TOWN OF WINTHROP



PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

FEBRUARY 21, 2018

I.

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VISION

WINTHROP AIMS TO PROVIDE QUALITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ITS CITIZENS THROUGH PROACTIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

The Parks and Recreation Plan is intended to:

- Establish goals and objectives for improving and maintaining Winthrop's parks and recreation resources.
- Identify the community's current and future needs and priorities for park facilities and recreational programs;
- Recommend specific parks and recreation projects for consideration and action;
- Explore sources and methods for financing improvements to recreational facilities;
- Establish grant eligibility with the Interagency Committee for Outdoor recreation.

By adopting this Plan, Town officials are stating their commitment to providing a comprehensive approach to the development and management of parks and recreation programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on community input, the following recommendations are central to implementation of this Parks and Recreation Plan:

- Submit the updated Winthrop Parks and Recreational Plan to Recreation Conservation Office for review and approval.
- Foster partnerships with public agencies, nonprofit organizations, community groups, and volunteers in support of the operation, maintenance and improvement of parks and recreation opportunities that serve our community and visitors.
- Complete the Susie Stephens Trail and the RiverWalk through downtown to provide links between key features of the community, as well as connections to the Methow Trails system.
- Maintain Winthrop's existing parks and trails in excellent condition.
- Support ongoing partnerships with Winthrop Rink and Methow Trails to operate, maintain, and improve the Rink and Trailhead.
- Support the development of trails and open space recreation areas that connect Winthrop with the Methow Valley schools and Pearrygin Lake State Park.
- Prepare applications to appropriate agencies for funding improvements identified in the Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Plan.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

With the adoption of this Parks and Recreation Plan, the Town of Winthrop affirms the importance of our parks and recreation facilities to area citizens and visitors. This plan functions as the Parks and Recreation element of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, and maintains consistency with the overall goals and action priorities expressed throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Updating the plan gives the Town an opportunity to express our vision and elaborate priorities in light of shifts in local demographics, needs, and recreational preferences. In keeping our plan current, we maintain our eligibility for Recreation Conservation Office (RCO) grants, which have been the major source of funding for park and recreation improvements.

Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities benefit our community by offering inviting places where people of all ages and abilities can gather, relax, play and exercise. The recreational activities available through our parks and trails play a role in building community spirit, cultural understanding, and family cohesiveness. Mack Lloyd Park, the Barn, and the new downtown Confluence Park function as central gathering places for everything from family outings to community events; the Ballfield, tennis courts and rink facilitate outdoor recreation for all ages; Mack Lloyd Park and Heckendorn Park offer children's play areas; and our ADA compliant trails encourage people to walk, roll, or bicycle.

This is the most recent iteration of a plan that was first adopted in 1987. The document was subsequently revised in 1989, 1998, 2000, 2006, and 2012. Over the course of time, updates have reflected many accomplishments in Winthrop's park system, most of which have are made possible through significant partnerships with organizations such as Kiwanis, Methow Trails, Winthrop Rink, and the Winthrop Auditorium Association. We have improved Mack Lloyd Memorial Park; developed Heckendorn Park; purchased property and developed the Rink and Trailhead; completed two phases of the Susie Stephens Trail; advanced toward construction of the RiverWalk; and, in 2016, accepted the generous donation of Confluence Park by the Pigott family.

This plan sets forth an inventory of existing park facilities, a summary of citizen input and participation, parks and recreation goals and objectives, and an analysis of demand and need which serves as the basis for a Parks and Recreation Six Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP identifies specific projects, providing cost estimates and potential funding sources for each. By following (and periodically updating) the CIP, the Town will continue to meet our highest priority recreational needs over time.

Description of Planning Area

Our immediate planning area consists of the Town of Winthrop, a small town of around 400 people in one of the largest, yet most rural counties in the US. Okanogan County consists of two major watersheds, the Okanogan Valley and the Methow Valley. Winthrop is one of two small towns, ten miles apart, which provide services to a broader valley-wide and school district population of more than 5,000. Nestled in the heart of the Methow Valley at the east slope of the North Cascade mountain range, Winthrop also draws thousands of visitors year round who come to enjoy a host of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Because Winthrop serves the valley-wide population and plays the role of a major recreation hub, the Town actively plans for more than the residents living within the incorporated limits. These larger planning efforts support the Town's success as a key destination along the North Cascade Highway (State Route 20). The Town's western architectural motif, geared towards the late 1800s, is a major attraction in itself. Visits by those seeking Town services, shopping opportunities, and lodging provide an important year round economic influence on the Town.

While the incorporated limits of Winthrop constitute the official planning area considered in this plan, we recognize that our service area is in fact much larger. Methow Valley Elementary and Liberty Bell Jr/Sr High schools are located between Twisp and Winthrop, and valley residents shop, seek services, and recreate in both communities. We know that our parks and recreation facilities are used as much by people living throughout the Methow as they are by our own citizens.

Beyond the population of the Methow Valley, Winthrop serves an even wider population of visitors. Winthrop is the hub or "trailhead" for a multi-faceted recreational paradise that stretches from the Columbia River and Lake Chelan to the south, to the Canadian border to the north, the North Cascades to the west and the Okanogan to the east. In fact, Winthrop is one of the highlights of the Cascade and International Loops, two scenic driving tours through the North Cascades.

The Town was founded in the late 1890's by pioneer Guy Waring. The townsite is situated on a series of terraces at the confluence of the Chewuch and Methow Rivers. The community is bi-sected by State Route 20 (also called the North Cascades Highway) which forms the main arterial through the Town as well as the primary link to the rest of Okanogan County and the State. Commercial development is concentrated in downtown on the east side of the Chewuch and Methow Rivers, and a highway commercial district to the south, on the west side of the Methow River. Downtown sits at the confluence of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers, and adheres strictly to Winthrop's "Old West" Theme. To the

south is the more recently developed highway commercial area which also contains several new residential developments. To the east lies a terrace where most of the developed residential area exists.

Winthrop's climate is strongly influenced by the nearby Cascade Mountains. Marine moisture is intercepted by the higher slopes resulting in precipitation amounts of around 15 inches per year, falling mostly in the winter as snow. Temperatures range from an average low of 15 degrees in January to an average high of 86 degrees in July and August ("Climate Winthrop Washington." *US Climate Data*. Web. 10 Feb. 2012. <u>http://usclimatedata.com</u>).

Population Information

According to the Washington Office of Financial Management, Winthrop's population in 2017 was 445. The official 2010 census population was 394. Census populations over the past 50 years have ranged from a low of 322 in 1990 to a high of 488 in 1970. After two decade of declining population the Town has seen two decades of slow steady growth. The following table shows the changes in census populations:

Year	Population	% change over decade	Yearly growth rate for decade
1960	375		
1970	488	30.1%	2.66%
1980	413	-15.4%	-1.65%
1990	322	-22.0%	-2.42%
2000	350	8.7%	0.85%
2010	394	12.6%	1.2%

TABLE 1.1 - POPULATION HISTORY

Looking to the 2010 US Census, we get a picture of who lives in Winthrop. Fully 97% are white, and about 4% are Hispanic. Our population is older, with a median age of 48 compared with a national median age of 38. At 1.92, Winthrop's average household size is considerably lower than national and state averages, 2.58 and 2.51 respectively. Our family size is also lower – 2.59 in Winthrop versus 3.14 nationally. While across the US, only about 27% of people live alone, in Winthrop 43% live alone.

Economically, residents enjoy a lower rate of poverty than the US as a whole – twelve percent in Winthrop versus 15% nationwide. However, median incomes are lower in Winthrop - \$40,605 compared with \$49,445 nationwide. Per capita income is \$22,746. At the time of the census, approximately half of Winthrop's residents were employed. Half of those employed worked in service occupations.

With the relatively small population base and fluctuations in growth rates over the past five decades it remains a challenge to project Winthrop's future growth. Considering the past growth fluctuations, this plan sets forth two population projections, one of 1% growth per year and one of 2% per year. These projections, based on the 2010 census produce the following results:

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
1% per year	394	414	435	457	481
2% per year	394	435	480	530	585

TABLE 1.2 - POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Table 1.2 indicates that the Town's population could increase by 87 to 191 people by 2030. However, such population projections need to be treated with considerable caution particularly since they only address the potential population growth in the incorporated area.

Economic Information

Along with the population trends, consideration of local economic fluctuations may be useful in accessing the Town's needs for parks and recreation. The chart below shows the Town's revenues from three sources, sales and use tax, stadium tax, and hotel/motel tax since 2002.

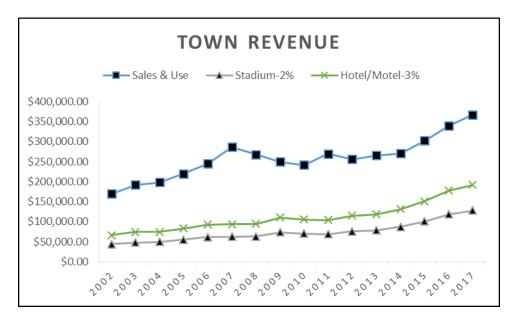


 TABLE 1.3 – TOWN REVENUE

Although there was a significant dip in sales and use tax from 2008 to 2010, that source of revenue began to climb again in 2011. Concurrently, both the stadium and hotel/motel taxes have continued a gradual climbing trend indicating that even in the face of recession, visitors remain interested in Winthrop. It appears from this information that Winthrop offers a good mix of amenities to continue to attract tourism; our park facilities and proximity to a world of outdoor recreation could be a strong factor in helping our community survive widespread economic challenges.

