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Baseball Field

CHAPTER 10: OPEN SPACE, PARKS, AND RECREATION

Background

The benefits of a vibrant open space, parks, and recreation system include human health and well being, habitat conservation, ecological vitality, and cultural protection.

The 1994 Tulalip Comprehensive Plan did not have a chapter devoted to open space, parks, and recreation. The 1994 Plan did, however, establish a Recreation land use designation which included the Port Susan Camping Club and an adjacent parcel (900 acres), Battle Creek Golf Course (160 acres), and the proposed Tulalip Golf Course (210 acres). The 1994 Plan also created a land use designation for recreation, identifying tracts over 20 acres in size that had a recreational purpose, and leaving smaller recreation facilities without special designation. Because of the recognized need of creating goals and policies specifically addressing parks and recreation and the need for a wider

spectrum of parks and recreation opportunities; the Open Space, Parks, and Recreation chapter has been added to the 2008 update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Providing varied passive and active parks and recreation opportunities is essential to the Reservation Community. Parks and recreation needs vary as widely as the residents of the Reservation. Each person has unique parks and recreation needs and recreate in many different ways. For this reason, many types of parks and recreation opportunities are necessary to meet the needs of the Reservation Community. Some people will solely use ball fields, while others will only hike and be interested in a trail network. There are a host of potential recreational opportunities available. It is imperative to identify what Reservation residents and visitors value and how they would prefer to access and use recreational resources.

Aside from recreational needs, the value of protecting natural areas of cultural, historical, and ecological significance is paramount to the Tribe. The past subsistence-based economy of the Coast Salish peoples depended upon the stewardship of limited natural resources. Although in a different context, the need for ecological protection continues today. Due to the increased development pressures on the Reservation, the need to protect natural areas has become more pronounced.

Preserving wild spaces on the Reservation also benefits rare plant, bird, and wildlife species. Maintaining links between open space areas is important to prevent isolation of habitats. Habitat areas that remain connected can better support species dependent upon an interconnected web of habitat corridors. The more diverse the habitat area, the healthier and more resilient it will be.

Open space is generally land and water areas retained for use as active or passive recreation areas or for resource protection in an essentially undeveloped state. Open space includes areas for parks, recreation opportunities, natural resources lands, wildlife areas, and sensitive areas. Preserving these areas from development is an important component to the conservation of lands on the Reservation.

Once parks and recreation facilities have been established on the Reservation, continued maintenance is imperative for their function and enjoyment. The intensiveness of maintenance required is dependent upon the recreation facility. For example, an equestrian trail is left in largely natural condition so requiring little maintenance relative to a sports complex which requires constant attention to ensure that the facilities are operating as they are intended. For the Tulalip Tribes, the Maintenance Department of the Public Works Division is charged with ensuring that parks, recreation, and open space areas are kept in great condition. The value of parks, recreation, and open space areas is amplified when they are treated as a community asset.

A key to planning for parks and recreation on the Reservation is the acquisition and appropriation of land to these uses. The Tribe acquires lands when the right opportunities arise. When considering future acquisitions, the Tribe should weigh the potential value of the land for meeting future demand of open space, parks, and recreation for the

Reservation Community. Identifying the process for land acquisition and targeting of those lands for open space, parks, and recreation can be achieved through a land acquisition plan. Acquisition is also an issue that will be addressed through the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan

The Tulalip Tribes recognizes the need for a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for the Tulalip Reservation. This plan could include the following key elements:

- **Inventory**
The inventory should include the types, purposes, sizes, and service areas of all parks and recreation opportunities existing within the exterior boundaries of the Tulalip Reservation. Although park use of residents of the Reservation may extend beyond the exterior boundaries, the inventory will include what is available only on the Reservation. This component is an evaluative tool used to assess current conditions of park, recreation, and open space within the exterior boundaries of the Reservation.
- **Level-of-Service Standards**
Level-of-service standards establish the number of people that are being served by present and future parks and recreation facilities. These standards are established by expected use of parks and recreation facilities and geographical extent of “service sheds” around these facilities. They are quantified as a ratio of acres/1000 population and present the minimum ground space required for specified parks and recreation facilities.
- **Projecting Future Demand**
This plan should project demand for parks and recreation for a 20-year period. At present, there are few parks and recreation opportunities for these Reservation residents.
- **Intergovernmental Coordination**
Examine the possibility of providing regional approaches to meeting park needs in the future. This coordination could include State, Snohomish County, and local governments.
- **Participatory Planning**
The planning process should include public input throughout the planning process in a meaningful way. The public are the users and benefactors of the park system so should significantly influence how park planning is developed on the Reservation.

Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Goals and Policies

Goal PR 1: **Protect and manage Reservation resources for their recreational benefits.**

Policy PR 1-1: Conserve and enhance natural, cultural, and scenic resources by developing low-impact and cluster development, and designating non-invasive recreational areas.

Policy PR 1-2: Develop parks, recreation, and open space areas including corridors and trail networks that protect watersheds, shorelines, soils, habitat, and aesthetics from the impacts of development.

Policy PR 1-3: Locate parks and open space to provide for a variety of outdoor activities that utilize natural processes and unique landscape features.

Policy PR 1-4: Develop and implement open space standards for integration or separation of complementary or incompatible land uses, community facilities, and resource conservation.

Policy PR 1-5: Pursue public acquisition of potential parks and other open space lands by utilizing a variety of funding mechanisms.

Policy PR 1-6: Ensure Tribal access to Reservation tidelands.

Goal PR 2: **Provide a range of open space, parks, and recreation facilities to meet the needs and interests of Reservation residents and visitors.**

Policy PR 2-1: Develop a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan with an inventory of existing parks and recreation opportunities, level-of-service standards, and future needs assessment.

Policy PR 2-2: Encourage that future subdivisions incorporate facilities for neighborhood parks and recreation.

Policy PR 2-3: Create a diverse mix of active and passive recreation opportunities for all ages.

Goal PR 3: **Ensure parks, open space areas, and recreation facilities are protected and maintained for present and future generations.**

- Policy PR 3-1: Ensure that lands designated for parks, recreation, and open space uses are protected.
- Policy PR 3-2: Promote cooperative efforts, partnership, joint project development, and long range planning with other public agencies and the private sector to create and maintain open space, parks, and recreational areas.
- Policy PR 3-3: Pursue and encourage public involvement in parks and recreation planning such as advisory boards, workshops, volunteer efforts, and news releases.

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