

TIKISHLA PARK

MASTER PLAN

November 16, 2016 (5:30-7pm)
Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship



OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

Overview

Anchorage Parks and Recreation is updating the master plan for Tikishla Park. The master plan will provide a framework for development of facilities, playing fields and other park assets over the next 20 years. To ensure that the master plan aligns with the desires of the community, Parks and Recreation hosted an open house event to share information and solicit additional feedback from members of the community.

Meeting Summary

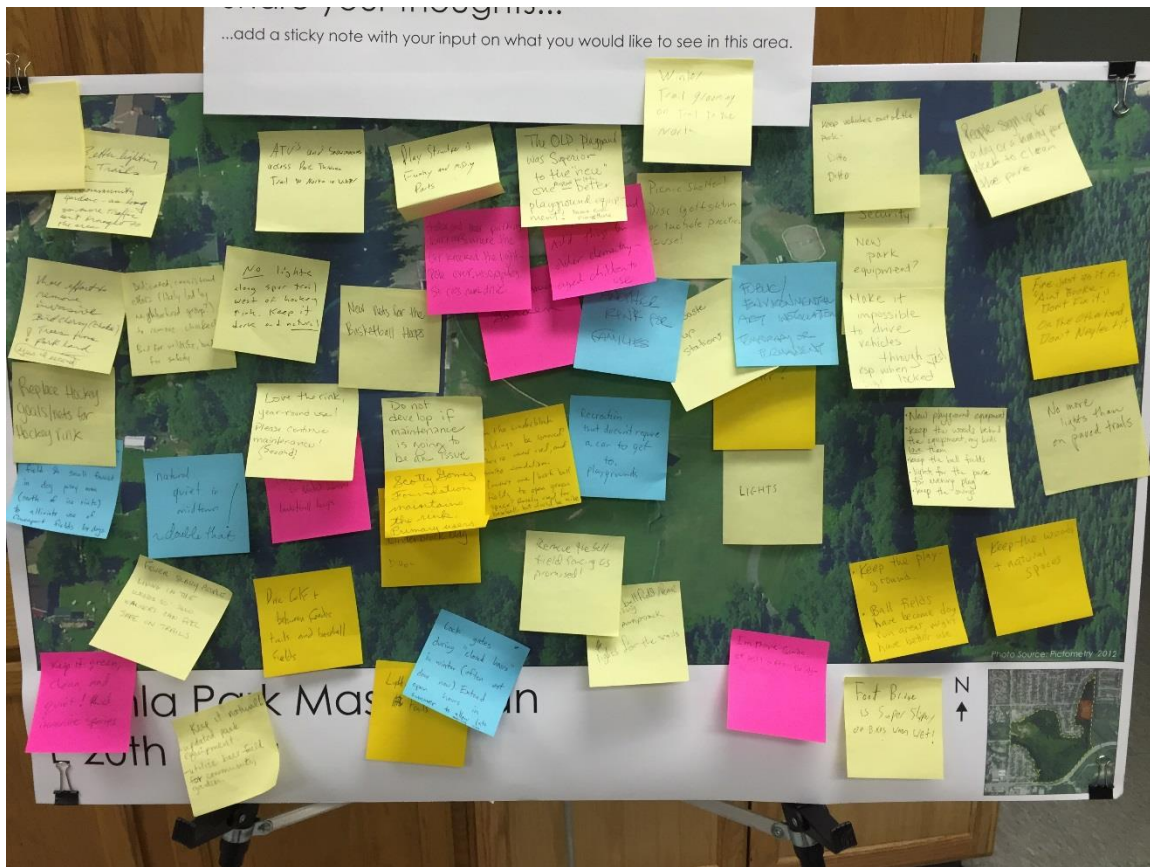
The Tikishla Park Master Plan open house was held at the Anchorage Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Airport Heights on November 16th, 2016. Approximately 60-70 people attended the event. The open house featured several interactive stations and attendees were encouraged to provide input.

