



City of Durham 2017 Park Survey

BACKGROUND

In 2016, the City Council initiated an update to the 2005 Park Plan. As part of the update, the City conducted a survey of Durham residents to find how City parks were used and what improvements could better address the needs and desires of the community. The purpose of the survey was to:

- 1) Provide guidance to the City Council and staff to develop an overall plan and identify short-term projects for the park properties, and
- 2) Better position the City to seek grant funding to assist with project completion.

The City of Durham owns three parcels of property within the city limits that have been designated as parks or green space.

- The primary property known as **Durham City Park** is approximately 45 acres straddling Fanno Creek on the west side of town. The property consists of a children's play area, a picnic area, a recently designated off-leash area, and large tracts of green space and trails.
- **Heron Grove Park** is a half-acre neighborhood park located south of Rivendell and west of Upper Boones Ferry Road.
- The **Tualatin View green space** is an undeveloped 4-acre parcel located adjacent to the Tualatin River on the east side of Upper Boones Ferry Road. It is intended to remain in its natural state with only minimal amenities.

The City also owns a 3.6-acre undeveloped wooded parcel on Upper Boones Ferry Road. This property was not considered in this survey because it is not specifically designated as a park area.

METHODOLOGY

The City established a Park Committee to help guide the update of the City's Comprehensive Park Plan.

The Park Survey was drafted by City staff and reviewed by the City Council and Park Committee. The Park Committee finalized the survey at the June 6, 2017, joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Park Committee.

A paper copy of the community survey was included in the summer 2017 quarterly City newsletter and posted on the City's website.

Because the City Council is soliciting comments about park use from residents, the City determined that only one survey per Durham household would be accepted. To ensure this standard was met, survey respondents were required to include their Durham address on their returned survey. The City did not receive any completed surveys from non-residents.

The survey was open from July 15 to August 15, 2017.

There were three ways to complete the survey and return it to the City.

1. Complete the paper survey and return it to City Hall by mail, email, or drop-off.
2. Download the survey from the City's website and email back to the City.
3. Complete and submit the survey via Google Forms using a computer or smartphone. Access to the Google Form survey version was provided on the Durham City website.

After the survey was closed, all survey data was inputted and tallied. The Park Committee will hold a public hearing discuss the results of the survey at the October 3, 2017 joint meeting with the Planning Commission. The public is invited to provide input.

The results are below.

City of Durham Map of Parks



RESULTS

The City received 61 resident responses to the survey. Forty-nine paper surveys were turned into City Hall. Twelve responses were completed online. The table below shows the number of respondents from each neighborhood.

Neighborhood	Count
Afton Commons	10
Kingsgate	30
Heron Grove	12
Ellman Lane & 81st Place	5
Peters Road	4
EddyLine	0
Tualatin View	0

GENERAL PARK USE

1. Of the three designated park/green space locations, which, if any, have you visited at least once in the past year? **60 responses**

Park	Count	Percent
Durham City Park	58	96.7%
Heron Grove Neighborhood Park	34	56.7%
Tualatin View Green Space	8	13.3%

2. Are you aware that Durham City Park is connected to Cook Park and Tualatin Community Park by a trail and pedestrian bridge over the Tualatin River? **61 responses**

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	60	98.4%
No	1	1.6%

Are there any parks that you have visited that have features that you would like at Durham City Park? If so, what features would you like to add? **22 responses**

COMMENTS:

- *no (5)*
 - *more benches (3)*
 - *splash pad and water/sand play areas similar to other Tualatin parks*
-

