



Pierce County Parks Parkland Community Trail

Community Feedback Summary

Overview

Pierce County Parks is developing design concepts for the Parkland Community Trail. The trail will connect Parkland neighborhoods to schools and park and provide a safe route for people of all ages and abilities to get around in an area that currently has few sidewalks and bike lanes.

Over the course of 2020, the project team completed a variety of outreach efforts to inform people about the project and solicit feedback to inform the design, including:

- An initial online survey to gauge priorities and comfort with different trail types
- An interactive web tool to gather mapped community input about local destinations, routes and safety concerns
- A public open house on Feb. 6 to present potential trail concepts
- A second online survey following the open house to ask for input on the proposed trail route and design options
- Outreach about the draft concept design, including a virtual presentation for project neighbors on April 29

The following sections summarize the public feedback received via each of these efforts. The project team will continue to solicit additional feedback as they move toward a final design concept for construction funding grant applications and as the project advances into later phases. To follow along with the project, visit www.piercecountywa.gov/parklandtrail and sign up for email updates.

Online survey 1 (Jan. 18 through Jan. 31, 2020)

The first online survey on the project website was available from Jan. 18 through Jan. 31 and was advertised primarily via a project postcard and social media. A total of 54 people completed the survey.

Key findings

The first online survey was intended to gauge community priorities and comfort levels with different trail design options. Respondents were most comfortable with shared-use paths and sidewalks, with some concerns or uncertainty about options with less protection – like bike lanes and greenways. Top priorities for the project included safety and accessibility.

Please read on for more detail on the survey results.

Trail designs

Respondents were asked, “To make a safe, visible and accessible trail corridor in Parkland, we will likely use a combination of different designs. How would you and your family feel about using the options described below to walk or bike on neighborhood streets in Parkland?” The response options were “comfortable,” “uncomfortable,” and “I’m not sure.” Participants were asked to respond for each of the following trail types:

- Shared-use paths: Wide, multi-use paths that are often separated from the street
- Sidewalks: Spaces along streets for people to walk or bike
- Bike lanes: Separated lanes on existing roads to provide dedicated spaces for bikes
- Shared roads or greenways: Neighborhood streets shared by people and cars that are built with traffic calming tools, like speed bumps and signage

More than 75% of respondents said they were comfortable using both shared-use paths or sidewalks. There was higher discomfort around bike lanes and greenways (both had 39% of respondents selecting “uncomfortable”), but also higher uncertainty (20% and 13%, respectively).

In comments about what would make them uncomfortable using certain types of design, people mentioned:

- Concerns about closeness to cars, speed, and distracted driving
- Concerns about the efficacy of speed bumps or bike lanes at keeping people safe
- Concerns about crime rates or vagrancy impeding trail benefits

Priorities

The next question asked, “What are your top priorities for a community trail in Parkland?” Respondents could select up to three answers from the list or write in their own. Enhancing sense of safety and accessibility were the top two responses, with interests also in improving connections to key destinations, safe connections for kids, walkability, and preventing conflicts between drivers and people on the trail. People who answered “other” shared the following comments:

- Interest in creating more than just a sense of safety
- Interest in ensuring the trail is consistently cleaned to prevent flat tires for bicyclists

See the full breakdown of responses below.

Response	Percent
Enhancing sense of safety through better lighting and visibility	61.1 %
Accessibility: Creating a safe, pleasant, and intuitive route (for people with limited mobility, people using wheelchairs, strollers, etc.)	59.3%
Improving connections for bicycles between key destinations in and around the Parkland neighborhood	42.6%
Safe connections for children to walk or bike to schools or neighborhood parks	38.9%
Walkability: Increased opportunities to travel through the neighborhood on foot	37.0%
Preventing conflicts between drivers and people using the trail	5.6%
Other (please specify)	5.6%
Minimizing potential impacts to private landscaping or parking areas	3.7%

Destinations and other comments

We asked, “Is there anything else you'd like us to know about how you get around Parkland (such as: what are the key destinations you travel to, what are your safety concerns, what types of trail features do you like and why)?”

Respondents shared the following themes:

- Parkland/Spanaway Library and Sprinker Recreation Center were mentioned often as frequent destinations
- Concerns about crime, safety, drug-use, and people experiencing homelessness using the trail
- Comments about C Street traffic volumes, need for a sidewalk

Outreach tools and demographics

To help inform additional project outreach, we asked, “What are the best ways for us to reach people in your neighborhood about this project?” as well as some optional demographic questions. The top

