

5 Demand & Needs Analysis



Introduction

Liberty Lake's quality of life and desirability is directly tied to its parks and recreation system. When asked, **"How important do you think parks and recreation are to the overall quality of life Liberty Lake?"** 83% of survey respondents said, "Very Important". Liberty Lake residents greatly value their parks, and a comprehensive parks system that is easily accessed and well used by the public provides a multitude of civic and public benefits. People living near well-designed and maintained parks report greater community connection and greater satisfaction with local government. The public appreciates parks which represent them by way of public art, events, and programming reflective of the community's culture and interests. Parks that are easily accessible are associated with greater civic trust and appreciation. According to a literature review conducted by the research nonprofit Urban Institute, parks positively contribute to the public's physical health, mental health, and social health. Parks also improve a city's environmental quality, improving the place's overall livability and resiliency. A summary of the benefits and impacts are listed in Table 5-1 below.

Table 5-1: Reported Health Benefits of Parks

	Benefits and Impacts
Physical Health	♦ **Well Being:** Spending 120 minutes per week in green spaces has been associated with higher levels of reported good health and well-being. ♦ **Physical Health:** Evidence suggests that proximity to green space has a positive effect on self-perceived general physical health, with a larger effect for the elderly, youth, and families with low incomes. ♦ **Reduced Complications:** Evidence has associated time spent in parks and green spaces with reductions in complications from chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.
Mental Health	♦ **Reduced Stress:** Several international studies have linked access to green space, whether through physical presence or views, to reduced stress levels. ♦ **Workplace Improvement:** The frequency, duration, and activity of open space usage reduced the stress levels and stress-related experiences of employees in the workplace as recorded by a self-reported questionnaire. ♦ **Job Satisfaction:** Open space, including greenery and outdoor space, fostered overall improvements to employee health and well-being, even leading to higher job satisfaction.
Social Health	♦ **Social Cohesion:** Park spaces were significantly correlated with positive impacts on stress and social support, suggesting that programmed park space may have a greater impact on overall health than general levels of neighborhood vegetation. ♦ **Social Capital:** Environmental education programs, volunteer programs, and community-led stewardship are associated with increased levels of social capital. Urban parks can serve as an access point to social participation through nature-based recreation. ♦ **Social Resilience:** Faced with increased social and psychological strain, emerging research indicates people seek out parks and green spaces as restorative resources.

Environmental Quality	♦ **Air Quality:** There is a relationship between exposure to air pollution and higher cardiovascular mortality and an association between green space and a reduction in air pollution. ♦ **Climate Adaptations:** Parks and green spaces can serve as natural ways to increase urban hazard resiliency. Green space can serve a crucial role in protecting against flood risk by reducing runoff.

Source: Urban Institute (2022). The Health Benefits of Parks and their Economic Impacts. Retrieved from https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/the-health-benefits-of-parks-and-their-economic-impacts_0.pdf.

Given how important the parks system is to the overall health and well-being of everyone who lives and recreates in Liberty Lake, this chapter seeks to help answer the following questions:

1. Does Liberty Lake Have Enough Parklands to Serve Its Current and Future Population?

2. Does Liberty Lake Have the Right Kind of Parks?

3. Are Liberty Lake's Parks Accessible to All Residents?

4. Are Liberty Lake's Facilities Accommodating Residents' Desired Recreational Opportunities?

The following analysis evaluates, quantifies, and considers facility and recreation demands, and identifies existing and future needs for parkland, facilities, and open spaces. The needs include both the preservation of existing services and resources, as well as projected future needs based on population forecasts and economic outlooks. The current update reflects the needs, desires, and recommended priorities that set the foundation for the next 6 to 10 years, as well as providing aspiration for the next 15 to 20 years.





Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative metrics are provided to give a fuller understanding of the demands and needs. Quantitative standards are traditionally used to assess the need for additional parks and recreation elements. Based on the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) guidelines and park metric database, simple comparisons of adequate land based on normalized averages across the country were the traditional way of determining what the minimum amount of parklands should be. This plan assesses the recreational demands of the City of Liberty Lake, starting with benchmarking level-of-service (LOS) performance metrics, reporting on recreation trends, and conducting a service coverage, 10-minute walkshed analysis of the current park system.

Quantitative Metrics

- Level of Service as Park Acres per 1,000 Residents.
- Number of Residents per Park.
- Areas Accessible Within 10-Minute Walk of Parks (Walkshed).
- Sidewalk Condition Assessment Scoring.

While quantifiable metrics allow for easy comparisons to be made, they are analytically and programmatically weak compared to understanding a community's quality of life. Qualitative indicators include identifying the percentage of facilities that are capturing public demand and are in good condition according to their function. By engaging with community members through surveys, pop-up events, and other forms of public consultation, the public's level of satisfaction with the condition, quantity, or distribution of existing active park and recreation facilities creates metrics that can be better utilized in developing strong strategies and improvements. The full community engagement report which assessed qualitative demands can be found in Appendix B: Community Engagement .

Qualitative Metrics

- Local, State, and National Recreation Trends.
- Community Satisfaction Survey.
- Community Facility Demand.



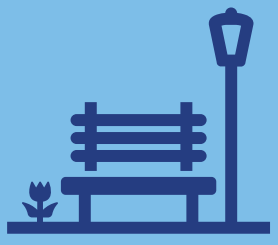
Quantitative Metrics

Level of Service Assessment

A “Level of Service” (Abbrev. LOS) refers to the amount and quality of recreation facilities that are necessary to meet current and future needs of the population. The LOS standards cited in the section may be thought of as guidelines and recommendations that Liberty Lake has the freedom to modify in whatever manner best serves the needs and desires of the community. Whatever standards are established shall also take into full consideration the City’s obligation to ensure that the operational and maintenance needs of the existing parks system are met.

Liberty Lake’s current adopted Parks and Open Space LOS is 30 acres per 1,000 population. Policies supporting this LOS include 10-3G-3 of City Development Code and the River District SAP-08-0001 which requires that all proposed residential uses shall be located within ½ mile of a park or greenway area. As development occurs, the developer and the City shall work concurrently to identify the size, location, and configuration of proposed parks and greenways, ensuring consistency with the City’s adopted Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Consistent with Article 10-3B of the Development Code, trails, sidewalks, and pathways must also be built concurrent with new construction to ensure adequate pedestrian access and circulation necessary to serve the development.

As of 2025, Liberty Lake is estimated to have a current population of 14,110 and is projected to grow to a population of 21,934 by 2046. The following section will demonstrate if Liberty Lake is meeting its adopted LOS standard and how the current parks and recreation system compares to communities of similar population sizes. As Liberty Lake anticipates future growth, an additional comparison can be made to small cities in the next population threshold with a population above 20,000, knowing that an increasingly diverse population base will have different needs and desires for programming than might currently exist. The supply of parks and recreation spaces with specific functions can then be compared with recommended LOS targets for those specific types of parks.



National Recreation and Park Association

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting parks, recreation, and environmental conservation as integral components of healthy communities. Its mission is "to advance parks, recreation, and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people." NRPA is a service organization that serves communities of over 60,000 park professionals and is a vocal advocate for the cause they serve by providing professional development, advocacy, grants, research, and publications. In summary, the importance of the NRPA's role in urban planning is to advocate for and provide guidance, ensuring that cities treat parks and recreation as fundamental services.

Defining Liberty Lake Parks to Match National Standards

There are several ways by which Liberty Lake's provision of parklands can be measured. Liberty Lake's current goal and adopted standard of 30 acres per 1,000 population is comprehensive in that it considers all parks, open space, and recreational areas, inclusive of all park classifications and forms of ownership and management. In other words, in real world terms, recreational spaces such as the County golf courses, though not governed by the City, nevertheless contribute significantly to the total parkland acreage and program offerings which serve the local population. Defined in this manner, the total parkland acreage in Liberty Lake is determined to be approximately 608 acres, yielding a LOS of 43.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents in 2025.

The NRPA employs a narrower definition of "parkland" to make LOS comparisons and recommendations. "Parkland" refers to both formal parks and non-park sites of other classification types which are directly managed or maintained by the submitting municipal parks and recreation agency. This means that **agencies only submit park metrics that are within their jurisdictional control,** a limitation which contrasts with Liberty Lake's adopted LOS that comprehensively considers all parks and open spaces, regardless of ownership or public access

A conventional standard used by local agencies has been to provide 6.25 to 10.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 population as a general standard for municipal park systems. Current NRPA guidelines have shifted toward broader measures that are based on national statistics (through the NRPA Park Metrics database). These measures enable cities to compare themselves against the nation's medians and peer agencies, but do not insist upon a rigid "standard." Under this definition of parks, owned and managed directly by the municipality, Liberty Lake is determined to have 318.77 acres of public parkland, as shown in Table 5-2 on the following page.

Table 5-2: Public Parks and Open Spaces Level of Service Inventory

Park	Acreage	Trail Miles	Ownership/Management
Community Parks			
Orchard Park	11.86	1.4	City
Pavillion Park	13.09	0.7	City
Rocky Hill Park	13.99	0.8	City
TOTALS	**38.94 ac**	**2.84 mi**	-
Open Spaces and Natural Areas			
Open Spaces and Natural Areas	126.76 ac	0 mi	Public
Neighborhood Parks			
Blueridge Ave Park	1.27	0	HOA with public access
Five Fingers Park	0.8	0	HOA with public access
Half Moon Park	2.9	0	HOA with public access
Harrier Ln Park	0.3	0	HOA with public access
Legacy Ridge Parks (3 gated parks and trails)	12.0	1.83	HOA with public access
Little Bear Park	0.4	0	HOA with public access
Osprey Ln Park	0.6	0	HOA with public access
Pumphouse Park	0.6	0	HOA with public access
River Rock Park	4.9	0.5	HOA with public access
TOTALS	**23.77 ac**	**2.33 mi**	-
Regional Parks			
Centennial Trail (part maintained by Liberty Lake)	51.66	2.75	State Parks
TOTALS	**51.66 ac**	**2.75mi**	-
School Ballfields			
Liberty Lake “The Diamonds” Ballfields	9.09	0.15	City
Liberty Creek Elementary	3.96	0	Central Valley School District
Liberty Lake Elementary	4.97	0	Central Valley School District
TOTALS	**18.02 ac**	**0.15 mi**	-
Special Use Parks			

Nature's Place Arboretum	2.8	0.27	City
Town Square Park (developed area)	1.75	0.25	City
Trailhead Golf Course	55.07	0.8	City
TOTALS	**59.62 ac**	**1.32 mi**	-
Overall System			
PUBLIC SYSTEM TOTAL	**318.77 ac**	**9.45 mi**	-
2025 Level of Service (Acres / 1,000 pop.)	22.59 ac/ 1,000 pop.	0.67 mi/ 1,000 pop.	
2046 Level of Service (Acres / 1,000 pop.)	14.53 ac/ 1,000 pop.	0.43 mi/ 1,000 pop.	*Note: This represents the baseline conditions without planned parks and trail facilities.*

Source: NRPA. (2025). 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review. NRPA Agency Performance Review.

Benchmarking Liberty Lake Parks with Similar Communities

NRPA collects annual nationwide data on characteristics of agencies, including types of programs offered, size of population served, budget and staffing. For a given metric, NRPA reports the median value of all reporting agencies within a certain population range to represent the “typical agency.” The following analysis will benchmark Liberty Lake’s performance metrics in comparison to the national median values of communities of a similar population size. The performance metrics compared here fall into three categories looking at the supply of parks, programming, and financing, including staffing, budgeting, and revenue. Table 5-3 provides an overview of all criteria provided by staff in comparison with the national median.



Table 5-3: NRPA Performance Metrics for Cities (2025)

Description	Liberty Lake (Pop. 14,110)	National Median Cities Less Than 20,000 Pop.	National Median Cities of 20,000-49,999 Pop.
Number of residents per park (median)	**743**	1,001	2,071
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (median)	**22.59**	10.9	9.2
Miles of trails (median)	**9.4**	4	10
Number of programs offered annually (median)	**19**	45	164
Percentage of programs that are fee-based	**37%**	83%	85%
Full-time equivalent staff (median)	**19**	13.8	30.5
Full-time equivalent staff per 10,000 (median)	**13.5**	13.7	9.6
Annual operation expenditures (rounded median)	$2,081,735.00	$1,451,763.00	$3,682,806.00
Operating expenditures per capita (median)	$147.54	$139.87	$112.38
Operating expenditure per acre of park and non-park sites (median)	$18,971.43	$9,512.00	$8,979.00
Operating expenditure per full-time equivalent (median)	$109,565.00	$107,982.00	$116,895.00
Park and recreation revenue per capita (median)	$2.61	$49.67	$28.40
Revenue as a percentage of operating expenditures (cost recovery)	1.8%	31.1%	25.8%
Five-year capital budget spending (rounded median)	$916,958.00	$2,211,950.00	$7,971,329.00

Table Key	
Green	Better Than National Median of Cities < 20,000 Pop.
Red	Worse Than National Median of Cities < 20,000 Pop.

Source: NRPA. (2025). 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review. NRPA Agency Performance Review.

Liberty Lake's park and recreation system demonstrates a distinct set of strengths and structural characteristics when compared to national median values for both cities with populations under 20,000 and those in the 20,000–49,999 population range, as reported by the National Recreation and Park Association 2025 Agency Performance Review.

Liberty Lake performs particularly well in measures related to park access and system capacity. With 743 residents per park, the City serves fewer residents per facility than the national median for cities under 20,000 population (1,001), indicating a comparatively high level of access. Similarly, Liberty Lake provides 22.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, more than double the national median for smaller cities and well above the benchmark for larger communities. The City also exceeds the national median for trail provision among small cities, with 9.4 miles of trails, approaching the median reported for communities in the 20,000–49,999 population range. Staffing levels further reinforce this service capacity, as Liberty Lake maintains 13.5 full-time equivalent employees per 10,000 residents, closely aligned with the national median for small cities and exceeding the staffing intensity of larger peer communities.

Operational investment in the park system is also relatively strong. Liberty Lake's operating expenditures per capita ($147.54) exceed the national median for cities under 20,000 residents, reflecting a solid commitment to day-to-day system maintenance and service delivery. Spending per full-time equivalent employee is comparable to national norms, while operating expenditures per acre are substantially higher than peer medians, consistent with a system characterized by well-maintained facilities and higher service expectations.

