

**RESOLUTION NO. R18-02**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY OF LAUREL'S RIVERSIDE  
PARK MASTER PLAN.**

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana:

Section 1: Approval. The City of Laurel Riverside Park Master Plan, a copy attached hereto, is hereby approved.

Section 2: Public Hearing. The City Council conducted a final public hearing to gather public input regarding the Master Plan on January 16, 2018. The public comments were incorporated into the Master Plan after the January 16, 2018 Hearing. Additional public input was gathered and incorporated into the plan during the preparation and drafting phases of the project as described within the Master Plan.

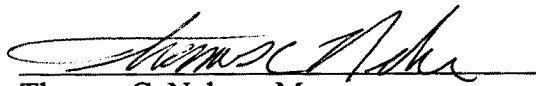
Section 3: Execution. The Mayor and Clerk-Treasurer of the City of Laurel are hereby given authority to execute any documents in order to accept the Riverside Park Master Plan on behalf of the City.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the City Council on February 6, 2018, by Council Member Sparks.

PASSED and ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2018.

APPROVED by the Mayor this 6<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2018.

CITY OF LAUREL

  
Thomas C. Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Bethany Keeler, Clerk-Treasurer

Approved as to form:

  
Sam S. Painter, Civil City Attorney



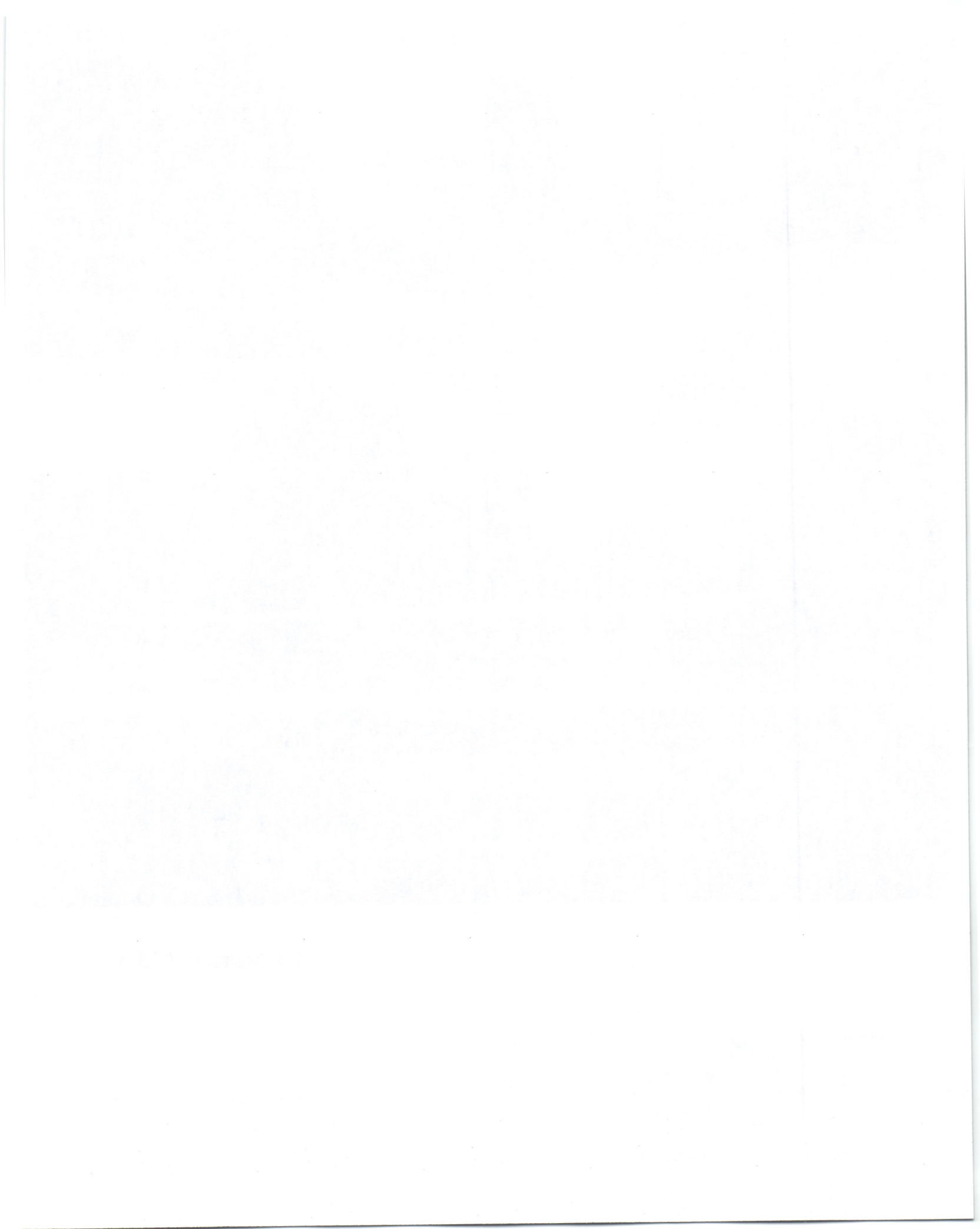
# CITY OF LAUREL

## Riverside Park Master Plan

**February 2018**

Prepared by:





# **CITY OF LAUREL**

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## **RIVERSIDE PARK MASTER PLAN**

2018

Adopted Document

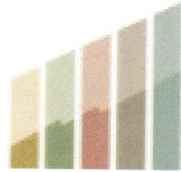
Reviewed by: Laurel City Council

Adopted by Resolution: February 6, 2018

The Plan was prepared for the Riverside Park Plan Advisory Committee:

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LuAnne Engh	City Parks Board
Roger Giese	City Planning Board
Judy Goldsby	City Planning Board
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The plan was funded in part by an award from the Montana Department of Commerce, Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund Program



The plan was prepared by:

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## 1.0 Executive Summary



For decades Riverside Park has provided the residents of Laurel and highway travelers with a unique combination of recreational and civic activities. Situated along the southern bank of the Yellowstone River, the Park provides access to the river for fishing and boating. The Park contains historic buildings that have been home to civic organizations, such as the American Legion, Jaycees, Laurel Rod and Gun Club and Laurel Rifle Club. It provided camping, open space and recreation opportunities such as horseshoes and trap shooting.

In 2011, the Yellowstone River flooded the Park and caused significant damage to facilities and buildings and dramatically altered the traditional uses in the Park. While many uses such as Jaycee Hall continue in the Park, others have ceased. In addition to flooding, in July of 2011, the ExxonMobil Silvertip pipeline crossing the Yellowstone River ruptured just downstream from Riverside Park. The rupture released of approximately 1,500 barrels (or 63,000 gallons) of crude oil and caused the oiling of vegetation, debris, structures, and other materials in the floodplain Yellowstone River.

While the 2011 flood and oil spill negatively affected the Park and created numerous problems and issues, it also presented City residents with an opportunity to reevaluate and envision what the Park could become in the decades to come. The plan is meant to provide the City Council, City residents and others with a clear vision about how the Park will be improved and managed over the next 10 years.

The Plan proposes the redevelopment of the Park to include multi-purpose facilities that would serve a variety of functions for local residents and travelers, including recreation, picnicking, camping and a center for Laurel's civic organizations. The plan envisions a significant redesign of the Park to accommodate multiple uses and activities.

Ultimately the plan provides the City and its residents with a list of prioritized projects that can focus the City's limited Park funds, and to form a strategy for pursuing funding from other organizations and sources. Table 1 below identifies the overall improvement priorities for the Park as identified by the project advisory committee.

Table 1 - Overall Park Improvement Priorities

PRIORITY	IMPROVEMENT
High	Public Restrooms
High	Drinking Water
High	Campground
High	Picnic Shelters
High	Removal of Hazard Trees
Medium	Restoration of Buildings
Medium	Overhead Lighting
Medium	Parking
Medium	Playground
Medium	Redesigned Road Network
Low	Garbage disposal
Low	Interpretive Signage and Kiosks
Low	Trail
Low	Fishing Access-ADA Access
Low	Planting Trees-Shrubs
Low	Remediation of Lead from Former Rifle and Trap Range
Low	Remediation of Historic Garbage Dump

## 2.0 Vision for the Park

In order to guide the overall redevelopment of the Park, the project advisory committee developed a vision statement. The vision anticipates a dramatic revival of the Park.

***“Riverside Park will become the centerpiece of Laurel’s park system and provide residents and travelers with a variety of high quality and cost effective recreational and civic facilities and services that take advantage of the Park’s natural amenities and history.”***

## 3.0 Introduction

### 3.1 Purpose of the Planning Process

The plan for Riverside Park provides a comprehensive vision and framework for the Park’s use and redevelopment, all based on public input and the setting of realistic goals. The Plan will allow the City of Laurel to identify the opportunities and challenges that exist at the Park,

and to provide future improvements and services in an economically sustainable manner. The plan will also serve as the foundation for identifying potential economic development opportunities and to increase the appeal of not only the Park, but the City of Laurel as a whole. Ultimately the document will guide physical improvements at the Park which will help facilitate economic development. Thus, increasing the opportunity for business expansion and job creation in and around the City of Laurel.

### **3.2 Steps in the Planning Process**

The development of the plan involved a number of major steps. That being said, the entire planning process required only nine (9) months to complete. The primary steps included:

- Kick-off Meeting: April 2017
- Advisory Committee Meetings: April – December 2017
- Site Visits: April and July 2017
- Infrastructure and Facility Analysis: April - June 2017
- Public Open House: August 2017
- Draft Master Plan: October - November 2017
- Review of Draft Plan by Advisory Committee: November - December 2017
- Edits to Draft Plan: December 2017
- Public Hearing on Final Draft: January 2018
- City Council Adoption of Master Plan: January 2018

The focus of the planning process was intended to elevate the importance of the Park in the eyes of residents and to gather their ideas and input. The result is a plan that encompasses both the public's and City Council's vision for the Park.

