



# LOWER TAYLOR CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT

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## INTERDEPARTMENTAL TEAM WORKSHOPS

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**A. Team Workshop #1 – February 4, 2013**

- a. Agenda
- b. Summary

**B. Team Workshop #2 – April 22, 2013**

- a. Agenda
- b. Option Evaluation Matrix
- c. Summary

**C. Team Workshop #3 – July 8, 2013**

- a. Agenda
- b. Summary

## MEETING AGENDA

### LOWER TAYLOR CREEK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS ANALYSIS – INTERNAL WORKSHOP #1 FEBRUARY 4, 9AM-12PM SMT 5965/5975

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#### WORKSHOP BACKGROUND

SPU plans to complete an in-stream restoration and culvert replacement project along lower Taylor Creek in southeast Seattle in 2015-2016. In 2010 as a result of a lawsuit, SPU purchased residential property in this area which opened up this project opportunity. However, the pending project has also raised issues with neighbors about what sort of public access may occur in the future and how that will affect the immediate neighborhood.

SPU and Parks (who may be the ultimate property owner for the site) are conducting an “options analysis” to evaluate different types of public access that could occur at the site. The Options Analysis objectives are to provide a clear and transparent process for the public access decision (as we expect that this issue will continue to be in-play throughout the project), include stakeholders in the analysis, and set the stage for a future positive working relationship with the community during the design and construction of the project.

Our general process for the options analysis is:

1. Develop the public access options and draft evaluation criteria. Ask for feedback from the public and stakeholders.
2. Apply the criteria to each public access option to identify advantages/disadvantages of each option. Document the evaluation in a draft Public Access Options Analysis Report and release it for public review. Hold a public meeting.
3. Develop a recommendation about public access. Ask for public feedback on the recommendation.
4. Forward the final Public Access Options Analysis Report, which will include the analysis, recommendation, and public feedback, to the Director of SPU and Superintendent of Parks for a final decision.

More information can be found at the project website:

<http://www.seattle.gov/util/EnvironmentConservation/Projects/DrainageSystem/TaylorCreek/index.htm>

We are engaging an interdepartmental team to assist us with this analysis. This includes the Mayor’s Office, Seattle Police Department, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Department of Neighborhoods (DON), and SPU representatives for the City’s Race and Social Justice Initiative. We plan to hold three workshops through the first half of 2013, with each workshop focused on a step in the above options analysis process (steps 1-3). We also have consultants from EnviroIssues and Osborn Consulting that are assisting us with this options analysis.

#### INTERNAL WORKSHOP #1 PURPOSE

- 1- Introduce folks to the project
- 2- Discuss the public access options
- 3- Discuss the draft evaluation criteria

#### WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

- Julie Crittenden, SPU, PM
- Tim Croll, SPU
- Susan Stoltzfus, SPU
- Rick Johnson, SPU
- Gary Lockwood, SPU
- Deb Heiden, SPU
- David Graves, Parks
- Mark Solomon, SPD
- Alison Van Gorp, Mayor’s Office
- Corey Jurcak, SDOT
- Ed Pottharst, DON
- Steve Louie, DON
- Yun Pitre, DON
- Steve Hamaj, SPU
- Emiko Takahashi, SPU
- Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues
- Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues
- Tarelle Osborn, Osborn Consult.

## WORKSHOP AGENDA

Facilitator – Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues

TIME	TOPIC	LEAD
10 min	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Coffee will be provided</i></li></ul>	Angie
10 min	<b>Background of Lower Taylor Creek Improvement Project</b>	Julie
20 min	<b>Overview of the public access options analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Purpose and objectives</i></li><li>▪ <i>Process and timeline</i></li><li>▪ <i>Report outline</i></li></ul>	Julie
20 min	<b>Public Access Options</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Review options - did we miss any?</i></li></ul>	Julie
90 min	<b>Preliminary Evaluation Criteria</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Review criteria</i></li><li>▪ <i>Are there criteria to add or remove?</i></li><li>▪ <i>How will we score each criteria?</i></li><li>▪ <i>Do they need to be weighted?</i></li></ul>	Angie
20 min	<b>Next steps</b>	Angie

**LOWER TAYLOR CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT – PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS ANALYSIS**  
**WORKSHOP #1 – FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**  
**FEBRUARY 4, 2013**

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**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting. She explained that the purpose of the workshop was to introduce the group to the Lower Taylor Creek Restoration Project, discuss current public access options being considered for the site, explain the purpose and need for a public access options evaluation, and discuss the proposed set of criteria that will be used to evaluate public access options. Julie noted that the desired outcome of the first workshop is to leave with options and evaluation criteria that are representative of both the City's and community's needs and values.

**PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Julie Crittenden, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Project Manager, provided a brief overview of the lower Taylor Creek project area and a history of the site. Development near the lower reaches of the creek causes habitat and maintenance issues on the SPU property that the City hopes to address with this project.

In 2010 and 2011, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) purchased five parcels of waterfront property. Purchase of the property provided SPU an opportunity to:

- Improve the stream channel and surrounding habitat, particularly for Chinook salmon
- Remove the last fish passage barriers between Lake Washington and Deadhorse Canyon
- Replace the public culvert under Rainier Avenue S
- Address storm-related flooding and sediment deposition at the mouth of the creek (as possible)

Julie noted that habitat and fish elements are the drivers of the project. SPU, King County and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) have been studying how fish use and interact with Lake Washington. Studies have shown that juvenile salmon prefer shallow shoreline and small stream environments for rearing and as a way to increase the success of Chinook migrating through Lake Washington to Puget Sound, Seattle is working to establish a network of salmon rest-stops along the lake shoreline. Taylor Creek is also used minimally for spawning by adult coho and sockeye salmon. Spawning use could increase substantially in the future once the last fish barriers between the lake and Deadhorse Canyon are removed.

