

4.12 Parks and recreation

4.12.1: Existing conditions

Parks, recreation and habitat conservation areas in Tacoma are primarily developed and operated by Metro Parks Tacoma. However, there are numerous other parties who own and operate park, recreation, and habitat facilities and/or who partner with Metro Parks Tacoma including:

- **City of Tacoma**
- **State agencies** - Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Ecology, Transportation, the Recreation and Conservation Office, and the Washington State Historical Society.
- **Other local governments** - Pierce County, Port of Tacoma, Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Tacoma Public Utilities, Tacoma Housing Authority.
- **Educational institutions** - Tacoma School District, Tacoma Community College, University of Puget Sound, Evergreen State College, and the University of Washington Tacoma.
- **Nonprofit organizations** - Citizens for a Healthy Bay, Tahoma Audubon Society, Cascade Land Conservancy, Sierra Club, Puget Creek Restoration Society.
- **Site specific neighborhood groups.**

A number of park and recreational facilities are located within or directly adjacent to the MLK subarea boundaries. Some additional significant parks and facilities are located at the end of proposed and potential pedestrian, bikeway, and rail transit connections between the MLK district and adjacent neighborhoods, and the downtown and waterfront, which have a bearing on MLK subarea plan goals and objectives.

Following is a summary description of each sponsor and their significant parks and recreational facilities.

Metro Parks Tacoma

Metro Parks Tacoma has its roots in the City of Tacoma Charter of 1880. The city set up a committee of city council members in 1883 to oversee the city's parks. That committee became the Board of Park Commissioners in 1890, with members appointed by the mayor.

In 1907 the Washington State Legislature passed a law allowing cities to form separate park districts, shortly after which Tacoma residents voted to establish the Metropolitan Park District of Tacoma as a separate municipal corporation with the ability to collect property taxes for support. Metro Parks Tacoma was incorporated

in 1907 with a 5-member elected Board of Park Commissioners

After more than 115 years, Metro Parks Tacoma continues to maintain and care for Tacoma's park resources with a combination of earned revenue and tax support

Historical parks adjacent to the MLK subarea

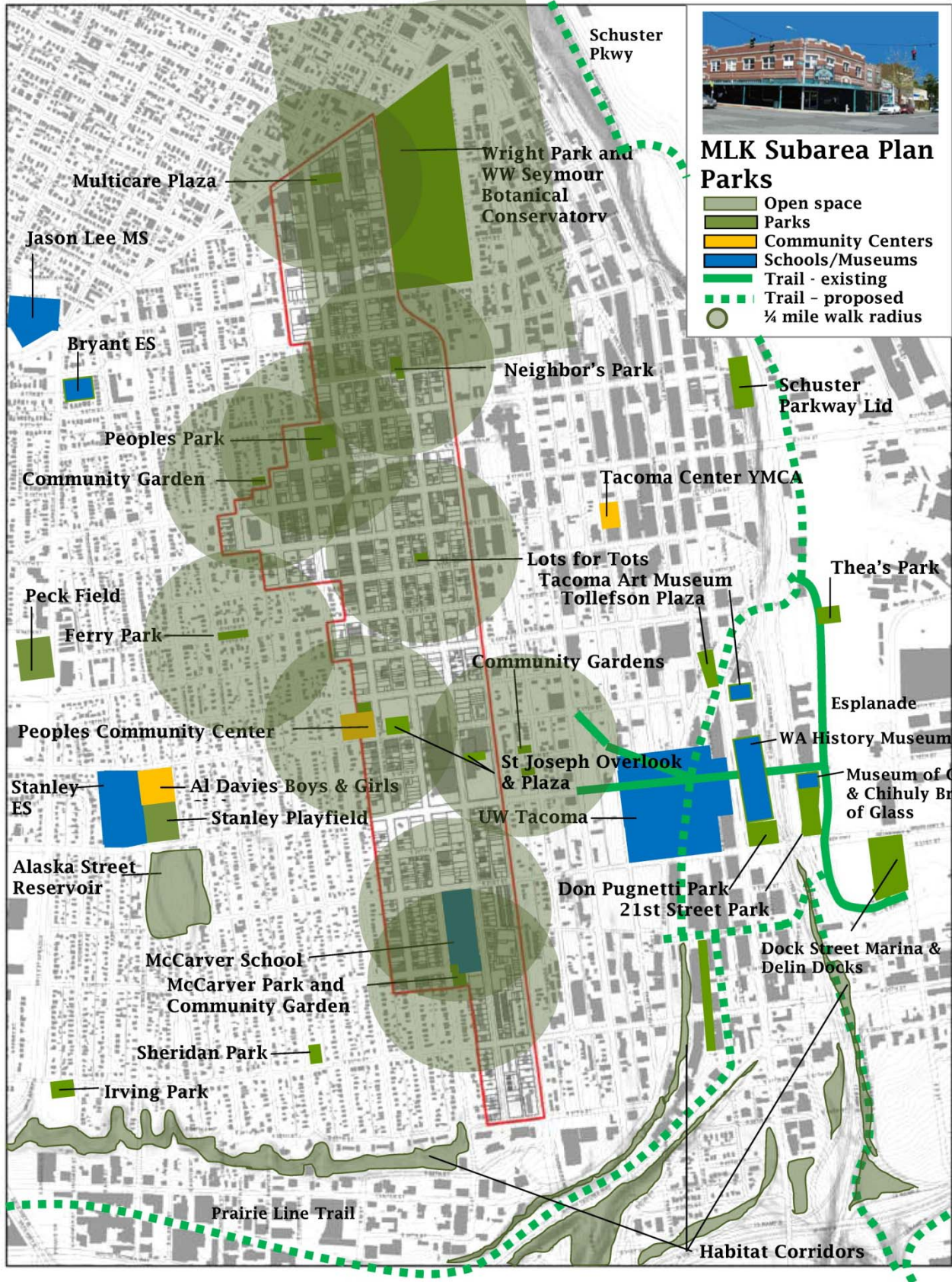
The following parks are located on the Hilltop just outside of the MLK subarea boundaries and were instrumental in establishing Tacoma's and the MLK district's park legacy.

