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# Hillsboro Parks and Recreation System Plan Focus Groups with Communities of Color

Prepared on behalf of Hillsboro Parks and Recreation

by PKS International Community Engagement Liaison Services and Stamberger Outreach Consulting

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# PROJECT CONTEXT & METHODS

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## Context

Hillsboro Parks and Recreation contracted with PKS International to gather diverse community input to help inform the new Hillsboro Parks and Recreation System Plan – a document that will guide parks and recreation program development in Hillsboro for the next 50 years. PKS International helped with focus group question development, recruited for and facilitated focus groups and provided translated summaries of results. PKS subcontracted with Stamberger Outreach Consulting to lead focus group question development, analyze resulting data, and compile this report.

## Methods

Focus groups were held with the following communities or groups:

Community or group	Number of attendees	Language of group
Black, Indigenous and other People of Color (BIPOC)	11	English
Latino/a/e or Spanish-speaking	7	Spanish
Middle Eastern/ North African or Arabic-speaking	10	Arabic
Vietnamese	10	Vietnamese
Indian	9	Hindi
Russian	13	Russian
Total participants: 60		

Focus groups were 90 minutes long and held over Zoom.

Participants were each given a \$65 Visa gift card as a thank you for their participation.

## A note on themes across groups

It is important to consider that each individual and community has a viewpoint and context specific to them. Each community outlined requests and shared engagement recommendations specific to them and their community. Although our results include themes across groups, each community should be approached according to their specific recommendations.

# THEMES ACROSS GROUPS

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## Top-level themes that arose in all or nearly all groups included:

### – *Safety concerns was the only concern mentioned by all groups*

Participants in all groups mentioned safety concerns around parks, mostly referring to feeling uncomfortable around homeless residents. Participants in half (3) of the groups suggested adding more security personnel or features to the parks and another half (3) requested additional lighting to make parks safer. One participant requested playground safety at Orenco Woods. These were strong themes in community survey results as well.

### – *More advertising to communities and in their languages (5 of 6 groups)*

Many groups mentioned not knowing about parks and recreation programs or events and requested better advertising to their communities, including in their languages. See community-specific summaries for advertising suggestions.

### – *Covered or indoor spaces (5 of 6 groups)*

Most groups requested more covered areas in parks and more indoor parks facilities to provide shade in summer and a place to recreate in rainy months. This was also a strong theme in the community survey results.

### – *Happy to be included (5 of 6 groups)*

As in the community survey, many focus group participants were happy to have been asked their opinion. They appreciate this type of community engagement and hope for more to come.

### – *Cost and affordability of parks programming and events (4 of 6 groups)*

Most groups also mentioned not being able to afford the costs to attend parks and recreation programming or events, and requested affordable, lower cost, or free attendance.

### – *More pools and water parks (4 of 6 groups)*

Also similar to community survey results, many groups requested the city invest in more pools, and to a lesser extent, water parks.

## Second-level themes that arose in half of groups included:

- Requests for culturally specific staff that understand communities' needs and speak their languages
- Parks and recreation classes, events, materials should be offered in their languages
- Request for more cultural events
- Problems using parks and recreation website, difficulty reserving, requests to improve website
- Continued connection – expressed wanting to continue being involved in the future
- Parks and recreation facilities are too crowded
- Increased cleanliness is needed
- More kids' classes are needed
- Cleaner and more access to restrooms requested
- Additional outdoor seating needed
- Requests for more classes, activities, playgrounds for younger kids

# COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC SUMMARIES

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## BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR (BIPOC) FOCUS GROUP

### What is going well:

- The new Hidden Creek Park is great, including tennis courts
- Appreciate there are many parks in Hillsboro, and they are well maintained
- Have great nature parks
- Updates to SHARC locker rooms appreciated
- Prices are affordable
- Outdoors In appreciated
- Rood Bridge Park is beautiful, very well managed, and clean
- Report having a good experience with parks and recreation overall
- Love Shute Park

*“Love the Shute Park, there are trees, places for party and music festival. Went to the Hidden Creek Center for kid’s activities and noticed the new park next to it. Enjoy it a lot.”*

### Primary concerns and requests:

- Request more covered and indoor areas for all parks, especially for shade in hot summers, and covered playground for all weather.

