

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

Camp Long: December 5, 2007

Total Participants: 11 Public, 2 Parks and Recreation Staff

Major Themes

Public engagement was a big focus of the meeting. Participants discussed wanting various types of information about Parks and Recreation available through different media and marketed better. The importance of continued environmentally sustainable practices and a “green” Seattle was emphasized.

1. What could Parks and Recreation improve?

Programs and Services

- Reservation system is awkward, need to post at site on the day of event
- Not enough family swim times
- Community Centers and Environmental Learning Centers are understaffed

Green Practices

- Seattle Parks and Recreation needs to be more sustainable
- Provide environmental education on “green” living/lifestyle

Public Engagement

- People don't always know parks exist in their neighborhood
- Parks and Recreation needs to communicate what the parks provide and let people know about the City's “best kept secrets”
- Need a regional guide to parks and trails in West Seattle
- Need an advertisement or insert in local newspapers once a quarter
- Parks and Recreation needs to put up signs that identify a park as part of a larger system, i.e., Longfellow Creek
- Need marketing
- Let people have a chance to provide input
- Need two or more meetings on topics with conflicts
- Need multiple, diverse means of providing input beyond just attending meetings
- Email impediments need to be overcome; use email not paper
- Youth are excluded
- Parks and Recreation needs to improve how various sectors of the population are heard
- Parks and Recreation should distribute surveys at schools
- Need to advertise and communicate in non-English newspapers
- No more phone messages instead of real people

2. What does Parks and Recreation do well?

Parks and Facilities

- So much “green” in Seattle, good that Parks and Recreation had the foresight to acquire open space
- Parks are well distributed throughout Seattle

Programs and Services

- Opportunities for stewardship

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

Finances

- Not enough City tax money to sustain Parks and Recreation budget
- Privatization and vendors could be an opportunity or a threat
- Without continued investment, facilities will crumble

Parks and Facilities

- Increased use of parks since people won’t travel elsewhere for recreation
- Parks and Recreation needs to develop a strategy to make the next generation care about the parks, and to educate, inspire, and inform new residents and young people about the value of parks

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

Partnerships

- Work with Seattle Public School District to further develop community service and service learning in the parks
- Parks and Recreation should work with various non-profit partners, e.g., AmeriCorps and others

Programs and Services

- Increase plays and concerts in the Parks
- Need RV campsites in Seattle area

5. What is your vision for Parks and Recreation?

Public Engagement

- Support consumer education and sharing lessons learned by allowing interpersonal messaging
- Foster volunteerism
- Foster a volunteer program to link school programs with Parks and Recreation at the neighborhood level
- Prepare running trail maps

Programs and Services

- Need healthy lifestyle advocacy

SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

- Need to reach all kids and get them outdoors to appreciate nature
- Geocaching, a treasure hunting game, should be offered at the neighborhood level

Environment and Green Practices

- Parks and Recreation needs to take the lead on environmental issues
- Research run-off implications on synthetic turf surfaces
- Focus on use of recycled material and ensure recycling
- More toward herbicide-free and pesticide-free environments
- Improved recycling and composting in parks

Partnerships

- Need Seattle Public School District and Parks and Recreation to work together better in the long-run.
- Safe adult and child programs

Parks and Facilities

- More camp facilities like Camp Long
- Need campground hosts at camp sites
- Bring back “Victory Gardens”, support raising food close to home
- Develop soft surface trails

Maintenance

- Add the tree canopy to the Capital Improvement Projects list and ongoing maintenance
- Improve storm water retention and detention

6. Other Comments on Specific Projects

- Colman is dedicated to clubs in the evenings, there is not enough sun time
- Trails in W. Duwamish Greenbelt create use and ownership of this asset