

2010 Parks & Open Space System Plan

Public Hearing: Written Comments

Katherine M. Reinleitner
146 128th Ave NE
Bellevue, WA 98005

I wanted to say that of all the places I have lived, Bellevue has by far the best parks and recreation services available to the citizens. The Light displays, the walking paths, the gardens, and the programs help make Bellevue the wonderful community it is.

I fully support making close-in parking have some cost associated with it, as in the dog park in Redmond which I use a lot. This helps defray costs. We need to find ways of making sure we continue to have and use our parks and this might mean small fees, increased use of volunteers, a leash-free area in the woods at Kelsy Creek or Wilberton Park might also be helpful for those of us who love their pets and want to see them able to run. A dollar fee for this is appropriate, in my opinion. A bulletin board on which businesses that serve the pets and pet owners could post their services could also be a revenue source for the parks department in this area.

Dr. Daniel Hwang

First off, Happy New Year to all of you and a great big thanks for the wonderful job that you're doing for our city and community. I am a resident of Abella condo (300 110th Ave NE, #508, Bellevue, WA 98004) facing directly the plot proposed for a city park. For obvious reasons to me, I would love to see a park there. My selfish gain admittedly would be to keep my Mt. Rainier view instead of facing a building. I know several residents on my floor frequent the area now as a dog walk place and it would help maintain a place for them to go nearby. I do see in the daytime people from Puget Sound Energy and bordering apartment people sitting on the bench on a nice day. I want to put a plug in for a park placement. Let me know if there is anything I can do to help this become a reality.

Again, thank you for all you do to keep our city green...literally!

Susan McInnis

My neighbors and I in North Bellevue need lap swimming facilities. The need is great! I won't ask you to answer for the past or present but, certainly our city can construct one or more decent pools to accommodate the public so we can learn to swim safely and get regular gentle exercise, especially during the dark winter months when our under-lighted streets are not safe for walkers.

Observe the pools at Lynnwood, and Montlake Terrace. We don't need to build a "world class competition pool arena." We need to provide for our regular citizens.

The city council is currently not seen as meeting citizens needs. Distracted by transportation projects, they seem to address high status projects only. To assume that everyone can swim at one YMCA or Bellevue Aquatic Pool or 24 hour fitness is simply ludicrous. The Bellevue Athletic Club is unaffordable. All these facilities are swamped with use and the need for swimming facilities is not met for many of us. We should also have more covered tennis facilities. Building parks which cannot be policed for security is not of use to citizens today. Please plan and build for value to the citizens. Parks that are lightly used are not giving value. They may look pretty but, truthfully, they are not the best use of the money. Please plan for lap swimming facilities, especially in the NW section of the city. Thank you for listening. I will see you Tuesday night.

Mike Herman

I've lived on the Eastside since 1973 and have obviously seen a lot of changes. I moved away for just 2 years to work in SLC and was amazed at how many family activities, facilities and things to do for all ages in that city and how public parks were shared and managed for multiple uses. When I moved back to Bellevue, I was disappointed at the limited places for the public to have fun, especially inside during our damp, wet, windy days.

Here are my thoughts:

1. The lack of quality indoor pools is amazing. The Forward Thrust pools are old/tired and boring. Bellevue needs at least one 50 meter pool and several 25 meter pools with more than just lap swimming. Add play sections. Whistler and SLC both have great examples. We have many Olympic caliber swimmers in this area and one Aquatics facility in Federal Way for the county?
2. Once upon a time there was an ice rink in Bellevue, the closet one is tucked away in the woods someplace around Renton. Why can't we have a year round facility in a major city like Bellevue?
3. Sports fields should all be turf for year round use. Less mowing, water, fertilizing, maintenance, more use in long run.
4. What about an indoor public tennis facility? With all the rain and cold this would be much used.
5. Regarding the trails in the parks. They are great, but do they need to be so manicured, this most cost a lot of money. They blow, bark, trim, plant the greenbelt trail behind our neighborhood and we walk it weekly. I may only see one other person on these trails at most once a week.
6. The Cougar Mt. park area is great. Why not carve out a section for Mt. Bike riding, it's a huge area? In SLC everyone knows that the trails are for walkers and runners on even days and Mt. Bikes on odd days. It's not a problem. Horses crap, and muck up the trails and intimidate people with their unpredictable moves too.

These are just a few ideas that I think would improve this area in my opinion.

Tom Pearson
300 110th Ave NE #509

The planned expansion of Downtown Bellevue Park may not be the best use of funds considering that it will eliminate needed parking space and may not be sufficient to provide any additional service to the growing population.

