



INDEPENDENCE PARKS & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

SECTION I:
INVENTORY



SECTION I: INVENTORY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The City of Independence is committed to providing its community with a strong, integrated system of parks and natural areas and a wealth of recreation opportunities. To continue this commitment, the City initiated the Parks System Plan 2015, a comprehensive planning effort that will address the changing recreational needs of its larger, more diverse population to ensure that the city's facilities reflect current and future recreational trends. The primary purpose of this Plan is to update the Independence Parks and Open Space Master Plan 1996 by identifying new trends in recreation, areas of growth in recreation participation, and changing community park and facility needs. The plan will explore the community's vision for parks, trails, and natural areas and will describe a strategy for meeting these future community needs. It updates the park classification system, establishes guidelines for park planning and development, creates a wayfinding strategy, recommends general locations for the development of future parks and trails, recommends improvements to existing facilities, and introduces policies to improve the provision of recreation services.

In short, the Plan gives the City a specific strategy to meet future challenges in order to provide creative recreation programs, new parks and open space sites, well-developed facilities and trails, and a well maintained park system. This Plan provides strategic guidance and recommendations on how to develop an interconnected and accessible park system for all citizens to enjoy.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The City of Independence is located in Polk County, in the central part of the Willamette Valley. The Willamette River, flowing along the eastern edge of Independence, is a dominant feature of the city's landscape, providing fish and wildlife habitat as well as recreation and transportation opportunities. Independence is located on relatively flat terrace and floodplain areas between the Forks of the Ash Creek and the Willamette River. The City is located on the west bank of the Willamette River and immediately east of Monmouth, Oregon. Salem, the capital of Oregon, is located about 10 miles to the northeast of Independence.



HISTORY

Independence was founded by pioneers who migrated from Independence, Missouri. Elvin A. Thorp arrived in the Independence area in 1845 and staked a claim north of Ash Creek in June of that year. He platted a small townsite that later became known as “Thorp’s Town of Independence” or the “Original Town of Independence” now known as “Old Town.” It was named by Mrs. Thomas Burbank, wife of one of the earliest pioneers, who settled 2 miles south of the city. Thirty square blocks of the oldest part of downtown forms the Independence Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historically, the agriculture and forest products industries have been the mainstays of the local economy. Independence thrived as a shipping point, by both rail and boat, for agricultural products and lumber until the 1950s. The city was known for its hops production from the 1890s through the 1940s, hosting a festival called the “Hops Fiesta” from the early 1930s to the mid-1950s. Hops no longer dominate local agricultural production.

1.2 RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

There are several plans, studies, and reports that influence the direction of the City of Independence Park System Plan 2015. This summary of the planning efforts reviewed during this inventory stage of the process describes the purpose of these documents and how they relate to the Park System Plan 2015. The City of Independence has completed several initiatives to plan for the future, ranging from large scale system planning to specific master plans and neighborhood plans. The related planning efforts include a review of statewide planning goals, Oregon Parks and Recreation Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Willamette River Water Trail, and local planning efforts.

STATEWIDE PLANNING GOALS

Since 1973, Oregon has maintained a strong statewide program for land use planning. The foundation of that program is a set of 19 Statewide Planning Goals. These goals express the state’s policies on land use and related topics, such as citizen involvement, housing, and natural resources. Most of the goals are accompanied by guidelines, which are suggestions about how a goal may be applied. Guidelines are not mandatory.

Oregon’s statewide goals are achieved through local comprehensive planning. State law requires each city and county to adopt a comprehensive plan and the zoning and land-division ordinances needed to put the plan into effect. The local comprehensive plans must be consistent with the Statewide Planning Goals. Plans are reviewed for such consistency by the state’s Land Conservation and Development Commission

(LCDC). The statewide planning goals that have the most applicability to the planning efforts for the Parks System Plan are as follows:

GOAL 5: Natural Resources, Scenic & Historical Areas & Open Spaces OAR 660-015-0000(5)

Local governments shall adopt programs that will protect natural resources and conserve scenic, historic, and open space resources for present and future generations. These resources promote a healthy environment and natural landscape that contributes to Oregon’s livability.

Fish and wildlife areas and habitats should be protected and managed in accordance with the Oregon Wildlife Commission’s fish and wildlife management plans. Stream flow and water levels should be protected and managed at a level adequate for fish, wildlife, pollution abatement, recreation, aesthetics, and agriculture. Significant natural areas that are historically, ecologically or scientifically unique, outstanding or important, including those identified by the State Natural Area Preserves Advisory Committee, should be inventoried and evaluated. Plans should provide for the preservation of natural areas consistent with an inventory of scientific, educational, ecological, and recreational needs for significant natural areas. Local, regional, and state governments should be encouraged to investigate and utilize fee acquisition, easements, cluster developments, preferential assessment, development rights acquisition and similar techniques to implement this goal.

GOAL 8: Recreational Needs OAR 660-015-0000(8)

Local governments shall adopt programs that will satisfy the recreational needs of the citizens of the state and visitors and, where appropriate, provide for the siting of necessary recreational facilities including destination resorts. The requirements for meeting such needs, now and in the future, shall be planned for by governmental agencies having responsibility for recreation areas, facilities, and opportunities: (1) in coordination with private enterprise; (2) in appropriate proportions; and (3) in such quantity, quality, and locations as is consistent with the availability of the resources to meet such requirements. State and federal agency recreation plans shall be coordinated with local and regional recreational needs and plans. Specific guidelines for recreation planning are provided by the statewide planning goal as follows:

- An inventory of recreation needs in the planning area should be made based upon adequate research and analysis of public wants and desires.

- An inventory of recreation opportunities should be made based upon adequate research and analysis of the resources in the planning area that are available to meet recreation needs.
- Recreation land use to meet recreational needs and development standards, roles and responsibilities should be developed by all agencies in coordination with each other and with the private interests. Long range plans and action programs to meet recreational needs should be developed by each agency responsible for developing comprehensive plans.
- The planning for lands and resources capable of accommodating multiple uses should include provision for appropriate recreation opportunities.
- The State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan could be used as a guide when planning, acquiring, and developing recreation resources, areas, and facilities.
- When developing recreation plans, energy consequences should be considered, and to the greatest extent possible non-motorized types of recreational activities should be preferred over motorized activities.
- Planning and provision for recreation facilities and opportunities should give priority to areas, facilities, and uses that meet:
 - a. *Recreational needs requirements for high density population centers,*
 - b. *Recreational needs of persons of limited mobility and finances,*
 - c. *Recreational needs requirements while providing the maximum conservation of energy both in the transportation of persons to the facility or area and in the recreational use itself,*
 - d. *Minimize environmental deterioration,*
 - e. *Are available to the public at nominal cost, and*
 - f. *Needs of visitors to the state.*
- Unique areas or resources capable of meeting one or more specific recreational needs requirements should be inventoried and protected or acquired.
- All state and federal agencies developing recreation plans should allow for review of recreation plans by affected local agencies.
- Comprehensive plans should be designed to give a high priority to enhancing recreation opportunities on the public waters and shorelands of the state especially on existing and potential state and federal wild and scenic waterways, and Oregon Recreation Trails.
- Plans that provide for satisfying the recreation needs of persons in the planning area should consider as a major determinant, the carrying capacity of the air, land and water resources of the planning area. The land conservation and development actions provided for by such plans should not exceed the carrying capacity of such resources.

