

Sweet Home Park System Master Plan



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Prepared by:
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Sweet Home Park Board

John Meier, Chairperson
Dave Trask, City Council Representative
Andrew Allen, Citizen
Anne Mehn, Citizen
Nancy Patton, Citizen

City Staff

Carol Lewis, TCL Consulting Services
Julie Fisher, Assistant Planner
Mike Adams, Public Works Director
Craig Martin, City Manager
Troy Hazelton, Public Works Maintenance
Laura Goodrick, Resource Assistance for Rural Environments

CPW Staff

Robert Parker, AICP Director
Erik Forsell, Project Manager
Anya Dobrowolski
Amy Combs
Aaron Harris

About the Community Planning Workshop

Community Planning Workshop (CPW) is one of the core programs of the University of Oregon's Community Service Center (CSC) (csc.uoregon.edu). Established in 1977, CPW provides students the opportunity to address planning and public policy problems for clients throughout Oregon. Students work in teams under the direction of faculty and Graduate Teaching Fellows to develop proposals, conduct research, analyze and evaluate alternatives, and make recommendations for possible solutions to planning problems in rural Oregon communities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Park facilities help improve a community's quality of life and meet residents' demands for recreational experiences. Providing adequate park facilities is a challenge for many communities. Lack of resources – both staff and money – limits local ability to develop and maintain adequate park systems. Identifying system priorities and matching them with available resources requires careful planning.

The *Sweet Home Parks Master Plan* identifies strategies and actions for operation and development of parks, as well as funding. Through this plan, the City of Sweet Home intends to continue improving the quality of its parks to meet the needs of current and future residents.

The Plan guides future development and management efforts for Sweet Home's parks system over the next 20 years. More specifically the Plan:

- Provides an inventory of existing parks and an analysis of appropriate park classifications and standards;
- Identifies current and future park needs using input from the community as well as technical data;
- Identifies strategies for park acquisition and trail development
- Includes a capital improvement plan (CIP) that outlines park specific improvements, estimated costs, and a timeline for completion; and
- Identifies potential funding techniques and sources to implement the CIP.

The executive summary highlights existing facilities, key community needs, goals and actions, park improvements, and the funding strategies described in the *Sweet Home Parks Master Plan*.

Park Inventory and Assessment

A critical aspect of planning for the future of the City's parks system is conducting an inventory and condition assessment of existing park facilities. The City currently owns eight developed parks and several special use areas. A summary of the City parks and recreation facilities and their respective classification is presented in Table ES-1.

Table ES-1. Park Inventory and Classification Summary

Park Name	Acres/Miles
Mini-Park	
Nandina	0.1 ac.
Evergreen Loop	0.2 ac.
10 th and Elm	0.1 ac.
Total for Mini-Parks:	0.4 ac.
Neighborhood Park	
Ashbrook	1.4 ac.
Clover Memorial	0.9 ac.
Northside	3.6 ac.
Strawberry Hills	3.2 ac.
Total for Neighborhood Parks:	9.1 ac.
Community Park	
Sankey	16.9 ac.
Total for Community Parks:	16.9 ac.
Special Use Areas	
South Hills Trail	1.3 miles
Hobart Natural Area	59.6 ac.
Pleasant Valley Boat Launch	0.2 ac.
Skate Park	0.8 ac.
Total for Special Use Areas:	60.6 ac.
TOTAL	87.0 ac

Community Needs Analysis

The Sweet Home Parks Master Plan includes an analysis and assessment of community needs based on local demographic trends, dialogue with the project advisory committee, and a tour of park facilities with the Public Works Director and maintenance staff, and two online surveys one for city staff and one for residents of Sweet Home. After reviewing this data, several key park facility needs emerged. These include the need for:

- An additional neighborhood or community sized park to address the underserved eastern and northern portions of the city;
- A multi-modal path and trail system that connects parks and open space with residential neighborhoods;
- A need for improved access for all people to city parks and the amenities, especially those with disabilities;
- An increased capacity to conduct regular maintenance to address deferred projects, reduce cost, and improve overall condition of park system;
- An adequate funding stream for park system programs, development and maintenance; and
- An appropriate amount of staffing for the parks department to conduct necessary duties

Community Vision and Goals

The Sweet Home Parks Master Plan update includes a long-term vision for the community and six goals that illustrate the system priorities and specific measurable objectives that are used to guide the development of the park system. Following is the City's vision for its park system.

Sweet Home's park system provides recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages. Sweet Home parks are maintained to promote the beauty and safety of the park system. The Sweet Home Park Master Plan provides guidance to the City, who as trustee of the park lands must work with the natural resources to protect and enhance habitats, plan for and provide land for future parks as needed in the City, and maintain and enhance the park system for the overall well-being of the community.

Goal 1: Provide Adequate Park System Funding. Develop and improve upon existing funding framework for park system activities that utilizes a stable, diverse and creative approach to securing funding.

Goal 2: Increase Capacity to Conduct Park Maintenance and Operations. Establish an Increased capacity to conduct regular maintenance in a way that is efficient and cost effective and promotes the health, beauty and safety of Sweet Home's Parks.

Goal 3: Coordinate Parkland Development and Acquisition. Develop and acquire parks to promote a healthy, safe and diverse set of passive and active recreational opportunities for residents while maintaining environmental stewardship and quality and an adequate level of service for all residents in Sweet Home.

Goal 4: Develop Park System Connectivity and Trails. Increase connectivity between parks and points of interest in the city with the use of multimodal paths, trails and streets.

Goal 5: Enhance Planning and Community Involvement. Focus on the coordination of planning from the Parks Board and city staff to increase community awareness, partnerships involvement, and stewardship of the parks system.

System Improvements

The proposed system improvements are intended to address local needs within the city's budget capacity. These include general improvements such as developing attractive wayfinding signage for park visitors to navigate easier to the park of their choice. Other improvements are more specific such as developing a 300' walking path at Strawberry Hills park or installing additional adult exercise equipment at Ashbrook park.

Most of the improvements are modest in this Parks Master Plan update because they are sensitive of the budget, staff and timeframe in which the Parks Master Plan update occurs. However, larger ideas such as the acquisition plan for an additional neighborhood park in the underserved portions of the city display the city's vision for a better vibrant and well-served park system. The system improvements section also address maintenance, the development of trails and general system improvements.

Funding

The Parks Master Plan provides the framework and guidelines for implementing park development and acquisitions over a twenty-year planning period. However, the Parks Master Plan and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provide little use to the city without the proper funding to implement the objectives and goals of the parks department.

As part of the Parks Master Plan update, a five-year CIP was developed under a separate cover with prioritized improvements. City staff should use this list of short and long-term improvement objectives and identify sources of funding to complete the projects. This Plan recommends that the city explore a variety of funding sources from donations for capital improvements, to grant funding for The Hobart Natural Area development, to considering developing a marginal parks fee to ensure funding for required maintenance.

Conclusion

Implementation of this Plan is an important step toward the fulfillment of the City's parks system vision and goals. With careful attention, Sweet Home's parks system will continue to improve local resident quality of life while adequately planning for the future park needs of the growing community.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The Sweet Home Park System Master Plan provides a 20-year vision for development and maintenance of the City of Sweet Home's park system. The Sweet Home Parks System Master Plan articulates the community's vision to provide healthy and enjoyable recreational opportunities to the residents and visitors. The plan provides specific tools and guidance for achieving the goals and vision of city staff and the community at large.

The Park System Master Plan update and accompanying five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provide a guide for the City of Sweet Home to plan and develop the park system according to the community's needs.

Overview

Parks systems are major contributors to a community's quality of life. "Quality of life" is a term that has grown in popularity in the last few decades; it refers to an individual's satisfaction with his/her social and physical surroundings. The term is linked to a number of community amenities, which include trails, natural areas, open space, and parks. These amenities are assets that build strong communities by providing recreation opportunities, gathering spaces, connectivity, natural resource protection, cultural resource preservation, and aesthetic beauty. Their functions shape the character of communities, provide an anchor for neighborhood activities, and promote healthy behaviors and lifestyles.

Creating and maintaining park and recreation facilities is a challenge for local governments. Limited resources and competition for resources, both staffing and budgetary, restricts many communities' ability to develop and maintain parks systems. Identifying system priorities and matching them with available resources requires thoughtful planning. Communities typically develop and adopt Parks System Master Plans to guide development of parks systems.

Purpose of the Plan

This plan is an update of the 1983 Sweet Home Master Parks Plan and the 2002 Sweet Home Parks Inventory. The Sweet Home Park System Master Plan (The Master Plan or the Plan) describes the City's vision and provides specific tools and components necessary to achieve that vision. The plan:

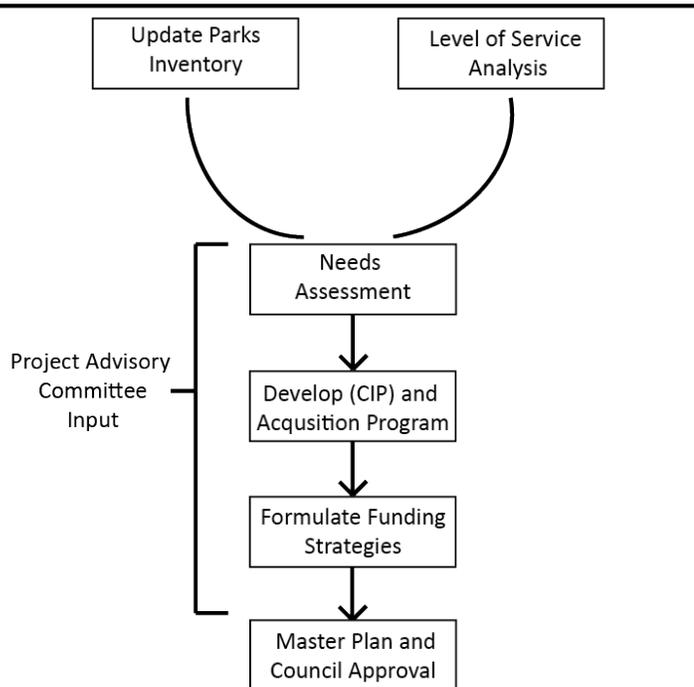
- Provides a community profile that describes demographic, housing and recreational trends and characteristics of the residents in Sweet Home.
- Updates the park inventory including city owned property, trails and linkages, county properties in the vicinity, and other state or federal parks within a reasonable distance of Sweet Home.
- Analyzes areas in the city that are currently underserved for park and recreational opportunities.
- Provides a planning framework of goals, objectives and specific recommendations to guide the city's decisions

- Includes a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) under a separate cover that is prioritized based on need, and contains funding options and opportunities for each improvement action.
- Details strategies for acquiring new parkland to better serve the community of Sweet Home.

The Parks Planning Process

The process for this update included technical, demographic and spatial analysis combined with the guidance of city staff. In addition, the Sweet Home Parks Board appointed by the City Council served as an advisory group for the parks plan and CIP. The Parks Board provided the necessary background information about the community and city so that the Plan is best suited to the community’s needs. Figure 1-1 provides an overview of the process used for the Park System Master Plan update.

Figure 1-1: Parks Planning Process



The Sweet Home Parks Board identified the following guiding principles related to the development of the Sweet Home Park System Master Plan:

- A plan that allows for the management of existing park systems while maintaining alignment with the community’s strategic vision for the City of Sweet Home.
- A plan that creates more facilities and amenities for parks in underserved areas; especially in the eastern sections of town.
- A plan that allows for creative and diverse funding strategies to allocate towards the maintenance and operation of park facilities.

- A plan that promotes clean, healthy and safe parks that are easily accessible to all community members of Sweet Home.
- A plan that facilitates well maintained parks and trails that serve all community members and promote the health of community members through wholesome outdoor recreational activities.
- A plan that protects and enhances the natural environment while simultaneously providing well maintained and updated park and open space areas.

Community Involvement

Community and stakeholder involvement are critical elements of the planning process. Community involvement provides tangible benefits to the process by: (1) providing insight into community members' values and preferences; (2) developing and nurturing an environment of goodwill and trust; (3) building consensus support for the Plan.

The parks planning process relies on the input and suggestions of residents and Sweet Home city staff. Community input was also gathered through stakeholder interviews, site visits, surveys and Parks Board meetings. These community involvement methods are summarized below:

- **Online Park Perception Survey to Residents and City Staff:** CPW conducted two online surveys. The surveys provided information about the community's desires for its parks system and gather feedback concerning desired park system improvements from the Parks Board.
- **Sweet Home Parks Advisory Committee Meetings:** Three meetings were held with the Parks Board. The Parks Board is a City Council appointed committee, which consists of a group of interested community members and key city staff. Parks Board meetings provided a format for the Committee to assist in the development of the park classification system, assess the need for a Level of Service (LOS) standard, and identify parks system goals, objectives, and improvements.

The planning process was further aided by input and direction from City staff. This Plan combines community input with technical analysis to provide a framework for achieving the goals and objectives that implement the parks system vision. The Plan can also be integrated into other planning decisions that relate to areas of parks planning.

Relationship to Other Plans

The Parks System Master Plan relates to several other plans. These plans provide context for how the local community understands the role of parks. The following plans and documents have relevance to the Parks System Master Plan.

- Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan—2010
- Sweet Home Strategic Plan—2014
- Sweet Home Parks System Master Plan—1983
- Sweet Home Transportation Systems Plan (TSP)—2003

- State of Oregon Trails Master Plan—2005
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan—2007
- Hobart Natural Area Conservancy Plan

Organization of the Plan

The remainder of the Park System Master Plan is organized as follows:

Chapter 2: Community Setting – Provides information on Sweet Home’s planning area, and growth and demographic trends.

Chapter 3: Park Classifications and Inventory – Provides information on Sweet Home’s park service areas, level of service, and park classifications. Includes classification and service area maps.

Chapter 4: Sweet Home Park System Needs – Presents the 20-year park system goals for Sweet Home and identifies system and specific park needs.

Chapter 5: Goals and Objectives — Presents a 20-year vision—including goals, and objectives—for the Sweet Home Parks System. Goals represent the general end toward which an organizational effort is directed. They identify how a community intends to achieve its mission and establish a vision for the future.

Chapter 6: Recommendations – Includes recommendations for park specific projects (included in the Capital Improvement Plan), the expansion of pedestrian and bicycle routes, and operations and maintenance.

Chapter 7: Funding and Implementation – Includes an overview of the current budget, park improvement funding needs, and funding recommendations.

Appendix A: Parks Inventory – Includes an inventory of City owned parks, as well as other public and private recreation facilities.

Appendix B: Related Plans – Summarizes local plans that link to the Sweet Home Park System Master Plan.

Appendix C: Funding Sources – Provides detailed information on funding sources, including grant opportunities.

Appendix D: Survey Reports – Provides a more detailed description of the survey questions and results.

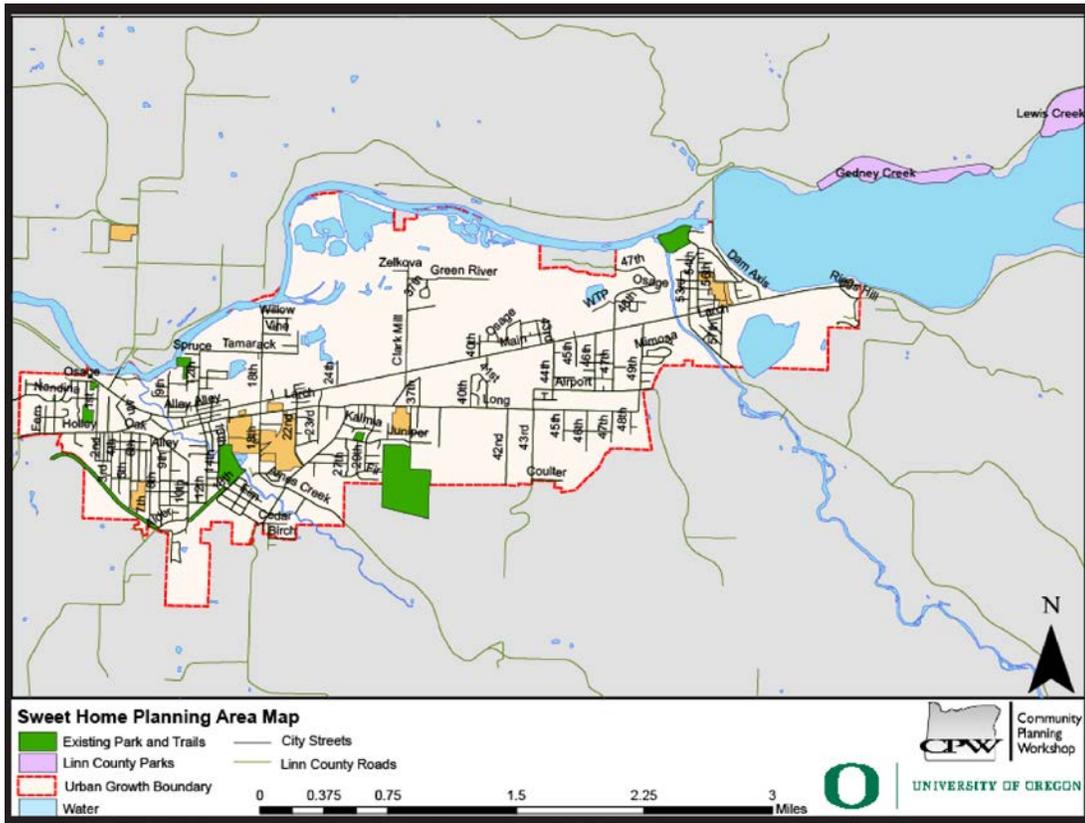
CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY SETTING

The parks planning process involves identifying current setting of the community of Sweet Home while attempting to predict future trends. Since people use parks differently, understanding community demographic characteristics and trends can help to ensure that parks best fit the diverse needs of varied populations.

Regional Context and Planning Area

Sweet Home has about 5.8 square miles¹ of area within its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Sweet Home's 2012 population was 9,025, while² Linn County had a population of 118,035 people. Map 2-1 shows the regional planning area and indicate areas of significance such as city parks, open space areas, major roads, water bodies and the (UGB).

Map 2-1: Sweet Home Parks Planning Area



¹ Area information derived from GIS maps and files.

² Population Research Center, Portland State University, Certified 2012 Population Estimates. <http://www.pdx.edu/prc/population-estimates-0>

Demographic Characteristics

An accurate understanding of the demographics of Sweet Home is integral to the parks planning process. People of different social, economic and cultural backgrounds use parks and open space differently—teenagers might favor a skate park, while older citizens may enjoy a light walking path or exercise equipment. A snapshot of the current status and a projection of future changes help to make the plan more useful for the community now and until the next Parks Master Plan update.

Population

Sweet Home grew slower than Linn County and Oregon; between 1980 and 2010, Sweet Home's population grew from 6,960 people to 8,925, an average annual growth rate (AAGR) of 0.83%. Sweet Home's population was 9,025 in 2012.³

The Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan presents the official county coordinated forecast for Sweet Home as required by ORS 195.036. The forecast addressed the 2000 through 2020 period and estimated Sweet Home's 2020 population at 9,025 persons. This equates to an average annual growth rate (AAGR) of about 0.8%. Because the forecast only extended to 2020, CPW extrapolated the forecast to 2033. Table 2-1 shows that, based on the county coordinated forecast, Sweet Home can expect to add 1,480 persons between 2013 and 2033, or a 16.3% increase in population.

