

**BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**July 24, 2003**

**Present:**

Bruce Bentley, Chair  
James Fearn  
Joanna Grist  
Terry Holme  
Sarah Nielson  
Kate Pflaumer

**Staff:**

Ken Bounds, Superintendent  
Sandy Brooks, Park Board Coordinator

Chair Bruce Bentley called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. **James moved and Terry seconded that the agenda consent items be approved, including the July 24 agenda, July 10 minutes as amended, and the acknowledgment of correspondence. The vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.**

**Superintendent's Report**

Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds reported on the following:

***People's Lodge at Discovery Park Agreement is Signed:*** Ken distributed copies of the agreement to the Board. Park Board members may have read the press release in Sunday's newspaper describing the agreement signed by the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Magnolia Community Coalition, and Seattle Parks and Recreation. This agreement is for development plans for the Indian Cultural Center at Discovery Park. City Council will be briefed on Monday, July 28. The agreement will come back before the Park Board during the process to amend the Discovery Park Master Plan.

Bruce asked about the status of the Park Department's application to purchase the Westpoint lighthouse. The lighthouse is located very close to Discovery Park. Ken said the application has been submitted and is currently in the review process.

***Golf Courses Management Changes:*** On July 17, Parks signed a release agreement with Frontier Bank and on July 18 signed a termination agreement with Municipal Golf of Seattle. An 18-month agreement with Premier Golf was signed on July 23 to manage the operations of the three 18-hole golf courses (Jackson, Jefferson, and West Seattle) through the end of 2004. Parks will continue to maintain the three courses and own all the assets; Premier will be paid a monthly management fee. Premier already manages the highly successful Interbay Golf. This will mark the first time all four courses will be operated by the same company and by a professional management group.

During the summer of 2004, a request for proposal will be developed to solicit proposals for long-term management of the courses. Golf course management will come back before the Park Board next year.

***Sand Point Magnuson Park FSEIS Appeal is Postponed:*** The appeal on the adequacy of the Supplemental Final Environmental Statement to the Hearing Examiner, filed by Friends of Magnuson Park, has been postponed until August 11.

Joanna asked if this will come back before the Parks Board. Ken answered that it depends on the Hearing Examiner's decision, which may occur by the end of September.

***Parks Acquires Additional Property:*** Parks is in the process of closing on a number of properties, including Maple Leaf community garden property, Smith Cove, Whittier substation, Alki substation, and property near Thornton Creek.

***Family Support Centers Moving from Community Centers:*** The 1991 Community Center Levy provided funds to replace Bitterlake, Delridge, Garfield, and Rainier Community Centers. Eventually, funds were also obtained to replace Miller Community Center. At Bitterlake, Delridge, Garfield, and Rainier, funds were obtained from the Community Development Block Grant to add 1,000 square feet at each facility for a family support center. These spaces were contracted by the City's Department of Human Services (DHS) to various organizations to run the family support centers.

Three months ago DHS, in a change of direction for the program, solicited bids for the support centers to be located in four quadrants of the city, one site per quadrant. None of the family support center operators at the four community centers were successful bidders for the program. Parks will be looking for other programs to fill this space.

***Jefferson Community Center Bid:*** The bid for construction work at Jefferson Community Center came in under estimate. This follows a positive trend, as all of the community center construction bids have come in under estimate.

***Pioneer Square and Downtown Parks Staff to Wear Uniforms During Pilot Project:*** Downtown Parks' maintenance crews will soon begin wearing uniforms as part of a pilot project.

Sarah asked if Parks staff view uniforms as a good thing. Ken said that about half the employees like the idea of uniforms and the other half don't. Some staff prefer to not be identified as Parks Department staff. It becomes a union bargaining issue - if uniforms are required, then the Department must provide the uniforms and pay for cleaning costs. The uniforms could be bibs, jackets, tee-shirts, etc. Jackets or bibs can easily be removed during breaks, lunch, etc. Zoo, Aquarium, and Summer Playground staff members wear uniforms.

***Parks Events Schedulers Are Busy:*** Lots of events are taking place in Seattle parks this summer and Parks Department scheduling staff are very busy. 2,200 picnics have been scheduled.

***Starbucks Plans September 13 Volunteer Event:*** On Saturday, September 13, Starbucks staff and members of the public will join for a volunteer work day at the Burke-Gilman Trail, from Fremont to 145th NE.

***Parks Department Web Page Update:***

- The Sherwood History Files, which include extensive maps and research on Seattle's parks, has recently been added to the Department's web page: <http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/history/sherwood.htm>
- In 2002, 680,000 hits to the Parks Department web sites were recorded. This number has already been exceeded in 2003 and over a million hits are expected by the end of the year.

***Walking the Talk of Environmental Stewardship:*** Ken distributed the Park Department internal newsletter on environmental stewardship, "Walking Our Talk".

***Future Park Board Meeting:*** Ken will be absent from the August 14 Park Board meeting.

**Oral Requests and Communication from the Audience**

Bruce explained that the general public comment portion of the agenda is reserved for topics that have not had or are not scheduled for a public hearing. Testimony is limited to three minutes per speaker. No one signed up to give testimony.

**Skateboard Policy Briefing/Public Hearing**

Susan Golub, Parks Strategic Adviser, came before the Board to give a briefing on the proposed Skateboard Policy. The Board also received a copy of the June 30, 2003, Revised Draft Skateboard Park Policy and a written explanation of the draft, including three proposed changes. Text of both follows:

**Written Briefing - Draft Policy  
REVISED DRAFT JUNE 30, 2003**

**Skateboard Park Policy**

**1.0 Preamble**

Seattle Parks and Recreation recognizes skateboarding as a healthy and popular recreational activity and a legitimate use to be accommodated in the parks system. The Department seeks to develop skateboard parks at selected sites in the city to serve a variety of skill levels.

## **2.0 Purpose**

To create a policy, general criteria and guidelines for the development and operation of skateboard parks in Seattle parks.

