



## Anchorage Park Foundation 2006 Challenge Grant Awards Final Report 10.15.2008

The Anchorage Park Foundation was created in 2004 to build *Healthy Parks & Healthy People* by mobilizing public support and financial resources for Anchorage parks, trails, and recreation opportunities. In partnership with the Municipality and the Anchorage community, the Anchorage Park Foundation is rehabilitating and improving public lands, making parks safer, more attractive and more usable.

In 2006, the Rasmuson Foundation awarded the Anchorage Park Foundation \$400,000 to support projects reconnecting Anchorage citizens with their parks and trails. The Anchorage Park Foundation initiated a challenge to Anchorage groups and individuals wishing to make improvements to parks and trails: Apply for a Challenge Grant for your community park project, and the Anchorage Park Foundation will match community contributions of fundraising, labor and in-kind support. The results are not only improved parks and trails, but engaged park user groups and an involved community.

Through these Challenge Grants, the Anchorage Park Foundation has increased community involvement in parks, strengthened park stewardship, and leveraged community contributions of time and money. The Anchorage Park Foundation supported community-based projects that rehabilitate park land, focusing first on the APF's central goal: Clean & Green, Safe & Secure. This is how the APF has prioritized the use of its resources.

Most of the 2006 Challenge Grant projects are complete. Cancelled or unused grant funds totalled \$12,000, and those funds were made available for grants in the 2008 Challenge Grant Campaign. In progress projects, University Lake Trail, Quiyana Park, and the Mountainview Gathering Place, are fully planned and funds are committed. While physical labor remains to be done in 2009, the hardest work of community organizing, planning, and fundraising is complete.

The Anchorage Park Foundation's work with community groups will never be complete. This September, community volunteers assessed their neighborhood parks, and the Anchorage Parks Report Card will be issued in November. The results will give groups a Fix-It List to advocate for -- some of the projects will be accomplishable by volunteers, and others will require considerable effort to secure project funding. Groups engaged originally by this first Challenge Grant have remained active, and will be working to improve their neighborhood parks into the future.

This report marks the "end of the beginning" of our community involvement.

Total # of Projects Funded:	27
Total Funding:	\$406,000
Value of match from community labor, in-kind contributions and cash:	\$1,202,336

***Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$1,512,905.25\****

\*the total project value will grow as labor is completed for the projects in process

## CITYWIDE PROJECTS

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### Girdwood Playground

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$20,000 cash  
\$5,000 staff time

The Girdwood Playground Committee installed a playground at Girdwood Park on May 31, 2006.

Total cash raised: \$110,000; volunteer labor and in-kind contribution value: \$45,000; skilled volunteer labor: \$5,000; total match value: \$160,000

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$185,000**



### Facilitation with Pool Community

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$2,500

An anonymous donor agreed to fund a series of facilitated meetings with the pool user community. The Anchorage Park Foundation Board voted to meet that donor challenge halfway with unused Challenge Grant funding. The facilitator played a major role in bringing the different parties to the table to discuss the future of municipal pools, resulting in a clearer understanding of each others' needs. Participants agreed to work together to establish an efficient and effective aquatic operation and to identify substantial and sustainable funding streams to deliver those services.

Total cash raised/match value: \$2,500

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$5,000**



### Park Cleanups

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$20,000

The Anchorage Responsible Beverage Retailers Association cleaned and cleared brush in Valley of the Moon Park, Charles Smith Park, and Woodside Park. A total of 8,800 feet of trail were made safer with brush removal and crown-raising, creating an improved line of sight.

Skilled volunteer hours: 500; wages contributed: \$2,753; total match value \$32,753

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$52,753**



### Tree and Shrub Plantings

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$15,000

Anchorage TREErific planted trees and shrubs at Abbott Loop Park, Lyn Ary Park, Turpin Park, Fairview Lions Park, and Meadow Creek Park. Volunteers have continued to water and maintain these trees to ensure the success of their initial project investments.

Total cash raised and in-kind donation value: \$3,160; volunteer hours: 1660; skilled volunteer hours: 80; total match value: \$37,010

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$52,010**



### United Way 50th Anniversary Day of Caring Project

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$20,000

United Way selected three parks in the Fairview neighborhood for its 2007 United Way 50th Anniversary volunteer Day of Caring project: Fairview Park, Fairbanks Park, and Fairview Lions Park. The Fairview Community Council was a strong partner in this initiative. Improvements made by volunteers include: 16 community garden plots, a patio, volleyball court improvements, and tree plantings.

