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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Lynn Zwaagstra, Director of Parks and Community Services
Michael Cogle, Deputy Director

Date: May 26, 2016

Subject: JOINT CITY COUNCIL AND PARK BOARD MEETING

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that City Council hold a joint meeting with the Park Board to discuss topics of mutual interest.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

The Kirkland Park Board welcomes the opportunity to meet with the City Council to discuss a number of important park and recreation issues. While the Park Board and Parks staff have an extensive work plan (**Attachment 1**) geared towards implementing the new Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, the Board suggests focusing the conversation on one main topic and, as time allows, three additional topics:

- Main Topic: 1. Next steps for the Aquatic, Recreation, and Community (ARC) Center
- Additional topics: 2. Designated Off-Leash Areas (DOLA's) Pilot Project
3. Future Uses for Houghton Custodial Landfill Site
4. Funding Major Maintenance of the City's Park Building Assets

1. ARC Center Next Steps

Creation of a Metropolitan Park District, which would have created the mechanism to fund development of the ARC Center, was not approved by Kirkland voters in 2015. However, there remains a demonstrable need for additional indoor recreation and aquatic space to serve the existing and future Kirkland community, and the City's many surveys and public outreach efforts have indicated a desire by residents for a multi-purpose indoor recreation facility such as the ARC Center.

Most recently, the Lake Washington School District announced that the Aquatic Center at Juanita High School will remain open as part of the development of the new school campus. While this is a reversal of the District's previous stated intent to close the pool, unfortunately no

funding for pool upgrades has been promised and the aquatic facility remains in poor condition. It is unclear how long the Juanita Aquatic Center will remain operational.

Meanwhile, programs at the City's two community centers continue to experience record enrollment, with extensive waiting lists for many City recreation programs indicating unmet demand.

Discussion questions for the ARC Center:

- What were some of the lessons learned from the failed MPD ballot measure?
- Does the Council have interest in continuing to explore options for creating additional indoor recreation space for Kirkland residents?
- If so, how and when might the Park Board and staff proceed with this effort? Would the Council have interest in receiving suggestions/recommendations from the Board on possible next steps that could be taken?
- Should the Park Board work with staff to explore opportunities to expand and/or otherwise maximize use of existing City facilities, such as the community centers and Peter Kirk Pool?

2. Proposed 2017 Pilot Project: Designated Off-Leash Areas in Kirkland Parks

In 2015 the Park Board, working with the local group K-DOG, researched options for expanding opportunities for permissible off-leash dog activity in Kirkland's park system. One option that has been successfully implemented in a number of communities world-wide is the creation of unfenced Designated Off-Leash Areas, or DOLA's, in certain park areas. The city of Portland, Oregon is the most prominent community in the Pacific Northwest to have such a program. DOLA's are established in areas of some parks and are denoted by boundary markers and/or existing park features such fences, pathways, and landscaping. DOLA's may have limited hours of operation, such as early morning or evening hours only, or may be limited to certain periods of the year to avoid conflict with other park activities (swimming beaches in the summer, for example).

A draft proposal for a pilot project has been developed by the Park Board and is attached (**Attachment 2**). If supported by the Council, the Park Board and staff would like to initiate a public engagement process with neighborhoods and park users this fall to assess and shape the proposal. Important issues to consider would include safety, liability, impacts to existing park uses, environmental considerations, program costs, enforcement, maintenance impacts, and community support. A final recommendation would be provided to the City Council by early 2017.

Discussion questions for the DOLA proposal:

- Would the City Council support having the Parks and Community Services Department explore with the community the proposed pilot project?
- If so, are there any particular issues that the Council would like to see addressed, or specific opportunities that the Council would like to see explored?

3. Future Use of the Houghton Custodial Landfill Site

The Houghton Custodial Landfill, adjacent to the Houghton Transfer Station, was operated by King County from the mid-1940's to the mid-1960's as a landfill site. Beginning in the 1970's, Kirkland Little League established ballfields on the site, and expanded the fields in 2005. The complex is now referred to as Taylor Fields. The site remains owned by King County and is operated by King County Solid Waste Division.