### **3.3 History of the Park**

The ownership of the land that makes up Riverside Park has varied over the last one hundred-plus years. An individual named Sam "Crow" Davis lived on these lands, having his cabin not far from the current railroad bridge. Mr. Davis had settled here when it was part of the Crow Reservation and he built an irrigation ditch, the Davis Ditch, to water his hay fields. At some point Mr. Davis moved to Pryor with his wife and family and subsequently homestead patents were filed on the land in 1911 by Theodore Wilkins and John Kinnick.

Ownership of these lands transferred many times after Wilkins and Kinnick. Owners included: Frank and Isaac Platz, the Danford Ditch Company, Mary Gordon and others. In the 1920s the land was leased to the American Indian Oil Company. Nellie and O.J. Wooters then sold the property to the City of Laurel. During the Great Depression, the City leased the land to the Montana Relief Commission and later to the Federal Transient Service and then onto the Work Progress Administration.

The Federal Transient Service was a special relief program established by the Roosevelt Administration in 1933. Shelters were established by the program that provided food, clothing, medical care, and training and education programs to people displaced by the impacts of the Great Depression. The program was unable to assist the thousands of displaced people and just two years later, in 1935, it was phased out. The Federal Transient Service camp at Riverside Park was replaced by a Works Projects Administration (WPA) camp. The WPA employed millions of unskilled men to complete public works projects across the country, including the construction of public buildings and roads. At Riverside Park, the men constructed buildings, sewer lines and water systems.

During World War II the Park was leased from the City by the Federal Government for use as a prisoner of war camp (1942 to 1945). Over 200 German POW's were housed at the camp and they provided labor to the surrounding sugar beet farms.

The Park property includes a historic levee and garbage dump. The levee consists of an earth embankment fronted on the river side by hand laid river cobbles. The levee is approximately 8-feet tall and 12-feet wide at the base. It is unknown when exactly the levee was constructed; however, it does appear on a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) General Land Office (GLO) Plat Map dated December 1906. It may have been constructed during or shortly after the railroad bridge was constructed in 1890. The WPA completed a riprap project for the levee in 1935, although it is unclear whether this project was completed.

The dump consists of metal refuse such as car bodies and appliances and numerous bottles, cans and household items. The dump originated when the relief camp was established in the 1930's and it continued in limited use as a dump until the 1960s.

There are a number of historic buildings located in the Park that were built by the WPA to house displaced men during the Great Depression and then to house German prisoners of war during World War II. In the decades following the end of the war, many of the historic buildings in the Park were used by local organizations such as the Laurel Rod and Gun Club, Laurel Rifle Club, American Legion and Laurel Jaycees. The 2011 flood event caused significant damage to several of the buildings and led to their closure. This includes the Laurel Rod and Gun Club building and the caretaker's building. Exceptions are Jaycee Hall and the relatively new Horseshoe Club building, which are still used by those organizations.

A shooting range and earth backstop was added to the Park following World War II by the Laurel Rifle Club. The Club also eventually developed a trap range. The trap range is located adjacent to and southeast of the former Laurel Rod and Gun clubhouse.

Until the 2011 flood, the Park was also used for tent and RV camping. Currently the park is used for recreation and picnicking and the Park has a new concrete boat ramp that provides better access to the Yellowstone River.

### **3.4 2011 Flooding**

Heavy rains and runoff from above average snowpack caused the Yellowstone River to overflow its banks from April 2011 through July 2011. This even flooded the Park and damage many of its buildings. During the flooding, the river bank adjacent to Riverside Park experienced significant erosion. The erosion destroyed the Park's previous boat ramp and exposed several underground utilities including the Exxon-Mobil's Silvertip oil pipeline, which ruptured and spilled crude oil into the Yellowstone River. The rupture spilled approximately 1,500 barrels of crude oil into the river. A new pipeline was installed shortly after the failure, and the old, damaged pipeline was removed.

The flooding also caused significant changes to the river in 2011. A large volume of sediment was deposited upstream and beneath the Highway 212 bridge and the railroad bridge upstream of the Park. The sedimentation reduced the hydraulic capacity of the bridges and created a backwater effect causing increased velocities and scour through the southern halves of the two bridges. This was the cause of the severe erosion. The river bank was eroded for approximately 1,400 feet downstream of the bridge and up to 45 feet back from the existing (pre-flood) riverbank location. The erosion caused the existing concrete boat ramp to break up and collapse into the river. Numerous cottonwood trees in the Park were also lost during the bank erosion, which ultimately left an unstabilized, gravelly and cobbly river bank which was highly susceptible to further erosion. The historic levee in the Park was also damaged during the flood. A historic log cabin which sat near the former top of river bank was nearly lost to erosion and the City had to remove the structure.

To address the erosion, the City of Laurel secured funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to construct improvements to protect the City's drinking water intake structure and the Park. These improvements included reconstruction and stabilization of the eroded south river bank and restoration of the hydraulic capacity of the upstream bridges. These measures restored the main channel flow back to its existing (pre-2011-flood) location. As part of the riverbank improvements a new boat ramp was installed by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The overall project was finalized in November 2014.

### **3.5 2011 Oil Spill**

In July of 2011 during the flood, the ExxonMobil Silvertip pipeline crossing the Yellowstone River ruptured just downstream from Riverside Park. The rupture released approximately 1,500 barrels (or 63,000 gallons) of crude oil and caused oiling of vegetation, debris, structures, and other materials in the floodplain Yellowstone River. ExxonMobil and its contractors cleaned approximately 70 river miles of contaminated shoreline under the oversight of the United States Environment Protection Agency (EPA), Montana DEQ, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), and other state and federal agencies.

ExxonMobil subsequently agreed to pay the State of Montana \$12 million dollars in order to mitigate the natural resource damaged by the oil spill. The State of Montana will be distributing some of these monies to local governments and local organizations to help fund projects to offset the impacts of the spill. This may provide the City with a source of funding to begin the redevelopment of the Park.

## **4.0 Existing Conditions and Facility Analysis**

### **4.1 Park Features**

Riverside Park is located approximately 1.4 miles south of Laurel, Montana on the south bank of the Yellowstone River. The Park is within the municipal boundaries of Laurel and is owned and maintained by the City. It is accessed directly from U.S. Highway 212, which forms the Park's western boundary. A Burlington Northern-Santa Fe railroad line parallels U.S. Highway 212 to the west of the highway. The topography of the park is generally flat with a manmade levee located along the river from the Highway 212 bridge to a point 2,500 feet downstream of the bridge.

The Park contains numerous mature cottonwood trees. In addition, upland riparian vegetation is present along the historic levee downstream of the boat ramp and in the area of the historic garbage dump. This riparian vegetation is well-established and needs minimal maintenance or expenditure of City resources. The vegetation is a mix of cottonwoods, western snowberry and dogwood.

The City currently provides maintenance to the existing Park facilities by mowing and spraying weeds in the summer, painting the park benches/picnic tables, grading the internal roads, and plowing snow and sanding the approach to the highway in the winter to maintain access. There are currently three (3) operational buildings in the Park; Jaycee Hall, the storage building and the Horseshoe Club Building. Jaycee Hall and the storage building are leased by the Jaycee's from the City which owns and maintains the buildings. The Horseshoe Club building is owned by the Club, but the Club leases the land from the City.

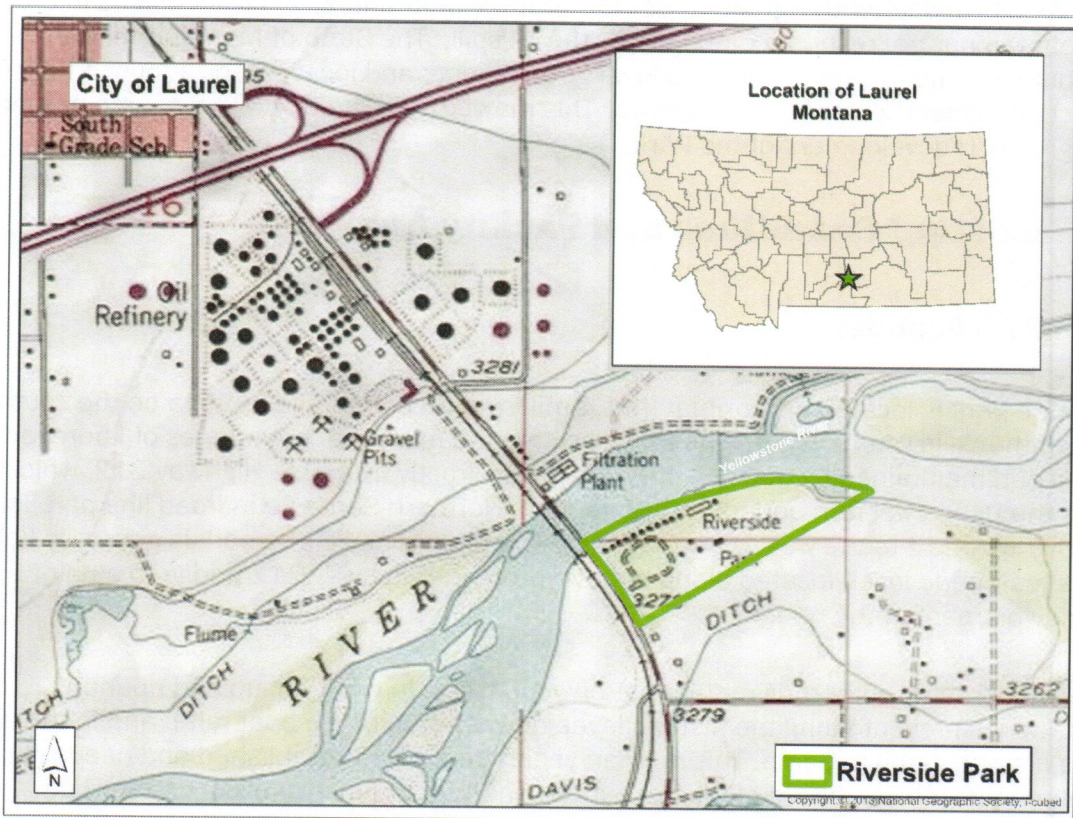
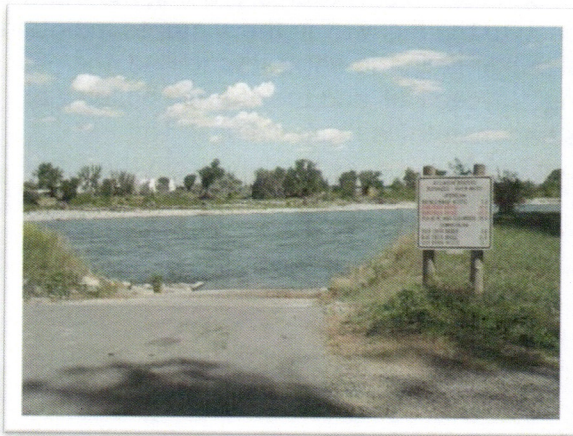


