



Kitsap County Parks Department

Staff Report and Recommendation 2025 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan Update

Report Date: May 1, 2025

Hearing Date: May 20, 2025

Amendment Type: County-Sponsored Amendment

Description: The Kitsap County Community Development Department proposes to update the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan. The PROS Plan Update is also an amendment to the 2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan to adopt the PROS Plan by reference.

Geographic Area Affected: Unincorporated Kitsap County

SEPA: Determination of Non-Significance

Department Recommendation: Adopt as proposed

This report and recommendation are based on information available at the time of publication. If new relevant and material facts are discovered through the public comment process before the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners (Board) as outlined in Chapter 21.08, this staff report may be revised, and the department recommendation may be modified.

1. BACKGROUND

The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) plan is a 6-year strategic plan that is premised on an analysis of department operations and existing parks and recreation facilities, conducting a needs analysis through robust community engagement, and from this, developing goals and objectives to guide policy and management and a list of capital improvement projects. The PROS plan is intended to help align the future direction of the Parks department with information gathered from the community. The Growth Management Act requires municipalities to develop comprehensive parks and open space plans and the PROS plan functions as this effort; upon approval, the PROS plan will be adopted into the Comprehensive Plan at the end of the year. It is also a requirement to be eligible for grants through the State’s Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

A. Authority

The Growth Management Act (GMA) mandates that Kitsap County’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations be reviewed and, if needed, revised at least every 8 years [RCW 36.70A.130(5)]. The most recent Kitsap County periodic update concluded with the adoption of the 2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan on December 2, 2024. The GMA also mandates that Kitsap County’s Comprehensive Plan and development regulations be subject to continuing review and evaluation, allowing for annual amendments to the Comprehensive Plan [RCW 36.70A.130(1)] and as-needed updates to development regulations to ensure consistency with desired development outcomes.

B. Proposed Amendment

The proposed amendment is to update Kitsap County’s Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan and adopt the PROS Plan by reference in the 2024 Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 6 (Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element).

C. Geographic Description

The amendment applies to all of Unincorporated Kitsap County.

2. DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Having analyzed the proposed amendment and other alternatives, if applicable, the Department recommends:

- Adoption of the amendment:
 - as proposed above
 - as described in Alternative ___ below
 - with revisions described below
 - with conditions described below
- Deferral of the amendment to a future docket
- Denial of the amendment

A. Rationale

Substantive Findings:

- The PROS Plan was developed with opportunities for public participation and comment as required by GMA and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW.
- The PROS Plan was developed according to, and is compliant with, the requirements of RCO, GMA, chapter 36.70A RCW, the Countywide Planning Policies, the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan, Kitsap County Code, and other applicable laws and policies.
- The PROS Plan is consistent with the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan by:
 - (a) Promoting a system of parks and recreation facilities to serve a population of diverse ages, backgrounds, abilities, and interests.
 - (b) Directing the development and implementation of natural resource management plans for lands managed for conservation and preservation.
 - (c) Promoting equitable access to parks and open spaces.
 - (d) Fulfilling state requirements for parks and open space planning and remaining eligible for RCO grants.

Procedural Findings:

- Public outreach regarding the PROS Plan was conducted through a dedicated up-to-date web page, social media postings, postings in the Kitsap Sun newspaper, and direct notification to all Kitsap County GovDelivery subscribers.
- On April 15, 2025, during a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting, the Planning Commission held a briefing to review the scope and purpose of the PROS Plan Update.
- On May 6, 2025, during a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting, the Planning Commission held a work study session to review and discuss the proposed PROS Plan Update.
- On April 29, 2025, a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determination of Non-significance was issued for proposed amendments. A 14-day comment period concluded on May 13, 2025.
- On May 5, 2025, the County published the draft PROS Plan and Appendices, SEPA DNS, and SEPA checklist to the Planning Commission website.
- On May 20, 2025, following timely and effective public notification, the Planning Commission held a public hearing to accept comments from interested parties.

3. OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No other alternatives were considered during the development of the PROS Plan.

4. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

Parks staff submitted a PROS Plan and Comprehensive Plan consistency review to DCD on April 2, 2025 for review. DCD staff determined the PROS Plan to be compatible with the 2024 Comprehensive Plan on April 2, 2025. The 2025 PROS Plan is an update to the 2018 PROS Plan, which is already in the Comprehensive Plan.