Table 2-1. Sweet Home Population, Historic (1980-2012) and Forecast (2013-2023)

Year	Population
1980	6,960
1990	6,850
2000	8,016
2010	8,925
2012	9,025
2013	9,101
2020	9,485
2030	10,318
2033	10,581
Change 2013-2033	
Number	1,480
Percent	16.3%
AAGR	0.8%

Source: Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan, Portland State University Population Research Center; Calculations by CPW
AAGR = average annual growth rate

Age

The age of a city's residents has important implications for parks planning. Age groups have different expectations and desires for recreational and park opportunities. It is important for parks systems to meet the recreation needs of residents of all ages. Census data indicate that

³ PSU. 2012 Population Estimate.

the average age of Sweet Home residents is increasing. In 2010, the median age of Sweet Home residents was approximately 39.6 years, up from 37.2 in 2000.

Table 2-1 shows the gender and age distribution in Sweet Home for 2000 and 2010. Based on the number of young people age 0 to 5 and 5 to 19 there are trends suggesting that parks plan should accommodate a growing younger population. Similarly, the number of people aged 45 to 64 grew 8.6% as did persons age 65 and over; this suggests that the city should consider elderly persons in the location and design of park facilities. These age groups indicate a need for certain open space and recreational opportunities such as walking paths for the elderly and playgrounds for younger children.

Table 2-1. Gender and Age Distribution, City of Sweet Home, 2000 and 2010

Gender/Age	2010	2000	Percent Change
Total Male	4,425	3,897	13.5%
Total Female	4,500	4,119	9.2%
Total Population	8,925	8,016	11.3%
Under 5	637	588	8.3%
5-19	1,880	1,850	1.6%
20-64	4,597	4,194	9.6%
65+	1,494	1,376	8.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 QT-P1 - Age Groups and Sex: 2010—100%

Following are additional findings related to the demographic characteristics of Sweet Home:

- The 2010 Census indicates approximately 24% of Sweet Home’s residents within the city limits were between 45-64 years old.
- As of 2010, the number of children living in Sweet Home under the age of five was approximately 7%.
- As of 2010, 37% of Sweet Home households were families that had children living at home.

Housing

The housing characteristics of a city inform the planning process by documenting both the location and type of housing development. According to the amended Sweet Home comprehensive plan, between 1990 and 2000, 438 or 88% of building permits issued were for single-family detached units.⁴ Between 2005 and 2011 approximately 368 building permits were issued to contractors for construction of new residential property within the urban growth boundary of Sweet Home.

As of 2011, Sweet Home had 3,823 occupied housing units in, of which 69.7% were owner-occupied. Nearly 85% of the housing in Sweet Home can be considered single-family detached housing types. Vacancy rates for multifamily housing were much lower in Sweet Home than Linn

⁴ Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan. Amended August, 2010.

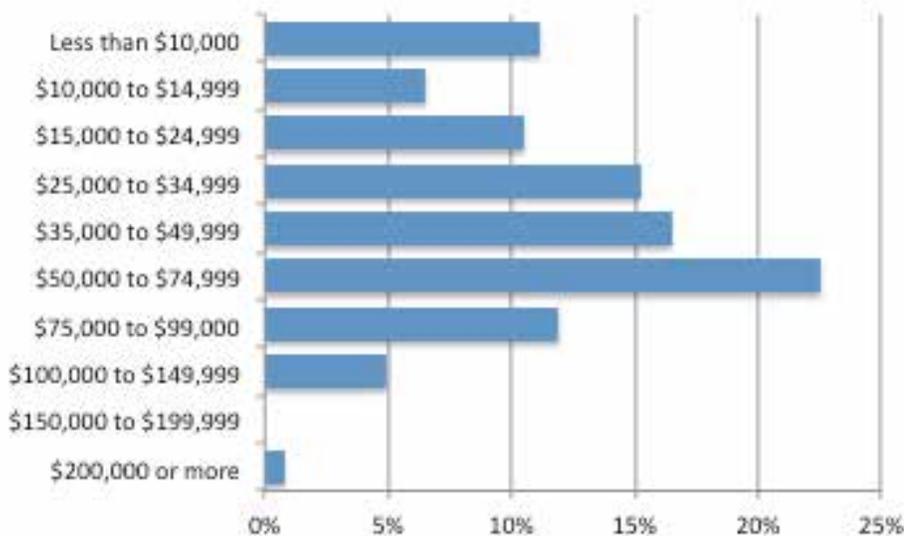
County. Conversely, single-family homeowner occupied vacancy rates were 6.4% in Sweet Home compared to Linn County with a 2.3% vacancy rate.

Income

The lumber and wood products industry has historically been the main driver of economic activity in Sweet Home. The industry has transitioned over the past two decades and went through a period of substantial decline. Although Sweet Home’s lumber industry is relatively stable it is also in the process of adapting and modifying its economic base. The city would like to focus on supporting nearby recreational activities as well as branding itself as a gateway to great recreation in the Western Cascades and Cascadia.

Figure 2-1 displays the Sweet Home residents’ income distribution in 2011 inflation adjusted dollars. The income distribution data set is accounting for a period of five years (2006-2011), in which the dollar amounts were adjusted to reflect the cost of inflation. This provides a more accurate representation of the net present value.

Figure 2-1. Sweet Home Household Income Distribution, 2007-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Sweet Home has a lower than average median income when compared to Linn County and many other municipalities in Oregon, this is likely attributable to the changing economic climate and its shift from resource extraction to a value added manufacturing and the service industries. Table 2-3 indicates the median income for families and households, poverty levels and unemployment characteristics for Sweet Home and Linn County in 2012.⁵

⁵ The U.S. Census defines household income as “the income of the householder and all other individuals 15 years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not. Family income is defined as “ the incomes of all members 15 years old and over related to the householder.

Table 2-2. Selected Economic Characteristics, Linn County and Sweet Home, 2008-12

Economic Characteristic	Linn County	Sweet Home
Household Median Income	\$46,872	\$40,678
Family Median Income	\$55,726	\$53,341
Below Poverty Level	15.90%	15.90%
Unemployment	8.50%	7.40%

Source: Selected Economic Characteristics
2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Key Findings

Sweet Home’s socio-economic trends help inform the planning and development of individual parks and the system as a whole. The community’s age distribution highlights the current and future need of parks for children, teenagers, and elderly populations. Key findings and conclusions from the community profile include:

- The city should anticipate the needs of a growing teenage and senior population and plan to develop and add additional parkland that accommodates these age groups.
- The city should consider the needs of households with children as they are significant portion of the population and require specific amenities at parks.
- The age distribution of Sweet Home’s population is diverse, with a large number of children, teenagers, and adults between the ages of 35 to 50.
- Sweet Home’s population grew by 11% between 2000 and 2010, slower than Oregon and Linn County.
- Ninety-six percent of Sweet Home’s population identifies as white and of only one race.
- Seventy-eight percent of Sweet Home residents have received at least a high school diploma, compared to Oregon at 88.3% and Linn County at 86.2%.
- About 85% of Sweet Home’s dwelling units are traditional single-family detached units or mobile/manufactured homes.

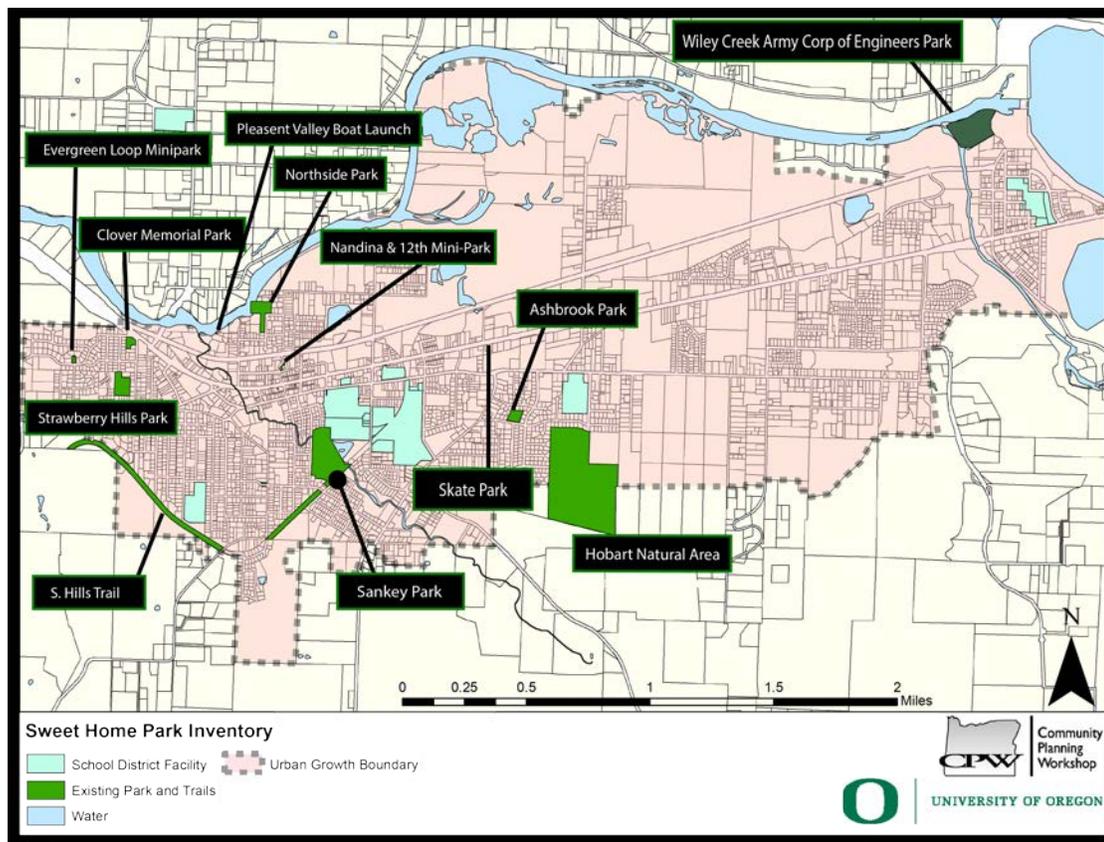
CHAPTER 3: PARK CLASSIFICATIONS AND INVENTORY

This chapter provides an overview and analysis of the existing Sweet Home parks system. It includes an inventory and classification of the system, which identifies the strengths and weaknesses of Sweet Home's parks; an assessment of park operations and maintenance; an analysis of the areas of Sweet Home that are served by the parks system; and an analysis of the current level of service (LOS) provided by the system.

The park inventory, classification, service area analysis, and level of service analysis characterize the existing parks system and establish a context (along with information presented in Chapters 2 and 4) for identifying park and recreation needs. The complete *Existing Park and Recreation Facilities Inventory* is included as Appendix A.

Sweet Home is relatively well served by its park facilities with a few notable exceptions; the eastern and northern portions of the town are deficient in access to neighborhood, community and miniparks. Map 3-1 indicates the service areas of the parks and displays how portions of the town are served by the park system.

Map 3-1. Sweet Home Park Facilities, 2014



Park Facility Inventory and Classifications

The Sweet Home Park System Master Plan includes seven park classifications:

- Mini-parks
- Neighborhood parks
- Community parks
- Regional parks
- Trails and open space
- Schools and playfields
- Special use parks and facilities

The city has a variety of park types and areas including mini parks, neighborhood parks, a community park, trails, regional parks and access to school district facilities. The park classification definitions are based on the size and function of the park. For instance, a mini-park is less than one acre in area and provides passive recreational opportunities for residents, while regional parks provide active and passive recreational opportunities and are greater than 30 acres. Table 3-1 summarizes the park classifications and inventory.

As part of the Park Master Plan update, the park classification system is applied to all city owned parks as well as special use parks that are within the planning area of Sweet Home. A more detailed description of the park classification, amenities, acreage and location is provided in Table 3-2. In addition to the city owned and managed recreational facilities, residents of Sweet Home also have the opportunity to use school district facilities for active recreation such as ball games and running. Table 3-3 describes the amenities found on school district property.

Table 3-1. Sweet Home Park Classifications and Facility Inventory

TYPE OF FACILITY	DEFINITION	BENEFITS & FUNCTION	SIZE CRITERIA	SERVICE AREA	DESIGN CRITERIA	EXISTING PARKS OF	
						THIS TYPE	
						NAME	ACRES
Mini Parks	Mini parks provide passive or limited active recreational opportunities. Mini parks may simply be open lots or may be more developed with a limited number of amenities. These should be accessible by sidewalks, trails, or low-traffic streets.	Mini parks provide a balance between open space and residential development. Mini parks add activity and character to neighborhoods and may be an appropriate space for neighborhood gatherings.	0.25 - 1.0 acres	1/4 mile or less	Mini parks may offer low-intensity facilities such as benches, picnic tables, multi-purpose paved trails, landscaping, and public art. If the mini-park also offers active recreation it may include children's play areas, community gardens, and a limited number of sports courts.	10 th and Elm	0.14
						12 th and Nandina	0.12
						Evergreen Loop	0.2
Neighborhood Parks	Neighborhood parks offer accessible recreation and social opportunities to nearby residents. These should accommodate the needs of a wide variety of age and user groups. These should be accessible by sidewalks, trails, low-traffic residential streets.	Neighborhood parks provide access to basic recreation activities for nearby residents of all ages. They contribute to neighborhood identity and create a sense of place.	1 - 10 acres	1/2 mile	Neighborhood parks should include both passive and active recreation opportunities such as children's play areas, sports courts and fields, picnic facilities, public art, open lawn areas, swimming pools, sitting areas, landscaping, community gardens, restrooms, and pathways. Security lighting and off-street parking may be provided if necessary.	Ashbrook Park	1.4
						Clover Memorial Park	0.92
						Northside Park	3.49
						Strawberry Hills Park	3.3

TYPE OF FACILITY	DEFINITION	BENEFITS & FUNCTION	SIZE CRITERIA	SERVICE AREA	DESIGN CRITERIA	EXISTING PARKS OF THIS TYPE	
						NAME	ACRES
						Community Parks (City-Wide Parks)	Community parks provide a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities for all age groups. These parks are larger in size and serve a wider base of residents than neighborhood parks. Community parks often include facilities for organized group activities, individual, and family activities.
Regional Parks	Regional parks provide a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities for all ages and serve to preserve open spaces and landscapes. These parks are larger than community parks and attract people from outside the community.	Regional parks offer recreational opportunities that benefit residents and attract visitors.	30+ acres	Determined by location, size, and amenities offered.	Regional parks should offer a variety of recreation opportunities such as benches, picnic tables, multi-purpose trails, landscaping, camping amenities, and natural areas. These parks may include sports and community facilities similar to a community park.	None	
Special Use Facilities	Special Facilities include areas such as skate parks, boat ramps and other areas that do not easily fall under another classification. These parks provide unique recreational opportunities to the community.	Special use facilities provide recreational and exercise opportunities that most other parks do not provide, they usually contain unique amenities.	none	none	Special facilities are typically designed to provide unique amenities; therefore, the design requirements are activity specific.	Skate Park Pleasant Valley Boat Ramp Army Corp--Wiley Creek	0.81 0.18 10.00

TYPE OF FACILITY	DEFINITION	BENEFITS & FUNCTION	SIZE CRITERIA	SERVICE AREA	DESIGN CRITERIA	EXISTING PARKS OF THIS TYPE	
						NAME	ACRES
						Trails and Open Space	Trails and Connectors serve for public access routes and trail-oriented recreational activities. They can include sidewalks, bikeways, multi-use trails and paths. These emphasize safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to and from parks and around the community.
South Hills Trail	1.3 miles/ approx .079 acres						
School District Facilities	School playgrounds and recreational facilities provide a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities designed to service a certain age group within the community.	Residents in the community have the potential to utilize school district facilities for active and passive uses during non-school hours.	Vary in size depending on the population	Determined by location, size, and amenities offered.	Elementary and middle or junior high schools may offer playgrounds and sports facilities. High schools tend to offer solely sport facilities.	Foster Elementary	7.33
						Hawthorne Elementary	9.77
						Oak Heights Elementary	7.07
						Sweet Home High	22.53
						Sweet Home Junior High	34.34

Table 3-2. Park Classifications and Amenities

Park Name	Park Type	Location	Acres/Miles	Amenities & Comments
Nandina	Mini-Park	12 th Avenue and Nandina	0.12 ac.	Covered bench and a trash can with a small grassy area.
Evergreen Loop	Mini-Park	Evergreen and Nandina	0.2 ac.	A small park surrounded by residences, large fir trees and a small sandy play area.
10 th and Elm	Mini-Park	10 th and Elm	0.14 ac.	Small grassy area, no recommended improvements.
Total for Mini-Parks:			0.36 ac.	
Ashbrook	Neighborhood Park	28 th Ave. and Juniper Street	1.4 ac.	City owned, picnic tables, BBQ grills, children’s play equipment, full sized basketball ½ court, gravel walking paths, new adult exercise equipment.
Clover Memorial	Neighborhood Park	Main Street	0.92 ac.	City owned, contains a covered bridge with a small creek and landscaping on the property, attractive signage and ample on street parking
Northside	Neighborhood Park	11 th Avenue, between Poplar and Redwood	3.63 ac.	City owned, and borders the South Santiam River, large grassy area with picnic tables near the river, full restrooms, water fountain and play equipment. The park also contains: BBQ grills, a full tennis court and an indoor racquetball facility, and river access.
Strawberry Hills	Neighborhood Park	Residential area in Eastern Sweet Home	3.2 ac.	City owned, this park is largely an open space area with a grassy field and landscape improvements, there is a small portable basketball hoop at the facility.
Total for Neighborhood Parks:			9.11 ac.	
Sankey	Community Park	809 14 th Avenue	16.85 ac.	City owned, the largest developed park of Sweet Home, Sankey has the Weddle Historic Covered Bridge, a clubhouse, gazebo, bandstand, picnic tables and BBQs, restrooms, trashcans and a BMX facility. The area is largely grass turf with many mature fir trees in the area providing ample shade for visitors.
Hobart Natural Area	Special Use		59.59 ac.	City owned, a large open space area with significant wetlands. The area contains 2 identified endangered species within the property. There is limited signage at the park.
South Hills Trail	Trail	35th Ave and Juniper St	1.3 miles	A soft walking path trail with connections to Sankey and other parks downtown, maintained by the Sweet Home Trails Group.
Total for Trails and Open space:			60.22 ac.	
Wiley Creek	Special Use	Foster Reservoir	10 ac.	Army Corp of Engineers owned, sorting facility, restrooms, picnic tables, boat launch & river access, and a large grassy field.
Pleasant Valley Boat Launch	Special Use		0.18 ac.	City owned, boat launch has restrooms, trash cans and a small boat staging area.
Skate Park	Special Use		0.81 ac.	City managed, school district owned. 10,000 square foot cement pad with 16 features, a covered seating area, picnic table, trashcans and a porta-potty.
Total for Special Use Areas:			10.99 ac.	

