

**PAUE Report for St. Edward State Park Ballfield Improvements August 5, 2016  
(submitted with the PAUE application)**

**Project Description:** The City of Kenmore proposes improvements to the existing grass ballfield area (approximately 3.5 acres) in St. Edward State Park. The City proposes a field designed to accommodate two little league fields, with overlay for two youth soccer fields, or one full-size soccer field, or one full size cricket field. Improvements include: new synthetic turf, bleachers, backstops, dugouts, pervious perimeter walking path, small maintenance shed, drainage improvements, parking improvements, wetland and buffer enhancement. Field lighting is included in the design but may be installed in a later phase.

The project minimizes impacts to critical areas and buffers as improvements are proposed within the existing field area and shifted as far west as possible within the existing ballfield footprint in order to avoid wetland impacts to the emergent wetland on the east side of the field. There are no impacts to the forested portion of the wetland south of the ballfield and no impacts to the seasonal stream that begins approximately 500 feet south of the ballfield. No trees will be removed and tree protection measures will be required during construction in accordance with a tree protection plan.

Approximately 4,725 square feet of mowed wetland buffer would be filled during site grading but not covered with synthetic turf. Installation of the turf would permanently grade, fill and cover 37,932 square feet of mowed wetland buffer. Impacts to forested buffers are avoided. Enhancement of the existing mowed wetland and wetland buffer area is proposed along the eastern and southern sides of the ballfield. Approximately 30,000 square feet of wetland and 25,000 square feet of wetland buffer enhancements are proposed as mitigation for project impacts to the wetland buffer. A detailed mitigation plan, including a planting plan will be prepared and submitted to the City with an engineering permit application.

**Proposed Long Term Lease Between the City of Kenmore and the Washington State Park Commission:** On 1/22/16 a Memorandum of Agreement (Contract 16-C1507) was executed between the City and State Parks to prepare a long term lease whereby the City improves the ballfields and manages and maintains them. On 6/6/16 the City and State Parks executed a SEPA lead agency agreement (Contract 16-C1561). The State Park Commission has the authority to approve a lease.

## PAUE Criteria KMC 18.55.160.D (Ordinance 16-0418)

1. There is no other *practical alternative* to the *development proposal* with less impact on the *critical area or buffer*, and

**Response:** The existing ballfield footprint is approximately 3.5 acres. The ballfield site is surrounded and constrained by forest and wetlands to the east and south. The park entrance roadway runs along the north side of the field. Immediately west of the mowed field is a picnic area with mature trees and gravel parking area. Due to site constraints and keeping within the existing ballfield footprint, there is no other practical alternative to renovate and improve the ballfield with less impact on the wetland buffer. The proposal avoids impacts to the wetland on the east and south side of the ballfield and avoids impacts to the forested wetland buffer. The proposal impacts wetland buffer which is already disturbed, being part of the mowed grass field area. It is not possible to meet the standard 100 foot wetland buffer or meet buffer averaging requirements within the existing ballfield footprint.

2. The *development proposal* benefits the public; and

**Response:** St. Edward State Park is approximately 316 acres in size. The 3.5 acre existing ballfield is approximately 1% of the park area. The existing ballfield has been used for active recreation and informal play for more than 80 years. Renovation of the existing ballfields benefits the public by enhancing recreation opportunities within St. Edward State Park for active sports such as youth baseball, youth soccer and cricket. The current field condition is poor and is not conducive for organized play. Providing open public use of the ballfields (e.g. Frisbee or pick-up games) is also important and will likely be a condition of the lease agreement between the City of Kenmore and the State Park Commission.

A potential schedule that could accommodate time for organized sports and open play is as follows: The ballfields could be available for open public use Monday through Thursday until 3:30 pm and all day Fridays during the sport season (February to November), and every day in December and January. Sundays would also be available outside of cricket season which is May through September.

The City of Kenmore owns one ballfield at Moorlands Park and has a lease agreement with Bastyr University through 2025, who have two fields which are fully booked. The renovation of the St. Edward ballfields will meet the unmet field needs of the City's youth soccer and little league players. Currently, there is a shortage of ADA accessible ballfields in the City, as the one turf field at

Inglemoor High School is only available to youth leagues on Sundays. Renovating the St. Edward fields will provide an ADA accessible public field.

Kenmore is part of a larger service area for youth soccer and baseball. Northshore Youth Soccer Association serves over 5,000 players on 504 teams within an area about four times the size of Kenmore (Kenmore is six square miles in size). The North Lake Little League has 476 players on 45 teams, serving an area twice the size of Kenmore. While there are over sixty fields (mostly on school property) in this area, four school districts and eleven recreation leagues compete for field use.

