

Residents Business Visitors Government Office of the Mayor  
**New York City Department of Parks & Recreation**  
 Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor • Adrian Benepe, Commissioner

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**ABRAHAM LINCOLN STATUE**  
 One of three sculptural renditions of Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865) in New York City's parks, this larger-than-life bronze by Henry Kirke Brown (1814–1886) watches over ...more

**ALEXANDER SKENE STATUE**  
 This impressive sculpture bust of Alexander Johnston Chalmers Skene, M.D. (1838–1900) honors a Brooklyn-based physician, medical researcher, college and hospital admin...more

**BROOKLYN HEIGHTS PROMENADE**  
 "There may be finer views than this in the world, but I don't believe it," said President Abraham Lincoln in 1864, when he exited his carriage on the crest that give...more

**BROOKLYN WAR MEMORIAL**  
 This granite and limestone memorial in Brooklyn's Cadman Plaza is dedicated to the 300,000 American men and women who served in World War II. The memorial was designe...more

**CARROLL PARK WAR MEMORIAL**  
 Serving as the symbolic centerpiece of this neighborhood park and playground, the Carroll Park War Memorial honors the memory of those men from the surrounding 8th Ass...more

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Find It

# Learning Virtually Everything About Your Park

Cities need to take advantage of the opportunities the Web offers to reach residents.

By Peter Harnik and Aharon Varady

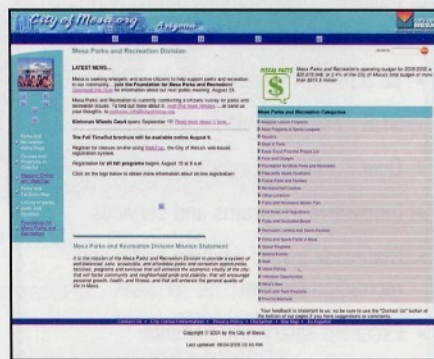
Do you need to disseminate information about your park system? Want to advertise where residents can take their dogs off-leash or catch a game of chess during lunch hour? Need help getting people to join a greenway clean-up organization?

Ten years ago, if you were driven by any of these needs you would have simply made a flier, maybe created a bulletin board in your recreation center and hoped to raise your residents' awareness. Today, your first stop is most likely your city park department Web site. But what would your community find there?

If you live in Seattle, Wash., or Cincinnati, Ohio, you would be pleasantly surprised—even amazed. You'd find interactive maps, lists of parks with their addresses and hours of operation, compilations of facilities and events, photos, prices and registration forms. And, if you still couldn't find what you were looking for, the sites even provide a way to directly contact the park director with your questions or suggestions.

In fact, in an analysis of the park agency Web sites of the 75 largest cities, every one of those cities plus Fresno, Calif., and Wichita, Kan., ranked tops for the quantity of information they provided their citizens and the ease in finding it. The study was carried out by the Trust for Public Land's Center for City Park Excellence (CCPE).

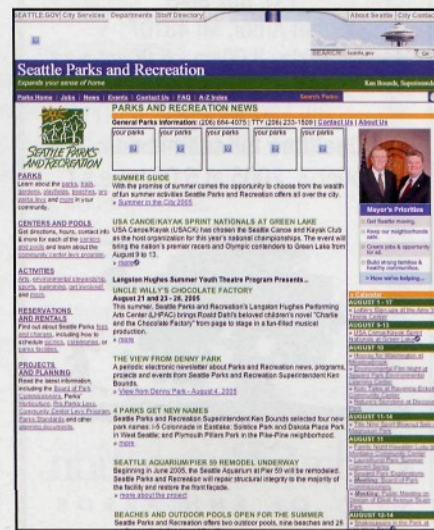
For each park department site, CCPE took note of the resources offered as well as the ease of finding it. The best overall sites provide excellent park maps, descriptions, lists of facilities, and park histories, all in an acces-



SCREENSHOT COURTESY OF MESA, ARIZ.