It goes without saying that Bellevue is known for providing services and amenities to its citizens and as a result has an excellent reputation. The park system has contributed to this reputation which has brought prosperity to the area. A viable park system is necessary to uphold and, if possible, improve the city as a great place to work and live.

The present Downtown Park is, at times, very crowded and many people must drive to the area to enjoy its benefits. The large high rise buildings recently completed or under construction will shift the population density to the east of the present downtown park. But the area suitable for developing a park in easy reach of the expected populated area is scarce.

A possible area would be the area bounded by 110th Ave NE on the west and 111th Ave NE on the east and 2nd Street NE on the south and 3rd Place on the north. It is understood that the development planned for most of the area has been abandoned. It is an area which would be accessible by walking to a large number of people. The park might contain a small play ground for children but be directed more toward an adult population by providing a shuffle board court, chess board (no skate boarding) and badminton court with the expectation that the users provide their own equipment. Tables and benches suitable for lunching and picnicking might be provided. The development would be directed toward a low maintenance with the main expense being maintaining trash bins and mowing.

The development of such a park would contribute to continuing the viability of the system and meeting the needs and wishes of the citizens of Bellevue as the city continues to grow.

Charles P Johnston
Bellewood Farms, Bellevue

Less lawns! Use only where necessary as on baseball/softball fields. Cutting grass releases tons of carbon dioxide and feeding lawns is costly as is the upkeep. Would rather see perennials or even weeds. We have way too many lawns in Bellevue. Include as many trees as possible as they release oxygen (and they consume CO2).

If most parks could remain wild and natural, that would be best for everyone.

Tom Vu

This letter is in response to the funding package for Proposition 1. I have been a Bellevue resident for 33 years. My twelve year old son attends public school at Tyee Middle School . Almost a year ago I realized my son was lacking mental stimulation by playing video games and we both had gained an unhealthy amount of weight. After brainstorming we decided we would both take up the game of tennis. Now, nine months later, after having learned the game by playing each other, we are both lean and in excellent shape. Our relationship has never been better, and our approach to life is healthier than ever before.

As the news tells us many children are living unhealthy sedentary lifestyles, leading to obesity, diabetes and a host of other health problems. Now it is obvious to me that tennis is one way to fight this growing problem. Yet there is a shortage of usable courts in our area. Existing courts are overused as people are often kept waiting. Also a lack of lighting limits their available hours of use.

This is especially true in the city of Bellevue. Robinswood Tennis Center is only for the privileged as the fee of \$24 per 1 1/4 hour is not affordable by everyone. Two new courts at South Bellevue Community Center are surrounded by tall trees. Consequently leaves cover the court and the sun cannot reach the surface. The courts are often wet and unusable. Newport High School has 10 courts but they are normally used by daytime tennis classes. Although the courts are open to the public, there are no lights for evening play. Additionally there are no restroom facilities at the Newport High School tennis courts. Working folks who can only play tennis at night must go to the nearest public courts with lightings in Renton or Redmond. Besides there is almost always a long waiting line at the Newport High Tennis courts causing many to leave the courts in frustration. During the summer, there were a few groups of 40 or more people who routinely took over all the courts for their own tournaments in the weekends. Upon request I can pool a great numbers of petitions for your records.

I have been to many states like California, Virginia, and Maryland, where tennis courts are found in most city parks along with racquet ball courts that can also be utilized for practicing tennis. I am quite dismayed to see a world class city like Bellevue lacking similar facilities. I would like to make a few proposals as follows:

- 1) Build more tennis courts in existing or new parks. There is still a lot of land at the Robinswood Park.
- 2) The City of Bellevue should work with officers from Newport High School to develop lighting and restrooms.
- 3) Tyee Middle School has two courts that are shared with Edgebrook Tennis Club. These courts are in very bad shape having many cracks and grass growing through the surface. Hence these courts are rarely used. There is a lot of land surrounding these two lots that probably belongs to Tyee Middle School. Perhaps the City of Bellevue could work out an arrangement with Tyee to repair and resurface these two courts and/or add additional ones.

4) Negotiate with other schools like Eastside Catholic, Forrest Ridge....to open their facilities to the public.

This is not a cure all for the obesity problems of youth prevalent in our society, but it is a step in the right direction. Programs can prosper when proper facilities are available to the public at a reasonable cost. I look forward to hearing from you to learn what possibilities you can envision. Thank you.

Paul S. Bradley
6002 142nd Pl SE
Bellevue

I noticed the article in the January 6 edition of the Bellevue Reporter with the title of "City Seeking Input on Parks Planning."

