

City of Sutherlin  
**PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN**

Adopted June 13, 2005



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**City of Sutherlin**

# **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN**

Prepared For:

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COPY

ORDINANCE NO. 960

ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY OF SUTHERLIN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN.

The City Council of the City of Sutherlin finds that:

A. In order to evaluate the existing condition of parks and open spaces within the City limits, and identify opportunities relative to the development of a parks system that will meet current and future needs, the City Council directed that a Parks and Open Space Plan be developed for the City.

B. Utilizing public involvement through regular consultations with staff, a series of Parks Advisory Committee meetings, focus group sessions and a community survey and open house, the Parks and Open Space Plan was developed.

C. The City Council has reviewed the Parks and Open Space Plan, and finds that it is in the public interest to adopt and utilize the Plan as a means to realize its vision of a comprehensive, networked suite of parks, open spaces and multi-use pathways within the City of Sutherlin.

NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY OF SUTHERLIN ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Based on the above findings, which are adopted herein, the Parks and Open Space Plan attached as Exhibit A hereto is hereby adopted.

Section 2. City staff shall ensure that copies of the Parks and Open Space Plan are maintained in a manner that facilitates access to it by interested members of the public.

Passed by the City Council on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2005.

Approved by the Mayor on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2005.

[Redacted Signature]
Joe Mongiovi, Mayor

ATTEST:
[Redacted Signature]
Vicki Luther, City Recorder

# Acknowledgements

The City of Sutherlin Parks and Open Space Plan was prepared with the generous assistance of city staff and Parks Advisory Committee members including the following individuals.

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# WHY PLAN FOR PARKS?

## FOR THE BENEFITS

### Economic Benefits

- Out of town visitors to special events
- Out of town teams participating in leagues or tournaments
  - Increased revenue for local businesses
  - Increased employment opportunities
    - Improved property values
- Tax revenues from new development next to parks

### Environmental Benefits

- Vacated sites redeveloped as parks
- Open spaces and natural areas protected
- Creeks and waterways restored and improved

### Social Benefits

- Opportunity for quality family time
- Neighbors share parks, get to know one another

### Individual Benefits

- Participate in recreation, pursue hobbies and sports
  - Increased exercise, improved health

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- Parks Survey Report

# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

Sutherlin is a growing community. Sutherlin is a desirable community in which to live. Whether raising a family or selecting a place for active retirement, Sutherlin offers a mild climate and easy access to services and recreation in all directions.

Located 12 miles north of Roseburg, the Douglas County seat, Sutherlin is centered on the transportation crossroads of Interstate 5 and Highway 99 in a north/south direction and Highway 138 in an east/west direction. Situated in one of the fertile valleys of the Umpqua River Watershed, Sutherlin is bounded on the north and south by two ridge systems. To the east lies a broad valley rising gently towards the distant Cascade Mountains. To the west lies a series of gently sloping rounded hills and valleys through which Calapooya Creek, and then the Umpqua River, works westwards to the Coast Range and Pacific Ocean.

Sutherlin is one of the fastest growing communities in Douglas County, increasing from 5,000 people in 1990 to over 7,300 in 2003. As the city continues to develop to accommodate this growth, attention to quality of life, including natural resources, open spaces and recreation opportunities becomes increasingly important.

It is in this regard that the City of Sutherlin set out in late 2003 to develop its first-ever comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan.

## 1.2 Plan Objectives

While Sutherlin has several parks within or near the community, the park system does not currently meet minimum recommended standards regarding the provision of parks and open spaces. Objectives for the Parks and Open Space Plan include:

1. Evaluate the existing condition of parks and open spaces in Sutherlin and identify opportunities relative to developing a parks system to meet the current and future needs of the community. (Chapter 2. Existing Conditions.)
2. Poll the community regarding preferences for a parks and open space system in Sutherlin. (Chapter 3. Public Comment.)
3. Develop a parks and open space system including recommended standards for type, size, location, physical elements and design considerations. (Chapter 4. Service Delivery Standards.)

4. Identify park and open space needs based on current and future population projections, including potential locations for future park and open space facilities. (Chapter 5. Needs Assessment and Chapter 6. Plan Diagrams.)
5. Identify park and open space projects, implementation strategies and an action plan for activating the Parks and Open Space Plan. (Chapter 7. Action Plan.)

