

Open House 2 Outreach Summary

Overview

Pierce County Parks and Recreation (PCPR) is conducting a feasibility study for an event stage in the Central Meadow at Chambers Creek Regional Park. To gauge public interest and solicit feedback on early stage concepts from the study, project staff hosted an open house on Thursday, June 27, 2019, from 6-8 p.m. at the Environmental Services Building (9850 64th Street W, University Place, WA) and hosted an online survey on the project website from June 27 – July 12.

At the open house, project team members greeted attendees and invited them to sign in, peruse project displays, and ask questions of project staff. Project Manager Benjamin Barrett and members of the consultant team gave a presentation about the goals of the feasibility study, early concepts of three potential stage locations (North, South, West), and findings from their initial analysis. They also shared that PCPR is interested in building potential picnic shelters surrounding the Central Meadow.



Notifications

People were informed about the open house through:

- Postcards sent to over 675 residences within approximately a quarter mile of Chambers Creek Regional Park
- Updates to the Pierce County's Chambers Creek Regional Park website
- Notices in the park, including flyers in kiosks, a banner next to the pathway leading down to the Central Meadow, and A-frame signs along the Grandview Trail
- Social media posts on the PCPR Instagram and Facebook
- Targeted emails or Facebook messages to community groups including SunDogs, Chambers Creek Foundation, and Steilacoom Kiwanis Club
- A press release and announcements/ads/community calendar postings in local media outlets, including:
 - Tacoma News Tribune
 - The Suburban Times
 - Tacoma Daily Index
 - Town of Steilacoom monthly newsletter
 - City of DuPont online news
 - City of University Place online news

Summary of Community Feedback

In-person feedback

The open house drew 23 attendees. Project staff invited questions and comments following the presentation and encouraged attendees to share their feedback by commenting directly on boards around the room or completing paper surveys.

Presentation Q&A

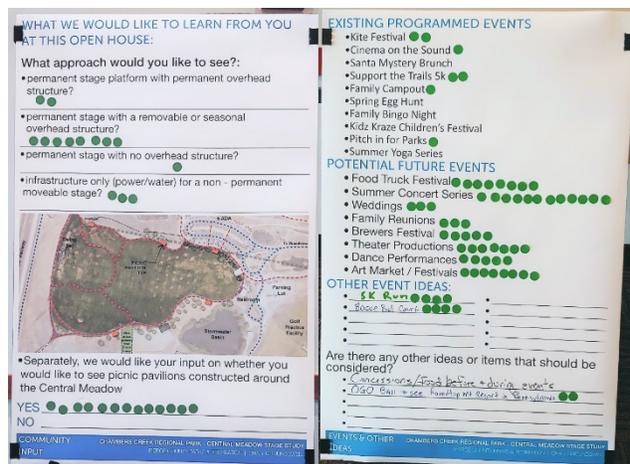
Following the presentation, attendees shared questions and comments on the following topics:

Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking capacity and access, particularly during events • Fees associated with event parking • Coordination of parking needs with the planned Chambers Bay Resort
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts to neighbors and regular park uses • Types and frequency of events • Ticketed versus free events • Opportunity for regional performance space
Access and operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partial park closures during events • Traffic management and access during events • Staffing for event sales, operations, and set up
Process and transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCPR's reasons for evaluating an event stage and whether any decisions have already been made • Financial gains, if any, from having an event stage • Funding sources and tax impacts for residents • Community outreach process
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location suggestions and feedback • Potential impacts to nesting birds

Interactive board comments

With stickers and markers, open house attendees were invited to provide project feedback directly on meeting display boards. Most participants preferred the South Option for the location of a potential stage in the Central Meadow (12 responses, versus 1 response each for the North and West options).

In terms of stage design, there was greatest interest in a permanent stage with a removable or seasonal overhead structure (8 responses) with the second-highest group indicating a preference for infrastructure only (3 responses).



For potential future events, the top three suggestions were summer concert series (12), food truck festival (8), and art market / festivals (8). Other suggestions included a 5K run, bocce ball court, concessions/food before and during events, and OGO balls (as used at Roundtop Mountain Resort in PA). Attendees also indicated support for picnic shelters in the Grand Central Meadow (13 responses in favor).

Survey responses

The project team received over 30 survey responses. This included 8 paper surveys from in-person meeting attendees on June 27 and 25 complete responses to the online survey (and over 20 partially completed online responses). Both surveys included the same questions.

Stage support and location

When asked to indicate their support for an event stage at the South Option location in the Central Meadow, 69% of respondents answered with support (somewhat support or strongly support) and 25% said they opposed (somewhat oppose or strongly oppose) with 6% responding neutral or no opinion. Write-in comments included pros and cons of the three sites proposed and alternative location suggestions.

Topics of concern

When asked about issues of most importance when considering a potential event stage in the Central Meadow, the top three responses were managing additional traffic (76%), ease of finding parking (71%), and compatibility with current park uses (55%). Respondents were able to select more than one issue. Several write-in comments noted concerns about affecting existing trails or the dog park.

Potential future events

In terms of potential future events or activities, participants indicated the greatest interest in summer concert series (81%), arts and crafts markets / festivals (72%), food truck festivals (67%), theater and dance performances (56%), and brewers festivals (53%). Respondents were able to select more than one event type.

Stage design

One third of respondents said they support a permanent stage with a removable or seasonal overhead structure. Other respondents were interested in either a full permanent stage with permanent overhead structure (23%) or infrastructure only to promote a non-permanent stage (23%). Several write-in comments requested the design blend with the site and be as unobtrusive to views as possible while others voiced opposition to any type of stage on the site.

Picnic shelters

Over 80% of respondents said they would support the addition of picnic shelters to the park.

Emailed comments

PCPR staff also received 4 emails during this outreach period with comments from community members about the project. Email comment topics included cost of constructing an event stage, frequency and affordability of events, and consideration of not building an event stage or if so, a temporary one.

Next steps

Based on community feedback, the project team will select and develop a preferred concept which they will present at the final open house on August 6. The team will also present findings from their analysis of traffic and parking management strategies during events.