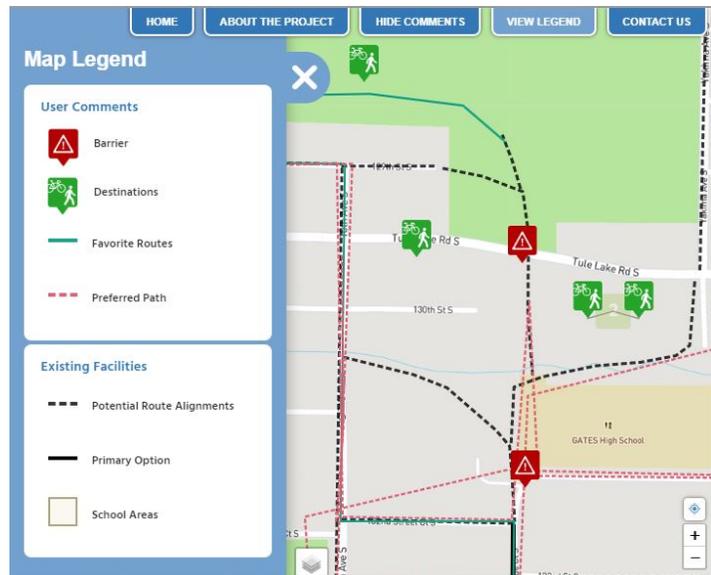
answers for outreach tools were mail, email, and social media posts from Pierce County Parks. Other respondents suggested places for posters, community online advertisements, and briefings (Pacific Lutheran University, Sprinker Recreation Center and the Parkland/Spanaway library came up frequently.

Most people who completed the survey identify as white and speak English at home. The highest represented age group was 35-44 (followed by 55-64 and 25-34). Approximately 85% of people who completed the survey were from the 98444 and 98445 zip codes in Parkland and Spanaway.

Interactive web tool (Jan. – Apr. 2020)

Alta Planning and Design hosted an interactive web tool on the project website. Participants provided input by identifying barriers, destinations, favorite routes and preferred paths. There were a total of 83 participants who interacted with the tool, and 46 comments. Participation also included 27 “likes” and 9 “dislikes” of other peoples’ comments.

Comments submitted via the web tool included notes about how people travel through the project area, safety concerns, key destinations, and suggestions for the trail route and design features.



Key findings

Common destinations included PLU, Gates High School, Gonyea Playfield, Sprinker Recreation Center and Bresemann Forest. Preferred trail paths generally followed the primary option, though several people noted routes that avoided busier streets in Parkland. In terms of barriers, people shared comments about safety concerns related to speeding vehicles, limited sidewalks in the area and crime rates or vagrancy impeding trail benefits.

Open House (Feb. 6, 2020)

Pierce County Parks and their consultant team, Alta Planning + Design and EnviroIssues, hosted an open house on Feb. 6 from 6-8 p.m. at Brookdale Elementary School. The meeting included a presentation on project background and proposed alternatives for the trail route and discussions between project staff and attendees around display boards and maps. The meeting drew 43 attendees; people returned 20 comment forms and 22 people signed up for project email updates.

Key findings

Attendees generally expressed support for the project. Many people noted that Parkland neighborhoods are currently unsafe for people walking and biking, which limits opportunities for people to get outside. Attendees supported separated facilities that would be approachable for families and young children as well as people with limited mobility. Additionally, people had specific questions and some concerns about the route and potential property impacts.

Read on for more open house details.

Route alternatives

Attendees shared the following feedback about the route alternatives:

- C Street is not currently used by many people riding bikes. Signage and education will be necessary to share the new route
- Some people expressed interest in exploring east-west connections via 138th St E
- Several people noted that they understood the rationale of why the trail would avoid 10th Avenue but said a lot of people walk along 10th Avenue to get to Gonyea, as well as cross the 10th Avenue bridge at Clover Creek while walking home from school

Yield street / greenway

Attendees shared the following feedback about their comfort using a yield street / greenway:

- In general, people had mixed feelings about the yield street
- Many people preferred separated, paved trails because they limit interactions with vehicles
- People noted that families would likely not ride on a yield street, even with calming devices
- Several people had questions about whether a barrier could be included to separate people biking from people driving
- Many people noted that drivers typically drive well over the posted speed limit through the neighborhood
- People generally expressed concern about sharing the road with vehicles

Attendees placed dots on the yield street / greenway board at the open house to answer the following questions on a 1 (uncomfortable) to 10 (comfortable) scale:

- How comfortable people would feel using a yield street, if designed to include traffic calming and other enhancements? People's responses ranged from 5 (somewhat comfortable) to 10 (comfortable). Notably, no respondents answered below a 4.
- How comfortable would you feel allowing your children to use the yield street, if designed to include traffic calming and other enhancements? Responses varied and were nearly evenly spread between 2 (uncomfortable) to 10 (comfortable).