The entire site (**Attachment 3**) is approximately 40 acres in size, of which the transfer station occupies about 7 acres. The property could be suitable for a number of public uses, in particular active sports and recreation activities. While it is important to acknowledge the challenges of redeveloping such a site, the former landfill offers rare opportunities because of its size and location in our community.

The Park Board has recommended that a Parks CIP project be funded to create a master plan for the site, and the project is proposed to be funded in the Preliminary 2017 – 2022 CIP, beginning in 2022.

Discussion questions for the Houghton Landfill Site:

- Is the Council interested in exploring future uses of the site for recreation and other public purposes through a funded master plan process?
- How does ongoing planning for a new Northeast King County Transfer Station influence the City's interest in the site at this time?
- Are there discussions with King County that can occur in the near term to set the stage for possible future Kirkland actions on the property?

4. Funding Major Maintenance of the City's Park Building Assets

Last year the City funded an independent comprehensive asset condition assessment of 22 buildings in the Parks system. Buildings assessed included restrooms, concessions, and residential structures. The assessment was intended to:

- a) Provide a baseline assessment for Parks Staff that specifically identifies maintenance and repair needs;
- b) Provide a short-term financial plan useful for prioritizing resources and budget requests;
- c) Assist in long-range CIP planning;
- d) Provide information to assist the City in determining the feasibility of establishing a sinking fund (e.g. set-aside fund) to address funding needs outside of the CIP and the Department's existing operating budget.

The report concluded that the overall condition of the Parks building assets could be characterized as "Fair". Specific improvements and lifecycle recommendations were provided for each structure. The Parks Capital Improvement Program will be used to address many of the needs identified in the report.

Discussion question:

- The Park Board and staff would encourage the City Council to explore establishing a sinking fund to affect timely repairs and major maintenance of the City's park assets. Would the City Council have interest in this approach?

The Park Board looks forward to discussing these topics with the City Council.

Attachments

**Adopted Kirkland Park Board 2015 – 2016 Work Plan
Status June 2016**

Attachment 1

1. THRIVE – Active Places and Programs for All Ages		
Objective	Description	Status
1.1: Work with the community and project partners to secure funding for a new Aquatic, Recreation, and Community (ARC) Center	Conduct community outreach and provide technical analysis and policy guidance to City Council on the facility components, siting, and funding options for a new community recreation facility.	November 2015 ballot measure was not approved by voters; Next steps if any to be determined by Council
1.2: Complete phase 1 renovations to Waverly Beach Park	Complete improvements including shoreline renovation, lawn restoration, new pathways, and playground replacement.	Construction underway; Completion June 2016
1.3: Complete Edith Moulton Park Master Plan and construct Phase 1 improvements	Complete long-range master plan and implement first phase of improvements.	Completed master plan. Construction start in 4 th quarter of 2016
1.4: Complete improvements to Juanita Beach Park including new bathhouse and group picnic shelter	Project includes bathhouse replacement, new group picnic shelter, and relocation of existing playground.	Design underway. Construction start in 4 th quarter of 2017
1.5: Complete improvements to Spinney Homestead Park	Consult with neighborhood on desired improvements; develop and implement renovation plan.	Initiate design process in 3 rd quarter of 2016
1.6: Complete improvements to Terrace Park	Consult with neighborhood on desired improvements and seek to integrate park with CKC as shown in CKC Master Plan; develop and implement renovation plan.	Initiate design process in 3 rd quarter of 2016
1.7: Complete improvements to Forbes Lake Park	Complete improvements including accessible pathway, parking lot, wetland enhancements, and street improvements.	Permitting in progress. ROW improvements to be completed in 4 th quarter of 2016
1.8: Complete improvements to O.O. Denny Park	Complete FHPRD-funded improvements including irrigation system and picnic shelter.	Complete irrigation system improvements in 4 th quarter of 2016; begin picnic shelter design permitting in 4 th quarter of 2016

