South Kitsap
Community Center

Public Preference Survey Report
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many discussions have taken place in recent years about locating a community center in South Kitsap. The City of Port Orchard and Kitsap County agreed to seek local preferences regarding a center. Together they solicited opinions from residents during April 2013 regarding interest to locate a community center in the South Kitsap area. The survey, developed by a citizen taskforce, received 531 responses. Key findings are:

- **Respondents.** Nearly half (41%) of those who answered the survey are between the ages of 36 and 50. Most of the respondents live in the 98366 and 98367 zip code areas.

- **Support for a New Facility.** Support is significant, with 93% of potential users indicating a desire for a new facility.

- **Community Opportunities Today.** Surprisingly, 45% of residents are unsure what is available at community facilities or programs that exist in South Kitsap now. However, 43% cite limits with current services due to factors such as set schedules and costs.

- **Preferred New Activities.** The programs most requested are swimming, strength training, walking and cooking classes.

- **Current Facility Challenges and Fees.** Users of current recreational facilities pay $41 or more per month to use them. 67% of respondents indicate few swimming opportunities exist due to requirements at existing facilities.

- **Funding Support for a New Center.** Most residents surveyed support privatization, user fees, donations and/or grants to construct and maintain a new facility. Slightly more than half (51%) would volunteer time to help with fundraising for a new South Kitsap community center.

This report outlines the survey methods and results, and recommends next steps for decision makers on topics such as potential partnerships, location, public outreach, and the need for further market review.
1. INTRODUCTION

Many discussions have taken place in recent years about locating a community recreational center in the South Kitsap area. The question of whether such a facility is needed at all, as well as what services to provide have been tailored to a specific organizational structure, like a YMCA or Boys and Girls Club. In an effort to answer questions, the City of Port Orchard and Kitsap County embarked on a process to identify community desires for a facility and services regardless of organizational structure. The first step in this joint venture was establishing an ad hoc citizen taskforce appointed by the two jurisdictions (Appendix A). South Kitsap community members from business, youth, senior and parks interests represented on the taskforce.

The group collected information to determine existing indoor facility/program capacities during meetings held from December 2012 through March 2013 (Appendix B). Previous public survey reports were also reviewed and found to be limited use for this project. Following this assessment, the citizens drafted questions for a survey to determine public desires and willingness to pay for a community center and recreational programs. The taskforce identified three survey objectives:

1. Gauge the perspectives of South Kitsap residents about an indoor recreational facility.
   - Build on prior survey efforts conducted by private and public groups.
   - Ensure the survey is inclusive and reaches a broad range of citizens to participate.
2. Create public discourse about the concept.
3. Prevent the displacement of existing, private recreational facilities in South Kitsap.

Following a review of the survey findings, the taskforce will continue discussing whether further research is needed. If so, the group may recommend the size, scale and amenities for a facility and identify potential partnerships.

While this survey provides valuable information on South Kitsap community perspectives, if discussion about locating a community center continues, more expansive market, usage and funding analysis should be completed.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Two methods were used to measure public preferences: an online survey and paper copy versions. The Taskforce developed eleven questions to learn the views of South Kitsap citizens regarding a community center. The questions are:

1. What are your three favorite indoor recreational and/or fitness activities?
2. What facilities/activities would you like to have in South Kitsap that are unavailable now?
3. What are the biggest challenges that prevent you from using the facilities we have?
4. Do we need a new facility in South Kitsap?

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1 Haselwood Family YMCA Feasibility Study (August 2007); City of Port Orchard Parks Survey (2011); and the South Kitsap School Districts Student Resources and Assets (May 2004).
5. If you use existing facilities and/or programs, how much do you pay per month for these services or programs?
6. What type of activities do you engage in at these facilities?
7. How should such facilities be paid for?
8. Would you be interested in helping raise funds for this facility?
9. What is your zip code?
10. What is your age?
11. Is there anything else you would like to suggest?

The online survey was available electronically at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/SKRecFacility](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SKRecFacility) from April 1-30, 2013. Paper copies were provided to community associations and placed at locations in the Kitsap County Administration Building, Port Orchard City Hall, Givens Community Center, Port Orchard and Manchester Libraries, South Kitsap High School and elementary schools at Sunnyslope, Olalla and Burley. Completed surveys were collected from April 1 to May 6, 2013.