Figure 1 - Riverside Park Location

## 4.2 Boat Ramp



Boat Ramp

The existing boat ramp was reconstructed in 2014 in conjunction with the bank stabilization project that addressed the impacts of the 2011 flood. The ramp consists of a concrete apron that extends into the river and an asphalt pavement section located at the top of the ramp. Both surfaces are in good condition, but should receive annual maintenance by Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) on the asphalt and adjacent riprap to remain functional.

The boat ramp is managed by FWP. That portion of the Park sees substantial use by anglers and boaters who do utilize Park facilities. Due to the lack of public restroom facilities near the boat ramp, human waste is sometimes encountered in that area. The City should actively encourage FWP to help provide additional restroom facilities for the people using the boat ramp.

### 4.3 Buildings

There are currently nine buildings located within Riverside Park. There are also several accessory buildings associated with the main buildings. Table 2 lists the buildings and their status

Table 2 - Existing Buildings in Riverside Park

BUILDING NAME	CURRENT STATUS
American Legion	Vacant and in need of repairs
Caretakers House	Vacant and slated for demolition due to flood damage.
Horseshoe Club	Operational and leased to the Horseshoe Club
Jaycee Hall	Operational and leased to the Laurel Jaycees
Public Restrooms	Closed and in need of repair or replacement due to flood and water damage to the system
Rifle Club	Vacant and in need of repair and operational upgrades
Rod and Gun Club	Vacant and in need of repairs due to flood damage
Storage Building	Operational
Williston Basin Maintenance	Operational and privately owned and maintained

With the exception of the Williston Basin Incorporated pipeline building and the Horseshoe Club, all of the other buildings are owned by the City of Laurel and have been traditionally leased to local organizations for a nominal fee. Currently the only leases are for the Jaycee Hall and the land under the Horseshoe Club.

The following narrative describes each building in the Park and provides a summary of the improvements or repairs needed by each.

#### 4.3.1 Condition of Building Roofs

It is estimated that all the buildings were reroofed in 1991 following a large hail storm that damaged all of them. Thus, all the roofs are 26-years old and reaching the end of their design life. Visual inspection of the roofs shows excessive granular loss to the shingles and hail marks and tears are also present. Also, all the buildings lack gutters and proper roof drainage away from the foundations.

#### 4.3.2 Building Septic Systems

At one time all buildings had water and sewer services, except the storage building which has no services and the Horseshoe Club building which only has water service. The general location of the septic systems and drain fields that serve the buildings are shown on the Figure 2. The exact locations of several septic systems is unknown. The condition of the water and sewer systems is discussed further in Section 4.5 and 4.18.



### 4.3.3 American Legion



American Legion Building

This building was previously used as the headquarters of the American Legion Laurel Post 123. Upon the departure of the Legion from the building in 2011, the structure has remained vacant. The building is showing rot on rafters and roof sheeting. Also, water has penetrated the roof and has caused the ceiling in the bathroom to collapse. Subsequently the interior of the building is now exposed to the elements. This building is in need of substantial repair and deferred maintenance if it is going to remain a viable structure.

### 4.3.4 Caretaker's Building

Prior to the 2011 flood, this building provided housing for the individuals who helped manage and oversee the use of the campground and other facilities in the Park. The structure is located in the central part of the Park. During the flood, the structure was damaged to such an extent that the City has determined that it is not worth the cost of rehabilitation. Therefore, it will eventually be demolished. Evidence suggests that there may be an old heating oil tank buried in the ground underneath the building. This would need to be removed when the building is demolished.



Caretaker Building

#### 4.3.5 Horseshoe Club

The Horseshoe Club Building is a metal sided and metal roofed building that is owned by the Laurel Horseshoe Club. The Club leases the land upon which the building sits from the City. The building houses indoor horseshoe courts, which are used in the winter for competition.



Horseshoe Club Building

The Club building is located in the south central part of the Park adjacent to the outdoor horseshoe pits. The building is in relatively good condition and appears to currently need minimal maintenance. While the Club building is for the exclusive use of Club members, the outdoor horseshoe pits are owned by the City and open to the public. The Club pays for electrical service



Jaycee Hall

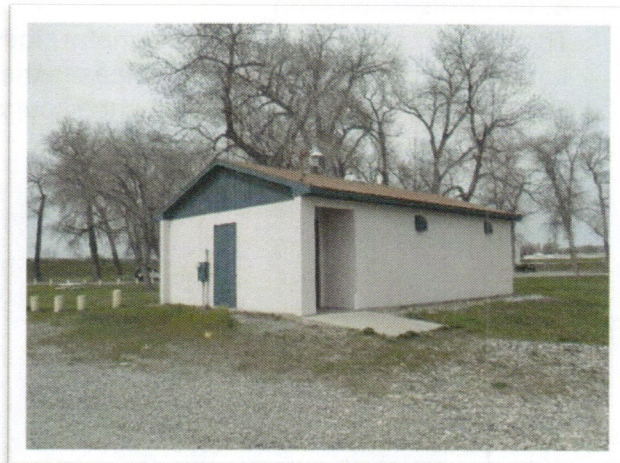
#### 4.3.6 Jaycee Hall

Jaycee Hall was one of the few buildings in the Park that experienced minimal damage from the 2011 flood. In fact, during the flood, staff from the City graded a berm around the building to direct flood waters around the structure. The building is leased to the Laurel Jaycees and is used as a meeting place for the organization and the building is rented out by the Jaycee's for events such as weddings, banquets, reunions, etc. The building has a large meeting room, kitchen facilities and restrooms. The

structure is in relatively good condition and is in need of typical maintenance, such as the replacement of the roof which dates from 1991. There is a small storage building used by the Jaycees that is located northeast of the main building. This building appears to be in good condition.

#### 4.3.7 Public Restrooms

The public restroom building is a concrete block building with a shingle roof located in the west central area of the Park. This facility is not currently functional. During the occurrence of high groundwater during spring runoff, the restrooms in the building will not flush and water will not go down toilets, due to the flooding of the drain field and tanks. In addition, the plumbing for the building is located within the concrete walls, thus making it difficult, if not impossible, to undertake any maintenance and repairs. The future of this building remains to be determined.



Existing Public Restroom Building

Due to the Park's location within the 100-year floodplain of the Yellowstone River, any new public restrooms would likely need to be of a vault toilet design. Such structures would need to meet the applicable regulations for siting and constructing sanitation facilities within the 100-year floodplain, which involves elevating the top of the storage vault 2-feet above the base flood elevation.

It is also important to note that the Park is the location for a boat ramp managed by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP). Thus, the area around the boat ramp sees substantial use by anglers and boaters, and functional restrooms are critical to keep the area sanitary. With this in mind, the City should actively work to encourage FWP to help provide additional restroom facilities for those users.



Historic Rifle Range

#### 4.3.8 Rifle Club

The Rifle Club building was first used by the Laurel Rifle Club in 1939. Over the following decades the building has

been used as a meeting place for the Club, to conduct indoor shooting, teach hunter safety and to host other shooting and archery events. The Club leased the building from the City and this lease expired in 2003. Because of issues related to the current condition of the building, the City Council decided not to renew the lease. The building has a number of structural and operational issues. The structural issues include the collapse of the bathroom ceiling resulting in significant water damage and mold. Also the roof has reached its life expectancy. From an operational standpoint, the interior of the building contains

elevated levels of lead caused by the discharge of firearms without adequate ventilation and cleaning. These elevated lead levels present a threat to public health and safety. In order to reduce the City's exposure to any liability due to the elevated lead levels, the City Council closed the building to public access and use.

The building is in need of significant repairs, including to the roof, the removal of the bathrooms and the remediation of the lead in the building. In addition, the future of indoor shooting in the building would require a very significant investment in the reconstruction of the building and installation of an air filtration system and other improvements to meet state and federal health and safety standards.

