Park; excess of signs Several entryways uninviting; poorly executed; lack of amenities |
| Connectivity Lacking | Poor connections between Silver Creek, civic buildings, downtown No direct access for library patrons to access Silver Creek Silver Creek pathway disappears at City Hall parking lot Unsafe, informal creek trail south of Coolidge & McClaine Park |
| Uncontrolled Invasive Vegetation | Infestations include Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom, English Ivy Some sites have serious invasions, affecting tree health No formal program for noxious weed removal/restoration on City land Lack of a community educational program |
| Lack of Interpretive & Educational Programs | Few educational displays and interpretive information Lack of historical, cultural, and ecological information No formal outdoor classrooms in Silverton due to funding constraints Outdoor education area at Robert Frost School was not sustained |

Upgrades and improvements have often been made by community volunteers and through partnership efforts with businesses, civic clubs, and others. Excellent examples include the Town Square (Park) development on Silver Creek, playground renovation in Coolidge & McClaine Park, and habitat restoration along Silver Creek.

Although most of Silverton’s parks and open space have been developed and improved without master plans and professional design, most decisions have been sound. The City has recognized the benefits of planning with recent engagement of a professional landscape architect to work with the community and prepare a master plan for Coolidge

& McClaine Park. Town Square (Park) reflects sound design and planning. The City has also aggressively pursued grants to improve facilities and recreational opportunities at the Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park, and Coolidge & McClaine Park. Volunteer labor and fund-raising has helped meet local matching requirements.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses in Silverton's parks and open spaces are largely due to lack of professional planning and design, aging infrastructure, and overuse of Coolidge & McClaine Park (see Table 9). As the community's only large community park, Coolidge & McClaine is exceeding its carrying capacity, especially due to the large number of community events and celebrations.

Some features such as signs fastened to trees and uninviting entryways detract from integrity of the parks. No direct public access is provided between the library building and the Silver Creek pathway, where one could sit and read at the Old Flourmill interpretive site.

Connectivity is also lacking along Silver Creek through the City Hall parking lot, and legible connections to the downtown core are weak. South of Coolidge & McClaine Park, the informal trail along the steep east bank of Silver Creek is unsafe in places.

Although volunteers have made major inroads at Coolidge & McClaine Park by removing English ivy that once threatened health of Douglas-fir trees on the adjacent hillside, noxious vegetation is taking a strong foothold and spreading throughout the Silverton park and open space system. Areas of infestation include along Silver Creek in the downtown and at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, and throughout the wetland adjacent to The Oregon Garden where Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry dominate the site.

Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park is underutilized, with no formal trail along the surrounding forested waterfront, lack of picnic facilities, and parking lot issues including legal ownership, insufficient parking, and unfiltered drainage.

Given the outstanding cultural, historical, and ecological values in Silverton's parks and open spaces, there is a lack of interpretive displays and educational information provided to patrons.

Opportunities

Many opportunities exist to upgrade and enhance Silverton's parks and open spaces (see Table 10). Moreover, there are excellent prospects for creating more vibrant and functional parks and open spaces because of many sound management decisions that have been made in the past.

Table 10: Opportunities and Threats – Individual Parks, Open Spaces

| Opportunities | Description |
|--|--|
| Coolidge & McClaine Park/Silver Creek Greenway | Vibrant downtown park and community gathering place Celebrating park history and Silver Creek Demonstration area for Silver Creek greenway and multi-use trail Major element of downtown revitalization project |
| Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park | Potential regional waterfront park Land and water-based recreation opportunities for residents & visitors |
| Connectivity | Silver Creek Greenway and Coolidge & McClaine Park have potential to demonstrate connectivity and initial off-street trails for walkability and bicycling |
| Connect Youth and Community with Nature | Volunteer efforts to remove noxious vegetation, habitat restoration and Interpretive displays such as the Fischer Flourmill site Potential for connecting community and youth to history and nature |
| Pettit Natural Area | High quality nature recreation and education opportunities Potential demonstration site; grant opportunities |
| Threats | Description |
| Lack of Staff and Organizational Structure | Without adequate staffing and leadership responsibility, system integrity could be compromised due to deferred maintenance and crisis management |
| Decision-making Not Integrated | Indicators of planning and improving individual parks in isolation of a system plan and policies, creating conflicts and inefficiencies |
| Lack of Integration with Other City Plans and Development | Transportation Plan and Downtown Master Plan are integral to the City’s future park and open space system Potential negative impacts of Growth and development on parks and open spaces, connectivity |
| Fragmented Community Engagement | Fragmented volunteer efforts and lack of formal partnerships show evidence of burn-out High potential for conflicting missions and tension among partners |

Historic Coolidge & McClaine Park and the public greenway/pathway along Silver Creek could be the crown jewel of Silverton, functioning not only as the central gathering place but also a major part of the revitalization of downtown.

The Pettit property has outstanding potential to complement The Oregon Garden and serve as a high quality, close-in natural area, providing opportunities for nature recreation, education, and solitude.

Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park could be transformed into a major regional waterfront park, providing non-motorized boating and passive recreation opportunities that are becoming rather scarce and yet very popular in Oregon.

Given its strong volunteer commitment, Silverton could work with the School District and other community organizations to expand hands-on habitat restoration, develop educational programs and outdoor classrooms, and reverse the trend of noxious vegetation spreading throughout the parks and open space system.

Silverton's abundant historic, cultural, and natural resources have excellent potential for developing a strong interpretive program and providing information to enhance experiences of park users and visitors to the community.

Threats

Threats to Silverton's parks and open spaces are primarily due to shortfalls in staff and resources to maintain parks and open spaces at a high level, and fragmented decision-making (see Table 10).

Management responsibilities appear diffused throughout the City's organization, and there is a lack of integrated effort to plan, improve and maintain parks and recreation facilities.

If these trends continue, integrity of the system will be compromised, partners will be inclined to work at cross purposes, crisis management will become a norm, and there will be burn-out that could affect morale of staff and partners.

Recreation Facilities

The Silverton Community Center and the Community Swimming Pool were both evaluated using an assessment instrument for rating several factors including overall condition.

Strengths

The swimming pool is in good condition, having been recently upgraded with a new bathhouse, gunite pool shell, cover for year-around use, parking improvements, and pool expansion including shallow water with zero depth entry (see Table 11).

The new senior center will expand services for Silverton's growing older adult population, and will replace a temporary facility that has been marginally successful in meeting senior needs.

The Silverton Community Center is a multi-story building leased from the State that is ideally located near the downtown, including the library and Coolidge & McClaine Park. Office space is provided for the Silver Falls YMCA, Silverton Together, and other community service organizations and includes a gymnasium. Special community events can be accommodated. Restrooms are ADA accessible, clean and updated.

Community sports fields planned at the new Silverton High School will not only substantially increase the number of sports facilities in the community, but are being designed for year-around community use. Baseball, soccer, and softball facilities are also located at elementary and middle school sites.

Table 11: Strengths and Weaknesses – Recreation Facilities

| Strengths | Description |
|---|--|
| Renovated Community Swimming Pool | Over 60 years of service to the community Recently renovated with new bathhouse, pool cover, shallow water, therapy steps, movable bulkhead, parking lot |
| New Senior Center | Grant funds obtained for constructing a senior center |
| Location of Community Center, Offices, Gym | Downtown location near Silver Creek Greenway, Coolidge & McClaine Park, and library; location of YMCA and Silverton Together offices; upgraded restrooms, gym floor, and Council Chambers |
| New Community Sports Complex | New sports fields at Silverton H.S. planned for community use New fields will help meet needs for soccer, baseball, and multi-use |
| Sports Facilities at School Sites | Sports facilities at existing schools including soccer, baseball, and gym facilities available for after-school use |
| Weaknesses | Description |
| Outdated Community Swimming Pool | Primarily a traditional pool for lap swimming, fitness, swim lessons; limited family water play opportunities Future enhancements for water play activities would impact Silver Creek greenspace |
| Community Center -- Limited Recreation Value | Former National Guard Armory, (80 year old building) Aging mechanical and electrical systems; roof leaks Not designed as a community recreation center No amenities, multi-purpose rooms, offices crowded, no storage Limited value for community recreation; not fully ADA accessible Gym not functional as multi-use facility Building not owned by City |
| Aging School Sports Facilities | Substandard existing sports fields at elementary and middle schools, some with hazardous conditions; lack irrigation, drain poorly |

Weaknesses

Neither of Silverton’s two recreation facilities has been designed to accommodate recreation needs of the community (see Table 11). The swimming pool is almost 70 years old and therefore was not designed to accommodate family water play, water therapy, and water fitness programs that today’s leisure pools provide. The pool tends to facilitate mostly pool rentals, followed by open swim, lap swimming, and water fitness.

The community center is in poor physical condition due to its age. The building has very limited value for meeting Silverton’s indoor recreation needs, primarily because it was designed as an armory. Major deficiencies include an aging cooling and heating system, an unusable second floor, poor access for persons with disabilities, and lack of activity space and amenities.

Opportunities

Opportunities for improving or replacing existing swimming and community center facilities are more long range than of a short-term nature due to the age and high cost for replacement, renovation, or retrofitting (see Table 12).

Table 12: Opportunities and Threats – Recreation Facilities

| Opportunities | Description |
|--|---|
| Continue to Upgrade Existing Pool; Explore Options | Explore opportunities to add family water play elements, concessions, outdoor facilities to existing pool Explore alternative location and feasibility of new leisure pool in partnership with the School District and others |
| Combine New Senior Center & New Recreation Center | Explore feasibility of new recreation center phase as a integral part of the design of the new senior center |
| Develop Regional Community Sports Complex | New community sports facilities have potential for becoming first phase of a regional sports complex, serving Silverton and nearby communities, and meeting shortfall of sports fields Economic benefits from regional visitors to Silverton |
| Improve School Sports Facilities | Partnering with the School District and with a new Inter-governmental agreement, there is potential to upgrade and renovate existing sports fields at school sites with City participation |
| Threats | Description |
| Continue to Operate Old, Inefficient Facilities | Limited recreation benefits of community center, pool High cost per participant to maintain and operate Limited revenue potential Revenue producing goals over-ride community access, needs |
| Inability to Complete Community Sports Complex | Loss of economic and community benefits from sports facilities Families and youth forced to travel out-of-town for competitive events |
| Aging, Unusable Sports Facilities | Deferred maintenance is high cost Potential risk to users without irrigation, good drainage Youth and adult sports needs continue to be unmet |

Given trends in family water play, water therapy, and water fitness, there is an opportunity to explore alternatives for the existing Community Swimming Pool. A feasibility study could be undertaken with the cooperation of others with mutual potential benefits, such as the School District.

Due to both economic and social benefits, the trend is to avoid stand-alone indoor recreation facilities and senior centers, but to design them as part of a community complex. With the new senior center, opportunity exists to design a future phase to accommodate a new recreation center at the same location.

With new community sports fields planned at the new high school, there is an opportunity to continue to design and complete future phases that would ultimately result in a regional sports complex, serving not only Silverton but surrounding communities. This would not only reduce travel by Silverton families and youth to nearby towns, but would bring visitors to Silverton as well and create economic benefits.

Threats

Threats to Silverton’s recreation facilities are mainly the high cost of maintaining and operating an older, traditional swimming pool and a community center that has limited recreation value (see Table 12). Over time, the financial drain on the community’s operating budget can be substantial, with opportunities foregone to offset costs with revenue from more viable facilities.

If the new community sports fields are not designed to high standards for year-around community use, Silverton also stands to lose the opportunity to provide needed sports facilities for youth and adults. Moreover, there would be a substantial loss in potential economic benefits from visitors if current and future phases did not result in a regional sports complex.

If existing sports fields are not renovated and upgraded at the school sites, maintenance and operations costs will be excessive, potential risk to those using the fields will increase, and youth and adult sports will continue to be unmet.

E. Recreation Programs and Services Analysis

Given the collaborative, community approach for providing recreation programs and services to Silverton residents, the master plan process relied in large part on the major providers to help assess strengths and weaknesses, and opportunities and threats.

Roundtable meetings with the Silverton YMCA, School District staff and coaches, Silverton Area Seniors, Silverton Together, and the Silverton Arts Association provided helpful information, and the public outreach efforts augmented the findings with perspectives of citizens.

It should be recognized that community wellness has historically been a high priority in Silverton, as evidenced by 100 years of service provided by Silverton Hospital and rated as one of the top 100 small hospitals in the country. With a statewide effort in the mid-1990s and support of Marion County, Silverton Together emerged as a strong community organization to help continue and expand community health and wellness programs, working with the hospital, YMCA, School District, and others.

Highlighted here are features that are considered important for the analysis.

Silverton Community Pool

Under contract with the City, the Silver Falls YMCA manages the 33-meter community pool. Aquatics programs include swim lessons, water exercise, lap swim, pool rentals, and open recreational swim. The School District has an agreement for use of the pool by the high school swim team; swim clubs also use the pool. The facility includes ADA accessibility, movable bulkhead, a shallow zero to 3-foot separate pool, tube slide, and family changing rooms.

Silverton Community Center

The City of Silverton maintains the two-story community center, and supports both the YMCA and Silverton Together with offices and support services. Built in 1925 as a National Guard Armory and leased from the State by the City, it has limited community recreation value due to its poor condition as reported in the previous section. Examples of some current recreation use of the building include ballroom dancing classes and Jazzercise.

