

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

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



2010
Fourth Quarter Report
Parks Omnibus Ordinance Report
to the King County Council
January – December 2010

WE'RE AT WORK SO YOU CAN PLAY

Highlights of the 2010 Fourth Quarter

- ❖ Overall, the Division's business revenues for 2010 were on target, but were slightly lower than in 2009 and remain below pre-recession levels. Since 2008, the economic downturn has affected the Division's success in pursuing business revenues. Business revenues have also been affected by the transfer of facilities, mostly pools, which generated more than \$2 million in revenues in past years. Facilities transferred in the past three years include the Renton, Evergreen, and Vashon Island Pool, along with other Urban Growth Area (UGA) parks and facilities that transferred as a result of annexations.
- ❖ Overall, revenues at Marymoor Park were up 48 percent over 2009, which can be attributed to a successful run of Cirque du Soleil and an increase in revenue from fields. Enforcement of the parking fee also contributed to this upswing, as rates of compliance significantly increased in 2010, resulting in \$625,000 in revenue for the Division.
- ❖ The Division's fields and facilities (other than Marymoor) brought in 5 percent more revenue in 2010 than in 2009, with this slow but steady growth reflecting the fact that the Division's existing assets have largely been maximized. Preston Community Center and the campgrounds and picnic shelters at Tolt-MacDonald Park showed strong revenues and continue to be some of the Division's most sought after facilities.
- ❖ In 2010, the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center was selected as the site for both the 2012 US Olympic Diving Trials and the 2012 NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Championships. Both events will be nationally televised and will have an estimated combined economic impact of more than \$4 million for the region.
- ❖ On Saturday, May 22, 2010, the Division and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA) celebrated the grand opening of the Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park, a project developed through the Division's Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) program. The park, which draws an estimated 500 visitors daily, is a unique facility and has received considerable local and national media attention. In addition to project management and trail building expertise, EMBA provided more than 6,000 hours of volunteer service and additional fundraising for the project, which they estimate added some \$140,000 of value to the project.

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Parks and Recreation Division
2010 Fourth Quarter Report

Introduction

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002, by the King County Council, included this reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division:

“The division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C. 2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the Division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the division’s efforts in:

- A. Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexation areas to cities; and*
- F. Community outreach and involvement.”*

This is our eighth year reporting on the accomplishments of the Division. Quarterly reports were transmitted for each quarter from 2003 through 2009. The year 2010 marks the third year of the renewed Parks Levy, which was approved by voters in August 2007, with collections running from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2013. Past reports are available from the Division’s website on the following Web page:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/recreation/parks/about/businessplan.aspx>.

We have structured the quarterly report to correspond to the ordinance requirements; however, the 2010 reports will no longer include information about the King County Fair or about pools other than the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center. Operation of the Fair and remaining pool facilities has been transferred to other jurisdictions or entities and is no longer the responsibility of the Division.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Brown or Katy Terry of the King County Parks and Recreation Division at 206-296-8687 with questions or suggestions.

