



City of Yakima

News Release

Subject: Randall Park Fundraising Effort

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Release Date: Wednesday, June 4th, 2014

Donor Issues Fundraising Challenge to Improve Randall Park

Last fall the City of Yakima welcomed a substantial contribution of \$50,000 from an anonymous donor who stipulated the gift was to be used to make improvements to Randall Park, located between 44th Avenue and 48th Avenue south of Nob Hill Boulevard and north of Washington Avenue.

Shortly after the initial donation was made, another anonymous benefactor contacted the City to issue a challenge. The second donor promised an additional \$100,000 gift for Randall Park if community members would match it dollar for dollar.

We were a bit floored, said Yakima Parks & Recreation Manager Ken Wilkinson. We had already started thinking about how to use the \$50,000 donation to upgrade Randall Park. Then, the next thing we knew, we were presented with a tremendous opportunity to really address a lot of needs at the park and truly give it a much needed facelift, said Wilkinson. Once the community meets the donor's \$100,000 challenge, we have the very real potential to invest over a half-million dollars in Randall Park.

That would happen by the City combining the \$100,000 that will hopefully be generated from Yakima community members with the promised \$150,000 from the anonymous donors to apply for a matching grant from the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). If the RCO grant were approved, which Wilkinson indicated is likely, the City would have at least \$500,000 to use to enhance Randall, which is one of Central Washington's largest municipal parks.

Individuals, business owners, local charitable groups, and others are encouraged to make a tax deductible donation, no matter how big or how small, between now and August 11th the "**Randall Park Improvement Challenge**" by sending contributions to the Yakima Valley Community Foundation at 111 University Parkway, Suite 102, Yakima, Washington, 98901 or by calling Ken Wilkinson at 509-576-6416,

Randall Park is very popular and is well loved, said Wilkinson. But that popularity has taken a toll on the park's facilities. The restrooms have to be replaced, trails could use restoring, modern playground equipment should be installed, updated picnic shelters could be built. The list of needs is long, said Wilkinson. With the community chipping in, along with the graciousness of our anonymous donors and an RCO grant, Randall Park can really become a jewel and major asset for Yakima.

The project will be discussed at the June 11th Yakima Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, which will begin at 5:30 pm at Yakima City Hall. Everyone is invited to attend the meeting and offer their input.

Randall Park is currently home to a disc golf course, a pond frequented by geese and ducks, several trails and pathways, picnic areas, playgrounds and basketball courts, and plenty of open space. For many years, Randall Park has also been the site of the *Yakima Valley Community Band Concert Series*, which includes weekly performances each summer.