### 1.3 Plan Development Process and Public Involvement

Building from the above five objectives, a plan development process was established. Seven Tasks were identified, beginning with data collection and analysis (Task 1. Existing Conditions Analysis) and ending with development of the Parks and Open Space Plan (Task 7. Plan Document).

Table 1.1 – Plan Development Process

Task	Fall 03	Winter 04	Spring 04	Summer 04	Fall 04	Winter 05	Spring 05
1. Existing Cond.							
2. Public Comment							
3. Service Delivery							
4. Needs							
5. Plan Diagrams							
6. Action Plan							
7. Plan Document							

A public involvement process was utilized to: a) help identify community preferences regarding parks and open spaces; and b) review and provide comment on various elements of the Parks and Open Space Plan. This was accomplished through regular staff consultation, a series of Parks Advisory Committee meetings, focus group sessions, a community survey and an open house. Details regarding these public involvement activities can be found in Chapter 3, Public Involvement.

### 1.4 Using the Plan

From a long-term community planning perspective, the Parks and Open Space Plan is subject to periodic review. From a short-term community development perspective, it is intended that strategies and actions included herein be implemented upon adoption of the Plan. Chapter 7, Action Plan, includes a capital improvements list identifying park, open space and pathway projects (7.1); a set of implementation strategies intended to be utilized by elected and appointed officials and staff to foster progress in meeting the parks and open space needs of the community (7.2); and an action plan, in calendar format, to be an annual or fiscal year planning tool (7.3).

The Parks and Open Space Plan is intended to be desktop ready and user-friendly. It is intended to be actively referenced by officials, staff, residents and those engaged in developing property. Officials and staff can use the Plan to pursue grants and other funding sources as well as to review development proposals in seeking and/or negotiating

for park, open space or pathway sites and facilities. Residents can use the Plan to stay familiar with Sutherlin park and open space plans and engage in conversations with staff and decision makers about park needs and priority projects. Those engaged in developing property can use the plan as a tool in identifying possible locations for park, open space or pathway facilities and in identifying opportunities for integrating development plans with park plans.

Working together, officials, staff, residents and the development community can help Sutherlin realize its vision of a comprehensive, networked system of parks, open spaces and multi-use pathways.

