

CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Policy Session Worksheet

Presentation Date: June 1, 2021 **Start Time:** 3:30 pm **Length:** 30 min.

Presentation Title: Barton & Carver Parks – Summer congestion planning & policy

Departments: BCS - County Parks, DTD, Clackamas County Sheriff's Office, Counsel

Presenters: Tom Riggs, Joe Marek, Cpt. Brad O'Neil, Scott Ciecko

Other Invitees: Sarah Eckman, Mike Bezner, Stephen Madkour

WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

The above listed County departments are requesting the Board of County Commissioners to make policy decisions approving the attached plan (Exhibit 1) to deal with inevitable and unavoidable crowding and congestion that occurs during summer months at and near County owned and operated Barton and Carver parks. The proposed plan recognizes that it is not possible to completely eliminate the problems that will occur, and that there are limited County resources available to try to minimize impacts and risks from the heavy usage. The plan does, however, contain recommended policy decisions as to how the limited County resources should be allocated in order to maximize the mitigation of the impacts from heavy summer usage.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (why and why now):

The congestion and crowding at these parks occurs on hot summer days, primarily on weekends, when hundreds, if not thousands, of people and cars flock to the Clackamas River to float from Barton to Carver. The high numbers of people and cars on these days results in significant congestion and increased risk of motor vehicle accidents, creates noise and inconvenience to neighboring residents, and often ends with people becoming intoxicated and causing disturbances or altercations. Summer is quickly approaching so the time to act is now.

Despite these problems, it is not possible to prevent people from flocking to the river and using County roads to get there. Although it would conceivably be possible to close the parks altogether on hot summer days, that option is not recommended and still would not prevent people from coming to the river in droves, parking along County roads, and finding alternate routes to access the river.

County departments addressing these issues have limited resources and limited options for how to respond. The attached plan describes the budgetary constraints involved,

the options available to try to mitigate the problems, and the recommended actions selected from amongst those options. Staff asks the Board to approve the plan now, prior to the hottest and busiest months at these parks, so that there is clear direction and policy approval as to how to proceed in addressing issues that will inevitably arise.

In summary, the plan involves DTD adding additional “No Parking, Tow Away” signage near park entrances, and adding “Congestion” signage near parks to warn motorists of additional pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Additionally, the Sheriff’s Office will be providing reserve deputies as available at and near the parks. Although the reserves will have authority to issue citations for illegally parked vehicles and to request that those vehicles be towed, the reality is that those tasks are time intensive and it is expected that there not be reserve deputies available for exclusive assignment to these parks each weekend day. A single tow can require up to two hours of deputy time, so towing will be limited only to vehicles parked in the public right of way that are obstructing vehicular traffic. The plan also involves ongoing efforts by the CCSO and BCS County Parks to fill vacant positions, and hiring of private security as budgets will allow to supplement County employees. A more in-depth description of the plan is attached hereto.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):

There are currently no financial implications from this plan as it is based on current department budgets. If additional money were to become available to the departments, additional options for dealing with these issues may become available.

Is this item in departments’ current budgets? YES

What is the cost? \$0 beyond current budgets

What is the funding source? Department budgets

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

- How does this item align with Department’s Strategic Business Plan goals?

BCS – County Parks: the plan aligns with the department goal of providing outdoor recreation, camping, and land stewardship services to residents and visitors so they can experience clean, safe and healthy recreation and natural resource opportunities in rural Clackamas County by coordinating with our county partners to increase safety around Barton and Carver Parks and the surrounding area

DTD: the plan aligns with the department goal of providing travelers on Clackamas County roads safe roads in good condition.

CCSO: the plan aligns with the department goal of providing public safety to those who live, work and, in this case play in Clackamas County, so they can enjoy safe, livable communities.

County Counsel: the plan aligns with the department goal of providing comprehensive legal services easily accessible to Clackamas County, and its elected officials, departments and special districts so they can effectively implement their policy objectives, achieve success for their operations, and minimize risk and adverse results.

- How does this item align with the County's Performance Clackamas goals? This plan aligns with the County's goal of ensuring safe, healthy, and secure communities.

LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

Because there are known risks associated with heavy summer usage of these parks and surrounding areas, the Board should make a policy decision, based on financial resources and available options, as to how it will deal with the situation. In exercising its discretion and making a policy decision about this issue, the Board will help protect the County from liability if and when a person is injured or property is damaged.

PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:

Although there have been past discussions between County staff and residents who live near these parks, there has not been direct public outreach yet this year. If this plan is adopted outreach may be necessary in order to alert neighbors as to how the County will respond to the situation. In addition, it may be helpful if PGA is willing and able to assist with a public service announcement urging people to carpool to the river, use only legal parking areas, drive carefully, and not consume or possess alcohol in the parks.

OPTIONS:

1. Make a policy decision to adopt the plan recommended in Exhibit 1 hereto.
2. Direct staff to evaluate or implement different options than those recommended in Exhibit 1.
3. Take no action.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommended the Board make a policy decision to pursue option number 1 because that plan acknowledges and responds to the congestions issues at Barton and Carver parks in the best way that is available in light of current financial conditions.

ATTACHMENTS:

Exhibit 1 – staff’s recommended plan & Attachment A thereto.


SUBMITTED BY: Scott Ciecko, Assistant County Counsel



Division Director/Head Approval _____

Department Director/Head Approval _____

County Administrator Approval _____



For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact
Anja Mundy @ 503-742-5396

BARTON & CARVER PARKS – SUMMER CONGESTION PLAN

This exhibit provides a non-exclusive list of considerations that the Board of County Commissioners should evaluate as it makes a policy decision for how to deal with congestion in and adjacent to Barton and Carver parks during the busy summer season. The goal in establishing this plan is to improve safety through policy decisions – recognizing and acknowledging risks, balancing available resources, considering options, and making reasonable choices amongst those options – as County departments deal with congestion that will inevitably occur and cannot be entirely eliminated. Staff requests that the Board make a policy decision to adopt the recommended options described herein.

Permanent Warning Signs

1. Resources and Options Available

DTD staff recommends increasing permanent signage to warn drivers of the congestion that will occur on County roads near the parks in the summer. Signs considered include “CONGESTION,” “PEDESTRIAN CROSSING,” and signs describing where and when the warnings apply.

All options for these signs are within DTD’s budget and do not have significant financial impacts on the department.

2. Recommended Option(s)

Staff recommends adding “CONGESTION” signs that also indicate “AHEAD” or “NEXT XX MILES,” and signs that contain the dates of the expected congestion of “JUNE 1 – SEPT 30.”

3. Reasons for Recommendation

The “CONGESTION” signs are recommended over the pedestrian crossing signs because it contains the broadest description of the conditions that are expected to occur. “PEDESTRIAN CROSSING” does not fully describe the array of issues that will be occurring including stopped and slowing traffic, pedestrians walking on the roadway, people transporting boats or inflatable floats. In addition, there is concern that such a sign might encourage pedestrians to walk on and repeatedly cross the roadways rather than trying to avoid them.

Staffing

1. Resources and Options Available

BCS – County Parks: BCS relies largely on seasonal employees at Barton and Carver parks in the summer. Parks hopes to hire 17 such employees for these locations, but as of May 20, has only been able to fill 6 positions with 3 more hires in process. Parks employees are responsible for a wide array of duties inside County parks including, assisting park visitors, ensuring payment of fees, and park cleaning and maintenance. These employees are not trained for or expected to: stop altercations; order cars towed, or; issue citations directly to individuals. Instead, park staff generally calls for law enforcement when necessary to assist with these confrontational tasks.

Parks is also responsible for payment to CCSO for reserve deputies assigned to work in parks. The current parks budget has \$15,000 available for reserve deputies. This amount is sufficient to pay for one reserve, if one is available, for three shifts per week during the summer months.

Last, Parks is currently awaiting contract bids from private security companies to assist during summer months. It is estimated that each private security officer will cost just under \$20,000 to work four shifts per week during the summer. Parks current budget for private security is \$55,000, which translates to two to three private security staff between the two parks on the busiest summer days.

CCSO: currently has staffing available for only one full time deputy for each shift to cover the entire law enforcement district that includes both Barton and Carver parks. Although that deputy may be available to assist with law enforcement issues that arise in and near the parks, the district is large and the deputy will need to take the highest priority calls wherever they may occur in the district, rather than be limited only to these two parks.

