



Lacey City Council Worksession Agenda

Refer to the bottom of the agenda for meeting information.

Tuesday, March 25, 2025

6:00 PM

Council Chambers and Online

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Land Acknowledgement

We, the City of Lacey, are on the ancestral land of the Tribal People of the Treaty of Medicine Creek, including the Nisqually Indian Tribe and Squaxin Island Tribe. We acknowledge and remember those Tribal People not recognized today who were absorbed or relocated into other tribes for survival. We recognize the ancestors and their descendants who are still here. We recognize and respect the Tribal People of the Treaty of Medicine Creek as the traditional stewards of this land since time immemorial and their role today in taking care of these lands in perpetuity. We recognize and have the responsibility to call attention to the histories of dispossession, forced removal, and abridged treaty rights that allowed our nation, state, and city to develop as they have today. We recommend that community members read the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854.

4. Approval of the Agenda

5. Public Comment

Refer to the bottom of the agenda for instructions on how to provide public comment.

6. Agenda Items

A. Public Works Construction Update

D'Andra Buchanan, Engineering Construction Manager
Ashley Smith, Engineering Design Manager

B. Economic Investment Strategy

Vanessa Dolbee, Community and Economic Development Director
Sarah Schelling, Planning and Economic Development Manager
Wesley Nguyen, Economic Development Coordinator

C. Metropolitan Park District

Rick Walk, City Manager

7. Adjourn

Meeting Information:

Attendance (Remote or In-Person)

The public may attend the meeting in-person, or you may view or listen to the meeting using one of the following platforms:

In-Person: Council Chambers at Lacey City Hall
420 College Street SE, Lacey, WA 98503

Zoom: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GXlvBOxtTzSvmgSSekAn4Q

Website: <https://cityoflacey.org/government/public-meetings/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cityoflacey>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LaPU5tD4rNE>

Phone: (888) 788-0099 or (877) 853-5247 (Webinar ID 829 5980 4265)

Verbal Public Comment

Each speaker is limited to three minutes. Comments are welcome on matters connected to City business or specific agenda items.

Prior to starting your comments, please provide your:

- a. Name
- b. City of residence or connection to the City
- c. Topic or subject matter of your comments

Those wishing to provide verbal public comment may do so in-person or by Zoom:

In-Person: Use the sign-up sheet located in the Council Chambers.

Zoom: Preregister using the following Zoom link no later than two hours prior to the meeting:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GXlvBOxtTzSvmgSSekAn4Q

Instructions and access details will be provided once registration is complete.

Written Public Comment

Public comments may also be submitted by email to PublicComment@cityoflacey.org. The commenting period will close two hours before the meeting time.

Written comments will be provided to the City Council electronically prior to the meeting.

Comments will not be addressed during the Council meeting; however, comments received will be added to the official record.



STAFF REPORT

Council Worksession

March 25, 2025

Subject: Lacey Metropolitan Park District Ballot Measure Resolution
To: Lacey City Council
Prepared by: Rick Walk
Department Director: Jen Burbidge, Parks, Culture, & Recreation Director *JB*
City Manager Review: Rick Walk *RW*

Purpose: Review Only - Future Action to be Requested

Brief: After receiving a recommendation from the 2024 Parks Funding Improvement Workgroup and a subsequent discussion by the City Council, Council directed staff to prepare a draft resolution to submit a proposition to the voters of Lacey regarding the creation of a metropolitan parks district (MPD).

A draft resolution will be presented to Council at the March 25, 2025 worksession for Council review and discussion. Based on Council, direction staff will make revisions deemed necessary and schedule the resolution for a future council meeting for City Council Action. The draft resolution proposes the following:

- The MPD be created and be called "Lacey Metropolitan Park District"
- The boundaries of the MPD be the same as the Lacey Corporate Limits
- The Lacey City Council serves as the ex officio board of parks commissioners.
- Impose a property tax in an amount up to \$.45 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.
- Upon approval, the district may use proceeds of such property tax for the purpose of paying or financing the cost of district projects and operations.

Alternatives: Council will review draft Resolution language and discuss alternatives

Prior Review:

City Council Worksession – April 23, 2024

City Council Worksession – May 28, 2024

City Council Meeting – June 4, 2024

Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup – August 19 through December 9, 2024

Prior Review (cont.):

City Council Meeting – December 17, 2024

City Council Worksession – January 14, 2025

City Council Retreat – January 30 & 31, 2025

City Council Meeting – March 4, 2025

Advisory Board Recommendation(s):

- See attached PIFW Recommendation

Fiscal Impact:

Budgeted Item: Yes

Amount: \$110,500 (Thurston County Auditor estimated based on one issue on ballot)

Funding Source: 001-0401-511.58.18

Attachments:

1. Draft Resolution
2. PIFW Recommendation
3. 03-04-2025 Worksession Staff Report
Lacey Metropolitan Park District

Policy or Legal Alignment:

1. RCW 35.61 Metropolitan Parks District

RESOLUTION No. 11**

CITY OF LACEY

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LACEY PROVIDING FOR THE SUBMISSION OF A PROPOSITION TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE CITY OF LACEY AT A GENERAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 5, 2025, FOR THE APPROVAL OR REJECTION OF THE CREATION OF A METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 35.61 RCW.

WHEREAS, the City currently acquires, operates, and maintains its parks, natural spaces, trails, recreational facilities, and programs substantially using general fund dollars; and

WHEREAS, the provision of parks, natural spaces, trails, recreational facilities and programs is an important function of city government and increases the quality of life within a city; and

WHEREAS, City staff, the Parks, Culture & Recreation Board (Parks Board), and a special Parks Outreach Team engaged in an extensive two-year public outreach and engagement process, which efforts resulted in establishing community priorities for parks improvements as identified in the Parks, Culture, and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and associated Parks Capital Improvement Program (PCIP); and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2024, the City Council passed Resolution No. 1148 creating a temporary ad-hoc Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup (Workgroup), the purpose of which was to review parks expansion and replacement projects identified in the six-year PCIP, analyze all available funding options, and recommend to the Lacey City Council a funding package identifying funding sources, including recommended amounts, to implement a prioritized list of parks capital projects; and

WHEREAS, the Lacey City Council selected, and on August 6, 2024 appointed 15 community members with a wide range of voices and perspectives to serve on the Workgroup; and

WHEREAS, in December of 2024 the Workgroup provided a recommendation to the Lacey City Council recommending the creation of a metropolitan park district (MPD) as authorized by Chapter 35.61 RCW; and

WHEREAS, RCW 35.61.020 authorizes cities to adopt a resolution submitting a ballot proposition to create a metropolitan park district to the voters of the area proposed to be included in the district at any general election, or at any special election which may be called for that purpose; and

WHEREAS, RCW 35.61.030 provides that the resolution shall choose a name for the MPD;
and

WHEREAS, RCW 35.61.050 provides that the resolution shall designate the composition of the board of the metropolitan park commissioners and that the ballot proposition shall clearly describe the designated composition of the board; and

WHEREAS, RCW 35.61.050 provides that when the boundaries of an MPD will be the same as a city's corporate limits, the city council may serve as the ex officio board of parks commissioners; and

WHEREAS, an established MPD has the authority to levy a maximum of \$.75 per \$1,000 assessed property value to provide desired parks and recreation services in the City of Lacey; and

WHEREAS, the City has identified projects to meet specific goals and accomplish key community themes articulated in the Parks, Culture and Recreation Comprehensive Plan by only levying a maximum of \$.45 per \$1,000 assessed property value; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to utilize these funds to expand maintenance, create new facilities, and operate those facilities, the intent being to use these funds to supplement, not supplant, existing parks and recreation funds; and

WHEREAS, in order to minimize the impact of cuts in services to citizens using Lacey parks and recreation facilities and programs, and in order to maximize the ability of the City to acquire and construct additional parks and recreational facilities in the future, the Lacey City Council desires to place a proposition on the ballot during the General Election on August 5, 2025, which calls for the creation of an MPD pursuant to Chapter 35.61 RCW;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LACEY, WASHINGTON, as follows:

Section 1. Proposed Metropolitan Park District. The Lacey City Council proposes that a metropolitan park district be created, that the district be called, "Lacey Metropolitan Park District," that its boundaries be the same as the Lacey corporate limits, and that the Lacey City Council serves as the ex officio board of parks commissioners. While state law authorizes an established metropolitan park district to levy a maximum of \$.75 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, the Lacey Metropolitan Park District would only impose a property tax in an amount up to \$.45 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Upon approval of the voters of the proposition hereinafter set forth, the district may use proceeds of such property tax for the purpose of paying or financing the costs of district projects and operations.

Section 2. Call for Election. Pursuant to RCW 35.61.020, the Lacey City Council hereby requests that the Thurston County Auditor include in the local voters' pamphlet produced as part of the August 5, 2025 General Election, in the manner provided by law, for the purpose of submitting to

the qualified voters of the City of Lacey, Washington, Proposition No. 1, asking whether a metropolitan park district should be created and governed.

Section 3. Auditor to Administer Election. The Thurston County Auditor, as ex officio supervisor of elections in Thurston County, Washington, is hereby requested to assume jurisdiction of and to call and conduct such election to be held within the City on August 5, 2025, and to submit to the qualified electors of the City the proposition hereinafter set forth. The Thurston County Auditor is authorized to make corrections to the Ballot Title necessary to comply with Washington State Law.

Section 4. Official Ballot Proposition. The City Clerk is hereby directed, no later than 4:30 p.m. on May 2, 2025, to certify the following proposition, together with the required Resolution Cover Sheet to the Thurston County Auditor in substantially the following form, with such changes as may be approved by the City Attorney:

CITY OF LACEY
PROPOSITION NO 1.
FORMATION AND FUNDING OF
NEW LACEY METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT

City of Lacey Proposition No. 1 concerns formation of the Lacey Metropolitan Park District, a metropolitan park district.

This proposition would create the Lacey Metropolitan Park District to provide ongoing funding to acquire, maintain, operate, and improve parks, natural spaces, trails, recreational facilities, and programs; set district boundaries as the city's corporate limits; designate the Lacey City Council as ex officio board of parks commissioners with all powers set forth in Chapter 35.61 RCW; and authorize the park board to set the maximum general tax levy rate at an amount up to \$.45 per \$1,000 assessed valuation.

Shall the Lacey Metropolitan Park District be so created and governed?

() For the formation of the Lacey Metropolitan Park District, to be governed by the Lacey City Council as ex officio board of parks commissioners.

() Against the formation of a metropolitan park district.

Section 5. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this Resolution is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 6. Severability. The provisions of this Resolution are declared separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this Resolution or the invalidity of the application thereof to any person or circumstance, shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the Resolution, or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 7. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption and signature as provided by law.

PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LACEY, WASHINGTON,

this _____ day of _____, 2025.

CITY COUNCIL

By _____
Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to form:

City Clerk

City Attorney



2024

Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup

Recommendation

Prepared for:
Lacey City Council

Voting Members: Chair Evette Temple, Vice Chair Rachel Murata, Mark Brown, Cathy Cook, Jim Eychaner, Karen Ideker, Brooklyn McReynolds, Phillip Roybal, Cheri Wilkins

Non-Voting Members: Wendy Goodwin (Parks, Culture and Recreation Board), Jon Hegwood (Commission on Equity), Lauren Howard, Haley Ortega, Daphne Retzlaff (Planning Commission), Ruth Weigelt (Lodging Tax Advisory Committee)





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Executive Summary

The Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup (Workgroup) was formed by the Lacey City Council's enactment of Resolution No. 1148 then Resolution No. 1156 to review parks expansion and replacement projects identified in the six-year Parks Capital Improvement Program (PCIP), analyze all available funding options, and recommend to the Lacey City Council a funding package identifying funding sources, including recommended amounts, to implement a prioritized list of parks capital projects.

The Workgroup is comprised of fifteen community members—nine voting members and six non-voting members.

The Workgroup's charge highlights funding challenges in the Lacey Parks system as the City of Lacey balances the need for park improvements amidst aging infrastructure, increasing maintenance needs, and a growing population, thus pointing to a need for a dedicated and sustainable funding.

Throughout eight meetings and one tour of select Lacey parks, the Workgroup received several presentations from City of Lacey staff on various aspects and challenges of operating, maintaining, and developing a parks system; discussed the community's priorities and needs as identified in the Lacey Parks Culture and Recreation (LPCR) Comprehensive Plan; reviewed the projects on the PCIP; and analyzed various types of funding mechanisms that could meet the needs of the City in maintaining the Lacey Parks system.

The Workgroup arrived at the conclusion that establishing a Metropolitan Park District (MPD) would leverage a stable and predictable property tax levy for parks funding, and recommends Lacey City Council draft a ballot measure for voter approval.

The Workgroup also recommends staff continue to seek funding through a variety of sources such as reviewing existing parks reserves, pursuing sponsorships and grants, assessing program, vendor and rental fees, pursuing Washington State Legislature funding, and that City Council review Lodging Tax priorities.

The combination of an MPD and diversifying the City of Lacey's parks funding amongst various sources would provide the funding needed to complete the projects on the PCIP while providing flexibility for maintenance and operation needs of the parks system.

Further, the Workgroup established a prioritized ranking of the PCIP projects by considering top-requested amenities, maintenance needs, service gaps, staff resources to manage capital projects, and community priorities.

Methodology

As the City of Lacey considered parks, culture and recreation funding and the challenges and opportunities presented in the Lacey Parks, Culture and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, the Lacey City Council sought to establish a workgroup of diverse and collaborative community members to provide park funding strategy recommendations to the Lacey City Council.

The Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup (“Workgroup”) comprises fifteen diverse and collaborative community members, some of whom serve on other City of Lacey advisory boards, thus drawing expertise from those boards to serve the Workgroup. The Workgroup contains nine voting members and six non-voting members. While only voting members cast final votes on actionable items, all members participated in meaningful discussions and group activities to inform the Workgroup’s recommendation.

- Voting Members: Chair Evette Temple, Vice Chair Rachel Murata, Mark Brown, Cathy Cook, Jim Eychaner, Karen Ideker, Brooklyn McReynolds, Phillip Roybal, Cheri Wilkins
- Non-Voting Members: Wendy Goodwin (Parks, Culture and Recreation Board), Jon Hegwood (Commission on Equity), Lauren Howard, Haley Ortega, Daphne Retzlaff (Planning Commission), Ruth Weigelt (Lodging Tax Advisory Committee)

Workgroup Members held public meetings approximately twice monthly from August through December 2024 to fulfill their assigned purpose. The structure of each meeting often contained subject-matter expert presentations from City of Lacey staff (staff), discussion amongst Workgroup Members, polls, and breakout activities.

August 19, 2024 Meeting

This meeting provided a framework for the expectations of the Workgroup and a roadmap for future meetings.

Staff provided the following presentations to the Workgroup.

- Advisory board stipend program and demographic survey
- Open public meetings and public records training
- Advisory Board Handbook overview
- Parliamentary Procedures overview
- Draft Rules of Procedure

- Workgroup goals, deliverables, and an overview of the future meeting schedule and meeting themes

September 16, 2024 Meeting

The Workgroup elected presiding officers and adopted the Workgroup Rules of Procedure. The Workgroup took a survey, similar to previous surveys given to community members, to assess how the Workgroup's priorities initially align with community priorities. Staff provided the following presentations to the Workgroup.

- An overview of the 2023 Lacey Parks, Culture and Recreation Comprehensive Plan process and community engagement efforts which identified the community's top priorities as a public swimming pool; access to and preservation of outdoor open space and natural areas; spray parks, indoor recreation opportunities, expanded walking trails; and development of the sports fields the City of Lacey has planned.
- Maintenance and operations overview and challenges
- Introduction to the Parks Capital Improvement Program (PCIP)

September 30, 2024 Meeting

This meeting highlighted the challenges set forth for the Workgroup.

- Existing funding sources necessitate the identification of new sources of revenue
- Predictable and stable revenue sources are needed for new and existing facility maintenance and operation costs.
- The capacity for new revenue resources is limited, so prioritizing the PCIP will be challenging.

Staff reviewed potential new funding sources, including the challenges and benefits of each. Workgroup Members participated in a group activity to further consider funding solutions.

- Program, vendor, and rental fees
- Sponsorships
- Grants and donations
- City of Lacey's General Fund Revenue
- Lodging Tax
- Committed and assigned reserves within the City of Lacey's Governmental Funds
- Excess property tax levy: General Obligation Bonds
- New Public Facilities District
- Metropolitan Park District (MPD)
- Impact Fees
- Cultural Access Program

October 4, 2024 Parks Tour

Staff led Workgroup Members on a tour of the following select Lacey Parks associated with projects on the PCIP. This provided an opportunity for the Workgroup to see some of the park system's amenities and needs first-hand while connecting PCIP projects to the

community's priorities as identified in the LPCR Comprehensive Plan. A summary of each PCIP project and the associated costs can be found in *Appendix A*.

- Brooks Park
- Rainier Vista Community Park
- Wonderwood Park
- Wanschers Park
- Depot Park
- Homann Park
- Virgil S. Clarkson Senior Center
- Woodland Creek Community Park
- Meridian Neighborhood Park
- Greg Cuoio Community Park

October 14, 2024 Meeting

Staff provided an overview of the City of Lacey's capital projects, design process, and existing projects in the extensive City-wide queue. The Workgroup Members who attended the tour shared their insights/highlights. Staff provided a detailed review of all the projects on the PCIP, which included:

- Project descriptions and photos
- Capital costs and ongoing maintenance and operational costs
- Benefits to the community
- How the project meets community needs as identified in the Lacey Parks, Culture and Recreation (LPCR) Comprehensive Plan

The PCIP project overview demonstrated the challenge for the Workgroup of prioritizing projects since all projects would fill a significant community need.

October 28, 2024 Meeting

Workgroup members preliminarily ranked the PCIP in small groups then reported their top projects to the Workgroup. The activity allowed the Workgroup Members to collaborate and understand different perspectives, demonstrating that each group had different prioritization approaches. Discussion topics and considerations included:

- Why projects rank high or low
- Previous community input
- Consideration for new vs. replacement projects
- Overall project costs

November 4, 2024 Meeting

Staff presented additional information to connect the PCIP projects to the major themes in the LPCR Comprehensive Plan derived from public input.

- Aquatics & Indoor Recreation: Pool and Indoor Playground, Spray Park #1(Central Lacey), Spray Park #2 (Southwest Lacey), Spray Park #3 (Northeast Lacey), Spray Park #4 (Southeast Lacey)
- Indoor Recreation: Pool and Indoor Playground, Lacey Museum & Cultural Center
- Trails, access to open space and preservation of natural areas: Greg Cuoio Park Next Phase, Long Lake Park Development, Meridian Campus North Park Development, Wonderwood Park Trails Resurfacing
- Development of the sports fields the City of Lacey has planned: Meridian Park Sports Fields Development, Regional Athletic Complex (RAC) Infield Turf Replacements, RAC Soccer Netting
- Outdoor amenities favored by the public (disc golf, pickleball, skate park/pump track and playgrounds): Meridian Parks Potential Pickleball Courts, Skate Features and/or Pump Track; Rainier Vista Park Pickleball Courts & Outdoor Table Tennis, RAC Playground Replacement - Baseball Complex, RAC Playground Replacement - Large Central Playground, Rainier Vista Park Playground Replacement, Thornbury Park Playground Replacement, RAC Playground Replacement - Soccer Fields

Staff provided a review of all available funding mechanisms. The Workgroup assessed which options were viable, long-term, stable revenue sources for the top ten projects identified from the group's activity during their October 28th meeting. The revenue options selected by the Workgroup included an MPD funding mechanism; reassigning some of the committed reserves from the City of Lacey's Governmental Funds; and a recommendation to continue pursuing a breadth of additional funding mechanisms to diversify revenue sources, leveraging City funds where possible.

The Workgroup determined these options were not well-suited based on the Lacey Parks system's current needs:

- City of Lacey's General Fund Revenue: limited funds available combined with an abundance of needs across City of Lacey operations
- Excess property tax levy: General Obligation Bonds: sunseting funds that are unable to support maintenance and operation needs
- New Public Facilities District: can only be used for a regionally agreed upon project(s) and would require a regional partnership
- Impact Fees: unpredictable source of revenue that does not provide a long-term solution and cannot be used towards maintenance and operation needs

- Cultural Access Program: not legally applicable to City operations as funds are directed to non-profits

November 18, 2024 Meeting

The Workgroup confirmed their intent to recommend an MPD with a continued commitment from the City Council of General Fund for LPCR and Parks Maintenance; potentially reassigning committed reserves from the City of Lacey's Governmental Funds; and for LPCR staff to continue to pursue diverse, smaller funding options.

Staff presented various MPD levy rate options, potential revenue generated by each option, the associated impacts to taxpayers, and the potential to issue debt through MPD revenue. The Workgroup took non-binding surveys on maintenance and operations funding allocations and ranked the PCIP projects. The outcomes from the surveys created a starting point for group consensus on:

- Ranking the PCIP
- Selecting an MPD levy rate
- Selecting projects to fund by reassigning some of the committed reserve funds in the City of Lacey's Governmental Funds
- Selecting an MPD revenue allocation for maintenance and operation needs

December 9, 2024 Meeting

Workgroup Members reviewed and discussed the Draft Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup Recommendation. The recommendation was adopted unanimously on December 9, 2024.

Recommendation

The culmination of the Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup was to provide a formal recommendation to the Lacey City Council and fulfill the Workgroup's purpose of recommending a funding package with identified funding sources, including recommended amounts, to implement a prioritized list of parks capital projects. The Workgroup's intent is to generate additional funding for LPCR.

Funding Mechanisms

- Establish a Metropolitan Park District (MPD)
After considering numerous funding options, the Workgroup determined that establishing an MPD is the most viable path to providing predictable and dedicated funding to manage, maintain, and improve Lacey Parks. Local examples of MPD

success in other jurisdictions provide a model for implementation. The Workgroup encourages the Lacey City Council to draft a ballot measure for voter approval accordingly.

- **Continued Commitment**
If the Lacey City Council elected to pursue an MPD, the Workgroup encourages the City Manager and Council to continue a commitment to support LPCR, and Parks Maintenance through the City of Lacey's General Fund.
- **Tax Rate**
The Workgroup initially considered a \$0.40 levy rate per \$1,000 assessed value but determined that rate would not generate enough revenue over five years to fund the Workgroup's top-five prioritized new capital projects on the PCIP. After considering a \$0.50 levy rate per \$1,000 assessed value, the Workgroup was concerned the potential impact on taxpayers would be too high.

To balance the revenue needed for the parks system and the potential impact on taxpayers, the Workgroup recommends the ballot measure reflect a \$0.45 levy rate per \$1,000 assessed value. At that rate, an MPD is projected to generate \$5,942,891 annually. With an average residential property assessment of \$500,000, the annual property tax is estimated at \$225.

Understanding that inflation will adversely affect the revenue generated from an MPD over the lifetime of the levy, the Workgroup encourages the City Manager and City Council to consider a phased increase up to the maximum levy rate.

- **Debt Issuance**
The Workgroup acknowledges the benefits and limitations of utilizing MPD revenue to issue debt through General Obligation bonds. Debt issuance would reduce spending flexibility due to long-term debt repayment obligations but would allow for an influx of immediate funding. Without the utilization of a debt issuance, the revenue would maintain a higher-level of spending flexibility but could delay projects due to limited initial cash flow. Taxpayer tolerance should be considered in this decision.
- **Maintenance and Operation (M&O) Needs**
To account for deferred parks facility maintenance and replacement needs, outstanding capital replacement projects, and potential future unexpected maintenance costs— a fixed percentage of MPD revenue should be allocated to maintenance. Initially, forty percent of MPD revenue should be allocated to M&O, leaving sixty percent for new capital projects. Over time as new projects are built it is expected the percentage allocated for new parks facility maintenance needs will increase.

- Community Education

Given the impact on taxpayers and the establishment of an MPD contingent on voter approval, the Workgroup encourages the Lacey City Council to allow ample time for community education after the ballot measure is finalized, before election day. The City of Lacey should directly engage in community education opportunities as appropriate.

- Diversify Revenue

While an MPD is the most viable option for sustainable and dedicated parks funding, the Workgroup also recommends staff continue to seek funding through a variety of sources.

- Existing Reserves Committed for Parks Facilities

The Workgroup recommends the Lacey City Council coordinate with staff to reassign select existing reserves committed or assigned for parks facilities in the City of Lacey's General Fund to the following projects on the PCIP. These projects are deferred maintenance needs, relatively low-cost, and one-time in nature—making them an appropriate fit for reserve funding. Funding should be reassigned from the existing reserves committed to the *Trail System – Bike/Ped Plan* (\$250,000) and the *Parks Comp Plan Priorities* (\$93,750) given the applicable nature of the intent of each of those reserve categories towards the PCIP projects identified below. The Workgroup requests that the Lacey City Council and City Manager identify other potential reserve funds that could be committed or assigned to cover the remaining funding gaps for these projects.

- Homann Park Picnic Area Renovation (\$324,000)
- Wonderwood Park Trails Resurfacing (\$200,000)
- Lakepointe Park Tennis & Basketball Court Renovation (\$40,000)
- RAC Irrigation Control Update (\$44,800)

- Sponsorships and Grants

The Workgroup encourages staff to evaluate their capacity to leverage sponsorships and grants further to generate additional revenue, including Community Development Block Grants.

- Program, Vendor, and Rental Fees

The Workgroup encourages staff to continue to regularly assess their fee structures for revenue generation. Fee structures should also remain competitive, affordable, and inclusionary.

- State Legislature Funding

The Workgroup encourages the City to strategically consider projects for Washington State Legislature Direct Appropriation Funding. Workgroup Members noted past successes of the City and other jurisdictions in acquiring funding for a variety of parks projects, including senior centers.

- **Lodging Tax (LT)**

The Workgroup acknowledges an opportunity for the City Council to prioritize additional LT funds for operation of parks facilities that draw visitors from outside the county and generate hotel stays such as the RAC, Lacey Museum, and future Greg Cuoio Park. In addition, staff should strategize applications to the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee to optimize potential funding from LT towards the most appropriate needs within the Lacey Parks system.

Prioritized Parks Capital Improvement Program

To best suit the needs of the Lacey Parks system, the Workgroup determined that the revenue generated from an MPD should include a dedicated allocation towards both *new capital projects* and *maintenance and operation needs*. Consequently, the Workgroup ranked the two categories on the PCIP separately.

The Workgroup prioritized projects with consideration of the community's top-requested amenities, maintenance needs, service gaps, and community priorities. While prioritizing projects, the Workgroup gave preference to ensuring an assortment of amenities requested in the LPCR Comprehensive Plan were listed high in the ranking to be inclusive of the variety of Lacey Parks users. For example, the top five new capital projects selected by the Workgroup meet several community priorities identified in the LPCR Comprehensive Plan and listed here:

- Park development in under-served areas
- Leverage partnerships to bring opportunities to community members
- Increases to outdoor water access
- Indoor recreation opportunities
- Increases to indoor water access
- Additional trails and preservation of natural spaces
- Additional sports fields in the spaces the City of Lacey already has planned

A summary of each PCIP project and the associated costs can be found in *Appendix A*.

- New Capital Projects

1. Meridian Park Potential Pickleball Courts, Skate Features, and/or Pump Track
2. Spray Park #1, Central Lacey
3. Pool & Indoor Playground (Potential Partnership)
4. Greg Cuoio Park Next Phase
5. Meridian Park Sports Field Development

6. Virgil S. Clarkson Senior Center Phase 3 Development & Parking Lot
 7. Rainier Vista Park Pickleball Courts Expansion & Outdoor Table Tennis
 8. Meridian Campus North Park Development
 9. Long Lake Park Development
 10. Brooks Park Development
 11. Lacey Depot Park Parking Lot Expansion
 12. Lacey Museum & Cultural Center
 13. Spray Park #2, Southwest Lacey
 14. Spray Park #3, Northeast Lacey
 15. Spray Park #4, Southeast Lacey
- Replacement / Maintenance and Operation Projects
 1. Huntamer Park Playground Replacement
 2. Homann Park Picnic Area Renovation
 3. Wonderwood Park Trails Resurfacing
 4. RAC Infield Turf Replacements (Fields 1 & 2)
 5. RAC Baseball Complex Playground Replacement
 6. RAC Baseball Complex Concrete Improvements
 7. Lakepointe Park Tennis & Basketball Court Renovation
 8. RAC Irrigation Control Update
 9. RAC Large Central Playground Replacement
 10. RAC LED Fields Lights Conversion
 11. Rainier Vista Park Playground Replacement
 12. RAC Soccer Fields Netting
 13. Thornbury Park Playground Replacement (5-12)
 14. RAC Soccer Fields Playground Replacement

Appendix A

Parks Capital Improvement Program Project Overview

The Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup reviewed and prioritized twenty-nine projects from the Parks Capital Improvement Program (PCIP). The projects were identified in the 2023 Lacey Parks, Culture and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and total \$56,938,240.

Some projects on the PCIP were not included in the Workgroup's review because funding was identified for the project or partnerships necessary for the project have not been confirmed.

New Capital Projects - \$48,484,200 (M&O \$1,891,880)

Meridian Park Potential Pickleball Courts, Skate Feature, and/or Pump Track

\$600,000

Develop the park with a skate feature, pump track, and/or outdoor pickleball courts.

Spray Park #1 Central Lacey

\$522,000 (M&O \$56,000)

Develop a spray park in Central Lacey, possibly at the North Thurston Public Schools Young Child and Family Center site.

Pool and Indoor Playground

\$5,000,000

The project cost is pending a stable funding source and partnership at the NTPS Young Child and Family Center site. The recreation components of the project could include an indoor pool, indoor playground, outdoor spray park, and/or nature playground. The City of Lacey would likely contribute toward the pool and/or indoor playground portion of the capital project.

Greg Cuoio Park Next Phase

\$6,920,000 (M&O: \$362,880)

Develop Phase 1B to include restrooms, utilities, frontage improvements for safety, landscaping with irrigation, and additional trails to include a cross-country course, a dog park and/or playground zipline.

Meridian Park Sports Field Development

\$2,864,000 (M&O: \$56,000)

Develop the sports fields identified in the original master plan which included a soccer field and two softball fields.

Virgil S. Clarkson Senior Center Phase 3 Development & Parking Lot

\$5,060,000 (M&O: \$62,000)

Develop Phase 3 building and parking lot expansion due to overcrowding. The senior center parking lot is often full, resulting in the use of the community center parking lot. It isn't practical or safe for seniors – often with mobility constraints - to walk such a long distance to access the senior center.

Rainier Vista Park Pickleball Courts Expansion and Table Tennis

\$988,000

Develop four pickleball courts, two outdoor table tennis courts, and safety netting. The additional pickleball courts will alleviate the long wait times and could generate additional revenue from tournaments.

Meridian Campus North Park Development

\$3,172,000 (M&O: \$56,000)

Create a master plan and develop the 5-acre parcel located in Northeast Lacey. The property is undeveloped and located within the under-served Meridian Campus neighborhood.

Long Lake Park Development

\$7,832,000 (M&O: \$112,000)

Update the master plan and develop Long Lake Park, incorporating the 1.8-acre adjacent parcel purchased in 2022. Improvements to the existing park site include decreasing the beach slope, changing the beach material to sand, and improving ADA access to the beach.

Brooks Park Development

\$636,000 (\$11,000)

Create a master plan and develop the park, focusing on adding amenities for the site. Currently, the park is a small 1-acre green space with no amenities.

Lacey Depot Parking Lot Expansion

\$270,000

Develop an additional parking lot as part of the Lacey Museum and Cultural Center project. This project is needed in the near term to accommodate the activities and events currently held at the Lacey Depot.

Lacey Museum and Cultural Center

\$13,000,000 (M&O: \$1,008,000)

Develop the Lacey Museum and Cultural Center (LMCC), a project that has been among the City of Lacey's long-term goals for over 2 decades. The LMCC will provide an opportunity for education, equity, and inclusion. The LMCC will provide indoor recreation opportunities through cultural classes, events, and rental opportunities.

Spray Park #2 Southwest Lacey

\$540,000 (M&O \$56,000)

Develop a spray park in Southwest Lacey, possibly at Rainier Vista Park.

Spray Park #3 Northeast Lacey

\$540,000 (M&O \$56,000)

Develop a spray park in Northeast Lacey, possibly at Meridian Park.

Spray Park #4 Southeast Lacey

\$540,000 (M&O \$56,000)

Develop a spray park in Southeast Lacey. A park site has not been identified.

Replacement /Maintenance and Operations Projects - \$6,505,160 (M&O \$56,000)

Huntamer Park Play Area Replacement

\$486,000 (M&O: \$56,000)

Replace the 19-year-old climbing structure that has fiberglass damage. Each feature is a single piece. Once there is significant damage to the structure, the entire piece must be removed, resulting in fewer amenities.

Homann Park Picnic Area Renovation

\$324,000

Replace the asphalt in the picnic area that is cracked, buckling, and creating a safety hazard. Two large Douglas Fir trees in the picnic area have grown too large for the enclosure and will die from girdling in the near future. This project can be done proactively, saving the trees from dying. If the trees die, the project will still be necessary to excavate and remove the stumps.

Wonderwood Park Trails Resurfacing

\$200,000

Resurface the trail from Stikes Drive to Brentwood Drive, which has experienced significant wear and tear. The asphalt is buckling from tree roots, creating a hazard for park users.

RAC Infield Turf Replacements

\$496,000

Replace the synthetic turf on softball fields 1 and 2. Depending on the amount of use, synthetic turf needs to be replaced every 9-10 years. These fields were the first replaced and will be ready for replacement again soon. Maintaining the RAC at a high level is essential to attract tournaments.

RAC Playground Replacement - Baseball Complex

\$406,000

Replace the playground that is out of warranty and becoming more challenging to maintain. Because of the use of sports complex visitors and regular park visitors, the RAC playgrounds are the heaviest used playgrounds. The heavy use has degraded the toys at a more rapid rate than any other playground. While they are not the oldest, they have the most repairs.

RAC Baseball Complex Concrete Improvements

\$360,000

The baseball complex has porous concrete, allowing water to pass through and reducing runoff. Over time, dirt has clogged the pores. A long-term solution is needed because annual maintenance costs are now \$10,000 - \$15,000.

Lakepointe Park Tennis and Basketball Court Surfacing

\$40,000

Improve the courts by adding acrylic surfacing to the existing asphalt and repair large cracks on the basketball, pickleball, and tennis courts.

RAC Irrigation Control Update

\$44,800

The irrigation control update will optimize water use, save staff time, and allow for remote control. The manufacturer stopped producing parts for the existing controllers.

RAC Playground Replacement - Large Central Playground

\$504,000

Replace the playground that is out of warranty, and becoming more challenging to maintain. Because of the use of sports complex visitors and regular park visitors, the RAC playgrounds are the heaviest used playgrounds. The heavy use has degraded the toys at a more rapid rate than any other playground. While they are not the oldest, they have the most repairs.

Regional Athletic Complex LED Field Lights Conversion

\$2,160,000

Replace the current lights with more energy-efficient LED lighting. The conversion to LED is a logical step for long-term cost savings and should be done before the existing warranty expires in 2028-2029, depending on use.

Rainier Vista Park Playground Replacement

\$600,000

Replace the playground that is over 21 years old and out of warranty. Replacement parts are not available. As a result, rather than repair or replace parts of play structures, they are removed entirely.

RAC Soccer Netting

\$199,360

Add netting to three of the soccer fields to keep balls within the play area. This is a safety issue for park users walking around the soccer fields and frustrating for players when they have to chase out-of-bounds balls.

Thornbury Park Playground Replacement

\$406,000

Replace the playground equipment for ages 5-12. Originally installed in 1997, it is among one of the City of Lacey's oldest play areas. It is out of warranty, and replacement parts are not available. As a result, rather than repair or replace parts of play structures, they are removed entirely.

RAC Playground Replacement - Soccer Fields

\$280,000

Replace the playground that is out of warranty, and becoming more challenging to maintain. Because of the use of sports complex visitors and regular park visitors, the RAC playgrounds are the heaviest used playgrounds. The heavy use has degraded the toys at a more rapid rate than any other playground. While they are not the oldest, they have the most repairs.



LACEY CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION

March 4, 2025

SUBJECT: Metropolitan Park District (MPD)

DISCUSSION: Briefing and discussion regarding next steps for Lacey MPD

STAFF CONTACT: Rick Walk, City Manager *RW*
Jen Burbidge, Parks, Culture and Recreation Director *JB*

ORIGINATED BY: Parks, Culture and Recreation Department

ATTACHMENTS: 1 – Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup Recommendation

FISCAL NOTE: N/A

**WORK PLAN GOAL
AND STRATEGY:**

Vibrant Place to Live, Work, & Play: C. Complete Greg Cuoio Park & Greenways – Phase 1 A (M&O)

Vibrant Place to Live, Work, & Play: E. Continue initiatives to advance indoor recreation & cultural opportunities

Vibrant & Diverse Economy: F. Focus on RAC Phase III & other sport facility developments

PRIOR REVIEW: City Council Worksession – April 23, 2024
City Council Worksession – May 28, 2024
City Council Meeting – June 4, 2024
Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup – August 19 through December 9, 2024
City Council Meeting – December 17, 2024
City Council Worksession – January 14, 2025
City Council Retreat – January 30 & 31, 2025

BACKGROUND:

The Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup (PIFW) recommendation was presented to the City Council at the December 17, 2024 [Council meeting](#). After the presentation and discussion, the City Council directed the recommendation be scheduled for the January 14, 2025 City Council Worksession.

At the January 14, 2025 [worksession](#) staff provided an overview of current parks, culture, and recreation funding, past community engagement results and community feedback, the PIFW process and recommendation and framework of a Metropolitan Park District (MPD). The goal of the worksession was to inform the City Council, address questions and receive Council direction, specifically on the following:

1. Confirm or amend the recommended Parks Capital Improvement Program (PCIP) order of priorities.
2. The appropriate levy to fund the identified priorities.
3. Direction on whether to move forward a ballot measure.
4. The appropriate date to propose a ballot measure.

After discussion, the Council confirmed the need to move forward with a ballot measure proposal, and identified August 5th, 2025 as an appropriate date to propose the ballot measure and informally confirmed the levy recommended by the Workgroup, \$5,942,851. The Council had a robust conversation around the park capital improvement and replacement program (PCIP) about projects to be prioritized and emphasized. The conversation focused on aquatics projects and projects that could be realized quickly, providing community benefit, if a measure is approved. After a robust discussion of community, workgroup and council priorities, direction was given for staff to develop a draft informational and communication plan to inform the next conversation regarding the PCIP in relation to the proposed ballot measure.

Council also discussed the boundary of the proposed MPD and whether the boundary should extend beyond the city limits and include the entire unincorporated urban growth area. After discussion of potential pros and cons, Council asked staff to conduct some research and bring additional information to the next discussion regarding the MPD.

On January 30, 2025, the first day of the City Council retreat, the Council revisited the question of the boundary of the proposed MPD. The Council held a robust discussion of the opportunities, benefits and challenges of either an MPD that is coterminous with the city's jurisdictional boundary or a boundary that also includes the full unincorporated urban growth area. At the conclusion of the discussion, Council voted to direct staff to proceed with a resolution for the MPD conterminous with the City limits. Council also re-affirmed scheduling the proposed ballot measure for August 5, 2025.

With the previous decisions by Council on the MPD boundary and the ballot date, the purpose of the March 4th Council Worksession is to focus on the following four items:

1. Review MPD ballot project timeline and key dates.
2. Confirm the levy amount to place before the voters.

The Parks Improvement Funding Workgroup reviewed the PCIP and associated maintenance responsibilities. The Workgroup recommended a levy of \$5,942,851. Their recommendation is based on their assessment that a levy rate of \$0.45 per 1,000

assessed valuation would fund the top 5 capital projects and top 5 replacement projects on the PCIP, and associated maintenance and operation costs.

3. Confirm priority projects.

Based on levy discussion, review the PCIP and have Council weigh in on the list of projects and which ones should be emphasized. Council and Workgroup discussions have been focused specifically on projects. Another way to convey value is to transition to themes. The project themes would cover a) Aquatics & Indoor Facilities; b) Trails & Preservation of Outdoor Spaces, and c) Outdoor Amenities. Individual project examples would be listed under the corresponding themes.

Staff will provide informational presentations on each of the above items with the goal of having Council discussion and ultimately direction on the MPD timeline and milestone dates, proposed levy amount, and priority projects. If time allows, staff will provide a brief overview and status of the communication strategy to set the stage for the next Council discussion.