I would like to recommend that an additional trail be built from Forest Drive to the Coal Creek Park trail. Right now, there are only three access points to that trail. They are at:

- Coal Creek Parkway,
- a half mile southeast on Forest Drive from the intersection of Forest Drive and Coal Creek Parkway and
- Lakemont Boulevard.

An additional trail could be built next to Forest Glen Park. That park is about 1.5 miles southeast of the intersection of Forest Drive and Coal Creek Parkway. Forest Glen Park also has limited parking for cars whereas the only current access trail from Forest Drive has no off-street parking.

Coal Creek Park would receive much more usage by residents who live near Forest Drive if there was an additional trail for accessing the park.

Dick Morris
Sunset Community Association President

Good morning Camron. Thanks for the invite meeting notice. Our Sunset Community Association has worked on the following project that would be a part of your extended overall plan for trails in our area from the Skyridge Park North to connect with the trail to Kelsey Creek Farm/Park. Geoff Bradley, Matt Jackson, and Mark O'mally are familiar with this project in coordination with the Parkland Estates project and owner Upinder Dhinsa 425-985-8838 with Engineer Ed Mecum 313-1078 business, and cell 753-0382. We hope to scope out this trail project soon with these folks. The Parkland Estates owner has agreed to host a trail through his Parkland Estates and not be responsible for the maintenance, etc. however at this time.

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We have asked Geoff and the Engineer Ed Mecum to figure out what this plan could be and can not get them to do this at this time. Mr Upinder Dhinsa told me that Ed was working on this and Ed could not verify that this was the case!!!!!! Mr Dhinsa also said that in the new housing lots being developed he would put something in the sale of these parcels that would mention the Sunset Community Association membership recommendation to join the Association. Of course this was a verbal conversation with me and nothing put in writing at this time!!!!!!! As you can imagine eh????

So, Camron we could use your input and resolution of getting this in the plan you are developing please. We will be at your meeting and if you have any questions, please call me at 425-644-2404 any time please. We have had good luck working with you all on these kind of projects and thank you very much for that.

Rachel Endicott

Some feedback about Bellevue parks:

1. Generally great!!! Love the amount of running trails and kid-friendly spaces...
2. More dog parks/fenced off-leash areas needed, both in downtown area (where I used to live) and in South Bellevue where I now live with black Lab Annie.
3. South Bellevue park off Newport needs better pedestrian access, both from the south and west as well as SIDEWALKS on Newport connecting to further up the hill and to the Newport Way library.
4. Water features...something that kids can run in at other Bellevue parks besides Crossroads. My middle school son would love a water slide.
5. For teens who don't skateboard, options become a little smaller...my son actually commented about wishing some of the climbing structures at parks were bigger (teen/adult sized).

Thanks for the offer to comment.

Carrie Nordberg Bellevue Resident

I strongly support the funding of a new public swimming facility in Bellevue. As a Masters swimmer and with children in swim programs, I see the need for more pool space. The Eastside in general is lacking a large facility that could accommodate regional swim meets as well as lesson/therapy and play space. I urge the Bellevue City Council to find the funding to support this type of project.

Tiffany Cloud

Thanks for the survey opportunity to make suggestions for our parks. Our family really enjoys and makes use of the parks in our area. Our favorite, since it's renovation, is Robinswood Park. Great playgrounds, open field, pond, trails, artificial turf and the wonderful paved trail have made this a favorite summer hang out for us. However, because of this climate, many of the wonderful park areas are unusable during winter months.

I'd love to see more "indoor" play options for our young children or perhaps some covered play grounds. My children are too old for the children playtimes at SBCC and Highland but too young to participate in open gym times like basketball and badminton. We are usually left with 321 bounce or the malls as indoor things to do in the winter. Indoor playgrounds....covered play areas....open gym time for elementary ages....just some ideas.

I'd also LOVE to see a large scale public outdoor/indoor swimming pool for summer time use. I grew up in Utah where there were many public pools and large recreation centers. My favorite one was located near my house and I can't tell you how much time we spent there as kids <http://www.cottonwoodheights.com/>. I love to take my kids there now when we visit. It is affordable for families and really serves the entire community. I was amazed when I moved to Bellevue to find that most pools around here require a private membership and are very expensive making them inaccessible for many families. I just think Bellevue has a lot of potential here. These options are very limited on the eastside.

Finally, my family loves to bicycle but there are very few "family friendly" biking trails on the eastside (similar to the Burke-Gilman trail at Merrymoor Park). I am not very comfortable having my young children biking on the side of the road such as Newport Way. We would really make use of a trail.

1. Indoor play areas/covered play grounds
2. Public outdoor pool and recreation center
3. Family friendly biking trails

Thanks again for asking for ideas.

