

TOWN OF WINTHROP



PARK AND RECREATION PLAN

MAY 24, 2006

Winthrop Town Council

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WINTHROP'S POLICY IS TO PROVIDE QUALITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ITS CITIZENS THROUGH PROACTIVE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

THE PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN IS INTENDED TO:

- ❖ IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY'S CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS AND PRIORITIES FOR PARK FACILITIES AND RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS;**
- ❖ RECOMMEND SPECIFIC PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION AND ACTION;**
- ❖ EXPLORE SOURCES AND METHODS FOR FINANCING IMPROVEMENTS TO RECREATIONAL FACILITIES;**
- ❖ ESTABLISH GRANT ELIGIBILITY WITH THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.**

BY ADOPTING THIS PLAN, TOWN OFFICIALS ARE STATING THEIR COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF PARK AND RECREATION PROGRAMS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on community input, the following recommendations are central to implementation of this Park and Recreation Plan:

- ❖ Submit the updated Winthrop Park and Recreational Plan to Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreational for review and approval.
- ❖ Maintain a permanent ad hoc citizens advisory committee to oversee plan implementation and updating.
- ❖ Foster a good working relationship with other agencies and organizations involved in providing recreational opportunities in the Winthrop area.
- ❖ Develop partnerships with public agencies, organizations and community groups as a means of generating support and matching resources for park and recreation projects.
- ❖ Develop the Susie Stephens Trail & Bridge and the Riverwalk through downtown to provide links between key features of the community, as well as connections to the Methow Valley Sport Trail Association's trail system.
- ❖ Support the development of trails that connect Winthrop with the Methow Valley schools and Pearrygin Lake State Park.
- ❖ Continue working with Winthrop Ice and Sports Rink Association and Methow Valley Sports Trail Association to develop an Ice Rink and Trailhead Community Park.
- ❖ Complete development of the Heckendorn Park.
- ❖ Continue to maintain Winthrop's existing park facilities in good condition, and identify the means to successfully operate and maintain future facilities such as the ice rink and trails.
- ❖ Prepare applications to appropriate agencies for funding improvements identified in the Capital Improvement Plan.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

With the adoption of this Park and Recreation Plan, the Town of Winthrop proudly recognizes the importance of recreation to area citizens and visitors. All area parks and recreation facilities and programs benefit residents by encouraging them to be physically active. Recreational activities also play a role in building community spirit, cultural understanding, and family cohesiveness.

This is the most recent iteration of a plan that was originally adopted in 1987. The document was subsequently revised in 1989, 1998, and 2000. Over the course of time, updates have reflected many accomplishments in Winthrop's parks system. Notably, the Town has benefited from several improvements to Mack Lloyd Memorial Park, development of Heckendorn Park, and purchase of property for the Community Ice Rink and Trailhead.

Updating the Park Plan gives the Town an opportunity to examine changes in demographics and recreational preferences. The current plan should enhance the Town's ability to secure funding for recreational improvements. In particular, this plan helps the Town maintain eligibility for Washington Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation grants.

This plan uses an inventory of existing park facilities, significant citizen involvement, park and recreation goals and policies, and an analysis of need as the basis for a Six Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP identifies specific improvement projects, providing cost estimates and potential funding sources for each. By following (and periodically updating) the CIP, the Town will meet its highest priority recreational needs over time.

Although the plan demonstrates significant community support for all recommended capital improvements, it is appropriate to mention one important focus. This plan places considerable weight on the development of trails within the community that would provide linkages between the commercial centers, as well as connections to the Methow Community Trail. Projects range from the Susie Stephens Trail, which the Town is actively seeking to fund and construct, to the long-awaited Riverwalk, and a host of other trail connections.

Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

The Town seeks to retain consistency between this plan and the Parks and Recreation Element of our Comprehensive Plan. The most recent version of the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1999, in a process that paralleled the development of the Park Plan. The two documents are complementary, with the Park Plan fleshing out the vision stated in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chapter 2 - Citizen Involvement

This plan has been made possible only by an earnest effort to identify and include the input and suggestions of Winthrop area residents. To encourage the broad spectrum of participation, the Town employed a variety of citizen involvement strategies. The process began with reconvening the Town's Parks Committee, which had been inactive for a couple of years. The rejuvenated committee, representing a variety of user groups and perspectives, began the task of updating the park plan in December 2004.

The committee used two primary methods for gathering information, 1) a Community Assessment process with USDA Rural Development, and 2) a Parks and Recreation Survey. These two efforts yielded consistent results that were used to develop a draft plan for public review. Subsequently, the plan was adopted by the Town Council on May 24, 2006. Meeting notices and the adopting resolution are included in Appendix A.

2005 Community Assessment

In March, 2005, the Washington Rural Development Council sent a four person team to Winthrop to complete a *Community Assessment*. The team members spent 3 days observing the community and leading 17 "listening sessions" that involved over 100 people. Their focus was on three questions: 1) What do you think are the major problems and challenges in your community?, 2) What do you think are the major strengths of your community?, and 3) What projects would you like to see completed in the future? Although the process was not specifically focused on parks and recreation, it illustrated a great deal of vision and interest in various parks and recreation amenities. The Community Assessment proved very valuable in setting the direction for the Park Survey and this plan. Further discussion of the findings follows in Chapter 5 – Park and Recreation Needs.

2005 Parks and Recreation Survey

The 2005 Winthrop Parks and Recreation survey was distributed in October of 2005 with the intention of collecting information to be used in updating the Town's Parks and Recreation Plan. The survey was prepared by the town planner, with review and input from the Parks and Recreation committee, Planning Commission, Town Council, and other town staff. The Parks committee agreed that the survey should be brief and focused on specific areas of interest for updating the park and recreation plan. The survey

instrument included a summary of the status of various parks and related projects, as well as a map illustrating where parks are located in Town.

Surveys were mailed out on October 4, 2005 to every household with a utilities account with the Town. Surveys were also made available at Town Hall, and placed at several businesses around town. Ninety surveys were returned to Town Hall by the due date of October 19. The findings of the survey are described in Chapter 5 - Park and Recreation Needs. A complete compilation of the results is included in Appendix C.

Public Process

In addition to the survey and Community Assessment, Winthrop area residents were invited to comment on the draft plan as it was developed and considered for adoption. The process culminated with a Public Hearing held before the Town Council, which allowed one final forum for citizen comment prior to adoption.

Citizen involvement is a necessary element and should not be limited to once every 5 or 10 years. As recommendations are implemented it will be important to provide for ongoing public dialogue on the Town's progress in meeting parks and recreation needs. Annual review of the capital project list should occur during the Town's budget development process.

Chapter 3 - Description of Planning Area

The Methow Valley is a major recreation destination for people throughout the Pacific Northwest. The Town's western architectural motif, geared towards the era from 1890 to 1919, is a major attraction in itself. Visits by those seeking Town services, shopping opportunities, and lodging provide an important year round economic influence on the Town. Many of the visitors come to Winthrop and the Methow Valley to enjoy their favorite outdoor recreational pursuits.