The open house included the following stations:

- 1) **Project Information Station:** Information about the Tikishla Park Master Plan including the timeline for public involvement, planning and approvals; information about Tikishla Park; Tikishla Park area land use map; and a copy of the 1998 Master Plan
- 2) **Tikishla Park Growth and Change:** Aerial imagery from 1960-2014
- 3) **Tikishla Park Use Area Stations:** Four stations with aerial imagery and photos where members of the public could provide (sticky note) comments specific to each Use Area: 1) Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave Area); 2) Davenport Fields; 3) Natural Resource Areas; 4) Trails
- 4) **Online Survey Results:** Station displaying online survey results collected to date, attendees could also complete a printout version of the survey
- 5) **Indoor Tennis Facility:** Members of the public were able to provide their comments on a proposed indoor tennis facility which is currently outside the scope of this master plan

Comments from attendees are provided on the following pages and are organized by Use Area and topic.

Comments on Tikishla Park (E 20th Ave Area)



Playground

- New playground equipment
- Update park equipment
- New park equipment?
- Keep the swings
- Keep the playground
- Re-design space/trails to have all playground in one area
- Improve playground, add things for older elementary aged children to use
- Parkour-style exercise/play stations
- Recreation that doesn't require a car to get to. Playgrounds.
- Play structure is funky and missing parts
- Pitiful use of space – two swings, check out playground in Homer. Balance beams, tree stumps, hand pump for water, 2-5 appropriate and 5-12 challenges
- The old playground was superior to the “new” one – better playground equipment – no one ever plays there

Trails

- Lighting on feeder trails
- Lights
- Lights for the trails
- Lights for the park for evening play

- Lights on this trail (main spur), LED, motion sensory or low ground – not light pollution in back yards
- Better lighting on trails
- No more lights than on paved trails
- No lights along spur trail west of hockey rink. Keep it dark and natural
- Foot bridge is super slippery on bikes when wet
- Foot bridge & trail are poorly alighted. Bridge is very slick w/ any moisture
- Improve grade of hill after bridge
- Winter trail grooming on trail to the north

Hockey Rink

- Love the rink, year-round use! Please continue maintenance! (Second!)
- Replace hockey goals/nets for hockey rink
- Another rink for families
- In the 1980's there was a 20 minute timer on the rink lights, we would reset it as we played hockey. It was great. Now motion sensing lights on a timer would be appropriate (yes!) (great idea)
- Do not develop if maintenance is going to be an issue (Scotty Gomez Foundation maintains the rink: primary users)
- New nets for basketball hoops
- Tall fences needed around basketball hoops (second)

Ball Fields

- Remove ball field fence + building
- Remove the ball field fencing as promised!
- Convert one/both ball fields to open green space? Rarely used for baseball, but would be nice.
- Get rid of baseball fields, bleachers + cinder block building (ditto)
- Convert City View legacy fields to 1 soccer field & small fenced dog play area (south of ice rink) to alleviate use of Davenport fields by dogs
- Ballfields have become dog run areas, might have better use...
- Can the cinderblock buildings be removed? They're never used, and invite vandalism.
- Keep the ball fields

Natural Areas

- Keep the woods behind the equipment, my kids love them
- Keep the woods + natural spaces
- Keep it natural!
- Dedicated, consistent effort (likely led by neighborhood group?) to remove chokecherries. Bad for wildlife, bad for safety
- More effort to remove invasive bird cherry (choke) trees from parkland! (yes, I second)
- Keep it green, clean and quiet! Rid invasive species
- Natural quiet in midtown (double that!)

Safety

- Keep vehicles out of the park (ditto, ditto)
- Make it impossible to drive vehicles through, especially when locked (yes!, ditto)

- Other

- ## Comments on Davenport Fields



Natural Resource Areas

- Preserve woods north of Chester Creek Trail
- Preserve wild spaces (second!) (third) (4th)
- Preserve wild spaces!! (I agree)
- Keep the trees, all of them (ditto) (I agree) no pavement please, gravel is fine
- Do not touch existing social trails in woods here (ditto!) (ditto)
- Regarding the natural resource area north of the ballfields: no development, no new trails, no disc golf (tears up vegetation), no need to "improve" existing trails

Other

- Multi-use?
- Winter use? Hmmm... yes, brainstorm this.
- Winter festival area? Concerts, Drive-in, etc.?
- Disc golf around perimeter and through woods on north side
- Any outdoor minimal construction activity inducing progress: Frisbee golf, orienteering course, trails, exercise equipment, etc.
- Quit using loud speaker/megaphone during games/tournaments

Safety

- Gate locked in evenings
- Add car barriers where bollards are missing
- Organize vehicle areas
- Less people using this as a party area after dark or a shooting range
- More security

