

# PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT

## TABLE OF CONTENT

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Growth Management Act Requirements.....	3
2. Purpose of the Parks and Recreation Element.....	3
3. Planning Area.....	3

### **II. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

1. Parks and Open Space.....	4
2. Facilities Within Brier.....	4
a. Active Parks.....	6
b. Passive/Natural Open Space.....	7
3. Other Parks and Recreation Facilities in Close Proximity to Brier.....	11

### **III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

1. Public Input.....	13
2. 2014 Community Survey Results .....	14

### **IV. PARK AND RECREATION LEVEL OF SERVICE**

1. Previous Level of Service.....	16
2. Revised Level of Service.....	17
3. Park System Value per Capita.....	18
4. Park Pedestrian Access.....	19
5. Impact Fees.....	20
6. Potential Future Parks and Open Space Areas.....	21

### **V. GOALS AND POLICIES**

1. Goals and Policies.....	23
----------------------------	----

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

1. Park Locations .....	9
Trails System.....	10

### **LIST OF TABLES**

1. Brier Park and Open Space Facilities.....	5
2. Trails and Connections.....	6
3. Park, Open Space, and School Facilities.....	11
4. Assessed Land Value – City of Brier Park Properties .....	18
5. Estimated Facility Replacement Costs.....	19
6. 2014 Park System per Capita Value.....	19

7. Additional Park System Value Needed for Growth.....21  
8. Maximum Park Impact Fee per Dwelling Unit.....21

# **PARKS AND RECREATION ELEMENT**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Growth Management Act Requirements**

The Washington Growth Management Act identifies a parks and recreation element as optional. As an optional element, there are no requirements prescribed in the law to be included in the Plan. However, one of the relevant goals of the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) follows:

***“Open space and recreation: Encourage the retention of open space, development of recreational opportunities, conserve wildlife habitat and increase access to natural resource lands.”***

As this Element was developed, the Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Plan, the Countywide Planning policies, and the requirements of the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) were reviewed and considered to ensure that Brier’s Plan is consistent with those documents. This starting point of this document is the 1989 Comprehensive Park, Trail & Open Space Plan, which has been updated and expanded, and the City of Brier 1994 Comprehensive Plan.

### **2. Purpose of the Parks and Recreation Element**

The Parks and Recreation Element gives a snapshot of the current state of the parks and open space system in Brier and identifies a plan to address the existing and future parks and recreation needs and demands. The Plan will serve as a guide and provide policy direction for the development of a parks and recreation system over the next 15-20 years.

It is also anticipated that the Parks and Recreation Element, as part of the overall Comprehensive Plan, will enable the City to be eligible for and successfully compete for county, state, and federal grants.

### **3. Planning Area**

The City of Brier is a residential community located in south Snohomish County. The total land area is approximately 2.13 square miles. The estimated 2014 population for Brier is 6,345 persons and it is projected to grow by another 666 persons to reach a population of 7,011 by 2035.

The “Municipal Urban Growth Area” (MUGA) for Brier is located to the east and north of the City. The land area is slightly larger than the City boundaries, and includes approximately 2.67 square miles. At this time there are no population estimates for the MUGA because it will be studied at a later date.

Brier’s natural environment is characterized by two major creek systems: Scriber/Swamp Creek corridor located on the east and north sides of Brier, and the Lyon Creek corridor, located along Brier’s west side. Other small creeks and springs are a

part of Brier's landscape. There is one lake, Abbey View Pond, located in the southwest part of the City, which is used as an irrigation reservoir by the adjacent cemetery. There also are areas of wooded slopes, ravines, wet forestland, and wetlands throughout Brier. Wildlife habitats are supported by these natural resources.

Brier's parks system consists of 26.3 acres of active parks and recreation areas and 41.9 acres of passive open space plus several trails. These resources are described in greater detail in the following section. In addition to the City-owned resources, there are two school properties, which also offer additional parks and recreation opportunities. They are an important component of the overall parks and recreation facilities available to City residents.

## **II. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **1. Parks and Open Space**

There are two primary types of parks within Brier: Active Parks and Passive Open Space, with one park a combination of both. Active parks include both neighborhood and community parks. Neighborhood parks in Brier are small parks, from 1-10 acres, and located close to neighborhoods, for which they are intended to serve. The service area for this type of park is ½ mile. Community parks in Brier are larger parks, at least 10 acres in size. These centrally located parks offer multiple activities to appeal to a variety of age groups. This type of park's service area is 1 mile or more. Open space does not have a particular service area, but is generally associated with environmental features, which need to be preserved. These parks are usually not developed, but are meant to be used in their natural state. The combination park has a service area for the local community, but also incorporates a large natural wetland area.

Either a community park or a neighborhood park, or both serve most of Brier's land area. There also are two schools located in the western part of Brier, which provide additional recreation opportunities within the City.

### **2. Facilities Within Brier**

Brier's parks and recreation, and open space facilities and trails are summarized in Table 1 and Table 2, followed by more detailed descriptions for each facility. In 2014, the City has five active parks (Brier Park, Brier Patch Park, Bobcat Park, and parks at the Wynbrook and Wynbrook II developments) and five passive/open space areas (Locust Creek Park, City Light Woods Park, Scriber Creek Greenbelt, Sunbrook Open Space and Hickory Park). Brier Park is a large and diverse community park while the other four parks, Brier Patch Park, Bobcat Park, Wynbrook Park and Wynbrook II Park are smaller-scale neighborhood parks. One additional park located in the northeast section of Brier serves as both an active park and a large passive/open space area, Brierwood Park. In addition, Brier Terrace Middle School and Brier Elementary School have recreation and open space facilities onsite. Because the school facilities are controlled and operated by the School District and not always available for general public use, they have not been included in the calculation for park and open space land within Brier, but they are shown separately on the tables.