Ferry Park - Tacoma's first park was Ferry Park at South 14th and Cushman just west of the MLK subarea boundaries. This tiny park, just a little over 0.5 acres, was donated by C P and Evelyn Ferry on May 14, 1883. Colonel Ferry platted the C P Ferry Addition to the city and set aside this piece of land for a park. He wanted to show the new and growing City of Tacoma how the European custom of small parks scattered throughout the residence districts could add its charm and beauty

Improvements completed in Ferry Park in 2009 include a kiosk to house utilities with interpretive signage describing the history of Ferry Park, ornamental steel fence, perimeter sidewalk, gravel paths, picnic tables, park benches, small seating wall/benches, play equipment and park sign

Wright Park - in 1886 the Tacoma Land Company under the leadership of its president, Charles B Wright, donated a parcel of land approximately 20 acres in size to the City of Tacoma for the sole purpose of being developed as a public park. The property, located directly adjacent to the MLK subarea, became one of Tacoma's first city parks quickly grew to its current size of 27 acres filling out 10 city blocks.

The City of Tacoma's Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) program received 2 pieces of artwork by local artist, Larry Anderson: the Leaf (1976) and Trilogy (1978). With funding through the 2005 Park Improvement Bond, the park went through a complete renovation of the pathways, utilities, pond, restroom, community building, and sculptures. In 2010 a new playground and spray ground were added along with interpretive signs. Wright Park also houses a Spanish-American War Cannon and several sculptures





From top to bottom:
Ferry Park playground
Wright Park pond
McCarver Park playground
Peoples Community Center entrance

including The Leaf, Trilogy, Dancing Girls, Lions, Fisherman's Daughter, and the Ibsen Bust.

W.W. Seymour Botanical Conservatory - at Wright Park was opened in 1908 through a generous gift from William W. Seymour. Today, the historical icon houses a brilliant venue for exotic plant displays from all over the world.

MLK parks and facilities

Lots for Tots - this 0.24 acre park is located at 1216 South I Street within the MLK subarea. The park has been improved with play equipment and picnic tables.

McCarver Park - is located at 2301 South J Street directly adjoining McCarver Elementary School within the MLK subarea. The park is a tribute to Zina Linnik (who was abducted and slain in 2007) and includes - a reading circle, playground with high tech interactive play equipment, tetherball and community gardens.

Neighbors Park - at 0.57 acres, was established in 1992 at 722 South I Street in what was once a vacant lot with blight and crime issues and which is now a great play and community garden area for the neighborhood.

Peoples Park - this 2.14 acre park located at 900 South MLK Way serves Tacoma's Hilltop community with amenities for both active and passive recreation. Recent improvements include sidewalk repairs, picnic tables and benches, irrigation upgrades, trees, landscape improvements, and relocation of the play area and basketball court. Peoples Park hosts MLK community events including the summer festival.

Parks adjacent and of interest to the MLK subarea

The following parks are located on the Hilltop just outside of MLK subarea boundaries and/or are directly related to proposed MLK trails and pathways.

Irving Park - is 2.7 acres and was established in 1946 at 1902 South 25th Street just south of MLK subarea boundaries. The neighborhood park overlooks the Nalley Valley and has been improved with a basketball court, playground, and picnic amenities.

Sheridan Park - through a cooperative effort of neighbors and the City of Tacoma, this vacant lot at 2347 South Sheridan Avenue, just west of the MLK subarea boundaries, was converted to a small neighborhood park.

Stanley Playfield - is located next to Al Davies Boys & Girls Club at 1712 South 19th Street just west of MLK subarea boundary. The 6.51 acre park was established in 1977 and has been improved with baseball/softball and football fields. The adjacent Stanley Elementary School provides play equipment and basketball courts.

Thea's Park - a 3.4 acre waterfront parcel located at 405 Dock Street was established in 1997 at the entrance to the Foss Waterway in Tacoma's downtown waterfront. The park provides views of ships and tugboats, cranes lifting cargo, floatplanes, harbor seals, sea lions, and kayakers. The park accesses the Esplanade along Thea Foss Waterway that connects with historic warehouses and the Murray Morgan Bridge and into the UWT campus and historic Brewery District.

In 2008, the Foss Waterway Development Authority (FWDA) installed a new ADA gangway and landing float to Thea's Park, replaced the wharf on the Balfour dock building, added a gangway to a public pier from the Balfour Wharf, a new 1,200 foot float, and associated utilities. Metro Parks maintains the site while the FWDA owner's association maintains all of the promenade public spaces and the float is maintained and managed by the Seaport Museum.

Peck Field - is located at 1425 South State Street, west of the MLK district. This central Tacoma facility includes 4 lighted sports fields accommodating adult and girls fast pitch, T-ball, and boys baseball (3rd grade through U12). The complex is generally only open during scheduled league play or tournaments.

People's Community Center - located at 1602 MLK Jr Way, Peoples Community Center was built as a result of strong community organization and effort. Known as the Malcolm X Center before the name was changed in 1978 to Peoples Center, it has served as a cornerstone of the community for meeting and social functions.

With a primary focus on youth and after school programming, the central location within the MLK district and greater Hilltop neighborhood is popular with adults and the many children and youth in the area.

A recently completed renovation enhances the facility, which includes a fitness center and basketball/gym. The indoor swimming pool is currently closed due to structural issues. A new and upgraded pool and aquatic facility has been



Top to bottom left:

- Tollefson Plaza
- Tacoma Art Museum
- Esplanade
- 21st Street Park

Top to bottom right:

- Museum of Glass
- Dock Street Marina and Delin Docks
- Washington State Museum of History

designed and partially funded by the City of Tacoma and the Park District and is scheduled to open in the near future.

