



City of Burien
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burienwa.gov

September 8, 2020

King County Council Mobility and Environment Committee
Via email @ kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov

RE: Public Comment, September 9, 2020 Agenda Item 9, Proposed Ordinance No. 2020-0069

Dear Councilmembers:

The City of Burien is grateful to the King County Council for adopting Ordinance 18890 to place the 2020-2025 Parks, Recreation, Trail, and Open Space Levy Measure on the ballot and to King County voters for supporting the levy lid lift. Burien is a city that benefits greatly from this funding source. The City is very appreciative of the annual funding support and county led development of the Lake to Sound Trail through Burien, which are provided by this levy.

Burien is a prime example of a city in King County that is in need of supplemental funds to support low income communities, communities of color, and a wonderful 350 acre park system inherited from King County that requires investment to maintain healthy natural areas for the entire community to enjoy. Burien is one of the poorest and more diverse cities in the county. There is a park and park maintenance deficit in our poorest neighborhoods such as Boulevard Park, Beverly Park, and Chelsea Park. Residents in Burien have inadequate access to regional trails due to poor connectivity across the City. Moreover, we need assistance to fund capital programs, to reinvest and invest in parks, and to provide more recreation programs to serve the underserved.

The only dedicated parks funding the City has for parks, recreation, trails and open space is the approximately \$200,000 a year from this levy and an estimated \$190,000 a year from the Community Development Block Grant Program. This funding is used for capital and maintenance projects. The City has used general fund balance and some reserve funds to support capital projects, but primarily relies on grants. At this point in time, there is no general fund balance to move towards fulfilling a large backlog of capital and major maintenance projects equating to approximately \$2.5M of investment each year.

Burien's recreation programs are supported by the City's general fund, recreation revenues and typically some grant funding from King County, such as Shape Up funding, Veteran's, Seniors and Human Services Levy Funding, or Youth and Amateur Sports Grants. However, our need for subsidized programs for

youth and seniors is high. Additional funding to support and expand these programs is essential, especially for our low-income residents and communities of color.

The City made headway over the last few years in expanding the elementary and middle school afterschool programs into nearly all the schools in Burien and serving Burien students. This is primarily funded by the city, and some of these programs may not withstand the budget shortfalls in the upcoming budget cycle, where the city faces a long-term, multi-million-dollar budget deficit.

The City also supports the aquatics capital grants to support the Evergreen Pool. Although this is not a City of Burien asset; our residents use the pool and the city financially supports its operations.

As the City Council considers how to structure the new grant programs, please consider following past practices of finding community members that represent the interests of community, the KC Levy Task Force and the intent of Ordinance 18890 by ensuring that a culturally and geographically diverse set of representatives are selected that understand the parks, recreation, trails and open space needs of the region. There are many people engaged in this work, on city parks boards or commissions, the King County Play Equity Coalition, and many non-profit organizations. Consider the challenges of applicants in finding matching funds and partners that can contribute cash towards grant applications. When using demographic data as criteria in the application process, please evaluate the most recent data to the best extent possible, rather than the 2010 US Census data, as our region has changed dramatically in the past ten years.

Best of luck with your deliberations and the roll out of this important program. Feel free to contact me if you require any additional information at 206-248-5513 or carolynh@burienwa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn Hope".

Carolyn Hope
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Director



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Doug McClelland (*), Former Assistant Region Manager
Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Secretary
Josh M. Lipsky(*), Partner, Cascadia Law Group PLLC

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September 8, 2020

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Jody Weil (X), Supervisor, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
Joel Yoker, President, Snoqualmie Valley Youth Activities and
Community Center

(* Executive Committee Member
(X) Ex-Officio {non-voting} Director

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The Honorable Claudia Balducci, Council Chair
The Honorable Rod Dembowski
The Honorable Reagan Dunn
The Honorable Jeanne Kohl-Welles
The Honorable Kathy Lambert
The Honorable Joe McDermott
The Honorable Pete von Reichbauer
The Honorable Dave Upthegrove
The Honorable Girmay Zahilay

King County Council
516 Third Ave, Room 1200
Seattle, Washington 98104
Via email, kcccomitt@kingcounty.gov

Re: Support for Proposed Ordinance 2020-0069, establishing grant award criteria for King County Parks

Dear Council Chair Balducci and members of the King County Council,

Please accept our strongest support for Proposed Ordinance 2020-0069, which will establish grant award criteria for King County parks, recreation, trails and open space grant programs. This important legislation will also guide the establishment of advisory committees.

King County Parks serves as a model for sustainable land management, ensuring conservation of critical habitat and recreation access for all ages and abilities for King County residents. We wholeheartedly support King County Parks and their leadership and guidance in preserving natural areas and providing access to our public lands.

We support these grant programs as they will enable partner organizations to play a significant role in conservation and recreation efforts. Given the size and scope of all of King County, these partnerships are critical to sustain healthy ecological lands while providing recreation areas for public health and outdoor experiences for all.

