

Fort Worden Long Range Plan Preliminary Recommendations Workshop - Public Comments May 27, 2008

On May 27, 2008, Agency staff held a public workshop to present preliminary recommendations for Fort Worden's Long Range Plan.

This was the third public workshop. The first workshop in March 2008, included an overview of the planning process, outlined expected deliverables, and answered questions raised by participants. A second meeting in April 2008 provided a comprehensive assessment of existing conditions at the park and asked for input on several alternative governance structures under consideration by the Fort Worden Task Force.

During the third meeting on May 27, 2008, agency staff and consultants presented a summary of preliminary recommendations for the park's Long Range Plan. Recommendations were grouped into four major categories: Business and Operations, Management and Governance, Site and Facilities, and Design Guidelines. Staff also handed out a hardcopy preliminary recommendations report at the end of the meeting. Participants were asked to provide any follow-up comments via mail/e-mail by June 15, 2008.

Business and Operations

Roles: Food Services – it is so important to add quality, small portion, informal, possibly outdoor food service

Inland Sea Academy idea is great. Something like Olympic Park Institute. What can we learn from them?

\$600,000 for marketing sounds like a lot. What is the current occupancy rate in the housing units? Why such an expansive marketing campaign?

Target market should be limited to 100 miles. Why promote irresponsible fuel use? Encourage groups that travel here by bus.

How does expense and revenue get divided up? If my program brings in more people – how much goes to the park and how much do I keep as a business?

Target Market: Individuals and Families. Children are natural advocates of Fort Worden and families often come for the benefit of their children. Facilitating children's activities and serving their needs should have priority in planning activities and facilities.

You must figure how to give people more time off than the weekend if you want to increase length of stay!

For CO Quarters if a non-profit such as the Heritage Group can't operate the museum, why can't state parks hire interpretive specialists to manage the museum and its collections? We already do this at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center at Cape Disappointment.

This is our state park and it should be owned and operated by the State.

Has effect of hundred room unit on motels and B&Bs been considered and articulated?

Opportunities: For life long learning, take advantage (and collaborate) with off site service providers and facilities. Participants can live at Fort Worden and extend their experiences with the resources of Port Townsend.

How was Madrona Mind Body Institute chosen? Was there an RFP and they were chosen?

We needed the plan to read ahead of time. The perception of this group is that a company from – elsewhere – is trying to keep us in the dark. Most of us read very well.

Destination Learning – local animal study – coyote, raccoon, deer, cougar, bears. History learning – Fort history – area history, WA state history, war history, forest and plant study

Cost and funding for school busing great cuts. Like you noting - manage guest expectations. Right and need great skill then why do you use map with circles of 30, 120 and 300. No one will come as the crow flies. We have Puget Sound ferries, bridges, traffic, you can make map with under way time. I also suggest bus service with _____<?> cost of fuel, bridge out openings, ferry out – small full

We looked into renting the bricks hospital in the officers' row and looked at it to decide and found the musty smell in the building overwhelming. We did not rent it. What is being done to handle this musty smell in the buildings to rent?

Because of gas increases, ferry slowdown, target market should be 100 miles, including those flying to SeaTac. "Pros" projections appear unrealistic because of economic factors. Suggest closely monitoring guests arriving next year instead of these "projections" before changes are recommended. No change may be appropriate course at this time.

Trusty says MSC cannot have direct competition? What about Centrum? Trusty previously said there could be another jazz fest as long as it was not at the same time as Centrum. So how is that different? Can one partner prevent competition? Mr. Herzog is almost as bad.

I felt too much importance attached to marketing.

When you target a moneyed clientele – it changes the dynamic. There needs to be plenty for people who don't have money – State Parks should be for all people. The parks belong to the people.

Management and Governance

Learn from the Port's awful Point Hudson lease. It is taught in law schools of what not to do!

What is in place to review the process after it is implemented? And is there a time frame?

To what extent has the park management pursued hiring part time employees to be used in staffing present partner operations? (PI and Park Aide)

No education representative on the Task Force. Centrum is being put into a position of no win conflict of interest in being able to allocate resources to Centrum and all others (i.e. good of Centrum vs. good of FW). How did Centrum get a big grant to develop the management structure without an MOU or other assurance that is already a done deal? (have we been railroaded) Any sub ___ agreement?

To whom is the non-profit accountable? Who will audit the process and outcomes? Will there be state employees in the management?

Has anyone contacted State Park about pending non-profit management arrangement? I.e. So they approve and will they cooperate?

Relationship of potential non-profit to state park? Just manager? State responsibilities? Similar to NPS concessionaire system?