Silverton Senior Center

The City of Silverton is in the process of designing a new senior center, a benchmark in the history of the Silverton Area Seniors program that grew out of the Meals on Wheels program in 1955.

Art Center, Education Center

The Silverton Arts Association operates two small buildings in Coolidge & McClaine Park, one serving as the Arts Center and Gallery, and the other functioning as a 625 ft. classroom for arts classes for children, teens, and adults.

Indoor Park

Silverton Together operates a parent cooperative for infants through 4-year old children at the Silverton United Methodist Church.

BMX Track

Through an agreement with Marion County, a local bikeshop owner and Silverton youths constructed and maintain a BMX track at the Rogers Wayside County Park on the southwestern edge of the city. An indoor skatepark facility was built by local youth, but it was discontinued when the vacant building was sold.

Transportation – Silver Trolley

The Silver Trolley provides demand-responsive transportation to the Silverton area. The goal of the service is to ensure that seniors, disabled, special needs population, youth, and the general public have transportation that allows access to facilities and services throughout the city. Donations are encouraged.

Community Sports Facilities

As discussed in previous sections, a new community sports complex is in the planning and construction stage will expand the number of outdoor sports fields and augment playfields at the school sites. Community leaders are hopeful that the complex will ultimately support league and tournament play. Roundtable meetings concluded that with the new sports complex on line, and renovation of the existing fields at Robert Frost and Mark Twain schools, most of Silverton’s outdoor sports facility needs will be met.

Special Events and Celebrations

For its size, a remarkable number of special events and celebrations are held each year. The Fine Arts Festival is a large event that attracts visitors from the Pacific Northwest; other celebrations include the Jazz and Wine Festival, Pet Parade, Homer Davenport

Days, Free Fish Day, Celebrate Families Community Picnic, Strawberry Festival, Cooley’s Iris Festival Holiday Celebration, Senior Olympics, and First Friday.

Recreation Program Participation

The 2007-08 total attendance at the Community Pool was 41,097 (see Table 13). Pool rentals comprised over half of the participation, and less than ¼ of the attendance was open or recreational swim. There is some anecdotal evidence that pool rentals are preempting scheduled open swim time at the pool.

Table 13: Silverton Community Swimming Pool Attendance 2007-08

| Open Swim | Lap Swim | Aqua Fitness | Swim Lessons | Swim Teams | Pool Rentals | TOTAL |
|-----------|----------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------|
| 9,383 | 5,089 | 2,139 | 1,853 | 410 | 22,691 | 41,565 |

Source: Silver Falls YMCA

In 2007-08 the Silver Falls YMCA offered recreation programs and activities to 1000 boys and girls ranging in age from kindergarten to 8th grade (see Table 14). This data indicates that most of the Y’s programs consist of recreational sports activities, with summer soccer attracting the most participants. Y staff estimates approximately 21% of its participants are from low-income families.

Table 14: Silver Falls YMCA Recreation Program Participation 2007-08

| Summer Soccer | Basketball Soccer | After-School Enrichment | Summer Camps | Cross Country Track/Field | Spring Break | TOTAL |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------|
| 300 | 287 | 128 | 125 | 118 | 42 | 1,000 |

Source: Silver Falls YMCA

In addition to the Y’s sports programs, representatives from the sports community indicate that soccer and baseball are their two most popular youth programs, managed by the Soccer Club and the Junior Baseball Organization with approximately 300 participants each. Girls fast-pitch softball is offered to 80 girls, as well as youth football.

Strengths

One of the most unique and special qualities of the Silverton community is the extent of its recreation and sports delivery system, with a large number of partners who are dedicated to providing high quality services (see Table 15). Particular strengths include a strong youth sports program for boys and girls, community use of sports facilities, direct and indirect support from the City, and large number of community celebrations and events that take place annually.

Table 15: Strengths and Weaknesses – Recreation Programs and Services

| Strengths | Description |
|---|---|
| Strong Youth Recreation and Sports Program | An extensive community network provides a wide variety of youth sports and recreation programs Volunteers, NGO staff, coaches, and vendors are hard working and dedicated; work as informal cooperative Local businesses sponsor sports teams; scholarships |
| Community Emphasis on Well-being | Strengthening families and children is a legacy of Silverton High priority placed on recreation and sports |
| City is Supportive Community Partner | City provides support services to community recreation City maintains Community Pool and oversees YMCA management |
| Community Celebrations & Events | Large number of special events help create a sense of community Family enrichment opportunities |
| Community Use of School Facilities | School District supports community use of sports facilities at schools Construction of a community sports complex on school lands |
| Program Scholarships | YMCA offers scholarships to those who cannot afford program and class fees |
| Weaknesses | Description |
| Lack of Planning and Coordination | Indicators of programmatic stress – e.g. scheduling activities and events is overwhelming volunteers and community organizations Little information on community recreation needs; target groups |
| Conflicts Between Groups | As year-around sports becomes more popular, soccer, baseball, volleyball, and basketball are competing for sports fields and gym space Some tension between recreational and competitive sports Pool rentals preempt open swim time |
| Gaps in Services | Lack of opportunities for youth who seek non-sports activities Indoor gym space is inadequate for adult basketball Hispanic population is underserved Increased pool fees without YMCA membership |
| Poor Conditions of Sports Facilities | Sports representatives consider sports fields at Robert Frost and Mark Twain schools to be unplayable, and some view as unsafe |
| Families and Youth Travel Outside City | Due to lack of adequate sports facilities, many Silverton youth and families travel to other communities |
| Staff & Volunteer Burnout | Increasing demands placed on those who are organizing, planning and overseeing recreation programs |
| Lack of Program Information | No central program guide to inform the community of programs, schedules, locations, costs |

Weaknesses

The major weakness in the present recreation service delivery system is in some respects a result of its success (see Table 15). The demand for recreation and sports opportunities has outgrown the informal cooperative that involves a wide array of non-profit organizations, clubs, coaches, vendors, and volunteers.

As a result, there are increasing conflicts among providers over scheduling and use of sports fields, gaps in services are surfacing in terms of unserved target groups, and there is high potential for staff and volunteer burnout. Outdoor sports facilities continue to deteriorate, and potentially can create unsafe conditions.

Without a central authority or overseer to help plan, organize, and coordinate an increasingly dynamic and fledgling recreation delivery system, these shortcomings will continue to place additional stress on the system as the community grows.

Opportunities

A number of opportunities exist to take corrective action and reduce weaknesses in the current recreation program (see Table 16). One solution would be to harness outstanding community partnerships and volunteers by creating City responsibility for leadership of the program. In this way, professional staff can assume accountability and direction for a fledgling program that can be expected to grow in size as the City expands.

Table 16: Opportunities and Threats – Recreation Programs and Services

| Opportunities | Description |
|---|--|
| Form a Coordinating Committee | At a minimum, a coordinating committee could improve communications and address critical issues with solutions |
| City Assume Leadership | It may be timely for the City to provide more leadership responsibility for overseeing the community’s recreation and service delivery |
| Create Parks and Recreation Department or other entity | New organizational structure could be a solution to overburdened City staff and community organizations |
| Make Moderate Improvements to Community Center | Make moderate repairs to the community center to facilitate existing recreational use and accommodate additional use Replace gutters and gym floor; repair leaking roof; make safety improvements |
| Build New Recreation Center | Build new community recreation center as future phase of senior center Community recreation complex includes a skatetpark and dog park |
| Distribute Program Guide | Distribute quarterly community recreation information guide |
| Threats | Description |
| Potential for Crisis Management | Lack of organization, planning, and coordination will create a less responsive delivery system, putting out fires |
| Community Partners in Conflict | Partners working at cross purposes and in competition with each other instead of collaboratively |
| Staff and Volunteer Burnout | Human resources are the most important part of a service delivery program |
| Declining Community Support | Residents will seek other recreational opportunities |
| Risk Potential | Risk increases for potentially unsafe outdoor sports facilities |

Threats

Threats to Silverton's recreation program include continued crisis management due to lack of organization, planning, and coordination of services (see Table 16). This can give rise to high potential for partners to work at cross purposes and in competition with each other. The upshot could be staff and volunteer burnout, declining community support, unmet recreation needs, and loss of revenue opportunities as well as opportunity to generate additional revenue. Risks also increase from potentially unsafe outdoor sports facilities.

F. Management and Operations Analysis

The City of Silverton's Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining and operating five parks and a greenway, the community center, and the community swimming pool. Currently there is one Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) assigned to park maintenance, with seasonal support. No organization chart is available to specify this organizational structure including park maintenance and operations. Maintenance of the swimming pool and community center is absorbed in the City's maintenance budget.

Volunteers are a growing part of the City's park management program, and existing staff takes responsibility for organizing and directing volunteers. No City Council-appointed advisory board exists to oversee the parks and recreation programs and recommend and/or weigh in on policy decisions.

No formal maintenance management plans have been prepared for individual parks and facilities, although maintenance schedules and assessment of needs are part of the park maintenance program. Staff recognizes increasing demands placed on the City's park system and limited resources available to maintain high standards for park operations and maintenance. Moreover, staff is concerned that growth is creating a need for more parks and services.

Given the scarce resources and lean staff that are assigned to manage Silverton's parks and recreation facilities, it should be recognized that it is testimony to their dedication and stewardship that there is a remarkable foundation in place for the future.

Clearly, the building blocks are in place, positive relationships have been established among many partners and volunteers, and the City recognizes a need for capitalizing on its opportunities to solidly position itself for the future.

Tipping Point

The planning process has concluded that the City is at a tipping point in its history, and the demands, expectations, and rapid growth of the community far exceed the capability and capacity of existing staff to manage a program of excellence.

If present trends continue, there will be fragmented decision-making, staff sometimes working at cross-purposes, staff burnout and morale problems, a tendency for crisis

management rather than effective management, and deterioration in the quality of services and condition of facilities.

Increasing park and recreation demands will require a more comprehensive, formal structure for efficient and effective park operations in the future.

G. Recreation Trends and Standards

Fortunately, more research is available on recreation trends and needs than ever before, largely because of the realization that recreation, parks, and open space have such powerful social, economic, environmental, and health benefits. Summarized here are trends that are considered important for Silverton.

Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation Surveys and Research

The Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation has been conducting outdoor recreation research for the last several years as the basis for updating the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). These research results are considered the most pertinent for the master plan.

Running/walking for exercise, walking for pleasure, birdwatching, and nature/wildlife observation were the top outdoor recreation activities that Oregonians participated in, as determined in 2005 (see Table 17).

**Table 17. Top Five Oregon Recreation Activities
State Residents**

| Activity | Estimated Annual User Days (millions) |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Running/Walking for Exercise | 49.2 |
| Walking for Pleasure | 47.4 |
| Birdwatching | 18.7 |
| Nature/Wildlife Observation | 17.6 |
| Sightseeing/Driving for Pleasure | 12.3 |

Source: Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The second and third highest increases in recreation participation in the last 14 years were nature and wildlife observation, and non-motorized boating (golf had the highest gain). The most significant losses in participation activities during the same period were outdoor tennis, horseback riding, and swimming in an outdoor pool.

The SCORP established these funding priorities for Marion County: (1) Land acquisition to keep pace with population growth and rising land costs; (2) Major rehabilitation of existing outdoor recreation facilities, and (3) Non-motorized recreational trail connectivity. These priorities should be considered in applying for state grants.

The most recent research conducted by the State focused on four demographic and social changes facing recreation providers in the coming years. These include:

- Rapidly Aging Oregon Population
- Fewer Oregon Youth Learning Outdoor Skills
- Increasingly Diverse Oregon Population
- Oregon's Physical Activity Crisis (Overweight and Obesity)

National Sporting Good Association Survey, 2004

The latest national sports survey found that skateboarding participation increased 48.6% from 1999 to 2004. Activities losing in participation were swimming (-7.7%), volleyball (-7.9%), and tennis (-11.9%).

Connecting Children and Nature

Richard Louv's book "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder" directly links the absence of nature in the lives of children with trends in the rise of obesity, attention disorders, and depression.

Declining Participation in Senior Centers

There is decreasing participation in senior centers, and the trend is to discontinue building stand-alone centers and to design community recreation centers that offer a wide range of recreation opportunities for all age groups.

Standards

There is much debate among park and recreation professionals concerning the use of standards, statistics, and formulas to guide decisions on the preferred size and number of parks, open space, and recreation facilities that should be provided to meet local parks and recreation needs.

For smaller communities, the issue is likely more crucial because of the compelling need to be fiscally responsible in terms of how much land can not only be acquired, but how to efficiently and responsibly maintain parklands and open space, as well as fund, construct and maintain community recreation and sports facilities.

One conclusion can be reached – use of national standards of acres per thousand and formulas commonly used for establishing levels of service are becoming obsolete. To illustrate the point, a common standard used for many years is 10 acres of parkland per thousand persons. Applying this standard to Silverton's 247 acres of parks and open space, the community will exceed the standard until well after it reaches its projected population of 14,500. Yet, the master plan concluded that Silverton is especially deficient and falling behind in equitable distribution of parks – especially neighborhood and community parks – and essentially there is no organized and connected park and open space system.

For this reason and for purposes of this master plan, standards are community-driven – that is, based on community goals and special characteristics of Silverton, and intuitive decisions that consider variables such as physical barriers, availability of school sites and

sports fields for community use, existing parklands and open space, and natural and topographic features of the urban landscape.

Nevertheless, it is useful to apply national standards to the City of Silverton to provide another gauge of how well park and recreation needs are being met, if only for comparison purposes.

