Cincinnati Recreation Commission

RECREATION

2019

BUSINESS PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Consultant Team

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CHAPTER ONE - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission ("CRC") desired a Programs and Facilities Business Plan to serve as the CRC's road map for the next five years and will recommend program direction, facility operations, maintenance, and capital improvements based on community needs. The plan provides an extensive overview of the system including historical context regarding CRC's rich history and national prominence; in addition to clearly stating its current condition, needs, cost for meeting needs, and future challenges.

This plan includes an inventory of current, as well as desired, facilities and programs needed to serve the community and prioritizes direction for the future programming of CRC's park and recreational assets and services. The study includes a community-supported action plan that provides guidance for future development and redevelopment of programs, facilities and services. The key goals of the plan were to:

- **Engage the community, CRC leadership and stakeholders** to build a shared vision for the Commission to further develop service improvement opportunities, as well as understand how to best serve current and projected recreation needs of the community in programs and facilities.

- **Utilize a wide variety of data sources and best practice** to predict trends and patterns of use and how to support continuous improvement culture and efficiency, as well as assess current recreation needs for park programming and facilities.

- **Shape financial and operational preparedness** through innovative and "next" practices to achieve the strategic objectives and recommended actions for facility utilization, operational staffing, pricing and revenue, and registration.

- **Develop a dynamic and realistic strategic action plan** that creates a road map to ensure long-term success and financial sustainability for the CRC, as well as action steps to support cultural vibrancy, strong social connections among communities, and quality of life for the community and businesses that make Cincinnati a great place to live.

1.2 KEY STEPS IN THE PROCESS

This Business Plan will create a clear set of objectives to will provide direction to CRC staff and the Board of Commissioners for a short-term, mid-term and long-term range. There were numerous steps in the project, with the following key areas of focus being foundation components.

Where are We Today?
- Site and facility operational assessments
- Programs and services assessments
- Classification of services
- Levels of services standards

Where Are We Going Tomorrow?
- Community needs analysis
- Demographics & trends analysis
- Benchmarking & comparative analysis

How Do We Get There?
- Needs prioritization
- Financial management and operations strategy
- Funding and Revenue planning
- Strategic action plan

1.3 KEY ISSUES

The following are key issues that the Business Plan addressed based on an assessment of the three key areas. These include Organizational Issues, Facility Issues and Program Issues that the Business Plan addressed. These issues were identified from interviews with key stakeholders, the community, staff, and consultant observations from all the pieces of work that were completed as part of developing this Business Plan for the CRC.

1.3.1 ORGANIZATIONAL

- There is not a clear focus of what are priorities and our role CRC should play in the city.

- Cincinnati is one of few cities that still operate Recreation and Parks separately. We recommend that the City consider having an independent audit of both agencies operations to determine the level of duplicity and determine if there are cost savings that should be captured including combining Departments.

- 81% of the operational budget is made up of salaries and benefits.

- How to remain unique to each neighborhood but still show consistency across the system in recreation services is not present.

- There is a lack of consistency of outgoing and vibrant recreation facility and program staff to build a strong user base for programs and facilities provided.

- CRC is over extended financially, and they need to find ways to have partners help them deliver services.

- Lack of data to drive decision making is a major concern.

- Lack of technology such as an updated registration software system to manage and track participation in programs, memberships and daily admission at recreation facilities is needed.

- There is a lack of corporate partners to help the system become more relevant. CRC has to wok with the city leadership, local businesses and CRC Board to revise and reorganize the CRC Foundation Board and incorporate a Executive Director that reports to the Foundation Board. Increasing membership is the pathway to success for CRC and the CRC Foundation.

- CRC lacks the appropriate level of dedicated funding to maintain the system to the community's expectations.

- Work with the City, Local Businesses and CRC Board to revise and reorganize the CRC Foundation Board (i.e. a paid Executive Director that reports to the Foundation Board membership is a pathway to success for CRC and the CRC Foundation Board.

- SAC's are note able to manage all aspects (inside & outside components) of their facilities when dealing with community complaints.

