

**Chapter 12**

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

**12.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

The Town of Eatonville is served by a number of parks and recreational facilities. Four of the parks and an elementary school playfield are inside the Town limits. Parks and recreation facilities outside the Town limits belong to Pierce County, the State of Washington and the U.S. Government. The following is a list of park facilities classified by ownership.

**12.1.1 Town of Eatonville Parkland.** The Town of Eatonville has four neighborhood parks and one community park. There are approximately 6 acres of neighborhood parks and 27 acres of community parks within the Town.

- Alder Street (neighborhood) 3.5 acres
- Glacier View (neighborhood) 1.2 acres
- Nevitt Park (neighborhood) 0.5 acres
- Downtown Park (neighborhood) 0.3 acres
- Smallwood Park (community) 26.8 acres

The Town of Eatonville parks as listed above provide both active and passive recreational opportunities within the Town. There is a total of 33 acres of park land that is owned by the Town. Parkland located at Rainier Avenue South and Larson Street West, commonly referred as Van Eaton Park, due to its terrain and geological condition is very difficult and expensive to develop into an active public park, and was eliminated from the Parks map in the Comprehensive Plan.

Eatonville needs a park in the downtown area to serve the downtown retail and service business customers, the downtown business employees and nearby residents. Land for a downtown park would get significant public use as compared to the parkland at Rainier Avenue South and Larson Street West. It is anticipated that a downtown park would get significant public use as compared to the parkland at Rainier Avenue South and Larson Street West. A downtown park, most likely, will increase property values of surrounding properties, will encourage economic development in the downtown area, will motivate downtown businesses to renovate and improve their properties, and will be an overall asset to the Eatonville Community. A downtown park serves Eatonville public interest and is not detrimental to the public health safety and welfare. A downtown park at

## PARKS AND RECREATION

Mashell Avenue North and south of Carter Street West has no probable significant adverse impact on the nearby properties or the natural environment.

**12.1.2 Town of Eatonville Multi-purpose Facilities.** The Town owns a number of multi-purpose facilities that are utilized for recreational and community service activities. The Eatonville Community Center, located at 307 Center St. W., includes an indoor basketball court, a pool table, painting classes and line dancing. Aerobics and Tae Kwon Do classes are held in the evening. Parents and Students in Action, a local group, runs a teen center at the facility Monday through Friday. The Red Cross provides meals for seniors on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. A regular group plays pinochle after each lunch, and the facilities are available for rent for similar activities by other groups. Pierce County provides a staff person at the center every Wednesday to coordinate land use and other issues with residents of the unincorporated area near town.

The Alder Street neighborhood park has a state of the art skateboard facility, a walking/jogging trail, the original Van Eaton cabin (under restoration by the South Pierce County Historical Society), fire department storage, and Lions Club storage. The Town is in the process of installing children's play-area apparatus. The site includes stormwater detention pond on the site, which collects drainage for most of the built-up area of the Town. In addition, the Alder Street Multi-purpose area provides public access to the Mashell River and the Mashell River Watershed.

The Town Hall, located at 201 Center Street West, includes the Fire Hall, which is used for community recreation and service events. These include events such as Santa's arrival, First Aide classes, and other similar activities.

The Town's Mashell Falls property was initially acquired by the Town for use as a domestic water and hydro-electric power source site. The 10 acre site has not been developed for either of these uses and is used, instead, for informal recreation. The site is located 0.5 miles south of Town, but is a 1.5 mile drive from the center of Town, and is outside the Town's 20 year Urban Growth Area. The Town has no immediate plans to develop the site. The existing park and recreation facilities are shown in Figure 12-1.

**12.1.3 Eatonville School District.** Eatonville School District maintains swimming pools, football, soccer, baseball and softball fields, outdoor tennis, outdoor and indoor basketball, volleyball courts, jogging tracks and playgrounds among one high, one middle and two elementary schools. The School District provides limited general public access to its facilities. The Eatonville Playfield, located at the Elementary School, is a shared facility between the Town and the District.