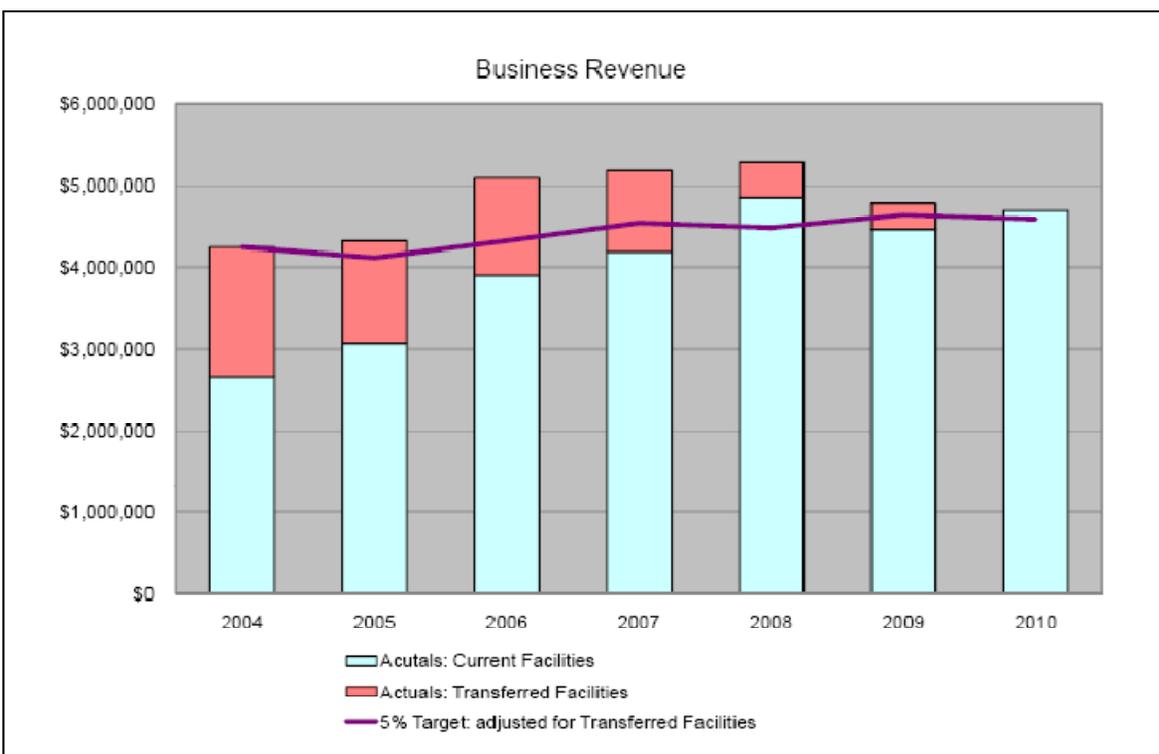
Implementing Entrepreneurial Strategies

Consistent with the vision of the Parks Business Plan, the Division has taken steps to maximize business revenues and continues to explore other actions that minimize the tax subsidy needed for the operation and maintenance of the Division's facilities and assets.

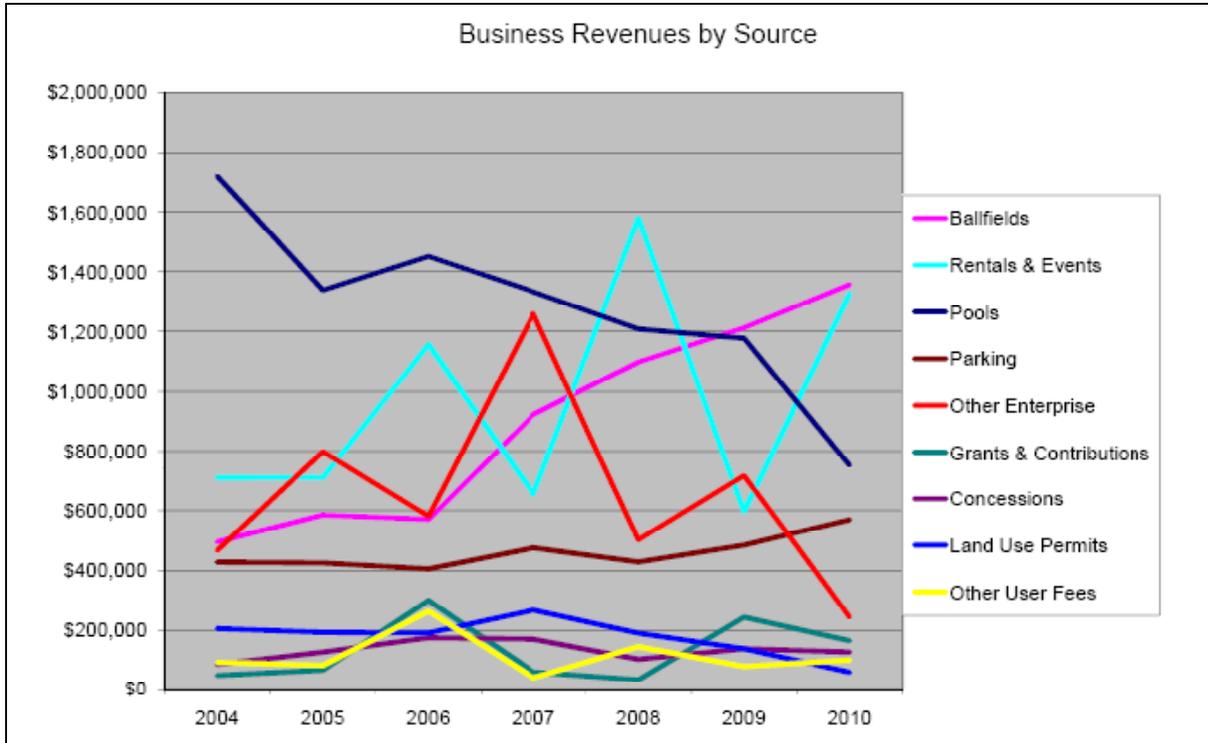
The 2002 Parks Business Plan outlined several revenue generating activities, such as maximizing revenue from the Division's existing asset base; establishing corporate sponsorships, naming rights, and other contributions; and pursuing gifts, bequests, and legacy donations.

The Parks Business Plan also called for transitioning to a system focused on providing regional parks, regional trails, and natural area parks that feature amenities such as backcountry trails. In 2004, more than one third of the business revenue came from pools, local parks, and recreational facilities, which have since been transferred to cities and other jurisdictions. While these facilities generated considerable revenue, they cost significantly more to operate.

As the chart below shows, the Division has successfully replaced the revenue from these transferred facilities and has increased business revenues by more than 5 percent each year when adjusted for the loss of these high revenue, higher-cost facilities.