Neighborhood and Community Park Needs

According to national standards of 1.5 acres/1000 population for neighborhood parks, and 6.5 acres/1000 for community parks, Silverton has a major deficiency in these two basic park types. At least 13.8 acres of public neighborhood parkland should be provided, while only 2.3 acres of pocket parks are available (see Table 3). Approximately 59.8 acres of community parkland should be currently available while Coolidge & McClaine Park, the greenway parks, school playgrounds, and the Pine Street Community Sports Complex total only 40 acres (see Tables 3 and 5).

According to these standards, Silverton currently needs at least two additional neighborhood parks and one community park, which combined with 29 acres of privately owned common open space should meet future needs for these types of parks.

Sports Facility Needs

According to national standards, Silverton has a shortage of existing sports facilities including soccer, football, baseball, and softball fields. With overlapping seasons for baseball and soccer, the deficiency of fields has been described by one sports official as “on a collision course.” Adding to the shortfall is the poor condition of fields at the school sites including lack of irrigation, drainage, and turf that is marginally playable. According to interviews with key knowledgeable in the community, new sports fields under construction and proposed at the Pine Street campus, and renovation of existing sports fields at the other school sites would meet 70% of the need for community sports fields.

Oregon Benchmarking Report

In 2006, the Oregon Recreation and Park Association conducted a survey to establish benchmarks for park and recreation service delivery including information on parks, recreation facilities, staffing, and budgeting. Because only a 34% response rate was achieved (39 of 116 organizations), the survey has limited value for comparing data with communities the size of Silverton.

Responses were examined from five communities and two park districts that have a range of populations similar to Silverton, providing useful comparisons for some of the data (see Table 18).

Silverton manages more parkland and open space than the other providers, but ranks very low for percentage of lands that are developed. As the master plan concludes, Silverton has been visionary in advance and timely acquisition of properties, but there are few park and recreation opportunities because of the lack of development and due to a deficiency

in neighborhood and community parkland. Also for comparison, all but two organizations have more miles of trails than Silverton’s estimate of two miles.

Table 18: Oregon Benchmark Survey Data

| Organization | Population | Park Acres | % Developed | Trail Miles |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| City of Silverton | 9,205 | 247 | .10 (est.) | 2 (est.) |
| City of Stayton | 7,505 | 126 | .57 | 3 |
| City of Eagle Point | 8,000 | 110 | .35 | 10 |
| River Road Park & Recreation District | 10,000 | 10 | .10 | .25 |
| City of Sisters | 14,000 | 14 | .90 | 57 |
| City of Canby | 14,500 | 140 | .40 | 5 |
| City of Central Point | 14,950 | 187 | .26 | 1.5 |
| N. Wasco County Park & Rec. District | 15,500 | 134 | .95 | 12 |

Source: Oregon Benchmarking Survey, Oregon Recreation and Parks Association, 2006

Table 19 ranks funding sources that the seven providers use for capital projects (multiple choices were possible). Grants (95%) and impact fees/SDCs (77%) top the list, while user fees rank high (64%) along with private fundraising (62%). Other entrepreneurial methods include revenue bonds (8%) and concession contracts (8%). Urban renewal funds also rank high (18%).

Table 19: Funding Sources – Oregon Benchmark Survey

| Funding Sources | Percent Used |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Grants | 95 |
| Impact Fees/System Dev. Charges | 77 |
| User Fees | 64 |
| Private Fundraising | 62 |
| General Obligation Bonds | 41 |
| Intergovernmental Agreements | 33 |
| Sales Taxes and Property Taxes | 21 |
| Urban Renewal Funds | 18 |
| Revenue Bonds | 8 |
| Concession Contracts | 8 |
| Industrial Development Bonds | 8 |
| Special Improvement Districts | 3 |

Source: Oregon Benchmarking Survey, Oregon Recreation and Parks Association, 2006

What is most significant about this data is the variety of funding sources used by these organizations, including revenue producing services and programs, and moderate use of general obligation funds.

Strategic Issues and Findings

Results of the community needs assessment were synthesized and distilled into a set of strategic issues, which are supported by findings of fact. The issues and findings are the framework for the vision, goals and policies, and recommendations of the master plan.

OVERARCHING ISSUE: Silverton is a special community and residents want to maintain its charm, human scale, natural beauty, and livability.

Highly valued are Silver Creek, historic Coolidge & McClaine Park, ridgeline greenspace, historic downtown, schools, and sports facilities. Art murals and galleries, celebrations and festivals, and community health and well-being rank high in importance. The Oregon Garden is a major asset and tourist attraction.

Issue 1. Rapid growth is beginning to shape the character of Silverton and threaten its special qualities.

Residents want public greenspace effectively incorporated into new developments, but current trends are toward either private common areas that are not accessible to the general public, or very small public park sites that do not fulfill neighborhood park needs. As a result there is a major deficiency of neighborhood and community parkland. Little guidance exists for integrating land development and conservation goals into community policy and decision-making.

Issue 2. Silverton lacks a system of parks and greenspaces, although major elements are in place.

The Silver Creek greenway near downtown lays the groundwork for a system concept –historic Coolidge & McClaine Park, swimming pool, library, City Hall, historic flourmill site, and Town Square Park – all connected with a multi-use, off-street trail. The Pettit property adjacent to The Oregon Garden has potential as a demonstration urban natural area; Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park could become a regional waterfront park. Large school sites are strategically located in areas unserved by neighborhood parks, and have potential for joint school-park use.

Issue 3. Weakest element of Silverton’s greenspace system is the lack of connectivity.

Linkages between parks, schools, and open spaces are almost non-existent except for the Silver Creek greenway near downtown. As the Silverton Transportation Plan finds, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is lacking with major barriers such as rail lines, Silver Creek, major thoroughfares, and ridgelines. A pedestrian and bicycle friendly, “walkable” community is a high priority of residents.

Issue 4. For its size, Silverton has extraordinary opportunities to meet recreational and greenspace needs.

Silverton’s natural landscape is rich and varied including the Silver Creek corridor extending through the heart of the community, scenic hillsides, wetlands, and woodlands, providing opportunities for walking and fitness, nature enjoyment, river recreation, scenic enjoyment, and environmental education for youth – all considered to be high priorities in terms of recreation trends and needs. These are the ingredients for creating a “quality place” that can help the community achieve economic prosperity, sense of community, and well-being.

Issue 5. Overall, Silverton parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces are well maintained and in good condition.

Dedicated staff takes pride in maintaining parks, facilities, and open spaces in good condition, and with the exception of the community center, they are functional and accessible. Most shortcomings are due to shortage of staff, lack of professional design and planning, and absence of maintenance management plans and guidelines. Coolidge & McClaine Park is used beyond its carrying capacity. At the swimming pool and Silverton Reservoir, runoff from parking lots is not filtered, and there are major infestations of noxious vegetation in some areas of parks and open spaces.

Issue 6. Silverton’s recreation facilities are costly to maintain, and are not designed to meet today’s recreational needs.

The Community Swimming Pool is almost 70 years old, and even though recently renovated and upgraded, it does not reflect the trend toward leisure pools that are designed for family water play. The Community Center is an old armory constructed in 1925, and offers very little opportunity to provide community recreation programs and activities. These facilities are maintained at a high cost per participant.

Issue 7. Silverton’s dedicated City staff, volunteers, non-profit groups, and businesses reflect a remarkable “can-do” spirit.

The School District, Silver Falls YMCA, Silverton Together, and large number of volunteers, vendors, and businesses provide a variety of community recreation programs and services including recreational sports activities, art classes, and aquatics programs. Community celebrations, events, and festivals bring families and the community together and draw large numbers of visitors from the region. Volunteers have been involved in major efforts to remove non-native vegetation from trees in Coolidge & McClaine Park, and restore riparian habitat along Silver Creek.

Issue 8. Indicators of programmatic and organizational stress are surfacing in the community.

Silverton is reaching a tipping point in terms of matching the community’s expectations for quality parks and recreation services with the capacity and capability of providers. Unrealistic demands are placed on City staff, and there is a general lack of oversight and leadership to coordinate, direct, and effectively administer the large number of recreation and sports programs that are offered in the community. Indicators of programmatic stress include tension among partners over mission and goals, perceptions of disproportionate commitment of resources, gaps in services (e.g. for youth recreation), crisis management, volunteer burnout, and lack of integrated decision-making and coordination.

Plan Recommendations

The master plan recommendations provide direction for implementing the vision statement, goals, and policies that emerged from the planning process. Recommendations respond to community park and recreation needs as identified through extensive public involvement, and an assessment of existing and future opportunities as well as physical conditions of sites and facilities.

To frame and guide the recommendations, findings from the planning process were distilled into several strategic issues or themes:

- Silverton wants to retain its special character
- Rapid growth is beginning to threaten Silverton’s special qualities
- Silverton lacks a system of parks and greenspaces
- Lack of connectivity is Silverton’s weakest greenspace element
- Silverton has extraordinary opportunities to meet community needs
- Overall, Silverton’s parks, recreational facilities, and open space are well maintained
- Silverton’s recreation facilities are not designed to meet community needs
- Silverton’s dedicated City staff, volunteers, NGO’s reflect a “can-do” spirit
- Indicators of programmatic and organizational stress are surfacing

Recommended Classification System

The classification system in Appendix A provides a comprehensive framework for planning, development, and management of a Green Infrastructure system. If the system is organized in this manner, Silverton’s park and recreation needs will be met in an efficient and effective manner, and incremental improvements and additions can be made systematically and in a feasible progression.

The most important aspect of the classification system is its structure comprising a hierarchy of parks, greenspaces, and recreation facilities, each with a discrete role and purpose. It is essential that preferred recreational uses for each system component is established by plan and policy, assuring not only equilibrium in the system but meeting sustainability goals of resource protection, public benefits, and efficient management.

Project List and Costs

A detailed project list and cost estimates for the master plan recommendations are provided in Appendix B. These recommendations respond to the conclusions in Chapter 4 and the issues and findings in Chapter 5.

Implementation

To implement the strategies and actions outlined in the plan, a critical set of special recommendations has been developed to address management and operations. As concluded in the plan, community expectations and needs do not match up with staffing and resources currently allocated to provide quality services.

A. Vision Diagram – Parks, Greenspaces, Facilities

The Vision Diagram is a graphic image of the existing and recommended parks and open space system (see Map 3). The “Green Infrastructure” planning concept was the overarching framework for organizing the preferred system. This concept views parks, open spaces, natural areas, and linkages as key components of a “greenspace” system – with essential functions considered to be as important as public streets and utilities.

The Vision Diagram responds to core beliefs and aspirations of Silverton residents, and creates a mental map and vision of a preferred future. The diagram begins with existing “building blocks” of the system.

Existing Parks and Greenspaces

Silverton’s park and recreation opportunities can be substantially increased through the following enhancements and improvements to existing parks and greenspaces.

Coolidge & McClaine Park Renovation, Town Square Improvements, Silver Cr. Greenway Renovation and rehabilitation of the historic 8.3-acre Coolidge & McClaine Park should continue as a high priority so that the park can become highly functioning as a downtown park, and its assets well protected and maintained. Improvements should include the following:

- New play equipment geared to needs of 5-12 year old children
- Rehabilitation or replacement and relocation of the restroom, ADA-accessible
- ADA-accessible trail connection from parking area across Silver Creek to park paths
- Improvement of existing informal trail south of the park along Silver Creek, providing ADA-accessibility and removal of noxious vegetation and replacement with natives
- Continued restoration of Silver Creek riparian area, including removal of invasive plant species and restoring with native plants, as well as correcting bank erosion
- New park benches and litter receptacles
- Outdoor amphitheater (will require additional site planning and design)
- Put-in / Take-out site to provide creek access for kayaks, canoes, and tubes

With assistance of community volunteers, continued habitat restoration work along the Silver Creek Greenway and hillside should also receive a high priority, removing invasive vegetation and replanting with native plant material.

The 7.7-acre linear open space along Silver Creek should become a demonstration greenway project, continuing to provide interpretive displays and information on the history of the corridor including the park, historic flourmill site, covered footbridge, and Town Square site. Areas such as the chain link fencing on the east bank entry to the park (near the pool parking lot) should be enhanced with landscaping and screening, and intrusive signs should be removed or replaced.

“Green” improvements such as the stormwater catch basin at the community center should be made in other areas such as the swimming pool parking lot, and information signs and/or interpretive displays installed that describe importance of biofiltration and protecting water quality of Silver Creek.

Improvements should be made to improve legibility of the creekside trail, such as the gap that now occurs at the City Hall parking lot and lack of a visible connection with the downtown sidewalk. Special pavers or painted footprints would enhance connectivity. The trail south of the park along the west bank should be improved, and trail connections made to the adjacent neighborhood.

Enhancements to Town Square are recommended so that it functions as a downtown gateway including an information kiosk, historical information, and interpretive displays.

Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park Development

Also located on Silver Creek just outside the city, 60-acre Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park (80-acres) functions as a large, regional waterfront park for non-motorized boating and fishing. A loop trail system including interpretive displays is recommended, which would require a footbridge across the creek below the dam. Also recommended is a designated swimming area, a park host program and preferred location to improve oversight of park use, enhancements to the entryway and parking lot including a biofiltration system and landscaping, replacing the conventional restroom with a “Green” composting facility, and expanding picnic facilities for families and large groups. Creek access below the dam is also proposed to provide a non-motorized boat access including kayaks and canoes.

