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# North Seattle HERALD-OUTLOOK

SERVING THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF NORTH SEATTLE SINCE 1922

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## With expansion, Greenwood Park looks to attract all ages

By Lauren Palmer



■ Bridger (foreground), 2, and Kyler Hansen, 4, rake up leaves in an open area of Greenwood Park that community members hope to improve and expand by incorporating adjacent properties that Seattle Parks and Recreation owns. photo/Erik Hansen

### PARK OWNERSHIP

Greenwood Park is preparing to grow, and supporters are looking for ways to make it more attractive to teens and seniors. Upcoming community meetings are planned to gather ideas from local residents.

The park, at 602 N. 87th St., currently includes a large grassy area with playground equipment, a plaza, benches and picnic tables. The original park property was purchased in 1999 with local government and neighborhood support. The Friends of Greenwood Park (FOGP), a group of neighborhood volunteers, was formed that year to help plan the design of the park.

Originally, the park didn't include two properties east along Fremont Avenue North near North 87th because they were occupied by homes. Seattle Parks and Recreation now owns these properties, and they are ready to be developed and incorporated into the park.

The original idea for the expansion was to create a p-patch with multiple gardening plots, but the group wanted to get ideas from the wider community before it settled on a plan, said FOGP chairperson Loretta Vosk, a member of the Vision Greenwood Park steering committee.

The two new properties allow an opportunity to make the park more inclusive and give everyone a say. "We needed to go beyond our little group," Vosk said. "The goal is to serve underserved populations."

These include teens and senior citizens, according to Crystal Barnard, unit director of the North Seattle Boys & Girls Club and member of the Vision Greenwood Park steering committee. Young children find the play equipment at the park entertaining, but teens and senior citizens are not as attracted to the park.

"If you look at the neighborhood and public areas, many are geared more toward elementary-age children," Barnard said. "Once they hit sixth or seventh grade, they feel there aren't a lot of spaces they can inhabit besides parking lots and dark corners."

According to Vosk and Barnard, over the summer, residents noticed graffiti, destruction, littering and garbage around the park and the neighborhood - apparently the work of teens.

Barnard said that if there were a basketball court, many kids might spend their time there instead of participating in destructive activities.

"If the park felt more like their own place, there is the idea that they might take more care of it," Vosk said.

## CITY GRANT

The steering committee for the volunteer group, Vision Greenwood Park, has applied for a \$15,000 Small and Simple Project Fund from the city's Department of Neighborhoods. With the funding, the committee hopes to incorporate the additional properties into the park, Vosk said.

The Small and Simple Project Fund requires that the amount awarded is matched dollar-for-dollar with volunteer and professional labor and in-kind donations. Volunteers with specialties and professional services like website building and landscaping are needed.

Community meetings were held in November and December. These produced initial ideas to make the park more appealing to the whole community.

A steering committee for Vision Greenwood Park was formed to coordinate volunteer pledges, outreach to local businesses and organizations and work on the Small and Simple Project Fund application.

If the group receives the project fund, the committee's first task is to hire a landscape designer to help create multiple plans for the new properties and inform the community at meetings.

## TWO PLANS

There are two other properties east along Fremont Avenue that are currently occupied by homes, but the owners of these two properties will offer them to Seattle Parks and Recreation when they decide to sell, Vosk said.

The long-term park plans will include these other two properties: a first stage for the two properties Seattle Parks and Recreation owns, and an interim plan for the other two they hope to acquire.

"It didn't make sense to think about just developing the two properties," Vosk said. "It made more sense to have the optimistic view that we are going to eventually have all four properties."

The group will find out if it receives the grant at the end of February and will then start the planning process. According to the fund application, park plans will be presented to the public at a meeting and displayed in the park's information kiosk, the Greenwood Neighborhood Service Center and the Greenwood Library to receive community feedback. After that, a new plan with alterations will be presented to the community.

"It's important to grab any properties you can for this type of space instead of seeing them turned into condos," Vosk said. "When there are condos going up all around you, you need those spaces to take it easy."

More information can be found on Vision Greenwood Park's online discussion forum at [groups.yahoo.com/group/visiongreenwoodpark](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/visiongreenwoodpark).