

5. RECOMMENDATIONS





RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting community needs for parks, recreation facilities, natural areas and programs will require a strategic approach to park system investment. This chapter presents both system-wide recommendations for the entire City, as well as specific projects and park improvements for each community planning area.

SYSTEM-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

The system-wide recommendations respond directly to the goals presented in Chapter 1. At the system-wide scale, there are seven overarching recommendations.

PROVIDE NEARBY PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES, PROGRAMMING AND NATURAL AREAS

According to the needs assessment, many areas are not served by existing parks, recreation facilities and natural areas. Some neighborhoods lack parks altogether, while barriers such as busy streets limit safe access to other park sites. System-wide recommendations for addressing parks needs include the following:

- *Implement a ½-mile service area to developed parks:* The City should continue to provide developed parks and natural areas within a ½-mile service distance. Removing barriers to existing parks and acquiring and/or developing new parks in underserved neighborhoods will increase access to parks and natural areas.



- *Implement a ¼-mile service area to developed parks in higher density areas:* In areas zoned high density residential, the service distance to developed parks and natural areas should be decreased and new facilities should be added to serve the population within one-quarter mile. Currently, most high density residential areas are underserved by local parks within a ¼-mile service area.
- *Maintain a developed park land level of service of 5.07 acres per 1,000 residents:* To meet existing and future needs, the City should continue to provide adequate developed parks to residents (particularly neighborhood and community parks). Based on the existing park acreage, the future population and the number of acres needed to provide parks within a desired service area, maintaining this standard will meet community needs when combined with additional quality, access and distribution criteria.
- *Develop new parks and improve existing parks according to updated design guidelines:* In order to fully address park needs, all parks should meet updated design guidelines, including the minimum size guideline and recommended features at each park.

INCREASE PARK CAPACITY AND USE

A few parks receive the majority of use in Renton, such as Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park and Liberty Park, which provide water access and sports fields respectively. Specific recommendations to



increase the potential capacity and use of frequently-used parks include the following:

- *Reinvest in Renton’s community assets:* Redevelop recreational facilities and supporting infrastructure at popular existing sites to accommodate a greater number of users. This may be accomplished by expanding facilities (such as the Henry Moses Aquatic Center) to larger, more flexible facilities that can fulfill unmet demand.
- *Increase awareness of Renton’s parks, recreation programs and natural areas:* Communicate the range of recreation opportunities in Renton. Use high traffic sites such as Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park and the Cedar River Trail to inform users about other park sites and recreation programs. Create a comprehensive signage and wayfinding system in all new and existing parks and natural areas. Signs should be both informative (e.g., directional signage) and interpretive (e.g., describing history, culture and the environment), with a consistent design style.
- *Incorporate unique features that contribute to community identity:* Recognize elements of Renton that are important to residents such as water access and salmon. Elements that proudly represent Renton’s character and community values can be carried forward into the park system through interpretive displays, public art and integration into play structures and environments.

IMPROVE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL AREAS

Enhanced management is needed in natural areas, balancing public use with protection and conservation. Through individual management plans, the City can determine long- and short-term goals and priorities for natural areas. System-wide recommendations include the following:

- *Conduct natural area inventories:* The City should conduct natural area inventories to inform management decisions for these areas. Inventories should specify site characteristics and identify threats to sensitive areas, as well as impacts from and suitability for public use.
- *Develop natural area management plans:* Following development of inventories, the City should conduct individual management plans for each natural area. Management plans should help establish goals, measurable objectives and costs associated with overall site management.



IMPROVE ACCESS TO SPORTS FIELDS

The sports field needs assessment revealed a significant demand and need for additional and improved sports fields. System-wide recommendations include the following:

- *Revise sports field level of service standard:* The sports field level of service for baseball/softball fields (1/6,663) and soccer fields (1/10,779) is the minimum service level that is required to meet community needs. To meet this need, the community needs access to City fields and Renton School District fields.
- *Collaborate on sport field scheduling and maintenance:* Develop a partnership model with the Renton School District that equalizes the quality of surfaces and maintenance efforts to a standard based on the intended level of play.
- *New and improved fields at existing locations:* Organized sports benefit from concentrations of fields and Renton residents indicated a preference for improving existing, distributed fields. Renton should combine these ideas and look to improve local sport fields in collaboration with the





school district, targeting sites where there is potential for a concentration of fields (Ron Regis, the NARCO property and potential new parks) augmenting school facilities.

- *Establish sports field use standards.* Establish standards for the amount of game and practice time each type of field can support, as well as standards for field maintenance. Because there is high demand for field use and limited supply, Renton should adopt standards to ensure that fields are not overused and are available for reservable practices and games.

INCREASE RECREATIONAL VARIETY

A variety of recreation facilities are needed. Specific recommendations at the system-wide level include:

- *Introduce variety in the opportunities for children's play:* Provide new playgrounds in underserved areas and integrate nature play areas in parks and natural areas where possible. Consider other specialized play spaces, such as thematic playgrounds and barrier-free play areas.
- *Provide more facilities to support community events and family activities:* Provide spaces and reservable facilities (e.g., picnic shelters) in underserved areas of the City. Existing smaller and underused spaces can be redesigned to include amenities for events and picnics.
- *Develop new skate park facilities:* Provide additional skate facilities in underserved areas.
- *Design and build off-leash dog facilities:* Develop new off-leash dog areas in new or existing park sites.
- *Provide opportunities for gardening:* Provide community gardens in areas near high density residential

development. Garden sites can potentially be located at existing neighborhood parks, community parks and schools or at small stand-alone locations.

- *Increase opportunities for swimming and water play:* Expand the Henry Moses Aquatic Center to create increased capacity for programming and open swim/water play. Add interactive fountains or spray parks to larger sites to provide closer-to-home opportunities for water play.
- *Improve water access:* Prioritize waterfront property for acquisition due to the rarity and multiple values it provides the system. Continue partnerships that offer opportunities for rowing, sailing, kayaking and canoeing. Provide enhanced boating storage and support facilities. Also seek partnerships with established groups or organizations for increased programming opportunities.

CONNECT THE PARK AND NATURAL AREA SYSTEM

Trail related activities are the most popular and needed amenity in Renton. Securing the corridors that link parks and connect neighborhoods and community destinations are critical to providing non-motorized transportation options and natural system benefits. The City of Renton recently adopted the *Trails and Bicycle Master Plan* in May 2009. The plan reflects the desire to create an interconnected pedestrian, water and non-motorized transportation network to accommodate recreation and commuter uses. Based on the *Trails and Bicycle Master Plan*, as well as community input generated for the Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas Plan, system-wide recommendations include the following:

- *Implement trails plan priorities:* Continue to implement priorities identified in the City's Trails and Bicycle Master Plan (trail map included in Appendix E).

The presence of a greenbelt in a Boulder Colorado neighborhood was found to add approximately \$500,000 in property tax revenue annually.

- American Planning Association (2004)





- *Increase system-wide connectivity:* Increase connectivity between downtown and the river valley and surrounding neighborhoods.
- *Remove barriers:* Address barriers facing bicycle and pedestrian travel, such as disconnected streets and limited crossing points due to major roadways and highways.

BUILD PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH PROGRAMMING

The City of Renton has successfully collaborated with other partners to enhance recreation services and programming. These relationships can be strengthened and new partnerships can be developed to extend recreational opportunities. System-wide recommendations include:



- *Build and strengthen partnerships:* Collaborative partnerships can help sustain existing facilities.
- *Further develop partnership with the Renton School District:* Increase use of school facilities through the development of a strong interlocal agreement with the Renton School District. Many Renton neighborhoods rely on use of local schools for recreation and play.
- *Focus recreational programming:* Evaluate existing and future recreation program offerings against the outcomes and benefits.
- *Base programming decisions on recreation data:* The City should rely on data collected from recreation program registration to help evaluate future offerings and scheduling.



