

About us

The city of Vancouver and Clark County, Washington, have a strong legacy of parks, recreation and open space. This legacy dates back to the dedication of Esther Short Park in downtown Vancouver in 1853, which is the oldest public park in the state of Washington.

The Recreation Commission was first formed in 1942 with the goal of providing more indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities for youth, teens and adults in the greater Vancouver area. The Commission worked closely with public schools, the Board of Education, the housing authority and local business leaders to operate its recreation program. The Commission's work began with the summer playgrounds program, which served approximately 3,400 children a day in its first year (1943). By 1944, the recreation program had expanded to include athletics, swimming, dramatics, music and arts and crafts for adults, teens and youth. The Commission also opened the Trapedero Teen Age Club in the Legion building that year. Classes and programs were provided in parks, public schools, grange halls, churches, the U.S.O. Club and other local community centers for more than 20 years. Marshall Community Center, the city's first recreation center, opened in 1965.

In 1997, Clark County and Vancouver consolidated their respective parks and recreation departments into the joint Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department in order to help gain efficiencies and better coordinate park planning, development and operations across jurisdictional boundaries.

Mission & vision

Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation will help build a healthy community, protect the natural environment and support a high quality of life for all residents. We will achieve this vision by following our mission to meet community needs by providing an interconnected system of parks, trails, recreation facilities, and natural areas that support environmental stewardship and diverse recreation programs and opportunities. Together, this vision and mission will guide us in creating a premier park system that improves the quality of life in our community.

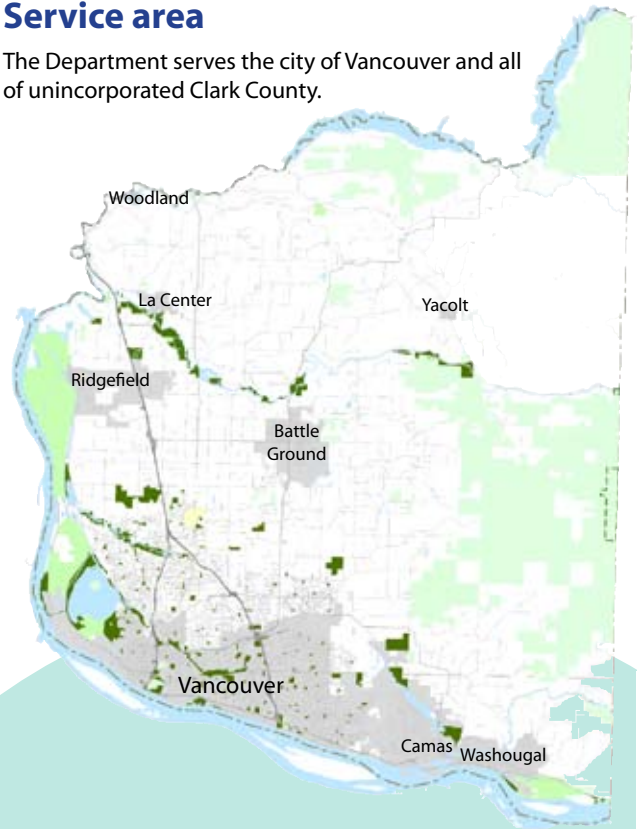
Staffing

95 full-time employees, 300-400 part-time/seasonal staff and five offender crews.*

* Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation, Clark County Public Works and City of Vancouver Public Works/Facilities staff combined

Service area

The Department serves the city of Vancouver and all of unincorporated Clark County.



How to contact us

Administrative Offices
415 W. Sixth St., third floor
P.O. Box 1995
Vancouver, WA 98668-1995
(360) 487-8311
www.vanclarkparks-rec.org

Firstenburg Community Center
700 NE 136th Ave.
Vancouver, WA 98684
(360) 487-7001
www.cityofvancouver.us/fcc

Marshall/Luepke Community Centers
1009 E. McLoughlin Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98663
(360) 487-7100
www.cityofvancouver.us/mcc

Vancouver Tennis Center
5300 E. 18th St.
Vancouver, WA
(360) 696-8123
www.vancouvertenniscenter.com



Organization & community partners

The Director of Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation reports to the Clark County Administrator and Vancouver City Manager. The Department is organized into three main programs: **1) parks and trails, 2) recreation and 3) business.**

The parks, trails, sports fields and recreation centers are maintained by the city and county public works and facilities departments, not by Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation.

