

## **PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

### **VISION**

**BELLEVUE IS A “CITY IN A PARK.”**

***Bellevue has a system of parks, open spaces, cultural facilities, and recreational amenities throughout the city. These provide abundant access to natural beauty and extraordinary experiences to define a lifetime of recreation and learning.***

### **MAJOR THEMES & DRIVERS**

The major thrust of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element is to continue to support the vision of a “City in a Park” even as the city changes and grows. Much has occurred since 2004 to change the landscape of parks, open space and recreation in Bellevue. Examples of these changes include:

- An updated Parks & Open Space System Plan adopted in 2010, including a change to the City’s level of service methodology for parks and open space.
- The acquisition of Coal Creek Natural Area in 2008, adding 450 acres of land and 4.5 miles of trails to the city’s inventory.
- The 2009 adoption of the BelRed Subarea Plan and associated parks, trails and open space envisioned to support redevelopment.
- The City’s support of collective impact service delivery models, as practiced by the Eastside Pathways campaign through which families, providers, schools and cities unite around common goals, measurements, and strategies to maximize each child’s opportunity for a productive, fulfilling life.

The Parks & Community Services Board recommends a series of edits to existing policies to merge and clarify issues and topic areas. A key theme for the Board is linking future acquisition and development of parks to areas in Bellevue experiencing dense population growth. A priority should be set for providing proximal, walkable access to parks and trails for all Bellevue residents and workers. The changes to the existing policies continue and advance this objective.

The Board also reaffirms that parks have a significant role in sustaining and improving the environmental health of the city. Partnerships and collective impact strategies have grown in importance over time and will continue to be instrumental in building and maintaining parks and recreation services in Bellevue. Finally, as Bellevue continues to diversify in areas of age, income, ethnicity and other factors, intercultural interactions are an essential element of creating community and instilling a sense of belonging among Bellevue residents.

## **SIGNIFICANT CHANGES**

**Park Access.** New policy (PA-X1) supports improved signage and wayfinding to existing parks to enhance community access to and promote the public's use of Bellevue's parks and recreation facilities.

**Culture and Heritage.** New policy (PA-X2) supports using parks to celebrate and preserve history, cultural arts and local heritage. This policy encourages the continuation of an existing practice to develop parks and recreation facilities as community gathering spaces that help to make Bellevue's neighborhoods vibrant and distinct.

**Monitoring.** New policy (PA-X3) supports tracking the community's evolving recreation and community services needs in order to continue to provide highly relevant and effective services. This reflects the city's desire to understand the evolving customer base for its recreation and community services and to remain nimble in providing services to Bellevue's diverse and changing community.

## **ISSUES**

Over the next ten years, parks and recreation services in Bellevue will continue to evolve, as the city:

- Collaborates with King County Parks and Sound Transit on the planning and development of the Eastside Rail Corridor.
- Designs and delivers phased development of the Meydenbauer Bay Park.
- Works to provide equitable and walkable access for all residents to park and trail facilities across the city.
- Modifies its recreation and community service programming to best serve changing demographic patterns in order to advance the Parks & Community Services mission to build a healthy community.

## **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

- Any questions about what is recommended for change?
- Any additional information needed on this topic?
- Any gaps or concerns to follow up on?