

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUPS AND PRCS BOARD

The following information summarizes the discussions with the PRCS Board and large focus group relative to key issues facing the City of Shoreline. Information has been compiled and reviewed by the PROS Project Team including Jill Krantz, GreenPlay, LLC; Bruce Powers, David Evans and Associates; Michael Davolio, Consultant; Wendy Barry, Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services; Rob Beem, Assistant Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

1. PARKS LEVEL OF SERVICE: Relative to current population – same, more, fewer

PRCS Board

- Take advantage of acquisition opportunities
 - Fircrest, etc.
 - Short term opportunities, once developed, gone
 - Very little extra land in Shoreline
- LOS not based on population
 - Consider geographic or usage deficiencies
 - Fill in geographic gaps
- Improve existing maintenance
- Indoor facilities are overtaxed (overtaxed description may be more of a perception) (not sure that this is actually true)
- Experiencing increasing participation in programs at parks – extend season and usage opportunities (i.e., synthetic turf, lights, etc.)
- As changes occur, tie in park system improvements with new development
- Needs:
 - Leisure pool
 - Arts facility
 - Beach access

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Fircrest is a significant opportunity
- Soccer field maintenance needs to be higher; kids getting hurt due to low maintenance; dust storms; reduction in maintenance occurred when City took over from County. Discussion clarified that fields also have gotten more play and are at the end of their projected life expectancy
- Fields deteriorated over time
- Youth soccer reports number of teams Hillwood – 160, Shoreline – 130:
- Enormous amount of park land for city our size
- Maintain what we have
- Look to schools for expansion of fields
- Yards and neighborhood space decreasing. Recalled having more small but usable spaces for practice and play in the past.
- Like Seattle “field house” (e.g. Meadowbrook, Bitter Lake) recreation center concept – gym, rooms off to side for recreation (end note from Rob, the facilities cited aren’t what I would call field houses, they are more like modern community centers.
- Don’t want to ignore cultural services – A group has been working on outdoor theater for 23 months

- Overall parks in much better shape since City formed.

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Don't have enough information to make that decision; need to tie it to cost
- We have adequate number of parks; good level of service
- Want more bike paths; easier access to parks without car
- More smaller/neighborhood parks with play equipment
- More amenities at parks – benches, places to site
- Nice looking treed area with good playground close

2. **PARKS LEVEL OF SERVICE:** Relative to current population – Evenly in all parts, new or better community-wide facilities, improving existing

PRCS Board

- Prioritize existing park facility based on citizen needs
 - Distribution – if limited or no opportunities, becomes a lower priority
 - Touch all 3 LOS options case by case
- Focus on existing park facilities
- Develop/improve to establish community-wide park(s) that attract citizens
- Take advantage of opportunities both for regional and neighborhood parks
- Improving existing parks is a high priority

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Parks we now have can use upgrades
- Improve condition of sports fields
- Expand use of Meridian Park fields for micro soccer; Cromwell abandoned due to water issues
- Outdoor theater will serve broad community
- Develop cultural center/theater for use by all ages
- Regional – Richmond Beach Saltwater Park (BSWP), Hamlin
- Walking to parks is important
- Water access is important and a significant draw
- North City – gorgeous place for arboretum
- Parks in east Shoreline all within 3 miles; can walk to them, but need sidewalks
- Can't walk through wooded parks; not safe
- Hamlin has parking problems
- Shoreline A&B outlived usefulness; perhaps different decisions about full irrigation

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Improve existing playgrounds
- Balance needs – even distribution not absolutely necessary
- Need community-wide benefit facilities
- Can do all approaches

- Spend dollars wisely
- Need another multi-use pool
- Environmentally sensitive upgrades
- Learning environmental opportunities
- Richmond Beach Saltwater Park bridge – beach not ADA accessible

3. PARKS AND FACILITIES ACCESSIBILITY

PRCS Board

- Cannot necessarily walk to parks
- Signage to parks (directions), signage at parks, signage within parks to various amenities
- Handicap and senior access is poor
- Lack sidewalks, buses, facilities to cross busy streets
- Topography barriers
- Puget Sound – improve access, bridges over railroad tracks, obtain private property
- General sense that parks are not easy to get to nor is it easy to get into them once you are there e.g. signage, limited parking

