



Chapter 9: Implementation

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9.1 Recommendation

Additional investment in Lake Oswego's park and recreation system is needed to meet current and future demands, as indicated in Chapter 5.

The attached table (Proposed level of service (PLOS) additions - by site) lists recommended improvements and investments for the next 15-20 years. The investments listed are not in priority order and determining community priorities is beyond the scope of this master plan. However, further assessment will be needed to determine which investments the community feels are most necessary in preparing Lake Oswego to meet future park and recreational needs.

9.2 Funding

The level of financial investment needed to fully implement the proposed additions can not be financed with the resources available to Lake Oswego, Lake Oswego School District, and other jurisdictions if each were to pursue an independent delivery approach or use traditional methods of funding. In order to deliver a comprehensive park and recreation system, Lake Oswego must use a combination of creative approaches and funding mechanisms.

Historically, there have been three methods by which the City has paid for needed capital improvements in its park system:

Parks System Development Charges (SDCs).

In accordance with Oregon state law, the City charges all new residential development an SDC to help pay for the impact new development has on the park system. Currently, the reimbursement component of the Park SDC is \$1,985 for a single-family residence, and the improvement component is \$296. Revenues from these fees can be used only to pay for expansion of the park system or improvements directly related to accommodating growth.

The Parks SDC has not been increased since the early 1990's. It is recommended that both components of the parks SDC be re-assessed to ensure that new growth is contributing appropriately to the impact it has on the park system.

General Obligation Bonds

In the past, the City has incurred debt to pay for improvements or expansion of the park system. To incur this debt, the community, through a majority vote, must authorize the City to sell general obligation bonds for a specific purpose. The City then uses the bond proceeds to finance those specified improvements while paying back debt via a tax on

City property owners. Recent examples of this financing method are the 1990 Parks and Open Space Bond Measure and the 1998 Open Space Acquisition and Athletic Field Renovation Bond Measure.

Parks and Recreation Fund.

The primary source of revenues for the Parks and Recreation Fund is property taxes. Property taxes are allocated agency-wide for five different uses: Public Safety; Parks and Recreation; Library; Adult Community Center, and the General Fund. Due to the passage of Ballot Measures 47 and 50, the assessed property values state wide are capped at an increase of 3% annually plus new construction. For the Lake Oswego, this results in a long-term reduction in available resources for Parks capital projects. In the future, it's anticipated that this funding source will be barely adequate to cover the replacement of existing park infrastructure.

Future Funding Opportunities

Future spending for park capital projects may need to come from a variety of sources. Re-evaluating the City's park SDC requirement will assist in funding some expansion projects, but is unlikely to cover a significant portion of this expense. Another park bond could be considered, but will have to compete for the attention of the community with other pressing city infrastructure needs. A local option levy is another possibility, which requires a vote of the community. As with most local agencies, Lake Oswego has historically preferred to use local option levies to assist in covering operating expenses, while using bond proceeds for capital projects. Therefore, alternative-funding methods will also need to be explored.

Possible alternative funding mechanisms could include:

- Public/partnerships;
- Leveraging city resources by purchasing access easements, conservation easements, and development rights on private property;
- Tax incentives to private landowners to preserve sensitive lands, and open space;
- Charitable donations;
- Creation of a non-profit Parks Foundation to financially support local park and recreation facilities and programs.

These and other alternatives are discussed in greater detail in the Lake Oswego Open Space Master Plan, adopted by the City Council in March 2001.