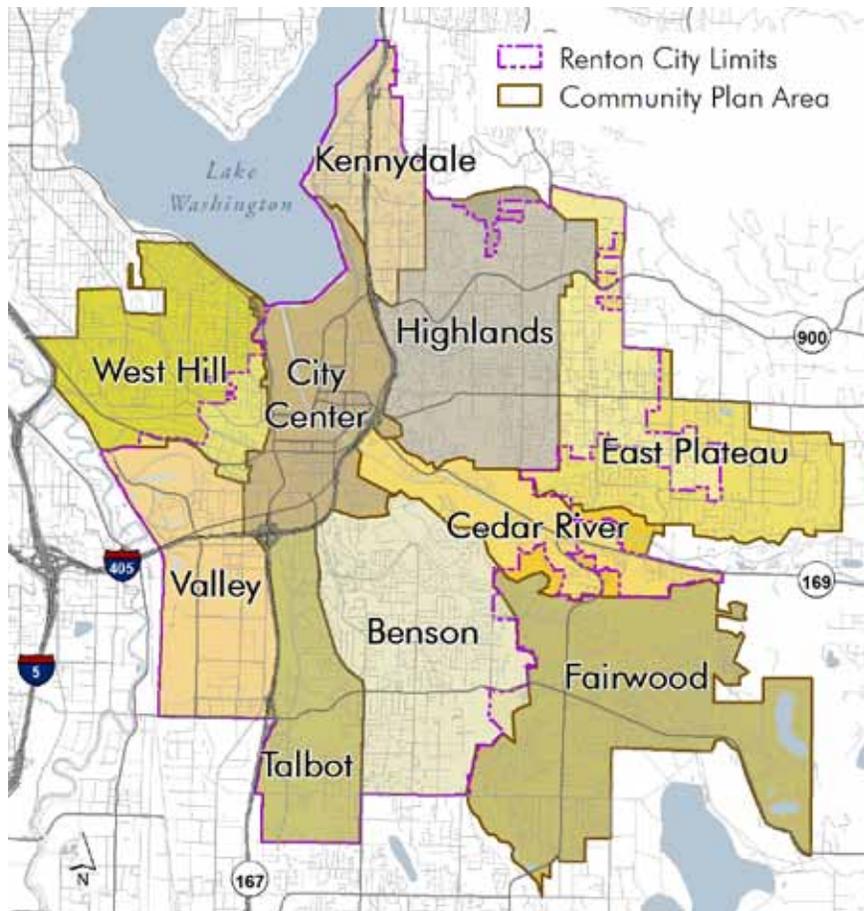
RECOMMENDATIONS BY COMMUNITY PLANNING AREA

Recommendations for the City’s ten community planning areas are noted below. Each section includes a description of the community planning area, a list of recommended projects and bulleted recommendations.

COMMUNITY PLANNING AREAS

Ten Community Planning Areas were established by the Renton City Council in 2009 to reflect unique factors such as community identity, physical features, schools, data collection units, existing infrastructure, service areas, districts, boundaries and community access. The ten Community Planning Areas were utilized through this process and are illustrated in Figure 5-1:

Figure 5-1: Community Planning Areas



Renton Community Planning Areas	
	Page
Benson	85
Cedar River.....	89
City Center	93
East Plateau	97
Highlands	101
Kennydale	105
Talbot.....	109
Valley	112
West Hill.....	115
Fairwood	117

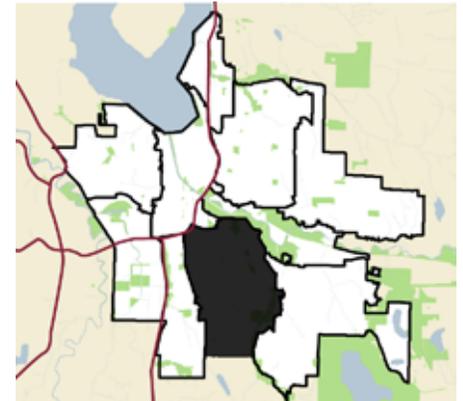
THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



BENSON

DESCRIPTION

The Benson community planning area was annexed into the City by an election in 2007 (effective 2008). The area includes over four square miles of land in southeast Renton. This large area currently includes two developed neighborhood parks owned by Renton (Tiffany Park and Cascade Park) and one additional developed park which remains under King County's management (Boulevard Lane Park). It is bordered by the Cedar River Natural Area to the north and the King County managed and maintained Soos Creek Corridor to the east. The Renton School District operates seven facilities in this area, including four elementary, one middle and one high school and one alternative program. The area is primarily composed of single family homes, with a denser cluster of residences and commercial activity centered near the intersection of SE 168th and Edmonds Avenue SE. The area is crossed by several major utility corridors, many of which have been used as informal transportation and recreation links. The majority of the Benson area has little or no access to developed parks and no public land. Expanding park service in this area will be a challenge. While both large and small parks are needed to provide local access, the priority expressed by



Projects

- Benson Community Park
- Tiffany Park
- Cascade Park
- SE 186th Place Properties
- Soos Creek Greenway: Boulevard Lane
- Parkwood South Div #3 Park
- Soos Creek Greenway: Renton Park
- Benson Neighborhood Park 1
- Benson Neighborhood Park 2



RECOMMENDATIONS

the community is to start with a larger, multi-purpose site. Until more parks can be added, connections and other facilities will be critical.

Acquire and Develop a New Community Park: ① Renton should acquire, plan and develop a large-centrally located community park. A multi-generational center could provide a wide variety of indoor recreation opportunities as well as a central gathering place for this community. Because this will be the only community park south-east of Interstate 405 and the Cedar River, the City should aim for a larger site of approximately 15 acres or greater.

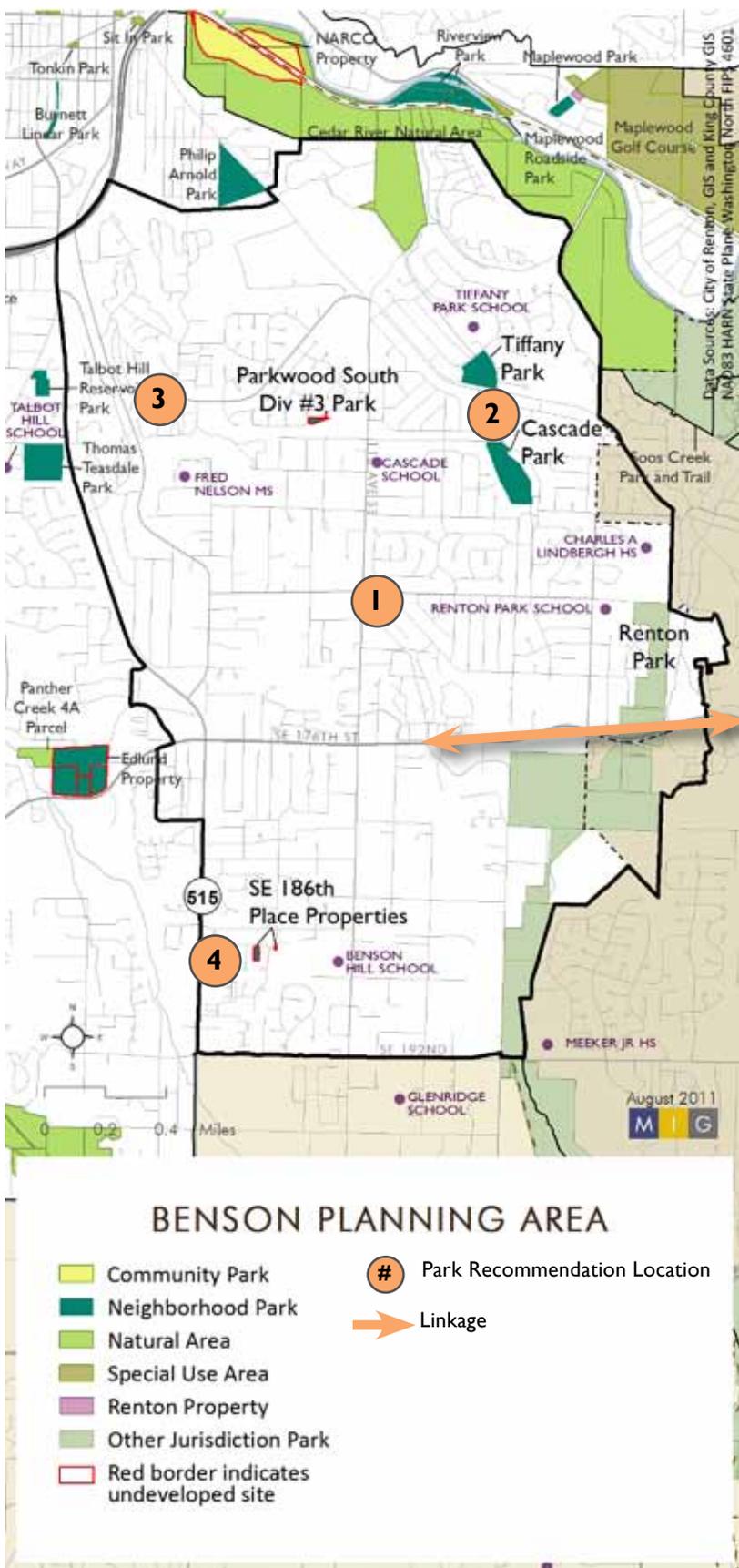
Enhance and Connect Tiffany and Cascade Parks: ② The City should acquire additional land to connect these two park sites with a natural area and trail. The City should also monitor property adjacent to Cascade Park for additional acquisition, increasing visibility and creating a welcoming entrance into the site. Both sites should be renovated to update, add and reorganize facilities. Cascade Park should be considered for an off-leash dog area. As part of the improvements to these sites, formal connections should be made to the access utility corridors that are currently used as trails, also necessitating formalized agreements with utility companies. When the two parks are connected and linked to these long pedestrian routes, the Cascade/Tiffany Park complex will become a hub for trail activity.

Add and Develop Park Land: To increase access to basic park features, a number of additional neighborhood parks are needed in the Benson Community Planning Area. Two small sites are owned by the City (one recently transferred from King County) but neither come close to the minimum size needed to provide the desired features of a neighborhood park. At both the SE 186th Properties and the Parkwood South Div #3 Park sites, the City should attempt to add property or identify alternative sites

for parks. Currently, both of these small sites offer the opportunity for community gardens or a tree farm. In the Benson planning area, augmenting Renton School District sites will be a key strategy to providing park service. The City should work with the School District to secure increased access to indoor facilities for programming through negotiated agreements. The City should also work with the district to acquire small park sites adjacent to schools to provide access to play opportunities.

