



Date: January 5, 2010

To: Parks & Community Services Board

From: Camron Parker, Senior Planner
Parks & Community Services

Subject: Parks & Open Space System Plan Public Hearing and Discussion

SUMMARY

The January meeting will include a public hearing (published notice attached) for the Board to receive comments on long-term acquisition and capital improvement objectives for Bellevue's parks and open space system. These comments may then be considered as the Board reviews a proposed list of long-term capital project recommendations that have been updated from the 2003 edition of the Parks & Open Space System Plan and discusses future-oriented key issues regarding expansion and maintenance of the system. The presentation will include context for the discussion and information on:

- Progress on capital projects undertaken since 2003
- Demographic overview of the Bellevue community
- Summary of public input received through surveys and presentations to date
- Changes to parks and recreation level of service standards

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The purpose of the Parks & Open Space System Plan is to guide staff and the Board when making recommendations to the City Council on the acquisition, development and management of parks and open space citywide. A regularly updated plan is a required standard for the department's accreditation and is frequently used to seek grant support for park acquisition and development projects. The current plan was last updated in 2003.

Copies of the 2003 plan were included in each board member's initial orientation materials. The plan is also available for review online at: www.bellevuewa.gov/park_plan_update.htm. If you would like an additional copy of the current plan in paper form or CD-ROM, please contact me at (425) 452-2032 or cparker@bellevuewa.gov.

BACKGROUND

Since September 2009, many avenues have been used to collect feedback and opinions from Bellevue parks users on how the park and trail systems are currently used and what priorities should be given in the future for development. These include:

- a statistically valid random sample survey of Bellevue residents with responses received from almost 700 households;
- an open web-survey completed by approximately 1,250 park users;

- 21 presentations to City boards and commissions, parks user groups and local neighborhood organizations, reaching approximately 170 individuals;
- A regularly updated project blog, accessed by an estimated 800 unique visitors; and
- Project updates and comment opportunities provided by the Parks & Community Services e-newsletter (16,100 subscribers), the Neighborhood Outreach Office's Neighborhood News (800 subscribers), through the City's presence on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter and local newspapers (print and online) and Eastside-focused blogs.

The public hearing hosted by the Board will be one of the final opportunities for general input from the public. The comments received both verbally and submitted in writing will be recorded and cataloged along with the results from all of the public input opportunities.

In very general terms, park users report a high level of satisfaction with the park and trail systems as a whole. There is an even balance between people's preferences for continuing to acquire park and open space land and developing existing park properties. Trails, playgrounds, open unstructured areas, waterfront parks and sports fields are the most frequently used types of facilities, and these same five categories were in the top tier of projects types given a high priority for future development.

CAPITAL PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

Public input received, a demographic analysis of Bellevue's population and future population trends, alignment with other city-wide planning initiatives and the City's current expectations for acquisition and park development funding all combine to influence the 20-year capital project recommendation list in the Parks & Open Space System Plan. Attached is a draft list of projects, taken from the 2003 plan. The list is categorized into groups of similar projects. The projects completed since 2003 are lined out, the projects that remain relevant are carried forward and new projects proposed to add are underlined. More detail on these project lists will be provided during the presentation.

FUTURE-ORIENTED ISSUES IMPACTING THE PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Several key issues have been identified that may play a significant role in the operation and expansion of the park and open space system in the future. The Board will be asked to discuss these issues and provide an opinion on the relative weight these issues should be given in the updated plan.

Issue 1: Increasing Diversity

Across the country, there is a trend of increasing diversity in preference for sport and recreation activities. This is caused by a number of factors, including the popularity of certain sports at a national level and diversity in demographic factors such as age and ethnic or cultural heritage. Bellevue's diverse demographic make-up amplifies this diversity of preference. The challenge associated with this issue is to continue to expand the city's inventory of facilities to accommodate an increased variety of sports without lowering quality standards (for example, only so many sets of lines can be painted on a court floor before they all lose meaning).

Issue 2: Partnerships and Regionalism

Parks & Community Services has relied for many years on partnerships to expand the City's ability to provide park and recreation opportunities for Bellevue park users. This trend is growing and is expected to become increasingly important. Partnerships will be a necessity to finance large scale facilities or facilities with a regional scope of service. The benefit of partnerships is the ability to provide facilities and services that the City could not provide on its own. However, this benefit must be balanced by sharing project control with partners and expecting a longer timeframe for project implementation.

