

TOWN OF QUEEN CREEK FIVE- PARKS MASTER PLAN

Focus Group Meeting No. 2

October 4, 2006, 9:00am

Location: Town Hall

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY (SENIORS)

This focus group meeting was held in conjunction with the Town of Queen Creek's local Senior's Group monthly meeting. There were approximately 24 members present at the meeting.

Troy White (Queen Creek Parks & Recreation Department) gave a brief overview of the Five-Parks Master Plan project and the planning process. He explained the purpose of the focus groups and emphasized the importance of input from the Senior's Group. Dave Wilson (EPG) then described what active and passive elements are as described in the PTOSMP and reviewed the location of each of the park sites. Dave also gave a brief description of each of the sites using exhibit boards. Each display graphic included an aerial photo of the park and its surrounding areas. Photos of site features, site conditions, on and off site views and existing amenities were included on the display. Dave then opened it up to the group for questions, comments, suggestions, etc.

EPG/J2 received information and input from group members. Following is a summary of the input received:

- A question was raised regarding "county islands" adjacent to the sites. Dave explained that there are county islands adjacent to some of the sites, and that the 5-Parks Master Plan public process will consider comments from those residing in the county islands.
- There is a desire for multi-generational facilities that could accommodate seniors as well as other age groups and activities (mixed-use). West Park and East Park sites were discussed as possible locations that may accommodate multi-generational facilities.
- It was suggested that all seniors should be able to utilize these proposed facilities at no cost. Elaborations on this comment indicated residents who live in Pinal County have had to pay fees to use facilities in the past.
- It was suggested that an all-purpose room be made available which could hold various activity types such as a health fair. Also, a storage room should be made available to store various supplies for groups (quilt club supply storage, for example). It was noted that the Apache Junction multi-generational facility has locking cabinets available for various uses.
- A member stated that at the Chandler Heights site, the stage coach stop should be incorporated into the overall plan with a nicer fence and nicer overall aesthetics.
- A member requested that a recreation center be provided for seniors' use only – nobody else. Dave explained the concept of a multi-gen. facility, allowing use for many different age groups at one facility. This member still felt the facility should be exclusive for seniors.
- There is a desire for concrete walking trails at the park sites.
- A swim area/pool was recommended by one member – preferably at East Park.

- There is a desire for class space within the multi-gen. facility, classroom-type rooms.
- One member had a question on how the parks would be funded. Dave discussed how this master planning effort was the first step in determining what facilities will be included in the parks and identify general lots for these facilities. Funding sources and phasing of the plans will be developed in conjunction with the town's capital improvement program. Additionally, long-term maintenance will need to be evaluated and arranged by the Parks Department and Town of Queen Creek.
- A member and resident of Pinal County would like to use the proposed parks and facilities at no cost. The Pinal County residents of the area said that they are concerned because they get "bumped" often from use of the senior facilities because they are not Maricopa County residents of the Town of Queen Creek. Several individuals made this same comment. There is also concern because these same residents of Pinal County pay extra fees, for example, to use the Town's library.
- A comment was made regarding ADA-accessible issues: there is a need at these multi-generational facilities for wheelchair lifts, concrete ADA-compliant walks, accessible vans, and handicapped parking spaces (allow plenty) to accommodate seniors. This individual felt the current standards are not sufficient regarding accessible parking spaces.
- One member believes that seniors are entitled to more than what they have been receiving in general by the local community. She expressed that many of these seniors have been living in the area for a long, long time contributing to the local community and deserve to have good recreational opportunities. It was stated that families and children get taken care of very well, and are provided with many activities and amenities, and that senior citizens deserve more than what they have been provided.
- It was stated that a separate-use ADA-accessible senior trail would be a nice amenity, so that seniors would not have to compete with bicyclists, skateboarders, rollerbladers, etc.
- A member noted that horses get frightened by cyclists, so a separate exclusive equestrian trail system should be provided from the concrete trail system.
- A member asked who these questions and comments are forwarded to. Dave explained this consulting team is working with a Steering Committee for the 5-Parks project. This group is working with input from the parks and recreation staff. The recommendations of the Steering Committee will be presented to the Town Council who will have the final say in approving the master plans.
- Troy White from the Town's Parks Department concluded by explaining that the Recreation Advisory Board was currently working with staff on determining an overall user fee philosophy and staff will present the Recreation Advisory Board's recommendation to Town Council. He explained there are two different philosophies regarding user fees. One is to charge everyone the same fee regardless of where they live. The second philosophy recognizes that citizens pay for the upfront cost to build the facilities, therefore those citizens would receive a discount.