Sports Illustrated 50th Anniversary Sportstown Application

In conjunction with the National Recreation and Park Association

The Sportstown Application must be postmarked no later than May 1, 2003. Applications must be sent (single spaced) to: Sportstown, NRPA, 22377 Belmont Ridge Road, Ashburn, VA 20148, or e-mailed to programs@nrpa.org. All inquiries regarding this application should be forwarded by e-mail to programs@nrpa.org. Please note, all video and printed materials forwarded with this application form are welcomed, but not required. Materials submitted with the application will not be returned.



Name of Agency:

City of Kent Parks, Recreation & Community Services

Agency Director:

John M. Hodgson

Application Contact Person:

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Title:

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NRPA Member Number:

901192

Population served by agency:

City Limits - 84,275

Kent School District 174,000

"Dedicated to Enriching Lives"



General Overview

What role does the park and recreation department have in the execution of community sport programming? Please describe how your agency provides, administers, collaborates or facilitates quality sports in your community.

The City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department has assumed the role as a leader in the area of community sports programming and facility planning/development. We pride ourselves on our ability to offer cutting edge programming, keeping pace with national trends without losing sight of the more traditional recreation programming we are well known for in the community. Our facilities are creatively designed for high volume, multi-use participation. Unique funding strategies and public-private partnerships allow us to develop new facilities and renovate existing spaces without overburdening the tax payers.

Located 15 miles south of Seattle in Washington State, our service area extends beyond the boundaries of the City of Kent to include the entire Kent School District and portions of the Federal Way School District. The City of Kent has a population of 84,275 residents, the eighth largest city in Washington, while our service area includes over 174,000 people. We reach out to a diverse population of participants, welcoming people of all ages, gender, ethnic backgrounds and skill levels. Our youngest participant is 6 months of age (indoor park) and our oldest participant is 101 years young. There are currently 86 languages spoken by the participants within our service area.

As our mission statement suggests, a department goal is to offer meaningful and inclusive recreational, cultural and human service programs. Careful consideration and analysis is given to participant and community surveys, statistical data and trend research to identify a balanced and comprehensive program offering. Through participant program evaluations, we are able to fine tune and enhance programming to best meet the needs of participants. Public meetings are held to identify the greatest needs in the area of facility acquisition and development. Development of new facilities as well as the renovation of existing facilities balances the needs of specific neighborhoods with the needs of regional users. Effectively planning for the future, land purchased today will be available for potential development or partnerships tomorrow. In the past five years we have acquired 152 acres of land.

A work group of eleven Program Coordinators and six Program Specialists in six divisions (Recreation/ Athletics/Community Education, Senior Programming, Specialized Recreation, Youth and Teen Programs, Cultural Programs, and Aquatics) develop and administer an average of 144 sports programs and classes every quarter for 32,000 individual registrants. Additionally, the department hosts a variety of drop-in special events and skills competitions throughout the year. Staff uses a variety of marketing techniques to insure that the community is aware of what is available. Examples include quarterly brochures, program flyers, mass mailings, and public service announcements in various local and regional media.

We work collaboratively with the Kent School District to make sure the needs of the entire community are met. A strong reciprocal agreement with the school district allows our department to use school sports fields, gymnasiums and classrooms. In exchange, the school district has use of city owned and maintained fields for league and tournament competition as well as physical education classes and special events. This arrangement insures efficient scheduling and use of all available spaces for community programming.

A variety of private sports organizations such as Aquatics Management, American Legion Baseball, Babe Ruth Baseball, Little League, Kent Youth Soccer, BCI / AAU Basketball and Kent Junior Football, meet the needs of the most competitive level participants. Many of these groups access city owned fields and facilities at an affordable rental cost.

We work cooperatively to insure that athletic fields are used to their maximum capacity. In some cases, parks department league rules reflect time limits or inning restrictions. This allows us to play as many games as possible on each field, serving the greatest number of participants.



1. What is your community philosophy to address issues of inclusion and lifelong sport participation?

Our department mission statement reads, "Dedicated to Enriching Lives". It simply means that everything we do is built around the concept that as recreation professionals, we can positively impact the lives of everyone in our community. We believe strongly in the premise that everyone in the Kent community shall have the opportunity to equally participate in, benefit from and enjoy Parks and Recreation programming and facilities. This philosophy is carried throughout every program, activity, special event and is foremost in the development and construction of parks, fields and facilities.

- Programs are designed to be welcoming and inclusive. We believe that if a person's first experience in an activity is positive, they will be more inclined to stay with that activity and take advantage of other opportunities for health, fitness and fun. Our participation statistics support this idea in that approximately 90% of registered participants return for the same or additional activities.
- Recreational sports and activities are introduced to participants at a very early age and they are encouraged to continue over the course of their lifetime. Activities are available for every age participant.
- All athletes have the opportunity to participate in every sport offered. Our goal is to make all participants, including those with special needs, feel welcomed through clear and concise communication. When needed, existing equipment may be modified or adaptive equipment provided to insure the best possible experience. We also offer unified teams, partnering athletes with and without disabilities, for anyone interested.



- For the purpose of equal competition and skill development, many programs are split by gender and age or grade.
 However, every effort is made to insure that all aspects of the programs are equitable. Close attention is given to equity of field quality and location, equipment, uniforms, coaching, and sports officials.
- Everyone that registers to participate is guaranteed a place on an appropriate team. Youth sports teams are formed by professional recreation staff to insure equity in competition.



- No youth or senior is excluded from participation because of financial concerns. Scholarships are available for those who cannot afford to pay program fees.
- Sports participation is essential for all ages. Participation in sports and exercise programs help seniors to age in place, possibly eliminating or postponing the need for later long term care.
- Planning and Development staff incorporate accessibility into every facility design to insure that persons with disabilities are able to fully enjoy and participate at all facilities.



Sports leagues and camps are designed to meet the interests, needs, abilities, and schedules of the greatest number of participants in the community. Routine evaluations and requests for participant feedback help insure that programs are meeting participant standards and expectations.



SECTION I Philosophy

2. What is your philosophy regarding the balance between competitive and recreational sport opportunities?

Athletics and sports related activities are for fun, fitness and feeling better about ourselves. They are an excellent social outlet for children and adults. For sports to bring out the best in young athletes, adults must keep winning in its proper perspective. Youth sports teams are coached by adult volunteers who can have an enormous impact on how a child feels about sports.

Coaches are the key to the successful participation of youth in sports. Sports programs involve kids who enjoy movement, who strive for excellence, and who grow with both praise and constructive criticism. With proper leadership, sports programs develop a child's ability to accept responsibilities, accept others and, most of all, accept themselves. The welfare of the athlete must come first, winning must come second. We continually ask the question, "What is best for the children?"

- The Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services philosophy states: "All boys and girls who
 register for a sport will be assigned to a team of similar age and skill level". Once assigned,
 everyone participates.
- Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department prides itself on being a leader in recreational sports opportunities. Our programs are designed for the participant who enjoys playing a variety of activities throughout the year. Fun is the central component in every activity.



- Playing on a team builds character through traits learned in both winning and losing.
- Programs focus on skill development and broadening knowledge of the sport. Introductory programs are designed for fun and participation. Scores aren't kept. There are no win – loss records.



- Only after participants have a sense of fundamentals are they introduced to competition.
 Winning plays an important role in the programs, but only after discipline, responsibility and sportsmanship are introduced and implemented. Young athletes are taught to enjoy winning and to respond to losing with renewed positive determination.
- As youth participants increase in skill level, play becomes more competitive. Leagues are available for the older and more skilled youth participants.
- Adult athletics (participants over 18 years of age) are divided by skill level. Teams consult with our professional program staff to identify the best level of play for their participants.
- Rules are in place to insure that there is a balance of competition within adult programming.
 Each year, winning teams move up a competitive level and less successful teams may move down.
- A variety of private sports organizations such as Little League, Kent Youth Soccer, Junior Football, etc. meet the needs of the most competitive level participants. They are a perfect program option for participants who have a single sport focus and choose to play that one activity year around. Staff works with these groups to schedule fields and to insure that balanced programming is available to suit individuals of all skill levels.



3. What are your top three priorities for improving the quality of sports in your community?

Improving the quality of sports programming in our community is dependent on the cooperation of recreation providers to collaboratively address the most significant priorities: facilities, participation and training.

• Facilities: Facilities are a priority because we know that insufficient or problematic sports venues tend to be one of the biggest deterrents to sports participation. Our department is very dedicated to expanding, improving and fully utilizing its parks, fields and gymnasiums to maintain the quality of our programs. Additionally, every attempt is made to develop or make available facilities close to where people live. Staff in the Park Planning and Development Division use a variety of tools to analyze the needs of the community. Through their research, they identify where new facilities are needed or when renovation of existing spaces may be a more viable solution.

Through considerable outside funding strategies including grants, donations, and



sponsorships, the department has been able to acquire land, develop new facilities and renovate existing spaces.

Facilities must be safe, clean, and accessible. Parks Maintenance staff prepares field spaces daily to guarantee the best possible playing surfaces for sports program participants. Seasonal maintenance plans are followed in preparation for the upcoming season. They also perform routine equipment and site inspections as a way to

prevent problems from occurring. Recreation staff coordinate and schedule parks department programs and serves as a conduit to private community user groups. Through consistent policies and communication, they work with community user groups to insure equitable and efficient use of facilities. Good channels of communication insure that user groups, participants, and parks department staff are aware of scheduling changes / cancellations. Marketing the facilities has been a significant part of the overall plan. Having captured the interest of regional and national tournament organizers, Kent routinely hosts state, regional and national softball, baseball, and soccer tournaments.

