

Fernhill Visitor Experience Plan

MASON  **BEE**
INTERPRETIVE PLANNING

 Clean Water Services

Introduction

Welcome to Clean Water Services' Fernhill Visitor Experience Plan! The purpose of this Plan is to guide how we create visitor experiences at Fernhill that support a healthy watershed and a thriving community. The tools in this Plan support CWS staff and partners as we adapt programs, form relationships, and prioritize which ideas to implement.

The Clean Water Services (CWS) education team led the effort to create the Plan with the support of Mason Bee Interpretive Planning. The Plan is informed by the following:

- Surveys conducted with adult and family groups at Fernhill
- Surveys with community members at the Forest Grove Public Library
- Meetings with the Fernhill Implementation and Landscaping Teams
- Meetings with community partners from Adelante Mujeres, Centro Cultural, and the Cornelius Public Library



Thank you to everyone who participated in developing this shared vision.

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Theme + Subthemes

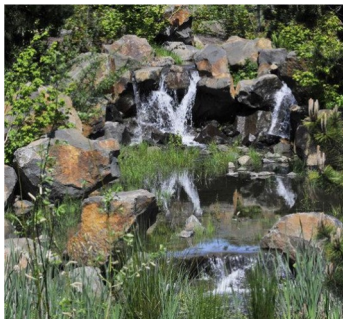
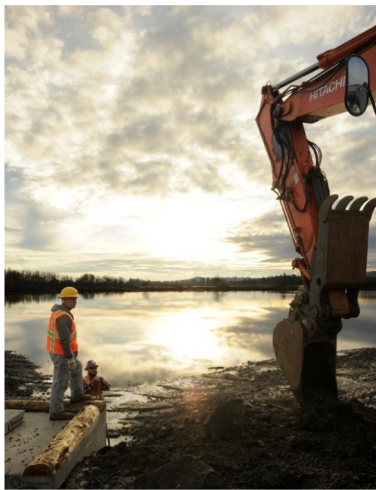
We create compelling, memorable experiences when we connect visitor experiences to a central theme. Our “theme” is the fundamental message we want visitors to walk away with.

The **four subthemes** support the overarching theme by highlighting key facets of Fernhill’s work and purpose.





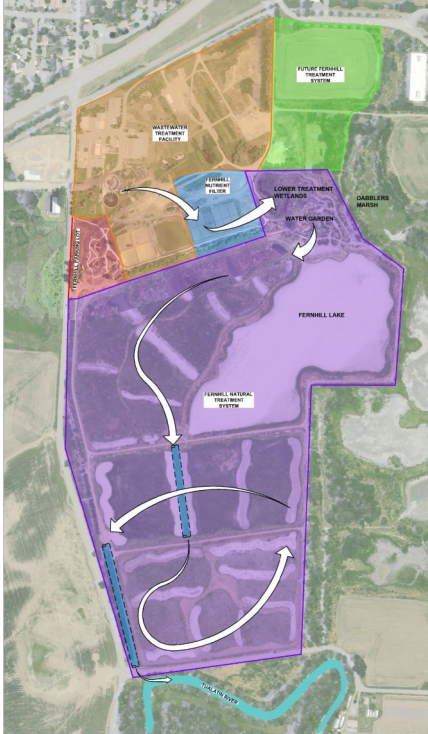
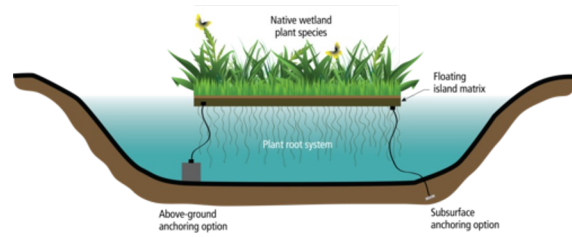
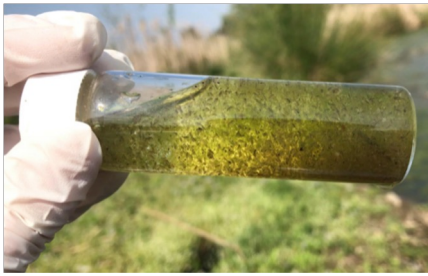
THEME:
**Fernhill is a healing space
that connects people, water,
and the environment.**



