



**CHAPTER 5:
MISSION, VALUES,
VISION, GOALS &
OBJECTIVES**

INTRODUCTION

The values of Pierce County residents and their aspirations for the future are guiding forces for the Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan. This chapter defines the mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives that illustrate the preferred future for the parks, open spaces, facilities, and programs provided by Pierce County Parks & Recreation Services (P&RS). These elements also introduce a planning framework for the recommendations, strategies, and actions that appear in the next chapter of this Plan. This framework is illustrated in Figure 2 on the next page.

MISSION

A mission statement was developed by P&RS staff to describe the approach they will take in conducting business. The mission of Pierce County Parks & Recreation Services is to:

Regionally deliver quality recreation opportunities and inviting parks, trails and open space facilities to the residents of Pierce County.

This mission reflects the primary role of P&RS as a regional recreation provider, which is the operational role set forth for Parks & Recreation Services in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. However, it also notes that the primary task of the Department is to provide quality services to *the residents of Pierce County*. This Plan reflects the balance that P&RS strives to achieve in representing the recreational preferences of diverse residents, in meeting various park and recreation needs identified by local communities, and in serving the interests of the entire region collectively. P&RS can only achieve this balance by prioritizing community needs by the benefits that recreation opportunities offer to the region overall.

VALUES

The adaptive park system noted in Chapter 4 was evaluated by several core community values, which were identified based on public feedback obtained during the planning process. The core values that are shared by Pierce County residents help create a vision of a preferred future for the park system. These core values include:

Mission

“Regionally deliver quality recreation opportunities and inviting parks, trails and open space facilities to the residents of Pierce County.”

Core Values

<p>Conservation We value the conservation of parks, natural and open spaces, wildlife habitat, shoreline environments, and ecological resources.</p>	<p>Inclusiveness We value creating, enhancing, expanding and promoting opportunities for participation in and enjoyment of parks and recreation services.</p>	<p>Connectivity We value an interconnected parks and facilities network that provides access to the parks system across Pierce County.</p>	<p>Stewardship We value efficient and effective management of our assets and stewardship of our parks and open space, to sustain them for future generations.</p>	<p>Quality of Life We value the health & well-being of the Pierce County community, and the benefits that parks, recreation and open space offer to our quality of life.</p>
---	--	---	--	---

Vision

We envision an innovative, inclusive, and interconnected system of parks and recreation services that promotes recreation, health, and environmental conservation as integral to a livable community.

Goals

<p>Provide a quality, diversified park and open space system that supports opportunities for active and passive recreation and conserves and enhances significant environmental or historical resources and features.</p>	<p>Incorporate features and amenities into parks that fit the local context; contribute to environmental sustainability; and are accessible, safe, and easy to maintain for the long term.</p>
<p>Provide a regional system of off-street trails and corridors that links parks, open spaces, significant environmental features, public facilities, and areas of interest.</p>	<p>Use effective and innovative funding methods to build, maintain, operate and promote the parks recreation, and open space system.</p>
<p>Promote, coordinate, facilitate, or provide recreation programs that serve regional needs, support community livability, connect the community with their parks, and encourage greater recreation participation in areas not served by other providers.</p>	<p>Develop and operate regional-serving recreation facilities to support core recreation program areas or economic development goals and meet identified recreation needs.</p>
<p>Incorporate natural areas and unique ecological features into the park and open space system to protect threatened species, conserve significant natural resources and habitat, and retain migration corridors that are unique and important to local wildlife.</p>	<p>Serve as a regional recreation coordinator, forging partnerships and fostering opportunities for countywide collaboration among all major recreation providers in the provision of parks, facilities, programs, and services.</p>
<p>Develop, train, and support a professional parks and recreation staff that effectively serves the community in the realization of the goals and objectives of this Plan.</p>	<p>Engage Pierce County residents in the planning, stewardship, and programming of park and recreation resources, and provide effective community outreach and marketing to increase public awareness and support of recreation services.</p>

Figure 4: Mission, Values, Vision and Goals Framework

Conservation: We value the conservation of parks, natural and open spaces, wildlife habitat, shoreline environments, and ecological resources.

- **Inclusiveness:** We value creating, enhancing, expanding and promoting opportunities for participation in and enjoyment of parks and recreation services.
- **Connectivity:** We value an interconnected parks and facilities network that provides access to the parks system across Pierce County.
- **Quality of Life:** We value our quality of life, health and well-being, and the role that parks, recreation and open space play in creating a livable community.
- **Stewardship:** We value efficient and effective management of our assets and stewardship of our parks and open space to sustain them for future generations.

These five core values support the vision for the Pierce County park system, which includes the parks and recreation opportunities provided by Parks & Recreation Services alone and in collaboration with other providers.

