



675 Wildwood Avenue  
Rio Dell, CA 95562  
(707) 764-3532

**For Meeting of April 16, 2024**

Consent Item;  Public Hearing Item

To: City Council  
From: Kevin Caldwell, Community Development Director  
Through: Kyle Knopp, City Manager  
Date: March 27, 2024  
Subject: Parks Master Plan Discussion

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "K. Knopp".

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**Recommendation:**

That the City Council:

1. Receive and Discuss a Potential Parks Master Plan; and
2. Provide Direction to Staff.

**Discussion:**

At the City Council meeting of March 19, 2024, the Council requested a discussion item regarding a Parks Master Plan for the City.

Parks and recreation facilities are an essential part of a healthy, quality, and sustainable community environment. They provide necessary components in human existence for events outside of the home, after work, and beyond school activities. Whether for passive or active use, park areas and recreation facilities are an important part of everyday active living. Much like streets and sidewalks, water and wastewater lines,

drainage facilities, police and fire equipment, and other municipal facilities and services, parks are integral components of the municipal infrastructure. Parks reflect the quality of life enjoyed by citizens, incorporating scenic, historic, and cultural values. They deserve a significant level of attention and commitment of resources to be adequately acquired, constructed, operated, and maintained.

A publication of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) entitled *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* includes criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities. The criteria are based on a national survey of municipalities of all sizes and geographic regions. These standards serve as a baseline to compare the current service levels against national standards. Many communities perceive these standards as a minimum, hoping to surpass them. Standards are typically calibrated to reflect local participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, climate, natural environment, and other factors specific to each community.

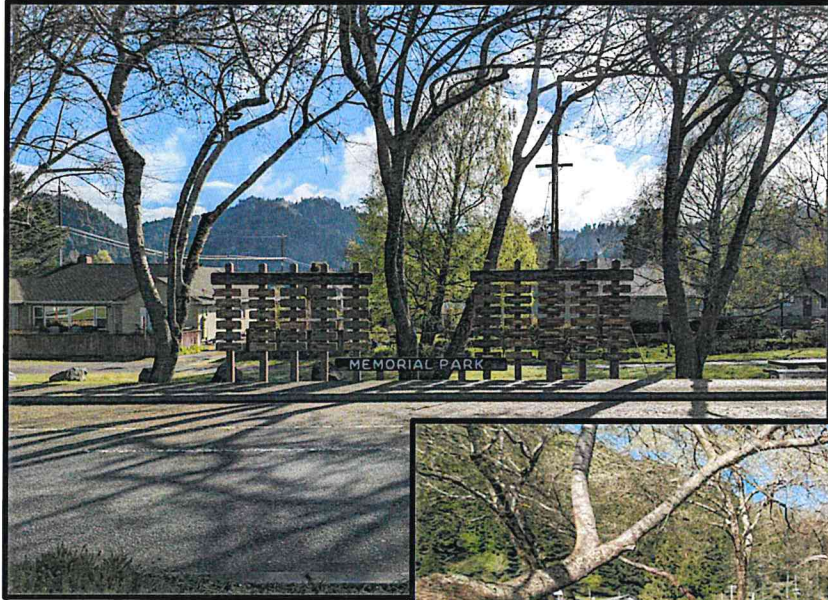
The NRPA recommends the following sizes for Pocket Parks, Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks.

- Pocket Parks – 0.25-.0.5/1,000 persons.
- Neighborhood Parks – 1-2 acres/1,000 person.
- Community Parks – 5-8 acres/1,000 persons.

**City Owned Parks**

The City owns, operates, and maintains two (2) parks, Memorial Park and Triangle Park. Based on their size, they are considered Pocket Parks by the NRPA. Memorial Park is located on the east side of Wildwood Avenue across the street from City Hall. It is approximately 13,000 square feet in size and includes a wooden structure displaying memorial plaques of deceased Rio Dell residents and two concrete picnic tables. The City Public Works crew maintains the grounds at Memorial Park. The Beautification

