

Investment Initiative Background Documents

This document contains supporting information for the Mayor's recommendations for Parks funding.



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1. Fix it First

\$29,015,000 per year

Includes:

- 1.1 Fund Major Maintenance Backlog and Property Management
- 1.2 Community Center Rehabilitation and Development
- 1.3 Saving Our City Forests
- 1.4 Aquarium Major Maintenance
- 1.5 Zoo Major Maintenance

Overview

These initiatives tackle the \$267-million major maintenance backlog, fund the improvement and rehabilitation of community centers, fully fund the Green Seattle Partnership's efforts to save the urban forest, and fund major maintenance at the Aquarium and Zoo.

Together, these five initiatives will have an annual cost of \$29,015,000.



Investment Initiative Background Documents

1.1 Fund Major Maintenance Backlog and Property Management

\$19,965,000 per year

Program category: Fix it First

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Reduce the major maintenance backlog by completing approximately 40 additional park and facility major maintenance projects per year
- Increased ability to remove property encroachments



A deteriorating building at Magnuson Park

This initiative will fund current major maintenance needs identified by Seattle Parks and Recreation. Parks has a major maintenance project backlog that became worse during the recession and the accompanying cuts in City spending. Full funding of this initiative is expected to ensure that no additional backlog will be added. Over time, it should reduce, and perhaps eventually eliminate, the backlog.

The Parks Legacy Plan notes that Parks “does not have the resources to ensure the long-term health of our assets through preventive maintenance, and now can only react to maintenance issues as they arise—a reactionary, emergency-management model.” This investment directly addresses this strategic concern by reducing the major maintenance backlog, developing and investing in an asset-management system, and responding to people’s concerns about park maintenance needs.

Parks’ 2013-2018 Asset Management Plan (AMP) is a six-year plan compiling all major maintenance projects necessary to keep Parks’ assets in safe and operable condition. A major maintenance project is a capital investment that preserves a facility’s ability to provide the services for which it was originally intended.

Every two years, the AMP is reviewed and updated before new projects are added to the list, based on the following six criteria: code requirements; life safety; facility integrity; improvement to operating efficiency; unique factors; and if the project must be done in the next two years.

Examples of Major Maintenance Projects

- Roof replacements
- Electrical repairs
- Turf resurfacing
- Comfort station renovations
- Play area replacement
- Landscape, trail, and forest restoration

The total estimated cost for AMP projects is \$267 million, approximately 9% of the estimated \$3 billion value of our parks and facilities. Projects not prioritized for funding in the next six years will remain on the backlog list and be added to the next six-year plan along with the list of new projects. This project review and prioritization process occurs every two years.

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In addition, this initiative funds additional staff to address the hundreds of property encroachments. It's important to ensure all public parkland—one of our greatest assets—is available for the public to use. But some owners of property adjacent to parks use our public park land to add to their private holdings. Including encroachment removal in this initiative recognizes that preserving our land is as much a priority as is preserving our buildings.



This hot tub and deck encroached 22 feet into publicly-owned park land at Volunteer Park.

To be clear, the problem is not, for example, homeowners erecting fences on their own property to ensure privacy. The problem is that some landowners have converted, to their own use, property clearly within a public park. These encroachments range from landscape work (hedges or fences that effectively “capture” public land) to major improvements (hot tubs, swimming pools, decks, sports courts, and more), all on land owned by the people of Seattle.

Responsibility for encroachments does not lie entirely with private property owners, however. Many park boundaries have not been surveyed, and some that have been do not have visible markers clearly indicating the property line. This initiative also will improve Seattle Parks and Recreation’s ability to accurately identify and mark public lands with a clear demarcation, helping to avoid conflict with property owners.

This initiative will:

- Identify and document park property through ownership and acquisition history.
- Efficiently manage a property records database.
- Survey and visibly mark park boundaries.
- Aggressively eliminate encroachments, requiring both removal and restoration.
- Permit some non-park uses for a limited, fixed time.
- Collect fees that could be applied to additional measures to protect and preserve parkland.

This initiative, recognizing that Parks’ current process for managing its AMP is labor intensive and difficult to update, will also fund an automated asset-management system that will provide the department with:

- The technology to better track and forecast our long-term asset and major maintenance needs, and
- The ability to provide current reports of the status of our asset management projects, and
- Provide a system for the public to give us direct feedback on maintenance needs in park facilities.

1.2 Community Center Rehabilitation and Development

\$3,000,000 per year

Program category: Fix it First

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Replaced or upgraded roofs, HVAC, etc.
- Reconfigured rooms, expanded gyms, environmentally sustainable building components
- Possibly new community center facilities

Seattle Parks and Recreation currently operates 26 community centers. Since 1999, Parks has invested \$74 million in upgrading and building new community centers. Most facilities have not received significant, dedicated funding for major maintenance or substantial upgrades. Community center projects compete with hundreds of other projects for funding and Parks' major maintenance allocation does not allow for needed building renovations to serve growing communities and new recreation needs.

Creating a dedicated fund would allow Parks to replace basic building systems such as roof, HVAC, etc., but also could fund reconfiguring rooms, expanding gyms, enhancing environmentally sustainable building components in order to meet today's and future recreational needs and the keep community centers focal points for the community. If sized appropriately, such a fund could also provide resources to contribute toward the construction of new community center facilities, should such facilities be needed.

1.3 Saving Our City Forests

\$2,850,000

Program category: Fix it First

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Green Seattle Partnership continues its progress toward restoring 2,500 acres of forest by 2025
- Parks' trail program improved by providing for forest and trail maintenance

The goal of the Green Seattle Partnership, a unique public/private collaborative effort to restore and maintain Seattle's urban forests, is to restore 2,500 forested acres by 2025. Parks currently anticipates allocating \$1.9 million in capital funds per year to Green Seattle Partnership projects.

