



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 7
June 2, 2022
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Bike Skills Area Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Review BSA Site Analysis Matrix and provide feedback to staff.	

STAFF:	Jason Kintner (Chief of Operations) Alaine Sommargren (Deputy Public Works Director)
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Craig Reynolds
EXHIBITS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bike Skills Area Commissioner Question Matrix 2. Bike Skills Area Site Analysis Matrix

SUMMARY

On October 7, 2021, the Bike Skills Area (BSA) in Upper Luther Burbank Park was temporarily closed due to significant operating challenges and safety concerns. Challenges included repeated unauthorized expansion of the course, damage to soils and established vegetation, and construction of jumps that exceeded park rules. The closure allowed the City to ensure the park area could operate safely and sustainably.

At the June 2, 2022, meeting the Commission will continue their April 26 conversation regarding the Bike Skills Area. The Commission will also review an analysis of Mercer Island parks and open spaces for future siting of the BSA, review answers to submitted questions by Commission Members, and provide input to staff regarding the BSA.

BACKGROUND

On [April 26th](#) the Parks and Recreation Commission held a Special Meeting to review the final Bike Skills Area Report and discuss staff recommendations and next steps. During the meeting, the Commission received public comment from 13 individuals and engaged in discussion around both long- and short-term options for reopening the BSA, including relocating the BSA to an alternative location at Deane’s Children’s Park.

The Commission voted (4-0-1) to support Short-Term Option 2 (referenced in [staff report](#)) which would temporarily reopen the current Bike Skills Area in Upper Luther Burbank Park in a limited fashion (e.g., a more simplified design) predicated on the City finding an alternative location that could be brought online within 2-3 years.

Following the Special Meeting, various Commissioners submitted questions to staff regarding the option of utilizing space at Deane’s Children’s Park, what other alternative locations had been evaluated, and what engagement had taken place with the community and stakeholders. Staff compiled these questions into a matrix and provided responses (Exhibit 1).

Given the Commission’s interest in evaluating the full range of park sites that may be suitable for the siting of a future Bike Skills Area facility, staff created a matrix of primary park and open space properties and rated each on fifteen criteria, including site amenities, safety considerations, and impacts on current park uses (Exhibit 2).

Staff anticipated bringing forward an appropriation request to the City Council on May 17, which would accompany the Commission’s recommendation. However, given Commission input and a desire to identify and further discuss long-term solutions, the appropriation request was delayed until after an additional meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission. Staff anticipates returning to City Council in July.

DISCUSSION

Tonight, the Commission will continue the April 26th conversation. The Commission will be asked to provide feedback on the site analysis matrix and discuss potential recommendations for long-term planning for the BSA. The Commission may also wish to discuss whether or not to continue forward with their previous short-term recommendation, or to prioritize a long-term solution with a more immediate timeline.

RECOMMENDATION

Review BSA Site Analysis Matrix and provide feedback to staff.