

Lake Forest Park PROST Plan

Public Involvement Summary

This report summarizes the community's goals, needs, and wishes from the public outreach events during the autumn of 2017. Detailed results can be found in the appendix of the PROST Plan.

Planning the future of Lake Forest Park's parks, recreation, and open spaces relies heavily on public involvement, and the community is engaged through multiple channels, including participatory events, a project website, an online survey, and notifications through the city of Lake Forest Park's website and Facebook page. These opportunities allow the public to find and provide information about current and future park usage.

The Picnic in the Park at Pfingst Animal Acres, kicked-off the public outreach events on a Saturday afternoon, gathering information about preferred park activities and introducing the public to the project. An open house at Lake Forest Park City Hall held in the evening collected public opinions and prompted lively discussion about specific parks and features. An online survey was advertised and distributed through multiple avenues including; Lake Forest Park's website and Facebook page, the Nextdoor website, a variety of community groups e-mail lists (such as the Friends of Third Place Commons, the Lake Forest Park Moms Facebook page, the PTA groups of Brookside and Lake Forest Park Elementary Schools), the Lake Forest Park Youth Council, and flyers in City Hall and at outdoor gathering areas. A future open house will provide feedback from the community as the report progresses.

Public Participation Results

The Picnic in the park event, the 1st open house, and the survey focused on questions relating to current and future park use and preferences. The results were comparable and are compiled in the following summary.

Park Use and Activities

The Lake Forest Park parks most visited are Horizon View Park and Pfingst Animal Acres, community parks that are active and passive, respectively. The most popular 5 parks from each event are shown below.

Combined respondents (439)	# of votes
Horizon View Park	202
Pfingst Animal Acres	164
Lyon Creek Waterfront Preserve	110
Whispering Willows Park	94
Grace Cole Nature Park	72

When other neighboring city park resources (within a ½ mile of the city limits, as well as private recreation clubs) are considered, the most visited parks are:

Combined respondents (439)	# of votes
Horizon View Park	202
Pfingst Animal Acres	164
Hamlin Park (Shoreline)	125
Logboom Park (Kenmore)	117
Lyon Creek Waterfront Preserve	110

These results are consistent with the more passive activities LFP residents prefer; *Walking/jogging, Scenic views, Lake access, Wildlife viewing, Hiking, and Open Space, Bicycling, and Playgrounds*. It is also reflective of the aspects residents like about living in LFP: *Places to be in Nature, The Trees, The community, Places to stroll, Places with views*.

Activity preferences for neighboring city parks, however, lean more toward active experiences, including *Lake access, Swimming, Dog park, Botanic gardens, and indoor fitness*.

Residents were asked how well the parks met their recreational needs/interests on a scale from 1 to 5, with 3 being the most frequent rating.

Park Benefits

The residents of LFP value the natural setting within which they live. The park benefits cited as most important are *Wildlife habitat, Aesthetics, Mental Health, Recreation experience, and Physical health*. These results help to confirm the community-specific needs and desires for their parks. With the *Additional Comments* taken into consideration, residents express a desire for more active parks in LFP.

Park Improvements

Residents were asked what park improvements are most important to them and which improvements are most important given a limited budget. The order varied only slightly between the two questions with *Trails and connections, Lake access, More parks and open space, Ecological health, Restoration, Restrooms, and more Community events* at the top of the list. More opportunities for active forms of recreation, such as *Playgrounds, Dog parks, Community events, and Sports/games* are also important.

Trails and connections was the most cited improvement. Additional comments further describe this need as being able to walk to the parks safely, have a park nearby to walk to, and have more trails within the parks to walk on.

Lake access was the second most important improvement. Lake Forest Park does not have any public water access. Residents must either be a member of a private recreation club or visit a neighboring city park.

More parks and open space was another request that when considered with the comments suggests that more active parks with a variety of activities and parks that are accessible by a short walk are desired.

Programming

Third Place Commons is the most visited place for city sponsored or private programming, even when considered with Shoreline and Mountlake Terrace's parks and recreation centers. Community events and performances were the most participated in with a high satisfaction rate. Comments suggest it is a highly valuable public resource and more programming is desired, but the facility itself could use renovation to better support programming and residents' needs.

The residents who participate in programming at Shoreline's Spartan Recreation Center and the Mountlake Terrace Recreation Pavilion are generally satisfied with the programs. Swimming is the most popular

activity, especially at Mountlake Terrace. Classes and active programming are more popular in Shoreline, most likely due to the partnership between LFP and Shoreline. LFP residents commented on the difficulties of getting into programs because they cannot sign up on opening day.

Regarding new programming, residents requested a variety of active programs for all ages groups, from skate parks to indoor play space to guided hiking trips. A community recreation center in LFP was cited as desirable, as well. Pickleball was a very popular suggestion. It must be noted however, when results were analyzed, the respondents who requested this activity did not live in LFP, but did use LFP parks.

Conclusion

LFP residents are generally satisfied with their parks, but frequently travel to parks outside of LFP that offer more active choices and lake access. Residents would like to see improvements to their parks in several main areas:

1. Safe and accessible routes to parks, more accessible trails within the parks
2. More parks and open space
3. Active parks or new park features
4. Lake access
5. Continue improving and protecting the natural ecology of the parks
6. More community events, such as holiday events, outdoor movies, and concerts. Residents are generally satisfied with the programs offered at Third Place Commons, but some find the facility out-dated and unable to adequately support programming.
7. Recreational programming improvements with Shoreline and Mountlake Terrace
8. A community recreation center