Programs at People's Community Center include the Late Night Program, MOCHA Mentoring, Little Village Childcare Center LLC, SLAM - A Summer Camp, AAU Basketball, Weight Room, and facility rentals.

Community gardens

The Community Garden program provides gardening opportunities for the physical and social benefit of the people and neighborhoods of Tacoma. Opportunities include meeting neighbors, becoming more self-reliant, beautifying the neighborhood, producing nutritious food, reducing the family food budget, conserving resources and getting outdoors for some healthy exercise.

Beginning in September 2012, Pierce Conservation District (PCD) began working with gardeners to oversee general operations at 66 gardens throughout the county, approximately half of which are located in Tacoma. The partnership agreement includes Metro Parks Tacoma, City of Tacoma, Pierce County Public Works and Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department.

McCarver Park Community Garden - is located on the south end of McCarver Park directly adjoining McCarver Elementary School.

Other local community gardens are located on South G Street just east of the MLK subarea boundaries.

City of Tacoma

Habitat Corridors - are sensitive environmental areas and animal migration corridors that Tacoma conserves for habitat protection. The steep hillsides along the Nalley Valley and Center Street; in and around the Interstate 5 and 705 freeways are designated for this purpose; and the wooded hillsides surrounding the Alaska Street Reservoir located west of the MLK subarea boundaries serves a similar purpose.

Prairie Line Trail - a rails-to-trails conversion of the former Prairie Line rail corridor into a pedestrian/bicycle corridor and linear park through the historic Brewery District, UWT, and Downtown Tacoma.

The rail corridor is historically significant as the first transcontinental railroad connection to Puget Sound, which shaped the early

development of Tacoma. The Prairie Line is envisioned as a key catalyst for the revitalization of the Historic Brewery District, a unifying feature connecting different districts of Downtown Tacoma, and a pedestrian/bicycle gateway to Downtown and the Foss Waterway.

Tollefson Plaza - is a hardscape amphitheater located at South Commerce Street and South 17th Street across from the Tacoma Art Museum and adjacent to the LINK light rail line and the Tacoma Convention Center. The plaza sponsors summer music and art events and a winter ice rink.

Tacoma Art Museum - the new museum facility located at 1701 Pacific Avenue directly adjacent to the Washington State History Museum provides 12,000 square feet of galleries highlighting the works of art on view in 8 exhibition spaces. Light spills into the building's non-gallery spaces from the center courtyard, which features a "stone wave" surrounded by 30-foot mirrored glass walls.

The building mirrors Tacoma Art Museum's commitment to arts education via the 8,046-square-foot Gottfried and Mary Fuchs Foundation Education Wing.

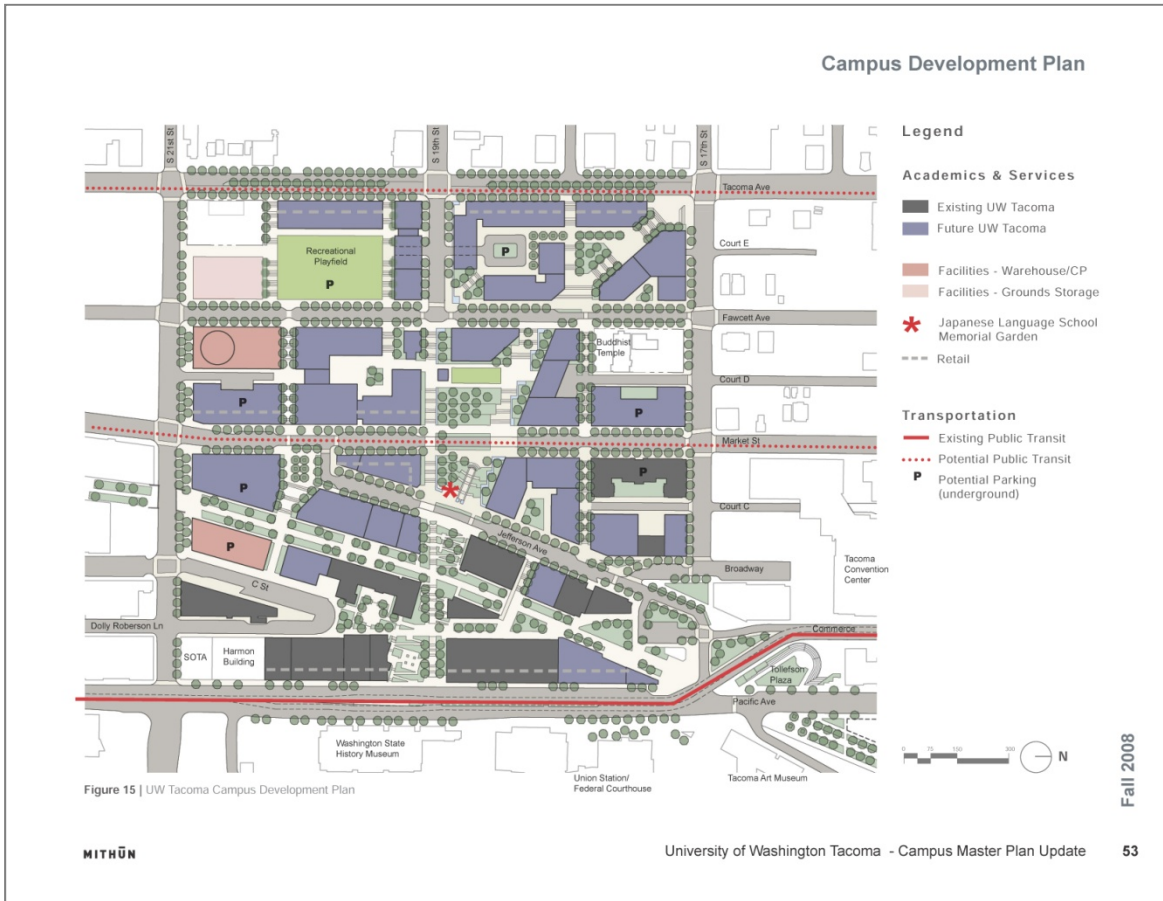
Foss Waterway Development Authority (FWDA)

FWDA owns and operates various parks and boardwalks along the Thea Foss Waterway, some of which have potential application to the MLK subarea plan trail proposals.

