

Chapter 8 - Parks

Introduction

The Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element establishes goals and objectives for the acquisition, development and maintenance of parks within the city of Battle Ground. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element sets a long-term direction for the City's parks infrastructure, while the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (Parks Plan) is the City of Battle Ground's short term blueprint for acquiring and improving parks.

Growth Management Act

In compliance with the GMA, the City of Battle Ground addresses parks and open space policy in an optional element of the Plan. The GMA established the following parks and open space goal:

- Encourage the retention of open space and development of recreational opportunities, to conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks.

County-Wide Parks Policies

Clark County has developed goals and policies that will direct parks and open space policy and development within the County. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element for this Plan is consistent with the following countywide parks and open space goals:

- Encourage cities to provide urban parks, open space, and recreational opportunities within urban growth areas, while ensuring that existing County-owned urban parks in unincorporated areas are properly managed and that future urban park opportunities, including greenbelt and open space areas, are preserved.
- Maximize the quality of life in Clark County by providing regional open space, trails, parks and recreational opportunities and facilities, and planning to acquire, restore, enhance, preserve, develop and manage these facilities and natural resources in such a manner as to afford the maximum benefit to the community.
- Develop a network of trails and bikeways throughout the County that will interconnect population centers, community facilities, work places, neighborhoods, recreational opportunities and natural green spaces.
- Preserve, conserve, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife conservation areas and open space lands and raise public awareness about the importance of these resources.

Comprehensive Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

The City of Battle Ground adopted the Parks Plan concurrently with this Plan. The Parks Plan is the City's blueprint for acquiring and developing parks, trails, recreation facilities and open space. The Parks Plan was designed to be used as a short term resource and planning guide for the City and its residents.

The Parks Plan provides:

- a history of parks planning
- a description of the planning effort's physical, social, and economic context
- an inventory of existing facilities
- a framework for accomplishing plan implementation
- goals and objectives for the City's parks
- a quantification of the community's parks facilities needs
- an outline of financing, incentive and regulatory programs available to implement the plan
- strategies for matching financing programs with identified needs
- a six-year capital facilities plan.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element Goals and Objectives

Parks Goal 1:

The City will seek to provide and preserve open space in the community for present and future generations.

Objectives

PO1.1 Natural habitat areas will be preserved for passive recreation opportunities and wildlife values.

PO1.2 Open spaces will be integrated into the design of the community.

PO1.3 The City will encourage the inclusion of open space in new developments.

PO1.4 Open spaces will be maintained in an environmentally appropriate manner and public access and amenities should be kept in good condition.

Parks Goal 2:

The City will seek to provide parks to meet the diverse needs of the community.

Objectives

PO2.1 The City will strive to provide adequate neighborhood parks appropriate to the neighborhood.

PO2.2 The City will strive to provide adequate community parks.

PO2.3 The City will strive to provide adequate pocket parks.

PO2.4 The City will facilitate the creation of community gardens.

PO2.5 The City will ensure that all City parks are maintained in good condition.

PO2.6 The City will ensure that all City parks are maintained in a safe condition.

PO2.7 The City will investigate creating recreational opportunities through partnerships with the school district and other organizations.

PO2.8 The City will use neighborhood and city parks to meet local recreation needs.

Parks Goal 3:

The City will seek to provide a safe and accessible community-wide trail system.

Objectives

PO3.1 The City will work to provide trails that meet the recreation needs of Battle Ground residents.

PO3.2 The City will work to establish a trail system that connects parks, residential areas and commercial areas and that helps serve the transportation needs of the residents of Battle Ground.

Parks Goal 4:

The City encourages cooperative efforts to preserve and enhance open space, trails, parks and recreation opportunities in the community.

Objectives

PO4.1 The City will maintain and enhance working relationships with other jurisdictions.

PO4.2 The City will work in partnership with the residents of Battle Ground and organized groups to preserve and maintain parks, open spaces and trails and increase recreational opportunities.

Existing Conditions

This section identifies the various recreation sites and facilities that are located in or near Battle Ground. The City of Battle Ground's system of parks and open space is divided into several categories. Each category is composed of facilities that serve specific community functions. Pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks and urban open spaces are based on a minimum service standard measured in acres per population for the acquisition and development of these facilities. The combined population based service standard for all of these facilities is a total of five acres of required parkland per 1,000 people. In addition to this combined population based standard, the City may require developer parties to develop and dedicate parks on a local basis to adequately serve neighborhoods. The need for conservation areas, greenways and trails is based on the characteristics of a specific resource, such as a river system or a sensitive habitat area, independent of population. Special facilities can be either population- or resource-based.