Chapter 2 - Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of this plan were crafted to guide Town staff and Winthrop's Town Council to make decisions that reflect community needs and priorities.

Goal statements provide general statements of intention. Following each goal is a statement of intent, which is provided to minimize confusion that may arise in the minds of future decision makers, and a listing of objectives required to attain the stated goal. The goals and objectives in this Plan have been carefully developed and updated through citizen involvement and have been structured to provide clear planning criteria against which implementing actions may be developed.

Goals and Objectives

GOAL 1: Provide recreation opportunities and facilities for all ages and abilities.

This goal emphasizes the need for Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities to work for all age groups and abilities. The more accessible our facilities are to a diverse array of people, the better we meet the public needs.

Objectives:

- Maintain and improve existing parks and trails to foster their use and enjoyment by people of all ages and abilities.
- Continue efforts to expand and diversify parks and recreation facilities that serve all ages and abilities in accord with public input and funding availability.
- GOAL 2: Coordinate and partner with public and private entities to provide recreation opportunities.

Our existing parks and recreation facilities exist because of the generous contributions from both public and private entities and individuals. Generous families donated park lands; countless individuals have shared time and resources to build our park system. We benefit tremendously from partnerships and funding from public agencies and private organizations that enable us to enjoy a much more diverse array of recreation opportunities than we otherwise would. Winthrop benefits from working with the WA Recreation and Conservation Office, WA State Parks, the Washington State

Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan County, Kiwanis, Methow Institute Foundation, Methow Trails, Winthrop Rink, Methow Conservancy, Methow Valley School District, Sun Mountain Lodge, Winthrop Chamber of Commerce, Methow Trails Collaborative, the Winthrop Auditorium Association, and other groups. This goal suggests coordinated planning, development, management, and use of recreational resources.

Objectives:

- Foster partnerships with public agencies, nonprofit organizations, community groups, and volunteers in support of the operation, maintenance, and improvement of recreation opportunities in Winthrop and the surrounding area.
- Work with other agencies and organizations to promote the development of trails to the Methow Valley public schools, Twisp, and Pearrygin State Park.
- Support the partnership with Winthrop Rink and Methow Trails for ongoing operation, maintenance and improvement of the Rink and Trailhead.
- Utilize and honor contributions from volunteers and businesses to implement priority parks and recreation projects.
- Honor donations of land, time and resources that make our parks system possible.
- GOAL 3: Maintain and improve our parks and recreation facilities in a manner that supports positive recreation experiences for residents and visitors.

The community recognizes the importance of recreation oriented tourism to Winthrop and the Methow Valley. This goal seeks to balance recreational opportunities that enhance tourism in the Valley with the needs of area residents.

Objectives:

- Prioritize improvement/completion of existing facilities and recreation projects. (Rink and Trailhead, trails projects, Mack Lloyd Park and Barn)
- Maintain parks and recreation facilities in excellent condition.

- Strive to ensure that parks and recreation facilities offer adequate restrooms, parking areas, lighting, walking connections, benches, trash receptacles, etc. to provide a quality recreation experience.
- Focus on improvements that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and regional recreation opportunities.
- Seek to ensure that parks and recreation facilities reflect Winthrop's Old West theme.
- GOAL 4: Foster the development of Winthrop as a walkable community and trailhead for the Methow Valley.

The Methow Valley is well known for its multi-use trails. The intent of this goal is to focus efforts towards developing Winthrop as a trailhead for people accessing the Methow Valley trails. We would like to increase access to trails that don't require a drive to a more remote trailhead.

Objectives:

- Construct a pedestrian trail system within the community that provides safe and convenient access to key features in the Town and links to regionally significant recreation opportunities.
- Explore options for open space recreation areas in or close to Winthrop, to enable opportunities for walking, biking, and passive enjoyment of the natural landscape without a need to drive.
- Continue the cooperative effort to develop the Town Trailhead park facility with restrooms, parking and other amenities that foster an enjoyable Winthrop experience.
- Encourage the development of education and interpretive opportunities that provide information on the Valley's human and natural history.
- Develop coordinated signage for trails and trail access points that provide a readily identifiable and unifying element for these important community assets.
- GOAL 5: Foster the development of water access points to and along the Chewuch and Methow Rivers.

Although Winthrop sits at the confluence of two scenic rivers – the Methow and Chewuch – they are not very accessible visually or physically. Our parks and recreation surveys show that people would like to be able to see and access the rivers.

Objectives:

- Develop the river access point at Mack Lloyd Park to prevent further erosion and facilitate access for tubing, kayaking or similar activities.
- Develop the RiverWalk to provide recreational access along the shoreline of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers.
- Maintain Confluence Park for visual access to the confluence of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers and to ensure ADA access to the RiverWalk when it is developed.
- Work with other public and private agencies to identify additional opportunities for river access that protect habitat and encourage public access.
- GOAL 6: Recognize the importance of neighborhood parks, and support development of neighborhood or pocket parks where opportunities and need exist.

This goal addresses the fact that neighborhood parks play a unique role in that they largely serve local residents, offering a place for kids to play. Winthrop only has one neighborhood park, but has one additional parcel of land in the Summerset addition that could be developed as a neighborhood park. The Town should analyze residential subdivision and development proposals to determine where and when additional neighborhood parks may be needed.

Objectives:

- Encourage donations of open space/park land where needed for the expansion and/or development of neighborhood parks.
- Maintain Heckendorn Park in excellent condition.
- Review publicly owned properties and undeveloped right-of-ways for their potential as possible pocket parks or river accesses.

Chapter 3 – Inventory

Winthrop offers some fantastic parks and recreation facilities given our small local population. While the community still envisions improvements and new facilities, we have much to celebrate. Just twelve years ago, volunteers were erecting a temporary ice rink in the Barn parking lot, and the Mack Lloyd Park was the primary recreation hub. In twelve short years, recreation options expanded to include an Ice Rink, Trailhead, the Susie Stephens Trail, and Confluence Park. Now our park system includes numerous unique amenities: open space, paved and unpaved trails, a sports field, pump track, rink, community gather space, and children's play areas.

This chapter provides an inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities, describes maintenance and repair needs, and points to capital projects.

Mack Lloyd Park

Winthrop's Mack Lloyd Memorial Park remains our central park complex, dedicated to the memory of Mack Lloyd, a local logger and businessperson who gave generously to the development of the Barn and surrounding park. In the late 1990s, the Town made several improvements to the park, supported by a local parks grant from RCO (then known as IAC) and local fundraising. The park is centrally located just west of downtown, and receives heavy use by both locals and visitors. The 18-acre park offers a range of recreation opportunities as described below:

Main Park Area - This

central park area offers approximately two acres of grassy respite close to downtown, well used by locals and visitors. The lawn area is bordered by the Winthrop Library to the west, an overflow channel of the Methow River to the south, the Barn to the east, and SR 20 along the north



edge. Large Ponderosa Pines dot the lawn area, and newer lines of deciduous trees were planted along the southern and eastern edges. Support facilities include twelve picnic tables (donated by Backcountry Horsemen), a 17' x 33' picnic shelter and drinking fountain (provided by local donations of labor and material), a bandshell donated by Cascadia and playground area purchased and installed by the Winthrop Kiwanis Club. The park also features a memorial

plaque dedicating the park in memory of Mack Lloyd, and a recently added wildland firefighter memorial. Adjacent paved parking can accommodate about forty vehicles.

The Barn - The Barn, a 6,500 square foot community auditorium owned by the Town and operated by the non-profit Winthrop Auditorium Association, sits prominently at the eastern edge of Mack Lloyd Park. The Barn stands apart as Winthrop's most heavily used parks and recreation facility. Both the 2012 and 2017 Parks and Recreation surveys indicate that 99% of respondents use the Barn during the course of a year. The Barn offers a year-round venue for a wide variety of community events



including meetings, concerts, weddings, fundraisers, dances, and a host of other private and public celebrations. It contains seating for 450 with a stage and sound system, restrooms and a commercial kitchen. Support facilities include a large parking area shared with the entire park, and two outdoor restrooms. A paved path provides access from the Barn to Downtown Winthrop.

Sports Field Area - The four-acre Sports Field Area consists of a single softball/baseball field with bleachers, restrooms, and a basketball court. Although limited by the shortness of the outfield, the ball field receives consistent use from local league players and provides space for community baseball and softball practice, games and tournaments.

Tennis Court "Expansion Area" – This four-acre add-on to Mack Lloyd Park was donated to the Town in 1995. This area features tennis courts and informal overflow parking. The area is used most intensively during the Winthrop Forty-niner Days and other special events. A small handful of private properties are accessed by easements that traverse through the parking area.

River Area - The River area consists of the lands along the southern boundary of the property, accessed by a pathway from the main park area. This portion of the park lies within the 100 year floodplain and channel migration zone of the Methow River. At the southeast corner, the park borders the Methow River. A small grassy triangle has been established at the river's edge, bordered by trees and the paved pathway from the main park area. This triangle is now often used for weddings in conjunction with the Barn.