#### **4.3.9 Rod and Gun Club**

Since 1929, this building had been the headquarters and meeting facility for the Laurel Rod and Gun Club. The building was damaged during the 2011 flood and the timbers comprising the lower walls on the building are showing signs of rot. Testing paid for by the Rod and Gun Club suggests that there is minimal mold and asbestos contamination minimal. The building has not been used since the flood. The lease for the building expired in 2008.



**Laurel Rod & Gun Club Building**

The Laurel Rod and Gun Club is interested in repairing this building so the Club can once again use the structure for Club functions. Knowing that the City does not have the resources to undertake this project, the Club has indicated that it is willing to provide the resources, time and money to complete the project. To that end, the Club has obtained an estimate for the repair and revitalization of the building, which is approximately \$45,000.

#### **4.3.10 Williston Basin Pipeline Maintenance Building**

The pipeline building, which is located in the middle of the main entrance road, is owned and maintained by Williston Basin Incorporated (WBI). The maintenance building is of concrete block construction with a metal roof and is in good condition.



**Williston Basin Pipeline Building**

#### **4.3.11 Future of the Buildings**

As mentioned in the narrative above, several of the buildings are in need of repair or upgrades to permit their future use.

Unfortunately, the City of Laurel does not have the money or resources to complete the

needed work. Therefore, it will be necessary to identify people or organizations who are willing to “champion” the fundraising efforts and the work necessary to complete the repairs and upgrades. For example, the membership of the Laurel Rod and Gun Club has expressed its willingness to raise the funds and resources to complete the work needed for the Rod and Gun Club Building to make it safely useable again. For those buildings that lack the support of people or organizations, they will likely be demolished. The City has obtained cost estimates for the demolition of those buildings not currently in a useable condition.

It is important to note that the cost estimates shown in Table 2 below do not include the potential costs for the abatement of hazardous substances such as asbestos or lead.

Table 3 - 2017 Cost Estimates to Demolish Buildings

BUILDING	COST
Caretaker	\$15,6000
Rifle Club	\$34,000
Rod and Gun Club	\$22,000
American Legion	TBD

#### 4.4 Campground

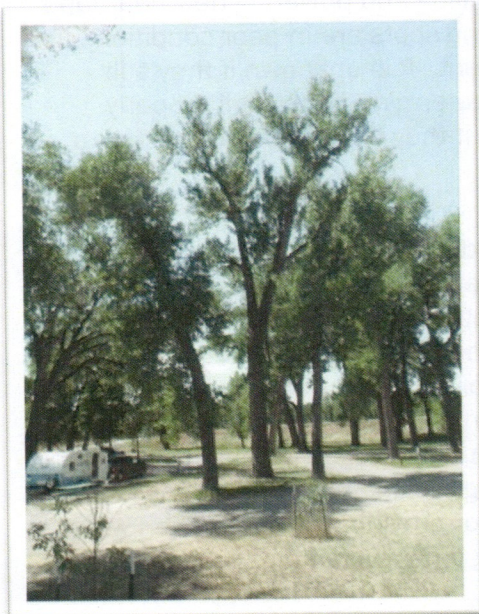
Prior to the 2011 flood, the Park was a popular location for people to camp, particularly travelers. At one time the Park provided public restrooms and water hookups for campers. There was also an onsite caretaker who lived in the caretaker’s house and helped provide management of the camping and other Park facilities. Camping was located mainly in the northwest corner of the Park between the main access road and the river. The damage caused by the 2011 flood was to such an extent that the restroom facilities were closed. Thus, without sanitation facilities, the campground was closed.



Former Campground Area

The reestablishment of a campground was identified by the project advisory committee and City residents as a very high priority. In order to compete with other campgrounds in the surrounding area, the facility would need to be designed and constructed to ensure that it could be used by full sized recreational vehicles and trailers. This would include the development of a dedicated campground with access roads, parking areas for RV’s, restroom facilities, water hookups and garbage disposal. A new campground should also include facilities for tent camping.

The location of the previous campground is home to numerous mature cottonwood trees. These trees are reaching the end of their life expectancy and are starting to drop large branches on a regular basis. In the near future they will likely start falling over and thus posing a life and safety risk to Park users.



Mature Cottonwoods in Park

It is recommended that a new campground facility be designed and constructed in the southwestern and south central portion of the Park. This location contains younger and smaller trees that could be incorporated into the design of the campground and would be much more easily maintained to reduce any hazards. This location would also allow the Horseshoe Pit complex to be incorporated into the design of the campground and therefore hopefully increase its use by campers and travelers.

If the campground is reestablished, it would be important that includes a caretaker or campground host(s) be living onsite during the summer to ensure that the facilities are safely and efficiently managed. A reestablished campground could provide the City

with an opportunity to generate revenue by attracting overnight visitors who are traveling along Highway 212 and Interstate 90.

#### 4.5 Drinking Water

Currently City drinking water is supplied to the Park by a 3" HDPE pipe that runs through an existing 4" PVC pipe suspended from the Highway 212 bridge. The pipe enters the Park at the northwest corner of the property, runs underground on the north side of the Park and transects the property. At one time the water main provided service to all buildings and multiple RV potable water hookups and one fire hydrant on the site. The only building currently using this service is the Jaycee Hall. The existing fire flows from the fire hydrant within the Park are estimated to be 50-75 gpm.

The water service has only been in seasonal use since 2010, due to the failure of heat tape that kept the line on the bridge from freezing. The failure of the tape caused the line to freeze and break. The pipe was eventually replaced with the 3" HDPE, but the break(s) in the heat



Frostless Hydrant in Park

tape could not be isolated and repaired. The City completed a cost benefit analysis on replacing the heat tape vs letting the water run continuously during the winter at Jaycee Hall. The City found that letting the water slowly run on the building's kitchen and bathroom fixtures to prevent freezing was less expensive than installing and powering new heat tape. The frostless water hydrants located at the old RV camping spots are in poor condition. In fact, many have been run into by vehicles and are now bent. It is unknown if they still function. These hydrants would need to be assessed to determine if they still properly function. It is likely that most would need to be replaced if they were to be put back into service.

The constraints of the existing water system are three-fold. First the underground 4" cast iron line within the Park does not have adequate soil coverage over the pipe to prevent potential freezing in the winter. Second, the available water flow volumes to the Park are inadequate. The current flow rate, estimated by staff at the City Public Works Department, is between 50-75 gallons per minute, which will not allow for the operation of a fire truck. Adequate fire flows would need to be closer to 1,000 gpm minimum. The third issue is the long-term viability of using the water line suspended along the bridge. Potential options for providing drinking water to the Park may include replacing the line across the bridge and/or installing onsite wells. Such wells may not be an option for providing fire protection water flows unless they are very large and capable of producing a high volume of water.

#### **4.6 Garbage Disposal**

Garbage disposal in the Park is limited to a large dumpster located east of Jaycee Hall. If the Parks facilities are dramatically improved, garbage disposal will become a more dominant management issue. This would be particularly true if a new RV campground and picnic facilities are developed. Disposal facilities should be sited in convenient locations, such as in close proximity to a new campground, and have the capacity to handle the volume of trash associated with the campground and other facilities.

#### **4.7 Horseshoe Pit Facility**

The Horseshoe Club facility in the Park consists of a tournament quality horseshoe course with 15 pits and a clubhouse. According to the documents held at the City, the pits were constructed in the 1970's using Land and Water Conservation Funds provided by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The clubhouse is owned by the Club, but the land is leased to the Club. The facility is in good condition and should require basic maintenance to ensure its long-term use. The facility does not see the use it did in the previous decades, but incorporating it into a new campground design could help to revitalize it.



**Horseshoe Pits**

Figure 2 - Existing Conditions





## 4.8 Interpretive Signage



Existing Interpretive Sign

The Park has a rich history and there are many stories to tell. These range from the homestead era through the Works Progress Administration Camp and the World War II prisoner of war camp. While there are several interpretive signs located in the Park, they have become weathered and are in need of replacement.

The project advisory committee and many City residents want to make sure the history of the Park is preserved and presented clearly to visitors. In order to achieve this, new interpretive signs are needed. Any

new signs should be large enough to

adequately convey the story of the Park, constructed of durable weather proof materials and include professional graphics and consistent colors and sign elements.

## 4.9 Lighting

The Park currently contains some overhead lighting. Several members of the advisory committee and many City residents expressed an interest in seeing additional lighting to improve the safety and security of the Park. Any new lighting should be coordinated with the development of a more defined road and parking network and with park improvements, including a new campground.

## 4.10 Natural Area-Historic Dump

Located north and east of the old rifle range is an undeveloped natural area that is associated with the riparian corridor of the Yellowstone River and the historic garbage dump. This is an area of dense vegetation including mature cottonwood trees, dogwood and snowberry shrubs. The area is typically used by a variety of bird species, small mammals and whitetail deer. The area is



Car Body in the Historic Dump

traversed by an unmaintained foot path that could eventually serve as the basis for a developed walking trail.

The area directly east of the safety berms for the old rifle range was used as a garbage dump until the 1960's. There are large pieces of metal including old car bodies and appliances located here. Much of the larger debris would need to be removed before the area could be used for formal recreational purposes. Prior to any development in the area of the old dump it would be necessary to complete an assessment of the types of garbage located onsite and to identify what mitigation would be necessary to safely use the area for recreational purposes.

#### 4.11 Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Pedestrian access to the Park from the City is very limited. There is a concrete sidewalk on the east side of Highway 212, north of the river. This sidewalk runs from the north side of the highway bridge to Bernhardt Road where it terminates at CHS refinery property. Southward from the highway bridge there is an asphalt trail that is separated from the highway by a guardrail which extends to the Park entrance. This is currently the only access point for pedestrians.

