

# PARKS AND RECREATION

**goal** Provide and maintain natural areas and recreational facilities and opportunities that enhance the health and well-being of the community.

Staff and volunteers maintain parks and run recreation programs

City invests in parks and recreational programs

So that...

City progresses on the Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan

So that...

Kirkland has an exceptional parks and recreation system

MEASURE	2007	2008	2009	2010	Target
FTE staff for parks maintenance and recreation programs	57.07	56.52	51.38	47.72	N/A
Park maintenance FTE's per 100 acres developed land	6.464	6.384	5.719	5.156	N/A
Number of volunteers	1,293	1,723	1,639	3,112	N/A
Volunteer hours	14,455	14,547	16,006	21,865	N/A

Parks Capital Improvement Program	\$884,000	\$1,685,000	\$2,518,500	\$1,220,500	N/A
Parks Operating & Maintenance Funding	\$3,517,763	\$4,059,073	\$3,835,398	\$3,754,612	N/A
Recreation Operating & Maintenance Funding	\$1,106,818	\$1,104,880	\$2,209,598	\$2,072,283	N/A

Residents with neighborhood park within 1/4 mile radius	72%	72%	76%	76%	100%
Acres of natural area in restoration	10.64	17.14	25.4	30.01	379 acres by 2028
Percent of recreation classes meeting minimum enrollment	73%	75%	76%	79.8%	80%

Citizens rate City parks as satisfactory or better	*	96%	*	95%	95%
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\*Community survey occurs in even years

## HOW DO WE MEASURE PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES?

The Comprehensive Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan sets targets that provide benchmarks by which to measure the development and maintenance of Kirkland's parks and natural spaces, including:

- Residents should have access to a neighborhood park within a quarter mile of their home.
- All 379 acres of natural areas should be restored to their natural state by 2028.

Recreation services are measured by subscription rates. Tracking recreation class attendance demonstrates how well they match residents' preferences.

Citizen satisfaction with the parks, as determined by the Community Survey, provides another measure of how well the park system meets the community's needs.

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

- The City's funding for all areas of parks and recreation services and capital improvements was reduced in 2009 and 2010 including a 30% reduction in seasonal parks maintenance staff. Still, citizens rate the City parks highly.
- Although the City falls short of the target for neighborhood park access, the number of neighborhoods meeting the goal has increased slightly.
- 80% of recreation classes met minimum enrollment indicating that the City provides classes that align with residents' interests.
- The City has seen an increasing number of acres of natural area in restoration in the past four years thanks to the Green Kirkland Partnership and extensive volunteer engagement. The program has surpassed the 20-year restoration plan benchmarks each year. The Green Kirkland Partnership exceeded the 2010 benchmark of 26 acres by four acres.

## WHAT IS THE CITY DOING?

Parks and recreation services enhance the quality of life and health in a community. Despite its importance to the community, parks and recreation services have had to face the reality of shrinking resources. Maintenance standards in some parks were reduced as have some of the programs offered by the department.

The community is fortunate to have the services of volunteers that are helping to bridge some of the maintenance needs. The Green Kirkland Partnership involves community organizations, businesses, and volunteers in the restoration of natural areas in parks by removing invasive plants and planting native species. Restoration provides many environmental benefits, including soil conservation, enhanced water quality through slowing storm water runoff and improving filtration, healthier habitats for native species and improved carbon removal through an increased urban tree canopy. Volunteers are essential to the program. With 10,207 volunteer hours in 2010, volunteer engagement surpassed the plan's benchmark by over 3,000 hours. Additionally, 16 volunteer park stewards lead restoration projects, exceeding the benchmark of six stewards by 2010.

Partnerships with local businesses help to keep the City's active parks in shape. The Heathman Hotel has adopted Heritage Park and works with the parks crews to pull weeds, pick up garbage and keep the park looking good. Additionally, legislative changes that now allow real estate excise taxes to be used for maintenance has provided service restoration in some parks.

The City's recreation programs provide residents with opportunities to enhance their physical and mental well-being. The Recreation Division facilitated over 2,049 programs that hosted 294,089 individual visits at the North Kirkland and Peter Kirk Community Centers a school site or a City of Kirkland Park. Total participant enrollment for 2010 was 21,042. The many activities also provide valuable volunteer opportunities for our citizens. The Recreation Division had over 132 volunteers that contributed 6,706 hours valued at \$125,871.



### Move It!

Move It! is a quarterly fitness program that gives passholders the opportunity to take a variety of classes all for one low price. Move It! offers a wide variety of fitness classes at different times to accommodate participants' fitness needs and schedules.

Move It! takes pride in its inviting and non-intimidating atmosphere. The inclusive nature of the program ensures a diverse group of participants of men and women in their mid-20s to late 50s. Instructors know the participants by name and keep the class sizes fairly small.

Over the past year, our overall attendance has increased by 20% with an average of 187 participants per quarter. Move It! is just one of many opportunities the City provides to enhance the health of its community members.