

**Park Views – January 24, 2019**  
**Help with Goal Setting for Parks & Recreation**  
**By, APRC Commissioners Rick Landt and Mike Gardiner**

Every two years at the beginning of the City's biannual budget process, Ashland Parks & Recreation Commission (APRC) staff and Commissioners determine goals for the coming years. Goal setting for APRC will occur next month.

There will be a listening session February 11th for citizens and interest groups who would like to share their ideas of what APRC should be focusing on over the next two plus years. Additionally, an online survey is up and running for those disinclined to attend a meeting. Hard copy surveys will also be accepted.

The APRC goals have in the past and will continue in the future to shape parks and recreation facilities in Ashland. A review of a few of APRC's past goals may be helpful in understanding the value of the goal setting.

The goal from two years ago to "improve the antiquated irrigation system at Oak Knoll Golf Course" has been completed, resulting in less labor costs to fix deteriorating infrastructure and lower water use (better for the environment and a cost saving).

One of our top goals from four years ago was to "negotiate with the Ashland YMCA to rid APRC of the restrictive deed that [governed] the use of APRC's "YMCA" Park." The 1980's deed gave the Ashland YMCA preferred use of the park for the majority of the year thereby limiting use by the general public. APRC's mission includes ensuring that all developed park spaces are accessible to the public and are not underutilized. This goal was furthered in 2017 by selling this park land to the Ashland YMCA. The proceeds from that sale, along with the sale of an adjacent APRC property to the Housing Authority of Jackson County for affordable housing, has allowed APRC to purchase a 5+ acre parcel on East Main Street for a replacement neighborhood park and a second dog park for Ashland residents. A second dog park at the south end of town was also one of the top priorities of our 2017-2018 budget cycle. Money from the sale of these two properties, plus the money already set aside by APRC for the second dog park not only pays for the new property, but also will pay for the development of the property.

Another goal was to "evaluate grant and other funding opportunities for a Nature Play area at North Mountain Park." A \$15,000 allocation by APRC Commissioners as a result of goal setting in 2017 was leveraged by staff into grants and donations totally over \$200,000, resulting in an innovative nature play area adjacent to the Nature Center at NMP in the near future.

“Pursue the evaluation of, and funding for, renovation or replacement of Daniel Meyer Pool into a year-round recreation and competitive aquatics facility” is another goal from four years ago that is in progress with two workshops planned to hear what citizens are looking for in aquatic facilities. The Workshops are:

- Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave.
- Thursday, March 21, 2019, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at The Grove, 1195 East Main St.

Some goals, like the one to “expand Bear Creek Greenway to its originally planned beginning/ending point at Emigrant Lake” will take many years to fulfill. Consistent with the goal, APRC recently purchased 11 acres along Bear Creek for City trail expansion, creek preservation and possible inclusion in the Greenway plan.

As one can see, having park and recreation goals sets a course of action for Ashland’s Parks and Recreation facilities. APRC Commissioners and staff invite you participate in the goal setting process by providing your input.

The listening session is scheduled for February 11, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Grove located at 1195 E Main in Ashland. Online survey forms can be accessed at [Ashland.or.us/APRCGoalsSurvey](http://Ashland.or.us/APRCGoalsSurvey). Hard copy surveys can be picked up at the Senior Center at 1699 Homes in Ashland and the Grove.