

Medford Open Space & Recreation Plan Extension

2026-2029

Medford, Massachusetts
Prepared September 2025





Medford OSRP Three-Year Extension

Acknowledgements

The project to develop this Open Space and Recreation Plan Extension was conducted by City of Medford staff.

Office of Planning, Development, & Sustainability

- Alicia Hunt, Director
- Amanda Centrella, Open Space Planner
- Juliette Geraghty, Graduate Intern
- Jack Podolsky, Graduate Intern
- Christian Zepeda-Lipovsky, Graduate Intern

This Plan Extension was made in consultation with the Mayor’s Office, Department of Public Works, Department of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, and the Recreation Department. The City of Medford will continue to pursue funding for a comprehensive OSRP update. The priority actions listed in this Plan Extension are items that should continue to be progressed in the interim.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Table of Contents.....	1
2019-2026 Plan Implementation Status.....	2
Public Participation Strategy.....	5
Public Participation Results.....	6
Survey Results:	6
Themes Derived from Public Participation.....	12
10-Year Action Plan	14
Updated Priority Implementation Matrix.....	14
2026-2029 Specific Park Improvements Recommendations	24

2019-2026 Plan Implementation Status

Since the current OSRP's implementation in 2019, the City has accomplished a number of projects including:

Highlighted Park Specific Improvements:

1. **Barry Park.** The City resurfaced the basketball court and reconstructed the baseball field to be a 50-70 sized field to address the programmatic needs of the Medford Youth Baseball League.
2. **Carr Park.** The City installed a new loop pathway with new staggered seating. Two baseball diamonds were reconstructed and four new dedicated pickleball courts with lighting, as well as new disc golf goals were added. Other new additions to Carr Park include a Bluebikes station, a dog park, and a formal pathway from the park to Stowers Avenue. Finally, the City has conducted several treatments to manage invasive plants in the park. Construction of additional park amenities is currently underway as a part of implementing the Carr Park Vision Plan. These include a mini skate park, one basketball court covered with a roof with solar panels, one open-air basketball court striped for street hockey, a small splash pad, new playground, a shaded picnic pavilion, small device charging, and water fountains.
3. **Condon Shell.** A large mural covering the band shell stage was added, as well as electrical outlets. Portable toilets have been rented for the past several seasons for farmer's market and music concert series. Invasive bushes that were blocking sightlines to the stage were removed. Finally, the City updated an agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Resources (DCR, who owns the land) that clarifies the City's and state's role in maintaining, improving upon, and programming in the park.
4. **Dugger Park.** The tennis courts were renovated and a rebounder wall and new striping for pickleball were added to the courts. The basketball court was renovated. In addition, a grassroots effort lead by community members has resulted in a collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Resources (DCR) to remove part of a state guardrail and create a pick-up area and an accessible path from the West Medford Community Center to the park.
5. **Gillis Field.** The severe flooding issues at the athletic field were corrected through a full renovation of the field that consisted of regrading, rain gardens, new drainage infrastructure, and more. Major improvements to accessibility were made in the form of the creation of an accessible route to the baseball field and other amenities within the park, as well as the correction and restriping of the crosswalk curb cut and ramp. The City

added a new adult fitness and picnic seating areas to Gillis, while also replacing the storage and concession structure.

6. **Harris Park.** The playground was fully renovated, and new features were added such as swings, a natural play area, and a splash pad. The athletic courts were reconstructed.
7. **Hickey Park.** New shade shelters were added to both the baseball dugouts and the playground, with the playground shade pavilion having a new accessible route to it. The tennis and basketball courts were redone, and a Bikebikes station was added.
8. **Morrison Park.** The tennis courts were reconstructed. The City resurfaced the entire playground with accessible rubber play surfacing. A new play area for 2–5-year-olds was added to the playground, including a sandbox. A few pieces of the 5–12-year-old play equipment at the playground were in poor condition and were also replaced. New interpretive signage about the large pin oak tree in the playground was added, as were several trees.
9. **Playstead Park.** Shade trees were added along the periphery of the park, and the basketball courts were reconstructed. The baseball diamond infield was also redone.
10. **Riverbend Park.** The playground at the McGlynn School has been fully renovated to correct severe drainage issues. The new playground is universally accessible with a turf athletic field, basketball hoops, play equipment, an outdoor classroom, a shaded amphitheater, rain gardens, and over 60 new trees. The City worked with a local artist to add a stone labyrinth over a section of the park that was capped to protect against soil contamination. The City also supported the Massachusetts Department of Conservation Resources (DCR) in constructing and opening the Clippership Connector path which is now an essential segment of the Mystic River path network. The City is currently working with TreesMedford, a community-based tree advocacy group, to design and construct a Memorial Grove along the Mystic River.
11. **Riverside Plaza.** The Plaza was fully reconstructed in 2019 creating a fully accessible space and adding a stage and permanent seating, and the City is currently working on further improvements that would add shade and a water fountain to the plaza.
12. **Wrights Pond.** Additional park benches and picnic tables were added, and the pavilion is currently being redesigned. A rain garden was installed to treat stormwater runoff from the parking lot and prevent runoff from degrading the grass area, and other stormwater mitigation tactics are being redesigned. A mural was added to the bathhouse.

Other General Improvements:

- **Athletic courts.** Court surfaces across the City have been redone. Moving forward, the City plans to seal minor cracks for 5-year-old courts and major reconstructions have been staggered to occur gradually rather than all at once.
- **Park Trees.** The City plants new trees at parks annually, adding over 100 new trees to parks since 2019. New plantings have been native species with minimal fruit production to help with pest control. The City is in the process of developing an Urban Forestry Master Plan and a publicly accessible mapping tool that shows new city tree plantings by year, condition, species, and location.
- **Bluebikes Stations.** In an effort to support multi-modal transportation to and from parks, the City has sited stations at Carr Park, Hickey Park, Logan Park, Harris Park, Hormel Stadium, and near Riverside Plaza, as well as at other strategic locations throughout the city. More stations will be added as funding becomes available.
- **Playground Surfaces.** The Department of Public Works converted compacted sand play surfacing to engineered wood fiber chips at several playgrounds.
- **Field Maintenance.** The DPW has developed and implemented a system for field maintenance, which is continually improved.
- **Connectivity.** The DPW has made significant improvements to Medford's roadway network throughout the city. This includes traffic calming measures, bicycle lanes, intersection improvements, and other Complete Streets initiatives. The City also works collaboratively with DCR on improvements to DCR-owned roadways that connect to parks and open space in Medford.
- **Programming.** The City has vastly improved and expanded the variety, frequency, and access to recreational programming. Since 2019, the City now has a designated Recreation Center and a formal permitting and reservation system called My Rec. Programming spans all age groups and includes new activities and events geared towards teenagers and older kids: Teen Nights, Open Gym, Spring Basketball League, and as of this extension, skating programming is in development. The City now offers free programming such as movie nights, exercise classes at Wright's Pond, fitness classes, and water aerobics. The Recreation Department now has dedicated administrative staff to facilitate permit applications to the Parks Commission. Schedules for recreational facility use are published online for expanded public access.
- **Energy Efficiency.** All lighting for city-owned recreational facilities is LED and meets Dark Sky criteria. Lighting is now set on specific timers and otherwise is only activated based on permitted uses. The HVAC system at LoConte Rink was upgraded. City staff have been coordinating with National Grid to correct billing inconsistencies and replace meters as needed. EV Chargers have been installed at Carr Park and Hormel Stadium, and on-street chargers are slated to be added to Morrison Park, Barry Park, and Magoun Park. The City is advocating for chargers to be added to DCR-owned properties.