- *Emergency phones or alert stations*
- *update play set, sandbox*
- *fence for dog park*
- *more playground equipment*
- *A couple more benches would be nice, and a fountain in the off-leash area would supply water to dogs & a cooling respite for adults and children.*
- *restroom, drinking fountain*
- *Bathroom or Port-a-potty in the summer*
- *Flush toilets*
- *More usable space. 1. Durham has a natural amphitheater east side of Fanno Creek. Clean up the area and add lawn and natural beauty! (i.e. planting flowers) Use the space for events, community or otherwise. Rent out? Alcohol- "permit required for liability" add more and improve playground. 2. Remove existing parking lot and turn into tables and grass with path through middle. 3. Create a U for parking. One way in, one way out with a narrow median. Upper grass area is not used often, so this makes sense to use more of the park. Diagonal parking on the median side. 4. Sign identifying "Durham Park" between parking lot. 5. Not sure what is feasible now, but I see the park could be 100% used more and more attractive. 6. Stinky garbage can move to new parking area w/surround but ease for Pride Disposal. That's all for now.*
- *Picnic area in the off-leash area 2-3 tables with a shade covering.*
- *river access*
- *update play equipment and ground over*
- *something similar to a butterfly garden at Cook Park*

DURHAM CITY PARK

4. How often do members of your family visit Durham City Park? **61 responses**

Frequency of Visits	Count	Percent
Several times per week	22	36.1%
At least once per week	9	14.8%
Once or twice per month	13	21.3%
Now and then throughout the year	16	26.2%
Never	1	1.6%

5. If you visit Durham City Park, what is your household's primary activity? **59 responses**

Durham Park Activity	Count	Percent
Take young children to use the play area	9	15.3%
Walk your dog	19	32.2%
Walk, jog, or bicycle	26	44.1%
Picnic	1	1.7%
Just to get outdoors and enjoy the open space	3	5.1%
walk dog/kids play/enjoy open space	1	1.7%

6. If you or other family members do not use Durham City Park, what is the primary reason? 5 responses

Reason for Not Using Durham Park	Count	Percent
Just not interested	3	60%
Does not provide amenities I want	0	0
Is not close enough to where I live rather isolated	0	0
We would use the park more.	1	20%

7. If you visit Durham City Park, how do you usually get there? 60 responses

Manner of Arrival	Count	Percent
Walk	47	78.3%
Drive	8	13.3%
Bicycle	5	8.3%

8. Do you have any concerns about safety when you visit Durham City Park during daylight hours? 60 responses

Concerned about Safety	Count	Percent
Yes	13	21.7%
No	47	78.3%

Is safety is a concern, please explain. 16 responses

COMMENTS:

- *Generally no, but there have been a few times that I've run into people clearly under the influence of drugs. When alone, that's a little unnerving.*
- *only recently because of the cougar sightings*
- *only the coyotes in the woods*
- *mild, dogs off leash & trail remoteness*
- *If I'm walking a dog, often others will allow their dogs to run off-leash not in the designated areas. This has sometimes resulted in dog-on-dog aggression*
- *Have been concerned about the cougar sightings*
- *Since dogs have been relegated to the one off-leash area, fewer people use the park, and we do often feel isolated, especially on the loop & south of Fanno Creek bridge.(Human menace/injury from accident/and the odd cougar!)*
- *Adult bicycle riders (especially around curves in the sidewalk) are a real threat to pedestrians. Very few give a warning noise when they approach from the rear at fairly high speeds.*

- *Off-leash dogs run up to me barking. I am afraid of getting bitten.*
- *Dogs jumping on bikes.*
- *If there are no cars in the parking lot, I don't go there. Too many aggressive dogs off leash!!! My little grandchildren do not need to be bitten!!!*
- *Sometimes. Never walk alone on the loop.*
- *Not particularly if there are lots of people around - Lots of strangers from all over come to the park, and if you're alone, it is remote and not easily viable to others*
- *Dogs that are off leash when they are in the on leash area. Some dogs are very aggressive.*
- *minimal; but the secluded areas create a little more need for caution and alertness*
- *People kick dogs. They are rude sometimes.*

9. Would you be interested in having community-sponsored events at Durham City Park such as a Fourth of July Picnic or Easter egg hunt? **57 responses**