**TABLE 1**  
**Brier Park and Open Space Facilities**  
**(Acres)**

<b>PARK FACILITY</b>	<b>ACTIVE-NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>ACTIVE-COMMUNITY</b>	<b>OPEN SPACE</b>
<b>Active</b>			
Brier Park		12.8	
Bobcat Park	1.2		
Brier Patch Park	.39		
Wynbrook	.14		
Wynbrook II	.31		
<b>Open Space</b>			
Scriber Cr. Greenbelt			8.7
City Light Woods			5.0
Locust Creek Park			4.7
Hickory Park			5.17
Miscellaneous Open Sp.			9
<b>Combination Active/Open</b>			
Brierwood Park	9.5		32.6
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	11.09 acres	12.8 acres	42.4 acres
<b>Trails/Connections</b>			
Developed		1.24	
Undeveloped		3.04	
<b>Schools</b>			
Brier Elementary		10.3	
Brier Terrace Middle		22.7	

Source: City of Brier, 2014 and Edmonds School District, 12/98

**TABLE 2**  
**Trails and Connections**

<b>Developed Trails/Connections</b>	<b>Miles</b>	<b>Undeveloped Trails/Connections</b>	<b>Miles</b>
Brier Park Trails	.44	City Light Park Trails	.25
Brierwood Park Trails	.02	Brier Road Poplar Way (east side)	2.35
Brier Elem. Access (232nd to School)	.02	Middle School Access (3210 Russet, south to school)	.08
Brier Elem. Access (228 <sup>th</sup> to School)	.23	Zuger Trail (end of Hickory Way, north to Vine)	.11
Briergate (39 <sup>th</sup> W., north to 228 <sup>th</sup> )	.06	28 <sup>th</sup> Ave. W. (vacated, south to Allview Way)	.25
Brierwood Foot Bridges/Trails		Locust Creek Cribwall Trail	0.25
Elm Drive to 214 <sup>th</sup> Pl. SW	.06		
Oak Way to 20 <sup>th</sup> Pl. W	.06		
Castle Crest #1 (Closed Trail to H.S.)	.03		
Castle Crest #2 (37 <sup>th</sup> Pl. W., w. to H.S.)	.03		
Emergency Access (219 <sup>th</sup> SW , south to 38 <sup>th</sup> )	.01		
Sunbrook Open Space	.01		
Emergency Access (34 <sup>th</sup> Ave. W., south to 34 <sup>th</sup> )	.02		
Middle School Access (32 <sup>nd</sup> Ave. W., north to school)	.03		
Middle School Access (34 <sup>th</sup> Pl. W., east to school)	.03		
Timbervale Stair Trail (Russet to 35 <sup>th</sup> )	.03		
220 <sup>th</sup> Pl. Stairs to Mountlake Terrace	.02		
20 Russet Rd. to 32 <sup>nd</sup> Pl. W. (370')	.10		
34 <sup>th</sup> Ave. W. to Russet Rd. (270')	.05		
<b>TOTAL MILES-Developed</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>TOTAL MILES-Undeveloped</b>	<b>3.29</b>

**a. Active Parks**

There are five active parks in Brier. Brier Park, consisting of 12.8 acres, is the centerpiece of the City's park system. It serves as a community park and is physically located in the geographic center of Brier, just east of City Hall. It includes 3 fields for baseball and soccer, tennis courts, playground equipment, horse arena, and picnicking areas, among other facilities. The wide variety of activities appeal to people of all ages.

Brier Patch Park is a neighborhood pocket park of .39 acres. There is play equipment, a half basketball court, and a picnic table.

Bobcat Park is located in the southwest quadrant of the City. This neighborhood park contains 1.2 acres and has facilities for both active and passive recreation activities. There is a full court basketball court, play equipment, a general-purpose grass playing field, picnic tables, and benches.

Wynbrook is a pocket park located in the Wynbrook development in the northeast quadrant of the city. It is .14 acres and contains a big toy, a half basketball court and a bench.

Wynbrook II is a pocket park of .31 acres. It is located in the northeast quadrant of the city. It contains climbing toys, a bench and a picnic table.

#### **b. Passive/Natural Open Space**

There are four major open space areas in Brier: Scriber Creek Greenbelt, City Light Woods, Locust Creek Park, and Hickory Park. They are not developed and are an excellent natural resource for the City, providing undeveloped land areas, wildlife habitat, and stream/wetland areas. Public access is permitted in all four areas. In addition to these areas, there are open spaces located throughout the City, which are primarily owned by or dedicated to the City.

Scriber Creek Greenbelt is located along Scriber Creek, which bisects the northeastern corner of Brier. The Greenbelt consists of 8.7 acres and runs approximately 2,000 feet downstream from Brierwood Park. There are no formal facilities, however, its proximity to Brierwood Park makes it fairly accessible. This Greenbelt was obtained through land dedication as part of the Brierwood subdivision development.

City Light Woods is located adjacent to the power line corridor and 236<sup>th</sup> St. S.W. in the southwest quadrant of Brier. The City does not own the 5-acre parcel, but it has a use agreement with Seattle City Light. The parcel is wooded and contains a moderately old stand of native growth trees surrounded by a residential setting. The park contains a casual "Information Center" with platform and bench seating for thirty. Students and teachers from nearby Brier Elementary School, as well as other social groups within Brier frequent the Information Center. The park also contains a picnic area and trails. A native plant restoration project is underway on the north end. The parcel was reserved as a substation site but has never developed for such a use.

