

# NOTES

## West Valley City Parks and Recreation Master Plan Focus Group #3

November 19, 2025, 5:30 pm, Utah Cultural Celebration Center



### IN ATTENDANCE:

Susan Klinker	UCCC Education Program Manager
Darren Nerdin	Park Maintenance
Steve Pastorik	Community Development Director
Craig Thomas	Community Engagement and Culture Director
Clint Burnham	Pool Manager
Chad George	Maintenance Supervisor
Lisa Benson	Project Manager, Landmark Design

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### General

- If you lose green space, you will never get it back. It's important to keep the parks and special facilities that we have, from our golf courses to our small parks.
- Walkability/Accessibility
  - Wants to see a safe walkable community where parents let their kids walk to destinations.
  - many households have transportation issues, working parents. Close proximity to parks and other facilities is essential in our city.
  - UTA will be providing a new route that comes directly in front of the Cultural Center and will have its own stop.
  - UTA on demand transportation program - should be expanded to serve residents in the city because this is a high needs area
- We build help community by providing resources and valuable services. We need to be supported in those efforts.
  - My Hometown – great volunteer program in the city
  - Have four Community Resource Centers in former LDS churches right now
    - two programs will be relocated into the new buildings that are being purchased, one is already in one of those.
    - Building can be used anytime now instead of just when the church isn't using it
    - The lighthouse church
      - City will be adding some improvements to the gym area

- Have needs for recreation programming - can probably fit 3 fields at the park behind the lighthouse church
  - Used to be an old ball diamond there, but still has a pavilion
- Closing or reducing services weakens our community. Master plan needs to help keep up with what we have.
- Love that the master plan is looking at the community and the Parks and Recreation system as a whole.
- City has done an amazing job.
- Want to see more green infrastructure used within the city.
- We keep getting denser housing and these people need open space, the youth need opportunities for positive activities and interactions.
  - Vanguard Academy for example rents out the pool space in their kids are exhausted after they're done. Keeps kids out of trouble and provides great opportunities.
- Need third spaces for teens in unstructured and unprogrammed spaces
  - They self-police the skate park.
  - Not a lot of third spaces in this city for teenagers. The libraries are incredibly packed and are very nice. Consider reaching out to the librarians to get their take on the needs for kids
  - The three new community resource centers we'll expand these third spaces, particularly the gyms
  - Want to provide a teen space at the fitness center
  - Took a field trip to Texas with staff to look at other recreation facilities - kids don't use their beautifully built teen spaces. They prefer to go to the basketball courts and feel they offer more freedom.
  - The kids prefer open lounge areas - they don't want to be secluded from others.
  - New employees started social club for high school students. It was just structured to provide a place for teens to come and hang out. The city would provide options like DJ's, photo booths, games, drinks, popcorn etc. This employee has moved on to work in the City Hall now and is working with the Youth Council.
  - The Prague foundation is a private company with a nonprofit foundation that works with youth in the community
- Iconic places:
  - What's your favorite place in the city? Usually a public place. What appeals?
  - What is West Valley City's "bean"/photo op
  - Need a destination park/spot
  - Placemaking/Iconography - murals at school and water tower, olmec head
    - Would like to see iconic art around the city and iconic architecture
    - Want to develop a mural program around the city
  - More beautification and compelling spaces
- Want to see entrances to the city enhanced such as 3100 S. There's always trash and then we have awful billboards that advertise bail bonds. Once you pass into the city you

have beautiful views and welcome signs need to enhance with iconic art. Decorative bridge like 3900 S which is done better. There's a big sign like Bangerter Highway has.

- May have work already started on entrances into the city already but they need to pop more.
- Employee environment in the city used to feel more family oriented/smaller
  - Doesn't feel like that now - used to feel more appreciated and more connected to other staff in the city
  - Feels so big now that we don't know each other
- Reach out to Alex with Healthy West Valley and Noemi Hernandez with Granite School District for additional ideas