The Esplanade - will stretch along the entire 1.5 miles of the western side of the Thea Foss Waterway reconnecting the downtown business district and the Union Station Historical District to the waterfront. This linear park will front on the waterway and a series of redevelopment mixed use projects with ground floor retail and pedestrian activities and upper floor offices and housing.

21st Street Park - is the newest installation of public space on the waterway. Built by the City of Tacoma and maintained by the Foss Waterway Owners Association, the park provides grassy play areas, benches, arbor accent areas, and public restrooms along the Esplanade.

Museum of Glass - this dramatic world-class museum celebrates contemporary and glass art in a 55,000 square foot facility at the south end of the waterway. The museum gives visitors a



Top:
UWT Campus Development Plan

Bottom left:
UWT Grand Staircase on South 19th Street from Pacific to Fawcett Avenues

Bottom right:
Courtyard behind academic buildings along the Hillclimb

first-hand experience of the creative process in its cone-shaped hot shop auditorium and exhibition halls.

Chihuly Bridge of Glass - the spectacular 500-foot pedestrian bridge links the Museum of Glass to the plaza at Union Station and frames the entrance to UWT, the historic Brewery District, and downtown. The bridge showcases the largest collection of Chihuly glass in a permanent outdoor exhibit that soars 70 feet above I-705.

Dock Street Marina & Delin Docks - located at 1817 Dock Street on the south end of the Thea Foss Waterway and situated near the Museum of Glass, Chihuly Bridge of Glass, Washington State History Museum and Tacoma Art Museum, the marina provides easy access to Downtown Tacoma and the LINK light rail system. Slips service larger boats, with potable water, sewer connections and fiber optics. Restrooms, showers and laundry facilities for Dock Street Marina are located on the upland esplanade.

Washington State

Washington State agencies own and operate various parks within the MLK vicinity, some of which have potential application to the MLK subarea plan trail proposals.

Schuster Parkway Lid - provides a series of viewpoint overlooks of Commencement Bay and the Puyallup River over the west lanes of Interstate 705 and Schuster Parkway between South 8th and 9th Streets in the downtown district. The park is the extended end of a streetscape connection between MLK Jr Way and the downtown district on South 9th Street.

Washington State History Museum - was built in 1996 as part of a revitalization of downtown Tacoma, including the restoration of Union Station and the development of the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) campus located directly across Pacific Avenue.

The building provides 106,000 square feet of exhibition, event, and meeting spaces. The design, the result of an architectural competition, was inspired by Tacoma's historic Union Station and by the warehouses of the district.

Don Pugnetti Park - a 0.5 acre plaza located at South 21st Street and Pacific Avenue adjacent to I-705 and the Washington State History Museum is owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). The plaza has been

improved with paving, landscaping, and benches.

University of Washington Tacoma (UWT)

The campus covers approximately 46.0 acres and 420,000 square feet including 22 retrofit historic buildings in downtown Tacoma's Union Station neighborhood, a district of historic warehouses built in the late 1800s and early 1900s at the western terminus of the great transcontinental railroad. The campus currently services nearly 4,000 students.

The UWT master plan proposes extending the hillclimb in South 19th Street from Pacific Avenue to Fawcett Avenue in a diagonal alignment from the Prairie Line Trail north to South 17th Street and Tacoma Avenue to serve proposed new academic buildings and parking decks. Recreational playfields are proposed to be developed along South 19th Street between Fawcett and Yakima Avenues.

Tacoma Public Schools District (TSD)

The Tacoma Public School District (TSD) is the 3rd largest district in Washington State serving more than 28,000 children in kindergarten through grade 12. The district has 35 elementary schools, 9 middle schools, 5 comprehensive high schools and 14 alternative learning sites.

McCarver Elementary School - located at 2111 South J Street within the MLK subarea boundaries, was established in 1925 as McCarver Public Intermediate School. The historic building houses classrooms, gymnasium, library, and playground next to Metro Parks' McCarver Park.

Stanley Elementary School - is located at 1712 South 17th Street, just west of the MLK subarea boundaries. The historic building houses classrooms, gymnasium, library, and playground next to Sewell Park and the Boys & Girls Club.

Bryant Montessori - is located at 717 South Grant Street, just west of the MLK subarea boundaries. The older school building supports kindergarten through 4th grade with classrooms, gymnasium, and playground.

Jason Lee Middle School - is located at 602 North Sprague, west of the MLK subarea boundaries. The historic school's service area includes all of the Hilltop neighborhood and houses classrooms, gymnasium, cafeteria,

library, and outdoor fields and courts. It is also home to the specialized Hilltop Artists in Residence Program.

Stadium High School - is located at 111 Northeast 6th Street. The historic school complex services the Hilltop, as well as north and northeast Tacoma neighborhoods from a site overlooking Commencement Bay. The complex houses classrooms, gymnasium, auditorium, cafeteria, stadium, and outdoor courts and fields.

Nonprofits

Boys & Girls Club of South Puget Sound

The Boys and Girls Club Movement began in the United States during the Civil War. Its inception is traced to Hartford, Connecticut with the formation of the Dashaway Club to serve needy boys in the community.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America had its beginnings in 1860 when several women, believing that boys who roamed the streets should have a positive alternative, organized the first Club. In 1990 the Boys Clubs began to also serve girls and officially changed its name to Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

The first Boys & Girls Club in Tacoma was started on 25th and Yakima in 1940. The Tacoma Boys Club at 711 South 25th Street located on the site of Longfellow School, was dedicated in 1942.

