



Staff Report

September 5, 2023 Council Workshop Meeting

Parks & Open Space Management Plan – DNR Grant Agreement and GreenWorks PSA

Presenter: Trang Lam, Parks & Recreation Director

Time Estimate: 15 minutes

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BACKGROUND: In 2003, the City of Camas completed the "[Policy Guidelines For An Open Space Management Plan](#)" (2003 Plan). The 2003 Plan was intended to set the framework for development of a City's Open Space Management Plan. It identified nine management goals and eight policies to guide open space management. It also identified high-level issues related to land management and trail development in and through open spaces. The 2003 Plan acknowledged additional work was needed – "It should be noted and understood that it is intended that additional information and documents will be added to this Policy guidelines for an Open Space Management Plan in order to make it a fully functional Open Space Plan."

Since 2003, the City's open space network has grown by over 50% in terms of city-owned acreage, and an updated, more specific, and science-oriented open space management plan is required to better guide City staff in the care, maintenance, and stewardship of the natural resources in our parks, open space and forested lands. Today, the Camas community is fortunate to have retained several significant natural areas across the City. Over 700 acres of open space properties and natural lands are either owned or managed by the City, in coordination with the acreage of the developed park areas; totaling over 1,000 acres of parks and open space land. These open space properties include forested lands, riparian corridors, wetlands, and steep slopes across 31 different sites. In addition, the City has been working consistently to create a network of trails to connect important destinations and help create a more walkable community. In total, the City has about 40 miles of trails, of which, Camas owns and maintains 12 miles of trails dispersed across its park and open space system.

More recently, the City adopted the [Parks, Recreation and Opens Space \(PROS\) Plan](#) (2022). Virtually all respondents (97%) to the [PROS Plan community survey](#), which received nearly 1,400 responses, felt that local parks and recreation opportunities are important or essential to the quality of life in Camas. And the top two community priorities are to '*maintain what we have*' and '*fill gaps and improve trail connections*'. As a result of this community feedback, the PROS Plan and Capital Facilities Plan identified Open Space and Urban Forestry Plans as top priorities for the next 2-3 years.

In response to the priorities set out in the adopted PROS Plan and Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), staff issued a Request for Qualification (RFQ) process to seek a multidisciplinary consultant team

to oversee the delivery and execution of a Parks & Open Space Management Plan (POSMP). The POSMP serves as a management tool for the City to efficiently and cost effectively maintain and enhance its parks' and open spaces' natural resources (i.e., trees, shrubs, and vegetation) and establishes levels of service and priorities to support a sustainable maintenance program that aligns with the Parks & Recreation Department's value of STEWARDSHIP – *We consciously invest in park and natural spaces while continually preserving and protecting them to benefit future generations.*

SUMMARY: In early 2023, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) awarded the City a Focused Technical Assistance (FTA) grant. The FTA includes direct technical assistance from DNR staff and a \$75,000 grant, with \$70,000 towards the POSMP work and \$5,000 towards City staff training. On May 23, 2023, the City and DNR facilitated a focus group to learn more about the current state and perceptions around urban forestry in the City of Camas. Key takeaways included:

What is working well?

- Dedicated staff
- Passionate community members
- Abundant community greenspace
- High environmental quality
- Small-town feel
- Vibrant downtown
- Engaged school district

What needs improvement?

- Capacity – staffing, funding, etc.
- Communication to & education of stakeholders (i.e. public, HOA's, developers, etc)
- Improvements to existing policies and ordinances

Staff incorporated the key takeaways from the May focus group session into the RFQ. The RFQ process was from Jun 20 through July 24. The team of GreenWorks, PlanIT Geo and ECONorthwest was selected to perform the work.

Staff is seeking Council approval of this Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with GreenWorks, PC in the amount of \$156,151.80 to be dispersed through the end of June 2024 to GreenWorks, PC, as work is completed. The PSA scope of work is attached as Exhibit A. The proposed services and the associated costs are summarized below:

Base Fee	\$153,090.00
Reimbursable Expenses	\$3,061.80
TOTAL FEES (Not to Exceed)	\$156,151.80

Staff is also seeking Council approval of the Grant Agreement with DNR in the amount of \$75,000.00. The Grant Agreement scope of work is attached as Exhibit B. The proposed grant is summarized below:

Grant – reimbursable for POSMP	\$70,000.00
Grant – City staff training	\$5,000.00
TOTAL GRANT	\$75,000.00

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY: This Project meets the following City adopted plans:

Camas 2035 Comprehensive Plan

Citywide Land Use, Natural Environment Goal - LU-1.4.4:

- Develop an interconnected network of parks, trails, and open space to support wildlife corridors and natural resources and enhance the quality of life for Camas residents and visitors.

Natural Environment, Environmental Stewardship Goal – NE-1:

- To preserve Camas’ natural environment by developing a sustainable urban environment and protecting habitat and vegetation corridors.

Natural Environment, Landscape Enhancement & Tree Preservation Goal – NE-4:

- To protect Camas’ native landscape and mature tree cover.

2022 Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan

STEWARDSHIP OF LAND, PARKS & PROGRAMS:

Goal: Improve Asset Management.

- Action: Update levels of service standards and develop a per acre maintenance budget.
- Action: Develop an urban forestry program that articulates long-term strategy for tree protection, urban forestry management and education.
- Action: Develop and implement improved natural area management practices to enhance ecological health and remove invasive plant species

Goal: Continue to preserve, protect and restore natural area corridors, include shorelines.

- Action: Pilot environmental education program.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE:

Goal: Encourage staff innovation and creativity.

- Action: Provide professional development opportunities through training and affiliation with NRPA and WRPA, among others.

2022 Camas PROS Plan Capital Facilities Plan

Listed as top priority project in the next 2-3 years

- Open Space Management Plan – Develop Plan
- Urban Forestry Management Plan – Develop Plan

BUDGET IMPACT: The POSMP PSA with GreenWorks, PD is funded in the FY 2023-2024 Parks Budget and grant funding from the Department of Natural Resources.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the GreenWorks, PC PSA and DNR Grant Agreement be placed on the September 18, 2023 Council Regular Meeting consent agenda for Council's consideration and approval.