The Department works closely with the following government and community partners:

- ◆ **Clark County Public Works and Facilities departments and the Greater Clark Parks District** – design, construction and maintenance of new and existing parks, trails, sports fields and open space located outside Vancouver
- ◆ **Vancouver Public Works and Facilities departments** – construction of new parks and maintenance of parks, trails, sports fields and recreation centers
- ◆ **Clark County Environmental Services Department, including the Conservation Futures program** – open space acquisition and planning, and environmental protection and restoration of county-owned parkland
- ◆ **Vancouver Urban Forestry** – tree planting and tree health and maintenance in city parks
- ◆ **The Parks Foundation of Clark County** – fundraising for a variety of parks and recreation programs, including the Everybody Plays! recreation scholarship
- ◆ **The Columbia Land Trust** – works to permanently conserve, restore and manage natural resources, landscapes, habitats and working farms in the Columbia River region
- ◆ **The Intertwine Alliance** – a bi-state coalition of public, private and nonprofit organizations working to promote, protect and improve an interconnected network of parks, trails and natural areas in the Portland-Vancouver area
- ◆ **School districts** – co-location of schools and parks, sports fields and recreation programming and community enrichment
- ◆ **Neighborhood associations, service clubs and special interest groups**, including youth sports leagues, and advocates for trails, equestrians, dog parks and disc golf

What we do

- ◆ Help improve the quality of life for Vancouver and Clark County residents by providing convenient and affordable recreation, health, enrichment and wellness programs, activities and events for all ages, abilities and income levels
- ◆ Support economic development by helping maintain and increase property values through the planning, acquisition, design and development of neighborhood, community and regional parks, trails and open spaces
- ◆ Preserve and build neighborhoods by facilitating maintenance of neighborhood, community and regional parks, trails and open spaces
- ◆ Encourage environmental stewardship and preservation by coordinating agricultural leases, invasive plant species removal and wetland/habitat restoration and improvement activities
- ◆ Help build social capital and generate community engagement by coordinating volunteer activities, including youth coaching, adopt-a-park, park maintenance donations and park improvement projects
- ◆ Improve community health by providing a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities, including community centers, multi-use parks, trails and greenways
- ◆ Assist in lowering crime by providing positive park and recreation activities for at-risk groups and by designing park amenities that discourage vandalism and criminal behavior
- ◆ Maximize service delivery, reduce duplication, lower costs and meet growing community needs by facilitating a variety of community partnerships
- ◆ Protect critical habitat and conserve sensitive lands by strategically acquiring property and planning for future public use



By the numbers (2010)

Area served: 630 square miles

Population served: Approximately 365,000*
*Vancouver plus the urban and rural unincorporated areas of Clark County

Acres of parkland: 7,272
City of Vancouver: 2,138
Urban and rural unincorporated areas of Clark County: 5,134

Number of parks: 191 (113 developed)
City of Vancouver: 108 (72 developed)
Urban and rural unincorporated areas of Clark County: 83 (41 developed)

Percentage of residents living within a half-mile of a park or open space: 80%

Maintenance cost per acre for neighborhood parks: \$2,790 (city); \$4,160 (county)

Maintenance cost per acre for community parks: \$4,108 (city); \$3,209 (county)

Maintenance cost per acre for regional parks: \$2,608 (county)

Oldest developed parks:
1. Esther Short Park (1853)
2. Leverich Park (1931)
3. Lewisville Regional Park (1936)

Largest parks:
1. Moulton Falls Regional Park (301 acres)
2. Lacamas Lake Regional Park (298 acres)
3. Whipple Creek Regional Park (259 acres)

Miles of trail: 66
City of Vancouver: 23.4
Clark County: 37.1
Other: 5.5

Equestrian trails: 5

Annual visits to Clark County's bicycle and pedestrian trails: Approximately 2.34 million

Recreation centers: 3
- Firstenburg Community Center: 80,000 square feet, opened in 2006
- Marshall/Luepke Community Centers: 60,000 square feet, opened in 1965 and remodeled in 2007
- Vancouver Tennis Center: 62,620 square feet, opened in 1975

Annual visits to recreation centers: 1,181,846

Community center passholders: 7,300

Youth day camp participants: 4,272

Swimming lessons provided: 5,240

Vancouver Tennis Center visits: 93,675

Everybody Plays recreation scholarships provided: 1,200 totaling \$104,000

Special recreation accommodations made to disabled citizens: 1,246

Senior centers: 1

Sports fields: 82

Skate parks: 2 full-sized, plus 6 small "skate spots" in neighborhood parks

Water access/swimming areas: 7 outdoor, 2 indoor

Dog parks: 3

Boat launches: 4

Community gardens: 5

Sand volleyball courts: 12

Disc golf courses: 1

Pistol/rifle ranges: 1

Tennis courts: 9 indoor, 13 outdoor

Annual volunteer contribution: 55,000 hours of service saving the department more than \$500,000

And the survey says...

90% of county residents believe parks and recreation programs and services are important to the quality of life in Clark County, regardless of whether or not they use them.

77% of county residents are satisfied with their local parks.

57% of county residents are satisfied with their local recreation programs and community centers.