Response	Count	Percent
Yes	32	56.1%
No	25	43.9%

If yes, please specify: **28 responses**

COMMENTS

- *4th of July (2)*
- *the Anniversary celebrations was nice...brought everyone together*
- *Any sort of event that brings neighbors together like the 50th last summer!*
- *Would participate in any activity!*
- *Annual neighborhood picnic*
- *All of the above*
- *Easter egg hunt*
- *But only once a year. Perhaps like the 50- anniversary celebration*
- *don't care either way*
- *concerts, movies, farmers market*
- *Annual picnic*
- *every five years*
- *just one all community picnic in the summer*
- *Fourth of July Picnic or other summer picnic*
- *maybe*
- *Farmers Market*
- *anniversary picnic was nice*
- *4th of July picnic*
- *Our 50th-anniversary picnic celebration was great!*
- *too old*
- *Easter egg hunt and Fourth of July picnic*
- *How about a Labor Day picnic?*
- *Fourth of July picnic*
- *Easter egg hunt (park is packed during the 4th of July)*

- 4th of July maybe
- Yes, we used to but don't anymore - was great for meeting people and kids.
- if interest and attendance justify

10. Are you aware of the recent designation of the off-leash area being ONLY the triangular grassy area west of the Fanno Creek Bridge? **61 responses**

Off-Leash Awareness	Count	Percent
Yes	59	96.7%
No	2	3.3%

If yes, are these boundaries reasonable? **53 responses**

Boundaries Reasonable	Count	Percent
Yes	45	84.9
No	8	15.1

PLEASE EXPLAIN: 20 responses

- *Seems like most of the people I see there drive from other areas, also concerns about small dogs (like mine) and kids, also wildlife. Not everyone that uses it is a responsible dog owner.*
- *Prefer the entire walking loop be off leash. I've walked the park on a regular basis for over 7 years and have never encountered an unruly dog. My only complaint is when people leave the poop bags on the sidewalk. I realize the intent is to pick up upon their return but it's just yucky. Is there some type of poop patrol? Perhaps there could be another trash bin placed on the outer loop of the triangle park. The only trash bin is at the entrance to the Durham Park and at triangle trestle where Cook/Durham/Tualatin borders.*
- *I loved having a trail where I could walk my dog off leash. I was very sad to see that taken away.*
- *Yes. It would be nice to have it fenced off (like at Tualatin Park). I was bit last year by a dog and I still see people not leashing their dogs. That's frustrating.*
- *I use the park for running and have had several incidents of nearly tripping over off-leash dogs; I support the off-leash ability, but appreciate the control relative to the trails*
- *People can walk anywhere, dogs have few places like the loop*
- *very generous space for pets*
- *I do not know as I have no dog to exercise*
- *if dog owners and dogs behave*
- *See response to Q8. Further, dogs need a wooded area with shade and water.*
- *I really don't care as much as others do.*
- *see comments below*
- *Ha, ha! Be nice if people obeyed them!*
- *Dogs use pathways to get to owners. see#13*
- *I think the loop should be included but not a big deal.*
- *but no need to be strict about it*
- *Good to have an area for dogs and an area for people*
- *No reason to exclude from the rest of the park.*
- *I personally would prefer a fenced area so those picnicking are not bothered by dogs.*

- *The boundaries are reasonable. Here is where I disagree. When my dog is off-leash in the triangular grassy area, he often runs off the path where the bench is. He only does it for a second or two. Just to sniff around. Some people sit on this bench with their dogs leashed. But they get aggressive, yell, "Get your dog and sometimes even kick my dogs and other people's dog. Technically, I could get fined. The people sitting on the bench feel so right that my dog is out of boundaries that they have kicked it. He just runs up to sniff and runs back. Now the people that walk their dogs without a leash on the path have ruined it, and have made the way it is. I don't think I need to go into further detail. I hope whoever reads this understands where I'm coming from. There might be a fight someday, not from me but between someone else. I just feel like if your dog is already playing in the off leash area, as long as he or she comes right back, it shouldn't be a penalty. Maybe making the whole park off leash would cut this aggressive two sided issue. The off leash vs leashed clash is old. There are two other parks that people can use to walk their leashed pet. Thank you.*