- Participation: Programming is designed to meet the needs of the entire community. A full range of activities have been developed to appeal to people of all ages, skill levels, and interests. Introductory classes and clinics are designed to capture participant's interest and serve as a foundation for continued growth in the activity. Our youngest participants are introduced to sports leagues through junior programs such as t-ball and junior hoopsters. These are designed for fun and development of fundamentals. Games are played but scores are not kept. Leagues and tournaments serve as an opportunity for sportsmanship, fun, and lifelong learning in athletic programs. Not only is our department striving to expand the participation in our own sports programs, we have been building and expanding our facilities for other area sports organizations to use and to increase their participation.
- Training: The final key component for improving quality of sports is through the selection and training of qualified and dedicated volunteers and sports officials. These people are asked to support the department's mission as they serve as coaches, teachers, mentors, and role models. Their proficiency in these areas can have a significant impact on how each participant feels about their experience in the activity. Many adults remember their earliest coaches and suggest that those early interactions colored their feelings about the activity into adulthood. Given their impact on participants, it is imperative that coaches and officials have adequate training. Training is explained in more detail in Section III, questions #9 and #11.





4. What are your standards of conduct for parents, coaches and participants?

We believe that it is imperative for coaches and parents to work together in order for young athletes to have the best possible experience. While yelling and disagreement seem to be common place in professional sports, that kind of behavior has no place in youth or recreational sports programs. It is essential that coaches and parents demonstrate more appropriate behavior in recreational sports. Their conduct serves to set a standard of behavior for their athletes. When they are positive and supportive, their athletes will follow suit. There is no question that the conduct of parents and coaches has a lasting impact on young participants.

Kent Parks provides each family a list of guidelines for parents and spectators that are designed to enhance the participants experience as well as maintaining a positive atmosphere

for each sports program.



This statement of philosophy accompanies all materials directed to coaches, parents and participants: The City of Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services and the Kent School District cooperate to provide the finest in quality recreational programs for the youth of our community. The cooperation has for many years provided the

opportunity for all boys and girls to participate equally with the assurance that the experience will be memorable with the emphasis on learning, exercising, building self-esteem, having **fun** and learning sportsmanship. Please encourage and support your team, the coaches, their assistants, and the officials. Negative actions will not be tolerated.

• Rules focus on sportsmanship, fair play, honesty, hard work, respect, and appropriate conflict resolution.

Adults are expected to set a positive example for participants. Rules are in place which
prohibits the use of alcohol and tobacco products during games or practices anywhere within
the participation area including bleachers and parking lots.

- Coaches, parents and spectators are expected to be positive and supportive in their comments.
 They are encouraged to cheer and support their team and participants rather than against the
 opposing team. Inappropriate language or comments are not acceptable. They are not
 allowed to disrupt the game in any way. This includes inappropriate or negative comments
 about or to the officials, participants, parents/spectators or coaches of either team before,
 during or after the game
- In an effort to prevent confusion or frustration, instructions to participants should come from the coach rather than parents and spectators. Coaches should be allowed to do the coaching during games and practices.
- Game officials are to be respected at all times. No one other than the head coach is to communicate with game officials.
- Special Olympics participants are asked to sign and abide by their Code of Conduct. They also follow the Honest Effort Rule.
- We've received considerable positive feedback regarding our standards and guidelines. Many people suggest that those high standards contribute to the fact that we've experienced very few major behavioral incidents during sports activities. Unlike many other communities, Kent has not had to create or enforce "Silent Spectator" rules.



Note: Specific Rules of Conduct/Honest Effort Rule are included in the appendix



5. What procedures are in place to promote participation and inclusion for your community sport programs?

Quite simply, everyone in the Kent Community is welcomed and encouraged to participate in all appropriate programming. Activities are available for persons of all ages and skill levels.

- Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department is a recent recipient of the \$10,000 Social and Recreational Activities Grant and is a recognized leader in inclusive programming in our region. Inclusive programs are strongly encouraged because they put children and adults, with and without disabilities, side-by-side in recreation programs and events. Coming together and sharing common experiences helps to break down barriers and stereotypes. The grant funds have enabled our department to purchase adaptive equipment and to offer training and consultation to general sports teams, parks department program coordinators, instructors, and volunteer coaches for the purpose of including people with disabilities into the mainstream sports programs.
- It is not unusual for staff to reach out to individual participants who might be well served by a specific program. Sometimes all it takes is a little encouragement to build self esteem and break down participant barriers.



- While every effort is made to welcome people with special needs into all areas of programming, specialized recreation opportunities are available to those who prefer that experience. Youth, Masters (adult) and Unified sports teams (combining disabled and non-disabled athletes) participate in all Special Olympics activities. Kent is also the recipient of the \$4,000 Family Support Community Service Grant. Funds have been used to promote and support community opportunities for children and adults with developmental disabilities who reside with their families.
- The City of Kent is committed to providing programs and services to individuals with disabilities. Every effort is made to honor requests for special accommodations.
- Programming is available for multi-age participants. However, programs are also available for senior citizens who prefer age specific opportunities.



- Rules are in place within youth sports programs which guarantee every participant an equal opportunity to play.
- The City of Kent Parks Department is responsible for forming all youth teams. This helps to
 insure that the skill level of every team will be as balanced as possible. Players are assigned by
 grade, school and geographic area to give them the opportunity to play with their friends, make
 new friends, and to make it easier to car-pool.
- Marketing to promote programs is carried out in a variety of ways. A Quarterly Brochure
 features every sports program, class, and special event planned by the Parks, Recreation and
 Community Services Department. The brochure is mailed directly to every city resident.
 Specific program flyers are mailed directly to past participants and others who are eligible and
 most likely to participate. Flyers and brochures are circulated to every school in the surrounding
 districts. News releases sent to various media highlight upcoming programs and events.
- Upcoming programming is featured on the City Web page. The Parks Department Web pages have the second highest number of visitors (just behind the employment web page).
- Interpreters are provided when possible, at the request of the participant. TDD and Telebraille services are available. When practical, promotional materials are translated into various languages to insure that the entire community has access to programming.

Note: Guidelines for Youth Team Placement are included in the appendix



SECTION II Policies and Procedures

6. What policies are in place for independent programs to safely utilize public facilities? (For example—do you require insurance certificates, birth certificates, background checks, etc.)

We have an excellent working relationship with the Kent School District and various private organizations to insure that facilities are used to capacity.

- A Reciprocal Use Agreement with the School District contractually allows us to access school buildings, gyms, and fields for programming after the schools have scheduled their activities. Similarly, the school district uses city owned and maintained facilities for their athletic programs and physical education classes once parks department activities have been scheduled. We share insurance certificates annually to cover all facility use.
- Private user groups are able to reserve fields and gyms on a trimester basis. Policies and
 procedures are in place to insure that all users have an equitable opportunity to rent space and
 that rules for use are clear and easy to follow. In many cases, staff meets with the various user
 groups ahead of their season to discuss best uses of the available spaces.
- All users must provide certificates of insurance prior to use of any city owned facility or field.
- Independent leagues require Washington State Patrol background checks for all coaches and birth certificates for proof of age of participants.

Note: Reciprocal Use Agreement and Rental Guidelines can be found in the appendix



7. What requirements exist for individuals or groups to volunteer in your community sport programs?

Volunteers are an essential component of all sports programming. Our goal is to make the experience of volunteering as fun, rewarding, and valuable to the program as possible.

- Volunteers must have general interest in and basic knowledge of the activity (adequate to teach the fundamentals of the game), an ability to coordinate groups of participants in meaningful structured practices, the desire to learn and apply additional coaching techniques, knowledge of or a desire to learn what young children are capable of doing, the willingness and ability to commit five or more hours each week for practices and games, a desire to work with the assigned age group, an understanding of and commitment to abide by the league rules and participation guidelines, and the ability to model good sportsmanship on the field and off.
- All volunteers must complete an Application for Volunteer Service which helps staff place them
 in an appropriate assignment that matches their interests and skills. It is also used as a tool for
 checking references.
- In the interest of participant safety, every volunteer must submit forms for a Washington State Patrol Background Check.
- Volunteers are treated with the same respect, care, and training as their paid employee counterparts. Schedules are built around their availability, they must be knowledgeable about city policies and procedures, and are held responsible for their volunteer assignments.
- Precise records are kept regarding volunteer participation in order for the city to insure them
 through Labor and Industries. If they are injured in the course of their volunteer service, they
 have the same insurance coverage as regular employees.
- Volunteers serve as youth sports team coaches and assistant coaches, assistants at special
 events, help with park clean up and renovation, and serve as representatives on the adult
 softball board, etc.
- There are approximately 1,100 volunteer coaches and assistants in our youth sports programs.
- Volunteers contribute over 166,000 hours annually to programs within the Parks Department. We save over \$1.4 million dollars annually thanks to their service.
- Senior volunteers serve as coaches or referees for senior softball, volleyball, and pickleball.
 Very often these volunteers have years of experience in the specific activity and are well suited to helping others learn the activity and can relate well to the specific needs of this age group.
- Volunteers are frequently asked to serve on various task forces or boards and may be required to reside within the City of Kent boundaries.

Note: Application for Volunteer Service can be found in the appendix



8. What are your community sport safety policies?

Participant and employee/volunteer safety is paramount in all programs and activities.

- Employees and volunteers participate in various training programs to insure that they are aware
 of the most current practices and procedures related to their assignment. In order to provide
 the safest programs and participant spaces, many staff attend the NRPA (National Recreation
 and Park Association) Resource Risk Management School. Maintenance and Planning /
 Development staff attend NRPA Resource Management School, NPSI (National Playground
 Safety Institute) Playground Certification, Floyd Perry Infield Maintenance School, STMA Sports
 Turf Management Association, and Washington State Pesticide Training and Certification.
- All Staff and many volunteers are required to be certified in Red Cross First Aid and CPR.
 Lifeguards are required to be certified in American Red Cross Advanced Lifesaving, American
 Red Cross Standard First Aid, American Red Cross CPR for the Professional Rescuer, and
 must pass Northwest Lifeguard Test.
- Training as appropriate is required before participating in or leading some activities.
- Appropriate safety equipment is provided to employees and participants.



