ERIE PROST 'CONNECTING YOU TO FUN' PLAYBOOK:

COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE EVENT SUMMARY

April 16, 2025
4:00-8:00pm
Erie Community Center Gymnasium

Prepared by DTJ DESIGN

Contents

Event Overview....2
Outreach and Engagement Stations....3
Community Feedback....4
Key Takeaways....11
Future Facilities Considerations....12
Future Programs Considerations....13

Event Overview

Event Facilitators

DTJ Design:

- Keith Walzak
- Michelle Regan
- Taylor Atkins

Town of Erie:

- Luke Bolinger
- Levi Moser
- Taylor Ingro
- Jay Mauer
- Rachel Wysuph
- Shane Greenburg
- Kathy Kron
- Jeff Rau
- Mike McGill
- Matt Spinner

Attendance:

An estimated **80-100** community members attended the event. Attendees consisted of a wide range of ages, including kids, teenagers, parents, and adults 60+. This diverse, multigenerational turnout ensured that various perspectives were heard regarding the future of PROST in Erie.

Purpose & Goals

- **Gather Broad Community Input:** Provide an open forum for community members to share their thoughts on project goals, objectives, and vision at key project milestones.
- **Engagement & Connection:** Encourage discussions about community values and future developments.
- **Interactive Participation:** Offer various hands-on activities to make participation accessible and engaging.

Outreach and Engagement Stations

Designed to gather broad community input and foster meaningful connections, the event featured a series of interactive stations, each focused on a specific area of the PROST Playbook. Participants were encouraged to share their ideas, preferences, and priorities through hands-on activities and discussions. The stations were as follows:

Station 1: PROST Playbook Project Introduction (Informational)

Introduced the PROST Playbook project description, purpose, timeline, and current mission, vision, and values.

Station 2: Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study Project Introduction (Engagement)

Introduced the PAC feasibility study project description, purpose, timeline, and next steps. Asked participants to indicate their current use of typical PAC programs, and which programs they would most likely participate in in the future.

Station 3: Walkable Map and Visioning (Engagement)

Asked participants to engage with a large-scale map of the existing Erie PROST system to gather data and feedback of the existing PROST system.

Station 4: Community Programming, Events, and Facilities (Engagement)

Asked participants to indicate which programs, events, and spaces they currently used, and which of these areas they would like to see more of in the future.

Station 5: Funding Resource Prioritization (Engagement)

Provided information on the current funding resource distribution within the parks and recreation department. Asked participants to indicate what types of programs and facilities they would like to prioritize funding in the future.

Station 6: Kids' Activity (Engagement)

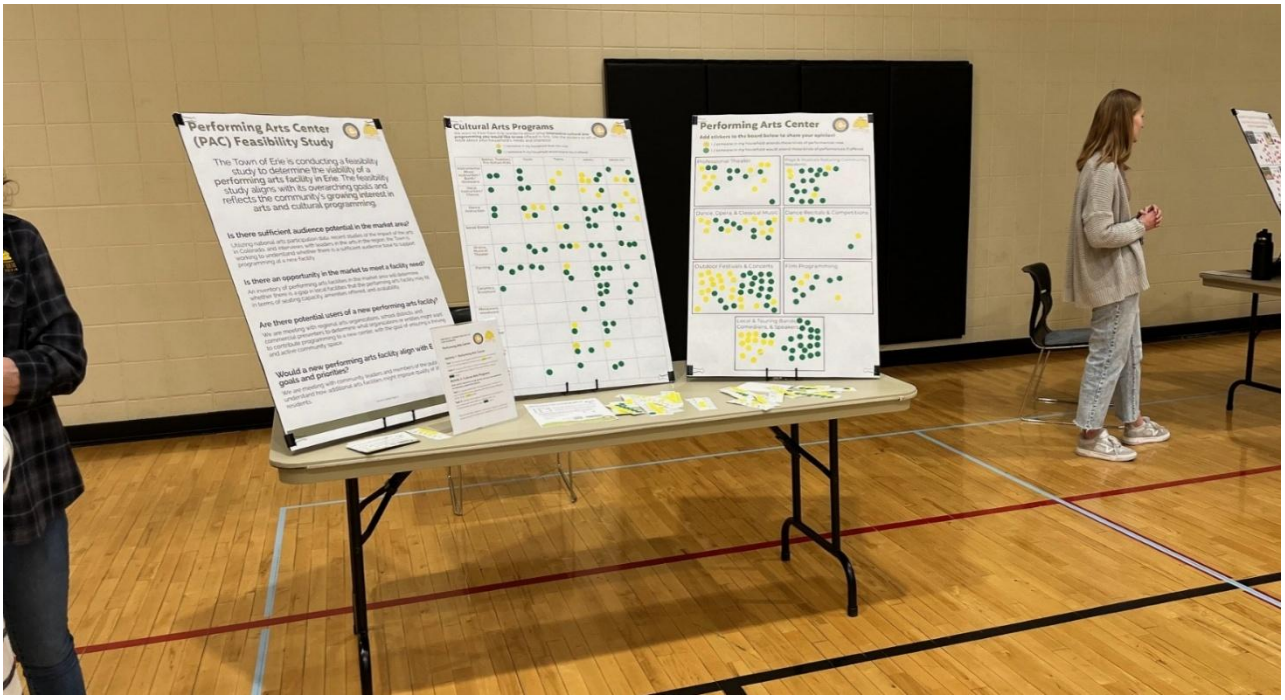
Provided coloring sheets and inspiration boards to allow kids to share their thoughts on what they would like to see in their parks in the future.

