

CITY OF VENETA

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Adopted July 13, 1998

This Plan is the result of many long hours of research, analysis, and community meetings. Many thanks to all who participated. Special recognition for dedication to the development of Veneta's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan goes to:

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Purpose/Relationship to Other Plans

The Veneta Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (Parks Plan) is the policy document that will guide the development of parks and recreation facilities in Veneta over the next 20 years. This planning effort is required as an element of the periodic review of Veneta's comprehensive plan, as established by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. The specific charge for this periodic review task is to "help further define the need for future parks and open space and describe how they will be developed to meet recreation needs."

The 1990 Veneta Comprehensive Plan included an element pertaining to parks and open space. This Parks Plan updates the existing comprehensive plan parks element by analyzing existing conditions; assessing current and future park needs; identifying challenges and opportunities for the park system; and outlining goals, policies, and actions to implement the long-term vision of Veneta's comprehensive parks system. Upon adoption, the Parks Plan will become a functional component of the City's comprehensive plan, although it is a stand-alone document specific to the provision, preservation, enhancement and development of parks, recreational facilities, and open space.

1.2 Veneta City Profile

Veneta is located southwest of Fern Ridge Reservoir, approximately 14 miles west of Eugene in western Lane County, Oregon. The early development of the town revolved around the railroad, which parallels present-day State Highway 126. Veneta has a long history of economic involvement in agriculture and the timber industry, which remains evident in the treed nature of the town to this day. Veneta's parks and recreation facilities and general town landscape take advantage of the natural beauty of the area.

1.2a Population & Demographics

Veneta's population rose steadily until the 1980's, declined slightly during a recession, and resumed its upward climb in the 1990's. Current population, based on a 1997 Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) estimate, is 2,870 residents. LCOG projects a year 2020 population of 5,760 people, almost exactly double the current population. The community is expected to grow due in part to increased employment opportunities in west Eugene and the slated completion of an upgrade and expansion of Veneta's sanitary sewer system.

The proportion of residents who are under 18 years of age is higher in Veneta (32%) than in Lane County (24%) or Oregon as a whole (26%), according to the Veneta Community Assessment (1995). In addition, there is a smaller percentage of young adults (age 18-24) and people over 45 in Veneta than in the county or the state. Since young people (up to age

18) are the sector of the population most likely to use parks, recreational facilities and open spaces, the demand for such facilities is high and will increase as the population grows.

1.2b Land Use

Existing land use in Veneta is primarily residential, with commercial uses clustered around the Territorial Road/Highway 126 intersection. Additional commercial uses are located along Territorial Road south of Highway 126 and in the historical city center along West Broadway. Industrial land uses are found north of Highway 126 and along its northern frontage through the eastern part of town.

The majority of working residents, 72%, commute to jobs in Eugene-Springfield (LCOG, 1997). There is ample supply of commercially and industrially-designated land in Veneta, both vacant and in current use. However, the greatest portion of vacant land within the urban growth boundary is designated for additional residential development. These lands are shown on the existing conditions map (Sheet L1). New subdivisions on residentially-designated vacant land will add to the demand for nearby parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces.

1.2c Anticipated Growth Patterns

Given the presence of large parcels of vacant land within Veneta's UGB, it is reasonable to assume that growth will occur in these undeveloped areas. Plans for residential subdivisions have been submitted for a number of properties in the southern and eastern portions of the city. LCOG's 1997 Draft Transportation System Plan projects that a large percentage of new housing development will occur west of Territorial Road and south of Bolton Hill Road (291 units). Neighborhoods west of Territorial Road and north of Bolton Hill can expect to absorb 302 units. In addition, gradual infill of neighborhoods east of Territorial Road is also projected (north of Hunter: 150 units; south of Hunter: 328 units). The total number of additional housing units needed to accommodate the projected population of 5,760 in year 2020 is thus 1,070 units. There are currently 1,178 housing units in Veneta.

Development proposals in some portions of town may exceed these projections, however. The City of Veneta and LCOG are proceeding with creating Specific Development Plans for two growing sectors of town. Through the Oregon Department of Transportation and Department of Land Conservation and Development's Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program, an Employment Center and a Neighborhood Center are being analyzed. The Employment Center is on an 80-acre site of mostly undeveloped land north of Highway 126. The TGM grant-funded project will explore a mixed use concept, integrating residential, commercial and industrial uses. The Neighborhood Center is conceived for a 161-acre vacant parcel in southwestern Veneta. Previous development proposals contemplated a 225-space manufactured home park and a 484-lot single-family home subdivision. The TGM project will explore design and development options for this area, integrating the transportation network proposed in the City's Draft Transportation System Plan with an appropriate mixture of neighborhood-oriented land uses.

1.2d Regional Setting

Veneta is fortunate to be located within a setting of large regional parks and open spaces. The close proximity of Fern Ridge Reservoir affords Veneta residents easy access to year-round boating, canoeing, kayaking, bird watching, picnicking, and hiking opportunities. Given the ample amount of park space which supplies Veneta and the Fern Ridge area with extensive regional park land, there exists a need for parks only at the neighborhood and community level within Veneta's UGB, consistent with a finding in the 1990 comprehensive plan.

Other regional amenities include the Long Tom River, Oregon Country Fair site, nearby wineries, and forested ridge lines managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

There are four basic components to an evaluation of existing park conditions and the calculation of current and future recreational needs. The first basic method is to measure acreage of park land by type and compare it to a set standard for a given population. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) sets standards for mini-neighborhood parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, metropolitan parks, and specific facilities such as athletic fields and swimming pools. In Oregon, the Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) has developed state-wide standards outlined in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Traditionally, for municipal-scale park systems, the SCORP standards have assessed the relationship between recreational activities and the facilities and land which provide opportunity for those activities. The current SCORP deviates from this prior model by expanding the focus to include the physical setting of that involvement. SCORP standards now mirror the Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) model promulgated by the U.S. Forest Service for recreational use on federal lands. The ROS model is not particularly suited to urban settings and municipal park systems; thus, the latest SCORP data is not used.

Given this, and the scale of analysis unique to Veneta, we have employed the previously published SCORP recommendations for local and “close-to-home” park and recreational space. Table 1 describes these standards, which mirror current NRPA guidelines for park and open space classifications. Since Veneta is blessed with a host of nearby regional park lands provided by other entities, our analysis focuses principally on standards for “close-to-home” space. Descriptions of desirable elements and standards for size are given for mini-neighborhood, neighborhood, community, and overall developable park and recreation facilities. It should be noted, however, that the standards are broad-based guidelines, and should not be used as the only tool to assess existing conditions and need. The trend in recent years has been to move toward community-based forms of need assessment, which include the three other components of the needs analysis process - site analysis, public input, and community comparison (see also the discussion of benefits-based planning in Chapter 3).

Table 1:

SCORP Recommended Local and
 Recreation Open Space
 Local/ Close-to-Home

Component	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/ 1000 Population	Desirable Site Characteristics
Mini-Park	Specialized facilities that serve a or limited population or specific group such as or senior citizens.	Less than 1/ 4-mile radius	1 acre or less	0.25 to 0.5 acres (.37 average)	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse development or housing for the elderly.
Neighborhood Playground	Area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools.	1/ 4 to 1/ 2-mile radius to serve a population up to 5000 people	15+ acres	1.0 to 2.0 acres (1.5 average)	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population-geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a
Community Park	Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon suitability and community need.	Several neighborhoods. 1 to 2 mile radius	25+ acres	5.0 to 8.0 acres (6.5 average)	May include natural features, such as water bodies, and areas suited intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhoods
Total Close-to-Space				6.25 to 10.5 acres (8.375 average)	

The second component of the evaluation and needs analysis is site analysis, which consists of on-site evaluations of existing park facilities; analysis of existing and planned land use, zoning, existing and planned transportation routes; and natural resource constraints and opportunities. This is the most intensive part of the analysis because it takes into consideration all of the physical and social characteristics specific to Veneta that impact the existing system and determine the nature of the anticipated need.

The third component is public input and user evaluation, which includes surveys, interviews, and meetings with interested community groups. This is a vital component because the ideas of those who use and deal with Veneta’s park resources are crucial in creating a usable, meaningful Parks Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.

The fourth component of evaluation and needs analysis is comparison of local facilities to those of nearby or similar communities, to gain some outside perspective.