The grade from the highway into the Park is fairly steep, thus making ADA access down into the Park from the highway very challenging and expensive. Internal to the Park there is only one short section of dedicated pedestrian/bike trail, an asphalt trail from the FWP boat ramp that goes to the main entrance road near the highway. Opportunities for increasing access by pedestrians and bikes, as well as ensuring ADA access to Park amenities should be addressed as redevelopment occurs.



Picnic Tables in the Park

#### 4.12 Picnic Facilities

Picnic tables are located throughout the Park. During the planning process, several members of the advisory committee expressed an interest in seeing additional picnic facilities, particularly picnic shelters. Such facilities could serve as a gathering point for families and visitors and help protect people from the heat of a summer day or from potential rain showers. Picnic shelters should be sited strategically throughout the Park to maximize their use.

#### 4.13 Pipeline, Electrical and Telecommunications Utilities Park Features



Pipeline Sign in the Park

There are a number of underground pipelines within or near the Park. The Exxon-Mobil Silvertip crude oil pipeline lies 750 feet downstream of the Highway 212 bridge. Two other pipelines, one for crude oil and another for natural gas are operated by Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline and they cross beneath the river and run through the Park. Williston Basin also has a pipeline maintenance station located in the western portion of the Park. This building is located in the middle of the main access road. Williston Basin Incorporated has an easement for the operation and maintenance of these pipelines.

Electricity is provided to the site via an overhead power line that comes in from north of the Park and terminates at a power drop located near the northwest corner of the property. This electrical service provides power to all buildings on the Park, as well as power connections to the former camping sites and to the light poles located throughout the Park. This existing service adequately provides electricity to the Park facilities, although the routing of lines is sporadic. Buried telecommunications lines also run along Highway 212 on the west edge of the Park.



Historic Trap Range

#### 4.14 Rifle and Trap Range

For many decades, Riverside Park was home to an outdoor rifle and trap range. The rifle range ceased operation in 2005. The rifle range began operation just after World War II when the Laurel Rifle Club constructed the facilities, including the safety berms and the shooting shelter. The outdoor trap range was developed in 1929 and two new traps ranges were installed in 2001 and sited to prevent the fall of shot onto the private property to the south.

The trap range is currently under the management of the Laurel Rod and Gun Club. The Club's lease for the trap range expires on May 7, 2018. Due to concerns about the liability associated with shooting within the City limits and upon the advice of the City's insurer, the Montana Municipal Insurance Association, the City Council had made the decision in 2017 to not renew its lease with the Laurel Rod and Gun Club for the operation of the trap range. Thus, despite significant public support for the continued operation of the trap range, the range would no longer be used upon the expiration of the lease.

The area encompassing the historic rifle and trap range has the potential to be redeveloped with future facilities. These could include athletic fields, a performance stage, disc or mini golf, etc. Decades of rifle and trap shooting has likely left deposits of lead bullets and shot in the soil of the area, so prior to any use in the area, remediation of lead deposits in the area would be necessary.

#### 4.15 Riverbank Stabilization



New Levee

The flooding and erosion that occurred in 2011 left the south bank of the Yellowstone River along much of the Park boundary at a near-vertical slope. To address this situation, the City of Laurel secured funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to construct improvements that would not only help to protect the City's drinking water intake structure in the river, but also protect the Park. These improvements included reconstruction and stabilization of

the eroded southern river bank along the Park. This project restored the main channel flow back to its existing (pre-2011-flood) location.

#### 4.16 Road Network and Parking

Vehicle access to the Park is provided by a road that intersects with Highway 212. The access road slopes down off of the highway to the Park. At its intersection with the Park entrance, Highway 212 is a five-lane highway with a speed limit of 45-mph. Once in the Park the internal road network consists of gravel surfaced driving lanes which provide access to all of the existing Park facilities. The condition of the internal roads is fair, exhibiting an adequate gravel layer across the site, but do lack proper drainage and there are pot holes throughout the site.

The Park's internal road network is poorly defined in many places with the driving lanes and parking areas overlapping. In addition, the driving lanes for the main entrance road are extremely wide, particularly from the highway up to Jaycee Hall. Also, random curbing can be found throughout the Park and it is not known what purpose they previously served.



Existing Road Surface in the Park

Vehicle parking is also not defined very well, with no formally designated parking areas. This is particularly true around Jaycee Hall. Vehicle travel lanes and parking area should be formally identified and delineated. This would not only improve vehicle and pedestrian safety, but would also reduce the amount of gravel surfacing in the Park and thus reduce maintenance cost for the City. This step would also increase the amount of space available for Park facilities and open space.

#### 4.17 Trails



Existing Asphalt Trail

There is currently no designated trail network within the Park. There is a short section of asphalt trail that goes from the boat ramp and then southwestward to the main access road by Highway 212. There is an unmaintained trail along the top of the historic levee that goes from approximately the boat ramp into the wooded area around the historic dump. This unmaintained trail could serve as the basis of a defined walking trail, but would need significant work. Any new trail network should be designed to provide access to the entire Park property including the natural area in the east of the property.

#### 4.18 Wastewater Treatment/Disposal

Before the 2011 flood, the Park had several restroom facilities including public restrooms and the restrooms found in the individual buildings. Treatment of wastewater was via septic

tank and drain field systems (septic system). As of today, the only known operational septic system is that which serves Jaycee Hall.

The septic system for the public restroom building is located in the grass area north of the building. During the occurrence of seasonal high groundwater, the restrooms in the building will not flush and water will not go down toilets, due to groundwater flooding the drain field and tanks. Because of this situation, many people/travelers stopping at the Park have resorted to using the wooded areas near the boat ramp and along the river as toilet facilities. In the worst cases people have simply relieved themselves next to the closed public restrooms. This presents a public health concern and makes the Park less attractive to visit.

Overwhelmingly, the project advisory committee and City residents indicated that no matter what other improvements are completed at the Park, at a minimum, new public restrooms need to be installed. Ideally more than one new restroom would be installed. New restrooms would likely be vault toilets and because of the 100-year floodplain, they would need to be elevated above the height of the floodwaters.

The American Legion building was served by a septic tank located south of the building. The location of its drain field is unknown. The septic tank that was installed for this building has an outlet port located towards the bottom of the tank. Because of this, solids would plug the drain field. In the past City personnel had to pump the septic tank following the use of the restroom.

The restrooms for the Rifle Club Building were a later addition to the north side of the building and were served by a septic system located north of the building between the building and river levee. The Rod & Gun Club and the Caretakers buildings shared a septic system with the tank located between the two buildings and the drain field located somewhere south of the buildings in the grass field between the Horseshoe Club and trap range. Jaycee Hall has a septic system and drain field located south of the building across the gravel driving surface surrounding the building.

Since the 2011 flood, the septic systems for these buildings have been unused. This is almost seven (7) years and it is unknown if they would still operate correctly.

If buildings such as the American Legion or the Rod and Gun Club are going to be repaired and made operational again, including the use of interior restrooms, it will be important to determine whether the existing septic systems are still functional. If an assessment determines they are not, then the options for providing wastewater treatment become very limited.

In order to obtain guidance regarding the repair/maintenance or existing septic systems in the Park the staff at River Stone Health (Yellowstone County environmental health division) was contacted by Great West Engineering, City staff and a member of the advisory committee. The staff at River Stone Health provided the following guidance:

- In order to provide guidance on wastewater treatment options the City would need to provide a very narrow or focused scope of work for a specific system.
- If an existing septic system fails (backs up or surfacing sewage) then the system may be repaired or replaced on the property. In many cases, only a portion of the parcel is in the floodplain and therefore the replacement area drain field must be located in the area outside the floodplain.
- For new septic systems, the sanitation rules followed by River Stone Health do not allow new systems to be located within 100 feet of the 100-year floodplain delineation.

Based upon this information, it appears that replacing any failing septic system will pose a challenge.

## 5.0 Public Outreach and Engagement

The plan was developed using a variety of methods to engage City residents. The primary approach was the creation of an advisory committee containing a diverse membership and with people having a strong interest in and knowledge about the Park.

Other steps included holding an open house, submitting newspaper articles and holding a public hearing before the City Council. The following is a description of the methods used to obtain the advice and ideas of City residents about the future of the Park.

### 5.1 Advisory Committee

To ensure that a wide range of views were incorporated into the development of this plan, the City Council appointed an advisory committee to provide City staff and Great West Engineering with advice and guidance. Table 4 lists the membership of the advisory committee.

Table 4 - Advisory Committee Membership

NAME	AFFILIATION
Evan Bruce	At Large Member
LuAnne Engh	City Parks Board
Roger Giese	City Planning Board
Judy Goldsby	City Planning Board
Curt Lord	At Large Member
Bruce McGee	City Council
Amy Pollock	City Parks Board
Sue Taylor	Beartooth Resource Conservation & Development
Irv Wilke	City Parks Board

The advisory committee was supported in the planning effort by the City Planner Noel Eaton, City Public Works Director Kurt Markegard and consulting planner, Jerry Grebenc from Great West Engineering.

The advisory committee held five (5) meetings over the course of the planning project, starting in July of 2017. The advisory committee's July meeting focused on identifying the best approaches to gathering input from City residents and discussing the committee's priorities for the Park. There was brief discussion about developing and distributing a survey to obtain resident input about Riverside Park. The committee quickly determined that a survey was unnecessary due to the fact that the City had conducted a similar survey in 2014 that focused on parks and recreation throughout the City. The committee felt that the results of that survey were still valid and did not need to be replicated. In addition, the committee members felt that they understood very clearly what the highest priorities for the Park were. The committee's July conversations about public outreach did result in the scheduling of an open house in August of 2017.

