

Bob & Crystal Rilee Park Master Plan  
Focus Group Summary Review  
Jan. 25, 2024

Summary of Common Themes

Oak Savanah

Trail Surfacing - Grading and special surfacing is not required for hikers, the cost of the trail coverings, phased resurfacing

Seasonal and Use Restrictions, Year round?

Future trails

Manure pit?

Auto Gates

Excluding Bicyclists

Shelters

Lower Westside trails

Viewpoint

Horse corrals, horse camping area, camp host, obstacle course

Off-leash dog area

Signage

Road Crossings-Bobs Corner, JK carrier

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GOOD:

Restore Oak Savannah & “N” Ag. Fields

off-leash area

paved, hard surfaced trails for the senior citizens. Perhaps a mile to be paved in the future

Oak Savannah and Wetlands restoration

Oak Savannah – recommend discussion of use of area in future

Creating an Oak Savannah from a marginal pasture/hay field could be a valuable educational project.

pleased to see the park will be focused on pedestrian and equestrian uses

The oak savanna restoration area at “D” seems like a great spot to embark on this type of habitat restoration.

Bad:

Single track built by cyclist - Hiking only more ‘Hiker only’ segments would be desirable.

Gravel or wood chips on the paths. more natural (less park like) trail surface.

Old issue - it would be great to have space for mountain bikes, removal of bike paths from the park. Without even a rationale for change, or discussion with the public at large, a 3-2 majority of the board voted to completely exclude the bicyclists.

Trail Surface Types - Expense

Manure Compost – Remove manure pit is totally unnecessary and frankly a bad idea

Gates - Costly, automatic gates have issues.

G-New Parking Lot –Expense

“G” New Parking area: The park currently has two official parking areas (equestrian and the main house/farm building area) plus Bob’s corner. The need to add a fourth new parking area at “G” on the map is questionable in terms of value.

“H” – This is a spectacular viewpoint for all pedestrian and family recreation, picnics, educational displays and star gazing and should be developed without connection to equestrian activities.

H-Shelter – Expense

Future trails? needs or ideas. Example Oak Savannah

West side of the lower forested area there is a long section of the trail-seasonal stream extremely wet - Boardwalk?

The maps show existing difficult trail conditions and modifications. These extensive modifications are only necessary, or desirable for equestrian use. Grading and special surfacing is not required for hikers.

removal of bike paths from the park.

Cost of the trail coverings (especially the gravel surfaces) will be extremely expensive. The park trails never have been intended to be all weather use. Equestrian all weather trails require the greatest engineering, labor and material costs of almost any trail we would build.

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Comments:

Great to have space for mountain bikes

A section of the dog area dedicated to small dogs

History of Farming - playground have an "educational theme?"

Horse corrals, horse camping area, camp host, obstacle course

Need water source

Large stand of oaks will be a drain on park staff resources keeping it free of blackberries and the grass mowed to fire safe length.

Employ Park Ranger exchange for free housing duties could include checking gates am and pm. Institute on-site camp host 8+ months of the year to act as a nefarious deterrent and include duties of accepting riding fees, handling gates and maintenance.

M-Off Leash Dog Area - Move west of "J" Playground

L-Reduce Grade - Having a varied topography is great for different levels of riders and hikers. Park already has plenty of easy impact trails across the 360+ acres.

What is the cost to implement? What is the timeline to implement? What are the revenue sources to accomplish the masterplan? Start thinking about how OET and other groups can assist in the masterplan implementation. Introduce fees or season pass to use the park (like McIver, Perrydale, Mt Hood EQ Center which all offer PAID access to obstacles year-round as prototypes. Designating an area for these to be constructed whether now or in the future as part of the master plan would be ideal as well as a draw to riders. Camp Host (free to CPRD) to assist in fee collection, gates, security etc... Would like CPRD to start thinking about how the Rilee Park can generate revenue to be self-sufficient vs. cost burden for the District.

Other Revenue Generating Options – Horse corrals, horse camping area, camp host, obstacle course, designated parking spots trailers vs. cars (like boat landing/trail areas)

Having the consultant's recommendations of a phased "resurfacing" plan would be useful.