SUBTHEME #1

An important bridge

Fernhill is doing an important job—the wetlands act as a bridge between conventional water treatment and the river. CWS engineers and maintains the space so each element (e.g., plants, waterfall, etc.) plays a specific role.



SUBTHEME #2

Scientific innovation

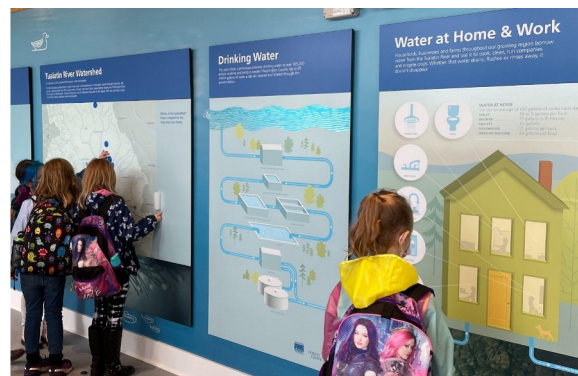
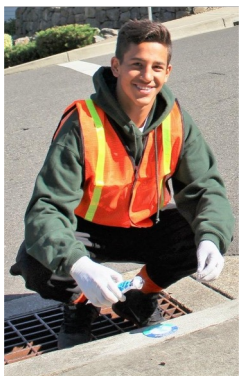
Fernhill is an example of scientific innovation using nature-based solutions. Creating this system is an ongoing process that takes experimentation, commitment, and investment.



SUBTHEME #3

The water cycle

Everyone is part of the water cycle; therefore, our actions impact the health of our water and community. Fernhill is a place to learn about and experience the benefits of caring for the watershed so we can do it at home.





SUBTHEME #4

Connection

Fernhill is a place to connect with family, friends, and nature.

Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change outlines the **change we want to be part of** in the world and the steps we need to take to support that change.

We use the Theory of Change to clarify our purpose and identify the most meaningful places to focus our efforts.



Theory of Change

Nature-based water treatment systems that integrate:

- Habitat for plants and wildlife
- Innovative science and technology
- Inclusive infrastructure for public recreation and learning

Create:

- Cool, clean water that is ready to go back to the river (river ready!)
- Beautiful places for people to recreate and socialize

These spaces support:

- Strengthening relationships between friends and family
- Positive interactions with staff and other visitors
- Seeing how humans can be a positive part of the watershed and ecosystem

Build deeper connections with nature and community that:

- Provide healing experiences with plants, wildlife, and the landscape
- Welcome and engage everyone, including historically underserved communities

Foster a resilient and connected community

Water management utilities commit resources to further research and innovation

With the systems being strengthened when:

People make everyday choices to support watershed health

Public and political leaders value and invest in nature-based solutions

Volunteers step up to champion natural spaces

People want to pursue natural resource careers



Audiences

While we want everyone to feel welcome at Fernhill, we have identified **three key audiences** to focus our efforts. The following slides outline what we learned about each audience through our visitor studies and how to create a meaningful experience for each group.



Local families with children

looking for multigenerational recreation

INCLUDES:

- Multiple generations ranging from infants to elders
- Many families of color and/or Latino families
- Tend to come from nearby communities

“What can we do this weekend as a family?”



What do they want to **FEEL?**

- Connected to each other
- Safe
- Fun
- Wonder
- Welcome
- Comfortable



What do they **THINK?**

- What can we do outdoors when the weather is nice?
- What can we do as a family that everyone will enjoy?
- How can we share our values and culture with our kids?
- What will allow my kids to learn something worthwhile?
- Will we feel welcome and safe from staff and authorities?
- What will we do if the kids melt down or have a bathroom emergency?
- Will the trails and activities be accessible for a stroller? Young kid? Elder?
- Can we participate if we don't speak English?