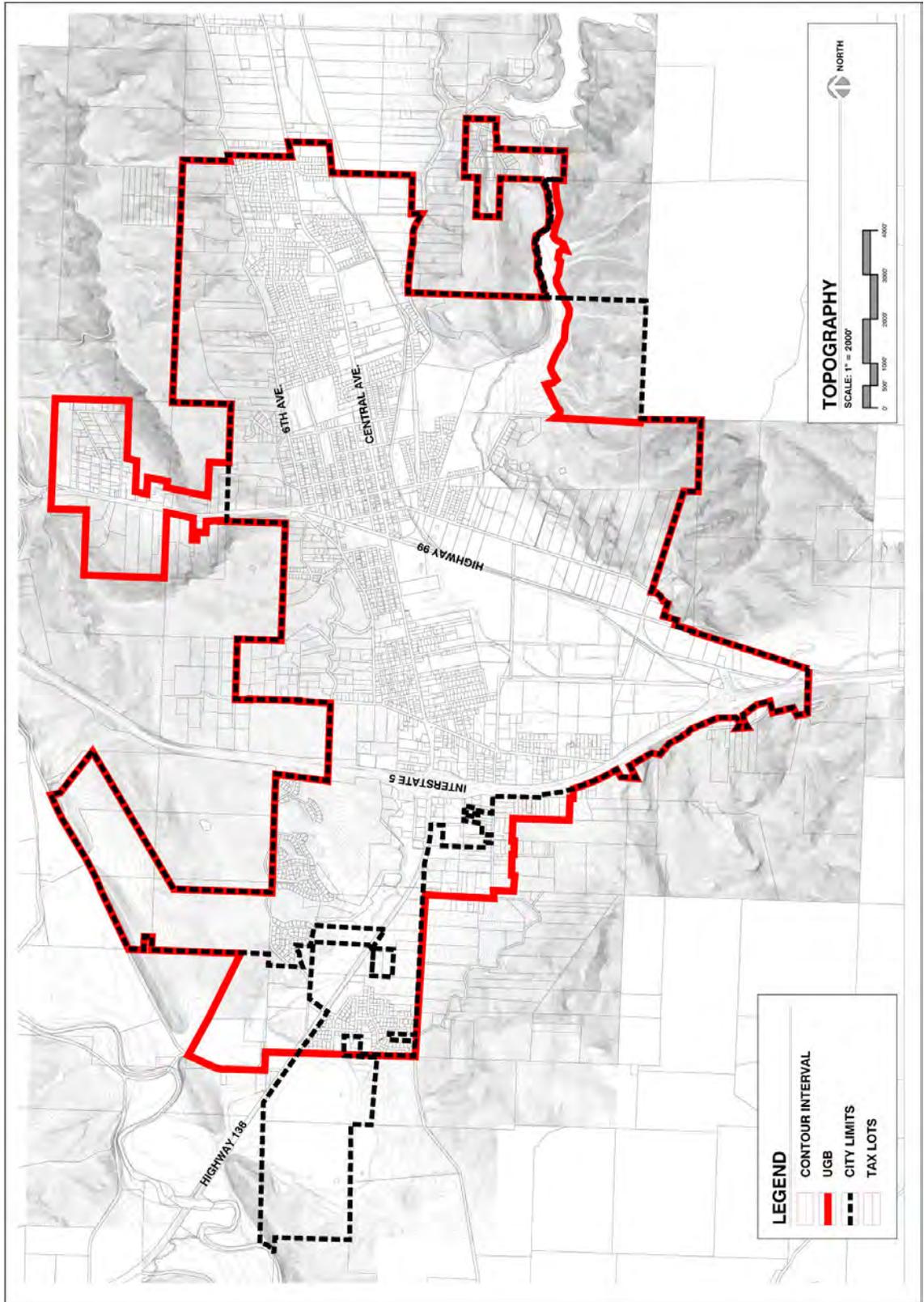


Figure 1.1 – Topography, UGB and City Limits

# Chapter 2. Existing Conditions

## 2.1 Existing Conditions

### Physical Setting, Urban Growth Boundary and City Limits

There are approximately 3,889 acres within Sutherlin's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and 3,052 acres within the city limits. Much of the UGB and city limits boundary is the same with the exception of an area north of the central area of town known as Union Gap, an area south of Cooper Creek south and east of the south end of State Street, an area west of Interstate 5 and south of Highway 138, and an area north of Highway 138 towards the northwest extent of the city. The UGB was located primarily on the basis of physical and natural features surrounding the community and thus follows the contours and topography of the surrounding foothills. These significant ridgelines to the north and south of Sutherlin (each running more-or-less east to west) frame the community in terms of development as well as serve as an important visual backdrop. Figure 1.1, Topography, illustrates Sutherlin's UGB, city limits and surrounding natural landform.

### Parks and Schools

Sutherlin has three city parks. Central Park, located south of Central Avenue between South Willamette and South Umatilla Streets, is a 4.2 acre facility improved with lighted tennis courts, playground equipment, a community center, historic and cultural monumentation, shade trees, picnic facilities and a small rose garden. Central Park is heavily utilized and highly popular to residents of Sutherlin.



Central Park

Sutherlin's second park, Hartley Park, is located on West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue east of Branton Street. Hartley Park is an 8.8-acre facility offering open space recreation, picnic and BBQ facilities, and play equipment. The park is located on the flank of the north foothills and slopes from north to south. An unimproved parking area off of West 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue exists at the bottom of the park and an access road along the eastern boundary serves a second paved parking area near the top of the park. Though



Hartley Park

there are some park elements at Hartley, the facility is largely unimproved, has inconvenient access and is difficult to supervise or police.

Sutherlin's third park is the Timber Days site. A 25.7-acre parcel, Timber Days is due south of Central Park across Sutherlin Creek. A narrow pedestrian bridge adjacent to South Willamette Street to the southwest of Central Park crosses Sutherlin Creek and provides access to Timber Days.



