



City of McCleary

Cemetery Capital Improvement Plan

August 2009

INTRODUCTION

The McCleary cemetery has long been a focal point for the residents of the city. Records show that the Knights of Pythias first opened the cemetery in 1911 on about an acre of property given to them by city founder Henry McCleary. When maintenance of the facility became more difficult for the fraternal group, it deeded the property to the newly formed city on May 25, 1945. Since that time the city has expanded the area and operated the cemetery through funds received from plot purchases and burial services and through property taxes that support the Parks and Cemetery Fund.

Figure 1
Vicinity Map

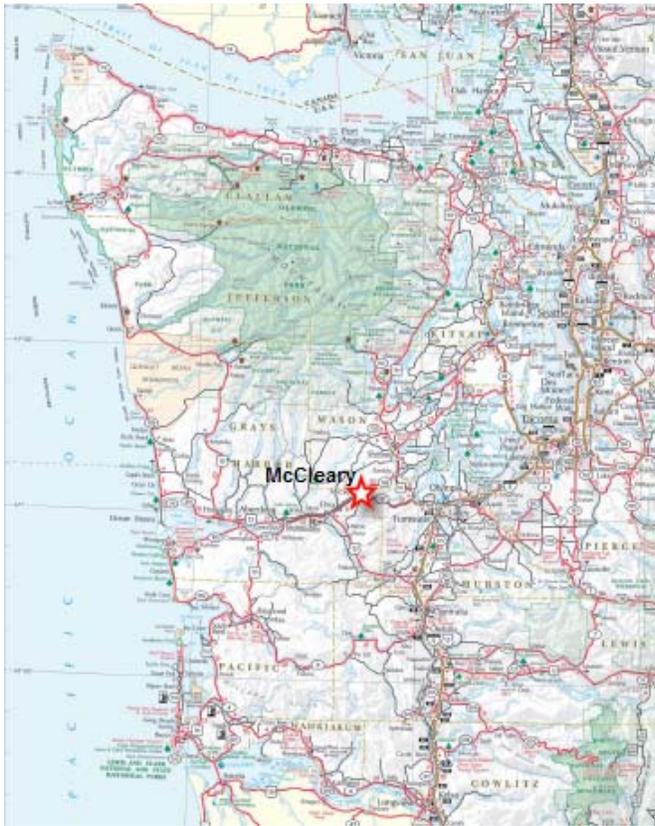
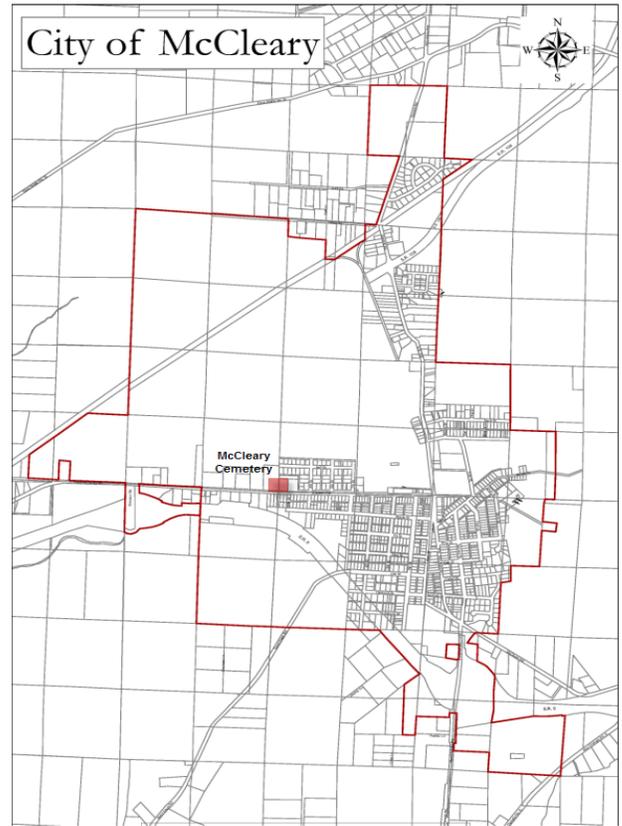


Figure 2
Site Map



INVENTORY

The cemetery is located north of Simpson Avenue, and west of North 9th Street and adjacent to the city's Community Center. The original or "old" cemetery is located on Tract D shown in Figure 3. In the late 1960's the cemetery expanded to the west onto Tract B. An additional 280 plots have been platted further to the west of what is shown as the Existing Cemetery within Tract B.