On behalf of the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, we pledge to participate in an advisory capacity whenever helpful to King County Parks. And we will continue to partner on park development, regional trail connections, and land conservation projects in the Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area in King County.

Thank you for the opportunity to support these important grant programs and thank you for all that you do for spectacular King County.

Best regards,

Deputy Director

From: [Rich Macdonald](#)
To: [KCC - Committee Assistants \(Email Group\)](#)
Cc: [Cindy Krueger](#); [Mary Jean Gilman](#); [Julie Bryan](#)
Subject: Comments on Parks Levy Criteria for 9/9 Mobility and Environment Committee
Date: Tuesday, September 8, 2020 11:52:12 PM

Councilmember Dembowski
Chair, Mobility and Environment Committee
King County Council

RE: Support for Parks Levy Grant Award Criteria and Processes

Dear Councilmember Dembowski: I'm writing for the group Save the Ballard P-Patch in support of the ordinance establishing the grant award criteria and process for the King County parks, recreation, trails and open space levy. We appreciate the council continuing to press forward with the levy in the face of everything going on. Our group plans to partner with the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods to submit a grant application that will help fund acquisition of the P-Patch. A successful application will be a match for our anticipated Conservation Futures Tax award and put us over the top when combined with our private and state funding. At the end of August, with bridge financing from Verity Credit Union, we closed on the property.

Public funding mechanisms like the Levy Grants are so important to communities working hard to better their neighborhoods. Without this help, Ballard P-Patch gardeners would have no hope to save a community garden that serves 90 families and annually donates 2500 pounds of produce.

Thank you
Rich Macdonald
Save the Ballard P-Patch

cc: Cindy Krueger, Mary Jean Gilman



Public Comment in support of Aquatic Centers Grant Program

September 8, 2020

Dear King County Council Members and members of the Mobility and Environment Committee,

Thank you in advance for your efforts and support to date to include the King County Aquatic Centers Grant Program in the recent Parks Levy. On behalf of *SPLASHForward*, I share with you a few additional thoughts as you review the legislation for this grant program. These public comments act as the collective voice of those we represent from the Learn to Swim toddler, to the aquatics therapist, to the recreational swimmer, to the competitive youth club swimmer, to the Special Olympics swim team member, and to our active aging adults seeking fitness and socialization through aquatics.

SPLASHForward is the community advocacy group, aquatics thought leader and private funding partner spearheading the advocacy efforts to bring a PUBLIC world class comprehensive regional aquatics center to the Eastside and satellite facilities to the region. We aim to go beyond meeting the aquatics and wellness needs of the community. We envision an aquatic center as an accessible, culturally inclusive, operationally efficient, sustainable, and vibrant hub built on a foundation of lasting local partnerships for many generations to come. Our advocacy serves the broad aquatic needs of the region for a full range of fitness, recreation, health, wellness, and competitive aquatics programs for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. A public aquatic center is a place where EVERYONE BELONGS, feels welcome and a great source of COMMUNITY PRIDE.

Regionally, our **communities are woefully underserved** for access to public aquatics facilities that include programming such as basic water safety skills, leisure, health, wellness and aquatic sports opportunities.

As you well know, the six lane 25 yard **Forward Thrust pools** sprinkled throughout King County were **built over 50 years ago and are at the end of their useful lives**. Many cities have spent millions simply to maintain but have not expanded to meet population and programming growth needs. We are effectively squeezing out opportunities for our community for every lap lane that is in high demand. Seattle budgeted a little over \$2M last year to 'repair' its 7 indoor pools and has spent \$4.65M to date, with work still in progress. Redmond budgeted \$8M to renovate Redmond Pool and its total will be closer to \$9.2M when it nears completion at the end of this year. I could go on.

It is BEYOND time for new pools. It is time to build modern state of the art facilities that are 'right sized' to meet the needs of all residents for Learn to Swim, recreation, therapy, wellness, and competition.

With the economic impact of COVID-19 unfolding, our challenges are great.

The HEALTH & WELLNESS OF OUR COMMUNITY is essential for a healthy workforce to rebuild our economy. Public aquatic centers and community centers that allow access for EVERYONE (all ages, abilities, backgrounds) are essential for the long-term health & growth of our area. This great need will outlast the current pandemic. We must use this time to be ready when our economy comes back to life.

We believe that private partnerships and developing the full range of SOURCES for FUNDS are essential steps to being as ready as possible to enhance and build new facilities for when the economy recovers.

SPLASHForward is a registered 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity and our tax id is 83-2629157

SPLASHForward P.O. Box 417 Kirkland, WA 98083     splashforward.org info@splashforward.org

SPLASHForward is engaged with our Eastside cities, Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland, and school districts, Bellevue School District and Lake Washington School District. We provided a Best In Class addendum to the recent King County facilitated Regional Aquatics Report. We are a committed partner to building REGIONAL and PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS and leading a private funding campaign to bring local, regional, state and national resources through individuals, corporations, grants and foundations to realize much needed new aquatics facilities. With the recent unanimous Bellevue City Council support to further explore site locations and refine design options, we are working closely with the City of Bellevue to define next steps including exploring REGIONAL support and necessary PARTNERSHIPS. We are also poised to begin a fundraising feasibility study to answer how much private funding can be realized.