Table 3-3. School Facilities and Amenities

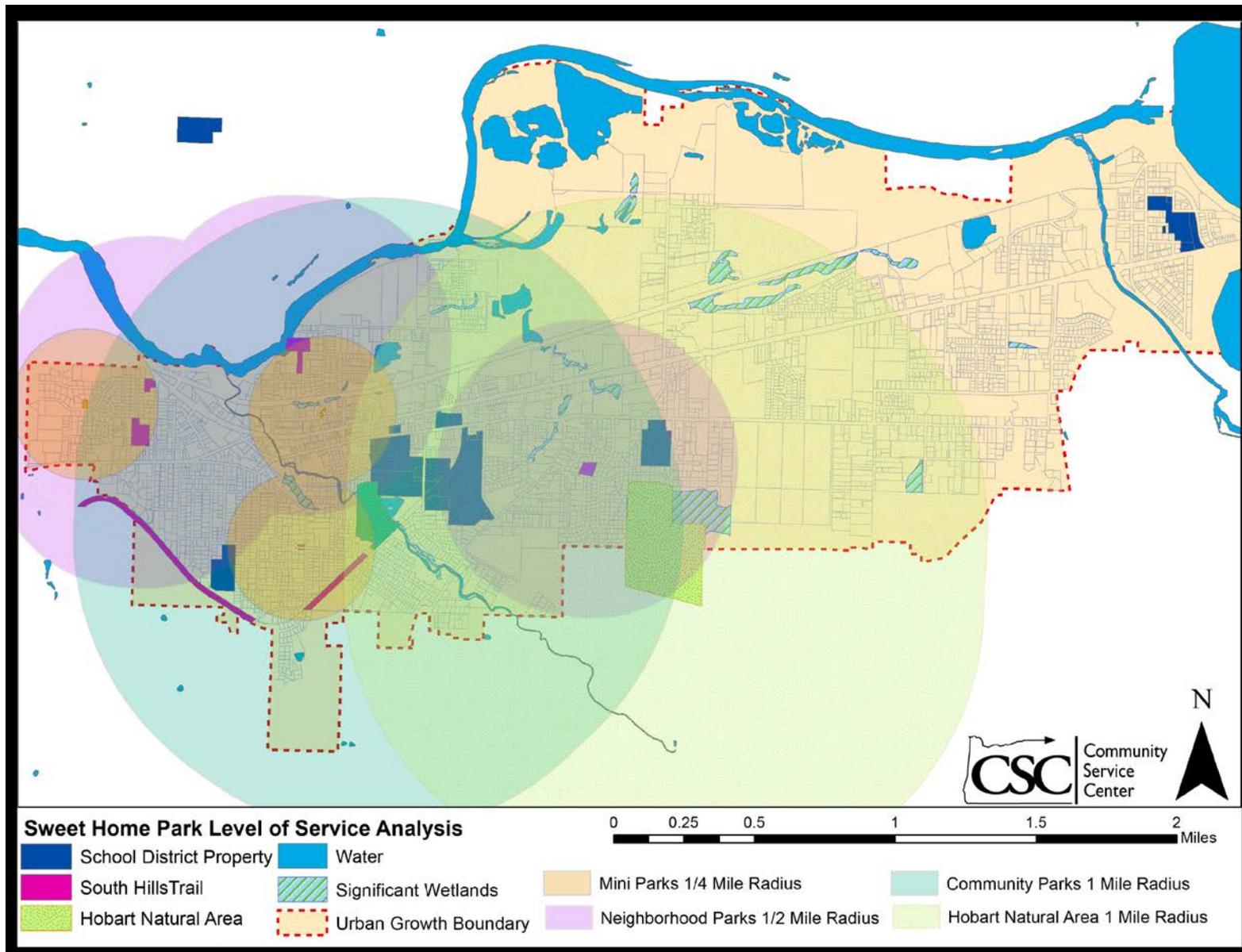
Park Name	Park Type	Location	Acres	Amenities & Comments
High School	School District	1900 Block of Long Street	22.53 ac.	Baseball and football field with bleacher seating and ADA accessibility and adequate parking, 2 gyms, an indoor swimming pool, and basketball courts.
Junior High	School District	22 nd Ave and Mt. View Road	34.34 ac.	Undeveloped playfields, the junior high shares the high school's facilities.
Foster	School District	54 th Avenue	7.33 ac.	A large playfield surrounded by a soft path, a playground and basketball hoops.
Hawthorne	School District – Via “ Boys & Girls Club of Greater Santiam	3400 Block of Long Street	9.77 ac.	Four baseball diamonds with bleacher seating, concession stands, nice playground, tetherball court, basketball courts, on-street parking and walking paths.
Oak Heights	School District	Elm Avenue and 7 th Street	7.07 ac.	Basketball courts, playgrounds and walking paths.
Total for School District Facilities:			81.6 ac.	

To serve the needs of a diverse population, it is important that a parks system contain parks of different sizes and types. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) established service areas for each park classification: community parks serve a ½ to 5-mile area; neighborhood parks serve a ¼ to ½ mile area; and special use parks, like school facilities, serve an area that is determined by size and type of amenities offered.

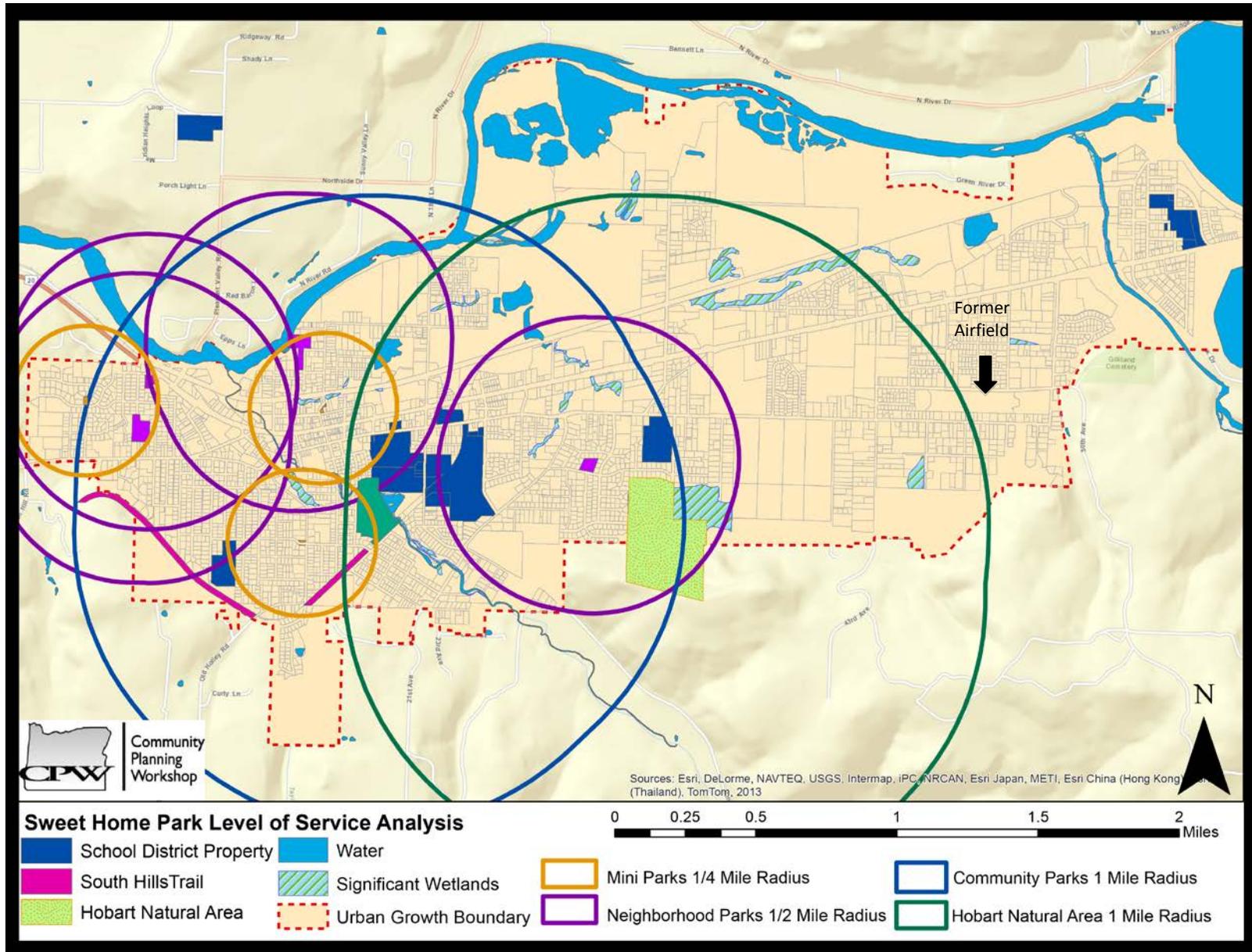
Map 3-2 and 3-3 illustrate park service areas and provide a spatial reference describing the area in which particular parks in Sweet Home serve according to classification standards compiled by the (NRPA). As displayed in Map 3-2, the western section of Sweet Home and the majority of the downtown area are well served by the park system. However, with exception to the Hobart Natural Area and Ashbrook Park, the eastern portion of town is underserved by developed city park land. Map 3-3 also illustrates this point while providing additional information about residential tax lots in the city. Currently much of the area that is underserved is planned for further residential development.

The current level of service in these areas suggest that additional park acreage will need to be acquired so that the city meets the needs of current and future residents in this area of the city. An area that the city could potentially focus on is the property formally known as the Langmack Airport denoted by the black arrow on Map 3-3. Advisory committee members suggested this land as a potential acquisition area. The location and size of this property suggest that it could be acquired and used for a community size park space.

Map 3-1. Sweet Home Parks Level of Service



Map 3-2. Sweet Home Parks Level of Service



Baseline Level of Service

The Level of Service Analysis (LOS) is conducted using existing and current park and open space facilities combined with current population estimates. The (LOS) is used as an evaluative tool to determine the individual park and system wide needs—it will directly inform the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the 20-Year land acquisition strategy.

The baseline (LOS) analysis functions as a benchmark that represents a ratio expressed as park acreage per 1,000 residents. Table 3-4 shows the current (LOS) for developed parks in Sweet Home is 2.94 acres per 1000 residents.

Table 3-4. Sweet Baseline Level of Service

Park Type	Acres	Level of Service
Mini-parks	0.36	0.04
Neighborhood parks	9.11	1.01
Community parks	16.85	1.87
Regional parks	0	0.00
Special use parks and facilities	0.18	0.02
Total	26.5	2.94

Source: CPW, 2013

Note that Table 3-4 does not include open space, parks that are not owned by the City, or school district facilities. CPW recommends that Sweet Home not include school district and open space areas in its level of service analysis because these facilities do not provide what (NRPA) describes as developed parks that are easily accessible and enjoyable for residents of all ages and backgrounds.⁶

⁶ (NRPA) Synopsis of 2010 Research Papers.

CHAPTER 4: SWEET HOME PARK SYSTEM NEEDS ANALYSIS

Estimating the future use of the park system is important so that the city can appropriately plan and prepare to provide an adequate amount and variety of parks for the future population. As a city grows, it will need to acquire additional park space for its residents, especially in the northern and eastern sections of Sweet Home which are currently underserved by the park system.

Through discussion with the Parks Board and analysis conducted by CPW Sweet Home’s parkland needs focus on five major areas.

- Funding
- Maintenance
- Development and Acquisitions
- Connectivity and Trails
- Planning and Community Involvement

Funding

Sweet Home has a limited parks budget that does not provide enough funding to effectively engage in the necessary tasks and activities required for developing and maintaining a vibrant park system. Ultimately, a reliable source of capital is the largest determining factor for the ability of the parks department to effect beneficial changes on the system. Therefore, securing a stable and reliable funding stream to complete improvements, maintenance and acquisitions is extremely important to maximizing the benefits of the park system. City staff should explore alternative measures to bolster this funding stream through creative measures that are suggested later in the chapter.

Review of city budget documents suggest a limited funding stream that provides limited support to the park system, see Table 4-1. According to Sweet Home budget documents, only \$2,500 dollars were spent in the 2012-2013 fiscal year for building maintenance and improvement; the proposed 2013-2014 year budget has no funding allocated for buildings and only a total of \$4,000 dollars appropriated to capital outlay. The budget data highlights the need for Sweet Home to discover and utilize additional funding sources.

Table 4-1. Sweet Home Park Budget for Project Improvements

	Budget 2012-13	Proposed 2013-14	Adopted 2013-14
CAPITAL OUTLAY			
Buildings	2,500	-	-
Projects and Improvements	2,000	2,500	2,500
Equipment and Machinery	1,500	1,500	1,500
TOTAL CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$6,000	\$4,000	\$4,000

Source: Sweet Home 2013-2014 Park System Budget Documents

Maintenance

Maintenance is directly correlated to staffing and funding, which are the primary support functions of maintenance activities. There are two distinct types of maintenance activities— facility maintenance and grounds maintenance which are needed in Sweet Home’s park system. Grounds maintenance is work such as mowing, raking, sweeping and other similar activities; facility maintenance includes actions such as painting, building repair work, replacing light bulbs and maintaining equipment.

Sweet Home has a limited capacity to undertake all of the necessary maintenance activities on its park and amenities. Many facilities in the Sweet Home system are experiencing deferred maintenance; for example, Sankey park needs facility repairs to the picnic tables, grills and pavilion structures and Northside Park is in need of several maintenance related improvements. Maintenance usually compounds over time and a leaky roof over a permanent bathroom facility can build from an annoyance to serious damage that will require an expensive complete replacement.

Another aspect of maintenance applies to the Hobart Natural Area and South Hills Trail; these city amenities are larger than the developed parks and need careful attention to the vegetation. For example, special considerations will be needed when managing vegetation in the Hobart Natural Area where invasives and unique native plants are included in the habitat.

Development and Acquisitions

Sweet Home requires an updated parkland level of service standard that can be used as a benchmark for an adequate amount of acreage for the population size. As Sweet Home grows it will need to acquire additional acreage to maintain a level of service that is equitable for its residents. Table 4-2 displays the current level of service and the acreage required to meet a level of service of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents.

Table 4-2. Park System Level of Service Analysis

Year	2013	2018	2023	2028	2033
Population Estimate	9,025	9,194	9,542	10,089	10,867
LOS for existing city facilities	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.4
LOS 5 Acres per 1000 Residents					
Additional Acreage Required	44.8	64.3	66.1	68.8	72.7

Source: CPW, 2013

To maintain the desired level of service, the City will need to acquire and develop new parks as the City grows. The need is twofold, (1) Sweet Home needs to acquire additional park land for underserved areas in the community, and (2) develop and improve upon the existing facilities within the city’s parkland inventory.

While each park has specific requirements and improvement needs, general park system improvements were identified for the majority of parks—these include better drainage and irrigation, improved signage, improved restroom facilities, and increased access by disabled and handicapped individuals to all amenities at Sweet Home parks.

Developing and improving upon the existing parkland is equally important to acquiring additional land, and the plan acknowledges the need for a strategy to address both. For example, the newly acquired 59-acre Hobart Natural Area provides residents with an excellent opportunity to enjoy undeveloped open space; however, this open space could be vastly improved by adding additional amenities and infrastructure to the area.

To address desired improvements at the Hobart Natural Area, CPW recommends development of a concept plan for the park. The concept plan will inform the planning process of developing the Hobart Natural Area and will outline the important aspects that are relevant to the site. For example, the presence of endangered plant species leads to the necessity for certain development protocols that will protect vegetation from intrusion.

A significant focus of this plan is to ensure that the residents of Sweet Home are provided with an equitable park system for all residential areas. Although a number and variety of parks exist, portions of the city, mainly in the East and Northern sections are currently underserved by parks. This plan seeks to guide city staff on the process of locating and acquiring additional acreage in these underserved areas.

Connectivity and Trails

A well connected, multi-modal trail system provides an active, safe route for residents to travel from parks to other point of interest in town. Sweet Home currently has a Trail System but needs to develop this further. As part of the need to expand the trail system, city staff and public partners should attempt to begin formulating a refined trails concept plan which can be incorporated more effectively into Sweet Home's Transportation Systems Plan (TSP).

Trails, paths, and sidewalks provide connectivity in Sweet Home without the use of the automobile. *The Sweet Home Transportation Systems Plan (2003)* is the sole planning document approved by The Oregon Department of Transportation that discusses multi-modal transportation in Sweet Home. The Sweet Home Trails Group is active in promoting the development of the trail system in Sweet Home and advocates for connectivity and multi-modal paths connecting parks with residential areas.

An essential component of developing the trail system further is the need to continue to work with other groups such as Cascade Timber Consulting, The Sweet Home Trails Group, Linn County, ODOT, U.S. Forest Service, and the Corps as part of the "South Santiam Community Forest Corridor Project" as a partnership aimed towards providing access through property for trail users.

Planning and Community Involvement

Sweet Home's last Master Parks Plan update was in 1983. CPW recommends the City update the plan on a 10 to 15-year schedule, or as needed. The need for collaborative planning is also important for Sweet Home; partnering with other influential groups requires sound planning and direction. The benefits of increased planning with groups like Linn County and CTC, allow for a better chance of large projects to become reality.

Increased community involvement in the park system is a need for Sweet Home. The residents of the city have the most at stake to keep their nearby parks in great shape for their families, children and future generations. A volunteer group that is devoted to providing assistance with

light maintenance, programming, and fund raising could be useful for bolstering the park system in Sweet Home.

CHAPTER 5: SWEET HOME PARK SYSTEM VISION, AND OBJECTIVES

This chapter presents a 20-year vision—including goals, and objectives—for the Sweet Home Parks System. Goals represent the general end toward which an organizational effort is directed. They identify how a community intends to achieve its mission and establish a vision for the future. Objectives are measurable statements, which identify specific steps needed to achieve the stated goals.

Master Plan Vision

The City of Sweet Home establishes the following vision for the city park system:

Sweet Home's park system provides recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages. Sweet Home parks are maintained to promote the beauty and safety of the park system. The Sweet Home Park Master Plan provides guidance to the City, who as trustee of the park lands must work with the natural resources to protect and enhance habitats, plan for and provide land for future parks as needed in the City, and maintain and enhance the park system for the overall well-being of the community.

Park System Goals

The Sweet Home Master Parks Plan update establishes a set of goals that provide a framework for development of the city park system. The plan goals are intended to be used as a guide to address current and future community needs for Sweet Home. Each goal includes one or more objectives that provide guidance on specific steps to take in order to achieve the goal. Because each goal is equally important, the goals are not listed in priority order.

- Provide Adequate Park System Funding
- Increase Capacity for Park Maintenance and Operations
- Develop a Vibrant Park System and Acquire Parkland for the Future
- Expand Trail System and Connectivity
- Bolster Planning and Community Involvement

Goal I: Provide Adequate Park System Funding

Sweet Home has a need for additional funding for park system staff, maintenance, activities, and facility development. An overall guiding principle of the funding goal is to develop and improve upon existing funding framework for park system activities that utilizes a diverse and creative approach to securing funding. City staff and the Parks Board suggested the importance of developing a stable and reliable funding strategy for parks maintenance.

Sweet Home is dedicated to developing additional revenue streams for its park system. This can be realized by using the plan update as a tool for acquiring grant funding, donations, and developing additional internal measures (park utility fee) for funding the park system.

Objective 1.1: Identify and evaluate external grant and donation opportunities to develop outside funding streams for parkland development. The external capital sources could come from non-profits, state government or federal agencies.

Objective 1.2: Evaluate the potential parks funding sources such as a park's SDC, parks utility fee, or establishment of an endowment through a local parks foundation.

