

# Parks, Recreation & Open Space Element

## Introduction

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element is an optional element pursuant to the Growth Management Act; however, capital acquisitions including property and facilities for parks and recreation must be included in the required Capital Facilities Plan. Additionally, the Growth Management Act encourages jurisdictions to retain open space, develop recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop park facilities. Open space corridors are further referenced in the Growth Management Act requiring that land use plans include identification of “open space corridors within and between urban areas. They should include lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection for critical areas.”

In 2011, the City Council created a Parks and Recreation Commission and charged the Commission with the creation of a Comprehensive Plan Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element.

Granite Falls’ residents have access to park and recreation facilities and programs provided by Snohomish County, Washington State Department of Natural Resources and the National Forest Service. At the same time, residents outside of Granite Falls have access to city parks and recreation programs.

This element provides an inventory of park and recreation facilities in Granite Falls, sets standards for such services, and identifies goals, policies and strategies for providing additional facilities and programs.

## Inventory

A variety of public and private organizations have assembled acres of land with park, recreation and open space use within the Granite Falls community. These lands provide a variety of activities including water front access, picnic facilities, trail corridors, horseback riding, fishing, athletic fields and playgrounds.

The park and recreation facilities can be classified according to the following types:

*Mini-Park (Pocket Park)* – A mini-park is characterized by having a unique feature like Jack Webb Park or Jim Holm Park.

Service Area: Four blocks from local residences

Size: 3,500 square feet minimum

*Neighborhood Park* – An area suited for passive and/or active family activities and play by preschool and elementary school-age children. Includes facilities such as picnic tables and shelters, barbecue pits, playground equipment, horseshoe pits, basketball backboards, grassy areas for free play, and tennis courts.

Service Area: Approximately 1/4- to 1-mile radius

Size: 1 acre to 5 acres

*Community Park* – Community parks are designed to serve the surrounding community. Community parks may contain special amenities attractive to visitors throughout the area. Such parks often consist of athletic facilities and significant natural features, such as large tracts of open space or natural areas.

Service Area: Approximately 1- to 2-mile radius

Size: Approximately 2 to 20+ acres

*Linear Parks/Trails* - Linear parks/trails are narrow corridors of open space. In most circumstances, the linear corridor includes multipurpose trails that are used for one or more modes of recreational travel including hiking, bicycle and horseback riding. The City currently does not have any linear parks or trails.

The following tables provide an inventory of the local park and recreation facilities.

**Table PRO-1 - Parks Owned & Operated By the City of Granite Falls**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description/Current Use</b>
Frank Mason Park	10.4*	Southeast of the SR 92/Crooked Mile Rd. intersection	Community park: 3 covered picnic areas, dock, restrooms, 10 acre lake, BBQ facilities, benches, grassy knoll, and walking paths. (*5.5 acres are undeveloped.)
Galena Park, aka Eagle Park	2.6	701 E. Galena	Neighborhood park: Off leash dog park with shy dog area, bicycle rack, grass area, covered gazebo, and benches.
Jack Webb Park	0.25	115 S. Granite Ave.	Mini-park: Restrooms, bicycle racks, grass area, benches, water fountain.
Jim Holm Park	1.45	210 S. Granite Ave	Neighborhood-park: Play area, skate deck, covered gazebo, basketball courts, grass area, benches, and picnic tables.
Undeveloped Park Property	22	North of western terminus of Paradise Lane	Community park land: No amenities at this time. Contains areas of grass-land meadows, wetlands, up-land mixed forest and informal trails. Contiguous to Frank Mason Park and Pilchuck Beach Park.
Perrigou Memorial Park	3	Jordan Rd. and Hemming Way	Community park: Leased to Little League Association. Includes baseball fields with lights, benches, bathroom, picnic tables, and sandbox.
Pilchuck Beach Park	2.32	Western terminus of Paradise Lane	Neighborhood park: Underdeveloped natural waterfront habitat at this time. River views and access. Possible picnic and fishing areas.
Noble Bog Interpretive Park	6.64	East & contiguous to School Dist. property at 307 N. Alder Ave.	Community park land: No amenities at this time. Contains areas of wetlands and up-land mixed forest. Pedestrian access only.