**PARKS AND RECREATION**

## PARKS AND RECREATION

12.1.4 Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma. The Park District, in conjunction with the City of Tacoma and the Tacoma School district has developed an extensive array of facilities within and outside of Tacoma's corporate boundary. The District owns and operates the Northwest Trek Wild Animal Park which is located about seven miles north of Eatonville, east of State Route 161.

12.1.5 Tacoma City Light. Tacoma City Light maintains a waterfront beach with boat ramp, walking trails, tent camping and picnicking facilities at Alder Lake. The Alder Lake facilities were originally owned by Pierce County, but were transferred to Tacoma City Light for more favorable financial reasons.

12.1.6 Department of Natural Resources. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources provides waterfront beaches, boat ramps, 4-wheel off-road trails, tent and vehicle camping sites, and picnicking facilities on state owned lands. Major facilities that the Department has developed in the vicinity of Eatonville for state residents and tourists include access areas at Elbe Hills and Tanwax Creek.

12.1.7 Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife provides waterfront beaches, and access to state owned or controlled streams, lakes, ponds and wetlands for fishing purposes. Major facilities that the Department has developed in the vicinity of Eatonville are Harts Lake, Jackson Lake, Ohop Lake, Rapjohn Lake, and Tanwax Lake.

12.1.8 National Park Service. The crown jewel of the National Park Service is Mount Rainier National Park. Eatonville is the waypoint to the Park, connecting the Puget Sound Metropolitan Area with the National Park. Heavy volumes of tourist traffic pass through Eatonville to and from the park. Traffic is particularly heavy during summer weekends.

12.1.9 Tacoma to Mount Rainier Railroad. The City of Tacoma and other governments, as well as civic and tourist oriented organizations, are planning to initiate tourist train service between Tacoma downtown and Mr. Rainier. If it is developed, the train will pass through Eatonville. Eatonville Comprehensive Plan envisions a train stop in the Town along the railroad right-of-way.

12.1.10 State Parks and Recreation Commission. The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is currently in the process of acquiring land and developing a state park at the confluence of the Nisqually and Mashell Rivers. The future park area is located southwest of the Town of Eatonville. A portion of the property has been purchased from Weyerhaeuser by State Parks. Weyerhaeuser has agreed to sell the remainder of the property, and State Parks is in the process of attempting

## PARKS AND RECREATION

to purchase the property. The intent is to develop a full use State Park there some day, but there are no plans for immediate development. The future park would offer a wide array of recreational opportunities such as: hiking, picnicking camping, horseback riding, fishing, and other river related activities.

### 12.2 STANDARDS

Parks and recreational standards vary widely from community to community depending on its size and location. Eatonville is in an area of Pierce County that is well served by regional county parks, state parks and national parks. The need for additional regional parks to be provided by the Town of Eatonville is therefore substantially lessened. The park and recreation standards for Eatonville are listed below in Table 12-1.

The level of service standards used in this plan have initially been established in the 1993 Comprehensive Plan for the Town. These standards emanate from the standards established by the National Recreation and Park Association. The National Recreation and Park Association standards are universally adopted by municipalities and park districts throughout the United States.

**Table 12-1  
Park and Recreation Level of Service**

Park Area	Recommended Standard
Neighborhood Park	2 acres/1,000 Population
Community Park	8 acres/1,000 Population
Tennis Courts	1 per 1,700 Population
Soccer Fields	1 per 3,000 Population
Softball Fields	1 per 3,800 Population
Youth Baseball Fields	1 per 4,070 Population
Walking/Hiking Trails	1 mile per 5,000 Population

A universally accepted standard methodology is the per capita acreage standard. The per capita standard, expressed as the number of acres of a specific park category or the number of facilities of a specific type per thousand population, is intended to determine whether the overall number of park sites and facilities is sufficient to satisfy the recreation demand.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

### 12.3. FORECASTED DEMAND

Population growth in Eatonville will create demand for additional parks and recreational facilities. The forecasted population of 2,070 persons at 2003 results in an increased demand for parks. The projected demand for park land does not take into consideration Town owned undeveloped park land, nor playgrounds and playfields at existing schools or for future facilities provided with the construction of new schools. The 2003 demand for park facilities is shown in Table 12-2.

