CITY OF LYNDEN

City of Lynden Conservation Futures Fund Request for Glenning Park

The City of Lynden requests $250,000 in Conservation Futures Fund to help complete funding for a 4-acre open field in the heart of the City. For many years the property was home to the Lynden Middle School, then later was used as a school playfield until the new Middle School was built in 2018. It has remained fenced and relatively underutilized ever since.

The site is unusual in that it is just three blocks from downtown Lynden and in the midst of a residential neighborhood. The logical use for the property was more housing units. But instead, residents encouraged the City to buy the site and preserve it as an open space park.

They pointed out that it is highly unusual to have open space of this size in the heart of any city and that it would be a highly prized recreational asset to the community. Supporters promised to help raise funds to buy it with private donations and by advocating for a bond measure that included some funding for the park.

On the strength of that promise, the City bought the site from the School District for $1.45 million in 2019. The City used a short-term line of credit and a contribution from its own General Fund to do so.

Meanwhile the bond measure moved forward. In Lynden, bond measures like this normally fail two or three times before being successful. Unexpectedly, it passed the first time with 62% of the vote - testament to the popularity of preserving the site for green space. Similarly, the funding for this project reflects a wide-ranging public-private partnership. So far it includes:

- $200,000 City of Lynden General Fund
- $200,000 Bond measure
- $575,000 Private donations

A funding shortfall remains of about $475,000, which the City is financing with a short-term line of credit. The $250,000 in Conservation Futures Fund the City seeks now would be used to help pay off that shortfall. Project advocates have promised to continue raising private funds until the project is fully paid.