Goal 2: Increase Capacity for Park Maintenance and Operations

The City of Sweet Home is committed to ensuring adequate resources are available for park maintenance and operations. Based on review of budget documents, CPW's assessment is that park maintenance is underfunded and under staffed. Deferred maintenance often leads to costlier repairs and replacements.

Sweet Home can benefit from a program in which routine maintenance projects are scheduled on a regular basis and are separate from capital improvement projects. A maintenance program will benefit the entire community and will ensure that capital investments achieve their full design lifespan. The maintenance level of service should be applied park wide so that repairs and other works on specific parks become prioritized on a need basis.

Ultimately this goal seeks to develop increased capacity to conduct regular maintenance in the park system in a way that is efficient and cost effective and promotes the health, beauty and safety of Sweet Home's Parks.

Objective 2.1: Develop a parks maintenance program in collaboration with the Public Works Department that informs when replacements, repairs or other improvements should be complete and with what resources and staff.

Objective 2.2: Identify deferred maintenance projects that are immediate priorities and develop budget estimates to address the needed work. Consider developing a deferred maintenance program to promote long-term cost savings.

Objective 2.3: Where appropriate, use automated irrigation equipment at parks to improve efficiency of staff and maintenance activities.

Goal 3: Develop a Vibrant Park System and Acquire Parkland for the Future

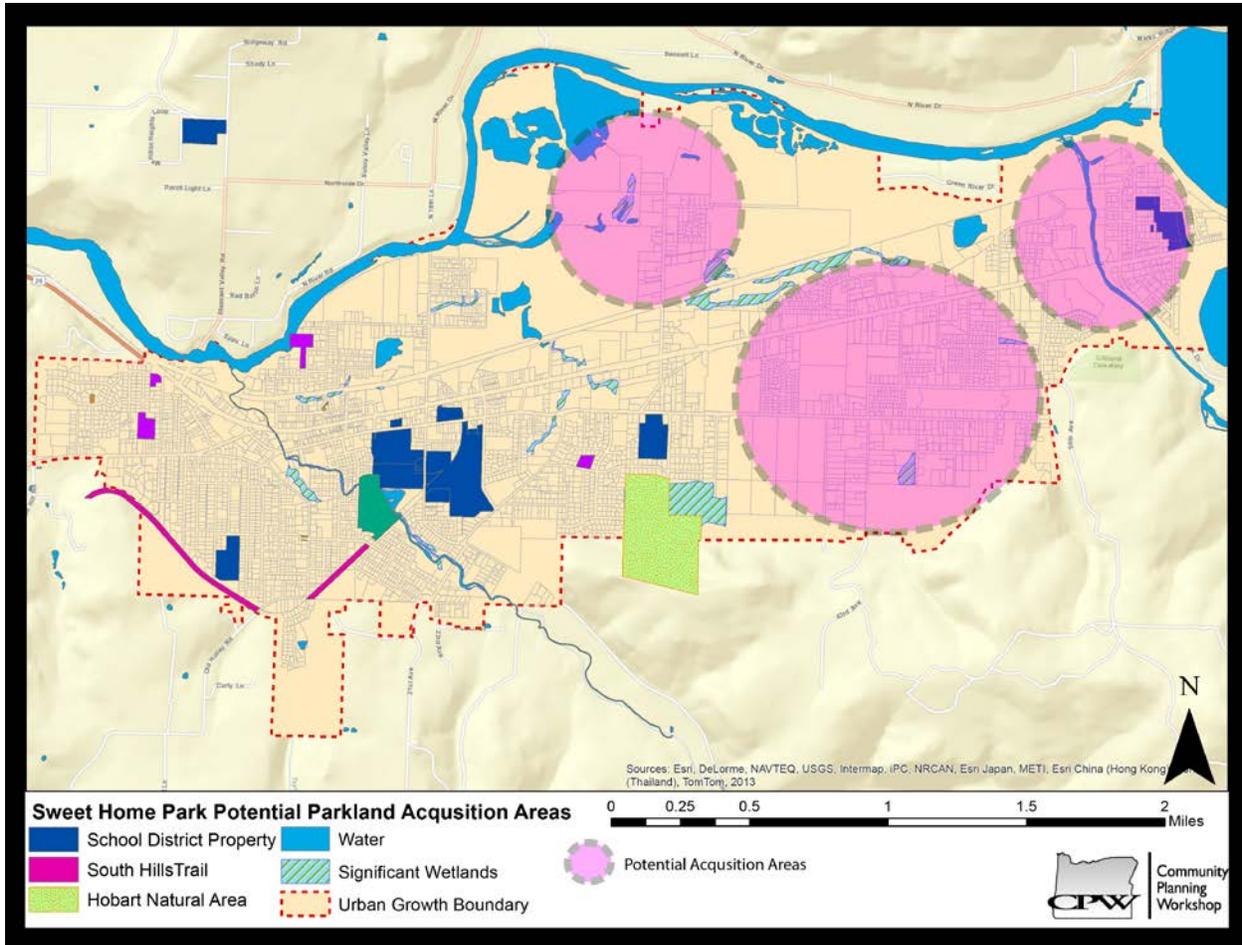
This goal focuses on the need to develop and acquire parks to promote a healthy, safe and diverse set of passive and active recreational opportunities for residents while maintaining environmental stewardship and quality.

Sweet Home will need to plan to address acquisitions during the 20-year planning period. To maintain the current Level of Service standard or to increase that standard, city staff will also need to plan for the future population of the city and ensure that parkland is allocated properly within the city limits.

A level of service standard of 5.0 acres per 1,000 residents is an appropriate benchmark for Sweet Home to strive towards. The current level of service is 2.94 acres per 1,000 residents. In

order to achieve a level of service of 5.0, Sweet Home will need to acquire approximately 44 more acres of parkland by 2034. Table 5-1 displays the level of service standard by park type and the total amount of developed parkland acreage.

Map 5-3. Potential Parkland Acquisition Areas



Source: CPW, 2013

Table 5-1. Sweet Home Baseline Level of Service

Park Type	Acres	Level of Service
Mini-parks	0.36	0.04
Neighborhood parks	9.11	1.01
Community parks	16.85	1.87
Regional parks	0	0.00
Special use parks and facilities	0.18	0.02
Total	26.5	2.94

Source: CPW, 2013

Acquisitions should account for the residential growth patterns of the city because these patterns of residential growth and development will ultimately influence the location of future

parks. In short, the City should plan to provide park facilities where future residential development is expected. As additional land is acquired the goal should be to immediately address locational deficiencies mainly in the Eastern and Northern neighborhoods in the city. This is not intended to prevent the city from acquiring lands in other areas if opportunities emerge; rather it intends to focus on specific areas of need.

Map 5-3 displays potential land acquisition target areas that were identified in the parkland needs analysis. The pink circles indicate a general area where land could be acquired to develop a community or neighborhood park.

Based on the LOS analysis, CPW recommends adding 1-2 new neighborhood parks on the east side of town—South of Highway 20. For a longer planning term, the city should explore the potential for acquisition of one neighborhood park North of Highway 20 which could potentially be located in or near the Linn County owned gravel ponds. If development occurs in the bottomlands, and in the later portions of the planning period, one community park of 10-20 acres in the east part of town.

Objective 3.1: Plan to acquire and develop 1-2 neighborhood parks in underserved areas for current residents in Eastern and Northern sections of the city.

Objective 3.2: Develop an acquisition program that begins to internally determine which properties inside the UGB can be acquired to bring park facilities online for underserved communities in the Northern and Eastern sections of the city.

Objective 3.4: Develop and build use areas (covered picnic tables, interpretive educational areas, and walking paths) that provide additional amenities at existing parks to increase passive and active recreational opportunities.

Objective 3.5: Conduct and finish planned and current park facility improvements (irrigation upgrades, bathroom facilities, exercise equipment)

Objective 3.6: Design and place interpretative and directional signage in the city and at specific park facilities to inform residents and visitors about park amenities and locations.

Objective 3.7: Ensure and provide access to disabled portions of the population, especially ADA access to amenities found at parks.

Objective 3.8: Explore the possibility of adding additional unique park amenities to the system (such as a community garden, dog park, Frisbee golf course, board walks at natural areas).

Goal 4: Expand Trail System and Connectivity

This goal focuses on increasing connectivity between parks and points of interest in the city with the use of multimodal paths, trails and streets. An important portion of acquisitions is land for trail development. Trails require special considerations for expansion such as access easements, land dedication, competing uses and varying material usage that may not be as prevalent in a typical city park. The Master Plan identifies an opportunity to extend the South Hills Trail to increase connectivity to parks and open space areas in the city. Map 5-5 displays the actual trail system and a preliminary proposed trail acquisition concept.

A significant goal for the improvement of the trail system is to create a refined trail concept plan that addresses some of the requirements and suggestions in Sweet Home Transportation System Plan (TSP) and buildable land inventory documents.

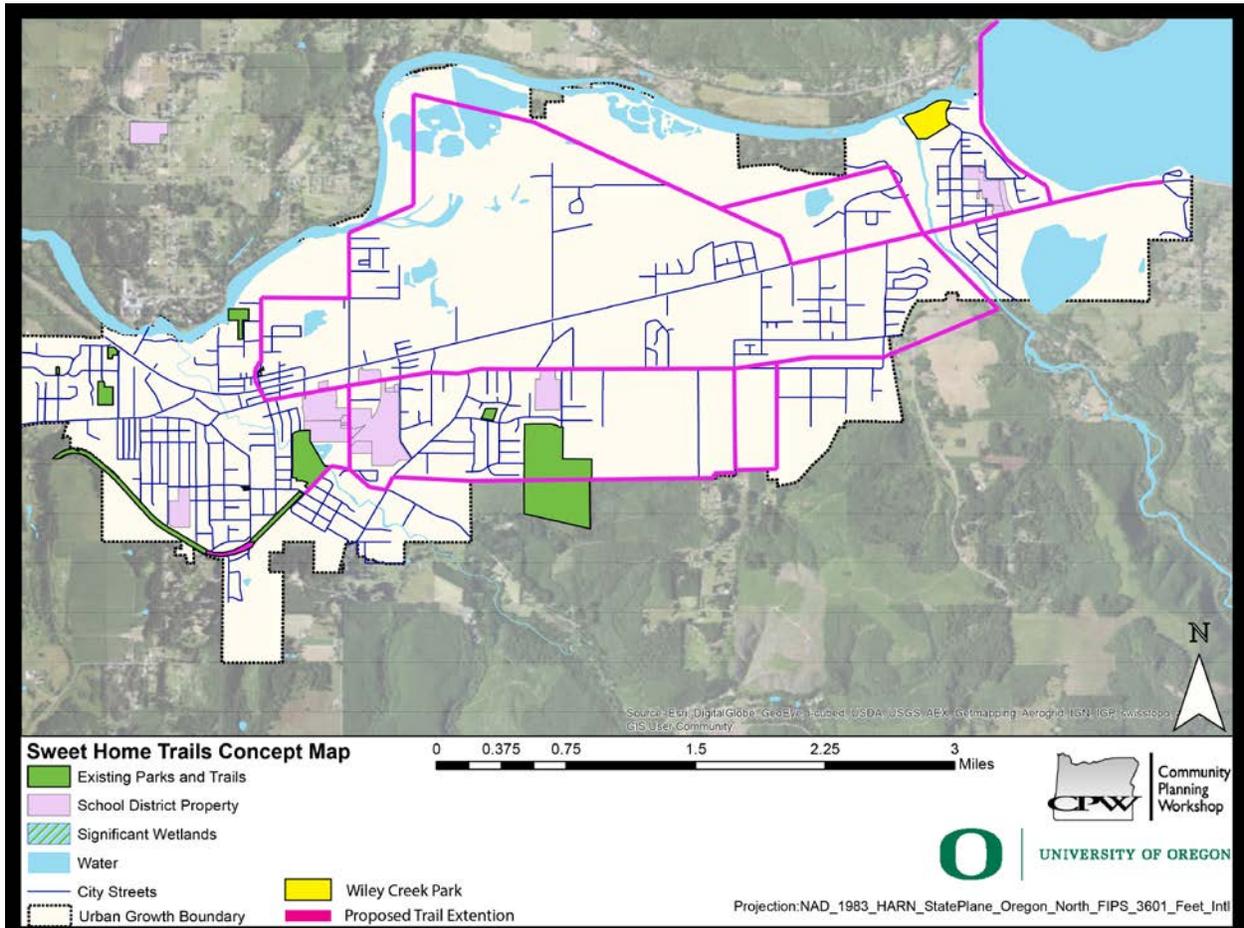
Objective 4.1: Design and build trails and paths that are multimodal and provide a variety of active recreational opportunities and link schools, parks and natural areas.

Objective 4.2: Collaborate with Linn County Parks to ensure that any planned facilities in Sweet Home are linked with county property (the aggregate ponds) to create a trail connection from county property to trail extensions inside the city.

Objective 4.3: Identify South Hills trail extension areas and partner with the County and other agencies to obtain access easements.

Objective 4.4: Collaborate and work with community groups and individual residents to identify trail extension areas and begin process to acquire land, access easements, dedications or donations for proposed trail extensions.

Map 5-5. Sweet Home Parks Trails Concept Map



Goal 5: Bolster Planning and Community Involvement

Goal 5 focuses on the coordination of planning from the parks board and city staff to increase community awareness, partnerships involvement, and stewardship of the parks system.

Encouraging community involvement in the park system can create a more vibrant and well maintained park system; community volunteer groups, a park endowment group and the trails group are examples of community involvement that can make the Sweet Home park system more successful.

Planning provides the framework for the park system development and actions. The planning framework acts as a 'roadmap' that the City of Sweet Home can use for park development, maintenance and acquisitions. Future plan updates enable the parks system to better serve the current and future population of Sweet Home.

A guiding principle of the update is that effective planning for the parks system can assist in the process of development and acquisitions by working to create specific items such as a Hobart Natural Area park concept plan or a refined Sweet Home trail system plan. CPW recommends that planning work and reviews to master plans occur on a scheduled basis as economically and politically feasible for the city. For example, we recommend the Sweet Home Parks Master Plan update should be reviewed every ten to fifteen years; while the Capital Improvement Program should be updated every five years.

Objective 5.1: Conduct reviews of the Sweet Home Master Park Plan at least every 10 years; update the five-year CIP every five years.

Objective 5.2: Create promotional concepts, educational opportunities community events that are geared to increase park system awareness and volunteer efforts.

Objective 5.3: Develop and coordinate volunteer opportunities to assist with the maintenance of existing parks.

Objective 5.4: Develop and nurture partnerships with private and public agencies like Cascade-Timber Consultants, The Trails Group and Sweet Home School District #55, The US Army Corp and Linn County.

Summary of Goals and Objectives

The five goals described above form the planning framework and overarching goal statements for the Master Plan update of Sweet Home's parks system. These goals serve as the link between the community's park and recreation needs and the more specific objectives and recommendations for parks system improvements outlined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 6: SWEET HOME PARK SYSTEM RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter describes the specific objectives and action items based on the needs analysis, goals and the Parks Advisory Committee input. This chapter is intended to guide activities that are measurable and require capital and staff time. The goals and objectives serve as an umbrella to categorize certain action item activities. The five-year Capital Improvement Plan builds from the recommendations in this chapter.

Recommendations

The Sweet Home Master Parks Plan update establishes a set of recommendations that serve as a framework for development of the city park system. The plan recommendations are derived from the goal and objective statements in the previous chapter; they are intended to be used as a guide for direct action in which the city can address current and future community needs for Sweet Home. The following material in this chapter details specific recommendations that address the goal and objectives statements mentioned in the previous chapter.

- Park System Funding
- Park Maintenance and Operations
- Parkland Development
- Parkland Acquisition
- Trail System and Connectivity
- Planning and Community Involvement

Park System Funding

This section delineates recommendations that can be used to bolster and improve funding streams to Sweet Home parks.

- **Recommendation 1:** Establish a park endowment fund that would be managed by 501-C non-profit organization that would serve as a partner organization that can accept grants, donations and other funding that the city could not accept itself. Many communities have nonprofit parks foundations.
- **Recommendation 2:** Explore creation of a parks utility fee that will support the park system with additional funding. Based on current population, even a modest fee could generate significant revenues.
- **Recommendation 3:** Use the updated Parks Master Plan and capital improvement program to develop and advocate for adequate funding and support—including allocations in the annual city budget process—as well as grants. Present annual updates to city council to build support for a stable funding stream that is consistently available to the parks budget over each fiscal year.

Park Maintenance and Operations

This section describes specific actions that are suggested for park maintenance and operations.

- **Recommendation 1:** Provide a minimum of 2 Full-Time Employee positions for park maintenance and operations and possibly additional FTE during as seasonal demand requires.

Parkland Acquisition

This section describes a recommended level of service benchmark for the Sweet Home park system and specific actions that are suggested to address the level of service and parkland acquisition for the Parks Master Plan update.

- **Recommendation 1:** Collaborate with Linn County parks on planning future development of the reclaimed gravel ponds. This site has the potential to provide an special use facilities over the 20-year planning period as well as any potential for trail connections to the existing trail system.
- **Recommendation 2:** Acquire a neighborhood park in underserved areas of city East of 37th Street and South of Highway 20.
- **Recommendation 3:** Maintain an agreed upon level of service standard that will guide the acquisition of additional properties for population growth. See Table 6-1 for a description of the current level of service and targets.

Table 6-1. Sweet Home Population Projection with Level of Service and Acreage Needed to Achieve LOS Benchmarks

Category	Result
New Residents 2013-2033	1480
Existing LOS (Acres/1000 residents)	2.94
Acres needed to maintain existing LOS	4.3
Target LOS (Acres/1000 residents)	5.0
Acres needed for Target LOS	26.4

Source: CPW, 2013

Note: Acres needed for Target LOS includes acres to address the deficit between existing and target LOS

Parkland Development

This section describes specific actions that are suggested for parkland development as part of the Parks Master Plan update. Many of the recommendations items are presented in the Capital Improvement Plan with detailed cost estimates for the particular recommended project. The recommendations are presented by the specific park in the following bulleted list.

