

# Ogden Valley Parks Special Service Area

## *Our Valley. Our Heritage. Our Parks. Our Way*

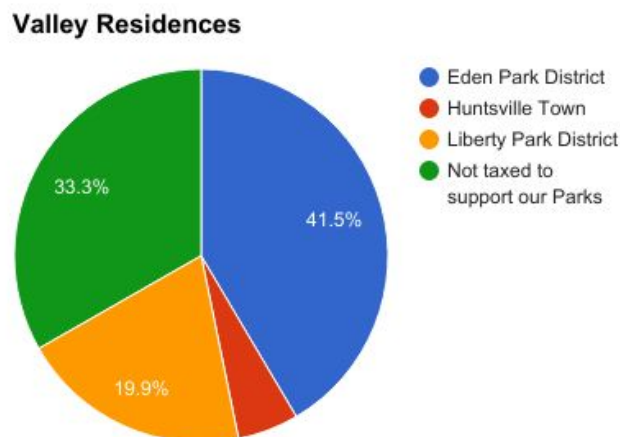
We are the stewards of our parks heritage.  
Let's make it a legacy to be proud of!

### **We have been given an amazing legacy in our parks!**

Huntsville Town Park has been around since 1861, when it was platted to serve as the town square of the new town of Huntsville. Liberty Park was donated to the Liberty Town Center in 1884 by John Marshall and was developed as a park in conjunction with the LDS Church until 1974, when it was given back to the community. Eden Park also began as an LDS Church-affiliated gathering place on land donated by Elizabeth Shaw Stuart and transferred to the community in 1980. To receive and operate the parks, Weber County created the Eden and Liberty Park Districts and appointed Boards to manage each district and the parks.

### **How do we currently fund our parks?**

Since then the three parks have operated separately and with different funding methods. The residents of Huntsville have paid taxes to develop and maintain the Park throughout its history. Since the formation of the park districts, Liberty Park District funds through Park District taxes, and and Eden Park District funds through a fee-per-household tax. As the Valley developed, the park districts and Huntsville Town boundaries did not expand to include a large number of new households and non-agricultural properties. Here is what the 2016 tax records tell us about the funding:

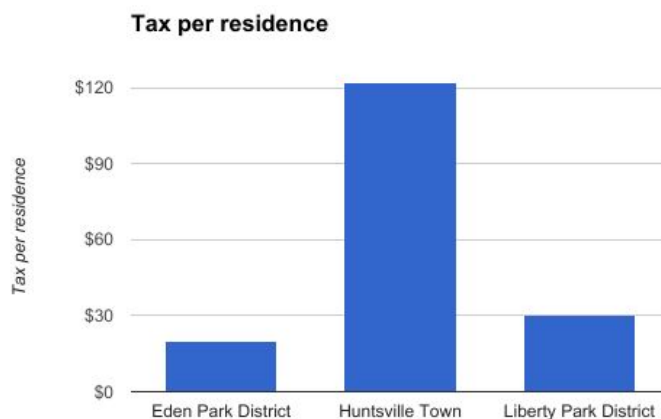


The Eden Park District contains 1,638 homes; its north boundary is the Cache county line and the south boundary includes about half of Ogden Canyon. Most, but not all properties inside the boundaries are paying toward the park, but for those that do it's \$20/year.

The Liberty Park District is also geographically large and contains 787 residences; it spans from the Durfee Creek area in the north, Wolf Creek golf course on the east, and ends just prior to Nordic Valley on the south. A \$400,000 residences pays about \$30/year.

Huntsville town proper includes 209 residences, with each paying about \$122/year.

There are 1,313 residences outside of Huntsville town or one of the park districts, and these residences pay \$0/year.



## **What does all of this mean?**

- Unless we change, our parks will continue to endure the impact of tremendous growth without adequate funding for maintenance and improvement.
- Unless we change, the inequities we pay in park fees will increase.
- Unless we change, we will never be able to significantly expand our parks.

In 2008, the County adopted the Recreation Element of the General Plan, which included population and development projections for the Valley along with recommendation to create a Valley-wide Park District with a financial basis that could expand parks and facilities to keep up with growth and tourism. It was noted then that our parks were not expanding to keep pace with growth. The 2016 update of the Ogden Valley General Plan includes the same recommendation.

