City of Kelso
Park and Recreation
Comprehensive Plan

Adopted by
City of Kelso City Council
February 18, 2014
City of Kelso
Park and Recreation Plan

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MISSION STATEMENT
The Kelso Parks and Recreation Program strives to provide quality parks and diverse recreational opportunities for all of its citizens. It is the goal of all those people involved with Kelso Parks and Recreation to understand the service level expectations of its citizens and to provide those services that enhance the quality of life for the community in which we live.

KELSO PARK BOARD RESPONSIBILITY
It is the responsibility of the Kelso Park Board to act in an advisory capacity to the Kelso City Council in matters pertaining to the park and recreational needs and opportunities of the community. This includes short and long-term planning for facility acquisition and development and recommending policies for daily operation of the parks, such as approving various activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
During the years from 2008-2013 several wonderful improvements were made to Kelso Parks. Due in great measure to the magnanimous giving of civic-minded residents and businesses, the Parks and Recreation Department oversaw the construction of three major improvements to city-owned parks.

Tam O’Shanter Park, the city’s pre-eminent park facility since 1958, was further enhanced with the 2008 construction of the Parking Lot “A” expansion. This project was funded by lodging tax revenue at a cost of approximately $300,000.

Further enhancements were made with a $250,000 upgrade to the girl’s softball stadium. Heerensperger Girl’s Softball Complex was made possible by the generous donation of more than $150,000 by David Heerensperger and his wife Jill, with other contributions from family, friends, businesses, and volunteers. The 2010 girl’s softball complex consists of new fencing, dugouts, bleachers, and plaza entrance area.

The third major project was the long awaited Rotary Skate Park. This was funded jointly by a Recreation and Conservation Office grant of $150,000 and other City funds. It was completed in 2010 at a cost of $383,905.
The 2013-2014 planning effort demonstrates that Kelso currently meets or exceeds National Recreational and Park Association (NRPA) LOS guidelines for outdoor active park and recreation facilities in every category except Neighborhood Play Lot. The City needs four additional play lots to meet national standards.

When recommending Kelso’s LOS, staff began with a method based on NRPA population ratios, and then took the following steps prior to making the final determination:

♦ Interviewed park and recreation staff to ascertain information related to daily operations and previously identified needs;
♦ Interviewed school district facilities staff to complete the facilities and amenities inventory and understand shared facility agreements;
♦ Held a stakeholder meeting to include frequent users of the park and various service organizations the regularly volunteer and contribute to the City’s park facilities.
♦ Considered citizen comments received during the planning process, specifically those voiced in written survey responses, and submitted via e-mail from the survey available on the City’s website; and,

♦ Direction was taken from members of the Park Board, Planning Commission, and City Council.

This planning effort includes a Capital Facilities Plan that estimates the cost of facilities improvements and maintenance actions recommended by the Parks Lead. It is important to note that this department’s projects compete for limited capital funds, and so the success of improving the park system will continue to rely in great measure to the benevolence and efforts of Kelso citizens and the dedication of elected government officials, assigned committees, and staff. This plan incorporates by reference both the Cowlitz Regional Trails Plan and the Tam O’Shanter Master Park Plan. The Parks CIP is largely funded by anticipated acquisition of grant funds. Since the General Fund finances the parks, no separate reserves are set aside to finance future building repairs and upgrades.

In order to ensure the contents of this plan reflect the mission of the Kelso Park and Recreation Department as well as address the needs of Kelso residents, staff engaged in a three-month public participation effort. A major component of this effort was hosting targeted stakeholder meetings and the distribution of almost 5,000 surveys. The results of the survey provided quantitative and qualitative information that helped to confirm current assumptions of park use, reveal opportunities for improvement, and identify future projects.
City of Kelso
Parks and Recreation Facilities

1 - Tam O' Shanter Park
2 - Kelso-Longview Airport
3 - Catlin Hall
4 - Catlin Spray Park
5 - Rotary Park
6 - Manasco Park
7 - Kelso High School
8 - Huntington Middle School
9 - Coweeman Middle School
10 - Lads & Lassies Park
11 - Catlin Elementary School
12 - Barnes Elementary School
13 - Butler Acres Elementary School
14 - Wallace Elementary School
15 - Scot Hollows Park
16 - Kelso Commons
17 - Kiwanis Park
18 - Triangle Park
19 - Cowlitz River Overlook
20 - Peter Crawford Home Site
21 - Rhododendron Gardens
22 - Cowitz River Trail
23 - Coweeman River Trail
24 - Camilla Summers River Front Park
25 - Harts Lake Recreational Area
26 - Aldercrest Open Space
27 - Mill Street River Front Park
POPULATION ANALYSIS