- Staff routinely consults the city's risk manager to insure program safety.
- The Parks Department welcomes outside evaluation of programming and facilities. We recently passed a safety audit conducted by the AWC (Association of Washington Cities).
- Washington State Patrol Background checks are conducted on all employees and volunteers.
- Policies clearly state that coaches and volunteers should not provide transportation to participants.
- First aid kits are kept at all participation sites and in all vehicles.
- Incident report forms are completed and filed for every injury involving participants, volunteers
 and employees. A safety committee reviews employee and volunteer injuries to determine if
 they were preventable and to identify ways to insure the incident doesn't reoccur.
- Sports officials and coaches check fields and gyms for potential hazards prior to the start of every practice and game.

- Coaches remind participants about safety rules before each practice and game. Additionally, they check safety equipment before allowing children to play.
- Participants are instructed to stretch and warm up before each activity.
- Fields are prepared for games and practices by trained and experienced maintenance staff.
- Maintenance staff conducts routine site inspections of fields and gyms to insure that everything
 is in good repair. Staff and volunteers are asked to immediately report any problems they
 encounter on site so that the problem can be fixed or activities re-scheduled.
- Facilities are thoroughly inspected at the end of each sport season so that repairs and life cycle improvements can be completed prior to the start of the next season.



9. What are your policies and practices regarding volunteer and coaches training?

Through the training of officials and coaches, the quality of sports in our community are improving. Coaches training requirements for our leagues include:

- All coaches and volunteers are required to attend a pre-season coaches orientation meeting
 which covers department philosophy, general information concerning the league, league rules,
 participation, safety, how to contact participants, how to address parent concerns, and practice
 time lines.
- Each coach receives a sport specific fundamentals and skill booklet to help them organize their practices and teach the basic fundamentals of the sport.



- Most of the youth sports programs have a pre-season coach's clinic. These clinics are taught by local high school or college coaches to give our volunteers hands on training.
- Coaches are selected for their background and experience in sports as well as their interest and willingness to work with a diverse group of people. They must be able to create a positive atmosphere in which players are more receptive to being corrected.
- Training is available to coaches who may need assistance in working with specific participant issues. Staff is available to help with adaptive equipment, interpreters, or any other special need a coach might have.
- Inclusion is a focus within all sports programs. Staff is always available to facilitate any situations that may arise with special needs adults or children.



SECTION III Education and Training

10. What education and training strategies do you use to provide parent education?

Our department strongly believes that parent education is a major factor in developing and sustaining a successful youth sports program.

- Parents are included in all aspects of the sports program. They receive program information
 and guidelines at the beginning of each season. They also receive league rules, program
 policies and procedures, schedules, and may access coaching materials if desired.
- Coaches are asked to have frequent communication with parents or guardians and are
 provided with a script to follow when reviewing procedures and behavioral expectations to
 insure that the message is consistent and concise.
- Parents are encouraged to coach or assist with their child's team. If they are unable to assume
 an official role with the team, they are invited to be supportive spectators at practices and
 games.
- Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all coaches training clinics, participant clinics, and sports officiating clinics.
- Professional recreation staff is available to provide information about the program and to answer questions as needed throughout the season.
- A list of national publication web sites is provided to parents for more information about specific sports and how they can best support their child in the program.



11. What minimum standards for training do you use for officials in your sport programs?

Given their impact on participants, it is imperative that officials have adequate training. Youth and Adult sports programs all have training and performance standards:

Adult Sports:

 Adult sports leagues, with the exception of volleyball, are all affiliated with various sanctioned sports organizations. Officials are recruited, trained and evaluated by that sanctioning organization.

<u>League</u> <u>Officials Used</u>

•	Adult Basketball Leagues	Pacific Northwest Basketball Officials Association
•	Adult Softball Leagues	Players Choice Softball Association
•	Senior Softball Leagues	Amateur Softball Association (ASA)
•	Adult Flag Football Leagues	Pacific Northwest Football Officials Association

 All Association officials go through a rigorous training program and must meet minimum test scores and performance standards in order to officiate adult sport leagues. These officials are evaluated throughout the year to insure acceptable levels of performance.

Youth Sports and Adult Volleyball:

- For over 30 years, Kent Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department has
 recruited, trained, scheduled and evaluated the sports officials and score keepers who work
 within the youth (and some adult) sports programs. For many of our applicants, this is a first
 time work experience so in some cases, training begins with how to complete an
 employment application and its associated paperwork.
- Once selected, potential officials go through a seasonal training program comprised of classroom discussion including thorough review of rules, policies and procedures, background on the program, and related orientation information.
- The next step is on-court or on-field training which focuses on mechanics and positioning.
 This training features role playing of common and uncommon scenarios they would likely
 encounter during the course of a real game. Experienced officials assist the new officials
 while fine tuning their own skills.
- Officials must pass a written test of rules and situations in order to progress to the next phase of training.
- Officials then participate in a series of jamboree (mini games) and practice games for the purpose of fine tuning skills and evaluation.
- Those people who successfully pass all the training requirements are assigned games.
 When possible, new officials are assigned to work with more experienced workers at the
 lowest levels of play in order to gain confidence and experience. Their performance
 evaluated throughout the season and as their skills improve, they advance to the more
 competitive levels of play.

12. What level of commitment does you community have to proper skill development for youth in sport? (For example, are there opportunities to learn skills before competing?)

Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department recognizes the importance and value that early skill development plays in future participation. For that reason, we have created a variety of introductory skills programs and camps as well as fun movement classes for all ages.

- Movement classes such as Wiggles and Giggles, Little Ninjas, Tiny Tigers, Parent / Tot Tumbling and Teeny Weeny Wigglers introduce children as young as 18 months of age to balance, fitness, safety, concentration, and teamwork. Through structured "play", participants develop skills that will be used in future sports participation. "Fun" is the central theme of these activities. Our goal is to make movement, fitness and sport so enjoyable that it will become a central part of their lives as they mature.
- Seasonal camps are available for every skill level in sports including soccer, basketball baseball, softball, volleyball, tennis, flag football, roller hockey and ice hockey. Sports camps feature a variety of instructors from local high school coaches to well known sports heroes from college and professional sports including past Olympians. In some cases, these camps introduce new participants to the activity while for others, the camp helps develop or enhance the participant's skill level.



- Private organizations work collaboratively with parks department staff to schedule seasonal sports camps and clinics.
- Classes and clinics are available for various specific sports skills. For example, college level coaches lead pitching clinics for boy's baseball and girl's fastpitch. Golf Pros conduct chipping, pitching and putting clinics.
- Practice time is essential to skill development. Every sports program includes a minimum of 3
 weeks practice and preparation time prior to the start of league play. Practice time is made
 available to teams at school and city owned facilities. This enables coaches to assess skill
 levels, fine tune fundamentals, and introduce new skills to their team members.



13. Beyond sport skills, what do your sport programs teach young people?

We feel very strongly that sports have a significant impact on those who participate.

- In many cases a child's first organized sport program may be with Kent Parks, Recreation & Community Services. We provide programs where children can acclimate themselves to a competitive setting. It is a learning environment that is non-intimidating and teaches important social interaction skills among their peers and adult mentors (other than their parent/guardian).
- Through sport participation, children are introduced to a diverse group of teammates and competitors. This serves to develop a strong sense of cultural awareness which will serve them well in later life.



- Emphasis is placed on participation and the joy of sport.
- Participants learn the value of being physically fit and positive impacts fitness can have on their health now and in the future.
- Sport can instill a variety of life lessons in a nonthreatening environment. It can be instrumental in teaching young people how to set and achieve goals through hard work and practice. Many

successful adult professionals suggest that they developed their strong work ethic and leadership skills on the sports field.

- Winning and losing gracefully is an art that is practiced daily throughout life. Adult sport
 coaches and mentors can leave a lasting impression on a participant by how they practice that
 "art".
- Sportsmanship and conflict resolution are skills practiced on and off the field.
- As in sports, life is full of rules and guidelines. Learning to understand and follow rules as well as respecting those people who must enforce them is a critical lesson.





A big part of most sports is the team and for young participants, being with teammates is fun. Later in life everyone finds themselves on teams and the lessons of cooperation and working together learned in those early sports years are invaluable.

 Values such as respect, honor, appreciation, and empathy are easily learned in sport and are crucial throughout life.



14. How does your community embrace the "everyone plays, everyone wins" approach to youth sports?

Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department has a primary goal for its youth sports programs and that is for every participant to share in the experience of teamwork, sportsmanship and competition. In providing that service, we require coaches to follow simple participation guidelines for each sport to insure everyone plays:

- In the youth basketball program, every eligible player must play one entire quarter from beginning to end without interruption, appear in both halves, and must sit out a full quarter.
- In the youth baseball program and youth softball program, every player bats and all players must participate on defense a minimum of two innings.
- In the youth soccer program, all players must participate a minimum of ten minutes in each thirty minute half.
- We offer instructional activities in youth soccer (kindergarten and 1st grade), basketball (1st grade and 2nd grade) as well as T-Ball (pre-kindergarten/kindergarten) and Toss Ball (coach's pitch for 1st /2nd grade). In these programs, every youngster plays equally and scores are not recorded.



Scholarships are a critical factor in youth sports programming. Our department feels very strongly that all youth should have the opportunity to participate in sports and other activities and that a family's financial situation should not compromise that participation. Scholarships are made available through various sources as needed to insure that everyone

that wants to play can play. In 2002, over 500 participants received financial scholarships.

- Philosophically, we feel that athletics are for fun, fitness, and feeling better about ourselves. For sports to bring out the best in young athletes, adults must keep winning in its proper perspective. The welfare of the athlete must come first, winning must come second. We encourage coaches to continually ask themselves, "What is best for the children?".
- We have found that most parents embrace the philosophy of equal playing time. They tell us that
 they have memories of being on teams where "win at all costs" was the theme and they ended up
 spending a good portion of the time on the bench. They don't want their child to have that same
 memory.

