

# MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE GIRDWOOD ROADS, FACILITIES, PARKS & RECREATION



**DATE:** April 24, 2020  
**TO:** Girdwood Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Kyle Kelley, Girdwood Service Area Manager & Margaret Tyler, Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** Parks and Rec 2019 Overview

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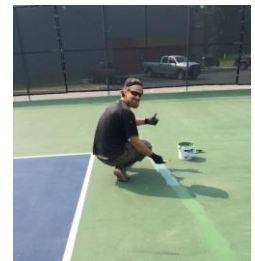
**Staffing:** combination of parks caretaker and 2 (well, 1.5) SCA interns was a great success. Summer season was unusually hot and dry, which made for more pleasant working conditions for all of these outdoor focused seasonal employees. Campground host continues to be an important volunteer support position, as the individual minds the campground and pavilions.

## **Tennis Courts:**

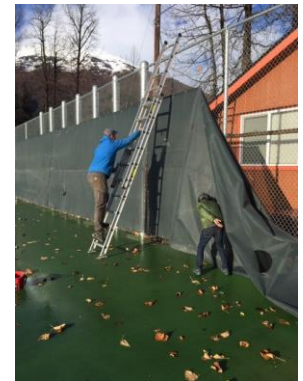
Tennis Committee hung the nets and wind screens in May, took them down in the fall, and met minimally in the early part of the year to discuss repair of earthquake cracks, chipping paint and request from pickleball players to add



permanent pickleball lines to the courts. Damage from the November 2018 earthquake was noticed in the early spring, repair materials were ordered and installed in the mid-summer, along with paint repair on the fence post supports. Boy Scouts completed info board and it was installed by volunteers in May. Pickleball players were advised to add chalk lines for now and reconvene later on to decide on permanent addition of lines to meet pickleball specs. Some comment that Pickleball could be added to the schoolyard, as FVCS is running pickleball program in the winter.



2020: Tennis Committee has approved purchase outdoor storage unit for materials. There are days when the courts go unused. Parks and Rec would like to encourage a local adult and youth tennis program to increase use of the tennis courts by youth and adults, encourage more diverse use, perhaps basketball, pickleball, etc.



## **Girdwood Park:**



Cottonwoods were trimmed in the spring. Storm mid-summer blew one cottonwood onto a camper truck in the campground, totaling the truck. Hot summer discouraged undergrowth and sightlines were maintained with minimal effort.

2020: Continue to assess and remove hazard trees in the park.

### **Nissman Pavilion:**

Maintenance only, summer long blowing out and cleanup. Shoveled moss off the roof mid-summer. Ordered bear resistant trash can for campground and pavilions this year, no reported bear issues in the park this summer.

2020: Replace the other BBQ Grill, remove the artistic chimney, re-stain the entire structure.

### **Marlow Pavilion:**

Managed rentals throughout the summer. No major items to report in 2019.

### **Girdwood Campground:**

Campground was unofficially renamed to honor Dwaine Schuldt, who started the project to create a campground in Girdwood. Artwork added to the campground in honor of Dwaine. Blew out paths and camp sites. Coordination with host on campground visitors. Fathers and Sons group spread gravel in the campground in spring. Summer Parks Caretaker improved campsite pads and signage.

### **Disc Golf:**

Some brushing as needed. Disk golf users did the majority of maintenance related to specific events held at the course.

### **Ball Field:**

Occasional clean up in the ballfield summer long. More effort to establish no dogs in the ball field, with formal signage. Organized use of the ball field continued from regular season through the fall.

2019: Replace the Outfield fence line. Paint the dugouts (? Possible service project). Work toward formal renaming of the field in honor of Sladen Mohl.

### **Little Bears Playground & park access:**

Projects on the playground assessment list were completed, including replacing the tire swing swivel, restoring the suspension bridge on the big kid side, replacing chains, replacing some untreated wood along the sandbox, and swing seats. Sealed wood on large play structures. Sold and added new pickets. Completed crosswalk project.

2020: Continue picnic area improvements, add sand and wood chips in spring, possibly with the Fathers and sons group in mid-May.

### **Girdwood Skate Park:**

Assisted Friends of the Skate Park with Throwdown Showdown pre-event and work party in May to build the new box jump. Installed new info kiosk outside the park for skate info. Encouraging new group to step forward with their ideas for the park, with great success. Updated logo for suitable design for hats and shirts. Summer long clean-up and blowing out of the park to keep ramps safe and free of forest and other debris.



2020: Assist with projects determined for this summer by FOSP. Work on flow of the park, rebuilding a couple ramps and adding 2 ramps. Assisting with Throwdown Showdown coordination and quilt fundraiser.

### **Parking Areas:**

Roads crew improved the surface and drainage. Coordinated rent-a-can and bear resistant dumpsters for the campground/pavilions.

2020: Possible to add some flowers or landscaping to the four corners of Alyeska Highway/Egloff/Hightower?

### **Soccer Field:**

Worked with Turf contractor on getting better grass growth, and it came in strong in the fall once it began raining. Field was damaged in fall 2019 by vehicles driving on the turf, amount of repair needed is not currently known.