Rodeo Grounds

Timber Days is home to an annual 3-day rodeo operated by a private non-profit community organization. The site is largely unimproved but contains a rodeo arena, BMX track, a short track for mud races, a picnic pavilion and public restrooms.



Cooper Creek Reservoir

In addition to city park facilities, Douglas County has one park facility which lies partly within the Sutherlin UGB. The Douglas County Park at Cooper Creek Reservoir offers boating, swimming, fishing and picnicking opportunities.

There are four public schools—two primary, one middle and one high school—in Sutherlin that offer playing fields and hard court sport and recreation opportunities. West Intermediate School is located in the north central area of Sutherlin, on Comstock, north of Sixth. It is about 16 acres in size, with about 12 of those acres considered outdoor area potentially available for shared school/park use. East Primary School is located north of downtown between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> just west of Umatilla. It is a smaller campus, about 3.5 acres overall, with about 1 acre considered potentially available for shared school/park use. The middle and high schools share one larger campus on two adjacent parcels. The north parcel, on the north side of 4<sup>th</sup>, just east of Umatilla contains the middle school and high school buildings and associated facilities. The south parcel, immediately across 4<sup>th</sup> from the school buildings, contains outdoor physical education and other athletic facilities. The south parcel is considered potentially available for shared school/park use, with about 16.3 acres overall.

#### Land Use, Transportation and Ownership

As with all communities in Oregon, Sutherlin's land use is governed by its Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. Within Sutherlin, there are four general land use categories—industrial, commercial, residential and public—within both the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. Generally speaking, existing development more or less follows the physical delineation of the land use classifications. For the most part,

the commercial land use designation occurs along Central Avenue east of Interstate 5 and Highway 138 west of the interstate, with an additional small commercial node at the Highway 99/Interstate 5 interchange on the south end of town. The industrial land use designation occurs: a) along the Highway 99 corridor from approximately 4<sup>th</sup> in the north to the Highway 99/Interstate 5 interchange in the south; b) within a large roughly triangle-shaped area west of Highway 99 from Hastings in the north to the south highway/interstate interchange in the south; c) two small areas west of Interstate 5 along the south side of Highway 138; and, d) a large undeveloped tract in the northwest corner of the UGB. Residential land use occurs outbound from the commercial/industrial core, with significant residential areas occurring to the northeast, southeast and northwest corners of the community. The public land use designation is scattered throughout the community, primarily occurring where current public facilities exist, including the schools, parks, city hall and library and public works shop. Figure 2.1 illustrates Sutherlin's Land Use Designations.

The transportation system in Sutherlin is defined by the Interstate 5 and Highway 99 north/south corridors which divide the city roughly into thirds and the Central Avenue and Highway 138 east/west corridor which further divides the community into sixths. These six sub-areas are each served by collectors and local streets. The existing transportation system is largely oriented to automobile transportation with limited accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian transportation. (Sutherlin is currently updating its Transportation System Plan to address future transportation needs, including multi-use paths.)

In addition to the public ownership mentioned above regarding parks and schools, other public ownership of significance includes Douglas County and the Sutherlin Water Control District. Douglas County owns most of the industrially designated land in the south central triangular area previously mentioned. The Sutherlin Water Control District owns and operates Cooper Creek Reservoir, including approximately 260 acres immediately surrounding the reservoir.

