

Meeting and FAQ Notes

Project name: Ashwood Park Master Plan Update
Date: Wednesday, April 3, 2024
Location: King County Bellevue Library Room 1
1111 110th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98004
Time: 6:00pm – 7:30pm
Subject: **Ashwood Park Community Meeting #1**

Overview

Audience members began entering the room around 5:45pm. Guests signed in and were given a project information sheet, comment card, and copy of the agenda. A few guests opted to take a project information sheet but did not stay for the meeting.

About 86 people were at the community meeting.

Presentation Notes

Zachariah Collom, Capital Project Coordinator for the City of Bellevue Parks and Community Services began the presentation by providing background and context to the Ashwood Park Master Plan update including information from the 1990 plan, an estimated timeline, visual maps, and a demographic review of downtown Bellevue. He then outlined the public outreach process including the goal to provide a range of opportunities for community input to generate broad-reaching, cross cultural input, engage community stakeholders, and keep the public, the Parks Board, and City Council informed.

Connie Reckord, from the design firm MacLeod Reckord, continued the presentation by outlining the park evaluation, assessment, and programming process. This included establishing criteria for decision making, assessing community needs, understanding opportunities and challenges, and developing a list of community preferences. The presentation utilized design maps, photographs, and other visuals to demonstrate examples of program opportunities for the park.

An explanation of the community meeting activity was given: five stations featuring different park elements were set up around the room for audience members to interact with. The five stations were:

1. Greenspace Activities
2. Park Structures
3. Plazas and Pathways
4. Parking and Access
5. Park Visioning – Voting, Surveys, and Comment Cards

The presentation concluded with information on how to provide input. Audience members were invited to join discussions at the stations. Guests were given three stickers to vote for what they felt were the most important elements for park improvements at the last station. Surveys and comment cards were provided for further input. The presentation was followed by a 10-minute question and answer period.

Approximately 50% of the meeting attendees left after the presentation and did not participate in the activity.

Questions and Comments

A 10-minute question period was conducted by Zachariah Collom and Camron Parker, Assistant Director, Bellevue Parks and Community Services. Audience members posed questions.

- What is the height limitation for buildings in the park?
 - Response: It depends on what type of building, and what side of the park. Information added at the Park Structures station: there are three overlays on the property: the northern $\frac{1}{4}$ of the site has a 70' height max; the middle $\frac{1}{4}$ has a 99' height max; the southern $\frac{1}{2}$ has a 230' height max.
- How will this park be budgeted? Through a new park levy or funds from existing sources?
 - Response: Capital project funding to support City property acquisition, planning, design, and construction can be found in the City's Budget - Capital Investment Program (CIP). The seven-year CIP budget is updated every two years. An estimated budget for Ashwood Park planning, design and construction is currently in the budget, funded with general CIP resources. Depending on the results of park planning and Council adoption of an updated master plan, the CIP budget may also need to be adjusted.
- Is there another example of a 2.5-acre park developed in Bellevue?
 - Response: Bellevue's Park & Open Space System has many 2 to 3 acre developed parks however there are no similar size parks in our downtown urban environment. For a full list of City parks and open space please see the 2022 Parks and Open Space System Plan at: [Parks and Open Space System Plan | City of Bellevue \(bellevuewa.gov\)](https://www.bellevuewa.gov/2022-Parks-and-Open-Space-System-Plan)
- Why are there changes being made? The park is fine as it is.
 - Response: The park is currently undeveloped, largely in the same state as when the City purchased the property in 1986. The City purchased the property with the intent of constructing a park. A plan is needed to make any improvements to a park, even improvements as minor as irrigation, landscape, or walkways. The existing plan for park development adopted by City Council in 1990 does not necessarily reflect the changes in the growth, demographics, and priorities of today's, 2024 Bellevue community.
 - Attendees were invited to participate in one-on-one discussions with City and design team members at each of the stations where they could express their preferences for the future development of the park.
- Will the City listen to community input or have decisions already been made? Fire station development issue was cited.
 - Response: Today's meeting is for the purpose of listening to the community's concerns and desires so no, decisions have not already been made.
- How will housing affordability be addressed with this park development?
 - Response: That is dependent upon what we hear from the public and whether that program element is determined to be one of the alternatives considered.
- The original master plan had affordable housing – is that still a possibility? and: Is this a revisit of the masterplan confirming there will be no housing or community center?
 - Response: Public input and overall City planning goals will both inform whether affordable housing and the community center from the earlier master plan will be included in the alternatives analysis for this updated master plan.
- Where is your "due process" station? Who has mandated this update is necessary?

- Response: A plan is needed to develop or make improvements to any City of Bellevue park. A plan provides a reliable and clear direction for development, enhances efficiency, reduces ‘do-overs’, optimizes resources as well as facilitates accountability and evaluation. Park plans are informed by Park and Open Space and City needs, community input, Parks & Community Services Board recommendations and City Council Adoption. Because a master plan for the park was adopted in 1990, and if changes to that 1990 park plan for Ashwood Park are desired, City policy dictates that the 1990 plan must be rescinded, a master planning process with the community be conducted, and an updated master plan be adopted. A park master plan is required prior to the City investing in improvements to park sites.
- Is there a “do nothing” option?
 - Response: Given the adopted master plan for Ashwood Park, “do nothing” would direct development of the 1990 Master Plan. If this question is suggesting the updated plan for the park be left undeveloped with no further improvements, we welcome that input from the community. If any park improvements are desired such as improving accessibility, adding irrigation, landscape, walking paths, entry plaza with benches etc., the updated park plan needs to reflect those improvements.
- Some attendees expressed the desire to hold a longer question period as opposed to breaking out into station discussions. The City team indicated that based on the number of attendees there would not be adequate time to take all comments and have the opportunity for more meaningful discussion with all in attendance.

Other comments, heard during the Q&A included the following (in addition the meeting comments made on the hard copy plans, note tablets, and comment cards are in a separate attachment):

- Ensure that a diversity of demographics from the neighborhood are represented in meetings.
- Engage more with the youth who will be using the park in the future.
- Green space should be preserved.

Project Team Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Company/Organization
Zachariah	Collom	City of Bellevue
Camron	Parker	City of Bellevue
Zarrian	Smith	City of Bellevue
Ryan	Walker	City of Bellevue
Mike	Chen	City of Bellevue
Jonathan	Winslow	City of Bellevue
Connie	Reckord	MacLeod Reckord
Arielle	Farina Williams	MacLeod Reckord
Terry	Reckord	MacLeod Reckord
Jeff	Wandasiewicz	ARC Architects
Emily	Aoki Yamashita	PRR
Sabrina	Lopez	PRR