



2. EXISTING CONDITIONS





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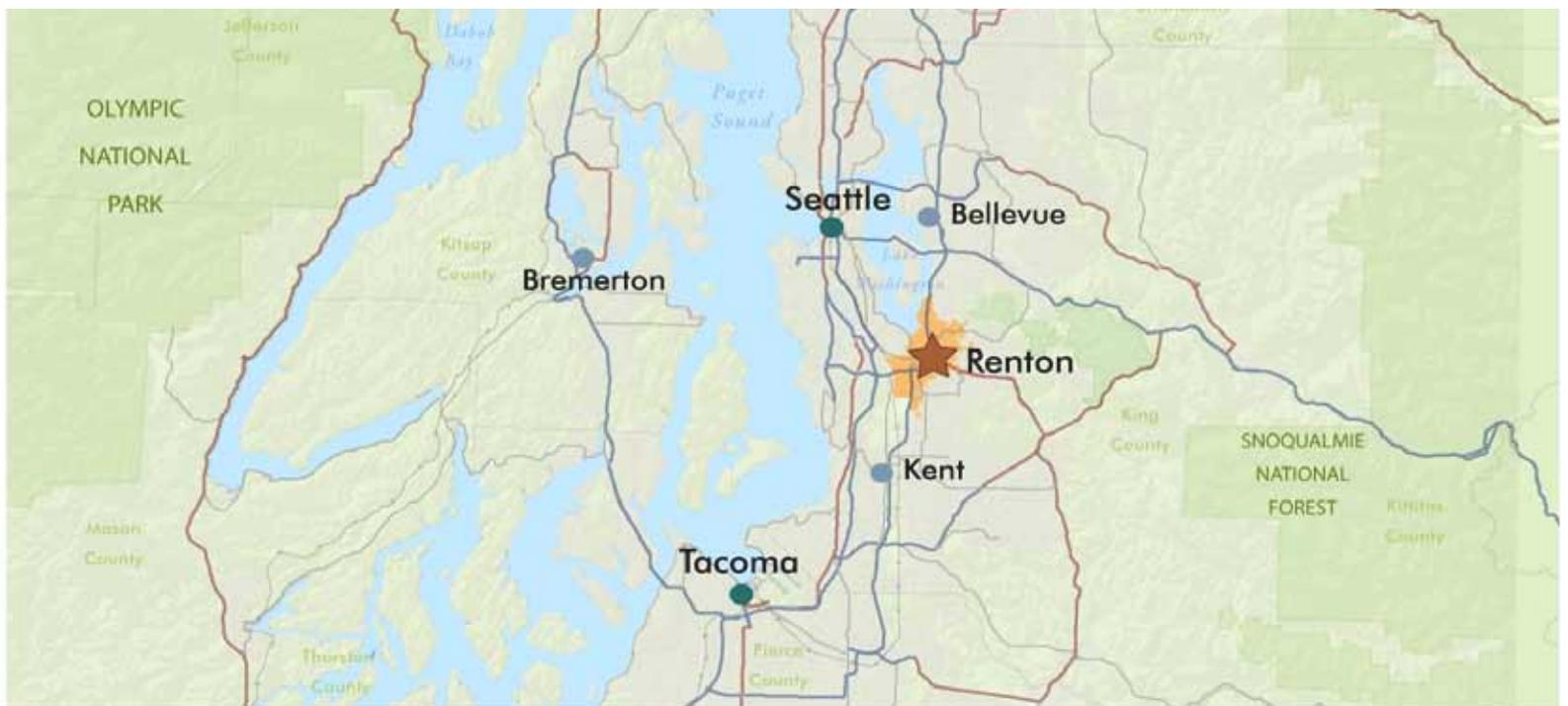
Renton, Washington is at the center of the Puget Sound region, located at the south end of Lake Washington and containing 23.3 square miles within its city limits.¹ Bordered by unincorporated King County, and the cities of Kent, Tukwila and Newcastle. Renton is situated at a key point in the regional transportation network.

RENTON TODAY

Renton, historically, was a small town located between the lake and the forest. In many ways it still retains that character. At the physical and economic core of the City, Renton's historic downtown offers shopping and year-round community events and activities. Uphill from Downtown Renton, the landscape is characterized by residential development and natural areas. The city is crossed by rivers and creeks, and its landscape is defined by riparian woodlands. The Cedar River, containing the largest run of sockeye salmon in the continental United States, runs through the heart of Renton's historic downtown. The City's rivers and Lake Washington are home to runs of chinook, sockeye and coho salmon.

But several factors place Renton on the threshold of change: the continuing transition of Renton's industrial sector and economy; continuing regional and local population growth; and the City's location at the crossroads of local, regional, national and international transportation. These factors foreshadow a new role for Renton as an important metropolitan center in the region, and in keeping with downtown Renton's designation as a Regional Growth Center.

¹ Study planning area calculation from King County GIS Center (KCGIS).



