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Big Rock Park South Market Analysis Report

City of Sammamish

ECONorthwest

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Executive Summary

This market analysis is intended to inform the Sammamish City Council's considerations for the vacant structures at Big Rock Park South (the Barn, the Residence, the Pool House, and two garages). A central question for the Council is whether these buildings could duplicate or complement Building 120, another City-owned facility under active consideration. To address this question, this study evaluates the market each building would enter, local demand for different use scenarios, and estimates the level of ongoing subsidy the City should anticipate.

OPERATIONS AT BIG ROCK PARK SOUTH WILL REQUIRE AN ONGOING SUBSIDY.

Operating scenarios for each building run at a deficit, with estimated annual subsidies for each structure ranging from roughly \$9,000 for the Residence meeting rooms under third-party operation to about \$270,000 for a standalone Barn event space under direct City operation. Rather than indicating weak demand, net negative revenues and the need for subsidy are a deliberate outcome of positioning the Park as a community-serving asset, priced in line with its municipal and nonprofit comparables rather than the private market. Additionally, because fixed labor costs drive operating expenses, neither higher capital investment nor higher utilization guarantees a lower City subsidy. Limited parking for the Park is a further constraint, capping how intensively the site can be used and making simultaneous use of multiple buildings difficult.

THE BARN IS A STRONG COMMUNITY ASSET AND SITE ANCHOR.

The Barn is the largest of the parcel's structures and has the clearest market rationale. As a potential event venue, its character and setting resemble those of private wedding and event venues found across East King County. However, pricing for these venues typically includes amenities and services that likely fall outside the City's role. Instead, the Barn is better positioned alongside its municipal and community comparables, such as the City's Beaver Lake Lodge, offering comparable character at a lower, community-oriented rate. The report recommends a flexible configuration that can accommodate a range of uses and event types, with estimated capital costs of roughly \$650,000 and an annual operating subsidy between \$73,000 and \$212,000. The Barn could also be offered as a package with other spaces at the Park for additional rental options and amenities at a higher rate.

THE RESIDENCE AND POOL HOUSE WOULD MEET STRONG LOCAL DEMAND, BUT HAVE THE MOST OVERLAP WITH BUILDING 120.

The Residence and Pool House could help meet the high unmet local demand for small- and mid-size meeting, class, and program space, as well as unique opportunities for indoor/outdoor programming. Together, the two structures would require capital



investments of roughly \$757,000 and an ongoing subsidy of \$42,000 to \$274,000 depending on use intensity. Because these structures overlap most directly with Building 120, the report recommends deferring this investment until the City determines Building 120's role.

THE PAVILION IS A COMPLEMENT TO THE SITE, NOT A STANDALONE DRAW.

The new picnic Pavilion would cost roughly \$500,000 in capital and a \$28,000–\$82,000 annual subsidy. However, demand is concentrated on summer weekends, and the City already operates five picnic shelters, making it better positioned as an amenity for the other spaces.

INVESTMENT DECISIONS FOR THE PARK CAN BE SEQUENCED OVER TIME.

These findings leave the City with a connected set of decisions for its portfolio. For the Barn, the question is which configuration to advance. For the Residence and Pool House, it is whether to invest in smaller meeting spaces that Building 120 could largely provide, or redirect those buildings toward supporting the Barn or other uses. Because operating the Park will require some level of ongoing subsidy, this decision is one of investment priorities rather than cost recovery: how much capital to commit, how large a subsidy to sustain, whether to operate directly or through a third party, and how the resulting public benefit compares to other uses of the same public dollars. However, potential uses for the Park spaces are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and these decisions can be sequenced over time rather than settled all at once.

REPORT OVERVIEW

This report has six main chapters:

- ◆ **Chapter 1: Project Overview** provides background information and context for the project, including an overview of the Big Rock Park system.
- ◆ **Chapter 2: Existing Conditions** summarizes the current status and uses proposed in the 2023 Master Plan for each of the Park's structures, as well as the local provider and programming needs identified through stakeholder interviews.
- ◆ **Chapter 3: Event Venue Market** examines the market in which the Barn would compete as a proposed event venue or larger community space.
- ◆ **Chapter 4: Meeting Space Market** examines the local supply of meeting and classroom spaces, a market aligned with proposed Residence and Pool House uses.
- ◆ **Chapter 5: Financial and Operational Considerations** describes the set of potential operating scenarios, the screening framework used to narrow them, and the resulting capital costs, operating models, and revenue ranges.



- ♦ **Chapter 6: Opportunities and Constraints** synthesizes the implications for the City's portfolio and its relationship to Building 120, as well as the next steps and decision points for the Council.



1. Project Overview

The City of Sammamish owns Big Rock Park, a set of three adjoining parcels known as Big Rock Park North, Big Rock Park Central, and Big Rock Park South. The North and Central parcels have been the focus of the City's earlier park investments and are open to the community. The third parcel, Big Rock Park South, is partially open to the public and has several vacant structures which could be repurposed for public use, including a Barn, Residence, Pool House, and two garages. These buildings, and the question of what the City should do with them, are the subject of this analysis.

Project Background

The Sammamish City Council commissioned this market analysis following its April 21, 2026, discussion about the future of Building 120, another City-owned facility. Because the two sites are in the same City portfolio and could potentially serve overlapping purposes, a central question raised by Council is whether the Big Rock Park South buildings could duplicate or complement Building 120 within the City's broader real estate portfolio. To inform this decision, this study addresses the following research questions:

- ◆ How could the Big Rock Park South structures duplicate or support the market's existing spaces, including the City's current portfolio?
- ◆ Does programming already offered nearby duplicate what Big Rock Park South could provide? Could the Big Rock Park South spaces host additional programming delivered by community partners?
- ◆ What is the range of capital costs, operating and maintenance costs, and revenues associated with various operating scenarios for the structures at Big Rock Park South?
- ◆ What uses would the market support, and would the structures at Big Rock Park South be a complement or substitute for Building 120?

Consequently, this report provides a comprehensive evaluation of the Barn, Residence, Pool House, and new garage at Big Rock Park South, analyzing their competitive positioning and market viability within the City's broader space portfolio, including the Reard House at Big Rock Park Central, Beaver Lake Lodge, and the Pavilion at Beaver Lake Park. Using these findings to filter potential site-use scenarios, this study then provides order-of-magnitude capital, operational, and revenue projections to inform trade-offs between revenue generation and community benefit, and to determine the level of municipal subsidy required to sustain these facilities over time.



History of Big Rock Park

Big Rock Park was donated to the City by landowner Mary Pigott through a 51-acre, phased land donation agreement that began with the transfer of the North parcel in 2011 and concluded with the transfer of the South parcel in 2021.

Big Rock Park North and Central

In 2014, the Big Rock Park Master Plan initiated planning and development for the Park, detailing improvements to the 16-acre North and 20-acre Central parcels. In accordance with the donation, all three park parcels should provide low-impact active and passive recreational uses and limit any new structures to 2,500 square feet to preserve the site's natural canopy. Following this framework, Big Rock Park North opened to the public in 2016, followed by Big Rock Park Central in 2021.

A central feature of Big Rock Park Central is the historic Reard House, an 1895 landmark relocated to the park in 2012 to serve as a resource for heritage education. The House has a total occupancy of 18, and the first floor is configured for public use, including a 525-square-foot meeting room, a 185-square-foot heritage museum, and a catering kitchen, while the second floor and attic are reserved for administrative offices and archival document storage. The house is in the final stages of restoration and is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2026.

Big Rock Park South Master Plan

In 2023, the City finalized the Big Rock Park South Master Plan, which established a long-term framework to integrate the newly acquired 15-acre South parcel into Sammamish's larger Big Rock Park system. The Master Plan is intended to reinforce the site's passive, natural environment while providing flexible recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities. It proposes a range of improvements, including a 55-stall parking lot, universal play areas, picnic shelters, seating and gathering areas, an open meadow, garden spaces, trails with interpretive signage, and restoration of wetlands and native landscapes. Whimsical elements are incorporated throughout the trails and open spaces to create a playful, interactive park experience. The Plan also proposes adaptive reuse of the site's existing structures, including:

- ◆ Using the Barn for public gatherings, weddings, classes, and community events, utilizing its approximate capacity of 100 to 150 people with improvements to the interior and expanding its footprint with a proposed new trellis on the south and a covered outdoor space on the north.
- ◆ Using the single-family Residence for community meetings, classes, small public gatherings, and events. The Residence would accommodate 50 to 100 occupants, with public access restricted to the first floor and the second floor reserved for support and event storage.



- ◆ Using the Pool House for small-scale public gatherings, intimate meetings, classes, and events for up to 20 occupants.
- ◆ Improving the New Garage to serve as park maintenance storage and shop area, along with a public restroom integrated into the north side of the structure.
- ◆ Removing the Old Garage to establish a new open-air Central Picnic Pavilion and adjacent overlook plaza framing views of the pond.

These structures and proposed uses are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.



2. Existing Conditions

Big Rock Park South comprises a cluster of structures set within surrounding grounds. This section describes each of the park's principal elements (the Barn, the Residence, the Pool House, the garages, and the park grounds) in terms of both its current condition and the changes proposed in the 2023 Master Plan, drawing on the existing conditions assessments prepared by Opsis and DCW. Each profile also identifies the direction the community and the Master Plan have signaled for the building's future use. Together, they establish the physical starting point for the market analysis in the following chapters: what each building is today, what it could become, and the constraints, from capacity to shared parking, that would shape any future use. This section concludes with a summary of insights from community providers the project team interviewed.

Current and Proposed Park Conditions

The Barn

The Barn's first floor (Exhibit 1) is 2,880 square feet, including a covered outdoor area on the southeast side and two stalls along the northeast side. The Barn also has a loft that spans approximately 1,440 square feet (Exhibit 2). There is a chicken coop with stained glass windows on the west side of the building.¹

During public engagement for the Big Rock Park South Master Plan, the community expressed the greatest interest in preserving the Barn for larger community or private events.² The Master Plan estimated the Barn's occupancy at 100 to 150 people, with proposed updates including:³



Exhibit 1: Barn First Floor Main Area

Photo source: EConorthwest

¹ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 18.

² City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 25.

³ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 50-51.

- ◆ Removal of the second story for a more open space and greater flexibility.
- ◆ Addition of a restroom, event prep space, and storage areas.
- ◆ Addition of a trellis and covered outdoor space to expand event areas.

