



# Centralia Parks and Recreation Master Plan



March 2007



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## **A VITAL MISSION**

There are many paths to healthy leisure activity leading to personal enjoyment and satisfaction. The Centralia Parks and Recreation Department recognizes the need for a diversity of choices, offering an opportunity for creative, wholesome and enjoyable leisure activities of benefit to the individual user, the family and the community.

The Centralia Parks and Recreation Department formulates, stimulates and encourages frequent and regular communications with citizens in order to assure that programs, goals and objectives are consistent with community needs and desires. As stewards of the community and environment, we recognize the need to preserve and enhance the resources we have today for future generations

**– Centralia Parks and Recreation Department**

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# Centralia Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

*March 2007*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Centralia is blessed with a rich natural environment. Rivers, woods, rolling hills and prairies present a vast array of recreational opportunities for people of all ages and interests. The city itself has maintained its historic, small-town charm. Visitors come here for the enjoyment of just these advantages. Centralia and Lewis County provide relief from the hectic pace of urban life.

Cautious planning keeps our environment healthy and can be a significant factor in keeping our economy strong. In 1991, the City of Centralia adopted a Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan of considerable scope. The aim was to provide a basis for making choices that could dramatically alter the character and quality of parks and other recreational facilities over the long term if not adequately planned. The comprehensive study analyzed supply, demand and need for public and private park and recreation facilities.

In the years since the plan was adopted, the city and other recreation providers have met and dealt with significant challenges, such as facility and maintenance problems from limited capital spending and declining operating budgets. With the exception of trail corridors, public support for parks and special facilities, as identified in the 2006 survey, weakens when an increase in taxes is included as a caveat of development and operation.

Regardless, expectations for parks and recreation remain high in the minds of residents. The “wish list” generated by local surveys and at community meetings was long and worthy of attention. Among the highlights:

- ◆ Trails corridors are the highest priority.
- ◆ The near-term acquisition of open spaces from development is critical to preserve the character of the area and facilitate trail corridor and parkland construction in the future.
- ◆ Special events and programs for children and teens are the most important recreation services identified.



- ◆ Today, the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks is more important than the construction of new parks.

People support their parks, but that support has to be earned on a continuing basis. Parks and trails have to be well maintained to be seen as safe, inviting places to go alone or with family, friends and children. Survey responses from 2005 and 2006 made many requests for better upkeep and maintenance of current facilities.

Also of particular interest, many people asked for more trails and walking paths, including an extended trail system that connects creeks systems to existing trails. Well designed paths and trails also provide an easy means of connectivity to neighborhoods, recreation facilities, retail businesses and schools.

*It should be noted that trails deliver a lot for a little: the ratio of per-capita use to dollars spent for construction and maintenance of a well-planned, connective pedestrian trail makes it one of the most economically feasible investments a community can make. It offers a wealth of healthy social, environmental and recreational benefits, an efficient alternative to travel by car, and is one of the most inexpensive of all facilities to maintain.*

Trails also have the potential to strengthen the city's sense of community. Many residents feel only a loose sense of connection with other citizens of Centralia, let alone Chehalis and other parts of Lewis County. There is heavy competition from video games, TV and the Internet for the hearts and minds of younger residents. Call it connectivity on a human scale, but our parks, trails and waterways are places where residents and tourists alike can go to get in touch with nature, participate in their activity of choice, and connect with one another in healthy, life-sustaining ways. These factors, in part, drove the development of this plan.

This report accounts for progress and community demand, and complies with newer IAC funding requirements, GMA guidelines and state law. It provides a fresh, streamlined Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan with current findings and recommended priorities for the next 15-20 years. Key recommendations:

- ◆ Aggressively pursue grant programs in partnership with utility department to facilitate trail acquisition and construction along major water courses.
- ◆ Study and consider long-term, stable funding sources for the expansion of the parks and trails system.
- ◆ Reinvest in existing park sites to address ADA compliance and maintenance concerns and to reestablish a strong positive sentiment of city residents toward the overall park system.

This plan is a roadmap for providing high-quality, community-driven parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities in Centralia and surrounding service areas. It articulates our vision for parks and recreation, provides tangible support for policies in the city's comprehensive plan, and sets reasonable priorities. It is also a repository of useful data that will serve as a valuable benchmark in all future planning efforts.

Nevertheless, the information contained herein is still but just a snapshot in time. The health, vibrancy and prosperity of Centralia's parks, open space, natural resources and recreational opportunities will be measured over the long term, not just years or decades, but centuries. They keep our population healthy and economy strong.

Just a year ago the nation commemorated the legendary journey of Lewis & Clark. Lewis County is named after the US Army Captain who President Jefferson commissioned to lead the expedition. And for many thousands of years before settlers, traders and homesteaders moved here, this area was home to the Chehalis people. We owe the Native American tribes a debt of gratitude for their thoughtful stewardship of the land they treated as a friend.

Through thoughtful planning, and by serving as effective land and water stewards of Centralia's future, we have the opportunity to continue in that path and pass this place onto future generations in as good or even better condition than we enjoy today.

***"We have not inherited the earth from our parents, we are borrowing it from our children."***

*Native American saying  
(often attributed to Chief Seattle)*





# 1 PLANNING AREA & CONTEXT

***"Centralia has changed considerably since the accomplishment of the last comprehensive park and recreation planning effort. The choices which confront Centralia at the present time are significant ... (the Plan) outlines the choices which are available and the means for implementing preferred actions of most benefit to Centralia residents."***

*From the introduction to the 1991 Centralia Parks Plan*

***Lewis was once the largest county in the United States, encompassing all land west of the Cowlitz River, north of 54 degrees 40 minutes, and as far north as the tip of Alaska. The present-day boundaries were set in 1888.***

## 1A. Introduction

In 1991, the City of Centralia adopted a Parks and Recreation Master Plan of considerable scope. The aim was to provide a basis for making choices that could dramatically alter the character and quality of parks and other recreational facilities over the long term if not adequately planned. The comprehensive study analyzed supply, demand and need for public and private park and recreation facilities.

The master plan served successfully for many years as a tool for managing the city's parks and recreational resources, even during times of serious financial pressure. Fifteen years later, however, there is a need to update the plan to account both for progress and community demand, and to comply with newer IAC funding requirements, GMA guidelines and state law.

The updated report, presented here, comprises a new, more streamlined Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan that uses the 1991 plan as a foundation, presenting current findings and recommended priorities for the next 15-20 years.

## 1B. Community Overview

Centralia is the largest city in Lewis County in Southwest Washington. Lewis County is the sixth largest county in the state. Geographically it extends from the crest of the Cascades to within 35 miles of the Pacific Ocean, containing a total of 2,452 square miles. The city of Centralia contains a total of 54 square miles.

Centralia's location in the north-central section of the county provides easy access to a wide range of opportunities for outdoor recreation. From the mountainous region of the east to the rolling hills and valleys in the west, there are activities to engage residents and visitors of every age and interest. Among the most popular are hiking, walking, camping, picnicking, and wildlife watching.

Centralia's proximity to Interstate 5 and its location within a principal railroad service corridor are also an advantage. The city is equidistant from Portland and Seattle, and just 30 miles south of Olympia. Residents can take advantage of the civic and cultural opportunities of these larger metropolitan areas without sacrificing the small-town charm, excellent livability and relatively low cost of living enjoyed in Centralia.

### **Outlook bright**

Traditionally, Centralia's economy has been based on the highly cyclical forest products industry with its frequent periods of high unemployment. While the timber industry still accounts for 10% of employment in Lewis County – and unemployment remains higher than the state average – economic diversification and job gains in trade and distribution are reducing dependence on the timber products industries.

Growth in tourism is a positive influence too. Travel spending in Lewis County increased 3.7% between 1998 and 2004. Latest figures show direct travel-generated earnings – at 2.8% – are higher than the state average of 2.2%.

The city of Centralia is well positioned to benefit from its prime location in the I-5 corridor. For example, Centralia's historic downtown restoration "Where Past Meets Present," in conjunction with Amtrak travel opportunities, offers a visitor package that samples the rich history of the area. It includes a greeting at the train depot, and transportation to antique stores, National Historic Registry homes, and the city's historic murals.

## **1C. Natural Features and Land Use**

Lewis County is characterized by three distinct regions: rough mountainous terrain in the east, reaching elevations of 8,000 feet; the Cascade foothills sloping toward the west and merging into a high plain in the central region; and the outlying hills and mountains of the coastal range in the west.

Most of Lewis County's principal industrial, agricultural and urban development has taken place in the central region, and mostly in the principal cities of Centralia and Chehalis.

Lewis County is drained by the Cowlitz, Nisqually and Chehalis River systems. The Chehalis and its tributaries drain the

*The Port of Centralia had a very productive year in 2005. Its latest industrial development park recruited five new businesses to the area. Its Industrial Development Park #1 continues to be a major success.*



*The Centralia area is the agricultural heart of Lewis County. Three Native Americans pictured here in a hop yard at Pearson Ranch are using cedar bark baskets of their own manufacture.*

*Courtesy of the Lewis County Historical Museum, Chehalis, WA*

northwestern portion of Lewis County, flowing through the central region into the Pacific Ocean at Grays Harbor. A principal tributary, the Skookumchuck River along with China, Coffee and Salzer Creeks, drain the foothills surrounding Centralia.

There are a total of 216 lakes in Lewis County with a surface area of 14,915 acres. Most of these lakes are located in the Cascades and adjoining foothills within national forest lands, and are available for fishing and other recreational uses.

Fort Borst, Hayes and Plummer Lakes in the central region within the Centralia area are fed by the Skookumchuck River. However, their boundaries and drainage characteristics over time have been altered by flood control improvements, the construction of Interstate 5 and related urban developments.

A variety of anadromous fish including Coho, Chinook and chum salmon, steelhead and chad inhabit Lewis County's rivers, lakes and streams. Rainbow, cutthroat and brook trout are among freshwater resident fish that are harvested extensively during season. Hatchery-spawned trout are used regularly to restock these species in lakes and streams.

Primary tree species are Douglas fir, western hemlock, western red cedar, lodgepole pine, western white pine, Sitka spruce, grand fir, noble fir and Alaska yellow cedar. Stands are smaller on the steeper and higher mountainous slopes but the stand is usually as dense as elsewhere in the region. Most of the marketable timber has been removed from lower-lying lands but virgin timber stands are still found in the higher elevations.

The central region surrounding Centralia is important habitat for pheasant, ruffed grouse, blue grouse and bandtailed pigeons. The area's bogs, sloughs and wetlands are vital nesting/resting places for geese, mallard duck, green-winged teal, wood duck and other migratory waterfowl.

## **1D. Historical Highlights – Trade, Transportation, Tourism**

Exploration parties from Fort Vancouver in the 1820s first scouted the area that is now Lewis County. French Canadians settled on the Cowlitz Prairie shortly later, and in 1833 the Hudson's Bay Company founded Cowlitz Farm on this site. The

***Much of the land in the central region was one timbered, but has since been logged and cultivated for farms or, more recently, for residential development. Just scattered stands of the original timber remain.***

Hudson's Bay Company increased operations steadily, bringing additional immigrants to the area. Lewis County was made part of the Oregon Territory by the federal government in 1845.

Rivers and trails in Lewis County played an important role in the daily lives of Native Americans and early settlers alike. Land and water routes formed extensive trading systems linking the Chehalis Indians, their sub-tribes and other peoples throughout the region. The tribes were expert fishermen and relied on the rivers for salmon, the mainstay of their diet. Salmon and dried salmon was their primary export.

Their water trails with relatively easy portages from the Cowlitz River system to the Chehalis River system were used well into the 19th Century – by the early settlers as well as Native Americans. The Upper Cowlitz people depended less on water transportation. They had horses and would travel by land to trade even with the Yakimas at a substantial distance for roots, herbs and berries.

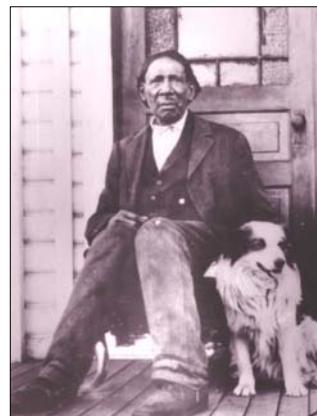
### **Centralia Founded**

As settlers moved into the area, Centralia became a halfway stopover point for stagecoaches operating between the Columbia River and Puget Sound. The city was founded by George Washington, the first free black man in the Washington Territory. He arrived from Missouri in 1851 with a friend, J.G. Cochran. Washington settled on the site of present-day Centralia, building a log cabin for an early dwelling.

For approximately 12 years, Washington and Cochrane operated a ferry boat across the Chehalis River and an inn for travelers at the approximate site of the Skookumchuck River joining. The inn was well known among early visitors to the region and today the site is known as Cochrane's Landing.

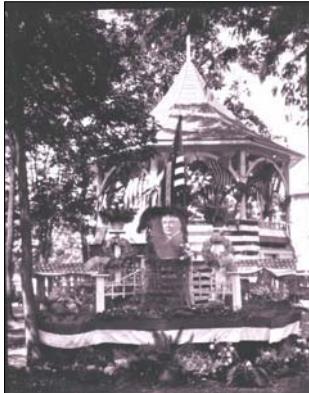
The city was platted and called Centerville in 1875 by Washington to serve as a transportation center, taking advantage of its location on the major north-south shipping routes and the new Northern Pacific Railroad line. The names he gave to streets are still used today, although the city itself was renamed Centralia in 1883 to avoid confusion with the city of Centerville in Klickitat County.

Platting in the 1800s parceled all available land into lots and street right-of-ways but did not dedicate space for public parks and



***George Washington, founder of Centralia, seen late in life resting on his porch steps with his dog.***

*Courtesy of the Lewis County Historical Museum, Chehalis, WA*



***The first speaker stand/gazebo in Washington Park is decorated for a visit by President Harding in a photo taken July 5, 1923.***

*Courtesy of the Lewis County Historical Museum, Chehalis, WA*

***From George Washington Park to the blockhouse built on the property of Joseph Borst and now located at Riverside Park, the city of Centralia has a rich legacy of community giving. Centralia's outdoor wall murals tell some of the story of early transportation, industry and pioneers.***

other uses. However, Washington and his wife Mary Jane Coonness in 1881 donated much of their property for schools and churches and were very generous with their holdings in developing the area.

George Washington Park, one of his earliest donations, now contains the Centralia Timberland Library. The Washington's also gave land to their Baptist congregation for a church and cemetery, and even pitched in to help build the church.

In another example of community giving, Allen Borst in 1923 presented to the city the blockhouse built on the original property of his father, Joseph Borst, to serve as a memorial to the early pioneers of the community. The blockhouse was built originally on Joseph Borst's 320-acre property holding near the junction of the Chehalis and Skookumchuck Rivers. It was moved to Riverside Park in 1915 and to its present location in 1922.

### **A Colorful Legacy**

By 1920 Centralia was known as the "Hub City." Its rail depot was the largest outside of Portland and hosted 44 passenger trains daily. Fourteen hotels dotted Tower Avenue. Five theaters, 24 taverns and 12 downtown restaurants entertained and served local residents, conventioners and loggers on holiday. The demands of a flourishing economy forged Washington's first community college, Centralia College, in 1924.

By mid-century the rise of the automobile reduced rail passenger flow substantially, and Interstate 5 siphoned the currents of people and commerce away from downtown Centralia. The history of the era has been preserved by those who live here. Many historic homes and buildings along with the well known murals can be seen in a short walking tour of the area. A revitalized turn-of-the-century shopping district adds to the charm of downtown Centralia.

## **1E. Growth of Parks & Recreation**

Centralia's first park and recreation plan was developed in 1963 by Fritsch & Kozlovzki of Lake Oswego, Oregon, and was summarily updated in 1982 and 1987 by department staff. A council-manager form of government was adopted in 1986. Centralia is a full-service city with its own electric, sewer, water

utilities, landfill, park administration, 160 full-time employees and a \$9.4 million operating budget.

The Centralia park system is administered by the director of the Community Development Department with the advisement of a five-member Park Board. Board members are appointed by the mayor with the consent of the City Council. The members serve one to five terms without compensation or salary.

The 1991 Park and Recreation Master Plan, which this document serves to update, facilitated the completion of several significant park and facility goals, to include:

- ◆ Lowland properties at the end of Bridge Street on Hayes Lake were acquired for development.
- ◆ Roads were paved as part of the goal to refurbish Fort Borst Park access roads and parking.
- ◆ Park land at Logan School was acquired in a joint venture with the Centralia School District.
- ◆ At Washington Lawn Cemetery the retaining wall was repaired, lighting was installed, and the writing on each stone or marker was recorded electronically. In addition, the stones were cleaned and leveled thanks to Washington State Correction Center work crews.
- ◆ Partnerships with volunteer groups and FIN were utilized to operate the seasonal Pearl Street outdoor pool.
- ◆ Community, cultural and tourist use of the BN Depot has been increased substantially, with the large room rented for company meetings and special events.
- ◆ Gardens at Borst Homestead have been improved with volunteer help from the Master Gardeners.
- ◆ The youth/adult sports program has continued yearly.
- ◆ Popular events such as STP, Summerfest and Music in the Parks are offered annually.
- ◆ Welcome/directional signage was installed on Harrison Avenue at the Centralia city entry.

In addition, a number of major accomplishments not contemplated in the 1991 include the following:

- ◆ Removing the campground and installing a skateboard park at Rotary Riverside Park with community assistance.
- ◆ Improving the parking lot entrance and assisting Friends of Seminary Hill Natural Area in creating and preserving 2.25 miles of trails. The city also purchased 7.5 additional acres.



***Many people do not realize that before a group of citizens sharing a love of Seminary Hill came together in the 1960s to save the property, it was nothing more than an unofficial dumping ground for used appliances, rotting sofas and even a beat-up truck! Today it is a special place where people come to hike, bird watch and enjoy the scenery.***



***Fort Borst Park was the site of Army maneuvers in this photo from 1926.***

***Fort Borst is shown in the background after it was moved back to Borst Park from Riverside in 1922.***

*Courtesy of the Lewis County Historical Museum, Chehalis, WA*

- ◆ Acquired railroad right-of-way at Cedar Street Park.
- ◆ Joined a partnership with a private fitness club and the school district in funding the indoor pool. At the same time, the fitness club finished constructing an addition next to the racquetball courts and it now includes a full-service health club.
- ◆ With citizen help, raised \$22,000 and constructed a one-room schoolhouse replica in Borst Park near the historic Borst Home.
- ◆ Received financial support from Centralia Rotary Club to help upgrade the playground equipment at Rotary Riverside Park to accommodate children with physical limitations.
- ◆ To beautify the area near Borst Kitchen #2, the Fuchsia Club developed and maintains a fuchsia garden, purchasing the plants, sign and walkway.
- ◆ Acquired a small wetland donation at the Gold Street Mill Pond.
- ◆ Acquired small undeveloped open space at Prairie Estate Development.
- ◆ Worked with the Youth Soccer Board to install three micro-sized soccer fields in Borst Park.
- ◆ Worked with Lewis County Memorial Committee to construct a “Freedom Memorial Walk” monument honoring all county residents who gave their lives to protect our freedom in the conflict of war.

### Looking to the Future

The range of recreational opportunities before us is rich and diverse. Our rivers, lakes, mountains and forests are an essential part of our daily lives. They frame our vision and inspire us. We need the healthful benefits that this bountiful natural environment provides: clean air and water, scenic beauty, recreation, and places to go for peace and quiet. By taking inventory of our assets, identifying the strategies to ensure an adequate supply of parks, open space and other facilities to satisfy community need, now and in the future, we can ensure parks and recreation will keep pace as Centralia and Lewis County continue to grow.

## **1F. Population and Demographics**

There are many population and demographic factors that affect demand for parks and recreation. As population demographics

change, so do preferences regarding parks and recreation facilities. Key factors influencing participation and demand are described below.

## Population

Lewis County is home to an estimated 72,449 residents, according to 2005 estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau. This represents a 5.6% increase since the last U.S. Census in 2000 and is just 1.1% less than the state average. In the years between 1990 and 2000, the percentage was significantly less (15.6% compared to a statewide average of 21.1%) due to a lower rate of economic growth in Lewis County and the slight out-migration of younger adults.

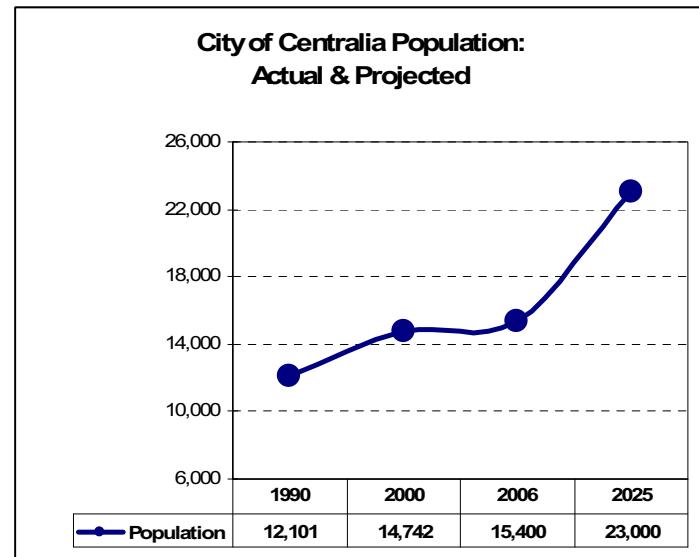
The city of Centralia is the county's largest population center with 15,430 residents, according to 2006 estimates from the Washington State Office of Financial Management. This represents a 4.7% increase since the 2000 U.S. Census.