Multiple notice methods helped to create public awareness of the survey. Press releases were distributed to the *Port Orchard Independent*, *Kitsap Sun*, City of Port Orchard and Kitsap County webpages, Kitsap County's Facebook and Twitter Accounts. Flyers were also posted on public notice boards at major local transportation terminals. Notices were mailed with utility bills for City of Port Orchard and West Sound Utility District customers, and distributed to every elementary school student in the South Kitsap School District.

A goal of 600 responses was set to achieve a high confidence level (+98%) for responses from the 71,000 South Kitsap residents with a margin of error of 5%. Survey data is available by request at the Kitsap County Commissioners' Office.

3. RESPONSES

Since the survey closed, 446 online responses and 85 paper copies were received -- a total of 531. Although we did not achieve the goal of 600 responses, the survey confidence rate, is approximately 97%. The respondents represent residents from the South Kitsap area and are largely 18-65 in age. The dramatically higher number of online responses is likely due to the ease of answering the questions and returning them quickly. Most respondents live within the 98366 (48%), and the 98367 (43%) zip codes. Two percent of respondents are in 98359 while seven percent reside in the 98332, 98312 and 98310 zip codes.

![Figure 1: Zip Codes](image)

*Figure 1: Zip Codes*

- 98367: 44%
- 98366: 48%
- Other: 8%
The respondents’ ages vary. The largest cohort (41.2%) is the 36-50 age bracket, while 23.5% are 18-35 and 9.9%, 65-85. Over 3,000 survey notices were sent to South Kitsap elementary students, but they represent less than 0.9% of the total. Figure 2 shows the responses by age group.

4. SURVEY FINDINGS

4.1 New Facility Desires

When asked if a new facility is needed in South Kitsap, 413 (91.8%) of responses say yes.

4.2 Current and Desired Activities

We wanted to see the full range of indoor activities people from South Kitsap engage in – without limiting their thinking about a specific facility. So we asked a free-response question for top three activities. This resulted in a large set of sometimes overlapping activities (such as weights, weight lifting, strength training). But because we asked them to list their three favorite activities, there is a clearly ranked priority. Table I shows only the top ten activities for first, second, and third choice responses. Collectively, the most frequent responses are swimming, basketball, yoga, walking and running.
Table I. What are your three favorite indoor recreational and/or fitness activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zumba</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Aerobics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Soccer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight Lifting</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Racquetball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Running</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>Treadmill</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 147 activities listed | 178 activities listed | 205 activities listed |

Note: Only top ten responses listed for each choice level.

Swimming is the favorite indoor activity across all three choices. 35% of the 446 people responding listed swimming as their first choice, 17% of 438 people who listed a second choice also chose swimming as their top preference, and 8% of 412 who named a third choice indicate swimming as their most preferred indoor activity.

What people like to do as their favorite activities for an indoor facility should be considered along with responses to Question 2 about facilities they want in South Kitsap (see Table II) and Question 6, facilities that are currently used for indoor recreation (see Table III). Table II adds strength training to the list of favorite indoor activities along with swimming, basketball, yoga, walking, and running that emerged from the previous question. Many of the “other” activities people preferred referenced special populations (children, elderly, teen, family or needs – a heated pool) and included activities that might fit under general fitness equipment and sport leagues.

The other activities and comments by survey respondents indicate a strong desire for a social, family oriented facility that offers specialized activities for seniors, children, teens, sports leagues, and personal as well as group fitness classes and facilities (heated pool, sauna, yoga, exercise machines – aerobic & strength training). For example, Table II shows, the demand for dancing and cooking classes is mentioned by 35 respondents, which is roughly 45% of the total who responded (and more people than the number who listed basketball as a second favorite activity in Table 1). The variety of culture and active recreation activities appropriate for a wide demographic mix (family, youth, senior) indicates a good balance for a community center. Similarly, basketball is the second favorite indoor activity across all three choices. 446 people (4%) say that basketball...
as their first choice, 6% of the 438 who gave a second choice also select basketball as their top preference, and 4% of 412 people third choices indicate basketball is most preferred.