The Residence

The Residence is a 4,000-square-foot, two-story craftsman-style home. As of 2023, there were no observable signs of structural distress; however, the basement is flood-prone. The Residence's main floor entrance opens to the home's connected living room and dining room (Exhibit 3). The main floor also has three smaller rooms, with areas of approximately 410 square feet, 200 square feet (Exhibit 4), and 180 square feet. The main floor also has a kitchen (Exhibit 5) and two restrooms.⁴

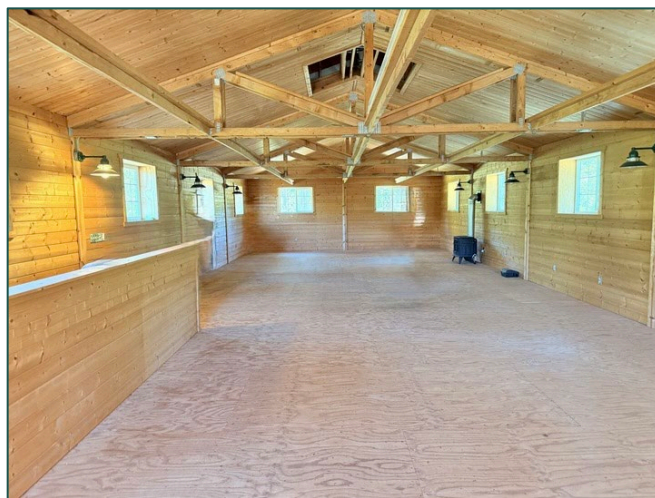


Exhibit 2: Barn Loft

Photo source: EConorthwest

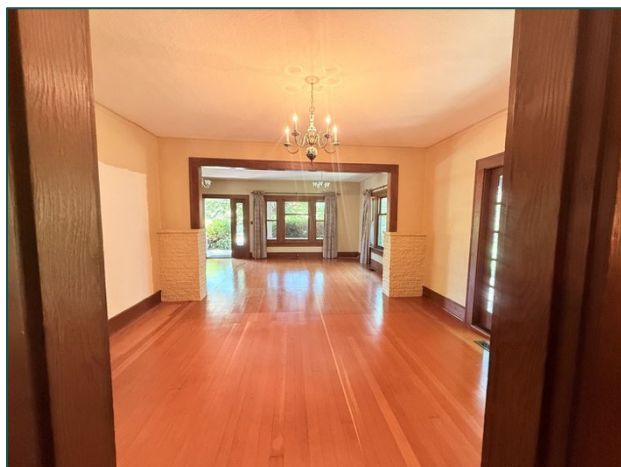


Exhibit 3: Residence Main Floor Entrance

Photo source: EConorthwest

Public engagement for the Master Plan revealed mixed feedback on the Residence. While residents expressed interest in seeing the Residence used as a meeting space, a formal event space, a class/workshop space, or an educational space, concerns were also expressed about renovation and maintenance costs, particularly those necessary to mitigate flooding in the basement.⁵ At a March 3, 2026 City Council meeting, the donor, Mary Pigott, noted that she was fine with demolishing the Residence, arguing that preservation funds could be better spent on the Barn, playgrounds, or accessibility upgrades.

As part of the 2023 Master Plan, structural analysis supported the possibility of reusing the building's main floor for meetings and events, with an anticipated capacity of 50 to 100 people, subject to accessibility upgrades. The kitchen would be used as a catering kitchen but is not intended to meet the requirements of a full commercial kitchen. Upstairs, the second level of the Residence would not be publicly accessible and could be used for storage.⁶

⁴ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 16.

⁵ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 25.

⁶ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 52.



Exhibit 4: Residence Main Floor Bedroom

Photo source: EConorthwest



Exhibit 5: Residence Main Floor Kitchen

Photo source: EConorthwest

Pool House

The Pool House has one main room of approximately 340 square feet, and is equipped with a sink (Exhibit 6). The structure also has a small storage room and two restrooms. Outside of the Pool House, the pool has been filled in and replaced with a court used for basketball and pickleball. Immediately adjacent to the building, the Pool House also has an arbor and patio area (Exhibit 7).⁷



Exhibit 6: Pool House Main Room

Photo source: EConorthwest



Exhibit 7: Pool House Aerial View

Photo source: City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 19.

⁷ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 19.

During the Master Plan's public outreach phase, there was community support for preserving the Pool House to meet demand for community meeting space. The final Master Plan proposes retaining the existing main room, which has an interior capacity of 15 to 20 occupants, for meetings and events. Additional improvements would include updating one of the restrooms for accessibility and installing two new, larger outdoor gathering areas to the west and south of the structure to expand the area's event capacity.⁸

Garages

Big Rock Park South has two garages:

- ♦ **The Old Garage** was built around 1940 and is in poor condition, with a portion located within the wetland buffer. The final Preferred Master Plan proposes that the Old Garage be removed and converted into a picnic shelter located entirely outside the wetland buffer, a proposal that received strong positive community feedback.
- ♦ **The New Garage** was built in 2000 and is in good condition. Per the Master Plan, the New Garage would be repurposed as a parks maintenance storage and shop area, with a new public restroom added as an exterior addition.

Park Grounds

Beyond its buildings, Big Rock Park South offers outdoor space that is itself part of the site's rental and programming potential. The Park's grounds consist of trails, wetlands, meadows, a central pond and gardens, and an apple orchard.

The Master Plan identifies multiple changes to the park grounds, including a primary trail connection to Big Rock Park Central via the removal of a boundary fence and an existing nature trail that directly impacts wetlands. They also identified a strong community desire for a disc golf course as well as new nature trails and accessible, paved trails. Per the Master Plan, the grounds would support two broad types of use:

- ♦ **Informal, programmable open space** for gatherings, classes, camps, and active recreation.



Exhibit 8. Central Pond

Photo source: ECOnorthwest

⁸ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 53.

- ◆ **Covered gathering space**, which the Master Plan proposes to add via a new picnic shelter.

Local Provider and Programming Needs

The Sammamish Plateau and its surrounding communities are served by an active but capacity-constrained set of recreation and youth-serving providers. Because the City of Sammamish is a contract city, community partners are likely to deliver much of the programming that would activate Big Rock Park South. To inform the market analysis, the project team interviewed several local organizations regarding program barriers, space needs, and market opportunities.⁹ Key findings are summarized below:

Providers describe unmet demand for affordable, bookable small rooms. Interviewees described unmet demand for rentable small rooms that can accommodate roughly 10 to 50 people at low or no cost. Currently, comparable small rooms in the area range from free (library meeting and study rooms, though these are limited to about one reservation per month) to roughly \$20 to \$50 per hour for small municipal and community center rooms. However, providers reported that rooms in this range are not reliably available at an accessible rate or time in practice. Even where low-cost municipal, library, and school space exists, interviews indicated that it is often unevenly accessible in practice, constrained by booking priorities, custodial coverage, insurance and liability requirements, and limited availability windows. In particular, while local school districts provide many of these lower-cost rooms, interviewees shared that there can be barriers to booking them, especially for non-youth-oriented purposes. While larger or private-market space may be available, many groups may be unable or unwilling to pay higher premiums for unnecessary space or amenities.

Existing community and recreation facilities are operating at or beyond capacity. Providers described full memberships and heavy monthly visitation, parking overflow, program waitlists, and full classes, along with a lack of dedicated outdoor space, and reported that local gyms, school commons, and athletic fields are consistently at or above capacity, leaving limited availability for groups that have not reserved space well enough in advance.

There is strong interest in recurring youth and community class programming that current facilities cannot absorb. Interviews pointed to unmet demand for multi-week specialized youth classes in areas such as coding, 3D printing, game design, fine arts, and cooking, and noted that providers lack the space to expand, with some offerings already at waitlist capacity and enrollment limited by facility availability. Interviewees also identified a gap in dedicated space for tweens and teens, including supervised drop-in options for pre-teens who cannot yet use existing facilities unsupervised.

The interviews identified a set of broader institutional demands that existing facilities cannot easily accommodate, including transition academy space for special-needs young adults,

⁹ Organizations interviewed included the Sammamish YMCA, Sammamish Boys & Girls Club, Lake Washington School District, Issaquah School District, and the City of Issaquah Parks and Recreation department.



sited separately from traditional school campuses; early-learning and preschool space; and space to consistently convene larger staff meetings and trainings. However, these demands point toward the need for larger, purpose-built spaces rather than those available at BRPS. The BRPS buildings are better positioned to meet the demand for accessible, affordable small rooms and for recurring youth and community classes, particularly where a partner would manage the programming. However, one recurring qualification shared by providers was that youth programming requires a self-contained space that can be separated for child safety and liability. A subdividable venue could potentially accommodate this condition, but would need to be planned and programmed accordingly.

Providers also reported having little or no outdoor space of their own and described youth camps and outdoor programming constrained by available facilities. However, much of the outdoor demand identified is specifically for athletic fields, a use that is incompatible with Big Rock Park South. Regulation fields call for graded and maintained turf, dedicated parking, and the traffic and lighting that active sports use brings, none of which fits the Park's planned character or low-impact active and passive recreational uses specified in the donation agreement. Instead, the grounds are most relevant to the portion of outdoor demand for open gathering space, room for camps and classes, and informal recreation.

The following section situates these structures and needs within the market itself: the venues Big Rock Park South would compete with and how its buildings would fit among them. The market is examined in two parts, beginning with the event venue market most relevant to the Barn and followed by the market for meetings and classrooms in which the Residence and Pool House would compete.



3. Event Venue Market

The Barn is the largest of the BRPS structures and the building with the clearest market rationale per the BRPS Master Plan. During public engagement, the community expressed the strongest interest in preserving the Barn for larger community or private events.¹⁰ The Master Plan estimated the Barn's occupancy at 100 to 150 people, with proposed updates including removing the loft and adding restrooms, event prep spaces, storage areas, and covered outdoor space.¹¹

To assess the Barn's market potential, this section profiles the venues a prospective renter would realistically weigh against it. Because event venues typically operate in a regional market, the local competitive set was defined by identifying rustic and mid-size event spaces of comparable character across East King County. These comparables fall into two groups:

- ◆ **Private event venues** run as premium wedding and event businesses;
- ◆ **Publicly and community-operated multi-use spaces** that pair rentals with ongoing community programming.

While the Barn's role and constraints place it much closer to the second group, the private venues help establish the Barn's potential competitive position within the broader market.

Private Event Venues

Venues are typically privately owned and operated as event businesses, and they account for the premium end of the events market. They demonstrate a clear opportunity for investment in the Barn's structure and potential usage but would require amenities and services that the Barn may not be able to feasibly provide, such as venue setup and takedown, on-site coordinators, parking, and private outdoor space.

Subject to cost and operational feasibility, however, the Barn might be able to provide certain amenities to increase market capture, such as access to the Residence for wedding parties, a commercial or catering kitchen, or a higher ceiling created by removing the loft. That said, market research indicated that, even with upgrades such as these, the Barn may still not be best positioned to compete with the existing local market of operators supplying premium event space. Rather, given the City's mission, the Barn's competitive edge would likely lie in offering a lower-cost alternative with fewer amenities while providing the same warm, rustic atmosphere that many users value.

¹⁰ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 25.

¹¹ City of Sammamish, [Big Rock Park South | Master Plan](#) (2023), 50-51.



THE PLATEAU CLUB

The Plateau Club is a large golf club on the Sammamish Plateau that can host weddings, corporate meetings, private parties, and tournaments. Its 37,500-square-foot clubhouse offers two event settings that can accommodate up to 180 guests: an indoor ceremony and reception in the Alder Room, or an outdoor event on the clubhouse balcony.¹² While different in character from the Barn, the Plateau Club is one of the few larger venues in Sammamish and could compete for business from users specifically seeking space within the City.

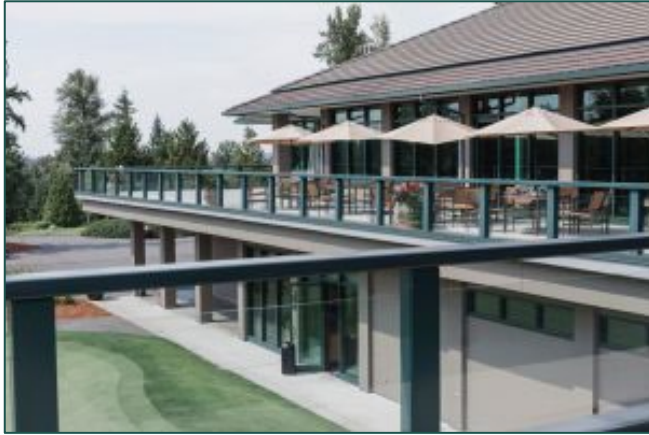


Exhibit 9: Plateau Club Clubhouse Balcony

Photo source: The Plateau Club, [\[link\]](#).