Pettit Natural Area Demonstration Urban Natural Area

The City owns an undeveloped 80-acre natural area and small lake known as the Pettit property, adjacent to The Oregon Garden. The recommendation is for this site to become a demonstration urban natural area with trails and interpretive facilities that complement the Garden. Recommended facilities include a small parking lot, ½ mi. nature trail, kiosks, display boards, benches, telescopes for observing wildlife, and a small natural amphitheater for educational presentations and discussions. Trail connections and sidewalks are needed between these open space areas and Coolidge & McClaine Park, as well as downtown.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Greenway Opportunity Area

A sizable, intact riparian forest of approximately 1500 linear feet is located on the City’s Wastewater Treatment Plant site, with an opportunity to provide creek access for kayaks and canoes, a small parking lot, an information kiosk, and interpretive displays with public open space as a major node and demonstration greenway area on Silver Creek.

Pioneer Village Pocket Park Development

The City recently acquired this small 2-acre pocket park site in the growing southeast part of Silverton, which should have a high priority for development because of rapid build-out in the area. A master plan should be prepared for the site with neighborhood participation, considering facilities such as a playground for children and youth including play equipment and hard surface court facility, picnic facilities including a small gazebo, pathways, signage and interpretive facilities providing information on the surrounding natural landscape and topography.

Lincoln Street Pocket Park Adopt-a-Park Program

Lincoln Street playground is a very small site in the north central part of Silverton. Due to its small size, an Adopt-a-Park program is recommended with involvement of the adjacent neighborhood or a community sponsor to help maintain the site and offset high maintenance costs.

Private Common Open Space Areas

Several common open space areas are privately owned by homeowners, and with some exceptions are small in size and have limited recreation functions. It is recommended that the City avoid taking responsibility for future maintenance or ownership of these sites, because of the high cost to maintain and limited recreation and open space value to the community. An alternative would be to establish an Adopt-a-Park program with a local sponsor and for volunteers to maintain the sites.

The Oregon Garden

The Oregon Garden is a major component of the existing greenspace system, functioning as a large non-profit public demonstration garden, educational facility, and meeting place managed and operated by others. The Garden should be connected to downtown with a multi-use trail.

Existing Recreation Facilities, Sports Facilities

As documented in the master plan assessment, Silverton's recreation facilities (swimming pool, community center) are largely deficient due to their design and age, and therefore substantial investment in these facilities is not recommended, at least in the short term. Partnering with the School District to upgrade existing sports facilities is a more immediate need.

Community Outdoor Sports Facility Renovations

Existing sports fields at Robert Frost and Mark Twain schools are in need of renovation, and it is recommended that the City partner with the School District in upgrading and restoring these facilities to meet needs for outdoor sports activities. Renovation should include improving drainage, installing an automatic irrigation system, and re-establishing turf. According to representatives of the sports community, approximately 70% of the community's sports facility needs would be satisfied with renovation of the existing fields and construction of the new community sports complex.

Silverton Community Swimming Pool Feasibility Study

The Silverton Community Swimming Pool is part of the central core of the greenspace system, located on the east bank of Silver Creek near Coolidge & McClaine Park. Although the pool was recently upgraded and renovated including a cover for year-around use, it still functions largely as a traditional pool and lacks opportunities for family water play. A feasibility study is recommended in the future to explore options for providing more water play opportunities either at the existing pool or a future location, and perhaps in collaboration with other community partners.

Silverton Community Center

The Silverton Community Center has limited recreation use, is not owned by the City, and is therefore not considered a functioning element of the Vision Diagram.

BMX Track

A BMX track is located at the Rogers Wayside County Park, near The Oregon Garden. The facility was designed and is maintained by a local bikeshop owner and youth in the Silverton community. Bicycle and pedestrian connections should be made for multi-modal access from the City.

New Parks and Greenspace

As concluded in the system analysis, Silverton has excellent opportunities for improving the public greenspace system, and correcting deficiencies in neighborhood and community parkland.

Silver Creek Greenway Feasibility Study

Flowing through the heart of Silverton, Silver Creek is recommended as a future greenway to support habitat protection and restoration, connect parks and greenspace, and where feasible provide opportunities for pedestrians and bicycles. Proposed facilities include interpretive displays, information signs, viewing platforms, and sitting areas. A feasibility study is recommended to evaluate viable options and directly involve landowners in any proposed recommendations.

Viewshed Protection Opportunity Area

On the southern edge of the undeveloped ridgeline east of S. Water Street, a Viewshed Protection Area is identified as a potential area to create conservation easements, viewpoints, and forest protection by working with property owners and others. A community Land Trust is recommended to facilitate negotiations and create opportunities for gifts, donations, and living trusts.

Proposed Community Park

A new 30 to 50-acre community park is recommended for acquisition and development east of Abiqua Heights to meet not only future needs, but also fulfill a shortfall of parkland for community-wide and neighborhood use and reduce current impacts to Coolidge & McClaine Park. Proposed location on the Vision Diagram is conceptual only and not site specific. Recommended improvements include a pavilion and amphitheater, group and family picnic facilities, playground for children and youth, court sports, and infrastructure including parking, restrooms, and pathway system. Trail connections should be provided to adjacent neighborhoods.

Proposed Neighborhood Park

A new neighborhood park is recommended in the Steelhammer Road area, a large area unserved by existing parks. A seven-acre tract of undeveloped school land is recommended for acquisition and development, assuming the land is not desired for a new school. Facilities to be considered in master planning for site include a playground for children and youth with play equipment and hard surface court facility, picnic facilities including a small gazebo, pathways, and signage.

Proposed Joint School-Park

Through a cooperative agreement with the School District, a 4-acre joint school-park is recommended at Mark Twain Middle School where a large oak grove exists and picnic

facilities and a new playground are recommended. A small adjacent area on the northwest corner of the school is recommended for acquisition to buffer the adjacent industrial use.

New Recreation Facilities, Sports Facilities

The City recently acquired 13 acres of undeveloped school land adjacent to Robert Frost School for community purposes. This acquisition provides an excellent opportunity to develop a community recreation complex. The site is very accessible to the community and within close proximity to downtown.

Silverton Senior Center and Future Recreation Center

The new 5,000 sq. ft. senior center will soon be constructed adjacent to Robert Frost School. A new 20,000 sq. ft. community recreation center is recommended as a future phase of the senior center in order to create a critical mass and full-service community recreation complex at one location. The center would include a multi-purpose gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms, a fitness-welless center, concessions, and amenities.

Skatepark Development

A skatepark up to 10,000 s.f. in size is recommended as a part of the community recreation complex on recently acquired land adjacent to Robert Frost School, with active involvement of youth in the design. Parking would be facilitated at the nearby senior center and proposed recreation center complex.

Dog Park Acquisition and Development

A fenced dog park is recommended on the vacant western edge of the school site, acquiring one acre of land from the School District that would become an addition to the special use recreation complex. Basic infrastructure is recommended including fencing, signage, and trail connection to parking facilities at the senior center and proposed recreation center.

Community Sports Complex – Phase 2 Improvements

New community sports fields at the Pine Street High School campus represent an initial phase of a potential, full-service community sports complex that could accommodate league and tournament play. It is recommended that the City cost-share with the School District in constructing a future phase of the complex, meeting not only outdoor sports facility needs, but also attracting visitors to Silverton. Outdoor lighting, storage facilities, and bleachers would be required to meet these needs.

Trail System Recommendations

While a comprehensive trail system was not part of the scope of the master plan, a framework was created for connecting parks and greenspaces, schools, and other major features of Silverton, with the following recommendations.

Multi-use Trail Corridors

The basic structure of a trail system incorporates recommendations in the Silverton Transportation Plan, including a multi-use pedestrian and bicycle trail along Silver Creek and connecting with a multi-use trail along the existing rail line and an abandoned rail line west of Mark Twain School. Connections between Mark Twain School and the two

high schools are also recommended, as proposed in the Transportation Plan. Footbridges across Silver Creek are also part of the Transportation Plan recommendations.

This master plan also recommends connections between Coolidge & McClaine Park, The Oregon Garden, and the Petitt Property, and extending a multi-use trail from “C” Street to the Wastewater Treatment Plant along Silver Creek. Regional connections along major highways as recommended by the Transportation Plan are also included – including a connection to Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park. Future roadway connections east, west and northside would provide multi-modal connection opportunities.

The greenway feasibility recommended in the section above should include a trails feasibility study to evaluate viable options and directly involve landowners in any proposed recommendations.

B. Recreation Programs and Services

Findings from the master plan process indicate a major strength of Silverton is the variety of recreation programs, services and community events that are offered through a large number of non-profit agencies, schools, community groups and clubs, businesses, volunteers, and vendors. The City of Silverton provides support to these groups in varying ways including office facilities, financial assistance, and use of parks and facilities.

Findings also suggest one of Silverton’s critical issues is the fact that it is reaching a tipping point in the size and scope of service delivery, with multiple indicators of programmatic stress placed on providers including the City of Silverton.

From the master plan outreach process, this theme surfaced in many ways including gaps in recreation services for some segments of community. Coordination, scheduling, and publicizing programs and activities are becoming more difficult, and missions are sometimes in conflict. The community center is not functional as a recreation center. Both the School District and City of Silverton have expressed the need to clarify roles and responsibilities for managing the large sports program and maintaining high quality outdoor sports fields and gyms for community use. And with construction of the new senior center, additional administrative and maintenance and operations support will be required.

As outlined in the next section, it is recommended that the City explore options for improving recreation programs and services, including more leadership responsibility assumed by the City of Silverton itself. In addition to possible organizational and administrative adjustments, there are several other recommendations.

Respond to Community Recreation Needs and Trends

Recent research indicates trends in recreation needs for Oregonians include providing programs for an aging and more diverse population, connecting youth with nature, and addressing a crisis in Oregonians’ physical activity that is leading to health problems.

Similar trends were underscored for Silverton residents through the master plan process, identifying gaps in community recreation programs and services for youth, seniors and adults, and Hispanic families. Teenagers consistently expressed concerns that not enough recreation opportunities were available for their age group, and frequently expressed dissatisfaction with the community placing a high priority on sports programs while ignoring other interests such as a skatepark and a safe, supervised public place to “hang out.”

Affordability was also identified as a community issue, with many families unable to absorb fees for programs and services, and are either reluctant to accept scholarships or do not know about their availability. Research also indicates that Hispanic families have specific cultural interests and needs including facilities for large groups and family gatherings, musical events and dancing, and cultural celebrations.

Given these concerns and recreation trends, these are examples of programmatic areas where community partners should consider working together to place more community emphasis and priorities.

Increase Health and Fitness Opportunities, Community Walkability

Opportunities for walking for both exercise and recreation should be substantially increased, since this is the most popular recreation activity for Oregon residents and addresses the crisis in lack of physical activity that is leading to health problems. Silverton Walk Abouts is an active Volkswalking club that promotes benefits of walking and could be supported as a more active partner in the community’s recreation program.

It is recommended that the YMCA explore ways to increase opportunities for family fitness programs at the Community Swimming Pool, perhaps working more directly with the Silverton Hospital as a partner.

Connect Youth, Families, Seniors, and Nature

Given the concerns for youth development and lack of connection with nature and the outdoors, more organized and unorganized programs and activities should be offered to children and youth in the community. With minimal improvements such as trails and interpretive information, outdoor opportunities could be made available at sites such as the Pettit property and Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park. Silver Creek could support more recreational use by improving public access opportunities and promoting seasonal and safe river activities such as kayaking, canoeing, tubing, and swimming.

Involvement of volunteers in habitat restoration projects provide excellent avenues for children and families to learn more about invasive vegetation, the important role of native plants and trees, and the benefits of maintaining healthy urban ecosystems. The School District could play a major role in these efforts, as well as the local Izaak Walton League and the Pudding River Watershed Council.

Given high participation rates and growing trends, this recommendation also would meet an increasing need to provide opportunities for birdwatching, nature enjoyment, and

wildlife observation. As the community population ages, these recreation interests will continue to increase at a large rate.

Recognize and Support Diversity

It is recommended that community recreation providers work more with local groups such as Hispanas Unidas to explore ways for local parks, facilities, and programs to accommodate and support diversity.

Improve and Expand Community Recreation Facilities and Sports Fields

The previous section includes several recommendations for addressing a deficiency in Silverton's recreation and sports facilities, and specific ways to expand recreation opportunities in the community. Notably these include development of a skatepark, addition of a community recreation center as a future phase of the senior center project, development of a full service community sports complex for tournament and league play, and renovation of existing sports fields at local schools. A feasibility study is recommended to explore options for improving family water play opportunities either at the existing community pool or a new facility. Other facility improvements can also close gaps in recreation services such as providing a designated swimming area at Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park and creating a park host program.

Conduct Systematic Recreation Needs Assessments

With the City's leadership, it is timely for recreation providers to evaluate existing programs and determine in what strategic ways community recreation programs can be adjusted to address recreation trends and needs. It is recommended that the City take the initiative to work with service providers and conduct periodic recreation needs assessments to continue to identify gaps in services, identify satisfaction levels, and determine community priorities. These efforts can then be coordinated with the Community Opinion Survey administered periodically by the City. (A process for conducting routine needs assessments is included at the end of the master plan).

Formalize Community Partnerships

In large part, collaboration among providers has been done on an informal and as-needed basis. Given increasing recreation demands and needs of the community, it will become increasingly important to develop formal agreements that provide improved coordination, planning, and management, fulfill organizational missions and goals, and offer more effective recreation services to the community. The City should assume leadership in implementing this recommendation.

