

Attachment A

Seattle Parks & Recreation Department Center City Parks Task Force, Subcommittee on Management of Downtown Parks Program Charter – “Recommendations For Park Management Models” May 12, 2010

BACKGROUND:

1. The Parks Levy Tax (PLT) as defined, is only for capital expansion of Seattle City Parks.
2. Public parks are being created with PLT funds. More than 20 acres in 2010.
3. Newly planned and existing parks cannot use the PLT for Operations, Maintenance and Repairs (OMR).
4. As with other Seattle City Departments the Seattle Parks & Recreation Department (SPR) is required to make operating budget reductions for this year and more for the 2011 / 2012 budgets.
5. Budget balancing efforts will be focused on OMR costs, which includes staffing.
6. An increase in more Parks and less OMR funds is a potential budget intersection that will create a significant negative impact on Seattle's Parks.
7. A new revenue source is needed to meet the needs of the SPR's OMR budget, thus allowing full utilization of a quality Park system for the citizens of Seattle.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide recommendations to the Center City Parks Task Force of the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department on “Management Models” for Downtown Parks.
2. Identify processes to meet the needs of budget shortfalls for OMR so as to create a robust and well-managed downtown park system.
 - 2.1. Find supplemental funds for OMR to meet immediate needs and for long-term operations.
 - 2.2. Consider some form of reorganization to create a new Parks Management Model for Downtown Parks.
 - 2.3. A combination of 2.1 and 2.2.
3. Meet with organizations having similar interests in regards to other civic stewardship models. In those conversations identify, discuss and coordinate potential synergistic activities and relationships.
4. Encourage the “Organic Growth” of Phase I.
5. Develop a **Program Charter** as an instrument of process to identify and document actions necessary to achieve the subcommittee's “Mission Statement”.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Identify and support processes whereby a new ‘Management Model’ and or “Organizational Entity” can be created to provide the management and finances necessary to support and improve Downtown Seattle Parks in a sustainable manner.

STAKEHOLDERS:

1. Center City Parks Task Force
2. Seattle Parks & Recreation (SPR)
3. Board of Park Commissioners for SPR
4. City Government

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5. Associated Downtown Organizations
6. Downtown Residents, Neighborhood and Businesses

RECOMMENDATIONS:

PHASE I: Pilot Project – Create an “Umbrella Coalition”. Year 2010

1. The “Umbrella Coalition” will consist of park stakeholders comprised of “Friends of” organizations representing each of the individual downtown parks.
 - 1.1. This coalition would consist of groups or “Friend of” that are stewards for Westlake, Freeway, Occidental, International Children’s, Bell Street Parks or other park organizations in the Downtown district.
2. The “Umbrella Coalition” leadership will work closely with the “Friends of” members to advocate the parks they represent and to work towards Phase II of this effort.
3. The “Umbrella Coalition” would not be an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Not-For-Profit 501c (3) entity.
4. The “Umbrella Coalition” will be coordinated by an “Incubator” to be selected by SPR. The “Incubator” would provide staffing support, leadership, coalition focus, organizational support, historical consistency, resources (meeting facilities, etc.), fiscal sponsorship and education.
5. The “Incubator” must have an understanding of “Business Improvement District” (BID) best practices to help guide the “Pilot Project” toward Phase II.
 - 5.1. Some “Coalition “ members may want to individually proceed directly to do a pilot Business Improvement District (BID). The “Incubator” would assist in this endeavor.
6. “Umbrella Coalition” bylaws would be created to advocate a viable, functional, democratic, transparent, sustainable and accountable entity. In addition, it would have some form of governance relationship with the SPR.
7. Use Phase I as a bridge to Phase II.
8. Create a *Program Plan and Implement*.

PHASE II: Create a “Downtown Parks Advocate” Entity in 2011 or sooner. Two possibilities.

1. First - Morphing of the “Umbrella Coalition” into a “Downtown Parks BID”, which may:
 - 1.1. Stand alone as an operating entity.
 - 1.2. Join another BID in partnership.
 - 1.3. Become part of an existing BID at department or division level.
2. Second - Morphing of the “Umbrella Coalition” into an “Umbrella NPO” (IRS Tax Registered)
 - 2.1. A stand-alone entity registered with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a not-for-profit-organization (NPO).

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3. Both entities would have some form of governance relationship with the SPR.

PROGRAM CHARTER COMPONENTS:

Both Phase II options would continue existing “Umbrella Coalition” efforts and expand their functionality to best serve the downtown public parks of Seattle and its citizens by implementing:

1. Support functions for:

- 1.1. Empowering the “Friends of” groups.
- 1.2. Community Outreach & Neighborhood Representation.
- 1.3. Park advocacy.
- 1.4. Fundraising.
- 1.5. Programming.
- 1.6. Marketing.
- 1.7. Amenity and Placemaking (supplemental)
- 1.8. Design, Planning and Construction.
- 1.9. Maintenance & Repair (remedial, routine, supplemental).
- 1.10. Safety Advocacy.

2. New revenue models:

- 2.1.1. Assessment of adjacent park property owners and or businesses. (BID Only).
- 2.1.2. Programming revenues. (In agreement with SPR/City).
- 2.1.3. Fundraising within local park neighborhoods (“Friends of” organizations).
- 2.1.4. City Levy Funds.
- 2.1.5. County, State, Federal Funds.
- 2.1.6. City, Regional, National & International Foundations.
- 2.1.7. All of the above.

3. **Bylaws supporting “best practices” for urban parks** for vibrancy, programming, growth, diversity, maintainability, sustainability and quality of experience.
4. **A proactive relationship** with the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department, Board of Park Commissioners, the City Government, Seattle Parks Foundation, the public and other existing entities or new organizations engaged in similar activities.
5. **A sustainable financial model** for Downtown Parks through cooperative public, private and government sources.
6. **Citywide expansion** of Phase II to all Seattle Parks as supported by results in Downtown.

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NEXT STEP:

1. Discussions by Center City Parks Task Force and selection of a pathway. This can consist of a Phased transition or going directly to Phase II.
2. Communicate the Program Charter intent to stakeholders.
3. Detail and staff the plan / Finance the plan / Move forward!