The riverbank beside the grassy triangle has been used informally for many years as a water access to the Methow River. However, the riverbank suffers from severe erosion that is eating back into the overflow channel. The asphalt path has begun to slide down the bank. Ongoing use as a river access will require bank stabilization.

A swath of undeveloped riparian land stretches eastward from the paved path to the tennis courts. This area contains an overflow channel of the Methow River and forested wetlands.

Connections - An accessible path begins by the Winthrop Library and follows the border of the central park area (the drainage canal), also providing access to the parking area, the Methow River and the Barn. A second trail was developed as a short interpretive loop through the riparian area, accessed by a footbridge crossing the overflow channel. Interpretive signs were developed for this portion of the trail highlighting some of the natural history, particularly the value and functions of riparian areas. The planning and construction of the interpretive trail was coordinated by the Methow Valley Citizens Council with a grant from the Department of Natural Resource's Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account and funding support from the Winthrop Barn Association and labor from the Methow Valley Ranger District.

Mack Lloyd Park Improvements and Maintenance Needs - With the high level of use Mack Lloyd Park receives, ongoing maintenance is key. In addition to regular maintenance the following items have been identified as important long-term repairs and facility improvements:

- Tree maintenance throughout the park
- Repair or full replacement of the bandshell
- Construction of water access in the River Area, including bank stabilization to slow erosion of the shoreline.
- Upgrades to the public restrooms
- Dark Skies compliant lighting
- Improve/repair parking areas (gravel, pavement patches)
- Repairs to tennis court surface
- Park furnishings: Drinking fountains, trash cans, recycling and pet waste receptacles
- Repairs/upgrades to children's play area
- Technology upgrades to the Barn to facilitate multimedia presentations
- Other Barn repairs/upgrades

Town Trailhead and Ice Rink

The Town Trailhead and Ice Rink are relatively new recreation features in Winthrop, developed through community partnerships with two local non-profits, Winthrop Rink and Methow Trails. The Trailhead and Rink form a second major community recreation hub. Grant funds from RCO and Okanogan County enabled the Town to assemble 3.7 acres of new park property through 3 separate purchases. The Trailhead sits on an upper plateau above the Rink area. The two distinct areas are joined by the Susie Stephens Trail and a set of stairs, allowing the Trailhead to function as the primary parking area for the Rink.

Ice Rink - This facility has been developed over two phases to date, both of which were funded by RCO Local Parks grants that were matched by local donations of cash, equipment and labor. Phase 1, completed in 2007, included initial construction of the rink and the associated building, plus the grading and installation of stormwater drainage for the trailhead portion of the property. Phase 1 resulted in a "natural ice" rink over a grass surface that was used for "indoor" soccer in other seasons. Phase 2, completed in 2015, replaced the natural grass rink surface with a refrigerated cement slab. The building was expanded with four locker room/skate changing areas, and increased area for skate rentals. The improvements have ensured a consistent ice skating season allowing for numerous hockey tournaments and popular open skate sessions.



Both phases of rink construction exemplify community spirit. While the Town secured grant funding from RCO, Winthrop Rink (our nonprofit partner) coordinated an army of volunteers and raised over a million dollars in match between the initial construction and the second phase. They not only provided the cash match and sweat equity to make the rink a reality, they have successfully operated and maintained the facility under an agreement with the Town. This project stands as a testament to the commitment of a group of volunteers to provide a unique recreation facility for our community. The Rink continues to prove its worth by providing a wonderful outdoor recreation experience and generating economic benefits to local businesses during winter.

Trailhead - The adjoining Trailhead functions as much more than a parking lot for the rink. It highlights another ongoing partnership with Methow Trails, the

nonprofit entity that manages a vast network of trails on public and private lands for Nordic skiing, biking, hiking and equestrian use. The Trailhead provides yearround trail access and parking for the Susie Stephens Trail and Winthrop Rink, as well as seasonal Nordic skiing access for the Methow Community Trail. We envision the Trailhead becoming a true hub for a vibrant walkable Town; in this vision, the Trailhead will be further improved to meet its potential as year-round satellite parking for people accessing downtown via the Susie Stephens Trail and Spring Creek Bridge.

Rink and Trailhead Improvements and Maintenance Needs - With the Rink now refrigerated and fully functional, Winthrop Rink, Methow Trails, and the Town have identified improvements that will help this park property meet its full potential:

- Site plan and improvements of the Trailhead, to include paved parking, landscaping, dark sky compliant lighting, fencing and site furnishings. The site plan needs to work with and improve the existing stormwater drainage system.
- Dark sky compliant lighting for the lower (Rink) parking lot.
- Comprehensive signage for the Rink, Trailhead, Susie Stephens Trail, downtown access, and Community Trail access.
- Paving of the west end of the rink between Susie Stephens Trail and Zamboni bay.
- Rink system improvements such as a pit melting system for ice shavings collected by the Zamboni and pump for filling propane tanks (Zamboni).
- Landscaping of the entire Rink and Trailhead area native/xeric species
- Playground area between the Rink and Susie Stephens Trail at the east end of the Rink.
- Additional storage for Rink equipment.
- Replacement of equipment as it ages Zamboni and tractor/plow.
- Replacement of worn/damaged dasher boards and glass.
- Tree care, irrigation, landscaping maintenance and weed control.

Trails

The results from parks and recreation surveys in 2005, 2012, and 2017 show sustained support for development of trails within Winthrop, connecting key features of the town and facilitating seamless access to the Methow Trails system. While ideas abound, five projects stand out:

1. Completion of the Susie Stephens Trail, providing access from downtown, through the Trailhead and Ice Rink park to the south end of Winthrop with highway crossings at the Virginian and the Post Office.

- 2. Construction of a Riverwalk, providing an alternate pedestrian route through downtown, along the banks of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers, connecting the Susie Stephens Trail with Sa Teekh Wa Park.
- A "safe route to school", extending the Susie Stephens Trail south to Methow Valley Elementary and Liberty Bell High School, located 3 miles south of Winthrop. (Ultimately, folks would like to see this trail connect to the Twisp as well.)
- 4. A Pearrygin Lake Trail, providing non-motorized access between Winthrop and the State Park at Pearrygin Lake.
- 5. A trail that extends the walking path through Sa Teekh Wa Park into a trail that winds through North Village, crosses the West Chewuch Road, and loops into Mack Lloyd Park.

These projects are all in various stages of completion, ranging from conceptual planning to under construction.

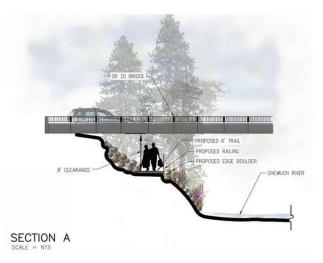
Susie Stephens Trail - The Susie

Stephens Trail is the furthest along from concept to reality. The project was the subject of nearly two decades of planning and efforts, including environmental and feasibility studies, preliminary bridge engineering, and right-of-way planning under a TEA-21 Enhancement grant. It inched closer to construction when the Town was awarded \$1.9 million state gas tax funds, specifically slated for design and construction of the pedestrian bridge and connection to the trailhead. Finally, the Town received enough funding from a WWRP Trails grant from RCO to undertake the acquisition of trail and bridge right-of-way, design and construction of the first half mile of trail.



Following successful completion of the first phase in 2012, the Town was awarded a second WWRP Trails grant to extend the trail further to the south. This second segment was constructed in the Fall of 2017, with finish work to occur in the Spring of 2018. A planned crossing of SR 20 at the present terminus should also be constructed in 2018, completing ³/₄ of a mile of multiuse (nonmotorized) trail. The Susie Stephens Trail winds its way from downtown, across the Methow River, through the Ice Rink and Trailhead park, past Little Star Montessori School, to the south end commercial district. Eventually, a third phase is intended to take the trail just shy of the south town limits. The three phases together will provide a major backbone of pedestrian and bicycle circulation through Winthrop. The Susie Stephens Trail is 10 – 12 feet wide, surfaced with asphalt and ADA compliant.

RiverWalk - The RiverWalk is another long-held dream of the community – a pathway along the banks of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers, connecting the Susie Stephens Trail on the south end of downtown with Sa Teekh Wa Park at the north end. The RiverWalk concept gained momentum with a generous donation by Lawrence Therriault in honor of his father, Paul Therriault, an early Winthrop (European-American) settler. The donation enabled the Town to get some preliminary engineering, geotechnical assessments, and survey



work done, which enabled us to pursue funding a first phase.

The RiverWalk is planned to be a 5-6 foot wide pedestrian pathway with an undercrossing of the Chewuch River Bridge at the heart of downtown. Phase one is funded through a mix of WWRP Trails money, federal STP and TAP grants, and donated match of land, services, and cash. An engaged committee of land and business owners has stepped forward to help shape the project and gain full participation from landowners along the rivers. Permitting for Phase 1 is now underway, and construction should be completed in 2018. The Town is actively seeking funding for the remaining segments to complete RiverWalk from Sa Teekh Wa Bridge to Spring Creek Bridge. This project is expected to bring the rivers into focus, creating a unique and beautiful way to experience downtown Winthrop.

Other Trail Projects – Trail concepts for reaching the Methow schools, Twisp, and Pearrygin Lake State Park garner significant community support; however, these trail projects end up largely outside of Winthrop's jurisdiction. The Town would actively support efforts to plan for these trails by Okanogan County, State Parks, Methow Valley School District, landowners, or other interested parties.