Station 7: Next Steps (Informational)

Thanked participants for attending and informed them how their feedback and input would be used for the project. Provided a space where people could take the questionnaire and provide additional feedback if needed.

Community Feedback

Station 2: Performing Arts Center Feasibility Study Project Introduction



RESULTS:

	Babies, Toddlers, Pre-School Kids		Youth		Teens		Adults		Adults 60+	
	Current	Future	Current	Future	Current	Future	Current	Future	Current	Future
Instrumental Music Instruction/Band/Orchestra	0	5	1	3	4	1	5	3	2	4
Vocal Instruction/Chorus	0	2	0	2	1	1	2	2	2	1
Dance Instruction	0	2	4	2	1	1	0	4	2	5
Social Dance	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	7	1	2
Drama, Musical Theater	0	1	0	4	1	2	1	4	0	6
Painting	0	5	0	5	1	2	2	6	0	2
Ceramics/Sculpture	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	9	0	3
Metalwork/Woodwork	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	7	0	3
Jewelry, textiles, fiber arts	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	8	0	1
Photography, filmmaking	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	2	1	4
Digital media, game design	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	4	0	1

Category	Subcategory	Current Use	Future Use
Performing Arts Center	Professional Theater	18	18
	Plays & Musicals featuring Community Residents	7	24
	Dance, Opera, Classical Music	15	14
	Dance Recitals & Competitions	3	4
	Outdoor Festivals & Concerts	29	36
	Film Programming	7	11
	Local & Touring Bands, Comedians, & Speakers	17	30

From these results, we can discern the following:

Age Group	Most particpated-in activity currently	Most desired future activity
Babies, Toddlers, Pre-School Kids	N/A	Instrumental Music Instruction/Band/Orchestra, Painting
Youth	Dance Instruction	Painting
Teens	Instrumental Music Instruction/Band/Orchestra	Digital media, game design
Adults	Instrumental Music Instruction/Band/Orchestra	Ceramics/Sculpture
Adults 60+	Instrumental Music Instruction/Band/Orchestra, Vocal Instruction/Chorus, Dance Instruction	Drama, Musical Theater

(Results below are shown in order of prevalence)

Category	Most Used Currently (Top 3)	Most Desired for Future Use (Top 3)
Performing Arts Center	Outdoor Festivals & Concerts	Outdoor Festivals & Concerts
	Professional Theater	Local & Touring Bands, Comedians, & Speakers
	Local & Touring Bands, Comedians, & Speakers	Plays & Musicals featuring Community Residents

These results indicate that there is a **community interest in expanding creative programs for all ages, particularly those focused on art and performance**. Additionally, **concerts, live performances, and both professional and local theater productions** are among the most utilized and desired Performing Arts offerings in Erie.

