

Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

The Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Element reflects the following framework goals that are highlighted in black:

FRAMEWORK GOALS

- FG1: Promote a sense of place by requiring quality building and development that is not just compatible with the surrounding environment, but enhances the community spirit.**
- FG2: Promote quality building and development that is compatible with the surrounding environment.**
- FG3: Support a variety of housing opportunities for Edgewood's diversifying population that are affordable, enhance a safe and livable community, and prepare and protect our families for life in the 21st Century.
- FG4: Pursue a strong and diverse economy and assure economic development that creates a "Heart" for Edgewood and balances regional objectives, while complementing the unique neighborhood character.
- FG5: Protect the natural environment and preserve environmentally sensitive areas.**
- FG6: Promote improvements to human services as the community changes and diversifies.**
- FG7: Assure effective and efficient public investment for quality public services, facilities, and utilities.**
- FG8: Balance the transportation needs of the community with regional objectives through improvement of both street and multimodal transportation systems for Edgewood's present and future population.
- FG9: Provide for inclusive and meaningful citizen involvement in community planning decisions.**

Intent

The Growth Management Act goals that relate to parks, recreation, and open space planning are particularly important in ensuring that the area's high quality of life is sustained as the City grows. The purpose of the Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element is to provide direction for the planning, development and maintenance of a park and open space system for the City. As the City matures and economic and population growth continues to occur, the need for more land for parks and open space will grow.

The Parks, Open Space and Recreation Element serves two related purposes. The first is to determine the type and level of park and recreational services that are desired by the residents of the City. The second purpose is to identify and protect a system of public and private open space lands. Open space may or may not be publicly owned. It is valued for wildlife habitat, trails, recreation, and connection of critical areas. Open space areas serve multiple purposes, including greenbelt buffers between developments and may be used for agriculture.

Existing Conditions**Active Parks:**

The City classifies active parks according to the following:

MINI PARK: This classification of park is privately owned and maintained and typically includes specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group, such as young children or senior citizens. They are typically one acre or less in size and are typically located close to multifamily complexes, townhouse developments, planned neighborhoods or housing for the elderly.

POCKET PARK: This classification of park is maintained by the City and has specialized facilities that serve a diverse population group. They are about three (3) acres or less in size and are typically located close to residential developments or housing for the elderly.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: This classification of park is for more intensive recreational activities, such as field games, crafts, playground apparatus areas, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc that serve neighborhood populations within a one mile radius. They are typically 3 to 15 acres in size and are located centrally so that they can accommodate safe walking and biking access from nearby neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY PARK: This classification of park is suited for more intensive recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, swimming pools, picnicking, and walking, viewing and sitting areas. They are usually fifteen (15) acres or larger and contain recreational facilities that serve populations within a two (2) mile radius.

SPECIAL USE AREAS: This classification of park is for specialized facilities that serve a regional area such as the Interurban Trail.

Inventory:

Table PR-1. Inventory of the City parks by acreage and park type:

Active Park Inventory				
Park Inventory	Mini/ Pocket	Neighborhood	Community	Special Use Areas
Edgemont Park		4.72		
Jovita Crossroads	1.50			
36 th / Meridian			18.0	
Civic Center		9.34		
Interurban Trail				22.29
Totals	1.50 acres	14.06 acres	18 acres	22.29 acres
			Grand Total	55.85 acres

EDGEMONT PARK is located at the intersection of 24th Street East and 110th Avenue East. It has an existing baseball/ softball field, a soccer field overlaid on the ball field, restrooms, a picnic shelter, a play area, unpaved trails and a small paved parking lot.

JOVITA CROSSROADS PARK is located northwest of Jovita Boulevard and 114th Avenue East. Improvement plans include a drinking fountain, restrooms, parking lot, picnic shelter, and a planned connection to the Interurban Trail.

36TH/ MERIDIAN COMMUNITY PARK is located at the intersection of 36th Street East and Meridian Avenue East. Master planning for this park includes baseball/ soccer fields and other improvements.

CIVIC CENTER is located north of 24th Street East on Meridian Avenue East. This site includes the City of Edgewood Civic Center (City Hall) and site improvements that support access to city services, civic functions, and recreational use of the property.

INTERURBAN TRAIL parallels Jovita Creek, Jovita Canyon and Stewarts Point Bluff and is a key component of the regional trail system. The trail system includes 1.88 miles within the City of Edgewood and will connect to the Interurban Trail developed by other communities along the old Interurban Railway route.