**Table PRO-2 - Parks within the Greater Granite Falls Community**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description/Current Use</b>
Centennial Trail	23 mi	Snohomish to Bryant	County park: 23 miles of completed trail, 10' wide multi-purpose paved trail, 6' wide natural surface parallel equestrian trail, picnic tables, benches, restrooms, shelters available for rent at Machias trail head, Permits for public events & activities on the trail, serves as conservation corridor protecting sensitive and important natural and cultural resources, provides safe alternative transportation route, currently connects Snohomish, Lake Stevens, Arlington, and points between. Trail is designed for walking, biking & equestrian use only, no motorized vehicles
Jordan Bridge Park	1.15	14300 Jordan Rd.	County park: River views, portable restrooms, picnic tables
Lime Kiln Trailhead	6.5 mi	Waite Mill Rd.	County park: 6.5 mile round trip to river, elevation at trailhead 700', 160' gain on way in, 300' on way out, series of trail signs, mile markers, and trail names, kiln structure, spectacular scenery and landscape
Twin Rivers Meadows Park	150	20416 Jordan Rd.	County park: Miles of trails, river fishing access, picnic shelters and tables, BBQ pits, camp sites (no hook-ups), open fields, restrooms, yurt village, Festival of the River August 13-14, park history, geocache, campsite cooking ideas
Riverscene Park	1.7	Jordan Rd.	County park: River access, portable restrooms, access to fishing
Robe Canyon Historic Trail	970.19	Mountain Loop Hwy.	County park: Railroad tunnels, river beaches, hiking trails
Granite Falls & Fish Ladder	34.42	Intersection of Mountain Loop Hwy. & South Fork of the Stillaguamish River	Dept. of Fish & Wildlife facility: Trail and views of the falls and fish ladder
Canyon Creek Falls Park	N/A	Canyon Creek Dr. off the Mtn. Loop Hwy.	Dept. of Fish & Wildlife Park: Covered area with a picnic table, a merry-go-round, BBQ, and access to the lower Canyon Creek waterfall
Masonic Family Park	244.53	24310 Mountain Loop Hwy.	Private gated campground: Open to all Master Masons, members of Eastern Star, Amaranth and their guests: Camping, fishing and swimming beach
Unnamed River Access	1.55	Southern terminus of Ray Gray Rd.	Dept. of Fish & Wildlife property: Vehicle parking area and river views, access & fishing

**Table PRO-3 - Snohomish County Fire District No. 17 Recreation Facility**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description/Current Use</b>
Horseshoe Park	0.50	East side of Cascade Ave., mid-block, between Stanley St. & Galena St.	Fire District No. 17 property: Four horseshoe pits. Treed & grass area for picnics and informal play.

**Table PRO-4 - Recreation Facilities & Programs<sup>1</sup>**

<i>Private Recreation Facilities &amp; Programs</i>	<i>Grange Halls</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camp Horse Country</li> <li>• Granite Falls Sportsmen’s Club</li> <li>• Granite Falls Jr. Athletic Association</li> <li>• Granite Falls School of Dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granville Grange - 9401 163rd Ave. NE meets 1st &amp; 3rd Wednesdays @ 7:00pm</li> <li>• Riverside Grange - 26830 53rd Ave. meets 2nd Thursday @ 7:30pm</li> </ul>
<i>School Recreation Programs &amp; Clubs</i>	
<p>Mountain Way Elementary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After School Choir</li> <li>• Band</li> <li>• Percussion Club</li> <li>• Games Club</li> <li>• Safety Patrol</li> <li>• ASB</li> </ul>	<p>Monte Cristo Elementary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choir</li> <li>• Band</li> <li>• Percussion Club</li> <li>• Safety Patrol</li> <li>• ASB</li> <li>• Blacker's Buddies</li> </ul>
<p>Granite Falls Middle School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choir</li> <li>• Jazz Band</li> <li>• Girls Volleyball</li> <li>• Recycle Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls Soccer</li> <li>• Track (Co-ed)</li> <li>• Spirit Club</li> <li>• Drama Club</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Cross Country</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Wrestling</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Football</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Basketball</li> <li>• Tennis (Co-ed)</li> </ul>
<p>Granite Falls High School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheerleading</li> <li>• FBLA</li> <li>• FFA</li> <li>• FCCLA</li> <li>• LINK Crew</li> <li>• Gay/Straight Alliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boys Wrestling</li> <li>• Girls Volleyball</li> <li>• Knowledge Bowl</li> <li>• Honor Society</li> <li>• Choir</li> <li>• Jazz Band</li> <li>• Boys Football</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Cross Country</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Soccer</li> <li>• Boys &amp; Girls Basketball</li> <li>• Spanish Club Yearbook</li> <li>• Boys Baseball</li> <li>• Girls Softball</li> <li>• Orchestra</li> </ul>
<p>Crossroads Alternative School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance Club</li> <li>• Fitness Club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Honor Society</li> <li>• Mural Club</li> <li>• Lifting Club</li> </ul>

1. These programs are in general not conducted or funded under the auspices of the City, nor should their inclusion here be interpreted as a unique declaration of support or endorsement. They are included to provide a complete picture of the Granite Falls community environment.