*“It is about tennis, it is raining season, mostly must reserve indoor court, there is none from Hillsboro, and the closest one is THPRD in Beaverton which treated as out of district residents and pay extra for the place, they also offer work course for tennis. Hillsboro doesn’t have such facilities offer any indoor activities, especially in winter, hoping the city can improve this.”*

*“Wishing there will be more indoor playground here since it rains so much. Also, during summer, the 53rd park is very hot, the play structure get too hot for the kids. Like the seating is too hot.”*

- Request more swimming facilities and swimming classes, especially for winter, indoor pool is more desired.
- Need more facilities that can offer indoor sport /activities for all ages as well as cultural events

### Other concerns and requests:

- Additional lighting needed in parks
- Parks facilities too crowded, lighting in tennis courts might help
- Difficulty using website, information outdated

- Concern about homelessness

*“When you mentioned about feeling safe, I thought about homeless. Is the city allowing them camp at the park? I don’t feel safe going to the park with my 3-year-old when seeing homeless in the park.”*

- Basketball courts need to be shared with younger kids
- Request for additional outdoor seating
- Request for more park development near Tamarack and Rood Bridge Park areas
- Noble Woods Park: preserve the forest, trails, and creek
- Reedville Park: crowded skate park, safety issues with kids riding scooters or bikes, younger kids get hurt
- Better advertising for parks and events, including Hidden Creek Park
- Food trucks in parks
- Large shelter or event space for up to 50 people
- More cultural events

#### **Future Vision:**

- Lego theme park
- Indoor playground for rainy weather
- More shaded areas at Hidden Creek
- Big, covered playground
- Indoor and outdoor pools
- Water park
- Ice skating rink for winter, like Orenco station, outdoor ice skating
- More outdoor events like movies, music festival, carnivals, drive in movies
- More fun activities for the whole family
- Interactive Christmas lights activity (improvement from drive through at Beaverton library)
- Group classes for people to get to know each other and learn about the community
- More kids’ classes

#### **Community-specific recommendations:**

- Request for event space for large cultural events

*“Hillsboro lacks a place to rent out for holding cultural events like Hmong community for celebrating New year, and Jade Night Market in Portland. Would love to have more cultural events.”*

#### **From Liaison’s perspective:**

- Majority of the participants understood the questions well, and eager to share their experience. People who like the outdoors, sports or with kids have the most response. With different background, they are sharing their unique experience.
- Not everyone is able to join the focus group to share their input, because of the date and time limitation to the people’s availability in joining, hoping there are more ways of communication with the communities.

- Interest in staying involved: Yes. They want to have their voice heard and find out if what they have done will make a difference to the city planning and development, to confirm that their voice matters. Which will help motivate more people get involved, make a better community for the future.

## LATINO/A/E OR SPANISH-SPEAKING FOCUS GROUP

### Primary concerns and requests:

- Parking limitations

*“Sometimes to go to an event is a couple of streets away and walking is not feasible, one prefers to drive for reasons of small children or elders and there is not enough parking.”*

- Drinking water
- Shelters to cover from sun or rain (covered areas and shade)

*“When my family and I visit the parks, I feel like there aren't enough trees, when it's hot I feel like we're directly under the sun's rays, there's no shade from trees to shelter in; Nowadays it is harmful to be under ultraviolet rays and we should not spend too much time in the sun.”*

- Available and clean bathrooms
- Request for more swimming facilities and water parks
- Activities for children with disabilities

*“Thinking about the park, I have a son with special needs and it's difficult to take him because he doesn't want to go, he doesn't like the noise of children and he feels self-conscious. Maybe you can allocate a day at each park for just people or children with special needs only. Or put out games like Legos, or art for kids with disabilities.”*