GOAL 15: Willamette River Greenway OAR 660-015-0005

Local governments shall adopt programs to protect, conserve, enhance, and maintain the natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic, and recreational qualities of lands along the Willamette River as the Willamette River Greenway. The Willamette River Greenway is a valuable natural asset of the City of Independence and the State of Oregon. Statewide Planning Goal 15, Willamette River Greenway, sets forth the overall framework within which state and local governments carry out protection and enhancement of the Greenway, including its natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, economic, and recreational qualities.

The Greenway boundary includes all lands within 150' of ordinary low water. A setback line is required to keep structures separated from the river in order to protect, maintain preserve, and enhance the natural, scenic, historic, and recreational qualities of the Willamette River Greenway. The setback line does not apply to water-related or water-dependent uses. Goal 15 requires localities to adopt Greenway boundaries, specify uses permitted within those boundaries, indicate areas of potential acquisition along the Greenway and adopt provisions, by ordinance, requiring a compatibility review permit for any intensification, change of use or development within the Greenway boundaries. One of the features of the Greenway law, is that the Oregon Department of Transportation, State Parks Division, may determine sites appropriate for purchase.

OREGON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

“Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: The Changing Face of the Future” Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2008-2012

The current Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for Oregon was completed by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) and accepted by the National Park Service (NPS) in January 2008. “Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: The Changing Face of the Future” SCORP constitutes Oregon’s basic five-year plan for outdoor recreation. The purpose of the plan is to provide guidance for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program and information and recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in making policy and planning decisions. The plan also provides guidance for other OPRD-administered grant programs and recommendations to the Oregon State Park System operations, administration, planning, development, and recreation programs. Each state is required to develop a SCORP to be eligible for matching grants from the LWCF grant program.

In this plan, OPRD has taken a proactive approach to addressing a limited number of important demographic and social changes facing outdoor recreation providers in Oregon including a rapidly aging population, fewer youth learning outdoor skills, an increasingly diverse population, and physical inactivity within the population. The planning process included a series of studies designed to provide outdoor recreation managers and planners across Oregon with usable knowledge to proactively address key statewide demographic and social changes. The plan includes separate chapters for each of the four demographic and social changes. These chapters include an issue introduction, a description of how the issue will affect recreation providers, a review of current literature related to the issue, a summary of key SCORP research findings, and a set of key planning recommendations for assisting recreation providers across the state to proactively address the issue. The key planning recommendations are provided for the following issues:

- **A Rapidly Aging Population**
- **Fewer Oregon Youth Learning Outdoor Skills**
- **An Increasingly Diverse Oregon Population**
- **Oregon’s Physical Activity Crisis**

For each of these topic areas, OPRD provided local recommendations for Oregon communities, including Independence, to consider in their park planning and programming. Each of these topics are highlighted on the following pages.



KEY PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A RAPIDLY AGING OREGON POPULATION

A Rapidly Aging Oregon Population

Within the next decade, 15 percent of Oregon's total population will be over the age of 65 and by 2030 that number will grow to nearly 20 percent. An enhanced focus on promoting and preserving the health of older adults is essential if we are to effectively address the health and economic challenges of an aging society. If older adults increase physical activity, improve eating habits, and take some relatively simple steps to minimize the risk of falling, they could live longer and healthier lives. Boomers will also have more time to "give back" to their communities or become involved in meaningful and purposeful volunteer activities. In addition to providing direct benefits to the community, studies have also shown that volunteering increases an older adult's physical health and agility as well as his/her cognitive and mental wellbeing. Clearly, Oregon's park and recreation providers have the facilities and programs in place across the state to take a leadership role in promoting and preserving the health of older adults through encouraging and facilitating their involvement in active outdoor recreation activities. OPRD has undertaken an effort to examine how recreation providers across the state can proactively prepare for changes associated with an aging Oregon population. The following recommendations we made in OPRD's 2008-2012 SCORP:

- **Statewide Recommendation #1:** Develop a statewide trails web site to facilitate recreational trail use by Oregon's Boomer population.
- **Statewide Recommendation #2:** Develop a statewide marketing plan to encourage Boomer outdoor recreation participation.
- **Statewide Recommendation #3:** Create a statewide interagency volunteer information web site or other communications medium to match Boomer volunteers with recreation or natural resource projects in Oregon.
- **Statewide Recommendation #4:** Facilitate the development of local senior walking clubs throughout Oregon.
- **Statewide Recommendation #5:** Identify ways to fund accessible trails in remote settings in close proximity to urban areas of the state.
 - i. *Local Recommendation #1: Greater priority for trail acquisition and development projects in high-priority counties and communities as identified by the Population Research Center (under the heading A Rapidly Aging Population) in OPRD-administered grant programs.*
 - ii. *Local Recommendation #2: Plan and develop regional trail systems in areas of the state having highest relocation intensity in the 40 to 79 age range in Coastal, Southern and Central Oregon communities as identified by the SCORP Boomer and Pre-Boomer Relocation Analysis project.*



KEY PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FEWER OREGON YOUTH LEARNING OUTDOOR SKILLS

Fewer Oregon Youth Learning Outdoor Skills

Although Oregon is a state with abundant natural resources, there is growing evidence that Oregon's youth are gravitating away from outdoor experiences and towards a virtual indoor reality. Analysis of past SCORP survey results indicates that participation in traditional outdoor recreation activities such as camping, fishing, and hunting have dramatically decreased. It could be argued that because of a variety of societal changes, Oregon has "lost a generation" of outdoor recreation participants. Research has shown that people who do not participate in outdoor recreation as youth are less likely to participate in those activities as adults. By providing Oregon's youth with opportunities to learn outdoor recreation skills in outdoor settings, we have the opportunity to rebuild the foundation for future outdoor recreation participation, reestablish personal connections with nature and their public lands, and improve not only health and well being of future youth and adults, but also instill a passion for nature that may parlay into nature stewardship. This can be accomplished by engaging Oregon parents in outdoor skill/development activities or engaging youth directly. OPRD's SCORP presents the following recommendations for increasing youth learning outdoor skills:

- **Statewide Recommendation #1:** Develop a statewide youth outdoor programming framework and funding source to focus youth programming efforts across Oregon towards addressing a specific set of key measurable objectives.
- **Statewide Recommendation #2:** Develop a menu of after-school programs which are linked to current education standards and that address key objectives of the statewide youth outdoor programming framework.
- **Statewide Recommendation #3:** Develop a "Let's go Camping" marketing campaign targeting Oregon adults with children with the objective of getting parents outdoors with their children.
- **Statewide Recommendation #4:** Create a new Outdoor Recreation Section within the Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA) addressing the areas of outdoor recreation and environmental education.
 - i. *Local Recommendation #1: Provide funding and assistance for innovative park designs to connect youth with nature in high-priority counties and communities as identified by the Population Research Center (under the heading Fewer Youth Learning Outdoor Skills) in OPRD administered grant programs.*



KEY PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AN INCREASINGLY DIVERSE OREGON POPULATION

An Increasingly Diverse Oregon Population

The face of Oregon is changing. By the year 2020, Oregon's combined Hispanic, Asian, and African-American population will make up 22% of the state's population. Research has identified that in general, minorities are less likely than whites to participate in outdoor recreation in the U.S. As a result, these under-represented populations forego the health, social, and other benefits of outdoor recreation, while natural areas, and the agencies that manage them, lose a potentially important group of supporters. As Oregon's population continues to change, it is critical to understand how different ethnic and racial groups participate in outdoor recreation activities, and the constraints that limit their participation to better serve their outdoor recreation needs. The following recommendations were made for increasing participation in outdoor recreation activities by diverse groups:

- **Statewide Recommendation #1:** Encourage organizational cultural change within public recreation agencies/organizations to effectively address the diversity issue.
- **Statewide Recommendation #2:** Create a pilot project to identify how to increase under-represented population access to outdoor sports fields.
- **Statewide Recommendation #3:** Develop recommendations for addressing language barriers to encourage under-represented population use of outdoor recreation facilities and programs.
- **Statewide Recommendation #4:** Create a customer service training module related to serving the outdoor recreation needs of an increasingly diverse population.
 - i. *Local Recommendation #1: Create priority for developing group day-use facilities, recreational trails, outdoor sports fields, close-to-home camping.*
 - ii. *Local Recommendation #2: Develop and implement a strategic regional marketing model designed to deliver outdoor recreation information to underrepresented populations in Oregon.*
 - iii. *Local Recommendation #3: Develop and implement a regional youth framework to encourage under-represented youth participation in outdoor recreation activities through partnerships and investments in school-based recreation clubs.*



OREGON'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CRISIS

Oregon's Physical Activity Crisis

According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC), rates of physical in-activity and obesity in the U.S. have reached epidemic proportions. Overweight and obesity are associated with increases in several chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, type-2 diabetes, and various cancers. Regular, moderate exercise has been proven to reduce the risk of developing coronary heart disease, stroke, colon cancer, hypertension, diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity and depression. Public facilities such as trails, swimming pools and parks that are conveniently located have been found to be positively associated with vigorous physical activity in a number of studies, among both adults and children. By providing facilities and programs which encourage physical activity, parks, and recreation providers can directly contribute to the battle on physical inactivity, obesity, and rising health costs in Oregon.

- **Statewide Recommendation #1:** Develop a statewide marketing plan to encourage Oregonians to become physically active by using park and recreation facilities and services.
- **Statewide Recommendation #2:** Develop and institutionalize the statewide trails web site and add information about physical activity related recreation programs and facilities following completion of the recreational trails work.
- **Statewide Recommendation #3:** Work with the medical community to get outdoor recreation participation information into medical offices and physician referrals.
- **Statewide Recommendation #4:** Identify ways to fund recreation maintenance and facility development on school grounds.
- **Statewide Recommendation #5:** Develop a strategy to strengthen the role of parks and recreation agencies in the state's Safe Routes to Schools grant program.
- **Statewide Recommendation #6:** Create a pilot program to identify how to increase under-represented population access to outdoor sports fields.
- **Statewide Recommendation #7:** Identify ways to fund and maintain bicycle trails on Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) right-of-ways which are separated from the road using excess corridor.
 - i. *Local Recommendation #1: Greater priority for close-to-home non-motorized trail acquisition and development projects in high-priority counties as identified by the Population Research Center (under the heading A Physical Activity Crisis) in OPRD-administered grant programs.*

SCORP PRIORITY COUNTIES

And finally, the appendices of the SCORP document includes population estimates and projection tables for Oregon counties and selected communities for specific demographic characteristics such as age, race/ethnicity, and health status. This information is intended to help OPRD strategically focus resources and efforts toward specific areas of the state where these issues are most relevant. The forecasts in this report are based on assumptions developed from analysis of historical trends and expectations of the future. Polk County was not identified in the appendices of SCORP as one of the high priority counties for the following projected categories:

- Increase in aging population 60 years and older
- Increase in youth population between the ages of 6-17
- Increase in population diversity: Hispanic ethnicity diversity, Asian/ Pacific Islander race diversity or Black race diversity

As the demographics change in Independence and Polk County, applications for grants to OPRD for financial assistance for park acquisition, park master planning and park development may be able to make the case that the city’s population meets the needs targeted by the key recommendations outlined in SCORP.

Seciton I: Table 1 - Top Ten Activities in Polk County, 2011

User Occasions Where Activity Occurred		% Population Participating	
Activity	User Occasions	Activity	% Population Participating
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	4,768,423	Walking on local streets / sidewalks	74.5
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	1,318,295	Beach activities – ocean	68.0
General play at a neighborhood park / playground	1,245,124	Walking on local trails / paths	64.6
Walking on local trails / paths	1,222,461	Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, festivals	61.8
Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas	1,069,213	Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc	57.8
Bicycling on roads, streets /sidewalks	924,021	Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	54.6
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	858,899	Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	51.3
Jogging / running on streets / sidewalks	608,756	General play at a neighborhood park / playground	48.2
Bird watching	570,821	Picnicking	44.9
Other nature / wildlife / forest / wildflower observation	491,826	Car camping with a tent	43.0

Source: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Demand Analysis –Polk County Summary, 2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Supporting Documentation by Randall Rosenberger and Kreg Lindberg, Oregon State University College of Forestry:12 November, 2012

OREGON RESIDENT OUTDOOR RECREATION DEMAND ANALYSIS – POLK COUNTY SUMMARY

OPRD conducted statewide surveys of Oregon residents regarding their 2011 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, as well as their opinions about parks and recreation management. Surveys were collected and categorized by county. The key findings of the survey for Polk County are represented in **Table 1 - Top Ten Activities in Polk County, 2011**.

SCORP Polk County: Priorities for the Future

Survey participants were asked about their opinions on priorities for the future in and near their community. **Table 2 - Priorities for the Future** reports Polk County results, with items listed in descending order by mean priority ratings. The top priority needs for Polk County residents are soft surface walking trails, access to waterways, playgrounds with natural materials (Natural Play Areas) and nature and wildlife viewing areas. Picnic areas for small groups, paved walking trails, off-street bicycle trails and nature and wildlife viewing areas rated high as well. Outdoor tennis and basketball courts and baseball / softball fields rated the lowest on priority investments.

Section I: Table 2 - Priorities for the Future, What Park and Forest Agencies Should Invest In, Polk County— Mean For 5-Point Likert (1 = “Lowest priority need” to 5 = “Highest priority need”)

Item	Mean
Dirt / other soft surface walking trails and paths	3.9
Public access sites to waterways	3.6
Children’s playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	3.5
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	3.5
Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups	3.3
Off-street bicycle trails and pathways	3.2
Paved / hard surface walking trails and paths	3.1
Children’s playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	3.0
Community gardens	3.0
Off-leash dog areas	3.0
Picnic areas and shelters for large visitor groups	2.9
Designated paddling routes for canoes, kayaks, rafts, driftboats	2.9
Multi-use fields for soccer, football, lacrosse, etc.	2.6
Baseball / softball fields	2.5
Off-highway vehicle trails / areas	2.5
Basketball courts	2.4
Outdoor tennis courts	2.3

Source: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Demand Analysis –Polk County Summary, 2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Supporting Documentation by Randall Rosenberger and Kreg Lindberg, Oregon State University College of Forestry:12 November, 2012

Section I: Table 3 - Value and Delivery for Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services, Polk County

Value For Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services—Mean for 5-point Likert (1 = "Least valued" to 5 = "Most valued")		Delivery of Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services—Mean for 5-point Likert (1 = "Currently does not deliver at all" to 5 = "Currently delivers extremely well")	
Benefit	Value Mean	Benefit	Delivery Mean
Improve physical health and fitness	4.3	Improve physical health and fitness	3.3
Make your community a more desirable place to live	4.3	Make your community a more desirable place to live	3.3
Preserve open space and the environment	4.3	Preserve open space and the environment	3.3
Help reduce crime	4.1	Preserve historical features in your community	3.2
Improve mental health and reduce stress	3.9	Provide opportunities for social interaction	3.1
Preserve historical features in your community	3.8	Enhance a sense of place and community	3.1
Enhance a sense of place and community	3.7	Help reduce crime	3.0
Increase property values in your community	3.5	Improve mental health and reduce stress	3.0
Provide opportunities for social interaction	3.2	Promote tourism	2.9
Help attract new residents and businesses	3.1	Increase property values in your community	2.8
Promote tourism	3.1	Help attract new residents and businesses	2.8

Source: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Demand Analysis –Polk County Summary, 2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Supporting Documentation by Randall Rosenberger and Kreg Lindberg, Oregon State University College of Forestry:12 November, 2012

SCORP Polk County: Value and Delivery for Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services

Polk County residents that participated in outdoor recreation activities were also asked their opinions related to the benefits provided by park and recreation agencies. Ranging from a mean score of 3.1 to 4.3 on the 5-point scale, improving physical health, community desirability and preserving open space rated the highest valued in Polk County. Lowest valued benefits in Polk County included promoting tourism, attracting new residents / businesses and providing opportunities for social interaction. Delivery of benefits ranged from a mean score of 2.8 to 3.3, with improving physical health, community desirability and preserving open space rated the highest delivered in Polk County. **Table 3 - Value and Delivery for Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services, Polk County** presents the overall preferences for values and benefits of parks and recreation services.