These four strategies were used in an effort to gain information from a variety of sources and to look at Veneta’s park system comprehensively. Below, Veneta’s park system is analyzed against SCORP standards, the results of the site analysis are presented, the comments of local park users and community groups are compiled, and Veneta is compared to other Oregon communities in terms of park acreage by facility type.

2.1 Existing Parks System

In order to accurately assess Veneta’s existing facilities and need characteristics, it is necessary to adapt the SCORP standards to fit with Veneta’s particular preferences. Based on the size of existing facilities, presence of regional park land, SCORP standards, use

characteristics, public comments, anticipated growth patterns, available land, and fiscal realities, recommendations have been developed for optimal park size and characteristics as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:
Veneta Park Classifications and Standards**

Park Type	Optimal Size	Location Standard	Facilities
Neighborhood Park	3-5 acres	Within 1/4 mile walking distance, serves a neighborhood	Grass play areas, play equipment, basketball courts, picnic facilities.
Community Park	5-10 acres	Within a mile of home, serving more than one neighborhood	Neighborhood park facilities, and special use facilities such as swimming pools, soccer and softball fields, rest rooms, and parking.
Multi-Use Paths	8-12 feet wide in a 15-20 foot corridor	Along designated greenways	Paved or bark chip paths for pedestrians, roller-bladers, bicyclists and others to serve both transportation and recreation needs.

The above facility components provide a simplified menu of desirable recreational facilities for a neighborhood or community park. Ideally, development of a neighborhood park should be conducted with input from neighborhood residents and children to assure that the type and scale of facilities provided is consistent with user needs, expectations, and neighborhood character. Neighborhood park development programs should incorporate natural features and prominent existing vegetation and landforms where possible, and strike a balance between active and passive park uses to meet the needs of various ages of park users.

An expanded list of potential active recreational facilities for a neighborhood park would include, but not be limited to, play structures and facilities designed for varying ages of children; informal play space; a backstop for non-regulation, “practice,” ballfields; half or full basketball courts; tennis and/or multi-purpose sport courts; horseshoe pits; wading pools; picnic tables and shelters; and park benches. Support facilities should include park signage; trash receptacles; and appropriately scaled lighting for security and amenity purposes. Vehicle parking is ordinarily not provided as neighborhood parks should be located within convenient walking access for target users. Bicycle parking facilities may be provided.

Four of Veneta’s five existing parks—Ralph Johnson, Oak Island, Fern Park, and 5th Street—are smaller than the optimal minimum size for a neighborhood park as shown above. However, because these parks are in close proximity to central residential areas of the city and serve certain functions of neighborhood parks, they are classified as such. It should be noted that the utility of each small park is greatly limited by its size. Areas shown as served by one of these parks on the site analysis map (Sheet L2) are actually underserved, due to the

lack of space and facilities located at these parks. However, they do contribute to the system of parks and open spaces in Veneta and their value should not be underestimated.

Facilities for community parks could include all of the above neighborhood park facilities plus others, such as regulation sports fields for baseball, softball, football and soccer; swimming pools; community centers; disc golf areas; skating facilities; hiking, biking, and bridle trails; large group picnic shelters; formal ornamental gardens; community gardens; and gazebos or outdoor stages. Parking is necessary to accommodate user access. A community park, as defined above, should be 5-10 acres, host community-wide events and contain a variety of passive and active recreational elements. The fifth of the existing parks, City Park, is Veneta's only community park; it contains many of these features and attracts community-wide events.

The effectiveness of Veneta's existing facilities in meeting residents' park and open space needs is limited by several factors, including park size and configuration, the age and condition of facilities, and a lack of open play space. If we look at the vast supply of regional parklands nearby but outside the city limits, as previously discussed, Veneta is outfitted with excellent parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. If we look at the close-to-home scale, however, Veneta's parks do not meet residents' expectations as expressed in the surveys, meetings, and public forum conducted for this study; nor do they meet established standards.

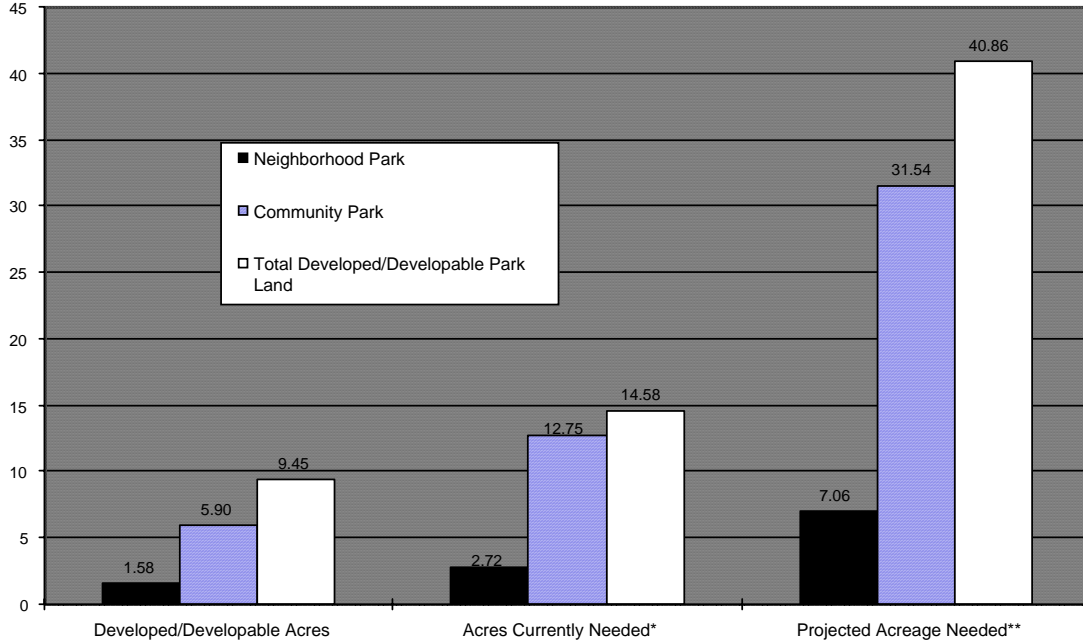
The four existing developed neighborhood parks total only 1.58 acres. Given Veneta's estimated current population of 2,870 residents, there are .55 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 people in Veneta. The average SCORP standard is 1.5 acres per 1,000. Therefore, Veneta currently needs an additional 2.7 acres of neighborhood park space to meet the SCORP standard (see Figure 1 below). In the future, based on a population projection of 5,760 people, Veneta will need an additional 7.06 acres (2.7 acres today, 4.36 more by 2020) of neighborhood parks to meet standards.

City Park, Veneta's only community park, is 5.9 acres in size. This translates to 2.05 acres of community park land per 1,000 residents. The SCORP standard is 6.5 acres. In order to meet this standard, Veneta currently needs 12.76 additional acres of community park land. To meet the needs of a population of 5,760, an additional 31.54 acres (12.76 acres today, 18.78 more by 2020) are needed.

The SCORP standards also include a measurement to assess park need in terms of total close-to-home park acreage. For this assessment we have included developable land, such as the two small city-owned sites that could be developed as neighborhood parks in the near future. It is useful to include developable land in total figures to accurately assess need for land acquisition. Veneta currently has 9.45 acres, or 3.29 per 1,000 residents, of developed and developable park land. To meet SCORP standards of 8.37 per 1,000 for the current population, Veneta would need to acquire an additional 14.58 developable park acres. The City would need 40.86 additional acres to serve the projected population of 5,760.

Figure 1:

Veneta Park Acreage: Current and Future Needs
 (Based on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation
 Plan Standards)



*to meet average SCORP standards. 1997 population: 2,870. **Projected 2020 population: 5,760.

2.2 Site Analysis

A comprehensive matrix of park facilities in and around Veneta is found in Table 3. This table depicts existing parks, undeveloped city-owned land, recreational facilities not owned by the city, regional parks, and natural areas. The matrix is useful in describing the city's and the region's recreational facility profile. Narrative descriptions of these facilities are found in the following paragraphs, and sketches of each municipal park is found in Appendix B. A detailed graphic analysis of issues and opportunities relative to individual park sites and areas throughout the park system and the entire community is included as Sheet L2.