While the incorporated limits of Winthrop constitute the planning area considered in this plan, the service area is in fact much larger. Winthrop is the hub or "trailhead" for a multi-faceted recreational paradise that stretches from the Columbia River and Lake Chelan to the south, to the Canadian border to the north, the North Cascades to the west and the Okanogan to the east. In fact, Winthrop is one of the highlights of the Cascade and International Loops, two scenic driving tours through the North Cascades.

The Town, located in the Methow Valley of Okanogan County, was founded in the late 1890's by pioneer Guy Waring. The townsite is situated on a series of terraces at the confluence of the Chewuch and Methow Rivers. The community is bi-sected by State Route 20, the North Cascades Highway which forms the main arterial through the Town as well as the primary link to the rest of Okanogan County and the State. Commercial development is concentrated in two areas. The original townsite, located in the northern portion of the Town adjacent to the confluence of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers, is the centerpiece of Winthrop's "Old West" Theme. To the south is the newer, tourist oriented commercial area which also contains several new residential developments. To the east lies a terrace where most of the developed residential area exists.

Winthrop's climate is strongly influenced by the nearby Cascade Mountains. Marine moisture is intercepted by the higher slopes causing precipitation amounts of less than 15 inches per year, falling mostly in the winter as snow. Temperatures range from an average low of 8 degrees in January to an average high of 71 degrees in July.

Recent historic population trends have shown periods of both growth and decline, as shown in the following table:

TABLE 3.1 - POPULATION HISTORY

Year	Population	Percent change from previous
1960	375	
1970	488	30.1%
1980	413	-15.4%
1990	322	-22.0%
2000	350	8.7%

Although population fell between 1970 and 1980, and again between 1980 and 1990, the years since 1990 show a reversal of that trend. Several trends may lead to continued growth inside the town limits:

- ❖ The Methow Valley, Winthrop included, has seen a tremendous boom in real estate, with fewer existing houses on the market and a significant increase in issuance of residential building permits.
- ❖ Since the town has a developed water and sewer system, it remains a good location for small single-family homes, duplexes and multi-family housing. A shortage of affordable housing has spurred interest in small lot development and duplexes.
- ❖ The continuing controversy over water in the Valley may serve to move some growth inside the town.
- ❖ The Town is receiving numerous inquiries from developers. A 50-60 home development is planned for a 20+ acre property across the Chewuch River, within the Town of Winthrop.

The Town of Winthrop Capital Facilities Plan makes two population projections, one of 1.5% growth per year and one of 2.5% per year. These projections, based on the 2000 census produce the following results.

TABLE 3.2 - POPULATION PROJECTIONS

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
1.5%/yr	350	377	406	438	471

<u>2.5%/yr</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>448</u>	<u>507</u>	<u>574</u>
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This table indicates that the Town's population could increase by 121 to 224 people by 2020. However, such population projections need to be treated with considerable caution particularly since they only address the potential population growth in the incorporated area. Many events could increase or decrease growth past these projections and these projections should be reviewed and corrected at regular intervals.

Chapter 4 – Parks & Recreation Opportunities

At present, Winthrop's Mack Lloyd Memorial Park comprises the main park complex for Winthrop. At 18 acres, the park includes many amenities, ranging from play and picnic areas, to tennis courts and a ball field. Since the last iteration of the Park Plan in 2000, the park system has seen some exciting additions. Heckendorn Park was a vacant lot, which now hosts a neighborhood park. A 12-acre parcel was donated to Okanogan County within the town boundaries, providing an open space park for the community's enjoyment. Most recently, the Town acquired 2.3 acres for the development of a community ice rink and trailhead. In addition, the town owns other properties with potential to become part of the parks system: a parcel in the Summerset subdivision that currently serves as an open space area, a fourteen acre parcel adjoining the wastewater treatment facility, an undeveloped street right-of-way that terminates at the Methow River, and a parcel along the Methow River at the south end of downtown, slated as a landing for the pedestrian bridge on the Susie Stephens Trail. This section provides an inventory of existing park and recreation facilities and includes descriptions of planned or proposed improvements.

Mack Lloyd Park

Winthrop's main existing park is dedicated to the memory of Mack Lloyd, a local logger and businessperson who gave selflessly to the development of the Barn and surrounding park. In the late 1990s, the Town made several improvements to the park, supported by a grant from IAC and local fundraising. The park is centrally located near downtown, and receives heavy use by both locals and visitors. The 18-acre park offers a range of recreation opportunities as described below:

Methow Valley Visitor Center - The Methow Valley Visitor Center, operated by the Methow Valley Ranger District, is located at the west end of Mack Lloyd Memorial Park on the southern side of S.R. 20. This handicapped accessible facility was completed in 1994 and has year round restrooms, a paved/stripped parking area for approximately 40 cars and a landscaped memorial area featuring native plants.

Sports Field Area - The four-acre Sports Field Area consists of a single softball/baseball field with bleachers, restrooms, and a basketball court. Although limited by the shortness of the outfield, the ball field receives heavy use from local league players and provides practice space for school and

community baseball and softball teams. The local Kiwanis installed a basketball court in the location of the old tennis courts.

Tennis Courts and “Expansion Area” – This four-acre property, donated to the Town in 1995, has been developed to provide overflow parking for horsepackers and other large vehicles. Approximately one acre of the site was cleared, filled and graded in 1996 to develop the parking area. During park upgrades, the tennis courts were relocated to the park expansion area behind the visitor’s center. The tennis courts remain a popular facility.

The Barn - The Barn, a 6,500 square foot community auditorium owned by the Town and operated by the non-profit Winthrop Auditorium Association, is the predominate feature of Mack Lloyd Memorial Park. It is used during all seasons for a wide variety of community functions including meetings, concerts, and dances. It contains seating for 450 and has two indoor restrooms and a commercial kitchen. Support facilities include paved parking for some 25 cars, in addition to those provided by the Picnic Area, and two outdoor restrooms. A hard surface path provides access from the Barn to the downtown area.

Central Park Area - The central part of Mack Lloyd Park is approximately two acres of irrigated and maintained lawn, bordered by the Visitor Center to the west, an overflow channel of the Methow River to the south, the Barn area to the east, and SR 20 along the north edge. Large Ponderosa Pines and newer deciduous trees planted along the southern and eastern edges add an attractive landscaping element. Support facilities include twelve picnic tables (donated by Backcountry Horsemen), a 17' x 33' picnic shelter and drinking fountain (provided by local donations of labor and material), a bandshell donated by Cascadia and a newly upgraded playground area purchased and installed by the Winthrop Kiwanis Club. Adjacent paved parking can accommodate about forty vehicles.