VISION

A vision illustrates a broad picture of success for the community as served by parks and recreation opportunities. The Pierce County Vision is as follows:

We envision an innovative, inclusive, and interconnected system of parks and recreation services that promotes recreation, health, and environmental conservation as integral to a livable community.

The vision provides a foundation for the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in this Plan, as well as the level of service standards and guidelines that were created to measure recreation needs. As such, it will guide the development of the park system and the provision of recreation services.

GOALS

Goals and objectives are statements describing how Pierce County Parks & Recreation Services will carry out the County-wide vision for parks and recreation. Goals define the broad outcomes to be produced by implementing the Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan. Objectives set forth clear directions for providing services and for creating a visionary park system. Taken together, goals and objectives can be a means of measuring the performance of Parks and Recreation Services in delivering recreation services.

These goals and objectives were developed based on input from staff and community members. The recommendations presented in Chapters 6 of this document include specific actions that should be implemented to achieve the goals and objectives set forth here. All goals, objectives, recommendations, and actions flow from the vision for park and recreation services. These goals are numbered for reference only; numbers do not suggest a priority for implementation.

- **Goal 1:** Provide a quality, diversified park and open space system that supports opportunities for active and passive recreation and conserves and enhances significant environmental or historical resources and features.
- **Goal 2:** Provide a regional system of off-street trails and corridors that links parks, open spaces, significant environmental features, public facilities, and areas of interest.
- **Goal 3:** Incorporate features and amenities into parks that fit the local context; contribute to environmental sustainability; and are accessible, safe, and easy to maintain for the long term.
- **Goal 4:** Develop and operate regional-serving recreation facilities to support core recreation program areas or economic development goals and meet identified recreation needs.
- **Goal 5:** Promote, coordinate, facilitate or provide recreation programs that serve regional needs, support community livability, connect the community with their parks, and encourage greater recreation participation in areas not served by other providers.
- **Goal 6:** Incorporate natural areas and unique ecological features into the park and open space system to protect threatened species, conserve significant natural resources and habitat, and retain migration corridors that are unique and important to local wildlife.
- **Goal 7:** Use effective and innovative funding methods to build, maintain, operate, and promote the park, recreation, and open space system.

- **Goal 8:** Serve as a regional recreation coordinator, forging partnerships and fostering opportunities for countywide collaboration among all major recreation providers in the provision of parks, facilities, programs, and services.
- **Goal 9:** Develop, train, and support a professional parks and recreation staff that effectively serves the community in the realization of the goals and objectives of this Plan.
- **Goal 10:** Engage Pierce County residents in the planning, stewardship, and programming of park and recreation resources, and provide effective community outreach and marketing to increase public awareness and support of recreation services.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives provide more specific directions for achieving the goals noted above. The objectives presented in this section are listed below the goal they support. Specific actions and recommendations to implement the goals and objectives are presented in Chapter 6.

GOAL 1

Provide a quality, diversified park and open space system that supports opportunities for active and passive recreation and conserves and enhances significant environmental or historical resources and features.

- Provide park types that support the mission and vision of Parks and Recreation Services, providing a wide range of active and passive recreation experiences and meeting the needs of diverse age groups, recreation interests, and abilities.
- Incorporate unique environments and interesting amenities and facilities into the park and open space system to provide a balanced park and recreation experience and diverse recreation opportunities.
- Incorporate opportunities for historical, cultural, and environmental interpretation into the park system to inform and educate the public about the local and regional context.
- Identify opportunities, including partnerships, to increase public waterfront access through the provision of public piers, swimming beaches, motorized and non-motorized boat launches, public boat moorage, and water viewpoints.
- Provide at least 3.0 acres of developed parks per 1,000 residents.
Note: In the CFP, this standard is noted as 8.75 acres per 1,000 residents based on the population of unincorporated Pierce County.

- Evaluate all P&RS parks—including existing sites, potential acquisition areas, land-banked sites and donated lands—to ensure that these sites are consistent with the vision set forth in this Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan.
- Provide geographically accessible regional parks and County parks in strategic locations throughout Pierce County.
- Strategically consider opportunities to land-bank sites for local parks in priority locations that meet the needs of unserved population clusters in unincorporated areas of Pierce County. Transfer these properties to local control when feasible.
- Balance regional and community park and recreation needs, supporting all policies and objectives in adopted Community Plans that are aligned with the role of Parks & Recreation Services as a regional provider and help meet identified County-wide needs.
- Coordinate with other park agencies, park and recreation districts, metropolitan park districts, park and recreation service areas, and private providers to ensure there is an adequate range and supply of active recreation facilities and programs in Pierce County.
- Monitor community demand for additional recreation services as the population in Pierce County continues to grow.
- Coordinate with other county departments in consolidating and defining the methods to define, identify, retain, and conserve open space within the County in order to better serve our citizens.

