



Department of Parks and Recreation

Seattle Board of Park Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2009

Web site: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkboard/>
(Includes agendas and minutes from 2001-present)

Also, view Seattle Channel tapes of meetings, June 12, 2008-most current, at
<http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/watchVideos.asp?program=Parks>

Board of Park Commissioners:

Present:

Neal Adams, Vice-chair
John Barber
Terry Holme
Donna Kostka
Jackie Ramels, Chair

Seattle Parks and Recreation Staff:

Timothy Gallagher, Superintendent
Christopher Williams, Deputy Superintendent
Sandy Brooks, Coordinator

Commissioner Ramels called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She noted that the Board held its annual retreat on May 5 at Northgate Community Center. She also welcomed Diana Kincaid, a mayoral appointee to the Board. Ms. Kincaid and Ms. Jourdan Keith are scheduled for City Council confirmation on May 11 as the Board's two newest members.

Commissioner Ramels next reviewed the meeting agenda. **Commissioner Holme moved, and Commissioner Barber seconded, approval of the agenda, April 9 minutes, and the record of correspondence. The vote was taken and the motion carried.**

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Gallagher reported on several park items. For more information on Seattle Parks and Recreation, visit the web pages at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/>.

Japanese Garden Entry Gate Grand Opening: A very successful grand opening was held for the new entry structure and gates at the Japanese Garden on Monday, May 4. The new entrance is spectacular and approximately 1,000 people visited the Garden during the grand opening. The Superintendent remarked that the project was a group effort of private donors, the Arboretum Foundation, City, Japanese Garden Advisory Council and others. To see a video of the grand opening, » [See video](#). For more information on the Japanese Garden, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/parkspaces/japanesegarden.htm#ceremony>

Discovery Park Roads: The Department is working to eliminate one of the paved roads in Discovery Park in the area of Daybreak Star and the private housing adjacent to the park. Staff presented the plan to the Discovery Park Advisory Council, and received strong support. Staff will next meet with community members. The park road is deteriorating and Parks has no money to maintain it. In addition, a long-term goal is to eliminate the paved military roads in Discovery Park.

Bell Street Boulevard Update: At the May 28 meeting, Commissioners heard a briefing on the proposal to transform four blocks of Bell Street, from First to Fifth Avenues, in a park boulevard with improved landscaping, better lighting, and more open space. The project converts one traffic lane and reconfigures parking to create a park-like corridor through the heart of Belltown. City Council has agreed to move the money forward for the project and staff are working to prepare the legislation for Council approval. For more information, see Mayor Nickel's news release at <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/newsdetail.asp?ID=9762&dept=40>.

Othello Park: The Superintendent reported problems at this park from gangs and young teens. Recently, up to 13 shots were fired from near the park and reported to 911 dispatchers. The Department's rangers cannot patrol this park because it is out of the downtown park designation where they are allowed to patrol.

Westlake Park: This park is also troubled with groups of young people hanging out and intimidating park patrons. Some of the youth have brought pit bulls to the park. Both the park rangers and Animal Control staff are stepping up their pace of enforcement at this site.

Ballfield Lighting Policy: At its June 25 meeting, the Board will be asked to consider a proposed change in the Department's Ballfield Lighting Policy. Commissioner Ramels asked if this change in policy includes tennis courts. Superintendent Gallagher responded that it doesn't, as the tennis courts are on timers.

Good News on Bid Openings: Parks staff are working with City Council to approve funding for the Delridge Skatepark to transfer \$250,000 in Parks and Greenspace Levy funds from the Myrtle Reservoir project to Delridge Skatepark. The Skatepark Advisory Council recently met and unanimously approved this request. Delridge is slated as a regional skatepark, with 12,000 sq. ft. to be built in the first phase and 3,000 additional sq. ft. in the second phase. As a comparison, the skatepark at Woodland Park is 14,000 sq. ft. Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber whether the new skatepark would include a skate pit like the one at Ballard Skatepark, the Superintendent responded that it will not.

Pool Drains Being Replaced: All City pool drains, both indoor and outdoor and wading pools, are in the process of being replaced under the Virginia Graeme federal act. This will affect wading pool schedules this summer; however, staff have worked to keep wading pools open in the four quadrants of the city. Volunteer Park's wading pool will open later this year due to the drain work.

Natural Resources Unit Develops New Program: The Department's Natural Resources Unit is working to develop a Urban Forest Youth Work Experience Summer Program to provide youth with the opportunity to interact with their environment and explore the ecosystem. NRU has partnered with Community Based Organizations (CBO) to engage youth in Urban Forestry Service and recreation opportunities. This exciting new program is expected to involve more than 100 kids.

Zoo Cherry Trees: The Superintendent stated that the Woodland Park Zoo plans to remove several cherry trees along the perimeter of the grounds. ["Nine years ago this type of cherry tree developed an insect problem which arborists thought would kill every cherry tree in Seattle. Consequently, the Zoo planted maple trees behind the cherries in anticipation of that eventuality. The maple trees have matured so the Zoo's arborist from Washington State University recommended removing the cherry tree before they negatively

affect the development of the maples.] Some Zoo neighbors subsequently hired an arborist who believes the cherry trees are now healthy.

The Superintendent reported that the City's Law Department is reviewing the City's contract with the Zoo Society to determine if the Superintendent can intercede in the decision. Commissioner Barber is curious whether the Zoo has a vegetation management plan.

