



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Item 3
June 3, 2021
Regular Business

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION

TITLE:	Recreation Reset Update – Planning 2022	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Discuss and provide input	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
STAFF:	Ryan Daly, Operations Section Chief – Emergency Operations Center	
COUNCIL LIAISON:	Emily Moon (Consultant)	
EXHIBITS:	Jake Jacobson	
	n/a	

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

On [April 20, 2021](#), the Recreation Reset Team and the Parks & Recreation Commission presented the “Strategy for Mercer Island Community and Event Center and Recreation Programs and Services” (known as the “Reset Strategy”) to the City Council during a joint study session. That strategy included a phased implementation plan. During regular business, the City Council appropriated the remaining 2021 Recreation Recovery funds that had been set aside in the budget and directed staff to utilize those funds to continue the Reset planning and to begin delivering additional recreation services and programs to the community. During the [Parks & Recreation Commission’s May meeting](#), the Reset Team announced that the funds would be put toward offering some drop-in programs and gymnasium rentals, facilitating the Arts Council’s Immediate Action Plan, readying the facility for some public use (including hiring some temporary staff, purchasing supplies and tidying up the interior and grounds), organizing a few outdoor recreation activities or programs, and providing permitting and collaboration for some community special events.

Tonight, the Reset Team will provide an update on its progress implementing the plan for 2021 and share initial thoughts about 2022 implementation. Commission members are encouraged to provide feedback to the Recreation Reset Team.

RESET UPDATE

Summer camps kickoff on June 21. Originally staff projected 750 total registrations, however registration numbers continue to grow; current registration is at 886 participants. Some camp activities will occur in the MICEC, which will mark the public’s first access to the building since March 2020.

Recruitment is underway for the additional, temporary staff who will be needed at the MICEC to serve the growing number of facility users. The Reset Team hopes to have all positions filled and new staff starting on/around July 1. That would enable drop-in programming and gymnasium rentals to begin on July 12.

The Reset Team continues to facilitate a wide range of other recreation programs and services such as boat launch parking permits, picnic shelter rentals, athletic field rentals, special events and use permits, and P-Patch use. In addition, the Team has been busy drafting procedures and policies, researching automation and self-service enhancements, conducting classification and compensation analysis for a future staffing model, establishing 2021 and 2022 fee schedules, planning Mostly Music in the Park, contemplating which programs and services to offer in 2022, and building corresponding budgets and revenue estimates for 2022.

2022 INITIAL THOUGHTS

The Recreation Reset Team is committed to implementing the Reset Strategy. As the Commission knows, the strategy describes how to allocate resources (such as tax dollars and user fees) toward community- and individually-derived benefits from recreation programs and services. With most of the tax dollars being put toward foundational expenses and community-wide benefits that are present from the first day onwards (e.g., maintenance, general administration, utilities, and inclusion services), programs that are subsidized to a lesser degree and that generate greater revenue are needed to fully implement the balanced strategy. Therefore, in 2022, the Team hopes to jumpstart the economic engine of the division by offering full-scale facility rentals. In addition, and as staffing and budget allows, the Reset Team is contemplating that 2022 might include planning and implementing the following:

- Fitness Center
- Preschool-aged programming
- Social-focused programming for seniors (i.e., not human service-focused)
- More community partnerships
- More drop-in activities
- Therapeutic/adaptive/specialized recreation services (evaluation and development of in-house programming)

The list above largely mimics what was included in Phase 1 and 2 of the Reset Phasing Plan, with a couple additions from Phase 3. Next year, all 2021 services and programs will be offered, and more Reset work will occur, including program design and evaluation, cost recovery analysis, and policy development.

NEXT STEPS

The Reset Strategy is anticipated to return to City Council in late June for their endorsement. In July, the Reset Team will present City Council with a high-level plan for the Recreation Division in 2022. The Team will collect City Council's input and incorporate that feedback into a budget proposal for 2022, which is likely to receive City Council consideration in November as part of the citywide biennial budget amendment process. Following approval of the budget and staffing allocations, the Recreation Division can begin recruiting new staff and gearing up for 2022. New staff would likely start near the end of the first quarter of 2022, which means that some of the new programs and services would not likely commence until the second quarter or later.

The Rec Reset Team will bring the Parks and Recreation Commission some policy considerations over the course of the next few meetings. These policies will help the Team implement the strategy; examples may include differential pricing and facility use prioritization principles.

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and provide input on the Recreation Reset plans for 2022.