River Area - The River area, which is almost entirely within the 100 year floodplain, lies between the Barn and Methow River, east of the drainage channel. Adjoining the Barn is a large graveled parking area developed to accommodate overflow parking during community events as well as accommodate users of this portion of the park. This graveled area has served for many years as the location of a temporary ice rink set up each winter and maintained by a group of dedicated volunteers.

A landscaped buffer of trees and shrubs has been planted along the river side of the parking area to provide a visual screen. A path provides access along the trees to the river. This area has been used informally for boat access to

the Methow River. However, the riverbank at that location continues to erode, eating back into an overflow channel, and ongoing use as a river access will require bank stabilization. West of the river access point between the Methow River and the central park area, there is a riparian area comprised of over three acres of forested wetlands dominated by cottonwood trees.

Connections - A wheelchair accessible path begins by the Methow Valley Visitor's Center and follows border of the central park area (the drainage canal), also providing access to the parking area, the Methow River and the Barn.

A second trail was developed as a short interpretive loop through the riparian area, accessed by a footbridge crossing the overflow channel. Interpretive signs were developed for this portion of the trail highlighting some of the natural history, particularly the value and functions of riparian areas. The planning and construction of the interpretive trail was coordinated by the Methow Valley Citizens Council with a grant from the Department of Natural Resource's Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account and funding support from the Winthrop Barn Association and labor from the Methow Valley Ranger District.

TABLE 4.1 - EXISTING PARK AREA USAGE

Facility	Orientation & Primary Uses	Intensity of Use	Park Season	Facility Expansion Potential
Sports Fields	Athletic - softball tennis	High	Year round/seasonal	Limited
Methow Valley Visitor Center	Visitor information	High	Year round	Moderate ¹
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park.	Family - picnic, performing arts and informal recreation	High	Spring through fall	Moderate
The Barn/ Winthrop Auditorium	Community - auditorium/ meeting space	High	Year round	Moderate ¹
Riparian Area	natural area - trails	Low	Spring through fall	Limited
Expansion Area	parking, tennis courts	Medium	Spring through fall	Limited

¹ - Facility could be expanded based on need/demand.

Table 4.1 above summarizes the primary use, relative intensity of use, and the expansion potential of each area within Mack Lloyd Park.

Community Trailhead and Ice Rink

The Town has partnered with the Winthrop Ice Rink Association and Methow Valley Sport Trail Association in the development of a new park facility, to include an ice rink and community trailhead. With the help of grant funds from IAC and Okanogan County, the Town purchased 2.3 acres of new park property. Currently, the Town is working with WISR and MVSTA to develop a site plan. Phase 1 development of the site, as funded by IAC, includes preparing the ice rink site and constructing restrooms and a maintenance building. This work is slated for completion by July of 2007.

As site planning and development proceed, the site is intended to become a central recreation facility for the community, providing year-round trail access and parking, together with an ice and sports rink with potential for year round activities.

Trails

Outcomes of both the Community Assessment and the 2005 Park Survey showed tremendous support for development of trails within Winthrop, connecting key features of the town and facilitating seamless access to the MVSTA trail system. While ideas abound, four projects stand out:

1. The Susie Stephens Trail and Bridge, providing access from downtown, through the new Trailhead and Ice Rink park to the south end of Winthrop.
2. The Riverwalk, providing an alternate pedestrian route through downtown, along the banks of the Methow and Chewuch Rivers, connecting the Susie Stephens Trail with Sa Teekh Wa Park.
3. A "safe route to school", extending the Susie Stephens Trail through to the Methow Valley schools, located 3 miles south of Winthrop. (Ultimately, this trail should connect to the Town of Twisp as well.)
4. A Pearrygin Lake Trail, providing non motorized access between Winthrop and the State Park at Pearrygin Lake.

These projects are all in various stages, ranging from implementation to conceptual planning. The Susie Stephens Trail (formerly called the South End Trail) is the furthest along, as a result of more than 10 years of planning, including environmental and feasibility studies, preliminary bridge

engineering, and right-of-way planning under a TEA-21 Enhancement grant. The project received another big boost when it was awarded \$1.17 million from the 2005 gas tax package, specifically slated for design and construction of the pedestrian bridge and connection to the trailhead. Funding the balance of the project is a top priority of the Town.

The Riverwalk is also a long-held dream of the community. Some conceptual planning for a 6' wide path along the Methow and Chewuch Rivers has already been accomplished. This project is likely to be divided into two phases. The Riverwalk and a "safe route to school" both will extend the Susie Stephens Trail, facilitating more connections. Ultimately, the Town will become a hub for a vast regional trail network, serving both residents and visitors alike.

Neighborhood Parks

The Town has two sites designated for neighborhood parks: Heckendorn and Summerset Hills. The town does not currently have plans to develop the Summerset Hills lot into a park; the .9-acre lot is expected to remain an open space area until sufficient interest is generated for developing a neighborhood park.

The Heckendorn Park, on the other hand, has grown from a vision to a reality in the past couple of years. This one-acre site is comprised of two lots donated to the Town by the Methodist Church in the early 1990's and a street end right-of-way. The Winthrop Kiwanis has taken the lead in developing Heckendorn Park. It now offers a basketball half court and play area, with playground equipment donated by John and Michelle Larsen. While improvements continue, the park is already a popular place for neighborhood families.

Sa Teekh Wa Park

Sa Teekh Wa Park consists of a 12-acre open space area located in a crook of the Chewuch River, just above the confluence with the Methow River. Although located within the Town of Winthrop, the park is owned by Okanogan County, with a portion of the park being dedicated to the Methow band of the Colville Confederated Tribes. The County plans to develop the park as part of a linear system connecting the Methow Valley with trails planned in the northern portion of Okanogan County, near Oroville and Nighthawk. The park is connected to Winthrop's downtown area by a cable-stayed pedestrian bridge, and will remain largely in its natural state, with some interpretive trails.

Water Access

With the Chewuch and Methow Rivers being central features of the Town of Winthrop, it stands to reason the community would benefit from more developed water access. The 2005 Park Survey looked at three water access projects: improving the informal access at the Barn, developing a new boat launch on the undeveloped McLean street right of way, which dead ends at the Methow River in the Heckendorn neighborhood, and development of a "whitewater park" within the Chewuch River. There is a great deal of support for developing the two boat access points, and mixed reactions to the idea of a whitewater park.

Other Town Property

As noted the Town owns other properties that have potential for park and recreation development. Two parcels of land, the old landfill site and the property in Heckendorn adjoining the wastewater treatment lagoons, could be developed for park and recreation purposes. The old landfill site would require significant fill and grading before it could be used for formal recreation. The parcel near the lagoons, hereinafter referred to as Cottonwood Park, lends itself to additional sports fields and related uses which will not impact future expansion of the wastewater treatment system.