#### Locust Creek Park

In 1998 the City received a grant from Snohomish County to acquire a 4.73-acre parcel of land for passive open space. A picnic area is available in this park, as well as a short trail running along Vine Road. This park also has a native plant restoration project underway. The parcel is located at 2218 Vine Road and its major amenity is that Locust Creek runs through it. The City acquired the land in early 1999.

Brierwood Park is a 25.8-acre neighborhood park located in the Brierwood residential area in northeast Brier. Its setting adjacent to the Scriber Creek allows this park to function as a dual purpose park, with both active and passive recreation facilities. There is a play structure, open lawns, paved trails, picnic tables, and benches within the park. This park also contains a large undeveloped open space. This land is intended to be used for passive open space to preserve a waterway and associated wetlands. There are informal trails that are not cleared or maintained.

This also includes that area formally known as Golde Creek Greenbelt. The Golde Creek Greenbelt is a natural open space comprised of over 16 acres of riparian area in the northernmost portion of the City, and is part of the Scriber Creek system in which the

stream runs through the southern edge of the greenbelt. The existence of riparian habitat; including various bird species, beavers and other typical riparian species native to the area rely on the preservation of this area.

Hickory Park This 5.17 acre park is located in the northeast quadrant of the city. It was purchased in 2014 with Snohomish Conservation Future Funds. The park consists mostly of wetlands and is headwaters to Locust Creek.

Miscellaneous Open Space is located throughout the City. The total acreage is 9 acres. Examples of these areas are in subdivisions (Briergate, Timbervale, Dundee, and Sunbrook) and the new scenic overlook in the 1.5-acre proposed County detention area in the southeast corner of the City (228<sup>th</sup> St. S.W. and Locust Way).

#### Trails/Connections

There are approximately 1.24 miles of developed trails located throughout Brier. Most of these multi-purpose trails are paved or surfaced with gravel for use by pedestrians, bicyclists, and horses. They include trails in parks, in subdivisions, and connections between subdivisions and to schools. Undeveloped trails, which are dirt or grass, total 3.04 miles. The longest undeveloped trail is located on the east side of Brier Road, extending the entire length totaling 2.35 miles. These trails and connections are also located in parks, in subdivisions, and adjacent to schools and public facilities. A list of trails and connections within Brier are shown on Table 2.

#### Schools

Brier Terrace Middle School is located west of Brier Road and south of Russet Road in the northwest quadrant of Brier. The school is operated by the Edmonds School District. Facilities are made available through the District, with school functions having priority over general public use. The total site is 22.7 acres. There is one football field, 1 baseball field and 1 softball field. Soccer is played in outfield areas of the ball fields. There is also a gymnasium at the school. Parking is located on site.

Brier Elementary School is located on 232<sup>nd</sup> St. S.W., west of 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. W., in the southwest part of Brier. This 10-acre facility is operated by the Edmonds School District and the same conditions noted above exist here. There is one baseball diamond and another field with a baseball backstop for smaller kids, a soccer field, three basketball courts, and a gymnasium on the site. Because it is an elementary school, there are different types of play equipment (e.g., tetherball, rings) and climbing structures. Parking is located on the site.

Table 3 identifies the facilities at the parks, open space, and schools in Brier.





**TABLE 3  
Park, Open Space, and School Facilities**

PARK NAME	Co	Fi	Sh	Ta	Co		Ar						
	Te	Sp	Plá	Pic	Pic	Ba	Gy	Hc	W	Opt	Be	Re	Pa
<b>Active Parks</b>													
Brier Park	2	3	✓	✓	✓	.5		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Bobcat Park		1	✓		✓	1				✓			✓
Brier Patch Park			4		1	.5							
Wynbrook			✓			.5					✓		
Wynbrook II			✓		✓					✓	✓		
<b>Passive/Natural Open Space</b>													
									✓	✓			
Scriber Cr. Greenbelt									✓	✓			
City Light Woods					2				✓		8		
Locust Creek Park (Undeveloped)					✓					✓			
Hickory Park													
<b>Combination Park</b>													
Brierwood Park			✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Miscellaneous O.S.													
<b>Schools</b>													
Brier Terrace Middle		3					✓					✓	✓
Brier Elementary		3	✓			3	✓					✓	✓

Source: City of Brier, 2004, Edmonds School District, 1998

**3. Other Parks and Recreation Facilities in Close Proximity to Brier**

These facilities are in the Close proximity to Brier.

Hazelwood Elementary

This 10.3-acre school site is operated by the Edmonds School District and is located at 204<sup>th</sup> St. S.W. and Poplar Way. It has a gym, soccer field, grass field with a baseball backstop, blacktop area with basketball hoop, and a play structure.

Logan Park

Logan Park is a County park located at 1411 Logan Road in Bothell, near Larch Way and Locust Way. The site is used as a baseball facility.

Forsgren Park

This County park is located at 23709 Carter Road in Bothell. This park's primary facilities are soccer fields.

#### Heritage Park (Lynnwood)

This park is located at the intersection of 196<sup>th</sup> Street SW and Poplar Way. It has displays of historic structures, walking paths and benches.

#### Bicentennial Park (Mountlake Terrace)

This 5-acre park is located at 4105 222<sup>nd</sup> St. SW. It has natural areas, covered shelters and picnic areas, as well as playground equipment.

#### Horizon View (Lake Forest Park)

This park is located at N.E. 201st Pl. and 47<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.E. and it is approximately 2.5 acres in size. It has an open field, half-court basketball, 1 tennis court, youth play area and playground.