In contrast, Liberty Lake differs markedly from national peers in programming volume, revenue generation, and capital investment. The City offers 19 programs annually, significantly fewer than the national median of 45 for cities under 20,000 residents and far below the level reported for larger communities. A relatively small share of these programs are fee-based (37 percent), compared to more than 80 percent nationally, contributing to very low revenue generation. Liberty Lake reports $2.61 in park and recreation revenue per capita and a cost recovery rate of 1.8 percent, well below national benchmarks. These figures reflect a system that is intentionally structured to minimize user fees and relies upon external partnerships and private facilities to meet community demand for year-round and specialized programming. Facilities such as HUB Sports Center, Liberty Lake Athletic Club, and regional providers such as the Spokane Valley YMCA of the Inland Northwest supply a wide range of sports, fitness, aquatics, youth enrichment, and after-school programs that are not directly offered through the City's parks and recreation department. This partnership-oriented service model helps fill program gaps without requiring direct municipal investment but also limits the City's ability to generate program-based revenue or directly control access, pricing, and long-term service availability.

Capital investment further distinguishes Liberty Lake from its peers. The City's five-year capital spending level of approximately $917,000 is substantially below national medians for both comparison groups, suggesting limited near-term capacity to expand, renovate, or diversify park facilities without new funding strategies.

Overall, Liberty Lake's park and recreation system is characterized by high levels of parkland access, strong staffing support, and sustained operational investment, resulting in a system that prioritizes availability and quality of public spaces. At the same time, comparatively low levels of programming, revenue generation, and capital spending indicate a model that is highly service-oriented but fiscally dependent on non-program funding sources. As Liberty Lake grows, these characteristics may shape future policy discussions around program expansion, financial sustainability, and long-term capital planning.

Local Peer Community Comparisons

Using NRPA's national database, as well as information about the park systems gathered directly from the agency staff, Liberty Lake's parks performance metrics may also be compared with those of other local agencies of similar populations sizes and geographies, located in Spokane County, Washington and Kootenai County, Idaho. Benchmarking these parks' performance indicators not only with national values, but also with local peer communities helps to identify which metrics Liberty Lake scores strongly in and which are performing lower. Further context and analysis can provide insights into why this is the case. The peer communities selected for comparison include:

- **Airway Heights, Washington:** Pop. 12,120.
- **Cheney, Washington:** Pop. 13,180.
- **Hayden, Idaho:** Pop. 16,531.
- **Rathdrum, Idaho:** Pop. 13,107.

Table 5-4: Peer Community Comparison Across Park Metrics

Description	Liberty Lake, WA	Airway Heights, WA	Cheney, WA	Hayden, ID	Rathdrum, ID
Level of Service Metrics					
Population (2025 Est.)	14,110	12,120	13,180	16,531	13,107
Number of Public Parks	19	7	11	6	10
Number of residents per park	**743**	1,731	1,198	2,755	1,310
Acres of Public Parks and Opens Space	**318.77**	83.11	79.22	73.65	32.56
Acres of parkland per 1,000 residents	**22.59**	6.9	6.0	4.5	2.5
Programs					
Number of programs offered annually	**19**	74	94	71	81

Percentage of programs that are fee-based	**37%**	89%	93%	76%	65%
Department Staffing and Budget					
Full-time equivalent staff	**19**	11	6	9	7
Full-time equivalent staff per 10,000 residents	**13.5**	9.1	4.6	5.4	5.3
Annual operation expenditures	$2,081,735.00	$2,421,163.65	1,342,341.60	$1,432,405.48	$1,146,525.00
Operating expenditures per capita	$147.54	$199.77	$101.85	$86.65	$87.47
Operating expenditure per acre of parklands	$10,523.38	$29,132.04	$16,944.48	$19,448.82	$35,212.68
Operating expenditure per full-time equivalent staff member	$109,565.00	$220,105.79	$223,723.60	$159,156.16	$163,789.29

Table Key	
Green	Better Than National Median of Cities < 20,000 Pop.
Red	Worse Than National Median of Cities < 20,000 Pop.

Source: NRPA. (2025). 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review. NRPA Agency Performance Review.

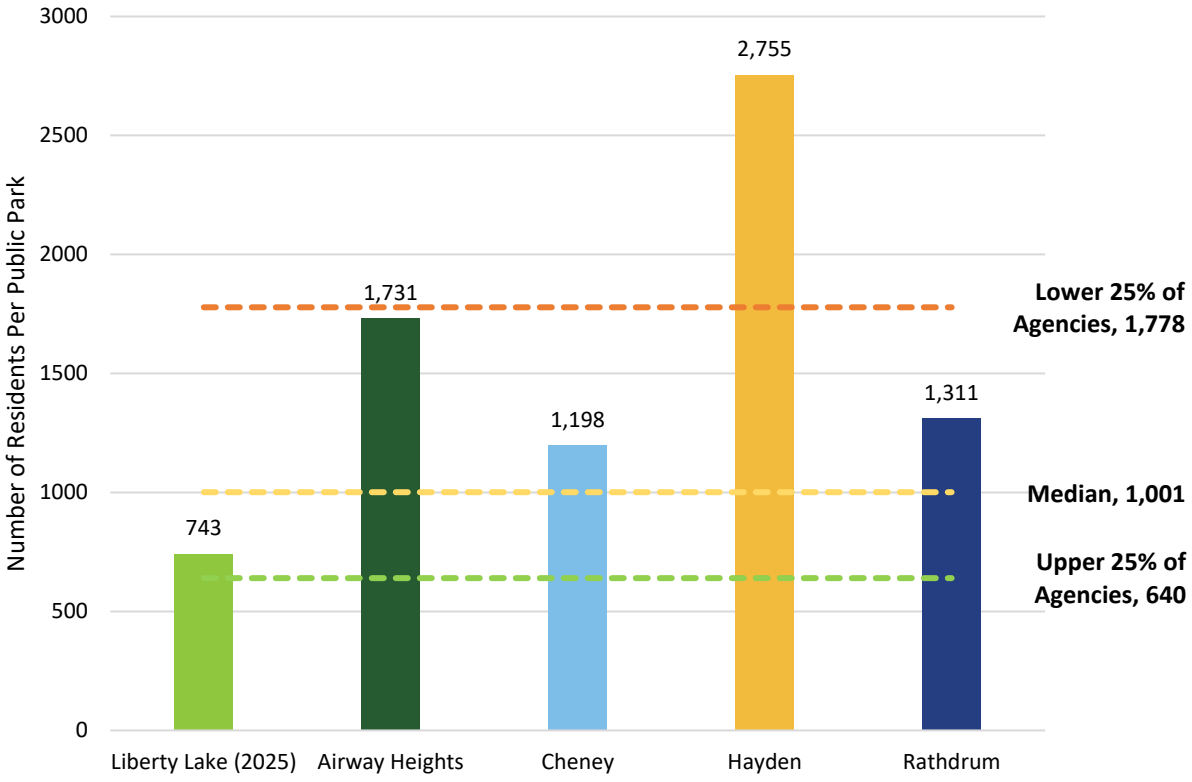
When benchmarking Liberty Lake with the four local peer communities of comparable populations, several findings emerge which will be discussed in further detail in the following sections:

Level of Service Metrics

Key Finding: Liberty Lake has more public parks and open spaces that are larger in size than its peer communities. This contributes to the lowest density of residents per park, but also the highest amount of acreage offered per capita.

For the purposes of comparison, the analysis includes public parks and recreational spaces directly owned by the city, as well as the portion of the Centennial Trail for which Liberty Lake is responsible for maintaining under a joint management agreement, and the Central Valley School District lawn and ballfield spaces for which the City maintains in exchange for programming reservations throughout the year. These parklands are inventoried in detail in Chapter 3. These facilities are determined to currently offer a LOS of 22.59 acres of public parkland per 1,000 residents in 2025.

Figure 5-1: Number of Residents per Park Comparison

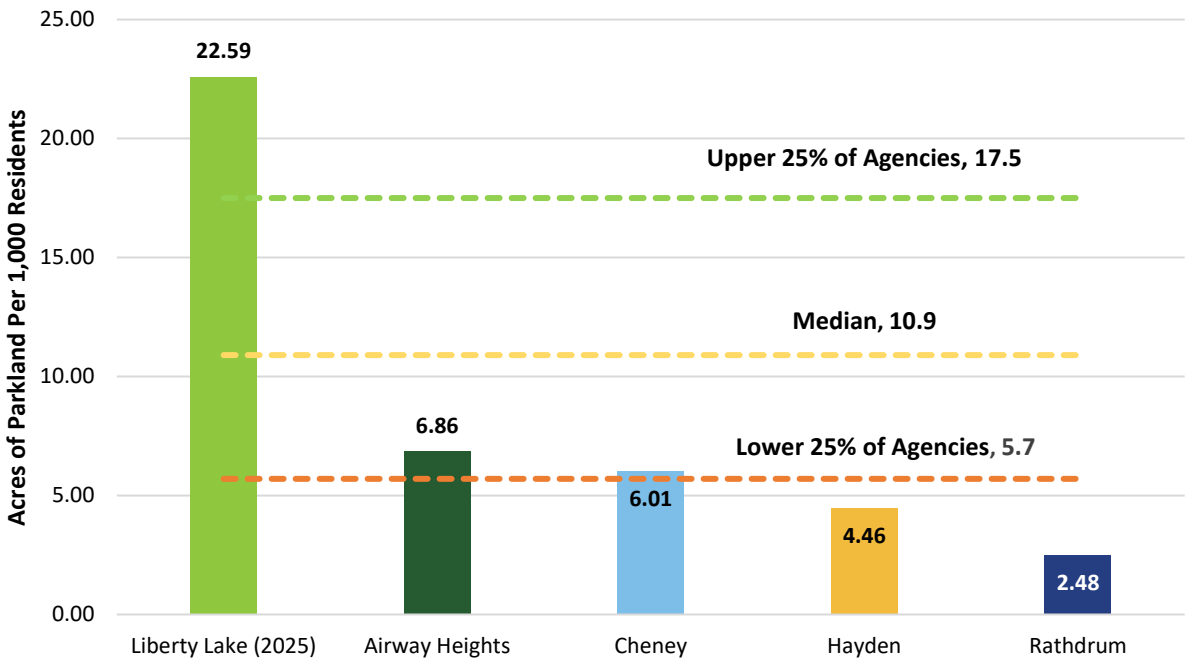


Source: NRPA. (2025). 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review. NRPA Agency Performance Review.

Figure 5-1 compares the number of residents served per public park in Liberty Lake to selected peer communities and national benchmarks reported by the NRPA. The figure also illustrates the lower quartile, median, and upper quartile values from the NRPA dataset, providing context for how Liberty Lake compares across the full range of agency outcomes. Approximately 25 percent of agencies report fewer than 640 residents per park, while half of agencies fall between the upper quartile and the lower quartile benchmark of 1,778 residents per park.

Based on 2025 data, Liberty Lake serves approximately 743 residents per public park, which outperforms the national median of 1,001 residents per park and is within the upper-performing quartile of agencies. Overall, Liberty Lake's parks and open space system achieves a higher level of service than its local peer communities. This metric reflects park quantity only and does not account for the unique functions, classifications, or amenity types provided within each park, as documented in the full inventory. While the city's larger number of neighborhood parks may help distribute park access and day-to-day use throughout the community, these parks may not provide the specialized or destination amenities that many users seek. As a result, higher-intensity activities and visitor demand may continue to concentrate within the City's community parks, potentially contributing to localized crowding despite a comparatively strong overall level of service.

Figure 5-2: Local Peer Community and NRPA Level of Service Comparison



Source: NRPA. (2025). 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review. NRPA Agency Performance Review.

Figure 5-2 compares Liberty Lake's current public parkland supply per 1,000 residents to selected peer communities and national benchmarks derived from the NRPA dataset. In addition to peer city comparisons, the figure illustrates the lower quartile, median, and upper quartile values reported in the NRPA survey, providing important context on how Liberty Lake compares across the full national distribution of park level-of-service (LOS) outcomes. Approximately 25 percent of agencies fall below the lower quartile benchmark (5.7 acres per 1,000 residents), 50 percent fall between the lower and upper quartiles, and the remaining 25 percent exceed the upper quartile benchmark (17.5 acres per 1,000 residents).

Based on 2025 data, Liberty Lake provides approximately 22.6 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, placing the city well above the NRPA median value of 10.9 acres and within the upper quartile of agencies nationwide. Liberty Lake's parkland LOS exceeds that of all identified peer communities shown in the comparison. Overall, the chart demonstrates that Liberty Lake's current park system provides a comparatively high level of park access when measured against both peer jurisdictions and national NRPA benchmarks for communities of a similar size.

Amenities Offered

A review of Liberty Lake's public park and recreation amenities was conducted and compared with national benchmarks reported by the National Recreation and Park Association for communities with populations under 20,000. These benchmarks provide a useful point of comparison for understanding how Liberty Lake's system aligns with the types of amenities commonly provided by similarly sized agencies across the United States. **Overall, the analysis found that Liberty Lake provides a solid baseline of core park amenities and does not exhibit any significant gaps of concern when compared with national averages.**

Table 5-5: Amenity Offering Comparison

Amenity. Managed by Agency	Liberty Lake # of Amenities	Peer Community Average # of Amenities	% of Peer Communities Which Offer Amenity	Average # of Residents per Amenity*	Liberty Lake # of Residents per Amenity**
Playgrounds or play structures	8	7	60%	1,575	1,764
Outdoor Basketball Courts	4	3	54%	3,676	3,528
Diamond Fields	8	6	51%	1,838	1,764
Rectangular Fields	2	6	48%	1,838	7,055
Outdoor Tennis Courts	0	5	38%	2,206	0
Tot lots primarily dedicated for kids aged 2-5	5	3	35%	3,676	2,822
Playgrounds primarily dedicated for kids aged 5-12	3	5	31%	2,206	4,703
Dog Parks	0	1	30%	11,028	0
Outdoor Pickleball Courts	0	4	30%	2,757	0
Community Gardens	2	4	28%	2,757	7,055
Skateboard Parks	1	1	27%	11,028	14,110
Multiuse Racquet Courts-Tennis, Pickleball	7	3	22%	3,676	2,016
Recreation Centers	0	1	33%	11,028	0
Community Centers	0	1	28%	11,028	0
Aquatics Centers	0	1	14%	11,028	0

**Average Population of Sample = 11,028 | ** 2025 Population = 14,110 | Source: 2025 NRPA Agency Performance Review.*

Findings Overview

Liberty Lake performs particularly well in several of the most common park amenities provided nationwide. The City offers diamond fields, basketball courts, and neighborhood playgrounds at levels generally consistent with peer agencies. For example, Liberty Lake offers more playgrounds and diamond fields than the national average and a comparable number of outdoor basketball courts. Playgrounds represent the most widely provided amenity nationwide and Liberty Lake maintains a strong foundation of play opportunities that serve multiple age groups, including tot lots and playground areas for older children.