City Parks

The City of Battle Ground owns approximately 203 acres of parks and open space located on 36 parcels within the City limits. Approximately 66 acres of these lands consist of wetland areas and creek corridors. Several small open space parcels associated with subdivision developments are also included in City ownership.

Parks dedicated before 1997, approximately 17.17 acres:

- Central Park (.42 acres)
- Fairgrounds Park – Parcel 1 (5.59 acres)
- Fairgrounds Park – Parcel 2 (2.67 acres)
- Kiwanis Park (8.49 acres)

Parks dedicated after 1997, approximately 17.48 acres:

- Florence Robison Park (7.12 acres)
- Hidden Glen (4.20 acres)

- Cresap Park (2.3 acres)
- Parkview Trails Property (3.86 acres, portions dedicated)

Parks dedicated after 2003, approximately 38.82 acres:

- Mac McConnell Park (2 acres)
- Dublin Meadows (.20 acres)
- Horsethief Park (.32 acres)
- Savannah Park (.15 acres)
- Brook Haven Park Trail (2.2 acres)
- Cedar Trails (2.7 acres)
- BG Village (.64 acres)
- DNR Property (30 acres at Tukes Mtn.)
- Wingate Park (.61 acres)

Future Park Properties, currently undeveloped, approximately 129.38 acres:

- Triangle Park (1.17 acres)
- Gardner Oaks Park (12.98 acres)
- Copperleaf (.59 acres)
- Oak Meadows (.10 acres)
- Remy Property (79.61 acres)
- Durkee Property (34.93 acres)

While the City Park system currently provides a variety of passive recreational opportunities, existing needs for active recreation facilities are not satisfied. Passive recreation is leisure activities involving little physical exertion, such as picnicking, strolling, dog-walking, and wildlife observation.

Active recreation is leisure activities involving heightened physical exertion, such as basketball, rollerblading, skateboarding, and soccer. Gardner Oaks and the Remy Property are currently unimproved. An unimproved park is land designated for recreational uses that have not received capital investment, therefore resulting in few opportunities for recreational activities. Central, Fairgrounds, Florence Robison, Kiwanis, Hidden Glen, and Lindberg parks, and the Parkview Trails property are either improved or partially improved for active recreation uses. An improved park is land designated for recreational uses that have received capital investment resulting in opportunities for passive or active recreational activities. Parks improvements may include landscaping, playfields, furniture, pavilions, etc. In total, approximately six acres of Battle Ground's parks are improved for active uses. Additional upland areas were combined with the 2.4-acre Woodin Creek open space to create Hidden Glen Park. In addition to parks, the City also has an inventory of urban open space, conservation areas, and greenways to provide areas of passive recreation and wildlife habitat.

Regional Parks

Regional Parks include areas with natural or man-made qualities for outdoor recreation, or with unique qualities or historical significance. These parks serve several communities within a one-hour driving distance. They range in size from 100 to more than 325 acres; however, no minimum is recommended. Regional Parks are provided by a variety of county, state, and federal agencies.

Development typically includes: picnicking, play areas, boating, fishing, swimming, camping and trail uses, or other unique qualities. Examples of Regional parks include:

- Battle Ground Lake
- Paradise Point
- Wormald
- The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and public hunting areas
- Yacolt Multiple Use Area (YMUA)
- Caterpillar Island and the Woodland Special Campground for the Handicapped
- Gifford Pinchot National Forest
- Fort Vancouver National Historic Site
- Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge
- Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge
- Lewisville Park
- Lucia Falls Park

Urban Open Space

Urban Open Space areas provide visual and psychological relief from human-made development within the urban area. Their size is based on resource values and intended uses. Public access for passive recreational opportunities are included where compatible with resource protection. When connected along stream corridors, open space areas provide valuable wildlife habitat.

These areas may or may not be improved, and can include trails, greenway corridors, farmed areas, buffers between land uses, and natural areas within community or neighborhood parks.

