



Date: February 7, 2013  
To: Councilmember Sally Bagshaw  
From: Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent  
Re: Superintendent's Report, Parks and Seattle Center Committee

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## ***GOOD NEWS***

**Parks Legacy Plan.** Parks continues to make progress developing the Legacy Plan. Working with the Park Board, we are developing Vision, Mission and Values statements and Plan outcomes. A team of staff analyzed our levels of service in the recreation and maintenance areas, and are completing similar analysis for our property management work. A survey of the public was conducted in the fall, which included a special emphasis on historically underrepresented communities. Staff evaluated our services, identifying which provide more community benefit as opposed to more individual benefit. All of this information is being compiled into the Legacy Plan which we will proudly send to the Council at the end of March.

**Washington Park Arboretum/SR 520 mitigation.** Parks and our partners at the Washington Park Arboretum (UW and Arboretum Foundation) held a press conference on January 24 to announce that the Washington Park Arboretum will receive \$7.8 million as the result of a collaborative effort between the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee (ABGC).

After years of negotiation we signed an agreement on January 14, 2013 that ensures the implementation of key projects in the Arboretum's Master Plan as required mitigation for the effects of the upcoming replacement of the SR 520 Bridge. The first phase of construction can begin no earlier than July 1, 2014 and will include a Multi-Use Trail through the Arboretum, Azalea Way Pond improvements, and trail and landscape improvements on Foster Island.

**Golf revenues on pace to set new record.** Our golf programs were within 1% of the target of \$9.85 million, which sets a new revenue record.

**Awards for Seattle Parks and Recreation.** Seattle Parks has received a whopping 13 "Best of 2012 Readers' Choice Best of the Neighborhoods" awards from Seattle Magazine in the "Best Kids' Activity" category. The magazine recognized the Golden Gardens Park playground, Beacon Mountain at Jefferson Park, Cal Anderson Park, International Children's Park, Pratt Park, Maple Leaf Park, Ella Bailey Park, Cowen Park, Magnuson Park, the sailing pond at Lake Union Park, the zipline at Cowen Park, Green Lake Park, and Alki Beach Park. Parks also received six 2012 awards

from ParentMap (as voted on by readers). For Best Nature Outing, Seward Park, Carkeek Park and Discovery park won awards; for Best Playground/Park, Carkeek Park and Golden Gardens Park won, and for Best Water Play, Green Lake Park's wading pool and swimming beaches won.

**RFP for moorages.** We are in the process of conducting a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that will result in a long-term contract with an operator for Seattle Parks and Recreation owned moorages at Lakewood and Leschi. The successful candidate will invest in upgrading the moorage in exchange for a long-term agreement to manage the two moorages. Parks will issue the RFP in late February and proposals will be due in May 2013. Improvement construction is approximately two to three years out, and Parks will hold a public meeting prior to construction. The moorage facilities are currently managed by a private operator through a concessionaire agreement that will terminate on May 8, 2013. The moorages are popular facilities with waiting lists of one to two years for the most popular size slips.

**Youth Basketball season.** The youth basketball season began on January 5 and 6 at 20 community centers. More than 250 teams, representing more than 2,500 youth and more than 400 volunteer coaches are participating in the program this season, which ends with Citywide Youth Championship games on March 24 at Rainier Community Center.

**Sadako statue at Peace Park.** For the second time in a decade someone has pulled an arm off the Sadako statue at Peace Park. The vandalism was first discovered by a Seattle Times photographer. Alan Berner, the photographer, later wondered if the arm might have been discarded in the woods between the park and ship canal. After a search, Alan found the arm and returned it to us the same afternoon. We worked with the Office of Arts and Culture who contacted the artist. While the artist worked on the repair, the World Friendship Center made a trip to Japan, where they secured a \$300 donation for the upkeep and maintenance of the Sadako and the Thousand Cranes. Sadako's arm will be reinstalled during the week of February 4, 2013.