The analysis identified rectangular athletic fields as one of the few amenities where Liberty Lake's publicly managed inventory is smaller than the national average. While comparable communities typically maintain an average of approximately six rectangular fields, Liberty Lake currently manages two fields within the municipal park system. However, this apparent gap is largely addressed through partnerships with the HUB Sports Center and the Central Valley School District to expand the community's overall inventory of athletic fields. Local schools contribute approximately four grass rectangular fields that are periodically available for community use. In addition, the HUB Sports Center is in the process of developing five new outdoor synthetic turf fields that will support sports such as soccer, lacrosse, football, rugby, and ultimate frisbee. Once completed, these facilities will significantly expand the supply of rectangular fields available to Liberty Lake residents.

A similar dynamic applies to racquet sport facilities. Liberty Lake does not currently have outdoor courts solely dedicated to tennis or pickleball within its park system, which could appear as a mild gap when compared with national averages. However, the City intentionally relies on a shared-use model for racquet sport facilities, allowing courts to accommodate multiple sports rather than dedicating land to single-use tennis courts. This approach helps conserve park space while allowing flexibility for sports such as pickleball and tennis. While shared-use courts can occasionally create scheduling conflicts between users, they also enable the City to provide racquet sport opportunities more efficiently within a limited park footprint.

Potential Need

Liberty Lake Parks and Recreation does not currently operate any indoor recreation facilities or community centers. Among agencies serving populations under 20,000, approximately 33% report operating community centers, 28% report recreation centers, and 14% report aquatics centers. While these facilities are often not provided by smaller park agencies, community engagement conducted for this plan suggests that residents have a strong interest in expanding indoor recreation opportunities, particularly those related to aquatic recreation. Public input consistently identified water-based recreation as a priority, ranking it among the highest or second-highest priorities across the engagement activities summarized in Chapter 04 Public Outreach & Community Engagement. These findings suggest that although indoor recreation and aquatic facilities are not standard among all peer communities, the absence of these amenities is strongly felt and consistently expressed by Liberty Lake residents.

Conclusion

Overall, Liberty Lake's park system compares favorably with national benchmarks for communities of similar size. While some amenities appear less prevalent within the City's municipal park inventory, these differences are largely explained by strong partnerships with regional sports facilities and local schools. Together, these partnerships expand access to key recreational amenities while allowing the City to use its park space efficiently and focus resources on maintaining a balanced and flexible park system.

Programs Offered

- As an agency, Liberty Lake currently offers fewer programs than the national median (45), placing it in the lower-middle range of performance. Despite being below the median, Liberty Lake still exceeds the lower quartile threshold (10 programs), meaning it offers more programs than roughly the bottom 25% of park agencies nationwide. All of the local peer communities exceed the national median, suggesting a regional trend toward higher-than-average program offerings.
- Liberty Lake's programming volume appears to trail behind its peer group and the national median, however much of this programming gap is currently being filled by contracted third parties, such as the Skyhawks Sports day camps run through the H.U.B. Sports Center. Through the sharing of public facilities and private programming, Liberty Lake is able to offer the public a wider variety of activities, particularly youth sports, with lower personnel costs.
- Many of the programs that are offered by Liberty Lake Parks and Recreation are free events to the public. Therefore, a much lower percentage of the programming is fee-based in Liberty Lake than might be expected if recreational center memberships and sports camp fees comprised a high percentage of program offerings. Fees charges for golf activities at the City-owned Trailhead golf course are accounted as a separate revenue source and are not here considered.

Staffing and Budget

- Liberty Lake has the highest number of full-time staff members who work under the department's budget compared to its peer communities. This also contributes to the highest staffing to population ratio of any community.
- Liberty Lake has the second highest parks operating budget and expenditure per capita among the peer communities. This indicates a higher-than-average investment in the public parks system per resident.
- Trailhead Golf Course's maintenance staff, operations, and capital purchases are not budgeted through the Parks Department's General fund, but rather through a separate Enterprise fund. This indicates that municipal investment in golfing opportunities is higher than just what is budgeted for the department.
- Liberty Lake currently invests $10,523.38 per acre of parklands, indicating efficient spending to cover the larger size of the city's parks system.
- Liberty Lake reports the lowest operating expenses per full-time employee among its peer communities. This suggests that the City is using staff more efficiently and/or has a leaner cost structure per employee.

Evaluating Future Demand

In order to estimate whether or not Liberty Lake will have sufficient parkland to serve its future population, several variables influencing the calculation will be defined. The first variable to consider is Liberty Lake's planned future population. There are two future population scenarios: As described in Chapter 2: Community Context, Spokane County estimates that Liberty Lake's population will be 21,934, based upon the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) medium growth scenario.

Another scenario, however, is basing a realistic population estimate upon the city's growth constraints. Liberty Lake is unique in that that all residential areas of the city have been platted or have an approved special area plan to guide the nature and intensity of future development. As such, a full 100% build-out scenario, supported by what has been platted or approved, yields a maximum future population within the city's current growth area of 15,861 residents. Therefore, two population projections could be considered to calculate future parkland level of service: 1) Future projections for local jurisdictions are a share of the total county population and 2) The maximum population that can be supported by a full land use build-out scenario, assuming no future UGA adjustments or annexation occurs.

The parkland LOS numerator is defined by the total acreage in 2046. The existing 318.77-acre footprint of the public parks and open space system in 2025 can be used as a baseline. The resulting LOS then represents the maximum service gap between the target LOS and the projected population or build-out population.

Many parks are planned for development in the near future before 2046. Table 5-5 lists which parks are currently planned as of 2025 with their corresponding size, classification, and owner. Factoring the total acreage of these known developments would add about 18.09 acres of parklands and 0.9 miles of trails to the total system.



Table 5-6: List of Currently Planned Park Facilities in Liberty Lake (as of 2025)

Location	Currently Planned Parks and/or Trails	Acres or Trail Mileage	Classification	Ownership
Parks				
Town Square Park	Master Plan Additional Undeveloped Acreage	4.55	Special Use	Public
Villages at Stonehill	"Village Green"	2.21	Open Space	Stonehill HOA
Villages at Stonehill	"Neighborhood Park" on Snowy Owl Loop	0.33	Pocket Park	Stonehill HOA
River District	"Quinimose Park"	Approx. 10	Community Park	Greenstone Homes
River District	Pocket Park #1	Approx. 0.5	Neighborhood Park	Greenstone Homes
River District	Pocket Park #2	Approx. 0.5	Neighborhood Park	Greenstone Homes
Total		**Approx. 18.09**		
Trails				
E Appleway Ave/ E Country Vista Dr	Appleway Trail Extension to Kramer Rd (CFP Project TP-23)	0.9	Regional Trail	Public

Using these assumptions for future population projections and the footprint of the total parks system, Liberty Lake's future LOS can be estimated. Applying the current LOS standard to the designated 2025 public parks and open space inventory shown in Table 5-2 results in major deficiencies. A new approach is therefore considered to better align with national best practices and the peer community benchmarks:

- **Establish a Level of Service standard** for the total public parks and open spaces that **more closely aligns** with the national median and NRPA minimum recommendation of 10 Acres per 1,000 residents.
- **Community Parks:** Establish a Level of Service standard of 2.75 acres per 1,000 residents.
- **Neighborhood Parks:** Establish a Level of Service standard of 1 acre per 1,000 residents.
- **Open Space and Natural Areas:** Establish a Level of Service standard of 5 acres per 1,000 residents.
- **Trails and Pathways:** Establish a Level of Service standard of ¼ mile of urban trails and pathways per 1,000 residents.

Using the defined inventory of existing parklands and the anticipated acreage of planned parklands, service levels for existing conditions, future projections, and modified LOS recommendations by park classification have been calculated, as summarized in Table 5-7 on the following page.

Table 5-7: Current and Future Level of Service Results

Metric	NRPA Median / Target	Current LOS (2025)	Future LOS (2046)	Future LOS + Planned Parks	Recommended LOS	Current Need?	Future Need?
A. Systemwide Park Metrics							
Total Parkland (acres per 1,000 residents)	10.9 acres / 1,000 pop.	22.59 acres/ 1,000 pop.	14.53 acres/ 1,000 pop.	15.36 acres / 1,000 pop.	10 acres / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target	Meets Target
Residents Per Park	1,001 pop. / park	743 pop./ park	1,154 pop./ park	914 pop./ park	1,000 pop. / park	Meets Target	Conditionally Meets Target
B. Level of Service by Park Classification							
Community Parks	5 acres / 1,000 pop.	2.76	1.78	2.23	2.75 acres / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target	Unmet Need
Neighborhood Parks	1 acres / 1,000 pop.	1.68	1.08	1.25	1 acre / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target	Meets Target
Open Space and Natural Areas	5 acres / 1,000 pop.	12.64	8.13	8.13	5 acres / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target	Meets Target
Trails (miles per 1,000 resident)	0.25 miles / 1,000 pop.	0.67	0.43	0.47*	0.25 miles / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target	Meets Target

** Includes planned Appleway Trail Extension (CFP Project TP-23).*

Factoring in planned parklands results in an increase in both the number of parks and total systemwide parkland acreage. Under future conditions, the City's parks system is projected to include **24 parks and recreation areas** totaling approximately **336.86 acres.** This equates to an average of **914 residents per park** and a projected **2046 Level of Service of 15.36 acres per 1,000 residents,** exceeding the proposed LOS standard.

With the inclusion of planned park projects, Liberty Lake is projected to **conditionally meet** the NRPA recommended level of service of **1,000 residents per public park facility** by 2046. This outcome assumes that identified park acquisitions and developments occur as planned and are delivered in step with population growth. Continued monitoring of park development timing, facility mix, and user demand will be essential to ensure that service levels are maintained. If planned parks are delayed or do not provide sufficient functional capacity, increased crowding at existing facilities could lead to user discomfort, scheduling conflicts, and diminished park experiences.

Liberty Lake currently offers three parks which are classified as community parks: Orchard Park, Pavillion Park, and Rocky Hill Park. Community parks typically range in size from 10 acres to as large as 50 acres. All three community parks in Liberty Lake are on the smaller size of the typical range, resulting in a current level of service gap of 2-and-a-quarter acres fewer per 1,000 residents than the NRPA's recommended LOS standard. Adopting a standard of 2.75 acres per 1,000 residents would aim to maintain current levels of satisfaction with Liberty Lake's premier parks into the future. By 2046, without the addition of new community parkland, the community park LOS is projected to decline to 1.78 acres per 1,000 residents, reflecting the effects of population growth and resulting in a substantial service gap relative to the adopted standard.

To partially address this decline in service levels, an approximately 10-acre park is planned along the River District waterfront, intended to interface with both the Centennial Trail and newly developed commercial area. This area can accommodate unique amenities such as a large community amphitheater and trailhead facilities. The addition of this park improves the LOS to 2.23 acres per 1,000 residents, representing a future deficiency of about 11.5 acres.

Town Square Park Potential Park Classification Change

Town Square Park is located within the central business district of Liberty Lake and currently functions as a multi-purpose urban plaza and green space. In its existing form, the park is appropriately classified as a Special Use Park, reflecting its role as a civic gathering space that includes enhanced picnic seating, paved plaza areas oriented toward nearby office and commercial uses, and its primary function as the host site of the seasonal weekly Liberty Lake Farmer's Market.

There is, however, a future opportunity to reconsider this classification, pending the outcome of the Town Square Park Master Plan. The master planning process would address the full buildout of approximately 4.55 acres of adjacent undeveloped open space, expanding the park from its current developed footprint to a total of approximately 6.3 acres. The site planning and design will be influenced by the community demands and needs identified in this plan, which would then guide capital budgeting, phasing, and construction of new park facilities.

Community Park Redesignation Scenario

If the master plan results in the introduction of facilities that extend beyond a civic plaza function, such as organized recreation amenities, unique and specialized uses, event-support infrastructure, and/or park features designed to serve residents citywide, Town Square Park may warrant reclassification.

While the expanded park would remain smaller than the typical size threshold for a Community Park, its central location, programming intensity, and community-wide draw could justify its designation as a Community Park rather than a Neighborhood or Special Use facility, particularly if it is designed to host large events, organized activities, and amenities that serve a broader service area.

Reclassifying Town Square Park as a Community Park would have a meaningful impact on the City's long-range park system performance. Under the 2046 planning horizon, **this change would increase the projected Community Park Level of Service from 1.78 acres per 1,000 residents to approximately 2.52 acres per 1,000 residents.** While this would still fall short of the adopted LOS target of 2.75 acres per 1,000 residents, it would substantially reduce the deficiency and place the City within a more achievable range for meeting its community park standard through incremental land acquisition, park expansion, or future park development.

Table 5-8: Level of Service by Town Square Park Classification Scenarios

Park Category	Future LOS (2046)	Future LOS + Planned Parks	Recommended LOS	Future Acreage Needed
Community Parks	1.78	2.23	2.75 acres / 1,000 pop.	+11.5 Acres
Community Parks (Town Square Redesignated)	1.78	2.52	2.75 acres / 1,000 pop.	+5 Acres
Neighborhood Parks	1.08	1.25	1 acre / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target
Neighborhood Parks (Town Square Redesignated)	1.08	1.53	1 acre / 1,000 pop.	Meets Target

Neighborhood Park Redesignation Scenario

As an alternative to reclassification as a Community Park, Town Square Park could also be considered for designation as a Neighborhood Park, contingent on the scale and character of improvements identified through the future master planning process. Under this scenario, the park would continue to function primarily as a walk-to amenity serving the nearby residential neighborhood and offices, while retaining limited civic programming such as the seasonal farmer's market.