However, the Club's pricing and amenities are geared toward higher-end events than the Barn is likely to offer. Wedding pricing starts at \$7,281 for weekdays and \$8,271 for weekends, with optional add-on services available for an additional fee, including bartending, table linens, butler hors d'oeuvres service, ceremony setup, changing rooms for the wedding party, in-house catering, and professional service staff.¹³ Outside of significant structural differences with the Barn, such service offerings would require the City to evaluate a third-party operating agreement. Such exclusive private

use of the facility was not the donor's intent. Rather, the gift was intended to create a park that would be accessible and available for the enjoyment of all residents. The City should regard this facility as the upper end of the market's fee-for-service range, positioning the Barn below it with intentionality regarding any overlap in target users.

¹² Plateau Club, [Meetings & Gatherings](#).

¹³ Plateau Club, [Weddings](#).

TRILLIUM NURSERY FARM AND TRINITY TREE FARM

These venues share a similar aesthetic and setting with the Barn but offer fully private spaces with premium pricing and amenity packages. The Trinity Tree Farm is an active private Christmas tree farm in Issaquah with two wedding venues, The Barn and The Lodge. Of these venues, the Barn is similar in character to the Barn at Big Rock Park South.

The Trinity Tree Farm Barn and its adjoining ceremony lawn can accommodate up to 150 guests, and an adjacent log cabin serves as a staging space for wedding parties. Wedding packages start at \$3,500 for non-peak dates and \$8,900 for peak dates. These rates are supported by the venue's amenities, including an adjacent log cabin for the wedding party, setup and takedown of the provided benches, chairs, and tables, a catering kitchen, lighting, fire pits, lawn games, overnight parking, and an on-site Venue Coordinator. A Day of Coordinator can also be provided for an additional \$1,750.¹⁴



Exhibit 10: Trinity Tree Farm Barn

Photo source: Trinity Tree Farm [\[link\]](#).



Exhibit 11: Trillium Nursery Small Barn

Photo source: Trillium Nursery Farm [\[link\]](#).

The Trillium Nursery Farm is a private venue with multiple indoor and outdoor event spaces, including a large barn that seats up to 140 guests and a smaller barn that seats up to 30 guests. These spaces can be rented individually or as a package for private events throughout the week. The smaller barn rents for \$300 per hour on weekdays and \$450 per hour on weekends, and the full facility rents for \$600 per hour on weekdays and \$1,000 per hour on weekends.¹⁵ The Farm also offers wedding packages priced at the high end of the market: \$6,000 to \$7,000 for weekday events and \$8,000 to \$11,000 for Saturday events, depending on the season. Like the Trinity Tree Farm, the venue's pricing includes several

premium amenities, including access to a small onsite cottage for the wedding party, tables and chairs with setup and takedown by venue staff, a catering kitchen, an outdoor bar, event tents, outdoor heating, and parking for up to 80 vehicles.¹⁶

¹⁴ Trinity Tree Farm, [The Barn at Trinity Tree Farm](#). Accessed July 2026.

¹⁵ Trillium Nursery Farm, [Private Events](#). Accessed July 2026.

¹⁶ Trillium Nursery Farm, [Wedding Pricing Pamphlet](#). Accessed July 2026.

ROBINSWOOD HOUSE

The Bellevue Robinswood House provides an alternative model for how the Barn could be operated. The City of Bellevue Parks Department and Premier Properties/Seattle Bride manage the Robinswood House Estate through a public-private partnership structure, shifting the operating burden away from the city.¹⁷ The Estate consists of a 1,600-square-foot house and a 600-square-foot detached cabana, located in Bellevue's 60-acre Robinswood Park, with public parking in the adjacent Robinswood Park lot.¹⁸

Pricing and availability schedules differentiate the property's use between weekdays and weekends. Weekdays and weeknights, the House's four main areas (each accommodating 10 to 38 occupants) can be rented individually as meeting rooms, with rates from \$125 for a half-day to \$445 for an evening reservation. The entire facility can also be reserved for \$590 for a half-day or \$750 for a full day.¹⁹



Exhibit 12: Robinswood Hospitality Suite

Photo source: Seattle Bride [\[link\]](#).



Exhibit 13: Robinswood House South Patio

Photo source: Seattle Bride [\[link\]](#).

On weekends, the property is only available to rent as a whole, with pricing notably higher. During peak season (mid-April to mid-October), the property can accommodate up to 150 guests across indoor and outdoor spaces, with rates starting at \$2,810 for a half-day and up to \$5,490 for a full day. Off-peak season rentals can accommodate up to 60 guests indoors, with rates ranging from \$1,400 to \$2,590. Included in weekend pricing are additional amenities, including setup and takedown of the property's chairs and tables. Table linens, décor, lighting, patio heaters, AV systems, and tents are also available for additional fees.²⁰

Robinswood provides an example of how a municipality can maintain public ownership of a venue while offloading risks such as management and operations to an experienced partner who understands the business, a model that could suit Sammamish as a contract city. The property itself, however, is primarily oriented toward the private wedding market and higher-priced space rentals. As with the privately owned venues discussed previously, competing in

¹⁷ Seattle Bride, [Robinswood House](#).

¹⁸ Premier Properties, [Robinswood House Details](#).

¹⁹ Premier Properties, [Robinswood House: Weekday Room Rates](#)

²⁰ Seattle Bride, [Robinswood House 2027 Rates](#).

this market would require either investment in amenities and services that extend beyond the City's likely role, or pivoting to cater more intentionally to non-wedding events. While the City could consider these options, the Barn may be better aligned with the publicly and community-operated spaces examined in the following section.

Multi-Use Event Spaces

This section evaluates spaces designed for ongoing community use, such as those with rooms programmed throughout the week, subdivided for concurrent activities, and rented out around that programming. Some of these spaces are also marketed for weddings and private events, but this use is not intended to be the building's core purpose. In this context, the following discussion examines the Barn's potential among other multi-use event spaces rather than purpose-built event spaces. Venues are separated by operator type: municipal spaces owned and run by cities, and community-operated spaces run by nonprofits and community associations.

Municipal Spaces

These venues are owned and operated by Sammamish or its peer cities, making them the Barn's closest analogs in both ownership and public purpose. Each pairs rentable event space with a standing civic use and is run as a subsidized community asset rather than a profit center, with rates set for community access rather than the private market.

BEAVER LAKE LODGE AND PAVILION

Beaver Lake Lodge is likely the Barn's closest comparable: a City of Sammamish, park-set venue of similar capacity. The 1,850-square-foot lodge accommodates up to 150 guests for weddings, private gatherings, and community events, and rents at community rates, with \$110 for a two-hour weekday block and \$580 for a four-hour weekend block, including furnishings and a 380-



Exhibit 14: Beaver Lake Lodge

Photo source: City of Sammamish, [\[link\]](#).

square-foot semi-commercial kitchen (a convection oven and a commercial gas stove and oven), and a 50 percent weekday discount for nonprofits.²¹ Its adjacent 2,500-square-foot open-air Pavilion, which offers lake views, a stone fireplace, a grill, and six picnic tables for up to 100 guests at \$25 to \$35 per hour, also illustrates how a lower-cost outdoor space can

²¹ City of Sammamish, [Rentals & Reservations](#). Accessed July 2026.

extend event capacity, a pairing the Barn could potentially replicate with the proposed picnic pavilion.^{22 23}



Exhibit 15: Beaver Lake Lodge Interior

Photo source: City of Sammamish, [\[link\]](#).

The City also uses the Lodge for community programming. Since 2023, the City has partnered with Indian American Community Services (IACS) to offer cross-cultural, no-cost senior programming three days per week from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. These events include exercise activities, games and crafts, lunch, and social opportunities.²⁴

According to City staff, the Lodge is booked several months in advance for weekend events, indicating that demand for this type of space currently exceeds supply. This unmet demand suggests that while the Barn would duplicate some of the space in the

City's current portfolio, it could also complement Beaver Lake by adding similar capacity. Additionally, the Barn's larger size and more flexible layout could provide more space to host events and uses that Beaver Lake cannot currently accommodate.

PICKERING BARN

The City of Issaquah owns and operates the Pickering Barn, a 12,000-square-foot event venue in downtown Issaquah with an occupancy of 350.²⁵ In deciding how this barn should be used, the Issaquah City Council weighed whether it should function as a business or a public space, recognizing that a business would aim to maximize profit, while a more



Exhibit 16: Pickering Barn Exterior

Photo Source: City of Issaquah, [\[link\]](#).

community-oriented space would require an operating subsidy. Ultimately, the Council determined that the barn should not be operated as a premium-priced wedding venue but rather positioned as a flexible community space. In interviews, City staff described efforts to signal to the public that the barn is more than an event or wedding venue, taking steps to activate the space in a variety of ways, including for service club meetings and other municipal and civic functions. The City uses it to host a Saturday farmers market, which draws an estimated 4,000 to 5,000

shoppers. In an ongoing partnership with Costco, the City rents the space as a preview area

²² City of Sammamish, [Facility Rental Amenity Guide](#). Accessed July 2026.

²³ City of Sammamish, [Facility Rental Amenity Guide](#). Accessed July 2026.

²⁴ Sammamish Seniors, [Events](#). Accessed July 2026.

²⁵ City of Issaquah, [Pickering Barn Facility Details](#). Accessed July 2026.

for furniture vendors. The barn is staffed by three City employees who manage its rentals, the farmers market, and programming, and is subsidized by the city.

According to staff, weddings do account for most of the barn's use, though at lower rental costs than the private venues described earlier in this section. The city offers weekday wedding rates ranging from \$2,950 to \$3,200 and weekend event rates from \$3,600 to \$4,590 for a full-day rental, depending on the season. For other weekday uses, the barn can be rented for \$1,025 for four hours or \$1,900 for nine hours. Rentals include the barn, the outdoor courtyard, a 145-stall parking lot, and the venue's chairs and tables, with an on-site attendant, though renters handle their own setup and takedown.²⁶ Reserved use is limited to the barn and courtyard, so the surrounding grounds and the adjacent Pickering trails remain open to the public.



Exhibit 17: Pickering Barn Dairy Barn

Photo Source: City of Issaquah, [\[link\]](#).

The Pickering Barn is a strong precedent for the BRPS Barn, with two caveats: it is larger (12,000 square feet versus 2,880, excluding the loft) and is in a more central urban setting. However, it still suggests that a publicly owned venue of this type would need to be planned as a subsidized community asset rather than a financially feasible stand-alone operation. Despite its size, regional draw, and higher rental rates than other community-oriented venues in the market, the Pickering Barn still requires an operating subsidy. For the smaller Sammamish BRPS Barn, rental fee revenues could offset operating costs but would be unlikely to fully cover them.

RED OAK COMMUNITY ROOM

The City of Redmond's Red Oak Community Room demonstrates how a purpose-built, flexible space can be configured and priced at different scales. Located within the City's Senior and Community Center, the Community Room is a 3,686-square-foot multipurpose space that can host up to 360 standing guests. The room can also be subdivided into four smaller spaces, enabling use for both large events and multiple smaller ones. The room features a raised stage and is adjacent to a commercial kitchen and a partially covered 2,629-square-foot terrace, each of which can be rented separately or with the room. This modular pairing of the main room with a commercial kitchen and a covered terrace mirrors the Master Plan's proposed configuration of an open main space with event-prep space, storage, and covered outdoor space, extendable by a proposed picnic shelter. When used in full, the Red Oak Community Room rents for \$254.75 per hour on its own and \$471.25 per hour with the kitchen and terrace. However, the Barn is much closer in capacity to the

²⁶ City of Issaquah, [Pickering Barn Pricing](#). Accessed July 2026.

room's subdivided configuration, which can accommodate up to 120 guests at \$94.75 per hour for the room alone or \$311.25 per hour with the kitchen and terrace.²⁷

Community-Operated Spaces

The venues in this group are operated by community associations and mission-driven nonprofits. Like the municipal venues discussed above, these spaces combine rentable event space with a standing community purpose, whether for general community gatherings, as at Blakely Hall and the Pine Lake Community Club, or for a specific mission, as with the Issaquah Depot Museum.

