

Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Julie Fitzgerald Supporting SB 1576-A: Legislation Restores Public Access to Free Trails and Recreational Facilities

Scheduled for public hearing on Feb. 27, 2024, before the House Committee On Judiciary

Co-Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Andersen and Whalen, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying in strong support of SB 1576-A, which restores recreational immunity for all local governments that allow the public to walk and recreate on their properties. Public access to trails and parks is a top-priority for the City of Wilsonville residents, visitors and employees of Wilsonville businesses.

Wilsonville's park system, which includes sports fields, sport courts, picnic shelters, trails and open spaces, also provides diverse recreational programming for all ages and abilities. The park system has grown by 23% over the past 10 ten years, from 230 acres in 2013 to 283 acres in 2023 with 18 parks, and is expected to continue to add acreage and facilities as City population growth continues. METRO's 250-acre Graham Oaks Nature Park, located adjacent to the City, features three miles of trails, which connect to the regional Ice Age Tonquin Trail.

The Oregon Public Use of Lands Act passed in 1995 with a goal of encouraging public and private owners of land to make their land available to the public for recreational purposes. The purpose of the Act was to facilitate the ability of landowners, both public and private, that made their land available without charge for recreational use by the public were not liable if a person was injured while using the land for recreational purposes.

The Act increased the availability of land for free recreation by limiting liability to cities, counties, parks, schools and a wide range of private owners, including farmers and timber companies that allow hunters, anglers, hikers, mountain bikers and other members of the public to use or traverse their lands at no charge.

SB 1576-A adds "walking, running, and biking" to the definition of recreational purposes (ORS 105.672) and adds improved trails to the recreational immunity provided via ORS 105.688. During the 2024 Interim period, the legislature could form a workgroup to pursue a more comprehensive fix to the recreational immunity statutes with all stakeholders at the table to be introduced in the 2025 legislative session.

The City of Wilsonville encourages a Do-Pass vote on SB 1576-A. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julie Fitzgerald, Mayor, City of Wilsonville

Attachment: City of Wilsonville Parks & Recreation Brochure

Willamette River

The Willamette River originates between the Cascade Mountains and the Coast Range. The area between

these two ranges is referred to as the Willamette Valley. While the Willamette River is one of the nation's largest rivers, it

also has the unique distinction of being one of only a handful of rivers that flows north. Because of the Chehalem Mountains, the river flows from west to east through the city separating the Charbonneau District to the south. The Willamette has always been a significant resource for Wilsonville. Historically, the Boone's Ferry crossed the river and connected Salem to Portland. This is the reason that Wilsonville was originally established. The river lies within the largest watershed in Oregon and provides a potable water source for the community. On average, 21 billion gallons of water flow past the Wilsonville banks daily. Downstream from Wilsonville, the river flows

Coffee Lake Wetlands

through Portland to its confluence

with the Columbia River.

Coffee Lake Creek originates in the Tualatin-Sherwood area and flows south through Wilsonville to the Willamette River. The wetland habitat along the creek supports many important species of migratory and resident wildlife and native wetland plants. The Coffee Lake Wetlands is a part of the larger Tonquin Geological area whose unique landscape includes formations such as kolk ponds and basalt hummocks that were formed during the Missoula Floods some 13,000 to 15,000 years ago. In 2008, Boeckman Road was extended over the wetlands

> with a pedestrian side walk providing wildlife viewing opportunities. The impact of development was minimized with wetland mitigation and wildlife passage struc-

tures. A variety of wildlife including great blue heron, osprey, bobcat, raccoon, black-tailed deer and Northern redlegged frogs have been observed in this unique ecosystem.