**Table PRO-5 - School Facilities**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Size</b>
Football Field	Turf	91,000 sq. ft.
Football Field	Grass	91,000 sq. ft.
Soccer Field	Grass	90,000 sq. ft.
Little League/Soccer Field w/3 backstops	Grass	120,000 sq. ft.
Baseball/Soccer Field	Grass	136,000 sq. ft.
Baseball Field	Grass	100,000 sq. ft.
Baseball Field	Grass	100,000 sq. ft.
Softball Field	Grass	36,000 sq. ft.
Softball Field	Grass	20,000 sq. ft.
Softball/Soccer Field	Grass	50,000 sq. ft.
Tennis Court	Asphalt	80,000 sq. ft.

**Levels of Service Standards**

Cities commonly use a set of criteria to evaluate local levels of service. In the past, cities have typically used a ratio of park land (acres) to each 1,000 population as a measure of park and recreation levels of service. The current trend is to evaluate a City’s levels of service in terms of population and spatial relationship, emphasizing access to parks rather than just the amount of park land available. The following provides typical criteria used by small cities (under 10,000 population) in Washington and Oregon to measure park and recreation levels of service.

**Table PRO-6 – Small City Level of Service Criteria/Standards**

<b>Park Type</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Acre/Population Ratio</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
Mini-park	2,500 sq. ft. – 1 acre	0.1 – 0.3 acre per 1,000 population	within ¼ mile
Neighborhood	1 – 10 acres	2 acres per 1,000 population	¼ - ½ mile
Community	10 – 40 acres	5 – 8 acres per 1,000 population	½ - 3 miles

These standards tell the City how it compares with other small cities, but not what is necessarily right for the City. To answer that question, the City must evaluate the needs of its citizens, the availability of funding, and the general quality of life. The level of service for the following types of City park and recreation facilities are based on the evaluation of existing facilities compared to the current population served and the projected needs required to maintain or improve the level of service of these facilities for the Granite Falls UGA 2035 population target of approximately 8,500 assigned by the County-wide Planning Policies, effective June 30, 2013.

*Mini-Parks* – The existing LOS for mini-parks can be calculated by dividing the existing total inventory (0.25 acres) by the existing (2012) City population of 3,378<sup>1</sup>. This yields the current LOS of 0.07 acres per 1,000 population. Obviously, the City is underserved by mini-parks. However, mini-parks are typically required as developer improvements in each new neighborhood. Therefore, the City should modify its development code to require these facilities.

*Neighborhood Parks* – The existing LOS for neighborhood parks can be calculated by dividing the existing total inventory (2.6 acres) by the existing City population of 3,378<sup>1</sup>. This yields a current LOS of 0.77 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 population. In order to maintain the existing LOS while accommodating growth anticipated under the 2015-2035 planning period, the City would need to add between 6 and 7 acres of neighborhood parks. It would be advantageous for the City to take steps to increase this minimal LOS as opportunities arise to develop or acquire neighborhood park facilities between now and 2035.

*Community Parks* – The existing LOS for community parks can be calculated by dividing the existing total inventory of developed community park acres (5 acres) by the existing City population of 3,378<sup>1</sup>. This yields the current LOS of 1.48 acres of community parks per 1,000 population. In order to maintain the existing LOS while accommodating growth anticipated under this Plan, the City would need to develop an additional 7.5 acres of community parks from 2015-2035. The development of the 5.5 undeveloped acres in Frank Mason Park and the 22 acres of park land on the western edge of the City purchased in 2010 will more than fulfill this need.

*Linear Parks and Trails* – The City currently has no linear parks or trails, therefore no projection for need has been made. However, policies in this Plan recognize the need for these facilities and encourage the City to develop a plan for linear parks and trails over the next six years. The undeveloped portion of Frank Mason Park and the abutting 22 acres of undeveloped park land could be developed with a system of trails and walkways for the enjoyment by Granite Falls' citizens and visitors. The undeveloped, 6.64 acre Noble Bog Park on the east side of the City also provides an opportunity for trail development.

