

Seattle Parks and Recreation Parks Legacy Plan

Goals and Strategies

September 2014



Creating Access, Opportunity, and Sustainability



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Contents

Letter from the Mayor	i
Letter from the Superintendent	ii
Introduction	iii
Goal Statements.....	ix
The Benefits of a Healthy Park System.....	1
Overview and Organization.....	8
Race and Social Justice	10
Seattle’s Demographics	11
Budget Overview	19
Partnerships	30
Basic Services	39
Survey of Seattle Residents.....	42
Trends	56
Regional Recreation Trends.....	56
National Recreation Trends.....	65
Parks of the Future.....	70
Recreation Overview	75
Maintenance Overview	89
Planning and Development.....	108
Regional Parks and Strategic Outreach	114
Program Snapshots	117
Athletics.....	118
Golf.....	120
Tennis and Amy Yee Tennis Center.....	122
Lifelong Recreation.....	124
Specialized Programs	126
Aquatics.....	128
Summer Beaches, Wading Pools, and Sprayparks	128
Swimming Pools.....	129
Small Craft Centers	131
Community Centers	132
Teen Programs.....	135
Youth Employment and Service Learning.....	135
Outdoor Opportunities (O2).....	136

Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.....	136
Late Night Recreation	137
Park Cleaning, Maintenance and Landscaping.....	140
Facility Maintenance.....	141
Major Maintenance and Asset Management	142
Natural Resources Unit.....	144
Specialty Gardens and Arboretum	145
Trails Program	147
Urban Forestry, Natural Area Restoration and Wildlife Management	148
Seattle Conservation Corps	150
Communication.....	153
Human Resources	155
Property Management and Acquisition	157
Safety.....	158
Technology.....	159
Volunteer Programs.....	160
Public Process Summary.....	161
Table of Figures	166
Table of Tables.....	167
Notes	168

Letter from the Mayor

Dear People of Seattle,

I grew up playing at the Hiawatha Community Center in West Seattle, so from my earliest years I treasured our city's parks and recreation programs. Now, as Mayor, I have heard from people throughout the city who hold the same appreciation for parks, green spaces, community centers, pools, athletics, and recreation programs— all described in detail in this Parks Legacy Plan. In many ways, our city's health is reflected in the health of our parks.

Thank you to the Parks and Recreation staff who work tirelessly to keep our parks clean, the grass cut, and our facilities welcoming and safe; and to those who mentor our youth, provide social and recreational connections for our seniors, and teach us to swim. Most importantly, thank you to the people of Seattle who participated in the development of this Legacy Plan through community meetings and written correspondence, and who contribute over 350,000 hours of volunteer service every year to our parks and to our recreation programs.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ed Murray



Letter from the Superintendent

It is with great pride, humility, and a bit of awe that I present to you the Parks Legacy Plan – Goals and Strategies. Perhaps for the first time in the history of Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks) we have a document that encompasses the breadth and depth of all that we do and care about so deeply—and we do a lot! The Program Snapshots that begin on page 117 cover the breadth of our activities, and the cost of service analysis in both the Recreation and Maintenance overviews provide an in-depth look at the financial side of Seattle Parks and Recreation.



Every day, Parks staff see first-hand the benefits of what they do for our community in our centers, pools, fields, and parks. The Legacy Plan affirms this hands-on experience by providing documented evidence of the benefits the community gains from a healthy park system, in terms of healthy people, a healthy environment, a strong economy, and strong communities.

Additionally, we asked the people of Seattle to tell us what they like, don't like, and want more of. Our survey included a statistically valid sampling, plus focused questioning of historically underrepresented communities and teens—two demographics of special relevance to our parks and recreation system. We incorporated additional public input into the Legacy Plan through six public meetings held in May 2013 and from the hundreds of written comments we received.

Volunteers and partnerships are critical components of the parks and recreation services the people of Seattle enjoy. The Legacy Plan profiles our key partners and presents data on the significant contribution of volunteers. To help Parks anticipate future needs and stay relevant, we researched trends in recreation and land management.

The Parks Legacy Plan – Goals and Strategies provides an invaluable resource for future decision-making. A follow-up document will provide an implementation plan and performance management strategy. Together these planning documents will chart a long-term, sustainable course for our parks system, ensuring the legacy that began with the Denny family in the 1890s and the Olmsted plans of the early 1900s will continue for future generations.

My sincere thanks are extended to the people of Seattle; we know you care deeply for our parks and our recreation programs. Your participation and comments strengthened this Legacy Plan. Thank you to the Board of Park Commissioners for your contributions to the planning process and the critical oversight you provide. Last, but never least, thank you to the staff of Seattle Parks and Recreation.

Sincerely,

Christopher Williams

Parks Legacy Plan

Introduction

Many things go into making a city a great place to live, work, and raise a family. But one factor that stands out is its parks and other natural features. Few places can match the beauty of the Puget Sound region and few cities have a greater legacy of parks and natural spaces than Seattle does. Born with the donation of the first city park by the Denny family in 1884 and solidified by the vision of John Charles Olmsted more than 100 years ago, the importance we put on parks is a cornerstone of our quality of life here. We love our parks and have shown it whenever it was needed. Seattle voters in 1999, 2000, and again in 2008 sent clear messages that we cherish our parks by strongly supporting levies to enhance and preserve them. But legacies can be fragile things.

The Parks Legacy Plan details the breadth and depth of how Seattle's parks and related facilities enrich the lives of the people who call our city home. Our parks reflect our values. We meet the needs of people—from all walks of life and backgrounds—who live here, whether it's for a place to play soccer, learn to tango, run a trail, do water aerobics, play a late-night basketball game or simply sit on a bench with a friend and take in the view of the snow-capped Olympic Mountains. And we want to keep meeting those needs for decades to come.

Few cities can boast the diversity and abundance of parks, playgrounds and other natural spaces that Seattle can. We are where we are today because more than 100 years ago our city's leaders chose a future for the city that emphasized parks. They hired the Olmsted Brothers, the nation's premiere landscape architecture firm at the time, to come to Seattle and create a plan that would set our city apart in its commitment to parks. John Charles Olmsted arrived in Seattle in 1903 and within a few months had designed a spectacular ring of parks linked by boulevards. By 1937, the City had built 37 Olmsted-designed parks, playgrounds, and boulevards. It was a park system few American cities could match.

Current staff, elected officials, and caring citizens steward the parks legacy built over the past century. We are responsible for maintaining that legacy for people today and for ensuring it continues for generations to come. This process and the resulting Parks Legacy Plan are designed to ensure we have done our best to continue the legacy.

Mission

Seattle Parks and Recreation provides welcoming and safe opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community, and promotes responsible stewardship of the land.

Values

Access
Opportunity
Sustainability

Outcomes

Healthy People
Healthy Environment
Financial Sustainability
Strong Communities

While hundreds of thousands of people use Seattle’s parks every year, our capacity to maintain all of our assets and offer our programs—some of Seattle’s most treasured places and things to do—is at risk.

Why is this Planning Effort Important?

Parks, open space, recreation facilities, and programs contribute to Seattle’s physical, mental, and environmental health, and support the City’s economic vitality. Well-managed stewardship of the City’s park land ensures the long-term viability and availability of parks and open space. Continuing to provide relevant recreation programs means providing Seattle’s young people with more opportunities to become future leaders of the community, and enables people of all ages to lead healthy and connected lives.

Recent levies have funded construction of new facilities and upgrades to existing ones. This both increases recreation opportunities and adds maintenance requirements. Due both to the recession and to the ongoing challenges facing the City budget, funding to maintain and operate facilities has not kept pace with needs. Due to the real estate market’s variable nature and the pressures created by major maintenance funding priorities across the City, not just for Parks, major maintenance funding fluctuates. The list of needed but unfunded maintenance projects increases annually—resulting in a backlog of necessary repairs that goes unmet. The cost of the backlog of major maintenance projects has reached \$267 million and increases each year because funding cannot keep pace with needed repairs.

In addition to the decline in maintenance abilities, fiscal constraints have forced Parks to limit use of public facilities through closures or reduced hours of operation.

Implementing operational efficiencies reduced the impact of budget reductions but did not solve the problem entirely. To improve efficiencies Parks has:

- Reduced energy costs by installing energy efficient lighting, replacing old boilers with new ones that conserve energy, and installing low-water toilets.
- Stopped watering grass in some parks and allowed the grass to brown in the summer.
- Reorganized how we staff community centers and offer programs within geographic areas.
- Restructured operations to reduce management expenses.
- Worked with partners to expand our recreation programming.

The Parks Legacy Plan will identify what we need to do to preserve the system long into the future. It will identify specific actions that need to be taken now to preserve the Parks Legacy.

Beyond the vital responsibility to preserve Seattle’s rich park and recreation legacy, this planning effort anticipates the trends and needs of the future.

Plan Overview

Seattle Parks and Recreation is developing a strategic direction for the future to ensure that our parks and facilities are accessible, full of opportunity, and financially and environmentally sustainable for everyone who wants to use them. Developing this strategy is a four-phase process that addresses these questions:

- What is the public view of our park system?
- What are the basic services Parks provides?
- Are our resources deployed in the most effective manner?

The Parks Legacy Plan (PLP) is the culmination of an effort launched by the Seattle City Council and Mayor in the spring of 2012, and aims to answer these questions. It outlines where Parks is headed and looks at our highest priorities. The PLP includes a detailed data assessment of parks operations, recreation programs, maintenance costs, and public input on our system—which allows Parks to make strong recommendations for the future.

PLP Strategic Process

Phase one: Development of shared Vision, Mission and Values statements.

Phase two: Telling the story of Parks and Recreation through a programmatic review of what we do, who we serve and how we are funded. This phase also includes the results from a citywide survey of park users and Seattle residents, and an analysis of national and regional recreation trends. Six public outreach meetings were held in May 2013; comments from the public meetings and those sent by mail are summarized on page 161 and have helped define the proposed goals in the Plan.

Phase three: Constructing a framework for a sustainable parks and recreation system through innovation, efficiencies, and secure funding. This framework for the future, based on the analysis provided in this report and public and staff review, fed into the recommendations of the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee.

Phase four: The Legacy Committee recommendations led to a Mayor's proposal for an August 2014 ballot measure for new funding for Parks and Recreation. Following the August vote, an implementation plan will be developed.

Integration with Citywide Planning

Seattle's [Comprehensive Plan: *Toward a Sustainable Seattle*](#) is a 20-year vision and roadmap for Seattle's future that guides City decisions on where to build new jobs and housing, how to improve the transportation system, and where to make capital investments such as utilities, sidewalks, parks and open space, and libraries. The Comprehensive Plan is the framework for most of Seattle's big-picture decisions on how to grow while preserving and improving our neighborhoods.

The Comprehensive Plan meets the requirements of the [Washington State Growth Management Act](#) by helping protect our environment, quality of life, and economic development. The plan is consistent with [Vision 2040](#) and King County's [Countywide Planning Policies](#).

The four core values of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan are:

- **Community** - developing strong connections between a diverse range of people and places
- **Environmental Stewardship** - protect and improve the quality of our global and local natural environment
- **Economic Opportunity and Security** - a strong economy and a pathway to employment is fundamental to maintaining our quality of life
- **Social Equity** - limited resources and opportunities must be shared; and the inclusion of under-represented communities in decision-making processes is necessary

While Parks and Open Space are not currently a separate element in the Seattle's Comprehensive plan, parks-related policies are included in multiple areas within the plan. The following list is just a small example of how Parks facilities, programs, and open space contribute to the City's health and well-being:

- *Community centers*
- *Parks and open space*
- *Strengthening neighborhoods - Neighborhood Matching Fund*
- *Creating healthy and equitable communities*
- *Eliminating racial disparities – equitable distribution of resources, engagement, mentoring, hiring*
- *More inclusive outreach and engagement – Race and Social Justice (RSJI)*
- *Increasing access to healthy food – P-Patches, Beacon Hill Food Forest*
- *Reduction in greenhouse gasses – vehicles and maintenance equipment, forest restoration*
- *Reducing water consumption*
- *Tree preservation*
- *Recycling programs*

In addition to Seattle's Comprehensive Plan, Parks Legacy Plan and its goals, policies and investment initiatives are supported by numerous goals and policies in individual Neighborhood Plans and Updates.

Seattle's [Climate Action Plan](#) provides a framework for meeting Seattle's climate protection goals, including the overarching goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2050. Parks' role involves maximizing the benefits of the bicycle and pedestrian master plans, meeting building energy plan goals, such as LEED compliance, and fulfilling urban forest restoration goals, such as those outlined in the Green Seattle Partnership.

In addition to the City-wide Comprehensive Plan there are myriad other plans for specific programs and amenities in the City that impact parks. Parks has varying interest in shaping those plans to help continue developing an integrated open space and recreation system in Seattle. Examples of other plans Parks ought to be attentive to include the Pedestrian Master Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan.

Report Outline

This plan is mission-driven, based on three key values, and focused on achieving four principal outcomes. The plan is informed by data that helps us understand:

- Seattle's changing demographics
- Our current budget and basic services
- What Seattle residents think about our current parks system and how they use it
- National and regional trends in recreation, and trends in park land management
- Our recreation and maintenance services as they currently operate



Maple tree in Washington Park Arboretum

The report begins with a list of goal statements, described below, which will guide the department's future priorities. We include an in-depth discussion of the benefits of a healthy park system, and then an organizational overview. We discuss Seattle's demographics, and overview the department budget, showing how it has changed over time. We explain Parks' relationships with key partners, and provide a summary of Parks' basic services to give the reader a better understanding of the breadth of the department's activities. We summarize a survey of Seattle residents and park visitors, gauging how they use and what they think about parks and recreation facilities and programs. We discuss national and regional recreation trends to give context to trends Parks will need to respond to in the future. We overview our recreation programs, maintenance activities, and planning functions. Last, we provide detailed program snapshots to give a better understanding of specific program areas.

Each program snapshot includes goals that set the direction for preserving the Parks and Recreation legacy into the future. The goal statements are based on research and analysis in the Plan, comments received during the public process, and the expertise of Parks staff. A full list of the proposed goal statements can be found next.

Few things build community like a thriving parks system. Here in Seattle, our values require a financially and environmentally sustainable system that gives everyone easy access and the opportunity to meet their potential. As we move forward through the 21st century, we must rely on these values to define what we do and how we do it.

That's what this Parks Legacy Plan is about. Examining each program, unit, and division through contextual data analysis shows what we have and how we are living up to our values of access, opportunity, and sustainability.

"I do not know of any place where the natural advantages for parks are better than here. They...will be, in time, one of the things that will make Seattle known all over the world."

-John Charles Olmsted, 1903.

Goal Statements

The following statements embody the values of access, opportunity, and sustainability and are meant to guide the department towards a sustainable future. Additional information pertaining to each goal statement can be found in the Snapshot section of this report, beginning on page 117.

To Preserve the Legacy...

Planning and Development

Plan for, develop, and maintain a parks and recreation system that responds to emergent needs and secures our assets for future generations.

Planning

- Ensure Parks' ability to proactively plan Seattle's park and recreation system.
- Respond to community-based initiatives by providing ongoing funding for park and recreation planning and development.

Acquisition

- Preserve and reclaim Parks' property for public use and benefit, and ensure continued access to parkland for a growing population.
- Continue to expand Parks' land holdings.

Asset Management

- Ensure the safety, long-term viability of parks facilities and the efficient management of maintenance activities by developing and investing in an asset management system.
- Take advantage of community interest and be responsive to people's awareness of maintenance needs for our facilities.

Major Maintenance

- Ensure the safety and long-term viability of parks facilities by reducing the backlog of major maintenance needs.
- Look for innovative ways to approach major maintenance activities so that environmental sustainability is maximized.

Seattle Conservation Corps

- Provide access to work crews that can perform a variety of maintenance activities for Parks and other City departments and reduce homelessness by providing comprehensive paid work experience, education, and case management services to homeless adults.

Recreation

Create opportunities for people to explore and enrich themselves by providing a diverse array of recreation opportunities.

Community Centers

- Ensure community centers are the focal points in our neighborhoods and serve as places where people can connect, foster relationships, build community, and enhance their health and well-being by offering programs, activities, and events to Seattle’s changing population.
- Ensure community centers are physically and emotionally safe and welcoming places for individual enrichment and community growth.

Aquatics

- Ensure fun and safe water experiences by providing a diverse range of healthy, accessible aquatic programs that continue our legacy of water safety.
- Ensure our aquatics facilities are physically and emotionally safe and welcoming places for individual enrichment and community growth.

Lifelong Recreation

- Create recreation and social engagement opportunities so older adults remain healthy and actively involved and engaged as part of our community.

Specialized Programs

- Provide welcoming, accessible, and affordable recreation and social programs and activities to enrich the lives of people with disabilities and their families and welcome them as part of the community.

Teens

- Capture young people in their hope stage of development by engaging teens with opportunities that help them to build their identity, connect with their passion, and acquire skills that lead to a healthy and productive adulthood.
- Give teens and young adults job and life skills.
- Connect teens and young adults to nature by providing outdoor and environmental opportunities.

Environmental Education

- Ensure a variety of programs that foster awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of nature in their neighborhood and across the city and region.
- Engage people in activities to protect our environment.

Athletics

- Ensure all people have access to athletic opportunities.
- Ensure our athletic fields serve as places where people can pursue both historic and emerging sports, participate in a community of recreation enthusiasts, and enhance their health and well-being.
- Offer sports programs, activities, and events to Seattle’s changing population where other providers are not meeting the need or demand.

Community Engagement

- Ensure that programs are accessible, welcoming and equitably utilized by communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations.

Regional/Specialty Parks

Recognize that regional parks and facilities are unique places for the neighborhoods in which they are located and for people who visit them from throughout the region, and need to be planned for and maintained in a unique way.

Downtown Parks

- Contribute to a welcoming, safe, and clean downtown.
- Implement effective maintenance and activation strategies that are closely aligned with the many current and future partners.
- Integrate the new Central Waterfront Public spaces with the existing Center City parks.

Regional Parks Planning

- Develop operational plans for regional parks to enhance the customer experience and nurture partnerships.

Specialty Gardens and Arboretum

- Enhance the guest experience and financial sustainability at Specialty Gardens and the Arboretum by enhancing partnerships and maintenance.

Events & Scheduling

- Make park facilities and resources available to everyone for personal, family, and community celebration of life's special occasions.

Tennis

- Ensure all people have access to tennis.

Golf

- Ensure all people have access to golf.
- Manage our golf courses in a way that maintains their long-term viability both as a place for the game of golf to be enjoyed but also as a vital habitat and open space resource for our increasingly dense city.

Maintenance

Provide the community with clean, safe, and welcoming parks and recreation facilities.

Safety

- Use a variety of means to make our parks safe through good design following appropriate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to proactively facilitating positive activities to enforcing adopted rules and regulations throughout the city.

Park Cleaning, Maintenance and Landscaping

- Provide cleaner, safer, welcoming parks by providing restroom facilities that meet the highest standard possible.
- Provide cleaner, safer, welcoming parks that are an asset to the neighborhood by picking up litter and removing waste in a timely way.
- Provide cleaner, safer, welcoming parks that are an asset to the community and have long term viability by regular maintenance of both the built assets and the landscape features.
- Maintain landscapes that will enliven communities, inspire neighbors, and attract visitors through colorful displays and native gardens.

Facility Maintenance

- Prolong the life and sustainability of our recreation assets and improve public access with proactive and preventative maintenance.
- Provide maintenance services and at the same time train employees in skilled crafts who would not normally get a training opportunity by expanding the apprentice program.

Trails

- Ensure a safe and well maintained system of walking trails.

Urban Forestry, Natural Area Restoration and Wildlife

- Improve the environment and wildlife habitat by restoring forests and expanding the tree canopy.
- Protect habitat and other wildlife areas for use, education, and interpretation by increasing capacity for professional wildlife management programs.

Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

- Approach maintenance activities, to the maximum extent practicable, in a way that is environmental sustainable.
- Improve environmental health by reducing utility consumption.
- Increase access to public land by assessing, managing, and cleaning up contaminated sites.

Department-Wide

Technology

- Improve customer service, increase efficiency, and maximize our capabilities by implementing strategies that keep us current with the best technology for managing our parks and recreation system.

Human Resources

- Recruit, hire, retain and develop employees who have the right skills, knowledge, personal traits and who share the organizations values and vision of providing safe, welcoming and sustainable opportunities to the public.
- Strive to have a workforce that is diverse and reflective of Seattle’s ethnic populations and demographics.

Communication

- Parks is committed to clear, concise, and honest communication.
- Parks will use the most effective communication methods and technologies available.

Volunteers

- Volunteers are vital to the successful operations of parks and recreation facilities and programs and will be actively pursued, cared for, and thanked.

Customer Service

- Parks visitors and participants in our programs will be treated with respect, communicated with appropriately and welcomed with open arms.

Partnerships

- Develop partnerships that include race and social justice as fundamental to their operations and business practices.
- Pursue partnerships with other organizations that have compatible values and goals, and which result in mutual benefits.

The Benefits of a Healthy Park System

Why is the Legacy Important?

Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks) manages a 6,200-acre park system of 465 parks and extensive natural areas. Parks provides athletic fields, tennis courts, play areas, specialty gardens, and more than 25 miles of boulevards and 120 miles of trails. The system comprises about 11% of the City’s land area. Parks also manages many facilities, including 26 community centers, eight indoor swimming pools, two outdoor (summer) swimming pools, four environmental education centers, two small craft centers, four golf courses, an outdoor stadium, and much more.

Seattle’s parks provide numerous benefits to the people of Seattle—healthy people, a healthy environment, financial sustainability, and strong communities. These benefits underlie the outcomes Parks aims to achieve. These outcomes are important to Seattle’s health and vibrancy. For Seattle to remain a world class city that is attractive both to businesses that provide jobs and to people who want to work in those jobs, it needs to maintain a great park system with healthy open spaces and recreational opportunities. A healthy city needs healthy people, a healthy environment, financial sustainability, and strong communities—which is why preserving the Seattle’s park legacy is so vital.

Healthy People	Healthy Environment	Strong Economy	Strong Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical activity reduces obesity and produces important psychological benefits, relieving symptoms of depression and anxiety, and enhancing psychological well-being. Park-like settings are associated with feelings of peacefulness, tranquility and relaxation; and with enhanced mental attention and performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust for Public Land estimated Seattle's annual stormwater retention savings due to parks is over \$2.3 million About 48% of the city's parkland is tree-covered, removing about seven tons of carbon dioxide, 17 tons of nitrogen dioxide, 38 tons of ozone, 36 tons of particulate matter, and 17 tons of sulfur dioxide in 2010. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over a five year period, from 2005 through 2010, the Trust for Public Land found residences located within 500 feet of a park had 4.8 percent higher property values, translating into an additional \$14.77 million in property tax collections during the five years. The Trust for Public Land estimated that parks and events in parks generated \$4.3 million in tax revenue to the City in 2009. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks' teen programs have strong public safety benefits. Studies have shown that greener environments reduce aggressive behavior. Community centers are neighborhood living rooms, providing places to gather, learn and have fun. Volunteer opportunities bring people together around a common goal

As noted before, the benefits of a healthy parks system are encompassed in Parks and Recreation's four outcomes: healthy people, a healthy environment, financial sustainability, and strong communities. These outcomes underlie all of what we do. Teen leaders see youth in their programs learn and grow; maintenance workers meet people every day who are improving their health on park trails and fields; tree crews see the benefit of their work every spring with new growth in the urban forest; and community center staff help every day to build social capital raised by people in a community playing and working together for common benefits. Beyond our innate understanding of the benefits of parks and recreation, however, multiple studies have shown measurable physical, mental, environmental, and economic benefits.

In 2012, the Big Day of Play brought more than 4,500 people to Magnuson Park to have fun while learning about healthy park and recreation opportunities

Healthy People

The Trust for Public Land (TPL)'s 2006 report, "The Health Benefits of Parks", synthesizes the findings of numerous studies regarding the health benefits parks, in general, provide to the public.¹ The benefits come both from physical activities people do in parks, and from simple contact with the natural world:

- People who engage in regular physical activity have reduced health risks and improved health and quality of life.
- Physical activity produces important psychological benefits, relieving symptoms of depression and anxiety, and enhancing psychological well-being.
- When there is no easy access to parks and people can't reach them, they often go without exercise.
- Teen sports participation has the strongest and most consistent correlation with teens maintaining a healthy weight.
- Park-like settings are associated with feelings of peacefulness, tranquility and relaxation, and with enhanced mental attention and performance.

In 2004, 54.4% of King County's adults were either overweight (36.7%) or obese (17.7%), although Seattle's adults were slightly less so.² In 2010, 21% of Seattle's high school students were obese, compared to 16% of eastern King County high school students.³ These numbers are alarming because obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death. A Trust for Public Land study comparing medical costs between active and inactive people found the annual value of medical care cost savings attributable to Seattle's parks is approximately \$64 million.⁴ Clearly, the better health outcomes correlated with parks and recreation benefit both individuals and public finances.

Healthy Environment

About 11% of Seattle’s land is public park or open space, and the environmental health of this land contributes significantly to stormwater retention, air quality, and wildlife and biodiversity:

- **Stormwater retention:** The famous Seattle rain needs a place to go, and the City spends millions each year managing runoff through pipes, sewers, and holding tanks. TPL estimated annual stormwater retention savings in Seattle to be \$2.3 million, by calculating the cost of managing runoff if there were no parks.⁵ The more rainwater captured in open ground, the less the City needs to spend to control the runoff from hard surfaces.
- **Air quality:** Improvements to air quality from parks and open spaces come from several directions. Because car emissions are one of the largest sources of greenhouse gases and pollutants, an important way to reduce transportation emissions is to locate parks in areas accessible by walking and biking. Trees remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store it in leaves, roots branches and trunks. A 50-year-old tree can store more than 100 pounds of carbon dioxide in a year, reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and lessening the rate of global warming. Parks and forests also reduce urban heat island effects by providing shade in the summer that cools buildings, lowering the need for air conditioning. TPL estimated the air pollution removal value to Seattle from parks and open space at \$0.5 million per year, reflecting the cost of preventing pollution from entering the atmosphere.⁶
- **Wildlife and biodiversity:** From the eagle soaring over Discovery Park to the coyote prowling the forests of Seward, parks and open space play a critical role in maintaining and enhancing wildlife in Seattle. Parks’ Native Plant Policy ensures that new plantings provide sustainable landscapes and are native to the Cascadia region. Implementing this policy protects and provides wildlife habitat and a healthy ecosystem, decreases the need for utility services, and demonstrates sustainable landscape management practices to the greater community. The Wildlife Sanctuary Policy creates a means to identify, protect and preserve areas providing wildlife habitat. The first named Wildlife Sanctuary, Kiwanis Memorial Ravine, is home to the City’s largest nesting colony of Great Blue Herons.

Seattle Parks is responsible for over 600,000 trees on developed park property and forested lands—and manages over 20% of Seattle’s total tree canopy!

Climate and Environmental Challenges

Native plants, animals, and tiny microorganisms work together, and rely on one another. Biological diversity is important because it underlies all the natural processes that lead to the environmental, economic, health, and community benefits provided through our parks system.

Characteristics of Seattle's ecosystem:

Much of Seattle's land mass has been impacted by human interaction for hundreds of years. Modern influences, such as development, environmental degradation, logging, stream bed alteration, gas-powered vehicles, and the introduction of invasive species have significantly altered the natural environment. Continuous evergreen forests used to make up the vast majority of Seattle's land, but today, only Schmitz and Seward parks still contain significant old-growth forest. There is little undeveloped shoreline, and urban use dominates the interior land.⁷ Pavement, rocks, and buildings make up over 50% of Seattle's total ground cover.⁸



Parks installed solar panels in picnic shelters at Jefferson Park, helping reduce the City's dependence on traditional energy sources

According to the City's Office of Sustainability and Development, tree canopy covers about 23% of Seattle's land area, or about 13,000 acres.⁹ Seattle parks contain over 100,000 trees on developed park property and along 20 miles of boulevards, and 500,000 trees in our 2,500 acres of forested lands. While natural areas make up only 7% of Seattle's total area, they contain 20% of the city's trees.¹⁰ 31% of Seattle's trees are evergreens and 69% are deciduous, while native Pacific Northwest forests are predominantly made up of evergreens.¹¹ Evergreen trees are especially important in managing stormwater surface flows in the winter months (December through February), when 39% of Seattle's annual rainfall occurs.¹² Invasive species like English laurel, English holly, Himalayan blackberry, English ivy, and morning glory are a growing problem; English laurel and English holly together make up 8% of trees in Parks-owned natural areas.¹³

Wetlands are another important piece of Seattle's ecosystem. Wetlands are areas that develop, when conditions permit, where land and water intersect.¹⁴ They are biologically important, providing habitats for diverse and rare plant species¹⁵ and amphibians, birds, mammals, and fish. Changes in wetland habitats can have significant effects on the food chain for all of these forms of life.¹⁶ Plants and animals are not the only beneficiaries, however—wetlands benefit humans by helping to control floods, recharging groundwater reservoirs, and filtering water.¹⁷

Our parks and green spaces also provide food and shelter for the millions of migratory birds as they travel across the North American continent and beyond through the Pacific Coast Flyway.

Threats to our ecosystem and biodiversity:

- Seattle’s population is expected to grow by 17% by 2040. This will place more pressure on our environment through increased resource and land use, especially with increased prosperity and consumption.
- Increased average temperatures, hotter and drier summers, wetter winters, rising sea levels, and urban “heat island” effects due to climate change.¹⁸
- Invasive species, which currently pose a “threat to an estimated 25% of the state’s plant species”, and are spreading rapidly.¹⁹
- Pollution, which contaminates ecosystems and threatens species.
- Loss of trees to age, decay, disease, storms, lack of maintenance, and human interactions. Parks loses 300 to 400 trees each year in developed parks alone.

Solutions:

Parks takes these and other threats to our environment seriously, and has already implemented the following strategies to protect and preserve biodiversity in Seattle:

Parks’ Urban Forestry program works to ensure that trees are healthy, and to plant new trees. Over the last seven years, Parks has planted and established more than 5,000 trees in developed parks. One way the Urban Forestry program works to protect and grow Seattle’s forested areas is through the Green Seattle Partnership (GSP)—a unique public-private partnership between Seattle Parks, concerned citizens and non-profit groups. GSP is dedicated to promoting a livable city by re-establishing 2,500 acres of healthy forested parkland by 2025, and developing the capacity to maintain this forest into the future. Over the last seven years, the GSP has restored some 1,000 acres, trained and supported 140 citizen forest stewards, and has 70 parks in active restoration.



Magnuson Park, 1957

Parks initiated the Wildlife Sanctuary program, in response to community interest, to protect the Great Blue Heron nesting habitat in Kiwanis Memorial Preserve Park. The Wildlife Sanctuary program partners with local groups and other government agencies to protect important habitats for priority species.

In Magnuson Park, a partnership between the Magnuson Park Stewardship Alliance and Parks staff works toward greater diversity and appreciation of birds, butterflies, dragonflies and amphibians throughout the park by



Magnuson Park, 2013

enhancing habitats and increasing consideration of habitats during the landscape planning process. Parks has completed one wetlands restoration project at Magnuson Park, and is currently working to create approximately one and a half acres of new wetlands in the park. These projects aim to increase the range of vegetation and create potential amphibian and aquatic invertebrate habitats.

Parks has worked to daylight Piper's and Longfellow creeks, and creeks in Roxhill Park and Dead Horse Canyon, among others. Parks also works to protect beaver dams and habitat—at Thornton Creek, among other locations.

Citizen science and environmental education programs are another important piece of Parks' efforts. Universities and community colleges are using our parks for research projects, including several partnerships monitoring urban bird and amphibian species. Our environmental education programs have recently expanded volunteer docent programs, expanding the opportunity for the community to partner with us to increase awareness of the role our parks play as habitat in the urban ecosystem.

It is important to integrate science-based best practices into wildlife and habitat management, in order to improve human and wildlife health, and restore habitats. Removing invasive plants allows for trees and shrubs to grow unencumbered and replace those trees and shrubs that are dying. Periodic monitoring and maintenance of trees is necessary to prevent the forest from reverting back to an unhealthy state and helps with forest succession planning.

Parks owns 120 miles of soft surface trail and relies on one planner, one maintenance staff and a small capital budget to repair and enhance the system. The trails program staff work with some 20 organizations and hundreds of individual volunteers throughout the city. These volunteers help to inventory the trail system, create maintenance condition maps, and provide public maps for recreation purposes.

Financial Sustainability

Parks and open space contribute to a healthier economy in Seattle by improving property values in areas near parks, by increasing tourism, and by the direct value of engaging in recreation by Seattle residents.

- **Property values:** People like living near parks and open space and will spend more for a home nearby. Over a five year period, from 2005 through 2010, TPL found being located within 500 feet of a park raised property values by 4.8 percent, translating into an additional \$14.77 million in property tax collections during the five years.²⁰
- **Tourism:** TPL estimated that parks and events in parks generated \$4.3 million in tax revenue to the City in 2009.²¹ As an example, a weekend rowing regatta on Green Lake attracted more than 1,000 participants, 358 from outside King County. Estimating each participant from outside the County came in groups of two and spent \$60, the two-day regatta resulted in approximately \$85,000 in tourist spending for one weekend park activity.

- **Direct use value:** If there were no parks, trails, pools, and community centers, Seattle residents would have to spend millions of dollars to purchase the recreation benefits they get from Seattle’s parks. TPL assessed the direct value of Seattle’s parks through a telephone survey of use, then applied a detailed formula for calculating the values for healthy outdoor uses such as running and walking, and the values gained from reduced cost activities such as golf on City courses as opposed to private ones. For 2010, TPL estimated the direct value at the huge amount of \$447 million.²² While it can be assumed that not all of the activities that take place in parks would be paid for in the market were the parks not available, the direct value is certainly a major component of the economic value of parks and open spaces to the people of Seattle.

Strong Communities

Parks and park facilities offer communities places to gather, meet neighbors and build relationships.

- **Community building:** Community centers serve as the living room of neighborhoods. Young parents gather at tot gyms during the day, seniors exercise, youth join programs or just hang out at the centers after school, and teens find safe haven at Teen Life Centers and during Late Night hours. From families cheering teams on athletic field sidelines, to the thousands who gather to pull weeds and plant seedlings at parks throughout the year, Parks programs and land build community.
- **Public safety:** The public safety benefits of park programs for youth and teens, coupled with the crime/aggression-reducing impact of green environments results in a significant, if often overlooked, benefit of parks, recreation, and open space. Ming Kuo (2010) writes that greener environments reduce aggressive behavior. Examining the flip side of aggression and crime—positive social behavior like acts of neighboring, caring and friendliness—we find that vegetation is associated with better social behavior across the board. More green translates to less aggression, less transgression, more socializing, and more acts of caring.²³
- **Volunteerism:** Participating in volunteer activities is a vital way of building community. Parks provides hundreds of opportunities a year for neighbors to come together and work toward a common goal.
- **Developing and leveraging partnership resources:** Parks offers a wide range of recreation opportunities and programs that the public can access and enjoy through its many partnerships with public and non-public organizations, such as the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), the Parks Foundation, the Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Audubon, Arena Sports, YMCA, and Premier Golf.

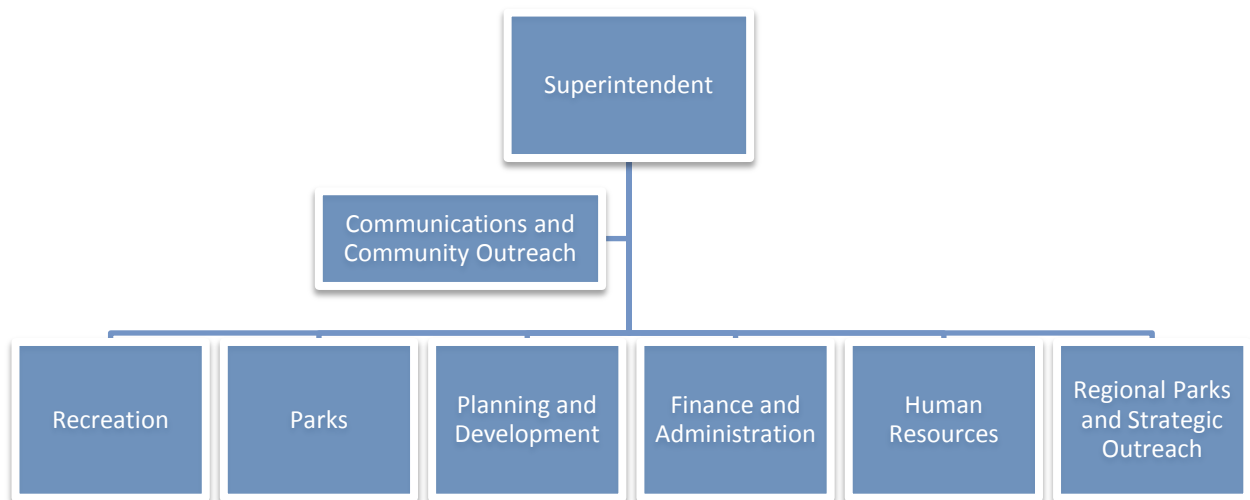
Seattle Parks and Recreation Overview and Organization

Seattle Parks and Recreation manages a 6,200 acre park system of 465 parks with hundreds of athletic fields, tennis courts, and play areas, extensive natural areas, 120 miles of trails, and more than 25 miles of boulevards. The system comprises about 11% of the City’s land area, and includes 26 community centers, eight indoor swimming pools, two outdoor (summer) swimming pools, three environmental education centers, two small craft centers, four golf courses, an outdoor stadium, specialty gardens, and much more.

The Woodland Park Zoo and Seattle Aquarium, while owned by Seattle Parks and Recreation, are operated by non-profit entities. Other Parks-owned yet privately-operated facilities include the Bathhouse Theater at Green Lake Park, Spectrum Dance Studio at Madrona Park, Pratt Fine Arts Studio at Pratt Park, Sail Sand Point at Magnuson Park, and the Seward Park Environmental and Audubon Center. Hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors use Seattle’s park system year after year.

Seattle Parks and Recreation is organized into seven divisions, as shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Department Organization



Recreation manages community centers, aquatics, youth and teen programs, programs for people with disabilities, and programs for people older than 50.

Parks maintains parks and facilities, cares for greenbelts, natural areas, and specialty gardens, performs environmental and sustainability oversight, and operates volunteer programs. The shops unit supports park and facility maintenance and security with paint, concrete, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, metal and carpentry shops, and the park rangers.

Planning and Development oversees levy, major maintenance and Neighborhood Matching Fund project management, asset management, project engineering and design, Parks' survey crew, property management, and the Seattle Conservation Corps.

Finance and Administration manages the department-wide operating and capital budget, accounting, information technology services, concession contracts, grants, and other agreements.

Human Resources oversees personnel management duties, including hiring, safety and labor relations.

Regional Parks and Strategic Outreach provides executive-level oversight for regional parks and manages key ongoing partnerships with nonprofits such as Woodland Park Zoo and the Seattle Aquarium. Operational functions include Citywide Athletics, Golf, the Amy Yee Tennis Center, Center City Programs, and operations at Magnuson Park.

The Superintendent's Office manages Parks and Recreation, handles communication, and analyzes policy.

Race and Social Justice

The Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is an effort of Seattle City government to realize the vision of racial equity by eliminating institutional racism and developing community partnerships. The Initiative's long-term goal is to change the underlying systems that create race-based disparities in our community and to achieve racial equity. A major goal of the Legacy Plan is to increase access and opportunities for recreation for communities of color, immigrant and refugee populations, and historically underrepresented communities—moving toward greater racial equity.

Parks staff have reached out to their diverse neighbors, welcoming them to community centers, pools, rowing programs, and learning from communities what programs would best serve them. For example, through outreach within their neighborhood, High Point Community Center staff learned of the desire Muslim women had to exercise during the day while their children were in school. Now, women-only fitness classes are popular at High Point. Parks has worked to increase access and opportunity to communities of color and people with special needs:

- The Food and Fitness program combines fitness and meal sharing that celebrates Korean, Vietnamese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Somali cultures.
- Women of the World swim sessions at pools provide opportunities to swim for women with cultural or religious practices that don't allow swimming with men present.
- Parks altered an athletic field to accommodate the unique features of Samoan cricket.
- Parks removed the fence along Madison Beach so that all communities can have greater access.

Parks Legacy Plan outreach began with a survey conducted over phone, internet, and by "intercepting" park users in August and September 2012. In order to ensure that historically underrepresented communities were heard, Parks partnered with the City's Department of Neighborhoods (DON), whose Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons translated the questionnaire into nine languages: Somali, Tagalog, Amharic, Affaan-Oromo, Tigrinya, Khmer, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. They then administered the survey to 90 representatives of historically underrepresented communities.

Parks has completed an Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement (IOPE) Plan and used the new Racial Equity Tool Kit to help guide and develop its outreach strategies. Outreach will continue for review of the Draft Parks Legacy Plan in spring 2013, and included a focused effort to hear from communities of color and historically underrepresented communities. Using Parks' outreach databases, advice provided in the Outreach to Immigrant and Refugee Communities in Seattle report prepared for Parks in 2012, and working with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs, Parks will endeavor to listen to a diverse chorus of community voices.

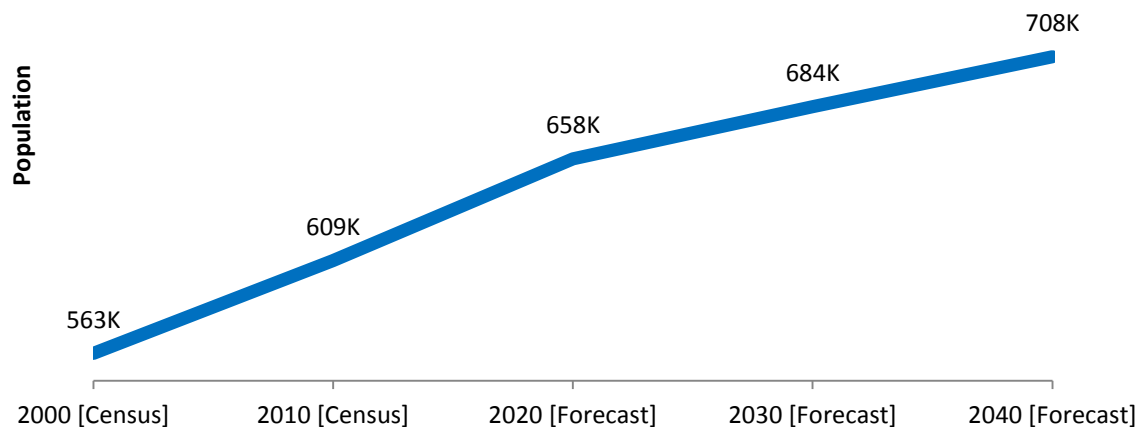
Seattle's Demographics

Important characteristics of Seattle's population are changing dramatically. While Seattle's overall population growth recently slowed, the ethnic and racial composition of the entire Puget Sound region shifted; there are now more people of color and fewer whites. Seattle's age distribution is currently dominated by ages 20-34, but the number of those 65 and older is projected to grow in proportion to Seattle's population into the foreseeable future. This information is critical to understanding what and how parks and recreation services ought to be offered.

Population

According to the U.S. Census, Seattle's population increased from 563,374 to 608,660 from 2000 to 2010—about an 8% increase. **Figure 2** shows population figures from 2000 and 2010 and Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) draft Seattle population projections through 2040. Seattle's population is projected to continue growing.

Figure 2: Actual and Projected Seattle Population, 2000-2040

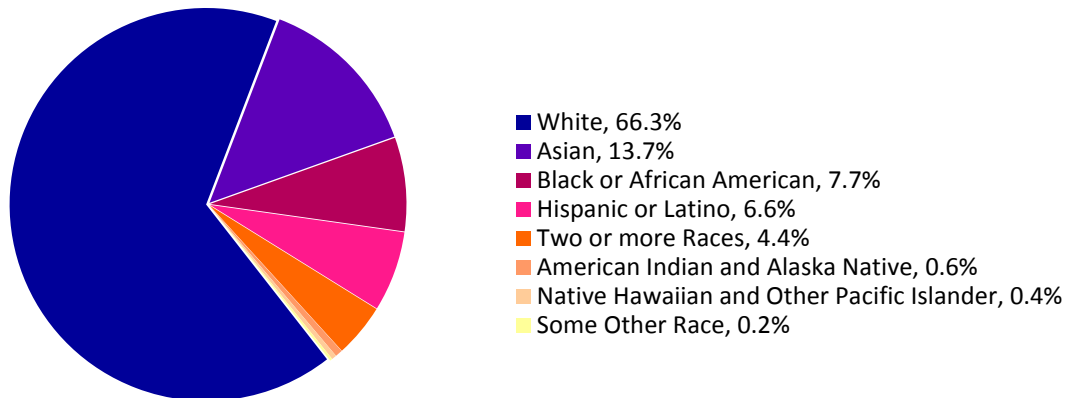


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Puget Sound Regional Council 2013 Land Use Baseline

Race and ethnicity

Diversity in Seattle has increased over the past ten years. The 2010 U.S. Census showed large increases in Seattle’s populations of color; the percentages of the racial/ethnic make-up of the City are shown in **Figure 3**.

Figure 3: Seattle’s Racial/Ethnic Composition, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

Seattle’s fastest-growing demographic is the Hispanic or Latino population. The number of people identifying as such, according to the U.S. Census, increased by 36% from 2000-2010, and now make up 6.6 percent of Seattle’s total population. The number of people identifying as Asian also increased by about 14% from 2000-2010, and now make up 13.8% of Seattle’s total population.

The Parks Legacy Plan phone survey, completed in fall 2012, contains statistically valid responses representing the views of self-identified members of Seattle’s ethnic groups:

- 85% of whites were very or somewhat satisfied with Parks’ programs, compared with 86% of Asians, 95% of African Americans, and 90% of Hispanics. Of those who identified as “Other,” only 67% were very or somewhat satisfied.
- Self-identified members of all races, except “other”, use Seattle Parks programs at a higher rate than programs provided by a private gym or employer or the YMCA or Boys & Girls Club. African Americans, however, use the YMCA or Boys & Girls Club at the same rate as they use Parks’ programs—47%.
- Whites, on average, ranked the importance of programs for teens as 7.2 out of 10, compared to Asians (7.8), African Americans (8.6), Hispanics (8.0), and Other (8.2).

Seattle is changing rapidly, and Parks must offer programs and services that are forward-looking and inclusive. In the survey, people of color did not choose “exercise and fitness” as the top reason to value parks and recreation, as whites did—62% instead chose socializing with family and neighbors. People of

color were also more likely than whites to use the YMCA or Boys & Girls Club, although both groups still reported using programs offered by Parks more.

More respondents of color than whites reported participating weekly or more in the following:

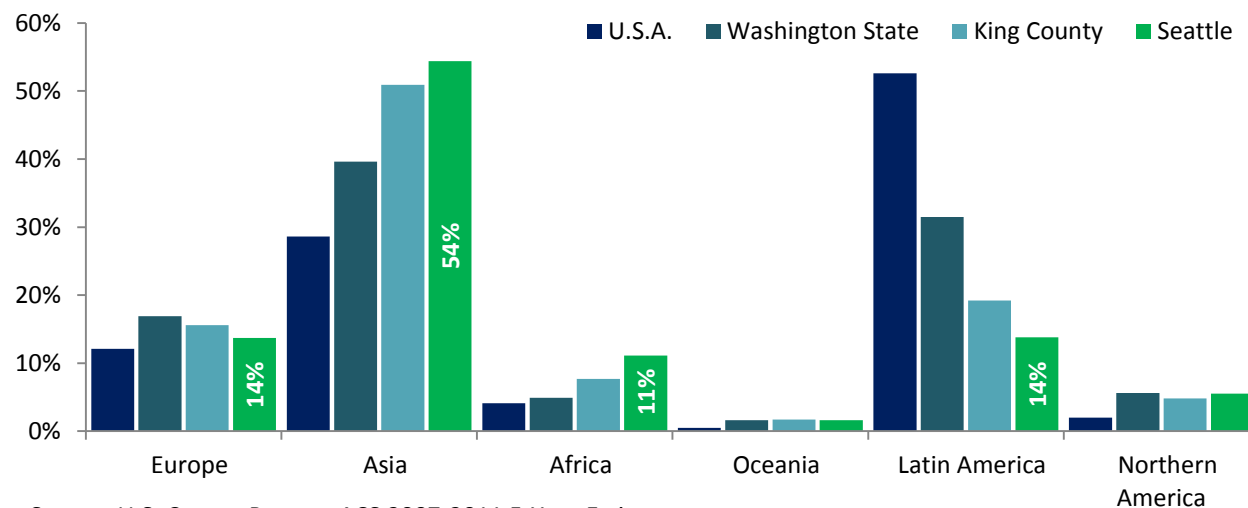
- Visit a parks playground (39%, compared to 32% of whites)
- Use an athletic field (22%, compared to 18% of whites)
- Visit a community center (18%, compared to 8% of whites)
- Participate in a Parks-sponsored recreation program (12%, compared to 7% of whites)
- Use a picnic area or shelter (15%, compared to 7% of whites)

Interestingly, although 52% of whites, 57% of African Americans, 70% of Hispanics, and 70% of those who self-reported “Other” reported using a small neighborhood or community park at least weekly, only 28% of Asians did.

Immigration

Seattle is home to a diverse and unique immigrant community. **Figure 4** shows the U.S. Census Bureau’s estimation of immigrants’ original birthplaces²⁴:

Figure 4: World Region of Birth of Foreign-Born, 2007-2011



Seattle has a higher percentage of immigrants hailing from Asia and Africa, and a lower percentage of immigrants from Latin America than the county, state, or nation as a whole. Parks partnered with the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) to contact these immigrant groups through the Historically Underrepresented Communities (HUC) portion of the Legacy Plan Survey. Although the HUC survey was

not statistically valid, it gathered views from speakers of nine languages, chosen to reflect Seattle’s diverse population: Somali, Tagalog, Amharic, Affaan-Oromo, Tigrinya, Khmer, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. This choice of languages reflects the prevalence of East African, Southeast Asian, and Chinese immigrant groups in Seattle. For the most part, HUC respondents were less likely to participate in activities on a daily/weekly basis than overall survey respondents.

