



CITY COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: September 4, 2025		Subject: Draft Natural Area Management Plan	
		Staff Member: Kerry Rappold, Natural Resources Manager; Tommy Reeder, Parks Lead Specialist	
		Department: Community Development/Parks and Recreation	
Action Required		Advisory Board/Commission Recommendation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing Date: <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance 1 st Reading Date: <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance 2 nd Reading Date: <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information or Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only <input type="checkbox"/> Council Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Agenda		<input type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Denial <input type="checkbox"/> None Forwarded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	
		Comments: N/A	
Staff Recommendation: Provide input and direction on the draft Natural Area Management Plan.			
Recommended Language for Motion: N/A			
Project / Issue Relates To:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Council Goals/Priorities:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Adopted Master Plan(s): 2018 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan: Objective 3.10 – Maintain and improve Wilsonville’s Natural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable	

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

The Natural Area Management Plan (NAMP) provides a framework for natural area management, which promotes long-term maintenance, enhancement, and community appreciation of city-owned natural areas. Staff will provide an overview of the draft Natural Area Management Plan (NAMP), which the City Council previously reviewed during its meeting on December 2, 2024. This work session serves as the final scheduled discussion prior to a public hearing in October.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In November 2023, City staff and the consultant, Ash Creek Forest Management, kicked off the planning process for the NAMP. The Plan will help the City achieve its vision of a more ecologically resilient future and the over-arching goal of improving the health and resilience of ecosystems in its natural areas. On December 2, 2024, the project team provided the City Council with an introduction to the planning process for the Plan. At this meeting, the project team will present the full draft of the Plan prior to a scheduled public hearing on October 6, 2025, before the City Council.

Since the project kickoff, staff and consultants have completed the following steps to develop the draft Plan:

1. **Catalog Natural Areas:**
Identified and catalogued city-owned natural areas based on size (greater than 0.5 acres), quality and condition of habitat, community access, and the potential for restoration.
2. **Prioritize Natural Areas:**
Developed prioritization criteria for the list of city-owned natural areas, which focused on natural resource function/value and baseline habitat conditions.
3. **Habitat Surveys and Delineation:**
Completed delineations and surveys of the catalogued city-owned natural areas to understand the historic and current habitat conditions and to clarify the treatment strategies that will be most effective in various habitat types.
4. **Compile Data and Categorize Natural Areas:**
Compiled and categorized city-owned natural areas to determine the ratings for natural resource function/value (i.e., High and Medium) and the baseline habitat conditions (i.e., good, fair and poor).
5. **Management Objectives and Strategies:**
Developed general management and habitat-specific strategies that City staff can utilize to achieve the management objectives outlined in the Plan.

The draft Plan includes the following content (see **Exhibit A**):

1. **Executive Summary**
A broad overview of the Plan's purpose, findings, and recommendations.
2. **Introduction**
Descriptions of the guiding objectives, natural area criteria, and the relationship to other existing plans for natural areas adopted by entities in the area surrounding Wilsonville (e.g., Metro and Graham Oaks Nature Park).
3. **Background**
Descriptions of the benefits and importance of natural areas, planning issues and concerns, past and ongoing natural area management in Wilsonville, and related management plans and reports.

4. **Community Engagement**

The community engagement targeted the public’s personal connections to natural areas, priority ranking of issues facing natural areas, and the vision for the future.

5. **Natural Areas and Habitat Types**

Descriptions of the methods to catalog the city-owned natural areas, delineations of habitat types, and the system used to rank the natural areas.

6. **Management Objectives and Strategies**

Outlined the management objectives and long-term strategies for the city-owned natural areas, including general management and habitat-specific strategies.

7. **Conclusion:**

A brief recap of the purpose and objectives of the Plan.

In addition to the City Council, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board provided input on the development of the Plan during its meetings on April 11, 2025, and May 8, 2025.

Discussion Questions:

1. What questions do you have about the draft Natural Area Management Plan?
2. Based on your review—considering the objectives and strategies, technical work, and public outreach—are there gaps in the Plan’s content or approach?

EXPECTED RESULTS:

The adopted Natural Area Management Plan will provide a systematic and consistent approach for managing city-owned natural areas.

TIMELINE:

The final plan is scheduled for a City Council public hearing on October 6, 2025.

CURRENT YEAR BUDGET IMPACTS:

The amended fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 Wilsonville budget includes \$78,844 in general funds as part of Project #9181 – Natural Area Management Plan. A supplemental budget adjustment will be needed to add unspent general funds from FY 2024-25 to the current budget year to fund the project through adoption of the final plan.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PROCESS:

Community involvement and public outreach were an important component of the project. The project is on the “Let’s Talk, Wilsonville!” website, which included a community survey and frequently asked questions. A public open house was held on April 23, 2025. In addition, information about the project was provided at the 2024 and 2025 Earth Day celebrations.

POTENTIAL IMPACTS OR BENEFIT TO THE COMMUNITY:

Natural areas are critically important to preserving and enhancing ecosystem resilience in urban landscapes and also have important benefits to human health and wellbeing. Developing a Natural Area Management Plan has provided the opportunity to identify long-term management objectives and strategies to maintain the viability, resilience and biodiversity of city owned

natural areas.

ALTERNATIVES:

In lieu of adopting the Natural Area Management Plan, the City could rely on existing policies, programs and initiatives to address natural area management. However, without a Natural Area Management Plan, City staff will not be able to effectively plan and provide for long term maintenance and enhancement of the city owned natural areas, leading to potential degradation over time.

CITY MANAGER COMMENT:

N/A

ATTACHMENT:

- A. Draft Natural Area Management Plan