Chehalis is the second largest city with an estimated 2006 population of 6,990. Winlock, Napavine and Morton rank well behind with populations ranging from 1,350 to 1,127. Approximately 60% of the population in Lewis County resides in unincorporated areas.

The population of Centralia has increased beyond projections that were forecast in the 1987 Comprehensive Plan. This may be due to a tendency for young adult households to remain in Lewis County in search of employment opportunities, and for middle-age families to settle in Centralia, either working in the local economy or commuting to jobs in Olympia or the fringes of Puget Sound.

***"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul alike."***

*John Muir  
Founder of the Sierra Club*



## Age Groups

The largest population group is comprised of 25- to 44-year-olds, representing 37.5% of the population in 2000. The number of children or youth between the ages of 0-19 years was 4,187. This is higher than the rest of Lewis County but comparable to the state as a whole.

Of special interest, Centralia has a significantly higher percentage of persons 65 years of age and older – approximately 19% in the 2000 Census vs. 11.2% in the state as a whole. (The percentage of persons 65 and older in the county as a whole has remained relatively stable at 15.5% since the 1990 Census.) The city is in a position to attract retired and elderly households who migrate to the area due to mild weather, ample recreational resources, less expensive living costs, and good medical care. Also, a mild growth in population will occur due to continuing trends which extend life expectancies.

### **Household Size**

In 2000, there were 5,943 households in Centralia. The average household size is slightly lower than the assumed number of 2.5 persons per household set by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). The average family size is 3.02 (equal to the rest of Lewis County), and the average household size is 2.4 persons (less than the county average).

### **Household and Per Capita Income**

The median family household income in Centralia was \$35,684 in 1999, according to the 2000 Census. The mean household income was \$30,078. These figures are less than other parts of Lewis County (and significantly less than the state as a whole). However, the mean retirement income at \$26,885 is approximately \$7,000 greater than the rest of the county. This suggests that many retired persons in Centralia are in a position to purchase their choice of recreational pursuits, but low-income households including the low-income elderly are at a disadvantage.

### **Poverty**

As of the 2000 Census, Centralia had 484 families living below the poverty level, representing 13.6% of the population (and above the state average of 7.3%). There were 427 families with related children under 18 years of age. There were also 2,591 individuals living in the city below the poverty level, and 253 of them were 65 years of age or older. The percentages represented here are all well above both state and national averages, and mean

there may be significant need for assistance in obtaining recreational services.

### **Persons with Disabilities**

The 2000 Census reported nearly 23% of the population (or 3,361 persons) as having a disability that interferes with life activities. This is higher than both state and national averages, which are 17% and 19.3%, respectively. For Centralia residents 65 years of age or older, the percentage rises to 52.7%, or 1,232 persons. This is higher than percentages found in the general elderly population and emphasizes the need to provide recreational services to persons with special needs.

### **Ethnic diversity**

Centralia's population is more diverse than the rest of the county. Some 89.8% of the residents identified themselves as white in Census 2000, compared with the county average of 96%. The state average is 85.3%.



## VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### 2A. A Vision For Centralia Parks & Recreation

The city of Centralia has outlined a vision for its park and recreation services that includes the following:



***Citizens were asked for their vision of parks and recreation at the community meeting Oct. 18, 2006.***

- ◆ Continue to strive for a recreation program offering equal opportunities for all regardless of race, creed, social status or economic need.
- ◆ Ensure a broad range of programs to stimulate good health and physical development.
- ◆ Provide programs, special events and facilities that promote a sense of community and stimulate socialization of the individual and family.
- ◆ Deliver measurable economic benefit to the community through programs, special events and facilities.
- ◆ Develop and market programs to stimulate more intensive use of existing facilities.
- ◆ Encourage more combined use of all community facilities such as parks, libraries and schools.
- ◆ Coordinate programs where possible with Lewis County and City of Chehalis, thus encouraging shared use of facilities.
- ◆ Provide a broad and varied program of leisure activities and services relevant to the needs, interests and abilities of all citizens.
- ◆ Ensure a well-trained workforce that is motivated to achieve department and citywide goals.
- ◆ Support a diverse organization that communicates openly, works as a team, and values quality, creativity and risk taking.
- ◆ Keep leisure-time opportunities and facilities cost-effective and environmentally compatible.
- ◆ Plan for the future so adequate open space, historical elements, recreation facilities and programs are provided for future generations.

## **2B. Goals and Objectives**

With the adoption of the Growth Management Act in 1990, the Washington State Legislature prescribed land use planning guidelines for selected cities and counties in the state, including Lewis County and the City of Centralia. The Legislature identified 13 planning goals to guide the development of comprehensive plans and development regulations (codified in Chapter 36.70A of the Revised Code of Washington). Three of these goals directly affect the development and implementation of this plan.

RCW 36.70A.020(9) covers parks, recreation, and open space:

*“Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.”*

RCW 36.70A.020(10) covers the environment:

*“Protect the environment and enhance the state’s high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.”*

RCW 36.70A.020(13) covers historic preservation:

*“Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.”*

### **Centralia Parks, Trails, Open Space & Recreation Goals**

**Goal P-1      Acquire, develop, and redevelop a high-quality, diversified system of parks, recreation facilities and open spaces that is attractive, safe, functional, and available to all segments of the population.**

Policy P-1.1      Provide a blend of passive and active parks and open spaces which fulfill the recreational needs of the city's residents and meet the adopted park standards of service.

***The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now encouraging schools to offer more physical education, urban policymakers to provide more sidewalks, bike paths, and other alternatives to cars, and parents to reduce their children's television and computer time and to encourage outdoor play.***

*Source: Health of Washington State Report 2002*



***The Borst farm house and blockhouse are pictured here at the confluence of the Chehalis and Skookumchuck Rivers in Centralia, circa 1865. The small boat carries an American flag on the mast.***

*Courtesy of the Lewis County Historical Museum, Chehalis, WA*

- Policy P-1.2 Provide parklands throughout the city at a standard of 14.5 acres per 1,000 residents.
- Policy P-1.3 Acquire and develop parks to provide an equitable distribution of facilities to all city residents; plan for all residents to be within one-half mile of a neighborhood park.
- Policy P-1.4 Establish scenic routes and greenway corridors for walking and cycling.
- Policy P-1.5 Actively seek park and open space acquisition, development and redevelopment through a variety of methods, including local financing, impact fees and dedicated taxes, private dedications, and partnerships and joint ventures.
- Policy P-1.6 Design and manage park and recreational trails and facilities offering universal accessibility for residents of all physical capabilities, skill levels, age, income and activity interests.
- Policy P-1.7 Cooperate with public and private agencies and with private landowners to set aside lands and resources within the urban growth areas, especially along the Skookumchuck and Chehalis Rivers and the proposed Lewis County Trail.
- Policy P-1.8 Preserve and protect significant environmental features for park and open space use including unique wetlands, open spaces, woodlands, shorelines and waterfronts which reflect Centralia's natural heritage.
- Policy P-1.9 Incorporate historical and cultural lands, artifacts and facilities such as the Borst Homestead and the Burlington Northern Railroad depot into the park system to preserve these interests and provide a balanced social experience.

- Policy P-1.10 Provide for public access in unique and/or important natural areas such as shorelines and forested area (including acquisition) and integrate them into the park and open space systems.
- Policy P-1.11 Consider development of a city-wide comprehensive tree plan to include tree selections and criteria, maintenance standards and tree care policies.

**Goal P-2: Develop a high-quality system of shared-use park trails and greenway corridors that access significant local landscapes, public facilities and developed neighborhood and business districts.**

- Policy P-2.1 Create a comprehensive and interconnected system that will provide multi-purpose, off-road trails within a reasonable distance of every home in the urban area and will provide for recreational hikers and walkers, cyclists and neighborhood residents.
- Policy P-2.2 Provide trails throughout the city at a standard of one-half mile per 1,000 residents.
- Policy P-2.3 Increase natural area and open space preservations within the urban area and extend trails through riverine corridors, such as the Skookumchuck River, to provide a diverse sampling of local landscapes.
- Policy P-2.4 In cooperation with other public and private agencies, preserve waterfront access for recreational activities including canoeing, kayaking, rafting and power boating, as appropriate, along the Chehalis and Skookumchuck rivers.

***61% of respondents in the October 2006 survey say an extended trail system connecting creek systems to existing trails is the recreation facility that best fits their needs!***

***"Trails connecting our parks would be a centerpiece of our city, improving the quality of life and drawing others to our area."***

*Online survey respondent  
October 2006*

**Goal P-3      Provide adequate recreational opportunities for City residents.**

**According to the 2002 Washington State Healthy Youth Survey:**

- Only about a third of students in 8th, 10th and 12th grade say they participated in moderate physical activity meeting the Surgeon General's recommendation.**
- About a quarter of adolescents surveyed were overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.**

*Source: Health of Washington State Report 2002*



**Centralia's strong sense of community is on display at 1920's July 4th parade down Tower Avenue. That spirit can be recaptured today.**

*Courtesy of the Lewis County Historical Museum, Chehalis, WA*

Policy P-3.1      Provide for a wide range of recreational experiences based on a system of water and shoreline areas, neighborhood parks and playfields, historic sites, natural study areas, and open space plazas.

Policy P-3.2      Support the development of athletic facilities that meet quality playing standards and requirements for all age groups and recreational interests, concentrating on field and court activities which provide for the largest number of participants. Develop, where appropriate, a select number of facilities that are oriented to the highest competitive playing standard for multi-agency use via cooperative and partnership arrangements.

Policy P-3.3      Support the development and multiple use of school, community and recreational centers which provide for specialized community activities and athletic uses on a year-round basis.

Policy P-3.4      Offer programs at a range of costs (free, low-cost, full-cost recovery, etc.) and implement strategies to ensure program affordability, while meeting financial goals.

Policy P-3.5      Evaluate opportunities to produce revenues in excess of expenditures in appropriate areas to help fund other programs.

Policy P-3.6      Promote special events and recreational programming within parks to enhance community identity, community activity and environmental education.

**Goal P-4      Provide a parks, recreation and open space system that is efficient to administer and maintain.**

- Policy P-4.1      Develop parks and recreational facilities only when adequate maintenance and operation funding is available to maximize maintenance efficiency, safety and public enjoyment.
- Policy P-4.2      Prepare master plans for parks and facilities prior to development, major improvement or renovation to promote cohesive, quality designs and ensure consistency with community needs.
- Policy P-4.3      Incorporate sustainable standards and best management practices into planning and design of new parks and rehabilitation of existing facilities.
- Policy P-4.4      Cooperate with the Centralia School District, Lewis County and the City of Chehalis to improve joint recreation facilities. Cooperate with other municipalities, state and federal agencies, school districts, nonprofit organizations and the private sector in fulfilling the recreational and open space needs of the urban area.

# 3

## DEFINITIONS & STANDARDS

There are five basic park, recreation and open space facilities types:

- ◆ Neighborhood parks
- ◆ Community parks
- ◆ Natural areas and open space corridors
- ◆ Trails
- ◆ Special facilities

***"We need to take seriously the evidence that open space counts in human lives and that places where we play can be places of hope."***

*Martin J. Rosen  
Founding Member and  
President of the Trust for  
Public Lands  
1972-1977*

For some park types, standards are provided, which were derived through evaluation of local needs and conditions, in combination with an analysis of comparable cities and national standards as identified in "Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines" (1983) by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). For other park types, need is based on the physical resource, rather than a population-driven standard.

### 3A. Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are generally no more than 10 acres in size, depending on a variety of factors including need, location, opportunity and funding capacity. These parks are intended to serve residential areas within walking distance (1/3 to 1/2 mile radius) of the park site and should be geographically distributed throughout the community. Access is mostly pedestrian, and park sites should be located so that persons living within the service area will not have to cross a major arterial street to get to the site. Developed neighborhood parks typically include amenities such as pedestrian paths and trails, picnic tables, play equipment, play fields, sports courts, landscaping and irrigation.

Neighborhood Parks	Acreage
Cedar Street Park	0.61
Central Park	0.03
Logan Community Park	1.1
Wilbur Parkins Park	5.07
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>6.81</b>

*Figure 1 - Existing Neighborhood Parks*

Elementary schools in the Centralia urban area do not play a role in its overall park system. School grounds in the area are generally small, provide little, if any, greenspace or open lawn area that might act as a proxy to a traditional neighborhood park, and access is restricted by school use and security concerns. The middle and high schools, however, do serve a need and are discussed in the next section on Community Parks.

### 3B. Community Parks

Community parks are generally 10 to 100 acres in size and are best defined by the array of recreational activities that a site provides. Community parks may include area suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools - but above all the parks are intended to provide access to areas of diverse environmental quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting and picnicking. These parks serve groups of neighborhoods within a three-mile radius of the park site. Access to community parks may be by car, bicycle or on foot.

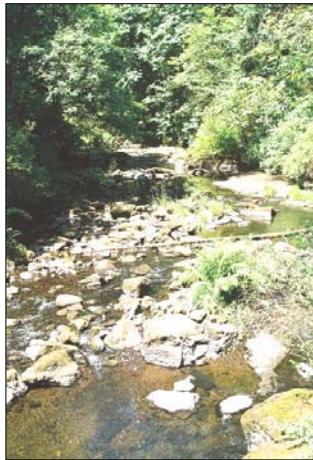
The range of facilities provided will be greater than in neighborhood parks and will generally appeal to more diverse user groups. Developed community parks typically include amenities such as picnic shelters and tables, tennis courts, covered activity areas, soccer and baseball fields, bike and pedestrian trails, restrooms, landscaping, irrigation and parking lots. Swimming pools and recreation centers may be located on these sites.

Community parks may be jointly developed in association with a middle or high school. These parks complement and expand on the services provided by school grounds. In certain areas, community parks are located adjacent to schools or involve developing and upgrading the school site. Centralia Middle School provides a soccer field and tennis courts on an underdeveloped property of which about 2.8 acres is available for recreational uses. Centralia Senior High provides athletic fields and a track on an underdeveloped property of which about 22.08 acres is available for limited recreational uses.



Community Parks	Acreage
Borst	101
Centralia High School	22.08
Centralia Middle School	2.8
George Washington Park-Library	2
Rotary-Riverside Park	14.05
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>141.93</b>

Figure 2 - Existing Community Parks



### 3C. Natural Areas & Open Space Corridors

Natural areas and open space corridors provide visual and psychological relief from man-made development within the urban area. Public access via trails and walkways to and within these areas is important to provide passive recreational opportunities, as appropriate with resource protection and environmental regulations. The selection of natural area sites is based on a variety of criteria, including linkage to or through other open spaces, public facilities, relation to existing parks in the area, the need to preserve a site's natural features, and the size and quality of the open space. Natural areas may or may not be improved, but generally provide amenities for passive recreation, such as trails, benches and environmental interpretive panels.

Natural Areas & Open Space	Acreage
Brick Wagner Park	0.38
Bridge Street Properties	2.69
Ed S. Mayes Park	0.03
Gold Street Mill Pond	0.81
Gold Street Overpass Improvements	4
Plummer Lake Boat Launch (WDFW)	0.4
Prairie Estates Development	2.2
Seminary Hill Natural Area	71.7
Washington Street Park	0.08
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>82.29</b>

*Figure 3 - Existing Natural Areas & Open Space*

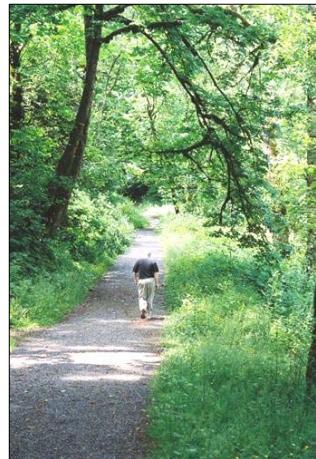
Open space corridors can include expansive greenway systems, which are resource-based open spaces. They are acquired with the intent of limited development – generally for trails and wildlife observation. Open space corridors are typically long, relatively narrow lands that follow roads, creeks, ridges, ravines and other natural or transportation corridors. These corridors serve various functions, including protection of environmentally-sensitive areas and wildlife habitat, wildlife viewing, environmental education and trails.

### 3D. Trails

Hiking, walking and cycling trails are in strong demand by residents of Centralia. A trail may exist within a publicly acquired

open space corridor or right-of-way or along railroad lines or utility corridors defined by drainage areas, topographical changes, wooded areas or vegetation patterns that can link schools, libraries or commercial areas with parks. The trail should be sufficiently wide enough to accommodate the intended type of trail user(s), preserve the features through which the trail is traveling and buffer adjacent land use activities. The proposed trail standard is to provide one-half mile of trail per 1,000 residents.

Trails	Mileage
Discovery Trail	1.5
Old Treatment Plant Trail (limited access)	0.6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2.1</b>



*Figure 4 - Existing Trails*

Trails may be developed in conjunction with various recreational activities, such as jogging, nature study and historic observation. They may be a separate facility, such as a fitness trail, or a connected element of a larger facility, such as a greenway trail. Surfaces will vary with location and use. Provisions for parking, consistent signage and interpretive markers may also be included in trail development.

### 3E. Special Facilities

Special use facilities are single-purpose recreational activities such as golf courses, conservatories, arboreta, display gardens, outdoor theaters and gun ranges. Special use facilities may include areas that preserve, maintain and interpret buildings, sites and other objects of historical or cultural significance, like museums, historical landmarks and structures. Special use areas may also include public plazas or squares or commons in or near commercial centers, public buildings or other urban developed areas. There are no standards concerning the development of special use facilities - demand being defined by opportunity more than a ratio standard. Nor are there minimum or maximum facility or site sizes - size being a function of the facility rather than a separately established design standard.

Special Facilities	Acreage
Armory Hills open space	33.33
Depot Railroad	0.33
First Street Trees	0.87
Pearl Street Outdoor Pool	0.86
Washington Lawn Cemetery	3.96
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>39.35</b>

*Figure 5 - Existing Special Facilities*

Examples of special facilities within Centralia include the outdoor swimming pool at Pearl Street, a small landscaped area in Washington Street Park commemorating the original location of George Washington's home, the Washington Lawn Cemetery, and the Armory Hills open space which is not currently in operation.

### **3F. Service Standards**

The plan identifies a combined standard of 14.5 acres per 1,000 population for neighborhood and community parks and natural areas. Within the combined acre standard, the preferred distribution is 8.5 acres for neighborhood and community parks and 6 acres for natural areas and open space corridors. For the purpose of calculating the level of service for park and open space lands, special facilities are excluded from the inventory. While these facilities serve a significant and growing need, special facilities, such as a display garden, are by definition unique to the parks inventory. The level of service standard for Centralia, in turn, focuses on those active and passive recreation sites without barriers of entry.

**Service Standards**

	<b>Parks</b>	<b>Natural Areas</b>	<b>Trails</b>
Level of Service Standard	8.5 acres/1,000	6 acres/1,000	0.5 miles/1,000
Desired Distribution	½ mile radius	NA	1 mile

### **3G. Modifications to Park System Classification from 1991 Plan**

In the 1991 Parks Plan and the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, a number of classifications were identified (mini-parks, linear parks, etc.), and this plan proposes to simplify the classification system to fewer facility types with the intent of having greater public understanding of the park system and the corresponding park standards. The following table illustrates which facility types are proposed for combination with the corresponding acreage standards.

Previous Classification	Standard	Proposed Classification	Standard
Mini-Park	0.35 ac/1000	(removed)	
Neighborhood Park	1.00 ac/1000	Neighborhood Park	8.50 ac/1000
Community Park	5.15 ac/1000	Community Park	
Regional Park	6.00 ac/1000	(removed)	
Linear Park	2.00 ac/1000	Natural Area & Open Space	6.00 ac/1000
Special Facility	NA	Special Facility	NA
<b>Composite Park Standard</b>	<b>14.5 ac/1000</b>		<b>14.5 ac/1000</b>

The table below shows the proposed re-classification of each park site.

