

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



DATE: February 27, 2022
TO: Girdwood Board of Supervisors
FROM: Kyle Kelley, Girdwood Service Area Manager & Margaret Tyler, Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Parks and Rec 2021 Overview

Staffing: In 2021 we hired 2 summer parks/trails caretakers, Brian and Andrew. Both were skilled at trail building and maintenance tasks. Hiring was tight, we were fortunate to attract these well-qualified individuals. We added a 3rd vehicle to our summer fleet, which provided additional flexibility. Our crew installed interpretive signs on the Lower Iditarod, brushed trails, did daily maintenance and repair in the park, assisted with construction of new ramps in the skate park, installed bear resistant trash can at Timberline/Alyeska Highway, added fish netting to trail boardwalks, re-routed the trail head at Virgin Creek Falls Trail.

In the fall an SCA crew time was donated to us; this group work on the Virgin Creek Falls Trail with our summer seasonal staff and added fish netting to trail boardwalks.

2022: staining the pavilions and park features, work on the Trails punch list, complete the work on the Virgin Creek Falls trail, including installation of interpretive sign at the trailhead.

Campground host continues to be an important volunteer support position, as the individual minds the campground and pavilions. In summer 2021 we were fortunate to have the Schwartz family in their RV keeping an eye on things.

Tennis Courts:

Tennis Committee hung the nets and wind screens in May, took the windscreens down in the fall. 2022: As in 2021, Parks and Rec would like to encourage a local adult and youth tennis program to increase use of the tennis courts, encourage more diverse use, perhaps basketball, pickleball, etc.

Girdwood Park:

2022: Continue to assess and remove hazard trees in the park.

Nissman Pavilion:

Maintenance only, summer long blowing out and cleanup. We replaced the broken bbq grill. 2022: Remove the artistic chimney, re-stain the entire structure.

Marlow Pavilion:

No major items to report in 2021.
2022: Maintenance only.

Girdwood Campground:

Summer crew blew out paths and camp sites during the summer. Coordination with host on campground visitors.

2022: Add gravel to camp sites and pathways.

Disc Golf:

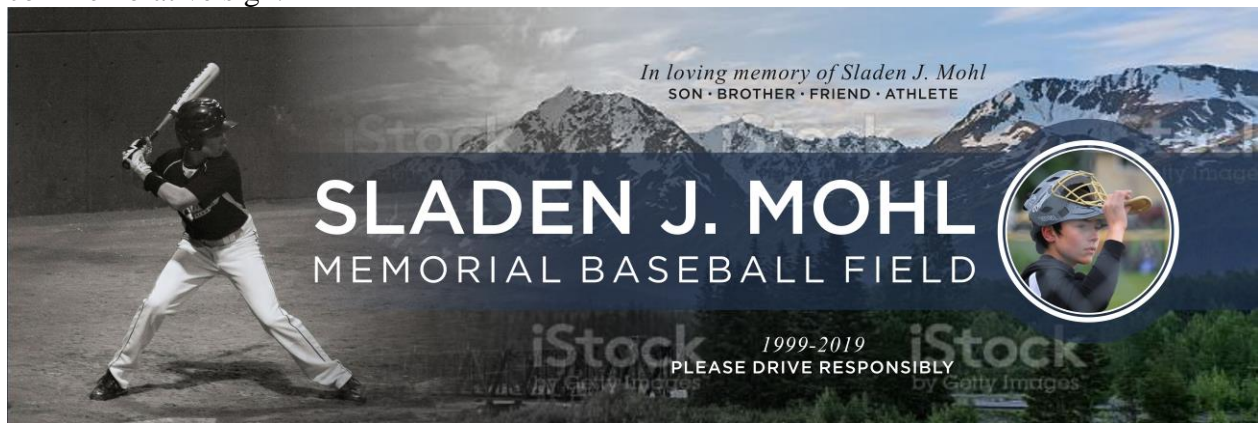
Brushing as needed. Disc golf Association held 2 tournaments in 2021.

2022: A local volunteer is working on mapping the back 9 holes and updating all maps for the disc golf course, installation expected Summer 2022 as part of an Eagle Scout project

Ball Field:

Occasional clean up in the ballfield summer long. More effort to establish no dogs in the ball field, with formal signage. Replaced the Outfield fence line and removed cottonwood trees adjacent to the fence line.

2022: Paint the dugouts (? Possible service project). Installation of Sladen J Mohl commemorative sign.



