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A Vision for Parks and Recreation

The Logan Parks and Recreation Department understands that its activities are central to the mission of the City of Logan: "to sustain and enhance life for all Logan citizens" The Parks and Recreation Department's vision is "Creating community through people, parks, and programs."

This is no small task, and the Department has long been a leader in enhancing Logan's quality of life and advocating for important community assets - open space, natural resources, and civic gathering places. As personal health and wellness concerns such as obesity, air pollution, and aging become a widespread concern, parks and recreation have become even more important. In addition, high quality park programs have become one of the most desirable amenities for relocating businesses and employees in our increasingly global economy. At a very fundamental level, parks and recreation are essential to a community's economic success and long-term personal and community health. Recreation is not a luxury; it is an essential part of thriving communities and our own lives.



Parks enrich our lives and promote community.

The Parks and Recreation Department endeavors to be a part of efforts across the city that promote economic vitality, a sense of place, walkability, active living, and community building. This can only be achieved by collaboration between different city departments and by partnering with other organizations and individuals that share these goals.

Changes facing Logan City

In the 2000 Census, Logan City officially became a Metropolitan Statistical Area of 100,000 people across the region. This benchmark highlights a shift that Cache Valley has been undergoing for the last decade. No longer is the valley a remote, agricultural province. It is now an integral part of Utah's changing economy and an employment and economic center in its own right. While Logan City's population has been growing at a moderate and steady 2% rate, neighboring towns have exploded in population and Logan has grown as the center of services and employment for the region. New growth is pushing development into the corners of Logan and out onto former agricultural land. Logan City and Cache County have become increasingly concerned with preserving many of the lands and resources that have long supported this valley's lifestyle. The population is not only growing, it is also diversifying, with many immigrants from other countries and cultures. The region is also facing the growing pains of defining what its residents value (new and old) and how their lifestyles are changing.

Challenges facing the Parks and Recreation Department

It is no surprise that the demands on the Parks and Recreation Department have not only grown, they also have diversified. New parks are needed in growing areas, and citizens are also calling on the Department to help protect important lands with recreation potential and to build trails and help promote walking and biking as healthy, alternative modes of



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transportation. In addition, citizens are asking the Department to provide for many new and diverse activities, especially self-directed and outdoor recreation activities, such as kayak and BMX parks, dog parks, walking routes, and fitness testing and programs. Logan City has also reached a critical mass of population at which it is possible to build larger, more sophisticated, and more diverse recreation facilities. At Logan's current size, many current and new residents not only desire, but come to expect certain public amenities-such as recreation centers, pools, libraries, trails and open spaces. This expectation comes with a willingness to pay that is possible because of the economic growth and prosperity that has attracted them to the city.

When the 1998 Master Plan was adopted and the City subsequently bonded for \$8.3 million in recreation improvements, the City was able to bring many parks up to safety and quality standards and build a handful of new, much-needed facilities. These facilities have been unquestionable successes-the Aquatic Center, skate park, and Northwest Park, to name a few. Yet, the City has lost ground in other areas. It is falling further behind in preserving open space and building trails. Logan also lost one of its primary winter recreation centers and its only indoor pool when the Municipool closed in 2005 despite public support for its continued operation until a replacement could be constructed.

Despite the obvious growth in demand and expectations, the Parks and Recreation Department is challenged by limited resources and increasing responsibilities. The City, as a whole, has weathered through financial difficulties and very tight budgets for the last five years, but has begun to turn a corner. Still, the City remains very resistant to increase any sort of taxes to support new development and necessary public services, despite historically low tax rates in Logan City. In particular, no new city funding sources for recreation have been secured in the last five years and the current department budget has not grown. Under these conditions, it is impossible to build any new recreation amenities or programs.

Community-supported Solutions

As might be expected, the citizens who participated in this master planning process were very supportive of recreation programs and had many ideas for expanding the City's recreation offerings. Recreation, and particularly open space and trails, has been shown to be very valuable to residents in recent surveys. This support is nothing new, either. Many of the priorities from the 1998 Master Plan are still important to residents - open space, trails, and a new recreation center. Still, citizens are also very conscious of the limits of public funding. Support is strongest for projects with the greatest public demand and benefit, over services that meet specialized interests and effectively serve individuals as a private enterprise.



