

# Community Center Strategic Plan Implementation Update

Civic Development, Public Assets, & Native Communities Committee

March 6, 2019

Seattle Parks and Recreation



City of Seattle

# Roadmap to Today's Presentation

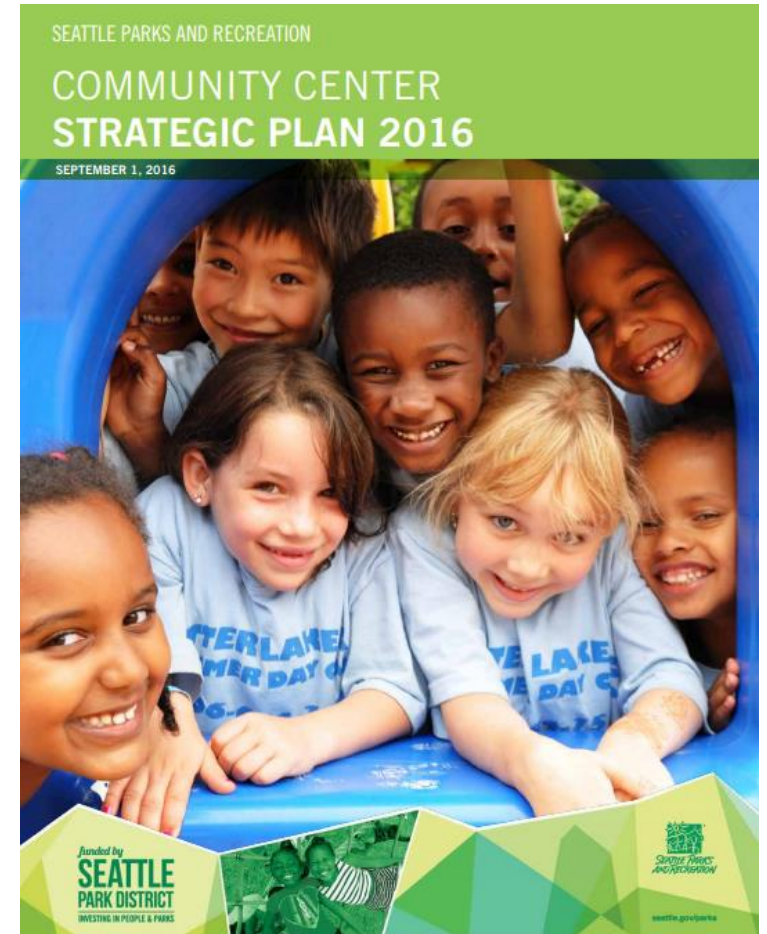
1. Overview of Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) Community Center Strategic Plan
2. Quick implementation updates on expanded operating hours, improvements, and innovations
3. In-depth implementation updates on “Hub” programming:
  - *Goals & Context*
  - *Research and Planning*
  - *2018 Pilots*
  - *Lessons Learned & Next Steps*





# Context and Planning Process

- In 2016, SPR completed a *Community Center Strategic Plan* to guide additional Park District investments in community center operations.
- The plan was informed by a demand study, demographic research, a best practices review, and significant staff and public outreach.
- Large portions of the plan were funded in the 2017 Adopted Budget.



# Strategic Plan Recommendations at-a-Glance

- 1. Increase staffing** to “right-size” busy sites and add hours at other sites.
- 2. Launch innovations** and pilot projects:
  - *Provide free programs in low-income communities*
  - *Expand financial and programming partnerships*
  - *Pilot “Hub” programming – today’s focus*
- 3. Implement system-wide improvements** creating greater access and improved service:
  - *Eliminate drop-in fees during operating hours*
  - *Simplify the scholarship process*
  - *Strengthen performance management and staff professional development*



# Implementation Update: *Expanded Operating Hours*

## The Investment: 6.5 FTE

## The Impact

Community Center	Increase in Weekly Operating Hours since 2016
ID/Chinatown	20 hours
Magnuson*	28 hours
Miller	15 hours
South Park*	22 hours
Van Asselt	20 hours
Yesler	17 hours

Increase in Community Visits, 2016 v 2017
15%
26%
14%
18%
15%
7%

Compare to system-wide People Counter growth of 2%

\* At Magnuson and South Park, this increase in hours and FTE reflects changes driven by the Strategic Plan in the 2017 Adopted Budget and in the 2019 Adopted Budget, with Park District funds and some General Fund resources.