TRANSITIONING ECONOMY

Renton's industrial sector is undergoing a transition away from heavy industrial/manufacturing toward medium and light industrial uses. Although manufacturing is expected to remain stable, the number of light and medium industrial jobs in wholesale/transportation/communications/utilities is projected to nearly double in the Renton area between today and the year 2020. In addition, Renton has been experiencing an increase in professional and service jobs. As an example, Boeing's related research and development facilities in and around Renton spurred the development of office parks south of the downtown and at the north end of the Green River Valley. At the same time, Renton has seen a growth in the number and types of commercial businesses in the city due to an increased demand for goods and services.

GROWING AND DIVERSIFYING POPULATION

Growth patterns and demographic characteristics of Renton's residents strongly influence recreation interests and levels of participation, affecting the future need for parks, recreation and natural areas. As of 2011, Renton has a population of 92,590, making it the eighth most populous city in Washington State and the fourth most populous in King County.

From 1990 to 2000, the city gained 11,419 residents; an overall increase of 18.9%. In comparison, during the same time period the population in King County grew 15.2% (1990 – 2000). Since 2000, the City's population has increased 19.9%, with a higher average annual growth rate of 1.84%. By 2017, the population of the City of Renton is expected to grow by over 11,000 people; a 13.6% increase from



2010. Based on the same average annual growth rate (1.84%), the total population will be 124,106 by 2030. In particular, Renton’s downtown is expected to experience considerable growth and change because a significant portion of the area has been designated a Regional Growth Center, by the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Renton has become increasingly more diverse since 2000, as Table 2.1 indicates. Populations identifying as Asian, African American and Hispanic Origin increased between 2000 and 2009. This trend of diversification is expected to continue.

Table 2.1: Race and Ethnicity 2000-2010 City of Renton

Race and Ethnicity	2000 Population	2010 Population	Percent Change 2000-2010
White	69.4%	49.4%	-20.0%
Asian	13.2%	21.1%	7.9%
African American	7.9%	10.4%	2.5%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	6.8%	13.1%	6.3%
Two or More Races	4.5%	4.7%	0.2%
Other Race	3.7%	0.2%	-3.5%
American Indian	0.7%	0.5%	-0.2%
Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

TRANSPORTATION CROSSROADS

Renton was originally located on Lake Washington for access to water transportation. Today, the city’s location as a hub of regional, national and international transportation is driving growth and change. The city is four miles from the Seattle Tacoma International Airport (SeaTac) and has easy access to I-5, a key West Coast freight route. Additionally, I-405 and State Routes 167, 169, 515 and 900 all intersect in Renton. In addition to positioning Renton for economic growth, these transportation routes create both transportation and access opportunities. However, as the hub of the regional trail system, Renton’s major transportation routes also serve as barriers to non-motorized transportation.

PROVIDING PARKS, RECREATION AND NATURAL AREAS

The City of Renton acquires, builds, maintains and manages an extensive inventory of parks and natural area lands.

Organizationally, the City is divided into nine departments, each of which reports to the Chief Administrative Officer who in turn reports to the Mayor, City Council and ultimately the citizens of Renton. The Community Services Department is the primary manager of the park and natural area system and is responsible for maintaining parks, trails, building structures, recreational programs, events, and volunteer activities. The Community and Economic Development (CED) department is responsible for economic development, business partnered events, development services, planning (including maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan) and government relations. A third department, Public Works, has its own long-term planning processes including the six-year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) that supports trails and non-motorized transportation resulting in some overlap with planning for the park system.

The Community Services Department is composed of eight divisions, providing the following services as defined by the city’s website (www.rentonwa.gov).

- *Administration*: Provides management and direction for the entire department.
- *Recreation*: Provides opportunities for the public to participate in diversified programs of recreational activities designed to meet the needs of all Renton area citizens.
- *Parks & Golf Course*: Provides a safe, healthful, pleasant and well-maintained environment for the public’s enjoyment of leisure time activities.

“I love living here. So close to nature, the river, the lake... Folks are friendly and [it] has a small town charm!”

- Online questionnaire open ended responses





- *Parks Planning & Natural Resources:* Provides a comprehensive and interrelated system of parks, recreation, open spaces and trails that responds to locally-based needs, values and conditions, provides an appealing and harmonious environment, and protects the integrity and quality of the surrounding natural systems; creates a sustainable and exemplary urban forest.
- *Facilities:* Operates and maintains City buildings and Park facility buildings and manages the Capital Improvement Program which provides planning, design and construction management services for City building projects.
- *Human Services:* The focal point for information and referral for City of Renton residents and agencies. The Division coordinates and collaborates with service providers to deliver services to low and moderate income households. Human Services also works with other City Departments and divisions to improve the quality of life for City residents.
- *Neighborhoods, Resources & Events:* Connects neighborhoods, people, businesses, and civic groups to opportunities which foster community. This includes recognized neighborhood associations, Sister Cities programs, city celebrations and other special events as well as matching volunteers with projects.
- *Museum:* Operates the Renton History Museum, the center for the history of greater Renton. The museum offers education exhibits, programs, events, volunteer opportunities and a small research library that is open to the public.