Station 3: Walkable Map and Visioning







The walkable map activity helped showcase where current Erie residents felt the town had adequate PROST facilities, as well as where they saw potential gaps. Engaging with these community members provided valuable, firsthand insight into the town's existing facilities and programs. Some discussions included:

- Potential areas for additional sports courts and fields
- Desired places for enhanced trail connectivity to connect neighborhoods to community parks and amenities
- Potential locations for an additional recreation center for the town
- Potential areas for open space conservation
- Concerns about the affordability of new facilities and making amenities accessible to all socioeconomic groups

Station 4: Community Programming, Events, and Facilities





RESULTS:

Category	Subcategory	Current Use	Future Use
Recreation Programs & Events	Aquatics	34	17
	Fitness & Wellness	43	25
	Sports	26	15
	Therapeutic Recreation	0	1
	Youth & Teen	11	11
	Adult / Adult 60+	19	17
	Special Events	37	29
	Cultural Arts	15	22
Indoor Spaces	Aquatics Area	26	40
	Fitness Area	42	39
	Sports Courts	21	45
	Adult 60+ Spaces	13	10
	Multi-Purpose Community Room	13	14
	Childcare	8	8
	Playground	11	16
	Teen/Youth Spaces	4	14
Outdoor Spaces	Community Parks	36	28
	Neighborhood Parks	33	32
	Passive Use Areas	28	24
	Sports Fields/Areas	19	26
	Venue Space	25	25
	Trails System	42	47
	Open Space	40	39
	Private Green Spaces	17	29

From these results, we can discern the following:

(Results are shown in order of prevalence for each category)

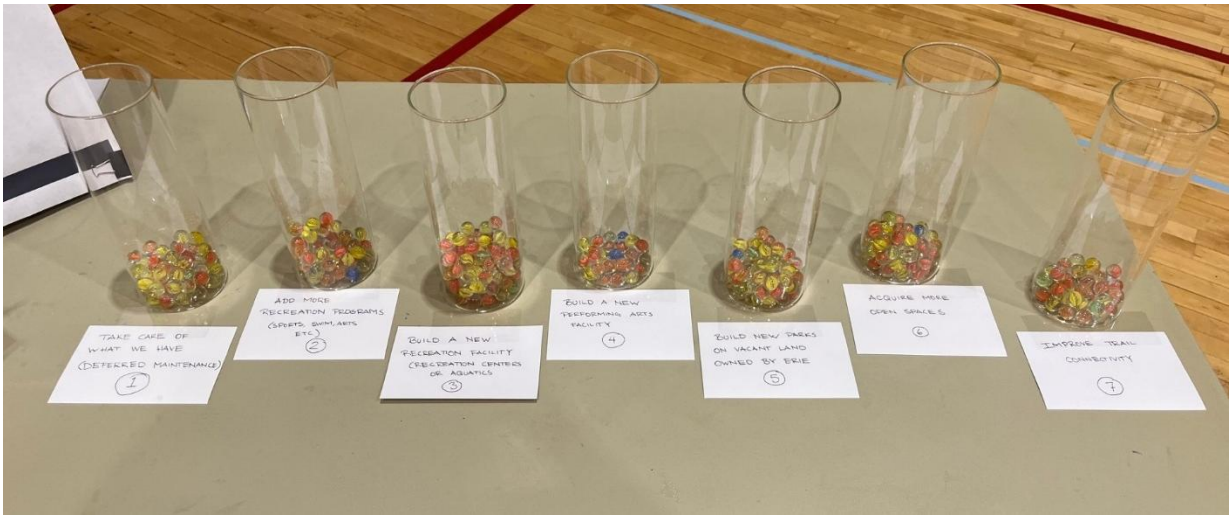
Category	Most Used Currently (Top 3)	Most Desired for Future Use (Top 3)
Recreation Programs & Events	Fitness & Wellness	Special Events
	Special Events	Fitness & Wellness
	Aquatics	Cultural Arts
Indoor Spaces	Fitness Area	Sports Courts
	Aquatics Area	Aquatics Area
	Sports Courts	Fitness Area
Outdoor Spaces	Trails System	Trails System
	Open Space	Open Space
	Community Parks	Neighborhood Parks

These results indicate a clear preference for fitness-related activities, special events, and improved trail systems. Erie residents currently make the most use of fitness areas and trail systems, and they want to see these amenities expanded in the future. There is also significant interest in adding more sports courts, aquatics facilities, special events, and parks and open spaces to Erie's available programming.