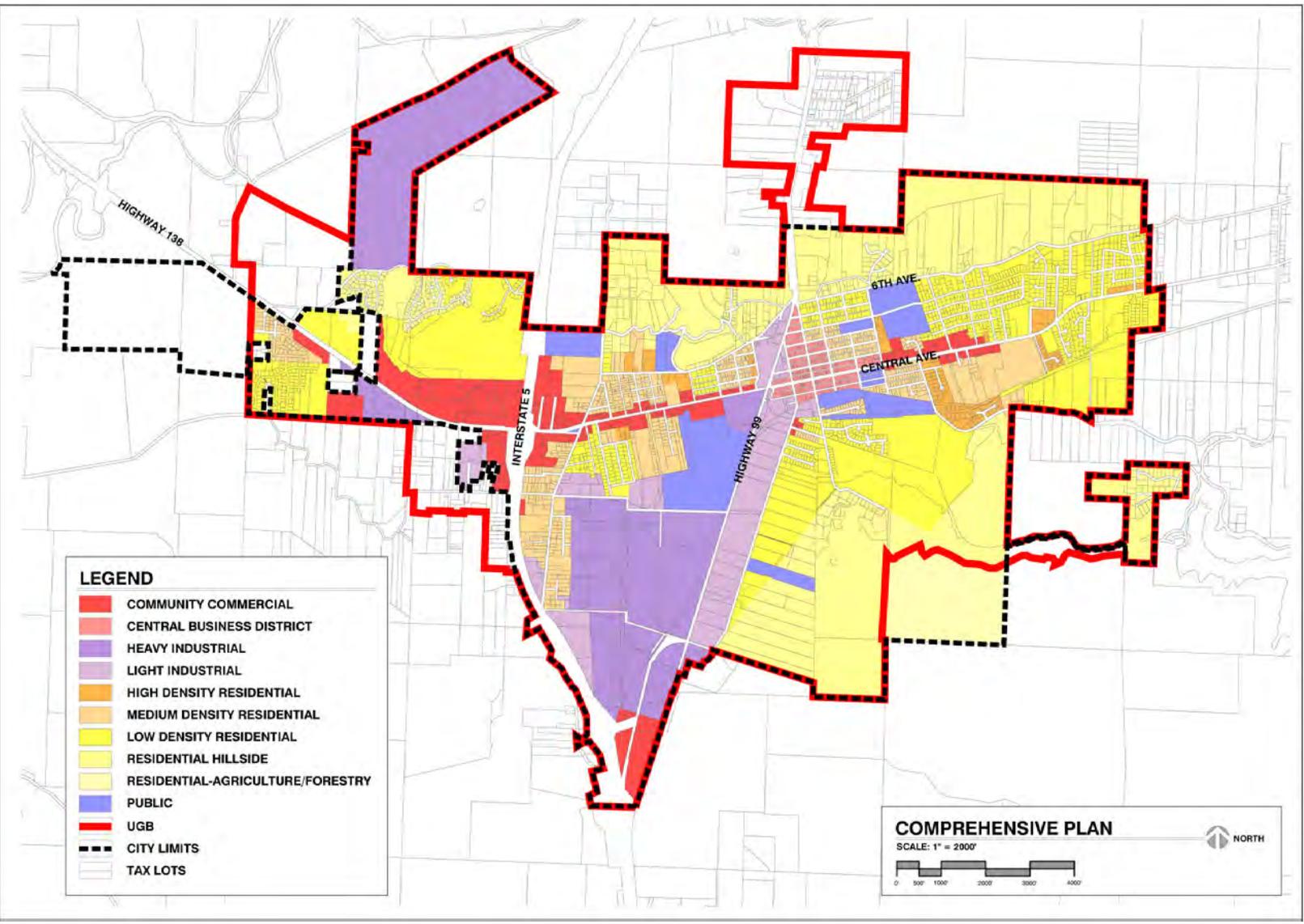


Figure 2.1 – Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations

Hydrology, Wetlands and Vegetation

Sutherlin Creek, Cooper Creek and Cook Creek are the primary linear drainage features in the community. Sutherlin Creek and Cooper Creek flow west and south, merging in the south central area of town before draining into the North Umpqua River west of Interstate 5 and Winchester. Sutherlin Creek has been highly altered over the years, with strategies employed to straighten and deepen the creek to accommodate storm drainage and urban runoff. Cooper Creek, much less impacted than Sutherlin Creek and retaining areas of intact riparian habitat, receives much of the runoff from the southeast Sutherlin hills. Cook Creek begins in the highlands immediately southwest of town, flowing north under Highway 138 before turning westward and making its way to Calapooya Creek and to the Umpqua River.



Sutherlin Creek  
Looking West from State Street



Ford's Pond

Other significant hydrologic features include Ford's Pond on the far western edge of the Sutherlin UGB and two remnant log ponds in the south central industrial area of the community.