Battle Ground Urban Open Spaces include:

- Lewisville Meadows (0.14 acres), NW 3rd Way
- Winchester Ranch (0.56 acres), SW 24th Avenue
- Clover Meadows (0.47 acres), SE 13th Street

Conservation and Greenway Systems

Conservation and greenway systems are resource- based open spaces. They are acquired with the intent of performing little or no development.

Conservation areas may act as a buffer for an existing park, industrial or residential area, or may protect a sensitive natural area. Greenways are similar to conservation areas, but are typically long, relatively narrow lands that follow roads, creeks, ridges, ravines and other natural or transportation corridors. Conservation and greenway systems serve various functions, including protection of environmentally sensitive areas and wildlife habitat, wildlife viewing, environmental education and trails.

The Battle Ground Conservation and Greenway Areas include:

- Parkview Trails (21.02 acres), NW 20th Avenue and NW 29th Avenue
- Lewisville Meadows Areas (16.16 acres), NW 3rd Way
- Horsethief Canyon Areas (7.38 acres), SW 11th Street/SW 23rd Avenue
- Robyn Wood Areas (5.72 acres), SW 24th Avenue, SW 4th Street
- Crestwood Meadows Areas (4.63 acres), NW Onsdorff Boulevard
- Melrose Park Areas (4.18 acres) , NW Onsdorff Boulevard
- Quail Hollow Areas (2.89 acres), SE Rasmussen Boulevard

- Hidden Creek Area (2.48 acres), SE 5th Circle
- Woodin Run Area (1.35 acres), SE 18th Street
- Creekview Pointe Area (0.57 acres), SE 2nd Avenue

Trails

Clark County has completed a comprehensive trails and bikeway system plan that identifies hiking and biking trails within Battle Ground and its UGA. According to the inventory, trails are any “path, route, way, right-of-way, or corridor posted, signed or designated as open for (non-motorized) travel or passage by the general public.” Trails may be a separate facility or part of a larger park development. Surfaces vary with location and use.

Acquired in 1985, the Lewis and Clark Railroad right-of-way extends diagonally through Clark County from Vancouver Lake to Chelatchie Prairie, extending through the City of Battle Ground on the east side and borders Fairgrounds Park. Identified as one of the five top priority “natural corridor” trails in Clark County, it was acquired both for commercial transportation uses and as a trail corridor. The corridor connects Battle Ground Lake State Park, Lucia Falls Park, Moulton Falls Park, and many other major recreation sites.

Community Schools and Centers

Community schools and centers are recreational facilities designed and operated jointly between the school district and the City. School facilities become available for recreation programs and services during non-school hours through joint-use agreements. Community schools and centers are strategically located within the service area. When used in combination with a full-service recreation center located in the same service area, community schools and centers provide an effective mechanism for the delivery of recreation services and programs at the community and neighborhood level.

The Battle Ground School District campuses provide a variety of recreation opportunities for area residents. Facilities include play courts, soccer fields, baseball fields, football stadium and track, open play meadows, and children’s play equipment. The general public can utilize school-based recreation facilities during non-school hours. In addition, the Battle Ground School Board has adopted policies that allow organizations to reserve and rent school buildings, playgrounds, and athletic fields. Currently, both youth soccer and baseball groups utilize the rental/reservation opportunity. Schools have been identified as possible partners in increasing the available recreation and open space opportunities for the community.

Battle Ground Schools Main Campus facilities include:

- Captain Strong Elementary
- Chief Umtuch Elementary
- Lewisville Middle School
- Battle Ground High School
- Battle Ground Senior Center

Special Areas and Facilities

Special areas and facilities generally serve a single focused activity or user group. Special areas are locations that generally have a particular theme or purpose, such as Officers’ Row in Vancouver. Special facilities are amenities that reside within a park, such as a boat launch. Recreation facilities are large

activity centers, such as the Battle Ground Senior Center. They have no minimum or maximum size. Support facilities may be included in park development, such as restrooms or parking. These facilities may stand alone—such as the senior center—or they may be recreational amenities that reside within an existing park or special area, such as a tennis court or ball-field complex. Special areas readily available to Battle Ground residents include:

- Daybreak Special Facility
- Durkee Environmental/ Recreation Area
- Cedars Golf Course (privately owned)
- Prairie Field Complex

Analysis and Projections

The City established a population-based parks service standard that requires acquisition and development of five acres of parks and open space for every 1,000 persons. This standard is based on guidelines from the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA). However, population-based standards do not apply to some facility types such as Special Areas and Facilities.