PINE LAKE COMMUNITY CLUB

The Pine Lake Community Club is a nonprofit whose stated purpose is to operate a community center for communal, civic, and social activities for residents of Sammamish's Pine Lake Area. Alongside weddings, receptions, and private rentals, the venue hosts a range of ongoing community programming, including a long-running cooperative preschool, driver's education classes, recovery meetings, youth enrichment and gymnastics classes, and summer camps.²⁸

The Club's community orientation is reflected in its pricing. It is one of the more affordable event spaces on the market, with Friday and Sunday rentals at \$100 per hour with a 5-hour minimum, while Saturday rentals are a flat \$1,000 fee. Rentals include tables, chairs, and kitchen access, but no setup or service, and renters supply their own utensils, dishes, and cleaning supplies.²⁹

Financial information from the Pine Lake Community Club's Form 990 tax filings illustrates the tradeoffs of this model. The nonprofit reported \$146,000 from venue rentals in 2024, with a total revenue of \$157,000. Using the Club's rental rate of \$100 per hour (assuming average Saturday rentals are approximately 10 hours), its reported revenue indicates about 1,460 total rented hours. Compared to the Club's available rental hours (roughly 36 hours per week), this would indicate the Club is booked 78% of its available hours. However, if the venue rental revenues include revenues from activity rentals during the week, actual utilization would be approximately half (37%), assuming 40 hours of weekday availability.



Exhibit 18: Pine Lake Community Club

Photo Source: Wedding Spot [\[link\]](#).

²⁷ City of Redmond, [2026 Facility Rental Guide](#). Accessed July 2026.

²⁸ Pro Publica Nonprofit Explorer, [Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax 2024](#), page 2.

²⁹ Pine Lake Community Center, [Information Sheet](#). Accessed July 2026.

Pine Lake Community Club also reported \$187,000 in operating expenses in 2024, including wages, maintenance, insurance, property taxes, etc., resulting in a negative net operating income of \$30,000.³⁰ In the prior year (2023), however, the Club reported \$175,000 in total revenues (\$163,000 from venue rentals) and \$170,000 in operating expenses, resulting in a positive NOI of \$5,000.³¹ While both years indicate decent rental demand, they illustrate that such facilities with this business model operate on tight margins.

ISSAQUAH DEPOT MUSEUM

Downtown Issaquah's Issaquah Depot Museum, operated by Issaquah History Museums, offers free public exhibits on the city's heritage. Its Freight Room can host up to 75 people and is available to rent for \$85 per hour on weekdays and \$110 per hour on weekends, with a 55% discount for nonprofits.³² The organization's Form 990 tax filings provide additional context for the Museum's event rentals. The majority (roughly 70%) of the museum's 2025 revenue came from government grants, and its most significant program was museum operations, which drew 4,677 visitors annually. The same year, the organization earned roughly \$16,300 in rental income, about 6% of its total revenue.³³ Using a weighted hourly rate for weekday and weekend rentals and assuming roughly half of the space's users access the nonprofit discount, the Museum's rental income indicates just over 225 hours of rentals in 2025. Using the Freight Room's advertised available rental hours (8:00 A.M. to 10:30 P.M.), revenues suggest the room was occupied for approximately 4% of its available hours. For the Museum, facility rentals serve as a modest supplement to a grant-supported civic mission rather than a revenue center, consistent with the finding that the Barn is best placed as a community asset rather than a financially viable stand-alone operation.

BLAKELY HALL

The Issaquah Highlands Council operates Blakely Hall as a community gathering place in the Issaquah Highlands. Throughout the week, it hosts a variety of community activities, including fitness classes, arts and crafts, movie nights, game sessions, and social groups.³⁴ It also houses a free art gallery featuring rotating themed exhibitions of work by local artists. When not in use, its main space can be subdivided so that individual rooms can be booked for smaller events or meetings; on weekends, the Hall is available to rent at \$200 per hour, accommodating up to 150 guests for events such as weddings, celebrations, and fundraisers. Venue details include:³⁵

- ◆ During rentals, staff is not on-site, and users are responsible for any event setup and takedown. Prior to the event, staff provides renters a Facility Orientation video and unique facility access code.

³⁰ Pro Publica Nonprofit Explorer, [Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax 2024](#), pages 9-10.

³¹ Pro Publica Nonprofit Explorer, [Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax 2023](#), pages 9-10.

³² Issaquah History Museums, [Issaquah Depot Rental](#). Accessed July 2026.

³³ Issaquah History Museums, [Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax 2025](#), page 9.

³⁴ Issaquah Highlands, [Events Calendar](#). Accessed July 2026.

³⁵ Blakely Hall, [FAQs](#). Accessed July 2026.



- ◆ Rentals include the use of chairs and tables, but renters provide any linens or décor. Renters and caterers also have access to the Hall’s kitchen, which includes a refrigerator, double ovens, stove, and other kitchen items.
- ◆ While the Hall does not have a parking lot, street parking is available near the venue.
- ◆ The Hall has its own sound system equipment available for a fee, or renters can bring their own. While DJs and music are allowed, Hall rental policies note that “Blakely Hall is in the middle of a residential neighborhood and renters must adhere to the Issaquah city noise ordinances and avoid any noise that ‘unreasonably interferes with the peace’ anytime, especially between 11 P.M. and 7 A.M.”³⁶

In its 2024 Form 990 tax filing documents, the Highlands Council reported approximately \$166,000 in facility rental income, about 14% of its total revenue.³⁷ Budget documents shared by the Council show the total budgeted Blakely Hall income for July 2023 and June 2024 (\$155,000) split between office rent (a flat \$25,500) and rental reservations.³⁸ Assuming the office rent stayed consistent, actual Blakely Hall event venue income for 2024 would be approximately \$140,500.³⁹ Given its hourly rate (\$200), these revenues indicate just over 700 hours of bookings that year. Assuming the Hall was available for rent an average of 40 hours per week (advertised weekend hours plus approximately 25% of weekday hours), the Hall would have been rented for roughly 34% of its available hours.

While actual Blakely Hall expenses do not appear as individual line items in the Highlands Council’s 2024 Form 990 filing, budgeted expenses for the Hall are detailed in the Council’s 2023 to 2024 annual budget. During this time period, total expenses for the Hall are budgeted at roughly \$132,000, resulting in a planned positive net revenue of about \$23,000. Major cost drivers include janitorial services (37%), utilities (roughly 20%), maintenance (14%), and property insurance (12%).⁴⁰

Event Space Pricing Considerations

This section considers the relationship between amenities and pricing of the above venues (Exhibit 19). For direct comparability, rental rates are presented as an equivalent hourly rate per occupant for a peak-season Saturday event. The summary points to the following conclusions:

- ◆ The publicly operated and nonprofit venues cluster at the low end of the rate spectrum at \$0.67 per occupant at Pine Lake, \$0.97 at Beaver Lake Lodge, and \$1.46 at the Pickering Barn.
- ◆ Privately operated venues run substantially higher, from \$4.18 at the Plateau Club, \$4.94 at Trinity Tree Farm, and \$6.55 at Trillium Nursery Farm.

³⁶ Blakely Hall, [FAQs](#). Accessed July 2026.

³⁷ Pro Public Nonprofit Explorer, [Form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax 2024](#), page 9.

³⁸ Highlands Council, [Annual Budget July 2023 through June 2024](#), page 1.

³⁹ The 2023 to 2024 budget includes data for 2021 to 2022 and 2022 to 2023, during which annual office rent was \$27,500 and \$25,500, respectively.

⁴⁰ Highlands Council, [Annual Budget July 2023 through June 2024](#), page 2.



The amenity columns generally justify this gap: privately operated facilities offer bundled setup and takedown, dedicated staging-ready space, linens and décor, and in-house or full catering, while publicly or nonprofit-operated venues generally do not include such services.

Exhibit 19: Regional Event Space Amenities and Pricing

PROPERTY	SOLE PROPERTY USE	DEDICATED PARKING	KITCHEN TYPE ¹	SETUP & TAKEDOWN PROVIDED	GETTING READY SPACE	LINENS & DÉCOR INCLUDED	RATE ²
Pine Lake Community Club	✓	✓	Semi-commercial				\$0.67
Beaver Lake Lodge			Semi-commercial				\$0.97
Blakely Hall	✓		Semi-commercial		Dressing rooms		\$1.33
Issaquah Depot Museum			Kitchenette				\$1.46
Pickering Barn		✓	Preparation		Dressing rooms		\$1.46
Red Oak Community Room³			Commercial				\$2.59
Robinswood House			Preparation	✓	Dressing rooms	Additional fee	\$3.05
Plateau Club	✓	✓	In-house catering	✓	Dressing rooms	✓	\$4.18
Trinity Tree Farm Barn	✓	✓	Preparation	✓	Detached cabin	✓	\$4.94
Trillium Nursery Farm	✓	✓	Preparation	✓	Detached cottage	✓	\$6.55

¹ Semi-commercial kitchens include commercial-grade cooking equipment, such as a convection oven and commercial range, that allow food to be cooked and prepared on site, while preparation kitchens provide space and equipment for staging, warming, and plating food prepared off-site.

² Rates calculated as effective hourly base rate per occupant for a peak-season Saturday event.

³ Rate shown for subdivided room with access to adjacent commercial kitchen and terrace.

In identifying defensible revenue-generating potential and market positioning for BRPS, the following factors are grounded in takeaways from the preceding analysis:

Shared park grounds. As a public park, private Barn rentals would be limited to its interior and any adjacent attached outdoor space (such as a courtyard). While guests would also have access to the broader park, they would share it with other park users and programming.

Limited parking. Assuming the Barn operated near its maximum capacity (150 guests), the 55 parking stalls proposed in the Master Plan could be insufficient. Additionally, event



attendees would also have to share the lot with other park users, further limiting on-site parking access.

Lack of a catering kitchen. Without a catering kitchen, usage of the space would be extremely limited, requiring users with day-long events to bring in any equipment for food storage, refrigeration, and preparation.

Event coordination, catering, setup and takedown needs. Providing onsite event staff and support services would likely fall outside the City's role and require a third-party operational partner. Without these amenities, the Barn would be positioned alongside municipal comparables rather than private venues on both amenities and price, likely translating into more modest revenue potential.

Integration of the Residence. Pricing could shift moderately upward if use of the Barn could be packaged with the Residence. Much of the price premium that private venues command reflects bundled amenities rather than size or setting, and the two the Barn most conspicuously lacks are a kitchen and dedicated staging space, each of which the private venues supply through a preparation kitchen and a detached cabin or cottage. The Residence could plausibly fill both roles, supporting rates closer to the top end of the municipal event spaces profiled above. Additionally, pairing the Barn and Residence poses a logistical consideration. If not paired but rented simultaneously to separate parties, parking constraints could become a challenge.

Ultimately, a package that includes the Barn and Residence could most defensibly be priced in an enhanced community-venue tier rather than as a private-market wedding product, capturing some added value from the additional amenities. If not packaged solely as an extension of the Barn, the site's other two buildings, the Residence and the Pool House, would likely serve a different, more local market. Rather than competing as destination venues, they could offer everyday meeting, class, and program space of the kind residents and community groups book close to home. The local market for this type of space is discussed in the following section.