Sankey Park Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Replace fire sprinkler system for Weddle Bridge

- **Recommendation 2:** Move irrigation equipment from current location to Lawn area and utilize quick-connect and automated timers
- **Recommendation 3:** Replace heavily damaged picnic tables at park
- **Recommendation 4:** Provide labor, equipment and materials as able to BMX restoration project
- **Recommendation 5:** Thin trees where over-planted, remove dead branches and debris for safety

Hobart Natural Area Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Develop an Invasive/Native Vegetation Plan and a stewardship plan that integrates people into the natural environment
- **Recommendation 2:** Install and improve parking by adding 4 spots with a gravel bed
- **Recommendation 3:** Install interpretive and educational signage about ecological qualities of the area

Strawberry Hills Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Provide more swings and light play equipment
- **Recommendation 2:** Develop drainage system (possibly earth removal with stonewash gravel fill and French drain)
- **Recommendation 3:** Direct drainage system to wetlands on-site and perform vegetation enhancement
- **Recommendation 4:** Improve upon existing parking facilities by adding 6-8 spots with a gravel bed
- **Recommendation 5:** Develop and construct a soft walking path trail loop (300') for visitors to participate in active recreation such as walking and jogging
- **Recommendation 6:** Partner with local community members to develop a small community garden area in the park

Northside Park Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Upgrade irrigation system for large lawn area on site, use quick connect and automated system with humidity sensors
- **Recommendation 2:** Provide ADA access to Santiam River with an acceptable grade hard path with a covered seating area and fishing platform
- **Recommendation 3:** Weatherize and winterize bathroom facilities on site
- **Recommendation 4:** Upgrade and retrofit racquetball recreation area lights with an easier accessed system that utilizes efficient technology with LED bulb

Ashbrook Park Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Install 2 concrete picnic tables on site
- **Recommendation 2:** Develop 2-4 additional and different adult physical recreational amenities

Clover Memorial Park Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Coordinate with Public Works to improve storm water drainage and conveyance

Pleasant Valley Boat Launch Recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Improve parking facilities by installing 4 additional parking spots with a gravel or paved road surface
- **Recommendation 2:** Partner with Mid-Willamette Stealheaders to improve the boat launch amenities

System Connectivity and Trails

This section details specific recommendations for system wide connectivity and the extension and expansion of the trail system. The most important recommendation describes the refinement of a Sweet Home Trails Plan that would assist and guide the development of the trail system over the 20 year planning horizon.

- **Recommendation 1:** Develop a specific Sweet Home Trails Plan that describes path extensions in accordance with the TSP, acquire access easements, use agreements, dedications or outright acquisition of land that functions a trail system that connects parks in the city while providing a healthy active recreational opportunity.
- **Recommendation 2:** Develop ADA compliant paths at parks so that all visitors can equitably enjoy the recreational experiences provided in the city. Special consideration should be paid to Northside Park, where a path and 'ADA fishing area' could be provided to access the Santiam River.
- **Recommendation 3:** Coordinate with Cascade Timber Consultants to extend trails through land near Hobart Natural Area and connect to existing South Hills Trail.

Planning and Community Involvement

The planning and community involvement recommendations are provided to assist and guide the collaboration of the residents of Sweet Home and city staff. This section also describes a suggested volunteer program that could be implemented in the city.

- **Recommendation 1:** Establish a volunteer program that targets park maintenance activities. Utilize volunteers, private businesses, group-quartered individuals, students and other Samaritans in town to perform light maintenance activities like mowing, trash pickup, trail maintenance and other similar work whenever possible. This will help to lessen the

load placed on the maintenance crews and allow them to perform more complicated and difficult maintenance tasks such as building repairs.

- **Recommendation 2:** Explore approaches to engage active and interested members of the community who wish to volunteer their time or coordinate efforts to increase the appeal of the park system.

Summary of Recommendations

The preceding list of recommendations are intended to be used as specific action items that the city can implement to address the goals and objectives of the 20-Year Master Plan update. The intention of the recommendation list is to provide concrete and measurable actions that can be taken to improve upon the Sweet Home park system. Some of the goals are primarily maintenance or construction related and are further detailed and quantified in the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

CHAPTER 7: FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter provides information on recent parks budgets, future funding requirements, and recommendations for funding and implementing the proposed recommendations in Chapters 5 and 6. Funding strategies are based on park-specific improvements and parkland operations and maintenance as outlined in the *Sweet Home five-year CIP*.

Identifying capital improvement projects for Sweet Home's park system is an important part of a *20-Year Parks System Master Plan*. It is recommended that Sweet Home pursue new and ongoing funding sources to fulfill the proposed recommendations noted in Chapters 5 and 6. Sweet Home should strive to have a diversified funding strategy that is comprised of multiple short and long term sources.

Funding the park system is the cornerstone for developing and maintaining an enjoyable and healthy set of recreational opportunities for Sweet Home residents. In order to deliver a reliable level of service that residents come to expect, a proper appropriation of funds is integral to the completion of maintenance, capital improvements, staffing and programs.

Sweet Home 2013-2014 Completed Park System Projects

The Sweet Home parks staff despite a fiscal budget freeze was able to accomplish some significant goals during the 2012-13 fiscal years. Public Works staff in concert with the Community Development Department was able to fix bathroom sewer lines beneath Sankey Park despite an almost non-existent Capital Improvement budget. The city was also able to maintain its summer parks programming which is geared to the youth and families of Sweet Home.

Three projects have been slated for approval and work is expected to begin in the 2013-14 year.

1. Updated Master Parks Plan with a 20-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
2. Repair and painting to the historic Weddle Bridge in Sankey Park
3. Visioning and developing the Hobart Natural Area with funds from the Oregon Watershed Enhance Board

Current and Recent Operational Budget

This section describes the current and prior operational budgets for the Sweet Home park system over the past three fiscal years; Table 7-1 shows current and past park operational budgets for the city.

Table 7-1: Sweet Home Park Budget

	Budget 2012-13	Proposed 2013-14	Adopted 2013-14
Total Expenditures	\$120,656	\$145,186	\$149,186

Source: Sweet Home 2013-2014 Budget Documents

Sweet Home’s park system funded entirely from general fund revenues that are appropriated by the city council as available and needed. Sweet Home has no other identified streams of funding which has been to the detriment of the park system, Table 7-1 identifies the total parkland expenditures over the past three fiscal years. The approved budget for the 2013-14 fiscal year is **\$149,186** of which **68% or \$102,000** has been appropriated for staffing and personnel services. The FY 14 budget appropriated only **\$4,000 or 2%** of the total parks budget expenditures for capital outlay, building improvements, equipment and machinery. Tables 7-2, 7-3 and 7-4 display the appropriated funds for buildings and improvements, materials and personnel services.

Table 7-2: Sweet Home Budget for Park Buildings, Improvement and Equipment

Year	2013	2018	2023	2028	2033
Population Estimate	9,025	9,194	9,542	10,089	10,867
LOS for existing city facilities	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.4
LOS 5 Acres per 1000 Residents					
Additional Acreage Required	44.8	64.3	66.1	68.8	72.7

Source: Sweet Home 2013-2014 Budget Documents

Table 7-3: Sweet Home Budget for Park FTE and Personnel Services

	Budget 2012-13	Proposed 2013-14	Adopted 2013-14
FTE Positions	1.5	1.7	1.7
PERSONNEL SERVICES	-	-	-
Park Maintenance (1.50)	\$35,856	\$51, 186	\$51, 186
Park Labor (.20)	8,580	4,576	4,576
Inmate Program	1,000	1,000	1,001
Overtime	-	-	-
Group Insurance	19,649	31,104	31,104
FICA	3,999	4,266	4,266
Retirement	4,303	6,142	6,142
Employment	44	56	56
SAIF	3,334	3,931	3,931
TOTAL PERSONNEL SERVICES	\$76,165	\$102, 261	\$102, 262

Source: Sweet Home 2013-2014 Budget Documents

Table 7-4: Sweet Home Budget for Parks Materials and Services

	Budget 2012-13	Proposed 2013-14	Adopted 2013-14
MATERIALS & SERVICES			
Memberships	50	50	50
Technical Services	-	-	-
Professional Services	2000	2,000	2,000
Repair and Maintenance	750	750	750
Rental	500	500	500
Advertising	250	275	275
Training and Travel	250	250	250
Office Supplies	100	100	100
Operating Supplies	3,000	3,000	3,000
Uniforms and Clothing	250	250	250
Equipment Operating Supplies	3000	3,000	3,000
Tools and Small Equipment	750	750	750
Utilities	6,000	6,000	6,000
Building and Grounds Maint.	10,000	10,000	10,000
Recreation Programs	11,000	3,500	7,500
29 TOTAL MATERIALS & SERVICES	\$37,900	\$38,425	\$42,425

Source: Sweet Home 2013-2014 Budget Documents

Funding Requirements

The funding requirements for Sweet Home identified in the Parks Master Plan address three primary functions of the parks department: acquisitions, capital improvement projects and for general operations and maintenance.

Acquisitions

Acquisitions target primarily vacant land or partially vacant land because of the impracticality of turning developed tax lots into parkland. According to the 2007 Buildable Lands Inventory Report conducted by CPW, there was over 1,163 buildable acres in the Sweet Home Urban Growth Boundary in 2007.⁷ The vacant or partially vacant tax parcels could be acquired for adding additional parkland in underserved areas of the city. The city could also explore the possibility of donations of land and property for parkland acquisitions and trail system additions.

The cost of acquiring parkland for acquisitions is heavily time sensitive, location and market dependent therefor cost estimates for acquiring additional land are not included in this document.

⁷ Sweet Home Buildable Land Inventory Report. 2007. CPW.

Capital Improvement Projects

The capital projects suggested in the recommendations chapter are detailed in the *Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan* which is under a separate cover.

Operation and Maintenance

Maintenance and staffing are the most capital intensive activities of the Sweet Home parks department. Personnel services, when combined with buildings and ground maintenance, and equipment are consistently the largest share of the parks budget expenditures. In the 2013-14 fiscal year, \$145,000, or 98% of the total budget was used for these activities—leaving very little for capital improvements or buildings.

Sweet Home is committed to maintaining a vibrant and beautiful park system, but it needs to be properly funded in order to achieve the goals laid out in the Parks Master Plan. Utilizing volunteer effort, donations and creative measures to support the maintenance and operational capacity of the Sweet Home park system is an essential funding requirement.

Funding Strategy

As the City of Sweet Home expands its parks system, additional funding is necessary to carry out capital improvements and maintenance. The parks system revenue, which had not exceeded \$150,000 in most recent three years (FY 13, FY 12, and FY 11), is not adequate to fund the proposed park improvements and future operations and maintenance costs. The City will need to obtain diverse funding sources to finance the majority of the proposed projects, as well as maintain those improvements. This section provides funding recommendations for capital Improvements and acquisitions. Acquisitions are considered a capital intensive process unless land is donated or dedicated to the city; therefore preparing and storing funds for parkland acquisition will be critical for the city. Additional information on funding sources is provided in Appendix C.

System Development Charges (SDC)

Sweet Home does not have an Ordinance describing a System Development Charge (SDC) for parks. Parks SDCs are currently used in many municipalities in Oregon and is charged to certain or all new residential development within City limits. According to a 2001 survey by the League of Oregon Cities, nearly 40% of Oregon municipalities have a parks SDC.

The City should consider creating an SDC that could be used to fund park land development, acquisition or maintenance. The SDC rate methodology should use an inclusion of improvement and reimbursement fees and tying future rate increases to an inflation index. Improvement fees can be used to fund future capital improvements and reimbursement fees can be used to compensate the City for costs incurred to develop Sweet Home's current parks system. Sweet Home added 476 more residential units between 2000 and 2010.

If Sweet Home adopts an SDC it can be at a rate deemed acceptable by the city. For example, Table 7-7 describes SDC rates for parks across the state of Oregon. Table 7-8 displays the amount of revenue that could have been accrued over a 10-year period using a SDC for parks. If Sweet Home had adopted a system development charge of **\$750 for each new single family**

home in 2000, the city would have accrued almost \$360,000 dollars for the park system budget by 2010.

Table 7-5. Potential Revenue 2000-10 SDC Residential Park Fee

SDC Rates	Park SDC Rate	476 Additional Houses
Low Rate	\$ 250	\$ 119,000
Medium Low Rate	\$ 750	\$ 357,000
Medium Rate	\$ 1,000	\$ 476,000
Medium High Rate	\$ 1,500	\$ 714,000
High Rate	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,190,000

*Based on single family occupancy

Table 7-6. SDC Residential Park Fee Comparison, 2004

City	Park SDC Rate
Cottage Grove	\$ 204
Madras	\$ 400
Lebanon	\$ 610
Columbia City	\$ 1,133
Grants Pass	\$ 1,157
Talent	\$ 1,382
Woodburn	\$ 1,513
Lake Oswego	\$ 1,825
Corvallis	\$ 1,928
Tualatin	\$ 2,100
Salem	\$ 2,962
Sherwood	\$ 4,996

*Based on single family occupancy

Source: League of Oregon Cities. 2004.

Local Improvement District (LID)

Under Oregon Law, communities can create LIDs to partially subsidize capital projects. The creation of a special district is most appropriate for an area that directly benefits from a new development such as a neighborhood park.

Local Improvement Districts (LIDs) are a means of assisting benefitting properties in financing needed capital improvements through the formation of special assessment districts. Simply stated, LIDs allow the city to issue bonds which are paid for over a period of time through assessments on the benefitting properties. The assessments may cover all or a portion of the cost of the improvement. Once enacted, an LID assessment becomes a lien against the property.

General Obligation Bond

This type of bond is a tax assessment on real and personal property. The City of Sweet Home can levy this type of bond only with a double majority voter approval unless the vote takes place during a general election held on an even year, in which case a simple majority is required. This fund can supplement SDC revenues and is more equitable.

Public/Government Grant Programs

These include Community Development and Block Grants (CDBG), Land and Water Conservation Grants, Federal Transportation Grants, State of Oregon Local Government Grants, Urban Forestry Grants, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Grants.

Utility Fee

A parks utility fee establishes a stable stream of funding for operations and maintenance. Routine maintenance is important for those using local parks, ensuring that lawns are mowed, paths are maintained, restrooms are cleaned, and playing fields are accessible, among other tasks.

Parks utility fees are used by local governments across the State of Oregon. Parks utility fees are added to each residency's utility bill, and are collected on a monthly basis. Cities such as Medford, West Linn and Talent have successfully implemented Parks Utility Fees for the operation and maintenance of parks, facilities, beautification and right-of-way areas. Parks Utility Fees for these three cities range from \$2.80 in the City of Talent to \$9.20 in the City of West Linn.⁸

Implementation of a parks utility fee allows local governments to continually invest in parks, making it possible for these assets to be used by residents. The parks utility fee can be increased to stabilize the on-going maintenance needs which represent a large long-term cost to the City. This would relieve the parks system's reliance on revenue from the City's General Fund. Table 7-7 presents the estimated revenue generation, based upon the number of housing units in Sweet Home in 2010, from a parks utility fee.

Table 7-7. Park Utility Fee Revenue Potential

Monthly Fee (\$)	Revenue Potential	
	Monthly	Annual
\$0.25	\$964	\$11,568
\$0.50	\$1,928	\$23,136
\$1.00	\$3,856	\$46,272
\$2.00	\$7,712	\$92,544
\$3.00	\$11,568	\$138,816
\$5.00	\$19,280	\$231,360

Source: Estimates by CPW.

⁸ CPW. Mt. Angel Master Parks Plan. 2009.

Donations

Donations of labor, land, or cash by service agencies, private groups or individuals are a popular way to raise small amounts of money for specific projects. Donations from various partners can come in the form of cash, land, in-kind labor, and equipment usage. For example, The Hobart Natural Area was donated to the city for the outdoor recreational use of all people and to ensure the protection of the unique habitats that are present.

The City of Sweet Home should strive to partner with organizations, such as the Linn County Parks System, Cascade Timber Consultants, The US Army Corp, Sweet Home School District #55, USFS and other organizations. The City should also consider partnering with local businesses or the police and fire departments.

Donations often take the form of formal capital improvement campaigns, which include building public relations. There are a number of drawbacks associated with this funding option:

- Soliciting donations requires time and effort on the part of City staff and/or a Parks Board; and
- Donations are an unstable funding source and should not be relied upon to fund the majority parks system improvements.

Public/Government Grant Programs

Sweet Home has played an active role in trying to secure grant funding for its park system from state and federal sources. For example, Sweet Home recently applied for funding from State of Oregon Parks Department for installing boardwalks and trails in the Hobart Natural area. The total project cost was estimated at around \$97,000 and the grant request was approximately \$76,000. Unfortunately, the grant was not awarded. This is just one example of available grant resources to assist land acquisition and park development. A comprehensive list of grant funding sources is included as *Appendix C*.

User Fee

Sweet Home collects a user fee and reservation fee for groups using Sankey Park's Weddle Bridge or 'The Hut' and requires a deposit for use. As more amenities are added to the parks system, the system will be able to accommodate a larger number of people and the amount of the user fee could be increased. These fees could be made available to the Parks Department for maintenance and operations. The user fees, however, will only represent a relatively small amount of the total revenue.

Local Option Levy

A local option levy for capital improvements provides for a separate property tax levy outside the City's permanent rate limit. This levy may be used to fund a capital project or a group of projects over a specified period of time, up to ten years. Revenues from these levies may be used to secure bonds for projects, or to complete one or more projects on a "pay as you go" basis. In Sweet Home, however, this option would negatively impact the current Library and Police Services Option Levies given existing state property tax statutes.

Summary of Funding and Implementation

The goal of Sweet Home's Parks Master Plan update is to guide the city when making decisions about how to maintain and improve upon a healthy and attractive park system. Based on the goals, recommendations and budget analysis the following recommendations are provided to address additional funding and guide implementation of the plan.

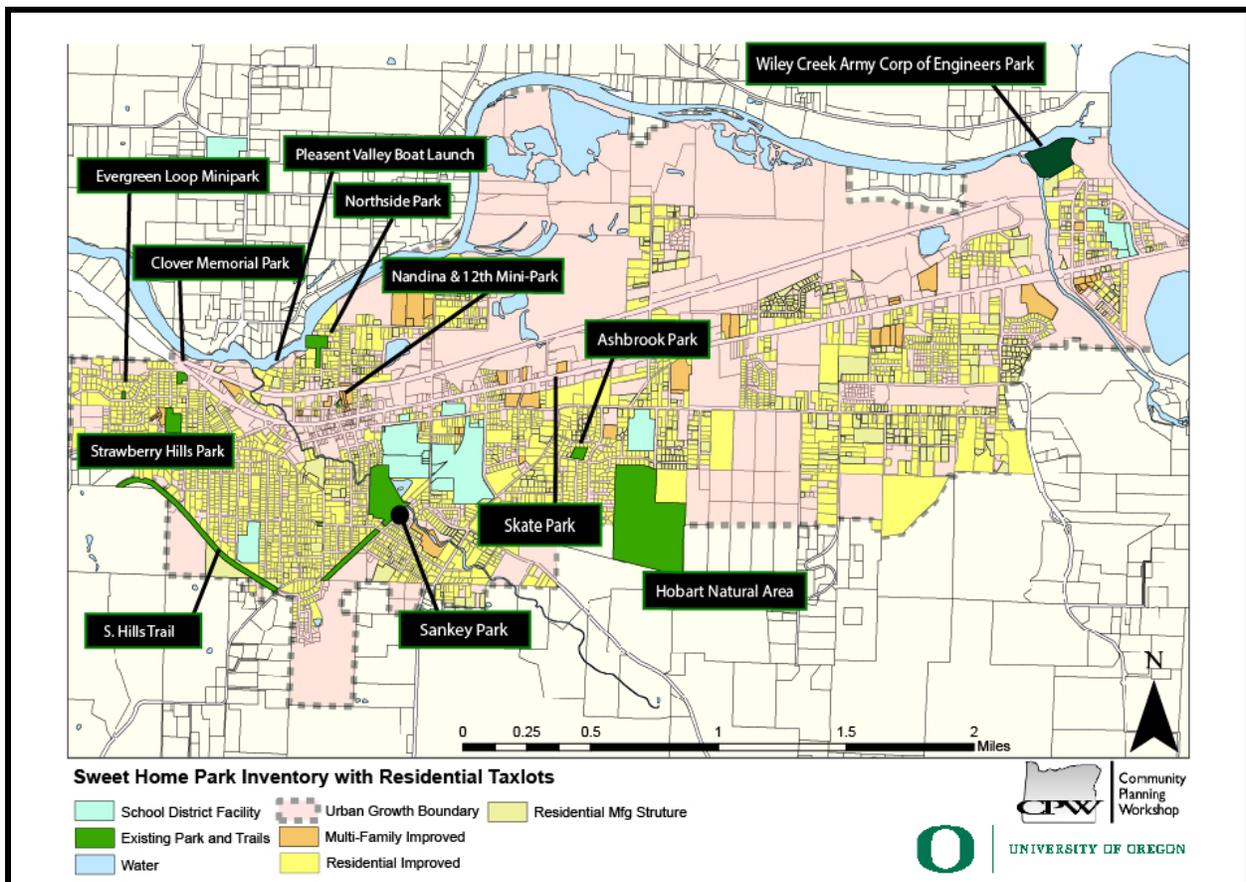
- **Develop a Parks Utility Fee.** A parks utility fee can be an extremely useful and relatively simple way to increase the funding for the park system. This type of funding would be stable and reliable and reduce the burden on the department's reliance on general funds.
- **Consider using a SDC for parkland development and acquisitions.** System Development Charges are an equitable method for supporting the future growth of Sweet Home by placing a small fee on new residential development inside the UGB. Even a relatively small SDC may be able to mature enough over time to produce a source of capital funding for the parks department.
- **Use the updated Master Plan as a tool for securing grant funding.** The updated Master Plan is useful as a tool for showing earnest effort and dedication to the park system. The plan can be used as part of the reason Sweet Home should receive grant funding from the state or federal government.
- **Explore measures to reduce maintenance costs.** The city should explore methods for reducing cost such as efficient designs for buildings and irrigation, recruiting volunteer and house quartered populations for maintenance, and developing a maintenance level of service program.
- **Partner with local organizations, community groups and Linn County.** Partnerships can reduce prices for materials or land and allow for creative opportunities to collaborate with other agencies, groups or citizens to develop a healthy and attractive park system.

