



THE FLASH

August 2020
Volume 20
Issue 8

An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

The Flash, which occupies the following two pages, is a publication of the City of Talent and is editorially separate from the rest of the Talent News and Review. All content and editorial choices contained in the rest of the paper are the sole responsibility of the TNR and are not in any way associated with the City of Talent. -JG

Parks Master Plan - City Council Review

The City of Talent is in the final stages of adoption of its revised Park Master Plan and your input on the plan is needed. Many understand the benefits of Parks and Recreation Master Planning and understand the relationship between community parks and recreation services, economic development, and quality of life. The master planning process enables local governments, like the City of Talent to assess recreation needs and interests of community members. It enables decision makers to prioritize resource allocation decisions for new facilities and rehabilitation projects, programs, and services in a manner that is fiscally responsible, environmentally sound, publicly supported, and politically prudent. In addition to providing a design blueprint for facilities, the master plan can be used as a promotional document to foster support and political involvement. A master plan can also go a long way to support grant request and community donations. A successful master planning process will transform a community's vision into tangible plans to create outstanding recreation opportunities, well-maintained facilities, and a customer-focused and responsive park system.

Having a great park and recreation system is the hallmark of a vibrant community, a trait which is witnessed daily by citizens in municipalities across the country and Talent is no different. In Talent assets such as Chuck Roberts Park with tennis and volleyball courts, a community water park and natural trails, not only provide hours of entertainment for children, they are a part of the good life in this community.

This Parks Master Plan is an update to the previous Parks Master Plan adopted in 2006. Talent has experienced significant changes since the adoption of the earlier Master Plan, and this draft has been revised to reflect current community choices and opportunities related to renewed economic development and downtown revitalization efforts, including the development of Suncrest Park.

A Parks Master Plan is a document that guides City elected and appointed officials, management and staff when making decisions or taking actions regarding planning, acquiring, developing or implementing parks, open space or recreational facilities. The Plan is intended to be updated periodically to remain current with the community's recreational interests.

This Parks Master Plan creates a vision for an innovative, inclusive and interconnected system of parks, trails and open spaces that promotes outdoor recreation, health and environmental conservation as integral elements of a thriving, livable Talent. The Plan establishes a path forward to guide the City's efforts to provide high quality, community-driven parks, trails, natural areas and recreational opportunities across Talent.

The 2020 Parks Master Plan considers the park and recreation needs of residents citywide. It provides updated inventories, demographic conditions, needs analysis, management considerations and capital project phasing. The Plan establishes

specific goals, recommendations and actions for developing, conserving and maintaining high-quality parks, trails, facilities and open spaces across the City.

The Parks Master Plan reflects the community's interests and needs for parks, recreational facilities and trails. The planning process was aimed to encourage and enable public engagement in the choices, priorities and future direction of the City's park and recreation system. Through a very extensive public process, the Parks Commission developed, with the assistance of the Community Planning Workshop team from the University of Oregon, a comprehensive update to the City of Talent Parks Master Plan. The Plan project team conducted a variety of public outreach activities to solicit feedback and comments, in concert with a review of the recreation system inventory, level of service review and the current and future needs assessment.

Current community interests surfaced through a series of public outreach efforts that included open house meetings, stakeholder meetings, online engagement and website content. An assessment of the park inventory became the basis for determining the current performance of the system to potential standards for parks. An overarching needs analysis was conducted for recreational facilities, parks and trails to assess current demands and project future demand accounting for population growth.

To guide the implementation of the goals of the Plan, a list of improvements was developed with a set of strategies that identified planning level cost estimates and potential funding sources. Together, this process is represented in the master plan document, which was reviewed by the public, Parks Commission and is now under review at the City Council. Once adopted, the Plan will assist in the development of the Parks Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and direct park system improvements and service delivery for the next 20 years. The draft being presented to the City Council reflects the recommendations of the public and Talent Parks Commission.

Implementing the plan as proposed would provide the City with approximately 7.34 acres of park per 1,000 residents, an increase in the level of service by nearly 1.6 acres per 1,000 residents.

While level of service is a good quantitative metric for evaluating a City's park system, a service area analysis was also completed to provide a more spatial understanding of how residents are served. The service area analysis established a ¼ mile buffer around existing "park and play" sites with active recreational amenities like playground equipment. The analysis determined that residents in south Talent have less access to parks than other residents and that lack of play structures and other active recreation facilities in central Talent leave multi-family housing units and low-income families disproportionately underserved.

Another component of the master plan included an inventory of existing parks, both developed and undeveloped. Several key themes were determined from the inventory and public input.