Carolyn Saxegaard

Thank you for your hard work. The new additions to the Bellevue Botanical Garden will be enjoyed. The Holiday Display was lovely. A new theater will be much appreciated. Would also like to see the Surrey Downs Park completed with a new building for community meetings.

Julie Cairone

As the park department updates their open spaces plan I would like for them to consider finding a corner close to the Bellevue Square side of the park – maybe at NE 4th and Bellevue Way to build a permanent ice-skating/roller skating facility. I think it would complement the Bellevue Square, Snowflake Lane, Holiday experience, would be less dangerous than the temporary shabby structure they erect every year, and would not require the skating rink to take away the beautiful reflection pond all of the neighborhood walkers love and enjoy for three months out of the year. I believe that more people would use the ice-skating because kids would be closer to their mothers while they shop and it would be a more beautiful and safe structure – more like Rockefeller Center and a beautiful place to visit year round. I believe it could fit either on the West side or East side of the beautiful fountain, would be a great attraction for all of downtown Bellevue and real draw for tourism and shoppers. I know that one of the places I love to visit when I am in NYC is Rockefeller center and listen to the fountains, music and watch the skaters. The center is full of people until 11pm every time I visit.

Joan Waldeck

Parking is a serious issue at Robinswood. Ever since the lot was restriped to accommodate handicap persons, the parking has been terrible. The spaces are entirely too narrow. People cannot park the big vehicles they drive which only makes the narrow space worse. It is difficult to get the door open enough to get yourself out of the car, let alone open the door enough to get your tennis racket out of the car. Please consider doing something about parking at Robinswood.

In addition to the spaces being too narrow, there simply is not enough parking. Many times, I have to drive around and park in the area that has steps that lead up to the parking lot. Frequently, I allow myself extra arrival time so that I can do this.

So, in addition to spaces large enough to park and get out of, we need additional parking. I most sincerely hope this gets taken care of in the near future.

Thank you for this opportunity to make input.

Carol Mutzel

I cannot suggest a higher urgency than developing local pea patches for community to increase community interaction, build community spirit, engage the old, young and middle aged and encourage healthy lifestyles and eating. I hope Bellevue will join other community in the availability of pea patches in all local communities per your Bellevue map.

Claude Bianconi
5921 138th Place SE

I would like comment about the current unbalanced situation in Forest Drive. It is my feeling that areas with strong neighborhood associations have pushed an agenda of improvements in their areas, while the city seems not to be as active in other areas. It seems an unfair distribution of public resources based not on equal and fair distribution of resources, but in providing benefits in the principle of the "squeaky wheel gets the oil".

The entrance of SE 60th x Forest drive is deteriorated, as you can see in the pictures I send you in this email. It seems unfair that public money can be used to create marble entrances and improved landscape for just a few areas. I felt strange that SE 60th street was the only street without an entrance message announcing the neighborhood, and by analyzing old property maps it seems a narrow strip of area around SE 60th Street that would be used for that purposed was incorporated into the adjacent Meadow park. This seems unfair that only place without an entrance was actually taken by the city without a replacement in the other side.

Part of the current unfairness is in how the process of Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) is managed. It is supposed to be a "democratic" process, but it is actually somewhat biased towards large neighborhood associations such as Somerset, which can drive a much greater share of votes due the number of members and resources to "lobby" for their cause. Personally, I have nothing against this in itself, but just the issue of lobbying in congress, there should be some safeguards ensuring that any resource/benefit is equally shared among ALL residents in the area. Marble entrances for Somerset or Westwood do not seem like a public resource that was spend in benefit to ALL residents in the area, just a distortion of a supposed "democratic" process. In the end, entrance of streets like SE 60th Street has been left to become deteriorated.

In the current plan for Forrest drive, it shows that between SE 63rd Street and 152nd Avenue SE has "historically been maintained under this program as a "category five" or Natural Streetscape concept". I could not find what this exactly means, but it would also seem to be unfair that only part of the forest drive corridor would be maintained in such way. This should be expanded to all other areas in Forest drive, or at least to have the resources equally distributed through the area. I have to recognize things have improved lately, but I still feel there is some imbalance on how resources have been used unevenly in the forest drive corridor.