Park Facility	Proposed Classification	Previous Classification
Borst	<b>Community</b>	Regional
Centralia High School	Community	NA
Centralia Middle School	Community	NA
George Washington Park-Library	Community	Community
Rotary-Riverside Park	Community	Community
Cedar Street Park	<b>Neighborhood</b>	Mini-Park
Central Park	<b>Neighborhood</b>	Mini-Park
Logan Community Park	Neighborhood	NA
Wilbur Parkins Park	Neighborhood	Neighborhood
Brick Wagner Park	<b>Natural Area / Open Space</b>	Mini-Park
Bridge Street Properties	Natural Area / Open Space	NA
Ed S. Mayes Park	<b>Natural Area / Open Space</b>	Special Facility
Gold Street Mill Pond	Natural Area / Open Space	NA
Gold Street Overpass Improvements	<b>Natural Area / Open Space</b>	Open Space
Plummer Lake Boat Launch (WDFW)	Natural Area / Open Space	NA
Prairie Estates Development	Natural Area / Open Space	NA
Seminary Hill Natural Area	<b>Natural Area / Open Space</b>	Open Space
Washington Street Park	<b>Natural Area / Open Space</b>	Special Facility
Armory Hills open space	Special Facility	Special Facility
Depot Railroad	Special Facility	Special Facility
First Street Trees	Special Facility	Special Facility
Pearl Street Outdoor Pool	<b>Special Facility</b>	Mini-Park
Washington Lawn Cemetery	Special Facility	Special Facility

NOTE: **BOLD** text signifies a proposed change.

# 4

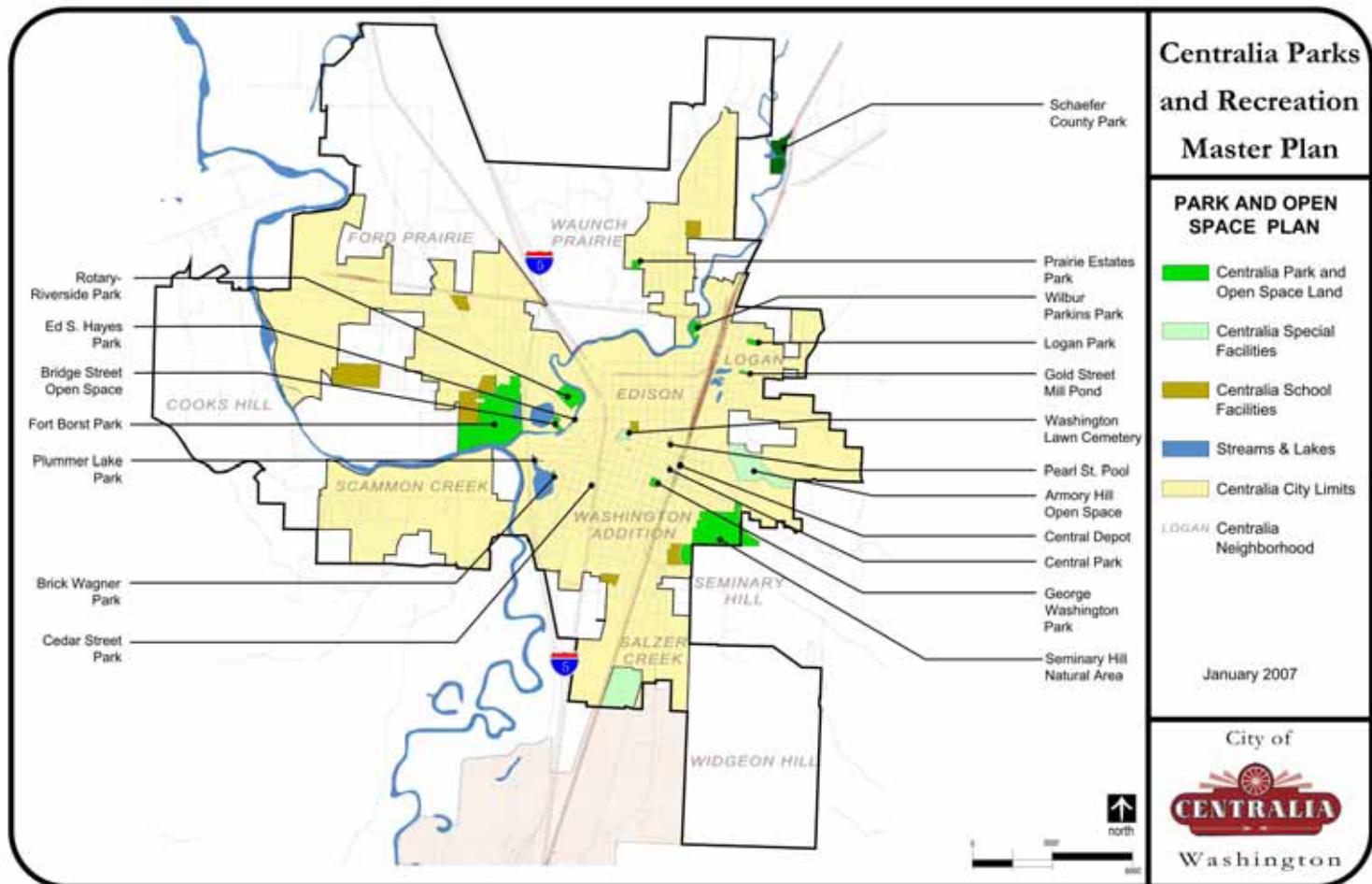
## EXISTING INVENTORY

The City of Centralia benefits from a diverse array of natural resources and public park and recreation facilities. In addition to the city sites, a number of local, state, and federal agencies are involved in providing park and recreational amenities for the community. Though many different providers are regionally present, this inventory focuses on sites and facilities located within the Centralia urban growth area.

### Centralia Service Area

Centralia provides park and open space opportunities on 229 acres of land distributed among 18 city and publicly owned sites. An additional 39 acres of public land is available at Centralia's five special facilities. Together, these 23 sites total 270 acres of public land and are listed on the following table:

Park Site	Classification	Acreage
Borst	Community	101
Centralia High School	Community	22.08
Centralia Middle School	Community	2.8
George Washington Park-Library	Community	2
Rotary-Riverside Park	Community	14.05
<b>Community Park Subtotal</b>		<b>141.93</b>
Cedar Street Park	Neighborhood	0.61
Central Park	Neighborhood	0.03
Logan Community Park	Neighborhood	1.1
Wilbur Parkins Park	Neighborhood	5.07
<b>Neighborhood Park Subtotal</b>		<b>6.81</b>
Brick Wagner Park	Natural Area / Open Space	0.38
Bridge Street Properties	Natural Area / Open Space	2.69
Ed S. Mayes Park	Natural Area / Open Space	0.03
Gold Street Mill Pond	Natural Area / Open Space	0.81
Gold Street Overpass Improvements	Natural Area / Open Space	4
Plummer Lake Boat Launch (WDFW)	Natural Area / Open Space	0.4
Prairie Estates Development	Natural Area / Open Space	2.2
Seminary Hill Natural Area	Natural Area / Open Space	71.7
Washington Street Park	Natural Area / Open Space	0.08
<b>Open Space Subtotal</b>		<b>82.29</b>
Armory Hills open space	Special Facility	33.33
Depot Railroad	Special Facility	0.33
First Street Trees	Special Facility	0.87
Pearl Street Outdoor Pool	Special Facility	0.86
Washington Lawn Cemetery	Special Facility	3.96
<b>Special Facility Subtotal</b>		<b>39.35</b>
<b>Total: Parks &amp; Open Space</b>		<b>231.03</b>
<b>Total: Special Facilities</b>		<b>39.35</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>270.38</b>



### Inventory Methodology

Inventory data was gathered from field assessments completed in the fall of 2006. Additional facility data and site narratives were extracted from inventory efforts completed by city staff in 1991 and 2005. The management issues and recommendations are the result of site assessments, previous inventory efforts, staff recommendations and public comments.

This chapter provides inventory information and site-specific recommendations for identified public sites managed by Centralia. Other area recreation providers are summarized in Appendix B. Detailed summaries of previous inventory efforts are also contained within this appendix.

Inventories of Centralia's 23 public sites are presented on the following pages.



## Fort Borst Park

<b>Acreage</b>	101.00
<b>Park Type</b>	Community Park
<b>Location</b>	Borst Avenue, west of Interstate 5

### Description

Fort Borst Park is the most significant park facility in the city system. Because of its size, central location, varied natural features and diverse recreational opportunities, Fort Borst Park attracts large numbers of local and park users. This well developed park is located at the confluence of the Chehalis and Skookumchuck rivers and is the home to the historic Borst homestead, schoolhouse, arboretum and Fort Borst Blockhouse.



In addition to being an important historic site, the park's athletic facilities include full service little league, softball and youth soccer complexes comprising over four baseball fields, three softball fields and seven soccer fields. Additional athletic fields, an indoor pool and outdoor tennis complex are located nearby and jointly managed with the Centralia School District.



Water access includes adjacent river frontages, Fort Borst Lake and concrete boat ramp along the Chehalis River. Fort Borst Park is very popular with large groups and includes group picnic, shelter and facility rentals.



In addition, Fort Borst Park is home to the city park administration and maintenance staff and facilities. The park is a major recreational asset that establishes an important identity for Centralia.



## Amenities

Paved parking	Benches
Restrooms	Tennis courts
Reservable shelters	Baseball/softball
Picnic shelters	Soccer/football field
Group picnic areas	Open play field
Bbq/cooking facilities	Natural areas
Concessions area	Interpretive/education
Boat launch facilities	Historic structures
Fishing/transit dock	Batting cages
Fishing/water access	Indoor pool
Paved paths	Racquetball facility
Primitive trails	Rifle club
Playground	Parks administration
Picnic tables	Parks operations



## Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Ensure adequate, long term maintenance and capital repair program for facilities
- ◆ Enhance automobile wayfinding and safety through use of signage and park road improvements
- ◆ Minimize site impacts associated with future Interstate 5 improvements
- ◆ Monitor water quality, invasive aquatic plant growth, and bank erosion associated with natural and manmade impacts at Fort Borst Lake
- ◆ Expand number of reservable picnic shelters
- ◆ Renovate interiors and replace roofing of selected site buildings, including park administration and operations buildings
- ◆ Replace aged and worn site and park furnishings
- ◆ Promote the history tourism opportunities at this site
- ◆ Increase the number of regional tournaments and other group events to maximize revenues
- ◆ Update the Borst Park Master Plan to guide future development and acquisitions



## Centralia School District

<i>Acreage</i>	<i>22.08 (High School), 2.80 (Middle School)</i>
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Community Park</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>813 Eshom Road (High School) 901 Johnson Road (Middle School)</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

Centralia School District owns and operates six elementary schools, one middle school and one senior high school on 110 acres of land within the Centralia service area. The school district's facilities are utilized for recreation by the community in a number of ways. The elementary school sites provide open play areas and playgrounds for community use during non-school hours. The gyms and building facilities are used by local youth organizations and youth sports programs, adult education, seminars, public meetings and community events.

In 1979 the Centralia School District built the Community Indoor Pool and now shares financial responsibilities with the city. Centralia Middle School provides land for city-developed and maintained outdoor tennis courts. Logan Community Park is built on a now closed elementary school site. The district also developed additional athletic facilities at the Centralia High School site including an all-weather track, baseball field and football and track stadium.

There is great potential for increased partnerships with the Centralia School District that will improve public access and better utilize school facilities and grounds. A joint study should be undertaken to study the options available to address community concerns for more neighborhood parks, additional and upgraded athletic fields/gyms, and better facilities.

## George Washington Park

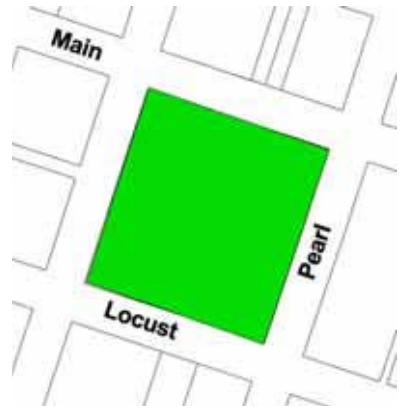
<i>Acreage</i>	2.00
<i>Park Type</i>	Community
<i>Location</i>	Main Street at Pearl Street

### Description

This two-acre park was created by public designation during the original platting of the town in 1881 to serve as Centralia's principal park square. The property is bound on the north and south by Main and Locust Streets and on the west and east by Silver and Pearl Streets. The maturely landscaped grounds also feature Centralia's Carnegie Endowment Library and large wood gazebo. The park is a popular site, particularly during special events such as Music in the Park, Veteran's Memorial Walk and other ceremonies. Generally, the park is in good condition, appropriately furnished and effectively used.

### Inventory

- Paved paths
- Benches
- Amphitheater/stage
- Interpretive signage
- Historic structures
- Site furnishings



### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Ensure that the park is adequately maintained to accommodate large public events
- ◆ Actively program the facility to maximize community and civic events
- ◆ Consider use of a mobile stage to increase performance space at park





## Riverside Rotary Park

<b>Acreage</b>	14.05
<b>Park Type</b>	Community Park
<b>Location</b>	Lowe Street north of Harrison Avenue

### Description

Riverside Rotary Park is a popular waterfront community park located along the banks of the Skookumchuck River between historic downtown and Interstate 5. Approximately 4.5 acres of this park site was originally owned and developed by the Centralia Rotary Club and later donated to Centralia in 1983. This park is now home to the city's 44,000-square-foot regional skatepark and provides a wide range of active and passive recreational opportunities. The park is fully serviced with parking areas, group picnic facilities, restrooms, shelters, play equipment, sport fields, and paved and soft-surface walking paths. Rotary Riverside Park provides critical open space and water access to the public.

### Amenities

Paved parking	Playground
Restrooms	Picnic tables
Reservable shelters	Benches
Picnic shelters	Skate/bike park
Group picnic areas	Baseball/softball
Bbq/cooking facilities	Soccer/football field
Fishing/water access	Open play field
Paved paths	Natural areas
Primitive trails	

### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide ongoing maintenance and repair of skatepark concrete decking and above-ground skate features
- ◆ Complete park access and parking lot improvements at skatepark and Bridge Street entrances
- ◆ Repair asphalt pathways and expand accessible park circulation system throughout site
- ◆ Enhance park entries, including the consideration of future land acquisitions near Harrison Avenue to increase visibility
- ◆ Renovate restroom interiors and replace restroom roof
- ◆ Replace aged and worn site and park furnishings



## Cedar Street Park

<b>Acreage</b>	0.61
<b>Park Type</b>	Neighborhood
<b>Location</b>	Intersection of Cedar St. and Pear St.

### Description

Cedar Street Park was acquired from the Centralia School District in 1969 and is located at the intersection of Cedar and Pear Streets. In 1990, Centralia obtained a lease permit from the Chehalis-Western Railroad Company to utilize a small portion of railroad right-of-way property for public park purposes. With the assistance of community partners, park staff developed neighborhood park improvements at this site. The site is fully developed and provides a wide range of recreation opportunities.

### Inventory

Play equipment	Basketball court
Picnic tables	Site furnishings
Tennis court	

### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Replace aged and worn site and park furnishings
- ◆ Add street and park trees to increase tree canopy and provide summer shade
- ◆ Repair or restart irrigation system if maintenance funding is available
- ◆ Enhance park signage





## Central Park

<i>Acreage</i>	0.03
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Neighborhood</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>Tower Ave., between Pine and Magnolia</i>

### Description

This “pocket” park fronting Tower Avenue was acquired by Centralia in 1970. The dilapidated building located on this site was demolished and park improvements were funded through a Local Improvement District. This park links with a public parking lot behind the business district and provides a green respite from the hard surfaces of the downtown during the warm weather. The park is generally in good condition, appropriately furnished and a popular attraction for shoppers and office workers. This site also serves as a staging area for special and community events.

### Inventory

Benches  
Site furnishings

### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Continue use of partnerships to plan for long-term maintenance and operation of site
- ◆ Vegetation management for plant health and user safety

## Logan Park

Acreage	1.10
Park Type	Neighborhood
Location	Logan Street at Vienna Street



### Description

This small neighborhood park located in the Logan neighborhood is owned by the Centralia School District and cooperatively developed and leased to the city. This park provides a wide range of active park amenities and a small open play field.

### Inventory

Picnic shelters	Tennis court
Play equipment	Basketball court
Picnic tables	Open play area
Benches	



### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Replace aged and worn site and park furnishings
- ◆ Add street and park trees to increase tree canopy and provide summer shade
- ◆ Repair or restart irrigation system if maintenance funding is available
- ◆ Enhance park signage





## Wilbur Parkins Park

<b>Acreage</b>	5.07
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Neighborhood</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>End of Meridian Avenue at the Skookumchuck River</i>

### Description

This waterfront park was originally established in 1972 by a land donation by Wilbur and May Parkins. Additional land was acquired in 1990 to expand park boundaries. This undeveloped 5-plus acre site is located along the banks of the Skookumchuck River at the end of Meridian Avenue. Informal rustic improvements over the years are the result of the site's popularity with the community. This site provides gravel beaches and water access to some of the more secluded stretches of the river.

### Inventory

Primitive parking	Picnic tables
Fishing/water access	Benches
Primitive trails	Open play areas

### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Prepare a master plan for the site to guide future development and acquisitions
- ◆ Consider linking park to natural areas on the west bank of the river, utilizing abandoned railroad trestle abutments
- ◆ Improve parking areas and picnic facilities

## Brick Wagner Park

<b>Acreage</b>	0.38
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>End of Tilley Street right-of-way at Plummer Lake</i>

### Description

This small waterfront park provides access to Plummer Lake at the end of Tilley Street. This park was originally created in 1929 with the Tilley Street and Dobcaster Mill race right-of-way vacations and expanded and reconfigured in 1934 and 1974. This park is a popular water access site and affords interesting views of Plummer Lake. The site amenities are showing signs of age, and site access, fencing and lakeshore erosion are management issues. This parcel could also serve as a trailhead for future trail linkages through Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife land holdings to access Plummer Lake shoreline and Skookumchuck River.



### Inventory

Fishing/water access	Benches
Picnic tables	Natural areas



### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Replace aged and worn site and park furnishings
- ◆ Consider adding ADA accessible fishing platforms or piers
- ◆ Prepare a master plan for the site to guide future trailhead and trail development at Plummer Lake





## Bridge Street Properties

<i>Acreage</i>	2.69
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<i>Location</i>	Bridge Street south of Harrison Avenue

### Summary and Recommendations

Undeveloped 2.7-acre waterfront property providing water access to Hayes Lake and the Skookumchuck River. This centrally located site is strategically situated between Fort Borst Park and Rotary Riverside Park and may someday play an important role in trail development along the Skookumchuck River. Minor site improvements would enhance the public's ability to utilize this unique urban open space.



## Ed S. Mayes Park

<i>Acreage</i>	0.03
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<i>Location</i>	First Street and Harrison Avenue

### Summary and Recommendations

A small parcel of land located at the intersection of First Street and Harrison Avenue adjacent to the bridge over the Skookumchuck River. The parcel was purchased in 1910 and planted with rhododendrons to create a landscaped gateway.

## Gold Street Mill Pond

<i>Acreage</i>	0.81
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>Gold Street between Marion and Yakima</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

An .8- acre undeveloped wetland open space located in downtown Centralia. This property includes a section of China Creek and mature riparian vegetation. This site has potential for wetland and stream restoration projects and educational opportunities.



## Gold Street Overpass

<i>Acreage</i>	4.00
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>Under and adjacent to the Gold Street and Kresky Avenue overpass</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

This four-acre parcel, established in 1968 and expanded in 1973 as a result of the Centralia/Chehalis thoroughfare projects, is located under and adjacent to the Gold Street and Kresky Avenue overpass structures over the railroad tracks at Northrup Street. The site consists of public street right-of-way that has been landscaped on the west side of the tracks to provide a beautification and entry definition to the downtown from SR 507. Inclusion of adjacent undeveloped street right-of-ways on Hickory Street and Centralia Avenue may increase the recreation potential of this little-used facility.





## Plummer Lake Boat Launch(WDFW)

<b>Acreage</b>	0.40
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>End of Lewis Street at Plummer Lake</i>



### Description

The Plummer Lake Boat Launch is situated on .4 acres of state land located at the end of Lewis Street. This non-motorized boat launch facility was developed in 1995 with the cooperation of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and state grant funds. This park includes a small parking area and restroom, and terrace access to the north end of Plummer Lake.

### Inventory

Restroom	Boat launch facility
Paved parking	Benches
Fishing/water access	Natural areas

### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Replace aged and worn site and park furnishings
- ◆ Consider adding ADA accessible fishing platforms or piers

## Prairie Estates

<b>Acreage</b>	2.20
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>Prairie Rose at Honeysuckle</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

A 2.2-acre undeveloped open space and wetlands adjacent to residential development.