DURHAM CITY PARK 4 DISTINCT ACTIVITY AREAS

11. Children's Play Area 55 responses

Potential Improvement	Count	Percent
Just continue upkeep of what is there	36	65.5%
Replace or install more play equipment	9	16.4%

OTHER COMMENTS

- *Provide additional picnic tables and benches*
- *Play equipment (with swings) needs tightening. Replace large chunk of mulch with more children-friendly product*
- *Any chance the dumpster can be moved? It is an eyesore AND it is super stinky. I think people put dog waste in it.*
- *Put up a sign or 2 for bicycle riders to warn walkers they are approaching*
- *Add picnic tables.*
- *add a bocce ball court*
- *Power wash wood- moss makes slippery. Children fall whoever does power washing does a real poor job!*
- *Provide seating for parents and elderly.*
- *update play equipment and ground cover*

12. Picnic Shelter 58 responses

Potential Improvements	Count	Percent
Just continue upkeep of what is there	41	70.7%
Add picnic tables	3	5.2%
Provide a power outlet and lighting to the shelter	8	13.8%

OTHER COMMENTS:

- *Refurbish/replace existing shelter.*

- *Consistent mowing would be helpful.*
- *Either tear it down or totally redo it. I think it looks terrible.*
- *A water feature, such as a wading pond would be wonderful in the grassy area.*
- *Manicure grass area for more usable space - remove existing table - beautify shelter.*
- *Currently not very useful; provide a grill.*

13. Triangular Field Area West of Fanno Creek - recently designated as the only off-leash area in the park. **57 responses**

Potential Improvements	Count	Percent
Just continue upkeep of what is there	32	56.1%
Place additional benches along the trail	13	22.8%
Modify use to a picnic area by adding picnic tables	2	3.5%

OTHER COMMENTS:

- *Reduce Use of herbicides around trees.*
- *A small shelter in the triangle area.*
- *Having benches will encourage vagrants to camp out there.*
- *Love it when new trees are planted in this field. Can we plant more trees?*
- *Provide a bench at the end of the loop trail by Fanno Creek.*
- *Please fence the off leash area so that walkers are not intimidated by barking dogs charging toward them.*
- *Place benches inside dog area so dogs don't go onto the path and owners have a place to sit.*
- *Water fountain would be great!*
- *Put a fence along the length to accommodate multi-use and kids can run around and play.*
- *"Consider" a secure picnic table (or 2); suggest the more shaded are on the east side of the field.*

14. Trail System and Green Space **59 responses**

Potential Improvements	Count	Percent
Just continue upkeep of what is there	22	37.3%
Place additional benches along the trail system	8	13.6%
Remove non-native vegetation and undertake restoration of Fanno Creek	20	33.9%

OTHER COMMENTS:

- *See question #2 and #3 above.*
- *More effort clearing and maintaining existing spaces. Clean up downed or weak tree limbs.*
- *Better maintenance needed on trail, grass is long, trees fall and lay for weeks.*
- *Place additional benches along trail system.*
- *Add trails.*
- *Place additional benches along trail.*
- *Try to increase warnings to walkers that bike riders are coming.*

- *Have Fanno Creek Bridge assessed for safety and repairs if necessary. Water was very high this year.*
- *Place additional benches.*

HERON GROVE PARK

15. Please check YOUR top priority. **56 responses**

Potential Improvement	Count	Percent
Just continue upkeep of what is there	47	83.9%
Install a couple of picnic tables and do some planting	3	5.4%

OTHER COMMENTS:

- *Nice open space area. If picnic tables are installed, we're concerned about trash and garbage cans. See additional comments below.*
- *Can the path lights be altered so that they don't blind people walking on the path at night?*
- *Prune large Laurel bush to clear walkway.*
- *Remove invasive ivy.*
- *Nothing to use there- never seen anyone using it - sell property and use \$ for upgrades to Durham park.*
- *More seating area/ another bench, no picnic tables.*
- *Never been there.*
- *Add a few children's play swing and slide. Keep it small.*
- *One picnic table is probably sufficient.*