There is an existing trail through Sa Teekh Wa Park, which is within Winthrop's boundaries, but owned by Okanogan County. Extension of that trail outside of the park to create a loop remains conceptual, but the Town would willingly explore and probably support such an effort.

Trail Improvements and Maintenance Needs - Trails are relatively new features in Winthrop, and thus we need to consider their short and long term maintenance needs. Maintenance, improvement and development needs include:

- Acquire ROW and complete construction of the funded SR20 crossing at the Virginian (Susie Stephens Trail).
- Plan for and construct Phase 3 extension of the Susie Stephens Trail to Rabbit Hutch Road, with crossing at the Post Office.
- Plan for and construct all Phases of RiverWalk.
- Weed control along trails, vegetation maintenance where needed.
- Trash, recycling and pet waste receptacles; benches; landscaping.
- Signage interpretive, wayfinding and safety signs.

Confluence Park



Confluence Park is Winthrop's newest park facility, located in the heart of downtown with a view to the confluence of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers. The park was gifted to Winthrop in 2016 by Jim and Gaye Pigott in honor of Jon R. Titcomb, Gaye's father. The Pigotts purchased the property and removed the old house on it to make way for an open space park that will eventually become a gateway to the RiverWalk trail. The park is landscaped with trees,

shrubs, native plants, and a small grassy area at the center. It is furnished with several benches and a pergola. In the short time since it was created, Confluence Park has become a beloved feature of downtown – a place to pause and enjoy the view, eat lunch, or chat with friends.

Confluence Park Maintenance Needs - As a focal point of downtown, this park needs careful maintenance of the vegetation and weed control. As the RiverWalk pathway comes to fruition, an ADA compliant pathway will need to be constructed to link RiverWalk with the downtown boardwalks. The gravel area adjacent to Winthrop Mountain Sports offers an ideal location to place bicycle parking racks. Trash, recycling and pet waste receptacles are also needed to encourage citizens to help in maintaining a clean park.

Heckendorn Park

Heckendorn Park is located on a one-acre site comprised of two lots donated to the Town by the Methodist Church in the early 1990's and a street end right-of-

way. The Winthrop Kiwanis took the lead in developing Heckendorn Park. It offers a basketball half court and play area, with playground equipment donated by John and Michelle Larsen. A volunteer group has constructed and maintained a petanque court in the northwest corner of the park. Our park surveys show that Heckendorn Park is a deeply valued facility for neighborhood families. Due to its location, it primarily serves locals. Some people use it for water access.

Heckendorn Park Improvements and Maintenance Needs - Overall, the park survey indicates satisfaction with Heckendorn Park. Some potential improvements that were mentioned include:

- Addition of restrooms (indoor, flush toilets).
- More site furnishings picnic tables, benches.
- Develop water access point.

Sa Teekh Wa Park



Sa Teekh Wa Park consists of a 12-acre open space area located in a crook of the Chewuch River, just upstream from the confluence with the Methow River. Although located within the Town of Winthrop, the park is owned by Okanogan County, with a portion of the park being dedicated to the Methow band of the Colville Confederated Tribes. The County initially planned to develop the park as part of a linear system connecting the Methow Valley with trails planned in the northern portion of Okanogan County, near Oroville and Nighthawk; to date, that trail system hasn't connected through to Sa Teekh Wa. The park is connected to Winthrop's downtown area by a cable-stayed pedestrian bridge, and a walking path with interpretive signage extends the length of the park along the Chewuch River. Otherwise, the park is intended to remain in its natural state. There has been some consideration of the County transferring ownership of Sa Teekh Wa Park to Winthrop.

Water Access

With the Chewuch and Methow Rivers being central features of the Town of Winthrop, it stands to reason the community would benefit from more developed water access. The 2005 and 2012 park surveys looked at three water access projects: improving the informal access at the Barn, developing a new boat launch on the undeveloped McLean street right of way, which dead ends at the Methow River in the Heckendorn neighborhood, and development of a "whitewater park" within the Chewuch River. The 2017 survey left out the McLean Street access, but asked about the other two projects. Currently, there is a great deal of support for improving water access at the Barn, and mixed support for the other two projects.

Open Space Park Concept

The 2017 Park Survey sought feedback on the concept of an open space park adjacent to Winthrop. This concept focuses on land that was identified in the Comprehensive Plan as being an "area of interest" to the Town due to potentially detrimental impacts its development could have on the character of existing neighborhoods and the Town's view shed. The land consists of high quality shrub steppe habitat, and offers tremendous potential for a series of carefully located walking and mountain biking trails. The park survey found strong support for the open space concept, and the Town remains interested in and supportive of exploring opportunities to create such a park.

Other Town Property

The Town owns other properties that have potential for parks and recreation development. Town-owned land near the sewer lagoons has been described in past plans as a possible location for additional sports fields and related uses which would not impact future expansion of the wastewater treatment system. The community has not shown a significant interest in pursuing such park development at this time. In addition, the Town owns a lot in the Summerset subdivision that has never been developed; the lot is expected to remain an open space area until sufficient interest is generated for developing a neighborhood park.

Valley-wide Recreation Opportunities

The Methow Valley as a whole offers an incredible mix of recreation opportunities that are provided and supported by various public, nonprofit and private entities. These recreation opportunities are available within a short drive from town, amplifying Winthrop's status as a recreation destination. Some key opportunities include:

- Methow Valley School District facilities, including, three gymnasiums, two tennis courts, two baseball/softball/soccer fields, and a Nordic ski trail;
- The 200 kilometer Methow Trails system open to Nordic skiing, hiking, biking, and horseback riding;
- Wagner Memorial swimming pool and adjoining park located in Twisp;
- Pearrygin Lake State Park which offers camping, trails, swimming, fishing and boating;
- Extensive public lands encompassed by the Okanogan National Forest, Pasayten Wilderness Area, Lake Chelan/Sawtooth Wilderness Area, and

the North Cascades National Park, offering vast spaces for hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, and enjoyment of nature;

- Bear Creek Golf Course;
- Loup Loup Ski Bowl offering alpine and nordic skiing and luge sled runs;
- Over 300 miles of groomed snowmobile trails and six Sno-Parks.

Maps in Appendix B depict Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities, as well as the location of many valley-wide recreation opportunities.

Chapter 4 - Citizen Involvement

This plan is only as valuable as it is representative of the input, values and priorities of Winthrop area residents. In updating this plan, the Town sought to invite a broad spectrum of participation, with the idea that citizen involvement gives life to a shared vision for the parks and recreation facilities at the heart of our community.

To craft this update, we drew on a wide variety of citizen involvement strategies. First and foremost, we sought focused input on the use, needs and priorities for parks and recreation through a survey and public workshop. We found further context through a concurrent planning process called *Winthrop in Motion*, which focused on multimodal transportation, the downtown Winthrop streetscape, and ADA planning. We have also involved community stakeholders in planning for specific projects identified in both the Parks Plan and Comprehensive Plan; for example, the Town has worked closely with a committee of land and business owners interested in furthering the RiverWalk – a pedestrian path through downtown. We often learn what citizens think from public comments at Planning Commission and Town Council meetings, and through participating in conversations at other community meetings. Whether the input is gathered formally on a survey, or through listening to open ended comments at a meeting, it helps us true our goals and set our priorities.

The Planning Commission discussed materials related to the Park Plan update during meetings on June 27, 2017; July 11, 2017; August 8, 2017; December 12, 2017; January 9, 2018, and February 12, 2018. The Planning Commission helped shape the content of the survey, considered the findings of our citizen involvement process and worked to incorporate them throughout this plan. The final draft of the plan was presented to the Town Council for Public Hearing and Adoption on February 21, 2018.

2017 Parks and Recreation Survey

In August and September of 2017, the Town conducted a Winthrop Parks and Recreation survey to collect public input to inform the update of this Plan. The survey was prepared by Planning Intern, Madeline Hart, based upon the format of the survey used in 2012. The new survey instrument was developed with input from Town staff members, the Planning Commission, and interviews with a few of our non-profit partners. The survey began with a brief summary of the status of various parks and recreation facilities and projects; it continued with a series of questions focused on demographics, park use, park needs assessment, project ranking, and feedback on maintenance and other park and recreation issues.

The survey was made available in both paper and electronic formats. Paper surveys were mailed out to all utility customers and made available at Town Hall

and a few other locations. The paper survey was replicated as an online survey with the same questions. The Survey Monkey link was noted on the paper survey, published on the Town's website, and emailed to the Town Planner's list of contacts in the Winthrop area, including the Winthrop Chamber of Commerce and other interested organizations. In addition, the survey link was sent in a press release to the Methow Valley News and local radio stations.

152 surveys were returned by the due date of September 7, 2017. The findings of the survey were substantially consistent with prior surveys in 2005 and 2012. The results are summarized in Chapter 5 - Parks and Recreation Needs. A complete compilation of the results in included in Appendix D.

Public Workshop

The Winthrop Planning Commission offered a Public Workshop on parks and recreation on September 12, 2017. The Town notified the local paper and radio stations with a press release. The forum offered an overview of the status of Winthrop's park facilities, and offered participants an opportunity to identify concerns and express preferences for park priorities.

