

# Meeting Summary

## INTERNAL/EXTERNAL WORKSHOP

3/29/19

### Introduction

The Internal/External Workshop convened partners from nearby agencies and non-profit organizations, along with City of Renton Community Services Department staff. The workshop focused on identifying changes that are impacting parks and recreation needs in Renton and the surrounding region since the Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas Plan was last updated in 2011. The participants were also asked to consider the collaborations and partnerships that exist or could be built to expand the opportunities for residents throughout the area.

### Participants

- Steven O. Beck, Starfire Sports
- Robert Eaton, City of Tukwila Parks and Recreation
- Matt Feldmeyer, Renton School District
- Dani Hastings, Coal Creek Family YMCA
- Cailin Hunsaker, City of Renton Community Services
- Brian Levenhagen, City of Kent Parks and Recreation
- Carrie Nass, City of Renton Community Services
- Erica Schmitz, City of Renton Community Services
- Maryjane Van Cleave, City of Renton Community Services
- Ryan Mottau, MIG

### Discussion Themes

Discussion themes from the workshop are summarized below and represent important take-aways from the workshop participants. Detailed documentation of results follows these discussion themes.

- The parks and recreation agencies noted that over the last 10 years or more, each has added significant additional parks, facilities and services with limited or no additional resources to maintain and operate them. Some added that parks and recreation staffing has not returned to pre-recession levels, despite other departments adding staff.
- Athletic field use and availability is a region-wide issue. When pricing or availability change in one city or at a major facility (such as Starfire), it impacts the demand and use of fields in others.
- Human services are becoming more tied to parks and recreation. From senior services (which have a long history within parks and recreation departments) to responses to the

impacts of homelessness in the community, parks and recreation staff are the front line for providing services.

## Workshop Results

Questions were provided to participants one week in advance of the workshop to prompt discussion in two major areas:

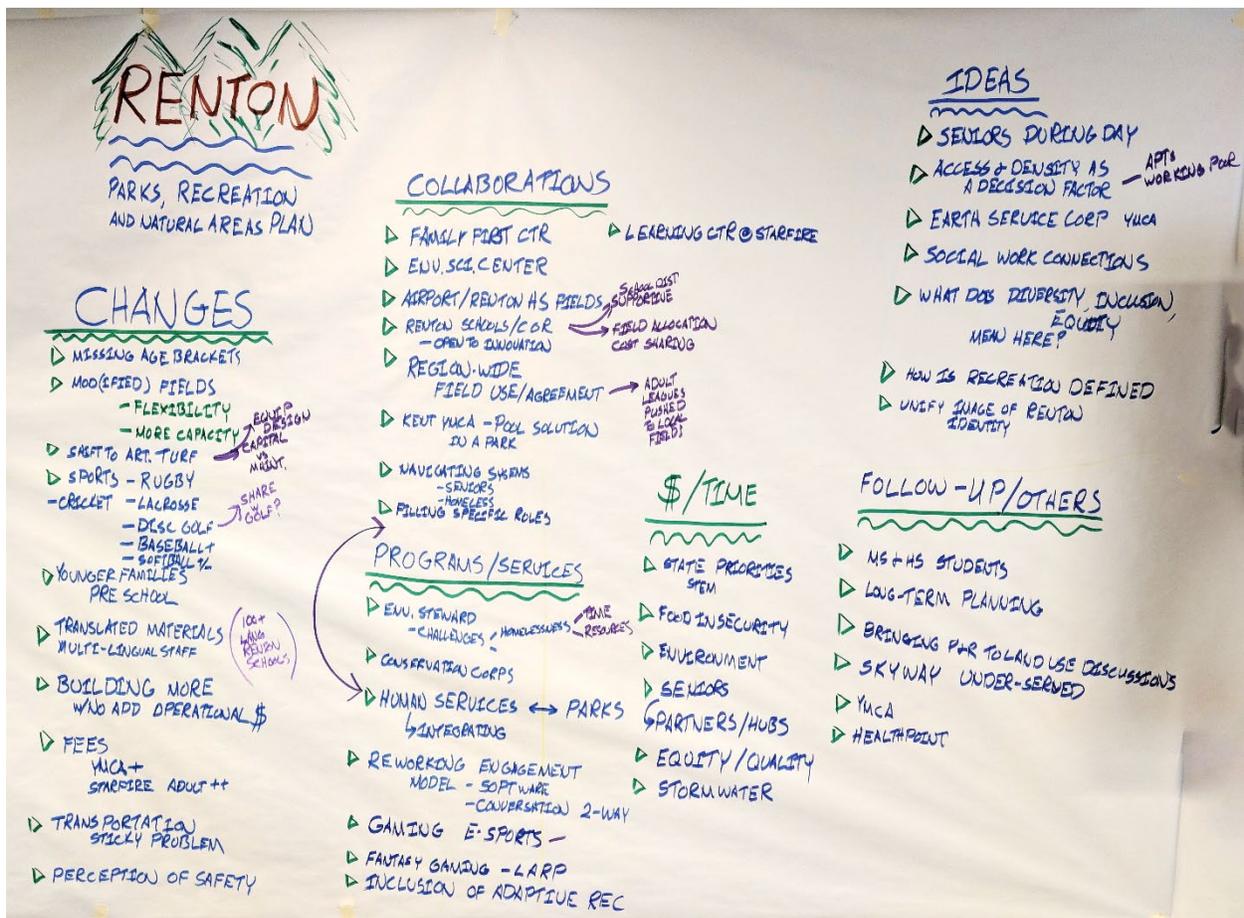
### Changes in Renton and the Region since 2011