<sup>1</sup>Washington State Office of Financial Management 2012 Population Estimate.

## **Needs Analysis**

*Parks* - The inventory of city parks reveals there are approximately 55.5 acres of park land within the City serving a current estimated population of 3,380. However, because of vandalism or the age of the facilities, some of the park's play equipment, picnic tables, and landscaping are in need of repair or replacement. Due to a limited budget typical of a small city, additional funding sources, such as Community Block Grants and private sponsorship of a park, need to be identified and acquired to provide a sustainable parks maintenance program. The addition of lighting and security cameras in the parks is needed to reduce vandalism. The use of volunteers and donations to improve and maintain park property is another resource the City should explore.

*Recreation Programs* - The City does not have a recreation program. The recreation programs that are available in the community are provided by the Granite Falls School District, churches, and private clubs or associations. A Boys & Girls Club is proposed to locate in the City in the relatively near future which will significantly increase the opportunity and access to year-round recreation programs for the youth. The City is investigating the feasibility of public/private partnerships to provide recreational programs for both the youth and adults in the community to encourage healthy physical activity.

In 2012, the Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Department conducted a county-wide parks and recreation survey. Although the survey was county-wide, responses from households within the Granite Falls zip code, 98252, were segregated out to provide an indication of local preference and perceived need for park and recreation facilities. The survey asked the responders to identify what age groups were represented in their household followed by what their funding priorities would be for six different categories of park & recreation facilities and programs. They were then asked to identify the most important activities in each category. They were also asked about their satisfaction with the availability, type, and condition of the park and recreation facilities as well as security associated with those facilities. The survey concluded with funding questions regarding their willingness to pay a “user fee” and support a short term funding effort (i.e. local levy) to pay for the operation and maintenance of county parks and recreation facilities. The response choices from households within the Granite Falls zip code are provided in Parks, Recreation & Open space Element Appendix PRO-1.

The specific survey questions are provided in Appendix PRO-2. For comparison purposes, the funding priorities were given points as follows:

Funding Priority	Points
1 <sup>st</sup>	5
2 <sup>nd</sup>	4
3 <sup>rd</sup>	3
4 <sup>th</sup>	2
5 <sup>th</sup>	1
6 <sup>th</sup>	0

Trails for hiking, walking and horseback riding were the top (1st) priority followed by: 2nd Water Access (boating, kayaking, beach access, fishing & swimming); 3rd Conservation/Wildlife Areas (viewing, interpretative trails & protected areas); 4th Leisure Activity (picnic areas, camping, & scenic views); 5th Sports Activity (baseball & soccer fields, etc.); and 6th Special Use Facilities (fairgrounds, shooting ranges, etc.).

In comparing the rankings for funding priorities categories in the survey and “most important activity” categories, it appears existing city parks and the proposed park south of Lake Gardner can and/or could provide for the activities in the top four funding priority categories of water access, trails, conservation/wildlife areas, and leisure activity. 5th ranked sports activity (soccer, baseball, softball, etc.) and 6th ranked special use facilities (fairgrounds, shooting ranges, indoor recreation facilities, etc.) points out the need for continued cooperation and reliance on the School District,

Snohomish County Parks & Recreation Department and the private sector. It is interesting to note the level of support for user fees and perhaps a levy to fund operation and maintenance. Because the survey was dealing with only County park facilities, the responses in regards to how satisfied the responders are with County facilities may or may not reflect how satisfied citizens are with City park facilities.

## **Parks, Recreation & Open Space Goals and Policies**

GOAL PRO-1 To provide quality parks and open space for Granite Falls citizens and visitors.

- PRO-1.1 Design and locate park facilities to adequately serve the needs of the current and projected population in the City of Granite Falls and of the City's visitors.
- PRO-1.2 Work with appropriate regional/county agencies to jointly finance parks and recreation facilities within the City and region.
- PRO-1.3 Use a combination of creative financing alternatives, impact fees, developer mitigation, grants, and cooperative strategies with the private sector to pay for the acquisition and construction of parks and acquisition of open space.
- PRO-1.4 Develop a plan for adequate and long-term maintenance for every public park prior to construction.
- PRO-1.5 Build a partnership with the state, counties, and local entities to encourage the development of parks and public space throughout and for the region.
- PRO-1.6 Support Snohomish County in fulfilling its defined role of providing regional facilities, programs, parks, and open space.
- PRO-1.7 Maintain existing and/or future parks and recreation facilities using best management practices and best available science.
- PRO-1.8 Achieve and/or maintain parks and recreation capital facilities level-of-service (LOS) standards to establish long-term facility and funding requirements.

