

Introduction

This manual was written to provide clear direction on standard operational procedures and design features; to effectively communicate the operational practices of the Parks & Community Services Department (Parks) to the public; and to respond to regional, state and federal environmental issues. Proper care and maintenance, as well as the understanding of certain practices and systems, is essential in perpetuating the longevity and usefulness of our park resources.

The Parks & Community Services Department's mission is to contribute to a healthy community through an integrated system of exceptional parks, open space, recreational, cultural and human services. This mission is based on the Parks and Community Services Department's philosophy to:

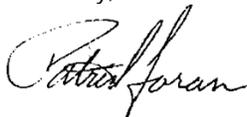
- Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive natural areas;
- Provide connections for an integrated open space system;
- Enhance the City's visual character throughout the park system by perpetuating the "City in a Park" ideal;
- To acquire and develop park facilities to meet the present and future needs of the community; and
- To renovate or modify parks for optimum use of resources.

The goals of the Parks & Community Services Department are to ensure the safety of citizens, protect water quality, provide for recreation, preserve wildlife habitat, buffer land uses and improve landscape conditions. All park designers, planners, managers, crews and contractors are required to use water efficiently; implement the principles of IPM; reduce and reuse landscape waste materials; minimize negative impacts on aquatic environments and soil organisms; design and renovate landscape areas to suit the site conditions; and restore, create and protect environmentally rich areas such as wetlands and riparian corridors, and aquatic, wildlife, forest and meadow habitats.

The Parks & Community Services Department is the single largest land owner and manager in Bellevue, with over 2900 acres of property. Of this, approximately 800 acres are in developed park sites, with various amenities such as: beaches, golf courses, sport-fields/courts, community centers, and City buildings. The remaining 2,100 acres are in natural areas comprised of forests, steep slopes, wetlands and meadows. Parks also manages 46 acres of farmland and 120 acres of street tree and arterial landscapes within the City's developed right-of-ways.

In order to continue to improve the standard of care and our maintenance practices, the Parks Department will review and revise this manual every 4 years. Any changes, modifications, or comments regarding these best management practices, should be directed to the Natural Resource & Resource Management Divisions.

Sincerely,



Patrick Foran, Director
Parks & Community Services Department