Wetlands represent a third significant hydrologic feature in Sutherlin. Of the 3,889 acres within Sutherlin's UGB, about 300 acres, or nearly 8 percent, of the community is wetland (All-told, over 1,300 acres of wetlands exist within the immediate vicinity of the Sutherlin, Cooper and Crook Creek drainages). Wetlands in Sutherlin are comprised of riparian woodlands and wet prairies.



Wetland Habitat along the Cook Creek Drainage

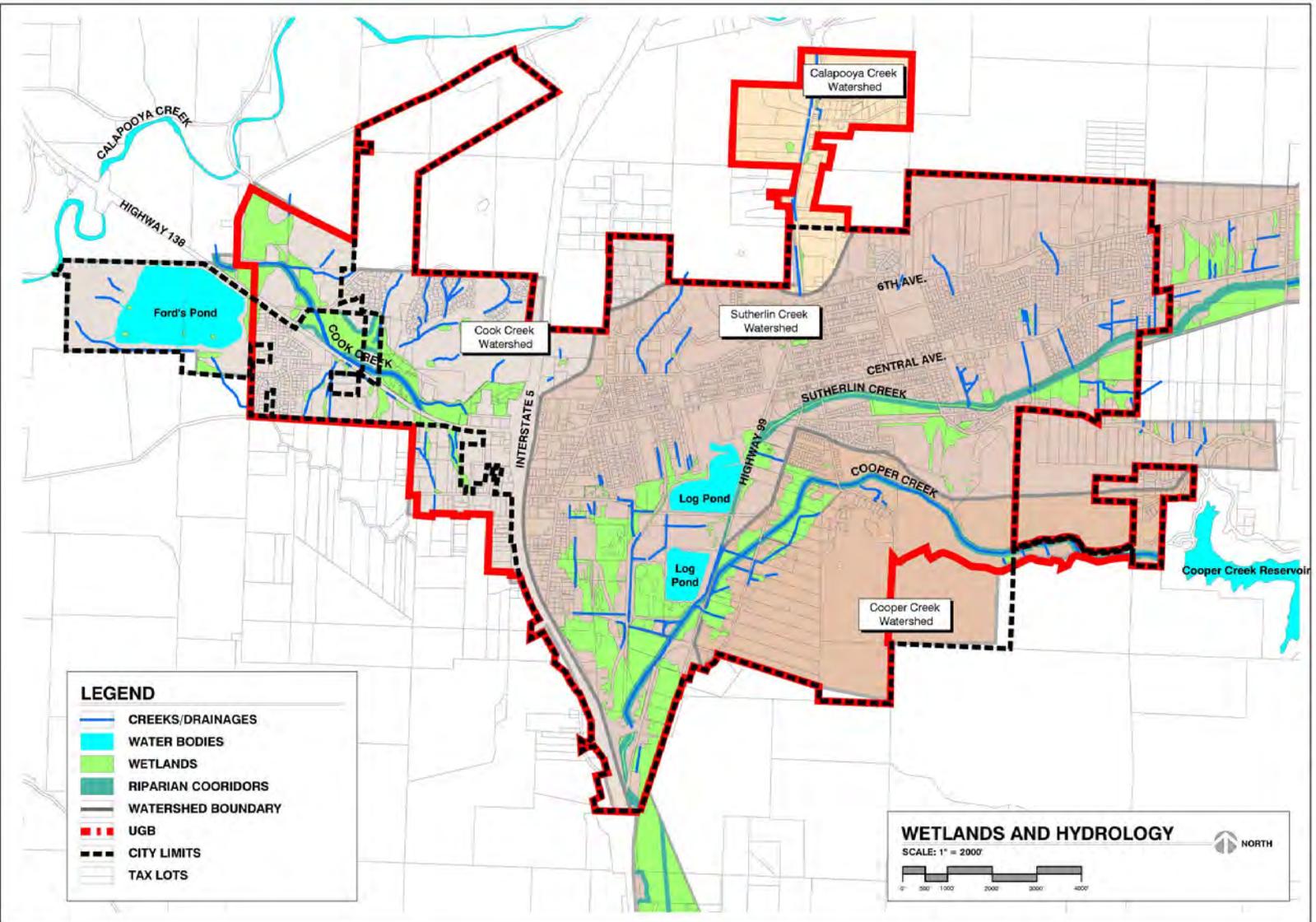


Figure 2.2 – Wetlands and Hydrology

Beyond the urban and suburban environment of Sutherlin proper and the surrounding lower elevations of grasslands and wet prairie, exist oak woodlands and mixed coniferous forests wherein Oregon white oak, Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir predominate. Figure 2.2 illustrates Sutherlin’s hydrologic and wetland elements.