- Need more affordable entry fees

*“I have attended events where they have live music as well as bands and the entrance tickets are expensive, it is not possible for me to pay another cost out of my pocket, I prefer to go to events where there is no cost.”*

- Theme about trust – wanting to see results of community engagement, wanting to feel listened to

*“I am glad to hear that in this group there are people from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexicans because at the end of the day, we are all Latinos, and we want to be among people who support us and want to listen to us and count on us to make changes in the city where we live. I've had experiences where I've left my opinion between authorities and I've felt that they don't give me results, that they don't pay attention to me. And I want to lend my participation to be heard as part of the community.”*

### Other concerns and requests:

- Affordability of event tickets
- Parks are crowded as many new people move to Hillsboro

- Concern about homeless residents in parks and request for security guards
- Concern about slipping and falling on leaves, request to clean up leaves
- Need for security cameras and better lighting to increase park safety
- Preserve green spaces and open spaces from development
- Adults-only park areas, especially for seniors, away from children, quiet

*“Unfortunately, in this country, we live very stressed, and it would be fabulous to have a noise-free space to feel heard. As an old man, no one pays attention to you, no one wants to listen, and all the young people don't listen to the elders.”*

- Shadywood Park: request for a shelter that can be rented
- Request for more dog parks
- Request for better advertising for public involvement

*“I didn't know of meetings like this, or other meetings that are held to talk about parks for example. If the person who invited me hadn't come knocking on my door to invite me, I would never have found out. More publicity is needed so that more people in the community find out through us by inviting more people. I know of a lot of people who don't use Zoom, but we'll pass the message on to them.”*

- Distrust that city will make changes to parks

*“I believe that the city has enough resources to expand and improve the parks, I have lived in Hillsboro for 40 years and I know that there is a lot of money in the city and the authorities can make the improvements, which they have not wanted to do is something else.”*

- Request for more programs and activities for young people

*“We need sports academies and talks for young people. Talks between police officers or firefighters and young people so that they are attracted to study these professions. Even doctors, we know that there is a need for a lack of doctors, could invite doctors to give talks among young people. We need to motivate young people to move away from ugly activities that are easy to obtain in the community by keeping them motivated with productive things toward their future. Like through dance and singing contests in different parks.”*

### **Community-specific recommendations:**

- Latino culturally specific place for adults, no kids (cards, dominoes outdoors, socializing)
- Latin American events from different countries and cultures to bring Latin American cultures together
- Hire Latino/Spanish-speaking staff to communicate with Latino community (several people)
- Need to see results of this type of community engagement (survey results) to build trust
- More police officers that speak Spanish (trust)
- See the importance of being involved in the public process

*“Apart from feeling connected, we must be present in all things, because we all receive flyers of announcements in the mail notifying us of events, for example: movies in the parks, lunch in the parks or in the schools. That is why I said that we, also as residents of this city, must be present, for example, in this meeting we must pay attention to everything that is being said, and participate in it. It is our obligation to inform ourselves and know what is happening in*



*the city. It is important to participate and be informed to feel included. Our voice is important.”*

**From Liaison’s perspective:**

- Consider that the downtown area is where most people and families gather when there is an event. Because it is better known and because there is more public transport it is easy to get there and so the roads and parking lots will be more congested, the bathrooms will not be enough.
- When there are events, nearby businesses can be considered as restaurants. If you hire food vendors from other cities, it may not benefit local restaurants to be the ones selling the food and drinks at local events.
- Specific parks for the elderly and adults and for people with special needs. Letting people know in some way that the authorities listened to the comments will attract the trust of the community.
- Interest in staying involved: Yes, in particular, 3 of them asked to be informed about future projects.