Citizens discussing Logan's parks and recreation needs.



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This plan recommends a new set of standards for recreation in Logan to ensure the quality of life and recreation opportunities its residents expect (see Chapter 6 - Goals and Recommendations). Logan City wishes to see every resident within walking distance (1/4 mile) of a park and trail and to provide a safe pedestrian route to get there. In addition, the City wishes to protect important open spaces that offer recreation, as well as environmental, aesthetic, and economic benefits. This plan also emphasizes that recreation in Logan reaches a diversity of users. Different ages, genders, cultures, abilities, and interests have asked to have their needs met and the City must expand its offerings to do so.

Priorities

The future of Logan City and Cache Valley remains to be seen, but Logan City is working to make sure it accommodates growth gracefully and efficiently. Many different departments have a stake in seeing a vibrant, connected open space and parks system, linked by trails and pedestrian ways. For example, the Community Development Department has shaped its 50-year vision to incorporate parks, trails, and open space in every new area of town and to enhance current parks in existing neighborhoods as they redevelop and increase in density. These priorities will take a coordinated effort between different city departments, including Parks and Recreation, Community and Economic Development, and Public Works. It is time for the City to seriously fund, staff, and support an interdepartmental effort to build the trails and open space system. These issues have proven to be too large and broad for any one department to tackle and they ultimately will require new staff and management commitment to become a reality.

To build a comprehensive parks, open space and trails system, Logan City must focus not only on construction projects, but also the recreation programs it offers and the internal City policies to make these a reality.

Projects

The highest and most immediate project needs are maintaining Logan's existing quality and diversity of parks and recreation. In addition, Logan City needs to continue to acquire land for its long term needs. Logan's highest project priorities are to:

1. Acquire open space.
2. Build trails.
3. Build an indoor winter recreation center with pool to meet winter recreation needs.
4. Acquire land for parks to meet current shortfall and future need.

The next highest project priority is to build additional recreation amenities at existing facilities that serve large user groups. This includes:

1. Indoor and outdoor basketball courts
2. After-school programs.
3. Soccer/football/lacrosse fields.
4. Community center, outdoor cultural event and performance space, downtown plaza
5. Outdoor winter recreation facilities.

The next highest priority is creating specific amenities for specialized user groups that are currently not served at all, such as a Dog Park, BMX Park, and kayaking.



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Programs

The future of many recreation programs in Logan is tentative. Recreation programs have been significantly reduced in the past year with the closure of the Municipipool. In addition, many new activities were identified by the public and the committee through the input process. The highest and most immediate need is restoring lost programs and fully funding programs with a broad community benefit. Logan's highest project priorities are to:

1. Expand winter recreation offerings - both indoors and outdoors.
2. Restore and fully fund existing programs, including indoor pool programs.
3. Institute permanent, protected funding for the after-school program.

The next highest priority is diversifying the offerings of the recreation department to promote active living and accommodate underserved groups and groups for which there are few or no recreation alternatives.

1. Encourage new programs that provide for various levels of proficiency, socio-economic levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages and gender.
2. Encourage new leagues for emerging sports, such as lacrosse.
3. Outreach programs to schools to get kids involved in recreation and introduce them to several new sports and activities.

The next highest priority is supporting programs that have an overall benefit on community wellness and identity.

1. Develop programs and activities that enhance overall health, wellness, and active living.
2. Host community events with a health and recreation focus (with less focus on events with a leisure and cultural focus).
3. Sponsor community health fairs.
4. Encourage contract classes for arts and cultural interests.



Logan can encourage volunteer groups or individuals to initiate new programs to serve emerging needs.

Policies

Logan City must continually make decisions and set policies for the future of the City's recreational facilities. Many recreation concerns are shared with other City departments, municipalities, agencies, and school districts, as well as neighboring communities and land managers. The first priority of the Parks and Recreation Department is increasing awareness of how community health and wellness impact the City's and region's bottom line.

