

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

Laurelhurst Community Center: November 29, 2007

Total Participants: 11 Public, 4 Parks and Recreation Staff

Major Themes

Much of the meeting focused on swimming pools.

1. What could Parks and Recreation improve?

Public Outreach

- Better citizen participation and more listening to the neighborhood, i.e. Magnuson accountability and Loyal Heights: commercialization is not wanted
- Better marketing and outreach of existing facilities

Swimming Pools

- More outdoor and indoor pools for children and elderly with unstructured time
- Cooperation with other pool providers for pool availability, specifically the University of Washington and the YMCA

Other Facilities

- Longer Community Center hours
- More services and activities for teens
- Better access to meeting spaces for neighborhood and community organizations at community centers
- Need policy re: community organizations' use of community centers

Partnerships

- Better cooperation with the Seattle Police Department, Department of Neighborhoods and other city departments

2. What does Parks and Recreation do well?

Recreation and Projects

- Low cost and variety of programs
- Facilitating Burke-Gilman Trail and Madrona Creek
- Implementation of the neighborhood vision about the new Laurelhurst community center
- Staff cooperation with seniors at pools

Outreach and Partnerships

- Cooperation and joint use agreements with Seattle Public Schools
- Good response to citizen requests
- Good web site
- Cooperation and coordination on projects

Use of Funds

- Use of private funds

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

Funding and Revenue Generation

- Funding
- Lack of funding for maintenance

Revenue Generation

- Potential commercialization at Magnuson Building 27
- Leases to “for profit” enterprises
- Need to travel to access activities – transportation problems
- Fee generation proposal, specifically at the picnic areas
- Parking meters and garages in parks
- Membership card

Transportation Changes, Development, and Growth

- Construction on SR-520 and the effect on Lake Washington Boulevard and the Arboretum
- Destruction of Washington Park Arboretum
- Increasing city population - limited capacity

Restrictions

- School use limits public use of public parks, for example:
- Perkins School at Meridian
- Seattle Prep at Montlake
- U-Prep at Dahl
- Roosevelt at Evans Pool

Organized Sports, Activated Parks

- Sports growth is taking over
- Encroachments on natural areas
- Lack of oversight on some activities, specifically ATVs at Magnuson
- Overuse of pool and fields
- Lack of instructors
- The lack of trails is leading to abuse of trails

Safety & Security

- Vandalism and crime in parks
- Graffiti not removed quickly from Parks and Recreation property
- Lack of security throughout the system
- Inappropriate use of parks, including drug sales, overtakes some parks

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

Developer Involvement

- Developers to pay for density and height increases
- Incentive zoning and impact fees

Facilities Upgrades and Maintenance

- More day lighting of drainage in flood control districts
- Acquire City Light substations
- Tear building 2 at Magnuson down for a pool
- Acquire Aqua Dive as skatepark
- Partner in cooperation with the Duwamish to clean up the area
- Explore opportunity for other special water sports
- Partner with SPU on watershed acquisition(s)
- SR 520 wetland mitigation in Seattle

Management

- Address the threats mentioned above
- Build on the positives
- More accountability for Parks and Recreation; there should have been more budget oversight for the ProParks
- Adhere to city council budget provisos

5. What is your vision for Parks and Recreation?

Health and Fitness

- Provide healthy opportunities for all ages and abilities

Environment and Open Space

- Provide facilities and open spaces that could not otherwise be built
- Provide environmental stewardship
- Protect natural areas
- Park as a refuge from urban tension, with wildlife component and social interaction
- Parks and Recreation should be an advocate for urban nature with private property owners

Organized Sports and Programs

- Organized spring and summer programs in every park
- Network of aquatic facilities deep water 25 yard diving pool – self supporting - zero depth to accommodate disabled with slides, hot tub element
- Programs geared for off season and school breaks
- Reinstate proactive conservation easement program with environmental organizations
- Parks as recreational opportunity (active and passive, structured/unstructured) for all citizens of all ages to meet their needs in close proximity

Other

- Arboretum re-united, SR 520 in a tunnel
- Less focus on tourism
- Safe and well maintained parks