



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

Highlights

Westlake Play Space. The Westlake Park Play Space grand opening will be held on Friday, March 1. The year-round play area will include a soft, rubber-like surfacing and a Geode by Goric. This large, netted spherical structure and a collection of large domes will be surrounded by a fence with bench seating in some areas. The design and elements involved were selected specifically with sightlines and function in mind, as the structures do not obstruct views to the retail spaces and through the park. Geode is designed to be used by children up to 12 years old.

Parks Legacy Plan. Staff have completed a draft of the Parks Legacy Plan that is being reviewed by City Council and Budget Office staff before its public release on April 1. The Plan includes the public survey results, service level evaluation, identification of basic services, and program and service snapshots which tell the Parks and Recreation story. We anticipate that the Board of Park Commissioners will host a series of public meetings in April and May to gather public input.

Rainier Beach hiring workshop. Brian Judd, Karl Fields, JR Salinas and Dennis Balcolm hosted a hiring workshop in the Rainier Beach Community on Tuesday, February 12. More than 50 people signed in for the event, and learned tips and pointers for applying and interviewing for City jobs. Brian and Karl went into detail about the various jobs that will become available at the Rainier Beach Community Center and Pool. The event was a success and will open up opportunities for community members to work in the new facility. The new Rainier Beach Community Center and Pool is scheduled to open in September.

Kinnear Off-Leash Area Grand opening. The new off-leash area at Lower Kinnear Park opened on Sunday, February 24. The 5,400 square foot off-leash area is located at the foot of Queen Anne Hill where W Mercer Place joins Elliott Avenue W. Seattle Parks in-house landscape architects Joe Neiford and Frank Robinson designed the park, which includes a kiosk, natural feeling wooden fencing, wood chip surfacing, logs and rocks, a bench and native plantings on the adjacent hillside. The Seattle Conservation Corps constructed the new OLA. Seattle Parks and Recreation now operates 12 off-leash areas, including three new off-leash areas opened in the past 12 months (Denny Park, Magnolia Manor and Lower Kinnear).

Japanese Garden Season Opening. The Seattle Japanese Garden will open for the season on Friday, March 1. There will be a First Viewing Celebration on Sunday, March 3. The Seattle Times published a very nice [story](#) on the opening in their February 28 edition.

Volunteer Park Conservatory Pay Station. We have begun charging a \$4 fee for adults to enter the Volunteer Park Conservatory to help preserve this 100-year-old jewel of Seattle's Olmsted park system. Following the results of a 2012 study, Seattle Parks and Recreation conducted to identify a more financially stable model for operating the Conservatory, the City adopted the \$4 adult entry fee. Other fees are: \$2 for youth ages 13-17, no fee for children 12 and younger, and \$25 for K-12 school groups (with advance reservations). There is a pay machine at the Conservatory's entry that accepts Visa, MasterCard, \$1 bills and change.

More people visiting pools and beaches. In 2012, Aquatics showed a 3.4% increase in attendance over 2011. More than 1,586,000 million attended aquatic facilities in 2012! Pool attendance records show that almost 1.2 million people visited our nine pools over the past year. That number includes an impressive 273,694 swim lessons taught! Beaches recorded 232,542 visitors; wading pools 102,402; and small craft centers 93,875.

Projects

Community Center Entrance Improvement Projects. We have initiated a program to make sure all the outdoor entry areas at our community centers and pools are welcoming. Central East district has been focusing on landscape improvements around our community centers. We began with Miller Community Center during the second half of January. There has been extensive pruning around the Community Center building as well as the entire parking area and tennis court shrub beds. Thirty yards of shrub debris have been removed, and fifty yards of wood chip mulch has been applied giving the whole area a revitalized feel. Pruning and shrub bed renovations have begun at Yesler and Garfield Community Center.

Jimi Hendrix Park. This project has had one review by the Design Commission, and is looking forward to a second at the beginning of March. The project has almost completed the design development stage. Fundraising is coming along swimmingly with the Friends of Jimi Hendrix/Jimi Hendrix Park Foundation raising more than \$400,000 so far. Major financial donors (\$10,000 or over) are Hard Rock Café (tee-shirt sales!), the Nisqually Indian Tribe, and Fender (guitars). There are many individual donors resulting from a mailing, PayPal donors who have looked at the Hendrix Foundation website, an IndieGogo site (kind of like Kickstarter), a Seattle Foundation family and an Australian raffle! There is also \$100,000 from the Neighborhood Matching Fund and \$40,000 from the King Conservation District. KISW has donated approximately \$600,000 worth of advertising time. Wheeew!