2.2.a Municipal Parks

City Park

Veneta's only community park is City Park, located at the terminus of East Broadway Street. This 5.9 acre park contains a community center, outdoor swimming pool, playground equipment, and picnic areas (see sketch in Appendix B). The park is large enough to hold community gatherings, with a picnic shelter, barbecue pits, and several play areas. The large play structure is new and in very good condition. City Park serves as the obvious choice for community gatherings in Veneta. However, several factors limit usage. These include inaccessibility, the smallness and deteriorating condition of the pool, a lack of open play

fields, and the unimproved gravel parking areas. In addition, the community building is small and when it is closed, park patrons must use a portable toilet.

Nearby residents can walk or ride bicycles to City Park, but the access is difficult from any direction other than west (see analysis map, Sheet L2). For very close residences, City Park functions as a neighborhood park, but the majority of park visitors arrive by car for picnics or organized events. There is potential to expand the boundaries of City Park, do selective tree clearing, and to make improvements to its entry ways. The connection to Veneta Elementary School is badly in need of access, visibility, and safety improvements, and the potential for an additional entry at the southeast corner should be explored. An enhanced bicycle crossing at Territorial Road is needed to improve non-auto access from residential areas on the west side of town.

Oak Island Park

This park, located on Oak Island Drive, is very small at .47 acres. It serves the immediate neighborhood for play space, picnicking and walking. The park includes a tot lot, a small picnic area, and a wooded area with a footbridge (see sketch located in Appendix B). There is not a lot of room to make improvements at this park; it is functioning as a neighborhood park for the immediate area. Since Oak Island Park is located within land designated as a city-adopted greenway, there is potential to connect this park to other future parks via an alternative transportation corridor, trail, or pathway (see analysis map, Sheet L2).

Ralph Johnson Park

Located on the corner of 5th Street and Dunham Avenue, Johnson Park is .25 acres behind the former City Hall. It consists largely of park benches, a picnic table and some landscaping (see sketch in Appendix B). This is a pocket-sized park mainly used for sitting, eating, and enjoying being outside. The main limitation of Johnson Park is its size. Although it provides some outdoor space for use of neighborhood residents, most of the neighborhood park needs of nearby residents are not being met by this park. There is not room to run or play catch; park users must travel further to the Territorial Sports Program site, City Park, 5th Street Park, or Fern Park. Thus, additional park space in the vicinity is necessary to provide nearby residents with a more usable facility.

5th Street Park

Also located on 5th Street, this .36 acre park is developed with playground equipment and an open grass area. It serves small children of the immediate neighborhood. The equipment is in generally fair condition. Although 5th Street Park is small, it is centrally located in the historic center of Veneta and provides facilities for residents in a densely populated area of the City. It would be optimal to augment the services provided by this park with a larger neighborhood park for more active recreation. Facilities should also be upgraded and/or replaced to improve function and accessibility. However, 5th Street will continue to provide a limited level of service to those who live or work nearby.

Fern Park

Fern Park is a .50 acre neighborhood park located on 8th Street. Its features include play equipment, a small picnic area, and wooded areas. There may be potential to expand this park somewhat. The patrons of Fern Park are mostly children who live within a few blocks of the park. The park is not connected to bicycle routes or other parks within the city. Like 5th Street Park, Fern Park can continue to serve as a play area but should be augmented by a larger facility with more active play space in the neighborhood. Selective tree removal and installation of a light within the park has helped improve park safety and visibility. However, concerns regarding vandalism and after hours use persist and are compounded by the park's configuration, depth, and lack of street frontage and access. A substantial play structure was created with community volunteer support, but does not meet ADA accessibility standards is generally appropriate to, and meets the needs of, older children.

2.2.b Undeveloped City-Owned Land

Applegate Trail Days Site

This site was used for the annual Applegate Trail Days festivals until the festival ceased operation in 1986. The festival has since resumed operation, but the location into the site for the festival has been changed. The site is located on the west side of Territorial Road adjacent to the Long Tom River. The City purchased the 29.7 acre parcel from the Army Corps of Engineers. The majority of the site is covered by natural resource constraints, most notably the Long Tom River floodway and the presence of a large occurrence of Bradshaw's Lomatium, an endangered wetland plant. Due to these constraints, the site is suitable for seasonal use and passive recreational uses, such as nature trail building, interpretive signage, environmental education, and bird watching, as stated in the *Ecological Planning for the City of Veneta, the Oregon Country Fair, and the Upper Long Tom Watershed* study (1996). Though undeveloped, this park serves an important open space function and affords the opportunity for specialized nature-based recreation within the UGB.

Unnamed Site - West Broadway Street

This small site sits near City Hall near the west end of Broadway Street. It is .50 acres in size and currently vacant. Surrounding land uses are industrial, commercial, and residential. The site could be traded for a piece of land adjacent to City Hall, in order to consolidate public ownership into a larger, more useful civic open space anchoring the west end of Broadway. Alternatively, plans to revitalize West Broadway Street include conceptual designs to create a small civic plaza at this site. While the site is not proposed to serve as a neighborhood park specifically, some facilities and features would complement those at other nearby, undersized existing parks. The conceptual plan is intended to blend with other streetscape improvements and plans to transform West Broadway Street into a walkable, "old town"-style district with a blend of residences, businesses and public spaces. The site is intended to spur redevelopment efforts and provide residents with a public commons. Proposed features include a gazebo, decorative lighting, pathways, benches, picnic facilities, and landscaping.

Unnamed Site - Bolton Hill Road

The Bolton Hill site is 1.47 acres in size and sloped, with scattered trees and other vegetation. Although long and thin in shape, the parcel has frontage on Bolton Hill Road, a rural collector. It has the potential to be developed into a neighborhood park, especially if adjacent property to the south can be acquired for expansion to improve park functions, visibility and its accessibility from existing and future residences. The site's current relationship to the adjacent Bowling Green subdivision does not capitalize on the site's proximity to residential lots.

On-site trees should be retained to enhance the aesthetics of the park. There are currently no sidewalks on Bolton Hill Road where it abuts the property. Therefore, access and safety issues need to be addressed in conjunction with site development. Sidewalks planned along Bolton Hill Road could also link the site with active uses at the Territorial Sports site. Future site development will also need to address slope, drainage, and soils considerations on-site to assure that play equipment and other facilities and features meet safety and accessibility standards, and are compatible with adjacent development.

**TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF
PARK AND RECREATION FACILITY COMPONENTS**

Facility	Location	Total Acres	Developed Acres	Park Signage	Play Structure	Swings/Slide	Spring Toys	Park Bench	Picnic Table	Picnic Shelter	Open Lawn Play Areas	Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts (Sand)	Regulation Softball	Baseball Diamonds	Football/Soccer Fields	Horseshoes	Skating Facility	Outdoor Stage	Barbecue Pits	Boat Ramp/Canoe Launch	Fishing Area	Natural Area	Hiking Trail (Unpaved)	Jogging Path (Unpaved)	Fitness Circuit/Stations	Community Center	Class/Meeting Rooms	Gymnasium	Fitness Facility	Swimming Pool	Rest Rooms	Off-Street Parking	Bicycle Parking	Trash Receptacles	Lights	Pay Phone	Drinking Fountain	Irrigation		
PARKS AND OPEN SPACES																																										
A. Neighborhood Parks																																										
1. Oak Island Park	Oak Island Drive	0.47	0.47	●	●		●	●																																		
2. Fern Park	8th Street	0.50	0.50	●	●	●	●	●	●																	●								●	●	●	●					
3. Ralph Johnson Park	Dunham Ave. & 5th Street	0.25	0.25	●				●	●																													●				
4. 5th Street Park	5th Street & Oregon Circle	0.36	0.36			●	●	●																																		
5. Unnamed Park Site	Bolton Hill Road	1.47	0.00																																							
6. Unnamed Park Site	West Broadway Avenue	0.50	0.00																																							
Sub-Total		3.55	1.58	2	2	3	1	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	3	0	0	0	
B. Community Parks																																										
1. City Park	East Broadway Avenue	5.90	5.90	●	●	●	●	●	●	●								●		●								●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sub-Total		5.90	5.90	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	
C. Metro / Regional Parks *																																										
1. Zumwalt Park	Jeans Road	92.00	0.00	●					●														●	●										●	●	●						
2. Perkins Peninsula Park	Highway 126	69.00	30.00	●					●		●												●	●										●	●	●	●				●	
3. Kirk Park	Clear Lake Road	166.00	30.00	●					●		●												●	●										●	●	●	●					
4. Orchard Point Park	Clear Lake Road	49.30	49.30	●	●	●		●	●	●	●					●		●				●	●											●	●	●	●				●	
5. Richardson Park	Clear Lake Road	157.00	157.00	●				●	●	●	●											●	●											●	●	●	●				●	
Sub-Total		533.30	266.30	5	1	1	0	2	5	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	5	0	0	3	0
D. Sports Parks *																																										
1. Territorial Sports	Bolton Hill Road & 6th Street	4.00	4.00													●	●																									
Sub-Total		4.00	4.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E. Natural Areas/Open Space																																										
1. Old Applegate Trail Days	Territorial Road	29.70	0.00																				●																			
2. Army Wildlife Viewing Area*	Territorial Road	100.00	1.00																			●	●												●							
Sub-Total		129.70	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL DEVELOPABLE PARK LAND		9.45	7.48																																							
TOTAL CITY OWNED PARKS AND OPEN SPACES		39.15	7.48	3	3	4	2	5	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	3	3	4	0	1	0		

