



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Victory Heights Community Council
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Online - Zoom
<i>Date:</i>	August 17, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	14
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Danyal Lotfi, Selena Elmer

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Several times our community has gone to try to host events in our park, understandably there are a lot of hurdles to host events in parks, which is a great way to be safer and healthier. We're seeking clarification on how to do that. *[specific feedback in LOB section below]*
- Concern expressed about cleanliness and health impacts of encampments nearby. Suggestion to stop encampments in the parks, which often prevents parks usage by other citizens.
- The pandemic has been hard on older adults, who faced the stress of possible severe illness via covid-19. Recommend increasing the variety of activities for older adults.

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- n/a

#### *Economic Recovery:*

- Recommendation to give community councils (even ones that aren't official non-profits orgs) waived fees or discounts on Parks & Rec facilities like for park event permits or event space rentals.
- Discussion about the benefits of friends of groups to help foster stewardship of neighborhood parks and establish a direct line to the department for specific location-based interests or questions.

#### *Impacts of Climate Change:*

- With all the development in Seattle, our tree canopy is being reduced. Pocket parks throughout the city could help with this effort.
- With the impacts of climate change leading to warmer weather, people need open space to enjoy. Also, lower income people, who may live in a more dense neighborhood or multi-family housing without "yards", need to be able to enjoy the park space.
- Continue preserving and increasing access to natural areas, keeping them clean and natural.

#### *Quote(s):*

- "..."

#### *Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- Do community councils (even ones that aren't official non-profits orgs) qualify for any waived fees or discounts on Parks & Rec facilities like for park event permits or event space rentals?
- Is Parks & Rec doing any special planning in its Lifelong Recreation program to help this population ease back into social and physically active life? And then, ongoing, where does programming for older adults fit in your priorities?
- Is it in the plan to buy more properties to make parks with lots of trees, to help attain our 30% tree canopy goal (that provides health benefits)?

#### *LOB-Specific Feedback:*



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

- Activation (event scheduling) – consider options to decrease barriers for small community groups to get permits to host neighborhood events, including increasing access to resources (e.g., list of possible insurers) to facilitate this kind of activity

### *Miscellaneous:*

- n/a



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Beacon Food Forest
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Online - Zoom
<i>Date:</i>	August 24, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	10
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Shanyanika McElroy, Brian Judd

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- The more people can feed themselves independently, the more secure each community is going to be.
- BFF “open harvest” policy (if something is ripe and ready, you may take it). This creates joy and empowerment from folks. “We need to keep normalizing this way of life.”

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- Beacon Food Forest has gone from monocultural to a poly-cultural approach as one way to address racism in perma-culture. This has been their mission with an emphasis on belonging and developing relationships with BIPOC communities. Their end goal is to include BIPOC farming groups in the area with the Food Forest, blending cultural farming practices, to ensure an integrated, multi-cultural approach to farming.
- Important for the City to do multi-language outreach around the p-patch communities.
- How do we meet people where they are at, and not simply expect folks to fold into how we do it today? If we acknowledge racial bias, we need to change the how.
- BFF can provide land, compost, cardboard, and wood chips to provide people to get started. BFF lacks funds for plants, seeds, starters, etc. – Especially ones aligned with cultural or ethnic groups and regions.

#### *Economic Recovery:*

- Some of the questions under racial reckoning also dovetail with economic recovery.
- Need to pay the people who are volunteering their time. The luxury of volunteer time is for people who are paid via some other means.

#### *Impacts of Climate Change:*

- Beacon Food Forest needs to advertise better how it reduces carbon in the local ecology, with SPR assistance with marketing.
- BFF offers shade, habitat for creatures, cooling areas under canopy for humans and other animals.
- A good site for teaching people how to pollenate – would like to see schools work with all kinds of bees.

#### *Quote(s):*

- “The pandemic has highlighted the importance and value of growing our own food.”

#### *Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- BFF is an all-volunteer organization. Are there ways SPR can partner with them to provide more support and resources? How do we blend this in with SPR programs?



- What is the role you (JA) see BFF playing in the future of SPR/Strategic Plan?
  - *Response offered:* All organizations participating in this round of listening sessions will be included in future communications about this effort and future planning endeavors. To SPR, meaningful community engagement required ongoing, sustained discussions with communities we serve, and we are always looking for feedback on how we can engage better, understand and meet changing community needs.
- Are there any specific resources for park that can address the homeless problem around BFF? Navigation team, counselors, other outreach?
  - *Response offered:* There are jurisdictional issues at play when it comes to encampment response, and multiple departments work collaboratively in this effort. Jesús committed to bring these issues back to the sub-cabinet on this topic and connect them with HSD, etc. We should definitely follow-up on this one.)
- Please provide contact info for a Human Services navigator. We have an immediate need for someone to help us with camping on the BFF site.
  - SPR committed to getting staff out to take a look and address encampments in the area.

*LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- BFF programs relate to SPR's Urban Food Systems and environmental education programming.

*Miscellaneous:*

- Integrated comment: Beacon Food Forest is a prime group to address all four of the crises guiding this work.
- Would welcome SPR teaching programs at the Beacon Food Forest.
- Foraging is a "complicated topic." Some p-patches not available for public. With this in mind, is a relationship with GSP appropriate? Honest question, not a leading one.
- One participant said that it is difficult to get folks to volunteer who are seeking to make a wage? "So, when are you going to pay forest stewards?" JA said he heard this and believes this concept is valid and important.
- "Open harvest: Gotta pay people for their time."
- Lots of trash and "people living at the garden," as an extension of the broader issues faced by the City.

**Items from the chat**

- "Some practical things that we could use help with on the BFF site: garbage removal, outreach to unhoused people living on the site, help with accessibility: ie: pathways to and from Jefferson park."
- "Yes I affirm that note on accessibility of pathways to Jefferson Park and the steep nature of the hillside throughout BFF."
- "Please provide contact info for a Human Services navigator. We have an immediate need for someone to help us with camping on the BFF site."



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	El Centro de la Raza
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual - Zoom
<i>Date:</i>	August 26, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	35
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Selena Elmer, Danyal Lotfi

**Notes:**

*Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Community gardens, urban farms, P-Patches are a great way to support health outcomes!
- Culturally relevant: more potlucks of different ethnic communities in Seattle
  - more ethnic concerts that are free to communities, especially in local/walkable parks (neighborhood scale), not large events in regional parks
- Provide inter-generational classes (health, fitness, etc) for the whole family unit; in case families need to stay together (lack of childcare, eldercare, etc)
- Adding more exercise/fitness equipment at parks, especially in communities of color

*Racial Reckoning:*

- Those who provide youth programming, do we know if the community is using our parks system?
- *Superintendent comment:* we're looking at how we can increase accessibility to field reservations to more communities, especially for underserved communities. One example: the new South Park Community Center field: we've made the conscious decision to not allow reservations for the first 5 years to allow that community to build infrastructure and use that amenity.
- More BIPOC voices in project planning: important to go INTO the community to hear their voices; not always enough to ask one organization for their input on behalf of the whole community
- Increased programming for/by ethnic communities in our parks
- Major concerns from some in the community about safety at parks