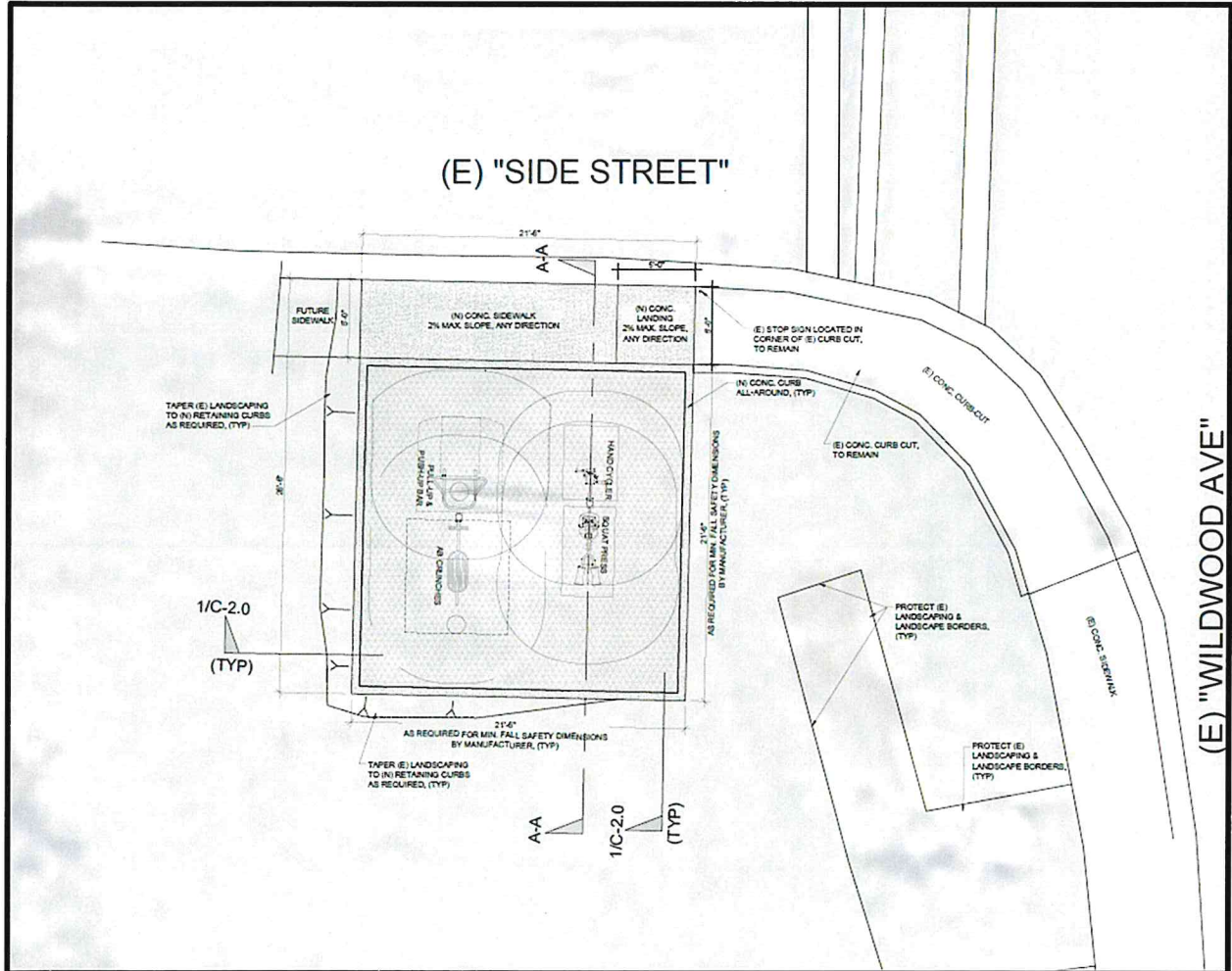
Committee recently discussed refinishing the memorial plaques. A local resident offered to refinish the plaques for \$10.00 each if the City provided the materials, i.e. sandpaper, paint, and polyurethane.



**Memorial Park**

Triangle Street Park is about 15,000 square feet and is developed with an informational kiosk, one (1) concrete picnic table, and two (2) concrete benches. As part of the recent Clean California Grant, a new exercise station, including a Hand Cycler, a Squat Press, a Pull Up Bar, and an Ab Crunch is planned for the park this spring/summer. Volunteers maintain the flower beds and the City Public Works crew maintains the grounds at Triangle Park.