GOAL 2

Provide a regional system of off-street trails and corridors that links parks, open spaces, significant environmental features, public facilities, and areas of interest.

- Enhance the existing trail network to develop an off-road, multipurpose trail system connecting all major P&RS parks and open space areas to schools, public facilities, business districts, other parks and points of interest, and key destinations in the community.
- Enhance the existing system of water trails in salt and freshwater bodies to support recreation opportunities for kayakers, canoers, paddle boaters, and other non-motorized watercraft users.
- Provide diverse trail opportunities, including both hard and soft-surfaced trails, looped trail systems, and trails with variety of lengths and access points.
- Link the Pierce County trail system with other regional trail systems, neighboring counties, and nearby jurisdictions.

- Provide adequate facilities and trail-support services including interpretive and directory signage, seating, drinking fountains, restrooms, parking and loading areas, viewpoints and overlooks.
- Coordinate with other park agencies, cities, local communities, trail organizations and providers to support trail development in Pierce County.
- Increase public awareness of the trail system.

GOAL 3

Incorporate features and amenities into parks that fit the local context; contribute to environmental sustainability; and are accessible, safe, and easy to maintain for the long-term.

- Include elements in the design and development of parks to contribute to community identity and reflect the local context, including the physical features on site, local history and culture, and neighbor and community preferences, including those specified in adopted Community Plans where appropriate.
- Design indoor amenities and facilities to be physically and geographically accessible to individuals of varying physical capabilities, skill levels, age groups, income, and activity interests.
- Consider innovative programs and the use of park design to increase park safety, security, and visibility.
- Consider the maintenance costs and staffing levels associated with acquisition, development, or renovation of parks or natural areas, and adjust the annual operating budget accordingly for adequate maintenance funding of the system expansion.
- Implement and fund maintenance frequency protocols that maximize the life of Parks and Recreation Services' park and recreation assets.
- Invest in preventative maintenance and upgrades to parks and facilities to maximize long-term benefits.
- Maximize operational efficiency to provide the greatest public benefit for the resources expended when park improvements are made.
- Incorporate low impact development techniques into park and trail designs, and be a leader in demonstrating sustainable building practices.

GOAL 4

Develop and operate regional-serving recreation facilities to support core recreation program areas or economic development goals and meet identified recreation needs.

- Provide unique, innovative, state-of-the art, signature facilities to draw users from throughout the region and establish an identity/brand for Pierce County Parks and Recreation Services.
- Prioritize new facility development, based on criteria such as a facility's regional draw, revenue-generating capacity, innovation or uniqueness of services, and ability to increase programming options within identified core program areas.
- Consider the need for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities with the capacity to support increased recreation programming and provide year-round recreation opportunities.
- Cooperate with other public and private agencies to acquire and preserve additional shoreline access for waterfront fishing, wading, swimming, non-motorized and motorized boating where appropriate, as well as other related recreational activities and pursuits.

GOAL 5

Promote, coordinate, facilitate or provide recreation programs that serve regional needs, support community livability, connect the community with their parks, and encourage greater recreation participation in areas not served by other providers.

- Focus on core program areas that support Parks and Recreation Services' niche and the preferred vision for parks, programs, and services.
- Continue to provide innovative, facility-based special events to provide social and cultural recreation opportunities for County residents.
- Expand mobile programming through Kidmobile and other endeavors, identifying a market to provide recreation opportunities at regional parks and County parks.
- Develop a programming strategy for providing services to underserved residents in unincorporated areas.
- Expand environmental programming by focusing on new program development, development of facilities such as nature centers and interpretive trails, and partnerships.
- Continue to support countywide sports, recreation programs, and special events through the provision of facilities.

GOAL 6

Incorporate natural areas and unique ecological features into the park and open space system to protect threatened species, conserve significant natural resources and habitat, and retain migration corridors that are unique and important to local wildlife.

- Conserve or partner to protect significant environmental features, including unique wetlands, open spaces, woodlands, shorelines, waterfronts and other characteristics that support wildlife and reflect Pierce County's natural heritage.
- Increase open space areas and greenway corridors within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) to provide alternatives to the built environment and buffers between communities.
- Identify and conserve wildlife habitat including wildlife corridors, nesting sites and foraging areas within the Urban Growth Area or adjacent to natural areas and open spaces.
- Ensure that the trail system supports natural area conservation and responds to environmental conditions and conservation priorities while providing public access where feasible.
- Incorporate interpretative signage and viewpoints of local natural resources throughout the park system.
- Develop a natural area management strategy to ensure that resources are maintained and conserved. The management strategy should address issues such as invasive weed removal, restoration projects, limited access areas, etc.
- Coordinate with agencies Countywide to conserve and provide public access to environmentally sensitive areas and sites that are especially unique to the Pierce County area, including shorelines.