The Kelso community can be described as a proud, open, friendly, and moderate income working community. The 2010 census indicated that the City of Kelso is slightly younger than the State of Washington as a whole with 26.3% of the population under the age of 18 compared to 23.5% statewide. 62% of Kelso citizens reside in family units with 29% having children under the age of 18. Most of the housing (59%) is in traditional single-family structures and the majority of Kelso’s housing is renter occupied.

While there has been a steady rate of growth for Cowlitz County since the 2010 census, the City of Kelso has experienced a slight increase in population from 11,925 to 11,940\(^1\) during that time. Based on Kelso’s historic rate of growth, city staff projects very little population growth and estimates that 12,157 people will reside within city limits in the year 2019, which is the time frame of this plan.

DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING AREA

Kelso is the county seat of Cowlitz County and is located in southwestern Washington where the Cowlitz and Coweeman rivers enter the Columbia. Kelso is located on Interstate 5 (I-5) approximately 48 miles north of Portland, 125 miles south of Seattle and 80 miles east of the Pacific Ocean. In the year 2012, there were 11,930 residents in Kelso and 103,300 people in Cowlitz County.

Kelso is very accessible, with I-5 passing north-south through the eastern portion of the city; SR4 going east-west through the center of the city; SR432 east-west through the southern part of the city; an Amtrak station located in the downtown core, and a regional airport in the south Kelso industrial area.

A council/manager form of government governs the city of Kelso. The city council consists of council members elected by four wards and an additional three serve at large. The city council selects the mayor and the mayor pro-tem.

\(^1\) The Office of Financial Management official estimate
CLASSIFICATION OF ACTIVE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The most commonly used measurement of recreational opportunities is to classify parks by:

- The SIZE of park.
- The CHARACTERISTICS of the park.
- The GENERAL USE of the park.
- The USER SERVICE ACRES of the park.

These factors are all interrelated and largely determine the recreational capabilities of the park site. Standards for these four elements have been developed from current practices in park system development.

KELSO PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

CLASS I: REGIONAL PARK / SPECIAL USE FACILITY
CLASS II: NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
CLASS III: NEIGHBORHOOD PLAY LOT
CLASS IV: NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACES
CLASS V: TRAILS
CLASS VI: UNDEVELOPED OPEN SPACES

These types of facilities are classified and discussed separately, however it should be noted that they will occasionally occur in combinations and overlap services. For instance, the neighborhood playground facilities will often be found within a neighborhood park. These facilities must then be recognized as not only serving as part of the neighborhood park, but also as forming user service areas for a neighborhood play lot. Hence, a larger regional park will also be shown as serving the city on a neighborhood level as a playground or passive recreation area. Additionally, the importance of Kelso School District properties when fulfilling recreational demands cannot be overemphasized, so the inventory of city recreational facilities includes school district properties, classified appropriately to correspond with the equivalent city managed park.
A brief summary of each recreation class is presented which includes a description of the class and a list of existing facilities that are in each class. An in-depth description and accompanying map is provided for each city managed facility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility / Amenity Types</th>
<th>City Managed</th>
<th>School District Managed</th>
<th>Total Facilities / Amenities</th>
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<tr>
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<td>5.9 miles</td>
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<td>5.9 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLASS I: REGIONAL PARK / SPECIAL USE FACILITY

The size of the facilities depend upon the focus of the park and the requirements of that activity(s).

Regional Parks and Facilities are special recreational areas that are unique, serve residents of the entire city and may attract visitors from the surrounding region. The range of amenities provided appeal to diverse user groups and includes areas for intense recreational activities, such as sports complexes, swimming pools, and trail heads, while also providing more moderate amenities to serve the immediate neighborhood.

CLASS I: CITY MANAGED FACILITIES

Tam O’Shanter Park
This multi-seasonal park is located south of Kelso High School off of Kelso Drive. This 38-acre multi-use community park consists of the following:

- Rister Stadium (baseball),
- concession areas, 5 baseball fields (2 lighted), 3 softball fields, 2 soccer fields, basketball court, playground, access to regional trail system, 30 picnic areas (18 covered), 6 restrooms, and 400 parking spaces.