## **MIDDLE EASTERN/NORTH AFRICAN, ARABIC-SPEAKING FOCUS GROUP**

**What is going well:**

- Appreciate the “fresh green in Hillsboro”

**Primary concerns and requests:**

- Cleaner parks and facilities, including restrooms
- Provide translations into Arabic
- Provide culturally specific events
- More affordable programs, events

**Other concerns and requests:**

- Request additional swimming facilities
- Activities for children with disabilities
- Parks facilities are too crowded
- Request more kids’ activities and programs, including for young kids
- Hidden Creek specific: needs more lessons and water polo, needs better advertising
- Additional lighting in parks
- Dog-free areas for people who do not like pets
- More indoor sports facilities
- Add security to parks to help enforce rules
- Additional outdoor seating in parks and on trails for seniors

**Recommendations for communication:**

- Flyers in schools, especially young children

- Don't feel the city communicates well with community

**Future Vision:**

- Request for senior-specific community center especially for immigrants and refugees
- Envisioned how to have culturally specific fun activities

**Community-specific recommendations:**

- Use interpretation companies to help overcome language barrier
- Hire multicultural staff

## VIETNAMESE FOCUS GROUP

**What is going well:**

- Parks within walking distance
- Options for classes
- Shute Park: childcare
- Movies in the park
- Cleaner than other parks, bathrooms and benches
- Big parks
- Kids' playgrounds
- Clean and fresh air
- Welcoming libraries
- The park near Hillsboro Airport is particularly popular, pond or lake, offering an ideal spot for walks and communing with nature.
- Another beloved destination is the Wetland, an oasis of tranquility known for its thriving birds and geese population. It's a peaceful escape with a scenic trail for leisurely strolls.

**Primary concerns and requests:**

- Playground for all ages
- Free or low-cost classes and activities, affordability is a concern
- Need Vietnamese language translations (flyers, website, newsletters)
- Need more Vietnamese parks and recreation staff
- More Vietnamese representation in parks
- More Vietnamese cultural events such as Lunar New year, mid-autumn festival and night market with Vietnamese street food and live music from Vietnamese local singers.

*“Hillsboro parks and rec need to be inclusive, diverse, and equitable. Needs to have something to highlight the Vietnamese such as art that represents Vietnamese culture. They*

*are hoping that the website will be available in Vietnamese and more Vietnamese staff, at least one Vietnamese staff at each Library and rec center.”*

- Homeless residents in and around the parks was as concern for some
- Class registration difficult – limited tech-savviness, limited classes and time slots
- Request more covered and indoor activities for winter and fall
- Request more advertising for events in communities
- More Read Aloud class options, weekends

*“The Read Out Loud program needs to happen based on the interest of people not based on attendance from the session.”*

#### **Other concerns and requests:**

- Improved access to bathrooms, toddler-friendly toilet, changing table
- More community gardens
- Increased lighting in parks
- Keep parks clean
- Don’t allow camping in or near parks
- Add security cameras to the parks
- More restroom access
- More free parking
- Request better access to parks by public transit, or parks shuttle bus
- Classes for very young kids
- Need walkable parks
- Increase funding, not decrease funding
- Concerned about development near parks
- Do not cut down trees for construction

*“Keep all the trees, do not cut them down to build more construction. The construction can be remodeled but keep the trees.”*

#### **Future Vision:**

- Balance urban development and preserving the integrity of parks, concerns about development in Hillsboro
- Vietnamese group is passionate about preserving their cultural heritage and ensuring that their city's services and activities are accessible and well-promoted.

#### **Community-specific recommendations:**

- People in this group want Hillsboro to take their feedback seriously and make their suggestions happen.
- Vietnamese cultural events and celebrations

*“All of us here want to see Hillsboro emphasize the Vietnamese culture and celebrate it such as the Lunar New Year and Mid-Autumn festival.”*

- Hire more Vietnamese staff
- Need Vietnamese language translations (flyers, website, newsletters)
- Need more Vietnamese staff
- More Vietnamese representation in parks