Other Recreation in the Winthrop Area

Methow Valley School District - In addition to Town owned and maintained facilities, the Methow Valley School District recently completed a major building project which included three gymnasiums and two baseball/softball/soccer fields. The District also intends to develop at least two tennis courts in the near future.

Private Recreation Opportunities - Private recreation ventures include horseback riding, bike rentals, helicopter skiing, recreational vehicle parks, guided hiking and climbing trips and a skate park that is presently being developed near the Town's old landfill. Sun Mountain Lodge, Arrowleaf and other private developments also provide a variety of recreational opportunities in the area.

Regional Recreation Opportunities - Other regional recreational opportunities include the following: the 200 kilometer trail system Methow Community Trail

operated by the Methow Valley Sports Trail Association (MVSTA) which provides opportunities for horseback riding, hiking, nordic skiing, and biking; the Wagner Memorial swimming pool and adjoining park located in Twisp; Pearygin Lake State Park which offers camping, swimming, fishing and boating; an extensive network of trails and campground facilities within the Okanogan National Forest; the nine hole Bear Creek Golf Club; the Loup Loup Ski Bowl which provides both alpine and nordic skiing; and over 300 miles of groomed snowmobile trails and six Sno-Parks. All of these offer important additional recreational opportunities within a short drive from Town for residents and visitors alike. A map denoting the location of many of these facilities is included in Appendix B.

A SCORP inventory is found in Appendix D.

Chapter 5 - Park and Recreation Needs

Park and recreation needs can be determined in many ways. The simple, straight forward method is to ask people in the immediate area how they spend their leisure time and the extent to which existing sites and programs meet their desire to recreate. Using this method, a community can begin to identify potential projects or programs for which the demand might be high. Such were the objectives of the 2005 Park Survey. Likewise, the March 2005 Community Assessment gave Winthrop area residents an opportunity to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Town's parks and recreation amenities.

National Park and Recreation Standards

A more institutional way to identify park needs is to compare existing and expected conditions to national park standards. Created by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), national park standards are described as a certain number of acres of park land for every 1000 residents; or also, 1 football field for every 20,000 residents. In essence, the standards reflect what "seemed to be right" based on the experience of recreation professionals from around the country. The attraction of national standards is that they allow a community to estimate how much additional park land should be acquired and improved as the population grows; they are also simple to administer and interpret.

Overall, the NRPA suggests that a community should strive to provide 6.25-10.5 acres of developed park land per 1000 residents. Currently, Winthrop's 350 residents enjoy 18 acres of developed park land, with 2.3 acres slated for development within the coming year. Given that the Town is clearly exceeding the national standards for total park area, the question becomes: are we utilizing this acreage in a manner that effectively meets the recreational needs of area residents?

The NRPA has also established standards for individual athletic fields and similar improvements. Provided they are kept in good playing condition, Winthrop is currently exceeding standards for improvements such as baseball fields and tennis courts. However, this in no way reflects current demand for these facilities, particularly given the relative isolation of the community. The real issue is whether or not the quantity and quality of recreational experiences currently available meet the needs of area residents.

Demand

In addition to the population growth information presented in Chapter 3, there are other factors that add to the demand for parks and recreation facilities. Because of Winthrop's tourist economy, the Town and thus its parks and recreation facilities serves a population much larger than just the residents. Also, as the state population increases, the Town has witnessed an increased demand on parks and recreation facilities due to Winthrop's prime location.

Other indicators of the growing demand on area recreation opportunities and facilities come from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Methow Visitor Information Center and Methow Valley Sports Trails Association (MVSTA). WSDOT traffic counts on the North Cascades Highway near Winthrop show a steady increase in traffic. In its first year of operation, the Methow Visitor Information Center registered 21,000 visitors, 85% percent of whom came between May and October.

Probably the most telling documentation of the growing demand for the Valley's recreation facilities comes from the MVSTA. This organization is responsible for the maintenance and operation of nearly 200 kilometers of trails, all of which are groomed for nordic skiing during the winter months. From the inception of the organization in the early 1980s until now the number of daily trail passes sold during the Nordic ski season has gone from 6,306 to 26,500, an increase of 320% over 20 years. These numbers do not factor in seasons pass holders, lifetime pass holders, landowners, and volunteers. If those are added, the MVSTA system sees in excess of 46,000 skier days per year.

Community Assessment

The Community Assessment was completed in March of 2005, and although not specifically focused on parks and recreation, it yielded a wealth of information about the priorities of people within the community. The assessment was conducted by a team of 4 observers from the Washington Rural Development Council. After 3 days of listening to members of the community respond to questions about Winthrop's strengths and weaknesses and their vision for the community in coming years, the team summarized what they heard. The most commonly mentioned problems pertained to transportation (both motorized and non-motorized), lack of cohesive community vision, enhancing tourism and the role of Westernization, and diversification into a year round economy. The strengths were the people,

who were thought to be friendly, talented and willing to devote themselves to volunteer efforts; the Methow and Chewuch Rivers, the beauty of the natural setting, and recreation.

During the listening forums, people identified important projects to help build the community of their vision: Community trails, the Riverwalk, the Ice Rink, parks and other community amenities; planning and communication; and dealing with pedestrian and parking needs. Clearly through this process, conducted by outside observers, the same set of needs and vision rose to the surface. The ideas generated during the assessment were used to develop the 2005 Parks and Recreation Survey.

Survey Results

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Survey was conducted for the purpose of assessing existing opportunities and gauging support for improvements to Winthrop's parks and recreation facilities. Most respondents (92%) reported that they live either in Winthrop or the Methow Valley. 84% were registered voters in Okanogan County. The largest response came from the 45-59 age group (47%). 25% were between the ages of 21 and 44, and 26% were over 60. One apparent weakness of the survey was a limited response from youth in the community; only 1% of the surveys were from people under age 21. Females responded to the survey at a higher rate as well, 60% female to 40% male. The average household size represented by respondents was 2.4.

After establishing the demographics of the respondents, the survey asked how often people use existing facilities. The results are tabulated in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 – Park Use

How often do you use the following facilities?	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Play Area - Mack Lloyd Park	18%	47%	35%
Picnic Area - Mack Lloyd Park	7%	68%	25%
Ballfield - Mack Lloyd Park	11%	29%	60%
Tennis Courts- Mack Lloyd Park	6%	32%	62%
Basketball Courts - Mack Lloyd Park	1%	13%	86%
Winthrop Barn	39%	59%	2%

Ice Rink	10%	42%	48%
Heckendorn Park	5%	28%	67%
MVSTA Trails	60%	16%	23%
Shafer Museum	11%	61%	28%

The shading highlights the facilities with highest reported usage. Frequent use was defined as 10 or more times per year. The Barn and MVSTA trails showed the highest level of use. Occasional use was defined as one to ten times per year. Many respondents indicated that they use the central play and picnic areas in Mack Lloyd Park; the Barn, the Ice Rink, and the Shafer museum at least occasionally. The top three reasons for not using Winthrop's park facilities were lack of time, no interest in the existing facilities and a preference to use private facilities.