15. How do sports in your community create unity, spirit and understanding among all?

Sports in our organization provide an outlet for youth to involve themselves in activities with peers outside the school or family setting. It provides an avenue for them to communicate and interact thus creating unity and spirit community wide.

- There are many new faces when youth enter junior/senior high school. Sports provide an outlet for youth to meet/communicate prior to involvement in junior high or high school. It creates a better understanding and spirit with their peers when entering a new environment such as secondary school.
- In a community where 86 different languages are spoken, cross cultural participation is routine within sports programming. While adults tend to group together within cultural comfort zones, kids demonstrate unity and understanding as they mix together in sport with little regard for ethnicity. Without compromising safety, existing rules have been updated or revised to accept and accommodate various cultural requirements or restrictions.
- Inclusive programming serves to bring together people of all ages, cultures, and skill levels, with and without disabilities to share a common experience. This breaks down barriers and promotes unity and understanding.



Kent has an active Sister Cities Association with sister cities in Castlereagh, Northern Ireland; El Grullo, Mexico; Kaibara, Japan; Kherson, Ukraine; Sunnfjord Area, Norway; and Yangzhou, China. Various sports exchanges have brought teams from those cities to Kent for exhibition and competition. Kent has also participated in sports equipment drives, collecting items such as bats, balls, and baseball gloves to send to impoverished areas around the world. These programs provide young participants a valuable cultural experience and bring about greater appreciation and understanding for how the world works.



- All of our youth sports teams are sponsored by local businesses. This is an opportunity for the
 businesses to contribute to the community by showing their support of fun and healthy youth
 activities. In return, they receive positive marketing of their business as their names appear on
 t-shirts, schedules, news releases, etc.
- Collaborative public/private partnerships demonstrate unity and understanding within the community. Examples include the Kent Ice Arena, Kent Pool, Sounders Soccer Complex, and Service Club Ballfield project. These partnerships are discussed in greater detail in questions #17, #18, and #21.
- Sports have served as a conduit to bring all service clubs of Kent together for a common purpose. They have been leaders in the community promoting unity and spirit. Each year the eight Kent service clubs sponsor a total of 45 youth sports teams. In 1997, the Lions Club provided \$33,000 to help build the first skate park in Kent; in 1999 all eight service clubs pledged \$140,000 to build a youth sports facility; in 2000 the Rotary Club provided \$25,000 to construct an outdoor basketball court near the Lions Skate Park.
- Each year since 1996, the Kiwanis Club has provided \$2,500 for plant materials as well as volunteers to plant and clean each of the four Kiwanis tot lots in Kent. In addition, Kiwanis volunteers have installed new play equipment at three of the four tot lots. Their volunteer time has been matched with \$243,004 from local and federal grants to renovate each of the four parks that were built in the 1960s.
- Sports also serve to bring together a variety of individuals within the community. Through the Adopt-a-Park program, 14 playgrounds were installed using neighborhood or service club volunteers under the supervision of a certified playground installer. This program saved \$185,720 that was reallocated to fund additional park improvements. The Adopt-a-Park program also uses volunteers to spread turface on infields, build score shacks, clear trails, plant trees and shrubs, pick up litter and paint buildings. Since 1996, over 4,500 people have contributed 10,049 hours volunteering. Combining this with donations of plants, materials, cash and equipment, the Adopt-a-Park program has saved the city over \$339,521 since 1996.



SECTION V Community Commitment to Parks and Recreation Resources

16. Does your agency have dedicated staff to oversee the quality community sports program?

The City of Kent Parks Department is dedicated to a high standard of quality within all areas of programming and the facilities that those programs utilize. The Department is directed by John Hodgson with Superintendents responsible for each division: Parks Maintenance, Golf Maintenance, Facilities Maintenance, Recreation and Cultural Services, Parks Planning & Development and Human Services.

Parks Maintenance staff is dedicated to daily maintenance of neighborhood and community parks, athletic complexes, plant propagation, capital project improvements and the City's street trees.

• This division employs 26 full time employees (FTE) as well as four regular part time employees (RPT) and 12 seasonal part time employees in the summer months. Of those FTE's, five are dedicated to ball field maintenance throughout the City as well as school district fields that are used for Parks Department programming. Specific maintenance staff is assigned to each sports complex. For example, at Russell Road Park, one full-time lead maintenance worker, one part-time worker year round and three seasonal workers are dedicated to the five ball field sports complex. We find that this develops a sense of pride and ownership of "their" fields.

Golf Maintenance staff is dedicated to the daily maintenance of the City's 18 hole and par 3 golf course and capital project improvements.

• This division employs five full time employees as well as three regular part time employees and four seasonal employees.



Facilities Maintenance staff is dedicated to the daily maintenance and capital improvements for City of Kent building facilities.

 This division employs 24 full time employees as well as four regular part time employees.



Recreation and Cultural Services staff is dedicated to the organization and administration of all programs, special events, performing and visual arts as well as the management and coordination for community use of facilities.

- This entire division employs 32 full time employees as well as five regular part time employees. Over three hundred seasonal part time staff assist with programs throughout the year as sports officials, field and gym supervisors, lifeguards and instructors.
- This division employs a dedicated work group of 11 Program Coordinators and 6 Program Specialists in six areas (Recreation and Community Education, Senior Programming, Specialized Recreation, Youth and Teen Programs, Cultural Programs and Aquatics) who develop and administer an average of 144 sports programs and classes every quarter for 32,000 individual registrants.

Parks Planning & Development staff is dedicated to the planning and administration of capital improvement projects associated with park development.

• This division employs five full time employees.

The Parks Department is committed to insuring that all spaces are well maintained so that they are as safe to use and as attractive after years of use as they were the day the facility opened. Care and upkeep of the space is every bit as important as construction. Maintenance plans go hand in hand with each development project. When possible, designs reflect less maintenance intensive approaches to care. For instance, one of the newest facilities in our park system features artificial turf. In a climate where weather plays a huge role in when and how activities are scheduled, this turf allows year round play with minimal maintenance.

The Kent Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department has been recognized nationally for its outstanding athletic programs and facilities, and for its balance and multitude of programs and facilities. Over the years, parks department staff have been acknowledged for their professional contributions.

• Individual staff awards include: 1972-Municipal League Outstanding Public Employee; 1976-Kent Citizen of the Year; WRPA and NRPA Outstanding Professional Award; 1985-Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award in the area of Specialized Recreation; 1988-WRPA Young Professional Award; 1989-NRPA Pacific N.W. Region Young Professional Award; 1994-WRPA Citation of Merit Award; 1994-Washington State Association of Senior Center's Professional Award; 1994 Kent School District Award of Excellence; 1996-Washington Jaycees Outstanding Young Citizen Award; 1997-Kent School District Community Volunteer Award; 1997-JC Penny Golden Rule Award; 1997, 1998 and 2000-Western Washington PGA Chapter's Junior Golf Leader of the Year; 1998–Pacific Northwest Golf Association's Caddy Master of the Year; nominee 1999 and 2001-Western Washington PGA Chapter's Junior Golf Leader of the Year.



SECTION V Community Commitment to Parks and Recreation Resources

17. What capital improvements have been made to your community sport facilities during the past five years?

Since 1998, the City of Kent has completed 22 athletic projects at 15 parks, including acquisition of 62 acres for a two new community sports complexes, and two acres for an extreme sports park. Project costs totaled \$11,967,717 or approximately \$141 per capita over five years (or \$28 per capita per year). Staff aggressively pursues state and local grant funds, foundation funds, and donations to augment City capital funds to improve our sports facilities. \$1,177,185 or 10% of the improvements were possible through outside funding sources: grants, donations, and foundations.

- Russell Road Park Ballfields: In 1998, four softball and one baseball field were renovated including automatic irrigation, sub-drainage, sand based outfields, infield mix, new scoreboards, field lighting, and fencing at a cost of \$1.5 million. Park amenities such as restroom renovation, new play equipment, enlarged picnic area, and pathway resurfacing have been made in 2001-02, and backstops were replaced in 2003 for a total of \$100,000. As a result of these improvements, we have drawn regional softball tournaments and received the National Softball Association's "Outstanding Park" Award for the State of Washington, three years in a row, 1999, 2000, and 2001. This is first time this award has been presented three times to one Ball Park in the State of Washington.
- Kent Memorial Park: In 1998, new play equipment was installed by staff and volunteers. In 1999, play area surfacing for accessibility was poured, automatic irrigation and drainage



was installed on field #1, some light poles were replaced, and a new scoreboard installed. In 2000 the two tennis courts were re-surfaced and new fencing erected, and the picnic shelter was installed by staff and volunteers from the Lion's Club. In 2001, automatic irrigation was installed on fields #2 and #3, and a new roof was installed on the maintenance building. The scorer's booth and restroom were painted by volunteers and staff. Total cost for the project was \$318,000.

- Glenn Nelson Park: In 2001, the two tennis courts were re-surfaced and new tennis court fencing erected for \$48,000. The soccer field and softball field will be renovated in 2003 and automatic irrigation installed.
- Turnkey Park: In 2002, the two tennis courts and basketball were re-surfaced and new fencing erected. A new drinking fountain was installed. An acre of land was acquired to expand the park and provide a sand volleyball court, picnic shelter and restroom. Total improvements were \$332,751.

- Kent Lions Skate Park: The first skate park in the city was built in 1996 with partial funding donated by the Kent Lions Club.
- West Hill Skate Park: The second skate park in the city was opened in 2000 at a cost of \$160,000. Local skaters provided public art.
- Kent Valley Ice Arena: Through a public-private partnership, the first ice arena in the City of Kent opened in 2001. This \$5 million facility was built at a cost of only \$13,000 to the City. The City leases the land on which a private corporation built the arena; the lease is valued at \$40,000. The city receives \$100,000 worth of ice time and facility use annually. The owner/operator has plans to build a second sheet of ice in 2004.



