

July 2024 - Comments on Burfoot Park Expansion Proposal via email and Facebook

1. I'd be for keeping as much of the county owned land as a possible conversion to the park. If it is given up, it will be forever lost to development. Our parks, county, state and National are treasures for the general public to enjoy. Don't cede them to corporations or wealthy interests. Keep the land for the public use. Thanks.
2. Thank you for the information regarding the County's proposal to expand Burfoot Park and the opportunity to provide input.

I own two side by side parcels along Boston Harbor Rd NE, both of which are adjacent to County property under consideration with respect to expanding the Park. I have a small home located at 7045 Boston Harbor Rd NE, parcel number 35905200101, right next to Block 54 - the "Irving Lassen Donation." While I support the expansion of the Park, I have a couple of concerns or points to make.

Expansion in the the Park in the Block 54 area would need to take into consideration wetland areas and wetland buffer zones encompassing at least 50% of the parcels primarily on the portion of the properties to the north/northwest of the block (the wetlands and wetland buffer zones under the current Critical Areas Ordinance [CAO] cover nearly half of the two parcels I own). The County needs to comply with the CAO when planning for trails and/or structures. No variances should be allowed.

Further, especially if the County is considering eliminating ROWs, I would appreciate it if County officials would not put trailways or structures within 150 feet or more of my property to maintain adequate privacy for my location - my living structure is very close to what would be the northern boundary of the proposed expansion.

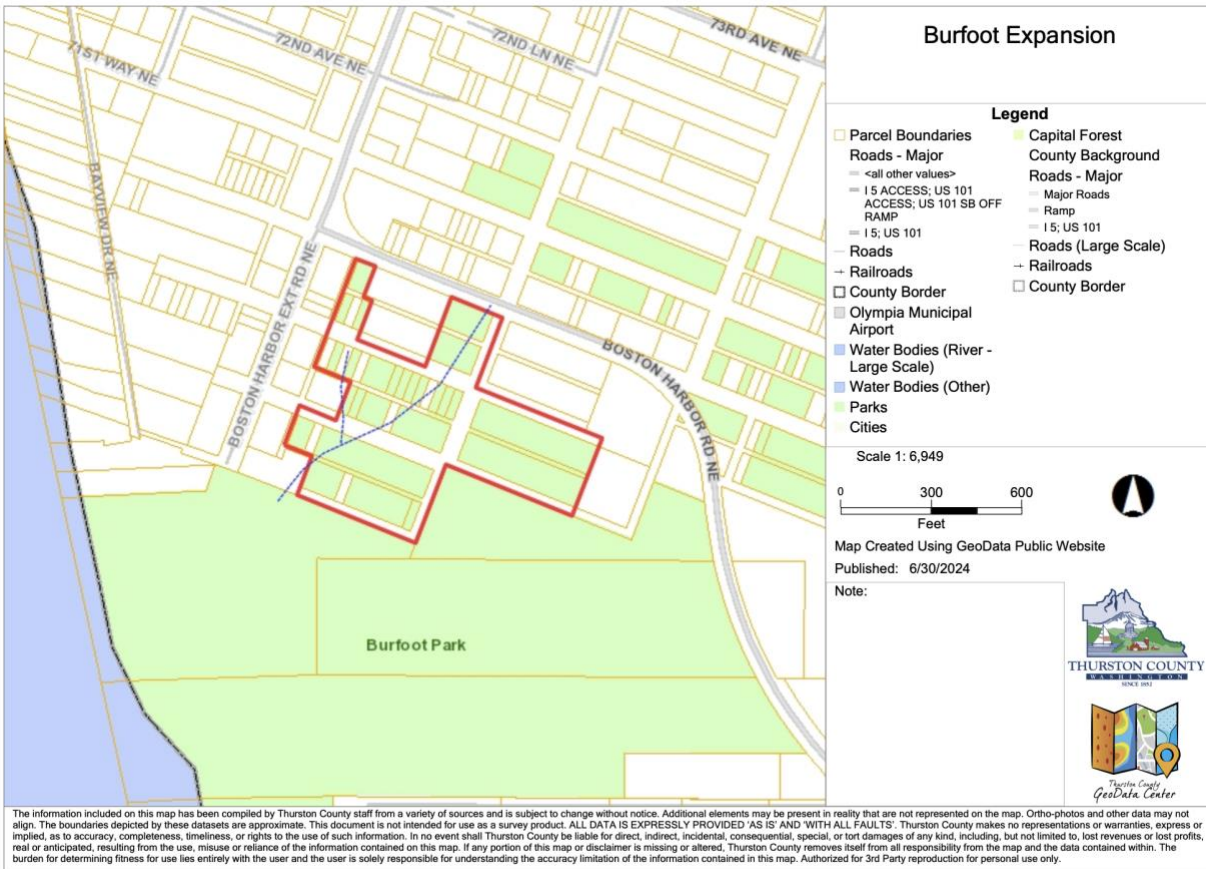
Again, I support the expansion of Burfoot Park, it's a beautiful place for the public to enjoy. However, the County must comply with its own CAO regulations, and I would appreciate that no trails or structures be built within 150 feet or more of my property.