- System-wide marketing is needed to address lack of awareness throughout the city about what CRC provides to the community.

- Functional organizational changes need to be addressed within the system to operate in a more efficient and effective manner.

- Lack of data to determine direct and indirect cost to provide programs and facilities on a functional level is lacking.

- The Department lacks a business development office to help them raise outside revenue to help maintain recreation programs and deliver recreation programs.

1.3.2 FACILITIES

- Many recreation facilities are outdated in many parts of the city and need to be updated.

- Recreation facilities are not managed to a business plan for operations, programs and services.

- Partnerships are not present to help support operational cost and capital costs to help maintain the system.

- The Department has a backlog of needed capital repairs for buildings, pools, parking lots, amenities and equipment replacement needs of over $264,802,610 dollars and growing with no source of dedicated funding for capital costs to slow down the fixed asset problem.

- Many facilities were designed for other purposes and have been repurposed into community recreation centers forcing staff to retrofit programs into poorly designed inadequate program spaces which limits the user's experiences.

- Some community centers are not safe and lack nurturing gathering places to energize program activities, events, and the history of CRC in the community that could make these facilities the hub of the neighborhood.

- Hours of operations are convenient for staff but not for the public and need to be expanded based on the services the users desire to achieve the level of use and revenue within the capabilities of the facilities to provide those services.

- Recreation facilities are not graded based on how well they are maintained, how well they are meeting the user's needs, level of use, diversity of users and level of support they have from the community.

- Currently, most of the recreation centers lack the appropriate hours, staffing, program spaces, equipment and functionality to become destination recreation facilities.

- Indoor pools availability is lacking in the system and the city.

- Many recreation facilities compete for the same audience in many areas of the city with overlapping services which dilute the effectiveness of these recreation facilities and management standards are not established on how to address this for a region within the city to be more efficient.

- Many underutilized facilities are taking resources away from the system with little return on investment and should be updated to meet the needs of the community or be eliminated.

- A disposal process is not in place on when and how to eliminate a under underutilized recreation facility.

- CRC community center memberships are not competitively priced compared to other providers like the YMCA in the city with similar facilities and programs.

- There is a desire for year-round State licensed childcare and after school programs in recreation centers as part of the Preschool Promise program to receive government funding to help offset staffing and facility costs, but no plan is in place to address this issue in the system.

- Outside recreation facilities like sports fields, playgrounds, trails and pools need to be updated to match what the neighborhood recreation facility needs are for the community and how to partner with other service providers who are looking for facilities to help program areas that CRC cannot support.

- Maintenance and cleaning standards inside of recreation facilities are inconsistent across the system and must be addressed.

- There is limited coordination between CRC, the City and the school system in how programs and recreation facilities are used in the city and could be improved.

- The renovation schedule for recreation centers is way off schedule to keep facilities updated due to lack of capital money.

- Fitness spaces and equipment are mostly outdated in most centers which limits its membership value.

- Outside destination sports fields need updating as well to be competitive in the market place

1.3.3 PROGRAMS

- There is not consistency in how program standards are applied to existing programs in the system.

- The Department lacks an effective pricing policy based on what is a core essential, important and value-added program which focus on the level of public good and private good.

- There are many programs at the end of their program lifecycle and need to be evaluate and or replaced with new program offerings based on what the community desires for that part of the city.

- Teen life skill programs are lacking along with child care and more programs for families and seniors in the recreation centers. In addition, programs targeted for Jr. Achievement, pre-vo-tech type of classes and camps for teens are lacking.

- Staff training in program delivery is lacking across the system in all core program services and a standard skill set assessment is missing in evaluating staff capability in program delivery.

- Performance measures that demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness are not present in the system.

- There is not a marketing and branding plan in place to reposition CRC for the future as it applies to health and wellness, community development, economic development, keeping kids safe and making CRC the center of the neighborhoods they represent.

- There is a limited number of core program offerings which could be expanded providing more residents with needed services at convenient times for the community to participate.

