



King County



Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

News Release

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Executive Constantine announces creation of new King County Parks Foundation with \$75,000 gift from Laird Norton Wealth Management in honor of Parks' 75th anniversary

Partnership will cultivate donations and legacy for the next 75 years of parks in our community

King County Executive Dow Constantine announced a new King County Parks Foundation in partnership with Laird Norton Wealth Management based on an initial gift of \$75,000 and a goal of raising \$7.5 million for legacy projects over the next decade. King County Parks is celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year.

"I am grateful that Laird Norton Wealth Management has joined with us in an important public/private partnership so that all people in our region can enjoy parks, trails and open space for generations to come," said County Executive Dow Constantine.

Descendants of early Seattle business partners William Harris Laird and his cousins, Matthew G. Norton and James Laird Norton, formed Laird Norton Wealth Management in 1967. "We are a family business with deep roots in the Puget Sound region, and we understand the importance of strengthening the community for future generations," said Laird Norton Wealth Management President and CEO Robert Moser. "We take great pride in our commitment to the communities that have helped us grow, and we want to work with other families and businesses to invest in this foundation, which will contribute to our quality of life, making this region a thriving and prosperous place to live, work and play."

The King County Parks Foundation's mission is to cultivate private-sector investments to connect communities to regional trails, open space and parks and to support the resiliency of King County's parks and trails for future generations.

In 1937 the King County Parks Department was formed with a few acres of donated land from the Des Moines Civic Betterment Committee. It was the first county parks department in the State of Washington.

From that humble beginning, King County Parks is now one of the largest parks systems in the nation, with more than 26,000 acres of parks and open space, 175 miles of regional trails and 180 miles of backcountry trails, that all contribute to our quality of life as a region, and make King County a great place to live and work.

In 2002 a task force of community members created a business plan for Parks, recommending that it form a foundation for long-term financial stability. With the creation of the King County Parks Foundation, we hope to provide essential funding to invest in long-term legacy projects as our region's population continues to grow.

Building on the existing network of regional trails and corridors of protected public open space, and investing in meeting the region's future needs, Parks has identified examples of strategic legacy projects that are closely aligned with the foundation's goals.

Current projects include restoring and improving access to the 250-acre Maury Island Site, the largest undeveloped marine shoreline in King County; and advancing improvements to King County's portion of the recently acquired Eastside Rail Corridor, which stretches from Renton north into Snohomish County. More examples can be found at www.loveourparks.org. These legacy projects are important priorities for King County Parks and reflect the variety of needs and users of its parks and trails. They are not intended to be the only projects ever funded by the foundation, as over time the priorities and needs will change.

Nearly 20 percent of King County Parks' annual budget is generated from business revenues and the remainder from a voter supported levy. These funds are essential for daily operations and maintenance, but they are simply not enough to properly invest in long-term legacy projects that will preserve beautiful places for leisure, protect our water and wildlife, and respond to growing recreation needs for generations to come.

For more information visit, www.loveourparks.org.

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About King County Parks

Celebrating its 75th Anniversary in partnership with Laird Norton Wealth Management, King County Parks - Your Big Backyard - offers more than 200 parks and 26,000 acres of parks and natural lands, including such regional treasures as Marymoor Park and Cougar Mountain

Regional Wildland Park, 175 miles of regional trails, 180 miles of backcountry trails and a world-class aquatic center. By cultivating strong relationships with non-profit, corporate and community partners, King County Parks enhances park amenities while reducing costs. Learn more at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/parks/>.

About Laird Norton Wealth Management

With nearly \$4 billion in assets under advisement, Laird Norton Wealth Management is the Northwest's premier wealth management company. Originally founded in 1967 to serve the financial management needs of the Laird and Norton families, the firm now provides personalized wealth management solutions for more than 425 individuals, families, business leaders, private foundations and nonprofit organizations with between \$1M and several hundred million in investable assets. For nearly half a century, Laird Norton Wealth Management has been driven by a passionate commitment to help its clients and their families achieve security, find happiness and thrive in every aspect of their lives. The company is relentless in the pursuit of client satisfaction and is committed to always making a client's best interest the number one priority. Deeply rooted in the Pacific Northwest as part of a company that has existed for more than 150 years, Laird Norton Wealth Management proudly maintains a long-term commitment to giving back to the local community in meaningful and impactful ways.