Julie reviewed the conceptual design plan and noted that the stream and culvert will be realigned and moved east to avoid installing a new culvert between two existing private culverts. The environmental improvements being made at lower Taylor Creek are in partnership with Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). WSDOT is required to mitigate their habitat impacts related to the State Route 520 Floating Bridge Replacement Program and have chosen lower Taylor Creek as one of their potential mitigation sites. WSDOT will fund the improvements between Rainier Ave S and Lake Washington.

**OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

SPU has been engaging nearby neighbors about the project since 2011 to hear concerns and potential issues related to the project. An open house was held at the site in August 2011 for neighbors on the private drive, Rainier Ave S and 68th Ave S. A larger public open house was held in February 2012.

Nearby residents are in support of salmon habitat improvements but they do not want the site to be publicly accessible. The private drive is maintained and managed by the residents, so there is a lot of concern with how restoration will affect people getting to and from their homes. Other concerns that have been raised include pedestrian safety concerns related to crossing busy Rainier Ave S, reduced property values, nuisance activities and crime.

Due to the nearby neighbors' concerns and to ensure SPU considers the broader community's concerns as well, SPU is completing a Public Access Options Analysis Report to evaluate public access options for the site once restoration work is complete. The community will have three opportunities to provide input on the public access component of the project, beginning with the chance to provide feedback on the draft options and proposed criteria. A public meeting will be held in spring for the public to review the draft report and weigh in on the results. Following the public meeting, City staff will make a recommendation for public access and the community will have a final opportunity to weigh in before the SPU Director and Park Superintendent make a final determination.

The goal of the analysis is to involve stakeholders with varying needs and priorities in this decision, and ensure it is supported by a clear, inclusive and transparent public process.

### **PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Julie explained the spectrum of public access options that have been considered by SPU and Parks. The two options at each end of the spectrum – selling the property back into private ownership and developing the property into an active recreational park – have been determined not viable due to the limited ability to redevelop the site and operations and maintenance constraints. The Mayor's Office and Parks agreed with this determination and those two options will not be carried forward in the analysis.

Julie reviewed the five public access options that are being considered, including: no public access, viewpoint access, scheduled access, limited access and open access. She noted that whichever option is chosen, SPU will work closely with the adjacent neighbors to share information about living near a public space, redesign the private drive (e.g. create space for vehicle turnaround), and develop design solutions to help mitigate potential impacts to their neighborhood.

The group agreed that pedestrian safety and improvements should be a focus during the design phase, as Rainier Ave S is heavily traveled and has limited site distance. Additionally, landscape design will be important and influence how people use the site and the ability to police it. One of the project goals is to provide quality habitat; however, ensuring SPD has a clear view shed is also important.

### **PROPOSED EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Angie reviewed the draft evaluation criteria. The criteria were divided into three sections: feasibility and construction factors; operations and maintenance factors; and social and land use factors.

#### ***Feasibility and construction factors***

The group discussed the idea of providing access formally versus informally via an established trail or open space. Given the small size of the site, a formal trail is the best alternative to ensure protection of the habitat improvements.

The group agreed that the final decision on site access should be reflective of City-wide goals, and suggested reviewing goals outlined in the City's Comprehensive Plan and the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan to include in the evaluation. While each option may have a different outcome, they should be evaluated based on the same set of City goals.

### ***Operations and maintenance***

The group adjusted the operations and maintenance criteria to ensure concerns were not outweighed or addressed more than once.

The group suggested that it is important to clearly define the design elements prior to evaluating each public access option in order to ensure a transparent process. The group generally agreed that the more open a public site is the higher the costs are for maintenance (garbage pickup, having to work around people visiting the site, etc.).

The group discussed how City liability and enforcement at the site differs based on property ownership. Parks operates under a recreational statute – as long as Parks does not charge admission and there are no hidden risks at the site, Parks cannot be held liable. Additionally, Parks has exclusion ordinances that provide enforcement abilities. SPU, however, does not operate under this same statute and the recreational land use codes do not apply. Under SPU ownership, the property cannot be monitored like a park regardless of the property design. This poses challenges and risks for both SPU and SPD. In order to accurately evaluate each option and maintain the site, the group agreed to designate assumed ownership as part of the evaluation.

Regardless of ownership, the group agreed that signage at the entrance to the park will be an important liability component. Signage should be multi-lingual and possibly include pictures and/or physical barriers for those that cannot read.

### ***Social and land use factors***

Julie explained that social and land use factors SPU and Parks are considering. It will be particularly challenging to accommodate changes to access at the private drive. The driveway is narrow and difficult to maneuver. SPU plans to work with residents on the private drive when considering redesigning their access.

David Graves, Parks, noted that research shows property values increase when public parks and spaces are created in a neighborhood. This research and associated statistics can help inform the evaluation process.

The group agreed that while connecting existing trails to Lake Washington is important, an emotional connection to the space is also an important social factor to consider.

### ***Potential weighting of evaluation criteria***

The group discussed whether to weight criteria as part of the analysis. It was agreed that all three factors should be weighted equally and if needed, this decision would be reassessed at the following workshop.

## **QUESTIONS**

Q: Will the section of the creek that runs through Lakeridge Playfield be daylight or run through a culvert? Does Parks have concerns with the creek running through the park?

A: [SPU] The channel that runs through the park will be daylight and run under Rainier Ave S through a culvert. Parks, in theory, accepts this plan, however SPU may have to restructure the park. We are not that far in the design process yet.

[Parks] The field is used mainly for youth baseball or T-ball so Parks does not have any major concerns about the daylight creek. We want to daylight the creek as much as possible and there are tweaks we can make to the field to accommodate this. Daylighting the creek would only affect maintenance vehicle access and parking but this can be accommodated.