In general, respondents seemed to have a high appreciation for our parks and the associated recreation opportunities. Asked how they would rate the condition of Winthrop's parks, 72% of the respondents answered either good or excellent. 28% felt the parks are in fair condition, and no one felt they are in poor condition. A full 88% of the respondents indicated that recreational opportunities are good or excellent. 10% felt the opportunities are fair, leaving just 2% indicating recreation opportunities are poor.

After assessing current use and satisfaction with Winthrop's parks, the survey asked respondents to indicate their level of support for a variety of parks projects. The list of projects was generated based upon the previous park plan, input of the Parks Committee, and the findings of the 2005 Community Assessment. The ice rink and trailhead project already underway was not included. Table 5.3 below summarizes the responses.

Table 5.3 – Level of Support for Project Proposals

Projects	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Do Not Support	No Opinion
Trail to schools and Twisp	57%	19%	14%	10%
Riverwalk Trail in downtown	70%	18%	9%	2%
Trail to Pearygin State Park	48%	33%	14%	6%
In-Town trail network	70%	14%	9%	7%
Soccer Fields in Winthrop	37%	41%	16%	6%

Soccer Fields elsewhere in Valley	38%	36%	12%	14%
Boat launch in Heckendorn	44%	24%	22%	10%
Improve boat access at Barn	53%	28%	14%	6%
Chewuch Whitewater Park	32%	20%	28%	20%

The survey indicates very high support for trails projects, particularly an in-town trail network and the Riverwalk. This reflects long term priority of the community, which the Town is working to meet. The support for a trail to the Methow Valley schools, midway between Twisp and Winthrop, and Pearrygin State Park is also high, but not as dramatic. This may indicate that residents are prioritizing trails in town first, but still interested in seeing them extended to key locations outside the town as well.

The need for soccer fields for Methow Valley kids has been noted for several years, including receiving focus in the previous version of this plan. Support for soccer fields remains. The survey sought to determine whether people would like to see a facility in Town or elsewhere in the Methow Valley. The results did not show a clear preference; fields out of town had slightly higher “strong support”, while fields in town received a higher percentage of “somewhat support” responses. Clearly soccer fields will remain a priority until the need is addressed, and the Town will need to stay involved in this discussion.

Three of the project ideas involve water access. The two boat launch areas appear to be supported. The slightly higher support for the access by the Barn most likely reflects the fact that it is located within a well defined park area, easily accessed off of SR 20. However, that access needs to be developed because existing informal use is contributing to erosion that could cause significant damage in a high water event. The access at McLean Street would be a good alternative as well, to provide additional access to the Methow River.

A third water access project, the Chewuch River Whitewater Park, received mixed support. In comments, some respondents expressed deep concerns about the impacts of such a feature upon fish habitat. A high percentage (20%) wanted more information before weighing in on whether a whitewater park would be desirable. The fact that 52% of respondents either strongly or somewhat supported the idea indicates the town may want to give it further consideration over time.

The idea of establishing a parks and recreation district has long been touted as a method to raise more money to support some of the high costs of

developing and maintaining quality recreation facilities. The survey asked whether people would support the formation of such a district, to be funded through a property tax levy of not more than \$16 of \$100,000 of property valuation. Support for the idea was fairly high, with two thirds of the respondents saying they would strongly or somewhat support a recreation district. 16% indicated they would like more information, and 19% opposed the idea outright. The percentages remained within 2% of those results when calculated only for those respondents who are registered voters in Okanogan County.

The final portion of the survey asked people to comment on Winthrop's existing or proposed parks and facilities. 41 respondents chose to add a comment, and those comments fell into three categories: trails, maintenance and funding, and other comments. Trails comments focused on how important such facilities would be to the community, highlighting their value in promoting health and wellness, safety, and economic development. Others pointed out the need to maintain what we have, and the difficulties of funding adequate parks and recreation facilities in a small community. As always, comments reflected a wide variety of suggestions and thoughts on the community and its needs.

A summary report of survey results, comments and list of volunteers is included in Appendix C.

Conclusion

Together, the Town, School District, Town of Twisp, Methow Valley Sport Trails Association and many other public and private entities provide Winthrop area residents and visitors with a variety of recreational opportunities. The community's desire and documented demand for year round recreational opportunities remains strong as shown by the Community Assessment and survey used to gather public input for the updating of this park plan. These findings inform the goals and objectives and 6-year capital improvement program proposed later in this plan.

Park and recreation improvements are rarely, if ever, self-supporting from a financial standpoint. Arguably, the costs required to construct and maintain park improvements will entail a higher degree of collaboration between the Town, School District, Forest Service, MVSTA and other partners if the goals and recommendations found in this plan are to be realized.

Chapter 6 - Goals and Objectives

All community planning processes require the formulation of goals and objectives. This is done in order to help decision makers, officials, and the public express community needs so that public policy can be developed and appropriate actions can be taken. The planning process usually results in the preparation of an officially adopted text, such as this document, which contains recommendations and supporting information. Plans should be frequently reviewed to assure that they continue to reflect the current desires of the community.

Development of goals and objectives constitutes an important step in plan preparation. The goals and objectives in this Plan have been carefully developed and updated from public ideas and have been structured to provide clear planning criteria against which implementing actions may be developed.

Goal statements provide general statements of intention. Objectives are measures designed to implement goals and objectives for the Winthrop Park and Recreation Plan.

The following section presents the goals and objectives for the Town's Park and Recreation Plan. Following each goal is a statement of intent, which is provided to eliminate confusion that may arise in the minds of future decision makers, and a listing of objectives, developed based upon the input received from the public through meetings and surveys conducted during the planning process, required to attain the stated goal.

Goals and Objectives

❖ *GOAL 1: Provide recreation opportunities and facilities for all age groups*

This goal emphasizes the need to plan park and recreation facilities and opportunities for all age groups. The public expressed a demand for such actions. Meeting this goal will also help increase use of park properties.

Objectives:

- Maintain existing parks for the use and enjoyment of people of all ages.

- Continue phased development of the new Town Ice Rink and Trailhead park.
- Continue efforts to develop recreational opportunities, such as trails, neighborhood parks, sports fields/courts, and water access, that serve all ages in accord with public input and funding availability.
- Diversify recreation opportunities at existing park areas by addition of new improvements such as playground equipment and year round recreation activities.
- Plan for the possibility of hiring a summer recreation director when the level of interest and facilities warrant such a position.

❖ *GOAL 2: Coordinate and cooperate with other public and private entities to provide recreation opportunities*

This goal identifies the desirability of coordinating recreation plans and activities between public and private entities. Public agencies and other organizations should be considered to include the Washington State Department of Parks, the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan County, Kiwanis, Methow Institute Foundation, Methow Valley Sports Trails Association, Methow Conservancy, Methow Valley School District, Sun Mountain Lodge, Arrowleaf, Winthrop Chamber of Commerce, Methow Valley Snowmobile Club and the Winthrop Barn Association. Trails projects in particular could benefit from partnerships with the Methow Valley Sports Trails Association, Methow Institute Foundation, U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan County and the private sector.