Volunteer hours: 2,000; in-kind contribution value: \$14,000; total match value: \$49,000

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$69,000**



## NORTHWEST PARK DISTRICT

### Brown's Point Park

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$2,000

Government Hill Community Council removed a section of parking lot pavement and replaced it with grass, installed parking barrier boulders, reseeded lawn areas, and repainted the totem pole. Landscaping was also added around the existing lilac trees. Portions of the project outside of the scope of the Challenge Grant will be completed within 60 days.

Total cash raised: \$2,300 (State Legislative Funding); total volunteers: 8; volunteer hours: 150; skilled volunteer hours: 10; total match value: \$5,525

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$7,525**



### Centennial Rose Garden

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$5,000

The Alaska Rose Society improved the Centennial Rose Garden in Delaney Park by installing 9 new beds. A water faucet was installed and underground irrigation was reinstalled. Heavy-duty edging was installed around the pruned rose hedge. As a result of these improvements, maintenance on the beds is easier. The group also continues to experiment to find the best varieties of roses for the Anchorage climate.

Total cash raised: \$6,000; total volunteers: 23, volunteer hours: 466; skilled volunteer hours: 421; other in-kind contribution value: \$2,566; total expenses: \$13,897; total match value: \$41,981

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$46,981**



### Didlika Park

**IN PROGRESS**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$20,000

Turnagain neighbors, community council volunteers, and an Eagle Scout are working together to improve this pocket park by reestablishing grass and foliage, and adding a historical sign and art element. Visible improvements to date feature a new fence that dramatically enhances the aesthetics of the park. This project experienced a delay due to a change in neighborhood leadership and a vetoed capital budget item. Progress has been made in assembling community members to support the project, drafting design elements, fundraising and gaining community feedback, as well as the installed fencing. Community members are working to fundraise, use community feedback to modify the current design, install benches and install playground equipment.

Total cash raised to date: \$2,520; total volunteers 10; volunteer hours: 600; skilled volunteer hours: 4; other in-kind contribution value: \$35; total match value: \$13,295

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$33,295**



### Fairbanks Park

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$35,000

Fairview Community Council and United Way Day of Caring volunteers planted 80 wild rose shrubs at the top of the hill in the park. The basketball court was removed and that area was reseeded. A fence was completed in July 2008. It has received positive feedback from the community as well as from the Anchorage Police Department. The community celebrated in September 2008 with a community Park Report Card event. The Anchorage Park Foundation plans to work with this group to spend remaining funds on additional improvements to their park.

Volunteer hours: 800; donations: \$5,000; total match value: \$19,000

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$54,000**



### Peratrovich Park

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$20,000

The Anchorage Park Foundation helped raise funds to install a statue titled *Flight of the Raven*, by Roy Peratrovich Jr., in Roy and Elizabeth Peratrovich Park. The project construction, landscaping and dedication is complete. This group will use remaining funds it raised for education and the enhancement of cultural aspects of project goals and objectives.

Total cash raised: \$56,100; total volunteers: 20+; volunteer hours: 1770; skilled volunteer hours: 775; total expenses: \$71,981; remaining funds to spend: \$4,539; total match value: \$133,575

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$153,575**



### Quiyana Park

**IN PROGRESS**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$19,000

The Winterberry Charter School Parents Guild is finalizing improvements to this small downtown park including visitor amenities, irrigation infrastructure, and play items to make the park usable and welcoming to visitors and residents. Volunteers planted a living willow fence, weeded and replanted the beds along 1st Avenue, added new picnic tables, a garbage can, boulders and sand play areas. The group obtained a permit required from the Alaska Railroad to work on Railroad property. Volunteers worked with designers and agencies to install an irrigation system in conjunction with an AWWU waterline upgrade project, planned for completion soon.

Total cash raised: \$9,500; volunteer hours: 749.5; skilled volunteer hours: 124; donations: \$17,122; total match value: \$47,178

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$66,178**



**Spenard Recreation Center**

**CANCELLED**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$450

Wallyball players at Spenard Recreation Center proposed to raise funds to purchase new nets and equipment. This proposal fell through, as the group disbanded.