Q: Is there angled street parking at Lakeridge Playfield?

A: [SPU] Yes.

Q: Are you considering changing the driveway access to the private drive?

A: [SPU] We looked at ways to change it but are limited by space and grade changes. The driveway is a private drive and we have mutual access easements that cover this piece of the property. There are some improvements we can make in terms of how it operates, but changing the location of the driveway or how people access their homes is not an option.

Q: Are there traffic lights or a shoulder along this section of Rainier Ave S? Does Metro have stops nearby?

A: [SPU] There is a crosswalk but no traffic signals. There is also a center turn lane and a shoulder, but there are visibility issues when people park there. Yes, Metro has stops on the north and south side of Rainier Ave S.

Q: Are there community groups or neighborhood groups that should be engaged in this project and the public access analysis process?

A: [DON] Yes. The Rainer Beach Community Club (RBCC) and the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Association (RBNA). The RBNA does not meet often but actively emails; Yolanda Gill Masundiré is a key contact. Rainer Beach Moving Forward is another group to connect with. The South Lake Washington Improvement Club also focuses on safety and cleanup issues around South Lake Washington and has a robust listserv.

[SPD] There are a number of nearby block watch participants that we can engage as well.

Q: How much money is WSDOT contributing to the improvements?

A: [SPU] Approximately one to two million. They will be paying for the piece of property from Rainier Ave S down to Lake Washington. This does not include the culvert replacement.

Q: Have there been discussions about stewardship opportunities and/or partnerships with non-profits?

A: [SPU] We have been working directly with Friends of Deadhorse Canyon. They do a great job holding work parties in the canyon south of the property. They are excited about the project and are interested in stewardship opportunities at the site.

Q: What public access option does Friends of Deadhorse Canyon prefer?

A: *[SPU] We have not put these specific options in front of them.*

Q: What is SPU's preference for public access if the property is not sold to Parks?

A: *[SPU] SPU prefers to discourage public access and volunteerism on SPU-owned properties since we do not have a mechanism for managing those and there is a potential for damage to the habitat restoration. There have been discussions between Parks, the Mayor's Office and SPU and the preference is for the property to be transferred over to Parks ownership after construction is complete. However, how the site ends up will influence who ultimately owns and manages it.*

Q: Are some of the concerns that have been raised by nearby neighbors occurring regularly in this area?

A: *[SPD] While there have been a couple instances of property damage and crime in the area, many of the concerns that have been raised are potential issues that may happen in the future. The site would not likely be attractive for nuisance activities since there is no parking or public amenities, such as bathrooms, trash cans, etc.*

Q: Are there concerns about illegal dumping at the site?

A: *[SPU] There is the potential for littering, particularly if the site is open; however, given the limited vehicle access and high visibility this is not a convenient location for dumping. Different options will require different maintenance needs so we are taking that into consideration during the analysis.*

Q: Will the landscape design be the same for all options?

A: *[SPU] Likely not. We will need to balance habitat needs with public safety needs. The types of vegetation (e.g. lower growing plants, limbed trees, etc.) will be dependent on what kind of public access is available at the site. We will need to work with SPD to design the project landscape.*

Q: Are there concerns about trees growing too tall and blocking views in the future?

A: *[Parks] There are no homes directly behind the site and only a few located up-slope.*

Q: Will dogs be allowed at the site?

A: *[SPU] Since the property will serve as a natural area and the main priority for this project is habitat restoration, dogs at least will need to be on a leash. We could restrict dogs from the site as well. Nothing has been decided on that yet.*

*[Parks] Dogs are not allowed on fields or public beaches. If dogs are allowed they must be on leash. All parks are signed with rules about dogs.*

Q: Will garbage cans or public furniture be included in the design?

*A: [SPU] Currently garbage cans and public furniture are not included in the design. The intent is for the space to serve as a natural area. If there is an issue with littering in the future, we may consider installing a trash can at the entrance to the site.*

Q: Will there be an educational component to the site?

*A: [SPU] Due to limited resources associated with development and upkeep of educational materials there is not currently an educational element planned for this project.*

Q: From a safety perspective, do any of the options increase issues with vehicles entering/exiting the site or access for emergency vehicles?

*A: [SPU] If the site is open to the public we likely will have more cars trying to access the site than if it is fenced off. We do anticipate some parking issues if the site is open.*

*[Parks] On the other hand, even if the site is fenced off, drivers likely will not see the fence until they pull onto the private drive because the private drive is above the site itself. Regardless of what public access option is chosen the traffic impacts will likely be the same.*

Q: Will a "Private Access" sign be installed at the entrance from Rainier Ave S?

*A: [SPU] That is something we will consider and work with the nearby residents to decide.*

Q: If the site is open to the public, how much advertising will you do to the community?

*A: [SPU] SDOT is currently revamping their street ends program so that might be a resource look at. However, knowledge about the space will mostly be spread by nearby residents and Friends of Deadhorse Canyon.*

*[Parks] The site will not be a major destination like Seward Park. It will mainly serve as a community amenity. If the nearby neighbors do not use it no one will.*

Q: Do people set up encampments in public spaces like lower Taylor Creek?

*A: [SPD] Sometimes encampments happen in public spaces like this, such as at Salmon Bay Natural Area and likely up in Deadhorse Canyon. There are some associated crimes committed by urban campers outside of the encampments in surrounding neighborhoods.*

*[Parks] Because the Taylor Creek site is small and visible to neighbors, the property does not lend itself to urban camping. Encampments are typically set up where there is not a lot of traffic.*

Q: What type of fencing will be used? Will you be able to see through it?

*A: [SPU] At this site fencing will likely be chain link that people will be able to view through. Neighbors will have an opportunity to weigh in on the type of fence used during the design phase.*

Q: Is there a different designation between a park space and a natural area?