Other potential/existing park/recreation sites: Veneta Elementary School, St. Catherine of Siega Picnic Grounds, fitness center.

* Sites not owned by the City of Veneta

2.2.c Other Land Meeting Recreational Demand

Territorial Sports Program Site

Territorial Sports Program (TSP), a non-profit organization providing youth sports league activity in west Lane County, operates a 8-acre play field site on Bolton Hill Road. This site is used heavily for soccer and regulation little league softball games, plus adult regulation softball during the little league off-season. The mixture of uses and field dimensions requires labor intensive operations to move makeshift fences delineating field boundaries.

The site is currently leased by TSP, and is owned by the State of Oregon and Lane County. Although there is no imminent demand that TSP vacate the site, its leased status is a source of concern. Already undersized to meet current demand, TSP officials estimate space needs twice that of the current facility to meet future demand.

The site also has numerous other challenges. On-site parking is in relatively short supply and on-street parking in the adjacent subdivision causes conflicts with neighbors. The large parking area across Bolton Hill Road is on private property that is subject to development. Traffic volumes and speed on Bolton Hill Road, the lack of sidewalks or wide shoulders and crosswalks also create safety concerns for users. Development of the adjacent Bowling Green subdivision also creates challenges to adequately configuring adult league softball fields while minimizing conflicts with property owners.

Due to the cramped space, it is advisable that TSP seek additional space at a satellite or replacement facility to meet at least some of the future demands, and alleviate pressures on the current site. It is also advised that the current site be secured through fee simple ownership by either TSP or the City. Ownership by the City would be preferable, however, given that TSP currently allows public access only during its own games. It is advisable that the site be open for expanded public use.

The site has many advantages, however. It is centrally located in Veneta, affording many families and children to access the site on foot or by bicycle. This is also one of the few sites in Veneta where open play is possible. There is great potential to provide play facilities and expanded opportunities for family activities.

Veneta Elementary School

Veneta Elementary School is located on Territorial Road south of Broadway. Because it is centrally located, kids often utilize the grounds after hours for recreation. The basketball courts, playground areas, and tennis courts are heavily used by school children after school and area residents on weekends and during the summer months. The school play fields are heavily used for TSP-sponsored soccer and little league baseball practices.

The play equipment needs to be upgraded and expanded, but generally is well maintained and in good condition. The tennis and basketball courts could likewise use improvement. The location of the play areas, however, is shielded from public view by the school building itself, creating

concerns for safety and vandalism. Conflicts between children of different age groups is somewhat common.

Although the eastern end of the school play fields are connected to City Park by a pedestrian gate, this connection needs to be improved to facilitate access between the two sites.

2.2.d Regional Parks

Veneta's regional park amenities are shown on the vicinity map (Sheet L1). All five parks are located on the shores of or nearby Fern Ridge Reservoir.

Zumwalt Park

Zumwalt Park is the closest regional park to Veneta's UGB. It is a Lane County Park, and for day use only, or otherwise by special use permit. The park has a trailhead parking area and drive with a locked gate; walk-in use is available. A portable toilet and an interpretive kiosk regarding the Applegate Trail were recently installed.

The park was once a major county park along Fern Ridge Reservoir, but conflicts with nearby neighbors and greater investment in other parks has left Zumwalt Park as suitable for passive recreational use. The park still has a number of picnic tables, park benches, lake access and an adjacent canoe launch area. For most of the year the park drive serves as an all-weather path for joggers, cyclists, and pedestrians of all ages. No further development of this 92 acre park is being planned.

Perkins Peninsula Park

At Perkins Peninsula, park users can launch boats, picnic, swim, use the open grass areas and ball diamond, or observe wildlife around the lake. Rest rooms are provided. The park is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), who developed about 30 of the site's 69 acres. Lane County will soon assume management responsibilities for the site by agreement with the ACOE. As a result the county will institute a fee for entrance during the peak season.

The county is willing to explore cooperative efforts with TSP to allow access for, and improvement and use of, the ball field for little league games or practices. Although the site is not within convenient walking or cycling distance of most Veneta residents, the use of this field may alleviate some of the demand at the existing TSP site, or at Veneta Elementary School for soccer and softball practices.

Richardson Park

Richardson Park, operated by Lane County, is 157 acres in size, which includes 50 RV camp sites with full hook ups, a boat moorage, swim area, rest rooms, and picnic areas. Forty additional camp sites are planned for construction in the summer of 1998. Admission fees are assessed during the peak season.

Orchard Point Park

This County park is 49.3 acres in size and located farthest from Veneta of the five regional parks. The site includes four reservation picnic sites, a new marina constructed in 1997, play equipment, a swimming area, rest rooms, and horseshoe pits. Admission fees are assessed during the peak season.

Kirk Park

The largest of the regional parks, Kirk Park encompasses 166 acres, of which roughly 30 are developed. Facilities include picnic tables and a portable toilet. Kirk Park is on the north side of Fern Ridge Dam, and is the only one of the five regional parks close to Veneta that does not feature access to the reservoir. The park does, however, have water access below the dam to the Long Tom River. Like Zumwalt Park, there is no fee to access Kirk Park.

2.2.e Land Use and Zoning

The majority of the land within Veneta's UGB is designated for residential use in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan (see existing conditions map, Sheet L1). Some of these residential areas are already developed and are underserved by parks, and some are vacant and will need parks in conjunction with new development. Residential areas should generally have parks located within easy walking distance. A quarter-mile is the generally accepted radius for a neighborhood park service area, as it represents the distance an average person can walk in 10 minutes. Areas that are designated for residential land use, as well as vacant areas within the residentially designated lands, are shown on the site analysis map (Sheet L2), with circles representing the quarter-mile walking radius drawn around existing parks.

Veneta is currently undertaking the task of updating its comprehensive plan. The Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation (CLUE) process will amend the land use plan, alter plan designations, and change the mix and configuration of land uses in some areas. Park site identification and acquisition will need to take plan changes into account. It is anticipated that Veneta will experience steady residential growth over the next 20 years, concentrated in the area south of Bolton Hill Road and west of Territorial Highway. The plan map shows potential areas where new parks would close existing gaps in service and serve newly developing areas (see Sheet L3).

There is currently a lack of land designated for park, recreation and open space use in Veneta. In addition, the zoning map does not coincide with the greenway plan designations. Additionally, the areas designated for greenways do not align with drainageways or wetlands, as have been recently mapped in the Veneta Local Wetlands Inventory. The greenway overlay was likely intended to cover two stream channels through the east and southeast sides of town and a corridor adjacent to the railroad. The greenway south of the railroad tracks has been infringed upon by development, breaking up its direct linear connection to Huston Road (see Sheet L2).

As the CLUE process continues, this Parks Plan should be incorporated into Veneta's comprehensive plan update. It may be possible to identify specific tax lots for park use and redesignate them to parks and open space (see Chapter 4 for recommended sites). After CLUE changes are made, updates to the zoning map should reflect the plan changes, facilitating the development of property for its planned use.