Beyond the existing parks and school sites, two additional neighborhood park sites should be identified. **3** **4** Both areas are hilly and isolated from other parks by distance and topography.

Partner with Schools for Indoor Programming Space: As noted above, schools will be important assets to expanding park and recreation access into Benson. In the short to medium term, prior to the completion of a community park for the area, the City could extend programming to multiple school sites in the Benson community planning area. Youth and after-school programming will be important services, but the City can





Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they exercise more.

- The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space (2006)

also offer adult programming to build support for the future multi-generational center and promote healthy activity levels among Benson residents.

Complete Soos Creek Corridor: The City should continue collaborating with King County to expand and connect the Soos Creek properties to protect the creek and surrounding habitat and provide a regional trail connection which also will connect with the Cedar River Trail. With the completion of the Soos Creek Trail, one park and one natural area (Boulevard Lane Park and Renton Park) will be transferred to the City for operation and management. Renton Park should be developed to connect with the adjacent Renton Park Elementary and Lindberg High School serving as an outdoor learning environment.

Integrate Utility Corridors: The City should actively pursue agreements with the utility companies that maintain corridors through the Benson community planning area and other parts of Renton. These corridors currently provide informal access to pedestrians, hikers and cyclists. However, because of their informal status, the City has no authority to improve trails or provide better access. Agreements should outline roles and responsibilities as well as the limitations and requirements of the utility use.



CEDAR RIVER

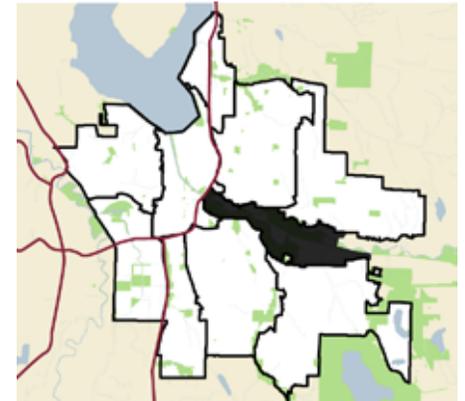
DESCRIPTION

The Cedar River Community Planning Area follows the Cedar River and the Maple Valley Highway from Interstate 405 to the Renton city limits. Many of the well known, most-used parks in the system are located within this community planning area, along with the largest natural area. There are several small developments of high and low density housing along the highway corridor that are relatively isolated from each other and the remainder of the city.

The Cedar River Community Planning Area contains the largest portion of a recreation corridor that extends from Lake Washington to Renton's eastern city limits. Most of the community's signature natural areas, recreation sites and facilities are located within this region. The focus for improvements to the system in this area is the enhancement of existing sites and facilities to increase capacity and quality.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implement the Tri-Park Master Plan: This community planning area includes two of the three Tri-Park Master Plan sites, Cedar River Park and the NARCO property that have been planned for significant improvements connected to reconfiguring Interstate 405. The long-term plan for these three sites remains relevant



Projects

- Cedar River Park
- Ron Regis Park
- Cedar River Natural Area
- NARCO Property
- Cedar River Trail Corridor
- Maplewood Golf Course
- Riverview Park
- Maplewood Roadside Park
- Maplewood Park



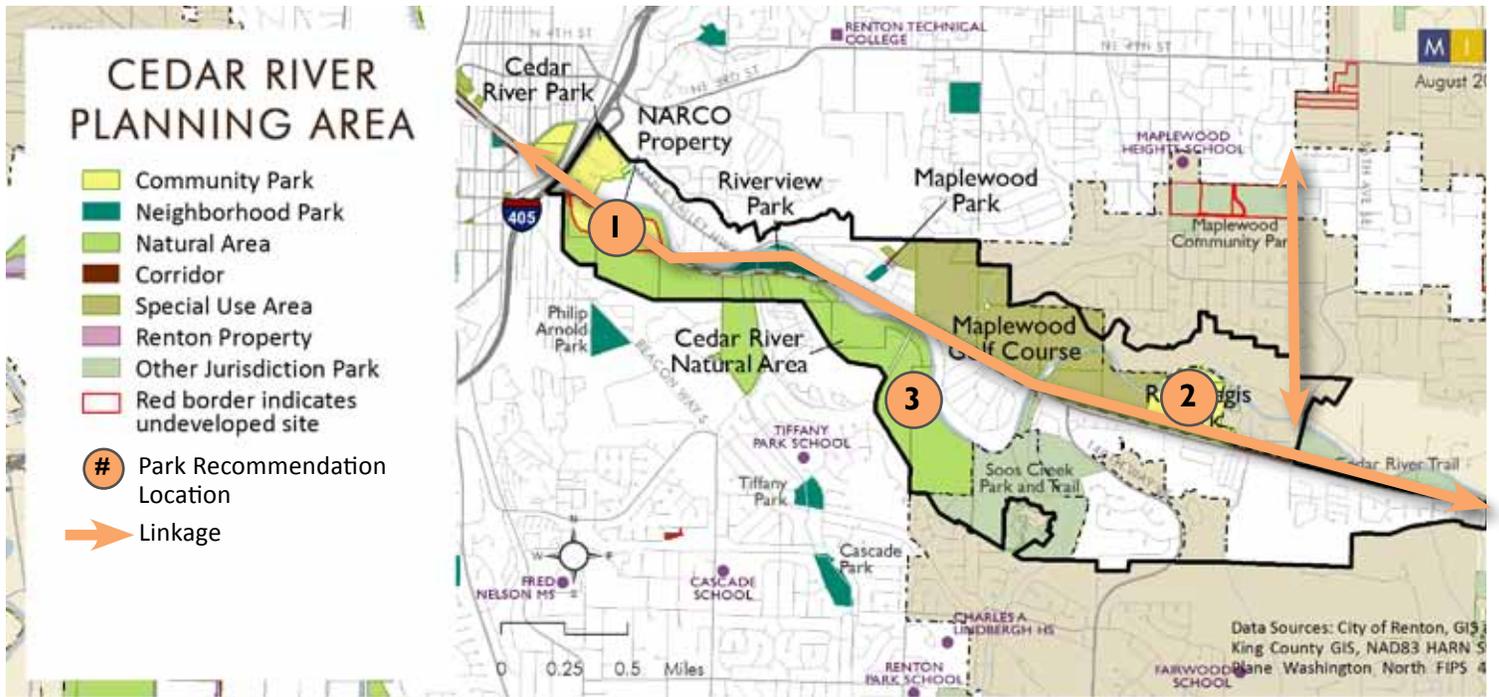
to the community. In the future, as the park is designed the City may want to consider including a small off-leash dog area for the NARCO site.



Provide Additional Sport Fields: Two sites in this community planning area offer the best existing opportunity to provide clusters of sports fields for recreational and competitive play in Renton. The fields planned as part of the Tri-Park Plan adjacent to Cedar River Park and the NARCO property ① will provide a central home for field sports. Fields should be designed to maximize the flexibility of field layout for different sizes of fields and alternate combined configurations (such as a cricket pitch). Existing and additional planned fields at Ron Regis Park ② should receive playing surface and equipment improvements to include synthetic turf as well as utility connections to provide potable water service to this site.



Manage Cedar River Natural Area: As the largest of the City’s major natural areas, and associated with the most significant waterway, the Cedar River Natural Area ③ should be a priority for inventory and management plan development. As part of this effort, the City should identify and formalize access points for stewardship activities as well as trail use. Invasive species treatment should emphasize areas that have the greatest risk for further spread, both within the site and beyond, such as the river edge, streams and creeks. The management plan should be coordinated between Renton, King County and other organizations involved in improving this watershed which provides regional recreation. Managing and maintaining the transition zones, between the natural area, developed features planned at the NARCO property and the regional trail, will be critical to the health of the natural systems and visitor safety. The role of this natural area in protecting the Cedar River, the site’s accessibility and the proximity to existing programming locations, makes this site a



prime opportunity for enhanced environmental programming and interpretation.

Balance Indoor Programming Space: The Renton Community Center, at Cedar River Park, is the largest indoor recreation facility provided by the City of Renton. Specific programs will be subject to additional analysis based on recreation program registration data, with important consideration given to the availability of indoor spaces for programming that reaches all age groups. In partnership with the Renton School District, youth programming could have increased availability across the city. The City should explore program time blocks that provide a mix of adult, youth and senior focused activities to add convenience for adults trying to work recreation into their schedules around youth activities. This clustering would also create more opportunities for informal multi-generational interaction at the community center.