*A: [Parks] Natural areas are held but not actively managed for public access. None of our current shoreline parks are fenced. There are some cases of illegal dumping or nuisance activities but generally there are very few problems.*

Q: Is there interest from the University of Washington to do any monitoring or studies at the site?

*A: [SPU] WSDOT will need to do monitoring at the site.*

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Review Rainer Beach Neighborhood Plan, Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Master Plan to identify related goals.
- Parks to provide a current public access map for Seattle shorelines.
- SPD to provide information about how they police public open spaces and what they are doing to keep crime down at these sites.

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

- Julie Crittenden, SPU, PM
- Tim Croll, SPU
- Rick Johnson, SPU
- Deb Heiden, SPU
- Steve Hamai, SPU
- Emiko Takahashi, SPU
- Maythia Airhart, SPU
- David Graves, Parks
- Mark Solomon, SPD
- Yun Pitre, DON
- Tarelle Osborn, Osborn Consulting
- Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues
- Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues

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## MEETING AGENDA

LOWER TAYLOR CREEK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT  
PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS ANALYSIS – INTERNAL WORKSHOP #2  
APRIL 22, 2013 9AM-11AM  
SMT 5975

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### WORKSHOP #2 PARTICIPANTS

- Julie Crittenden, SPU, PM
- Tim Croll, SPU
- Susan Stoltzfus, SPU
- Rick Johnson, SPU
- Gary Lockwood, SPU
- Deb Heiden, SPU
- Emiko Takahashi, SPU
- Maythia Airhart, SPU
- David Graves, Parks
- Carsten Croff, SCL
- Mark Solomon, SPD
- Alison Van Gorp, Mayor's Office
- Greg Izzo, SDOT
- Art Brochet, SDOT
- Yun Pitre, DON
- Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues
- Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues
- Tarelle Osborn, Osborn Consult.

### WORKSHOP #2 AGENDA

Facilitator – Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues

TIME	TOPIC	LEAD
10 min	<b>Arrive and fill in master evaluation matrix poster with ratings</b>	<b>Angie</b>
10 min	<b>Welcome introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Overview of workshop purpose</i></li></ul>	<b>Angie</b>
15 min	<b>Review of the project, public access options and evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Julie</b>
5 min	<b>Overview of March survey</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Community feedback collected on draft options and criteria</i></li></ul>	<b>Chelsey</b>
70 min	<b>Evaluating the public access options</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <i>Discuss group results and rationale for rating</i></li><li>▪ <i>Discuss areas of disagreement</i></li><li>▪ <i>Come to a consensus</i></li></ul>	<b>Angie</b>
10 min	<b>Wrap up and next steps</b>	<b>Angie</b>

**Option evaluation matrix directions:**

1. Review the five public access options you are being asked to evaluate.
2. Six criteria were developed at our first IDT workshop, which are listed below along with considerations to think about for rating each criterion. Please evaluate how each option affects the set of criteria using ratings of: very positively (**++**), positively (**+**), negatively (**-**), very negatively (**--**), neutrally/doesn't affect the consideration (**0**), unknown (**?**). You can think about it like "How does providing this type of **[ACCESS OPTION]** at the site affect **[CONSIDERATIONS]** in a **[[++, +, -, --, 0, ?]** way?" For example, "How does providing No Access at the site affect access to the lake shoreline?"
3. Rate all five access options in each of the six criteria categories (blue shading). Use the open space above each blue row to write your comments. A fictitious example is provided for guidance.
4. If you have any summary thoughts per option, please capture that in the final row of the matrix.

			ACCESS OPTIONS SCORING				
CRITERIA	QUESTION	CONSIDERATIONS	No Access	View Point	Scheduled Access	Limited Access	Open Access
1. Project Goals	How does each option affect our ability to meet the goals of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide fish passage into stream and upstream of Rainier Ave S</li> <li>Provide high quality habitat for fish and wildlife in the stream and along the shoreline</li> <li>Reduce negative impacts of sediment deposition and flooding (as possible)</li> <li>Feasibility and cost to design/construct/permit the project</li> </ul>					
		<b>Project Goals RATING:</b>					
2. City Operations and Maintenance	How does each option affect the City's ability to maintain and operate the site, the new culvert, and upstream areas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff time and costs for site maintenance, including care of plants, clearing culvert debris, removing trash and illegally dumped items, and repairs to paths, fences, and other structures.</li> <li>Staff time and cost to provide access</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance crew safety</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policing the site effectively</li> </ul>					
<b>O&amp;M RATING:</b>							
3. City Safety and Liability	How does each option affect the City's Legal Liabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City liability for injuries at the site</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enforcing rules and regulations at the site</li> </ul>					
<b>Safety &amp; Liability RATING:</b>							
4. Community Amenities	How does each option interface with city-wide objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to the lake shoreline</li> <li>Connectivity between public open spaces</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social equity of city services</li> </ul>					
<b>Community Amenity RATING:</b>							

			ACCESS OPTIONS SCORING				
CRITERIA	QUESTION	CONSIDERATIONS	No Access	View Point	Scheduled Access	Limited Access	Open Access
<b>5. Potential Neighborhood Impacts</b>	<i>How does each option affect the surrounding neighbors?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential for property damage/theft (vandalism, graffiti, fireworks, etc.)</li> <li>Potential for person-to-person crime and personal injury</li> <li>Potential for nuisance behavior (e.g. loud music, urban camping, drinking, littering, illegal dumping, etc.)</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic hazards to people walking or children playing on private drive</li> <li>Vehicular accessibility to homes on private drive</li> <li>Emergency vehicle access to homes on private drive</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighborhood character</li> <li>Neighborhood privacy</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs incurred by adjacent property owners related to wear and tear at the site</li> <li>Property values</li> </ul>					
<b>Neighborhood Impacts RATING:</b>							
<b>6. Mobility</b>	<i>How does each option affect mobility on Rainier Ave S?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pedestrians crossing Rainier Ave S</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bicycles traveling on Rainier Ave S</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic congestion on Rainier Ave S, Cornell Ave S, 68<sup>th</sup> Ave S, and at entrance to private drive</li> </ul>					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking</li> </ul>					
<b>Area Mobility RATING:</b>							
<b>Option Summary: Pros/Cons:</b>							