With regards to the committee's priorities, there was overwhelming consensus by all the committee members that providing operational public restrooms, drinking water and reestablishing the campground were essential to revitalizing the Park. In addition, the committee discussed other potential improvements and the future of the buildings and recreational shooting in the Park.

The committee spent considerable time at its August and September meetings discussing the results of the August open house. This included conversations about the priorities identified by the attendees and other topics. The future of recreational shooting (trap and indoor) in the Park was a substantial focus of these meetings. Due to potential safety and liability issues, the City Council and the Mayor made the decision in September of 2017 to no longer permit shooting. Understandably, this was a very controversial decision, as managed shooting had taken place in the Park for decades.

It is also important to note that in August, members of the committee and City staff used public input from the open house to develop funding applications that were submitted to the Montana Natural Resources Damage Program to help fund Park infrastructure such as public restrooms. The applications were submitted to the Yellowstone River Oil Spill Recreation Project Advisory Committee and the Montana Department of Justice Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP). These entities are administering funds to help complete recreation projects in compensation for natural resource losses from the rupture of the Exxon Silvertip pipeline and the subsequent oil spill that occurred in July 2011.

The committee's October meeting focused on finalizing the priorities for the Park. At the conclusion of this meeting the committee directed City staff and Great West Engineering to develop a draft layout of what the Park might look like in the future and also to compile a draft master plan for the committee to review.



In November, the committee met to undertake a cursory review of the draft plan and to identify any apparent edits that needed to be made. Hardcopies of the draft plan were distributed to the committee and the members agreed to review the plan in detail and provide their comments and edits to City staff and Great West Engineering by mid-December 2017. In addition, the committee discussed the schedule for presenting the draft plan to the City Parks Board and then ultimately to the City Council. The committee felt that it might be January of 2018 before the plan would be considered for adoption by the City Council.

## 5.2 Open House

The advisory committee, with the help of staff from the City and Great West Engineering, scheduled and organized an open house to gather public guidance about the future of Riverside Park. The event was held on the evening of August 14, 2017 at Jaycee Hall in the Park. The format of the open house was informal. Posters showing potential Park improvements were mounted on the walls and staff to answered questions. Attendees were asked to use the posters to prioritize projects by marking their preference for each. For example, the poster for public restrooms allowed people to identify whether they considered the facility very important, important, neutral, not important or not needed. Each poster was setup this way. People could also write down other comments on blank comment sheets. Over 100 people attended the open house. The table below shows the improvements and activities that were identified as being the most important to attendees.



Open House

Table 5 - Open House Attendee Priorities

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT	IDENTIFIED AS VERY IMPORTANT	IDENTIFIED AS IMPORTANT	TOTAL
Water and Restrooms	78	35	113
Restore Historic Buildings	87	13	100
RV Park and Camping	54	27	81
Removal of Dump	3	55	58
Lighting	8	49	57
Revenue Generation	34	20	54
Interpretive Signs	17	35	52
Picnic Shelters	16	32	48

Participants also provided input on the blank comment sheets that were available at the open house. These comments overwhelmingly indicated attendee support for the continuation of shooting sports in the Park.

### 5.3 Public Hearing

The final draft of the plan was presented to the City Council at a public hearing on January 16 2018. The hearing was noticed in the Laurel Outlook and the draft plan was available for review and download from the City's website. City residents were encouraged to review the draft plan prior to the hearing. Residents provided the Council with their thoughts on the Park plan as envisioned by the advisory committee. Public comments included the following statements:

- John Smith suggested that Riverside Park become its own authority like the [Laurel] Airport [Authority] is. The authority would then know what money it would receive each year and not be run out of the General Fund. He stated that he felt the park was a diamond in the rough and that those buildings had been here since he was young.
- Steve Krum, 249 24th Avenue West, reminded Council of the shooting heritage of the Park. He stated that he had participated in activities within the Park and has been part of shooting clubs. He is grateful that shooting sports are being considered. He gave a few examples of those who have shot down at the Park. Such as Patty Spurgeon, an Olympic Athlete, and a young woman who participated in small bore team shooting who received a full ride scholarship to Texas A&M, who was an average shooter before becoming part of the team. The Rifle Club is the only indoor 50-yard range in the Northwest; it is a unique building and range. He stated he did not know how far into shooting the plan went but strongly recommended the Council keep it as part of the heritage down there.
- Mathew Ray, from Joliet, stated that his kids are members of 4-H and he is the Shooting Sports leader. The kids have used the Park for archery and pellet rifle in the past. It was a great option to shoot indoors, especially during the winter. They currently have no place to shoot during the winter. He stated there are 30 kids involved in the program and would like shooting sports to be included in the plan.
- Todd McKeiver, 1702 East Main Street, stated he is a proponent of shooting sports in the Park. He is the Air Rifle leader for the young 4-H kids; they were taught how to handle a rifle. The Park was a great central location. He stated he is glad shooting sports is being discussed and would like to have the Park back the way it was.
- Ronnie Baker, Park City, stated she is the Yellowstone County 4-H Extension Agent. She stated that 4-H currently has about 250 kids in the shooting sports program. There is a facility located at the Metra and in Shepard where the kids can shoot. The facility here is key to allow access for kids on this side of the county. She stated that this group is great at volunteering. If there are ways, they can be involved and engaged in any of the upgrades within the Park. She gave an example of a building located on the fairgrounds in which they were part of bringing the building up to code.
- Jaime Krug lives South of Laurel, stated that she grew up in Laurel and has been involved with shooting sports for the past 14 years. This year marks the first year not

being able to use that building and the program took a huge hit and almost lost the entire program since the kids had to go into Billings each weekend. She has found another location to shoot archery but is unable to shoot rifle and shotgun. She stated that she would like Council to consider that youth use that building to learn gun safety and the proper way to shoot.

- Curtis Lord, 418 W. 12th St., excited to see camping and restrooms come back to the Park. Glad to see that shooting is being bought up, youth need a place to shoot. He stated that the Rod and Gun Club has asked the Park Board to review and renew their lease for shooting.
- Jennifer Lazloffy, 3165 Hwy 212, stated she has been a 4-H leader for the past 20 years. Her own children shot at Riverside Park and are awesome marksmen and archers. The Park has offered a great recreation for her family. She asked those kids who were involved in shoot sports to stand up. She also stated that they have not been able to shoot this year as they have no place to shoot in inclement weather.

## **6.0 Design and Improvement Recommendations**

### **6.1 Overall Park Concept**

This plan envisions a substantial redesign and reconfiguration of the Park from its past. The redesign and development the Park was based upon dividing the Park into five distinct areas. These included:

- Boat Ramp-Picnic Area (northwest)
- Campground-Horseshoe Complex
- Historic Buildings Complex
- Historic Rifle Range-Trap Range
- Natural Area-Historic Dump

Figure 3 shows the approximate locations of each area.

These areas were used to develop a conceptual layout of what the Park design and improvements could look like in the future. Figure 5 shows the proposed layout and redesign. Based upon the input of the advisory committee and residents and practical considerations, the plan advocates for the following types of development for each area.

#### Boat Ramp-Picnic Area:

- Designated parking area
- Interpretive sign kiosk
- Picnic shelters
- Playground
- Restrooms
- Trails

#### Campground-Horseshoe Complex

- 30-unit RV campground, which would include tent sites and an access road system
- Restrooms
- Reliable water source for drinking and fire flows
- Electrical hookups
- Centralized trash disposal

#### Historic Building Complex

- Maintenance of Jaycee Hall and storage building
- Identifying champions to repair and maintain the American Legion building, Rifle Club building and Rod and Gun Club building
  - Removal of buildings if no champions found
- Removal of caretaker's building
- Reliable water source for drinking and fire flows
- Wastewater treatment for building bathrooms
- Interpretive sign kiosk
- Trails
- Centralized trash disposal

#### Historic Rifle and Trap Range

- Removal or mitigation of lead shot
- Examine potential future uses i.e. athletic fields or stage/pavilion

#### Natural Area-Historic Dump

- Mitigate or remove trash and debris
- Design and build a trail system
- Design and build a fishing access for pedestrians along the river

The following narrative provides more detail about the proposed improvements.

Figure 3 - Park Design Areas



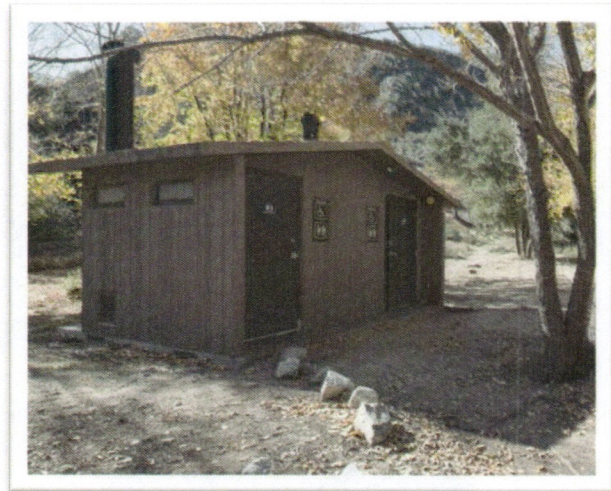
Figure 4 – Conceptual Park Layout



## 6.2 Public Restrooms

The installation of public restrooms is the most important improvement that can be made in the Park. Simply having sanitary and functional restrooms available will make the Park much more attractive to residents and travelers. In addition, it will help to reduce the problem of human waste being deposited around the Park.