We have made some modest progress since 2008. In the last eight years Weber County reached an agreement with Snowbasin to set aside 7 acres for a public park near the Trapper's

Loop Junction. Huntsville purchased the old Valley Elementary property, expanded the Park into part of it, and added a soccer field and trails hub/kiosk as grants allowed. And recently, the Liberty Park Board solicited donations to purchase two parcels of property adjacent to Liberty Park in order to protect and expand the park. This is good news, but none of the park entities have sufficient funds to continue expansion or improvements. All three parks receive around \$30,000 per year, but need around \$50,000 to operate. The difference between costs and revenues is having the negative effect of burning out our volunteer park Boards (and Huntsville Town Council) members. Much of their energy goes into annual fund raising to make up the difference.

This also means we have no way to finance expansion of the parks as the Valley grows. The County General Plan reveals these important aspects of growth projections for the Valley: (a) housing units are expected to double by 2030 and double again by 2050, (b) we will soon hit the point where the number of Valley resident homes will be outnumbered by second homes and vacation properties, and (c) the overall taxable value of Valley property is increasing at a fast pace.

## **Our park leaders want to turn Our Heritage into Our Legacy!**

Friends of the parks, the Eden Park District Board, Liberty Park Board, and members of the Huntsville Town Council are concerned about these trends, and have been meeting for well over a year to come up with a feasible solution. Here is a summary of their proposal:

- Let's create a **single valley-wide park service area** to help generate funding for maintaining and improving our parks in the most equitable way.
- Let's call this the Ogden Valley Parks Service Area, and **equal representation** from all areas in the Valley.
- Let's retain **local control** of each park by keeping individual Park Committees.
- Let's base the park service **fee on assessed property value**.
- Let's **get ahead of the growth** in the valley, so we can provide parks that will be used by our children for years to come.

Our valley forefathers were community-minded, and left us a beautiful heritage. The proposed Ogden Valley Parks District gives us a chance to fund and manage our parks in a fair way... and continue our legacy.

## **What are the details?**

1. What would be included in the Ogden Valley Parks Service Area?
  - a. All properties in Weber County from the Cache, Rich, and Morgan county lines to the bottom of Ogden Canyon.
2. Who would be on the OVPs board?

- a. 9 members: likely 2 from Liberty Park, 2 from Eden Park, 2 from Huntsville Park, 2 from annexed area, and one that is not affiliated with a park.
3. Responsibilities of OVPs board:
  - a. Be vested and committed to running the Ogden Valley Parks Service area as a single valley-wide entity.
  - b. Hold legal, financial and civil responsibility for all 3 current parks and additions.
  - c. Manage all park assets.
  - d. Establish and oversee the Park Service fee and distribute funding to Local Park Committees.
  - e. Grant authority to the Local Park Committees.
4. Who would be on the Local Park Committees?
  - a. Committee members that are vested and committed to their Local Park.
  - b. Current board members that are not on the OVPs board.
  - c. Additional members as needed to run local events.
5. Responsibilities of Local Park Committees:
  - a. Fundraising and other local events to maintain community traditions community.
  - b. Propose budgets, improvements, and plans for growth to OVPs board.
6. Ogden Valley Parks Service Fee
  - a. Would be structured as Liberty Park currently does, and at 0.00015 of assessed property value (after discounts are applied for green belt and primary residence).
  - b. For example, a primary residence with assessed value of \$400,000 would have a fee of about \$30/year.
  - c. By making this one change, funding for the Parks would increase from \$87,866 to about \$160,903 per year.
7. Steps needed to accomplish this:
  - a. Liberty and Eden park form interlocal agreement to join together.
  - b. Combined name would be changed to Ogden Valley Parks Service Area.
  - c. OVPSA board and Local Park Committees would be formed.
  - d. OVPSA would annex in all properties not currently in a park district.
  - e. Huntsville Town would make a resolution for the park to join OVPSA.

## **Where do we go from here?**

The procedure for moving forward is well understood. Two valley-wide public information meetings are scheduled to present this information, answer questions, and gather input. We are very interested in total transparency, and really want to know how the residents of the valley feel about this process. Here is how you can take action:

- Attend one of the public information meetings on June 12th or 19th from 7-9pm
- Voice your input at either meeting or email it to [info@ogdenvalleyparks.com](mailto:info@ogdenvalleyparks.com)
- Visit [OgdenValleyParks.com](http://OgdenValleyParks.com) for more information



# **OGDEN VALLEY PARKS SERVICE AREA**

**[www.OgdenValleyParks.com](http://www.OgdenValleyParks.com)**

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## **PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS:**

**Thu, June 12th 7-8:30pm  
Ogden Valley Library**

**Mon, June 19th 7-8:30pm  
Eden Park Bowery**