

9.0 PARKS AND RECREATION.

9.1 Introduction

The mission of Yakima Parks and Recreation Division is “to provide and promote community leisure as well as recreational and cultural activities for all citizens of Yakima.” The division offers recreational programs and activities, maintains facilities that are aesthetic and desirable for use, and enhances well-being of Yakima’s citizens. This element, in parallel with the City of Yakima Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan, guides the future of park acquisition, development, and management that meets level of service standards.

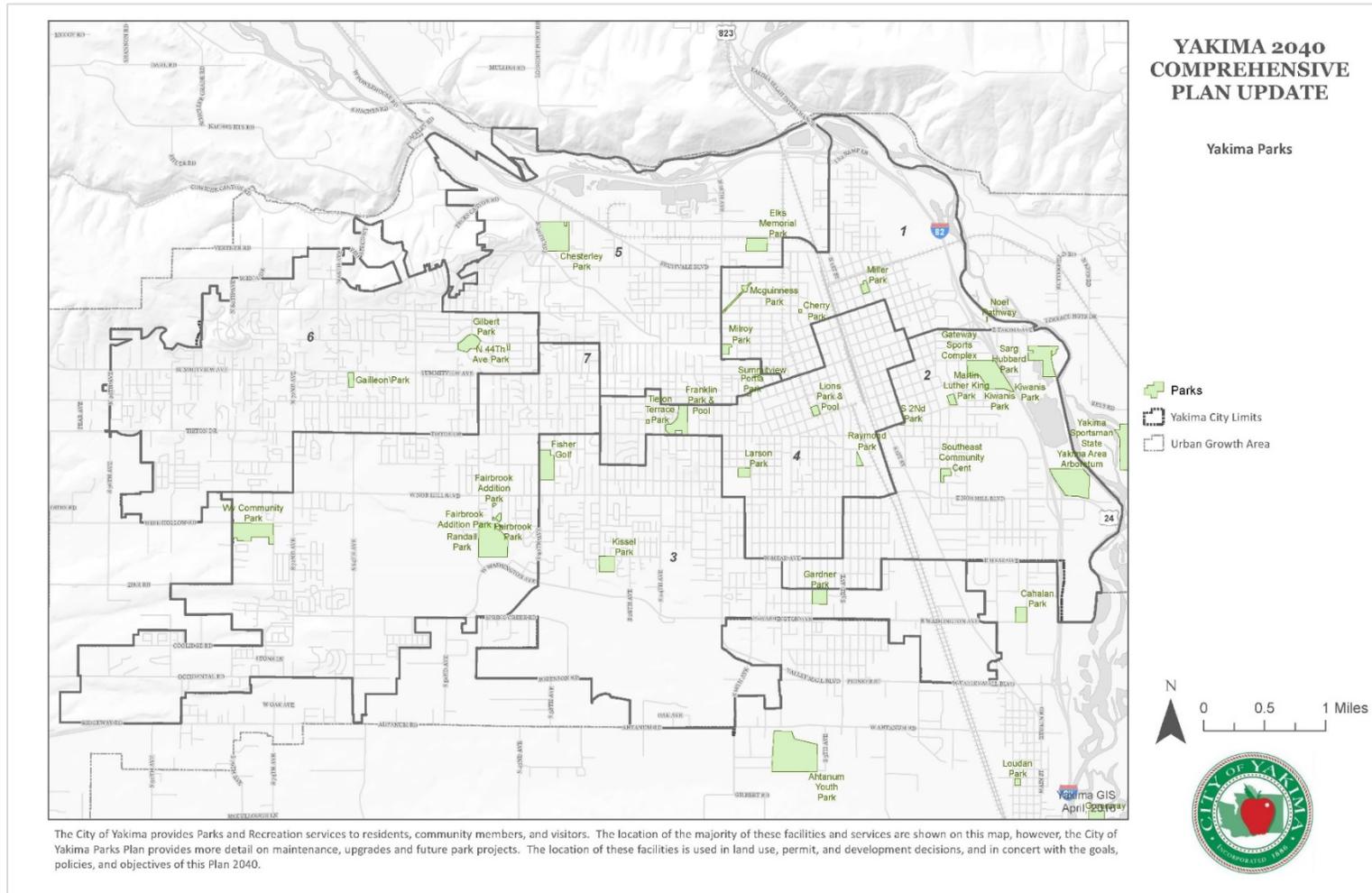
9.2 Conditions and Trends

Yakima has around 368 acres of parks and recreation facilities, in addition to some public buildings, such as the Harman Center and the Southeast Community Center. Also available to the public are the Yakima Greenway, with about 10 miles of trails, the Sportsman State Park, and the Yakima Area Arboretum. The City of Yakima Parks & Recreation Division also offers activities for adults, youth, and seniors through sports programs, the senior center, summer day camps and other special events. Exhibit 9-1 shows a map of Yakima’s existing Neighborhood and Community Parks.