Key Takeaways

- » **Competitive position:** The Barn is best understood as a community-oriented multi-use venue rather than a premium private-market product. Its rustic character and park setting lend it an appeal similar to that of private venues, but the amenities and services that support their higher rates largely fall outside the City's likely role. Positioned instead alongside the municipal and community-operated comparables, the Barn's advantage would lie in offering comparable character at a lower, community-oriented rate.
- » **Operating model:** Whether the City operates the Barn directly or contracts a third-party operator will shape its staffing, service level, cost, and risk. Direct operation would require the City to fund and manage on-site staff, whereas a partner-operated model would shift much of that staffing burden, along with its associated costs and liabilities, to an outside operator. Those arrangements also have tradeoffs for revenue, cost, and



mission: a private operator would likely lift both revenue and operating cost while steering toward higher-value private use, whereas direct City operation or a nonprofit partner would keep rates and revenue lower but hold the space closer to its community purpose.

- » **Subsidy:** The community-oriented comparables consistently indicate that publicly owned venues of this type operate as subsidized community assets rather than a self-supporting business. For the Barn, rental revenue could offset a share of operating costs but would be unlikely to cover them fully.



4. Meeting Space Market

While the preceding section examined venues that compete on setting, service, and distinctive character that can command a premium, the venues considered in this section are more substitutable: i.e., those with meeting rooms, community-center spaces, classrooms, and study rooms that are interchangeable. Research indicates that this may be the most price-sensitive part of the market, as it is heavily saturated with venues including parks and community centers, libraries, school districts, senior centers, community recreation and youth-serving nonprofits, and fire stations. As such, much of the supply is offered either free or at a nominal price, setting a much lower ceiling for usage fees and creating a challenge for how Big Rock Park South's smaller spaces could compete.

As for usage, this market is intensely local, catering to the following types of uses: groups booking a class, a small meeting, or a study session tend to look close to home rather than travel. Stakeholders interviewed emphasized that residents typically prefer to remain on the Plateau for programming. As a result, the relevant competitive set below is drawn from Sammamish and the neighboring Issaquah and Redmond areas. Within that set, Sammamish's own supply is comparatively thin, most visibly in the mid-size range, and a large share of the comparable civic space is in Redmond and Issaquah.

Market Supply

Available spaces within the market are divided into three capacity tiers below, from the larger municipal and civic spaces above 100 occupants, through the mid-size meeting rooms of roughly 50 to 100 occupants, to the small classrooms and study rooms under 50 occupants, where the Residence's individual rooms and the Pool House would actually compete.

Large Gathering Spaces

At one end of the market is a set of large municipal and civic spaces, summarized in the table below. These are not private event venues but publicly and institutionally operated rooms built for community-scale gatherings, including the Boys & Girls Club, Lake Washington School District school commons, and the City of Issaquah's Senior Center. None of the BRPS buildings could accommodate gatherings at this scale; however, pricing for these spaces sets a ceiling for these types of civic uses and indicates whether there is a market gap that BRPS would be unable to fill. Within Sammamish, the only rooms at this scale are the Boys and Girls Club space and the school district commons, each of which serves its operator's own programming first, with more limited availability for community bookings in practice.

Notably, the available spaces in this tier all exceed the Barn's capacity (up to 150 occupants). The Barn is relatively unique at its scale, sitting in a gap between these larger



spaces, which tend to be in institutional facilities, and the mid-size community rooms discussed in the following section. In this position, the Barn has strong potential to serve a gathering size that the local market does not currently accommodate well.

Exhibit 20: Sammamish, Redmond, and Issaquah Comparable Larger Meeting and Event Spaces, Capacity Above 100 Occupants

LOCATION	CITY	OPERATOR	CAPACITY	RENTAL RATE
Boys & Girls Club	Sammamish	Boys & Girls Club	200	\$150/ hr
Sammamish school commons (5)	Sammamish	Lake Washington School District	400 to 653	\$96/hr to \$128/hr
Redmond school commons (4)	Redmond	Lake Washington School District	200 to 569	\$96/hr
Issaquah Senior Center	Issaquah	City of Issaquah	250	\$120/ hr

Data sources: Boys & Girls Club staff, Facilitron, [Lake Washington School District](#), City of Issaquah Parks & Community Services, [Birthday Parties & Meetings](#).

Potential capital changes to the Barn could also enable flexible subdivision with movable partitions, preserving the option of a single large, open space for larger events while allowing smaller concurrent bookings. In this case, the individual spaces could more closely resemble the whole-house Residence, aligning with the mid-sized spaces discussed in the section below.

Mid-Size Rentable Spaces

The table below summarizes the market's supply of spaces accommodating groups of roughly 50 to 100. This market segment primarily consists of city-run meeting rooms in municipal buildings, priced for community access: the Redmond City Hall Conference Center and Lecture Hall at \$94.75 per hour, the Redmond Community Center's two meeting rooms at \$57.75 per hour, and Issaquah's Gibson Hall at \$45 per hour on weekdays and \$65 on weekends. The King County Library System provides space at the most access-oriented end of the tier, free to reserve once per month. Two venues in this tier offer a more distinct setting: The Watershed Science Center rents at \$195 per hour with a two-hour minimum alongside its salmon-education programming, and the Meadow Shelter at Lake Sammamish State Park rents for \$281 per day on weekdays and \$562 on weekends. These higher effective rates suggest that a clear identity and a differentiated space can support pricing above the municipal rooms, though well below the private-venue rates discussed previously.

Notably, very little of this supply is in Sammamish itself. The City's only comparable space in this tier is the Sammamish library meeting room, which is limited to one reservation per month and is suitable for occasional meetings but less so for regular programming or reliable bookings. Additionally, one of the larger sources of lower-cost rentable space in the region, the Lake Washington and Issaquah School Districts, do not advertise space within this tier; instead, available school spaces tend to fall into smaller classrooms (shown in Exhibit 22) and larger school commons (shown in Exhibit 20). Mid-size rentable space is



the clearest gap in the local supply, and it is the tier that a subdivided Barn or a whole-house Residence booking could potentially fill, giving the BRPS site a locational advantage in the mid-size range that the neighboring cities' rooms cannot match for Sammamish users.

Exhibit 21: Sammamish, Redmond, and Issaquah Comparable Mid-Size Meeting and Event Spaces, Capacity 50 to 100 Occupants

LOCATION	CITY	OPERATOR	CAPACITY	RENTAL RATE
Sammamish library meeting room	Sammamish	King County Library System	72	Free to reserve once per month
City Hall Conference Center	Redmond	City of Redmond	75	\$94.75/ hr
Redmond Community Center meeting rooms (2)	Redmond	City of Redmond	60	\$57.75/ hr
Redmond Community Center lecture hall	Redmond	City of Redmond	83	\$94.75/ hr
Redmond library meeting rooms (2)	Redmond	King County Library System	61 to 81	Free to reserve once per month
Issaquah library meeting room	Issaquah	King County Library System	54	Free to reserve once per month
Gibson Hall	Issaquah	City of Issaquah	70	\$45/ hr weekdays, \$65/ hr weekends
Issaquah Community Center Rainier Room	Issaquah	City of Issaquah	50	<i>Rate quotes vary and are not publicly available</i>
Meadow Shelter at Sammamish State Park	Issaquah	WA State Parks	100	\$281/day weekdays, \$562/day weekends
Watershed Science Center	Issaquah	Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery	60	\$195/ hr, 2 hr minimum

Data sources: King County Library System, [Meeting and Study Rooms](#). City of Redmond, [2026 Facility Rental Guide](#). Visit Issaquah, [Gibson Hall Information Guide](#). City of Issaquah Parks & Community Services, [Birthday Parties & Meetings](#). Washington State Parks, [Lake Sammamish S1-Meadow Shelter](#). Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery, [Rent the Watershed Science Center](#). All sources accessed April 2026.

Small Meeting Rooms and Classrooms

The smallest tier is where the Residence's individual rooms and the Pool House would likely compete and is the deepest part of the local market with the lowest revenue potential. It is also the most substitutable, since the space itself is largely undifferentiated and groups choose among rooms chiefly on price, location, and availability.

Free or nearly free options are available across all three cities: the King County Library System has multiple study rooms in Sammamish, Redmond, and Issaquah available for no



charge once per month, and Eastside Fire and Rescue makes station community rooms available at no cost. Where facilities do charge, the fee generally reflects the cost of operating the room rather than any premium for the setting: custodial coverage, staffing or supervision, electricity or other utility use, or increased maintenance requirements. Paid options remain modest, from the Lake Washington School District's classrooms at \$2 per hour for youth programming and \$23 to \$66 for other users, and Issaquah School District classrooms at \$30, through the Sammamish YMCA at \$20 per hour, to the municipal rooms in Redmond, where the Community Center, Senior Center, and Old Redmond School House sit around \$50 to \$58 per hour, and the Boys and Girls Club Teen Center at \$75.

Sammamish has more smaller spaces available than in the larger tiers, including the King County Library System's study spaces, Eastside Fire and Rescue's station rooms, the YMCA's rooms, the Boys and Girls Club Teen Center at \$75, and the school district's elementary classrooms. Additionally, the City's Reard House will add dedicated program space for 18 occupants once it opens. However, this supply is somewhat constrained in practice: the library and fire station rooms are small and in limited supply, school classrooms are subject to booking priorities and custodial coverage, and the remaining community-facing options are relatively modest.

Exhibit 22: Sammamish, Redmond, and Issaquah Comparable Small Meeting and Event Spaces, Capacity Under 50 Occupants

LOCATION	CITY	OPERATOR	TOTAL ROOMS	CAPACITY	YOUTH RATE	ADULT RATE
Reard House	Sammamish	City of Sammamish	1	18	Not currently available	
Sammamish elementary schools	Sammamish	Lake Washington School District	4	30	\$2	\$23 to \$66
Sammamish YMCA	Sammamish	YMCA	2	42 to 52	\$20/ hr	
Sammamish library study spaces	Sammamish	King County Library System	2	10	Free to reserve once per month	
Sammamish fire departments	Sammamish	Eastside Fire and Rescue	2	N/A	Free	
Boys & Girls Club Teen Center	Sammamish	Boys and Girls Club	1	20	\$75	
Clara Barton Elementary	Redmond	Lake Washington School District	1	30	\$2	\$23 to \$66
Redmond Senior & Community Center	Redmond	City of Redmond	2	35 to 45	\$50.50 to \$57.75	
Redmond Community Center	Redmond	City of Redmond	4	15 to 30	\$50.50 to \$57.75	
Old Redmond School House	Redmond	City of Redmond	1	49	\$57.75	



LOCATION	CITY	OPERATOR	TOTAL ROOMS	CAPACITY	YOUTH RATE	ADULT RATE
Redmond library study rooms	Redmond	King County Library System	3	4 to 10	Free to reserve once per month	
Issaquah fire department	Issaquah	Eastside Fire and Rescue	1	N/A	Free	
Issaquah library study rooms	Issaquah	King County Library System	2	2 to 4	Free to reserve once per month	
Issaquah Community Center classrooms	Issaquah	City of Issaquah	3	20 to 30	<i>Rate quotes vary and are not publicly available</i>	
ISD classrooms	Issaquah	Issaquah School District	N/A	N/A	\$30	

Data sources: Facilitron, [Lake Washington School District](#). YMCA, [Sammamish Community Y Amenities](#). Eastside Fire and Rescue, [Facilities and Meeting Room Reservations](#). City of Sammamish, [Rentals & Reservations](#). City of Redmond, [2026 Facility Rental Guide](#). City of Issaquah Parks & Community Services, [Birthday Parties & Meetings](#). King County Library System, [Meeting and Study Rooms](#). Issaquah School District 411, [4260P – Use of District Facilities Procedure](#). All sources accessed April 2026.

With the exception of the Reard House, which is not currently available for public use, the local supply consists of more utilitarian, lower-cost public rooms. The following section discusses the comparative market advantages of the BRPS structures' unique setting and layout.