2.2.f Existing and Planned Transportation Facilities

Veneta's main north-south thoroughfare is Territorial Highway, which is classified as a minor arterial in the Veneta Draft Transportation System Plan (December 1997). State Highway 126, classified as a principal arterial, runs east-west and separates the majority of the town from the shopping and industrial areas north of the highway. Collector roads include Broadway Avenue (the old main street), Hunter Road, East Bolton Road, Cheney Road, and Perkins Road (all running east-west), 8th Street on the west side and Huston Road on the east side (running north-south). Bolton Hill Road, a collector, connects Veneta to Crow-Vaughn Road southwest of the City. The only existing on-street bicycle lanes are on Territorial Highway, Highway 126, and East Broadway.

The Draft Transportation Plan proposes that all collectors and arterials within Veneta's UGB have striped on-street bicycle lanes. In addition, three off-street multi-use paths are proposed, all within the existing greenway/open space overlay. Two are located along the wetland corridors draining to the northeast, and the third parallels the railroad tracks east of Territorial Highway (see Sheet L2).

Safe and convenient bicycle connections are an integral component of a successful parks, recreation, and open space plan. Therefore, planned bicycle facilities should be coordinated with existing and future park and recreation sites. Fortunately, the planned off-street bicycle paths will tie in very nicely with many of the areas underserved by neighborhood parks. The paths can thus function as recreational elements in themselves as well as providing safe and direct access to and among parks, schools, and residential areas. As shown on the plan map, proposed connections, either by on-street lanes or off-street paths, extend to each of the existing parks and the areas proposed for new parks (see plan diagram, Sheet L3).

2.2.g Natural Resources

The City of Veneta has two major areas of natural constraints: wetlands and steep slopes. Although a limitation on buildable land, these resources are assets that can be effectively set aside for open space and passive recreational uses. Unique natural features add interest and diversity to a community's park system while protecting ecological values.

Veneta's Local Wetland Inventory was completed in 1998 as part of the City's Goal 5 inventory update. The result was comprehensive mapping of jurisdictional wetland resources within the UGB (see analysis map). The greenway overlay shown on the existing comprehensive plan map corresponds closely with the newly mapped wetlands, demonstrating the potential for

simultaneous recreation and resource protection. (There is a slight location discrepancy between the greenway overlay and the wetland corridor - see Sheet L2. This should be resolved in the CLUE process.)

The steepest slopes are located in southwest Veneta in the Bolton Hill area, as shown in the 1990 comprehensive plan. Where development is not possible due to steep slopes there is potential to secure and develop a hillside park. The potential in this area for recreation and open space should be considered by the CLUE committee when evaluating the need for parks and open space designations near residential areas.

2.3 Public Input and Needs Analysis

The community of Veneta was invited to share thoughts, opinions and ideas at several venues throughout the parks planning process. Public outreach efforts included meetings held with the Veneta Parks Advisory Board, Fern Ridge Community Action Network, the Veneta City Council and Veneta Planning Commission, the Veneta Chamber of Commerce, and the Veneta Economic Development Committee.

Also, a community-wide Public Forum was held in conjunction with the CLUE steering committee. A survey was also developed for school-aged children and distributed to administrators at Veneta Elementary, Fern Ridge Middle School and Elmira High School. Responses were received only from teachers administering the survey at Veneta Elementary School.

Interviews with local active citizens provided additional insight. Interviewees included the superintendent of Fern Ridge School District 28-J, the principal of Veneta Elementary, the director of the Territorial Sports Program, and a former chair of the Veneta Parks Board. The aggregated comments from the public involvement process are contained in Appendix A of the Plan.

Throughout the research and data gathering phases of the Veneta Parks, Recreational Facilities, and Open Space Master Plan project, recurrent themes regarding needs and desired amenities became apparent. Generally, public comments focused on four themes related to park needs:

- New and expanded neighborhood parks in close proximity to homes.
- City Park expansion, upgrading of facilities (especially the pool), and improvements in accessibility/visibility from the school.
- Wide open play fields available in Veneta for regulation and pick-up ball games, kite flying, running and playing, etc.
- Paths and trails for safe transportation and linear recreation, especially along the drainage corridors covered by the comprehensive plan's greenway overlay.

These comments echo those collected from a Veneta parks survey conducted in 1991. The most popular responses to the 1991 survey's question of what short term improvements are most needed were improved picnic facilities and more play equipment, followed by tennis court improvements. Since this survey was completed, new play equipment has been installed at City Park. Long term interests expressed in the survey included a covered pool, additional basketball courts, a fitness course and a running trail.

At the public forum held in conjunction with CLUE, citizens were given opportunities to comment on existing conditions and share ideas for improvements. Most of those in attendance stated that they use the park closest to their home for outdoor recreational activities, especially with children. Comments were heard about the inadequate size of the existing facilities, the desire for more ball fields, and the need for safe off street bicycle routes.

Fifty-one youth surveys were returned by students at Veneta Elementary. In addition, responses from 23 students were received by e-mail. The main concerns of the students focused on the condition of the parks (too small, not enough to do, dirty, bothersome teenagers) and the distance from their homes (too far away, too hard to get to, etc.). Their favorite activities included basketball, baseball/softball, swimming, bicycling, hiking, and boating/fishing.

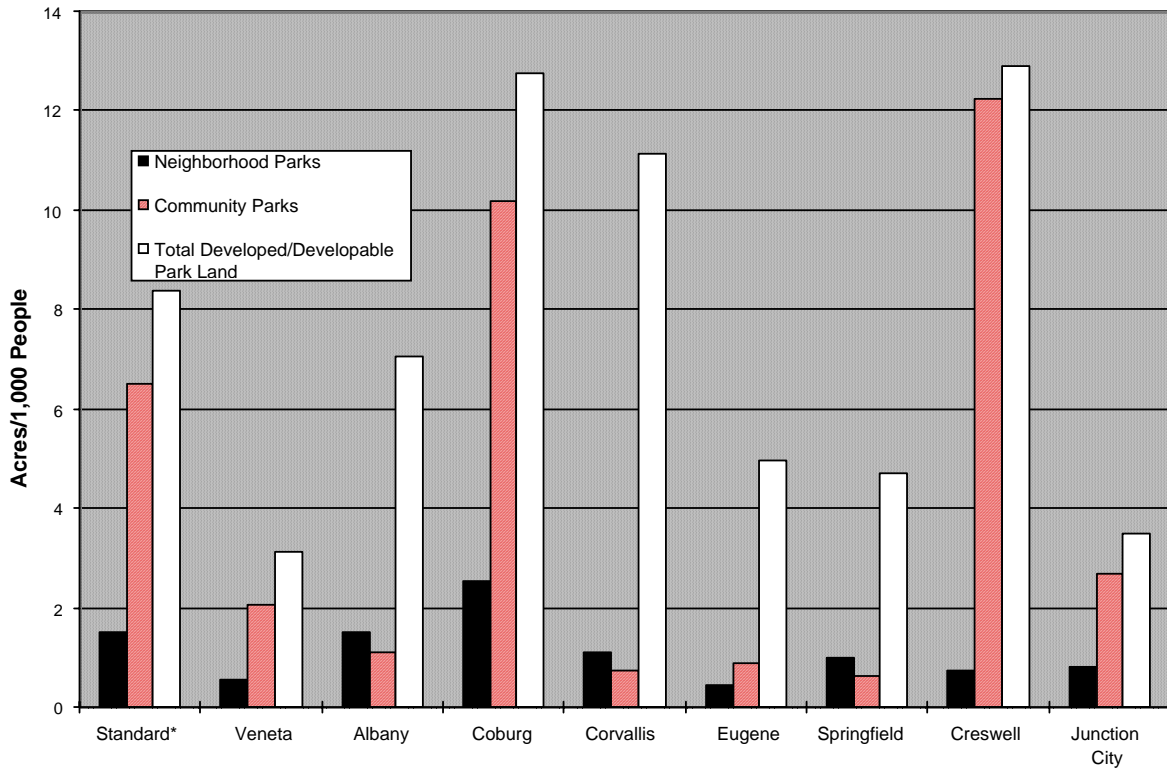
2.4 Comparison to Other Communities

Relative to other Oregon cities, Veneta is comparable to Junction City in terms of overall provision of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces and follows Albany, Coburg, Corvallis, Eugene, Springfield, and Creswell (see Figure 2 below). Given its proximity to Fern Ridge Reservoir, however, Veneta offers its residents easy access to large open spaces that is not reflected in the statistics, which only measure park land within urban growth boundaries. Broken down by park type, Veneta has the second lowest allocation of neighborhood park acreage per 1,000 population of all the other cities researched, after Eugene.