What do they like to **DO?**

- Exercise (walk, run around, climb, etc.)
- Enjoy nature and fresh air
- Look for wildlife and interesting natural objects
- Socialize
- Learn something new
- Enjoy a meal or snack



What are their **NEEDS?**

- Opportunities to interact as a family
- Fun, affordable, culturally relevant activities
- Safe, accessible spaces for all ages and abilities
- Lots of seating and shelter
- To feel welcome and safe from authorities
- Bilingual resources and staff
- Hands-on, full-body activities for children
- Places to change diapers and use the bathroom

Visitor Experience Map:

The website provides primary information in **Spanish and English**



STAGE 1 Decision

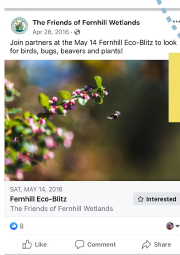
Easy to find **hours, rules, and directions**

It is clear that **admission is always free**

People can learn about Fernhill through **multiple community connections**



There are clear **invitations to return** to do other activities or for special events



People have a **positive experience** and want to come back

Visitors feel inspired and **empowered to make choices** that support clean water

People can safely come **by car, bus, foot, or bike**



Directions on navigation sites are accurate and easy to follow

STAGE 2 Travel



People feel **welcome** when they arrive



People can easily access **information and bathrooms**

Interpretation inspires wonder and care for the watershed



STAGE 3 Entry

Families have many opportunities for **shared experiences**



People can use **all of their senses and whole body** to explore and engage



Local families with children looking for **multigenerational recreation**

People can learn more **about Fernhill** in the Visitor Station or through a program



STAGE 5 Wrap-Up



People have all the infrastructure they need for a **positive experience**

STAGE 4 Explore



Experiences support **connection to nature and community**



Regional adults

looking for nature-based outdoor activities

INCLUDES:

- Most commonly people over 45
- More likely to travel from other parts of the metro area
- Frequent visitors who come multiple times a month

“Being in nature rejuvenates me.”



What do they want to **FEEL?**

- Rejuvenated
- Connected to nature
- Awe
- Calm
- Curious
- Safe



What do they **THINK?**

- Where can I go to enjoy the beauty of nature?
- Where can I enjoy my hobbies?
- Where can I see interesting birds and other wildlife?
- Where can I get exercise outside?
- Where will I feel safe?
- What local green spaces are well maintained and easy to access?
- What interesting new things can I experience?
- Will it be calm and peaceful or too busy?