It is conceivable that any of the entities listed above may be planning for similar recreation opportunities which could result in duplication of efforts. This goal suggests that planning, management and/or use of recreational resources be coordinated, jointly operated and efficiently utilized.

Objectives:

- Coordinate with other agencies and local organizations in providing diverse recreation opportunities in the area.

- Work with other agencies and organizations to promote the development of trails to the Methow Valley schools, Twisp, and Pearrygin State Park.
- Encourage private businesses and organizations to invest in projects that improve recreation opportunities in Winthrop and the Methow Valley.
- Utilize concessions as a means of generating funds for operation and maintenance of park improvements.
- Submit grant applications for needed improvements to the Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation and other potential funding sources.

❖ *GOAL 3: Maintain and improve parks and recreation facilities for residents and visitors alike.*

The community recognizes the importance of recreation oriented tourism to Winthrop and the Methow Valley. This goal seeks to balance recreational opportunities that enhance tourism in the Valley with the needs of area residents.

Objectives:

- Continue efforts to develop an in-town trail network, including the Susie Stephens Trail and Bridge, the Riverwalk.
- Provide adequate restrooms, parking areas and other improvements needed to support existing and planned recreation facilities and activities.
- Focus on improvements that foster regional recreation activities, such as nordic skiing, snowmobling, horseback riding, biking, ice skating and hiking.
- Develop and provide points of access to and along the Methow and Chewuch Rivers that enable persons of all abilities to enjoy the community's river front location.

❖ *GOAL 4: Maximize opportunities to form partnerships and utilize contributions from volunteers and businesses to help implement park projects*

As shown during the Community Assessment, Winthrop area residents are devoted volunteers. Many notable projects, including the 1987 reconstruction of the Barn, improvements to Mack Lloyd Memorial Park, development of Heckendorn Park, and the development of a local ice rink have been accomplished through the hard work of Methow Valley residents. Indeed, the vision articulated in this Plan will involve a high percentage of donated labor, funds, and materials.

Funding for operating park lands and improvements can be augmented, in part, through privately operated concessions. Care should be taken to assure the design, location and operation of these ventures is done in a manner that compliments park use.

Objectives:

- Structure park improvement programs which call for specific participation by area residents and businesses.
- Recognize volunteer efforts and donations to the development and maintenance of Winthrop's parks.
- Maintain an active ad hoc committee to oversee the implementation of park projects.
- Seek innovative ways to fund projects through revenues from tourism.

❖ *GOAL 5: Foster the development of the Town as a hub for the regional trail systems*

The Methow Valley is well known for its nordic ski , snowmobile trail and hiking trail systems. The intent of this goal is to focus efforts towards developing Winthrop's parks and/or the Town itself as a trail head for people accessing the Methow Valley Community Trail (limited to non-motorized uses) and as a staging area for groups and individuals coming to the area to use the extensive system of groomed snowmobile routes, or the vast trail network within the Okanogan National Forest.

Objectives:

- Construct a pedestrian trail system within the community that provides safe and convenient access to key features in the Town and links to regionally significant recreation opportunities.

- Continue the cooperative effort to develop a Town Trailhead park facility with restrooms, parking and other amenities that foster an enjoyable Winthrop experience.
- Work with the County, State and Federal governments on the potential for a snowmobile link from the Town to one or more snowparks.
- Encourage the development of education and interpretive opportunities that provide information on the Valley's human and natural history.
- Develop common signage for trails and trail access points that provides a readily identifiable and unifying element for these important community assets.

❖ *GOAL 6: Continue development of neighborhood or pocket parks where there is a need.*

This goal identifies a need, particularly evident in existing and growing residential neighborhoods, to provide small tracts of park land for low-intensity family uses. Acquisition of certain lands through conditions placed on development in Winthrop is suggested for these purposes.

Objectives:

- Encourage donations of desired properties for the expansion and/or development of neighborhood parks.
- Develop a reserve fund for the eventual acquisition of high-priority properties.
- Complete the development of Heckendorn Park.
- Prepare plans for the eventual development of the park property dedicated to the community in the Summerset Hill subdivision.
- Review street ends and other publicly owned properties for their potential as possible pocket parks or river accesses.

Chapter 7 - Six Year Capital Improvement Program

The Six Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) consists of a set of Action Priorities and a 6-year plan for parks and recreation improvements. The goals and recommendations of this plan will not be achieved if they are not financially realistic. Thus this chapter is intended to prioritize and define park projects with an understanding of the financial capabilities of town.

The Six Year CIP formalizes the Action Priorities by including estimated costs, potential funding sources and year project/activity is to be completed. An important premise is that no project or program should be implemented until operation and maintenance costs are known.

Because the Action Priorities and CIP are limited to facilities owned and operated by the Town, it is suggested that the School District, Okanogan County, Forest Service, MVSTA and other partners review this plan and consider adopting all or portions of it to establish eligibility for grant funding from the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. Presumably, the District, County or other partners would substitute the Action Priorities and CIP found in this plan with ones that address the capital improvement needs of facilities and properties that are under their care and ownership.

The implementation of this plan must be flexible to keep abreast of changes in community trends and demands. For this reason, the list of projects found in the Action Priorities and CIP will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as goals are met, funding opportunities arise, and needs change.

Action Priorities

The following Action Priorities were developed to address the demand and need for park and recreation improvements, based on input from the public, the Parks Committee, Planning Commission, and Town Council. Projects are listed in priority order by park or type of recreational amenity.

Table 7.1 - Action Priorities

Location	Project Description
Mack Lloyd Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue maintenance and upkeep • Continue landscaping and tree replacement program • Improve/develop boat launch area by the Barn
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete land acquisition & site planning • Phase 1 - site prep, define rink area, construct restrooms & maintenance building • Phase 2 - construct rink with refrigeration and/or roof, develop trailhead parking, add landscaping
Heckendorn Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase and place benches, tables, garbage receptacles • Landscape property • Install horseshoe pits
Summerset Hills Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain as open space until demand arises for neighborhood park
Cottonwood Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore potential for soccer & other sports field development • Site planning and field development
McLean Street River Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare plans for site development • Develop river access site
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct Susie Stephens Trail and Bridge • Complete planning, design & construct Riverwalk • Work with other jurisdictions and organizations to extend trails to school and Pearygin State Park
Whitewater Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore feasibility & environmental impacts of a whitewater park

Financial Considerations

Park maintenance, operations and improvements are financed through the Town's Current Expense Fund. Except where there is a special revenue source such as grants or donations, park improvements draw from the same pool of tax revenue as the Town's administration, Marshal's office, and fire department. Each year, the Town allots money from the Current Expense fund to operate and maintain the existing park facilities. Generally, park improvements are considered as money is available, but due to the size of the Town's budget, often only a few thousand dollars can be spared. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 below summarize Maintenance and Operations expenses and

specific project expenditures. Grants are not included, since the purpose is to show the Town's financial capability.

