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CAPITAL PROJECTS



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expanding
ACCESS

Johanna Palmer, chair of the Evergreen Hill Neighborhood Association shares a moment with her Golden Retriever at the May 9 Picnic in the Park. The City of Kirkland is designing a stormwater system beneath the park's ballfields that will consolidate and treat stormwater run-off from the surrounding 48.5 acres. Kirkland's leaders are capitalizing on this money-saving opportunity—as well as the need to expand park access—to replace the grass surface with synthetic turf.

Kirkland's leaders found a way to expand ballfield access at 132nd Square Park. That discovery began with an August 2015 report on stormwater runoff.

For nearly two years, between 2013 and 2015, a team of consulting hydrologists, civil engineers and geographic information systems specialists studied the 665-acre Totem Lake Sub-basin, searching for a way to reduce the flow of stormwater—and the sediment and pollutants carried with it—into Totem Lake and Juanita Creek.

The team identified and outlined three solutions; three different

stormwater retrofit projects that would help achieve this. The largest and most effective of the three solutions was at 132nd Square Park.

The network of pipes, detention vaults and infiltration wells recommended by the team in its August 2015 report will collect stormwater from 48.5 acres surrounding the park and direct it into the ground, which will slowly absorb it. In the process, this stormwater system

TO LEARN MORE

- Contact Christian Knight, Neighborhood Services Coordinator: 587-3831; or email cknight@kirklandwa.gov
- Or Mary Gardocki, Parks Planner: 587-3311 or email her at mgardocki@kirklandwa.gov.
- Aparna Khanal, Senior Project Engineer: 587-3827 or email her at akhanal@kirklandwa.gov

will eliminate 80 percent of the sediment—and the pollutants that glom on to that sediment—from the stormwater. The result will be cleaner water and much less water in Totem Lake and Juanita Creek.

“The study looked at where our stormwater system is now and where does it need to go to support fish and people’s need to recreate and be in touch with the water in our lakes,” says Jenny Gaus, Kirkland’s former surface water manager.

To build this system, the City of Kirkland will have to strip 132nd Square Park’s soccer fields of its grass and dig down at least another 10 feet. In some areas, the trench could be 20 to 30 feet deep. The field will remain in this state for months.

“It’s a big system and it requires a lot of space,” says Senior Project Engineer Aparna Khanal. “We have to have a broad area to collect the water and we have to go deep to ensure the water flows down, not across.”

Buried in this 10-foot-deep, 30,000 square-foot hole, Kirkland’s leaders discovered an answer to another question: How can we expand residents’ access to their parks?

Kirkland’s residents have access to 38 fields and more than 39,000 hours of peak-use field time, thanks largely to a partnership the City of Kirkland formed with the Lake Washington School District in 2001.

“And most of those hours are already filled,” says

Leveling the **PLAYING FIELD**

By installing turf as part of the restoration process for the 132nd Square Park stormwater retrofit, the City of Kirkland can save nearly \$2 million in construction costs. This, combined with turf’s lower need for maintenance and higher ability to generate user fees, narrows to \$1.5 million the cost-of-ownership gap between turf and grass.

Turf’s other benefit is that it triples the number of hours that residents can book in a 10-year cycle at 132nd Square Park, from 8,510 hours to 24,600 hours. All tolled, turf would cost the City an estimated \$152 per hour of use, compared to a grass field, which would cost an estimated \$251 per hour.

This map shows the footprint of the stormwater system retrofit, as currently conceived. The trenches would be at least 10 feet deep and as much as 30 feet deep.

**All costs are estimates based on turf field costs from nearby parks.*



Lynn Zwaagstra, Kirkland’s director of Parks and Community Services.