- Programs are competing against each other across the system and better coordination of what should be provided within the planning areas and at each center is needed.

1.4 GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.4.1 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

GOAL
Create a model recreation system for the state of Ohio that promotes a positive image of Cincinnati and the services provided.

STRATEGIES
- **Develop maintenance and cleaning standards for all facilities and park grounds** to match the community's expectations for safe, clean, updated, modern and inviting indoor and outdoor spaces.

- **Establish the appropriate staffing of fulltime, part-time and seasonal staff** based on increasing the hours of recreation centers and pools to meet public expectations with larger centers and pools having longer hours while creating destination facilities.

- **Update all recreation centers and pools** over a 10-year period to stay relevant.

- **Eliminate some recreation centers and pools that are underutilized** and past their useful life to avoid overextending the system more than it currently is today through a three-year review/elimination process.

- **Implement a technology plan** for each recreation center, pool operation and program registration area that is internally functional easy to implement, and easy to use from a consumer perspective.

- **Develop and implement a marketing and communication plan** for the system that positions CRC for the future with measurable outcomes.

1.4.2 RECREATION FACILITIES

GOAL
Enhance existing recreation facilities to support the program needs of all residents increasing the use of facilities and programs while creating a sense of place for people of all ages to experience.

STRATEGIES

- **Re-design recreation facilities** to be multi-generational and multi-functional and with adequate spaces to provide a diverse set of programs for people of all ages using established design and program standards.

- **Update or convert sports fields to meet a diverse user base** and re-establish youth and adult sports programs as a core service, system wide.

- **Eliminate all underutilized or unplayable facilities** and amenities and repurpose those sites with modern amenities that the public will use and appreciate.

- **Consider development of three indoor field houses** to support turf sports, basketball, volleyball, soccer, Lacrosse along with an indoor pool while eliminating underutilized and underappreciated facilities and operate these facilities at a high cost recovery level.

1.4.3 RECREATION PROGRAMS

GOAL

Provide innovative professional developed recreation programs that are creative, fun, safe, and that promote healthy lifestyles and support a diversity of users for people of all ages.

STRATEGIES

- **Recruit and retain quality recreation professionals and staff** that drive energy and passion into their programs and facilities they manage.

- **Develop effective partnerships** with other service providers working together to serve basic community recreational program needs, including effective management of recreation facilities to serve the entire community this would include public/public partners, public/not-for-profit partners and public/ private partners.

- **Add five new core programs** in senior services, special events, art programs, life skill programs for teens and adults, and license preschool to maximize existing recreation facilities.

- **Programs need to drive design of all facilities** being updated or creating new.

- **Eliminate programs competing in** areas of the city as well as with other departments of the city to maximize existing facilities.

1.4.4 FINANCIALS

GOAL

Ensure the public trust through responsible management of public funds.

STRATEGIES

- **Develop mini-business plans** for all recreation centers, sports facilities and pools in the system to achieve the established cost recovery goal for the site (minimum of 50%), which accounts for the unique circumstances of each service area.

- **Maintain fee schedules** with current market conditions to maximize financial sustainability.

- **Develop a dedicated funding source** for capital, operations and maintenance via establishing a Recreation District or a dedicated levy from a voter approved funding plan.

- **Create permanent partnerships** within the city to help offset operational and capital costs with the school district, city, Great Parks, Cincinnati Parks, and the Redevelop Authority.

1.4.5 PARKLAND

GOAL

Maximize the value of park lands, amenities and trails as community assets that residents will use and connect with for generations to come.

STRATEGIES

- **Establish a true partnership with Cincinnati Parks** on what are their park responsibilities and CRC park responsibilities and rewrite the management plan with them for the next ten years.

- **Establish a working partnership with Great Parks** on parks within the city that would give them a presence where the property could potentially be transferred to them decreasing the financial stress of CRC.

- **Update existing parks that are underutilized with new park master plans** repurposing these parks to enhance their value and use throughout the community and the neighborhoods they serve.