Passive Parks/ Open Space:

Passive Parks/ Open Space are lands that are intended to be left primarily in their natural state with little or no facility improvements. Passive parks and open space often contain distinctive geologic, botanic, historic, scenic or other critical area, or natural resource land features. They are intended for passive recreational use in a natural setting.

Inventory:

Table PR-2. Inventory of the City passive parks and open space by acreage

<u>Passive Parks/ Open Space Inventory</u>	
<u>Park Inventory</u>	<u>Passive Parks/ Open Space</u>
<u>Nelson Natural Park</u>	<u>12.51</u>
<u>Nelson Farm Park</u>	<u>10.00</u>
<u>Walkers Pond</u>	<u>4.00</u>
<u>Mortenson Farm</u>	<u>12.31</u>
<u>Crawford Woods</u>	<u>4.57</u>
<u>Kempf Open Space</u>	<u>12.56</u>
<u>Totals</u>	<u>55.95 acres</u>

Private Open Space:

In addition to the City-owned passive parks and open space noted above, there are privately-owned properties in Edgewood that have “current use assessment” tax classification (authorized by RCW 84.34) for open space, timberlands and agriculture. While these properties are not available for active recreational uses, they provide visual open space as long as they remain in the “current use” tax classification of open space, farm and agriculture, or timberland. In 2006, the Pierce County Assessor’s office reported 63.83 acres with a “current use” tax designation of open space, 211 acres with agriculture and farm, and 52.66 acres with timberland.

Other Recreational Facilities:

Though not a part of the City Park system, school facilities provide recreational opportunities for citizens when schools are not in session. Table PR-3 shows a list of schools and associated facilities.

Table PR-3. Other Recreational Facilities

Other Recreational Facilities		
Facility	Ball Field	Sports Field
Edgemont Jr. High	Yes	Yes
Northwood Elementary	Yes	Yes
Mountain View Elementary	Yes	Yes
Hilltop Elementary	Yes	Yes
Alice V. Hedden Elementary	Yes	Yes

Future Parks and Recreation Demand

Level of Service: Level of service (LOS) is a term describing the amount, type or quality of facilities needed to serve the community at a desired and measurable standard. Level of service standards are the minimum thresholds required to adequately serve new development.

The Growth Management Act requires cities to adopt measurable level of service standards for capital facilities to include parks. In accordance with the Growth Management Act, Table PR-4 establishes the following LOS standards:

Table PR-4. Acceptable Levels of Service for Parks

Acceptable Levels of Service for Parks	
Active Parks (all classifications)	17.35 acres per 1,000 people
Passive Parks/ Open Space	17.35 acres per 1,000 people

The LOS standards recognize that the City contains large areas of environmentally sensitive areas that are required to be protected and preserved per the Growth Management Act as critical areas.

Existing Level of Service and Future Demand:

Table PR-5. Existing Park LOS for the City

Existing Levels of Service			
Type of Parks	2008 Population	Total Acreage	LOS
Active Parks	9,595	55.85	5.82 acres per

			1,000 people
Passive Parks/ Open Space	9,595	55.95	5.83 acres per 1,000 people

Table PR-6. Existing and future demand for parks and open space

Demand Analysis					
Year	Population Projection	Park Type	Acres at LOS 17.35/ 1,000	Existing Acreage	Net Reserve or (Deficiency)
2008	9,595	Active	166.5	55.85	(110.65)
		Passive	166.3	55.95	(110.35)
2012	10,110	Active	175.4	55.85	(119.55)
		Passive	175.4	55.95	(119.45)
2016	12,128	Active	210.4	55.85	(154.55)
		Passive	210.4	55.95	(154.45)
2022	13,700	Active	237.7	55.85	(181.85)
		Passive	237.7	55.95	(181.75)

In order to obtain and maintain the LOS as the City grows over the next fourteen (14) years, the City will have to develop new parks and open space. Although many of these parks will be in areas of the City with high growth potential, several existing developed neighborhoods still lack neighborhood parks.