What do they like to **DO?**

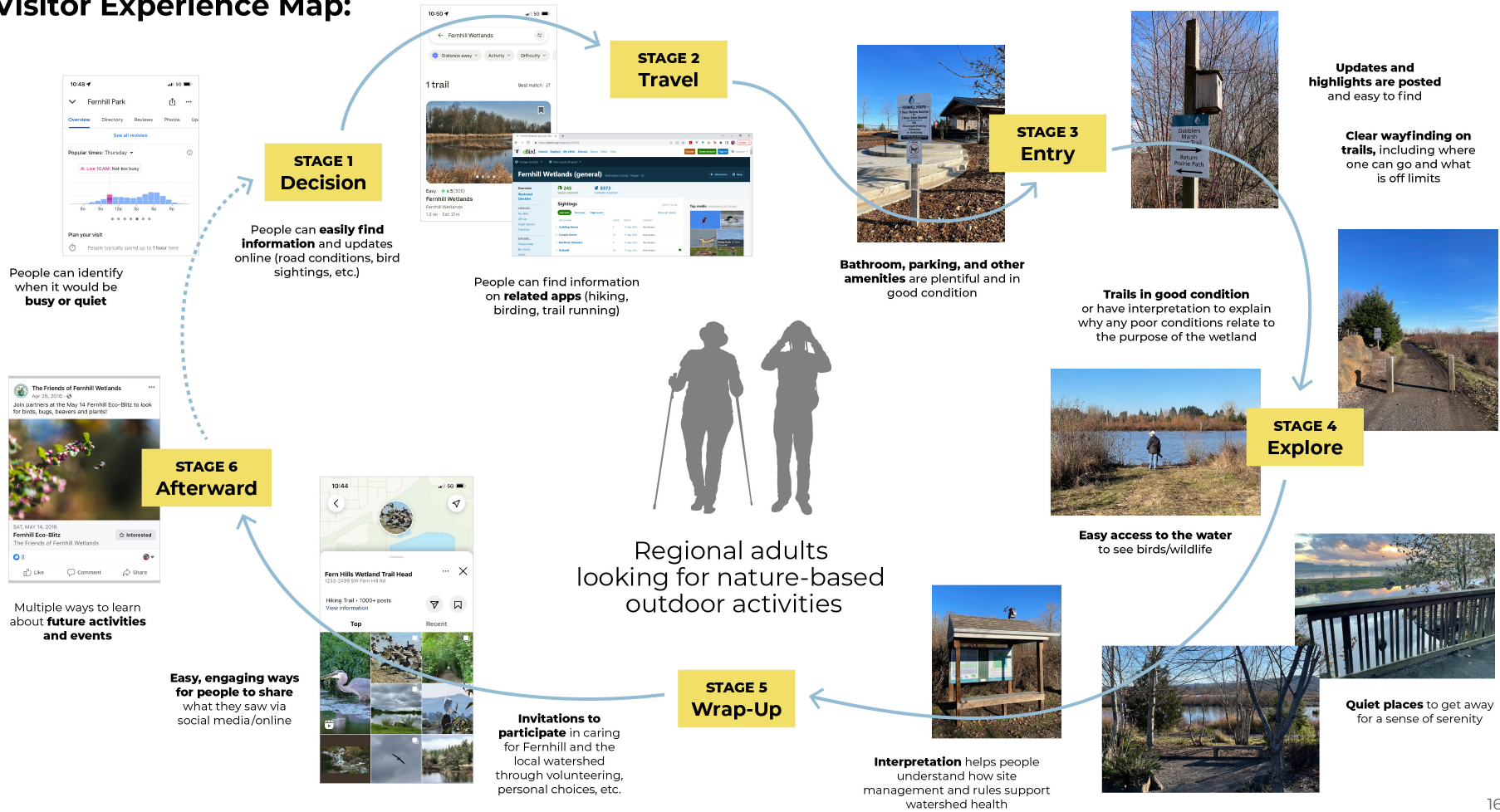
- Exercise (walk, jog, hike)
- Experience nature
- Bird-watch
- Socialize
- Photography



What are their **NEEDS?**

- Easily accessible places to see wildlife and the water
- Safe, well-maintained trails and facilities
- Clear wayfinding
- Interesting places to explore
- Information about what is new
- Quiet areas
- Ways to learn and share information with others

Visitor Experience Map:



Local youth

looking for educational and career development

INCLUDES:

Most commonly people 16–24

Tend to come from nearby communities and schools

Diverse backgrounds, including Asian/Pacific Islander and Latino youth



What do they want to **FEEL?**

- Engaged
- Purposeful
- Secure
- Interested
- Connected



What do they **THINK?**

- Where can I do what I need to for my class projects?
- Where can I get job experience?
- Where can I go with friends or on a date?
- What can I do to support a healthy environment and community?
- How can I utilize my talents to make a difference?
- How am I going to support myself financially?
My family?
- Where can I go outdoors to unwind or get exercise?
- Do I have time and a way to get to these places?