I say "unfair" in multiple points to express my perception, not a judgment per se. My concert is that resources been used by city to improve the area around Somerset and other neighborhoods adjacent to Forest Drive could receive EQUAL amount of resources from part of the Bellevue Parks System, and that the Neighborhood Enhancement Program can be modified to avoid the current unfairness of using lobbying techniques to impose the will of many over the few residents that may not be as organized. In any instance, even with a lobbying process, it is my opinion that public resources should not be use for be benefits that clearly is specific for just a few residents, such as marble entrances with neighborhood association names! I cannot even imagine what was the logic of people allowing this. I actually complained about this fact when it was happening, but the official told there is a rule that controversial issues like this would be place for "vote" once again - which

seems to appear democratic – but it only reinforces once again the power of many over the few, creating an absurd distortion of use of public resources. As I said, in practice, I have nothings against the process and even the neighborhood association lobbying for benefits in their area, BUT I think there should be much clearer restrictions on how public resources could be used for improvement that CLEARLY BENEFIT just a FEW, not the many. In addition, the overall amount of benefits received over time should be proportionally used in all areas, not just the few ones with more lobbying power, so some provisions for equitable distribution of resources over the area is necessary. For instance, improvements in a street entrance, it is a fair improvement, no matter the location. But, placing a marble entrance in there, it is not a benefit that could be classified to ALL residents in the area, since it clearly linked to a limited group of residents.

These are my comments. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Susan Tatelman

I am responding to an email that I received from Betsy McAlister from the *King County Parent Coalition*. I will be unable to attend the Public Hearing on Tuesday, January 12th.

I am the parent to a young man, Jacob (almost 15 years old), who has Autism. ***I am writing to request that Bellevue Parks & Community Services design and plan programs that adequately address the diverse needs and ages of the special needs population.***

My specific experience was the Highland Community Center Day Camp for Special Needs this past Summer. I had enrolled Jacob in the Special Needs Summer Camp for 2 weeks. My 16 year old daughter (typically developing) was signed up to volunteer simultaneously. She was going to initially shadow Jacob, but then assist other campers, so that Jacob would be socializing with other adults and peers.

I had discussed and emailed with the Camp Director on numerous occasions. I had been impressed with the camp program that seemed so structured to the needs of the special needs population, and offered such wonderful opportunities for socialization and recreation. Opportunities that our special needs children don't often have.

Long Story Short. I only had Jacob attend camp for one day, and our money was completely refunded. However, our summer plans were completely disrupted.

My daughter reported that she was by Jacob's side all day (she was the only volunteer, as the others were paid staff) and no one was really attentive to Jacob. Actually, she reported that during an outing to the park, many of the paid staff were not really attentive to any of the campers, as the staff were seated together on a park bench, texting friends. Campers were walking around, unattended, and so my daughter felt uncomfortable at the idea of leaving Jacob and assisting other campers.

Lunch time was one hour long. My son is not conversational, as were many of the campers in attendance. This length of unstructured time is extremely difficult for campers with language and

social delays, and my daughter reported numerous other times in the day where there were no meaningful structured events.

For these children, unstructured time often leads to challenging behaviors. During Lunch, one young camper was walking around the table, hitting camper's heads, and the paid staff seemed oblivious to this. My daughter stopped this young lady when she got to Jacob.

Additionally, the activities that were offered, were hardly suitable for a teenagers or young adults. The art projects included coloring and painting pine cones, all projects very suitable for preschoolers. Yes, our special children are often developmentally delayed, but that does not mean that we do not provide them with age appropriate activities and opportunities. The current programming at the Highland Center was sorely lacking in this respect.

I realize that the Highland Community Center offers other programs for adults with disabilities, and initially, I had been very enthusiastic about Jacob becoming more involved with them. However, quite frankly, I am now concerned that although they may look "good on paper" the stark reality is another story.

-My son has autism. I am committed to him having a meaningful life of purpose and dignity. I work hard with his school and at home everyday to increase his skills for independence, socialization, and inclusion in the community. As my son approaches adulthood, I hope that programs and services in the community will offer my son (and others like him) these same opportunities.

Adults with developmental disabilities have much to offer the community.. It can be win-win.

But the opportunities have to be properly planned, structured and provided. Over the next 20 years, we will see an increase in this population, and it does need to be addressed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Jack W Hakala, PE
Bandleader, SoS Big Band

Bellevue's *Sound of Swing* (SoS) Big Band, based at N. Bellevue Community Center, has played concerts in Bellevue's parks. Based on our experience, we'd like to suggest that the Parks Board consider a multi-purpose performance pavilion as an objective in your long-term plan. An example is shown at <http://www.shelllakeonline.com/Pavilion.htm>.

In some communities, pavilion design and construction has been financed by private fund drives. Of course, band shells are sited usually on existing city property and at least, require budgeting for maintenance and operation.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this suggestion with you in more detail at your convenience.