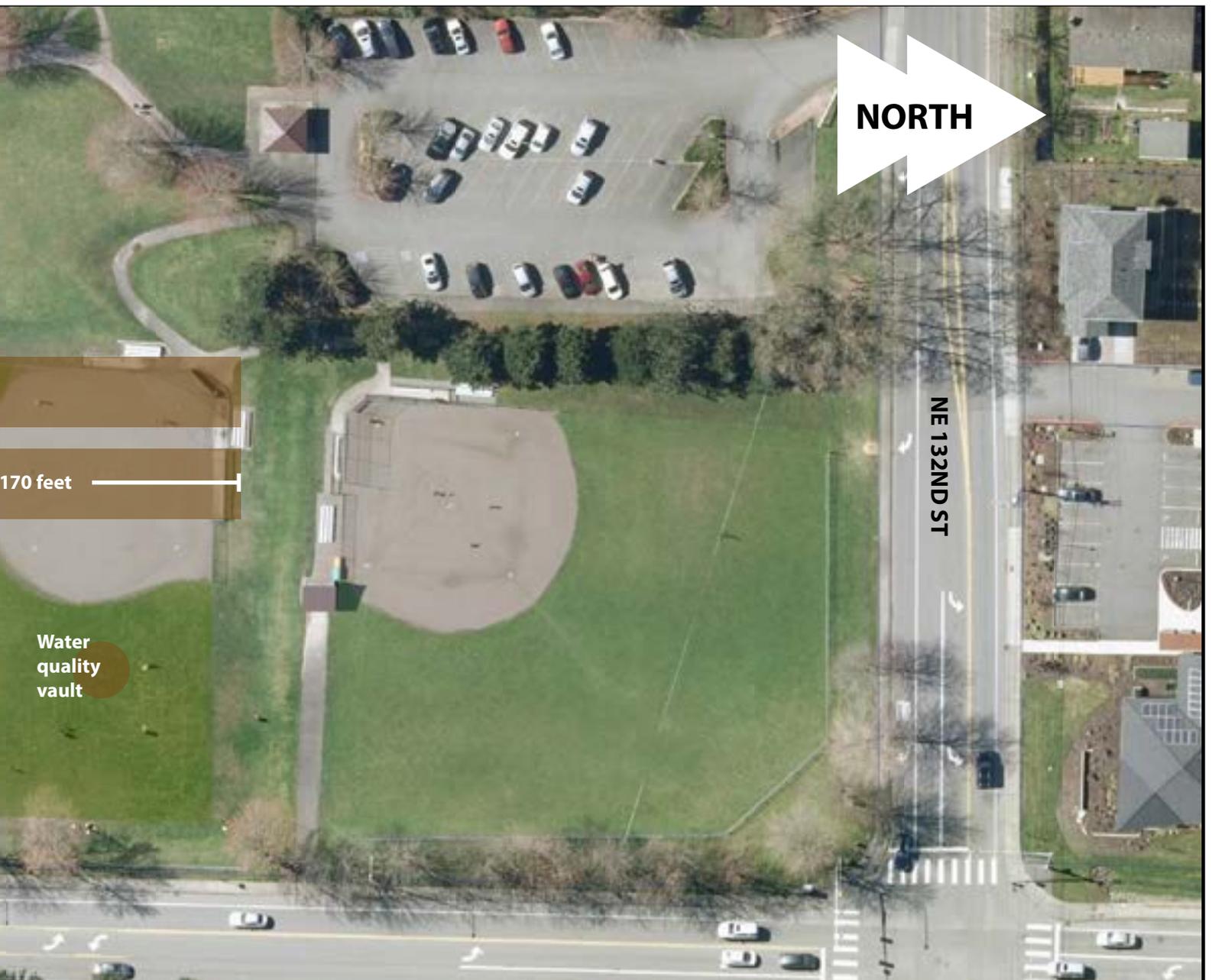
That’s why the 2015 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan urged Kirkland’s leaders to replace these fields’ grass surface with turf.