# Implementation Updates: *System-wide Improvements*

## The Innovation

**Eliminate drop-in fees** at all community centers during operating hours

### Improve the scholarship process:

- Simplified application
- Increased multi-lingual outreach
- Honoring Utility Discount Program participation as income verification

## The Impact

**10% increase** in drop-in attendance (2016 vs. 2017).

**4,329** people received **\$2.1 million** in scholarships in 2017:

- \$1.5 million for licensed childcare programs (GF)
- \$400K for recreational programming (Park District)
- \$200K in supplemental donations



# Implementation Update: *Hubs*

*“Seattle’s diverse community requires a differentiated approach with some services tailored for specific populations.*

*Rather than providing one-size-fits-all programming across the system, or spreading tailored programming thinly across the entire system, we will explore the idea of creating ‘hubs’ for particular communities at select community centers... ”*

- From the 2016 **Community Center Strategic Plan**

## The Investment:

- ✓ 2.0 FTE Senior Recreation Program Coordinators
- ✓ These are higher-level positions to lead the analysis, planning, and incubation of Hub innovations

# Developing Hubs as Tools for Serving Community Needs

## Goal-Setting

1. Community centers are focal points
2. Respond to changing needs
3. Promote social equity



## Research

Typical “Hubs” in other cities:

- **Neighborhood, local, and regional**
- **Matrix**
- **Partnership / “Strategic Impact Coalition”**
- **Specialty programming**
- **Network**

Program gap analysis and needs assessment

Analysis of center usage

Racial Equity Toolkit



**Partnership Hub:**  
*Lake City CC*

**Specialty Programming Hub:**  
*Destination Summer Camps*

**Matrix Hub:**  
*Pickleball Pilot*



# Partnership Hub: *Lake City Community Center*

## The Gap Identified

No senior center in Lake City;  
services needed for teens; limited  
public resources.



## The Innovation

*Partnering with local services  
providers, piloting the use of  
**Public Benefit Contracts** in  
recreation:*

- Sound Generations
- Hunger Intervention
- Sea Mar Community Health Centers
- Chinese Information & Service Center
- Lake City Lions



# Partnership Hub: *Lake City Community Center*

## The Impact

### SPR Provides:

25 hours per week of funded operations

- ✓ Lead senior fitness classes
- ✓ Dementia friendly programs
- ✓ Teen leadership group
- ✓ Recreation programming – Hapkido
- ✓ Special Events – Fright Night
- ✓ Drop-In Activities – Tot gym
- ✓ Community rentals

### Partners Provide:

19 additional operating hours, beyond publicly funded operations

- ✓ Expanded meals program (10,950 meals served in 2018)
- ✓ Senior case management
- ✓ Foot care
- ✓ Latino and Chinese socialization programs for older adults
- ✓ LGBTQ peer support group



# Specialty Programming Hub: Destination Summer Camps

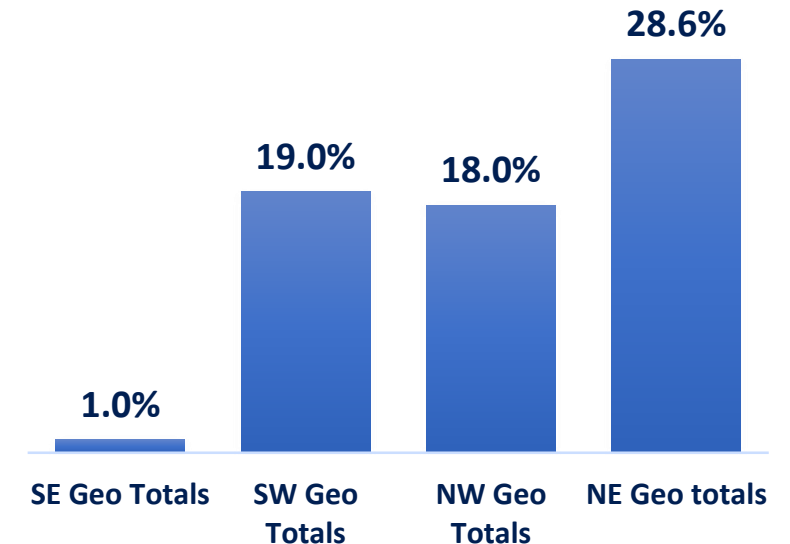


## The Gap Identified

- Summer activity camps\* are a proven program model, but our analysis identified a geographic inequity in who benefits from these programs
- Historically, activity camps in central and southeast Seattle have high cancellation rates due to low enrollment
- With our “pay-to-play” model, we believe cost is a barrier for many families



**Activity Camp Program Access**  
(Registrations as % of population in 2017)



\*This analysis is focused on activity camps—not licensed summer child care, supported by \$1.5+ million in General Fund scholarships and other sources.



# Specialty Programming Hub: *Destination Summer Camps*



## The Innovation

*Developing and leading the program with an unyielding focus on equitable access*

- Placed the program in a region that would not otherwise have this program model.
- Leveraged outside funding from Associated Recreation Council (ARC) (\$85K) to pay for scholarships and other program expenses.
- Piloted a change to scholarship policy: full scholarships for families who qualified for 80% or greater.
- Marketed in neighborhood and ethnic media sources, beyond traditional media.
- Directly marketed to shelter and pre-qualified families who were waitlisted for Summer Day Camp funds.
- Offered free meals and snacks throughout the day.





