

## STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

### Meadowbrook Community Center: December 4, 2007

Total Participants: 26 Public, 5 Parks and Recreation Staff

#### Major Themes

This meeting had a balance of attendees supporting un-programmed green space development and more active uses of the parks.

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

#### *Programming*

- Be aware of youth centric balance of programming – be strategic about mix
- More programs to teach youth about environment and natural world
- Need sports-themed summer camps
- Understand demographics and design programs accordingly
- Improve accessibility online for fields; see what is scheduled and allow for scheduling
- Improve monitoring of bicyclists' adherence to rules in parks

#### *Partnerships*

- Cooperation with other public entities, such as Seattle Public Utilities, University of Washington, Seattle Department of Transportation, and Seattle Public School District, to maximize the benefits of open spaces and parks to the public
- Do not be dependent upon "Friends of" groups

#### *Green Practices*

- Parks should have a "green" czar
- More sustainable design and ecological awareness
- Need more shade
- Need more natural, less manicured landscapes

#### *Improvements and Maintenance*

- Sports need to use and improve existing facilities before building new ones

#### *Parks and Facilities*

- More outdoor pools needed—long waiting list at private pools
- Think outside the box on outdoor pools, make them semi-seasonal with a retractable roof, doors and windows
- Extend outdoor pool season for existing pools
- Extend pool hours
- Need open water swimming
- Buy Aqua Dive in Lake City
- Improve each park rather than sports facilities

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

### ***Improvements and Maintenance***

- Mow, blow and edge
- Impressed with community center facilities—spaces are well used, preserving old parts was good

### ***Aquatics***

- Aquatics open to diverse population—easy to work with

### ***Public Engagement***

- Work with citizen groups
- Good volunteer coordination
- Outreach

### ***Programming***

- Special population programs are well thought out and have good substance
- Good that community centers will open earlier in the day

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

### ***Finances***

- Parks and Recreation is too driven by a revenue producing mentality, Parks and Recreation does not need to be revenue driven
- Sun-setting of levies

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

- Need “Free Days” at the Zoo
- The public pays for too much
- Increasing development is cutting off Parks and Recreation’s ability to create open space and trees
- Need preservation of open spaces
- Private organizations are dictating how parks may be used
- Renovations and improved services should make field use year round and allow all season play

### ***Partnerships***

- Beware of privatization under guise of partnership
- There are collaboration opportunities for community based programming, Parks and Recreation should build on community center proximity to libraries and senior centers
- Look for community based agencies whose missions are aligned with Parks
- Parks and Recreation should join with Seattle Public School District and do what is necessary to put sports and playfields at elementary schools

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

##### ***Environment and Green Practices***

- Because of what Parks and Recreation owns, like Discovery Park and Magnuson Park, they can take the lead in “Green” development

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

- Acquire and develop more open space, look 100 years into future.
- Examine whether current outdoor pools meet the community need
- Create a mile long open water course on Lake Washington
- Resolve use conflicts
- Preserve Parks and Recreation land before additional acquisitions
- Prioritize other interests
- Maintain parks and facilities in an efficient, low-cost way
- Have donation days to enhance access

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

- Be clear with messaging
- Be specific about what kind of input you are asking for as a way to get people involved
- Be clear about how decision will be made, this would reduce conflict

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

- Contribute to the health and vitality of the community and environment in a measurable way
- Building healthy vital sustainable living in this community
- Ensure access to all activities regardless of ability to pay, offer scholarships and free days
- Build play areas for children to get dirty in, facilitate play in ravines
- Put together think tank to brainstorm outside-the-box recreation ideas
- Offer outdoor, unrefined recreational opportunities, such as a balance beam in the woods

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

- Preserve and value what we have
- Expand on our connectivity
- Extend beyond the borders of Parks and Recreation
- Extend beyond the borders of our bureaucracy
- Integrate the web of our community, connect it all
- Be able to go out any front door and walk to a park
- Accommodate the City’s growing and diverse population
- Find creative way to address user conflict
- Use resources in variety of ways

#### **6. Other Comments on Specific Projects**

- Just paved the crew quarters at the NE Crews – a mistake not to repeat
- Good job on recent renovation of Magnuson Sports Meadow, wise mix, path views, access to parking
- Buy Aqua Dive in Lake City – now