

King County Parks **Your**  King County  
**Big Backyard**

King County  
Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Parks and Recreation Division



Parks Omnibus Ordinance (Ordinance 14509)  
Report to the King County Council

**2011**  
**Fourth Quarter Report**  
October – December 2011

WE'RE AT WORK SO YOU CAN PLAY

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## **I. Executive Summary**

Based on preliminary year-end data, business revenues in 2011 are nearly 10 percent lower than in 2010, which is due in large part to Cirque du Soleil cancelling its West Coast appearances for 2011. The decline in revenues was further affected by a wet, rainy spring, which meant fewer visitors to the system and more rain-out games and practices on the Division's dirt ballfields.

Overall, revenues at Marymoor Park were down 26 percent compared with 2010, which again was largely due to Cirque du Soleil not performing in 2011. However, revenue from facility rentals is up 78 percent for the year, as a result of new and returning events, such as the International Children's Festival, the Evergreen Hospital Gala, large picnics, and charity runs.

Revenue was down significantly from this year's summer concert series, as only seven shows were booked by the production company this season. In 2010, there were 14 shows, and the historical average has been 12 shows per season. Most shows in 2011 were well-attended, but fewer performances at the concert venue meant a 47 percent decline overall.

The second annual King County Parks' Big Backyard 5K benefit run and walk was held in May at Marymoor Park. More than 1,200 walkers and runners completed the course, and the event grossed \$55,000, including title sponsorship by Group Health.

The Division was notified of several grant awards in 2011, including several large grants from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, which is administered by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. These matching grants will help the Division to develop the Issaquah Segment of the East Lake Sammamish Trail (\$500,000), acquire property at the northeast edge of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildlife Park (\$500,000), and build a parking lot and trailhead at Duthie Hill Park (\$317,000).

From July to September, the Division worked with consultants to carry out a multi-faceted public engagement process that focused on customer satisfaction, and specifically the role the Division can play now and in the future in meeting the community's parks and recreation needs. The effort included two focus groups with King County residents, a series of on-site intercept surveys of park and trail users, and an online survey. Funding for this effort was made possible in part by a grant from the National Center for Civic Innovation (NCCI).

## II. Summary of Revenues and Expenditures

### Parks and Recreation Division Revenues and Expenditures

	Revenues	Expenditures
2011 Adopted	\$26,597,910	\$29,184,939
2011 Revised <sup>1</sup>	\$26,607,010	\$29,072,858
2011 Estimated <sup>1</sup>	\$26,014,690	\$29,072,858
2010 Actual	\$26,414,318	\$26,064,830

### Fourth Quarter - Business Revenues<sup>2</sup> and Expenditures

	Actual Revenues	Actual Expenditures
January 1 – Dec. 31, 2011 (Preliminary) <sup>3</sup>	\$4,240,791	\$26,992,780
January 1 – Dec. 31, 2010	\$4,706,002	\$26,064,830

### Revenues

Based on preliminary year-end data, business revenues in 2011 were nearly 10 percent lower than in 2010, which is due in part to the 2010 booking of Cirque du Soleil. However, revenues were also approximately 11 percent lower than in 2009, a recent comparable non-Cirque year. The wet, rainy spring also had a negative impact on business revenues, as the Division's dirt ballfields were often not playable, and games and practices had to be cancelled.

Since the start of the first levy in 2004, the Division's financial plan has assumed a five percent annual target for the growth of its business revenues, which the Division successfully achieved for seven consecutive years until 2011. In recent years, the Division has been struggling with this five percent growth target, in part because of the poor economic climate and in part because it has already transferred many revenue-generating facilities, especially pools, which in the past generated more than \$2 million in revenues. Moreover, in the past decade, the Division has taken great strides to maximize the revenue-generating capacity of its assets, converting much of its existing ballfield inventory to synthetic turf and making other investments in facilities with the potential to generate revenue. As the Division's inventory is now largely made up of natural area parks and regional trails, sustaining a five percent annual business revenue growth rate in future years will become increasingly difficult.

<sup>1</sup> 2011 revised includes a supplemental request as approved by Council. Estimated includes that supplemental request and revisions to revenues made by the Office of Economic and Forecast Analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Business revenues include user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues. Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the division are excluded from this total.

<sup>3</sup> Preliminary data as of February 7, 2012.

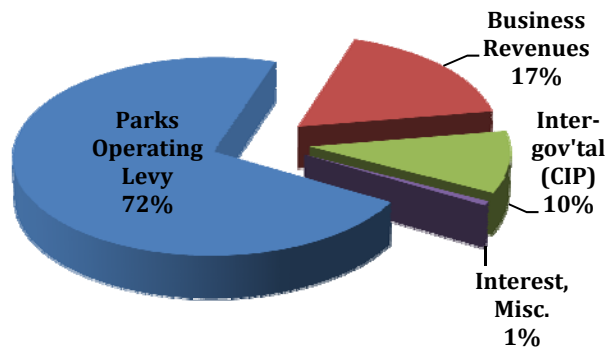
In 2011, business revenues are projected to comprise about 16 percent of the Division's 2011 projected revenue. Although this is similar to the percentage in 2002 at the start of the Parks Business Transition Plan era, the Division's revenue-generating capacity from its assets has shifted, mainly due to the transfer of facilities, such as pools and local parks. The business revenue forecast for the remaining assets has risen from a total of about \$2.3 million in 2002 to more than \$4.6 million in the 2011 adopted budget.

**Expenditures**

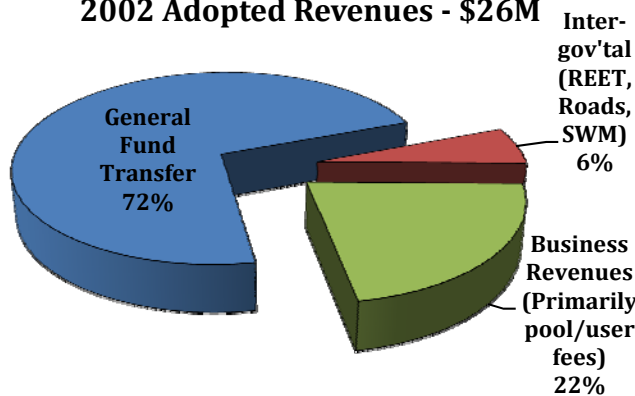
Based on preliminary year-end data, total 2011 expenditures equaled about 93 percent of the Division's annual expenditure budget. This expenditure pattern is in line with historic business trends and reflects the Division's conservative approach to spending given lower business revenues.

As long as the target fund balance is achieved, the Division intends to spend the maximum amount of its expenditure authority on maintaining parks, open space, and trails. This may not result in the Division achieving maintenance at levels comparable to historic levels prior to 2002; however, the Division is committed to maintaining its assets at maximum possible levels given its limited resources.

**2011 Adopted Revenues - \$26.6M**



**2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M**



### III. Revenues – Key Business Units

#### Marymoor Park

	2011 thru Q4	2010 thru Q4	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - Facilities	\$190,343	\$107,229	\$83,114	78%
Rev - Ballfields	\$922,535	\$924,321	-\$1,786	0%
<b>Non-Traditional</b>				
Rev – Parking <sup>1</sup>	\$637,855	\$625,311	\$12,544	2%
Rev – Concerts <sup>2</sup>	\$169,720	\$321,200	-\$151,480	-47%
Rev - Concessions	\$111,364	\$134,436	-\$23,072	-17%
Rev - Cirque du Soleil <sup>3</sup>		\$625,363	-\$625,363	-100%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$2,032,000</b>	<b>\$2,738,000</b>	<b>-\$706,000</b>	<b>-26%</b>
<b>Total Expenditures (rounded)<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>\$3,388,000</b>	<b>\$3,671,000</b>	<b>-\$283,000</b>	<b>-8%</b>

1. Includes revenue from parking violations.

2. Includes revenue from on-site ticket sales.

3. Cirque du Soleil cancelled its West Coast appearances in 2011.

4. As in past years, estimated expenditures include direct costs. Estimated costs do not include "loan-in labor", i.e. labor that may have been contributed by other work units. About \$187,000 in direct loan-in labor was associated with Marymoor in 2011, and \$174,000 in 2010 (this loan-in figure does not include benefits, overhead, or other direct or indirect costs associated with such labor).

Source: Parks and Recreation Division CLASS software system for revenue tracking; ARMS financial reports for expenditures.

#### 2011 Fourth Quarter Highlights: Marymoor Park

- Overall, revenues at Marymoor Park were down 26 percent compared with 2010, which was largely due to Cirque du Soleil cancelling its West Coast appearances in 2011. However, revenue from facility rentals was up 78 percent for the year, thanks to new and returning events, such as the International Children’s Festival, the Evergreen Hospital Gala, large picnics, and charity runs.
- Revenue was down significantly from this year’s summer concert series, as only seven shows were booked by the production company this season. In 2010, there were 14 shows, and the historical average has been 12 shows per season. Most shows in 2011 were well-attended, but fewer performances at the concert venue meant a 47 percent decline overall. Concert revenue is generated from rental facility fees, parking, and on-site ticket sales administration fees.
- Starting in October 2011, the Division initiated a permit system to manage professional dog walking businesses that utilize the park’s popular off-leash dog area. Professional dog walking services must pay permit and impact fees and have the option of reducing the fee through hours served in helping to steward the park. While this change is not expected to have a significant impact on concession revenue, the new system has reduced complaints and generated many positive comments, especially from the public and the Division’s key community partner in stewarding the off-leash area, Serve Our Dog Area (S.O.D.A.)

## Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC)

	2011 thru Q4	2010 thru Q4	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - Facilities	\$632,913	\$603,645	\$29,268	5%
Rev - Courses	\$101,841	\$116,995	-\$15,154	-13%
Rev - Drop in	\$31,972	\$33,620	-\$1,648	-5%
Rev - Conference center	\$17,144	\$22,928	-\$5,784	-25%
<b>Non-Traditional</b>				
Rev - Concessions	\$49,525	\$36,685	\$12,840	35%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$833,000</b>	<b>\$814,000</b>	<b>\$19,000</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Total Expenditures (rounded)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$3,181,000</b>	<b>\$2,955,000</b>	<b>\$226,000</b>	<b>8%</b>

1. As in past years, estimated expenditures include direct costs. Estimated costs do not include "loan-in labor", i.e. labor that may have been contributed by other work units. WKCAC recorded about \$103,000 of loan-in labor in 2011 compared with approximately \$75,000 in 2010 (this loan-in figure does not include benefits, overhead or other direct or indirect costs associated with such labor.)

Source: Parks and Recreation Division CLASS software system for revenue tracking; ARMS financial reports for expenditures.

### 2011 Fourth Quarter Highlights: WKCAC

- Overall, revenues from the WKCAC were up slightly compared with 2010 and continue to be at levels similar to revenues from the past several years. The WKCAC hosted some major events in 2011, including the U.S. Synchronized Swimming Nationals, the Pacific Coast Swimming Invitational, and the Washington State Special Olympics Championships. These events helped increase revenue in the facilities and concessions categories, but also had a negative impact on revenue from conference center rentals and public programs.
- The WKCAC was closed for maintenance in August as the Division continues to upgrade the facility in preparation for the NCAA Division I Men's Swimming and Diving Championships in March 2012 and the U.S. Olympic Team Dive trials in June 2012. Thanks to energy efficiency upgrades made to the facility in 2010 and 2011, Puget Sound Energy awarded the WKCAC a \$55,570 rebate.

### Fields and Facilities Business Unit

	2011 thru Q4	2010 thru Q4	Change (\$)	Change (%)
<b>Traditional</b>				
Rev - Ballfields	\$353,004	\$378,414	-\$25,410	-7%
Rev - Facility Rentals	\$225,909	\$220,854	\$5,055	2%
<b>Non-Traditional</b>				
Rev - Camping/RV	\$71,456	\$68,537	\$2,919	4%
<b>Revenues - Total (rounded)</b>	<b>\$650,000</b>	<b>\$668,000</b>	<b>-\$17,000</b>	<b>-3%</b>

## **2011 Fourth Quarter Highlights: Field and Facilities**

- Overall, revenues from fields and facilities were down slightly in 2011 when compared to 2010, and revenues have remained largely stable since the major field turf conversion projects at Preston Athletic Fields and Steve Cox Memorial Park in 2008. Poor weather conditions in the spring negatively affected ballfield revenue, as many of the Division's dirt ballfields were often not playable, and games and practices had to be cancelled.
- Camping revenues were up slightly for 2011, making up for a weak first two quarters when the west side of Tolt-MacDonald Park was closed for several months due to flood damage.

### **Revenue – Other Sources**

The Division laid the groundwork for new partnerships and cultivated relationships with existing partners in 2011, meeting with more than 25 local businesses and public relations firms. These efforts are expected to generate business revenues in 2012 and beyond through new events, sponsorships, and recreation amenities, providing critical support for the Division's operations and maintenance.

The second annual King County Parks' Big Backyard 5K benefit run and walk was held in May at Marymoor Park. More than 1,200 walkers and runners completed the course, and the event grossed \$55,000, including title sponsorship by Group Health.

The Division was notified of several grant awards in 2011, including:

- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – Trails grant for the development of the Issaquah segment of the East Lake Sammamish Trail - \$500,000
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – Local Parks grant for acquiring property at the northeast edge of Cougar Mountain Regional Wildlife Park - \$500,000
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – Local Parks grant for developing a parking lot and trailhead at Duthie Hill Park - \$317,000
- 4Culture grant for the White Center Teen Program to provide visual and performing arts classes in 2011-2012 - \$6,000
- 4Culture grant for replacing the floors at the historic Preston Community Center in 2011 - \$7,5000
- National Center for Civic Innovation grant for customer satisfaction measurement in 2011 - \$4,780

## **IV. Agreements with Other Organizations and Jurisdictions**

### **Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program**

The CPG Program continues to develop partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities throughout the King County Parks' system. There are currently more than 50 projects in various stages of negotiation, planning, design, permitting, or construction that represent \$14 million in CPG grants and/or Capital Improvement Program commitments. By leveraging community



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investments (cash, grants, in-kind donations, volunteer labor, etc.), these CPG projects will add new public recreation facilities valued at an estimated \$50 million. The status of key CPG projects includes:

- The synthetic field conversion project at Ravensdale Park was completed in December 2011.
- The synthetic field conversion project at Petrovitsky Park is under construction and anticipated to be completed in March 2012.
- Final permitting continues with the City of Kirkland for a new lacrosse facility at Big Finn Hill Park.
- The foundation for Sammamish Rowing Association's boathouse at Marymoor Park was installed and the utilities completed. The materials for the building's structure will be delivered during the first quarter of 2012.

### **Transferring Division Assets**

The transfer of parks within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is an on-going effort as part of the County's larger annexation strategy. These efforts have intensified in light of the continuing pressure on the County's general fund, which supported the Division's UGA facilities through 2010. As of 2011, the Division's remaining UGA facilities are supported by the business revenues that the Division generates from assets throughout the system. The remaining urban unincorporated facilities lie largely within the North Highline and Federal Way UGAs, and their transfers are highly dependent upon annexation activity.

## **V. Community Outreach and Involvement**

### **Volunteer Program**

In 2011, a total of 8,360 volunteers provided 58,350 hours of service during 430 events benefitting more than 50 sites throughout the Division's vast system of parks and trails, including some 2,680 volunteers and 20,000 hours during the fourth quarter. Although it is difficult to compare numbers across years due to factors such as weather and readiness of projects, the volunteer program's 2011 participation levels are similar to those in past years. Using the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office's rate of \$14 per hour for volunteer labor, the Division estimates that its volunteers provided the monetary equivalent of \$816,900 in service hours in 2011.

Volunteer projects ranged from building and repairing backcountry trails to removing invasive and noxious weeds to clearing litter and other improvement and beautification projects, including planting more than 23,000 native trees and shrubs and restoring habitat across some 38 acres and 2,150 feet of riparian and Puget Sound shoreline.

More than 50 groups were involved in 2011, such as local businesses, youth groups, churches, community groups, and non-profit organizations, and many individuals also volunteered their

time through the Parks and Trails Ambassador Program, Eagle Scouts, and the AmeriCorps Individual Placement Program.

Some highlights include:

- The Division hosted the first annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner in May, which recognized the on-going commitment of some 40 community groups whose hard work and dedication have been invaluable to the Division's efforts to steward its vast system. The King County Council issued a proclamation declaring May 12, 2011, as "Parks Volunteer Day."
- In 2011, several service-oriented celebrations brought out thousands of volunteers, such as Earth Week in April (with some 300 volunteers) and the United Way Day of Caring and National Day of Service in September (with some 3,000 volunteers). These nationally-commemorated events are an important tool for the Division to attract volunteers, especially among local companies who encourage their employees to take time from work to volunteer.
- Two sets of AmeriCorps National Community Civilian Corps (NCCC) teams supported the Division in 2011 in April and November. Camping for six weeks in the yurts at Tolt-MacDonald Park, the teams helped plant native trees and shrubs, remove invasive and noxious weeds, work with volunteers, and build and repair backcountry trails. The Division also worked with Tolt Middle School in Carnation where two NCCC volunteers from the November team assisted teachers each school day.

### **Community Outreach**

From July to September, the Division worked with consultants to carry out a multi-faceted public engagement process that focused on customer satisfaction, and specifically on the role the Division can play now and in the future in meeting the community's parks and recreation needs. The effort included two focus groups with King County residents, a series of on-site intercept surveys of park and trail users, and an online survey. Funding for this effort was made possible in part by a grant from the National Center for Civic Innovation.

The Division was involved in a variety of community and corporate outreach events in 2011, doubling outreach opportunities from the year prior. Some examples included participating in the Seattle Bike Expo, White Center's Jubilee Days, the Mountaineers' OutdoorsFest, and at various REI store location events, as well as having a presence at the health and wellness fairs at many local employers, such as The Boeing Company, PACCAR, and Perkins Coie.

Other special events included:

- The Division sponsored "Little Footprint, Big Forest," a cargo container design competition that challenged participants to adapt a cargo shipping container into a low-cost, low impact camping structure. The Division received 12 entries, which were evaluated by an all-star panel of judges and scored using King County's Sustainability Scorecard. The winning design, called "RE-Tain" by Hybrid Architecture, was announced at the Built Green Conference in September. The Division is working on

building a prototype, which is anticipated to be open for public use by the summer of 2012 at Tolt-MacDonald Park.

- The Technology Access Foundation (TAF) hosted the official groundbreaking for its three-story, 25,000 square-foot Bethaday Community Learning Space at Lakewood Park in White Center. King County Executive Dow Constantine, Councilmember Joe McDermott, staff from the Division, and TAF came together in celebration of this green-built community center that will include classrooms and labs as well as community meeting space.

The Division continued to have an active presence in the media, largely focusing on utilizing social media tools, such as Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and “The Plog,” the Division’s blog.