

# Westlake and Occidental Parks Activation Pilot

## 2015 Year-End Report



A public-nonprofit partnership between Seattle Parks & Recreation (SPR) and the Downtown Seattle Association (DSA), to enhance Westlake and Occidental Parks through staffing, activation and regular programming.

### Reinvesting in Our Parks

**Every dollar raised** in Westlake and Occidental Parks is **reinvested** in park activation.

### Leveraging Dollars

Every \$1 of Seattle Parks & Recreation funding generated an additional **\$9.25 in private funding** – providing a smart, efficient leveraging of SPR dollars to enhance and activate Westlake and Occidental Parks.

### Positive Initial Results

Results have been positive. July 2015 saw a **31 percent increase** in overall visitors in Westlake Park versus same period last year. Additionally, **82 percent** of park survey respondents **felt safe** in the parks, and **95 percent plan to return**.

## Overview

In June 2015, DSA and the Metropolitan Improvement District (MID), in cooperation with other Downtown stakeholders, began a new collaboration with Seattle Parks & Recreation (SPR) by signing a one-year pilot contract to manage and program Westlake and Occidental Parks.

In addition to City funding, this required the DSA and MID, along with partners (Alliance for Pioneer Square, Friends of Waterfront Seattle and the Seattle Parks Foundation) to contribute significant financial and organizational resources toward this effort.

This park activation pilot would enhance Westlake and Occidental Park by providing 24/7 staffing, regular daily programming, as well as investing in new, colorful park amenities in order to accomplish several key goals:

- Increase the overall number of park visitors, including children;
- Improve the ratio of men to women using these public spaces;
- Improve the overall attractiveness of the parks;
- Reduce the amount of observed illegal activity occurring in the parks; and
- Explore the benefits that a community approach to park activation and management can offer.

The initial results from the past six months have been fantastic. Data indicate an increase in overall park visitors, as well as a significant improvement in the men-to-women ratio.

## Park Activation Strategy



### Staffing

Effectively operating both parks required significant staff resources. A 24/7 staff presence in the parks was critical to improving perceptions of safety and making the parks more welcoming.



### Activations

It was through regular, daily programming that people began to perceive the parks as increasingly safe, welcoming and vibrant urban spaces.

DSA placed a high priority on designing programs and activations that were free and open to everyone – ensuring that the events and activities could be enjoyed by all and lead to increased positive public use of these urban parks.

## Public Benefits

Park Staffing & Security	15,280 park staff hours
Concerts	309 FREE concerts
Live Music	614 hours of live music
Children's Programs	44 FREE programs
Fitness Classes	49 FREE Fitness Classes
Food Truck Appearances	928 Food Truck Visits



### New Amenities

Investing in colorful, new amenities was another key part of the activation effort. DSA purchased hundreds of new tables, chairs and umbrellas to draw more visitors to the parks.



### Outreach & Community Building

Providing outreach and support to individuals in need is another key part of the park activation strategy. The MID's Outreach Team works closely with park staff to help support park users in need. MID Outreach ambassadors regularly visit Westlake and Occidental Parks in order to establish relationships with many of the frequent park users in need.

Since July 2015, the MID Outreach team made 73 outreach contacts in the parks and was able to provide ongoing engagement, case management assistance, supplies, as well as connect some individuals in need to temporary housing.

**\$9.25**

Additional private dollars raised in 2015 for park activation for every \$1 the Parks Department invested.

## What Others Are Saying

These gathering spots need to be welcoming to all and properly maintained. The vision for a comprehensive urban parks plan provides activation to make these spaces inviting, but also accountability to make sure the parks are vibrant spots that people from all walks of life can enjoy.

### Jeff Lilley

*Union Gospel Mission*

I come [to Westlake Park] every day when the weather is nice. I like the atmosphere, especially now that it's been cleaned up. It's more family-friendly. I read a lot, do a lot of photography and meet people from different countries. I've met people from Germany, Italy and Sweden in this park. I like meeting people from other cultures.

### John Harris

*Lake City resident*

# Initial Results



## Observed Park Visitors

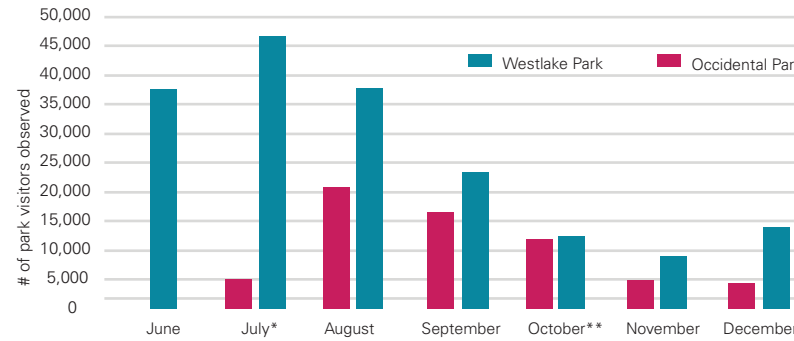
Park ambassadors made hourly observations every day and recorded the total people observed in each park at that time.