*Economic Recovery:*

- Specific to Latinx community: a lot of folks in the community don't have social security cards, preventing them from participating in job training programming; other paperwork we can add that would make these folks eligible? (for example I-10 numbers)
  - SPR should use its position to advocate for a path to citizenship for undocumented residents of Seattle; young Latinos are often blocked out of these programs because of their citizenship status
- Sometimes SPR and community organizations provide duplicates of the same services (youth programming, etc); how can we combine our efforts to be more efficient and effective?
  - Perhaps SPR can provide training to these organizational leaders who lead programming in the community

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- SPR should add recycling and compost bins to parks, in addition to garbage bins
  - Especially in older parks that were not designed with these additional bins in place



- In Washington DC neighborhood with majority Dominican/Black population: environmental youth justice program; they can earn college credits; they would explore different parks and gain hands-on experience with the environment
  - SPR should replicate this in communities like South Park
  - Language Access: making sure these programs are accessible, offered in different languages and/or translated

*Quote(s):*

- *“Sometimes we get requests to help doing community outreach for project planning, but the leg work should be on SPR to talk to people living nearby, rather than leaning on another organization to do that work when they may not necessarily know the specific needs of that community. It’s important to directly connect with people who live in community.”*
- *“In order to support economic recovery, we need to assess who’s providing which services and not duplicate”*

*Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- Parks have become very unsafe and unclean over the past year and a half with increased encampment activity: will this change in the future? Green Lake Park specifically looks like a “dumpster”
  - *SPR Response:* Much of this is related to COVID in terms of decisions the city made around encampments. Additionally, as with many organizations, we’ve had significant reductions in our staff, and we’re ramping that up. We are continuing to navigate our way through encampment response to bring our parks back to where they need to be and make them accessible to communities, but to do so in a humane way. Folks living in parks have many needs and we need to be sure to address those.

*LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- Comments specific to Urban Food System programs, Recreation Programs, Encampment Team

*Miscellaneous:*

- n/a



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Urban Forestry Commission
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual - Webex
<i>Date:</i>	September 1, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	15
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Selena Elmer, Danyal Lotfi
<i>BPRC Facilitators:</i>	Jessica Farmer, Kelly McCaffrey

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Tied also to equity lens and analysis, where are the gaps? Having gaps in services, and how expensive land is in Seattle – need to understand the resources to fill in gaps, which is so expensive. At a certain point, we’re very reactive and don’t have a plan of where we’re missing things. What comes to mind is Bell Street – Belltown is very urban, but wanted to get open space, tried to make it more of a boulevard. How do we fill in the gaps – makes me feel overwhelmed as to how to keep what we have in good condition so people feel safe, and rectify the past built environment we’re living in?
- For culturally relevant programming, it's really important to have staff from within the community leading the events. If there aren't SPR staff who live in the area, then paying community partners to host events would make residents feel more welcome, and also help with local outreach.
- Improved wayfinding between parks is important, facilitate movement between parks, get people spending more time outside.
- Open up park space for more community gardens. Work with SDOT to use planter strips for similar purposes.
- Such important health benefits from trees in terms of mitigating urban heat island, but also extensive benefits of showing natural spaces for mental health – how to incorporate trees and natural elements into existing parks?
- Huge challenge to realize what the high demand is for parks, and the cost of identifying and creating new parks is such a big challenge – something we’ve talked about is trying to tie park land to development in some way. Increase density, and require some land to be set aside as a pocket park. As we increase density, don’t want to lose green space. Think creatively about ways the City can proactively increase density and use that to try to make some pocket parks.
- Forgot to mention: parks can be a leader in moving away from using second generation anticoagulant rodenticides for rodent control. SGARS have infiltrated the food web have negative impacts on wildlife, pets, and sometimes children. The City's B Contract for pest control is up for renewal, would be great to have a blanket contract with a pest company that offers less-toxic rodent control services.
- Enjoyed the gaps analysis by Parks in 2017: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/about-us/policies-and-plans/2017-parks-and-open-space-plan>

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- Wayfinding – having good signage so people feel like they can walk through the environment, even if they’re not familiar with it. Important to have an escape route in uncomfortable or dangerous situations.
- Also wayfinding and signage in multiple languages!



- Hosting or supporting activities that are led by particular affinity groups. At Seattle Audubon, we lead events with specific communities.
  - *Jessica:* Recreation for all – community-led activities throughout the city, things we'd like to see continue.

*Economic Recovery:*

- Instead of having volunteer stewards taking care of natural areas and doing more restoration, tend to favor folks who have the means to be volunteers, having a jobs program where a lot of those kinds of jobs have a low barrier of entry and end up paying people to do that restoration work and urban forestry work to bring in a greater diversity of folks.
- As we acquire more properties, we don't always have a commensurate amount of maintenance resources. Critical to ensure we do that. One of the ways we could tie those new sites to communities is to try to recruit people from nearby communities and ensure they're doing what they want to do. Maintenance doesn't need to be a centrally-staffed approach, goes along the same lines.
- When working from home, works for some people, but not all – I don't totally understand how equipped our facilities are to be work-flexible spaces to help people who can't necessarily support the home environment.
- When it comes to economic recovery, there's going to be a lot of balancing of priorities of where money comes to. If we're talking about moving to have more paid positions for this labor – really connecting with community to ensure that they are helping shape fiscal priorities, ensure it resonates with them.
- Recruit and hire within the communities that the parks serve, especially BIPOC youth, which relates to the racial equity pillar too, and helps create a welcoming environment for local residents
- A way to remove barriers to programs could be to partner with SDOT and Metro and advertise public transportation options to events and parks. Potentially even making a free transit day to encourage ridership and visitation. This would leverage the combined strength of the parks and transit systems so people can take advantage of both.
- Youth at high schools are required, I believe, to be involved in activity - such as Parks maintenance and youth programs.

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- There are lot of lawns in developed parks, which do little mitigate heat island effects. Replace some of those lawns with trees!
- Eliminate gas powered trimmers, leaf blowers, etc.
- Adding air-conditioned facilities. There are other ways to increase energy efficiency of those facilities also, like putting on green roofs. Enhance vegetation while reducing carbon footprint.
- More trees!
- Citywide assessment of the tree planting capacity of the city, figuring out how many trees we have space for, how fast could it happen, setting aspirational goals for enhancing urban forest canopy – SPR cannot solve that problem on our own. Could be something to consider that we could do an assessment of our land and identify a strategic plan for how to meet an internal canopy cover goal for Seattle Park land.
- 100 years ago, parks were the places families had to go to cool down and be healthy. With high heat, parks with trees can be life savers. Assessment of parks – are there some parks that have abundant trees and some that are not quite so abundant? We all know the plume of cooling created by one tree





or multiple trees can drop the outdoor temperature considerably. Great opportunity to examine for the city – but it can provide a free access for health and safety.

- Trees we currently have are important assets from climate change – stresses from drought, heat, resilience – things that need to be thought about. Other cities retain tree pathologists – need a monitoring plan for tree and pest outbreaks.
- Ballfields, uses of park land – looking at more strategically distribution of resources.

*Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- *From Kelly:* Does SPR interact with DirtCorps? Referring back to the economic recovery and the connection between maintenance and training of forestry and stewardship. I work for the Conservation Districts, and this morning some project managers were just talking about the difficulty in accessing sufficient supply of contractors for restoration crews.