Southwest Washington Regional Airport
The airport is located at 2215 Parrott Way, within the industrial section of the city. While the focus of airport management is to fulfill transportation and business-related demands, there is a recreational component to the facility that includes small craft planes for site seeing and flying of ultralight recreational planes.

Catlin Hall
Catlin Hall is located next to Catlin Pool at 106 North 8th (West Kelso). This multi-purpose facility that consists of an assembly room, a kitchen facility and ADA restrooms. The cities of Kelso and Longview entered into an interlocal agreement in 1995 to jointly utilize Catlin Hall. Cooperative recreation programs are available for residents for both communities. This agreement includes a division of responsibilities and the sharing of the upkeep costs. The facility is used year around.

CLASS I: EQUIVALENT SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES

Gaither Swimming Pool
The pool is located 1904 Allen St., within Kelso High School, and includes public swimming, special programming, and exercise classes.
Tam O'Shanter Park

**Location**
Tam O'Shanter Dr. (off Kelso Dr., south of Allen St.)

**Acreage**
38

**Park Type**
CLASS I - Regional Park / Special Use Facility

**Service Area**
The city and immediate region

**Population Served**
50,000 - 250,000 depending on facility and/or event

**Description**
Tam O'Shanter Park is the most significant park facility in the city system. Because of its size, central location, varied natural features and diverse recreational opportunities, Tam O'Shanter Park attracts large numbers of local and regional park users. Opened in 1958, this park is located directly south of Kelso High School, adjoining the Coweeman River and is open year around.

Tam O'Shanter has the new Heerensperger Girls' Softball Complex, two additional softball fields, Rister Stadium Babe Ruth baseball field, five Bambino baseball fields (two lighted), a multipurpose field for soccer, two horseshoe pits, ten rest rooms, and a basketball court with six hoops. There is a large playground to the south of the fields for use by younger children and large covered shelter that may be rented.

The Boxing Club is open two nights per week from September through March. Contact Steve Chase at (360) 636-2568 for more information.

Hikers enjoy a four mile trail on the dike along the Coweeman River that begins at the 2500 block of Allen Street, continues through Tam O'Shanter Park, and ends at Talley Way.

In addition, Tam O'Shanter Park is home to the city park administration and maintenance staff and facilities.

The annual Highlander Festival, held the 2nd full weekend in September, draws approximately 4,000 people from the PNW and Canada.
Amenities
- Rister Stadium (baseball);
- Heerensperger girls' softball complex;
- Concession areas;
- 5 Baseball fields;
- 2 Additional softball fields;
- 2 Soccer fields;
- Basketball court;
- Playground;
- Access to 4 mile trail system;
- 30 Picnic areas (18 covered);
- 6 Restrooms;
- 400 Parking Spaces

Management Issues and Recommendations
- Additional 600 - 1,200 stadium seats;
- Continue repaving and improving parking areas;
- Improve site drainage;
- Improve the main gate area;
Many of the aircraft based at the Kelso - Longview Airport participate in recreational activities such as site seeing. Ultralight planes are purely for recreational purposes.

The Experimental Aircraft Association, whose purpose is to educate, train, and promote aviation, leases a clubhouse and 3 hangers to house Local Chapter 1111.
Description

Catlin Hall is a Senior Center facility located next to Catlin Spray Park at 106 8th Ave NW. The hall includes an assembly room, a kitchen facility and ADA accessible restrooms.

Kelso has entered into an agreement in 2008 to utilize Catlin Hall. Cooperative programs are available for residents of both Kelso and Longview. This agreement includes a division of responsibilities and the sharing of the upkeep costs. The facility is used year around.

Open daily Mon. - Fri. 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Square Dancing:
  Wed. 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm lessons
  Fri. 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm
  Sat. 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Bridge: Thurs. 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Kiwanis: Thurs. at noon

AARP meets the 2nd Sat. 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Democratic Women meet on the 4th Wed. at 11:30 am
CLASS II: NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Neighborhood parks are characterized by playground equipment, athletic fields, tennis courts, multi-use courts, picnic areas, community center, restrooms, parking lots, and trails.

Neighborhood parks are generally used by people of all ages for non-supervised or organized recreational activities for residents within ½ to 1 mile radius.

CLASS II: CITY MANAGED FACILITIES

Catlin Spray Park _________________

This facility is located on the corner of Cowlitz Way and Main Street and includes a water spray play area, benches, picnic tables, and restrooms. There are plans to obtain shade covers for 3 or 4 of the tables.