- Rotary Basketball Court: This fullcourt was installed in 2000 with partial funding from Kent Rotary Club at a cost of \$58,321.
- Wilson Playfields: A multi-use sports complex with lighted fields and synthetic turf for softball, baseball, flag football, soccer, lacrosse, rugby and Kent youth track program opened in December, 2002 at a cost of \$7.2 million.

- Kiwanis Tot Lot #2: Accessible play equipment was installed with volunteer labor from Kent Kiwanis Club. All improvements were funded by a grant of \$72,524.
- Kiwanis Tot Lot #1: For \$5,679, a drinking fountain was installed adjacent to the basketball court, and handicapped access to the court was provided for our disabled athletes. Our Special Olympics team practices here.





- West Fenwick Park: In 2001, three outdoor handball courts were constructed along with tennis court re-surfacing and fencing for \$291,500.
- Valley Floor Ball fields: In 1998, the City acquired 50 acres to build four softball fields, two baseball fields, and a community park. Master planning is proceeding with surveying completed in 2002.
- Over the last three years, eight tennis courts within the City of Kent have been resurfaced at a total cost of \$30,000.

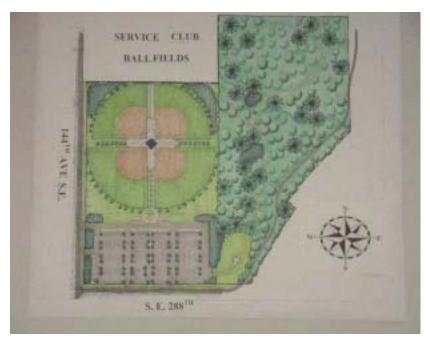


SECTION V Community Commitment to Parks and Recreation Resources

18. What sport facilities are in your master plan for the next five years?

The City of Kent has 16 sport facility projects with a value of \$7.5 million in our capital improvement program. The city currently has three grant applications pending that could provide an additional \$550,000.

 Service Club Ball Fields: Development of four new softball/baseball fields, parking, restroom, picnic shelter, and play equipment with funds raised by eight Service Clubs and grants in 2005 at a cost of \$2.3 million.



- East Hill "X" Park: A grant from the Tony Hawk Foundation allowed for the hiring of Grindline, a professional skate park design firm, to work with local skaters for development of the new third concrete bowl skate park, separate bicycle area, climbing wall and boulder, picnic shelter, parking, and restroom, which will be constructed in 2004 at an estimated cost of \$640,000.
- Canterbury Neighborhood Park: A new 2 acre park, under construction in the summer of 2003 at a \$400,000 cost, includes a volleyball court and pickle ball court, as well

as play equipment, shelter, trail, and open field for casual, unorganized sports such as a pickup game of touch football.

- Seattle Sounders Professional Soccer Stadium: Joint project with the City of Kent to build a 10,000 seat stadium and training facility with community use of the six tournament fields and four modified fields in 2005. City share of the project is \$500,000 for this \$20 million project.
- Glenn Nelson Park: Conversion of an existing cinder soccer field to grass, automatic irrigation and fencing, and renovation of an existing softball field with automatic irrigation, backstop, and fencing. This 2004 project will be completed at a cost of \$250,000.
- Kent Indoor Pool (a cooperative agreement between the City, Kent School District and a non-profit organization): In late 2002, King County announced the closure of the Kent Pool (a King County facility) and other county owned Forward Thrust pools, due to insufficient operating funds. The City of Kent, working collaboratively with the Kent School District and a non-profit organization, pledged \$20,000 annually for up to three years to keep the pool open for competitive and recreational swimming programs.



- BMX Park: Volunteer contractors have constructed a dirt racing course that will open in 2003, with minimal cost of \$15,000 to the City (signs, site furniture, etc.).
- Community Aquatic Center: A feasibility study will be conducted in 2003-2004, followed by a bond issue for voter approval in 2005. If approved, land will be acquired and engineering, permitting, and construction will start on the new aquatic center in 2006.
- Uplands Playfields: Backstops, benches, and bleachers will be replaced on two youth baseball fields in 2004 at a cost of \$40,000. The City is submitting a grant application to fund installation of an automatic irrigation system on these two fields.
- West Hill Park: Development of a new 8 acre park, including two tennis courts in 2005.
- Kiwanis #1: Resurface the existing basketball court in 2007.
- Soccer Field Renovation: Convert an existing grass field on Kent School District property to synthetic turf. This joint project with the Kent School District will begin in 2007, at a cost of \$700,000.



- Commons Playfield: Renovation of six softball/soccer fields in 2007 with automatic irrigation, sub-drainage, new backstops, benches, restroom, and picnic shelter at an estimated cost of \$1.1 million.
- 272nd Street Neighborhood Park: Development of a new 3 acre park in 2007, to include a basketball court, play equipment, and trail.
- West Fenwick Park: T-ball and toss ball field renovation with sub-drainage and turf restoration will begin in 2008 at a cost of \$300,000.
- 132nd Avenue Neighborhood Park: Develop new 4.5 acre park in 2006, to include tennis and basketball courts, play equipment and trail, for \$750,000.
- Valley Floor Ballfields: Staff is developing a master plan and applying for grant funds to acquire additional lands.

Note: Project list is included in appendix



SECTION V Community Commitment to Parks and Recreation Resources

19. Does your community provide adequate resources to maintain quality sport facilities and ensure safe environments for sport play?

The Park Planning and Development Division established a life cycle replacement program in 1997 that provides \$250,000 annually to renovate existing facilities as they approach the end of their useful life. Tennis and basketball court re-surfacing is put on a rotating schedule, so each court is re-surfaced once every seven years.



- Backstops, fencing, benches, bleachers, drinking fountains, and restrooms are on a life cycle for replacement. Automatic irrigation systems are being systematically installed on all fields and quick coupler systems will be replaced.
- Ball fields will routinely undergo major turf renovation to maintain a safe, quality playing surface. Examples of routine turf renovation include Russell Road

Park, a five field softball complex in 1998, Kent Memorial Park field #1 in 1999, and Glenn Nelson Park in 2003.

- Golf balls hit out of the driving range pose a serious safety concern. Consequently, the net is being raised an additional 30 feet. Poles with netting will be replaced this year at a cost of \$200,000.
- The City places a high priority on the quality of its sports facilities. Careful design and professional maintenance attract hundreds of user groups to Kent, keeping fields and surrounding park spaces in constant demand. Kent Memorial Park, a premiere baseball field with grass infield hosts the annual high school baseball district tournament and is a frequent site of the High School State Championships. Kent Memorial Park is also home to Kent American Legion and Babe Ruth Senior Teams. Russell Road Park, a five field softball complex, is booked with tournaments twenty-six weekends each summer. Numerous western regional and national events have been hosted here. Riverbend Golf Course hosts numerous tournaments each year for the Pacific Northwest Golf Association, Washington State Junior Golf Association and the Pacific Northwest P.G.A. Section. Averaging over 73,000 rounds of golf annually, Riverbend has been named the busiest 18 hole golf course in the State of Washington by "Inside Golf" for 2000, 2001 and 2002.

 Our park maintenance staff takes pride in our sports facilities, and puts out extra effort to maintain or make improvements. To stretch available dollars, our staff implements many projects.

• Park Maintenance Division is adequately funded for staffing, equipment, and supplies. All parks are inspected weekly for safety and playground inspection is being logged monthly. Many of



the park assets are on life cycle programs. Staff regularly attends training regarding risk management and safety. In cooperation with Bob Kristofferson at Safeco Field (home of the Mariner's Major League Baseball Team), our staff has been instrumental in the formation of the Northwest Chapter of the Sports Turf Managers Association, and are regular speakers at Turf management and ball field maintenance seminars.



SECTION V Community Commitment to Parks and Recreation Resources

20. Is funding for annual staff and volunteer training provided for in your budget? If not, how do you cover the expense of training and education?

Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department places a very high value on training for staff and volunteers. Annual resources are set aside in every division to insure that training is available.

- In some cases, training is required to maintain or update certification in specific areas such as first aid and life guard training.
- Within the maintenance area, training includes Washington State Pesticide Training and Certification, NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) Resource Management School, NPSI (National Playground Safety Institute) Playground Certification, Floyd Perry Infield Maintenance School, and STMA (Sports Turf Management Association) Programs.
- In the interest of program safety and careful facility development, many department staff attend the NRPA Risk Management School.
- Staff are also encouraged to attend seminars, conferences, and read professional periodicals in order to stay current in the profession.
- Staff have demonstrate strong participation in professional organizations including: a past NRPA Pacific Regional Council President; a past NRPA Regional Board Member; a past Board of Regents Member for the NRPA Revenue and Resources Management School: 2 past Washington Recreation and Park Association (WRPA) Presidents; a past WRPA Treasurer; a past WRPA Resolution Chairman; 3 past WRPA Secretaries: 2 past WRPA Newsletter Editors; 2 past NRPA Regional Conference Exhibit Chairpersons; 1992-WRPA State Conference Chairperson; 2 past WRPA State Conference Exhibit Chairpersons; 1983-NRPA Conference Chairperson: a WRPA Membership Committee Chairperson: a WRPA Diversity Committee Chairperson; 1984-1991 Hershey Track and Field Youth Program Director; NRPA Youth Fun and Fitness Pilot Project City Chairperson; Community Council for Youth Executive Board President; past President Kiwanis Club of Kent; Regional NFL Punt, Pass and Kick Chairperson: Washington State NFL Punt, Pass and Kick Chairperson: past President Washington State Association of Senior Centers; Secretary, Washington State Association of Senior Centers; member Washington State Association of Senior Centers Nominating Committee; NRPA Washington Leisure and Aging Representative; Board member Arts Northwest: member, Kent Community Foundation, YMCA Youth Sports Advisory Committee: appointee, Western Washington PGA Education Committee; representative, City of Lacey Area Coalition for Teens; member, Nisqually River Basin Land Trust; member, Washington State Natural Heritage Council; Kent School District Learning Improvement Team member; member, Sportsplex Operators and Developers Association; member, Red Cross Volunteer Advisory Board; member, Renton Technical College Basic Studies Advisory Board; member, United States Professional Tennis Association; member, Professional Ski Instructors of America; member, Washington State Alzheimer Association; member, Washington State Association of Adult Day Canters; member, United States Golf Association; member, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America; member, Western Washington Golf Course Superintendents Association; member, Northwest Turfgrass Association; facility member, United States Golf Association.