- Develop loop trails within CRC parks as well as connect to regional trails where possible.

1.5 CONCLUSION

Cincinnati Recreation Commission is at a crossroads as the system is overextended with the money and resources it has available to try to deliver recreation facilities, programs and services equitably across the City. The City has not adequately funded the system, both operationally and capital wise, to meet the community's expectations and has continually added elements to the system.

Additionally, many of the recreation facilities and park amenities have been allowed to deteriorate, which has reduced the community's use of these resources. Most of the facilities are only open five days a week versus seven days a week which hasn't served the community well.

The Business Plan was developed to address these concerns using government business principles to guide the process. This will require a cultural shift within the CRC, as well as in the City leadership to address the problems outlined. These issues are not the fault of any one person, group, or political body, but a combination of all involved over several years.

To recover the system to community expectations of the CRC, will take time, money, and the ability to say "no" gracefully to the residents and key city leadership when resources are not in place to meet expectations. This will take a combined effort between the City leaders, the Cincinnati School District, corporate partners, and not-for-profit partners, as well as the general public to step up and help reposition the system for the future.

It will not be easy, but it can be accomplished with the right attitude and perspective to achieve the vision outlined in the Business Plan. The CRC Board and staff are committed and equipped to address these challenges; let the process begin!

CHAPTER TWO - DEMOGRAPHIC AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

A key component of the Program and Facilities Business Plan is a Demographics and Trends Analysis, which helps provide a thorough understanding of the demographic makeup of the system's residents, as well as national, regional, and local recreational trends.

2.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Demographic Analysis focuses on five designated Planning Areas. These planning areas were developed with CRC's Recreation Centers as the primarily focal points. Each of the planning area's boundaries contains 4-5 Recreation Centers. This Analysis describes the populations within each of these five areas and includes key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race, and ethnicity. It is important to note that future projections are based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the analysis could have a significant bearing on the validity of the projected figures.

2.1.1 PLANNING AREAS BY RECREATION CENTERS

Area 1 (Far West)	Area 2 (Central)	Area 3 (Central)	Area 4 (Central)	Area 5 (Far East)
Dunham Recreation Center	Bush Recreation Center	Bond Hill Recreation Center	Clifton Recreation Center	Leblond Recreation Center
Price Hill Recreation Center	Corryville Recreation Center	Hartwell Recreation Center	College Hill Recreation Center	Madisonville Recreation Center
Sayler Park Recreation Center	Evanston Recreation Center	Hirsh Recreation Center	McKie Recreation Center	Mt. Washington Recreation Center
Westwood Town Hall	Lincoln Recreation Center	North Avondale Recreation Center	Millvale Recreation Center	Oakley Recreation Center
	OTR Recreation Center	Winton Hills Recreation Center		Pleasant Ridge Recreation Center