4. PARKS LEVEL OF SERVICE: Changes to parks

PRCS Board

- Comprehensive interlinked trail system
 - Interurban trail provides spine
 - Looped system
- Add multi-use sports fields
- Acquire Fircrest property
- Build amphitheater (seat approximately 50 – 100 in seats, 300 – 400 on grass)
- Develop performing arts theater (seat approximately 750 – 1000) – possibly include turntable theaters (intimate space seating approximately 250 – 400) which supplements main theater space (i.e., examples in Chandler, AZ) – existing theaters in community seat approximately 500 - 600
- Provide adequate parking especially if develop performing arts theater
- Improve park at existing Shoreline Center facility (i.e., under tennis courts or soccer fields, move maintenance space, etc.)
- Outdoor climbing wall
- Off leash dog park
- Water front

Discussion - Focus Group B

- No written comments

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Leave more parks areas natural
- Environmental education opportunities – Ronald Bog, Richmond Beach Saltwater Park, outdoor theater
- Outdoor basketball
- Playground equipment that matches surroundings
- BMX location
- Keep natural areas natural

5. OUTDOOR RECREATION AND SPORTS FACILITIES: changes/additions

PRCS Board

- Better ADA access
- Restrooms
- Concessions
- More soccer fields not shared as heavily with other activities
- Current facilities are overused and under maintained
- Neighborhoods not necessarily in favor of park improvements (i.e., lights, etc.)
- Develop tournament sports complex possibly using private-public partnerships
- Work with School District to improve existing fields (i.e., synthetic turf, etc.) which would expand supply

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Lighting – Topic is so charged and difficult that SYSA has hired an advocate to work on this issue
- How to finance field upgrades - \$2M estimate for Shoreline A&B
- Shoreline A&B no longer “the place to be” for soccer play
- Many ways to pay for fields besides bond issues – leagues have many ideas
- How to reach kids whose parents aren’t willing/able to help them get to activities

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Maintain tennis courts
- Add outdoor basketball
- Synthetic turf at Twin Ponds, Shoreline A&B
- Put parking structure under Shoreline A&B
- Synthetic turf for soccer fields

6. TRAILS: importance, near home versus connections, surfaces

PRCS Board

- More
- Connect assets!
- Where possible, develop true separate trails rather than bicycle lanes

- Improve existing trails within the parks – Innis Arden, Paramount Open Space and trails within smaller parks.
- Continue utilizing a variety of surfaces
- Provide bicycle trails
- Provide system of marked bike trails/signage
- Mark trails

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Link to Interurban or Burke even if just on street with striping
- Trails don't serve west Shoreline
- Different surfaces meet needs of different users
- Echo Lake recent opportunity for "Green Lake" type of amenity; problems with private ownership on north and west sides
- Markings and interpretive signing for trails and Interurban Trail; trolley car all lined up ready to install
- Play up historic components – Interurban, red brick road
- Interurban a focal point for Shoreline
- Echo Lake's history as private recreation site; Echo Lake Bathing Beach
- Walking trail at Paramount School Park now heavily used

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Finish Interurban Trail
- Hugely important in big parks – Hamlin and Boeing Creek are okay
- Bike trails/paths providing connections
- Link to Burke Gilman from Interurban
- Connected system of trails in city
- Connect private trail systems to public trails
- Safe trails – open, visible line of sight
- Complete Interurban Trail
- Add bike lanes
- Add sidewalks
- Bike trails, lanes on streets

7. WATER AND SOUND ACCESS: City provide, what types

PRCS Board

- Possible locations:
 - Boeing Creek
 - Innis Arden (loop trail, add parking)
 - Beach
 - Apple Tree Ln
 - Richmond Beach Pump station owned by King County/METRO
 - South of Point Wells – homeowners want private access and are interested in help from the City, leverage opportunity for City?