21. How do you engage other public, private and non-profit organizations in providing quality sports in your community?

Kent has long been a leader in involving individuals and organizations in programming and facility development. Identifying areas of need and finding innovative solutions through public input and participation has become a matter of practice over the years.

- A number of sports organizations serve special sports interests in the community. The Parks
 Department works closely with these groups as a facility provider and as a reference guide
 for people interested in other participation options:
 - Kent School District Soccer, Kent Youth Soccer Association, Maple Valley Youth Soccer Association, Greater Seattle Soccer League, Puget Sound Soccer League, Kent Korean Soccer League, Cascade Soccer Club, Washington State Women's Soccer Association, Liga Hispana Soccer Club.
 - Maple Valley Lacrosse
 - Kent Little League, Tahoma Little League
 - Kent Crusaders Youth Rugby Club
 - Kent Legion Baseball, Kent Bulldogs Baseball, Kent Cannon's Baseball
 - Puget Sound Senior Baseball Group
 - Evergreen Lutheran High School
 - Kent View Christian School
 - Highline School District
 - Amateur Softball Association (ASA), National Softball Association (NSA), United States Slowpitch Softball Association (USSSA), Players Choice Softball Association (PCSA), Independent Softball Association (ISA).



Through a public/private partnership, the first ice arena in the City of Kent and in South King County opened in 2001. This \$5 million facility was built at a cost of only \$13,000 to the City. The City leases the land on which a private corporation built the arena; the lease is valued at \$40,000. The city receives \$100,000 worth of ice time and facility use annually. The owner/operator has plans to build a second sheet of ice in 2004.



- Service clubs are very involved in sports programming and facility development within the Kent community. For over thirty years, service clubs have consistently sponsored youth sports teams every season. They have also provided financial support to Senior sports programs as well as Special Olympics teams. They are now instrumental in the development of Service Club Ballfields, a sports complex which will feature four new softball/baseball fields, parking, restroom, picnic shelter, and play equipment. With financial support from eight service clubs and grants this \$2.3 million facility is slated to open in 2005.
- Staff approached the local Rotary Club and asked for their partnership to help serve the needs
 of youth and teens in the community. The Rotary Club of Kent provided \$25,000 to construct a
 full basketball court in downtown Kent.
- The Kent Indoor Pool is an excellent example of community involvement. Due to insufficient operating funds, King County in late 2002 announced the closure of the Kent Pool. The facility was owned and operated by King County until December 31, 2002 along with other county owned Forward Thrust pools. The City pledged \$20,000 annually for up to three years and worked collaboratively with a non-profit organization and the Kent School District to negotiate a cooperative agreement which will keep the pool open for community recreation and competitive swimming programs.
- The Lion's Club of Kent provided \$33,000 toward the \$125,000 needed to build the first skate
 park in Kent in 1996. An advisory committee of local skaters helped design the park and under
 the guidance of a professional artist, created public art that was incorporated into the seating
 area.
- The Seattle Sounders (a professional soccer team) is working collaboratively with the City of Kent to build a 10,000 seat stadium and training facility. The facility will include community use of six tournament fields and four modified fields expected to open in 2005. City share of the project is \$500,000 for this \$20 million project.
- The Seahawk's team owner has also offered to provide grant funds distributed throughout the state to improve youth athletic fields. The City of Kent has applied for and received three grants including: acquired land for Wilson Playfields, replaced wooden light poles on two baseball fields, and installed automatic irrigation and sub-drainage on three fields.
- A group of volunteer contractors have worked closely with city staff to construct a BMX Park.
 Thanks to this private group, the community will enjoy a dirt racing course slated to open later
 this year. Total minimal cost to the city (signs, site furniture, etc.) is \$15,000.
- Non-traditional sports continue to grow in interest within the community. To meet the needs of those sports enthusiasts, our plan is to develop an extreme park for skaters, bicyclists, and rock climbers. With a grant from the Tony Hawk Foundation, Grindline, a skatepark designer has been hired. Work is underway with input from an advisory group made up of kids in the community.



- We maintain excellent working relationships with the Kent Chamber of Commerce, Kent
 Downtown Partnership and their associated members. These businesses value the programs
 available for the community and lend financial sponsor support for hundreds of youth sports
 teams.
- A group of Kent citizens had to drive over 30 miles one way to the closest course to play frisbee golf. They came to the Parks Department to request that a course be constructed in Kent. The Kent Frisbee Golf Association (FGA) was created and with staff assistance, a suitable site was selected in the existing park system. The course, which opened in 1999, was constructed entirely by volunteers from the FGA. Adopting the course, the FGA performs regular maintenance and has even created a web page featuring course information.
- All parks and sports field development includes a vehicle for community input. Public meetings
 are slated throughout the course of the project to invite their suggestions and questions. Some
 development may include the formation of an advisory board (Lions Skatepark, Extreme Park,
 etc.) to do research on existing facilities and to identify amenities that would best serve Kent.
- Joint projects with Kent School District are highlighted in question #22.



22. What are the community/school relations for providing sport opportunities in your community?

In 1969, the Kent School District and the City of Kent Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department entered into the first year of a reciprocal use agreement for school and park facilities. The agreement is still honored today having weathered only slight revisions over the past 34 years. This agreement insures each agency of second priority use of the other agency's facilities. Additionally, a small portion of the city lies within the Federal Way School District and several of that district's facilities are also used for various programs. By sharing fields and facilities, the community maximizes use of these spaces, reaching the greatest number of athletes.

- The Parks Department currently uses four Senior High Schools, seven Junior Highs and 28 Elementary Schools within the Kent School District for sports and fitness programming. This includes thousands of hours of practice, game, clinic, and camp time.
- Youth sports teams are developed around school boundaries. This insures that as much as
 possible, participants will have an opportunity to play with friends and that teams will have
 practice time close to home.
- Parks Maintenance staff maintains school fields during spring and summer for parks department program use. They also prepare city owned facilities for school district use.
- Kent Memorial Park (Kent's premier baseball field, well known for its grass infield) is home to
 one of the school district's junior high baseball teams. It also hosts the annual high school
 baseball district tournament and is a frequent site of the High School State Championships.
- Four high school golf teams use Riverbend Golf Course (a City owned 18 hole public golf course) as their home course for practice and matches.



- The Kent Pool is used heavily for practice and competition by swimming and diving teams from three high schools. Parks Department Special Olympic swim teams and senior fitness programs also use this popular community pool.
- Parks Department staff work with the school district when possible to cooperatively set participation rules and sports time lines to coincide with school district sport seasons.
- High school coaches and their team members are recruited to lead various sports clinics.



- Recreation sports programs are a developmental opportunity for future interscholastic participation. Many high school stand-out athletes got their start in parks department sports programs.
- Students in physical education classes are encouraged to participate in seasonal parks department sports programs and to make participation a life long commitment. A local junior high P.E. class is a prime example of this type of participation. The P.E. teacher has introduced the students to running as an affordable means to fitness that can be done anywhere and anytime. These students receive classroom credit for participating in the Parks Department's annual Christmas Rush Fun Run. The



department acknowledges their commitment to fitness by offering discounted fees.

- City owned fields are also used for physical education classes by an adjacent public junior high school as well as numerous private schools and home school students.
- Parks Department sports programs are marketed heavily throughout the school district.
 Seasonal job opportunities are also made available throughout the high schools. The attitude shared by the Parks Department and the Kent School District regarding joint development of facilities and resources is exemplary. An example is the upcoming project to construct synthetic turf fields on high school property. The school will use the space during the day and the community willuse the facility during non-school hours.



23. How do you manage diverse sport agendas in your community to achieve a comprehensive commitment to quality sports for all?

In a community of 84,000 city residents and a service area of 174,000 people, there are a variety of diverse sports agendas. Our greatest success has come from maintaining open communication which involves soliciting and listening to input from all the various interest groups. Our goal, as much as possible, is to fill programming needs that aren't being met in some other way within the community.

- Field use is coordinated following consistent priority use procedures which insure equity among all outside user groups.
- We work closely with the Kent School District on a variety of facility use issues. Every attempt is made to schedule facilities so that they are used as effectively as possible.
- Community input is critical to program and facility development success. We receive
 compliments, suggestions and occasional criticism from individuals participating in
 programming as well as from the community at-large. All information is taken seriously while
 staff do their best to respond in a timely and effective manner. When possible, these
 suggestions are put in place and when they aren't, there is a well thought out reason why not.



- In many cases, we solicit input from the community. Public meetings are held to share information about upcoming projects and to gather input and ideas about what the public would like. In some cases, advisory boards are created to provide on-going input and direction. An example is the Adult Softball Advisory Board, established in 1997 with representation by managers, coaches, and players from every league and division of play within the Kent Parks Department Men's, Women's and Coed Softball Leagues.
- Recreation and Cultural Services Division programming is evaluated at the conclusion of every class, event, performance, and sports season. A variety of questions are tailored to each program and are directed at the participant or parent, instructors, performers, artists and vendors in order to gather information about customer satisfaction, program quality, customer service, program fees, facilities used, sports rules/revisions, and improvements that can be made to enhance future programming.