GOAL 7

Use effective and innovative funding methods to build, maintain, operate, and promote the park, recreation, and open space system.

- Maintain diverse funding for the acquisition and development of park land, recreation facilities, and trails to meet community recreation needs.
- Actively seek innovative funding methods to retain financial flexibility, match user benefits and interests, and increase facility services.
- Periodically evaluate park impact fees to ensure that rates are sufficient to meet increased recreation needs caused by development.

- Explore partnerships with other public and private agencies including cities, school districts, regional, state, federal, other public and private agencies, and for-profit concessionaires where feasible and desirable.
- Provide sufficient operations funding to support County residents' desired level of service.
- Provide technical assistance or facilitate in the formation of local park and recreation service areas, park and recreation service districts, or metropolitan park districts where appropriate to implement the recommendations of adopted Community Plans.
- Explore alternate service provision models that may enhance efficient and effective operations.

GOAL 8

Serve as a regional recreation coordinator, forging partnerships and fostering opportunities for countywide collaboration among all major recreation providers in the provision of parks, facilities, programs, and services.

- Create a comprehensive, balanced park and recreational system that integrates Parks and Recreation Services facilities and services with resources available from the other jurisdictions, organizations, and public and private agencies to meet the vision and goals set forth in this plan.
- Cooperate with other public and private agencies, as well as with private landowners, to conserve land and resources necessary to provide high quality, convenient park and recreation facilities before the most suitable sites are lost to development.
- Cooperate with the cities, school districts, and other public and private agencies to avoid duplication, improve facility quality and availability, reduce costs, and represent local resident interests through joint planning and development efforts.
- Continue to serve as a provider of recreation facilities to support programming and recreation opportunities provided by public and private groups in the community.
- Provide guidance to newly formed park service areas, park districts, or metropolitan park districts in the development of parks, facilities, programs, and funding strategies, including grant writing and the formalization of partnership agreements.
- Where appropriate and economically feasible, assist local park districts in the conservation, development and operation of parks and recreational facilities of interest to the regional population,

such as water access, trail-related recreation, and regional parks or County parks.

- Where appropriate, initiate or participate in the joint planning and provision of programs with other public and private agencies to meet County recreation needs.

GOAL 9

Develop, train, and support a professional parks and recreation staff that effectively serves the community in the realization of the goals and objectives of this Plan.

- Employ a diverse, well trained work force that is motivated to achieve Department and County-wide goals.
- Encourage teamwork through communications, creativity, positive image, risk taking, sharing of resources, and cooperation toward common goals.
- Foster staff development and training by encouraging participation in professional organizations, educational classes, and training seminars.
- Provide mentorship opportunities and emphasize ongoing performance evaluations for all staff members to improve staff performance.
- Consider national accreditation of Parks and Recreation Services, demonstrating the efficiency, effectiveness and professionalism of Parks and Recreation Services' operating system.
- Target new hiring and skill development to meet identified needs for specialized and technical services.

GOAL 10

Engage Pierce County residents in the planning, stewardship, and programming of park and recreation resources, and provide effective community outreach and marketing to increase public awareness and support of recreation services.

- Increase name recognition and establish and identity/brand for Pierce County Parks & Recreation Services.
- Promote Pierce County as a recreation destination, using a variety of public relations and marketing techniques.
- Enhance customer service by making information and registration more accessible to the community.

- Target frequent park users and special interest groups through a multi-media campaign in order to raise awareness of parks and recreation opportunities throughout the County.
- Consider partnership opportunities for advertising parks, programs, and services County-wide to promote P&RS to a wider group of potential park and facility visitors.
- Promote volunteerism to enhance community ownership and stewardship of parks, recreation programs, and services. In particular, encourage citizen involvement and participation in maintaining, improving, and restoring parks and natural areas.
- Provide opportunities for public input in park planning and design decisions.
- Balance the perspectives of nearby neighbors with community preferences, regional needs, staff knowledge, and County regulations to create effective plans and designs for parks, facilities, and programs.
- Periodically review local park and recreation preferences, needs, and trends.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The planning framework set forth in this chapter defines a position and outlines the approach Parks & Recreation Services will take in providing parks, recreation facilities, and programs. As noted in the mission and vision, this is a regional approach that strives to enhance community livability through the provision of parks and recreation services County-wide. As noted in the values, goals, and objectives, this approach has been designed inclusively to take into account local preferences, priorities, and resources, reflecting community values in a more place-specific way. This balance between local and regional aspirations for the park system will be reflected in the recommendations and projects noted in the Capital Facilities Plan in the next chapter. This vision will be carried through the implementation of the Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan.