

# parks & recreation



# Parks & Recreation

## 6.1 Overview

This section provides information on existing parks, recreation, and open space that serve and support the City's Capital Facilities and Utilities plan elements. An inventory is provided for parks, recreation facilities, and open space including the type of facility, location, size, and existing level of service.

## 6.2 Summary of Key Findings

- **Sultan residents have access to 107.7 acres of municipal parks and 51.7 acres of school parks, which offer opportunities for recreation, nature walks, and access to waterways** - Much of Sultan's park space consists of large swaths of tree cover, some of it programmed with paths (Osprey Park) and largely unprogrammed (Rudolph Reese Park).
- **In addition to local parks, Sultan residents have access to several state parks and forests managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources.**
- **Most of the western half of Sultan falls within a half-mile walk from some type of green space** - Meanwhile, the eastern part of Sultan lacks accessible park space.
- **Sultan currently has no public neighborhood parks** - These are smaller in size and offer basic amenities such as playgrounds, ballfields, benches, and picnic tables. Public feedback is in support of prioritizing of large parks rather than a network of smaller ones. However, Sultan is expected to begin construction work on 4.5 acres for Mountain View Park in early 2024.
- **City Council and the community view recreation resources as an economic tool** - Done right, these amenities could attract visitors from outside the area through modes like regional sports tournaments, large trail systems, school events, and much more.
- **There are opportunities to add amenities to maximize the use of existing parks.**

## 6.3 Regulatory Context and Planning Framework

Parks and recreation are addressed in Goal 9 of the GMA, below, and are required to be addressed in a specific element of municipal comprehensive plans.

(9) Open space and recreation. Retain open space, enhance recreational opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, increase access to natural resource lands and water, and develop parks and recreation facilities.

Guidance for Parks and Recreation Elements is outlined in RCW 36.70A.070 (Comprehensive Plans—Mandatory Elements).

(8) A park and recreation element that implements, and is consistent with, the capital facilities plan element as it relates to park and recreation facilities. The element shall include: (a) Estimates of park and recreation demand for at least a ten-year period; (b) an evaluation of facilities and service needs; and (c) an evaluation of intergovernmental coordination opportunities to provide regional approaches for meeting park and recreational demand.

## **VISION 2050**

- MPP-En-3 Maintain and, where possible, improve air and water quality, soils, and natural systems to ensure the health and well-being of people, animals, and plants. Reduce the impacts of transportation on air and water quality and climate change.
- MPP-En-9 Enhance urban tree canopy to support community resilience, mitigate urban heat, manage stormwater, conserve energy, improve mental and physical health, and strengthen economic prosperity.
- MPP-En-10 Support and incentivize environmental stewardship on private and public lands to protect and enhance habitat, water quality, and other ecosystem services, including protection of watersheds and wellhead areas that are sources of the region’s drinking water supplies.
- MPP-En-11 Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas through mechanisms, such as the review and comment of countywide planning policies and local plans and provisions.
- MPP-En-12 Identify, preserve, and enhance significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries through implementation and update of the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.
- MPP-En-13 Preserve and restore native vegetation and tree canopy, especially where it protects habitat and contributes to overall ecological function.
- MPP-En-15 Provide parks, trails, and open space within walking distance of urban residents. Prioritize historically underserved communities for open space improvements and investments.
- MPP-En-16 Preserve and enhance habitat to support healthy wildlife and accelerate the recovery of salmon, orca, and other threatened and endangered species and species of local importance.
- MPP-En-19 Reduce the use of toxic pesticides, fertilizers, and other products to the extent feasible and identify alternatives that minimize risks to human health and the environment.

## **SNOHOMISH COUNTY POLICIES**

### Development Pattern Policies:

DP-35 Jurisdictions should identify and plan for the development of parks, civic places, and public spaces, especially in or adjacent to centers.

DP-41 The County and cities should adopt policies that create opportunities for: (a) Supporting urban food production practices, distribution, and marketing such as community gardens and farmers markets; and (b) Increasing the local agricultural economy's capacity to produce, market, and distribute fresh and minimally processed foods.

### Climate Change Policies:

CC-4 The County and cities should use natural systems to reduce carbon in the atmosphere by establishing programs and policies that maintain and increase natural resources that sequester and store carbon, such as forests, vegetative cover, wetlands, farmland, and estuaries.

### Environmental Policies:

Env-2 The County and cities should work collaboratively to identify, designate, and protect regional open space networks and wildlife corridors both inside and outside the Urban Growth Area and across the jurisdictional boundaries. Jurisdictions should establish policies and coordinated approaches to preserve and enhance these open space networks and corridors and ensure that all residents have access to parks and open space.

## **LOCAL PLANNING AND REGULATORY CONTEXT**

Sultan's existing Parks and Recreation Element establishes policies to guide the development and maintenance of parks, trails, and open spaces in Sultan. The follow goals and policies provide a summary:

### **PK 1 GOAL:** Effectively manage park and recreation resources

- **PK 1.1:** Strive to create a comprehensive, balanced park and recreational system that integrates Sultan with Snohomish County, Sultan School District, Washington State Department of Wildlife, and other public and private park and recreational lands to provide a greater variety of recreation facilities to the Sultan community.
- **PK 1.2:** Cooperate with the Snohomish County Department of Parks & Recreation, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife, other public and private agencies, and with private landowners to preserve the most suitable sites and resources with the ability to provide high quality, convenient park and recreational facilities.
- **PK 1.3:** Emphasize user input in planning, design, development and maintenance of park and trail facilities.
- **PK 1.4:** Work to design and develop facilities that are of low maintenance and high capacity

design to reduce overall facility maintenance and operation requirements and costs.

- **PK 1.5:** Where appropriate, use low maintenance materials and settings to reduce maintenance and security requirements and retain natural conditions and experiences.
- **PK 1.7:** Design park and recreational trails and facilities to be accessible to individuals and organized groups of all physical capabilities, skill levels, age, income, and activity interest

**PK 2 Goal:** Develop trail and corridor access system

- **PK 2.1:** Support community efforts to plan trail corridors and networks to gain adequate support for trail development, long-term maintenance, and protection.
- **PK 2.2:** Emphasis should be given to connecting people to destinations such as neighborhoods, parks, water resources, schools, and work.

**PK 3 Goal:** Preserve quality park resources

- **PK 3.1:** Preserve and protect significant environmental features for park and open space use including unique wetlands, open spaces, woodlands, shorelines, waterfronts, and other characteristics that reflect Sultan's natural heritage.
- **PK 3.3:** Cooperate with other public and private agencies to acquire and preserve additional waterfront access for recreational activities and pursuits.

**PK 4 Goal:** Develop quality recreation facilities

- **PK 4.2:** Incorporate historical and cultural lands, sites, artifacts, and facilities into the park system to preserve these interests and provide a balanced social experience.
- **PK 4.3:** Support the development of athletic recreational facilities for all age groups and recreational interests.
- **PK 4.4:** Support the development of indoor community and recreational centers that provide for community activities, athletic uses, and select significant indoor activities for multi-agency use on a year-round basis

Sultan's existing Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan echoes many of the same Goals and Policies as the Parks and Recreation Element. The following are additional policies outlined in the PROS Plan:

- **Policy 1.3:** Cooperate with the Snohomish County Department of Parks & Recreation, Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife, other public and private agencies, and private landowners to set aside land and resources necessary to provide high quality, convenient park and recreation facilities before the most suitable sites are lost to development
- **Policy 1.6:** The Public Works Department is responsible for building community partnerships to establish park maintenance and security programs that ensure parks are welcoming and safe.

- **Policy 1.7:** Make parks inherently safer through intentional design, maintenance, and material choices.

### **Public Outreach Policies:**

- **Policy 2.1:** Establish a city-managed volunteer program to help engage Sultan residents and their concern for the city's parks' conditions. Use programs to encourage park advocacy and awareness.

### **Trail Policies:**

- **Policy 3.3:** Recognize trail corridors as an important recreational opportunity, resource conservation mechanism and alternative transportation network.
- **Policy 3.4:** In general, develop a local on- and off-road trail system that provides flexible north-south and east-west access routes between the Sultan River valley, the plateau, across the U.S. Highway 2, and to parks, schools, and employment centers. Priority placed on connecting the east and west sides of Sultan by acquiring and maintaining the evacuation trail that connects the Basin community to central Sultan.
- **Policy 3.5:** Work to connect parks and prioritize connections to Sultan's largest parks; Rudolph Reese Park and Osprey Park. Create a safe pedestrian network that residents and visitors can utilize to access park resources.
- **Policy 3.6:** Extend trails through natural area corridors to provide a high quality, diverse sampling of Sultan's environmental resources. Particularly along the Wallace, Sultan, and Skykomish Rivers and Winters and Wagley Creek Shorelines.
- **Policy 3.7:** Use trail design standards set by county and/or other public entities that are easy to maintain and accessible to service personnels including maintenance and security staff.

### **Recreation Policies:**

- **Policy 5.5:** Identify the current and future needs of different neighborhoods based on demographic changes in the community structure, such as an increase in families with young children.

### **Park Finance Policies:**

- **Policy 6.1:** Support innovative methods of financing facility development, maintenance and operating needs.
- **Policy 6.2:** Define existing and proposed land and facility levels of service that incorporate population growth.

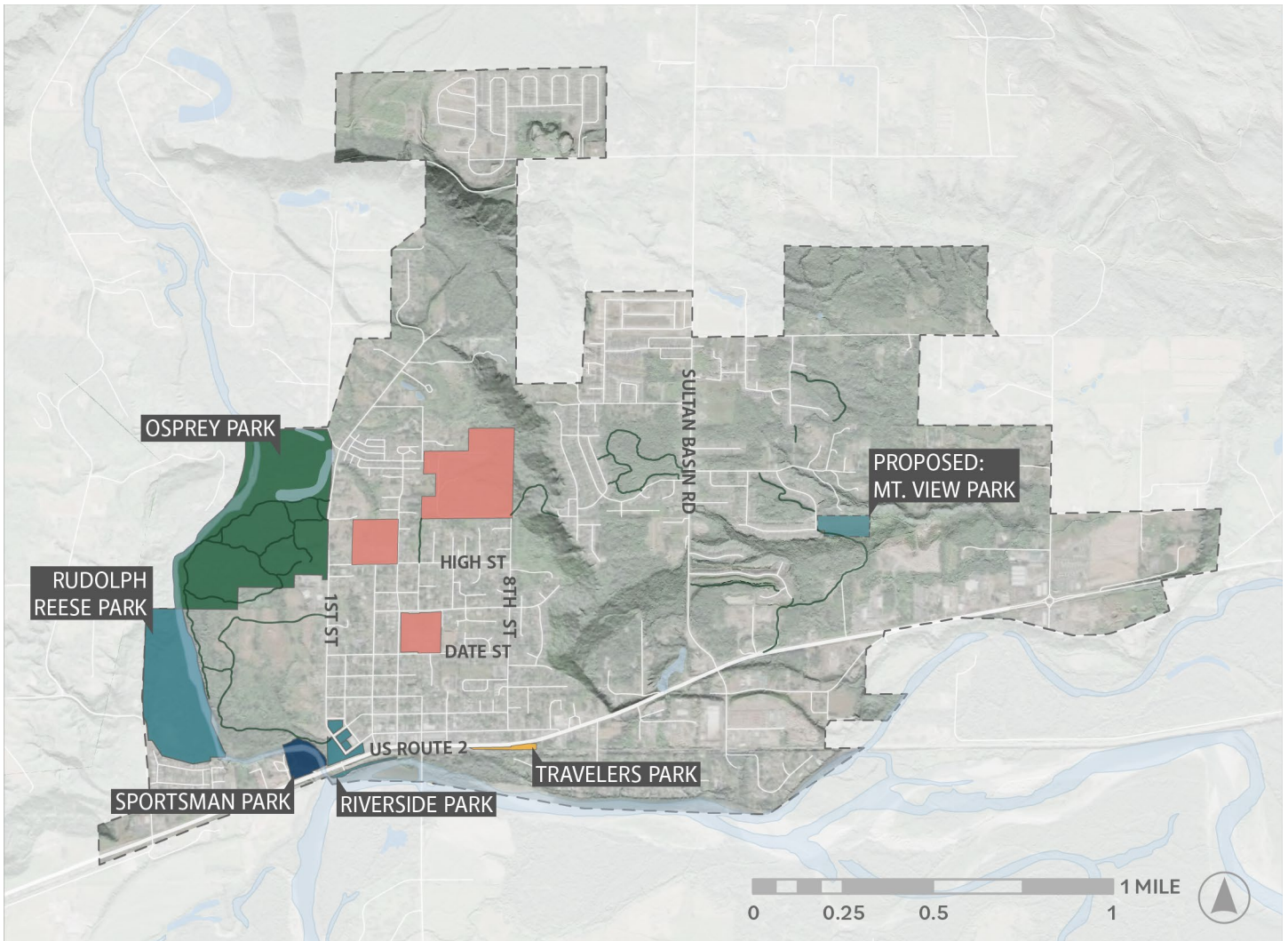
## 6.4 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Inventory

