

# Lynnwood Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts Department

## 2013/2014 Biennium Report



**LYNNWOOD**  
WASHINGTON

*A great deal more*

## Director's Message

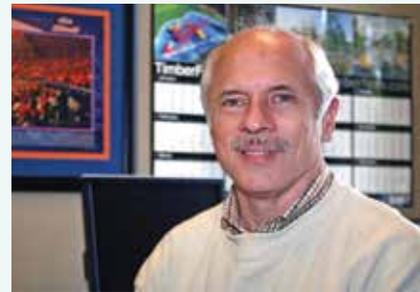
I am very pleased to provide the citizens of Lynnwood with the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts 2013-14 Biennial Report. It is clear that the early visionaries of the City's park system made no small plans. Over 50 years later, we are still working hard to provide the dedicated leadership and stewardship of our open spaces, trails and wonderful recreation programs and facilities that truly make the City of Lynnwood a great place to live.

I am extremely proud to lead a department that plays such a pivotal role in creating a strong community and improving our citizens' health and wellness, as well as the quality of our environment.

Our team of professionals is dedicated to the City's vision which states, "the City will be a regional model for a sustainable, vibrant community with engaged citizens and an accountable government." Through the 2013-14 biennium, our organization worked to build upon a long-standing history of maintaining the City's beautiful parks and open spaces. In addition, we worked through some difficult economic conditions which required us to continue to reevaluate our services and staffing levels. The department's latest reorganization represents a significant shift and it provides a progressive approach to strategic decision making and is expected to realize even greater efficiencies. We are proud of our ability to adjust and forge new partnerships and relationships that will help to sustain our menu of services.

As you will note in this report, we continue to contribute heavily to the City's economic impact, environmental sustainability, and social well-being through our Healthy Communities initiatives.

I am proud of the accomplishments that we have highlighted in this report. We could not have achieved this high level of service delivery without the support of the Mayor, City Council and our dedicated core of citizen volunteers who serve on our boards and commissions. In 2013, we began the extensive process to update our Park, Arts, Recreation & Conservation (PARC) Plan, which we anticipate to complete later this year. Looking ahead, we will continue our efforts to maintain our beautiful parks and facilities, and continue to focus on delivering quality programs to our ever-changing community.



Respectfully submitted,

*Lynn D. Sordel*

*Director of Parks, Recreation  
and Cultural Arts*

*City of Lynnwood*

# Creating a healthy community through people, parks, programs and partnerships

## Administration

- Earned \$5.566 million in total department revenue from all sources, \$5.479 million from Recreation programs and services
- Awarded \$5 million Conservation Futures grant to purchase 13.02 acres in Lund's Gulch
- Received grant to create and install a permanent interpretive Interurban Car #55 exhibit at Heritage Park
- Hosted annual Arbor Day celebrations and received the City's 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> annual Tree City USA awards with 146 trees planted
- Partnered with the Parks & Recreation Foundation's Par 4 Kids Golf Tournament, generating contributions totaling \$16,600 for the Recreation Benefit Fund



*Arbor Day Tree Planting*

## Park Operations & Maintenance

- Completed development of Stadler Ridge Park, a new neighborhood park serving the Spruce neighborhood, for a total cost of \$652,842.15 using a \$350,000 Washington State WWRP grant
- Completed replacement of overwater boardwalk at Scriber Lake Park for a total cost of \$150,832
- Completed Phase 4, environmental and ADA improvements, at Lynndale Park Amphitheater for a total cost of \$85,979 supported by a 50% match from Snohomish County
- Seal coated and restriped Lynndale Park, Daleway Park, Meadowdale Athletic Complex and the Skate Park parking lots
- Continued partnership with Pacific Little League to provide baseball and softball opportunities for youth at Lynndale Park and host to the 2014 All-Stars World Series team
- Continued to support the City's community service program partnering with the Police Department and Court to put community service workers to work in our parks in lieu of incarceration providing a labor savings for the City totalling 3,364 hours

## Recreation

### Recreation Center

- Sold 9,787 10-visit cards generating \$372,472
- Booked 2,066 facility rentals generating \$389,636
- Hosted 64,761 adult, 81,785 youth and 17,598 family drop-in visits
- Provided swim lessons to 19,146 registrants
- Offered 1,195 Fitness Pass classes totalling 12,477 participant visits

### Recreation Programs

- Offered monthly CPR & First Aid classes to the community generating over \$51,502
- Served 1,931 summer campers in Kamp Kookamunga (with a record 103% fill rate in 2014)
- Senior Center had 105 volunteers who contributed over 7,343 hours of service equivalent to 3.5 FTE with an in-kind value of \$165,585 (2013)
- Introduced new 62+ outdoor recreation activities: whitewater rafting, zip lining, stand-up paddle boarding, indoor skydiving, horseback riding, and backyard hikes



Scriber Lake Park Boardwalk



Kamp Kookamunga

## Community Programs

- Managed the City's Outreach and Communication Program by publishing Inside Lynnwood, launching the GovDelivery eNews service, launching Social Media, developing web content and issuing press releases
- Managed, facilitated or hosted City and City-partnered events including MLK Celebrations, Stand Against Racism events, Citizen Summit, Celebrate! Music & Dance Festival, Lynnwood Farmers Market, annual Celebration of Food Festival, VFW Memorial and Veterans Day ceremonies, Domestic Violence Awareness Month, Affordable Health Care event, Edmonds School Foundation Celebrate Schools 5K Run/Walk event, and more
- Produced annual Lynnwood University program with 87 graduates
- Hosted 12 Shakespeare in the Park performances viewed by more than 1,800 attendees/year
- Generated more than \$37,000 in event/program sponsorships (2014)
- Awarded \$1.9 million BikeLink grant from Verdant Health Commission to improve regional bicycle infrastructure & safety (2014)
- Facilitated the successful relaunch of an employee wellness initiative including assessments, program components and evaluations
- Earned an AWC WellCity Award (2014)

## Golf

- Studied operations of the Golf Course and developed strategies to make Golf Course financially viable
- Negotiated and executed a 5-year contract with Premier Golf Centers, LLC for management of the Golf Course
- Added a tee box to the #2 hole
- Negotiated with Edmonds Community College to secure additional parking spaces for Golf Course patrons



Shakespeare in the Park



Lynnwood Golf Course

## Core Value Stories

We are a part of Lynnwood's daily life and we shape the character of the community by:

## Providing stewardship of our resources

In recent years, the Lynnwood Municipal Golf Course experienced financial distress. Even though the 20-year general obligation bonds had been retired in 2012, with the sagging economy, overall downward trends continued in total golf rounds and business. In 2013, we extensively studied an array of options ranging from closing the course to revising the business model to ensure greater revenue success and stability. The City Council later voted to approve moving the operation of the Golf Course to a privately-managed, third party operator. On January 1, 2014, Premier Golf Centers, LLC assumed management of the course and ended year one operations with net positive income. Premier also successfully assumed management of course maintenance in May.

 [www.LynnwoodGC.com](http://www.LynnwoodGC.com)



Lynnwood Golf Course

## Providing recreation opportunities for all ages

Any day of the week, you'll find all sorts of fitness and recreation enthusiasts visiting the Lynnwood Recreation Center. Some of our most dedicated visitors are friends and family members recreating together. Since 2004, Jenni and her daughters, Bella (10) and Sophia (13), have been coming to the Rec Center. This threesome is motivated not just by the benefits of being physically active but also by viewing it as a regular family recreation experience. Over the years, they've tried lots of programs and have invited their friends to join in the fun. These days, you'll find Jenni, Sophia and Bella regularly attending Group Centergy® and Group Kick® together. Jenni and Sophia have recently added a third class to their rotation: Group Power®. Not to be outdone, these women have signed up for the Biggest Mover contest and are all in the top 10 for most classes attended. Every once in a while, Dad is convinced to join them and the whole family works up a sweat, laughs, and enjoys kicking their way to good health.

 [www.PlayLynnwood.com](http://www.PlayLynnwood.com)

## Contributing to the City's economic vitality

Each month the Lynnwood Recreation Center hosts more than 35,000 visits - that's equivalent to the entire population of Lynnwood! Visitors come from all over the region to splash around in over 20,000 square feet of pure aquatic fun. An impact survey conducted in the spring of 2014 found that visitors came from as many as 42 different cities, three states and Canada. Our family-friendly facility offers a premium experience for an affordable price, attracting families, groups, camps and hoards of birthday parties. The Recreation Center is a strong attraction for the City as 97% of our open swim visitors came to Lynnwood for the express purpose of visiting the Rec Center and, while in town, spent an average of \$12/person dining out, shopping and buying groceries. To be expected with the Rec Center's extraordinary demand, parking has become a premium on the Civic Campus and we look forward to the much needed completion of the parking lot expansion.

 [www.PlayLynnwood.com](http://www.PlayLynnwood.com)



*Group Kick® class at the Rec Center*



*Lynnwood Rec Center Open Swim*

## Promoting health and wellness

Employees spend approximately 36 percent of their total waking hours at work, and more employees are becoming overweight from poor eating habits and physical inactivity. Heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes are all linked by common risk factors associated with poor eating habits, physical inactivity and tobacco use. As employers, it makes sense for us to get the most out of our employees by creating a work environment that supports and encourages good health. And that is just what Lynnwood has done. Three years ago the City of Lynnwood launched a Wellness Program for its employees which has grown into a comprehensive, ongoing program that focuses on the well-being of its employees. The mission of the program is to create a culture that's sustainable, supports positive health practices and encourages individual fitness goals and healthy choices. The City of Lynnwood values employee health. We strive to maintain a productive work environment and encourage the fulfillment of personal health and wellness goals. We know that each employee and the City will benefit from a greater awareness of health risks and developing methods of maintaining good health.

In 2014, the City of Lynnwood earned the prestigious AWC WellCity Award, which earns the City a 2% discount on medical premiums. That's a savings of over \$120,000!

 [www.ci.lynnwood.wa.us/HealthyCommunities](http://www.ci.lynnwood.wa.us/HealthyCommunities)



Employee Wellness Walk

## Fostering social connections

Five days a week, the Lynnwood Senior Center offers a warm, friendly place for adults 62+ to gather, socialize and recreate. Providing a social outlet and connection to a community of friends is particularly important on holidays when many seniors become isolated. In 2013 and 2014, the Senior Center hosted a Thanksgiving Day potluck event for 70 members and their friends and family. With main dishes of turkey breasts, mashed potatoes, stuffing and rolls donated by the Senior Center's Appreciation Fund, the Center Supervisor and five dedicated volunteers hosted this free event on an otherwise closed day of operations. This provided a unique opportunity for fellowship and celebration.

 [www.ci.lynnwood.wa.us/SeniorCenter](http://www.ci.lynnwood.wa.us/SeniorCenter)



Lynnwood Senior Center Pinochle Group

## Embracing innovation & Leaving a legacy for future generations

Former Parks Superintendent, Bob Colinas, and his successor, Eric Peterson, have managed Lynnwood's park system with a long-held philosophy of providing quality parks and services utilizing green practices and searching out new efficiencies. Our collective goal is to manage these parks to last not just years or decades to come, but for centuries.

### Conservation and Management

We conserve and maintain more than 200 acres of urban forests, wetlands and natural habitat areas. In addition to regular park maintenance, our Park Operations crew haul away garbage and illegally dumped material, rehab trails, remove invasive species and repair or replace worn equipment. Our community also contributes and supports park maintenance by volunteering to remove invasive species material such as English Ivy. This past biennium, volunteer groups helped to remove more than 100 yards of invasive material.

While our aging park system has more than \$1 million worth of deferred maintenance need, we continue to restore, repair, improve and maintain our sites and facilities. In 2014, we completed a major urban forest restoration project at Lynndale Park that removed and replaced dead and hazard trees with new, native tree species and understory vegetation. Additional landscaping and defined pathways addressed the significant root compaction and degradation of the natural area surrounding the Amphitheater.

### Efficiency Improvements

In 2014, our crews began repairing and upgrading the existing lighting in the parks, completing the following projects:

- Replacement of all HID exterior building, bollard and parking lights at Heritage Park. This project included replacement of 20 high efficiency LED retrofit lamps with an overall energy savings of 75%.
- Retrofitting the Wilcox Park and Civic Campus seasonal lighting with LED replacement bulbs, resulting in energy savings and reducing ongoing maintenance costs and risk of combustion due to lower operating temperatures.
- Retrofitting park restrooms and meeting areas with LED lighting. By using energy efficient lighting we are now able to add additional fixtures to supplement restroom and entryway lighting. Additional lighting creates a safer and more appealing environment throughout the park system (this project is ongoing).



## Supporting staff professional development and excellence

The high level of service the City of Lynnwood Recreation Center provides the community and its customers depends directly on the investment we make in recruiting and retaining high-quality staff. The City understands the importance of investing in ongoing staff training and professional development to help staff boost their effectiveness and learn new skills with a focus on customer service. This process helps develop a more effective, efficient, productive and motivated workforce.

Recreation Coordinator Amy Kirk is a shining example of the investment the City is making in staff development. Amy was selected to participate in Leadership Snohomish County for Young Professionals and was recently chosen to be a national trainer for MOSSA. Amy stated, "There is an open mindedness to trainings at the City of Lynnwood that has supported me in not only improving my current job functions but also as a young professional. The leadership training pushed me out of my comfort zone and because of this I have grown significantly professionally and personally."

We value our employees and encourage them take ownership of their jobs and to strive for personal excellence; for this, our customers benefit.



Amy Kirk teaching Group Power®

## Engaging and responding to the changing needs of our community

In 2014, the City of Lynnwood was awarded the National Council on Aging's Programs of Excellence Award for the development of the Intergenerational Garden; a community garden built by teens and seniors. This project brought together teen and Senior Center volunteers who worked hand-in-hand to build a community garden. Participants aged 4 to 90 years old constructed 30 raised garden beds intended to offer opportunities for intergenerational pairs of gardeners to grow food together. Twenty-five raised garden boxes built four feet square and three feet tall were placed in a large rectangle, with five one-foot high raised beds in the middle. The waist-high outer boxes allow access for people with knee problems or who use mobility aides. The inner box assignments were initially provided to a preschool and a Boy Scout troop that grew vegetables for the food bank.

The purpose of this project is to increase wellness, foster intergenerational interaction and provide access to fresh produce for older adults. Senior Center Supervisor Mary-Anne Grafton says, "I saw an eighty year-old man teach a sixteen year-old girl how to use a power tool, and instantly knew this was the 'why' of the project. Youth have so much to learn from older adults, and older adults have so much to give."

The City's commitment to the Healthy Communities Program remains strong and community gardens can play a significant role in enhancing the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being necessary to build healthy and socially sustainable communities.



Intergenerational Garden

## Creating a connected community

The City of Lynnwood, in partnership with the cities of Edmonds and Mountlake Terrace, was awarded a \$1.9 million grant from the Verdant Health Commission to construct or connect more than ten miles of bicycle lanes/infrastructure connecting South Snohomish County to the Interurban Trail and key transit and attraction destinations. The project, BikeLink, will knit together a fragmented system into a functional skeleton offering several key north/south and east/west travel corridors to travel by bike. BikeLink will be a five-year project with construction to be completed by 2018 and will offer community education, group rides, bike rodeos and other outreach efforts to engage the community on their new bicycling infrastructure asset.

 [www.VerdantHealth.org/BikeLink](http://www.VerdantHealth.org/BikeLink)



*Senior Bike Ride*

## Providing premier customer service

With close to 10,000 weekly visitors to the Recreation Center, our Customer Service staff see a lot of faces, answer thousands of phone calls and are the face of our organization. We are fortunate to have a core group of customer service wizards who have served the City for many years. One of those faces belongs to Jean Gersbach. Jean reports for duty every morning at 5:30am and has done so for the past 15 years. Rarely sick, Jean provides a consistency that has come to be relied upon by our morning customers, all of whom Jean knows by name. Jean loves our morning customers and even started a coffee bunch club for them to hang out and relax after their daily workout.

Jean loves gardening, reading, family, dogs, and roots for the Sounders, Seahawks and Packers. If you see Jean, say, "hello!" Jean LOVES her job and we love her!



*Customer Service Staff Member Jean Gersbach*

## A Look Ahead

The 2015/2016 biennium will largely be focused on long-range planning, finding efficiencies and continuous process improvements. The following projects and initiatives represent some of our top priorities:

### **Parks, Arts, Recreation & Conservation (PARC) Comprehensive Plan**

After two years of inventorying and assessing our programs and services, we will be crafting a new, 10-year comprehensive plan. This plan will identify the value of current assets, deferred maintenance needs, prioritize capital renewal plans, and determine future level of service needs and goals. The plan is being developed with significant community input and is expected to be completed by the end of 2015.

### **Healthy Communities Action Plan**

A citywide workgroup joined by community members will form with the purpose to create a 10-year Healthy Communities Action Plan which will collectively address Policy, Infrastructure Improvements, and Programming. This strategic plan will be a citywide endeavor, created collectively to contain numerous strategies across departments to help us reach the broader goal of improving the health of Lynnwood with a specific focus on improving access to healthy foods and increased physical activity.

### **Staff Reorganization**

Several reorganizations of staff in both Parks Operations and Recreation Divisions have begun. These shifts should be completed by June 2015 with the purpose to increase efficiency, maximize employee skills, and further develop our professional workforce.

### **Preparing For the Silver Tsunami**

An evaluation of our Adults 62+ programs and services will begin to identify new program growth opportunities, staff realignments, and providing additional resources to meet the needs for our rapidly increasing senior population.

### **Deferred Maintenance**

An effort to prioritize the extensive list of needed repair, equipment replacement, and capital renewal of our aging park system is underway. Strategies for addressing these needs will be developed and included in the PARC Plan.

### **Capital Projects**

We have several capital projects in various planning stages to secure funding, initiate development or complete. They include:

- Lund's Gulch—secure newly acquired Seabrook Heights property and begin planning for future use
- Lynndale Park—create an off-leash dog run area
- Meadowdale Playfields—artificially turf two existing sand soccer fields
- Meadowdale Neighborhood Park—expand parking, construct a picnic shelter and develop a Pocket Farm in partnership with Farmer Frog
- Rowe Park—apply for state RCO grant to develop this future neighborhood park
- Scriber Creek Trail—begin planning for trail improvements on existing path and plan for future extension to Lund's Gulch

### **Restoring Arts Programming**

The Lynnwood Arts Commission is developing a new Cultural Arts Plan that is expected to be adopted in early 2016 and will outline programs, projects and policies that will continue to enhance Lynnwood's creative resources.

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