Research on the brain demonstrates that play is a scaffold for development, a vehicle for increasing neural structures, and a means by which all children practice skills they will need in later life

- Association for Childhood Education International



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

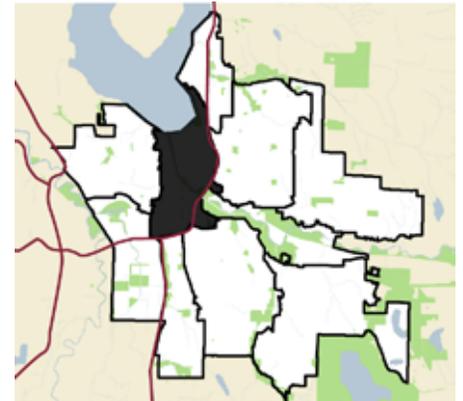


CITY CENTER

DESCRIPTION

The core of Renton, the City Center Planning Area includes the historic downtown as well as the transitioning and industrial lands north to the edge of Lake Washington. Several signature Renton parks are located within City Center, including Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park, the Piazza and Cedar River Trail Park. The area also includes many community facilities, including those owned by the City and two sites owned by the Renton School District. The character of this area varies greatly from industrial and airport uses to single family homes near downtown main streets to a new destination mixed-use center at the Landing.

The current and planned density of this area, and the diversity of activities require a range of sites as well as flexible use. With the City Center Plan in place, the area is poised for population and economic growth that will increase the demands on the relatively limited existing park spaces. Key improvements to increase access and capacity will improve the City Center's ability to serve as the heart of Renton.



Projects

- Senior Activity Center Property
- Liberty Park
- Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park
- Corridor Acquisition
- Cedar River Trail Park
- Burnett Linear Park
- Philip Arnold Park
- Community Garden/Greenhouse
- Piazza & Gateway
- City Center Neighborhood Park 1
- Boeing EIS Waterfront Park
- Veterans Memorial Park
- Tonkin Park
- Jones Park
- Sit In Park



Cedar River Trail Section from City Center Community Plan, 2010



RECOMMENDATIONS

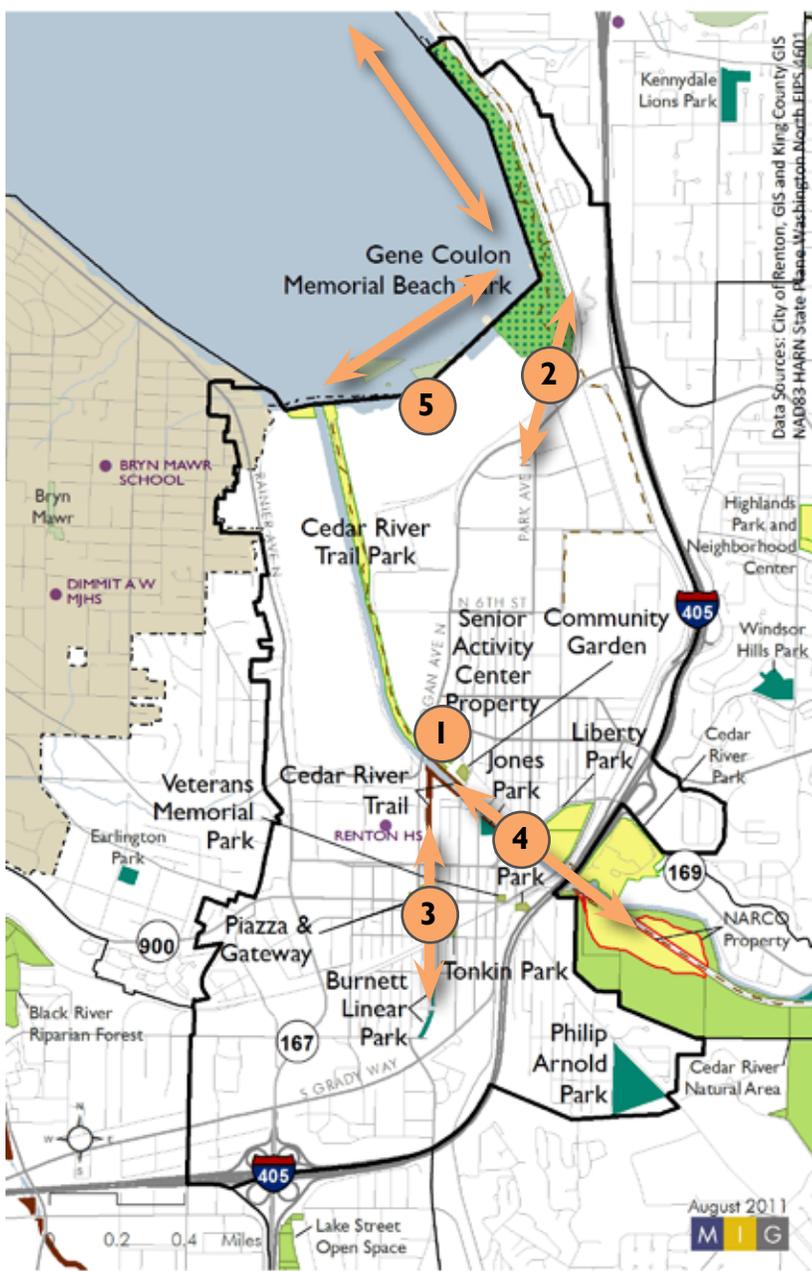
Expand and Redevelop Senior Activity Center Site: The City should relocate the shop facilities located between the Senior Activity Center and the Community Garden (including the greenhouse) to allow for expansion of this site and a broader set of activities. A new master plan for this park should be developed for integration with the Renton Senior Activity Center and the adjacent neighborhood. With no name existing for this entire site, it is identified as City Center Neighborhood Park 1 **1** in this plan. This site should be designed for neighborhood scale activity, but recognizing that this will be in the heart of the city, near downtown and on the Cedar River Trail. As a result, this park should be designed for higher intensity use.

Enlarge and Enhance Existing Sites: The City should seek opportunities to expand several sites within the City Center community planning area. Additional land should be acquired to provide overflow parking for Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park, with an improved connection between the park and residential and commercial development at The Landing. **2** Burnett Linear Park should be expanded north to the area currently used as

parking, strengthening the link between this park, Tonkin Park, the Piazza and the Cedar River Trail. ③ Redevelopment around the Piazza and Gateway park site should be encouraged to include a plaza and other complementary outdoor spaces allowing activities to extend beyond the existing park, creating a civic center.

Relocate the Cedar River Trail: The City should consider acquiring additional property above the river bank along the Cedar River ④ and relocate the trail out of the 100 year flood zone and as outlined in the Shoreline Master Program and the City Center Community Plan. This proposed relocation will provide better access and allow for riverbank restoration, improving water quality and salmon habitat. The relocated trail needs to maintain the strong connection between the Senior Center and Liberty Park.

Secure Land for Future New Parks: In addition to the master plan for the site adjacent to the Senior Activity Center, the 2003 Boeing Renton Comprehensive Plan Amendment EIS identifies a 75 acre park providing a potential connection to Gene Coulon



CITY CENTER PLANNING AREA

- Regional Park
- Community Park
- Neighborhood Park
- Natural Area
- Corridor
- Special Use Area
- Other Jurisdiction Park
- Red border indicates undeveloped site
- # Park Recommendation Location
- Linkage



Memorial Beach Park and the Cedar River Trail. This improvement will only occur if the Boeing Company should decide to surplus the existing manufacturing facilities. This will be a truly rare opportunity for future park development, shaping the future of central Renton. Based on the priorities of the community in 2011, the most important land to secure within the current Boeing properties would be the waterfront between Cedar River Trail Park and Gene Coulon Regional Park. **5** The exact configuration of this new site should be carefully planned to further economic and community development and improve connectivity between Coulon Park and the Cedar River Trail.

Enhance the Cedar River: The Cedar River is the major natural feature in the City Center Planning Area and the river and salmon run are closely tied to Renton’s identity. The City should develop an enhancement and stabilization program along the Cedar River. Stabilization should improve and protect the health of the trees that anchor the bank as well as control invasive species. Invasive species control will likely involve removal and treatments beyond this community planning area.

Explore Creative Partnerships: The businesses and organizations that are located in City Center offer a wide range of programming possibilities. As part of the Recreation Programming Plan, the City should explore how to involve additional local businesses and community organizations. One opportunity identified during the planning process involves collaborating with the Boeing Company’s employee health program to identify walks and fitness opportunities in proximity to Boeing facilities for employees to participate in during lunch breaks or before/after work.

Implement Tri-Park Master Plan: See Cedar River Community Planning Area recommendations.

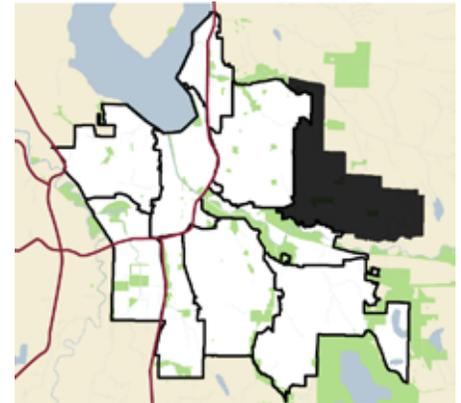


EAST PLATEAU

DESCRIPTION

The East Plateau makes up the eastern edge of the City of Renton, north of the Cedar River. Much of this planning area is outside of the current city limits. The East Plateau has no developed City-owned parks and nearly the entire planning area is outside the ½ mile range of developed parks. Five school sites are located within the planning area, including schools in both the Renton and Issaquah districts. The character of this area is primarily residential with a high density commercial and residential corridor along NE 4th Street. There are many disconnected streets due to topography, stream corridors and development patterns.