This initiative builds on that existing commitment by expanding Parks' capacity to restore forestland and to provide the ongoing, long-term monitoring and maintenance work required to keep restored areas from being once again overrun by invasive plants. A healthy urban forest contributes significantly to the health of the environment by cleaning air and water, filtering and retaining storm water, and providing the people of Seattle with a respite from the built environment.

Experience over the past several years of urban forest restoration work has shown that restoring forests and keeping trails safe and accessible are most successful when augmented by volunteer organizations, including our established partners the Student Conservation Association and the Goodwill-supported Youth Green Corps.

This initiative will:

- Expand Parks' Natural Area Crew and create a Trail Crew to regularly maintain 120 miles of the park and forest trail system.
- Allow Parks to maintain our urban forest trails and provide access to leadership and youth development opportunities in the forest and in classrooms.



Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Forterra and the Green Seattle Partnership, 29
- Urban Forestry snapshot, 142

1.4 Aquarium Major Maintenance

\$1,200,000 per year

Program category: Fix it First

Anticipated Key Outcome:

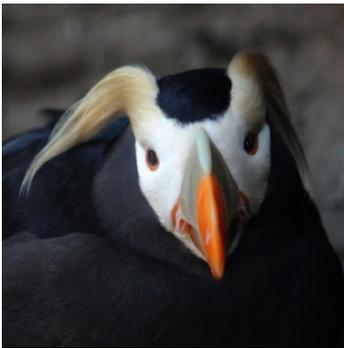
- Up to four Aquarium major maintenance projects completed per year

The Seattle Aquarium's location in the harsh salt-water environment makes major maintenance for the buildings and infrastructure critical. Aquarium major maintenance is often very expensive, and many building elements and systems have reduced life cycles. In addition, the Aquarium has live animals and fish that require protection, and reliable facilities are critical to their survival.

This initiative will:

- Provide major maintenance funding directly for the Seattle Aquarium.

Seattle Parks is responsible for the piers, the building envelope (windows, doors, roof), exterior deck, HVAC, electrical, sewer and water lines. The Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS - the non-profit aquarium operator) is responsible for its exhibits and some interior work. In 2009, SEAS hired the consulting company VFA, Inc. to do a facility condition report. VFA identified \$58 million in total needs.



Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Aquarium overview, 27
- Asset Management Plan, 104-106
- Major maintenance backlog, 16-17

1.5 Zoo Major Maintenance

\$2,000,000 per year

Program category: Fix it First

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Up to eight Zoo major maintenance projects completed per year

Long-term underfunding has led to a multimillion-dollar maintenance backlog at the Woodland Park Zoo.

Maintenance priority problems require \$2 million a year to address, and include:

- Seismic improvements to several buildings.
- Roof replacements, water, irrigation and electrical system repairs (the Zoo is experiencing regular power outages).

This initiative will:

- Provide major maintenance funding directly for the Woodland Park Zoo.

The City owns the zoo grounds and buildings and is committed to their major maintenance by its operating agreement with the Zoo Society, which owns the animals.

Capital projects and major maintenance at the Zoo have been underfunded for a long time. In 2002, there was a recognized \$11 million major maintenance backlog; since 2008, the Zoo has received no major maintenance funds from the City.



Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Zoo overview, 26-27
- Asset Management Plan, 104-106
- Major maintenance backlog, 16-17

2. Maintaining Parks and Facilities

\$4,611,000 per year

Includes:

- 2.1 Increase Preventive Maintenance
- 2.2 Provide Clean, Safe, Welcoming Parks
- 2.3 Activate Urban Center Parks
- 2.4 Make Parks Safer
- 2.5 Improve Dog Off-Leash Areas
- 2.6 Rejuvenate Our P-Patches

Overview

These initiatives fund day-to-day maintenance of parks and facilities, improve safety by adding more park rangers, and enliven urban center parks through programs and activities.

Together, these six initiatives will have an annual cost of \$4,611,000.



2.1 Increase Preventive Maintenance

\$1,440,000 per year

Program category: Maintaining Parks and Facilities

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Long-lasting facilities
- Improved repair response and preventive maintenance
- Increased facility operating hours

Budget cuts have reduced facility preventive maintenance to the point that some Parks and Recreation buildings are run down and uninviting. Parks and facilities are deteriorating at an alarming rate, and there is simply not enough funding for major repairs to reverse the trend.

Deferred maintenance also is increasing maintenance expenses over time. Consider that:

- Community center interiors are scheduled to be repainted only every 14 years—wholly inadequate given the wear and tear they receive.
- Limited capacity to regularly inspect and patch roofs leads to additional maintenance work when leaks damage interiors.
- Current custodial funding does not allow deep cleaning such as high dusting, cleaning kitchen grease traps, cupboards, tile and grout in bathrooms, shower stalls, walls, windows, and blinds.
- Because of the lack of flexibility imposed by low staffing levels, some facility maintenance work has to be performed during operating hours, necessitating facility closures.

This investment initiative adds staff in the skilled trades—carpenters, electricians, plumbers, pool maintenance workers, and maintenance laborers—to form a night maintenance team that can accomplish more work at night when facilities are closed.

This initiative restores past reductions but uses resources more efficiently in a manner that helps keep facilities operating for programs. For example, in 2013 there were four pool closures and five other facility closures (at community centers, the Amy Yee Tennis Center, and an environmental learning center) because of facility maintenance work. The night crew will be able to eliminate or reduce the length of these closures and reduce the disruption to the public closures cause.

Some Services Performed by Facilities Maintenance Staff

- Repair and upgrade electrical, irrigation, and plumbing systems.
- Inspect and tighten nuts and bolts holding play equipment together.
- Inspect and repair roofs

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Facility maintenance snapshot, 135
- Budget impacts and efficiencies for maintenance, 82

2.2 Provide Clean, Safe, Welcoming Parks

\$2,106,000 per year

Program category: Maintaining Parks and Facilities

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Improved parks grounds maintenance, landscape care, and tree work

The scope of Seattle Parks and Recreation’s land and facilities (parks make up 10% of the city’s total land area, and there are well over 30 recreation facilities throughout the city) requires a substantial effort to maintain to the public’s satisfaction. A 2012 telephone survey of residents commissioned by Seattle Parks and Recreation provided some insight into public priorities: Clean and well-maintained public restrooms ranked highest among nine maintenance services (9 out of 10 points), followed by litter collection (8.8), and maintaining the health of Parks’ urban forests (8.5).

