

# Renew the Legacy... Fulfill the Vision

Renton Parks, Recreation, Open Space  
and Natural Resources Plan



## Stakeholder Interviews

Date **October 2010**

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**Participants:** Kevin Poole, RUFF (10/11);  
Joe Lamborn and Rick Strake, Renton School District (10/11);  
Suzanne Krom and Mike Hamilton, Herons Forever (10/11);  
Mark Arnold, Skatepark Advocate (10/12);  
Jesse Uman, Jeff Adelson, Linda Scholl, Boeing (10/27)  
**Consulting Team Members (MIG):** Ryan Mottau, Dean Apostol

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## Summary

The City of Renton is updating and expanding the park system plan to create a new Park Recreation, Open Space and Natural Resources Plan. This project includes a wide variety of public input opportunities to identify ideas, issues and direction for the future of the park system. One of the early activities was a targeted set of individual and small group interviews with representatives from the consulting team to build an in-depth understanding of diverse points of view. These stakeholders were drawn from the much larger list of interested parties based on their understanding of a particular issue or representation of a major interest.

The discussions varied widely depending on the stakeholder's connections to the various topic(s). While these perspectives are important, the intention is not to make any decisions based entirely on these conversations but instead to identify topics and ideas that should be explored in other public input opportunities and integrated into the planning analysis. This summary is intended to relay and record these topics and ideas.

**Kevin Poole: Planning Commissioner and member of RUFF (Renton Unleashed Furry Friends)**  
**October 11, 2010**

- Cedar River Corridor is a key part of future parks and recreation development
- Overall plan should focus on the center of the city, using existing showpieces to their best effect
- May creek offers opportunity for a much different experience, more like hiking
- It is important to have some projects that can move forward soon, many of the big ideas are contingent on factors beyond the City's control (particularly the projects associated with the I-405 improvements)

- Utility corridor use is a great opportunity but remains an unofficial “grey area” without any formal agreements
- Over a year of discussion to site the dog park at NARCO property, with the understanding that it is a temporary location (due to grant funding requirements)
- Would like to see a smaller dog park site within the eventual development of the NARCO property
- The partnership and matching funds model that built the dog park in a short time is replicable to other sites

**Rick Strake and Joe Lamborn, Renton Public Schools, Facilities Operations and Maintenance October 11, 2010**

- More major school facilities are already committed as part of the 2008 bond measure, with no new maintenance resources. In addition, current maintenance funding will probably be cut back
- Decreased operating funds will impact community use. If fields can't be refreshed and maintained for the high level of use, scheduling will need to be cut back. Gyms also require staffing to allow use by the community
- One alternative to cutting back availability is raising user fees to maintain maintenance level
- There is a clear connection between community support and the passage of bond measures; community use of school facilities is important to building support
- There is interest in creating an ADA playground, potentially at the Early Childhood Education Center or Highlands Elementary
- There are limitations on when and how the School District can share facilities, especially during the school day

**Suzanne Krom and Mike Hamilton: Herons Forever October 11, 2010**

- Primarily interested in the Black River Riparian Forest site and specifically the heron colony which has been home to a specific sub-species of Pacific Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias fannini*)
- Herons are being preyed on by local bald eagles, threatening the success of the colony

- Lots of potential for habitat protection/restoration but also year-round viewing and education
- The site has been impacted in the past by nearby development projects and it will continue to be a challenge to protect this site as surrounding land uses change
- Entire site has challenges: relatively unknown, poor access, limited parking, invasive species
- Herons Forever is encouraged by positive moves by the City including assisting with trail work
- North side of site has special challenges: homeless encampments, active rail line (BNSF), gravel mine/concrete recycling facility (uphill)
- Dam on this site is a flood control effort resulting from the massive rerouting of historic waterways, the capacity of water storage at this site is reduced by silt that may need to be dredged at some point in the future and is likely to be heavily contaminated

**Mark Arnold, Skatepark advocate**  
**October 12, 2010**

- Existing park inadequately built and use is over capacity
- Being over capacity has the potential to create safety concerns on busy days
- Rule of thumb, based on population, indicates the potential need for two parks the size of the existing site plus one larger park
- Additional skate dots or skate spots (small single features added to local parks) would help spread the demand around and add activity to existing parks
- A graffiti wall (an authorized place for graffiti) could cut down on the cost of removal; could be considered a public art installation
- Skaters are not likely to spray paint on skate features because it makes them slick and less useable
- Skateparks provide a central gathering place that creates an opportunity to reach some otherwise marginalized youth through programming and support services

**Jesse Uman, Linda Scholl and Jeff Adelson, Boeing Renton Facilities  
October 27, 2010**

- Of the three facilities Boeing operates in Renton, the assembly plant has the most connection to the park system, being located between Cedar River Trail Park and Coulon Park
- With new defense contract work coming online, security becomes even more of an issue and workforce will likely be expanding
- Safety concerns include cyclists cutting through “Apron D” south of 6<sup>th</sup> Street from the Cedar River Trail
- One of the biggest concerns for Boeing is traffic. How people get to and from work at the facilities and move around the sites has major implications for the workforce and management
- Employees use Cedar River Trail Park often for walking during breaks. Fewer employees make the trip to Coulon (because it is difficult/further to get to)
- Boeing is encouraging smokers to stay at designated areas to lessen impact to other park users
- Ideas for encouraging use of the park and recreation opportunities:
  - Bike sharing for getting to and from Coulon Park, other destinations from Boeing campuses
  - Connecting “Boeing on the Move” employee walking/fitness program to trails and park destinations
  - Alignment of programs with health program staff at Boeing
  - Improve signage to trails from major office areas, such as near Springbrook Trail

For more information about the project, including a project calendar and interim documents, visit the City’s home page at [www.rentonwa.gov](http://www.rentonwa.gov) and click on “Renew the Legacy... Fulfill the Vision”