

# INCLUSIVE OUTREACH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

*“The Race and Social Justice Initiative is not a single project, but an ongoing commitment to a new way of doing business, of working to overcome institutional racism and create the kind of community where equity in opportunity exists for everyone.”*

**– Mayor Mike McGinn**



**ADVANCE OPPORTUNITY.  
ACHIEVE EQUITY.**

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**Seattle Parks Department's Inclusive  
Outreach and Public Engagement Plan  
for Seattle Park's Legacy Plan  
May 21, 2013 Draft**

# 4. PLAN

## **INCLUSIVE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

Identify the need for and purpose of public engagement. Identify the appropriate level of community involvement with staff and through early consultation with key stakeholders. Develop a public involvement plan, including strategies for inclusive engagement.

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The following three steps are recommended before filling out the rest of the worksheet:

	<b>Description</b>
<b>Step 1</b>	Review inclusive engagement strategies (see Section 2), and the public engagement matrix (see Section 5).
<b>Step 2</b>	Identify appropriate staff to complete the analysis; determine whether Change Team and/or Core Team assistance would be beneficial. The Department of Neighborhoods' District Coordinators and the Customer Service Bureau are also key resources for your public engagement planning.
<b>Step 3</b>	Collect data necessary for completion of the Racial Equity Impact Analysis (see sidebar for resources).

### **1. What is the scope and goals of the issue/process?**

**Provide description:** (Does it build on something existing or is this new? Is it demographically based? Citywide versus smaller geographic area; non-geographic; affects everyone equally or some groups more than others. What is the final product?)

To honor Parks' 130-year legacy and to plan for our future, Seattle Parks and Recreation (Parks) needs to hear from Seattle residents, park neighbors and park users. Accordingly, Parks is embarking on a planning process to develop a strategic direction for the future. Three key questions to be addressed include:

- Are our resources deployed in the most effective manner?
- What is the public view of our park system?
- What are the basic services Parks provides?

The culmination of this planning process is a Legacy Plan that sets the framework, policy decisions, and priorities for future funding for parks and Recreation.

Our first key goal is to engage the public to help plan the future of Seattle's parks, community centers and other facilities. Parks is starting an important public conversation to ensure we have a great park system for generations to come. This is a citywide effort.

The second key goal of the Parks Legacy Plan is to develop specific strategies and policy initiatives that will improve access and opportunities to communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations to park programs, facilities, and services. This important goal is consistent with the Parks' core values of providing Access, Opportunity, and Sustainability to the citizens it serve. A third and equally important goal

is to make sure that the plan receives substantive feedback and input from diverse communities and immigrant and refugee populations that have historically not participated in public meetings regarding policy and funding decisions anticipated by city governments. A final goal is that the plan includes future funding priorities for parks and recreation that reflect the needs of communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations.

To that end, as part of its outreach strategies, Parks scheduled 6 public meetings in May 2013 to gather public input for the future of our parks, community centers, swimming pools or other facilities. To get the word out about these meetings, Parks will utilize the Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Community Organization Resources list, the immigrant and Refugee community contacts compiled by a consultant it hired in 2012; reach out to the Mayor's Office of Immigration and Refugee to market the meetings and plan to its community contacts and constituents, and have its community center Recreation Coordinators send out info about these meetings to their community contact lists, i.e., such as community activists, community leaders, church groups etc. To get data on who is coming to these meetings, Parks will have IOPE Sign in sheet/cards at all its public meetings. Parks will also look into having additional personal outreach to these populations as resources are made available when the second draft of the Legacy plan is rolled out in June 2013. This second draft will include recommendations received from the 6 community public meetings and emails and/or written correspondences received from the public. A more detailed summary of the outreach strategies for the Legacy Plan is attached as Exhibit A of this document.

Input from these meetings will provide essential community input and information for the Parks Legacy Plan. This plan will inform a citizen steering committee now being appointed by the Mayor and Council. They will hold meetings from June-December and make recommendations to the Mayor and Council on:

- An amount of funding
- A package of projects to be funded
- A levy or a Metropolitan Park District as the funding mechanism.

The Council will act by May 25, 2014 in order to get the question on the August ballot.

Does the proposed project/issue directly or indirectly impact (check all that apply):

xxx  Racial disparity (different outcomes for individuals based on race. e.g. are some services benefiting some communities more than others.)

xxx  Institutional Racism (policy or program change that impacts communities of color.)

xxx  Multiculturalism (equal rights and respect for all cultural groups. Creating the conditions for understanding, respect and interaction between cultures.)

xxx  Raise Awareness (Explicitly educates about the importance of historical and contemporary facts regarding race, racial disparities, and/or culture.)

Please describe:

This plan will help guide Park outcomes and services which impact all of the above. An example of this is Women of the World swim – should this be a priority? Or are increasing or restoring hours of community centers and childcare more of a priority? Are there resources to support both services and programs?

Who's affected by the proposed project/policy?