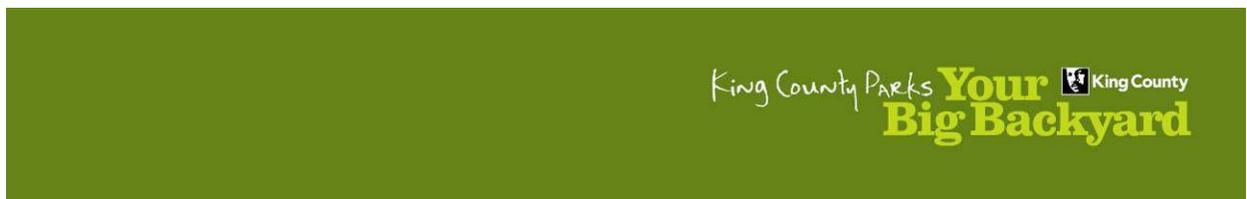


The Division has developed a solid base of diverse revenue sources, including corporate partnerships, special event facility rentals, user fees, land use permits, concessions, and the activities of the business units outlined in this report. The fluctuations for rentals and events revenue in the chart below reflect the years that Marymoor Park hosted Cirque du Soleil.

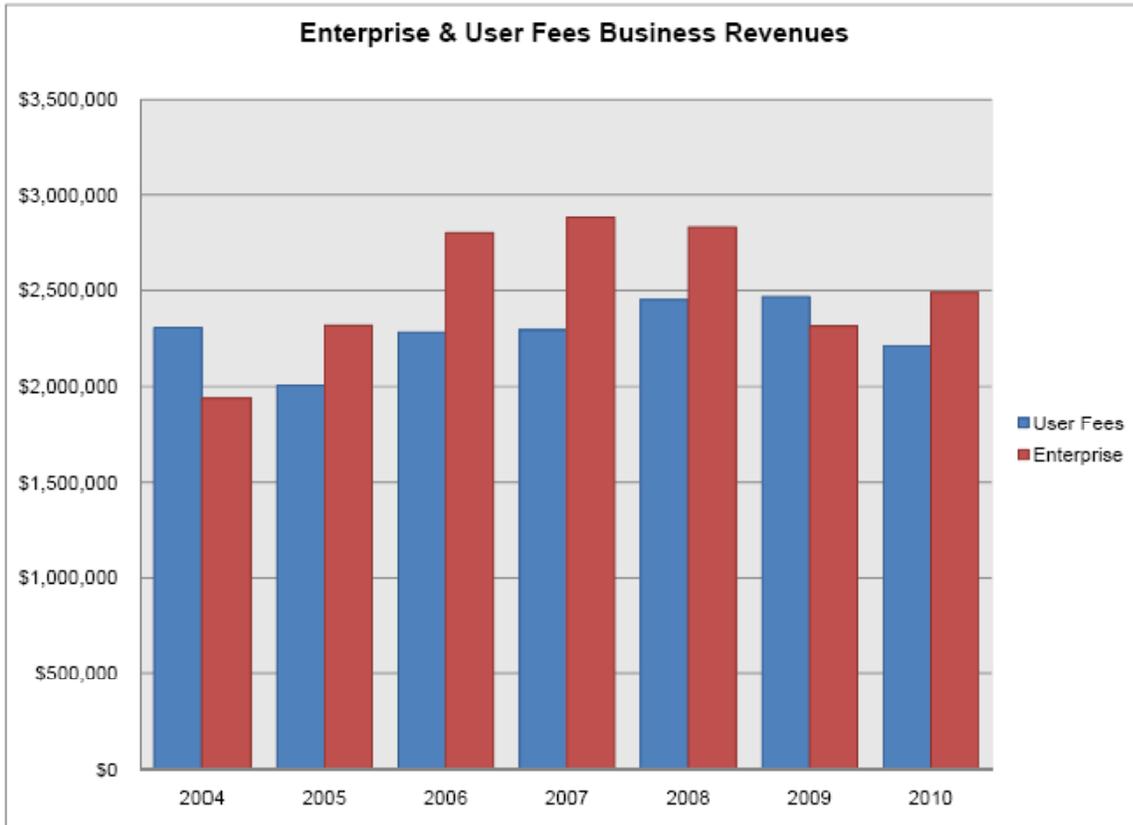


The Division categorizes business revenues in two ways: enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues and user fee revenues. Enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues are comprised of a myriad of non-traditional activities, ranging from corporate sponsorships, creative public-private partnerships, and special facility rentals (such as the Concerts at Marymoor Series, Cirque du Soleil, and use of our facilities for other large, special events). These are generated largely as a result of business development efforts and partnerships established by the Division’s staff. These revenues have been hit hard by the prolonged economic downturn and showed some recovery in 2010, although they remain well below pre-recession levels.

User fee revenues represent more traditional recreational activities, such as ballfield reservation fees, picnic shelter rentals, indoor facility rentals, and camping. These revenues are directly tied to the Division’s existing asset base.