#### Interurban Trail

This multi-use trail runs north-south in Lynnwood and connects to the north to Everett and to the south with Mountlake Terrace's 1.5 mile part of the Interurban Trail which is under construction.

#### Larry Egbert Park (Mountlake Terrace)

This 1-acre neighborhood park is located at 228<sup>th</sup> St. S.W. and 39th Ave. W. This park is immediately contiguous to Brier's west city limits. The facilities include playground equipment, picnic areas, and barbeque pits.

#### Mountlake Terrace Recreation Pavilion

The Pavilion is located in Mountlake Terrace adjacent to Terrace Creek Park at 5303 228<sup>th</sup> St. S.W. The facilities include a swimming pool, racquetball courts (6), classrooms, and community meeting rooms.

#### North Creek Sports fields

This 14-acre resource is located off North Creek Parkway in the Quadrant Business Park in Bothell. The site has a multi-purpose 4-field complex for either soccer or softball. It is also the trailhead for the North Creek Trail, which runs north into Snohomish County.

#### Terrace Ridge Park (Mountlake Terrace)

This park is located at 4600 242<sup>nd</sup> St. S.W. and it consists of 6 acres. It has playground equipment and picnic areas.

#### King County

King County and Seattle to the south have additional regional recreation opportunities, including the Burke-Gilman Trail which can be accessed through Lake Washington via Lake Forest Park, the zoo, the aquarium, the Seattle Center, and Green Lake.

### **III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

#### **1. Public Input**

There was a public meeting held by the Planning Commission and a public hearing held by the City Council and an on-line survey that were undertaken to determine the priorities of the community in regards to park facilities. A parks and recreation survey was provided on the city's website in October and November 2014. A notice about the survey was included in the City's quarterly newsletter.

## **2. 2014 Community Survey Results**

A link to the city's Parks and Recreation survey was provided in the City of Brier's November, 2014 newsletter which is distributed to 2,800 households in Brier. A link to the survey was also provided on the city's website and was printed on the October 2014 sewer bill. The City received 85 responses for the survey. While this survey is not considered a scientific survey, it is one way to gather data that reflect the current interests and opinions of the Brier community about the parks system. These data will be used as part of an overall public participation program to help gauge what is important to the community and to determine the future plan for the parks system in the City.

All survey respondents were asked for their age and whether they have children under 18 living at home. The majority of respondents were middle aged, with 84% of respondents being between the ages of 34 and 64. An even split of the other 16% of respondents were 25 to 34 or 65 and over. Survey respondents were evenly split in terms of whether they had children under 18 living at home.

### Current System and Use

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the amount of park land and the overall maintenance of Brier's parks, and about their current usage of park land in Brier. Overall, respondents felt that the amount of park land in Brier currently is adequate; however, the majority of those who did not respond that the amount of park land is adequate think that there is too little park land in Brier.

Survey respondents were also asked about the overall quality and maintenance of Brier's current parks. The majority of respondents (67%) feel that the current parks maintenance is either good or very good, however another 32% feel that parks maintenance is medium, poor, or very poor, showing that there is some room for parks maintenance improvements. Respondents were additionally given an opportunity to share some specific quality or maintenance concerns; much of the feedback centered around conservation and landscaping or on specific concerns about Brier Park.

Feedback about conservation and landscaping included:

- Concerns about invasive species;
- Need for additional landscaping, mowing, and weed control;
- Desire for more native plants in park landscaping; and
- Preservation of habitat for existing native species.

Specific feedback regarding Brier Park centered mostly on its sports fields and included:

- Dissatisfaction with baseball and soccer field maintenance;
- Concerns about the unevenness of park fields;
- Need for additional field irrigation; and
- Desire for better restroom maintenance and for them to be open more often.

Additional feedback indicated a desire for more parks and green space, including additional natural habitats space, to meet the growing demand from recent development.

In addition to their satisfaction with current City of Brier Parks assets, we asked respondents how often, on average, they use Brier Parks and other local and regional park assets. The results show that survey respondents, on average, use Brier parks more frequently than other local and regional park assets in their community. 72% of respondents report using City of Brier Parks at least several times per month. A large majority of respondents indicated very infrequent use of the horse arena.

To enhance the understanding of survey respondents' use of these parks, they were asked what activities they participate in at the parks. 89% of survey respondents said they walk and bike in their parks. Roughly half of respondents also use City parks for playing with or walking their dogs, social gatherings, and generally play activities. Respondents were invited to share some of the other activities they do in City parks, beyond the choices provided in the survey. Their responses include:

- Birdwatching and other wildlife viewing
- Tennis
- Horseback riding
- Bocce ball
- Skate park

Survey respondents were also asked if they experience any barriers to using City of Brier Parks. Most respondents did cite that there were some barriers to their use of Brier Parks. A lack of facilities, lack of knowledge of existing facilities, lack of time, and lack of safe pedestrian access to Brier Parks were all cited by around 15% of respondents as barriers to their use of parks. Other responses included lack of natural and open space, lack of trails, lack of police presence and public safety concerns, and need for lighting.

#### Future Priorities

Survey respondents were asked to list their top three priorities for additional parks and recreation space. The top ten priorities (priorities mentioned more than ten times) given are:

- Walking space;
- Open space;
- Dog park/Off-leash area;
- Bird and wildlife watching;
- Trails;
- Sports fields;
- Family activity space

The results show that walking space and trails, which may be achievable through the same facility, are the top priority of survey respondents. Open space and family activity space, which may again be achievable through the same facility, are also high priorities, as are sports fields. Other activity spaces that survey respondents would like to see in future parks include playgrounds, picnic areas, equestrian trails, and biking space.