TUALATIN VIEW GREEN SPACE

16. Please check YOUR top priority. **54 responses**

Potential Improvement	Count	Percent
Leave it as it is	46	85.2%
Place a couple of benches along the trail	7	13%

OTHER COMMENTS:

- *Last time we went there it seemed like it needed cleaning up.*
- *Not sure where this is located.*

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

17. Which residential area do you reside in? **61 responses**

Neighborhood	Count	Percent
Afton Commons	10	16.4%
Kingsgate	29	47.5%
Heron Grove	12	19.7%
Ellman Lane & 81st Place	5	8.2%
Peters Road	4	6.6%
EddyLine	0	0
Tualatin View	0	0
Rivendell	1	1.6%

18. Number of people in your immediate household within each age group:

Age Range	Count
0-10 years old	3
11-18 years old	5
19-30 years old	9
31-45 years old	7
46-60 years old	17
61-75 years old	31
Over 75 years old	13

19. How long have you resided in Durham? **61 responses**

Lived in Durham	Count	Percent
Less than one year	1	1.6%
1-3 years	4	6.6%
4-10 years	10	16.4%
11-19 years	13	21.3%
20 or more years	33	54.1%

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE PARKS, IMPROVEMENTS, EQUIPMENT, USES, ETC: 21 RESPONSES

- *Keep Heron Grove as is! It is perfect for a walk with the dog, runners, etc.*
- *Thanks for keeping our parks so beautiful! We are so lucky to live in such a great community!*
- *More regular mowing of open space on east side of Fanno. More effort clearing brush and maintaining existing trees.*
- *a water fountain or faucet by the off leash dog park for both dogs and people*
- *We love living in Durham. Would love to see better upkeep of the overgrown bushes/weeds on the walking/running trails.*
- *The park(s) look generally good and it appears they are serving the citizens well*
- *no dogs yet*
- *As there are extensive facilities as both Cook and Tualatin Park, I don't think it's necessary to spend resources on future amenities in Durham. Benches, picnic tables, etc. often encourage overnight sleeping by non-residents or meeting places for drug dealers*
- *Living very close to Bridgeport Village, we are seeing an increase of individuals asking for money. We are opposed to adding tables and benches to our small Heron Grove green space due to concerns of attracting non-residents who will congregate and sleep in our neighborhood park.*
- *I feel Durham City Government has had a positive impact on my 12 years in Heron Grove.*
- *We enjoy our parks and appreciate the work you do to maintain them.*
- *Though not a park, preserving the wooded natural space across from City Hall would be our #1 priority. It is a community treasure.*
- *Upkeep has been terrible: the grass has been allowed to grow knee or even waist high at times and then is so badly and unevenly cut as to be even worse eyesore. It's often cut when the ground is boggy, leaving deep ruts. A friend would not go to this park this spring because of overgrowth and fear of ticks and mosquitoes resulting from it. Broken and dead tree branches are left for months on end. They would fall and cause injury.*
- *I am looking for an Eagle Project*
- *I wish I felt safer going to the park by myself. Currently, I go with friends, carry a stick, and pepper spray. Two things make me feel unsafe - off leash dogs running up to me while barking and the 3 camps I have seen which look like a place where a homeless person might be staying. One camp in Durham Park, one camp in Tualatin City Park near the river and one camp in the Kingsgate wooded area.*
- *Put a couple of benches in the wooded area on Upper Boones Ferry Road*
- *Great place to live.*
- *Residents of Kingsgate are getting older- they need a safe walking area. Too many dogs are off leash even in the neighborhood. Homeless living openly in the park! Yikes!*
- *see comments above*
- *We should hesitate to add picnic areas that require adding trash cans/electricity or additional maintenance. We can do that in our home or go to state parks. Let's not attract homeless camping or the like (noise or litter).*
- *In general, folks do a good job and are respectful, although there are folks who let their dogs use others yards and don't pick up their dog waste. Even though our parks are for public usage, we find it and our Durham residents should be the deciding factor in its development and majority rule should apply.*