**Mt. Baker Rowing and Sailing Center.** In fall 2012, Junior Crew enrollment was up 19% from last year for a total enrollment of 142. Of the kids participating in the program, 17 receive scholarships through a partnership between the Mt. Baker Boating Advisory Council and Rainier Valley Rowing. The partnership serves to increase accessibility of the sport through targeted outreach to neighborhood schools in southeast and central Seattle, assisting with transportation. By providing scholarship money for up to 100% of program costs -- depending on the needs of the particular family, we are able to bring this sport to kids who may not otherwise be able to participate.

**Partnership with Seattle Housing Authority.** Van Asselt Community Center completed a summer partnership with Seattle Housing Authority, and surpassed the contract requirements by serving more than 300 youth aged 7-18, in over 65 programs such as day camp, computer basics, salsa and hip hop dance.

**Women of the World Swims.** Beginning this year, Seattle Parks and Recreation will begin offering women-only, single-gender swimming at four of our swimming pools. Meadowbrook, Medgar Evers (moved from Rainier Beach) and Southwest. For the past 10 years, we have been hosting single-gender swimming as a private rental. Late in 2012, we were informed that one of the programs would lose its funding in 2013. Given that the program has grown from one

location for 1.5 hours a month to three locations – with a fourth on the way (Rainier Beach when it reopens in September) – to 9 hours a month, serving as many as 120 women, it seemed time to integrate the program into our regular lineup. Most of the women who participate identify as Muslim; others are Orthodox Jews and still others do not want identify a religious affiliation.

**PSKS Matching Fund Grant.** In October, Peace from the Streets By Kids from the Streets (PSKS) announced that without an immediate influx of cash, it would have to close its doors. Seattle Parks and Recreation identified a matching fund grant of \$20,000. With Mayor McGinn, Parks announced the donation publicly. PSKS ultimately received more than \$200,000 in donations, putting it in good standing moving forward.

## **GREAT EVENTS**

**Magnolia Manor Park – Off-Leash Area.** Seattle Parks and Recreation celebrated the grand opening of a brand new dog park at Magnolia Manor Park on November 18, 2012. The community celebrated the day before the opening also by hosting a work party on Saturday, November 17 to install some of the border plants and the poop bag stations, and to install a mock-up of the Lawton 2012 5<sup>th</sup> Graders’ Art Fence project. The new 21,000-square-foot off-leash area includes an area with a “chuck it” game zone and dog drinking fountain.

**Green Seattle Day.** Our 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Green Seattle Day on Saturday Nov. 3 was a HUGE success and exceeded all out expectations of plants and volunteer! We had an estimated 1,025 volunteers, which meets and beats our event goal of 1,000 volunteers. These volunteers gathered at 17 different parks across Seattle planting more than 6,800 trees, shrubs and groundcover, moving mountains of mulch and clearing ivy and blackberry -- all in celebration of healthy forests. To top off the day, the weather cooperated providing us with absolutely perfect fall planting conditions!

**MOHAI Opening.** On December 29, 2012, the new Museum of History and Industry opened its new facility on the grounds of Lake Union Park. MOHAI restored the old Naval Reserve Armory there on the shores Lake Union. The opening day was the first in a series of events that marked the kick off the museum’s new home in South Lake Union. Festivities continued throughout the week, and on New Year’s Day, they welcomed kids and families to help kick off initiatives such as MiniMOHAI. (As part of the public benefit of having the museum in the park, all children under 14 are free.) Over the course of the week’s celebration , more than 20,000 people saw the new MOHAI.

**Polar Bear Plunge attracts record crowd.**

The 11th annual Polar Bear Plunge was held at Matthews Beach on New Year’s Day at noon. It was a HUGE event, with at least 3,500 people on site to celebrate the New Year. The team from Meadowbrook Pool, which hosts the plunge each year, brought creativity to the event with badges of courage, polar bear vitamins (marshmallows), decorations, signage,



costumes, hot beverages and more. The news media interviews were excellent and focused on Seattle Parks and Recreation as the host for this crazy event.