## Seminary Hill Natural Area

<b>Acreage</b>	71.70
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>End of Barner Drive, between Summa Street and Seminary Hill Road</i>



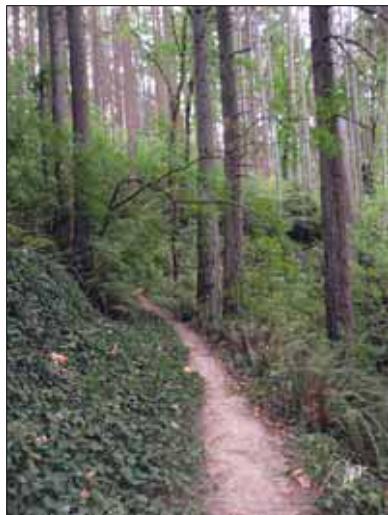
### Description

This large urban natural area occupies hilltop property overlooking Centralia, the Chehalis and Skookumchuck River valleys and the municipal water reservoirs on Seminary Hill Road. The original property holdings consisted of the reservoir lands. The open space area was enlarged in the 1980s with the assistance of the local conservation group Friends of Seminary Hill. A trailhead was later established at the end of Barner Drive, providing public access to the natural area's steep trails, woods and vistas. The 2.25-mile trail system is generally in good condition though some portions are subject to erosion. Development of adjacent private parcels and the presence of invasive non-native plants may impact the natural character of this site. Centralia currently leases a home on this property for the purpose of providing a park caretaker's residence.



### Inventory

Primitive parking	Natural areas
Primitive trails	Interpretive signage
Picnic tables	



### Management Issues and Recommendations

- ◆ Provide basic maintenance to ensure public access and safety
- ◆ Enhance park signage
- ◆ Consider additional trailhead development at south end of site or on Central School District property on the west
- ◆ Manage invasive plant species
- ◆ Enhance trails to reduce hillside erosion and increase user safety
- ◆ Consider future land acquisitions to maintain natural site qualities
- ◆ Prepare a master plan for the site to guide future development and acquisitions





## Washington Street Park

<b>Acreage</b>	0.08
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Natural Area / Open Space</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>Washington Street at Park Street</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

A small, 3,500-square-foot parcel located at the corner of Washington and Park Streets. The property is reputedly the site of the original dwelling built by George Washington, Centralia's founder. The original buildings and other historic items have long since been removed from the site. The site's adjacency to single-family homes gives it the appearance of being part of the front yard of a private residence. Other than sentimental value, this site lacks significant historic or recreational values. Centralia should consider long-term ownership issues associated with this unusual parcel and discuss expansion or possible disposition of this property.



## Armory Hills Open Sapce

<b>Acreage</b>	33.33
<b>Park Type</b>	<i>Special Facility</i>
<b>Location</b>	<i>End of Duffy Drive below Seminary Hill</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

The 33.33-acre property, located at the end of Duffy Drive below Seminary Hill, was provided by a state land grant in 1949 and 1963. The property is situated within a valley formed by Seminary Hill to the south and Ham Hill to the north. The former golf course included a wood-framed, two-story clubhouse facility, caretaker's residence and restaurant on the upper level and a pro shop, equipment storage and operations facilities on the lower level. The course is currently not in operation. The site has many challenges including steep topography, an inadequate irrigation system and development pressures along the site boundaries.

## Central Depot Railroad

<i>Acreage</i>	0.33
<i>Park Type</i>	Special Facility
<i>Location</i>	210 Railroad Avenue in downtown

### Summary and Recommendations

The Central Depot is a 14,228-square-foot restored historic railroad station serving Centralia rail passengers. This unique building and grounds are maintained by Centralia and include a 1,400-square-foot multipurpose room which is currently rented for meetings and events. This rental facility includes a fully equipped kitchen facility. The remaining building space is divided between passenger rail functions and leased commercial office spaces.



## Pearl Street Outdoor Pool

<i>Acreage</i>	0.86
<i>Park Type</i>	Special Facility
<i>Location</i>	North Pearl Street

### Summary and Recommendations

This popular 5,000-square-foot outdoor pool was developed by the community in the 1950s. The parcel was originally acquired in 1930 and also includes an 11,620-square-foot bathhouse. The pool closed briefly in the early 1980s before being reopened in 1984 by the local non-profit organization FIN (Friends in Need). FIN, with the financial assistance of Centralia, continues to operate the outdoor pool during the summer months. The swimming pool, mechanical systems and bathhouse need significant repair and refurbishing. The landscaped areas have been planted with grass, but are ill-kept and not well utilized. Additional landscaping and site improvements will allow the pool to better accommodate seasonal crowds.





## Washington Lawn Cemetery

<i>Acreage</i>	3.96
<i>Park Type</i>	<i>Special Facility</i>
<i>Location</i>	<i>Washington Street at Maple Street</i>

### Summary and Recommendations

This historic cemetery is located within one of Centralia's celebrated downtown residential neighborhoods. Located between Washington and Ash Streets, this four-acre cemetery facility is fully developed and has been maintained by Centralia since 1937. The grounds are in poor condition and lack adequate irrigation, landscaping, fencing, frontage improvements, lighting and other remedial improvements. Vandalism and settling have deteriorated the condition of some headstones. Many of Centralia's earliest residents are buried here and recent volunteer efforts have helped document and digitally archive headstone information. Though few historically important personages or headstone improvements are present, this site has the potential for becoming a historic and visual asset for the city.





# 5

# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

In establishing a framework for parks and recreation planning that will be viable for the next 20 years – a generation to come – the opportunities for public involvement were exciting and extensive. Three primary methods were used: 1) review of five citizen-based planning efforts conducted between 1991 and 2006; 2) two public opinion surveys completed in July 2005 and October 2006; and 3) community meetings and stakeholder interviews conducted during September and November 2006. The SEPA environmental review process allowed the public time to review and comment on the draft plan. Additionally, a public hearing was held with the Centralia City Council.

***"The whole goal is to get input from people to find out what kinds of services we want to provide in the future."***

*Emil Pierson, Community Development Director  
The Chronicle  
Oct. 17, 2006*

## 5A. Community-Based Plans

The five plans reviewed in this section are community-based plans. Their development involved public input and participation, and their implementation has received community support.

### 1991 Centralia Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

The Centralia Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan was prepared under the guidance of and with input from a citizen Planning Task Force which included representatives of the Centralia City Council, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and various park and recreation interest groups. A telephone survey, intercept questionnaires, and public meetings were employed to elicit recommendations and input from residents. Completed in 1991, the plan outlined 14 goals for park and recreation service delivery and the maintenance and expansion of the park system. Furthermore, the plan identified nearly 70 discrete implementation measures providing direction for the improvement of the city's park and recreation system.

### 1996 Centralia 21st Century Visioning Project

Between 1994 and 1996, the city of Centralia contacted 500 individual business and community members and hosted a series of community discussions to establish a vision for its future. Through dialogue with residents, a vision of a revitalized and

robust city was drafted, in which parks and recreation programs play a significant role. Specifically, 76% of residents felt that parks and recreation were important to the city's quality of life and reinforced the vision to include the provision of recreational services, linked trails and pathways, and developed park space for families to enjoy.

### **1998 Centralia Comprehensive Plan and Capital Facilities Plan Element**

Completed in conformance with the GMA, the 1998 Comprehensive Plan entailed an extensive community outreach program consisting of monthly advisory board meetings, public workshops and public hearings. Published in December 1998, the Centralia Comprehensive Plan establishes 10 general planning policies to guide the acquisition, development and maintenance of parks and trails and two policies to guide the provision of recreational services to residents.

### **2002 Lewis County Comprehensive Plan**

The Lewis County Comprehensive Plan was approved in June 1999 and amended in April 2002. It contains nine general policies related to park and recreation services and incorporates the county's 1995 park and recreation plan. During the course of comprehensive plan development, Lewis County held over 50 public workshops and meetings on various elements of the comprehensive plan. These workshops were in addition to the Planning Commission's regularly scheduled workshops and were designed specifically to receive citizen input on the comprehensive plan.

### **2006-07 Centralia Comprehensive Plan**

The current parks and recreation plan update will be a component of the city's broader comprehensive plan, which is currently being prepared. Through coordination with staff and the consultant team, the parks plan seeks to integrate and coordinate goals and planning objectives for the city. The comprehensive plan process has included numerous public meeting, work sessions and hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council.

## 5B. Public Opinion

**"We need more neighborhood parks. Handicap accessibility. Bike trails."**

Online survey respondent  
October 2006

Several methods were employed to allow the public the opportunity to provide information and express opinions about the needs and priorities for urban parks, recreation and open space facilities and programs in the Centralia area. The results of these efforts played an important role in preparing and prioritizing the capital facilities plan contained in the report.

### 2005 Park User Intercept Survey

**"Very little attention has been put into Borst Park for a long time now. I have lived around here for 25 years and since then Borst Park has been declining."**

Survey respondent  
July 2005

Centralia Parks Department staff developed an intercept survey to assess park users' opinion about specific park sites and the overall park system. The survey was conducted by volunteers during July 2005. Surveys were provided in print format at numerous locations throughout the city with an overall response of 260 surveys completed. The survey instrument focused primarily on recreational activities of interest and specific facility enhancements. The survey instrument and a summary of data are provided in Appendix C. Results from the survey will be discussed in greater detail in the Needs Assessment section of this plan.

### 2006 Web Survey

**"Please make available a map of your park locations and descriptions."**

Survey respondent  
July 2005

Building on the data gathered in 2005, the project team designed a more detailed survey collaboratively with staff and the Parks Board. The survey was designed specifically for the internet and was available to residents through a link provided on the city's webpage. The survey was "live" online from September 28th through November 3rd. A series of newspaper articles appeared in The Chronicle highlighting the various aspects of this project, the survey and the broader Comprehensive Plan. Approximately 40 respondents completed the online survey, and an analysis of the data reveals a survey sample that is representative of the city in terms of specific demographics: age, gender and income. The survey instrument and a summary of data are provided in Appendix C. Results from the survey will be discussed in greater detail in the Needs Assessment section of this plan.

**"We have an unused 60-mile trail connecting the twin cities to Willipa Harbor. As you know, this traverses some beautiful countryside. It would bring bikers to our area from around the country."**

Online survey respondent  
October 2006

## **Public Meetings**

Two public meetings were held during the planning process. Both were held at Centralia Community College and elicited important feedback from residents about the strengths of the overall parks and recreation program, as well as needed improvements. The first session was held on August 3, 2005 and the second on October 18, 2006. Public notices and newspaper articles were used to publicize the events. Each lasted about two hours. Summary responses from both meetings are provided in Appendix C.



## **Other Outreach**

Separately, several stakeholder meetings were held with individuals in the community who have a particular interest or knowledge of parks and recreation in the Centralia urban area. Stakeholders included the Centralia Parks Board, Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce, Friends of Seminary Hill, and staff from Chehalis and Lewis County.

Lastly, a unique project page for the Parks Plan Update was developed and posted on the city's website for residents to learn about the planning process and timelines, notice of public meetings, access to the online survey, and review a draft version of the plan update. Staff contact information was provided for resident inquiries.

***"We need more walking trails in town!"***

*Survey respondent  
July 2005*

***"Seminary Hill Natural Area needs help having invasive species removed such as English ivy and English holly."***

*Online survey respondent  
October 2006*

# 6 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## 6A. Assessment of Demand & Need

Establishing priorities for the acquisition, development and maintenance of park and recreation facilities within Centralia culminates the planning process. Capturing the hopes and desires of citizens – and finding the resources necessary to meet their expectations – may prove to be a challenging task. Through an analysis of community needs, a six-year capital facility plan is developed to identify and prioritize critical upgrades, improvements and expansions that can best fulfill the community's needs.

Several methods are available for assessing the demand and need for facilities and services.

- ◆ **Definitional Standards** involve a description of the intended use, desired size, or location of the facility.
- ◆ **Numerical Standards** involve the numeric quantification of facilities based on community, industry, or professional judgments or computations.
- ◆ **Resource Identification** involves facility types that are defined by the existence and nature of the resource itself.
- ◆ **Public Input** is the expression of personal and community wants and desires.

The following assessment of demand and need is divided into four basic categories: neighborhood and community parks, natural areas and open space corridors, trails and recreation programs. The assessments are based heavily on public input from intercept and web-based surveys conducted in 2005 and 2006, along with stakeholder discussions and public meetings.

Overall, residents of Centralia support parks and recreation and believe these services help make a better community. In a survey conducted as part of this plan update, 97% of respondents believed that park and recreation services are important to the city's quality of life. In exploring broader recreation trends for city residents, the adjacent table identifies the top six activities by the percentage of respondents participating, the relative

**Most Frequent Participation by Activity**

	<u>2006 Survey</u>	<u>2002 SCORP</u>
	Rating	Rank
Hiking / Walking	<b>88%</b>	<b>1</b>
Picnicking	<b>79%</b>	<b>2</b>
Wildlife Observation	<b>68%</b>	<b>3</b>
Bicycling	<b>62%</b>	<b>4</b>
Swimming	<b>59%</b>	<b>5</b>
Camping	<b>53%</b>	<b>6</b>

ranking, and the corresponding rankings provided in the 2002 Washington State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) document.

## 6B. Neighborhood and Community Parks

Neighborhood and Community Parks provide active and passive recreational opportunities and have been strongly supported by residents. The City of Centralia is fortunate to have two large community parks in its inventory (Borst and Riverside) to support a range of sport activities and community gatherings. However, the number and size of neighborhood parks throughout the city and urban area are limited, and the location of those facilities leaves several gaps in the park system where newer residential areas are underserved with parkland.

As a review of the numerical standards, the city's overall park system is intended to achieve the population-based standard of 14.5 acres per 1,000 residents. This plan proposes that this standard be further divided to set an aggregate Neighborhood Park and Community Park standard of 8.5 acres per 1,000 residents, with the remaining 6 acres per 1,000 residents being attributable to Natural Areas and Open Space Corridors. The following table identifies the existing and projected level of service to that standard using the existing parkland inventory and current and future population levels.

**Neighborhood & Community Parks: Acreage Assessment**

	<b>2006</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Population</b>	15,400	23,000
<b>Acreage</b>	146.7	146.7
<b>Proposed Acreage Standard</b>	<b>8.50 acres/1000</b>	<b>8.50 acres/1000</b>
<b>Current LOS</b>	<b>9.53 acres/1000</b>	<b>6.38 acres/1000</b>
<b>Net LOS to Standard</b>	1.03 acres/1000	(2.12) acres/1000
<b>Success to Standard</b>	111%	67%
<b>Acreage Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>15.8 acres</b>	<b>(48.8) acres</b>

At the present, the city owns sufficient neighborhood and community parkland to meet the population-based demand, with a surplus of nearly 16 acres. However, as the city grows in population and if no additional lands are purchased or dedicated

for this facility type, the city will have a significant deficit of nearly 50 acres of land by 2025.

Recent surveys provide additional insight that illustrates the importance of these facilities to local residents. Strong support (*4.65 on a scale of 1-5*) exists for the continued protection and purchase of open spaces for future generations. In terms of specific site improvements, residents have a somewhat stronger leaning toward passive activities than those of a more active nature (*again on a 1-5 scale*), as the following table illustrates.

Park Amenities	Importance	Response Average
<b>Picnic facilities including shelters and tables</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>4.13</b>
<b>Children's playground equipment</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>4.10</b>
<b>Youth and adult sports fields</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>3.87</b>
<b>Open lawn areas</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>3.81</b>
<b>Asphalt walking paths</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>3.74</b>
Asphalt areas for basketball biking and rollerblading	49%	3.39
Extreme sports areas skateboarding and BMX biking	32%	2.84

## 6C. Natural Areas and Open Space Corridors

Natural areas and open space corridors include those unique resource lands such as forests, wetlands, hillsides or riverbanks that provide a buffer from development, connectivity across the landscape, and passive outdoor experiences. At 71.7 acres, Seminary Hill is Centralia's largest individual natural area; several smaller, isolated open spaces are dotted across the city.

This plan proposes a service standard of 6 acres per 1,000 residents for Natural Areas and Open Space Corridors. In reviewing the current inventory, a deficit of 10 acres exists today, which will grow to a 55.7-acre deficit by 2025 assuming no additional acquisitions are made and population projections hold true.

### Natural Areas & Open Space Corridors: Acreage Assessment

	2006	2025
<b>Population</b>	15,400	23,000
<b>Acreage</b>	82.3	82.3
<b>Proposed Acreage Standard</b>	<b>6.00 acres/1000</b>	<b>6.00 acres/1000</b>
<b>Current LOS</b>	<b>5.34 acres/1000</b>	<b>3.58 acres/1000</b>
<b>Net LOS to Standard</b>	<b>(0.66) acres/1000</b>	<b>(2.42) acres/1000</b>
<b>Success to Standard</b>	88%	32%
<b>Acreage Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(10.1) acres</b>	<b>(55.7) acres</b>

Centralia's small city character and recent new construction in the area may contribute to a community desire to protect and preserve open spaces from development. As noted above, a recent survey showed that 93% of respondents favored protecting open spaces for future generations. Additionally, 82% of respondents support the acquisition of hillsides, wetlands and forests to preserve the character of the Centralia area.

The 2006 survey and the 2005 intercept survey identify a strong level of support for passive recreation opportunities. The installation of additional walking paths and the provision for more areas to include mature stands of trees were widely favored by 94% and 87% of respondents respectively. Survey responses indicate a local shifting in values regarding the park system to one that more heavily favors open space corridors and natural areas than traditional park facilities. The desire for trails reinforces this shift.

## 6D. Trails

This plan proposes the establishment of a separate service standard of one-half mile per 1,000 residents for trails throughout the community in response to consistently strong support since the 1991 parks plan. Today, Centralia has one existing trail corridor that is not part of a park or natural area property. It is a one-half mile segment along the Chehalis River near the retired sewer treatment plant. The most significant project arising from this planning process is the acquisition and development of a trail corridor extending from the existing trail to Borst Park, across Interstate 5, and connecting to Riverside Park.

As the following table illustrates, the city has an existing deficit of 5.6 miles of trails to the proposed standard. That

**Trails: Mileage Assessment**

	2006	2025
<b>Population</b>	15,400	23,000
<b>Mileage</b>	2.1	2.1
<b>Proposed Mileage Standard</b>	<b>0.50 miles/1000</b>	<b>0.50 miles/1000</b>
<b>Current LOS</b>	<b>0.14 miles/1000</b>	<b>0.09 miles/1000</b>
<b>Net LOS to Standard</b>	<b>(0.36) miles/1000</b>	<b>(0.41) miles/1000</b>
<b>Success to Standard</b>	27%	18%
<b>Mileage Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(5.6) miles</b>	<b>(9.4) miles</b>

deficit will grow to 9.4 miles by 2025. This deficit can be significantly reduced if the high priority project mentioned above is successful. A trail connection to Riverside Park will be approximately 5.5 miles in length. The completion of this trail corridor alleviates 82% of the total trail system demand.

Combined with the survey comments supporting natural area acquisitions and protection, support for trail corridors is clearly held with the highest importance. When residents were asked about facility preferences to fill their recreational needs, nearly two-thirds of respondents (61%) favored an extended trail system connecting creek systems with existing trails. This sentiment is corroborated in multiple rankings where the installation of trails and walking paths were identified as the highest priority.

Additionally, 75% of respondents identified trails as the highest priority for special, non-parkland facilities. Separately, survey responses indicate a high level of support for trails that follow river systems and natural areas, and connect to other existing facilities, as the following table illustrates.

Trail Facility Types	Importance	Response Average
Trails along rivers	87%	4.29
Trails connecting parks to other parks	78%	4.13
Trails in more forested more natural areas	74%	4.10
Trails connecting neighborhoods to workplaces, etc	71%	3.97
Water trails for non-motorized boat use	61%	3.61
Trails for equestrian use	19%	2.65

## 6E. Recreation Programs

Centralia offers a range of recreation programs for its residents including league and pick-up sports, educational programs, and activities for children, teens and adults. Services are also provided in partnership with other local agencies as a means to maximize participation and manage costs.

Within the city, no service standard exists for recreation programs; however, they are provided with the intent to serve a wide array of customers and are determined by program demand. Activities such as the coed softball league, Twin City slowpitch, the art jamboree and the 6<sup>th</sup> Graders Night Out continue to command high levels of participation.

Survey responses indicated a high degree of support for recreation programs. The table below identifies in rank order those programs and activities that residents support and are willing to expand.

**Recreation Program Support by Type**

Program Area	Program Support		
	Expand	Keep Same Level	Reduce
<b>special events</b>	<b>69%</b>	31%	
<b>children's activities</b>	<b>67%</b>	30%	3%
<b>teen activities</b>	<b>60%</b>	31%	9%
<b>adult activities</b>	<b>59%</b>	36%	3%
<b>senior citizen activities</b>	<b>56%</b>	41%	3%
adult sport leagues	34%	63%	3%
activities for persons with disabilities	31%	66%	3%
aquatic programs	31%	69%	

## 6F. Levels of Service Summary & Overall Future Need

The following points summarize the demand for park facilities and recreation programs:

- ◆ Trails corridors are the highest priority.
- ◆ The near-term acquisition of open spaces from development is critical to preserve the character of the area and facilitate trail corridor and parkland construction in the future.
- ◆ Special events and programs for children and teens are the most important recreation services identified.
- ◆ Today, the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing parks is more important than the construction of new parks.

Greatest need for trails and open space exists along river corridors, railroad corridors, and connecting existing facilities. Highest-priority projects include trail acquisition and development along the Chehalis River upstream from the old water treatment plant, connecting to Borst Park and the Skookumchuck River, the Tacoma railroad line section bisecting the city, and the Skookumchuck River section upstream of Borst Park to Riverside Park.