#### Future Funding

To increase current services and meet future priorities, additional funding may be needed. Survey respondents were asked whether they would support additional funding

measures (which might include taxes, bond issues, local improvement districts, or other special measures) for either additional park improvements and features or for improved parks maintenance. On both cases, there was support for additional funding measures, with over 90% of respondents in each case identifying that they would or that they might be willing to support an additional funding measure to support City of Brier parks. In fact, over 50 out of 80 respondents overall said in the survey that they would support one or more of these funding measures.

### Summary

On the whole, survey respondents were satisfied with City parks and most believe that the current amount of park space is adequate, though a sizeable minority (38%) would like more. Respondents commonly use Brier parks for general recreational activities, such as walking, playing with their dogs, social/family gatherings, or general play. Reasons why residents don't use City parks more often or use parks outside Brier included safety (lighting and police presence) and maintenance of facilities, especially weed control, athletic fields, and restrooms. Also cited were a lack of trails, open space, and non-motorized access from other parts of the city.

Walking space, open space, and off-leash dog parks were the highest priorities cited by respondents for future park development, and a large majority of respondents indicated that they were willing to support or consider additional funding measures to support park improvements and maintenance.

## **IV. PARK AND RECREATION LEVEL OF SERVICE**

### **1. Previous Level of Service**

#### Description

The City's previous level of service (LOS) required 12.5 acres of park and open space per 1,000 residents. Of this, 5.5 acres per 1,000 residents was to be devoted to active park space, and 7 acres per 1,000 residents was to be dedicated to passive open space. This LOS standard left the City with a 14.8 acres deficit of park space (12 acres active/2.8 acres passive), based on a 2004 population of 6,450 persons. Brier's population has since declined to 6,345, creating a current demand for 79.3 acres of parkland (34.9 acres active/44.4 acres passive). The City currently owns 68.2 acres of parkland, resulting in a current deficit of 11.1 acres (8.6 acres active/2.5 acres passive).

#### Advantages and Disadvantages of Previous System

The primary advantage of the City's previous system is its clarity and simplicity. Simple "acreage per resident" LOS standards such as this are commonly used by local governments, and the city's surplus or deficit of park facilities can be easily calculated based on current population. The primary disadvantage of this system is its reliance on ongoing land acquisition to keep pace with population growth. Brier's land base is constrained, with only moderate opportunity for expansion of the city limits, making acquisition of additional land for parks difficult and costly. As vacant land in the area continues to be consumed for development and land values in the area rise, the City's previous LOS standard is likely to become increasingly infeasible as land costs outpace the City's financial resources.

## **2. Revised Level of Service**

### Level of Service

The LOS standard for the City of Brier shall be:

- Park system investments as growth occurs sufficient to maintain a park system value of at least \$2,772 per resident.
- All properties in the city shall be able to access a park or school recreation facility on foot or by bicycle within a distance of ½ mile, using public streets, trails, or access rights-of way.

### Description

To address priorities identified by Brier residents in the community survey, the revised LOS consists primarily of a minimum park system value per residents, coupled with a minimum standard for non-motorized park access.

### Advantages and Disadvantages of Revised System

Much like the City's previous LOS system, a Per Capita Investment method (park system value per resident) is straightforward, using simple calculations of land and facility values based on readily available data. In addition to its simplicity, this method provides the City with flexibility in how to direct future investments in the parks and recreation system. Because the LOS standard dictates only an overall system value, the City may choose to apply future investments to those improvements that will best meet community needs. Rather than being based strictly on acquisition of more parkland, the Per Capita Investment method also allows for improvements to existing parks and facilities that increase capacity of improved user experience.

The flexibility of the Per Capita Investment method is also one of its disadvantages, as it does not identify how and where investment should occur. Development of prioritization measures could overcome this disadvantage by establishing prioritized categories of investment or packages of improvements based on public input. Another potential disadvantage of the Per Capita Investment method is the volatility of land values. Because the value of land can fluctuate with real estate market conditions, the total value of the City's park system can vary from one year to the next. As a result, it is necessary to periodically reevaluate the system's value or index the system value to a particular year to minimize the effect of these market fluctuations.

The minimum standard for non-motorized park access is derived from a method known as the RCO (Recreation Conservation Office) method. This method evaluates that quantity and quality of park facilities, as well as the distribution and access of park facilities. The revised level of service incorporates only the distribution and access component of the RCO method. Though the entire RCO method is comprehensive and analyzes the park system based on multiple factors, some of which are not fully addressed by other common LOS methodologies, the comprehensive nature makes it complex. However, distribution and access data is readily accessible. Distribution and access criteria provide a dimension that is often overlooked in LOS standards that focus only on acreage of parkland or number of facilities; where are park facilities located within the community, and are residents able to access them easily, even if they don't have access to a personal automobile? Given the online survey input provided by Brier

residents regarding trail access to City parks, location and distribution of park facilities should be an integral part of the City's new LOS standard.

### **3. Park System Value Per Capita**

#### **Current Land Value**

The current value of the City's park system was estimated based on land value of current park properties and the replacement cost of existing park facilities. Value estimates were based on a combination of Snohomish County Assessor data, Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA) data, and example construction costs from recent parks projects in Snohomish County.