Al Davies Club - a branch of the Boys & Girls Club of South Puget Sound is located at 1620 South 17th Street, just west of the MLK subarea boundaries and directly adjacent to Stanley Elementary School and Sewell Park. The facility houses multipurpose classrooms and a gymnasium.

The Boys & Girls Club conducts before and after school arts programs including dance and drama, health and life skills, education and career development, and youth sports in association with Metro Parks Tacoma.

YMCA of Pierce & Kitsap Counties

The YMCA is a cause-driven organization that is has operated in Pierce and Kitsap Counties since 1883 focused on 3 key areas: youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties ensures access to balanced health for all members of the community by:

- Working through partnerships and collaborations
- Building community through a sense of belonging and fostering relationships
- Increasing youth financial assistance from 14% to 20% of all membership and program participants.
- Inspiring healthier lifestyles through 12-week YMCA membership for all Pierce and Kitsap County 12 year olds.
- Reversing the trend of youth obesity and curtailing the increasing incidents of chronic diseases in our community.
- Serving and building communities that are accessible geographically and economically, with emphasis on under-resourced communities.
- Ensuring a YMCA facility or program center is accessible within 15 minutes of everyone in Pierce and Kitsap Counties.

The YMCA operates out of 10 centers, including the Tacoma Center located at 1144 Market Street, just east of the MLK subarea in the downtown core.

4.12.2: Impacts

Both alternatives will allow development and redevelopment in the MLK subarea for urban uses and activities to various intensities. An increase in urban development and thereby the overall resident population will in turn increase the demand for park and recreational facilities, and for open space and wildlife habitat relief, particularly for residents of high density neighborhoods like the MLK subarea's mixed use zones.

According to Tacoma's Community & Economic Development Department's moderate growth scenario, the MLK subarea's population will increase from 2,903 persons in 2010 to 7,915 persons by 2040 or at an annual average rate of 3.4% for the projection period.

MLK will grow in accordance with recent and expected trends which are optimistic but not maximum build-out. Maximum build-out would reach 14,520 persons by 2040 at an annual average rate of growth of 5.5%.

Tacoma's level of service (LOS) standard for parks, recreation and open space facilities are 0.002 acres per capita for open space and wildlife habitat, 0.003 acres per capita for local parks, and 0.007 acres per capital for regional parks.

If the MLK subarea develops in accordance with

the moderate growth scenario the additional population by the year 2040 of 5,012 persons will require approximately 10.0 more acres of additional open space and wildlife habitat, 15.0 more acres of local parks, and 35.1 more acres of regional parks to be developed somewhere within the MLK subarea or Tacoma service areas.

Should the MLK subarea reaches the potential build-out the additional 11,617 more persons will require 19.0 more acres of open space and wildlife habitat, 34.9 more acres of local parks, and 81.3 more acres of regional parks to meet current LOS standards.

	Pop	OSpace 0.002	Local 0.003	Rgnl 0.007
2010	2,903	5.8	8.7	20.3
2040	7,915	15.8	23.7	55.4
Difference	5,012	10.0	15.0	35.1
Build-out	14,520	29.0	43.6	101.6
Difference	11,617	19.0	34.9	81.3

Source: Tacoma Community & Economic Development Department 2012 and Tacoma 2011-2018 Capital Facility Program (CFP) LOS standards

The additional park land requirements under the LOS standards do not necessarily need to be satisfied within the MLK subarea, though the additions need to service MLK populations somewhere within the MLK and Tacoma service area. Open space, wildlife habitat, and regional parks requirements would likely be satisfied by recent park developments along Thea Foss Waterway while local park requirements by expansions of existing parks in the Hilltop system.

However, it should be noted that Metro Parks Tacoma's current approach to LOS standards is to look at access opportunities to physical space rather than simple per capita land standards as well as program/recreational options since it is no longer reasonable or practical to assume Metro Parks Tacoma or any other public agency, can continue to buy, maintain, and operate larger and larger tracts of park land as the City continues to grow. The traditional park service model may also not be the only or even best method for the delivery of park and recreational services, considering the growing recognition and expansion of new types of urban recreational facilities, such as greenways, bicycle corridors, urban trails and enhanced pedestrian features.

If present lands or facilities remain the only resources available to local residents, the additional demand and use could exceed the

environmental capability of some existing sites if these lands are not properly developed or protected.

Additional use could also overload or crowd the limited number of existing available park and school athletic fields and courts, denying existing residents the effective use of these facilities if new, additional facilities are not developed to accommodate an increase in the MLK subarea's population.

New MLK households are likely to be single adults or adult households with no or very young children with recreational interests different than the households who reside in the surrounding neighborhoods and for whom most park and recreational facilities have been built to date.

New or enhanced park and recreational facilities will need to reflect the changing household composition in MLK.

4.12.3: Mitigation measures

Both alternatives

The following measures have been incorporated into the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan to mitigate possible adverse impacts:

Open Space Habitat and Recreation Plan (OSHRP)

OSHRP is an element of the Tacoma Comprehensive Plan that will create an integrated system of habitat and recreation lands and facilities in Tacoma that defines and enhances the built and natural environment, supports and nurtures plant and wildlife habitat, offers a well-balanced range of recreation opportunities and enriches the lives of Tacoma's current and future citizens.

The OSHRP is intended to be used in harmony with other elements of the Tacoma's Comprehensive Plan, as well as Metro Parks Tacoma's Strategic Parks and Program Services Plan. The OSHRP defines the types of open space that make up the city's open space system, ranging from low-impact to high-impact recreational use:

Open Space Habitat Areas - are lands that support, nurture and preserve natural and wildlife habitats and native vegetation. Habitat lands usually contain natural resources, such as wetlands, streams, wildlife, native and forested habitats, that are managed for stewardship and conservation via best management practices -

such as the designated hillsides south of the MLK subarea along the Nalley Valley, Center Street, and I-5 and I-705.