Superintendent Invited to Visit Russian City: Superintendent Gallagher has been invited to visit the city of Khabarovsk in Southeast Russia and leaves on Wednesday, May 20. Khabarovsk is similar in size to Seattle and their Parks Department are doing a great deal of restoration/projects on their waterfront parks. He is invited to advise their officials. Responding to a question from Commissioner Ramels on blogging his experiences, Superintendent Gallagher agreed to do so, if the web capability is available. Commissioner Kostka commented that she has visited Khabarovsk previously with a scientific group while she worked for the Environmental Protection Agency.

Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience

The Chair explained that this portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had, or are not scheduled for, a public hearing. Speakers are limited to two minutes each and will be timed. The Board's usual process is for 10 minutes of testimony to be heard at this time, with additional testimony heard after the regular agenda and just before Board of Park Commissioner's business. No one testified.

Discussion/Recommendation: Native Plant Policy

Barb DeCaro, Seattle Parks Natural Resource Conservation Coordinator, briefed the Board at the March 26 meeting on the Native Plant Policy (<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2009/03-26-09.pdf>), followed by a public hearing at the April 9 meeting (<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2009/04-09-09.pdf>). Tonight the Board will discuss the policy and vote on a recommendation to the Superintendent.

Ms. DeCaro introduced herself and reviewed reasons for development of the Native Plant Policy. Commissioner Kostka commented that Ms. DeCaro has done a great job on the policy and that she had an amendment she would like to propose. After discussion, it was agreed that once a motion is made on whether to recommend/not recommend the policy, Commissioner Kostka would propose the amendment.

Commissioner Barber noted that Section 6.1 of the policy calls for a concentration of native plantings. Many park visitors, in particular his neighbors at Roanoke Park, enjoy the color from spring-blooming plantings at the parks. He asked if there is some way to keep this. Ms. DeCaro responded that the policy isn't final; however, the plan is to use natives to provide the splashes of color. This color could come not just from flowers, but also from foliage. The Superintendent added that staff will come back with a list of parks where non-natives would provide color, such as Volunteer and Seward Park, the entry to Seattle Asian Art Museum, and others. He agrees with Ms. DeCaro that native species can provide a splash of color and be dramatic. Ms. DeCaro gave a brief overview of how florals have been used in Seattle's parks and noted that the "showcase entrances" evolved around 1983. Staff will look at various ways to make the entries special. Later in the meeting, Commissioner Holme stated that he also wants to speak in favor of the 20% of non-native plantings as splashes of color at the parks. He also enjoys the seasonal color.

Commissioner Adams stated that the bioregion fascinates him and asked for more information. Ms. DeCaro responded that the bioregion for native plants for this area include parts of Washington, Oregon, Montana, Alaska, and California. The commonality is the plant's climate adaptation, rather than the plant genus or species. The native-type species can also attract wildlife. Commissioner Ramels asked if other cities or parks have native plant polices and Ms. DeCaro responded that U.S. national and Canadian parks have adopted such

policies, as well as some California areas. Commissioner Ramels commented that it seems like all parks would have such a policy.

She asked how the Department currently selects plants. Ms. DeCaro responded that the plantings depend on the type of project and most have had some public input. The Department has irrigation systems and has been able to regularly water the non-native plantings and make them "work." Under the Native Plant Policy, staff would begin adding in some native plants to developed parks, as it can, with some shrubs and small trees and look at new landscaping with a goal of 80% native species.

Commissioner Barber asked if the 80% is a firm goal, and voiced concerns that picnic and grassy areas not be eliminated. Ms. DeCaro answered that the 80% goal isn't firm yet and discussions will continue on the amount of turf in parks. The need for leisure, recreation, and grassy areas must be balanced. Commissioner Barber asked if 60% of the City's parks are designated as natural areas and the Superintendent agreed. He added that the major change will come in new park projects. The goal would be to put in new plantings that consist of 80% natives and to replace any non-natives that are removed with natives. In the long-term, this will save money and will set a model for the community.

Commissioner Holme asked if, under the terms of the new policy, if the Department purchases 100 new plants for a project that at least 80 of them must be native. The Superintendent and Ms. DeCaro agreed. Commissioner Holme also asked if the Department intends to use this policy for future plantings and not start going back to existing sites and re-doing the landscaping. Superintendent Gallagher and Ms. DeCaro agreed with this summary. Responding to a question from Commissioner Holme, Ms. DeCaro responded that the native plant requirements would be on both the project's checklist and design standard. The contractor will be required to supply the required number of native plantings.

Responding to a question from Commissioners on whether any further testimony has been received on the policy since the April 23 meeting, Ms. DeCaro answered no.

Commissioner Barber moved to accept the policy as presented and Commissioner Adams seconded. Commissioner Kostka distributed her proposed amendment to add a new section 7 and moved that the existing section 7 be revised to section 8 and to read:

7.0 STAKEHOLDER GROUP AND EXPERTISE

Washington Native Plant Society, 6310 NE 74th St., #215#, Seattle 98115, (206) 527-3210, www.wnps.org

(Website contains: (a) "Native Plant Lists" – plant lists for specific natural area locations in Washington, including the Puget sound region, (b) "Education" materials – native plant ID cards, containing photos and descriptions, (c) "Starflower Restoration Stewardship guidelines and Reports" – maps and native plant lists for restoration sites completed in a number of Seattle parks by the Starflower Foundation.)

