



City of Auburn, Maine

Recreation Department

Sabrina Best, Director

48 Pettengill Park Road | Auburn, Maine 04210
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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?

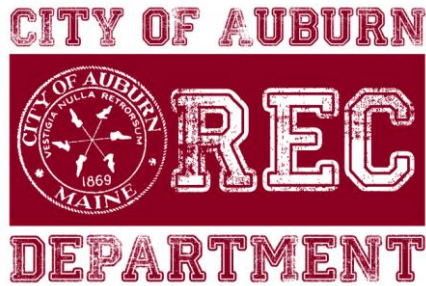
NOW: Ingersoll Turf Facility, Gully Basketball Courts, River, Trails, ELHS Football, Golf, Airport (for events), Farming, Library, Nothing, Norway Savings Bank Ice Arena, Festival Plaza, Boat Ramp, Riverwalk, Sidewalks, LACC, Pettengill Park, Playground, Chestnut Park, Lost Valley, Mt. Apatite, Parks 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 you house etc. There was a discussion around using 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 scheduled 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 big 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 advertized 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 to help send a clear message. It was also discussed at 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. Update 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 and 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 to try having everyone pick 1 focus items, Quality vs. Quantity was the idea behind this suggestion.

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

HOW TO: Pick 1 item and focus on it to optimize the exposure, establish Auburn as a 4 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 try 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 effort to highlight

Auburn’s natural recreational opportunities should be a big focus. There needs to be a better effort and plan around promoting activities, programs, facilities, events etc. Auburn has the ability to highlight something for each season which could be a niche for promoting 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)
 Beautification, 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

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

Word of Mouth, 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, hard fliers, message boards and kiosks such as neighbored message board in New Auburn, social media, city website, establish a visual display board and 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.