But budget reductions over the past several years constrained Parks’ ability to effectively perform these basic tasks, even though the department streamlined operations and became more efficient (pages 20-23; Parks Legacy Plan: June 25, 2013).

This investment initiative will: maintain restrooms at the highest standard possible, ensure that litter is collected and waste is removed in a timely manner, see that both built assets and landscape features receive regular maintenance, maintain lively, inviting landscapes and native gardens, and improve the environment and wildlife habitat by restoring forests and expanding the tree canopy.

The investment initiative will support routine maintenance activities in three ways:

Peak Season Park Maintenance: Increased park maintenance during the June–October peak season will ensure garbage cans aren’t overflowing, litter is picked up, picnic tables are ready to use, and comfort stations are clean and fully supplied.

Tree Maintenance: City budget cuts left only enough resources to maintain a tree once every 50 years—significantly less than the industry standard of once every 14 years. Trees need to be maintained regularly to stay as healthy as possible, which is why this initiative adds a third tree crew to protect the long-term health of park trees.

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Parks Facilities by the Numbers

Parks maintenance workers are responsible for maintaining:

- 465 parks
- 118 comfort stations
- 204 athletic fields
- 144 tennis courts
- 26 community centers
- 10 pools
- 1,225 picnic tables
- 150 children’s play areas
- 2,897 benches
- 100,000 trees



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Special maintenance and small construction projects, and homelessness: The Seattle Conservation Corps does maintenance and small construction projects while providing comprehensive support services and paid work experience to about 100 homeless adults each year. However, revenue does not cover homeless support services or the administrative costs of the program. This investment initiative will provide operating costs for the Conservation Corps, ensuring its ability to continue to complete parks maintenance projects while helping the homeless, providing them with life and job skills, housing, and a path to economic, personal and housing stability.



2.3 Activate Urban Center Parks

\$276,000 per year

Program category: Maintaining Parks and Facilities

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Contribute to a welcoming, safe, and clean downtown
- Effective maintenance and activation strategies that closely align with current and future partners

A healthy and vibrant downtown is essential to both the city's financial sustainability and to the smart-growth goals of a family-friendly, job-dense downtown where people can live, work, play, and raise a family without relying on a car.

Because successful parks are a key characteristic of a healthy city, the department is pursuing an innovative approach to downtown parks by merging programming and maintenance under a single manager beginning in 2014.

This initiative will:

- Provide safe, welcoming parks with ongoing activation

This investment initiative would allow the Parks downtown programming and maintenance unit to evolve into a specialized team, structured and trained to address the needs specific to making downtown parks welcoming and vibrant. Park concierges, who help design programs and provide information and helpful tips at some city parks, are currently seasonal employees and are employed only on good-weather days. This initiative would make them permanent year-round Parks employees and their programming and customer service roles would expand to include maintenance.

Downtown Seattle comprises only about 5% of the city's land area, but

- generates 30% of the City's tax revenues
- provides 41% of jobs
- supports a weekday population of 214,000
- is home to 3,000 children
- has the fastest-growing residential population in the city
- is the center of our tourism industry

This initiative would allow concierges to shift their focus between activation and programming in good weather, and maintenance in bad weather. It would ensure a year-round, reliable, friendly presence in the most problematic downtown parks during the times of day when downtown is busiest. Training and expansion of roles for the crew as a whole would ensure that skills in concierge work and in communicating with homeless people become basic tools for a strong, nimble, and integrated team.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Center City Parks Initiative, 107-108

Investment Initiative Background Documents

2.4 Make Parks Safer

\$485,000 per year

Program category: Maintaining Parks and Facilities

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Safer, more inviting parks
- A larger parks security team, able to respond to more safety problems
- Fewer park users bothered by dogs off leash

Park security was a top-ranked concern of 56% of Legacy Plan survey respondents, with higher rankings coming from people of color, women, families with children, and those with low incomes. This initiative would fund additional park rangers and animal control officers.

Park Rangers provide a dedicated security presence in 10 center city parks, and respond as needed to eight additional parks. The Park Rangers' mission is to reduce negative behaviors and enhance park goers' safety. Rangers enforce park code violations, develop strategies with communities to address public-safety issues in parks, and connect homeless individuals with human service agencies.

This initiative will:

- Fund two additional Park Rangers as well as two Parks-funded Animal Control Officers.

Neighborhoods throughout the city would like Park Rangers to respond to more than just downtown parks and to increase their responsibilities by helping with nuisance violations such as dogs off-leash and alcohol consumption in city parks. Additional Park Rangers are needed to provide these services and to respond to community complaints and concerns about security issues in parks outside the downtown area.

The most frequent complaints Parks receives regard off-leash dogs running free in parks. Dedicated Animal Control officers are needed to respond to off-leash dogs in our parks. Under this initiative, Park Rangers and Animal Control officers would work outside the downtown parks, with special focus on random patrols of parks where there have been complaints of off-leash dogs, or where there is ongoing damage to turf, trails, or natural areas caused by off-leash dogs. Park Rangers and Animal Control officers would cooperate to educate and promote compliance with the leash law. The focus would help to make parks safe and enjoyable for all users. It also would provide a deterrent for other park code violations.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Safety snapshot, 152

2.5 Improve Dog Off-Leash Areas

\$104,000 per year

Program category: Maintaining Parks and Facilities

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- More maintenance and amenities for dog off-leash areas

Dog off-leash areas (OLAs) have become well-used park amenities since they were established in the 1990's. Seattle has 14 OLAs, and there are frequent calls for new ones to be added. OLAs activate parks by providing places for individuals and families to exercise pets off-leash and enjoy a community of other dog owners.

