Overview of Master Plan

The Master Plan is a culmination of extensive inventories and analysis resulting in a solidly formulated direction for the park’s future development. During the planning process several additional objectives were developed that were added to the seven objectives stated earlier. These include:

1. Enhance parking and transportation within the park boundary.
2. Improve and augment existing park trails.
3. Create a land classification scheme using State Park’s Land Classification System, consistent with development and resource management objectives.
4. Establish the park’s long-term boundary.
5. Reduce development clutter.
6. Create appropriate and recognizable park districts that reflect the park’s cultural and natural diversity.
7. Implement the park-wide 2003 Interpretive Master Plan.
8. Restore environmentally degraded areas.

The overall Master Plan accomplishes all of these objectives. See the Master Plan Map on page 15, and the Land Classification Map on page 17.

Park Sub-Areas

Gateway Center

Located on the westbound leg of SR 100 near downtown Ilwaco, the proposed location of a new Gateway Center will accomplish several goals. First, it will serve as a way-finding point for visitors while effectively identifying the park’s entrance. The Center will also serve as a transit hub for regional and park shuttle systems. Additionally, maintenance vehicles and park operational equipment will be stored within a shared facility, removing them from ecologically sensitive and prime recreational lands within the park area. The close proximity to city services located in Ilwaco is intended to provide economic stimulus to local businesses.

Bluff Trail and Overlooks

A new one and one-half mile trail will be added connecting Beard’s Hollow to the existing Discovery Trail near Seaview Dunes. This bluff trail will include a series of three overlooks providing blue water views of the Pacific Ocean located as shown on the Master Plan map. Design of trail and overlooks will be done in such a way as to minimize their visibility from the beach.

Beard’s Hollow

With its close proximity to the main entrance into the park, Beard’s Hollow is one of the most commonly visited destinations within the park. Existing parking within the area will be maintained. With the development of the Discovery Trail and the proposed multi-use trail with connections to the Isthmus, some parking and circulation improvements are needed. This includes clearly identifying trailheads, pedestrian and bicycle circulation and vehicular warning devices.

North Head Lighthouse

North Head is one of the most visited attractions of the park. With an entire complex of unique
Land Classification

Legend
- Resource Recreation Area
- Recreation Area
- Natural Forest Area
- Natural Area
- Heritage Area

*Note: A ‘Long-Term Park Boundary’ is for WSPRC policy direction only and should not affect private property owners, be used as an indication of property owner’s willingness to sell, or be used as a basis for making state or local government regulatory, permitting, or zoning decisions on private land holdings. It represents areas where the WSPRC would be interested in owning or managing for public purposes. Due to the uncertainties of beach erosion and development patterns in nearby parcels, the Commission should also consider land acquisition near Cape Disappointment but outside this mapped long-term park boundary. If a parcel is listed as ‘publicly supported’ it means that the parcel is not owned by the WSPRC but is supported by public funds. The ‘protected’ parcels listed as being supported by public funds are: Cape Disappointment State Park overlay monoply; dock underneath station; environmental restoration project; federal (Wright’s Point); county (North Head); local (Alsea); state (Beard's Hollow); park access; parking area; circulation; park administration; park maintenance; and/or recreational trail corridors.
Because of its popularity, improvements to the existing vehicular circulation and parking are needed. Currently, access to the area is via a Pacific County roadway. The North Head road is narrow, without shoulders and doesn’t adequately accommodate larger motor homes or automobiles with trailers. Circulation improvements will include widened shoulders to accommodate bicyclists, additional passenger vehicle parking, parking for tour buses and a bus turn-around. Design of these improvements will be architecturally compatible with the historic character of the North Head Lighthouse Complex.

Other proposed improvements in the area include providing a gift shop in one of the outbuildings in the complex, featuring the maritime history of the area; a designated picnic area for day use; and an interpretive walk. Because the lighthouse keeper’s residences will continue to be available for overnight rental to park visitors, ample buffers between public day use areas and private residential areas near and around the rental units are required.
Isthmus

Serving as the primary visitor contact and hub of activity, the Isthmus will be improved to better accommodate park visitors. Administrative and concession facilities will be developed in proximity to one another, taking advantage of potential synergies while reducing areas required to develop these facilities separately.

Park visitors entering the Isthmus will be funneled to an entry station and administrative complex. Within this area, short-term parking facilities are provided for visitors needing additional park information, campground registration, and the concessionaire. Day use parking is also provided for the Administrative Complex.

Other facilities within the Isthmus include lakeshore cabins fronting O’Neil Lake, a group picnic shelter near O’Neil Lake, picnic areas at O’Neil Lake and Waikiki Beach, a multi-use trail system providing access to other park areas and attractions and improved boat launch parking at Baker Bay. Environmental restoration areas are also included within the Isthmus. (See page 21 for Isthmus Concept Plan Map)

Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center

Another popular zone of the park is the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center (LCIC). The area is constrained by difficult topography and sensitive ecological and cultural areas. Given the topographical constraints alone, opportunities for additional parking are limited. Therefore the facility must rely on a shuttle system to move people to and from the facility. In order to accommodate shuttle traffic, the parking area will be modified to include a bus turn-around and visitor drop-off area, reducing the current number of automobile parking spaces. In addition to these improvements, there are plans for the installation of an art piece commemorating Thomas Jefferson’s vision of westward expansion. The location of this installation will be north of the LCIC and adjacent to the existing trail connecting LCIC and Waikiki Beach.