What do they like to **DO?**

- Exercise (walk, jog, hike)
- Enjoy the outdoors
- Study STEM subjects
- Participate in internships and class projects
- Participate in prosocial/environmental justice activities
- Socialize with friends

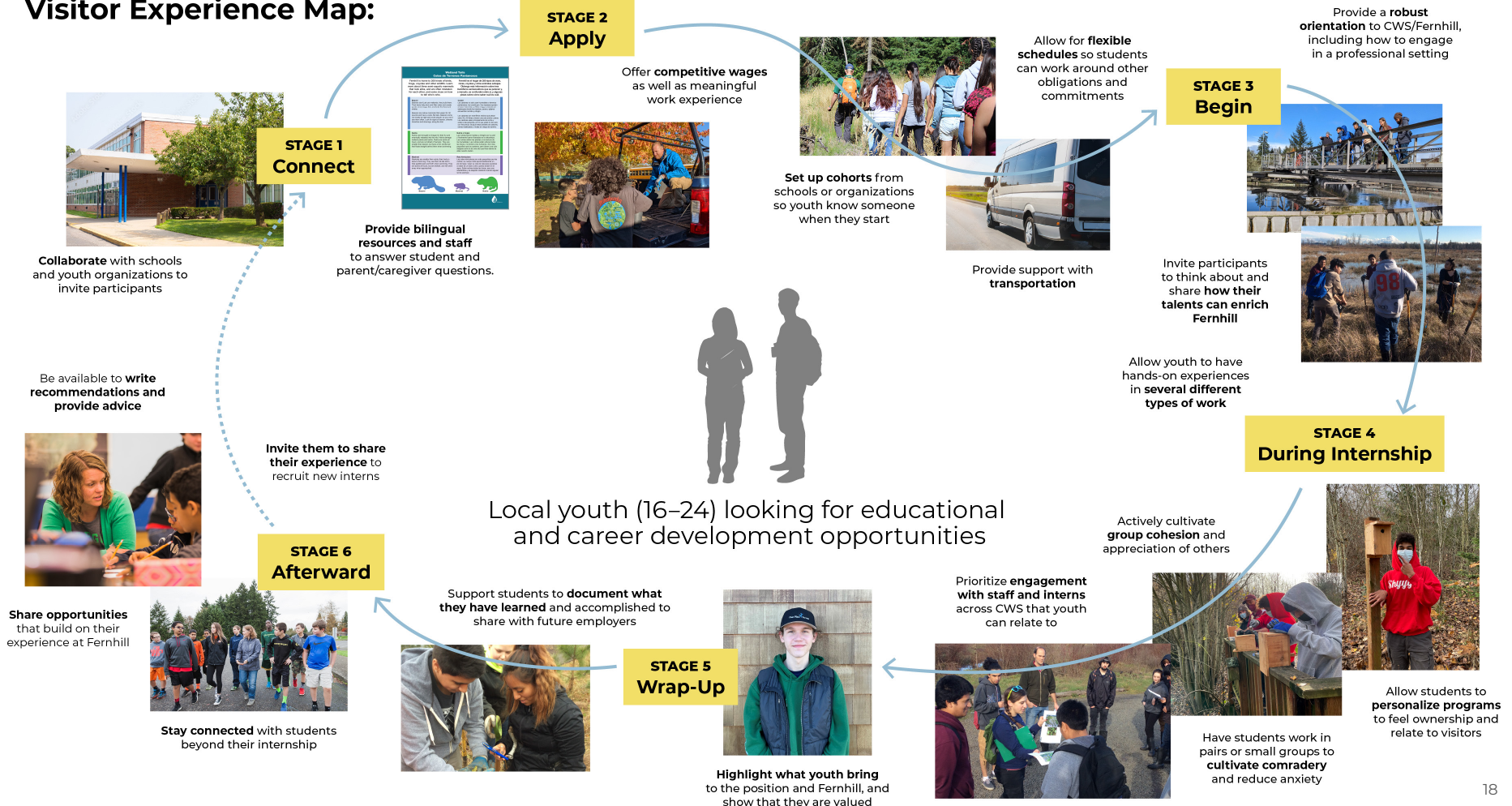
"I want to do something with my career that helps my community and the environment."



