



Outreach and Engagement Report

Lake City Community Center Redevelopment

March 20, 2026

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1. Executive Summary

In February and March 2026, Seattle Parks and Recreation, in collaboration with the Office of Housing and the Department of Neighborhoods, conducted targeted outreach to share design updates for the new community center and secure community feedback on play area options. The primary goal was to gather input on play structure design, safety, accessibility, and site amenities to ensure the new center reflects the needs of the surrounding community.

To ensure equitable representation, the Department of Neighborhoods partnered with Community Liaisons to conduct multilingual outreach to Spanish-, Vietnamese-, East African-, and Chinese-speaking communities. This approach resulted in a strong, representative response, with 185 surveys collected—nearly half of all responses—and direct engagement with over 200 people through trusted community platforms and in their native languages.

The community chose Theme 1 – Nature Play and gave feedback on the design. This report outlines this outreach effort and what we heard from the community.



Figure 1- The revised plan for the new community center after hearing feedback from the community

2. Project Background and Objectives

2.1. Project Background

The Lake City Community Center has been an integral part of Lake City's neighborhood history, serving as a hub for community activities and bringing together people of all ages and cultures. In 2023, a fire destroyed a major portion of the building, and the community center was demolished.

Seattle Parks and Recreation and Seattle Office of Housing are partnering with Mercy Housing to redevelop the former Lake City Community Center with 112 affordable housing units above. This new community center will be the first of its kind for the City of Seattle by combining affordable housing, essential services, and shared community spaces to create a welcoming place where residents can live, gather, and thrive.

The Department of Neighborhoods has led the outreach to gather input on this project beginning in 2024.

2.2. Outreach objectives (February-March 2026)

This latest outreach effort had the following objectives:

- To solicit feedback and input on the playground design
- To inform community about the latest design of the new community center
- To report back how community input has been applied to the design
- Inform community of the construction and development timeline
- Use equitable and accessible outreach and engagement strategies to engage traditionally underserved communities

3. Outreach and Engagement Strategies

- Translated all materials into 10 different languages- Spanish, Vietnamese, Amharic, Somali, Traditional Chinese, Tigrinya, Ukrainian, Oromo, Russian, Arabic
- Contracted with 6 Community Liaisons to connect with the local community: Activities included: attending food banks to talk to people, visiting local businesses to discuss the project, posting on social media, talking to neighbors and their networks
- Mailed nearly 5,000 postcards to residents within ½ mile of the community center site
- Created a survey for input and received 400 responses. The survey was available online and printed and translated into 10 languages.
- Posted on social media and kept the project website current with the latest information and materials
- Held a public drop-in info session at the Lake City Library
- Held an online public meeting. The presentation was recorded and will be on the project website
- Held a drop-in info session for residents at a low-income housing complex in the Lake City neighborhood
- Connected with local neighborhood groups and organizations to help spread the word
- Intentionally tried to reach families and children by contacting parent-teacher associations, pre-schools and attended places where families and children were likely to be (ex. School bus pick-ups)

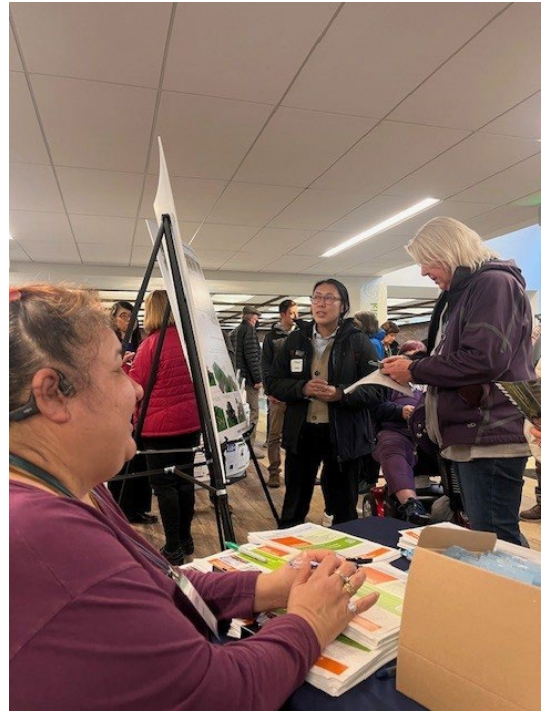


Figure 2- Drop-in information session at the Lake City Library

4. Summary of Engagement and Findings

4.1. Who We Engaged

Feedback was collected between Feb 24- March 19. A total of 400 surveys (printed and online) were collected.