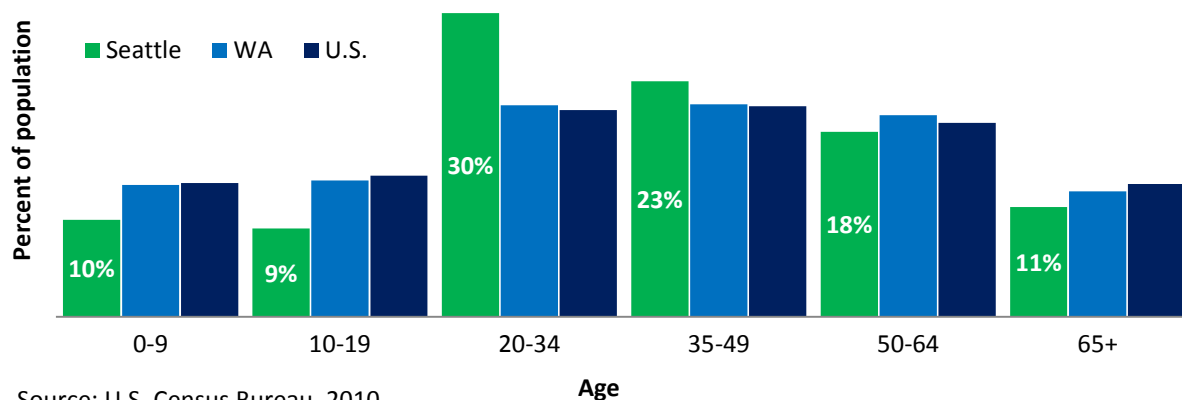
Parks has engaged in a number of initiatives to reach out to immigrant and underserved communities, including:

- The Food and Fitness program combines fitness and meal sharing that celebrates Korean, Vietnamese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Somali cultures.
- Women of the World swim sessions at pools provide access/opportunities to swim for women with cultural or religious practices that don’t allow swimming with men present.
- Parks altered an athletic field to accommodate the unique features of Samoan cricket

Age

The 2010 U.S. Census has the most up-to-date and accurate age information on Seattle’s age distribution. **Figure 5** shows the 2010 Census age distributions for Seattle and the U.S. Seattle has many more people age 20-34 than do the state or the U.S. as a whole—30% of Seattle’s total population.

Figure 5: Age distribution of Seattle, Washington State, and U.S., 2010



As described in the recreation trends section of this report, younger Americans tend to recreate more in general, are more interested in team sports, and participate the most in fitness activities. People ages 18-34 who don’t recreate, but want to, are most interested in working out with weights, working out using machines, running or jogging, and swimming.

The Legacy Plan Survey shows that those aged 35-54 are the most frequent users of Seattle Parks programs and participate the most in the most overall popular activity, walking or jogging in or along a park. 66% of people age 35-54 visit a small neighborhood or community park at least weekly, compared to 42% of 18-24 year-olds and 41% of people older than 55. Residents ages 54 and younger, especially those ages 18-34, prioritize maintaining and improving existing parks roughly equally, while older residents place more focus on maintaining, not improving, what currently exists.

Seniors

The Washington State Office of Financial Management projected through 2040 the percent of King County’s population over 65, shown in **Figure 6**. While King County’s senior population is lower than the national average, their share of the total population is projected to grow over time, to almost 20% in 2040.

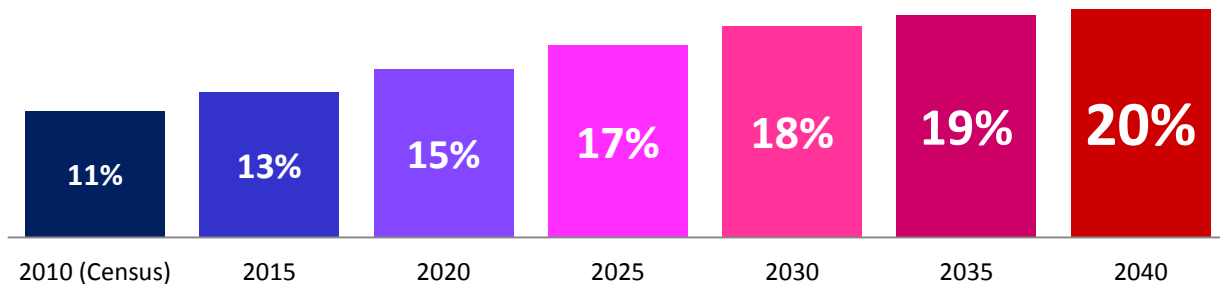
“A friend recommended the outdoor activities in the Lifelong Recreation program. I signed up in the fall for hikes and outings and have been doing more and more each quarter. I took a drawing class last summer.

I walk with the Striders and go to Circuit Training. Every hike/walk out of the city is full or nearly full most of the time. It is great to meet new people and to see the same faces over and over again. A great sense of community has evolved on these outings.

People look out for each other. Retired people are out exercising rather than sitting at home and deteriorating. I see walkers who are in their 70's and 80's. It is very inspiring.”

-Public comment

Figure 6: Projected Percent of King County Population Age 65+, 2010-2040



Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management, May 2012

As described in the recreation trends report, baby boomers (born 1945-1964) tend to recreate individually, rather than on teams; they tend to participate in outdoor activities at a higher rate; and a high number engage in fitness activities. People ages 65 and older who are inactive and do not participate in recreation activities are interested in trying working out using machines, swimming, and fitness classes.

The Legacy Plan Survey shows people older than 55 are, as shown before, more interested in maintaining what already exists than in acquiring and developing new lands and facilities. They are more likely than 18-34 year-olds to visit a community center (28% of ages 55 and older compared to 26% of

ages 18-34 do so at least monthly), and are more likely than all other age groups to play at a Seattle public golf course (13% play at least monthly, compared to 10% of the total population).

Children

Families with children use Parks' land and programs most extensively and are the most satisfied with them, but constitute a relatively small share of Seattle's population. The Legacy Plan Survey showed families with children younger than 18 were the most satisfied with Parks' services (92% were very or somewhat satisfied), and two-thirds (66%) participated in Seattle Parks and Recreation programs in the last year.

Figure 7: Percent of Households with Children, 2007-2011

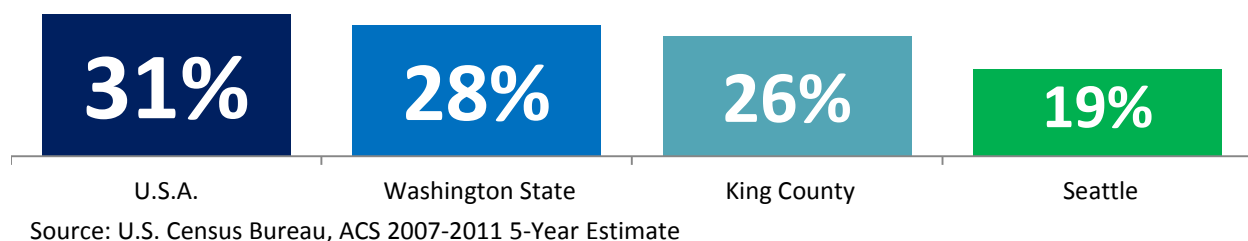
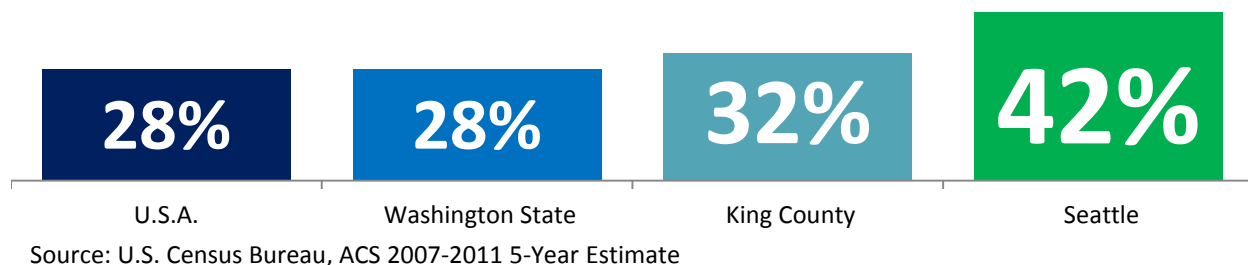


Figure 8: Percent of Householders Living Alone, 2007-2011



According to the survey, families with children are more likely than those without children to do the following at least weekly:

- Visit a Parks playground (60% do so at least weekly, compared to 22% of those without children)
- Visit a small neighborhood or community park (73% do so at least weekly, compared to 41% of those without children)

Families with children are more likely than those without children to do the following at least monthly:

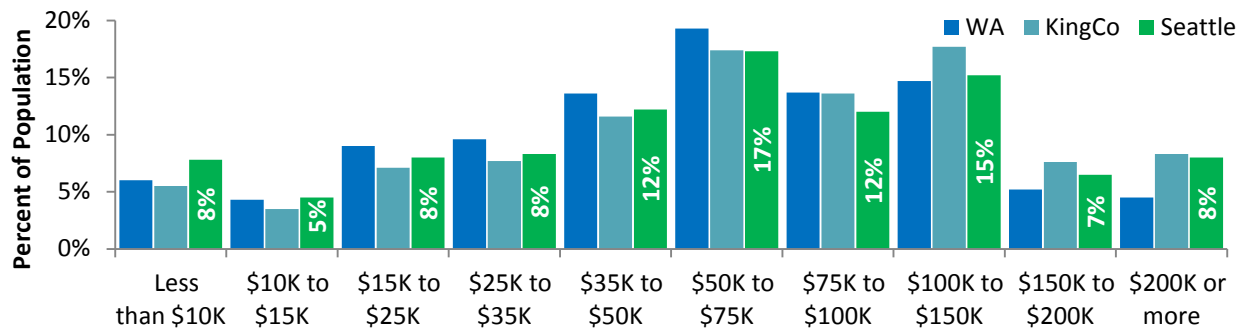
- Visit a natural area (78% do so, compared to 54% of those without children)
- Visit a public beach (66% do so, compared to 50% of those without children)
- Use an athletic field (72% do so, compared to 24% of those without children)
- Visit a community center (50% do so, compared to 26% of those without children)

- Participate in a Parks-sponsored program (34% do so, compared to 10% of those without children)
- Use a picnic area or shelter (40% do so, compared to 24% of those without children)
- Use a community indoor pool (42% do so, compared to 17% of those without children)

Income

Income level is strongly correlated with a person’s recreation participation. Those with higher incomes are more likely to be active, while people with lower income levels are associated with less participation, obesity and other health issues. **Figure 9** shows five-year estimates of Seattle, King County, and Washington State’s income distributions, as estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau over 2007-2011. From the same source, in 2011 dollars, Seattle’s median household income is \$58.89.

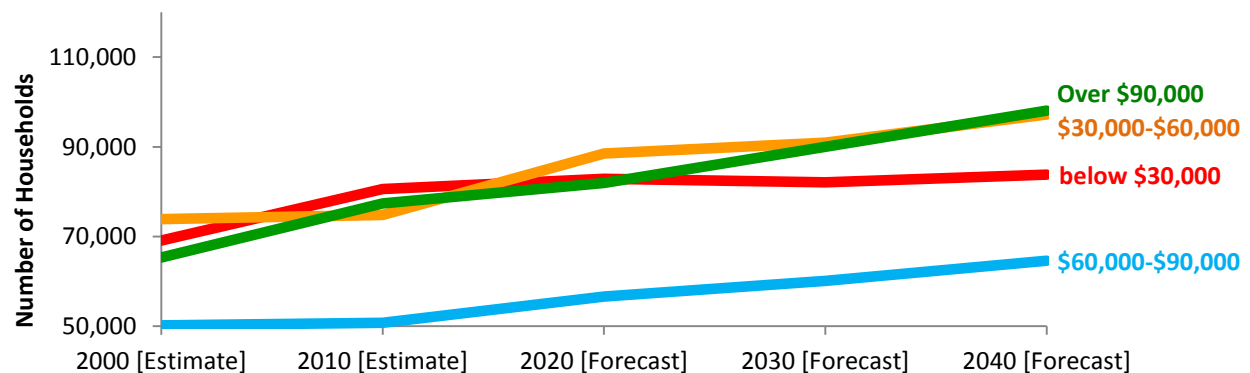
Figure 9: Washington, King County, and Seattle Household Income Distribution (2011 Dollars)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2007-2011 5-Year Estimate

Seattle has a higher percentage, relatively, of lower- and middle-income residents than King County, a proportion that the Puget Sound Regional Council, in their 2013 Land Use Baseline, expects will increase over time. **Figure 10** shows the estimated number of people in each of four household income classes from 2000 and 2010, and the projected number of people estimated to be in each of those four income classes in the future.

Figure 10: Projected Composition of Household Income Brackets, Seattle, 2000-2040



Source: Puget Sound Regional Council, 2013 Land Use Baseline

Survey Results by Income

Income levels are a strong predictor of recreation participation. People with lower incomes are, in general, much less likely than wealthier individuals to participate in recreation activities, with two notable exceptions—community center and picnic area use. The Legacy Plan Survey showed: Those making less than \$50,000 a year are much less likely than wealthier individuals to:

- Participate in activities provided by Parks (64% do not participate, while 46% of those making over \$100,000 do not participate)
- Participate in activities sponsored by a private gym or employer (24% do so, compared to 54% of those making over \$100,000)
- Visit a small neighborhood or community park (39% do so daily or weekly, compared to 68% of those making over \$100,000)
- Walk or jog in or along a park (37% do so daily or weekly, compared to 54% of those making \$50,000-\$100,000 and 63% of those making over \$100,000)
- Visit a public beach (14% do so daily or weekly, compared to 26% of those making over \$100,000)
- Visit a natural area (20% do so daily or weekly, compared to 36% of those making over \$100,000)
- Use an outdoor tennis court (4% do so monthly, compared to 13% of those making \$50,000-\$100,000)
- Play at a Seattle public golf course (3% do so monthly, compared to 12% of those making over \$100,000)
- Use an athletic field (64% of those making less than \$50,000, and 69% of those making \$50,000-\$100,000 use fields yearly, rarely, or never—compared to 49% of individuals making over \$100,000)

People making less than \$50,000 per year were at least as likely as wealthier individuals to:

- Visit a community center (34% do so, compared to 32% of those with higher incomes)
- Use a picnic area or shelter (33% do so, compared to 29% of those with higher incomes)

Scholarships and reduced or non-existent fees are some of the means Parks uses to bring programs to low income people.

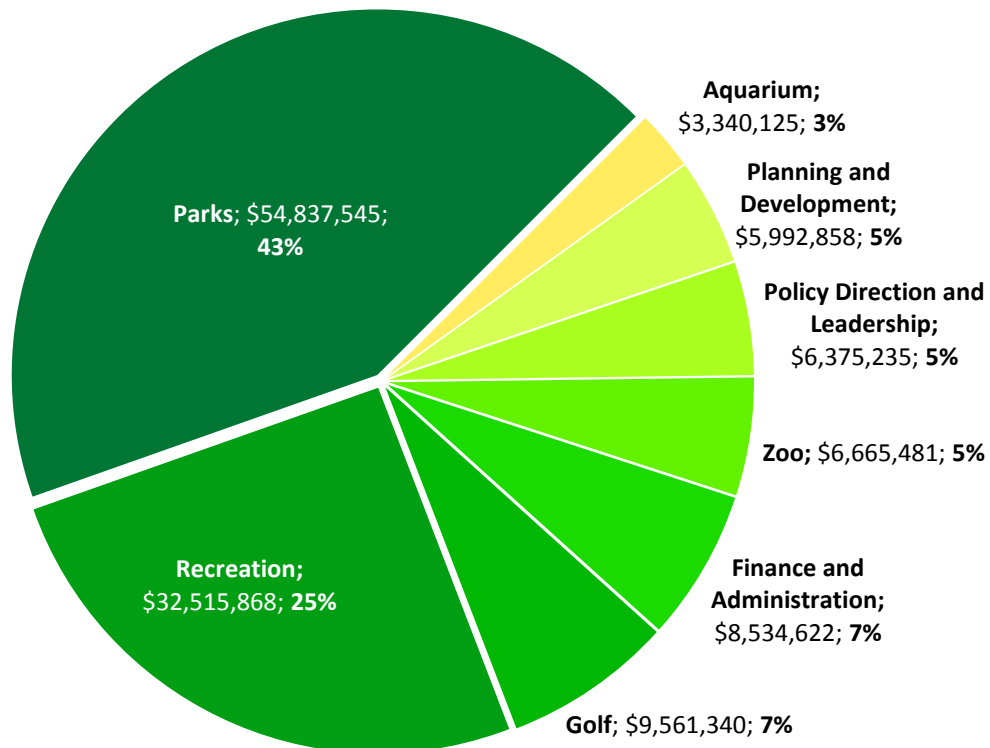
Budget Overview

2013 Operating Budget

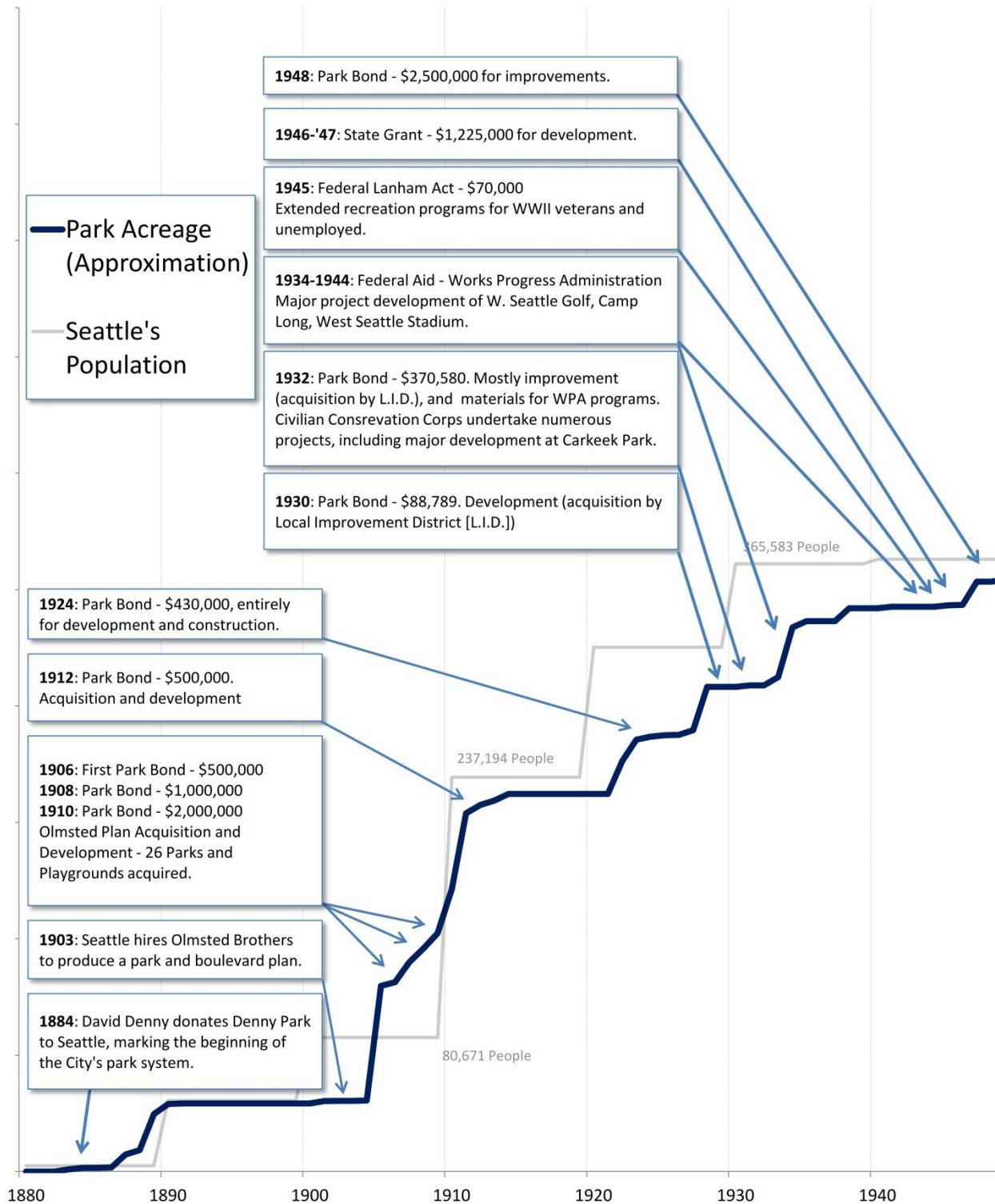
The operating budget for Seattle Parks and Recreation in 2013 is approximately \$128 million. Approximately 2/3 of the revenue comes from the City's General Fund, and the other 1/3 is derived from various fees, charges, leases and other sources. Approximately 10% of the City's General Fund is allocated to Seattle Parks and Recreation; the fund also supports fire, police, and other municipal services. The General Fund is derived from revenue from property taxes, retail sales tax, utility taxes, business and occupation taxes, parking fees, and various fines.

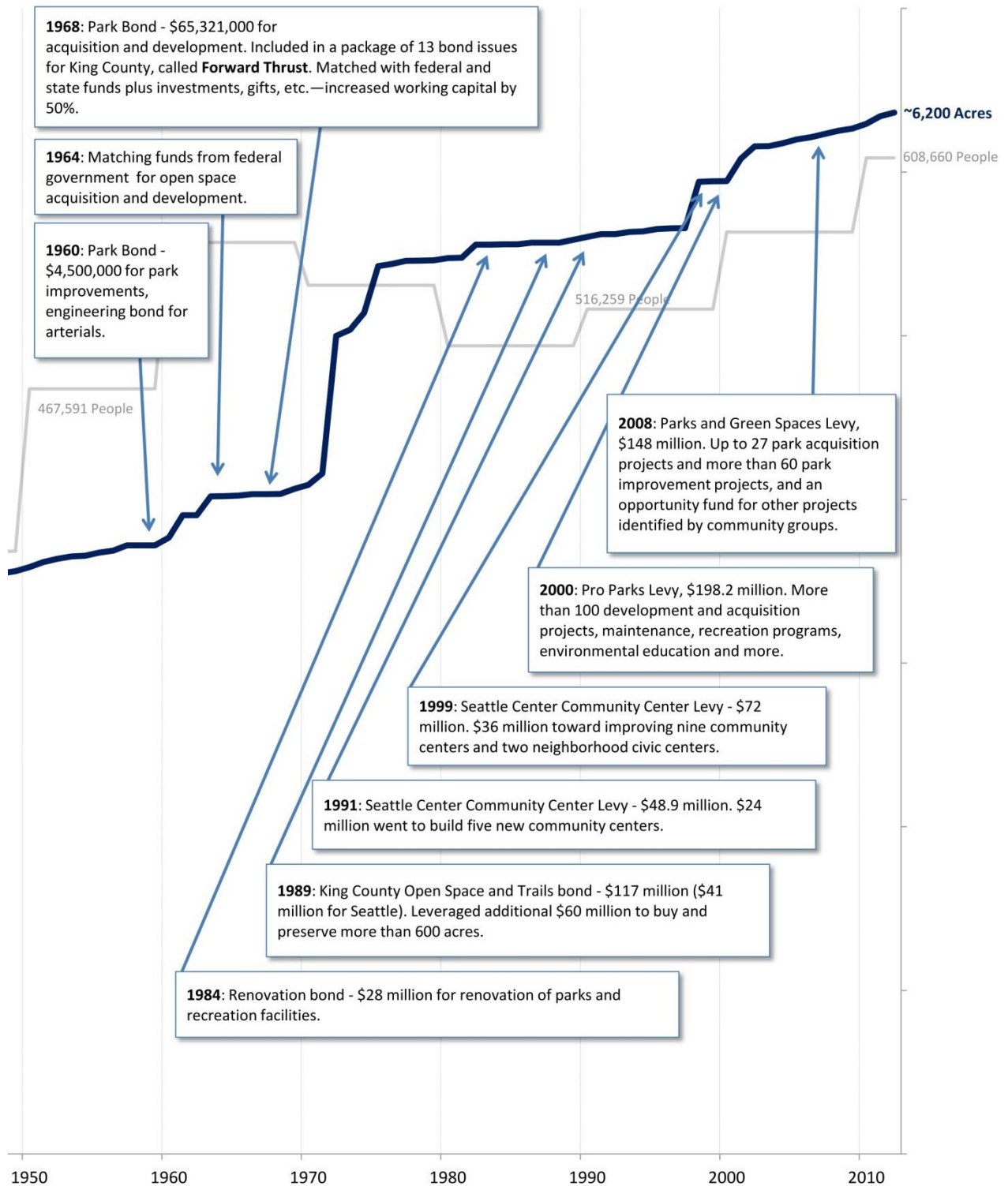
The breakdown of the budget by function is shown in **Figure 11**; the basic functions of maintaining parks and facilities and operating community centers and pools consume 68% of the budget. Note that the Policy Direction and Leadership category includes Human Resources, Superintendent's Office, Magnuson Park, Communications, Event Scheduling, Center City Parks Administration and others.

Figure 11: 2013 Parks Fund Operating Expenditures



Seattle Parks and Recreation Funding History





Capital Improvement Budget

In addition to the \$128 million operating budget, Parks receives funding for capital expenditures each year from a variety of sources including levies, the City's Cumulative Reserve Subfund, councilmanic debt, the Shoreline Park Improvement fund and other special fund sources, grants and private donations.

Parks prepares a six-year Asset Management Plan (AMP) each biennium as part of the City's budget process. The 2013-2018 AMP is a compilation of all the known major maintenance needs that are necessary to keep Parks assets in safe and operable condition. The AMP is the basis for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and includes a prioritized listing of more than 300 projects and programs ranging from building renovations and ballfield and lighting replacements, to forest and landscape restoration, to roof replacements, and improvements of play areas, tennis courts, and basketball courts. The estimated cost of these projects is nearly \$267 million.

After projects are identified, priorities for funding are generated based on the whether the project:

- addresses code and regulatory requirements
- addresses safety issues
- protects the building envelope
- promotes facility integrity
- reduces operating and maintenance costs
- results in water and energy savings
- results in other benefits to Parks facilities

The basic funding for the Capital Improvement Program is the Cumulative Reserve Subfund (CRS), derived from revenue from the Real Estate Investment Tax (REET), a tax on the sale of properties and on new building construction. Due to the variable nature of the real estate market, the level of CRS funding fluctuates:

- 2000 – 2006: the annual amount of CRS funding ranged from \$11 to \$13 million
- 2007 – 2008: strong real estate years and CRS funding reached \$21 and \$22 million
- 2009 – 2011: the recession cut the level to \$7 to \$8 million
- 2012 – 2013: with a slight recovery in commercial real estate, \$12 to \$13.5 million

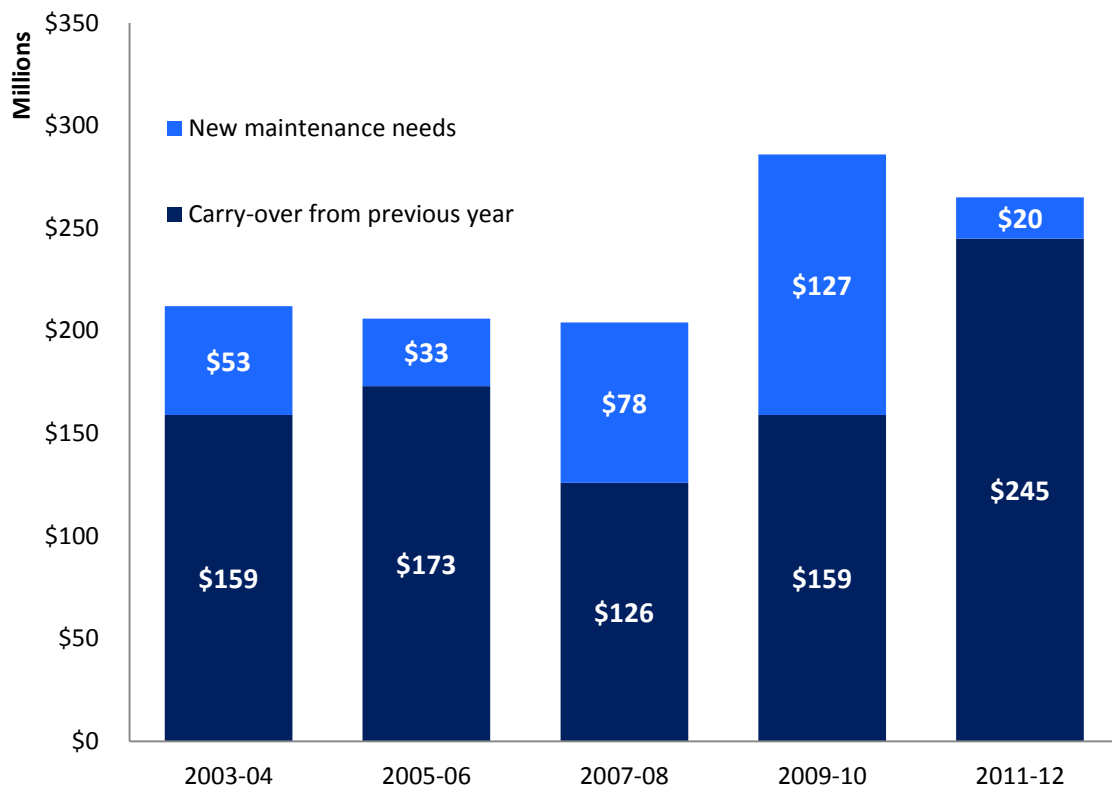
While the increase for 2013 is certainly welcome, the need for major maintenance funding is not being met: in order *not* to have an ever-increasing list of projects, capital funding would need to be at about \$38 million per year, a level not seen even during the boom years of 2007 and 2008.

Asset management plan projects comprise the roofs that need repairing, leaky irrigation systems—some with pipes dating back to the 1940s—cracked walkways, and more. The improvements are needed to preserve the integrity of Park facilities and to provide welcoming, safe places for the public. New

facilities have been added to the system over the past 20 years, primarily with levy funds, which has both increased recreation opportunities and added to the major maintenance list, as even the more modern buildings need regular preventive maintenance and major maintenance as they age. A coordinated work order and asset management data system is one of the technology upgrades needed to more efficiently identify when a facility reaches the point where it needs major maintenance.

Figure 12 shows the trend in Parks’ asset management backlog. The increase in new maintenance needs was partly a result of the end of the Pro Parks Levy. During the life of the levy maintenance funding was included for each capital project that was built. With that fund source gone, the maintenance gap increased. Asset management is discussed in more detail in the Planning and Development Division Overview, beginning on page 108.

Figure 12: The Cost of Asset Management



Source: Planning and Development Division

Levies

Seattle voters have strongly supported park development in recent years, approving the following levies:

- **1999 Community Center Levy** provided \$36 million to redevelop nine aging community centers;
- **2000 Pro Parks Levy** provided \$198 million to purchase new park land, redevelop existing parks, and provide maintenance and program funds;
- **2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy** is raising \$145 million for park acquisition and development projects, trails and patches.

For each of these recent ballot measures, Parks and Recreation has leveraged federal, state, and regional funding to supplement the Levy funds. For example, the 2000 Pro Parks Levy added \$28 million in funding from other sources, and the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy has added \$4.5 million in funding from other sources through the first four years of the Levy, with more anticipated.

Budget Trends and Impacts

Over the past decade, Parks has enjoyed strong community support from the people of Seattle in approving levies that enrich the parks system. New parks and facilities provide more access and opportunity – and bring with them new maintenance requirements. Since 2000, Parks added 261 acres of land, 48 new parks, three new community centers (International District, Northgate and Belltown) and many smaller neighborhood gems like the recently opened Dakota Place Park Building in West Seattle, a former City Light Substation.

The Great Recession reduced City tax revenue and led to budget cuts throughout government. The budget cuts beginning mid-2009 led to reductions in staff and services, and increased fees and charges for a number of activities. Parks closed the plant nursery, reduced staffing for grounds maintenance activities, reorganized park maintenance districts, and eliminated one of three tree crews. The Carkeek Park Administration Building closed and the Seattle Audubon Society will operate it under a lease agreement beginning in 2013. Parks' shops were constricted by cuts that eliminated the fence crew, cut paint shop staffing in half, and reduced the metal and machine shop's capabilities.

In 2011, five community centers shifted to limited operations because of staffing reductions, and in 2012 Parks implemented a new community center operating model that achieved a \$1.2 million reduction in community center operating costs. Community centers are now clustered into geographical groupings with three different levels of operating hours. Overall community center hours decreased 19% (1,402 hours per week to 1,115 hour per week) from 2009-2012, as shown on **Table 4** (page 78).

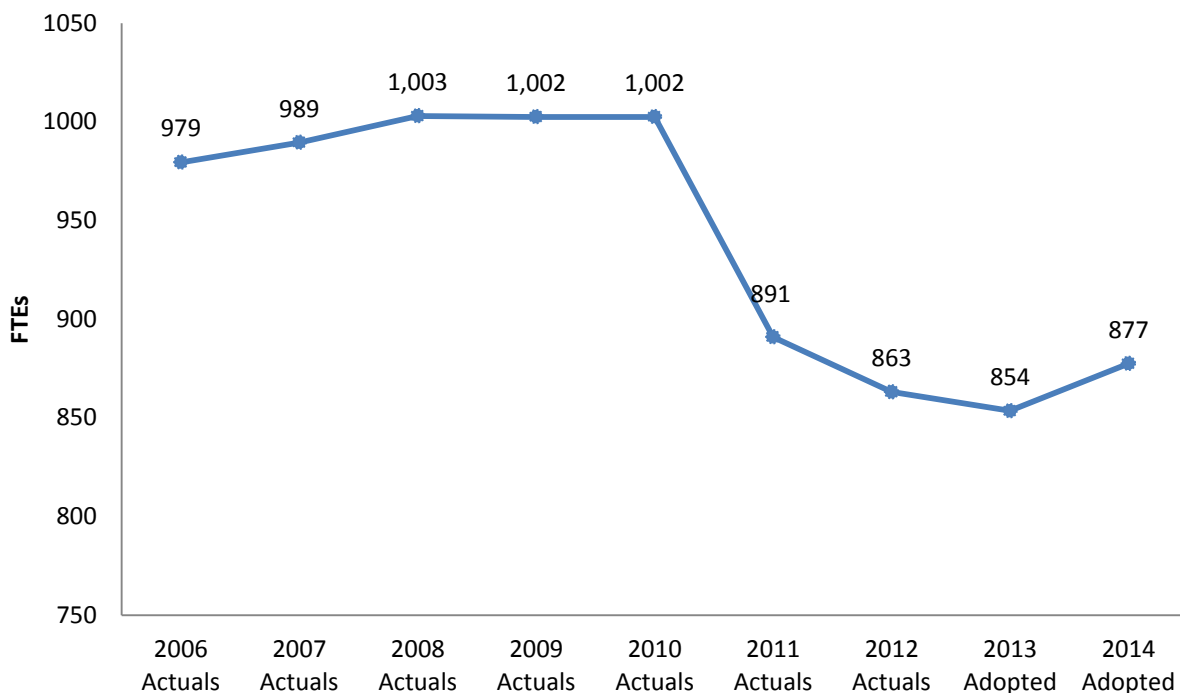
Due to reduced General Fund flows, other funding sources were used to preserve important services. The Associated Recreation Council (ARC), our primary partner in the provision of recreation services,

stepped in to provide funding in each of the past three budget years to help offset General Fund reductions to community center operations.

Staffing History

Figure 13 identifies changes in the Department’s staffing levels since 2006. Staffing levels are expressed in *Full Time Equivalent* (FTEs), and include Parks’ significant use of intermittent and seasonal staffing, which allows close tailoring of staffing to work requirements.

Figure 13: Staffing (FTEs)



It is important to note that more acres and more facilities were added to the system during this time. Significant factors affecting changes in staffing are discussed in more detail under Selected Budget Impacts and Efficiencies, but include:

- Reductions in routine maintenance work and therefore, staff.
- Elimination of certain facility maintenance crews.
- Reductions in the Planning and Development Division.
- Reductions in community center hours.

Selected Budget Impacts and Efficiencies, 2010-2013

In addition to developing partnerships and enhancing our relationships with volunteers, Parks has undertaken a range of measures to deal with recent budget reductions and expansion of the Parks and recreation system. While not exhaustive, the lists below are intended to give a sense of what strategies Parks has implemented over the past several years.

2010 Examples – Budget Impacts and Efficiencies

Maintenance reductions

- Reduced trash and litter pickup: \$277,000
- Decreased community center maintenance: \$73,000
- Reduced winter crews: \$18,000
- Merged nine Parks Resources districts into eight (13 full-time equivalent positions eliminated): \$234,000

Efficiencies

- Extended computer replacement time period: \$32,000
- Intrusion detection system efficiencies: \$58,000
- Transferred recreation program marketing to the Associated Recreation Council: \$71,000
- Closed Atlantic Street Nursery: \$75,000

Staff reductions

- All-staff 10-day furlough: \$300,000
- Decreased internship funding: \$12,000
- Decreased Youth Teen Development grants: \$25,000
- Eliminated two positions at Environmental Learning Centers: \$187,000
- Eliminated one policy position in Superintendent's Office: \$102,000

Closures and service reductions

- Closed five wading pools, with three converted to spray parks: \$30,000
- Closed Carkeek Park Environmental Education Center

2011 Examples – Budget Impacts and Efficiencies

Efficiencies

- Reduced utility bills with conservation efforts on showerheads and toilets at pools and community centers, lighting, and irrigation calibration: \$295,000
- Reduced administrative costs (2 positions eliminated, 4 positions reduced): \$390,000
- Converted three wading pools to more efficient sprayparks: \$143,000
- Reduced athletic field preparation costs: \$314,000
- Reduced drainage and wastewater costs by implementing GPS technology improvements: \$73,000

Staff reductions

- Reduced six specialty garden positions : \$150,000
- Eliminated the third tree-trimming crew (4 positions): \$150,000
- Eliminated two positions in the natural area crew: \$122,000
- Eliminated one position and reduced a second position in the Planning and Development Division positions, delaying upgrades to the Asset Management System: \$310,000
- Eliminated three positions at Environmental Learning Centers: \$191,000
- Eliminated funding for the Apprenticeship Program: \$180,000

Maintenance reductions

- Reduced frequency of mowing, trash pickup, and weeding (28 positions eliminated, 70 positions reduced to less than full time): \$1.7 million
- Decreased facility maintenance for painting, metal fabrication, and fence repair (8 positions eliminated): \$520,000

Closures and service reductions

- Significantly reduced Alki, Ballard, Green Lake, Laurelhurst, and Queen Anne community center drop-in hours to 30 hours per week (19 positions eliminated): \$1.5 million
- Seven wading pools remained closed
- Cut staff and public hours at small craft centers (2 positions reduced): \$67,000
- Eliminated public programs (nature walks, bird, beach, and tideland programs) at Environmental Learning Centers: \$192,000

Fee Increases

- Amy Yee Tennis Center, Athletic Fields, Boat Ramps, Camp Long, Community Meeting Rooms and Gyms, Japanese Garden, Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center, Special Events, Pools, and After-School Teen Programs: \$1.9 million

2012 Examples – Budget Impacts and Efficiencies

Staff reductions

- Eliminated three administrative positions: \$250,000
- Eliminated multiple Planning and Development Division positions: \$737,000
- Eliminated Strategic Advisor: \$84,000

Efficiencies

- Clustered community centers into five geographic teams, streamlining management and coordinating programming across centers—helping to restore some hours at Alki, Ballard, Green Lake, Laurelhurst, and Queen Anne: \$1.23 million
- Reallocated \$9.8 million in savings from the 2008 parks levy to asset preservation

Closures and service reductions

- Replaced 2011 community center model by classifying community centers into three service levels: Level 1 centers open 70 hours a week, Level 2A centers open 45 hours per week, and Level 2B centers open 25 hours per week
- Decreased total community center hours per week from 1,238 in 2011 to 1,115 in 2012

Fee increases

- Increased program fee received from the Associated Recreation Council from 3.25% to 4%: \$44,000
- Instituted a 10% non-Seattle-resident fee at Amy Yee Tennis Center: \$5,000
- Implemented a new paid parking fee at Lake Union Park: \$14,000

2013 Examples – Budget Impacts and Efficiencies

Staff reductions

- Reduced two and a half positions in Planning and Development Division: \$255,000
- Eliminated part time Accountant with work reassigned to existing staff: \$58,000
- Reduced interoffice mail delivery: \$46,000

Fee increases

- Increased swimming pool fees: \$300,000
- Started a new \$4 fee at Volunteer Park Conservatory: \$100,000
- Added a fee for the new Camp Long Challenge Course: \$55,000

Efficiencies

- Reduced irrigation levels in less frequently used parks: \$250,000
- Modified work duties in Human Resources, saving \$50,000
- Transferred roof cleaning duties from Shops to Parks Resources, creating salary savings: \$197,000

Service increases

- Partially restored funding for peak season maintenance activities: \$200,000
- Increased funding at community centers to provide structured programs for teens (dependent on City Council approval): \$176,000
- Maintained increased operating hours at International District and Magnolia community centers: \$50,000
- Improved programming and public safety at downtown parks, particularly Hing Hay Park: \$60,000

Partnerships

Parks is looking at new ways to provide and maintain park, open space and recreation services for our communities through partnerships. Partners can use their community connections and be more flexible than governmental agencies in accomplishing policy goals. For certain projects, partners can be critical in raising capital development funds.

Parks has many dynamic partnerships with non-profits, community groups and individuals. These partnerships efficiently and effectively provide recreational programming and some park maintenance work. Other partners provide critical capital funding and planning assistance.

Existing partnerships bring hundreds of thousands of volunteer support hours to Parks each year, provide improvements to existing parks and facilities, assist in acquiring new park land, and manage facilities—providing public benefits while saving taxpayer dollars. Major partners include:

Associated Recreation Council (ARC)

ARC is the 501c3 partner of Seattle Parks and Recreation, and provides equitable, dynamic and responsive recreation and lifelong learning programs for every Seattle resident. In addition to current programmatic support, ARC raises funds to expand existing programs and create new programming where there is community need, and provides scholarship opportunities. Parks' partnership with ARC and its many member advisory councils has proven to be remarkably resilient over the past 32 years. Through its network of volunteers and staff at work in every neighborhood, ARC provides significant service to the people of Seattle.

ARC Mission Statement

Seattle Parks & Recreation, the Associated Recreation Council and its member Advisory Councils build community through citizen engagement and participation in recreation and lifelong learning programs.

ARC Vision

To provide equitable, dynamic and responsive recreation and lifelong learning programs for every Seattle resident.

ARC Program Examples

RecTech Coalition's Community Technology Centers provide free and low-cost technology access and training to more than 2,500 Seattle youth and adults across nine sites at Delridge, Garfield, Garfield Teen Life, International District, Miller, Rainier, South Park, Southwest Teen Life, and

Yesler Community Centers. RecTech labs function as community resource centers, providing open lab access and diverse technology training, including basic computer and internet skills; job-readiness and résumé building workshops; Internet safety; and basic graphic design for youth, adults, and seniors. RecTech interns completed training in film making, web design, audio production, digital animation, and graphic arts.

ARC's *School-Age Care Program* continues to provide a safe, healthy place for children to learn and grow. Across Seattle, ARC serves over 1,500 children monthly in before- and after-school programs and 1,100 children each week during summer day camp.

Learn to Swim and *Youth Scholarships* offer immediate assistance to eligible families who cannot otherwise access the programs, classes, and activities that are important to their health and well-being. ARC offers youth scholarships in our many programs that include: sports teams; summer day camps; the Camp Long challenge course; environmental learning programs; tennis lessons; swim lessons and more. Two of our most underfunded and critical scholarship programs are *Summer Day Camp* and *Learn to Swim*. City budget cuts have resulted in a depletion of the scholarship budget and ARC works to raise funds for this vital program that last year, served over 3,900 Seattle-area participants.

The Seattle Parks Foundation

The Seattle Parks Foundation (SPF) is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving and expanding Seattle's parks and green spaces. The Foundation cultivates philanthropic giving to support park projects throughout the city and promotes innovative funding for the entire system. They have funded new parks like Lake Union Park, Homer Harris Park, and Counterbalance Park, and supported significant redevelopment of existing parks like the Volunteer Park Conservatory and Seward Park Playground. They also provide technical and fundraising assistance to neighborhood-led green space projects. Over the last twelve years SPF donors have contributed more than \$40 million to a wide range of new and enhanced park, trail, and green space projects, including a \$20 million investment in Lake Union Park.

Seattle Parks Foundation highlights:

Over the last 12 months, donors have given nearly \$2 million, including \$100,000 to complete McGilvra Place Park, \$70,000 to complete 12th Avenue Square Park, \$50,000 for the South Park community to develop a comprehensive green space plan of connected public spaces along the Duwamish, \$90,000 to support Seattle Neighborhood Greenways, \$140,000 to place benches and trees in parks across the city, and nearly \$900,000 to support restoration of the Volunteer Park Conservatory and larger park restoration efforts of the Volunteer Park Trust.

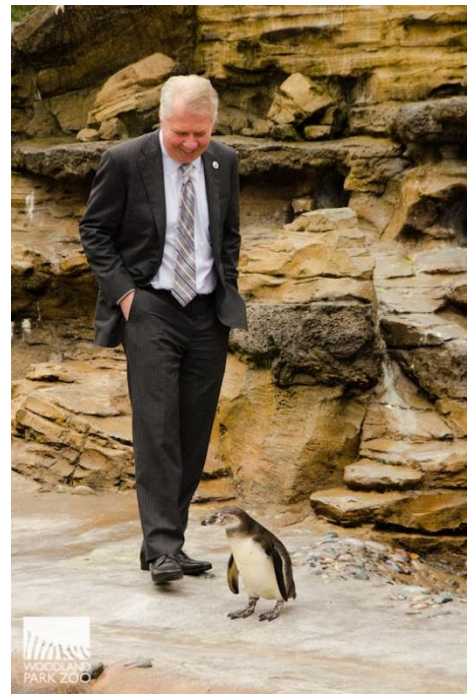
Currently, in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and a group of civic leaders, SPF is advocating for integrated, cross-neighborhood planning and public and private sector investment in green space, open, space, and safe, green pedestrian routes in the fast-developing “Lake to Bay Zone” that includes Belltown, the Denny Triangle and Regrade, Lower Queen Anne, and South Lake Union.

In partnership with the creative team at DNA and the participation of Parks staff, SPF is launching a major communications initiative in the summer of 2013—promoting the value of parklands. This campaign will encourage increased private sector support for parks and will highlight the value of public sector investment in the system. SPF has also funded research that led to the City's "Bands of Green" efforts, increasing access to parkland by connecting neighborhoods and green pedestrian and bike ways. "Sustaining Seattle's Parks," another SPF publication, laid the groundwork for developing a long term plan for truly sustainable funding for the Parks Department. SPF also commissioned polling to test the findings of this study.

The Woodland Park Zoo

Woodland Park Zoo has been a community asset and gathering place for more than 110 years. The City of Seattle owns the buildings and property, and the Woodland Park Zoo Society—a private non-profit—manages the Zoo to world class standards. Zoo operations are financed through a combination of earned income, public support and private philanthropy. By leveraging City ownership to raise capital and operating funds through extensive volunteer efforts, fundraising and private philanthropy, the Zoo operates at a considerable savings to the City.

- The Zoo’s extensive mission includes first-class animal care, animal and habitat conservation, and environmental education. The Zoo works to inspire its more than 1 million annual visitors to take action themselves to save species and habitat. From early learners to senior learners, and on and off grounds, the Zoo's developmental approach to lifelong learning fosters empathy for nature, builds conservation knowledge and skills, and increases people's personal commitment to actions that benefit wildlife and habitats. In 2012, 88,000 students, teachers, and chaperones visited the Zoo in school groups or received a Zoo outreach program. Special programs ensure admission for underserved communities and



Mayor Murray with a tuxedoed penguin

educational opportunities for schools in low-income areas. The many educational elements at the Zoo—classes, public programs, signage, and volunteer activities—serve to illustrate the importance that conservation plays in our mission.

- Since private management began in 2002, the Zoo has also significantly expanded its wildlife conservation programs. Wildlife conservation projects in the Pacific Northwest and 35 countries around the world are working to create a sustainable future for people and wildlife.
- In its long-established partnership with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation, the Zoo shares a commitment connecting people to nature and the outdoors, to sustainable operations and to life-long learning opportunities.

The Seattle Aquarium

The Seattle Aquarium is Washington State’s leading platform for marine conservation education and is the region’s green gathering place for information about Puget Sound and the oceans beyond. Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), it’s the ninth largest aquarium in the U.S. by attendance, and among the top five paid visitor attractions in the Puget Sound region.

Aquarium Mission Statement

The Aquarium’s mission of *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment* is reflected in each of its education, public outreach and community engagement activities, including:

- The Aquarium provides environmental education to school children from Seattle, the region—and even across the country, many of whom may have never experienced the ocean. Since its opening in 1977, the Aquarium has provided marine conservation education to over 1.6 million school children; in 2012 alone, 38,648 K-12 students in the Puget Sound area were served by its educational programming and 425 classes were subsidized with free admission and transportation. Also in 2012, through a pilot program with Google+, students in Georgia, Illinois and Texas were able to participate in a “virtual field trip” to the Aquarium. More such events are in the works for 2013 and beyond.
- The Aquarium extends learning opportunities during summer vacation for school children by offering a broad range of Marine Summer Camps for students in grades K–8, and working to ensure access with a generous scholarship program. The number of these popular camps was increased by 50 percent in 2012; most were at capacity.
- By deploying over 150 trained Beach Naturalist volunteers to 11 Puget Sound beaches during summer low-tide weekends, the Aquarium engages families in hands-on exploration of the marine environment while increasing understanding of how everyday actions affect Puget Sound. In the summer of 2012, Beach Naturalists engaged in 37,566 conversations with beach-goers.
- The Aquarium develops opportunities to engage the community in marine conservation via programs such as the Marine Mammal Monitoring program, which drew nearly 100 volunteers

of all ages and backgrounds to observe and collect data on marine mammals in Puget Sound during the construction of the Aquarium's new Harbor Seal exhibit.