These lands often provide opportunities for environmental research and interpretative programs, in addition to low-impact recreational activities. Aside from the gulches, wetlands and other habitat areas managed by the City of Tacoma, Metro Parks Tacoma also manages “greenspace”, a sub-component of open space habitat, used mainly for conservation, environmental education and low-impact recreation purposes, such as walking and nature viewing.

Community Gardens - includes land gardened by a community group for food, plant or fiber production, either for personal or charitable uses - such as the gardens at McCarver Park, and those just outside of the MLK subarea boundaries on South M and South G Streets.

Properly designed and managed, community gardens can greatly enhance a neighborhood’s vitality and can be created on their own or in coordination with neighborhood parks, playgrounds, housing developments or apartment complexes. Community gardens generally depend on local governmental support in terms of ownership, access and/or management.

Neighborhood Parks - provide daily convenient, walking access to basic recreational opportunities for nearby residents living within a 0.75-mile radius of the park. Generally small in size, neighborhood parks are a combination of playground and other amenities/ facilities designed primarily for spontaneous, non-organized recreation activities - like Neighbor’s Park and Lots for Tots within the MLK subarea, and Ferry, Sheridan, and Irving Parks within the MLK service area.

Properly designed and managed, these parks can enhance neighborhood identity, preserve neighborhood natural space, and improve the quality of life of nearby residents. Schoolyards offering playground opportunities often function as neighborhood parks to meet the recreational needs of the nearby residents - like McCarver, Stanley, and Bryant Elementary Schools that serve the children of the MLK district.

Community Parks - are designed to serve those residents living within a 1.5-mile radius of the park, community parks provide a wider range of recreational opportunities to accommodate large group activities, structured recreation

programs, and major outdoor recreation facilities, such as sports facilities - like Peoples Park within the MLK subarea, and Stanley Playfield and Peck Field that serve MLK district residents.

Community parks can enhance neighborhood and community identities, preserve natural and green space, and enhance the quality of life of community residents. Some community parks portray a design theme - like Peoples Park. These “signature community parks” have a wider community appeal and contribute to the identity of the larger community as a whole.

Regional Parks - provide visitors with access to unique features and attractions that will draw visitors from throughout the city and beyond - like Wright Park and W.W. Seymour Botanical Conservatory directly adjacent to the MLK subarea. The Foss Esplanade, Thea’s Park, Dock Street Marina and Delin Docks, which are located at the end of the 19th Street Hillclimb and Chihuly Bridge of Glass, and accessible from the Prairie Line Trail, also serve as regional recreation facilities in the general area.

Urban Parks - provide visitors with access to open space in the downtown area, mixed-use centers and corridors, and high-density residential areas. Examples of urban parks include public squares, promenades, urban plazas and landscaped courtyards - like People’s Park in the MLK district, as well as Tollefson Plaza and Fireman’s Park in the downtown core.

Urban amenities, a subset of urban parks, include features such as landscaped boulevards, prominent public staircases, mini parks and enhanced sidewalk and landscaping features - like UWT’s Hillclimb and courtyards.

Urban parks sometimes serve the neighborhood park needs of surrounding residents and often provide opportunities for community events. Urban parks can enhance the quality of life of urban dwellers and workers, create an identity for the urban core and mixed-use districts, as well as promote tourism and economic development for the entire city.

Open spaces on private property, such as downtown plazas associated with an office building, can serve roles similar to those of publicly owned urban parks - like MultiCare’s Plaza and St Joseph Hospital’s new plaza at the corner of South 17th and J Streets.

Recreation Facilities - outdoor and indoor facilities offer opportunities for programmed

activities to promote active living, an appreciation for nature and the environment, and to foster respect for culture and heritage amongst all ages. These facilities can be free-standing or sited within a community or regional park and are usually managed by Metro Parks Tacoma - like People's Community Center.

OS-R-1 Develop and Improve Recreation Opportunities

Acquire, improve and maintain land and facilities valuable for recreation purposes that support the goals of the OSHRP, other elements of the Comprehensive Plan and Metro Parks Tacoma's Strategic Parks and Program Services Plan.

OS-R-2 Meet Community Needs

Work with partners to provide a broad range of recreation opportunities to serve all citizens. Adopt a proactive approach to adapting to changing community preferences, while emphasizing key long term priorities such as enhancing waterfront access and Tacoma's parks. Customize park design to address the diverse demographic needs of the community.

OS-R-3 Recreational Distribution

Design and locate appropriate recreational developments, facilities and services within areas demonstrating a need for such facilities and services taking care to serve all people fairly and equitably.

OS-R-4 Design and Development

Promote design and development of recreation and open space facilities that provide for play that will enhance Tacoma's natural setting and that complement the ecology and unique features of the site or area.

OS-R-5 Multiple Use

Encourage compatible, multiple use of open space and recreation facilities.

OS-R-6 Scenic Sites and Vistas

Develop and maintain a system of scenic view sites and vistas in order to take advantage of the natural beauty of Tacoma and its siting in the Puget Sound Region, while respecting and conserving natural features and habitat areas.

OS-R-9 Public Events and Festivals

Partner with public and private entities to encourage, sponsor and support a range of public activities and events within appropriate open spaces, as well as within temporarily closed streets, such as markets, festivals and parades.

Multi-purpose Trails

Trails serve both a recreation and a non-motorized transportation function. The OSHRP incorporates planning for trails inasmuch as they are recreational facilities contributing to the City's parks and open space system.

