



Seattle
Parks and Recreation

Memorandum

To: Park District Oversight Committee
From: Susan Golub
Date: January 23, 2018
Subject: Planning the Future of the Park District Oversight Committee

I. Introduction

2018 presents new and interesting challenges for Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) regarding integration of the new master planning process with our advisory boards, particularly coordinating the Board of Park Commissioners responsibilities and those of the Park District Oversight Committee. Integrated with development of a new master plan will be the development of the second 6-year Park District financial plan, a task also requiring coordination between advisory boards. The Oversight Committee’s retreat will begin the conversation about the committee’s work in the planning process.

II. Issues

A. 2018 Master Plan: What are the long-term community needs and interests for recreation programming, and how do those programming needs drive facility improvements? This is the key question underlying a new master planning process to be undertaken by SPR in 2018. The plan will consider *everything* we do, leading undoubtedly to a massive facility improvement list. This list will become the foundation for the department’s Capital Improvement Program and the Park District financial plans.

Here is a tentative timeline for the planning process:

Red dates firm; others tentative

January 2021	Second 6-year financial plan cycle begins
November 2020:	Park District Board (City Council) adopts second 6-year financial plan
March 2020:	SPR includes financial plan in budget memo to Mayor
November 2019:	Park District Oversight Committee (PDOC) recommendation
Sept. – Oct. 2019:	Second round of public outreach
June-August 2019:	Develop draft financial plan per public input
April-May 2019:	Public outreach on financial plan priorities
Jan. – March 2019:	Work with PDOC to refine financial plan
2018	New SPR programming and facilities plan developed

B. Committee Responsibilities: The interlocal agreement adopted by the City when the Park District was formed established four responsibilities for the Park District Oversight Committee:

1. Establish a Major Projects Challenge Funds application process and evaluation criteria, and make recommendations to the

Superintendent of Parks and Recreation ("Superintendent") on the annual allocation of the Major Projects Challenge Fund.

2. Reviewing an annual report prepared by SPR for the Seattle Park District and the City, including assessment of performance measures and expenditure of District funds including interest earnings, and reporting to the Superintendent and Park Board on implementation issues, concerns and needed adjustments in services or spending.
3. Holding public meetings and making recommendations to the Superintendent in connection with each 6-year update to the spending plan.
4. Provide to the Mayor, City Council, and Superintendent of Parks and Recreation an annual report on the progress of expenditures, a mid-term report half-way through each 6-year period, and a final report in advance of each 6-year update to the spending plan. Progress on construction of park development on the 14 land-banked sites in Initiative 4.4 will be among the issues addressed in the first mid-term report.

The issue to address at the retreat and in subsequent Committee conversations is how the master plan review fits with the interlocal agreement's defined responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Board of Park Commissioners.

C. Historical Perspective: A key difference between the Park District and previous parks and recreation levies is that the Park District initiatives encompass a much broader range of SPR projects/activities. Prior levies were primarily dedicated to capital projects, making the distinction between the responsibilities of the Park Board and the levy oversight committees simpler to distinguish.

The most recent master planning process, which culminated in the 2014 Parks Legacy Plan, was reviewed and informed by the Park Board. The Parks and Green Spaces Levy Oversight Committee met through 2015, finishing their review of the 2008 Levy spending, but were not involved with the Parks Legacy Plan. The recommendation to form a park district and the specifics of the initial 6-year financial plan came from a separate community advisory group, the Parks Legacy Citizens Advisory Committee.

Planning Context

Document	Year	Purpose/Authority
Parks Legacy Plan	2014	Established the need for additional funding for SPR; led to Park District formation
Community Center Strategic Plan	2016	Established programmatic and facility priorities for community centers
Recreation Demand Study	2016	Estimated future demand for recreation services
Seattle: 2035, the City's Comprehensive Plan	2016	Established land use and planning direction for the city until 2035

2017 Parks and Open Space Plan	2017	Required by State of Washington to be eligible to apply for State grant funds; must be updated every 6 years; established open space metrics
New Parks & Recreation Programming and Facilities Plan	2018	Will result in long-term facility improvement list, based on analysis of current and future programming interests/needs
Second Park District 6-year financial plan	2019	Second 6-year financial plan begins in 2021, but must be finalized by the end of 2019 to be included in the Mayor's 2021 budget (SPR submits to Mayor in March 2020)

III. Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities

Kathleen Conner, currently the SPR Planning Manager, will begin a special assignment this month to lead the master planning process and development of the second Park District 6-year financial plan. Susan Golub will be the co-lead for the planning work.

As we discuss with the Oversight Committee and the Park Board about volunteer and public involvement, we recognize that the Oversight Committee brings a unique perspective to the table, as 7 members represent Council Districts and 4 members represent City Commissions: we want to ensure the people you represent are heard throughout the process. In addition, there is the overlap with four Committee members also serving on the Park Board.

What are the challenges, the realities we face in coordinating plan review and community engagement with the Park Board?

- As noted, the integration of the Park District in most everything SPR does differentiates it from prior levies. However, Park District funding accounts for approximately 28% of the department's budget: in 2017 Park District funds amounted to 8% on the operating side and 48% on the capital side.
- Department-wide master planning is traditionally and appropriately the realm of the Park Board. However, this master plan will directly feed into the development of the second Park District 6-year financial plan, which is, per the interlocal agreement, the work of the Oversight Committee.
- Per the interlocal agreement, four Park Board members serve on the Oversight Committee. What are the opportunities and challenges brought about by this overlap in membership?
- How do we best serve the public and provide a clear avenue for public involvement?

We look forward to discussing these issues, and more! at the Committee retreat.