

LYNNWOOD PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2021
Via Zoom

10. Call to Order – 6:05 pm.

20. Roll Call

Boardmember Coelho	Councilmember Frizzell
Boardmember Darboe	Director Sordel
Boardmember Gladysz	Deputy Director Olson
Boardmember Hernandez	Senior Parks Planner Thompson
Boardmember McKeown	Administrative Assistant Flesher
Boardmember Stohr	

30. Approval of Minutes – February 3, 2021. Approved.

40. Written Communications – None.

50. Public Comments – None.

60. Comments from Boardmembers.

Boardmember Hernandez commented on the presentation Parks Planner Thompson and Deputy Director Olson made to City Council on the upcoming Scriber Creek Trail improvements. It was fabulous. She thinks City Council appreciates the attention to detail and a presentation that tells a story of what they are doing and how they leveraged resources.

70. Messages from the City Council. Councilmember Frizzell thanked Boardmember Hernandez for her comments; she agreed that Council appreciated the presentation and the ready answers to questions. She reported playing pickleball at South Lynnwood Park recently. She and her friends appreciated the mural. She observed a young man using the mural as a backboard for tennis practice and was disappointed by that. Parks Planner Thompson noted that the new playground will be across from the mural wall, which should prevent people using it for wallball. The improvements will also include a new handball wall.

Boardmember Coelho noted that he'd recently read pickleball is spreading across the country. Councilmember Frizzell shared some background about the sport.

80. Resolutions and Other Business.

80.1 Approve April – July Meeting Schedule. Deputy Director Olson explained the need to approve meeting dates and times through July.

Boardmember Stohr, seconded by Boardmember Hernandez, moved that the Board approve the following changes:

- Change April, May and June meeting times to 6:00-8:00pm.
- Add a Joint Board and Commission Meeting on Thursday, April 29, from 5:00-8:00pm.
- Change July meeting date from July 7 to July 14, from 6:00-9:00, tentatively set for a park tour.

Motion passed.

90. Staff Reports

90.1 PARC Plan Update.

Park and Trail Usage Study:

Parks Planner Thompson reviewed anticipated project phasing for the Scriber Creek Trail improvement project. She shared an illustration of the Phase 2 trail segment and a description of that part of the project. Goals of the project are to move people to the transit center and provide a safe and pleasant experience, accommodate both bicyclists and pedestrians with a wider trail, and address 60+ barriers to accessibility. Two viewpoints and lookout areas will be formalized for birding. Illumination will be added throughout Scriber Creek Park and lighting will be improved along 200th.

Deputy Director Olson reported that this trail had almost 500,000 users (with mobile devices) over the last three years. Usage is predicted to triple with the anticipated improvements.

Deputy Director Olson introduced the graduate student team from UW Tacoma, in the Master of Science program in Business Analytics, who have been mining and scrubbing the data for Lynnwood's park and trail usage study. Team members: Kevin McInerny, Trishali Ranjan, Gauri Patil and Monib Sabet presented.

Project phases include business understanding, data understanding and data cleaning; detailed data analysis, data visualization reports, and data model prototype; refinement of data model, implementation of data visualization dashboard, reporting and maintenance documents.

The requirement is that a new level of service metric is required. The solution involves park usage data analysis using StreetLight data. The goal is to provide an analysis of park utilization, demand and capacity.

The project scope is to analyze location-based park usage data to identify patterns and trends that will help suggest a new LOS. Focus areas include number of users, seasonal patterns and trends, pre and post-Covid patterns and trends, demographics of park and trail users and key amenity usage.

StreetLight Data processes approximately 40 billion pings/month and collects data on virtually every road, trail and park in the United States and Canada. It distinguishes between modes (bikes versus pedestrians). Data is limited to mobile device carriers with location turned on. A key metric is average daily traffic broken down by bicyclists and pedestrians. To get a complete picture the data can be manipulated to show total annual usage, weekdays versus weekends, monthly or seasonal totals, etc. The team presented data for a variety of parks and trails and showed how the data changed across years and seasons.

Data shows a consistent spike in 2020, which indicates a higher usage during the pandemic and unique patterns for the seasons in 2020. An aberrant example was Meadowdale Playfields, which was closed (locking gates) during the pandemic.

Supplemental data can be used to enhance the data. For instance, a counter has been placed on a section of the Interurban Trail.

Analysis moving forward can include calibration of data using counter data, use of a predictive model to forecast future traffic, analysis of the amenities to observe their contribution to park traffic, and demographic analysis of the park traffic.

Deputy Director Olson noted that Lynnwood is fortunate to have this team of data scientists working for us. The data is still being calibrated and data analysis being completed. The data is very complex.