## **3.0 Organizations Affected**

3.1 Seattle Parks and Recreation

3.2 Seattle park users including members of the skateboarding community

## **4.0 References**

4.1 Seattle Park and Recreation Plan 2000

4.2 Public Involvement Policy for Proposals to Acquire Property, Initiate Funded Capital Projects, or Make Changes to a Park or Facility 060-P1.9.2

## **5.0 Policy**

5.1 It is the policy of Seattle Parks and Recreation:

5.1.1 To seek public input on the development and operation of skateboard parks in a manner consistent with Reference 4.2, its Public Involvement Policy for Proposals to Acquire Property, Initiate Funded Capital Projects, or Make Changes to a Park or Facility 060-P1.9.2

5.1.2 To develop publicly-owned skateboard parks in the City of Seattle consistent with Reference 4.1. Generally, Skateboard Parks should include components that serve a variety of skill levels. Skateboard Parks that serve specific skill levels can be considered in the context of the site.

## **6.0 Siting Criteria**

6.1 Different considerations may apply for sites that serve specific skill levels. The following does not preclude consideration of site specific features that may be appropriate depending on the skill level including fencing, lighting, graffiti wall, etc.

6.1.1 Skateboard Park sites should:

- be developed as part of a larger park space that provides other park amenities
- be located to provide maximum visibility in and through the skateboard park area
- consider adjacent uses and potential noise impacts
- be located near public transportation (i.e. bus routes)

- have a code of conduct

#### 6.1.2 Ideal Skateboard Park locations would include:

- spectator accommodations (i.e. seating and/or viewing area)
- a designated graffiti wall
- a drinking fountain
- a bike rack
- restroom facilities within the park

6.1.3 The Department will seek to distribute facilities throughout the city and generally will not seek to develop Skateboard Parks as stand alone facilities.

### 7.0 Skateboard Park Design and Construction

7.1 Design created through a public involvement process consistent with the Department's existing Public Involvement Policy.

7.2 Design consistent with any applicable Department design standards.

7.3 The Department will seek to use consultants/designers who have experience in the design of skateboard parks.

7.4 Skateboard Parks may be designed and then constructed in phases.

7.6 Design and materials selection will consider available products, ongoing maintenance costs, noise reduction techniques and safety.

7.7 Design elements within the park should be spaced so participants can maneuver and recover without interfering with other users or another element. Also elements requiring different skills levels should be situated so that users of different levels do not interfere with one another.

7.8 Provide signage as to the specific rules of conduct for each skateboard park. Signage may include hours of use, recommendations for helmets and padding, prohibition of other uses such as in-line skates or bikes, appropriate use of graffiti wall, presence of supervision, etc.

### 8.0 Skateboard Park Maintenance and Operations

8.1 The Department will consider contracting with a qualified organization to operate and maintain Skateboard Parks.

8.2 A fee may be charged at some facilities.

8.3 No amplified music will be played at the facilities unless permitted for a special event.

8.4 Use of Skateboard Parks will not be directly supervised by Park and Recreation staff.

8.5 Use of Skateboard Parks by skaters will be permitted when the Department determines such uses can be safely accommodated. The Department may limit non-skateboarding use of the Skateboard Parks.

## **Written Briefing**

### **Introduction**

Skateboarding is one of the fastest growing sports in the nation. As the sport has evolved and grown, so has the challenge of finding safe and legal places to board. Skateboarding today is not simply a means of travel, but is a sport that involves tricks and maneuvers that use street furniture, curbs, steps, railings, artwork - anything that can be ridden upon, jumped over or used for grinding. The development of skateboard parks is one way to better serve the sport. Good parks include bowls, pipes, railings, and steps that simulate a street environment and provide not only a place for boarders to ride, but a place for spectators to watch the action.

The development of this policy by a Department staff team was significantly influenced by a skateboard park design charrette conducted by University of Washington students last fall. The charrette brought together skateboarders, park designers, and City staff with the goal of helping the City develop general criteria and specific designs for skateboard parks.

### ***Policy Issue: Adoption of a Skateboard Park Policy***

The issue before the Board is the adoption of a Skateboard Park Policy which will guide the future development of skateboard parks. Perhaps the most important element of the policy is the preamble which recognizes the sport "as a healthy and popular recreational activity and a legitimate use to be accommodated in the parks system." We welcome skateboarders to our parks and will seek to develop parks to serve them.

### ***Elements of the Policy***

1. Siting Criteria (Section 6): The draft policy lists elements that will be used to guide where we build skateboard parks. Listed are those features that should be found at all park sites, and those which we would ideally be able to provide. The list of ideal items could be much longer, but we have attempted to be financially sensitive and not create hope for features (such as heated pavement) that undoubtedly will be beyond our reach. The list of should haves could also be expanded: we have heard comments that lights are a must, and that drinking fountains are a necessity, not a luxury.

The siting criteria call for skateboard parks to be developed as part of a larger park, that they generally should not be developed as stand-alone facilities. The purpose of this criterion is to integrate the sport into our parks; to provide built-in security by having other park users nearby; and, where possible, to share restroom and parking facilities with existing parks.

2. Design and Construction Recommendations (Section 7): Design and construction are extremely critical elements of skateboard parks, perhaps more so than with other park facilities. Well-designed parks promote a safe flow of boarders and will draw riders in from the streets; poorly designed parks can be dangerous and will not attract users. The same issues surround construction: for a park to safely serve the sport, concrete must be very smooth and trick features must be built with great precision. We have learned more about these issues since drafting the policy and now recommend a change in section 7.3:

7.3: The Department will [eliminate "seek to"] use consultants/designers as part of a skateboard park project team who have experience in the design of skateboard parks.

There are many experienced designers both locally and across the country, so this change should not cause any difficulties for future park development.