The Landscape of Sutherlin – Grasslands and Wet Prairies Surrounded by Oak Woodlands and Coniferous Forests

## 2.2 Opportunities and Constraints

There are numerous opportunities for park and open space development in Sutherlin. On the positive side, the Sutherlin landscape lends itself to an interconnected park system developed around existing creeks, riparian drainages and wetland corridors. Strategic acquisition of park property could result in a spectacular park, open space and pathway system – a true emerald necklace throughout the city. The good news is that the skeleton of a system already exists and with careful planning can be capitalized on. That said, the limited number of parks in the city today coupled with existing transportation barriers present a number of unique challenges that will need to be addressed. Figure 2.3 depicts the location of key opportunities and constraints.

### Opportunities

- The three stream corridors, Sutherlin Creek, Cook Creek and Cooper Creek, present linear riparian corridors that could serve as:
  - Bike/Pedestrian connections between park facilities
  - Habitat and corridors for wildlife
  - Open space and visual diversity throughout the city
  - Connections to nearby recreation destinations such as Cooper Creek Reservoir, Plat I Reservoir, Ford’s Pond, or Calapooya Creek
- The existing log ponds provide opportunities for wildlife habitat, open space, non-motorized boating, warm-water fishing and recreation functions.
- “Multiple objectives”<sup>1</sup> management strategies applied to existing water resources could easily be capitalized upon to the benefit of the park system and the city as a whole.
- The vacated east-west railroad ROW provides a linear park and pathway opportunity along Sutherlin Creek with potential connection from Plat I reservoir to the center of town.

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<sup>1</sup> Multiple objectives management refers to a program designed to provide multiple benefits (such as stormwater detention and filtration, habitat, active and passive recreation opportunities, wetland protection, etc.) to a community through an integrated management structure.

- With several large portions of the ROW under city ownership, improvements could be made with relative ease.
- ODOT's planned expansion of the Highway 138 access under Interstate 5 in 2005 provides an important transportation opportunity to expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities and provide connections westward to Ford's Pond.
- Realigning the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Extension/Highway 99 intersection presents an opportunity for a safe and efficient east west access on the north side of town.
- Redesign and expansion of the south Sutherlin Interstate 5 interchange presents an opportunity to provide a bicycle/pedestrian link across the freeway.
- Transportation system improvements provide opportunities to establish links between parks and pathways.
- Though having limited street-frontage, the Rodeo Grounds location, existing infrastructure and community familiarity offers a prime opportunity for expanded community park facilities in the heart of town.
- Cooper Creek Reservoir (owned by Sutherlin Water Control District) and surrounding county park could serve as an east end, water-oriented community park.
- The existing log ponds in south central Sutherlin (North - owned by Murphy Plywood, South – owned by Douglas County) could serve as significant natural area and open space for passive recreation.
- The majority of the City is relatively flat with a number of large undeveloped parcels suitable for park or open space development.
- Wetlands provide an opportunity for multiple benefits of open space, habitat, and stormwater detention and filtering.
- The ridge systems surrounding the city present opportunities for a system of trails, scenic overlooks and backdrops with Sutherlin as a focus.

### Constraints

- Wetlands may constrain park development.
- Improving and restoring degraded portions of the existing hydrologic system— Sutherlin Creek and the south central wetlands near the log ponds—may be expensive.
- Both I-5 and the active railroad ROW present significant barriers to east-west bicycle and pedestrian transportation across the city.
- Connections between parks, particularly bicycle and pedestrian connections between west and east Sutherlin, is significantly limited by I-5.
- East-west connections on the north side of town are constrained by the poor intersection design at 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Highway 99 and the lack of a 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue extension across the railroad tracks.
- Purchase or acquisition of new parkland may be the biggest constraint simply due to economic factors.
- The steep slopes surrounding the city present a challenge in terms of access to and cost of trail construction.