At the community park level, Veneta places fourth out of the 8 communities researched, ahead of Albany, Corvallis, Eugene, and Springfield. Two of the communities that have large concentrations of community park land—Coburg and Creswell—do not have particularly large facilities and have not fully developed these sites. These cities have small populations, like Veneta, but are relatively rich in the quantity of available park land.

In terms of total developed and developable acreage, Veneta's statistics reveal its lack of close-to-home recreational space, while other communities with large reserves of open space within their UGB's show the greatest provision of overall resources. Again, if regional resources (Fern Ridge, Perkins, Zumwalt, Kirk, and Orchard Point) were shown in this graph, Veneta would far exceed standards in terms of regional park land.

**Figure 2:
Veneta Park Land Compared to Other Oregon Cities**



* Based on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

CHAPTER 3: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 Vision for the Future

The City of Veneta has the potential to develop a truly integrated and complete parks, recreation, and open space system. Much of the area within the UGB is still in open space, leaving ample opportunity for designation and development of a variety of recreational facilities. This plan is the tool that will enable the fruition of the long term vision of Veneta's park system, and in that vein, it is opportunistic, but still takes into consideration financial realities. This plan outlines the ideal parks system so that as funds become available, the community can set priorities for park projects.

The plan diagram (Sheet L3) shows Veneta in the foreseeable future, with numerous additional neighborhood parks, updated and expanded sports facilities, off-street trails linking parks and residential neighborhoods, and bicycle lanes leading to parks, schools, and other local trip destinations. The implementation of this plan will lead to many desirable outcomes for the City of Veneta: improved recreational opportunities and quality of life, increased self-sufficiency and decreased dependence on outside facilities, increased safety for bicyclists, enhanced city image, and preservation of open space.

3.2 Trends

The National Recreation and Park Association, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and numerous international recreation associations have shifted focus in recent years from strict provision of park acreage and facilities toward a more community oriented method of planning known as benefits-based planning. This type of planning emphasizes the needs and desires of a particular community and works that into the needs analysis, decreasing reliance on numbers and increasing use of locational and experiential factors.

The benefits of recreation can be divided generally into four categories: personal, social, economic, and environmental benefits.

- Personal benefits include things such as the importance of play to children's physical and emotional development, the use of recreational activity in stress reduction and fitness, personal satisfaction, and improved quality of life.
- Social benefits of community recreation include positive effects on juvenile crime and adult loneliness, enhanced family and community-building, and elevated levels of community involvement.
- The economic benefits of recreation include its function as preventative health care, its contribution to a healthy, productive work force, acting as a catalyst for local tourism and retail spending, and alleviating costs associated with criminal activity found in communities with deficient recreational resources.

- The environmental benefits of recreation focus on the protection of open space, pervious ground surfaces, and opportunities for restoration and enhancement of natural areas within the community.

The above benefits are products of a complete and integrated system of parks, recreational facilities, and open spaces. Increasing the variety of facilities in turn increases the variety of benefits afforded by those facilities. This plan has been crafted to maximize the potential benefits of Veneta's parks system by outlining the ideal outcome of recreational infrastructure at buildout of the urban growth boundary.

3.3 Challenges

While Veneta is well positioned to expand its park and recreation system in the coming years, the City faces numerous challenges that must be addressed in the process. Issues that impinge upon the effective provision of park and recreation resources include, but are not limited to:

- Funding of improvements to the park system will always be a consideration. There are inadequate resources to make all or even most of the recommended improvements found in this plan. Funding for rehabilitation and maintenance of existing facilities is as critical as that needed for acquisition and development of new parks and facilities.
- Constraints to connectivity. Major roads, the railroad, and Highway 126 all form substantial barriers from park and recreation facilities for children, the elderly, etc. The lack of adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities compounds this lack of accessibility and creates safety hazards.
- Existing parks tend to be undersized and lack adequate open, informal play space and selected facilities (e.g., basketball hoops). They also tend to have aging play equipment and facilities (i.e., the pool) which do not meet user needs and do not meet federal accessibility standards. There is also inadequate land to meet existing, as well as future, demand for children's field and ball sports, as well as demand for adult leagues.
- Existing parks are also poorly configured with little street frontage. The relationship of these parks to the streetscape and surrounding properties is often indicative of the park's ability to properly function, meet user needs, and be viewed as an asset rather than a liability by neighbors. There is a direct relationship between the configuration and layout of park and recreational facilities and their safety and utility.
- Existing recreational facilities often do not meet the needs of all age groups. The lack of age appropriate facilities often manifests itself in inappropriate behavior and conflicts between age groups. Given projected growth at both ends of the age spectrum, additional facilities and programs for youth, families and the aging are warranted.
- Wetlands and steep slopes account for a significant portion of the available open space in Veneta. It will be a challenge to simultaneously protect sensitive lands and make use of them for passive recreational use.
- Much of the available vacant land consists of small parcels with inadequate access or a lack of utility infrastructure. These locational issues make development of the land for park and recreational purposes all the more challenging.

As the community grows there is the potential for development to consume land otherwise available for parks and open space. And with new residential development comes greater demand for parks and recreational facilities. This is of most concern in areas with little or no existing development, such as the area south of Bolton Hill Road and west of Territorial Highway. The primary challenges will be to secure enough land in the development process to meet future recreational needs, and to find sufficient funding to develop and maintain parks and recreational facilities.

3.4 Opportunities

Just as there are challenges to the procurement of additional recreation facilities, there are many opportunities of which the City can take advantage. Given tight fiscal budgets for public and non-profit entities, it is likely that Veneta will have to be opportunistic to meet the community's park and recreational needs. Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Working with state and county officials to secure the Territorial Sports Program site on Bolton Hill Road. The site could be made available for greater public use, and could integrate more family-oriented activities with sports play. If TSP needs to expand and move to a new facility in the future, the City should be able to find a way to retain use of the fields for public recreation.
- As the City grows, there may be a need for additional school facilities. Planning parks in conjunction with schools allows pooling and consolidation of resources, integrates education and recreation, and creates a focus for community and civic activity. Working more extensively with school officials to expand or enhance facilities at Veneta Elementary School would also be worthwhile.
- Veneta residents will continue to have the opportunity to utilize nearby regional parks and Fern Ridge Reservoir. Additional usage of these facilities for civic and active recreational needs should be explored with the Lane County and ACOE representatives.
- The local area is rich in natural resources as shown by the recent local wetlands inventory. The greenway/wetland corridors present one opportunity area, and the nearby Long Tom River presents another. The *Ecological Planning for the City of Veneta, the Oregon Country Fair, and the Upper Long Tom Watershed* study (1996) recommends trail building and interpretive signage at these sites, and these recommendations have been incorporated into this plan (see Sheet L3). Again, opportunities for collaboration with non-profit groups (i.e., Long Tom Watershed Council, Oregon Country Fair) and the school district could make these recommendations a reality for passive recreational and educational purposes.
- Parks and recreation opportunities have economic development potential. Working with the Veneta Economic Development Committee and Chamber of Commerce could result in private sector provision of some needed recreational facilities. Conversely, capitalizing on the community's natural resources and recreational opportunities could also produce a positive economic impact for Veneta. Examples include bicycling tours and races in association with the Oregon Country Fair and local wineries; or expanded angling, boating or canoeing through creation and promotion of "blue trails" on local waterways and the Fern Ridge Reservoir.

- More stable funding sources. Increases in the parks Systems Development Charge (SDC) would offset costs related to new demands. While additional growth will ensure some level of funding with the current SDC, existing rates are not adequate to meet acquisition and development costs for parks.
- Consideration of a regional park and recreation district. Veneta and surrounding communities collaborate extensively to meet service needs. Similar to the library district, a park district would allow the larger Fern Ridge area to pool its resources and meet needs across the area without regard for jurisdictional boundaries.

More specific opportunities are addressed both on the Site Analysis Map and Master Plan Diagram, and in the recommended actions below.