Commissioner Kostka believes that the policy is missing a number of stakeholders. If these groups are added, the public can go to their websites and understand more about native plantings. After discussion, Commissioner Kostka changed her amendment to read "Add additional references from various sources (including Commissioner Kostka's suggestions of Native Plant Lists, Education Material, and the Starflower Restoration Stewardship guidelines and reports) to the policy to reflect organizations where staff and citizens can go for educational purposes." Commissioner Barber accepted the amendment. After further discussion, it was agreed that Ms. DeCaro will add some additional organizations to the references. Commissioner Adams asked if the Natural Resources Unit will be responsible for training Parks staff in this new policy and Ms. DeCaro agreed. He voiced appreciation for Parks staff in their flexibility working with the Board on this policy.

Commissioner Ramels also thanked Commissioner Kostka for her work on this policy, and recognized that native plantings are a particular interest of the Commissioner.

The vote was taken on the amendment and was unanimous. The vote was then taken on Commissioner Barber’s motion, including the amendment, and was unanimous. Motion carried.

Commissioner Holme added that he appreciates the native dogwoods in the forests and hopes the Department will plant some of the disease-resistant cultivar varieties, including greenbelts. Ms. DeCaro responded that the Department has planted a selected cultivar for the past 20 years that is similar to the native species and more disease resistant.

Commissioner Ramels noted that the Alki community will be presented an award on May 23 for its wildlife habitat area that includes interpretive natives.

The Board thanked Ms. DeCaro for the briefing and for her good work on this policy. A copy of the revised and recommended policy follows:

Native Plant Policy



Your City, Seattle

Department Policy & Procedure

Subject: Native Plant Policy		Number 060-P 5.9.1
		Effective June 1, 2009
		Supersedes N/A
Approved: Timothy Gallagher Signature on file	Department: Parks & Recreation	Page 1 of 4

1.0 PURPOSE

As a steward of Seattle’s park land and an environmental role model to Seattle’s community, Seattle Parks and Recreation aims to provide landscapes for park patrons to enjoy that are sustainable in their design, construction, and maintenance practices. Sustainable landscapes using native plants conserve plants and trees that are native to the Cascadia region; protect and provide wildlife habitat and a healthy ecosystem; achieve utility conservation; and demonstrate sustainable landscape management practices to the greater community.

2.0 ORGANIZATIONS/INDIVIDUALS AFFECTED

- 2.1 Staff who design, construct, and maintain Seattle Parks and Recreation landscapes.
- 2.2 Consultants, landscape architects, and park designers hired by the Department to design park landscapes.
- 2.3 Citizens, horticultural, botanical and park advocate organizations.

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 Seattle Parks and Recreation will strive to achieve sustainability in all landscape design, construction, and maintenance in order to:
- i. Help balance human and ecological interests;
 - ii. Fully use a diversity of native plant species that are naturally adapted to local climate and soils, and that provide beauty and year-round interest;
 - iii. Mitigate the loss of ecosystem services such as stormwater filtration, flood control, and carbon sequestration caused by urbanization;
 - iv. Improve and enhance habitat for and conservation of indigenous plant and animal communities;
 - v. Contribute to the Northwest's natural beauty and sense of place;
 - vi. Promote integrated pest management and reduce the use of pesticides in public landscapes;
 - vii. Provide an educational forum for understanding ecological value in natural and developed landscapes

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Native plants are defined as those existing in landscapes prior to European settlement and those plants originating in the Cascadia Bioregion (see map and description, Attachment 1). The Cascadia Bioregion (also referred to as the Pacific Northwest Bioregion) encompasses all or portions of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, Alaska, British Columbia, and Alberta. The Cascadia Bioregion claims the entire watershed of the Columbia River (as far as the Continental Divide), and the Cascade Range from Northern California into Canada and Alaska.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.1 Each Parks division that designs, constructs, or maintains landscapes shall provide targets and objectives annually to the Superintendent that demonstrate the division's commitment to increasing the use of native plants in developed parks and natural areas, and the benefits of using native plants.

6.0 PROCEDURE

- 6.1 Seattle Parks and Recreation aims to achieve landscapes with 80% native plantings in developed parks and/or landscape areas through all design, construction, and maintenance. with the following exceptions:
- 6.1.1 athletic fields and developed turf areas,
 - 6.1.2 designated community and horticultural gardens (e.g., P-Patches and Japanese Garden),
 - 6.1.3 parks and arboreta with horticultural plant collections and interpretive displays,
 - 6.1.4 significant floral displays (e.g. "showcase" floral beds or borders), and historic and cultural landscapes such as Olmsted parks,
 - 6.1.5 parks with vegetation management plans not conducive to a native vegetated landscape, or
 - 6.1.6 other parks as approved by the Superintendent.
- 6.2 Parks shall continue to use and maintain 100% native species for plantings in natural area design, construction, restoration, and rehabilitation, and will use and acquire only species native to Puget Sound lowlands, wetlands, forests, and grasslands, as appropriate to the site conditions.

- 6.3 Native plantings will consist of trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, bulbs, and ferns in any combination. The 80% percent target will be determined, on a site by site basis, through analysis of the available planting areas excluding designed hardscapes, and turf areas, and shall typically be expressed as a percentage of the total plants in a park or site renovation area. Species composition will be temporally dependent as landscapes change over time, requiring adaptive management for aspects of the site including sun, shade, slope, canopy coverage, and other factors.
- 6.4 Native plant selection will be appropriate for site conditions, including but not limited to aspects of the site including sun, shade, slope, soil structure, and available moisture from rainfall or irrigation.
- 6.5 Native plants used in landscapes will be obtained from local propagators and nurseries, if feasible.
- 6.6 For horticultural projects designed and/or constructed, the applicability of Parks Design Standard 02950-01 “The Design of Sustainable Plantings within Functional Landscapes” will be reviewed.