Figure 1: Planning Area Breakdown

2.1.2 METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in March 2018 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2010 Census and estimates for 2017 and 2022 as obtained by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for 2027 and 2032 projections. The Planning Area boundaries shown below were utilized for the demographic analysis (**Figure 2**).
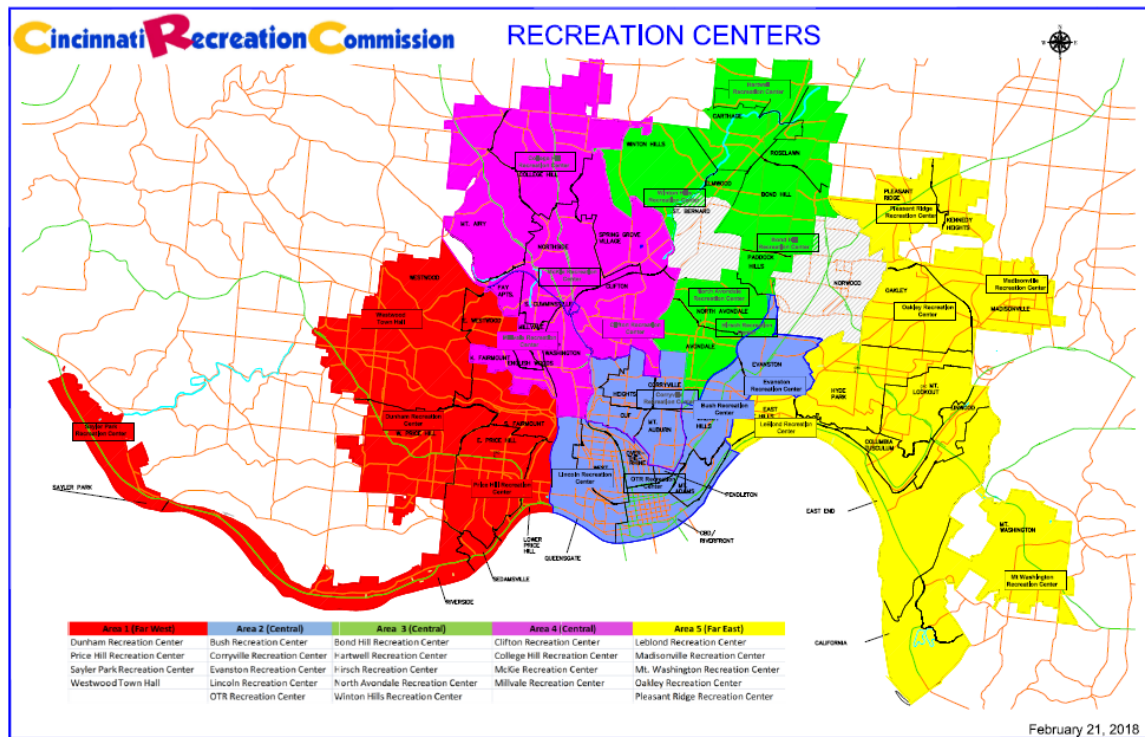
Figure 2: CRC's Planning Area Boundaries

2017 Population Overview	Total Population	Total Households	Median Age	Predominate Race	Median Household Income
Area 1 (Far West)	77,314	31,955	33.5	53% White Alone	$34,059
Area 2 (Central)	65,322	27,900	27.6	50% Black Alone	$24,513
Area 3 (Central)	44,832	20,181	38.6	75% Black Alone	$27,755
Area 4 (Central)	50,447	22,551	34.8	53% Black Alone	$33,171
Area 5 (Far East)	73,055	37,188	37.6	71% White Alone	$58,814

RACE AND ETHNICITY DEFINITIONS

The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below. The Census 2010 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2000 Census and earlier censuses; therefore, caution must be used when interpreting changes in the racial composition of the US population over time. The latest (Census 2010) definitions and nomenclature are used within this analysis.

- American Indian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment

- Asian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam

- Black – This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa

- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands

- White – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa

- Hispanic or Latino – This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race

*Please Note: The Census Bureau defines <u>Race</u> as a person's self-identification with one or more of the following social groups: White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, some other race, or a combination of these. While <u>Ethnicity</u> is defined as whether a person is of Hispanic / Latino origin or not. **For this reason, the Hispanic / Latino ethnicity is viewed separate from race throughout this demographic analysis**.*

2.1.3 AREA 1 (FAR WEST) POPULACE

POPULATION

The population within Area 1 is the largest of all five Planning Areas. Overall, this service area has experienced moderated growth in recent years (0.62 % per year), with the total population increasing roughly 4.31% since 2010. Currently, the population is estimated at 77,314 which is roughly 25% of the City's total population. Based on predictions through 2032, the target area is expected to continue growing, reaching 82,752 residents.

