

Skyway Community Center Project Frequently Asked Questions

Why is King County Parks working on a community center for Skyway?

King County is contracting with a consultant to determine the feasibility of constructing a community center for Skyway in response to the community's request to help young people grow and get involved in their community. During a series of workshops facilitated by the Pomegranate Center, Skyway residents identified the creation of a community center as key to achieve this goal. The community center's vision is to be a unifying hub for the area, providing a "home away from home" and acting as the glue that holds the community together. This project is part of a broader community-driven effort aimed at enhancing the quality of life in Skyway.

How is King County learning about what Skyway community members want from a community center?

Since 1994, Skyway-West Hill community members have been actively involved in discussions and planning for a future community center. King County is committed to using this input as we move forward with this project. [The design team has reviewed community input from previous studies, community center designs, and public surveys.](#)

King County will continue to engage with the community. [A meeting was held in July 2024 to seek input on programming](#) and on Skyway Park as a potential site. In July/August 2024, [203 community members gave their thoughts in an online survey.](#) There will be more community meetings and surveys in the future for further input. King County is also working with local organizations like Skyway Coalition to gather additional community feedback. For updates on the project, [sign up for the Skyway Park e-newsletter.](#)

Why is Skyway Park the proposed site for the Skyway Community Center?

The design team identified and reviewed 10 different locations, looking at availability, size, access to parks and transit, location in the community, and site characteristics. Skyway Park came out on top in their assessment — the site is large, centrally located, and already owned by King County Parks. 86% of survey respondents were supportive of siting the community center at Skyway Park. A well designed and run community center could help activate Skyway Park and increase community use of the park's green spaces.

King County is gathering more information on Skyway Park to confirm it as a feasible location for a community center. At this time, King County does not have a clear pathway to acquiring any other suitable locations.

What kind of programs will be at the community center?

Previous community planning and current community feedback is helping inform the programs and types of spaces in the community center. The design team is working on a Recreation and Program Demand Plan now, and [a draft of this plan is available on the website.](#) There would be space to host a variety of community building, health and fitness, play, and learning programs.

When will the community center be completed?

There is no completion date at this time. There is still a lot of planning work to be done and significant funds to be secured before a community center could be constructed.

How will community center construction and operations be funded?

Approximately \$8 million has been allocated to start planning a community center, but this won't be enough to fully cover construction or operational costs. Cost estimates from previous planning efforts are out of date. More accurate updated cost estimates will be available in 2025. The design team will help King County and our community partners understand

likely construction costs, as well as how the community center could be managed and funded in the future. Additional funding will need to be secured once a conceptual design is in place.

How will community concerns about safety at Skyway Park be addressed?

King County Parks is launching a Park Ranger program to increase staff presence at parks, making these locations safer and more welcoming spaces. Rangers will provide a positive presence and educate users about park rules. Parks deputies will continue to patrol Skyway Park to address safety concerns, and Park’s Mobile Engagement Team (MET) will continue to activate the park by encouraging community use of the space during summer months. Additionally, placing a community center at Skyway Park could provide opportunities to better design the space in order to address safety concerns (for example, additional lighting and better pathways may be installed around the community center).

Aren't there wetlands within Skyway Park? Will it be okay to build there?

King County is currently having geotechnical surveys done to better understand site considerations and to find the best spot for construction in the south end of the park. We will know more soon.

Will there be adequate parking and transit access for increased use that would be associated with a community center at Skyway Park?

This project will explore access improvements as part of the community center design process. The project would likely require the development of additional parking spaces and improved pedestrian access to nearby roads and bus stops.

Will the community center have a swimming pool?

There is no plan to construct a swimming pool as part of the community center, due to the high construction and operation costs associated with pools.

What about the Skyway Resource Center?

To meet the community’s growing needs, the Department of Local Services awarded the Renton Innovation Zone Partnership (RIZP) and King County Housing Authority (KCHA) \$2 million for the development of the Skyway Resource Center in the former US Bank building in Skyway, set to open in October 2024. This resource center will serve as a HUD EnVision social services hub and provide place-based housing, health, and economic resources to the community. The community center will focus on recreational and social activities, while the Skyway Resource Center is dedicated to providing essential support services.

What about the West Hill Community Center?

After a community center was identified as a priority in the West Hill Community Plan in 1993, the West Hill Community Recreation Center was designed in partnership with the community based on planning sessions conducted in 1996. The 5,200-square-foot Westhill Community Center was opened in April 1998 on the grounds of Dimmitt Middle School. An innovative partnership between King County and the Renton School District made it possible for this project to be completed in less than one year. Through the partnership, the school district supplied the land, and the county funded construction of the building. King County Parks operated a Teen Program out of the Community Center until 2002, when the lease was assigned to the Boys and Girls club due to unprecedented KC budget shortfalls. The building is no longer adequate to support the needs of the Skyway community.

Last updated 12/11/2024