A library could help unify the messages about FW – support all of the partners have an online and physical presence for providing services to visitors and partners.

Site and Facilities

Signage, displays: Don't overdo it. It's no retreat to be bombarded with information. I want to see the woods, the beach, the kite flyers, etc. not signs and displays all over the place.

I am concerned about the proposed change of entrance to Fort Worden from Cherry Street to Admiralty Ave as it would increase traffic by the middle school and by the homes of the elderly on San Juan. There are many animals along the Admiralty Ave and who cross there and the corner by the military cemetery and the tree house complex would become hazardous.

Nervous about being too successful in attracting people to Fort Worden. Don't want it to be loved to death. Does the expanded upper campground extend into some of the natural areas? I oppose developed use of natural areas.

The COQ is unique, an important attraction. It has been supported by the local and outsiders in time and donations of historical materials. To lose the COQ as a museum would be tragic!

One reason people come here is to enjoy the woods (Ft. Casey has none to speak of). Don't cut a single tree along with wood corridor to expand the upper campground! That's just shooting ourselves in the foot and ruining our most valuable resource.

Is somebody activity trying to find another entity to run the COQ or is it just appeasement to many angry people?

Pt Townsend is one of the three nationally recognized Victorian Seaports; the COQ is the only Victorian house museum in the large area. It would be criminal to turn it into a rental facility. It is an outstanding visual and teaching facility. Many school classes come and also other groups. It is a learning place. Please do not turn your back on PT and the Victorian Festival.

Has the State committed to spending the millions of dollars that will be needed to convert buildings into first class accommodations?

Requiring food purchases stops some groups from coming.

FW cannot be a life long learning center without the COQ. It is the only organization on site that informs guests about the history of the Fort. The COQ must be supported by the park. Please do not eliminate the COQ. The history will be eliminated – a huge loss.

The extensive (and valuable) furnishings were donated to be shown in this house. It would be very sad to see them consigned to storage.

A multitude of people – local and visitors – come to Ft Worden for recreation and relaxation rather than “learning”. Do not forget that FW is a park! Recr4eation puts heads in beds – including RVs.

The Leader stated the possibility of opening the Admiralty St. entrance. Why would the city/park redirect traffic past a middle school, retirement center when it's not necessary? And why increase traffic at the intersection of Admiralty and the Tree House project intersection that is already safety problematic?

I recommend programs on sustainability – gardening, farming, wilderness awareness, etc. How about teaching families to farm together, create home gardens, etc. teach canning, root cellaring, composting etc. Even classes in animal husbandry like housing chickens at home, etc.

Will mold in the USO be addressed?

Chinese Gardens area – leave it alone!!! Proposed opening of west gate to RVs – NO! Impact on quiet neighborhoods and serenity of woods walk. Where would the upper campground be expanded to?

Accommodations- cost of room upgrades?

Your plan to remove the Officers Quarters museum is short –sighted. People come to the fort to see and do, not just to stay.

Who is responsible for finding someone to run the COQ museum?

Design Guidelines

Is consideration for ensuring programs, structures and services (power, transport, etc.) practice and demonstrate sustainable (green) practices? This will have a significant impact on target market's interest, given the strong level of eco-awareness. Eco tourism and “teach” how to implement and executive sustainable living practices. – Good point

Fort Worden Long Range Plan Preliminary Recommendations Meeting - Staff, Partners and Advisory Committee Comments May 27, 2008

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Business and Operations

Where are camping improvements? How increase revenue from camping?

Additional Ranger staff needed. Fort Worden Area (minimum) – two (2) additional day shift positions – 1 for safety/security of Fort Worden/Old Fort Townsend, 1 for better supervision of staff and assistance with administrative tasks – 1.4* additional swing/nightshift positions to provide better facility and visitor security during evening hours when many events are taking place and quiet hours must be enforced at our three campgrounds (* 1 current night security position is a .6 FTE)

Operational strategies and capacity building steps for new entity – funds for partner collaborations and building that culture – tools for helping partners make steps

Is it environmentally responsible to create programs/facilities at FW that will induce increase fuel consumption, travel costs, gas, etc.? At the last meeting, PROS reported that “culinary instruction” was the #1 topic of interest to people. So why was it not even mentioned in today's report as a subject for destination learning?

Management and Governance

Assuming the transition to a new management structure, what is “Plan B” if that new management structure proves to be ineffective or short lived?

Site and Facilities

I'm concerned about the dramatic reduction of dorm space. In order to produce valuable programming at levels projected, much of this programming need to be open to larger groups. Where would they stay?

Design Guidelines

(No comments)