**LOWER TAYLOR CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT – PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS ANALYSIS**  
**WORKSHOP #2 – FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**  
**APRIL 22, 2013**

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**PRIOR TO THE WORKSHOP**

Prior to the workshop, participants were asked to evaluate how each option affects the six evaluation criteria. Options were evaluated based on how they affect each of the criteria: very positively (**++**), positively (**+**), negatively (**-**), very negatively (**--**), neutrally (**0**), or unknown (**?**). As participants arrived, they were asked to transfer their completed option evaluation matrix to a master matrix using colored dots to visually show where there were differences of opinion.

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting. She explained that the purpose of the workshop was to discuss each individual's justifications of their completed option rating matrix, to come to consensus about how each option is impacted by the various considerations, and to develop solid rationale for the final rating.

**REVIEW OF PROJECT, OPTIONS AND CRITERIA**

Julie Crittenden, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Project Manager, provided a brief review of the Lower Taylor Creek Restoration Project and public involvement efforts to date. Most recently, a project mailer was delivered to over 1,300 nearby neighbors, businesses and stakeholder groups via mail, email and in-person at Rainier Beach Community Club and West Hill Community Association briefings. Attached to the mailer was a survey asking the public to review and provide feedback on the proposed public access options and evaluation criteria, as well as other thoughts they may have regarding the project. Ninety-two surveys were returned.

**OVERVIEW OF MARCH SURVEY**

Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues, provided an overview of the survey results:

- 92 people participated in the survey (56 via returned mail, 36 via SurveyMonkey).
- *Public access options:* Approximately 73% of participants agreed with SPU's proposed access options and did not feel additional options should be considered.
- *Evaluation criteria:* Approximately 59% of participants thought SPU should consider additional evaluation criteria.
- Additional criteria suggested that is not already being considered:
  - Educational potential for the site
  - Rights and interests of the taxpayers
  - Preservation of native cultural resources that might be present at the site
  - Impact and benefit comparison to similar street ends projects
- *Options preference:* Many participants explicitly expressed their thoughts on a preferred access option:
  - Open Access – approximately 26%
  - Scheduled/Limited Access – approximately 7%
  - No Access – approximately 25%

The group reviewed the community's feedback and incorporated criteria suggestions. Educational potential was added as a consideration in the "Community Amenities" criterion. Taxpayer costs were accounted for in the "Project Goals" criterion for construction costs and in the "City Operations and

Maintenance” criterion for site operation staff time. During project design and environmental permitting process, SPU and Parks will assess the cultural resource potential of the site and research waterfront street end sites for lessons that can be applied to this project.

### **EVALUATING THE PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS**

The group discussed the master evaluation matrix and the benefits and challenges associated with each option. In general, the group agreed that regardless of which option is chosen at the end of this process, aesthetics and habitat quality will be improved at the site, relative to current conditions. Key points and themes from the discussion are summarized below.

#### *Project goals*

- If public access is restricted, SPU has more space available to design habitat improvements.
- A closed site would include more vegetation, resulting in a cooler landscape more beneficial to the fish; an open landscape would provide lower quality habitat.
- If the site is fenced, sight lines do not need to be maintained.
- Supervision of visitors is a key component to how quickly the site may be degraded (e.g., dogs, pedestrians meandering off the path, etc.).
- At some Parks properties, salmon and people interact successfully and respectfully. At Carkeek Park the salmon come back every year. The City can provide a community amenity and education opportunities with little damage to the site.

#### *City operations and maintenance*

- Closed Access would limit the frequency with which City-staff need to come out the site for maintenance. However, little or no access to a site does not eliminate daily maintenance costs. There are costs associated with episodic-type maintenance (e.g., fixing fences, addressing community calls, etc.); these costs can be challenging to budget.
- Maintenance cost of a closed site is reduced because the introduction of invasive species is limited, there is no cost associated with opening and closing a fence, etc. However, maintenance is not free.
- May be an opportunity to include site access via a kayak or boat to engage in salmon observation, regardless of the final public access option chosen.
- The potential for stewards increases as public access increases; when more people care for the site, the less destructive people are likely to be.
- SPU has examples of stewards obtaining keys to sites to assist with maintenance and having eyes on the site; however, sometimes steward’s maintenance objectives do not align with the City’s.

#### *City safety and liability*

- The more people that have access to the site the more opportunity there is for illicit activity; as the number of people increase enforcement gets more difficult.
- Example of open access site that isn’t working well: Meadowbrook Park
  - It is a much bigger site but people both enjoy and destroy the space (illegal dumping, “stewards” redirecting the creek, drug use, graffiti, trampling vegetation, etc.); the cost and resources for SPU to maintain the site is significant.
- Example of closed access site that isn’t working well: Salmon Bay Natural Area

- When the site was open, there was a number of instances of urban camping and littering. A fence was installed (although it is relatively easy to get around); however, illegal activity continues to occur.
- Limited Access could result in more calls and complaints (e.g., someone forgot to close the fence, the gate is locked and someone is inside the site, etc.).
- The culvert under Rainier Avenue S could potentially create hiding spots.
- There is the potential for people to forget the open space is there if there aren't any fences to remind them.
- Designing the site using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles may help mitigate or avoid potential problems.