Little Bears Playground & park access:

Little Bears Playground was heavily utilized throughout the summer.

2022: Continue picnic area improvements, add sand and wood chips in spring.

Girdwood Skate Park:

Assisted Friends of the Skate Park with Throwdown Showdown event in March. Work was limited due to high cost of lumber in 2021, however some old ramps were due for replacement and Josh Nadell, welded chair 6 chairs to create benches in the Skate park.



2022: Assist with projects determined for this summer by Friend of the Skate Park:
Repair/resurface of asphalt. Continue to work to improve flow of the park. Assist with
Throwdown Showdown coordination

Parking Areas:

Roads crew improved the surface and drainage. Coordinated rent-a-can and bear resistant
dumpsters for the campground/pavilions. We left these items out longer into the fall as public
was enjoying an extended park season. Added Rent-a-can to 5K parking lot, which has stayed
throughout the winter.

2022: Possible to add some flowers or landscaping to the four corners of Alyeska
Highway/Egloff/Hightower to replace culvert-style planters at 2 corners that were removed with
road construction. Installation of Stumpy's Trail interpretive signage adjacent to parking area.

Soccer Field:

Worked with Turf contractor on getting better grass growth, and it came in strong in the fall once
it began raining.

2022. 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.

2022: Assess and remove cottonwoods that are hazards. Work with Lions Club on construction
of pavilion for this park, perhaps through [Anchorage Park Foundation grant funding](#).

Town Square Park:

Replacement of 3 the large planters around Town Square park.
Maintenance of plants and beds as possible. Addition of rent-a-can for
summer season across from the bus stop.

2022: Continue evaluating iris beds inside and surrounding Town Square
Park. 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 no-contact planting day in June. Fertilizing,
deadheading, weeding all summer

2022: Coordinate beautification day in June.

Perennial Gardens:

Perennial beds are located at Fire Hall, inside/perimeter of
town square park, Community Room/Library, and Nina's
Wall. They all need attention and maintenance.



Bulbs planted at the library
garden bed worked out great and add a lot of color in April.
Coordinate and plant donated perennials where needed.



Nina's Wall:

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

2022: Similar maintenance required. Garden bed receives debris from winter sanding and requires maintenance early season. Likely need new pump in spring for fountain. Consider having AWWU turn on the spigot for summer if the season is hot and dry.

Community Center:

Washed windows inside and out in summer. Pruned shrubs by windows in the fall. John Samuelson Memorial Bench purchased and installed. Added planter/flowers by the Samuelson Bench and pathway to access.

2022: Ice dams and snow falling from roof has brought down some of the snow brakes from the roof. Replacement needed.

Community Room/Library:

Handle rentals and coordination of groups. Piano Tuning.

2022: Plans to add to A/V to allow for hybrid meetings. Recommend continue annual piano tuning as regular maintenance of this community asset.

Little Bears & Glacier City Hall:

Used for storage for parks and warm storage area for contractor snow clearing equipment. Continue support for historic survey of this locations/structures/features and maintenance of those through various methods.

2022: 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:

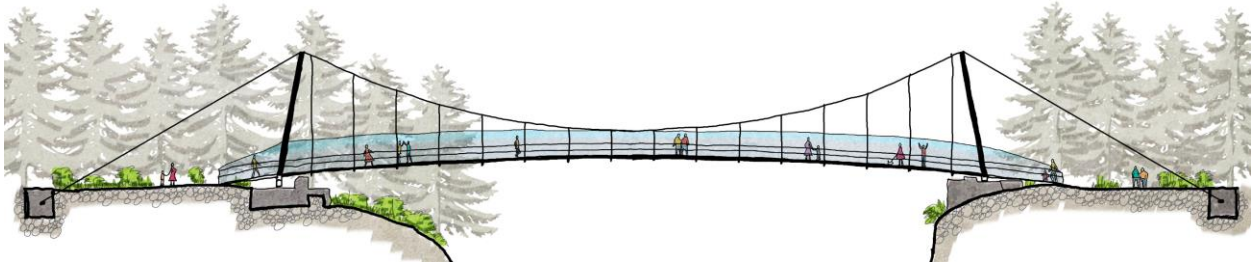
Spring 2021 started additional grooming with snow dog around the perimeter of Moose Meadows. Fall 2021 received support from GTC to groom around the perimeter of upper valley trails also. Purchase of new grooming snow machine. GNSC purchased 2nd snow dog, a new snow machine for grooming and added 2nd conex to the 5K for storage.