Improve Information Distribution

Due to the number of recreation providers and wide variety of programs, many residents either have limited information or are confused with recreation programs and services that are offered. By preparing and distributing a recreation program guide, residents could find in one information piece all of the activities and services.

The previous section outlined recommendations to enhance community recreation programs through improved existing recreation facilities and several proposed new facilities.

C. Management and Operations

The master plan assessment highlighted the outstanding leadership role, dedication, and accomplishments of City staff in shaping the current structure and framework for meeting Silverton's park and recreation needs. Indeed, given its size, it is remarkable that Silverton has such an excellent foundation for creating a first class park and recreation system. At the same time, increasing community demands are exceeding the current level of staff support, existing organizational structure, and available resources.

The following recommendations are highlighted as essential for Silverton to transition from its current management and leadership approach to one that can begin to implement the master plan. The full set of recommendations is outlined in the Strategies and Actions section of the master plan, and additional recommendations are included at the end of the master plan document.

Create a New Organization Structure

It is recommended that the City create a new organizational structure to begin immediately implementing the master plan. Initially, this could take the form of a new coordinator within the Public Works Department to oversee maintenance and operations and provide direction to the program.

However, this does not resolve the dilemma of a fragmented community recreation program, and the organizational capability and capacity to implement the numerous strategies and actions recommended in this plan. For this reason, it is recommended that the City explore alternatives for preferred long-term administration of the program, including:

- New Division within the Public Works Department
- New City Parks and Recreation Department
- Parks and Recreation District (using boundaries of the library or school district)

Appoint a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

Appointment of a formal parks and recreation committee is recommended to advise the City Council on matters of policy and to help guide and support the program. In preparing the master plan, it has become quite evident that there are key knowledgeable with remarkable skills and talents in the community, and these human resources should be harnessed on a formal basis.

Develop a New Partnership Agreement with the School District

Clearly, both the City and School District recognize the community benefits in developing a more collaborative relationship. A new agreement is needed to establish an equitable way for the community to use school facilities for after-school sports programs, and in some cases for satisfying unmet neighborhood park and open space needs.

Develop Maintenance Management Plans

Formal maintenance management plans provide a systematic course of action to avoid deferred maintenance and maintain facilities and parks in good condition. The National

Recreation and Parks Association offers continuing education for preparing maintenance management plans. Best practices should be identified that meet sustainability goals.

Equally important, special management plans should be prepared for natural areas, since they have requirements that go well beyond grounds and facility maintenance. Often, local professionals and specialists will volunteer to draft these plans with an understanding of the science and management requirements that can “nudge” natural habitats with strategic restoration goals and strategies, as well as recommend public uses most suited to fragile landscapes.

Assess Health of Tree Canopy in Coolidge & McClaine Park

The master plan considers Coolidge & McClaine Park as a historic and vibrant downtown park that should continue to accommodate community events and celebrations. However, given the significant tree canopy in the park, an arborist should be retained to assess health and conditions of the Douglas-fir trees and make recommendations on the desired carrying capacity of the park.

Develop a Formal Volunteer Program

The current volunteer program does not reach its full potential because of staff shortfall to oversee and manage. It is recommended that a Green Volunteer Program be created and a recognition component developed. A work plan should be prepared with a list of potential projects for local civic groups, clubs, and others. Trail construction and maintenance, and invasive vegetation removal are two of the most popular volunteer programs.

Prepare a Gift Catalogue

Gift catalogs have been most valuable for obtaining gifts and donations. The value of the catalog is to not only develop priorities that match departmental goals and strategies, but through pictures and text a potential donor can be inspired to make a commitment.

Help Facilitate Creation of a Local Land Trust

Non-governmental organizations such as a Community Land Trust have proven most effective in helping protect viewsheds with public access opportunities in undeveloped ridgeline and hilltop areas, and using methods such as conservation easements, fee simple acquisition, gifts and donations, and living trusts.

Establish an Adopt-a-Park Program

An adopt-a-park program is recommended for Lincoln Street Park because of its size and high cost to maintain. This should also become the proto-type should any of the several private common areas become abandoned and the City is requested to maintain them by default.

D. Strategies and Actions

To facilitate implementation of the master plan, strategies and actions are recommended for each of the eight goals outlined in Chapter Two. The list is not prescriptive, but

represents a conceptual framework for a work program that can be adjusted to availability of funds and opportunities, and annual City goals and priorities.

In this context, these strategies and actions should be viewed as an organized array of potential recommendations, continuously evaluated and refined based on feasibility and resource capabilities. In particular, these recommendations are intended to provide an action plan to help keep pace with rapid growth and development.

GOAL 1: Develop a Green Infrastructure Network

- 1.1 Adopt the recommended Park and Greenspace System Classification and use as guidelines for planning, managing, and maintaining parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities.
- 1.2 Establish a community education program to help implement the Greenspace Vision Diagram including brochures, maps, posting on the City's web site, and celebrate milestones.
- 1.3 Create and work with a Community Land Trust to protect viewsheds with public access opportunities in undeveloped ridgeline and hilltop areas, exploring methods such as conservation easements, fee simple acquisition, gifts and donations, and living trusts.
- 1.4 Conduct a feasibility study for implementing the Silver Creek Greenway and Multi-use Trail, including greenway management and habitat protection goals.
- 1.5 Manage existing City greenway properties as a demonstration area to help implement the Silver Creek Greenway concept.
- 1.6 Work with the Pudding River Watershed Council to help protect and restore riparian habitat along Silver Creek.
- 1.7 Work with landowners and provide information/education on habitat protection and restoration along the Silver Creek Greenway.
- 1.8 Develop the Pettit property as a demonstration urban natural area, and develop a trail system and interpretive program.
- 1.9 Work with local scientists and professionals to help refine and implement the Greenspace Vision Diagram, by continued assessment of the condition and health of Silverton's urban ecosystems, including vulnerability analysis.

GOAL 2: Guide Land Use and Manage Growth

- 2.1 Amend the Silverton Comprehensive Plan, incorporating the Green Infrastructure concept and policies into Chapter 4: Open Space, Natural and Cultural Resources.
- 2.2 Continue to implement riparian setback and steep slope requirements and evaluate their effectiveness.
- 2.3 Work with the development community to foster and promote green infrastructure design in new subdivisions; use an incentive-based approach to the greatest degree possible and avoid dedication of neighborhood parkland and open space that does not meet standards and guidelines of the master plan.
- 2.4 Establish a recognition and awards program to acknowledge local development projects that achieve design excellence and promote Green Infrastructure concepts.

GOAL 3: Create a Linked Greenspace Network

- 3.1 Conduct a feasibility study for implementing multi-use trails along rail lines, in addition to the Silver Creek feasibility study (Strategy #1.4).
- 3.2 Actively involve property owners in all feasibility studies for implementing Green Infrastructure concepts and multi-use trail plans.
- 3.3 Establish a Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee representing key public and private sector representatives to coordinate and implement the proposed linked network of Green Infrastructure, commercial and employment areas, downtown and other special areas.

- 3.4 Connect The Oregon Garden, Pettit property, Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park, and other significant landscape features and recreation amenities in the Green Infrastructure Network.
- 3.5 Develop a Comprehensive Trails Plan including on-street and off-street trails and pathways, implementation strategies, and proposed funding options.

GOAL 4: Assure Recreation and Education Opportunities are Available

- 4.1 Develop intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with the City and non-profit agencies, the business community, schools, and other organizations to facilitate meeting recreational and outdoor sports needs of the community.
- 4.2 Evaluate the current organizational structure and explore options for improving the planning, administration, and management of community recreation programs, and include operations and management of the Community Swimming Pool.
- 4.3 Develop a periodic community recreation needs assessment to identify gaps in services, involve major partners, and coordinate with the Silverton Community Opinion Survey.
- 4.4 Review recreation research and trends (aging population, connecting youth with nature, increasing population diversity, Oregon's physical activity crisis) and work with providers to evaluate and improve existing recreation programs.
- 4.5 Prepare and distribute a recreation program guide that provides information on all community recreation activities and services, including programs offered at the swimming pool, and list schedules and locations.
- 4.6 Develop a funding strategy and construct a recreation center as second phase of the new senior center.
- 4.7 Conduct a feasibility study to add family water play and amenities to the existing swimming pool and/or alternative locations and design of a new leisure pool in partnership with others.
- 4.8 Acquire undeveloped 0.9 acres for a fenced dog park on the west side of the Robert Frost Elementary School site.
- 4.9 Develop a funding strategy and construct a skatepark, preferably on the 13.35 acres of undeveloped school land adjacent to Robert Frost Elementary School.
- 4.10 Cost share with the School District to construct a full-service community sports complex suitable for league and tournament play including lights, concessions, bleachers and amenities such as picnic and play areas.
- 4.11 Cost share with the School District to renovate, upgrade, and maintain outdoor sports facilities at Mark Twain Middle School and Robert Frost Elementary School.
- 4.12 Develop a relationship and mechanism with the Art Association to incorporate art in the design of new parks and in renovations of existing parks.
- 4.13 Work with Non-Government Organizations (NGO's), schools and volunteers to expand and coordinate outdoor education programs for youth and adults.
- 4.14 Develop loop trails that are conducive for short hikes and have multiple outdoor education opportunities.
- 4.15 Develop educational interpretive displays in key locations within the parks system.

GOAL 5: Maintain a Green Infrastructure Ethic to Sustain a Healthy Economy and Tourism

- 5.1 Collect and share national studies that illustrate monetary, personal health, and social values that are attributed to a progressive parks, recreation and healthy green infrastructure system.
- 5.2 Connect The Oregon Garden with the Silverton Trail System, and through proper signage and trailheads encourage and welcome visitors to the downtown core.
- 5.3 Make enhancements to Town Square to function as a downtown gateway including an information kiosk, historical information, and interpretive displays.
- 5.4 Working with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, develop a work plan and strategies to improve the walkability of Silverton, promote local businesses, and make it more visitor friendly.

- 5.5 Develop public information on benefits of Silverton's Green Infrastructure program to promote the community as a sound place for businesses and families to locate.
- 5.6 Develop Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park as a regional waterfront park, and develop a loop trail system, improved parking, and interpretive program.

GOAL 6: Incorporate Sustainability Concepts in Decision-making

- 6.1 Create a Sustainability Advisory Committee to review the City of Silverton's services and how they can be improved to meet sustainability goals; e.g. to encourage an employee ethic that could be transferred to the community as a whole. Appoint a staff member as coordinator.
- 6.2 Develop a strategic plan to implement core sustainable actions for maintaining parks and public facilities, including a robust recycling program.
- 6.3 Create a staff training and education program for sustainable practices.
- 6.4 Develop alternative transportation initiatives for City staff.
- 6.5 Develop an organized volunteer program for invasive vegetation removal and appoint a City staff member as coordinator (Strategy 7.1).
- 6.6 Promote recycling in all parks and public spaces, especially during festivals and special events.

GOAL 7: Strengthen and Maintain Community Partnerships, Volunteers, and Public Engagement

- 7.1 Create a Green Infrastructure Volunteer program and include a recognition component.
- 7.2 Facilitate forming non-governmental organizations such as a Land Trust that will partner with the City to implement the Green Infrastructure program.
- 7.3 Develop a Volunteer Work Plan with a list of projects for local civic groups, clubs, and others to select projects.
- 7.4 Develop a gift catalog for the community to help fund specific needs.
- 7.5 Focus work parties on trail construction and maintenance as well as invasive vegetation removal – projects that have proven to have high community support.
- 7.6 Develop a cooperative program between the City and School District to engage students in outdoor classroom projects that help connect youth with nature.
- 7.7. Establish a resident park host program at Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park to help enforce park regulations.
- 7.8 Integrate community gardens into existing parks and open space sites.

GOAL 8: Provide High Quality Services and Fill Gaps

- 8.1 Create a new organizational structure and staff responsibilities to immediately begin implementing the City's Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.
- 8.2 Explore alternatives for preferred park and recreation administration, including a City Parks and Recreation Department, a Park and Recreation District (with similar boundaries to the Library and/or School District), or expand responsibilities within the City's existing organizational structure.
- 8.3 Appoint a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Citizen Advisory Committee to help guide the program and advise the City Council.
- 8.4 Develop an agreement with the School District to establish a partnership for community use of school lands and outdoor sports facilities.
- 8.5 Designate Mark Twain Middle School as a Joint School-Park and acquire oak grove from the School District for neighborhood park use; also acquire adjacent private land (0.3 ac triangle).
- 8.6 Acquire and develop a 30-50 acre new community park east of Abiqua Heights.
- 8.7 Hire an arborist to conduct a study of the trees in Coolidge & McClaine Park and recommend a management program that establishes limits of use for community events and celebrations.
- 8.8 Acquire 7-acre Steelhammer Rd undeveloped site from the School District, and develop as a neighborhood park.

- 8.9 Develop an adopt-a-park agreement with the Lincoln Street Park neighborhood to serve as the pilot for the City to disengage from primary responsibilities for small, inefficient parks. Should homeowners in other neighborhoods discontinue maintenance responsibility for private common open space and parks in the future, use the Lincoln Street Park model as the preferred alternative to the City accepting responsibility for these areas by default due to their high cost.
- 8.10 Develop maintenance management plans for all City parks and open spaces.
- 8.11 Develop management plans for natural areas with specific policies, goals, and management practices that give special attention to habitat protection and restoration, as well as recreation uses suitable to the site and its vulnerabilities.