OPRD: WILLAMETTE RIVER WATER TRAIL

The Willamette River Water Trail was developed by a core partnership consisting of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the American Heritage Rivers Initiative, the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Program, and the Willamette Riverkeeper.

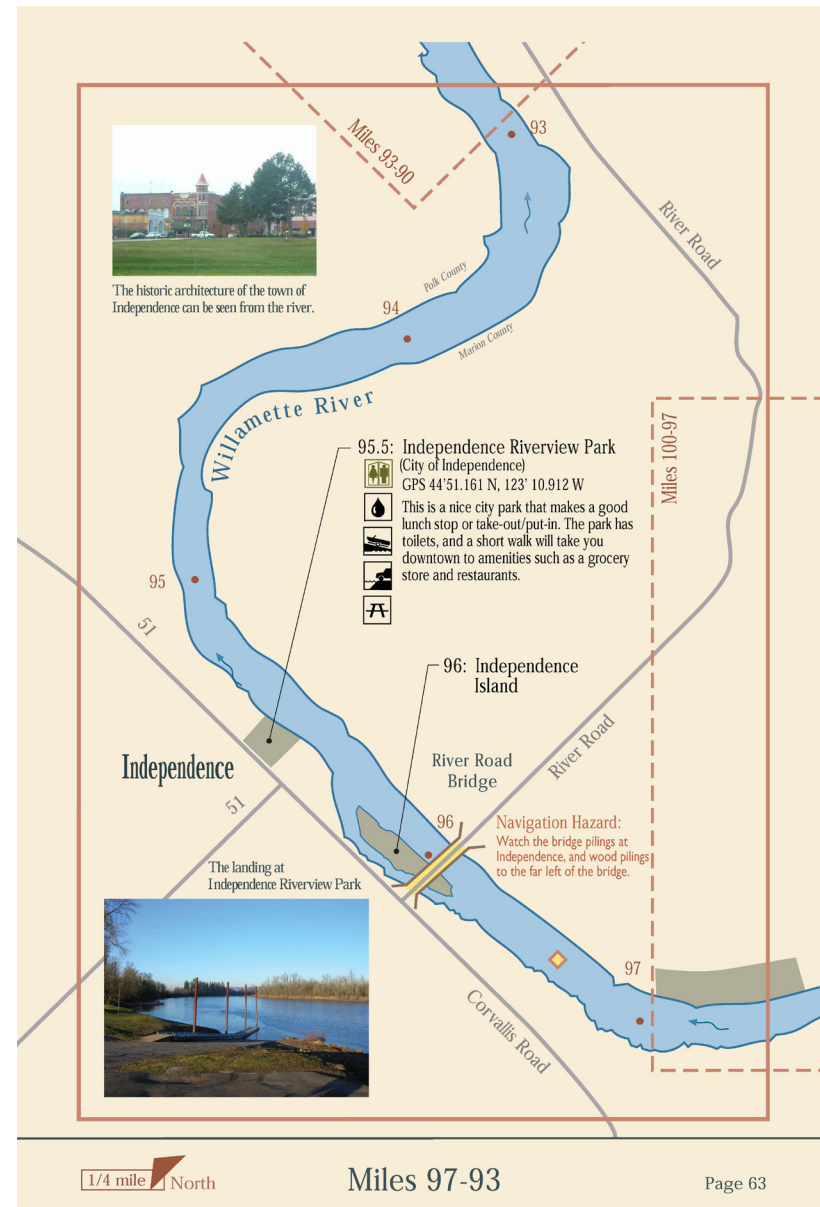
Water trails are rivers that act as corridors or "trails." Water trail facilities are legal and safe put-ins and take-outs, parking, restrooms and camping, all designed for kayaks, canoes, drift boats and other small, motor-free water craft. Some of Oregon's water trails were completely grassroots driven and some were developed by a coalition of private groups and the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The need for water trails grew out of several issues including:

- A need to address conflicts between motorized and non-motorized boaters.
- The need for more public access to Oregon's waterways.
- The need for consistent information including signs and maps.

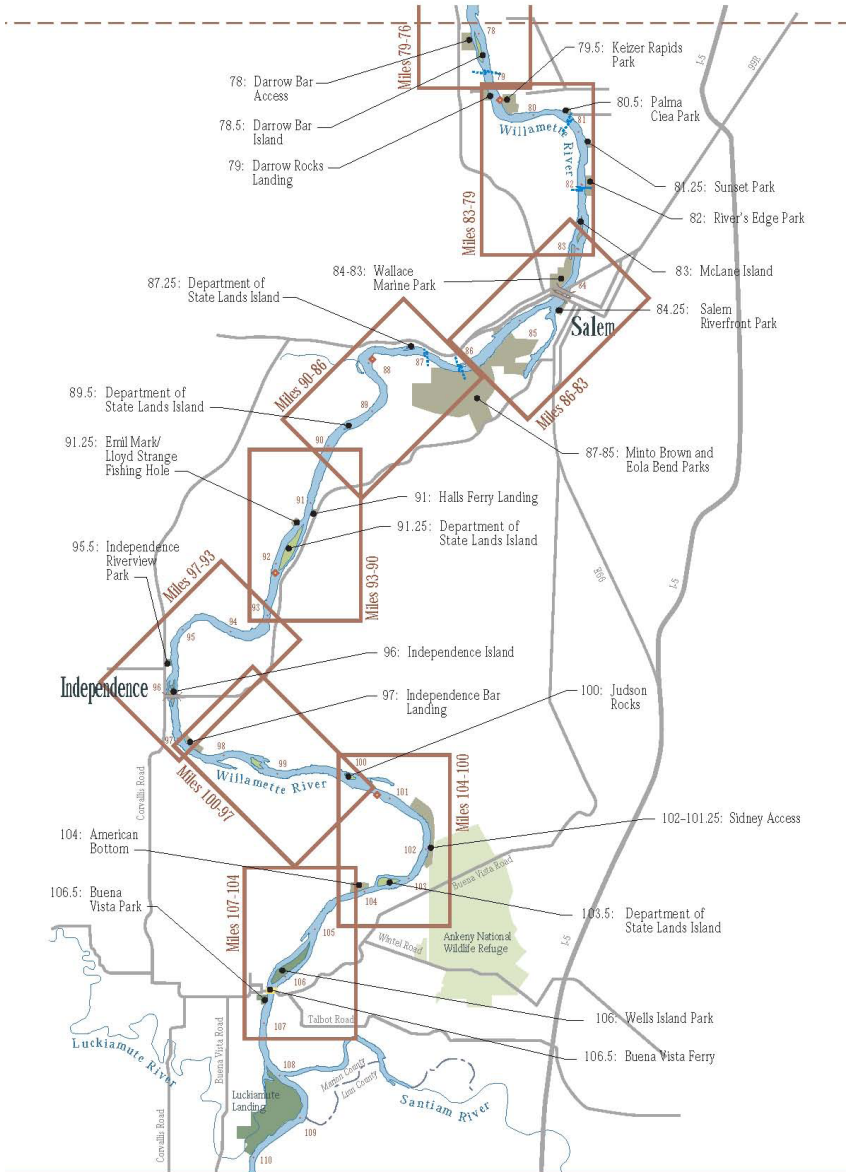
The Willamette River Water Trail (shown in **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**) is an assemblage of properties that provide access for paddlers to the Willamette River, or afford opportunities to camp along the river. The trail also has two key guides that enable people to identify campsites, track river features, and that offer a bit of history and information on what can be found as you travel the river.

