

# PARKS TASK FORCE MEETING AGENDA

*Gresham Parks 2035 Parks Task Force Meeting*

**Date:** Tuesday, December 17, 2024 | **Time:** 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p. m. | **Location:** [Microsoft Teams](#)

**Attendees:**

**Parks Task Force:** John Hartsock, Stella Funk Butler, Sue Ruonala, Ed Chin, Christian Burgess, Catherine Nicewood, Maria Valez, Kayla Viramontes, Sheena Raab

**City of Gresham:** Tina Nunez- Osterink

**MIG:** Matt Hastie, Tiffany White-LaPierre

**Guests:** Carol Rulla (Neighborhood Associations)

<p><b>Welcome &amp; (Re)introductions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ City staff opened the meeting by providing the PTF with a brief welcome and then transitioned to the consultant team, MIG, to begin introductions.</li> <li>▪ Attendees were asked to provide their name, length of time living in Gresham, organizations they may also represent and if they were a member of the Parks Task Force (PTF) or a guest.</li> <li>▪ Attendees introduced themselves with varying lengths of time living in Gresham and various organizations represented including the Latino Network and Gresham Chamber of Commerce among others. There was one guest in the meeting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Project Status</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG shared a PowerPoint presentation and discussed the project schedule noting that some of the dates had shifted since the last PTF meeting held in April 2024.</li> <li>▪ The schedule is divided into a four phased approach . MIG noted that the first two phases have been completed and Phase 3 has begun. Phase 4 will conclude</li> </ul>

	<p>the project with results/findings from Phases 1-3 included in the final Parks Plan 2035 report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The project is anticipated to conclude by May 2025.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Engagement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG continued with the presentation and began sharing work conducted to date beginning with the various community engagement efforts completed.</li> <li>▪ City staff mentioned that more information about work completed to date can be found on the Engage Gresham website and shared the link in the chat. <a href="#">Gresham Parks 2035   Engage Gresham</a></li> <li>▪ City staff highlighted several events they attended where they engaged residents and guests including Pop-Up events at several Movies in the Park and at other community events/celebrations and neighborhood meetings throughout the summer.</li> <li>▪ MIG shared the major themes that emerged from the various engagement activities which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Maintain the existing amenities and facilities</li> <li>○ Accessible walkways and paths</li> <li>○ Improvements to undeveloped parks</li> <li>○ Community center</li> <li>○ Natural areas &amp; nature parks</li> <li>○ Play structures</li> <li>○ Safety improvements</li> <li>○ Youth and teen programming</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ MIG opened the floor to attendees to ask questions and provide general feedback on the information shared at that point. Responses included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Safety and maintenance – lights and security stuck out to one attendee – they noted that the City hired two Park Rangers pre-COVID and was unsure of what happened to them – City staff clarified that those two were temporary support through the summer and that hiring is occurring for permanent community officers to serve in a similar capacity.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee asked which council members were invited to the interviews and wanted to know if they were targeted or if everyone was given a chance – MIG explained that all Councilors were invited to attend but only 4 of the 7 were able to participate during the dates and times available. The attendee also asked if the Major was involved at all – City staff/MIG noted that they did not have a chance to talk to the mayor but did send the questions to the mayor to provide written comments, but did not receive any feedback from them or the other council members. This attendee also asked how new council members will be engaged in this process. City stated that the new council will be engaged in advance of the finalization of the plan – hopes this would be sometime in March. MIG shared that during that time initial recommendations would be ready to share with them</li> <li>○ Another attendee mentioned that two of the new council members are advocates of parks. MIG stated that they would be receiving updates on what has occurred to date to catch them up on the project before it is presented to them for adoption</li> <li>○ Another attendee was happy to know that they were happy there was targeted outreach, but also notes that there may have been some Asian populations missed in the engagement efforts. City staff mentioned that in January more cultural outreach will be included in the engagement process – attendee mentioned that they have Asian neighbors who do not speak English and wants to be sure they have translation services available to them to participate in the process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Park and Trail Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG shared four maps included in the Needs Assessment and Level of Service report and described the methodology behind the creation of the maps. MIG also mentioned that there was a summary table included in the report they could refer to for more information about needs and strategies to address them in specific</li> </ul>

	<p>areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee pointed out on Map 3-1 that in Kelley Creek community highway 26 is included as an accessible route and should not be, as it is a barrier to access. They also mentioned the area around Southwest Community Park is expected to be developed but it is not represented on the map. They stated that they will have a follow-up conversation with City staff to discuss these issues further.</li> <li>○ An attendee asked, “What does it mean when something is identified as a planned area?” – MIG and City staff explained that they are not yet annexed but are identified as areas that will eventually become part of the City and in most cases some initial concept or other area planning has been done for them.</li> <li>▪ MIG discussed the park and trail need opportunities and reiterated that the project has not gotten to the recommendations stage and that the opportunities listed within the presentation and in the report are preliminary strategies to address needs that emerged from the analysis.</li> <li>▪ MIG also mentioned that the City is unlikely to be able to fund the development of parks in all the unserved areas of the City due to limited resources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee asked if there was a definition of what makes a park (is there a size limit) and they also raised concerns about equitable access to reasonably sized parks and not just small patches of open space or pocket parks with limited amenities or space for recreating. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG stated that size does matter, but what is prioritized is access to types of amenities in parks such as opportunities for play, exercise equipment, paths/trails, play structures, access to nature, etc.</li> <li>▪ City staff mentioned that though some parks are smaller they serve a purpose</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<p>and a need for the residents in that area – Yamhill Park was mentioned and though it is smaller, it has a community garden and is surrounded by multi-family homes and provided a refuge and opportunities to grow food for those individuals who do not have access to private green space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee asked about potential partnerships between the City and private developers to conserve green space and or/build parks when large developments are constructed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG mentioned that there is an opportunity to amend city codes to require open space within large developments though specific recommendations. MIG noted that further conversations would need to be held with the City to learn more about current procedures and policies.</li> <li>▪ An attendee mentioned that the SDCs require funding to build parks within City codes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ An attendee mentioned that even though SDCs exist, those funds can only be used to develop parks but cannot be used to maintain them. They emphasized that many times SDCs must be supplemented by other funding sources but are primarily allotted to support amenities that support growth/development in new construction areas.</li> <li>○ An attendee mentioned that in the Rockwood neighborhood there is a minimum threshold to require developers to allocate funds for parks and open space, but believes most developers avoid these requirements by building just below the threshold.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recreation Facility &amp; Program Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG noted that the City does not have staff or resources to directly deliver most programming and that most programming occurring now is done through</li> </ul>