Triangle Park

The City also owns and maintains another triangle shaped property in the Riverside Acres subdivision. This grassy parcel is about 4/10th of an acre in size and has a couple of benches on it. The parcel is surrounded by a drainage ditch.

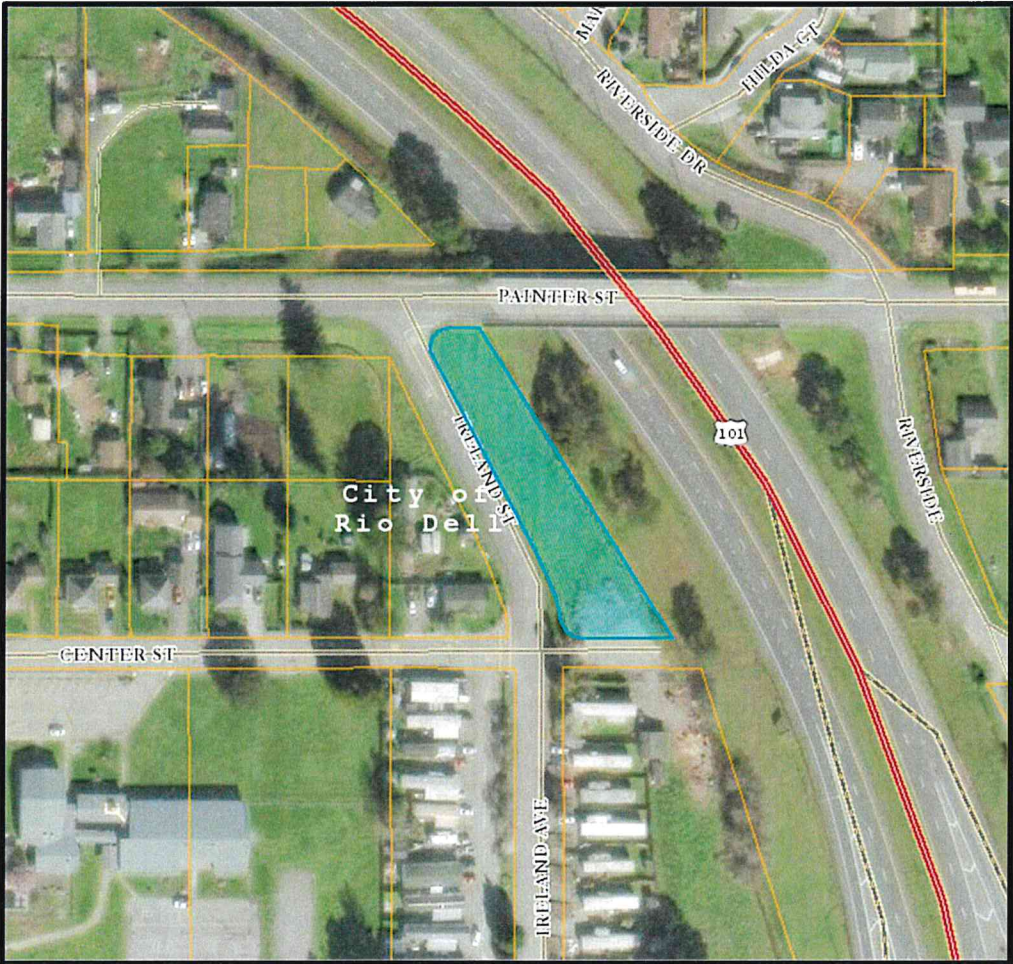


**Riverside Acres Open Space**



**Dog Park**

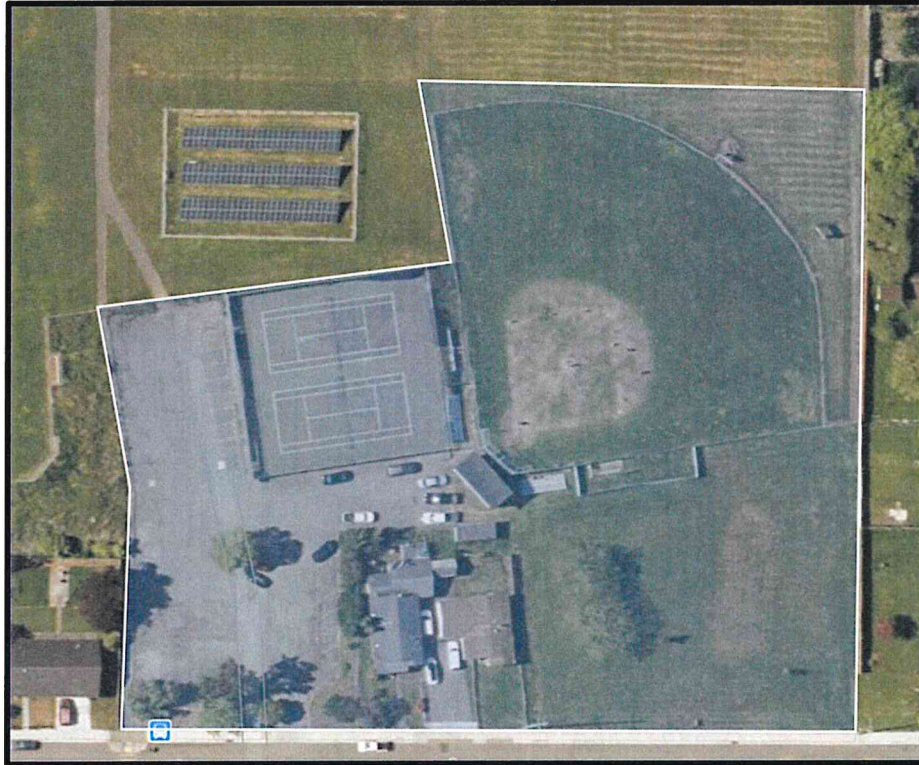
The City also owns the parcel which will be developed into a Dog Park shortly. That parcel is located at Center Street and Ireland Avenue. The City recently awarded the construction project for the first phase of the Dog Park which includes the dog run area, on-site sidewalks, and the development of the parking area. Construction of Phase I should be starting very soon. The second phase will include a retaining wall, a half-court basketball court, and a couple of picnic benches.



**Dog Park Parcel**

## Joint Use Agreement Park – Davis Street Park

The City has a Joint Use Agreement with the Rio Dell School District for the Davis Street Park. Davis Street Park is considered a Neighborhood Park and totals about 3.2 acres and includes two tennis courts, a baseball field, a parking lot, and about 6/10th of an acre of open space/grass.