Big Rock Park South Market Considerations

Set against the market's existing spaces, the BRPS buildings would enter with several distinguishing features, many of which stem from the site itself rather than from the buildings' interiors.

Adjacent outdoor space. The Barn, Residence, and Pool House sit within Big Rock Park South, with direct access to the surrounding grounds and the Big Rock Park system. With a covered picnic shelter (as proposed by the Master Plan), an indoor booking could be paired with outdoor activity in a way the library rooms, municipal meeting spaces, and school classrooms are unable to offer. This also speaks directly to a need identified in stakeholder interviews: providers reported having little or no outdoor space of their own, with some youth camps and classes constrained by facility limitations. Furthermore, a park-set room that opens onto usable grounds, as at Big Rock Park South, would likely be well suited for that type of programming.

Co-location of spaces. Few comparable venues offer a similar mix of spaces (a large, flexible hall, a house, a smaller detached space, and open grounds) within a single venue. From a demand perspective, the value of that combination is that a single booking can cover an entire activity rather than a single room. Much of the demand surfaced in the interviews is multi-part in nature: a youth program that needs a class space, separate breakout or quiet



rooms, and outdoor space for active play; a camp running several age groups at once; or a gathering that moves from a preparation space to a main room to the grounds.

Together, the preceding market analyses establish where the Big Rock Park South buildings could fit: the Barn as a community-oriented event and multi-use venue best priced with the municipal comparables, and the Residence and Pool House as small, park-set meeting and program spaces that compete on setting and co-location rather than on price.

However, reconfiguration and investment in the structures and their amenities to meet a supply-side and competitive market opportunity do not necessarily translate to a financially feasible operation whether operated by the City or a third-party partner. The following section builds on the market research and provider insights, and applies an operational feasibility framework with consideration for potential usage fees, utilization assumptions, capital and operational cost structures to understand how and to what extent the City might pursue such investment.

Key Takeaways

- » **Target users:** Both the Residence and the Pool House would serve a local, community-scale audience, including community groups, instructors, and community partners who run classes or workshops, small meetings, and youth or camp programs. While the broader market across Sammamish, Redmond, and Issaquah has low-cost, reservable spaces, consistently available space within Sammamish itself is limited, resulting in persistent unmet demand among these users for affordable spaces that can be reliably reserved to host this type of programming.
- » **Competitive position:** Because the market has available free and low-cost public rooms, the Residence and Pool House's main advantage would lie not in price but in setting and co-location: a park location with direct access to the grounds, a proposed picnic shelter, and the adjacent Barn. This distinction positions the property well for multi-part programming, such as a class paired with a breakout room and outdoor play, highlighted by local providers. These assets could support rates modestly above the most utilitarian public rooms but still well below those of the private event market.
- » **Revenue outlook:** The market that these spaces would serve is community-scale and price-sensitive. To reach the local groups, instructors, and partners driving demand, rates would need to stay at or near the low end of comparable public rooms, below private-market pricing. As a result, the market would not support rents sufficient to cover the cost of operating either building, and the City should anticipate that activating these spaces would require an ongoing operating subsidy. The financial analysis in the following chapter quantifies the likely scale of that subsidy under different operating scenarios.
- » **Role within the site:** The Pool House, set somewhat back from the Barn and Residence with a single small room, is most naturally a standalone meeting and class space. The Residence could serve either way: independently as local meeting, class, and program



space, or bundled with the Barn, where its kitchen and separate rooms could supply the preparation and staging functions the Barn lacks.



5. Financial & Operational Considerations

This chapter presents findings from a high-level operational analysis of potential upgrade scenarios for BRPS to estimate the potential City subsidy needed for operations and inform Council investment decisions. The analysis draws from the market research discussed in prior chapters, including event usage, hourly rates, and staffing and operational expenditures. It also incorporates estimated capital expenditures for potential upgrades provided by Opsis. Together, these inputs provided a basis for comparing the upgrade scenarios and implications for the facility’s future operations and management.

Modeling Approach

This analysis provides directional, order-of-magnitude results intended to support early decision-making rather than precise budgeting. The scenarios test how different uses change capital needs, staffing requirements, and annual subsidy. Because many of the operating assumptions used as analysis inputs will depend on future decisions regarding site design, intended use, and operating model, these results should be interpreted as ranges indicating the relative scale and direction of costs and revenues across scenarios. Combining uses would require a site-wide operating model before their costs could be added reliably.

In collaboration with City staff, the project team identified potential operating scenarios for modeling, grounded in the uses proposed by the Master Plan and market analysis findings. In general, these scenarios are not mutually exclusive, and the City could choose to implement some combination of them. The exception is the Barn Event Space Package, which bundles the Residence and the Pavilion into the Barn's event rental. As a result, this scenario’s estimated expenditures and revenues encompass all three buildings.

Exhibit 23: Operating Scenarios Modeled

SCENARIO	DESCRIPTION
Barn Community Space⁴¹	Flexible event and community space.
Barn Event Space	Standalone, dedicated event space.
Barn Event Space Package	Dedicated event space offered with the Residence and Pavilion.
Residence Meeting Rooms (Lower Floor)	Rentable meeting and small event space.
Pool House Meeting Room	Rentable meeting and small event space.
Pavilion	Old Garage is demolished and replaced by a rentable pavilion.

⁴¹ This report evaluates the Barn under two distinct operating concepts. Community Space prioritizes access for local groups, classes, and meetings, operated at rates more consistent with the lower-cost multi-use event spaces profiled in Chapter 3. Event Space positions the Barn as a rentable venue for weddings and private events at higher rates, often including additional services such as event setup and coordination. Because



Each of these scenarios is associated with different levels of investment and operating commitment. The following sections discuss potential capital and operating expenditures, as well as revenue potential, for each scenario.

Capital Expenditures

Capital investments reflect the scope of construction and site work required to prepare the buildings and grounds for their intended use. The cost estimates below range from modest accessibility and interior improvements for scenarios that reuse existing spaces largely as they are, to more substantial investments for scenarios that involve major building upgrades or new construction. These figures are order-of-magnitude planning estimates that would be refined during design development, and they represent capital costs only, separate from the ongoing operating subsidies discussed in the following section.

Exhibit 24: Capital Improvements and Estimated Capital Costs by Operating Scenario

SCENARIO	DESCRIPTION	COST
Barn Community Space	Addition of restrooms and serving kitchen, interior upgrades (e.g., new flooring, lighting, HVAC, doors, paint)	\$649,566
Barn Event Space	Barn community space upgrades, with updates to New Garage for storage capacity	\$804,169
Barn Event Space Package	Barn event space upgrades, with new pavilion construction and residents upgrades (below)	\$1,845,575
Residence Meeting Rooms	Accessibility upgrades, renovated serving kitchen, updated walls, interior upgrades	\$541,576
Pool House Meeting Room	Accessibility upgrades, addition of serving kitchen, interior upgrades	\$215,681
Pavilion	Demolition of Old Garage and Pavilion construction	\$500,000

Data source: 2023 Big Rock Park South Master Plan. Cost estimates do not include taxes, contingency, contractor markups, or design and permitting fees.

Capital costs do not track directly with financial performance: the least expensive Barn option is the broader community-space configuration, while the Barn’s event space package costs nearly three times as much. The Pool House has the lowest-cost reuse, but its small size limits its reach and revenue.

Operating Expenditures

Beyond capital investment, each improvement scenario could imply different operations and maintenance costs, including as management, maintenance, and administration. For some of the improvement scenarios, the scale of operating expenditures will depend on two fundamental use and operations aspects:

- ◆ How actively does the City choose to program and rent each facility?
- ◆ Does the City operate the space directly or contract to a third party?

these two uses differ in target users, pricing, staffing, and investments, they are assessed as distinct scenarios.



To guide the City, this section analyzes operating costs across a range of activity levels and both City and third-party operation.

Labor Costs

Labor represents the largest and most variable component of the cost of operating any of the spaces under consideration, and the level of staffing required would depend heavily on how actively the City chooses to program and rent each facility. The following labor cost estimates reflect four roles that are typically involved with operating a space, regardless of whether the City or a third party operates it:

- ◆ **Management roles** provide overall oversight of the space's operation, including staff supervision, budget administration, rental policies, and extent of any programming.
- ◆ **Administrative roles** manage bookings, including promoting the space, responding to inquiries, scheduling, coordinating, and processing reservations and contracts. This may also include event logistics such as setup, on-site support, and teardown. If the operator offers direct programming in the space, this role would also encompass developing and delivering recreational or community programming offered directly at the space, such as classes, camps, or events.
- ◆ **Accounting roles** handle the financial functions associated with operating the space, such as invoicing, payment processing, and payroll.
- ◆ **Maintenance roles** keep the facility and grounds clean and in good working order, including routine custodial work, repairs, and turnover of the space between events.

The scope and intensity of each role can vary considerably depending on the scale and ambition of the operation. For example, a rental space with limited services might require only a fraction of a position across all four functions while a more active operation with a full events calendar and regular programming could warrant dedicated staff for each function. However, even modest operations require a base level of management, reservations, financial administration, and facility turnover support. These functions create a substantial fixed cost before the City hosts an event. To reflect a range of operating scenarios, the analysis uses low and high staffing estimates for each structure.

Labor estimates are based on staffing for comparable spaces. The table below shows employment estimates in increments of 0.2 FTE, equivalent to one workday per week of staff time dedicated to Big Rock Park South operations.⁴²

⁴² The low estimate for certain scenarios assumes a negligible amount of dedicated staff time for certain positions, such as management or accounting, assuming operations could either be covered by other roles or absorbed into existing functions.



Exhibit 25: Estimated Labor Needs by Operating Scenario (Full Time Equivalent)

SCENARIO	MGMT.	ADMIN.	ACCT.	MAINT.	TOTAL FTE
Barn Community Space	0.2 to 0.6	0.6 to 1.0	0.2	0.2 to 0.6	1.2 to 2.4
Barn Event Space	0.2 to 0.6	0.8 to 1.4	0.2	0.2 to 0.6	1.4 to 2.8
Barn Event Space Package	0.2 to 0.6	1.0 to 1.6	0.2	0.6 to 1.0	2.0 to 3.4
Residence Meeting Rooms	0 to 0.2	0.2 to 0.6	0 to 0.2	0.2 to 0.4	0.4 to 1.4
Pool House Meeting Room	0 to 0.2	0.2 to 0.4	0	0.2	0.4 to 0.8
Pavilion ⁴³	0 to 0.2	0 to 0.2	0	0.2	0.2 to 0.6

Data source: EConorthwest.

Labor costs for a City-operated space were estimated using available salary ranges for comparable City roles.⁴⁴ For a third-party operator, staffing needs were assumed to be approximately 80% of the City's to reflect the specialized expertise and economies of scale a dedicated operator would bring.⁴⁵ In this scenario, labor estimates assume that a City employee (between 0.2 and 0.4 FTE) would be needed to oversee the contract, a cost that would partially offset the efficiencies gained through contracting. Below, Exhibit 26 shows the range of annual labor costs associated with each operating scenario.

Exhibit 26: Estimated Labor Costs by Operating Scenario

SCENARIO	CITY-OPERATED	THIRD-PARTY OPERATOR
Barn Community Space	\$178K to \$354K	\$175K to \$348K
Barn Event Space	\$204K to \$407K	\$195K to \$390K
Barn Event Space Package	\$290K to \$492K	\$264K to \$458K
Residence Meeting Rooms	\$56K to \$182K	\$45K to \$145K
Pool House Meeting Room	\$56K to \$152K	\$45K to \$121K
Pavilion	\$30K to \$88K	--

Data source: EConorthwest.

A third-party operator may reduce staffing costs, but it does not change the economics of operating these spaces. City contract administration offsets part of the operator's efficiencies, leaving most scenarios with similar overall cost ranges.

