



City of Auburn, Maine

Recreation Department

Sabrina Best, Director

48 Pettengill Park Road | Auburn, Maine 04210  
[www.auburnmaine.gov](http://www.auburnmaine.gov) | 207.333.6601

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**Recreation Strategic Planning Public Forum  
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 6:00pm

Auburn Senior Community Center

Members Present: Tizz Crowley, Dana Staples, Misty Edgecomb, Rob Morrison, Denise Clavette, Shawn Boyd, Shelley Kroszewski, Leroy Walker, Stephan Martelli, Adam Lee, Sabrina Best

It was clarified that when we are discussing Recreation, we are talking about a broad range from organized sports to unorganized walk-through-the-park that any organization or entity offers to the community of Auburn, not just the City/Recreation.

**1. What Recreational amenities are currently available in your neighborhood for you and/or your family to use?**

**NOW:** Ingersoll Turf Facility, Gully Basketball Courts, River, Trails, ELHS Football, Golf, Airport (for events), Farming, Library, Nothing, Norway Savings Bank Ice Arena, Festival Plaza, Boat Ramp, Riverwalk, Sidewalks, LACC, Pettengill Park, Playground, Chestnut Park, Lost Valley, Mt. Apatite, Parks in general, Taylor Pond, Community Little Theater, Ball fields, Cemeteries, Spring Rd.

**FUTURE:** Safe Bike Lanes, Bike Racks, Canoe and Kayaking rentals, Fitness classes in Parks, Lights on all walking paths, areas for artist on sidewalks and parks, better bus services to event locations, utilize airport for more events, more sidewalks in areas that don't have any, soccer fields or rectangle fields in general, increase in police presence to slow down cars/speeders, increase arts/history/culture opportunities, increase ADA accessibility to all facilities and parks, conserve land, improve trails on Mt. Apatite, Splash Pad, Dog Park.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:** There was some discussion on what defines a neighborhood – is it the ward, your street, a block distance around your house, etc. There was a discussion around use of the farm land to create rectangle field opportunities. The group spent some time talking about the importance of safe avenues for community members to travel throughout the city, such as sidewalks, safe bike lanes, more bus routes, etc.

**2. What do you need for programs, services, and facilities to achieve a high quality of life while living in Auburn?**

**NOW:** Youth Sports, YMCA – POOL, Safe Bike Lanes, Green Space for quiet time, Arts (music and history), E.L. Park in front of CLT, Ingersoll Turf Facility, Softball Program (youth and adult), PAL, Boys and Girls Club, New Auburn Trails and snowshoeing, Grange Hall, Running race opportunities like 5k, ski lessons, Mountain Biking Club, resources for outdoor summer/winter activities, smart phone history walk, Race training, LACC, Museum LA, skateboard park.



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**FUTURE:** Fishing and Paddling instruction, dog agility course, NINJA training facility, better advertisement of events, fishing programs, bowling, art walk improvement, art wall updated and plan for future maintenance and updates, public swimming, bike stuff, outdoor pool, 50+ activities open with a full schedule that is open to all and available at all times, health focus activities, price difference for non-residents, TOURISM, zip lines, pick up volleyball at Ingersoll, Volunteer list at rec for events with recourses, City in-kind services, increase coaching opportunities, better skateboard park, City Wide wifi, better maintenance parks tennis courts, etc, Ice fishing, better utilization of Lake Auburn for recreational opportunities like swimming, sled hockey for Paralympics.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:** There was a discussion around volunteers and creating a centralized location or HUB for all groups looking for volunteers as well as collecting all individuals seeking volunteer opportunities. It was discussed that the Rec should be the HUB but not necessarily doing all the 'match making' work. The idea was that anyone in the community new/old would have one location to gather any and all information about how to become engaged in our community. Advertising and promoting events was another hot topic as many felt that there are so many events, programs, meetings that no one knows about but yet it was advertised in some way. There are so many avenues available when it comes to marketing it was suggested that there should either be one centralized method (Hard flier or Website) that is focused on sending a clear message. It was also discussed that using all the methods or possibly establishing a priority list of what level of exposure the event/meeting/program falls under and would entail X amount of promotion in X avenues. Tourism was another area that the group felt could be capitalized on to help increase not only the actual event (sports, art, music) but also the local economy. Updating plans and future maintenance was a topic that was brought up to address the concept of after an item or program is created a plan or schedule of updates, maintenance needs to be developed and upheld on both the management level and funding.

### 3. What would Auburn need in order to become a Recreational Destination? How could we improve or expose our current programs, services, and facilities to promote recreational destination?

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:** The idea of trying to have everyone pick one focus item, Quality vs. Quantity was the idea behind this suggestion.

**FOCUS:** Snow, Golf Courses (winter and summer uses), Great Falls, Lake, River

**HOW TO:** Pick one item and focus on it to optimize the exposure, establish Auburn as a four season destination for recreation, Advertise and Promote not just locally but state wide and nationally, Marketing and Branding Auburn, develop 'Packages' that bundle a youth hockey tourney with a local family event or music festival etc. More coordination with EVERYONE in the community and organizations.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION:** A suggestion of trying to brand Auburn as a community that within steps of the "city/downtown" life you have rural and passive recreational opportunities within a 10-15 min drive (Lost Valley, Farm land, Golf Courses, Mt. Apatite). There was a consensus that the efforts to

highlight Auburn’s natural recreational opportunities should be the main focus. There needs to be a better effort and plan around promoting activities, programs, facilities, events etc. Auburn has the ability to highlight activities for each season which could be a niche for promoting in our community. It was also discussed that Auburn was the starting point for many events and programs but they soon outgrew the space in Auburn and had to move to a new community. There is a need for bigger facilities that can help create, maintain, and sustain these events in Auburn.

**4. What is your favorite part about living in Auburn? How could we help improve your favorite part?**

**FAVORITE**

Winter/fall Holiday Events  
 Downtown  
 Riverwalk  
 Barker Mill Trails  
 River  
 Walking/Biking  
 Diversity in aerial view  
 Citizens  
 Library

**HOW TO IMPROVE**

Collaboration with local organizations (Rec, PAL, B&GC)  
 Modern-updates, Support future projects  
 Improve West Pitch Park and add Zip Lines  
 Kiosks, clean up viewing areas, benches, signage  
 Market and Promote  
 Bike education, resources for bikes such as fixing kit stations  
 Band and Market Auburn  
 Promote, engage, and educate community

**5. What is the best method for you when it comes to promoting events, programs, and services?**

1. Word of Mouth
2. Sending out the same message and image across all platforms (often times the picture or flier or message posted on Facebook is different then an email or flier or press release)
3. Hard fliers
4. Message boards and kiosks (example; neighbored message board in New Auburn)
5. Social media
6. City website
7. Establish a visual display board
8. Attend conferences and trade shows to promote Auburn.

The meeting wrapped up with discussion on holding this type of meeting annually to help adjust the future planning of Recreation in Auburn as trends and demand change. There will be a survey sent out for those who were not able to attend to chime in their opinions. All the data collected will be analyzed by staff and reported to the public, Council, and City Staff.