7.0 APPENDICES

- 7.1 Reference: Parks Design Standard 02950-01 “The Design of Sustainable Plantings within Functional Landscapes” (<http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/projects/standards/specs.asp>)
- 7.2 Native Plant Information, References and Stakeholders
 - 7.2.1 Washington Native Plant Society, 6310 NE 74th St., #215E, Seattle, WA. 98115, 206-527-3210, www.wnps.org
 - 7.2.2 Northwest Horticultural Society, PO Box 4597, Rolling Bay, WA. 98061, 206-780-8172, www.northwesthort.org
 - 7.2.3 Seattle Urban Nature Project, 5218 University Way NE, Seattle, WA 98105, 206-522-0334, www.seattleurbannature.org
 - 7.2.4 King County, WA: Native Plant Guide, <http://green.kingcounty.gov/GoNative/Index.aspx>
 - 7.2.5 Washington State University Master Gardener: Northwest Native Plant Guide, <http://gardening.wsu.edu/nwnative/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cascadia>

“As an ecological bioregion

The concept of Cascadia is closely identified with the environmental movement. To counter what some environmental movements see as improper stewardship of the land, they have defined what is called the Cascadia Bioregion (also referred to as the Pacific Northwest Bioregion). This area would encompass all or portions of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Wyoming, Montana, Alaska, British Columbia, and Alberta. Bioregions are geographically based areas defined by land or soil composition, watershed, climate, flora, and fauna. The Cascadia Bioregion claims the entire watershed of the Columbia River (as far as the Continental Divide), as well as the Cascade Range from Northern California well into Canada. The delineation of a bioregion has environmental stewardship as its primary goal, with the belief that political boundaries should match ecological boundaries. Environmental sustainability appears to be a central tenet. “



Map drawn by Cynthia Thomas on the basis of forest data in Conservation International, Ecotrust, and Pacific GIS, "Coastal Temperate Rain Forests of North America," Portland, 1995. See also David D. McCloskey, "Cascadia," Cascadia Institute, Seattle, 1988.



Public Hearing: Park Operating Hours

Eric Friedli, Seattle Parks Policy and Business Analysis Manager, presented a briefing on a proposal to standardize park operating hours at the Board's February 26 meeting. To read the minutes, including the briefing paper, see <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/ParkBoard/minutes/2009/02-26-09.pdf>. Tonight the Board will hold a public hearing, to be followed by a discussion and possible recommendation at the June 25 meeting.

Public Hearing

The Chair reminded the speakers that they have two minutes each to testify and will be timed. One person signed up to testify.

Rebecca Weiss: Ms. Weiss testified to the Park Board five years ago during a public hearing to change the hours at Prentis Frazier Park. The Board agreed that the park hours should be changed in response to the neighborhood's request, from opening at 4:00 am and closing at 11:00 pm to opening at 6:00 am and closing at 10:00 pm. Neighbors were disturbed by late night basketball games, drug dealers, people hanging out late in the park, and other disturbances in this small park, with neighborhood houses in close proximity. Six am is plenty early for this park to open; however, if the policy is modified it would have opened at 4:33 am this morning, while in December it would close at 5:18 pm. This doesn't make sense. Please take more time to consider the implications of this change – the neighborhood worked hard to get the current hours established.

The public hearing concluded.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Ramels urged other Prentis Frazier neighbors to write to the Board before its discussion and recommendation at the June 25 meeting.

Mr. Friedli stated that the Department held three public meetings on the proposed policy change, with little community response. The Green Lake and Miller Community Center meetings had no one in attendance and at Jefferson Community Center, four people showed up. They had good comments and focused on the basketball court at Lakewood Park. They stated that the basketball players frequently shine their car lights on the court at night to continue playing, and the lights shine into the windows of nearby homes. Seattle Police Department recommends that neighbors be cautious in approaching the participants to request they discontinue the play. If there is a sign stating that the park is closed, it makes it easier for SPD to approach the participants.

The Board has received one e-mail testimony, regarding groups of people using the park in early morning hours and disturbing the park neighbors. Mr. Friedli commented that whatever hours are set for a park, enforcement is the key issue. During staff discussions, the message that the Department wants to give is that it is the negative behavior in parks that the Department wants to change – the change in hours isn't focused on those who are just walking through a park. Staff are considering the concept of "continuous motion", "loitering" language to be included in the policy.

Commissioner Ramels wondered why there has been so little response from the public on this topic. Mr. Friedli responded that the issue hasn't captured an advocacy or citizen groups' interest as an issue. Commissioner Barber added that may be because the Department hasn't yet given its proposal. He asked if, after the Department determines the public's interest, it would develop a proposal and Mr. Friedli agreed. Commissioner Holme also voiced concern that the Board has had little feedback from the public. This is an important issue and the Board does not have enough public reaction to make a recommendation.

Commissioner Kostka asked if the Department is proposing a particular set of hours and Mr. Friedli responded that it is first looking at whether to standardize the hours. The suggestion of closing the parks one hour after

sunset and opening them one hour before sunrise is one suggestion. Commissioner Ramels appreciates that staff are coming to the Park Board early in this process because so many parks have non-standard hours. Mr. Friedli agreed that the Board's input at this early is very helpful. He expects that more public response will be received once a proposed set of hours is announced. Commissioner Kostka asked if there can be a flexible list of reasons for being in the park before/after it is closed, such as walking or jogging – and not as part of a noisy group. The Superintendent responded that the set closure hours gives Seattle Police a reason to check the park and remove negative behaviors. It is not just a reason for Police to issue tickets.

