

October 26, 2022

City of Camas Council  
616 NE 4th Avenue  
Camas, WA 98607

*Commissioners:*

*Ellen Burton*

*Katy Daane*

*David Dewey*

*Brittany Grahm*

*Jason Irving, Vice Chair*

*Steve Lorenz, Chair*

*Jenny Wu*

**RE: Requesting Approval Of Mayor's  
FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget**

Dear City Council members,

The Camas Parks and Recreation Commission respectfully requests that the City of Camas Council approve funding and staffing as proposed in the Mayor's 2023-24 budget. We sincerely appreciate your continued support of our valued Camas parks, trails, open space, and recreational programming, all of which contribute to what makes Camas a special place and our "small town feel." By listening to our Camas citizens, setting the vision, and investing for the long term, our entire community benefits from the livability created through abundant recreation and natural space opportunities.

The request from Parks & Recreation Department (Department) outlined in the Mayor's 2023-24 proposed budget is in direct response to and aligns with community priorities we heard during the development of the 2022 Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan. By approving the budget, you reaffirm your commitment to implementing the PROS Plan adopted in April 2022. This proposed budget enables us to start closing the gap, ensuring our parks, trails and facilities are maintained appropriately to prevent higher future costs; delivering relevant programming to all; and developing new parks and trails to support increased usage.

**Department Overview**

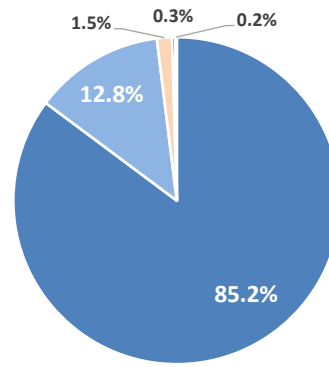
The Department provides and manages a wide range of places and programs providing year-round recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. The Department develops, operates, and maintains:

- 16 developed parks, including Fallen Leaf Lake Park;
- A variety of outdoor recreation facilities, from playgrounds and picnic areas to boating and water access points, to sports facilities such as the Skate Park and Prune Hill Sports Park;
- Three indoor recreation and community gathering facilities – the Camas Community Center, Lacamas Lake Lodge, and Scout Hall;
- 12 miles of City trails;
- Over 1,060 acres of parks and open space (over 462 acres acquired in the last 10 years); and
- Holding over 20 special events and about 1900 recreational classes annually (2019, pre-COVID).

**Where we've been and what we've accomplished**

The PROS Plan guides City officials, management and staff in making decisions about planning, operating and implementing various parks and recreation services. Between adoption of the new 2022 PROS Plan in April 2022, and the previous one in 2014, the Department:

- Acquired and preserved multiple properties along the north shore of Lacamas Lake, also known as Legacy Lands, (165 acres), and forest land at Green Mountain (115 acres);
- Opened the Lacamas Lake Lodge and Conference Center;



■ Essential to the quality of life here   ■ Important, but not really essential  
■ Useful, but not necessary   ■ Not Important  
■ Don't know

**98% feel parks &  
recreation is  
essential or  
important**  
*(2022 PROS Plan  
community survey)*

- Completed the first phase of field and site improvements for the Prune Hill Sports Park;
- Constructed the Cooper's View Neighborhood Park;
- Secured Council adoption of the site master plan to guide Crown Park renovations; and
- Prepared a site master plan to guide renovations to Fallen Leaf Lake Park.

### Where we are now

During the 2021-22 biennium, the Department, in partnership with the Public Works Maintenance staff:

- Completed the community-based 2022 Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan on-time and under-budget.
- Secured a \$1.25M county grant, with \$2.25M in state grants pending for capital and land acquisition projects, which returns tax dollars to the Camas community for other uses. If awarded all \$3.5M, it would equal 153% of the adopted 2022 parks capital budget.
- Utilized seasonal staff to cost effectively complete much-needed clearance trimming and minor surface maintenance of nearly 7.5 of our 12 miles of trails.
- Continued to build community during COVID by holding 29 events (9 in 2021 and 20 in 2022), attracting about 15,000 participants in 2022 to date, and expect at least 3000 participants for Hometown Holiday.
- Continued to focus on community physical and mental health throughout COVID by safely offering hundreds of recreational youth and adult classes to thousands of community members.
- In-process of completing the 30% Crown Park design per the City's long-standing promise to the community.
- Growing our partnership with the Camas Parks Foundation through capital campaigns – fundraising and planning the much-needed Camas-Washougal Skate Park improvements.

### Where to, next?

To address our community's desires balanced with Council's vision and guidance, the Director and Commission are prioritizing key projects as described in the adopted 2022 PROS Plan:

- **Protect** our current assets by bringing parks in good and fair condition up to standard, repairing and replacing parks in poor condition, and maintaining and improving our 12 miles of trails.
- Continue **building** great parks and trails with Council's partnership to fund capital and on-going operational expenses.
- **Invest** in our future by taking a deep dive into open space management to safeguard our legacy lands, protect our ecosystem, and slow climate change.