The spray park was dedicated in 2006.

Rotary Park ______________________

This four-acre city park is located to the east of Interstate 5 off of Burcham Street. The park consists of a skate park, playground, covered picnic area, restroom facilities, and open field space. This park’s main activity occurs in the spring, summer, and fall months.

Manasco Park _____________________

There are five soccer fields and two restrooms at Manasco Park, which is located at the 1800 Block of River Road S.

CLASS II: EQUIVALENT SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES

Kelso High School
1904 Allen Street

Football field, baseball field, 2 softball fields, 3 soccer fields, and 8 tennis courts.

Huntington Middle School
500 Redpath Street

Football field and track.

Coweeman Middle School
2000 Allen Street

Tennis courts, track, and a football field.
Description
The Catlin Rotary Spray Park was constructed in 2005 and the dedication for the Park was in 2006. The Spray Park was constructed on the site that used to house the Catlin Swimming Pool. The Spray Park is open from Memorial Week End through Labor Day weekend in September, weather permitting.

Amenities include the water spray play area, benches, and covered picnic tables.

Management Issues and Recommendations
- Pursue funds for additional trees and covered picnic area;
- Expand park to Phase II
Rotary Park

Location: Southeast Corner of Minor Rd. & Burcham St.
Acreage: 3.5
Park Type: CLASS II - Neighborhood Park
Service Area: 1/2 Mile
Population Served:
- 2,600 Persons for Neighborhood Park amenities
- 48,573 Persons for the skate park (Kelso and Longview)

Description
Rotary Park has been used since 1943. It has playground equipment, covered shelter and picnic tables. The park is used primarily in the spring, summer and fall months.

In 2010 Kelso completed the long awaited skate park. This project was funded in part by RCO $150,000 grant.

Management Issues and Recommendations
- Make the access ADA compliant;

Rotary Park Service Area
(Including Surrounding Land Uses)
Manasco Park

Location | 1800 Block of River Rd. S.
Acreage | 1.9
Park Type | CLASS II - Neighborhood Park
Service Area | 1/2 Mile *
Population Served | 882

* In addition to the neighborhood population, the park serves formal soccer leagues.

Description
Manasco Park has five soccer fields, two bathrooms and storage.

Management Issues and Recommendations
- Increase and upgrade parking

Manasco Park Service Area (1/2 Mile)
(including surrounding land uses)
CLASS III: NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYLOTS

Neighborhood playlots are typically one acre or less. Amenities include playground equipment, paved multi-use courts, small open areas for group games and informal play, benches and landscaping.

Playlots provide active recreation area for preschool and lower elementary age children during school hours, weekends and summertime.

The service area is typically 1/4 mile or less (3-4 blocks) from the park perimeter.

CLASS III: CITY MANAGED FACILITIES

Lads & Lassies Park ________________
Located at the corner of 8th and Elm Street
This completely fenced facility has a playground, park benches, trash receptacles, picnic table and a bike rack. This park is used year around by the surrounding community.

CLASS III: EQUIVALENT SCHOOL DISTRICT MANAGED

Catlin Elementary ________________
404 Long Street
The facility consists of a covered play area, open fields, basketball courts, and playground equipment.

Barnes Elementary ________________
401 Barnes Street
The school has 2 playground areas, open field for play and soccer fields.

Butler Acres Elementary ___________
1609 Burcham Street
The area is open to the public for play during daylight hours. The facility consists of a covered play area, playground, basketball courts, track, and benches.

Wallace Elementary _______________
410 Elm Street
The facility is open to the public during daylight hours and consists of playground equipment, basketball courts, covered area, and tetherball. The play area is completely fenced.
Approximately 4,356 people (37% of the city population) live within a quarter mile of a park with playground equipment. Staff has identified the need for four additional well-placed playlot parks.
CLASS IV: NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACE

Neighborhood Open Spaces are typically one acre or less and are simple open areas for lounging, perhaps including picnic tables, benches, a memorial sign, and landscaping. These facilities are passive recreation areas for neighborhood residents or workers within a 1/4 mile or less (3-4 blocks) from the park perimeter.

City Managed Facilities

Scot Hollow Park

This three-quarter acre open space is located at the intersection of 19th and Bates St. The facility consists of a picnic table, park bench, and an open field for play. This park is very aesthetic and is used mainly in the spring, summer, and fall months for relaxation and play.

