

## STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN PUBLIC MEETING PHASE 1

### Magnuson Community Center: December 5, 2007

Total Participants: 45 Public, 3 Parks and Recreation Staff

#### Major Themes

Much of the meeting focused on the need for better communication from Parks and Recreation to the public about the decisions it makes around facilities, programs and services. More opportunities for public input were requested as were more transparent Parks and Recreation processes. The future uses of the Magnuson hangars was also of concern to the public.

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

#### *Public Engagement*

- More comprehensive communication
- Better marketing
- Outreach to broader City
- More community involvement
- Publicize an annual project plan that summarizes funded projects
- Parks and Recreation needs to listen to public input for prioritization
- Come to consensus, make decisions and move on outcomes need to result from meetings
- Need summary of meeting outcomes and follow-up communication with stakeholders
- Need synopsis of issues to be addressed
- Community outreach and plans for major projects
- Get early honest public input
- Seek community buy-in
- Public meetings should have professional facilitation
- Better customer service
- Offer workshops and tutorials for how to use Parks resources (e.g. RFP process)
- More clarity and transparency with layperson, simple terms, communications

#### *Parks and Facilities*

- More swimming pools
- Create different strategies for different facilities, parks and assets
- Identify different levels in plan e.g. destination parks, pocket parks
- Determine needs
- Make arrangements for more flexible use of resources
- Create a process for additional facility uses including:
  - Better website interface, what users need and what Parks can provide
  - Better calendar
  - Electronic documentations for contracts, reservations, community input options at community centers

- Need hot water in restrooms in major parks
- Budget for upkeep of aging facilities and any planned expansion before expanding

### ***Partnerships***

- Keep private businesses out of parks

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

- Good diverse programs
- Parks are clean
- Hire good people
- Art
- Classes for everyone
- Good maintenance service, including mowing
- Creek restoration (Carkeek)
- Parks tries hard meeting various/competing needs
- Parks are clean/dog Parks are great
- Public input for this SBP
- Green Lake wonderful, Discovery is great too, same for Magnuson as a destination Park-waterfront etc.
- Use of hangers at Magnuson keep
- Diversity of classes
- Advisory councils function
- Community Centers
- Breadth of resources

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

### ***Finances***

- No comprehensive community vision on how to use Parks and Recreation budget
- The Skatepark Plan was organized by one group and the public at large was ignored
- Ending of Pro Parks Levy, there is no movement from Parks and Recreation or the City Council to move forward and maintain
- Inadequate budgeting for Parks and Recreation by council for past 20 years
- Parks and Recreation needs to advocate for more budget
- Parks and Recreation is viewed as ever-growing entity

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

- Climate change
- Work with Seattle Public Utilities on storm water collection
- Provide more neighborhood level services, like athletic fields and pools, to encourage less driving

### ***Changing City***

- Rapid city growth encroaching resources
- Loss of open space

- Increased density demands on land

### ***Public Engagement***

- The need for more transparency, Parks and Recreation serves the public
- Parks and Recreation needs to counteract the polarization of attitudes in the public by facilitating forums for discussion and facilitating a process to reach middle ground
- How the public is perceived within Parks and Recreation
- Encourage a culture within Parks and Recreation that serves public

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

- Losing “consumers” and users of Parks and Recreation to private service providers
- High user fees are pricing-out users
- Keep fees low and equitable fees
- Comprehensive and coordinated plan for how Parks should provide programs and services
- Influential groups can get results
- Stop reacting rather than planning
- Maintain a consistent, predictable, open, and transparent process
- Usage and availability should be prioritized before profits

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

- Only exclusive groups can afford to use facilities
- Maximize use of parks/facilities
- Convert sand fields to synthetic fields
- Ensure access for all
- Ensuring public use and availability
- Schools are encroaching on Parks and Recreation land
- Loss of open space

### ***Partnerships***

- Work with Seattle Public School District on use of land and spaces
- Privatization will be a challenge

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

### ***Partnerships***

- Make better arrangement with Seattle Public Schools, improve the joint use agreement
- Better public transportation between parks

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

- More accessibility for field scheduling
- Comprehensive and versatile fields for multiple sports use
- Linking bike and walking trails throughout city
- Scheduling of fields could be done better
- Close roads to some parks

### ***Public Engagement***

- Increase information base on website

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

- Create a leading role to go greener
- Better use of wetlands
- Pesticide free parks
- Build artificial turf athletic fields on asphalt (parking lots) and grass fields on green areas
- Habitat preservation
- Designing or lessening parking needs
- Leader in environmental sustainability
- Don't convert potential green space to dead space always go greener
- Be a model for the Country—don't fill wetlands

### ***Staff***

- Development of human resources and bring new resources in
- North end of Magnuson

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

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

- Creation of better outdoor swimming areas
- A more compelling waterfront
- Water related uses
- Diverse parks incorporating ball fields, kite areas, gardens, walking, and history, etc.
- A philosophy that recognizes why we have parks and maintains balance
- Vision of park where kids can explore and discover nature
- Well managed waterfront
- Parks and Recreation for the public - No privatization
- Protected waterfront—manage for that purpose
- Expansion of park acreage
- Take advantage of lake front parks for user friendly swimming experiences
- No artificial turf conversion for turf fields
- No private leases for building

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

- Lead in promoting healthy lifestyles - Nutrition, healthy snack options
- If private food vendors, emphasis on healthy food

### ***Public Engagement***

- Input from community groups

### ***Community Vision***

- Greater good for greatest number
- Let the best elements of Parks and Recreation shine and reflect the character of their neighborhoods and locations
- Seattle will be the greenest city, with livable, walkable communities

- Green linkages between all parks in City
- Parks and Recreation should do what they do well

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

- Open hangars