What has changed in Renton and the surrounding region since this plan was last updated in 2011?

### Collaboration and Partnership

How can Renton prepare for, support and rely on partnerships with your organization/agency?

Key points from the discussion were captured on a wall graphic that is shown below and is transcribed on the following pages.



### ***Changes in Renton and the Region Since 2011***

- By focusing on youth and seniors, providers are missing serving other age groups in the community
- Modified soccer fields (playing on smaller rather than full-size competitive fields) are changing the way Starfire and others are providing fields and programs
  - Flexibility
  - More capacity
  - Typically, youth and older adult players playing on modified fields
- Overall shift to artificial turf for competitive fields
  - Equipment design can be customized to the specific needs of the Northwest
  - This shift is a capital vs. maintenance trade off
- Sports that are emerging and changing include:
  - Rugby
  - Cricket
  - Lacrosse
  - Disc golf (share space with golf?)
  - Baseball (increasing participation)
  - Softball (up in some places and down in others)
- Younger families need pre-school activities
- Increased need for translated materials/multi-lingual staff to communicate and welcome an increasingly diverse population
  - 100+ languages spoken in Renton Schools
  - Multi-lingual staff are often part-time/seasonal
- Public agencies have acquired more land and built more parks with little or no added operational resources
- Fees to participate are a fact of life in both public and private facilities
  - YMCA (membership model with scholarships/reduced fees for those who need it)
  - Starfire (focus on youth drives particularly high fees for adults)
- Transportation is a sticky problem, especially getting kids to a central facility
- Perception of safety keeps people away from parks
- Gaming/E-sports as an emerging activity
- Fantasy gaming (Live Action Role Playing – LARP)

## ***Collaboration and Partnership Opportunities***

How can Renton prepare for, support and rely on partnerships with your organization/agency?

### *Examples of Successful Partnerships Discussed in the Workshop*

- Family First Center
- Environmental Science Center at Seahurst Park (Burien)
- Learning center at Starfire (under construction right now)  
City of Kent and YMCA partnership to provide the community a pool on a park site

### *Partnership Opportunities:*

- Airport reconfiguration and the impact on Renton HS fields creates an opportunity for the Renton School District and the City of Renton to partner
  - Current field demand is exceeding supply
  - Field allocation and cost sharing are important issues
- Region-wide field use and management
  - Adult leagues are often pushed around to different fields due to preference for youth sports
  - Leagues move across city boundaries depending on capacity and cost
- Integrating human services and parks
  - Parks agencies can fill specific roles, particularly for seniors and people experiencing homelessness
  - Navigating systems and helping people find services, for example: King County Library System adding a social worker on site
- Managing natural areas is an increasing responsibility and has regional impacts, many agencies are utilizing volunteer Environmental Stewards or Conservation Corps
  - Homelessness impacts in natural areas can't be addressed by volunteers
  - Time and resources are needed to manage volunteers
  - This region has not tapped into the Earth Service Corp, a YMCA program available in other areas.
- Engaging with community leaders (in linguistically and culturally diverse communities) to re-work community engagement models
  - Engaging in 2-way conversations
  - Using software to assist in outreach
- Inclusion of adaptive recreation (including participants with sensory and spectrum challenges)
- Health care providers are an obvious partner
  - Healthpoint
  - Kaiser Permanente
- Issues can drive action and opportunities to partner
  - Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) is a State priority

- Food insecurity
- Environment
- Serving seniors (through partners and providing hubs of activity)
- Equity and quality
- Stormwater (managing rain water runoff from streets and buildings)

*Ideas and Questions to Explore in the Plan Update*

Participants in the workshop brought up the following ideas and questions relevant to the Plan update, but not necessarily part of the discussions around changes in the region or partnerships.

- Seniors can be a focus for programming during the day, when demand is otherwise low
- Long-term planning: bringing parks and recreation perspectives to land use discussions
- Access and density should be a decision factor, keeping in mind those living in apartments and the working poor
- Unify image of Renton identity: bridge the geographic divide and thinking of Renton in parts
- What does diversity, inclusion, equity mean here?
- How is recreation defined? Is this changing?
- How can middle and high school students be involved in the Plan update?
- Is there any opportunity to serve Skyway residents, especially kids?