

CITY OF UNIVERSITY PLACE PROS PLAN SURVEY FINDINGS

During the month of August and September, the City of University Place distributed a community survey designed to gauge community knowledge of U.P.'s park and recreation programs and facilities, and perspectives on investment priorities to help guide the PARC Commission in support of the PROS Plan development. The survey was distributed at two community events – the U.P. Festival and Community Night Out events – as well as through U.P. Refuse billings.

Who Responded

In sum, 517 surveys were received – 475 surveys were returned from the U.P. Refuse mailing and 40 were returned from the two community events. These responses represented 502 U.P. households and more than 1,470 U.P. residents of all ages – 42% from 35-64 years old. U.P. resident responses were almost equally split between households with children under the age of 18 (49.8%) and those without (50.2%).

Most respondents were from two zip codes, 98466 (60%) and 98467 (38%). In addition, six respondents wrote in zip codes from Seattle, Eatonville, Tacoma, Puyallup/South Hill, and Lakewood.

Familiarity with U.P. Parks & Recreation Facilities

More than half (58%) of the survey respondents were familiar with the Grandview Trail, Curran Apple Orchard and the Curtis/Colegate Playground facilities. Visits to the Grandview Trail tend to be more regular – more than half (56%) visit weekly. Visits to the Curran Apple Orchard tend to be on an annual basis and visits to the Curtis/Colegate Playground tend to be more spread out throughout the course of a year.

Fewer survey respondents have visited Homestead Park (32%), Chambers Creek (30%), Sunset Terrace (27%), the Senior/Community Center (22%), and Adriana Hess (18%). Most visits to these facilities have occurred on an annual basis in the last 12 months. Chambers Creek, however, is visited on a more frequent basis. The half basketball court on Drum Road was the least visited by survey respondents.

Facility	Visited Before (all responses)	Frequency of visits in last 12 months			
		Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Annually
Grandview Trail	57.9%	55.6%	23.4%	10.3%	10.7%
Curran Apple Orchard	57.9%	8.8%	19.3%	24.4%	47.5%
Curtis/Colegate Playground	57.9%	22.4%	26.3%	19.4%	31.9%
Homestead Park	31.5%	9.0%	16.0%	25.7%	49.3%
Chambers Creek Recreation Facilities	30.0%	19.9%	15.7%	10.0%	8.8%
Sunset Terrace Park	27.2%	14.5%	27.4%	23.1%	35.0%
Senior/Community Center	21.8%	15.1%	17.4%	17.4%	50.0%
Adriana Hess Wetland Park	18.1%	11.3%	29.9%	14.4%	44.3%
Half Basketball Court - Drum Rd.	4.8%	3.5%	4.2%	7.0%	6.3%

Despite the apparent high level of awareness of some parks, several who responded to the survey requested more information about the City's parks and recreation facilities.

Investment Priority

Most survey respondents (64%) expressed a preference for investment in both existing parks and purchase of new parks and open space to meet future needs. More than one quarter of respondents preferred investment in existing parks. Less than 10% of respondents preferred investment solely in acquisition of new parks and open space.

Investment Priority	Response
A combination of investments in existing parks and purchase of parks and open space for future needs	64.1%
Capital improvements to existing parks	26.6%
Purchase of more parks and open space for future recreation needs	9.3%

Investment Prioritization by Facility

Approximately half of those choosing to rank facilities in order of investment priority (481), ranked community parks, facilities for organized sports, open space/natural areas, greenways and trails as a somewhat high to high priority. However, few facilities were a clear priority for investment. Neighborhood park and senior/community center facilities were ranked lower in priority, however, responses were more evenly distributed across the spectrum of investment priority.

Facility Type	Investment Priority		
	Somewhat high to high priority	Mid-level priority	Somewhat low to low priority
Community Park	52.3%	23.2%	24.5%
Facilities for Organized Sports	48.8%	22.7%	28.4%
Open space and Natural Areas	45.7%	23.4%	30.9%
Greenways and Trails	45.0%	24.3%	30.7%
Neighborhood Parks	39.0%	28.6%	32.4%
Senior/Community Center	34.1%	33.1%	32.8%

Participation in Recreation Program and Satisfaction with Experience

Almost two thirds (330) of survey respondents answered Question #6 regarding their participation in U.P.'s recreation programs. Some respondents recognized their newness to the community (2) or let it be known that they had not participated in any of the recreation programs listed (9). Special events were the most well attended – almost 40% of all survey respondents (60% of those answering the questions) had attended a special event before. Almost one quarter of survey respondents (40% of

those answering the question) had participated in youth sports. In both cases, a high level of satisfaction was expressed by participants.

Overall, respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with recreation programs – in most cases, at least one quarter of those who were familiar with U.P.’s recreation programs reported the highest level of satisfaction with the program.