Commissioner Adams stated that public input is important to him and suggested that the Department set up some focus groups to gather baseline information on the proposal to standardize park hours. Mr. Friedli responded that Parks staff have discussed that idea. Commissioner Adams asked if there is a noise ordinance that would help with noise problems in the parks. There is; however, it is difficult to enforce. Loud noise could consist of 15 or so kids talking loudly and Police cannot remove them from the park unless it is closed. Responding to a question from Commissioner Barber on whether the Department's park exclusion policy would help, Superintendent Gallagher responded that the park exclusion keeps an individual from a park for 7 days or 90 days or up to a year. It does not deal with the problem. Commissioner Barber wondered whether changing the park closure hours would help, either. He has found that SPD respond to calls about disturbances in the parks when they don't have more pressing business. Superintendent Gallagher stated that addressing negative behavior is difficult, but the park hours are one tool the policy can use, if they have time to respond. SPD will keep looking for effective ways to help. Both Parks and SPD want people to use parks for legitimate purposes.

Commissioner Ramels stated that Parks will refine its recommendation and bring back to the Board for discussion at the June 11 meeting [this date was subsequently changed to June 25.] Commissioner Adams asked what staff hope to learn from the public from this policy. Mr. Friedli responded that staff want to determine how the public views the tradeoff of shorter access to parks vs. removing the bad behaviors from parks – while balancing all interests. Commissioner Ramels commented that it is helpful to have a lengthy process on this proposal.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Friedli for the update and will hold further discussion on June 25.

Update Briefing: Park Rangers

Larry Campbell, Seattle Parks Security Manager, presented an update briefing on the Department's Ranger Program. Two of the seven park rangers, Aaron Belt and Cyril Ishem, joined Mr. Campbell and also answered questions. Prior to tonight's meeting, Commissioners received a written briefing paper, which was posted to the Board's web page for public access and included below.

Written Briefing

Requested Board Action

The Board is not being asked to take any action. This is an informational briefing only. The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update on the Park Rangers Program

Project Description and Background

The Park Rangers program is an outgrowth of the Mayors' Center City Parks and Public Spaces Task Force. That 16-person Task Force met 16 times through late 2004 and into 2005. It held a series of public meetings and the Board of Park Commissioners held a public hearing in March 2006. The full report of the Task Force is available at <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/projects/downtown.asp>. The funding for the Park Rangers program was approved in 2007 for implementation in 2008.

Our overall objective with this program is to increase public use and enjoyment of our downtown parks – making them more welcoming, convivial, and safe public spaces. Our approach to achieving that is multi-

pronged and includes, in addition to the Park Rangers Program, the Center City Parks Activation Program. Addendum 1 provides more information on the Center City Parks Activation Program.

Park Rangers Program

Park Ranger Program Activities in 2008

Following a month of training, the Rangers began their official patrolling role in June 2008. Over the course of that time, they have logged 4,617 ranger patrols (ranger patrol of an individual park) of the Center City parks to which they have been assigned: Hing Hay, Occidental, City Hall, Cal Anderson, Freeway, Westlake, Victor Steinbrueck, Waterfront, Pier 62/63, and Lake Union Park. We have five full time Rangers on staff at this time (two part-time vacancies will be filled by May 13). They patrol our Center City parks between 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday; 6 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday; and, 6 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

While last summer the Rangers were limited to only 10 parks, this summer they will be patrolling all downtown parks. A statistical and graphical summary of the Rangers' activities during these foot patrols is in Addendum 2.

In addition to their main role patrolling and supporting community use of our parks, the Rangers have addressed a number of larger security issues, and continued their training:

- They've joined the Citywide Youth Outreach effort to address the needs of the homeless youth that congregate in Westlake and Freeway parks.
- Along with staff from the Center City Parks Program, they worked with the Youth Care arm of the Orion Center, New Horizons, University District Street Youth Ministries and many others to coordinate outreach fairs for homeless youth in Westlake Park. We held one fair in 2008; two are planned for 2009.
- They have become certified instructors for the Management of Aggressive Behavior (MOAB), a course that teaches principles, techniques and skills for recognizing, reducing and managing violent and aggressive behavior with humanity and compassion. The Rangers have customized this nationally recognized course to address the needs of frontline Parks and Recreation employees—in community centers, on maintenance crews and elsewhere. To date, 116 Parks employees have received this training from the Rangers.
- They have completed a "Command of Spanish" course to learn specific Spanish words, phrases, and questions that would facilitate communication with Spanish speaking subjects, witnesses and victims.
- They have completed a 20-hour Street Smart Bike Training course.
- While patrolling, the Rangers often need to go above and beyond their basic role. For example: Two Rangers encountered a homeless woman in Westlake Park wearing a rain slicker over a hospital gown and booties. They learned that she'd been living in the park, had become ill, was sent to Harborview Hospital, and subsequently lost all the belongings she'd left behind. The Rangers found clothing for her at the Women's Wellness Center, helped her contact her son in Spokane, and get a bus ticket home.
- Our collaboration with the police is continuing, and over the course of 2008 Rangers have: attended several police role calls, rode with the police, sat in with 911 operators during their initial training, and conducted a second shift patrol with the support of the Community Police Team. We believe that at the operational level --community police team, police officer level – the Rangers have a good working relationship with SPD.