Renton Community Services is one of only two park agencies in the state of Washington accredited by the National Recreation and Parks Association’s Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). This distinction recognizes park and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. The five year cycle of the accreditation process certifies the compliance with national standards and implements a self assessment process to ensure continued compliance and improvements. The Department was the first in the state to be accredited and is currently working toward its second (2012) re-accreditation.



PARK LAND AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Renton’s parks, recreation and natural area system is comprised of distinctive parks and popular recreation facilities, providing for a wide range of opportunities and benefits for the community. Parks are also a key gathering point, creating space for building community and providing exposure to history, arts and culture. In addition, many parks in Renton play a critical role in preserving natural areas, protecting wildlife and riparian habitat, conserving natural resources and contributing to clean water and a healthy environment for city residents.



PARK CLASSIFICATION

The City’s park system is composed of various types of parks, each providing unique recreation and environmental opportunities. City parks are classified by their size, function and features. While park sites function differently, they collectively meet a variety of community and natural resources needs. The Renton parks and recreation system has six different park land categories:²



² The park classification system has been modified from prior planning efforts to better reflect the realities and uses of the Renton system.



NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks are small park areas (usually 2-10 acres in size) utilized for passive use and unstructured play. They often contain open lawn areas and non-programmed field space, a children's playground, sports courts and a picnic area. Neighborhood parks provide close-to-home recreation opportunities for nearby residents, who typically live within walking and bicycling distance of the park. Some larger neighborhood parks incorporate natural areas, such as heavily wooded areas, which reduces the amount of active use acreage at the site.

The City's current inventory of neighborhood parks range in size from 0.5 acres (Glencoe Park) to 23.8 acres (the undeveloped Cleveland/Richardson Property). At one end of the spectrum, seven of the smallest sites are below the City's minimum size threshold of two acres. These sites are provisionally classified as neighborhood parks but only have space to provide basic recreation opportunities, such as a playground, open lawn and an internal pathway (e.g., Glencoe Park and Sunset Court Park). At the other end of the spectrum, some sites provide these facilities plus multiple sport courts, multi-use sports fields, picnic shelters, permanent restrooms and even an indoor activity center (e.g., Phillip Arnold Park and Tiffany Park). Five neighborhood parks are larger than 10 acres in size.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks are larger sites that can accommodate organized play and contain a wider range of facilities than neighborhood parks. They usually have programmable sports fields or other major use facilities as the central focus of the park. In many cases, they will also serve the neighborhood park function for nearby residents. Community parks generally average 10-25 acres in size with a substantial portion of them devoted to active use.

Renton's community parks range in size from 10.8 acres (Highlands Community Park and Neighborhood Center) to 43.4 acres (Ron Regis Park). Some, such as Cedar River Park, are highly developed with specialized facilities, such as the Renton Community Center, Carco Theatre and the Henry Moses Aquatic Center. Others, such as Ron Regis Park, balance natural features with sports fields and less intense park uses.

REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks are large park areas (50 acres or more) that may serve a single purpose or offer a wide range of facilities and activities. In many cases, they also contain large portions of undeveloped natural areas. Many regional parks are acquired because of unique features found or developed on the site.

In Renton, Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park functions as the only park in Renton that meets the size and unique character of a regional park. Coulon Park, 51.3 acres in size, is a specialized waterfront park with a variety of recreation opportunities, including restaurants, boating facilities and a guarded beach for swimming.

SPECIAL USE AREAS

Specialized parks and facilities include areas that generally restrict public access to certain times of the day or to specific recreational activities. With the exception of the Maplewood Golf Course (192.3 acres) and the Senior Activity Center Property (3.1 acres), special use parks in Renton are approximately one acre in size or less. These include the Piazza, Veterans Memorial, Tonkin Park (with its bandstand), Sit-In Park, the Green House and the Community Garden.





NATURAL AREAS

Natural areas in Renton preserve land for a variety of reasons. Some natural areas preserve habitat or include environmentally sensitive lands, including streams, ravines, steep hillsides and wetlands. In other cases, these may be wooded areas that contribute to the tree canopy and scenic views across Renton.

In Renton, natural areas range in size from 0.3 to 250.8 acres. The vast majority of these sites are focused on water resources (rivers, streams and wetlands) and the forested lands surrounding them. While four sites include trails or trail access, most do not have recreational access.