Age Diversity

Since we were looking to collect people's opinions on playground options, we wanted to reach out to children and families. We were able to engage a good range of ages, including children under 12, parents, and older adults.

8. Age Group

Select Box | Skipped: 12 | Answered: 389 (97%)

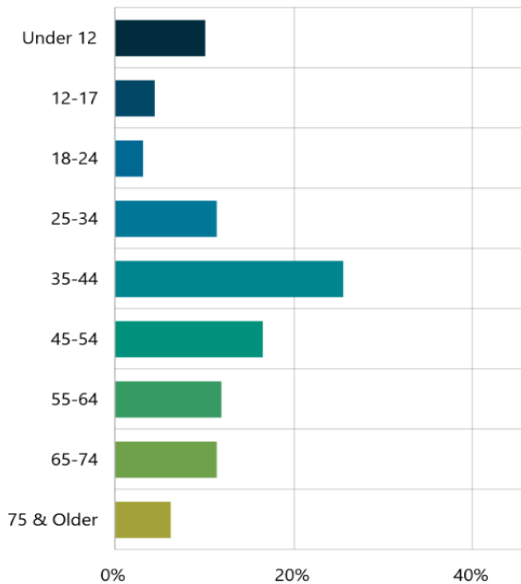


Table 1- Survey participants shown by age



Figure 3- Tabling at mixed-income housing in Lake city

Neighborhood Diversity

Lake City is a diverse neighborhood, so it was essential that we reach out to a variety of stakeholders to gather input. There was good representation regarding race/ethnicity and most survey respondents lived and were familiar with the Lake City neighborhood.

9. Race/Ethnicity

Select Box | Skipped: 16 | Answered: 385 (96%)

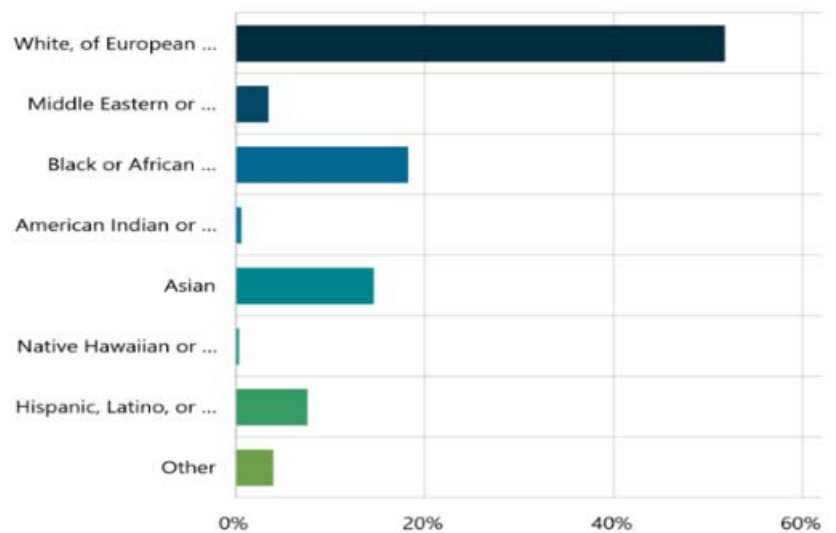


Table 2- Survey participants by Race/Ethnicity

7. What is your relationship to the Lake City neighborhood? (check all that apply)

Multi Choice | Skipped: 3 | Answered: 398 (99.3%)