- The Aquarium engages with youth via the innovative "Puget Sound: We Love You" campaign, which aims to increase awareness and conservation of Puget Sound in teens, as well as their families, and leverage the influence of teens to reach out to the public in new ways.
- The Aquarium hosts an annual speaker series, *Sound Conversations*, that allows the public to enter into dialog with local and international experts about critical issues related to marine conservation.
- The Aquarium continues to attract visitors with compelling exhibits that allow the Aquarium to share its vital message of marine conservation. The new Harbor Seal exhibit, which opened June 1, 2013, not only provides a larger home for the animals and a better view than ever before—it also offers enough seating for three classrooms of children to sit while enjoying conservation-themed talks and demonstrations.

Future growth

The Aquarium has begun its expansion planning process to be completed in 2014, planning for the Aquarium's future growth and development that could increase its physical size by over 35%, increase attendance from 800,000 to as much as 1.2 – 1.5 million visitors per year—and realize the institution's vision to become a true regional landmark and world-class aquarium. As a key component of Seattle's Waterfront, the Aquarium is undertaking its expansion planning consistent with the City's plans for the transformation of the Waterfront that will occur after the Seawall is replaced and the Alaskan Way Viaduct is demolished.

Washington Park Arboretum

The Arboretum Foundation, University of Washington Botanic Gardens, and Parks jointly manage the Washington Park Arboretum. Parks owns and maintains the land and most of the buildings and manages the capital projects. The University owns and manages the plant collections and brings botanical expertise to the partnership. It also provides the environmental education programs for preschool and school-age children and, with the help of volunteers, provides guided tours for the public. By agreement with Parks, the University manages the Graham Visitors Center and provides public information at its front desk. The non-profit Arboretum Foundation supports the Arboretum through fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and advocacy.

The collections, which are managed by the University of Washington Botanic Garden are either organized either as display areas (like Azalea Way), taxonomically with plants of the same family grouped together or eco-geographically with plants that grow in the wild together displayed together.

The Foundation provides major funding for the education programs, for the arborists and for garden maintenance. In addition, the Foundation raises capital funds from private donors to match with City of

Seattle levy funds to pay for the installation of the new garden exhibits that were envisioned in the Master Plan adopted in 2001. Foundation volunteers also run the Gift Shop in the Visitors Center, the Pat Calvert Greenhouse which grows plants from cuttings taken in the Arboretum, and the Plant Donations Nursery. Our volunteers also staff the regular plant sales and events that raise funds to support the Arboretum and participate in regular work parties to pull weeds and remove invasive plants. Foundation volunteers also serve as the trained garden guides for the Japanese Garden, which is located in the southwest corner of the Arboretum.

The jointly managed Stewards Program is an innovative new initiative that provides skilled volunteer maintenance and care to the Pacific Connections Garden and Azalea Way. The volunteer stewards work alongside the professional horticultural staff to help maintain these high-profile areas of the Arboretum. Horticultural experts regularly provide skills training and enrichment activities for the dedicated corps of volunteer stewards.

Forterra and the Green Seattle Partnership

The Green Seattle Partnership is a unique public/private partnership between the City of Seattle (Parks and Recreation, Office of Sustainability and Environment, and Public Utilities) and Forterra which enlists support from thousands of community volunteers, who, with the support of businesses and nonprofits, actively work to restore and maintain Seattle's forested parklands. The Partnership's goal is to restore 2,500 forested acres of parkland by the year 2025. Since the program launched in 2005, the Partnership has planted over 134,000 trees and is actively restoring 865 acres of forested. During this time volunteers have demonstrated remarkable support by investing more than 575,000 hours working with the Green Seattle Partnership.

Forterra is the largest conservation and community building organization in the Northwest. Forterra's mission is to act with immediacy to protect, enhance and steward the region's landscapes. As a founding partner, Forterra has raised and invested more than \$3 million in the Green Seattle Partnership as part of a campaign to jump start the program until long-term funding was established. Forterra provides strategic leadership, expertise in programmatic logistics and planning, creates tools to help track and manage volunteers and restoration projects, and elevates the brand and name of the Green Seattle Partnership through communications and media. Forterra has replicated the Partnership model with five additional cities in the Puget Sound region, forming a Green Cities Network. Forterra and its City partners are using an innovative approach to conservation that encourages collaboration across all sectors and balances environmental, social, and economic needs. Combining the efforts of volunteer forest stewards, legions of volunteers pulling ivy and planting trees, with funding from the City and partners will preserve the City's urban forest legacy for future generations.

Central Waterfront

The Central Waterfront project represents one of the most significant civic projects in Seattle’s history. “Waterfront Seattle” is a partnership between the City of Seattle and the entire community to create a dynamic public waterfront. Building on ten years of public planning, Waterfront Seattle is a large-scale design process for a range of improvements to our waterfront, made possible by the demolition of the failing Alaskan Way Viaduct in early 2016 and the replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall starting in 2013. Waterfront Seattle is guided by Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the City’s Departments of Transportation and Planning & Development. The core projects for the Waterfront Seattle program include design and construction of:

- A new Alaskan Way surface street—located under the present-day Viaduct—between King and Pine Street and serving all travel modes
- A city street connection between the waterfront and Belltown, connecting Alaskan Way to Elliott and Western Avenues
- A new promenade between the waterfront piers and the new Alaskan Way surface street
- A direct connection between the Pike Place Market and the Aquarium, called the “Overlook Walk”
- New waterfront public spaces, including a redesign of Pier 62/63 (the “concert pier”) and Waterfront Park (the new Union Street Pier), both owned and operated by Seattle Parks and Recreation
- Improved connections to the waterfront, including east-west pedestrian connections like green streets, hillclimb assists, and pedestrian bridges

The considerable public and private investment and intensive future use of the Central Waterfront’s public spaces require a higher standard of programming, operations, and maintenance compared to most public spaces within the City. Many of the new public spaces will need extensive programming to fully activate the entire Central Waterfront. While the Seattle Department of Transportation will own much of the non-road Central Waterfront public space, much of this space, to the public, will feel and operate like a park.

A new non –profit advocacy and fundraising organization, Friends of Waterfront Seattle, was formed in July 2012. The organization will be an important partner in the future of Waterfront Seattle.

Additional Partners through Contracts

Trust, commitment at the highest level, a shared vision, and strong communication are key elements for partnership success.

Partnerships must connect to Park's mission and enhance park users' enjoyment, and involves careful attention to quality control, policy development, role definition, and risk-sharing. Doing so requires staff capacity, expertise, and time devoted to partnership development. Parks is committed to continuing our rich and dynamic partnerships and to seeking new strategic partnerships throughout the community.

Parks develops, manages, and monitors over 90 contracts with external partners to provide cost-effective and beneficial program services. Parks ensures cost-effective service delivery, measures program outcomes, and collects data to support public programs. Parks manages over \$2 million in concessions business each year, and receives revenue from leases, food vending, moorages, performances, Green Lake Boat Rental, and more.

Developing partnerships with external parties has clear benefits and will continue to play a role in the provision of public programs and services. Key questions for the department include deciding how many partner relationships should be pursued in the future, and what attributes should be considered when deciding to pursue new partners like sponsorships and restaurants. The department's sponsorship and partnership policies will help guide those decisions.

Examples of contracts with partners that **use Parks' facilities and offer publicly-available programs:**

- Bathhouse Theatre (Seattle Public Theatre)
- Seward Park Art Studio (Seward Park Art)
- Pratt Fine Arts Center (Pratt Fine Arts)
- Madrona Dance Studio (Spectrum Dance Center)
- The Seward Park Audubon Center (Audubon Society)
- The Carkeek Park Administration Building (Seattle Audubon Society)
- Seattle Mountaineers
- Cascade Bicycle Club
- Arena Sports
- Seattle Courts Sports
- Outdoors for All
- YMCAs at Magnuson Park and Cascade People's Center
- Seattle Children's Playgarden at Colman Playground

Examples of contracts with **business-oriented** partners that lease Parks' facilities:

- Green Lake Boat Rental Facility, operated by G2 Good Sports
- Marination Ma Kai at the Seacrest Park Boathouse

Volunteers

Parks could not provide all that we do without the help of the thousands of volunteers and the hundreds of thousands of hours that they provide. In 2012, 39,835 volunteers worked 426,052 hours. Volunteers cannot work in a vacuum: on average, it takes one hour of staff time to support four hours of volunteer time, translating into the hours of 51 full time employees.

Table 1: 2010 - 2012 Volunteer Program Detail

Maintenance					Recreation				
Mayor's Clean and Green					Community Centers				
2010	7,740	hours	1,408	volunteers	2010	105,617	hours	6,931	volunteers
2011	1,100	hours	N/A	volunteers	2011	153,256	hours	3,103	volunteers
2012	No Program				2012	165,664	hours	6,548	volunteers
Green Seattle Partnership					Teen Programs (Community Learning Centers, Youth Employment Service, Student Teen Employment Preparation)				
2010	96,095	hours	25,242	volunteers	2010	22,026	hours	232	volunteers
2011	83,665	hours	20,320	volunteers	2011	41,132	hours	1,679	volunteers
2012	77,534	hours	18,907	volunteers	2012	31,438	hours	675	volunteers
Center City Parks					Aquatics				
2010	5,875	hours	1,030	volunteers	2010	23,654	hours	669	volunteers
2011	8,200	hours	1,021	volunteers	2011	22,720	hours	774	volunteers
2012	(Included in Parks Resources Districts)				2012	23,208	hours	1,667	volunteers
Ballfields					Specialized Programs and Lifelong Recreation				
2012	26,322	hours	35	volunteers	2010	16,159	hours	N/A	volunteers
Parks Resources Districts					Golf				
2010	27,094	hours	9,786	volunteers	2010	14,729	hours	N/A	volunteers
2011	48,736	hours	4,665	volunteers	2011	5,443	hours	132	volunteers
2012	60,363	hours	10,611	volunteers	2012	5,263	hours	121	volunteers
Environmental Education Centers					Langston Hughes, Seattle Youth Violence Initiative, COD, Late Night				
2010	10,522	hours	1,032	volunteers	2010	Facility Closed			
2011	3,331	hours	100*	volunteers	2011	1,354	hours	57	volunteers
2012	9,028	hours	54	volunteers	2012	7,258	hours	442	volunteers

*Estimate

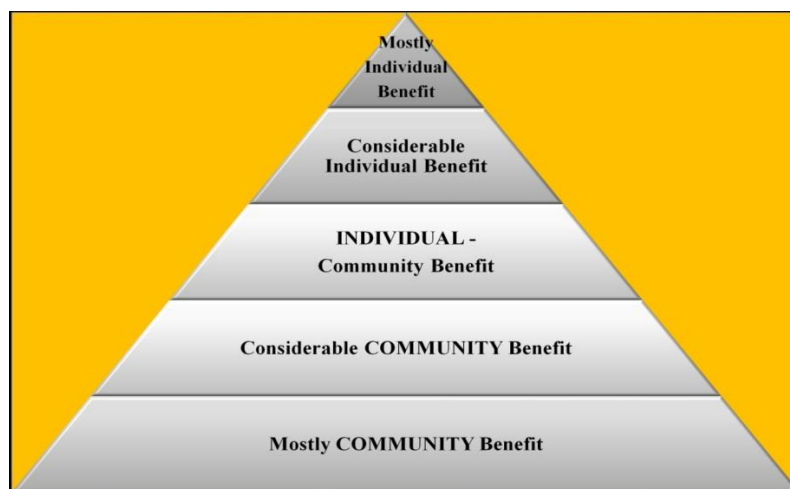
Basic Services

Identifying basic services is an important component of understanding our Parks system and planning for a sustainable future. Knowing what services are basic to Parks' vision and mission informs decisions regarding Parks' budget and fees. For the Legacy Plan, identification of basic services is one piece of the puzzle that, when combined with the survey results, demographic and recreation trend information, data analysis and the snapshot descriptions of our programs and services, will lead to recommendations for a sustainable future. In order to identify Seattle Parks and Recreation's basic services, staff sorted programs based on the amount of community versus individual benefit provided by each. Parks used three ways to gauge internal definitions of Parks' basic services: an all-staff online survey, a staff focus group, and a session of the Expanded Executive Team—consisting of approximately 50 division directors, managers and strategic advisors.

The position of a program on the community versus individual benefit continuum does not define the overall value of the program; it is simply one element in the assessment that, when combined with other elements, informs decision making.

Basic Services Continuum

Below is a pyramid divided into five levels of benefit ranging from programs that provide mostly community benefit to those that provide mostly individual benefit. Below the pyramid is a description of what each level in the pyramid means.



Mostly Individual Benefit

This level includes activities and facilities that almost exclusively provide benefit to an individual or a single group. These typically exclude general community participation.

Considerable Individual Benefit

This level represents specialized services generally for specific groups that only marginally benefit the community as a whole. Programs and services may be priced to recover full program costs.

INDIVIDUAL - Community Benefit

This level promotes individual physical and mental well-being and some level of recreation skill development that is about equal to the general benefit of the community by addressing social needs, enhancing quality of life for residents, providing safety and possibly increasing property values.

Considerable COMMUNITY Benefit

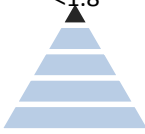




This level includes those programs, facilities and services that promote individual physical and mental well-being and provide recreation skill development, but also provide some level of benefit to the community in general.

Mostly COMMUNITY Benefit

This level includes those programs, facilities and services that provide benefits to the COMMUNITY as whole. To account for this community benefit, these services are usually City funded, free, or have a minimal fee. These programs, facilities and services address social needs, enhance quality of life for residents, provide safety and can increase property values.

After staff members read the descriptions above, they were asked to rank 30 different Parks programs. The all-staff online survey, the staff focus group, and the Expanded Executive Team session each resulted in unique groupings of Parks programs into the five benefit categories. Then, to aggregate the three sets of data, Parks counted the instances of each service in each category across all three outreach methods, and then weighted the resulting scores.²⁵ This technique results in equal weighting for each survey method: the all-staff online survey, the focus group, and the Executive Team session.²⁶ Please see the results in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Basic Services Exercise Results

Benefit Category	Service	Weighted Score
Mostly individual benefit, 1.0 - <1.8 	Golf*	1.0
	Golf - Adult*	1.0
	Moorages	1.0
	Food concessions	1.3
	Rentals	1.3
	Tennis	1.7
Considerable individual benefit, 1.8 - <2.6 	Conservatory	2.3
	Small craft centers	2.3
	Golf - Youth*	2.5
Individual - community benefit, 2.6 - <3.4 	Athletics - Adult	2.7
	Seattle Aquarium and Woodland Park Zoo*	2.8
	Outdoor Stadium*	3.0
	Lifelong recreation	3.3
	Performing arts	3.3
	Specialty Gardens	3.3
Considerable community benefit, 3.4 - <4.2 	Outdoor Pools*	3.5
	Athletics - Youth	3.7
	Camp Long	3.7
	Day camps	3.7
	Environmental Education Centers	3.7
	Indoor pools	3.7
	Specialized Sports	3.7
	Conservation Corps	4.0
	Marketing*	4.0
	Outdoor Opportunity - O2*	4.0
	Specialized recreation	4.0
	Mostly community benefit, 4.2 - 5.0 	Community learning centers
Picnic shelters*		4.5
Community Centers		4.7
Park Landscaping		4.7
Park Rangers		4.7
Teen programs		4.7
Wading Pools and Spray Parks		4.7
Land restoration and urban forestry		5.0
Parks and Open Space*		5.0
Routine maintenance and cleaning		5.0
Summer lifeguarded beaches		5.0
Trails and restoration		5.0

*Not included in all three outreach methods

As identified by Parks staff, programs and services related to open space and parks and those for youth and teens are deemed to have the greatest overall benefit for the community as a whole. Consistent with this analysis, fees for these programs/services are either non-existent (parks and open space) or low in comparison to adult fees (teen programs at community centers v. adult programs). Parks charges rates comparable to the market for indoor tennis and adult golf, and the newly instituted fee at the Volunteer Park Conservatory reflects its categorization as having considerable individual benefit.

Survey of Seattle Residents

Overview

Parks used a two-pronged approach to gather information from the people of Seattle as a one element in the development of the Plan. The desired goals were to have a statistically valid survey component, to reach a broad spectrum of users, and to provide a variety of engagement methods. This survey is important to developing proposals for the Legacy Plan, as it provides some insight into what is important to current residents about parks and recreation. To achieve these goals, Parks used the following two methods:

- Statistically valid phone survey (Phone Survey): 400 respondents
- Other Survey Tools (OST): 3,057 respondents, including:
 - Online Survey: 2,745 respondents
 - Historically Underrepresented Communities Survey: 115 respondents
 - Intercept Survey (stopping park users in parks): 90 respondents
 - Teen Survey: 107 respondents

Parks designed the survey to gather representative feedback from a mix of customers, stakeholders and Seattle residents about their use of Seattle Parks and Recreation programs and facilities. Questions were designed to reveal priorities for parks, recreation, open space activities, improvements, and funding. Each of the separate survey distributions contained the same questions. Parks hired Pyramid Communications and DHM Research, two non-partisan and independent firms specializing in opinion and public policy research, to administer and analyze the survey.

Components of Statistically Valid Survey

Statistically valid phone survey: In early September 2012, DHM and Pyramid randomly surveyed 400 Seattleites age 18 and older by telephone. They used a mixed-sample methodology, which included Random Digital Dialing (RDD) and cell phone samples. DHM and Pyramid also set age, gender and geographic quotas to match Seattle’s demographic profile as reported in the 2010 U.S. Census. The margin of error for a sample size of 400 falls between +/-2.9% and +/-4.9% at the 95% confidence level for each question in the survey, depending on the number of respondents for each question. Results may add up to 100% ±1% due to rounding errors.

Components of Other Survey Tools

Online Survey: Between August 31 and September 23, 2012, DHM hosted the online survey on a secure server 24 hours a day, seven days a week. DHM programmed the survey for both online and smart devices. Parks also made hard copies available.

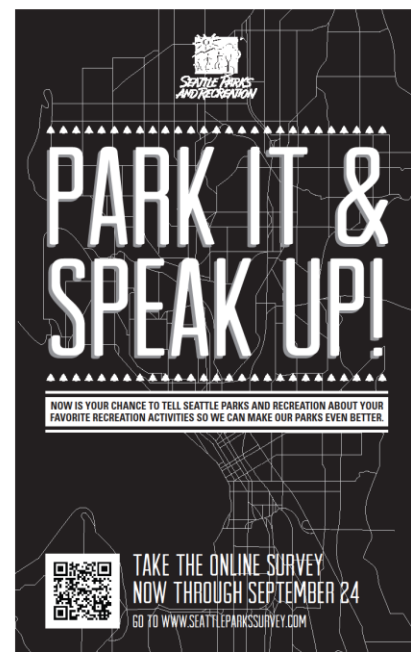
Distribution and promotion included:

- Fliers and signs throughout city
- QR codes on fliers and signs for instant smart phone access
- Email and media blast with a link to the survey website
- Survey URL on the Parks home page

Intercept Survey: Parks volunteers and interns administered the intercept survey in various parks and facilities during the month of September.

Historically Underrepresented Communities Survey: Parks partnered with DON to reach and survey historically underrepresented communities. DON administered the survey for Parks through their Public Outreach and Engagement Liaisons (POELs). Individual POELs translated the questionnaire into nine languages: Somali, Tagalog, Amharic, Affaan-Oromo, Tigrinya, Khmer, Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese. They then administered the survey to 90 members of historically underrepresented communities. Due to the time requirements of translation, POEL training, and the intensive community outreach process, the Historically Underrepresented Communities Survey deadline was extended through October 2012.

Teen Survey: Parks staff and volunteers administered the Teen Survey at various Parks facilities, programs, and special events. Parks eventually collected surveys from 107 teens younger than 18.



Survey Highlights

Statistically valid phone survey:

- **92%** agree parks meet their household needs.
- **77%** visit a neighborhood or community park at least monthly.
- Respondents rated **cleaning comfort stations, picking up litter and garbage, maintaining the health of urban forests, and maintaining trails** as their most-important maintenance services.
- Respondents rated **large community parks, small neighborhood parks, walking and running trails, playgrounds, and having lifeguards at public beaches** as their most-important recreation services.
- The most active park and recreation users are people with **children younger than 18** in the household, and **people ages 35-54**.
- A diverse mix of Seattleites—**32%** in total—use community centers monthly or more. **28%** of people 55 and older use community centers monthly or more, compared to **43%** of those 35-54 and **26%** of those 18-34. Community center use was consistent across all income levels and races. The most frequent users were African Americans— **59%** use community centers at least monthly.
- While **56%** of all respondents chose “exercise and fitness” as their top reason to value parks and recreation, **62%** of people of color chose “socializing with family and neighbors “ as their top reason to value parks and recreation.

Other Survey Tools (OST):

- Compared to statistically valid survey respondents, respondents from the Historically Underrepresented Communities (HUCs) survey **reported less frequent use** of parks (60% use monthly or more), public beaches (24% use monthly or more), athletic fields (18% use monthly or more), playgrounds (45% use monthly or more), and natural areas (20% use monthly or more), yet were **just as likely** to report using community centers (32% use monthly or more).
- **57%** of HUC respondents said parks were very or somewhat safe, compared to 89% of statistically valid survey respondents.
- Teen respondents reported **frequent use of athletic fields** (40% use weekly or more) and **indoor pools** (27% use weekly or more).
- Park user respondents would spend \$61 out of \$100 on **maintenance**—both routine (\$40) and major (\$21).
- Online and park user respondents were much **more likely** than statistically valid survey respondents to participate in nearly all parks and recreation-related activities.

Survey Summary

This section contains a summary of the survey. Comparison information is broken out into two main reporting categories: the Phone Survey and Other Survey Tools. Phone Survey results are statistically valid and accurately represent Seattle’s demographics. Other Survey Tools consist of responses from the Historically Underrepresented Communities (HUC) Survey, the Intercept Survey, the Online Survey, and the Teen Survey.

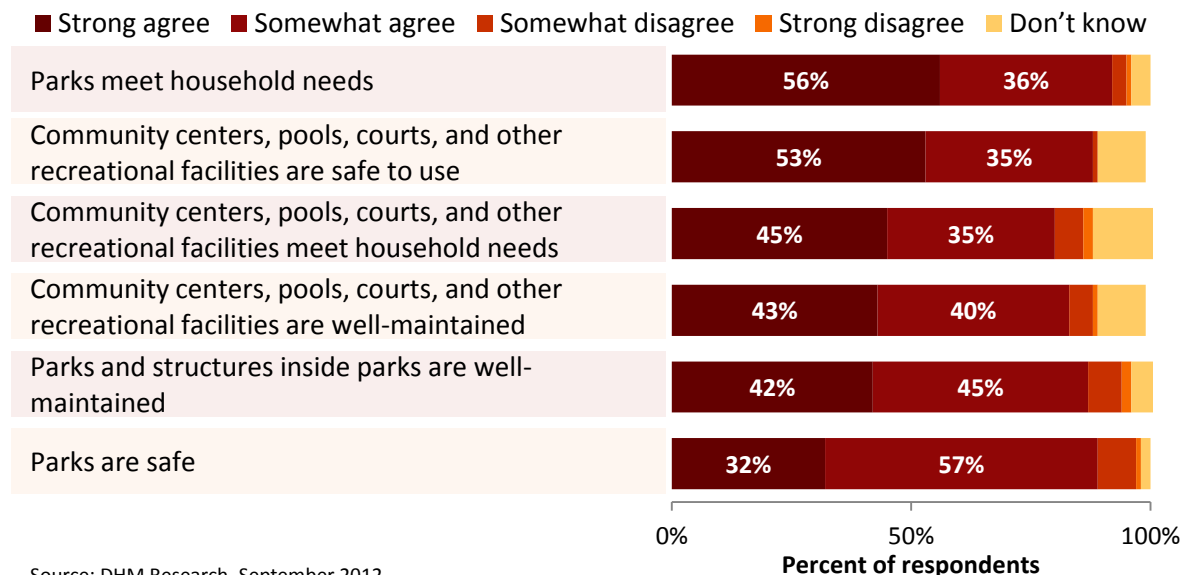
Overall Satisfaction and Safety

Phone Survey: People are highly satisfied with services provided by Seattle Parks and Recreation.

- 85% said they are satisfied with Seattle Parks and Recreation programs, and almost five in 10 said they are very satisfied.
- People with children use services most frequently, and are the most satisfied.
- 92% said that parks and recreational facilities meet the needs of their households, 87% viewed parks and structures inside parks as well-maintained, and 89% viewed parks and facilities as safe.
- 90% of men and 88% of women agree that parks and facilities are safe.

These high overall satisfaction rates and high “meet the needs of my household” numbers—shown in **Figure 14**—reflect the quality of work done by Parks staff keeping parks and open spaces clean and beautiful, and facilities providing programs that neighbors want to participate in.

Figure 14: Overall Satisfaction and Safety [Phone Survey]



Source: DHM Research, September 2012

Service Provider Use

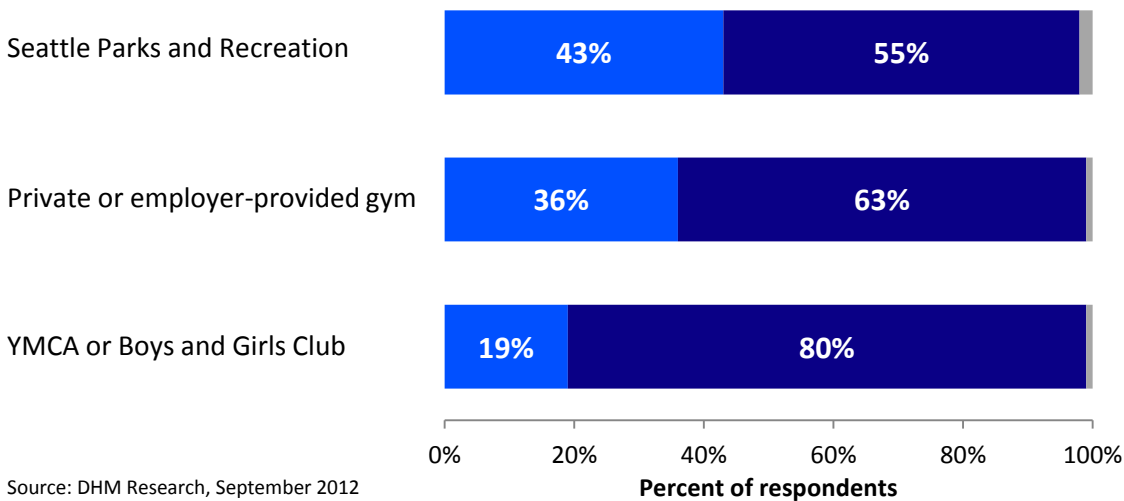
Phone Survey: More respondents use Seattle Parks and Recreation services than use private gyms, the YMCA, or Boys & Girls Clubs—especially households with children. See **Figure 15** below.

- 43% have participated in Seattle Parks and Recreation services and programs, 36% have used private gyms, and 19% have used YMCA or Boys & Girls Clubs.
- Two-thirds (66%) of people with kids younger than 18 have participated in Seattle Parks and Recreation programs in the last year.
- Groups most likely to self-report as users of Seattle Parks:
 - Ages 35-54: 60% reported annual use
 - People with children under 18: 66% reported annual use
 - People with incomes over \$100,000: 54% reported annual use

Other Survey Tools: Like telephone respondents, respondents who participated in the other survey tools were most likely to participate in activities offered by Seattle Parks and Recreation, and did so at a higher rate than telephone respondents (58% vs. 43%). Intercept, historically underrepresented, and teen respondents were more likely to participate in Seattle Parks and Recreation activities than in those provided by other organizations.

Figure 15: Service Provider Use [Phone Survey]

■ Yes, participated ■ No, did not participate ■ Don't know



How Often People Use Parks and Recreation Services

Phone Survey: The most popular form of recreation is visiting parks and natural areas. See **Figure 16**.

- 77% of respondents visit a neighborhood or community park at least monthly. For Seattle’s population, this translates into at least 475,000 monthly visits and 5.7 million annual visits to neighborhood or community parks. More than 50% visit a natural area, playground, or beach monthly or more.
- The most active visitors are people with children younger than 18 in the household, people ages 35-54, and residents with incomes over \$50,000.
- Between 32% and 38% use recreational facilities and/or programs monthly or more. This translates into more than 200,000 monthly visits and at least 2.8 million visits annually.
- Off-leash areas are visited by 11% of residents weekly or more, 9% monthly, and 4% yearly. Three-quarters said they rarely or never visit these areas. Off-leash area use is similar across demographic groups (age, gender, income, etc).
- Picnic shelters are used by 9% of residents weekly or more; 20% use them monthly, and 27% use them yearly. 44% said they use them rarely or never. People with young children are more likely to use picnic shelters monthly or more than those without children younger than 18 in the household (40% vs. 24%).
- Outdoor tennis courts are not widely used. Only 2% of residents say they use them weekly, 8% use them monthly, and 11% use them yearly. Another 77% said they use courts rarely or never. Findings are similar by demographic group.

Other Survey Tools: OST respondents were most likely to have walked or jogged in or along a park or to have visited a small neighborhood or community park on a daily/weekly basis (66% and 59%, respectively)—similar to the Phone Survey results. These preferences mostly held for intercept, historically underrepresented, and teen respondents, with the exception that historically underrepresented respondents were more likely to have walked or jogged in or along a park yearly, rarely, or never (44%), rather than on a daily/weekly basis (34%). See **Figure 17**.

For the most part, historically underrepresented respondents were less likely to participate in activities on a daily/weekly basis than other respondents. 37% of historically underrepresented respondents visited a small neighborhood or community park weekly or more, compared to 59% of total OST respondents.

About one-quarter of OST respondents said they use a swimming pool semi-frequently: 9% daily or weekly, 15% monthly, 10% yearly, and 66% rarely or never. Findings are similar by demographic groups; however, it is worth noting that people with children younger than 18 are more likely to use swimming pools monthly or more than people without them (42% vs. 17%).

Figure 16: Frequency of Participation [Phone Survey]

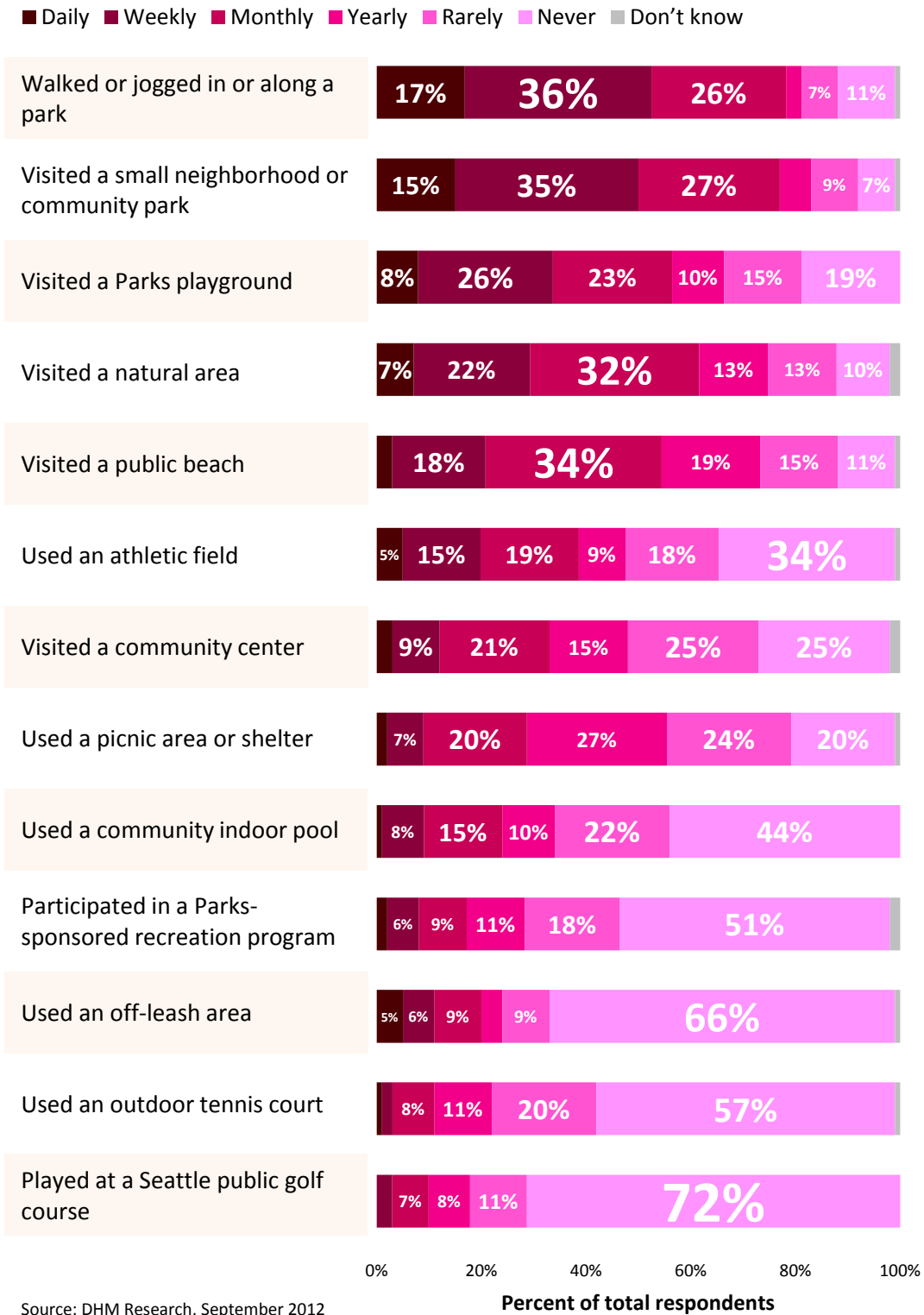
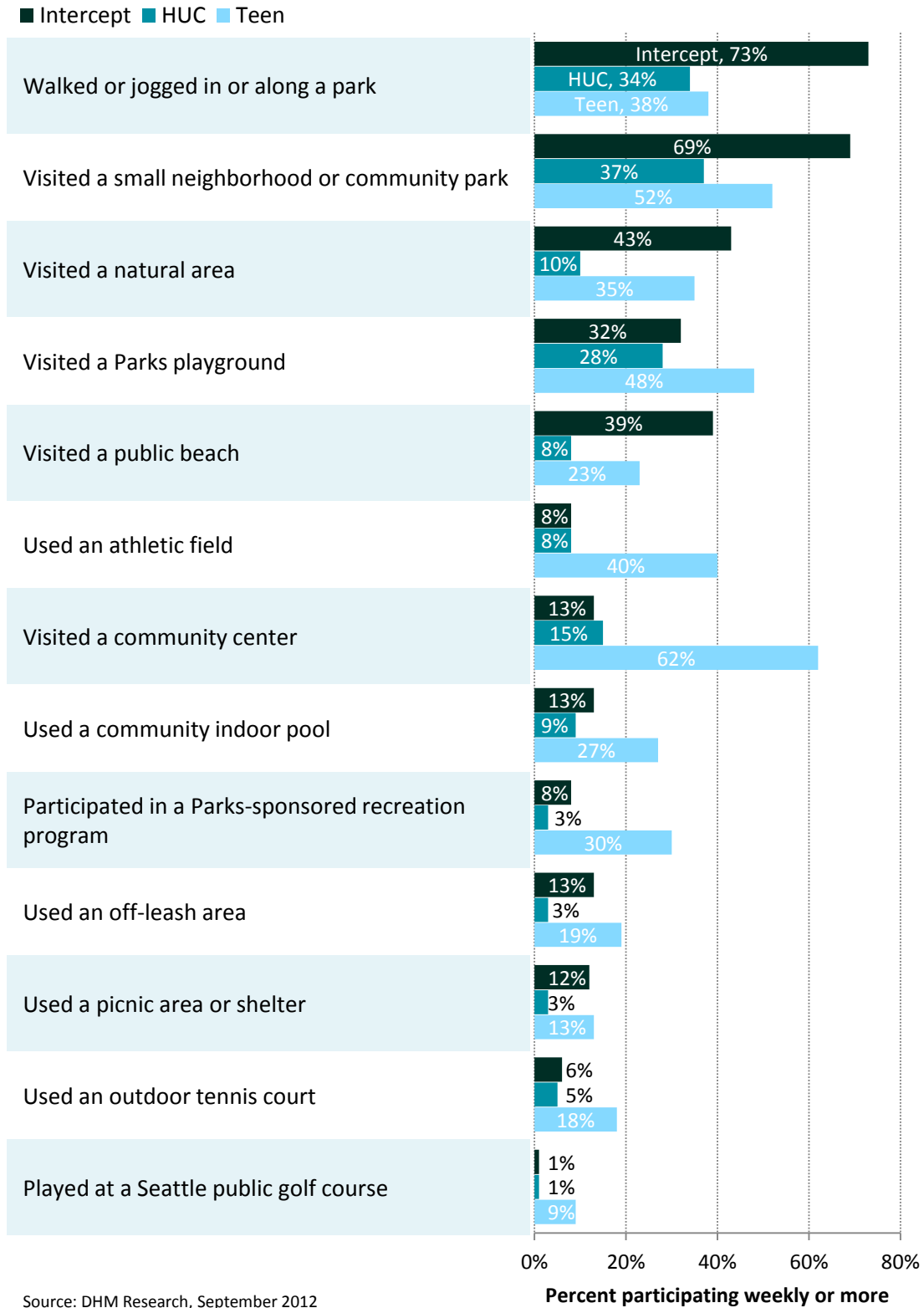


Figure 17: Percent Participating Weekly or More [Intercept Survey, Historically Underrepresented Communities Survey, and Teen Survey]



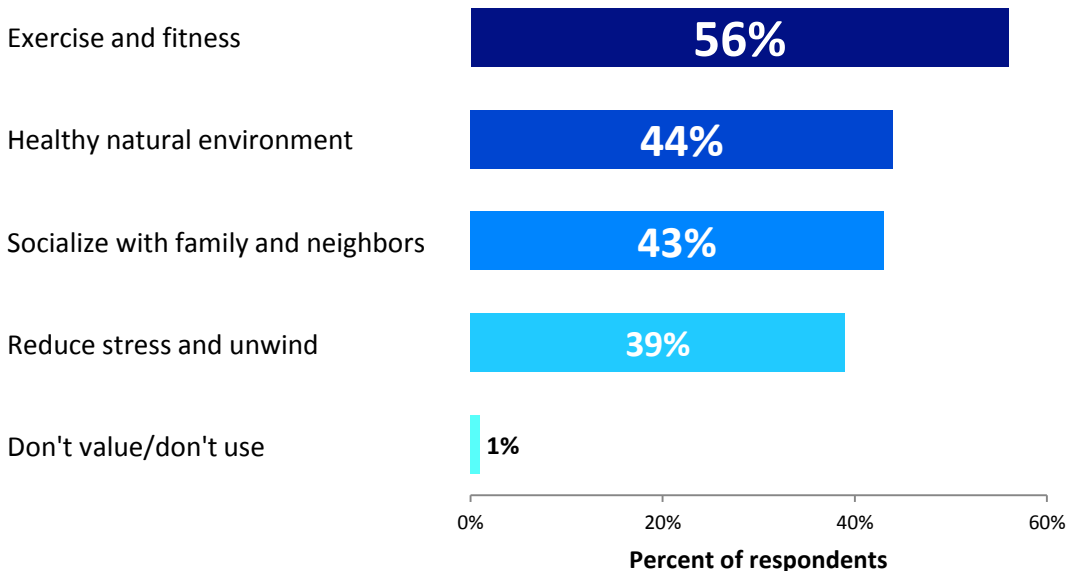
Top Two Reasons for Valuing Parks and Recreation Activities

Phone Survey: Residents link parks and recreation to overall physical, social, environmental, and mental health. See **Figure 18** below.

- A majority (56%) ranked exercise and fitness as one of the top two reasons they value parks and recreation.
- The second choice for residents is divided almost evenly between healthy natural environment, socializing and reducing stress (each was ranked as one of the top two by approximately 40% of residents).
- Minority residents (people of color) did not choose exercise and fitness as the top reason to value Parks and Recreation activities, and 62% instead chose socializing with family and neighbors as the top reason.

Other Survey Tools: As in the Phone Survey, OST respondents were most likely to choose exercise and fitness (63%) and a healthy natural environment (59%) as the two main reasons they value parks and recreation. However, 66% of intercept respondents chose a healthy natural environment as their top reason, while 41% of historically underrepresented respondents and 35% of teen respondents chose socializing with family and neighbors as their second-highest reason.

Figure 18: Top Two Reasons for Valuing Parks and Recreation Activities [Phone Survey]



Source: DHM Research, September 2012

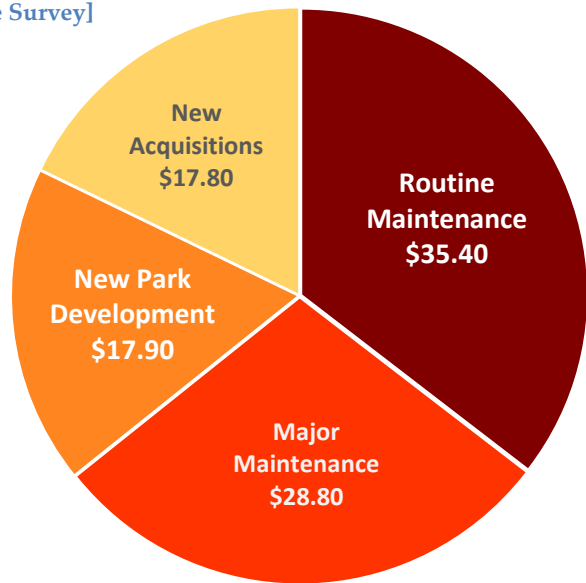
Multiple response question, percentages may not add up to 100%.

Service Priorities

Phone Survey: Respondents were asked to allocate, based on their priorities, a hypothetical \$100 across four broad service areas. The results show routine maintenance activities and improvements to existing services and facilities are most important to residents. The Parks Division performs routine maintenance, and major maintenance priorities are defined through the Planning and Development Division’s Asset Management Plan. See **Figure 19** and **Figure 20** below.

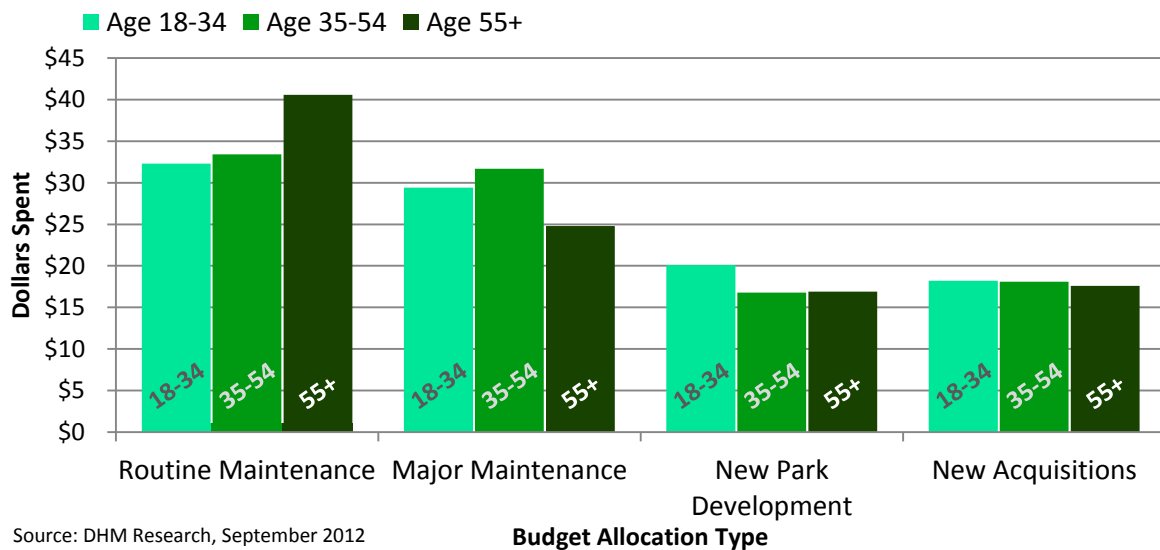
- Residents would spend \$35.40 on routine maintenance, \$28.80 on major maintenance, \$17.90 on new park development, and \$17.80 on new acquisitions.
- Respondents older than 55 were much more likely to fund routine maintenance, and spent \$40.60 of their \$100 budget doing so.

Figure 19: Service Priorities [Phone Survey]



Source: DHM Research, September

Figure 20: Service Priorities by Age [Phone Survey]

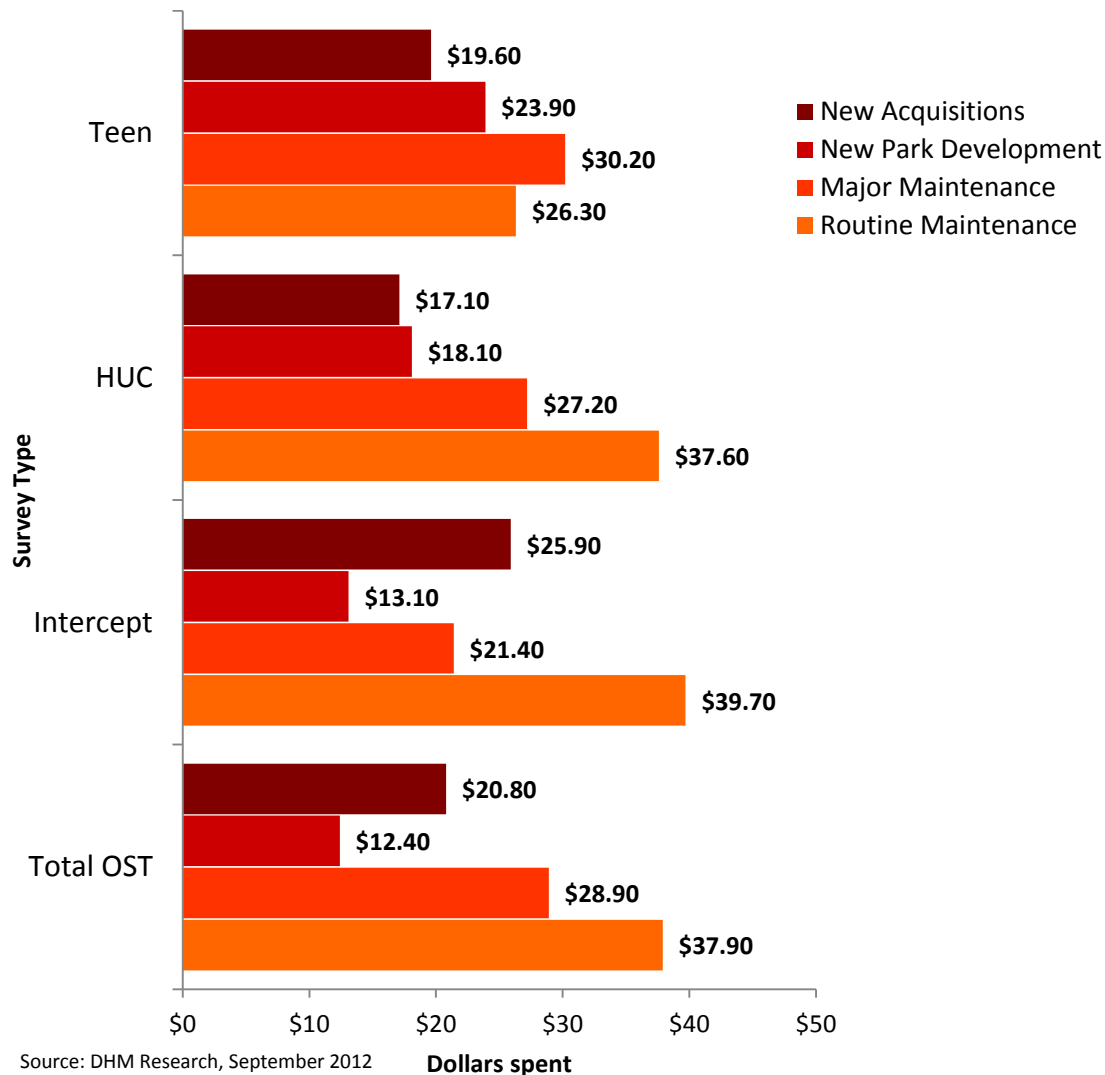


Source: DHM Research, September 2012

Other Survey Tools: Similar to Phone Survey respondents, OST participants prioritized funding for maintenance and improvements to existing parks and facilities, albeit with notable differences among intercept, historically underrepresented, and teen respondents. See **Figure 21** below.

- Intercept respondents allocated the second-largest amount for acquiring new park land and open space (\$25.90), over \$5 more than all other surveyed groups.
- Teen respondents were the only group to allocate a plurality of funds to any option other than routine maintenance, dedicating \$30.20 to major maintenance.
- Teen respondents also allocated over \$5 more than any other surveyed group for building new parks (\$23.90).

Figure 21: Service Priorities by Other Survey Tools Survey Type [OST Surveys Only]



Importance of Recreation Services

Phone Survey: Respondents rated recreation services from 1-10, with 10 being most important. All recreation services received above average importance ratings from residents with certain services having higher levels of importance. Scores of 8, 9, or 10 were classified as ‘important.’ More than two-thirds rated large community parks, small neighborhood parks, walking/running trails, and playgrounds as important. Please see **Figure 22** below.