Winthrop In Motion

The Winthrop in Motion planning effort addresses multimodal transportation, the downtown streetscape, and ADA needs. While not focused on parks specifically, this planning effort focused on the transportation connections that facilitate park use and recreation access. Beginning with a "Walking Audit" and "Big Ideas Workshop on September 28, 2017, we sought to understand how people of all ages and abilities get around in Winthrop, and particularly how they access high traffic areas such as Mack Lloyd Park, the Barn, the Rink and Trailhead, and the Susie Stephens Trail. The Walking Audit drew significant participation, and led to creative engagement with two sets of design concepts that significantly overlap and bolster the Parks and Recreation Plan. These design concepts were presented to a stakeholder/advisory committee, the Planning Commission, Town Council, the Winthrop Chamber of Commerce, and at a public workshop. At the time of this update, an online survey was prepared for distribution to further collect input on the design concepts so they can be refined into a three-pronged plan for multimodal transportation in Winthrop.

Putting it Together

To make the most of the public input received for the purpose of updating this plan, we sought to compare it with the findings that informed the 2006 and 2012 Park Plans, as well as the continuous input we have received in various community forums over the past decade. By looking at the feedback residents have given us over time, we see the true long term priorities for our community. Our past three parks surveys provide a consistent picture. We continue to see emphasis on the same projects and park improvements over the years, and this is valuable information for setting our compass.

At the culmination of this planning process, citizens were invited to comment on the draft plan as it was developed and considered for adoption. The process culminated with a Public Hearing held before the Town Council, which allowed one final forum for citizen comment prior to adoption.

Citizen involvement is critical to crafting a useful plan and should not be limited to once every 5 or 10 years. As recommendations are implemented it will be important to provide for ongoing public dialogue on the Town's progress in meeting parks and recreation needs. Annual review of the capital project list should occur during the Town's budget development process.

Chapter 5 - Parks and Recreation Needs

Parks and recreation needs can be determined with a range of methods from quantitative assessments to more qualitative measures. Larger communities may benefit from assessing their park systems against a "level of service" standard. In our case that leads to the impression that we have more park land and recreation facilities than our small community needs. We find that using more localized tools such as surveys and citizen input give us more realistic feedback on the demand for local park facilities.

On the qualitative side, surveys and other public participation forums allow locals and visitors to weigh in with input regarding how they spend their leisure time and the extent to which existing sites and programs meet their desire to recreate. These methods also provide valuable information with which a community can identify high priority projects or programs. Winthrop considered our park facilities through the lens of RCO's Level of Service Tool, but our assessment of demand and need relies most heavily on our parks and recreation surveys and other local input.

Demand

We have learned that our planning for parks and recreation needs to reflect a broader picture of demand than what we would supply based on Winthrop's small population. Because of Winthrop's central location in the Methow Valley and our tourist economy, we serve a population much larger than just the residents. Also, as the state population increases, the Town has witnessed an increased demand on park and recreation facilities due to Winthrop's prime location.

In assessing the demand, we have looked to a variety of indicators that help paint a picture of who is showing up to use Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities. For starters, looking at WSDOT traffic data points in Winthrop, we see a nearly 20% increase in traffic through Town. Over the past decade, despite the recession, we see that our hotel/motel and stadium taxes have increased strongly and steadily; in fact, the revenue from these sources has more than doubled over ten years. This tells us we have more people visiting and recreating in Winthrop than ever before.

Another telling piece of documentation of the growing demand for the Valley's recreation facilities comes from the Methow Trails. This organization is responsible for the maintenance and operation of more than 200 kilometers of trails, all of which are groomed for Nordic skiing during the winter months. From the inception of the organization in the early 1980s until now the number of daily trail passes sold during the Nordic ski season has increased dramatically. Over the past ten years, Methow Trails has seen an average of 12% growth in

recreation users per year (statistic provided by Methow Trails based on an Economic Impact of Trails study.)

When we added refrigeration to our ice rink, we were able to dramatically increase the length of the skating season. This has meant a marked increase in the number of people enjoying the ice. Last winter, the first with refrigerated ice, saw a 23% increase in the number of public open skate visits over the best year on natural ice (13/14). The rink was able to host six hockey tournaments, which generated an estimated \$275,000 extra dollars to local businesses.

Aggregating the evidence we see in our local economy, we see that Winthrop has an active local population, and an ever growing number of tourists and part time residents coming here specifically to enjoy outdoor recreation. Available data confirms our sense that Winthrop experiences a far higher demand for recreation opportunities by a much larger user population than our local population and demographics would otherwise indicate.

Survey Results

Winthrop has conducted parks and recreation surveys for the past three park plan updates, including surveys in 2005, 2012, and 2017. Initially we used only paper surveys; however the surveys in 2012 and 2017 offered the same questions and information in an online platform hosted on Survey Monkey. This most recent survey received the highest rate of response to date, with 151 responses. This represents a 28% increase over the 118 responses in 2012.

The Parks and Recreation Survey has become our primary tool for assessing demand and needs. The surveys have sought input on existing opportunities and gauged the level of support for improvements to Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities. Because we did not control the distribution of the online survey, we can't ascertain how representative the responses are; but this plan places the survey in the context of public input in various forums over time. Across twelve years, we've seen remarkably consistent survey results, indicating solid support for our parks system, and setting clear direction for maintaining and improving a full range of recreation opportunities.

In the 2017 survey, most respondents (86%) reported that they live either in Winthrop or the Methow Valley. The largest response came from the 46-55 and 56-65 age groups (57%). 22% were between the ages of 18 and 45, and 21% were over 60. One apparent weakness of the survey was a limited response from youth in the community; only 1% of the surveys were from people under age 25. This is an area where coordinated outreach would be useful to determine whether younger residents share the same priorities. This time, females responded to the survey at a higher rate – 58% to 39%, whereas past surveys have had more equal responses between the genders. After establishing the demographics of the respondents, the survey sought to determine how often people use existing facilities. 72% reported regularly using park facilities. For those who don't regularly use our parks, the 3 most common reasons are: 1) don't have time, 2) age or disability, and 3) no facilities that interest them. Specific facility use results are tabulated in Table 5.1.

How often do you use the following facilities?	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Play Area - Mack Lloyd Park	17%	49%	34%
Picnic Area - Mack Lloyd Park	5%	70%	25%
Ballfield - Mack Lloyd Park	8%	26%	66%
Pump Track – Mack Lloyd Park	3%	21%	76%
Tennis Courts- Mack Lloyd Park	5%	24%	71%
Winthrop Barn	29%	70%	1%
Ice Rink	21%	50%	29%
Town Trailhead	65%	25%	10%
Heckendorn Park	15%	39%	46%
Methow Trails	73%	20%	7%
Sa Teekh Wa Park	23%	49%	28%

Table 5.1 – Park Use

Frequent use was defined as 10 or more times per year; occasional use was defined as one to ten times per year. Overall, the facilities that see the highest use are the Barn, with 99% of respondents using the Barn at least occasionally; the Town Trailhead and Methow Trails, with around 90% of respondents indicating at least occasional use; and the picnic area in Mack Lloyd Park with over 75% enjoying that facility. The play area in Mack Lloyd Park (56%) and the Ice Rink (71%) also enjoy high usage. Other park facilities with less use nevertheless enjoy devoted support from the groups who use them; the tennis courts, ballfields, and Heckendorn Park all receive significant use and remain very important to the overall quality of life in Winthrop.

The 2017 survey sought to determine what types of recreation facilities are most desired and needed in our community. We asked this question in different ways, focusing on support for types of facilities as general categories, as support for specific projects, and as a narrative list of each respondent's top three priorities.

The table below present a summary of findings related to facility preference.

Which parks and amenities within the parks are most important to you & your family?							
	1 - Not important	2	3	4	5 - Most Important		
Trails	2.5%	0.5%	9.0%	13.0%	75.0%		
Open Space/Grass	1.0%	2.0%	4.0%	25.0%	68.0%		
Recreation facilities	6.0%	8.0%	29.0%	21.0%	36.0%		
Playgrounds	17.0%	22.0%	22.0%	20.0%	19.0%		
Athletic fields	21.0%	17.0%	22.0%	17.0%	23.0%		

Table 5.2 – Importance of type of park facilities

Over the arc of facility preference questions, we see demand for trail projects rise clearly to the top. Trails stand out as the "most important" facility to 75% of the survey respondents, followed by open space/grass area at 68%. In terms of completing existing trail projects, we see that 87% strongly support completion of the Susie Stephens Trail and 82% strongly support the RiverWalk (see Table 5.3 below). Trails to Pearrygin Lake State Park, the schools, and Twisp also enjoy considerable support, though being mostly outside of Winthrop, they are projects that would require partnerships with Okanogan County, State Parks and other entities.