Table 7.1 – Parks Maintenance & Operations Expenditures

2002	2003	2004	2005
\$15,472	\$14,542	\$14,858	\$15,109

Table 7.1 – Parks Project Expenditures

2003	2004	2005	2006
Ice Rink Property Acquisition \$ 15,000	Tree Replacement \$760	Landscaping \$484	Heckendorn Park Improvements \$1,000
	Heckendorn Park Improvements \$451	Tennis Court Lighting \$1,500	Landscaping \$4,150
\$15,000	\$1,210	\$1,984	\$5,150

Six Year Capital Improvement Plan

The Six Year Capital Improvement Plan has been prepared with knowledge of the town's limited financial resources. A list of funding abbreviations used in the following CIP follows.

- IAC - Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation
- ALEA - Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
- WSDOT - State transportation funding
- SAFETEA - Federal transportation funding package
- Grants?- Unknown
- Donations - Donations of time, materials, equipment and money from the community
- Town - Town funds, staff time, equipment, materials
- Kiwanis - Donations of time, material and money from Winthrop Kiwanis

Table 7.3 Six Year Capital Improvement Plan 2006			
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	• Landscaping and tree replacement	\$500	Town, donation
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$500</i>	
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	• Complete land acquisition	\$200,000	Donation
	• Complete site & building plans	\$46,000	IAC, donation
	• Site preparation & utilities	\$125,000	IAC, donation
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$371,000</i>	
Heckendorn Park	• Irrigation and seeding	\$4,000	Kiwanis
	• Install picnic table and garbage cans	\$1,000	Town, donation
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>	
Trails	• Work with WSDOT on Bridge segment of Susie Stephens Trail	\$50,000	WSDOT
	• Seek funding for acquisition, design and construction	\$3,000	Town
	• Acquire easements/rights-of-way	\$444,000	IAC, donation
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$497,000</i>	
2006 TOTAL		\$873,500	

Table 7.4 Six Year Capital Improvement Plan 2007			
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	• Landscaping & tree replacement	\$500	Town, donation
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$500</i>	
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	• Construct restrooms & equipment storage shed	\$116,000	IAC, donation
	• Install rink lighting	\$15,000	IAC, donation
	• Stormwater system and landscaping	\$34,000	IAC, donation
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$165,000</i>	
Heckendorn Park	• Landscaping	\$1,000	Town, donation
	• Horseshoe pits	\$500	Kiwanis
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,500</i>	
Trails	• Work with WSDOT on Bridge segment of Susie Stephens Trail	\$50,000	WSDOT
	• Design & Permitting for Susie Stephens Trail	\$282,000	IAC, donation
	• Continue to explore Riverwalk feasibility	\$1,000	Town
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$333,000</i>	
2007 TOTAL		\$500,000	

Table 7.5 Six Year Capital Improvement Plan 2008			
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	• Do feasibility & permitting for boat launch	\$3,000	Town, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$3,000</i>	
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	• Seek Phase 2 funding	\$2,000	Town
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>	
Cottonwood Park	• Explore sport field feasibility	\$500	Town
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$500</i>	
Trails	• Construct Susie Stephens Trail & Bridge	\$2,000,000	WSDOT, IAC, Town, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$2,000,000</i>	
2008 TOTAL		\$2,005,500	

Table 7.6 Six Year Capital Improvement Plan 2009			
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	• Design & construct boat launch improvements	\$25,000	ALEA, Grants
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>	
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	• Develop Trailhead & Rink parking	\$50,000	IAC, donation
	• Landscaping	\$25,000	
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$75,000</i>	
Cottonwood Park	• Site planning for soccer & ball fields	\$1,000	Town, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>	
Trails	• Seek funding for Riverwalk design & construction	\$2,000	Town, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>	
2009 TOTAL		\$103,000	

Table 7.7 Six Year Capital Improvement Plan 2010			
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	• Nothing planned		
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	• Ice Rink surfacing	\$30,000	IAC, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$30,000</i>	
Cottonwood Park	• Seek funding for improvements	\$1,000	Town
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>	
Trails	• Riverwalk – Phase 1 design & construction	\$500,000	Grants, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>	
McLean Street River Access	• Survey & evaluate site for river access	\$2,000	Town
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>	
2010 TOTAL		\$533,000	

Table 7.8 Six Year Capital Improvement Plan 2011			
Park	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Mack Lloyd Memorial Park	• Nothing planned		
Ice Rink & Trailhead Park	• Ice Rink roof & refrigeration	\$1,000,000	IAC, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,000,000</i>	
Cottonwood Park	• Seek funding for improvements	\$1,000	Town
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$1,000</i>	
Trails	• Riverwalk – Phase 2 design & construction	\$500,000	Grants, donations
	<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$500,000</i>	
2011 TOTAL		\$1,501,000	

It should be obvious that the Town is and will be unable to fund many of the improvements included in the Six Year CIP without some special circumstances. The plan assumes that most of the projects will be heavily dependent on local support in the form of donated time, materials, equipment and money. Larger projects such as the Ice Rink, Susie Stephens Trail and Riverwalk, will also rely on grant funds from a variety of sources.

Since it is vital that the Town not develop more parks than can be maintained, it is crucial that the annual review of the CIP include an analysis of current and projected M&O costs and projected revenues. When potential shortfall is identified or anticipated funding is not received, projects in the CIP should be moved ahead to the next year or farther into the future if warranted.

To address financial concerns, the following summary of potential sources of funding for both construction and maintenance has been included. The funding discussion also explores opportunities for cooperative agreements between the Town and other partners.

Funding Sources

The Six Year CIP could not be implemented if the Town had to rely exclusively on the current expense fund. This section describes potential funding sources, paying special attention to those sources listed on the far right column of the Six Year Capital Improvement Program.

Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) - Created by the Washington Legislature in the 1970s, the IAC provides money to state and local agencies, generally requiring a 50% match from grant applicants. IAC funds can be used to acquire property, develop new facilities, or rehabilitate old ones. To establish eligibility, applicants must have an adopted Park and Recreation Plan that documents the process used to identify the community's recreational priorities.

Debt Financing - Debt financing instruments such as general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, and councilmanic bonds can be used to fund recreational improvements. However, they are more typically used for water, sewer, and street improvements. General obligation bonds require voter approval. They also cannot be used for maintenance and operation.

Special Levies - Special levies are often proposed by taxing districts such as a Park and Recreation District. They must be voter approved and can be issued

for operation and maintenance (but only for a one year period). Other types of levies may or may not require voter approval, depending on limits imposed by state statute.