Total Operating Costs

Beyond labor, operating a space entails a range of non-labor costs, including utilities (e.g., electricity, water, gas, waste removal, and internet service), insurance, ongoing repairs and maintenance, office expenses, and marketing costs. Because these costs tend to scale with the level of activity at a facility, the analysis uses planning-level estimates benchmarked as a

⁴³ Because of the relatively low staffing requirement and revenue potential, the analysis assumes the City would not contract a third-party operator unless the Pavilion was packaged with the Barn.

⁴⁴ Job descriptions and salary ranges accessed July 2026 via [governmentjobs.com](https://www.governmentjobs.com). Benefit costs were applied as 40% of salary costs, a conservative estimate based on the City's [2025-2026 Mid-Biennial Budget](#) expenses.

⁴⁵ The 80% efficiency assumption is theoretical; it is possible that a nonprofit third-party entity contracted through a competitive procurement process, might propose a cost savings of more than this.



share of anticipated revenues rather than as individual line items. The analysis assumes non-labor operating costs equal to 20% of revenues at the low end and 30% at the high end, a range consistent with typical operating patterns for comparable event venues.⁴⁶ The estimate is intended to provide a reasonable order of magnitude that can be refined as more detailed operating plans are determined.

Non-labor costs also include annual contributions to a reserve fund to cover future capital projects or repairs for each structure, estimated at 0.5% of each structure's capital costs.

The table below combines non-labor operating costs with the labor costs in Exhibit 26 to show the range of estimated total operating expenditures for each scenario.

Exhibit 27: Estimated Total Operating Expenditures by Scenario

SCENARIO	CITY-OPERATED	THIRD-PARTY OPERATOR
Barn Community Space	\$207K to \$420K	\$204K to \$414K
Barn Event Space	\$230K to \$470K	\$221K to \$454K
Barn Event Space Package	\$347K to \$634K	\$321K to \$601K
Residence Meeting Rooms	\$68K to \$239K	\$57K to \$198K
Pool House Meeting Room	\$60K to \$162K	\$49K to \$132K
Pavilion	\$34K to \$94K	..

Data source: ECOnorthwest.

Operating Revenues

The revenue each scenario could generate depends on how much the space is rented and at what rate. This section estimates gross operating revenues by combining rental rate assumptions drawn from comparable venues with assumptions about how heavily each space would be used across seasons and days of the week. Compared against the operating costs estimated above, the resulting net revenue estimates indicate the general scale of City subsidy that could be required under each scenario.

Rental Rates

Rate assumptions are based on current rates for similar venues in the region:

- ◆ For the Barn, rate assumptions are based on pricing for comparable multi-use event spaces shown in Exhibit 19, ranging from the median rate per occupant to the upper end of the market depending on intended use. Averaging data across all event spaces profiled in Chapter 3, the average weekday rate is assumed to be 60% of the weekend rate, and off-season rates are assumed to be 80% of the peak-season rates.

⁴⁶ Costs were benchmarked using data from available Tax Form 990 filings for nonprofit organizations in the previous chapters.



- ◆ For the three rooms in the Residence and the main room of the Pool House, meeting room rental rate assumptions are based on median prices for the comparable small meeting spaces shown in Exhibit 22.
- ◆ Pavilion pricing is based on the City's current pricing for the Beaver Lake Pavilion.

Like comparable venues, the analysis also assumes a rental rate discount for nonprofits: 50% for community space and meeting rooms, and 25% for the event venue.

Exhibit 28: Hourly Rental Rates by Scenario

SCENARIO	PEAK SEASON		OFF-SEASON	
	WEEKENDS	WEEKDAYS	WEEKENDS	WEEKDAYS
Barn Community Space	\$200	\$120	\$160	\$96
Barn Event Space	\$275	\$165	\$220	\$132
Barn Event Space Package	\$590	\$354	\$472	\$283
Residence Meeting Rooms	\$20			
Pool House Meeting Room	\$20			
Pavilion	\$35		\$25	

Data source: EConorthwest. Rates shown are per hour unless otherwise specified.

These pricing assumptions reflect the City's public purpose and Big Rock Park South's market position. As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, the local rental venue market is roughly divided into privately operated venues charging premium rates and publicly and nonprofit-operated venues that are run as subsidized community assets, with rates set for community access rather than the private market. Because Big Rock Park South is more aligned with municipal and nonprofit comparables than with private venues, rate assumptions are drawn from that lower tier. Like these venues, Big Rock Park South cannot simultaneously maximize cost recovery and remain positioned as an affordable community venue. The rates modeled by EConorthwest intentionally favor community access, based on our interviews with comparator venues. This makes subsidy an expected outcome rather than evidence of weak demand.

Gross Operating Revenues

In addition to rental rates, total operating revenues are driven by how frequently the space is rented, estimated as a share of overall availability. Operating schedules for rental availability are based on the City's current facility rental policies at Beaver Lake Lodge:⁴⁷

- ◆ Weekdays (minimum rental two hours): Available 8 A.M. to 10 P.M. Mondays through Thursdays, and 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. on Fridays.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ City of Sammamish, [Facility Rentals](#). Accessed July 2026.

⁴⁸ Like the Beaver Lake Pavilion, the Big Rock Park South Pavilion is assumed to close at dusk; given it will primarily be used in warmer seasons, the analysis estimates average availability at 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. each day.



- ◆ Weekends (minimum rental four hours): Available Fridays 5 P.M. to 12 A.M., Saturdays 8 A.M. to 12 A.M., and Sundays 8 A.M. to 10 P.M.⁴⁹

Because demand for event and meeting space tends to concentrate on weekends and during warmer months, EConorthwest differentiated utilization by season and day of the week, and applied low and high estimates for each to reflect the range of activity a space might reasonably support. Compared with utilization averages calculated for similar facilities using publicly available data in Chapter 3, these rates represent low and high estimates of the range of activity a space might reasonably support. For the Barn's closest comparables, conservatively estimated annual utilization rates range from around 15% for Beaver Lake Lodge, up to roughly 37% and 34% for the Pine Lake Community Club and Blakely Hall, respectively.⁵⁰

It should be noted that these rates are expressed as a share of all advertised available hours, which typically range from early in the morning to as late as midnight, depending on the day. As a result, these calculations include many low-demand late-night and off-season hours that are rarely booked, understating the utilization rate during peak demand windows. Additionally, because these calculations are based on publicly available revenue, usage may not reflect internal programming that does not generate rental revenue (such as the senior programming at Beaver Lake Lodge). However, while these estimates do not necessarily reflect actual *demand* for these spaces, they can provide a useful benchmark. Applying the same all-hours basis across venues provides a more consistent comparison: the Big Rock Park South rates, like the comparables, average across all available hours rather than peak windows. As a result, the assumptions in the table below should be read as conservative estimates that understate use during the busiest, highest-demand windows.

Exhibit 29: Estimated Utilization Rates by Scenario

SCENARIO	PEAK SEASON		OFF-SEASON		ANNUAL UTILIZATION
	WEEKENDS	WEEKDAYS	WEEKENDS	WEEKDAYS	
Barn Community Space	33% to 44%	30% to 45%	22% to 33%	15% to 30%	21% to 35%
Barn Event Space	33% to 67%	9% to 15%	11% to 22%	6% to 9%	10% to 19%
Barn Event Space Package					
Residence Meeting Rooms	27% to 55%		14% to 27%		17% to 34%
Pool House Meeting Room					
Pavilion	22% to 44%	15% to 30%	No rentals		4% to 13%

Data Source: EConorthwest.

Applying these utilization rates to the rental rates in Exhibit 28 yields the ranges of gross annual operating revenues for each scenario shown in the table below. As with the cost

⁴⁹ A noise ordinance is in effect after 10 P.M., limiting audible noise to a 75-foot radius; assuming the Barn is open until 12:00 A.M. on weekends, the City would need to consider strategies for mitigating any event noise. Strategies could include setting policies limiting outdoor access after 10 P.M., requiring any doors to be closed, and having Facility Monitors verify that noise ordinance is being met.

⁵⁰ EConorthwest calculations using Form 990 tax filings or municipal budget data; additional assumptions noted in Chapter 3.



estimates, the results are presented as ranges to reflect different assumptions about how heavily each space would be used.

Exhibit 30: Estimated Gross Operating Revenues by Scenario

SCENARIO	GROSS ANNUAL REVENUE
Barn Community Space	\$131K to \$208K
Barn Event Space	\$108K to \$202K
Barn Event Space Package	\$237K to \$444K
Residence Meeting Rooms	\$48K to \$96K
Pool House Meeting Room	\$16K to \$32K
Pavilion	\$6K to \$12K

Data source: EConorthwest.

Operating Subsidy

Comparing the gross revenues in Exhibit 30 against the total operating costs estimated earlier indicates the extent to which rental income could offset the cost of running the space. Exhibit 31 presents the range of annual subsidies required for each scenario across two cases that bound the likely range of outcomes: a lower-activity case, in which modest utilization yields lower revenues and lower operating costs, and a higher-activity case, in which stronger utilization yields higher revenues and higher operating costs.⁵¹

Exhibit 31: Estimated Annual City Subsidy Required by Scenario

SCENARIO	CITY-OPERATED	THIRD-PARTY OPERATOR
Barn Community Space	\$76K to \$212K	\$73K to \$205K
Barn Event Space	\$122K to \$270K	\$113K to \$253K
Barn Event Space Package	\$109K to \$191K	\$83K to \$157K
Residence Meeting Rooms	\$20K to \$144K	\$9K to \$102K
Pool House Meeting Room	\$44K to \$130K	\$33K to \$100K
Pavilion	\$28K to \$82K	--

Data source: EConorthwest.

All scenarios would operate at a deficit and require an ongoing subsidy from the City.

Estimated subsidies range from as little as \$9K per year for the Residence Meeting Rooms under third-party operation to as much as \$270K per year for the standalone Barn Event Space under City operation. Across scenarios, the higher-use case also results in a larger deficit than the lower-use case, suggesting that at the rental rates these public-serving venues could realistically command, the additional labor and operating cost of supporting more events would likely outpace the additional revenue those events generate.

⁵¹ These estimates do not account for debt service on capital improvements; if the City were to finance the up-front capital investment rather than fund it outright, the associated debt payments would be an additional cost beyond the estimated subsidies below.



Several structural factors contribute to why cost recovery is difficult for facilities of this type, resulting in required subsidies:

- ◆ The most significant is that labor represents the largest share of operating cost, and staffing a space carries a substantial fixed cost that does not scale down in proportion to the relatively modest revenues a small, seasonally used venue can generate.
- ◆ Demand for event and meeting space also tends to concentrate on weekends and during warmer months, leaving considerable capacity unused on weekdays and during the off-season even as the space must still be managed and maintained.
- ◆ The relatively small scale of each building further limits the economies of scale that a larger commercial venue might achieve.