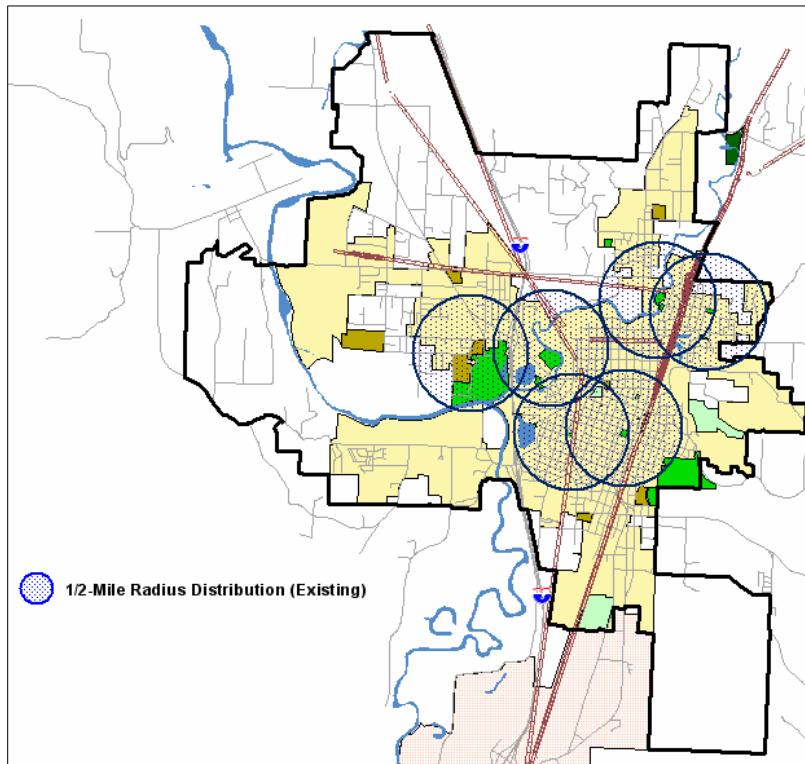
The table below summarizes the acreage demand through 2025 for the entire system. Projects listed on the accompanying capital facilities plan attempt to ameliorate some of the current and projected deficit.

**Surplus & (Deficit) Summary by Facility Type**

	2005	2025
<b>Neighborhood &amp; Community Parks</b>	<b>15.8</b> acres	<b>(48.8)</b> acres
<b>Natural Areas &amp; Open Space Corridors</b>	<b>(10.1)</b> acres	<b>(55.7)</b> acres
<b>Parkland Subtotal</b>	<b>5.7</b> acres	<b>(104.5)</b> acres
<b>Trails</b>	<b>(5.6)</b> miles	<b>(9.4)</b> miles

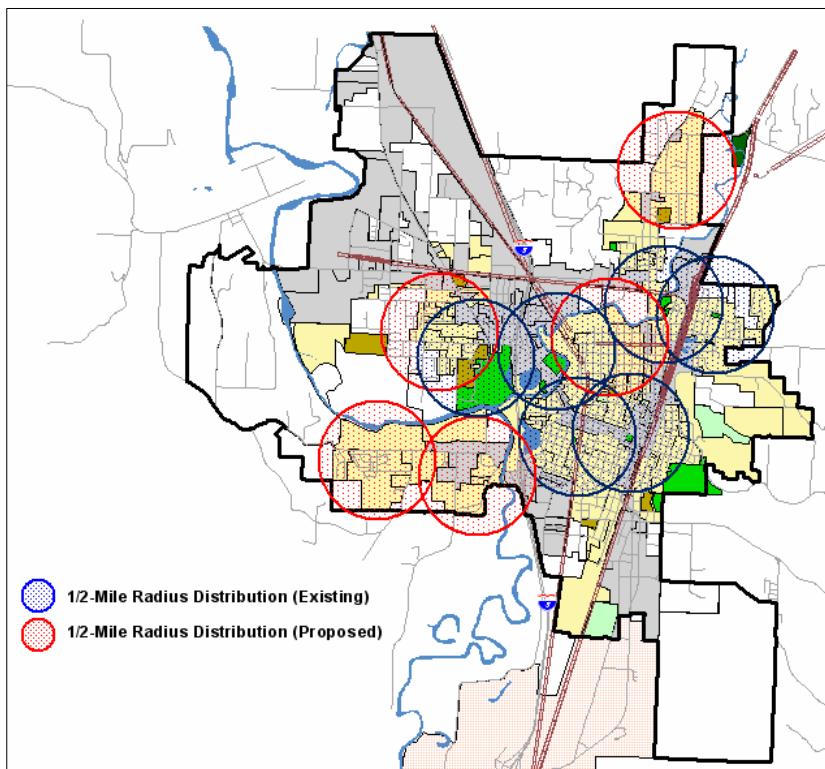
In concert with meeting the acreage demand for the park system, survey respondents favored the acquisition of properties now and also favored the refurbishment of existing facilities before developing any new areas as formal parks. This point becomes significant as periodic budgeting attempts to align with overall system demands.

Additionally, in reviewing the distribution of existing neighborhood parks, gaps occur in the coverage and indicate that residents from numerous areas must travel more than a one-half mile to a neighborhood park. The adjacent map illustrates the application of the one-half mile distribution standard on existing neighborhood parks.



By overlaying zoning and parcel information on the map, a clear picture emerges of where the city should consider acquiring additional parkland to meet the future acreage demand. The map shows in grey those areas that are zoned either commercial or industrial; these areas are excluded from the analysis since neighborhood parks serve residential areas and thus should be situated within residentially zoned areas. A total of 10 potential

acquisition areas are identified on the map; five are located within the city limits and five are located in the urban unincorporated area. Greatest needs for parkland are for smaller neighborhood parks distributed within walking distance throughout the city to serve residential areas.



### ***Benefits of Trails and Greenways***

#### ***RECREATIONAL VALUE AND HEALTH BENEFITS***

*There is a significant health and fitness benefit as most recreational activities on trails involve exercise. This health benefit accrues to the individual and, in the form of reduced health-care costs, to society as well.*

#### ***TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT AND SAFETY BENEFITS***

*Trails encourage pedestrian and bicycle commuting, thus reducing traffic and congestion on roads, and reducing fuel consumption and its associated pollution.*

*Designated trails strive to define a designated space for human-powered commuters.*

#### ***ECONOMIC BENEFITS***

*Trails attract tourists that bring a direct economic benefit to local businesses.*

#### ***EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS***

*Trail corridors can become outdoor classrooms where children can observe and learn about their natural and cultural environment.*

#### ***ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS***

*By preserving critical open space that provides natural buffer zones that protect streams, rivers and lakes, trails and greenways can play an important role in improving water quality.*

#### ***PRESERVING OUR HISTORY AND CULTURE***

*Trails have the power to connect us to our heritage by preserving historic places and providing access to them. They can give people a sense of place and draw people to historic and cultural sites.*

Source: "Creating Connections: The Oregon Recreational Trails How-To Manual" 2004

### **7A: Current & Projected Demand**

Trails are an important component of any recreational plan. They are the physical manifestation of the "connectivity" envisioned for our parks and recreation facilities. Throughout the Centralia Parks, Recreation and Open Space planning process, the interest and demand for new and improved trail facilities was very strong. Together, survey responses and public sentiment captured during public meetings reinforced this awareness of demand for trails and trail facility development. Locally documented results coincide with growing interest in recreational non-motorized trails shown in surveys of both state and national trends. As noted on page 53, walking and hiking had the single highest participation rate (ranked #1) in recent statewide recreational surveys. Bicycling was also significantly ranked (#5) as a top activity in these surveys.

In March 2003, the state of Washington prepared Estimates of Future Participation in Outdoor Recreation in Washington State to project future participation rates for 13 recreation categories. These estimates were based upon:

- ◆ National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) project for the Pacific Region
- ◆ Age group participation and age trends in Washington
- ◆ Estimates of resource and facility availability
- ◆ User group organization and representation
- ◆ Land use and land designation
- ◆ "Other factors," including economic and social pressures

The resulting estimates for trail and trail related activities, as a percentage of change in the number of people participating in the future compared to current levels, are illustrated in the following table:

### Percentage Change in Participation Rates, For Trail Related Recreation Activities

Activity	Est. 10 yr Change	Est. 20 yr Change
Walking	+23%	+34%
Hiking	+10%	+20%
Bicycle riding	+19%	+29%
Canoeing/Kayaking	+21%	+30%

*Project Trail Related Participation Rates (Estimates of Future Participation in Outdoor Washington in Washington State, March 2003, Page 4)*

Projections of future participation rates are useful for planning, including determining future expenditures for sites and facilities. These usage projections support the observed demand for increased trail and trail related facilities in Centralia.

### 7B: Trail Planning Recommendations

Local and statewide trends support a growing demand for trail facilities in the city of Centralia. This plan acknowledges that trails, both land and water, are an integral component of a recreation and open space system. In addition to local benefits, the trail system of Centralia may serve as a critical link to county lands and waterways and a future statewide system of trails traversing Washington.

Throughout the planning process, the community expressed interest in developing a full range of trail types. Priority trail projects were typically associated with existing park facilities and stream and greenway corridors within the city limits. A summary of trail recommendations include the following actions:

- ◆ Create a comprehensive and interconnected system of trails within a mile of every home in the urban area
- ◆ Pursue grants in partnership with utility providers to facilitate trail acquisition and development along major water courses
- ◆ Establish a multi-purpose community trail link between Borst Park and Rotary-Riverside Park
- ◆ Development/restoration of trail facilities located within Borst and Rotary-Riverside Parks, and Seminary Hill Natural Area

#### **Benefits of Water Trails**

*A water trail can help people become acquainted with their river heritage.*

*People along the river can discover a whole new perspective of both their community and the aquatic environment.*

*A water trail system with identified launch and landing sites, resting places, maps and safety information can help people traveling on the river find the best places to paddle based on their experience and available time.*

*An identified trail can help protect natural and cultural resources from degradation by dispersing use and limiting access to sensitive areas. Trail information can provide guidelines for low-impact use.*

*A sense of stewardship can be nurtured through public education and coordinated volunteer activities such as cleanups and water quality monitoring.*

*An officially recognized water trail can be eligible for regional and national resources and funding.*

**Source:** Lower Columbia Water Trail brochure, Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership

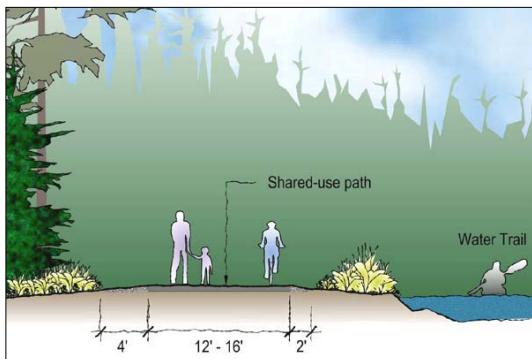


- ◆ Acquire and develop a 7-mile regional trail along the Chehalis River from the Old Treatment Plant to Borst Park to the new Public Works facility at Goodrich Road.
- ◆ Assess the feasibility of acquiring and developing a regional trail along the Skookumchuck River from Rotary-Riverside Park to Wilbur Parkins Park to Schaefer County Park
- ◆ Assess the feasibility of establishing a partnership to develop a rail-trail project along 2.5 miles of the Tacoma Line Railroad through the city of Centralia.

Additional goals (Page 20) and capital facility project descriptions (Page 69) can be found in other sections of this plan.

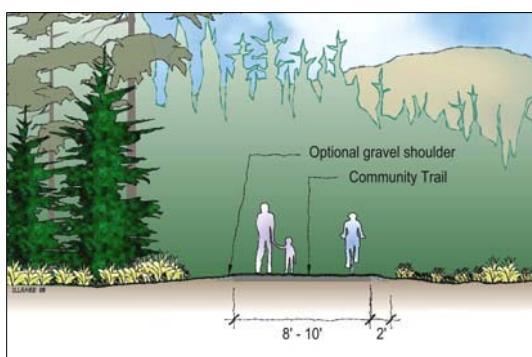
## 7C: Trail Facility Guidelines

In order to provide an appealing, safe, accessible, economical and diverse trail system, trail standards and classifications should be developed. For the purposes of this plan, the following trail facility recommendations were developed during the inventory, assessment and community involvement: phases of this project:



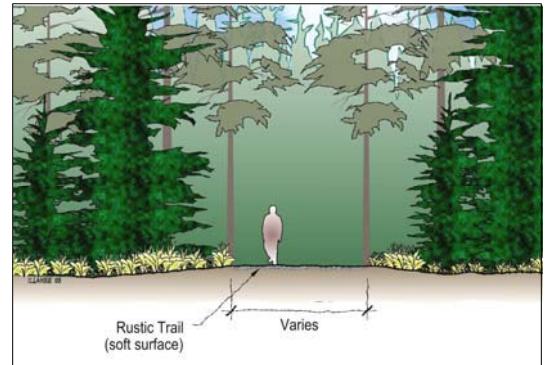
### Trail Classifications

**Regional Trail:** Paved, shared-use, long-distance linear trail corridors for the exclusive use of pedestrians, bicycles and other approved trail users. Regional trails are typically 12'-14' wide with a 2' wide gravel shoulder on both sides. An example of a regional trail would be proposed facilities along the Chehalis River.

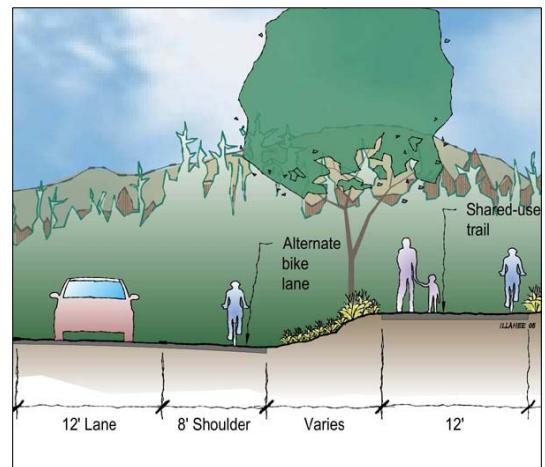


**Community Trail:** Paved, shared-use trails typically found within community parks or linking park facilities. Community trails are typically 8'-10' wide. The paths within Rotary-Riverside Park are examples of community trails in Centralia.

**Rustic Trail:** Earthen or soft-surface trails with limited horizontal clearances and challenging grades and obstacles. Providing accessibility and regular facility maintenance are issues typical of this type of trail. Rustic trails vary in width and surfacing. The trails of Seminary Hill Natural Area are rustic trails.



**Water Trail:** Navigable non-motorized and motorized waterways appropriate for canoe, kayak, and other boating. Providing launch facilities and non-motorized boat access points are important considerations in water trails.



**Bike Routes and Sidewalks:** Typically associated with the transportation system, these linear paths are heavily used within urban areas and should be included in trail planning efforts.

**Rail Trail:** Rail-to-trail and rail-with-trail projects continue to gain momentum in communities throughout Washington. The Tacoma Line Railroad should be studied to assess the feasibility of creating a partnership for the development of a rail trail.



### Trail Support Facilities

**Trailhead:** Full-service facility that supports trail access and user comfort. Trailheads typically include paved parking areas, restroom facilities, drinking fountains, bike racks, benches and picnic tables, and way finding/interpretive signage.



**Trail Access Point:** Primitive trail facilities that provide access along a trail corridor. Typically located between trailhead facilities and may include limited parking, signage and site furnishings such as benches and waste receptacles.

**Parks:** May provide access to a variety of trail types. Parks serve larger recreational needs but typically provide facilities that

support trails and paths within a park or connecting other nearby recreation facilities.

**Trail Crossings:** Crossings exist when trails intersect with roadways and other trail corridors. Trail crossings have the potential for a high level of conflict between motorists and trail users if not properly planned and designed.

## 7D: Funding



The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal government program administered through the Washington Interagency Committee on Outdoor Recreation (IAC) that provides funding to assist in preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources including but not limited to parks, trails, wildlife lands and other lands and facilities desirable for individual active participation. The distribution of LWCF funds must be guided by a current state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP). Washington's plan identifies three broad priority areas to be addressed by LWCF funds. The state's first priority area is focused on community-based trails, highlighting:

“Community-based trails serving multiple benefits including recreation, the encouragement of physical activity and transportation.”

The reasons, according to Washington State, for identifying trails as a top priority area include:

- ◆ High participation in walking, bicycling and other trail-related activities
- ◆ The Centers for Disease Control and Washington State Department of Health physical activity data and subsequent findings concerning obesity and related health issues
- ◆ Accompanying recommendations for providing community trails and paths as a cost-effective means of addressing these problems
- ◆ Department of Transportation efforts to provide a suite of options to address mobility, and

- ♦ Need to maximize effectiveness in investments of state funds.

Though other fund sources are available for trail projects, LWCF has been identified as the best source to address the unique convergence of recreation, transportation, and health goals supported by community-trail projects. (Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State, SCORP 2002-2007, Appendix 3, Land and Water Conservation Fund).

## 7E: Conclusion

Given the rising demand for trail facilities, the potential for trail development in Centralia has been addressed briefly within this planning document, including funding and other issues connected with development. Future planning efforts would help inventory current trail facilities, evaluate community pedestrian and bicycle needs, and develop a comprehensive system of facilities.



It is recommended that a subsequent Trails and Bikeway Master Plan be completed to fully assess existing resources and plan for future trail facilities within the city of Centralia.

Refer to the Transportation Element of the Centralia Comprehensive Land Use Plan for additional information on trails and trail planning for Centralia..



# CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN & IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES

## Capital Projects: A 6-Year Outlook

The Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) lists all park and facility projects considered for the next six years. Projects are listed on the following pages by name, type of improvement, funding source and estimated cost. The CFP also lists the total amount of funding for each funding source by year.