- **Community Gardens.** Gardens have been established at McNally Park, Riverbend Park, La Prise Village, Andrews Middle School, Tufts Park, Walkling Court, Willis Ave Development, Winthrop Street Community Garden, Tempone Apartments, and a pop-up garden behind City Hall. A new garden has been recently approved for Barry Park.
- **Public Stewardship.** The City organizes an annual Citywide Park Clean-Up event. The Mayor's Office has also begun organizing invasive plant walks to share information about identifying and removing invasive plants with members of the public. Moving forward, the City will continue to work with interested community members to encourage groups to self-organize to remove invasive plants.

Public Participation Strategy

The City of Medford's Office of Planning, Development, & Sustainability (PDS) staff developed an online survey and in-person interactive materials for use at public events. The interactive materials consisted of several boards that posed open-ended questions about an individual's experience at city open spaces and parks, alongside a map of the city's green space.

Participants were encouraged to use stickers to ID their favorite parks and areas of most challenge, as well as write their own responses to questions. Questions asked participants about barriers to enjoying the city's open space and recreational facilities, areas of excessive heat, flooding, favorite park features, and desired changes. In total, there were 195 individual responses collected through the in-person interactive materials.

The public survey was advertised by placing event flyers in public buildings including City Hall, Medford Public Library, recreation facilities, Senior Center, and was distributed to various Boards and Commissions, and the Medford Family Network. The survey was shared with athletic league members that reserve city recreational facilities. Graphics and participation materials were shared across several City-managed social media channels and City email listservs.

PDS attended nine in-person community events with digital and print surveys as well as interactive boards as tools with which community members could engage. These events included four play group sessions hosted by the Medford Family Network, located at Harris Park, Barry Park, Capen Park, and Dugger Park. Staff also tabled at the City's Back-to-School Resource Fair, Brazilian Independence Day Celebration, and two beer garden events hosted in the city's Clippership Pop-up Park space. PDS staff met with the Commission for Persons with Disabilities at a public meeting to discuss members' input and feedback received from the broader community.

The online public survey was administered from August 8, 2025, through September 10, 2025. The survey was designed to measure how frequently respondents visited open space and recreation amenities; what activities were pursued at these amenities; and barriers to enjoyment and use of public facilities. The survey received 122 responses.

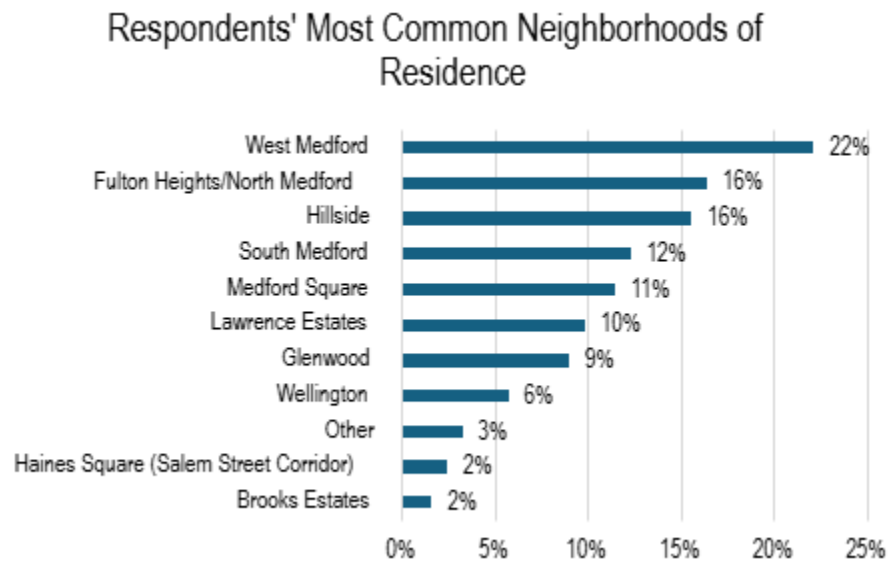
PDS staff organized all responses into broad categories that emerged during the review process: Amenities, Safety, Recreational Opportunities, Climate Resiliency, Accessibility, and Public Art. Facility-specific feedback was organized by facility. More specific objectives became evident

with further review, many aligning with those listed in the pre-existing OSRP's implementation matrix. Matrix actions in alignment with public outreach were highlighted and adjusted per the received feedback.

Public Participation Results

Survey Results:

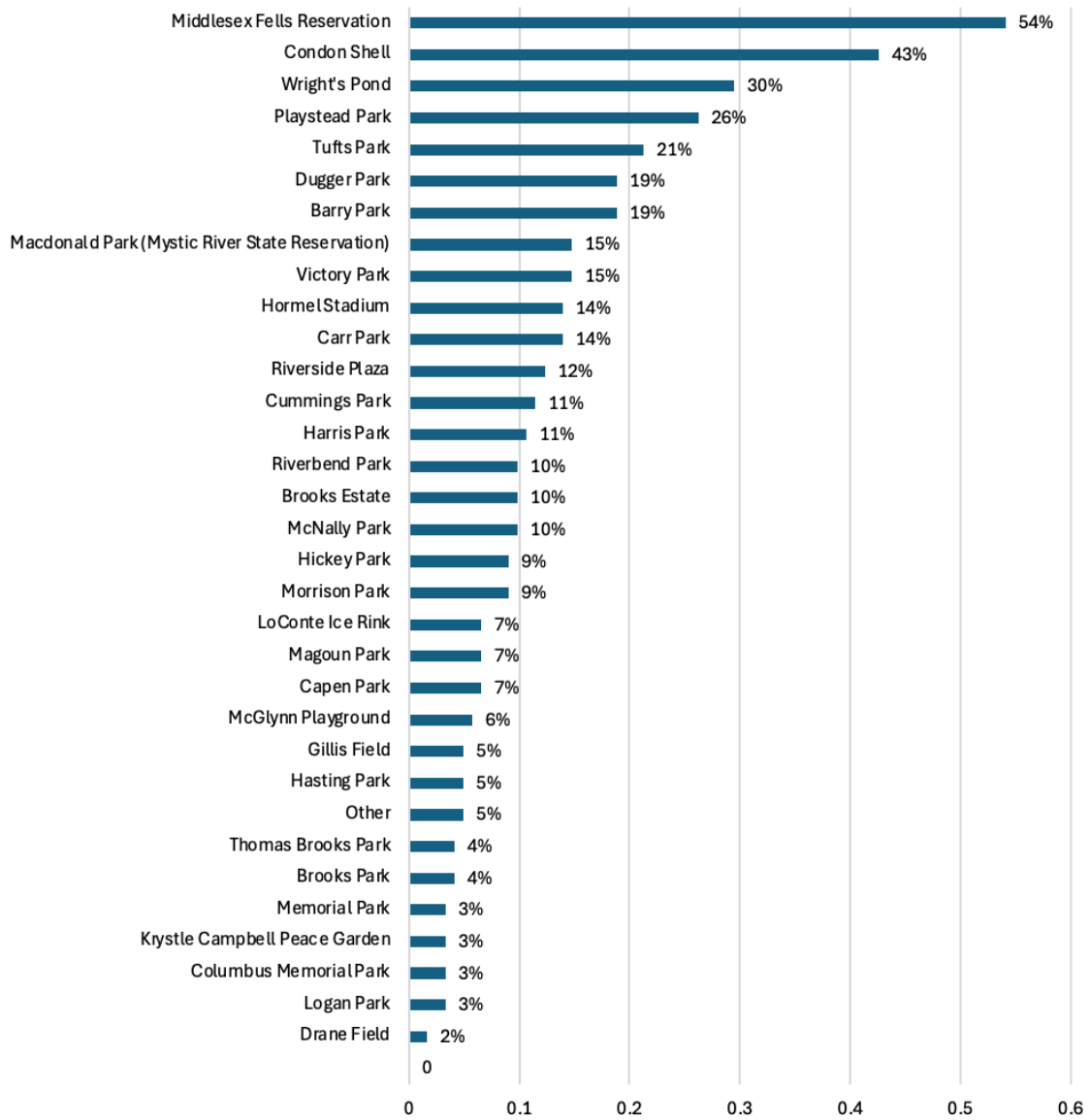
Neighborhoods Represented by Respondents



Most respondents were from the neighborhoods of West Medford (22%), Fulton Heights/North Medford (16%), and Hillside (16%).

Parks Visited by Respondents

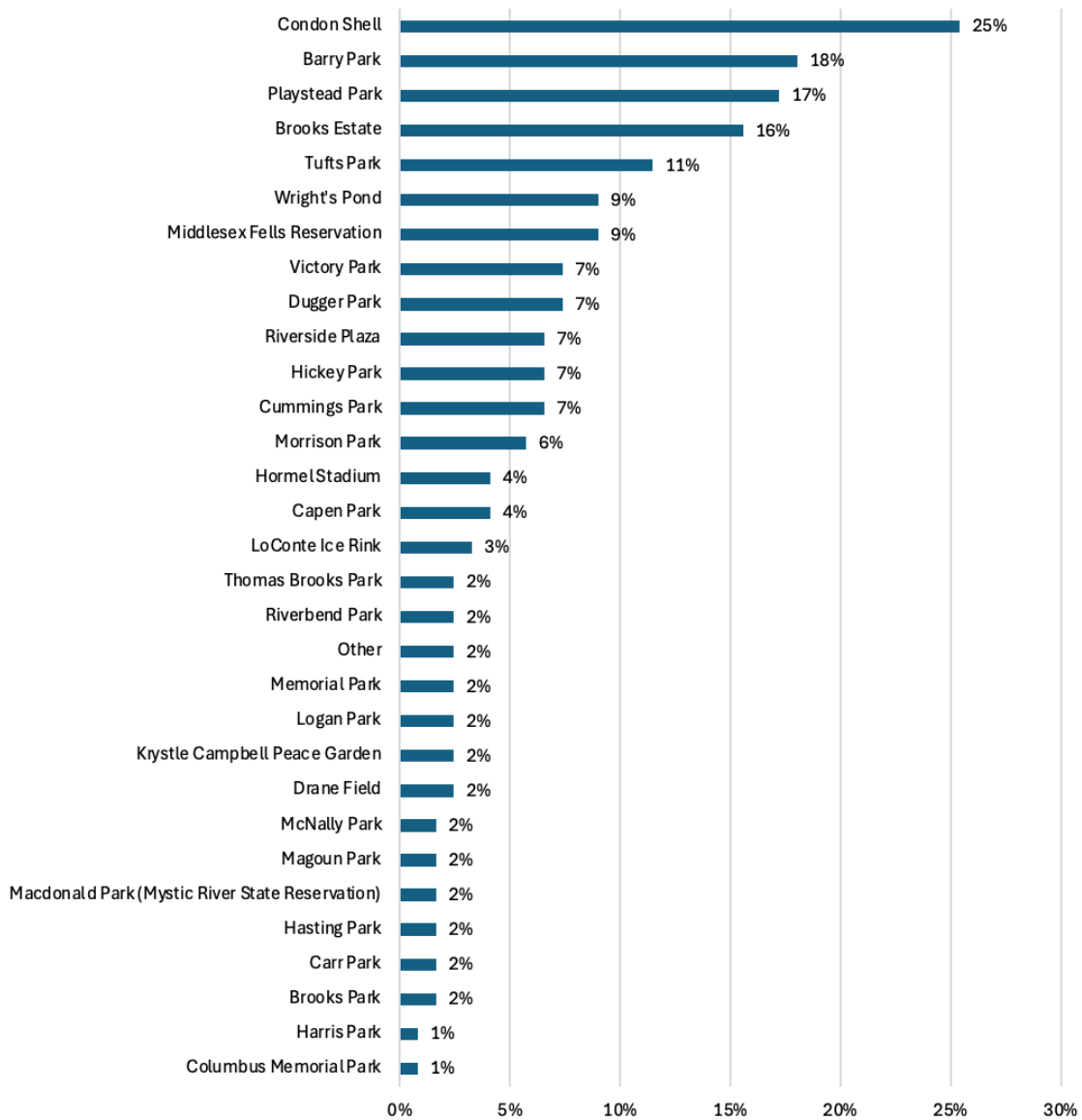
Most Visited Parks, Based on Responses



The top five parks most frequently visited by respondents were the Middlesex Fells Reservation (54%), the Condon Shell (43%), Wright's Pond (30%), Playstead Park (26%) and Tufts Park (21%).