Possibilities to enhance the Rangers' effectiveness

Given the current budget outlook we have not identified a source of funds or developed formal proposals for these possible Ranger program enhancements.

1. Expanding the Rangers patrol area to include other geographic areas, such as Queen Anne and Capitol Hill. We are now patrolling all of the Center City parks. With the current vehicles and staffing, it does spread the rangers thin. Additional staffing would provide more complete coverage. We do target patrols by using collected information from the Ranger daily activity logs, customer complaints and other sources.
2. Consider moving forward with the development of a new Park Ranger designation, such as Park Ranger II, which would allow them to issue civil citations — dogs off leash, parking citations, etc. -- along with the park exclusions they already issue for violations of park rules and regulations. This would be an additional tool that is scalable, and enhances the Rangers ability to enforce the Park Code. We have worked with personnel on the class specification for this possible new title.
3. Expand the Park Ranger program with addition of two more rangers.

Addendum 1 Center City Parks (CCP) Program

Center City Parks (CCP) Highlights of 2008

Now in its third year, the CCP provides a variety of park activities and additional security, funded together by Parks, DON, OED and community contributions. The CCP is continuing to evolve as experience refines our work and new partners are engaged. The parks that have received our primary focus are Hing Hay, Occidental Square, Freeway, Westlake, Victor Steinbrueck, and Waterfront. We have tailored our work in these parks to meet each site's individual needs, as each one is different due to the nature of their daily use and surrounding communities. Parks that are less intensively programmed include the International Children's, Pioneer Square, and Myrtle Edwards. Cal Anderson is handled by our Community Parks Program. The Community Parks Program is similar to the CCP, but focuses on challenging parks outside Center City.

In an electronic survey conducted in the fall of 2008, with 105 respondents, 83% said that programming in the Center City Parks was either *very* or *somewhat* effective in promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in the park. And 76% said that programs help *very much* or *somewhat* in making the parks safer and more welcoming in general, even when the programs are not actually occurring.

These are the four main programming activities that occurred in the parks last year.

- Dancing 'til Dusk—A ballroom dance series in Freeway Park. With a live band, outdoor dance floor, and a one-hour, beginner-level lesson to start, this program generated a happy buzz in Seattle's extensive dance community. We expect this program to grow as the word spreads.
- Buskers Program—By increasing the stipend and by holding auditions, the quality and reliability of this program was significantly improved over the 2007 pilot. A Chinese gaohu performer (similar to cello) was a frequent favorite at Hing Hay.
- Chinatown/ID Night Market—In its second year, this market has been well attended, and is significantly larger than in 2007, drawing people from around the city.
- Park concierge—Part-time concierges were hired for Occidental and Freeway parks. Well received by the surrounding community, the concierges provided a friendly, and helpful presence, supported programming, and sent a clear message that the parks are "open for business."

Plans for 2009

The busker program will begin in early May. Other programming will begin in June.

The economy makes 2009 a challenging year. We are concerned that a loss of sponsors for our community organizations may cause a reduction in some programming. We are working with these groups to use our lessons learned from previous years to prioritize and get the most out of the dollars we have. The buskers, park concierges, dancing programs, gardening classes, and volunteer activities will all be happening again. The outdoor movies program will be cut back to better fund more community-centric programs such as the Night Market and dancing.

New developments

- "*Parks-Specific*" (*working title*) — In partnership with the Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, 4Culture, and Downtown Seattle Association (DSA), all of whom are contributing funds, this new program aims to bring

Seattle's vibrant art scene into Center City parks. Curators will program Victor Steinbrueck¹, Westlake and Occidental Parks as art spaces, with a variety of activities and performances throughout the summer.

- *Dancing 'til Dusk* — We will expand this Freeway Park program to include Occidental Park, for a total of 10 nights of dancing.
- *Partnership with DSA* — In past years, DSA participated in the CCP program by receiving \$25,000 from Parks to fund a part-time parks programmer to generate activities in designated parks. While this did produce some excellent programming, the general approach was not an efficient use of dollars. This year, Parks will handle all programming and DSA will provide marketing support, primarily through their website. DSA has also contributed \$4,000 toward the "Parks-Specific" program.
- *Vendors* – We have secured mobile food vendors for Pioneer Square, Westlake, Victor Steinbrueck, and Waterfront parks. A possible vendor relationship is under discussion for Occidental Park.

¹ As in 2008, an appeal has been made to the Pike Place Market Historical Commission's approval of the program in Victor Steinbrueck. However, this year everything we requested was within the Commission's and the Parks Dept.'s guidelines for the park. The only part of last year's appeal that was approved was the claim that the Commission wasn't following its own guidelines. We do not expect this year's appeal to be successful. If for some reason it is, we will adjust the programming to fit the outcome. The hearing is scheduled for May 15.

City Center Parks 2008 Summary

Programming Totals:

Number of events: 1,806
Event hours: 5,287
Number of volunteer hours: 6,820

Funding Totals:

Center City Parks funds: \$172,113
Other City funds (DON, OED): \$42,700
Community funds: \$173,039

Program Summary

Center City Cinema: Outdoor movies in Hing Hay and Occidental parks.

Busker Program: June through December, street artists and musicians in Freeway, Hing Hay, Pioneer Square, Westlake and Waterfront parks.

