



FORWARD¹

These Standards are not intended to supersede City/State/Federal laws or codes or generally accepted design practices of professional consultants. It is meant to be used on City of Bellingham Parks' projects only. Bellingham Parks shall not be held responsible if these standards are used for other purposes.

If the user of this manual identifies any conflict between these Standards and City or other governing codes, he/she shall notify the Parks Project Manager and seek a resolution, which complies with City codes and thereafter is acceptable to the Bellingham Parks.

The complete *Design Standards for Park and Trail Development* (herein referred to as the "Standards") includes the *Instructions, Standard Details, Design Standard Narratives, Design Standard Specifications, and Forms*. These parts complement each other in describing the complete Standards. Any requirement in one part binds as if stated in all parts. The user of these Standards shall provide any work or materials clearly implied in the Standards even if the Standard does not mention it specifically.

Engineering design and judgment is needed for all details on all projects. All designs, including the standards in this manual, shall be carefully engineered to ensure that drainage, hardware, footing sizes, etc are adequate for the site specific application. This includes all retaining walls retaining soil over 4 feet in height, stairs, handrails, and other structures.

The design environment changes rapidly, and often without warning to the practitioner. Flexibility is permitted to encourage independent design that is tailored to particular situations. When flexibility is applied, and critical dimensions of a proposed design do not meet the *Design Standards* criteria, additional documentation is required to record the decision making process and must be approved by Parks before implemented.

The fact that new or modified design criteria are added to the *Design Standards* through the revision process does not imply that existing features are deficient or inherently dangerous. Nor does it suggest or mandate immediate engineering review or initiation of new projects.

Cost-effective and environmentally conscious design is emphasized.

The complexity of Park and Trail design requires the designer to make fundamental tradeoff decisions that balance competing considerations. Although weighing these considerations adds to the complexity of design, it accounts for the needs of a particular project and the relative priorities of various projects and programs.

Updating the manual is a continuing process and revisions are issued periodically. The most current standard applies and must immediately take precedent over all previously released versions.

Questions, observations, and recommendations are invited.

Notes:

1 The wording of this *Forward* has been adapted from the WSDOT Design Manual and the Seattle Parks Design Standards website.