Other themes

Attendees shared the following general feedback themes about the Parkland Community Trail:

- Many people shared that the trail should include lighting to improve safety and accessibility in the mornings, at night, and during the winter
- Many people identified a need for additional sidewalks for users of all ages and abilities; they noted there are few existing sidewalks in Parkland neighborhoods
- Several people identified that few people currently ride bikes through Parkland
- Many people expressed concerns about bikes using sidewalks
- Multiple people noted a need for bike and car safety education, especially for children
- Several people suggested including bike racks to prevent theft
- Several people identified that roadway shoulders are currently filled with branches and vines, which makes it difficult to ride bikes and/or walk through the neighborhood
- One person noted that the trail would be a good space for a walking deaf person to get outside
- There were suggestions that trail signage should be in multiple languages
- Several people expressed concerns about the cut through path into the north side of the Sprinker Recreation Center being closed off
- People had questions about funding, trailhead parking, nearby construction, connections to Pierce County bus routes, options for additional east-west connections

Notifications

People were notified about the community input meeting in the following ways:

- Announcements on several Pierce County Parks websites
- Mailer sent to 4,000 residences within one mile of the Parkland Community Trail project area
- Postcards distributed to multiple locations around Parkland
- Emails to key stakeholders and to an interested parties listserv with 170 members
- Pierce County Parks Facebook posts
- Posts on community Facebook groups
- Listings in the community calendars of the Tacoma News Tribune and Suburban Times
- Story in the January 29 edition of the Suburban Times
- Press releases published on the Pierce County News website

Photos



Online survey 2 (Feb. 7 through Feb. 24, 2020)

The second online survey was meant to extend the reach of the Feb. 6 open house, offering people who couldn't make the meeting a chance to view the materials and the proposed routes for the trail. The survey was available from Feb. 7 to Feb. 24, 2020 and was promoted primarily through email and social media. A total of 33 people completed the survey.

Key findings

As an extension of the open house information, the second survey asked for input on if and how people would use the trail and what they thought of the proposed route and design options. All but one respondent said they would use the trail, and most thought the trail route made sense. Most respondents were comfortable with adults using yield street or greenway facilities, but there was less comfort about children using a yield street due to vehicle speed and safety concerns.

Please read on for more detail on the survey results.

Trail usage

Respondents were asked whether they would use the trail, what types of activities they would use the trail for, and what their primary motivation would be for using the trail. Participants shared the following responses and themes:

- All but one of the participants responded that they would use the trail.
- Types of usage included walking, biking, running, walking dogs, and walking with children.
- Respondents' primary motivations for using the trail were recreation and health (52% and 42%, respectively). The remaining 6% were split between commuting and ADA accessibility.

Trail route

The next question asked, "Does the proposed route make sense to you? If not, what changes could improve the proposed route?" Respondents shared the following responses:

- The majority of respondents noted that the proposed route does make sense.
- Additionally, respondents noted several areas where safety is a concern, including along Pacific Ave, Tule Lake Rd, 10th Ave S, and 129th St S.

Yield street / greenway

The following series of questions gauged respondents comfort level with yield streets on 135th St S or 137th St S and followed up with: "What would make you more likely to use the trail yourself or allow your children to use the trail?" Participants shared the following responses and ideas:

- Over 50% of respondents noted that they would personally be comfortable using a yield street in this area, with an additional 43% noting they would be somewhat comfortable. The remaining 3% of respondents indicated they would be uncomfortable.
- In response to the question specially about comfort levels with children using a yield street, 45% of respondents shared they would be somewhat comfortable, 32% percent noted they would be uncomfortable, and 23% percent shared that they would be comfortable.
- People who responded "uncomfortable" to either of these questions voiced concern about vehicle speeds and non-trail users raising safety issues. The following concepts were shared to increase trail usage: crossing lights, speed humps, and driver and trail user education.

Other comments

In response to a general prompt, respondents shared the following themes.

- General support for the Parkland Community Trail
- Interest in additional traffic calming devices near the Sprinker Recreation Center
- Questions about lighting along the route and trail maintenance
- Interest in exploring building the trail through PLU’s disc golf course rather than on 129th St S
- Suggestions for greater involvement with residents
- One participant expressed interest in building a skate park and mountain bike park

Demographics

Most people who completed the survey identify as white and speak English at home. The highest represented age group was 55-64 (followed by 65-74 and 45-54). Approximately 65% of people who completed the survey were from the 98444 and 98445 zip codes in Parkland and Spanaway.

Concept design outreach (April – May 2020)

In mid-April, the project team shared the completed concept design for the trail on the project website and sent letters to all residents and property owners along the route. Originally envisioned as in-person drop-ins for residents to engage with the project team, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, project neighbors and general community members were invited to participate in a virtual presentation on April 29 to learn more about the design and ask questions. A total of 16 people RSVPed for the event, with approximately 10 households participating.

Following the event, a [recording of the virtual presentation](#) and coloring activities for kids were posted to the website and promoted through email, social media, and a PeachJar flyer to families from local schools.

Questions from the virtual presentation

Attendees were invited to submit questions by email or type them into the chat during the presentation. Themes from the community’s questions included:

- Safety features and expected improvements of the trail
- Trail amenities (such as parking, dog waste cans, fencing, mile markers, and landscaping)
- Regional connections and future trail phases
- Potential impacts to trees or private improvements in the right-of-way

Photos