Recreation Programs	Attended Before (all responses)	Level of Satisfaction for Participants		
		Somewhat high to high	Satisfied	Somewhat low to low
Special Events	38.1%	73.6%	15.7%	10.7%
Youth Sports	25.5%	66.7%	19.7%	13.6%
Art, Marital Arts, Fitness Classes	10.1%	73.1%	13.5%	13.5%
Senior Program or Classes	9.9%	56.9%	25.5%	17.6%
Day Camp	8.1%	69.0%	11.9%	19.0%
Trips and Tours	7.4%	60.5%	26.3%	13.2%
Other (write in)	4.3%	59.1%	18.2%	22.7%

In addition to the recreation programs listed, several respondents (20) wrote in other recreation programs they participate in and three made requests for new program offerings. These included the U.P. Festival (7), “walking trails” (4) and Farmers Market (2). Other responses included: Family Fun Days, Skyhawks, Senior Lunch, “cheerleading for one year”, youth art, Cider Squeeze, and “Skatepark when open”. Requests for new program offerings included toddler programs, a bridge refresher course at the Senior Center, and an off-leash dog park.

Recreation Program Offerings

More than three quarters (390) of those answering the survey responded to this question. Those who answered expressed a strong interest in adult class offerings. In addition, cultural arts and teen program offerings were of interest.

Recreation Program Offerings	Preference
Adult Classes	61.3%
Cultural Arts	38.2%
Teen Programs	32.3%
After School Programs for Middle School Children	28.5%
Adult Sports	26.2%
After School Programs for Junior High School Children	23.3%
After School Programs for High School Children	20.0%
Preschool Classes	16.4%

Almost 10% of respondents offered additional comments about possible recreation program offerings, including:

Adult/Senior Program Ideas:

- Adult trips and tours; trips to nearby sites (within 10 miles)
- Senior hiking groups, not walks
- Foreign travel - Elder Hostel coordination
- Exercise for seniors; senior classes; senior citizen sports
- Computer classes for seniors

Exercise Class Ideas:

- Tennis; walking program; Tai Chi (other martial arts); yoga; prenatal yoga; bridge class
- Aquatic exercise and skating
- "Please continue Kayaking classes. I want to take advantage of them next time."

Other Classes:

- Computer classes
- Self defense classes
- Craft classes (sew, knit, needlepoint, wood and leather craft)

Youth Program Ideas:

- After school programs for elementary students; after school primary/elementary age children
- Elementary school age pottery or painting classes
- Summer day camp
- Give kids something constructive to do!
- Programs to help children
- Buy old fire station for Boys and Girls Club
- "It is extremely important to find ways to interest kids and to stress their value in the community. They have a lot more energy and time to contribute but they have to be treated in a respectful, sincere way by adults, who must openly recognize they have knowledge, we don't example computers."
- "They get out at 2:30. Parents get home at 5:30. That spells trouble. More trips and more parents night out stuff where the kids stay late or overnight and have a fun and safe night themselves like Metro Parks does."

Other:

- Open Space
- Outdoor Family Movies
- Keep cost down on after school program

Preferred Method of Communication about U.P. Activities and Programs

Most respondents preferred U.P. Headlines, the Parks and Recreation Program Guide or a utility bill insert as ways to communicate about U.P. activities and programs. Several other suggestions were offered and are discussed below.

Method of Communication	Preference
U.P. Headlines	78.6%
Parks and Recreation Program Guide	49.9%
Utility Bill Insert	48.9%
Tacoma News Tribune	37.1%
Web Site	18.8%
Flyers at events and posting at City facilities	13.4%
U.P. TV	13.0%
Email updates	11.8%
American Community Journal	9.7%

In addition to the responses listed above, two respondents stressed the importance of cost effectiveness in whatever communication method was used. A set of mailing options was also offered, including regular mail, mailing through the School District and continuing communication through utility billings. Other suggestions included mailing a calendar of monthly of events, posting some information at the library and broadcasting information on KBTC TV 12. Several respondents were unaware of the existence of a local newspaper.

Preferred Community Center Facilities

Approximately 87% of all survey respondents answered this question. Most (59%) expressed a preference for a multi-purpose room for rentals in a community center, if developed in University Place. There was more support for arts and crafts facilities, fitness class rooms, and performing arts facilities than for gymnasium, weight or exercise equipment, general purpose class rooms, commercial kitchen or dining facilities and locker rooms with showers.

Possible Facilities for Community Center	Preference
Multi-Purpose Room for Rentals	61.0%
Arts and Crafts Facility	51.0%
Fitness Class Rooms	50.6%
Performing Arts Facility	47.2%
Weight or Exercise Equipment	41.2%
Gymnasium	40.8%
Class Rooms	36.1%
Commercial Kitchen Facilities	33.0%
Dining Facilities	29.5%
Locker Rooms with Showers	31.3%

There were many other ideas for the type of facilities that could be included in a community center, including:

- **Swimming Pool.** Another 4% (20) of respondents wrote in "pool" as another type of facility that they would like to see developed as part of a community center. Others offered a further clarification – that the pool should include a jacuzzi and a fountain for small kids, that it should be an "open air pool," or an indoor pool "like Wild Waves/McKinley's Pool."
- **Age-specific uses** including "something for youth," "area for toddlers," "senior space," "space where local youth bands can practice/perform," and "programs offered to all ages and U.P. families"
- **Outdoor areas** – "garden for outdoor events," "more walkways, trails, areas with shade"
- Other facility ideas:
 - A few classrooms
 - Racket ball courts
 - Golf course
 - Tables and benches for dining
 - Hobbies
 - Counseling
- "Some kind of room or tower for simple astronomy viewing. Multi media facility for public hearings, entertainment or education. (U.P.S. Wyatt Hall has such a room for Art History classes)."
- "An ice arena and a roller rink. Who wants to drive to lessons all the way to Spanaway at Sprinker? For 50 years we used to have a Lakewood's ice arena, now we don't have even an indoor roller rink we need both."