At its core, the Water Trail helps enable paddlers to enjoy the Willamette River for a short trip, or a multi-day trip along the river. The Trail covers 187 miles of the mainstem Willamette River, and several miles of the river on the Coast Fork Willamette, Middle Fork Willamette, and the McKenzie River. With a host of parks and natural areas, especially Willamette Greenway Sites, administered by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, the Water Trail maintains a host of opportunities to access the Willamette River.

Section I: Figure 1 - Willamette Water Trail Map: Miles 97-93



Section I: Figure 2 - Overall Willamette Water Trail Map



1 Mile North

Key Map 4

CITY SYSTEMS PLANNING

The City of Independence plans and operates many different systems across the city. The following system plans will directly relate to Parks System Plan:

- City of Independence Comprehensive Plan 1993
- Parks and Open Space Master Plan 1996
- Independence 2020 Vision Plan
- Independence Action Plan
- City of Independence: Urban Renewal Plan 2001
- Ash Creek Trail Plan 2005

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1993

While several related planning efforts will influence the direction and outcomes of the Parks System Plan, most important of these is the City of Independence Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is mandated by the state to be in conformance with 19 Oregon Statewide Planning Goals, including those related to land use planning, open spaces, historic resources and natural areas, and parks and recreation. Land development and related activities, including the City's development ordinances, must be consistent with goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Other plans, such as those related to parks, recreation and natural areas also must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Comprehensive Plan focus areas that are relevant to the formation of the new Parks System Plan are as follows:

Natural Hazards and Disasters

Goal: To protect life and property from natural disasters and hazards.

Policies:

1. Independence will not permit development other than open space park uses within the floodway.

Natural Resources

Goal: To preserve and encourage wise use of available natural resources.

In order to preserve and encourage wise use of available natural resources, all development within the City of Independence will comply with applicable state environmental rules, regulations, and standards.

Open Space Policies:

1. Independence shall develop and implement an amendment to the subdivision ordinance requiring parkland dedication or payment in lieu of dedication.
2. Independence shall encourage a buffer of open space where feasible between Monmouth city limits and shall encourage and coordinate with Monmouth to do the same.
3. Independence shall maintain the Ash Creek and Willamette River floodway as open space.

Scenic Resources Policies:

1. Independence shall encourage preservation of scenic views through building height limitations along the Willamette River.

Fish and Wildlife Policies:

1. Independence shall preserve the riparian vegetation along the Willamette River and Ash Creek.
2. Independence shall seek available funding to study feasibility of development of Ash Creek floodplain as a nature center, park and wildlife sanctuary.
3. Independence shall maintain the sewage treatment lagoons as de facto waterfowl sanctuary by limiting public access.
4. Independence shall encourage other agencies and responsible private groups in any effort to improve wildlife habitat long the Willamette River and Ash Creek.

Waterfront Area Policies:

1. Independence shall encourage existing waterfront activities that retain the characteristics of previous uses of the river.
2. Independence shall preserve present riparian vegetation along the Willamette River through setback requirements.

Willamette Greenway

Goal: To protect, conserve, enhance, and maintain the scenic, historical, agricultural, economic and recreational quality of land along the Willamette River.

Policies:

1. Independence will cooperate with governmental agencies and special districts to protect all Willamette Greenway lands and resources.
2. Independence encourages agricultural uses within the Willamette River Greenway.
3. Independence considers existing aggregate uses within the Willamette Greenway.
4. Independence considers publicly owned land in the Greenway to have recreational value and will encourage its use as such.
5. Independence recognizes the confluence of Ash Creek as an archaeological significant area, a wildlife habitat, a park expansion area, a scenic area, a flood proves area, and protects it with Greenway implementation tools.
6. Independence recognizes the importance of vegetation to the resource quality along the river and will encourage the preservation of it within the greenway.

Public Facilities: Schools

1. The City of Independence recognizes the need and ability of the Central School District to plan all elements of the services they provide. However, the City shall encourage and promote cooperative planning between the city and the district regarding any development or program having a direct bearing on the school location or city services.
2. The future school sites should be sufficiently large to provide school facilities that may be expanded as the need arises. Encouragement should be given to multi-uses of school property such as open space and neighborhood parks.

Recreation

Goal: To provide adequate recreation opportunities for the citizens of Independence and visitors from surrounding areas.

Policies:

1. Independence shall seek available funding or assistance to evaluate the condition, usage, and adequacy of the present park system.
2. Independence shall assist in maintaining programs of leisure time activities for senior citizens and youth.
3. Independence shall encourage acquisition of land north of Riverview Park (formerly Polk Marine Park) when funding becomes available,.
4. Independence shall encourage usage of public parks and other recreational facilities.

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN 1996

In 1996, Independence adopted the Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The ten year master plan was undertaken at that time as a response to growth and the expressed desires of the residents and a concrete step in the City's continued efforts to provide recreational opportunities for all its citizens and improve quality of life. The master plan was used as a guide to develop the Capital Improvement program for parks and as a tool to secure grants and private funding for park improvements.

A Citizen Advisory Committee was formed at the beginning of the master planning process. The members provided guidance and assistance to the master plan team in acquiring input from the public at large and contributed their opinions as informed and involved citizens. People invited to participate in the Citizen Advisory Committee included representatives from the City Council, the Park Board, the Police Department, a member of youth, the Hispanic population and neighborhood groups.

A park system survey was created and distributed as an insert to the quarterly City of Independence Newsletter to all people with an Independence address. Surveys were also distributed by the City Manager at a school assembly; a Spanish version was distributed door to door by a Citizen Advisory Committee member. Public workshops were held to solicit suggestions from citizens. In addition, interviews were conducted with several community members including the Chamber of Commerce Director, the Chief of Police, and the Facilities Director for the School District.

The Parks Master Plan acknowledged the difficulty of applying national park standards for larger cities onto rural cities with smaller population size such as Independence. The national park standards for park system planning for cities with a population of 50,000 do not have the same applicability to the City of Independence. At the time, the City of Independence met the minimum standard for acres of park per capita population, distance from parks, actual park space, and diversity of facilities were below recommended guidelines. The plan underscored that according to SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Recreation Plan) and other studies, distance was a major factor when people decide whether or not to participate in recreational activities. Walking and running trails, playgrounds, and swimming pools are used mostly by people who live within one quarter mile of the facility. Bicycling, skating, botanical gardens and historic exhibits are used most highly by people who live within one half mile of the facility. At the time, only a little over half the residents can walk to a park within five minutes without crossing a major arterial. Almost all of the new residential development occurring and anticipated to occur in the projected ten years will be in locations without parks within walking distance. This deficiency was reflected in the recommendations that more small parks be created. The overall park system recommendations included the following Goals:

- Develop a community park and community center which can accommodate large groups and a variety of activities.
- Establish two neighborhood park/playgrounds: one north of Monmouth Avenue between Highway 51 and Gun Club Road; one south of Monmouth Avenue between Corvallis Road and the western City limits. Include intense use facilities for individual and team sports.
- Establish mini-neighborhood parks as necessary so that most of all residents are no more than a five minute walk from a neighborhood park/playground or a mini-neighborhood park and can reach that park without having to cross the major arterials in the community (Monmouth Avenue, Gun Club Road, Hoffman Road, Polk Street, Highway 51 or Corvallis Road). Include facilities for young children and parents, older children and adolescents, seniors, and ones that will accommodate small neighborhood functions.