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Objective	Description	Status
1.9: Implement Totem Lake Park Master Plan	Seek ownership transfer from KCD and secure funding for Phase 1 implementation.	Phase 1 design in progress; Submitted State grant application in 2 nd quarter of 2016; Negotiations with KCD are ongoing
1.10: Expand opportunities for off-leash dog activity in City parks	Assess and make recommendations on allowing limited off-leash hours at certain parks on a pilot basis. Implement as directed by City Council.	Initiate public engagement process in 3 rd quarter of 2016 to assess community interest
1.11: Complete renovations to Marina Park dock and boat launch	Complete structural improvements and new decking for dock and renovate boat launch to improve access and functionality.	2015/2016
1.12: Complete design of replacement restroom/storage building at Everest Park	Develop schematic design for replacement of Everest Park Restroom/Storage Building.	Project deferred until 2017
1.13: Complete ADA Transition Plan in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act	Complete assessment and develop strategies to ensure access to facilities, programs, and information.	City-wide plan to be completed by 4 th quarter of 2016
1.14: Renovate/replace playgrounds at select sites.	Complete playground upgrades at Forbes Creek Park (2015) and Van Aalst Park (2016) as funded in the CIP.	Construction to occur in 1 st and 2 nd quarters of 2016
1.15: Replace boiler at Peter Kirk Pool	Replace boiler to improve user comfort, increase energy efficiency, and reduce maintenance.	Completed

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2. <u>SPORT – Athletic Fields and Facilities for a Wide Variety of Sports</u>		
Objective	Description	Status
2.1: Complete playfield improvements to 132 nd Square Park	Renovate playfields to improve playability and safety for participants and reduce maintenance and operational costs.	Project to be coordinated with City stormwater utility project; State grant to be determined in 2017
2.2: Facilitate playfield improvements at Lakeview Elementary School	Conversion of existing playfield to synthetic turf in partnership with Google/SRM, LWSD, and Kirkland Lacrosse.	Completed
3. <u>CONNECT – Trails and Greenways Linking People and Places</u>		
Objective	Description	Timing
3.1: Develop trail signage standards and improve route and wayfinding signage for trails and associated facilities	Work in conjunction with Public Works on a City-wide plan for trail signage and wayfinding for trails and designated pedestrian/bicycling routes.	Ongoing
3.2: Conduct preliminary assessment of a shoreline trail connecting Juanita Bay Park and Juanita Beach Park	Provide a staff report detailing policy implications and technical considerations for creating a shoreline connection between the parks.	Research and analysis to be conducted in 4 th quarter of 2016
4. <u>NURTURE – Environmental Stewardship for a Green Future</u>		
Objective	Description	Timing
4.1: Complete update to Green Kirkland Partnership Forest and Natural Areas Restoration Plan	Work with community and identified stakeholders to update the 20-year plan.	Completed
4.2: Implement agreement with Seattle Tilth to initiate urban agriculture and productive landscape activities at McAuliffe Park and other public spaces	Work with Seattle Tilth and other community partners in implementing activities as identified in McAuliffe Park master plan and PROS Plan.	Partnership at McAuliffe underway;

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5. SUSTAIN – Institutional Capacity to Realize the Vision		
Objective	Description	Timing
5.1: Update the Parks’ Capital Improvement Plan	Develop recommendations for Parks and Community Services capital project funding for the 2017-2022 CIP.	In process
5.2: Complete lifecycle replacement plan for buildings and structures in parks	Commission assessment and replacement plan for park structures including restrooms and picnic shelters and implement budgetary strategy for lifecycle replacement.	Completed
5.3: Update Park Impact Fee Methodology and Fee Schedule	Update park impact fees assessed to new development in a manner that provides maximum flexibility in how impact fees can be used to address the impact of new growth on the community’s park and recreation system.	Completed



Proposed Pilot Program: Unfenced Designated Off Leash Areas in Kirkland Parks

Goal: Provide a range of on-leash and off-leash opportunities to accommodate the variety of needs of dogs and their owners, while not overly impacting the needs of other park users.