Table II. What type of activities do you engage in at these facilities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strength training</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swimming</strong></td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Running</strong></td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walking</strong></td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basketball</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport leagues</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting rooms</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II. What facilities/activities would you like to have in South Kitsap that are unavailable now?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Swimming</strong></td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength training</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walking</strong></td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking classes</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yoga</strong></td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education classes</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and crafts</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Running</strong></td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social programs</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Current Facilities--Challenges and Fees

Challenges

The survey also queried “what are the biggest challenges to using existing facilities”? Responses indicate four major themes: lack of information about existing facilities, costs, scheduling or capacity constraints and accessibility.
Figure 3 shows that 45% of people are unsure what is available, though nearly as many cite incompatibility with set schedules as well as costs. Of the (393) of respondents to this question, 28 (7%) indicate that transportation issues make use of existing facilities a challenge.

This is interesting when compared with unavailable activities, shown in Figure 3. Upon review of responses to the question, “What are the biggest challenges that prevent you from using the facilities we have?” many indicate that use of the existing swimming pool at South Kitsap High School is limited. These constraints include lack of public swim time, restrictions, needed maintenance, and water temperature. Another theme from the comments is the need for an all-ages facility. While the existing facilities address the demand for service, there is not a centrally located multipurpose facility for families of all ages.

Figure 3
Existing Facility Challenges

Fees
When asked how much current programs and facilities cost, 31% of the respondents indicate they pay between $21 and $40 per month. Some 46% of the sample population pay $41 or more. Figure 4 shows the range of fees.
4.4 Potential Funding Sources

Any new facility requested by local citizens will incur expenses. So, the survey inquired about how respondents prefer to fund a new community center. They were asked to express support or opposition to suggested funding methods. Figure 6 shows that out of 449 respondents, 389 favor user fees, 396 for grants and 272 private ownership. Many of the open-ended responses strongly oppose new taxes.
4.5 Volunteers

The survey asked if residents “would be interested in helping raise funds for this new facility” of the 429 who responded, 51% responded “yes”!

5. COMMUNITY COMMENTS DURING THE SURVEY

The survey offered South Kitsap residents an option to write in comments for some questions and 218 people did so. A summary of collective messages received from community members is as follows:

- **Survey Organization.** Many residents provided opinions to the preferred organizational structure of the new facility. Some residents (71) believe a YMCA or Boys and Girls Club would be appropriate for the South Kitsap area.

- **Distance/Facility Constraints.** While facilities or services do exist in the surrounding area, some (32) consider the distance too far for frequent use or services are limited due to facility constraints.

- **Multi-Purpose Community Center.** Reasons for not using current fitness facilities is said to be because they do not orient to the entire family nor do they offer programs for all ages. There is a strong theme for activities that serve all ages, especially for seniors and for youth in junior high and high school.

- **Improve Existing Facilities.** A focus on developing available facilities such asset forth in the South Kitsap Regional Park Master Plan is expressed. Improvements to existing parks could increase usage and attract additional services and patrons.

6. SUMMARY

The survey method helped accomplish the objective to learn the perspectives of South Kitsap residents about an indoor recreational facility. The South Kitsap residents who responded to the survey represent this area with a high confidence level. They expressed strong interest in a centrally located multi-purpose community center in South Kitsap. Further, their favorite recreational activities include swimming, basketball, yoga, and walking or running. While a new facility should include these fitness activities, definite preferences emerged for an all-ages facility to offer social and family-oriented functions such as dancing and classes as well.

Based on this preliminary survey, recommendations include:

1) **Awareness.** The survey responses demonstrate a strong desire for a new community recreational center in South Kitsap. However, data also notes that nearly half (45%) of residents are unaware of current options or are deterred by limited schedules or the costs. More information about existing programs may prove valuable to increase knowledge of them, as well as exploring scheduling and fee structures.

2) **Available Services.** This survey did not ask whether existing facilities meet the demand for popular activities. While a preliminary list of current facilities has been prepared, further review
of facilities or usage is needed to determine if and how modifications of existing facilities can address the needs of the South Kitsap community.

3) Location. The free-form comments provided by respondents clearly convey that a centrally located facility providing services for all ages and interests is desired in South Kitsap.

4) Funding. Potential funding sources supported by respondents were primarily grants, donations and user fees, rather than new taxes. If there is to be a new community center, future discussions are needed to explore funding options further.

