

Mark Looney's Language on Wiehle Parks
(Referenced at Wiehle Avenue Subcommittee Meeting 09-15)

Note: Text mainly taken from existing Comp Plan language for Springfield Mall redevelopment

On-site Urban Parks and Recreation- Multiple, publicly accessible urban plazas and park spaces at various scales and functions should be included in the transit station area at each phase of redevelopment. The plazas should form a network of on-site public spaces and should be supplemented by existing and improved off-site recreation facilities. The on-site urban parks should provide active and passive recreational opportunities to serve the residents, employees, and visitors of the transit station area. These spaces should be distinguished from streetscape and retail amenities, contribute to the quality of life for users and residents through their function, use, accessibility, facilities, amenities, or other elements.

The urban park spaces should be distributed throughout the land unit and, depending upon function, may be at ground-level or at rooftop locations. Elevated active recreation areas should have clearly denoted public access points. A broad range of leisure facilities and amenities could include a trail network, off-leash dog parks, plazas, courtyards, outdoor seating areas, playgrounds, gardens, sports courts, fitness stations, or other active recreational amenities as well as flexible spaces that will accommodate large events such as farmer's markets, community festivals and performances. These diverse spaces, functions, and amenities should be provided to the extent possible at each phase of the development.

The location of urban plazas around the perimeter of the transit station area should function to welcome users, provide transparency, and act as gateway features into the transit station. Particularly important to the design is the location of an urban plaza at the _____ of the land unit. This location is critical to the enhancement of the link between the _____ and the transit station, as this area is expected to experience high-volumes of pedestrian and bicycle traffic moving to and from the transit facility. At the initial phase, some level of improvements should be made to this area, which should be enhanced as the development builds out.

The network of public spaces and plazas in Land Unit(s) _____ should focus on one large, signature, central public plaza/park. This central plaza/park should function as an important civic gathering place for residents, employees, and shoppers of the transit station area. The provision of a range of auxiliary and connecting leisure amenities will support casual and programmed activities and help enliven the area. The central plaza/park should provide a link between at least one external roadway and the principal onsite road(s). The form and size of the plaza/park should encourage and facilitate a variety of outdoor activities and uses. The design should include flexible, programmable open space, outdoor seating, landscaped space, and unique place-making features, such as water, public art, or other interactive elements. The plaza should relate to the surrounding buildings with buildings aligned to the space and entrances opening onto it. The design of the plaza should promote safe usage by the pedestrian by limiting vehicular access. As appropriate, a peripheral transit stop and drop-off area should be provided to encourage pedestrian access to this site and promote activity.

Off-site Parks and Recreation- The on-site urban park spaces and amenities should be supplemented by off-site facility development, such as improvements to existing local parks,

and/ or other contributions. These off-site improvements should offset the recreational needs generated by the new development. The improvements could include new or expanded athletic fields, sports courts, playgrounds, picnic areas, trails, open spaces, dog parks, skate parks, and other supporting amenities. A network of pedestrian trails or sidewalk connections should enable pedestrian connections from the transit station area to nearby parks.