Dogs

- Dog owners not picking up – big problem for baseball – dog park elsewhere
- Dog waste cleanup stations
- An official off leash dog area fenced in

Comments on Trails



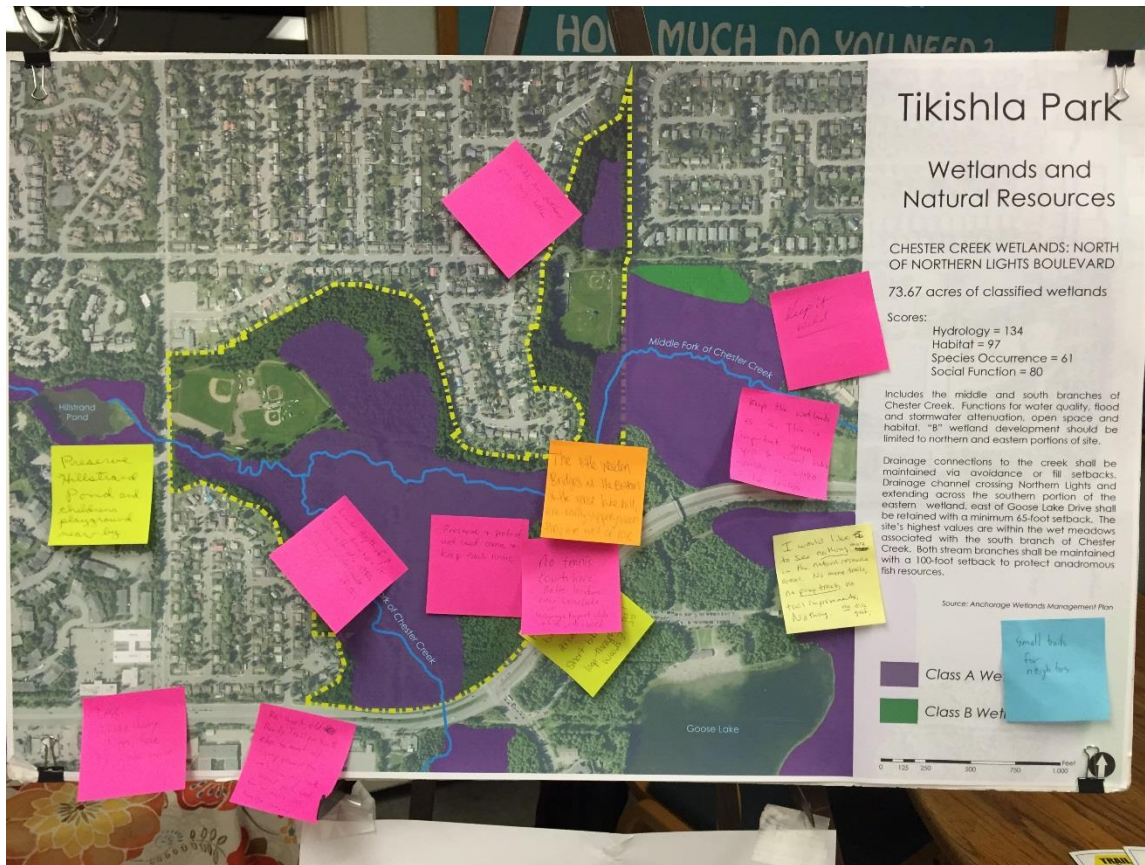
Soft Surface Trails

- Please leave existing soft-surface trails as-is. Their current character makes travel on them somewhat adventurous – a good thing!
- Generally, these are great informal trails + natural space to leave as-is, some in the area NE of Davenport Fields + N. of Chester Creek Trail
- This trail along the bluff (Anchor Park side) seems important to the neighbors on this side of the greenbelt and creates a nice loop, but it is very rinky-dink. I have mixed feelings but very minor improvements may be warranted for dry feet + creek crossing (yes, please)
- Great connector, neighborhoods need these
- A small bridge over S. Fork North of Northern Lights. The snow berm & plow debris can be difficult in the winter (2nd)

Paved Multi-Use Trails

- The little wooden bridges at the bottom of the goose lake hill area really slippery when they are wet or icy