Issue 3: Technology

The portability and wireless nature of technology presents both practical and philosophical issues for the parks system. In the same way that Bellevue's demographic diversity amplifies the need to address diversity in sport and recreation preference, Bellevue's success in becoming a national hub for the high-tech industry brings with it a cutting edge, technologically-advanced workforce and resident population. One example of this issue is the provision of wi-fi services in outdoor parks. With a laptop and a cell phone, one can set up an outdoor office on any park bench. On one hand, such a system could be used to provide easily-updated park or trail information to a level far beyond the capacity of a free-standing kiosk. On the other hand, does wi-fi work against the department's mission of building a healthy community and promoting healthy lifestyles? Some park professionals argue that parks should be preserved as "technology-free" sanctuaries.

Issue 3: Renovating and Re-Purposing Facilities

As the park and open space system continues to age and expand, the need to prioritize funding for renovation of existing facilities will increasingly compete with prioritizing funding for property acquisition and development of new facilities. Further, when there is a need to renovate a facility, there is a natural opportunity to examine its use and determine whether the site should be re-purposed to serve another use. This evaluation process needs to be well structured and equitable in order to justify a switch from support of one activity to support of another in cases where both cannot be accommodated within the same facility.

The Board's input on these items will be incorporated into the draft Parks & Open Space System Plan. The plan will be brought back at the February meeting for the Board's consideration and recommendation to the City Council.

If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please contact me at (425) 452-2032 or cparker@bellevue.gov.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Public Hearing Notice
2. Proposed 2010 Long-Range Capital Project Recommendations

PLEASE PUBLISH ON December 28, 2009

Notice of Public Hearing

Parks & Open Space System Plan Update

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing on the update to the Bellevue Parks & Open Space System Plan will be held during the Parks & Community Services Board Regular Meeting on Tuesday, January 12, 2010 at 6:00 PM in Room 1E-108, Bellevue City Hall, 450 110th Avenue NE, Bellevue, Washington.

The public hearing is an opportunity to provide public input regarding long-term acquisition and capital improvement objectives for the parks and open space system.

Written comments will also be accepted and may be mailed or e-mailed to Camron Parker, Senior Planner, Parks & Community Services, City of Bellevue, P. O. Box 90012, Bellevue, Washington, 98009-9012 or by e-mail to cparker@bellevuewa.gov. Comments must be received by 5:00 P.M. on January 12, 2010.

Translation and American Sign Language services are available upon 48 hours notice. Please call (425) 455-4162 (voice) or 711 (TDD Relay Service) if you require interpretation services.

Affidavit of posting has been filed with Bellevue Parks & Community Services for the Bellevue Parks & Community Services Board.

Dated this 28th day of December, 2009.

Myrna L. Basich
City Clerk

Parks & Open Space System Plan

Comprehensive Capital Recommendations (2003-2022) (2010-2029)

This section from the 2003 Parks & Open Space System Plan is displayed with proposed updates for 2010. Projects that have been completed since 2003 are shown in strikethrough text and projects proposed to add to or edit existing recommendations are shown in underlined text. Most projects for the 2003-2022 time period remain relevant and are proposed to carry-forward into the 2010 edition. The category headings have been revised from the 2003 edition to reflect a more contemporary organizational structure. This caused some change in where some projects were listed in the 2003 edition; however, this change does not affect the purpose or justification for those projects reclassified.

The ** symbol following a project indicates funding provided through the 2008 Parks & Natural Areas Levy.

Open Space, Greenways, Wildlife Corridors and Trails

The majority of acreage within the overall parks system is open space. Protecting these spaces and providing a well-maintained and interconnected trail network is a hallmark of the parks system. The following projects continue the work of connecting and expanding open space and trails.

Greenway Connections/Extensions Between large open spaces and regional systems Native Growth Protection Areas (NGPA) Lewis Creek and South Bellevue Greenway Kelsey Creek Greenway Richards Valley	
Lake-to-Lake Trail Connections** Richards Valley Mercer Slough to Kelsey Creek Park Lake Hills Greenbelt	
Coal Creek County Park <u>Natural Area</u> and Greenway improvements**	
North-south power line and pipeline corridors	
Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan implementation	
Regional Open Space and Trail Connections Cougar Mountain connections Houghton-to-Marymoor Regional Greenway – Bridle Crest Trail <u>BNSF right-of-way corridor connections</u> Mountains to Sound Greenway trail connections	

Park Facilities

Everyone needs a place to play. These projects advance a goal to bring green space within walking distance for all Bellevue households. They also propose additions or enhancements to existing parks to increase the variety of recreational opportunities for city residents.