### Summary of Projects (2007-2012)

- ◆ 10 Acquisition projects totaling \$2,200,000
- ◆ 8 Trail projects totaling \$2,530,000
- ◆ 3 Bridge/Crossing projects totaling \$375,000
- ◆ 17 Development projects totaling \$684,500
- ◆ 21 Repair projects totaling \$108,335

### Funding by Source (2007-2012)

Funding	Total	Percentage
Grant	\$ 2,743,750	47%
Local	\$ 3,051,835	52%
Partnership	\$ 102,250	2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,897,835</b>	

### Priority Projects: Short-Term (1-3 years)

Skookumchuck River Trail: Borst to Riverside	\$ 360,000
Pearl Street Pool Renovations	\$ 41,000
Riverside Park Restroom Improvements	\$ 8,600
Fords Prairie Neighborhood Park Acquisition	\$300,000
Skookumchuck R. Trail: Borst to Old Treatment	\$450,000
Chehalis River Trail: Borst to Game Farm	\$450,000

COMMUNITY PARKS   Capital Projects and Repairs					
Facility	Type	Funding	Priority	Time	Total Cost
<b>FORT BORST PARK</b> Administration Building -Tear off and replace roof Administration Building -Siding, windows and repaint Borst Kitchen #1 - weatherize, windows, floors & fireplace Borst Kitchen #2 - Tear off and replace roof Borst Kitchen #2 - east paving and drainage upgrades Borst Kitchen #2 - resurface floors Borst Home - annual cleaning and restoration Borst Home - replace foundation timbers Block House - relocate near Borst Home & repair timbers Borst Park - hazard tree prevention work Borst Park - tree replacement program Borst Park - install new picnic tables Borst Park - new group picnic shelter Borst Park - trash receptacle replacement Borst Park - playground improvements & ADA upgrades Softball Complex - repair asphalt walks & service roads Softball Complex - fencing repair and replacement Ed Wheeler - upgrade/repairs to field lighting Ed Wheeler - bleacher repairs and painting Ed Wheeler - repairs and upgrades Tennis Courts - repair cracks and resurface Tennis Courts - replace court lighting system Borst Stage #2 - side walls and cover Borst Lake - water quality improvements	repair	local	high	short	\$52,500
	repair	local	high	short	\$48,200
	repair	local	high	short	\$24,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$18,000
	development	local	low	mid	\$5,000
	repair	local	low	mid	\$19,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$3,000
	development	grant / local	low	long	\$90,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$4,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$2,400
	development	local	high	short	\$3,000
	development	local	low	mid	\$75,000
	development	local	high	short	\$1,200
	repair	local	high	mid	\$33,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$2,400
	repair	local	high	short	\$14,600
	repair	local	high	short	\$4,800
	repair	local	high	mid	\$6,600
	development	partnership / local	low	mid	\$18,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$35,000
	development	grant / local	high	mid	\$60,000
	development	local	low	mid	\$14,500
	repair	grant / local	med	mid	\$10,000
<i>Subtotal</i>					\$572,200
<b>GEORGE WASHINGTON PARK</b> Hazard tree prevention work Irrigation upgrades, turf repairs and plant replacement Sidewalk lighting repair	repair	local	high	short	\$2,500
	repair	local	high	short	\$3,200
	repair	local	low	mid	\$18,000
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$23,700
<b>ROTARY RIVERSIDE PARK</b> Restroom Improvements Lowe Street entrance grading and paving Skate Park - concrete crack repair Skate Park - court edge paving Skate Park - concessions road grading and paving Skate Park - parking strips Skate Park - parking lot, landscaping and lighting Hazard tree prevention work Tree replacement program Install new picnic tables Trash receptacle replacement Security lighting upgrades Playground improvements with ADA upgrades Install pedestrian bridge (see Trail list)	repair	local	high	short	\$8,635
	repair	local	high	long	\$3,800
	repair	partnership / local	high	short	\$3,800
	repair	partnership / local	high	short	\$4,550
	repair	partnership / local	high	short	\$3,800
	repair	partnership / local	high	short	\$3,750
	development	partnership / local	low	long	\$113,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$3,000
	development	local	low	mid	\$1,200
	development	local	high	short	\$2,000
	development	local	high	short	\$1,200
	development	local	low	mid	\$43,000
	repair	local	high	short	\$33,000
<i>Subtotal</i>					\$224,735
<b>Community Park Total</b>					<b>\$820,635</b>

**Time Frame:** Short Term (1-3 years), Mid Term (4-7 years), Long Term (8-10+ years)

**Priority:** High (Urgent, Possible Safety Issue), Medium (Moderate), Low (Long-Term Improvement, Limited/No Funding)

**Funding:** local (General Fund, Bonds, etc), partnership (Private, Non-Profit, Agency Participation, Volunteerism, Donation), grants

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS | Capital Projects and Repairs

Facility	Type	Funding	Priority	Time	Total Cost
<b>CEDAR STREET PARK</b> Playground improvements with ADA upgrades New park entry sign Install play area ADA ramp and accessible surface Install street and park trees	repair repair development development	local local local local	medium low medium high	long short long short	\$33,000 \$1,500 \$7,500 \$2,000
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$44,000
<b>CENTRAL PARK</b> New park entry sign	repair	local	low	mid	\$1,500
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$1,500
<b>LOGAN COMMUNITY PARK</b> New park entry sign Install play area ADA ramp and accessible surface Install street and park trees	repair development development	local local local	low low high	short mid short	\$1,500 \$7,500 \$2,000
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$11,000
<b>WILBUR PARKINS PARK</b> Prepare park master plan Develop dike trail (see Trail list) Parking lot improvements (oil mat) Develop day-use picnic facilities	development development	local local grant / local	high med high	mid long long	\$25,000 \$5,000 \$175,000
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$205,000
					<b>Neighborhood Park Total</b> \$261,500

## TRAILS AND GREENWAYS | Capital Projects and Repairs

Facility	Type	Funding	Priority	Time	Total Cost
Chehalis River: Borst Park to Game Farm (1.5 mi)	Trail	grant / local	high	short	\$450,000
Chehalis River: Game Farm to Galvin Road (1.5 mi)	Trail	grant / local	medium	long	\$450,000
Chehalis River: Galvin Road to Goodrich Road (2.9 mi)	Trail	grant / local	high	long	\$870,000
Chehalis River: Borst Park to old treatment plant (1 mi)	Trail	grant / local	high	short	\$300,000
Skookumchuck River: Borst to Riverside Park (.6 mile)	Trail	grant / local	high	medium	\$360,000
Skookumchuck River: W. Parkins Park dike trail (.25 mi)	Trail	grant / local	low	long	\$100,000
Skookumchuck River: Borst Park Bridge	Bridge	grant / local	high	short	\$150,000
Skookumchuck River: Riverside Park Bridge	Bridge	grant / local	low	long	\$150,000
Skookumchuck River: W. Parkins Park Bridge	Bridge	grant / local	low	long	\$75,000
Rails with Trails: Tacoma Line (2.5 mi)	Trail	grant / local	low	long	\$750,000

**NOTE:** Trail costs assumes design, permitting and construction of 12' asphalt path. Figures do not include land acquisition costs, engineering, permits or special construction

**Trails and Greenways Total** \$3,655,000

## ACQUISITIONS | Future Park Land

Facility	Type	Funding	Priority	Time	Total Cost
Fords Prairie Acquisition (3 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	high	short	\$300,000
Still Waters Acquisition: south of hospital (3 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	high	short	\$300,000
North of Edison School (2 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	medium	mid	\$200,000
Cooks Hill area (2.5 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	medium	long	\$250,000
Oakview School area (2.5 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	low	long	\$250,000
Cooks Hill West area (2 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	low	long	\$200,000
Seminary Hill East (2 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	low	long	\$200,000
Reynolds Ave, west of Pearl (2.5 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	low	long	\$250,000
Joppish /River Heights Acquisition (2.5 ac)	Acquisition	grant / local	low	long	\$250,000
Mahoney Dairy Site	Acquisition	grant / local	low	long	TDB

**NOTE:** Assumes \$100,000/acre for upland, residential lands (2006 dollars)

**Acquisition Total** \$2,200,000

**Time Frame:** Short Term (1-3 years), Mid Term (4-7 years), Long Term (8-10+ years)

**Priority:** High (Urgent, Possible Safety Issue), Medium (Moderate), Low (Long-Term Improvement, Limited/No Funding)

**Funding:** local (General Fund, Bonds, etc), partnership (Private, Non-Profit, Agency Participation, Volunteerism, Donation), grants

NATURAL AREA & OPEN SPACE   Capital Projects and Repairs						
Facility	Type	Funding	Priority	Time	Total Cost	
<b>BRICK WAGNER PARK</b> New park entry sign Replace worn benches and tables Install steps to access water edge Develop ADA fishing dock/pier	repair repair development development	local local grant / partnership grant / local	low high Low Low	short mid mid long	\$1,000 \$2,500 \$7,500 \$25,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$36,000	
<b>BRIDGE STREET PROPERTY</b> Prepare park master plan Disposal of tree debris Develop day-use picnic facilities	development repair development	local local grant / local	high high high	short short long	\$25,000 \$3,200 \$175,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$203,200	
<b>ED S. MAYES PARK</b> New park entry sign Renovate landscape plantings	repair repair	local partnership	low low	short long	\$1,500 \$2,500	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$4,000	
<b>GOLD STREET MILL POND</b> n/a	-				\$0	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$0	
<b>GOLD STREET OVERPASS</b> Replace irrigation system	repair	local	low	long	\$80,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$80,000	
<b>PLUMMER LAKE</b> Improve water quality	repair	local	med	long	\$10,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$10,000	
<b>PRAIRIE ESTATES PARK</b> Prepare park master plan	development	local	low	mid	\$15,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$15,000	
<b>SEMINARY HILL</b> Locust Street trailhead parking lot paving New park entry sign Invasive plant removal	repair repair repair	local local partnership	med low high	long short long	\$3,000 \$3,000 \$3,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$9,000	
					<b>Natural Area/OS Total</b>	<b>\$357,200</b>

SPECIAL FACILITIES   Capital Projects and Repairs						
Facility	Type	Funding	Priority	Time	Total Cost	
<b>ARMORY HILLS OPEN SPACE</b> n/a	-		low	long	\$0	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$0	
<b>FIRST STREET TREES</b> New street trees	repair	partnership	low	long	\$3,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$3,000	
<b>PEARL STREET POOL</b> Chain link fencing replacement Cinder block wall repairs Roof repair and seal Repair pool deck and surfacing	repair repair repair repair	partnership / local partnership / local partnership / local partnership / local	med med high med	mid mid short short	\$3,300 \$24,000 \$14,000 \$27,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$68,300	
<b>WASHINGTON LAWN CEMETERY</b> New park entry sign Fencing and landscape renovation	repair development	local partnership / local	high high	short long	\$3,000 \$125,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>				\$128,000	
					<b>Special Facility Total</b>	<b>\$199,300</b>

**Time Frame:** Short Term (1-3 years), Mid Term (4-7 years), Long Term (8-10+ years)

**Priority:** High (Urgent, Possible Safety Issue), Medium (Moderate), Low (Long-Term Improvement, Limited/No Funding)

**Funding:** local (General Fund, Bonds, etc), partnership (Private, Non-Profit, Agency Participation, Volunteerism, Donation), grants

## Implementation Strategies

A number of strategies exist to facilitate the continuation and expansion of service delivery for the Centralia Parks & Recreation Department. However, clear decisions must be made in an environment of competing interests and limited resources. A strong community will must exist to bring many of the projects listed in this report to live. A brief synopsis of the past budget cycles will set the context for the discussion to follow.

### **Budget Appropriations: Historic**

Historical data shows that the Parks and Recreation Department operating budget was a significant component of the overall city's budget (16.3% in 1995). After September 11, 2000, resources were shifting toward safety, such as police and fire protection, which resulted in budget reductions for Parks and Recreation. In the post-9/11 era (2000-2005), modest budget increases for Parks ensued; however, the adjustment for inflation shows a real dollar decrease over time. In the ten year period between 1995 and 2005, the cumulative budget change for Parks & Recreation is 5.6% compared to an inflation factor of 21.6% (based on implicit price deflator).

	1995	2000	2005
<b>City Operating Budget</b>	\$ 6,060,727	\$ 7,771,532	\$ 9,370,685
<b>Parks &amp; Rec Department Operating Budget</b>	\$ 989,676	\$ 978,455	\$ 1,045,465
<b>Parks (% of City Budget)</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>
City Budget (% Change from prior period) - <i>cumulative</i>		28.2%	20.6%
Parks Budget (% Change from prior period) - <i>cumulative</i>		-1.1%	6.8%
			<b>5.6%</b>

Given that the operating budget for the department has been limited and that no dedicated capital fund for parks exists, the implementation measures identified below look primarily to non-General Fund options.

## **Securing Land for the Future & Enabling Site Development**

**Conservation easements:** This type of easement protects the conservation values of the property while keeping the land in private ownership. The landowner still owns the property, but the use of the land is restricted. A Conservation Easement may provide tax benefits to the individual or the estate. Alternately, a portion of the property can be donated outright possibly qualifying for a tax deduction or sold outright possibly reducing general property or estate taxes. This method could be used to acquire trail corridor segments along the Chehalis and Skookumchuck rivers, and any donation of easement or property rights could be used as local match on future grant applications.

**Transfer of Development Rights:** The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based planning tool that allows land owners to trade the right to develop property to its fullest extent in one area for the right to develop beyond existing regulations in another area. This approach should be considered in those areas of rapid residential development within the city as a means to protect larger lots from subdivision, while maintaining a reasonable valuation for the property owner. Coordination with the Community Development Department, the county Assessor's Office, and the local realtors association could further facilitate the protect of lands through TDR.

**Impact Fees:** Impact fees are charges placed on new development as a condition of development approval to help pay for various public facilities the need for which is directly created by that new growth and development. In a nutshell, new growth pays for park system expansion, and impact fees can be segregated by "acquisition" and "development" to further specify use and manage political liabilities. While the imposition of impact fees may not be timely for Centralia, criteria can be developed to facilitate decision-making and dialogue between staff and city council. Specifically, criteria could include: thresholds for new development on a year-over-year or percentage change basis, the rate and time at which the existing parkland surplus turns negative relative to population – as impact fee legislation requires the local jurisdiction to separately finance any system deficits at the time of imposition, and changes to or imposition of fees by other jurisdictions in the region.

**Grants:** Several state and federal grant programs are available on a competitive basis, including WWRP, ALEA, USDA. Pursuing grants is not a panacea for park system finance, since grants are both competitive and often require a significant percentage of local funds to match the request to the granting agency, which depending on the grant program can be as much as 50% of the total project budget.

**Bonds:** Councilmanic bonds may be sold by cities and counties without public vote. The bonds--both principal and interest--are retired with payments from existing county or city revenue or new general tax revenue, such as additional sales tax or real estate excise tax.

**Partnership Agreements:** Either through interagency or public-private agreements, the joint acquisition, use and maintenance of property or facilities can further the mission of the department.

**Business Sponsorships/Donations:** Business sponsorships for youth, teen, adult and senior programs are available throughout the year. Sponsorships and donations range from \$5 to \$1,000. In-kind contributions are often received, including food, door prizes and computer equipment.





## APPENDIX A: ADOPTING ORDINANCE





## APPENDIX B: PARK INVENTORY DETAILS

Park Site	Classification	Acreage	Parcel	Parcel	Parcel	Parcel	Parcel	Parcel	Parcel
Borst	Community	101	021154003000	003475009007					
Centralia High School	Community	22.08	021154001000	003475018001					
Centralia Middle School	Community	2.8	003475015002						
George Washington Park-Library	Community	2	000874001001						
Rotary-Riverside Park	Community	14.05	003416035002	003416015001					
		<b>Community Park Subtotal</b>	<b>141.93</b>						
Cedar Street Park	Neighborhood	0.61	000798000000						
Central Park	Neighborhood	0.03	000053000000						
Logan Community Park	Neighborhood	1.1	002984001000						
Wilbur Parkins Park	Neighborhood	5.07	002833058009	003449001061	002833053000	002833062000			
		<b>Neighborhood Park Subtotal</b>	<b>6.81</b>						
Brick Wagner Park	Natural Area / Open Space	0.38	003408005000	000792002000					
Bridge Street Properties	Natural Area / Open Space	2.69	003416027001	003416026000	003416025001				
Ed S. Mayes Park	Natural Area / Open Space	0.03	NA - R.O.W.						
Gold Street Mill Pond	Natural Area / Open Space	0.81	002921002000	002923005001					
Gold Street Overpass Improvements	Natural Area / Open Space	4	NA - R.O.W.						
Plummer Lake Boat Launch (WDFW)	Natural Area / Open Space	0.4	003475029000						
Prairie Estates Development	Natural Area / Open Space	2.2	003682006037						
Seminary Hill Natural Area	Natural Area / Open Space	71.7	003631001001	001365012000	002842013002	008968001000	008966000000	008967000000	008967000000
Washington Street Park	Natural Area / Open Space	0.08	000487001000						
		<b>Open Space Subtotal</b>	<b>82.29</b>						
Armory Hills open space	Special Facility	33.33	003681009000	021256000000					
Depot Railroad	Special Facility	0.33							
First Street Trees	Special Facility	0.87							
Pearl Street Outdoor Pool	Special Facility	0.86	003416005000						
Washington Lawn Cemetery	Special Facility	3.96	001209000000						
		<b>Special Facility Subtotal</b>	<b>39.35</b>						
		<b>Total Parks &amp; Open Space</b>	<b>231.03</b>						
		<b>Total: Special Facilities</b>	<b>39.35</b>						
		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>270.38</b>						







## APPENDIX C: COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

## **Survey Results – July 2005**

260 surveys were brought in from Borst Park, Washington Park, Library, Thorbecke's, City Hall and the Chronicle. Also, thanks to girl scouts, Alicia and Elizabeth vonSeggern and college student, Sam Wilson, who helped distribute surveys in July.

**Overall, Centralia compared:** worse = 20  
same = 93  
better = 91

## What improvements would be supported?

- Add more playground equipment – 92
- Refurbish outdoor pool – 105
- Add more sports fields – 43
- Refurbish older existing P&R facilities – 84
- Improve water quality in Borst/Hayes/Plummer lakes – 105
- Develop trailhead and walking/biking trail beginning at old wastewater treatment plant through Borst Park following to Hayes and Plummer lakes – 116
- Develop walking/biking trail along the east bank of the Skookumchuck beginning at a trailhead in Schaefer County Park continuing east of the Burlington Northern Railroad right-of-way crossing over Hanaford Creek and continuing past the Agnew Lumber Company to a trailhead at Wilbur Parkins Park – 115
- Develop a walking/biking trail along China Creek from Little Hanaford Valley linking downtown, Centralia College, Plummer lake and Mellen Street Bridge – 112

<b>Residents living in Centralia:</b>	0-1 years = 14
	2-5 years = 19
	5-10 years = 19
	10+ years = 90

## JULY 2005 COMMENTS FROM SURVEY

- adult coed soccer
- lighted tennis courts
- wouldn't lighted tennis courts be great?
- Love our 4<sup>th</sup> of July activities...need more
- We really need to update and make available bike riding & walking trails that are blacktopped, safe and have distance!
- Picnic tables need to be replaced and/or scrubbed prior to special events such as the July 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Willing to pay additional tax \$ for walking/biking trails along rivers!
- Canoe rentals?
- Improve hiking/walking along river by old Safeway on Harrison Ave!
- Park needs poop bags for doggy's throughout park.
- Develop equestrian trails
- Very little attention has been put in Borst Park for a long time now...I have lived around here for 25 years and since then Borst Park has been declining, unkempt lawns, littering and sooting should be done to clean up Borst Park Lake and I don't believe that money is an issue because Centralia collections enough taxes that should not be used to pay high wages to public officials.
- Please arrange for re-cycling during Summerfest!
- Would like more art for teenagers
- Some of the small parks have no shade—they are too hot in the summer. For example, Cedar Street Park would be lots better with a couple red oak trees.
- Need quality fields
- The softball fields are great as far as a complex but they need to be maintained better- the infields are like concrete. The leagues would be greatly improved if they were sanctioned.
- I don't think any of the parks offer enough natural beauty combined with peace and tranquility, aesthetics, convenience and parking.
- Relocate Pearl St pool to a park setting
- How about a rails to trails along the seldom used tracks between Skookumchuck river and downtown (the formerly owned by Tacoma Rail)?
- Office staff often not sure of what's going on and they never have sports camps info ahead of time (early spring) so people can plan summer vacations.
- Please make available a map of your park locations and descriptions.
- I really enjoy Borst Park it is a very peaceful place to walk my dog..Thank you.
- Would like to see swimming area at Plummer Lake.
- covered or lighted tennis courts
- Lighted playground area at Borst Park was awesome about 10 years ago. When I was a single parent, I had little time with my kids ages 3-12 because of my college and job schedules. Whenever weather cooperated I would take them here to play with them in early evening. We had much fun there to relax and enjoy each other.
- Riverside and Borst bathrooms need help. Safety at night is big issue.
- If you make them pay for parking, maybe the druggies would not stay in parks
- All facilities need more advertisement
- We need more walking trails in town!
- I would like lawns upgraded and landscaping upgraded at Borst Park. It used to be a showplace of azaleas.
- Parks could be more inviting for children and equipment better maintained
- Borst & Riverside do not always feel safe due to shadowy areas and types of people that sometimes wander through
- The bathrooms at Borst Park need improving
- The parks office building looks bad
- We feel some of the parks need a presence – grounds keeper / ranger on duty.

**What is liked about Centralia Parks & Recreation Department?**

- easy accessibility
- friendly/responsive staff
- utilizes volunteers
- team approach for problem solving
- all staff is approachable
- there's a variety in area of things to do
- Community involvement for additions and changes
- kitchens are clean and comfortable
- like past management and current city manager (J.D.) and his vision and follow through
- well maintained
- youth sports
- soccer
- skate park
- helpful staff
- timely response to needs
- upgrades are timely
- Borst Park – youth fields
- Washington Park
- Music in Park
- Summerfest
- STP improvement at the College

**What are dislikes about Centralia Parks & Recreation?**

- vulnerability for vandalism
- no walking/biking trail along Skookumchuck
- no surveillance of parking – don't feel safe
- litter and broken glass
- no long term plan for maintenance of Sem Hill trails
- Borst tennis courts are not covered
- Poop patrol – more needed
- Drug activity in parks
- restrooms need upgraded
- Borst Kitchen #2 needs new roof
- Make Pearl Street pool facility more park like.
- Maintenance staff overworked
- staff needs to be better involved and combine efforts with other programs ie, farmer's market, non-profit specially organized groups, to promote their programs through joint advertising
- Not enough child activities
- P&R building needs to be refurbished

## **Improvements:**

- Right of Way on China Creek - Proposal Issues- Zero land use vs. Mini San Antonio river walk
- *Agnew Property – Develop lake (Gold St area) walking trails*
- Rifle Club – Emphasize gun safety not hunting to educate youth re: choices
- Lighting on trails in Riverside Park
- Visibility of law enforcement in parks
- Pool – update apparatus/deck maintenance
- Resurface trails at Seminary Hill Natural Area- add additional lighting for safety at entrance/parking area
- Refurbish restrooms at Riverside Park
- Downtown needs clean, nice public restrooms
- Transient issues (tents, alcohol, drugs, money pestering)
- Expansion walking trails – Galvin to high school ideas
- Add rock climbing wall at Riverside Park
- Water Quality & trails for 3 lakes
- trail development on Skookumchuck River
- Pearl Street Pool – long term
- Refurbish older exsiting rec facilities
- area behind Goodwill- establish park area/shelter
- Separate Maintenance and office
- Use classrooms for classics: senior classes, crafts, camps—coordinate with private enterprise to make affordable for everyone and make sure needs are met
- Expand communication role of Parks & Rec
- Jr. Job opportunity
- Focus on property the city owns including golf course

## Centralia Parks Plan Update

### Public Open House

#### Summary Notes

*Centralia Community College, Cafeteria*

*October 18, 6:00-8:30PM*

### Overview

Approximately 20 people attended the Parks Plan Update open house; however, the majority were affiliated with the City as members of city council, the Parks Board or as staff. Four display stations provided graphic and narrative information for residents to review, comment, and discuss. The station included the following:

- Existing Facilities and Vision
- Trails and Greenways
- Park Inventory: Renovation, Enhancement, Expansion
- Future Needs

The information below is a summary of comments recorded during the open house. Additionally, a mapping exercise was conducted to inquire about physical locations for park and facility upgrades or renovations, potential property acquisitions, and other opportunities. A composite map will be compiled to illustrate these comments and will be included in the Plan appendix.

