

To: Chair Drechsler and Planning Commissioners
From: Tina Osterink, Natural Resources Planner
Memo Date: Sept. 18, 2020
Meeting Date: Sept. 28, 2020
Subject: Undeveloped Parks Concept Planning Update
Attachments: A: [Gresham Parks Concept Plan Final Report](#)
B: Gresham Undeveloped Park Map

The purpose of this work session is to provide an update on the Parks Concept Planning project that is an element of the 2020 Council Work Plan project called *Parks Assets and Opportunities*. Staff will share draft Concept Plans for the city's six undeveloped parks along with a summary of community engagement and feedback received as part of the process to develop the concepts.

The overall public purpose and community outcome of this project is an enhanced park system that reflects the needs and desires of the community. Information resulting from this project will be used to help inform Council decisions regarding prioritization of investment and future development of the larger City of Gresham parks system.

BACKGROUND

City staff and Juncus Studios, LLC consultants have created draft concept plans and a final report for Gresham's six undeveloped parks, as shown in the link for Attachment A. The plans will support City Council's community goals for livability and natural resource protection, incorporate site opportunities, and reflect community desires. These are high-level concepts that can be used as a starting point for future master plan processes. Master planning would require funding, additional outreach and a more refined design process.

Two of the parks are community parks and four are neighborhood parks as shown in Attachment B. In general, community parks are sized and designed to accommodate visitors from throughout the city and region. Neighborhood parks are smaller in size and designed to serve nearby neighborhoods.

The following are the parks for which concept plans were developed:

- Southeast Community Park (16.1 acres)
- Southwest Community Park (34.1 acres)
- Jenne Butte Neighborhood Park (6.7 acres)
- East Gresham Neighborhood Park (5.6 acres)
- Southeast Neighborhood Park (6.5 acres)
- Columbia View Neighborhood Park (7.5 acres)

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Engaging the community to make sure all voices were heard was vital to the project planning process, which included three community engagement phases.

During *Phase One*, residents attended on-site park and neighborhood meetings, completed surveys, and received social and print media updates. Following is a list of the outreach conducted for this first phase:

- Six on-site Park Concept Plan Outreach Meetings engaging 300 residents
- Two Community Park Online Surveys engaging 360 participants
- Four Neighborhood Park Online Questionnaires engaging 150 participants
- Four Neighborhood Association Meetings
- Six Citywide Outreach Events
- Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations
- Advertised on web, social media, utility inserts (20,000) and newsletter (52,000)
- Directly engaged 100 youth.

During *Phase Two*, information from Phase One was used as a basis in developing conceptual designs for each park. Elements included in the designs for each park relied heavily on comments collected during on-site outreach, open house sessions, and a Council Parks Listening Session. Subsequent community meetings focused on specifics relating to each park's conceptual design elements and community members weighed in on possible locations of amenities within parks. The elements were also placed within "zones" of different levels of activity. The zones define distinct areas where protection and preservation of the natural environment is desired and areas where recreation and other public uses could be maximized.

During *Phase Three*, neighborhood groups, residents and community-based organizations looked at draft designs using a visual online tool called Story Map. The tool let people choose what activities they most desired at the different parks, share their vision of the parks, and comment on whether it meets family and community needs. English and Spanish versions of the Story Map tool were shared with various groups to ensure the concept plans reflect a balance between local desires and needs with those of the larger community. A final virtual informational open house is scheduled for September 22 to share feedback on the six conceptual designs, take suggestions, and respond to questions.

Key questions for the Planning Commission are:

1. Do you have questions or input on the planning and engagement process and/or final concept park designs?
2. Are there additional suggestions you would like staff to consider?

NEXT STEPS

Staff will share the final concept plans and report with City Council at an Oct. 20 policy development meeting.