As part of our work with the City of Bellevue's recent Aquatic Center Feasibility Study, SPLASHForward has conducted a Feasibility Study, Analysis, and Report on aquatic programs and provides a recommended 'RIGHT SIZED' comprehensive regional Aquatic Center for Bellevue. Our study provides a wealth of information, analysis, and methodology that will be a resource for any new facilities in the region. We welcome a future opportunity to share with you our Aquatics Analysis and Study.

With our collective recent Aquatics Reports, we now have the framework to fully ENGAGE private partners.

The \$44M King County Aquatic Grants Program IS ESSENTIAL in providing CATALYTIC support to not only to Bellevue's and our Eastside City's efforts, but to the region's aquatics facility development. The momentum and opportunities for alignment across cities, school districts and local entities have never been stronger and the need more clearly defined. The six year window and grant opportunities for planning and capital funding set the stage for partnership opportunities to realize our shared aquatics facility dreams.

Let's make our communities thrive with aquatic centers that will attract and retain our diverse and growing population and most importantly, provide health and wellness opportunities for generations to come.

Please enable King County to pass the legislation of the Aquatic Centers Grant Program and companion programs.

I leave you with the following to consider...

Everyone should have Affordable Access to Learn to Swim.

- *For every child or adult that learns to swim, you not only may save their life, but you may save the life of someone else and increase the chances that they exercise as they age*
- *Drowning is 2nd leading cause of unintentional injury death for children & teens ages 1 to 17 in Washington*
- *Learn-to-Swim programs reduce the risk of drowning by 88%*
- *79% of children in households with incomes less than \$50,000 have little-to-no swimming ability*
- *91% of deaths in autistic children are due to drowning. Teaching Water Safety is the #1 priority*

We are STRONGER TOGETHER.

On behalf of SPLASHForward,



Susan Pappalardo
SPLASHForward, Board President

SPLASHForward is a registered 501(c)(3) tax-exempt public charity and our tax id is 83-2629157

SPLASHForward P.O. Box 417 Kirkland, WA 98083



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info@splashforward.org



September 8, 2020

The Honorable Rod Dembowski
Mobility and Environment Committee
King County Council
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Re: Letter of Support for King County Parks Levy Legislation, Proposed Ordinance No. 2020-0069

Dear Chair Dembowski and fellow Councilmembers:

The Wilderness Society (TWS) would like to thank you for your enduring commitment to the health and vitality of urban and rural communities throughout King County through your continued support of parks, trails, open space, and recreation. The passage of the King County Parks Levy in 2020 provided \$800 million to support critical investments in parks and open spaces, community programming, critical infrastructure, staffing, and more to deliver on the county's mission to steward, enhance and acquire parks to inspire healthy communities and offer close-to-home recreational experiences for everyone.

TWS offers our enthusiastic support for the passage of **Proposed Ordinance No. 2020-0069**. By passing this ordinance, the King County Council will ensure that roughly \$100 million in grant funding will go to improving the quality of life and environment of all residents in King County. This legislation would establish the process and guidelines by which cities, tribes, park districts, non-profits and other eligible entities seek and are awarded funding from the following competitive grant programs: the new Targeted Equity Grant Program, the Open Space – River Corridor Grant Program, the Aquatics Center Grant Program, and the Urban Capital and Open Space Grant Program. The legislation also establishes advisory committees to review and make recommendations for grant awards under these programs.

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues to take its toll here and on communities across the nation, it has laid bare stark inequities along race, class, and place. In King County, we know that access to parks and open space is not a given in every community, whether it's because parks are too few, not well maintained, or not welcoming for local residents. King County's Land Conservation Initiative recognized these inequities and committed the county to closing access gaps in underserved communities. The Parks Levy provides critical funding to realize these goals, including the new

Targeted Equity Grant Program, which provides up to \$10 million to increase access and use of parks, open spaces, and programs for recreational facilities in underserved areas in unincorporated King County and King County towns and cities. It is time to pass this legislation and begin the important process of investing in these critical spaces and facilities across the county. Recent high volumes in many of the region's public lands shows high demand for this shared resource.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a letter of support for this important work. Our team is committed to working with partners to close gaps and address inequities in the region's parks and open space system and advocating for programs, policies, and investments that improve the health and well-being of local communities. We extend our thanks to the Council for your stalwart leadership during this pandemic and for your long-standing support for parks, trails, and open space. Passage of the parks levy grants legislation will support much-needed investments in aging infrastructure, work to support the creation of new parks, trails and open spaces, and address inequities in service across the county. These investments are critical to the long-term health and vitality of our communities.

Please feel free to contact me for any further information at (206) 473-2523 or kcraig@twso.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kitty Craig".

Kitty Craig
Deputy Director, Washington State Office
Urban to Wild, Seattle Lead