Source: Blue Ribbon Commission for Parks and Recreation countywide telephone survey, November 2010

2010 Operating Budget

EXPENDITURES

City of Vancouver	
Parks and Recreation Administration	\$576,000
Parks, Trails and Natural Resources	\$435,000
Parks Maintenance	\$1,883,000
Firstenburg Community Center	\$3,692,000
Marshall Community Center	\$4,044,000
Outdoor Programs	\$312,000
Vancouver Tennis Center	\$881,000
City of Vancouver Subtotal	\$11,823,000

Clark County	
Parks and Recreation Administration	\$326,000
Parks, Trails and Natural Resources	\$707,000
Public Information and Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator	\$78,000
Parks Maintenance – Regional Parks (General Fund)	\$706,000
Parks Maintenance – Greater Clark Parks District levy	\$2,467,000
Clark County Subtotal	\$4,284,000

Total 2010 Operating Expenditures **\$16,107,000**

REVENUES

City of Vancouver	
Park User Fees	\$48,000
Firstenburg Community Center User Fees	\$3,536,000
Marshall Community Center User Fees	\$2,420,000
Outdoor Program User Fees	\$169,000
Vancouver Tennis Center User Fees	\$818,000
City of Vancouver General Fund*	\$4,507,000 (38% of total)
Grants/Donations/Other	\$325,000
City of Vancouver Subtotal	\$11,823,000

** Since 2003, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation has reduced its dependence on the Vancouver general fund by a total of \$2.3 million.*

Clark County	
Parks User Fees	\$421,000
Clark County General Fund	\$1,318,000 (31% of total)
Greater Clark Parks District Levy	\$2,545,000
Clark County Subtotal	\$4,284,000

Total 2010 Operating Revenues **\$16,107,000**

2010 Capital Budget

EXPENDITURES

City of Vancouver	
Planning	\$69,000
Park Acquisition	\$651,000
Park Construction	\$641,000
Capital Repair and Maintenance	\$380,000
Debt Service (Community Centers)	\$1,550,000
City of Vancouver Subtotal	\$3,291,000
Clark County	
Planning	\$17,000
Land Acquisition	\$4,162,000
Park Construction	\$4,439,000
Capital Repair and Maintenance	\$412,000
Clark County Subtotal	\$9,030,000
Total 2010 Capital Expenditures	\$12,321,000

REVENUES

City of Vancouver	
Park Impact Fees	\$689,000
Real Estate Excise Taxes	\$2,116,000
Grants	\$440,000
Donations	\$96,000
Miscellaneous	\$112,000
City of Vancouver Subtotal	\$3,453,000
Clark County	
Park Impact Fees	\$4,412,000
Real Estate Excise Taxes	\$4,441,000
Grants	\$648,000
Donations	\$11,000
Miscellaneous	\$13,000
Clark County Subtotal	\$9,525,000
Total 2010 Capital Revenue	\$12,978,000*

* Revenues exceed expenses due to receipt of grant reimbursements that supported expenses incurred prior to 2010.

2003-2012 budget cuts

Since 2003, a total of \$2.3 million has been cut from the Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation budget. These cuts were achieved by:

- ◆ Eliminating 35 full-time positions in both the parks and recreation programs
- ◆ Eliminating programs like the Funwagon, preschool, Hough Pool operations, Hudson's Bay High School teen center, lifeguarding at Kline Pond and special activities
- ◆ Reducing or restructuring the budgets of a variety of individual programs including teen services, urban forestry, special events/Slocum House, summer playgrounds, Access to Recreation, Inclusion, Kids First, Senior Enrichment and sports field maintenance
- ◆ Reducing hours of operation at the Marshall/Luepke centers and Firstenburg Community Center
- ◆ Increasing pass fees at community centers in 2007, 2009 and 2011; and conducting annual fee reviews for classes and programs to keep fee structure affordable, but competitive with similar service providers
- ◆ Increasing parking fees at some regional parks for the first time in 17 years, increasing park event permit fees, and implementing new picnic shelter reservation fees at some regional parks
- ◆ Streamlining administration, including changing the organizational structure of the department and eliminating positions
- ◆ Updating janitorial contracts and transferring some services to program staff
- ◆ Significantly reducing printing costs
- ◆ Eliminating a number of department motor pool vehicles



Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

The Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission is comprised of 13 members: five are appointed by the Vancouver City Council and five by the Board of Clark County Commissioners. The Commission also includes one non-voting member each from the Vancouver and Evergreen school districts and The Parks Foundation of Clark County.

The commission serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council and County Commissioners in matters relating to: planning, acquisition, development and operation of neighborhood, community and regional parks, greenways and open space, trails; sports fields, recreation programs and cultural programs and activities.

The Commission meets on the third Friday of every month from noon to 3 p.m. The location varies. More information is available at www.vanclarkparks-rec.org under "Who We Are."

Recreation services cost recovery rates

Overall Recreation Program:	76%
Firstenburg Community Center:	96%
Marshall/Luepke Community Centers:	60%
Vancouver Tennis Center:	93%

Note: Cost recovery rates are determined using the total user revenues divided by the direct operating cost, including staff, program materials and supplies, customer service, maintenance activities and utilities.