# Specialty Programming Hub: Destination Summer Camps



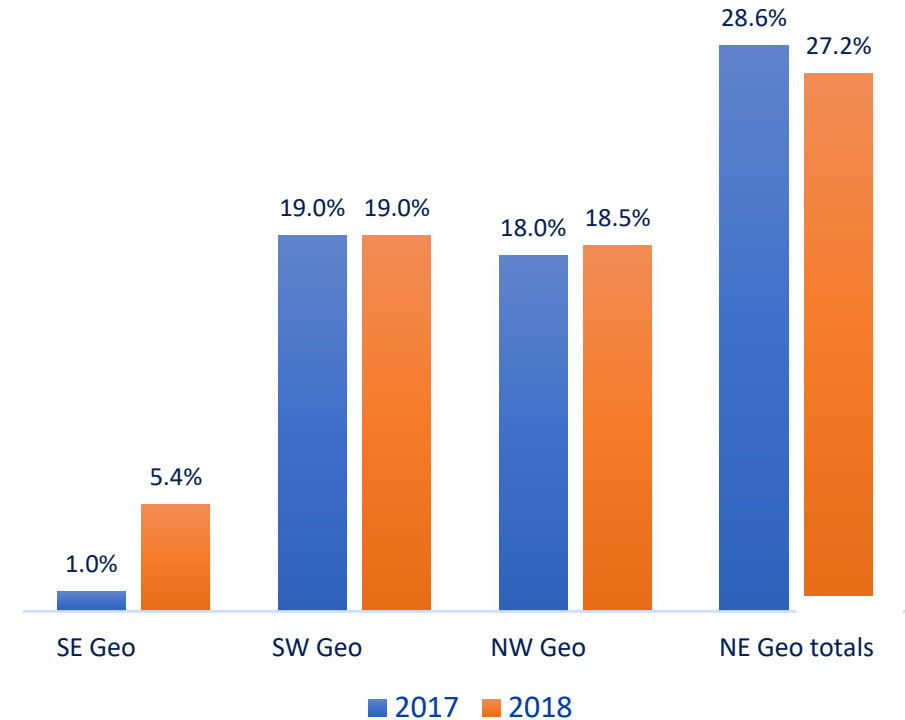
Linda and Lluvia's mother does not speak English. When registering them for camp she handed the phone to her children who delightfully chose Art, Lego and Science camps.



## The Impact

- 40 separate camps, with 582 registrations.
- 80% of participants received full scholarships sponsored by Associated Recreation Council.
- Registrations as a percent of population increased more than five-fold.

Activity Camp Program Access  
(Registrations as % of Population)



# Matrix Hub: Pickleball & Adult Sports Pilot

## The Gap Identified

- Growing demand for non-traditional adult sports competes for limited space and time with youth recreation and other programs
- Siloed system for scheduling leads to confusion, inefficiency, and opportunities to improve customer service



## The Innovation

*Testing new models for engaging adult sports users:*

- Identified time and space in non-peak and dark hours
- Created financial structure to allow access during non-operating hours
- Collaborated across silos (center staff, planning and development, and the community) to stripe 24 outdoor courts, with equipment available for check-out at community centers



## The Impact

- Growth in pickleball hours – 20 hours a week systemwide in 2009, to 106 in 2019
- Piloted after-hours, fee-based opportunities at 2 centers – ultimately underutilized
- Significant utilization of outdoor courts



# Moving Forward

**Continue to do deep program analysis** to identify efficiencies and disparities, and to incubate new Hub innovations.

## 2019 Hub Focus:

- *Lake City Community Center* – Senior Hub and increase teen access; continue engagement with partners.
- *Destination Summer Camps* – Offer again in 2019, assess impact and sustainability.
- *Magnuson Community Center* – explore “Strategic Impact Coalition” Hub to better support Solid Ground, Mercy Housing, and other neighborhood residents.

# Lessons Learned

For many of our programs and services, **demand exceeds capacity**.

## **Innovation can achieve results**

- Some are self-sustaining (*striping outdoor courts, new times to play pickleball*)
- Some require continued investments (*dedicated scholarships for low-income neighborhoods*)

**Our “pay-to-play” model** sustains significant program opportunities, but by itself does not deliver equitable program distribution.

- Hub investments (2 FTE) have given us the capacity to understand this problem in more granular ways, and to identify solutions

**Continued opportunities for innovation** – but the system’s complexity requires deep analysis and strategic planning. With site staff focused on ever-growing operations, investing in professional level staffing is vital for system-wide improvement.