This funding would allow for enhanced maintenance at existing OLAs, and provide funding towards establishing new OLAs. Many OLAs need to be renovated. This initiative would fund renewal of existing OLAs, update aging OLA infrastructure, expand OLA space, increase accessibility, and expand essential services.



Off-leash area at Magnuson Park

2.6 Rejuvenate Our P-Patches

\$200,000 per year

Program category: Maintaining Parks and Facilities

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Enhanced P-Patch support and development

This initiative will allow Parks and the Department of Neighborhoods to enhance P-Patch community gardens throughout the city. Many existing gardens were built on shoestring budgets and need renovation. This initiative would fund the renewal of existing P-Patch gardens, update aging garden infrastructure, expand gardening space, increase accessibility, and expand essential services.

P-Patches have been a vibrant and beloved presence in our neighborhoods for 40 years. The program manages 82 gardens located throughout the City. Each P-Patch boasts a set of volunteers who creatively steward public open space, actively engage their neighborhood, and grow food for those in need.

This initiative fosters community building and recognizes both the importance of P-Patches as community spaces and the support needed to sustain them for everyone, including underserved and underrepresented communities.



Community garden at Westcrest Park

3. Programs for People

\$5,402,000 per year

Includes:

- 3.1 Restore Community Center Operations
- 3.2 Recreation Opportunities for All
- 3.3 Better Programs for Young People—Seattle's Future
- 3.4 Meeting the Needs of People with Disabilities
- 3.5 More Programs for Older Adults
- 3.6 Put the Arts in Parks
- 3.7 Get Moving Fund
- 3.8 Customer Service and Technology

Overview

These initiatives will help the people of Seattle be healthy, active, and engaged. From providing more opportunities for people from underserved communities to expanding and improving programs for the young, those with disabilities, and older adults, these initiatives contribute to our legacy of healthy people and strong communities. These initiatives improve and fund programs, classes, and services for the community, and focus on providing access to recreation for all.

Together, these eight initiatives will have an annual cost of \$5,402,000.



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3.1 Restore Community Center Operations

\$2,681,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Increased public access to recreation facilities through expanded community center public hours and creation of a citywide ARC scholarship fund

This initiative will restore many of the cuts in community center hours and staffing that were made during the recession. It also will increase access to programs by establishing a citywide scholarship program in cooperation with the Associated Recreation Council.

Budget pressures reduced community center funding in 2011 and 2012 by almost \$2.7 million. In response, Seattle Parks and Recreation, working with City Council and Budget Office staff, thoroughly reviewed community center operations and streamlined them through a new, innovative, management structure. Staff cuts were made to achieve budget reduction goals.

The new management structure has clusters of community centers within five geographic zones. Staff in each zone, known as geo teams, work together to support the specific recreation needs of their sector.



The new structure also divided community centers into three tiers of service. This reduced costs by reducing operating hours and staff at lower-tier centers, designated as Tier 2a and 2b centers. Higher-level staff, who previously worked at individual centers, were reduced in number and assigned to geographic zones rather than individual centers. Funding for some staff positions was transferred to Parks non-profit partner the Associated Recreation Council.

In general, both community center advisory councils and staff have seen increased collaboration on programming and staffing within geo teams. Public hours are now determined by community needs within the geo team, rather than by assigning equal public hours to all sites. However, the current low level of staffing has concerned both advisory councils and staff. Additional staff included in this initiative will allow centers to extend outreach to the community and will allow for more consistent staffing at centers.

(Continued)

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Major maintenance backlog, 16-17
- Asset Management Plan, 104-106

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Hours of Operation

Community centers operate for a significant number of nonpublic hours (programming offered outside of public hours, or building rentals) each week—particularly Tier 2a and 2b sites. Table 1 shows the average number of hours a week the centers are open, by tier.

Table 1: Hours of Activity Supervised by Community Center Staff

Tier	Public Hours Weekly Average	Non-Public Hours Weekly Average	Total Average Hours per Week	Base Facility Staffing
Tier 1	69	14	83	4.5 FTE
Tier 2a	46	22	68	3.5 FTE
Tier 2b	28	22	50	2.0 FTE

Sites with less-wealthy advisory councils provide fewer nonpublic hours of service during the week. This has an unintended consequence of allowing less public access to community centers in less wealthy areas of the city.

This investment initiative improves customer service by expanding public hours at most community centers, and opens a typical facility to the public an average of 50 to 65 hours per week—with a base staffing level of 4 FTE. Center staffing will vary depending on neighborhood demand and type of facility, so this isn't a cookie-cutter staffing approach—new staff will be incorporated in the geographic management model, creating flexibility that allows centers to be responsive to the public.

Scholarship Opportunity

Individual community center advisory councils currently allocate scholarships for recreation programs, which creates an issue of access inequity. Some wealthier advisory councils can offer more scholarships than others—leaving out areas where scholarships are needed the most. At present, only licensed childcare programs offer system-wide scholarships.

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This initiative will:

- Ensure community centers are the focal points in our neighborhoods and serve as places where people can connect, foster relationships, build community, and enhance their health and well-being by offering programs, activities, and events to Seattle's changing population.
- Ensure community centers are physically and emotionally safe and welcoming places for

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As part of this investment initiative, the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), a private nonprofit partner of Parks, will create a citywide scholarship system initially estimated to support a \$400,000-plus system-wide scholarship fund.

To support this increased opportunity for community members, the investment initiative adds a 0.75 FTE (full-time equivalent) position to Parks' scholarship office. The scholarship office (currently 1.0 FTE) determines eligibility for all scholarship funding allocated by Parks and ARC.

Financial Sustainability

Existing community center staff members—the equivalent of about 105 full-time employees—are hard-pressed to do their jobs effectively because of the steep cuts in staff and the operating budget. During the recent recession, the City budget reduced Parks' general fund allocation by \$2.68 million and required Parks to cut 33 FTE positions. Users of community centers find the facilities are often unable to meet their recreational needs. Comments received throughout the Legacy process reflected these concerns, and Parks believes the current situation is unsustainable.

