

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

Rainier Beach Community Center: November 26, 2007

Total Participants: 10 Public, 7 Parks and Recreation Staff

Major Themes

The largest concern was the need for an updated, state-of-the-art facility in the Rainier Beach area. In addition, participants emphasized the need for stronger fee-based programs with a sliding scale and a good scholarship program. People seemed to feel that Parks and Recreation facilities were a safe place for everyone. The group really liked the programming that happened at Othello Park this year, but they felt Parks and Recreation needs to improve on the perception of safety. They felt many people do not participate at the community center because they perceived it to be unsafe. Another major theme was the request for more intergenerational programming. They also thought there is a need for more training and staff development around professionalism and partnership building. Many people supported having food concessions at signature parks.

1. What could Parks and Recreation improve?

Programs and Services

- More programming for adults in the evenings. More programming for teens/youth
- More programs for education and academics. Tech labs are under used and Parks should offer more adult programs. Adult reading programs, etc.
- Parks programs should be superior to other organizations (YMCA, private clubs) and programs (fitness programs). Have more of an entrepreneurial spirit
- Youth sports vs. adult sports; serve all populations. Need decent consistent field times for adults
- Offer more non-traditional sports opportunities for kids
- Offer more arts programs for all ages
- Offer more programs for parents and kids to do together (toddler/parent programs)
- More structure, leadership and funding for Late Night and Teen programs (more learning opportunities like resume writing)
- More academic programming for kids, not just watching kids play basketball
- Stronger fee based programs with good scholarship program
- Fees on a sliding scale so more families can participate in programs
- Offer programs at alternative facilities at off-site non-Parks facilities
- Strong fee structure to support diverse programming on-site and off-site
- Offer the option for participants to donate \$1, \$2, etc to a scholarship fund when they register; scholarship would provide opportunities for other kids to participate
- Provide spaces for use for community groups in addition to programming

Staff

- Staff should reflect the community they work in. Felt staff should be more invested in the community
- Need more professional staff in daycare programs to provide more supervision

- Better staff training and development on professionalism, partnership building, program design and program surveying
- Bilingual staff
- Greater staff accountability

Parks and Facilities

- Update facilities, with more rooms and opportunities for programs
- Improve all weather outdoor facilities; more all weather facilities; increase the use of the school district's fields
- Facilities should be open longer; open earlier and later
- Better facility in Rainier Beach.
- Design buildings with safety and security in mind. Site lines within the building and outside as well as looking out of the building to the space outside of the building.

Public Engagement

- Conduct focus groups in neighborhoods to find out what the community wants
- Community outreach. Advertise in locations in the neighborhood where people are currently spending their time, like the library
- Equity of programs across the city

2. What does Parks and Recreation do well?

Programs and Services

- Nutrition and fitness programs
- Women of the World swims
- Fitness/Obesity programs
- Lifelong learning programs (Sound Steps)
- Costs of programs are affordable. Rates are at or below market
- Programming in the parks such as Othello Park
- Access to sports programs for youth
- Youth projects
- Online website and online registration
- Kids in daycare are well cared for
- Volunteer groups/projects are well supported by the system
- Computer labs/ teen labs
- Willie Austin fitness programs
- Swimming pool programs and staff. Partnerships have been easy to begin
- Bicycle Saturday and Sundays

Staff

- Staff are always helpful; good customer service

Maintenance

- Green spaces and parks maintenance. Well kept, clean and safe

Partnerships

- Collaboration with other City/County Departments

Safety and Security

- Provide a safe environment
- Parks are well used; people feel safe in parks

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

Programs and Services

- Programming for the “new” senior population; programs, services, and facilities
- Providing more cross generational programming
- Offering programs that meet the needs of all of the diverse groups in the community

Public Engagement

- Changing neighborhoods
- Many languages of participants
- Serving neighborhood demographics
- Gangs; strategically look at how to engage gang members

Parks and Facilities

- Management of sports facilities
- Emphasis nutrition. No soda pop machines. More healthy alternatives in vending machines

Partnerships

- Private/public partnerships

Finances

- Budget

4. What are the opportunities for Parks and Recreation?

Programs and Services

- Lifelong learning
- Multigenerational programming
- Provide more engaging community activities at centers
- Creating a sports campus at signature parks. Offer space for eating, concessions, sports, leisure space, WIFI
- Sliding scale for all programs
- Fees break for city residence or multi family member discount
- Memberships
- Women only programming/ facilities. Provide diverse opportunities
- Intellectual cultural arts; variety of non typical programming other than sports
- Expand on the best programs throughout the city

Public Engagement

- Changing the current image

Partnerships

- Creating partnerships with corporation to bring money back to Parks

5. What is your vision for Parks and Recreation?

Parks and Facilities

- Provide WIFI
- Broad range of services at facilities (espresso stand at signature parks)
- Continue to maintain tennis courts
- State of the art facilities; build for future growth
- Build a state of the art facility in Rainier Beach area.
- Boat rentals at Beer Sheva Park
- Improved parking and access to facilities
- Hub and satellite facilities or satellite staff

Programs and Services

- Consistency among services
- Lifelong health; healthy choices
- Licensed preschool care
- Community festival at the new Rainier Beach plaza to build interest in facility
- Coordinate programming with other parks facilities

Public Engagement

- Develop and implement a communication strategy
- Be an intentional neighborhood center/hub

Finances

- Understand our cost centers. What does it cost to run facilities? What is the mission?

Partnerships

- Public/ private partnerships with long term public value/ focus/ benefit