Peter S. Marshall
3030 109th Ave. SE
Bellevue, WA 98004

I have been a resident of the Enatai area for 32 years, and I must say my family and I have always been quite pleased with the parks in South Bellevue, and in other places we visit occasionally such as the Downtown Park, Robinswood, Larsen Lake and Weowna Parks. The park designs, maintenance and upkeep have always appeared to meet high standards. Over the years the development of waterfront park facilities at Enatai Beach, and planning for another park at Maydenbauer Bay, have been important investments for the future of Bellevue.

I am responding now to a very brief announcement/article I saw in the Jan. 6 Bellevue Reporter. Since details were scant, I don't know the scope of the Jan. 12 public hearing, for example whether or not you already have drafted some revisions of the 2003 plan. But in case I cannot be at the Jan. 12 Parks & Community Service Board meeting Jan. 12, here are a few comments for your consideration.

My review of the 2003 plan online reminded me that the Lake-to-Lake Trail and Urban Greenway system, improvement of pedestrian-friendly corridors, and further connections of pedestrian trail segments are key concepts of the existing plan that should be retained and furthered in the plan update.

The 2003 Plan, on page 59, indicated that the Parks Department worked with the city's Transportation Department to develop over 110 acres of landscaping adjacent to arterials and boulevards. Those have indeed enriched the visual experience along 148th Ave., parts of Bellevue Way, South Main Street and elsewhere. I would like to suggest one further kind of pedestrian enhancement, and that would be soft-surface paths alongside the paved sidewalks, for use by runners and joggers. The jogging paths could logically be along the presently-paved sidewalk links between parks, such as the Lake Hills Connector. A currently-proposed improvement of pedestrian, bike and parking areas along 108th Ave. SE (Bellevue Way to I-90) could benefit by inclusion of a soft path. Some parts of the west side of that route are now gravel shoulder which provides a very welcome alternative to the paved sidewalk along the Avenue's east side. It would be a shame to see pavement eliminating that existing "amenity".

I've seen a lot of pavement expansions in the 32 years I've lived here, and usually they covered previously-graveled shoulders that had been favored by runners. That particular recreational activity was thereby diminished, even though many people would consider the safety improvement of paved sidewalks to be paramount. I realize that soft paths could present some maintenance issues, but I think these are minimal. And they need only be installed (or maintained) in selected places, they don't need to be everywhere. I believe a policy statement and maybe some development concepts for this idea could be part of the Park and Open Space Plan revision.

I think the plan revision should include something for the Factoria and Richards Valley area. My

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impression is that considerable population and employment density has already occurred there with no clear public open space amenities, and I think more substantial development is anticipated once the economy turns around. This may be a good time to initiate some land acquisition for this eventuality. I think there's some open area near the multifamily areas on the ridge east of Factoria, and some open land opportunities may still exist nearby in the Richards Valley area. Maybe if the retail shopping area is significantly reconfigured, there would be a chance to acquire or swap some land and cooperate in public open space development.

The revised plan policies should probably have something to say about publicly-owned boat moorage along Lakes Washington and Sammamish. I noticed in the Maydenbauer Park steering committee discussions that there was a loose understanding that some of the public park shoreline should continue to be allocated to the moorage function. However, it seems to me that this serves a very specific segment of Bellevue's population, and perhaps diminishes the visual and physical access that should be broadened for people who don't keep a boat moored there. At any rate the Parks Plan revision process could provide an opportunity for public discussion of this issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I would like to be kept informed of the plan revision process. You have my email address, and my mailing and telephone are below.

Paul Johnson
2901 162nd AVE SE
Bellevue WA 98008

I am unable to attend the public hearing this evening but wanted to express my support for including significant investment in new aquatic facilities into our city's Parks and Open Space Plan. I believe our community is underserved by adequate recreational swimming facilities. My family and I have been envious of school and community swim facilities in our visits to other Western states. On our trips to Park City Utah, for example, we often swim at the Ecker Hill Middle School during their morning masters swim program and wonder why it is that not even one of our own high schools has an onsite swim facilities. Sandy, Utah's Dimple Dell Rec Center is another example of a fine swim facility that we occasionally enjoy on our trips. Sandy does not strike me as a comparatively wealthy city but the dimple dell facility is far superior to our own Bellevue community pool and one of several community and school swim facilities residents there enjoy.

I understand the plan requires a balance of interests that all seem good and valuable to our city. But swimming is an important part of our family's physical and recreational needs and this need is not currently being met in our otherwise wonderful city.

Rebecca Peck

I would like to urge Bellevue to build a public regional aquatic facility for recreation, competition, education, and therapy. I live in Bellevue and my whole family is active in swim team, swim lessons, and masters' swimming.

My son is 8 and already on a year-round swim team. By the time he and my 4-year-old daughter are in high school, it would be great if swimmers at the Bellevue high schools didn't have to travel as far as they do now to practice and to participate in swim meets.

