

# **PARK BOND AND OTHER REGIONAL PARK OPPORTUNITIES**

## **Background**

Redmond and Kirkland are communities known for their quality parks and recreation facilities and programs, due in large part to excellent citizen involvement and support. Each community is currently in varying stages of considering new voter-approved park funding initiatives to help meet current and future needs.

Kirkland: Kirkland's last park ballot measures were approved by voters in November 2002. An \$8.4 million park bond provided funding for a number of projects, including acquisition of key parklands and natural areas, development of neighborhood parks, and investment in improved school district playfields. Funding was also provided to support transfer of Juanita Beach Park from King County. All told, ten different sites throughout the community were either acquired or developed via park bond proceeds. A tandem maintenance levy was also approved by Kirkland voters in 2002. This perpetual levy provides about \$700K annually to support the maintenance and operations of the parks and playfields developed from the park bond. Prior to 2002, Kirkland's last park bond was approved in 1989. These 20-year bonds will come "off the books" at the end of 2009. Kirkland officials have had informal discussions about the timing of a future park ballot measure, but at this point no decisions have been made and no specific park bond planning has commenced.

Redmond: Redmond's last park bond (1989) funded parks renovation, acquisition of parks and trails and development of Perrigo Community Park. A maintenance levy accompanied the bond. In August 2007 Redmond citizens approved an operating levy increase of five cents per \$1000 of assessed valuation (\$637,122), to support programs such as the Teen Center and after-school programs. The levy also supports maintenance and operations of park facilities.

The need for a new park bond was identified when Redmond's first comprehensive Park Improvement Plan (PIP) was adopted in 2004. The PIP identified all parks, trails and recreation facilities necessary to meet community demand and accommodate the future needs of a growing population. Improvements which could not be funded by our ongoing capital improvement funds totaled \$66 million in 2004. We believe this gap has grown to over \$100 million in current dollars. Redmond has explored several bond strategies since 2005, and the Redmond Parks and Trails Commission has recently recommended a park bond measure for voter approval in 2009.

## **Issues for Discussion**

1. What issues in our respective communities are influencing our considerations for a possible future voter-approved park bond/levy?
2. What key funding needs (i.e. possible projects) could a potential park bond/levy address in our respective communities?

3. Are there any specific projects in our communities that could benefit from joint planning and funding between the two cities?
4. What are some initial concerns about the idea of a joint Kirkland-Redmond voter initiative?
5. Are there any other park, recreation, and/or trail opportunities that could be explored by Redmond and Kirkland for shared benefit? Are there other communities that could be involved?
6. What issues should be scheduled for more follow-up discussion?

**Staff**

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