The CCSO also utilizes reserve deputies (who are volunteers rather than full time County deputies) when available to work in and around parks during summer months. This summer (2021) the CCSO does not have reserve deputies who can commit to working each weekend day exclusively in and around Barton and Carver parks. Although reserves are able to undertake a variety of duties in and around the parks including intervening in disturbances and altercations, issuing citations, and requesting tows of illegally parked vehicles, their availability cannot be guaranteed due to staffing shortages and likelihood of higher priority law enforcement calls within the County.

It should be noted that overall the CCSO is currently understaffed by 18 deputies. With that shortfall, deputy and reserve assignments must be prioritized to the most serious incidents occurring throughout the County. Although congestion and crowding at these parks is a problem, deputies will be required to respond to emergent situations rather than be committed exclusively to parks.

DTD: staff will install permanent signs and replace/repair as necessary, but have no role in day-to-day operation of parks or in enforcing park rules or traffic laws.

2. *Recommended Option(s)*

Due to staffing shortages of law enforcement and seasonal park positions, there are few options available for dedicated employees at the parks. It is not clear that additional money, even if available, would actually fix the staffing problem, although more money for private security could provide more bodies to enforce park rules.

Staff recommends that the Board make the policy decision to urge Parks and the CCSO to continue to try to fill vacant positions as quickly as possible, and to assign staff to these parks on summer weekend days if and when they become available.

Staff does not recommend asking park staff to take a more active role in parking citations and towing because they are primarily seasonal employees that do not have training in those areas, which are better suited for law enforcement.

Staff also does not recommend asking the Sheriff to dedicate deputies or reserves to the parks because of CCSO staffing shortages. Law enforcement must be available to serve the entire district and respond to emergencies when they arise, which would include emergent situations that arise in these parks, but does not include having law enforcement available during all busy days at these locations.

Last, staff recommends that private security be utilized as budgeted. If additional money is available outside of the current budget that may allow for additional use of private security, that money would allow for additional security personnel, but staff is currently not aware of any such additional money.

3. *Reasons for Recommendation*

Staffing options are very limited due to staffing shortfalls. Thus, it is not clear there is anything more that the Board or staff can do but continue to try to fill open positions and then assign additional employees to parks when they become available.

Parking

1. Resources and Options Available

DTD: staff is responsible for establishing “no parking” zones on County roadways based on traffic safety and operation needs. Options available for these zones include leaving the no parking zones as they currently exist along South Springwater Road, South Hattan Road, and Bakers Ferry Road, or expanding the zones further.

CCSO & Parks: Sheriff’s deputies and reserve deputies currently have authority under County Code section 7.01.010(A) to issue citations and order tows for illegally parked vehicles. In addition, the Sheriff may authorize others (e.g. park staff) to do the same.

The options available as to citations and towing involve the questions of who should be responsible for issuing citations and ordering tows, and when to issue citations rather than towing a vehicle that is illegally parked in a “no parking” zone.

2. Recommended Options

DTD: staff recommends expanding and updating the “no parking” zones along all three roadways. Updates will ensure compliance with the most current guidance as well as the most current information about congestion issues at and near the parks. The recommended changes are shown on Attachment A hereto.

CCSO & Parks: staff recommends that citations by sheriff’s deputies and reserves be the primary mechanism for enforcing “no parking” zones.

Towing should generally only be ordered when a vehicle is parked in a manner that creates an immediate hazard in lanes of travel on a County road, e.g. a vehicle is parked so that it is obstructing use of a roadway. See County Code 7.01.080(J).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

DTD: expanding and updating the “no parking” zones is within DTD budget and requires only relatively small expenditures.

CCSO & Parks: the recommended use of citations rather than towing is due to the staffing shortages described above, and the fact that ordering a tow of single vehicle generally takes one to two hours of deputy time. A deputy or reserve is required to call for the tow and then wait while the tow is occurring in order to keep the peace and to provide traffic control at the location along the roadway where the tow is occurring.