3. Maintenance and Operations (Section 8): As we proceed with development of skateboard parks in the City, we may explore management contracts with outside agencies, or fee parks. The policy leaves these issues open to future research and consideration. It also leaves open the issue of the use of skateboard parks by non-boarders. Some parks in the region permit roller blades and bikes, sometimes with specific times that those uses are allowed. Non-boarding users can create traffic flow problems and decreasing the safety of all users; and bikes are known to be very hard on park surfaces, gouging concrete in ways that create additional safety concerns for skateboarders. These issues will be explored in the planning and design for individual parks.

#### ***Staff Recommendation***

With the change recommended to Section 7.3 noted previously, staff recommends approval of the draft Skateboard Park Policy dated June 30, 2003.

#### ***Verbal Briefing***

Susan gave a summary of the proposed skateboard policy and its evolution. She reviewed three sections in more detail. Proposed changes to these three sections are as follows:

**6.0-Siting Criteria.** This has been left as a general list in order to consider specific cases and look at what surrounding uses are and what the impacts of a skateboard park would be on those uses. Under the list of ideal elements, 6.3 lists a graffiti wall as desirable. Lots of comments have been received on this. Both the police and graffiti rangers have reported that the graffiti walls are not generally successful. The graffiti spills over into other areas and also encourages gang tagging. Parks will now recommend that the graffiti wall be removed from the policy and replaced with a community-generated art wall.

**7.0 -Design and Construction.** Because the design of the skateboard park is so important, Section 7.3 will be re-written as follows: "7.3: The Department will [eliminate "seek to"] use consultants/designers as part of a skateboard park project team who have experience in the design of skateboard parks." This may cause additional costs for the skateboard parks.

**8.0-Maintenance and Operations.** Where the policy reads "fees may be a requirement", this may mean a special exhibition fee not a Park Department fee to use the facility. Signage will list safety rules and will also list what other uses will be allowed. This will be decided on a park-by-park basis.

At its August 14 meeting, the Board is asked to discuss and make a recommendation to the Superintendent on the policy.

### **Board Discussion**

Kate asked about design and liability issues. Susan has looked at State guidelines and it is her understanding that, if a fee isn't charged and signage is posted, users ride at their own risk. This will be reviewed with the City's Risk Manager. Ken stated that this would not exempt the Department from negligence. Kate asked if there could be a claim for negligent design. An audience member, who designs skateboard parks for a living, stated that there have been no negligent design lawsuits in the United States related to skateboard parks. Susan said there is a wealth of good skateboard park designers. Joanna asked if there is existing skateboard parks in Seattle. Susan said that Ballard has a temporary skateboard park, as do Magnolia and Southwest Seattle. These have attracted lots of skaters.

Terry referred to 8.0, regarding "fees may be a requirement" and asked if that might increase liability for the City. Susan stated that the fee would be charged to spectators to watch an event, not to riders who are using the skateboard park. The Board asked that the policy language be re-worded to reflect this.

James asked about proposed locations for skateboard parks. Susan said one proposed park is at the I-90 Lid. Terry asked about noise mitigation issues and about hours of operation. Susan answered this would be handled on a case-by-case basis. Siting the skateboard parks in an appropriate area would deal with noise mitigation - the goal is to determine a good location for the park so there won't be noise issues. No amplified music will be allowed in the skateboard parks. Susan said the policy does not spell out X number of feet a skateboard park would be located from other facilities. Terry would like to see included in the policy language that noise generated is taken into account when siting the parks. James asked if there is a minimum # of features required for a skateboard park. He has seen a park with only one bench and skaters are there constantly. Susan said that the amenities depend on the size of the park. Bruce stated that Burien has a nice skateboard park which he has visited. Joanna said there are dozens of nice skateboard parks around the State and her agency, the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition, helped fund six of them.

Bruce said there will be further opportunity for the Board to discuss the policy and make a recommendation at the August 14 Park Board meeting.

### **Public Testimony**

The following people signed up to give public testimony on the Skateboard Policy:



**Dan Hughes:** Is a skateboarder and Renton resident. He asked that the designers of future skateboard parks listen to older skaters like him (he has been skating for over 30 years) when designing the parks, and not just to younger skateboarders. Two years ago Renton built a \$200,000 park based mostly on input from younger skaters and had \$50,000 in repairs this year. He recommends that the Request for Proposal be well advertised so the design firm that is chosen can be carefully evaluated.

**Frank Shields:** He was involved in the creation of the Ballard Skateboard temporary park. When the park was being built, he did extensive research on existing skateboard parks. He and his kids visited several high-end, well-built parks in Arizona and he hopes that Seattle builds similar parks. Involve kids and get their input early in the process before any decisions are made, and before making a decision on the graffiti wall, get their input on what the wall means to them.

**Mike Peterson:** He is a skateboarder who believes that the main purpose of a skateboard park is to attract kids from using non-skateboard area. The design of the skateboard parks should look like schoolyards or Westlake Park, which are areas where kids like to skateboard.

**Merril Cousin:** Lives directly across the street from Colman School parking lot, where a skateboard park is proposed. She believes that the Parks Department is determined to build a skateboard park at Colman regardless of what the community wants. She believes the proposed policy is vague to the point of being meaningless - a skateboard park could be sited anywhere. Make the language of the siting criteria much more specific. She is very concerned about the process being used to determine where skateboard parks will be located. She is currently going through such a process and it has been very frustrating. There is a huge amount of opposition from nearby neighbors of Colman School to site a skateboard park there. She supports more skateboard parks; however, they should be sited where they will be successful. She also read written testimony that she brought and gave to the Board.