Kelso Commons

This quarter of an acre mini-park is located in the business district on the corner of Pacific Avenue and Oak Street. The facility, completed in 1975, consists of picnic tables, park benches, trash receptacles, media building, drinking fountain, and a memorial structure. This mini-park is intended for day use by people visiting the business district.

Kiwanis Park

This one third acre site is located at 121 Allen Street just west of the interstate highway. The bench and landscape area provide a quaint respite for pedestrians and travelers.

Triangle Park

Triangle Park is a tiny (0.09-acre) lot located at the corner of Cowlitz Way West and West Main Street where the city maintains a welcome sign and some landscaping.

Cowlitz River Overlook

This area is located along the Kelso Dike Trail across the railroad tracks at the foot of Allen Street and Pacific. The facility consists of park benches, picnic tables, and small fenced area of open space looking over the river. This area is used as a resting point along the trail.
**Peter Crawford Home Site**

The city maintains a one-acre strip of land along the east bank of the Cowlitz River near the intersection of Crawford Street and 1st Avenue where the city’s founder, Peter Crawford, once lived. The site consists of a sign that explains the history of Peter Crawford and the site.

**Rhododendron Gardens**

This quarter of an acre at Pacific Avenue North and Harris Street is strictly for passive purposes. There is no development; the area consists of a rhododendron garden.

**CLASS V: TRAILS**

Kelso’s urban trail system is a combination of on and off-road trails that provides a network of recreation, transportation, and wildlife habitat viewing corridors around the city. The trails are located and designed to provide neighborhood links to commercial areas, schools, parks, employment centers, wildlife habitat areas, and promote green space.

Kelso’s trail system is linked to the larger Cowlitz County regional trail system.

### Table 2
**Existing Trail System**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Trails</th>
<th>Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cowlitz River Trail System</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coweeman River Trail System</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burcham Street Stairs</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen St. to 7th Avenue North Stairs</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cowlitz River Trail System**

This trail follows the Cowlitz River dike from Cowlitz Gardens to Mill Street. The trail is paved and lighted.

**Coweeman River Trail System**

This trail follows the Coweeman River dike from Talley Way to Tam O’Shanter Park ending at Allen Street and Corduroy Road. The trail is gravel with a series of park benches.
Scot Hollow Park

**Location**
SE Corner of 19th Ave. N. and Bates Rd.

**Acreage**
0.75

**Park Type**
CLASS IV - Neighborhood Open Space

**Service Area**
1/4 Mile

**Population Served**
570

**Description**

This three-quarter acre community park is located at the intersection of 19th and Bates St. The facility consists of a picnic table, park bench, and an open field for play. This park is very aesthetic and is used mainly in the spring, summer and fall months for relaxation and play.
Neighborhood Open Spaces are simple open areas for lounging, perhaps including picnic tables, benches, a memorial sign and landscaping.
There are approximately 5.9 miles of trails within the City of Kelso.
CLASS VI: UNDEVELOPED OPEN SPACE

Kelso is blessed to have a rich natural environment. Rivers, forests, and prairies provide sanctuary in an urban environment. Undeveloped open spaces may be slated for future park development or may remain open green space corridors that provide visual and psychological relief from man-made development.

Camilla Summers River Front Park

This undeveloped parkland is five acres in size and is located on the Cowlitz River between the Allen Street Bridge and the old water treatment plant. Within this five-acre area are three privately owned parcels, totaling approximately seven tenths of an acre.

Harts Lake Recreational Area

This 248-acre parcel of land was donated by the Department of Natural Resources and is located adjacent to the Aldercrest landslide area along the Coweeman River east of Interstate-5. The parcel consists of timber, Coweeman river wetlands, and wildlife habitat. The Coweeman River flows through the northern portion of the site, creating a seasonal lake during wintertime. There is no public access to the lake at this time, other than from the Coweeman River.

Aldercrest Open Space

A 10-acre site used for open space located east of the intersection of Banyon Drive and Grimm Road. The site has limited access. Interstate-5 acts as a man-made access barrier to the west.
Camilla Summers Open Space is a five acre undeveloped parkland located on the Cowlitz River between the Allen St. bridge and the old water treatment plant. The Cowlitz River trail runs north to south along the eastern limits of the property.

Recreational opportunities include enhancing the trail and providing public access to the shoreline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>North of the Allen St. bridge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acreage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park Type</td>
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