The current land value of the City of Brier park system is \$20,379,582.38. All city-owned property identified in the Parks Element of the Comprehensive Plan as an existing active park or passive open space was included in the estimate, as were several additional properties identified by City staff as having been acquired since the last plan update. Miscellaneous open space tracts associated with private development that the City does not own were not included in the calculation of park system value. Several City parks were assigned no value by the County Assessor. Land value for these properties was estimated based on the average assessed value per acre for single-family and vacant land within Brier (\$376,819.41 per acre). Based on this data, the current assessed land value of the City's park system is approximately \$20,379,582.

**Table 4. Assessed Land Value – City of Brier Park Properties**

<b>Park Class</b>	<b>Assesses Value of Improvements</b>	<b>Assessed Land Value</b>	<b>Total Value</b>
Active - Neighborhood		\$4,430,686.84	\$4,430,686.84
Active – Community	\$659,000	\$3,831,400.00	\$4,490,400.00
Open Space		\$11,458,495.54	\$11,458,495.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$659,000.00</b>	<b>\$19,720,582.38</b>	<b>\$20,379,582.38</b>

Source: Snohomish County Assessor, 2014

It should be noted that replacement value for park land is generally slightly higher than assessed value; park land is often assessed below market value because it is government-owned property. If the City needed to replace its current park acreage through market-rate purchases, it would probably pay more than the aforementioned value. However, due to rising land costs over the past several decades, adjusting for sales value would likely overstate that amount the City has actually invested in its park land.

#### **Replacement Cost of Park Facilities**

The value of the City's park facilities and infrastructure, such as sports fields, play equipment, and buildings, is expressed in terms of replacement construction cost. Using a combination of WCIA building insurance information and example construction costs from recent parks projects elsewhere in Snohomish County, a total facility value was calculated. Based on these estimated values, current replacement cost of the City's park facilities and improvements is approximately \$3,412,993.

**Table 5. Estimated Facility Replacement Costs**

<u>Facility Type</u>	<u>Examples</u>	<u>Capital Replacement Value</u>
<u>Brier Park Facilities</u>	<u>Baseball/softball fields. Skate park, tennis courts, horse arena, playgrounds, etc.</u>	<u>\$659,000.00</u>
<u>Playgrounds and Picnicking</u>	<u>Play equipment, picnic tables/shelters, benches, etc.</u>	<u>\$1,551,178.12</u>
<u>Sports Fields</u>	<u>Soccer fields, basketball courts, etc.</u>	<u>\$719,987.04</u>
<u>Site Improvements</u>	<u>Parking, restrooms, etc.</u>	<u>\$134,419.09</u>
<u>Trails</u>	<u>Developed walking trails (paved/gravel)</u>	<u>\$348,408.90</u>
<b><u>Total</u></b>		<b><u>\$3,412,993.15</u></b>

Source: Snohomish County Assessor, City of Brier, Washington Recreation & Conservation Office, Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Department, BERK Consulting

**Per Capita System Value**

The total per capita value of the City's park system consists of the combined values of land and facilities, divided by the City's current population. The combined land value and facility replacement value equals the total estimated value of the City's park system. This amount is then discounted for system investments not funded by City of Brier taxpayers, such as grants. Including a grant discount based on the Department of Commerce's 2014 population estimate for Brier, the current value of the City's park system is approximately \$3,644 per resident.

**Table 6. 2014 Park System per Capita Value**

<u>Category</u>	<u>Value</u>
<u>Land Value (Assessor Tax Year 2014)</u>	<u>\$19,720,582.38</u>
<u>Facility Replacement Value</u>	<u>\$3,412,993.15</u>
<u>Current Estimated Replacement Value</u>	<u>\$23,133,575.53</u>
<u>Discount for Non-City Taxpayer Contribution (Grants)</u>	<u>\$13,738.18</u>
<u>Subtotal</u>	<u>\$23,119,837.35</u>
<u>2014 Population</u>	<u>6,345</u>
<u>Land and Facility Value per Capita, undiscounted</u>	<u>\$3,645.95</u>
<u>Land and Facility Values per Capita, discounted for grants</u>	<u>\$3,643.79</u>

Source: Snohomish County Assessor, Recreation & Conservation Office, BERK Consulting

**4. Park Pedestrian Access**

The RCO Distribution and Access method described in the previous section asks how many parks in the system may be accessed safely by foot, bicycle, and transit. This analysis evaluates the City's system based on walking distances of one-half mile, which is part of the RCO Methodology described previously. Most able-bodied adults can walk a mile in 15-20 minutes.

Based on Snohomish County Assessor land use codes, the City of Brier contains a total of 2,511 parcels. Of these, 1,036 (41%) are within a 1/2-mile walk of a park or school, using one of the designated pedestrian walkways. If all public streets are used to calculate walking distance, 2,144 parcels are within a 1/2 mile walk of a park or school (85%). These estimates are conservative, and the actual number of parcels accessible is likely slightly higher, given the lot configuration in certain areas of the city. The largest contiguous gaps in service coverage are in the northeastern and southeastern corners of the city. These areas present access challenges due to long, circuitous streets and cul-de-sacs that increase walking distances and limit pass-through connections. In the northeastern area, an additional access point at Brierwood Park with associated pass-through trail access to the street network could alleviate access challenges. In the southeastern area, it is likely that development of an additional park would be necessary to provide access to all properties in the vicinity.

## **5. Impact Fees**

### Legal Basis of Impact Fees

Impact fees are those fees charged by a local government on new development to recover a portion of the cost of capital facility improvements needed to serve new development. Impact fees may be charged to help pay for public transportation and road facilities, fire protection facilities, schools, and public parks, open space, and recreation facilities. Local governments are authorized to charge such fees under RCW 82.02, provided that such fees are only imposed for system improvements that are reasonably related to the new development, do not exceed a proportionate share of the costs of necessary system improvements, and are only used for system improvements.