#### *Community amenities*

- Closed Access does not provide any community benefit and is the least desirable option in terms of cultivating connections with people and nature and social equity.
- Viewpoint may be the most expensive option to construct and provides little community benefit – no access to the lake, little education opportunity and limited physical or emotional connection to the space.
- Scheduled Access would allow SPU/Parks to have control over who uses the site and how they use it, while still providing some social benefits and equity.
- If the site is accessible to the public via Scheduled or Limited access, the amount of community benefit and inclusiveness will be dependent on when (days and times) and to whom (school groups, environmental groups, etc.) the site may be accessed. Social equity and inclusiveness will vary based on the type of management approach SPU/Parks chooses.
- Calling to schedule a visit to the site requires more effort from the public, as well as additional staff resources from the City.
- Open Access has the potential to degrade the site.
- If the site is closed, the people who are going to be the stewards will more likely be the nearby neighbors. If the site is open it may become a community amenity and draw from larger group of people, and potentially increase the number of stewards as a result.

#### *Potential neighborhood impacts*

- CPTED principles will be used during the design to limit graffiti, illegal dumping, people climbing over the fence, etc.
- The project will improve the aesthetics of the neighborhood.
- Designing the fence for the southern edge of the property will be difficult; the fence might not be aesthetically pleasing.
- Depending on the level of public access, the project may decrease neighborhood privacy.
- The risk of undesirable activities is present with all five options.
- The more people at the site, the more opportunity there is for bad behavior. However, more people leads to more eyes on the site to help discourage illicit activities.
- Viewpoint may encourage more illegal activity than the other options; visitors will be able to see into the site but they cannot get in. This may lead to meandering around the private drive and the neighborhood in an attempt to access the site.
- According to Parks, property values tend to go up when community amenities are built nearby.
- Educational opportunities may increase as public access increases because anyone can access the site at any time.

- Because the Taylor Creek site lacks features that make it a regional draw (limited size; no on-site parking; no bathrooms, picnic table, docks or trail systems), most people using the site will be nearby neighbors or users of Lakeridge Park.
- Because the site is situated between large waterfront homes, it may not draw a diverse population to the area. It may be in the City's best interest to spend more money on a community amenity project elsewhere in Rainier Beach that will benefit a larger group of people.
- Further research and discussion with SPD is needed for this criterion.

#### *Mobility*

- Parking will not be provided at the site; users will need to park across the street at Lakeridge Park.
- Based on early design, it is likely the project will have to rebuild the private drive entrance from Rainier Ave S, unless tunneling is used to construct the culvert.
- It is highly likely that any option will require a look at how to improve mobility in the area (into/out of private drive, pedestrians crossing Rainier Ave S, etc). However, the No Access option may not need such improvements.
- The more public access available at the site the more pedestrian/vehicle interactions there will be, with a greater safety risk.

#### **DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS**

Workshop participants suggested the following design elements be considered:

- ADA accessibility for all options providing public access.
- Consider water access viewing area to observe salmon from a boat or kayak.
- Traffic and pedestrian safety improvements on Rainier Avenue S.
- Police turnaround adjacent to the site to facilitate enforcement.
- Open fencing to discourage graffiti and illegal activities.
- Clear signage at the entrance explaining how people can/cannot use the site and why.
- Educate users about the habitat improvements and salmon lifecycle.
- Use Pipers Creek Natural Area for design inspiration; incorporate designated areas where people can look at the stream to direct foot traffic to specific points and limit habitat damage.

#### **QUESTION AND ANSWER**

Q: How were the community briefings? Were people supportive of the project and public access?

A: *[SPU] In general community groups have been supportive of the project and the opportunity for a potential waterfront space. Many neighbors who use Deadhorse Canyon have frequently expressed the desire to "connect" the two open spaces.*

Q: Will you have to close Rainier Ave S to replace the culvert?

A: *[SPU] We will likely have to do some type of closure; potentially closing half of the roadway at a time and using metal plates. The construction methods for culvert replacement are still to be determined.*

Q: Will there be a space at the site for maintenance vehicles?

A: *[SPU] Yes.*

Q: Can SPU start with Open Access and then reduce the amount of access as needed?

A: [SPU] This is something we may consider, not as an additional option but as a potential adjustment or re-evaluation after the site has been in operation for a specific period of time. However, how the public uses the site will influence how the site is designed, so changing the level of public access after the project is complete would be a challenge.

Q: If Scheduled Access is chosen and someone wants to visit the site at a specific time, would SPU be required to open the site?

A: [SPU] Not necessarily. It will depend on staff availability. This will also depend on who SPU decides gets access to the site for the Scheduled Access option.

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- Incorporate response statements into the March survey summary to address participants' questions and key themes.
- Meet with SPD to discuss how public open spaces are policed, how CPTED is implemented at other sites, and what they are doing to keep crime down at these sites.
- Meet with Parks to better understand how similar parks and natural areas affect nearby neighbors (e.g., property values, privacy, character, etc.).
- Parks to provide a current public access map for Seattle shorelines.
- Schedule Analysis Workshop #3 in late June or early July.

