

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

Date: April 17, 2024

To: Dave Hamilton, City Councilmember, Parks & Community Services Board
Liaison and Bellevue City Councilmembers

From: Paul Clark, Chair
Parks & Community Services Board

RE: First Quarter 2024 Report and Communication

During each of the first three meetings of the year, the Parks & Community Services Board reviewed and discussed the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the BelRed Subarea Plan. The board appreciated the opportunity to provide input and recommendations that will be considered by the Planning Commission and eventually, the City Council. In addition, the board amended its bylaws and gave a heartfelt thanks to Councilmember Stokes for fostering a strong and trusting relationship during his time as liaison. The board then welcomed Councilmember Hamilton as its new liaison with full expectation that the collaborative relationship will remain strong.

The board's recent work to update the policies of the Parks & Open Space System Plan and Recreation Program Plan served as a springboard for updates to overarching Comprehensive Plan policies. Key themes identified by the board include a continued policy priority for conserving natural areas and ecological systems. Policy recommendations relating to park and recreation programming promote using data and outreach to meet the needs of Bellevue's increasingly diverse residents. Additionally, policy language promoting safety was recommended in relation to bicycle and pedestrian access to parks. Specific to the BelRed Subarea Plan, the board recommends continued policies and implementation efforts to acquire and construct parks around the stream corridors as a defining urban design and livability feature.

Other points of focus during the quarter were two park assets serving the Northwest Bellevue neighborhood. These included the Northwest Arts Center and Ashwood Park. The NW Arts Center has been a staple of Bellevue's park and recreation system since 1970. Programs serve all ages with access to classrooms, a mirrored fitness and dance space, teaching kitchen and pottery studio. Ashwood Park has also long been a valued amenity for Downtown Bellevue and surrounding neighborhood as an open unstructured recreation area next to the Bellevue Regional Library. The Council-directed work to update the park's 1990 adopted master plan began in March and will continue with public engagement opportunities throughout the year.

Thank you for your continued support of the board and its work. If you have any questions, please contact me anytime at pclark@bellevuewa.gov.