According to the provisions of RCW 82.02.060, impact fees must be adjusted for other revenue sources that are paid by development, if such payments are earmarked or portable to particular system improvements. Likewise, the City may provide impact fee credit if the developer dedicates land or improvements identified in the City's adopted Capital Facilities Plan, and such construction is required as a condition of development approval. Collected impact fees may only be spent on public facilities identified in a capital facilities plan or to reimburse the government for the unused capacity of existing facilities (RCW 82.02.050(4)). In addition, impact fees may only be spent on capital costs; they may not be used to pay for operating expenses or maintenance activities.

### Value Needed for Growth

Impact fees are intended to defray the cost of providing facilities for future growth in the community. The LOS described earlier requires that investments be made in the parks system to maintain a per capita value of \$3,644. Based on Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) 2013 population forecasts, Brier is anticipated to grow to a population of 7,011 by 2035. This represents an increase of 666 residents over the 2014 population of 6,345. Maintaining the current per capita park system value would require an additional investment of \$2,426,763 during this period.

Impact fees must be adjusted to account for other payments made by developers to support capital facility improvements. Currently, the City collects Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) on the sale of real property in Brier to fund capital facility improvements. Including parks projects. Since 2005 the average amount of annual REET revenue

dedicated to parks capital improvements was \$27,661.64 over the period 2005-2013. REET revenue in the years since 2011 has shown moderate growth, though it has not yet returned to its pre-recession levels. After applying the REET discount, the total amount of investment needed for growth is \$1,845,869. Divided among the projected new residents, the net per capita investment needed for growth is approximately \$2,772.

**Table 7. Additional Park System Value Needed for Growth**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Value</b>
Land and Facility Value per Capita, discounted for grants	\$3,643.79
Project Population Growth: 2014-2035	666
Additional Value Needed for Growth: 2014-2035	\$2,426,763.07
Average Annual REET Revenue: 2005-2013	\$27,661.64
Discount for Anticipated Real Estate Excise Tax Revenue: 2014-2035	\$580,894.42
Subtotal	\$1,845,868.65
Net Per Capita Investment Needed for Growth	\$2,771.57

Source: PSRC, 2013; City of Brier, 2014

Cost per Dwelling Unit

The per capita investment can be converted to an impact fee to be assessed per housing unit by multiplying by average household size. Because single-family and multifamily homes typically have different household sizes, it is recommended to calculate separate impact fees for each unit type. Based on the Census Bureau's 2013 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, the average household size for a single-family home in Brier is 2.82 persons per household. The average household size for multifamily units is 2.38 persons. The impact fee per single family dwelling unit is \$7,815.84 and the impact fee per multifamily dwelling unit is \$6,596.35; [if calculated to capture 100% of the impact of a unit. The City has chosen to capture 50% of a unit's impact through mitigation fees. The City will use other monies such as general fund, grants, and County park mitigation fee monies to pay for the remaining 50% of a units' impacts.](#)

**Table 8. Maximum Park Impact Fee per Dwelling Unit**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Value</b>
Net per Capita Investment Needed for Growth	\$2,771.57
Average Single-Family Household Size(persons)	2.82
Average Multifamily Household Size (persons)	2.38
Maximum Impact Fee per Single-Family Unit	<u>\$7,815.84</u>
Maximum Impact Fee per Multifamily Unit	<u>\$6,596.35</u>
<u>Impact Fee per Single-Family Unit</u>	<u>\$3,907.92</u>
<u>Impact Fee per Multifamily Unit</u>	<u>\$3,298.18</u>

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2013; City of Brier, 2014

## **6. Potential Future Parks and Open Space Areas**

The following are possible sites for future parks and/or open space in and near Brier. They are not prioritized and specific parcels are not identified, but rather provide a guide for possible acquisitions.

---

Abbey View Pond Property (approximately 40 acres)

This property contains a scenic 10-acre pond, wetlands, and wooded areas. It also supports a natural habitat for wildlife. The pond is used for irrigation water supply for the cemetery located to the south of the property. The property has been used unofficially for walking and equestrian activities. Due to its biological diversity, this property is an important piece of resource-based open space land within Brier. Future uses would be primarily passive open space and a multi-use trail.

North Brier (acreage undetermined)

This area is likely to see most of the new development within Brier in the next 5-10 years. There will be a need for neighborhood and pocket parks.

Southeast Brier (acreage undetermined)

This area does not contain any parks or open space. There may be opportunities for neighborhood or pocket parks, trails connections, and a possible community park, such as a ball field, in this section of Brier.

Citywide (acreage undetermined)

There are potential opportunities throughout Brier for the creation of pocket parks on lots that may be ready for redevelopment.

## V. GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL PR 1.0: Develop an outstanding parks and open space system in Brier to meet the needs of the community.

- Policy PR 1.1: Preserve a wide variety of lands for park, open space, and greenbelt purposes including but not limited to:
- a. Natural areas and natural features with scenic or recreational value;
  - b. Land that may provide public access to water bodies, natural areas and parks;
  - c. Use boundaries and City boundaries;
  - d. Lands that visually or physically connect natural areas or provide important linkages for recreation and wildlife habitat, and;
  - e. Environmentally sensitive areas, including severe landslide hazard areas, steep slopes, floodways of 100-year floodplains, wetlands, stream corridors, and habitat for established, threatened, endangered or highly sensitive wildlife species.

Policy PR 1.2: Preserve a wide variety of lands for park, open space, and greenbelt purposes including but not limited to:

Policy PR 1.3: Locate recreational facilities where they are easily accessible to the residential population.

