



Staff Report

DATE: 1/5/2020

MOTION

AGENDA ITEM: Parks Commission 2021 Work Plan
SUBMITTED BY: Ben Prchal, City Planner
REVIEWED BY: Marty Powers, Public Works Director
Ken Roberts, Planning Director

BACKGROUND:

Per Section 32.092 of the Lake Elmo City Code, the Parks Commission is tasked with developing an annual work plan, including a list of projects, maintenance items, programs and goals for the year. Staff built off of the 2020 work plan to establish the 2021 Parks Commission Work Plan.

The Plan is intended to assess and then implement overall goals of the Parks Commission and outlines projects that the Commission and Staff will work on throughout the upcoming year, yet has the flexibility to respond to priorities as they emerge. The projects are broken down in to the following categories:

- **Planning and Policy** – This section addresses the larger long term park projects and funding opportunities.
- **Development & Equipping** – Projects that will be carried out in the following year.
 - This would be limited to projects approved through CIP.
 - This provides an opportunity to break down specific tasks associated with developing and equipping.
- **Maintenance & Refurbishing** – Projects in this category are carried out by public works staff and does not rely on the Park Dedication money for funding.
- **Nature & Conservation** – What specific activities can the Parks Commission carry out this year to promote open space character and commitment to the environment via nature observation amenities and targeted conservation programs? Also, continue to implement conservation efforts and remediation of invasive species.
- **Park Awareness** – Establishes the goals and ways in which staff and the commission can receive feedback from the community. The City currently uses an online survey tool to reach out to residents with hopes of understanding what the needs of the community might be.
- **Finance** – How, specifically, does the Parks Commission want to spend and budget Parks and Recreation funds?
 - This will of course go hand-in-hand with planning and audit but this specifically should focus on next tasks to be carried out in terms of budget.

ISSUE BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL:

Would the City Council like to approve the 2021 work plan as proposed?

DETAILS AND ANALYSIS:

Included as an attachment is a redlined work plan but Staff has outlined some of the changes below.

Planning and Policy – The edits in this section outline a larger project of visiting each park and identifying areas that need improvement.

Development & Equipping – This section has not changed much because there are not any projects planned. Staff will be expecting to see this section change going into 2022 after the park assessment has been completed.

Maintenance & Refurbishing – There are not many changes to this section of the work plan.

Nature & Conservation – Sunfish Lake Park will need to be managed and receive buck thorn mitigation for years to come.

OPTIONS:

1. Approve the Parks Commission 2021 Work Plan as presented.
2. Amend the Parks Commission 2021 Work Plan as presented.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Fiscal impacts are outlined and confirmed in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). CIP items are funded through the Park Dedication Fund while Development & Equipping items are funded through the Public Works Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Parks Commission:

During the review the Parks Commission did not have drastic changes but instead wanted to see more specific dates to replace “on-going” or “as needed” deadlines. This was requested to better track progress and keep projects moving. Staff made corrections to the areas that could be amended. The amendments and work plan passed by a 5-0 vote.

Staff recommends the following motion:

“Motion to approve the 2021 Parks Commission Work Plan.”

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2021 Parks Commission Work Plan



2021 Parks Commission Strategic Work Plan

The City of Lake Elmo Park Commission has affirmed their overall goals to be:

- 1) Ensure that our parks and trail system are constructed / maintained.
- 2) Provide recreational amenities that will attract more users of public lands as well as property tax payers to the City.
- 3) Create a safe environment in all our parks.
- 4) Serve as a reviewing body to make sure the “open space” character development is preserved in new developments.

With the broader priorities defined, the 2021 Park Commission Strategic Work Plan has been broken down into six segments: Planning & Policy; Park Development & Equipping; Maintenance & Refurbishing; Nature & Conservation; Park Awareness; and Finance.

Status and Timeline (projected months in which project will be brought to Parks Commission meeting) are also indicated in order to better manage goals and objectives.

Planning and Policy			
Assess future park needs.			
Project	Specific Tasks	Status	Timeline
Work with the County on implementing the Central Greenway Trail Master Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist Washington County when necessary. Work with Washington County on funding opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Met Council has approved the master plan. 	(Ongoing) As road projects or other opportunities become available Staff will work to help develop segments of the trail
Development Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to make recommendations on development applications with a focus on proper equipping of parks and available park funding. Have available 5 year CIP upon request 	Ongoing	Ongoing
By-laws for Parks Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/amend as required. 	When Required	Ongoing
Park Use plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit each City park and outline the needs of the City and Neighborhood for amenities within the park. Apply findings to CIP. 	In Progress	2021
Look for Grant Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for grant opportunities that aide in development of parks within the City. 	Ongoing	Ongoing

Development & Equipping

Begin work on approved projects (those in the Capital Improvement Plan or have received a form of funding approval).

Project	Specific Tasks	Status	Timeline
Dog Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review City parks/land to determine where a dog park may be located. 	Beginning Conversation in 2023.	2023
City Trail Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify trails within the City that can be connected to each other. 	In progress	2021/2022

Maintenance & Refurbishing

Maintain and upgrading park facilities in a manner that increases park use for a relevant experience.

Project	Specific Tasks	Status	Timeline
New soccer and tennis nets, add benches and garbage cans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public works to carry out maintenance. Trash can replacement Tree plantings 	Recommended by Public Works	2020
Pickleball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurbish current tennis courts to accommodate pickleball. 	Ongoing and as requested.	2021
Park needs assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be completed by public works staff. 	In progress	Yearly
Reid Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch Trails – mulch may need to be brought in to fill soft spots. 	In progress	Spring 2021
City Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Public Works and Planning Department will be preparing trail maps and maintenance plans for the trails. 	2021	Ongoing
Sunfish Lake Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with MORC to maintain the single track trails. Submit grant for buckthorn removal 	Trail Planning Planning	Submit buck thorn grant 2021.

Nature & Conservation

Mission Statement: To promote the open space character and commitment to the environment via nature observation amenities and targeted conservation programs.

Project	Specific Tasks	Status	Timeline
Sunfish Lake Forest Management Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work and build off of the existing management plan. Submit grant for buckthorn removal 	In Progress	On going
City Wide buckthorn removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify areas where buckthorn is a problem and take measures for removal. 	In Progress	On going
Sally Manzara Nature Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support as detailed in the agreement. 	In Progress	On going

Park Awareness

Mission Statement: To promote the utilization of City Parks

Project	Specific Tasks	Status	Timeline
Resident Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Survey residents on park amenities via new survey tool.	As Required	Ongoing

Finance

Mission Statement: To effectively spend parkland dedication funds to meet the objectives of each year's Strategic Plan of Work while maintaining a minimum fund balance of \$100,000.

Project	Specific Tasks	Status	Timeline
Update Capital Improvement Plan if needed to accomplish goals outlined herein.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reassess funding priorities as needed.	As needed	April/May 2021
Provide Budget Updates as necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide financials on park dedication fund upon request.	As requested	Ongoing