



## CITY OF NEWPORT PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN

### COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGY

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This document provides a working list of the public involvement activities proposed as part of the Newport Park System Master Plan. It is intended as a living document and may be updated as the project progresses.

Understanding community priorities for specific types of park and recreation facilities is foundational for any parks and recreation plan, and community collaboration and support will be essential to the success of this project. Additionally, it will be extremely important to involve Newport's residents and decision-makers early and often throughout the project in order to develop a plan that can be successfully implemented.

This public involvement strategy will define the following:

- Desired project outcomes and objectives
- Key messages
- Stakeholders
- Tools for meeting key objectives and involving specific stakeholders
- Responsibilities of the Consultant and City Staff

#### **Project Background and Overview**

The City of Newport adopted its current Park System Master Plan in 1993. In the 25 years since, the City has experienced population growth and shifts in demographics, expanded its Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), made upgrades and additions to its parklands, constructed a large recreation and aquatic center, and expanded its recreational programming.

In 1990, sixteen percent of Newport's population was 65 years or older. Today this age group makes up around one fourth of the City's population. Additionally, the number of Newport residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino has almost doubled since the year 2000, currently comprising around sixteen percent of the City's population. Over twenty five percent of Newport's youth (age 19 and under) are Hispanic or Latino, and one half of Newport's households are renters. In conjunction with a comprehensive public engagement program that assesses the future park and recreation needs and preferences of the community as a whole, doing targeted outreach to engage these groups will be a critical component of the planning process.

The City of Newport recently underwent a visioning process that indicated strong community support for engaging residents in identifying priorities and future needs related to open space,

trail, and park and recreation assets. Newport's 2040 Vision identifies further development of an integrated multi-use trail system that connects neighborhoods, visitor destinations, open spaces, and natural areas as a top tier priority. The Vision also identifies the need to make recommendations for future park upgrades, planning, and development with particular attention paid to cultivating sustainable funding streams for maintenance.

### **Desired Outcomes and Objectives**

- Developing a set of overarching park and recreation goals and guiding principles: a Vision for the park and recreation system
- Increasing the recreational value of existing parks, including conceptual designs for underdeveloped spaces
- Identifying areas underserved by parks, trails, and recreation facilities and proposing new parks, trails, and recreation facilities for serving them
- Developing a management plan for open space and passive recreational areas
- Recommending effective strategies for integration, siting, design and management of new and upgraded amenities
- Recommending effective strategies for funding, operations, maintenance, and implementation related to management and development of the City's park system
- Identifying ways to increase energy efficiency and enhance natural resources associated with park and recreation maintenance and operations
- Identifying ways to reduce ongoing maintenance requirements and costs for each of the City's parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities

### **Key Messages**

These key messages summarize the **what, who, when, where, why,** and **how** of the process, and constitute the basic talking points when communicating with the public about the project. The entries below are a first draft for early phases of the process—they will change and expand as the project evolves.

- **What:** The City of Newport is evaluating community priorities, future needs, and sustainable funding sources for the City's open space, trail, and park and recreation assets through the development of a new Park System Master Plan.
- **Who:** All residents of and visitors to Newport are encouraged to participate in the planning process and will have many opportunities to give input at meetings, community events, workshops, and online activities over the coming months. Regional recreational partners will also be engaged in creating the plan.
- **When:** The planning process began in June of 2018 and will conclude in the spring of 2019.

- **Where:** The plan area includes Newport's City Limits and Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).
- **Why:** To implement the community's vision for parks and recreation and to reflect current conditions and future needs related to demographics, recreational trends, land availability, funding capacity, and partnership opportunities.
- **How:** Through an interactive community-driven process that identifies existing conditions, park and recreation needs and desires, demographic and recreational trends, alternative approaches to meeting current and future needs, and a preferred path forward.

## **Stakeholders**

City staff will identify a list of project stakeholders such as community leaders, organizers, and/or affiliates of local community groups to build an initial assessment of park and recreation opportunities, challenges, existing conditions, needs, trends, and goals through small group discussions.

Possible participating groups could include the following:

- Newport Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee member(s)
- Newport Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee member(s)
- Newport Public Works and Parks Maintenance staff
- Sports teams and players of all ages
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
- Trails advocates
- Skate park advocates
- Wilder and Wolf Tree Resort representatives
- Latino community
- Environmental groups
- Youth
- Lincoln County School District
- Lincoln County Parks Department
- City Beautification Committee
- Cyclists
- 60+ community
- Open space and conservation advocates

The Consultant will conduct up to 10 interviews and two group discussions with key community stakeholders. Each group should include no more than five (5) people if possible. Meetings will last for about 45 minutes, with a 15-minute break; if possible, all meetings should occur in the same place. The summary of results will focus on common themes, as well as the needs of specific types or groups of community members. Interviews will take place during the same trip to Newport as the Project Kickoff Meeting and Initial Site Visit conducted during the first phase of the project. Some meetings will be conducted by phone if participants are not available during this time. City staff will identify, schedule and organize meetings with the stakeholder groups and may conduct selected interviews or small group meetings.