If the existing public restroom building cannot be rehabilitated, it will be replaced with a vault toilet, ideally in the same general location. In addition, public restrooms should be installed in appropriate locations to serve the future campground and other development. Due to the fact that the Park is in the floodplain, any new vault toilets would need to be elevated above the base flood elevation.



Vault Toilet

As mentioned previously, the City should actively encourage the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) to assist with improving the restroom facilities in the Park, particularly near the boat ramp managed by FWP.

### Cost Estimates:

- Assessment of existing drain fields: \$5,000
- Repairs to existing drain fields: \$25,000
- New 3 riser double vault toilet: \$40,000+ each

## 6.3 Water Facilities

The current drinking water system and fire protection water supply to the Park is substandard. To facilitate the sustainable, long-term development of the Park, it will be essential to identify a more reliable method of providing water to the Park buildings, proposed campground and fire protection hydrants. Options for providing adequate water could include replacing the current water line suspended along the Highway 212 bridge with an improved system. Another option could involve obtaining the necessary water rights and drilling groundwater wells onsite. The advantage of a new water line running along the bridge from the City service is that it could be capable of providing sufficient flows for fire protection, while a groundwater well may not be able to supply enough water or may be cost prohibitive to develop. In addition to improving the supply of water, the distribution system with the Park should be redesigned and replaced, particularly in light of the desire for a new campground.

The City of Laurel has submitted an application to the State Natural Resource Damage Program request grant funds to replace the water service along the bridge with a new service line. The grant funds are part of the mitigation funds provided by Exxon-Mobil due to the rupture of its Silvertip Pipeline and the oil spill that occurred into the Yellowstone River.

Cost Estimate:

- New 6" HDPE line over bridge: \$260,000 (design, permitting, materials and labor)
- New 6" PVC distribution piping: \$100,000 (design, permitting, materials and labor)
- \$1,000 per month for electricity for heat tape (6 to 7 months)
- The cost of onsite wells would depend upon the scope of the project

## 6.4 Camping-RV Park



Campground Host

Any future campground would be designed to accommodate both recreational vehicle (RV) campers and tent camping. Up to 30 RV sites are envisioned for the campground, with the number of tent sites to be determined during the design phase. Facilities would include a road network internal to the campground, restrooms, water hook ups, electrical hook ups and garbage disposal. In order to accommodate RV camping, the internal roads may have to be designed as one-way roads so that campers could be backed into angle

parking spots, unless another type of campground design is used, such as a pull through design for RV units. The campground would be sited in a manner to incorporate the Horseshoe Club facility, thus ensuring that use of the facility increases. The proposed campground will require detailed site design and planning prior to any construction.

In the open space area north of the Horseshoe complex, it is proposed that a playground and parking area be established. A playground would complement the Horseshoe complex and make the campground more attractive for families.

The City of Laurel has submitted an application to the State Natural Resource Damage Program request grant funds to design and construct a new campground. The grant funds are part of the mitigation funds provided by Exxon-Mobil due to the rupture of its Silvertip Pipeline and the oil spill that occurred into the Yellowstone River.

Cost Estimates:

- Gravel Pad: \$600/site
- Picnic Table: \$500/table
- Fire Ring: \$400/site



- Frost Free Hydrants: \$500/site (includes service connection to new distribution network)
- Electrical Service/Hookups: \$1,000/site (includes distribution network to each site)

## 6.5 Picnic Facilities



Example Picnic Shelter

Picnic facilities such as shelters would provide a natural gathering point for people and families when they visit the Park. Several shelters are proposed in the Boat Ramp-Picnic Area

### Cost Estimates:

- Picnic Selters: \$10,000 to \$30,000 per sturcture. Depends on size and style
- Picnic Table: \$500 to \$1,000 per table
- Labor: \$ 5,000 to \$10,000

## 6.6 Removal of Hazard Trees:

The City is in the process of removing the aging cottonwood trees that have reached the end of their lifespan. These tree pose a hazard to park users due to falling branches and the likelihood that the trees themselves will fall over in the near future.

### Cost Estimates:

- The City is currently paying \$1,000 per tree for removal. This is below the typical cost for such removal.

## 6.7 Restoration of Buildings

The plan envisions that the buildings can be repaired and restored in order to provide valuable civic, social and educational purposes. Unfortunately, the City does not have the resources to do more than maintain Jaycee Hall and the storage building. Thus, it will be essential that private or non-profit champions come forward to provide the time, money and

other resources to repair and improve the buildings in need of work. The Laurel Rod and Gun Club has already expressed a willingness to take on the task of repairing the Rod and Gun Club building and has obtained cost estimates to complete the work.

If champions are not identified within 18-months of the adoption of the plan, then the City will have no choice but to begin the process of removing the buildings as resources become available. The goal would be to reduce public health and safety issues related to deteriorating buildings.



Example of Building Restoration

Potential building champions will need to provide the City with a formal proposal for the repair and operation of a specific building. Proposals shall be based upon criteria that City staff are developing. It will be essential that proposals provide realistic cost estimates for repairs and for the future operation of the building. Proposals should also ensure that all work will comply with the applicable City codes and State of Montana requirements including assessments for hazardous materials.

As mentioned earlier in the plan, at one time all of the buildings in the Park were provided with wastewater treatment via septic/drain field systems. The exceptions were the Horseshoe Club building, Williston Basin building and the storage building. Today the only known functional septic system is the one for Jaycee Hall. In the short-term it will be important to determine whether the septic systems for the other buildings are still operational. If any are no functional, longer term options for wastewater treatment will need to be identified, such as siting replacement drain fields outside the floodplain or the installation of a sewage lift station to pump effluent back to the City sewer treatment plant. It must be noted that each of these options poses challenges, particularly financial.

#### Cost Estimates:

- Assessment of each drain field: \$5,000
- System Repairs: \$25,000
- Maintenance \$500/system/year

## 6.8 Overhead Lighting

Improved overhead lighting would be essential to improving safety and security within the Park. This would be particularly true in the new campground and picnic areas. The installation of all new overhead lighting should be coordinated as much as possible with the overall redevelopment of the Park. In addition, low maintenance and cost effective lighting options should be examined, such as solar powered lights, which could be used in the more remote areas of the Park.



Example Lighting

### Cost Estimates:

- Electrical Service to all poles: \$40,000
- Light Poles: \$6,000 each

Operation and Maintenance: An estimated \$100 per light per year should be allowed to account for vandalism and replacement of burnt out bulbs for the maintenance budget. Operation of the lights will vary based on type and size of head used. Solar panel lights may be used to augment operational costs but will increase construction costs.

## 6.9 Parking

The development of dedicated parking in conjunction with a redesign of the Park road system, would be important not only for improving the safety of pedestrians and vehicle drivers, but also for maximizing the amount of land available for recreational facilities and open space. Dedicated parking should be provided for the following areas:



Example Parking

- Boat Ramp – Picnic Area
- Buildings – all
- Interpretive Signs
- Horseshoe Club – Playground

Parking lots will likely be gravel surfaced in order to keep construction costs down.

### Cost Estimates:

- Cost for parking lots will vary greatly on the exact size provided, but based on this conceptual layout (35,000 square feet) the gravel lots would cost \$30,000.
- Maintenance of the lots would consist of routine grading: \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year.

## 6.10 Playground

In order to enhance the attractiveness of the Park playgrounds are proposed in the Boat Ramp/Picnic and Campground areas. The design and complexity of the facilities will be determined at a later date.

### Cost Estimates:

- Small Playground System: \$10,000
- Large Playground System: \$50,000



Example Playground

## 6.11 Road Network

The plan proposes an extensive redesign of the road network, with particular emphasis on reducing the number of approaches onto the existing main access road and developing a network with individual spurs and loops to serve the campground, boat ramp-picnic area, buildings and horseshoe facility. Road surfacing will likely remain gravel and include drainage ditches and annual dust control and routine grading.

The unique challenge of this particular project is designing the road network in order to provide traffic control at road intersections. The layout of the future road system proposes using a simple roundabout located around the Williston Basin Pipeline Building. This proposal is meant to keep vehicle speeds low within the Park and to incorporate the building into the design, particularly since that area cannot be used for Park functions. Ultimately a formal analysis would be necessary to determine the most practical design for addressing the road intersections.

### Cost Estimates:

- 3,500 feet of new road system with storm drainage: \$170,000
- Operation and Maintenance:
- Routine Grading: \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year

## 6.12 Garbage Disposal:



Example Dumpster Enclosure

The redevelopment of the Park will undoubtedly increase its use by residents and visitors. This will be accompanied by an increase in the volume of trash generated in the Park. Developing several centralized garbage disposal facilities will be essential to addressing this issue. In addition, to being appropriately sited, the garbage disposal facilities should be designed and constructed so that they blend into the Park. It will also be important to strategically locate smaller trash receptacles throughout the Park including those for dog waste.

### Cost Estimates:

- Large Trash Receptacle: City provided
- Large Trash Receptacle Enclosure: \$5,000
- Small Trash Receptacle: \$750 each
- Dog Waste Receptacle: \$400 each

Operations and Maintenance for these facilities would be \$400 to \$500 per year and would include replacement garbage bags for small receptacles, replacement dog waste bags and receptacle liners.

## 6.13 Interpretive Signage and Kiosks



It is important to share the history of the Park with residents and visitors. To do this the plan envisions the construction of two interpretive sign/kiosk complexes. The first would be located north of and along the main access road and would be accessed by a small pullout/parking area or via a trail from other parking areas. This kiosk and

interpretive signs would describe the history of the Park in graphics and narrative.