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Feet First
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual
<i>Date:</i>	9/1/2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	6
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Shanyanika McElroy, Mary Beth Josef, Jesus Aguirre

**Notes:**

*Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Pedestrian accessibility in the central area, benefits of accessing parks within walking distance, more emphasis with walkability and coordinating with other agencies to tie them together
- access to public transit... increase access, many parks not on public transit
- more encouragement for safe group activities, walking parties, bird watches to proactively promote healthy habits and increase visits to the parks
- Sidewalks are uneven and need repair, many are walking in the street due to uneven surfaces and not safe. Would like to see increase in walking loops. More guidance on mask protocols within parks environments even in the outside environments
- Green Lake, due to current encampment activities, safety concerns and access to the park due to encampment barriers
- Julia Lee’s park – encampment activities / safety issues prevent access. Rarely see high use there, could be some opportunities to repurpose use to perhaps affordable housing (JA – discussion about initiative 42 and limits of parks lands)

*Racial Reckoning:*

- Many parks named after African Americans- there needs to be something in the park explaining what the history is for park naming (? Historical reminders /Interpretive signage) and fostering cultural relevance.
- Adapting to gentrification
- Do you have a plan to identify density around greenspace, gentrification, and use equity mapping tools to inform future parks development (JA answered)

*Economic Recovery:*

- Concerned about our small business health and resiliency, outdoor options and walkability
- Community groups need resources to create outreach (mailings, volunteers) believe there is a missed opportunities to reach these communities due to lack of resources
- East African community – ESL barriers – access to language bank to increase communication
- Difficulty accessing translation resources and bridging cultural differences (distrust of gov, creating safe place) ? Community engagement ambassador program,

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- Black community mentioned effectiveness of cooling centers. Seems to be an opportunity to expand access to cooling centers.
- Pressure to preserve the tree canopy as we continue to lose our trees due to climate changes



- Looking for guidance on pedestrian equity – is there resources that you can share with our organization on overall equity resources?
- Maintenance equipment and relationship to fossil fuels. Is there a plan to get away from fossil fuel-based equipment? (JA answered e.g. pilot)
- Will there be an increase in charging station across the system? (JA answered, yes planning is underfoot)
- Golf courses – look at data and golf not as popular as it used to be – how do we expand how to use these large spaces for other recreation use (JA confirmed that this is a robust conversation on both sides of the issue) Could we move to 9 holes for quicker play as a better model and then repurpose land

*Quote(s):*

- n/a

*Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- *Send equity resources to Rob Fellows*

*LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- n/a

*Miscellaneous:*

- Discovery park, hike the woods a lot, how do you preserve the non-motorized pathways (unpaved pathways). There's clear policy but its not communicated effectively and enforce the rules



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Lake City Collective
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	In-Person (outdoor) at Little Brook Park; conducted in Spanish
<i>Date:</i>	September 4, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	22
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre and Selena Elmer

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- SDOT Stay Healthy Street pilot in front of park has been a huge benefit for keeping kids safe and increasing access to/use of park and street
- Improve access to SPR-run activity camps: some local kids don't know how to plug in and participate
- Homelessness has posed an issue for access – for example, recently someone experiencing homelessness was using the bathroom to bathe, and SPR staff locked the bathroom as a result, meaning the community did not have access to it
- The pandemic has posed major public health impacts to kids and families
- Lake City Community Center needs adequate programming – currently, not sufficient, and not relevant to community represented by LCC
- Additionally, more programming on the street could help activate
- Concerns about access to play fields across the system – they are all booked up, which restricts community use
  - *SPR Response: All fields need community hours, and we are piloting new approaches, like leaving the new field at South Park unreservable for the first 5 years of operations to allow the community to build infrastructure and activities there before it enters the reservation system*

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- Allocate funds directly to communities identified as high priorities to be prioritized by those communities
- Parents have noticed distinct difference between level of funding for Latinx kids in Little Brook and white kids in Lake City
- Additional City investment with a cultural component to programming would make this local park feel more welcoming
  - For example, earlier this weekend, LCC organized a street fair that was very successful because it was planned by LCC, which represents this community, and therefore it was relevant
- Little Brook is not the same as Lake City. Sometimes, organizations in Lake City reference Little Brook community so their applications for funding for projects cover a diverse population, but the results of those projects do not benefit this community, so there is appropriation taking place
- Community does not feel City Council representation for D5 supports the immigrant population
- General feeling is that the voices of all those here (in attendance at this session) have not been heard for many years
- DON and SDOT are very explicit in their external messaging about their internal process of equity, and engage community partners to support that work. SPR could learn from these examples.



*Economic Recovery:*

- In absence of City investment, community has been making small investments in priority areas itself (i.e., running a soccer camp at Little Brook park on a budget of only \$800)
- Community is concerned that park improvements will result in displacement and will be crowded/reserved by those who already have good access to amenities
- Believe it is unfair that this community needs to fundraise for its own park improvements – there should be a better pathway for community-identified projects to receive funding
- Desire for community partnerships in program development and deployment
- Opportunity to leverage youth programs like the Seattle Youth Employment Program to pay young people for work and build employment capacity

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- Need additional green stormwater infrastructure near Little Brook Park, as there are runoff issues associated with dog poop that pollutes the creek (e-coli)
- Desire for additional access/enjoyment of the creek (in line with that enjoyed by higher-income neighborhoods along the same waterway)

*Quote(s):*

- “...”

*Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- Last time Jesús visited, there was a discussion of putting up more prominent signage regarding appropriate cleanup after dogs in parks, has not happened
- Maintenance concerns raised at the park – maintenance staff not emptying garbage, no new woodchips at the play area
- How are park projects decided/prioritized/built? What does a community need to do to get on that list?

*LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- Recreation Programming: community-informed, culturally relevant programs are needed
- Grounds Maintenance: maintenance issues at Little Brook park – garbage emptying, woodchips, signage

*Miscellaneous:*

- Community members do not have time to go to public meetings, nor do they know about the right meetings to attend. They are tired of finding time to attend and not seeing results of advocacy.
- Can be very challenging to get the City’s attention
- SPR needs to come to where community is to connect, not expect community to come to us
- The use of the park by dog owners in the adjacent apartment means kids don’t play in the park anymore: dog poop everywhere, recently one resident shaved his dog on a play structure and just left the dog hair all over the place
- Desire for more ticketing for dog owners who do not obey leash and scoop laws
- Smoking in the park has also been an issue
- Desire for a pool in Lake City (Meadowbrook is a one-hour walk, not convenient to this community, and Little Brook is extremely dense)



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

- Community desire for an ongoing connection with a human being, not just online contact or 2-minute public comment at Park Board meetings



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Seattle Immigrant & Refugee Commission
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual – Zoom
<i>Date:</i>	September 7, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	13
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Danyal Lotfi; BPR Commissioner Marlon Herrera

**Notes:**

*Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Culturally-relevant programming at parks and facilities
- Accessibility to/from parks by transit
- Clean and functioning public restrooms
- Unhoused community needs to be a higher priority
  - How do we better share the public space; how do we better address this issue as a system?
- Better upkeep of facilities and amenities (trash pickup, etc)