5) Next Steps. To create more public discourse about the concept of a multi-purpose community center, presentations about the survey will be offered throughout South Kitsap County. City and County representatives and members of the Task force are available to present this information at community and civic meetings in the coming weeks.
Appendix A

Members of the Citizen Taskforce

**Business**
City: Coreen Johnson
County: Teresa Osinski

**Nonprofit**
City: Roger Jenson
County: Bob Abel

**Parks**
City: Amy Miller
County: Tony Otto

**Senior**
City: Pam Heinrich
County: Judith Kay

**Youth**
City: Derrick Marshall
County: Two youths were invited but unable to attend.
## APPENDIX B

### List of Existing Facilities Identified by the Taskforce

**Indoor**

- SK8Town
- Olympic Fitness Club
- Curves
- Westcoast Fitness
- Annapolis Fitness
- Cross Fit NNW
- Olympic Fitness Pro
- Mountain Yoga & Pilates
- Mile Hill Gymnastics
- Gallery Gymnastics
- The Dance Gallery
- Academy of Dance
- Just for Kicks School of Dance
- Kitsap Karate by Butokukan
- UKO Karate
- Olympic Tae Kwon Do
- SKHS Community Pool
- Givens Community Center
- PO Active Building (Givens Sr. Ctr.)
- Western WA Center for the Arts
- Port Orchard Pavilion
- SKHS Gymnasium
- Parkwood Community Club
- Port Orchard Armory Gymnasium
- Kitsap Square Dance Center
- Olalla Grange
- Bethel Grange
- Long Lake Community Center
- Associated Club of Waterman

**Outdoor**

- McCormick Woods Golf Course
- Village Greens Golf Course
- Horseshoe Lake Golf Course
- Trophy Lake Golf & Casting
- SK Disc Golf (Van Zee & Dalaiwood)
- SKHS Tennis Courts
- SK Regional Park*
- Veterans Memorial park (ball fields)
- SKHS Ball Fields
- Banner Forest Heritage Park
- Horseshoe Lake County Park
- Long Lake County Park
- Harper Park
- Howe Farm
- PO Rotary Park
- Calvinwood
- Anderson Point Park
- Wicks Lake
- Givens Ball Fields
- Roze El Stables
- High Point Stables
- Riding Place
- J’s Eden Riding stables
- Cedar Crest Stables
- Northwind Farm
- Crescent Moon Farm
- Kitsap Saddle Club
- Port Orchard Marina Park
- Bremerton Motorsports Park/Raceway
- Manchester State Park
- Square Lake State Park
- Clayton City Park
- Van Zee Park

* Ball fields, playground, picnic shelter, picnic area, walking trails, scale outdoor railroad (run by Kitsap Live Steamers), batting cages (run by Casey's Batting Range

July 22, 2013

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Appendix C

The Survey Questions

Tell us how you use or might use a recreational facility.

1. What are your three favorite indoor recreational and/or fitness activities?
   1.

   2.

   3.

2. What facilities/activities would you like to have in South Kitsap that are unavailable now? (Please check all that apply)

   ![Table with options]

3. What are the biggest challenges that prevent you from using the facilities we have? (Please check all that apply)

   ![Table with options]

4. Do we need a new facility in South Kitsap?  □ Yes  □ No

5. If you use existing facilities and/or programs, how much do you pay per month for these services or programs?

   □ Free  □ Less than $20  □ $21-$40  □ $41-$60  □ $61-$120 □ other?: ___________
6. What type of activities do you engage in at these facilities? (Please check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sports</th>
<th>Education/Social</th>
<th>Arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ running</td>
<td>□ cooking classes</td>
<td>□ dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ strength training</td>
<td>□ meeting rooms</td>
<td>□ drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ basketball</td>
<td>□ sport leagues</td>
<td>□ arts and crafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ swimming</td>
<td>□ yoga</td>
<td>□ other(s)?:__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ volleyball</td>
<td>□ walking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ cycling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we do want a new facility, how will we make it happen?

7. How should such facilities be paid for? Please indicate (where 1 = support and 2 = oppose) if you would favor or oppose the following methods of funding.

   _____ existing taxes
   _____ special levy
   _____ grants
   _____ donations
   _____ private ownership (for profit facilities)
   _____ local improvement district
   _____ user fees
   _____ others


8. Would you be interested in helping raise funds for this facility? □ Yes □ No

We would like this survey to be representative of our community -

9. What is your zip code?

10. What is your age? □ 6-17 □ 18-35 □ 36-50 □ 51-65 □ 65-85 □ 85+

11. Is there anything else you would like to suggest?