Music -- Out to Lunch & Music in the Park: Cascade, Freeway, Occidental, Tilikum Place, Victor Steinbrueck, Waterfront, and Westlake parks.

Festivals: Wooden Boat Festival (Lake Union), Fire Festival (Occidental), Chinatown-ID Summer Festival (Hing Hay).

Arts & Craft Markets and Gardening Classes: Cascade, Freeway, Hing Hay, Victor Steinbrueck and Occidental Square parks.

Volunteer Work Parties: Volunteers conducted library book sales, raised awareness, and helped maintain parks and off-leash areas.

Vendors: Fruit and flowers in Westlake; hot dogs in Pioneer Square; corn roaster in Victor Steinbrueck Park.

Special Events & Other Activities:

Ivar's 4th of July (Myrtle Edwards)
Uptown Sunday and Uptown Stroll
(Counterbalance)
Dancing 'til Dusk (Freeway)
Seattle Sandfest (Westlake)
A WILD Holiday (Hing Hay)
Tree Lighting Ceremonies
(Cascade, Westlake)
Winter Carousel (Westlake)

Winter Solstice Celebration (Tilikum)
Winter Warmth Day (Cascade)
Drop in Bocce (Occidental Square)
Friends of the Library Book Sales (Freeway)
Drop-in Board Games (Freeway, Hing Hay)
Drop-in Tai Chi (Freeway, Hing Hay)
Drumming & Dance Classes (Cascade, Waterfront)
Poetry Reading (Victor Steinbrueck)
And many more....

Partners

Associated Recreation Council, Pioneer Square Community Association, Freeway Park Neighborhood Association, Downtown Seattle Association, Downtown District Council, Center for Wooden Boats, International District Housing Alliance, Chinatown International District Business Improvement Association, Cascade People's Center, Uptown Alliance, Seattle Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority.

Addendum 2

Statistical Summary of Ranger Activities June 2008 to April 2009

	Positive Encounters	Property Protection	Ranger Enforcement Actions	Ranger Patrol	Grand Total
Cal Anderson Park	460	22	469	449	1,400
City Hall Park	152	36	105	172	465
Freeway Park	268	40	150	274	732
Hing Hay Park	468		192	392	1,052
Lake Union Park	271	34	146	415	866
Occidental Square	499	37	460	472	1,468
Piers 62 & 63	117	13	52	320	502
Victor Steinbrueck Park	1,094	15	481	526	2,116
Waterfront Park	276	31	52	325	684
Westlake Park	1,339	178	167	475	2,159
Grand Total	4,944	406	2,274	3,820	11,444

Positive encounters:

Positive encounters are when Rangers make direct contact with park users, parks neighbors, community group or any stake holder to promote safety and activation of our parks. Examples include checking on a person's well being, handing out Junior Ranger Badges, giving tourists directions, and coordinating with the Orion Center to put on a Citywide Youth Outreach Fair. The next Fair is April 30 at Westlake Park.

Property protection:

Property protection encompasses inspection and protection of park property, managing vandalism, graffiti and maintenance by working with trades and grounds maintenance staff to track and prevent property damage.

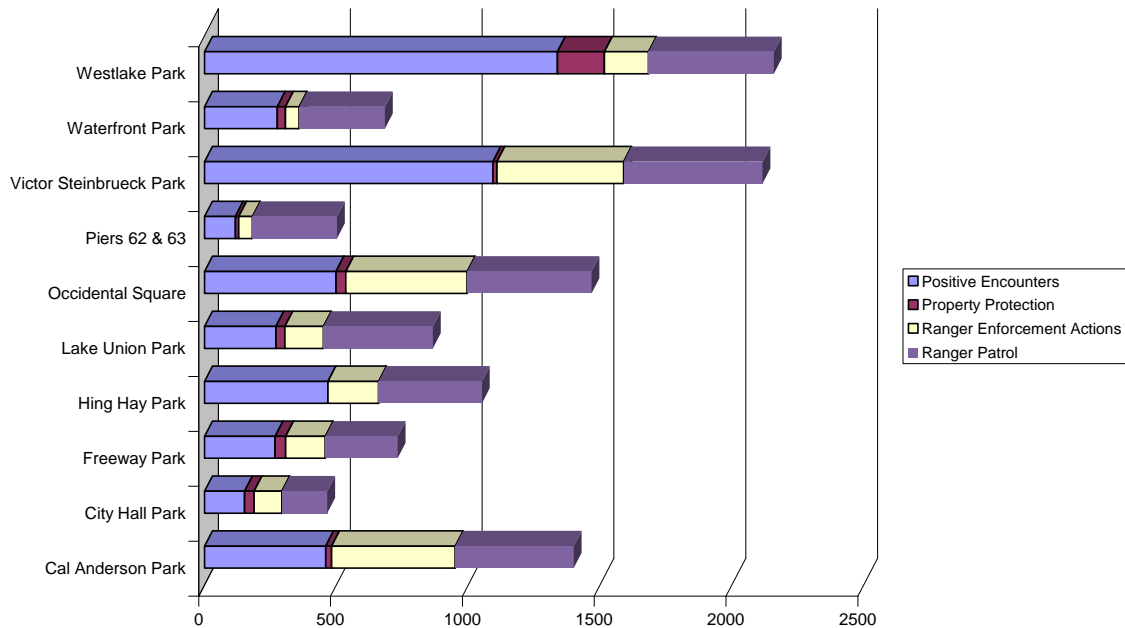
Ranger enforcement actions:

Ranger enforcement actions relate to enforcement of the Park Code or a park rule by using voluntary compliance or the issuance of a Park exclusion citation.