Respondents' Top 3 Priority Parks

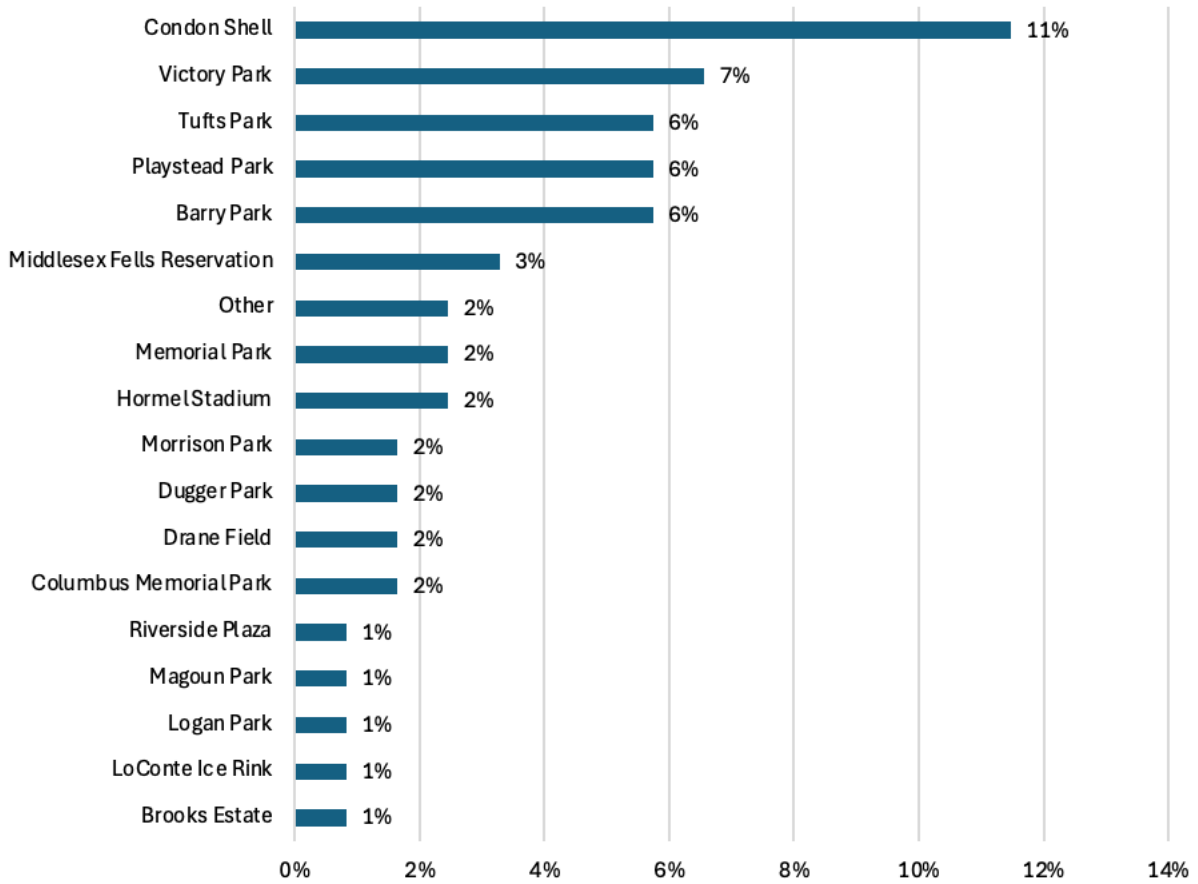
Highest Priority Parks for Improvement, Based on Responses



The top five parks with the highest priority for improvements by respondents were the Condon Shell (25%), Barry Park (18%), Playstead Park (17%), Brooks Estate (16%), and Tufts Park (11%).

Parks with Flooding, Identified by Respondents

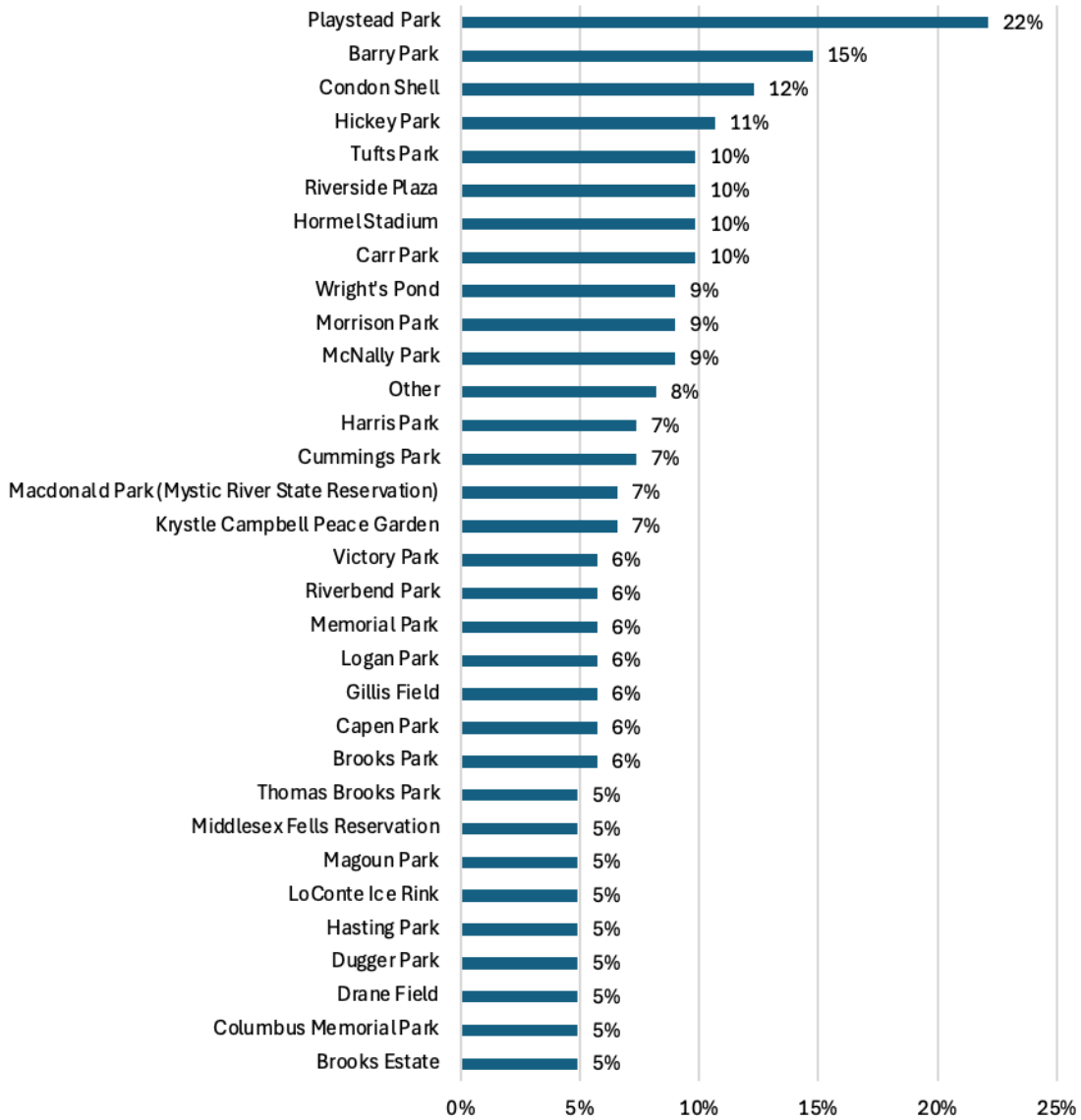
Parks with Flooding, Based on Responses



According to respondents, the top five parks that experience flooding are the Condon Shell (11%), Victory Park (7%), Tufts Park (6%), Playstead Park (6%), and Barry Park (6%).