**From Liaison’s perspective:**

- The Vietnamese group has voiced a comprehensive set of desires and suggestions for their city's parks and recreational offerings. At the heart of these recommendations is a call for inclusivity, diversity, and equitable representation, with a particular emphasis on Vietnamese culture. They want the city to celebrate and promote Vietnamese culture through events like the Lunar New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival, supported by the inclusion of Vietnamese art and representation in public spaces.
- To enhance accessibility and community engagement, they hope for the city's website to be available in Vietnamese and advocate for an increased presence of Vietnamese staff in libraries and recreation centers. The desire for free or low-cost classes reflects a commitment to making fun and education and cultural enrichment accessible to low and middle classes.
- Concerns about urban development encroaching on existing parks highlight the importance of balancing growth with the preservation of green spaces. Residents want assurance that the city takes their feedback seriously and acts upon their suggestions.
- Furthermore, they stress the need to maintain cleanliness in parks, prevent homeless encampments, and enhance security with the installation of cameras.
- Overall, the community's vision for Hillsboro's parks and recreational programs is rooted in cultural celebration, accessibility, responsiveness to feedback, and a commitment to preserving their natural and recreational resources.
- Particularly important to convey to city staff:
  - Recognize and celebrate the Vietnamese culture
  - Bring arts and other traditions that represents Vietnamese cultures such as Vietnamese cooking class, more Vietnamese books in the libraries.
  - Playground for all ages
  - Low cost or free classes
  - More time slots for classes especially swimming class and classes for kids under 5 years old.
  - There are lots of people who want to exercise but can’t afford the memberships and daycare. They want to go to the park and bring their kids there with them and exercise at the same time. They would like to exercise using equipment similar to those found in Vietnam, combining fitness benefits with the enjoyment of nature. An illustration includes a bicycle integrated with the water system: as individuals pedal, it activates the water flow, similar to a sprinkler system, effectively utilizing human effort for this purpose.
- Interest in staying involved: Yes. They asked this question during the focus group. They would like to stay informed. They would like this feedback to turn into action and willing to help in the future if needed.

# INDIAN FOCUS GROUP

## What is going well:

- Appreciate diverse inclusion and involvement in parks planning
  - “I do understand the importance of the park and recreation in every one's life. Because it provides excellent resources for families at very affordable price. So I'm excited about this involvement that on the request of [CELS] and so but thank you for involving all of us.”*
- Like current facilities for basketball, tennis, pickleball, soccer, cricket, swimming, and track.
- Appreciate being part of a multi-age ethnically diverse community
- Praise for Hidden Creek Park

## Primary concerns and requests:

- Participants would like outdoor theaters with good acoustic systems as well as auditoriums with good capacity for 200+ people for indoor arts events.
- Request for more sports facilities, specifically: tennis, pickle ball, soccer, cricket, swimming, walking tracks
- Safety and cleanliness of parks and recreation areas is important, especially for women and children who may be using these facilities with open access.
- Request covered and indoor facilities - Outdoor facilities are not usable during winter months
  - “Can I tell you something? If you look at Oregon weather right from October, It's a dead period. You can't play anything outside other than soccer. All the tennis players, all the pickle ball players. They have no option but to go to THPRD. I have private club membership in Lake Oswego and in Beaverton. The reason is there is no way I can play anything in Hillsboro. So, most of our facilities, I'm talking about the sports ones, you know, it's not indoor. So in winter, it's just no use basically. So that's I think is one of the areas that we need to focus on...”*
- Need to improve advertising and promotion of parks and recreation facilities
- Request facilities more like THPRD

## Other concerns and requests:

- Some large parks are not used as well
- Request balance between large and small parks
- Recommend partnering with Oregon Food Bank, offering cooking classes
- Offering nature activities for kids
- Make class registration easier, better technology
- Concern about safety at parks, and request for increased security
  - “A couple of things I worry about is the safety of these parks as the population is growing. I do see off and on, unidentified people moving around with pocket knives and all that. I don't know. I'm just worried about the safety of these parks. If some kind of security can be provided, at least there are not round the clock but like vigilance once in a while.”*
- Increase number of sports classes, programs offered, fill up quickly

- Shute Park specific: repair, add electrical outlets in shelters, improve and add shelter areas
- Add more cricket fields