The most notable need in East Plateau is for designated park land to accommodate the recreation opportunities most desired by the community. The population in this area benefits from some access to natural areas, primarily those owned by King County. Residents of this area use school facilities and travel to other parts of the city for gathering places and indoor programming.



Projects

- East Plateau Community Park
- May Creek/McAskill
- East Plateau
Neighborhood Park 1
- East Plateau
Neighborhood Park 2

“Please preserve and maintain the natural habitats we still have so our children and grandchildren can learn about all the wonderful areas of nature in Renton.”

- Questionnaire
Response from East
Plateau



RECOMMENDATIONS

Add a New Community Park: The City should acquire the Maplewood Community Park and Maplewood Neighborhood Park sites **1** from King County with the intention of developing a unified community park connecting to the adjacent Maplewood Heights Elementary School. Following acquisition, the site should be master planned with input from the community about the specific features and design elements. Key features for a community park in this area are a concentration of sports fields (adding to existing fields at the elementary school), creating a community gathering space and maintaining the forested area with trails.

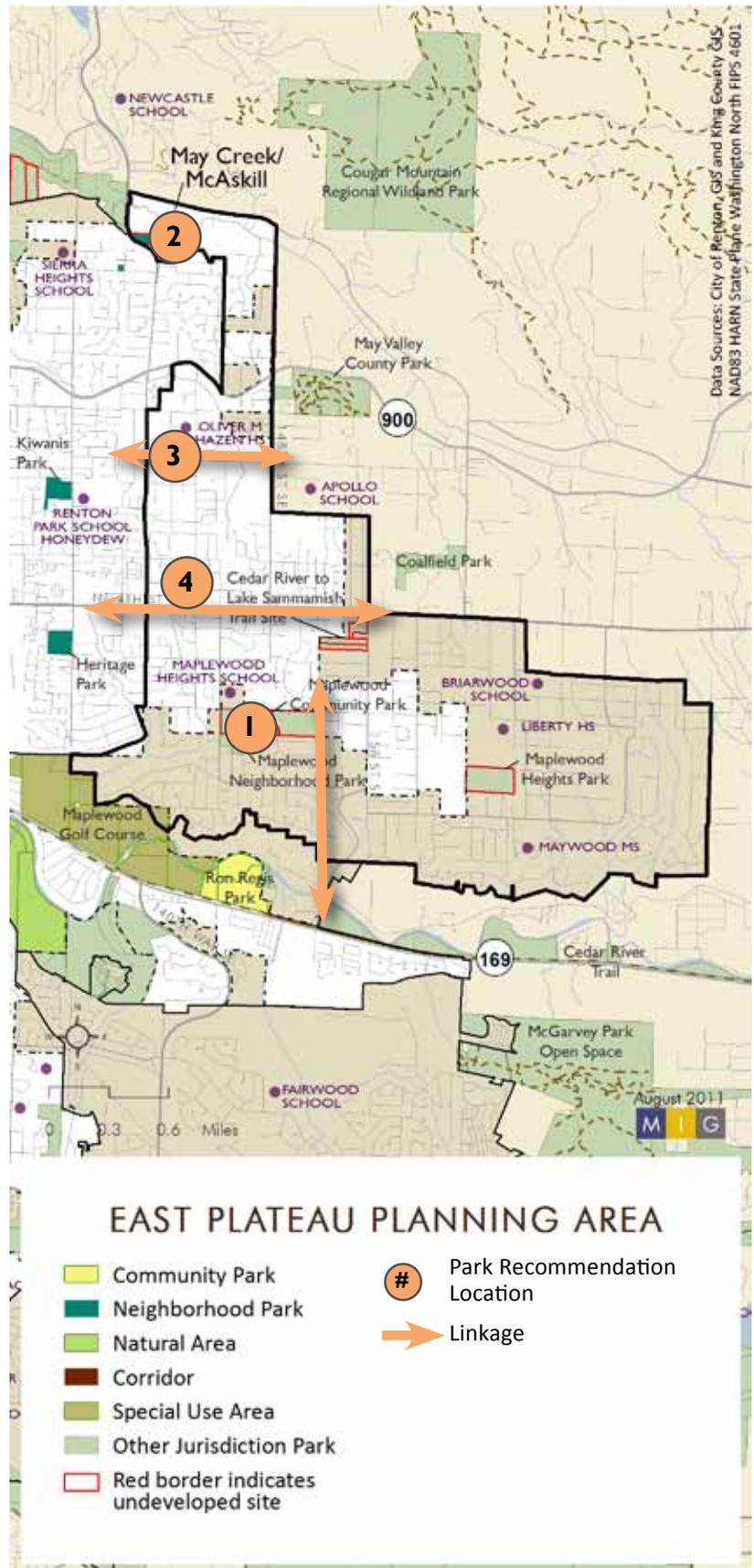
Improve Access to May Creek Park: In the north end of the planning area is a City-owned, undeveloped site known as the May Creek/McAskill property. **2** Access to this property is limited and should be expanded by acquiring additional property and connecting local trails. The concept plan (in chapter 7) can be used as a starting point to identify potential elements and the relationships between features.

Identify and Develop Two New Neighborhood Parks: Within the current city limits, at least two additional neighborhood parks are needed to provide basic recreation amenities within ½ mile of residents. The first of these, East Plateau Neighborhood Park 1, **3** should be located in the area south of Sunset Boulevard and east of Duvall, near Oliver Hazen High School. The high school campus has the potential to augment a future public park. The second additional park site (East Plateau Neighborhood Park 2) **4** should be near NE 4th Street, close to the planned higher residential and commercial density. This area has no existing publicly owned land and will require acquiring between 5 and 10 acres of park land that should be connected to bike and pedestrian routes. New neighborhood parks should be master planned and developed according to the design guidelines.

Plan for Annexation Areas: If the City expands into the remaining parts of the potential annexation area, additional park sites will need to be located, potentially including the King County owned Maplewood Heights Park property.

Provide Key Connections: The following trail and bicycle routes are particularly important to improving access to and from this community planning area as well as within it.

- The May Creek corridor crosses the north edge of the planning area and additional protected land would provide habitat and serve recreation and non-motorized transportation needs.
- King County’s planned Cedar to Sammamish Regional Trail connects this area to the Cedar River Planning Area to the south and exits the city to the north east.
- The east-west bicycle routes planned along Sunset Boulevard and NE 4th/SE 128th Street.
- Shared streets connecting to Highlands and extending east out of the City.





Enhancing Existing Natural Areas: The City should support King County and City of Newcastle efforts to complete habitat restoration projects utilizing volunteers and partnerships such as the Mountain to Sound Greenway. Residents of this area who participated in the planning process indicated a desire to maintain natural elements within park sites.

Acquire Natural Areas: The City should support King County and City of Newcastle efforts to identify and acquire natural area land that connects creek corridors such as May Creek. Natural area acquisitions in this community planning area should have the potential to serve as habitat or trail corridors, or expand existing protected areas.

Programming and Facility Partnerships: Partnering with both the Renton and Issaquah School Districts will be important to providing programming options in the East Plateau. As the City of Renton expands into the Potential Annexation Area, a school partnership within the Issaquah District should be considered.

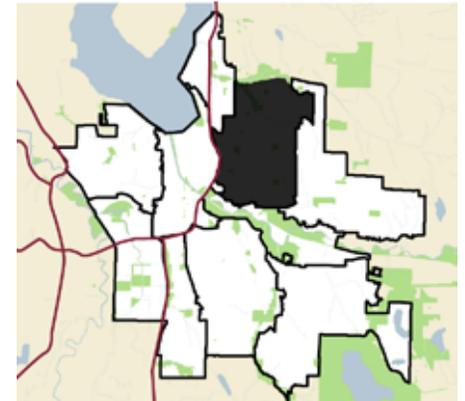


HIGHLANDS

DESCRIPTION

The Highlands Community Planning Area is located on a plateau above the City Center Community Planning Area and the Cedar River in northwest Renton. This area includes a wide range of park lands from very small neighborhood parks to large natural area properties along Honey and May Creeks. The Renton School District operates five elementary and middle schools in or immediately adjacent to the Highlands Planning Area. There are two corridors of higher density residential and commercial development along the major east-west routes, following Sunset Boulevard and NE 3rd/4th Streets. The hills descending from the plateau, Interstate 405 and limited street connections isolate this area for pedestrians and cyclists.

The City should focus on maximizing the use of the extensive community investment in park land and facilities in this area. Some of the older parks in Highlands need design updates and new features which could better serve this area's population. In addition, while this community planning area has the best overall coverage of parks (minimal gaps in service), some parks do not meet size recommendations and/or the ½ mile service area access distance. Linking the park system to institutional partners, including the Renton School District, Renton Technical College and King County Libraries may enhance access to programs and decrease facility gaps in the system.