Comments on Natural Resource Areas



Natural Resource Areas

- Keep it wild
- Keep the wetlands as is. This is important green space & animal habitat especially as UMED further develops
- Preserve & protect wet land area + keep trails rustic
- For better protection of the uplands north of northern lights, the master plan should advocate for or re-designate that area to be "preservation land" (an upgrade from current "conservation land")
- The master plan should state that there is to be no development in the natural resource areas (yes!) (ditto)
- The natural areas area the best part about this park. PLEASE keep them natural + do not build anything that would detract from that (ditto)
- Keep wetlands as is. This fall there were several salmon visible in Chester Creek by 20th – alive into October!
- Natural Resources areas are my main use. No development please. (Agree! Keep it green/natural)
- I would like to see nothing more in the natural resource areas. No more trails, no pump track, no trail improvements, no disc golf, nothing
- Make salmon friendly (arrow to Chester Creek)
- Small trails for neighbors
- No need to change

- No tennis courts here: better locations near Goose Lake or Anchorage Racquet Club which just closed
- Re-work old Rony Trail on South edge to meet old campground trails – narrow, dry route around park. Good for neighbors; less homeless camping
- Less choke cherry trees. Save the moose browse
- Less invasive trees
- Preserve Hillstrand Pond and children's playground near-by
- Lower depth of sewer drain here. It was altered in 1980's raising water table making more of this swampy
- Pump track & bike skill development area – short bike trail loop through woods? (yes! Second)

Comments on Indoor Tennis Facility

Attendees had the opportunity to provide input on a proposed indoor tennis facility in the Tikishla Park area. The following question asked:

“Over the last two years, there has been talk of a proposal to develop a large indoor tennis facility in/or around Tikishla Park. Do you support the development of an indoor tennis facility at Tikishla Park? If so, please describe why or why not in the space provided below...”

- I absolutely oppose a tennis facility at Tikishla. The very idea is so at odds with the park's character, beloved use, and value to Anchorage generations to come. This is a shockingly bad idea that must die now.
- No I don't want to see this type of development in Tikishla Park. Use the money to fix existing tennis facilities in town, local schools, other parks, vacant parking lots like the old Sam's Club on Rodeo Dr. It's not worth permanent changes/loss of a natural resource for an activity that seems to be declining in popularity.
- Absolutely NO tennis facility on our park space! This is totally unfitting. Tennis players can build their own facility in Ship Creek. This proposal totally goes against what Tikishla Park is all about. Do not build on our precious remaining urban green space that will permanently be erased!
- No indoor tennis facility in Tikishla Park, Please!
- No, I do not. As much as I appreciate an all-season facility, I appreciate our ever dwindling natural spaces even more. I am a frequent user of The Dome, and a tennis player, but greatly value these lands of natural habitat - Play tennis in the summer!
- NO! Absolutely No! That space, or any parkland, is not there to be developed into large facilities, or any kind of development. The green space is what makes that area special and should be preserved as such. Parkland is not just a holding place until someone comes up with a crazy idea to destroy it, it's a place to enjoy as natural space.
- Very much oppose the building of an indoor tennis facility in Tikishla Park. This area is one of the last intact greenbelts in a city with ample places where clearing has occurred and this facility can be built.
- No. Tikishla Park should be preserved first as a natural resource area with emphasis on outdoor recreation (ice hockey, basketball, baseball, walking, playground, etc.) We don't need or want to clear land to build indoor space