An integrated, safety-oriented multi-purpose trail increases mobility choices, reduces reliance on single-occupant vehicles, provides convenient access to schools, centers, transit, parks and other destinations, and encourages regular physical activity to enhance health and wellness.

OS-T-1 Trail Corridors

Develop or partner with others to provide trails and trail corridors both within open space lands and connecting destinations across the city, and create trail linkages with regional trail systems. Coordinate trail planning efforts with public agencies to ensure that city and regional trails connect with major destinations, such as community and regional parks, habitats areas, schools, libraries, business districts and Mixed-use Centers.

OS-T-2 Non-Motorized Transportation System

Design trails to support and link with the city's non-motorized transportation system, whenever feasible and appropriate to habitat area sensitivity. Design multi-purpose trails to encourage walking, hiking, bicycling, skateboarding, rollerblading and similar modes of travel.

OS-T-3 Trail Design

Design specific trails according to the purposes served and the location. Trails developed primarily for low-impact access to or through habitat areas should be developed to minimize their impact to the environment through location choices, narrower width, and use of pervious surfaces. Pervious pavement and low impact development techniques are preferred, especially within habitat areas. Trails developed as non-motorized transportation corridors should be wide enough for the projected use and developed with a durable hard surface.

OS-T-4 Hillside Pedestrian Pathways

In areas where streets are separated by steep slopes which are not ideal for the development of streets, and where public rights-of-way are available, consider development of staircases or paths to create pedestrian connectivity while minimizing the impact on the slope and any natural features present. When appropriate, within downtown and mixed-use centers, pursue opportunities to incorporate urban amenities such as landscaping, plazas or architectural features and/or to incorporate such pedestrian connections as part of an urban park.

Urban Parks in Mixed-use Centers

As the areas planned for the most intense and dense development within the city, downtown and the other mixed-use centers are and will ever increasingly be home to many of Tacoma's

residents as well as where Tacoma residents work, shop, dine and recreate.

Urban parks should be well-designed and fitted to their unique locations. Urban parks and facilities are among the defining characteristics of their neighborhoods and the city as a whole.

New recreational facilities in downtown and other mixed-use centers should be designed to use land efficiently. Small but well-designed parks, plazas, gardens or other open spaces can provide invaluable relief from the built environment, as well as recreational and social opportunities.

OS-MUC-1 Open Space within Centers

Ensure open space is provided in the Mixed-use Centers as the population in the center increases.

OS-MUC-2 Siting and Design

Recognize the primary importance of urban parks and open spaces, and invest in well-chosen designs and locations. Provide a range of urban parks suited to their unique locations and accommodating a broad range of activities and park users, ranging from small plazas and gardens to large urban attractions. Park designs should connect with and provide easy access to the pedestrian network of the center.

OS-MUC-3 Identify Open Space Needs within Centers

Work with the Green Tacoma Partnership, Metro Parks Tacoma, Neighborhood Councils, business district associations, property owners, and residents to identify open space, park, and recreation needs within Mixed-use Centers. Identify potential locations and opportunities for further action and use innovative methods and partnerships to fund the identified needs.

OS-MUC-4 Partner with Public Institutions and Private Landowners

Recognize and collaborate with public and private organizations, including schools, universities and colleges, utilities, hospitals, churches, businesses and private landowners, some of which have a large footprint incorporating open space and pedestrian features. Explore options for public-private partnerships and other innovative approaches to providing open spaces within centers.

OS-MUC-5 Mechanisms to Create Urban Parks

Develop zoning incentives, controls and/or funding mechanisms, such as Transfer of Development Rights, to create highly functional urban parks and amenities within Mixed-use Centers, downtown and Planned Residential Developments.

OS-MUC-6 Fee In Lieu Program

Consider adopting a fee-in-lieu program that would allow development to contribute toward open space, park, community garden, or recreation space within a Mixed-use Center rather than providing on-site open space.

OS-MUC-7 Streets and Sidewalks as Temporary Open Space

Support and encourage the use of streets and sidewalks within centers as open space on a temporary or intermittent basis for a range of activities such as markets, festivals, shopping, dining and recreation, while ensuring safety and balancing street and sidewalk use for transportation.

OS-MUC-8 Public Streets as Linear Urban Parks

Seek opportunities, including joint ventures with public or private partners, to create a park-like environment within public rights-of-way, incorporating features such as widened sidewalks, street amenities and furniture, and landscape planting. Engage in a collaborative process to identify appropriate streets for such treatment, based upon factors including current uses and travel demand, maintenance issues, adjacent land uses and partnership opportunities.

OS-MUC-9 Reconnect the Waterfront

Seek opportunities to re-connect the waterfront to abutting neighborhoods, in particular downtown and the Thea Foss Waterway, through developing multi-functional open spaces, trails and/or recreational facilities that provide or enhance pedestrian connectivity between downtown or other centers and the waterfront.

Green Infrastructure

To achieve a greener Tacoma, the OSHP calls for restoring and enhancing environmental functions throughout the city through planting and maintaining trees and landscaping, and reducing impacts from stormwater and environmental pollution. Enhanced vegetation along streets and freeways, as well as on private land, can help create habitat connections that support and expand the habitat areas.

Vegetation, such as trees and shrubs, filter air pollutants, help to counteract climate change, produce oxygen, buffer noise, improve pedestrian safety and comfort, and provide beauty and shade. In addition, street trees add a human scale to the built environment and help soften the affects of urbanization.

OS-GI-1 Green Neighborhoods

Establish an achievable goal to increase the forest canopy cover by 2028 to a citywide percentage that achieves Tacoma's vision as an environmentally sustainable community.

Determine the existing canopy coverage and develop a process to monitor progress toward achieving the indentified goal. Amend the Comprehensive Plan to adopt the specific canopy goal once it is established.