To warrant reclassification as a Neighborhood Park, the master plan would need to emphasize amenities typically associated with neighborhood-scale recreation and unstructured use rather than citywide or regional programming. Improvements that would support this designation may include the addition of a playground or inclusive play elements, small multi-use open lawn areas suitable for informal youth play or neighborhood gatherings, pedestrian paths or short loop trails, and passive recreation amenities such as benches, picnic tables, shade structures, landscaping, and irrigation.

Limited sport courts or multi-purpose paved areas could also be appropriate, provided they are designed to serve nearby residents rather than organized league play. Facilities would generally be sized and programmed to avoid the need for significant off-street parking or event-support infrastructure, consistent with the characteristics of other neighborhood parks in Liberty Lake.

Reclassification of Town Square Park as a Neighborhood Park would have a measurable benefit to the City's park system performance. With the full development of the additional 4.55 acres, **this scenario would increase the projected Neighborhood Park Level of Service in 2046 from 1.08 acres per 1,000 residents to approximately 1.53 acres per 1,000 residents,** exceeding the adopted standard of 1.0 acre per 1,000 residents. This outcome would fully address the City's neighborhood park acreage deficiency and provide additional capacity within the system to accommodate future population growth.

Under this scenario, Town Square Park would continue to play an important civic role but would be formally recognized as part of the City's distributed neighborhood park network. As with the Community Park scenario, final classification should be determined through the master planning process based on the mix of amenities provided, the park's intended service area, and its functional role within the broader Liberty Lake parks system.

Park Equity and Access

As outlined in the Goals & Objectives and related policies, ensuring that residents have fair and easy access to parks located within a half mile of their homes is crucial for the overall health and well-being of the community. This section of the report provides a set of maps that offer insights into population density and conducts a network analysis of park accessibility. This analysis examines each property's ability to reach a nearby park within a half mile, either via a street or a trail. The service area maps are designed to demonstrate how accessible parks with various amenities are to the community and how accessibility could be enhanced through improvements to parks that currently offer limited amenities. It's worth noting that these accessibility gaps can be reduced by ensuring safe access to parks can be increased with new sidewalks and transportation improvements.

The "10–Minute Walk Metric"

An important concept in sustainable urban design is creating places at a walkable scale to promote community, safety, and healthy outcomes, yielding a higher quality of life for all residents. Parks are a vital recreational and social gathering space that should be accessible within a 10-minute walk of the surrounding areas for many reasons. A 10-minute walk, representing a distance of approximately 1/2 mile on level ground, as a park access metric is important because it promotes physical activity, equity, sustainability, social interaction, and overall community well-being. It aligns with various health, environmental, and social goals that Liberty Lake has and should encourage urban planners and policymakers to prioritize accessible green spaces as a fundamental part of Liberty Lake's development and the community's desired quality of life.

The following maps identify the service areas, AKA the 10-minute “walksheds”, for each of the distinct park classifications according to their function and recreational offerings: community parks, special use parks and facilities, public school facilities and open space, and other parks not owned by the City. No walkshed data was found for Liberty Lake’s open space areas and was therefore not analyzed. A combined walkshed map then highlights all remaining areas of the city currently not accessible within a 10-minute walk of any public park.

Figure 5-3: Community Park 10-Minute Walksheds

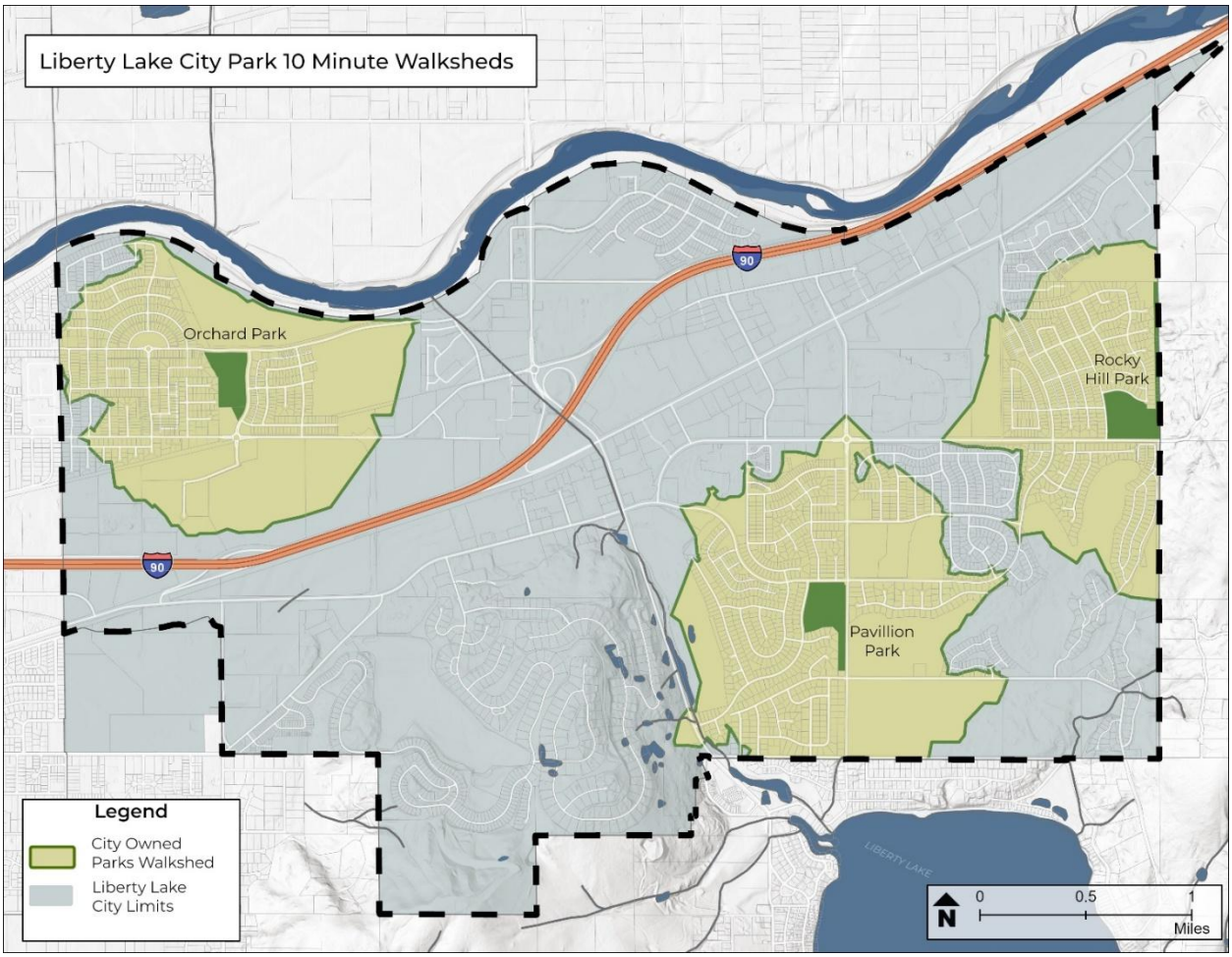
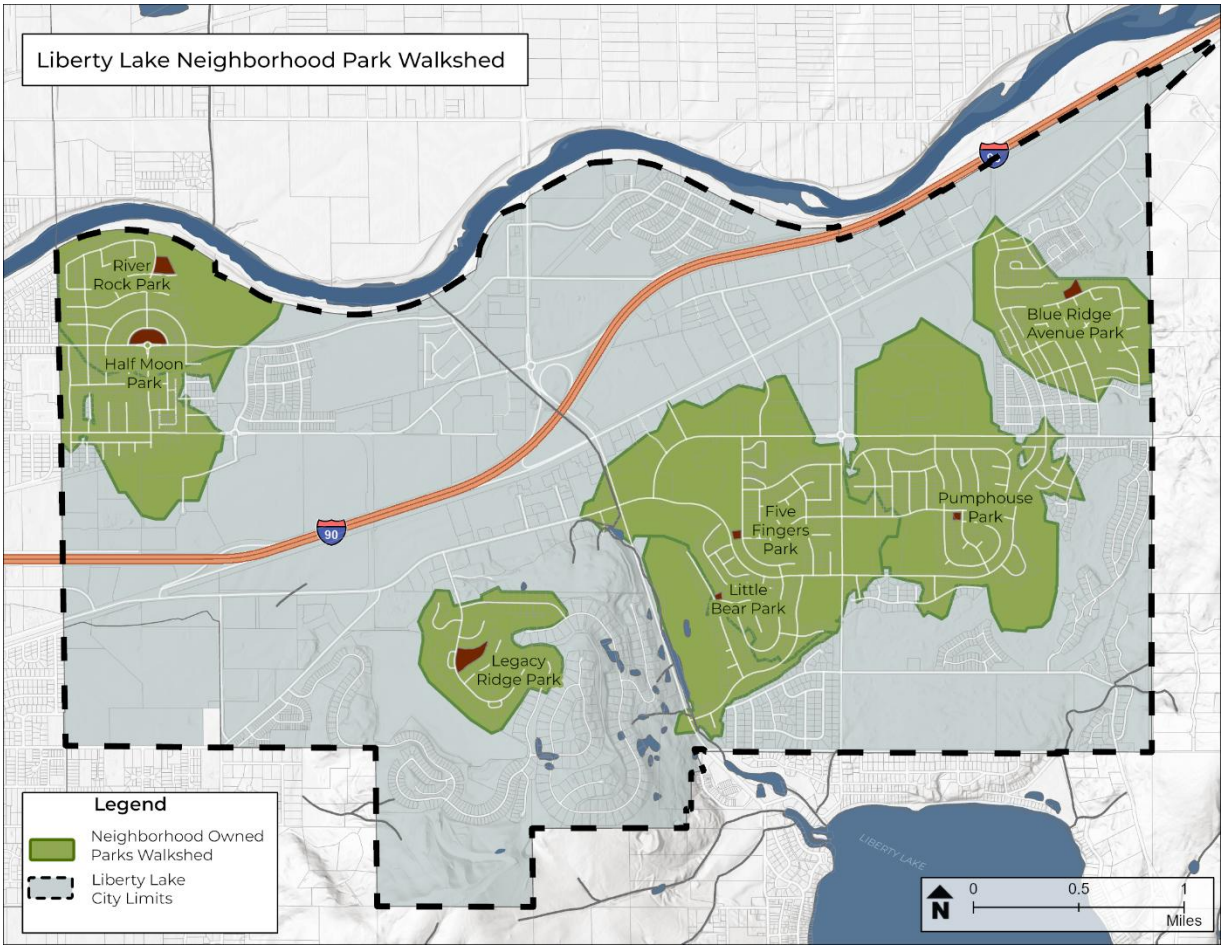


Figure 5-3, above, maps Liberty Lake’s three premier parks that have a wide array of facilities and generous supply of open space, able to accommodate the needs of the entire community: Orchard Park, Pavillion Park, and Rocky Hill Park. As these parks host large community events like Touch a Truck at Orchard Park and the Fourth of July Fireworks at Pavillion Park, high numbers of visitors are accommodated by parking areas are present at each of these parks. For day-to-day use of facilities like the playgrounds and sports courts, each park is centrally located within its neighborhood.

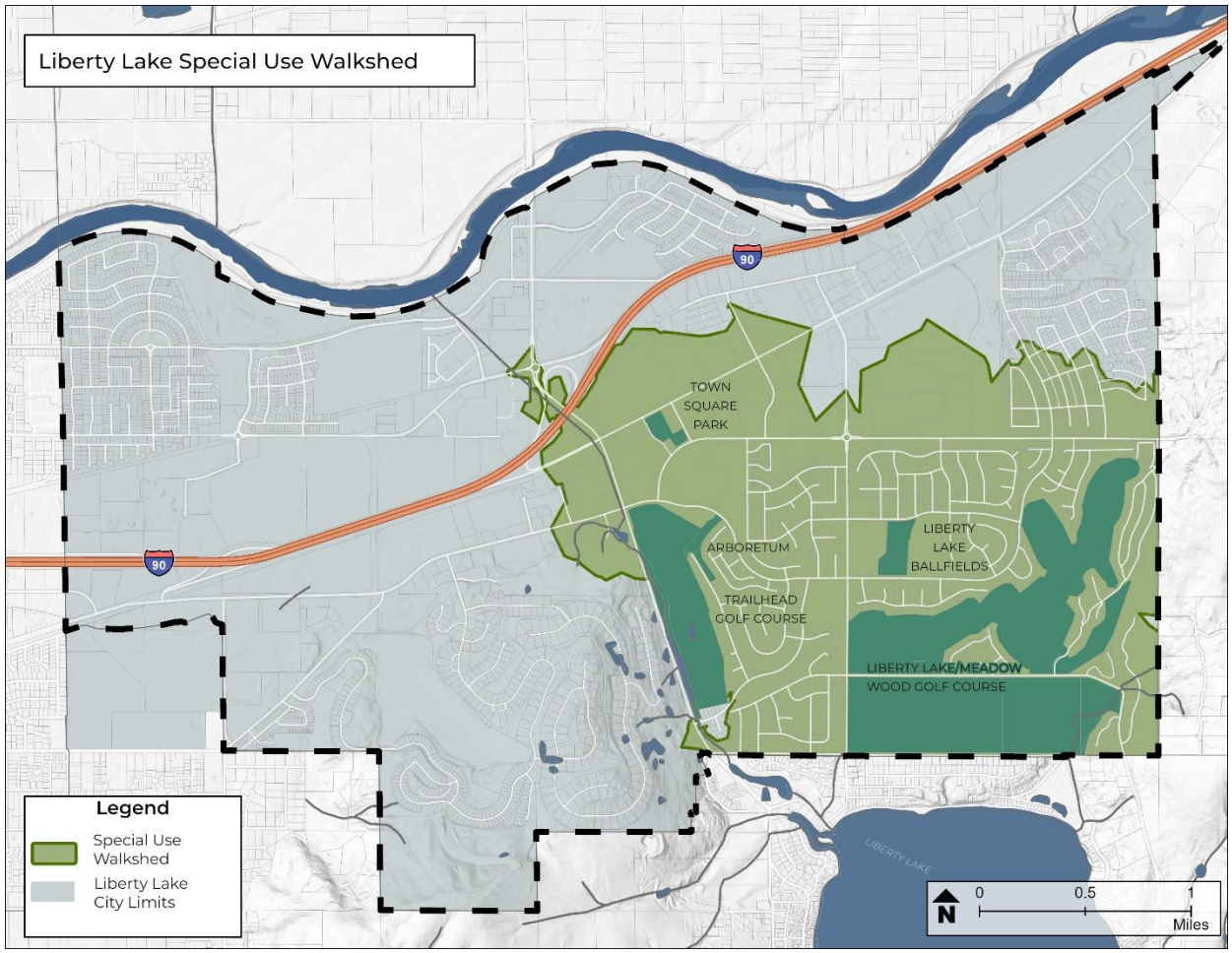
The results of the 10-minute walkshed service areas reveal that some parts of the neighborhood and broader swaths of Liberty Lake are not within a short walking distance of these premier parks. The residential area located east of Malvern St and between E Mission Ave and E Country Vista Drive has less direct, non-motorized access to either Rocky Hill Park or Pavillion Park. The developing areas surrounding N Harvard Rd north of I-90 and E Country Vista Dr south of I-90 are located much farther outside of these walksheds. This indicates a lack of convenient and equitable, non-motorized access to the most desirable park amenities that Liberty Lake currently has to offer.