<p>Add neighborhood parks in underserved subareas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridle Trails** Crossroads Subarea Factoria Subarea Newport Hills Subarea 	
<p>Develop existing un-developed properties including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastgate/Newcastle Subarea (Norelius/Sunrise Property) North Bellevue (Chapin Property) Wilburton (Glendale Property) 	
<p>Enatai Neighborhood Park redevelopment</p>	
<p>Meadow Wood Park (Factoria subarea)</p>	
<p>Surrey Downs county site acquisition</p>	
<p>Add to or continue phased development of existing community parks, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airfield property Park** Bellevue Botanical Garden Expansion and Visitor Center** Bellevue Botanical Garden complete park master plan Crossroads Park Eastgate Park Kelsey Creek Park Lewis Creek Park picnic area and trails** Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center <u>Natural Area</u> Eastgate Park <u>Surrey Downs Park</u>** Wilburton Hill Park 	

Active Recreation Facilities

The following projects increase indoor and outdoor opportunities for active or structured sport and recreation.

South Bellevue Community Center	
Crossroads Community Center addition	
North Bellevue Community Center addition	
Teen Activity center(s)	
Off-leash dog areas	
Alternative Sports and Recreation Facilities <u>supporting recreation preferences of a diverse population</u>	
<u>Community Center serving West Bellevue</u>	
Sportsfields Synthetic soccer field surfaces** Two lighted ball fields at Marymoor Park Lighted sportsfields at Airfield site-Park Lighted fields at selected community and school sites Improve school sportsfields One ballfield at Wilburton Hill Park	
Enterprise Fund improvements Golf Course Tennis Center Aquatic Center	

Waterfront Access

When surveyed, Bellevue residents consistently support increasing public access to the city's shorelines. The following projects will provide water-oriented recreational opportunity for all Bellevue residents while at the same time creating opportunities to restore and improve the ecological function of the shoreline.

<u>Meydenbauer Beach to Marina completion</u>	
<u>Meydenbauer Beach/Marina Development</u> <u>Meydenbauer Bay Park</u>	
Meydenbauer Bay Park to Downtown Park connection	
Connect Enatai Beach Park to Mercer Slough Natural Area	
Enatai Beach Park completion	
SE 40th Boat Launch Parking Addition	
Lake Sammamish waterfront**	
Chism Beach redevelopment	
<u>Clyde Beach Redevelopment</u>	
Additions to existing waterfront parks	

Parks & Open Space Serving Urban Densities

The majority of Bellevue’s residential growth over the next twenty years will be focused in the high density subareas of Downtown and Bel-Red. The park system required to serve these subareas differs in scale and function from other areas of the city. The following projects will provide needed green space for these urban areas and provide all Bellevue residents with a new and unique urban park experience.

Downtown Subarea additions NW & SE quadrant neighborhood parks Downtown Urban trail system Mini-Park transfers (from Transportation) <u>and expansion</u> <u>Main Street Linear Buffer Greenway</u> Community center serving Downtown	
Ashwood Park redevelopment	
Downtown Park phased development completion**	
Bel-Red Subarea <u>Open space and off-street trail development</u> <u>Multi-purpose trail development</u> <u>Park acquisition and development</u> <u>Trail connections to regional facilities such as BNSF corridor</u>	

Partnerships

The City maintains a partnership with the Bellevue School District that allows expanded community access to the district’s geographically dispersed network of school properties along with increased quality and condition standards of the fields and playgrounds. While partnerships can play an important role in any project recommended in this plan, the follow set of projects may require significant partnership arrangements in order to be implemented.

Elementary, Middle and High school recreation site improvements	
<u>Partner with other City departments to create parks</u>	
<u>Partner with other public agencies to create parks, including but not limited to Bellevue School District, Cascade Water Alliance, Sound Transit, Washington State, King County and Bellevue College</u>	
Aquatic Facility	
Ice Rink	
Fieldhouse	
Historic Building Preservation	
<u>Cultural Arts Center</u>	
<u>Youth Performing Arts Center**</u>	