Development Criteria

ACTIVE PARKS:

The following criteria serve as guidelines to site selection and development of active parks and recreational facilities:

Type of Park	Service Area	Development Criteria	Appropriate Facilities
Mini Park	Local subdivision or multifamily development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.5 to 1 acres • Entire site is useable as active park space • Interior location • Privately-owned and maintained • Access is from a public or private street 	Children’s playground, seating areas, open grass areas
Pocket Park	Local Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.5 to 3 acres • Entire site is useable as active park space • City-owned and maintained • Access is from a public street 	Playground, seating areas, open grass area, picnic table, lighting
Neighborhood	1 mile radius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 to 15 acres 	Multiuse field, children’s

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 50 percent is usable as active park space • Pedestrian access from the neighborhood is provided • City-owned and maintained • Access is from a public street and have at least 200 feet of frontage • Off-street parking spaces are provided 	playground, paved court, picnic areas with shelter, trails or pathways, restrooms, lighting
Community	2 mile radius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 acres and larger • At least 75 percent is usable as active park space • City-owned and maintained • Access is from an arterial street and have at least 500 feet of frontage • Pedestrian access from the neighborhood is provided • Off-street parking spaces are provided 	Sports fields, tennis courts, volleyball court, children's playground, picnic facilities with shelters, trail system, senior center, restroom facilities, lighting and outdoor sports courts
Special Use	City Wide	Depends on proposed facility	Depends on proposed facility

PASSIVE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE:

The following criteria serve as guidelines to site selection and development of passive parks and open space:

Type of Open Space	Service Area	Development Criteria	Appropriate Facilities
Critical Areas	City Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size varies depending on the boundaries of the critical area • Sites are generally unsuitable for development • Protection of natural features and environmental functions is paramount 	Interpretive areas, trails, or pathways, seating areas, vegetation or wildlife enhancements, viewing platforms, boardwalks, trailheads
Scenic and Aesthetic	City Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size varies depending on location • Provide view opportunities 	Trails or pathways, vistas or viewpoints, seating areas, trailheads
Linkage and Public Access	Local or City Wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size varies depending on location • Links parks and other open space areas 	Trails or pathways

Goals and Policies

Goal PR I: Provide adequate management resources to offer park and recreation services to residents of all ages.

PR1: *Annually update the six-year capital improvement program for acquisition and development of parks and recreational lands.*

Discussion: The Capital Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes a long-term financing strategy for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. A six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) will be updated annually to set priorities for park acquisition and improvement expenditures.

PR2: *Update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element every five years to ensure eligibility for state and federal grants.*

PR3: *Acquire and develop parks and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the public within available resources.*

Discussion: The City has a limited amount of funding for parks. The City should consider all acquisition and development projects in the context of future development responsibilities. Cost/benefit assessments are important to determine the appropriate level of maintenance. Proper maintenance protects the public investment in the parks system. Well-maintained parks encourage use and promote community pride.

PR4: *Annually evaluate City-sponsored programs in terms of cost, public benefit, and all levels of established program criteria.*

Discussion: Each program shall establish review criteria as part of the initial funding proposal.

PR5: *Provide management of park and recreation services.*

PR6: *Actively seek outside sources of revenue for the acquisition, development, and improvement of park and recreational facilities.*

Discussion: Identifying and pursuing additional funding sources, such as the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), is a beneficial method for increasing available park capital improvement funding. Funding and services offered through county, state, and federal agencies and through volunteer donations will serve to expand parks and recreation opportunities.

PR7: *Continue to work with non-profit groups, such as the Friends of the Parks, the Edgewood Athletic Association, and other volunteer groups.*

Discussion: To offset some maintenance costs and promote community identity and involvement, the City should utilize the resources and ideas of civic and community-based organizations.

Goal PR II: Encourage public involvement in the park and recreation planning and service process.

PR8: *Utilize the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and citizen committees to facilitate public involvement in planning for parks.*

Discussion: Development of an efficient quality parks and recreation system and program requires sound planning and implementation strategies. Planning requires continual citizen participation to assure that citizen desires are identified and addressed. Local citizen groups are active in City government and seek to be involved in park projects. A Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and other citizen advisory committees are an effective way to include public participation.

PR9: *Periodically review park and recreation preferences, needs, and trends through household surveys, public meetings, and other public input sources.*

Discussion: Park surveys should solicit information about changes in public sentiment and general public need relative to cost.

Goal PR III: Provide a system of parks and recreational facilities that provides a variety of recreation opportunities.

PR10: *Develop the neighborhood park as the basic park unit for the City.*

PR11: *Develop several multi-use community parks that serve the entire Edgewood area and provide a wide range of passive and structured recreation facilities.*

PR12: *Acquire and preserve land for parks and recreational uses in advance of development in an effort to ensure affordable land prices and a choice of sites.*

Discussion: The acquisition of open space and park land requires considerable forethought because it is expensive and commits the City to maintenance responsibilities. Benefits of park and open space acquisition include establishing greenbelts, providing access to water, reserving areas for wildlife habitat, and protecting natural features. Acquiring and preserving such lands should be encouraged because they offer opportunities for recreation and provide open space. Open spaces or small parks in commercial areas also serve several functions, including providing social places for employees.