*Racial Reckoning:*

- Ensuring our outreach and engagement is equitable and focused on those most marginalized
- Including an immigrant/refugee integration effort in our Strategic Plan; working with these communities to develop plans/programs
- Provide essential gear for youth in our programs (rain protection, boots, sun block, etc)
- SPR should consider neighborhood demographics when doing outreach
- Equity means to take resources away from certain things and put them toward other things; this is the realistic outlook that SPR should ground itself in
  - Redistribution of resources, not just from things that are not working, but programs/services that may be working in an inequitable way for Seattle residents

*Economic Recovery:*

- Creating more opportunities for job readiness for BIPOC communities; the trades field does not reflect the community very well
- Parks in Seattle mean a great deal to our immigrants and refugees, especially new arrivals
  - Emmanuel (Commissioner): As a refugee who has gone through so much for 10 years, fleeing my own country with many struggles, finding myself in a Seattle park is great opportunity to heal and reflect
- +1 to SPR participation in the Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP)

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- We should coordinate with other city departments on addressing climate challenges, especially in areas that have seen the biggest impact
- Using parks planning as a way to prevent gentrification
- More community gardens!! Especially ones reflecting the communities they are in (their culture, way of life, etc)



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

- Incorporating more drought-resistant plants and greenery (thinking of clover lawns instead of regular grass for example)

### *Quote(s):*

- *“Parks are a place for healing trauma”*

### *Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- *What are the ways in which we support job readiness?*
  - *Community seems less educated on this*

### *LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- Shout out to SPR for in-person outreach at South Park recently
  - Presumably, the CEAs?

### *Miscellaneous:*

- Increased partnerships with other agencies in the City; having a mobile library at parks, for example
- Improving safety at parks, especially by better maintaining our restrooms





## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Women’s Commission
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Webex - online
<i>Date:</i>	September 20, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	13
<i>BPRC Facilitators:</i>	Andréa Akita and Jessica Vu
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Selena Elmer

**Notes:**

*Public Health & Well-Being:*

- People have definitely been meeting at parks – most utilized place for everyone I know – difficulty of getting a picnic shelter – utilization of parks throughout different seasons – ability to increase them would be great
- Fitness classes that are outdoors could be increased – hand in hand with more shelters
- Super relevant – I think about who I see when I go out to the parks – I bought a paddleboard during the pandemic – but these aren’t cheap things to buy, not the most accessible; having availability of water toys to rent, or credit system to get people out there so they’re not overburdened by the cost of the activity
- Potentially opportunities to address childcare deficits through summer camps, school break camps, etc.
- Resident of South Seattle – our parks are a little different than up north – maybe
- South Park work – encourage marginalized communities to not eat resident fish – helping learn to prepare salmon – cooking classes or something like that – awesome & culturally relevant way to reach people
- More partnerships with other groups, orgs, preschools to increase childcare and family programming opportunities in both parks and facilities
- And a way to help existing childcare providers to have access to enriching outdoors
- Accessibility to public bathrooms and drinking fountains

*Racial Reckoning:*

- Hiring & recruitment – having teachers that look like you is very important
- Not necessarily having to go big – healthy streets – putting parks where people are, even microparks – small plots of land
- Have you built relationships with BIPOC-led organizations – reach out to organizations and invite them to our meetings, be a better way to build relationships – more concerned about health initiatives – for Black community and elsewhere – give employees have more of a presence at parks to help keep it clean, security for people to feel a little more safe – sometimes people are living at the parks
- Roadshow or small business communities day by BIPOC businesses
- Hosting during spring, summer fall seasons: African American community day; Hispanic community day
- To build racial equity - doing more of this - engaging with different groups of folks to share info, solicit input, making the process for BIPOC communities to be involved in planning/implementation easier and uplifting/supporting/funding what BIPOC communities are already doing instead of bringing them into your processes/systems



*Economic Recovery:*

- Are there fee reductions or waivers for some programs and services? like for community groups, nonprofits, etc.
- Implementing sliding scale fees, scholarships for classes, waive fees
- More scholarships, costs reduced, offer childcare for some folks – often a barrier to engagement
- Opportunity for improved signage, also put resources on how to get there at each park – here's a map, and here's where you can find x,y,z thing
- Ensuring classes, facilities, etc. are well connected to public transportation
- Reach out to older people, part-time, light-weight stuff to keep older folks involved – young people and older people connect a little bit more, would be great
- Create paid internship programs with young people from different communities
- Might be a way to both solicit information from the community on what they would like to have (like small businesses or services) and then coordinate training to support first-time-business owners in creating those things?

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- Community gardens! – adding more
- Using permaculture methods, rain catchment systems.
- More trees and green spaces in our areas that don't have as much. more p-patches. more educational opportunities, more partnerships/uplifting existing org's and group's work
- Grass – water it requires – have more sustainable surfaces, use recycled infrastructure and materials, and then use signage to talk about that for materials
- Increase in waste at parks – not enough spaces for things to throw people away – assuming that's been an issue
- Fall & winter – park usage, expect it to go down? Implementing in the spring?
- teaching self-sufficiency through urban farming



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	United Indians of All Tribes
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Online - Webex
<i>Date:</i>	September 28, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	7
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Brian Judd, Todd Burley

**Notes:**

*Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Public education components around health: Kindergarten to higher education.
- Used to have a stronger curriculum around this at Native Heritage School. This school dissolved 17 years ago. This is one contributing factor.
- Community Center is needed to fill this gap for education of all sorts for youth in this community.
- Struck a housing deal with the City. United Indians needs the City's assistance around beginning this project.
- Would like to open their sweat lodge for religious observance. Seeking information from SPR on options to do this safely and within guidelines. (Sweat Lodge is used for purification rituals for people with different diseases and ailments. Burning Area is across from the lodge where they burn clothes and food of folks who have moved to a different elevation).

*Racial Reckoning:*

- The area around Daybreak Star is filled with whiteness. It is time to improve visibility for Daybreak Star, its indigenous history with our park, and tying our public lands to indigenous history.
- Daybreak Star explicitly requesting financial and other support for Daybreak Star as part of racial equity.
- Partnership with SPR and WIOA (acronym they named, not sure what it means) for employment opportunities and pathways to job.
- Partnership around social services and community center opportunities.

*Economic Recovery:*

- n/a

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- n/a

*Quote(s):*

- "It is time to put your Land Acknowledgement into practice."

*Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- Regarding sweat lodge: SPR plumbers sometimes turn water off. Need better communication here to ensure they have access to water. Need this for the Burn Area, too.
- Problems with homeless encampments, theft of lights off property, encroachment of burning areas.
- Requesting a switchback from the east entrance to the Pow Wow grounds for access for elders and others with differing abilities.
- "School Zone" signage on the grounds is needed to minimize drug dealing and traffic infractions.



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

- Nighttime security assistance needed for the Center, as well.
- Gate at the fence of the driveway needs a new post.
- Lighting around the Burning Area needs updating. The posts are degraded, and lights could be updated. Outlets also get damaged regularly.
- Would like to get their arts and cultural programming on the SPR Events Calendar.
- See item from the chat below.