Ultimately, these findings are consistent with how the City approaches its other parks and recreation facilities, which are generally understood as public amenities supported in part by public funds rather than as revenue-generating enterprises. **The relevant question for decision-making is not only whether a scenario would recover its full costs, but whether the level of subsidy it would require is commensurate with the community benefit it would provide.**

Key Takeaways

- » **Limited parking is a binding constraint on how intensively the site can be used.** The 2023 Master Plan provides roughly 55 stalls to serve the entire park. Much of that supply is likely to be absorbed by casual park visitors regardless of bookings, limiting capacity for rentals and making multiple uses difficult to operate simultaneously. For example, a large Barn event, a Residence or Pool House booking, and general public access would compete for the same spaces, making parking access for any one use uncertain. As a result, the Park's parking would limit joint use of the buildings, capping the size and frequency of rentals the site can realistically support.
- » **The Park will require a subsidy to operate, consistent with other public amenities.** Nearly every scenario would run at a deficit and require an ongoing City subsidy, ranging from roughly \$9K per year (Residence Meeting Rooms under third-party operation) to up to \$270K per year (standalone Barn Event Space under City operation). This reflects a deliberate choice, consistent with market analysis findings, to price BRPS as a community-serving asset aligned with its municipal and nonprofit comparables rather than as a revenue-generating enterprise in the private market. As a result, ongoing subsidies are an expected outcome, not a sign of weak demand. The City will need to weigh the potential community benefits of each scenario against the public investment required.
- » **Contracting to a third-party operator may not materially change the economics.** Even assuming a conservative 20% staffing savings, most of that gain is offset by the City's added contract oversight. If a third party were able to operate the facility more efficiently and program events to achieve a competitive level of utilization, greater cost savings



could be realized. In general, however, a subsidy would still be needed. In this context, the operating-model decision is better understood as a question of capacity and control than of cost savings.

» **More use does not improve financial performance under the modeled assumptions.**

Additional bookings generate more revenue, but supporting them requires more staff time. Because labor is largely a fixed cost that doesn't scale down in slow periods, added activity tends to raise costs faster than revenue. Additionally, with demand for event space generally concentrated on weekends and warmer months, and because of each building's limited capacity, the City cannot program its way to a break-even point while charging "community-oriented" event fees.

» **Capital investment and ongoing subsidy are separate decisions, and capital investment does not guarantee positive operational feasibility.** Estimated capital costs span a wide range, from about \$216K for the Pool House to roughly \$1.85M for the Barn Event Space Package. Higher capital investment does not necessarily guarantee stronger performance, and the City should weigh how much to invest up front largely independently of the subsidy a scenario will require to operate year to year.



6. Opportunities and Constraints

This chapter synthesizes the findings of the preceding chapters into a set of recommendations and considerations for each structure at Big Rock Park South, and situates those results within the City's broader space portfolio. Key findings are provided based on the research, insights, and analysis completed, and considerations are provided based on ECONorthwest's expertise to highlight key aspects of the BRPS scenario's operational characteristics and financial performance potential.

As discussed in the previous chapter, all operating scenarios would require an operating subsidy. However, these types of uses are generally not intended to generate revenue but do provide quantifiable benefits to communities, including direct benefits like public health and wellness, as well as indirect benefits like community non-use value, or the value residents place on the availability of a facility, even if they do not use it themselves.⁵²

City Portfolio Considerations

A central question posed by Council is how the Big Rock Park South structures might overlap with the City's broader portfolio, including Building 120. Key considerations surfaced by this analysis include:

- ◆ **The Barn represents a distinct market opportunity that Building 120's institutional space cannot replicate.** Building 120 is a large, central, all-weather facility that could function as an institutional community center, providing amenities highlighted by interviewed community partners such as indoor athletic, meeting, and youth-programming space. By contrast, the Barn's value lies in its rustic character and park setting, positioning it as a mid-sized event and community venue with an appeal closer to the private market than anything Building 120 could offer.
- ◆ **Within the City's portfolio, the Barn would overlap most directly with Beaver Lake Lodge.** Beaver Lake Lodge is the Barn's closest comparable: a City-operated, park-set venue accommodating up to 150 guests, rented at community rates with a semi-commercial kitchen. However, City staff reports high utilization and unmet demand for the Lodge, indicating capacity for additional community-rate event space of this character. The Barn could serve much of that same demand, suggesting it could help absorb overflow the Lodge cannot currently accommodate rather than simply duplicating existing capacity.
- ◆ **As standalone rentable spaces, the Residence and Pool House overlap most directly with Building 120.** For small meetings and classes, space character is less likely to be the deciding factor over affordability and accessibility. As a larger space,

⁵² The suggestion of measurable benefits implies that a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) is often an important method for building a case for capital investment in community amenities or infrastructure. In a BCA, one-time and ongoing capital investment and operating expenditures are weighed against such measurable economic, social and environmental benefits.



Building 120 could be configured into several meeting and program rooms at once, meeting much of the community demand on its own. Interviews with community providers also identified demand for specific uses requiring larger institutional space, including transition-academy space for special-needs young adults, indoor and outdoor athletic spaces, and reliable spaces to convene larger staff meetings and training sessions.

Opportunities by Structure

This section presents EConorthwest's recommendations and considerations for each structure at Big Rock Park South, synthesizing market demand, capital cost, and subsidy findings from the preceding chapters. Each structure begins with a lead recommendation, followed by the findings and considerations that support it. The structures are not evaluated in isolation: the strongest opportunity, the Barn, anchors the site, and the roles of the Residence, Pool House, and Pavilion are shaped in part by how the City configures the Barn and by how each space relates to the City's broader portfolio, including Building 120. Overall, these recommendations are intended to help the City understand the tradeoffs among uses and to sequence its decisions, rather than to prescribe a single path.

The Barn

Prioritize flexible community use while preserving the ability to bundle other spaces selectively for different event types.

The Barn has the strongest market potential of the structures at Big Rock Park South and could be positioned as a mid-sized, rustic, indoor-outdoor gathering space. How the City configures that use, however, would shape both its cost and the range of residents it serves. For the City, the operating decision will need to weigh the viability of an ongoing subsidy against the value of its potential public benefit.

While positioning the Barn as a dedicated event space, deliberately packaged with the Residence and Pavilion, could require the lowest subsidy of the modeled scenarios at the upper end of each range (\$157K annually), it would carry the highest up-front capital cost (\$1.85M) and provide the lowest community benefit. Packaging the buildings for event rental would serve a narrower, higher-end market and would preclude the Residence and Pavilion from other community uses; however, if these spaces are not available, achievable rental rates would be lower, resulting in the highest required subsidy of the three uses (up to \$270K annually). Even if the Barn were to target higher-end users, its limitations, such as its public setting and limited parking, make it unlikely to command event rental rates high enough to offset costs and potentially cross-subsidize other community benefits at Big Rock Park South.

Alternatively, positioning the Barn as a more flexible community and event configuration would require lower capital costs (roughly \$650K) and the lowest potential Barn operating subsidy, keep it accessible to a wider community, and make fuller use of the site



throughout the week. In this scenario, the Barn would combine reserved private events such as weddings and celebrations of life with regularly programmed classes, camps, and community gatherings. Depending on the scope of operations, this use could require a subsidy of \$73K to \$212K annually; at the low end of the range, the required subsidy would be the lowest of the Barn scenarios. Additionally, this use would reach a broader range of residents and uses, spreading the Barn's value across users rather than concentrating it in weekend rentals.

The City could also consider leaving open the possibility of future expansions following a period of performance evaluation. For example, the City could choose to upgrade the Barn to accommodate mid- to higher-priced events and operate it accordingly for a few years. If it were successful or more utilized than anticipated, future expansion or upgrades would present less risk at that time than they might today.

The Residence and Pool House

Defer standalone investment until the City resolves Building 120's role.

The Residence and Pool House are best considered together, because they serve the same underlying purpose: reservable, community-scale meeting and class space. They differ mainly in size: the Residence accommodates roughly 50 to 100 occupants across its three rooms, while the Pool House accommodates up to 20. However, as standalone meeting and small-event spaces, both would meet high market demand in a segment with limited practical availability, particularly in Sammamish.

Given market overlap with Building 120, decisions about how to use all three spaces should be considered together. Both the Pool House and Residence would target the same local demand and overlap most directly with Building 120, which could meet much of that demand on its own. Additionally, upfront capital costs for the Pool House and Residence would be roughly \$216K and \$542K, respectively. Given this, the City should consider the future community role of Building 120 before investing in capital improvements: if Building 120 advances as a community center, the Residence and Pool House could be redirected to support the Barn and other site uses rather than compete for the same market. However, if Building 120 is used for another purpose, the case for activating the Residence and Pool House as standalone meeting spaces grows stronger.

On their own, however, the Residence and Pool House are likely unable to fully meet market demand for community space. Many interviewed providers identified the need for multiple rooms operating simultaneously, as well as recurring or dedicated space, rather than ad hoc booking. The Park's buildings would also be unable to serve some of the larger and more specialized uses identified in the interviews, including indoor gatherings (over 100 occupants), transition-academy space, indoor and outdoor athletic space, and standing space for convening larger staff meetings and training sessions. What differentiates the Big Rock Park South buildings from a central facility like Building 120 is the park setting itself: rooms with direct access to the grounds, trails, and the adjacent Barn, which are well suited



to the multi-part, nature-oriented programming described by providers and that an institutional community center is unlikely to replicate. Rather, the Residence and Pool House could meet much of the City's everyday meeting-space demand, serving a distinct, park-oriented segment especially well, but would not fill the full demand for community space in Sammamish.

Because operating costs are driven largely by staffing and achievable rents are relatively low, the City should explore opportunities to reduce on-site staffing needs. Annual operating costs for the Pool House and Residence are estimated at \$33K to \$130K and \$9K to \$144K, respectively. For example, rather than relying on on-site facility monitors, the City could consider operating the space on a self-access basis: the space would be bookable online, accessed with a unique, time-limited access code, and users would be responsible for their own setup and takedown. This model is used by Blakely Hall in the Issaquah Highlands and could address barriers to space availability and reliability caused by staffing coverage issues described by other interviewed community providers.

The Pavilion

Pursue the Pavilion as a complement to the broader site, not a standalone investment.

The Pavilion that would replace the Old Garage would perform best in conjunction with other uses rather than on its own. Overall market demand is low, concentrated on summer weekends and limited on weekdays and in colder months, and would duplicate space already in the City's portfolio, as the City already operates five picnic shelters. At about \$500K in capital and a subsidy of \$28K to \$82K, it is best understood as a complement to the Barn and grounds, much like the pairing of Beaver Lake Lodge and its pavilion, rather than as a standalone draw.

Operating Model Considerations

How the City chooses to operate the Park, whether directly or through a third-party operator, will also influence its staffing, cost, service level, and risk.

Staffing will need to scale to the level of service and programming the City envisions. The larger the scale of event activity, the more staff time will need to be devoted to operations. If it would like to manage operations directly, the City would likely need to expand its capacity for event planning, programming, scheduling, and coordination, rather than incorporating these functions into existing staff roles and responsibilities.

Alternatively, the City could contract with a third-party for its operations, preserving staff capacity for more relevant strategic or governance functions rather than facility operations. And, as with most service procurement processes, the City would issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Information (RFI) to solicit proposals from qualified providers to operate certain functions of the facilities. Through such an agreement, the City would specify the services to be provided, any required qualifications, and contract terms. Potential contractors would then submit bids to operate the facility at a value that



would support their own operational structure, overhead, margins, materials, and other costs.

The City could offer the operator a performance incentive. Under a third-party arrangement, the City's operating expenditures would be replaced by the contract value. Because that value would already account for the contractor's business model, the City would retain the operating revenues. However, the City could consider sharing a portion of revenues for programming or utilization that exceeds a baseline level of activity, aligning the operator's incentives with the City's goals for the space.

Next Steps

These findings leave the City with a connected set of decisions for its portfolio. For the Barn, the question is which configuration to advance. For the Residence and Pool House, it is whether to invest in smaller meeting space that Building 120 could largely provide, or redirect those buildings toward supporting the Barn and other uses. Underlying these choices is the level of ongoing subsidy the City is prepared to sustain and whether it would operate the facilities directly or through a third party.

All scenarios tested in this analysis would require an ongoing subsidy, and the site is unlikely to generate revenue without giving up the community-serving positioning that gives the site its value. The decision is therefore one of investment priorities rather than cost recovery: how much capital to commit, how large a subsidy to sustain, whether to operate directly or through a third party, and how the resulting public benefit compares to other uses of the same public dollars.