### Vision

- Provide more “passive” areas with trees and casual shelters
- Ensure adequate park facilities to serve the needs of a growing population
- Instill pride in Centralia’s park system and more awareness of current park facilities
- Bring destination status to Centralia by promoting the unique mix of parks, recreational activities, historical interest, easy access and potential for day trips to sites like Mt. Rainier and Mt. St. Helens

### Trails

*An illustration of an informal open space and pathway was drawn by a resident. He wanted to acknowledge this space, which is located east of the main RR line and between Plum and Walnut Streets.*

### Future Needs

- Provide running, walking, and biking trails to connect the parks
- Provide more neighborhood parks, specifically in the Cooks Hill area and in the area near Reynolds and Pearl
- Clean ditches and embankments along Gold Street Extension
- Encourage integrated subdivision design to make accessible, informal open spaces
- Provide trail linkage – dependent on I-5 revision – from Borst Park to Rotary Riverside Park and beyond

**Centralia Parks, Recreation & Open Space Survey  
SUMMARY RESULTS**

*The following represent the summary results of the Centralia online survey. At the close of the survey on November 3, 2006, a total of 34 respondents completed the survey. All ranked responses appear in descending order.*

**1.) Overall, what is your favorite park or open space in Centralia?**

**Borst: 19 of 33**

Seminary Hill: 6 of 33

Washington Park: 3 of 33

Schaefer Park: 3 of 33

Riverside Park: 2 of 33

**2.) Please mark with an “X” whether you, or a member of your family, participated in any of the following recreational activities within the last year:**

**Most Frequent Participation**

	<b>2006 Survey Rating</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>2002 SCORP Rank</b>
Hiking	<b>88%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Picnicking	<b>79%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>
Wildlife Observation	<b>68%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
Bicycling	<b>62%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Swimming	<b>59%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>
Camping	<b>53%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>

**3.) What do you consider the three most needed facilities, projects, improvements or programs in the parks and recreation system?**

(see attached sheet at end)

**4.) Which ONE of the following three statements comes closest to the way you feel about park and recreation services in your community.**

**76%** Members of my household use parks or recreation programs on a regular basis, and I believe that these services are important to quality of life.

**21%** Although members of my household do not use parks or recreation programs frequently, I believe that these services are important to quality of life.

**3%** Parks and recreation services are not important to quality of life.

**5.) Using a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), how important do you believe parks and recreation services and facilities are to the quality of life in Centralia?**

1 - Not Important at All

2 - Somewhat Unimportant

3 - Neutral

**12%** 4 - Somewhat Important

**88%** 5 - Very Important

**7-13.) Existing programs in Centralia provide residents with a diverse range of recreational activities.**

Program Area	Program Support			Funding Support			
	Expand	Keep Same Level	Reduce	Definitely Yes	Possibly Yes	Likely No	Definitely No
<b>special events</b>	<b>69%</b>	31%		<b>55%</b>	36%	4%	4%
<b>children's activities</b>	<b>67%</b>	30%	3%	<b>62%</b>	38%		
<b>teen activities</b>	<b>60%</b>	31%	9%	<b>63%</b>	37%		
<b>adult activities</b>	<b>59%</b>	36%	3%	<b>47%</b>	47%	5%	
<b>senior citizen activities</b>	<b>56%</b>	41%	3%	<b>61%</b>	39%		
adult sport leagues	34%	63%	3%	45%	45%	13%	9%
activities for persons with disabilities	31%	66%	3%	50%	50%		
aquatic programs	31%	69%		55%	36%		9%

**14.) Which of the following best fits your needs:**

**61%** **an extended trail system that connects creek systems to existing trails**  
**21%** a larger, 50 acre, more broadly developed park suitable for a range of uses within a short drive from your home—no more than three miles  
**11%** a park of approximately 3 acres in size with basic park amenities, such as play equipment and open fields, within walking distance of your home  
**7%** undeveloped open space with limited or no improvements

**15.) Using a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important), how important is it for your local neighborhood park to provide the following:**

Open space protected for future generations	1	2	3	4	5.....	<b>4.65</b>
A quiet place to walk and relax	1	2	3	4	5.....	<b>4.55</b>
Open space to provide physical breaks in urban development	1	2	3	4	5.....	<b>4.48</b>
A place for active play	1	2	3	4	5.....	<b>4.26</b>

**16.) Below is the same list again. Which one is the single MOST important one for your local neighborhood park to provide.**

**36%** **Open space protected for future generations**  
**29%** A quiet place to walk and relax  
**19%** A place for active play  
**16%** Open space to provide physical breaks in urban development

**17.) Using a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important), how important is it for the city of Centralia to purchase natural areas such as hillsides, wetlands or forests? 1 2 3 4 5.....****4.10**

**18.) Using a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important), how important is it for the city of Centralia to purchase parklands for playgrounds and sport fields? 1 2 3 4 5.....****3.97**

*Centralia Parks, Recreation & Open Space Survey*  
**SUMMARY RESULTS**

**19.) Neighborhood and community parks offer residents a variety of recreational activities. Using a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important), how important is each of the following to your neighborhood:**

Activity	Very Imp & Important	Response Average
<b>Picnic facilities including shelters and tables</b>	81%	4.13
<b>Children's playground equipment</b>	74%	4.10
<b>Youth and adult sports fields including soccer baseball and softball</b>	52%	3.87
<b>Open lawn areas</b>	72%	3.81
<b>Asphalt walking paths</b>	61%	3.74
Asphalt areas for basketball biking and rollerblading	49%	3.39
Extreme sports areas skateboarding and BMX biking	32%	2.84

**20.) Using a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), please rate the importance of each of the following types of trail in the Centralia area:**

Trail Facility Types	Very Imp & Important	Response Average
<b>Trails along rivers</b>	87%	4.29
<b>Trails connecting parks to other parks</b>	78%	4.13
<b>Trails in more forested more natural areas</b>	74%	4.10
<b>Trails connecting neighborhoods to workplaces, etc</b>	71%	3.97
Water trails for non-motorized boat use	61%	3.61
Trails for equestrian use	19%	2.65

**21.) Using a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), how important is it to include each of the following in the development of a neighborhood park of about three to five acres in size:**

Neighborhood Park Amenities	Very Imp & Important	Response Average
<b>Walking paths</b>	94%	4.45
<b>Natural areas with mature trees</b>	87%	4.42
<b>Play equipment</b>	80%	4.26
Irrigated grass areas	68%	3.71
Half court basketball courts	45%	3.55
Small skateboard facilities	25%	2.87

**22.) Some neighborhoods in Centralia have no land today available for parks and open space. In these areas, local schools are often used to provide open space and park facilities. On a scale of one to five, with five "strongly agree," and one - "strongly disagree," do you agree or disagree that local schools are adequate to meet the need for open space and park facilities in these neighborhoods?**

1    2    3    4    5.....**2.29**

**23.) If Centralia were going to expand its services or facilities for today's residents, which ONE of the following areas should be the highest priority?**

- 39%** Building trails and walking paths
- 19%** Renovating existing parks
- 19%** Acquiring and developing new parks
- 13%** Building or expanding recreation programs, pools and community centers
- 10%** Purchasing open space and natural areas

**24.) It is estimated that the population of Centralia will grow 25% in the next 20 years to nearly 23,000 people. Using a scale of 1 (*very important*) to 5 (*not important at all*), how important is it for Centralia to purchase land now to set aside for future park and recreation development?**

	<b>Very Imp &amp; Important</b>	<b>Response Average</b>
<b>Purchase land to set aside for future parks</b>	80%	1.87

**25.) If Centralia were going to expand its services or facilities to meet the needs of a growing population, how would you rank in priority each of the following areas?**

	1st - Highest Priority	2nd	3rd	4th	5th - Lowest Priority
<b>Building trails and walking paths</b>	1				
Renovating existing parks		2			
Purchasing open space and natural areas			3		
Building or expanding recreation programs, pools etc				4	
Acquiring and developing new parks					5

**26.) I would like you to evaluate the importance of several special types of facilities or programs, keeping in mind that an increase in taxes may be needed to build and operate each facility: Using a scale of 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*very important*), how important are:**

<b>Special Facilities</b>	<b>Very Imp &amp; Important</b>	<b>Response Average</b>
<b>Trail corridors</b>	75%	4.13
Outdoor sports complexes for tournaments such as soccer baseball and softball	45%	3.45
Smaller all purpose sports fields for casual ball games such as soccer softball and football	38%	3.29
Boat launches	45%	3.26
Parks or areas for dogs	35%	2.84
Spaces for community vegetable gardens	23%	2.68
Bicycle motocross or other types of bicycling facilities	22%	2.65
Improved or updated shooting range facilities	23%	2.52
Additional or expanded skatepark facilities	16%	2.32

**27.) How would you rate in importance each of the following factors pertaining to natural areas and open space lands in Centralia. Using a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), how important is it to have natural areas and open space lands to:**

Activity	Very Imp & Important	Response Average
Provide hiking and biking trails greenways and other low impact recreation	77%	4.39
Improve water quality	80%	4.35
Protect wildlife habitat	74%	4.13
Protect shorelines	74%	4.00
Preserve historic and archaeological sites	64%	3.81
Recover threatened salmon species	55%	3.74
Conserve farm and forest lands	68%	3.68

**28.) Using a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), how important is it for the city of Centralia to manage, preserve, and replace street trees in the urban area?**

1   2   3   4   5.....**4.10**

**29.) Using a scale of 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important), how would you rate the overall safety and security of the parks and recreation facilities in Centralia?**

1   2   3   4   5.....**3.19**

**30.) In general how satisfied are you with the maintenance and upkeep of the following park and recreation areas in your community? Please use a grading scale with A B C D and F.**

Neighborhood and community parks	<b>B</b>
Open space and natural areas	<b>B</b>
Recreation and community centers	<b>B</b>
Trails and walking paths	<b>C</b>

### **Demographics:**

Age	
Younger than 18	0.0%
18 to 34	19.4%
35 to 44	22.6%
45 to 54	29.0%
55 to 64	22.6%
65 and older	6.5%

Years in Centralia	
Less than 1 year	6.5%
1 - 5 years	16.1%
6 - 10 years	6.5%
11 - 20 years	9.7%
More than 20 years	61.3%

Income	
Under \$20,000	0.0%
\$20,000 - \$34,999	9.7%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	29.0%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	25.8%
\$75,000 or more	35.5%

Residence	
Own	90.3%
Rent	9.7%

**OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES:**

**3.) What do you consider the three most needed facilities, projects, improvements or programs in the parks and recreation system?**

Eradication or control of English ivy in Seminary Hill; more safe neighborhood trails for walking, jogging, cycling; more help or encouragement for present volunteers - perhaps a Parks Dept coordinator of volunteerism to encourage more citizens to get involved

consistent funding to allow staff to consistently maintain current facilities

field turf soccer field, public restrooms on lower end of Borst Park

trails, cleanup of brushy areas, new park near hospital

more sitting benches, security

Sports fields and programs Grassy picnic areas and trails More event facilities (kitchens, shelters, gazebos, stages, etc.

Baseball and softball fields walking and jogging trails another picnic shelter

walking and biking trails access to river for kayaking safe fishing for kids improve pool at Pearl St., wading pool for kids

We need more neighborhood parks. Handicap accessibility. Bike trails.

Biking/walking/running trails. This is important to give people (especially kids) a safe and fun place to ride bikes. Trails like this connecting our parks would be a centerpiece of our city, improving the quality of life and drawing others to our area. This type of project has been very successful in other towns. At its best, I would envision a paved trail along the banks of the Skookumchuck, connecting Schaeffer park, Riverside park, another new park behind Goodwill, the lake behind the outlets and finally Fort Borst park. 2. Clean water and improved navigability of the Skookumchuck and Chehalis rivers to encourage recreational canoeing and kayaking. The narrowed fast moving section behind Riverside park could even have the streambed modified a bit to create small rapids for a canoeing and kayaking whitewater park. This has been done in many towns throughout the west and is a huge draw in these cities. There is nothing like this with close freeway access in western Washington. 3. Parks programs to promote outdoor activity and a healthy lifestyle, such as city sponsored runs or biking events. City assistance with "rails to trails" is another example. We have an unused 60 mile trail connecting the twin cities to Willipa Harbor. As you know this traverses some beautiful countryside. It would bring bikers to our area from around the country.

**31.) Which sites or facilities could use additional upkeep and maintenance?**

Outdoor swimming pool Borst Park Borst Home and School House

Borst, wilbur Parkins, Riverside, overpass areas, Bridge st property,

Riverside needs new picnic tables.

walking paths in Schaeffer park

*Centralia Parks, Recreation & Open Space Survey*  
**SUMMARY RESULTS**

The old golf course - it would be a great spot for soccer fields (fairway number 1) and hiking areas on the rest of it...

Seminary Hill Natural Area needs help having invasive species removed such as English Ivy and English Holly.

All of the parks need help in different areas

Riverside Park--due to large groups and the teenage skateboarders who choose not to utilize the garbage cans. Main commuting routes--debris (garbage and small stones) along arterials is hazardous to nonmotorized commuters. Off-street trails would be better and safer.

Schaefer Park

SHNA Borst Riverside

INDOOR POOL

Rifle and pistol range

Logan

Borst Park above all because it is the most conspicuous to visitors. As it is now, it reflects badly on our commitment to natural areas for our citizens.

Logan area

multi-purpose park area east of downtown needs to be cleaned on a regular basis (just look cleaner)





## APPENDIX D: FINANCING & INCENTIVES

# Financing Programs

## Federal & State Funding Programs

### ***Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)***

#### ***Washington State Department of Natural Resources***

This program provides matching grants to state and local agencies to protect and enhance salmon habitat and to provide public access and recreation opportunities on aquatic lands. In 1998, DNR refocused the ALEA program to emphasize salmon habitat preservation and enhancement. However, the program is still open to traditional water access proposals. Any project must be located on navigable portions of waterways. ALEA funds are derived from the leasing of state-owned aquatic lands and from the sale of harvest rights for shellfish and other aquatic resources.

### ***IAC Grant Programs***

#### ***Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation***

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) was created in 1964 as part of the Marine Recreation Land Act (Initiative 215). The IAC grants money to state and local agencies, generally on a matching basis, to acquire, develop, and enhance wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Some money is also distributed for planning grants. IAC grant programs utilize funds from various sources. Historically, these have included the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, state bonds, Initiative 215 monies (derived from unclaimed marine fuel taxes), off-road vehicle funds, Youth Athletic Facilities Account, and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

### ***Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)***

#### ***Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)***

The IAC is a state office that allocates funds to local and state agencies for the acquisition and development of wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation properties. Funding sources managed by the IAC include the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. The WWRP is divided into Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts; these are further divided into several project categories. Cities, counties, and other local sponsors may apply for funding in urban wildlife habitat, local parks, trails, and water access categories. Certain state agencies may also apply for funding in natural areas, critical habitat, and state parks categories. Funds for local agencies are awarded on a matching basis. Grant applications are evaluated once each year. However, in 1999, the IAC limited project review in odd-numbered years to local park acquisition. The State Legislature must authorize funding for the WWRP project lists.

### ***Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)***

#### ***Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)***

The WRP provides landowners the opportunity to preserve, enhance, and restore wetlands and associated uplands. The program is voluntary and provides three enrollment options: permanent easements, 30-year easements, and 10-year restoration cost-share agreements. In all cases, landowners retain the underlying ownership in the property and management responsibility. Land uses may be allowed that are compatible with the program goal of protecting and restoring the

wetlands and associated uplands. The NRCS manages the program and may provide technical assistance.

***Water Resources Development Act***

***Environmental Restoration Programs and Authorities***

***U.S. Army Corps of Engineers***

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides funds for environmental and/or ecosystem restoration projects under provisions of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), as amended. Section 306 of the WRDA of 1990 specifically authorizes environmental restoration as one of the primary missions of the Corps. Environmental and/or ecosystem restoration projects are intended to “improve the condition of a disturbed ecosystem, including its plant and animal communities, or portions thereof, to some prior ecological condition.” Various authorities and programs are established for these purposes. These include General Investigation Studies and “Continuing Authorities” under Sections 206 (’96), 1135 (’86), and 204 (’92) of the WRDA. Generally, projects require the support of a local sponsoring organization and some level of cost sharing is required. The federal share on Continuing Authorities may range as high as \$5 million. For General Investigations there is no per project cost limit.

***Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)***

***United States Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency***

The Conservation Reserve Program provides annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to help preserve and enhance sensitive habitat areas on qualifying agricultural lands. The program, established in 1986, is voluntary. Lands enrolled in the CRP must be used for riparian buffers, filter strips, shallow water areas for wildlife, or other uses that provide beneficial habitat values.

Landowners enter into agreements that last 10 to 15 years. Unlike the 1998 CREP, the CRP is not limited to stream areas that support salmon runs listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

***Washington Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)***

***United States Department of Agriculture – Farm Service Agency***

This program is a federal/state partnership, authorized in 1998, that involves the retirement of farmland for conservation purposes. Washington CREP focuses on the preservation and restoration of riparian habitat that supports salmon listed under the Endangered Species Act. This voluntary program provides financial incentives to farmers and ranchers to remove lands from agricultural production. Eligible landowners enter into agreements for periods of 10 to 15 years. Landowners receive an annual rental payment and cost-sharing is available for habitat enhancements. The federal Farm Service Agency is the primary administrative agency..

***Trust Lands Transfer Program***

***Washington State Department of Natural Resources***

This program provides a mechanism to protect DNR-managed properties with significant natural, park, or recreational attributes while infusing money into the public school construction fund. The program has been in effect since 1989. The program identifies “common school trust lands” with significant park, recreation, and natural features, which are difficult to manage as income-producing properties for trust beneficiaries and transfers them to more appropriate ownership. The Legislature appropriates funds to “buy out” these properties from the School Trust Program. Revenues equal to the timber value on subject properties are placed in the Common School Construction Account, while the timber is not harvested. The Legislature also provides for the replacement of the land by appropriating the land value of the property to purchase other real property having better income

potential for trust beneficiaries. The properties to be preserved may be transferred to local or state agencies. The selection process involves a detailed evaluation system. Key features include: 1) properties must have a high timber value to land value ratio; 2) properties must be of statewide significance for park, recreation, or natural area uses; and 3) the properties must have significant difficulties (e.g., sensitive wildlife habitat) in managing the property for income to trust beneficiaries.

### ***Jobs for the Environment (JFE)***

#### ***Washington State Department of Natural Resources***

The JFE program was created by the state Legislature in 1993. The program promotes the long-term, stable employment of dislocated natural resource workers in the performance of watershed restoration activities. The program provides minimum funding commitments for salaries and benefits for displaced workers, and funding is also available for training. Since its inception, the program has completed many in-stream, riparian, and upland restoration projects. Entities eligible to apply for funding include state and local governments, tribes, and nonprofit organizations.

Funding proposals will focus on limiting factors and recovery strategies within all or a portion of a Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA). Specific projects will then be identified, prepared, and approved for implementation over the life of the grant agreement.

### ***Forest Legacy Program***

#### ***Washington State Department of Natural Resources***

#### ***U.S. Forest Service***

This program provides funds to acquire permanent conservation easements on private forestlands that are at risk of being converted to non-forest uses such as residential or commercial development. Congress established the program in 1990, and DNR is the lead state agency for the program in Washington State. The program is intended to preserve “working forests,” where forestlands are managed for the production of forest products and where traditional forest uses are encouraged. These uses will include both commodity production and non-commodity values such as healthy riparian areas, important scenic, aesthetic, cultural, fish, wildlife and recreation resources, and other ecological values. Historically, the program focus has been on the I-90 Highway Corridor east of Puget Sound within the Mountains-to-Sound Greenway area.

### ***Washington State Ecosystems Conservation Program (WSECP)***

#### ***U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)***

This WSCEP was established in 1990 and is divided into federal- and state-managed components. The federal program focuses funds on projects that help restore habitat for threatened, endangered and sensitive species and, secondarily, for species of concern. In addition, the program attempts to concentrate funds within a limited number of watersheds to maximize program benefits. The program provides funds to cooperating agencies or organizations. These grants, in turn, can be distributed among project sites. The program requires a 50% cost-share from cooperating agencies, and individual landowners at project sites must enter into maintenance/management agreements that have a 10-year minimum duration.