In addition, there were five clear statements of lack of support for a community center ("we prefer not to see a new community center developed," "not interested," "not needed at this time," and "should not be built") in addition to four "none of the above" suggestions. Another respondent wrote in "Preserve the trees! Private developers are cutting so many of them down. UP needs a skating rink."

The idea of a community center also spurred additional comments throughout the survey, including:

- "Need bigger Senior / Community Center"
- "Check out Kent Community Center – Superb!"
- "We do not support a new community center. We have buildings available now. Try the Old Fire building, schools, Senior Center and Churches."
- "I would like to see the use of 'empty' spaces such as former fire station on 40th. Spaces in Windmill Village area including all in the area up to 35th St. including Denny's for wedding receptions, private parties, family reunions, charity fundraisers, garage sales, that especially for apartment dwellers although sure there would be all kinds of legal issues, etc. I'd like to see something being done to avoid the depressing sight of empty stores and run down buildings. Plus it would meet a need for just such temporary space. Christmas bazaars by private for profit individuals artists, etc. could be charged according to intake, plus a usage fee for all users."
- "Stop spending now. Everything looks great."
- "Keep community cost down."
- "We have a YMCA in our backyard. We do not need these – weight room, gym or locker room."
- "Pierce County does not need any more theatres."

Ways to Fund a Community Center

Possible Funds for Community Center	Preference
User Fees	66.8%
Rental of Specific Areas	54.2%
Lease Some Space to Vendors	47.4%
Public/Private Partnership	40.4%
Public/Public Partnership	44.0%
Membership Dues	28.4%
New Dedicated Tax Source	13.5%
Lease Entire Facility to Private Manager	11.5%

Several respondents (11) wrote in “no new taxes,” “use existing tax base,” “must be self supporting” and “the citizens are already paying for it, there shouldn't be a charge!” Another respondent added that the fee should be “lower for U.P, school families.”

Other ideas for revenue generation:

- Snack bar or vending machines
- New tax only if very clear about use; outline budget
- User fee for private use; for non-residents
- It would be a good thing to have all of the above, but rented out so the center pays for itself
- Fundraisers/volunteering

Other Comments

In addition to the survey responses, fewer than 27 respondents added other comments throughout the survey. These comments are captured below verbatim.

Facilities-related comments:

- “We need an enclosed Tot Lot like Fircrest’s.”
- “Colegate Park needed more maintenance last spring. Pretty shabby, even dangerous (i.e. a friend found a used needle while walking her dog).”
- “Need Honey Bucket on Grandview Trail.”
- “Shouldn't parks have picnic tables and benches? They always have been prior to “cityhood” (like Tacoma!).”
- “I don't know where some of these parks are, a map would be nice.”
- “How in good conscience can you add facilities and programs and not do good maintenance on what you have?”
- “Why don't they replace the hoop and net at the bottom of Cirque Hill / Grandview?”
- “Develop the Grandview trail so the 50-year plan is 5 years. Boat launch restaurant, beach access picnic tables are more important than the golf course. Build it and the Private Investors will come and build the Golf Course.”
- “We may not have used these (parks and recreation facilities) a lot – but, just knowing that they are there is a wonderful gift.”
- “I believe partnership with schools provide effective and efficient use of public resources.”

- "I'd like to see these parks we have now finished, developed. Do not cut down any more trees or use wooded areas for developments at all. Leave some nature as it is!"

Other comments and questions

- "My husband and I have lived in the same house, in University Place for 47 years. We have raised three children who all live in University Place. We fully support our town, so please explain to me why there is money for new parks, a new town center but University Place can not finish the landscaping it started on 26th and Bridgeport. Walgreen's looks beautiful but 26th St. looks like someone dumped dirt and rocks and then forgot it. What a shame the "old" University Place doesn't count."
- "We don't like living in U.P. anymore - after 14 years- we will be moving to Tacoma soon. They are raping the land and causing unbearable traffic!"
- "I moved to U. Place recently and our family grew up across the street from Fircrest Park - great! I would support parks and all activities- young people need activities away from TV, along with all ages 5 - 80 years. Thank You."
- "Thank you for asking!"
- "Do we have a local paper?"
- "We miss the U.P. Journal. Everyone I know does."
- "Farmers Market What happened this year?"
- "Why not get all U.P. residents in U.P. School tax zone? It's about time."
- "More streets – reduce bottlenecks!"
- "Tax relief should be the highest priority."