APPENDIX A: SWEET HOME PARK INVENTORY

A critical step in parks planning is identifying how much parkland exists, where parks are located, what facilities and amenities parks provide and what condition parks are in. Parks are assessed based on level of development, amenities, size and service area. Parks are categorized into the following classification types: Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, and Special Use Parks.

This parks inventory includes parkland owned by the city that is both developed and undeveloped. It also includes information about Sweet Home’s School District, and privately owned recreation facilities that are available to residents. The inventory was completed using information provided by City staff, as well as field visits to each park facility.

Map A-1. Sweet Home Park Inventory



Sankey Park (Community)

Description

Built in 1935, Sankey Park was the first park developed in the city of Sweet Home. The expansive 11.53-acre park, located on 14th/15th and Elm Streets, is within close proximity to the downtown region and serves community-wide needs with its varied amenities for a range of ages. Sankey Park is the largest city-owned park and home to the annual Oregon Jamboree.⁹ According to NRPA standards, it is defined as a community park because it meets various recreational needs and preserves unique landscapes and recreation spaces. A newly erected playground, a walking/biking trail, clubhouse, gazebo, and bandstand are located in the lower Sankey Park. Upper Sankey Park contains a seven-year-old BMX bicycle track. All amenities appear to be in good condition.

Turf in the park consists primarily of grass, and Douglas Firs and ferns are concentrated on the hillside near the pathway leading to upper Sankey Park. The drainage system does not present any problems, but the 30–40 year-old irrigation system suffers from major leaks and lacks a backflow device. The park is bounded by residential single-family homes on the west, and Ames Creek on the north and east. Currently, the City is conducting wetlands restoration to area to the north surrounding the creek. Sweet Home High School lies further north, across the creek and a sports field, and has direct access to the park.



Weddle Historic Covered Bridge at Sankey Park, Photo by CPW

Parking facilities include paved parking lots off of 14th Avenue, a partial gravel parking lot and on-street parking. The parking lot accommodates approximately ten cars. The restroom facilities, open during park hours, are equipped with handicapped-accessible stalls. There are several metal trashcans interspersed throughout the park.

Amenities

- Several concrete and wood picnic tables. The concrete tables have the City of Sweet Home logo engraved on the side, and some have chessboards imprinted on the top surface.
- One clubhouse
- One gazebo
- One bandstand
- A BMX bicycle track on upper portion of park

⁹ <http://www.oregonjamboree.com>

- Natural walking/biking trail
- Historic Weddle Covered Bridge and Dahlenburg Bridge
- Horseshoe Pits
- Barbeque Grills
- Benches
- Restrooms
- Trashcans

Recommendations

- The irrigation system should be repaired or replaced because of major leaks
- The walking/biking trail requires additional maintenance.
- Bike racks should be installed.
- Implement BMX Concept Plan
- Repair/replace fire suppression system on Weddle Bridge
- Repair picnic tables on site

Ashbrook Neighborhood Park (Neighborhood)

Description

Ashbrook Neighborhood Park is situated on 1.4 acres, and located on 28th Avenue and Juniper Street on the east side of Sweet Home. Ashbrook Park is surrounded by single-family residences, and bordered by a fence on two sides and a low-traffic road on the other two sides. It provides several recreational uses including picnicking, basketball, and children’s play. It has a well-kept, gravel trail system that offers a pleasant place for locals to stroll.

The twelve year-old park is well maintained. Its grass turf and plantings are in good condition as are its trails, picnic tables, barbeque grills, bench, and 7 year-old play structure. Sparse deciduous trees are scattered throughout the park. The park’s irrigation and drainage systems are both in good condition.



Playground at Ashbrook Park, photo by CPW

The park has a colorful sign identifying it and is easily accessible from the east side. Juniper road borders the park on the south side and serves as the entrance. From the west is a gravel road that is not easily accessible to all vehicles. The park does not have a parking lot, but there is adequate street parking. Ashbrook has

limited handicap accessibility: there is a ramp at the park entrance, but the trails are gravel and the play structure is edged making these amenities more difficult for people in wheelchairs.

Amenities

- Picnic tables
- Barbeque grills
- One bench
- Children’s swing set and jungle gym structure
- One basketball court with one hoop
- Gravel paths throughout the park
- Colorful park sign
- Handicap accessible concrete ramp
- Fence on two sides
- Trashcans

Recommendations

- Additional trees should be planted.
- A fence should be constructed between the eastern boundary of the park and the adjacent properties.
- Install additional adult exercise stations

Clover Memorial (Neighborhood)

Description

Clover Memorial is a one-acre park located along Main Street. Residential uses primarily surround the park. There is no parking lot, but adequate on-street parking is available. The park does not currently have an irrigation system.

The turf is largely in good condition, however there is no irrigation system in place. The planter box (formerly a water fountain), memorial markers, and landscaping require a thorough cleaning. However, the fountain and surrounding rock wall are prone to frequent vandalism and graffiti. There are no restroom facilities or other recreational amenities, although the City would like to install playground equipment in the near future.



Whittemore Covered Bridge at Clover Memorial Park, Photo by CPW

Amenities

- A planter box (former water fountain) within rock-covered structure
- Memorial to Sweet Home civil servants
- Whittemore covered bridge over Stonebrook Creek
- A turf area with newly planted trees

Recommendations

- The water fountain could be rebuilt and the surrounding rock wall should be repositioned. Currently, the wall serves as a barrier between the park and Main Street and increases the propensity of graffiti and other crimes.
- Secure rock wall along perimeter of park nearest Highway 20 sidewalk
- Possible improvements include a picnic area, street visibility and access, and handicapped accessibility. For example, the bridge is too narrow and there is no curb cut near the other, somewhat sloped entrance.
- Coordinate with public works to improve stormwater drainage and conveyance

Northside Park (Neighborhood)

Description

Northside Park is located along 11th Avenue between Poplar and Redwood Streets. The South Santiam River borders the 3.63-acre city-owned park on the west and residential neighborhoods border the park on the other sides. There is some designated street parking available and includes marked handicapped spots. A resident resides on-site between the front entrance and the basketball court. Most of this park consists of grass turf, though the picnic and barbeque amenities are located in a wooded area along the river. People utilize the banks of the South Santiam for fishing purposes.

The only city-owned tennis and racquetball courts are located within Northside Park. Access to the indoor racquetball court, which is in fair condition, is key-access only and limited to those who join the yearlong racquetball court membership through the City. The tennis court, half-size basketball court, and playground are in good condition. The basketball court has minor flooding problems, and the playground equipment is dated. Picnic tables and barbeque pits appear to be in good condition. There are restroom facilities on the premises, as well as a portable bathroom located near the racquetball court. The restroom facilities are not handicapped-accessible, but are in good external condition since they were recently repainted.

The 1983 Sweet Home Park System Master Plan classifies this park as a neighborhood park. However, according to the National Recreation and Park Association

Classification Table, this park does not fall into a classification as it is between the classification for the Mini-park (2500 sq. ft. to one acre) and Neighborhood Park (5 to 10 acres).



Entrance Sign at Northside Park, photo by CPW

Amenities

- Indoor racquetball court
- Outdoor tennis court
- Half-size basketball court
- Swing set
- Concrete picnic tables
- Barbeque grills
- Benches
- Horseshoe pits
- Restrooms
- Drinking fountain

Recommendations

- Portions of the park, especially near the river, are not accessible to disabled persons.
- Some damaged picnic tables near the banks of the South Santiam should be replaced.
- There should be handicapped-accessible stalls in the restroom facilities.
- Construct an ADA path for access to the Santiam river for all visitors
- Replace existing light fixture and ballast in Racquetball court to facilitate easier replacement and maintenance

Strawberry Park (Neighborhood)

Description

Strawberry Park is a 3.2-acre neighborhood park located in a residential area on the West side of Sweet Home. According to the 1983 Sweet Home Park System Master Plan, the park underwent turf and drainage improvements (1978 and 1979) through a grant from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. As of May 2002, the turf continues to be in good shape. The irrigation system does not function, and the park has problems with its drainage system.

The park provides an asphalt parking lot, with no designated handicapped-accessible spots. There are no restroom facilities or signage throughout the park. Playground equipment, picnic tables, and barbeques are in the park. One portable basketball hoop, provided by surrounding neighbors and located near the entrance of the park. The park is large enough to accommodate one of a number of different sports facilities, such as a baseball diamond, soccer field, basketball court, or walking path. In response to a survey conducted in 1983 by the Sweet Home Parks Board, the City drafted designs for a running track, exercise areas, and handball practice pad.



Strawberry Hill Park, photo by CPW

However, a neighborhood charette conducted in 2006 did not find support for large sports field options and focused on keeping the park passive and for local use.

Amenities

- Large, grass play field
- One portable basketball hoop

Recommendations

- Install additional play equipment
- Improve stormwater drainage and conveyance
- Improve wetland area
- Construct soft or hard walking loop path on site
- Improve on site parking by adding 6-8 more spaces

10th & Elm (Mini-Park)

Description

The 10th and Elm mini-park is .14 acres and lies adjacent to private property. The amenities include a grassy area, but the park does not have an irrigation system or seating facilities.

Amenities

- Small grassy area

Recommendations

- Bench and trash receptacle

12th Avenue & Nandina (Mini-Park)

Description

The mini-park located at the intersection of 12th Avenue and Nandina is a small area with a covered bench and grassy area. The park serves as a greenway for residents walking along the sidewalks, and perhaps a place where they can sit and chat.

Residences surround this park on all sides except for the north side where there are railroad tracks. There is a fenced-off utility area near the railroad tracks on the west side. On the north end of the park, there is a large natural area, and there is one large tree as well as a concrete pad on the west side. There are sidewalks along both sides of the park, but the sidewalk going through the east side is narrower and has several stairs with handrails.

The landscaping is neat in appearance. While the turf and limited amount of shrubbery appear in good condition, there are some areas on the east side with drainage problems on the sidewalk and concrete area surrounding the bench. To the north end of the park there is a natural area with many large trees, vines, and shrubs.

There is no designated parking for this site, but adequate on-street parking is available. Handicap access is limited to the two sidewalks bordering the road, although the slope may be too great in the north-south direction. There are no signs for this park although it is easily visible from the street.

Amenities

- Grassy area on both sides of the park
- One covered bench
- Sidewalks on both sides of park
- Large natural area near the railroad tracks on the north end of the park
- Large tree in the middle of the west side
- One trashcan

Recommendations

- Make repairs or improve picnic table and covered area

Evergreen Loop (Mini-Park)

Description

The mini-park located on Evergreen and Nandina streets is less than 1 acre and consists primarily of large Douglas fir trees. There is a small grassy clearing suitable for a picnic table. Currently, there are no recreational amenities for this park.



Evergreen Mini-Park, photo by CPW

Amenities

- Primarily tree-covered small neighborhood park

Recommendations

- A picnic table could be added in the small grassy clearing.

South Hills Trail

Description

The South Hills Trail is located between 35th Avenue and Juniper Street. The trail is 1.3 miles in length and is a soft walking path trail with connections to Sankey and other parks downtown, maintained by the Sweet Home Trails Group.

Amenities

- 1.3 mile soft surface path

Recommendations

- No improvements are proposed for the South Hills Trail

Pleasant Valley Boat Ramp

Description

The Pleasant Valley Boat Ramp is a special use facility that provides access to the South Santiam River accessed by Pleasant Valley Road. The 0.18-acre facility includes restrooms, trash cans, parking, and a small boat staging area. It is located adjacent to the City wastewater treatment facility.

Amenities

- Boat launch
- Restrooms
- Trash receptacles
- Parking/staging area

Recommendations

- Improve parking facilities by installing 4 additional parking spots with a gravel or paved road surface
- Partner with Mid-Willamette Stealheaders to improve the boat launch amenities

Skate Park

Description

The Sweet Home Skate Park is an 0.81 acre facility that has skateboarding features. The facility is managed by the city and owned by the Springfield School District. The Skate Park itself is a 10,000 square foot cement pad with 16 features, a covered seating area, picnic table, trashcans and a porta-potty.

Amenities

- 16 skateboard features
- Covered seating area
- Picnic table
- Trash receptacles
- Porta-potty

Recommendations

- No improvements are proposed for the Skate Park

Other Park and Recreation Facilities in Sweet Home and Surrounding Area

Sweet Home High School and Junior High School

Description

Sweet Home High School shares several outdoor facilities with the Junior High School. Sweet Home School District owns these facilities. Most of the school district facilities are located closer to the high school and are close to the downtown area of Sweet Home. Adequate parking with designated handicap spaces is available, but the lot is in fair condition with many large potholes.

The junior high school has basketball goals in the parking lot and courtyard between buildings. The goals are in good shape but need new nets. There is a baseball field, although the fence surrounding the field is in disrepair in a few areas. The high school has a football field, which contain two sets of covered bleachers that are handicapped-accessible. One set of bleachers includes an announcer's stand. A running track surrounds the football field has some drainage issues with the possibility of flooding during heavy rains. A covered bicycle parking area is also located in the parking lot.

Amenities

- One soccer field
- One baseball field
- A football field and track, with two sets of covered bleachers
- A concession stand
- Large parking lot with handicap parking spaces.
- Six tennis courts
- Two gymnasiums
- Indoor heated swimming pool
- Outdoor basketball courts
- Several undeveloped playfields

Recommendations

- The schools' proximity to the new Sweet Home Community Center and Sankey Park makes them ideal amenities to be used by the community as well as school groups. The primary type of vegetation at these facilities is the field turf.

Foster Elementary School

Description

Foster Elementary School serves important neighborhood and community park functions due to its location, large playing fields, good accessibility, and the lack of other City parks in Sweet Home's eastern planning area. Residential uses surround the park.

The fields are in good shape and serve as the location for summer softball league games. There are no bleachers or other permanent structures. A cyclone fence encloses the fields with openings along the street and at the school.

Amenities

- One large field area circled by a dirt track
- One children's playground
- Basketball hoops

Recommendations

The track is in good shape overall with some seasonal flooding along the eastern boundary. The playground is in good shape. A cyclone fence encloses the playground with access only permitted through the school grounds. The basketball hoops are in need of minor repairs (i.e. net replacement, painting); no formal basketball courts are associated with the hoops.

Hawthorne Elementary School

Hawthorne School is a 5-acre park with many amenities. This school park is surrounded by fences and has only a few entrances mostly next to the actual school buildings. The turf, which covers an expansive area, is in good condition with some bare spots. The plantings and trees are in good condition. The baseball field is controlled and operated by the Greater Santiam Boys and Girls Club of America through contract with the Sweet Home School District.

Amenities

- Four baseball diamonds with built stands for spectators
- Concession stand
- Elaborate playground, plenty of equipment
- Tetherball
- Basketball courts that may need some maintenance
- May need more parking, does have roadside parking with no sidewalks
- Paths

Recommendations

- The School has many amenities that can be beneficial to the community if access is offered. With recreational equipment that appeals to many age groups, use of the park is far reaching. With the City and the school working together the site has a high use potential from the community.

Oak Heights Elementary School

Description

Oak Heights Elementary School, located on Elm and 7th Street is near the downtown area. Residential development surrounds the park. There are sparse plantings and trees on the school grounds. The turf is healthy and well maintained. Accessibility is limited after school hours.

Parking spaces are available and visible. In addition, the bright colors on these recreational facilities present an active atmosphere. The sidewalks and paths are in good condition.

Amenities

- Three – four basketball courts

- Two playgrounds
- Paths

Recommendations

- After school, the fence is locked, limiting people from using this park.

Boys & Girls Club

Built in 2000, the Boys & Girls Club offers a multitude of family and children’s activities at its 18th Avenue location. The building and property is city-owned, but the Club provides the activities and amenities. The Boys & Girls Club is open to all children up to age 18, and offers a yearly membership.

Since the building was built recently, all equipment and amenities were in good condition. There is ample parking with designated handicap spaces.

Amenities

- Computer room with Internet access
- Play room with foosball, ping pong, and billiard tables
- Multi-purpose room with a television and snack bar
- Multi-purpose gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, and dodgeball
- Outdoor soccer, baseball, track and field, and football
- Metal bleachers
- Indoor park for children up to 4 years of age
- Family board game night
- Co-ed adult softball league



Game room at Boys & Girls Club, photo by CPW

Recommendations

- No activities are recommended.

Andrew J Wiley Park

Andrew J Wiley Park is a part of the Foster Reservoir project constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers. The park provides visitors and Sweet Home residents alike with fishing and picnicking amenities. There is ample parking with spaces large enough to accommodate vehicles and boat trailers.

Amenities

- Boat launch
- Fishing
- Picnic tables
- Restroom facilities

Recommendations

- No activities are recommended.

Comparison with 1983 Park System Master Plan

The 1983 Parks Master Plan outlines several objectives, recommendations, and priority actions to plan for the future of Sweet Home's parks needs. The first objective is to "establish and maintain a city-wide park system which provides a variety of recreational opportunities to the citizens of Sweet Home."¹⁰ Since the 1983 Park System Master Plan was developed, 3.42 acres were added to Sankey Park through the addition of campgrounds and a BMX bicycle track. Sweet Home has also added two mini-parks to their park system: Evergreen, and 10th & Elm,. Moreover, the City acquired the Hobart Natural Area.

