

MILWAUKIE PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

FOCUS GROUP WITH SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY MEMBERS

FEEDBACK SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The City of Milwaukie conducted a focus group with several people to understand the unique needs of people who primarily speak Spanish when they go to and visit parks. Participants were asked the following questions in the focus group:

1. What experiences do you like to have at parks?
2. What experiences do you not like to have at parks?
3. What amenities do you want to see at parks?
4. What are barriers to using parks?
5. How can we keep you and others engaged in this work?

Date and time: Wednesday, July 13, 6-7p

Location: Wichita Community Center

Staff: Adam Moore and Jon Hennington (City of Milwaukie), Jennifer D'Avazano (Greenworks), Daniel Franco (izo), Jessica Pickul (JLA Public Involvement)

Attendees: A total of **thirteen (13) people attended** the focus group.

SUMMARY

Participants appreciate **parks that were well maintained, clean, and safe**, that feature amenities like security cameras, lighting, and that are activated with family programming. **Clean well maintained public bathrooms in park was a large topic of discussion at this focus group.** Having **amenities for a variety of ages and abilities** was important to this group, as was providing ample seating. Several comments were made in support of **exercise equipment, bike paths, public art, and quality parking.** Ensuring that picnic areas have BBQ grills was also noted as important features as were water play areas. Overall, participants want all family members to feel comfortable and safe in parks.

A theme that surfaced several times was that **some neighborhood parks or pocket parks don't feel safe to many people.** One example was shared that going to some parks feels unsafe because of illegal activity in parks or that parks in certain areas are not maintained well. The city can help people feel welcome in neighborhood parks by **ensuring that sports facilities can be used with adult supervision or that areas for older children and younger children are separated.** Small parks or outdoor spaces that are close to private homes and that do not feature parking can make parks feel exclusive to only certain people.

People also noted that if they live further from the city center, in apartments that don't have easy access to a local park, or if their neighborhood park is in poor condition, they have to come into the city to go to parks.

BULLET POINT SUMMARY

Below is a summary of the feedback, organized by theme and question.

What participants enjoy at parks:

- Water Park – Talked about one in Wilsonville and downtown Portland. Even
- **Restrooms.** More soap dispensers and/or hand sanitizer stations
- Sports Courts
- Natural areas
- Playground for kids
- At North Clackamas – a Volleyball court
- A place where kids can play. Basketball courts.
- Courts are more centralized. Where the kids can be close to their parents. Safety.
- Each park where there are courts.
- Picnic Tables for picnics and BBQ's. **This is big.**
- **Like to walk for exercise**
- **A place where you can do exercises for free. While the kids are playing. I can be healthy.**

Barriers to using parks or unpleasant experiences:

- Not feeling safe when I walk
- Smoking Marijuana – Signage that says no smoking. Or have an area. Make sure people know.
- The bathrooms are very dirty.
- The homeless people are all over the parks. I cannot take my kids or do activities. Unsafe.
- Dogs not on leashes or people not picking up after themselves. Maybe a dog park area. **Have bags available so people can pick up after them.** (This is a very practical idea).
- There are areas where dog parks do not exist.
- There are parks that look good and there are others that are not. Well maintained meaning.
- We need play areas for little toddlers. Off my itself. The bigger kids have hurt the little ones. In Oregon City they have the play area divided.
- Parks not maintained well.
- **When the park is small and there are houses around. There is very little parking. When you park by a house, the people don't like it. They think its their parking spots**
- Not enough tables/seating.
- There are not places for places to be in the park.
- Dog poop
- Having bathrooms that are so dirty they aren't able to be used.

Preferred amenities or features:

- More benches and places to sit
- Bathrooms
- Cameras
- Good lighting
- Good parking
- Bicycle paths

- Water play
- Drinking fountains
- Drinking water and clean and secure bathrooms
- Cameras for safety. Deter crime
- Take care of what we have.
- Exercise machines would be great
- No dry grass or items that are old and never used.
- I don't mind paying for a clean bathroom. There is some charge, and they say the bathrooms are not maintained. **Community will pay for clean bathrooms. HUGE ISSUE that was talked about for a while. Someone to come by on a schedule to keep them clean.**
- More family friendly events in the park. Movie Night, Art Projects. Similar to what the library does.
- An area to play sports
- More posts with bags to pickup dog poop
- Art and warm places in the winter

Dogs in parks:

- It can be very overwhelming with kids and culturally having dogs in parks that are off leash.
- Signs could be an opportunity to make it clear which areas dogs are allowed or not allowed

Keeping participants engaged:

- All in Spanish, not half or bilingual
- Advertise on Facebook, social media
- Univision/Telemundo
- Schools and school districts or flyers for children
- Mail – Something official
- Signs in the park with information. Billboards or yard signs
- Direct and concise mailers or emails without much fluff

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