This initiative invests \$2.6 million in an estimated 24.75 FTE, including additional custodians, front desk staff, and supervisory staff. This investment is more efficient than the system that existed in 2010, especially considering that it also adds resources to the Scholarship Office, includes general fund support for Belltown Community Center (not included previously), and leverages a new \$400,000-plus scholarship fund through ARC.

3.2 Recreation Opportunities for All

\$465,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Increased access to recreation opportunities for historically underrepresented communities
- Approximately 25 new, responsive programs per year (assuming \$10,000 per program)



This initiative will fund partnerships with organizations outside Seattle Parks and Recreation that represent underserved populations, helping to provide innovative new programs to those who will benefit the most.

Seattle is home to a diverse and unique immigrant community. Parks’

Women of the World swims and the Food and Fitness Program for elders from immigrant communities are examples of the department’s continuing efforts to reach and serve immigrants, refugee populations, and others that have been historically underrepresented.

In addition, the funding will be used to support partners who work with underrepresented communities and to make connections between Parks and the communities they serve.

The fund will start new recreation opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities. Currently no such funding exists. For example, when the idea for women-only swims arose, immigrant groups lacked money for pool rentals. Parks, on the other hand, is unable to waive fees for some groups and not others. An enhancement fund directed to partnerships with underserved communities could have resolved this issue—and could help Parks be more relevant to the entire community in the future.

This initiative will:

- Ensure that programs are accessible, welcoming, and equitably utilized by communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations
- Develop partnerships that include race and social justice as fundamental to their operations and business practices.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Race and Social Justice overview, 3

3.3 Better Programs for Young People – Seattle's Future

\$551,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Implementation of the Youth Quality Program Assessment (YQPA), a research-validated and field-tested program evaluation method
- At least 30 programs evaluated annually using this method, with the lessons learned implemented to improve program quality



Parks and Recreation provides a wide variety of academic, enrichment, and recreation programs for teenagers at Teen Life Centers, community learning centers, and community centers. This investment initiative will help Parks improve those programs and deliver them to more young people, who represent the future of the city.

This initiative's funding will allow Parks to implement research-validated approaches to program improvement developed by the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. In particular, the funding will increase the

department's capacity to develop quality programs aimed at building twenty-first century skills in our teen participants, including youth from underserved and underrepresented communities.

The Weikart Center tools are being used in education, human services agencies, and community-based settings in more than 20 states. These techniques will allow Parks' professional staff to develop programs that enhance teens' opportunities to develop skills such as effective planning, decision-making, and maintaining a positive view of the future, which contribute to success in life. In addition, this initiative will ensure that teen program staff members have the training, time, and resources to ensure that programs are meeting their intended goals.

This initiative will:

- Engage young people by providing opportunities that help them build their identity, connect with their passion, and acquire skills that lead to a healthy and productive adulthood.
- Teach teens and young adults job and life skills.
- Connect teens and young adults to nature by providing outdoor and environmental opportunities.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Teen Programs snapshot, 129-131

3.4 Meeting the Needs of People with Disabilities

\$170,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- An additional 60 youths served through our summer overnight camp program
- Increase access to recreation programs to meet the special needs of participants

A major goal of the Special Populations Program is to provide the same recreation opportunities primarily for people with cognitive disabilities as are provided for those without. It's a unique service that aligns professional recreation staff with people with special needs.

Funding provided with this initiative will initially expand the youth summer camp program and fund ongoing program needs, which could include:

- More field trips and classes
- Sign-language interpreter at a swim lesson for a deaf child.
- Wheelchair lacrosse equipment.
- Wheelchair lifts for swimming pools.
- Other needs that arise that are not covered in the current budget.

This initiative will:

- Provide welcoming, accessible, and affordable recreation and social programs and activities to enrich the lives of people with disabilities and their families and to welcome them as part of the community.

Additional needs may be identified as circumstances change and program standards evolve.



Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Special Populations Program snapshot, 120-121

3.5 More Programs for Older Adults

\$270,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Expanded programs for adults over age 50, such as Sound Steps, with a specific focus on community members diagnosed with early stage dementia
- Increased participation in food and fitness programs with the goal of increasing participation in other Parks programs

Hiking in a nearby forest, visiting a museum or a renowned garden: trips like these are a vital component of Parks' Lifelong Recreation Program. Like the many other trips offered to older adults, each of these trips requires reliable transportation, which Parks provides. This initiative will fund additional, reliable transportation.

Residents age 50 and above have a variety of programmatic needs and desires. While those needs may change over time, this investment initiative is focused on getting those who are 50-plus out and about in the community and region.

The need for such programs is increasing as the region's population gets older. In 2010, 11% of Seattle's population was over age 65, and that proportion is expected to continue to grow. This initiative recognizes that trend and seeks to provide more recreational opportunities for residents age 50 and older. As time and interests change, other program areas may be identified.



This initiative will:

- Expand our Healthy Parks programs for 50-plus community members.
- Extend the immigrant and refugee Food and Fitness Program to additional ethnic groups and engage the elders in our other recreation programs.
- Explore additional programming needs identified by the community, such as programs designed for people with dementia.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Lifelong Recreation Program snapshot, 118-119

3.6 Put the Arts in Parks

\$340,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Enlivened and activated neighborhood parks through arts and cultural activities in underserved and economically constrained neighborhoods.

Activating a park builds community ownership, increases use, and creates opportunities for artists, musicians, and other performers. Many parks are located in neighborhoods where residents are focused on meeting basic needs, and don't have the resources or time to initiate activities that maximize a park's community benefits—the things that make up what Parks calls "park activation."