### ***Washington State Ecosystems Conservation Program (WSECP) – Upland Wildlife***

#### ***Restoration Initiative***

#### ***Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)***

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will purchase important upland habitat, or provide technical and/or financial assistance to protect, restore, or enhance such habitat on private property. The program emphasizes certain target species including pheasant, quail, and turkey, but

also emphasizes protecting and enhancing habitats that support species diversity. The program covers the entire state, with an emphasis on eastern Washington. Private landowners who volunteer for this program enter into agreements that outline protection and maintenance programs. The program includes both agricultural and forestlands.

#### ***Community Development Block Grants***

#### ***U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development***

These funds are intended to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for low and moderate income persons.

### **Local Funding Options**

#### ***Excess Levy***

Washington law allows cities and counties, along with other specified junior taxing districts, to levy property taxes in excess of limitations imposed by statute when authorized by the voters. Levy approval requires 60 percent majority vote at a general or special election. Excess levies by school districts are the most common use of this authority.

#### ***General Obligation Bonds***

For the purposes of funding capital projects, such as land acquisitions or facility construction, cities and counties have the authority to borrow money by selling bonds. Voter-approved general obligation bonds may be sold only after receiving a 60 percent majority vote at a general or special election. If approved, an excess property tax is levied each year for the life of the bond to pay both principal and interest. Centralia has a maximum debt limits for voter-approved bonds of two and one-half percent of the value of taxable property in the city. The city has an additional two and one-half percent for municipal water, sewer and lighting facilities, and an additional two and one-half percent for acquisition and development of open space and park facilities.

#### ***Councilmanic Bonds***

Councilmanic bonds may be sold by cities and counties without public vote. The bonds--both principal and interest--are retired with payments from existing county or city revenue or new general tax revenue, such as additional sales tax or real estate excise tax. For both cities and counties, the Legislature has set a maximum debt limit for councilmanic bonds of one and one-half percent of the value of taxable property in the city or county, respectively.

#### ***Revenue Bonds***

Revenue bonds are sold with the intent of paying principal and interest from revenue generated by the improvement, such as fees and charges. For example, revenue bonds might be sold to fund a public water system that will generate revenue through utility charges to customers. Other funds may be dedicated to assist with repayment; however, it is desirable to have the improvements generate adequate revenue to pay all bond costs. Limits on the use and amount of revenue bonds are generally market-driven through investor faith in the adequacy of the revenue stream to support bond payments.

#### ***Development Impact Fees***

Development impact fees are charges placed on new development as a condition of development approval to help pay for various public facilities the need for which is directly created by that new growth and development. Under the Growth Management Act of 1990 (ESHB 2929), counties, cities, and towns may impose impact fees on residential and commercial "development activity" to help pay for certain public facility improvements, including parks, open space, and recreation facilities.

### ***Utility Taxes***

Cities are authorized to impose taxes on utility services, such as telephone, electric and natural gas. Legislative maximums limit the amount of tax that may be collected. For example, the maximum tax rate for electric and natural gas is six percent. Maximums may be exceeded for a specific purpose and time period with majority voter approval. City operated water and sewer utilities do not share the 6% limit.

### ***Sales Tax***

Washington law authorizes the governing bodies of cities and counties to impose sales and use taxes at a rate set by the statute to help "carry out essential county and municipal purposes." The authority is divided into two parts.

Cities and counties may impose by resolution or ordinance a sales and use tax at a rate of five-tenths of one percent on any "taxable event" within their jurisdictions. Cities and counties may also impose an additional sales tax at a rate "up to" five-tenths of one percent on any taxable event within the city or county. In this case, the statute provides an electoral process for repealing the tax or altering the rate.

### ***Real Estate Excise Tax***

Washington law authorizes the governing bodies of counties and cities to impose excise taxes on the sale of real property within limits set by the statute. The authority of cities and counties may be divided into three parts relevant to park systems.

A city or county may impose a real estate excise tax on the sale of all real property in the city or unincorporated parts of the county, respectively, at a rate not to exceed 1/4 of 1% of the selling price to fund "local capital improvements," including parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, water systems, bridges, sewers, etc. Also, the funds must be used "primarily for financing capital projects specified in a capital facilities plan element of a comprehensive plan . . . "

A city or county may impose a real estate excise tax on the sale of all real property in the city or unincorporated parts of the county, respectively, at a rate not to exceed 1/2 of 1%, in lieu of a five-tenths of one percent sales tax option authorized under state law. These funds are not restricted to capital projects. The statute provides for a repeal mechanism.

A city or county--in counties that are required to prepare comprehensive plans under the new Growth Management Act--are authorized to impose an additional real estate excise tax on all real property sales in the city or unincorporated parts of the county, respectively, at a rate not to exceed 1/4 of 1%. These funds must be used "solely for financing capital projects specified in a capital facilities plan element of a comprehensive plan."

### ***Real Estate Excise Tax - Local Conservation Areas***

#### ***Lewis County***

Boards of County Commissioners may impose--with voter approval--an excise tax on each sale of real property in the county at rate not to exceed one percent of the selling price for the purpose of acquiring and maintaining conservation areas. The authorizing legislation defines conservation areas as "land and water that has environmental, agricultural, aesthetic, cultural, scientific, historic, scenic, or low-intensity recreational value for existing and future generations..." These areas include "open spaces, wetlands, marshes, aquifer recharge areas, shoreline areas, natural areas, and other lands and waters that are important to preserve flora and fauna."

### ***State-Distributed Motor Vehicle Fund***

State law establishes requirements for planning, construction and preservation of trails and paths during the construction or reconstruction of both limited-access and nonlimited-access highways. It also authorizes cities and counties to expend state-distributed motor vehicle fund revenues for planning, accommodating, establishing and maintaining trails and paths. Qualified trails and paths must be served by highways or their rights-of-way, or must separate motor vehicle traffic from pedestrians, equestrians, or bicyclists to a level that will materially increase motor vehicle safety, and be part of the adopted comprehensive plan of the governmental authority with jurisdiction over trails.

### ***Regular Property Tax - Lid Lift***

Counties and cities are authorized to impose ad valorem taxes upon real and personal property. A county's maximum levy rate for general county purposes is \$1.80 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. A city's maximum levy rate for general purposes is \$3.375 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation unless the city is annexed to either a library or fire district, in which case the city levy may not exceed \$3.60 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Limitations on annual increases in tax collections, coupled with changes in property value, causes levy rates to rise or fall. However, in no case may they rise above statutory limits. Once the rate is established each year under the statutory limit, it may not be raised without the approval of a majority of the voters. Receiving voter approval is known as a lid lift. A lid lift may be permanent, or may be for a specific purpose and time period. Other limits on taxing authority remain in effect, such as the aggregate levy rate limits of \$5.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value and 1% of true and fair market value.

### ***Conservation Futures***

#### ***Lewis County***

The Conservation Futures levy is provided for in Chapter 84.34 of the Revised Code of Washington. Boards of County Commissioners may impose by resolution a property tax up to six and one-quarter cents per thousand dollars of assessed value for the purpose of acquiring interest in open space, farm, and timber lands. Conservation Futures funds may be used for acquisition purposes only. Funds may be used to acquire mineral rights, and leaseback agreements are permitted. The statute prohibits the use of eminent domain to acquire property.

## **Incentive Measures**

### ***Current Use Taxation***

#### ***Lewis County***

Lewis County's current use taxation program applies to lands in both incorporated and unincorporated areas. It provides tax reductions to land holders in return for maintaining their land

in an undeveloped condition. The program derives its authority in the 1970 Washington Open Space Taxation Act (RCW 84.34, 458-30 WAC), which establishes procedures for tax deferments for agricultural, timber, and open space lands. Owners of such lands may apply to be taxed according to current use, rather than true market value--a considerable difference in some cases. When the property is removed from the program, the tax savings realized by the land owners for a period dating back up to seven years, plus interest, are collected. Tax savings dating back further than seven years may not be collected. If the removal of classification or change of use occurs in less than ten years or if the owner fails to provide two years advance notification of withdrawal, an additional 20 percent penalty is imposed.

### ***Density Bonuses***

Density bonuses are a planning tool used to encourage a variety of public land use objectives, usually in urban areas. They offer the incentive of being able to develop at densities beyond current regulations in one area, in return for concessions in another. Density bonuses are applied to a single parcel or development. An example is allowing developers of multi-family units to build at higher densities if they provide a certain number of low-income units. For density bonuses to work, market forces must support densities at a higher level than current regulations.

### ***Transfer of Development Rights***

The transfer of development rights (TDR) is an incentive-based planning tool that allows land owners to trade the right to develop property to its fullest extent in one area for the right to develop beyond existing regulations in another area. Local governments may establish the specific areas in which development may be limited or restricted and the areas in which development beyond regulation may be allowed. Usually, but not always, the "sending" and "receiving" property are under common ownership. Some programs allow for different ownership, which, in effect, establishes a market for development rights to be bought and sold.

## **Regulatory Measures**

A variety of regulatory measures are available to state and local agencies and jurisdictions. Clark County and Vancouver have exercised their regulatory authority under several programs. Programs available to state and local agencies include: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA); Forest Practices - Conversion of Timber Lands, Washington Department of Natural Resources; Shorelines Management Program; and Hydraulic Code, Washington State Department of Fisheries and Department of Wildlife.

## **Other Methods & Funding Sources**

### ***Land Trusts***

Land trusts are private non-profit organizations that traditionally are not associated with any government agency. Land trusts serving the region include the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Trust for Public Land (TPL).

### ***Private Grants, Donations & Gifts***

Many trusts and private foundations provide funding for park, recreation and open space projects. Grants from these sources are typically allocated through a competitive application process, and vary

dramatically in size based on the financial resources and funding criteria of the organization. Philanthropic giving is another source of project funding. Efforts in this area may involve cash gifts and include donations through other mechanisms such as wills or insurance policies. Community fund-raising efforts can also support park, recreation, or open space facilities and projects.

### ***Business Sponsorships/Donations***

Business sponsorships for youth, teen, adult and senior programs are available throughout the year. Sponsorships and donations range from \$5 to \$1,000. In-kind contributions are often received, including food, door prizes and computer equipment.

### ***Fundraising***

Fundraising projects are used to support special projects and programs. Recycling drives, golf tournaments and candy sales are three examples of successful fundraising efforts.

### ***Interagency Agreements***

State law provides for interagency cooperative efforts between units of government. Joint acquisition, development and use of park, recreation and open space facilities has been successfully used by Centralia, Chehalis and Lewis County.

### ***Public/Private Utility Corridors***

Utility corridors can be managed to maximize protection or enhancement of open space lands. Utilities maintain corridors for provision of services such as electricity, gas, oil, and rail travel. Historically, some utility companies have cooperated with local governments for development of public programs such as parks within utility corridors.

### ***Local Improvement District***

Local Improvement Districts can be formed by local governments for capital projects. The capital project must directly benefit those properties that are assessed, and there must be a relationship between the benefit received and the assessment paid. Typically, these districts fund improvements to sewer, water or road systems through bonds that are subsequently paid back from special assessments that are levied on district members. LIDs are initiated by petition, or in the case of a citywide project, the city could initiate the project by resolution. A petition signed by property owners representing 60 percent of the affected area is necessary to stop a project. Funding for LIDs is usually spread over 10 years. Specific legislation covers use and operation of various LIDs.

### ***Park and Recreation Districts***

#### ***Independently elected park district commissioners***

Park and recreation districts may be formed for the purposes of providing leisure-time activities and recreation facilities. Authorized facilities include parks, playgrounds, public campgrounds, boat ramps, public hunting and fishing areas, bicycle and bridal paths, and "other recreation facilities." Park and recreation districts are explicitly authorized to acquire and hold real and personal property. Formation of a park and recreation district must be initiated by petition and requires voter approval.

### ***Park and Recreation Service Areas***

#### ***Board of County Commissioners***

Park and recreation service areas may be formed to finance, acquire, construct, improve, maintain or operate park and recreation facilities. They may be initiated by a resolution adopted by the county legislative authority or by a petition. Voter approval is required. Members of the county legislative

authority, acting ex officio and independently, compose the governing body of any park and recreation service area created within their county.

***Metropolitan Park District***

***Independently elected park district commissioners***

Metropolitan park districts may be formed for the purposes of management, control, improvement, maintenance and acquisition of parks, parkways and boulevards. In addition to acquiring and managing their own lands, metropolitan districts may accept and manage park and recreation lands and equipment turned over by any city within the district or by the county. Formation of a metropolitan park district may be initiated in cities of five thousand population or more by city council or city commission ordinance, or by petition, and requires voter approval. The proposed district must have limits coextensive with the limits of the city, and must exclude cities of the fourth class.



## APPENDIX E: PRESS & MEDIA EXHIBITS

# Centralia restarts park planning

**COMPONENT: Public comment sought at meeting and in online survey**

By Carrina Stanton  
*The Chronicle*

over the position, he recognized the entire process needed to be revamped. The completed plan is meant to be a comprehensive vision for parks development over the next 20 years, and, Pierson said, he thought it was not entirely complete.

Portland planning consultant firm Conservation Technix was hired about six weeks ago to complete the park plan update. Building off the former work on the comp plan component, as well as comment from the parks and recreation board, Steve Duh, principal of Conservation Technix, said the majority of work to this date has been preliminary research.

"Right now, the project team is in the midst of gathering a lot of information about the city, its population and its future population trends," Duh said.

"There were a lot of loose ends out there and I was hired to pull all those together," Pierson said.

**AN UPDATE OF** the park plan, a piece of the overall Centralia comprehensive plan, was begun more than a year ago, and included a survey and community open houses. That in-house update, the first of its kind since 1991, was completed, but then its inclusion in the overall comp plan was stalled by the departure of Community Development Director Dennis Rhodes in March. That position sat empty until night on the Centralia College campus to allow the public to make in-person comments.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

■ Parks Plan open house — 6 p.m. Wednesday at the Centralia College student cafeteria

■ Online survey — [www.centraltiaparks.com/centraliaparks/parkplan.jsp](http://www.centraltiaparks.com/centraliaparks/parkplan.jsp), comments due by Oct. 31

Information: Telephone Linda Whitcher at 330-7662

end of 2006. Pierson said he will soon address the council with his recommendations to slow down the process in order to get more community member advice, as well as make sure the plan is done correctly. He declined to say yet what his recommended schedule will be, but said completing the comp plan before December is not going to happen.

One example of why Pierson thinks slowing down would be a good idea is that Centralia's comp plan is supposed to support the goals of Lewis County's comprehensive plan. The county is in the midst of updating some of its goals as well, and Pierson said he thinks it would be a good idea to allow the county process to get a little ahead of Centralia's. The uncertainty of Mellen Street is another concern for the comp plan process. Transportation is one of the elements of a comp plan, and Pierson said if Centralia drafted its plan before the Mellen Street interchange's future is better known, the city may be facing updating it again in the near future.

"It makes sense," Pierson said. "We're not just going to create a plan that is going to just sit on a shelf and get dusty. We're going to create a plan we can be proud of, and that will get used."

**Carriina Stanton** covers municipal government and health for *The Chronicle*. She may be reached at 807-8241, or by e-mail at [stanton@chronline.com](mailto:stanton@chronline.com).

**ONCE THE ONLINE SURVEY and community meeting have concluded, Duh will submit a draft plan that will be reviewed by the parks and recreation board, the planning commission and the city council. The city council will eventually hold a public hearing on the draft plan before it is adopted. Duh said the Wednesday public meeting and the survey are some of the first efforts in the update process.**

"It's really happening on the front end of the planning project," Duh said. "At this point, we're not making any recommendations yet. We'll probably be asking more questions than we'll be answering."

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**plan update was originally**

**planned to be completed by the**

# The Chronicle

TUESDAY, OCT. 17, 2006

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## Centralia comp plan delayed another year

**Date:** October 27, 2006 **Section:** News

The good news is Centralia expects to be finished with its comprehensive plan update by September of 2007. The bad news is by that time, it will be nearly two years late.

THAT WAS THE MESSAGE this week from Centralia Community Development Director Emil Pierson. Since starting Sept. 1, he said, he has been carefully culling over documents regarding the comprehensive plan, an update of which was originally planned to be complete by December 2005, but is not yet done.

The exact cause of the delay is somewhat of a mystery, Pierson said. Instead of trying to lay blame, he said, his game plan is simply to move forward from this point and get the update done.

"A lot of it is still evaluating what needs to be changed and what doesn't," Pierson said.

"Some of the document is still very, very good, in my opinion."

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN is a 20-year planning document that is required of all jurisdictions by the state Growth Management Act. It includes various sections relating to goals and policies for the future of transportation, housing, capital facilities, utilities, shorelines, economic development, and parks and recreation, among others.

The GMA also requires comp plans to be updated periodically. They can be updated as often as every year, but no less often than every seven years. Centralia first adopted its comp plan in 1998, and it has not been updated since.

Even with work that is already in place, the update can be accomplished only so quickly, Pierson said. The document must meet requirements in a 17-page checklist from the Washington State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development before it is final. Pierson said while CTED representatives were not thrilled to hear the new schedule for the Centralia comp plan, they were pleased with the city's game plan to actually make the update a reality this time.

"No one said they will be citing us or writing us a ticket," Pierson said. "I think they just want to see this completed in a timely fashion."

Karin Berkholz of the CTED growth management division said many Washington jurisdictions completed their updates on time in 2005, but there are others, such as Centralia, that, for whatever reason, are taking more time.

The biggest risks to jurisdictions that do not update their comprehensive plans in a timely manner include losing points on grant applications and being vulnerable to appeals, Berkholz said. Sanctions would not be likely from the state unless Centralia was doing something extremely wrong, which does not appear to be the case, she noted.

"That's something the state doesn't do lightly, because everyone tries," Berkholz said.

"The most important thing is there is some effort, some movement."

ONE OF THE SLOWDOWNS Pierson has found related to consultants who were hired to assist with the plan update. In reading the contracts, he learned the consultants were tasked with providing a framework of goals and policies, but city employees would ultimately be responsible for connecting it all.

He recently convinced councilors to cancel a contract with H.W. Lochner for the transportation element, and to execute a contract with CH2M Hill for the task, because the latter company promised to be able to deliver a more complete product in less time.

An in-house attempt at updating the parks and recreation portion was also dropped in favor of hiring Conservation Technix of Portland about two months ago. "They're not giving us the bones, they're giving us the whole element," Pierson said of the decisions.

IT IS NOT ANTICIPATED any more consultants will need to be hired to complete the comprehensive plan, Pierson added.

Another slowdown has occurred because of forces out of the city's control. Pierson said in order to be complete, Centralia's comp plan must be consistent with the goals and policies of Lewis County's comp plan. The county is in the process of updating its comp plan, which was last updated in 2002. At this point, that update is expected sometime around the end of the year, which means Centralia will need to wait to determine how it will draft its goals and policies to be in harmony with the county.

Another time consideration out of the city's control is the Mellen Street overpass, which will have a bearing on the transportation element of Centralia's plan.

The Washington State Department of Transportation is in the midst of studying where to site the Mellen Street interchange when it is reconstructed as part of the \$160 million Interstate 5 Mellen Street-to-Grand Mound reconstruction project. The state is currently down to three alternatives, and a decision is expected to be made by the end of the year. Because the Mellen Street relocation has a potential to affect a large portion of Centralia's traffic patterns, it would be foolhardy to set transportation goals for the next 20 years without knowing this information, Pierson said.

The slowdown isn't all bad news for Pierson, who said it will also allow for more public comment on the comp plan update. The city held a handful of open houses earlier this spring, but Pierson said he'd like to have even more public participation in the effort. More open houses are planned, the first of which will likely be in November or December. And like the online survey for the parks and recreation element, Pierson said he hopes to have more information online, such as draft plans and maps on which the public may comment via the Web site.

Carrina Stanton covers municipal government and health for The Chronicle. She may be reached at 807-8241, or by e-mail at [cstanton@chronline.com](mailto:cstanton@chronline.com).

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**City Manager's Office**

**City Attorney's Office**

**City Clerk's Office**

**Personnel Department**

**Engineering Department**

**Community Development**

**Parks and Recreation**

**Finance Department**

**Municipal Court**

**Downtown Economic Development Office**

**Utilities Department**

**Centralia Timberland Library**

**Police Department**

**Fire Department**

## **Parks and Recreation Plan Update**

City Hall

The City of Centralia has recently begun an update of its 1991 Parks and Recreation Plan. The new Plan will establish a road map for providing high quality, community-driven parks, trails, open space and recreation facilities throughout Centralia. The update will establish goals and priorities and recommend specific projects for the city's parks and recreational lands for the next 20 years. The participation process involves input from the public, local and state agencies and the tribes, with final review and adoption of the plan scheduled for December, 2006.

### **Parks & Recreation**

902 Johnson Rd.

Centralia, WA 98531

(360)330-7688

centparks@cityofcentralia.com

### **Contact**

If you have any questions about the Centralia Park and Recreation Plan update or the survey, please contact:

[Linda Whitcher](#)

360-330-7662