The Table below depicts the City’s past, existing, and projected populations compared to the neighborhood, community parks and urban open space acreages. This analysis indicates that the City’s overall land base of parks exceeds the combined population-based service standard. An emphasis should be placed on improvement of existing parks, particularly with active uses due to the growing number of families with children settling in Battle Ground. There is a need for acquisition and development of neighborhood parks in proximity to residential areas in some of the Neighborhood Service Areas. Both active and passive recreation improvements are needed in these areas. It will be necessary to acquire and improve neighborhood and pocket parks concurrently with new development to serve local recreation and open space needs. Close partnership between the City and development parties will help to ensure that these needs are met.

Table 8-1: Neighborhood and Community Park and Urban Open Space Analysis

Year	Population	Acres Needed at Standard*	Actual School Acres**	Actual Park Acres***	Total Acres
1996	5,015	25.00	30.00	19.26	49.26
2002	12,000	60.00	120.00	184.00*	304.00
2009	17,150	85.75	129.00	200.62*	329.62
2015	20,871	104.36	129.00	225.00*	354.00
2035 20-Year	38,443	192.00	--	--	--

* Standard is 5 acres per 1000 population.

** School Acres based on land available for community use.

*** Actual park acres equal all parks and open space acres.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks serve a crucial function of providing a nearby location for enjoying leisure and exercise and helping to foster neighborhood identity. Future parks and recreation needs were identified

based on previous parks planning exercises, and a projection of where new residential development will occur. New neighborhood parks will need to be acquired and improved with active and passive recreation uses as new residential development and, to a lesser extent, commercial development occurs. On-going acquisition and development of neighborhood parks is consistent with the findings of the Livability Element, because they support strong and cohesive neighborhoods.

The Battle Ground Future Urban Growth Area is divided into 21 Neighborhood Service Areas (NSA) and three special study areas (see Figure 8-1). These include a maximum service area radius of 1/2 mile and service area boundaries that provide for residents to visit parks without having to cross major roads, highways, or other impediments. The projected need for neighborhood parks is based on how much residential development is expected in each NSA compared to the existing availability of