As demonstrated in the level of service analysis, the acreage of Sweet Home's current community and neighborhood parks is not sufficient to meet the Comprehensive Plan's guidelines. If the City has initiated a joint-use agreement with the Sweet Home School District for public use, the additional recreational facilities may meet the level of service standards. Furthermore, Andrew J Wiley Park, although not city-owned, provides the community with many amenities, and could be considered a neighborhood park.

The second objective encompasses park design and states: "as practicable, design each of the City's parks prior to development."¹¹ The future actions for this objective included: development of master plans for each park within the City's park system; provide park design experience to students at Oregon State University and Linn-Benton Community College; and development of an effective design for a series of directional/locational signs for each park. Currently, no master plans exist for each park within the park system. The signage for each park varies and appears to be adequate but inconsistent for those parks with multiple signs.

The next objective addresses the plan to develop natural areas and open space for recreational use. The plan identifies the South Santiam, Wiley Creek, and Ames Creek as areas well suited for this type of development. Within Northside Park, there is a wooded area for fishing and picnicking. In addition, there is wetland restoration and a walking/biking trail along Ames Creek in Sankey Park.

The following lists, extracted from the Parks Master Plan, identify specific recommended improvements for five of Sweet Home's major parks, which have yet to be completed.

Sankey Park

- Develop master plan
- Develop women's size softball field

Northside Park

- Develop master plan
- Place speed bumps and caution signs
- Repair picnic tables

¹⁰ Sweet Home Park System Master Plan, 1983.

¹¹ Sweet Home Park System Master Plan, 1983.

- Install backstop in playfield
- Surface paved bike route along Redwood Street
- Construct floating dock and roped off swimming area

Strawberry Hills Park

- Install culvert grates
- Construct running track
- Construct exercise areas
- Acquire and plant landscaping
- Develop and post signs
- Obtain access from west, east, and south sides

Ashbrook Park

- Grade park
- Construct volleyball court and horseshoe pits, and install bike racks

Clover Memorial Park

- Install culvert grate
- Install swings and play apparatus
- Correct drainage problem

APPENDIX B: RELATED PLANS

Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan

The Sweet Home Comprehensive Plan is a vision and a guide for the rules and regulations around development within the community. This plan completed in 2003 and updated in 2010, goes into detail of the goals and aspirations of parks and open space within the Sweet Home Community. In particular, the comprehensive plan outlines goals for the Sweet Home community; the overarching goal of the parks system is to balance the development needs of the community with responsible stewardship of the natural environment. Additionally, the plan provides detailed policies and designations for parks; for example the plan includes land use designation of natural resource overlay, which aims to protect areas identified as significant natural resources.

Similar to this update for the Parks Master Plan, the Comprehensive Plan provides goals and plans for the parks system. Furthermore, the comprehensive plan provides a guide for the Master Plan through establishing policies for and definitions of the parks within Sweet Home. Unlike the comprehensive plan, the Master Parks Plan provides a detailed overview of all the parks, how the parks can be improved and how the community envisions the parks.

Sweet Home Strategic Plan

Sweet Home's Strategic plan encompasses the goals and objectives of the community. This process was completed with public outreach efforts and an overview of past Sweet Home strategic plans. The community agreed upon five main goals and several objectives to achieve these goals. The goals include: Sweet Home is a community where well being is based on a culture of social inclusivity, and Sweet Home makes decisions that keep the population within a boundary of a sustainable built environment that protects the beauty and function of the natural environment.

The strategic plan provides a recent context for how the residents of Sweet Home envision their community. In including goals that speak to protecting the natural environment, the Strategic plan emphasizes the importance of the parks in Sweet Home. The Master Parks plan provides a means to achieve these goals of protection of the natural environment. This Master parks plans aims to create specific goals related to how to emphasis the parks and open space, therefore this parks plan furthers the vision for the parks and provides a detailed account for how to protect natural environments while emphasizing recreational opportunities.

Sweet Home Master Parks Plan

The last complete update to Sweet Home's Master Parks plan was in 1983. This plan includes an inventory of the existing parks and facilities, needs analysis and recommendations for Sweet Home's park system. The plan was designed as a component of the city's community development program. In providing the needs analysis the 1983 plan completed a community outreach assessment that asked questions to Sweet Home residents about the current parks system. Additionally, this past master plan completed an analysis of the level of service in the different areas of the community.

This current Master Parks Plan aims to build from and update the 1983 plan. These two plans share similar components. However, the 1983 plan completed a community assessment and does not provide a detailed inventory of the condition of each park, while the updated plan does not include the community assessment it does provide a detailed inventory of the conditions of each park. Furthermore, the 1983 plan provides a context for the current parks system. For instance, the community assessment found that parks were not a high propriety for the east side of Sweet Home; this could account for the current lack of parks in east Sweet Home today.

State of Oregon Trails Master Plan

The State of Oregon's Master Trails plan provides an overview of the current trail resources and needs for improving the trail system throughout Oregon. The plan used the SCORP's issues workshop and user survey to identify the state of trails within Oregon. The plan highlights key opportunities to improve the trail system. For instance, trails need to be closer to where people live, there needs to be an increase of trail connectivity, and there is a need for increase of trail maintenance.

Sweet Home has expressed interest in improving and increasing the trails throughout the Sweet Home Community; the statewide plan mirrors the needs and wants of the local community. The Master Parks plan incorporates the insight of the community and takes into account the statewide plan.

Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides an overview of the population and demographic trends as they relate to recreational activity trends in the state of Oregon. This resource is particularly useful in providing information for the increase or decrease of certain recreational opportunities in the state of Oregon over the last 20 years. Additionally, this guide provides information on which residents are more or less likely to participate in certain recreational activities. SCORP provides a context for what recreational opportunities could be the focus within the Sweet Home community based on the age and income demographics of Sweet Home. This is discussed further in the Community Needs section of this plan below.

Sweet Home Transportation Systems Plan

The Sweet Home Transportation Systems Plan (TSP) is an important traffic analysis document that analyzes the connectivity, access and flow of traffic facilities in Sweet Home. It is a useful document to consider in the Parks Master Plan update because of the correlation between trails development and multimodal paths along state, county or city owned transportation facilities and infrastructure.

Sweet Home BMX Restoration Plan

A BMX restoration concept plan was presented at a Park Board meeting by a local resident on behalf of some local riders in December 2013. The plan contains drawings, sketches and ideas for how the area at Sankey Park can be restored to a more acceptable standard. The plan suggests the use of donated materials and the collaboration between the city public works department and volunteer time and effort. It is included in this plan because it is a useful strategic plan and design for retrofitting the BMX area at Sankey Park.

Sweet Home Trails and Greenways Plan

A document created by a Resource Assistance for Rural Environments (RARE) placement highlights some of the major issues, constraints and opportunities for the Sweet Home trails system. The materials in this document are used to better inform the recommendations for trails and connectivity in the Parks Master Plan update.

Hobart Natural Area Concepts

Several concept planning documents describing the potential for a endangered species vegetation management plan, a parking area concept plan and a soft trail and raised boardwalk design are all documents that are relevant to the recommendations and data presented in the Parks Master Plan update. None of these documents have been formalized.

South Santiam Community Forest Corridor Declaration of Cooperation

The Declaration of Cooperation (DoC) for the South Santiam Community Forest Corridor project captures project team members' commitments toward implementation of a 12-mile corridor along the South Santiam River between the city of Sweet Home and the Willamette National Forest.

The South Santiam Community Forest Corridor will be a physical place that improves and demonstrates the connections between local residents and natural resources. It will allow residents and visitors to reconnect with the natural world. Establishment of the corridor will respect the rights and values of landowners while focusing on capitalizing on win-win opportunities to coordinate land management on public and private forests, generate forest products, and create recreation and conservation education activities. The management of lands associated with the corridor would be focused on economic development, forest stewardship, the provision of recreation opportunities for local residents and tourists, and promotion of improved health and a high quality of life.

APPENDIX C: POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Overview of Potential Funding Sources

This expanded list of funding sources provides additional information, including brief descriptions and contacts for the funding strategies presented in Chapter 7. The list includes local monetary funding sources, such as bonds, levies, and system development charges. For example, Tables C-5 and C-6 provide a table based overview of major funding options and alternatives that could be employed. Table C-7 describes these funding sources in more detail, and lastly a thorough list with contact information and narrative descriptions follows the charts.

Table C-5. Potential Park System Funding and Support Strategies

Funding Source	Time Frame	Duration of Funds	Pros	Cons
General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds	Long Term	Limited	Distributes cost over life of project	Debt burden must not be excessive
			Can generate substantial capital	May require voter approval
Revenue Bonds	Long Term	Limited	Do not require voter approval	Repayment is dependent on Park District revenue, which may not be consistent
				Often have higher interest rates than the G.O. Bond option
Levies	Long Term	Limited	Can be dedicated for either Capital Improvements or Operation expenses	Intergenerational inequity (levies are carried by current users, though future users will benefit)
			Can generate reduced-interest funding	Requires voter approval at defined intervals (double majority)
			Can provide substantial funding for short term (under 10 year) projects	

Table C-6. Potential Park System Funding and Support Strategies

Funding Source	Time Frame	Duration of Funds	Pros	Cons
Private and Public Partnerships	Short Term	Varies	Builds Cooperation	Requires ongoing coordination
			Increases ability to pursue projects	No guaranteed of success
Donations	Short Term	Ongoing	Can be a win-win situation	Requires continuous time and effort
			May include land, monetary or material contributions	Donor fatigue very possible in small communities
Grants	Short Term	Varies & Limited	Good track record with grants often leads to more grants	Requires staff time for applications and ongoing reporting
			Often support new, one time expenditures	Often only short term and only for specific projects
				Often require matching funds

Local Tax Options

Bonds

To issue long-term debt instruments, a municipality obtains legal authorization from either the voters or its legislative body to borrow money from a qualified lender. Usually, the lender is an established financial institution, such as a bank; an investment service that may purchase bonds as part of its mutual fund portfolio; or, sometimes, an insurance company. Issuing debt is justified based on several factors:

- Borrowing distributes costs and payments for a project or improvement to those who will benefit from it over its useful life, rather than requiring today's taxpayers or rate payers to pay for future use;
- During times of inflation, debt allows future repayment of borrowed money in cheaper dollars;
- Borrowing may improve a municipality's liquidity to purchase needed equipment or for project construction and improvements. Debt issuance also does not exhaust current cash-on-hand, allowing such general fund revenues to be used for operating expenses; and
- Interest rates rise as the maturity term of a bond increases, as borrowers have to compensate investors for locking up their resources for a longer period of time.

Oregon Law requires that all Unlimited-Tax General Obligation (ULTGO) bonds be authorized by a vote of the people. The *Oregon Bond Manual – 4th Edition*, recommends municipalities hire a bond counsel prior to the bond election to ensure that all requirements are met. The Bond Manual also notes that approval of an ULTGO bond requires considerable effort. Some examples of methods for gaining public support include: attitude polls, forming a bond issue citizens' committee, holding public meetings, leaflets, and door-to-door canvassing. Note that under Oregon law, no public resources may be used to advocate a pro or con position regarding a ballot measure. Accordingly, any printed materials must be purely explanatory in nature.

A fundamental rule associated with issuing long-term debt instruments is not to issue them for a maturity period longer than the project's useful life. People should not be paying for a major park or recreational facility after it is no longer in use. Further, Sweet Home should be very clear about the specific acquisitions and other actions to be carried out with the bond revenue, as the City will be asking residents to pay for park and recreation acquisitions. Working with the community is a key aspect of a successful bond measure.

The key benefit of bonds for park acquisition and development is that they City can generate a substantial amount of capital. This capital can then be used to purchase parkland or for major capital improvements that will serve the community far into the future.

Levies

A local option levy for capital improvements provides for a separate property tax levy outside the City's permanent rate limit. This levy may be used to fund a capital project or a group of projects over a specified period of time, up to ten years. Revenues from these levies may be

used to secure bonds for projects, or to complete one or more projects on a “pay as you go” basis.

The advantages of levies include reduced interest, increased flexibility, enhanced debt capacity, improved borrowing terms, and increased fiscal responsibility. The major disadvantages of the approach are insufficient funding, intergenerational inequity (if, for example, long term facilities are paid for disproportionately by current users), inconsistency of funding requirements, and use of accumulated reserves. There are also legal requirements for the City of Sweet Home, including property tax limitations imposed by Ballot Measure 50 (approved by Oregon voters at the statewide special election ballot on May 20, 1997).

Prior to Measure 50, Oregon’s property tax system was a levy-based system. With its adoption, the system was converted to a combination rate and levy-based system, eliminating the taxing district’s ‘tax base’ for operational purposes, which automatically increased by six percent annually. Instead, each taxing district has a frozen tax rate for operation expenses, but local jurisdictions may obtain revenue through bonds and local option levies. Revenues from local option levies are also subject to limitations under Measure 5.

Local option levies require voter approval and are subject to the double majority requirement of Measure 50 and are not considered to be a good alternative to the use of general obligation bonds for large projects or groups of projects. Property tax levies can be used for land acquisition and capital improvements; however, they are also frequently used for facility operations and maintenance.

System Development Charges

A SDC is a one-time fee charged on new development and certain types of redevelopment to help pay for existing and planned infrastructure to serve the development. Currently, the fee is charged to all new residential development within City limits and is based upon cost to prepare this *Parks System Master Plan* as well as the administrative cost required to prepare each new development permit. Cities, counties and special districts in Oregon may impose SDCs for capital improvements, which include parks and recreation facilities. SDCs cannot be used for operation and maintenance costs or replacement costs for existing infrastructure capacity.

A SDC may be an administrative fee, improvement fee, reimbursement fee, or a combination of the three. SDCs utilized for parks and recreation facilities are generally improvement fee SDCs. Improvement fee SDCs may be charged for new capital improvements that will increase capacity and includes debt service payments. The improvement fee must be calculated such that it funds the portion of the cost of capital improvements that meets the projected need for increased capacity for future users. Revenues generated by improvement fee SDCs may be expended only for capital improvements identified in a required Capital Improvement Plan.

Partnerships

Partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies, and not-for-profit groups play an important role in the acquisition and development of park and recreation facilities. Partnerships can also provide one-time or ongoing maintenance support.

Federal

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Assistance available through the USFWS include the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program. Since 1987, the program promotes conservation and habitat protection by offering technical and financial assistance to private (non-federal) landowners to voluntarily restore wetlands and other fish and wildlife habitats on their land.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Oregon
911 North East 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232-4181
Phone: 503-231-6156
Fax: 503-231-2050
Website: <http://partners.fws.gov>

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM manages a wide variety of public land uses in Oregon. Public land uses include land for wildlife, recreation, timber harvest, livestock grazing, mineral resource extraction and other public uses. The BLM offers grants for land acquisition requiring that it be used for public and recreation purposes. Local government can also obtain parklands at very low or at no cost if there is a developed park plan.

Salem District Office
Bureau of Land Management
1717 Fabry Rd. SE
Salem, Oregon 97306
Phone: (503) 375-5646
Website: <http://www.or.blm.gov>

U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

The Pacific Northwest Region of the USFS offers urban and community forestry funds and assists with economic diversification projects.

Group Leader, Grants and Agreements
USDA Forest Service – Pacific Northwest Region
333 SW First Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97208
P.O. Box 3623, Portland, Oregon 97208-3623
Phone: (503) 808-2202
Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6>

State

Department of State Lands (DSL), Wetland Grant Program

The Wetland Grant Program provides technical and planning assistance for wetland preservation efforts. Elements of the program include wetland inventory, identification, delineation, and function assessments as well as wetland mitigation, public information and education.

Wetland Mitigation Specialist
Division of State Lands
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 100
Salem, Oregon 97301-1279
Phone: (503) 986-5299
Website: <http://statelands.dsl.state.or.us>

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)

OPRD provides and protects outstanding natural, scenic, cultural, historical and recreational sites for the enjoyment and education of present and future generations. OPRD administers grants and provides technical assistance to communities involved in parks planning.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
725 Summer Street NE, Suite C
Salem, Oregon 97301-1279
Phone: (503) 986-0707
Website: <http://www.prd.state.or.us>

Oregon Youth Conservation Corps (OYCC)

OYCC provides communities with needed services, while unemployed youth are placed in gainful activities. OYCC funding is distributed in equal amounts to each county in Oregon every summer. The program funds individual projects ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The OYCC program consists of grants of labor and capital financing. Grants support conservation or environment-related projects proposed by non-profit organizations.

Oregon Youth Conservation Corps
255 Capital Street NE, Third Floor
Salem, Oregon 97310
Phone: (503) 378-3441
Fax: (503) 373-2353
Website: <http://www.oregon.gov/CCWD/OYCC/>

Local

There are a variety of public, private, and non-profit organizations available to provide the City of Sweet Home with additional parks and recreation facilities and services. Local partnerships

create cooperation among public and private partners in the area. A list of potential partners besides police and fire departments, utility providers, and the school district include:

- Cascade Timber Consultants
- Sweet Home Trails Group
- Sweet Home Tree Commission
- Sweet Home Economic Development Group (SHEDG)
- Sweet Home Active Revitalization Effort (SHARE)
- Sweet Home Fire
- Sweet Home Chamber of Commerce
- Army Corp of Engineers
- Linn County Parks
- Sweet Home School District #55
- Religious organizations
- Community associations
- Boy Scouts of America
- Girl Scouts
- Knights of Columbus
- American Legion

Local businesses may also be willing to partner with the city to provide partner services. The Chamber of Commerce is a good way to begin to form such partnerships.

Not-for-Profit Organizations

The Nature Conservancy

This is a national environmental organization focused on the preservation of plants, animals and natural communities. They have worked in direct land acquisition and in obtaining conservation easements for protection of wilderness and agricultural lands. Their grants program is usually focused on acquisition of land, but they are willing to work with communities who want to purchase land if it is to be set aside for environmental preservation.

The Nature Conservancy of Oregon
821 S.E. 14th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97214
Phone: (503) 230-1221
Fax: (503) 230-9639
Website: <http://nature.org/Oregon>

Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA)

The Oregon Recreation and Park Association, a non-profit organization founded in 1954, serves as a network offering information and contacts directly related to the parks and recreation systems. ORPA's mission is to provide a network of support through professional development and resources in order to enhance the quality of recreation and parks services.

Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA)

309 Lexington Ave.
Astoria, OR 97103
Phone: (503) 325-6772
Website: <http://www.orpa.org/>

Private Donations

Donations of labor, land, or cash by service agencies, private groups or individuals are a popular way to raise small amounts of money for specific projects. Two key motives for donation are philanthropy and tax incentives. These benefits should be emphasized when collaborating with landowners. Most organizations implement capital campaigns focused on specific projects for cash donations. The typical strategy for land donations is to identify target parcels (such as identified in the land acquisition section of the Plan) and then work directly with landowners.

Soliciting donations, like partnering, takes time and effort on the part of City staff, but can be mutually rewarding. Most cities establish a nonprofit parks foundation to implement a capital campaign and to accept and manage donations. If the City of Sweet Home is interested in donations, it should set up a foundation or recruit volunteers to provide the services. Generally, donations are not stable sources of land or finances and should not be relied upon as a major portion of funding.

Pursuing donations through partnerships can provide advantages to all parties involved. For example, working a land transaction through a non-profit organization may provide tax benefits for the donor, provide flexibility to the City, and reap financial benefits for the non-profit.