The proposal is supportive of the Kitsap County Mission:

Kitsap County government exists to protect and promote the safety, health and well-being of all County residents in an efficient, effective, and responsive manner.

The proposal supports elements of the Kitsap County Vision Statement:

- An Engaged and Connected Community – Establish strong connections with and among residents, community groups, neighborhoods and organizations through timely, useful, inclusive, and responsive communication, outreach and events. Inform and engage residents where they are, respecting local input in transparent and decision-making.
- A Healthy and Livable Community – Enhance our quality of life through protection of our air quality, water quality, natural systems and promote open spaces, walkable communities, accessible health care, and education and recreational opportunities that are welcoming for all people.

5. DEPARTMENT ANALYSIS:

The Parks Department recommends approval of the PROS Plan for the following reasons:

1. State Requirements & Grant Eligibility – GMA requires jurisdictions to have comprehensive parks and open space plans and the PROS Plan functions as this effort. Additionally, to remain eligible for their grant program, RCO requires jurisdictions to review and update their PROS Plans every six years. The last PROS Plan was approved in 2018, meaning an update is due.
2. Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) – The PROS Plan, through robust community engagement and a demand and needs analysis, identified several capital projects that will serve as the basis for the Department’s CFP and Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
3. Goals & Objectives – The goals and objectives section contained within the PROS Plan serves as a guide to inform Department decision making.
4. Recreation Opportunities – The PROS Plan promotes diverse and accessible recreation opportunities for all park users and includes projects intended to make improvements to existing facilities and improve equitable access to parks and open spaces.
5. Environmental Protection – The Parks Department manages over 9,000 acres of open space. The PROS Plan promotes preservation and restoration of the natural environment and directs the Department to develop and implement natural resource management plans for lands managed for conservation and preservation.

6. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)

The Kitsap County's SEPA Official has reviewed the SEPA checklist prepared for this amendment and has issued a SEPA Threshold Determination of Non-Significance (DNS). Notice of this SEPA threshold determination was:

- Filed with the Washington State Department of Ecology SEPA Register;
- Published in the Kitsap Sun newspaper; and
- Distributed directly via email to the Kitsap County's SEPA Programmatic Contact List.

7. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH

Kitsap County's public involvement and outreach for the PROS Plan meets the requirements of the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A) of early and continuous involvement, as well as the procedures outlined in Kitsap County Code (KCC 21.08). The Department conducted early and often public outreach as shown below.

Outreach:

- Sent notifications for public engagement opportunities via GovDelivery (all Kitsap County subscribers), Volgistics (the Department's volunteer contact list), RecDesk (the Department's events and facility renters contact list), social media posts (via both Kitsap County and Parks Department accounts), and flyers placed at parks. Public engagement opportunities throughout process included three community surveys, community open houses, interviews with stakeholder groups, and a five-week public comment period (which included three community presentations).
- Provided project website for the PROS Plan Update. Project website includes overview of the project, original and revised drafts of the PROS Plan, comments received during the public comment period, a list of edits made to the PROS Plan, public presentation, and a project schedule: [Kitsap County Parks - PROS Plan](#)
- The Department of Community Development issued a SEPA DNS on April 29, 2025, which included a 14-day public comment period (closed on May 13, 2025).
- The Planning Commission Public Hearing public comment period ran from May 5, 2025 to May 20, 2025. The public could learn more about the PROS Plan by:
 - Attending applicable Planning Commission meetings;
 - Contacting the Parks Department at parks@kitsap.gov; and
 - Visiting the PROS Plan website
- To be included in the official record, written comments must be submitted to the Parks Department by May 20, 2025. Unless extended, comments must be submitted before 11:59 PM by one of the following methods:
 - Emailed to ccsmith@kitsap.gov
 - Mailed to 614 Division Street – MS1, Port Orchard, WA 98366; or
 - Dropped off at the Parks Department Office at 1195 Fairgrounds Rd, Bremerton, WA.
- Oral and written testimony may also be made to the Kitsap County Planning Commission at the public hearing scheduled at 5:30 PM on May 20, 2025 in the

- Commissioner’s Chambers on the 3rd Floor of the Kitsap County Administration Building (619 Division Street, Port Orchard, WA). A remote option, via zoom is provided. The planning commission webpage will provide the necessary information for this meeting.
- Notifications and announcements regarding this comment period and public hearing include the following:
 - Legal notice published in the Kitsap Sun newspaper; and
 - Electronic announcements via GovDelivery.

8. STAFF CONTACT

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