Other Survey Tools: Like the telephone respondents, OST respondents provided the highest mean score and highest importance rating (a score of 4 or 5, compared to 8, 9, or 10 for the phone survey) for large community parks at 4.7 and 88%, respectively. HUC respondents had notably high ratings of having lifeguards at public beaches (87%). Interestingly, Teen Survey respondents gave a lower top importance rating (score of 4 or 5) for recreation programs for teens (63%) than all other OST respondents.

Figure 22: Importance of Recreation Services [Phone Survey]

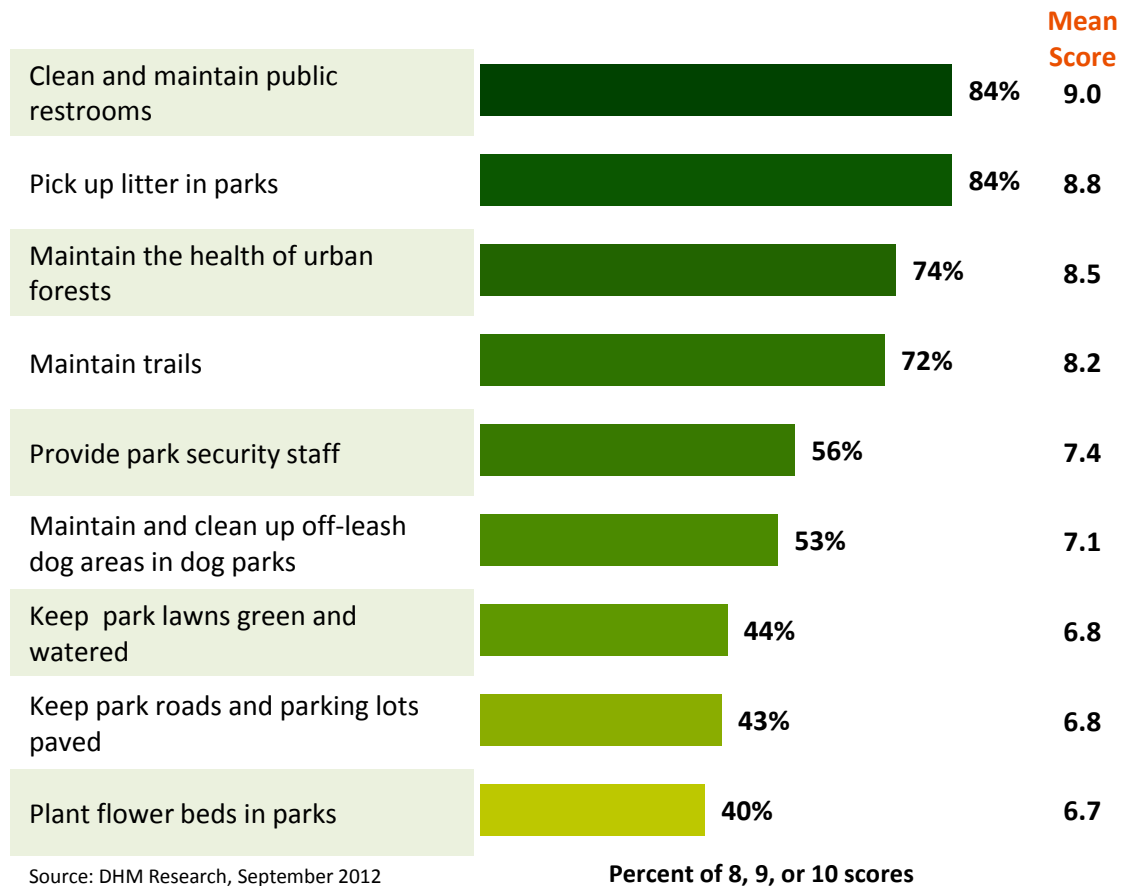


Importance of Maintenance Services

Phone Survey: Respondents rated maintenance activities from 1-10, with 10 being most important. All maintenance services received above average importance ratings from residents and certain services had higher levels of importance. Scores of 8, 9, or 10 were classified as ‘important.’ Three-quarters or more give top priority to cleaning and maintaining public restrooms, maintaining the health of urban forests, maintaining trails, and picking up litter in parks. Please see **Figure 23**.

Other Survey Tools: Intercept, teen, online, and historically underrepresented respondents rated maintenance activities on a different scale of 1-5, with 5 being most important. Similar to Phone Survey respondents, OST participants gave cleaning and maintaining public restrooms the highest mean score and the highest top importance rating (4.6 score, and 90% of respondents, respectively). Notably, historically underrepresented respondents gave higher top importance ratings for each service than all other surveyed groups, with the sole exception of cleaning and maintaining public restrooms, which also had high support from other OST respondents (90% of both groups’ scores were either a 4 or 5).

Figure 23: Importance of Maintenance Services [Phone Survey]



Information Sources

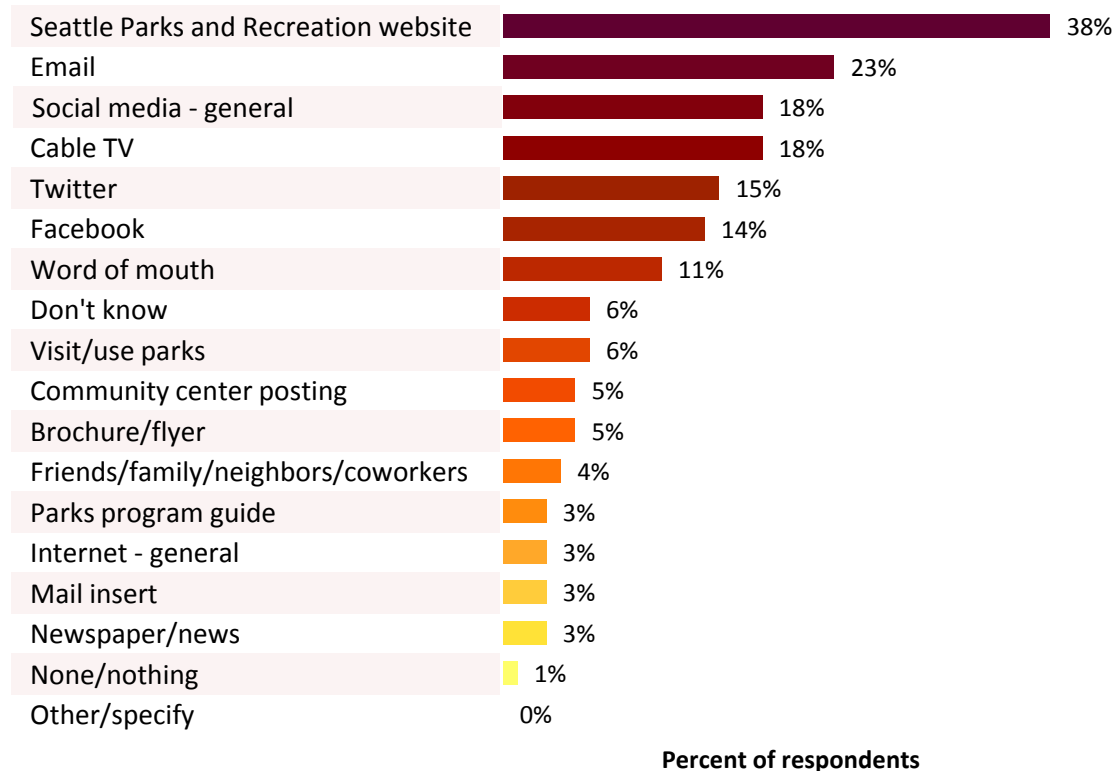
Phone Survey: People go online to find information about parks and recreation activities in their communities. See **Figure 24** below.

- Respondents overwhelmingly reported using online sources: 38% use the Seattle Parks and Recreation website, 23% use email, and 18% use social media in general—in addition to 15% who use Twitter and 14% who use Facebook.

Other Survey Tools: There were significant differences between telephone participants and OST respondents when it came to preferred sources of information:

- Intercept and teen respondents most preferred word of mouth (67% and 61%, respectively) as an informational source, while historically underrepresented community respondents most preferred friends/family/neighbors/coworkers for information (67%).
- Teen participants were least likely to use the Seattle Parks and Recreation Website (12%), but most likely to use both Facebook (37%) and Twitter (19%).

Figure 24: Information Sources about Seattle Parks and Recreation [Phone Survey]



Source: DHM Research, September 2012

Multiple response question, percentages will not add up to 100%.

Trends

This chapter compiles trends in recreation and park management.

Regional Recreation Trends

Parks gathered data from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office to study regional recreation trends.

2012 Washington State RCO General Population Survey

Washington State's Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) conducts a recreation trends survey every five years for its State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning (SCORP) document, used to maintain eligibility for federal grant funds. RCO completed its latest survey in 2012, and a full report will be released in 2013.

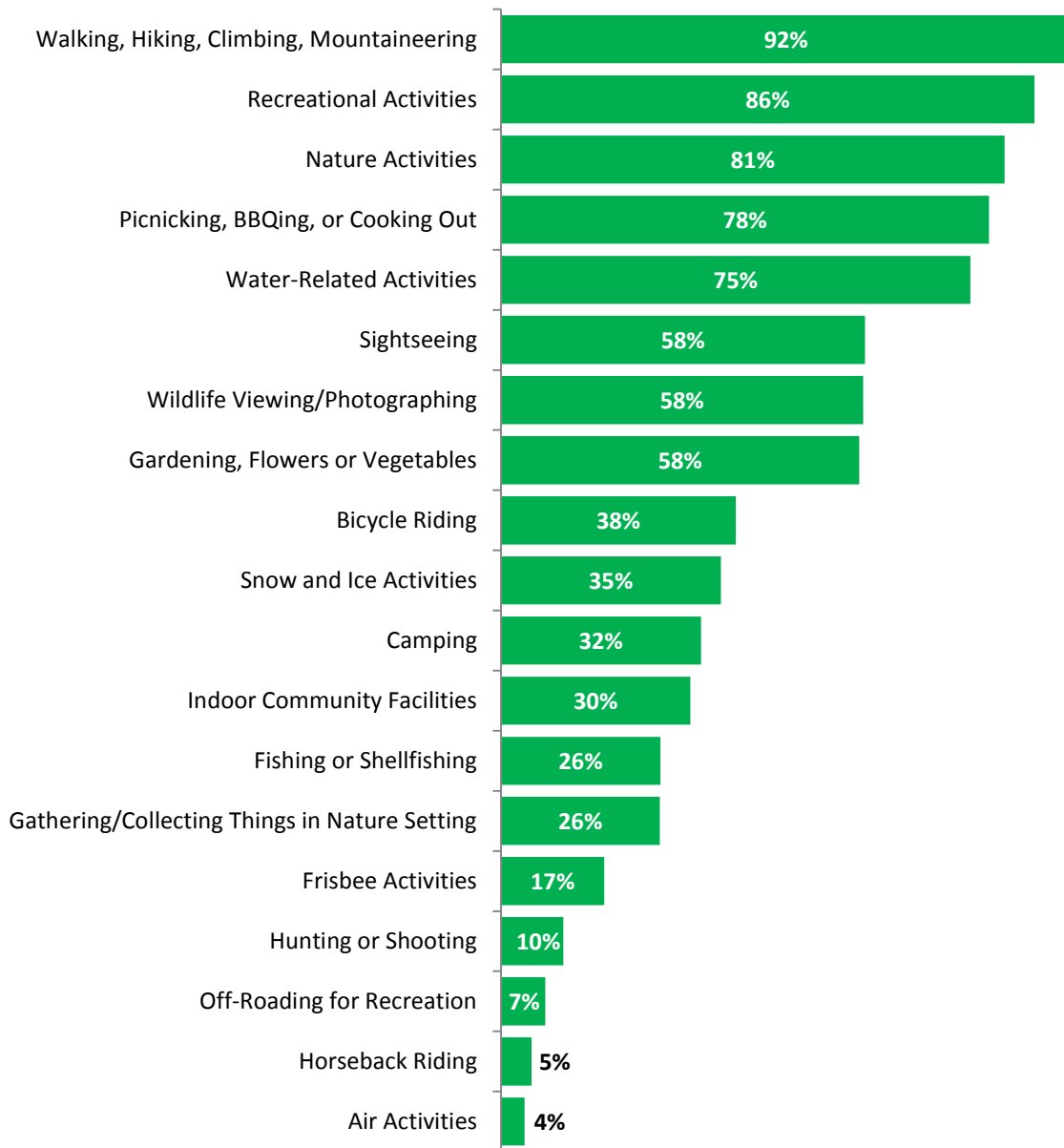
The RCO breaks down the results by region, age, income, gender, and census-defined ethnicity. Only the regional analysis is currently available. Correlations between the other variables and statewide recreation trends are not available at this time, but will be released over the course of 2013.

RCO 2012 Regional Analysis

The RCO operationally defines 10 Washington State regions by using state-defined tourism regions. The statewide sample contained about 310 interviewees per region. To compile statewide results, the RCO weighted each region's results to reflect its share of Washington's population.

RCO geographically defines the Seattle-King region as King County. Responsive Management conducted the survey for RCO and interviewed 308 King County residents age 18 and older. **Figure 25** shows the Seattle-King region's cumulative participation rates (the percentage that participated in the activity in the past year) for all of the types of activities included in the 2012 RCO survey.²⁷

Figure 25: Top Activities in Seattle-King Region, 2012

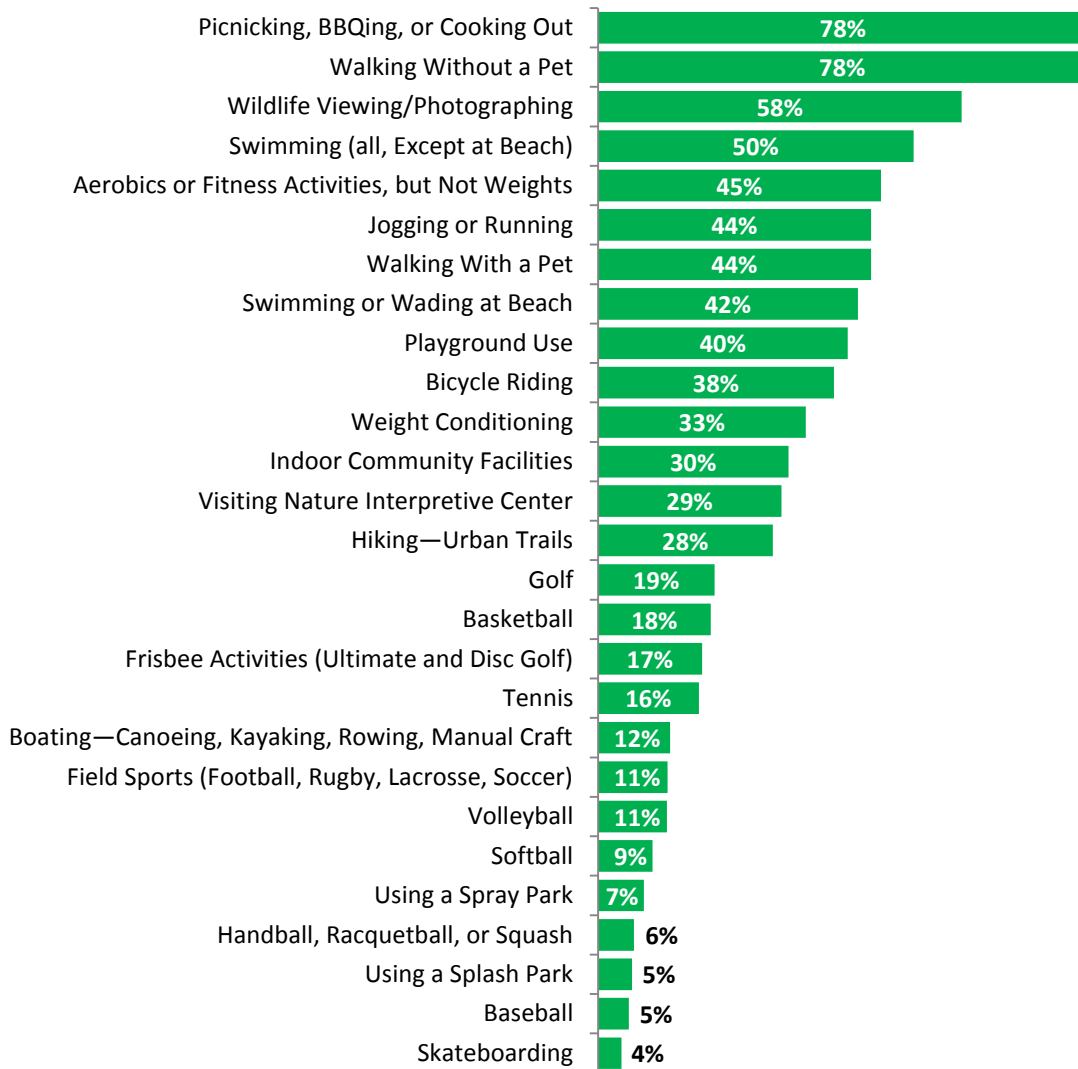


Consistent with Legacy Plan Survey results, walking is the top activity in the RCO survey. Recreational Activities, which includes team sports, exercise activities, playground use, and other physical activities, is second overall in participation. Nature Activities, like bird and wildlife watching, is third. Although this data affirms the importance of parks for active use, it also shows the extent and popularity of passive park use—a majority of respondents reported participating in nature activities, picnics, sightseeing, wildlife photography, or gardening.

Total Participation in Relevant Activities

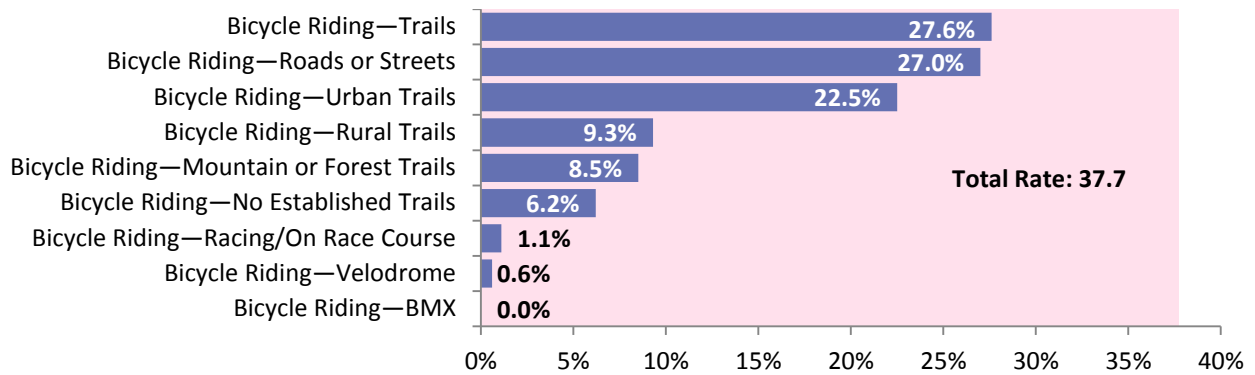
Participation rates for activities that Parks offers or provides space for are shown in **Figure 26**. Due to the breadth of activities covered by the RCO survey, If Parks or another provider does not offer a certain service or activity, or space to engage in that activity, it is not included in this analysis.²⁸

Figure 26: Relevant Activities in Seattle-King Region, 2012



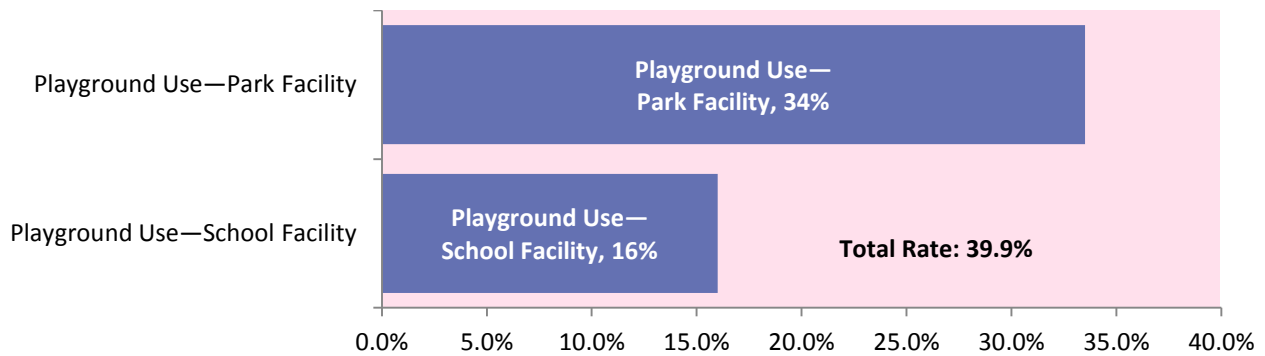
About 43% of Seattle-King residents jog or run, according to RCO’s data. Running on hard surfaces is most popular, but jogging and running on trails is a close second. The average person who went jogging or running did so on 72.9 days a year.

Figure 27: Percent Bicycle Riding, 2012



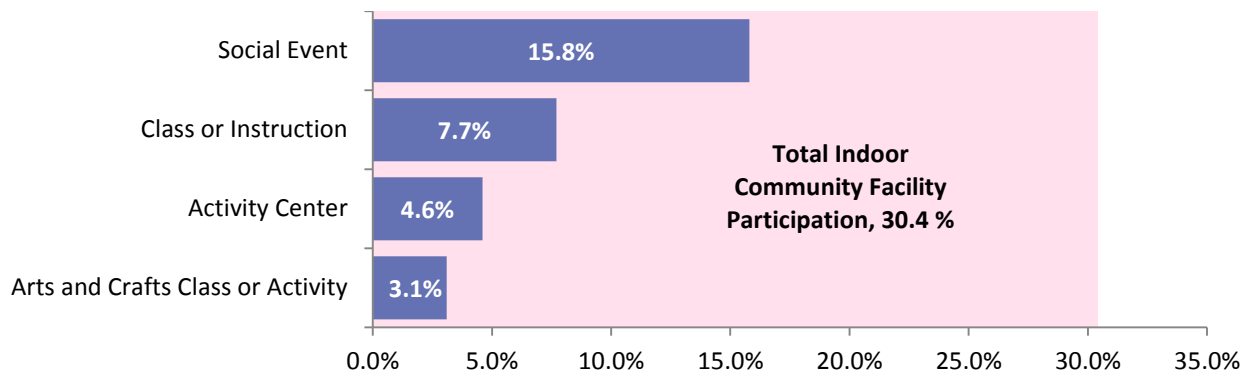
More than 35% ride a bicycle in some fashion, with the majority about equally split between riding on trails and riding on roads or streets. Seattle-King residents ride urban trails much more than rural trails, meaning they often stay in the city to ride. Bicyclists are not just commuters, and bicycling is a popular recreation activity in its own right. The average person who rode a bicycle did so on 29.1 days a year.

Figure 28: Percent Using Playgrounds in Seattle-King Region, 2012



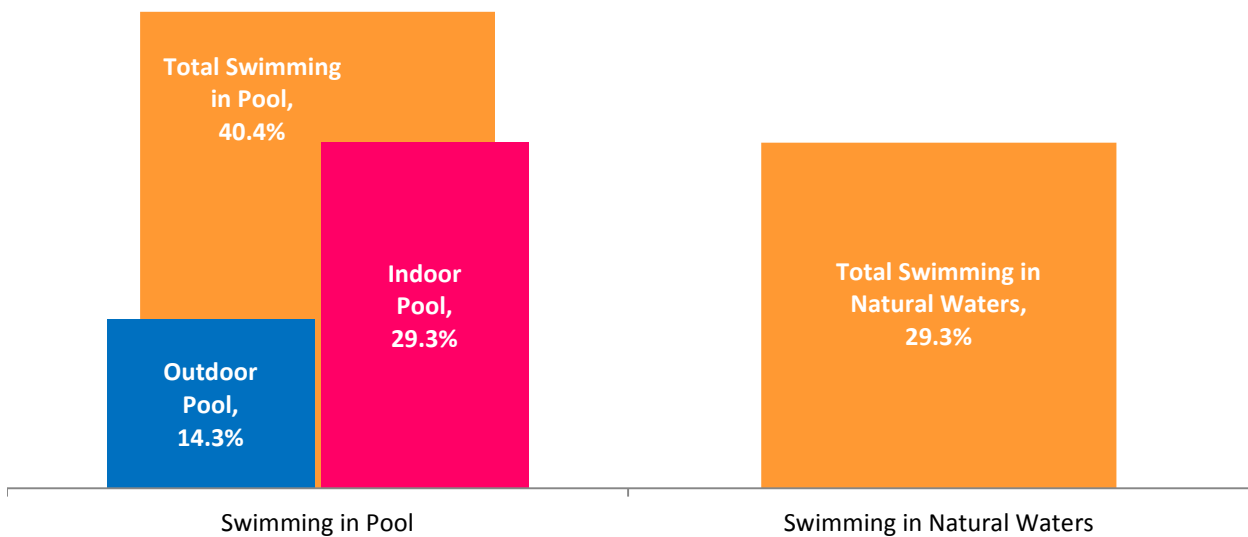
Nearly 40% reported using playgrounds. More than double the amount of people reported using park playgrounds as reported using school playgrounds. The average person who used a playground did so on 37.4 days a year.

Figure 29: Percent Using Indoor Community Facilities in Seattle-King Region, 2012



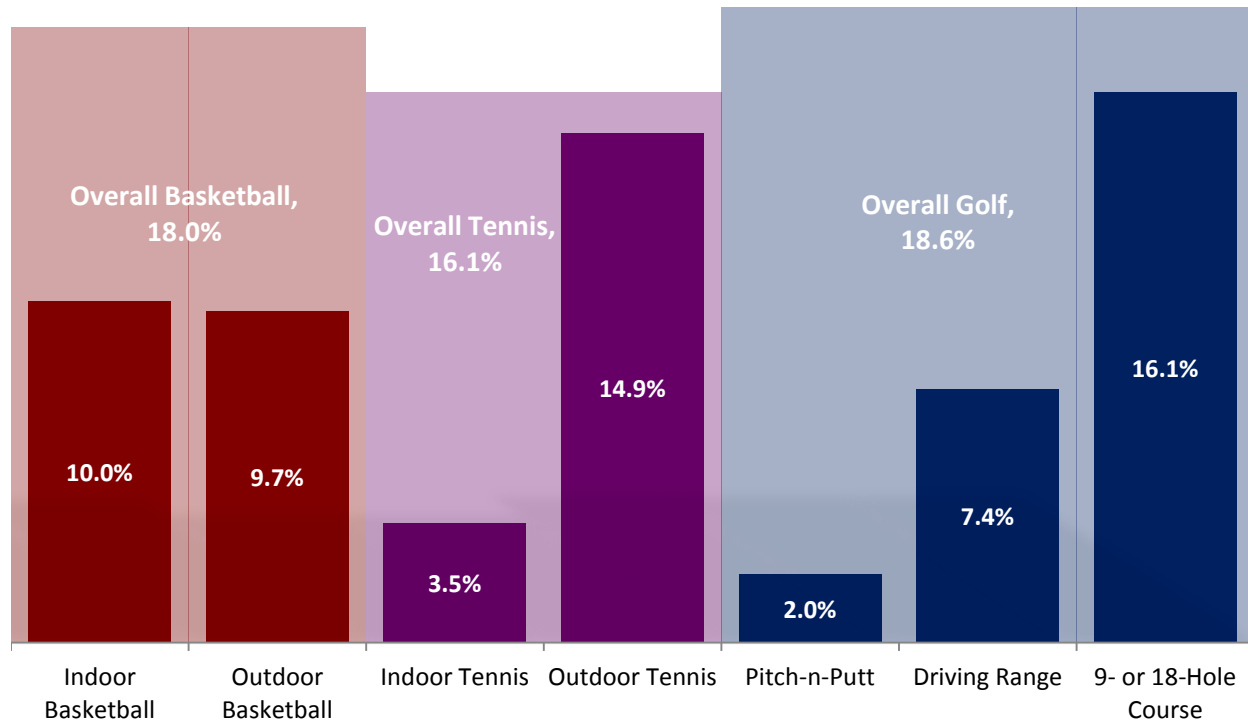
Nearly a third of King County respondents reported participating in activities at community centers in the past year. Attending social events at community centers is most popular, with about 16% of King County respondents participating. Generic classes are second-most popular, with about 8% participating. Less than 5% participate both in Activity Center activities and in arts and crafts classes. The average person who participated in indoor community facility activities did so during 37.1 days a year.

Figure 30: Swimming Participation, 2012



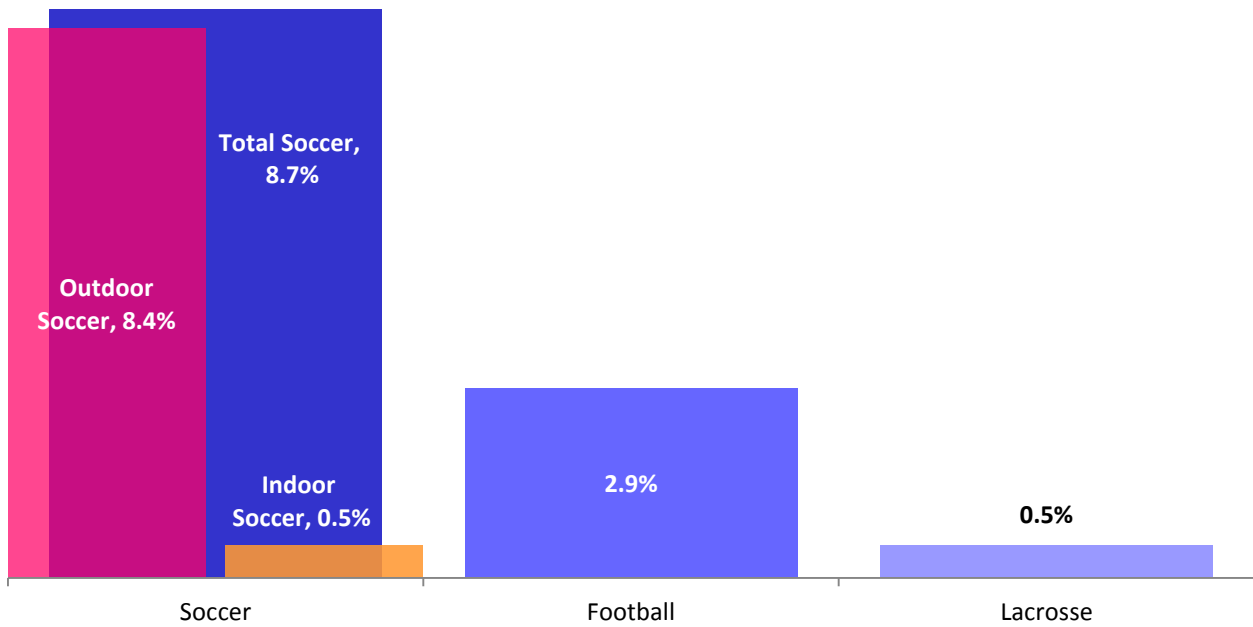
Swimming activities are popular—about 50% of Seattle-King respondents reported swimming in general. More people swim in pools than in natural waters; almost 30%, however, reported swimming in the region’s abundant natural waters. About 15% of respondents swim at indoor pools, and about 30% swim at outdoor pools. Due to overlap between indoor- and outdoor-pool users, total pool participation stands at about 40%. The average person who swam in a pool did so on 22.6 days a year, while the average person who swam in natural waters did so on 12.8 days a year.

Figure 31: Basketball, Tennis, and Golf Participation, 2012



Basketball, tennis, and golf are the three most participated-in competitive sports in King County. Golf has the highest participation rate, at 18.6%, and about 16% reported playing a 9- or 18-hole course. In the past year, tennis players reported spending an average of 23.1 days playing tennis, and basketball participants reported spending an average of 18.2 days playing basketball. Golfers spent an average of 12.2 days playing. Many people golf infrequently; fewer people play basketball and tennis but do so more regularly.

Figure 32: Selected Field Sport Participation (Soccer, Football, Lacrosse), 2012



The RCO grouped soccer, football, lacrosse, and rugby into a general category called field sports, with an overall participation rate of 11.1%—as shown in **Figure 32**.²⁹

More people play soccer than play all the other field sports combined, with an 8.7% participation rate. Although indoor soccer facilities are more visible than ever before, the vast majority of soccer players play outdoors.

Trend: nationally, soccer participation has held steady from 2007-2011, while tackle football has seen an average annual decrease of 3.8% each year over the same period. Lacrosse participation increased dramatically over time, percentage-wise, in national SFIA surveys; yet it continues to reach a relatively narrow segment of the population, shown by its .5% participation rate in King County.

In Seattle, field demand has continued to increase despite the decline in traditional sports participation, partly to due to increased demand for emerging sports like lacrosse, disc ultimate (Frisbee), and kickball.

Other Notable RCO Results (King County Only):

Figure 33: Modes of Transportation to Recreation Areas, 2012

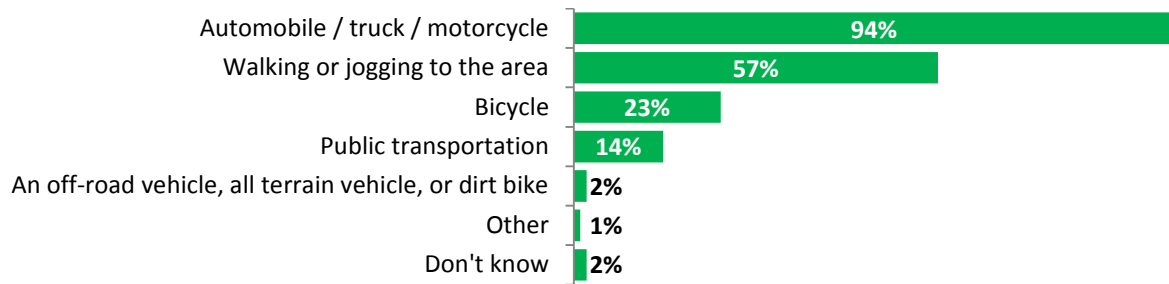


Figure 34: Percent of Respondents Who Visited a Municipal, State, or National Park, 2012

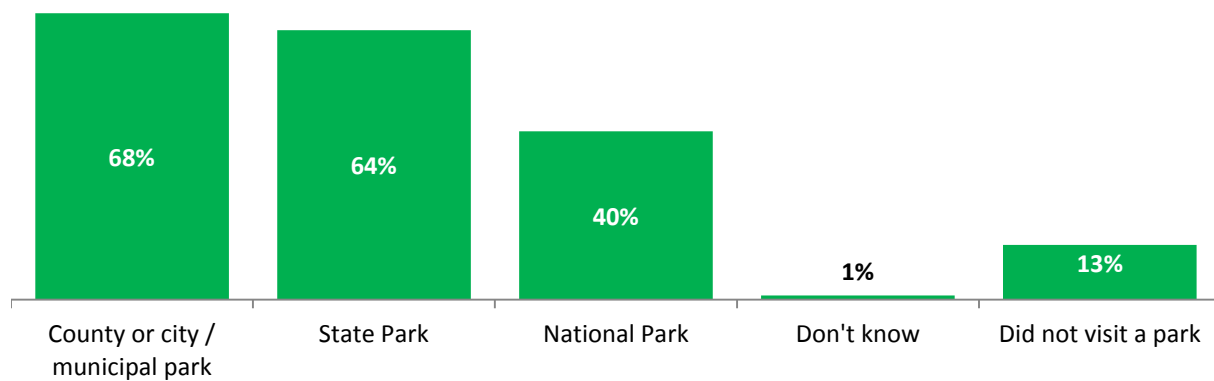


Figure 35: League Participation, 2012³⁰

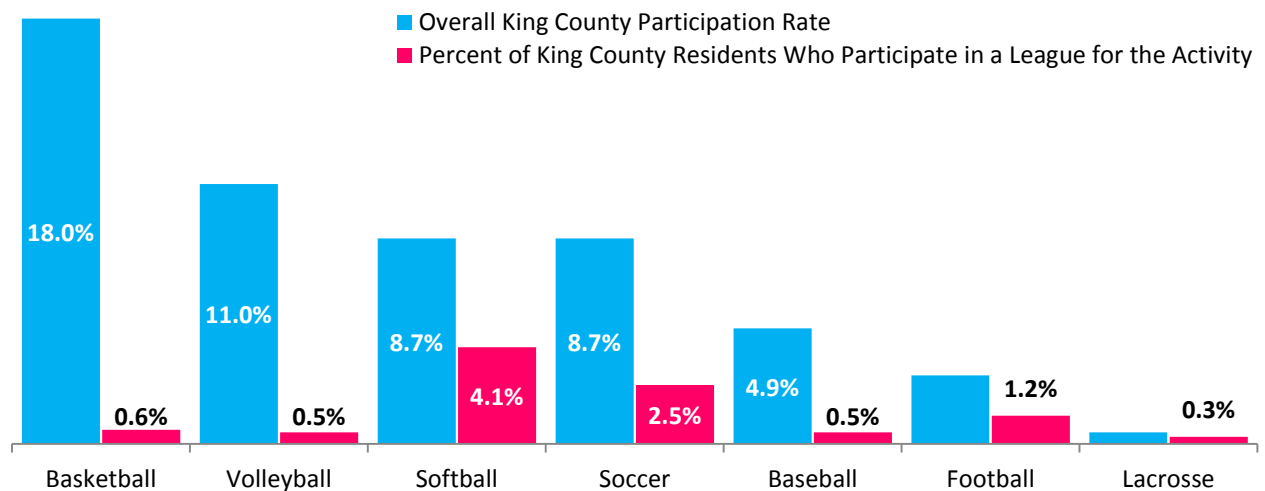
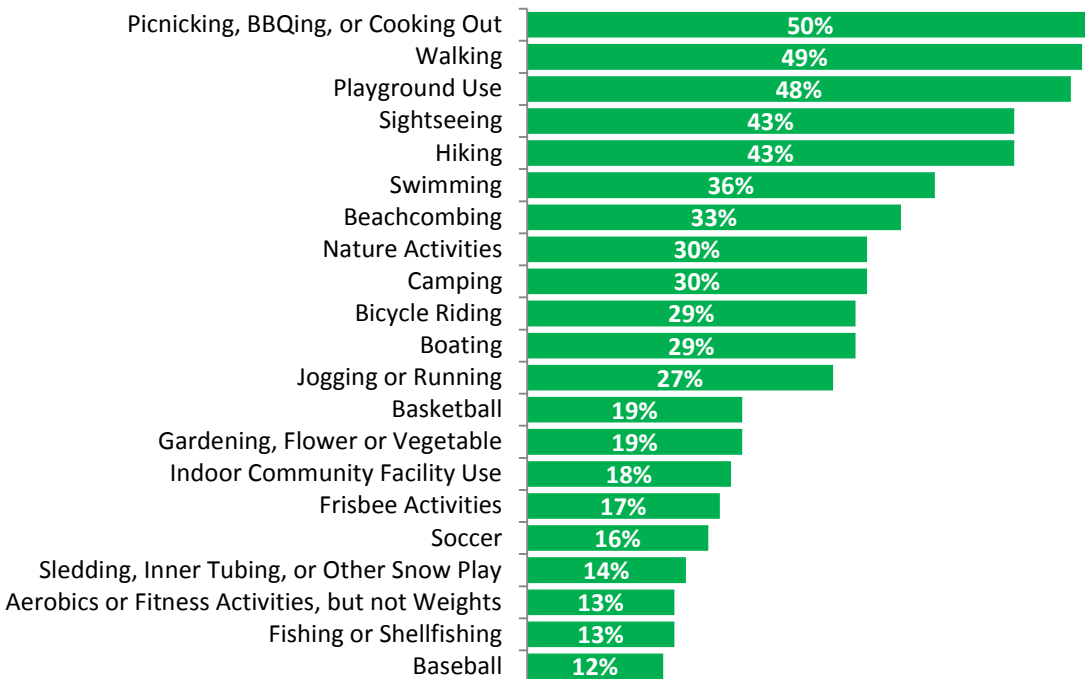


Figure 36: Percent of Residents with Children whose Children Participate in the Activity (Top 20 Activities), 2012



According to the Legacy Plan Survey, families with children (according to the 2010 Census, 19% of Seattle households have children) are more likely than those without children to do the following at least weekly:

- Visit a Parks playground (60% do so at least weekly, compared to 22% of those without children)
- Visit a small neighborhood or community park (73% do so at least weekly, compared to 41% of those without children)

Families with children are more likely than those without children to do the following at least monthly:

- Visit a natural area (78% do so, compared to 54% of those without children)
- Visit a public beach (66% do so, compared to 50% of those without children)
- Use an athletic field (72% do so, compared to 24% of those without children)
- Visit a community center (50% do so, compared to 26% of those without children)
- Participate in a Parks-sponsored program (34% do so, compared to 10% of those without children)
- Use a picnic area or shelter (40% do so, compared to 24% of those without children)
- Use a community indoor pool (42% do so, compared to 17% of those without children)

National Recreation Trends

This section contains data from the Sports and Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA)³¹ 2012 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Participation Report.³² The SFIA produces this annual national survey—measuring participation across 119 sports, recreation and fitness activities—to provide marketing research for sporting goods manufacturers. The report shows current participation rates, as well as participation rates over the past five years, allowing for a trend analysis.³³ Trend information, when combined with basic service categorization, survey results, demographic information and operational data analysis, helps inform Parks' sustainable future.

Highlights (based on the 2012 SFIA Topline Report):

- Fitness sports (individual, non-competitive, and vigorous activities) are the most popular.
- Sports with largest increases from 2007-2011 are lacrosse, running, yoga, elliptical training, ice hockey, ultimate Frisbee, and beach volleyball.
- Classic team sports like slow pitch softball, football, and baseball showed at least a 3% annual drop in participation during the past five years.
- The most popular team sports in terms of overall participation are basketball, soccer, and baseball.
- People with higher incomes, especially those making more than \$75,000 a year, tend to participate more in recreation.
- Community center activities constitute an important recreation option, especially for youth and the elderly.
- Swimming is as popular as other fitness sports.

2012 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Report

Figure 37 shows the average annual participation 2007-2011 for recreation activities that are relevant to Parks policies and programs. To whittle down 119 sports and activities to those most important to the future of Parks, we included only activities that frequently occur on or around city property. Most non-active recreation choices were discarded, except for those that people often engage in from Parks property, like fishing. Activities that people cannot enjoy in Seattle were also removed, like camping, as were activities that people engage in at home. Elliptical training and weight machines are exceptions, due both to their popularity and the fact that Parks has gym facilities in some community centers.

The SFIA data show that fitness sports like walking, running, bicycling, and using weight machines are the most popular activities nationally.³⁴ Golf and basketball are the most popular traditional, competitive sports, each with more than 25 million annual participants. This also makes basketball the most popular team sport. Activities like racquetball, disc ultimate (Frisbee), track and field, volleyball, ice

hockey, and lacrosse have relatively low national participation levels—especially lacrosse, which the SFIA estimates 1,501,000 people played at least once in 2011. Out of the 119 activities SFIA measured in 2011, lacrosse ranked 111th in total participation—right behind triathlons and before windsurfing. During the past five years, however, total lacrosse participation has grown by more than 40%.

Figure 37: Relevant Activity Participation

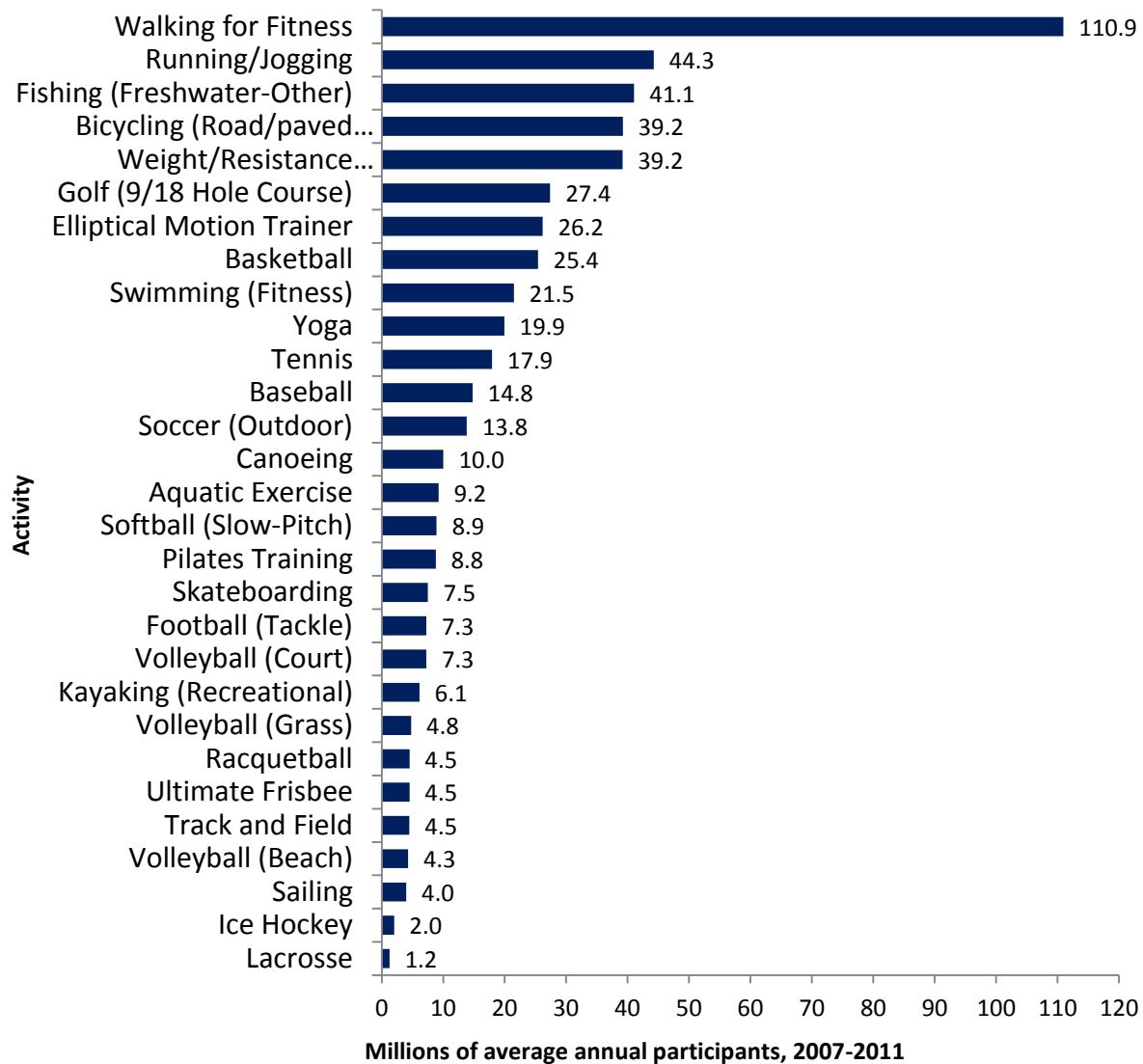
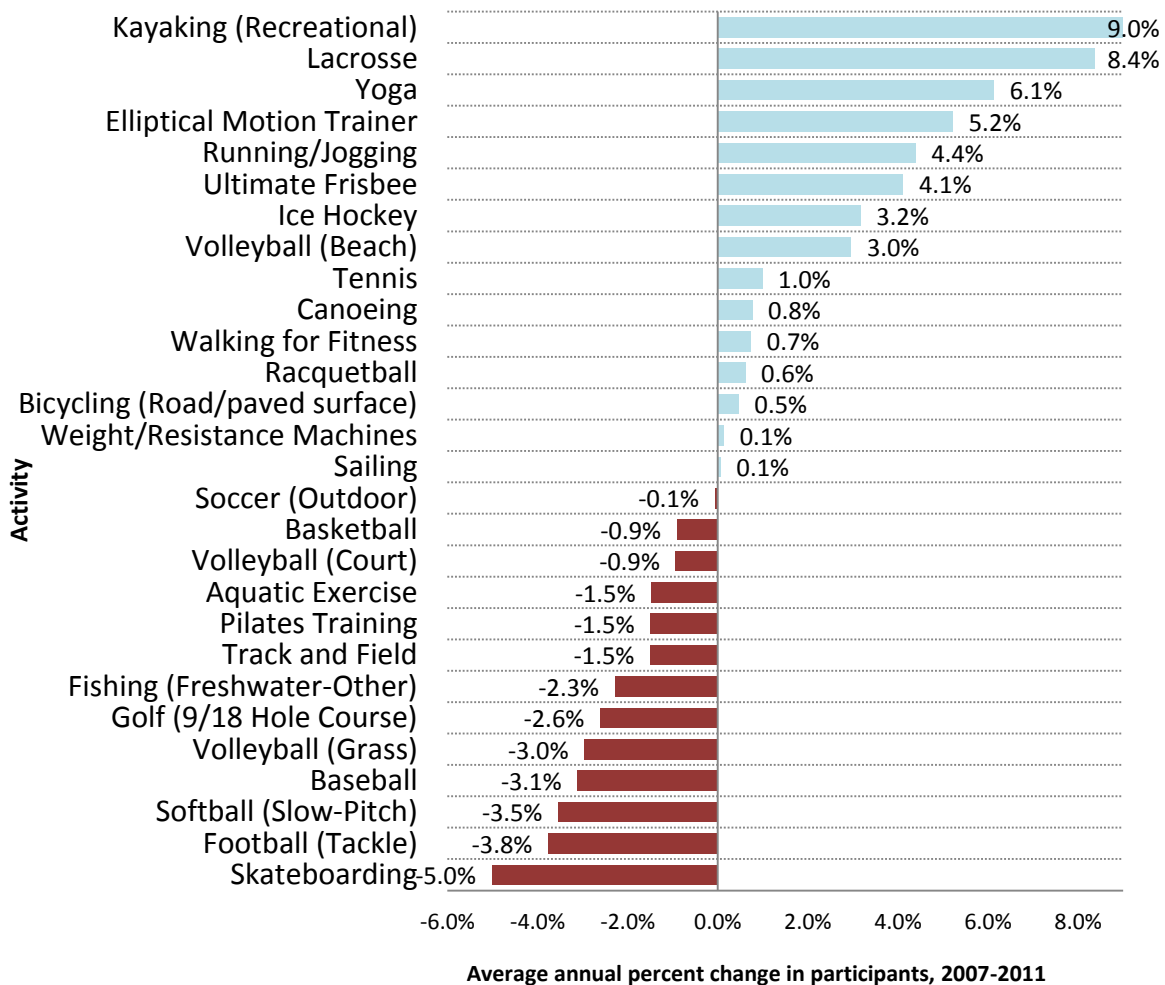


Figure 38 shows recent participation trends in the activities relevant to Parks. Each bar represents the average annual percentage change during 2007-2011. This was calculated by dividing the difference in participation between 2007 and 2011 by the number of participants in 2007, and then dividing the result by the number of years for which data was collected.³⁵ Swimming is not included here because the SFIA changed their data collection method for their 2012 study, making direct trend comparison impossible.³⁶

Sports that saw the largest trend increases during 2007-2011 were recreational kayaking, lacrosse, yoga, elliptical training, running, disc ultimate (Frisbee), ice hockey, and beach volleyball; all grew by at least 3% per year. The sports with the largest decreases included classic team sports like slow pitch softball, football, and baseball. Individual, non-fitness sports like skateboarding and golf also saw a decrease between 2007 and 2011. Sports like bicycling, sailing, and soccer showed little change.

