

Background

In the early 1990's, the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department acquired the Fairgrounds Community Park property, which is an 88-acre property located at NW 11th Avenue and NW 164th Street. The site is adjacent to both Whipple Creek Regional Park and the Clark County Fairgrounds. The 88-acre park site has a variety of landscape types that include wetlands, forests, meadows, riparian areas, steep slopes, and former agricultural fields. The service area for the park is generally expected to be a 3-5 mile radius from the site, plus the service areas for the Salmon Creek Little League and Salmon Creek Soccer Club.

Planning Process Underway for Community Park

Community members gathered on August 16th for an update on the master plan and to discuss ideas for the park. Alex Schwartz, a landscape architect for Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, and David Sacamano of the Illahee Group, discussed options for the park including sports fields for both soccer and little league, sports courts, a skate park, playgrounds, picnic shelters, an equestrian connector trail, walking and bike trails, and a caretakers home.

Comments on Park Design and Use

Meeting participants shared their aspirations for the park. Here are some of topics that were brought up:

- Design an accessible children's play area.
- More sports fields are needed in the community: provide both Soccer and Little League Fields.
- Provide a connector trail that links the Clark County Fairgrounds to Whipple Creek Park. Provide agility obstacles for equestrians along side the connector trail. Consider providing indoor riding facilities in parks.
- Provide a network of walking trails throughout the park.
- Provide an off leash dog area at this park site or nearby.
- Protect forested areas and areas of sensitive habitat.
- Locate observation and interpretive areas for viewing wildlife and natural features.
- Consider providing activities that can be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities such as bocce ball.
- Design a family friendly and safe park for the community to visit.

Guiding Principles for Park Design

- Accommodate community based activities to meet the diverse needs of the entire community.
- Provide a balance of passive and active park uses.
- Address access, security and adjacent uses.
- Provide sports fields for youth sports programs based in the area.
- Preserve and enhance natural resources; Incorporate sustainability principles.
- Develop a plan which is financially responsible and viable for the long term.
- Establish visual interest throughout the park; open areas; forested areas, vistas.

Next steps— review a master plan drawing

A master plan drawing for the park will be presented at the next public meeting. This will be held on Thursday, September 15th from 6 – 7:30 p.m., at the Public Safety Complex at 505 NW 179th Street, one half mile west of the Fairgrounds. Please join us! Project information is also online at: www.clark.wa.gov/parkdesign