3. Attached is a map that more accurately indicates the possible area that could be gained for Burfoot Park if the County were to acquire the island properties and vacate the rights-of-way.

The map indicated on your website is in error because it depicts the entire vacated ROW going to the County. County ROW is best viewed and described as a strong easement to the benefit of the County to construct a County Road. The County does not have fee ownership of the property which is why when it's vacated, it reverts back to the adjacent property owners with typically half going to one side and half going to the other. The boundary between the Boston Harbor Plat and Burfoot proper is atypical because the Boston Harbor Plat only provided for 30' of the 60' ROW when platted with the intent the neighboring property (Burfoot) would provide the additional 30' when/if platted. So those Boston Harbor Plat properties bordering the current Park end up with the entire 30' of right-of-way when vacated.

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Until County ROW is opened as a County Road (exercising their easement rights), it's not available for the use of the public, not even for a trail. The County does allow private owners to use unopened rights-of-way to access their properties for private driveways or roads but those are not open to the public. A County Park can not be granted the same because it's a public park and the only way to open to the public is a road. I'm just touching the surface because it's complex but hopefully the attached map will assist you as you look to plan the future of Burfoot Park.



- I am 100% in favor of absorbing the additional 7-8 acres into Burfoot Park. Conserving additional green space while further buffering what is there is a positive. It is not important to me to add additional trails to Burfoot. I use what is there and it is adequate. I would understand if trails were needed for maintenance.
- I support this proposal. The purchase of 4 properties assessed at \$58,400 expanding an established thriving public park by eight acres is fantastic payback for the minuscule investment.

I'm perfectly happy if the additional eight acres are left for the critters. I'm pretty sure they will appreciate the privacy.

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Beyond being “a good deal”, this proposal also preempts bad deals. Of the four privately owned undeveloped parcels in Blocks 55 and 59, two were purchased in 2003 as tax deeds. For 21 years, the owners have been paying taxes on fallow land. Three of the four owners don’t even live in Thurston County.

Another 10 Thurston County-owned parcels in Blocks 54, 55 and 59 could end up unexpectedly for surplus sale like was recently experienced at 359-046-03700.

Boston Harbor has 22 documented cases of undeveloped land sold by the county then re-acquired for back taxes. These undeveloped parcels often are classified unbuildable, and often result in long-festering Code non-compliance cases for those with road access. Thurston County should not be contributing to the cycle of tax title sales, illegal encampments, then forfeitures.

While this proposed 8-acre expansion of Burfoot Park does not entirely eliminate the unbuildable land tax title problem in Boston Harbor, it will protect 14 parcels of the 67 total.

This proposal is a worthy investment.

6. I fully support Thurston County keeping the 8 acres they own north of Burfoot Park to potentially expand the park.
7. I think it is a great idea to keep the acreage to expand Burfoot Park and for potential different uses in the future.
8. I think expanding the park to include the 8 acres bordering the park is an excellent idea. Thank you for pulling all of this information together. We are going to need to preserve our open spaces to maintain biodiversity and habitat.
9. I am writing to express my whole hearted support of the proposed Burfoot Park expansion. As a 47 year resident of Thurston County, I have had the privilege of decades of enjoyment in our public spaces. I appreciate the good stewardship of the land by having city and county parks, and Burfoot Park especially gives all of our citizens - and visitors, the chance to enjoy Puget Sound in a rural setting. Expanding the park will provide more opportunity in a wonderful location.

Please support the Burfoot Park expansion.