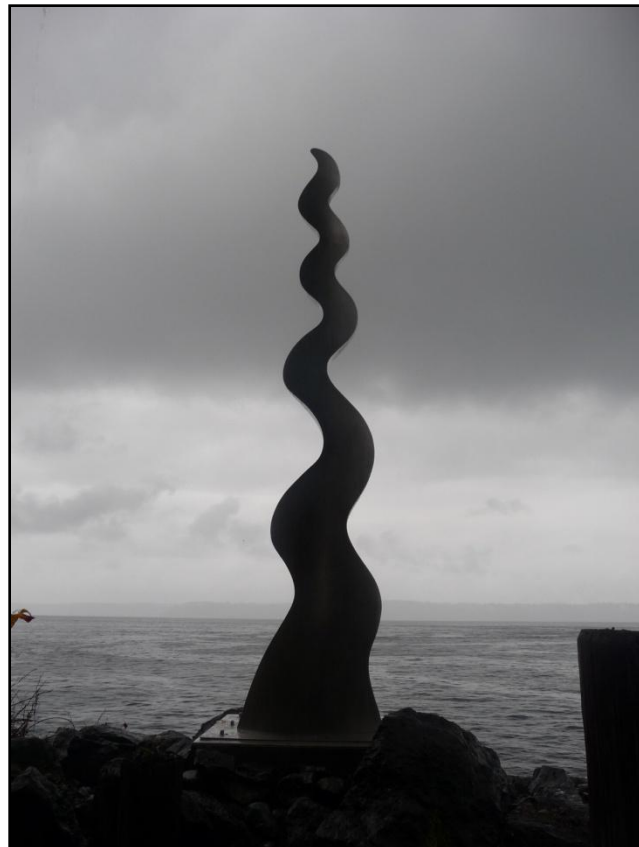
**Volunteer Park for the Holidays.** Seattle Parks and Recreation partnered with the Volunteer Park Trust and the Friends of the Volunteer Park Conservatory to begin new holiday traditions at Volunteer Park. This year, there was a “Holiday in Volunteer Park” event with luminaries, caroling, music and refreshments. That was coupled with ongoing events at the Conservatory, including a 75-foot, elevated model railway that wound its way through mountains of poinsettias and holiday trees decorated in splendid Victorian décor.

**Combating youth obesity.** Some of Seattle’s top, and youngest chefs, competed for the title of Top Teen Chef in October while learning how to shop for and cook healthy foods. The teen experiential program at Seattle Parks and Recreation’s community centers held its final competition on Oct. 3. The Great Pumpkin Finale competition included teams from five community centers throughout the city, and featured pumpkin as the ingredient that chefs had to use. All chef-testants were between the ages of 13 and 18. Top Teen Chef was created through Seattle Parks’ Late Night program in 2008 as a way to teach teens basic life skills while also combating epidemic childhood obesity rates. (Today, there are three times as many obese children and teens as there were 20 years ago.) Chef-testants had already won preliminary competitions at their home community centers. They were judged on preparing a dish that was economical, low-fat and tasted good. Judges quizzed contestants on how much the meal cost to prepare and how many calories were in it.

**Tree of Life at Victor Steinbrueck Park.** The Tree of Life sculpture was completed and installed at Victor Steinbrueck Park in October 2012. This Department of Neighborhoods led project partnered with non-profit organizations that advocate for King County homeless. The project had been eight years in the making, and recognizes the names of homeless people who died alone on the streets.

**Arroyos Sculpture “ Illusion Dweller “ Dedicated.** In November 2012, Gerry Tsutakawa’s sculpture ‘Illusion Dweller’ (*pictured here*) was dedicated on the shoreline of Park’s Arroyos Green Space. The sculpture commissioned by Tina Bullitt, in memory of her late husband Stimson Bullitt, who donated the 5.7 acre Arroyos Green Space on which it is situated.