2022: Continue to support GNSC and other volunteer grooming efforts.

Hand Tram:

Hand tram remained closed as MOA risk management and administration overall were focused on COVID-19 issues. Study of bridge alternatives to be addressed in late 2020-early 2021 has brought about proposal for suspension bridge. Working on additional study of this with hopeful construction in 2022/23 along with commemorative display for the hand tram.



2022: Construction of bridge, reuse of as much of the hand tram materials as possible, interpretive display. Work with State of Alaska planners regarding possible Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) Grant, and with USFS on getting the bridge on the list of projects for possible Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) funding.

Trails:

Girdwood Trails Master plan local input is nearing completion. Andy Hehlin completed upgrades on Lower INHT, completing access trail along property line to attach to Ruane. Summer staff added interpretive signage and wayfinding signage on the Lower INHT



We also continued worked initiated in 2020 on the Virgin Creek Falls Trail to improve the trail tread and move the trailhead alignment off private property.

2022: Completion of this will include installation of interpretive signage to Virgin Creek Falls Trail. Middle Iditarod NHT also will have wayfinding signage added at trailheads and crossings at Crow Creek Road.

GPR installation of additional bear resistant trash cans to install along with mutt mitt stations.

Fall Storm damage repair in the spring.

Continue work on Easements for Girdwood trails, starting with Stumpy’s Winter Trail.

Cemetery:

Project is currenting on hold while Eagle River cemetery committee catches up for joint bond proposal in 2023.

Other Issues:

Homeless camping was less of an issue in 2021 than in previous summers. 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.

Vehicles camping outside of campground: Both derelict and running vehicles are used for camping throughout town roads and parking lots. Overnight use of town square area is not allowed, camping is technically allowed on Crow Creek Road and at private areas such as Daylodge Parking Lot and Crow Creek Mine.

Concern of fires 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.

Land Acknowledgment: Interest in pursuing understanding of Alaska Native use of the Girdwood area and forming a thoughtful statement of land acknowledgement for LUC and GBOS meetings.

Anti-Racism: As part of a GBOS Resolution in 2020 and after a turbulent year, nationwide, there was a commitment to hold a local forum regarding race.

Staff will coordinate and participate in these community-based conversations.

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 in 2021.

Turf Contract – Mowing contractor comes about every 10 days to care for lawns and ballfields.
Window Washing – Hal LaPointe did an excellent job in 2021

2022: No changes anticipated.

GBOS Grants:

GBOS changed the grant cycle in 2021, shifting to a fall application, spring contract. Essentially this limits the down time between application, review and payment and the timing seems to work well for our grantees. GBOS 2021 Grantee year end reports are included in the report.

Other Grants:

State of Alaska, Recreation Trails Program Grants:

No application for 2021 cycle as GTC had no projects for consideration.

\$75,000 awarded in spring for Lower INHT, phase 1 part 2. Project closed and reimbursed.

\$75,000 applied for in fall 2019 for Lower INHT, phase 2, from Ruane Rd to Karolius on existing alignment. Project started, plan to close in 2021.

Kenai Mountains/Turnagain Arm Heritage Area:
\$TBA applied for to assist in Stumpy's Early Winter Trail Interp sign in March 2021.
\$5000 applied for and granted for Beaver Pond, Abe's, and California Creek Trail sign, closed and reimbursed.
\$7,300 1:1 matching grant applied for and granted for the Virgin Creek Falls Trail work and interpretive signs. Project slated for 2021.

Anchorage Park Foundation:
\$5,000 applied for and granted for work on Lower INHT phase 2, closed and reimbursed.

CARES Act: \$50,000 for 2021 projects.

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2022 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 – this program seems to be on hold. Another possibility may be Anchorage Park Foundation funding.

AARP Community Grant: Possibility for grant to improve connectivity in the community.

Great American Outdoors Act: funding to USFS for deferred maintenance projects. We are hopeful that this could be used toward some upper valley trails and trail access to Iditarod system/Crow Pass; Winner Creek; etc).

KMTA will have a grant opening this Jan-March.

Anchorage Park Foundation: Grants with APF are every other year, grant cycle in 2021 was offset to 2022

Concern: With many new and complex granting possibilities related to COVID recovery and infrastructure funding, Girdwood may need to hire a fund finder and grantwriter to help us navigate and lobby for community projects.

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 was supposed to get rolling in 2020 and has perhaps been delayed by COVID-19. Our role in this group is to be established as the group begins to form.