I also swim on a masters' swim team to stay fit. Because another masters' team in the area just lost their pool, my masters' practices at Newport Hills have recently gotten very crowded.

Over the last few years, we have been participating in swimathons and other grassroots fundraisers to help make this happen. Please support the goals of SPLASH and include an aquatic facility in the city of Bellevue 20 year parks and open space plan.

Thank you.

**Alan Gibson
(Kristin, Kellen & Lindy too)**

Although work is preventing me from attending tonight's meeting, I want to express my family's strong support of a new aquatics facility on the eastside and maintaining/updating existing pools. I grew up on the eastside (Sunset Elem, Tyee Jr. High, and Newport Sr. High), have enjoyed both public and private swimming pools since I was little (Edgebrook, Triangle, Norwood, Bellevue Club and Odle), and continue to live on the eastside. Although I've never been a competitive swimmer, both of my girls (8 and 10) enjoy participating on swim teams during the summer (Norwood) and year round (BC). In addition, we enjoy spending quality time with each other and friends at various pools around the region. Pools are valuable community assets that should be maintained and expanded. Beyond supporting lap swims, lessons, and competition; it would be great to have access to a pool with additional "aquatics" features that promote other fun, water activities (e.g., slides, rope swings, water polo, kayaking lessons, etc.).

Thank you for your time and interest.



Bellevue Youth Soccer Club
PO Box 861
Bellevue, WA 98009



January 4, 2010

Cameron Parker, Senior Planner
City of Bellevue
PO Box 90012
Bellevue WA 98009

Dear Mr. Parker;

I am writing on behalf of the Bellevue Youth Soccer Club Board to ask you to consider including multiple use sports fields as part of the long term acquisition and capital improvement plan as it relates to Parks and Open Spaces. With the growth in homes and population specifically in the West Bellevue area, the City should commit to helping its citizens maintain active, healthy lifestyles.

As an organization that works to provide soccer opportunities for West Bellevue families, and with over one thousand children participating in our club this last fall, the Board's most challenging issue is lack of available sports fields. Active field facilities in Bellevue are used to their capacity and many are in need of serious improvement. The single biggest limiting factor for how many children we can accommodate is field availability, and for the past several years *we have actually had to turn children away from playing the sport of soccer because of lack of field space.*

While Bellevue and its neighbors have grown rapidly in the last decade and will continue to grow, Bellevue's recreation facilities are essentially the same as they were twenty (20) years ago. The Downtown Implementation Plan, while providing a framework for an astonishing amount of growth, did not carry a commitment to setting aside land and resources for active parks. Now, we have and will have higher demand for fields because of more families, as well as the number of sports children are involved in. The health benefits of sports are very important as well, considering the higher levels of childhood obesity and diabetes our nation is facing. In light of all this, we ask the City to strengthen its commitment to provide an adequate number of fields available for youth and adults.

There is also a trend for sports seasons to run longer, and in some cases teams are now playing for most of the year. In recent years interest and involvement in new sports, such as lacrosse, has blossomed, adding to the pressure for field scheduling. This increase in demand is a good thing for the City. Parents are stepping up as volunteers in organizations like ours to handle increased demand. We ask the City to step up to do what it can to support expanded involvement.

Planning for future sports facilities is essential because opportunities to develop new sports facilities are limited within the City, especially near West Bellevue where so much growth is being focused.

One site in West Bellevue that would serve as a perfect location for improvement is the Hidden Valley Sports Park. This site should be considered for installation of synthetic turf and altered to serve as a multi sport facility similar to the enhancements at several surrounding communities' complexes such as Marymoor Park and Grasslawn Park. With the installation of synthetic turf and converting the facilities into multi sport use would allow for more use and provide much needed and appropriate facilities for our community.

On behalf of all of our members, please don't miss this opportunity to help improve the future for children and active adults in this City.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jason Smith', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

**Jason Smith, President
Bellevue Youth Soccer Club**

Cc: Bellevue City Council

PO Box 40042
Bellevue, WA 98015-4042
January 12, 2010

To: **Bellevue Parks & Community Services Board**
450 110th Avenue NE
Bellevue, WA 98004

Re: Comments for Public Hearing on *Bellevue Parks & Open Space System Plan Update*, January 12th, 2010

Dear Chair Keeney, Vice-Chair Roland, Boardmembers George, Grindeland, LaPine, Robinson & Stokes:

The information in your meeting packet comprises what is publicly available from the 2010 plan update document: a list of capital project recommendations through 2029. When the complete document is ready for review in February, **please establish a 120-day public comment period** following its release. This seems a reasonable timeframe for a long-range plan which affects the entire city.

