

## STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

### Rainier Community Center: December 6, 2007

Total Participants: 25 Public, 4 Parks and Recreation Staff

#### Major Themes

Four themes were foremost on people's minds at the meeting: Parks should be fully funded and take better advantage of the budget process so we can provide the services and facilities the communities' desire without having to resort to levies. Parks should promote healthy lifestyles. Parks should collaborate with other agencies and individual community centers should collaborate with other centers to provide broader and not duplicative services. Finally, we should do a better job with outreach to reach the non-traditional park user.

### 1. What could Parks and Recreation improve?

#### *Finances*

- Budgeting process – Why isn't Parks fully funded by the budget so we don't need levies? There should be more budget money for Parks
- Be mindful of money; don't waste money on frivolous things. Demonstrate fiscal responsibility

#### *Programs and Services*

- More community center and program hours; more late night and early morning hours
- More welcoming staff @ community centers (2x)
- More partnering with other agencies for programs and services
- Balanced programming; some core programming provided across all community centers and some individual community center driven
- Collaborate on programming to serve a larger region; catalogues should include a larger region
- Collaborate with other community centers or parks to hold regional events
- Embrace healthy choices for community center users
- Continue evaluation of programs and services; are they successful, well attended, etc
- Equity in programming, maintenance and services across the City (2x)
- Involve teens in programming

#### *Public Engagement*

- More scholarships and/or outreach to low immigrant communities; served the underserved
- Serve a diverse population; be more inclusive of different cultures and ages
- Is Parks meeting the needs of the community? Better outreach.
- Better information and outreach to public/users before programs are cancelled
- Feedback from the youth is missing; how do you capture their input
- More transparency of advisory councils and other boards; recruit new members
- Marketing across the system; one central catalogue for all programs and not just web based. Provide hard copies at libraries and other spots

***Staff***

- More outdoor staff at parks
- More lifeguards
- More customer service training at the front desks; more general staff training

***Access***

- Provide transportation to parks; coordinate with Metro to ensure parks are served by transit and/or easily accessible by transit.

***Maintenance***

- Improved maintenance.
- Infrastructure enhancement to better serve the community

***Parks and Facilities***

- Provide healthy choices in vending machines (2x); involve the youth in these choices

**2. What does Parks and Recreation do well?**

***Programs and Services***

- Holiday events for youths and families
- Programs like learn to swim (should expand to include more ages!)
- STEP and TREK programs; youth programs
- Provides a safe place for kids, structure and a place to be
- Traditional youth/adult sports such as basketball, baseball and football
- Keeps kids and teens safe; Parks provides activities
- Good on recreation but not so good on parks.
- Children and families are treated well
- Senior programs

***Staff***

- Staff dedication
- Diversity of staff and work with the neighborhoods
- Staff are more professional and focused

***Parks and Facilities***

- Community centers open during emergencies
- Operation of facilities; staff does a great job
- Grounds maintenance
- Parks are beautiful and varied

***Public Engagement***

- Supports other neighborhood programs

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

#### ***Finances***

- Money, budget /funding; Parks and Recreation needs more dollars
- Don't be driven by liability concerns and/or costs; these can be barriers to connect to people

#### ***Programs and Services***

- Where is Parks and how does Parks compare to other park agencies? Develop benchmarks
- Kids go to school longer so they have less time to take advantage of parks and Parks programs
- Competing community center programs
- Aging population; different demands and needs

#### ***Public Engagement***

- Parks should look at all groups, don't focus too much on just one group
- Stay innovative; reach out to families/parents, new populations, the disenfranchised (nook and cranny folk). Value the experience of everyone
- Diverse cultures have different needs and desires; be inclusive of all cultures
- Widening gap in economic classes – treat all people equally regardless; Parks should serve everyone

#### ***Safety and Security***

- Security/violence.
- Disaster planning.

#### ***Parks and Facilities***

- Increasing density around parks; preserve and acquire more open space
- Overuse of parks

#### ***Maintenance***

- Physical resources; continuing operation and maintenance costs, landscaping needs

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

#### ***Public Engagement***

- Collaborate with community groups
- Marketing to community members; bring in more community members
- Get feedback to make parks work better; make better connections
- Volunteer resources; include non-English speakers (need better outreach)
- Engage the youth;
- Bring youth in early and young to make them life long users and supporters of Parks facilities and parks.

#### ***Programs and Services***

- Make environmental Learning Centers more visible; partner with community centers
- Role models/mentors for youth

- Involve the youth in programming
- Cultivate more diverse adult programming; not just activities for parents, but singles and seniors too

### ***Partnerships***

- Partner with more health agencies to promote healthy lifestyles (2x)
- Partner with the Department of Neighborhoods to add community gardens

### ***Environment***

- Leverage the climate change discussion

### ***Finances***

- Get a more dedicated funding stream; sustainability of funding

## **5. What is your vision for Parks and Recreation?**

### ***Public Engagement***

- Celebrate health, enjoy community; available to everyone
- Active partner with community; help the community resolve community issues
- Provide community, not just the immediate neighborhood, but all of Seattle
- Distribute successes across the whole system
- Safe, peaceful communities
- Community centers and parks should be teeming with staff, users and volunteers; they should be happy, safe, engaging and inclusive of all

### ***Parks and Facilities***

- Open space in all areas of the city; available and accessible to all
- Quality parks within a ¼ mile of everyone; clean, operable, safe and well cared for
- Easily accessible small playfields for small children
- More space available

### ***Programs and Services***

- Diversity of activities; something for everyone
- Annual health and safety job fair; collaborate with all community centers
- Provide neighborhood focused activities and amenities to encourage people to stay local and not use their cars

### ***Finances and Department Stature***

- Parks should be respected among City departments and valued equally to the Fire and Police Departments for the important services Parks and Recreation provides; fully funded