10. Feel strongly this is a good move. My knee jerk is that adding the remaining parcels/acres to the park either now or later would also make sense. If not plausible or practical to add to the park, would suggest some other way to guard those parcels and have them in some type of stewardship. If an effort is mounted to acquire or protect those, we would certainly want to know how we can help.

Thanks so much...great idea and right on target!!

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11. We have owned a home in the Boston Harbor area since 1987 and live steps from the road down to Burfoot Park. We and many, many thousands of folks (both residents and visitors) have enjoyed this park for decades. The concept to officially incorporate the county-owned properties into the park is a win-win. Those 8 acres under consideration would provide more access and more environmental protection for this very popular and beautiful waterfront/nature trail/community park. In residential Boston Harbor because of water and sewer access, more building cannot be accommodated because of limitations. This request will enlarge the opportunities for others to enjoy aspects of the waterfront and landscape, included wooded areas and wetlands. Our home on 6905 Bayview Dr. as close to the north side of the park as are a number of the residences up on the hill near the walk-in park entry. We welcome this request for a proactive move to enlarge and protect those parcels that will result in the transfer of some of the country-owned land to the park.
12. I am strongly in favor of the county keeping the least 8 acres of land as proposed by the BHA Environment Committee. It is very important to provide habitat for birds, deer and other wildlife, as more parcels are developed in the area and keeping this land as part of the park will help. I would prefer if all of the parcels were kept undeveloped as wildlife habitat, but 8 acres is better than zero.
13. We express our strong support for the BHA Environment Committee proposal to retain the 16 acres in the Boston Harbor community for an eventual expansion of Burfoot Park. This park is an essential part of the local community. We urge our elected representatives and agency officials to support this effort.
14. Yes, love it! I agree with your proposal.
15. I think this proposal makes sense. The County already owns most of the entire block of land north and west of Burfoot Park extending to Boston Harbor Rd and Boston Harbor Rd Ext and should acquire privately owned parcels within the block as they become available. This is a step in the direction of a more proactive and visionary approach to parks and open space in Thurston County.
16. We are in favor of the County keeping the 8 acres of land next to Burfoot Park.
17. I love this idea. It makes sense on so many levels. Burfoot Park is a county and community treasure, and an expansion would make it even better. Thank you for all of your research and work on this project!
18. Yes to this proposal. It is so important to have these lands formally included into Burfoot Park by the County and have a plan going forward to fill in the gaps. Much of the land was gifted to the County yet it has existed unacknowledged. This proposal puts a purpose and use for the public. It has been a fear of ours that small parcels of this would be sold off by the County, not recognizing their value to the whole.

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Burfoot Park is a gem with its upper woods and lower estuary and saltwater beach, one of the few public saltwater accesses in this area.

Logistically, this proposal is a natural fit, making use of public land already owned by our County and adjacent to the existing Park.

Environmentally, these lands include the upper portion of the stream-fed estuary which feeds the Park's saltwater beach. The lands buffer the Park from the busy Boston Harbor Road and development.

Burfoot Park is heavily used and enjoyed for family celebrations, picnics with the kids, daily walkers, community events, school outings to learn of the plants and animals, and plain old fun in the playground. Yes, let's acknowledge and make use of what the County already owns and protect these lands by formally including them in Burfoot Park.

19. I would like to express my strong support for the proposal to expand Burfoot Park by 8 acres. Burfoot Park is such an amazing resource for the community and the environment. It adds value in so many ways - peace of mind and enjoyment for visitors, wildlife habitat, and natural forest to help combat climate change are just a few of the benefits. Please consider the expansion of Burfoot Park, and subsequently increasing the value of such a wonderful place.
20. We agree 100% with the proposal.
21. The Boston Harbor Area has had a very long history of environmental degradation, because of wetlands and poor soils and steep slopes. Some of these problems were remedied by concerned neighbors, with the addition of modern water and sewer systems.

Most of the remaining environmentally marginal properties have been gifted, deeded or abandoned to Thurston County.

My recommendation is that the County retain all their properties north and south of Boston Harbor Rd. and formulate a plan to expand Burfoot Park to act as a preserve. This would require the County to acquire some properties. The only exception to holding properties might be an occasional small lot (30x100) that could be absorbed by an adjoining neighbor. Please contact me for further discussion.

