



Minutes | Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

100 Dexter Ave N/Kenneth R. Bounds Boardroom

Remote accessibility via Zoom

Thursday, April 23, 2026

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Attendance

Present: Stonecipher, Werner, Mays, Meng, Bakker, Zhang, Diamond, Flinn, Baum (co-chair), Chisholm Clare,

Absent:

SPR Staff and Presenters:

Welcome, Introductions & Land Acknowledgement

Baum calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and provides logistical instructions for in-person and remote attendees.

Commissioners and SPR staff introduce themselves.

Baum reads the land acknowledgement.

Baum introduces the consent agenda: tonight's meeting agenda. Baum asks for unanimous consent to adopt the agenda; without objection, the consent agenda is adopted.

Adopted: 4/23/26 BPRC Meeting Agenda

Public Comment

The BPRC heard public testimony on the following topics:

- Draft Outdoor Racquet Sport Strategy;
- SeaFair permitting;
- Park user behavior at Denny Blaine Park

[Interruptions from attendees in meeting room.]

Baum asks if SPR staff is willing to adjust the agenda to allow the racquet sports presentation to go first, since many public comment attendees are present for that topic. Staff agrees.

Outdoor Racquet Sports Strategy Briefing

Andy Sheffer, Deputy Superintendent – Planning and Capital Development Branch, introduces the presentation. Annie Hindenlang, Planning Manager, and Jonathan Garner, Sr. Planning & Development Specialist, deliver the briefing.

The purpose of this briefing is to introduce the Draft Strategy, outline current recommendations, and share outreach & engagement plans. Following public engagement, this topic will return as an agenda item for Board review and action.

The goal of the strategy is to increase play time for both racquet sports, streamline communication, enable open play, plan for expansion, and add single-sport hub locations. The strategy implementation is phased and can start as early as June 2026.

Some background on dual court use: dual striping is an effective initial approach to quickly add a significant number of pickleball courts to an existing system. Dual use also requires consideration of a number of competing pressures, including demand between sports, public and private school needs due to the Joint Use Agreement (JUA), demand between types of pickleball play, balancing two growing racquet sports, development of young athletes, reducing noise disturbances, organizations serving front-line communities, and revenue generation.

The proposed strategy would end dual use in favor of designated single-sport sites, affecting 18 locations. Dual use would remain at SPS-owned courts. The guiding principle behind this change is to maximize the use of existing facilities to provide access to both racquet sports for both reserved and drop-in play, while taking into consideration:

- school use
- equity priority areas
- historic use
- site conditions
- needs of two sports
- geographic distribution

Dual use will be phased out at the selected locations in two phases. Phase I will include dedicated use indication signage, the misaligned-use nets will be removed and stored, and reservations will be clarified in ActiveNet (our reservation software). Phase II will occur as courts are due for resurfacing; we will remove obsolete striping and, if possible, increase court density on the existing slab footprint.

The proposed plan will result in a decrease of total pickleball courts citywide from 92 total (7 single-use dedicated) to 67 total (67 single-use dedicated), projected to increase to 90 total (90 single-use dedicated) by 2030. [Hindenlang pauses for an interruption from attendees in the meeting room.] The total number of tennis courts citywide will decrease from 133 total (105 single-use dedicated) to 114 total (114 single-use dedicated), with no projected increase by 2030. [Hindenlang pauses due to interruption from attendees.]

The strategy also focused on enabling and easing open pickleball play, a style of play where individuals arrive at a court location and rotate into the queue of play with individuals already playing on the court. This is distinct from “closed play,” where players can reserve courts for a specified length of time. [Baum pauses to remind attendees that this meeting is not a forum for open questions to staff.] Hindenlang and Garner note the proposed locations where one or the other play will be preferred.

The Racquet Sports Plan is still a draft and there are additional opportunities for engagement:

- May 4, 6:30 PM – Bitter Lake CC
- May 7, 7:00 PM – Garfield CC
- May 9, 10:30 AM – Van Asselt CC

There is also an online survey, available until 3:00 PM on May 11. Find all opportunities for engagement on the engagement page: <https://engageseattleparks.com/outdoor-racquet-sports-strategy/rs-engage>

Werner asks for clarification on the criteria that the proposed plan is designed to optimize for. Hindenlang clarifies that school use, neighborhood equity, court conditions, and court use are all major considerations. Werner also asks how SPR is collecting data to assess playing time and court use. [Delay due to interruption from attendees.] Hindenlang clarifies that reservation data and historic help to inform the department.

