



PARK COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE	
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PARK COUNTY PARK PLAN
SCHEDULE OF DRAFT PLAN and PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS.

Written public comment on the proposed Park County Park Plan can be submitted to the Park County Planning Office any time; however, members of the public are encouraged to submit comments using the timelines described below. Written comments must be clearly legible or printed. Comments should be dated, signed, and submitted to the Planning Office, attention Hillary Taylor, 414 E. Callender St., Livingston, MT 59047 in a sealed envelope. Please contact Hillary Taylor or Jackie Robbins at 222-4102 or asstplanner@parkcounty.org with questions.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>MEETING</u>	<u>ACTION</u>
May 30, 2007	Planning Staff	Staff has developed a Draft Park Plan.
June 1, 2007	Planning Staff	Planning Staff will have the Draft Park Plan completed and available for public review. The public will be able to download the draft Park Plan from www.parkcounty.org or get a hardcopy from Insty Prints in Livingston. This public comment period will be open from June 1, 2007 until 5:00 PM on Monday, July 9, 2007.

June 21, 2007	Planning Board	Planning Staff to present the Draft Park Plan to the Planning Board. Public comment on the Draft Park Plan is open from June 1, 2007 until 5:00 PM on Monday, July 9, 2007.
July 19, 2007	Planning Board	Planning Board Public Hearing on the Draft Park Plan at 1:30 PM in the Community Room of the City County Building, 414 E. Callender St., Livingston, MT. Planning Board recommendation to the Park County Commission.
July 26, 2007	Planning Staff	Revised copy, based on the Planning Board recommendations, of the Draft Park Plan is available from www.parkcounty.org or in the Park County Planning Office. A public comment period on the revised Draft Park Plan is open from July 26, 2007 until 5:00 PM on August, 8, 2007.
August 15, 2007	County Commission	Final Draft Park Plan before the Park County Commission for public meeting and adoption at 9:00 AM in the County Commission Chambers, 414 E. Callender St, Livingston, MT.

This time line was updated last on Wednesday, May 30, 2007 by the Park Planning Office.

PARK COUNTY PARK PLAN

This Draft Plan was last updated on May 30, 2007

INTRODUCTION:

Park and recreation facilities are basic components that build the foundation of a community. They provide areas for group activities, intergenerational activities, personal reflection and exercise. They provide a means to maintain natural and historic features. Park and recreation facilities provide a way to preserve cultural heritage and the quality of life in a community. Parks and recreation areas improve the standard of living and increase property values.

This Park Plan will review the existing facilities in the county; list types of parks and recreational facilities, discuss existing regulations, provide a policy for the management of the Park Fund, make recommendations for the future and provide a list of ideas to stimulate discussions about goals and the obtainment of those goals.

*"Park and recreational service use continues throughout the life cycle. Recreational participation declines with age, but park use does not. In fact, people between the ages of 65 and 74 use local parks more frequently than any other age group from those 15 and older."*ⁱ

*"Trails, parks and playgrounds are among the five most important community amenities considered when selecting a home, according to 2,000 recent homebuyers surveyed in 2002 by the National Home Builders and National Association of Realtors. Effective strategic planning is the first step in achieving a community's vision for parks and recreation, economic development and social and environmental benefits."*ⁱⁱ

EXISTING FACILITIES:

Park County is fortunate to have several existing recreation areas in or adjacent to the county that are administered by the federal government, the state, the town of Clyde Park, the city of Livingston, private groups and by the county.

FEDERAL RECREATION AREAS (in Park County)

Park County is made up of approximately 51% Federal Lands; some of it designated Wilderness area. Most of the Federal Land is managed by the USFS, some by the BLM and some by the National Park Service.

United States Forest Service lands are under the jurisdiction of the Gallatin National Forest. USFS recreational facilities include trailheads, trails, roads, campgrounds, cabins and interpretive trails. USFS lands are used for fishing, horseback riding, rock climbing, hiking, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, firewood gathering, photography, driving,

four wheeling, picnicking and nature study. Park County worked with the USFS to develop the Yankee Jim Historic Site with an accessible trail for all individuals. Other federal lands in Park County include Yellowstone National Park and BLM lands. Federal lands are used by citizens from all over the country, usually in the warmer months; however snow sports are particularly attractive, especially in the Cooke City area.

STATE RECREATION AREAS

The state of Montana owns approximately 2% of the land in Park County. The state maintains Daily Lake State Park, state school lands and MTFW&P fishing access sites. The Montana Department of Transportation maintains historic markers; one in rest area on US 89 South and one near the Black Diamond Quarry.

