



INTRODUCTION





INTRODUCTION

The Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas Plan is the result of a collaborative effort between community members, staff, agency representatives and elected officials with the goal of creating a unified community vision for the future of Renton's parks, recreation resources and natural areas.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

Initiated in September 2010, the Plan:

- Presents a long-term vision and goals for the City and community for the next 20 years;
- Describes current and future needs, interests and community preferences for parks, recreation facilities and programs and natural resources;
- Identifies system-based policies, implementation strategies and an investment program to enhance and sustain parks, recreation and natural areas as critical elements of a livable community;
- Provides a framework to guide the City in setting priorities, making decisions and funding improvements and operations for Renton's parks, recreation facilities and natural areas; and
- Responds to the needs of the community as well as the requirements of the State of Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for grant funding eligibility. The plan will maintain this eligibility for six years from the date of adoption.



RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANNING EFFORTS

This document is structured to align with three levels of planning: the city-wide system, the community planning areas and individual park sites. This Plan reinforces the policies presented in the Renton Comprehensive Plan and provides specific guidance for individual Community Plans. While the City's Comprehensive Plan presents overarching guidance and direction for city-wide planning including environmental protection and land use, the Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas Plan provides specific strategies and actions to enhance, program and maintain City parks, recreation facilities and natural areas. In turn, these system-wide actions and implementation strategies will guide the individual community planning efforts. Each Community Plan will create a finer level of detail about the specific needs, priorities and character of each of the ten individual community planning areas. The City has other system and site specific plans in place and in progress. System-wide plans with a strong tie to the parks system include the Trails and Bicycle Master Plan, the Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan, the Arts and Culture Master Plan and the Museum Master Plan. Overall, this document provides similar system-level guidance as these plans.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas Plan was developed through the active participation of residents, interest groups, park users, City staff and agency representatives who provided feedback through a variety of meetings, workshops, surveys, questionnaires and an interactive online mapping exercise. These diverse outreach activities were designed to collect feedback from a variety of people,



including different cultural groups, ages and interests. Over 1,500 people participated in the development of this plan.

In addition to the many public involvement activities, several key groups met regularly during the planning process to provide direction and coordination with other City policies and goals.

These committees and commissions included:

- A 16-member Steering Committee, a citizen group consisting of demographically-diverse members representing a range of interests and backgrounds;
- An 18-member Interdepartmental Team, promoting a high degree of coordination among City departments;
- The 7-member Parks Commission, overseeing park and recreation facility operations;
- The 9-member Planning Commission, responsible for the oversight of land use policies and regulations;
- The Community Services Department staff, representing the front lines of implementing recreation programs and services; and
- The council committee, Committee of the Whole, meeting to provide additional and in-depth discussion.



The resulting plan reflects the many different priorities and interests of the Renton community. It also provides the City with the flexibility to respond to changing community demographics and needs.