- Connect to Edmonds Beach
- Lakes and ponds
- Improvements on inland lakes and ponds
 - Fishing
 - Piers
 - Boardwalks
 - Improve marked public access to help mitigate numerous “social” accesses

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Echo Lake
- Burlington Northern restricts access to Puget Sound
- Improve physical accessibility to Richmond Beach Saltwater Park
- Have priorities other than water access – water access is expensive and there are other places nearby available to get to water

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Innis Arden Reserve – improve parking and community knowledge of this resource
- Crucial
- Need more
- Needs to be ADA accessible
- Expand access to Echo Lake

8. OPEN SPACE: importance, greater access, how manage, interpretive programs

PRCS Board

- Seek opportunities to purchase open space
- Include a part of parks system and keep in reserve for passive recreation
- Especially focus on opportunities adjacent to existing parks
- Improve maintenance to improve habitat
- Utilize as outdoor education facilities and opportunities for schools
- Include annexation of Point Wells in PRCS Plan

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Have large amounts of open space now – large lots, big trees, topography
- Better management of open spaces to promote safety
- Spaces overgrown but, in wooded areas can't prevent someone from hiding behind a tree
- Safe developed area
- Use promotes safety
- We're a City not the National Forest Service

Discussion - Focus Group B

- More needed especially at top of important water sheds

- Acquire stream/creek corridors to improve downstream
- Crucial
- How it should be managed is a cost issue
- Protect natural areas from bicycles and people (i.e., Shoreview, Boeing Creek)
- Manage open spaces

9. RECREATION PROGRAMS: LOS, variety and types, awareness

PRCS Board

- Offering fewer programs is not realistic
- Have not met saturation level yet
- Continue growing until meet capacity

PRCS Board – Should provide

- Facility and programs similar to Kent Senior Center
- Multi-use community center

PRCS Board – Should NOT provide

- Regional competitive pool (50 meter, etc.)
- Evaluate need for leisure pool
- Full size, competitive gymnasium

Discussion - Focus Group A

- Get out of some programming areas
- City jumped into some program areas rather than spend dollars on maintenance
- Some level of overlap and competition exists with Senior Center
- Better maintenance of facilities needed
- YMCA – overlapping programs, better coordination before programs are duplicated between City and YMCA
- Sense that programs compete
- City coordinate among community's service providers
- Arts Council, Historic Museum, Senior Center have a sense that - "City dictates what services should be"
- City programs are higher quality than YMCA programs
- Coordinate programs – contract for services could achieve efficiencies
- Varied experiences with program quality
- City/school joint operational agreement has been very positive
- Senior Center and other organizations can form partnerships
- Overall Shoreline is a "Pretty nice place to live"

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Programs not publicized enough; people unaware of the current services
- Don't duplicate – support partnerships and alliances for all kinds of programs

- Feeder and introductory programs okay; may feed into higher level programs offered by other agencies
- Young adult/teen programs important – talk to teens to find out what they want
- Proactive collaboration to bring many programs to community through several providers
- Collaborate within and beyond city boundaries (i.e., use old park district boundaries?)
- Outdoor theater
- Better website – more friendly and easier to use

10. INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES: changes/additions, need for community center

PRCS Board

- Art studios for variety of instructional programs and drop-in/rental use (i.e., pottery, water colors, jewelry, metals)
- Refurbish Annex with involvement from Shoreline, Lake Forest Park, YMCA
- Do more with the School District
- Fircrest opportunities
- Examine need for large community center and/or small community center
- Examine opportunities to work with Highland Ice Arena in developing additional indoor space
- Field turf at schools to free up more time and fields

Discussion - Focus Group B

- Indoor basketball – drop-in at schools and Spartan Gym
- Multi-purpose pool

11. PRIORITIES (without attachment to funding)

- Finish what started
- Improve what we have – capital projects and amenities within parks and at sports fields
- Cultural aspect – outdoor community theater
- Coordination of programs – collaborate, don't duplicate
- Put more emphasis on natural areas – protection, enhancement, dealing with blatant problems
- Start thinking about 2nd indoor pool
- Develop 5 to 10 year plan to guide activities – near, mid and long term
- Increase awareness and availability of facilities and programs – improve web site
- 1% set aside for arts is in place recently – implement with new PRCS Department and trails construction

12. FUNDING PRIORITIES

Following the discussions, individuals were asked to identify funding priorities from the following categories within the PRCS Department – Parks, Trails, Indoor Recreation Facilities, Recreation Programs, Open Space, and Outdoor Recreation and Sports Facilities. Using two "post it" notes, participants specified priorities and provided a general description of their thoughts as appropriate.