**12.3.1 Neighborhood Parks.** The existing neighborhood park facilities are adequate to service the 2003 forecasted demand. There are currently 6 acres of neighborhood parks, about the same amount that is demanded in 2003. In addition, the Eatonville Playfield, that is part of the school district facilities, provides the equivalent of an additional neighborhood park. The 2022 demand amounts to eight acres, a shortage of two acres.

**12.3.2 Community Parks.** The forecasted demand for community park land for 2004 is 18 acres. The existing supply is 27 acres, giving a surplus of 9 acres. Since community parks are generally 10 acres in size or larger, meeting level of service standards for 2003 would require the development of an additional community park, or the expansion of the existing park. In order to meet the shortage in supply, and to meet the demand for community parks beyond the current need, the Town should look to develop an additional community park.

### 12.4 NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS

As the demand analysis indicates, the Town of Eatonville is currently meeting its level of service goals for parks and recreation facilities. As such, there are no immediate needs for acquiring additional park lands. Over the next twenty years, the population is forecasted to double, placing an increased strain upon existing facilities. Existing facilities will, however, be adequate to maintain level of service standards for six to ten years.

In the next twenty year period, the Town of Eatonville needs to acquire, at a minimum, an additional neighborhood park of six acres or more. The location of the park should be somewhere west of Hilligos Lane. In addition, the Town should develop and construct additional walking and bicycle trails. The most likely place for trail development is along the shores of the Mashell River.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Table 12-2  
Future Park and Recreation Facilities Demand**

Facility	Standard	Current Supply	Current Demand	Current Surplus Deficiency	2022 Demand	2022 Surplus Deficiency
Neighborhood Park	2 acres/1,000 Population	6 acres	5 acres	1 acres	8 acres	-2 acres
Community Park	8 acres/1,000 Population	27 acres	18 acres	9 acres	33 acres	-6 acres
Tennis Courts	1 per 1,700 Population	3 courts*	1 court	2 courts	3 courts	0
Soccer Fields	1 per 3,000 Population	2 fields*	1 field	1 field	1 field	1 field
Softball Fields	1 per 3,800 Population	1 field*	1 field	0	1 field	0
Youth Baseball Fields	1 per 4,070 Population	2 fields*	1 field	1 field	1 field	1 field
Walking/ Hiking Trails	1 mile per 5,000 Population	0.5 miles*	.5 miles	0	0.8 miles	-0.3 miles

\* School District Facilities

## 12.5 GOALS AND POLICIES

**12.5.1 Goal.** To provide adequate parks and recreation facilities for the community with emphasis on the adopted standards, goals and policies outlined in this element of the Town of Eatonville Comprehensive Plan.

**12.5.2 Policies.**

1. Develop and build out Alder Street Family Park and Skateboard Facility and open it for public use in 2004.
2. Acquire additional park lands as new residential areas are developed, particularly west of Hilligos Lane.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

3. Increase appurtenances in existing parks to include drinking fountains, benches, playgrounds, and tot lots, etc.

4. Maintain the quality of existing park facilities and improve them as funds permit.

4.5. The Eatonville Regional Trails Plan dated May 2009 is hereby adopted and incorporated into the Eatonville Comprehensive Plan.

Formatted: List Paragraph, Left, No bullets or numbering, Tab stops: Not at 1.5"

**12.5.3** Goal. To provide parks and recreation facilities through cooperative efforts with other governmental agencies, such as the Eatonville School District.

### **12.5.4** Policies.

1. The Town will continue its present informal inter-governmental cooperative arrangement for recreational activities with the Eatonville School District.

2. The Town shall explore possibilities for inter-agency development for recreational facilities when feasible.

**12.5.5** Goal. To provide sound fiscal basis for the funding of future park and recreation facilities acquisition and development.

### **12.5.6** Policies.

1. The Town shall explore all potential revenue sources, to include the continuation of existing parks impact fee, bond issues, matching grants, donations, Pierce County contributions, and contributions from the State of Washington.

2. Encourage the adoption of a Town Parks Plan and a Town Trails Plan.

Formatted: No underline