General population  XX \_\_\_\_\_

Race and ethnic population  XX \_\_\_\_\_

Specific groups \_\_\_\_\_

Specific area(s)  All city Residents \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe how these groups are affected:

It is fair to say that Legacy Plan will force Parks to identify and concentrate on what basic services it should provide to the public. Parks will sort a program's impact as either a community benefit or more as an individual benefit. While a program's position and impact as a community benefit versus an individual impact is important in prioritizing delivery of services, other factors will be used in helping with the decision making process.

Ultimately, there may be programs and services identified from this plan that are no longer addressing the current needs and demand of Seattle citizens, and as a result may be discontinued or reduced despite a small constituency that would favor keeping the program or service. Other citizens may benefit from new or enhanced programming as a result of the plan recommendations. Parks will be very intentional and conduct a thoughtful review process and be laser focused in coming up with a fair and equitable plan for distributing resources appropriately.

**3. What is the timeline for completion of this process?**

Deadline for project completion:  May 24, 2013 (1<sup>st</sup> draft of plan; June 13-20<sup>th</sup> ( 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of plan;

Describe Timeline: (Include any legal requirements (e.g. SEPA), political commitments, and staff goals.)

- PLP final draft completed June 2013
- PLP Steering Committee review and public meetings July-Sept 2013
- Steering Committee recommendations to City Council and Mayor, December 2013
- City Council Review of PLP 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2014
- City Council adoption and Action on proposed funding May 2014

**4. What is the public's perspective in this process/project? What degree of public influence is possible?** (It is important to manage expectations. Be clear about what you want participants to contribute to the process, what they will gain from taking part, and the extent to which their input can influence decision-making.)

What are the objectives in involving the public in this process/project?

To help with policy making:

- X Use it to define the problems, to find solutions, or both.
- Establish the complexity of an issue.
- X Develop innovative policy options.
- Test out ideas.
- X Build consensus.
- Identify and understand the risks.
- X Find the most effective and cost-efficient solutions to problems.

To help relations with community:

- xxxx Ensure community feels heard on the policy-making process.
- Sharing with community the pros and cons of policy options.
- XX Building relationships with specific racial/ethnic communities.
- Strengthening relationships between constituencies.
- Developing alternative methods for public engagement for racial/ethnic communities.
- xxx Partnering with community organizations.
- Maintaining and deepening relationships within a community.

Please describe:

Ensuring that Parks has made its best efforts to outreach to its public stakeholders about the plan will improve the delivery of programs and services to communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations. Parks believes it has developed and implemented comprehensive outreach strategies for the Legacy Plan that utilize a broad range of communication tools and resources, as well as building community participation in the process. This will result in a Seattle Parks that reflect the needs of communities that may not have had historic access or input. New types of programs and services would be developed to respond to these needs. All of these efforts will result in communities feeling they have had a voice in the process, that they can develop relationships with Parks that are mutually beneficial.

What are the constraints to public influence?

- Previous City commitments
- xxx Funding limitations (amount; how it can be used)
- Legal constraints (laws that constrain scope and/or solutions)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe:

As much feedback and input that Parks will receive from its outreach strategies, there is the reality that the demand for programs and services will outweigh current resources and potentially future resources. There is simply not enough money to support every "asks" from the public. Prioritizing would mean some of these requests will have to be

deferred or scaled back in some way. Parks' message during these meetings must include this condition and not build unrealistic expectations from the community.

Public Role: (check all that apply)

**XX** **Inform** (Educate the public about the rationale for the project or decision; how it fits with City goals and policies; issues being considered, areas of choice or where public input is needed.)

**xx** **Consult** (Gather information and ask for advice from citizens to better inform the City's work on the project.)

**xxx** **Collaborate** (Create a partnership with the public (key stakeholder groups) to work along with the City in developing and implementing the planning process or project.)

**Shared Decision-making** (Decision-makers delegate decision-making power to stakeholders or give them a formal role in making final decisions to be acted upon.)

Describe any legally mandated public involvement (e.g. SEPA):

Unknown.

## **5. What type of decisions are to be made in this process?**

Describe nature of decision: (What is the decision to be made?)

What is the funding level for the plan?

What type of funding mechanism?

What are the priorities for basic services?

What programs and services to allocate resources?

What programs and services that can be provided by external partners?

How will our recommendations impact our communities?

Will the recommendations reinforce the Parks' core values and mission?

How will this impact access to Parks programs and services by communities of color and Immigrant and refugee populations?

Who are the Decision-makers? (check all that apply)

**xx** Mayoral priority

**xx** Council priority

Other level of government: \_\_\_\_\_

Appointed officials: \_\_\_\_\_

**XX** Other Decision-makers: Citizen Steering Committee\_\_\_

**6. Who are the stakeholders in the process?** (Include all who are affected: client, sponsor, influencers, end users, “bystanders,” media, others affected by the process/action. Pay particular attention to identifying those who typically don’t participate or have a voice, but who are affected like people of color, immigrants, low income households, elderly, youth, etc.)