### *Miscellaneous:*

- Need help to upgrade signage directing people to Daybreak Star. Would like to have Jesús take a tour of the space – I recommend that this be set up.
- 1.5 FTE is all they have for staff capacity for the Center. Seeking City assistance to expand this capacity as they expect a higher volume of visitors soon.
- He has some other items to speak with Jesús about. Recommend he sets up time to reconnect.
- Daybreak Star is leasing the property from SPR. SPR needs to treat it with respect, take more ownership, and deal with maintenance issues. This includes stewarding the land.
- City took the property over on May 8, 1970. This is reference as a takeover by the group (rightfully so).
- Would also like better communication with the military folks in the park for evening security issues.
- Seeking an on-site with Jesús to walk the grounds, walk through the concerns and opportunities, etc.
- **Overall, they need better communication with SPR. They request a point of contact for all these operational and maintenance needs.** They are disconnected from what's happening at Discovery Park and how they might be affected in emergencies.

### **Items from the chat**

- *There is a very precarious branch hanging over the trail and playground next to our preschool - can that be addressed soon along with the tree? It looks like it may have died off.....*



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Seattle Youth Commission
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual - Zoom
<i>Date:</i>	September 29, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	8
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Danyal Lotfi (SPR), Andrea Akita (BPRC)

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Getting more people vaccinated in our communities
- Providing safe and welcoming venues and meeting spaces for communities to gather, especially for youth who are not yet able to get vaccinated
  - Opportunities for communities to connect and improve their health and well-being
  - Partnership between SPR and Seattle Public Schools
  - Emphasis on schools that don't have ample outdoor and gathering spaces (equity lens)
- Providing a platform for communities to share their events/community updates (elevating the voices of the community through SPR online channels)

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- Public acknowledgment of mis-served communities in Seattle
  - Recognize the history and elevate their voices
  - More opportunities for improvement in under-served neighborhoods; more investments in those communities
- Seeing yourself represented in SPR programs (participants and staff) – more diversity; this helps to promote sense of belonging and inclusion and makes places, spaces welcoming
- Park benches – they should highlight more BIPOC historic figures
- Using art to re-imagine what the utilization of a park could look like
  - Expanding the definition of how public spaces are used and by whom
  - Using parks as an opportunity to educate people about different cultures and backgrounds (culturally-relevant programming)
- More partnerships with artists of color (Arts in Parks, etc)

#### *Economic Recovery:*

- Transportation and accessibility – making parks and programs more accessible by public transportation
- More partnerships with artists of color (Arts in Parks, etc) as a way of supporting them and their industry

#### *Impacts of Climate Change:*

- +1 to reducing carbon footprint
  - How can we decrease partnerships with corporations that pollute the environment?
  - No more contracting/partnership with polluting corporations
- Improving bike/walking paths to parks and programs (decrease reliance on cars)



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

- Helping park visitors to be more conscious of their actions
  - Signage, educational campaigns for park visitors
- Incorporating more efficient waste disposal in parks
  - more recycling and composting bins
  - maintaining cleaner parks (free of trash)



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Alliance for Pioneer Square, Woodland Park Zoo, Washington Trails Association, Friends of the Conservatory, Friends of Athletic Fields, Steamer Virginia V Foundation, Arboretum Foundation, UW Botanical Gardens, Golden Bricks Events, Seattle Parks Foundation, Seward Park Clay Studio, Rain City Rock Camp, Seward Park Audubon Center
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual - Webex
<i>Date:</i>	September 29, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	19
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Todd Burley, Selena Elmer, Shanyanika McElroy

**Notes:**

*Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Public health and sanitation related to bathrooms – how to partner with SPU and their resources to improve and expand the bathroom facilities (beyond encampments)
- Trees and green spaces help wellness. A gap analysis of greenery at underserved neighborhoods
- Our population is growing, have a limited number of facilities, more youth, more active play – only have so much land, probably not going to be building a lot more fields – the goal of the department is to increase the usability of the inventory we have (shift from grass to synthetic). Every field that gets redone has gone to cork infill. Adding lights and synthetic is how we increase use of existing inventory – having playfields distributed geographically around the city is the most equitable thing we can do. We’ve promoted playfields in historically underserved communities. The areas that don’t have lit synthetic fields are Queen Anne and Magnolia – wealthier areas. Pushing to make it fair to everyone in the city so everyone can get a good workout and don’t have to drive all over the place.
- Working on how you get people to parks – transportation is a little bit of a challenge – working with SDOT or Metro – how much interaction with those entities?
- Safe routes to parks
- Piloting composting toilet system at the arboretum – but also echo comments about restrooms – people have discovered how being outside helps them
- Arboretum has tried to touch on cultural relevance with plants and Japanese Garden – trying to figure out ways to engage communities and find ways to speak to them that allows them to show their environmental interest and interest of the outdoors – relates to climate change
- Public safety is very top of mine for us, want to ensure folks have access. Major issue at Pioneer Square – isn’t space for everyone to access spaces – voice that. Upticks of crime and hearing a lot from businesses there that customers and underground tour, tourists don’t feel safe in that area.
- Besides physical access to playfields – biggest barriers is not proximity – everyone plays in leagues, need to “pay to play” to a certain extent – people of limited means are challenged to participate – formerly, were no fees at youth fields. Different world. Department should be thinking about ways that scholarships can be promoted and transportation can be provided – parents are working, can’t transport kids. Something that needs to be thought about.
- Want to be able to offer more programming to youth to Seward Park Clay Studio – can we collaborate with SPR to connect to community centers that are nearby – are there ways to connect kids in after school programs at community centers to the studio?



- Are there other facilities that are being underused? Would love to be in dialogue about doing some co-programming and working with teaching ceramics skills to teachers – technical art, and many of the teachers who have access don't know how to use it.
- Lake Union Park is looking a little run down, uptick in crime – doesn't feel like there's been a lot of concern on the part of SPR; a number of us associated with this park have been trying to come up with solutions – making ships accessible
- Another hazard there at the park – bulkhead, dock down there, people tend to jump off the bulkhead
- Interested in additional fencing, lighting

*Racial Reckoning:*

- Plan to deliver in neighborhoods of need first makes a lot of sense.
- Demystifying the process is essential. What does co-design look like for SPR? How can staff get trained up so community members who've been served can have their voices elevated.
- Making it easier for volunteers to engage with SPR offers many opportunities, but it's high barrier
- Definitely actively reaching to community organizations and neighbors communities. Great example: expansion of Chinatown urban Park where we brought in translators for community engagement – eventually, realized that it was a genuine effort to reach out to them – issue of language, but also issue of genuine participation, and it usually takes more than one touch for communities to engage – it's expensive and cumbersome. Literally finding the language that belongs to both SPR and the community, not just asking them what they need. Simplistic question
- Opportunity for minority-owned businesses to be engaged in the park – find the process and cost of engaging in programs is a barrier they can't overcome – people who are doing business here, need to find a way to engage them. Constantly bombarded by questions about whether we have anything to eat or drink – needs to bring something into the park – bring food trucks to the park, benefit from the closure and have something to do, something to eat when they get there – programs for people doing exercise programs, nature study – will roll the dice that no one at SPR will find out about their programming
- South Park – public/private partnership, private group brought in a bunch of money to fix up a field, what was really groundbreaking was the agreement with the community to give them dedicated play time for 5 years – good precedent. Yesler Terrace – some projects on the horizon, would love to see if there's a way to promote the community and giving them access to facilities.