Parks Experiencing Heat, Identified by Respondents

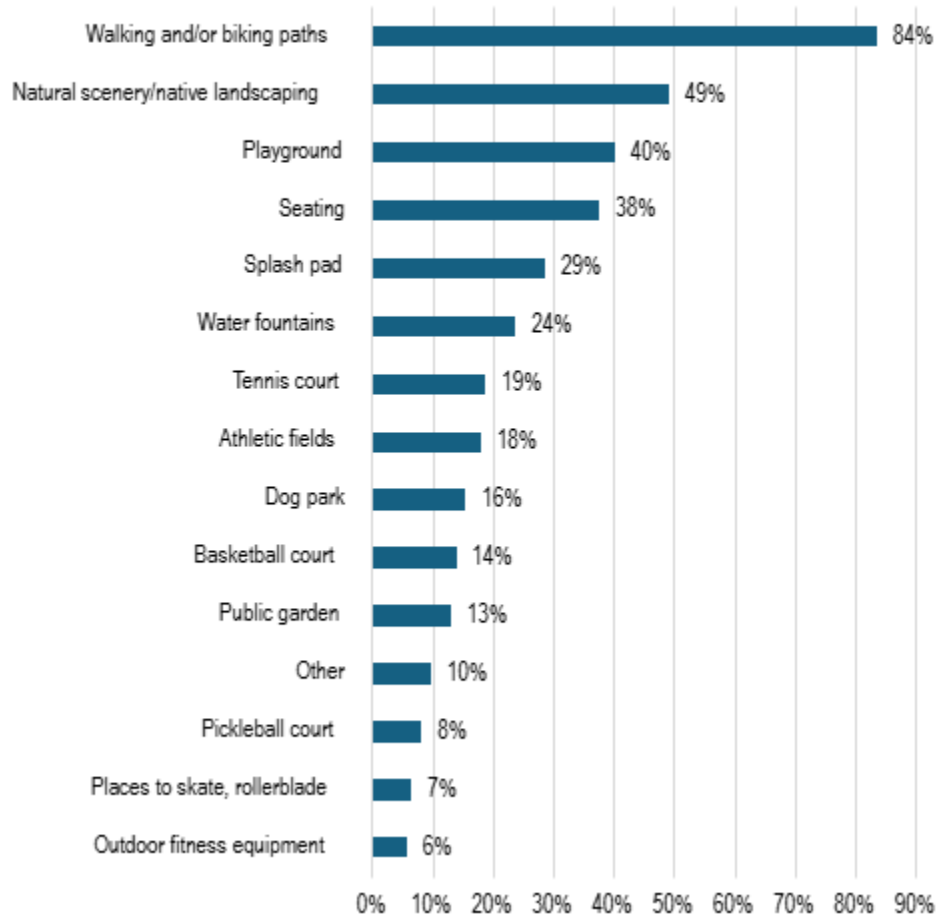
Parks with Severe Heat, Based on Responses



According to respondents, the top four parks that experience severe heat are Playstead Park (22%), Barry Park (15%), the Condon Shell (12%), and Hickey Park (11%).

Park Amenities Used by Respondents

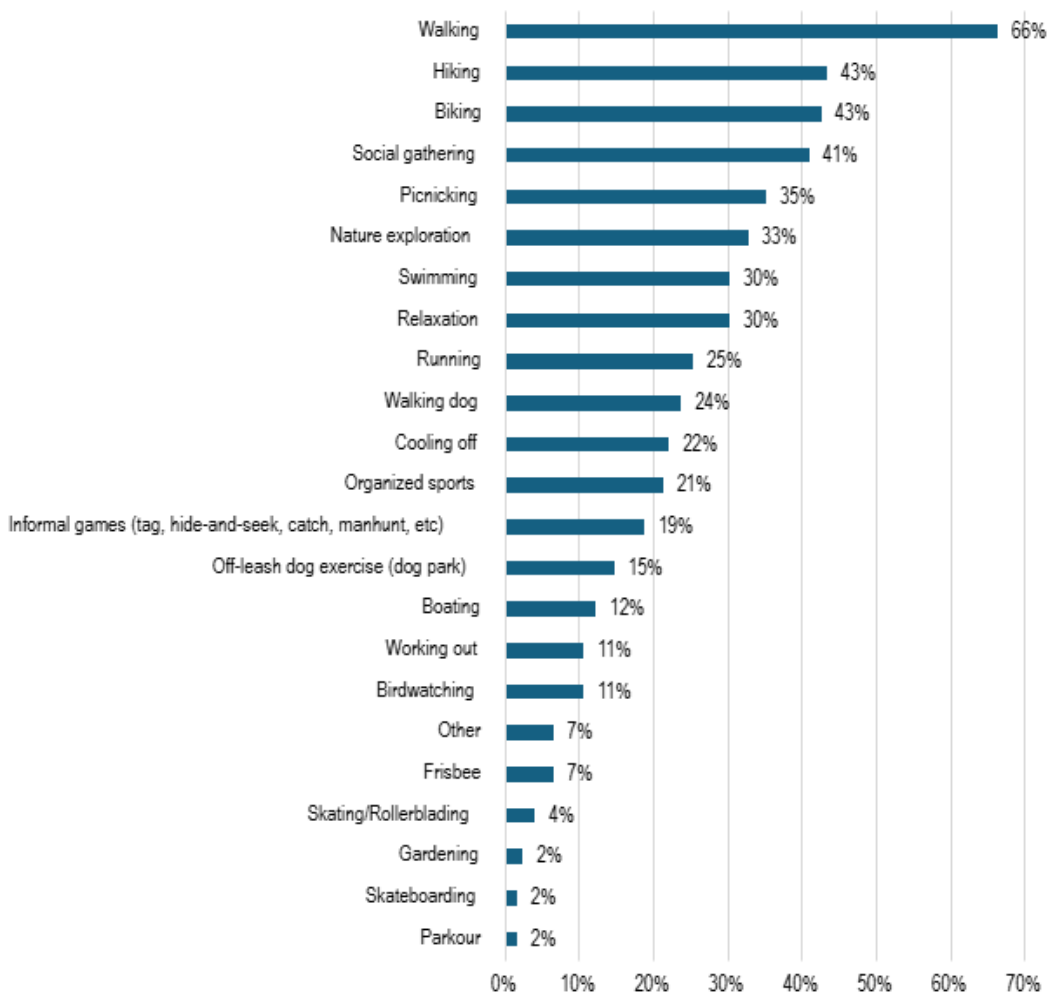
Amenities Used by Participants



Overwhelmingly, the most common park amenity used by participants were the walking and biking paths (84%).