Open Space and Recreation – Growth Management Act

Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities. (RCW 36.70A.020(9))

Exhibit 9-1. City of Yakima Parks



Source: City of Yakima, 2016

9.3 Challenges and Opportunities

Yakima’s park system includes an extensive inventory of passive and active recreation facilities. Repair and maintenance of these assets is a priority of the Parks and Recreation Division. While there has been substantial investment in the system in the last 15 years of almost \$20 million, there are still parks and amenities that have aging infrastructure in need of repair or replacement.

Additional land is needed to increase the available park acreage and opportunities in Yakima. Based upon National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards, Yakima is deficient in park land by approximately 158 acres for the current population. Increased access to existing trail systems, such as the Yakima Greenway and Powerhouse Canal Pathway, is also a priority.

9.4 Goals and Policies

GOAL 9.1. Maintain existing parks and recreation facilities at a level that meets the public’s desire for safe, clean, and enjoyable parks.

GOAL 9.2. Develop existing city parks and open space areas to meet the current and future demands of both individual city neighborhoods and the community at large.

GOAL 9.3. Establish and implement a long-range plan for the development of parks, open space, green belts and pathways within the City of Yakima and the greater urban growth area.

Policies

- 9.3.1. Explore opportunities for leveraging local money for park development through both public and private grant funding.
- 9.3.2. Establish an ongoing six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Parks and Recreation facilities.
 - Fund capital improvements through the City’s general fund, parks cash balance and state, federal, and other grants.
 - Promote private, public and non-profit partnerships for capital improvements to parks.



GOAL 9.4. Expand the presence of art throughout the community, particularly in public spaces and parks to enhance the community and its quality of life.

Policies

9.4.1. Foster relationships with local arts organizations to encourage the addition of art in public spaces and parks.

GOAL 9.5. Establish a priority for future land acquisition and park development based on neighborhood as well as the overall City's needs.

Policies

9.5.1. Draft a City standard for public open and green space.

9.5.2. Develop and maintain an up-to-date park land acquisition plan that targets and sets priorities for future park acquisitions.

- Review the City and its neighborhoods and identify needs according to that standard.
- Meet with local neighborhood associations and residents to identify their needs and interests.
- Consider safe pedestrian and bicycle access in future land acquisition and park development.

GOAL 9.6. Create a unique and positive image for the City through establishment and development of green belts and pathways within the City of Yakima.

Policies

9.6.1. Continue to cooperate and share resources to develop and expand the Yakima Greenway.

9.6.2. Work with the city Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathway Committee to use existing irrigation canal rights-of-way and Yakima Valley Transportation (YVT) corridors for pathways.

9.6.3. Ensure that bikeways and pedestrian pathways are made a consideration in surface transportation planning for the City of Yakima.

- 9.6.4. Establish landscaping standards for implementation along major city streets, arterials and city pathways at urban gateways that are compatible with area uses and maintainable by existing city resources.
- 9.6.5. Incorporate, whenever possible, greenbelts and pathways into all future residential, commercial, and industrial developments and keep these trails, as much as possible, separate from streets and arterials.
- 9.6.6. Establish connectivity with the William O. Douglas Trail portion which goes through the City of Yakima.
- 9.6.7. Explore possibilities for establishing pathway connections between existing and future parks.

GOAL 9.7. Develop innovative approaches to creating new park facilities.

Policies

- 9.7.1. Promote private, public and not profit partnerships for capital improvements to parks.
- 9.7.2. Encourage creation of a centrally located outdoor performing arts stage or facility through a public, private and/or business partnership.
- 9.7.3. Encourage development of non-traditional recreation venues including a water park, BMX track, skate parks, disc golf, and other facilities for emerging sports and activities.
- 9.7.4. Use city cultural and historical landmarks as a cornerstone for park development whenever possible.
- 9.7.5. Establish level of service standards for city park properties to provide guidelines for their appropriate use by the public and for special events.

GOAL 9.8. Create and implement a long-range plan and program for the preservation of prime open space areas in or adjacent to the City of Yakima.

Policies

- 9.8.1. Support continued expansion of the Yakima Greenway.

- 9.8.2. Support the fostering of a strong relationship between the Greenway and abutting city neighborhoods.
- 9.8.3. Advocate incorporation of greenbelts into future residential, commercial, and industrial development to minimize impacts of locating potentially incompatible land uses next to one another.
- 9.8.4. Preserve open space through means other than ownership, such as transfer of development rights, tax obligation relief and land donations to non-profit open space preservation organizations.

9.5 Implementation

Yakima’s Comprehensive Plan is implemented through the actions and investments made by the City with the support of its residents and stakeholders. Some of these actions include regulatory changes, partnerships, coordination, administrative acts, policy changes, and capital investments. The following implementation items aid in this process.

Exhibit 9-2. Parks and Recreation Implementation

Implementation Item	Action Type	Results
Capital Facilities Plan	Functional plan and funding plan, updated periodically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital investment in parks
Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan	Functional plan, updated periodically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals and policies to guide future of parks • Maintain grant eligibility
Bicycle Master Plan	Strategic plan for bicycle circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved bicycle network