CHAPTER 4: GOALS, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS

Based on information in preceding chapters, this chapter recommends continuation of the parks, recreation, and open space goal contained in the existing comprehensive plan. This goal has subsequently been endorsed by the current Veneta City Council, Planning Commission, Fern Ridge Community Action Network, and Economic Development Commission as a proposed comprehensive plan goal guiding Veneta's periodic review process.

This chapter also includes policies, breaking them into seven categories: existing facilities, new facilities, greenway acquisition and development, collaboration, transportation, natural resources, and fiscal resources. Under each policy are recommended actions which will implement the policy, with the overall vision being to meet the intent of the parks, recreation, and open space goal.

The recommended actions are not listed in order of priority. Actions should be prioritized based upon available opportunities and as reflected in budgetary allocations through the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

4.1 *Veneta Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Goal*

Develop a variety of neighborhood parks, open space areas, and recreational facilities for use by the residents of Veneta.

4.2 *Policies and Recommended Actions*

4.2a Existing Facilities

Encourage the improvement of existing park and recreation facilities in Veneta through equipment replacement, maintenance, landscaping, access improvements, visibility and safety measures, and expansion.

Recommended Actions:

1. Explore the potential for expanding City Park to include adjacent tax lots, including property that would open access onto Hunter Drive. Improve the connection between City Park and Veneta Elementary School.
2. Remediate drainage problems for the park area south of the City water tank and selectively clear trees to provide an area for open play space and/or basketball facilities. Preserve existing tree canopy elsewhere in the park for shade and amenity value.

3. Explore options and levels of funding for continued renovation of the existing municipal swimming pool in City Park. Include options for remodeling, expanding, reconstructing, and covering the pool.
4. Improve the parking areas at City Park to beautify the park entrance, improve access and reduce dust impacts to park patrons and adjacent residents.
5. Initiate local fund-raising activities and pursue grant options to expand the play facility and improve the community center at City Park. Also pursue funding for needed play facility renovations and replacement at other existing park facilities.
6. Conduct an inventory and evaluation of park equipment and facilities in all parks and develop a program to replace unsafe, substandard or worn facilities and play equipment through the CIP.
7. Secure and expand the existing Territorial Sports Program (TSP) site for continued sports use and expanded functions as a community park (see Policy D - Collaboration, Recommended Action 1).
8. Explore the potential for expanding Oak Island Park onto adjacent industrial land.

4.2b New Facilities

Acquire additional land for new active recreation sites (including ball fields), passive recreational sites, open space, and new neighborhood and/or civic parks.

Recommended Actions:

1. Secure a three- to five-acre neighborhood park site in the central portion of the City east of Territorial Road, preferably near the confluence of the two drainages covered by the greenway designation and overlay (Area 1, see Sheet L3 and Greenways policy, below).
2. Secure a three- to five-acre neighborhood park site in the southern portion of the City, south of Perkins Road (Area 2, see Sheet L3).
3. Secure a three- to five-acre neighborhood park site in the eastern portion of the City, south of the railroad right-of-way (Area 3, see Sheet L3).
4. Secure a three- to five-acre neighborhood park site in the area north of Bolton Hill Road and west of Territorial Road (Area 4, see Sheet L3). Park development would be compatible with the area's hillside terrain and compatible with the neighborhood's character.
5. Secure a three- to five-acre neighborhood park site or a ten-acre site for the development of a community park with active recreation space, including baseball/softball, soccer, and

open play fields (Possible location: southwest as part of the planned TGM Neighborhood Center nodal development area, Area 5, see Sheet L3).

6. Secure a three- to five-acre neighborhood park site, or smaller public plaza or open space in conjunction with the planned TGM Employment Center nodal development area north of Highway 126 (Area 6, see Sheet L3). Seek to link parks and open space with the residential area off Jeans Road.
7. Seek to configure new parks with maximum street frontage to enhance the park's image, improve patron safety, and better integrate the park with adjoining uses.
8. Develop a "civic park space" on the City-owned site on Broadway, to include a public plaza or gazebo, landscaped area, and benches.
9. Consider expanding public use south and east of the City Administration building, and explore options to develop a play structure and facilities that would better serve neighborhood park functions for residents of central Veneta than Ralph Johnson Park.
10. Develop an environmental education/conservation program for the Applegate Trail Days site, including interpretive signage, viewing platforms and low impact trails.
11. Develop "gateway" monumentation, landscaping and beautification on Highway 126 near the city center in the proposed opportunity area (see Sheets L2 and L3).
12. Evaluate the potential for developing an active recreational facility at the proposed opportunity area that might not be suitable in a residential setting, i.e., a skate park (see Sheets L2 and L3).

4.2c Greenway Acquisition and Development

- 1) Work to acquire and develop lands along the drainage corridors and the railway right-of-way designated for greenway use on the Veneta Comprehensive Plan Map.**

Recommended Actions:

1. Process a comprehensive plan diagram amendment locating the greenway overlay zone along drainages in the southeast portion of Veneta to coincide with wetland boundaries contained in the Local Wetlands Inventory.
2. Establish a Greenway/Natural Resource zoning overlay district and apply the comprehensive plan greenway overlay zone to the official zoning map.

3. Work with land owners to sequentially acquire, either fee simple or by easement, land for greenway purposes along the drainage corridors from Territorial Road east to Huston Road (see Plan Diagram, Sheet L3).
 4. Develop bark-chipped or paved pathways as appropriate along the greenways, to be used for walking, jogging, bicycling, walking pets, and passive recreational and educational use.
- 2) Investigate the potential for designating additional greenway corridors to connect to both the planned local system and to regional recreational resources.**

Recommended Actions:

1. Locate additional greenway corridors in conjunction with wetlands identified on the Local Wetlands Inventory Maps, to facilitate the concurrent functions of stormwater control, flood management, recreation, and transportation.
2. Link Veneta's proposed greenway trails to connect to regional trail systems along the Long Tom River and at the ACOE wildlife viewing area.
3. Extend the existing greenway south of the railroad right-of-way west to the City limits; link to a proposed powerline trail (see Plan Diagram, Sheet L3).
4. Develop a system of "blue trails" on local waterways connecting the Fern Ridge Reservoir and Long Tom River. Provide launch and take out points, with suitable parking and other trailhead facilities and signage.
5. Integrate greenway designation, acquisition, and development with more active park, recreational, and civic uses where possible. Explore the potential for linking City Park to the designated greenway area and the expanded library to the proposed greenway area (see Sheets L2 and L3).

4.2d Collaboration

Work together with civic and non-profit organizations, such as schools and recreation providers, to collocate facilities and share in acquisition, development, operation and maintenance.

Recommended Actions:

1. Work with the Territorial Sports Program (TSP) to retain and expand public recreational use of the fields on Bolton Hill Road in the event of relocation of TSP activities.
2. Work with Lane County and the State of Oregon to secure the TSP site through possible

City ownership.

3. Work with Lane County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to allow for expanded local community recreational use at parks and facilities owned and managed by these agencies. Specifically, explore the possibility of meeting existing and future ballfield needs by improving the ballfield at Perkins Peninsula Park for TSP use, and waiving park entrance fees for players and spectators.
4. Explore the possibility of expanded passive recreational, day-use activities at Zumwalt Park, e.g., trails. Collaborate with nearby neighbors and obtain consensus prior to any improvements.
5. Work with the Fern Ridge School District to combine potential sites of new schools with park and recreational facilities, and to continue and expand mutually beneficial recreational and educational programs.
6. Collaborate with Lane County, the residents of Elmira, and the Long Tom Watershed Council to establish a greenway along the Long Tom River.
7. Work with the Oregon Country Fair to use parking and meadow areas for community recreational use appropriate with the site and its natural resource values and recreational development capabilities (e.g., soccer practice fields, continued model airplane flights).
8. Work with the Parks Board, Beautification Committee, civic groups and local businesses, local schools, the University of Oregon, and the OSU Extension Service Master Gardener program to plan and implement landscaping and beautification improvements at all parks and city gateways.

4.2e Transportation

Coordinate park acquisition and development projects with the Transportation Plan, especially planned bikeways and bike routes.

Recommended Actions:

1. Work to establish bicycle lanes or off-street paths connecting residential neighborhoods, schools, and park and recreation facilities (see Plan Diagram, Sheet L3).
2. Work to provide sidewalks along streets to connect parks and recreation facilities and to provide safe pedestrian travelways.