Recent revenue increases from user fees are largely the result of capital investments, such as upgrading athletic fields to synthetic turf, partially offset by the revenue lost from the transfer of pools to other jurisdictions.



Revenues - Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Total Revenues

2010 Adopted Revenues	\$26,551,338
2010 Revised Revenues ¹	\$26,495,988
2010 Total Actual Revenues (Preliminary) ²	\$26,414,318
2009 Actual Revenues	\$27,789,082

Fourth Quarter - Business Revenues Only

Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the Division are excluded from this total.

Actual Business Revenues³ (Includes user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues)

January 1 – December 31, 2010	\$4,706,002
January 1 – December 31, 2009	\$4,782,838

Based on preliminary year-end data, business revenues in 2010 were slightly lower than in 2009 and remain below pre-recession levels.

The downturn in the economy has affected the Division's success in pursuing business revenues since 2008, as has the transfer of facilities, mostly pools, which generated more than \$2 million in revenues in past years. Facilities transferred in the past three years include the Renton, Evergreen, and Vashon Island Pool, along with other Urban Growth Area (UGA) parks transferred as a result of annexations.

Despite these transfers and the earlier transfer of other high revenue-generating assets⁴, business revenues still comprise about 17 percent of the Division's entire revenue budget (2010), which is similar to the percentage in 2002 at the beginning of the Business Plan (see charts, following page). The business revenue forecast for the remaining assets has risen from a total of approximately \$2.3 million in 2002 to nearly \$4.5 million in the 2010 adopted budget.

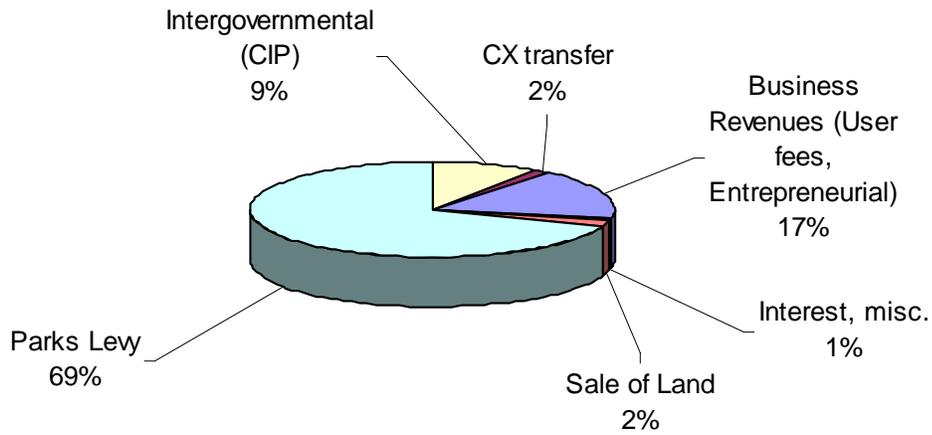
¹ 2010 Revised Revenues includes supplemental omnibus adjustments, including adjustments for the Panther Lake annexation, a \$50,000 pass-through for the Enumclaw Fair, and the non-sale of Puget Sound Park.

² 2010 Actual Revenues figures are preliminary, per ARMS financial reports as of January 31, 2011. Final figures (14th month) are anticipated to be available in March 2011.

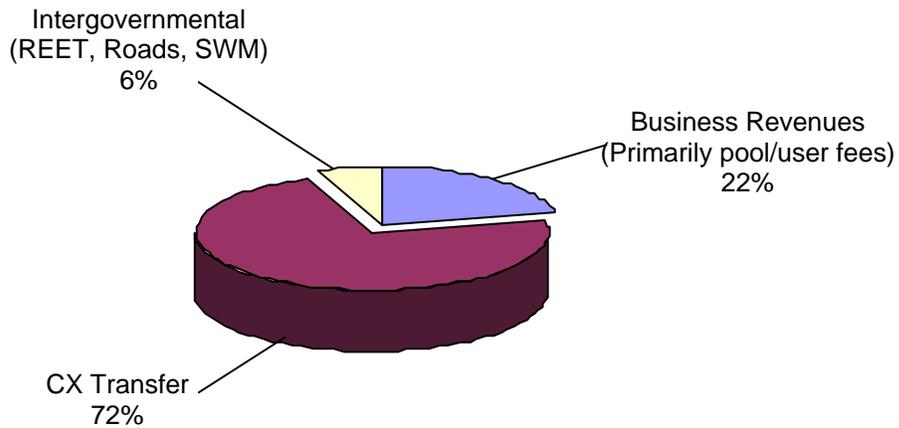
³ Based on ARMS financial reports as of January 31, 2011. Final figures (14th month) are anticipated to be available in March 2011.

⁴ As discussed on page 5, these facilities cost significantly more to operate than the revenue they generated.