PR13: *Provide an equitable distribution of recreation resources between active structured park areas, natural open space, trails, sports fields, and special use areas.*

PR14: *Plan to distribute park facilities evenly throughout the City to meet applicable service areas.*

Discussion: Decisions to purchase and develop park and open space areas should consider a geographically equitable distribution of park and recreational facilities throughout the City. Park sites and activities should be conveniently accessible to all residents.

PR15: *Coordinate with the local school districts to maximize the use of school properties and facilities for park and recreational purposes.*

Discussion: The Puyallup and Fife School Districts have buildings and play fields that can be used for recreational programs. The Sumner school district does not have any facilities in the City of Edgewood, but may in the future. Cooperative agreements addressing maintenance can result in cost savings for both the City and the school districts. Locating youth programs at school facilities provides easy access to school age groups.

PR16: *Where appropriate, pursue joint venture opportunities with the State of Washington, King County; Pierce County; the Cities of Federal Way, Fife, Milton, Pacific, Puyallup, and Sumner; and the local school districts of Fife, Puyallup, and Sumner; and other groups and agencies in developing parks and facilities.*

Discussion: Because the use of recreational facilities goes beyond the boundaries of local governments, intergovernmental coordination is important. Potential funding sources from outside agencies make it important to maintain an effective intergovernmental coordination program. The necessity for intergovernmental coordination is particularly important for the City of Edgewood, given the presence of adjacent cities, Pierce County, and the school districts. There will be many opportunities for shared use of facilities and cooperative projects.

PR17: *Explore opportunities to jointly develop parks, athletic fields, indoor recreation space and aquatic facilities with other agencies and organizations.*

Discussion: Volunteer groups, private community clubs, and businesses operate facilities and recreation programs. Cooperating with these groups will extend opportunities for local residents and employees, and will reduce duplication of funding and staffing. Mutual support and partnerships can increase the success of grant applications and potential programs that the City's funding cannot provide.

PR19: *Prohibit the development of small mini-parks that would be owned by the City when not linked to a trail system. These types of parks are appropriate where a private homeowner group agrees to develop and maintain them.*

PR20: *Where housing densities exceed 8 dwelling units per acre, the developer shall provide indoor and outdoor facilities for recreation on-site.*

Discussion: Residential developments of eight (8) dwelling units per acre or more shall provide on-site recreational opportunities for adults and children. The City can implement this policy through its development regulations.

PR21: *New development should develop and maintain greenbelts within their developments.*

PR22: *Adopt mitigation fees and other methods that support the acquisition and development of parks.*

Discussion: The City can provide for mitigation of development impacts to parks through some of the following methods:

1. Requiring dedication of land within the subdivision.
2. Permitting voluntary park contributions.
3. Establishing a park impact fee by ordinance.
4. Developing a contractual agreement that calls for the developer to construct needed facilities in an existing park.
5. Developing an alternative that combines the options listed above.

Goal PR IV: Provide a high quality park system that is safe, accessible and efficient to operate.

PR23: *Design and construction of parks should take into account conservation of resources such as energy and water.*

PR24: *Design of new parks should reflect safety and security of park users.*

Discussion: As needs change and as existing facilities age, redevelopment of existing facilities may occur.

PR25: *Park and recreation facilities shall be easily accessible to the disabled.*

Discussion: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that parks are reasonably accessible to all citizens, regardless of disability. Barrier-free design standards should be incorporated in all new park design and development.

PR26: *Provide adequate on site facilities; such as off-street parking, handrails, ramps, lighting, and other facilities so that all members of the community have equal opportunity for safe and satisfying recreational experiences.*

Discussion: Parks should have adequate and safe facilities to encourage park use. Such facilities may include off-street parking, hand-rails, ramps, lighting, picnic tables, benches, trash receptacles, and restroom facilities, where appropriate.

Goal PR V: Preserve and manage critical natural open space areas; such as forested areas, floodplains, wetlands, view sheds and watersheds.

PR27: *Coordinate with other public and private organizations to preserve natural open space lands.*

Discussion: Natural open space lands can include stream corridors, wildlife habitats, wetlands, depressional potholes, and other features. To implement this policy, the City should encourage the formation of a land trust and adopt Pierce County's Public Benefit Rating System as it relates to open space taxation.

PR28: Provide for the joint planning and acquisition of storm water retention areas in conjunction with the parks needs of the City. This shall incorporate open space and natural buffers into the design of future park and recreation facilities.

PR29: Encourage the use of green belts as buffers between commercial and residential use

Goal PR VI: Provide an inter-connected system of pathways and trails throughout the City, with regional connectivity.