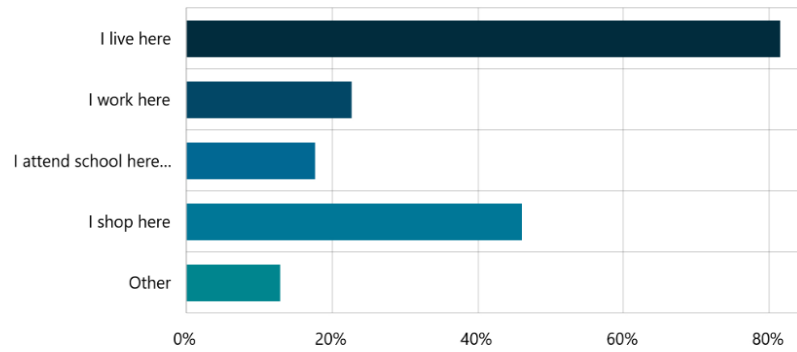


Table 4- Survey participants' responses when asked their relationship to the neighborhood

4.2. What We Heard

When asked, the community chose Theme 1- Nature play as the top choice. People like the classic look, places for kids to hide, the bridge, and it encourages imaginative play.

1. What is your preferred playground theme? Please rank your choices:

Ranking | Skipped: 18 | Answered: 383 (95.5%)

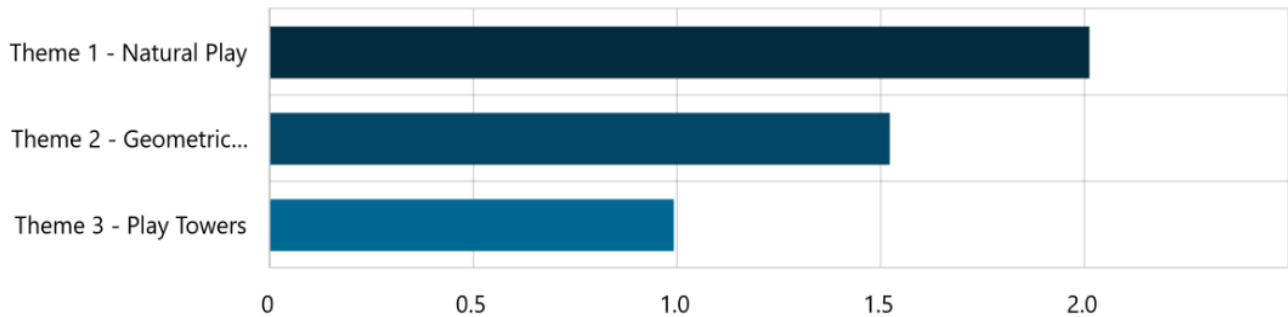


Table 5- Survey participants ranked their choices and Theme 1-Natural Play was the top choice

4.3. Summary of Feedback

Play Option Design

- Add swings- accessible and for all ages..
- Respondents would like to see an area for teens- many older siblings are at the park with younger kids, LED lights, if you make it accessible at night it would activate the space.
- Materials
 - Community would like to see non-toxic, sustainable, and durable materials for the base and the structures.
 - Ensure the materials are not slippery, prone to growing mold, and have good drainage to prevent accumulation of water and debris.

Safety and Accessibility

- Many are concerned about drug use and encampments and how to ensure that doesn't continue to happen in this new space.
- Make sure play structure is not near street (ex. Curb elevation to limit direct path, fencing, etc).
- Consider guard rails and include handrails on stairs/ramps.
- Add ramps – not stairs- for strollers and wheelchairs for moving between the tiers.

Amenities

- Include trash cans, picnic tables or benches where people can sit, a water fountain, overhead trees and/or coverings for shade and rain.
- To complement the Nature Play theme, people were interested in trees, local plant and wildlife identification, rocks to climb on, connections to the Pacific Northwest and Thorton Creek.

4.4. How Feedback Will Be Used

This report will be shared with the design team at Seattle Parks and Recreation and Mithun to implement the feedback. It will also be shared with the community and posted on the project website.

5. Next Steps and Conclusion

The final design for the play area should be available on the project website by Summer 2026. There will be an additional outreach effort, led by the Office of Arts, deciding on art for the new building. Construction on this project is expected to begin in December 2026 and the new Lake City Community Center should open to the public in 2029