E. Operations Impact Analysis and Funding Sources

Forecasting Operations and Maintenance Costs

This section forecasts potential operations and maintenance (O&M) costs for implementing projects identified in the master plan within the first five years after adoption. To determine O&M costs for renovated parks and new projects coming on line, current O&M expenditures for intensely developed, passively developed, and undeveloped parks were used as the base number.

Silverton's inventory of parks and open space consists of 247 acres, of which approximately 10% is considered highly developed and the remaining acreage is either passively developed or undeveloped. The FY 2007-2008 operating budget for park operations and maintenance is \$208,833, which also includes support services such as assistance in facilitating several large community events and festivals. It is estimated that costs attributed primarily to active park maintenance of Silverton's developed parkland is approximately \$3,800 per acre. This cost is derived from using 55 acres of maintained parkland within the current parks system, and comparisons with other cities.

The Pettit property is recommended as a demonstration natural area, and it is estimated that improvements for passive recreation, outdoor education, and natural resource management will cost approximately \$500 per acre (about 20 total acres). It should also be recognized that one of the highest demands for park development is nature trails, which lends itself to volunteers and therefore has limited general fund requirements other than natural area management and planning, and preparing grant applications for trail construction.

Other sites that are recommended for development within the first five years include the Steelhammer Neighborhood Park, Pioneer Village Park, a skatepark, a dog park, and access to Silver Creek at Coolidge & McClaine Park. Continued renovation of Coolidge & McClaine Park is recommended, but typically average costs are lowered once parks are upgraded and facilities at the end of their life cycles are replaced. Recommended enhancements of Town Square should not create additional O&M costs during the five-year period.

For the first 5-year period of the master plan, annual O&M costs of \$68,742 are projected for five new projects and the City’s proposed share to maintain the new community sports complex (see Table 20). Additionally, to provide professional direction and leadership for an expanded parks and recreation system as the master plan recommends, a 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Parks and Recreation Supervisor position should be created.

Table 20. Projected Annual Operations and Maintenance Costs for Personnel and New Projects (First Five Years)

| New Projects | Size | Projected Annual Cost | Remarks |
|---|------------|-----------------------|---|
| Coolidge & McClaine Park Renovation | 8.3 ac | No additional cost | Renovations typically will lower annual costs for operations and maintenance |
| Town Square Enhancement | 7.7 ac | No additional cost | |
| Pioneer Village Park | 2.0 ac | \$7,600 | |
| Pettit Natural Area | 20 ac | \$10,000 | 20 acres projected for improvements; costs would be lower (\$500/acre) than for more developed parks |
| Steelhammer Neighborhood Park | 7.0 ac | \$26,600 | |
| Skatepark Facility | 8,000 s.f. | \$5,000 | Average costs typically minimal depending on location and siting, parental and user involvement |
| Dog Park | 1.0 ac | \$3,800 | Users often assist in maintaining these facilities |
| Silver Creek Access (Put-in / Take-out) | 1 site | \$1,000 | Initial site at Coolidge & McClaine Park; second site in future years |
| Community Sports Complex | N/A | \$14,742 | Based on equivalent of .5FTE seasonal position (\$10/hr @ 1040 hrs) plus materials and services as City’s share of O&M costs to maintain new fields and facilities at the new high school |
| Sub-total Annual O&M Costs | | \$68,742 | |
| Personnel | | | |
| Park and Recreation Supervisor | | \$50,540 | 1FTE position (\$24.30/hr – includes benefits) |
| TOTAL ANNUAL O&M COSTS | | \$119,282 | |

With the supervisory position, the total annual O&M costs are projected to be \$119,282. Not included are O&M costs for the new senior center, which were estimated to be \$84,800 in the grant application pro forma. Maintenance costs for new multi-use trails and pathways are also not included, assuming these are estimates included in the City’s transportation budget.

Financial Challenges and Recommendation

The City of Silverton will be challenged with critical decisions as it implements and responds to recommendations of the master plan. Due to Oregon's property tax laws, limiting growth in tax assessment to 3% per year has created compression for cities across the state, ultimately pitting police, fire, parks, libraries, and administrative services against each other.

At the same time, Silverton residents have placed a very high priority on parks, recreation services, and open space amenities. It is therefore incumbent on the City to be as creative as possible and explore all available strategies for providing these services. There is no formula for being creative; however, it becomes increasingly difficult to leverage small amounts of funds without professional staff having primary leadership responsibility for programs and services.

These are examples of management strategies that are essential to developing a quality parks and recreation program:

- Working with the Community and decision-makers to implement and periodically update the adopted Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan
- Providing leadership with community and decision-makers to increase awareness of the economic, health, and environmental importance of parks, recreation and open spaces
- Developing strong community partnerships with others including the Silver Falls School District, collaborating to meet community goals and priorities and coordinating recreation programs such as scheduling community use of sports fields
- Building relationships with private landowners to help create land donations, conservation easements, and trail easements
- Coordinating a successful volunteer program that can provide countless hours of critical services (i.e. trail development and maintenance, and invasive vegetation removal have been proven to be a very good focus for volunteers)
- Developing a strategic approach to preparing grant applications, pursuing alternative funding sources, and leveraging support to meet priorities and implement the master plan
- Working with County Community Work Crews (individuals that have been assigned to work crews in lieu of incarceration) can help maintain parks
- Building relationships to help form or work with an existing Land Trust to purchase open space or develop conservation easements for protection of important scenic corridors – a Land Trust also can become an important source of volunteers for trail development and maintenance
- Working with the community to develop an equitable fee program for services that does not exclude citizens from access to parks and recreation services
- Managing contract services where the City receives higher value than hiring internally
- Performing periodic community needs assessments to assure the community is served holistically and there are no gaps in services
- Developing a business plan with help from the community to create an 'entrepreneurial' approach for service delivery
- Developing maintenance management plans that assist staff with proper and effective operations

As outlined above, for the first five years a 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Park and Recreation Supervisor Position is recommended to provide management and oversight

for the operations and maintenance of new projects, and to give professional leadership to the expanded parks and recreation program. Projected costs for the supervisory position are based on the following.

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Unit</u> | <u>Rate</u> | <u>Benefit</u> | <u>Total Rate</u> | <u>Annual Cost</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Park and Recreation Supervisor | Per Hr. | \$18.00 | 35% | \$24.30 | \$50,540 |

Funding Park, Recreation, and Open Space Operations

It is important to maintain an annual funding baseline for parks, recreation, and open space services for the purposes of leveraging these funds to implement goals and strategies laid out in the Master Plan. It is recommended that a supplemental funding source be identified to help decision-makers budget annually for implementing the master plan recommendations, and to develop stable and sustainable funding. A potential source to consider is the recently adopted Transient Tax (tax on Hotels, Motels and Campgrounds). Park and recreation services play a major role in attracting visitors to Silverton and it is appropriate to offset O&M costs with a proportional share of these funds. As the master plan is implemented, more visitors will enjoy the enhancements and the fund will grow accordingly.

Funding Sources

Following are some potential sources to explore for additional funding for acquiring, developing, and maintaining the City’s parks and recreation system.

General Fund

General fund revenues consist chiefly of property taxes derived from the City’s permanent tax rate, and are subject to the \$10 combined limit on local government taxing agencies imposed by Measure #5 (1990), and the 3% annual increase in property valuation imposed by Measure #50 (1997). General fund revenues are severely limited and are an inconsistent and unlikely source for funding parks and recreation improvements. General fund revenues should be considered as a possible funding source for some operations and maintenance activities.

System Development Charges (SDCs)

System Development Charges (SDCs) are fees paid by new development to cover a portion of the costs of capital facilities needed to serve new development. Silverton collects parks and recreation SDCs for all new residential development within the City. Revenue from SDCs can be used only for land acquisition and development related to growth, and may not be used for maintenance.

General Obligation Bonds (G.O. Bonds)

G.O. Bonds are debt instruments sold to fund new capital facilities or make improvements to existing facilities. These bonds are repaid with property tax revenue generated by a special levy that is outside the property tax limits imposed by Measure #5 (1990) and Measure #50 (1997). Voters must approve G.O. Bonds, and this approval must occur in a general election in an even-numbered year, or in another election in which at least 50% of registered voters participate.

Local Option Levy for Capital Improvements

A local option levy for capital improvements provides for a separate property tax levy outside the City’s permanent rate limit, but subject to the \$10 combined rate limit imposed under Measure #5. The levy may be used to fund a capital project or a group of projects over a specified period of time, up to 10 years. Revenues from these levies may be used to secure bonds for projects, or to complete one or more projects on a “pay as you go” basis. Voters must approve local option levies, and this approval must occur in a general election in an even-numbered year, or in another

election in which at least 50% of registered voters participate. These levies may be considered for projects, but are not a good alternative to G.O. bonds for large projects or groups of projects.

Federal/State/Other Grants

Federal, state, and other government agencies and foundations sometimes make funds available to serve specific purposes related to parks and recreation, such as land and water conservation, open space preservation, or bicycle path construction. In addition to often requiring a local match, grants may also have other conditions and limitations, such as providing for project planning but not for construction. The availability of grants is limited, but may be useful for specific project needs, such as pathways and trails or greenways acquisition. Some potential sources of grants are listed below.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) administers this program, which uses federal dollars from the Department of Interior, National Park Service that are passed down to states for acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of parks, recreation areas and facilities.

Web: <http://egov.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/lwcf.shtml>

Contact: Marilyn Lippincott
Grants Program Coordinator
503-986-0793

Local Government Grant Program

OPRD also administers this program, which provides funding for public outdoor park and recreation areas and facilities. These areas and facilities must be open and accessible to the public-at-large.

Web: <http://egov.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/local.shtml>

Contact: Michele Scalise
Grants/Contracts Coordinator
503-986-0708

Heritage Program Grants

The Heritage Programs Division offers grants for various types of historic preservation and heritage-related projects.

Web: <http://egov.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/grants.shtml>

Contact: Kyle Jansson
Oregon Heritage Commission Coordinator
503-986-0673

Recreation Trails Program

Every year, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department accepts applications for Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grants. Projects eligible for RTP funding include the maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailhead facilities, construction of new recreation trails, and acquisition of easements and fee simple titles to property.

Web: <http://egov.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/trails.shtml>

Contact: Michele Scalise
Grants/Contracts Coordinator
503-986-0708

Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

The Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Program funds pedestrian and bicycle projects which are situated within existing street, road or highway right-of-way. Eligible projects include sidewalk infill, pedestrian crossings, intersection improvements, and minor roadway widening for bikeways.

Web: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED/>

Contact: Sheila Lyons
Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Management
Oregon Department of Transportation
503-986-3555

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

This organization funds projects to conserve and restore fish, wildlife and native plants through challenge grants, small grants, and special grants.

Web: <http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Grants>

Contact: Suzanne Piluso
Project Coordinator
Pacific Northwest Region
Suzanne.Piluso@nfwf.org
503-4178700

The Conservation Fund American Greenways Program

The American Greenways Awards Program provides small grants to local greenway projects.

Web: http://www.conservationfund.org/kodak_awards

Contact: The Conservation Fund
703-525-6300

The Collins Foundation

The Foundation funds projects that focus on developing the arts, humanities, education, environment, religion, youth activities, and community.

Web: <http://www.collinsfoundation.org>

Contact: Cynthia G. Adams
Executive Vice President
503-227-7171

Fohs Foundation

The foundation funds projects for economic development, human services, children/youth, environment, and education in the northwest.

Contact: Rosemary Cooper
Secretary-Treasurer
541-447-1587

Ford Family Foundation

This foundation makes grants to organizations in rural Oregon communities and the northwest for projects related to community improvement and development, education, and recreation.

Web <http://www.tfff.org/main/GrantPrograms/tabid/63/Default.aspx>

Contact: Carol Dalu
Grants Manager
541-957-5574

Meyer Memorial Trust

The Trust offers both general-purpose grants and small grants for capital projects, program development, general operations, and continuing project support.

Web: http://www.mmt.org/grants_programs/

Contact: Barbara Gibbs
Director, Grant Programs
503-228-5512

The Oregon Community Foundation

The Oregon Community Foundation makes grants to tax exempt 501(c)(3) organizations throughout Oregon for various causes including community enrichment, economic development, capital projects, program development and expansion, and matching funding. This source is a potential for projects that involve partnering between the City and eligible organizations.

Web: <http://www.ocf1.org/>

Contact: Gregory A. Chaill
President
503-227-6846

The Brainerd Foundation

The Brainerd Foundation is a grantmaking institution dedicated to protecting the environmental quality of the Pacific Northwest

Web: <http://www.brainerd.org/>

Contact: The Brainerd Foundation
206-448-7222

The Bullitt Foundation

The Bullitt Foundation supports non-profit organizations in efforts to protect and restore the environment of the Pacific Northwest.

Web: <http://www.bullitt.org>

Contact: The Bullitt Foundation
206-343-0822

River Network

River Network offers watershed assistance grants to local watershed partnerships to support organizational development and long-term effectiveness.

Web: <http://www.rivernetwork.org>

Contact: River Network
503-241-9256

Special Assessment / Local Improvement Districts

Residents may choose to form a local improvement district (LID) to pay for capital improvements or maintenance of facilities through special assessments on their property. This method requires the approval of at least 51% of the owners of land within the proposed district, and must represent at least 51% of the land abutting the proposed improvement.