Table 8-2: Neighborhood Service Area Parks and Recreation Needs

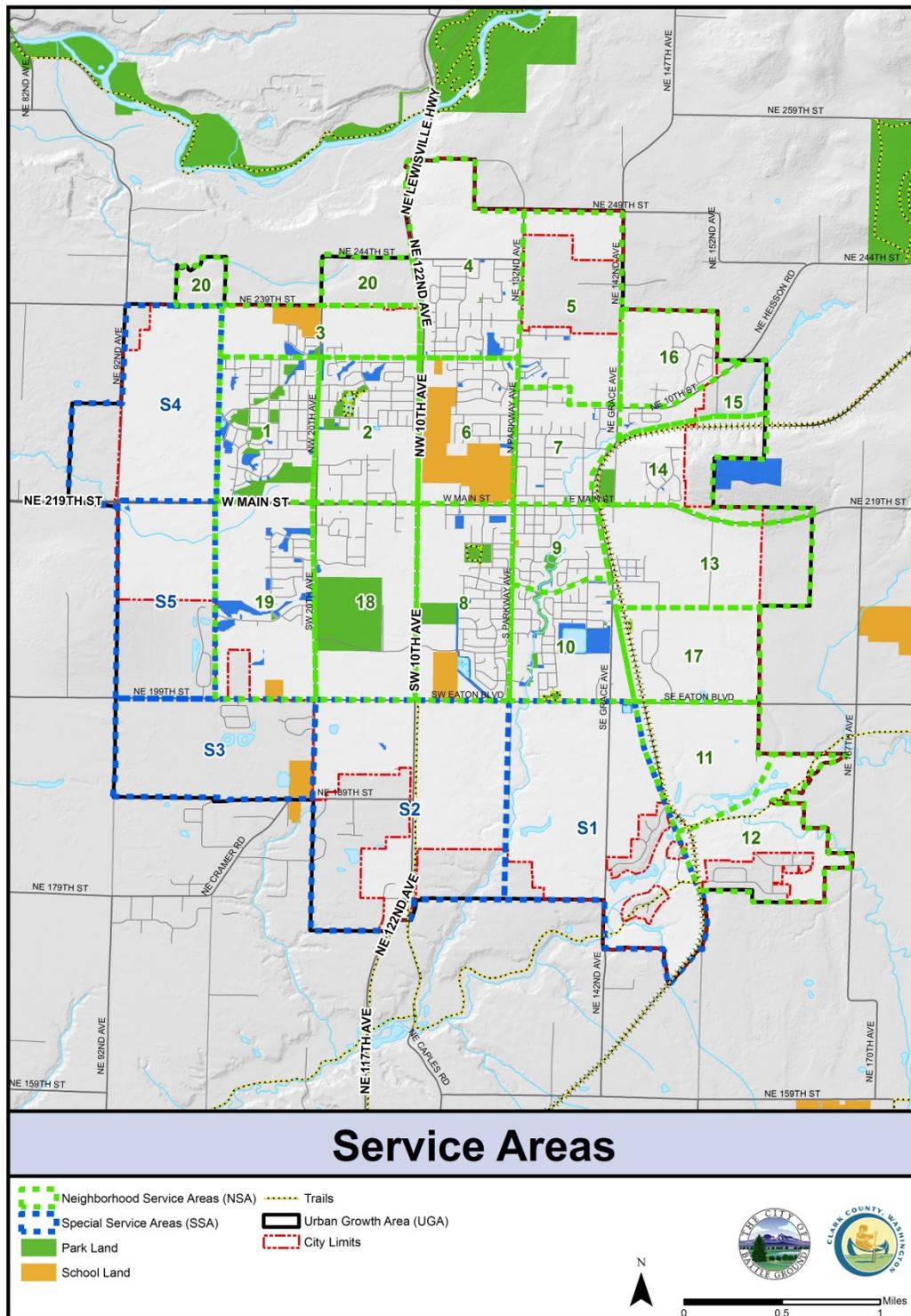
NSA #	Growth Projection	Active ¹	Passive ²	Additional Land Needed
1.	High	Yes	Yes	3-5 acres
2.	Low	Yes	Yes	None
3.	High	Yes	Yes	3-5 acres
4.	Low	Yes	Yes	3-5 acres
5.	Low	Yes	Yes	3-5 acres
6.	Medium	Yes	No	None
7.	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
8.	Medium	Yes	Yes	None
9.	Medium	Yes	Yes	None
10.	Low	None	None	None
11.	High	Yes	Yes	3-5 acres
12.	High	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
13.	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
14.	Medium	None	None	None
15.	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
16.	Low	No	No	None
17.	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
18.	Low	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
19.	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
S1	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
S2	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
S3	High	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
S5	High	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
S6	Medium	Yes	Yes	3-5 Acres
			Total	54-90 Acres

1) Active recreation improvements are uses that provide opportunities for physical activity, such as basketball courts, running tracks, and swimming pools.

2) Passive recreation improvements are uses that provide opportunities for leisurely recreation such as pavilion shelters, site lighting, and park benches.

Sources: OTAK, Parametrix, ClarkView

Figure 8-1: Neighborhood Service Areas



Community Parks

The Community Park Service Area for the City of Battle Ground has the same boundaries as the Battle Ground UGA. There are three major community parks: Fairgrounds Park, Gardner Oaks Park and the Remy property. Existing community parkland is expected to meet the anticipated demand for future community parks, therefore it is not expected that additional community parks will be needed during the 20-year planning horizon. However, continued emphasis will need to be placed on improvement of existing park sites. It is anticipated that there will be an expanding need for active recreation improvements due to the growing number of families with children that are projected for Battle Ground.

Fairgrounds Park

Fairgrounds Park is located in Neighborhood Service Area 15. The 8.26-acre park is a hub of intensive activity in the older part of Battle Ground. It is viewed as a gathering place for the community and is a major resource where all kinds of activities take place throughout the year. Improvements at the Fairground Parks site should accommodate diverse recreational needs, including:

- gathering spaces
- exercise facilities for children and adults
- leisure spaces
- live entertainment facilities
- multi-purpose spaces for public and private events.

Gardner Oaks Park

Since the City recently acquired Gardner Oaks Park, it this site has not yet been developed for public use. This 12.89-acre park is located in Neighborhood Service Area 9 on SR 503 (10th). An old grove of oak trees exists on site, which is locally significant as designated by the Critical Areas Ordinance. This enabled its purchase through funding from the Conservation Futures grant program. Gardner Oaks also provides an important opportunity for a link to the planned citywide trail system. Improvements at the Gardner Oaks Park site should accommodate passive and active recreational needs, including: trails or similar facilities leisure spaces environmental education enhancements.

