

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

Date: April 20, 2022

To: John Stokes, City Councilmember, Parks & Community Services Board Liaison
and Bellevue City Council members

From: David Hamilton, Chair
Parks & Community Services Board

RE: First Quarter 2022 Report and Communication

The first quarter of 2022 was marked by a series of significant transitions for the Parks & Community Services Board. First, we offered heartfelt thanks to our prior City Council Liaison, Janice Zahn and welcomed our new Liaison, John Stokes. Both councilmembers graciously joined the board's February meeting for the passing of the torch. Councilmember Zahn was a diligent and trusted advisor, communicating regularly and openly with the board during the challenging years of 2020 and 2021. The board looks forward to a similar level of engagement with Council Liaison Stokes this year.

In another significant transition, the Board finished eight months and six meetings of engagement on the 2022 Bellevue Parks & Open Space System Plan culminating in a unanimous vote recommending City Council approval of the plan. Throughout the process, it was apparent that the Bellevue community highly values its parks, trails, open spaces, community centers, sports facilities, and recreation programs. At the same time, there remains work to be done to keep up with rapid pace of change currently gripping the city.

The board's work on the Parks & Open Space System Plan naturally feeds into its next major task of reviewing and recommending a slate of capital construction projects for City Council consideration as part of the biennial budget update process. The board reviewed its role in this process at the March meeting, asked clarifying questions regarding the process and provided initial feedback based on messages heard from the community through the Parks & Open Space System Plan update process.

The Bellevue community has expressed a clear need and desire for more parkland. This includes catching up and getting ahead of designing and developing parks for the increasing growth in redeveloping areas such as BelRed and Wilburton. In addition to planning for the new, there are existing projects that are long-running priorities to implement, such as acquiring and developing a neighborhood park for the Eastgate neighborhood. The Board looks forward to continued focus on this topic in the months ahead.

Concurrently, we will continue to build awareness of the wide array of programs and services offered by Bellevue Parks & Community Services. For example, a presentation was provided on the city's Adult Misdemeanor Probation Division, which provides supervision and support to over 1,000 community members. The board is enthused to see the department's programs, services and events return to full strength in the coming year.

In one final note of transition, the board marked the end of four years of service by Pamela Unger. Boardmember Unger had been serving as the Vice-Chair and with Pam's departure, the board voted in March to elect Paul Clark to serve as Vice-Chair until the regular annual election of officers occurs in June.

If you have any questions about the board's work, please contact me anytime at dhamilton@bellevuewa.gov.