Figure 38: Annual Percent Change in Participation by Activity



Many people do not participate in any activities at all. According to SFIA’s research, 68.2 million people, or 23.9% of all Americans, are completely inactive—meaning they did not participate in any of the 119 activities measured by the SFIA. This number has steadily risen over time, but slowed to an increase of 1.1 million new inactive Americans from 2010 to 2011.³⁷ The SFIA did not have an explanation of why these people did not participate, but did ask them which activities they aspire to participate in.

Table 3 shows the sports or activities that totally inactive people aspire to participate in, according to the SFIA.³⁸ The results show that inactive people are interested in fitness activities like working out with weights, machines, swimming, running, and bicycling. For brevity’s sake, we only included the top three aspirational interests for each age group, but more are included in the full SFIA topline report.

Table 3: Inactive Aspirational Interests

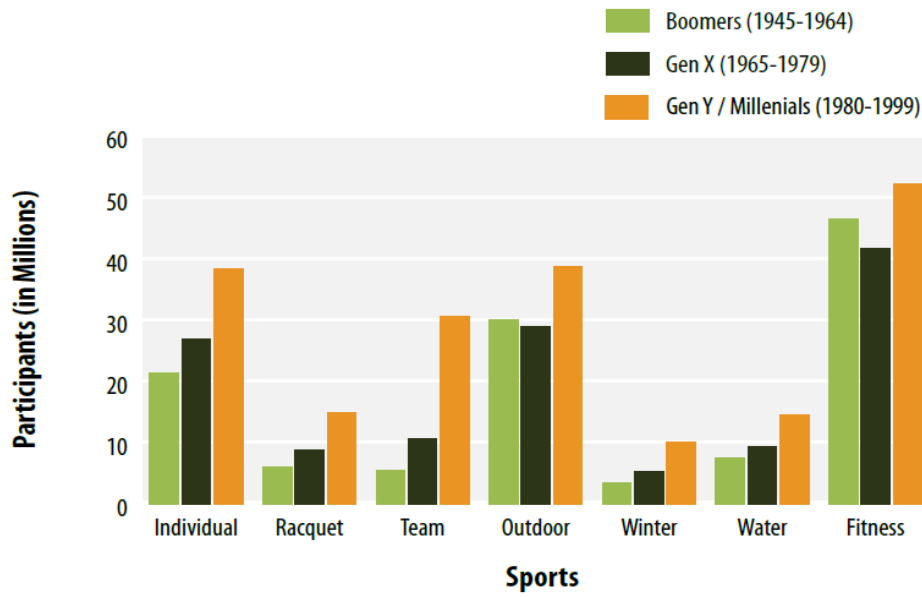
<i>Interest</i>	<i>Ages 6-12</i>	<i>Ages 13-17</i>	<i>Ages 18-24</i>	<i>Ages 25-34</i>
Highest Interest	Swimming	Working Out with Weights	Working Out with Weights	Working Out with Weights
↓	Bicycling	Working Out using Machines	Working Out using Machines	Working Out using Machines
Lower Interest	Camping	Running/Jogging	Swimming	Running/Jogging

<i>Interest</i>	<i>Ages 35-44</i>	<i>Ages 45-54</i>	<i>Ages 55-64</i>	<i>Ages 65+</i>
Highest Interest	Working out With Weights	Swimming	Bicycling	Working Out using Machines
↓	Working Out using Machines	Bicycling	Swimming	Swimming
Lower Interest	Bicycling	Working Out with Weights	Working Out using Machines	Fitness Classes

Parks can use this information to offer activities and programs that non-participants are actually interested in, asking: what can Parks do to better meet the aspirational needs of inactive people?

Figure 39 shows SFIA’s estimate of how different generations participate in activities.³⁹ According to the SFIA, people who were born after 1980 – Generation Y and the Millennial Generation – are much more likely to participate in all sports than those born before 1980. Members of these two generations also are much more likely to participate in team sports than older people are. Members of Generation X (born 1965-1979) are second in participation across all categories except fitness and outdoor sports, while Baby Boomers (born 1945-1964) participate in strong numbers. Boomers participate much more in individual sports than in team sports, but lag behind in overall participation.

Figure 39: Activity Participation by Generation



The higher participation rates for young adults, combined with the demographic data showing Seattle’s high proportion of people in this age group compared to other cities, leads to questions about whether Parks programs are positioned to attract/meet the interests of this age group.

Parks of the Future

By 1890, Seattle’s population had skyrocketed to 42,837 and would nearly double in the 1890’s. By 1925 Seattle’s population would reach over 200,000, thanks to the Klondike Gold Rush. In the face of public opposition to new land acquisition, the Board of Park Commissioners hired the Olmsted Brothers landscape design firm, based in Brookline, Massachusetts. Looking to build credibility and respect for the young City of Seattle, the Commissioners were reluctant to hire the Olmsted firm after they learned their primary candidate, famed patriarch Frederick Law Olmsted, was in ill health and his son, Frederick Jr., was not able to travel to Seattle. The Commissioners “settled” for Frederick’s stepson, John Charles Olmsted, who was, unbeknownst to them, possibly the most well-qualified landscape architect they could have hired.



Hiawatha Fieldhouse, 1911. Hiawatha Playfield is Olmsted-designed.

John Charles Olmsted’s design connected Seattle’s existing parks like Volunteer Park, Washington Park, and Woodland Park into a 20-mile-long park and recreation system encircling the city. Olmsted wasn’t wedded to a particular style of park. He designed parks that remained natural and forested, emphasizing the scenic beauty of Seattle. He also designed parks filled with flower gardens, playgrounds and other formal features, creating vibrant parks that encourage active recreation.

The Olmsted Brothers set the standard for Seattle parks for years to come, and many of Seattle’s oldest parks still seem ahead of their time. As Seattle moves further into the 21st century, it is important Parks continues to look to the future, just as the Olmsted plans did. This section describes what Parks is doing now and plans to do in the future to offer the best possible “Parks of the Future”.

Design and Construction

John Charles Olmsted’s work ensured Seattle began the 20th century at the forefront of park design, and Seattle continues to lead the way with innovative designs that are responsive to community needs. Today, park planners and their consultant teams are expected to design and build parks that are environmentally sustainable, safe, fun, and inclusive.

Environmental sustainability and energy efficiency

Creating environmentally-friendly parks is a growing trend that depends heavily on the funding available for a project. System-wide, Parks has converted wading pools to spray parks, reduced irrigation at selected parks, replaced grass athletic fields with synthetic turf, and reduced the use of water, fertilizers, and gas-powered mowers. In the future, Parks will continue to look at these and other options to further

reduce environmental impact. Parks also works to restore and daylight creeks and wetlands that have been lost or buried through development.

Implementing energy-efficient design is another important trend that Parks follows when it has the resources to do so. When possible, park designs include elements that reduce energy use or offset energy costs. Recent upgrades to Jefferson Park and Woodland Park Zoo included solar panels that send electricity back to the grid, reducing energy costs. Parks has also worked to build sustainable and efficient facilities, and now boasts four LEED-certified buildings, three of which are certified as LEED Gold. Additionally, the recently-opened Rainier Beach Community Center and Pool is on track for a LEED Gold certification.

In fact, the Rainier Beach Community Center and Pool, opened in 2013, is 40% more energy efficient than a 2009 Seattle Energy Code baseline building. The building features radiant slab heating, ground-source heating and cooling, and evacuated tube solar water heating. Light fixtures and controls are above code standards and daylight illuminates all public spaces. Activity and gymnasium spaces in the building are cooled through natural ventilation, saving energy that would have been required for mechanical cooling. Rainwater harvesting provides 90% of water for toilets and urinals. The new facility also makes creative use of recycling: wood beams were repurposed for siding and the wood ceilings from the old locker rooms were re-milled and installed for the lobby's ceilings.

Parks' next project to encompass energy efficiency will be the solar roof planned for building 406 at Magnuson Park. The new roof, replacing a leaky one, will include photovoltaic panels to supply electrical power to the building and at times a surplus that will result in a credit for power used.

Parks sees buildings like this as the future, and will continue to incorporate similar elements into designs as resources permit.

[Providing safe, fun, and inclusive parks and recreation opportunities](#)

In new and renovated park designs, planners look to respond to and stay ahead of recreation trends.

Environmental benefits: A recent trend in creating new parks in Seattle is the purchase of existing residential and commercial properties in urban centers or areas targeted for population growth. In converting these previously developed sites into parks, significant areas of impervious paving and buildings are removed and replaced with lawns and plantings for natural infiltration of stormwater. Green stormwater infrastructure strategies are employed to lessen flows into the City's underground stormwater system.

Sports and exercise: As older adults tend to engage in individual recreation, Parks has installed outdoor exercise equipment in playgrounds, making it easier for parents and seniors to exercise. As shown in Trends, use of elliptical motion trainers is both a popular and growing exercise activity. Adding standalone outdoor elliptical machines in parks is an effective way to



[Skate Like a Girl lesson at Lower Woodland Skatepark](#)

connect with people who may not otherwise have the time to exercise, but often find themselves at a playground with their children and grandchildren. Younger people tend to be more involved in team sports, so Parks has invested in replacing grass fields with synthetic turf, which allows for year-round play and increases recreation opportunities for young people. Many of these new synthetic turf fields have markings for emerging sports with high growth rates like lacrosse and disc ultimate.

Skateparks: The rise in popularity of skateboarding over the last two decades led to the development of siting criteria for skateparks and a master plan recommending locations for future construction of skateparks on park property. According to the American Sports Data research firm, in 2001 more people under the age of 18 rode skateboards than played baseball. A decade ago, Parks offered no skateparks. Over the last decade, Parks has built 10 skateparks, ranging in size from small skatespots with one or two features to large, district skateparks with multiple bowls and street skating elements. Three additional skateparks are planned and funded.

Dog off-leash areas: As density and population increase, the need for running room for Seattle’s 153,000 dogs (Seattle Animal Shelter estimate) increases. Parks’ 15 off-leash areas provide the space for dogs to play and neighbors to meet. Parks is looking at ways to continue providing dog parks and ensure they are clean, safe, and fun for dogs and owners alike.

Playgrounds: Playground equipment has changed dramatically over the last two decades, from clunky structures to safer playgrounds with integrated natural features that encourage continuous play. For example, the recently renovated Seward Park playground, nestled in trees at the edge of the forest, features an amazing cable ride, tall play structures, rocks and ropes, swings, a whirl, spring toys, and interactive art. Parks is also following a trend toward intergenerational playscapes, where young and old can interact—typified by the partnership for senior ‘play’ and exercise equipment with the Seattle Parks Foundation.



Seward Park Playground

Safer parks through design: Parks and landscapes that allow users to see what is going on around them often attract less crime than low-visibility designs. Parks works to ensure visibility for users by incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques, such as creating safe lighting and trimming hedges and trees for better sightlines and light penetration.

Art in parks: Incorporating art in parks is a positive trend in park design and management that has been bolstered by the City’s long-standing percent-for-art program, passed by ordinance in 1973. The program specifies that 1% of eligible city capital improvement project funds be set aside for the commission, purchase and installation of artwork. Doing so enriches people’s daily lives and gives voice to artists.

In the future: Improving the Seattle park experience will require Seattle Parks and Recreation to continue the trends described above, and also accomplish the following:

- Keep all parks clean and well-maintained, as 77% of a sample of Seattleites reported visiting a small neighborhood or community park at least monthly.
- Recognize that many people, especially people of color, use parks for socializing with friends and family—not only exercise—and plan accordingly. As Seattle becomes more diverse, picnic shelters, functioning community centers, and other social amenities are of great importance.
- Consistently incorporate environmental and energy-efficient elements into park designs, as funds allow.
- Connect parks to greenways and mass transit lines so more people have access to parks.
- Solve the challenging public-health problem of reaching people who don't exercise at all, and get them into parks.
- Keep attuned to the new and changing world of parks and recreation locally, nationally and internationally; and maintain both an attitude and organizational structure that can readily adapt to and embrace change.

Operations Management

Throughout the country, public funding for park departments has decreased, and Seattle is no exception. Finding innovative ways to pay for park operations and maintenance is necessary to providing high-quality park and recreation experiences to the public while staying within the tight constraints of today's budgetary realities. Innovative funding can help support Seattle Parks and Recreation, but General Fund support provides the backbone of the department's operations, and will into the future.

Nationwide, ways to pay for parks with less reliance on public funds include public-private partnerships, park conservancies and philanthropy, real estate proceeds, developer impact fees, and corporate sponsorships. Each of these methods has benefits and costs, and some work better than others depending on the location and circumstance. Seattle Parks and Recreation, for example, has steered away from sponsorships that could be perceived as branding in public spaces.

Public-private partnerships already help Parks to offer more services while generating revenue. Golf courses, boat moorages, and food concessions, all of which tend to benefit individuals rather than the community at large (see Basic Services), are contracted public-private partnerships, the revenue from which supports the department's larger community goals like providing clean and welcoming parks. Partnerships are generally used to enhance or enable programs.

Establishing park conservancies can increase operations and maintenance funding for highly-visible, signature parks, but proactive steps should be taken to ensure less-visible parks are maintained to a similar level. It's possible for conservancies to raise private funds for park improvements and maintenance far beyond what public support can provide. Parks improve surrounding real estate values and business operations (see The Benefits of a Healthy Park System). Other states fund park operations by capturing a portion of these benefits to private land and businesses using mechanisms such as

developer impact fees and tax increment financing zones. More research needs to be done in this area, but most of these methods are limited in Washington State to fund only capital projects.

Technology

Seattle Parks and Recreation needs to use technology to change the way it does business. From connecting people with recreation opportunities to increasing the efficiency of and coordination between asset management, preventive and routine maintenance, better technology has the potential to improve the way Seattle Parks and Recreation operates.

Rapid technological advancement has made it possible for Parks to greatly increase its efficiency when it comes to coordinating asset management planning, routine maintenance, and predictive maintenance. Better collection and use of data will help Parks to maintain parks and facilities more efficiently and effectively. Parks' asset management system does not currently integrate with the maintenance work order system. This causes inefficiencies when, for example, a routine maintenance project is completed just prior to a major maintenance overhaul. An integrated system would allow multiple work units to stay informed and up-to-date with projects, and would help increase the effectiveness of any preventive maintenance. Implementing mobile applications for staff will allow for crews to see work orders and input data quickly and perform additional repairs and maintenance tasks in a single trip to a location. The current system issues paper work orders that are manually assigned and routed. An updated asset management system would nearly eliminate this time delay, increasing responsiveness and providing better information for work planning.

Geographic information systems, or GIS, provide a profound advancement in the way parks and recreation departments visualize data. GIS systems allow users to overlay layers of data on top of maps. Since parks are inherently geographic, Seattle Parks and Recreation staff have developed detailed geographic inventories of each park in Seattle. This work allows staff to quickly see, for example, each stormwater catch basin within a park, and the body of water the catch basin drains to. Further use of GIS will allow the department to avoid costly mistakes in design and planning, rapidly respond to problems, study programming needs, and analyze maintenance route workloads.

The Seattle Parks Department web site is very popular, and provides a great deal of information about Seattle's parks, projects, and programs. Survey respondents reported using Parks' website to gain information about parks and recreation more than any other source. Resources to update and maintain this public information have not been available to keep up with newer technologies involving mobile devices and social networking. The current public web site is based on year-2000 technology. With the exception of some calendar functionality, the web site lacks most new web features created in the last 14 years. Staying up-to-date with technology advancements will help Parks better serve the public.

Recreation Overview

Parks' Recreation Division provides opportunities for people to play, learn, and lead healthy, active lives through programs and facilities. People gather, take classes, and play sports in Parks' 26 community centers, and learn to swim, swim laps, and have fun with the whole family at Parks' 10 pools. Parks provides four golf courses, boating activities at the Green Lake and Mt. Baker small craft centers, and 144 tennis courts—including an indoor tennis center. Recreation programs and facilities like Teen Life Centers, the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, the Late Night program, and Community Learning Centers focus on helping youth and teens. Offered throughout many of our facilities are Lifelong Recreation programs for older adults and Specialized Programs for people with disabilities, both of which are organized and run by Parks staff and partners.



Parks' partnership with the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) is instrumental in recreation programming. ARC is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to manage recreation programs in Parks facilities. They provide instructors for yoga at community centers, rowing coaches at the small craft centers, teachers for child care, and much more. In most cases, Parks provides the facility and ARC provides the program instructors.

Did you know...

In 2011, Parks staff provided 273,143 swim lessons.

Both City-run and ARC-run program registrations are processed through a computerized system called CLASS. CLASS tracks the number of people registered or admitted to a program, revenue from program fees or attendance, and revenue and attendance data from facility rentals.

Parks' 26 community centers are neighborhood gathering places where residents can meet and enjoy a variety of social, athletic, cultural, and recreational activities. Centers offer recreation programs for seniors, before and after-school programs for youth and teens, food, fitness and health programs, arts and music, community basketball, intergenerational programs, late night recreation programs and other drop-in activities for teens.

Most centers are equipped with a kitchen, multi-purpose rooms, classrooms, gyms, spaces for child care and teen programming, computer labs, and fitness rooms. Partnering and working closely with ARC and community center advisory councils allows community centers to offer a variety of programs and opportunities. Community centers are also available to rent for private events. The centers are well-

loved: in 2012, electronic people-counters recorded more than 2.7 million entrances into community centers.

Volunteers play a vital role in bringing recreation programs to the community. In 2012, more than 9,000 people volunteered more than 250,000 hours throughout the system. Those 9,000 volunteers mentored children and teens; taught golf, tennis, and organized sports to children; helped at track and field and swim meets, and much more—ensuring that community programs enriched the lives of their neighbors. One small yet illustrative example is Sound Steps, part of the Lifelong Recreation program. More than 400 people walk each month with Sound Steps, and while the program is organized by Parks staff, volunteers lead walking groups from 20 locations each week.

City and Associated Recreation Council (ARC) Programs

The Recreation Cost of Service Analysis makes a distinction between Parks-run and ARC-run Parks programs. City and ARC operations are evaluated separately and then summed together to provide a full picture of combined City and ARC cost and expense activity for each Parks facility and program. There are a few important notes about this distinction:

- Because ARC is an independent non-profit organization that provides programs within Parks facilities, and pays a participation fee to the City, ARC revenues and expenses are evaluated separately from City programs and facilities. Only ARC revenues and expenses are included in the ARC component of this analysis.
- Paid Attendance, Shops, and Direct Program Administration costs are only included within the City/Parks component of this analysis, not within the ARC budget analysis.

Budget Impacts and Efficiencies

Community Centers

Essentially all community centers operated with similar staffing levels and operating hours in recent years: the standard community center was open to the public 53 hours per week during the school year and 46 hours per week during the summer for an annual average of slightly more than 50 hours per week. A standard site was staffed by five full-time staff plus temporary staff as needed, with a minimum of two staff whenever the center was open to the public. In 2011, Parks, in collaboration with a multi-departmental team and a citizens' advisory group, evaluated community center operations with the goals of developing a more efficient operating model and reducing City General Fund support. Findings from the community center evaluation were:

- Centers had “dark” hours (hours where not much was happening).
- A cookie cutter approach to staffing, with the same number of staff at all centers, did not reflect use or demand.
- Parks did not have a comprehensive way of measuring community center use.

In response to the 2011 community center evaluation, Parks installed different model for 2012 which organized centers into five geographic groups with three service levels of operation. Centers across each tier differ in the hours open to the public for drop-in activities. Service Level 1 centers are open to the public 70 hours per week. Service Level 2a centers are open 45 hours. Service Level 2b centers are open 25 hours per week. Some centers open for additional hours for ARC programming. Staff reductions related to the geographic model led to savings of approximately \$800,000 in 2012—in addition to reductions realized in 2011.

The 2012 implementation of the geographic-based community center model and related staff reductions led the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) to help fund positions that were to be cut from the 2012 budget. In 2012 and again in 2013, ARC contributed approximately \$450,000 to pay for seven assistant recreation coordinator positions that otherwise would have been eliminated. ARC was able to pay for these positions out of surplus funds that will not be available in the long term; the current community center funding package is not sustainable for the future.

The geographically-based reorganization of community centers increased efficiency: staff can be deployed more effectively when managed across building lines and programming within sectors can be coordinated. It is a good operating model. However, implementing the geographic based management model in concert with significant budget reductions has led to serious staffing challenges:

- There are times each day that centers have only one staff person in the facility, a difficult situation where the individual must cover the front desk, answer phones and monitor building use.
- While the geographic model provides a better mechanism for sharing staff between facilities than the previous standard management model, when staff are sick or on vacation there simply are not enough people in the system to cover facility needs.

Table 4 shows the downward trend in community center operating hours from 2009 through 2013.

Table 4: Community Center Weekly Public Hours

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total public hours per week*	1,402	1,402	1,238	1,115	1,140

*Rainier Beach Community Center closed in 2010 for renovation and will reopen late in 2013; the new Belltown Community Center is included in the 2013 information

Additional Recreation Program Budget Impacts and Efficiencies

Through the partnership with ARC, Parks was able to reduce reliance on the City’s General Fund:

- In 2010, Parks reduced the General Fund budget by eliminating marketing; (ARC picked up the cost of producing recreation program brochures, a savings to the City of \$71,000.)
- Parks closed a number of wading pools in 2010 and 2011, avoiding the costs of staffing, filling and emptying the pools daily; through a creative sponsorship agreement with a private business, Parks was able to reopen several wading pools in 2012.
- Parks did less line marking on athletic fields for play in 2011, saving \$314,000.
- Parks increased fees for the Amy Yee Tennis Center, including a higher fee for non-Seattle residents, and for athletic fields, pools, boat ramps, Camp Long, and rentals at community centers. Parks also instituted new fees at the Volunteer Park Conservatory and for parking at Lake Union Park.

Recreation Program Cost Recovery

Parks' mission to provide free or low-cost programs to the people of Seattle results in low cost-recovery ratios for many recreation programs. Parks' programs aim to cast a wide net, and to provide benefits to as many people as possible in the most effective way possible. A 2010 realignment of Parks' fees and charges adjusted fees based on the level of overall community benefit, an exercise similar to the Basic Services exercise described on page 29.

Programs like youth athletics and Specialized Programs, categorized as providing considerable community benefit, are free or charge low fees. Fees are set closer to market levels for programs viewed as having more individual than community benefit, like indoor tennis and golf for adults. Increased partnerships, sponsors, or grants can improve low cost recovery ratios for high-community-benefit programs.

The 2011 recreation Cost of Services Analysis methodology follows.

Facilities and Programs

The Recreation Division has multiple units and programs. For the sake of analysis, recreation programs were categorized by how they are budgeted (for example, Specialized Programs and Lifelong Recreation are managed from the same office, but have two separate budgets—they are therefore listed as two programs). Parks collects data on city expenses, city revenue, and participation.

Aquatics compiles data from nine pools, multiple beaches and wading pools, and two small craft centers.

- Lifeguards and wading pool attendants estimate a daily count of visitors to provide attendance estimates.
- Sprayparks are not included in this analysis because their attendance numbers are not available. Spray parks are not staffed, and their costs are included in the Maintenance Analysis.
- Rainier Beach Pool has been closed since 2010 for reconstruction.

Community Centers comprise data from Parks' community centers.

- During 2011, a limited use model was in effect for community centers. Five centers were operating at reduced hours and staffing to reduce their costs (Alki, Ballard, Queen Anne, Green Lake, and Laurelhurst).

Citywide Athletics compiles data from two categories: fields and stadium information and programs.

- Programs are sports programs managed by Parks staff such as track and field and basketball. A 2012 Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) directed Parks to provide detailed athletics information – the final Parks Legacy Plan will include the detailed information from the SLI.
- In this draft of the Plan, the information provided for the split between fields/stadium and programs are an approximation based on the best information available from the 2011 budget.
- Athletics costs span both the recreation and maintenance sides of Parks and Recreation. The full costs of maintaining fields cannot be identified due to the way work is tracked in the maintenance tracking system (PLANT). Therefore, recreation program expenses do not accurately reflect total costs, and no cost recovery ratio has been calculated for athletic fields. More data analysis is underway, and will be added into the final report.

Recreation Programs compiles data from ten programs, each described in the Snapshots section:

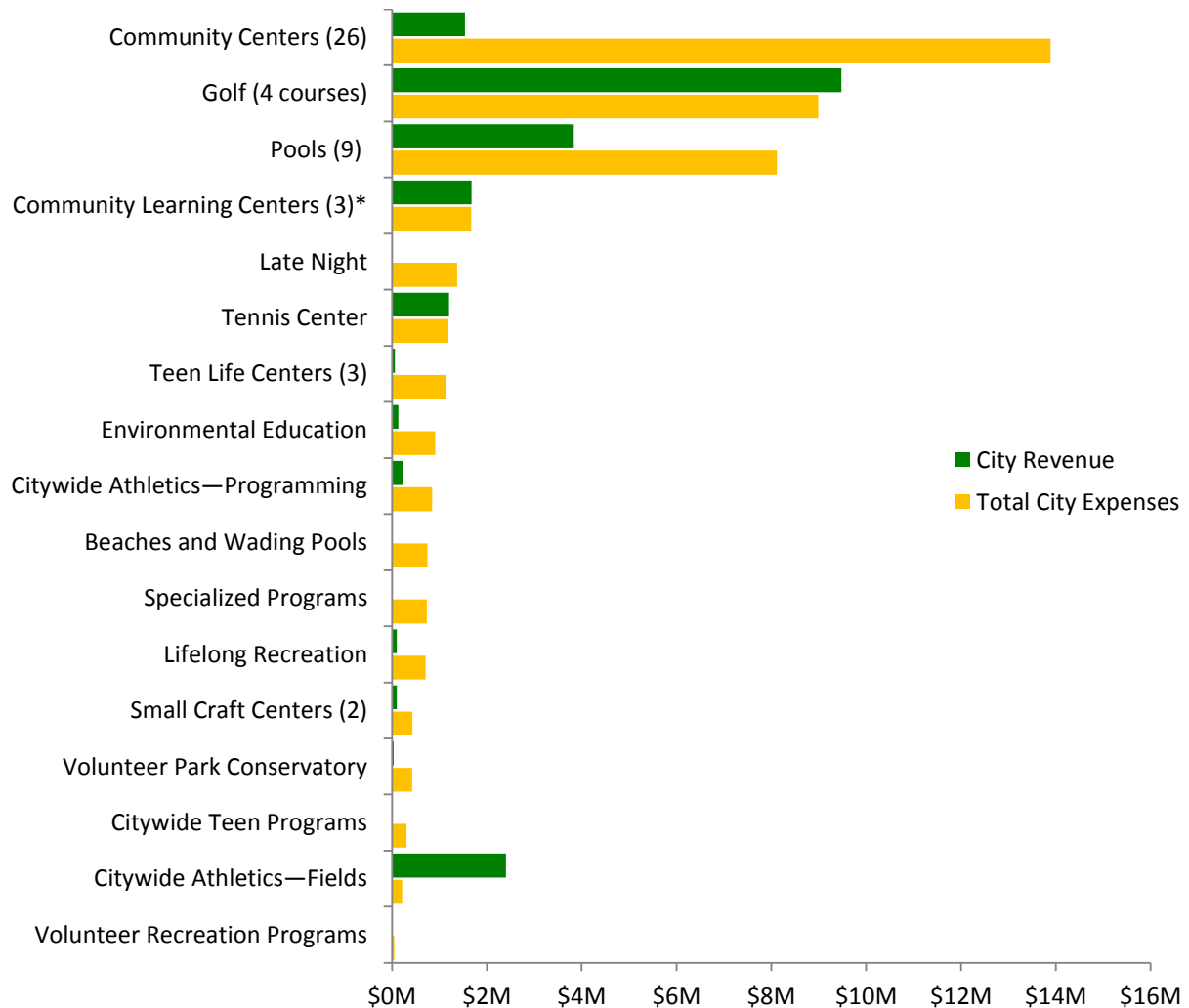
- Athletics, Citywide Teen Programs, Community Learning Centers, Golf, Late Night, Lifelong Recreation, Special Programs, Teen Life Centers, Tennis Center, and Volunteer Recreation Programs.

Other Divisions compile data from Parks' Environmental Education programs, and the Volunteer Park Conservatory.

Analysis of Cost Recovery Data

Figure 40 shows the recreation programs’ revenues and expenses. The graph is sorted by program expenses, with the most expensive programs at the top. Note that no ARC data is included here.

Figure 40: Recreation Revenues and Expenses by Program, 2011



*Community Learning Center funding comes from the Families and Education Levy.

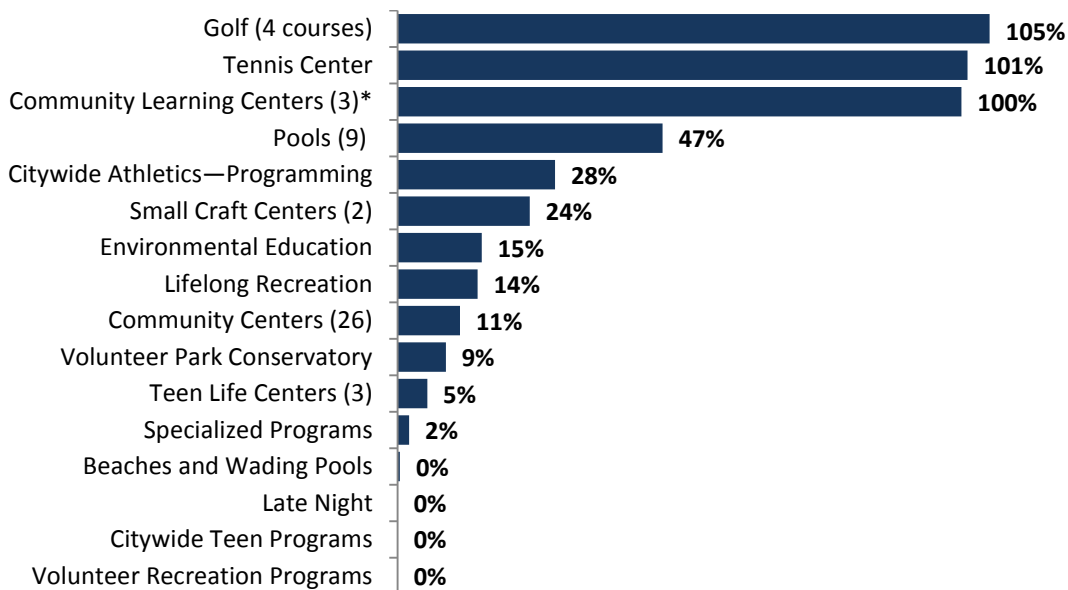
Services that tend to benefit individuals tend to have higher revenues, such as golf, the Amy Yee Tennis Center, and Citywide Athletics. Services that tend to benefit the community as a whole tend to have lower revenues or none at all. For example, community centers and programs like Specialized Programs and Lifelong Recreation have lower revenues. In terms of magnitude, community centers, golf, and pools are the largest programs within the recreation program.

Cost Recovery

Cost recovery ratios—calculated in **Figure 41**—show the percent of a program’s costs that are recouped through that program’s revenues. Note that no ARC data is included here.

- Golf and the Amy Yee Tennis Center recover slightly more than their costs, consistent with the basic service assessment which categorized the adult components of these programs as mostly individual benefit. Golf revenue in excess of expenses supports golf capital improvements.

Figure 41: Cost Recovery Ratio, 2011



*Community Learning Center funding comes from the Families and Education Lev.

City Participation

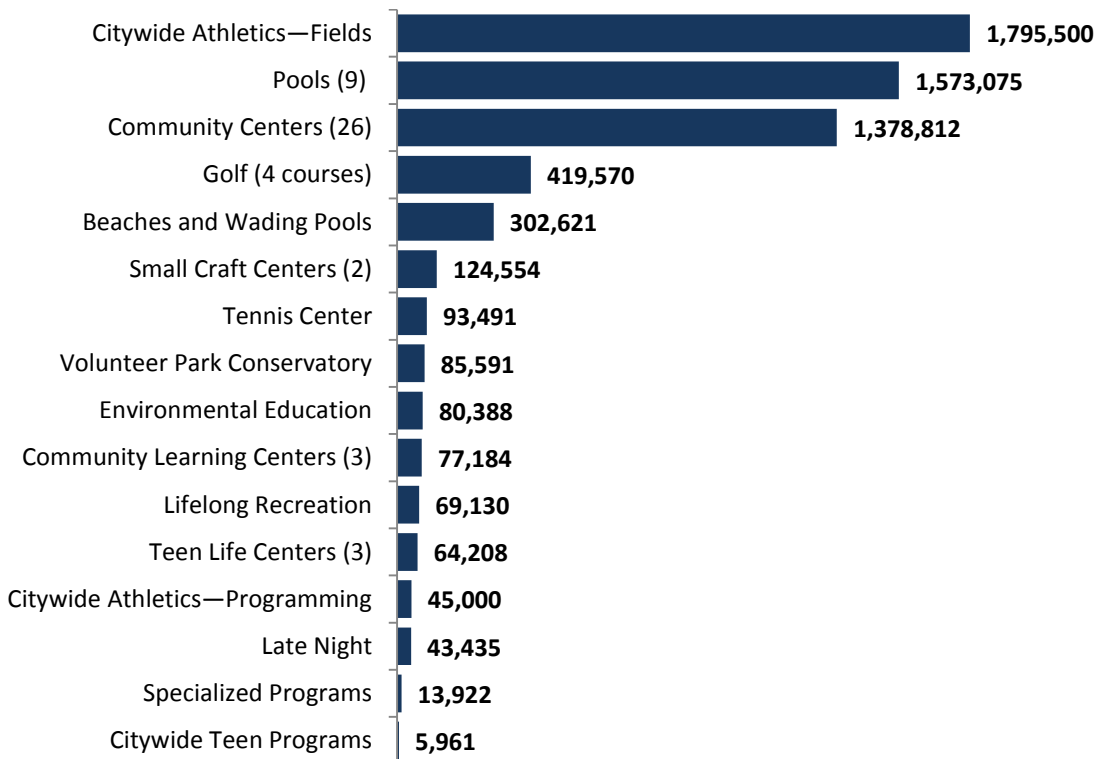
City Participation is the sum of the following 2011 data sources:

- **Program Sessions**—the total number of program sessions, per person, registered in the CLASS registration system (both City and ARC). If a person signs up for an eight-week class that meets once a week, it is counted as eight attendance sessions.
- **Admissions**—the number of entrants to pools and other facilities entered in the CLASS registration system (for example: lap, fitness and public swimming sessions, and paid drop-in basketball).
- **Rentals**—the estimated number of people attending a rental event (for facility rooms, outdoor weddings, special events, etc.) as reported in rental agreements.

- **Athletic field attendance**—the estimated number of people attending athletic field events. Field attendance is calculated by multiplying field reservation hours by 30, a fixed approximation of the number of players, coaches, and spectators per game, or by 15 people per practice.

City Participation does not include non-paid attendance. Non-paid City attendance includes community center activities like youth spending time in teen rooms after school, table tennis, card playing, and socializing. In 2012, people counters were installed at facilities; they provide information on the number of people going through the facility doors and will aid in future calculations of attendance.

Figure 42: City Participation, 2011



City Revenue

2011 budget actuals from the following categories make up City Revenue:

- **Fee revenues** are generated by City recreation programs but do not include revenues from ARC-operated programs. An example of a City recreation program is swim lessons.
- **Rental revenues** are generated by rentals of Parks properties, including room rentals, athletic fields, and weddings and other special events.
- **Miscellaneous merchandise revenues** are generated by sales of items like swim goggles and vending machine receipts.

City Expenses

2011 budget actuals from the following categories make up City Expenses:

- **Direct Program Expenses** are costs directly associated with each activity or facility, like salaries, benefits, equipment, and contracts.
- **Direct Program Administration** costs for each facility are calculated as a proportion of total administrative costs based on each facility's total share of administrative costs within the Aquatics and Community Center units. For example, Ballard Pool takes up 14% of the overall Aquatics budget, so Ballard Pool was allocated 14% of Aquatics' Direct Program Administration costs. Programs and facilities other than those listed in the Aquatics and Community Centers categories were not allocated Direct Program Administration costs.
- **Shops Costs** were assigned to major recreation facilities like community centers, pools and small craft centers, and the Amy Yee Tennis Center—but not to programs. Actual shop hours for these facilities were counted and were assigned a percentage of total shops hours for recreation facilities based on the facility's share of their own category's direct program expense. Actual shops costs per facility were not allocated because doing so would have skewed the analysis. In some years, certain facilities receive special attention from shops for projects like replacing boilers. Annually, these costs are variable and unevenly distributed, but over time they apply evenly to all facilities.
- **Administrative Overhead** was allocated as a proportion of Recreation Division Administrative costs based on the proportion of the full Recreation Division budget made up by the facility's costs. For example, Lifelong Recreation expenses are 1.8% of the total Recreation Division budget, so Lifelong Recreation was proportioned 1.8% of the Recreation Division's Administrative Overhead costs.

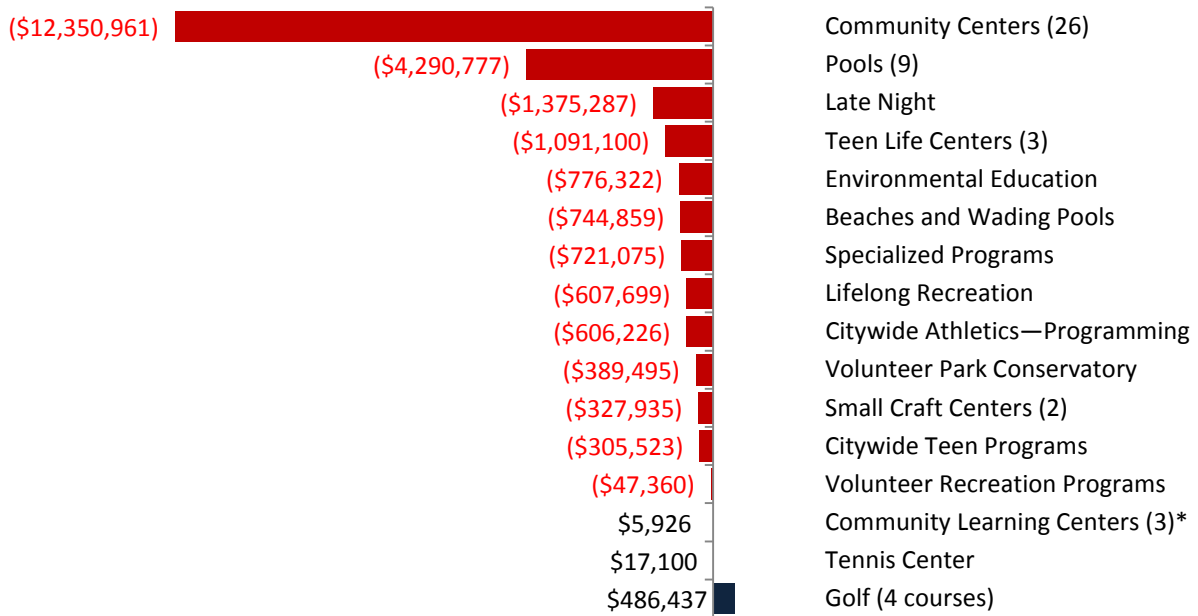
For this analysis, Shop Costs are allocated only to major Recreation facilities. Other Shops Costs are also allocated separately to outdoor Parks facilities in the Maintenance analysis. Environmental Education Centers were not allocated Shops Costs because they are included within the costs for the park within which the center is located. These costs are contained in the Maintenance Analysis.

City Net Income

A program's City Net Income equals City Revenue minus City Expenses.

- Programs that are heavily subsidized should provide more community than individual benefit, as defined in the Basic Services section of this report.
- Community centers are the most heavily subsidized of all recreation programs.
- The privately-operated Golf program returns more than \$450,000 to Parks annually.

Figure 43: City Net Income (Cost), 2011



*Community Learning Center funding comes from the Families and Education Levy.

ARC Cost of Service Analysis

Seattle Parks and Recreation partners with ARC, a nonprofit organization that provides programs, classes, and activities. While Parks supplies the facilities, ARC supplies program instructors and sometimes equipment; for example, ARC funds the boats used at the Small Craft Centers. ARC also works with a network of advisory councils, each focused on a specific park, facility, or program, to fundraise and involve citizens in citywide recreation services. ARC, in some instances, also provides for facility or park improvements. In this analysis, ARC’s expenses and revenues are broken up by program type, and then by advisory council. ARC collects, administers, and disburses funds for its member advisory councils. This analysis will first assess ARC’s total cost of service—detailed in **Figure 44** and **Figure 45**—and then show combined ARC and Parks costs of service community centers, shown in **Figure 46**.

Did you know...

In 2011, ARC provided 8,000 programs for people of all ages.

ARC Advisory Council Overview

These classifications are used in **Figure 44** to show a general breakdown of ARC’s budget—they do not represent an official classification.

Aquatic Advisory Councils: ARC is affiliated with six individual pool advisory councils—for example, the Queen Anne Pool Advisory Council and the Ballard Pool Advisory Council. These revenues and expenditures are compiled in the “Aquatic Advisory Councils” category. ARC plays a small role in the swimming pool system.

Community Center Advisory Councils: The majority of ARC’s funds and energy are spent providing community center programs like yoga classes, cooking classes, basketball camps, licensed child-care, and more. These revenues and expenditures are summarized in the “Community Center Advisory Councils” category.

Parks Recreation Program Advisory Councils: Many ARC advisory councils focus on supporting Parks programs not tied to specific community centers. For example, Parks’ Student Teen Employment Program (STEP), a summer program, has a dedicated ARC advisory council. More examples include the Specialized Programs Advisory Council and the Lifelong Recreation Advisory Council. This category also includes Environmental Education. Parks provides the majority of funding for its own recreation programs, but ARC contributes a great deal to a few programs through its advisory councils. These revenues and expenditures are summarized in the “Parks Recreation Program Advisory Councils” category.

Other Advisory Councils: ARC also supports a number of advisory councils not necessarily tied to a specific Parks program. Many of these are “friends of the park” groups, while others are focused on specific facilities. These revenues and expenditures are summarized in the “Other Advisory Councils” category.

Figure 44: ARC Overview by Program Category, 2011

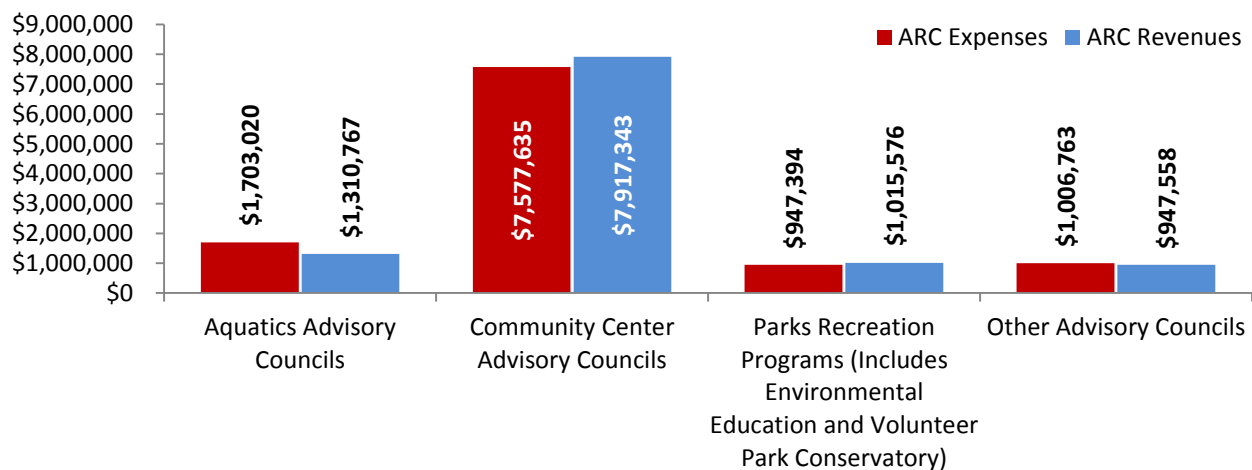
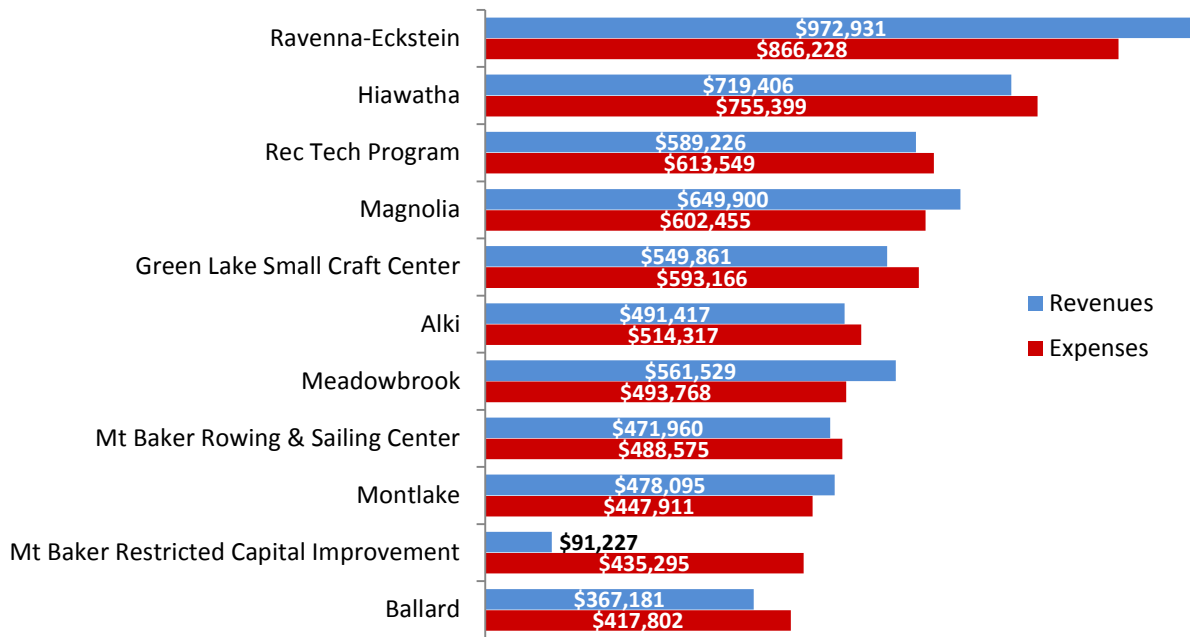


Figure 45: Ten Largest ARC Advisory Councils by Funding, 2011

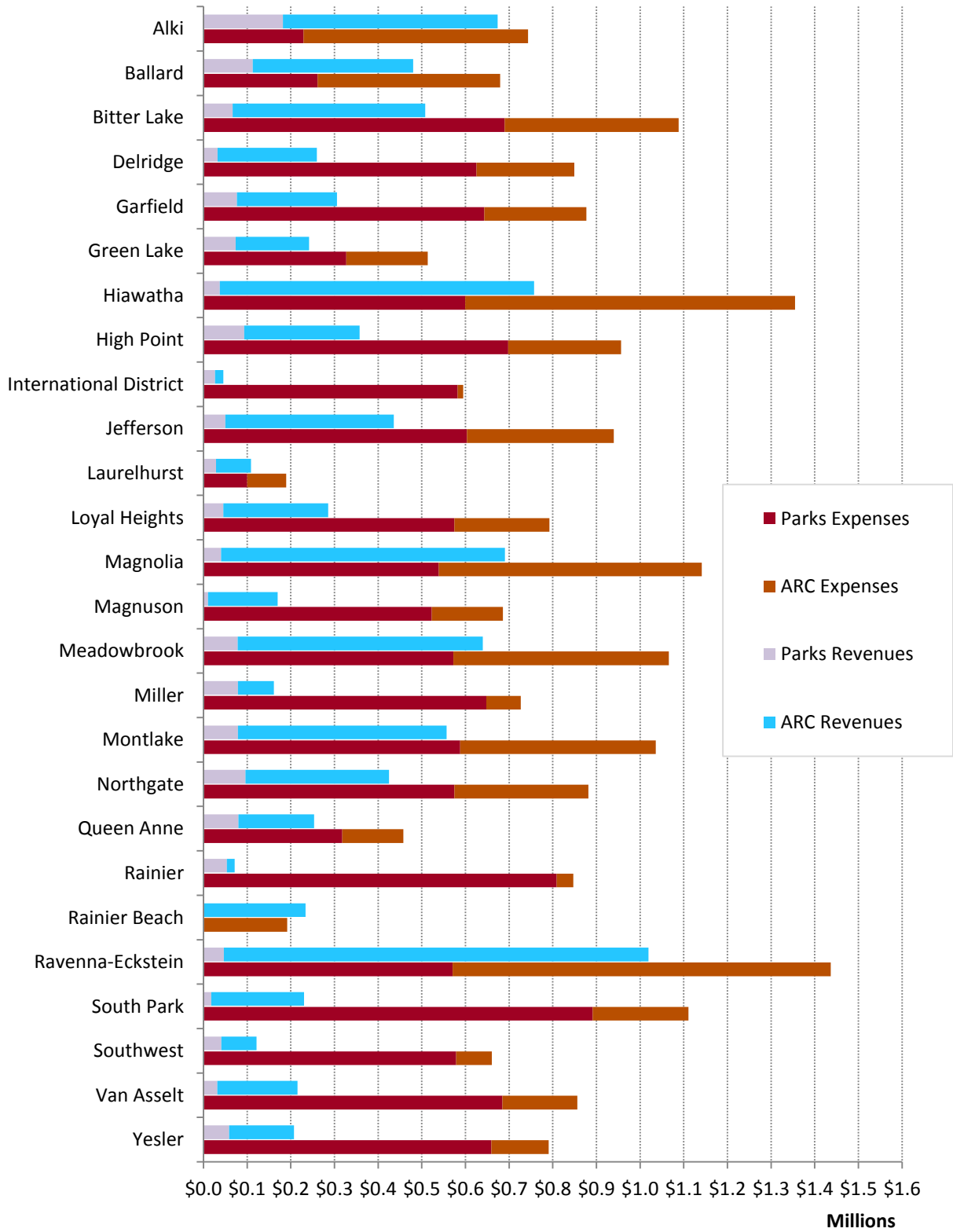


ARC and Parks Together

In many cases, Parks provides a facility and ARC supports the programming. The combination of both organizations' efforts are what ultimately provides Seattleites with positive, healthy, and fun experiences. ARC community center revenue pays program teachers and leaders, and in 2012 and 2013 ARC contributed approximately \$450,000 to Parks to pay for seven assistant coordinator positions.