SCREENSHOT COURTESY OF WICHITA, KAN.



SCREENSHOT COURTESY OF SEATTLE, WASH.

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sible, easy-to-navigate manner. Other high ranking sites include Mesa, Ariz., and Charlotte-Mecklenburg, N.C., which missed top ranking only by lacking historical information and written park descriptions.

Cities that present outstanding his-

torical information include Chicago and New York. In Chicago, the history of Abbott Park, for instance, not only includes a small biography of Robert Sengstacke Abbott (1868-1940), for whom the park is named, but also an explanation of why and for which com-

**Table 1. Notable City Park Web Sites**

### Overall Excellence

Seattle	<a href="http://www.seattle.gov/parks">www.seattle.gov/parks</a>
Cincinnati	<a href="http://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityparks/pages/-3065">www.cincinnati-oh.gov/cityparks/pages/-3065</a>
Wichita	<a href="http://www.wichitagov.org/CityOffices/Park/Parks.htm">www.wichitagov.org/CityOffices/Park/Parks.htm</a>
Mesa	<a href="http://www.ci.mesa.az.us/parksrec">www.ci.mesa.az.us/parksrec</a>

### Excellent System-Wide Maps

Mesa	<a href="http://www.ci.mesa.az.us/parksrec/Parks_facilities_maps/all_districts_map.asp">www.ci.mesa.az.us/parksrec/Parks_facilities_maps/all_districts_map.asp</a>
Seattle	<a href="http://www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkspaces/parkmap.htm">www.cityofseattle.net/parks/parkspaces/parkmap.htm</a>

### Excellent Individual Maps

Wichita	<a href="http://www.wichitagov.org/CityOffices/Park/Parks.htm?ID=7">www.wichitagov.org/CityOffices/Park/Parks.htm?ID=7</a>
Cincinnati	<a href="http://dynamic.cinci-parks.org/images/park_medial162.gif?696">dynamic.cinci-parks.org/images/park_medial162.gif?696</a>
Bakersfield	<a href="http://www.bakersfieldcity.us/recreation/Parks/campusparkso.htm">www.bakersfieldcity.us/recreation/Parks/campusparkso.htm</a>

### Excellent Historical Information

Seattle	<a href="http://www.seattle.gov/parks/history/default.htm">www.seattle.gov/parks/history/default.htm</a>
New York	<a href="http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/historical_signs.html">www.nycgovparks.org/sub_your_park/historical_signs.html</a>
Chicago	<a href="http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/index.cfm?fuseaction/parks.detail/object_id/0EBEF4AC-AEB4-419A-B63F-F28FC81BBEFA.cfm">www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/index.cfm?fuseaction/parks.detail/object_id/0EBEF4AC-AEB4-419A-B63F-F28FC81BBEFA.cfm</a>
Cincinnati	<a href="http://dynamic.cinci-parks.org/cgi-bin/parks.cgi/park_desc?park_id=59">http://dynamic.cinci-parks.org/cgi-bin/parks.cgi/park_desc?park_id=59</a>

### Vintage Photos

San Francisco	<a href="http://www.sfgov.org">www.sfgov.org</a>
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### Excellent Park Lists (with park feature comparisons)

Fresno	<a href="http://www.fresno.gov/parks-rec/parkview.asp">www.fresno.gov/parks-rec/parkview.asp</a>
Minneapolis	<a href="http://www.minneapolis.parks.org/default.asp?PageID=5&amp;advSearch=parks">www.minneapolis.parks.org/default.asp?PageID=5&amp;advSearch=parks</a>
Jacksonville	<a href="http://www.coj.net/Departments/Parks+and+Recreation/Where+Do+You+Want+To+Play+Today/default.htm">www.coj.net/Departments/Parks+and+Recreation/Where+Do+You+Want+To+Play+Today/default.htm</a>
Chicago	<a href="http://www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/index.cfm?fuseaction/parks.home.cfm">/www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/index.cfm?fuseaction/parks.home.cfm</a>