Ranger patrols:

Each individual bike, vehicle or foot visit to a park is logged as a "Ranger park patrol." Encounters or activities that occur during these patrols are logged according to the three main categories described above: property protection, positive encounters, and ranger enforcement action.

Graphical Summary of Ranger Activities June 2008 to April 2009



Board Discussion

Mr. Campbell introduced himself and two of the park ranger, Aaron Belt and Cyril Ishem, who assisted with the verbal briefing. Mr. Ishem has worked for Seattle Parks for nine years and Mr. Bert was previously a police officer for 10 tens.

Commissioners gave high compliments to the well-written briefing paper. Mr. Campbell distributed a draft copy of the Park Ranger Manual, which is being finalized. The ranger program was started about one year ago, and while it has presented challenges, it has also been rewarding and fun.

Mr. Campbell briefly reviewed the information in the written briefing. New developments since the briefing was prepared include that it is now approved for the rangers to patrol Lower Queen Anne and Capitol Hill parks. In addition one of the 2 new rangers has been hired. Park rangers keep a daily log of their contacts with people in the park and to date, have logged 4,000 positive contacts. They have also issued 30 park exclusions. Rangers patrol the parks by bike and by foot, with the majority by bicycle.

The first year of this program has been very successful.

Board Discussion

Commissioner Adams stated that this has been a very good and interesting report. He asked for several examples of Aha! moments that rangers have experienced. Mr. Campbell gave an example of a park visitor asking for a photo to be made with one of the City's mounted police patrols on one side and a park ranger on the other side. Being recently allowed to use police radios was a positive experience for Mr. Belt, as relations with Seattle Police Department continue to become stronger. Mr. Ishem stated that the rangers work with the homeless and instead of just intimidating or moving them to another location, the rangers give them information on where they can get assistance. He believes the rangers get compliance from many from taking

the time to talk with troubled people in the parks. The rangers distribute their contact information to business merchants near the parks and ask that they be called when situations aren't an emergency that require SPD to respond.

Commissioner Barber noted that the Downtown Business Association strongly supported the ranger program and asked if the Association gives feedback to the ranger program. Mr. Campbell responded that he attends the Association's monthly meetings and the feedback there is good. He routinely explains what the rangers are, and are not, allowed to do in the parks. There are many chronic problems that won't go away (homelessness, alcoholism, etc.) The rangers try to engage as many in the parks as possible to help them, and work with the community and Seattle Police Department and others on these problems.

Commissioner Ramels asked why the City doesn't expand this successful program to the regional parks [Discovery, Seward, Gas Works, Green Lake, etc.], as these parks also need the ranger's presence. Superintendent Gallagher responded that the area of coverage has been limited due a police union issue. When the ranger program was first implemented, the Police Guild signed a contract that the rangers could only patrol the downtown parks. Now the downtown parks are being re-defined to expand to park needs. Commissioner Ramels added that both Golden Gardens and Alki Beach Parks also need the presence of rangers. The Superintendent added that the Department has requested funding for two more rangers and he believes this request will be approved. Commissioner Kincaid added that Magnuson Park and all the large parks would benefit from this service.

Mr. Campbell commented that his staff, which consists of 8 rangers, himself, and one other security guard, also provides security for all of Seattle's 500+ parks. Commissioners Ramels expressed her amazement at the area this staff must secure.

Commissioner Holme stated that the park ranger program, in his opinion, has been the best result of the Downtown Parks Strategy. He is impressed with the accomplishments of this team in just its first year. He met and talked with one of the rangers about six months ago and personal safety of the rangers is a concern. He asked if the rangers have self-defense tools at their disposal when they encounter risky situations in the parks.

Commissioner Holme wants the message to go to the Mayor that the Board of Park Commissioners is extremely supportive of this program and that personal safety of the rangers is top priority. Mr. Campbell responded that each ranger carries a baton and set of handcuffs and travel in pairs. The rangers include former police officers and state park rangers. Mr. Campbell at first thought that self-defense weapons were not necessary for the rangers; however, some people who are approached by the rangers check out the rangers and when they see limited self-defense tools, sometimes become more aggressive. The rangers do have radios to call Seattle Police officers, who have responded quickly to the rangers' calls for backup. Mr. Belt added that most situations can be diffused; however, there are random situations that escalate.

Commissioner Ramels asked Commissioners to send any additional questions to Mr. Campbell. She recalled when the park ranger program was just a concept. The Board thanked the rangers for their good work. The Superintendent added that this is a developing program and staff are working hard to make sure it is successful each step of the way.

Old/New Business

Operating Procedures and Board Correspondence: The Board reviewed the revisions to its Operating Procedures at the May 5 annual retreat. The Procedures include an attachment that describes the selection process for the Board's appointment of the 7th position. Commissioner Kostka moved to approve the Operating Procedures as revised and Commissioner Adams seconded. The vote was taken and the motion was unanimous in favor. Commissioners thanked Parks staff Susan Golub for her work on these revisions, as well as the Board's coordinator, Sandy Brooks, and former chair Amit Ranade.

Commissioner Ramels also thanked the Coordinator for drafting the thank you letter to Mr. Ranade, to express the Board's gratitude for his service to the Park Board.

There being no other new business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

APPROVED: _____

Jackie Ramels, Chair
Board of Park Commissioners

DATE _____