22. I am supportive of Thurston County keeping the 8 acres they own north of and adjacent to Burfoot Park to potentially expand the park. This is the best land use option that protects more land from impacts of development especially close to an environmentally sensitive area.

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23. I think this is great for all of Olympia (so many people from all over Olympia enjoy coming to the park).
24. I am writing in support of the County keeping the 8 acres north of Burfoot Park to potentially expand the park. Burfoot is one of our favorite parks in the Olympia area because it has such varied terrain, and is so welcoming throughout the year. We would be overjoyed if it was expanded and kept safe for the local flora and fauna as well as our children's children. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our opinion on this important matter.
25. Burfoot Park is an absolute gem, and to paraphrase Marty Rubin - "Parks and playgrounds are the soul of a County." Thurston County has an opportunity to grow its soul for the benefit of current residents and future generations by expanding the park with the adjacent 8 or 9 acres already owned by the County. Why would you not want to do this?
26. My wife and I have been residents in the Boston Harbor area for 48 years. We are strong supporters of the expansion of Burfoot Park with the bordering 16 acres owned by Thurston County. The park is such a great amenity to our area and to the people of Thurston County.

Thank you for your commitment to positive environmental decisions that will benefit so many people of Thurston County.

27. With great enthusiasm I think this is a fabulous idea. There is absolutely nothing to be gained by the community or the county selling these parcels off separately. The community will benefit by this extension of current property which adds to the small natural forest for our children and families to explore. As the community increases with more young families, this will help preserve the habitat for our foxes, deer, birds and the amazing beach. Having the small wetland and ravine is certainly to the advantage of people who love to explore and educate the children about the natural environment.

Adding to the park at this time is an amazing opportunity that will never occur again. I just say, **DO IT.**

28. I have lived in the Boston Harbor community for 60 years. The biggest change I have seen is the growing number of families with small children. Walking, bicycling, exploring has never been so much a part of the local culture as it appears to be now. I have 18 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren so am very aware of how important parks and the natural environment is to all families and how important it is to teach about this and preserve as much forest land as possible.

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The B.H Park property was offered to the Community by the Burfoot Family in 1967 by "Dad Burfoot" who had put several pieces of property together to form the land the family owned. (this info from Bev. Burfoot). At one time the name, "Quails Cove" was considered as a name for the park. There is a rich history about this land which is available in articles in old Olympian newspapers. There is also a story of the parks history in John (Jack) Marshall's "*A History of the Boston Harbor and Gull Harbor Area*". (Book available at Boston Harbor Marina).

As the community grows adding these acres is a "no brainer". Please complete these transactions ASAP.

29. Having resided in Boston Harbor, two blocks away from Burfoot Park for 32 years, I am in favor of the proposal for county preservation of Burfoot Park to the north 8 acres. This would allow for an increase of connectivity for birds and wildlife. Protecting this vital watershed should be prioritized. This area provides not only habitat for wildlife, but is a cherished recreational corridor used extensively by those who live in the county and beyond.
30. I am 100% in favor of the proposal set forth. The Boston Harbor community have always welcomed visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of this area. People come here to appreciate the lack of commercial development, and the local government and citizens have a responsibility to cooperate in maintaining a quality of life for the humans, as well as the native animal population and environment.
31. Thanks for making this so clear and easy to review and comment on! Great work – and very much appreciated. Yes, I support encouraging the county to retain the existing parcels and purchasing others to fill in the 8 acres outlined in red – with a couple questions/concerns/suggestions.

Has someone spoken with the owners of abutting parcels? The proposal should take into consideration the needs and intentions of property owners living along the road.

- Would they prefer to purchase neighboring parcels and expand their holdings instead of the County retaining ownership?
- What are their concerns about having trails and expanded public access behind their homes? Can we say something in the proposal to assure them that we understand concerns they may have, and that we support fencing and other methods to protect their privacy, etc.?
- The folks who own the solar panels (parcel 51) need to retain access for maintenance and repair/replacement over time. How does the proposal protect their access long-term?

Thanks again for all your good work!

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32. Thank you for the informative letter about the proposed expansion of Burfoot Park. My lots are within the target area. Please add my email address to your monthly newsletter mailing list. Thank you.
33. I think this is fantastic! Thank you for all your work on this project.
34. Seems like a really good idea to me.
35. I support the proposal to expand Burfoot Park. The Lassen donation is a great place to start.