Total Population / Avg Annual Growth

Year	Population	Avg Annual Growth
2010	74,123	
2017	77,314	0.62%
2022	78,693	0.36%
2027	80,824	0.54%
2032	82,752	0.48%

Area 1 (Far West) Population — Average Annual Growth (%)

Figure 3: Area 1 (Far West) Total Population

Total Households / Avg Annual Growth

Year	Households	Avg Annual Growth
2010	30,861	
2017	31,955	0.51%
2022	32,516	0.35%
2027	33,261	0.46%
2032	33,957	0.42%

Area 1 (Far West) Households — Average Annual Growth (%)

Figure 4: Area 1 (Far West) Total Number of Households

HOUSEHOLDS

Similarly, the total number of households has also increased in recent years (3.54% since 2010). Currently, households are estimated at 31,955 with 37% being owned units and 63% being rented units. Projecting ahead, the total number of households is expected to continue to grow over the next 15 years. Based on predictions through 2032, Area 1 is expected to have approximately 33,957 households.

AGE SEGMENT

Relatively similar to the national age distribution, Area 1's population is moderately young, with the median age being just 33.5 years old. Over the next 15 years the target area is projected to undergo an aging trend. While the 54 and under age segments are expected to experience decreases in population percentage; the 55+ age segments are projected to continue increasing. This will result in approximately 28% of the population being 55+ by 2032.

Population by Age Segment

Legend: 0-17, 18-34, 35-54, 55-74, 75+

Age Segment	2010	2017	2022	2027	2032
75+	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%
55-74	15%	18%	19%	21%	23%
35-54	27%	25%	24%	23%	22%
18-34	27%	26%	25%	25%	24%
0-17	27%	26%	26%	26%	25%

Area 1 (Far West)

Figure 5: Area 1 (Far West) Population by Age Segments

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RACE

In analyzing race, Area 1's current population is approximately 53% White Alone, 39% Black Alone, and 8% all other races. Predictions for 2032 expect the population by race to become even more diverse as the White Alone category decreases to 47% of the service area's total population and all minority races experience increases.

Population by Race

White Alone | Black Alone | American Indian | Asian | Pacific Islander | Some Other Race | Two or More Races

Year	2010	2017	2022	2025	2032
Two or More Races	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Black Alone	38%	39%	40%	41%	41%
White Alone	55%	53%	51%	49%	47%
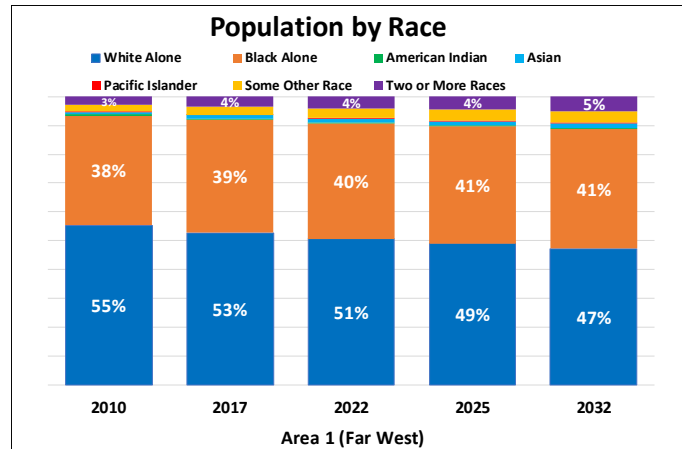
Area 1 (Far West)

Figure 6: Area 1 (Far West) Population by Race

ETHNICITY

Looking at ethnicity, the target area's current population is estimated at 5% Hispanic/Latino. Based on the 2032 projections, the Hispanic/Latino population is expected to experience slight growth over the next 15-years, reaching 8% of the service area's total population.

Population by Ethnicity

Hispanic / Latino Origin (any race) | All Others

Year	2010	2017	2022	2027	2032
All Others	96%	95%	94%	93%	92%
Hispanic / Latino Origin	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%

Area 1 (Far West)

Figure 7: Area 1 (Far West) Population by Ethnicity

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As seen in **Figure 8**, Area 1 currently has a per capita income of $19,101, which is the lowest of all 5 planning areas, and a median household income of $34,059. Both of these are expected to increase significantly over the next 15 years to $26,736 and $41,376 (respectively).