**Julia Byrd:** She objects to the skateboard policy and believes it must be more specific. She did an internet search on Google and found skateboard park policies that are much more specific and comprehensive than the vague and lame policy that is being presented tonight. Selecting Colman Park is "putting the cart before the horse." She stated that a landscape architect told her at an April meeting that Colman was selected because the Parks Superintendent wants a skateboard park there. She read three reasons why this site is inappropriate: 1. it is inappropriate and insensitive to put a skateboard park in the parking lot next to where the African American Heritage Museum is to be built; 2. it is inappropriate to put a skateboard park close to a densely-populated residential neighborhood because of noise; and 3. the community and the RainKing neighborhood association, which represents the area, objected to putting in a skateboard park in the design, as skateboarding is not an activity that represents what folks do in this area. She believes Parks is pushing the design. She is not a NIMBY ("not in my back yard") person and supports building a skateboard park in the right area. She asked several residents who live near the Ballard skateboard park how they felt about the temporary skateboard park

located there and found that people hate the park. The skating and noise go on 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Kids break all the rules at the park and skate all night. Residents can't sit outside their homes because of the park. The situation at the Ballard park was much worse than she had expected.

**Steve Bull:** He is interested because he believes the Colman site was proposed without any siting criteria. In his research, he found that other communities generally outline straightforward criteria so a skateboard park is sited properly. Siting considerations should address that there is a demonstrated need for a skateboard from the local community. The flexibility and language in the policy makes it difficult for the public to see that a public process is being handled in a way that has been carefully thought out and has considered the needs of the neighborhood. The proposed policy will always be open-ended and there will always be opposition. Ensure that the sites chosen meet not only the criteria of the skaters, but also the neighbors.

**Kevin M. Cortezarter:** He was one of the liaisons who worked with Virginia Anderson, Seattle Center Director, to develop the skateboard park for the City of Seattle. To save on lighting costs at the parks, consider keeping the skateboard park open from dawn to dusk in summer months and until 9:00 p.m. in winter months. He likes to ride his BMX bike at the Ballard park; however, it is a safety issue for skaters to ride with the BMX bike riders. BMX bikes need more space than skateboarders. Referring to the noise, he said that the Parks Department has more than 6,052 acres of park land and should already have statistics for noise from other sports, including cheering from both the audience and participants, teams of 12+, vehicles arriving and leaving, etc.

**Chris Hildebrand:** He is one of the two originators, along with Frank Shields, of the Ballard skateboard park and likes the policy that was presented tonight. His group originally selected Golden Gardens Park as a skateboard park, received all sorts of donations, worked hard, and was turned down by the City. The Parks Department instead proposed the temporary Ballard site and it was developed. He is grateful for the Department's open-mindedness and response to his group's efforts. Skaters have been working since the 1980's to get skateboard parks in the city. The temporary Ballard site is located next to a large dumpster and is smelly. The Northwest is known as an area of the country with excellent skateboard parks; however, this is mostly due to efforts in Oregon. Seattle needs to step up its efforts and develop 4-5 major skateboard parks. He believes there are many obstacles to having Colman Park as a skateboard site.

**Stephen Lundgren:** He is the past president of the Ballard Community Council and the Sunset Hills Community Club. He discussed the history of how the skateboard park came to Ballard. The community recognized the need for a skateboard facility and supported the temporary site. He believes the park has had positive benefits and has provided kids with an appropriate place to skate. However, it is a temporary site and doesn't work as a long-term site. Ballard residents want a permanent skateboard park located in their area at an appropriate site. Parking, noise, proximity to other facilities, and lighting are all significant issues and should be determined up front in a skateboard park site. Refine the policy - don't rush in.

As no further speakers signed up to testify, the public hearing was closed. Ken gave an update on the proposed skateboard park at Colman School. After the public process many issues were raised. This site has been put on hold and is being re-evaluated.

Bruce thanked Susan for the presentation.

### **Woodland Park Zoo EIS/Long Range Planning Briefing**

Deborah Jensen, Chief Executive Officer of the Woodland Park Zoo, and Bruce Bohmke, Deputy Director, came before the Park Board to give a briefing on the Zoo's Long Range Physical Development Plan (LRPDP). The Board received both a written and verbal briefing. The written briefing, in its entirety, follows:

#### **Written Briefing**

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the LRPDP but no action is required of the Board.

#### ***Long-Range Physical Development Plan 2002***

The Long-Range Physical Development Plan is intended to amend the Zoo's original Long-Range Plan, which is now nearly 30 years old. The plan provides overall guidance for the physical development of the Zoo through the year 2020. The key objectives are to continue the 1976 plan's approach to naturalistic exhibitry and excellent animal care, but update the plan to:

- Improve the animal health, conservation and maintenance facilities and provide new exhibits;
- Provide the community with facilities for social gathering, recreation and interactive learning for visitors of all ages, with a focus on programs that inspire conservation;
- Enhance the zoo's financial stability and stewardship by creating facilities and programs that yield new, year-round revenue streams;
- Improve visitors' experience, particularly for families with young children and during off-peak times in late fall, winter and spring;
- Reduce the neighborhood traffic impact by providing sufficient on-site parking to accommodate current and projected zoo attendance on all but a few days each year, and;
- Provide on-site staff work space that enhances efficiency, productivity and collaboration.

The Environmental Impact Statement process has focused on two major changes, which reflect the suggestions of the hearing examiner, providing significantly different plan alternatives and a more detailed analysis of traffic patterns. Minor changes were made throughout the document to enhance clarity.

## **LONG-RANGE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ELEMENTS**

### ***Animal Exhibits and Conservation Facilities***

The plan proposes new exhibits for tigers, Asian bears, Asian rhinos, desert animals and animals of the Asian Highlands, including snow leopards. It also provides for new mammal, bird, reptile and elephant conservation facilities that would enhance the zoo's ability to provide the highest quality of animal care.

Education and conservation are two key goals for the zoo. The continued upgrading of the animals environments is essential to provide effective education about the value and beauty as well as behavioral and physical adaptation of animal life. Increasing knowledge of animal psychological and physical needs has driven and will continue to drive exhibit improvements.

### ***Discovery Village***

Discovery Village would be an education and conservation facility located near the site of the existing West Gate. The Village would function as a cluster of interconnected facilities, including the Family Science Learning Center, and landscapes that provide a year-round dynamic environment for interactive, lifelong learning. It would be oriented toward the interior of the zoo and is intended to become a central hub for visitors of all ages to engage in hands-on learning about the zoo, its animals and their exhibits, as well as the zoo's role in conservation of wild species and habitats. The facility represents a significant step in implementing the zoo's 1997 Education Strategic Plan and achieving the plan's primary purpose: "to inspire an understanding of nature and a commitment to conservation."

### ***Parking Garage***

Woodland Park Zoo has less than half the available parking than other zoos with comparable attendance, and demand exceeds capacity more than 100 days each year. The parking garage and surface lot proposed in the LRPDP 2002 would provide sufficient onsite parking to meet current and projected needs on all but a few days each year. The garage and associated parking management strategies would move zoo visitor cars off neighborhood streets and onto zoo grounds, remedying a long-standing neighborhood problem with overflow zoo parking.

### ***Parking Garage Location***

The proposal contemplates that the parking garage would be located on the site of the zoo's existing south lot, the zoo's most popular entry, where demand is greatest. This site takes advantage of the existing services located at this entrance, and would require little in the way of retraining visitors. The south entrance is closest to major transportation arterials and would result in fewer vehicles being brought through the heart of the neighborhood. Alternative locations for the parking garage have been examined and

described in the revised Environment Impact Statement.

### ***Parking Garage Specifications***

To minimize any visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood and the Rose Garden, the zoo has proposed that the garage be built mostly underground, with surface parking and one above-ground level. Any above-ground features would be well-screened by trees and other plantings.

### ***Alternative Transportation***

The zoo will continue to work with county and city agencies to encourage alternative transportation such as transit, bikes and flex cars. However, single-family vehicles will continue to be the predominate mode of transportation to the zoo for several reasons. First, families with children generally need flexibility in departure times. Second, the majority of visitors bring strollers and other gear that is not easily transported via other methods. Finally, many visitors come from areas of the region that do not offer direct transit service to the zoo. Surveys have shown that zoo visitors arrive in carpools with an average occupancy of 3.5 people per car.

### ***Events Center***

By providing dedicated indoor events space, the Events Center would allow for year-round community use of the zoo for workshops, weddings, family celebrations, company parties and other social gatherings that currently take place outdoors at the zoo during the summer. It is modeled in part on similar indoor gathering places that have been successfully integrated into many other zoos and botanical parks across the country. Zoos with more notable events centers include Oregon, Denver, San Francisco and Atlanta. The one-story building would be designed to accommodate up to 400 people (reduced from 600 in response to public comment). Rental fees would provide a source of revenue for zoo operations during the off-season months when the zoo experiences a significant drop in revenues.

### ***Events Center Location***

The Events Center would be located in the current staff parking lot at the edge of the North Meadow, a designated "public activity area" that currently hosts family and community events such as concerts, large-scale celebrations, family reunions, company parties and other social gatherings.

### ***Events Center Specifications***

The Events Center would be a one-story, 9,000 square foot building, with a basement for support functions, that would be in keeping with the rest of the zoo. Like most zoo facilities, it would be sensitively designed and screened by trees and other vegetation.

While the building would be designed to accommodate as many as 400 people, average attendance is likely to be lower.

### ***Historic Carousel***

The Historic Carousel, originally located at the Cincinnati Zoo, would offer families with children (the majority of the zoo's visitors) an additional option for fun activity play on zoo grounds, responding to a frequent request for more active options at the zoo for young children. The Historic Carousel would be housed in a one-story, all-weather structure that would include restrooms and an 840 square foot space that can be rented for birthday parties. The rental space can be divided into two areas by closing an operable partition. Birthday party rentals would provide new sources of revenue to support zoo operations and programs throughout the year. Carousels are customary at zoos across the country, including Denver, Oklahoma City, Columbus, Atlanta, Fort Wayne, Memphis, Riverbanks, San Francisco, Indianapolis and Roger Williams Park zoos.

### ***Historic Carousel Location***

The Historic Carousel would be located at the northwest corner of the North Meadow, where it would be screened from view both from the zoo's natural habitat areas and from outside the zoo. The North Meadow was designated a "public activity space" in the 1987 update to the Long-Range Plan, and currently offers active, programmable space used for concerts, large-scale celebrations, family and company picnics and other activities. The addition of the carousel would be in keeping with the customary use of this area for family-oriented celebrations and events.

### ***Historic Carousel Music***

The zoo has consulted with a sound system expert to develop specifications for the Carousel sound system that would prevent any "sound bleed" from the carousel. The music system would utilize the latest technology and small, directional speakers to ensure that music would not be audible beyond the immediate area of the carousel. The system would not have the traditional band organ.

### ***Zoo Office***

The LRPDP 2002 includes a new office building that provides consolidated and improved workspace for most zoo operations staff and volunteers who are currently dispersed among nearly two-dozen sites across the 92-acre grounds. The building would replace a series of aging and energy inefficient trailers of a similar footprint, enabling zoo staff from different departments to work together more collaboratively and efficiently. In addition to increased work and meeting spaces, the building would provide a cafeteria, enabling zoo staff and volunteers to gather informally and reducing the need for staff to travel offsite for lunch. It would contain locker rooms and showers for keepers and veterinary staff who work with the animals daily (and are sometimes required to be onsite overnight) and for staff who ride bicycles to work.

The new office would also serve as a model of sustainable design that reinforces the zoo's commitment to conservation. A key design objective of the zoo office building is to demonstrate the application of "green" architecture by utilizing natural wind and solar patterns, natural materials, and energy efficient design. The building would be constructed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards developed by the U.S. Green Building Council.

### ***Zoo Office Location***

The building location, at the site of the current North Entrance, was specifically selected because it is the most conducive for the success of natural ventilation and heating systems - an important element of sustainable design that also helps to lower operating costs. The building is also located to ensure that it would have no visual impact on the surrounding neighborhood. From the interior of the zoo, the building would be partially screened by a small hill and several large trees, and its design would utilize natural and recycled materials for an attractive, "Northwest" style.

### ***Offsite Location Consideration***

The zoo considered and rejected the potential option of locating the zoo offices offsite because this option would be directly counter to the zoo's goal of developing an efficient and collaborative work force. Most zoo staff are required to be onsite every day in order to perform their jobs. This is true across nearly every department, from animal management to guest services, marketing to project management, fundraising to media relations, and human resources to exhibits and interpretive staff. Locating zoo staff offsite would be impractical and inefficient, requiring that staff travel several times a day to and from the site to and carry out their duties. This would also have the unintended effect of increasing traffic on nearby streets. In addition, during an emergency, all staff have a critical roll and are required to be onsite in order to ensure the safety of animals, visitors, the public and staff.

### ***Traffic Analysis***

The analysis of the zoo's contribution to traffic in the year 2020 is considered conservatively high, because the traffic consultant, Transpo, used a combination of high attendance numbers that is unlikely to occur even on the zoo's busiest days. This was done to ensure that the zoo's contribution to traffic would not be underestimated.

The traffic analysis reflects higher analysis day attendance levels than were used in the previous EIS. For the analysis of weekday and weekend intersection operations, Transpo selected attendance levels that are more than twice the average annual weekday and weekend attendance, and even exceed the average weekday and weekend attendance during the zoo's peak season from June 15 through Labor Day. Using these higher numbers ensures that the zoo's contribution to peak-hour traffic is not underestimated.

Transpo continued to use the assumption used in the previous EIS that zoo attendance would increase by 23% between 2000 and 2020, even though they forecast a likely 19% growth, based on a detailed examination of regional growth data correlated with zoo attendance data.

For the revised EIS, Transpo used updated methodology in the most recent Highway Capacity Manual that was not yet widely adopted for use at the time of the analysis for the previous EIS. They also updated signal timing and phasing based on information from the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT).

For the analysis of 2020 intersection operations at signalized intersections, Transpo assumed that the current signal timing would remain in effect, although it is likely that SDOT would periodically adjust signal timing to optimize intersection operations as traffic grows over the years.

### ***West Entry***

The LRPDP 2002 proposes to reduce the zoo's three entry gates to two by consolidating the North and West Entries at the West, thereby reducing the impact of zoo traffic on the residential street north of the zoo (North 59th St.) and increasing efficiency for zoo staff. The new West entry would incorporate ticketing and admissions, public restrooms, a Zoo Store, a first aid station and stroller rentals. A new pedestrian pathway would connect transit stops on Phinney Avenue North to the West Entry. Zoo visitors parking in both the West and North parking lots would enter the zoo through the West Entry; with the primary access off Phinney Avenue North at North 56th St. The existing North entry would be closed to general zoo visitors.

### ***Verbal Briefing***

Ken reviewed where we are in this process. The Zoo went through a long-range planning and environmental review process last year, which was subsequently challenged on many issues. Only one of the issues, traffic, was identified by the Hearing Examiner as an issue. The Examiner then identified a second issue, parking, that was not in the appeal. Prior to the long-range planning and environmental review process, staff and the community spent a great deal of time working on the location for parking and alternative locations. The Hearing Examiner requested that additional parking alternatives be looked at in respect to the plan. Zoo staff have been working to revise the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and are here tonight to update the Park Board on the process.

Deborah Jensen and Bruce Bohmke came before the Board to give a brief verbal briefing. They displayed two large drawings of the Zoo grounds. The Zoo recently put the EIS out for public comment and is in the middle of a 30-day process. Zoo staff are meeting with many neighborhood and community groups to talk about the Zoo's goals, how this plan will help the goals be achieved, and to gather comments and feedback from the community.



Deborah gave a brief history of the Zoo, which is 100 years old. The Zoo's Long-Range Plan was developed in the 1970's. The Plan was amended in the 1980's and it is now time for a new capital and physical plan. Their priorities are: 1. excellent quality exhibits, and 2. excellent care of animals. Deborah described the various planned improvements, which were also included in the written briefing (see above.)

### ***Board Discussion***

Joanna asked if the Park Board is being asked to approve this plan and asked about management of the Zoo. Ken said that tonight's presentation is a briefing only. The City owns the property and has a 20-year contract with the Zoological Society to manage the Zoo. This management must be consistent with the Long-Range Plan and changes to the Plan must be approved by City Council. Parks and the Zoological Society had hoped to have the Long-Range Plan updated before the 20-year contract was signed; however, this was delayed by the appeal. Once the appeal process is complete, the Park Board will be asked to make a recommendation, and then the Plan goes before City Council for a vote.

Kate asked what is the Park Board's role in examining the financial aspect of the Plan, which she believes is very ambitious and could be very costly. What happens if, during the course of the next 20 years, only part of the projects can be funded does it come back to the City to pay? Deborah said the City has agreed to work with the Zoo on the parking garage, as additional parking is a high priority. Ken stated that, other than the parking, the Zoo is on its own to raise funds for the projects. Ken and Deborah said this is a road map for the future and the Plan could be revisited in years to come.

Bruce Bohmke reviewed the Environmental Impact Statement. Zoo staff received lots of comments from the public during the process. When the EIS was appealed, the Hearing Examiner selected two issues that she found deficient: (1) how transportation is handled; and (2) provide significantly different plan alternatives. In addition to these two issues, Zoo staff has made minor changes throughout the document to enhance clarity, based on comments from the public.

Bruce B. stated that four plan alternatives have been formulated: (1) continue using the 1976 Long-Range Plan; (2) continue using the 1976 Long-Range Plan, with three additional areas of focus: animals; people (which the old plan does not focus on); and financial stability. This is the recommended plan. (3) the recommended plan without the carousel and event center (this would affect the Zoo's financial stability and its ability to serve the people of Seattle); and (4) the recommended Plan excluding the parking garage, which is costly.

Ken asked about the timing of the appeal process. Bruce B. said there is a 30-day comment period. The Zoo staff will respond to comments and questions received during this 30-day period, then will issue the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Long-Range Plan. If the FEIS isn't appealed, the Plan could go before the City Council in the fall. If there is an appeal, it may be early 2004 before it goes before City Council.

## Questions and Answers

Sarah asked if the Plan will come back before the Park Board. Ken stated that it will likely come back before the Board this fall. He believes that the first EIS was not very clear and that caused problems for the process. This EIS is very clear. Sarah asked if the Park Board will hold a public hearing. Ken said the Zoo will hold a public comment period and if the Board wants to hold one, it may. Bruce B. said that after the FEIS goes out, there is a public comment period and appeal.

Terry observed that the "hot spots" seem to be parking and traffic. How does parking for the proposed event building function? Is there something in the plan that would allow the public to access the event building without gaining access through a Zoo gate. Bruce stated there would be direct access from the parking lot to the facility, because sometimes these events are held during hours the Zoo isn't open. Terry asked if this is a stand-alone facility and can the public access it without experiencing the Zoo? Bruce B. answered that the mission is to connect visitors to the Zoo; however, direct access to the event building is planned.

Terry asked what is the City's reaction to traffic studies. He understands that building the parking facility on the Zoo grounds should lighten parking in the surrounding neighborhoods. What he doesn't understand is what the City can do when the traffic study reveals that the waiting time at traffic lights will increase 3-7 minutes (with increased Zoo visitors) and the impact this has on neighborhoods. Bruce B answered that the Zoo is working with the neighbors on parking and traffic issues and the neighbors respond that parking is the hottest issue they believe traffic is bad everywhere. Ken stated that the City's policy, made 25-30 years ago, was to not widen 45th and 50th Streets, but instead to encourage mass transit. The City would have to change this policy and address traffic issues as part of a larger citywide issue. The EIS deals with issues focused on the Zoo.

Joanne asked if Metro could add the Zoo as a stop on its timetables as a way to encourage bus ridership to the Zoo. Bruce B said this is a great suggestion and Zoo staff will work on it. He said Zoo visitors often carry many items with them, which makes it difficult to travel to the Zoo by bus. The average car arriving at the Zoo has 3-4 passengers. Sarah said Portland has a "zoo" bus, covered in animal graphics that residents easily recognize as the bus to ride to the Zoo. James said the Park Board has previously had long, positive discussions about Zoo busses. Ken said ridership is an issue for Metro.

Sarah asked about the carousel and Zoo staff's statements that it would be an enclosed structure. Does this mean walls and a roof? Deborah answered that the enclosure is a roof that will protect the historic carousel from inclement weather. Zoo sound engineers believe the music from the carousel will not distract animals or neighbors. Bruce thanked Deborah and Bruce for the great job that Zoo staff are doing in listening to the public. He encouraged the Zoo's efforts to improve the work locations of Zoo staff.

## **Off-Leash Area Rule**

### 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 To establish rules of behavior for people who take their dogs to Seattle's off-leash areas.

## 2.0 ORGANIZATIONS AFFECTED

2.1 Seattle Parks and Recreation

2.2 Seattle Animal Control

2.3 Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA)

## 3.0 REFERENCES

3.1 Section 18.12.080, Seattle Municipal Code: "Any person who takes a dog into an off-leash area must have physical control of the dog by means of an adequate leash when entering and leaving the off-leash area and must maintain voice control over the dog at all times while in the off-leash area. All dogs in an off-leash area must be licensed and must display valid license tags attached to the dog collar. Vicious animals, as defined in Section 9.25.024A of this Code, are not permitted to use the off-leash areas. . . Any person with a dog or other pet in his or her possession or under his or her control in any park shall be responsible and liable for the conduct of the animal, shall carry equipment for removing feces, and shall place feces deposited by such animal in an appropriate receptacle."

3.2 Section 9.25.024, Seattle Municipal Code: Animal Control, definitions

3.3 Section 9.25.049, Seattle Municipal Code: "All dogs and cats four (4) months of age or older shall be vaccinated against rabies."

3.4 Section 9.25.050, Seattle Municipal Code: "The following animal licenses shall be required: potbelly pig, cat, and dog licenses, guard and attack dog licenses, and exotic animal permits. . ."

3.5 Section 9.25.051, Seattle Municipal Code: "Any owner of a cat or dog over the age of eight (8) weeks must obtain a valid license for each such animal. Within 30 (30) days of entry of any cat or dog into the City of Seattle, the owner of the cat or dog must obtain a valid license for each such animal."

3.6 Section 9.25.080, Seattle Municipal Code: "It is unlawful for the owner of any animal to:

3.6.1 Fail to obtain the licenses required by the Animal Control Fee Ordinance (SMC Chapter 9.26);

3.6.2 Fail to display conspicuously the current and valid license identification on the licensed animal . . . ;

3.6.3 Fail to show the license upon the request of any animal control officer or any police officer;

3.6.4 Use or permit another person to use a license or license identification not issued to such person;

3.6.5 Remove a license identification from any pig, cat or dog without the owner's

consent;

3.6.6 Alter a license in any manner;

3.6.7 Make a false or misleading statement or representation regarding the ownership or right to custody or control of an animal, or regarding the ownership of an animal redeemed from, surrendered to, detained by the Director;

3.7 Section 9.25.082: "It is unlawful for an owner to: Fail to remove the fecal matter deposited by his/her animal on public property or private property of another before the owner leaves the immediate area where the fecal matter was deposited; fail to have in his/her possession the equipment necessary to remove his/her animal's fecal matter when accompanied by said animal on public property or public easement. . ."

3.8 Section 9.25.084, Seattle Municipal Code: "It is unlawful for the owner to . . . permit any animal, except cats and pigeons, to be at large or trespass on the property of another. It is not a violation of this subsection to have a dog off-leash in an area designated pursuant to Section 18.12.080 as an off-leash area. . ."

3.9 Section 18.12.278, Seattle Municipal Code: "The Superintendent may, by delivering an exclusion notice in person to the offender, exclude from a City park zone or zones, anyone who within a City park:

3.9.1 Violates any provision within this chapter; or

3.9.2 Violates any park rule as defined in Section 18.12.030; or

3.9.3 Violates any provision of the Seattle Municipal Code or Revised Code of Washington.

The offender need not be charged, tried, or convicted of any crime or infraction in order for an exclusion notice to be issued or effective. The exclusion may be based upon observation by the Superintendent or upon the sort of civilian reports that would ordinarily be relied on by police officers in the determination of probable cause."

#### 4.0 POLICY

4.1 It is the policy of Seattle Parks and Recreation to adopt rules of behavior for people who take their dogs to Seattle's off-leash areas.

#### 5.0 DEFINITIONS

5.1 COLA: Citizens for Off-Leash Areas, a 501(C)(3) organization that advocates for the off-leash areas program.

5.2 Off-Leash Area: An area within a park set aside for the purpose of allowing dogs to roam without leashes, as defined in Section 18.12.080 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

5.3 Adequate leash: A leash of eight (8) feet in length or shorter.

#### 6.0 RESPONSIBILITY

6.1 Each dog owner, or person accompanying a dog to an off-leash area, is responsible for following the rules.

6.2 Animal Control is the City agency responsible for enforcing Seattle Municipal Code sections relating to animals. Among the remedies Animal Control is authorized to use is a park exclusion notice.

## 7.0 RULES

7.1 Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs. (18.12.080)

7.2 Owners and dog-walkers must be in control of their dogs at all times. (18.12.080, 9.25.084)

7.3 Dogs that exhibit dangerous or aggressive behavior must be muzzled; biting, fighting and excessive barking are not allowed. (9.25.024)

7.4 Outside the off-leash areas, dogs must be leashed; inside the off-leash areas, owners must carry a leash for each dog. (9.25.084, 12.18.080)

7.5 Owners must clean up after their dogs, and must visibly carry scoop equipment. (9.25.082, 18.12.080)

7.6 All dogs must be licensed and vaccinated. (9.25.080, 12.18.080)

7.7 Female dogs in heat are not allowed in off-leash areas. (9.25.084)

7.8 Puppies under four months of age are not allowed in off-leash areas.

7.9 Adults must closely supervise young children.

7.10 Bring food into off-leash areas at your own risk.

7.11 Leave bicycles outside the off-leash areas.

7.12 Remove pinch or choke collars when entering off-leash areas.

7.13 Unattended dogs are not allowed in off-leash areas.

7.14 Owners who see unattended dogs or other problems should call Seattle Animal Control at 206-386-4254, Extension 2.

## **Board Discussion**

Ken stated that Parks staff member Dewey Potter has worked with members of Citizens for Off-leash Areas (COLA) to formulate this policy. Ken and COLA members answered Park Board questions. Board members asked if the policy would be posted at off-leash sites. COLA answered yes currently there is nothing posted at the off-leash areas that dogs under four months or dogs in heat are not allowed. Sarah asked if COLA is comfortable with this policy and COLA members answered that they yes they are, as they helped draft the policy.

Sarah asked about the 8-foot leash limit inside the off-leash area. COLA stated that most dog owners remove leashes when the dogs are inside the off-leash area; some owners leave the leashes on because their dogs might jump. Leashes longer than 8 feet tend to get really tangled when the dogs are running, which becomes a trip hazard. Terry said his understanding is that 8' is the City of Seattle's legal leash limit. The current wording could imply that a longer leash outside the off-leash area is acceptable. Joanna asked that this be re-worded so as not to be misleading.

The Board held a brief and lighthearted discussion as to whether pigs are using the off-leash area. COLA members answered that they haven't seen pigs at the sites; however, pigs' owners must abide by the leash law.

Regarding dog owners not removing "pinch" or choke collars before entering the off-leash area, Bruce suggested that the wording be clear that the "pinch" or choke collars are to be removed at the entrance to the off-leash area not in the parking lot (as he has witnessed at Westcrest Park off-leash area.) COLA members briefly discussed the difference between choke collars which are training collars and walking collars. The choke collars are not allowed inside the off-leash area because they can strangle the dog wearing the choke collar or become entangled with other dogs' collars.

Joanna believes brochures would be helpful to notify off-leash users of the policy. COLA said that once the policy is approved that COLA will include it in their map that they distribute to users of off-leash areas. Ken said that there are specific rules from the policy that will be posted.

Sarah asked if there are bike racks near the off-leash areas for those who ride their bikes to the off-leash area.

Bruce thanked the members of COLA and the Parks Department for the good work on this policy.

**Kate moved and James seconded that the policy be adopted. The vote was taken and passed unanimously.**

### **Park Board Business**

- The Board briefly discussed Park Board membership on various committees. Parks staff will update the list of committees and will report back to the Board.

Joanna has agreed to serve on the Seattle Parks Foundation Board as the Superintendent's appointee.

- Sarah invited members to the Washington Park Arboretum Master Plan Implementation Open House on Thursday, July 31. Sarah is the Park Board representative to the Arboretum and Botanic Garden Committee, the Arboretum's oversight committee.
- Thursday, September 18, was chosen as the date for the Park Board retreat. Sarah suggested the new Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center as the location. Also suggested were Camp Long, the Asian Art Museum at Volunteer Park, and the South Lake Union complex. Parks staff will confirm the location and report to the Board members.
- Joanna disclosed that she is meeting with Seattle Audubon Society and also disclosed that her boyfriend is on Disks Northwest, which is the Board of the Ultimate Players Association.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Bentley, Chair