2020: repair of turf damage. Continued planning for better layout and drainage of the park area, replace shed.

### **Lions Club Park:**

Blew leaves out in spring. Light brushing during summer.

2020: Work with Lions Club on construction of pavilion for this park, possible project for Land and Water Conservation Fund grant. Assess and remove cottonwoods that are hazards.

### **Town Square Park:**

Inside Park: Weeding of garden beds, tackling invasive weeds. Alyeska Landscaping assisted with maintaining and fertilizing trees. Turf contractor traded mowing for pruning some of the shrubs in Town Square Park. Perimeter of Park: Maintenance of planters around Town Square Park, weeding iris beds, removal of dead trees.

2020: Continue evaluating iris beds and determine best option. Assess trees that have been damaged by wildlife and weather. Consider adding lights to one of the live trees for Holiday tree lighting. Evaluate watering necessity for this park if the summer is hot and dry.

### **Beautification:**



Coordinated planting day in June. Dry weather required weekly watering to maintain the planters. Fertilizing, deadheading, weeding all summer. Bulbs planted at the library garden bed worked out great. Added a few perennials and more spring bulbs to library garden beds in fall.

2020: evaluate condition of planters, some have significant cracks from freeze/thaw. Continue looking for donations of perennials for garden beds, beautification day in June. More watering may be needed at the Community center/library if summer 2020 is hot and dry.

### **Nina's Wall:**

Staff cleaned out bed this spring and added more mulch, staked tall plants, cleaned out fountain. Replaced pump and water.

2020: Similar maintenance required. Garden bed gets hit with debris from winter sanding and requires maintenance early season. Consider having AWWU turn on the spigot for summer if the season is hot and dry. Hauling in water to this location is possible with normal weather pattern.

### **Community Center:**

Washed windows inside and out in spring. Turf contractor traded mowing for pruning some of the shrubs around the community center.

2020: John Samuelson Memorial Bench purchase and installation of pathway and bench on the lawn by the community room.

### **Community Room/Library:**

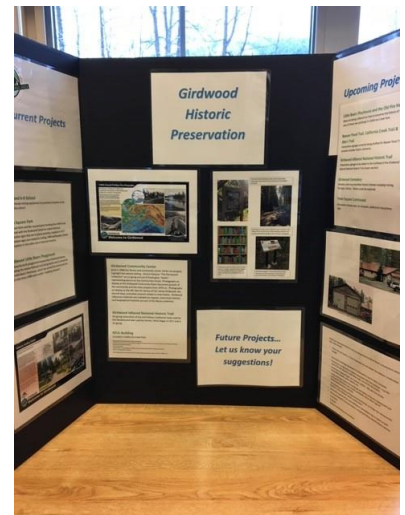
Handle rentals and coordination of groups. Purchased new video recorder and Lewis worked on the a/v. Carpet cleaned quarterly but is showing wear. Community Room reservations have switched to updated ActiveNet system. New rentals this year include piano lessons, gymnastics/tumbling.

2020: Room needs A/V equipment: mics, wireless connectivity to projection. Recommend annual piano tuning as regular maintenance of this community asset.

### **Little Bears & Glacier City Hall:**

Significant investment by staff on removal and rebuild of modern community buildings in this location, now moving forward as bond proposition in April, 2020 election. Continued support in establishing survey of historic locations/structures/features and maintenance of those through various methods.

2020: Ongoing repair and maintenance anticipated. Researching options to replace garage for road service warm storage and park equipment. Preservation of oral history of the two existing buildings.



### **Winter Grooming:**

Parks snow machine was out of commission much of spring 2019, repairs completed in March. Assist getting materials and fuel for the volunteer groomers. Late snow in fall 2019, no need for grooming yet.

### **Hand Tram:**

Incident in May, prior to hand tram opening, resulted in a fall from the cables/ropes to trees on the Crow Creek side. Fatal fall from Hotel side in June resulted in closure of the tram for several weeks and evaluation of the systems, addition of signage and safety additions. Serious injury fall from Hotel side in August resulted in closure of the hand tram for the season and review and discussion by Trails Committee and the community. This discussion continues with review of additional safety measures and consideration of the long term viability of the hand tram to meet the needs of the increasing number of trail users. Hand tram is working properly mechanically, however volume of people trying to get across is resulting in unsafe use. During the short 2019 season, hand tram rope was replaced twice, cable was tightened with assistance from Alyeska lift maintenance crew, and many staff hours.



2020: Staff will follow community direction through Trails Committee following discussions of liability, safety measures, operations and maintenance plan for the hand tram, along with study of alternate route and bridge to reduce pressure on the hand tram.



## **Trails:**

GTC completed repairs on Lower INHT from winter 2018/19 storms as work party effort. Completed California Creek Bridge on the Lower INHT with assistance from KMTA and held a grand opening. GTC also built a bench at the bridge site and commemorated the area in honor of Dwaine Schuldt, who spearheaded the effort to have the Iditarod Trail classified as a national historic trail.