Waikiki Beach

Sheltered by coastal bluffs on the south and North Jetty on the west, Waikiki Beach provides a protected cove and is especially popular with families with small children. The area of Waikiki Beach includes more than the beach itself. The area also includes sand dunes covered with flotsam and jetsam, a grassy picnic area with adjacent restroom, a hiking trail providing access to the LCIC and a 37-unit vehicle parking area.

McKenzie Head

Prior to the construction of the North Jetty, the Pacific Ocean nearly surrounded McKenzie Head. William Clark and his company reported camping at the base of the giant sea stack. During World War II, Battery 247 was constructed at the top of this land formation. Today, the guns are gone, but the coastal fortification structure is quite visible and popular among visitors. In addition to these military remnants, there are two existing art commemorations dedicated to the Corps of Discovery at the parking lot.
Improvements in the area of McKenzie Head include additional single unit vehicular parking, bus parking and a bus turn-around. In addition to the vehicular improvements, visitors will also experience additional interpretive facilities including a re-creation of Clark and Company camp.

**West Campground (Benson Beach Area)**

The threatened West Campground will essentially remain unchanged. Given the uncertainty of future erosion, only a select few improvements are included in this area.

In order to provide a fully functional intra-park shuttle system, a new bus turn-around will be added to service this area. Shuttle service will provide visitors an alternative mode of transportation throughout the park.

An amphitheater will be constructed within this area. In order to reduce the development footprint, the amphitheater will be located within a reasonable walking distance from the campground. Its proximate campground location near an existing parking lot will eliminate the need for additional parking spaces. Improvements for accessibility will be provided in association with the new amphitheater. Lastly, a new sewage dump station will be constructed between the campgrounds and the decommissioned sewer lagoon.

**Pacific City**

With views over Baker Bay and continuing south to the Coast Range of Oregon, Pacific City offers a unique day use area opportunity. Interpretive opportunities describing the boom and bust nature of the former platted city will provide visitors with a special appreciation for this landscape.

Improvements at the Pacific City day use area include a six-space parking lot and picnic area. Improvements will occur in conjunction with completion of county borrow-pit operations and relocation of the State Highway.

**Trails Plan**

Providing a comprehensive network of trails that accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and fitness levels is a critical component of this Master Plan. The emphasis on this particular aspect of the planning effort came in response to two primary factors: improved visitor safety and an enhanced recreational experience for visitors.

An expanded trail system within the park will include three classifications of trails. These classifications are as follows:

- **Paved Multi-use Trails**

  These trails are to be hard-surfaced, 10-feet wide with one-foot shoulders. These trails will be used by both hikers and bicyclists, and are separated from adjacent roads for increased safety.

- **Bike lanes on widened roadway shoulders**

  Bike lane widths should be a minimum of five feet in each direction, and be separated from vehicular traffic by a painted fog line. Additional signage and on-roadway signage would also be necessary to alert vehicles when they must share the roadway with bicyclists.
Hiking trails

These trails are soft surface (gravel or native soil), 36 inches to 48 inches wide with minimal or no shoulder. Because of challenging topography, the maximum longitudinal gradient should be 18% (or approximately one vertical foot in five and one-half horizontal feet). Special structures such as stone retaining walls, elevated boardwalks and drainage culverts may be required to resolve unique field conditions. They are restricted to pedestrians only.

There are several trail segments of each type proposed in the Trails Master Plan (page 25). These are discussed below by classification:

1. Paved Multi-use Trails

There are four separated multi-use paths segments identified in this Master Plan.

Segment 1: Beard’s Hollow to the Isthmus
This trail responds to the development of Discovery Trail and its connection to Beard’s Hollow. Visitors entering the park by either bike or on foot at Beard’s Hollow need a separated trail connection to the Isthmus in order to avoid an unsafe situation where bicyclists and pedestrians share narrow SR 100 with automobiles.

In order to accomplish this, several alternatives were studied. These alternatives included a shared roadway with bike lanes that widens the current alignment of SR100 and a separated multi-use path that would have an alignment independent of SR 100. Following extensive analysis that included inter-agency evaluation and field verification, a separated multi-use path was selected as the most viable option to provide the necessary connection from Beard’s Hollow to the Isthmus. The details of the alignment remain to be worked out, but it will follow closely and be parallel to the SR 100 corridor in order to minimize impacts.

Segment 2: Waikiki to Benson Beach
This segment of multi-use trail continues from Waikiki Beach and parallels North Jetty Road providing access to Benson Beach. An additional trail segment connects North Jetty Road, past the former sewage lagoon to the intersection with Segment 3 listed below.

Segment 3: Isthmus to West Beach Campground
This segment of multi-use trail provides pedestrian and bicycle access from the Isthmus to the West Beach Campground, paralleling the road past McKenzie Head and the West Beach Campground Roads.

2. Bike Lanes on Shoulder

There are three road segments within that park that appear to have the physical capacity to allow for widened shoulders in order to accommodate bike lanes.

Segment 1: Ilwaco to Gateway Center
The first segment is located between the city center of Ilwaco and the proposed Gateway Center along SR 100. From the Gateway Center, a cyclist could board an intra-park shuttle and safely enter the park. This segment would be constructed in cooperation with the city of Ilwaco and Washington State Department of Transportation.

Segment 2: North Head Lighthouse Road
This segment would allow for safe two-way bike traffic between SR 100 and the North Head parking lot.

Segment 3: LCIC Access Road
The third on-shoulder bike lane segment will connect the Isthmus to the LCIC Parking Area with bike lanes along the road.

With the connections listed above, a cyclist could ride to the Gateway Center from Ilwaco, take a short shuttle ride to Beard’s Hollow and from there connect to all of the major attractions within the park by bicycle!

3. Hiking Trails

Three new hiking trails have been identified in the Master Plan. These new trails are intended to complement, rather than replace, the existing 7.5 miles of hiking trails contained within the park.

Segment 1: Bluff Trail
This segment of hiking trail will connect Beard’s Hollow to Seaview Dunes. It will contain a series of three overlooks and will be constructed in such a way as to reduce visual impacts from the
Parking and Transportation

A network of roadways serves vehicular circulation within the park. These roads are owned and maintained variously by the State of Washington, Pacific County and by State Parks. The Master Plan maintains existing core circulation with minor enhancements accommodating on-shoulder bike lanes identified previously. Three primary transportation objectives are identified in the Master Plan. These are:

1. Maintain efficient emergency vehicular access; including to and from the Coast Guard Station.

2. Accommodate shuttle facilities to reduce park congestion.

3. Enhance existing parking to accommodate anticipated increased visitation during the Lewis & Clark bicentennial.

Existing Roadways

The primary access point into the park is from Ilwaco off of US Highway 101. Visitors entering the park follow State Route 100 (SR 100). SR 100 is a two-lane loop road that continues west, then south, passing Beard’s Hollow and North Head Lighthouse Road until it meets SR 100 Spur. At the intersection of SR 100 Loop and SR 100 Spur, visitors can either continue to the park Isthmus or turn left and head north returning to the city of Ilwaco. Visitors who continue south along SR 100 spur will pass through the Isthmus and continue to the LCIC. The entire length of the SR 100 Loop and Spur are owned and operated by Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT). At this time, no improvements are scheduled for this roadway except for routine spot improvement such as signing, striping, guardrail treatment and paving.

Pacific County maintains responsibility for two road segments within the park: Willows Road at the very northern extents of SR 100, and North Head Lighthouse Road located on the western leg of SR 100. Both of these roads are two-lane asphalt roads.

All other roads within the park boundary are under the jurisdiction of State Park’s. These roads provide access to Beard’s Hollow, North Jetty, and the West Beach Campground.
Roads located on the Coast Guard Reservation are outside of the scope of the Master Plan.

The Master Plan proposes to maintain existing roads and their alignments. A potential exception is the eastern leg of SR 100. This roadway should be explored in the future as a one-way vehicular road with a parallel two-way bicycle lane. The implementation of this proposal will require close coordination with the city of Ilwaco, Coast Guard Reservation, local emergency service providers and WSDOT.

**Park Shuttle**

In an effort to reduce congestion within the park, an intra-park shuttle has been implemented. This shuttle provides visitors transportation to key attractions throughout the park. The Master Plan includes Shuttle stops at the following sites:

1. Gateway Center
2. Beard’s Hollow
3. North Head Lighthouse
4. Isthmus, LCIC, Waikiki Beach
5. North Jetty
6. McKenzie Head
7. West Beach Campground

The shuttle will follow existing roadway alignments and require only modest roadway improvements such as bus turn-arounds, shelters and signage.

Although outside the scope of this document, in addition to the intra-park shuttle, the Master Plan also anticipates some provisions being required for a planned Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Shuttle, linking Fort Stevens State Park, Fort Clatsop National Monument, Station Camp Interpretive Site, Long Beach, Ilwaco, and Cape Disappointment State Park. Exact route, desired stops and spatial requirements are not known at this time. Continued coordination and awareness of this system is essential.

**Parking**

Existing parking facilities are at or over capacity during the park’s busy summer months. Responding to the anticipated increased visitation expected in the future, additional parking has been proposed in this Master Plan. Additional parking facilities will be spread throughout the park primarily where parking is currently provided. Although the Master Plan reduces parking in a few areas, it also creates parking in areas where none currently exist. This effort largely eliminates existing informal roadside shoulder parking.

Please see Parking and Transportation Plan page on 29 for parking facility capacity and locations.
Parking & Transportation Plan

Legend:
- Existing State Highway
- Existing Local Government Road
- Existing Park Road
- New Park Road
- Parking
- Transit Shuttle stops
- Long-Term Boundary

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