Boardmember Hernandez asked if the large number of users of the Golf Course Trail included golfers. Deputy Director Olson indicated that the sensitivity in the data system confirmed it wasn't picking up Golf Course users or golf carts. The trail is a loop, which is always popular. It's in a residential neighborhood between two schools and the college. Park Superintendent Peterson confirms that it gets a ton of usage. A good portion of the trail is soft surface or gravel, which also makes it popular for trail running.

Boardmember Hernandez asked about the drop in users of the Scriber Creek Trail from 2018 to 2019. Deputy Director Olson noted that both Scriber Creek Trail and the Interurban Trail had dips in 2019. A lot disrupts usage of the trails. There were several construction detours or closure impacts that might attribute to that. Director Sordel noted that there were periods of excessive rainfall in 2018 and 2019, which might have impacted the use.

Monthly averages for precipitation or temperature can be added to the analysis to help explain certain patterns.

Deputy Director Olson noted that the counters also provide excellent data and she hopes to purchase more. The 3-year StreetLight data is expensive; the City won't likely be able to purchase this data for at least another ten years. Boardmember Hernandez asked if the three years of data would be enough to determine a level of service. Deputy Director Olson indicated that there is another team of graduate students running research and analysis to make a recommendation on how we should calculate LOS in the future.

Boardmember McKeown asked how demographic data would be acquired. That data is available in an aggregated format in StreetLight.

Boardmember McKeown asked if there were findings that staff found significant. Director Sordel noted that the 2020 numbers validate how important our trails and parks were during the pandemic to users. That resonated with him and the rest of the team. Deputy Director Olson noted another surprise was the high numbers at North Lynnwood Park, which has less space and much less parking than other parks. There is an interesting relationship being next door to the school.

Director Sordel reminded the board that Spray Parks at North Lynnwood and Daleway, and the picnic shelters, weren't open in 2020. The dog run and a lot of the play structures were also closed for a large portion of the year.

Boardmember McKeown asked if there is a way to approximate child use of parks and trails when most don't carry cell phones. Deputy Director Olson has raised this question; it might be that we could approximate non mobile-device users, or just use the data and explain what it does and doesn't include. There are limitations to the data. There is also a potential for double counting. It's an incomplete picture but it's the best data we have available.

Boardmember Gladys agreed about how important it was that the parks were kept open in 2020. Nature became everything during that time and he really appreciated that parks were kept open; that data reflects that.

Boardmember Darboe was also amazed by this data. He is eager to see the demographic data as well.

Boardmember Stohr finds the information very interesting and insightful. It is great that that numbers were up in 2020 even with the spray parks and play areas closed for a good part of the year. It would be interesting to see data in the future. In terms of the counters – it would be interesting to place them near playgrounds or spray parks or some of the more active use spaces. Tracking that specific demographic could be interesting.

Boardmember Coelho commented that big data terrifies him sometimes but it can also provide great insight on trends and policy recommendations. He asked if there was an available comparison to regional trends? Deputy Director Olson responded that there isn't. The use of big data in this way is an emerging field. We're leading edge on this.

Boardmember Coelho asked possible redundancy with bikes versus pedestrians and potential double-counting. If someone is using a trail to get to work, is the return trip also counted as another trip? This is counted as a separate trip.

Boardmember Coelho asked whether demographic information would let us know where people are visiting our parks from. It can provide information in length of the trip in minutes and length of trip in miles, so we can extrapolate to estimate where users are coming from.

Deputy Director Olson welcomed additional questions from the Board. She thanked the team for their work and for their presentation.

Outreach and Engagement Plan:

Deputy Director Olson indicated that the PARC Plan update would include three surveys – a park user survey, a recreation customer survey, and a recreation needs survey. She provided a sample of the kinds of questions that will be asked in the survey. The recreation survey will be emailed to recreation customers. The community-wide recreation needs survey will be conducted in April online and on paper, and will be translated into Spanish, Korean and Russian. Staff wants to reach non-white community members. Discussion continued of potential outlets for reaching this target demographic.

90.2 Staff Report. A written report was provided.

Deputy Director Olson:

- The City's YouTube channel has a video about the mural at South Lynnwood Park, a story-telling by the artist.
- The Annual Heritage Park spring clean will take place April 7; pre-register if you want to come.

Director Sordel:

- South Lynnwood Neighborhood Park bid opening March 4.

- Heritage Park Water Tower Project bid opening March 11.
- The Recreation division is continuing to manage programs we are able to operate under the state guidelines. Staff is discussing temporary ideas for re-opening of the Senior center. He is encouraged by the turnout we're seeing at the Recreation Center with reduced capacities. All programs are fully booked in advance at a 25% capacity.
- Supt Peterson has added two maintenance workers this month.
- Two really great Eagle Scout projects are highlighted in the latest issue of *Lynnwood Times*.

100. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.