#### **PARTICIPANTS**

- Julie Crittenden, SPU, PM
- Tim Croll, SPU
- Rick Johnson, SPU
- Deb Heiden, SPU
- Emiko Takahashi, SPU
- Maythia Airhart, SPU
- David Graves, Parks
- Yun Pitre, DON
- Art Brochet, SDOT
- Tarelle Osborn, Osborn Consulting
- Angie Thomson, EnviroIssues
- Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues

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## MEETING AGENDA

### LOWER TAYLOR CREEK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS ANALYSIS – INTERNAL WORKSHOP #3 JULY 8, 2013 2:30 PM-4:30 PM; SMT 4439

#### WORKSHOP #3 PARTICIPANTS

- |                             |                        |                                   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ▪ Julie Crittenden, SPU, PM | ▪ Deb Heiden, SPU      | ▪ Alison Van Gorp, Mayor’s Office |
| ▪ Tim Croll, SPU            | ▪ Emiko Takahashi, SPU | ▪ Art Brochet, SDOT               |
| ▪ Susan Stoltzfus, SPU      | ▪ Maythia Airhart, SPU | ▪ Yun Pitre, DON                  |
| ▪ Rick Johnson, SPU         | ▪ David Graves, Parks  | ▪ Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues     |
| ▪ Gary Lockwood, SPU        | ▪ Mark Solomon, SPD    | ▪ Tarelle Osborn, Osborn Consult. |

#### WORKSHOP #3 AGENDA

Facilitator – Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues

TIME	TOPIC	LEAD
5 min	<b>Welcome and introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Overview of workshop purpose</i></li> </ul>	<b>Chelsey</b>
5 min	<b>Overview of analysis process and community input to date</b>	<b>Julie</b>
30 min	<b>Overview of June survey results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Community feedback on the preliminary evaluation – summary of feedback attached to appointment</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Discussion: What major messages came from the meetings and survey? How could/should we refine the evaluation/report and process to address those major messages?</i></li> </ul>	<b>Chelsey</b>
15 min	<b>Are we ready to develop a recommendation?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Given the feedback, are we ready to make a recommendation? Is additional work needed prior to making a recommendation? Do we think additional information would change the recommendation vs. designing around it?</i></li> </ul>	<b>Chelsey</b>
30 min	<b>Develop a recommendation for public access</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Straw poll on recommendation</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Discuss areas of disagreement</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Consensus recommendation</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Contingencies for recommendation (e.g., Design Task Force, CPTED, start with open access and include a plan to monitor neighborhood and habitat impact and re-evaluate access, etc)</i></li> </ul>	<b>Chelsey</b>
20 min	<b>Completing the Public Access Options Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Report development and review</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Report release and public comment</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Briefing to Ray and Christopher</i></li> </ul>	<b>Julie</b>
15 min	<b>Wrap up and next steps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Finalizing report, Traffic and/or park use studies, etc</i></li> </ul>	<b>Chelsey</b>

**LOWER TAYLOR CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT – PUBLIC ACCESS OPTIONS ANALYSIS**  
**WORKSHOP #3 – FINAL MEETING SUMMARY**  
**JULY 8, 2013**

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**PRIOR TO THE WORKSHOP**

Prior to the workshop, the Interdepartmental Team (project team) held an open house meeting on June 13 and a neighborhood drop-in session on June 18 to present and discuss the preliminary evaluation of the public access options with the community. During the events, community members were provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft report and complete a comment form (survey) to submit their feedback on whether they agreed or disagreed with how the project team evaluated the five public access options, and to share their preferred access option(s).

A draft summary of the survey results was distributed and reviewed at the start of Workshop #3 before discussions began. A full summary of survey results and comments received is available online at [www.seattle.gov/util/TaylorCreek](http://www.seattle.gov/util/TaylorCreek).

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chelsey Funis, EnviroIssues, opened the meeting. She explained that the purpose of the workshop was to review and analyze public feedback received from the June preliminary evaluation survey and to develop a staff-level recommendation for public access at lower Taylor Creek.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OVERVIEW**

Julie Crittenden, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Project Manager, provided a brief review of the Lower Taylor Creek Restoration Project and public involvement efforts to-date. Since the Public Access Options Analysis process began in March, the community has had two formal opportunities to weigh in on how SPU and Parks should evaluate public access options at lower Taylor Creek and what type of public access they want to see once the project is complete.

Most recently during Community Input Opportunity #2 in June, a public open house and a neighborhood drop-in session were held for people to review and provide comments in-person on the preliminary evaluation of public access options and share their favorite option with the project team. In addition to the in-person opportunities, participants could submit their comments online between June 10 and June 28.

Chelsey provided an overview of the June survey results:

- 91 people participated in the survey (52 via returned mail, 39 via SurveyMonkey).
- Approximately 84% of participants agreed with the Interdepartmental Team’s preliminary evaluations overall.
- Public access options:
  - 10.5% preferred *No Access*
  - 4.7% preferred *Viewpoint*
  - 8.1% preferred *Scheduled Access*
  - 5.8% preferred *Limited access*
  - **69.8%** preferred ***Open Access***
  - 1.2% preferred none of the above
- Location of survey participants: the majority of participants (42.4%) live in the broader Rainier Beach/Skyway Community.

- Key themes:
  - Many participants felt stewardship and education opportunities associated with Open Access were underrepresented in the evaluation.
  - Participants were generally in disagreement about whether the amount of existing open space and access to Lake Washington in their neighborhood was sufficient.
  - The majority of those preferring Closed Access referenced public safety, operations and maintenance costs, protecting salmon habitat, and/or investing these funds into existing open spaces nearby as key priorities.
  - The majority of those preferring Open Access referenced community benefits, educational and stewardship opportunities, social equity, and/or potential cost savings related to volunteer maintenance as key priorities.
  - Several participants raised concerns about traffic and pedestrian safety getting to and from the site if the City decides to make it publicly accessible. Many agreed that further traffic assessment and coordination with Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) are needed to improve overall safety at this section of Rainier Ave S where it meets with 68th Ave S, Cornell Ave S and the private drive.