Realities: The following assumptions are built into managing the use of public recreation areas by dogs and their owners [*Source: Portland, Oregon Off-Leash Program*]:

- Recreating with a dog is a legitimate and appropriate park use.
- Conflict is unavoidable.
- Park managers have the responsibility to design, create, and manage parks in a way that minimizes conflict.
- Park users also have a responsibility to help minimize conflicts with other park users by displaying mutual respect and by following park rules.

Policies and Regulations: Pertinent City and State regulations or policies have been reviewed in developed of this proposal. City regulations and/or policies may need to be revised in order to implement the pilot program.

What is an "Unfenced Designated Off-Leash Area"?

An unfenced designated off-leash area (DOLA) is a carefully selected area in a city park where dogs can play and exercise off-leash under voice control of their owner. The designated areas are shared with other park users and kept available for other park uses.

What does voice control mean?

Dog owners using unfenced off-leash areas should have their dogs under control at all times. The challenge can be individual interpretation of what "under control" means. It should mean the owner/handler has voice control over the actions of the dog in all situations and it is trained to respond to verbal commands of come, stay, down, sit, and no.

Why consider unfenced off-leash areas?

- Strong demand from Kirkland park users for more off leash opportunities.
- Off-leash (unauthorized) activity is already widespread in most Kirkland parks.
- Sanctioned use can be more easily monitored and managed.
- Sanctioned use increases likelihood of responsible dog ownership and dog socialization through interaction with positive role models and opportunities for education and outreach.
- Provides expanded opportunities for informal and formal dog training.
- Considerably less expensive than creating a dedicated, fenced off-leash dog park.
- Allows for other park uses throughout the day.
- Provides an opportunity for dog owners to meet, share information, and form community bonds.
- Makes it less likely that dogs will be let loose in undesirable areas.
- Lessens pressure placed upon Jasper's Dog Park as being Kirkland's sole public off-leash opportunity.



What are the Keys for Ensuring Success?

- **Abundant and Dispersed:** More locations are better than fewer. Providing opportunities across all neighborhoods lessens traffic, encourages neighbor-to-neighbor interaction, and lessens the likelihood that a particular park in the community may be overused.
- **Right Site:** A designated off-leash areas (DOLA) should:
 - Be a minimum of 5,000 square feet
 - Not negatively affect fish and wildlife habitat
 - Not negatively affect water quality
 - Avoid active restoration areas
 - Be relatively level
 - Have minimal impact on adjacent residential areas (off leash areas should be No Barking Zones)
 - Be away from playgrounds
 - Avoid playfield conflicts
 - Avoid swimming beaches during swimming season
 - Off-leash trails should be wide enough to allow for the passing of dogs and owners
 - If on a school walk route, avoid off-leash activity immediately before/after school hours
 - A park's main pedestrian circulation should not be within the designated off-leash areas
 - Avoid siting DOLAs adjacent to streets with heavy traffic
 - Consider areas currently experiencing high off-leash dog use
 - Be equipped with minimum amenities which include site signs with places for posting notices; fence or boundary markers; garbage cans and dispensers for scoop bags
- **Clear boundaries:** Unfenced designated off-leash areas should be clearly defined through signage and boundary markers such as posts, bollards, or other visible devices. Existing fencing, walls, and vegetation can also help define the areas. Flyers, maps, etc. should also be made available.
- **Right times:**
 - Programming of specific hours provides a balance between the needs of dog owners and other park users.
 - Off-leash hours and seasons should be defined by individual park use patterns and hours of daylight.
 - Morning times: 6:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
 - Evening times: 4:00 p.m. – Dusk
- **Right Enforcement:** Parks and Community Services has a limited ability to enforce off-leash rules and regulations. Current emphasis is placed on education and outreach, with enforcement a secondary priority. It should be noted that the City has a limited capacity to actively enforce all park rules (not just leash laws), and that enforcement of park rules is typically complaint-based. Nonetheless, additional resources are likely to be necessary to ensure program success.
- **Right Rules:** Rules should be clearly posted at off leash sites and written to be easily understood. It is anticipated that additional efforts will need to be made to help all park visitors



Attachment 2

understand why the rules are important and to encourage them to be considerate of others and to act responsibly.

Learning from the experiences gleaned from Jasper's Dog Park and successful unfenced off leash areas in other communities, the following rules and regulations are proposed for Kirkland's off leash areas:

Rules for dogs:

- Demonstrate appropriate social interaction
- Display tags showing proof of current license and rabies vaccination
- Be considerate of park neighbors by playing quietly in the early morning and evening hours - No Bark Zone
- When off leash, stay in the designated off leash area boundaries

Rules for owners/handlers:

- Dogs displaying aggressive behavior toward people or other dogs must be removed from the DOLA immediately.
 - Bring no more than two dogs to the DOLA at any time.
 - Remain in the DOLA to supervise their dog and keep them within view and under verbal control at all times.
 - To prevent injury, remove pinch or choke collars when playing off leash.
 - For health and safety reasons, do not bring a dog in heat to a public park.
 - For health and safety reasons, do not bring a puppy under six months old to the DOLA.
 - Children must be closely supervised.
 - Accept responsibility for any damage or injury caused by their dog. No digging allowed.
 - Comply with all other park rules.
- **More Education:** The City should partner with advocacy groups such as KDOG to sponsor and promote increased education for dog owners. Experts can be used to provide a variety of on-site trainings and workshops. Topics may include:
 - Canine social development
 - Dog body language - friendly, fearful, and aggressive
 - Basic commands every dog should know
 - Help for leash-reactive dogs
 - Equipment for dogs and how to use it
 - Meeting the needs of your high energy dog
 - Teaching your dog to love a muzzle
 - Dog breeds and behavior
 - Mentally stimulating toys and training
 - The aging dog
 - Dog park drop outs

Trial Period: In order to assess the proposed program over the course of the varying seasons of the year, the trial period should be a minimum of 12 months from date of inception. The program should be formally reviewed by the Park Board at the end of every season to assist Parks staff in making any necessary adjustments and to help determine continued viability.



Attachment 2

Parks staff will require approximately 90 days after the program is formally approved to begin implementation.

Assessment: Data and information used for on-going and final assessment of the pilot program will include:

- Citizen comments log
- Observational reports
- Enforcement data
- Maintenance impact assessments
- Web survey
- Feedback from neighborhood associations

Public Involvement: Public input should be gathered to assess support for the proposed pilot program and refine parameters prior to making a final decision on whether or not to implement the project.

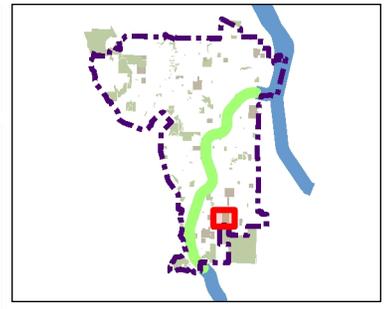
Public participation goal should be to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Recommended public engagement strategies include:

- Outreach to all neighborhood associations, including attendance/presentations by staff and Park Board when possible.
- Web survey to ascertain opinions and attitudes towards pilot program
- News release to media and blogs
- City webpage
- Notices posted at each proposed DOLA site
- Park Board Public Hearing



Houghton Custodial Landfill Site



- Legend**
- Cross Kirkland Corridor
 - Regional Rail Corridor
 - Streets

1: 4,284

Notes



NAD_1983_StatePlane_Washington_North_FIPS_4601_Feet

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