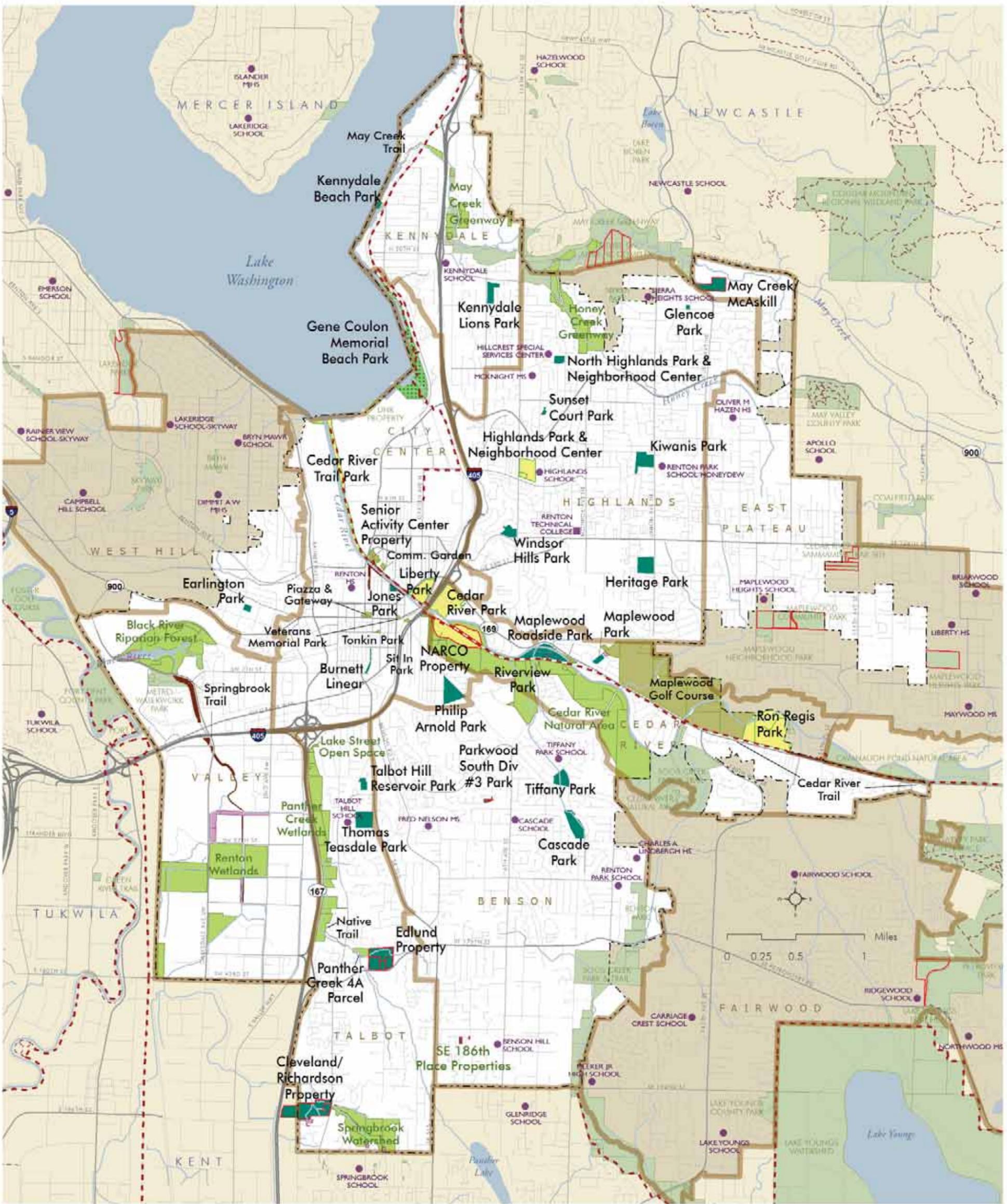


CORRIDORS

This category of park captures narrow swaths of land that serve as connections between parks or to other destinations. A corridor site can be the location of a trail or can provide a habitat linkage between two larger areas. These sites do not typically include many park amenities.



The City owns several narrow pieces of property that extend between park sites, creating connections within or beyond the City's system to other destinations in the region. All of the corridor lands that are owned outright by the City are associated with the Cedar River Trail and are located between Cedar River Trail Park, Jones Park and Liberty Park. The Cedar River Trail Corridor lands owned by the City total 12.9 acres. In addition to these properties, the City owns easements to corridors in several areas including the Springbrook Trail between the Black River Riparian Forest and the Renton Wetlands. Some of these areas are developed and maintained by the City and some are managed by other entities.



- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Regional Park | Other Jurisdiction Park | Renton Technical College | Freeway |
| Community Park | Red border indicates undeveloped park | School | Principal Arterial |
| Neighborhood Park | Water Body | Regional Trail | Major Road |
| Natural Area | Potential Annexation Area | Local Trail | Local Street |
| Special Use Park | Renton City Limits | | River/Creek |
| Renton Property | Community Planning Areas | | |
| Corridor | | | |

EXISTING PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

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PARK LAND SUMMARY

The City of Renton provides over 1,200 acres of parks, natural areas and corridors (Table 2.2). The Existing Parks and Natural Areas Map illustrates the location of these parks within Renton.