*“I think 2 years ago Bethany Lake Park, they added a pad to play cricket on and that really attracted a lot of people. Indians love to play cricket of course in the summer. Every time I walk by that park, I find people playing cricket there. If they're parks that can have a little bit of a cricket patch created on them that would attract a lot more people in the summertime.”*

#### **Future Vision:**

- Planning must be done across both long term and short-term horizon, with adequate data on supply/demand and demographics. Short-term needs should be addressed urgently (5-year plan at lower cost).
- Prioritize indoor facilities and increased sports facilities first

*“We should focus on indoor facilities. And I don't know, we are all impatient. We want to enjoy life right now than wait for 10 years.”*

- A diverse vision for arts and culture is needed and facilities must be built to support that vision.
- Facilities should be technologically advanced
- A partnership between public and private entities may help address short term or immediate needs.
- Maintain what is good and working, make short term improvements with technology
- For long term expansion need land and capital, and lead time for construction

#### **Community Specific, Future Engagement:**

- The process used so far has provided a lot of useful inputs from community members. It would be beneficial to further expand the number of community members providing inputs.
- The time constraints have limited how many people could be engaged for this FG. Given this experience and a little more time we could have a second round of engagement with a different set of people to get broader feedback.
- People who are working are extremely busy and it is hard to get their attention during the week. If we could do another round on a weekend that would help.

#### **From Liaison's perspective:**

- The general responses from some of the participants were in greater depth than others and provided a good 360 degree perspective of the needs and issues. We may get even better feedback with a targeted written survey that is sent out to key individuals in the community with similar gift card incentive (rather than a drawing). However, the 90min meeting provided a very good baseline of feedback and ample information to work with.
- If another round is to be held, I will send out another written set of questions that should be answered before holding another Zoom call (4-6 weeks in advance). That would allow people who participate to give much more thought and be better prepared.
- We could invite second round participants to a face-to-face meeting with lunch provided as an incentive and get them to participate in person on a weekend.

- Interest in staying involved: Yes, I think so but they need to be informed of the overall process being used by the City to collect the feedback and complete the planning, and then share the plans back with the surveyed population with room for some adjustments before it is implemented.

## RUSSIAN FOCUS GROUP

### What is going well:

- People enjoy parks for walking, meeting friends, having picnics, and playgrounds for kids.
- Parks that have all amenities in one place
- Enjoy sports events
- Enjoy running tracks
- Little libraries in parks
- Favorite parks in the area include Orenco Woods, Bridge Root Park, Wetlands, Griffin Oaks, 53rd Park, Magnolia Park, Forest Park, Cooper Mountain Nature Park, Noble Woods Park, Tualatin Hills Park, and Hidden Creek Park.

*“I really like parks where I can walk, meet friends, have a picnic, and where there is a playground. Perfect for me are Orenco, Rood Bridge Park, and Wetlands.”*

### Primary concerns and requests:

- Safety: Addressing homelessness, adding lighting, and ensuring safer pedestrian access to parks.

*“I don't feel safe in Shute Park because there are a lot of homeless people there. I heard that some programs are being started to protect the parks and make sure the parks are safe. It's scary to go there with a child when there are people lying around the library. I avoid going to that park now. It started last year, a year ago there was no such thing.”*

*“No pedestrian walkways, you can't walk to these parks, you have to walk on the roadway. Everything is designed for cars only.”*

- Facilities: Adding water sandboxes, dog-friendly areas, educational activities for all ages, and a Ninja Park for active recreation.
- Covered outdoor areas, more shade
- Increased outdoor seating
- Safe play areas for kids – specifically Orenco Woods HOA play park slide dangerous, too close to road
- Poor Facilities: There's a problem with not enough good shelters and lights in the parks.