Figure 5-4: Neighborhood Parks 10-Minute Walksheds



As shown by Figure 5-4, several parks owned by other entities are located with the City of Liberty Lake, primarily managed by local Homeowners Associations. These small, private parks are characterized by having a limited amount of space and facilities, functioning to primarily provide passive and play-oriented recreational opportunities for residents living in the immediate vicinity. They provide little to no parking spaces, so non-motorized transportation methods are likely the most viable option to access them. Their private status means that they may not be accessible to the public. Despite their limited offerings and accessibility, they do supplement the public parks system by meaningfully filling in gaps in open space coverage.

Figure 5-5: Golf Courses and Special Use Facilities 10-Minute Walksheds



Many of the public recreational spaces in Liberty Lake are dedicated to specific activities, such as the driving range and courses used for golfing. The recreational areas and facilities used for golf and baseball/ softball have ample off-street parking spaces provided as they generate trips from the wider surrounding region and necessitate the use of sports equipment and other cargo, rendering non-motorized uses to be less relevant. However, other parks with specific uses, like Town Square Park and the Nature's Place Arboretum at MeadowWood, do facilitate more passive recreation activities like picnicking and leisure walking. Users of these two parks are more likely to use non-motorized means to access from the surrounding areas, making their walksheds highly relevant. Town Square Park can be accessed within a 10-minute walk of the Central Business District and many of the workplaces and homes west of N Molter Rd.

As noted in the trails and bicycle pathways assessment, gaps in the sidewalk network or poor condition of the sidewalks surrounding Town Square Park pose barriers to access even from places within the walkshed. The Arboretum park offers a non-motorized path connection between E Country Vista and N Garry Drive. It is primarily accessible to the neighborhoods in the vicinity of those two roads.

Figure 5-6, below, maps the four public schools that currently exist within Liberty Lake's city limits: Ridgeline High School, Selkirk Middle School Liberty Creek Elementary School, and Liberty Lake Elementary School, and are all part of the Central Valley School District. These schools offer sports courts, fields, baseball diamonds, and playgrounds that are primarily used for school programming; however, they can also sometimes be accessed by the general public when official programming is not occurring. Ridgeline High School, located in the southwest portion of the city, offers recreational fields that may partially fill in a meaningful recreational gap for nearby residents located within a ten-minute walk as no other public facilities are accessible.

Figure 5-6: School Recreational Facilities 10-Minute Walksheds

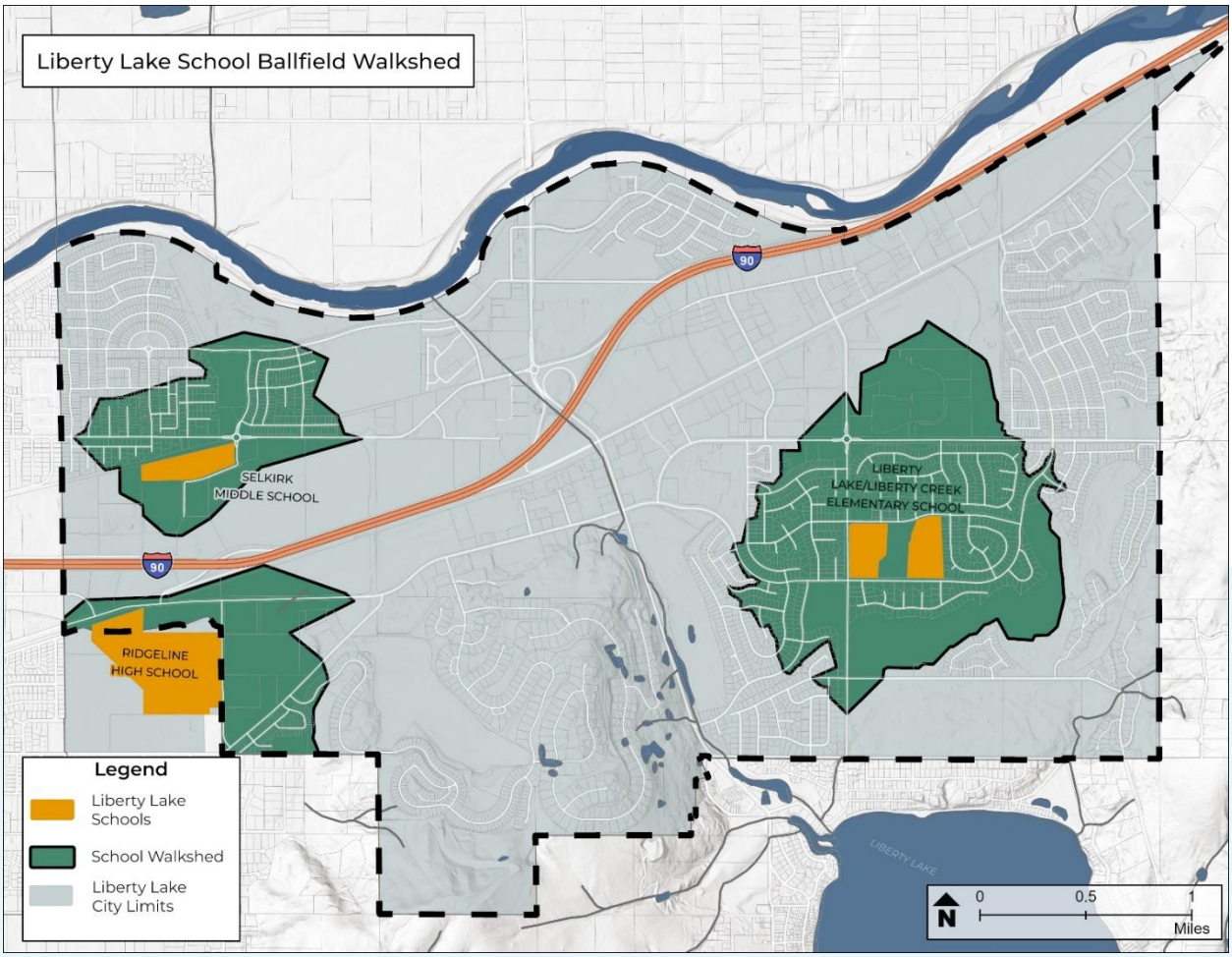


Figure 5-7: Combined Walkshed Gap Analysis

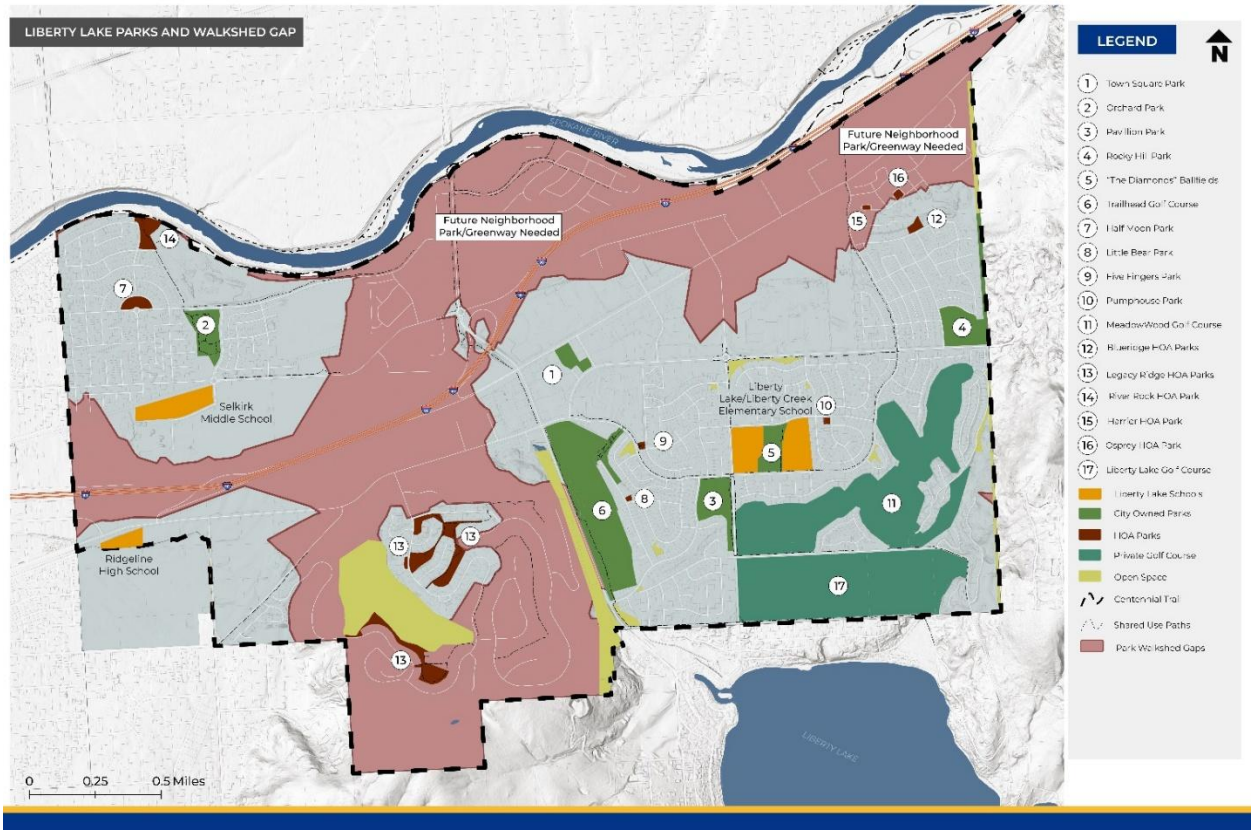


Figure 5-7 shows the remaining areas in Liberty Lake which are currently beyond a 10-minute walk of any public open space facility. These include the neighborhood north of I-90 surrounding N Harvard Rd and the residential area in the northeast corner of the city south of E Appleway Ave. Both areas are actively being developed as of 2025 and have access to regional trails: The Centennial Trail and Liberty Lake-State Line Trail. Planned parks exist in both areas, so the implementation of both Special Area Plans should be closely monitored to ensure that these concept parks are constructed to meet adequate service levels. As the southwest portion of the city develops, planning measures will necessitate adding open space facilities to serve new developments in this area as well.

Trails and Bicycle Network Assessment

Trails, both within parks and connecting parks, schools, shops, and destinations, are generally the top demand seen across the country. Providing trail connections between these popular destinations enhances a community's walkability and encourages active lifestyles. Trails can be developed to accommodate multiple uses or shared uses, such as pedestrians, in line skaters, and bicyclists.

Trail usage has seen a significant uptick in recent years, with data suggesting a surge in demand starting in 2020. This trend underscores the growing importance of well-maintained and comprehensive trail networks. A useful trails system should not only be present within parks, but also provide useful connections between destinations like parks, homes, and businesses.

There is also growing enthusiasm for cycle tracks or bicycle highways between urban areas. A popular example would be the 40-mile long Centennial Trail which offers a non-motorized connection between Liberty Lake to the western cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley.

In its trails network, Liberty Lake has approximately 9.4 miles of non-motorized, shared-use trails and pathways. A trailhead at Harvard Road provides a linkage between Liberty Lake's urban trail and bicycle network and the Centennial Trail multi-use cycle track.

Bikeways are different than trails in that their principal focus is on safe and efficient non-motorized transportation. Bikeways and pathways serve distinctly different user groups than trail users. Liberty Lake offers approximately 20 miles of bike lanes throughout the city along arterial streets and collector roads. The city is recognized as a "Bicycle Friendly Community," being awarded the designation in 2007 by the League of American Bicyclists. As the smallest city to receive this award in the award's history, the City of Liberty Lake continues to strive to maintain the 5 E's of a bicycle friendly community:

- **Engineering:** Creating safe and convenient places to ride and park
- **Education:** Giving people of all ages and abilities the skills and confidence to ride
- **Encouragement:** Creating a strong bike culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling
- **Enforcement:** Ensuring safe roads for all users
- **Evaluation & Planning:** Planning for bicycling as a safe and viable transportation option

Liberty Lake also uniquely accommodates golf carts as a form of transportation from residential areas to the three golf courses located within city limits. Golf carts must be operated at low speeds not exceeding 20 miles per hour. They must be driven in the extreme right of the roadway and yield to all vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. Roadway designs should consider the presence of golf carts and prioritize bicycle facilities designs which maintain higher levels of protection for bicycle lane users in the shared right of way. Wayfinding and rule enforcement signage should also be considered, signs which clearly communicate where golf carts are allowed, where they are prohibited, and provide directions to each of the three courses.