What are their **NEEDS?**

- Develop professional skills and networks
- Job and academic opportunities
- Bilingual resources and staff
- Safe, cheap, fun ways to socialize
- Earn money
- Ways to reduce stress
- Sense of purpose

Visitor Experience Map:



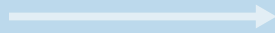
Theory of Action

The Theory of Action combines insights from the Theory of Change and key audience maps to create a **specific action plan** for Fernhill. It includes measures of success to monitor impacts throughout the process.



Theory of Action

Attract



Build Awareness

People know about Fernhill, how to get there, why they should come, and that their needs will be met

Appeal

Fernhill has beautiful, inclusive places for the public to recreate and learn

Include

Everyone, including historically underserved communities, feels welcome and engaged

Measures of Success

- Visitor demographics reflect the diversity of nearby communities
- When asked to describe why they come to Fernhill, visitors share that it is a beautiful place to recreate and/or spend time with friends and family
- Visitors from historically underserved groups report feeling welcome, safe, and interested in visiting
- Visitors report that staff are helpful and welcoming
- CWS has partnerships to ensure transportation and communications for key audiences

Impact



Heal

People experience healing by interacting with plants, wildlife, and the landscape
Fernhill provides habitat for plants and wildlife
Cool, clean water that is ready to go back to the river

Connect

Visitors strengthen relationships with friends and family
People have positive interactions with staff and other visitors

Learn

Visitors understand the key theme/subthemes
Fernhill wants to convey
Visitors see how humans can be a positive part of the watershed and ecosystem

- When asked to describe Fernhill and its purpose, visitors can state the theme and subthemes in their own words
- Visitors can identify ways that they and others are part of the watershed and actions they can take to protect watershed health
- Visitors report mental, social, and physical health benefits from being at Fernhill

Inspire

Take Action

People make everyday choices to support watershed health
People want to pursue careers in the field

Support

The public and political leaders value investing in nature-based solutions
Volunteers step up to champion natural spaces
The field commits resources to further research and innovation

- Community members report telling others about Fernhill and its benefits to the community
- Fernhill visitors name at least one thing they do or commit to doing to support a healthy watershed
- Visitors can identify careers related to CWS and natural resources
- When surveyed, ratepayers support CWS and Fernhill