This initiative would allow Parks and the Office of Arts and Culture (Arts) to work together to develop a program that will activate parks by funding arts and cultural activities. The partnership will direct money to community-based organizations that offer cultural or creative activities, events, and installations in underserved areas of the city—areas where activation is needed the most. Parks will work to develop partnerships that include race and social justice as fundamental to their operations and business practices.



Artists at work in a downtown park

This initiative will:

- Allow Parks and the Office of Arts and Culture (Arts) to develop a program to activate parks by funding arts and cultural activities.

Part of the funding will be devoted to helping underserved community groups and artists apply for and receive funds. An annual portion will be dedicated to arts to fund community activities in underserved communities, and Parks will dedicate a portion to support initiatives in neighborhood parks. This funding will help programs be accessible, welcoming and equitably utilized by communities of color, immigrants, and refugees.

Projects would include, but not be limited to: community celebrations, art installations, and arts classes and workshops.

3.7 Get Moving Fund

\$500,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Improved health through increased physical activity
- New or expanded partnerships with community groups
- Increase access to athletic opportunities.

Most of us need more exercise.

In King County, 56% of adults and 21% of middle- and high-school students are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity rates in America have tripled during the last three decades. Today, almost one in every three children is overweight or obese.

Everyone in our community has a role to play in reducing obesity, including parents, elected officials, schools, health-care professionals, faith- and community-based organizations, and private sector companies.

This initiative will:

- Create a full-time Recreation Program Coordinator position to manage the fund and collaborate with outside organizations to offer events and programs to get Seattle moving.

This initiative would allow Parks to work with outside organizations and provide innovative “Get Moving” opportunities to targeted communities. Parks often has the opportunity to partner with outside organizations to reach a new target population or to better serve a community. However, the success of these partnerships is often constrained because Parks does not have resources to leverage community and outside organization involvement. This initiative would provide the necessary funding. As our city continues to evolve and diversify, these resources will help Parks stay relevant to the entire community.

This proposal creates a full-time Recreation Program Coordinator position to manage the fund and collaborate with outside organizations to offer events and programs to get Seattle moving.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- The Benefits of a Healthy Park System, xiii

3.8 Customer Service and Technology

\$425,000 per year

Program category: Programs for People

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Increased capacity to respond to customer demand for electronic access to park and recreation information
- Updated online registration system that supports mobile access

This investment will upgrade Parks' outdated customer-service technology, improving user experience.

For the past six years recreation facilities have used CLASS business software for front-counter services. This software performs program registration, facility booking, point-of-sale, cash and financial management, and payment processing.

However, significant service gaps exist because the system lacks robust functionality, and the department lacks the resources to implement changes. CLASS has recommended a system upgrade that would employ the latest cloud computing and make it possible to use mobile devices to connect with recreation programs and facilities.

This initiative would fund a review of business processes, implement business process changes, and upgrade equipment compatible with the new registration technology. This technology may allow users to view rental availabilities at community centers, pools, athletic fields, picnic shelters and other parks venues in real time. Business process changes would streamline the program registration process for the public.

This initiative will:

- Improve customer service, increase efficiency, and maximize our capabilities by implementing strategies that keep us current with the best technology for managing our parks and recreation system.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Neighborhood Parks Maintenance Overview, 88
- Partnerships - Seattle Parks Foundation, 24

4. Building for the Future

\$13,824,000 per year

Includes:

- 4.1 Park Land Acquisition and Leverage Fund
- 4.2 Major Projects Challenge Fund
- 4.3 Maintain and Activate Seattle's New Waterfront Park
- 4.4 Develop 14 New Parks at Land-Banked Sites - 2016-2018
- 4.5 Maintain 14 New Parks at Land-Banked Sites
- 4.6 Develop Smith Cove Park - debt service for 12 years
- 4.7 Maintain Smith Cove Park
- 4.8 Community Response Fund
- 4.9 Activating and Connecting to Greenways
- 4.10 Performance Monitoring & Strategic Management
- 4.11 Urban Parks Partnerships

Overview

These initiatives prepare for the future by developing new parks, acquiring new park land, or building new assets within parks. They include maintenance funding to keep the new parks clean, safe, and welcoming long after they're constructed. They also contain funding to help Parks be more responsive to community project proposals, activate connections between greenways and parks, and explore a new management and partnership model for downtown parks.

This bundle of 11 initiatives has an annual cost of \$13,824,000 per year.



4.1 Park Land Acquisition and Leverage Fund

\$2,000,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Up to \$4 million of new park land purchased each year, through the use of this fund to leverage other sources

This investment will provide ongoing funding for property acquisition. The city is growing—and so is the need for additional land for new parks. According to Parks' 2011 Development Plan, 32 Urban Villages and single-family neighborhoods still need additional park space.

There are frequent opportunities to acquire property adjacent to existing parks and greenbelts. Funding from this initiative will allow Parks to leverage other sources of funds that require a local match—such as King County Conservation Futures (which have provided an average of \$2.5 million per year for the past 20 years).

Without matching funds, Seattle will be unable to take advantage of King County Conservation Futures funding and other state and federal sources—and will leave tens of millions of dollars on the table in years to come. Conservation Futures is a one-to-one matching grant program.

Over more than two decades the City has leveraged more than \$50 million of these funds because it had the resources necessary to match the futures funds at an average of about \$2.5 million per year. This initiative will ensure our continuing ability to double our investment in this way.

This initiative will:

- Continue to expand Parks' land holdings.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Property and Acquisition Services overview, 103

4.2 Major Projects Challenge Fund

\$4,000,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Renovated, expanded, or upgraded parks and facilities, funded through a combination of City and community-generated funds

This investment will provide matching funds to respond to significant community-generated projects. Often, the City is asked to provide financial support to capital development projects that focus on parks and recreation, but for which no funding is available.

This Challenge Fund will provide City funding to leverage funding generated by others for renovation of Parks' facilities where other City funding is unavailable. Examples may include: improvements to the Amy Yee Tennis Center, enhancements to the Washington Park Arboretum, and the expansion of the Green Lake Rowing and Sailing Center.