- Large -> How large? And Where? The informal unpaved trails of the park area are important to me. They provide a feeling of wildness while living in the city. I have heard - do not know for sure that tennis facility would be located off N Lights about old city campground in what is currently Natural Resource area. I am opposed to locating the tennis center in natural resource area because I think natural resource areas will be under increasing pressure in the urban area.
- It should not be necessary to cut trees/raze natural areas for this facility. If it is determined to truly be needed/wanted and would be used, put it in an area that is already developed. If there is real reason to put it in a Muni Park, consider putting it at Goose Lake to replace the derelict building there - where ample parking already exists. I have questions - why was the nearby tennis facility close (near Penland Pkwy + Bragaw)? - How is an indoor tennis facility to be structure so that it would be appropriate on public park land? It sounds a lot like a private facility taking advantage of free land. However, I am supportive if there is a purpose + need, just not in Tikishla Park.
- I do not support this type of facility in this area or Tikishla Park. The area is a sensitive ecological resource for watershed and the footprint would severely disturb this resource. There are plenty of other indoor tennis facilities and this is simply not needed.
- Do not build this facility at this site! 1) The site is in daily use by residents doing low-impact quiet recreation - walking, jogging, biking, skiing, dog walking. It is beloved space! 2) It borders the Middle Fork with a recovering salmon run. All slopes drain into the creek. 3) It creates an upland buffer to an important wetland and to a dense urban neighborhood. 4) There are much better locations where you would not damage wildlife habitat and recreation values. 5) Traffic! Imagine the nightmare of another driveway in that stretch of N Lts Blvd.
- I do not support the use of our green spaces for the development of indoor recreational facilities. There are plenty of previously developed lots that need to be renovated that would better suit these purposes.
- No. Use an existing surplus/excess structure for this, assuming there is actually enough demand for more tennis courts besides Dan Sullivan.
- Absolutely not!
- No! Not in what is now natural areas. Dome courts at East or Wendler instead! Would love tennis - just not in current green space!
- No: Park is designated as a natural space and should be maintained as such. Traffic on the Northern Lights/Lake Otis corridor is already too congested.
- This is highly dependent upon the chosen location. There are already some disturbed areas and parking facilities at Goose Lake. This is my preference for something like this.
- Not if it takes away the existing natural spaces. (sorry mom)
- No, I do not support this in any way, shape or form. It is not the appropriate place. The natural open, green space of this park is what makes it a jewel of this city. The city must find another location for this facility if it determines there is a high level of possible participation ensured. I question the use of such a facility because the other local tennis facility closed.
- Absolutely not. We don't need to lose the watershed (sp?) buffer and green space; we don't need yet another traffic complication right amidst the UMED under (sp?) traffic

- I would love to have an indoor tennis facility in the right place in Anchorage, but Tikishla Park is not that place. (If nothing else, parking would be awful) Perhaps East High area is better.
- No, I do not support the development of an indoor tennis facility at/in Tikishla Park. When Mr. Shepherd spoke at the Airport heights Community Council he said "no one is using those woods, except for homeless camps." He was so wrong. There are trails everywhere. People walk to work at UAA and U-MED employers. Kids walk through to schools. People with fat tires bike year round. Cross country skiers use trails (when there is snow). I walk the trails to get centered.
- No, I am strongly opposed to the proposed indoor tennis facility@ Tikishla Park. I believe that any developments of parkland should encourage outdoor recreation, especially for low-income families/kids. This aligns with the "play every day" campaign, teaching kids healthy activities @ a young ages.
- Nope. Green space has much higher value.
- No, I do not support the development of an indoor tennis facility. I feel it will significantly degrade the wildland + change the whole demeanor of the area.
- No - because of the loss of green space.
- I absolutely do not support a tennis facility in the Tikishla Park area. It's not a matter of NIMBY, but common sense. There is room and parking already at Goose Lake Park. There is great access at the NE corner of Russian Jack, at Debarr + Pine. The natural area at Tikishla north of N Lights is a unique zone of wetlands (including a salmon Stream with increasing returns of fish to both forks, black spruce and uplands of birch + white spruce. It's a sound buffer to the neighborhoods as well. Finally, it is used by many in the neighborhood daily for walking running, biking, etc.
- This is not a developed area. There is no utilities in this area. This is an inappropriate use of the land
- I am totally opposed to locating this facility in undeveloped or "natural resource" areas of Tikishla Park. I "recharge" in those areas, at least once a week. I am open to locating it in existing developed areas, such as the ballfields on Lake Otis, provided that no additional clearing is needed.
- I do not support the tennis facility. It will too greatly impact the natural area and does not fit with the spirit of the park.
- I think this would be a huge waste of a natural green spot. There are many places in Anchorage to build a site like that, please don't use this one.
- I would like to see an indoor tennis facility in Anchorage, and in this general area of town, but not in the park. What about the talk of a dome over East High courts?
- No - Tikishla's attributes are its wilderness feel and access. Tennis happens at the Alaska Club and similar facilities. Such a building would draw people from all over town as a destination, clogging streets and parking facilities, detracting from the natural peace. More industrial parts of town are much more conducive to such use.
- NO!!! There are better places to locate such a facility than in the Tikishla parkland. I will vehemently oppose a tennis facility in Tikishla Park area.
- Prefer OUTDOOR facility, 2 to 4 courts, and ice skating in winter - an area for non-hockey skaters - little kids. The rink is very popular.