It is not recommended that park employees and seasonal workers be authorized and directed to issue parking citations and order tows outside of County parks on adjacent roadways. This is because park staff does not have the training or experience necessary to respond to potentially volatile situations that can occur when a vehicle owner arrives while a citation is being issued or a tow occurring. Such encounters are better suited for trained law enforcement. In addition, sending park staff outside of these parks to patrol for parking violations will take the staff away from their primary duties inside of the parks.

Pedestrian Traffic

1. Resources and Options Available

It is not possible to eliminate pedestrian use of rural County roads. It is, however, possible to restrict pedestrian access into County Parks once the parking lots become full and gates are closed, which is the current practice at Barton Park.

It is also possible to use signage to warn motor vehicle drivers of areas with congestions and pedestrians on roadways.

Theoretically, it would also be possible to construct sidewalks, pedestrian travel lanes, or install crosswalks to accommodate pedestrian use of County roads near these parks.

Finally, there is the option of utilizing park staff and CCSO staff to provide traffic control and to assist pedestrians.

2. Recommended Options

Staff recommends utilizing the “CONGESTION” signage described above to warn drivers that caution is needed when driving near the parks.

Staff further recommends continuing the practice of closing the gates to the parks and prohibiting pedestrian access at Barton park once parking areas become full.

Other options are not recommended due to being cost prohibitive and due to staffing shortages already described.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

Using a sign such as “Pedestrian Crossing” is not recommended for reasons described above in the permanent signage section of this document.

Closing the gates and preventing pedestrian access is already done at Barton Park once the parking becomes full. That practice will continue, but does not entirely eliminate pedestrian access as people find other ways besides the front gates to access the park and it is not feasible to monitor or completely fence all potential access points to the parks and to the river.

Moreover, at Carver Park the problem is that location is where people are getting out after floating the river. This means the pedestrians are not trying to get into the park, but rather are floating up to the boat ramp, getting out of the river, and then walking out of the park to their vehicles. It is not possible to prevent people from taking out of the river at Carver Park and likewise there is no feasible way to prevent people from walking through the park to get back to their cars.

As to using CCSO or Parks staff to provide traffic control, the severe staffing shortfalls described above prevent that option. Even if one or two staff were to be available to provide some type of traffic control when congestion is at its greatest, there is simply

too much roadway adjacent to parks for staff to monitor and direct traffic in a way that meaningfully would ensure pedestrian safety.

Last, staff does not recommend widening Springwater, Hattan, or Bakers Ferry roads to add sidewalks or pedestrian traffic lanes. There is no budget for such projects and the costs of acquiring the additional right of way and building the improvements is prohibitive. Even if there were a budget for such projects, the improvements are only utilized for a limited number of summer weekend days when the parking lots in the parks become full.

Mobile/temporary Traffic Control

1. Resources and Options Available

Options available include using mobile, portable electronic changeable message signs to warn people of the conditions at busy times, using concrete barricades to block off areas where parking is illegal, and using County staff to provide traffic control and flagging.

2. Recommended Options

None of these options are recommended.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

All electronic changeable signs that the County has are already dedicated to DTD summer construction projects. Even if the signs were available, it would require DTD staff to place and program the signs. If the Board would like to explore hiring a contractor to place temporary signs, that can be done but the costs of such work are estimated to be around \$750 per week or \$1,850 per month, and those expenses are not currently in DTD or Parks budgets.

Concrete barriers preventing access to illegal parking areas such as roadway shoulders and pull outs are also not recommended. The costs of obtaining and placing the barriers is not budgeted and the barriers create their own hazards as they would need to be placed very near fog lines in order to prevent parking. That area of roadways should generally be kept clear in order to reduce seriousness of crashes, and placing the barriers there would force pedestrians to walk on the roadways, which would result in greater risk of a pedestrian being injured.

Last, the option of having County employees provide traffic control or flagging is not feasible due to staffing shortfalls. It may be possible to hire a private contractor to provide such a service, but there is currently no money budgeted for that and the cost estimates for that type of work would be at least \$1000 - \$1500 per day.

Other/Misc.

1. Resources and Options Available

Other options to try to address the issues at and near these parks in the summer include public outreach warning people of the congestion and asking them to carpool and follow all applicable laws and rules.