Local Option Levy for Operations

A local option levy for operations provides for a separate property tax levy outside the City's permanent rate limit, subject to the \$10 combined rate limit imposed under Measure #5. These

levies may be useful to fund operations and maintenance activities over a specified period of time, up to 5 years. Voters must approve local option levies and this approval must occur in a general election in an even numbered year, or in another election in which at least 50% of registered voters participate. This source should be considered for funding City parks operations and maintenance activities.

User Fees and Rents

User fees and rents are direct charges to individuals and groups who use specific programs, facilities, and services. These fees and rents usually help pay only a portion of the costs of providing public programs and services. User fees generally are set at levels sufficient to cover only a portion of program and maintenance costs, and are rarely used to fund capital projects. When renting a facility the group or individual must comply with the rules and regulations of the specific facility. This source may provide very limited funds for operations and maintenance.

Sponsorships/Partnerships/Donations

Public, private, and/or not-for-profit organizations may be willing to fund outright or join together with the City to provide additional parks and recreation facilities and/or services. For example, the City may receive assistance from local civic organizations in construction of picnic shelters, or may partner with a foundation for acquisition/development of natural areas, trails, etc. This method for funding is generally limited to specific projects or portions of projects and may be subject to the same types of requirements and conditions identified for grants, above. Some programs and organizations that specialize in land acquisition and protection for parks and open space conservation include the following:

The Trust For Public Land

The Trust for Public Land works exclusively to protect land for human enjoyment and well-being, helping conserve land for recreation and spiritual nourishment and to improve the health and quality of life of American communities. The Trust for Public Land works with government agencies and landowners to arrange for conservation easements or government ownership of lands to be used for parks, open space and other recreational uses.

Web: <http://www.tpl.org>

Contact: The Trust for Public Land
Oregon Field Office
503-228-6620

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is dedicated to the preservation of the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Nature Conservancy protects prairie grasslands, oak savannas, and similar lands in the Willamette Valley of Oregon.

Web: <http://www.natureconservancy.org>

Contact: The Nature Conservancy of Oregon
503-230-1221

Flintridge Foundation

This organization provides grants and works in partnership with small, community-based organizations promoting natural environmental sustainability.

Web: <http://www.flintridgefoundation.org>

Contact: Flintridge Foundation
626-449-0839

F. Additional Recommendations

To assist with implementation of the Silverton Parks and Recreation Master Plan, outlined here are additional recommendations.

Establishing a Community Needs Assessment Program

Description

A comprehensive needs assessment is required to provide a well-rounded and targeted community recreation program. This is especially critical for Silverton because of the large number of groups and organizations involved in the service delivery system, rapid growth and change in the community, and the need to wisely use scarce resources.

Methodology

It is recommended that the City provide the leadership and create an Ad Hoc Citizen Advisory Committee to develop a strategic plan involving existing providers, non-profit groups, businesses, vendors, sponsors, the City of Silverton, and the Silverton School District. Outlined here are suggested key tasks to conduct a community recreation needs assessment.

1. Examine Silverton's demographic profile, especially age, income, and race
2. Inventory existing recreation programs and services and providers
3. Conduct surveys of patrons and users of existing recreation programs and activities, examine recreation trends, and determine satisfaction levels, gaps, preferences, and attitudes (parents, children and youth)
4. Conduct a school survey of elementary and high school students to determine preferences, needs, and priorities
5. Conduct a survey of adults through existing community organizations, newspaper inserts, or utility bills
6. From Tasks 1-5 prepare findings, distill into critical issues, and draw conclusions. For example, where are gaps in services, what target groups are most in need of programs and services, and how can the needs best be met
7. Develop a strategic recreation service delivery plan, including:
 - Community Recreation Mission Statement
 - Goal Statements – targets to implement the Mission Statement
 - Action Plan – implementing strategies to fulfill the goals
 - Performance Measures – specific benchmarks linked to the goals

Benefits and Outcomes

A strategic plan for community recreation establishes the structure and framework for capitalizing on the wide variety of community support organizations, harnessing resources, and directing them so that programs are not only efficiently managed and conducted, but also provide the highest level of community benefit.

Relationship to Master Plan Issues and Recommendations

The strategic plan addresses the issue of programmatic and organizational stress that is surfacing in the community, and the need for direction to effectively administer a large number of recreation and sports programs.

Positioning Silverton to Capitalize on Recreation, Tourism, and Quality of Place

Description

In recent years, the City of Silverton has been working to position itself solidly in the future as a sustainable community, with visionary decisions supporting The Oregon Garden and nearby Silver Falls State Park as tourist attractions, key acquisitions of public open space including the Pettit property, enhancement of Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park and renovation of Coolidge & McClaine Park, and development of comprehensive master plans for downtown revitalization and transportation planning.

By adopting this long range master plan and continuing to invest in the City's parks, recreation, and open space system as a major priority for public policy, Silverton can reach a tipping point in shaping its future – one that could become a model for small communities in Oregon.

Benefits and Outcomes

“Green infrastructure” and “community-oriented public spaces” are becoming well recognized as the driving forces for promoting economic prosperity, ecological health, sense of community and well-being – all key elements of a community's “quality of place” and “livability.” Silverton is fortunate to have magnificent opportunities for establishing quality of life goals that would be the envy of any city – natural and cultural assets, compact growth, and human scale. For example, traffic congestion – i.e. the automobile, is becoming a problem that a walkable community can overcome, and at the same time contribute to health and fitness. Connecting families and youth with nature and the outdoors is an opportunity that is ever present. These amenities in turn can be leveraged to attract high quality businesses, and create new markets for an even wider variety of recreation opportunities such as coffee houses, arcades, and other private sector enterprises. Silverton's propensity for youth involvement in sports programs could become a major part of the City's economy if a regional sports center attracts regional tournaments and league play. Community vision coupled with strong doses of strategic planning, urban design, building relationships, creative financing, and action priorities can make it all happen.

Relationship to Master Plan Issues and Recommendations

The master plan documents extraordinary opportunities for Silverton to meet economic, social, recreational, and greenspace needs. Ingredients are present for creating a “quality of place” that can help the community achieve economic prosperity, sense of community, and well-being.

Emerging Business Approach for Managing Basic Parks, Recreation Programs, and Open Spaces

Description

Parks and recreation managers struggle to provide basic services with limited operational funds. Faced with unprecedented budget constraints, in the recent past various management models have been explored including efforts such as making parks and recreation programs more “self sustaining” through fees and charges, and other revenue generating operations. What these models have demonstrated is twofold: (1) Parks and recreation programs require a more business-like approach to be fully accountable, set priorities, and manage efficiently and effectively within a community’s financial capabilities; and (2) It is essential to recognize that the fundamental business of public parks and recreation programs is to provide community service, with a solid commitment of public funds that can in turn be leveraged in a multitude of ways to create a robust and healthy park, recreation and open space system. Clearly, there is no “silver bullet.”

Benefits and Outcomes

Leveraging public dollars requires a strategic business plan that sets goals, priorities, creative action strategies, and performance measures. Successful parks and recreation departments are directed by professionals who interface and build relationships with community leaders, local groups, and businesses; harness creative thoughts of the community; and develop a solid program of excellence including green infrastructure and responsive recreation services. These are specific characteristics of this approach:

- Sound decisions are based on sound information. Due diligence is necessary, for example, in purchasing or accepting property within the system. What are the benefits, what are the costs? Benefit/cost analysis will take in all factors, creating a systems approach to decision making.
- A business model helps to manage a system. Decisions for whether or not to establish fees and charges to meet program costs should be based on the adopted philosophy. For example, revenue opportunities may be appropriate but foregone without a business plan.
- A sound fee program is based on marketing knowledge, knowledge of community demographics, dialogue with the community, and a business plan that is accepted by policy makers.
- Providing services either in house or through contracted services is a decision that needs to be made with solid information. Can the program be better served by contracting the service or managing the program in house? Is the community receiving the best return for its investment?
- Relationships with the community can be extremely rewarding. Trail easements, conservation easements, volunteer efforts, and gifts and donations can be the outcome of creating solid relationships.
- Comprehensive, integrated, and strategic business approaches explore the full range of creative opportunities to implement parks and recreation master plans including grants, volunteer labor and sweat equity, bargain sales of land, and community good will through community contributions such as life estates, gifts, and donations.

Relationship to Master Plan Issues and Recommendations

Silverton has outstanding opportunities to continue developing a “sense of place” and maintain the community’s special character and well-being. Investing in a quality parks, recreation and open space system is one of the key components of community livability that cannot and should not be ignored.

Appendix A. Classification System and Definitions Silverton Master Plan

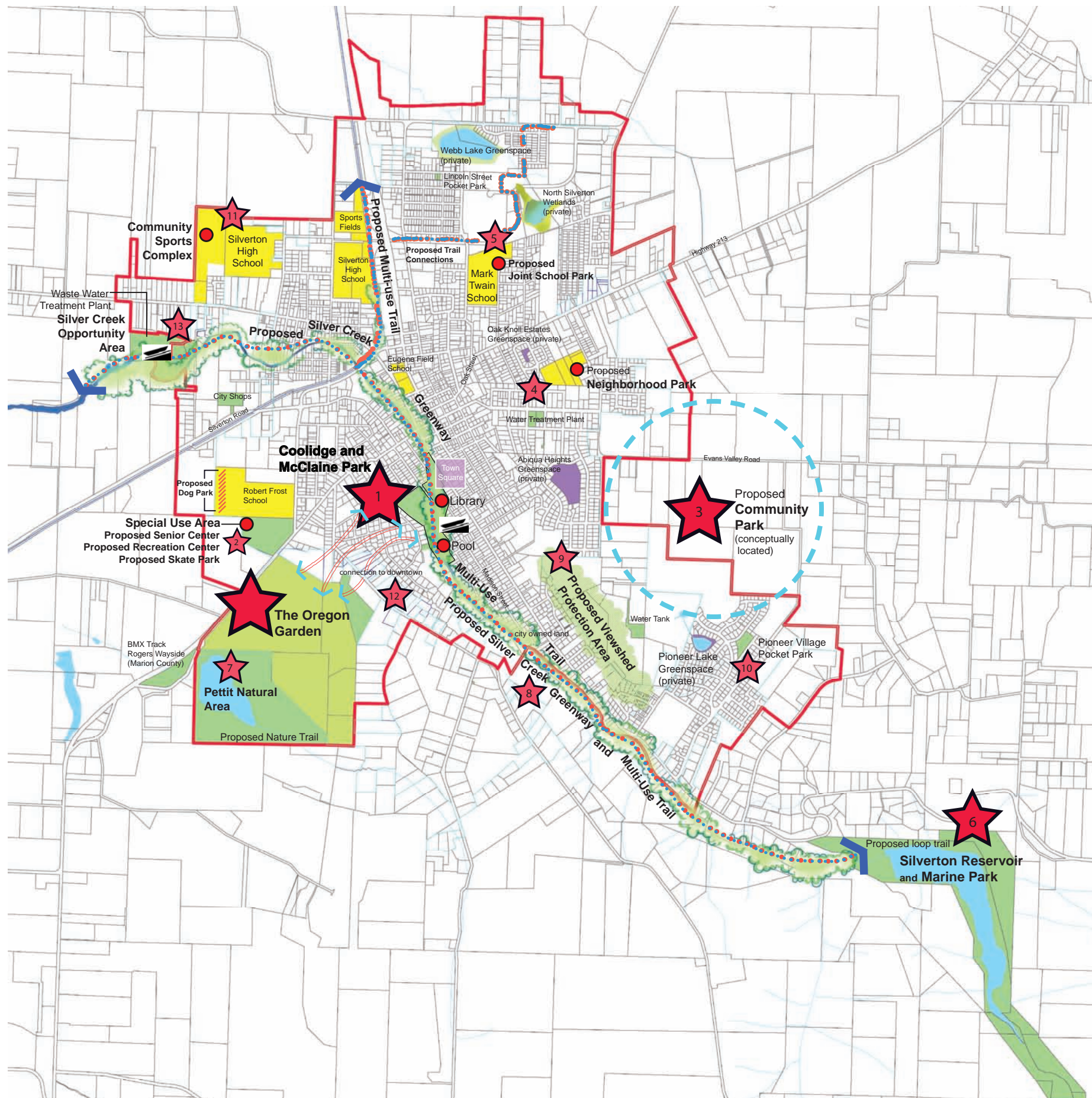
| Type | Size | Purpose and Functions | Silverton System |
|---|--------------------------------|--|---|
| PARKS AND GREENSPACES | | | |
| <i>Neighborhood Park</i> | 5-10 acres | Basic unit of the system; serving as recreational and social neighborhood focus with 1/4-1/2 mi. radius. Playground, picnic area, informal play area, natural area. Avoid sports fields for organized play. No restrooms | Steelhammer School Site |
| <i>Joint School-Park</i> | Variable | Either undivided ownership for combined school and park functions or City acquisition for more formal partnership. Same functions as neighborhood park | Mark Twain School-Park |
| <i>Community Park</i> | 30-50 acres | Focus on community-based recreation needs and preserving special landscapes and natural habitats; group picnic facilities, pavilions, small amphitheater, playground, court sports, restrooms | Coolidge & McClaine Park Proposed new park |
| <i>Natural Area Greenspace</i> | Enough to protect resources | Areas valued for natural features, disappearing landscapes, special habitats, and visual aesthetics that support a wide range of passive recreation uses such as nature and scenic enjoyment, walking, solitude, information play, and environmental education | Pettit Property Natural Area |
| <i>Greenway</i> | Usually linear, no limitations | Ribbons of riparian lands along rivers and creeks that support habitat protection, community trails and other passive recreational use; major function is to provide connectivity and "Green Infrastructure" | Recommended Silver Creek Greenway |
| <i>Private Common Area & Open Space</i> | Variable | Small "pocket parks" or greenspace areas such as small lakes and wetlands that are privately owned, usually by homeowners or adjacent lot owners, and have limited public use functions | Abiqua Heights Hawthorne Village Oak Knoll Estates Pioneer Lake Silver Street Townhouses Webb Lake |
| <i>Special Use Area</i> | Variable | Parks and greenspaces that tend to function either as single-purpose areas or sites that have distinctive functions (a downtown park); also small "pocket parks" with limited public recreation uses | Coolidge & McClaine Park Lincoln Street Park Pioneer Village Park |
| <i>Regional Site</i> | Variable | Sites that attract visitors from a large area including tourist destinations and specialized use supported by a major natural or special feature such as a water body | Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park |
| SPORTS FACILITIES | | | |
| <i>School Playfields</i> | Variable | Outdoor sports fields including multi-purpose fields, soccer fields, baseball and softball fields, practice fields, court facilities for basketball and tennis, and gyms that are available for after-school community use. | Mark Twain School Robert Frost School Silverton High School |
| <i>Community Sports Complex</i> | 25-50 acres | Sports fields including soccer, baseball, softball and multi-use fields designed for competitive league and tournament play, designed as a complex including lighted threeplex and fourplex diamonds with concessions, picnic and playground areas, restrooms, parking | Silverton High School Community Sports Fields (Pine St. campus) |
| RECREATION FACILITIES | | | |
| <i>Special Facility</i> | Variable | Facilities designed primarily for specific community recreational use such as swimming pools and water play facilities, recreation centers, skateparks, off-leash dogparks | Senior Center, Skatepark, Recreation Ctr, Dogpark, Silverton Swimming Pool |
| TRAILS | | | |
| <i>Multi-use Trail Nature Trail</i> | Variable | Multi-purpose, multi-modal trails that support safe travel for bicycles and pedestrians; also community and neighborhood connectors; recreational trails in greenways, parks, natural areas | Silver Creek Pathway Pettit Natural Area |