Policy PR 1.4: Strive to achieve the adopted level of service standards for capital facilities planning purposes. The following level of service standards shall be used as guidelines to evaluate the adequacy of public facilities:

~~Active Parks—5.5 acres/1,000 Population—~~

~~Passive Open Space—7 acres/1,000 Population~~

- Park system investments as growth occurs sufficient to maintain a park system value of at least \$2,772 per resident.
- All properties in the city shall be able to access a park or school recreation facility on foot or by bicycle within a distance of ½ mile, using public streets, trails, or access rights-of way.

Policy PR 1.5: Seek funding from multiple sources for parks and open space acquisition and development.

Policy PR 1.6: Establish an annual parks maintenance program which includes tasks for both City staff and volunteers.

Policy PR 1.7: Prepare a feasibility study for a community center. The study should focus on the community's interest in such a facility and examine economic feasibility.

Policy PR 1.8: Continue to sponsor community events such as SeaScare, concerts in the park, and the holiday tree lighting.

Policy PR 1.9: Develop more specific design standards for multi-use trails

and on-street bicycle paths or ways.

Policy PR 1.10: Continue to implement playground safety standards per NPSI (National Playground Safety Institute).

Policy PR 1.11: Continue to update all current and future plans to consider ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) access.

---

Goal PR 2.0: Provide active park and recreation facilities accessible to all residents.

- Policy PR 2.1: Acquire and/or develop high quality active parks and recreation facilities that are cost-effective and require minimal maintenance.
- Policy PR 2.2: Acquire land for active neighborhood parks located within one half mile of surrounding neighborhoods.
- Policy PR 2.3: Provide park facilities that are handicapped accessible.
- Policy PR 2.4: Preserve the horse arena and encourage new and additional areas for equestrian uses.
- Policy PR 2.5: Prepare a master plan for each park in the City.
- Policy PR 2.6: Develop facilities and activities that appeal to older youth/teens, such as a skate park.

GOAL PR 3.0: Preserve open space for public access and to provide a balance of land uses within Brier.

- Policy PR 3.1: Preserve land for open space which provides multiple benefits, including passive recreation opportunities, scenic amenities, and fish or wildlife habitat.
- Policy PR 3.2: Allow some limited flexibility in zoning and design requirements when developers offer to set aside a portion of their property in a planned unit development for open space or greenbelt, along with other mitigating improvements.
- Policy PR 3.3: Designate waterways and adjacent lands and wetlands as open space which cannot be built upon or impacted in such a way as to degrade the natural area.
- Policy PR 3.4: Provide for passive recreational facilities, for example, trails through open space, natural reserves, open space, and picnic grounds.
- Policy PR 3.5: Protect and enhance existing natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.

GOAL PR 4.0: Acquire and develop a City-wide, integrated multiple use trail system that is functional, safe and convenient.

- Policy PR 4.1: Develop a network of open space corridors, multi-use trails and paths throughout the City. This network should provide links between developments and subdivisions and also provide links to parks, open spaces, and other trails in Brier and in adjacent communities.
- Policy PR 4.2: Provide for the safe and convenient integration of bicycle, pedestrian, and where appropriate, equestrian multi-use networks.
- Policy PR 4.3: Encourage the development of pedestrian rights-of-way and well-lighted trails which can provide safe passage between neighborhoods, schools, commercial and recreational areas.
- Policy PR 4.4: Upgrade existing horse and pedestrian trails and obtain new easements for extending trails. Unpaved, off-street horse trails are preferable to on-street ones.

Policy PR 4.5: Construct pathways and trails in City rights-of-way and on trail easements obtained on private property in order to establish a system throughout the City.

Policy PR 4.6: Connect Brier's trail system in key locations with other trail systems, where possible.

GOAL PR 5.0: Preserve natural vegetation and promote the addition of landscaping throughout the City to enhance the natural environment.

Policy PR 5.1: Develop a City wide landscape plan to provide a basis for:

- a. Further inventories of existing vegetation.
- b. Open space planning and acquisition proposals.
- c. Development of noise and visual buffers.
- d. Evaluating the impacts of any new development on the natural elements environmental systems.
- e. Encourage the use of native plants in parks, and control invasive plants.

Policy PR 5.2: Use open space, greenbelts and natural vegetation to reduce noise and visual pollution and encourage natural buffering between land uses and to separate incompatible land uses from residential areas.

Policy PR 5.3: Preserve major areas of open space in adjacent developments as unified and integrated open space to enhance the visual effect of the open space.

Policy PR 5.4: Promote the adoption of standards for public street development that include aesthetic enhancement, distinctive street signage, lighting, and/or furnishings, enhanced pedestrian walkways, and street tree plantings.

Goal PR 6.0: Work cooperatively with the State, Snohomish County, Edmonds School District, and private entities on issues including park planning, acquisition, development, and operations.

Policy PR 6.1: Promote the provision and development of park and recreation facilities through public and private funding, including impact fees, and through partnerships with other agencies.

Policy PR 6.2: Require all new developments to contribute their fair share to parks, street improvements, signalization, and sidewalks for project mitigation. The parks contributions could include land dedication or fees in lieu of land.

Policy PR 6.3: Require all development projects along trail routes to provide easements to the City for incorporation of the trail into the City's trail system. These trails could include easements on private property and utility easements for off-road trails.

Policy PR 6.4: Preserve areas designated as parks and open space through incentives, trades, purchase of land, easements, or transfer of development rights.

Policy PR 6.5: Participate in region-wide parks and recreation planning activities and consider joint projects, where appropriate.