Bike lanes are bicycle facilities built along city streets that generally provide a 5-foot wide "lane" to accommodate bicycles, usually on both sides of the street adjacent to the curb. The City Development Codes have implemented a "complete streets" program that requires all new development to have sidewalks, pathways, bike lanes, etc. as applicable, that provide connections or future connections to the existing system. The City Development Codes also enforce bicycle parking standards for new development. Additionally, all new or substantially improved arterial and collector streets have bike lanes.

From the Liberty Lake Police Department's bike patrol, to educating kids about bicycle safety, to promoting community bicycling events, Liberty Lake is a "Bicycle Friendly Community" and lots of people of all ages and abilities are riding bikes.

The current bicycle and pedestrian pathway networks (*Figure 5-8, Page 152*) have been analyzed to understand where facility gaps exist due to either the poor condition of a facility, or where nothing exists at all. Seeking to repair and/or fill in gaps in the network can improve rates of non-motorized use. Even small gaps can cause people to avoid walking or biking to parks out of discomfort for their own safety or simply because the gap renders the route to be inconvenient compared to driving.

Figure 5-9 (*Page 153*) is a map of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities which reveals a notable gap between Town Square Park and the existing sidewalk network. In its current form, the park is can only be accessed by walking, biking, or rolling in the shared roadway of N MeadowWood Ln, or by traversing the undeveloped open space of the park site. The future Town Square Park site master plan should put forward design concepts for enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections from the park to the main arterials of E Appleway Ave and E Mission Ave to better connect the park to surrounding neighborhoods.

The City of Liberty Lake is in the process of developing a Sidewalk Master Plan with recommendations for capital improvements based upon current conditions. The existing path conditions have been evaluated on a quantitative scale from 0-100. Figure 5-10 reveals that the sidewalks found to be of fair to poor condition are located on central arterials such as N Molter Rd, between E Appleway Ave and E Valleyway Ave; and along E Country Vista Dr, between E Mission Ave and Pinehurst Ln. These arterials connect neighborhoods in the eastern half of the city to important parks and recreation facilities such as Pavillion Park and the Liberty Lake Ballfields, both located at or near the intersection of E Country Vista and N Molter. Fair-to-poor conditions indicate that even though a shared use pathway may exist along a certain corridor, its surface quality may impose enough of a barrier to deter people from using that path. Resurfacing these pathways should then be given higher priority in the sidewalk master planning project list, as they are a critical means of access to these parks from nearby neighborhoods.

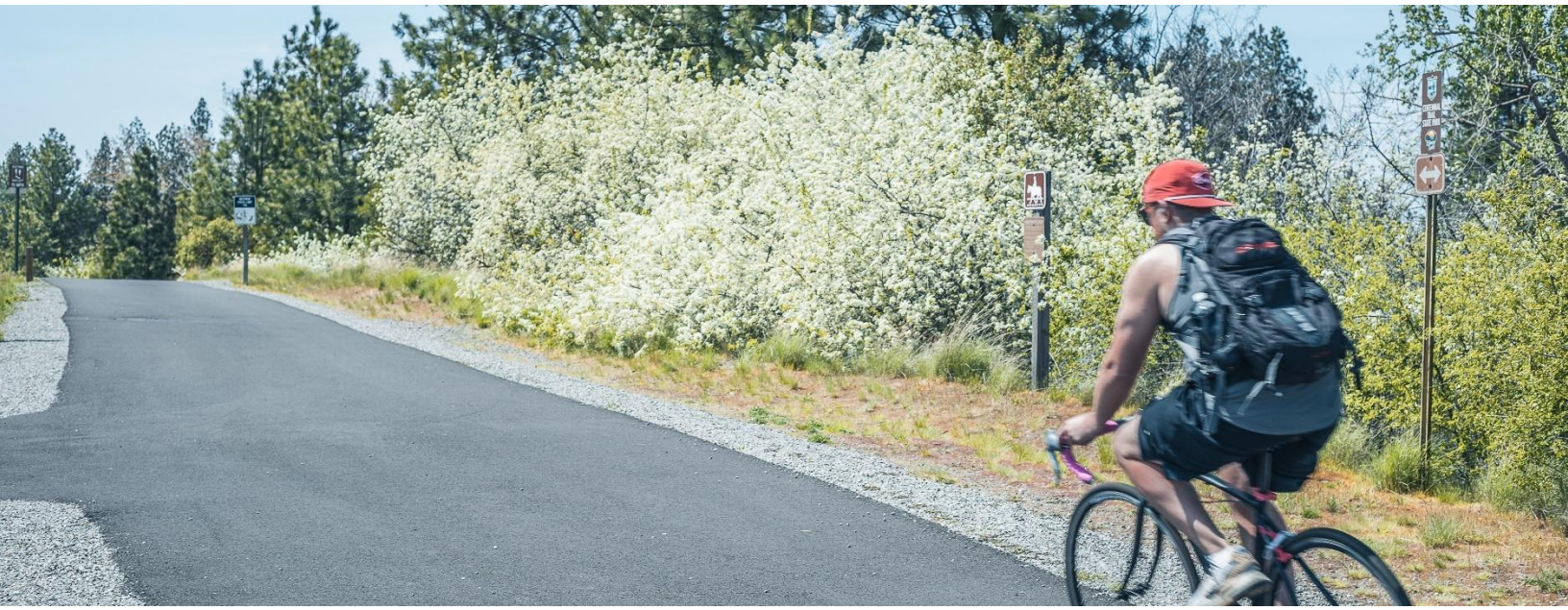


Figure 5-8: Bicycle & Pedestrian Pathways Map

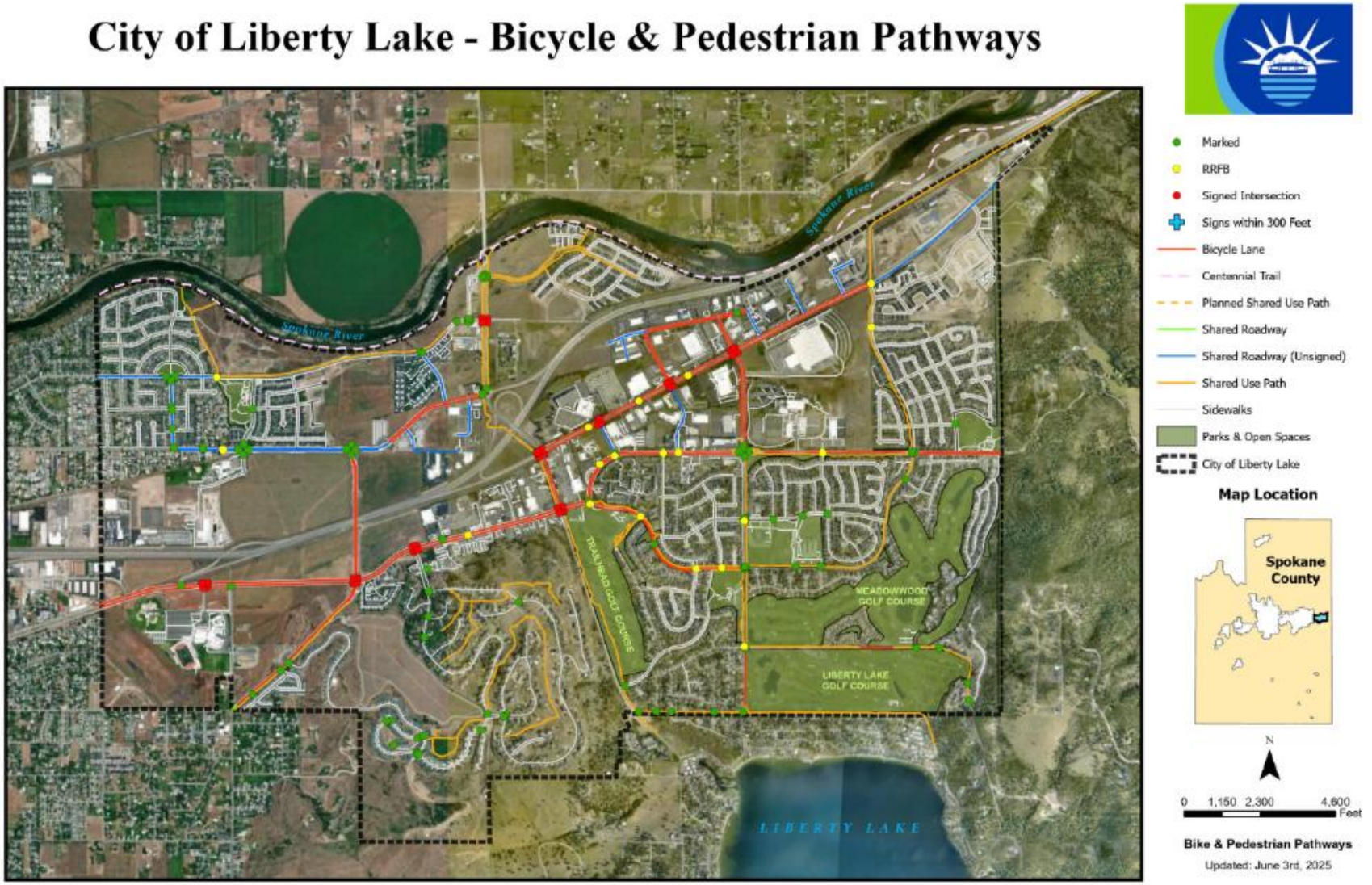
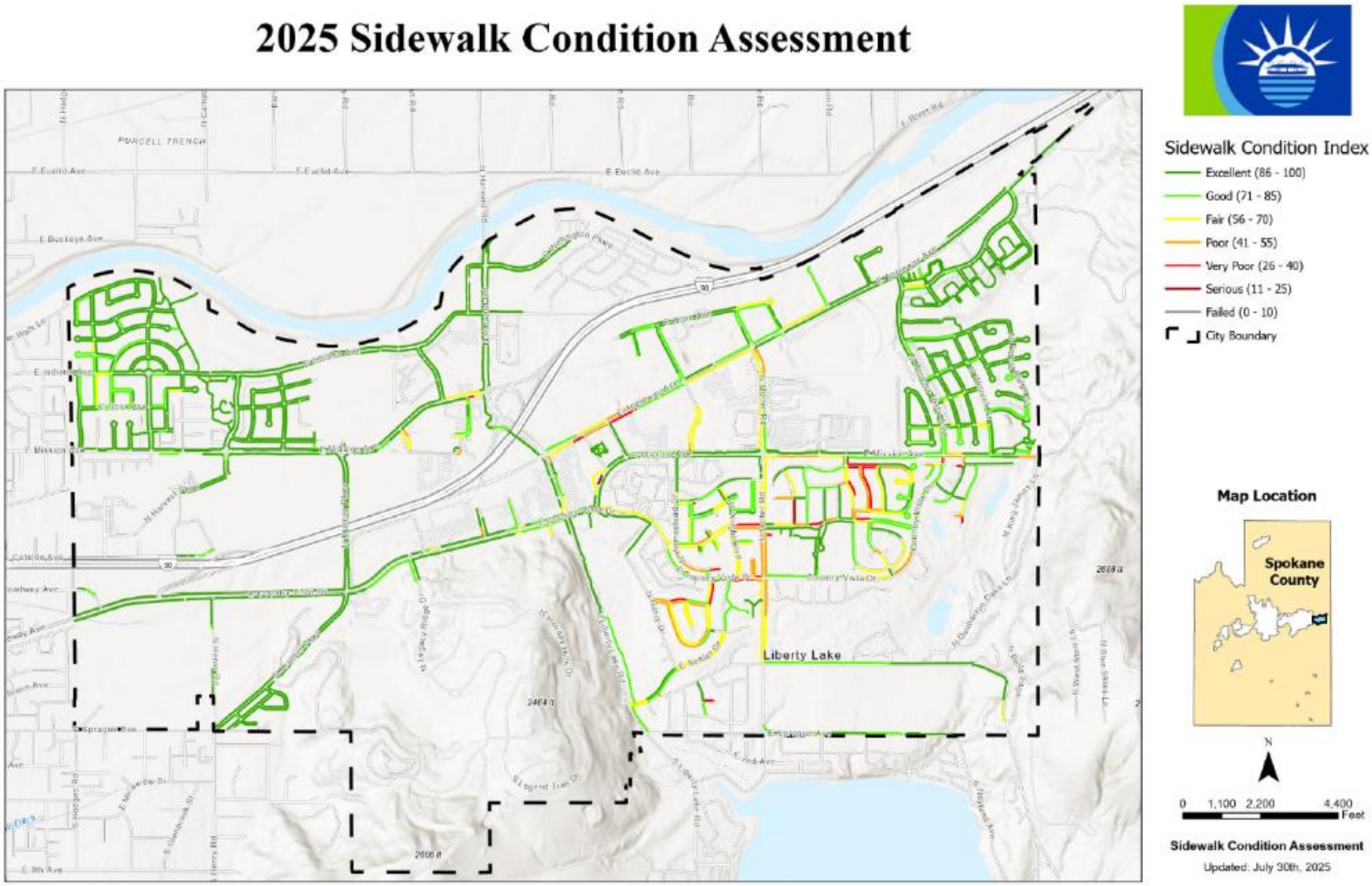


Figure 5-9: Sidewalk Condition Assessment



Recreation Trends

Outdoor recreation is on the rise nationwide, and Washington State and its communities are no exception. From 2019 until the most recent reports in 2023, outdoor recreation equipment sales have seen significant increases across all major product categories. In Washington, there has been a notable surge in the participation rates of 20 outdoor activities since 2017. Among these activities, non-motorized trails, nature and wildlife viewing, camping, paddling, winter recreation, and leisure activities in nearby parks are consistently in high demand among Washington residents. With an expected statewide population increase of 2 million residents in the next 25 years, it's more critical for cities such as Liberty Lake to plan demand for outdoor recreation facilities.

National Trends

Canines

The trend of dog ownership in the United States is experiencing a significant upswing, with estimates suggesting a population exceeding 89 and 94 million canine companions nationwide. This surge translates to a parallel rise in demand for designated dog parks across the country. These parks, particularly larger facilities, have become popular destinations, attracting dog owners and potentially boosting agency revenue through user fees and contributing to tourism. Cities are responding to this trend by incorporating more designated dog walking areas, off-leash spaces, and waste disposal stations into their parks and recreation land use planning strategies.