Figure 46, shown on the next page, shows combined revenues and expenses for each community center advisory council. Note that Rainier Beach C.C. was closed in 2011. Advisory councils for community centers like Hiawatha and Ravenna-Eckstein have strong fundraising capabilities, and spend a great deal on programs, while advisory councils for Rainier C.C., International District C.C., Southwest C.C., and Miller C.C. had much less revenue in 2011.

Figure 46: Individual Community Center Expenses and Revenues, 2011 (Parks and ARC)



Maintenance Overview

Parks Maintenance Division Overview

As with recreation, in order to prepare for the future we need to understand how the parks and recreation system is currently maintained and the level of service we are able to provide. This helps lay the ground work for thinking about what needs to be done to preserve the Legacy into the future.

The Parks Maintenance Division comprises three major units:

Parks Resources	Natural Resources	Facility Maintenance
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performs day-to-day park cleaning and landscape care activities• Controls litter and garbage pickup• Mows and trims lawns• Prepares ballfields• Rakes and picks up leaves in the fall• Cares for shrub beds• Cleans comfort stations, picnic areas, and play areas• Maintains community centers, pools, and other grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintains greenbelts, natural areas, and urban forests• Irrigates land• Landscapes parks and specialty gardens• Maintains athletic fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supports all maintenance activities through the following shops:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carpentry• Concrete• Electrical• HVAC• Metal• Machine• Plumbing• Paint

Budget Impacts and Efficiencies in Parks Division

Budget reductions over the past several years have constrained Parks' ability to maintain our assets—parks and buildings—that are Seattle Parks and Recreation's legacy. These reductions required the Parks Division to cut grounds maintenance staff, eliminate a tree crew and the fence crew, cut paint crew staffing in half, and reduce the metal and machine shop resources. The Parks Division does not have the resources to ensure the long-term health of our assets through preventive maintenance, and now can only react to maintenance issues as they arise—a reactionary, emergency-management model.

The Parks Division achieved the following efficiencies in response to recent budget reductions:

- Changed staff districts to minimize travel and maximize staff teams
- Provided more Installation Maintenance Workers who are able to perform a range of tasks while in the field
- Modified staff deployments and maintenance assignments based on new work-tracking data

Irrigation Savings

In the summer of 2012, Parks identified and reduced water use in low-priority areas like informal lawns and well-established shrub beds, saving about 44 million gallons of water and \$250,000 in 2012—just over a 20% reduction compared to recent four-year average use.

Based on the continued need to balance financial sustainability, positive park visitor experience, and environmental stewardship, Parks plans to continue similar but somewhat limited irrigation conservation strategies in 2013. Parks staff will adjust sites to minimize the risk of any long-term landscape health issues.

Maintenance Efficiencies

Parks' maintenance units responded to recent budget reductions by reorganizing, cutting staff positions, and reducing some services. Note that the following list is not comprehensive.

Selected 2010 efficiencies

- Reduced trash and litter pickup: \$277,000
- Decreased community center maintenance: \$73,000
- Reduced winter crews: \$18,000
- Merged nine Parks Resources districts into eight (13 full-time equivalent positions eliminated): \$234,000
- Closed the Atlantic Street Nursery: \$75,000
- All-Parks-staff 10-day furlough: \$300,000

Selected 2011 efficiencies

- Reduced frequency of mowing, trash pickup, and weeding: \$1.7 million/28 positions eliminated, 70 positions reduced to less than full time
- Decreased facility maintenance for painting, metal fabrication, and fence repair: \$520,000/8 positions eliminated
- Increased fees at specialty gardens
- Reduced six specialty garden positions : \$150,000
- Eliminated the third tree-trimming crew: \$150,000/4 positions
- Reduced two positions in the natural area crew: \$122,000

Selected 2012 and 2013 efficiencies:

- Reallocated \$9.8 million in savings from the 2008 parks levy to asset preservation
- Reduced irrigation levels
- Transferred roof cleaning duties from Shops to Parks Resources, creating salary savings: \$197,000

Level of Service

The Parks Division creates a unique maintenance plan for each park, open space, and natural area, based on national standards, Seattle time trials and best management practices. These plans are referred to as PLAN hours and represent each park’s ideal “gold” level of maintenance. Having this target level of service allows us to assess how closely we are achieving it. By defining the best possible way to maintain each park, the Parks Division can make the most efficient use of its resources, and can clearly show their level of service by comparing real-world, tracked hours spent to the planned hours for each park— showing the percent of each park’s ideal level of maintenance that is completed each year.

If Parks achieved the ideal, “gold” service level, each park would, to the public, provide a maximum of psychological and physical comfort. While the details differ based on the type of landscape within parks, some general characteristics would always exist. An ideal, “gold” service level park would be free of litter and not just where it is easily visible—there would be no litter tucked away behind a tree, or within a shrub bed. Grass would be aerated and properly irrigated so the surface is soft, forgiving, and filters water through

Did you know...

Staff service 118 outdoor restrooms, requiring about 90,000 rolls of toilet paper per year. Put end to end, the rolls would stretch 3,187 miles, about the distance from Seattle to Boston!

the soil—leading to higher water quality and reduced stormwater flows. Walkways and other hard surfaces would be sanitary, with clear drains and few contaminants flowing to the sewer, and free of debris that can obstruct paths for bicyclists and other users. Play areas would be comfortable places for kids that are completely clean, safe, and fun. People could walk barefoot on every beach, and picnic areas would always be clean and ready to use. Flower beds would be full of colorful flowers and free of weeds and invasive plants. Lawns would be edged and mowed, and feel well-kept and usable. Bathrooms would always have toilet paper, be free of graffiti, and receive regular attention. Maintenance to this level would ensure that all parks have capacity for heavy use without feeling overused and degraded.

In 2009-2010 Parks began developing PLANT, a program that tracks maintenance hours, measures the division's efficiency and helps staff to quantify maintenance levels of service. Concurrently, the division mapped each outdoor park's assets in GIS to develop a maintenance cost and procedure baseline.

Due to the gradual transition to the PLANT system, maintenance hour tracking in 2009-2010 was incomplete. In 2011, enough crews were using the new system to allow Parks to compare maintenance hours by park category and by asset or activity, as can be seen in the charts on the following pages. "Uncategorized" hours were hours that were miscoded by the crews to the maintenance district instead of to a specific park, or that took place at one of the District Headquarters.

The Parks Resources unit classifies Seattle Parks and Recreation's outdoor space into eight different park categories, based upon size, function, defining features and the amount of maintenance required. Although not every park fits exactly into a category, they help to show which types of parks require which types of maintenance, and how much of it. Actual hours of maintenance are compared to planned hours of maintenance in **Figure 47**. It would have taken Parks Resources about 434,000 hours in 2011 to maintain parks to PLAN, "gold standard" levels—yet they received enough funding to complete only 237,095 hours, resulting in a system-wide 54.6% level of service.

Figure 47: PLAN Hours v. Tracked Hours, 2011 (Parks Resources Only)

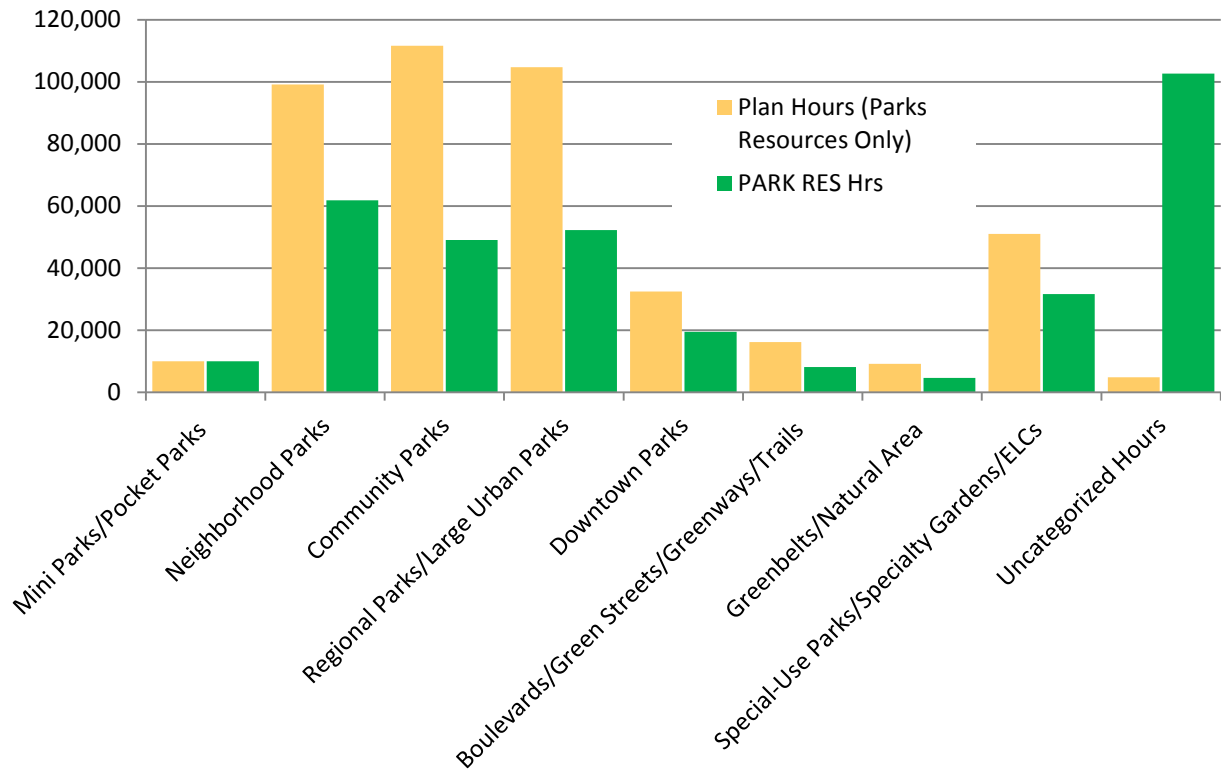
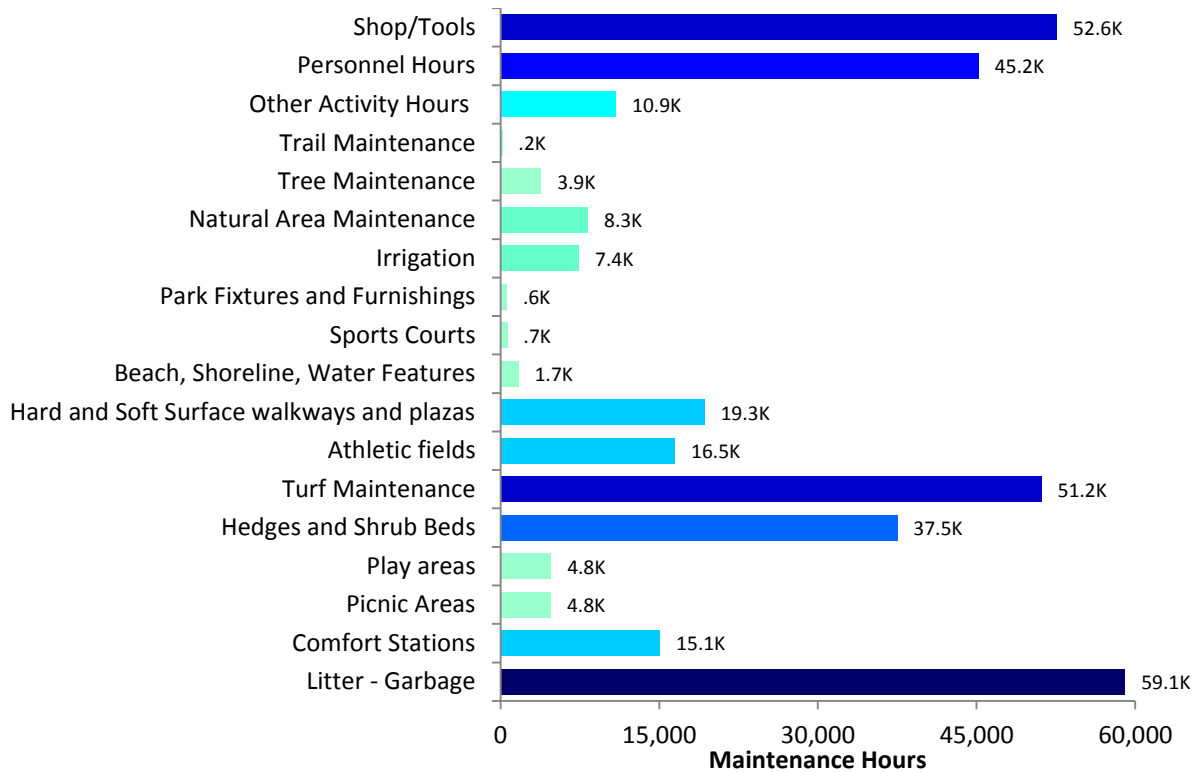


Figure 47 shows community parks have the largest gap between PLAN and tracked Parks Resources Hours in 2011 (a 44% level of service), while mini and pocket parks recorded a 100% level of service. All other park types hovered around a 50 or 60 percent level of service. The level of service equates to the frequency of park cleaning—a low level of service means parks are cleaned less frequently and lawns are mowed less often. In general, it means the public receives a lower service level. Garbage cans, litter pick up, comfort station cleaning, hard surface cleaning, mowing, edging, mulching, etc., are all completed less frequently. The difference between a lower and higher level of service is shown by a gradual deterioration of a park’s appearance, cleanliness, perception of safety and customer service—limiting the user experience.

Tracked Activities/Assets

The PLANT system tracks approximately 50 separate assets/activities. For ease of reporting in the Parks Legacy Plan, we have combined assets/activities into 18 categories. Figure 48 shows proportionately how maintenance hours for the Parks Resource Unit are divided among the 18 assets/activities. Parks’ goal is to have maintenance units tracking their time using an integrated software system with onsite capabilities. Only Parks Resources’ hours, through PLANT, are detailed enough to track specific activities. All maintenance units combined—Parks Resources, Natural Resources Unit, and Shops—spent 340,000 hours maintaining the entire system in 2011.

Figure 48: 2011 Tracked Hours of Maintenance (Parks Resources Only)



Parks Resources spent large amounts of time in 2011 picking up litter and garbage, caring for turf and grass (edging, mowing, aerating, weed eating, fertilizing, etc.), maintaining hedge and shrub beds (planting, mulching, weeding, pruning, trimming, soil preparation, etc.), maintaining and repairing their tools, and on personnel hours (training, safety instruction, legally mandated breaks, and personnel processes).

Mini and Pocket Parks

Level of Service: Mini and Pocket Parks, 2011

PLAN hours: 9,980	Tracked, actual hours: 10,009	Level of service: 100%
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Mini and Pocket Park Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Litter - Garbage	27.1%
Turf Maintenance	25.8%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	20.4%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	9.9%
Other Activity Hours	6.9%
Irrigation	3.8%
Natural Area Maintenance	1.6%
Athletic Fields	1.4%
Tree Maintenance	1.1%
Comfort Stations	0.7%
Picnic Areas	0.6%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	0.2%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.2%
Play Areas	0.2%

Mini and pocket parks provide a little green in dense areas. They are small parks transformed from developed, urban land sites acquired by the City. These urban land acquisitions have a wide variety of uses, and are sometimes jointly operated for both recreational and utility/infrastructure purposes.

Mini and pocket parks may include ornamental areas, traffic islands, small boulevards, oversized rights-of-way, medians, and minor drainage ways. Plans for mini or pocket parks try to use remnants of old landscaping features or other elements from the site’s prior use to emphasize cultural or historic importance. Plans may also incorporate water towers or other utility infrastructure.

- ### Examples of Mini and Pocket Parks
- California Place
 - Ernst Park
 - Horiuchi Park
 - Katie Black’s Garden
 - Broadview Park

To fully maintain all mini and pocket parks to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend 9,980 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent 10,009 hours maintaining mini and pocket parks, for a 100% level of service. Over 70% of Parks Resources time in mini and pocket parks is spent removing litter (27%), tending to hedges and shrub beds (20%), turf and grass maintenance (26%), and maintaining hard and soft surfaces (10%).

Neighborhood Parks

Level of Service: Neighborhood Parks, 2011

PLAN hours: 99,116	Tracked, actual hours: 61,859	Level of service: 62%
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Neighborhood Park Maintenance by Asset (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Turf Maintenance	25.5%
Litter - Garbage	24.2%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	15.6%
Comfort Stations	7.8%
Athletic Fields	6.8%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	6.3%
Other Activity Hours	3.1%
Irrigation	3.0%
Play Areas	2.8%
Natural Area Maintenance	2.0%
Tree Maintenance	1.7%
Picnic Areas	0.6%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.2%
Sport Courts	0.2%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	0.1%
Trail Maintenance	0.1%

Examples of Neighborhood Parks

- Beer Sheva Park
- Bitter Lake Open Space Park
- Meridian Playground



Neighborhood parks are substantially larger than pocket parks, and generally occupy an area equivalent to one city block.

Typical park development may include play areas, small fields, turf, trees, shrubs, irrigation, benches, trash receptacles, picnic tables, vehicular barriers, paved parking or walkways, signage and lighting. Many Neighborhood Parks are playgrounds and viewpoints.

To fully maintain all neighborhood parks to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 100,000 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent just under 62,000 hours on neighborhood parks, for a 62% level of service. Within all neighborhood parks, Parks Resources spends 25% of its time maintaining turf and 25% removing garbage. Crews also spend 16% of their time on hedges and shrub beds, and 8% of their time cleaning comfort stations.

Community Parks

Level of Service: Community Parks, 2011

PLAN hours:	Tracked, actual hours:	Level of service:
111,623	49,081	44%

Community Park Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Turf Maintenance	23.7%
Litter - Garbage	21.0%
Athletic Fields	16.1%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	11.7%
Comfort Stations	9.2%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	5.6%
Other Activity Hours	2.7%
Natural Area Maintenance	1.3%
Irrigation	2.8%
Play Areas	2.5%
Picnic Areas	0.7%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	0.3%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.3%
Tree Maintenance	1.3%
Trail Maintenance	0.0%

Examples of Community Parks

- West Magnolia Playfield
- South Park Playground
- Ravenna Park
- Genesee Park and Playfield

Community parks satisfy the recreation needs of multiple neighborhoods. They generally accommodate group activities and recreational facilities not available at neighborhood parks. They may have athletic fields, large open spaces, paths, benches, natural areas, and restrooms. Community parks are accessible by arterial or collector streets, and usually include off-street parking.

To fully maintain all community parks to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 112,000 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent just under 50,000 hours on community parks, for a 44% level of service. Within all community parks, Parks Resources spends 24% of its time maintaining turf and 21% removing garbage. Athletic field maintenance takes up another 16% of staff time. Hedge and shrub maintenance takes about 12% of total time, and comfort station work takes about 9%.

Downtown Parks

Level of Service: Downtown Parks, 2011

PLAN hours: 32,467	Tracked, actual hours: 19,489	Level of service: 60%
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Downtown Park Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Litter - Garbage	51.5%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	22.5%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	11.9%
Turf Maintenance	5.6%
Irrigation	3.7%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	1.4%
Other Activity Hours	1.2%
Play Areas	0.7%
Tree Maintenance	0.7%
Comfort Stations	0.3%
Picnic Areas	0.2%
Natural Area Maintenance	0.1%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.1%

Examples of Downtown Parks

- Freeway Park
- Occidental Square
- Victor Steinbrueck Park

Downtown parks are typically smaller, developed sites located in Seattle’s center. Many are iconic urban landscapes and provide a respite from busy downtown streets, offer places to sit, and provide space for performers and vendors.

Many of these parks have historic significance. Downtown destination parks are signature parks of interest to the broad community and allow the public to enjoy the city’s center.

Downtown parks cost \$114,000 per acre to maintain, the highest per acre cost of all park categories (on weekdays, Seattle’s downtown parks serve a daytime downtown population of 214,000 workers, visitors, and residents).

Keeping downtown parks safe and welcoming for the public requires:

- Three to four visits a day for litter, garbage, and human waste removal
- Daily rinsing and bi-weekly pressure washing
- Staff members working in pairs for safety
- Intensive gardening due to frequent vandalism
- Challenging fountain maintenance
- Flexibility due to heavy event scheduling

To fully maintain all downtown parks to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 32,500 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent just under 19,500 hours in downtown parks, for a 60% level of service. Within all downtown parks, Parks Resources spends most of its time removing litter and garbage (52%), maintaining hard and soft surfaces and walkways (23%), and maintaining hedges and shrub beds (12%).

Greenbelts and Natural Areas

Level of Service: Greenbelts and Natural Areas, 2011

PLAN hours: 9,208	Tracked, actual hours: 4,690	Level of service: 51%
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Greenbelt and Natural Area Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Litter - Garbage	29.1%
Turf Maintenance	27.8%
Natural Area Maintenance	16.3%
Other Activity Hours	8.6%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	8.1%
Athletic Fields	4.2%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	3.5%
Irrigation	0.6%
Trail Maintenance	0.6%
Tree Maintenance	0.6%
Picnic Areas	0.2%
Play Areas	0.2%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	0.1%
Comfort Stations	0.1%

Greenbelts and natural areas are park sites established to protect and preserve outstanding natural features of local, regional, or statewide significance; they also can protect remnant natural areas within the City that can provide habitat or other natural systems support functions. Natural areas are intended to be used in a sustainable manner for scientific research, education, aesthetic enjoyment, and appropriate public use not detrimental to the primary purpose. Minimal infrastructure may include access, parking, signage, and security lighting, where it will not have an adverse impact on habitat or natural systems functions. Larger natural areas may have small sections developed to serve a community park function.

Within all greenbelts and natural areas, Parks Resources spends 29% of its time picking up litter and garbage and 28% on grass maintenance. Natural area maintenance takes up another 16% of staff time.

To fully maintain all greenbelts and natural areas to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 9,200 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent just under 4,690 hours on greenbelts and natural areas, for a 51% level of service.

The Natural Resources Unit and volunteer groups also spend time maintaining greenbelts and natural areas— data reported here only refers to the Parks Resources Unit's work.

Examples of Greenbelts and Natural Areas

- West Duwamish Greenbelt
- Longfellow Creek Green Space
- Inverness Ravine Park
- Sturtevant Ravine

Regional and Large Urban Parks

Level of Service: Regional and Large Urban Parks, 2011

PLAN hours: 104,687	Tracked, actual hours: 52,230	Level of service: 50%
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Regional and Large Urban Park Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Litter - Garbage	21.0%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	19.2%
Turf maintenance	17.7%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	8.1%
Comfort Stations	5.3%
Other Activity Hours	4.9%
Picnic Areas	4.7%
Natural Area Maintenance	4.6%
Irrigation	4.3%
Athletic Fields	3.8%
Play areas	2.3%
Tree Maintenance	1.8%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	1.2%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.6%
Shop/Tools	0.2%
Sports Courts	0.2%
Trail Maintenance	0.1%
Personnel Hours	0.1%



Cal Anderson Park

Regional and large urban parks supplement neighborhood and community parks. They serve broader community-based recreation needs, in addition to those addressed by neighborhood and community parks. These parks tend to be destinations, often generate tourism, and have views or water access. These parks may include large areas of undeveloped land with natural habitat and vegetation, or larger creeks and bodies of water. Restroom facilities and off-street parking should be provided for facility users. Park lighting should be for security and safety as well as facility use.

Within all regional and large urban parks, Parks Resources spends 21% of its time picking up litter and garbage, 19% on hedge and shrub beds, and 18% on turf maintenance. To fully maintain all regional and large urban parks to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 104,690 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent 52,230 hours maintaining regional and large urban parks, for a 50% level of service.

Examples of Regional and Large Urban Parks

- West Seattle Golf Course
- Jefferson Park
- Green Lake Park
- Cal Anderson Park

Boulevards, Green Streets, Greenways, and Trails

Level of Service: Boulevards, Green Streets, Greenways, and Trails, 2011

PLAN hours: 16,143	Tracked, actual hours: 8,135	Level of service: 51%
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Boulevard, Green Street, Greenway, and Trail Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Turf maintenance	39.8%
Litter - Garbage	23.7%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	12.5%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	10.1%
Natural Area Maintenance	4.8%
Other Activity Hours	4.3%
Tree Maintenance	2.4%
Irrigation	1.1%
Comfort Stations	0.5%
Athletic Fields	0.4%
Picnic Areas	0.2%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	0.1%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.1%
Trail Maintenance	0.1%
Play areas	0.0%
Sports Courts	0.0%
Personnel Hours	0.0%
Shop/Tools	0.0%

Park boulevards are established by City Council Ordinance and are generally an extension or expansion of a dedicated street that continues to serve as a right-of-way, but also features wide swaths of green along the sides of the roadway or a landscaped center strip. Many were developed during the Olmsted era. Greenways are linear features that emphasize harmony with the natural environment. Their purpose is to allow safe, uninterrupted pedestrian movement along both natural and/or man-made corridors.

To fully maintain all of these parks to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 9,200 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources spent 4,690 hours, for a 51% level of service. Within all boulevards, green streets, greenways, and trails, Parks Resources spends most of its time on grass and turf maintenance (40%) and litter and garbage pickup (24%). They spent 12% of their hours on hedge and shrub bed maintenance, 10% on hard and soft surface maintenance, and 5% on natural area maintenance.

Examples of Boulevards, Green Streets, Greenways, and Trails

- Queen Anne Boulevard
- Lake Washington Boulevard
- Elliot Bay Bikeway

Special-Use Parks and Specialty Gardens

Special-use parks, specialty gardens, and ELCs

PLAN hours:	Tracked, actual hours:	Level of service:
51,019	31,604	62%



This category refers to stand-alone parks that are designed to serve one particular use. Specialty gardens are some of Seattle's most beautiful and inspiring places. They offer respite from the city's noise, quiet places to sit and reflect, and a revival of color and fragrance in the

spring.

Special-Use Park and Specialty Garden Maintenance by Asset, 2011 (Parks Resources only)

Asset	Percent of Total
Turf maintenance	18.9%
Hedges - Shrub Beds	18.1%
Litter - Garbage	17.6%
Natural Area Maintenance	8.3%
Other Activity Hours	7.3%
Hard and Soft Surfaces	6.0%
Comfort Stations	5.9%
Athletic Fields	5.6%
Picnic Areas	4.7%
Tree Maintenance	2.3%
Beach and Shoreline, Water Features	1.9%
Irrigation	1.6%
Play areas	1.3%
Sports Courts	0.2%
Trail Maintenance	0.2%
Personnel Hours	0.1%
Shop/Tools	0.1%
Park Fixtures and Furnishings	0.1%

Parks Resources spends much of its time in all special-use parks and specialty gardens on grass and turf maintenance (19%), litter and garbage pickup (18%), hedge and shrub work (18%), natural area maintenance (8%), comfort station cleaning (6%), athletic field upkeep (6%), and hard and soft surface work (6%).

To fully maintain all special-use parks and specialty gardens to the ideal standard, defined by PLAN hours, requires Parks Resources to spend about 51,000 hours per year. In 2011, Parks Resources staff spent 31,604 hours, for a 62% level of service.

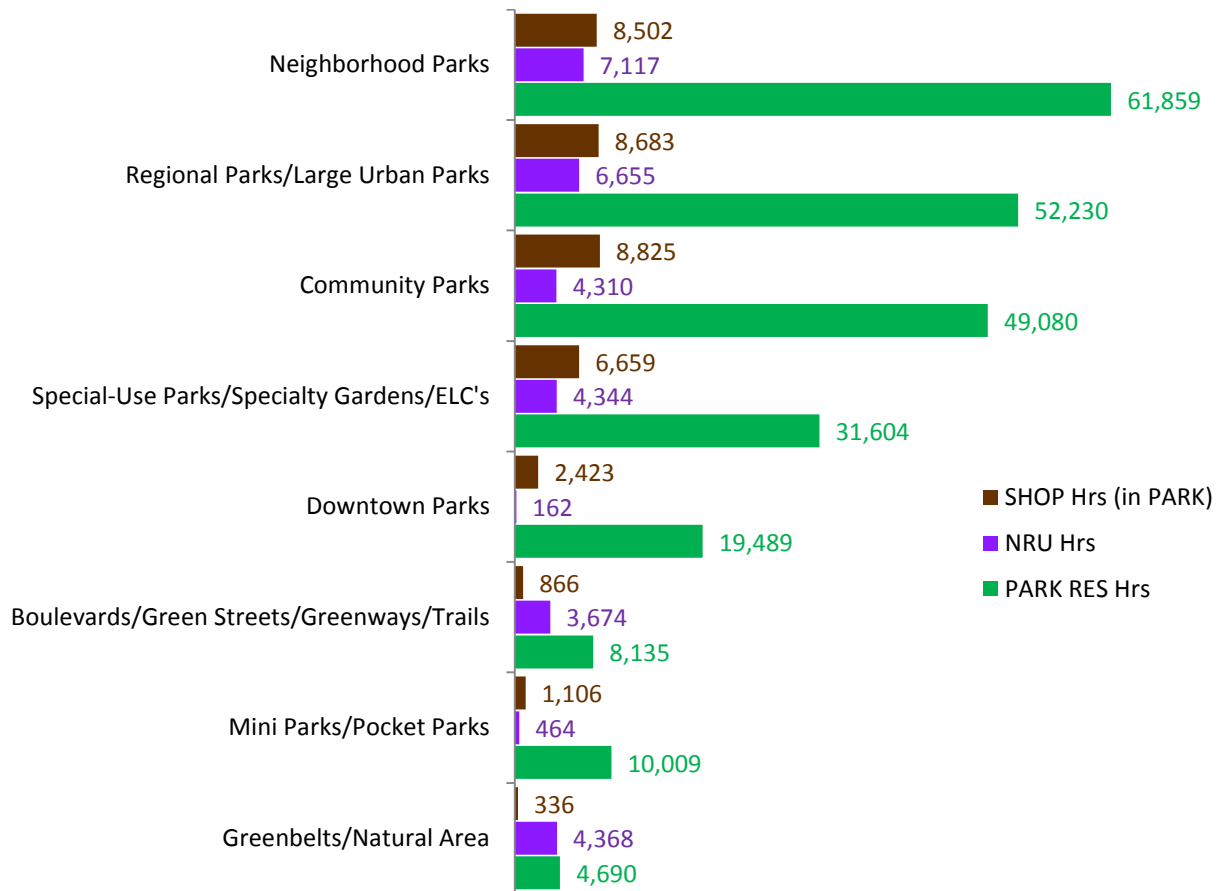
Examples of Special-Use Parks and Specialty Gardens

- Discovery Park
- Kubota Garden
- Washington Park Arboretum

Maintenance Services Analysis and Description

In 2011, tracking by the Parks Resources Unit was at a sufficiently high performance level to allow Parks to chart maintenance hours by Park Category and by Asset/Activity, as can be seen in the charts on the following pages. There still remain some hours that are reported in the charts as ‘Uncategorized.’ These are hours that were coded by the crews to the maintenance district instead of to a specific park. The same applies to the Asset/Activity charts where there are activity hours that were miscoded to the maintenance district instead of to a specific park, or that took place at one of the District Headquarters. **Figure 49** shows the number of hours spent maintaining each of the eight park categories by the three units of the Parks Division in 2011.

Figure 49: Maintenance Hours per Park Category by Parks Division Unit, 2011



Parks Resources spends more time maintaining neighborhood parks—smaller parks located close to people’s homes—than any other park type. This activity is consistent with Legacy Plan Survey results which showed visiting a small neighborhood or community park the second most frequent activity (walking in parks was first).

There are approximately 50 different Asset/Activities that Parks Division staff code to when they are performing maintenance work out in the field. For the purposes of this report we have combined related items into 18 different groups. One example would be under the group of 'Litter-Garbage.' Here we have combined the tasks of general litter pick-up and liner replacement, recycling, routine emptying of garbage cans and dumpsters, and the time that is involved for the driver and aide on a Packer Truck to pick up and dispose of the garbage.

In 2012, Parks refined the Asset/Activity lists, and the level of tracked hours was more complete than in 2011. The goal is to implement a tracking system that can be used division-wide. The tracking system, PLANT, is currently used only by the Parks Resources Unit, so all comparisons to the ideal Plan hours to gauge levels of maintenance pertain only to this unit.

Some of the challenges facing Parks are that maintenance crews are still reporting their hours, where they worked that day, the types of activities and assets that were maintained on slips of paper that require manual entry into the weekly reporting system. Another aspect that makes accurate reporting challenging is that PLANT, as noted, is only used by one maintenance unit.

Litter and Comfort Stations

Litter: The Legacy Plan Survey showed that cleaning and maintaining comfort stations and picking up litter and garbage are Seattleites' top two maintenance priorities—comfort station cleanliness was rated 9 out of 10 and litter and garbage pickup was rated 8 out of 10 on a ten-point scale of importance. Litter removal took 17% of Parks Resources' total time in 2011. Litter duties include:

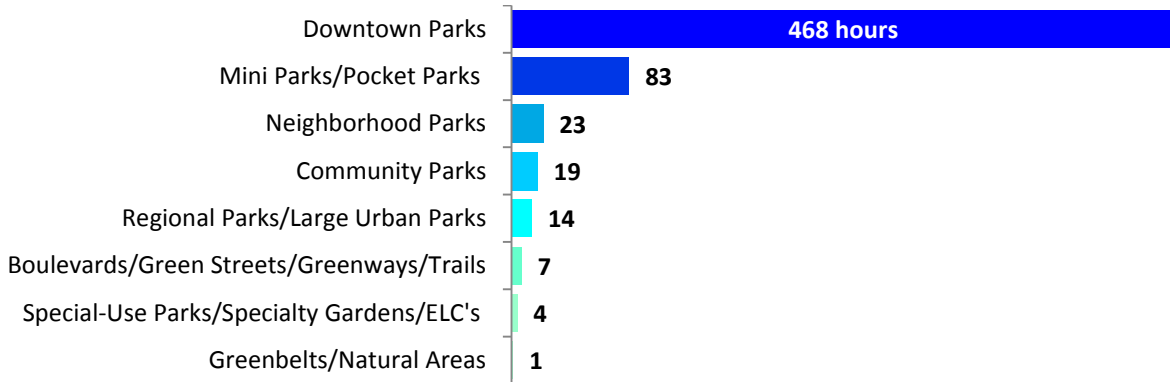
- General litter pick-up
- Liner replacement
- Recycling
- Routine emptying of garbage cans and dumpsters
- Tracked litter and garbage hours also include the time spent by the driver and aide on a Packer truck.

Wagging the Dog

In 2011, Parks spent over 1,400 hours on off-leash area maintenance and upkeep; this work included stocking mutt mitts, smoothing surface materials, and dumping at least 400 tons of dog waste.

Figure 50 shows Parks Resources’ hours spent on litter pickup and removal, per acre, by park type:

Figure 50: Litter Maintenance Hours per Acre, 2011 (Parks Resources Only)

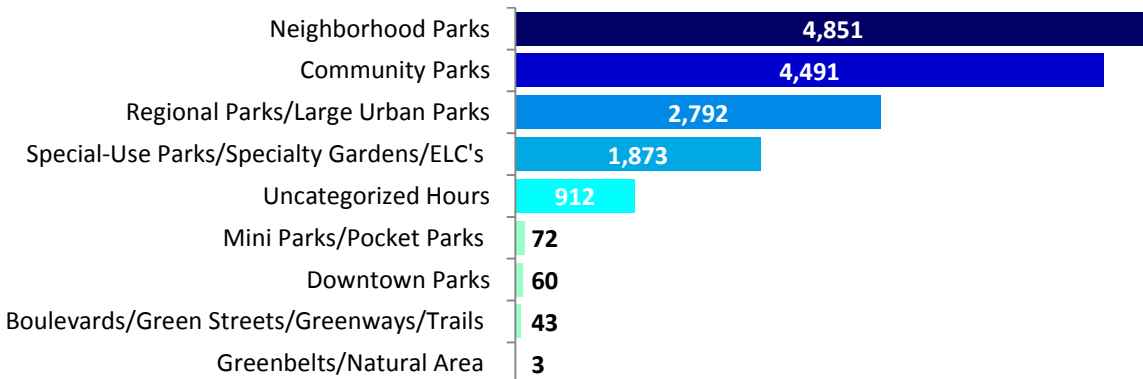


Parks Resources spent 468 hours per acre picking up and removing litter from downtown parks in 2011, over three times more than the hours per acre for every other park category combined. Downtown parks, as described above, require three to four visits per day for garbage and waste removal—a reflection of the over 214,000 people who use downtown parks daily. Mini and pocket parks also require more hours per acre for litter pickup than other park types, mostly due to their small size and being spread out across the city. Most park types’ level of service was less than 60% in 2011, which meant that crews did not visit downtown, neighborhood, and community parks to remove garbage as frequently as the ideal.

Comfort stations: Parks Resources’ comfort station regimen includes:

- Cleaning
- Unlocking and locking
- Inspection

Figure 51: Total Hours Spent Cleaning Comfort Stations, 2011

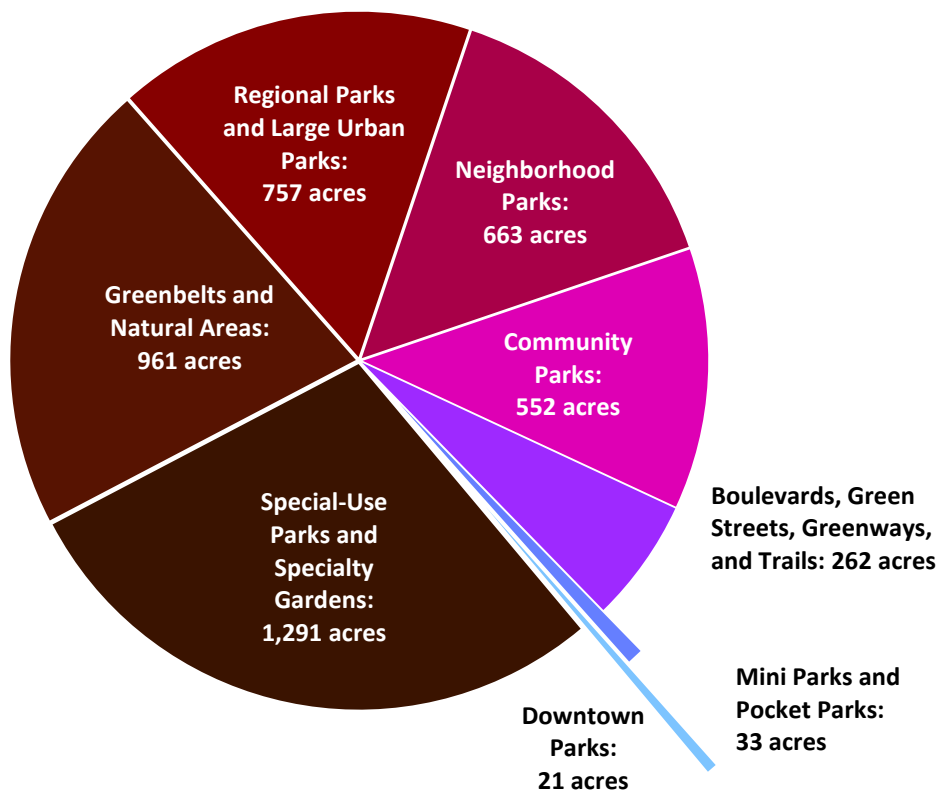


Parks Resources spent more time cleaning neighborhood park comfort stations than comfort stations at any other park type—no surprise, since survey respondents reported visiting small neighborhood or community parks (77% visit monthly or more) more than they engage in any other Parks-related activity besides walking or jogging in or along a park. Community parks also require many comfort station cleaning hours. They are larger, and tend to attract more people who may stay for a longer period of time, requiring more restroom breaks.

Comparisons

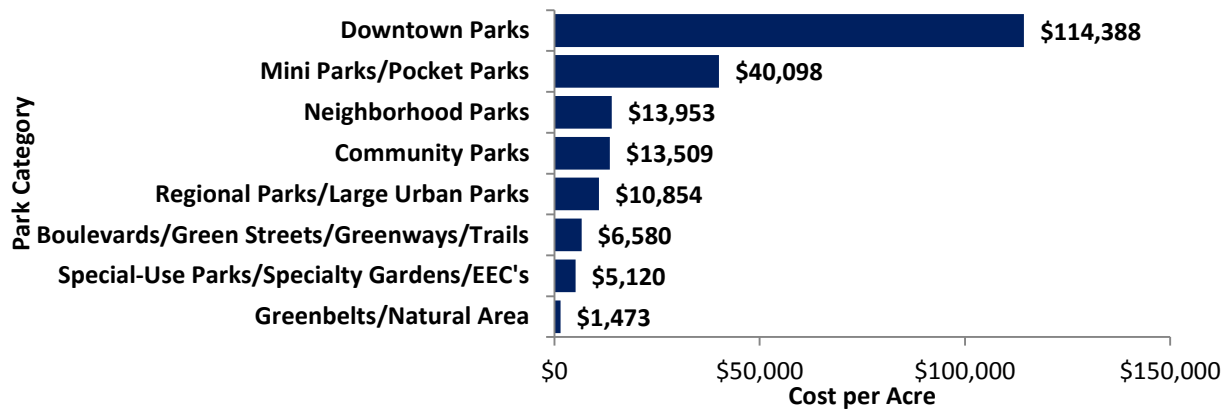
If we compare the number of acres maintained per each of the eight different park categories with the maintenance and operations costs for the respective categories based upon the tracked asset/activity hours logged by the crews, we start to see a clear view of how our resources are being deployed. For example, greenbelts and natural areas comprise 961 acres, or approximately 21% of Seattle’s maintained acres, and cost an average of \$1,473 per acre to maintain in 2011. Downtown parks comprise 21 acres, approximately 1% of Parks’ total maintained acres, but cost approximately \$114,000 an acre to maintain in 2011.

Figure 52: Total Acres Maintained Per Park Category, 2011



The acreage maintained does not equate to hours spent maintaining each park category, however. Special-use parks and specialty gardens have the most acreage, followed by greenbelts and natural areas—which have the lowest number of hours spent for any park category. Downtown parks and mini/pocket parks, the two most expensive types to maintain, comprise 54 acres. The next figure shows the cost per acre to maintain each park type.

Figure 53: Total Maintenance Cost Per Acre/Per Park Category, 2011 (Parks Resources Only)



As shown above, maintenance cost per acre varies widely by park category. There are multiple reasons for this variation that include the park’s size, layout, assets, manner of use, and location. The high cost per acre to maintain downtown parks illustrates this, and shows why some parks cost more to maintain than others. Downtown park maintenance requires:

- Three to four visits a day for litter, garbage, and human waste removal.
- Daily rinsing and bi-weekly pressure washing.
- Staff members working in pairs for safety.
- Intensive gardening due to frequent vandalism.
- Costly fountain maintenance.
- Flexibility due to heavy event scheduling.

Mini and pocket parks have one of the same issues as downtown parks—they are small. Maintenance crews spend a great deal of time working on hedge and shrub upkeep. The small size of the parks eliminates any economies of scale, and crews must spend more time shuttling between parks. Mini and pocket parks do not have as many sanitation issues as downtown parks, but the typically small sizes of parks in both categories causes both to be relatively expensive to maintain.

Parks in the other park categories cost much less per acre to maintain. Neighborhood, community, and regional parks often have more types of assets requiring maintenance than do mini and pocket parks (comfort stations, play areas, athletic fields, irrigation systems), but economies of scale allow maintenance crews to complete tasks more efficiently. Boulevards/green streets/greenways/trails, special-use parks/specialty gardens, and greenbelts/natural areas require less maintenance and can use more volunteer hours than other park types.

Planning and Development

Division Overview

The Planning and Development Division (PDD) oversees the planning, design, development, and management of the City's park system, and provides the ongoing technical and engineering support needed to facilitate day-to-day operations and maintenance activities. This work includes planning and implementing capital improvement and major maintenance projects, engineering and design services, surveys, construction inspections, property acquisitions, real estate management, and the Seattle



Opening Bell Street Park

Conservation Corps. This work is central to the growth and long term sustainability of the parks and recreation system. It is central to maintaining the Parks Legacy.

Parks Planning, Project Management, and Public Information

The Planning and Development Division manages the implementation of levy, major maintenance, and Parks-related Neighborhood Matching Fund projects, and serves on interdepartmental or interagency project teams including Central Waterfront planning, Washington Park Arboretum management, the City's Neighborhood planning efforts and most Parks planning efforts. In 2012, project management staff oversaw roughly 150 Parks capital projects – in various stages of development, these projects include development of shoreline street ends and trails, new neighborhood parks, play areas, skateparks, sprayparks, golf course improvements, and facility development and renovation.

Parks Planning is involved in many planning activities that involve both park assets and programming. Some of these activities include:

- Development of the six year Asset Management Plan, a compendium of major maintenance needs and priorities upon which Parks' major maintenance Capital Improvement Program is based

- Environmental permitting, planning, and coordination: SEPA, shoreline permits, site remediation permitting, etc.
- Interdepartmental coordination with Seattle Public Utilities, Department of Neighborhoods, and other City departments
- Historic Preservation permitting and liaison with the Friends of Seattle’s Olmsted Parks
- Developing plans such as the Open Space Gap Report, the Parks Development Plan, waterfront plans, the Citywide Skatepark plan, the Golf Master plan; developing plans for individual sites such as roofing studies, water quality studies, and architectural and engineering assessments
- Leading special studies such as mountain bike trail feasibility, Volunteer Park Conservatory sustainability study, etc
- Public outreach for plans, projects, and grant proposals
- Analysis, evaluation, and cost estimation of grant proposals

The role of planning is crucial in the design and development of capital projects, maintenance of the facilities, and in fostering strong partnerships with the public, other divisions within Parks, and with other City agencies. The outcome of these efforts is a park system that reflects public needs and desires.

Engineering, Design, and Technical Services

Parks Engineering and Design Services supports the Planning and Development group by developing design and construction standards tailored to Parks’ needs, assisting in CIP planning and budgeting, reviewing all design proposals and construction documents for adherence to Parks’ standards, administering the Public Works construction program, and performing project design and management services as staffing permits. They support the Property Management group by providing survey and geotechnical analysis services, and support Parks Resources and Operations groups in a variety of ways, including:

- Assessing and monitoring the condition of Parks’ aging infrastructure
- Developing and refining candidate project proposals for CIP and major maintenance funding
- Investigating accidents and natural events that damage Parks facilities
- Responding to injury and damage claims
- Representing Parks in the development of Citywide standards
- Representing Parks’ interests with respect to code revisions
- Informing Parks staff regarding code and standard revisions that impact Parks facilities and Best Management Practices
- Responding to landslides and performing geotechnical analysis
- Coordinating with FEMA during emergencies
- Reviewing private and public non-Parks construction projects or proposals that impact park property
- Providing technical assistance to Parks Resources and Recreation staff

- Providing design services for facility renovations and reforestation projects
- Troubleshooting operational and warranty issues
- Maintaining record drawings and documents

Engineering & Design also provides essential services to meet the needs of the citizens relative to technical issues. They frequently respond to citizen concerns about park design, development, and construction. The group works with community organizations to help implement neighborhood based projects and they assist local sports groups and leagues with athletic based proposals.

Property and Acquisition Services

Property and Acquisition Services provides a wide range of support services to the Department and the public. This small group maintains property files containing 100+ years of park histories, legal documents, agreements, permits and information telling us what we own, where it is, when and how we got it and what features or conditions may affect its use. GIS (geographic information systems) staff maintain and update information and present it in various digital and visual formats to make it readily understandable and usable for planners, project managers, decision-makers, line staff, and the public.