- While high ratings are typically received, the surveys are an excellent method for identifying areas needing improvement. Staff makes a serious commitment to implement suggestions for change
- A 1997 survey taken of players, coaches and spectators solicited their input on field conditions, availability, and desired amenities for future improvements. The survey was instrumental in bringing about a major renovation at the city's five-field softball complex in 1998.



The Kent Parks Department also recognizes the sports needs of the individual who may not play a team sport. We have two state of the art concrete bowl skate parks with features usable by skaters of all abilities. We constructed three outdoor handball courts (three-wall) in 2000 that serve a group of athletes not served in other cities in the region, and hold an annual tournament that draws competitors from the entire Western United States. We are currently working with Derby Cycle Diamond Back to build the first BMX park in our area. This is a much needed project as

youth currently ride in a variety of unapproved areas such as vacant lots.

 Wilson Playfield is an artificial turf facility designed for multi-use. The creative use of different colored lines sewn into the artificial surface allows for a variety of uses with little or no preparation. Soccer can be played immediately after a track meet, followed by flag football, and then lacrosse. This multi- use facility meets the diverse needs of thousands of parks program participants and private rental groups.



24. Please provide a summary of the number of sport programs provided directly and indirectly by your agency with participation levels.

The following chart summarizes a majority of our sports programs and their participation levels within the last year.

Youth Sports	# of Participants	# of Teams
Youth T-ball – Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten (Co-Ed)	442	32
Youth Toss-ball (Coaches Pitch) – 1 st /2 nd grade (Co-Ed)	514	39
Boys Baseball – 3 rd /4 th Grade	288	24
Boys Baseball – 5 th /6 th Grade	273	22
Boys Baseball – 7 th /8 th Grade	172	13
Boys Baseball – 9 th /10 th Grade	115	9
Boys Baseball – 11 th /12 th Grade	21	2
Girls Fastpitch Softball – 3 rd /4 th Grade	159	13
Girls Fastpitch Softball – 5 th /6 th Grade	173	14
Girls Fastpitch Softball – 7 th /8 th Grade	59	5
Girls Fastpitch Softball – 9 th -12 th Grade	58	5
Youth Track 4 th – 6 th Grade	1281	26
Youth Soccer – Kindergarten/1st Grade (Co-Ed)	240	20
Boys Soccer – 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th Grade	478	32
Girls Soccer – 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th Grade	240	20
Junior High Girls Volleyball – 7 th /8 th Grade	99	10
Junior High Girls Volleyball – 9 th /10 th Grade	67	7
Youth Flag Football – 4 th /5 th Grade	78	7
Youth Flag Football – 6 th /7 th Grade	67	5
Boys Basketball – 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th Grade	750	77
Boys Basketball – 7 th , 8 th , 9 th Grade	179	18
Girls Basketball – 3 rd , 4 th , 5 th , 6 th Grade	510	51
Girls Basketball – 7 th , 8 th , 9 th Grade	56	6
Total Youth Sports	6,319	457



Adult Sports Programs	# of	# of
	Participants	Teams
Adult Softball – Men's	1,454	105
Adult Softball – Women's	180	13
Adult Softball – Coed	416	30
Adult Softball – Extended Season	870	58
Adult Softball Tournaments – 26 events	10,140	780
Adult Basketball – Fall	125	15
Adult Basketball – Winter	173	21
Adult Basketball – Summer	99	12
Adult Flag Football	253	23
Adult Volleyball – Winter	288	36
Adult Volleyball – Spring	144	18
Adult Volleyball – Fall	232	29
Total Adult Sports Programs	14,374	1140

Senior Sports Activities	# of Participants	# of Teams
Senior Softball	25	2
Senior Volleyball	30	2
Senior Pickleball	30	1
Senior Ping Pong	22	1
Senior Golf	40	
Senior Skiing – Downhill & X-Country	200	
Total Senior Sports Activities	347	6

Sports Clinics/Camps/Competitions	# of Participants	# of Teams
Special Olympics Sports – Bowling, Softball, T-Ball, Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer, Swimming, Cycling	404	27
Skyhawks Sports Camps – Basketball, Baseball, Mini Hawk, Roller Hockey, Flag Football, Soccer	444	
Basketball Clinic – Kindergarten, 1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd Grade	200	
Rugby Clinic	56	
NFL/Gatorade Punt, Pass & Kick Competition – 16 and Under	33	
Pepsi Pitch, Hit & Run – 14 and under	36	
Soccer Skills Competition – 14 and under	77	
Basketball Skills Competition – 14 and Under	59	
Pat Powers Volleyball Clinic – 13 yrs - Adult	56	
Summer Tennis Day Camp	212	
Christmas Rush Fun Run	1,053	
Total Sports Clinics/Camps/Competitions	2,630	27



Lessons/Classes/Open Programs	# of Participants	# of Teams
Adult Sports Classes – Racquetball, Martial Arts, Golf Workshop, Fly Fishing	204	
Gymnastics, Martial Arts Classes	1,271	
Indoor Park – 10 months – 4 ½ years	3,279	
Tennis Lessons Youth & Adult	31	
Adult Open Gym – Basketball/Volleyball	2,875	
Racquetball Participation	5268	
Wallyball Participation	155	
Weight Room Participation	13,077	
Total Lessons/Classes/Open Programs	26,160	

Golf Activities	# of Participants	# of Teams
Riverbend Men's Golf Club	728	
Riverbend Ladies Golf Club	236	
Par 3 Men's club	85	
Par 3 Ladies club	68	
Riverbend Junior golf	157	
High School Golf Team	96	4
Junior High Golf Team	48	
Riverbend Golf Camps	240	
Nike Golf Camps	96	
Total Golf Activities	1,754	4

Community Partners		# of Participants	# of Teams
Kent Little League		864	72
Kent Youth Soccer		2000	120
Kent Valley Ice Arena		300,000	
	Total Community Partners	302,864	192



25. Please provide a summary of program opportunities for youth, teenagers, adults and older adults.

Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department takes great pride in our sports and athletics programs but the department also offers a variety of non-sports related classes, programs and special events for all ages. The 2003 Spring Program Guide provides examples of the wide range of programming options offered by Kent Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department.

Senior adult activities including day trips and tours, overnight/extended tours, special events including birthday parties, Boomer Blast, entertainment events, music and dancing opportunities, games and cards, sports and fitness including skiing (downhill & cross country), walking club, pickleball, volleyball, sport fishing, aerobics, strength & stretching, workshops and classes, arts & crafts, computer learning, special interest groups including book club, woodcarving, fly tying, stamp collecting, singing group, services including Meals on Wheels, Adult Day Center, pet food, senior boutique, transportation to and from the Center, health services including massage therapy, health/foot clinic, blood pressure monitoring, health insurance counseling, support groups including arthritis support, diabetes support and Alzheimer support, volunteer opportunities and Mill Creek Café, a senior five day per week meal program featuring food cooked on site, a salad bar and a soup and sandwich option.



- Youth activities include dance, music, art, movement, theater arts, fitness, gymnastics, martial arts, cheerleading, skating, pottery, day camps, resident camp, trips, fishing, after school express (an after school program for elementary age participants featuring sports, games, crafts, and homework help), summer playground drop-in program, language instruction, and inclusive classes for tots and their parents such as Movin' and Grovin'. Play Time Pals, and Activity Time for Twos which incorporate movement, tumbling, and play.
- Teen programming includes late night activities at Lighthouse (positive peer influence while participating in creative activities, games, sports, music, dance, tutoring and counseling), T.O.A.C (Teen Outdoor Adventure Club which includes day long and overnight trips, skiing, horse back riding, kayaking, camping, back packing, etc.), Teen Employment and internships, Work Your Way Back (a collaborative program with the Kent School District provides structured work projects, counseling, and tutoring), Big Blue (a mobile technology bus featuring computer classes and traditional recreation programming brought to "kids where they live"), and classes in dance, music, art, theater, cooking, and fitness.

• Teens are also very involved in Reclamation art projects, an innovative approach to public art programming that focuses on actively involving community members in the beautification of their neighborhoods through the creation of lasting works of art. The project pairs a professional artist with youth (often at-risk or special populations). The art created through these collaborations "reclaims" areas of the community from vandalism, builds a sense of ownership and community pride, and develops self-esteem in the participants. This program received the 1996 Program of Excellence Award from the Washington Recreation and Park Association and the 1997 Dorothy Mullen Arts and Humanities Award from the Pacific Northwest Regional Council of the National Recreation and Park Association.



- Adult programs include dance, fitness, health, cooking, finance, computers, and a wide variety of creative arts (such as soap making, home decorating, scrap book making, quilting, painting, and wood working).
- of programs and classes for persons with and without disabilities and their families. Participants enjoy life skills classes, cooking, gardening, Work Out Buddies (disabled participants are paired with non-disabled "buddies" for inclusive fitness

programs of their choice), computer classes, Creative Artspace (this award winning program includes a variety of expressive arts featured in a quarterly art show and sale), Studio 315 (a Friday night social club) and T.H.U.N.K (a program designed for persons with brain trauma or injury). Inclusive programs are strongly encouraged because they put children and adults, with and without disabilities, side-by-side in recreation programs and events. One of the most popular inclusive programs is Stewpot Theater. This program offers instruction in acting and singing skills for persons with and without disabilities. Each spring, an original production is performed featuring these actors. This program was the recipient of the NRPA Dorothy Mullen National Arts and Humanities Award in 2000.

- Outdoor Recreation features a variety of opportunities for adults and families including kayaking, whitewater rafting, fly-fishing, interpretive walks (such as late night favorites Owl Prowl and Bat Walk), hiking, and skiing.
- Cultural programs, festivals and special events are very popular in the Kent community.
 Canterbury Fair, a cultural heritage festival draws nearly 30,000 visitors annually. The Fourth of July Splash brings the community together to celebrate Independence Day through music, old fashioned games, sports competitions, food, and fireworks. Various concert series, Kent Kid's Arts Day, Art Walk and Art Gallery provide an opportunity to enjoy performing and visual arts.