- Establish a Linear Park along Ash Creek from Central School District at the western Edge to Ash Street on the east.
- Preserve some land along Ash Creek as a conservation area.

The plan recognized the need to address three priority areas in the city:

1. Creating access to Wildfang Park
2. The Gun Club Road- Ash Creek Neighborhood was one of the more densely inhabited areas of town and was without convenient access to a park. The neighborhood association was active in efforts to get a park built near them and focused their attention on the site deeded to the City by the Northgate subdivision developers.
3. Riverview Park needs renovation for aesthetic and economic reasons as well as recreation.

INDEPENDENCE 2020 VISION PLAN

Independence 2020 is a community-wide visioning process sponsored by the City of Independence in cooperation with several community partners. The goal of Independence 2020 is to set a road map for the future with input from those that live, work, and play in the community. The plan provides an opportunity for the community to continue to shape the kind of city that future generations will be proud to call home. Independence 2020 is not a “City” of Independence plan but rather a community plan with the benefits and responsibility of development and implementation shared among a broad range of partners.

The year-long vision plan process began in the summer of 2008 with the objective of updating the City’s vision statement and developing an action plan to implement this vision. In addition as part of Independence 2020, existing market conditions were analyzed, a retail business development strategy was identified, a code audit of the existing zoning ordinance was performed, and development and design standards and guidelines were created as the necessary regulatory framework to implement the vision.

INDEPENDENCE ACTION PLAN

The planning process for Independence 2020 Vision Plan resulted in a list of projects that when implemented, will move the community towards a shared vision. The action plan provides a road map for accomplishing Independence’s 2020 vision. The plan is shaped by the values and ideas of the community. Specific actions are identified, and a timeline, lead partner, and supporting partners are identified to ensure implementation. The action plan contains three pieces: community values, a 2020 vision statement, and an action plan. With a clear picture of the future articulated in the vision statement, community members developed a set of actions to help them realize their vision. These initial actions were organized these into emphasis areas and identified seven goals:

- Enhance Independence’s Historic Character
- Develop a Vibrant Downtown
- Create an Accessible Community
- Focus on Youth
- Improve and Promote Community Assets
- Sustainability at Work
- Promote Economic Vitality

Goal: Create an accessible community

Independence is a diverse City that values people of all ages and cultures. The City should continue to be welcoming in its services and at its facilities. Services should be accessible to all regardless of ethnicity or age. Facilities should provide opportunities for all residents and be ADA accessible. Finally the City should be easy to navigate whether walking, biking, or taking public transit. Independence will remain a great place to live far into the future if opportunities are made available to all people living in the City.

Top Strategy 1: Provide/champion more transportation options.

If it is easy to get around the City of Independence, residents and visitors will be able to enjoy all the City has to offer. Independence is the perfect size to travel on foot or by bike. Currently, however, the public realm is not inviting and residents take unnecessary trips by car as a result. More opportunities should be provided to get people out of their cars and promote community members interacting with one another. The Ash Creek Trail serves as a multi-modal path that will connect the residential neighborhoods with the historic downtown. Creating additional connections will help stimulate the downtown economy.

Actions:

1. Promote and provide opportunities for walkability and bikability (emphasize accessibility)
2. Create a Monmouth Street “Community Corridor”
3. Work to create more north-south and east-west collectors
4. Increase frequency of bus service between Monmouth and Independence (look at developing a rubber-tired trolley system)

Top Strategy 2: Provide more opportunities for all types of recreation in parks. Parks are a key part of any City, providing a place for residents to gather, kids to play, and families to spend time together outdoors. Independence should provide high-quality parks that offer its residents a range of activities. Existing and improved parks will allow residents to take advantage of the City’s natural setting and waterways, including Ash Creek and the Willamette River. A strong park system will also act as an economic engine, attracting visitors from the region and Paddle and Cycle Oregon participants.

Actions:

1. Include cross-country running Trail and disc-golf course in North Riverfront Park Sport Complex
2. Complete Ash Creek Trail
3. Improve neighborhood parks
4. Create more baseball, softball and soccer fields
5. Build a dog park
6. Update Parks & Open Space Master Plan
7. Continue to develop Mountain Fir Nature Park
8. Build/improve skate park with Monmouth

Top Strategy 3: Improve ADA accessibility

Actions:

1. Improve accessibility to community buildings, events and downtown businesses
2. Continue current sidewalk repair program
3. Build accessible playground in Riverview Park

4. Use 2008 sidewalk inventory to develop a citywide sidewalk repair program. Use Central Plaza as an example
5. Launch education program on property owner responsibility for sidewalk maintenance

Goal: Focus on youth

Everyone agrees that youth and family should be a community priority. The City and community should help youth stay healthy. Opportunities to work and play locally are key to the future success of the City. Independence should be a great place for people to live and raise a family. In order to accomplish this goal, Independence must also be a great place for youth so that they will stay in Independence and raise families of their own.

Top Strategy 4: Provide more locations and opportunities for youth.

In order to ensure that Independence is a great place for youth, there must be fun and safe things to do, places to gather, and opportunities for jobs. If youth have access to healthy activities, they will get into less trouble and become more a part of the community. If there are opportunities for employment, youth will be less likely to move away from the area.

1. Build new swimming pool/aquatic center
2. Encourage development of a YMCA or Boys and Girls Club-type facility
3. Create more youth groups and clubs
4. Start a High School age sports leagues- “city league” - type competition level
5. Develop Parks & Recreation “staff” support
6. Organize and collaborate youth work force development activities
7. Organize, re-start, or better promote 4-H programs
8. Increase Hispanic involvement in Central Youth Sports
9. Increase soccer leagues/teams

Goal: Improve and promote community assets

In order to be a great place to live for generations to come, Independence must have high-quality infrastructure — streets, water, sewer, and parks. The City must plan ahead for the growth of these systems while also ensuring that they meet current needs. Valuable community assets like sidewalks, parks, and the airport should be safe and attractive and continue to benefit residents and the region.

Top Strategy 5: Find ways to utilize Riverview Park more often.

Riverview Park is an exceptional resource for the city. Seen as a community treasure, the park should be programmed with more activities on weekends and more facilities such as picnic shelters and tables. In addition, Riverview Park should be marketed to the larger region in order to attract visitors and bolster efforts to redevelop the downtown.

Actions:

1. Work with WOU and Pentacle Theater to put on outdoor theater productions
2. Provide more picnic shelters
3. Develop an amphitheater events committee to organize larger events. Consider the need for an Event Coordinator/Amphitheater Manager
4. Actively program Riverview Park to generate ongoing downtown activity, enhance downtown's identity as an entertainment destination and to increase sales to businesses
5. Advertise events and attractions
6. Investigate a larger stage for the amphitheater

Goal: Sustainability at work

Sustainability is an important goal for the City of Independence in terms of natural resource protection, community involvement, and policies and programs. Good stewardship of natural and community resources is tied to the continued development of a successful local economy as Independence continues to grow.