Property and Acquisitions staff work with communities to identify potential park sites, respond to neighborhood concerns and issues, research site conditions, account for financial and environmental considerations, and negotiate potential purchases. In 2012, Parks acquired seven new properties with Parks and Green Spaces Levy funds. Since 2000, Parks has acquired more than 260 acres of new park land. Acquiring contiguous properties to current parkland enables better land management and programming.

Property staff continue to work on preventing and eliminating encroachments and private non-park uses of park lands. Many park neighbors voluntarily maintain portions of the park or boulevard adjacent to their property. Unfortunately, some neighbors landscape parkland or make other adjustments—adding fences, other structures, etc.—that capture parkland for private purposes. By managing park property boundaries, parks become easier to maintain.

Seattle Conservation Corps

The Seattle Conservation Corps is a unique Parks program that provides homeless adults opportunities to train and work in a structured program that teaches them job skills and allows them to carry out projects that benefit our City and our environment. The program gives back to the community in two ways. First, the Corps provides training and counseling for homeless people so that they can successfully compete for viable, living-wage jobs. Second, it provides construction and other valuable services, not only for Parks, but for other agencies and employers.

Major benefits of the Seattle Conservation Corps:

- Comprehensive case management services and hands-on occupational and work readiness training helps individuals remove barriers to employment and helps to open the door for personal and economic stability.
- City departments and other local agencies contract with SCC crews for capital improvement projects that improve City resources and services.
- SCC participants earn income and reduce their reliance on social services, public assistance, and housing programs. SCC participants have reduced recidivism rates and become contributing members of the community. 75% completed the program and left with employment.

Budget Impacts and Efficiencies in Planning and Development

Currently, Capital Improvement Project funds staff the Planning and Development Division (PDD). There is little staff capacity for projects or issues not directly related to capital projects. Community-driven initiatives require PDD to “cobble together” staff required to address these requests. Recent staff reductions in Planning and Development include:

- 2011 – position reductions, saving \$310,000
- 2012 – eliminated several planning, administrative, and project management positions, saving \$737,000

Impacts from the lack of General Fund positions reduced staff capacity to:

- Work on citizen-initiated projects that do not have an associated capital project funding source
- Work with potential partners on design ideas to improve the park system
- Begin to address the backlog and increasing number of illegal encroachments on park property
- Fully participate in other City initiatives that may have impacts on park property
- Provide quick turnaround for other Parks divisions on small renovation, alteration, technical, or infrastructure projects that need some level of design expertise
- Provide technical expertise when natural disasters and other emergency situations occur
- Implement systematic changes for larger building or infrastructure conservation measures

Major Maintenance and Asset Management

Parks’ 2013-2018 Asset Management Plan is a compilation of all known major maintenance needs necessary to keep Parks’ assets in safe and operable condition. There are nearly 300 projects totaling nearly \$267 million listed in the Asset Management Plan—shown in **Table 5**. Projects are ranked in

priority order, with top priorities proposed for funding in Parks and Recreation’s Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

Major maintenance is funded by the Cumulative Reserve Subfund (CRS), a portion of revenue from the Real Estate Investment Tax (REET), a tax imposed on the sale of properties and on new building construction. Due to the real estate market’s variable nature and pressures created by City departments’ competing priorities, major maintenance funding fluctuates. The major maintenance backlog, a list of needed yet unfunded projects, increases annually. In order to *not* have an ever-increasing list of needed projects, and to begin to reduce the backlog, major maintenance funding would need to provide about \$38 million a year. Not even since the real estate boom of 2007 and 2008 has such a funding level occurred. Without a larger and more stable source of major maintenance funds, short-term ongoing maintenance costs will continue to rise as, for example, more roofs go unfunded for replacement and require patches; in the long-term, some facilities’ structural integrity may fail, resulting in building closure.

Table 5: Asset Management Schedule by Asset Category (in millions)

Asset Category	Current Backlog	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
Aquatic & Swimming Facilities	9,825	5,366	1,416	1,857	63	249	491	19,267
Buildings- Community Centers	376		4,410	672	6,360		4,662	16,480
Buildings- General	4,814	7,641	4,906	2,960	2,710	2,710	2,935	28,676
Buildings- Magnuson	38,835	1,538				14,200		54,573
Central Waterfront & Aquarium	2,412	1,122	1,374	22,286	859			28,053
Infrastructure	8,914	9,463	8,478	4,615	3,806	3,038	3,538	41,852
Playfields, Courts & Play Areas	3,850	12,667	14,513	8,474	10,150	5,650	7,942	63,246
Site Accessibility/ADA	115							115
Urban Forests & Trails		2,189	2,242	2,669	2,669	2,669	2,669	15,107
Total	69,141	39,986	37,339	43,533	26,617	28,516	22,237	267,369

Another way to look at Parks’ Asset Management Plan is through the programs in the Plan, for in addition to individual projects, the Asset Management Plan includes 18 programs. Programs consist of many smaller/lower-cost projects that affect the performance of individual assets, but would not likely compete well as individual projects. As a group, these programs undertake hundreds of projects that extend the life cycle of the assets and improve safety, thus providing cost-savings to Parks. For example,

by reroofing a small building with Parks staff, the building is protected, the public and staff are better-served by a dry building, and it costs less than having an outside contractor do the work. Similarly, utility conservation projects help reduce operating and maintenance costs, and Parks is demonstrating its leadership and commitment to conserving natural resources. Finally, undertaking crack repairs and adding new surfacing to tennis courts gives a court at least 10 more years of wear and improves safety for the players. While Parks doesn't rank these programs like individual projects, they are important and are automatically put at the top of the recommended funding list (before the scored projects).

The 2013-2018 Asset Management Plan (AMP) recommends funding the following 18 programs, shown in **Table 6**.

Table 6: Asset Management Plan: On-going Programs

- Ballfield Minor Capital Improvement
- Boiler and Mechanical Replacement
- Electrical System Replacement
- Environmental Remediation
- HVAC System Duct cleaning - Large Buildings
- Irrigation Replacement
- Landscape Replacement
- Neighborhood Response
- Parks Upgrade
- Pavement restoration
- Play Area Safety
- Small Roof
- Tennis and Basketball Court Small Scale Renovation
- Trail Renovation
- Urban Forestry: Forest Restoration
- Urban Forestry: Green Seattle Partnership
- Urban forestry: Tree Replacement
- Utility Conservation

Regional Parks and Strategic Outreach

Division Overview

The Regional Parks and Strategic Outreach Division (RPSO) oversees major parks and ongoing relationships with community groups, advocates, and people interested in regional park development and operations. The division's central goals are to provide consistent, high-level management of regional parks, strengthen relationships with key partners, build community engagement, and advance capacity building within partnerships. The division also delivers certain park and recreation services.



Regional Parks

The RPSO Division is responsible for community relationship management for our regional parks—center city parks, Magnuson, Gas Works, Lincoln, Discovery, Seward, Green Lake, Alki, and Myrtle Edwards. This role also includes stewarding park operational plans (where applicable), interpreting City policies related to use of these parks, acting as the liaison with local chambers and community councils, and ensuring that underserved populations' needs and interests are considered.

Center City Parks Initiative

Healthy downtown parks are critical to the social, emotional, and economic well-being of our community. Keeping parks positive and welcoming in an urban environment requires constant effort and strategic, daily positive activation, with a high level of maintenance. This unit works with downtown partners to help build and maintain a robust, efficient, and nimble approach to center city opportunities and issues. This function includes a dynamic park activation program and maintenance and park cleaning programs.

- Downtown Seattle is our economic engine; it is home to 41 percent of Seattle's jobs and generates 61 percent of our tax revenue.
- Right now, nearly 40,000 people call the downtown neighborhoods home. That will double by 2030.
- Tourism is also up ; overnight stays in Seattle increased 3.6 percent in 2011.
- The Port set a record for cruise ship boardings.
- Travelers to the city and county spent \$5.9 billion while visiting, an increase of 6.6 percent. The taxes they paid also went up 6.6 percent.

Magnuson Park Unit

In the last decade, cities have realized the importance of active urban parks. The roles of urban parks range from athletic complexes, public arts, community gathering spaces (outdoor special event venues) to simply providing natural areas for passive relaxation—the city’s breathing space. Well known examples include Central Park in New York, The Presidio in San Francisco, Balboa Park in San Diego, and Hyde Park in London.

Key to these parks’ success is comprehensive landscape and programming plans and long-term operating, capital improvement, and maintenance funding. Magnuson Park in its own right is unique among former military bases conveyed through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) program. It is one of the largest conveyances in terms of building square footage intended for “park and recreation use in perpetuity.” The Historic District includes three other property owners, each with specific goals: the University of Washington focuses on education-related uses; Solid Ground supports the transitional homeless and provides low-income housing; SDOT supports the street network. During the 1990s, the City took the lead role in providing planning, construction, programming and maintenance coordination. In 2000, this role and staffing was transferred to Seattle Parks.

Discovery Park Unit

With more than 554 acres, Discovery Park represents roughly nine percent of the total parks system and one fourth of Seattle’s natural open area. It is the city’s largest park. This unit works to further the mission of providing a strong, well organized and unified regional, urban park, a decisive framework in the tradition of the Olmsteds’ park design. Staff work to develop community capacity, civic engagement in event production, reforestation work and increased activation, and wide community use of the park.

Events, Permits, and Athletic Field Scheduling Unit

Parks' outdoor and indoor use permits cover a wide range of services which result in citizens gaining access to beautiful and attractive spaces for public and private uses. Seattle Parks and Recreation issues about 6,700 outdoor park use permits every year for festivals, tournaments, sports, charity events, park events, weddings, ceremonies, picnics, filming, and many other activities that help build community, encourage interaction of diverse communities and enrich our citizens' lives.

In addition to permits for use of park spaces, the Event Scheduling office issues approximately 240 annual permits for unique Parks structures that include Golden Gardens Bathhouse, Pritchard Beach Bathhouse, Ward Springs Pump house, Cal Anderson Shelter house, Alki Bathhouse, Dakota Place Building and Mt. Baker Rowing and Sailing Center. Parks' indoor venues provide affordable, high quality rental options for Seattle citizens in all income ranges. These venues are ideal for weddings, ceremonies, parties and meetings.

Golf Unit

Golfers play more than 200,000 rounds of golf annually at Parks' four public golf courses, three driving ranges and par-3 pitch and putt course. Revenue from green fees, driving range fees, restaurants and merchandise sales covers the courses' operating costs and provides for ongoing major maintenance work and major golf improvements. Seattle's golf courses include West Seattle, Jefferson Park, Jackson Park, and Interbay golf courses.

Tennis and Amy Yee Tennis Center

Seattle Parks manages 144—71 lit—outdoor tennis courts throughout the city. Courts are available for recreational tennis players, schools, and tournament play. Courts can be reserved through the Events, Permits and Athletic Field Scheduling office.

The Amy Yee Tennis Center is the largest public tennis center facility in the Puget Sound area, and has been since it was opened in 1977. The Center has ten indoor courts and six outdoor courts and welcomes more than 100,000 visitors each year from the greater Seattle area.

A second indoor facility, Tennis Center at Sand Point, will open soon at Magnuson Park through a public/private partnership with Seattle Courts Sports Unlimited. It features 10 tennis courts, a viewing platform, Wi-Fi Internet access, locker rooms, a full service café and a pro shop

Program Snapshots

The program snapshots that appear on the following pages are intended to provide more detailed synopses of specific park and recreation programs. Each snapshot presents information about a program, and a synopsis of the resident survey and national trends data pertinent to each.

In this draft report we propose goal statements designed to preserve the legacy and move us toward a sustainable future.

Contents

Athletics.....	118
Golf	120
Tennis and Amy Yee Tennis Center.....	122
Lifelong Recreation.....	124
Specialized Programs	126
Aquatics.....	128
Summer Beaches, Wading Pools, and Sprayparks	128
Swimming Pools.....	129
Small Craft Centers	131
Community Centers	132
Teen Programs.....	135
Youth Employment and Service Learning.....	135
Outdoor Opportunities (O2).....	136
Youth Violence Prevention Initiative	136
Late Night Recreation	137
Park Cleaning, Maintenance and Landscaping.....	140
Facility Maintenance.....	141
Major Maintenance and Asset Management	142
Natural Resources Unit.....	144
Specialty Gardens and Arboretum	145
Trails Program	147
Urban Forestry, Natural Area Restoration and Wildlife Management	148
Seattle Conservation Corps	150
Communication.....	153
Human Resources	155
Property Management and Acquisition	157
Safety	158
Technology.....	159
Volunteer Programs.....	160

Athletics

Athletic Programs and Field Rentals

Citywide Athletics offers activities for both youth and adults, including basketball, flag football and volleyball. Youth-only sports include a large track and field program and girls volleyball. Adult-only recreational sports include dodgeball and kickball.

Approximately one-third of the Citywide Athletics budget is related to the sports programs it offers. The remaining two-thirds of the Citywide Athletics budget is related to field and stadium use. Citywide Athletics schedules 204 athletic fields, four school district athletic complexes, 144 tennis courts and two multi-use courts that host dodgeball, bike polo and roller hockey.

As shown in **Figure 16**, 39% of phone survey respondents use Parks athletic fields monthly or more. The highest participation rates belonged to 34-54 year olds, 35% of which use fields weekly or more. The racial breakdown of those using athletic fields weekly or more is: African-American: 26%; Asian: 21%; Hispanic: 20%; Other: 23%; White: 18%. As shown in **Figure 22**, 57% of phone respondents ranked athletic fields as an 8, 9, or 10 on a scale of importance from 1 to 10, putting it in the second tier of recreation services. 40% of teen survey respondents (not a statistically valid survey), as shown in **Figure 17**, reported using athletic fields weekly or more.

Demand for field use continues to increase. Emerging sports like lacrosse and disc ultimate are placing more pressure on field use, and Seattle's largest age group, those aged 24-35, plays team sports at a higher rate than other age groups. Converting already-lit grass fields to synthetic turf increases efficiency by maximizing previous investments in lights, while expanding the amount and duration of scheduled time available—increasing revenue.



Go outside and play!

In 2011, Parks booked 93,653 hours of play time at our 204 athletic fields.

If those hours were played on one field, it would equal more than 10 years of continuous 24-hour-a-day play.

Athletic Field Maintenance

Parks operates 16 sites with synthetic fields. Synthetic turf fields have a life expectancy of 8-12 years, but only two of Parks' 16 fields were replaced in the last 12 years. Parks recently acquired a machine that prolongs the life of synthetic fields by cleaning and decompacting the carpet, and the more effort that goes into maintenance, repair and decompaction, the safer and more playable the fields are. Natural grass athletic fields require fertilizing, aerifying, overseeding and top dressing once per season to stay green and healthy. Field users currently prep fields for games as volunteers—but some teams have fewer resources and volunteer time for all fields to be prepared to the same standard.

Challenges in the maintenance of Parks' athletic fields partially result from the lack of a dedicated athletic field maintenance program, leading to below-standard turf quality in many locations due to compaction, irrigation issues, soil quality, and grading.

Table 7: Citywide Athletics Data Summary, 2011

Participation	1,840,449
Fields Revenue *	\$2,400,000
Fields Expenses *	\$210,000
Programs Revenue *	\$241,301
Programs Expenses *	\$831,700
Basic Services Rank: Youth Athletics	Considerable Community Benefit
Basic Services Rank: Adult Athletics	Individual/Community Benefit

*The split between field rentals and Parks-run programs is an approximation; detailed analysis will be added in the final Parks Legacy Plan.

Participation on Parks athletic fields in 2011 was over 1.8 million including players and spectators. In the Legacy Plan Survey, athletic fields received a score of 7.4 out of 10 in a rating of importance (with 10 very important), seventh on the list of fourteen programs.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure all people have access to athletic opportunities.
- Ensure our athletic fields serve as places where people can pursue both historic and emerging sports, participate in a community of recreation enthusiasts, and enhance their health and well-being.
- Offer sports programs, activities, and events to Seattle's changing population where other providers are not meeting the need or demand.

Golf

More than 200,000 rounds of golf are played annually at Parks' four public courses, three driving ranges, and the pitch-and-putt course. Revenue from greens fees, driving range fees, restaurants and merchandise sales covers the courses' operating costs and provides for ongoing major maintenance work and major golf improvements. Premier Golf operates the courses—and in 2011, renewed their contract for ten years—while Parks runs the ground maintenance operations.



Seattle-area schools hold practices and competitions at Parks' courses, and a combination of various youth programs host approximately 40,000 kids each year, including the Special Olympics. Golf clubhouses serve as de facto community centers: neighbors frequently meet and socialize at clubhouse cafes and larger-scale social events are common. Each course has a Men's and Women's Club; together they conduct up to 16 tournaments annually. Courses and clubhouses also host corporate events, weddings, and banquets.

Parks' golf courses provide a high-quality golf experience for golfers who cannot afford to play at private clubs, and have built a strong tradition—Seattle's golfers are passionate and form long-standing relationships with 'their' courses. Seattle was one of the first communities to attract and assimilate a diverse community into golf. Jefferson Park Golf Course was the first course in the country to recognize an African-American club, followed shortly by an Asian golfers club. In addition to providing high quality golf experiences, golf courses provide green breathing room for the city, animal habitat, and recreation opportunities like the new five-mile trail around Jefferson Park Golf Course.

Did you know...

In 2011, Parks donated more than 300 rounds of 18-hole golf in support of community nonprofits such as El Centro de la Raza and Kin On.

The Golf program's financial sustainability depends on the City continuing to provide competitive courses and amenities for golfers. Developed in 2009, the Golf Master Plan provides a blueprint to ensure long-term sustainability of the Golf program. Clubhouse upgrades, such as the currently funded redevelopment of the Jefferson Park Clubhouse and driving range, provide revenue-generating opportunities for the golf program and gathering places for the community. Other improvements, such as the recently completed perimeter trail around the Jackson course, allow the public to enjoy the natural environment of the course.

While national trends show a slight decrease in golf participation, the Legacy Plan Survey shows 10% of respondents play at a Seattle public course monthly or more, and the program operates at a profit.

Table 8: Golf Data Summary, 2011

Attendance	419,570
City Revenue	\$9,475,135
City Expenses	\$8,988,698
Cost Recovery	105%
Basic Services Rank: Youth Golf	Considerable Individual
Basic Services Rank: Adult Golf	Mostly Individual

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure all people have access to golf.
- Manage our golf courses in a way that maintains their long-term viability both as a place for the game of golf to be enjoyed but also as a vital habitat and open space resource for our increasingly dense city.

Tennis and Amy Yee Tennis Center

Parks operates 144 outdoor tennis courts throughout the City, 71 with lights. The courts serve recreational tennis players, schools and tournament players. Courts can be reserved through Parks' Athletics Scheduling Office, or can be played on a first come, first served basis. A fee is charged to reserve a court.

The Amy Yee Tennis Center is the largest public tennis facility in the Puget Sound area, and has been since it opened in 1977. The Center has ten indoor courts and six outdoor courts, and welcomes more than 100,000 visitors each year from the greater Seattle area. Thirty-six total weeks of programming are offered annually in six-week sessions for both adults and children aged 4-17. Approximately \$3,000 in scholarships is awarded each year to junior program participants. Combined, programs and court rentals allow this facility to generate more revenue than expense.



Did you know...

In 2011, Parks hosted nine tennis tournaments with 1,600 participants, the proceeds of which helped support the junior scholarship and facility expansion.

A second indoor facility is under construction at Magnuson Park through a partnership with Seattle Court Sports Unlimited. When completed, Seattle's tennis players will have ten new indoor courts to enjoy at no cost to the City to build.

The Tennis Center also hosts nine tournaments annually, provides hundreds of hours of court time for the US Tennis Association adult and junior tennis leagues, and works with community partners to provide outreach to at-risk and low-income youth. Outreach programs are expanding to community centers through Quickstart, an under-12 summer program.

The Amy Yee facility is aging and in need of major capital maintenance such as paint and court resurfacing. The Tennis Center Advisory Council is working to expand the facility by raising funds to build five more indoor courts.

Table 9: Amy Yee Tennis Center Data Summary, 2011

Attendance	93,491
City Revenue	\$1,202,952
City Expenses	\$1,185,852
Cost Recovery	101%
Basic Services Rank (Tennis)	Mostly Individual

Outdoor tennis courts suffer through Seattle’s rainy, cold season, and court maintenance cannot keep up with needed repairs. The Tennis and Basketball Court program in the Parks Asset Management Plan has a \$1.1 million backlog in recognized, needed court maintenance. While the Amy Yee Tennis Center continues to bring in revenues that more than cover expenses, survey responses show that outdoor tennis courts are not widely used. Only 3% of residents say they use them weekly, 8% use them monthly, and 11% use them yearly. Another 77% said they use courts rarely or never.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure all people have access to tennis.

Lifelong Recreation

Many health studies have shown that older adults who stay physically active and socially engaged are much healthier than those who are not active. Lifelong Recreation serves older adults by offering classes, trips, and activities focusing on physical activity, social engagement, education, arts and creativity, and healthy lifestyles. Parks offers recreation programs for adults who are physically active, entry programs for those who are just becoming active, and programs for those who have age-related limitations. Program staff and instructors have the training and experience to work with adults who have special needs and requirements.



Lifelong Recreation has many partners that include Group Health, the Alzheimer’s Association, University of Washington, Parkinson’s Association and “Outdoors for All.” Parks also provides outreach programs to immigrant and refugee communities through our Food and Fitness program. These provide a combination of fitness and meal sharing that celebrates Korean, Vietnamese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Somali cultures. More than 400 people walk each month with volunteer leaders from the Sound Steps program. In the Legacy Plan Survey, programs and activities for people older than 50 received a score of 6.8 out of 10 in a rating of importance (with 10 very important), eleventh on the list of fourteen programs.

Finding space for programs and having enough staff for planning and programming are the primary challenges for the Lifelong Recreation Program. As described in the recreation trends report, baby boomers (born 1945-1964) tend to recreate individually rather than on teams; they tend to participate in outdoor activities at a higher rate; and a high number engage in fitness activities. People ages 65 and older who are inactive and do not participate in recreation activities, are interested in trying working out using machines, swimming, and fitness classes.

Did you know...

In 2011, the Sound Steps walking program provided walking opportunities at more than 35 sites every month and sponsored 30 special events involving 1,100 senior walkers.

Table 10: Data Summary - Lifelong Recreation, 2011

Attendance	69,130
City Revenue	\$100,857
City Expenses	\$708,556
Cost Recovery	14%
Basic Services Rank	Individual - Community Benefit

The Washington State Office of Financial Management projected the percent of King County's population over 65 through 2040, and while King County's senior population is lower than the national average, their share of the total population is projected to grow over time, to almost 20% of the county's population by 2040.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Create recreation and social engagement opportunities so older adults remain healthy and actively involved and engaged as part of our community.

Specialized Programs

Specialized Programs provides affordable, accessible, and adaptive recreation programs for youth and adults with disabilities. The goal of the program is to provide people with disabilities the same opportunities that are available to others in the community. Specialized Programs also provides technical knowledge, assistance and resources to other City programs and community-based agencies. Staff members serve people with a wide range of disabilities, and programs are designed to fit participants' wide-ranging needs—from basic social interactions and communication to skills for living independently. Specialized Programs also provides information and support to parents, families, and community members who are helping a child or adult with disabilities.



Specialized Programs offers many classes, programs, and events in multiple categories—fitness, sports, education, social recreation, cooking, arts and crafts, and health. People with a wide range of disabilities can choose from field trips, dances, teen clubs, environmental learning, outdoor recreation, and seasonal events like the Special Olympics.

Specialized Programs meets a significant need in the community by offering recreation programs for people with disabilities. Parks is one of the few providers in the region of programs for people with disabilities, and the only provider that can align a professional recreation staff with the vast recreation infrastructure of Seattle Parks. In the PLP survey, programs for people with special needs received a score of 7.4 out of 10 in a rating of importance, 8th out of 14 programs listed. The program is viewed as a core service—providing a benefit to the community as a whole—and fees are non-existent or low, which results in a low level of cost recovery. Supplementing city funds with grants, sponsorships and partnerships could increase programming and perhaps decrease or stabilize City funding.

Did you know...

In 2011, 450 adults and youth with disabilities participated in eight different sports programs, leading some to participate in local and state Special Olympics.

Table 11: Data Summary - Specialized Programs, 2011

Attendance	13,922
City Revenue	\$14,933
City Expenses	\$736,008
Cost Recovery	2%
Basic Services Rank	Considerable Community Benefit

Seattle Parks is an approved DSHS DDD respite provider and received reimbursement for services from the state of WA. There are no other publicly subsidized programs in Seattle that offer the range of recreation programs that Seattle Parks does. While specialized programs are viewed as a core service, providing a benefit to youth and adults with disabilities, fees are non-existent or low, resulting in a low cost-recovery.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Provide welcoming, accessible, and affordable recreation and social programs and activities to enrich the lives of people with disabilities and their families and welcome them as part of the community.

Aquatics

Parks aquatics programs celebrate a community connected to the water by providing safe, healthy, fun, water-related programs. From learning to swim to excelling at rowing, aquatics programs have life changing impacts for the people of our community. Values at the heart of Parks aquatics programs are:

- Providing diverse, accessible opportunities, such as the Women of the World Swim;
- Improving physical and social health;
- Incorporating environmental sustainability, such as with conversion of wading pools to spray parks (water conservation); and
- Above all, infusing water safety education and practices in all that we provide.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure fun and safe water experiences by providing a diverse range of healthy, accessible aquatic programs that continue our legacy of water safety.
- Ensure our aquatics facilities are physically and emotionally safe and welcoming places for individual enrichment and community growth.

Summer Beaches, Wading Pools, and Sprayparks

The Summer Beach program provides lifeguards at nine beaches: two on Green Lake and seven on Lake Washington. During the 10-week summer program, beach staff provide free and safe swimming for more than 230,000 swimmers and each year rescue about 100 swimmers. The Summer Beach program has operated for 45 years without a drowning at a Parks-lifeguarded beach.



Parks offers free swim lessons daily at all nine beaches, and the free Lifeguard Training Team program connects a diverse group of local youth to lifeguarding courses, CPR/First Aid certification courses, job training, and positive peer to peer interactions. In the Legacy Plan Survey 66% of respondents with children attend public beaches monthly or more. Having lifeguards at public beaches received an average score of 7.9 out of 10 on a rating of importance (with 10 very important), fifth on the list of 14 programs.

Parks offers 16 wading pools and seven spray parks distributed throughout the city. Wading pools open on warm summer days and are primarily used by families as a place to cool off and play. State law requires wading pools be staffed in order to be open. Parks has recently converted three wading pools

to sprayparks and has seen efficiencies in staffing and utility costs. Sprayparks provide summer fun for toddlers up through elementary school aged children, are self-activating, and do not require staffing during operating hours. Attendance at wading pools varies by location. For example, the Green Lake wading pool generally has the highest attendance, averaging more than 20,000 users per season.

Table 12: Data Summary - Beaches and Wading Pools, 2011

Attendance	302,621
City Revenue	\$2,994
City Expenses	\$747,853
Cost Recovery	0%
Basic Services Rank	Mostly Community Benefit

To achieve staffing and energy efficiencies, Parks has closed some wading pools, converted others into sprayparks and upgraded water delivery systems, for a total savings of \$173,000.

Swimming Pools

Parks and Recreation operates eight indoor pools that operate year-round and two outdoor pools that operate in summer months only. The indoor pools all have six 25-yard long lanes, and two have additional shallow water areas.

Use of the indoor pools includes swim and water safety lessons and fitness classes, and time for lap swims and general public swims. There are also various special events, swim team rentals, summer swim team programs, use by Seattle high schools for their swim teams, and other rentals (e.g., scuba classes). Each pool is operated by

Parks staff and revenue from swim fees and class registration covers a substantial amount of the staffing, utilities and operating costs of the pools.



Coleman Pool

Parks staff reach out to communities and families to inform them of lesson opportunities and scholarships and Parks provides culturally specific swimming opportunities, such as Women of the World Swims.

Blocks of time are set aside at each of the eight indoor pools for school programs under the School-Parks Agreement that involves a sharing of public facilities with the Seattle Public Schools. This time is not available for lessons, lap swims, adult swim, or other activities that would otherwise generate revenues. In contrast, the two outdoor pools (Colman, a 50 meter outdoor pool and Lowery C. “Pop” Mounger,

with a 25 yard lap pool and a smaller warm water pool) both realized sufficient revenues in both 2011 and 2012 to essentially cover operating costs.

Figure 30: Swimming Participation, 2012 (Regional Recreation Trends)

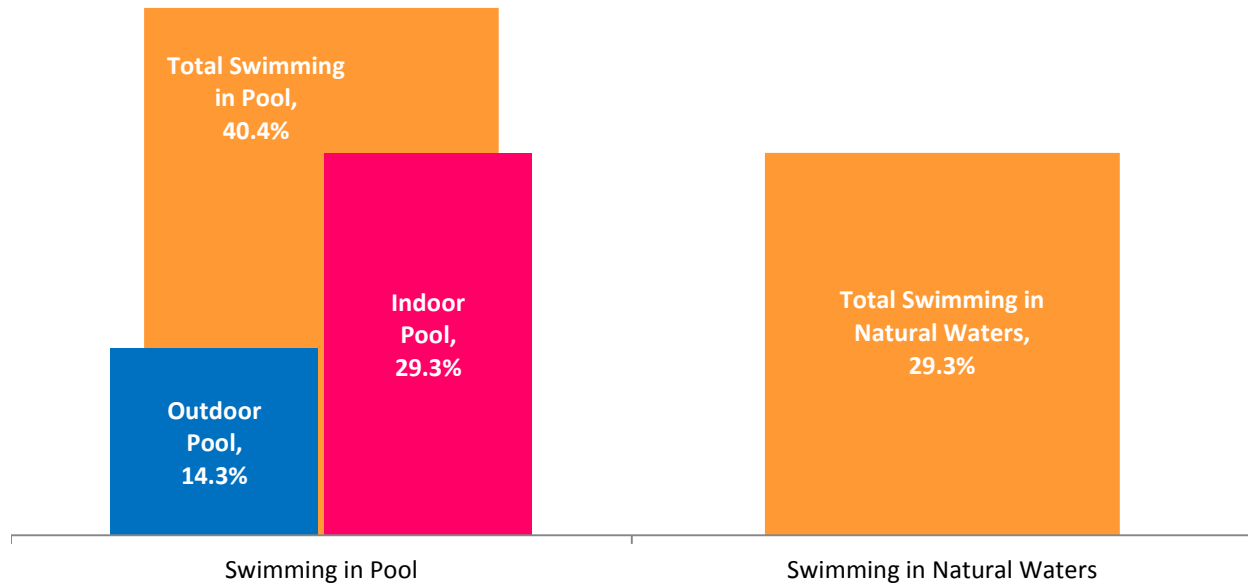


Table 13: Data Summary - Swimming Pools, 2011

Attendance	1,573,075
City Revenue	\$3,829,707
City Expenses	\$8,120,484
Cost Recovery	47%
Basic Services Rank	Mostly Community Benefit

Both the trends report and survey show that swimming in general and swimming pools have a good deal of support. Parks does not plan at this time to build new pools based on their high capital and operating costs.

Small Craft Centers

Parks operates two boating centers in partnership with the Associated Recreation Council. Green Lake Small Craft Center is located on the south shore of Green Lake, and Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center is situated on the shores of Lake Washington. Together, the centers host the largest after school youth rowing program in the region. Green Lake Small Craft Center hosts three major rowing regattas throughout the year, and Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center complements the schedule with several smaller sailing regattas.



All-day summer camps are extremely popular at the boating centers. Campers can choose from a variety of programs to further their skills in a water sport of their choice. Summer boating outreach visits to community centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and other facilities bring smiles to many campers who would rarely get a chance otherwise to have a safe and fun experience on the City's many waterways.

In 2011, City funding of the Small Craft program of \$428,752 was supplemented by \$1,081,741 in advisory council programming at the two boating centers. The success of the advisory council programming, and the ability to serve diverse communities and young people, is contingent on maintaining City support. Program pricing has been adjusted to reflect the priority to keep youth pricing low while remaining competitive with non-City boating centers for adult programs. While statistics in the Trends Report show 11.5% of respondents in the Seattle-King County region participate in canoeing and rowing, a decrease in adult attendance at our facilities between 2010 and 2011 may indicate that adult demand is elastic and that further increases in adult fees may not increase revenues.

Table 14: Data Summary - Small Craft Centers, 2011

Attendance	124,554
City Revenue	\$100,817
City Expenses	\$428,752
Cost Recovery	24%
Basic Services Rank	Considerable Individual Benefit

Parks recently completed a review of the small craft centers. The key recommendations from that review were to continue City funding support, while increasing partnership opportunities.

Community Centers

Parks’ 26 community centers are neighborhood gathering places where residents can meet, celebrate, and enjoy a variety of social, athletic, cultural, and recreational activities. At Parks’ safe, accessible centers, people meet their neighbors, experience diversity, and often overcome fears of the unknown. Most centers are equipped with kitchens, multi-purpose rooms, classrooms, gyms, spaces for child care and teen programming, computer labs, and weight/fitness rooms. Community centers are also available for private rentals such as wedding receptions, conferences, and sporting events.



Mayor Murray at International District/Chinatown CC

Working closely with our partners at ARC and the community center advisory councils allows each facility to offer a variety of programs and opportunities. Budget reductions over the past several years led parks to reorganize community center operations into a more cost-effective geographic management model. The reorganization allows for coordination of programming between centers. ARC contributed \$450,000 in both 2012 and 2013 to fund 11 assistant coordinator positions—an unsustainable model.

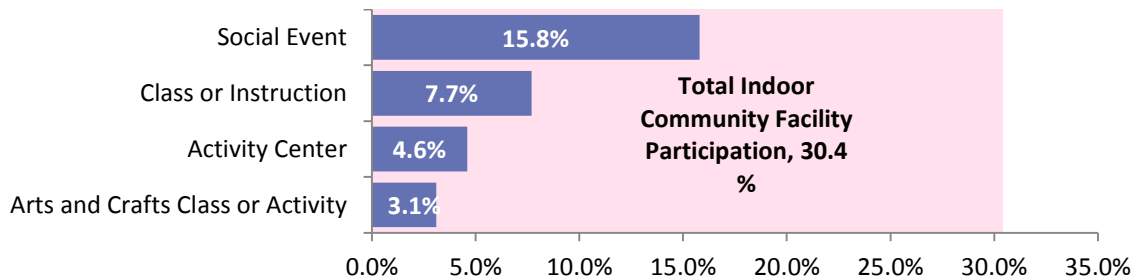
Centers offer lifelong recreation programs, before- and after-school programs for youth and teens, food, fitness and health programs, arts and music, community basketball, intergenerational programs, late night recreation programs for teens and other drop-in activities.

Hours for drop-in and programmed activities provide a safe place for youth, teens and young adults to gather. Keeping centers open at night gives youth a choice other than “hanging out” in the streets and provides a healthy location with adult supervision and activities such as basketball, board games, computer labs, volleyball, a place to listen to music, use of the weight rooms, ping pong tables, and safe places to gather and talk.

Table 15: Data Summary - Community Centers, 2011

Attendance	1,378,812
City Revenue	\$1,539,927
City Expenses	\$13,890,888
Cost Recovery	11%
Basic Services Rank	Mostly Community Benefit

**Figure 29: Percent Using Indoor Community Facilities in Seattle-King Region, 2012
(Regional Recreation Trends)**



32% percent of Legacy Plan Survey respondents said they visit a community center or other facility monthly or more; however, there was no particular community center or facility that residents said they use most often, as shown in the table below.

Table 16: Community Center or Facilities Used Most Often (Legacy Plan Survey)

Community Centers/Facilities	N=299
Green Lake	9%
Meadow Brook	7%
Rainier Beach Community Center	4%
Queen Anne	4%
Ballard	3%
Magnuson	3%
Loyal Heights	3%
Hiawatha	3%
All other responses	2% or less
None/Nothing	12%
Don't know	4%

In the Legacy Plan Survey, community centers received a score of 7.3 out of 10 in a rating of importance (with 10 very important), ninth on the list of fourteen programs.

Between 32% and 38% of Legacy Plan Survey respondents use recreational facilities and/or programs monthly or more. This translates into more than 200,000 monthly visits and at least 2.8 million visits annually. Similar participation results are found in the Recreation Trends Report for King County.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure community centers are the focal points in our neighborhoods and serve as places where people can connect, foster relationships, build community, and enhance their health and well-being by offering programs, activities, and events to Seattle’s changing population.
- Ensure community centers are physically and emotionally safe and welcoming places for individual enrichment and community growth.

Staff reductions

- 19 positions eliminated

Efficiencies

- Clustered community centers into five geographic teams, streamlining management and coordinating programming across centers—helping to restore some hours in 2013

Closures and service reductions

- Significantly reduced Alki, Ballard, Green Lake, Laurelhurst, and Queen Anne community center drop-in hours to 30 hours per week: \$1.5 million
- Replaced 2011 community center model by classifying community centers into three service levels: Service Level 1 centers open 70 hours a week, Service Level 2a centers open 45 hours per week, and Service Level 2b centers open 25 hours per week
- Decreased total community center hours per week from 1,238 in 2011 to 1,115 in 2012

Fee increases

- Increased the program fee received from the Associated Recreation Council from 3.25% to 4%: \$44,000

Teen Programs

Teen Life Centers, community learning centers, and community centers provide academic, enrichment, and recreation opportunities that engage teens and help them build the skills that lead to a healthy and productive adulthood. Teen Life Centers—Garfield, Southwest, and Meadowbrook—are a hub for Parks’ citywide teen programming and offer employment readiness assistance, academic support, and positive recreational, artistic, and culinary opportunities. Outside of the hubs, Parks offers a variety of geographically distributed programming aimed at helping teens to build their identity, connect with their passion, engage in society, and make a positive impact.



Southwest Teen Life Center

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Capture young people in their hope stage of development by engaging teens with opportunities that help them to build their identity, connect with their passion, and acquire skills that lead to a healthy and productive adulthood.
- Give teens and young adults job and life skills.
- Connect teens and young adults to nature by providing outdoor and environmental opportunities.

Youth Employment and Service Learning

Studies have shown that preparing young people for employment, along with social and life skills, is the best path to a better future. The Youth Employment and Service Learning (YESL) program coordinates after school and summer employment readiness and leadership programs for middle and high school youth. YESL programs are structured, project-based, outcome-driven, multiple-week experiences that consist of both training and service elements.



Each program integrates team building activities, leadership development, job readiness workshops and academic enrichment. Most programs provide a stipend ranging from \$100 to \$599, and some offer

service learning hours, a graduation requirement (60 hours) for all Seattle public high school students. In recent years, YESL program participants have contributed upwards of 19,000 volunteer hours. YESL partners with community based organizations to develop meaningful projects that address a community need. Targeted recruitment is placed on underrepresented groups including low income, immigrant, refugee, foster/kinship care and youth with special needs.

Outdoor Opportunities (O2)



Outdoor Opportunities (O2) is an outdoor program designed to expose diverse, inner-city teens to outdoor recreation, environmental education, and conservation and stewardship, while creating an environment for community leadership and empowerment. The O2 program has served over 20,000 teens, planted over 10,000 trees, and built countless structures over the past twenty years. O2 engages in weekly after-school educational activities, monthly outdoor overnight events, and conservation service projects. The O2 workshops focus on environmental education, stewardship, community, leadership, college preparation and career development themes.

Typical O2 service projects occur in City parks and include: restoration and rehabilitation projects, native tree plantings, non-native removal, wildlife rehabilitation projects and trail projects. The O2 program effectively uses recreation as a tool for education, integrating a curriculum that includes the biology and ecology of the region, outdoor living skills, and life skills.

Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

Parks' branch of the City's Youth Violence Prevention Initiative (YVPI) provides a safe space for teens at risk of committing or becoming victims of violence. Since 2009, YVPI's annual goal has been to serve 400 Youth Violence Prevention Initiative-enrolled youth. To enroll in the Youth Violence Prevention Initiative, a youth needs to have been convicted of a crime, arrested, suspended, be at risk of suspension due to truancy, or a victim or perpetrator of violent crime(s). YVPI provides pro-social, pre-employment pathways and civic engagement opportunities through various recreation programs and services throughout Seattle, including pre-employment certification classes in first aid, CPR, lifeguarding, and in leadership and civic development. Our efforts focus on increasing program participation, maintaining program participation throughout the year, and involving youth in academic, literacy, and enrichment programs.

Late Night Recreation



Late Night Recreation provides a safe, supervised environment for teens ages 13-19. Late Night Recreation operates year-round at 10 sites: Bitter Lake C.C., Delridge C.C., Garfield Teen Life Center, High Point C.C., Meadowbrook Teen Life Center, Rainier Beach C.C., Rainier C.C., South Park C.C., Southwest Teen Life Center and Van Asselt C.C.

The Late Night program serves more than 40,000 youth annually. Late Night program goals are to reduce crime in neighborhoods, to engage youth in positive activities, and to provide a positive environment where youth can hang out. Emphasis is placed on gender and culture specific programming, including a female-only volleyball program, and futsal, a South American soccer game. In the Legacy Plan Survey, recreation programs for teens received a score of 7.5 out of 10 in a rating of importance (with 10 being very important), sixth on the list of fourteen programs.

Table 17: Data Summary - Late Night Recreation, 2011

Attendance (Late Night)	43,435
City Revenue	
City Expenses (YESL, YVPI, Late Night)	\$1,375,287
Cost Recovery	0%
Basic Services Rank (Teen Programs)	Mostly Community Benefit

Community Learning Centers

The Community Learning Centers program is funded through the Families and Education Levy. Parks collaborates with schools to provide academic, recreational, and family engagement opportunities during out-of-school time.

Each Community Learning Center is located at one of five Seattle public schools: Denny International, Eckstein, Mercer, and McClure middle schools and Northgate Elementary. The program’s primary goal is to help all students achieve academically and to reduce achievement gaps. Services are designed not only to engage and support struggling students throughout the school year, but also to provide additional academic support during the summer months to address summer learning loss. More than 4,500 students are served each year, with program attendance totaling over 77,184.

Community Learning Centers create environments that enhance learning, support student achievement, and form positive connections between schools, families, and community.

Did you know...

2011 summer academic outcomes showed 84% of students met the attendance target, and all students showed gains in math and reading scores.

Table 18: Data Summary - Community Learning Centers, 2011

Attendance	77,184
City Revenue	\$1,678,716
City Expenses	\$1,672,790
Cost Recovery	100%
Basic Services Rank	Mostly Community Benefit

Through the Families and Education Levy, community learning centers serve 4,500 students in five different schools, with a 91% of the students self-reporting that the programs helped them succeed in school.

Environmental Education and Outdoor Learning

Environmental Education and Outdoor Learning provides programming aimed at nurturing the spirit of civic responsibility for the natural environment through interpretive programming, education, and understanding of natural systems. Programming and operations at the four centers is provided by Parks staff, volunteers and our partners at Audubon. The four centers and their features include: Camp Long, complete with a lodge, meeting rooms, and kitchen; Carkeek, the City’s first LEED gold building; Seward Park, where the Environmental and Audubon center was recently renovated by the Audubon Society; and Discovery Park Visitor Center, which contains a multi-purpose room, small classrooms, and an amphitheater.



The Seattle Volunteer Naturalist (SVN) program was initiated on a citywide scale in 2011 to increase the number and diversity of volunteer environmental educators. SVN provides more educational programs to more people in more places than has ever been possible before—especially in historically underrepresented communities. Through the SVN program, Parks is able to educate in place— to go where the young people are—enabling the program to reach more youth at reduced costs. Future emphasis with Parks environmental education program is a closer alignment with Parks teen programming and an expansion into and collaboration with on-going middle and high school programs.

Table 19: Data Summary - Environmental Education, 2011

Attendance	80,388
City Revenue	\$136,403
City Expenses	\$912,725
Cost Recovery	15%
Basic Services Rank	Considerable Community Benefit

50% of survey respondents felt that environmental education was important, with a score of 7.2 out of 10. Also, in 2012, volunteers contributed more than 9,000 hours of support for environmental education.

Parks provides environmental education through partnerships and Parks’ own staff. Environmental education was ranked as considerable community benefit in the basic services exercise.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure a variety of programs that foster awareness, knowledge, and appreciation of nature in their neighborhood and across the city and region.
- Engage people in activities to protect our environment.

Park Cleaning, Maintenance and Landscaping

Eight geographically-based park district crews handle day-to-day cleaning, maintenance and landscaping of our park system. Parks Resources crews remove litter and garbage, clean dog off-leash areas, keep grass watered and trimmed, irrigate, landscape and water plants and trees, establish new trees and plants, clean restrooms, keep play areas safe, support volunteer projects, and help prepare for special events.

As described in the Maintenance Overview, the Parks Division measures its level of service by comparing an ideal, “gold” standard of park upkeep to the actual number of hours spent on each individual park. The current level of service is below 60% of the ideal. At this level, Parks replaces important asset maintenance and landscaping tasks with cleaning tasks that achieve Parks’ minimum standard of ‘clean and safe’, but do not prevent assets and land from degrading over the long-term. A higher standard of cleanliness is an effective way to make parks feel more comfortable and appealing to those using parks.

There are 465 parks throughout the City that include 118 comfort stations, 149 dumpsters and 2,165 garbage cans. Parks has improved its effectiveness in garbage pick-up by using in-ground trash cans, planning routes using GIS mapping and reducing the number of garbage cans. Some parks do not have any trash cans and are all part of the ‘pack-it-in pack-it-out’ program.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Provide cleaner, safer, welcoming parks by providing restroom facilities that meet the highest standard possible.
- Provide cleaner, safer, welcoming parks that are an asset to the neighborhood by picking up litter and removing waste in a timely way.
- Provide cleaner, safer, welcoming parks that are an asset to the community and have long term viability by regular maintenance of both the built assets and the landscape features.
- Maintain landscapes that will enliven communities, inspire neighbors, and attract visitors through colorful displays and native gardens.



Did you know...

When asked how they would allocate \$100, survey respondents gave routine maintenance \$35.40 of \$100, the highest amount allocated of the four options.

Cleaning, Maintenance, and Landscaping reductions since 2010

- Reduced trash and litter pickup: \$277,000
- Reduced winter crews: \$18,000
- Merged nine Parks Resources districts into eight: \$234,000
- Reduced frequency of mowing, trash pickup, and weeding: \$1.7 million
- 42 positions eliminated
- 70 positions reduced to less than full time
- Reduced athletic field preparation costs: \$314,000
- Eliminated the color program with limited exceptions: \$100,000

Facility Maintenance

The Facility Maintenance Unit supports all other divisions and programs by maintaining 570 buildings, outdoor park assets, and infrastructure within Parks' 6,200 acres of property. Facilities Maintenance employees fix and upgrade the things that are integral to all aspects of Parks, yet often go unnoticed by the public—irrigation systems, electrical systems, nuts and bolts on play equipment, etc.—the things that hold the system together.

Maintenance's main duties are to react to and repair assets that have broken down, and perform proactive, regularly scheduled upgrades to facilities that prevent future problems. Focusing maintenance on planned work maximizes the quantity and quality of each dollar spent. Maintenance occurs on a regular schedule such as quarterly, annually or every few years depending on the asset or site.

Parks' current capacity essentially allows for projects required because of risks to health or safety, legal mandates, prevention of lost resources, or vandalism—but not preventative maintenance projects, which generally cannot be completed in addition to required projects.

Reduced capacity for maintenance leads to buildings that look neglected and uninviting, and increased major maintenance costs as buildings deteriorate over time. Facilities Maintenance currently plays a reactive role: many in-house staff cannot engage in planned or preventative maintenance projects because they have to react to boiler replacements, utility conservation upgrades, roof repairs, capital project demands—diverting workers from maintenance tasks. Eventually, this capacity needs to be refunded and redirected towards preventive and planned maintenance to prevent long-term asset erosion.

Twenty percent of Facility Maintenance staff is eligible to retire, and the average age within the unit is 60. These staff members carry a great deal of institutional knowledge of complex infrastructure that could be lost if it is not passed on.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Prolong the life and sustainability of our recreation assets and improve public access with proactive and preventative maintenance.
- Provide maintenance services and at the same time train employees in skilled crafts who would not normally get a training opportunity by expanding the apprentice program.

Maintenance reductions

- Decreased community center maintenance: \$73,000
- Decreased facility maintenance for painting, metal fabrication, and fence repair: \$520,000

Staff reductions

- 8 positions eliminated
- Eliminated funding for the Apprenticeship Program: \$180,000

Efficiencies

- Transferred roof cleaning duties from Shops to Parks Resources creating salary savings: \$197,000
- Reduced drainage and wastewater costs by implementing GPS technology improvements: \$73,000

Major Maintenance and Asset Management

A major maintenance project is a capital investment intended to preserve a facility. Typically, these projects are expensive and long-lasting, costing at least \$20,000 and designed to function for at least 15 years. Major maintenance projects help preserve Parks' \$3 billion in assets to make sure they operate as intended and are safe for the public's use and enjoyment.



Parks uses a six-year Asset Management Plan—a compendium of all known capital major maintenance needs, currently comprising more than 300 major maintenance projects that together cost nearly \$267 million. Projects are prioritized based on safety and regulatory requirements first. Parks' Capital Improvement Plan is developed from the Asset Management Plan.

Collecting data on the age, condition, life cycle, and geographic location of assets helps the effort to take a more strategic and systematic approach to renovating and replacing facilities. Parks' long term goal is to use a “seamless” system coordinating demand maintenance (work orders), preventative maintenance (regularly scheduled maintenance such as semi-annual roof inspections or community center closures), and major maintenance. A seamless system would help Parks to strategically address the \$267 million backlog of needs, and to make more efficient use of staff hours spent on routine and preventative maintenance.

The 1999 Community Center Levy, the 2000 Pro Parks Levy and the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy provided funding for facility upgrades and many new centers, but a backlog of roof, painting, electrical and plumbing projects need to begin. Decreased facility maintenance reduces the life of assets and increases the rate at which major maintenance is needed.