GOAL PRO-2: To ensure adequate and enriching recreational opportunities for the citizens of Granite Falls that encourages physical activity.

- PRO-2.1 Create and promote a wide range of new facilities and opportunities to address the recreational needs of the citizens of Granite Falls.
- PRO-2.2 Provide recreational activities specific and appropriate for each age group.
- PRO-2.3 Develop and maintain a comprehensive multi-model trail/pathway system connecting all parts of Granite Falls.
- PRO-2.4 Develop additional sport fields, picnic areas and swimming pool facilities to serve the Granite Falls community.



GOAL PRO-3: To create and preserve a variety of open space to maintain and enhance the quality of life.

- PRO-3.1 Preserve open space throughout the City to provide for passive uses such as shoreline access and fish and wildlife habitat.
- PRO-3.2 Give preferences to facilities that improve water quality and protect stream corridors.
- PRO-3.3 Plan interpretive facilities and environmental programs to increase public understanding of the value of stream corridors, wetlands, and critical areas.
- PRO-3.4 Consider incentives to preserve valuable open space in new development.
- PRO-3.5 Utilize a variety of public and private tools in the preservation of open space including donations, land banking, mitigation, impact fees, grants, and partnerships, or transfer of development rights, regulatory restrictions, and tax relief programs.

GOAL PRO-4: To explore innovative opportunities to achieve parks, recreation, and open space objectives as a part of all City planning activities and development review.

- PRO-4.1 Plan bike paths, hiking trails, boardwalks, and non-motorized transportation routes to improve access to parks, recreational facilities, open space, residential neighborhoods, employment centers, downtown, and other local and regional non-motorized systems including links to the City of Lake Stevens trail system, the Centennial Trail and the Mountain Loop Recreation Area.
- PRO-4.2 Integrate planning for park facilities with other capital facility projects such as roads and stormwater projects in order to realize the greatest benefit to the public by leveraging mitigation, grant funds, and cost-effective use of design, acquisition, and construction funds.
- PRO-4.3 Obtain agreements with the Granite Falls School District to maximize recreational opportunities and provide greater access to school facilities during non-school times for the entire community.

GOAL PRO-5: To create a public process that involves citizens in identifying, acquiring, and designing parks, recreation facilities, and open space, and in designing recreational programming to meet diverse needs.

- PRO-5.1 Integrate public participation regarding park and recreation planning with other aspects of community development.
- PRO-5.2 Provide opportunities for potential primary users of recreational facilities to participate in the process of selection, acquisition, and development of open space, recreational facilities, and programming.

GOAL PRO-6: To protect, conserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage of Granite Falls.

- PRO-6.1 Coordinate and cooperate with local, state and national historical and cultural preservation organizations in order to promote historic and cultural preservation within the City.

- PRO-6.2. Work with the Stillaguamish, Sauk Suiattle, and Tulalip Tribes to preserve significant cultural and historic sites.
- PRO-6.3 Promote a mutually supportive relationship between historic and cultural preservation and economic development.
- PRO-6.4 Incorporate the preservation of sites and structures of historic, cultural, and archeological significance as a part of the aesthetic and environmental consideration in site design and subdivision plan review.
- PRO-6.5 Promote historical, environmental, and cultural education through special event programs, the preservation of historic sites, and the support of festivals and events reflecting the cultural heritage of Granite Falls.
- PRO-6.6 Support the Granite Falls Historical Society in its efforts to inventory significant historical and archaeological resources and to provide information to the community on the history of Granite Falls.

## **Actions**

PRO Action 1 - Proceed with the planning and development of undeveloped parkland.

PRO Action 2 - Obtain an Interlocal Agreement with the School District for joint use of School District recreational facilities.

PRO Action 3 - Support local entities seeking to establish recreational programs and facilities in the community.

PRO Action 4 - Continue to seek out private and public funding for a community center.

PRO Action 5 - Improve and develop a system of trails and walkways to connect the open space and parkland within and adjacent to the City including:

- Pathway to the bogs on the eastern edge of the City.
- Sidewalk to the Granite Falls Fish Ladder and bridge on the northern edge of the City.
- Coordination and cooperation with Home Owners Associations that own parks and trails in the City.

PRO Action 6 - Provide lighting in all City parks where appropriate.

PRO Action 7 - Provide security cameras in all City parks.