Top Strategy: Increase and maintain natural areas along creeks and rivers.

Situated along the banks of the Willamette River and Ash Creek, residents of Independence feel a connection with the waterways in their community. Not only do community members want to protect and enhance these water resources, but they also would like better access to these areas for recreational opportunities.

Natural areas should be increased and maintained along Ash Creek and the Willamette River. These areas could provide key educational and conservation opportunities.

Actions:

1. Develop soft surface jogging trails along the river
2. Restore riverbank in Riverview Park and protect the Willamette River from erosion
3. Complete riparian restoration projects on Ash Creek
4. Add more shade trees
5. Organize volunteer groups to pull invasive weeds along creeks and river

CITY OF INDEPENDENCE: URBAN RENEWAL PLAN 2001

The City of Independence: Urban Renewal Plan was adopted in 2001. The Urban Renewal Plan outlined the goals and objectives as follows:

Goal One: To diversify economic base and family wage jobs within the district.

Goal Two: To maintain effective, efficient and safe traffic systems for vehicular and pedestrian users.

Goal Three: To improve and retain existing businesses,

Goal Four: To improve attractive visual amenities for customers and community members throughout the district.

Goal Five: Provide user friendly and eye pleasing streets, pedestrian ways and greenways throughout the district.

Goal Six: Furnish new and improved pedestrian areas and parks through out the district.

Parks, Recreation, Pedestrian and Bike Corridors and Other Amenities were recognized in the Urban Renewal plan to allow the Urban Renewal Agency to acquire and improve land or buildings for public parks, open space, bicycle and pedestrian uses, construct facilities for public use and fund planning and engineering activities as needed to carry out these activities.

ASH CREEK TRAIL MASTER PLAN APRIL 2005

The vision for the Ash Creek Trail Master Plan is two-fold: (1) to create open space and restoration opportunities and create a trail that (2) offers all community residents and visitors a non-motorized travel alternative between Independence and Monmouth. The proposed Ash Creek Trail will travel roughly parallel to Ash Creek and provide spur trails to locations outside the greenway, protecting and enhancing the biological, cultural, and historic resources of the corridor. Ash Creek is an evolutionary product of human development.

Two hundred years ago, early settlers drained and leveled wetlands and riparian areas for agriculture, logging, and settlement. Before this period, the creek and surrounding area resembled boggy, “braided marsh” with numerous small drainages, all spilling toward a larger drainage, what is known today as Ash Creek, and on to the Willamette River. Today, Ash Creek is a significant drainage that links Monmouth, Independence, and Dallas (at its farthest reaches). It is home to listed threatened fish species, is picturesque in areas that have not been impacted by development, and serves as an ecological and educational asset to the community. It is also a creek in distress. It has been dredged for flood control; much of its riparian corridor has been removed and is overrun with invasive plants; garbage and yard debris litter the creek bed and lodge in creekside vegetation; and the water is contaminated with agricultural and urban runoff, such as pesticides, animal effluent, oil, and other toxic liquids.

The Ash Creek Trail will also provide a convenient, non-automotive transportation alternative to Oregon 51 and Hoffman Road for local trips within the communities of Independence and Monmouth. As the communities continue to grow, the Ash Creek Trail will serve as a major transportation connection between the cities, linking neighborhoods, schools, and parks along the corridor. The trail will also provide access to areas outside the corridor, such as commercial retail areas and neighborhoods south of OR 51, as well as provide additional recreational and open space preservation opportunities. The master plan analyzes and recommends a trail alignment, environmentally-sensitive trail design features, trail amenities, and safety and security measures for the four-mile corridor.

Greenways are undeveloped corridors, usually along water bodies or between urban centers that are reserved for non-motorized uses and environmental preservation. Greenways provide direct connections for walkers and runners, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users to other networks, such as bicycle lanes and sidewalks on local roadways and other trail systems, as well as to parks and open spaces, schools, neighborhoods, and other desirable destinations. They may also include stretches of ‘quiet’ minor roads designed to be safe and attractive for bicyclists or pedestrians.

The over arching vision for the Ash Creek Trail Master Plan is to designate the creek corridor as a greenway and develop a multi-use trail that provides a non-motorized travel alternative between Independence and Monmouth for all community residents and visitors. The Ash Creek Trail will travel roughly parallel to Ash Creek and provide spur trails to locations outside the greenway, while protecting and enhancing the biological, cultural, and historic resources of the corridor. The City has developed Phase 1 of the Ash Creek Trail system, a half mile concrete path running along Ash Creek between 16th Street and Gun Club Road. The built path has excellent views of the Ash Creek and features a shelter with interpretive signs about the community and a large tile mosaic depiction of the creek.

1.3 REPORTS AND STUDIES

Special studies and reports can provide a greater level of analysis to inform the park system plan decisions and help establish the foundation for future planning. Planning reports and studies that directly relate to the Parks System Plan include:

- Valley Concrete Site Concept Plan & Report
- Southwest Independence UGB Concept Plan
- North Riverview Park Report

VALLEY CONCRETE SITE CONCEPT PLAN & REPORT: INDEPENDENCE, OREGON 30 MAY 2014

Over the last 15 years, Downtown Independence, Oregon, has experienced a revitalization – spurred on by a series of adopted plans; municipal investments in a new streetscape for Main Street, a premiere City park and amphitheater (Riverview Park), and a new Civic Center; and private investments in Downtown buildings and businesses.

Adjacent to Downtown – between Main Street and the Willamette River – is the Valley Concrete site, an 18-acre, industrially-zoned property that is home to a ready-mix concrete operation. The City’s 2020 Vision Plan (adopted in 2009) included concepts for housing and mixed-use development on the Valley Concrete site that would bolster Independence’s restored Downtown. Oldcastle Materials, the site’s owner, expressed an interest in relocating Valley Concrete’s ready-mix concrete operation and putting the property itself up for sale. The City was able to secure a State Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Quick Response grant to further develop concepts for the site’s future.

The Valley Concrete site is a potentially transformative location for new housing and commercial uses that will further the city's rejuvenation by bringing new businesses and residents to downtown and better connect the community to the Willamette River. The proximity of the site to both Riverview Park and the Willamette River itself make it an attractive location for parks, open space, and an extension of the riverfront trail network. The 100-year and 500-year floodplains cover significant portions of the site; the seasonal floodway also covers the eastern part of the property. A more recent survey of the property by the owners suggests that a sizable piece of the site could be removed from the floodplains through land reclamation and filling. Any future development would require a more extensive topological and geological survey to better understand these issues.

During the planning process, a preferred conceptual alternative was created for the site to foster a partnership between the City and Old Castle Materials for the site's transformation (Figures 3 and 4). In the concept plan, open space and parks in the site concept are organized around a transect that connects the natural, riverfront zone adjacent to the Willamette on the east with more formal parks, plazas, and landscaped greenway streets that provide stormwater management towards the central and western portions of the site. Gardens, landscaping, event spaces, seating, recreation facilities, and water spray pads are among the amenities that would be woven in between buildings and along the development edge to provide gathering and activity spaces for residents, hotel guests, and visitors. Smaller open spaces near residences could be communal gardens, playgrounds, plazas, and outdoor dining and gathering locations.

Roughly seven acres of the site are within the river floodway; this zone will support native habitat and restoration, an extension of the trail system, and other features that can withstand seasonal high water. This restoration zone will conform to State and Federal mitigation standards and can vary in width to respond to the determined floodway line. The riverfront restoration zone creates a strong north-south connection between developable and natural areas that can be improved with natural surface trails, interpretive features, gathering locations, viewpoints, and river access spots.