SPORTS FIELDS SUMMARY

Table 2.2: Park Land by Classification City of Renton

Park Classification	Developed Park Sites*		Undeveloped Sites/ Natural Areas		Total	
	# of Sites	Acreage	# of Sites	Acreage	Total Acreage	% of System
Neighborhood Park	18	92.8	5	52.0	145.5	12.1%
Community Park	5	102.2	1**	24.1	126.2	10.5%
Regional Park	1	51.3	-	-	51.3	4.3%
Special Use Area	8	199.3	-	-	199.3	16.5%
Natural Area	-	-	9	686.5	686.5	55.6%
Corridor	1	12.9	-	-	12.9	1.1%
Total	33	458.5	15	762.6	1221.7	100%

* Some developed park sites include natural areas and/or undeveloped areas.

**Reflects the undeveloped flat area of the NARCO Property.

Renton has 60 sports fields, located at 11 park sites and 22 schools (Appendix A-1 and A-2). The school sites add considerably to the City's inventory and sports groups rely on these fields for practice and games. The school district also operates a stadium used primarily for school events that also have been scheduled by the City for Special Olympics and track. Most of the City's fields are designed as multi-purpose; typically a rectangular field with one or more backstops and infields at the field corners. These fields offer the possibility of sharing the same space between different user groups, used for baseball or softball in one season and soccer or rugby in another. However, in nearly all cases only one sport can play at a time. Specialized diamond shaped (baseball/softball) and rectangular (soccer, football, rugby etc.) fields also exist, mainly at school sites and community parks.

Table 2.3: City of Renton Sports Fields by Scale

Field Scale	Field Type Totals			Total Fields
	Diamond	Rectangular	Multi-Purpose	
City of Renton				
Competitive	2	-	-	2
Recreation	2	1	5	8
Neighborhood	-	-	6	6
Subtotal	4	1	11	16
School District				
Competitive	3	3	2	8
Recreation	4	2	14	20
Neighborhood	2	2	12	16
Sub-Total	9	7	28	44
Total	13	8	39	60

Three field scales serve to describe the character of Renton’s existing sports fields, helping to plan for their maintenance and development. Table 2.3 summarizes existing sports fields by field scale, showing the total number of individual fields owned by the City of Renton and the Renton School District. The scales account for field size, quality and type of programming, and include:

- *Competitive:* Competitive fields are heavily scheduled and tightly controlled for designated uses. These fields are reserved and used solely for organized and programmed games and events, and feature lighting for extended play;
- *Recreation:* Recreation fields are primarily reserved for scheduled games and activities during peak times. These generally occur after school hours for sports play by the City, School District or community sports leagues. At this scale, recreation scale fields can be used for informal field use; and
- *Neighborhood:* Neighborhood fields have minimal or no scheduling for sports play. These fields are not designed nor maintained for formal game play and are not ideal for programming sports and games.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Renton’s parks offer a wide range of outdoor recreation facilities, adding recreational variety to the park system. A complete inventory of these facilities by park is provided in Appendix A.

PLAYGROUNDS

There are 20 parks in Renton that provide playground play equipment. Almost all neighborhood parks feature playgrounds; three are available in community parks and a large playground exists in Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park, a regional park.

When considering Renton School District elementary schools, an additional 14 sites could be added to the inventory for a total of 34 playgrounds.

INDOOR PROGRAMMABLE SPACES

The City of Renton has invested in several indoor recreation facilities, which provide local, community and regional-scale recreation opportunities. Many of the same park sites that offer rentable space also provide indoor recreation programming space. The Renton School District also provides indoor facilities that support recreation as well as education.

SWIMMING POOLS/AQUATIC FACILITIES

Swimming and water access are one of the most popular seasonal activities in Renton. Two sites - Kennydale Beach Park and Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park - provide seasonal guarded public access to outdoor beach swimming and water play in Lake Washington. Cedar River Park houses Renton’s aquatic facility, the Henry Moses Aquatic Center featuring an extensive leisure pool and a separate lap pool. Additional indoor pools are owned and operated at two area high schools and are programmed by the school district.





SKATE PARKS

Skateboarding has experienced rapid growth across the state over the past several years and is also popular in Renton. Renton’s community-scale skate park is centrally located in Liberty Park, at the site of the former Henry Moses Pool. The 8,400 squarefoot facility features artwork funded by the Renton Municipal Arts Commission 1% for Art, and includes obstacles for varying degrees of ability.



WATER ACCESS FACILITIES

Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park and Cedar River Trail Park provide water access for boating, rowing, sailing, canoeing and kayaking. Additional opportunities are offered for canoeing and kayaking at the Lake Washington Boathouse. For motorized boating, the only facility in Renton is the eight-lane boat launch at Coulon Park providing access to Lake Washington. The facility provides 123 stalls to support boat trailer parking and is over capacity on warm summer days. Non-motorized boat access is available at Coulon Park, Cedar River Trail Park and Riverview Park.