3. Assure each park and recreation site is connected to other park sites, schools, and residential neighborhoods via greenways and off-street linkages or on-street bicycle lanes with crossings that are well-marked and/or have pedestrian/cyclist-activated signals (see Plan Diagram, Sheet L3).

4.2f Natural Resources

Where natural resources constrain development potential, consider acquiring these lands for permanent open space purposes.

Recommended Actions:

1. As part of the Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation (CLUE), designate heavily constrained natural resource lands for open space use.
2. Rezone lands designated open space in the CLUE process to the appropriate zoning district.
3. Through the Natural Resources Plan, develop standards for various trail types, materials and widths of trails and trail corridors.

4.2g Fiscal Resources

Encourage the development of stable funding mechanisms for short and long term park maintenance, acquisition, and development projects.

Recommended Actions:

1. Explore with other local governments and organizations the feasibility of developing a regional park and recreation district. Assess the revenue and cost potential and public support for such a district in the greater Fern Ridge Area, and constraints to establishment based upon adequate room within statutory tax limitations.
2. Examine the current Systems Development Charge methodology and fee structure. Determine if adjustments are required to meet community needs and objectives.
3. Continue to work with developers to secure new park land in conjunction with new development.
4. Develop incentives for the donation of land to the City for public recreation purposes.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Public Comments

Public Forum (May 12, 1998 at City Hall)

Convert railroad tracks to trails.

What is City's budget for parks?

Construct trails along RR corridor, with or without rails

Investigate easements, dedications, and land swaps to ease acquisition budget burden.

Strike a balance between open, passive play space, greenways, and active play space.

If TSP moves, don't let fields get developed. Kids need fields close in to play and practice.

Schools are booked for play/ball games

TSP is a good park because it is big and close to home, but it lacks parking

TSP doesn't own the land

Clean up Zumwalt Park -- mow, upkeep of facilities

Develop small park adjacent to city hall (picnic benches, play structures)

Improve trails for hiking and biking at Zumwalt, compatible with wildlife habitat needs

Transfer Zumwalt to the City

Property outside the city - citizens would have to vote on it

Thin understory, invasive species to improve habitat, visibility

Use inmate labor for cleaning

Utilize/protect greenways, build bike paths (bark)

Clear, open access between school and City Park, integrate community center more

Build community gardens

Veneta Parks Board (April 9, 1998)

Facility preferences include:

Basketball courts (target older youth)

Pool repairs and possible replacement

Community gardens (especially for small lot subdivisions and manufactured home parks)

Stage or gazebo (was cited on the 1991 community survey)

Use of community center as a teen center

Expanded use of Veneta Elementary school gym for dances and other uses

Sand volleyball

More regulation-sized sports fields/softball

Parks preferences include:

Focus on neighborhood parks

Integrate Greenways

Locations for new parks should address the south side

Beautification of city entrances

Veneta Comprehensive Land Use Evaluation (CLUE) Steering Committee (April 2, 1998)

Vision for 2020 includes:

Get bicycle paths and pedestrian pathways throughout Veneta that are integrated with wetlands and not in conflict with autos.

Parks should have facilities for people of all age groups and more recreational programs. More tennis courts. Have another large park, minimum 5 acres, prefer 10 acres.

A community that is willing and able to provide adequate public services like library, schools, police, parks and others.

Utilize wetlands for mitigation, recreation, and education.

Veneta Planning Commission (May 4, 1998)

Use the berm area along the railroad tracks for greenway trail development

Consider community gardens, especially for elderly, associated with a commercial greenhouse

Widen wetlands boundaries and buffer with landscaping

Natural features are important and the linear nature of wetlands and drainages can be utilized for recreational use and interpretation

Smaller units are preferable to community parks

Set up policies to trade off for wetlands/greenway linkages; have valued added policy rather than takings

Have a menu of options for scope of park and open space development

Try to incorporate parks and recreation into the school

Would TSP be situated better in the center or out on the periphery of town?

Include kids in park design

Want to see more active play space to complement greenspaces, linear parks, passive recreational areas

Encourage donations of park lands

Veneta Economic Development Commission (May 6, 1998)

Teflon coat facilities to prevent graffiti

Recreation isn't a panacea, not all at-risk kids will embrace recreational programs

We need facilities for all kids, particularly basketball facilities

Get kids involved in the design and maintenance of park facilities

In addition to renovating the big pool, install wading pools for tots and moms

Existing parks aren't utilized enough, need to combat perceptions that they are not safe and aren't properly located

City pool is almost obsolete, a new pool could be incorporated with other facilities

Location is important

Not enough money to support a skating rink locally

Explore the possibility of a recreational district to include Crow, Veneta, Elmira

Would like to see a golf feasibility study

Support 1/4 mile walking radius for neighborhood parks and preserving green spaces on a neighborhood basis

The perception is that the City doesn't have enough money to keep up with park maintenance needs

Look at having trails at Zumwalt Park and one good-sized baseball field for older kids and a smaller open area for smaller kids

In the Jeans Road area there are older people who may be willing to serve as park caretakers

Use County prison labor for parks maintenance and brush clearing

There are economic opportunities in recreation, for example, riding trails for horseback riding, perhaps a large equestrian facility

Ken Johnson, Principal of Veneta Elementary (via e-mail, May 1998)

Summary of Elementary Students' Responses to Parks Survey:

1. What is your favorite place to play?
The Park.
2. What do you like best about it?
Things to play on, friends are there, lots of room.
3. What park is nearest to your home?
City Park, Fern Park, Fifth St. Park
4. How do you usually get there? (car, bike, walk)

Ride bike, walk, some riding

5. What do you like about it?

Lots of stuff to do, play structure

6. What do you not like about it?

The old slide, graffiti

4th Grade Class

[The students in the class] love organized sports and they are quite capable of helping with clean up or maintenance of a site.

1. Thirteen students like to play in their own yard. Six students like to play at a park.

2. The things they like best about the parks are: merry-go-round, swings, and the play structure. The things they like best about their yards are: trampoline, bike ramps, play structure, safety, cleanliness.

3. Eight students live near Bolton Hill ball fields. Five students live near Veneta Park. Four students live near 5th St. Park. Three students live near Fern Park on 8th St. Three students live nearest the 6th St. apartment park.

4. Twelve students get to the park by riding their bikes. Eleven students walk there. One student goes in a car.

5. Same as #2.

6. The only thing my students did not like about their yards was the smallness. The things they did not like about the parks were: trash, syringes, lack of safety, glass, graffiti, bothersome teenagers.

7. For recreational activities, my students liked:

a. baseball - 13

b. basketball - 15

c. bicycling - 20

d. boating - 12

e. fishing - 14

f. hiking - 19

g. horseback riding - 18

h. skating/roller blading - 20

i. soccer - 11

j. swimming - 21

k. tennis - 13

l. other: football - 13, Frisbee - 12, street hockey - 11, volleyball-15, soccer baseball - 8

8. Ten students spend their recreational time at home. One student goes to the city park. Eight students go outside of the area.

9. Besides the answers to #7, students also suggested: walking a dog, golf, miniature go-carts, 3- or 4-wheel course, BMX course.

10. Twenty one of my students expressed an interest in helping to develop and maintain facilities to support recreational activities.

Thanks for your interest. I think it would be a great benefit to youth in this area to have some developed and maintained recreational facilities.

Youth Surveys Received from Veneta Elementary

Summary

1. Favorite place to play: Yard, Street, Park, in that order.

2. What do you like about it? Close to home, lots of room to do things.

3. What park is nearest your home? City Park, Fern Park, 5th Street, Fern Ridge, Veneta Elementary School.

4. How do you get there? Most walk or bike, a few in cars.

5. What do you like about the park? The play structures, fields, meeting friends.

6. What do you not like? Not safe (strange people, needles, bothersome teenagers), litter, not enough to do.

7. Students participated in all activities listed, mostly baseball/softball, basketball, bicycling, boating, and swimming.

8. Students spend most of their recreational time at home, with some using the parks, the school, or facilities outside the area.

9. Students would participate in indoor swimming, using trails, tennis, football, and other organized sports.

10. Roughly one third of the students expressed an interest in helping develop or maintain facilities to support recreational activities.

Appendix B. Sketches

City Park

Oak Island Park

Ralph Johnson Park

5th Street Park

Fern Park

Appendix C. Plan Sheets