2010 Adopted Revenues - \$26.6M



2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M



Although total business revenues are similar between 2002 and 2010, the nature of the revenues has changed. In 2002, business revenues were generated primarily from pools which were expensive to operate, and which only offset a portion of the cost of their operation. In 2010, business revenues were generated from a wide range of facilities and activities, in many cases offsetting most of the cost of operating the hosting facility, and thereby minimizing the level of tax subsidy.

Expenditures – Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Expenditures

2010 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,825,262
2010 Revised Expenditures ⁵	\$27,848,669
2010 Total Actual Expenditures (Preliminary) ⁶	\$26,114,077
2009 Actual Expenditures	\$25,571,404

Based on preliminary year-end data, the Division underexpended its revised budget by roughly six percent in 2010. These savings are primarily attributed to salary savings in non-maintenance positions and energy and operating efficiencies across the Division. This expenditure pattern is in line with historic business trends and aligns more closely with budgeted amounts than the significant, double-digit savings in both 2008 and 2009.

As part of the Parks Operating Levy (2008 – 2013), the Division was tasked with increasing maintenance to historic levels prior to 2002. As long as target fund balance is achieved, the Division intends to spend the maximum amount of its expenditure authority on maintaining parks, utilizing levy funds as the voters intended.

⁵ 2010 Revised Expenditures includes supplemental omnibus adjustments, including adjustments for the Panther Lake annexation, a \$50,000 pass-through for the Enumclaw Fair, central rates, and the non-sale of Puget Sound Park.

⁶ 2010 Actual Expenditure figures are preliminary, per ARMS financial reports as of January 31, 2011. Final figures (14th month) are anticipated to be available in March 2011.

Revenues - Implementing the Business Plan
Key Business Units

Marymoor Park Business Unit



	2010 thru Q4	2009 thru Q4	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev – facilities*	\$107,229	\$136,529	-\$29,299	-21%
Rev - fields	\$924,321	\$768,075	\$156,246	20%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - parking	\$625,311	\$483,023	\$142,288	29%
Rev - concerts	\$314,664	\$281,843	\$32,821	12%
Rev - concert ticket admin fee	\$6,536	\$4,368	\$2,168	50%
Rev - Subway	\$22,629	\$21,354	\$1,275	6%
Rev - Pet Garden	\$4,050	\$2,250	\$1,800	80%
Sponsors/concessions**	\$54,523	\$101,803	-\$47,280	-46%
Bellevue Agreement	\$53,234	\$52,948	\$286	1%
Cirque du Soleil***	\$625,363	\$0	\$625,363	100%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$2,738,000	\$1,852,000	\$886,000	48%
Expenditures (rounded)****	\$3,671,000	\$3,100,000	\$571,000	18%

Business Unit Actual Revenue as Percentage of Direct Costs

75%

*The 2009 revenue from facilities has been adjusted from the value included in the 2009 Fourth Quarter Report; an accounting error in that report was identified and the correct value is listed here.

**Total in this category for 2009 reflects the Premier Properties' payment for services rendered in 2008.

***Cirque du Soleil did not take place in 2009.

**** As in past years, estimated expenditures include direct costs and administrative and overhead costs associated with assigned labor. Estimated costs do not include "loan-in labor", i.e., labor that may have been contributed by other work units. About \$174,000 in direct loan-in labor was associated with Marymoor in 2010, and \$142,000 in 2009 (this loan-in figure does not include benefits or 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 and Division indirect cost estimates for expenditures.

2010 highlights from Marymoor Park include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues at Marymoor Park were up 48 percent over 2009, which can be attributed to a successful run of Cirque du Soleil, an increase in revenue from fields, and enforcement of the parking fee.
- ❖ This year's Cirque du Soleil (Cirque) show, Kooza, generated more than \$625,000 from facility rental fees and parking. Although this is a 10 percent decrease from revenue generated by the Cirque appearance in 2008, Marymoor Park remains one of Cirque's most successful West Coast locations. Cirque is scheduled to bring a new show to the park in the winter 2011-2012.
- ❖ Revenue from fields increased by 20 percent from 2009, which is due in part to rental fees from hosting parking for the 2010 US Senior Open at Sahalee, which took place in the summer. Field revenue has experienced steady increases each year for the past several years as fields have been converted to multi-use synthetic turf surfaces, which command higher fees, can be scheduled more frequently and for more months of the year, and experience fewer weather-related cancellations.
- ❖ The Concerts at Marymoor outdoor performance series saw an increase in revenue of 12 percent in 2010, and revenue from this event remains an important and stable source of annual revenue for the Division. Although direct sales of concert tickets are not a major revenue source for the Division, those revenues increased 50 percent in 2010. This is due in part to the Division's efforts to encourage concert-goers to support parks by purchasing tickets directly at the park.
- ❖ After a full year of enforcing the parking fee by issuing citations, parking revenue has increased 29 percent to \$625,000. Before the parking enforcement program was launched in July 2009, compliance rates had been steady or declining. With regular enforcement, compliance has improved, and there is a better atmosphere of equity among users who have faithfully been paying the fee since it began in 2003.
- ❖ Revenues from the Pet Memorial Garden increased 80 percent in 2010, returning to a level similar to 2007, the first full year the garden was completed. More visitors are aware of the garden, especially since it is frequently the site of volunteer work parties, which help with plant care and weed control in this special area.

Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) Business Unit



	2010 thru Q4	2009 thru Q4	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$603,645	\$716,422	-\$112,778	-16%
Rev - courses	\$116,995	\$130,782	-\$13,787	-11%
Rev - drop in	\$33,620	\$39,025	-\$5,405	-14%
Rev - conference center	\$22,928	\$31,481	-\$8,553	-27%
Non-Traditional				
Rev – concession stand	\$15,941	\$18,226	-\$2,285	-13%
Rev - concessions	\$20,744	\$2,641	\$18,103	685%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$814,000	\$939,000	-\$125,000	-13%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$2,955,000	\$2,820,000	\$135,000	5%

Business Unit Actual Revenue as Percentage of Direct Costs

28%

*As in past years, estimated expenditures include direct costs and administrative and overhead costs associated with assigned labor. Estimated costs do not include "loan-in labor", i.e., labor that may have been contributed by other work units. The WKCAC recorded about \$75,000 of loan-in labor in 2010; compared to \$24,000 in 2008 (this loan-in figure does not include benefits or 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 and Division indirect cost estimates for expenditures.

2010 highlights from Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) include:

- ❖ In 2010, revenues from WKCAC were down 13 percent from 2009, but are similar to revenue levels in 2008 and 2007. Revenues from rentals, lessons and drop-ins, and the concession stand were negatively affected by major maintenance and renovations that required a five week closure of the facility in August and September. These improvements, which included draining, cleaning and repairing all three pools, continuing to upgrade the HVAC system, expanding the locker rooms, and repainting the whole facility, contribute to the facility's status as one of the country's preeminent aquatic centers.
- ❖ Conference center revenue shows a decline of 27 percent and concessions revenue shows a significant jump, which is due to accounting for Jazzercise class rental fees in the concessions category in 2010 rather than in the conference center category as in past years. Concessions revenue, which is comprised of temporary vendors selling goods at specific events, is also affected by the timing of when payments from vendors are received by the Division.
- ❖ In 2010, WKCAC was selected as the site for both the 2012 US Olympic Diving Trials and the 2012 NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Championships. Both events will be nationally televised and will have an estimated combined economic impact of more than \$4 million for the region.
- ❖ In October, WKCAC again hosted its annual "Haunted Pool Party", posting the largest attendance in recent years. This family-friendly night features a haunted tunnel, canoe rides through the gloomy lagoon, the world's largest apple bob, and other fun and treats.

Fields and Facilities Business Unit



	2010 thru Q4	2009 thru Q4	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - Ballfields	\$378,414	\$400,462	-\$22,048	-6%
Rev - Facilities	\$220,854	\$188,179	\$32,675	17%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - RV Camping	\$68,537	\$49,748	\$18,789	38%
Revenues - Total	\$668,000	\$638,000	\$30,000	5%

2010 fields and facilities highlights include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues from fields and facilities were up 5 percent from 2009. This is a smaller increase than in past years, and this slow but steady growth reflects the fact that revenue from the Division's existing assets have largely been maximized.
- ❖ Although revenues from ballfields were strong in 2010, there was a 6 percent decrease from 2009. This is due to revenue lost with the transfer of two athletic complexes in 2010, the Evergreen Athletic Fields (to the Highline School District, the property owner) and the North Meridian baseball fields (to the City of Kent as part of an annexation).
- ❖ Revenue associated with facility rentals was up 17 percent from 2009. This increase can be attributed to the popularity of the Preston Community Center for weddings, special events, and meetings, as 2010 was the first full year that the center was available for reservation since its renovation and restoration.
- ❖ Camping revenues from RV, tent and yurt camping at Tolt-MacDonald Park increased 38 percent in 2010. The campground, which was partially closed over the past two years due to a flood mitigation project, returned to full availability in 2010. Booked steadily throughout the year, the park is also becoming increasingly popular for the unique picnic shelter/yurt wedding package offered by the Division.

Donations and Grants



2010 highlights include:

- ❖ The Division began working on several grant-funded projects, the grants for which were awarded in 2009. Grants included:
 - Washington State Department of Ecology, Aquatic Weeds Management Grants – Garden Loosestrife Control in Marymoor Park, \$28,750
 - Land and Water Conservation Fund – Tanner Landing Park public access development, \$77,200
 - Community Development Block Grant – Steve Cox Memorial Park tennis court rehabilitation, \$100,000

- ❖ On May 23, 2010, the Division hosted the first annual “Big Backyard 5k”. Organized by Sound Experiential Marketing with the Division as the beneficiary organization, the race took place at Marymoor Park and had 500 participants. Group Health sponsored the event at \$7,500, with several other local businesses providing in-kind donations. The Division anticipates making this an annual event, which netted an estimated \$13,000 for the Division in its first year.