Pickleball and Padel

The participation in pickleball has witnessed a remarkable surge, growing by 159% in just three years, reaching 8.9 million participants in 2022, as reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association. Like pickleball, Padel is a racket sport of Mexican origin gaining popularity across the United States. This game is a cross between tennis, racquetball, and squash. It's currently estimated that Padel has over 100,000 players in the United States, and the number of courts has more than doubled in the last two years, expecting to grow to 30,000 courts by 2030.

This rapid increase in paddle sports' popularity and subsequent facility expansion has presented challenges for public parks and recreation departments, which must strike a balance between the competing interests of diverse recreational activities while working within the constraints of limited space and budgets. Parks agencies are becoming increasingly confronted with the task of accommodating pickleball enthusiasts, who favor this tennis-like sport with a smaller court, without causing discomfort or inconvenience to others. The noise and disruption generated by pickleball is becoming more a source of frustration for some neighbors, tennis enthusiasts, parents with young children, and other community members. Therefore, continued community feedback and monitoring of these facilities is essential to maintain an attractive offering of amenities that also accommodates those who do not participate.

Youth Sports

Participation in youth sports leagues has undergone a complex transformation in recent years. While traditional team sports remain popular, data suggests a decline in children (ages 6-12) consistently playing on teams. The Aspen Project reports a drop from 45% in 2008 to 38% in 2018, and the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) confirms this trend with a 6% decline in core participation (ages 6-17) between 2019 and 2022. This translates to roughly 1.2 million fewer participants. Several factors may contribute to this decline, including the financial burden of participation fees, equipment, and travel expenses, concerns about over-specialization leading to burnout, and time constraints due to competing academic and extracurricular demands.

This changing landscape has potential implications for the need for large regional sports facilities. While the decline in regular participation suggests a decreased demand for facilities solely focused on traditional team sports, total team sports participation (including those playing at least once a year) remained stable between 2019 and 2022, suggesting a potential shift towards less structured forms of sports involvement. Basketball continues to be the most popular sport, with nearly a quarter of youth (ages 6-17) participating at least once in 2022.

Multi-sport facilities catering to a wider range of activities and hosting tournaments or events attracting teams from a broader area are expected to see continued use. Well-designed facilities could also become community hubs, offering recreational activities for all ages and potentially incorporating amenities like fitness centers or indoor walking tracks that would not be affected by inclement weather.

Electric Vehicles

As electric technology develops, maintenance equipment, vehicles, mowers, and other equipment used in parks and recreation are transitioning from gas powered resources to electric assets. This transition provides long-term cost savings, environmental benefits, and decreased noise. Additionally, parks and trailheads should consider the addition of EV charging stations in parking lots, as the number of EV cars on the road continues to grow. Washington State has led this transition to electric vehicles, with over 18% of new cars sold in the first half of 2023 being fully electric or plug-in hybrids according to the Seattle Times. Vehicle chargers located at park facilities enable drivers to enjoy the park while waiting for a full charge.

Climate Resiliency

The concept of electrification pertains to growing needs for climate resilience and the ways in which future park implementations can accommodate the increase of hotter days and nights, as well as the increase of storm and wildfire impacts. Parks create a great opportunity to address these goals through smart design and engineering. Parks and open space can mitigate urban heat islands, absorb flood and stormwater, and create fire breaks through green space and linear trail corridors. Climate change, stormwater/flooding implementations, and tree canopy coverage should be considered in future park renovations to increase resiliency.

Statewide Trends

The 2023 Recreation and Conservation Plan, commonly referred to as the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), is a comprehensive document outlining the state's vision for outdoor recreation and public land conservation. Developed by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the plan guides investments for the next 5-10 years. It considers the challenges and benefits of outdoor recreation, assesses current demand, and inventories existing opportunities. By establishing statewide priorities and goals, the plan serves a crucial role in securing funding, guiding investments strategically, and fostering collaboration between land managers. Ultimately, the WA State RCO SCORP Plan serves as a blueprint for a sustainable future where outdoor recreation and public lands are preserved and accessible for all.

To assess demand and satisfaction with recreation opportunities in Washington State, SCORP solicited public input through surveys and outreach to ensure the plan reflects the needs of Washington residents. The SCORP survey includes Liberty Lake in the Northeast Region, which includes Spokane County. According to the 2022 Assessment of Resident Demand report, participation rates for 45 recreational activities were compared to data from 2017.

The top four activities with the highest rates of participation were:

1) Walking or Using a Mobility Device on Roads or Sidewalks (91%)
2) Walking or Day Hiking or Using a Mobility Device on Trails (90%)
3) Scenic Driving (Sightseeing) (85%)
4) Wildlife or Nature Viewing (85%)

All but two activities—technology-based games and collecting or gathering things in nature—showed increased participation. The activities with the most significant increases in participation in the past five years included:

1) Wildlife and Nature Viewing (+28%)
2) Paddle Sports (Whitewater, Canoes, Kayaks, Stand-Up Paddle Boards, Rowing) (+28%)
3) Visiting outdoor cultural and/or historical sites and attending cultural events (+19%)
4) Tent Camping in Developed Areas (+19%)
5) Casual Use or Hanging Out in Parks (+19%)
6) Mountain Biking (+18%).

Golf In Liberty Lake

Liberty Lake is a golfing community that fully embraces the sport as a key part of what makes the city so livable and attractive. The City of Liberty Lake is currently the home to three public golf courses within the city limits. The three courses offer golfers a variety of choices in course design and playing conditions, all immaculately maintained and priced competitively with other courses in the Spokane area. The scenic hillsides, uncrowded surroundings, easy access, and availability of tee-times, even on short notice, make Liberty Lake a premier golfing locale. Approximately 100,000 rounds of golf are played each year in the City of Liberty Lake. Trailhead Golf Course is publicly-owned and operated by the City, while Liberty Lake Golf Course and MeadowWood Golf Course are Spokane County operated public courses located within the city limits.

Trailhead Golf Course: See Chapter 3: Inventory & Assessment (*Page 71*).

Liberty Lake Golf Course: Owned and operated by Spokane County, this course is 124.50 acres in size and is the oldest of the three; however it underwent a recent remodel. Liberty Lake Golf Course is an 18-hole championship public municipal golf course, re-designed in 2008 and opened in 2010. The course boasts a 6,607-yard, Par 70 layout and is a fun challenge for all skill levels. Players will enjoy white sand bunkers, large greens, and water as they experience a marvelous new golfing creation. Liberty Lake utilizes a grass tee driving range with targets and yardage indicators. Separate chipping and putting areas allow players to hone their short game skills. Liberty Lake Golf Course also has a practice driving range on grass, a large practice sand bunker and chipping area, a practice putting green, and a clubhouse with restaurant and bar.

MeadowWood Golf Course: Owned and operated by Spokane County, MeadowWood is an 18-hole par 72 championship public municipal golf course. In 1985, the land on which MeadowWood Golf Course sits was used to grow alfalfa, wheat, and grass seed. With the generosity of Jeslyn Morris Schultz and in the interest of conservation, the Schultz family donated 150 acres to Spokane County on which to build MeadowWood Golf Course. MeadowWood is a Robert Muir Graves designed, Links style golf course. Opened in 1988, MeadowWood is mainly an open course with strategically placed trees, bunkers, and water features. With a varying set of tees, it can be enjoyed by golfers of all skill levels. The course can be played as short as 5709 yards or as far as 6900 yards for those golfers who want to be challenged. Golf Digest once ranked MeadowWood “One of the Top 10 Best Public Golf Courses in the State of Washington”. MeadowWood is the newest of the three courses located within the city, and due to the numerous tournaments that are held there each year, it is likely the most well-known. MeadowWood also includes an aquatic practice driving range, practice sand bunker, a putting green, and a clubhouse with restaurant and bar.

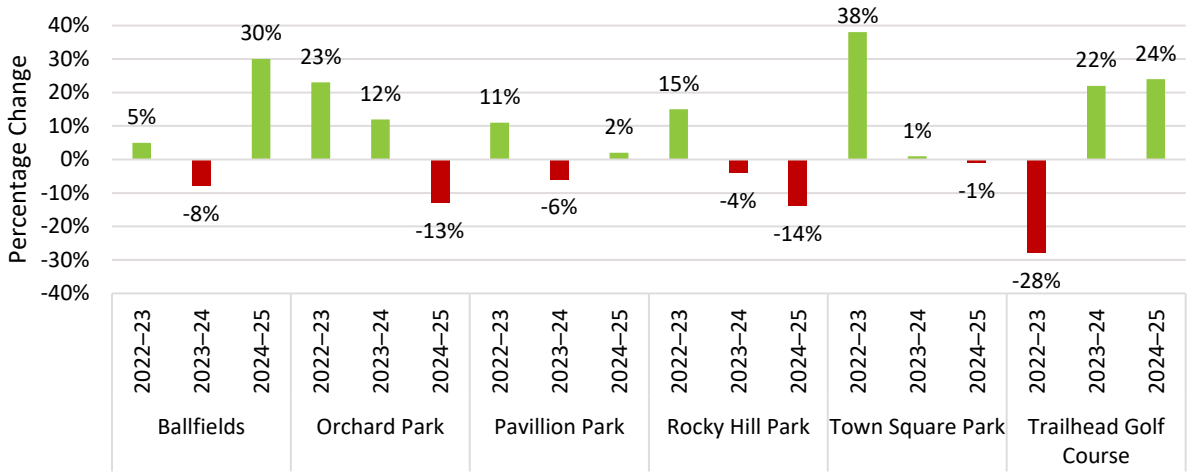
Parks Visitation Trends

Recent visitation data for Liberty Lake's city parks was collected using anonymous location signals from mobile devices via a third-party data provider. These signals are aggregated and analyzed using statistical modeling and machine learning to estimate the number of visits to the parks each year. This data reflects total visits rather than unique individuals, meaning repeated visits by the same person are counted multiple times. While not an exact headcount, this dataset provides a reliable indicator of relative park use trends, seasonal patterns, and overall demand for recreational spaces.

Table 5-9: Number of Park Visits

Parks	2022	2023	% Change 2022-23	2024	% Change 2023-24	2025	% Change 2024-25
Orchard Park	132,100	162,100	23%	181,400	12%	157,800	-13%
Pavillion Park	136,000	151,400	11%	142,700	-6%	145,000	2%
Trailhead Golf Course	81,700	59,100	-28%	72,200	22%	89,500	24%
Town Square Park	44,200	61,000	38%	61,600	1%	60,900	-1%
Rocky Hill Park	58,300	67,200	15%	64,200	-4%	54,900	-14%
Ballfields	18,500	19,500	5%	18,000	-8%	23,400	30%
TOTAL	472,822	522,323	10%	542,124	4%	533,525	-2%

Figure 5-10: Yearly Percentage Change in Number of Park Visits, 2022-2025



These results indicate that Orchard Park was the most visited in 2025, followed closely by Pavillion Park as the two most visited parks. Orchard Park recorded the highest visitation levels across most years and remains the most visited park in 2025, while Pavillion Park continues to serve as a major community gathering space with relatively stable use over time. Both parks experience peak visitation primarily between April and September, reflecting seasonal outdoor recreation patterns, with Orchard Park also seeing some increased winter activity in December due to the Winter Wonderland holiday lights event.

The trends show that Orchard Park, Pavillion Park, Rocky Hill Park, and Town Square Park have all shown relative declines in visitation since 2023. Meanwhile, Trailhead Golf Course and the Ballfields have seen a significant uptick in usage over the same period.

Town Square Park has maintained moderate and relatively consistent visitation since 2023 following earlier growth, with peak use occurring between May and September when the Farmers Market is held. Similarly, Rocky Hill Park shows spring through early fall peak usage but has experienced a gradual decline in visitation since 2023, which may reflect shifts in recreational preferences or competition from other amenities.

Athletic facilities, including the Ballfields, have shown an overall upward trend, particularly between 2024 and 2025. Their peak usage occurs primarily during organized sports seasons in spring and early fall (April–June and September–October), reflecting scheduled league play, tournaments, and community athletic programming rather than casual daily recreation.

Trailhead Golf Course exhibits a distinct seasonal visitation pattern consistent with its operation as an executive nine-hole municipal golf course that is typically open from March through November. The facility experienced a decline in visitation in 2023 followed by a strong rebound in 2024 and 2025, influenced by the completion of the new clubhouse building in 2023 with expanded amenities such as a pro shop, simulation bays, and an event space. The extended operating season compared to traditional parks, combined with structured programming, tournaments, and practice facilities, contributes to sustained visitation across much of the year.



RCO Local Agencies Level of Service Tool

The WA State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) has adopted a Level of Service (LOS) tool in their 2024 Planning Policies and Guidelines which is recommended as a planning tool for grant recipients. RCO's LOS tool provides specific, measurable criteria for local agencies to assess three primary areas: quantity, quality, and access. Based upon current percentages for each given criteria, Liberty Lake is evaluated on an "A" to "E" grading scale, with "A" being the highest possible mark and most desirable outcome and "E" representing the lowest possible mark and least desirable outcome. Lower grades can indicate a need for more investment in those areas of the parks system to achieve the target LOS.

The RCO LOS Tool framework is offered here as another means to evaluate Liberty Lake's park metrics. The framework incorporates quantitative data from the demand and need analysis above, as well as qualitative feedback from the community survey and public engagement efforts. In this section, the quantitative metrics which have been calculated and benchmarked will be graded using the RCO grading scale. At the end of the following section, the RCO qualitative metrics will also be evaluated using the tool.

RCO Quantitative Indicators and Criteria

Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities

Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities	A	B	C	D	E
Percent difference (the gap) between existing quantity of parks and recreation facilities and the desired quantity (e.g., eight out of ten would be a Level B: 20 percent gap) (also may use per capita average).	<10%	11-20%	21-30%	31-40%	>41%

Metrics Considered: Acreage per 1,000 Residents (LOS); Number of Residents per Park; 10-Minute Walkshed Analysis; LOS by Park Classification.

Grade Assigned: B.