North Lake Little League has grown over 32% in the past three years and they play primarily on school and county park fields. During this period the league lost access to some fields and has adjusted by increasing the number of players per team, with three teams sharing two fields for practice and decreasing practice hours per team. The fields at St. Edward State Park would let the league reduce team size and increase hours played per participant. There are 274 league players who reside in Kenmore which equates to 27 teams. Because the league serves a larger area than Kenmore, calculating a regional need for fields does not answer the proportionate share of local field need. This was calculated using the following formula. Number of field need ( $\frac{\# \text{ players}}{\# \text{ players per team}}$ ), divided by the # of teams per game or practice, and this number is then divided by the number of games or practices per day. Using this calculation game field need equals  $(\frac{274 \text{ players}}{10})$  divided by 2 teams per game, divided by 4 games per day or 3.4 fields. The existing supply is three fields so there is demand for one additional field, which will be met with the St. Edward ballfield renovation. The league runs from March through June with practices starting in February and some tournament play in July.

Northshore Youth Soccer Association has also experienced growth in recent years, and this group also doubles up teams on fields and uses fields outside the service area. Quality game fields are a particular need in Kenmore. There are 703 Northshore Youth Soccer Players who reside in Kenmore which equates to 70 teams. Using the same calculation for proportionate local share, the need for quality game fields calculates as  $(\frac{703 \text{ players}}{10})$  divided by 2 teams per game, divided by 6 games per day or 5.9 quality game fields. The current supply within the City is four (three at Bastyr University and one at Moorlands) based on the current practice of running three games on the two fields at Bastyr University which leaves a shortfall of two fields. The renovated ballfields at St. Edward State Park will meet this need by providing two youth soccer fields. The soccer season runs from August through November.

Olympic Cricket Club's season is May through October 7, and they currently use St. Edward field for game and practice play. To accommodate competing field use in May, June, August and September on Saturdays, field use would have to be divided equally between cricket/baseball/soccer.

3. Strict application of this chapter would restrict or prohibit the *development proposal*; and

**Response:** Strict application of wetland buffer or buffer averaging requirements would prohibit the proposal. Due to site constraints as stated in the response to #1 above and keeping within the existing ballfield footprint it is not possible to meet the standard 100 foot wetland buffer or meet buffer averaging requirements.

4. The *development proposal* minimizes impacts to the *critical area or buffer* to the maximum extent practical, for example, through placement of facilities on previously disturbed areas, boring rather than trenching for utilities, use of pervious or other low impact materials, etc.; and

**Response:** The ballfield development proposal minimizes impacts to critical areas and buffers. The new ballfield improvements were positioned as far west as possible within the existing ballfield footprint in order to avoid wetland impacts to the emergent wetland on the east side of the field. There are no impacts to the forested portion of the wetland south of the ballfield. Wetland A is a palustrine emergent and palustrine forested wetland located along the eastern and southern sides of the existing ballfield, meeting the City's definition of a Class 2 wetland because it is greater than 1 acre in size and contains a forested wetland class (KMC 18.55.300(B)). The buffer requirement for Class 2 wetlands is 100 feet, plus a 15-foot building setback (KMC 18.55.320(F), 18.55.270). The emergent portion of Wetland A is located on the east side of the ballfield and is subject to ongoing mowing and recreational use, the wetland extends partway up the slope east of the ballfield. The southern portion of Wetland A (south of the ballfield) is forested.

The stream that runs south from Wetland A south of the ballfield meets the criteria for a Type 4 stream, as it is not used by fish (KMC 18.55.400(A)). The buffer requirement for Type 4 streams is 25 feet (KMC 18.55.420(B)). As the northern, upstream extent of the stream is located approximately 500 feet from the project area, no portion of the stream buffer lies within the project area. The one drainage swale/ditch along the western side of the existing ballfield is a constructed feature that does not convey a natural watercourse. Therefore, pursuant to KMC 18.20.2900, the ditch is not considered a regulated stream. The ditch along the eastern side of the existing ballfield is a constructed ditch within a regulated wetland, and is part of Wetland A.

The new ballfield improvements will be located entirely within the existing ballfield area, avoiding removal of native vegetation and trees. Approximately 4,725 square feet of mowed wetland buffer would be filled during site grading but not covered with synthetic turf. Installation of the turf would permanently grade, fill and cover an additional 37,932 square feet of mowed wetland buffer. Impacts to forested buffers are avoided.

The City of Kenmore defines Fish and Wildlife Habitats of Importance (FWHI) to include those habitat areas that meet any of the following criteria (KMC 18.55.500):

1. Documented presence of species listed by the federal government or the State of Washington as endangered or threatened; or
2. Heron rookeries or active nesting trees; or
3. Class 1 wetlands as defined in the City's regulations; or
4. Type 1 streams as defined in the City's regulations; or
5. Bald eagle habitat shall be protected pursuant to the Washington State Bald Eagle Protection Rules (WAC 232-12-292).