*Economic Recovery:*

- A lot of expertise at Seward Park Clay Studio – untapped reservoir, would like to build a community of people who want to do these skills – offers quite a few career pathways, it's a lateral field – send the list
- Folks are retiring – what the Port of Seattle is doing to create internships and green jobs – can we start thinking about ways to expand those and work with organizations (e.g., DIRT Corps – doing hands on trainings) – how can we fill some of those gaps.
- We offer summer maritime internships aboard our historic vessel and field trips for youth maritime training programs in the schools and sponsored by groups like Goodwill. Our location at Lake Union Park makes that much more accessible so we're grateful for the location.
- I think of Green Pathways program from RVC as a good model for career pathways

*Impacts of Climate Change:*





- Pandemic – when you ask about how things have changed, the pressure on the Arboretum has been extraordinary – very used, and when you look at all the things you do – there’s one arboretum. It’s a destination park. So when we think about the Arboretum, what can we do with the plant collection, and education? Help people come and really see what’s happening to plants and the world in a very real way. If there are organizations out there interested in partnering with us – the programming is key to that.
- Park is being used in a variety of ways we hadn’t seen before during heat event – preparation of getting the park ready, when summer hit, that’s when SPR pulled back its program from the beach because there were no staff – people still went to the beach. These are communities that don’t have air conditioning, really getting hit hard with more people wanting to find refuge in these places. How can we be a sense of refuge? Have to recognize this will be a respite for many people who are using the park – simply wasn’t ready for it this year. I know some support staff from SPR looked at different areas of the park and tried to make different parts of their visit better. Wanted to look at the park in different ways.
- Other thing – what’s going to happen with trees and animals? Some trees – drought, about last 8-10 years, ongoing lack of water – we’re going to lose trees. How will we compensate for this? Will be plant new trees? Investing in the natural areas crews and what they can do and plan – not just the next 20 years, but the next 70 years, and how we can be responsible for doing our own battle with climate. Urban tree canopy in the city – issues here. SPR certainly doesn’t own all that property, but we can include more trees. Role of natural areas should play
- Planning & scientific study of our urban trees is critical – I worry we’re not far enough ahead of that – scientific knowledge is critical – role we will have at SPR and at the Arboretum to have a successful city going forward
- Last 4-6 years, cumulative impact, frankly means we’re going to have to change the way we manage trees and vegetation. We have new pests caused by the stresses of hot summers. Having to look at different species – having to look at preserving what we’ve got. Need to pay attention not just to the trees, but how to care for them. How they adapt to drought stresses – share research with larger universities. Emphasize – anything we can do with management of existing canopy to make sure it’s as resilient as possible is critical. Keeping what we have – which is great – alive and healthy, will pay greater dividends
- Arborists and horticulture crews – there aren’t very many of them to start out with, and often the first cut. If anything, might need more staff in that area. Tree cover in the green spaces and in the bigger parks, but bigger impacts in smaller parks. Nat Geo had an interesting article about trees in neighborhoods – always skeptical about partnerships within City departments – if there’s a way to partner with SDOT (street trees)
- Environmental Learning Centers – environmental learning is directly tied to people’s understanding of climate – the legacy committee really missed that one, there are funding issues, Camp Long, Discovery Park Visitor’s Center is closed – lots of opportunities for SPR to be out there educating the public.
- SPR can do better recycling, working with Todd on that a little bit – hopefully the department can figure out what works. I think you can do a better job there.
- Anything we can do with opportunities for recycling and compost – getting service – encouraging energy efficient, rechargeable tools, looking at heat pumps and things like that – solar where



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

appropriate – a lot of technological improvement in the equipment SPR staff use, great way to lead on that.

- Great opportunities for tree planting with open areas/fields – other open spaces there might be good opportunities to build there, especially that you can plant things that provide some cover that are climate adapted. Shade is a double-edged sword for athletic fields.

## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Southwest Youth and Family Services, Neighborhood Farmers Markets, UW Botanic Gardens, YMCA Outdoor Leadership, Madison Park Cooperative Preschool, Arboretum Foundation, University District Partnership, Cal Anderson Park Alliance, Alliance for Pioneer Square, City Fruit
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Webex – Online
<i>Date:</i>	October 6, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	10
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Todd Burley, Mary Beth Josef, Shanyanika McElroy

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- SPR has done as phenomenal job hosting testing centers and vaccine opportunities – as long as we’re in the pandemic. To the extent that leadership wants to work with community to make sure people have access to vaccines and tests, that’s a huge impact.
- Really don’t talk about partnerships – it’s pretty critical – comes in under building community, but we do provide space to a number of organizations that wouldn’t have space – something to talk about, especially in the context of community health and well-being, also arts – all sorts of partnerships.
- Challenge at Cal – has to provide a lot of respite for community, but it’s heavily used – doesn’t have the resources to accommodate things, things get damaged and it takes a long time for things to get fixed. You could also apply that lens to how much parks are used – way to put a lens on how many people a park has to serve and use that as part of planning and resourcing – choices between parks, which is really frustrating and disappointing, and it’s an opportunity to provide more service to more people, including renters who live in Cap Hill. Functioning of the parks is critical. Looked at Laurelhurst Park.
- Is there good data around the demographics on use? Do we know who is using those? A concern the Arboretum wants us to know is equity and access – specifically ADA session. *[answer – it’s hard*
- And evaluating resources for accessible parks that are close to public transit investments.
- Role of destination parks, and understanding that there are certain parks within the system that can provide different types of resources and program opportunities that can appeal to a broader section
- Arboretum has been thinking really hard at Japanese Garden about culturally relevant programming – looking at AAPI violence issues, responsibility is highlighting Asian American artists and promotion cultural understanding; a way to help with recovery is providing opportunities for more artists to have more opportunities in safe, outdoor venues – hope that continues to be an emphasis looking forward
- OED is using Placer.ai to track cell phone data to measure foot traffic and demographic info for visitors to business districts. You can draw a line around parks too. Wonder if there is a way to share notes.
- We talk a lot about urban canopy, but we need to look at other green spaces – especially downtown in more urban spaces. Had significant impact on people’s mental health. For Pioneer Square, City Hall Park is the only grass, was inaccessible due to tents.
- Programming: ensure we balance that with having a quiet place just to be and not over-program all parks.



*Racial Reckoning:*

- Clear communication and clear information-sharing – great way to improve connections with the public. To the extent we can be conduits to getting communication out, will help address barriers. Hard to capture the totality of all the resources and information in one place.
- Youth Advisory Council? How can you get young people/women of color to weigh in to inform our programming? Have to pay them and make it worth their while to participate, especially young people.
- Innovative ideas were brought forward by communities of color about what they wanted to see – more work that needs to be done, if an idea doesn't fit within the framework of staff/resourcing, how can you give it legs and opportunity without reinventing the parks department? How can you move more nimbly?
- How can parks can serve as a place to bridge connections to improve food access? With P-Patches, resurgence of urban farming, time barriers – lower barrier opportunities for P-Patch folks to steward land in and around where markets are cited – feedback: see connection reflected in the priorities we've already identified and bring it forward as an opportunity. Lots of great work happening in the City, and SPR has a role to play in facilitating that.
- Area where environmental education is very important – if more of our BIPOC students feel comfortable in parks from a younger age, that's a long-term investment that will continue to bear fruit. Another thing I'd like to see is more internship and volunteer opportunities at the high school level – building that pipeline of leaders into the future is ultimately what's going to make a difference. Not an overnight fix, but investments we make now are going to manifest over the next decade or two.
- Project planning in particular: Washdot peninsula, end of 520 – really tempting/easy to give more weigh to groups who show up really prepared with plans in place – often the groups that have time and resource that do that are not BIPOC groups. How can the planning process incorporate a broad span – meaningful engagement with communities that's not just a box checking exercise.
- Looking at lifestyles – makeup of the parks in the south end is not always great for folks who take transit – consideration or looking into something like more pocket parks that responds to their lifestyle and reality in the medium term as planning new parks.