Lerer asks about communication plans on the ground regarding reservations during the phased transition period of implementation, and how to avoid confusion. Hindenlang notes that this is an important element of ongoing community engagement, that SPR knows where the reservations currently are, and is factoring these transitions into the plan implementation.

Chisholm Clare asks for more information about single-sport hubs. Hindenlang explains the capital planning and recreation use goals of hub strategy as it pertains to both this current plan, and for the department's long-term plan generally.

Flinn notes that the planned public comment sessions at the upcoming public engagement meetings seem short relative to the amount of feedback received and encourages the department to add additional time to hear feedback. Flinn also notes that because pickleball is often open play (not reservation based), there might be some undercount in the court utilization data concerning pickleball play and encourages SPR to incorporate some additional data collection to capture this. Hindenlang describes the efforts and methods that SPR uses for this data collection.

[Interruption from attendees.]

Baum thanks attendees and SPR staff.

Partnership Spotlight: Sail Sand Point

Seth Muir, Executive Director of Sail Sand Point, delivers the presentation.

Sail Sand Point is a community sailing program located in Magnuson Park in NE Seattle; SSP's mission is to bring the joy and life-enhancing benefits of sailing and small boats to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. SSP serves over 15,000 people each year including park residents and youth from partner organizations.

Muir discusses highlights from 2025 and so far in 2026, noting progress made on SSP's ongoing capital improvement campaign. In 2025, SSP served over 15,000 people through programs, provided over \$50,000 in scholarships, and provided over \$300,000 in public benefit. We also completed Phase 1: renovation/remediation of abandoned weld shop and reopened it as "Bill's Shop," investing over \$700k in Building 11 at Magnuson.

So far in 2026, we have completed Phase 2: renovation and improvements to our existing offices, new classrooms and other spaces, investing over \$800k in existing spaces in Building 11. We have now begun phase 3: Feasibility, Pre-design and Pre-permitting for Building 31 Boathouse and floating docks.

- Anticipating a \$10-12M total budget for 3 Phases
- \$6.6M raised so far from State of WA, King County, Norcliffe Foundation, Murdock Trust, Brettler Foundation, \$1.5M spent on Phase 1 & 2
- \$5.1M Pledged for Phase 3 (King County Parks Levy and private donor)
- \$7-9M still needed to complete Phase 3

Muir presents the history of Phase 1/Phase 2 renovations to Building 11, showing before and after renovation images and highlighting the progression of renovation plans for Building 31 as they have evolved over time. Muir notes the degradation of the pilings supporting the building and emphasizes improvements to safety and usability in the current renovation plans and shows Board members fly-through visualizations of the proposed Building 31 renovation plans.

Muir pauses for questions from the Board.

Werner asks Muir to clarify who owns the actual pier; Muir clarifies that the City owns the pier.

Stonecipher remarks on the grant leverage Parks may have given its ownership. Muir agrees, and notes that SSP's goal is to keep costs affordable, especially given the general nature of yacht clubs. Grants help keep costs low.

Planning & Capital Development Update

Jessica Murphy, Planning & Capital Development Division Director, and Oliver Bazinet, Strategic Advisor, deliver the presentation.

Murphy advises the Board on recent updates regarding Gas Works Park.

Murphy provides a quick overview of capital project key performance indicators pursuant to Cycle 2 of the MPD, focusing especially on lines of business that SPR has designated "Closely Monitoring." This category includes:

- Facility Electrification/Decarbonization
- Dedicated Pickleball Court Development
- Pool Major Maintenance
- New Park Development Sites
- Special Community Center Projects

Murphy and Bazinet show project construction photographs of selected projects, including Soundview Playfield, Smith Cove, the Northwest Native Canoe Carving Center, and early project designs for Lake City CC and Queen Anne CC. Construction for QACC is scheduled to begin in early 2027; a development agreement for LCCC was signed this week and construction is expected to begin next year with a planned opening in 2029.