Level of Support for Trail Projects:	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Do Not Support	No Opinion
Complete Susie Stephens Trail	87%	7%	3%	3%
Riverwalk Trail in downtown	82%	15%	2%	1%
Trail to Pearrygin State Park	74%	20%	3%	3%
Trail to schools and Twisp	75%	17%	3%	5%

Table 5.3 – Trail Projects – Level of Support

Focusing in on trails, the survey asked for trail surface preferences: 40% said gravel/natural surface, 21% said pavement, and 39% had no preference. People who preferred pavement stated that it was because of age, mobility needs, and to meet ADA. Those who preferred natural trail surfacing noted reasons such as lower cost, lower maintenance, and a more natural aesthetic. We also asked which locations are most important for connectivity. The responses were as follows (listed from most mentions to fewest):

- Completion of the Susie Stephens Trail to the Post Office, providing a pedestrian and bike route for SR20. (47)
- Completion of the RiverWalk/downtown focus. (44)
- Overall connectivity throughout Town (21)
- Connection to the schools (19)

- Trail to Twisp/Valleywide Trails (13)
- Pearrygin Lake State Park (10)
- Connection to Methow Trails (4)
- North Winthrop (3)
- Studhorse, Heckendorn, Satellite parking areas

In another way of gauging support for the various parks and recreation facilities/projects, the survey asked respondents to note their top three priorities. This created a broader spread of project interest, but overall similar results. The cumulative prioritization of the projects in the survey results a very strong priority of completing existing trail projects (Susie Stephens Trail and RiverWalk), and adding to that network with more trails. Out of 125 response for the first priority, 101 listed trail projects. The next level of priority seems to be for developing water access, especially at the Barn. Overall responses show that people value diverse recreation opportunities within the community.

We wanted to follow up about the demand for soccer fields, water/river access, neighborhood parks, and open space. Past park surveys have kept tabs on the desire for soccer fields. This survey asked whether soccer fields in Twisp should be a valley-wide resource or Winthrop should construct additional fields. Respondents largely favored soccer fields in Twisp – 73% versus 27% who thought Winthrop should add soccer fields.

Water access has been another topic of past surveys. This time when we asked what respondents think about developing water access for rafting and other activities. 84% would like to see water access developed in Mack Lloyd Park. 23% favored a whitewater park. Suggestions for other locations focused on Heckendorn Park and the "horse corral" area.

Generally those respondents who live here and are familiar with Heckendorn Park are quite happy with it. We received some suggestions for improvements that included restrooms, a picnic shelter, water access, and more frequent trash pickup.

The survey delved further into the details of what amenities are needed in our parks. Regarding site furnishings and amenities, 65% of respondents felt existing item are adequate. Of those who listed needed improvements, the most common responses included:

- Restrooms Mack Lloyd Park & Heckendorn Park (9 responses)
- Benches in parks and along trails (5 responses)
- Lighting (4 responses)
- Water Fountains (4 responses)

The Town has recently been exploring the idea of an open space park adjacent to town that would protect shrub steppe habitat, preserve views, and offer a network of walking and biking trails. We sought to assess whether people favor additional open spaces, park land or trails adjacent to Town. 87% said yes, 12% said no, and 1% had no opinion.

An open ended question asked respondents to list park maintenance priorities. Priorities included cleanliness, trash removal, weed control, playground equipment, tennis court repairs, keeping Confluence Park weeded, clean and accessible year-round, tree maintenance, and recycling. Many respondents noted that our parks are generally well maintained.

A summary report, plus the complete survey results is included in Appendix C.

Community Forums

Over the past 15 years, the Town has reached out on several occasions to get a deeper understanding of public needs and priorities. While some of the forums listed here are several years old, they indicate a building trend in envisioning Winthrop as a Trailhead, and an outdoor recreation hub for the Methow Valley.

2005 Community Assessment with USDA Rural Development - A Community Assessment was completed in March of 2005, and although not specifically focused on parks and recreation, it yielded a wealth of information about the priorities of people within the community. The assessment was conducted by a team of 4 observers from the Washington Rural Development Council. During the listening forums, people identified important projects to help build the community of their vision: Community trails, the Riverwalk, the Ice Rink, parks and other community amenities; planning and communication; and dealing with pedestrian and parking needs. Clearly through this process, conducted by outside observers, the same set of needs and vision rose to the surface.

2008 Town Visioning Workshop - On May 13, 2008, the Winthrop Planning Commission and Town Council held a joint public workshop to gather public input on zoning code and comprehensive land use issues. Fifty-four people (not counting Town Staff) attended. Pedestrian mobility stood out as probably the most frequently mentioned and highly supported single topic in the workshop and written comments. This encompassed development of trails (the Susie Stephens Trail, RiverWalk, and others) and otherwise promoting pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The area around the metal bridge & the SR 20 corridor raised particular concern, giving utmost priority to the Town's efforts to construct the Susie Stephens Trail and Spring Creek Bridge.

2015 Comprehensive Plan Update – The Winthrop Planning Commission worked intensely over three years to complete a wholesale update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The planning process reached out to the Winthrop Chamber and public at large to craft a vision, goals and policies reflective of the community. The resulting plan places high priority on Winthrop's recreation

attributes, and on growing our network of trails.

2017 Walking Audit and Big Ideas Workshop – This workshop drew 30 people over the course of two segments. The focus was on multimodal circulation and downtown streetscape; however, it focused substantially on connecting to our major recreation facilities: Mack Lloyd Park and the Barn, the Rink and Trailhead, the Susie Stephens Trail, and RiverWalk. The focus on walking and biking dovetailed substantially with the findings of our parks and recreation survey. Above all, Winthrop residents and visitors desire a community where it's easy to get on a trail, to walk or bike to parks and key community sites. The findings of the workshop were refined into design concepts and will ultimately wind up on an action oriented plan to improve people's experience of moving around in our community. This workshop and planning process also specifically aims to address ADA compliance, ensuring that people of all ages and ability can get around Winthrop.

Conclusion

Together, the Town, School District, Town of Twisp, Methow Trails Association and many other public and private entities provide Winthrop area residents and visitors with a variety of recreational opportunities. The community's desire and documented demand for year round recreational opportunities remains strong as shown by public input used in updating of this park plan. These findings inform the goals and objectives and 6-year capital improvement program proposed later in this plan.

Parks and recreation improvements are rarely, if ever, self-supporting from a financial standpoint. The costs required to construct and maintain park improvements will entail ongoing collaboration between the Town, Winthrop Rink, Methow Trails, Kiwanis, Winthrop Auditorium Association, and other partners if the goals and recommendations found in this plan are to be realized.

Chapter 6 - Capital Improvement Program

This chapter aims to define park action priorities, consider the Town's financial capabilities, and offer a six-year plan for parks and recreation improvements. The goals, objectives and recommendations of this plan represent large and long-term visions for Winthrop; they must be weighed against the Town's ability to generate partnerships and procure grant funding. They also must be considered in light of the Town's ability to support ongoing operations and maintenance costs. Because this Capital Improvement Plan needs to be financially realistic, some action priorities may be deferred until funding and demand align.

Our parks survey shows that the community is fairly satisfied with our operation and maintenance of park facilities. As the financial discussion in this Chapter illustrates, the Town has gradually increased spending on operations and maintenance of our park facilities. In addition to local revenues, we depend on active partnerships with Winthrop Rink, Methow Trails, the Winthrop Auditorium Association and Kiwanis to keep everything maintained. Improvements to what we already have, or new projects require substantial cash outlays that are only possible with grant funding and partnerships.

The Six Year CIP formalizes the Action Priorities by including estimated costs, potential funding sources and year project/activity is to be completed. An important premise is that no project or program should be implemented until operation and maintenance costs are known.

Because the Action Priorities and CIP are limited to facilities owned and operated by the Town, we encourage other local jurisdictions and entities that provide recreation opportunities to review this plan and consider aligning their plans with it. Shared priorities help us make a stronger case to RCO and other funding organizations that we are working together to meet the recreation needs of the larger valley community.

Implementation of this plan must be flexible to keep abreast of changes in community needs, partnership opportunities and funding options. For this reason, the list of projects found in the Action Priorities and CIP will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as goals are met, funding opportunities arise, and needs change.

Action Priorities

The following Action Priorities were developed to address the demand and need for parks and recreation improvements, based on input from citizen participation, the Planning Commission, and the Town Council. Priorities are listed by facility. Though they are not ranked, the top priority for each facility is listed first.

Location	Project Description			
Mack Lloyd Park	 Improve/develop water access area with bank stabilization. Repair/replace the Bandshell. Repairs & upgrades to the Barn. Tennis court maintenance/repairs. Upgrade public restrooms, drinking fountains. Maintain trees and landscaping. 			
lce Rink & Trailhead Park	 Improve Trailhead parking lot with paving, storm water drainage, lighting, landscaping, and signage. Improve lower rink area with parking lot lighting, landscaping, and additional paving at west end of rink. Comprehensive signage for Trailhead, Rink and Susie Stephens Trail, including route to downtown. Improvements to storage and rink equipment. Maintain the Rink and associated equipment in good condition. 			
Heckendorn Park	 Consider restrooms, upgrades to play equipment, picnic shelter. Maintain park in good condition. 			
Confluence Park	 Install bike racks, recycling and pet waste stations. Construct ADA access to RiverWalk corridor. Maintenance and weed control. 			
River Access	 Explore need and possible locations for additional water access besides Mack Lloyd Park. 			
Trails	 Complete Susie Stephens Trail Plan, permit, design & construct Riverwalk – all phases Work with other jurisdictions and organizations to extend trails to public schools and Pearrygin State Park. Promote the development of an in-town trail network, including a trail through North Village. 			
Open Space Park	 Explore the possibility of an open space park adjacent to Heckendorn that would protect habitat and extend walking and biking trails. Foster partnerships in support of the open space park concept. 			