DOG PARKS

The NARCO Property has been serving as the site of a temporary dog park developed by a local advocacy group (RUFF) in partnership with the City. This facility is the only formal dog park in Renton and is heavily used. In addition, Renton and other South King County Cities developed and help to maintain Grandview Park through a multi-agency agreement to provide an additional off-leash area. This facility is located in the City of SeaTac.

GOLF COURSE

The City operates the Maplewood Golf Course, an 18-hole par 72 facility. The amenities include a 30-stall covered heated driving range, a fleet of 50 gas powered golf carts and a 15,500 sq. ft.

clubhouse that has a full service pro shop, restaurant, lounge, patio and banquet facilities. The course was certified as an Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Golf Course in 2009, the twelfth golf course in the state to achieve this recognition.

OUTDOOR COURTS

The City of Renton provides 17 tennis courts, 11 full basketball courts and three half courts located throughout the City. There are also two sand volleyball courts located at Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park. The Renton School District adds 15 tennis courts to this inventory.



COMMUNITY GARDENS

Renton has developed a community garden site near the Senior Activity Center. Garden plots (10-foot x 20-foot) can be reserved for a fee and are reservable through the Renton Senior Activity Center.



TRAILS

Renton has several miles of trails, including the popular Cedar River Trail, Honey Creek Trail and Springbrook Trail. Multiple regional trails are also part of the trail system, including the Lake to Sound Trail, the Interurban Trail, the Green River Trail, the Soos Creek Trail and Lake Washington Loop. As a partner in the regional trail system, Renton collaborates in trail planning and development with King County, and the neighboring cities of Kent, Newcastle and Tukwila. This partnership includes trails that cross Renton city limits such as the May Creek Trail which connects to Newcastle. Eight Renton parks and the Maplewood Golf Course also have trails or trail access points to the adjacent Cedar River Regional Trail. Outside of City-owned park land, trails are also provided on easements owned by the City or other public entities.





INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

Interpretive facilities such as kiosks and signs that convey the historic, cultural and environmental context of a site can be found at varying locations throughout the park system.



NATURAL AREAS AND RESOURCES

Natural resources can be found within existing parks of any type: at neighborhood and community parks, special use areas and natural areas. The City’s natural area lands, in particular, contain important local and regional natural resources—including creek and river floodplains, extensive wetlands, riparian woodlands and upland forests. For the purposes of this Plan, the term natural area is used as a category of park land (generally kept in a less developed state) and natural resource refers to the features of any land such as habitat, water resources and tree canopy. Many parks and natural area lands protect these sensitive areas.



EXISTING PORTFOLIO

Renton’s parks play various roles in natural resource conservation. While some developed parks are not thought of for their natural resources, some heavily developed parks serve to protect aquifer recharge. Other areas are primarily undeveloped and have limited trail access (Black River Riparian Forest and Cedar River Natural Area). Within this range are a number of sites that include both developed and natural features. Additional properties owned by the City (some managed by other departments) also serve natural resource functions, whether they are heavily forested or contain wetlands to help manage surface and storm water such as the Cedar River Natural Area or the Renton Wetlands Mitigation Bank. King County is also a major natural area property owner in and around Renton; the City continues to coordinate property acquisitions to create connected systems.

Most of the natural area lands, and the associated natural resources, in Renton are concentrated along river/stream valleys, including the Cedar River, May, Honey, Soos, Springbrook and Panther Creeks. The Cedar River is the most prominent of these waterways in Renton, providing some of the best salmon habitat in King County and recharging the aquifers that are the primary source of Renton drinking water. The Green River corridor is west of Renton's border, and is hydrologically connected to remnants of the Black River. These two river systems are managed as Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA) 8 (Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish) and 9 (Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound). Soos Creek flows along the southeastern edge the city. With the exception of Springbrook Creek and the Green River, all of these creeks and rivers drain into Lake Washington and eventually Puget Sound. Along the way, many of these streams have been modified by manmade structures. Renton's greenways are not continuous, and are often interrupted by privately-owned land. Soos Creek, Cedar River, Honey Creek, May Creek and the Springbrook watershed are important aquifer recharge areas.

WETLANDS, RIPARIAN CORRIDORS AND FLOODPLAINS

A sizeable portion of the natural acreage in Renton is classified as wetlands, riparian corridors or floodplains. Local streams are low to moderate gradient, with low lying floodplains that include wetlands. Some of these wetlands are open and grassy, while other areas have woodlands dominated by maple, cottonwood and alder (with ash trees present, particularly at the Black River Riparian Forest area).

Renton has fairly extensive floodplains, some of which have been developed. Floodplains are concentrated along Cedar River, May Creek, Soos Creek and the Green River. The Black River area has experienced extensive flooding and is managed by the King County Flood Control District. Riparian corridors within Renton

Public rights-of-way include 8% of Renton's canopy cover. Other public property lands comprise 23% of the total canopy cover.