Projects

- Highlands Park and Neighborhood Center
- Honey Creek Greenway
- Highlands Neighborhood Park 3: Sunset Park (EIS)
- North Highlands Park and Neighborhood Center
- Highlands Neighborhood Park 1
- Highlands Neighborhood Park 2
- Glencoe Park
- Kiwanis Park
- Heritage Park
- Windsor Hills Park
- Sunset Court Park



Rendering from Sunset Planned Action EIS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maximize Highlands Park: Located geographically at the center of the Highlands Planning Area, ❶ this site serves as the only community park for most of east Renton. Additional land to the south has been added to the site which has yet to be integrated into the overall design. The park also shares a property line with Highlands Elementary School. Increasing density also places increased demand on park sites. To better serve this community, the City should begin a long-term process of planning and designing a completely reconfigured Highlands Park. This site should retain current park amenities but reconfigure them to accommodate a larger, multi-generational indoor facility with additional features to include a community garden and a skateboarding area. The reconfigured park should also maintain the designated Safe Route to School.

Create a shared play area in North Highlands: The City and the Renton School District should jointly develop a children’s play area between the Hillcrest Early Education Center and North Highlands Neighborhood Center. ❷ A shared facility offers the unique opportunity to create a signature facility that removes barriers to inclusive play regardless of physical abilities.

Implement Sunset Planned Action EIS: The City should implement the adopted Sunset Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement. This project is a collaborative redevelopment involving Housing Authority property, a new library and a park to replace the undersized Sunset Court Park. This proposed park, Highlands Neighborhood Park 3, is provisionally known as Sunset Park. ❸ Chapter 7 includes a concept design that advances the thinking from the environmental impact statement development to provide an idea for this future park. As the redevelopment moves forward, the City should develop a master plan that recognizes the expected high level of use and the relationships to other

features in the redevelopment plan, especially the library. The park site should be developed concurrently with the housing redevelopment to maximize construction efficiency. Other improvements tied to the redevelopment include integrated stormwater management approaches that will include trail connections to the site.

Add New Park Sites: The Highlands Community Planning Area is well served by parks within ½ mile of residents. However, two areas remain underserved. The first gap, a new proposed Highlands Neighborhood Park 1, ④ should be north of Sunset Boulevard and west of Duvall. This area has a neighborhood park which currently does not meet acreage recommendations to serve this area. Opportunities to acquire land as it becomes available should be considered. A second proposed park, Highlands Neighborhood Park 2, ⑤ would serve the residential area in the southern most portion of the community planning area. This park would serve the higher density residential area.





Expand Existing Sites: Glencoe Park is a very small site that offers less variety than does a standard neighborhood park. Property surrounding this site should be monitored for acquisition opportunities to expand the park to the minimum 2 acre guideline. A second park, Windsor Hills Park should also be monitored for adjacent property acquisitions to open up park access, visibility, and increase functionality.



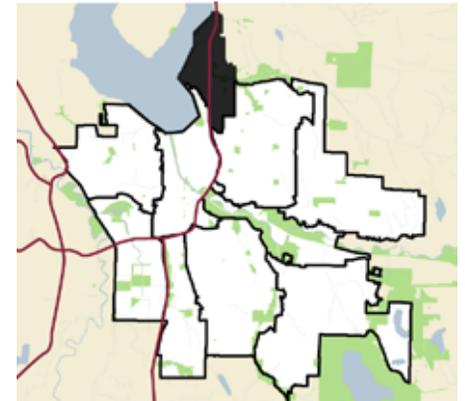
KENNYDALE

DESCRIPTION

The northern most tip of Renton, includes Kennydale neighborhoods on both the east and west sides of Interstate 405. This area includes two developed parks and portions of the May Creek Greenway. The Renton School District has one elementary school in the area. The majority of this area is low density residential, with mixed use commercial and residential property at the far north edge. Connections across Interstate 405 are limited. The May Creek Greenway also isolates a pocket of housing near the Newcastle border. The area encompasses substantial natural areas but does not necessarily provide access. The City of Renton, in partnership with King County and the City of Newcastle, has been acquiring property along the greenway since 1990 in order to make a connection from Lake Washington to Cougar Mountain Regional Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Expand Access to the May Creek Greenway: Acquisitions by Renton and King County in the Kennydale Community Planning Area has resulted in a nearly continuous swath of greenway across Renton's northern border. Approximately fifty percent of the May Creek Greenway in Kennydale is owned by King County.



Projects

- May Creek Greenway
- Kennydale Beach Park
- Kennydale Lions Park
- Kennydale Neighborhood Park 1
- Kennydale Neighborhood Park 2

Renton has very well-maintained, beautiful parks! I plan on kayaking next summer so I'm happy to have the boat house... Well done!!!

-Kennydale
Questionnaire
Respondent



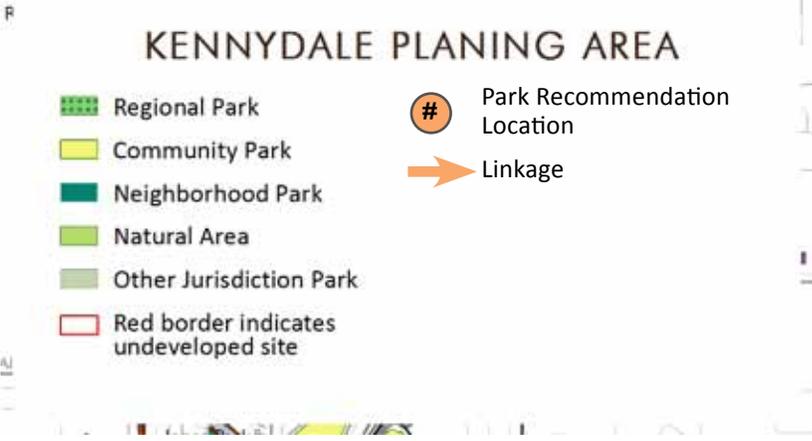
The City should work with King County to create a management plan that includes identifying appropriate access points to the greenway and developing trails that allow for stewardship and recreation in a natural setting.

Enhance Existing Park Sites: The two developed parks in the community planning area are key to local identity and community gathering. Kennydale Beach Park is a summertime staple but is severely constrained by neighboring property and the railroad track. Renton should capitalize on water access and the associated natural areas. The City should monitor adjacent properties for opportunities to purchase land to expand this park. Kennydale Lions Park is an under-developed asset. A full redesign of this site should be completed using community input and the City's park design guidelines. Chapter 7 includes a concept for this park that provides one idea for the future of this expanded site.

Provide Two Additional Neighborhood Parks: The City should add park sites to the isolated pockets of this area, although the availability of appropriate land will be a major challenge. On the west side of Interstate 405 in Kennydale, the only developed park is the small Kennydale Beach Park. While a highly valued site, the size and waterfront location of this park limit its use for some types of park activities. If the site cannot be expanded, an additional neighborhood park should be added to this area. **1** A second neighborhood park should also be added east of the freeway and north of the May Creek Greenway. **2**



Data Sources: City of Renton, GIS and King County GIS
NAD83 HARN State Plane Washington North FIPS 4601



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

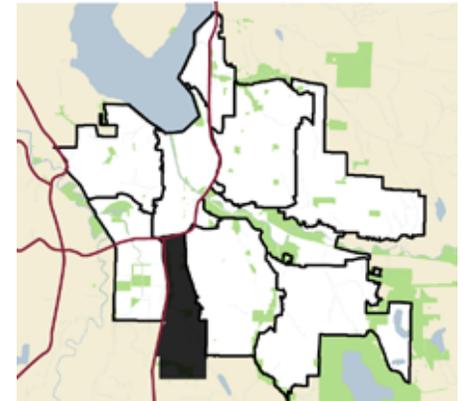


TALBOT

DESCRIPTION

The Talbot Community planning area is located in southwest Renton extending south from Interstate 405 between SR-167 and SR-515/108th Avenue SE and south to the city limits. The Talbot planning area includes two developed parks and substantial natural area acreage. In addition, two properties have been acquired for future neighborhood parks in the southern half of the area. Talbot is primarily residential with a commercial corridor connecting the Valley and Benson Community Planning Areas along SW 43rd Street/S Carr Road. This corridor includes Valley Medical Center. A cluster of high density residential property extends south from SW 43rd on either side of 96th Avenue South. Connections within this area and beyond are challenging due to the hills, a disconnected street pattern and freeway barrier to the west.

Developing existing park land in the south and the management and maintenance of natural areas should be a focus for the City. The properties acquired for new neighborhood parks have development constraints due to wetlands. There are also opportunities for integrating and interpreting the natural features and historic landscapes and structures.



Projects

- Panther Creek Wetlands
- Edlund Property
- Cleveland/Richardson Property
- Thomas Teasdale Park
- Talbot Hill Reservoir Park
- Springbrook Watershed
- Lake Street Open Space
- Panther Creek 4A Parcel



Not only may natural settings enable and encourage regular physical activity, but exposure to nature seems to directly stimulate immune functioning.