Donations - Many of the projects in the CIP list donations as a funding source. Increasing reliance on donated time and material may be the result of today's fiscal austerity. On the other hand, Winthrop has always seen the many benefits of working together to achieve a goal, even if they involve personal financial sacrifices.

Gift catalogs are an excellent way to fund small items such as furniture, flooring, picnic tables and other physical objects on which appreciation for the benefactors can be expressed. Donations can come from business interests as well as individuals.

Related to donations, volunteers are an important source of funding that most park systems would have trouble operating without.

User Fees - Although rarely significant enough to fund capital projects, user fees are often used to help cover operation and maintenance costs. Care must be taken, however, to make sure increases in user fees do not unintentionally deny Winthrop residents the ability to participate. Certainly, user fees will be a significant issue when the new recreation center is completed.

Cooperative or Joint Use Agreements - Agreements are more a way to reduce expenses than a source of funds. Three obvious parties should consider increasing the use of cooperative/joint use agreements: the Town, U.S. Forest Service, and Methow Valley School District.

Many communities have found that one agency is not able to take on a commitment like a new recreation center or athletic field alone. In many cases, interlocal agreements have been established between neighboring communities, school districts, and other special districts to lay the ground work for cooperative use, staffing, and maintenance.

Formation of a Park and Recreation District - From a statutory standpoint, the Park and Recreation District is authorized to enter into a variety of activities. Examples include: acquire and dispose of property, contract with any local government or private agency for the conduct of park and recreation programs, and operate jointly with other governmental units any facilities or property including participation in property acquisition (RCW 36.69.130).

In a similar manner, the Town and the School District are provided the ability to enter into agreements that serve legitimate public purposes, although the City cannot "give" public funds to an entity without a contract specifying what services are being provided by the entity. Doing so would be a violation of the state's constitution (Article 8, Section 7).

In most cases, interlocal agreements are set up to save public funds by avoiding duplicative efforts and the construction of duplicative facilities. The Town, Park and Rec. District, and School District could begin exploring opportunities to establish additional or expanded interlocal agreements by considering the questions below.

- Currently, who is responsible for taking care of which facilities?
- Currently, who is using what facilities?
- Who is most capable of taking care of the various existing facilities, both from a practical and financial standpoint?
- What percentage of park users live outside Town limits, but within School District/Park District boundaries? What, if anything, might cause this percentage to go up or down in the future?
- What agreements are currently in place? How could they be improved?
- Would establishing long term leases or even transferring title to property or portions of property be in the interest of the parties involved?

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) -In 1983, the Town began collecting a one-quarter of one percent Real Estate Excise Tax. This is above and beyond the real estate tax collected by the State of Washington. The tax is imposed each time real property changes hands within the Town. After Okanogan County retains a small amount for administration, the Town is provided with the funds resulting from the collection of this tax on a monthly basis. For obvious reasons, the amount received by the Town is proportional to level of real estate activity in the area.

Proceeds from the Real Estate Excise Tax can be used for many things. RCW 35.43.040 as well as the Chapter 3.20 of the Winthrop Municipal Code state that the tax can be used for "local capital improvements". The state statute gives some examples, focusing on improvements that can also be funded through a Local Improvement District (LID) :

- streets
- parks
- sewers

- water mains
- swimming pools
- gymnasiums

The REET cannot be used for items such as fire engines and computers. Projects must be things than can be done to or on a parcel of property. Arguably, the REET also cannot be used for the repair and rehabilitation of existing facilities or the acquisition of park land, unless the Town finds itself planning under the Growth Management Act at some point in the future.

Lodging Excise Tax - Also called the Hotel/Motel Tax, the Lodging Excise Tax is a 2% charge applied at the time hotel rooms, trailer sites, and other accommodations are furnished to visitors. Compared to the REET (above), the purposes for which this tax can be used are severely limited. The funds are typically used for promotion of the area in various publications. Particularly in more populated areas where larger amounts are generated, the tax is also used for the construction of convention centers, stadiums, and performing art centers. It is thought that "performing arts centers" can be interpreted broadly to mean theaters, stages, and other facilities for dance drama, and music.

Current Expense Fund - Use of the general fund for park improvements is perfectly appropriate, subject to the approval of the Town Council. It is hoped that this plan will be a useful tool that can be used to guide general fund decision regarding park improvements.

It goes without saying that the Town has many obligations to fill, many of them mandated by either state or federal agencies. The fact that park improvements are not mandated may help explain why they tend to get the smallest piece of the budget pie.

Still, implementation of this plan will likely require the Town to consider using the Current Expense Fund to pay for lower cost improvements and to help meet match requirements of state funding agencies.

Appendix A - Resolution Adopting Park Plan

Appendix B - Maps

Appendix C - Parks and Recreation Survey

Appendix D - Park and Recreation Inventory

IAC Public Lands Inventory

Managing Agency: Town of Winthrop

1. Site Name		Mack Lloyd Park	Heckendorn Park	Ice Rink/Trailhead	Cottonwood
2. Site Location	A. City/Town	Winthrop	Winthrop	Winthrop	Winthrop
	B. County	Okanogan	Okanogan	Okanogan	Okanogan
	C. Section	2	2	2	2
	D. Township	34	34	34	34
	E. Range	21	21	21	21
3. Total Site Acreage		18	0.5	2.3	14
4. Athletic Fields	A. # Baseball/Softball	1			
	B. # Football/Soccer				
	C. # Open Play				
5. Outdoor Courts	A. # Tennis	2			
	B. # Basketball/Other	1	1/2		
6. Golf Courses	A. # Holes				
7. Swimming Pools	A. Outdoor				
	B. Indoor				
8. Day Use Facilities	A. # Picnic Tables	12			
	B. # Picnic Shelters	2			
9. Camping	A. Total # camp units	0			
	B. Units w/ hookups				
	C. Are any units for: Bike/Hike/Boat only?				
	D. Group Camping?				
10. Water Body Facilities	A. Water: River/Stream?	Yes, River	Yes, River	No	No
	Wetland/Marsh?	No	No	No	No
	Lake/Reservoir?	No	No	No	No
	Saltwater	No	No	No	No
	B. Water Body Name	Methow River	Methow River		
	C. Linear Ft. Shoreline	200	100		
	D. Linear Ft. Designated				
	E. # Boat Moorage Slips				
	F. # Boat Moorage Buoys				
	G. # Boat Launch Lanes				
	H. # Car/Boat Trailer Parking				
11. Does the site provide:	A. Restrooms?	Yes	No	No	No
	B. Fitness/Jogging Courses?	No	No	NO	No
	C. Playground Equipment?	Yes	Yes	No	No
	D. Handicapped Accessible?	Yes	?	not yet	No
	E. Trails?	Yes	No	not yet	No
	F. Predominately Open Space?	No	No	No	Yes