The City of Sultan contains over 159.4 acres of parks and open space and over 10 miles of trails. Figure 1 provides an overview of the acreage, adjacent use, and facilities of Sultan parks, followed by individual park profiles that outline opportunities and constraints.

The City of Sultan administered a parks-specific survey to inform the development of the 2020 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. The survey received 182 responses, the results of which are summarized in the PROS Plan Appendix. Some themes from the survey include the desire for new and updated park equipment, as well as the desire for an increase in off-leash dog parks. Since this, there was an addition of a small, fenced-in area in Travelers Park devoted to dogs. The issue of safety was also a central theme from survey respondents, who called for an increase in lighting in parks as well as the management of transitory populations and clean-up of drug paraphernalia in parks.

Many Sultan residents stated that they were unaware of volunteer opportunities related to Sultan parks, but would be interested in devoting several hours of their time each month to such programs. This speaks to the desire for stewardship in the community and the need for outreach.

**Figure 1** Sultan Parks Map, 2023



- Regional Park
- Community Park
- Mini Park
- School Park
- Special Use Park
- Trail

*Snohomish County; Framework, 2023*

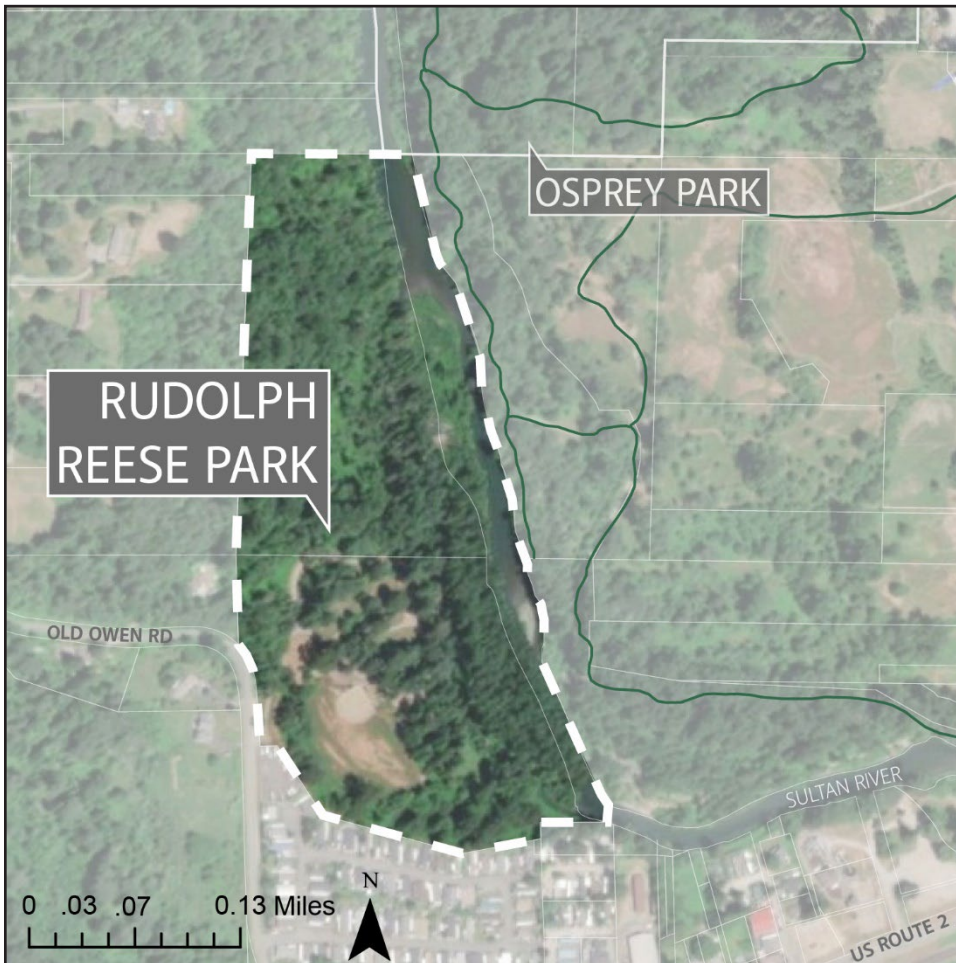


**Figure 2** Sultan Parks Matrix, 2023

Park	Size	Adjacent Uses	Picnic Tables	Play structure	Baseball field	Basketball Court	Soccer field	Open field	Dog Area	Shelter	Grills	Parking lot	Bike Racks	Informational signs	Restroom	Skate Park	Art	Memorials	Trails	Boat Launch	Lighting
Osprey Park	76.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•High Density Residential</li> <li>•Low Density Residential</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
Rudolph Reese Park	18.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Highway Oriented Commercial</li> <li>•Sultan River</li> </ul>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					✓				✓		✓
Riverside Park	7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Highway 2</li> <li>•Sultan River</li> <li>•Urban Center</li> <li>•High Density Residential</li> </ul>	✓					✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sportsman Park	3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Highway 2</li> <li>•Sultan River</li> <li>•Wastewater treatment plant</li> </ul>	✓					✓		✓		✓		✓	✓					✓	✓
Travelers Park	1.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Highway 2</li> <li>•Moderate Density Residential</li> <li>•Highway Oriented Commercial</li> </ul>	✓						✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓			

City of Sultan; Framework, 2023

# 1. Rudolph Reese Park-



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

- 18.8 acres