### **Advisory Committee**

The City will establish a Project Advisory Committee, and City staff will be responsible for arranging meeting venues, preparing meeting minutes, and distributing meeting materials to Advisory Committee members. The Consultant will develop agendas, prepare additional meeting materials, travel to, and help facilitate no fewer than four Advisory Committee meetings during the course of the project. Agenda topics for meetings will include:

#### *Meeting 1*

- Committee introductions and Chartering, including group decision-making
- Scope and schedule review and discussion
- Interviews and outreach discussion and input
- Communications and Outreach Strategy
- Park and recreation priorities that will be used to craft a set of goals and objectives or guiding principles for the Park System Master Plan

#### *Meeting 2*

- Level of service analysis
- Recreation assets and needs
- Opportunities and constraints
- Results of Community Workshop and Online Open House

#### *Meeting 3*

- Master Planning Alternatives
- Priority or preferred alternatives

#### *Meeting 4*

- Results of the in-person and Online Open House and other outreach activities

- Resulting recommendations regarding preferred strategies or alternatives for meeting park and recreation needs

#### *Meeting 5*

- Review Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Advise on preparations for the adoption process

#### *Meeting 6 (if needed)*

- Review final revisions to Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Capital Improvement Component

Advisory Committee meetings should be open to the general public and each meeting will include time at the beginning and/or end of the meeting for public comment. In addition to these meetings, the Consultant will work with City staff to solicit additional comments on the Draft System Plan and Capital Improvement Component via email. This process will include the following activities:

- Summarize online survey responses and suggest any resulting revisions to the draft System Plan.
- Ask Advisory Committee members to review the draft System Plan, draft Capital Improvement component, and list of potential revisions and note any other suggested revisions via email in advance of an Advisory Committee meeting.
- Consolidate Advisory Committee comments and present a list of potential resulting revisions at an Advisory Committee meeting; focus discussion on any inconsistencies between changes suggested by different committee members.
- If needed, conduct a separate meeting to agree on a final list of changes (not included in the current budget and scope of work).

### **Community Events**

#### *Community Workshop and Open House*

The Consultant will conduct a public workshop that serves as a public project launch, to provide the community with an overview of the purpose, scope, and schedule of the project. The workshop will take place during the same day or the day following Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting #2 and will be a forum for participants to provide information about park and recreation assets and needs, and to identify opportunities and constraints that they see relative to the project's objectives. The public also will review the draft Overall Goals and Guiding Principles during the workshop. The Consultant will draft a summary of public comments provided during, or within one week of, the meeting date. The City will make meeting arrangements, including public notice.

The Consultant will conduct a community open house to review Master Planning Alternatives prepared during the second phase of the project, including potential refinements identified by the Advisory Committee. The second open house will be conducted in conjunction with Advisory Committee Meeting #3. City staff will make logistical arrangements for the open house and help publicize it.

#### *Online Open Houses*

The Consultant also will conduct two Online Open Houses to allow for a wider range of community members to review and weigh in on the alternatives. The Online Open Houses will coincide with the two Community Open Houses and will essentially mimic those events in terms of the materials presented and questions asked. The Online Open Houses will be activated on the day of each in-person Open House and be open for approximately one week to 10 days after those events. In addition, an online survey will be conducted during the third phase of the project to gather feedback on the proposed Capital Improvement Program and draft Master Plan recommendations.

### **Community Group Meetings or Events**

To supplement initial stakeholder meetings, Advisory Committee meetings, and in-person and online community workshops and open houses, the City may conduct additional community meetings or engagement activities with specific community groups or populations. Some of these meetings may be targeted at reaching typically underserved or difficult-to-reach groups such as young people, Latino community members, low income households, renters, or people with disabilities. Additional engagement activities could include:

- **Conduct additional meetings with key community groups or populations**, including outreach to the Latino community and presentations to individual community groups. The Consulting Team will provide a “speakers bureau” kit for these meetings, including handouts, talking points, comment forms, or project contact “business cards” with the project title, webpage URL, and staff contact phone number and email address.
- **Conduct youth activities in coordination with the school district**. This could include either one or more school-wide activities built into the curriculum or more ad-hoc meetings with student leaders at the middle school or high school. Activities could range from small group mapping exercises, an art contests focused on drawing or modeling the ideal park, or presentations at school open houses or PTA meetings.

### **Other Tools for Meeting Key Objectives and Involving Specific Stakeholders**

Additional strategies for informing and engaging with stakeholders include:

- Provide email updates about the project to community members. Email updates could be distributed every 1-2 months or prior to a major community meeting or event to help

update interested citizens on the project's progress. This could be done through existing email lists created and maintained by the City or other community groups, or through the establishment of an interested parties email list specific to the project that would be maintained by the City.

- Use the City's social media platforms to disseminate information about the Plan and encourage Advisory Committee members and partnering agencies to also use their social media networks to inform people about the process and encourage their participation.
- Work closely with the *Newport News Times* and other local media outlets to publish articles, public service announcements, or other features about the planning process.
- Staff a booth or table at local public events, fairs, festivals, or farmers markets to distribute information and flyers about the project and establish familiarity with community members. Where these events occur in advance of project meetings or open houses, flyers with information about the upcoming project events can be distributed to encourage other community members to attend. Links to open project surveys should also be included.
- Build on the social networks of existing community groups to disseminate information about the project and engage a wide range of community members. Community groups and venues to reach out through could include:
  - Newport Chamber of Commerce
  - Newport Walking Club
  - Newport Farmer's Market
  - OSU Extension "Walk with Ease"
  - Newport Booster Club
  - Newport Recreation Center
  - Newport 60+ Center
- Work with local church pastors to organize one or more meetings with parishioners at a church.
- Conduct "intercept surveys" at local community events, particularly festivals or other events attended by Latino community members.
- Use online surveys or questionnaires and work with individual apartment building managers to disseminate information about the survey and encourage participation.
- Work with local motels, hotels, and other lodging and visitor-oriented businesses to assess park and recreation needs and priorities for tourists and visitors.

## Community Engagement Timeline

The following timeline illustrates the approximate schedule for conducting the activities described in this Plan.