**Davis Street Park**



## Fireman's Park & Picnic Area

Fireman's Park and Picnic area is owned, operated, and maintained by the Rio Dell Fire Protection District (RDFPD). This park is considered a Community Park and is about 4.25 acres in size. It includes the Fire Station, Fire Hall, children's playground, picnic areas, a softball field, bocce ball courts, and the local library.



## Potential Sites

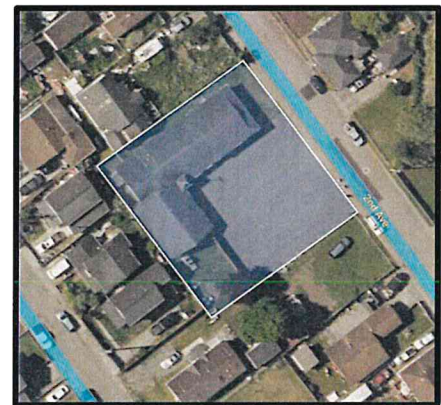
There are a couple of other parcels in town that may be suitable for park locations. The premier parcel for a Community Park is the Gillenwater parcel located at the end of Davis Street. The 4.8-acre parcel has river frontage and is located at the northern end of the proposed Eel River Trail. During the 2020-2021 California State Parks Proposition 84 open grant application, the City reached out to the Gillenwater's to see if they were interested in selling the property to the City. At that time the Gillenwater's were not interested in selling the property.





