

E. RECREATION (AND OPEN SPACE)

POLICIES

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Recreation Policies section is to identify recreational and open space assets within the City of Auburn; and to set forth goals, objectives, and strategies for the preservation and development of facilities to meet the future needs of the community.

Recreation Goal:

Goal E.1: Provide for adequate recreation facilities and open space in Auburn.

VALUE STATEMENT

Auburn is a community that values accessible, diverse recreational opportunities for everyone.

VISION

Auburn maintains and enhances parks and recreational facilities to serve current and growing populations. By promoting tourism, the City welcomes visitors while balancing recreation with natural resource protection. The City emphasizes the cost-effective planning and management of facilities as well as communication about recreational opportunities; and the development of connections between parks, including neighborhoods, Complete Streets, sports fields, open spaces, and recreational centers. The City promotes a collaborative approach focused on local facilities and resources by how well its resources are situated in a regional context.

The City places a priority on developing equitable recreational access to open spaces and public waterways including boat launches, parks, cultural facilities and trails. Auburn will collaborate with nonprofit organizations, landowners, and recreational clubs to maintain safe access to rural open space for a variety of users including pedestrians/hikers, skiers, snowmobilers, boaters and cyclists.

POLICIES

E.1 RECREATION AND CULTURE

Goal E.1: Provide for exceptional recreation facilities and open space in Auburn.

Objective E.1.1:

Ensure that there are exceptional recreational facilities to meet the needs of residents throughout Auburn to include welcoming and attracting visitors from away.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.1.1.a:

Support ongoing funding that leverages the annual budget process, including State and Federal regulatory and funding programs and private/non-profit funding options that support and enhance the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to improve and maintain existing park and recreation facilities.

Strategy E.1.1.b:

Develop ways to maximize and maintain strong community partnerships and recreation facility availability.

Objective E.1.2:

Improve access to, and awareness of, recreational amenities along the Androscoggin and Little Androscoggin Rivers.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.1.2.a:

Develop a riverfront access campaign to inform residents and visitors about the recreational opportunities available along both rivers and to collect feedback about recreation.

Strategy E.1.2.b:

Support the connection of local recreational facilities along the Androscoggin River with riverfront facilities in other communities, such as the Androscoggin Riverlands and Lewiston.

Strategy E.1.2.c:

Identify and develop new land and water access points that create connectivity with the Androscoggin and Little Androscoggin Rivers and surrounding recreational opportunities. Utilize public and private resources to mitigate financial, recreational, and cultural impacts.

Strategy E.1.2.d:

Improve existing recreational river access points through better trail and park maintenance, increased signage, adequate lighting, promotion and programming.

Strategy E.1.2.f:

Promote defunct dam removal for improved access, recreation, habitat, and fishing opportunities.

Objective E.1.3:

Support continued designated public access and recreational use in and around Lake Auburn, Taylor Pond, Gulf Island Pond, Royal River, Basin Pond, Androscoggin and Little Androscoggin Rivers.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.1.3.a (See Also Strategy A.1.1.b and A.1.1.c):

Support recreational efforts of the Lewiston & Auburn Pollution Control (LAWPC), including the linking of Lake Auburn trails to regional trail networks while addressing the lost MaineDOT rest area by creation of an essential trailhead, with picnic tables and general sightseeing opportunities of lake Auburn. Specifically, redeveloping the Southern Link Trail (SLT) gateway from the picnic area to west Auburn to link Lost Valley recreational areas.

Strategy E.1.3.b:

Evaluate the feasibility of creating a public boat launch on Taylor Pond.

Objective E.1.4:

Protect and expand open space and rural recreational activities within Auburn.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.1.4.a:

Review Recreation Area/Open Space Standards for residential developments.

Strategy E.1.4.b

Coordinate efforts among the City, public and non-profits for private-public recreation and open space to identify a network of trails and open space, along with consistent standards to ensure recreational users have continued access to land, ecologically sensitive land is protected, while impacted landowners are respected.

Strategy E.1.4.c:

Create a Complete Streets network from the downtown to Lake Auburn. Work with neighboring municipalities to create an interconnected system of routes for non-vehicular commuters.