SCA Crews and Andy Hehnlín nearly completed the trail restoration from the bridge to the edge of the Industrial park with RTP grant funds. SCA also cleared downed trees, brushing on Beaver Pond Trail, tread work on the upper INHT by the School, and work on connector trails and Deb's Way. GTC held 3 work parties in the summer, completing 80 hours of volunteer trail work. Agreement made with State to work on the south end of the Beaver Pond Trail (about .25 mi from junction with bird/gird trail to HLB land). Ongoing partnership with other trail

organizations, including Alaska Trails, GMBA, GNCS and others.

Fall storms dropped some trees of lower INHT and on Beaver Pond Trail. Some have been cleared by staff, others cleared by volunteers.



2020: Complete Phase 1 part 2 INHT construction, which will bring the trail to the Northeast end of the Industrial Park Land, and complete repairs on wash-out from December 2019 storm cycle. Initiate Phase 2 improvements. Work on Virgin Creek Falls Trail, pending decision on type of trail tread. Assist with Girdwood Trail Master Plan effort. We plan to hire SCA interns again in 2020 and to recruit local volunteers for trail maintenance projects.

## **Cemetery:**

Public Open House regarding Schematic Design was held on February 28. Project is currently on hold while Eagle River cemetery committee catches up for joint bond proposal in 2021.



## **Other Issues:**

Homeless camping year-round on private and public land. Girdwood Staff works with land owners to notify and clean up camps as quickly as possible. Formal notice requires 2 weeks of posted camp before legal clean up. Summer 2020 was hot and dry, some camps went unobserved for long periods of time because they were obscured by forest growth.



Vehicles camping outside of campground: Both derelict and running vehicles are used for free camping by summertime residents throughout town roads and parking lots. Overnight use of town square area is not allowed, camping is technically allowed on Crow Creek Road.

Concern in summer 2019 of campfires related to camping.

Abandoned vehicles, some recreational vehicles and U hauls, and sometimes boats are left in community parking lots. Such vehicles must be tagged for 48 hours before towing can begin, which usually results in vehicles being pushed or otherwise moved to a different spot in the same lot. Vehicles that are towed are towed at the community's expense.

### **Social Media & Website:**

Ongoing contact and updates via website and social media. Shifted email communication to subscription service for meeting notifications.

### **Other Contracts:**

Invasive Weeds contract – Alien Species LLC did a great job with regular weeding, handling spraying, and holding an invasive weed pull in summer 2019.

Turf Contract – Hot weather was a factor in establishing our needs. Contract is up for re-bid in 2020.

Window Washing – Hal LaPointe did an excellent job in 2018 and 2019.

2020: Likely continue with Alien Species LLC and H&L windows for another year. Turf contract will need to be renewed.

### **GBOS Grants:**

Ongoing cycle, MOA requirement for insurance has changed, but all are working through it. GBOS increased budget for awards in 2019 to \$50,000 total. GBOS 2019 Grantee year end reports are attached

### **Other Grants:**

State of Alaska, Recreation Trails Program Grants:

\$50,000 awarded in spring for Lower INHT, phase 1. Project is closed and reimbursed.

\$75,000 awarded in spring for Lower INHT, phase 1 part 2. Project is \$30,000 from completion.

\$75,000 applied for in fall 2019 for Lower INHT, phase 2, from Ruane Rd to Karolius on existing alignment. Funding looks positive.

Kenai Mountains/Turnagain Arm Heritage Area:

\$17,000 applied for and granted, closed and reimbursed for Lower INHT bridge and construction

\$4920 applied for, granted, closed and reimbursed for Trail Tools

\$5000 applied for and granted for Beaver Pond, Abe's, and California Creek Trail signage

GTC applied for and was awarded matching grant of \$5,000 for trail signs

Anchorage Park Foundation:

\$17,000 closed and reimbursed grant for Lower INHT

\$5,000 applied for and granted for work on Lower INHT phase 2

Alaska Community Foundation

\$890 gifted to put toward power wheelbarrow from ACF 2019

Anchorage Trail Care Fund grant.



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2020 grant plans:

Watching for grant openings for a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant, perhaps to help with Hand Tram work.

Also watching for opening of the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant, possibly for the Lions Club Park Pavilion.

KMTA will have a grant opening this spring.

Anchorage Park Foundation: Grants with APF are every other year, no grant cycle in 2020 likely.

**Community Meeting Attendance:**

GBOS, GTC, LUC, PSAC, Cemetery, Friends of the Skate Park, Tennis Committee

As needed: Girdwood Bear Aware, Title 21 Chapter 9, Housing Working Group

Alaska Trails Stewardship Grant Partnership – group working on the Southern Trek of the INHT.

Kyle attends Library Boosters and Girdwood Alliance as needed

Margaret attends KMTA and Girdwood Chamber as needed

Imagine! Girdwood (GAP) has become independent of GBOS, neither of us are currently attending in an official capacity.

New group related to Girdwood Historic Preservation is getting underway. Our role to be established as the group begins to form.