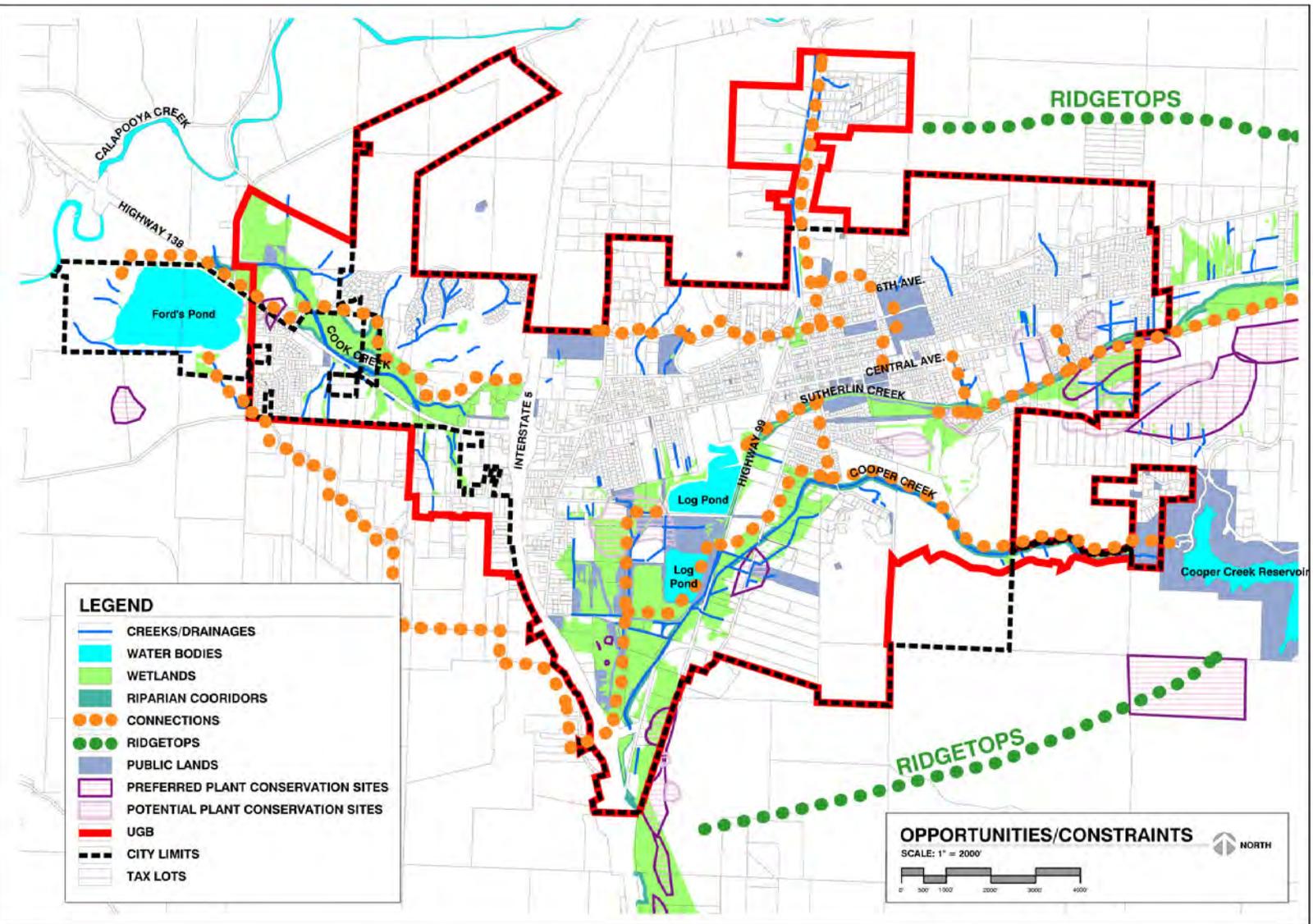


Figure 2.3 – Opportunities and Constraints