-Parks and Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat (2010)

RECOMMENDATIONS

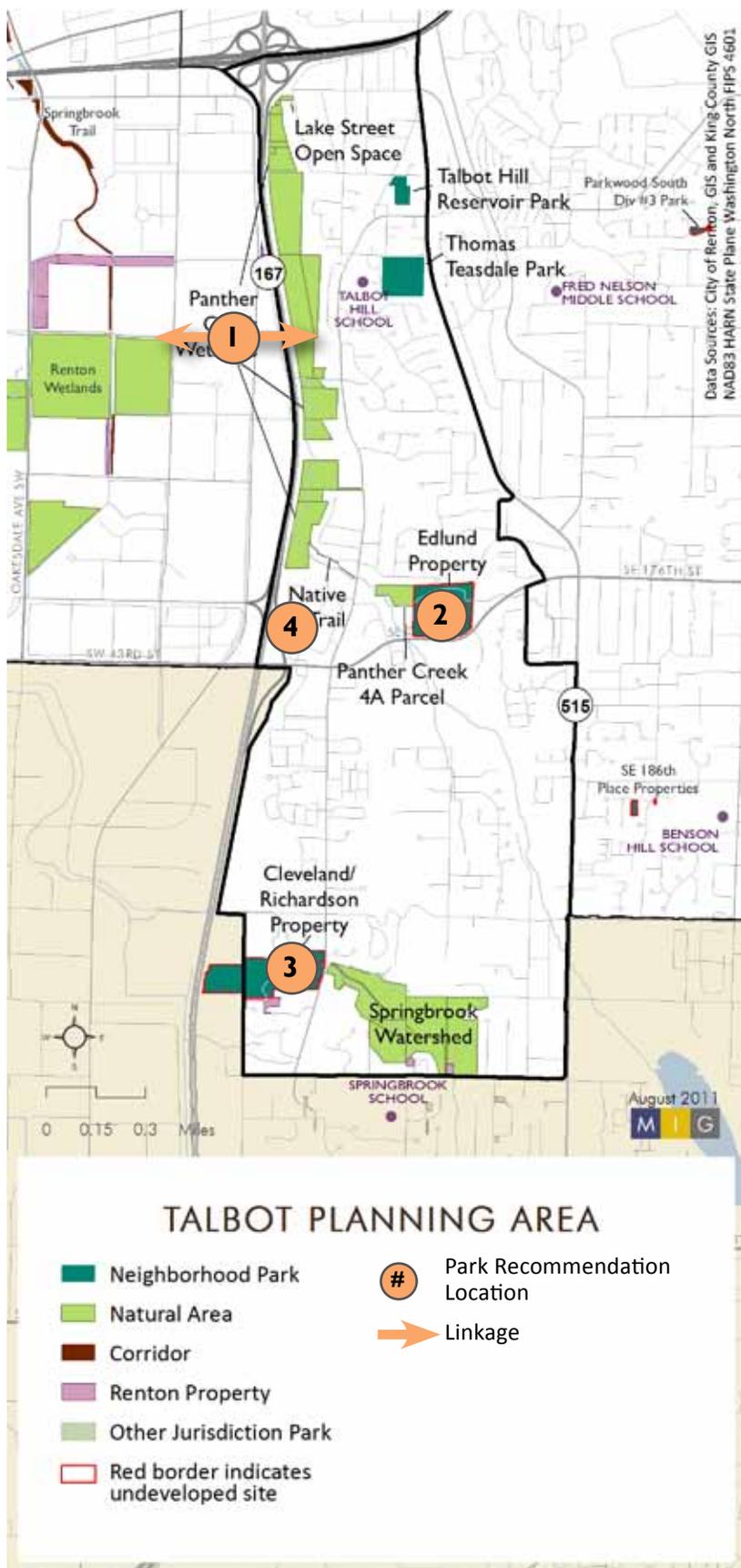
Expand/Connect Panther Creek Wetlands: The City has acquired substantial natural area land extending from the intersection of SR 167 and Interstate 405 to just north of the Valley Medical Center campus at S.W. 43rd Street. The City should continue to expand the protected acreage along Panther Creek and develop trail connections that provide access for enjoyment of nature and stewardship activities. The expansion of this natural area should include a connection via acquisition or easement east to the developed portion of the Edlund Property and west to the Springbrook Wetland Mitigation Bank. ①

Design and Develop Undeveloped Sites: The two undeveloped neighborhood park sites should be master planned and designed to integrate the natural and historic elements as well as features that support gatherings, recreation and fitness. ② ③ Chapter 7 includes a concept designs that provide ideas for the future of these two sites. Access to each site should be maximized by creating trail connections to the neighboring residential areas and to nearby parks and natural areas.

Partner to Foster Health and Wellness: In partnership with Valley Medical Center there could be increased opportunities to develop healthy lifestyle programming for residents, employers/employees and visitors that utilize both City facilities and the medical center campus. Valley Medical will also have access to a future trail connecting to the Panther Creek Wetlands ④ and the Edlund property. A partnership between the City and Valley Medical Center could be pursued to develop a trailhead.

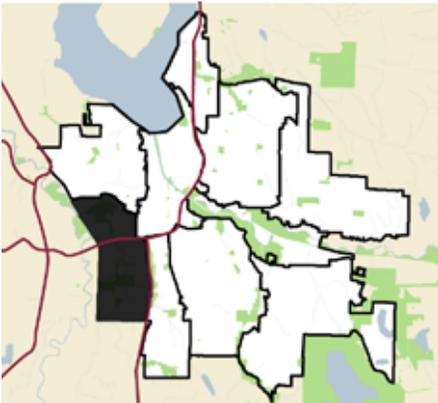
Strategic Reinvestment in Existing Parks: Two additional parks, Thomas Teasdale Park and Talbot Hill Reservoir Park are located close together in the north portion of Talbot. As reinvestment is required, these two sites should be planned together to differentiate the opportunities provided and maximize the use of the available park land.

Consolidate Properties: For future reference and inventory purposes, the properties known as the Lake Street Open Space and the Panther Creek 4A parcel should be considered as part of the Panther Creek Wetlands and Edlund Property, respectively.





VALLEY



DESCRIPTION

The Valley Community Planning Area makes up the west edge of Renton in the low lands immediately east of the Green River. The area is a contrast of light industrial, commercial and office park development against preserved and restored wetlands and green spaces. In addition to the two Renton owned sites, King County owns the Waterworks Garden site incorporated in the regional water treatment plant. With the excellent access and a history of office park and other industrial and commercial uses, this area is focused on employment. Park and recreation services in this area should focus on facilities that are useful to employees, attractive to employers and add to natural systems and green infrastructure.

Projects

- Black River Riparian Forest
- Environmental Education Programs
- Renton Wetlands

RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide Improved Access and Interpret the Black River Riparian Forest: As a unique site that provides habitat and floodwater control, the Black River Riparian Forest ⓘ has a multi-layered story for visitors, in addition to being a beautiful and calm place within an urban environment. Renton should formalize public

access to this site, including trails and an interpretive facility. A boardwalk section of trail should be considered in site master planning. It will be important to balance the access and level of habitat and wildlife protection necessary for this specific site.

Create an Environmental Education Hub: The combination of unique natural areas, local and regional trail routes and the King County Waterworks Garden creates a destination for environmental education within Renton. The City should develop interpretive elements at key sites, including the Black River Riparian Area, along the Springbrook Trail corridor and at the Renton Wetlands. ② The City could also contribute to developing curriculum for visiting school and tour groups to explain the importance of these natural areas as habitat and a part of the City’s green infrastructure.

Add Trails and Seating Areas: The City should continue to build trail connections within and connecting to the Valley as well as continue partnering with King County and South King County cities to complete the Lake to Sound Trail. ③ The segment of this regional trail under design in





2011 will link the existing Springbrook Trail to the regional system, ultimately including the Lake to Sound Trail the Cedar River Trail, the Green River Trail and the Interurban Trail. Trails in this community planning area would increase access to healthy activity to the area's employment base. Convenient trails in attractive settings, such as the existing boardwalk in the Renton Wetlands, provide walking opportunities for stress relief and fitness, while regional trails, bike lanes and freeway pedestrian connections create active transportation options for commuters. Seating areas along trail corridors and adjacent to natural areas, should be designed to accommodate outdoor eating and informal gathering.



WEST HILL

DESCRIPTION

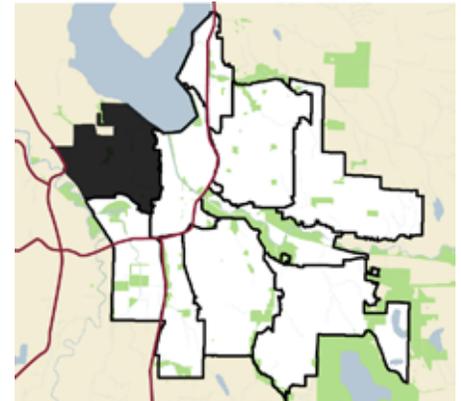
West Hill is located to the west of the Renton airport and north of Martin Luther King Jr. Way/SW Sunset Boulevard. The majority of this community planning area is currently outside of the existing city limits. The City of Renton owns one neighborhood park in West Hill and there are also two King County owned park properties (one developed park and one natural area site) located in the potential annexation area. Renton School District extends through West Hill and five school sites are located in this planning area.