Stim Bullitt was the largest single donor to Seattle Parks and Recreation



in our history. In addition to the Arroyos property in southwest Seattle he donated his 1.6-acre property on Capitol Hill (*currently subject to a life estate*) for a park. He also donated the bulk of his estate to The Seattle Parks Foundation.

The dedication, organized by the Park Foundation was attended by Dennis Hayes, President & CEO of the Bullitt Foundation, Sally Jewell, President & CEO of REI, Harriet Bullitt, Stim's sister and owner and CEO of Leavenworth's Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat, and Gerry Tsutakawa, artist.

## ***MAGNUSON PARK***

**Tennis Center.** Work continues on the Tennis Center at Sand Point. The frame for the six-court structure has been completed, and the frame for the four-court structure will begin soon. The Tennis Center is targeting a May or June opening.

**Building 30.** Renovation of Building 30 began January 21, and is expected to be completed in three phases with final completion targeted for mid-September. Building 30 is one of the many buildings at Magnuson Park that have been falling into increasing states of disrepair since the U.S. Navy transferred the site to the City. Two years ago, the City deemed the building unsafe for occupancy, moving out many cherished community events, including the annual Friends of Seattle Public Library book sale. The budget for the renovation is \$8.5 million, and will renovate the main hanger and east and west wings of the building. The west wing of the building will be focused on artist work space and the east wing will include office space for Seattle Parks and Recreation staff and non-profit tenants.

**Magnuson Park – Crew Quarters.** This building is currently being used by SPU as a staging area for their CSO project. A feasibility study for the renovation of Building 308 into a Crew Quarters facility is complete, and the design process has begun. Design will be completed in 2013 and *Hoshide, Wanzer Williams Architects* are the prime consultant. Construction is planned for 2014, contingent upon filling a gap in funding.

**Magnuson Park Electrical System Renovation.** A planning study by Sparling is complete and an RFP has been advertised for immediate design to upgrade the electrical spine throughout the park. Work includes upgrading the current 4kv electrical system to 26kv. Construction will occur in the summer of 2013.

### **Building 2 at Magnuson Park.**

The Conservation Corp works out of Building 2 and the roof needs to be replaced. Seattle Parks is working to secure funding to replace the roof.

**Children's Hospital.** Parks finalized a three-year agreement with Children's in early January for use of the parking lot off of 65<sup>th</sup> Street that reflects a 4% fee increase for the first two years and a variable increase for the third year.

**Food service at Magnuson Park.** Coming in February the Magnuson Park campus will finally have food service! Caddy Shack coffee will be opening for business in their space adjacent to the Junior League Playground, offering coffee, cocoa and tea as well as a selection of snacks and sandwiches to folks who visit or work in the park.

**Magnuson wetlands.** The 2004 Sand point Magnuson Park Master Plan set the stage for habitat creation and sportsfield development. The initial project funded by the 2000 Pro Parks Levy, converted 43 acres of former military base into a unique intermingling of athletic fields and wetlands. The Wetland Habitat and Athletic Fields project opened in September 2009 and has been the recipient of a number of national and local awards.

The first 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy Project created a multi-use trail down 65<sup>th</sup> that connected to the waterfront promenade to create a safe pedestrian entrance and loop around the park.

The EPA was so delighted by the environmental accomplishments at the park, that they matched levy funds to develop the wetlands across Lake Shore Drive toward the lake. The Shore Pond project deliberately avoided impacting the shoreline, but moved the dream of connecting the wetlands directly to the lake much more feasible. The community celebrated the Shore Pond project in spring 2012 on International Migratory Bird Day.