PR30: Develop non-motorized connections in and around the City to connect neighborhoods with parks, schools and other facilities.

Discussion: Pathways and trails can connect diverse areas and decrease reliance on the automobile for recreational and transportation activities. Park site selection should also consider accessibility to pedestrians and bicyclists.

PR31: Include walking, jogging, horseback and bicycle trails in the design of parks and recreation facilities.

PR32: Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions to develop and maintain a regional trail system, such as the Interurban Trail.

Goal PR VII: Provide opportunities for indoor recreation activities.

PR33: Coordinate with the local school districts to maximize use of indoor facilities, such as gymnasiums, classrooms, and meeting space.

Discussion: Locating youth programs at school facilities provides easy access for youth.

PR34: Coordinate with other agencies and groups to provide senior activity spaces.

PR35: Plan for community meeting spaces.

Discussion: Planning for a meeting space will enable the City to offer a wide range of recreation opportunities.

PR36: Plan for a senior activity center.

Discussion: Planning for a senior activity center will enable the City to offer a wide range of recreation opportunities.

Goal PR VIII: Meet the needs of Edgewood residents for sports fields.

PR37: Work in coordination with school districts and non-profit organizations to upgrade sports fields on school grounds.

PR38: *Explore the feasibility of a joint venture for the development of a sports field complex with a neighboring community.*

Discussion: For potential parks and activities of regional significance, the City should make efforts to participate in planning processes. The City should participate in regional park planning efforts even if the project is located in a neighboring city.

PR39: *Strive to meet the active recreation requirements per the Six-Year Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Needs Assessment.*

Discussion: The City of Edgewood currently does not offer many facilities for active recreation. Play fields, bicycle and jogging trails, and playgrounds should be given priority consideration in funding plans.

Goal PR IX: Promote a broad, diverse, flexible, and challenging program of recreation and cultural services to meet the leisure needs of all age groups and interests.

PR40: *Promote and facilitate recreational and cultural arts programs in Edgewood.*

Discussion: Quality recreational programming for the community is important. People need constructive and engaging activities. Programs in the City of Edgewood will enhance quality of life and community identity.

PR41: *Coordinate and monitor recreational and cultural programs and services to ensure that they are available to citizens of Edgewood.*

PR42: *Consider offering a limited recreation program (e.g., summer playground program) in conjunction with volunteer organizations, school districts, or adjoining communities. Expand the program as demand occurs with consideration for the ability of the City to manage and finance it.*

PR43: *Promote youth and children's programs that meet the growing needs of families, such as before and after-school programs.*

Goal PR X: Maintain a high quality and efficient level of maintenance for all park areas and facilities.

PR44: *maintain Park and recreation facilities in a safe, attractive and positive way to enhance the livability of the community and neighborhood.*

Discussion: As needs change and existing facilities age, redevelopment of existing facilities may need to occur. Redevelopment should meet the changing needs in the community and promote safety and accessibility as primary considerations.

PR45: *Consider coordinating maintenance operations with other agencies in an effort to maximize efficiency.*

PR46: *Establish a standardized list of specifications for materials and equipment in an effort to maintain consistency of park design and development.*

Discussion: A consistent list of specific materials and equipment facilitates planning and cost analysis.

PR47: *Use volunteers and non-profit groups for some special park maintenance projects.*

Discussion: To offset some maintenance costs and promote community identity and involvement, the City should utilize the resources and ideas of civic and community-based organizations. For example, the City could coordinate with the local Boy Scouts organization or another volunteer group for periodic trail maintenance or removal of brush. The City could also consider an “adopt-a-park” program.

PR49: *Design and development of parks should minimize operational and maintenance costs.*

Discussion: The City should consider all acquisition, development, and improvement projects in the context of future maintenance responsibilities. Proper maintenance protects the public investment in the parks system. Well maintained parks encourage use and promote community pride. Cost/ benefit assessments are essential for determining appropriate design and construction.

PR50: *Encourage donations from individuals and groups in the community.*

Discussion: Citizens and property owners may wish to donate land to the City or add improvements to park sites. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board or Planning Commission should review potential donations in terms of priorities and long term maintenance obligations.

PR51: *Encourage the use of the Pierce County Public Benefit Rating System to allow citizens the opportunity for tax relief to protect certain categories of open space lands, agricultural lands, and timberlands based upon the current land use and present state of the property.*

Discussion: The City of Edgewood and Pierce County have formed a County-City Open Space Taxation Determination Board to consider requests under the 1999 Public Benefit Rating System.