Station 5: Funding Resource Prioritization







RESULTS:

Options	Votes in Favor
Take care of what we have (deferred maintenance)	47
Add more recreation programs (sports, swim, arts, etc.)	44
Build a new recreation facility (recreation center or aquatics)	87
Build a new performing arts facility	30
Build new parks on vacant land owned by Erie	61
Acquire more open spaces	58
Improve trail connectivity	40

Based on the results of the activity, there is a resounding desire for building a new recreational facility. Other top priorities for increased funding included building new parks on vacant land, acquiring more open spaces, and taking care of what already exists in Erie (deferred maintenance).

Station 6: Kids' Activity















Key Takeaways

The Open House event served as a dynamic and inclusive platform to engage the community in shaping the future of PROST in Erie. From evaluating current facilities and programming to envisioning future developments, including the Performing Arts Center, the event successfully encouraged thoughtful participation and set the stage for the next phase of community-driven planning.

The Open House allowed for:

- **Community Insight:** The event created space for residents of all ages to contribute feedback on current and future park and recreation priorities.
- **Project Introductions:** Clear overviews of the PROST Playbook and PAC feasibility study helped participants understand the vision, goals, and timelines.
- **Transparent Next Steps:** Attendees were informed of how their input would be used, creating continued community involvement in the planning process.

Community input gathered through the Open House activities revealed strong interest and clear priorities for the future of Erie's PROST Programming. These key takeaways will help inform future recommendations and design approaches for PROST in the Erie community.

Key Takeaways (Takeaways are not listed in order of prevalence):

- **High support for funding an additional Recreation Center:** There is widespread community support for funding a new recreation center and related facilities (i.e. aquatics facility)
- **High support for funding more parks and acquiring additional open space areas:** Residents prioritized building neighborhood parks on existing vacant lands currently owned by Erie and acquiring more open space areas.
- **Interest in Creative and Cultural Programming**: If the community were to develop a new performing arts venue, there is strong interest in expanding arts and performance offerings for all ages.
- **Strong desire for enhanced trail systems:** There is a clear interest in expanding Erie's trail system and improving access between neighborhoods and parks.
- **Prioritization for fitness areas and events:** Fitness areas, aquatics facilities, sports courts, and special events are highly used. Residents support the expansion of these areas in the future.
- **Commitment to Open Space and Sustainability:** Many participants underscored the importance of conserving natural areas and maintaining existing infrastructure.
- **Local Perspective:** The walkable map helped current residents identify areas with both strong coverage and service gaps in PROST facilities. Areas for new facilities, trails, and open space were identified.

Future Facilities Considerations

1. **New Multi-Use Recreation Center**
    - High community interest in a new facility offering fitness, aquatics, indoor sports, and flexible program space.
    - Should prioritize affordability and accessibility for all socioeconomic groups.
2. **Expanded Trail Systems**
    - Enhance trail links between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and community destinations.
    - Consider both paved and natural surface trails to support walking, biking, and running.
3. **Sports Courts**
    - Additional basketball, tennis, and pickleball courts to meet growing demand.
    - Lighting and year-round usability could be considered.
4. **Aquatics Facilities**
    - Expand aquatics offerings with features like lap pools, splash pads, and leisure pools.
    - Indoor/outdoor options for year-round access.
5. **Parks on Vacant Land**
    - Activate underutilized or vacant land with new parks, prioritizing underserved neighborhoods.
6. **Open Space Conservation Areas**
    - Identify and preserve areas with ecological or scenic value.
    - Support passive recreation like birdwatching, walking, or nature education.
7. **Performing Arts and Creative Spaces**
    - A dedicated Performing Arts Center (PAC) or community theater to support concerts, local productions, and arts education.
    - Flexible creative space for art classes, music, and multi-generational cultural programming.

*Please note that future considerations listed here will be further analyzed alongside additional community input

Future Programs Considerations

1. **Fitness and Wellness Classes**
    - Group classes, senior fitness, and adaptive programs for residents of all abilities and ages.
2. **Community Events & Festivals**
    - Seasonal events, outdoor concerts, and cultural festivals that bring people together.
3. **Arts & Performance Education**
    - Dance, theater, music, and visual art classes accessible to all skill levels and age groups.
4. **Aquatics Programs**
    - Additional swim lessons for all ages, competitive swim programs, and allotted time for open swim.

*Please note that future considerations listed here will be further analyzed alongside additional community input