This summer (2013), the state of Washington is funding “Headwaters project” which will develop the “entry wetlands” at the beginning of the wetland chain, closest to Sand Point Way. SPU has already completed a significant portion of this work as part of their CSO project.

Magnuson Park Wetlands Phase IV is in the early planning stages. The proposal restores close to 20 additional acres of wetlands and restores the waterfront between the Tower Comfort Station and the Boat ramp. It also includes removal of the old tennis courts in the center of the park per the master plan. This project is on hold because it represents potential mitigation for unfunded portions of the SR520 bridge replacement project. Parks will hold additional public meetings if Phase IV moves forward.

The redevelopment of Magnuson Park from one-time naval airfield to active recreation and high-functioning wetlands is every bit as engineered as the runway that once occupied the site. The Story of Magnuson’s Wetlands and ecological creation has come to life through a series of projects and contributions from city, state, and federal agencies.

Most important, we have always maintained our focus on the following goals.

- 1) Habitat diversity: Develop habitat areas that promote a diversity of wildlife, including areas free of human activity for species that are less tolerant.
- 2) A living laboratory: Create a “living laboratory” for water management, the assessment of human impacts of wildlife, and the observation of ecological life cycles in an urban context.
- 3) Support a growing city: Provide a valuable counterpoint to Seattle’s increasing density with wetland habitat areas, and a physical outlet with programmed recreation areas.

**Magnuson Park wetland monitoring.** Staff at Magnuson Park recently completed three consecutive years of vegetation monitoring at Magnuson’s new wetlands. Gardener Miriam Preus spent three days working with a pair of ecologists to monitor 68 vegetation plots across the 14-acre site. Thanks to Miriam’s dedicated care of the wetlands, the site is on track to meet performance standards, and will not require monitoring next year. This will save the city

approximately \$20,000. Amphibian and macro-invertebrate sampling will occur in spring 2013. As per the monitoring plan, vegetation and hydrology monitoring will be conducted in years 5, 7, and 10.

**Copper thefts at Magnuson.** Staff are strategizing about ways to reduce recent increases in copper theft incidents in Magnuson Park. A private security firm has been hired to monitor the Park from 3pm to 6am daily.

## ***DOWNTOWN PARKS***

**Belltown Community Center Grand Opening.** The long awaited Belltown Community Center held its grand opening in September. The center is open 25 hours a week, and has -- since it opened -- had 7,500 visitors, according to the people counters. They are enjoying success with a variety of programs, including the recently well attended My First Movie for pre-k kids. They also have Playground in a Box (see below).

**Playground in a Box.** To continue to work toward a more family and kid-friendly downtown, Center City Parks has partnered with the Downtown Seattle Association and the Seattle Parks Foundation to purchase a *Playground in a Box* by Imagination Playground. This equipment will be used primarily in the new Belltown Community Center, but is also portable, thus allowing us to bring it to Westlake or other downtown parks to support kid-oriented events and to use it in Bell Street Park, once that is completed.

**Bell Street Park.** Construction bids opened on January 23, 2013 and Parks anticipates awarding the contract to AGR Construction of Monroe WA. The Parks and Green Spaces Levy Oversight Committee allocated the necessary additional \$1.5 million in funding to allow Parks to move forward on the entire four blocks of the park from 1st Avenue to 5th Avenue on Bell Street. Parks hosted a public meeting to update the community on the progress of the park. We will issue a press release to announce the construction schedule. Parks anticipates construction to take 180 working days from the date of notice to proceed.

**Westlake Play Space.** The equipment for the play space has been ordered. Construction will begin in February, and we will host a grand opening celebration on March 1 with Mayor McGinn. Councilmember Bagshaw is confirmed to attend.

**Hing Hay Park.** We are getting underway on one of the last five named projects from the 2008 Parks and Green Space Levy development projects. This project will renovate the existing park and develop the portion of the park currently occupied by the post office. (Seattle Parks and Recreation purchased the property from the post office with funds from the 2000 Pro Parks Levy, and has been leasing the property to the U.S. Postal Service.) Planning and design is starting this year. A group is interested in forming a Friends of Hing Hay Park group to help with fundraising and programming – both for the existing park before construction and after the expanded park is completed.