OS-GI-2 Green Streets

Designate specific streets, trails and other public rights-of-way which are the most appropriate for implementation of green infrastructure practices, based on their location, width, traffic volumes, adjacent uses, prominence, potential to enhance habitat connectivity, contiguity with open space areas and/or other considerations. Prioritize those streets for implementation of such measures.

OS-GI-3 Green Corridors

“Green” Tacoma through citizen mobilization, outreach, and education working to identify, designate, and green corridors throughout the city. Provide connections between habitat areas and recreational opportunities through neighborhood green corridors. Use incentives and innovation to achieve canopy cover goals. Partner with local farms and nurseries to offer options for local residents to increase tree plantings in yards.

OS-GI-4 City Leadership

The city will lead by example and seek opportunities for pilot projects and innovative designs that reduce the footprint of construction or infrastructure projects and/or green the city.

OS-GI-5 Tree Planting and Maintenance

Actively engage in tree planting, maintenance of native and climate-adapted trees and plants, and preservation of large trees city-wide. Encourage and work with partners to conserve, plant and maintain trees and landscaping. Prioritize street and freeway rights-of-way, and include utility rights-of-way, parks, school sites, and other public property when appropriate. Trees and landscaping should be appropriate to the location and conditions, and seek to avoid or minimize conflicts with existing public infrastructure and/or utility facilities.

OS-GI-6 Encourage Voluntary Plantings

Develop an incentive and/or outreach program to encourage voluntary plantings of native and climate-adapted trees and plants on private property.

OS-GI-7 Sustainable Development Practices City-wide

Encourage and support sustainable development practices throughout the city, such as low impact development stormwater management, green building and complete streets. Review and update city regulations on an ongoing basis, as new information and opportunities become available, to better achieve outcomes in terms of green infrastructure goals.

OS-GI-8 Streetscape Improvements

Recognize that streets and sidewalks provide a vast amount of public space, and develop complete streets standards and low impact development street sections for creating a balance between pedestrians, bicycles and automobiles, making sidewalks pleasant and functional public spaces, and accommodating low impact development stormwater management.

Community Gardens

Community gardens are locations for individuals to grow food on public or communally held land—an innovative approach to incorporating small-scale agriculture into the lives of city dwellers. Such practices can support Tacoma’s open space goals in a number of ways, including bringing a positive community use to underutilized urban open spaces, adding to the City’s vegetation and green canopy, preventing undesired or illegal activities through fostering community ownership of open spaces, aiding stormwater management by improving soil quality, raising awareness of both urban open space and regional farmland issues, creating a sense of community, and improving health.

OS-CG-1 Community Gardens

Support and develop existing and new community gardens within parks and on appropriate public and private lands. Consider creative approaches to managing community gardens, such as support by education institutions or volunteer management by community organizations.

In addition to the above, Alternative 1: No-action will complete the following:

31: People’s Community Center Pool - resolve a financial source of funds to finish refurbishment, retrofit, and expansion of the existing facility to include indoor leisure pool elements, party rooms and concessions as proposed in the People’s Community Center master plan.

Metro Parks Tacoma and the City of Tacoma refined the pool option into a 3-phase project of which phase 1 will demolish and rebuild the natatorium with all aquatic features, party rooms, and the stair tower for a water slide. Phase 2 will install the water slide and construct an outdoor spray ground. A future phase 3 will expand the center north to provide for an enlarged fitness facility, concessions, and storage.

Alternative 2: MLK Subarea Plan

Alternative 2: MLK Subarea Plan will apply the measures outlined above as well as the following action items outlined in the MLK Subarea Plan:

28: Greenways - designate a system of coordinated open spaces, conservation corridors, greenways and green streets to link MLK parks and community facilities, and connect the MLK district to adjacent neighborhoods, the Prairie Line Trail, UW Tacoma and the Thea Foss Waterway.

29: Community gardens - plant community or pea patch gardens on vacant sites as well as other available lands within MLK to restore habitat, grow healthy foods for local use, and improve visual appearances, in some cases to serve as temporary uses on sites waiting for redevelopment.

30: People's Community Center Plaza - redevelop the green space in front of People's Community Center into a more formal plaza type park with active features such as picnic shelters, tables, benches, splash fountain, and play equipment in accordance with the proposals in the People's Community Center master plan.

32: Native habitat - plant street trees, reforest open spaces, remove invasive species, and promote use of native and drought resistant plants to restore wildlife habitat in and around MLK's public facilities and within MLK's green, urban, and parkway street corridors.

33: Stormwater - develop rain gardens, green roofs and walls, bio-filtration swales, and other green development features in and around the MLK subarea's public facilities and within the MLK area's green and urban streets as well as in new project developments.

37: Trails - extend and connect the MLK subarea's walkways on South 6th, 11th, 15th, 19th, and 25th Streets to the neighborhood to the west and the downtown to the east and explore extension of the proposed UW Tacoma hillclimb into the district to provide connections to the Prairie Line Trail, UW Tacoma, South Downtown, and Thea Foss Waterway.

44: Green streets - reconfigure South I and J Streets, and the wider right-of-way in 14th, 21st, and 25th Streets (historical streetcar routes) to expand on-street parking, improve sidewalks, plant street trees, and develop bio-swale rain

gardens to calm traffic, improve pedestrian and bike access, and establish a "green and park-like" Green Complete Streets character to these residential neighborhood streets.

4.12.4: Unavoidable adverse impacts

Under both alternatives, the undeveloped and underdeveloped lands in the MLK subarea will be redeveloped for higher intensity uses that will increase park and recreational land and facility requirements and associated personnel, equipment, and facilities.

Proposed public policies under both alternatives will create comprehensive and more systematic improvements necessary to effectively balance demands throughout the MLK subarea and/or create facilities within the citywide system that can.

However, Alternative 2: MLK Subarea Plan will more aggressively implement policies dealing with greenways, community gardens, native habitat, stormwater, trails, and green streets than is currently likely under Alternative 1: No-action.