SPR recently brought design options to the public in quick succession for 3 play areas at Roanoke, E. Queen Anne Playfield, and Froula. These are being designed in-house. Before we begin developing construction documents, we create these concepts for community feedback and announce through press releases, blog posts, and our website. Folks that can't make the meetings can also engage online.

We've launched a new platform for engagement around our projects: [EngageSeattleParks.com](https://engage.seattleparks.com) This site hosts new project webpage and has integrated survey and participation features. You can go to the link and see what projects are "open" for engagement and see materials from past engagement.

If you have questions about which projects are part of the KPIs we went over earlier – there is a map for that. You can go and click on the individual project categories to see what has been completed this cycle. The map is updated as projects are completed so take a look now and check in a few months to see the numbers increase. The map is available at maps.seattle.gov/sprcycle2completions

Murphy pauses for questions from the Board.

Stonecipher asks for clarification regarding court sport restriping and resurfacing. Murphy and Bazinet clarify how PCD is considering these projects for its plans.

Chisholm Clare asks if Magnuson Park projects include any new restroom projects. Bazinet confirms.

Lerer asks if project completion numbers noted “revised” had been revised up or down. Bazinet clarifies that many estimates, such as accessibility barriers and turf replacements, have been revised up. Finnegan adds that full transparency is available in the annual report appendices.

Superintendent’s Report

Michele Finnegan, Interim SPR Superintendent, delivers the report.

Finnegan previews updates to the Superintendent’s Report to the BPRC. Pursuant to feedback from the Board and beginning today, this report will feature Department Updates, a “Superintendent Feedback Loop” to report back on issues raised by the BPRC in previous meetings, and Opportunities to Engage.

Department Updates

Project Updates

- South Park CC and Site Reopening – May 9
- Westlake Park Reopening – May 28
- Gas Works Hazard Abatement
 - Contractor mobilizing
- Lake Union Park Improvements Underway
 - Landscaping and lawn improvements, repairs to wood decking, refreshed gravel and benches

Operations Updates

- Summer of Safety
 - Summer Hours start May 1
 - Beach Fire Program Starts Memorial Day Weekend
- Outdoor Pools
 - Mounger and Colman Pre-Season begins May 9th

Trail closure between Foster Island and East Montlake Park at the Arboretum. Not unexpected but the Army Corp seemed to have raised lake levels a little earlier this year than typical. I do not know when levels will subside but also note that we will be starting construction on the Foster Island floating trail system soon. We are working to issue a notice to proceed (NTP) in the next week or two. Once a schedule is set, I can have the webpage and signage updated.

Seasonal Growth and Maintenance Priorities: District maintenance crews continue to focus on areas experiencing rapid growth, including turf and other plant materials. Crews are actively tackling physically demanding tasks such as hillside trimming and hedging. While some areas are intentionally left with longer grass to support habitat, high-visibility locations remain a top priority for regular maintenance.

Superintendent Feedback Loop

Volleyball League – Weather Related Impacts

SPR's Athletic and Event Scheduling Manager met with constituent to learn more. SPR will be revising our Standard Operating Procedure for scheduled volleyball tournaments, allowing this organizer discretion to cancel tournament and receive a refund based on weather (maximum of twice per calendar year). The organizer has up to 5 business days after the date of the rainout/cancellation to contact the Athletic Scheduling Office to initiate the refund.

Seattle Children's Play Garden

Colman Adaptive Playfield is an outside proposed project and is not in our Capital Plan. The Seattle Parks Foundation (SPF) brought this project forward for our consideration for RCO grants earlier this year. SPR is supportive of the project; however, we have other higher priority needs that are projected to compete more successfully for grant funds (Judkins Park renovation, Miller Inclusive Play Area, and Dr. Jose Rizal Play Area). We are committed to providing actionable feedback on the current proposal so SPF and their partners can continue to progress the proposal with outside funding and ready it for Parks ProView reviews. We are currently working on that feedback, and plan to present to SPF in our next regular coordination meeting with them next week.