- Adjacent uses: Highway Oriented Commercial, Sultan River
- Play structure, baseball field, soccer goals, shelters, picnic tables, open field, lighting, and a restroom.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- Park could be better connected to the main areas of Sultan through the addition of signage as well as the addition of pedestrian or cyclist connections. The idea of constructing a pedestrian bridge between Osprey Park and Rudolph Reese Park arose during public input for the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan as a way to expand Sultan's trail system while also improving access to Rudolph Reese Park.

- The addition of lighting could improve feelings of safety in using the park.

### CONSTRAINTS:

- Because it is separated from the main area of Sultan by the Sultan River, Rudolph Reese Park is not very accessible. This may impact concerns of safety that were expressed in the 2020 PROS Plan survey.
- Flood-resistant design should be considered when siting new amenities.

## 2. Osprey Park



### EXISTING CONDITIONS:

- 76.2 acres
- Adjacent uses: Low and High Density Residential

- Play structure, baseball field, soccer goals, shelter, restroom, lighting, bleachers, a covered basketball court, picnic tables, a dog waste station and an off-leash dog park
- Baseball field, soccer goals, restroom, and basketball hoops are in need of maintenance, according to the 2020 PROS Plan
- Three medium-sized parking lots and two bike racks
- Children’s play equipment was replaced in 2020 with a larger footprint structure that includes an ADA swing and a zipline
- Part of the Adopt-a-Park program from the Sky Valley Pokémoners

### **OPPORTUNITIES:**

- The addition of educational and wayfinding signage to provide education on the ecology and history of the park and aid in navigating it, respectively.

### **CONSTRAINTS:**

- Issues of safety came up in the 2020 PROS survey, with suggestions for additional lighting as well as restrooms near the playfields

### 3. Sportsman's Park



#### EXISTING CONDITIONS:

- 3.6 acres
- Adjacent uses: Wastewater treatment plant, Sultan River, US-2
- Boat launch, covered shelter, open fields
- One parking lot
- A pedestrian bridge crosses the Sultan River, linking Sportsman's Park with River Park provides an alternate evacuation route in the case of US-2 failure.
- Shelter and signs leading to the park require maintenance

## OPPORTUNITIES:

- A large portion of the park consists of gravel for parking and driving. There may be an opportunity to use some of this space for additional amenities, open field, or landscaping.
- The addition of picnic tables and/or shade structures along the river would facilitate additional activity.
- Addition of signage and infrastructure to boat launch to improve safety and usability.
- Opportunity for more engagement with and education about the Sultan River.