Buffer between the new gravel paths and the field

All season Equestrian trails – Hear from consultant where they have seen chips over gravel used for equestrian /hiker trails on a slope and how they hold up compared to gravel?

Is the goal to extend trail use year-round for equestrians as well as hikers or just for hikers. What type of guidelines should be used for determining when to close trails to equestrians? Is it possible to restrict equestrians just to hard-packed gravel trails in the winter?

Equestrian Parking Signage – VERY important to include in masterplan the need for clear demarcation for parking for those without horse trailers and prohibiting parking of "cars" in the equestrian parking areas.

Proper signage should alert motorists to crossing areas and pedestrians to look for cars.

"D" Oak Savannah – for variety of purposes. Maybe it is off limits to everyone and kept as a natural area? Should horses be allowed? The oak savannah could be a great bird watching/wild life watching area. Could you get a native plant society chapter to "adopt it"? Planting lots of native shrubs and trees and overseeing it under an agreement over the years – or some other oak protection group? Maybe it is for hikers only with simple mown paths for trails?

"H" – viewpoint pavilion – While this spot definitely has a terrific view, a lovely bench, perhaps a tie rail for horses would be more than sufficient as a viewpoint. I would recommend planting one or two trees potentially to provide shade. If the weather is rainy, it won't provide much of a viewpoint anyway so why incur the cost of a pavilion that probably will not get much use. Low priority and high cost in my view. I have installed many benches along trail systems at scenic spots. They are definitely a welcome rest spot. From feedback I've heard, most people out for a hike in nature do not want a significant pavilion to stop under. While I understand why the parking area was proposed at "G" so that people did not have to walk far to see the

view, this is not an urban park. It's a rural park. Recommend keeping pavilions and the like limited to the already developed area near the house and reducing cost, overhead and further encroachment into the agricultural areas.

4.1 Targeted trail improvement issues: A discussion of fixing some of the really wet, underwater areas of the trail along the western property line is sorely needed. On the map, on the west side of the lower forested area there is a long section of the trail where one essentially walks/rides through a stream when there is rain/lots of water. Some sort of fix is needed for that area to keep everyone out of the water. The proposed trail surface map completely ignores this glaring issue. Chips over gravel will be washed away in the first large rain and would make a total mess on the neighbor's property. One solution, while costly, would make this section of the trail much more useable during the entire year – an elevated walkway commonly used in wetlands/wet areas. This would make for a permanent trail surface and be better for the intermittent stream/waterway that passes through the area. It would be a fabulous project for Eagle Scouts or some other community group. Lots of great example around the state but the Cathedral Hills trail system in Grants Pass provides excellent and highly successful examples. As mentioned at the beginning, the identified switchback areas need a proposed route.

4.2 Cost data: The numerous items outlined in the masterplan should have a cost estimate associated with each item to give CPRD a sense of what monies could be needed, to guide priorities and more. Vault toilets are not cheap. What would be the relative cost of a vault toilet versus having a porta-potty serviced regularly by a local company? While Vault toilets are nice, the masterplan should provide some alternatives and provide cost information to help guide what the priority investments should be.

4.3 Funding ideas: It would be nice to have the consultant offer some ideas of possible future sources of funding ranging from equestrian parking fees, grants sources or fund raiser events such as a horse event or running event on the trails?

4.4 Runners: I did not see any discussion of how to deal with runners and equestrians. (of course, I didn't see any text so perhaps this is understandable) If this park were to become popular as a place to run, there will be safety issues similar to bikes in some of the blind spots on the trail. Some discussion/recognition of this possibility would be wise.

4.5 Future options – A masterplan for a property usually lays out some ideas/proposals for a future for a property. This plan does not include a possibility for expanding the trails; or reducing agricultural fields and replacing it with ???? , adding other activities (other than the off-leash area and picnic pavilions) for hikers/equestrians like some obstacles along the trails; , or using the farmhouse for small events to generate \$ for the park; adding a riding arena – helpful to local equestrian high school teams and any equestrians; corrals for future limited

horse camping – dry sites or other possibilities like geocaching etc. It would be nice to have the creative talents of the consultant think outside the box -to give the community some ideas for the future.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this portion of the plan for the future of the Rilee Park. I will be happy to provide explanations, or reasons for any of the following.