Remy Property Purchase

The City recently purchased a 79.48-acre farm called the Remy Property, located on SE 20th Avenue. About 50 percent of the site is designated wetlands. However, the remaining buildable land on the site was identified as an appropriate location to accommodate the growing need of youth sports field complexes and community park amenities.

As the largest park site in Battle Ground, the Remy property can accommodate many of the community's recreation needs, including:

- flexible play spaces
- special purpose exercise facilities (i.e. Challenger fields, skatepark, etc.)
- exercise facilities for children and adults
- trails and environmental education enhancements
- wetland enhancement or banking opportunities

Regional Parks

The City of Battle Ground and its UGA are well served by regional parks and regional special facilities provided by Clark County and the Washington State Department of Parks and Recreation. These include Daybreak Park, Battle Ground Lake State Park, Lewisville Park, and Moulton/Lucia Falls Park.

Urban Open Space

High quality areas of urban open space are found throughout the Battle Ground UGA. These areas provide multiple open space benefits, including wildlife habitat, wetlands, drainage, water quality, and, where appropriate, community gardens and other low-impact recreational opportunities. The highest priority urban open space areas within the Battle Ground UGA include Woodin Creek and its associated flood plain, Mill Creek and its associated flood plain, Salmon Creek and its associated flood plain, and critical wetlands and habitat.

The Economic Development and Environment Elements state that the City should explore development of a wetland mitigation bank. Establishing a wetland mitigation bank could also provide cultural and recreational benefits to Battle Ground residents.

Conservation and Greenway Systems

While the City contains extensive open space areas providing a variety natural resource functions, there are some specific areas that provide exceptional value to Battle Ground. The City has identified four priority Conservation and Greenway Systems:

- Woodin Creek and its associated flood plain
- Salmon Creek and its associated flood plain
- Tukes Mountain covering 120 acres of forested uplands and open fields
- DNR's Heisson Road ownership covering 120 acres of forest lands and open fields.

Trails

The City places a high priority on acquiring and developing an interconnected system of multi-use trails within the City limits and adjoining urban growth area. Various factors support an increased need for acquisition and development of regional trail systems, including bicycle and pedestrian mobility. The Transportation Element provides additional information on the need for trails with Battle Ground. The City will continue to coordinate with Clark County, the Washington State Department of Transportation and other service providers to help actively seek acquisition and development of a unified and interconnected trail system.

Special Areas and Facilities

The special facilities category covers a wide range of single-purpose or specialized activities and facility types that may be located within larger park settings or separately. In the 2004 Parks Plan update, new special facility objectives and actions were added to address these upcoming needs within the Battle Ground community. These give the City the ability to begin working toward the goal of providing these special facilities for the growing population for the twenty-year vision. The special facility types that have been identified as a high priority by the City are:

- "challenger" sports field complex (facilities for physically handicapped youth)
- youth sports complex
- skateboard park

- community center
- swimming pool
- Lewis and Clark Railroad site.

The acquisition and development of a youth sports fields complex, including baseball, softball, soccer, and a “challenger” field are the City’s highest priorities. The City recently acquired the 79.48-acre Remy property to accommodate the need for the youth sports complex.

Development of a community center has also been identified as a high priority for Battle Ground. The community center would include indoor recreation opportunities and a performing arts center during a future phase of construction.

Findings:

Since existing City Parks, school facilities, and open space areas exceed the acreage required by the combined population-based service standard projections, there will now be an emphasis on development of these parks, with active uses as part of the six-year Capital Facilities Plan and beyond. In addition, the City will need to work with developers to ensure that locally serving neighborhood parks and recreation spaces are available as new subdivisions are created.

Many options exist for raising funds to make capital improvements to community parks, though the most promising opportunity for raising funds is through bond levies. For the purposes of funding capital projects, such as land acquisitions or facility construction, cities and counties have the authority to borrow money by selling bonds. Three general types of bonds may be sold: voter-approved general obligation bonds, agency-approved or councilmanic bonds, and revenue bonds. In order to make significant improvements to the City’s parks and open space infrastructure, bond levies must be explored. Other funding opportunities such as impact fees, development requirements, and grants should be explored to make smaller incremental improvements to the City’s park system.