PARK COUNTY RECREATION AREAS AND FACILITIES

Park County owns some small parks. The Green Acres Park is just north of Livingston. It is approximately 3 acres and contains a maintained playground, trees and a lawn. In Gardiner, the Arch Park has a stone shelter, picnic tables, a BBQ area, a water fountain and trees. Silvergate has a small park area in the center of the townsite and several lots in Duffy's Meadow, a wetland area.

Park County has recreational facilities near Livingston; the fairgrounds, rodeo grounds and the bike path between Carter's Bridge and Livingston. The county also maintains the Lewis and Clark sign on the Interstate and the Lewis and Clark Driving Tour signs. Park County owns the Wilsall Senior Citizen's center. Park County owns approximately 10 acres on the east side of the Yellowstone River across from Mayor's Landing which is used as a fishing access site.

CITY OF LIVINGSTON

The city of Livingston has several parks, playgrounds, an outdoor swimming poolⁱⁱⁱ, horseshoe pits, soccer fields and trails. The lagoon provides fishing for children, waterfowl feeding and non-maintained ice skating. The city maintains a bandshell, a skate board park, baseball fields, a dog park and a sledding hill. The Civic Center provides space for recreational programs.

TOWN OF CLYDE PARK

The Town of Clyde Park has a park with a playground, picnic area and grassy area for ball sports.

PRIVATE PARKS AND FACILITIES

There are privately owned facilities in the county.

- Wilsall's Veteran's Park is privately owned and maintained. It has a gazebo, porta-potties, and a playground.
- The Community Center in Clyde Park is owned and operated by the Shields Valley Community Hall Association.
- The rodeo grounds at Wilsall are privately owned and maintained.
- The Gardiner Chamber of Commerce owns and maintains the Gardiner Rodeo Grounds.

- The Emigrant Community Hall Association owns the Emigrant Hall.
- Murphy's Ox Yoke Ranch LTD allows the public to reflect at the shrine located across US 89 South from Emigrant.
- There are private parks located in subdivisions. The Community of Glastonbury has some common areas for its residents.
- There are historic information signs marking Fort Parker on the Mission Ranch.
- Some schools have recreational uses.
- Some churches have recreational uses.
- The former Beaver Creek School is privately owned and allows groups in their neighborhood the use of the building.
- Other private recreational facilities include Chico Hot Springs, the Bowling Alley, the Rod and Gun club, Polo grounds, and the Motocross track.

TYPES OF PARKS:

There are different types of parks and recreation facilities that should be considered for future planning. The following are some considerations:

- ◆ **Recreation Parks** – centers for activities, events, sport complexes, dog parks, outdoor amphitheaters, sledding hills, skateboard parks, water parks, and equestrian parks.
- ◆ **Neighborhood parks** – small, open, casual play activity, close to those that use them.
- ◆ **Nature sites** – preserve natural features, scenic overlooks, scenic views, maintain open landscapes; providing visual relief from the built environment. Can be landscaping along a transportation corridor or “framing” for development.
- ◆ **Trails and Greenways** – provide corridors which may have a variety of purposes; walking, biking, running, alternative transportation opportunity, dog walking, scenic opportunity and riparian preservation.
- ◆ **Cultural sites** – provide cultural richness to the community by preserving or enhancing a prehistoric, historic or cultural feature. Driving tours and scenic pullouts are examples.
- ◆ **Conservation Easements** – preserve open space in our county. Cooperative efforts with landowners, county government and the holder of the easement can create recreational opportunities for the public.
- ◆ **Subdivision parks** – created in residential subdivisions and serving the owners of the subdivision property.
- ◆ **School sites** – used by children during and after school hours, also school facilities used by public after school hours for community events.

PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS AND SITES:

Olympic size Indoor Swimming Pool

Indoor Recreational Facility

Historic Markers: preservation, prehistoric sites and educational sites

Trails and Greenways

Linked Bike paths and designated bike routes on county roads as shared transportation corridors
Undeveloped county road right of ways as trail systems and bike paths
Preservation of natural features and scenic pull offs
Large (15+ acre) multi use park in Paradise Valley and Shields Valley
Ice Skating Rinks
Outdoor Amphitheater
Bathroom facilities along the Yellowstone River for river users
Outdoor restrooms and garbage cans along bike paths
Riparian area preservation
Preservation of the old jail at Gardiner historic site

