

# MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &  
Community Services

Date: January 9, 2024

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

From: Paul Clark, Chair  
Parks & Community Services Board

RE: Fourth Quarter 2023 Report and Communication

The vision statement for the Parks & Community Services department is “In Bellevue, everyone can connect to each other and to nature through experiences that help them to live, grow, and thrive.” The Parks & Community Services Board is pleased to report another active quarter advancing this vision. The board worked on policies for recreation programming that help Bellevue residents connect to each other. At a practical level, construction of a neighborhood park will offer a new physical space for community connection. Finally, the board learned more about and celebrated programs that assist residents in better connecting with our unique natural environment.

In November, the board endorsed an update to the department’s Recreation Program Plan. This plan assesses community needs and guides strategic investments in recreation programming. A regularly updated and reviewed plan is required to maintaining accreditation. The plan operationalizes the long-held goal of focusing public recreation programming to offer services and opportunities for population groups with fewer recreational options.

In another significant milestone, the board recommended, and the Council later approved, the name Bridle Trails Valley Creek Park for a new neighborhood park currently under construction on 140<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. This project is one of the final projects funded in part by the 2008 Parks and Natural Areas Levy. Looking forward to 2024, we are pleased to support development of additional smaller neighborhood-serving parks funded from the new parks levy program. Adding smaller parks in underserved neighborhoods is one of the best ways to advance the city’s goal of bringing park or trail access points within walking distance of all Bellevue residents.

One of the best ways to connect with nature in Bellevue is through the department’s Bellevue Naturalist Program. Trained Bellevue Naturalist volunteers have aided forest enhancement work across the city, and particularly in Weowna Park. To date, 50 Bellevue Naturalists have given 346 hours to complete restoration treatments on approximately 7.3 acres of Weowna Park, working in areas with substantial groupings of rare old-growth trees threatened by invasive, non-native vegetation. These volunteers are a gift and their work conserving open space will benefit the community for decades.

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](mailto:pclark@bellevuewa.gov).