Decision-Making Tools

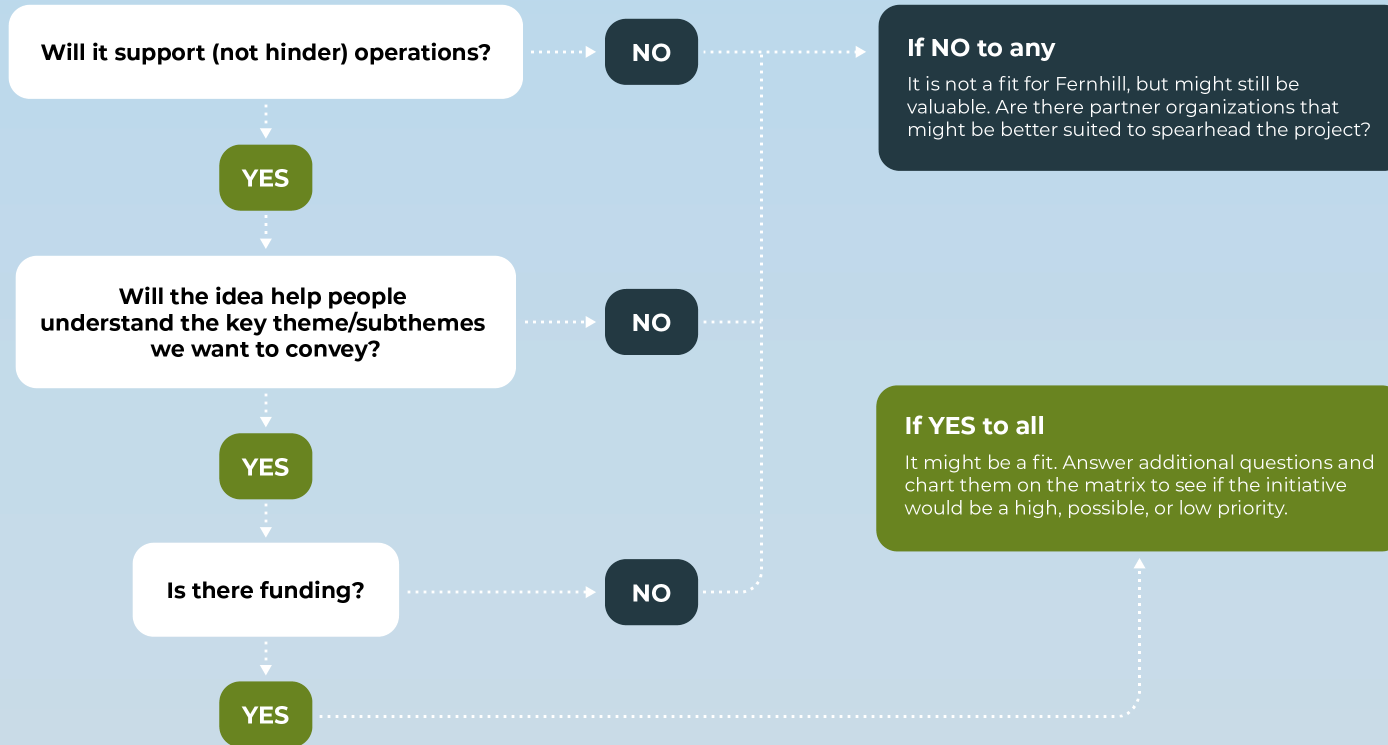
The following tools help staff determine if potential initiatives support Fernhill's visitor experience goals.

The **Decision Tree** asks three fundamental questions to identify projects that might be a good fit for Fernhill. The projects that answer yes to all three questions are then plotted on the **Action Priority Matrix** to see how well they reinforce Fernhill's efforts to create a healthy watershed and community.