The rational evaluation of any plan requires the consideration of purpose and cost for the benefits anticipated. To a great extent costs are the result of underlying assumptions, some of which may be openly expressed, while some others may be expressed behind the scenes based on political maneuvering. The question of who benefits from the use of public funds should be fundamental to any public project evaluation. The plan you submitted for review does not address any of these considerations and therefore has inadequate context to review intelligently.

Based on this narrowed revised option, it is clear that those benefitting most from this plan are the small percentage of CPRD taxpayers who ride horses. This exclusive use by those who want to pay nothing, violates the fundamental principle that publicly funded tax-exempt organizations should do the most good for the most people. A fee is charged for the golf course and swimming pool. Why not the equestrian trails?

The Rilee property offers, and has offered exceptional opportunities for the equestrian experience. No one suggests that the equestrian trails be denied this use. However, without harming the equestrians, the park could, and has also provided a valuable experience for mountain bikers. By designating the west to the horses and the east to the bikers, two serious user groups were accommodated.

Without even a rationale for change, or discussion with the public at large, a 3-2 majority of the board voted to completely exclude the bicyclists and committed the entire park to the smallest user group, the admittedly wealthy equestrian “class”. This unannounced power play is indefensible and, indeed shameful.

I would guess that 95% of the people being taxed for CPRD will never ride a horse or even picnic at the Rilee Park. The few minor tokens to the general public; a couple of viewpoints, a few picnic tables and shelters, an off-leash dog park and a “restored spring house” are an insult to your tax paying public, particularly in the light of lavishing expensive, unnecessary modifications to an exclusive use group of “equestrians.” None of this plan seriously encourages the

CPRD-taxed public to explore this magnificent park. This plan is a testimony to the success of behind-the-scenes lobbying for the personal gain of a select few.

Family excursions, family picnics, hikers, and mountain bikers do not need a 4, 6, or 8 foot wide graded, contoured path to enjoy the beauty of this park. I propose the following as guiding criteria for Rilee Park development.

Development priority for this property should be:

1. Family education, family recreation and safe family exposure to nature
2. Collection of environmental data to further understand the natural environment at this aspect and elevation.
3. Equestrian Trails - where they do not interfere with, or limit # 1, #2 or #4
4. Mountain Biking Trails - where they do not interfere with, or limit # 1, #2, or #3

#### Trail Difficulty & Trail Surfacing Pages Comments

The maps show existing difficult trail conditions and modifications. These extensive modifications are only necessary, or desirable for equestrian use. Grading and special surfacing is not required for hikers.

1. To modify these trails, the grading alone will require extensive clearing and soil disturbance. The Jory clay soils are erosion resistant on flat to gentle slopes and when covered by the typical forest ground cover. Bare clay soils on 20% plus slopes without thoughtful drainage design are extremely vulnerable to erosion. The execution of these proposed grade changes will be very messy.
2. The delivery of graded materials to isolated work sites without common civil construction equipment (ie. Dump Trucks) will require specialized equipment to move and place materials. The type of equipment that can operate in such narrow, steep conditions will have to be either purchased or rented.
3. How can the very high cost to provide these modifications be justified simply to provide an exclusive use group with perfect horse trails?
4. The entire trail system should be broken into sections, identified and evaluated by criteria, such as implementation difficulty, and the extent to which the system needs that specific section to provide a meaningful equestrian experience.
5. Clearly, the existing labyrinth of trails in the southwest and east areas could be streamlined to simplify and enhance the experience. Just because the trail is there does not mean it was intelligently located. Much of the southwest trail area was plowed by a dozer owner who convinced Crystal he knew what he was doing. This is why some of the original (pre-Rilee Trust) trail was in creek beds, drainage channels and across non-Rilee private property. The "L" trail along the extreme southwest area ignores the terrain and follows the property line. This section is identified for some of the most drastic trail treatments.

6. The best alternative would be to ignore the existing trails and have an expert design a trail system pleasant to traverse, suitable to the terrain and reasonable to build and maintain. Where appropriate, some existing trails could be incorporated into the new system. In the long run the expense of this alternative would be less than trying to force a standard trail onto inappropriate terrain.

