

PARKS AND RECREATION

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

2009 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We are now a year into the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan. Although the economic conditions are very different from when the plan was written, we continue to move forward with most action strategies and tasks on schedule. Due to funding constraints, many of the planned 2009 initiatives have been deferred, including tree-related best management practices training for parks staff; conducting a staff forum with citizen groups to discuss volunteer efforts; development of an employee skills bank; and the development of an information management system.

Highlights of Completed Tasks

Goal 1: Steward Seattle's Parks and Open Spaces for Long-Term Sustainability

- We created a park classification system that helps define appropriate public uses and types of development while identifying the capacity of each land resource.
http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/policy/parks_classification_policy.pdf
- The Board of Park Commissioners recommended approval of the Golf Master Plan, which the City Council incorporated into the 2010 budget.
http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/golf_master_plan.pdf
http://www.seattle.gov/parks/Publications/golf_appendices.pdf
- We adopted a new Native Plant Policy.
http://www.seattle.gov/parks/horticulture/native_plants/files/native_plant_policy.pdf
- We adopted a new Wildlife Sanctuary Policy.
http://www.seattle.gov/parks/wildlife/sanctuary/files/WSP_policy.pdf
- We planted more than 20,000 native plants.
- We began design of the Bell Street Park Boulevard project.
- We met Green Seattle Partnership goals by adding 110 new acres, maintaining 312 restored acres, and planting 10,000 trees.

Goal 2: Provide Recreation and Learning Opportunities

- We increased opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle safety through the Summer Streets and It's a Walk in the Park programs.
- We increased programs and registrations for people with disabilities.
- All community centers and pools are actively developing and implementing intergenerational and family programs.
- We encouraged healthy lifestyles by hosting a "Healthy Parks/Healthy You" event at Seward Park that drew more than 2,500 people.

- We are changing the offerings in vending machines with healthy alternatives.
- Sixty-two teens participated in a Summer Youth Program, and 160 teens benefited from a partnership with Goodwill where teens volunteered to improve trails and worked at Goodwill.
- The Lifeguard Training Program increased participation by communities of color by 25%. All passed their lifeguard test.
- Field use for rugby increased by 75%.
- We installed a new playground at Delridge Community Center.
- 45,548 citizens volunteered 326,766 hours to improve parks.
- Within a year of the vote, we finished five “stimulus” Parks and Green Spaces Levy playground projects, two ballfield projects, a beach park renovation, and the 65th St. Entrance project at Magnuson Park.

Goal 3: Actively Engage and Build Relationships with Seattle’s Diverse Population

- We inventoried and evaluated existing marketing systems and protocols.
- The new event calendar is up and running on the web.
- A draft marketing template has been formulated and reviewed by selected Community Centers. Eight community centers held public meetings with the Superintendent to listen to the public, answer questions, explore possibilities, and build relationships.
- Individual community centers are conducting analyses of who lives in their service areas, another way of reaching out, bringing new people to the centers, and creating ongoing relationships.
- Division Directors attended District Council Meetings, and community center staff attended monthly neighborhood meetings.
- We completed implementation of a Partnership Portal on the web.
- New Volgistics software for registration and tracking of volunteers is installed and in use.

Goal 4: Maintain Parks and Recreation’s Land and Facilities

- Through the Parks, Labor and Timekeeping (PLANT) program, 220 employees recorded hours spent on specific tasks in park maintenance, landscaping and at environmental learning centers. This is important data to justify additional needs and show our shortages.
- Two new exhibits are completed at the Aquarium -- Interactive Orca Sounds and the Coral exhibit.
- We evaluated the outdoor recycling pilot program and expanded the plan system wide this summer with 120 cans.
- We are meeting the six-day metric from the Mayor’s Graffiti Task Force and maintaining Parks’ 48-hour response target.

- We reclaimed several encroachments at Seward Park and are working on others, including properties next to Volunteer Park.
- We have completed a draft plan to define components of an “Ideal Green Park.”
- Fuel use is down by 8%.

Goal 5: Develop Team Capacity and Organizational Culture

- All Directors, managers, and strategic advisors now have a performance measurement related to Race and Social Justice.
- We evaluated Parks’ existing recruiting efforts and developed recommendations for expanding and updating our future efforts to reach all citizens of Seattle.
- We researched the practices of other jurisdictions and provided reduced fee or free access for Parks employees to swimming pools and weight rooms.
- We are working with a Citywide interdepartmental team in Personnel to replace the online application system with a more user friendly system. In the meantime, we have made hard copies available to employees.
- All permanent employees underwent a performance appraisal.
- More than 600 employees have attended the “Race: The Power of An Illusion” training.
- We completed a recruitment plan for 2010.
- We created a toolkit to outline current employee development opportunities.
- 470 staff attended a safety fair.
- 302 staff participated in the heart walk and raised \$7,300.
- Two weight loss challenges resulted in employees losing 973 pounds in 2009.

Goal 6: Strengthen Organizational Systems and Structures

- We reorganized the department to implement the Strategic Action Plan, and activated six goal teams.
- We evaluated our fees and charges by collecting information from other park and recreation agencies and have developed a fee policy that enriches community/public benefit.
- We examined our scholarship and fee reduction offerings and standardized the program.
- We defined categories for all levels of partnerships and drafted a partnership policy.
- We formed a workgroup of frontline supervisors and managers to gather information about their needs for a management information system.