	<p>partnerships with support from City staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG stated that though a Community Center was mentioned in engagement efforts for this project as well as in previous engagement activities in 2022-2023, constructing one would likely not be recommended as a short-term recommendation as they are expensive and would likely require a bond measure to fund. MIG and City staff believe that other priorities may rise to the top and that can be addressed in the short term of this plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee mentioned that the development of the new East County Library may help alleviate the need for a community center to some degree.</li> <li>○ Another attendee mentioned that there is no shortage of available sports fields, but the condition of the fields makes it difficult to implement programs/activities – rental fees are high, and organizations must maintain the fields on their own because the City lacks the resources to maintain them.</li> <li>○ Another attendee mentioned that Gresham residents are likely to support purchasing land to preserve natural areas and that this should be kept in mind when considering the built environment. This attendee believes that community support can be built for preserving the native ecosystems in Gresham.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Maintenance and Operations Needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG reviewed the maintenance and operations analysis portion of the presentation and prefaced that the section was completed by Juncus Studios who were unable to join the meeting. MIG stated that Juncus will be available to clarify and/or answer any questions after the meeting if they were unable to do so during the meeting.</li> <li>▪ MIG (via Juncus) emphasized that maintenance of downtown parking lots takes up the highest FTE hours per acre and that one preliminary approach to improving maintenance and operations is to reduce FTE hours and reallocate resources to other areas.</li> <li>▪ MIG mentioned that Juncus Studio created a tool that</li> </ul>

	<p>outlines cost estimates for maintaining parks based on size and amenities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee mentioned that Pat Pfeifer Park does not require trash pickup every day in the winter because the park is used less during that season. This attendee suggested that staff resources be reallocated to areas that need more support during this time.</li> <li>○ City staff stated that as undeveloped parks are developed, they will need to increase supporting staff to properly maintain them – this is an ongoing challenge within the City.</li> <li>○ An attendee asked if there were updated concept plans for the undeveloped parks – MIG mentioned that updates are being made now and are not yet available. City staff stated that there is a website with the current concept plans available and dropped the link into the chat. They also stated that concept plans have not been updated since 2020. <a href="#">Planning for Parks   City of Gresham</a></li> <li>○ An attendee asked “Does the City pay for maintenance of the Springwater trail? If so, is there a way to get Metro to fund that?” – City staff stated that the City of Gresham and City of Portland maintain this trail with the City of Gresham maintaining the area of the trail that runs through the City.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ADA Assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG reviewed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Assessment portion of the presentation and stated that the assessment included seven (7) facilities identified by the City and project team.</li> <li>▪ The ADA Assessment is included in full as an appendix of the Needs Assessment.</li> <li>▪ MIG referred to a summary table pulled from the Needs Assessment report to review the number and types of barrier types identified within ADA Assessment.</li> <li>▪ The ADA Assessment was completed in conjunction with the City’s ADA transition plan.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ An attendee felt the table of barriers helped to build a foundation for the ADA Transition Plan</li> <li>○ City staff asked to clarify if there would be policy recommendations included in the next phase of the project related to the ADA Assessment. MIG confirmed this is in the scope of work and will be completed.</li> <li>▪ MIG opened the virtual room for discussion and asked each attendee to describe/share their top priorities related to the Needs Assessment. Responses included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Concern is that the ability to implement the plan will depend on the City's available budget to build and maintain facilities; cautions MIG/City to be careful of how it is delivered to the public, so we don't over-promise.</li> <li>○ Identify funding sources for the community so the public knows what the choices and costs will be for priority items to set realistic expectations.</li> <li>○ Maintenance for current parks &amp; facilities; preservation of land for future parks/open spaces; funding for staffing.</li> <li>○ Overall thinks the plan is moving in the right direction.</li> <li>○ Accessibility is a huge concern in the Pat Pfeifer area as a lot of people in the area use a wheelchair; additionally, some people do not feel safe in Pat Pfeifer park and are choosing not to use it anymore as a result.</li> <li>○ Preservation of green spaces for the benefit of wildlife and human life. Use permaculture design principles to minimize waste and cost savings, while increasing mutual benefits of parks; focus on the gaps (parks in SE and SW Gresham).</li> <li>○ Important to work on getting code changed to have open spaces for higher density, including apartments. Long overdue. In many of these newer infill HB 2001 properties there are no parks or open spaces nearby.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Need to have realistic maintenance funding and cut the “red tape” for groups that are helping to maintain the fields.</li> <li>○ Gresham is wonderfully diverse and wants the City/MIG to ensure it captures those voices in the planning process.</li> </ul>
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ MIG closed the meeting by discussing the next step in the project before ending the meeting. The next steps include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Facility improvement recommendations</li> <li>○ Systemwide goals and strategies</li> <li>○ Funding analysis and strategy</li> <li>○ Additional community outreach &amp; engagement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>