Note: Program Guide included in the appendix



26. Describe your commitment to offer non-league sport opportunities (For example, supervised free/open gym).

Organized league sports are extremely popular in our community but they are far from the only sports related activities available. Our goal is to keep people active through a variety of opportunities. Movement classes get very young children interested in being active through play with parents and peers. Introductory skills classes familiarize children with various sports. Adult instruction and competitive opportunities encourage participation in life long activities. Non-league sport opportunities include programming such as:

- Senior pickleball, volleyball, ice skating, skiing, walking programs, and fishing
- Indoor Park (supervised open play for children)
- Supervised Open Basketball/Volleyball
- Racquetball, handball, tennis, and basketball courts available for drop in or scheduled use
- Weight Room available for drop in use or organized instruction
- Walking is encouraged on Park trails. A newly created walking promotional program focuses on the health and social benefits of walking. It features a walking guide of all park trails and a walking log to record miles walked.
- Free play in open park spaces (includes play equipment, swings etc. to encourage movement and fitness)
- Sports skills competitions in soccer/baseball/basketball/football space available for private use
- Organized lessons tennis, racquetball, karate, kendo, golf, skiing, kayaking, swimming, ice



- skating, gymnastics, fly fishing, aerobics, cheerleading, dance, movement classes for our youngest participants such as tiny tots, little ninjas, parent tot tumbling.
- After school express, Lighthouse, Movin' and Groovin', Day Camp, summer playgrounds.
- Specialized Recreation Special Olympics (featuring instruction in developmental swim, cycling, golf, soccer, tennis, track and field, basketball, volleyball, softball, t-ball)
- Riverbend Golf Course features an 18 hole course and 9 hole Par 3 course with instruction available.
- Christmas Rush (an annual 10K run with over 1,000 participants)
- Fishing Experience
- Skate parks (2 facilities are available for drop in participation)
- Whitewater rafting
- Dragon Boat Racing
- Dog agility
- Disc golf



Finally, please describe why your community is unique among all other in your state to be recognized as the Sports Illustrated 50th Anniversary Sportstown?

The City of Kent continues to provide leadership and be a role model for innovation, creativity, and successful programs for Parks Department's in the State of Washington and the Pacific Northwest as we have for the past 35 years. For example:

- Each year other city park departments and school districts visit our track program, celebrating its 40th year in existence. Meets involve 25 teams of 1,281 participants in 24 meets over a six week period in the spring. Many other cities average 50 100 youth in a track program, and want to model our success.
- Since many people in our community work swing shifts, our facilities are frequently used during the daytime so that everyone has an opportunity to play regardless of work schedules. Many of the participants live in neighboring cities, where this opportunity does not exist.
- We have the only ball field complex in the state that received an award three times the 1999, 2000, and 2001 National Softball Association's Outstanding Park Award.
- Floyd Perry has conducted his annual seminar on Athletic field maintenance in one of our ball field complexes three times. Dr. Edwin Kajihiro of Texas uses one of our staff as a speaker on maintenance practices and renovation of sports fields in his seminars.
- We have a husband/wife volunteer team who have worked in our concession stand at a ball field complex for thirty years (not missing a single baseball game!) because they love kids and our community, and support sports.
- We opened Wilson Playfields in December of 2002, the first synthetic turf sports complex in the country to use four colors of lines in the turf to delineate different sports fields, making it truly available for year round use for every sport, and getting the most for our money.



Our department is truly "Dedicated to Enriching Lives" where we as recreation professionals can positively impact the lives of everyone in our community. Whether it is building one of the first skate parks in the state or venturing into a public/private partnership to build an ice skating arena, we leave no stones unturned in creating inclusive recreational, cultural and human services opportunities that will last a lifetime for all the residents in the City of Kent and those we serve.



- Philosophy- "Dedicated to Enriching Lives", our mission statement, is carried throughout every program, activity, special event and capital project.
- **Participation-** is encouraged from everyone in the Kent Community, regardless of age and skill levels.
- Volunteers- are an essential component for the entire Parks Department. Our goal is to make the experience of volunteering as fun, rewarding and valuable to the program as possible.
- **Safety-** for our participants, employees and volunteers is paramount in all of our programs and activities.
- **Training-** is essential for improving the quality of the experience for the participant, parents, sports officials, and volunteers.
- Education- is fundamental to developing and sustaining successful sports programs.
- **Competition-**"everyone plays, everyone wins" philosophy
- Unity through sports, our diverse community becomes united regardless of ethnicity or disability.
- Dedicated staff our staff has a passion for recreation and parks, and is dedicated to getting all citizens to participate.
- Capital improvements our community provides funds at a high per capita rate to insure
 that adequate facilities are available. Generous donations from citizens and pursuit of
 outside grant funding stretches local tax dollars. Progressive and innovative facility
 development such as skate parks, Wilson Playfields, and the ice arena ensure that
 community needs are met and maximized.
- Planning citizens are involved in the planning of sports facilities and actively volunteer to help construct and maintain facilities
- Resources Kent is known throughout the state for its first class standard of maintenance and safety
- Community involvement Kent citizens reap the benefits of innovative partnerships to
 provide facilities such as the ice arena, leagues for all skill levels, successful fundraising.
- **Relationships** strong partnerships with the school districts, clubs and leagues lead to the greatest number of participants and maximum use of facilities and fields
- **Diversity** we offer a full spectrum of programs and leagues, indoors and outdoors, and in every season. Kent Parks is on the cutting edge.



The Kent Parks, Recreation, and Community Services Department has been recognized nationally for its outstanding athletic programs and facilities, and for its balance and multitude of programs and facilities. Our department and staff are the recipient of several awards, including:

Department awards include: 1982-WRPA Citation of Merit for Outstanding Contributions and Continuous Service to the State of Washington; 1982-Governor's Art's Award for Excellence in Arts and Cultural Contributions; 1983-Consulting Engineer Council of Washington First Honor Award for Mill Creek Earthworks Park and Drainage Design; 1986-NRPA Dorothy Mullen National Arts and Humanities Award:

1986-Seattle Foundation Award presented for Adult Day Care Program; 1987-NRPA Gold Medal Finalist Award for Parks and Recreation Management; 1988-Gold Medal Grand Award Winner for Parks and Recreation Management; 1989 and 1990-Gold Medal Finalist Award for Special Recreation; 1991-Gold Medal Grand Award Winner for Special Recreation; 1996-WRPA "Program of Excellence" Award; 1997-NRPA Dorothy Mullen Pacific N.W. Region Arts and Humanities Award; 1998-American Public Works Project of the Year; 1999, 2000, and 2001-National Softball Association's Outstanding Park Award; 2000-NRPA Dorothy Mullen National Arts and Humanities Award; 2000-First public golf course to host Washington Junior Golf Association State Championships; 2003 – Tree City USA.

Individual staff awards include: 1972-Municipal League Outstanding Public Employee; 1976-Kent Citizen of the Year; WRPA and NRPA Outstanding Professional Award; 1985-Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award in the area of Specialized Recreation; 1988-WRPA Young Professional Award; 1989-NRPA Pacific N.W. Region Young Professional Award; 1994-WRPA Citation of Merit Award; 1994-Washington State Association of Senior Center's Professional Award; 1994 Kent School District Award of Excellence; 1996- Washington Jaycees Outstanding Young Citizen Award; 1997-Kent School District Community Volunteer Award; 1997-JC Penny Golden Rule Award; 1997, 1998 and 2000-Western Washington PGA Chapter's Junior Golf Leader of the Year; 1998–Pacific Northwest Golf Association's Caddy Master of the Year; nominee 1999 and 2001-Western Washington PGA Chapter's Junior Golf Leader of the Year.

Staff demonstrate strong participation in professional organizations including: a past NRPA Pacific Regional Council President; a past NRPA Regional Board Member; a past Board of Regents Member for the NRPA Revenue and Resources Management School; Current Instructor at NRPA Resource Management School; 2 past WRPA Presidents; a past WRPA Treasurer; a past WRPA Resolution Chairman; 3 past WRPA Secretaries: 2 past WRPA Newsletter Editors; 2 past NRPA Regional Conference Exhibit Chairpersons; 1992-WRPA State Conference Chairperson; 2 past WRPA State Conference Exhibit Chairpersons; 1983-NRPA Conference Chairperson; a WRPA Membership Committee Chairperson; a WRPA Diversity Committee Chairperson; 1984-1991 Hershey Track and Field Youth Program Director; NRPA Youth Fun and Fitness Pilot Project City Chairperson; Community Council for Youth Executive Board President; past President Kiwanis Club of Kent; Regional NFL Punt, Pass and Kick Chairperson; Washington State NFL Punt, Pass and Kick Chairperson; past President Washington State Association of Senior Centers; Secretary, Washington State Association of Senior Centers; member Washington State Association of Senior Centers Nominating Committee; NRPA Washington Leisure and Aging Representative; Board member Arts Northwest; member, Kent Community Foundation, YMCA Youth Sports Advisory Committee.

Parks and Facilities in the City of Kent include 25 softball/baseball fields, 10 soccer fields, 3 flag football fields, indoor ice arena, indoor swimming pool, 3 outdoor three wall handball courts, 15 tennis courts, 9 basketball courts, 18 hole disc (*Frisbee*) golf course, 18 hole golf course, par 3 golf course, mini-putt course, 2 outdoor concrete bowl skate parks, a resource center with gymnasium, senior center with dance hall and activity rooms, and a community center with gymnasium, weight training center, and handball courts. Partnerships with the school districts, clubs, and churches open a the greatest possible number of facilities for community use.