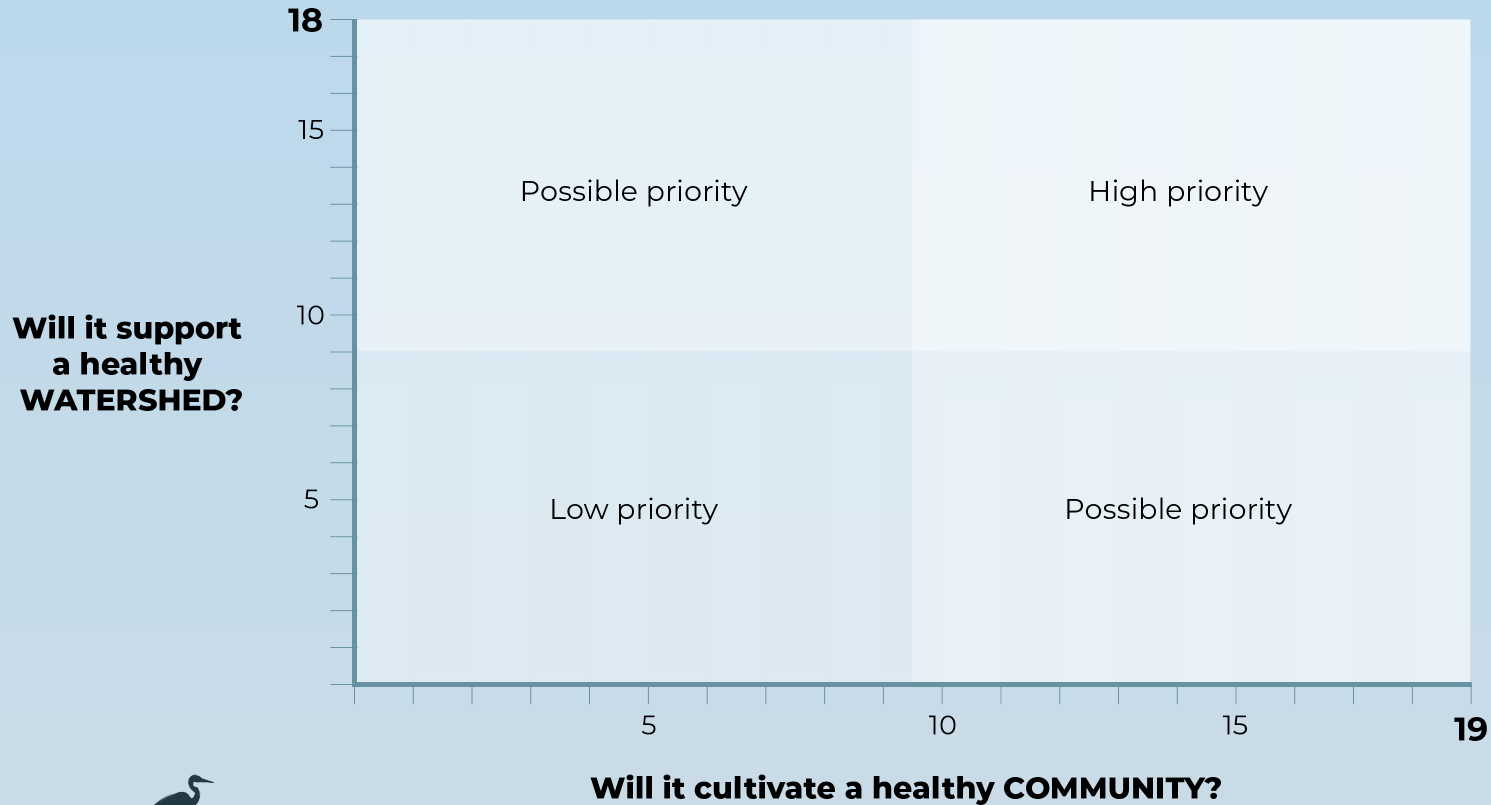
Is it a good fit for Fernhill?

Decision Tree



Is it a good fit for Fernhill?

Action Priority Matrix



Is it a good fit for Fernhill?

Action Priority Matrix

Will it support a healthy WATERSHED by:

YES

0 1 2 3

Allowing us to test promising nature-based water treatment solutions?

0 1 2 3

Creating cool, clean water that is ready to go back to the river (river ready!)

0 1 2 3

Inspiring people to make choices that support a healthy watershed?

0 1 2

Actively engaging people in supporting the health of the watershed?

-1 0 1 2

Positively impacting wildlife and/or their habitat? **If it will hurt plants or wildlife, answer = -1**

0 1 2

Inspiring and/or supporting people interested in nature-based water treatment as a career?

TOTAL (out of 18)

Will it cultivate a healthy COMMUNITY by:

RATE

0 1 2 3

Feeling safe and welcoming to historically underserved communities, especially Latino community members?

0 1 2 3

Encouraging people to notice and experience beautiful, interesting natural phenomena?

0 1 2 3

Allowing people of all ages and abilities to participate?

0 1 2

Being culturally relevant and engaging for at least one of our key audiences?

0 1 2

Supporting positive interactions between visitors and staff/other visitors?

0 1 2

Allowing people to socialize with friends/family?

0 1 2

Cultivating a feeling of beauty and calm?

0 1 2

Inspiring curiosity?

TOTAL (out of 19)



Credits and contact info

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