Park Rangers

We've provided you with a copy of the January–April Citywide Park Ranger Data Report in your meeting materials.

BPRC Requests / Follow-Up

Future Briefings:

- AMWO/Find it Fix It
- Park Rangers
- Partner Spotlight: Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Update

Parkways Blog Sign-Up

- Working with Seattle IT to determine best ways to follow the blog.

Opportunities to Engage

Seattle Beautiful Game Series

The Beautiful Game Series represents SPR's integrated approach to supporting the 2026 FIFA World Cup across programming, operations, and community engagement. Some of the activities we'll be offering include neighborhood watch parties, youth soccer jamborees, over 60 recreation programs reimagined with soccer themes occurring at community centers, parks, and aquatic facilities and a variety of activations through the Beautiful Grant supporting community-led soccer, futsal, and cultural events. You can find all of this on our website for updates.

Bicycle Weekends

As most of you heard at the Retreat a few weeks ago, the Mayor announced the Bicycle Weekends schedule earlier this month which runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day. This year, a section of LWB extending from Mount Baker Beach to Seward Park will close for bike access only every weekend except during Seafair (8/1-8/2). Note: On holiday weekends, closures will be extended an additional day to include the holiday (Memorial Day, Fourth of July & Labor Day).

April Pools Day

In April, our Aquatics team provides an education-based series of events focused on pool safety that we've coined April Pools Day. It's a fun way to learn essential water safety skills, enjoy free swim time, and take part in games and activities, including opportunities to win life jackets & other prizes!

April Pools Day is a great way for individuals and families to build confidence around water while having fun together. Some examples of programming:

- Preventing open water drowning
- Lifejacket use and promotion
- Cold water awareness
- Basic water rescue skills for children

Event details and activities vary by location and more information on the dates and times can be found on our parkways blog.

Neighbor Day

On Saturday, May 2, 2026, neighbors across Seattle will take a little time to connect; say hi, check in, share a laugh, or do something kind. No perfection required. No big plans needed. Just people, showing up for each other. This year is extra special. Neighbor Day 2026 kicks off the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods' 35th Anniversary, which is a yearlong celebration of community, connection, and the power of neighbors working together. You can visit the Department of Neighborhood website to learn more.

This week, I want to highlight the outstanding work of our Seattle Parks and Recreation Carpentry Crew, whose dedication keeps our community spaces welcoming, functional, and safe for everyone. Recently, the SPR Carpentry Crew responded quickly to a broken fence at Camp Long after a fallen tree caused significant damage. The team removed the old, unsafe fencing and installed a brand-new replacement fencing in its place. The improvement is clear the moment you see it and more importantly, it eliminates a potential hazard for the kids and families who explore in the area.

Finnegan pauses for questions from the Board.

BPRC members express gratitude for the revised Superintendent's Report format.

Werner asks for clarification regarding SeaFair permitting and its relationship to SPR and Bicycle Weekends. Finnegan clarifies that SeaFair is permitted via a citywide Special Events Permit, which SPR is involved with but is facilitated by the Office of Economic Development (OED).

Flinn asks for general feedback update on Bicycle Weekends announcement. Finnegan notes some mixed feedback, including concern from some who would like more recreational driving time on Lake Washington Boulevard and others who would like to see similar programs on other scenic boulevards.

Old & New Business

Baum presents the results of BPRC subcommittee preference ranking, noting that every member will be able to serve on the subcommittee of their top preference. Werner asks if there was any resolution reached around the Park Naming committee when no work is active for that group; Baum clarifies that that can be revisited if the situation arises. Baum calls for a vote to approve the subcommittee allocation as presented.

Werner moves to approve the subcommittee allocation; Stonecipher seconds the motion. The vote is unanimous in favor.

Adopted: 2026-2027 Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners Subcommittees [see below]

Baum thanks members of the Board, SPR staff, and public for their advocacy. There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 8:03 PM.

Subcommittee Rosters 2026-2027

Park Naming	Performance Oversight	Park CommUNITY Fund	Policy Review
Chisholm Clare	Flinn	Haile-Leul	Bakker
Mays	Lerer	Meng	Baum
Zhang	Stonecipher	Nakamura	Diamond
			Werner