



Date: October 9, 2025
To: Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners
From: Brian M. Judd, Strategic Advisor
Daisy Catague, Deputy Superintendent of Park and Recreation Services
Subject: 2025 Park Hours Changes Proposal

Action Requested: The Superintendent seeks a recommendation from the Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners (BPRC) regarding a staff proposal to change operating hours for select parks and boat ramps.

Summary: This memo outlines proposed changes to operating hours for some of Seattle Parks and Recreation's (SPR) popular parks and boat ramps. These adjusted hours will address illegal and nuisance behavior at certain locations, incorporate lessons learned from recent pilot operating hours at selected sites, and / or ensure operating hours align with public information.

Background: SMC 3.02 (Administrative Code) establishes rule-making procedures for City agencies including allowances for Emergency Rulemaking (3.02.050) for 60 days or less and notice requirements prior to the adoption, amendment or repeal of any rule.

Summarized in the table below is the municipal code outlining the Superintendent's authority to set park hours and SPR policies that stem from this authority. This briefing focused on the highlighted categories only.

| Park Hours | Details | Guiding Code or Policy |
|---------------------|---|--|
| 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | All Parks - Unless Otherwise Posted. SMC also provides Superintendent authority to also set specified hours for individual parks or facilities, including 24 hours a day. | SMC 18.12.245 |
| Open 24 hours/day | Kerry Viewpoint, Green Lake Park, Myrtle Edwards Park, a portion of Lake Washington Blvd Path and certain boat ramps are currently open 24 hours a day. | SPR Policy: Park Operating Hours Exception. 4.2 |
| 6 a.m. - 10 p.m. | <i>Exceptions to the two options above will be limited to this time frame, unless there are clearly identified extenuating circumstances justifying different hours.</i> | SPR Policy: Park Operating Hours Exception. 4.7 |
| Pilot Hours | Superintendent may establish pilot hours for a park for up to 270 days to address public safety or other issues. SPR is required to file pilot period notice with the city clerk. Public hearing is also required. | SPR Policy: Park Operating Hours Exception Policy. 7.2.3 |
| Permanent Seasonal | Alki, Don Armeni, Golden Gardens, and Eddie Vine. Closed one early from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day. | SPR Policy: Park Operating Hours Exception Policy. 7.2.3 |

Recommendation: The staff recommendation includes permanent changes to certain park hours and a few 270-day pilots. SPR recommends these changes to:

- Continue responding to community concerns about illegal/nuisance activity at popular summer locations.
- Digest lessons learned from recent, successful operating hours pilots
- Align formal operating hours in City Clerk filings by formalizing previous Superintendent decisions about select sites.
- Align formal clerk filings with current operating hours information on public signs / web sites at select sites.

Recommendation #1: Establish Permanent Hours at Select Pilot Locations

- Earlier this year, following BPRC consideration and a public hearing, the Superintendent established the pilot operating hours in the table below. Staff recommend making these pilot hours permanent based on positive outcomes and community feedback.

| Location | Recommended Hours (Current Pilot) | Hours by Policy | Current Pilot Timeframe |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Atlantic City Boat Ramp | 4 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. | 24 hours | May 23, 2025 – February 17, 2026 |
| Fourteenth Avenue Boat Ramp | 4 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | |
| Stanley Sayers Boat Ramp and Park | 4 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. | 24 hours | |
| Sunnyside Boat Ramp | 4 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. | 24 hours | |

Recommendation #2: Establish Pilot Hours at Select Parks

- To address ongoing illegal and nuisance behaviors at these parks, staff recommend establishing similar pilot operating hours to what is currently being piloted at Hoa Mai. During the pilot timeframe, SPR staff will continue developing longer-term solutions for a future BPRC recommendation establishing new, permanent hours at these locations.

| Location | Pilot Hours | Hours by Policy | Pilot Timeframe |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Hoa Mai Park (continuing) | 7 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | May 11, 2025 – February 5, 2026 |
| Lake City Mini Park | 7 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | October 2025 – February 5, 2026 |

Recommendation #3: Establish Pilot Hours at Select Boat Ramps

- SPR staff recommend the following boat ramp operating hours changes to run until the summer seasonal hours begin. These locations are currently set at these operating hours under a 60-day emergency rule enacted in response to community concerns.

| Location | Pilot Hours | Hours by Policy | Pilot Timeframe |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Don Armeni Boat Ramp | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | Permanent Seasonal ¹ | October 2025 – May 22, 2026 |
| Eddie Vine Boat Ramp | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | Permanent Seasonal | |

Recommendation #4: Formalize Changes from 1996

In reviewing operating hours consistency in the park system, staff have discovered previous documents showing changes made by the Superintendent in 1996. The June 25, 2009, BPRC meeting meetings document a presentation about operating hours proposals from 1989 - 2009 that included these changes, but a formal City Clerk file cannot be located.

This recommendation aligns with operating hours displayed on signs and web sites for these locations and will involve submitting a City Clerk file to formalize what is already public-facing for these locations.

| Location | Hours by Policy | Proposed Change | Notes |
|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Emma Schmitz Mem. Overlook | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | Formalizes 1996 decision |
| Madrona Playground | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | Aligns with public information |
| Me-Kwa-Mooks Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Othello Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |

Recommendation #5: Technical Changes

To survey internal consistency, staff have reviewed operating hours information (policy, signs, and web sites) for ~125 park locations. In this initial review, operating hours information discrepancies were found for the locations in the table below.

Since the signs and web sites for each location show 6 a.m. – 10 p.m., we believe a previous Superintendent decision was made to establish these hours, but there is no

¹ **Permanent Seasonal Hours:** In this operating hour category, these two boat ramps are open 4 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day and then 24 hours for the remainder of the year. **The recommended boat ramps pilot would be for the period outside of summer months.**

documentation on file with the City Clerk nor are these included in the aforementioned BPRC meeting minutes.

This recommendation will involve submitting a City Clerk file to formalize what is already public-facing for these locations.

These recommended technical changes serve as a preview for an additional, future slate of technical changes coming to BPRC. Staff are currently collecting photos of the rest of our park rainbow signs to see where there are operating hours discrepancies between policy and signage.

| Location | Hours by Policy | Proposed Change | Notes |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| Albert Davis Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | Aligns with public information |
| Dr. Blanche Lavizzo Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Chinook Beach Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Denny-Blaine Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Haller Lake Street End | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| John C. Little, Sr. Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Junction Plaza Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Leschi Park | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| University Playground | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |
| Van Asselt Playground | 4 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. | 6 a.m. – 10 p.m. | |

Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners Action:

- 10/9: BPRC Presentation and Public Hearing (and possible vote)
- 11/13: BPRC Recommendation Vote (if no vote(s) on 10/9)
- November: Superintendent decision and SPR updates to signage and websites

Attachment:

- SPR Park Operating Hours Exception Policy. Adopted 1995, amended 2009