- ❖ In 2010, the Division applied for three grants through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), a state-level matching grant program administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office. The Division ranked competitively on all three projects, but available funding, if any, for this grant program will not be known until the end of the 2011 state legislative session in April. The projects included:
 - WWRP Local Parks category – Duthie Hill Park Trailhead Development, \$317,477
 - WWRP Local Parks category – Cougar Mountain Park Precipice Trail Additions, \$500,000
 - WWRP Trails category – East Lake Sammamish Trail Development, \$500,000

- ❖ The Division is working with the Pacific Northwest Research Service of the US Forest Service, Cascade Land Conservancy, and the University of Washington on a unique multi-year project to assess the health of urban forests and residents' interest in forest stewardship. This project was made possible through recovery funds obtained by US Forest Service. The Division, which will receive more than \$320,000 over the course of two years, is providing field staff to carry out on-the-ground forest health assessments across King County, including on approximately 16,000 acres of Division-owned forest lands.

Agreements with Other Organizations Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program

The Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program continues to develop partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities in King County's parks. 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 investments (cash, grants, in-kind donations, volunteer labor, etc.), these CPG projects, when completed, will add new public recreation facilities valued at an estimated \$60 million.

CPG highlights from 2010 include:

- Grand opening of the Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park (partnership with Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance)
- Grand opening celebration of Phase I of the historical interpretive trail at Dockton Park (Vashon Historical Association, Friends of Dockton Park).
- Groundbreaking and completion of Phase I of Marymoor boathouse (Sammamish Rowing Association)
- At 100 percent design on synthetic turf field conversion project at Ravensdale Park (Friends of Rock Creek)
- Design development underway for field turf conversion projects at Petrovitsky Park (Kent Youth Soccer Association) and Big Finn Hill Park (Kirkland Lacrosse)
- Design development nearing completion on Phase II at Preston Athletic Fields and Community Park (Eastside Football Club)
- Development of a CPG small grants program, where 15 grants of up to \$10,000 each will be available in 2011. Approximately 10 grants will focus on projects in natural area parks and 5 will focus on active recreation projects.



Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets

Transferring local recreation amenities to cities and focusing on rural and regional facilities was a key element outlined in the Parks Business Plan, and many transfers have taken place since 2002. Consistent with the Parks Business Plan, the transfer of parks and pools⁷ within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is an on-going effort as part of the broader King County annexation strategy. These efforts have intensified in light of the continuing pressure on the County's general fund, which supports the Division's UGA facilities.⁸

Facility transfers that occurred in 2010 include:

- In July 2010, the following parks officially transferred to the City of Burien as a result of annexation:
 - Arbor Lake
 - Hazel Valley
 - Hilltop
 - Puget Sound
 - Salmon Creek
 - Southern Heights

- In July 2010, the following parks officially transferred to the City of Kent as a result of annexation:
 - Green Tree (including Green Tree Park Tract A Open Space)
 - North Meridian
 - Park Orchard

- The Vashon Pool was transferred to the Vashon School District, which will contract with the Vashon Park District for its operation.

- The City of Kirkland is moving forward with annexation, which is anticipated for 2011 and will affect a number of Division park properties, including:
 - Edith Moulton
 - Juanita Heights
 - Kingsgate
 - Windsor Vista
 - 132nd Square (anticipated to transfer in 2012)

- The Division is developing an inter-local agreement with the City of Issaquah for the transfer of Klahanie Park.

⁷ Transfer of UGA pools was completed with the return of the Evergreen Pool to the Highline School District, the property owner, in early 2010.

⁸ County general fund support for the UGA parks was discontinued at the end of 2010. Beginning in 2011, the remaining UGA parks will be funded from business revenues generated throughout the parks system.

Remaining facilities under consideration for transfer include:

Park	Potential Jurisdiction
Bingamon Pond	City of Federal Way
Bridle Crest Trail (portion)	City of Bellevue
Bryn Mawr	City of Renton
Boulevard Lane	City of Renton
Camelot	City of Federal Way
Cascade	City of Renton
Cecil Moses	TBD
East Norway Hill	City of Bothell
Hamm Creek	City of Seattle
Juanita Triangle	TBD
Kentlake Athletic Fields	City of Kent
Lake Geneva	City of Federal Way
Lakewood	TBD
Maplewood Heights	City of Renton
Maplewood	City of Renton
May Creek	City of Renton
North Green River (portion)	City of Kent
North Shorewood	TBD
Renton	City of Renton
Sierra Heights / Honey Dew	City of Renton
Site #1 Duwamish	City of Tukwila
Skyway	City of Renton
South County Ballfields	City of Federal Way
Sunset Playfield	City of SeaTac
White Center Pond Natural Area	TBD
White Center Heights	TBD

Community Outreach and Involvement



King County Parks Volunteer Program

More than 8,550 volunteers provided 57,400 hours of service in 2010. From planting 20,000 native trees and shrubs to recycling and composting more than half the waste generated at the Concerts at Marymoor to building five miles of backcountry trails, volunteers enhanced parks, trails, natural areas, and recreational amenities throughout the county. 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 more than \$800,000 in service hours in 2010.