7. Simplifying alone would also reduce the proposed signage requirements. There are 26 trail intersections in the southwest area, 19 in the east area. Signs at each intersection would be unique to that location and would require sufficient information to prevent people getting lost. Signs are expensive.

#### Trail Surface Design Standards & Trail Clearing Standards Pages Comments

1. The “standards” do not state that the trails will NOT be available for equestrian use during winter months. In fact, the “standards” want to “provide year-round trail access”. The idealized all-weather trail cross-section further implies equestrian use. Rather than trying to make an all-weather surface, seasonal use restrictions and closures, like those currently in effect, should be continued. The questionable benefits from this costly gravel design cannot be justified for the unknown number of winter users or if seasonal equestrian closures are maintained.

2. Two & three inch lifts of compacted gravels on saturated Jory clay soils will not survive the impact of horses. The lifts with wood chips instead of gravel will be a worse maintenance headache. Wood chips do not compact, they shrink and swell with every rain.

3. The cut/fill design across slopes of 15% or greater with a 2:1 max. slope and a 1-foot buffer on both sides results in a surprisingly wide disturbed swath. The “trail width varies”, but the drawing shows widths that allow side-by-side travel. Not counting the cuts, fills and buffer zones, that would be at least 8’ for horses. Single file would allow a 4-6 foot travel surface, but still result in much wider disturbances depending on slope.

4. The one-foot side clearance should specify trimming with no surface disturbance. In the forest, offending branches should be cut to the branch collar at the trunk, not just pruned where the branch enters the 1 foot area.

5. Shod horses do not compact surfaces, they churn them. Both of these surfaces will quickly be invaded by early succession native plants. How will the next stage of blackberries, poison oak, scotch broom and shrubbery be controlled? By mowing? By herbicides? By hand tools?



6. The plan to create switchbacks in steep terrain rather than changing the route to avoid switchbacks, needs to be realistically addressed. A switchback in steep terrain produces a huge footprint of disturbed ground. Further, to maintain the “standard” trail width and the 2% cross slope will require extensive cuts/fills at any switchback.

7. Side hill cuts on steep slopes in this area frequently get into boulders and poorly weathered bedrock. The smaller equipment envisioned for the civil work may not be very effective dealing with these obstacles. Cutting switchbacks can become a very expensive operation, particularly when switchbacks are choices, not necessities.

8. The last two standards pages require far more defined design criteria than presented here. These “standards” are far too general to assure they will produce the desired outcomes, particularly when left to be interpreted by the dozer operator in the field. Without the boundaries defined by clear design criteria the best of intentions can result in unintended results.

9. In the mature Douglas Fir stands of the Southwest and Southeast areas special consideration needs to be paid to any root damage that nearby mature trees will suffer from the grading. Even if they are outside the clear limits, with destabilizing root damage, they may need to be removed for safety.

10. In steep trail sections the logging boundaries, clear limits, cut & fill depths and trail widths should be engineered and staked by survey before civil work begins.

The oak savanna restoration area at “D” seems like a great spot to embark on this type of habitat restoration. There are already anchor trees at Bob’s Corner and the area would experience habitat uplift via control of the blackberries located in the “bowl”. It’s also not so huge an area to be an overwhelming project and can be used to explore restoration techniques due to its varied topography and equipment-accessible location.

The springhouse at “K” seems like a natural location for a palustrine forested wetland. There are already wetland components on site (namely a permanent water source), but hydrology and topography will need to be considered in greater detail to determine whether or not a larger wetland could actually be successfully established in this area. I recall there is already an existing stream channel and the bench might not be wide enough to support much of a wetland without considerable ground contouring, but it’s definitely worth further investigation.

Suggest establishing a signed nature trail using the existing trail that travels from the farm house, past the oak savannah restoration area, looping down to the wetland, and traversing some of the older Douglas-fir forest across from the horse trailhead.

Could a road crossing be installed near the JK Carrier gate at the southern end of the property? That would allow hikers and horse riders to connect the trails on either side of the road without needing to travel back up to the farm house.

Cost savings- I'd consider dropping the vault toilet at Bob's Corner since there will already be facilities at the farm house parking area and at the horse trailhead.