An annual competitive application process will prioritize projects with a parks-and-recreation mission, public access, leveraged non-City funds, and other pertinent criteria. A portion of funding will be allocated to assist diverse communities and organizations that lack resources for a match.

This initiative will:

- Provide funding to leverage community donations for park and facility improvement projects.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Planning and Development Division overview, 101-106

4.3 Maintain and Activate Seattle’s New Waterfront Park

\$3,510,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Maintenance of new public space on the Central Waterfront
- Activation of new Central Waterfront public space

The Central Waterfront project is one of the most significant civic projects in Seattle’s recent history. Waterfront Seattle is a partnership between the City of Seattle and the entire community to create a dynamic public waterfront, a vision made possible by the demolition of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall.

This initiative will:

- Contribute to a welcoming, safe, and clean downtown.
- Implement effective maintenance strategies that are closely aligned with the many current and future partners.
- Integrate the new Central Waterfront Public spaces with the existing Center City parks.

The considerable public and private investment and the anticipated frequent use of the Central Waterfront’s public spaces will require a higher standard of programming, operations and maintenance compared with most other public spaces in the City. Many of the waterfront’s public spaces will need extensive programming to increase year-round activation. While much of the non-road Central Waterfront public space will be owned by the Seattle Department of Transportation, much of this space will feel and operate like a park.

The funding in this investment initiative will provide a baseline level of maintenance service for the new Central Waterfront. The amount is based on Parks’ experience with the cost of maintenance in existing downtown parks. It would also provide funding to activate the new Central

Waterfront park areas with festivals, events, artwork, classes, musicians, etc. The activation amount is based on Parks’ experience with the cost of programs in existing downtown parks

Maintenance funding for the Central Waterfront will not be needed until 2019, because the new park space will not be built until then (after the viaduct has been removed).

Use of this initiative’s funds from 2016-2018: Maintenance and activation funding for the Central Waterfront will not be needed until 2019, because the new park space will not be built until after the viaduct is removed in 2016. **This initiative’s funding from 2016–2018 has been redirected to develop land-banked sites (Initiative 4.4).**

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Central Waterfront overview, 29

4.4 Develop 14 New Parks at Land-Banked Sites - 2016-2018

\$3,510,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- 14 new parks developed throughout the city

Yes – 14 new parks!

Fourteen neighborhood park sites acquired through the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy are land-banked—held in their current, undeveloped condition. These land-banked sites are located throughout the city, many in dense neighborhoods also experiencing rapid population growth. These sites need to be developed to become true assets to their neighborhoods, and to keep faith with the voters who supported their acquisition as parkland. This initiative would provide funds to develop the 14 new parks for which land has been acquired, and Initiative 4.6 will maintain them.

Park development in the land-banked sites will follow a normal planning and design process, which will include opportunities for the community to participate in design development.

Maintenance and activation funding for the Central Waterfront will not be needed until 2019, because the new park space will not be built until after the viaduct is removed in 2016. Funding allocated to the Central Waterfront (Initiative 4.3) from 2019 and beyond will be used to develop the 14 land-banked sites from 2016-2018.

4.5 Maintain 14 New Parks at Land-Banked Sites

\$1,400,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- 14 new parks maintained

The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy approved by Seattle voters included funds to acquire new parks. However, the levy did not include money to develop the newly purchased properties into parks, or to maintain them.

Fourteen neighborhood park sites have been acquired with 2008 Levy funds, but are land-banked—held in their current condition. The land-banked sites are located throughout the city, many in dense neighborhoods also

experiencing rapid population growth. These sites need to be developed to become true assets to their neighborhoods, and to keep faith with the voters who supported their acquisition as parkland.

This initiative will:

- Fund maintenance of new parks serving the people of Seattle.

This investment initiative provides funding for *operations and maintenance* of the new parks after they have been developed. The funding to *develop* these parks, to transform them into neighborhood gems, is provided in Initiative 4.4.

Use of Initiative 4.4 funds from 2016-2018: Initiative 4.4 will provide \$3.5 million per year to develop the land-banked sites from 2016-2018. Over this period, these funds will total \$10.5 million, providing \$750,000 for development of each of the 14 land-banked properties. Ongoing maintenance of the new parks will be provided by this initiative.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Maintenance overview, 81
- Planning and Development overview, 101-106

4.6 Develop Smith Cove Park - debt service for 12 years

\$697,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Develop a new waterfront park

Acquiring the property at Smith Cove has been a City priority dating to the 1990's and the Shoreline Park Improvement Program. The public now owns the land needed to make this waterfront park a reality.

In 2003, The City purchased 5.6 acres from the Navy and developed it into playfields. More recently, as a result of a King County Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) project sited on Port property adjacent to Smith Cove, the Port was willing to sell adjacent waterfront property. With both the Magnolia and Queen Anne communities strongly advocating purchasing the land, the County and City agreed to jointly acquire the Port's West Yard property. This acquisition provides a unique opportunity to develop a new waterfront park with sensational views to downtown and Mt. Rainier. The park's construction would be funded by a 12-year loan, and Initiative 4.7 funds maintenance of the new park.

These development funds are not based on an estimate of the total cost of park construction based on a developed design. Rather, it is a level of funding that represents the City's contribution to park development. The funding is expected to provide for improvements to sports field drainage and irrigation, some amount of shoreline work, infrastructure, and very basic park development.

4.7 Maintain Smith Cove Park

\$200,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcome:

- Maintain a new waterfront park

This initiative will fund maintenance of Smith Cove Park after development. The maintenance funding is an estimate based on maintenance requirements of similarly sized parks.



The view from Smith Cove Park

4.8 Community Response Fund

\$400,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Increased ability to respond to community-initiated proposals for park system improvements
- 10 to 30 project proposals reviewed per year
- Increased ability to seek opportunities to leverage grant funding
- Around 10 projects completed per year

Seattle Parks and Recreation regularly receives community-initiated proposals for improvements to the park system. This initiative would provide funding to respond to community-initiated proposals for park improvements, many of which are donations.