Park Activities of Respondents

Activities Respondents Participate In



About two-thirds (66%) of participants use the park for walking.

Themes Derived from Public Participation

As a result of public participation efforts, several themes were revealed for priorities of park improvements.

1. **Amenities.** Increasing access to restrooms and water fountains was one of the highest priorities for participants, especially where children's sports games take place. Many participants highlighted the lack of parking and the need for increased access by other modes of transportation, including walking, biking, and transit. Participants also called for incorporating more local public art throughout Medford parks. There was a strong interest in increasing the number of dog parks to allow for a dedicated place for unleashed dogs

and avoid dog droppings throughout the park. Improving lighting and increasing the number of benches were also common priorities of participants.

2. **Safety and Park Maintenance.** Participants indicated that there is a need for increased general maintenance and cleaning to ensure parks are free of any hazards, trash, and overgrowth. Playground structures that are broken or rusting should be prioritized for improvements. Several sports fields and facilities were flagged as needing attention. Participants also underscored the need to fix gate closures and fencing at several parks to keep both children and dogs safe. One of the most often cited issues with cleanliness is the high presence of goose droppings, especially at the Condon Shell.
3. **Recreational Opportunities.** Participants highlighted the desire for increased recreational opportunities in city parks. Specifically, many participants emphasized their preference to diversify play features and recreational amenities to appeal to different age groups, including older kids and teenagers. Additionally, one of the most frequent requests was for more splash pads and water features. Participants would also like to see the continuation and expansion of community events at city parks, particularly at the Condon Shell.
4. **Climate Resiliency.** Participants were asked about parks that experience severe heat and flooding after wet weather. To combat heat, participants recommended increasing shade, such as through more trees or shade structures. Participants also suggested increasing access to water, including through water fountains or splash pads. Participants listed several parks where they have witnessed pooling of water after heavy rain, highlighting the need to explore additional stormwater management techniques. There were also frequent requests to address invasive species and increase plantings of native trees and plants.
5. **Accessibility.** While many participants noted that they value the high volume and connectivity of parks in Medford, expanding the accessibility of the parks was highlighted as a key priority for improvements. Several walking and cycling paths are in need of maintenance to ensure accessibility across all parks for those using wheelchairs and mobility aids. Increasing access to seating and benches is also an important step towards ensuring that parks are accessible and comfortable for all users. Playground features, including surface materials, are in need of improvement so that users have equitable access.

10-Year Action Plan

Updated Priority Implementation Matrix

While reviewing comments from the public and city staff, much of the feedback received aligned with original actions from the 2019-2026 OSRP. Below, the “10-Year Priority Action Matrix” lists original actions that have been identified as priorities for both in the short-term and ongoing in light green rows. Modifications to actions and new actions based on project outreach and existing conditions have been identified in the “Notes” column of the table below.

We believe that a robust assessment of the parks and uses is necessary. The City will continue to pursue funding for a comprehensive plan update. The priority actions listed below are items that should continue to be progressed in the interim.

List of Responsible Parties Acronyms:

BC	Bicycle Commission
CC	Conservation Commission
CGC	Community Garden Commission
COA	Council on Aging
CPC	Community Preservation Committee
CPD	Commission for Persons with Disabilities
DCR	MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
DEI	Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
DPW	Department of Public Works
EE	Energy and Environment
FD	Forestry Division
HC	Historical Commission
HD	Highway Department
MAC	Medford Arts Council
MO	Mayor’s Office
MPS	Medford Public School
MyRWA	Mystic River Watershed Association
PDS	Office of Planning, Development, & Sustainability
PC	Parks Commission
RD	Recreation Department

10-Year Action Plan Matrix				
Goal 1: Serve the active recreation needs of all residents throughout Medford by expanding its open space resources and upgrading the conditions of existing facilities				
Objectives/Actions	Responsible Parties	Notes	Time Frame	Potential Funding Sources
Objective 1.1: Provide each neighborhood with a safe open space that provides multi-generational opportunities for recreation				
1.1.1 Implement improvements identified for various parks	DPW, RD		Short- to long-term	City, CPA, PARC, CDBG, LWCF
1.1.2 Continue to reach out to seniors and people with disabilities to understand their recreation needs and how they can best be met	PDS, COA, CPD, DEI		Ongoing	n/a
1.1.3 Expand programming and intentional spaces for teens at parks and recreation centers	RD		Short-term	City
Objective 1.2: Meet community needs for organized and informal team and individual sports				
1.2.1 Consider ways in which the field permitting process can be streamlined and coordinated	RD, PC		Completed	n/a
1.2.2 Publicize schedules for field use so that users can identify openings that can be used for informal, non-organized league use	RD, PC		Completed	n/a
Objective 1.3: Meet the needs of all citizens through universal design				
1.3.1 In order to improve accessibility to the City's parks and open spaces, the City should adopt the principles of universal design to ensure that they are accessible to all regardless of age or ability	PDS		Ongoing	City, CPA, PARC, CDBG, LWCF
1.3.2 Support the Community Garden Commission in increasing accessibility to and integrating universal design	CGC, PDS, DPW, DEI	The community gardens are not currently fully accessible, though they may have accessible features. The City should	Ongoing	City, CPA

principles and programming at community gardens		continue to work with the CGC to increase accessibility of the gardens by providing professional and financial support.		
Objective 1.4: Extend playing hours for adult leagues and facilitate Youth League night-time play				
1.4.1 Look for opportunities to provide lighting at playing fields and courts in a manner that does not impact adjacent neighborhoods (i.e. lighting that is compliant with International Dark-Sky Association Community Friendly Sports Lights Program)	RD		Mid-term	City
1.4.2 Conduct a lighting audit to ensure that the best practices are implemented to ensure that recreation, public safety and energy efficiency goals are met	DPW, RD		Completed	City
Objective 1.5: Provide a clean, safe playground for each neighborhood that provides a variety of play spaces and experiences				
1.5.1 Upgrade playground equipment, benches, and picnic facilities at parks as identified in this plan	DPW		Short- to long-term	City, CPA, PARC, CDBG, LWCF
1.5.2 Provide shade structures and covered picnic areas at heavily used parks and playgrounds	DPW, PDS		Short- to long-term	City, CPA, PARC, CDBG, LWCF
1.5.3 Adopt city standards for park furnishings such as waste receptacles, benches, and water fountains/water filling stations	DPW, PDS	New action	Short-term and ongoing	City
Objective 1.6: Extend the playing season and minimize use limitations due to wet conditions				
1.6.1 Where needed, regrade playing fields to both prevent pooling and manage stormwater runoff away from fields but onsite	DPW, RD, PC		Ongoing	PARC, CPA, LWCF, CDBG, City