Judkins Park Skatespot. The new skatespot at Judkins Park opened to the public over the President's Day weekend. Hydroseeding and final landscape work is contingent on warmer weather and will be completed in March. An opening event is being planned for late May 2013.

Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands Restoration. We've started the permitting process and are working through new territory with Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and urban farms. We have a meeting with DPD next week to determine how the Seattle Municipal Code should apply to this project. The goal of the project is to establish unique green infrastructure that transforms a former

City of Seattle working nursery into an active organic urban farm and demonstration wetlands restoration site.

McGilvra Place Renovation. After getting an SDOT SIP permit, writing a MOA, and coordinating with a private contractor for site access, we're finally mobilized and starting work. Point 32, Schuchart, and all parties have been cooperative and collaborative. The goal of opening the park to coincide with the building on Earth Day, April 22, is a tough challenge -- but it's the goal in our sight. This partnership, with Point 32 and The Bullitt Foundation, has been a good one. The park is currently in line to achieve Living Building Challenge status. Point 32 has assigned Joe David from their office to steward the LBC portion and W.S. Contractors is on board with the contractor's requirements for LBC. Demolition has begun and we are storing concrete sidewalk pieces for reuse. Most of the submittals are complete and compliant with Living Building Challenge criteria.

Washington Park Arboretum - New Zealand Focal Forest. This project is under construction by W.S. Contractors. The majority of infrastructure has been installed and work will slow down until planting occurs in June-July of 2013. This project includes Phase III of the Washington Park Arboretum, Lake Washington Boulevard. The lighting project and additional planting in the Gateway to Chile are complete.

Washington Park Arboretum –Multi-use Trail. This project provides a multi-use trail from the intersection of E Madison Street through the Arboretum to the intersection of Foster Island Road and Lake Washington Boulevard. The city will receive \$7.8 million dollars from WSDOT once legislation is passed. An RFP for design of the project will start advertising on February 22, 2013. Construction is anticipated to commence in August of 2014.

Washington Park Arboretum –Foster Island Underpass. This project provides a pedestrian trail under the future SR 520 bridge across Foster Island with planting to continue the vegetative design idiom across the right of way. The consultant team has completed final conceptual design. The partners, including WSDOT, Parks, UW and Arboretum Foundation, are negotiating a "compromise solution" that will maintain the arboretum design idiom at a reasonable maintenance and operations cost.

Washington Park Arboretum – Renovation of Overlook Structure. This project includes design for renovation of the historic overlook structure in the Arboretum. Its goal is to restore the structure to its original configuration and to ensure its preservation for future Arboretum visitors. Construction is contingent upon received grants; but, it will, ideally, be implemented as a change order to the New Zealand Forest Project.

Community

Volunteer Events. More than 100 people supported the Green Seattle Partnership volunteer "Mountains to Sound Event" recently by removing weeds and planting the Golden Gardens natural area that is under renovation. The Northeast Crew supported Blanchet High School's Service Day project at Northacres Park. Fifteen students spread 20 yards of chips over the forest renovation area. A successful Friends of Pipers Orchard work party took place last weekend; the volunteers cleared a large quantity of limb and brush trash. The trash is clean green yard waste and will be disposed of appropriately.

Hands-on Skills Fair. Ravenna-Eckstein and Meadowbrook Community Centers, in partnership with Sustainable Northeast Seattle, held the third annual "Hands on Skills Fair" on February 9 at both

locations and at the new Northeast Tool Library. Sustainable Northeast Seattle coordinated the instructors for the day and arranged volunteer support for all three locations. Almost 80 participants chose from a wide range of skill classes such as bike repair, tree pruning, cheese or bread making, and a whole lot more. Participants paid \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door for the event. The day concluded with a potluck dinner and dance. Proceeds from this event will benefit the advisory councils of both community centers.

Grit Academy. The Mercer Community Learning Center lead and Mercer Middle School's Student/Family Advocate will co-teach a class to 30 6th grade Levy cohort students. The Grit Academy will focus on the six elements of Grit: optimism, enthusiasm, self discipline, gratitude, curiosity and social intelligence.

Seattle Conservation Corps Graduates get Employment. Danielle, Sean and Darin have all completed their year with the Conservation Corps and are now employed.

- Before entering the program Danielle had been homeless on and off for five years. She had an excellent attendance record while at the Corps and worked hard to stabilize her life. She was able to move into her own apartment and is now working as an administrative assistant for a local construction company.
- Sean was able to reinstate his driver's license while in the Corps and worked hard at taking the necessary steps toward completing the program. He is now working full time for a recycling company as an account representative.
- Darin was a great asset to his crew and was promoted to crew lead before leaving the Corps. He was able to move into permanent housing and is now working full time as an apprentice for an HVAC company.