### Other concerns and requests:

- More adult exercise equipment in parks like turnstiles and planks

*“Sports fields. There are many basketball and soccer courts, but not many outdoor gyms. In our park we have made gyms scattered along the road, each two hundred meters apart.”*

*Nobody uses them. They should be in one place. It seems to me that the money spent is not well thought out. The trainers are of poor quality.”*

- More athletic facilities, including running tracks
- Confusion about what is labeled a park on maps
- Increase dog parks, and separate parks for small and large dogs
- Updated, easier to use parks website with list of events
- Add more bike paths
- Move bike parks away from homes to reduce noise
- Rock Creek Trail specific: add benches and shelters and adult fitness equipment
- Mountain biking trails
- Yoga in parks during the summer
- More sandboxes
- Music in the parks
- Outdoor ice skating
- Roller-skating
- Ping pong
- Classes for newcomers in everyday topics

*“I think basic education on the laws governing ordinary everyday life would be helpful. Taxes, interaction with government services, interaction with neighbors, etc. Where and what documents are drawn up, how to buy/sell real estate/cars, etc.”*

- Nature classes

#### **Community-specific recommendations:**

- Questions about feelings are not accepted in Russian-speaking communities
- Cultural events like Russian New Year for kids
- Invite Snow Maiden in early January
- Christmas decorations in parks
- Need official translations into Russian, not Google translate
- They find flyers to be wasteful and newsletters often end up in spam.
- Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Nextdoor, as well as community centers, churches, libraries, and city websites, are recommended for sharing news and updates about parks and events.

#### **Future Vision:**

- During the discussion, an action team was organized to create and maintain an aggregator website for all City events. After the meeting 3 people have already written to me with a desire to participate in this project, for example, to make constant updates on children's or sports events. If the City has such a project in its plans, we have a team ready!
- Interactive parks with water features and varied landscapes to foster children's imagination.
  - Example: <https://berliner-seilfabrik.com/en/product/neptun-17/>

*“There was such a cool Engineering Park in Vienna, the kids loved it. I think it would be cool to have something educational for kids - experiments, educational games.”*



- Zoning parks by age or theme
- Eco-friendly playgrounds with natural materials
- Adding water parks for children
- Outdoor theaters for dance events
- 'Ninja Parks' for all ages
  - Example: <https://m-ps.co.il/en/israels-largest-ninja-park/>

**From Liaison's perspective:**

- Community members have highlighted the need for safer parks, emphasizing the reduction of homelessness and improving pedestrian-friendly access. The establishment of child-safe play spaces with educational and interactive features for all ages is important, as is accommodating cultural celebrations like Russian holiday events. Enhancing park facilities with adequate lighting, seating, festive decorations during holiday (dark) seasons, and ensuring parks are dog-friendly for pet owners is also a priority. Moreover, there's a call for a centralized source of information on events and programs to keep residents informed and involved.
- Everyone was engaged in the discussion and actively participated. After the meeting, there were many messages of thanks for the invitation to such an interesting and useful meeting and for the friendly atmosphere. People were happy to share their problems, ideas for improvements, and creative innovations. After the meeting, participants sent me additional links and photos that they had mentioned in the discussion.
- Key suggestions/comments:
  - Safety Concerns: Addressing issues related to homelessness in parks is a top priority.
  - Inclusive Facilities: There's a need for educational spaces, and amenities that cater to different age groups and abilities, including dog-friendly areas.
  - Cultural Celebrations: Incorporating cultural events (such as Russian holiday celebrations) can enhance community engagement and inclusiveness.
  - Infrastructure Improvements: Upgrading park infrastructure with better lighting, seating, and shelters, especially considering the local climate, is essential.
  - Accessible Information: Providing a centralized, accessible, and multilingual platform for information on park events and programs is crucial for community participation.
  - Pedestrian Access: Improving the walkability to and within parks is necessary for accessibility without reliance on cars.
  - Community Feedback: Ongoing engagement with the community for their feedback and ideas should be an integral part of the project's development.
- Interest in staying involved: Yes, it's likely that participants would be interested in being notified of future developments of the project. Their active involvement, willingness to share ideas, and appreciation for being part of the discussion indicate a strong interest in the project's progression and a desire to see their input considered in the final outcomes. They are contacting me after meeting for updates and forming a group to work on a city events aggregator website. Continued updates would keep them engaged and invested in the project's success.