### **Parks and Open Space**

- It's important to have parks and other recreation options close to home. It's important for my kids to be able to walk to fields and playgrounds. Would like to see more kids be able to go to parks and recreation places on their own.
- Understand that there is limited land left within the city. This is a big concern. Neighborhoods have deficits in parks and safe spaces.
- We are a young city and don't have a lot of mature trees in our parks. This makes our parks less desirable than mature parks throughout the county.
- The Cultural Center and the areas along the Jordan river are one of the few natural areas in the city.
- Existing parks don't make best use of space.
- East side is lacking parks.
- Not a single picnic table at the county park by the Utah Cultural Center - saw people wandering around with their kids looking for a spot to sit and eat their lunch. Park doesn't work for residents and visitors.
- Decker lake drive by Petzl has opportunities for recreation.
- Marketing/Promotion – we don't do a good job marketing what we have
  - We really need to do a better job of marketing our opportunities including facilities and programs
  - Parks and trails are not well signed
  - Most people don't realize that the fitness center is what it is - people have mistaken it for many things
- Open Space Hub - Tracy Aviary, UCCC, Jordan River Natural Wrea, Redwood Recreation Center, Decker Lake, Crosstown Trail - all of these are key resources in this area and they're not linked and not well advertised
  - Could form a really neat core in the city

## Facilities/O&M/Funding

- The Cultural Center is 22 years old now. Funding has always been an issue - there has been a consistent lack of improvements over the years.
- No plan to update what we have.
- Need to fund maintenance on our premier facilities - we build these premier facilities and then don't maintain them.
- We're always putting fires out, only addressing the latest crisis. Need to be more proactive.
- We don't have regular replacement schedules set up for things like playgrounds, parking lot maintenance, etc.
- Often told we are the face of the city, that we are the people who interact with residents, yet we have to justify ourselves every year by proving we're bringing in enough revenue.
- Centennial pool wasn't serving the community well when the county owned it. They were closed a lot. Now that the city has taken over, we're starting to cut our hours as well because of a lack of funding. The pool is 27 years old and has significant issues.
- More work keeps being added for city staff but we haven't been adding additional employees and funding to help keep up with the demand. Budgets are less now than before we had both pools at Centennial.
- People think that pools and fitness center should make money. As it is, we have to price lessons outside of the range of budgets of most residents because we have to turn a profit, yet drowning is the second most frequent cause of youth fatalities. We're doing our residents a major disservice when we can't offer affordable swimming lessons.
- Redwood Recreation Center is in poor shape
  - Need city Recreation Center for accessibility on the West side - this is one of the most underserved areas in the city
  - The county has plans to replace the Redwood Recreation Center - planning to level it, but won't have a pool, intend to make it more of a sports complex
  - Pools are expensive - look at other options in the region including maybe distribution of some specific facility types
    - Have one splash pad right now at Fairbourne and there's one at Valley Fair Mall. Splash pads are nice but they lose a lot of water and pools serve more users. They have a lot of the same maintenance requirements as a pool but serve less people.
    - Advantages are that they don't require a lifeguard and they require less security.
    - Magna regional has a splash pad
    - Look at pools available regionally
- Funding conversation at the council level - consider providing scenarios like a base scenario of taking care of what we have and what that price tag would be versus a moderate and a "go big" option.

- Want an art walk at the cultural celebration center as well as a food truck and small shelters to host smaller gatherings
- City was able to secure a grant to upgrade irrigation systems within high needs areas of the community in parks in underserved areas – were able to get funding without having to match funds from the city
  - Official government map for underserved areas at the federal level
- Need a dedicated staff member that can work on developing private partnerships
  - We need to seek partnerships
  - Old admin didn't support this - the new administration wants partnerships
  - We have great companies here like Petzl, Backcountry, and other great businesses that could be community partners.
  - U of U is coming too - hospital appears to have cut a lot of the community-requested outdoor amenities that were planned for new facility (5600 W between 3500 S and 4100 S)

### Trails

- Sugar Plum trail on the west side is over 20 years old and has never been resurfaced. Hunter trail is in poor shape too. Wouldn't roller blade on either one.
- Centennial Park has had small portions of the trails redone but never a comprehensive repair of the whole trail system in the park.
- Trail connectivity - get on board with the state's bike connectivity plan.
- Jordan river planning with nearby communities is happening at the state level.
  - County/Jordan river study - plan for county property along the river - they want to enhance it to provide more of a natural feel, but it needs to be improved to make it more welcoming.
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- Ask about complete streets policy.
- Jordan river trail - U of U campus coming nearby. The U reached out to the community to talk about the spaces they wanted to see on the campus
  - Community wanted gathering spaces that are culturally aware and relevant to them
  - Some wanted specific elements built in, need flexible space that can serve multiple needs
- Granite district is difficult to work with
  - Costs are extremely high to rent space and they don't like to make much space available
  - Orchard, Redwood, Sandberg elementary schools are closed now but they still won't allow the city to access any of the fields or facilities and don't want to sell them yet
  - Could be options for future parks or community spaces
  - Schools have open space in play but they don't welcome the public
- Trails – could accommodate ethnic groups more with trails
- Address safe routes to school