With only a small portion of the community planning area within the current City limits, the primary focus is serving that area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

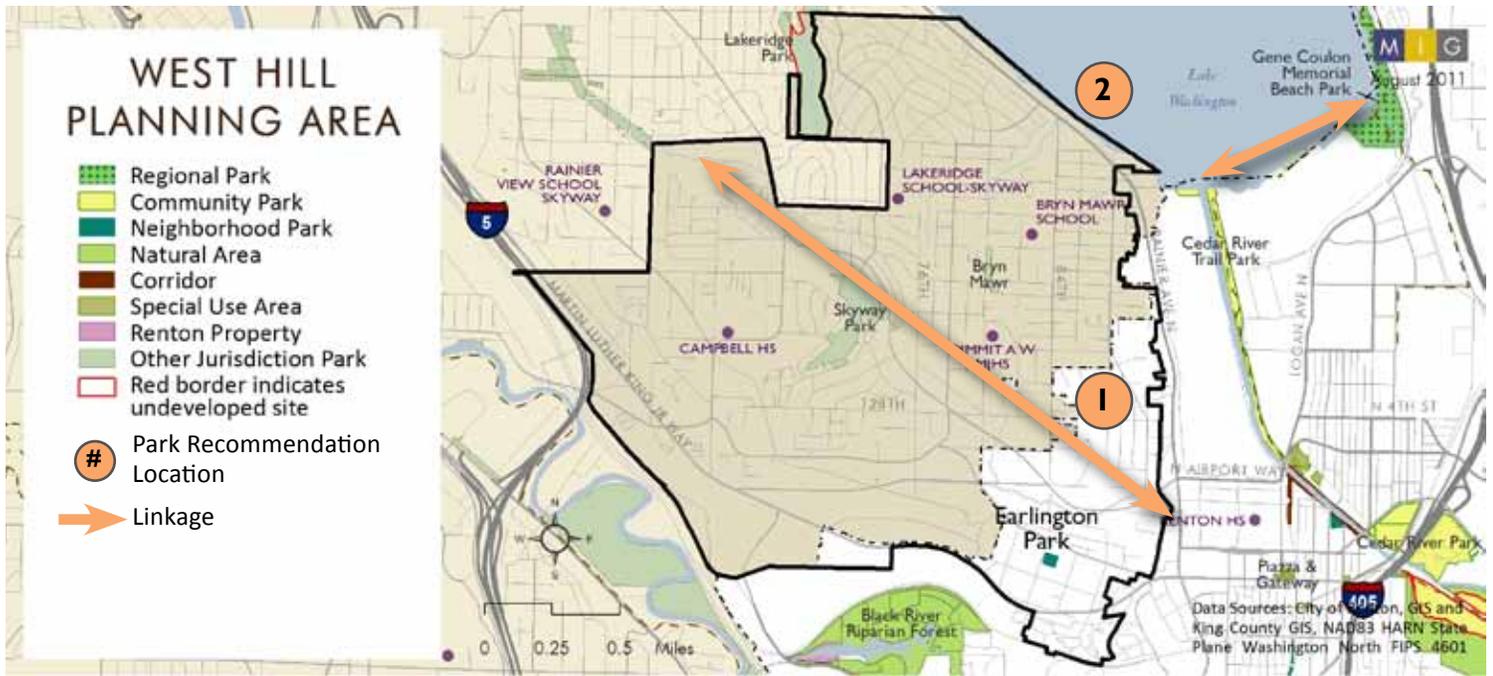
Expand Earlington Park: The existing neighborhood park in West Hill is slightly under the minimum size for this type of park.

While the park should continue to be maintained and treated as a neighborhood park, the City should monitor opportunities to purchase adjacent land to expand the park to a minimum of two acres and add features to match the intent of the guidelines.



Projects

- Earlington Park
- West Hills Neighborhood Park



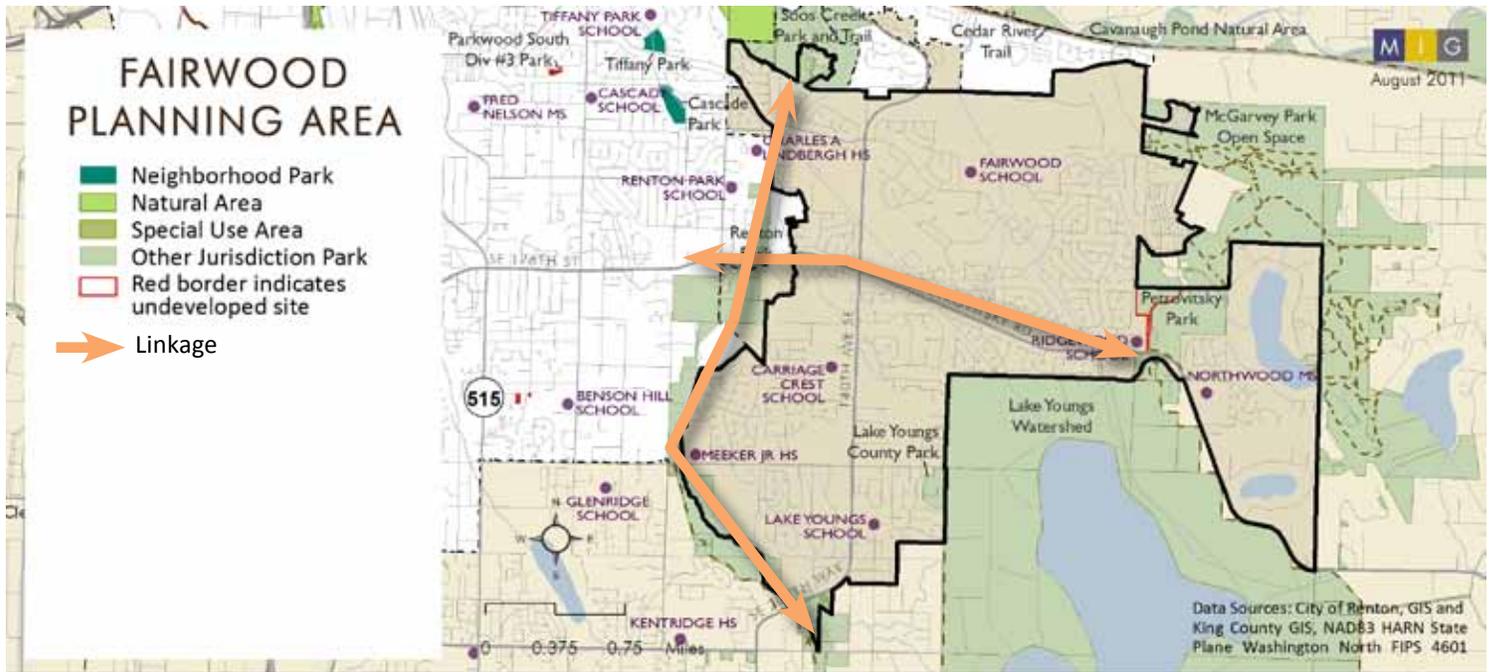
In greener settings we find that people are more generous and more desirous of connections with others; we find stronger neighborhood social ties and greater sense of community, more mutual trust and willingness to help others; and we find evidence of healthier social functioning in neighborhood common spaces—more (positive) social interaction in those spaces, greater shared use of spaces by adults and children.

-Parks and Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat (2010)

Provide One New Neighborhood Park: Within the current city limits, one additional neighborhood park should be located in West Hill. ① The hills and barriers (such as the airport) make it difficult for residents to access parks within or outside of the community planning area on foot or by bicycle.

Acquire Waterfront Areas: If the Lake Washington waterfront is annexed, the City should carefully monitor opportunities to acquire additional waterfront property for habitat improvement and water access. ②

Plan for Annexation Areas: If the City expands into the potential annexation area, additional park sites will need to be located. Skyway Park, currently owned by King County, will be an important resource. Partnership opportunities with the Renton School District could increase access to recreation whether annexation occurs now or in the future.



FAIRWOOD

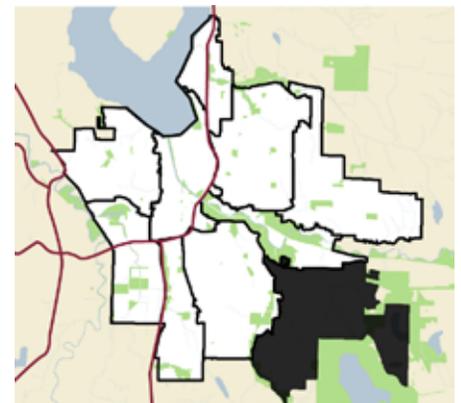
DESCRIPTION

The Fairwood Community Planning Area is located east of the current city limits south of State Route 169, and borders the Lake Youngs Watershed on three sides. This Potential Annexation Area, if annexed, would become the south east corner of Renton. This area is largely developed, with single family homes and contains a commercial center with higher density multi-family housing centered at SE Petrovitsky Road and 140th Avenue SE. The City of Renton owns no parks in this community planning area but King County owns and manages the large sports field focused Petrovitsky Park at Parkside Way and Petrovitsky Road.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Plan for Annexation Areas: If the City expands into the potential annexation area, additional park sites will need to be located, including neighborhood parks and a community park. As with other areas in the City, partnerships with the Renton and Kent School Districts will be important to providing park and recreation services to this area.

Connections: The majority of the connections within this community planning area will be on-street bike routes and sidewalks. Future planning for this area should take advantage of the existing trail on Petrovitsky Road and large publicly owned natural areas along Soos Creek and Lake Youngs with associated trails.



Projects

- No projects identified

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK