



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lake Stevens Creates Parks Department to Improve Services for Residents

CITY OF LAKE STEVENS, WA – The City of Lake Stevens is forming a Parks and Recreation Department to better serve residents and the growing popularity of its parks, trails, and community spaces.

The City has been working to provide residents with the recreational opportunities they said were important to them in a recent community survey. Through its park plan, the City has been maintaining, updating, and building new facilities and community recreational spaces for residents to play, relax or connect with others.

“Our staff has done a wonderful job responding to the community’s desire for high-quality, inclusive and safe outdoor community and recreational spaces,” Mayor Brett Gailey said. “Every park we have improved has increased in popularity, which means we need a dedicated parks department to further enhance our offerings today and in the future.”

The City Council has been evaluating more effective ways to manage the city’s parks system to respond to the growing demand for services. Right now, the City manages parks across multiple departments, which means staff must split their time between parks and non-parks projects. The creation of a dedicated parks department will help the City deliver services more efficiently and reliably. It also means the City will be able to expand programming, host more community events, and offer more classes and other recreational activities.

“Parks enhance quality of life, physical and mental well-being, and economic vitality, which all of us appreciate and value,” Council President Steve Ewing said. “We are committed to improving the way we do things to better serve the recreational needs of residents and surrounding community members who attend our festivals, visit our parks and trails, and use our facilities. After all, we are one community around a beautiful lake.”

Completed projects include:

- **North Cove Park:** Doubled the size of the park, built The Mill a multi-purpose community venue, put in a new accessible playground, added public restrooms, expanded the beach area and concert stage.
- **Lundeen Park:** Replaced and expanded play equipment, added new walking paths, landscaping, and made the park more visible from the street so residents could find and enjoy it.
- **Cavalero Hill Community Park:** Built 16,000-square-foot skate park with playground and basketball court and added parking on the south end.
- **Frontier Heights:** Added walking trail, upgraded sports court, walking paths, picnic structures and playground (phase 1). Building multiuse synthetic baseball and soccer field, adding four pickleball courts and exercise stations (phase 2).



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Upcoming projects include:

- **20th Street Ballfield:** Add practice fields for sport activities, west side trail (Phase 1) which will run north to south within city limits, playground, parking and dog park.
- **Sunset Beach:** In master planning phase right now, but the City is working to install an accessible walking path from the parking lot to the beach, as well as reconfigure parking lot and add shade structures in picnic areas.
- **Eagle Ridge Park:** This park is home to the Eagle Ridge Community Garden and Lake Stevens Senior Center. The City is working to build a large playground, amphitheater and install interpretative signage throughout the park's passive nature trails.

The City will be reassigning three staff members from the Planning and Community Development and six staff from the Public Works departments to create the new Parks and Recreation Department. The Parks department will be led by the City's first-ever dedicated parks director, Sarah Garceau, who comes from Grants Pass, Oregon, where she was the director of county parks for six and a half years.

The Parks and Recreation Department will officially be open for business in late August and will be funded through the general fund.

Transportation Benefit District revenue can be used for park pathway/sidewalk connections

The City is asking voters to consider a sales tax of two-tenths of one percent, or two cents on a \$10 purchase, to raise revenue for transportation projects of which trails and parks qualify. While most of the funding would be used for pedestrian safety and traffic congestion relief, some funding would be used for matching funds to leverage larger grants for parks and trails.

To learn more about the City's parks projects or Transportation Benefit District proposal, visit www.lakestevenswa.gov.

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The City of Lake Stevens, Wash. (pop. 40,7000) is located 36 miles north of Seattle in Snohomish County. The City shares the name of the lake it surrounds, and is nestled between the beautiful Cascade Range and Puget Sound. The City's vision is to be "one community around the lake" with a vibrant economy, modern infrastructure, and exceptional quality of life for residents and businesses alike. More information about Lake Stevens can be found at www.lakestevenswa.gov.