## **DEVELOPING A STAFF-LEVEL RECOMMENDATION FOR PUBLIC ACCESS**

### ***Group discussion***

The group further reviewed and discussed public feedback collected during Community Input Opportunity #2. Members of the Interdepartmental Team agreed that because they were knowledgeable of the overall project, they understood the implications associated with each public access option, and the nearby community had been successfully engaged throughout the decision-making process, a staff-level recommendation for public access could be made. Additionally, the group agreed that an appropriate level of effort had been made up to this point to address neighborhood concerns raised throughout the process, including potential increases in crime and nuisance behaviors. The team felt that there can be additional efforts to reduce and avoid potentially adverse impacts as part of the design phase.

Prior to developing the recommendation, each member of the Interdepartmental Team shared their preferred access option and an explanation for their preference, including the factors that most heavily influenced their decision. In total, one member preferred Closed Access, one preferred Viewpoint, three preferred Scheduled Access, and seven preferred Open Access. Key points made in favor of the four preferred public access options are summarized below.

### ***Closed Access***

- The amount of space for habitat improvements is already fairly limited due to the small size of the site. Adding a pedestrian pathway would further reduce the amount of space for salmon-related improvements.
- No Access would require less staff time and fewer costs for operating and maintaining the site.
- SPU is not currently set up to manage stewardship or educational partnerships at their properties.
- Dogs and/or people disturbing the site, specifically during spawning season, could have serious implications on the success of salmon returning to this area.
- Bringing both traffic and pedestrian conditions at the entrance to the private drive and across Rainier Ave S up to current standards to safely accommodate visitors may be prohibitively expensive.

### *Viewpoint*

- The primary purpose of the project is to improve and protect salmon habitat. This option provides habitat protection while still offering some type of community open space.

### *Scheduled Access*

- Design of the site could be primarily focused towards habitat improvements while still providing some community benefits.
- Scheduled Access could serve as a “mid-way” option, allowing for access to be increased or decreased over time if needed.
- Visitor groups, either educational or stewardship, could potentially be managed and/or coordinated by a designated organization (e.g. Friends of Deadhorse Canyon).

### *Open Access*

- Open Access received the greatest public support during the analysis process and was the preferred option for both the broader community and stakeholder groups due to potential community benefits.
- Open Access requires minimal cost increase for access design, moderate staff maintenance requirements, and provides the greatest opportunity to offset costs with stewardship.
- The site would provide shoreline access between Beer Sheva Park and Renton where little to no shoreline access currently exists.
- Open Access would provide the largest and most equitable community benefit overall due to shoreline access, connectivity to nearby open space/parks, and easiest access for education and stewardship groups.
- This option provides greater flexibility to adjust the level of access, as needed, should concerns about negative activities or users come to fruition. The site could be designed in a way that access could be restricted, either temporarily or permanently, if negative neighborhood impacts are observed.
- Other City of Seattle habitat restoration sites, such as Carkeek Park, have proven that humans and salmon can interact successfully. Potential habitat impacts could also be mitigated through design of the site.
- Open space and shoreline access are finite resources, particularly in this part of Seattle. Restricting access to publicly funded property is not consistent with Parks’ mission.

### ***Staff-level recommendation***

Due to the reasons listed above, the Interdepartmental Team came to a consensus decision to recommend some version of Open Access for the lower Taylor Creek site. However, the team’s recommendation is contingent upon the following elements:

- A commitment to continue engaging with nearby neighbors and the broader community during the design process to ensure community input is incorporated into the final design.
- A commitment to continue engaging SDOT regarding potential traffic and pedestrian revisions on Rainier Ave S, 68th Ave S, Cornell Ave S, and at the entrance to the private drive through completion of a traffic study.

- A commitment to further engage the Seattle Police Department to incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into the design of the site, as well as continued monitoring of the site for nuisance activities once the site is open to the public.
- Continue discussion with WSDOT regarding potential concerns with Open Access at the site and how it may affect their funding for SR 520 habitat impacts mitigation funding.
- Consider how the location and types of plants installed, and possibly low fences and other structures, to help protect the restored areas while still allowing people to interact with the stream. Seasonal closures, prohibiting dogs, and/or strict enforcement of leash laws may be necessary as well.

### QUESTION AND ANSWER

Q: Has ownership of the site been determined yet?

*A: Ownership is contingent upon the final access decision. If the site is open and available to the public in some way, it will likely be sold to Parks. If the site is closed to the public, SPU will continue to own and operate the site.*

Q: Many participants noted during Community Input Opportunity #2 that the report should better reflect the positive neighborhood impacts associated with public access.

*A: We can further identify and/or highlight the potential stewardship and educational opportunities in the final report. We will also look into existing street ends nearby and include our findings.*

Q: Is co-management of the site between SPU or Parks and a neighborhood organization like Friends of Deadhorse Canyon realistic?

*A: Potentially. An example of this is Park's arrangement with the Audubon Society; however, stewards are not typically required to lock a gate. From a maintenance perspective, encouraging and engaging community members and organizations to take on ownership of the site of the site is preferred; however, SPU is not set up to manage or coordinate this type of maintenance approach. Parks is better suited to operate this type of arrangement.*

Q: Will traffic revisions to the area look the same regardless of whether open or restricted access is chosen for the site?

*A: It is likely that the traffic and pedestrian revisions, specifically improvements made for ingress and egress at the private drive, will look very similar, regardless of which access option is selected.*

### NEXT STEPS

- Post the June survey summary and results to the project website.
- Continue to coordinate with Seattle Police Department to finalize the neighborhood impacts section of the report.
- Meet with SDOT to discuss next steps for conducting a traffic study in 2014.
- Incorporate the staff-level recommendation into the final report.

- Release the final report with staff-level recommendation via email for public comment in mid-August (Community Input Opportunity #3).
- Submit the final report with public comments in September to SPU Director and Parks Superintendent for the final public access decision.

**PARTICIPANTS**

- Julie Crittenden, SPU
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