As shown in the attached graphics, current funding and staffing constraints are insufficient to continue delivering the level of service our community expects and deserves. Neither funding nor staffing has kept pace with population and park land growth. Thus, we request that you support the Mayor's 2023-24 budget for parks and recreation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steve Lorenz

*Chair*

Camas Parks and Recreation Commission

Enclosure: Parks Data

## PARKS DATA

Figure 27. NRPA Agency Performance Metrics Comparisons – Park & Recreation Staffing

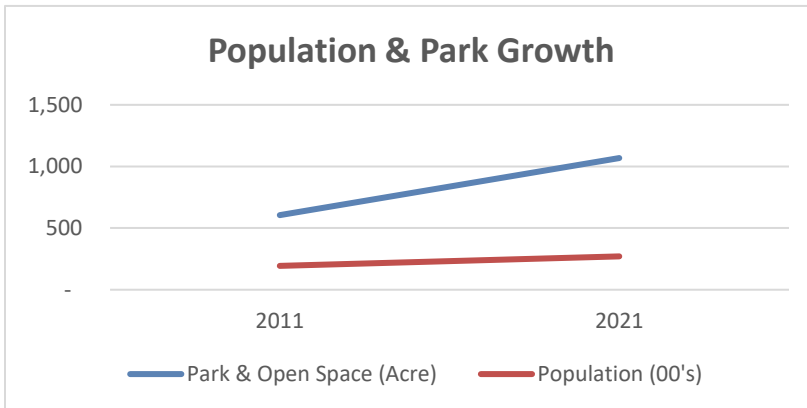
Metric	All Agencies	Pop. 20,000-49,999	Camas 2020
Park & Rec FTEs*	41.9	27.3	<b>11.1</b>
P&R FTEs per 1,000 Residents	8.1	8.9	<b>0.4</b>
Annual Operating Expenditures	\$4,342,495	\$2,885,847	<b>\$1,771,272</b>
Operating Expenditures per Capita	\$81.19	\$95.34	<b>\$67.96</b>
Operating Expenditures per Park Acre	\$7,160	\$8,522	<b>\$1,665</b>

2022 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

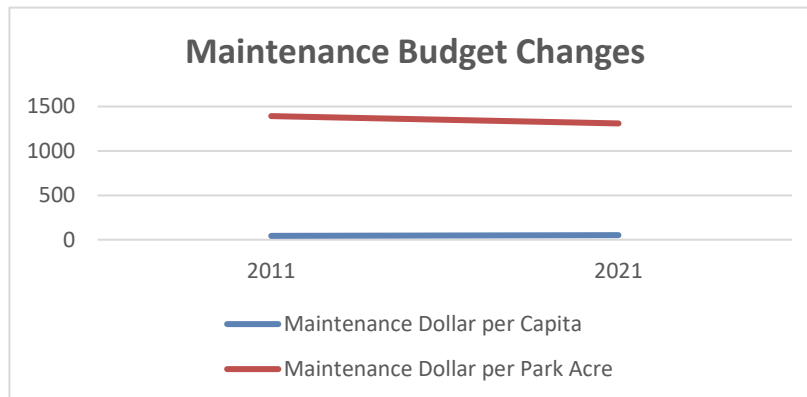
Chapter 8: Operations & Maintenance

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\*No seasonal FTEs for Camas in 2020 due to COVID

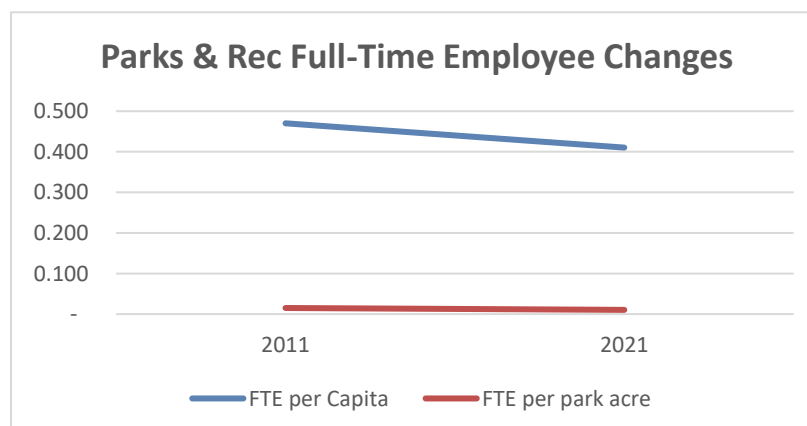


In the past 10 years, Camas experienced park land growth of 462 acres and population growth of 7,700, that is 76% and 40% increases, respectively.



While maintenance budget per capita remain flat over the years, maintenance budget per acre dropped 6% in the last 10 years.

\*The impact of increased maintenance costs from capital projects in the pipeline are not reflected in this calculation



Staffing has not kept pace with population and asset growth. Over the past 10 years, parks maintenance and recreation full-time employee (FTE) per capita and per park acre dropped 13% and 31%, respectively.