



PARKS TO PONDER

AN INFORMATIONAL FLYER REGARDING THE PROPOSED GREAT FALLS SPECIAL PARK DISTRICT

Park and Recreation Master Plan

The Park and Recreation Master Plan was adopted by The City Commission on November 15, 2016. The Master Plan is available on line at:

<https://greatfallsmt.net/recreation>. The plan included an intensive public process to ensure a complete understanding of the community's priorities; including town meetings, 84 focus group meetings, a statistically accurate survey, and an on-line survey open to the entire community. The Park and Recreation Master Plan identified:

- \$12,000,000 for deferred maintenance (Critical Projects); completion in 1-5 years recommended
- \$1,150,000 for Sustainable Projects
- \$20,250,000 for Visionary Projects
- Parks: Currently have 23.5 FTE's (full time equivalents), recommended level is 39 FTE's. The Master Plan recommends twelve park staff additions within three years
- Forestry: The industry standard for trimming trees is every 4-7 years, the current schedule is 30-35 years. Lack of inspections and pruning creates safety hazards and potential property damage, which is detrimental to the health of the trees/urban forest, and substantially increases the cost/time to trim each individual tree. The Master Plan recommends three Forestry staff additions within three years

Parks and Natural Resources Inventory

Includes 775 acres of developed land, 140 acres of undeveloped land, 300 acres of conservation lands, 57 developed parks, 9 undeveloped parks, 52 buildings/facilities, a compost site, 25 landscaped medians/islands, 36,000 trees (boulevards, parks, and golf courses), and 52 miles of recreational trails (21 miles paved, does not include trails within parks).





Proposed Park District

The City's general fund cannot adequately fund parks and recreation and there has been no funding for capital improvements or major repairs. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommended the creation of a City-wide Parks District to supplement current funding and create a sustainable funding source for the purpose of providing park and recreation system services:

- Park District Funds may be used for parks, forestry and trails for capital improvements, staff, and operations
- Park District Funds may also be used for maintenance/improvements to recreation and aquatics facilities
- Park District Funds may not be used for programming

The proposed amount to be generated is \$2,267,796 annually for the first three years. The assessment would be based on taxable value; on a \$100,000 property, the assessment would be \$43.28/year or \$3.61/month. The assessment can be adjusted annually and must be set by City Commission Resolution.

Creation of the Park District would help fund deferred maintenance and prevent removal/closure of amenities. Proposed Improvements over a three year period include but are not limited to:

- Rest room improvements for Gibson, Oddfellows, and Lions Parks
- Picnic pavilions and tables
- Play equipment
- Resurfacing sports courts (basketball, tennis/pickleball)
- ADA sidewalks to play structures
- Improvements to Electric City Water Park Bath House
- Replacement of trails in Gibson Park and Elks Riverside Park
- Improvements to River's Edge Trail & Multi Sports Softball Complex (which will be supplemented by match money)
- Second dog park
- Feasibility study for a recreation/aquatics facility
- Mature tree trimming and tree replacement
- Operations/equipment/upgrades/labor/staff/contracted services

For more information, call 761-1265 between 8-5, Monday thru Friday.

