

MEMORANDUM



Bellevue Parks &
Community Services

DATE: October 11, 2022

TO: Parks & Community Services Board

FROM: Pam Fehrman, Planning & Development Manager
Parks & Community Services Department

SUBJECT: Bellevue Airfield Park – Master Plan Update
For information, discussion, and feedback– No Board action required

At your meeting on October 11th, staff will provide an update of the [Bellevue Airfield Park \(BAP\) Master Plan](#), schedule, outreach process and community feedback.

BELLEVUE AIRFIELD PARK SITE

In 2002, recognizing that the Bellevue Airfield Park (BAP) site may represent the last opportunity to acquire a large, undeveloped, relatively flat parcel of property in Bellevue, Council authorized the purchase of the properties with the intent of developing an active recreational community park.

The BAP is currently an undeveloped site comprised of three parcels totaling 27.5 acres. The site is accessed by vehicle from the south through a business office park.

The site is located just off I-90 and is surrounded by residential neighbors to the north and west and office park to the east, south and west. Vehicular access is from the south on 160th through the office park, while pedestrian trail access is provided from the north and west residential neighborhoods. Significant to development considerations are the historical operations of the Bellevue Airfield (until 1983) and operation of a municipal landfill from 1951 to 1964. From a development perspective, the site is rife with utility system easements (abandoned and operational) such as a landfill gas migration system, ground water monitoring wells, storm water systems, and a major King County Metro sewer line among others.

2012 MASTER PLAN

The original Master Planning process started in May 2008. The planning effort was led by Parks & Community Services staff. There was significant participation in this planning process from nearby residents and several interest groups. Most participants in the planning process advocated that most of the open area of the site be devoted to one of four elements: 1) an off-leash dog facility; 2) a little league field complex; 3) a regional aquatic facility; or 4) a passive-use meadow.

The Parks & Community Services Board recommended a preferred Master Plan for the Eastgate Area properties and the name Bellevue Airfield Park. The City Council concurred and adopted the Master Plan and park name in June 2012.

The current Bellevue Airfield Park Master Plan provides the community with two lighted synthetic turf sports fields, wooded picnic areas, trail connections, playgrounds, restrooms, and parking. It would maintain woodland buffers between the park and nearby residences. The Master Plan also includes the expansion of the off-leash dog area at Robinswood Park from approximately 1.75 acres to 5.75 acres (Robinswood is located west of the site about a 1/4 mile via a pedestrian path.)

2022 MASTER PLAN UPDATE

As shared with the Board at your June 14th meeting, City Council directed an update to the 2012 Bellevue Airfield Park Master Plan to understand community preferences and inform impacts associated with locating a new aquatic center on-site. A master plan update offers a rare opportunity to address the growing aquatic needs of Bellevue. The only existing public aquatic facility in Bellevue – the Bellevue Aquatic Center (BAC) - is reaching the end of its useful life. Built in 1970, it has served Bellevue’s approximate 150,000 residents for over 50 years. Its age, capacity, and inability to provide a full range of aquatic programming make it inadequate to meet the current and future demand for swimming facilities in Bellevue. The Bellevue Airfield Park site is the only undeveloped City-owned site large enough to accommodate the recommended aquatic facility concept (10-11 acres). Additional elements recommending an aquatic facility at this site are easy access off I-90, existing shared parking agreements with owners of the surrounding office park and the site size that could allow for park and BAC complementary outdoor recreation and open space development.

The two-year Master Plan update process will continue to include a robust community outreach process to inform development parameters. After seeking City Council feedback and concluding public outreach we will return to the Parks & Community Services Board seeking a preferred master plan update recommendation - estimated in early 2023. Ultimately a state environmental permit review (SEPA) will conclude, and the City Council will be asked to adopt an updated Master Plan – estimated end-of year 2023.

After your June Park Board meeting, community outreach continued with a June walk of the Bellevue Airfield site with interested neighbors, followed by two community meetings in July and September. Using information obtained from community meetings, correspondence and survey responses, a few Master Plan alternatives have evolved.

Staff looks forward to sharing community input, and master plan alternatives and would appreciate hearing the Board’s feedback prior to the next evolution of plan alternatives.