□ Trails and pedestrian connections are insufficient

□ Parks are not sufficiently inclusive or accessible

□ Overall park maintenance is good, but larger facilities such as the tennis court and skate park need repairs

□ New parks will need to be developed to support population growth over the next 20 years to assure that all residents have sufficient and equitable access to park facilities

Successful implementation of a park master plan requires a commitment by the City to ensure funding is available now and well into the future, both for infrastructure improvements and for the operation and maintenance funds necessary to sustain the parks once development is complete.

Operations and maintenance costs of City parks have been considered as part of this plan. Operations and maintenance (O&M) are paid for from a variety of revenue sources, with the park utility fee comprising the largest revenue source at nearly 80% of total revenues. Other revenue sources include gas, marijuana and transient taxes as well as licenses, permits and fees.

The city hired the firm of Hansford Economic Consultants (HEC) to conduct a financial analysis of the draft Master Plan to estimate what funding levels would be needed to be to pay for the improvements currently recommended in the draft Parks Master Plan. HEC looked at approximately \$4 million in improvements in today's dollars, including recommended land purchases, and then inflated those cost estimates to calculate for inflation costs over the life of the plan. Tables B-1 and B-2 in the appendices of the financial analysis detail the estimated capital improvement costs and provide potential funding sources.

Park improvements are primarily paid for from two funding sources: one-time Park System Development Charges (SDCs) pay for improvement costs that are allocated to future users (new development), and park utility bill fees pay for improvement costs that are allocated to existing customers, as well as a majority of park operation and maintenance costs.

Current Park SDCs are \$1,782 for each new single-family home constructed in Talent, while multi-family units and mobile home park units incur an approximately \$1,200-1,300 charge. HEC modeled three different scenarios in determining how much SDCs would need to rise in order to pay for the improvements recommend in the draft Plan. The first scenario assumed all projects in the proposed draft would be implemented, the second scenario assumed only Phase 1 of Suncrest Park would be constructed, and the third scenario assumed that neither Phase 1 nor Phase 2 of Suncrest Park would be constructed.

Park System Development Charges (SDCs) are imposed on new development to meet the increased demand for parks resulting from the new growth. The 2006 Park Master Plan, while thorough, didn't include any major projects and was adopted after the Park SDC adjustment in 2005. It didn't take into consideration the projects proposed in the 2006 Park Master Plan. The 2001 plan used to calculate the SDCs included only \$303,458

in capital projects, \$100,000 of which was allocated for the development of Suncrest Park. The SDCs were also based on the 1990 census data and population projections. Considering that SDC calculations are based in part on capital projects and that very few capital projects were proposed in the plan, the SDC rate in 2006 was calculated and approved at a rate of \$1,402 per single family dwelling.

Since 2006, the Park SDC has increased only by the rate of the Construction Cost Index (CCI) and resulted in an increase of \$302 (or 21%) over the 14-year period. While using the CCI is appropriate for yearly increases in the SDC rate, it doesn't take into consideration the City's actual increase in operation and maintenance costs and doesn't provide a means for increasing the level of service to serve a growing population. The master planning process is the appropriate means of updating the rate structure and best positions the City to obtain future acquisition and development financing from residential development. The City should prioritize the usage of Parks SDCs to secure new park properties and finance park or path/trail development consistent with the priorities within this Plan.

In addition to revenue from SDCs that comes from new Talent residents, parks are also funded by current Talent residents through a \$5.00 monthly Parks Fee on their utility bill. This fee is intended to pay for capital improvements to existing parks as well as parks operation and maintenance costs. Of the \$5.00 fee, \$4.00 is slated for O & M, and \$1.00 is designated for capital improvements. HEC modeled four options for needed utility fee increases in order pay for the improvements recommended in the draft plan. Those options are:

- Option 1 - Improvement costs greater than revenue generated by \$1.00 of the parks utility fee per month per EDU is debt-funded.

- Option 2 - The monthly fee is increased by 50 cents every year and the remaining unfunded capital costs are debt-financed.

- Option 3 - The monthly fee is increased by \$1.00 every year and the remaining unfunded capital costs are debt-financed.

- Option 4 - All new capital improvements costs are cash-funded.

Parks utility bill fee increases under each of the four options are illustrated in the table below. City staff has recommended Option 1 as the preferred option. This option has the least impact on residents in the City while providing the revenue necessary to fund the proposed projects over the 20 year planning period.