## CONSTRAINTS:

- Being adjacent to Highway 2 limits the expansion and uses of the park

## 4. Travelers Park



## **EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

- 1.9 acres
- Adjacent uses: Highway 2, Moderate Density Residential, Highway Oriented Commercial
- Primarily used as a rest stop along Highway 2.
- Veterans memorial Freedom Rock, a water feature, and a large Douglas fir round that highlights Sultan's logging history.
- Off-leash dog area, a living willow picnic area, and restrooms.

## **OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Because of its position next to Highway 2 and amongst local businesses, Travelers Park can invite passersby to linger in Sultan. This could be improved by adding pedestrian connections and benches or picnic tables. The addition of informational signage could also emphasize this park as a welcome area for travelers.
- The addition of vegetation or natural barriers could improve feelings of safety by buffering from Highway 2, but should be done in a way that maintains visibility into the park.

## **CONSTRAINTS:**

- Being adjacent to Highway 2 constrains the potential uses as well as the size of Travelers Park. Being long and linear in shape also constrains the potential uses of the park.

## 5. Riverside Park



### EXISTING CONDITIONS:

- 7.2 acres
- Adjacent uses: Highway 2, Urban Center, High Density Residential, Skykomish River
- Skate park, Veteran's Memorial, gazebo, restroom, picnic tables.
- Second most used park in Sultan (PROS Survey, 2020).
- Trail connecting Riverside Park to Osprey Park was completed in 2019.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

- Parcels 00588800900100, 00588800800900, and 00588800800701 are currently unprogrammed, consisting of large lawns with some trees. This space could be redesigned to include some of the amenities that Sultan residents expressed a desire for in the PROS



2020 Survey, such as new playground equipment, a splash pad, and areas for picnicking or barbecues.

**CONSTRAINTS:**

- Flooding of this park is a consideration when determining design and programming.

## 6.4 Levels of Service

The following levels of service assessment is derived from the 2020 PROS Plan.

**Figure 3** Park level of service and future needs, 2020

Park Type	2020 Facilities	Proposed LOS*	2020 LOS*	2035 Projected LOS	Acres Needed to Meet Proposed LOS
Regional	76.2 acres	10	14.71	9.11	7.4 surplus
Community and Neighborhood	25.99 acres	5	5.02	3.11	15.81
Mini-Parks	1.9 acres	Up to 3	.37	.23	None – within range
Special Use	3.57 acres	n/a	.69	.43	.n/a
School Parks	51.70 acres	n/a	9.98	6.18	n/a
Public Trails	4.34 miles	.5 mile/1000 residents	.84 mile/1000 residents	.52 miles/1000 residents	.16 surplus
<b>Overall</b>					
<b>Parks Overall</b>	159.36 acres	10	30.76	20.10	75.76 surplus

\*acres/1000 residents, unless otherwise noted

*City of Sultan, 2020; Framework, 2023*

**Figure 4** Indicators and criteria for the City of Sultan

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E
<b>Quantity Criteria</b>					
<b>Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities</b>	<10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	>41%
Percentage difference between existing quantity or per capita average of parks and recreation facilities and the desired quantity or per capita average					
<b>Facilities that Support Active Recreation Opportunities</b>	>60%	51-60%	41-50%	31-40%	<30%
Percentage of facilities that support or encourage active (muscle-powered) recreation opportunities					
<b>Facility Capacity</b>	>75%	61-75%	46-60%	30-45%	<30%
Percentage of demand met by existing facilities					
<b>Quality Criteria</b>					
<b>Agency-Based Assessment</b>	>80%	61-80%	41-60%	20-40%	<20%
Percentage of facilities that are fully functional for their specific design and safety guidelines					
<b>Public Satisfaction</b>	>65%	51-66%	36-50%	25-35%	<25%
Percentage of population satisfied with the condition, quantity, or distribution of existing active park and recreation facilities					
<b>Distribution and Access Criteria</b>					
<b>Population within Service Areas</b>	>75%	61-75%	46-60%	30-45%	<30%
Percentage of population within the following service areas (considering barriers to access): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.5 mile of a neighborhood park/trail</li> <li>• 5 miles of a community park/trail</li> <li>• 25 miles of a regional park/trail</li> </ul>					
<b>Access</b>	>80%	61-80%	41-60%	20-40%	<20%
Percentage of parks and recreational facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation					

City of Sultan, 2020; Framework, 2023