Memorial Park is the City's center for active outdoor recreation and organized community team sports. It is a place where people gather for special events, picnics and day camps. There is a very clear distinction between the developed, grassy portions of the recreational core of the park and the forests that form a dense vegetative envelope that surrounds the recreational sports complex. Memorial Park features many amenities including: fields used for baseball/softball/soccer, $boat\ dock, picnic\ areas, sand\ volleyball,\ disc\ golf,\ pickleball,\ drinking\ fountains,\ restroom\ facilities,\ an\ off\ leash\ dog\ run,$ tennis and basketball courts, skatepark, playgrounds and picnic shelters that can be rented for group functions.

cherished resource for the community and offers a diversity of active and passive recreational opportunities.

Undeveloped portions of the park feature forested areas, stream riparian corridors and open meadow landscapes. Boeckman Creek bisects the park and joins the Willamette River just outside the southeast corner of the park. A pedestrian bridge over the creek provides an opportunity to view the City's first fish passage and stream restoration project Approximately 50 acres of native forest can be explored in the park. The native landscapes of the park provide wonderful opportunities for walking and observing wildlife.

During the spring of 2015, the park recieved an updated 10-year Master Plan including: park rehabilitation, enhancement of existing elements and the addition of new recreational features.

Murase Plaza

Murase Plaza has become the community's playground. The interactive water feature and spray deck serve as a gateway into Memorial Park. As visitors move through the park, the amenities create a series of experiences that move the visitor from today to the City's rich past. Park users transition from urban to rural and architectural to nature as they move east across the park towards Boeckman Creek. An old nut orchard and the century old Stein-Boozier barn sit adjacent to the children's play area. Overall, the peaceful setting provides a draw for all ages and activity levels.

The Murase playground contains two large play structures with one of the structures being fully accessible.

Town Center Park and Oregon Korean War Memorial

Town Center Park, an urban park located in the heart of the city, is a popular destination for people of all ages. One of the highlights of the park is a water feature where kids can play and splash on hot summer days. The park includes a large grassy area, kids play area, half-court basketball court, picnic areas and is home to community concerts and festivals. The Parks and Recreation Administrative Offices are also located within

The Oregon Korean War Memorial was dedicated in Town Center Park on September 30, 2000. The memorial centerpiece is a 94 foot long 'Wall of Honor' containing the names of 287 Oregon service men and women killed in the Korean War. A bronze statue honoring General Douglas MacArthur is also located at the

Boones Ferry Park

Boone's Ferry Park is located along the Willamette River at the terminus of Boone's Ferry Road in Old Town. The park is the former location of the Boone's Ferry which crossed the Willamette River. River ferries crossed here for 107 years, transporting thousands of horses, cows, buggies, automobiles and pedestrians across the river connecting Salem to Portland prior to the completion of Interstate 5. Boone's Ferry ceased operations in 1954. The Tauchman House, located in Boone's Ferry Park, is a turn-of-the-century house available for private events. From Boone's Ferry Park, a trail under the Boone bridge connects to Memorial Park.

During the fall of 2018, the park recieved an updated Master Plan including: greater river access, a dog park, a new playground, increased trails and a landing site for the French Prairie Bridge.



Graham Oaks Nature Park

Adjacent to the western city limits, the 250-acre Graham Oaks Nature Park is a part of the regional open space system. Owned and operated by Metro, the site improvements provide visitors with opportunities to interact with nature. Graham Oaks

showcases sustainable development practices and includes a small parking lot along Wilsonville Road, a hierarchy of trail types with miles of walking and cycling paths, a picnic shelter, restrooms, interpretive nodes with seating, educational information and areas for quiet contemplation. The site was completely restored in 2007, with over 150,000 trees and shrubs being planted in six different habitat types.

The site contains a mix of forested terrain, seasonal wetlands and Oregon white oak savanna offering rich wildlife viewing opportunities.

Paths traverse the site connecting to existing neighborhoods and schools and the CREST environmental education center, providing visitors with opportunities to interact with diverse habitats and wildlife.