Additional design considerations for open spaces on site include:

- Spaces oriented to provide sunlight exposure and views towards the river.
- Hearty, native species that are well-suited to the Willamette Valley climate and will not require excessive maintenance.

Oldcastle Materials is currently evaluating options for relocating the Valley Concrete ready-mix facility away from its current location in central Independence and has

listed the property for sale. Following this relocation and site restoration efforts, Oldcastle plans to work with the City of Independence to secure Comprehensive Plan and zoning amendments for the property to allow the proposed mix of housing, commercial, hotel, and open spaces as recommended in this plan.

SOUTHWEST INDEPENDENCE CONCEPT PLAN JUNE 2012

The Southwest Independence Concept Plan area includes approximately 270 acres of land located at the southwest corner of Independence. This land was brought into the city's urban growth boundary (UGB) in 2008 with the intention of providing the long-term capacity for more residential development for Independence, specifically a mix of housing types with a greater emphasis on multi-family residences. The area is comprised mostly of agricultural land with a few scattered houses. It is split in half by Ash Creek, which runs generally north-south through the area.

The planning process for this Southwest Independence Concept Plan began in summer of 2011. The Concept Plan identifies future land uses, including a mix of housing types and densities; a transportation system, including collector and arterial roadways and bicycle and pedestrian connections; and an approach to creating an open space and parks system which also protects important natural resources in the area. The approach for creating the parks and open space in this new growth area will be integrated into the Parks System Plan. The Southwest Independence Concept Plan was adopted as an ancillary document to the city's Comprehensive Plan and will be used to guide growth and development in the Planning Area.

Cultural & Recreational Resources

There are several existing parks in Independence and Monmouth that would serve future development in portions of the Planning Area. At the time, the Independence Parks and Open Space Master Plan 1996 identified a potential mini-neighborhood park in the northwestern portion of the Southwest Independence Planning Area (see Figure 5). In addition, based on the proximity of existing facilities, one neighborhood park of approximately 10 to 15 acres was desirable in the Planning Area, though this need may be met by a proposed greenway and linear park along the South Fork Ash Creek. There are no identified cultural or historic resources located in the within the Southwest Independence UGB expansion area limits.

Natural Resources

The topography within the Southwest Independence Planning Area is generally flat. The South Fork Ash Creek flows diagonally across the Planning Area from southwest to northeast, bordered by a vegetated riparian corridor. A 25-foot setback from either side of the creek is protected from development by City code. The creek's

100-year floodplain covers approximately 29 acres of the Planning Area. Potential wetlands were identified during preliminary wetland surveys in areas adjacent to the riparian/floodplain area and in swales and depressional areas located throughout the site. Formal delineation of wetlands will be required prior to development, and preservation and/or mitigation will be required for any wetlands that may be impacted. There are also two drainage ditches and two man-made freshwater ponds in the Southwest Independence UGB expansion area.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Network

The Southwest Independence Concept Plan includes a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to serve future Southwest Independence UGB expansion area as well as accommodate regional connectivity. All of the proposed collector roadways would include striped bicycle lanes and sidewalks, providing a continuous network of east-west and north-south connections. These facilities would be supported by a series of off-street multi-use paths along Ash Creek and other natural features within the Planning Area.

Open Space & Natural Resources Management

The Southwest Independence Plan incorporates an open space system centered on the South Fork Ash Creek stream/ floodplain/wetland corridor. This corridor will meet multiple purposes including protection of riparian and other natural resources, opportunities for wetland mitigation, flood storage, stormwater management, a multi-use trail, and linear and mini-neighborhood park areas.

The Plan also identifies two potential drainage/ wetland corridors based on the wetland study findings identified during the planning process and previous studies. However, their location may change pending the results of future wetland delineations and proposals for wetland avoidance, restoration and enhancement. The final amount of developable land will be determined by formal wetland delineation. Depending on how wetlands are treated on the site during development, some additional existing wetland areas may be further restored or enhanced and become part of the open space network.

The open space network identified in the Southwest Independence Concept Plan is an essential element of infrastructure for the future community. The combination of open space, parks, and trails in this network can deliver vital services at the scale of a watershed while fostering a livable community.

Parks, Open Space, Natural Areas and Trails Recommendations

- Ash Creek Riparian Corridor: The City will establish an open space corridor along the South Fork of Ash Creek to provide for a combination of riparian area protection, flood storage capacity, wetland preservation

and enhancement, stormwater management and linear park and trail development.

- Park Development: A minimum of one mini-neighborhood park will be established within the Concept Plan area. The specific location and size of this park shall be refined through the master plan and subdivision process. However, as illustrated in the Concept Plan (Figure 6), the park site shall be generally located adjacent to and/or partially within the South Fork Ash Creek riparian/floodplain/wetland corridor. The park shall meet standards for a mini-neighborhood park as detailed in the Independence Park and Recreation Master Plan. A Mini Neighborhood Park is a hybrid category created for the Independence Parks Master Plan 1996. It fills the gap between a mini-park (one acre or less) and a neighborhood park/playground (15 or more acres). The Mini-Neighborhood Park must be accessible within ¼ mile radius of the community it serves. It requires not having to cross an arterial for access to the park. Mount Fir Park, Pioneer Park and Mount Fir Village Park provide Mini-Neighborhood Park service to part of the study area.
- Open Space and Natural Resources: The City will support “green” development approaches, including co-location of stormwater swales in parks and along linear trail corridors to reduce land needs and costs and create opportunities for education, amenities, and recreational activities.
- Wetlands: The city will encourage mitigation of wetland impacts through a combination of avoidance, on-site enhancement or restoration of existing wetlands and participation in the State of Oregon’s wetland mitigation payment-in-lieu program. Within the Southwest Independence Concept Plan area, the city places a particularly high priority on enhancement or restoration of wetlands adjacent to the South Fork of Ash Creek.
- Trails: A linked trail system shall be developed within the planning area, including development of trails within the South Fork Ash Creek corridor, other open space corridors and within proposed stormwater management/trail corridors. Through the subdivision and development permit process, the City of Independence may require dedication or easements to accommodate the development of the trail system.
- Intermittent drainages: In addition to the South Fork Ash Creek, the Concept Plan identifies two other potential open space corridors. They are located within an east-west drainage and potential wetlands area west of the South Fork Ash Creek and along an intermittent stream

corridor and potential wetland area running northwest to southeast, west and north of South Fork Ash Creek as shown in **Figure 7**. The City encourages designs that provide a linear drainage corridor combined with stormwater management features and recreational trails that connect with the corridor along South Fork Ash Creek. At a minimum, a 50-foot wide drainage with a 30-foot wide stormwater/trail corridor on one side, for a total 80-foot wide corridor, is the preferred design for these areas.

NORTH RIVERVIEW PARK REPORT

The City of Independence partnered with Olsen Agriculture and the State Transportation and Growth Management program to create a conceptual design for the development of Olsen's 66 acre property north of town. Eighty percent of the property lies within the floodplain of the Willamette River, rendering those areas unbuildable.

The conceptual design process will explore possible uses for the buildable portions of the land, and also examined the feasibility of developing the low land for use as city ballfields. The Quick Response team worked with the City, Olsen Agriculture and the public to develop a conceptual design for the property that was compatible with area land uses and provides the maximum potential for public benefit and return on the owners' investment. The concept plan was finalized (See Figure X). The City was able to receive assistance from the State Marine Board to build the access road, boat ramp, vault toilet and parking lot for the new boat launch facility and is currently working to continue develop the North Riverfront Ballfield Complex as funding is available.