### Gillenwater Parcel

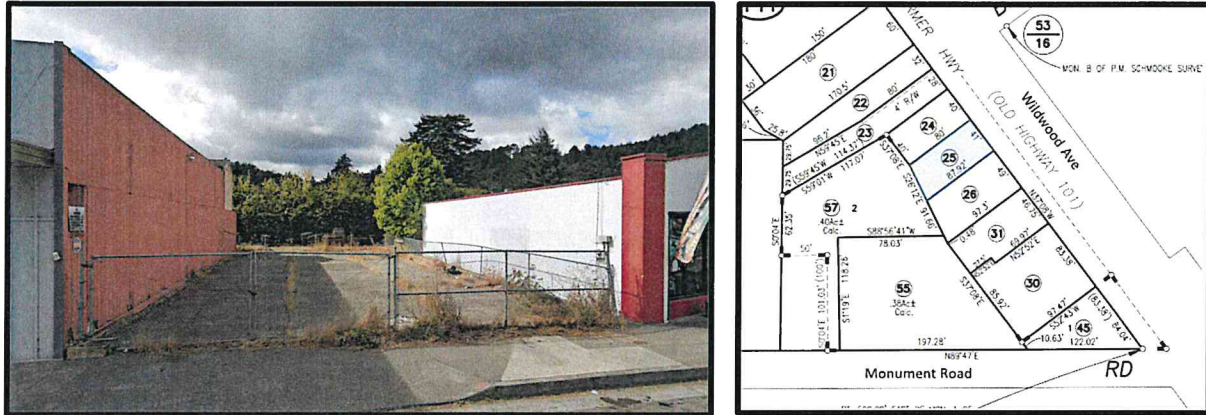
Another potential Neighborhood Park is the Church of Christ property on Second Avenue. This 15,000+/- square foot parcel is developed with an approximate 4,000 square foot assembly area. There is also an adjacent parcel possibly consisting of two separate lots. Including this lot, the potential total area would be about 23,000 square feet.



### Church of Christ Parcel 325 Second Avenue



A possible Pocket Park is the vacant parcel between the former Pizza Factory parcel and E&J Liquors. This parcel is owned by the estate of Mona Konicke. The parcel is currently considered in tax default and if the back taxes are not paid by July 1, 2025, a lien for the past due taxes will be placed on the parcel and the potential tax sale will take place after that.



**Konicke Parcel – Wildwood Avenue**

Possibly the potential “Crown Jewel” of a park could be the Enes property which sits west of Pacific Avenue. This property consisting of 43.2 acres was listed for sale for quite some time. The combined asking price was approximately \$1,000,000.

Staff’s intent was to gauge to possible acquisition through grant opportunities. Including future Proposition 84 and CDBG Grants. The City was in discussions with Mr. Enes regarding the possible purchase of the property in December 2022 before the Ferndale Earthquake. Obviously, the earthquake response became the priority. Mr. Enes recently reached out to see if the City may still be interested in purchasing the property.

The Enes property could make a fantastic park site, providing both passive and active recreational possibilities, including trails, playgrounds, picnic areas, disc golf, etc. It could also be managed as a community forest, as it has a good stand of merchantable redwood on the property. In addition, the adjacent portion of the Cortazar property would make a nice addition to the potential park.



**Enes/Cortazar Property**

## **Public Engagement**

A critical component to a successful Parks Master Plan is the involvement of the community. A Committee or Commission should be established, then actively encourage public participation with community members, community leaders and local school officials and students. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends the following steps in developing a Parks Master Plan.

- **Internal Assessment:** Before starting the master planning process, lay the foundation for the vision and mission of your agency and the plan. Then, assess your capacity and understand what your agency needs to work with the community, elected officials and others in the development and approval of the plan.

- **Community Engagement:** Work with the community in all aspects of the master plan process to ensure that the community has a voice and decision-making power in data collection, analysis, implementation plan and execution. To create an equitable plan, ensure that the process allows for under-represented groups and communities to participate in this decision making.

- **Resources & Data Collection:** Conduct data collection and analysis to prioritize resource allocation based on level of need for both park access as well as outcomes associated with park access such as physical activity and climate resiliency. Include both qualitative and quantitative analysis in this data collection to understand where gaps and inequities in distribution, park quality, safety and inclusion may exist. These measures include geographic information systems (GIS), community engagement, audits and resource analysis.

- **Implementation:** Create a realistic action plan based on needs identified and current and future resource, partnership and funding scenarios. If there are anticipated gaps in funding, outline a plan to close the gap and how you will prioritize resources in the short term.

Although there are funding sources for acquisitions and construction, many small communities struggle to provide funds for maintenance and repairs. For example, the Scotia Community Services District (SCSD) charges a recreation assessment of \$228 per dwelling unit. To properly maintain any significant new park facilities, it is likely the City would have to explore a potential benefit assessment district to fund the needed maintenance and repairs.