Figure 3
City Owned Property and Current Uses



- Tract A - former Brookside Mobile Home Park, purchased for park use from Larry and Stacy Birindelli, August, 2009; mobile homes have been removed and land has been graded since the date of the aerial photograph
- Tract B - purchased from Henry and Elizabeth L. Hillman, February 15, 1967
- Tract C - dedicated for playground/public use through the platting of the Third Addition to the Townsite of McCleary, January 16, 1943
- Tract D - original cemetery property donated (for \$1.00) by Knights of Pythias, May 25, 1945
- Tract E - donated (for \$10.00) by Twin Harbors Area Council, Incorporated, Boy Scouts of America, May 9, 1967

The original cemetery was platted into 552 plots. Another 680 plots were added after 1967 when the Hillman property was purchased, making the total number of plots at 1,232. At the same time when the 680 plots were added, another 280 plots were created but still have not been made available for sale. The plots were laid out in blocks of 4 and 8 plots, each plot measuring 5 feet by 10 feet. The purpose of having blocks was to allow family purchases. Each plot will accommodate one casket and up to 4 urns, or cremated remains of up to 5 persons.

It is unknown exactly how many people are buried in the cemetery. Early record-keeping was incomplete. Another complicating factor is that the mill employed many Greek immigrants: because of prejudices of the times, graves of the immigrants who died here were not always marked. As a result there are a number of plots that the City will not sell, as it has not been confirmed if they already have been used.

As of July 2009, only 22 plots remain unsold of the 1,232 created in the existing cemetery area. The 280 plots that were platted to the west of the existing cemetery can be made available when the existing fence and a row of 16 pine trees are removed.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

One way to assess the need for public facilities is through public involvement. In preparation of the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan update that was adopted in June 2008, a Public Facilities Survey was distributed through the city's website (www.cityofmccleary.com) and by paper copies that were made available at the McCleary School, Gordon's Select Grocery, Timberland Regional Library, McCleary Video and Sterling Savings Bank. A total of 59 surveys were returned (39 from City residents), representing a household population of about 203. The in-city household respondent rate was 5.8 percent.

Fifty six respondents provided answers to a question about how many times a year they used the cemetery. Thirty-one, or 55.4% indicated no use; 22, or 39.3% indicated use of 1-10 times per year; and 3, or 5.3% indicated they used the cemetery more than 11 times a year. When asked if the cemetery was meeting their needs, 33 responded, with 61.6% answering "yes" and 38.4% answering "no". Of the 20 responses to the question "what improvements would you like to see", a substantial majority indicated a need for improved maintenance. Other comments included a need to expand the size, enhance the landscaping, repair the fence, and provide signage to identify the name of the cemetery.

DEMAND AND NEED ANALYSIS

The City of McCleary has experienced population shifts several times since its incorporation in 1943. From 1960 to 1980 the population grew by about one-quarter, yet growth slowed to less than ½ of 1% during the 1980's and declined during the 1990's. Although the overall percentage increase in population from 1950 to 2009 has been 32.3 percent, this still only represents an addition of 380 people during that 59-year time period.

Several new subdivisions have recently been developed; however, the current recession has stalled construction of new homes. It is anticipated that McCleary's proximity to the Olympia area will result in significant growth in the coming years, assuming that the state and region both continue to be attractive places for people to relocate from other areas of the country.