No fish and wildlife habitats of importance, as defined by KMC 18.55.500, are found in the project area. While bald eagle habitat is identified within St. Edward State Park, the mapped habitat does not include the ballfield site.

5. The *development proposal* mitigates impacts to the *critical area functions and values* to the maximum extent practical, consistent with the *best available science* and with the objective of no net loss of *critical area functions and values*. For impacts to *wetlands*, the *development proposal* should strive to meet the mitigation performance standards outlined in KMC Sections 18.55.330(G) and 18.55.330(H).

**Response:** Mitigation sequencing was considered during site design to avoid impacts to the wetland and minimize impacts to the wetland buffer. The ballfield improvements are positioned as far west as possible in order to avoid wetland impacts. Impacts to forested buffer areas are also avoided. Installation of ballfield improvements will not result in a major impact on the limited buffer functions provided by the existing mowed field. Approximately 4,725 square feet of mowed buffer would be filled during site grading but not covered with synthetic turf. After construction this area will be planted with native vegetation. Approximately 37,392 square feet of wetland buffer would be

graded, filled and covered with synthetic turf. The proposed buffer enhancement plan will provide a greater diversity and density of native plants, increase the habitat value for native wildlife species and help screen the existing forested habitat from light impacts.

Enhancement of the existing mowed wetland and wetland buffer areas is proposed along the eastern and southern sides of the ballfield. Approximately 30,000 square feet of wetland and 25,000 square feet of wetland buffer will be enhanced. In the forested wetland and buffer areas adjacent to the ballfield, invasive species will be removed by hand. Native emergent and shrub species will be planted in the mowed areas. The existing ditch that runs along the east side of the field would no longer be cleared of vegetation and it is expected that native volunteer species would colonize the remaining portions of the ditch over time. Functions provided by proposed wetland mitigation, include: dense emergent plantings will help to slow and filter surface flows and absorb excess nutrients and increase wildlife habitat value. Functions provided by buffer enhancement include: increased screening of the wetland from human activity and increased wildlife habitat values. A detailed mitigation plan, including a planting plan will be prepared.

Surface water currently flows from the surface of the existing ballfield area south into Wetland A before entering a small stream that eventually discharges to Lake Washington. The lake is located approximately 0.5 miles from the ballfield area. There is no existing stormwater management system for the ballfield area. The proposed ballfield improvements will use permeable synthetic turf, directly below which will be a plastic collection grid system with void space for stormwater runoff to accumulate and flow to a detention system constructed below it. Permeable pavement will be used for the pedestrian paths, and underdrains below the paths will collect runoff and route it to the detention system. Runoff from the asphalt-paved parking area along the west side of the field will sheet flow to the adjacent permeable pedestrian walkway, where it will enter the stormwater detention system. Stormwater will exit the detention system from a pipe at the southwest corner of the field, which will flow south towards Wetland A. The outfall pipe is located outside of the buffer of Wetland A.

The following will be implemented to mitigate for construction-related temporary impacts. A Temporary Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will be developed for the sports field improvement project. This plan will include measures to control surface water runoff and capture sediments prior to reaching off-site waters. The construction will also take place in the spring or summer, during a drier period of time to minimize surface water runoff issues. The project will comply with City of Kenmore drainage

requirements. The City will also apply for a Construction Stormwater permit through the Department of Ecology, which is required for projects that disturb one acre or more of land. This permit requires completion of a Notice of Intent form and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

A tree protection plan has been developed, in accordance with KMC 18.42.090. The plan includes measures to protect and preserve trees near construction areas, such as installation of temporary construction fencing around the critical root zones of nearby trees.

Increased use of the ballfield may result in increased disturbance of wildlife in the forested portion of Wetland A. When field lighting is installed there is the potential for wildlife disturbance. Impacts to foraging or breeding bald eagles are not anticipated from this project. The ballfield site is outside of the management zone distances specified by regulatory agencies for activities in the vicinity of bald eagle nesting or foraging areas. The ballfield is screened from the mapped bald eagle nest location by intervening vegetation and topography. In addition, the bald eagles that use St. Edward State Park for foraging and breeding are likely accustomed to human disturbances such as mowing, hikers and bicyclists, and water activities (jet skis, boats).

Several mitigation measures are proposed to minimize light and glare impacts if field lighting is installed, which include:

- The light poles will be installed as close to the field as possible to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat in the vicinity.
- Lighting will only be operational during gameplay.
- Lighting has been designed to have an average maintained lighting of 50 footcandles in the infield and 30 footcandles in the outfield.
- An additional 45 western red cedar trees are proposed to be planted adjacent to the north side of the field to further buffer field lighting from the rest of the park.