Natural Areas and Native Habitats

A diversity of native habitats can be found within Wilsonville's park system. In the Willamette Valley, landscapes and plant communities have

> been influenced by geologic events, climate and cultural history. Glaciations, volcanic

eruptions, earthguakes and floods have shaped the land-

scape and created distinct soils and landforms. Native people maintained open pasture through periodic burns and settlers cleared extensive areas for agriculture. Native habitats such as meadows, coniferous forests, mixed deciduous woodlands, riparian corridors and wetlands are all accessible in local parks. Take a moment to visit the Oregon Ash forested wetland at Park at Merryfield or the mixed coniferous/deciduous forests of Memorial Park

Arrowhead Creek Park 10350 SW Arrowhead Creek Lane

Boones Ferry Park

31240 SW Boones Ferry Road

Canyon Creek Park 26610 SW Canvon Creek Road

28970 SW Costa Circle West

11825 SW Wilsonville Road

Hathaway Park

Memorial Park 8100 SW Memorial Drive

Murase Plaza

28732 SW Costa Circle East

11249 SW Champoeg Drive

Town Center Park

Tranquil Park

Trocadero Park

Willow Creek - Landover Park

Courtside Park 7665 SW Wimbledon Circle South Edelweiss Park

SW Montebello Drive Graham Oaks Nature Park

29455 SW Meadow Loop

8300 SW Memorial Drive Palermo Park

Park at Merryfield 29778 SW Camelot Street

Piccadilly Park 28870 SW Costa Cirle West River Fox Park

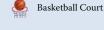
Sofia Park

28350 SW Willow Creek Drive

Park Amenities 🛟 🥺 🧶 🥟 🎤 🔯 🖼 🚭 🍪 📆 🦠 🚻 📵 📔 Arrowhead Creek Park Boones Ferry Park Canyon Creek Park Courtside Park Edelweiss Park Engelmann Park Graham Oaks (Metro Owned) Hathaway Park Memorial Park Murase Plaza Palermo Park Park at Merryfield Piccadilly Park River Fox Park Sofia Park Town Center Park Tranquil Park Trocadero Park Willow Creek Landover Park





























Park Rules

In an effort to keep Wilsonville parks safe and enjoyable for all users we ask that you obey the following:

Park hours are 5:00am to 10:00pm unless otherwise approved.

Alcohol is not permitted in Wilsonville parks unless approved by permit.

All Wilsonville parks are smoke and tobacco-free.

Keep pets on-leash except in the Dog Park located at Memorial Park; properly dispose of pet waste.

Overnight camping is not allowed in Wilsonville parks.