Table 6.1 - Action Priorities

Financial Considerations

Park maintenance and operations are financed through the Town's Current Expense Fund, which is the same pool of tax revenue that pays for the Town's administration and Marshal's department. Typically all substantive improvements to our parks, and new projects such as the Ice Rink and trails require additional funds from grants, partnerships, donations and volunteer contributions.

Operations and Maintenance - Each year, during budget time in the Fall, the Town allots money from the Current Expense fund to operate and maintain the existing park facilities. This money covers Public Works staff time (including a proportional share of payroll benefits), operations money, insurance, utilities, weed control and hazard tree maintenance. Table 6.2 below illustrates the Town's expenditures for Parks Operations and Maintenance over the past six years.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
PW Assistant 1 salary (1 month)	\$ 2,810	\$ 2,842	\$ 2,971	\$ 3,031	\$ 3,160	\$ 2,899
PW Assistant 2 salary (.5 month)	\$ 1,178	\$ 1,183	\$ 1,284	\$ 1,355	\$ 1,402	\$ 1,336
PW Assistant 3 salary (2.5 month)						\$ 5,140
Payroll benefits	\$ 2,285	\$ 2,251	\$ 2,309	\$ 2,460	\$ 2,539	\$ 5,852
Park operations	\$ 3,150	\$ 3,759	\$ 2,055	\$ 2,573	\$ 7,660	\$ 5,607
Insurance	\$ 3,665	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 5,750
Utilities	\$ 1,894	\$ 1,744	\$ 2,061	\$ 1,871	\$ 2,071	\$ 2,671
Park weed control			\$ 707		\$ 562	
Hazard Tree Removal						\$ 3,462
Total O&M Expenditures	\$ 14,982	\$ 15,780	\$ 15,387	\$ 15,290	\$ 21,332	\$ 32,716

Table 6.2 – Park Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

Of note is the fact that our expenses have more than doubled over the period, with the sharpest increases in 2016 and 2017. This reflects an increase in our insurance rate, added commitment of staff time to parks, and higher operations costs. With the number of facilities the Town supports, and their high importance to our community, continuing to budget adequate funds for operations and maintenance should be a priority.

Park Projects - Generally, park improvements are considered as funding becomes available through grants, partnerships, community donations, and volunteer efforts. Due to the size of the Town's budget, often only a few

hundred to a few thousand dollars are allocated per year, based on specific project needs. The Town supports park projects through staff time spent on project management and grant administration tasks. The project funds expended in Table 6.3 below come from numerous grant sources and cash donations to the Town. Park project expenditures over the past six years total \$1,998,000 – an enormous investment in Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
Ice Rink Property	\$ 10						
SST Property	\$ 1,384						
SST P1 Design	\$ 6,239						
SST P1 Construction	\$ 516,873						
Ballpark Restroom Repair	\$ 1,297						
SST P2 Design		\$ 269	\$ 3,121	\$ 23,471	\$ 23,173	\$ 1,065	
RW P1 Design		\$ 6,300	\$ 35,006	\$ 45,185	\$ 42,684	\$ 38,437	
MLP Bridge Decking - AWC			\$ 1,939				
Ice Rink P2 Design			\$ 4,066	\$ 30,612			
SST Crossings & Signage			\$ 1,768	\$ 10,023	\$ 10,631	\$ 4,807	
Rail Fence - AWC				\$ 1,160			
Ice Rink P2 Construction				\$ 731,302	\$ 221,130		
SST P2 Construction						\$ 199,263	
SST P2 Construction Engineering						\$ 36,696	
	\$ 525,802	\$ 6,569	\$ 45,899	\$ 841,753	\$ 297,617	\$ 280,268	

Park Project Funding Sources

As demonstrated above, capital park projects require funding from sources other than the tax revenues that fund operations and maintenance. This section describes potential funding sources, paying special attention to those sources listed in the Six Year Capital Improvement Program.

Recreation Conservation Office (RCO) - Created by the Washington Legislature in the 1970s, the RCO administers a variety of grant programs that provide funds to state and local agencies, generally requiring a 50% match from grant

applicants. RCO funds can be used to acquire property, develop new facilities, or rehabilitate old ones. To establish eligibility, applicants must have an adopted Parks and Recreation Plan that documents the process used to identify the community's recreational priorities. Of the various grant programs available through RCO, the Town has mostly sought local parks and trails funding through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)

Transportation Funding – Though federal and state transportation funds are not typically available for parks and recreation projects, this plan update identifies the Susie Stephens and RiverWalk trails as action priorities. Trails projects are often eligible for transportation grants. The Town has received funding from the federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The Spring Creek Bridge and Susie Stephens Trail were funded through a one-time legislative appropriation in the 2005 gas tax package. In 2017, the Town also received a "Complete Streets Award" from the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). The award can be spent on planning and implementation of projects that advance our goals around improving transportation of users of all ages and abilities. Collectively, these transportation funding sources enable us to combine transportation and recreation objectives to meet our action priorities.

Economic Development Funding – In years past, the Town has successfully combined .09 Infrastructure funds to match other resources and further our parks and recreation project goals. State law apportions .09% of county-wide sales tax revenues for infrastructure projects that benefit economic development. Okanogan County distributes those funds as advised by the Economic Alliance. The Town has used .09 funds to purchase land for the Trailhead, and to pave the lower Rink parking lot. In addition, the Town has sought the support of the regional Economic Development District in furthering our projects.

Private and Foundation Grants – Occasionally the Town identifies grants offered by private foundations or nonprofit organizations that are a fit for our projects. However, award amounts are often small and we have had little success with such applications. Nonetheless, we pay attention to such opportunities and seek them where we have projects that are a good fit.

Donations - Many of the projects in the CIP list donations as a funding source. Donations come to us as land, cash for design and construction, and volunteer contributions of time and resources. Donations have been crucial to the development of Mack Lloyd Park, the Barn, and the Ice Rink. Confluence Park was donated to the Town already developed. Without these generous donations, our Park Plan rapidly becomes an unattainable wish list. Winthrop celebrates the tremendous benefits of working with donors to create vibrant recreation opportunities. **Partnerships** – Partnerships are increasingly a cornerstone to envisioning and developing lasting recreation opportunities. Both the Barn and the Rink are owned by the Town, but have been operated and maintained by our nonprofit partners. Their dedication and expertise has been essential. Methow Trails has helped with maintaining the Trailhead. Looking forward, these and other partnerships will remain essential to meeting the goals and objectives of this plan. Partners can bring additional funding sources; donations of time, money and resources; and valuable assistance operating and maintaining parks and recreation facilities.

Cooperative or Joint Use Agreements - Agreements (a subset of partnershipsas described above) are more a way to reduce expenses than a source of funds. Many communities have found that one agency is not able to take on a commitment like a new recreation center or athletic field alone. In many cases, interlocal agreements have been established between neighboring communities, school districts, and other special districts to lay the ground work for cooperative use, staffing, and maintenance. Potential partners for such agreements could include: Okanogan County, State Parks, and the Methow Valley School District.

User Fees - Although rarely significant enough to fund capital projects, user fees are often used to help cover operation and maintenance costs. Care must be taken, however, to make sure increases in user fees do not unintentionally deny Winthrop residents the ability to participate.

Debt Financing - Debt financing instruments such as general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, and councilmanic bonds can be used to fund recreational improvements. However, they are more typically used for water, sewer, and street improvements. General obligation bonds require voter approval. They also cannot be used for maintenance and operation.

Special Levies - Special levies are often proposed by taxing districts such as a Parks and Recreation District. They must be voter approved and can be issued for operation and maintenance (but only for a one year period). Other types of levies may or may not require voter approval, depending on limits imposed by state statute.

Formation of a Parks and Recreation District – There has been ongoing conversation about the potential benefits of a Parks and Recreation District that could own, operate and maintain facilities that serve the entire Methow Valley. From a statutory standpoint, a Parks and Recreation District is authorized to enter into a variety of activities, including, acquiring and disposing of property; contracting with any local government or private agency for the conduct of parks and recreation programs; and jointly operating recreation facilities with other governmental entities (RCW 36.69.130). A ballot initiative in 2013 that would have created a Parks and Recreation District in the Methow Valley was

turned down by voters. There has not been any significant public discussion of that idea since; however, it remains a possibility for ensuring the long term success of recreation facilities in the future.

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) -In 1983, the Town began collecting a one-quarter of one percent Real Estate Excise Tax. This is above and beyond the real estate tax collected by the State of Washington. The tax is imposed each time real property changes hands within the Town. After Okanogan County retains a small amount for administration, the Town is provided with the funds resulting from the collection of this tax on a monthly basis. For obvious reasons, the amount received by the Town is proportional to level of real estate activity in the area.

Proceeds from the Real Estate Excise Tax can be used for many things. RCW 35.43.040 as well as the Chapter 3.20 of the Winthrop Municipal Code state that the tax can be used for "local capital improvements". The state statute gives some examples, focusing on improvements that can also be funded through a Local Improvement District (LID): streets, parks, sewers, water mains, swimming pools, and gymnasiums.

The REET cannot be used for items such as fire engines and computers. Projects must be things than can be done to or on a parcel of property. Arguably, the REET also cannot be used for the repair and rehabilitation of existing facilities or the acquisition of park land, unless the Town finds itself planning under the Growth Management Act at some point in the future.