1.6.2 Where needed, integrate green infrastructure measures to mitigate stormwater runoff	DPW, RD, PC		Mid-term	PARC, CPA, LWCF
Goal 2: Establish Connections to and along the City's natural resources				
Objectives/Actions	Responsible Parties	Notes		
Objective 2.1: Create a multi-use path system along the Mystic River and Malden River				
2.1.1 Improve and expand open space opportunities along the Mystic and Malden Rivers, including potential linear parks with accessible multi-use paths to existing open spaces	DCR, MyRWA, PDS		Mid-term	DCR, CPA
2.1.2 Provide needed safety improvements including sidewalk renovations, updated crosswalks, and strategic curb cuts.	HD, DPW	The original action calls for more curb cuts, but poorly designed or placed curb cuts can lead to more conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, particularly in public parking lanes.	Ongoing	RTP, City
2.1.3 Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between parks and open spaces within Medford and in the region	BC, HD, CPD, DPW		Ongoing	RTP, City
2.1.4 Work with DCR to improve/restore the pedestrian bridge and the park between the pedestrian bridge and Main Street	DCR, CPD		Mid-term	DCR
Objective 2.2: Provide access to the water for pedestrians, personal water crafts, and as an alternative route for transportation				
2.2.1 Look for opportunities to expand water access locations and activities, particularly along the Mystic River	DCR, RD, PDS, MyRWA		Mid-term	DCR, CPA
Objective 2.3: Prioritize DCR's Mystic River Master Plan findings and leverage common goals				
2.3.1 Look for ways to promote and advance projects promoted by DCR, DOT, MyRWA including MacDonald Park, Mystic	PDS, DCR, MyRWA, RD	The Clippership Connector project is completed. The South Medford Connector is now being managed by	Short- to long-term	State, CPA

Lakes Linear Park, South Medford Connector, Wellington Greenway, Wellington Connector, and the Condon Shell		the Department of Transportation.		
2.3.2 Work with DCR and improve communications to work collaboratively to meet mutual goals	DCR, PDS, DPW		Ongoing	n/a
Goal 3: Expand/diversify recreational programming for the City within the existing open spaces resources				
Objectives/Actions	Responsible Parties	Notes		
Objective 3.1: Expand community garden sites within the City to serve more moderate to low income neighborhoods				
3.1.1 Partner with community groups in Medford to develop a strategy for maintaining and expanding community gardens	CGC		Ongoing	City, CPA
Objective 3.2: Ensure that passive recreation opportunities are available throughout the City				
3.2.1 Look for opportunities to add passive recreational activities such as installing picnic tables, establishing walking paths, and creating gathering spaces	PDS, RD		Mid-term	PARC, CPA, City, LWCF
3.2.2 Continue to expand opportunities to provide programming at parks and consider public programming when making infrastructure improvements to parks and recreational facilities	PDS, RD	Public feedback showed significant support for the existing programming at parks and requested more. When making other updates to recreational facilities, consider ways to make those spaces even more compatible with future programming (electrical outlets, seating, etc)	Ongoing	n/a
Objective 3.3: Provide separate and distinct open space resources for residents with dogs who are not allowed off-leash in many of the City's parks				
3.3.1 Consider additional sites for new dog parks	PDS		Short-term	City, CPA, PARC, Stanton (and other) private foundations

3.3.2 Provide bag dispensers and signage to encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs; facilitate the organization of Friends groups for dog parks to manage stocking dispensers with bags and enforcement	DPW, PC, RD, PDS	The City does not currently have the staff capacity to stock waste bags at dog parks. In the past, whole boxes of bags were immediately and repeatedly removed after restocking.	Short-term	City
Goal 4: Improve the ecological quality of the City				
Objectives/Actions	Responsible Parties	Notes		
Objective 4.1: Expand the urban forest canopy				
4.1.1 Preserve mature trees and strategically plant new trees to provide public health and environmental benefits	FD		Ongoing	City
4.1.2 Along frequently traveled pedestrian routes, add benches and sufficient shade tree plantings	DPW, FD		Mid-term	City
4.1.3 Follow the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Master Plan for developing succession plans for tree plantings in existing parks	FD		Ongoing	City
Objective 4.2: Restore wetlands within the riverfront areas to create better ecological function and native habitat				
4.2.1 Regrade and revegetate river banks to prevent erosion	CC, DCR		Mid- to long-term	City, State
Objective 4.3: Manage the presence of exotic invasive vegetation in ecologically significant landscapes				
4.3.1 Plant native plants as existing parks are renovated and new ones are developed	DPW, CC, PDS		Ongoing	City
4.3.2 Remove invasive plants and develop a maintenance plan to prevent their return. replace with native ones	DPW, CC, PDS		Ongoing	City
4.3.3 Provide educational resources to the broader community about identifying and removing	MO, PDS	New action	Short-term and Ongoing	City, CPA

invasive plants; organize community removal events				
4.4 Deploy stormwater management pilot projects throughout the City to improve water quality (see specific design recommendations in the Climate Resilience Appendix)	EE, CC		Ongoing	City, PARC, LWCF, CPA
4.5 Protect water quality and important natural resource areas and buffer zones (see specific design recommendations in the Climate Resilience Appendix)	EE, CC		Ongoing	City, PARC, LWCF, CPA
Goal 5: Develop a system for park facility management/maintenance				
Actions	Responsible Parties	Notes		
Objective 5.1: Improve the overall quality of Medford's existing inventory of open spaces and facilities				
5.1.1 Install or construct restroom facilities (temporary or permanent) that meet ADA accessibility guidelines, particularly at the City's most heavily used parks and those with playgrounds and ballfields	DPW, RD, PC, PDS		Ongoing	City
5.1.2 Research additional funding resources for the maintenance and upgrading of parks and recreation facilities to relieve the financial burden on City departments	PDS		Ongoing	n/a
5.1.3 Establish metrics to assess how the City implements the goals and objectives of this Plan (i.e. miles of walkways built, new open space acquisitions, facilities improved, etc.)	DPW, RD		Ongoing	n/a
5.1.4 Hire a Certified Playground Safety Inspector to perform	PDS, DPW	New action	Mid-term	City