Additionally, the idea to reach out to TriMet about the possibility of bus and/or shuttle service from, for example, the Town Center transit mall to the parks is something that could be explored. The feasibility and cost of this option has not yet been investigated, but it is something that could be explored, likely for next summer (2022).

Last, because citations for illegal parking will likely be used more frequently than towing, the Board could increase the citation fine amount. Currently that fine is set at only \$40. Increasing that fine amount could create a greater deterrent effect and reduce the number of illegally parked vehicles.

2. Recommended Options

Staff recommended that public outreach occur and that PGA be contacted and asked to assist.

In addition, staff recommends that the Board direct staff to reach out to TriMet to explore the possibility of public transportation to the parks on summer weekends.

Staff recommends increasing the fine amount for illegal parking from \$40 to \$80.

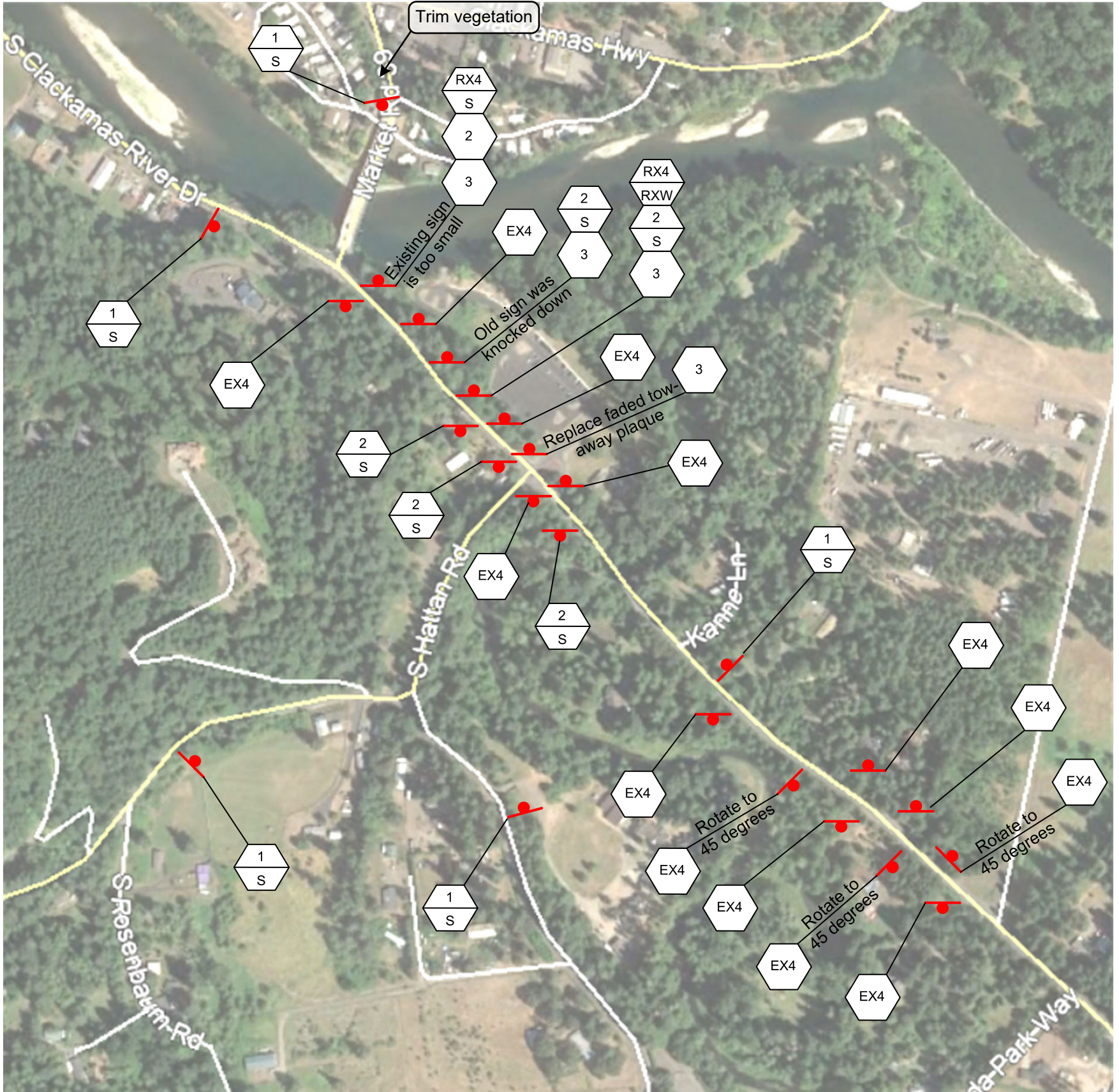
3. Reasons for Recommendation

The public outreach appears that it could be done from within the County and would have relatively minimal financial impacts.

Communications with TriMet would be extremely preliminary and staff does not know whether public transit to the parks would be possible, however, exploring that option would require only staff time and would not have significant financial impacts.

The increased fine creates a greater deterrent effect and puts the fine for illegal parking outside of parks at the same amount as the fine for illegal parking inside a park (\$80). In addition, this increased fine would be squarely between the fine for unlawful parking of a detached trailer (\$45) and illegal parking in a handicapped parking space (\$150).

Attachment A -- No Parking zones



- NOTES:**
1. SIGN LOCATIONS ARE MARKED AND STAKED IN FIELD.
 2. ALL NEW AND EXISTING NO PARKING SIGNS SHALL BE ROTATED 45-DEGREES RELATIVE TO THE ROADWAY.
 3. CLEAN EXISTING NO PARKING SIGNS AS NEEDED FOR VISIBILITY.



PERMANENT SIGNING LEGEND

- Install New Sign (N) on New (M) Sign Support
 - Install New Sign (N)
 - Remove Existing Sign (N) and Remove Existing (M) Sign Support
 - Maintain and Protect Existing Sign (N) and Support
 - Remove Existing Sign (N) and Save Existing (M) Sign Support
- N = Sign Number
M = Material
Materials: S = Perforated Square Steel
W = Wood