1. Support active living in every way possible.
2. Quarterly reports to the City Council on how parks and recreation improvements are benefiting the City's bottom line (crime, health, traffic, accidents, etc.).
3. Provide recreation and leisure information to the City's economic development department.
4. Protect open space and greenways to improve the image of the city.



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The next highest priority for the Department is to work with interested partners to find and implement shared solutions.

1. Boost focus on health, wellness, and active living (Partner with hospital and health departments).
2. Improve walkability and bikeability of Logan by completing key sidewalk projects and infrastructure improvements. (Partner with Public Works).
3. Prepare trails master plan (Partner with Community Development Department, canal companies)
4. Prepare open space master plan ((Partner with City Planning Department)
5. Make parks, trails, and recreation key planning issues to be considered in all zoning, annexation, density, and development approval decisions.
6. Rework the management of departmental partnerships such as the golf course, fairgrounds, and zoo to give more responsibility to outside organizational partners.
7. Work with community groups, such as dog advocates, trails groups, BMX group, to develop solutions and funding.

The next highest priority for the Department is to secure new and more comprehensive funding to survive.

1. Develop partnerships that will benefit the citizens of Logan.
2. Develop non-city sources of revenues, such as impact fees, recreation service district fees, increase RAPZ fund, corporate sponsors.
3. Fundraise from private sources for capital facilities.
4. Grant writing.
5. Recruit volunteer and senior mentors and instructors.
6. Pursue long-term financing of capital improvements when funding conditions are appropriate.

Costs and Funding

This plan is ambitious, but is well within the grasp of the City of Logan and the will of its citizens. Because of the City's long-standing commitment to parks, the City is actually not far from where it wants to be with providing parks and recreation. But it has fallen behind in the last five years and will take extra effort to catch up to its population. In addition, the demands of Logan City's residents have grown and open space, trails, and recreation are now priorities that the Parks and Recreation Department must address. The City must undertake a major acquisition and construction effort to deliver the amenities that residents are requesting. In the short term, this will require a significant



Many of life's lessons are learned on the playground. The benefits of parks and recreation span beyond exercise and fun.



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amount of funding, but will taper off over the years. Funding needs are summarized in the following table and outlined more fully in Chapter 8 - Action Plan.

Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Needs — 2005 to 2030			
<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Funds Needed</i>	<i>Annual cost per resident</i>	<i>Projects Proposed</i>
Short Term (24 months)	\$ 6,680,000	\$66.80 (50,000 residents)	22 acres parks, 42 acres open space, 8 miles urban trails, 8 miles primitive trails. Includes Northwest Park improvements and other 1998 Master Plan projects.
Medium Term (5 years)	\$ 15,840,000	\$105.60 (50,000 residents)	33 acres parks, 63 acres open space, 11 miles urban trails, 14 miles primitive trails, Recreation Center. Includes 600 South Park, 615 N. 400 W. Park, Southwest Park, Logan River Park, Municipool site.
Long Term (25 years)	\$ 32,800,000	\$16.32 (80,000 residents)	95 acres park acquisition, 180 acres park improvements, 160 acres open space, 15 miles urban trails, 15 miles primitive trails.
Total	\$ 55,320,000	\$34.04	Over 25 years for an average 65,000 residents. In 2005 dollars. Current City of Logan spending per Person on recreation = \$76.46.

Parks and recreation have proven benefits that pay off in ways both measurable and priceless. Logan City cannot afford to neglect one of its greatest assets - its parks and recreation system. By investing in these important public places and natural spaces, Logan is investing in its people, its economy and its image. Residents today and in the future will be reaping the benefits of planning ahead and changing with the times as Logan City becomes a more vibrant, active, and healthy city.

INTRODUCTION

Four out of five Americans use their local parks or recreation system, and 70% have a park or recreation facility within walking distance of their home. (source: National Recreation and Park Association, 2005) Recreation is a strong part of our personal, family, and civic lives. Logan City takes pride in providing a high quality of life and strong sense of community, and places significant value on its recreational opportunities.