Develop programs to connect urban residents with rural recreational opportunities, including the expansion of transit service between the downtown and areas such as Mt. Apatite and Lake Auburn.

Strategy E.1.4.d:

Continue to support rural landowner participation in the Farmland Open Space Tree Growth and the Volunteering Municipal Farm Support Program as a means to preserve open space and public access.

Strategy E.1.4.e:

Create a central website where people can find out where to recreate within the City. Tie-in existing public and private resources from all recreation user groups.

Objective E.1.5:

Ensure that community trails and water-bodies are well maintained, safe, and accessible and minimize environmental impact throughout Auburn.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.1.5.a:

Actively support the efforts of outdoor recreational clubs and organizations and educate residents on ways to support organizations that maintain trails, open space and boating access.

Develop trail “share” programs that maintain trails year-round by integrating different user groups by season, neighborhoods throughout Auburn.

Strategy E.1.5.b:

Develop a trail maintenance program to ensure that all City-owned trails are safe and accessible year round.

Work with and support the Cities three snowmobile clubs so they can continue their 100 plus miles of trail maintenance on public and private lands. Continue to return snowmobile registration monies to the snowmobile clubs to provide needed funding for bridge replacements, trail maintenance, signage and grooming while performing and promoting in-kind volunteerism for critical state match through grants.

Strategy E.1.5.c:

Develop a safety program including public awareness campaigns for trails and waterbodies to educate users of safety protocol and provide a brief history of the resource.

Strategy E.1.5.d:

Support the upgrading of the Androscoggin River from a Class C to a Class B Water Quality Standard.

Strategy E.1.5.e:

Explore the idea of obtaining conservation and access easements to land to promote recreation and enhance connectivity.

Strategy E.1.5.f:

Develop a program to convert winter trails to year-round uses to include hiking, ATV and horseback where feasible.

Strategy E.1.5.g:

Create and integrate existing trail maps to create a trail app for all trail users.

Strategy E.1.5.h:

Consider adding multiuse trails in the City where economically feasible with a focus on equity.

Objective E.1.6:

Provide a wide range of cultural and arts amenities.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.1.6.a:

Continue to collaborate with Lewiston to expand and promote cultural venues within

the region.

Strategy E.1.6.b:

Develop marketing materials to expand public awareness of local cultural amenities, such as offerings at the Great Falls Community Center, Museum LA, LA Arts, Public Theater and at other museums throughout Auburn.

Strategy E.1.6.c:

Solicit input from the community for potential reuse or redevelopment of the Great Falls School site.

Strategy E.1.6.d:

Support funding investments in public art displays, cement the shared use of publically owned facilities.

Strategy E.1.6.e:

Use art as a mechanism to promote recreation and open spaces to gain attention from a broader stakeholder group for a deeper appreciation for the outdoors, recreation, natural resources, and open spaces.

Objective E.1.7:

Focus on a regional approach to new programs and facilities that are unique and would draw people in from the outside to come to the City of Auburn.

E.2 SPORT TOURISM

Goal E.2: Increase sport tourism in the City of Auburn as a legitimate way to boost the number of visitors, visitor spending, and evaluate the potential of being a significant driver. The City recognizes the health and strength of the sport tourism industry, making investments in sport tourism projects and initiatives to increase economic impact, promote the city, and encourage tourism activities. Sport tourism has been identified as a key initiative for ensuring a sustainable, prosperous, and diverse local economy.

Objective E.2.1:

Build on the community's capacity to deliver well-managed and sustainable events that maximize the community and economic benefits of sport tourism.

Strategies to achieve this objective:

Strategy E.2.1.a:

Develop strong support from the municipal and private leadership.

Strategy E.2.1.b:

Develop a multi-partner approach to encourage lasting sport tourism capacity.

Strategy E.2.1.c:

Create incentives for sports events to come to the City of Auburn.

Strategy E.2.1.d:

Create a brand to promote the community.

Strategy E.2.1.e:

Create anchor tenants to support the facility and its uses.

Strategy E.2.1.f:

Provide arts and entertainment tourism to support facilities and uses.

Objective E.2.2:

Assess and/or acquire land to further support the growth of Auburn's sport tourism infrastructure.