

## Fall 2023 Community Engagement



Picture (above): Queen Anne residents sharing their input at the Seattle Parks and Recreation booth at the Queen Anne Halloween Harvest Market.

**Project** **Ward Springs Play Area Renovation Project**

<https://seattle.gov/parks/about-us/projects/ward-springs-play-area-renovation>

**Project Team** Jordan Hoy, Planner

Stephanie Hammer, Landscape Architect

Jessica Michalak, Capital Projects Coordinator

**Budget** Seattle Parks District Major Maintenance provides \$430,000 for planning, design, construction.

**Schedule** **Planning:** Summer - Fall 2023

**Design:** Fall - Winter 2023/2024

**Construction:** 2024 (tentative)

**Outreach Goals:**

In this initial "kick-off" phase of the project, the project team conducted outreach to inform the community about the Ward Springs Play Area Renovation Project and to receive public input to help inform the future design of the play area. The project was advertised through various methods, including the installation of a project sign and flyers in the park, postings in the neighborhood and in local establishments, as well as being published on the City of Seattle website, parkways blog, social media channels, NextDoor, and as a press release to local media outlets. The project team collected input through a concise survey, available online and as in-person handouts, to understand what the community likes about the current play area and what they would like to see incorporated into the design for the new play area.

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## Public Involvement #1: **Queen Anne Halloween Harvest Market**

[W Crockett Street and Queen Anne Avenue N](#)

October 28, 2023

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

**Number of people engaged:** Approximately 120 people, 79 survey participants.

### Presentation & General Discussion

The planning and design team reserved a booth at [Queen Anne Farmers Market](#)'s October event "Halloween Harvest Market". As the first public involvement opportunity for the Ward Springs Play Area Renovation Project, the project team's attendance at this community-organized event set out to raise awareness about the project and solicit community participation on the Project Kick-Off Survey. At the Seattle Parks and Recreation booth, a project poster was displayed to provide a high-level summary of the project. The survey was available as in-person sheets and virtually through the scanning of a QR code. Large images of play equipment styles and activity types were displayed on the table for people to reference as they took the survey.

### Public Feedback

#### **Question/Comment**

Maintaining the option of swings is essential for the Ward Springs Play Area because the nearby park, Bhy Kracke Park, does not offer this activity type.

(Unrelated to Ward Springs)  
Suggestion to utilize the hillside at Kerry Park better by adding terraced seating.

(Unrelated to Ward Springs)  
The merry-go-round at "Little Howe" (East Queen Anne Playground) is hazardous and the neighbors would like to fundraise to have it removed.

#### **Staff Response (if applicable)**

Thank you for your input. The planning and design team will keep this in mind when balancing the space requirements of the site and the swing's fall-zone and the number of activity types that the play area provides.

Thank you for the suggestion. I will pass this feedback along to the planner in my division managing the Parks and Open Space Plan update.

Please email us and we can forward this concern to the Neighborhood Matching Fund program manager. We will look into the Play Area Renovation Program project schedule to see when this play area is due for a renovation.



Please add equipment that older kids and teenagers can use!

Thanks for your suggestion! This play area and the new design for the play area will be for children of all ages.

I'd like to request the inclusion of adult workout equipment for the play area.

We appreciate your feedback. Unfortunately, due to play area design guidelines, adult exercise equipment needs to be in a different vicinity than the children play area separated by a paved pathway. This will not be able to be completed as a part of this project's scope.

Please do not use synthetic turf.

Thank you for your request. The project scope's budget accounts for the replacement of the engineered wood fiber (wood chips), so synthetic turf will not be a part of this project.

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## Public Involvement #2: "Pop-Up at the Pumphouse"

Ward Springs Park, Ward Springs Pumphouse

[4th Avenue N & Ward Street](#)

November 4, 2023

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

**Attendees:** Approximately 20 people, 19 survey participants.

### Presentation & General Discussion

The project team reserved the Ward Springs Pumphouse, located within Ward Springs Park, to meet a localized representation of the community that uses the play area. Snacks and beverages were provided alongside a project poster that displayed a high-level summary of the project. The survey was available as in-person sheets or virtually through the scanning of a QR code. Large images of play equipment styles and activity types were displayed on the table for people to reference as they took the survey.

### Public Feedback

#### **Question/Comment**

#### **Staff Response (if applicable)**

I like the play area the way it is. What is the reasoning for the renovation project?

The City strives to renovate every play area on a maintenance cycle of about every 20 years, depending on the site's conditions. Additionally, the renovation projects provide the opportunity to bring the play area up to current safety and accessibility standards. Ward Springs Park's existing play area is comprised of wooden play equipment that is rotting in some locations, so it is due for replacement. In this phase of the project, we'd love to learn what you like about the current play area and what you would like to see for the new play area design.

What is the current budget for the project?

Seattle Parks District Major Maintenance provides \$430,000 for planning, design, and construction.

What is the planned timeline?

We're currently in the planning phase and will move into design development later this fall. We plan to reach back out

with three preliminary design concepts early next year. Construction is anticipated to take place at the end of 2024, but this tentatively be moved to sometime in 2025 depending on a multitude of factors, such as staff and crew capacity and availability of play equipment.

Is the designer in-house or a private firm?

Our landscape architect designer for the Ward Springs play area is an in-house designer at Seattle Parks and Recreation.

People keep "gorilla" planting tomato plants in this park.

We will pass this feedback along to our district gardening team who maintains Ward Springs Park.

Previously, I observed encampment activity in this park. Specifically, there were tents under the trees by the pump house.

Ward Springs Park has now been added to the Seattle Parks and Recreation's new Park Ranger Program's patrol route. Our project team will be sure to share your comment with the Park Ranger team.

This location is included in geocaching routes.

Thanks for bringing that to our attention.

Will the tire swing be included in the new design of the play area?

The new play area will meet new safety and accessibility standards. There are new varieties of swinging equipment that can provide similar play opportunities that a traditional tire swing provides.

Can we build public restrooms and/or add a water fountain as a part of this project?

Unfortunately, the budget for this project is quite limited and will only cover the planning, design, and construction of the play area. There are some of the existing city resources to initiate projects, such as the Neighborhood Matching Fund program community can explore as options.

My daughter and I bike to this play area all the time. We'd love to have bike parking at Ward Springs Park.

Thank you for your recommendation. Adding bike parking is something we can explore adding as an addition to this project.

Can Seattle Parks and Recreation work on a public message to prevent people from taking pictures of children in play areas?

Thank you for sharing your concern. We will pass this along to our strategic communications team.