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Key Pen Parks Executive Director Scott Gallacher stands on site of Gateway Park last week.

Phase 1 of master plan for Gateway Park begins to take shape

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The bulldozers moving earth and clearing land adjacent to state Route 302 on the Key Peninsula is a welcome sign for Key Pen Parks officials.

The activity is a telltale sign that a nearly five-year process of working to kick off Phase One of Gateway Park has officially started.

Phase One of the project includes a playground and picnic shelter, donated from the Gig Harbor Rotary, a restroom, a park entrance and exit and trailhead parking for the 360 Trails, said Scott Gallacher, Key Pen Parks executive director.

"I think the public is excited about it," Gallacher said of the project.

The parks district purchased the 39-acre property across from the Wauna Fire Station in 2012. It has since added two more parcels of land to the project over the last year, bringing the total size of the park to 72 acres.

Key Pen Parks has already received one grant for the project from the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office, which helped with the initial land acquisition. A grant from Pierce County's Conservation Futures Program helped acquire the two new parcels. While the new land adds a bit of a wrinkle to the initial



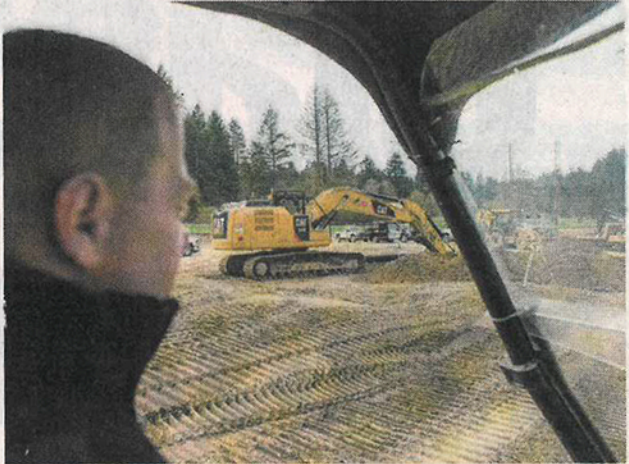
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Crews from Bob Pearson Construction Inc. work on grading the site of Gateway Park last week.

plan, Gallacher said it's not a big deal.

"We are going to have to revisit some of the

items from the master plan," he said, adding that it more has to do with the spacing and the location of



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Gallacher looks out during a tour of the site as crews from Bob Pearson Construction Inc. work on grading the site of Gateway Park on the Key Peninsula last week.

the facilities.

There are five phases in the master plan of the project, Gallacher said, with Phase One estimated to cost \$1.7 million, when it is all said and done. The cost of the total five-phase project is \$7.5 million.

The park is going to serve an underserved area when it comes to access to use of recreational facilities, Gallacher said.

The park will likely also be a big draw for other Pierce County residents, said County Councilman Derek Young, whose district includes the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor.

"I think it's going to be a huge asset for not only for the KP, but also for Gig Harbor," said Young, who acknowledged 26th District state Reps. Jesse Young and Michelle Caldier for lobbying the state for budget support for the project. "It almost acts as a regional draw to folks on the other side of the bridge as well. It's going to have a spillover effect."

Barring any weather delays, people should begin to see the park take shape once crews being to lay concrete in the next few months. The contractor has a project deadline of the end of September to

complete Phase One, Gallacher said.

"They are pushing to get it done faster," he said.

Donations for the park's playground and picnic shelter are still being accepted through the Key Peninsula Parks & Recreation Foundation.

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