Grants

Securing grants is a good strategy to supplement park acquisition and development funds. Many grant organizations throughout the country fund park acquisition and improvements, although few provide funds for ongoing maintenance activities. Most grant organizations have lengthy processes that require staff time and effort, and grants usually have very specific guidelines and only fund projects that address the granting organization's overall goals. Moreover, grants should not be considered a long-term, stable funding source. This appendix provides contacts for state, regional, and federal granting organizations and outlines these organizations' goals.

The grant process is highly competitive. When identifying possible grant funding, allocate staff time appropriately for applicable grants and pursue partnerships for volunteer grant writing. As grant agencies often look favorably upon collaborative projects, developing partnerships between agencies, organizations, and the City will improve the City's competitiveness in the grant application process.

Private Grant-Making Organizations

National Grants

Kodak American Greenways Awards Program

This program is a partnership of the Eastman Kodak Company, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society. The program provides small grants, a maximum of \$2,500, to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout the U.S.

The Conservancy Fund
1800 N. Kent Street, Suite 1120
Arlington, Virginia 22209-2156
Phone: (703) 525-6300
Fax: (703) 525-4610
Website: <http://www.conservancyfund.org/conservation>

State Grants

Oregon Community Foundation Grants

The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) prioritizes funding based on a set of principles and four funding objectives.

- To nurture children, strengthen families and foster the self-sufficiency of Oregonians;
- To enhance the educational experience of Oregonians;
- To increase cultural opportunities for Oregonians;
- To preserve and improve Oregon's livability through citizen involvement.

OCF awards about 200 grants annually. Most Community Foundation Grants are between \$5,000 and \$35,000 but multi-year grants may range up to \$150,000 for projects with particular community impact. Around 5 percent of Community Grants are above \$50,000 and tend to be created only for projects that are an exceptionally good fit with OCF priorities, have a broad scope of impact, and address an area to which OCF's board has decided to give special attention.

Oregon Community Foundation
1221 SW Yamhill, #100
Portland, Oregon 97205
Phone: (503) 227-6846
Fax: (503) 274-7771
Website: http://www.ocf1.org/grant_programs/grant_programs.html

The Collins Foundation

The purpose of the Collins Foundation is to improve, enrich, and give a greater expression to the religious, educational, cultural, and scientific endeavors in the State of Oregon and to assist in improving the quality of life in the state. The trustees of the Collins Foundation work through existing agencies and have supported proposals submitted by colleges and universities, organized religious groups, arts, cultural and civic organizations, and agencies devoted to health, welfare, and youth.

Director of Progress
The Collins Foundation
1618 SW First Avenue, Suite 505
Portland, Oregon 97201
Phone: (503) 227-7171

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

Public Grant-making Organizations

Federal

National Park Service, National Heritage Area Program

The United States Congress designates a national heritage area as a place where “natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography”. (National Park Service, <http://www.cr.nps.gov>) Through Strategic public and private partnerships, federal grant money is available to leverage funding opportunities for nationally designated heritage sites.

To determine if the City of Sweet Home qualifies as a National Heritage Area, the community must complete a suitability/feasibility study, using the ten guidelines developed by the National Park Service. All ten guidelines can be found at the National Park Service website.

The designation enhances local pride and includes limited technical planning and financial assistance from the National Park Service. Federal designation depends on Congressional support and the degree to which a community is engaged in a support of the designation. The four critical steps that need to be followed prior designation are:

- Completion of a suitability/feasibility study;
- Public involvement in the sustainability/feasibility study;
- Demonstration of widespread public support among heritage area residents for the proposed designation;

Commitment to the proposal from key constituents, which may include governments, industry, and private, non-profit organizations, in addition to area residents.

National Heritage Areas Program

1201 Eye Street, NW

8th Floor

Washington D.C., 20005

Phone: (202) 354-2222

Fax: (202) 371-6468

Website: <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/>

Land and Water Conservation Fund

This fund provides federal dollars from the National Park Service that are passed down to states for acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of park and recreation areas, and facilities. To be eligible for Land and Water Conservation Fund grants, the proposed project must be consistent with the outdoor recreation goals and objectives contained in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and elements of a jurisdiction’s local

comprehensive land use and parks master plans. Emphasis should be placed on the grants available to the State of Oregon rather than federal funds.

Land and Water Conservation Fund
725 Summer Street NE, Suite C
Salem, Oregon 97301
Phone: (503) 378-4168 Ext. 241
Fax: (503) 378-6447
Website: <http://egov.oregon.gov/OPRD/GRANTS/lwcf.shtml>

U.S. Department of Transportation

Through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the U.S. Department of Transportation authorizes federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit. TEA-21 provides funding for parks and connections that include:

- Bicycle transportation and pedestrian walkways;
- Recreational trails program;
- National Scenic Byways Program;
- Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilots.

U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street, S.W.
Washington D.C., 20590
Phone: (202) 366-4000
Website: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/index.htm>

State

State Highway Funds

At least 1% of the State Highway Funds which the City receives must be spent for bicycle/pedestrian improvements and maintenance within existing street rights-of-way. Oregon Revised Statute 366.514 required the Oregon Department of Transportation and cities and counties within Oregon to “expand reasonable amounts of the highway fund to provide bikeways and walkways” and it requires “the inclusion of bikeways and walkways whenever highways, roads, streets are constructed or relocated, with three exceptions: 1) where there is no need or probable use, where safety would be jeopardized, or where cost is excessively disproportionate to the need or probable use.” ODOT also administers the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facility Improvement Grant Program, which provides grants of up to \$200,000 for sidewalk completion, ADA upgrades, crossing improvements, and minor widening for bike lanes or shoulders. Competitive projects involve no right-of-way or environmental impacts; have significant local matching funds available; consider the needs of school children, the elderly, disables, or transit users; and have support of local elected officials. Grant money may not be used for the completion of trails and/or bikeways within parks but can be used to help fund larger pedestrian and bicycle improvements occurring within street rights-of-way.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)

State Pedestrian and Bicycle Grants

ODOT provides grants to cities and counties for pedestrian or bicycle improvements on state highways or local streets. Grants amount up to \$200,000, with local match encouraged. Projects must be administered by the applicant, be situated in roads, streets or highway right-of-ways. Project types include sidewalk infill, ADA upgrades, street crossings, intersection improvements, and minor widening for bike lanes. Grants are offered every two years.

Oregon Department of Transportation
Bicycle and Pedestrian Program
355 Capital Street N.E., Fifth Floor
Salem, Oregon 97301
Phone: (503) 986-3555
Fax: (503) 986-4063

Transportation Enhancement Program

These funds are available from ODOT projects that enhance the cultural, aesthetic and environmental value of the state's transportation system. Some of the eligible activities include bicycle/pedestrian projects, historic preservation, landscaping and scenic beautification, mitigation of pollution due to highway runoff, and preservation of abandoned railway corridors. The application cycle is every two years.

Transportation Enhancement Program
Oregon Department of Transportation
Phone: (503) 986-3528

Transportation Safety Grants

Transportation Safety Grants promote vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and motorcycle safety programs. Projects are chosen by problem identification and there is no application process.

Bicyclist & Pedestrian Traffic Safety
ODOT Transportation Safety Division
235 Union St N.E.
Salem, Oregon 97301
Phone: (503) 986-4196

Transportation Growth Management (TGM)

Oregon's Transportation and Growth Management Program supports community efforts to expand transportation choices for people. By linking land use and transportation planning, TGM works in partnership with local governments to create vibrant, livable places in which people can walk, bike, take transit or drive where they want to go. Additional ODOT funding information can be found on Oregon's Economic Revitalization Team website:

http://www.oblpct.state.or.us/Gov/ERT/about_us.shtml

Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD)

Travel Oregon

Travel Oregon focuses on tourism related projects, and offers matching grants of up to \$10,000 for tourism projects. These can include marketing materials, market analysis, signage, and visitor center development planning. Grants do not include funding for construction.

Specific Oregon Economic and Community Development Department funds can be found at the Economic Revitalization website:

<http://industry.traveloregon.com/Departments/Tourism-Development/Matching-Grants-Program.aspx>

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Water Quality Non-point Source Grants

The DEQ offers grants for non-point source water quality and watershed enhancement projects that address the priorities in the Oregon Water Quality Non-point Source Management Plan. Grants require a minimum of 40 percent match of non-federal funds and a partnership with other entities. Approximately \$2.7 million is available each year, and applications are due around June 15th each year.

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

Phone: (503) 229-5088

Specific Oregon Department of Environmental Quality grants can be found at:

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/programs.htm>

or the Economic Revitalization Team's website:

http://www.oblpct.state.or.us/Gov/ERT/about_us.shtml

Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL)

Easements

DSL grants easements for the use of state-owned land managed by the agency. Easements allow the user to have the right to use state-owned land for a specific purpose and length of time. Uses of state owned land subject to an easement include, but are not limited to, gas, electric and communication lines (including fiber optic cables); water supply pipelines and ditches, canals and flumes; innerducts and conduits for cables; sewer, storm and cooling water lines; bridges, skylines and logging lines; roads and trails; and railroad and light track.

Oregon Division of State Lands

Phone: (503) 378-3805

Wetlands Program

The Oregon Division of State Land's Wetlands Program is implemented through the 1989 Wetlands Conservation Act. The program has close ties with local wetland planning conducted by cities, providing both technical and planning assistance.

Wetland Mitigation Specialist
Division of State Lands
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 100
Salem, Oregon 97301-1279
Phone: (503) 378-3805, Ext. 285
Website: <http://statelands.dsl.state.or.us/>

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department administers several grant programs including the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, Local Government, and Recreation Trails grants. Local Government Grants

These grants provide for the acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of park and recreation areas and facilities. Eligible agencies include city and county park and recreation departments, park and recreation districts, and port districts.

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
Phone: (503) 986-0711
Grants Coordinator
Phone: (503) 986-0712
Fax: (503) 986-0793

Recreation Trail Grants

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department accepts applications for Recreation Trail Program (RTP) grants every year. Types of projects include:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails;
- Development and rehabilitation of trailhead facilities;
- Construction of new recreation trails; and
- Acquisition of easements.

Grant recipients are required to provide a minimum of 20 percent in matching funds. Projects must be completed and costs billed within two years of project authorization.

Recreation Trails Grants
Phone: (503) 986-0750
Fax: (503) 986-0793

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) administers a grant program that awards more than \$20 million annually to support voluntary efforts by Oregonians seeking to create and maintain healthy watersheds. Types of grants provided by OWEB include: upland erosion control, land and/or water acquisition, vegetation management, watershed education, and stream habit enhancement.

Grant Program Manager
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
775 Summer Street NE, Suite 360
Salem, Oregon 97301-1290
Phone: (503) 986-0203
Fax: (503) 986-0199
Website: <http://www.oweb.state.or.us>

Oregon Department of Forestry

This department oversees all aspects of forest policy in Oregon, appoints the state forester and adopts the rules for forestry practices in the state. Grants are available for parks programs but are restricted to development involving trees and forest canopy.

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Grants
Forestry Assistance Program
2600 State Street
Salem, Oregon 97310
Phone: (503) 945-7391
Website: <http://egov.oregon.gov/ODF/>

Park and Recreation Districts

Special districts, such as park and recreation districts, are financed through property taxes and/or fees for services. Information regarding special districts is found through the Special District Association of Oregon (SDAO). SDAO was established to pursue the common interests and concerns of special districts.

Executive Director
Special Districts Association of Oregon
727 Center Street NE, Suite 208
P.O. Box 12613
Salem, Oregon 97309-0613
Phone: (503) 371-8667; Toll-free: 1-800-285-5461
Fax: (503) 371-4781
Website: www.sdao.com

Table C-7. Funding Strategy Descriptions

Funding Strategy	Description
<p>System Development Charges</p>	<p>These fees are assessed for the development of residential and/or commercial properties with the proceeds to be used for parks and recreation purposes, such as open space acquisition, community park site development, neighborhood parks development, regional parks development, etc. The Parks District will update collection rates on a periodic basis in order to keep rates up-to-date with development costs. Updates must be done in a manner meeting all state and local ordinances and coordinated with the collection activities performed by the City and County.</p>
<p>Utility Fee</p>	<p>These fees are charged to residents on a recurring basis via utility billing. The fee may take the form of a small lump sum added to a utility bill and is one method of generating funds for long term maintenance and upkeep of facilities.</p>
<p>Park User Fees or Dedicated Parking Fees</p>	<p>This fee applies to parking at selected destination facilities such as beach parking areas, major stadiums and other attractions to help offset capital and operational cost or to use of selected facilities. The potential outcome of revenue generation is consistent with national trends relating to public park and recreation agencies, which generate an average 35% to 50% of operating expenditures.</p>
<p>Transient Use Tax</p>	<p>Tax based on gross receipts from charges and meals services at hotels, motels or restaurants, which may be used to build and operate sports fields, regional parks, golf courses, tennis courts, and other special park and recreation facilities.</p>

Table C-8. Funding Strategy Descriptions

Funding Strategy	Description
Private and Public Partnerships	Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a City department, or a private business and a City agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.
Donations	These dollars are raised from tax-exempt, non-profit organizations established with private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, sales of items, etc.
Grants	A variety of special grants either currently exist through the Federal and State governmental systems or will be established through the life of current and proposed facilities.
General Obligation (G.O.) Bonds	Bonds that raise money for capital improvements and general public improvements. These bonds must be approved by voters.
Revenue Bonds	Bonds used for capital projects that will generate revenue for debt service where fees can be set aside to support repayment of the bond.
Local Option Levies	A local option levy for capital improvements provides for a separate property tax levy outside the permanent rate limit, subject to the \$10 combined rate limit imposed under Measure #5. This levy may be used to fund a capital project or group of projects over a specified period of time, up to 5 years. Revenues from these levies may be used to secure bonds for projects, or to complete one or more projects on a "pay as you go" basis. Local option levies require voter approval and are subject to the double majority requirement of Measure # 50 (>50% of registered voters must participate and >50% of voters must approve for local option levies to pass).
Local Option Levies	A local option levy for operations provides for a separate property tax levy outside the Parks District's permanent rate limit, subject to the \$10 combined rate limit imposed under Measure #5. This levy may be used to fund operations and maintenance activities over a specified period of time, up to 5 years. These local option levies require voter approval and are subject to the double majority requirement of Measure # 50 (>50% of registered voters must participate and >50% of voters must approve for local option levies to pass).

APPENDIX D: COMMUNITY SURVEY REPORTS

This section of the appendix describes the two online surveys that were conducted to gather information and to better understand the perceptions of the community. The first online survey was sent to the Project Advisory Committee and The Parks Board, which had a small sample size and a limited response rate. However, the information gathered from that survey which is of informed individuals in the community led to useful input. The second survey was an online convenience survey distributed to residents of Sweet Home with 75 responses returned. The following tables and narrative discussion describe the results in more detail.

Survey One—City Staff and Parks Board

This section describes key findings from the survey that CPW conducted on Sweet Home park action items and capital improvements. CPW sent the survey to ten potential respondents and received five responses. Following is a list of key observations from the survey results. The findings are organized by listing the prompting question from the survey for contextual purposes.

- **Please indicate the relative importance of improvements at each park in the next five years (Q-9)**
 - Survey respondents suggested that Sankey Park and The Hobart Natural area were most in need of improvements, the South Hills Trail and Pleasant Valley Boat Launch were also ranked high on that list.
 - 100% of respondents indicated that improvements at Sankey were either important, very important or critical.
- **Please indicate how important the following capital improvements are for Sankey Park (Q-2).**
 - Survey respondents indicated that repairing existing amenities such as picnic tables, grills and buildings at Sankey Park was most important followed by improving the irrigation system and adding a central maintenance and storage area.
 - 100% of respondents indicated that repairing existing amenities at Sankey Park was either critical or very important.
- **Please indicate how important the following capital improvements are for The Hobart Natural Area (Q-8).**
 - Survey respondents suggested that the following improvements would be important for the Hobart Natural Area: a boardwalk loop trail or soft walking path, interpretative educational facilities discussing rare native vegetation at the park, and native vegetation planting and invasive species removal.
 - 60% of respondents indicated that permanent bathroom facilities were either not needed or unimportant.
 - Hobart Natural Area needs a park concept plan for further development and the survey results here could be useful for the plan.

- **Please indicate the level of importance for creating an additional unique amenity for the park (Q-10).**
 - Survey respondents indicated that more connectivity with trails and walking paths was the most important, this suggests a weighted importance for the extending the South Hills Trail.
 - 100% of respondents suggested that trail linkages and connectivity was either needed immediately or within the next 5 years.
- **Please indicate the relative importance of park administrative activities (Q-11).**
 - Respondents overwhelming indicated that ensuring proper funding for the park system activities was the most important park administrative activity.
 - 80% of respondents indicated that funding the parks system was a critical component of park administrative activities.
- **Please indicate the relative importance of partnerships for developing and maintaining the park system (Q-12).**
 - Respondents were in favor of all the partnership options provided, but again emphasis was placed on partnering with local organizations like the trails group to ensure community input in the park development process.
 - 60% of respondents suggested that trails partnerships were critical with the remaining 40% of respondents indicating that it was very important.

Survey Two—City Residents

This survey was administered using the same software as the first survey but had fewer questions and was posted on the City of Sweet Home’s city website. 70 residents viewed the survey with approximately 65 people responding. The survey was open for approximately 2.5 weeks in November 2013. The following list details the questions and numerical data for the responses.

D-1: In the past two years, please estimate how often do you or others in your household use parks in Sweet Home?

Answer	Response	%
Never	9	14%
Less than Once a Month	24	38%
Once a Month	10	16%
2-3 Times a Month	8	13%
Once a Week	4	6%
2-3 Times a Week	6	9%
Daily	3	5%
Total	64	100%

**D-2: Which parks do you or your household use most often in Sweet Home?
(Please check all that apply)**

Answer	Response	%
Sankey Park	33	54%
Northside Park	12	20%
Ashbrook Park	9	15%
Clover Memorial Park	1	2%
Hobart Natural Area	3	5%
Skate Park	3	5%
Mini-Parks	1	2%
Strawberry Hills Park	1	2%
South Hills Trail	6	10%
Pleasant Valley Boat Launch	21	34%
Other: Please Describe	7	11%

D-3: How would you rate the Sweet Home park system overall?

Answer	Response	%
Very poor	10	0.16
Poor	12	0.19
Fair	27	0.42
Good	14	0.22
Very Good	1	0.02
Total	64	1

D-4: Please prioritize which parks in Sweet Home you or your household believe are in the most need of improvement.

Question	Not Needed	Somewhat Needed	Needed	Total Responses	Mean
Sankey	11	19	21	51	2.2
Pleasant Valley Boat Launch	17	15	25	57	2.14
Northside	10	22	15	47	2.11
Hobart Natural Area	18	15	13	46	1.89
Strawberry Hills	19	15	12	46	1.85
Skate Park	22	8	13	43	1.79
Skate Park	22	13	10	45	1.73
South Hills Trail	20	19	7	46	1.72
Ashbrook	18	23	3	44	1.66
Clover Memorial	21	18	5	44	1.64
Mini-Parks	24	15	7	46	1.63

D-5: Please describe your level of interest for participating in a parks volunteer organization.

Answer	Response	%
Uninterested	28	0.44
Somewhat Interested	28	0.44
Very Interested	8	0.13
Total	64	1