Parks

- Develop outdoor theater
- Cultural services space for programs – outdoor theater
- Outdoor theater
- Outdoor theater
- Outdoor theater
- Accessibility – There has been a shift on the eastside to increased cultural diversity, and also density (more apartment buildings). As we continue to become denser, accessibility to parks, open space and trails will become very important.
- Expand and enhance beach/near shore parks and property; precious resource that must be protected for public enjoyment
- Signage inside/out, directional and facilities
- City needs to take advantage of opportunities to acquire land for parks – all investment in future quality of life that couldn't be passed over

Trails

- Accessible, developed, well-used trails
- Cannot divorce some of these categories – recreation programs are of course a part of trails and open space
- Interurban trail, linking bike trails throughout City
- Cultural service – Interurban Trail interpretation, historical site/park development; as part of the trail and historic brick road
- Outdoor access and trails, bike trails, access to what we have
- In Seattle I believe safe, accessible trails interconnect with other regional trails systems and parks; these are provided and important. Trails are usable to all ages, and a regional system provides benefit to all and allows us to benefit from other trails.
- There are very little facilities to walk or ride bikes (no sidewalks). Most drive to find a place to walk or ride.
- Trails increase people friendly community. Less auto dependence.
- Serves all citizens communally
- More trails; improve, acquire; better parking, railroad crossing; Boeing Creek, Innis Arden Reserve

Indoor Recreation Facilities

- Including pools, basketball courts, etc. – partnering with others who have these facilities (Shoreline Community College, School District, etc.)
- Performing arts center and studio arts facility would be a great way to address lack of opportunities to express and embrace cultural diversity and enhance senior quality of life
- Recreation center with performing arts cultural center with art classrooms including indoor and outdoor performance areas
- The shortfall of Shoreline is under cultural services (i.e., arts studios for all fine arts and performing arts (classes as well as performance)
- City needs cultural/recreation/multi-use center to fill a huge void in our city

Recreation Programs

- Collaboration and communication about programs and facilities

Open Space

- Open space can be too easy an area to exclude and is too important
- Environmental education
- Programs to enhance wildlife habitat area and protect streams
- Public gardens
- Environmental centers

Outdoor Recreation and Sports Facilities

- Priority
- Improve condition of soccer fields and also baseball fields (Shoreline A&B and Twin Ponds with synthetic turf)
- Add synthetic turf to Shoreline A&B and Twin Ponds to maximize usage and reduce the growing percentage of injuries and health problems to children
- Improve the current parks, specifically Hamlin to showcase standard including concession stand and better drainage on all 6 fields
- Access to what we have
- Synthetic turf for soccer fields – This is affordable and “doable.” Partnership possibilities with sports groups.
- It appears that there is a shortage in sports complexes. Additional sports complexes can be used to provide trails, playgrounds, etc. These complexes can meet multi-purpose needs and benefit programs.
- Sports facilities for development for our youth

General Overall

- Improve the publicity/awareness of recreation programs and facilities (i.e., web site, etc.)

13. CHALLENGES

- Funding for capital, maintenance and operations

14. FUNDING OPTIONS

PRCS Board

- People willing to pay increased user fees for better facilities
- Relative to bond, citizens would need to be clear on specifics of how dollars would be used
- Utilize partnerships with school, public-private partnerships (restaurants, sports stores, food kiosks, local hotels, etc.), marketing partnerships, Arts Council, youth and adult athletic leagues, professional teams

Discussion - Focus Groups A&B

- Partnerships – Community College, School District, neighborhoods
- Marketing partnerships/sponsorships
- Philanthropic, foundation
- Bond issues
- User fees and organization contributions (i.e., soccer, softball, baseball, service clubs, etc.)



CITY OF SHORELINE PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN
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