- Renton Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2011



69% of Renton’s urban forest is on private land; 31% is on public properties

- Renton Urban Tree Canopy Assessment 2011



are mostly discontinuous. However, undeveloped stretches cut through the city and provide green space near many homes and neighborhoods.

The Green River, May Creek and Soos Creek form greenbelts that roughly follow the west, northeast and south east city boundaries respectively. The Cedar River bisects the city, especially through the downtown area. A network of freshwater marshes and forested wetlands exists in the southwestern part of Renton, including the Black River Riparian Forest area. There are over 500 acres of riparian woodland (North Pacific Lowland Riparian Forest and Shrubland) within Renton, and over 120 acres of Temperate Pacific Freshwater Emergent Marsh.³ Within Renton’s park system, there are 172 acres of riparian woodland and 31 acres of Temperate Pacific Emergent Marsh.

UPLAND FORESTS

In addition to the forested areas of wetland and riparian corridors, nearly 3,000 acres of additional public and private land in Renton is classified as upland forests.⁴ The upland forest lands across the city are concentrated along steep bluffs and river corridors. Within Renton park lands, approximately 775 acres is forested, approximately 65% of all park land. The dominant trees noted in the City’s Tree Inventory are big leaf maple, cottonwood, red alder and Douglas fir. All of Renton’s forests have been logged in the past and are in varying stages of recovery from this initial disturbance. There is no true old growth forest within the city, though there may be individual old growth trees.

³ 2010 USGS Gap Analysis <http://gapanalysis.usgs.gov/>

⁴ USGS Gap Analysis - this includes forest on private property and may include areas outside of the city limits due to the margin of error in the analysis.

STREET TREES

Street trees, defined as trees growing in Renton's rights-of-way, are an important part of the urban forest, supplementing the larger forested lands. These trees provide the general benefits of larger stands of trees and contribute directly to the beautification of the city. In 2007, the City completed a public property tree inventory and assessment that individually counted all trees in rights-of-way and parks. In addition to the location, type and number of trees, the assessment provides information on management issues and health of the trees. The inventory and assessment identifies 5,897 street trees, 20,370 park trees. In addition to these trees, which exist in more developed environments, the inventory also estimates the number of trees within Renton's natural area lands at over 106,069.

TREE CANOPY

The sum total of the area covered by trees in the forested land, street trees and trees on private property is the urban tree canopy. Renton completed the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment in July 2011. This assessment involves mapping the tree canopy based on satellite imagery with the express purpose of quantifying the environmental benefits of the canopy and to establish data points to measure change over time. Results indicate total canopy coverage of 4,804 acres, or 28.6% of the area of the City.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The City of Renton has several unique areas of habitat, many of which coincide with its wetlands and water resources. While the Cedar River supports major fish runs, Springbrook Creek, Honey Creek and May Creek also provide habitat for salmonids. The Black River Riparian Forest provides habitat for over 50 species of birds, including herons, eagles and many small mammals. The Cedar River, May Creek and Panther Creek corridors have





forest, meadow and shrub habitats that provide shelter and food for many species. In the Environment Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan, policies that preserve these areas are noted, not only to preserve their unique features, but also to enhance the quality of life and provide recreational opportunities for Renton residents.



Beyond watersheds, salmon and wildlife habitat, Renton's history is steeped in forestry. From its early naming after Captain William Renton (a lumberman) to its present-day recognition as Tree City USA (2008, 2009 and 2010), the City of Renton values its trees. Renton has managed trees for many years and in 2008 embarked upon a formal urban forestry program. In 2009, City Council approved the 2009 Urban and Community Forestry Development Plan, a legacy program to guide the City's urban forestry efforts over the next ten years.

RECREATION PROGRAMMING

Recreation programming is a major service the City of Renton provides. The diverse set of programs is the responsibility of the Recreation Division of Community Services, which also collaborates with a variety of community partners who use City facilities and advertise within the recreation program guide. Renton’s recreation programs and services can be organized into ten major program areas:

- *Aquatics:* The Henry Moses Aquatic Center provides public swims, lap swimming, youth group swimming lessons (ages 9 months to 12 years), water walking, water aerobics and facility rentals during summer months. Lifeguards are provided at Kenndale Beach Park and Gene Coulon Memorial Beach Park during the summer months.
- *Camps:* There are a variety of camps offered by the City including summer day camps, spring and winter art camps, tennis camps and other sports camps.
- *Crafts and Visual Arts:* This includes senior, adult, youth and pre-school art classes, as well as Renton History Museum and Carco Theatre programs.
- *Health and Fitness:* This program area includes fitness, martial arts classes and drop-in exercise opportunities for seniors, adults and youth.
- *Outdoor Recreation:* A variety of outdoor programs, such as sailing, rowing, kayaking, cross-country skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, golfing and gardening are provided for all youth, adults and seniors.
- *Performing Arts:* This area includes classes and recitals for dance, music and theatre/drama for all ages.