This level and type of volunteerism is similar to past years; however, due to factors such as weather, availability and readiness of projects, and volunteer interest, evaluating a volunteer program's success should not be limited to comparing only participation numbers from year to year.

From one-day work parties to continuing volunteer commitments, the Division offered a variety of types of projects for volunteers to participate in, such as building and maintaining trails, removing invasive species, restoring habitat, clearing litter and facilitating recycling and composting, assisting park users, transplanting plants at the Greenhouse, caring for community garden plots, and opening and closing entry gates.

2010 volunteer involvement highlights include:

- ❖ The volunteer program collaborates with civic organizations, community-based groups, park user groups, schools, churches, and companies, especially on nationally recognized community service days, such as on Martin Luther King Day in January, Earth Day in April, the United Way's Day of Service in September, and HandsOn Network's Make a Difference Day in October, among others.

Attracting hundreds of volunteers of all ages, these key days of service (which often stretch over weeks or the entire month) benefit the Division in many ways, including introducing King County's vast system of parks and trails to new users and inspiring the first of many more days to come of volunteer service to the Division.



Microsoft volunteers teamed up with Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance volunteers on the Day of Caring in September

- ❖ The Division hosted 21 volunteers through AmeriCorps' National Civilian Community Corps program. The two groups of young adults camped at Tolt-MacDonald Park during their respective six- and five-week volunteer periods and focused on habitat restoration projects and trail work at a variety of sites throughout the system.
- ❖ For the fourth year, the Division worked with volunteers who facilitated composting and recycling during the Concerts at Marymoor summer performance series. Through the efforts of the 95 volunteers who provided 530 hours of service, half of the waste generated by the concerts was diverted from the landfill. This volunteer-based effort has been successful for the Division, attracting many returning volunteers, engaging nearly 100 percent of the concert food vendors, and reducing the cost and impact of hosting these types of large events.

Community Outreach Initiatives



The King County Parks and Recreation Division has a variety of ways to reach out to and interact with park user groups, other stakeholders, and the general public.

Electronic Outreach

King County Parks and Recreation Division website

The Division continues to innovate through its website, integrating social media and other interactive elements to keep the site up-to-date and dynamic.

King County Parks e-newsletter

The Division sends a regular email newsletter to an opt-in list with some 2,000 subscribers. This newsletter helps direct additional traffic to the Division's website and blog, while also highlighting upcoming events, recent news, and ways to get involved.

King County Parks and Social Media

Since 2009, the Division has been using social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to interact with and engage the public. The Division's Facebook fan base continues to grow and the Division regularly sends news items to be broadcast over the general King County News twitter account, which has more than 5,500 followers including media outlets, local non-profit organizations, and the general public.

This summer, the Division carried out a campaign to drive traffic to the Division's Facebook page and encourage interaction by "liking" the Division and being entered into drawings for tickets at the Concerts at Marymoor. As a result of this effort, the Division's Facebook fan base doubled over the course of three months. The Division will continue to carry out fun and engaging activities for the public by utilizing no-cost tools such as social media.

www.parksfeedback.com

Through *parksfeedback.com*, the Division receives a variety of compliments, suggestions, feedback, and notifications, which are delivered directly to the email inboxes of Division staff. While the feedback system does not provide a statistical gauge for constituent satisfaction, it is a powerful tool that asks a series of multiple choice questions and allows users to write in comments and include their email or telephone number to receive a direct response from the Division. The notifications sent by park users through

King County Parks Your Big Backyard King County

parcsfeedback.com also serve as “eyes and ears on the ground” for the Division’s 26,000 acres of property.

King County Press Releases

During 2010, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks’ Public Affairs Section issued more than forty press releases on behalf of the Division. In addition to notices about events, the press releases covered topics such as facility closures or detours and partnerships.

Earned Media

The Division continues to track the media coverage it garners in other outlets, such as community newspapers and blogs, regional print and broadcast media, and other online sources.

Outreach Events

The Division participated in a host of outreach events throughout the year, which attracted hundreds and even tens of thousands of attendees and provided excellent opportunities for visibility, information dissemination, and direct interaction with the general public. Some of the 2010 events included the Cascade Bicycle Club’s Bike Expo, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks Earth Day Expo at Westlake Center, the Green Festival, PACCAR and Boeing health and wellness fairs, Park(ing) Day, and the concerts and movies at Marymoor Park, among others.



The Division’s ‘mini park’ attracted a lot of attention and visitors on Park(ing) Day in September