“Improvements to turf, irrigation, lighting and spectator facilities could allow existing fields to better serve recreation users and extend playing seasons,” says Policy 6.1 of the plan that residents helped craft in 2014 and 2015. “Resurfacing existing ... fields with artificial turf will allow more intensive use of field space, extend field seasons and reduce play cancellations due to rain and muddy conditions.”

“With turf and lights, we add months into the season,” Zwaagstra said. “And we add hours in the month.”

A turf field with lights at 132nd Square Park could add another 300 hours of reservable field time. And those additional hours are essential for groups like the Kirkland National League, which uses the four baseball fields at Juanita Beach and 132nd Square Park as its home base for the 533 tee-ball, baseball and softball players from Finn Hill, Juanita and Kingsgate it organizes into 45 teams.

Kirkland American League, by contrast, uses the eight fields at Crestwoods and Everest parks as its home base for the 685 players it organizes into 57



teams.

“So this is also an opportunity to solve an equity issue between the northern part of our city and the southern part,” Zwaagstra says.

To create more equity throughout Kirkland, City leaders have invested millions of dollars into Finn Hill, Juanita and Kingsgate since annexing those neighborhoods in 2011.

It has extended by a decade the useful lives of its residential streets. It has built rapid flashing beacons, crosswalks and crosswalk islands. And it is investing in the construction of freeway on-ramps at Northeast 132nd Street.

To some extent, however, the real estate developer who created Kingsgate, built parks-inequity directly into the Kingsgate neighborhoods. Murdock McPherson’s vision in 1964 for the 450 acres of open space in unincorporated King County was to create a planned community of 2,000 homes. He’d build them specifically for families with children. That meant private roads, private sidewalks, private parks and a private swimming pool. If you lived in one of the Kingsgate communities, you had access to these facilities. In fact, you owned a share of these facilities. All for \$18,500 to \$27,000.

So the demand for parks space was met by Kingsgate residents, themselves.

Over time, however, other developers built and sold homes in other subdivisions adjacent to Kingsgate. Those subdivisions did not offer their owners their

own neighborhood parks. But because Kingsgate had so many private parks of its own, no public neighborhood parks emerged.

For many of these residents—and the many more who followed—132nd Square Park functioned as their neighborhood park.

But it’s not a neighborhood park. Kirkland has 22 neighborhood parks. And they all share specific characteristics. They are small—two to five acres. They have playgrounds, maybe court, of some kind, benches, tables and pedestrian paths. What they don’t have is ballfields and significant areas of parking. Cedar View, Forbes Creek and South Rose Hill parks are all neighborhood parks.

A community park, on the other hand, is larger—10 to 30 acres. It offers more features, such as ballfields, playgrounds, restrooms and parking. Kirkland has seven of these parks. The 9.75-acre 132nd Square Park is the City’s smallest community park.

“We believe that turf and lights are two of the three things that can help 132nd Square Park fulfill its role as

a community park, as a host to all of the children who are playing soccer, baseball and flag football,” Kirkland’s Parks Director Zwaagstra says. “What can help ensure that 132nd Square Park continues to function as a neighborhood park for the surrounding community is the master plan process, which is beginning now and during which, we’ll be asking residents what they value in the park.”

With turf and lights, we add months into the season and we add hours into the months.

— LYNN ZWAAGSTRA, Kirkland’s director of parks and community services

Community PARKS

Kirkland has four different types of parks: Waterfront, Natural, Community and Neighborhood. Neighborhood parks are small—two to five acres—and don’t necessarily offer parking or structured play facilities, such as ball fields. Kirkland

has 22 of them. Community parks, by contrast, are larger—10 to 30 acres—and frequently offer structured play facilities as well as parking. Kirkland has just seven Community parks. At 9.75 acres, 132nd Square Park is the smallest of them.

COMMUNITY PARK	ACREAGE
Crestwoods	26.63
Edith Moulton	26.72
Everest	23.17
Heritage	10.12
McAuliffe	11.6
Peter Kirk	12.48
132nd Square	9.75