HOW DO WE MEASURE PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES?

The 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.
- 487 acres of natural areas are targeted to be restored to their natural state by 2035.

The budget and number of FTE staff available to parks maintenance and operations help measure the Department’s ability to maintain the parks. With the infusion of levy funds, park maintenance staffing was nearly returned to 2010 levels.

Given the important contribution that volunteers make to the City, the number of volunteers and their total number of hours are also tracked. Volunteer Opportunities include recreation programs and parks maintenance. The Green Kirkland Partnership carries out environmental restoration in parks almost exclusively through volunteers.

Recreation and community services programs and classes are measured by tracking the percentage of programs and classes that meet minimum numbers to operate. This demonstrates how well they match residents’ preferences. Over 82% of recreation classes met the minimum enrollment, which exceeds the City’s target, a good indication that the classes offered met the demands of residents.

Resident satisfaction with the parks, recreation and community services, as determined by the biennial Community Survey, provides another measure of how well the park and recreation system meets the community’s needs.
HOW ARE WE DOING?

Parks and Community Services has changed a great deal over the years. With the annexation in 2011, the department has increased its scope and responsibility. This includes an increase in park acreage from 490 acres to 619 city-owned acres and another 80 acres that are not City-owned but available for community use. New acres have been added to the restoration program, growing it from 30 acres in 2011 to 108 acres in 2018. The Department currently encompasses parks maintenance and operations, Green Kirkland Partnership, community centers, Peter Kirk Pool, recreation and community services programming, special event support services, youth services, senior services and human services.

The Parks and Community Services Department has made considerable strides to keep pace with the community growth in order to meet the health, wellness and recreation needs of the community. New technology is paving the way to automate how services are delivered to the community. Capital improvement projects in development for years have finally been completed or are in construction. Customer service processes are being streamlined to better serve the community and the department is striving to allocate its resources to the community’s top priorities.

WHAT ARE WE DOING?

In 2018, the recreation and community services staff offered 2,107 unique programs and had 18,582 customers registered for those programs, with another 4,892 people on waitlists. 82 percent of recreation classes met the minimum enrollment, which exceeds the City’s target, a good indication that the classes offered met the demands of residents.

The Human Services program granted $901,863 to 40 organizations offering 65 different programs. The priority focus is programs that provide food to eat and a roof overhead; supportive relationships within families, neighborhoods and communities; a safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse; health care to be as physically and mentally fit as possible; and education and job skills to lead an independent life.

Finally, the capital improvement program grew from $888,000 in 2011 to $3,235,000 in 2018. The City is growing and we are growing with it!

During the City’s 2018 Cost Recovery Study, the City Council gave direction to enhance and grow the scholarship program supporting Kirkland residents’ ability to participate in recreation, health and wellness programming. It is the philosophy of the City/Department that cost should not be a significant barrier to Kirkland residents for participation in City Parks and Community Services programs. Staff formalized the scholarship program, which now includes 50%, 75% and 95% scholarships. Support of the scholarship program comes from donations from community members and local organizations. You can contribute to this program online by going to www.kirklandparks.net

RECREATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarships are available for Kirkland Residents of all ages and abilities who might not be able to participate due to income.

• NEW: 50%, 75%, and 95% scholarships are available (depending on income verification).
• Donations from community members are now being accepted!
• Donations support the Scholarship Program and will allow all Kirkland Residents to participate in department-offered programs.

Please visit kirklandparks.net and click on “Recreation Scholarships” for information about the program or to donate today!