**NORTHEAST PARK DISTRICT**

**Abbott Loop Park**

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$35,000

Simonian Little League installed an irrigation system, including a pump house, at the Abbott Loop Park ball fields with this grant. They also erected fences; installed batting cages; purchased and installed storage units; ran electrical service to the fields; designed and constructed a state-of-the-art irrigation system; modified and moved bleachers, moved and modify the temporary concession building; completed the infields and warning paths; purchased and installed pitching rubbers, bases and home plates at all 4 fields; and purchased and installed protective fence top coverings. The field is irrigated, with the bulk of the materials donated by ENSTAR. Electric installation is complete.

Total cash raised: \$338,522; in-kind contribution value: \$87,000;  
total match value: \$425,522  
**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$460,522**



**Bartlett Pool Scoreboard**

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$3,500

Central Area Swimming purchased and installed a new LED scoreboard for Bartlett Pool, installed October 2006.

Total cash raised/match value: \$10,593  
**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$14,093**



**Campbell Creek Trail**

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$1,200

Both Firefighter Union - Local 1264 and MOA's Animal Care Shelter combined to donate \$1,200 between them. Four Dog Stations were installed along the 2.5 mile Campbell Creek Trail corridor. This has profoundly improved trail cleanliness and contributed to a sense of user friendliness on this *high use* trail. Additionally, \$1,500 was spent on wildflower seeds that were distributed along this trail corridor. While some of the wildflowers made their first appearances this season, the full beauty of this seed dispersal effort should be realized in the 2009 and 2010 summer seasons. Verna Pratt, the Alaskan prolific author of many books on wildflowers, was the expert consultant on this project.

Total cash raised: \$1,200; total volunteers: 4; volunteer hours 14; skilled volunteer hours: 25; total match value: \$2,945  
**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$4,145**



## Jacobson Park Trail

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$8,000 Original  
\$519 Actual

Rogers Park Community Council improved a trail in Jacobson Park for pedestrian use with the help of an Eagle Scout. Due to local controversy, the project was scaled down considerably. The group requested \$2,100 and ended up returning \$1,581, spending only \$519.

Volunteer hours: 70; in-kind contribution value: \$997; total match value: \$2,222

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$2,741**



## Mountainview Baseball

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Grant \$10,000

Donor Larry Partusch asked that we spend his contribution and the matching funding on improving three Mountainview baseball fields. In 2008, the existing 3' high outfield fence was removed and replaced with a 6' high chain link fence to match the green vinyl-coated baseline fence placed in 2007. These new fences are significant improvements to the use and safety of the field for Little Leaguers in Mt. View.

Total cash raised/match value: \$10,000

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$20,000**



## Mountainview Community Gathering Place **IN PROGRESS**

Rasmuson Foundation Grant \$35,000

Mountain View residents and Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services, a program of Catholic Social Services in cooperation with Cooperative Extension, are working to improve the Refugee Garden near the McPhee Gardens community gathering space within Davis Park. The existing water system is not sufficient for the current garden use. There are not enough hose bibs and the lines freeze very easily on cold August and September nights. As soon as the ground thaws in the spring 2009, the irrigation system will be upgraded.

## Paddleboat Café at Goose Lake Park

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Grant \$10,000

In summer 2007, a Parks & Recreation project manager organized the installation of 3 new double doors and 3 picture windows for the Paddleboat Café. During that summer, the city also installed a new park sign, new benches, trashcans, a bike rack, and a new patio.

Skilled volunteer hours: 16 hours for design services, materials and volunteer hours for 3 roll down security doors; install discount: \$1,800; SBS discount; total match value: \$4,300

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$14,300**



### University Lake Park

**IN PROGRESS**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$40,000

The Tudor Center Trust (comprising owners on the Alaska Native Medical Center campus) will improve University Lake Park as a place of recreation and healing for visitors, patients, and employees. We are working with the Tudor Centre Trust to make the trail ADA accessible from the park boundary to the lake. The trail will promote access to the park, and the trailhead will be established and beautified, connecting to the Chester/Campbell trail connection. This project was delayed due to nearby connecting trail construction, but is on track for summer 2009 with a cash match from Tudor Center Trust. Plans include summer trail work for Youth Employment in Parks.



### Williwaw Park

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$30,000

Russian Jack Community Council installed playground equipment in Williwaw Park on June 22, 2006. This grant provided funds for landscaping and a trail through the park.

Total cash raised: \$14,000; volunteer hours: 5,191; total match value: \$105,102

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$135,102**



Before



In Action



Complete! Success!

### SOUTHWEST PARK DISTRICT

#### Sand Lake Dock

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$5,000

The Anchorage Rowing Association purchased and installed a floating dock, 7'6" wide by 45' long, angling off the existing dock ramp.

Total cash raised: \$9,266; volunteer hours: 191; skilled volunteer hours: 3; total match value: \$12,789

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$17,789**

Putting in the lake:  
Before = wet rowers



Putting in the lake:  
After = dry rowers



## SOUTHEAST PARK DISTRICT

### Rabbit Creek Trail

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$1,193

The Rabbit Creek Community Council and the Anchorage Trails & Greenways Coalition established a trail system in the Rabbit Creek Greenbelt. Volunteers used this grant to improve trail safety.

Total cash raised and in-kind donation value: \$2,336; volunteer hours: 416; skilled volunteer hours: 4; total match value: \$9,856

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$11,049**



Before, a steep, eroding slope



Community & Trail Crew Construction



After! A sustainable & safe trail

### Richter Trail Reconstruction & Extension

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$5,287

The Nordic Skiing Association of Anchorage reconstructed the Richter Trail to provide a classic-only trail loop in the Hillside trail system. The new connector trails from the Bog Trail to the Ridge Loop have been completed. The Bog Trail is awaiting a determination from the Army Corps of Engineers regarding Class C wetlands. Further work to the Bog Trail is dependent on the permitting process.

Total cash raised: \$14,204; volunteer hours: 354; skilled volunteer hours (Firewise): 216; total match value: \$33,359

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$38,646**



## CENTRAL PARK DISTRICT

### CENTRAL

### Bancroft Park Playground

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$6,370

Actual \$7,370

Anchorage East Rotary installed playground equipment for three to five year olds (purchased in a previous year) in Bancroft Park. They held five volunteer work days. The project went \$1,000 over budget, with board approval.



Volunteer hours: 200 volunteer hours; skilled volunteer hours: 20; gravel, topsoil, bark mulch and geotech fabric donated; total match value \$9,350

**Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$16,720**



## Campbell Park

**IN PROGRESS**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$20,000

Campbell Creek Commons developers and Evergreen Nursery sought to improve a section of Campbell Park near the new development. The project has not moved forward due to lack of progress on the condos/apartments adjacent to the park that this area was to support, in addition to the general public. The developer will spend \$20,000 directly on Campbell Park, and APF will spend the award at board discretion in an area of need.

## Far North Bicentennial Park

**COMPLETE**

Rasmuson Foundation Award \$18,000

Volunteers set out to install 30 trail intersection sign posts and 8 trailhead kiosks. As the project took shape project leaders determined that FNBP needed 57 signs posts to do a thorough job. Cost savings were achieved by relocating and/or refurbishing several existing kiosks, necessitating the construction of only 4 new kiosks.

All 57 sign posts have been installed and have signs designating the trail names, maps for orientation, direction and distance to the nearest trailheads, appropriate seasonal usage, and direction of travel if needed. The sign posts are designed to look consistent with those in the BLM Campbell Tract.

Improved map scale for the posts will be addressed in the Far North Bicentennial Park Trail Improvement Plan, expected in March 2009.

Total cash raised: \$22,425 (state funding); volunteer hours: 690 volunteer hours;  
total match value: \$34,535

***Total Project Value including Rasmuson Foundation Grant: \$52,535***



## LESSONS LEARNED: 2006 CHALLENGE GRANTS

This Rasmuson Foundation Grant was used for the first administration of Anchorage Park Foundation Challenge Grants. Lessons learned have been applied to our 2008 Challenge Grant Process.

- Engaging community groups with Challenge Grant opportunities that allow grantees to meet their match with labor, as well as materials or cash, truly helps us meet our mission.
- It takes two years to complete a challenge from start to finish, and we are now on that schedule. Some of our first grantees were encouraged strongly to apply, and were not ready for project execution. We changed our scoring criteria in 2008 to give more weight to those projects that already had some community vision, and were doable.
- In 2008 we had the professional association of landscape architects volunteer to work with applicants for project scoping. Fifteen of the sixteen granted in 2008 received this assistance, and it showed in the quality of the applications.
- Many projects raised their matches with APF through the Alaska Community Foundation fund. It was a valuable service to those without internal capacity to raise and spend funds. It created work for the Anchorage Park Foundation, but also helped build relationships.
- The Municipality hired one full time and one seasonal project manager, in recognition that Challenge Grants are important and require staff time to do them properly.
- The 2006 Challenge Grants will have a lasting effect on Anchorage parks -- through physical park improvements, but more importantly through increased community collaboration and ownership.