playground inspections across all parks				
Objective 5.2: Educate the residents as to the resources available throughout the city-wide open space system				
5.2.1 Develop a coordinated online schedule for all playing fields so that potential users can determine field availability	RD, PC, DPW		Completed	n/a
5.2.2 Develop an updated inventory of amenities available at city parks, bike paths, and open spaces and update online detailed descriptions on MyRec	PDS, RD	The City previously set up online webpages detailing park/recreational facility offerings but could expand by adding details on features such as access to bike parking, water fountains, and accessibility considerations.	Short-term	n/a
5.2.3 Follow the recommendations of the 2025 wayfinding study to implement a wayfinding system to direct people to the City's parks and open spaces, especially from adjacent roadways and walking paths	PDS, RD, PC, DPW	The City is currently working with a consultant on a city-wide wayfinding study.	Short-term	City, CPA
5.2.4 Continue to improve communication between various City commissions, departments and other entities such as with volunteer stakeholder groups and sports leagues	All		Ongoing	n/a
Objective 5.3: Facilitate the management of playing fields to protect their condition				
5.3.1 Encourage the establishment of Friends groups to help oversee park conditions and report vandalism by utilizing and promoting SeeClickFix	DPW, PDS, MO		Ongoing	n/a
5.3.2 Expand the participation in the annual park cleanup day; consider hosting multiple clean up events	MO	The Mayor's Office now organizes an annual park cleanup day each spring. Consider	Ongoing	n/a

		opportunities to build upon this work.		
5.3.3 Evaluate options for right-sizing operational staff and resources	DPW, RD	New action	Short-term	City
Objective 5.4: Support programming that support public art and use of public outdoor venues throughout the City				
5.4.1 Integrate arts and culture into the design of open spaces by creating opportunities for performing arts and the display of artwork	MAC, MO, PDS		Short-term	City, private
5.4.2 Work with residents, teens, and neighborhood groups to identify pop-up opportunities for the arts and culture	MAC, PDS		Short-term and Ongoing	n/a
5.4.3 Commission artists to develop destination artworks along bicycle paths and routes to promote wayfinding and encourage use of bike and pedestrian trails	MAC, MO		Short-term and Ongoing	City, private
Objective 5.5: Leverage permit fees as income for parks maintenance				
5.5.1 Re-evaluate the permit fee schedule to determine how it can effectively cover ongoing maintenance expenses	RD, PC	The majority of the fees are derived from youth sports, and the City would prefer not to increase the cost burden on families. The fees for private institutions have been reviewed and clarified.	Completed	n/a
5.5.2 Work toward establishing a dedicated park maintenance fund created in part from permit fees rather than having those fees go into the general fund	City Council, RD, PC	Fees are directed to the Recreation Department's Budget.	Completed	City
Goal 6: Strengthen Medford's climate change resilience through park and open space design and preservation				
Objectives	Responsible Parties	Notes		

<p>6.1 Perform ecological restoration and maintain the ecological integrity of Medford’s natural areas to maximize natural systems’ benefits, such as cooling, sequestering carbon, avoiding and capturing stormwater, and mitigating air pollution (see specific design recommendations in the Climate Resilience Appendix)</p>	<p>PDS, CC</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City, PARC, LWCF, CPA</p>
<p>6.2 Include design improvements in park renovations that incorporate strategies that mitigate climate change risks of urban heat island, stormwater runoff, inland flooding, and riverine/coastal flooding (see specific design recommendations in the Climate Resilience Appendix)</p>	<p>PDS, CC</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City, PARC, LWCF, CPA</p>
<p>6.3 Prioritize new parks and open space acquisitions in locations where climate change mitigation can address risks such as extreme heat, inland flooding, and coastal flooding (see specific design recommendations in the Climate Resilience Appendix)</p>	<p>PDS, CC</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City, PARC, LWCF, CPA</p>
<p>6.4 Increase park access and distribution for neighborhoods where residents are most vulnerable to climate change (see specific design recommendations in the Climate Resilience Appendix)</p>	<p>PDS, CC</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City, PARC, LWCF, CPA</p>

2026-2029 Specific Park Improvements Recommendations

In addition to the updated Priority Action Table, below is a list of recommended improvements organized by location. These recommendations were derived from public feedback and from consultation with city staff and are intended to augment outstanding recommendations from the 2019-2026 OSRP.

Barry Park

- Re-align faulty fence gate.
- Reconstruct the basketball court.
- Support the Community Garden Commission's efforts to install a new community garden at the park.

Brooks Estate

- Community feedback highlighted the Brooks Estate as an underutilized city open space asset. The City should continue to offer support to M-BELT's effort to complete the access drive renovation to allow for more events to be hosted on-site.

Capen Park

- Replace the splash pad fixtures with low-flow and soft-touch fixtures.
- Resurface the splash pad area with a low-slip surface.
- Replace faulty fence gates.

Condon Shell

- Implement geese deterrents to minimize geese waste, particularly within the lawn area facing the Shell stage.
- Advocate to DCR for the installation of an accessible viewing pad for the Shell stage.
- Continue to expand programming and events hosted at the Shell.
- Work with MyRWA and DCR to install permanent wayfinding signage for the Mystic River path, clarifying how it meets with the Clippership Connector (opened 2025).
- Consider, in consultation with entities that use the Shell for events, installing picnic tables on an accessible route.

Cummings Park

- Reseal basketball court.
- Re-install a sandbox in the play area.

Harris Park

- There is a snail-shaped water feature at the splash pad with a spray range that can reach benches placed nearby. Consider relocating the benches or, at minimum, providing signage alerting visitors using the benches that they are in range.

- Consider planting trees near the swing area to provide shade.

Hickey Park

- Add bleachers on an accessible route.
- Plant additional trees for shade.

Hormel Stadium

- Implement signage recommendations from the wayfinding study, once completed.

Logan Park

- Work with the Medford Arts Council to commission an artist to create a sculpture out of the large oak tree stump.
- Diversify play offerings by installing a nature play area accessible from the walkway.

Magoun Park

- Remove and replace the broken net play structure and surrounding play surface.

Morrison Park

- Evaluate existing loop pathway for improvements.
- Conduct community conversation to assess the existing mix of uses and amenities at the park.

Playstead Park

- Reconstruct the tennis courts.
- Support Medford Athletics in installing a new baseball scoreboard.
- Ensure there are accessible connections to existing site features.
- Plant additional trees for shade, prioritizing areas near the playground and visitors attending soccer games.
- Engage the surrounding community in a discussion about future park amenities that appeal to a variety of users and age groups, such as a pump track or skate space.

Riverside Plaza

- Install shade features.
- Install a water fountain.

Tufts Park

- Pursue opportunities to install field lighting at the park. Explore whether lighting the basketball court is also feasible.
- Explore options for correcting drainage and flooding issues at the fields.

- Develop a new playground design, informed by public outreach
- Implement community outreach to inform the possible creation of an off-leash dog area
- Consider replacing picnic tables in the pavilion area
- Redesign the loop path route to avoid conflict with the dugouts and playground.
- Add trees as a natural visual, sound, and shaded buffer between neighbors and the rear grass lawn area of the park.
- Remove or replace brush near playgrounds to deter pests.

Wrights Pond

- Consider locating an additional rain garden.
- Replace the existing stage area in poor condition with an accessible pavilion area.