Official Newsletter of the
City of Talent

Edited by Gabriella Ciprazo

www.cityoftalent.org

541-535-1566

gciprazo@cityoftalent.org

Fee Level Option	2020 Current	2021 Year 1	2022 Year 2	2023 Year 3	2024 Year 4	2025 Year 5
Option 1	All capital (>\$1.00/mo) debt funded					
Operations	\$4.00	\$4.87	\$5.08	\$5.30	\$5.52	\$5.75
Capital	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Debt	\$0.00	\$0.79	\$0.79	\$1.70	\$1.69	\$1.68
Total	\$5.00	\$6.66	\$6.87	\$8.00	\$8.21	\$8.43
Option 2	Increase \$0.50 / yr + debt service [1]					
Operations	\$4.00	\$4.87	\$5.08	\$5.30	\$5.52	\$5.75
Capital	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.20	\$1.48	\$1.75
Debt	\$0.00	\$0.79	\$0.78	\$1.58	\$1.57	\$1.56
Total	\$5.00	\$6.66	\$6.86	\$8.08	\$8.57	\$9.06
Option 3	Increase \$1.00 /yr + debt service					
Operations	\$4.00	\$4.87	\$5.08	\$5.30	\$5.52	\$5.75
Capital	\$1.00	\$1.13	\$1.92	\$2.70	\$3.48	\$4.25
Debt	\$0.00	\$0.71	\$0.70	\$1.01	\$1.00	\$1.00
Total	\$5.00	\$6.71	\$7.70	\$9.01	\$10.00	\$11.00
Option 4	No debt for existing users					
Operations	\$4.00	\$4.87	\$5.08	\$5.30	\$5.52	\$5.75
Capital	\$1.00	\$6.18	\$5.97	\$5.75	\$5.53	\$5.30
Debt	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total	\$5.00	\$11.05	\$11.05	\$11.05	\$11.05	\$11.05

Source: HEC November 2019.

summ

[1] In years 1 and 2 the increase is greater than \$0.50 per year (excluding debt service) to ensure at least \$1.00 of the fee is put toward capital projects.

The City recognizes that the vitality of a community is directly correlated to its quality of life and that a strong component of a community's vitality is in the quality of its parks and recreation amenities and services. This project was initiated to facilitate a community planning process that would create a revised long-range master planning document for the City of Talent to help guide decisions related to providing parks, recreation and open space opportunities. This planning process has provided the City with the opportunity to articulate its vision for these services and provides a framework of action plans for implementation during the next 20 years.

We are asking groups and individuals to take a look at the plan and provide input on the project at the upcoming City Council meeting on August 19, 2020 at 6:45 PM. The Parks Commission and City Staff believe that this a well

thought out plan and that the costs associated with the improvements proposed are in line with the need of the community. Improvements as part of this plan will help Talent remain the vibrant, environmentally sensitive community it has strived to be in the past several years.

The Master Plan and Financial Analysis is available for review on the City's website under the News link. If you would like to provide written comments, you can do so by emailing the City at publictestimony@cityoftalent.org. Additionally, you can participate electronically via Zoom by using the link to the August 19th Council meeting on the City's website. If you have any questions about the plan or funding mechanisms that support the plan, please feel free to contact me directly at zmoody@cityoftalent.org or by calling 541-535-7401.

Energy News: How to Cook with Minimal Energy

As I have been spending more time cooking throughout this pandemic, I noticed I was using my natural gas stove top burner more often than usual and wondering if this was the most energy efficient way to cook. Apparently, after some research, I was far from it and unfortunately was cooking very energy intensive. This led me to write August's Energy News article on how to cook with minimal energy. Here are some tips 'n tricks to try:

Keep Burner Pans on Stove & Microwave Clean : When clean, they have nothing blocking the energy (flame) and heat the most efficiently.

Use Toaster Ovens, Crockpots, & Microwaves: They use less energy than a stove or oven when cooking a small- to median-sized meal.

Use the Smallest Pan Possible: Smaller the pan, the less energy it takes to heat up.

Use Glass or Ceramic Pans in Ovens: Usually baking temperatures are lower for these containers, resulting in less energy used.

Keep Oven Clean & Racks Clear : When clean, they have nothing blocking the energy (heat) and heat the most efficiently.

Use Lids: Lids help cook food faster by keeping the steam in the pot or pan. Try not to peek and loose that heated energy!

If anyone would like more information about these activities or implements one of the tips 'n tricks, feel free to reach out to me via email (below).

Michael Hoch

City of Talent - Energy Efficiency Coordinator & RARE Participant

mhoch@cityoftalent.org

Bring in the Bees: Talent's 50th pollinator garden opens to bee visitors

by Diana Reynolds Rouse

Talent just certified its 50th pollinator garden, making the town and its outlying areas one of the best places in the country for a bee to live and work. As anyone can tell when they drive into town and see the colorful sign, Talent is designated a Bee City USA. In fact, when it earned the title in 2014, it was the second Bee City in the country, and indeed the world.

Since that time, there has been a steady growth in interest and commitment for pollinating insects, which are vital for the health and beauty of the environment as well as our food supply. The first areas designated Pollinator Gardens in Talent were the creation of Gerlinde Smith, who first carried out the redesign and planting of the garden in front of City Hall, making it infinitely more attractive while demonstrating how a comparatively small area, even in an urban setting, can become a haven for bees and butterflies, and a peaceful stopping point for humans. City Hall garden also includes the Dutch Connection (bulbs), a Native Garden and a Monarch Waystation, all on the west side.