## ***IN THE NEWS***

**Toxic Algae in Green Lake.** We closed Green Lake to some activities for about two months – from October to December -- after a toxic algae was discovered. A safe amount of blue green algae in the lake is 6 micrograms per liter. The highest readings were around 400 micrograms per liter. We reopened the lake after we received three consecutive tests that showed the levels of algae were within acceptable limits.

**Volunteer Park Coyote.** On Friday, Nov. 30, around 3 p.m. the USDA Wildlife Services successfully found and euthanized a coyote on Capitol Hill that had been sick and aggressive. USDA tracked the animal for several days, and with the help of the Seattle Police Department was able to locate it.

**Burke-Gilman Trail Landslide.** A landslide blocked the Burke-Gilman Trail at the 13000 block of Riviera Place right before the Christmas holiday. The volume of soil and debris was approximately 30 cubic yards, and included three tree trunks. Crews had the slide cleaned up the day it happened in time to clear the way for the evening bicycle commute, and returned the next day (a Saturday) to power wash the area and return it its former condition. The photo indicates how close the slide is to adjacent home owner's property.



## ***PROJECTS***

**Opportunity Fund.** We are in the process of distributing the second half Parks and Green Spaces Levy Opportunity Fund. Last summer, staff conducted three workshops assisting proponents with the application process. We received 53 applications in September, and spent the next few months reviewing and ranking the applications. On November 26, 2012, staff recommended that 14 of the 53 proposed projects be approved for funding. Parks held two Open Houses for Opportunity Fund hopefuls to present their ideas to the Levy Oversight Committee. Final recommendations to the Mayor and City Council are slated for summer 2013. The Parks and Green Spaces Levy Opportunity Fund provides \$15 million in funding for community initiated park development or property acquisition projects. Parks will allocate approximately \$8 million towards projects in the 2012/2013 funding cycle of the Opportunity Fund.

**Maple Leaf Reservoir Park and Maple Leaf Play Area Renovation.** This park renovation has been under construction since September. Work started work in the play area, and moved up to the reservoir when it became available from SPU. Once those items are completed, they'll start work on the ballfields. The park will open in autumn 2013.

**King County Youth Sports Facility Grant (YSFG) Recommendations for 2013.** With the King County Council's passage of the County budget in November 2012, Seattle Parks and Recreation was awarded King County YSFG funding for three projects. The contracts for the projects will run from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2014. The projects and awarded grant amounts are:

- Benefit Park Skate Park development in the amount of \$38,000 (full funding);



- Duwamish Rowing Facility (dock construction) in the amount of \$55,000 (partial funding of \$75,000 requested);
- Loyal Heights Community Center Half-Court renovation in the amount of \$5,855 (full funding).

**Roxhill Play Area Renovation.** The community got together for a build the play area from November 2-6, 2012. Many volunteers showed up and participated for the event. Under the supervision of Leathers & Associates, the community has successfully pulled it together and built another castle-type play equipment echoing the previous one installed 15 years ago. Many of them expressed their appreciation to Parks for our willingness to collaborate and work with the community to make this happen. And now the community has a brand new playground.



**Camp Long Ropes Challenge Course.** The High Ropes Course installation is complete! Staff training on the course is beginning and a full grand opening will be in spring 2013. This project was initiated by the Camp Long Advisory Council and is funded by both the Department of Neighborhoods Large Matching Fund and the King County Sports Youth Facility Grant.

**Washington Park Playfield.** Field Turf will start the installation of the turf this week. Work at the site has been delayed to allow for both contractors to complete work without risking damage to new concrete work during the installation of heavy material for the field. The field is expected to be complete and open for use at the end of October.