In 1998, the City of Logan Parks and Recreation Department engaged its citizenry for the purpose of setting the course for meeting the park and recreational needs of the City. Those needs were synthesized into a comprehensive park, recreation, trails, and open space master plan that the Logan Municipal Council adopted on May 6, 1998.

*"Before beginning,
plan carefully."*

Marcus Tullius Cicero,
Roman Statesman

From that master plan, the citizens of Logan approved funding to construct a new outdoor pool, a skate park, improvements to existing recreational and park facilities, established trailheads, new parks, and land for open space and a gateway to the City.

Seven years later, in 2005, the Parks and Recreation Department finds itself at the beginning of another planning chapter as it begins to update the 1998 plan. Once again, participation by the citizens of Logan is an essential component to the development and integrity of this plan. The 2005-2010 Master Plan strives to set the course for the next 5 years, while keeping an eye on the long-range vision of Logan City. This plan also sets the City on a course to estimate and secure costs for short-term (5 year) improvements as well as the foreseeable future of the City (50 years).

This plan strives to mesh with the Logan City General Plan, and make recommendations for the overall improvement of the City. This will happen through the cooperation of the City government, including planning and public works, and through cooperation with Cache County, neighboring communities, and the Logan School District.

■ A. Definitions of Parks, Trails and Open Space

Throughout this planning process, the terms "park," "open space," and "trail" have been used to define and measure what Logan City is striving for in providing for the recreation needs of its residents. Webster's Dictionary defines a park as "an area of public land; specifically an area in or near a city, usually laid out with walks, drives, playgrounds, etc., for public recreation; an open square in a city with benches, trees, etc." Logan City defines a park similarly, and makes a distinction between the different types or recreation facilities that the Parks and Recreation department manages.

Parks

The City of Logan has adopted a legal definition of City parks that includes municipally or joint-jurisdictional publicly owned land, that is:

- free of admission for access;
- developed for multi-recreational public purposes;
- that serves multi-recreational public purposes;
- and is not designated as open space.



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This definition excludes as city parks, any recreation areas that are:

- privately owned land
- require an admission fee for access
- serve a single public purpose or single recreational purpose
- are currently underdeveloped
- are designated as open space or a recreational trail system

The Logan City Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for numerous facilities that do not meet the definition of a true park, but that do serve a recreation need. For this study, facilities (Logan Recreation Center, Logan Aquatic Center, Logan Skate Park, Willow Park Zoo, Logan/Cache County Fairgrounds, City Cemetery,) are not considered parks, but sports field complexes (Willow Park Sports Complex, Logan Soccer Complex, Northwest Park Youth Baseball Complex) are. Furthermore, the City of Logan Open Space areas, such as Cliffside Open Space and the Deer Pen Property, and the Logan River Golf Course, are designated as City open space instead of parks.

Trails

Different types of trails attract different users and provide different recreation benefits. Logan City has both Urban and Primitive trails available for recreation use, as defined below.

Urban Trails - Publicly owned rights-of-way, designed to move non-motorized traffic such as pedestrians, bicycles, and wheelchairs within the metropolitan area of the City. These right-of-ways are generally concrete sidewalks that connect to public trail systems. Urban trails range in width from four to ten feet. One of the purposes of the urban trail is to link public service areas such as a city hall, library, parks or other trails together for the benefit of the non-motoring public.

Primitive Trails - Publicly owned rights-of-way, deeded corridors, or easements specifically designated for public, non-motorized, recreational trail use. Primitive trails are generally up to ten feet in width, consisting of a crushed rock composition although some corridors may be constructed of concrete or asphalt. Primitive trail systems are usually located along bench areas, rivers, and canals. One of the purposes of the primitive trail is to link parks with trails in a scenic, environmentally-friendly, non-motorized manner.

Open Space

Logan City intends to protect important landscapes as open space. The City defines open space as land that:

- Has been identified by the community as an important landscape;
- is a part of a larger network of open spaces;
- is permanently protected;
- and is for public purpose.

This definition is further clarified in the Open Space section of the City's Comprehensive Plan.