Since then, Smith and her team of dedicated volunteer helpers, Terri House and Vickie Vitale (jokingly called the "Three Garden Graces"), have also brought new elegance and health to several other areas. These include an area adjacent to the Skate Park on John Street, the postage stamp of ground in front of the Post Office, Talent Historical Society, and the Legal Garden (at the Police Station).

Among the hardy plants in these gardens are lavender, daphne, salvia, penstemon, roses, hellebore, rudbekia, sea thrift, heather, spice bush, witch hazel, mock orange, allium, pieris, milkweed, bee balm, and many more.

"We always like to include a good amount of native plants because they have a synergistic relationship with our native pollinators," said Smith, who is Treasurer of the Talent Garden Club and a Commissioner for Talent Parks and Recreation. "In Oregon we have approximately 500 species of native bees and many other native pollinators, ranging from syrphid flies (hover flies) to ladybugs. Oregon has 90 ladybug species, moths, butterflies and many others."

Pesticides and herbicides are strictly prohibited, and shallow water sources are provided. There is even a shelter for bees, appropriately named Bingham palace. All these gardens now bloom almost all year long and they are always a pleasure to pass on the way to mailing a letter or visiting City Hall.

The same can be said of the planting areas leading up to the roundabout on Valley View Road, which vibrate with color from small trees and shrubs, thanks to the efforts of many volunteers under the leadership of Bradley Wilson, who worked tirelessly to bring the earth back to health and the whole area up to standard.

Of the fifty pollinator gardens that now grace Talent, nine are public, and 41 are private. These gardens bring not only bees but also an enormous variety of pollinating insects. Aside from the well-known bumble bees and European honey-bees, there are some 4,000 native bee species in the US, from the tiny perditia minima to large black carpenter bees. Some are specialized to specific plants, such as the blueberry bee, and others will not visit plants that originated outside the Americas. They carry out the important task of foraging among petals,

collecting pollen in bags on their legs and often coating their bodies, before flying off to spread their valuable cargo to other plants, thus ensuring that all will propagate and grow. The insects benefit from the nutritious pollen as well as the plants in one of nature's most perfect co-operative schemes, ensuring that everyone wins – plants, bees, and humans too.

The fiftieth pollinator garden in Talent belongs to Ryan Pederson, who cultivates a remarkable collection of carefully selected plants on less than a quarter of an acre just off Talent Avenue. Though an enthusiastic gardener for years, his interest in growing a pollinator garden was sparked while he was serving on the Talent City Council.

"This seemed an excellent way to have community members involved in a shared effort while beautifying the city at the same time," he said. An analyst by profession, Pederson went about the challenge methodically, analyzing light and shade in his yard, combining elements of year-round bloom, his own favorite flowers and shrubs, and those that would attract humming birds. He researched plants whose blooming periods would overlap so that they would ensure flowers not just for the required months of early spring to late fall, but all year. He learned about companion planting, and created a spreadsheet segmented out in groups according to bloom time and color. Now, less than two years after he moved to his current home, almost every square foot of his garden is occupied and the pollinators have made themselves at home.

"I have at least 40 flowers blooming right now," said Pederson. In order to qualify as a pollinator garden, he built a special pollinator row of long-blooming, drought tolerant plants like aster, rudbekia, astragalus, lavender and rosemary in an especially hot area. He also made planter boxes for flowering vegetables like beans, squash and tomatoes. Heavy clay was amended by adding sand whenever a new plant went in, and by mixing in a few scoops of leaf debris (with the help of a neighbor's maple tree). "When I walk outside, I want to see at least six different flowers in bloom," Pederson added.

The magic of pollinator gardens never fails to inspire Dolly Warden, one of the first bee champions in Talent and member of the team of adjudicators in the Pollinator Garden scheme, which includes Ginny

Ross and Jim Thompson, who created the bee on the pollinator garden sign. Warden has no particular formula for success in creating such a garden, but leaves every participant to interpret the guidelines in a way that suits them. Along with Gerlinde Smith and a few other volunteers, she has inspected almost all of the 50 gardens that have been certified so far.

There is no one way to create a successful pollinator garden, says Warden. "Everybody's garden is so unique and so beautiful, and so much part of them. When I go in I feel I'm going into an Alice in Wonderland place, to see the love that people have for their gardens. Everybody that's a gardener has this special quality, and I wait for it to appear."

If you are interested in creating a pollinator garden, the certification inspection takes about 30 minutes to an hour. Cost is \$12 which pays for the pollinator garden sign. Call Dolly Warden 541-897-0065 or Gerlinde Smith 541-601-6791.