**Chapter Eight  
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

[8.1: Developed Parks Map](http://www.codepublishing.com/UT/Provo/html/pdfs/map_7-1.pdf) (PDF)

# 8.1 Introduction

Provo City is nationally recognized as one of America’s most livable cities. Provo’s natural surroundings, parks, recreational amenities, and varied leisure opportunities are integral to its outstanding quality of life and livability.

Recreation has the capacity to build communities and offer many social benefits. The pursuit of recreational facilities and participation in leisure activities are essential factors in not only individual well-being, but in contributing to the community health. Park and recreation opportunities serve as important benchmarks against which the quality of life within a community can be measured.

Parks and open space, whether designed for passive or active recreation, are important elements in creating a balanced living environment. Having recreational opportunities close at hand is important not only for convenience, but for maintaining the physical and social strength of the community through active recreational and social interaction with family and neighbors. Provo’s citizens have repeatedly expressed through public opinion surveys, bond elections, and RAP funding decisions the need and the desire for additional parks, recreational opportunities, and the retention of the open and – in some parts of the city – rural feeling of the community.

In establishing a parks and recreation plan for a community, it is important to provide a variety of recreation experiences through various sizes of parks intended for different types of use and users. Parks should be designed to be inclusive with the users in mind, whether those users be healthy children and adults, senior citizens, or the disabled. It is also important to achieve equitable distribution of basic park lands, recreation facilities, and programs throughout the community by applying standards uniformly and consistently.

This chapter is intended to be an overview of the parks, recreation, and open space goals of the City. See the current version of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan for more details.

# 8.2 Background

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| **SECTION HEADINGS** | |
| 8.2.1 Park Standards | 8.2.2 Planning for Parks |

## 8.2.1 Park Standards

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes level-of-service standards for park and open space acreage in relation to population size. Standards vary according to park types, which include pocket parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, conservation parks, and open space. Parks are classified based on their sizes and service areas. The master plan includes an updated list of current and proposed parks.

Utilization of other facilities such as state parks, neighboring city parks, school grounds, or facilities can also address community needs through cooperative use agreements. This approach may be expanded, if public access is maintained, and especially if there is an identified shortage of City-controlled facilities in particular geographical areas or shortage of specific uses.

## 8.2.2 Planning for Parks

Advance acquisition of park land is vital to maintain level of service standards as the community grows. Once general locations have been identified as suitable for parks or open space, as set forth in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, land should be acquired in advance of actual need in order to ensure its protection and availability for future use. Once these lands are acquired, they may be leased for agricultural or other uses until the land is to be developed as a park. The acquisition and/or preservation of prime open space should be a priority.

Not all pieces of land are, however, suitable for park development. As the City considers land to purchase, receives offers of donated land, or requires park land dedication as a condition of development, it should be careful to not become caretakers of unusable or high-maintenance property. All property considered for acquisition should have a thorough study to assure that it will be beneficial as a public park or other recreation facility.

Funding sources should be established for land acquisition, facility development, operation, and ongoing maintenance of the park system. Federal and State agencies may have limited funding programs for recreation facility development, yet many of these sources have dwindled in recent years and some programs have ended altogether. Cities are having to depend more and more on local revenues, donations, and volunteerism to develop parks and recreation programs. Provo should take advantage of any opportunities to leverage existing funding with outside grant resources. However, an annual commitment should be maintained within the capital improvement program for park property acquisition, new park development, and existing park renovation.

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# 8.3 Vision

*Vision 2030 states:*

Provo City is nationally recognized as one of America's most livable cities. Provo's natural recreational amenities and varied leisure opportunities are integral parts of its outstanding quality of life and livability.

Humankind has always sought opportunities to relax, restore, and invigorate the mind and body. The pursuit of and participation in leisure activities are essential factors in health and well-being.

Provo's excellent opportunities for cultural arts, entertainment, and recreation for all citizens are among the best in the Intermountain West. These opportunities are essential for all ages because they improve the quality of life for those who participate regularly. Providing a wide range of recreational opportunities that appeal to the largest cross-section of our citizens is a primary goal of Provo City.

# 8.4 Goals and Implementation

**8.4.1 Provide a system of attractive and accessible parks and recreation facilities that will provide a complete range of activities for all age groups.**

**8.4.2 Encourage and provide increased public access to natural amenities such as the Provo River, Utah Lake, Rock Canyon, Slate Canyon and Provo Canyon, and mountain open space.**

**8.4.3 Promote efficiency and resource conservation in the selection, design, operation, and maintenance of parks and recreation facilities.**

**8.4.4 Plan for and manage a system of non-motorized trails and multi-use pathways that connect recreation facilities and encourage walking and bicycling as alternative modes of transportation and for recreation. These trails should complement and align with the transportation Master Plan.**

**8.4.5 Provide a well-rounded selection of recreation programs and activities that will provide uplifting, healthful, enjoyable, and personally satisfying experiences for Provo City residents of all ages.**

**8.4.6 Pursue special events of regional, statewide, national, and international significance to intensify community pride, enhance economic development, and assist in providing lasting facilities to be used by City residents.**

**8.4.7 Protect and provide enhanced opportunities and facilities for the arts, entertainment, and museums reflecting Provo’s status as the county seat of the second most populated county in the state of Utah.**

**8.4.8 Develop funding sources and strategies to supplement appropriation from the City general fund to provide parks and recreation facilities.**

**8.4.9 Operate a City Cemetery that will continue to provide a variety of interment services that meet the needs of residents and add beauty and dignity to the community.**

**8.4.10 Conduct a feasibility study to evaluate an expansion of facilities at the Covey Center for the Performing Arts.**

**8.4.11 Update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan on five ~~to seven~~ year intervals to assure that it provides for the current needs of the community.**

**8.4.12 Consider options to expand the use of the Peaks Ice Arena that may include additional fitness and recreational opportunities.**

**8.4.13 Identify potential parkland in growth areas within the City based on level of service analysis.**

**8.4.14 Operate the East Bay Golf Course in a cost-effective manner to benefit the community.**

**8.4.15 Explore opportunities to establish a recreational beach and other site improvements and amenities near the Utah Lake boat harbor.**

**8.4.16 Operate a world-class municipal recreation center that continues to meet the needs of the community.**