*Economic Recovery:*

- Looking at burdens that aren't just in parks, but also surrounding districts – for example, Pioneer Park and the economy of the district – a lot of opportunity for the boundaries of the park to be torn down a little bit so there's a more comprehensive plan that integrates better into nearby areas
- City's continued effort and investment across all the multiple departments to transcend the more distributed permitting or regulation access is really important – frankly, as a person who's involved in this every day, it's not always a straightforward or transparent process. Need to start talking across departments to make it easier for people who are participating in economic activity to do it in parks.
- Bring our partners in – concerted strategy around reframing some perceptions around parks as being safe and welcoming – particularly for tourists and the way the national media perceive Seattle. Getting tourists back into Seattle – parks can be an important part of that equation.
- Big opportunity.
- Something we are all working through is constraints on capacity – staffing, funding, etc. – a takeaway has been to try to ask a lot more questions about how we can avoid duplicating services and program



offerings. Would love to see Parks and Rec, or better communicate, better connect, better interact with everyone interfacing with SPR – sometimes we find ourselves halfway through a project, and we realize there's duplication, some of the best

*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- Other municipalities – parks and rec departments have been used as education tools themselves – I know we're doing some of that work, I'd love to see it highlighted more and shared out. There are so many things happening, would be really wonderful for those to be shared out more and use them as a structural opportunity to move forward.
- UW – impact of climate change on the collections at the arboretum – worth thinking about that – we have these big, beautiful tall trees, doesn't mean we'll always have them – maintenance, replacement, long-term planning around how do we plan to maintain the tree canopy and spaces we love and are so valued in the face of climate change – really important and will likely accelerate given climate change.
- Reducing carbon footprint – thinking long term about buildings and spaces, how they can become more sustainable – know Graham Visitor Center at the arboretum is quite old – how could the indoor spaces become more energy efficient, etc. – through major or routine maintenance
- More of a question – during this process, how much ability was there to work with other big city agencies – thinking about coexisting with watershed; how much of an ability has there been to do some joint planning on some of these priorities? How can we effectively coordinate with SDOT and WashDot on regional transportation on ways to get to the parks? As partners, we don't always have visibility into how easy it is to do that kind of coordination, but seems like a huge
- Suggested strategy to better leverage relationships with other agencies

*Miscellaneous:*

- While these are important topics, there is a lot they leave out that I think is also important to our conversation today.
- How to best leverage the limited but meaningful assets of parks stewardship groups didn't come up but might fit in somewhere



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Rainier Beach Action Coalition's Beach 5 (youth group)
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual Google Meet
<i>Date:</i>	October 8, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	5
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Danyal Lotfi, Pamela Kliment

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Food Justice: expanding partnership on food security for the neighborhood

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- Important to invest in and partner with organizations like RBAC/Beach 5, since they are majority black-led and serve the south end of Seattle
- Beach 5 wants to have more allies in the City/government agencies; especially after the impacts we saw in 2020
  - Attendees were appreciative of our acknowledgement of this land and the historical discriminatory policies
- Beach 5 would like to connect more youth in the neighborhood to SPR programs and services
- RBAC works with youth in the community to find solutions for safety and crime prevention
  - Total fall in crime at the Safeway parking lot since they started tabling there this past summer
- Equity: ensuring that Rainier Beach is being offered \*the same\* (not more or less than) as other neighborhoods

#### *Economic Recovery:*

- Priority Hire
  - Different regional agencies have invested in this program; very important for community development
- More paid employment opportunities for youth in the neighborhood

#### *Impacts of Climate Change:*

- Food Justice for communities in Rainier Beach

#### *Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- JA committed to stop by and walk the neighborhood with Gregory Davis and RBAC members

#### *LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- RBAC would like to see an audit of the impacts of the pandemic on different neighborhoods, and assess through an equity lens

#### *Miscellaneous:*

- SPR is a large landowner in the neighborhood; important for us to grow our partnership with the community
  - Especially around food justice; RBAC is hoping to make Rainier Beach a food innovation district; SPR has a critical role to play in this



- Be'er Sheva: grass not mowed during the pandemic
  - SPR initially refused to cut the grass; RBAC decided to have their "Clean Crew" do it, after which SPR agreed to mow the grass
  - Rainier Beach is a neighborhood that is at a disadvantage and needs extra attention from SPR and the City

Notes from Beach 5's presentation about RBAC:

- Founded to prevent further violence/crime and negative outcomes for folks in the neighborhood
- Focused on youth empowerment
- Their efforts have shifted since the pandemic; providing "Healing Space" on Fridays for community members
- They have a "Clean Crew" who cleans up the neighborhood
- Circle Keeping – where community members can gather to talk about their needs/concerns
- RBAC as an abolitionist education group: working with youth in the neighborhood to find alternative solutions to safety and crime prevention
  - Educational programing for neighborhood youth about race, class, policing, etc
- RBAC Mission:
  - Implement the Rainier Beach Neighborhood Plan (1997, 2014) and build a connected, sustainable and equitable community within the Rainier Beach neighborhood.
  - Promote the "made in Rainier Beach", quality education, living wage jobs, affordable transportation and housing for all.
  - Promote a safe place where people thrive, a neighborhood the world calls home.
  - Build neighborhood capacity to enhance quality of life in Rainier Beach as well as to address critical issues threatening the community



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Seattle LGBTQ Commission
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual – WebEx
<i>Date:</i>	October 12, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	6
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Danyal Lotfi, Deepa Sivarajan (BPRC)

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- Gathering spaces for the queer community for activities, especially ones that don't include drinking (a lot of queer events take place at bars, so this would create more spaces for underage youth and those who are sober)
  - Also, safe & welcoming spaces for LGBTQ youth who are NOT out to their family/network
- All gender swim time that is safe and accessible for the trans community
- The LGBTQ community deals with a lot of poverty and lack of housing; having access to wading pool/spray parks during heat waves is important; please give the public access to these during heatwaves in the future
- Using SPR spaces for inclusive sex education for LGBTQ individuals, who wouldn't otherwise receive a proper education on the matter
- More non-gendered bathrooms and locker rooms for trans and non-binary people x 3
  - Especially at aquatic centers
- SPR should hire more openly queer, disabled and/or POC staff members
- More outdoor educational activities for those with disabilities (not just board games, etc)
- Keep restrooms open more consistently; add doors and sharp containers in the restrooms

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- The south end of Seattle, which is where a lot of queer people of color live, don't have the same resources as, for example, a neighborhood like Capitol Hill
- Rethinking the stereotypes of what a "black sport" is (basketball, track & field, etc); how do we ensure certain sport activities (golf, softball, soccer, tennis, etc) are not just for white neighborhoods
  - SPR should not presume what the black community needs in terms of programming and activities; it must engage with the community about their needs
- Finding more spaces for formal and informal sports activities for LGBTQ leagues
  - Engage those LGBTQ leagues about what challenges/barriers they face
  - Some queer leagues have stopped working with SPR due to challenges with scheduling, unfair practices (not prioritizing LGBTQ leagues)
- More non-police forms of security at SPR facilities

#### *Economic Recovery:*

- Access to outdoor spaces for renters and disadvantaged communities as well as dense neighborhoods
- Hire more openly queer staff who lead programs and activities
- Lower the barriers to accessing and reserving SPR facilities/spaces





*Impacts of Climate Change:*

- More connections between public transit and parks/green spaces

*Quote(s):*

- “Look into safety plans that don’t rely on police or on kicking homeless people out of parks because that doesn’t make me feel safe”

*Questions/Issues Raised Requiring Follow Up:*

- ?