Table 1
Population: 1950 - 2000

Year	Population	% Change
1950	1,175	
1960	1,115	(5.1%)
1970	1,265	13.5%
1980	1,419	12.2%
1990	1,473	3.8%
2000	1,454	(1.3%)
2009 (est.)	1,555	7.0%

Because of the inconsistencies of past growth trends, It is difficult to project the demand for additional burial plots based on past use. On the other hand, past demand is the only measure available.

Over the past eight years, there have been 89 burials, 74 caskets and 15 urns. This is an average of 11 burials per year. If demand were calculated at 15 burials per year, the existing plots (22 + 280) will accommodate another 20 years of burials.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With the city's purchase of Tract A for use as a park, the full use of the cemetery property can be achieved. The prior use by the mobile home park made use of an easement from the city for adequate property to allow good access and parking for the mobile home park residents. When that lease ended and the property was eventually purchased by the city, a more comprehensive plan for the various properties could be undertaken.

Existing Constraints

The property to the north of the existing cemetery that is owned by the city is in a natural state. A dirt/gravel roadway has been graded along a 20-foot alley on the north side of Tract C, and then meanders in a southwesterly direction to connect with the two existing cemetery platted accesses. A four-foot green chain-link fence surrounds the cemetery and is not in very good condition.

On the west end of Tract B, sixteen pine trees are growing within the platted area that is currently outside of the fenced, existing cemetery.

Proposed Improvements

Expand into already-platted area: the existing fence on the west side of the cemetery should be removed and the pine trees should be cut down to allow sale of the 280 platted plots. This will provide up to 20 additional years of burials.

Access road/alley realignment, resurfacing: The roadway on the north side of Tract C and its extension into Tract B should be regraded to an east-west alignment.

Plat additional plots between the existing cemetery and the new east-west alley: An additional 456 plots can be created in the area north of the cemetery and south of where the road/alley should be relocated. This would provide up to an additional 30 years of burials, for a total of 50 more years of use.

Develop parking north of the new east-west alley, add to Brookside Park: There is no designated parking for the cemetery. The land north of the new alley alignment has been filled and may not be best for cemetery use. Also, there is a “bench” of land, and then it drops in elevation toward Wildcat Creek. This lower land is not appropriate for cemetery use, but could be added to the park (Tract A). The small area on top of the “bench” that is north of the east-west alley, can be developed into a parking area.

Fencing: New fencing all around the fully expanded cemetery would enhance the cemetery, while separating it from the other public uses of the community center, the new playfield by the community center and the new Brookside Park.

Irrigation: A major concern of survey respondents is the grounds upkeep of the cemetery. An automated sprinkler system would provide better maintenance of the grass.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Funding Sources

Property Tax: The city's Park and Cemetery Fund is primarily supported by the property tax. Each year 25% of the total property tax received by the city is earmarked for this fund. All maintenance of all parks, as well as the cemetery, must come from this limited source of money.

Cemetery Fees:

Plot cost	\$448.00
Urn Burial	\$101.00
Full casket burial	Arranged through private funeral home – no city fee

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET): RCW 82.46.010 provides that cities with a population of five thousand or less may tax the sale of real property at a rate $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1% and may use the funds "...for any capital purpose identified in a capital improvements plan...."

Private Donations: Land and other improvements may be donated to the city earmarked for cemetery purposes by individual citizens and private corporations.

Grants: There are no known grants to support the maintenance of public cemeteries.

Bonds (notes of credit): Either voter-approved bonds or councilmanic general obligation bonds may be used to support cemetery maintenance. The difference between them is that the voter-approved bonds are paid for by a special levy within the property tax, while GO bonds must be paid for out of the general city operations and maintenance budget.

Table 2
Cemetery Capital Improvement Program

Priority	Project Name	Fund Source	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
1	Fencing – west side of expansion area	REET	\$6,500					
2	Remove pine trees	REET	\$1,000					
3	Relocate alley	REET	\$10,000					
4	Irrigation	REET		\$8,500				
5	Storage shed	REET		\$5,000				
6	Fencing – entire cemetery	REET			\$20,000			
7	Signs	REET			\$5,000			
TOTAL			\$17,500	\$13,500	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0