The second kiosk would be located in the area of the historic buildings and would likewise use graphics and narrative to describe the history and use of the buildings. This kiosk would be doubly important if any of the buildings were eventually removed. In fact, if this were to occur, it would be essential to salvage any historic items or architecture from the buildings and incorporate them into the signage.

**Cost Estimates:**

- Larger Signs: \$1,000 to \$5,000 per sign
- Smaller Signs: \$500 per sign
- Kiosks: \$2,000 per unit and \$750 in labor

### 6.14 Trails

While not necessarily a high priority, the development of a trail system throughout the Park is a logical recreational facility that would provide recreation and safe pedestrian/bicycle access around the Park. A trail in the east end of the Park would only be possible with the end of trap shooting. A trail system could also provide access to the proposed fishing access downstream of the boat ramp. Any trail system would likely be constructed of gravel.



Example Trail

**Cost Estimates:**

- 5,500 linear feet of a gravel trail system: \$31,000

### 6.15 Fishing Access-ADA Compliant



Example ADA Fishing Access

While the existing Montana FWP boat ramp provides good access to the Yellowstone River for boaters, pedestrian and wade fishing access is very limited in the Park. This is primarily due to the steep bank along the rehabilitated levee upstream of the boat ramp and the density of vegetation along the river bank downstream of the ramp. In order to improve access to the river for pedestrians and wading anglers, the plan proposes a fishing access downstream of the ramp for foot travel and to provide access for people with disabilities, ADA

accessibility. The access would be sited at a point that is relatively level and provides easy access to the river. This project would require some removal of vegetation to allow for the

construction of an access trail and a platform. This removal would be minimized as much as possible. It is anticipated that any platform would be constructed at grade in order to resist flooding and to minimally impact flood flows. The fishing access would be reached via the proposed overall Park trail system. All permitting would be obtained prior to the access's construction. Cost of permitting these improvements is not included in the estimates below.

Cost Estimates:

- Excavation and Tree Removal: \$10,000
- ADA accessible Fishing Platform: \$50,000

## 6.16 Trees and Shrubs

As proposed, the redevelopment of the Park will require the planting of new trees and shrubs, particularly in the area around the proposed campground and the redesigned roads and parking. Selection of trees and shrubs should focus on native species in order to minimize the need for maintenance and care.

Cost Estimates

- \$20-\$100 per tree
- \$20-\$50 per shrub
- \$20 labor per unit

## 6.17 Remediation of Historic Rifle and Trap Range and Future Development



Outdoor Stage in Roundup, Montana

The location of the former rifle and trap ranges provides an ideal location for the future development of additional recreational facilities. What these facilities might be remains to be determined, but could include athletic fields or a stage/pavilion

Prior to the redevelopment of this area, an assessment of lead contamination would need to be conducted and mitigation completed prior to redevelopment.

Cost Estimates: To be determined at a later date once a project is identified.

## 7.0 Improvement Priorities and Completion Schedule

Priorities for the redevelopment of the Park were established through the advice and guidance of the project advisory committee and with the input of City residents during the outreach and engagement process. The priorities were reviewed and approved by the City Council. The following table lists projects based upon their priority.

Table 6 - Project Priority and Implementation Plan

PRIORITY	IMPROVEMENT	ESTIMATED COST	SCHEDULE
High	Public Restrooms	\$40,000+ per unit depending upon size and design	2018
High	Drinking Water <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City water service</li> </ul>	\$360,000 line across bridge and distribution throughout the Park (design, permitting, materials and labor)	2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groundwater well(s)</li> </ul>	\$25 to \$29 per foot for drilling well \$1,600 to \$2,300 for pump (Depends upon size) \$400 to \$1,000 per pressure tank (Depends upon size) Labor (Depends upon scope) Distribution line (Depends upon scope)	
High	Campground	\$3,000 to 3,500 per site	2019
High	Picnic Shelters	\$10,000 to \$30,000 per unit	2019-2020
High	Removal of Hazard Trees	\$1,000 per tree	Ongoing
Medium	Restoration of Buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Septic system assessments</li> <li>Septic repair</li> <li>Structural assessments*</li> <li>Hazardous materials abatement*</li> <li>Permitting*</li> <li>Restoration work*</li> </ul>	\$5,000 per assessment \$25,000 for repairs  *To be determined	2019
Medium	Overhead Lighting	\$40,000 for electrical service to lights \$6,000 per light	2019-2020
Medium	Parking	\$30,000 (55,000 sq. feet)	2020
Medium	Playground	\$10,000 small unit \$50,000 large unit	
Medium	Redesigned Road Network	\$170,000+ (3,500 linear feet)	2019-2021
Low	Garbage disposal	\$5,000 for enclosure \$750 per small receptacle \$400 per dog waste receptacle	2019-2021
Low	Interpretive Signage Sign Kiosk	\$600 per sign \$2,750 per unit	2022
Low	Trail	\$31,500 (5,500 linear feet)	2024
Low	Fishing Access-Foot Access Only	\$60,000	2025
Low	Planting Trees-Shrubs	\$20-\$100 per tree \$20-\$50 per shrub \$20 labor per unit	2019-2025



PRIORITY	IMPROVEMENT	ESTIMATED COST	SCHEDULE
Low	Remediation of Lead from Former Rifle and Trap Range	To be determined	2025
Low	Remediation of Historic Garbage Dump	To be determined	2027

The City intends to be opportunistic when it comes to achieving the priority list above. Therefore, while the list will serve as the basic approach and schedule for improving the Park, if an appropriate funding opportunity arises to help implement a project that is a lower priority, it will be pursued.

## 8.0 Funding Options

Determining how to finance the identified Park projects will be one of the most difficult and important parts of making this plan a reality. The goal of this plan to identify funding sources for Park improvements so that the redevelopment of the Park will not become a financial burden upon City residents.

The following table is a brief description of potential funding sources to help finance the proposed improvement projects. It is important to note that this is not an all-inclusive list of every potential funding opportunity.

Table 7 - Potential Funding Sources

IMPROVEMENT	FUNDING OPTIONS
Public Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exxon-Mobil Settlement For Natural Resource Damage</li> </ul>
Campground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exxon-Mobil Settlement For Natural Resource Damage</li> </ul>
Drinking Water Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exxon-Mobil Settlement For Natural Resource Damage</li> </ul>
Restoration of Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Montana History Foundation</li> <li>Montana Preservation Alliance</li> <li>MDEQ Assessment</li> <li>Private sources and donations</li> </ul>
Garbage Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep America Beautiful's Community Restoration and Resiliency Fund</li> <li>The Coca-Cola Company/Keep America Beautiful Public Space Recycling Bin Grant</li> </ul>
Interpretive Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MT Department of Commerce: Tourism Grants Program</li> <li>MT Department of Commerce: Community Technical Assistance Program</li> <li>Building Active Communities Initiative (Trails and Bicycle Facilities)</li> </ul>
Fishing Access-Foot Access Only	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Montana Fish, Wildlife and Park</li> <li>NorthWestern Energy Community Works</li> <li>BNSF Foundation</li> </ul>
Overhead Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>United States Department of Agriculture REAP Grant/Loan (Solar powered lights)</li> </ul>
Remediation of Historic Garbage Dump	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MDEQ Assessment</li> </ul>
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown at this time</li> </ul>
Pavilion/Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Foundations: Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, Town Pump Foundation, BNSF Foundation, Walmart Foundation, First Interstate Bank Foundation,</li> </ul>

	Lowes Community Grants, NorthWestern Energy Community Works, Montana Community Foundation- Laurel Community Foundation
Picnic Shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Foundations: Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, Town Pump Foundation, BNSF Foundation, Walmart Foundation, First Interstate Bank Foundation, Lowes Community Grants, NorthWestern Energy Community Works, Montana Community Foundation- Laurel Community Foundation</li> <li>American Academy of Dermatology Shade Structure Program</li> </ul>
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private Foundations: Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, Town Pump Foundation, BNSF Foundation, Walmart Foundation, First Interstate Bank Foundation, Lowes Community Grants, NorthWestern Energy Community Works, Montana Community Foundation- Laurel Community Foundation</li> </ul>
Redesigned Road Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown at this time</li> </ul>
Remediation of Lead from Rifle and Trap Range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown at this time</li> </ul>
Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MT FWP Recreational Trails Program (RTP)</li> <li>Montana Department of Transportation, Community Transportation Enhancement Program</li> <li>Montana Conservation Corps (volunteer labor)</li> <li>Private sources and donations</li> </ul>
Wastewater Treatment/Septic System Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unknown at this time</li> </ul>

## 9.0 Plan Evaluation and Update

The City Parks Board is the entity assigned the task to manage the overall implementation of this plan. The Board will do this with the support and advice of City staff. The Parks Board will review the plan on an annual basis to assess progress in achieving the plan's vision and recommendations. The Board will also determine if the prioritization of projects in the plan is still relevant. Based upon this annual review, the Parks Board will provide the City Council with a report detailing which projects have been implemented, identifying any opportunities or difficulties encountered, and how the plan and its recommendations might be revised. The review schedule for the plan shall begin in January of 2019 and will continue in the subsequent years until the next comprehensive update of the plan. The plan is intended to provide guidance to the Parks Board and the City for the next ten years and it is anticipated that the plan would be fully updated in or around the year 2027.





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Water/Wastewater ▪ Transportation ▪ Grant Services ▪ Solid Waste ▪  
Structural ▪ Bridges ▪ Natural Resources ▪ Planning



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