Examples of Major Maintenance Projects:

- *Roof replacements*
- *Electrical repairs*
- *Turf resurfacing*
- *Comfort station renovations*
- *Play area replacement*
- *Landscape, trail, and forest restoration*

In the Legacy Plan Survey, respondents allocated 28.8% of Parks' budget to major maintenance, showing that closing the asset maintenance gap was respondents' second-most-important budget priority.

Table 20: Data Summary - Major Maintenance, 2011

Major maintenance backlog	\$267 million
2013 major maintenance funding	\$13.5 million
Amount needed yearly to stabilize major maintenance backlog	\$30 million per year
Survey Results	Maintenance, including improvements to existing parks, was the highest priority for funding

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure the safety, long-term viability of parks facilities and the efficient management of maintenance activities by developing and investing in an asset management system.
- Take advantage of community interest and be responsive to people’s awareness of maintenance needs for our facilities.
- Ensure the safety and long-term viability of parks facilities by reducing the backlog of major maintenance needs.
- Look for innovative ways to approach major maintenance activities so that environmental sustainability is maximized.

Maintenance reductions since 2010

- Decreased facility maintenance for painting, metal fabrication, and fence repair: \$520,000

Efficiencies since 2010

- Reapportioned \$9.8 million in savings from the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy to major maintenance projects

Natural Resources Unit

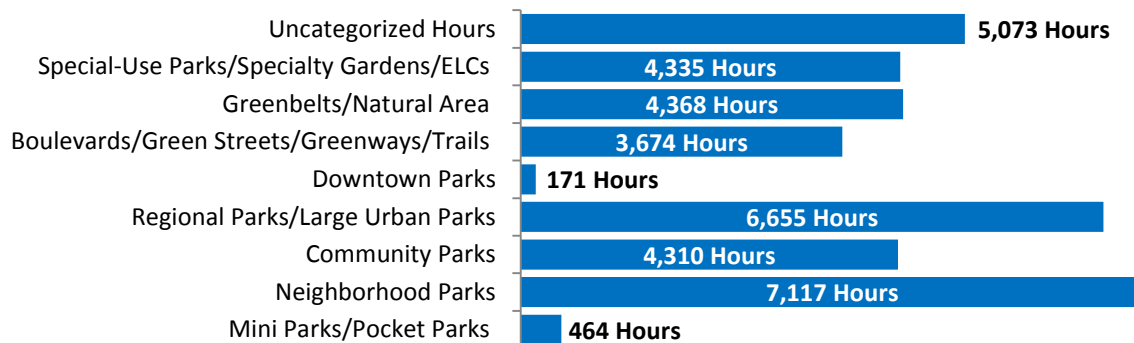
The Natural Resources Unit (NRU) comprises several programs spanning both natural areas and developed parks, each focused on preserving Seattle’s land for public use—forest restoration, urban forestry, wildlife management, trails, landscape renovation, grass and turf management, and specialty garden management. NRU strives for maintenance best management practices and sets targets for trees planted, pesticides used, land restored, and the presence of invasive weeds and animals.

The following chart shows the number of hours NRU spent between the various park types—because NRU does not use the PLANT tracking system, these hours are estimates only. The Legacy Plan Survey results show that Seattle loves its parks, whether it’s neighborhood and community parks with ballfields and play areas, or our wild greenbelts and natural areas, or our regional parks with specialty gardens. The Natural Resources Unit performs work in all of these areas. The following pages will give more detail about the individual programs within this unit.

Survey results show natural land’s importance:

- 56% valued parks and recreation for “exercise and fitness”, followed by “healthy natural environment” (44%).
- 53% walk or jog in or along a park weekly or more.
- Respondents, on average, ranked the importance of maintaining urban forests an 8.5 out of 10—just after cleaning restrooms and picking up litter in parks.
- The importance of maintaining trails ranked 8.2 out of 10.

Figure 54: NRU Hours by Park Type, 2011



(Uncategorized hours represent support activities attributable to the entire Park system)

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Improve the environment and wildlife habitat by restoring forests and expanding the tree canopy.
- Protect habitat and other wildlife areas for use, education, and interpretation by increasing capacity for professional wildlife management programs.

Specialty Gardens and Arboretum

Seattle Parks is home to four beautiful specialty gardens—the Japanese Garden, Kubota Garden, Volunteer Park Conservatory, and the Washington Park Arboretum. All four require intensive gardening to maintain their unique plant collections and grounds. These facilities function as an educational venue, places for respite and as contributors to the attractiveness and cultural identification of the community and Seattle’s role as an international gateway.

The **Seattle Japanese Garden**—located in the Washington Park Arboretum—hosts 40,000 visitors each year. World-renowned Japanese garden designer Juki Iida supervised the design and construction of the three and a half acre formal garden in 1960. The Japanese Garden, open spring, summer and fall, offers volunteer-led public tours free with admission on weekend days. The volunteer docents provide an educational introduction to the culture and history of the Seattle Japanese Garden. A small meeting room is available to rent on site. The garden hosts popular events such as Children’s Day, Moon Viewings, the Tanabata Festival, the Garden Party, Respect for Elders, and the Maple Viewing. In 2012, the perfectly clear skies and blue moon drew a crowd of 600 visitors to the September Moon Viewing.



[Japanese Garden at Washington Park Arboretum](#)

The **Washington Park Arboretum** is a gem on the shores of Union Bay. Jointly managed by the City of Seattle and the University of Washington, its 230 acres contain a dynamic assortment of plants. The City owns the majority of the land and buildings and manages the park functions. The University owns the plants and manages the collections, education, and outreach programs. The non-profit Arboretum Foundation supports the Arboretum through fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and advocacy.

The Arboretum emphasizes trees and shrubs emblematic of the maritime Pacific Northwest. The collections, managed by the University, combine either plants that grow in the wild together or different plants from the same family, and conserve important species. An increasingly important component is an emphasis on plant conservation and biodiversity research. The Arboretum serves the public, students, tourists, naturalists, gardeners, and nursery and landscape professionals with its collections, educational programs, interpretations, and recreational opportunities. Attendance at the Arboretum continues to rise with new exhibits and projects such as the New Zealand Focal Forest.

Kubota Garden is a 20-acre garden that blends Japanese garden concepts with native Northwest plants. It is located in the Rainier Beach neighborhood, and features streams, waterfalls, ponds, bridges, and a rich array of plant material. Fujitaro Kubota, a Japanese immigrant, first planted the garden in 1927, and it has historically served as a cultural center for the Seattle's Japanese community. Kubota hosts an estimated 50,000 visitors and about 30 weddings each year. The garden offers free public tours one Saturday per month and receives about 6,000 volunteer hours each year.

The **Volunteer Park Conservatory** is a 100-year-old Victorian-style greenhouse with 6,800 square feet of display space. It was developed as an integral part of the original Olmsted design of Volunteer Park, which is considered the most well-preserved of all Olmsted public landscapes in the Northwest. The Conservatory is a designated National and Seattle Historic Landmark, and in 2012 served an estimated 100,000 visitors. Gardeners continuously care for and maintain the Conservatory's plant collections and conservatory staff work with Friends of the Conservatory, a nonprofit organization, to conserve the building, recruit docents, and host special events. Friends of the Conservatory also provide additional financial resources via plant sales. In 2013, the Conservatory began charging an admission fee for visitors 13 and older to help secure the garden's sustainability into the future.

The Conservatory offers visitors a unique Seattle experience to learn about the building's history and plant biodiversity. Visitors in the humid glass building can observe both tropical and desert plant environments, and examine both familiar and foreign species—due to the plant collection's local and international origins.

Specialty gardens provide educational and cultural resources for Seattle similar to museums, the Zoo and the Aquarium. Specialty gardens are perceived by Parks staff to have individual benefit or individual-community benefit because of their specialized horticultural nature. Although the gardens may not be mission critical to Parks and Recreation, all major cities have these facilities because they provide civic value at the municipal level.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Enhance the guest experience and financial sustainability at Specialty Gardens and the Arboretum by enhancing partnerships and maintenance.

Did you know...

The U.S. interned Fujitaro Kubota and his family in Idaho during WWII, but he quickly rebuilt his landscape business after the war and continued to work on the garden. In 1972, the Japanese government awarded Kubota the Fifth Class Order of the Sacred Treasure for "achievements in his adopted country, [and] for introducing and building respect for Japanese Gardening in this area."

Trails Program

Parks' survey indicated that walking is Seattle's favorite recreation activity—and trails through natural areas provide for great walks. There are more than 120 miles of soft-surface trails in 67 forested parks throughout Seattle.

Trails program staff work with about 20 organizations and hundreds of individual volunteers throughout the city. These volunteers help to inventory the trail system, create maintenance condition maps, and provide public maps for recreation purposes. These volunteer ambassadors often provide feedback and leadership around trail projects, standards, installations, and planning across the city, while also providing technical support to Park Resources Staff and the Natural Area Crew.



Youth Green Corps at Cheasty Green Space

The Youth Green Corps, a partnership between Parks and Seattle Goodwill, educates and trains young adults by mixing classroom experiences with outdoor forestry restoration. In an effort to provide youth employment and create a pathway to green jobs, Parks staff members teach site management, restoration skills management, tool safety, native and invasive plant identification, and environmental stewardship to Youth Green Corps participants.

As we progress toward healthy forested park land, soft-surface trails are arterials into the natural areas for fitness, to enjoy nature and wildlife, and to simply find some peace in the busy city. Currently we build and repair soft-surface trails; major repairs occur on a 20-year cycle. Walking is the number one activity that people across the nation participate in. 79% of respondents to the Legacy Plan Survey said they walk or jog in or along a park monthly or more, and 72% ranked maintaining trails as the fourth maintenance priority.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Ensure a safe and well maintained system of walking trails.

Urban Forestry, Natural Area Restoration and Wildlife Management

Parks dedicated **Urban Forestry** program cares for and manages tree populations to sustain the tree canopy and improve the urban environment. A healthy, mature tree canopy cleans air and water, sequesters carbon, filters and retains storm water, increases property values—and also provides shade.



Seattle Parks and Recreation owns approximately 600,000 trees, yet loses several hundred each year to age, decay, disease, storms and human interaction. Maintaining trees improves both tree health and safety for people walking underneath them, and Parks' experienced tree crew performs one of the most dangerous jobs in the city to help maintain the health of mature trees, respond to incidents, and protect the public. Parks manages about 20% of the total tree canopy of Seattle. With this amount of canopy, Parks' tree crews maintain 2,000 trees per year on average, meaning one tree is maintained about once every 50 years. Over the last seven years, Parks has planted and established more than 5,000 trees in developed parks.

Parks and Recreation seeks to restore and manage a variety of natural areas including forested areas, shorelines and wetlands. Restoration of forested parkland is achieved through a unique, volunteer driven public-private partnership called the **Green Seattle Partnership (GSP)**. The GSP was launched in 2005 with a community driven goal to restore 2,500 acres of forested parkland by 2025. Park and Recreation's role in the partnership is to manage the program, oversee the work of non-profits, volunteers and contracted labor spanning 800 restoration sites. Volunteers organize site-specific work parties and provide over 80,000 hours of the labor each year—more than 575,000 hours since the program began. There are now 865 acres in active restoration. The Partnership will need to continue restoration activities, monitor and maintain all 865 acres in addition to initiating restoration and maintenance on another 1635 by 2025 to meet the projected goals and benchmarks of the adopted Green Seattle Partnership 20-Year Strategic Plan.

Did you know...

Seattle Parks contains over 600,000 trees, representing 20% of the total tree canopy of the city. With this amount of canopy, Parks' tree crews maintain 2,000 trees per year on average, or once in a tree's lifetime, or every 50 years.

The Green Seattle Partnership currently stands as the most visible and successful model of public-private partnership in the region. Regionally, six cities have replicated this cutting edge program, and New York City's new Natural Areas Conservancy used the GSP as a model. Seattle is the first

metropolitan area to earn the distinction of Forest Stewardship Council certification—the gold standard in environmentally friendly forestry.

Maintaining the health of the urban forest received a score of 8.5 out of 10 (with 10 being very important), third on the list of nine maintenance services in the Legacy Plan Survey.

Urban wildlife inhabits Parks’ developed parks, forests, beaches, wetlands and grasslands. Our community has many opportunities to see, experience, and learn about wildlife in the urban ecosystem.

Community interest, appreciation, and involvement in the conservation of urban wildlife and habitat is increasing and is expected to continue as we restore natural areas and diversify landscapes. In 2009, in response to community interest, Parks protected the city’s largest Great Blue Heron nesting habitat in Kiwanis Memorial Preserve Park. More and more frequently, universities and community colleges are using our parks for research projects—for example, several partnerships monitor urban bird and amphibian species—increasing awareness of the role our parks play as habitat in the urban ecosystem.

Did you know...

Kiwanis Memorial Preserve Park is home to the City’s largest Great Blue Heron nesting habitat.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Improve the environment and wildlife habitat by restoring forests and expanding the tree canopy.
- Protect habitat and other wildlife areas for use, education, and interpretation by increasing capacity for professional wildlife management programs.

Seattle Conservation Corps

The Seattle Conservation Corps (SCC) is a comprehensive work experience program serving homeless adults that provides maintenance for Parks and other City departments while increasing participants' economic, personal, and housing stability. Since 1986, the Conservation Corps has provided, for up to one year, paid employment and housing to participants. It also provides on-site comprehensive case management services, housing assistance, transportation assistance, a staffed learning center, support for drug and alcohol recovery, life skills training, mental health counseling, and job search assistance. SCC participants show reduced recidivism rates and earn income, reducing their reliance on social services, public assistance, and housing programs.



In 2012, SCC completed 354 projects and earned more than \$2.5 million in revenue. 109 homeless adults received services, 76 of whom were new enrollments. Still, SCC has to turn away potential participants at recruiting sessions. 75% completed the program and left with employment. SCC workers can quickly mobilize, and plant landscapes, remove invasive plants, install beach re-nourishment materials, and perform other related tasks that enhance the City's green infrastructure.

Major Benefits of the Seattle Conservation Corps:

- Comprehensive case management services and hands-on occupational and work readiness training helps individuals remove barriers to employment and open the door to personal and economic stability.
- City departments and other local agencies contract with SCC crews for capital improvement projects that improve City resources and services.
- SCC participants earn income and reduce their reliance on social services, public assistance, and housing programs. SCC participants have reduced recidivism rates and become contributing members of the community.
- SCC contributes to the citywide 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Provide access to work crews that can perform a variety of maintenance activities for Parks and other City departments and reduce homelessness by providing comprehensive paid work experience, education, and case management services to homeless adults.

Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

The Environmental Stewardship program focuses on conserving utility and water use, sustaining urban food systems, and building the environmental health of land and facilities, all while improving customer service. In 2005, Parks began a comprehensive utility conservation program. Since then, Parks has reduced the amount of energy consumed per square foot of building by 14% and

reduced overall water use by 20%. In 2011, Parks brought in its millionth conservation rebate dollar from 59 energy and water conservation projects completed over five years.



Irrigation at the Horticultural Center

Energy and utility efficiencies have been accomplished through:

- Installing high efficiency lighting and controls
- Installing and operating weather-based automatic controls
- Replacing old boilers with high efficiency ones
- Installing low-water-use plumbing systems
- Reducing vehicle fuel use

The irrigation program focuses on reducing the cost of and amount of water used in Parks' 300-plus irrigation systems. In 2012, Parks initiated a pilot project to assess how water use could be reduced through voluntary water reductions in low priority irrigation areas—for example, less-used turf and well-established shrub beds receive less supplemental water. Respondents to the Legacy Plan Survey ranked “keeping park lawns green and watered” in the lower tier of importance, indicating public support for continuing efforts to reduce water use.

Parks is an integral component of City of Seattle's Food Action Plan, dedicated to improving access to affordable and healthy food. Parks' Urban Agriculture program helps communities come together to propagate and harvest food while building relationships that reduce historic racial and social inequities in access to healthy food. Parks partners with Seattle Tilth, City Fruit, and other organizations to fulfill the goals of this program, and will expand partnerships in the future.

Parks achieved its \$1 millionth conservation dollar savings in 2011!

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Approach maintenance activities, to the maximum extent practicable, in a way that is environmental sustainable.
- Improve environmental health by reducing utility consumption.
- Increase access to public land by assessing, managing, and cleaning up contaminated sites.

Center City Parks

While only accounting for 5% of Seattle’s land area, downtown Seattle supports a weekday population of 214,000, houses 41% of the city’s jobs, and has the fastest growing residential population in the city. Center city parks are not large in terms of acreage, but are used intensely by thousands of people every day—businesspeople, downtown residents, and people from all walks of life. They are also an important aspect of the tourist experience. The Center City Parks program works to make downtown parks lively, welcoming, community-building attractions that enhance the City’s social and economic health.



The Center City Parks program currently focuses on six parks: Westlake, Victor Steinbrueck, Occidental, Freeway, Waterfront, and Hing Hay. Ensuring these parks are safe and positive places requires a heightened level of maintenance and constant, proactive staffing. Downtown parks host ‘dancing to dusk’, ‘art in the park’, city hall concerts, Westlake events of civic and regional scale, the First Thursday Art Walk, and more. Activating these parks makes them more welcoming for passive uses like eating lunch or just hanging out, and ensures that the relatively small acreage provided through downtown parks is used to the fullest possible extent. The collaborative effort to activate downtown parks results in hundreds of events, a wide variety of arts and special holiday lighting installations, and thousands of hours of park concierge presence in downtown parks. Parks contributes roughly a third of the total annual cost for activation of downtown parks, while community organizations and corporate sponsors provide the rest.

Parks’ downtown community partners invest significantly in events that activate downtown parks. Partnerships with the Downtown Seattle Association, the Metropolitan Improvement District, the Alliance for Pioneer Square, the Chinatown International District Business Improvement Area, Freeway Park Association, and others leverage capacity within the community to help activate downtown parks. Many of these activation efforts are single-destination events. While important, they often do not address the smaller, ongoing activation needs that keep spaces friendly on a daily basis. Community investment in activation of downtown parks equaled more than \$800,000 in 2012. In addition, Parks is developing a partnership with Waterfront Seattle and the non-profit Friends of Waterfront Seattle to work to create a dynamic central waterfront after the viaduct is removed.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Contribute to a welcoming, safe, and clean downtown.
- Implement effective maintenance and activation strategies that are closely aligned with the many current and future partners.
- Integrate the new Central Waterfront Public spaces with the existing Center City parks.

Communication

A former Parks Superintendent observed, “People in Seattle love their parks. They just love them in many different ways.” This diversity of affection for our system of recreation facilities and parks means we need a responsive, informed and nimble communications unit that tells our story, provides often complex information, and keeps faith with the public’s confidence in us. Communication and outreach to citizens, staff, and internal partners gives Parks insight into community needs, and to barriers that prevent residents from participating. Listening and responding to the community increases public awareness and support.



Local (and some national) media have a deep interest in what happens in Seattle parks, and they are quick to focus on park issues that matter to the people of Seattle, such as park use, environmental practices, aesthetics, trees, and animals. The Communications Unit averages 10 media inquiries (including blogs) every week; most require a very fast response, and many require detailed and complex information.

63% of phone survey respondents said they get most of their information about Seattle Parks and Recreation either from our website or from social media. Ease of use and posting timely and correct information on our website are benchmarks Parks uses to gauge how well it’s serving the public. However, a single staff person manages Parks’ webpage, an inadequate level to meet the increasing demands of our complex parks system and the public’s reliance on the web for information.

Parks is increasing its use of the Web and social media technology, a trend bound to continue given technology’s pace of change. These tools play a central role in communicating teen job readiness and other programs. Not surprisingly, teen respondents to the Legacy Plan Survey were the most likely age group to use Facebook and Twitter to find information about parks and recreation activities.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Parks is committed to clear, concise and honest communication.
- Parks will use the most effective communication methods and technologies available.

Did you know...

Seattle Parks is the city parks agency with the third highest number of Twitter followers, after New York and Chicago.

-activecommunities.com

Emergency Management

Parks' role in emergency management spans two categories: 1.) providing shelter and 2.) debris management. Working in cooperation with the Office for Emergency Management (OEM) and other City departments, Parks is the lead agency for providing shelters for citizens in an emergency. Procedures and materials are in place for community centers to serve as mass care shelters if needed, and Parks has 180 staff trained in Red Cross shelter operation and 10 trained in Red Cross shelter management. In the past five years various community centers have served as shelters after apartment fires and during inclement weather seven times.

Another component of Parks' shelter role has been preparing community members to serve as Community Emergency Response volunteers. Training is provided by OEM staff, and emergency supplies accessible to the volunteers are kept at community centers.

While all Parks community centers are listed as potential shelters, there are six high priority sites dispersed geographically throughout the city that can shelter between 140 to 700 people. These sites have emergency generators, pet shelters (mandated by law) and the ability to expand to a campus concept using adjacent schools.

Priority-one sites include:

- Bitter Lake – Northwest
- Meadowbrook – Northeast
- Queen Anne – West Central
- Garfield – East Central
- Southwest – Southwest
- Rainier Beach – Southeast

Four second priority sites have generators and pet shelters and can shelter 140 people each. All other community centers shelter 60-140 people each, but do not have generators or identified pet shelters.

Priority-two sites include:

- Magnuson – Northeast
- Jefferson – Beacon Hill
- Rainier – Southeast
- Delridge – Southwest

Parks has coordinated plans with other City departments for debris removal after an emergency and participates in damage inspection. Landslide clean-up is a large component of debris removal, since the vast majorities of landslides in the city either start or end on public property.

Human Resources

Because Parks has a customer-focused culture, our people are our greatest asset. Our employees are effective and efficient stewards of public resources. In 2013, Parks has 969 regular positions (30% of which are part-time) and a contingent of more than 700 temporary and seasonal employees. The Human Resources Division manages a broad range of employee support programs including training and development, hiring and selection, performance management, compensation and benefits, employee and labor relations, employee development, and safety and health.



All-staff gathering in 2009

- **Employment Services'** lines of business include strategic recruitment and selection for regular and temporary employees, background checks (criminal, driver's license/abstract verification, and references), new employee orientation, and records management.
- **Employee and Labor Relations** works with our 23 unions and conducts internal and external investigations, Labor relations and grievance resolution, consultative services such as labor contract interpretation, performance management, employee development (e.g., mentorship) and represents Parks in collective bargaining, Equal Employment Opportunity compliance and Civil Service and litigation support.
- **Safety and Health** staff oversee workplace violence prevention, accident prevention program development/monitoring, medical monitoring programs, worksite safety inspections, ergonomic assessments, consultative services such as safety plan development/review, worker's compensation claims management, return to work programs, disability and leave management, and ADA accommodation processes.
- **Training** includes coordinating, scheduling, communicating and registering participants for Parks sponsored training and coordinating with other departments on citywide training.
- **Administration** includes strategy and policy development, position management, coordination with City Personnel and the Law Department, and information management.

Trends and Issues

A key issue facing Parks' workforce is the high number of employees eligible for retirement. In the City workforce, 46.4 percent will be eligible to retire in 5 years. The average Parks employee who retires does so with 23 years of service—at age 62. The racial and ethnic demographics of Parks' staff largely matches the City's demographics as a whole, but there are very few young people in entry-level positions. With the entry-level age bracket virtually empty, there are very few people in positions

obtaining the skills necessary to step into successor positions in 5 to 8 years. An empty entry bracket means fewer employees can learn the institutional knowledge that needs to be handed down. Much of the historical basis for the how and why we do things is in danger of being lost. A methodical and sustainable approach to leadership succession and supervisory development will be needed to preserve the Parks Legacy.

Staffing and budget pressures continue to influence business decisions. The impact of budget reductions over the past several years has been a significant challenge. Layoffs, position reductions (from full time to three-quarter or half-time), changed assignments and the stress of working under the threat of reduced financial circumstances created challenges for all employees, including the Human Resources staff who, while experiencing a 25% staffing reduction themselves, helped impacted employees navigate their options.

We improve management's capacity to manage effectively by developing and implementing successful Human Resource practices and ensuring employees feel valued, motivated and care about their work and the performance of the department.

To Preserve the Legacy:

- Recruit, hire, retain, and develop employees who have the right skills, knowledge, and personal traits; and who share the organizations' values and vision of providing safe, welcoming and sustainable opportunities to the communities we serve.
- Attract, develop, and retain a well-qualified workforce that is diverse and reflective of Seattle's ethnic populations and demographics.

Property Management and Acquisition

The 2000 Pro Parks Levy and the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy provided funds for acquiring new park land. Since 2000, property management staff have negotiated acquisitions adding 261 acres to public lands. Staff in the Property Management group work with communities to identify potential acquisition sites, analyze each site's financial and environmental conditions, and acquire the property in keeping with recommendations from Parks' Gap Analysis and policies.



With more than 465 park sites in the City's system, Seattle parks have many neighbors. Some of our neighbors take over public park property as their own – illegally encroaching into public lands.

Recently approved changes to the Municipal Code clarify encroachment procedures and promise more direct and speedy removals. Property management staff assist with awareness and public information on larger encroachment issues; coordinate the physical changes or corrections to encroachments in a timely manner.

Staff reductions

- Eliminated or reduced multiple Planning and Development Division positions, delaying upgrades to the Asset Management System: \$1,302,000

Property management staff have recently negotiated agreements with other agencies and City departments such as Seattle Public Utilities to locate Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) tanks beneath Park property, and with the Washington State Department of Transportation regarding SR520 project mitigation for impacts to Park property.

While acquisition of new park property was ranked fourth of four behind major maintenance, routine maintenance and park development, the most popular form of recreation is visiting parks and natural areas. 77% of Legacy Plan Survey respondents visit a neighborhood or community park at least monthly. For Seattle's population, this translates into at least 475,000 monthly visits and 5.7 million annual visits to neighborhood or community parks. More than 50% visit a natural area, playground, or beach monthly or more.

To Preserve the Legacy

- Preserve and reclaim Parks' property for public use and benefit, and ensure continued access to parkland for a growing population.
- Continue to expand Parks' land holdings.

Safety

Park Rangers

The Park Ranger Unit provides a dedicated security presence in the 10 Center City parks and responds on an as needed basis to eight additional parks. The Park Rangers' mission is to reduce negative behaviors and enhance park users' personal safety. Rangers enforce Park Code violations that would otherwise require action from police officers, develop strategies with communities to address public safety issues in parks, and connect homeless individuals with human services agencies.

Park Rangers work in teams of two to provide greater presence and safety for staff during enforcement and welfare contacts in the parks. Rangers are scheduled to provide the maximum presence in the parks times, especially during summer. Multiple work teams will overlap both their schedules and parks to expand coverage on weekends and times when special events are scheduled.

Reoccurring nuisance crimes such as leash law violations and alcohol consumption, both public health and safety issues, continue to afflict parks across the system. Many communities outside downtown have expressed an interest in park rangers patrolling the parks in their neighborhoods.

Providing park security was ranked top importance by 56% of Legacy Plan Survey respondents, with higher rankings coming from people of color, women, families with children, and low income respondents.

To Preserve the Legacy

- Use a variety of means to make our parks safe through good design following appropriate Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to proactively facilitating positive activities to enforcing adopted rules and regulations throughout the city.



Regularly patrolled parks:

Victor Steinbrueck
Westlake
Occidental
Hing Hay
City Hall
Freeway
Waterfront
Pier 62-63
Cal Anderson
Lake Union

Parks patrolled as-needed:

Regrade Park
Pioneer Square
Children's International
Kobe Terrace
Myrtle Edwards
Counterbalance
Denny
Cascade

Technology

Parks operates 750 desktops at 77 networked locations, and provides public and private wireless access to certain locations. In addition, the Information Technology unit supports:

- A registration and payment system (CLASS) that allows the public to sign up online for recreation activities
- A work order system that allows staff to record when work has been done
- A Geographic Information System (GIS) used to analyze property acquisition and maintenance
- An irrigation control system for leak identification and reporting
- An external web site, YouTube, and Twitter accounts for communication with our customers.



Respondents in the Legacy Plan Survey overwhelmingly reported using online sources to find information on parks and recreation: 38% use the Seattle Parks and Recreation website, 23% use email, and 18% use social media in general—in addition to 15% who use Twitter and 14% who use Facebook. Teen respondents were least likely to use the Seattle Parks and Recreation website (12%), but most likely to use both Facebook (37%) and Twitter (19%).

Parks recently assessed its technology services to ensure they are aligned with the department’s goal of providing excellent customer service, accountability and visibility, and generating efficiencies and revenue. The following are some of the gaps identified in the report:

- Customers cannot view rental availability for facilities online.
- The current work-order system relies on a paper work ticket to record maintenance activities.
- Parks has tried many low-cost options to connect recreation centers and other Parks buildings. Many of these efforts have not created enough bandwidth to allow efficient use.
- Parks’ application portfolio has grown in an ad hoc fashion over time, with individual applications or databases deployed to meet specific business needs. As a result, it is difficult to aggregate data across the department in meaningful ways to support management decision making.
- Parks lacks a platform for document management and work processes to support the capture/entry of documents into such a system for archival purposes.

To Preserve the Legacy

- Improve customer service, increase efficiency, and maximize our capabilities by implementing strategies that keep us current with the best technology for managing our parks and recreation system.

Volunteer Programs

Volunteers, Parks' invaluable partners, are active throughout many of our programs. They work to restore the urban forest, maintain shrub beds, coach youth sports teams, teach cooking, host pancake breakfasts and ethnic lunches, work special events, grow food for local food banks, teach Mandarin Chinese and computer skills, lead bird walks or conducting pond programs, serve on Advisory Councils, prune and harvest fruit from parks fruit trees, take photographs and work on web pages, save salmon, host school programs, make GIS maps, build trails, and do many other needed tasks.



Volunteers engage neighbors in park improvement projects and raise funding to support these projects. They teach about the environment or teach new skills like making jam or pressing apples into cider. Volunteer activities are supported by Parks and Recreation staff throughout the system with staff time—usually one hour to every four volunteer hours—and supplies.

More than one hundred volunteer groups like Friends of Deadhorse Canyon, Carkeek STARS, Seattle Asian Sports Club, and many others provide long-term service. Hundreds of college groups return to tutor every year and corporate groups return annually for work parties. Seattle Parks and Recreation provides a venue for the community to give back.

Volunteer Programs Coordinators recruit, register, supply, train, and supervise volunteers—in 2012, 39,835 volunteers put in 426,052 hours of work. Many volunteers remain with projects for years, but many newer volunteers prefer short-term, one-time opportunities. Work parties are growing in size, scope, and intensity, requiring more time from Parks staff to fully prepare for projects. For Parks to continue existing volunteer projects and respond to the more market-driven future of volunteering, it is critical that sufficient staff in parks and in recreation facilities are available and have time to plan volunteer projects and supervise volunteers.

To Preserve the Legacy

- Volunteers are vital to the successful operations of parks and recreation facilities and programs, and will be actively pursued, cared for and thanked.

Public Process Summary

Key Dates in 2013

- **April:** *First draft* of Parks Legacy Plan released for public comment and posted on Parks website
- **April – May:** Parks staff and public input; comments taken via e-mail, snail mail, public meetings, Facebook and Twitter
- **May:** Parks hosted six public meetings
- **June:** *Second draft* of Parks Legacy Plan released with draft goals and strategies
- **June:** Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee begins meeting
- **June – November:** Preparation of Final Parks Legacy Plan
- **December:** Presentations to Mayor and City Council

Public Involvement

Parks developed a comprehensive public involvement process, which included a project website, extensive community and media outreach, and briefings with City leaders and various agencies—including the Office for Civil Rights, Seattle Housing Authority, Department of Neighborhoods, Immigrant and Refugee Commission and the Associated Recreation Council.

Public Meeting Goals

During May 2013, Parks hosted six public meetings at various locations throughout the city. The primary goals of these events were to:

- Provide the public with a greater understanding of the challenges facing Seattle Parks and Recreation.
- Provide a forum for the public to share their priorities for preserving our parks legacy.
- Engage in a citywide dialog about Seattle Parks and Recreation's future.

*"I would like to take this opportunity to highlight one very innovative and interesting program that was piloted through Seattle Parks and Recreation in partnership with community agencies: the **Women of the World Swim Program**. This is an innovative program that helps to remove barriers for immigrant communities to get active, learn water safety and have a fun physical activity for women and kids. The Parks Department should continue this innovative program."*

-Public comment

Meeting Format

All six public meetings followed a similar format. After introductions, a Parks presentation summarized key findings in the Legacy Plan. Following the overview, participants divided up into small groups for discussions. Parks staff facilitated the theme-oriented groups. The groups were set up to encourage community discussions, and staff recorded participants' ideas, priorities, and concerns. After 20-30 minutes participants had the option of moving to a different group. Some participants switched groups two or three times; others chose to stay in their original groups for an in-depth discussion.

Themes included, but were not limited to:

- Aquatics
- Tennis
- Senior and teen programs
- Environmental programs
- Urban forestry
- Maintenance and open space.

The last meeting focused on immigrant and refugee communities. Parks conducted additional outreach for this meeting and provided fliers, posters, and interpreters in nine different languages.

Outreach

Individual Park Board members went to 10 District Council meetings to announce the public meetings and ask that district councils distribute the information to their member organizations and email lists. KEEP POSTED, a commercial distributor, delivered 175 posters to coffee shops and other highly visible public areas around Seattle. Parks distributed posters to community centers, pools, environmental learning centers, golf courses, the Amy Yee Tennis Center, branch libraries, neighborhood service centers, Seattle Housing Authority, City Hall, and at the 23rd Avenue Action Plan (Union-Cherry-Jackson) Department of Planning and Development-sponsored community workshop.

Parks sent email notices to more than 30,000 individuals and a variety of listservs. Press releases went out to 400 local news outlets, neighborhood blogs and the City's official minority media list. Parks posted messages on Facebook pages and Twitter. The Mayor, Councilmember Bagshaw, and Seattle Schools included information on the meetings in blog posts.

Parks sent notification to Seattle Young People's Project, Annual Teen Summit, Seattle Parks Youth Programs, and Lifelong Recreation lists.

Seattle should be justly proud of its programs for youth and adults with disabilities. I have always been impressed with the staff and their interaction with their attendees. Each participant has always been treated with utmost respect, understanding and compassion."

-Public comment

"There is always demand for something"

-Public comment

Participation

More than 300 people signed in at the public meetings, and an additional 120 people participated through email and other written comments. Written comments focused on everything from archery to dog off-leash areas, to the impact of specialized programs, to the benefits of a tennis bubble and paying lighting fees through one's mobile phone.

There have been 1,750 page views on the project's website, and 541 people looked at the draft plan online.

Staff Engagement

Each Parks division provided opportunities for all employees to learn about the plan and provide input. In addition, each division director worked with his or her management team to develop goal statements based upon the public and staff input gathered during the public process.

"Parks and Recreation's Special Populations (program) has given all of us a chance to breathe and to enjoy our child's abilities rather than always worrying about his disabilities."

-Public comment

The Results

There was overwhelming appreciation for Parks staff, programs and open space. Many community members shared stories about how a staff person or program or outdoor access had a significant impact on their life. The following list captures some of the hundreds of comments received.

"As someone who teaches Environmental Justice, I was quite pleased to see that your recent survey thoughtfully gave voice to those historically underrepresented in park usage. Your special effort to represent those groups is to be commended."

-Public comment

Athletics

- Creative funding, logos, sponsorship and advertising on ball fields should be considered if it is consistent with Parks' mission and values. Community members should be engaged in the selection process.
- Start an athletic field lottery and rotate annually to provide equitable access to fields.
- There is a high demand for field time for soccer, lacrosse and cricket.
- Athletic clubs should contribute more to synthetic turf maintenance.

Aquatics

- Spray parks are very popular.
- There need to be more amenities at pools, such as slides, toys, shallow entry, and hot tubs, to make them more marketable.
- The current school use agreement leads to times when pools are not available to the public, but are not being used by schools.

- Small craft centers are well loved—there were many testimonials to the value of rowing and sailing programs.

Community Centers

- Need consistent and sufficient staff.
- Programs and staff need to reflect the changing face of the community; be engaging, multi-lingual and reach out into the community.
- Parks needs better promotion/marketing/outreach for programs offered.
- Need to balance fees with scholarships and simplify forms.

“I feel that the most important role of urban parks is to be able to maintain regular and ready access to natural spaces for our urban residents. The psychological, health and economic benefits of such access and integration of contact with nature into our urban lives is enormous and immeasurable.”

-Public comment

Lifelong Recreation

- There is not enough capacity for the demand for active programming; need vans, space, and staff.
- Increase intergenerational opportunities such as computer classes and volunteering.
- This type of program is not offered elsewhere.

Specialized Programs

- Parks is the only service provider within King County with this type of program and affordability.
- The program provides growth and social skills for individuals and families not available elsewhere; it is a lifesaver for families.
- Stability of the program is very important.

Teen Programs

- Opportunities for multigenerational programming—mentors, drawing and painting, interviewing skills, tech programs and assistance with career training, music workshops.
- Make sure facilities are safe.
- Need more partnerships between schools and community centers.
- Engage and help develop healthy lifestyles through athletics and community.

Dog off-leash areas

- Suggested a good dog/green dog program.
- Should be fee based.

Parks Resources

- Priorities are to clean comfort stations, pick up litter, and maintain sports fields.
- Would like to have more horticultural training for volunteers and stewards.
- Encourage Green Seattle partnership to do more training of volunteers to do other maintenance tasks.
- Keep turf fields in playable condition. Maintained sports fields last longer and are safer for users.

Major Maintenance

- Reduction of maintenance costs.
- Reduction of utility costs.
- External funding.

Natural Resources Unit

- Forest restoration and stewardship is essential; restoration projects need to be maintained so past efforts are not lost.
- Docent and adopt-a-park programs are good ways to accomplish other goals, such as trail maintenance, and tree planting.
- Developers should be assessed by parcel to provide open space; percentage of new development.
- Expansion of greenways and trails provides health benefits for everyone.
- This urban forest is the largest in the country. It is critical to wildlife, insects, and a healthy environment.

Citizens Advisory Committee Formation and Roles

In June 2013, the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee began meeting to review the recommendations of the Legacy Plan and public and staff comment/input. The 15-member committee, appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was composed of two co-chairs, a representative each from the Board of Park Commissioners, Parks Foundation, and the Associated Recreation Council, and additional committee members.

The Committee:

1. Looked at different funding options, including the potential use of a metropolitan park district or property tax levy
2. Examined how to allocate these funds, seeking a balance among funding for keeping facilities open, maintenance, and acquisition of new land and development of new facilities.

The Committee's recommendations were submitted March 12, 2014 to the Mayor and City Council for a Parks funding ballot measure that would go the public for a vote in August 2014. Should the voters approve a new funding measure for Parks and Recreation, an implementation plan will be developed that will become volume 2 of the Parks Legacy Plan.

"I appreciate the conundrum faced by Parks as you try to cover existing projects and facilities with a budget that is facing ongoing threats. I understand that major maintenance projects are building up in an ever-increasing backlog, and that you've had to reduce programs and find efficiencies so that core programs and work can continue. Your reading materials and presentations have convinced me that there is a critical need for a significantly increased Parks annual budget."

-Public comment

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Department Organization	8
Figure 2: Actual and Projected Seattle Population, 2000-2040.....	11
Figure 3: Seattle’s Racial/Ethnic Composition, 2010	12
Figure 4: World Region of Birth of Foreign-Born, 2007-2011.....	13
Figure 5: Age distribution of Seattle, Washington State, and U.S., 2010	14
Figure 6: Projected Percent of King County Population Age 65+, 2010-2040	15
Figure 7: Percent of Households with Children, 2007-2011	16
Figure 8: Percent of Householders Living Alone, 2007-2011.....	16
Figure 9: Washington, King County, and Seattle Household Income Distribution (2011 Dollars).....	17
Figure 10: Projected Composition of Household Income Brackets, Seattle, 2000-2040.....	17
Figure 11: 2013 Parks Fund Operating Expenditures	19
Figure 12: The Cost of Asset Management.....	23
Figure 13: Staffing (FTEs)	25
Figure 14: Overall Satisfaction and Safety [Phone Survey].....	45
Figure 15: Service Provider Use [Phone Survey].....	46
Figure 16: Frequency of Participation [Phone Survey]	48
Figure 17: Percent Participating Weekly or More [Intercept Survey, Historically Underrepresented Communities Survey, and Teen Survey]	49
Figure 18: Top Two Reasons for Valuing Parks and Recreation Activities [Phone Survey]	50
Figure 19: Service Priorities	51
Figure 20: Service Priorities by Age [Phone Survey]	51
Figure 21: Service Priorities by Other Survey Tools Survey Type [OST Surveys Only]	52
Figure 22: Importance of Recreation Services [Phone Survey]	53
Figure 23: Importance of Maintenance Services [Phone Survey].....	54
Figure 24: Information Sources about Seattle Parks and Recreation [Phone Survey]	55
Figure 25: Top Activities in Seattle-King Region, 2012	57
Figure 26: Relevant Activities in Seattle-King Region, 2012	58
Figure 27: Percent Bicycle Riding, 2012.....	59
Figure 28: Percent Using Playgrounds in Seattle-King Region, 2012.....	59
Figure 29: Percent Using Indoor Community Facilities in Seattle-King Region, 2012	60
Figure 30: Swimming Participation, 2012	60
Figure 31: Basketball, Tennis, and Golf Participation, 2012	61
Figure 32: Selected Field Sport Participation (Soccer, Football, Lacrosse), 2012	62
Figure 33: Modes of Transportation to Recreation Areas, 2012	63
Figure 34: Percent of Respondents Who Visited a Municipal, State, or National Park, 2012	63
Figure 35: League Participation, 2012	63
Figure 36: Percent of Residents with Children whose Children Participate in the Activity (Top 20 Activities), 2012.....	64
Figure 37: Relevant Activity Participation.....	66
Figure 38: Annual Percent Change in Participation by Activity	67
Figure 39: Activity Participation by Generation.....	69
Figure 40: Recreation Revenues and Expenses by Program, 2011	81
Figure 41: Cost Recovery Ratio, 2011	82
Figure 42: City Participation, 2011.....	83

Figure 43: City Net Income (Cost), 2011	85
Figure 44: ARC Overview by Program Category, 2011.....	86
Figure 45: Ten Largest ARC Advisory Councils by Funding, 2011	87
Figure 46: Individual Community Center Expenses and Revenues, 2011 (Parks and ARC)	88
Figure 47: PLAN Hours v. Tracked Hours, 2011 (Parks Resources Only).....	93
Figure 48: 2011 Tracked Hours of Maintenance (Parks Resources Only).....	94
Figure 49: Maintenance Hours per Park Category by Parks Division Unit, 2011.....	103
Figure 50: Litter Maintenance Hours per Acre, 2011 (Parks Resources Only).....	105
Figure 51: Total Hours Spent Cleaning Comfort Stations, 2011	105
Figure 52: Total Acres Maintained Per Park Category, 2011	106
Figure 53: Total Maintenance Cost Per Acre/Per Park Category, 2011 (Parks Resources Only)	107
Figure 54: NRU Hours by Park Type, 2011	144

Table of Tables

Table 1: 2010 - 2012 Volunteer Program Detail	38
Table 2: Basic Services Exercise Results.....	41
Table 3: Inactive Aspirational Interests	68
Table 4: Community Center Weekly Public Hours.....	78
Table 5: Asset Management Schedule by Asset Category (in millions).....	112
Table 6: Asset Management Plan: On-going Programs	113
Table 7: Citywide Athletics Data Summary, 2011	119
Table 8: Golf Data Summary, 2011	121
Table 9: Amy Yee Tennis Center Data Summary, 2011.....	123
Table 10: Data Summary - Lifelong Recreation, 2011.....	124
Table 11: Data Summary - Specialized Programs, 2011	127
Table 12: Data Summary - Beaches and Wading Pools, 2011	129
Table 13: Data Summary - Swimming Pools, 2011	130
Table 14: Data Summary - Small Craft Centers, 2011.....	131
Table 15: Data Summary - Community Centers, 2011.....	132
Table 16: Community Center or Facilities Used Most Often (Legacy Plan Survey)	133
Table 17: Data Summary - Late Night Recreation, 2011.....	137
Table 18: Data Summary - Community Learning Centers, 2011.....	138
Table 19: Data Summary - Environmental Education, 2011.....	139
Table 20: Data Summary - Major Maintenance, 2011.....	143

Notes

¹ The full report, titled “The Health Benefits of Parks” (2006), can be found on The Trust for Public Land’s website.

² From Public Health - Seattle & King County’s 2006 “Health of King County Report.” To find the full report, go to <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data/hokc.aspx> and click on “Chapter 5: Risk Factors For Chronic Disease and Injury”.

³ From Public Health - Seattle & King County’s 2011 report, “Youth Obesity in King County.” From the Public Health Data Watch 11.1 (2012). The full report can be found here: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data/datawatch/Volume1101.aspx>.

⁴ The study used an algorithm based on studies showing individual health savings due to exercise to measure the collective economic savings people in Seattle realize through activity in parks. A telephone survey identified people who exercised in parks. The full report, titled “The Economic Benefits of Seattle’s Park and Recreation System” (2011), can be found on The Trust for Public Land’s website. The methodology begins on page 12 of the report.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁷ King County Biodiversity Report, 31. 2008. The full report can be found here: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/biodiversity/king-county-biodiversity-report.aspx>

⁸ Green Cities Research Alliance. “Seattle’s Forest Ecosystem Values: Analysis of the Structure, Function, and Economic Benefits,” 11. 2012. The Green Cities Research Alliance is a collaborative research program between the University of Washington, King County, Forterra, and the City of Seattle that aims to coordinate sciences with local partners. The full report can be found from the Alliance’s project webpage, here:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/outernet/pnw/research/gcra/>

⁹ City of Seattle. “Urban Forest Management Plan” (Draft), 17. The full report can be found here:

<http://www.seattle.gov/trees/management.htm>

¹⁰ Green Cities Research Alliance, 6.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹² Green Cities Research Alliance, 8.

¹³ “Urban Forest Management Plan” (Draft), 20.

¹⁴ Puget Sound Wetlands and Stormwater Management Research Program. “Wetlands and Urbanization: Implications for the future,” 26. A ten-year research project, the PSWSMRP documented the impacts of urbanization on wetlands. The full report can be found on King County’s website, here:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/waterandland/wetlands/wetlands-urbanization.aspx>

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁸ <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/animalsAndPlants/biodiversity/threats/ClimateChange.aspx>

¹⁹ Washington Biodiversity Council. “Washington Biodiversity Conservation Strategy: Executive Summary,” 11. 2007.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

²² *Ibid.*, 10.

²³ Frances (Ming) Kuo, a noted scientist who studies how urban settings affected health outcomes, authored this informative paper collecting numerous results of studies showing how well-designed green environments affect both human health and behavior. Kuo discusses how green environments affect aggressive behavior beginning in Chapter 2, and specifically on page 14. The full report can be found on the National Recreation and Park Association’s website, here:

http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/MingKuo-Research-Paper.pdf

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- ²⁴ Note that Figure 4 does not show ancestry of residents, just the birthplace of foreign-born individuals.
- ²⁵ The weighting metric is as follows: scores are assigned on a scale of 1-5 from “Mostly Individual Benefit” to “Mostly Community Benefit”. Parks is making no judgments on the real value of these programs, and is simply using this exercise to start a discussion about Parks’ priorities.
- ²⁶ Certain services listed were not discussed at all of the sessions—these services were weighted according to how many out times the term was used throughout all three outreach methods. Although this is an imperfect way to aggregate the three outreach methods, it allows the full breadth of Parks’ services to be compared.
- ²⁷ All data reported in this section is from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)’s “Results of General Population Survey in Support of the Development of the Washington State Comprehensive Outdoor Plan,” 158-184. The report can be found here: <http://scorpwa.files.wordpress.com/2012/12/wa-scorp-gen-pop-survey-report-2012.pdf>
- ²⁸ This omits RCO-collected participation rates for hunting, snow and ice activities, air activities, climbing and mountaineering, horseback riding, off-roading, camping, gardening, scuba diving, and more. The results are from the same report referred to above.
- ²⁹ Rugby is not included on this chart because it has a participation rate of 0%.
- ³⁰ Rugby is not included on this chart because it has a participation rate of 0%.
- ³¹ The SFIA was previously known as the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA). The name change occurred in October 2012.
- ³² The SFIA report is available on their website. It is free for members, or available for a fee.
- ³³ The survey is conducted via online interview of a sample representative of the U.S. population aged six and older. The survey sample size was 38,172; this led to a $\pm .21\%$ confidence interval for an activity with a participation rate of 5% (fewer responding participants would increase the variance and error). SFIA over-sampled typically under-responding groups to correct for nonrespondent bias, and weighted the data based on demographic and regional characteristics to match the characteristics of the total U.S. population, age six and above. All figures in the report are in the hundreds of thousands—for example, SFIA estimated 112,715,000 people walked for fitness at least once in 2011. The survey asked respondents to state the number of times they participated in a given activity in a year. This allowed the SFIA to construct a total participation rate – used here – and also “regular” and “frequent” participation rates. The number of instances required to qualify as a regular or frequent participant depend on the sport, with more accessible sports having higher thresholds. For example, to be counted as a frequent runner, one must report running or jogging more than 100 times a year. For simplicity’s sake, we included only total participation figures, but measures of both regular and frequent participants can show the level of enthusiasm for specific activities.
- ³⁴ Activities that are individual, non-competitive (there is not necessarily a winner or loser), and vigorous are considered fitness sports.
- ³⁵ The average annual percent change for yoga only includes data from 2008-2011, because the SFIA began collecting yoga participation data in 2008.
- ³⁶ The SFIA divided its swimming data into two separate choices in 2011 – ‘swimming for fitness’ and ‘swimming for competition’. Previously, they collected data only on ‘swimming’. This creates too much uncertainty to include swimming as a trend.
- ³⁷ SFIA. “2012 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Participation Report”, 6. www.sfia.org.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.