

**PROPOSED Chapter 18.265:
PARKS/OPEN SPACE DISTRICT
(P/OS)**

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18.265.010 Purpose.

A. The purpose of the parks/open space district (P/OS) is to implement the policies of RUACP Chapter Six, Environment, Chapter Nine, Parks and Recreation, the Parks element of the Ridgefield Capital Facility Plan (RCFP) and the Ridgefield Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan (RCPRP).

B. Significant RUACP environmental policies implemented by this chapter include:

1. Protecting, sustaining and providing for a healthy and diverse ecosystem;
2. Protecting and enhancing surface and ground water quality;
3. Protecting tree species and native plant materials; and
4. Promoting environmental stewardship.

C. Significant RUACP park polices implemented by this chapter include:

1. Ensuring the acquisition, development and maintenance of parks for Ridgefield residents;
2. Providing for a system of local and regional trails; and
3. Establishing and implementing park standards.

18.265.015 Applicability.

The P/OS district is applied to all land designated as P/OS on the Comprehensive Plan map. P/OS districts may be created by City Council action or through the development review process. In addition, property owners may request a P/OS designation for parks, trails, open or natural areas that meet the purpose of the zone.

18.265.020 Parks/Open Space districts.

- A. Open space lands may include, but are not limited to, forested areas; wetlands and wetland buffers; creek, stream or river corridors; open water bodies; ravines, bluffs, landslide hazards and/or other geological hazard areas. Open space lands may include trails and passive recreation areas.
- B. Parks lands may include developed active recreation areas, trails, passive recreation areas and lands held for future development.
- C. P/OS lands may be publicly or privately owned.

18.265.030 Uses.

- A. Uses shall comply with the provisions of RDC 18.205.

18.265.040 Review required.

Improvements to lands designated P/OS shall be reviewed consistent with 18.205 or through the development review process in conjunction with the residential subdivision or PUD approval process (see RDC 18.600 and 18.401).

18.265.050 Exemptions.

The following activities within the P/OS district are allowed without the need for additional land use review though, depending upon the use, the activities may require building, life safety, erosion control or grading permits:

- A. In-kind replacement of buildings or structures smaller than 10,000 square feet and previously approved under this chapter.
- B. Changes in color schemes, wall art, and freestanding statuary or art.
- C. Revision to parking alignment or circulation within an existing parking area.
- D. ADA facilities, such as access ramps and modifications to access ways to improve accessibility, outside of critical areas.
- E. Removal of ivy and other invasive vegetation by hand.
- F. Construction of new sidewalks, paths, and trails that do not intrude into a critical area.
- G. Emergency repairs or maintenance. The City Manager, or designee, shall make the determination that emergency conditions exist. All necessary restoration, mitigation or permitting, required by this chapter, shall be undertaken by responsible parties once the emergency period has ended.
- H. Installation of directional or interpretive signs, consistent with RDC 18.710, Signs.
- I. Fences and walls up to 200 feet long, consistent with RDC 18.740.
- J. Landscape maintenance; changes to park landscaping outside of critical areas such as replacement of one type of plant with another; or tree planting.
- K. Repair or maintenance of minor utility facilities.

18.265.060 Lot requirements.

- A. There is no minimum or maximum size for P/OS sites. Siting and sizes of facilities must comply with standards set in the RCFP and RCPRP.
- B. All facilities shall front a public road for at least 50 feet. In the alternative, if it is not feasible or practical to meet this standard because of location and/or physical site constraints, the review authority may approve a pedestrian connection via a minimum 20-foot wide dedication or perpetual easement and an 8-foot wide hard surface path. The pedestrian pathway connection shall be made from the public street to the park.
- C. A minimum of 50 percent of total park area shall be improved with irrigated lawn area and landscaping, playfields, pedestrian paths, picnic tables and seating areas play equipment and swings, pedestrian-scale lighting along paths, sport courts or similar amenities approved by the review authority. Prior to any on-site construction, the park developer shall present a park improvement plan to the Public Works Director that demonstrates conformity with this Chapter and the RCPRP.
- D. Passive open spaces containing critical areas, their buffers or stormwater facilities shall be combined with active open spaces, either contiguously or via pedestrian facilities, to create interconnectivity between neighborhoods and/or other park and pedestrian facilities.
- E. Upland park areas shall be incorporated adjacent to wetlands or passive areas to ensure active recreation opportunities such as playgrounds, fields, fitness equipment or other facilities.
- F. Trails shall be consistent with the provisions of the RCFP and RCPRP.

18.265.070 Dimensional standards.

- A. Any structure or development requiring a building permit or SEPA review must be set back at least 10 feet from all property lines. Any structure exceeding 10 feet in height shall be set back an additional one foot from all property lines for each foot of height above 10 feet.
- B. Any lighted facility must be set back at least 50 feet from all property lines shared with a residential property.

18.265.080 Development standards.

- A. Signs shall meet the requirements of RDC 18.710.
- B. Lighting. Lighting shall comply with Chapter 18.715, Exterior Lighting.
- C. Parking. Off-street parking shall comply with Chapter 18.720, Off-Street Parking and Loading.
- D. Landscaping.
 - 1. Landscaping shall comply with RDC 18.725.
 - 2. The preservation and/or enhancement of existing native plant materials, consistent with RDC 18.830, Ridgefield Native Plant List, shall be the predominant characteristic of landscape treatment within this district.
- E. Fencing. Fencing shall comply with Chapter 18.740, Fencing.

18.265.090 Dedication or easement.

All park improvements required pursuant to this chapter shall be constructed and either dedicated to the City or have public access easements established prior to or concurrent with final land use or final plat approval for the project phase in which the park is located.

18.265.100 Use of P/OS facilities

A. Conduct. Public use and conduct, including hours of use, are subject to the regulations in RDC Section 8.18, Park Rules and Regulations, except as otherwise limited by the terms of an easement between the applicant and the City.

B. Trespass. Nothing in this chapter is intended to authorize public use of private property. Public use of private property is trespass unless appropriate easements and access have been acquired.

18.265.110 Nuisance.

Nuisances are regulated by RDC Section 15.24, Public Nuisances.

18.265.120 Facility maintenance and liability

A. City maintenance. The city reserves the right to, but is not obligated to, assume maintenance and liability for P/OS facilities. The city may accept maintenance and liability for P/OS facilities if the City Manager, or designee, finds all of the following:

1. The applicant requests that the City assume the responsibilities.
2. The facility lies within an easement, right-of-way or land dedicated or granted to the City.
3. The facility has been constructed to City standards.
4. The City has adequate resources for maintenance of the facility.

B. Applicant maintenance. The applicant retains maintenance and liability responsibilities unless these responsibilities are accepted by the city. Where the applicant retains maintenance and liability responsibilities, the facilities must be maintained at a level at least equal to comparable facilities maintained by the city. The applicant shall ensure that the developer or homeowners association owning the facility grants the City the right of third party enforcement or other similar mechanism to assure perpetual care and maintenance of the facility.

18.265.130 Shorelines restrictions.

A. The city may approve developments within the city's shorelines only after the applicant meets the provisions contained in the city's adopted Shoreline Master Program and the provisions of RDC 18.820.

B. If the provisions of the SMP conflict with the provisions of this chapter, the more restrictive shall apply.