- *Special Events:* Special events include a variety of celebrations, festivals and activities that support community interaction, recreation, fitness and fun. These events are targeted to, and enjoyed by, all ages.
- *Special Interest:* This program area includes miscellaneous classes, such as computers, photography, dog obedience, etc. for adults and seniors, and to a lesser degree classes for preschool, youth, and teens.
- *Specialized Recreation:* The Specialized Recreation program provides a variety of recreational opportunities, group leisure/social programs and adaptive programs for youth and adults with disabilities.
- *Sports:* This program area supports tennis (in partnership with Aces Tennis) and youth and adult athletics (softball, soccer, cricket, baseball, basketball, volleyball, and flag football), including leagues and instructional classes.

POPULATIONS SERVED

The Recreation Division provides programs and events for a wide variety of people of all ages and abilities. These programs include preschool, youth, teen and adult leisure programs; youth, teen and adult athletics; and social and recreational programs for seniors and those with special needs. Specific groups served are noted below, along with examples of related programming and activities.

- *Multi-generational:* A variety of parent/child recreation opportunities are provided through the Parent & Me Programs (toddler activities). In addition, special trips are provided for preschoolers and their favorite adults, such as the Theo Chocolate Factory Tour, Tower Lanes Entertainment Center, Spring Fair in Puyallup and Jim's U Fish at Old McDebbie's Farm. Special events target multiple ages as well.

- *Preschool:* Arts, crafts, movement, music, dance, preschool, sports and play opportunities are provided. Examples include Pee Wee Picassos, Baby Dance, Creation Station, Alphabet Adventures, Musical Tots, Eco Kids Camp, Terrific Tots Playground, Creative Kids Preschool, Bounce Around Birthday Party Package and Renton Rookies (basketball, multi-sport, indoor soccer).
- *Youth:* The City's youth programs include youth basketball and softball, as well as Club Highlands and Club North Highlands which offer drop-in programs for ages 6 and up. Aside from youth sports, dance and art classes, there are also a few specialty classes, such as D&D All Day Long, Marauding Miniatures and Magic and the Fantasy Game Club.
- *Teens:* A variety of programs, classes and clubs are offered specifically for teens. The Teen Scene includes free drop-in programs and free Friday Late Nights for grades 6-12 at the Highlands Neighborhood Center. Examples of classes that target teens include Beginning Guitar, Fantasy Game evenings and the Youth Dodgeball League. Transportation to some off-site activities is provided for teens by the Renton Recreation Division and leaves from and returns to the North Highlands Neighborhood Center. Also, the Renton Youth Council (RYC) provides opportunities for middle and high-school youth to help organize activities, provide education concerning youth issues and volunteer at community events.
- *Adults:* Programs are provided for adults through sports leagues, fitness classes, outdoor recreation programs and some specialized classes, such as Organizing 101 and art classes.





- *Seniors:* Senior programs are offered at the Renton Senior Activity Center that provides free social, health and recreational activities and services for citizens age 50 and over.
- *Specialized:* The City also provides inclusive recreational opportunities, group leisure/social programs and adaptive programs for youth and adults with disabilities. Examples of programs include Club Thursday (with BINGO Night, Movie Night, Karaoke Night, Sweetheart Dance, Pizza and Games, Cinco de Mayo Party), Exciting Excursions, Special Olympics (Basketball, Track & Field, Soccer, Bowling, Softball and Cycling), 360 Art, Golf, Flag Football and the Bowling Club.

In addition to these programs, the City directly provides partnerships with youth and adult sports organizations where Renton provides facilities and field scheduling services, expanding the recreation opportunities available in the community.

RENTALS

Facility rentals are an important service area within the Community Services Department. Picnic shelters, sports fields, aquatic center and indoor facilities are all available for rental. Permits can be purchased for the boat launch. Like program fees, rental fees rates increase for non-residents. The complete 2011 fee schedule is provided under separate cover by the City in the Existing Conditions report, March 2011.

- *Picnic Shelter Rentals:* Ten picnic shelters are available for rental for non-profit events on a first-paid, first-served basis.
- *Field Rentals:* Sports field rentals are available for softball, baseball, soccer, football and other sport activities.
- *Indoor Facility Rentals:* Banquet rooms, meeting rooms, classrooms and gyms are available for rental at indoor recreation buildings, such as the Renton Community Center and Senior Activity Center.
- *Henry Moses Aquatic Center:* Two party tents are available for rental, with variable rates. The entire pool can be rented on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings for a maximum of 500 guests.
- *Carco Theatre:* This 287-seat facility is a popular venue for plays, dances and musicals. The theater has many amenities and flexible hours, making it suitable for business meetings, seminars, receptions and other activities. The facility is available for rent Monday through Sunday from 6:00 am to 12:00 am. The auditorium and lobby are both available for use with rates based on function and need.



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