

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

Date: November 19, 2025

To: Parks & Community Services Board

From: Laura Harper – Park Ranger, Parks and Community Services Department

Subject: 2025 Summer Park Ranger Program
For information only - no Board action requested

Background

The Summer Park Ranger Program is a long-standing initiative of the Parks & Community Services Department (PCS), led by the Natural Resources Division. Running annually from Memorial Day through Labor Day, the program deploys a team of uniformed, non-commissioned rangers to enhance visitor experiences and support daily park operations during Bellevue's busiest season.

Rangers serve as front-line ambassadors for the City's "City in a Park" vision, focusing on:

- Education and Engagement – Promoting park rules and resources through positive public interactions.
- Community Service – Assisting visitors, answering questions, and supporting events.
- Stewardship – Monitoring trails, natural areas, and facilities to ensure safety and sustainability.
- Collaboration – Coordinating with Police, Human Services, and other partners when illegal activity or public safety concerns arise.

While not an enforcement program, Rangers provide a visible, approachable presence that fosters safety, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship.

2025 Program Overview

Summer Park Rangers continued to provide daily coverage across Bellevue's park system from 8:00 a.m. to midnight, maintaining a strong and welcoming presence during peak hours. Serving as ambassadors and stewards, rangers engage with the public through a variety of impactful services, sharing information about park rules, offering passive interpretive programs, promoting environmental awareness, discouraging inappropriate activity, assisting with light maintenance, and compiling detailed patrol and activity reports.

This well-established program plays a vital role in daily operations and reflects Bellevue's commitment to high-quality, community-focused service. Rangers help advance key departmental goals such as public engagement, sustainability, and responsive service, while supporting Comprehensive Plan objectives that ensure Bellevue's parks remain safe, inclusive, and resilient.

Key Contributions and Outcomes

- Enhanced Visitor Experience
 - Completed nearly 3,000 patrols citywide.
 - Made over 59,400 positive contacts, fostering a welcoming and inclusive park atmosphere.
 - Provided staffing at kiosks, visitor centers, and community events, including the Lake-to-Lake Bike Ride, Movies in the Park, and marina operations.
 - Provided education about rules pertaining to pets to 678 dog owners.
- Strengthened Community Safety
 - Responded to more than 90 immediate service requests, ensuring timely resolution of community concerns.
 - Coordinated with Bellevue Police and outreach partners to address illegal camping and connect vulnerable individuals to resources.
 - Deterred negative behaviors through visible, approachable interactions. Locked 742 gates and addressed 2,104 after hours contacts.
- Advanced Environmental Stewardship
 - Supported the Lake Hills Greenbelt Management Plan through monitoring at Phantom Lake.
 - Removed graffiti, addressed litter, and documented trail and habitat conditions.
 - Collaborated with local and state agencies on wildlife management and public education.
- Promoted Equity and Inclusion

- Delivered multilingual, culturally responsive outreach with bilingual staff and translated materials.
- Provided equitable access to park information, contributing to a safe and welcoming environment for Bellevue's diverse community.
- Supported Organizational Excellence
 - Maintained accurate patrol records and submitted monthly reports to inform leadership and guide adaptive management.
 - Collected real-time data to support continuous improvement and department planning.

Alignment with City Goals

The Summer Park Ranger Program reflects Bellevue's commitment to:

- Exceptional Public Service – Welcoming, responsive, and informed engagement with tens of thousands of park users.
- Environmental Stewardship – Protecting resources through monitoring, education, and sustainability practices.
- Equity and Inclusion – Ensuring all visitors feel welcome and safe through culturally responsive service delivery.
- Accountability and Innovation – Leveraging data to improve operations and guide future planning.

Conclusion

The 2025 Summer Park Ranger Program provided visible, proactive support that elevated park safety, visitor experience, and environmental protection during Bellevue's busiest season. The program's alignment with PCS strategic priorities and the City's Comprehensive Plan underscores its ongoing value as a high-impact, community-centered initiative.

The Rangers' contributions reinforce Bellevue's reputation as a safe, sustainable, and inclusive "City in a Park," while providing a strong foundation for continuous improvement and future planning.

CC: Michael Shiosaki, Parks & Community Services, Director
Shelley McVein, Parks & Community Services, Deputy Director