

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

100 Dexter: November 28, 2007

Total Participants: 8 Public, 3 Parks and Recreation Staff

Major Themes

Participants felt that Parks and Recreation should be a presence in downtown parks, which are different from other neighborhood parks, form more partnerships with other City Departments to create walking areas connecting parks, and with Developers to make pocket parks and open spaces all over the place. Belltown has grown 246% in the past 15 years and parks are not keeping up with demand. There is a need for a downtown pool or form relationship with developer with pool so people can use it.

1. What could Parks and Recreation improve?

Parks and Facilities

- Need parks in downtown and Belltown
- Urban parks need to be functional with programming and security
- Differentiate downtown parks from other urban parks:
 - Street parks
 - Small spaces
 - Walkable
- Work with SDOT to incorporate streetscape with park feel
- Create linkages to parks, which are as important as the park itself
- Small pocket parks with new developments
- Signage for public areas
- Need new pools for a variety of uses and recreation
- No pool or gym downtown
- Partnering with developers to get amenities for public use
- Support street parks in Belltown
- Make downtown parks functional and useful

Public Engagement

- Involve “Friends of” groups
- Get better input by involving more people and businesses
- Remember that children are downtown and in Belltown

Programs

- Create more events in parks like music, food carts, etc
- Programming that includes water-related activities for adults and children

2. What does Parks and Recreation do well?

Public Engagement

- Crew chiefs are supportive as are other Parks employees of public groups and their events

Programs and Services

- Programs, maintenance, golf
- Golf reservations are easy

3. What are the issues and challenges that Parks and Recreation will face in the next five years?

Maintenance

- Threats – invasive plants – ivy, blackberry, holly

Public Engagement

- Better enforcement of park lands – remove encroachments (work with Law)
- Enforcement vs. anti-social behavior

4. What are the emerging trends that will drive how Parks and Recreation does business over the next five years?

Parks and Facilities

- More pools, increased safety in high-crime parks, outdoor cafes/restaurants that open to the parks, lights and safety boxes for 911 in parks where people walk and run.
- Multi-use parks (i.e. pools, picnic, ball fields, open spaces) will drive people to the parks. The small spaces are nice, but a large park with all things is where it is going
- Some commercial activity in parks are reasons for people to come in—particularly food
- When thinking about downtown parks and open space plans – see set of policies that ties public and private open spaces / streetscapes
- Couple with places for kids and families to be
- Create park “squares” for people to eat and congregate
- Create more partnerships with development for more walkable and green streets
- Street-level spaces better than, for example, rooftops

Public Engagement and Partnerships

- Work with local businesses and neighbors to get a vision for parks
- Improve relationships with City police to make changes
- Partnerships with other departments to maintain all open / public spaces
- Partner with UW
- Make planning of parks more accessible

5. What is your vision for Parks and Recreation?

Parks and Facilities

- More skateparks
- More swimming pools
- Develop walking areas, such as alongside the canal
- Safety call boxes / lower level LED lighting along Burke-Gilman Trail, Green Lake, other paths
- Parks that are comfortable and safe
- Partnerships to create amenities for public use
- Broaden view / vision of open space
- Parks that have a Seattle Parks and Recreation Department presence in downtown

Staff and Partnerships

- Parks personnel presence all day in Park
- Host / greeter / programmer, also provide oversight
- Check out basketballs, etc – could be recreation vendors or recreation leaders
- Think more broadly about responsibility for operations and maintenance
- Envision and plan with other City departments and King County