Rationale: The adequacy of Liberty Lake's parks and recreation facilities has been evaluated using the revised level of service (LOS) standards by park classification established in this plan, including community parks, neighborhood parks, open space and natural areas, and trails.

These standards are informed by NRPA benchmarks, peer community comparisons, and local context, and are intended to reflect the functional role each park type plays within the overall system.

Under current conditions, Liberty Lake meets or exceeds the revised LOS standards for neighborhood parks, open space and natural areas, and trails, both systemwide and in projected future conditions. Neighborhood parks provide sufficient acreage to support distributed, walk-to access, while open space and trail facilities continue to exceed recommended service levels and contribute significantly to recreational access, environmental quality, and active transportation.

The only identified future deficiency under the revised LOS framework is associated with community parks. While the City currently meets the adopted community park standard, population growth is projected to reduce the community park LOS to 1.78 acres per 1,000 residents by 2046 if no new community parkland is added. With the inclusion of planned park projects, including the River District community park, the LOS is projected to improve to 2.23 acres per 1,000 residents. Despite this improvement, the system would still experience a projected service gap of approximately 11.5 acres, representing a 19 percent shortfall relative to the revised community park LOS standard of 2.75 acres per 1,000 residents.

As a result of the 10-minute walkshed analysis, Liberty Lake is found to have several neighborhoods not within a 10-minute service area of any type of park. Service gaps are identified where some of the new parks and greenways in the NW Quadrant (River District) have not yet been dedicated or developed, nor have several parks in the NE Quadrant (Lakemore). With potential residential development in the SW and SE Quadrants, additional parks or greenways will be needed in these neighborhoods as well. This results in a walkshed gap where at least 11% of the population is found not to reside within a 10-minute walk of any existing parks.



Based on the revised LOS standards and projected conditions, Liberty Lake's overall park system demonstrates strong performance with a moderate, targeted future gap limited to community parks. This gap falls within the 11–20 percent range defined by the RCO grading rubric for the Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities metric, supporting the assignment of a "B" grade.

While many areas are currently served by the parks system, others were found to not be within a 10-minute walkshed of any existing park, result in a difference between the demand for park access and supply of parks of at least 11%, resulting in a "B" grade.

Number of Support Active Recreation Opportunities

Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities	A	B	C	D	E
Percentage of facilities that support or encourage active (muscle-powered) recreation opportunities (e.g., eight out of ten would be Level A: more than 60 percent)	>60%	51-60%	41-50%	31-40%	<30%

Metrics Considered: Parks LOS by Classification.

Grade Assigned: A.

Rationale: The City of Liberty Lake currently scores an "A" for facilities that support active recreation opportunities. Most of the parks and open space facilities in the City of Liberty Lake support active recreation in some form due to our extensive network of trails and pathways, as well as the incorporation of the Fallen Heroes Circuit Course Outdoor Exercise Equipment Stations throughout the city. Approximately 193 acres or 60% of the current parks system supports active recreation opportunities.

Facility Capacity

Facility Capacity	A	B	C	D	E
Percentage of demand met by existing facilities (e.g., 65 percent of reservation requests at a facility can be met would be Level B)	>75%	61-75%	46-60%	30-45%	<30%

Metrics Considered: NRPA programming comparison; Survey results; Reservation requests.

Grade Assigned: A.

Rationale: The City of Liberty Lake currently scores a "A" for percent of demand met by existing facilities. According to the Community Survey recorded in Chapter 4 and Appendix B, 67.4% of survey respondents indicated that the capacity of amenities in Liberty Lake parks are "excellent" or "pretty good". About 17.6% said that the existing facilities "Could Use Work" or were "Bad". When asked, "Are your needs for programs/activities being met in the Liberty Lake parks system?" there were 47.8% of respondents who said that their needs were being fully met and additional 40.8% who said that their needs were being partially met, yielding a result that at least 88.6% are having their recreational needs partially or fully met by the current system. Reservation requests are generally able to be accommodated by the current system. This chapter has recommended that additional community parks with a diverse range of amenities and sports courts will be required to keep up with resident demand as the population grows over the next 15-20 years. The community feedback results in a level of satisfaction with the current facility capacity that exceeds 75% of the surveyed population.

RCO Distribution and Access Criteria

Population Within Service Areas

Population Within Service Areas	A	B	C	D	E
Percentage of population within the following services areas (considering barriers to access): ♦ Within a ½ mile of a Neighborhood Park or trail ♦ Within 5 miles of a Community Park or trail ♦ Within 25 miles of a Regional Park or trail	>75%	61-75%	46-60%	30-45%	<30%

Metrics Considered: Walksheds Analyses.

Grade Assigned: A.

Rationale: Greater than 75% of Liberty Lake residents are located within the service areas. RCO grades a community's access to its park system based upon the population's proximity to parks, differentiated by park classification i.e. what function the park serves by the quantity and type of amenities that it offers. According to these criteria, 100% of Liberty Lake residents are within 5 miles of a Community Park. All residents are also located within 25 miles of a "Regional Park," such as the Centennial Trail and the Liberty Lake Regional Park (located 1.5 miles outside of the city limits). Greater than 75 percent of residents live within 0.5 miles of a neighborhood or pocket park, however gaps do exist as noted in the Gap Analysis section of this chapter. Should new parks and greenways not be constructed to keep pace with residential development, the city's grade for its service area coverage will be significantly reduced for the neighborhood park/trail and slightly reduced for the community park/trail.

Access

Access	A	B	C	D	E
Percentage of parks and recreation facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation.	>80%	61-80%	41-60%	20-40%	<20%

Metrics Considered: Trails and Bicycle Network Assessment.

Grade Assigned: A.

Rationale: As noted in assessment, though some gaps do exist between certain parks and neighborhoods, greater than 80 percent of parks and recreation facilities may be safety accessed by non-motorized means. The city has an extensive trail, pathway, and bike lane system that connects facilities to users and expansion of the trail network is consistently desired by the community. In the community survey, residents voiced their need for continued accessibility upgrades such as expanding neighborhood trail connections and providing more safe enhancements along trail corridors.





Key Findings

Summary

This Demands and Needs Analysis has used quantitative and qualitative metrics to help determine if there are gaps in park access, quantity, or specific types of parks that are necessary to serve the public's current and future needs. The analysis finds that Liberty Lake performs strongly at a systemwide level, exceeding national benchmarks for park access and parkland provision when compared to peer communities. Under the revised level of service standards by park classification, the system is projected to continue meeting targets for neighborhood parks, open space and natural areas, and trails through the 2046 planning horizon. The only identified future service gap is associated with community parks, where population growth is expected to outpace available acreage and functional capacity, resulting in a projected 19 percent service gap even with currently planned park projects. Planned parks and potential park reclassification scenarios, including at Town Square Park, offer meaningful opportunities to reduce this gap; however, timely implementation and ongoing monitoring will be essential to maintain service levels. The highest priority areas for new parks are in the north and southwest neighborhoods where no community or neighborhood parks currently exist. Sidewalk gaps around Town Square Park and paths that are currently in poor condition along key arterials between parks and schools should be given the highest priority for improvements.

Does Liberty Lake Have Enough Parklands to Serve Its Current and Future Population?

When evaluated using peer community comparisons and systemwide park metrics, Liberty Lake's parks and open space system currently performs at a high level relative to communities of similar size. Based on National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) benchmarks, Liberty Lake provides 22.59 acres of public parkland per 1,000 residents, more than double the national median for cities under 20,000 population and well above the median for cities in the 20,000–49,999 population range. This places Liberty Lake within the upper quartile of parkland provision nationally and above all local peer communities evaluated.

Liberty Lake also performs strongly in terms of park access and distribution. With approximately 743 residents per public park, the City serves fewer residents per facility than the NRPA median of 1,001 residents per park, indicating a comparatively high level of access. Peer community comparisons show that Liberty Lake has both more parks and larger total park acreage than neighboring jurisdictions of similar population size, resulting in the lowest resident-to-park ratio among the peer group.

Looking ahead to 2046, systemwide metrics indicate that Liberty Lake is projected to continue meeting the recommended benchmarks for total parkland acreage and residents per park, assuming currently planned park projects are constructed. With planned parks included, Liberty Lake is projected to provide approximately 15.36 acres of public parkland per 1,000 residents and an average of 914 residents per park, remaining above the recommended LOS thresholds. These findings suggest that, at a systemwide level, Liberty Lake's parks and open space network will continue to provide adequate capacity to serve future population growth.

Does Liberty Lake have the right kind of parks to meet public demands and needs?

While systemwide metrics indicate that Liberty Lake provides a sufficient quantity of parkland and compares favorably to peer communities, evaluating whether the City has the right kind of parks requires a closer look at park classifications, functional roles, and the distribution of amenities across the system. Different park types serve different purposes, and overall acreage alone does not fully capture how well recreational demand is being met.

Liberty Lake's park system is characterized by a strong supply of open space, natural areas, and trails, which together exceed recommended service levels and contribute significantly to everyday recreation, environmental quality, and active transportation. These facilities provide broad community benefits and help distribute passive recreation and trail use throughout the city. Neighborhood-scale parks also perform well under the revised LOS standards, supporting walk-to access and informal recreation in many residential areas.

This analysis has identified a potential future deficit of community parks, which serve as the City's primary locations for destination amenities, large events, organized recreation, and higher-intensity use. Liberty Lake currently has three community parks—Orchard Park, Pavillion Park, and Rocky Hill Park—all of which are smaller than the typical size range for community parks. As population grows, demand for community-scale amenities is expected to increase, placing greater pressure on these facilities even when systemwide acreage targets are met.

Planned park development, including the River District community park, will improve the balance of park types and partially address future community park service needs. However, even with planned parks, community parks are projected to still fall short of meeting current service levels by about 19%, representing a demand for an additional 11.5 acres of high-quality community parkland.

One such strategy to further meet this need is the potential reclassification of Town Square Park, contingent on the outcome of the future master planning process. If the park is expanded to its full buildout area and incorporates destination-level amenities, event-support infrastructure, and facilities intended to serve residents citywide, reclassification as a Community Park could meaningfully increase the community park level of service and reduce future service gaps. Alternatively, if improvements emphasize walk-to amenities and neighborhood-scale recreation, reclassification as a Neighborhood Park would further strengthen the City's distributed park network and increase neighborhood park service levels beyond the adopted standard.

Together, these findings indicate that Liberty Lake generally has the right mix of parks to meet current needs, but future success will depend on how planned parks are developed and classified, and how amenities are distributed across the system. Strategic use of park classification, facility programming, and expansion opportunities, such as at Town Square Park, offers a means to improve system performance and better align park types with evolving community needs.

Recommendations

Set new LOS standards as Goals and Objectives for the next five to ten years:

1) For all parks, consider the following measures:
   a) Offer parks that meet the interests and needs of the Liberty Lake community based upon continuous public feedback.
   b) Provide parks within a 10-minute walk of all city residents.
   c) Ensure high operations and maintenance standards are achieved for all parks.
   d) Prioritize the enhancement of non-motorized connections to parks.
2) For Community Parks, establish a base target LOS of 2.75 acres per 1,000 Liberty Lake residents to maintain current levels of satisfaction with Liberty Lake's premier parks into the future.
3) For Neighborhood Parks, establish a base target LOS of 1 acre per 1,000 residents.
4) For Passive Open Space:
   a) Establish a base target of 7.5 acres per 1,000 residents.
   b) As open spaces have the potential to be developed, consider acquiring new properties to create spaces that also meet the City's environmental objectives, offering preserved natural areas that can also provide educational programming and benefits.

Parks System Expansion and Acquisition:

- Future park development should prioritize providing amenities that directly respond to community-identified needs and preferences, as documented through the public engagement process, rather than focusing solely on meeting acreage-based level of service targets. New parks or park expansions should be strategically located within identified service gaps to improve walkable access while also delivering facilities that residents have requested.
- To achieve a target LOS for community parks of 2.75 acres/1,000 residents, by 2046 Liberty Lake would need to add about 11.5 acres of community parks to its system.
- Golf remains very popular in Liberty Lake and represents a part of the City's distinctive identity. As the population and commercial sector grows, the City can facilitate expanded golfing venues and programming to continue to promote and accommodate the sport.
- Rocky Hill and Orchard Park are in neighborhoods with the lowest current presence of trees and higher socio-economic vulnerability metrics. As these areas continue to develop, high priority should be placed upon planting trees in these parks to address existing disparities.

Are Liberty Lake's Parks Accessible to All Residents?

The 10-minute walkshed gap analysis finds that, while greater than 75% of the residential and working population are located within a 10-minute walk of a public park facility in Liberty Lake's center, residents living and working in developing peripheral areas often cannot access a park within a 10-minute walking distance.

There are currently no community or neighborhood parks located in the north or southwest portions of Liberty Lake. These developing neighborhoods currently lack desirable park amenities like playgrounds, splash pads, sports courts, and walking paths.

The current bicycle and pedestrian path network supports non-motorized access to most park facilities. Gaps do exist, however, such as between Town Square Park and its surrounding neighborhood and commercial area. Sidewalks in poor condition are located on arterials which connect residential streets to Pavillion Park, Rocky Hill Parks, and "The Diamonds" ballfields.

Recommendations

As neighborhoods continue to develop, plan for and construct neighborhood parks in these areas to achieve a level of service that facilitates community recreational demands. Closely monitor the neighborhoods being developed under the regulation of Special Area Plans to ensure that concept parks are constructed to meet adequate service levels. As the southwest portion of the City develops, planning measures will necessitate adding open space facilities to concurrently serve new developments in this area as well.

Prioritize sidewalks that are currently in fair to poor condition as they are a critical means of access to parks from nearby neighborhoods. The future Town Square Park site master plan should put forward design concepts for enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections from the park to the main arterials of E Appleway Ave and E Mission Ave to better connect the park to surrounding neighborhoods. Filling in gaps in the network can improve rates of non-motorized use.

Are Liberty Lake's Facilities Accommodating Residents' Desired Recreational Opportunities?

According to feedback gathered from the community engagement surveys and pop-up events, recommendations related to desired park facilities and recreational opportunities are outlined in Chapter 4: Public Outreach & Community Engagement, Key Takeaways from Engagement (*Pages 120-122*).