

Chapter 12: Parks, Open Space, and Recreation

Vision

Pagosa Springs will support and expand its legacy of parks and open space.

Pagosa Springs contains several public parks, a river walk, and private recreation facilities that serve the community's needs for active and passive recreation, such as organized sports, hiking, bicycling, and bird watching. Reservoir Hill is a wonderful undeveloped open space amenity in the downtown. On the west side of town, the Pine Golf Course is a private facility open to the public. Just outside of town, the San Juan National Forest is an excellent outdoor recreation resource, offering skiing, hiking, and numerous other outdoor recreation opportunities. In addition, the town and school district provide ballfields and other facilities for public use through shared agreements.

As Pagosa Springs grows, the town will face increasing fiscal challenges in maintaining, enhancing, and expanding the current park system, but the town is dedicated to maintaining its public parks and recreation facilities. As necessary to maintain its current service levels, the town will add new parks that meet the needs of current and future residents and visitors.



Chamber trailhead sign at visitor center guides visitors along the river.



The Community Center is widely used for recreation, arts, meetings, and other activities.

Goals and Policies



Pagosa Springs River Park provides ballfields for the schools and the community.

Goal P-1 Pagosa Springs will improve and maintain its existing parks and, as future growth occurs, improve and maintain the current level of service for parks to provide a full range of high-quality park and recreation facilities.

Pagosa Springs has a well-loved and highly used system of public and private parks. Most town neighborhoods have access to a nearby public park, with the exception of those residents located in the Pagosa Lakes area. Residents want to ensure the town continues to maintain and improve its public parks in a manner that is consistent with their needs. As the town and surrounding county areas continue to grow, the town aims to maintain and improve its current ratios of parkland and park staff to residents, and account for the demands of growing numbers of county residents.

Policy P-1(a) New Developments Provide Public Parks

New developments should provide at least eight (8) percent of the land for public parks and open space consistent with the recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan and parkland dedication standards to be provided in a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan.

Policy P-1(b) Useable Parkland

Parks should not be built on left-over land designated for detention basins or some other purpose. Any land dedicated for parks should be useable and accessible. Future neighborhood parks should be bordered by at least two local streets, and be centrally located in neighborhoods.

Policy P-1(c) Maintain and Develop Trails

The town will maintain and develop trails as shown on the Trails plan that connect parks and open space. (See Figure 11-3: Trails Plan, in Chapter 11 Transportation, Trails, and Mobility.)



Existing and planned pedestrian trails along the river help connect the downtown area.

Actions

- P-1.1 Prepare a Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan to identify needs and prioritize park improvement and maintenance programs. The Master Plan should address a

full range of park and recreation facilities that are attractive, efficient, convenient to use, appropriately distributed throughout the community, and that reinforce community identity.

The Master Plan should determine whether parks should be developed (including sports fields), or left undeveloped. A Master Plan would also identify needs for neighborhood parks and for facilities such as tennis courts.

- P-1.2 Establish a dedicated source of funding for park acquisition, creation, and maintenance. Consider additional revenue sources for parks and recreation facilities, impact fees, and sales tax increase.
- P-1.3 Continually monitor the quality and quantity of parkland.
- P-1.4 Evaluate existing parkland dedication standards in the Land Use Development Code (LUDC). Adjust as necessary to meet town goals.

Goal P-2 Pagosa Springs will pursue additional connected public and private open space.

Reservoir Hill is an important open space asset for the town, but it is one of the few public and permanently conserved open spaces that provides public access to residents and visitors of the town. This plan promotes identifying and potentially acquiring additional open space lands, particularly areas with access to the San Juan River, McCabe Creek, and links to the San Juan National Forest and view corridors along SH 160 and SH 84.



The San Juan River connects open space and parks in the town. Residents and visitors use the trail along the San Juan River.

Policy P-2(a) Town Open Space Program

The town will expand its supply of public open space land through various means, including land acquisition, as funds are available.

Policy P-2(b) New Developments Provide Open Space Lands

New developments should provide connected private or public open space, especially as identified on the Future Land Use Plan.

Actions

- P-2.1 Identify and conserve corridors or large open spaces, as noted on the Future Land Use Plan and as identified through a Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Master Plan. Conserve

open space through a variety of means, including acquisition, site planning, and conservation easements.

P-2.2 Determine public willingness to support an open space acquisition financing program (i.e., bonds or sales tax).

P-2.3 Work with land trusts, non-profit organizations, foundations, private donors, and other organizations to seek ways to acquire and maintain public and private open space in and around the community.



Pagosa Lakes' private recreation is an amenity for Lakes residents.

Goal P-3 Pagosa Springs will provide indoor recreation amenities to promote a healthy and active community.

The Pagosa Springs Community Center is an important recreation resource for residents. The town aims to maintain this resource and to continually improve its recreational facilities by building a recreation center that will have the capacity to serve a wider range of users and provide additional recreation opportunities.

Actions

P-3.1 Continue to support the Community Center.

P-3.2 Identify funding sources for acquiring a recreation center site, building this facility, and maintaining such a center.

P-3.3 Work with private entities to avoid duplication of private recreation services so that public and private recreation facilities complement one another.