Lodging Excise Tax - Also called the Hotel/Motel Tax, the Lodging Excise Tax is a 2% charge applied at the time hotel rooms, trailer sites, and other accommodations are furnished to visitors. Compared to the REET (above), the purposes for which this tax can be used are severely limited. The funds are typically used for promotion of the area in various publications. Particularly in more populated areas where larger amounts are generated, the tax is also used for the construction of convention centers, stadiums, and performing art centers. It is thought that "performing arts centers" can be interpreted broadly to mean theaters, stages, and other facilities for dance drama, and music.

Current Expense Fund - Use of the general fund for park improvements is perfectly appropriate in the scope of an overall budget, subject to the approval of the Town Council. Small contributions by the Town in the scope of larger projects often help us meet match requirements and demonstrate local commitment. This plan is intended as a tool to guide general fund decisions regarding park and trail improvements.

Six Year Capital Improvement Plan

The Six Year Capital Improvement Plan reflects the Town's action priorities as filtered by financial considerations and potential funding sources. It is intended to plot a path for achieving our goals and objectives and fulfilling the recommendations set forth at the beginning of the plan. It reflects the demand and needs of our community. It is bold and ambitious, and will require ongoing success in securing outside funding. It assumes that the Town's main financial commitment to parks and recreation lies with ongoing staff support, operations and maintenance.

The CIP is laid out in a series of six tables, one for each year. It is organized by the same grouping of park facilities listed in the Action Priorities. Cost estimates in the near term are closer to reality, while those for projects more than a couple years out are simple estimates. Similarly, project funds for projects that are currently underway are known and secured; funding of future projects requires considering the most likely fit for funding and a willingness to keep all of our options open.

A list of funding abbreviations used in the following CIP follows.

- RCO Recreation Conservation Office grants
- WSDOT Transportation grants
- Grants Grant opportunities to be identified from public or private sources
- Donations Donations of time, materials, equipment and cash
- Town Town funds (including lodging taxes and sales tax), staff time, equipment, materials
- Partners Donations of time, material and cash from partner organizations

Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2018					
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources		
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	 Seek funding to improve water access at Barn Repair/replace bandshell Hen House meeting room improvements 	Staff time \$ 2,000 \$ 2,500	Town, partners		
	Subtotal	\$ 4,500			
Ice Rink & Trailhead	Site and signage plan for TrailheadLandscaping and lower parking lot safety lighting	\$ 8,000 \$ 3,000	Town/partners Winthrop Rink		
	Subtotal	\$ 11,000			
	 Complete Susie Stephens Trail Phase 2, including SR20 crossing. 	\$ 101,000	WSDOT, RCO		
Trails	 Complete environmental, permitting, ROW and construction of RiverWalk Phase 1. 	\$ 460,000	Complete Streets Award		
	 Obtain letters of intent from all landowners for RiverWalk Phase 2 & 3. 	Staff time	Town		
	 Seek funding for next RiverWalk Phase. 				
	Subtotal	\$ 561,000			
Confluence Park	 Install bike racks, recycling and pet waste stations 	\$ 5,000	Complete Streets, Town		
	Subtotal	\$ 5,000			
	TOTAL	\$ 581,500			

Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2019					
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources		
	 Design and construct water access at Barn, including bank stabilization and repair of paved pathway. 	\$ 100,000	RCO, partners,		
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	Improve restrooms & drinking fountainsTennis Court repairs	\$ 10,000 \$ 5,000	Town, other grants		
	Subtotal	\$ 115,000			
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	 Seek funding for Rink & Trailhead parking improvements 	Staff time	Town, partners		
	Subtotal	\$ -			
Heckendorn Park	 Project planning for park upgrades (playground equipment, restrooms, trees & water access). 	Staff time	Town, partners		
	Subtotal	\$ -			
Trails	 Finish work and restoration/mitigation RiverWalk Phase 1 	\$ 50,000	RCO, WSDOT, partners,		
Trais	 Design and environmental permitting for RiverWalk Phase 2, including bank stabilization 	\$ 150,000	donations		
	Subtotal	\$ 200,000			
Open Space Park	 Develop partnerships, conceptual planning 	Staff time	Town, partners		
	Subtotal	\$ -			
	TOTAL	\$ 315,000			

	Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2020		
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Sources
Ice Rink & Trailhead	 Rink & Trailhead parking improvements (paving, lighting, landscaping, signage) 	\$ 150,000	Grants, Town, partners
	Subtotal	\$ 150,000	
Heckendorn Park	 Seek funding for park upgrades (restrooms, play equipment, etc.) 	Staff time	Town, partners
	Subtotal	Ş -	
Trails	Seek funding for final phases of RiverWalk and SSTConstruction of RiverWalk Phase 2	Staff time \$ 500,000	Town, RCO, donations
	Subtotal	\$ 500,000	
Open Space Park	 Seek funding for open space park acquisition 	Staff time	
	Subtotal	\$ -	
	TOTAL	\$ 650,000	

Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2021						
Park	Project			mated Cost	Funding Source	
Ice Rink & Trailhead	Rink Equipment and site repair/upgrades		\$	50,000	Grant, partners	
		Subtotal	\$	50,000		
Heckendorn Park	Park Improvements – site design & permitting		\$	25,000	RCO, donations	
		Subtotal	\$	25,000		
Trails	RiverWalk final phase design & permitting		\$	100,000	Town, grant	
		Subtotal	\$	100,000		
Open Space Park	Open Space Acquisition		\$	500,000		
		Subtotal	\$	500,000		
		TOTAL	\$	675,000		

Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2022					
Park	Project	-	mated Cost	Funding Source	
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	Tree maintenance and replacement	\$	4,000		
	Subtotal	\$	4,000		
Heckendorn Park	Construct park improvements	\$	150,000	RCO, Town, partners, donations	
	Subtotal	\$	150,000		
Troile	Riverwalk final phase construction	\$	500,000	RCO, donations	
Trails	Susie Stephens Trail final phase design & permitting	\$	100,000		
	Subtotal	\$	600,000		
River Access	 Seek partnerships and explore more river access 	S	taff Time	Town	
	Subtotal	Ş	; -		
	TOTAL		\$ 754,000		

Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan 2023							
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source				
Trails	 Susie Stephens Trail final phase construction 	\$ 500,000	rco, wsdot				
	Subtotal	\$ 500,000					
Open Space Park	 Site design and seek development funding 	\$ 25,000	Partners, Town				
	Subtotal	\$ 25,000					
	TOTAL	\$ 525,000					

Appendix A - Resolution Adopting Park Plan

RESOLUTION NO. 2018 - 5

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WINTHROP APPROVING THE TOWN OF WINTHROP PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WINTHROP. WASHINGTON, as follows:

Section 1. The Town of Winthrop Parks and Recreation Plan dated February 21, 2018 is hereby approved.

Section 2. The Mayor is hereby authorized and directed to execute the same, for and on behalf of the Town of Winthrop.

Section 3. The Town Clerk/Treasurer is authorized and directed to attest her signature.

PASSED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL this 21st day of February, 2018.

APPROVED:

ERanzar____ Sally Ranzau, Mayor

ATTEST:

Michelle Gaines, Clerk/Treasurer

Appendix B – Maps

Appendix C - Parks and Recreation Inventory

RCO Public Lands Inventory

Managing Agency: Town of Winthrop

1. Site Name		Mack Lloyd Park	Heckendorn Park	Ice Rink/Trailhead	Cottonwood
2. Site Location	A. City/Town	Winthrop	Winthrop	Winthrop	Winthrop
	B. County	Okanogan	Okanogan	Okanogan	Okanogan
	C. Section	2	2	2	2
	D. Township	34	34	34	34
	E. Range	21	21	21	21
3. Total Site Acreage		18	0.5	3.5	14
4. Athletic Fields	A. # Baseball/Softball	1			
	B. # Football/Soccer				
	C. # Open Play				
5. Outdoor Courts	A. # Tennis	2			
	B. # Basketball/Other	1	1/2	Ice Rink 1	
6. Golf Courses	A. # Holes				
7. Swimming Pools	A. Outdoor				
	B. Indoor				
8. Day Use Facilities	A. # Picnic Tables	12			
	B. # Picnic Shelters	2			
9. Camping	A. Total # camp units	0			
	B. Units w/ hookups				
	C. Are any units for:				
	Bike/Hike/Boat only?				
	D. Group Camping?				
10. Water Body Facilities	A. Water: River/Stream?	Yes, River	Yes, River	No	No
	Wetland/Marsh?	No	No	No	No
	Lake/Reservoir?	No	No	No	No
	Saltwater	No	No	No	No
	B. Water Body Name	Methow River	Methow River		
	C. Linear Ft. Shoreline	200	100		
	D. Linear Ft. Designated				
	E. # Boat Moorage Slips				
	F. # Boat Moorage Buoys				
	G. # Boat Launch Lanes				
	H. # Car/Boat Trailer Parking				
11. Does the site provide:	A. Restrooms?	Yes	No	Yes	No
	B. Fitness/Jogging Courses?	No	No	NO	No
	C. Playground Equipment?	Yes	Yes	No	No
	D. Handicapped Accessible?	Yes	?	Yes	No
	E. Trails?	Yes	No	Yes	No
	F. Predominately Open Space?	No	No	No	Yes

Appendix D - Parks and Recreation Survey, Results, and Summary