For clarity, the scope of the plan needs to be defined more precisely. The *2003 Parks & Open Space System Plan* speaks to the overall mission, philosophy, and vision for Bellevue parks; however, its main focus is on development and acquisition. If the purpose of the 2010 update is to plan for future development and acquisition, then a subtitle (such as "Capital Improvement Project Recommendations" or "Acquisition and Development") could resolve any possible confusion with other roles of the Parks Department, such as Resource Management & Natural Resources. (Ideally, those divisions would also participate in the long-range planning process.) Even within a limited scope, the update needs to include concomitant plans for environmental stewardship, lifecycle costing, transportation, and collaboration with other city departments during design and development phases. In this era of increased fiscal responsibility, **for each item on the capital projects list, please include:**

- ✓ a more detailed project description
- ✓ rationale
- ✓ source(s) of the requirement (group or organization, citizen-identified priorities from the survey)
- ✓ relative priority among all items on list
- ✓ estimated cost (including long-term maintenance and operation) in 2010 dollars
- ✓ effect of the development or acquisition on the city's tree canopy and carbon footprint

To ensure systemwide public information and involvement, please consider:

- ✓ implementing an **Internet map-based tool for public comments and feedback**
- ✓ allowing access to the *2010 Parks & Open Space System Plan* via the **Park Planning & Development webpage**
- ✓ publishing **results of the random-sample survey in the plan update** and posting them on the Park Planning & Development webpage
- ✓ describing **how proposed projects map to the priorities chosen by citizens in the random-sample survey**

Camron Parker is to be commended for his diligence and extra effort to inform and involve Bellevue's boards, commissions, and citizens in the requirements gathering phase of this project. In an attempt to gather citizens' wishes for their park system, he made innovative use of Internet technology on the Park Planning & Development webpage. We attended his presentation to the Environmental Services Commission in December where he explained the process and results of a random-sample survey; his presentation was crisp and professional. He follows through on citizen inquiries.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,


Jo Scott

Parks Board Public Hearing
January 12, 2010
By: Anita Skoog Neil

The recent Bellevue Reporter article said it succinctly: “Recession hits Bellevue Hard”. Recessions give us an excellent opportunity to question our priorities, and to re-examine where and how we spend our money.

Since mid 2007, I’ve been tracking one park project, the Meydenbauer Bay Park, and have been astounded at the amount of our tax money that is spent on such an effort. I was especially surprised in fall of 2008, when the financial markets collapsed, that it was “business as usual” in the Parks-planning arena. That effort cost over \$1.5million in consultant fees, and over 2 years (so far) of various City staff time – that means: specific staff assigned to that project, their support staff, the legal dept, planning dept, utility dept, transportation dept., council support staff and so on - that all adds up to additional tax dollars!

The City of Bellevue is now in a budget crunch – it has been using capital improvement funds, to fund some operating costs. It is time for the City, just like our individual families must, to tighten its belt and do conservative forward planning. In our nationally/internationally changing world, our tax dollars are, and will continue, to be in demand. Just wait ‘til Health Care hits.

The Parks Operating Budget is one of the largest budgets the City has, second only to Fire and Police. The Parks Operating Budget is 16.6% of the current two-year \$338+million General Fund budget. The Parks seven-year Capital Budget is \$107+million, or 30.9% of the overall General Capital Investment Program (or CIP), of \$347million.

The preliminary budget for the current Meydenbauer Park Masterplan is apx \$43million – that’s equivalent to nearly half of the current seven year capital budget! Obviously, this means the Park Dept will want more money, as the Meydenbauer capital project isn’t even budgeted for at this point.

Due to time constraints of a Public Hearing, I’ll end by quickly commenting on four issues staff would like you to address tonight:

- 1) Increasing diversity – As the population becomes more diverse so does their ability to pay; we have more immigrants, more low income households, and a larger aging segment than before.
- 2) Partnerships & Regionalism – Bigger is not better; private investors/developers need a financial return for their investment, which easily could be at the expense of the “quiet enjoyment” of the neighborhoods adjacent to such development.
- 3) Technology – If we do not define parks to be green spaces, we soon will lose the definition of what a park means. Parks are for recreation and respite. If we fill our parks with Wi-Fi, retail kiosks, cafes, we will soon have only City. We no longer will know when we’ve left the City and entered a park – it will all be the same.
- 4) Renovating/re-purposing park facilities – Existing parks may need some renovation going forward. Remember the definition of what a park is in doing so. If everything becomes the same, where do we go “to get away from it all”.

It’s your City – please make decisions like you’re paying for them personally – because you and I are.