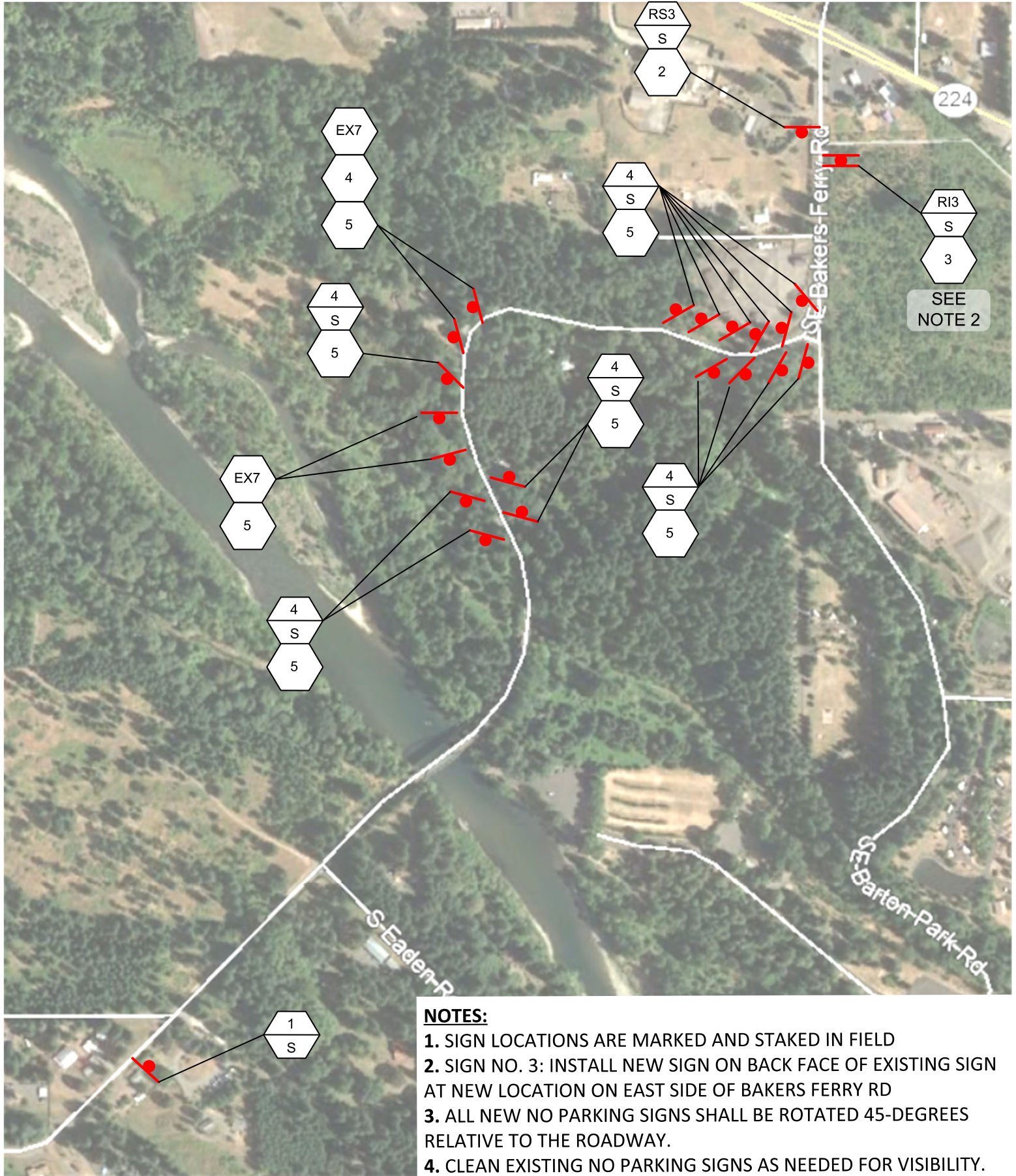


REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
60272PE
Christian L. Snuffin
OREGON
JULY 15, 2004
CHRISTIAN LEE SNUFFIN

EXPIRES: 6/30/2022

Traffic Engineering Department		CLACKAMAS COUNTY	
CLACKAMAS RIVER RD, SPRINGWATER RD, HATTAN RD, GRONLUND RD		DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT 150 BEAVERCREEK ROAD OREGON CITY, OR 97045	
CARVER PARK VICINITY SIGN PLAN		DAN JOHNSON DIRECTOR	
Date: May 2021		DESIGNED BY: CS	CHECKED BY: JM
		DRAFTED BY: CS	
REVISIONS	DESC.		
#	DATE		
Sheet No.		1 of 2	

Attachment A -- No Parking zones



- NOTES:**
- SIGN LOCATIONS ARE MARKED AND STAKED IN FIELD
 - SIGN NO. 3: INSTALL NEW SIGN ON BACK FACE OF EXISTING SIGN AT NEW LOCATION ON EAST SIDE OF BAKERS FERRY RD
 - ALL NEW NO PARKING SIGNS SHALL BE ROTATED 45-DEGREES RELATIVE TO THE ROADWAY.
 - CLEAN EXISTING NO PARKING SIGNS AS NEEDED FOR VISIBILITY.

 1 1 REQUIRED	 2 1 REQUIRED	 3 EXISTING + 1 NEW REQUIRED	 4 17 REQUIRED	 5 19 REQUIRED
		 6 EXISTING	 7 EXISTING	

PERMANENT SIGNING LEGEND

- Install New Sign (N) on New (M) Sign Support
 - Install New Sign (N)
 - Remove and Save Existing Sign (N) and Save Existing (M) Sign Support
 - Maintain and Protect Existing Sign (N) and Support
 - Reinstall Existing Sign (N) on New (M) Sign Support
- N = Sign Number
 M = Material
 Materials: S = Perforated Square Steel
 W = Wood

REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
 60272PE
Christian L. Snuffin
 OREGON
 JULY 15, 2004
 CHRISTIAN LEE SNUFFIN

EXPIRES: 6/30/2022

Traffic Engineering Department										
BAKERS FERRY RD (23019) BARTON PARK VICINITY SIGN PLAN										
Date: May 2021										
CLACKAMAS COUNTY DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT 150 BEAVERCREEK ROAD OREGON CITY, OR 97045	DIRECTOR DAN JOHNSON									
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