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1) It is recommended that the Park County Commission immediately appoint a Park Board.
- (2) Unbuilt county road right of ways shall be recognized, retained, built when possible and used as trails; either as shared roadways, or solely as non-motorized trails.
- (3) The Park Board shall revise this document and prioritize goals and objectives using citizen input. The Park Board may be a sub-group of the Planning Board or an entirely new board. The goals and objectives of the Park Board shall be re-evaluated on an annual basis by the Park County Commission.
- (4) It is recommended that all subdivision applicants whose projects require park land meet with the Park Board for ideal park location and design, whether the park land lies within or outside of the subdivision proposal.
- (5) It is recommended that the Park Board review all subdivisions prior to preliminary plat approval.
- (6) The Park Board shall make recommendations to the Park County Planning Board and the Park County Commission regarding the placement of parks within any and all proposed subdivisions, the usefulness of parks within any and all proposed subdivisions, the exact location and design of parks within proposed subdivisions, and whether the public would be best served by a park in any and all proposed subdivisions or if cash in lieu of parkland better suits the needs of the citizens of Park County.
- (7) Any and all land donations shall be deeded to Park County. Section 76-3-621, MCA.
- (8) The Park Board shall make a recommendation to the Park County Commission on any and all expenditures made out of the Park County Park Fund.

- (9) The Park Board shall review on a quarterly basis the Park County Park Fund budget.
- (10) It is recommended that the Park County Commission encourage the formation of a non profit group to raise money for Park County Parks (Friends of Park County Parks).
- (11) It is recommended that the county consider joint recreational projects with schools, private funders, and the incorporated areas of the county.
- (12) It is recommended that community groups be encouraged to 'adopt' parks to help with maintenance and fundraising for individual parks and recreational facilities.
- (13) It is recommended that funding be acquired for the Park Fund from subdivision requirements, groups and individuals interested in making donations and any additional sources other than subdivision requirements.
- (14) It is recommended that neighborhood parks be at least 10 acres in size.^{iv} It may be more efficient to provide equipment, park maintenance and weed control with a few larger regional parks.

POLICY:

Deposits to the Park County Park Fund from subdivision cash in lieu payments shall be made with the particular subdivision identified on the deposit entry in the Treasurer's Office so that deposits can be tracked back to the subdivision. In the event that the county establishes regions the deposits will be held for use in the appropriate region of the county where the subdivision occurred.

Park County has a number of natural outdoor amenities; because of these opportunities it is relevant to put a high priority on the establishment of a public indoor recreational facility.

The Livingston/Park County Trails Plan has identified the community's desire for trails at least in the vicinity of the City of Livingston and the surrounding area. Trails and greenways shall be encouraged in new proposed subdivisions including those without the Park Land requirement.

The governing body can work and use funds in conjunction with private donors, grant funds, resort taxes, and fund raising activities conducted by the public. MCA 76-3-621 (4)i – ii states that "parks need to be located within a close proximity to the proposed subdivision that pays cash in lieu of the parkland requirement." The entire county shall be deemed in close proximity to each and every subdivision for the purposes of locating parks and using the Park Fund.

EXISTING REGULATIONS:

- **Park County Subdivision Regulations (October 2006 as amended):**

VI-P. Park Land Dedication – Cash in Lieu – Waivers – Administration (as amended)

- **Montana Code Annotated 2005 (as amended):***

7-16-2401. Park and recreation land -- definition (as amended)

7-16-4107. Use of park funds for public recreation (as amended).

76-3-621. Park dedication requirement (as amended).

*This list is not exhaustive of what is available under Montana Code Annotated regarding Parks and Recreation.

- **Livingston/Park County Trails Plan (November 1, 2006)**

ⁱ *Benefits of Parks and Recreation.* City of Columbia, Missouri, http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/ParksandRec/About_Us/benefits.php 2004. Information is based on a nationwide study conducted in 1992 at Pennsylvania State University; "The Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services-A Nationwide study of the Perceptions of the American Public."

ⁱⁱ *The Economics of Urban Park Planning.* National Recreation and Park Association. Andrew Pack, ASLA and Scott Schanuel, AICP, PMP. <http://www.nrpa.org/content/default.aspx?documentId=2618> (2006).

ⁱⁱⁱ Limitations with the City of Livingston's outdoor swimming pool: 1.) Location: It exists in the floodplain. 2.) Location: Due to the size of the lot it would be difficult to enlarge and enclose the existing pool. 3.) Size: It is not regulation size. Schools would not be able to hold swim meets there. This makes it difficult for the schools to help with funding to enclose the existing pool. Livingston Park and Recreation Department comments 5-29-2007.

^{iv} Other Montana counties have stated in their Park Policies that small parks can be problematic for the county; it is more costly to equip and maintain numerous small parks compared to a few larger regional parks.