These proposals may include, for example:

- Donations of art.
- Enhancement of play areas (such as the Denny Park play area).
- Grants to renovate facilities (such as the Brighton Playfield basketball courts).

Typically, community-initiated proposals are funded work program and general fund support is not available to pay for the staff time necessary to work with community groups to develop, review, and implement their proposals. Most staff in Parks' Planning and Development Division, who would be the natural fit to work on community-initiated projects, are assigned to and funded by existing capital projects; there is no funding for staff to work on new projects that come through the door. This means Parks must ask community groups to raise funds to cover Parks' staffing or to rely on other existing capital projects, on top of the fundraising the group already completed to pay for the project itself. This untenable situation is frustrating to community members who often have secured outside funding to support projects and doesn't represent how Parks wants to interact with the people of Seattle.

This initiative will:

- Respond to community-based initiatives by providing ongoing funding for park and recreation planning and development support.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Budget Impacts and Efficiencies in Planning and Development, 104

4.9 Activating and Connecting to Greenways

\$321,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Connected and activated links from greenways to parks
- More accessible connections between parks for non-motorized transportation

A growing trend among cities and neighborhoods is to develop and activate neighborhood greenways —residential streets that are dedicated connectors for pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized travel.

This initiative will allow Parks to work with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to activate and enhance connection points from greenways to parks, with parks-oriented expertise.

An effective example of this initiative’s potential can be seen in a greenway project currently planned for Beacon Hill. SDOT plans to extend a greenway across Spokane Street directly into Jefferson Park, which would allow enhancements to this park entrance, such as an information kiosk, additional landscaping, bike racks, and activation events throughout the year.

This initiative will:

- Activate connections between and parks.

More broadly, Parks and Transportation foresee cooperating in these ways:

- **Events and activities:** Parks staff would work with neighborhood and advocacy groups, businesses, SDOT, and others to develop fun and engaging events.
- **Target areas:** Parks staff would work with SDOT, other City departments, and other stakeholders to select greenways and safe walkways to link with parks.
- **Partnerships:** Parks staff would form partnerships with neighborhood and community groups, neighborhood businesses, City departments, and other stakeholders to gather ideas, build consensus, leverage funding, and plan events.
- **Capital investments:** Improvements to greenway entrances to parks, and creating walking loops in existing larger parks or other appropriate locations.
- **Burke-Gilman Trail:** Evaluate and set best practice standards for safety and to ensure safe, cooperative use for cyclists and pedestrians.

Related information in the Parks Legacy Plan:

- Greenway maintenance overview, 93

4.10 Performance Monitoring & Strategic Management

\$886,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Performance measuring
- Monitoring
- Reporting

In its final Committee Report, the Parks Legacy Citizens' Advisory Committee recognized the need for Parks to "ensure it is accountable to the public, dynamic, and able to adapt to new conditions". Parks does not have a system of performance measurement, does not routinely assess the local and national trends in recreation needs and services, and isn't able to regularly check in with its customers.

This initiative recognizes that, if the entire package were approved by the voters, many of the included investment initiatives would fund additional staff for increased hours at community centers, providing additional day-to-day maintenance of parks and facilities, and leading new, ballot-measure-funded programs for seniors, teens, and the disabled. This increase in staff and in cash flow calls for increases in human resources, computing support, and financial management staff. In addition, approval of a Park District would result in some accounting and management costs for other city departments, requiring additional financial support. At \$886,000, this initiative equals 1.6% of the proposed \$54.3 million package.

The accountability and implementation functions included in this initiative would establish high-performance teams to ensure Parks delivers more effectively on its mission. Specifically:

Performance measuring, monitoring, and reporting

- Set measurable and aspirational benchmarks
- Regular reporting on benchmarks and efforts to implement ballot measure
- Program audits
- Periodic public surveys

Strategic planning

- Critical assessment of performance measurements

Strategic management

- Provide support to other city departments for managing the business of the Park District.

4.11 Urban Parks Partnerships

\$410,000 per year

Program category: Building for the Future

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Expand the concierge program and provide research and seed money for a new management/partnership model for downtown parks.

This proposal would add funding to enhance downtown parks operation and provide the groundwork for a potential new management/partnership model for downtown parks. Parks are just one aspect of healthy downtown but often seem to be in the center of a wide range of social, behavioral, and public safety issues. The activities that go on in parks, both good and bad, impact and are impacted by the surrounding areas. Our current attention to downtown parks is a mix of:

- Activation through concerts, buskers, small festivals, etc.,
- Eyes on the park through our park concierge services,
- Safety through our park rangers, and
- Involvement through our community partnerships.

Additional funding would allow us to strengthen the activation and eyes on the park programs by providing additional activities and expanding the role of the concierges.

This funding would also allow us to test some innovative solutions to downtown parks. A big emphasis with this funding would be to move towards a new management/partnership model for downtown parks that could become a model for managing downtown in general.

A portion of the funds in the first several years would be used to actively explore the concept of a conservancy operations model. Parks conservancies have been used successfully in many other cities. There are particular challenges in Seattle given the size and distribution of our downtown parks and the diversity of the neighborhoods in which they lie. After an assessment and feasibility study has been completed this funding may be used as seed money to establish a park conservancy if that is an appropriate step.

5. Transition year funding payback

\$1,448,000 per year

Anticipated Key Outcomes:

- Provide ramp-up costs for the initial year of the Park District
- Planning and criteria/process development for some initiatives
- Partial year funding for some initiatives

New tax districts are required by state law to have their boundaries established by August 1 of the year preceding the first year of tax collection. Because the primary election does not occur until August 5, 2014, after the state deadline, the Park District will not collect taxes until 2016.

In order to begin Park District planning and some projects in 2015, the City will loan the District \$10 million for ramp-up year costs. The loan will be paid back from Park District revenue over 8 years, beginning in 2016, at \$1,448,000 per year.