Identify specific stakeholders:

xx  General Public:

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xx  Racial/Ethnic Groups:

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xx  Community Based Organizations (advocacy groups, non-profit agencies):

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xx  Private Sector (business community, development community):

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xx  Decision makers (Department Director; Mayor; Council; other legislative bodies):

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xx  City Department(s):  
Seattle Parks

XX  Other Public Agencies:

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Other (those directly affected by the outcome):

**8. What are the stakeholders’ interests/concerns?** (Consult with community representatives such as the Immigrant and Refugee Advisory Board as “sounding boards” to help address questions. List the interests/concerns for each stakeholder group.)

What changes do they want and what do they want left unchanged?

What are their expectations?

What resources do they have?

How can they benefit from the policy/project?

How would they be affected by the risks? (Are they harmed?)

What relationships do they have with others?

We will follow-up with these interests/concerns once the PLP has been completely rolled out and feedback has been recorded and analyzed.

***Check In #1: Project Lead check-in with department leadership and communications staff and other departmental staff for advice/approval of initial assessment of stakeholders and roles.***

**9. Is there a need for an advisory group or community partnership?**

How will this be accomplished? (Will you use or build on an existing group or to create a new advisory group? What is the purpose of the group? Specify resources needed.)

As mentioned, a citizen steering committee will be formed and rolled out in June that will review, monitor, provide advice, and make recommendations to the Mayor and city council by December of this year.

**10. What is the basic communications strategy and goals for the project?**

What are the key messages that need to be shared about the project?

Your input is vital to the planning and continuation of the Parks legacy

What programs and services are important to you?

How would you allocate resources given competing needs?

What is the strategy for communicating with the media? (Include strategies for working with Ethnic media outlets)

Please see Attachment A.

What are the translation and interpretation needs of the project?

Please see Attachment A.

**11. What public involvement tools/activities are appropriate for the project?**

Describe engagement tools/activities: (Refer to the Public Engagement Matrix (section 5) to determine types of appropriate engagement. e.g. survey, public meeting, etc.):

Parks has implemented the following engagement tools:

- Survey of activities—done
- Telephone survey about Parks—done
- Flyers, press releases, emails, social media, newspaper
- 6 public meetings—done
- Utilizing DON's resources to outreach to communities of color and immigrant and refugee populations—done
- Utilizing community contacts form consultant, IOPE, Office of Immigrant and Refugee, etc.-done
- Utilizing IOPE sign in sheets at public meetings—done.
- Looking at conducting several face to face meetings with community of color and immigrant and Refugee populations—July –August 2013

Do the tools/activities achieve inclusive engagement?

(Review the six essential strategies for inclusive public engagement.)

XX  **Build personal relationships with racial/ethnic community** – Activity deepens existing relationships or establishes new relationships.

XX  **Develop alternative methods for engagement** – Approach provides multiple ways for contributing input and feedback and direct communication with racial and ethnic community.

XX  **Partner with diverse organizations and agencies** – Activity provides opportunity to collaborate with organizations of color and draws upon leadership from communities of color.

**Maintain a presence within the community** – Activity builds upon presence in community, or establishes ongoing relationship.

XX  **Increase accessibility** – Activity takes into account language and barriers to participation like location, time, transportation, childcare, and power dynamics.

XX  **Create a welcoming atmosphere** – Activity reflects the culture of the community and is welcoming.

**12. What resources and responsibilities are needed to carry out the public involvement activities?**

Staff Responsibilities and Roles (Project manager, public involvement lead, other staff)

Project Management PIO, Supt's Communications Manager, Parks RSJI Change Team, Executive Team, PLP team, Recreation Coordinator support; advisory councils, etc.

Community responsibilities and roles (if applicable):

Funding needs – communications, public events, consultant services

Need to develop a sustainable plan to support future outreach strategies.

**13. What is the public involvement schedule?**

**Develop a timeline and month-by-month calendar** of tasks and activities for public involvement. Show how these are connected to project timeline and milestones. In developing these schedules, work back from deadlines to determine what types of involvement is possible given timeframe and deadlines for the project.

Key Dates:

- May 7<sup>th</sup> to May 23—feedback to 6 public meetings on first draft of plan.
- June through July 2013—additional feedback to 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of plan
- Public feedback to city council -1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2014.
- June 2014—public feedback on city council recommendation of funding plan/mechanism.

**14. What are the reporting mechanisms?** Identify products that document and report on the outcomes of the public involvement.

- xxx  Media/communications pieces (press packet, news release)
- Progress report(s)
- xxx  Final report
- Formal recommendations
- Briefings and presentations for decision-making bodies (involve community participants)

Describe:

Staff will compile data and summarize the outreach and public involvement process for Parks executive. These results will be shared with the citizen steering committee.

***Check in #2: Check in with department leadership and communications staff on proposed public involvement strategy/tools, resource needs and responsibilities, and coordination with other projects.***