**Appendix B. Recommended Project List
Silverton Master Plan**

Final

| PRIORITY | PROJECT | SCOPE | EST. COST |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------------------|
| EXISTING PARKS AND GREENSPACES | | | |
| In progress | Coolidge & McClaine Park Renovation | Phase II park renovation (recommendations in 2007 Site Plan) including new restroom, new trail south of the park along Silver Creek, creek bank restoration, park furnishings, and new play equipment; also an outdoor amphitheater (will require additional site planning) | \$509,300 |
| 1-5 years | Town Square Downtown Gateway Enhancements | Enhancements to help implement Downtown Master Plan including kiosk with interpretive displays, historical information | \$10,000 |
| 1-5 years | Pioneer Village Park Development | Planning and development of existing 2-ac undeveloped park including infrastructure, playground, and amenities (2-ac) | \$500,000 |
| 5-20 years | Silverton Reservoir and Marine Park Development | Entry enhancement, “Green” parking lot expansion, and upgrade including biofiltration and “Green” composting restroom replacement; new loop nature trail and environmental education features including interpretive displays; feasibility study of Silver Creek footbridge below dam and Silver Creek access for canoes and kayaks; family and group picnic facilities; designated swimming area | \$500,000 |
| 5-20 years | Acquisition | Acquire additional 50 acres for water quality protection | \$500,000 |
| 1-5 years | Pettit Demonstration Urban Natural Area Development | Initial ½ mi. trail development, signage, interpretive information of 80-acre site; future demonstration natural area including parking, trail expansion, kiosks, interpretation, small natural amphitheater | \$100,000 |
| 5-10 years | Wastewater Treatment Plant Opportunity Area | 1500 linear feet of trail for creek access, non-motorized boat access, small parking lot, information kiosk, viewing platform, and intepretive displays | \$100,000 |
| 1-2 years | Silver Creek Put-in / Take-out Site Development | Develop one additional access site at Coolidge & McClaine Park for canoes, tubes, kayaks to complement the Wasterwater Treatment Plant site | \$15,000 |
| 5-10 years | School Sports Field Renovation | Renovation and improvements to existing sports fields at Mark Twain and Robert Frost Schools; approximately 8 acres including drainage improvements, irrigation, new equipment, and turfgrass renovation | \$600,000 |

| PRIORITY | PROJECT | SCOPE | EST. COST |
|---|---|---|----------------------------------|
| EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES | | | |
| 5-10 years | Silverton Swimming Pool Feasibility Study | Conduct feasibility study to explore options to expand and enhance 1800 s.f. existing pool to provide family water play and related amenities (additional approx. 1000 s.f.), or select new site and construct a new Community Aquatics Center, possibly in collaboration with community partners | \$50,000 (study) |
| PROPOSED PARKS AND GREENSPACES | | | |
| 1-5 yr-acq 5-10 yr-dev | Steelhammer Neighborhood Park Acquisition & Development | Acquisition, planning, and development of vacant school land at Steelhammer Rd. and Norway Ave. (approx. 7 acres) | \$700,000 acq \$1,400,000 dev |
| 5-10 years | Mark Twain School-Park Acquisition & Development | Partnership with Silver Falls S.D. for designation and acquisition of 3-ac oak grove and greenspace as a joint neighborhood school-park; also acquisition of 1.4-ac triangle to enlarge functional open space; planning and basic infrastructure development | \$150,000 acq \$330,000 dev |
| 5-10 yr-acq 10-20 yr-dev | Community Park Acquisition & Development | Acquisition, planning, and development of a community park located north of Pioneer Village and east of Abiqua Heights (30-50 acres) | \$600,000 acq \$2,500,000 dev |
| PROPOSED SPECIAL USE AND SPORTS FACILITIES | | | |
| In progress | Senior Center Construction | Senior Center (5,000 s.f.) in progress with approved grant and site acquired adjacent to Robert Frost Elementary School | \$1,000,000 |
| 10-20 yrs | Recreation Center Construction | Recreation Center as Phase 2 addition to 20,000 s.f. Senior Center including multi-purpose gym, multi-use space, fitness center, offices, lobby amenities | \$5,000,000 |
| 1-2 years | Skatepark Development | Proposed skatepark (up to 10,000 s.f.) with amenities including benches, landscaping; part of a Community Park complex including the Senior Center/Recreation Center/Dog Park adjacent to Robert Frost Elementary School | \$500,000 |
| 1-5 years | Dog Park Acquisition and Development | Acquisition of 0.9-acre vacant land behind Robert Frost Elementary School; planning and infrastructure including fencing, signage, trail connection to senior center and proposed recreation center | \$90,000 acq \$10,000 dev |
| 3-10 years | Community Sports Complex – Phase 2 | Partner with the School District to complete Phase 2 improvements – lighting 4 fields, storage facilities, and bleachers; (Assumes City’s proportional share is 40%) | \$500,000 |



Recommended Action Plan



Establish Coolidge and McClaine Park and connecting open space as Silver-ton's Downtown Park and Silver Creek Greenway

- Continue renovation of the park as a downtown park; hire arborist to study tree health
- Develop Town Square as a Downtown Gateway
- Promote Silver Creek as a demonstration greenway; continue habitat restoration
- Conduct feasibility study of options for community swimming pool to incorporate water play
- Provide access for non-motorized boating (canoes, kayaks, tubes)



Create a community recreation complex adjacent to Robert Frost School

- Build a recreation center as Phase 2 of the Senior Center
- Construct a skatepark
- Acquire vacant 0.9 acres on western edge of school site and create a dog park
- Sports field renovation -- grading, drainage, irrigation, and turf restoration



Acquire and develop new community park east of Abiqua Heights



Acquire and develop new neighborhood park (Steelhammer undeveloped school land)



Acquire Mark Twain School oak grove for Joint School-Park



Develop Silverton Reservoir & Marine Park as regional waterfront park

- Develop a loop trail
- Improve parking, entry enhancements, picnic facilities
- Establish a resident park-host program



Establish Pettit Property as Demonstration Urban Natural Area

- Develop interpretive nature trails, outdoor education opportunities



Conduct Silver Creek Greenway and Multi-use Trail feasibility study

- Involve landowners in the study as well as recommendations



Form a Community Land Trust to create Viewshed Protection Area

- Explore methods of conservation easements, gifts and donations, living trusts



Develop Pioneer Village Pocket Park



Work with the School District to continue future phases of a Community Sports Complex



Connect Oregon Garden and Pettit property with downtown



Provide creek access and open space opportunities at Waste Water Treatment Plant

Citywide

Create a Connectivity Advisory Committee and prepare a comprehensive trails plan, including feasibility of a multi-use trail along existing and abandoned rail lines

Make parks bicycle and pedestrian friendly - provide bike racks, drinking fountains, construct park trails, provide safe park and greenspace connections

Create a volunteer and Adopt-a-Park program to help maintain safe and quality greenspaces and invest in projects such as trail building, trail maintenance, and habitat restoration

Work with the School District to renovate outdoor sports facilities at school sites

Recommended Vision Diagram

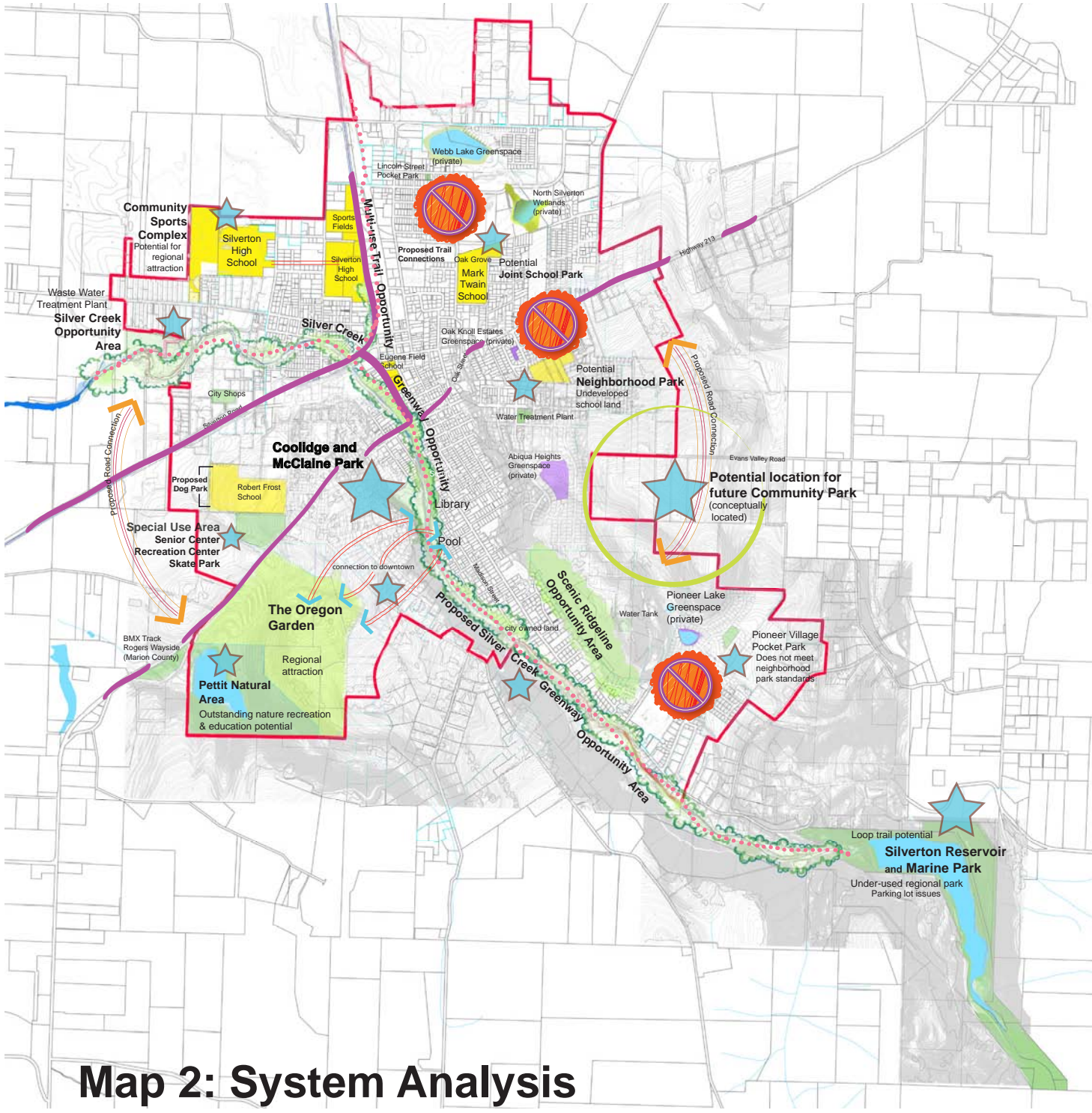
Prepared by:
David Reed & Associates, Inc.

Map created by:
Schirmer + Associates, LLC

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not to scale



Major park deficiency



Opportunity areas



Hills and ridges



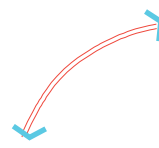
Schools



The Oregon Garden



Potential multi-use trail & greenway



Connection opportunities



Roadway barriers



not to scale



7.10.08

Map 2: System Analysis

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David Reed & Associates, Inc.
Map created by:
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