*LOB-Specific Feedback:*

- Better lighting across parks (safety)
  - More “roller rink” type of areas that are well lit at night (without disturbing neighbors/wildlife)



## Strategic Plan Implementation Engagement | Listening Session Notes

<i>Organization:</i>	Catholic Community Services Seattle Community Outreach Program and Engagement (CCS SCOPE), Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC), Downtown Seattle Association Metropolitan Improvement District Outreach Team (DSA MID), Health One, Hepatitis Education Project, City of Seattle Human Services Department (HSD), Lake City Partners, Lived Experience Coalition, Mary’s Place, Public Health – Seattle & King County, REACH, JustCARE, Ryther, Seattle Indian Health Board, Seattle Indian Center, Scofflaw Mitigation Project, Teen Feed, Union Gospel Mission, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
<i>Meeting Location/Format:</i>	Virtual - Webex
<i>Date:</i>	October 20, 2021
<i>Number of Participants:</i>	63
<i>SPR Staff in Attendance:</i>	Jesús Aguirre, Selena Elmer, Danyal Lotfi, Donna Waters

### Notes:

#### *Public Health & Well-Being:*

- More drinking water facilities and 24-hour bathrooms (x2)
  - JA: 24-hour bathrooms are a particular challenge for us – we are still working through how to prioritize these, but continues to be of priority
- Real luck when we’ve partnered with outreach teams who know the individuals living in the community, would like to offer to partner strategically to build solutions (REACH)

#### *Racial Reckoning:*

- As everyone is aware, the population we work with – unhoused folks – primarily composed of POC – how does SPR see that relationship of racial equity when it comes to removal of encampments in parks, how do we look at that relationship and literally removing indigenous and Black people from the land?
  - JA: We’re responsible for maximizing access to parks and recreation facilities and amenities. My job, and in the City charter it’s laid out that this is part of my job. These are the most marginalized people in our City. We try to find the balance – try to prioritize when we request removals – it isn’t necessarily to say we’re specifically trying to get folks out of our parks. That’s the challenge we as a community and a city are facing.
- Seems like the dichotomy is really clear – indigenous people are being removed from land they historically occupied.
  - JA: As a community, we can make a decision to give back the land. I’m not saying we aren’t on stolen land, and I’m not saying everyone doesn’t deserve the opportunity to thrive. We have land that is dedicated by community, by society for a specific purpose, which is currently being used for multiple purposes. Within the current structure, the current framing – need to find the right balance that honors humanity.
- Removal of people from parks is inherently inequitable. Can’t be done equitably. How are the decisions being made, and will the ante be upped about making this racially equitable?
- I haven’t seen the City take any measures to attempt to address this disparity – even moving from Navigation to the HOPE team, we’re told this is the most equitable way things can be done. Now



moving to RHA, many staff of HOPE team and coordinated entry for all system – painting it a different color, but it's the same thing.

- I wanted to add that there is often a discussion in this group regarding the tension that exists when people in park encampments are prioritized for shelter, effectively leaving no shelter spots for other unsheltered folks in the city.
  - **JA:** It's a great fundamental question about who is prioritized – I'd love to hear from you how you recommend we do what we do to balance providing access to land and incorporating racial equity. If you were the Superintendent of SPR – how would you do this? Say either, anyone who wants to live in a park can live in a park, or no one can live in a park? As we move forward – as we hear the challenges we have as a City – how do we move the work forward and invest in the right places to continue to do this work in a way that serves community?
- I want to thank you for responding this way – perhaps we should have a further discussion – I think there are other ways to do it. I'm not the only one who has these ideas. Something that is triggering – followed by a presentation about equity and social justice, and this is the process we're working in, which is not equitable – definitely open to having a discussion about how we are open to making things better.
  - **JA:** We're trying to work through this as well. My expertise isn't to make decisions about our treatment of unhoused individuals. The work of encampments and providing service – that's not really out work at SPR, we've always had work – we are talking about equity when it comes to our approach to core parks and recreation services.
- Is SPR having a conversation about the prioritization of the parks? I do street outreach and am witnessing folks are moving into parks because then they're prioritized for shelter units – Ballard becoming visible and being prioritized? Is that a conversation SPR is having about how that's going to perpetuate more of the same?
  - **JA:** Need to work with Donna to get an answer there. To ensure I understand your question - when we're prioritizing encampments for removal, how do we reckon with that attracting folks into encampments? When we see how things settle out with the budget, we can come back and seek your guidance and feedback.

*Miscellaneous:*

- Want to understand how encampment removals are prioritized and what services are offered to folks, and how it's going to shift during the pandemic?
  - **JA:** When decisions are made about removals (we don't lead that), we come in and relocate. We're charged with stewarding our lands and accessibility – focus on encampments that are creating challenging situations in terms of access, safety, environmental critical areas
- Seems to be in contradiction to what we've been told regarding decision-making – sometimes decisions are made by SPR to remove encampments, not necessarily in collaboration with HSD
  - **JA:** We have our own internal team – we have discussions to get input from recreation team and others to understand where our impacts are – we have a running list of where encampments are. In some cases, incidents will occur (i.e., fires, etc.) – once we have prioritization, Donna meets with HSD and folks from the Mayor's Office to discuss prioritization – sometimes our prioritization is agreed upon, and sometimes it isn't. That's how it works – it's collaborative. HSD leads when it comes to outreach and understanding whether there's enough shelter people can be moved to before we make a decision about moving encampments. Our job is to determine how we staff it and work to implement.



## Seattle Parks & Recreation

- If HSD was to meet with you and there aren't enough shelter spaces to move them, what would happen?
  - **JA:** we leave them where they are (which is exactly what's been happening). Some on the lower priority list jump the line.
- Question around future Mayor's budget – looks as though some HOPE team personnel will move over to parks? Unclear what's going to RHA and what's going to the City?
  - **JA:** Next phase of work – I don't have a lot of specificity and insight – part of the charge here, and part of the reason some of the resources are staying with the City is the idea is as the work transitions to the regional authority, we can do it in a way that honors the process of referrals but also gives us the resources to do that work – still working through what those individuals will be doing – functions will remain in terms of identifying shelter, housing, beds – continue to be the purview of human services and regional authority. Our function continues to be to help with prioritization, collect data, ensure we have information – we're in a fuzzy situation – want to make sure there's an effective transition. Council hasn't finalized the budget, don't know what will happen yet.