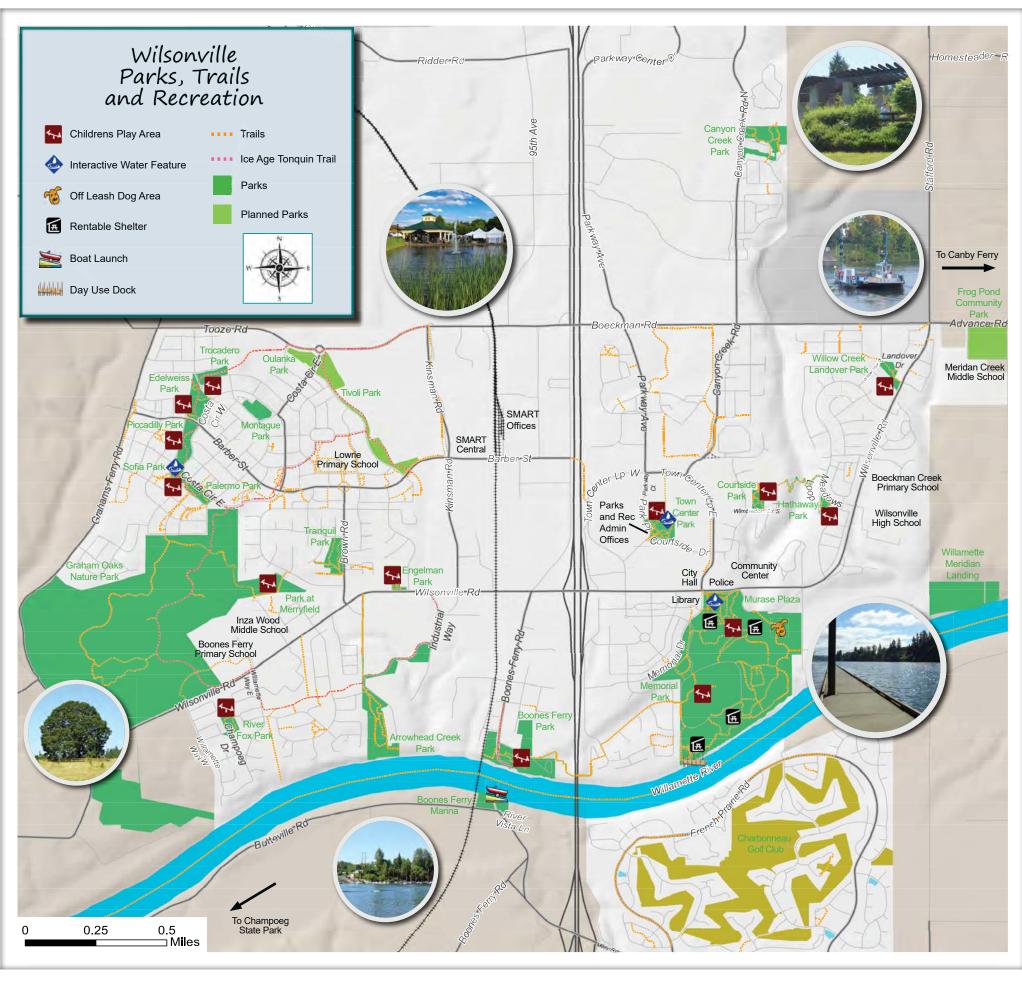
No open flames, fires, charcoal grills or camp stoves shall be allowed. Propane grills may be used but must be kept on paved surfaces.

No person shall possess any loaded firearm; discharge any firearm, pellet gun, bow and arrow, slingshot, or other weapon capable of inflicting injury on any person, bird or animal.

No removal of, or damage to, park grounds, structures or facilities







Park Facility Rental

Stein-Boozier Barn

Murase Plaza, with a main gathering space of 1,325 square feet. Amenities include: clear bulb string-lighting, tables & chairs, and a 10' bar with a sink. The area in front of the barn contains terraced basalt stone seating and both front and rear sliding doors can be opened. Maximum capacity: 96



River Shelter

The River Shelter at Memorial Park sits in the SW corner of the park near ball field 5. This is the largest covered shelter in the park and its amenities include: electricity, water, 16 picnic tables, and a large grassy area suitable for lawn games. River access is just a short walk away. Maximum capacity: 200



The Forest Shelter at Memorial Park sits in the SE corner of the park and is a secluded shady shelter near ball field 3. Amenities include: electricity, water, and 20 picnic tables. The surrounding area is very wooded with a small sloping grassy area. Maximum capacity: 150



Field Rental

Memorial Park

Fields are available for rent from April 1st to October 31st depending on weather conditions.

There are 5 baseball/softball fields and 3 soccer fields. The outfield of ball field 4 can be used for small sided soccer games.

Baseball/Softball Fields Dimensions:

Fields 1 and 2: Dirt infields with 60', 65', 70' and 80' base length capabilities

Field 3: Grass infield with pitching mound and 70, 80, and 90' base length capabilities

Field 4: Dirt infield with 60', 65', and 70' base length capabilities

Field 5: Dirt infield with 60' and 65' base length



Recreational Opportunities

The City of Wilsonville is dedicated to creating community through people, parks, and programs. We strive to enrich the lives of Wilsonville citizens by providing diverse opportunities for personal development and social interaction.



Rec Department provides recreation programs, encompassing all age groups from preschool to older adults and offering community members a chance to experience the

arts, fitness programs, sports activities, family events and a wide range of classes

To find out more information about our great program offerings, youth sports or special events please visit the Parks and Rec website.

Wilsonville Parks