Note: This does not reflect the number of people visiting each park which is a significantly higher figure.

\* Activation of Occidental Park did not begin until late July 26, 2015

\*\* Beginning Oct 2015, park ambassadors made 4 fewer daily observations due to a shift in park operating hours

Total Monthly Observed Park Visitors (2015)



100%

The amount of revenue generated from park activation reinvested in Westlake and Occidental Parks.



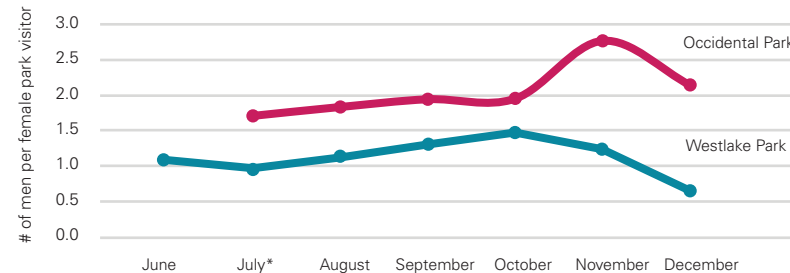
## Ratio of Men-to-Women

Another key indicator that is tracked daily is the ratio of men-to-women. This is considered to be a key indicator of the health of public spaces, as an increasing percentage of women and children using the park improves perceptions of safety.

These observations were made hourly each day during park operating hours.

\* Activation of Occidental Park did not begin until late July 2015

Ratio of Men-to-Women by Month (2015)



11.21

Total inches of rain that fell in Seattle during December 2015. The historical average is 5.35"

Between Oct-Dec 2015, nearly 25" of rain fell in Seattle.

Women's Share of Monthly Park Visitors (2015)

	Jun	Jul*	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Westlake Park	48%	51%	48%	44%	40%	46%	59%
Occidental Park	N/A	37%	37%	35%	35%	28%	37%



## Park Visitor Survey

Surveys were conducted in both Westlake and Occidental Parks in August and December 2015. These surveys were given in person and online.

\* Summer 2015 Survey (n=109 online respondents), and Winter 2015 Survey (n=88, 62 in-person and 26 online)

felt safe

found the space clean and welcoming

plan to return

Summer 2015\*



Winter 2015



# Park Activation Revenue & Expenses (2015)

January 1 - December 31, 2015

## Income (\$)

<b>Seattle Parks &amp; Recreation Funding</b>	<b>60,000</b>
<b>MID Funding</b>	<b>292,035</b>
<b>Partner Funding</b>	<b>140,000</b>
Alliance for Pioneer Square	50,000
Friends of Waterfront Seattle	40,000
Seattle Parks Foundation	50,000
<b>Other Income</b>	<b>123,067</b>
Food Trucks	70,853
Permit Fees	26,565
Sponsorships	25,500
Miscellaneous	149
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$615,102</b>

## Expenses (\$)

Park Staffing & Security	268,937
Activations (e.g., buskers, arts & crafts, Movies in the Park)	106,650
Equipment (e.g., lighting, planters)	110,236
Fixed Assets (e.g., furniture, bookcases, canopies)	92,248
Other Expenses (e.g., marketing, uniforms, event staging)	37,031
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$615,102</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$0</b>

# Permit Fee Events

June 1 - December 31, 2015

Breitling Model Jet	7/29-8/2	\$5,675
National Honesty Index (Honest Tea)	7/30	\$605
Illuminating Piano	9/4	\$215
CenturyLink Ellnos Giveaway	9/8	\$595
Antsquare	9/18	\$1,650
Seattle Street Accapella Singing	9/19	\$75
Benefit Concert for Fire Victims	9/19	\$75
Delta's Blue Friday	9/25	\$1,710
Umpqua Bank Growth Exhibit	9/21-10/7	\$14,515
Pinnacle Integrative Health	10/19	\$235
DXP Launch Event	12/12	\$1,215
<b>Total Permit Fee Income</b>		<b>\$26,565</b>

## Our Partners

### Funding Partners



### Programming Partners