Income Characteristics

Per Capita Income | Median Household Income

Year	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income
2017	$19,101	$34,059
2022	$21,646	$36,498
2027	$24,191	$38,937
2032	$26,736	$41,376
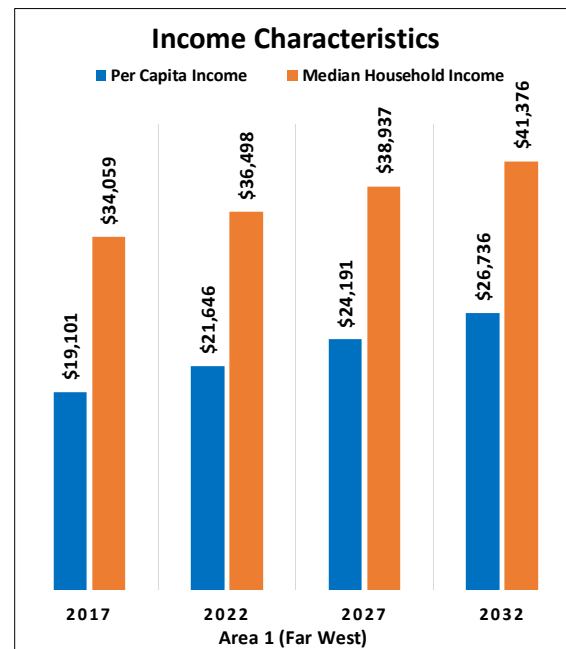
Area 1 (Far West)

Figure 8: Area 1 (Far West) Income Characteristics

2.1.4 AREA 2 (CENTRAL) POPULACE

POPULATION

Area 2's population has experienced a rapid growing trend in recent years (1.03% per year), with the total population increasing roughly 7.23% since 2010. Currently, the population is estimated at 65,322 residents which is approximately 21% of the City's total population. Based on predictions through 2032, this service area is expected to continue growing, reaching 72,589 residents.
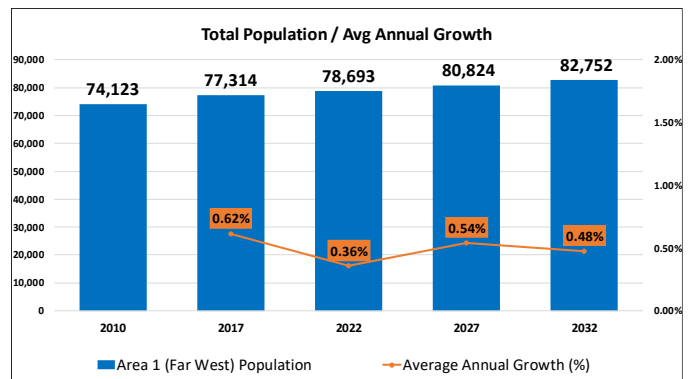

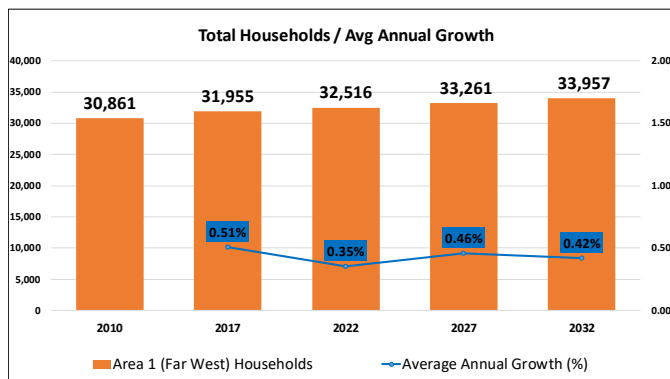**Figure 9: Area 2 (Central) Total Population**

HOUSEHOLDS

Likewise, the total number of households has also increased in recent years (7.59% since 2010). To date, households are projected at 27,900 with an estimated 82% being rented units versus only 18% owned units. Projecting ahead, the total number of households is expected to continue to grow over the next 15 years. Based on predictions through 2032, the service area is expected to have approximately 31,414 households.
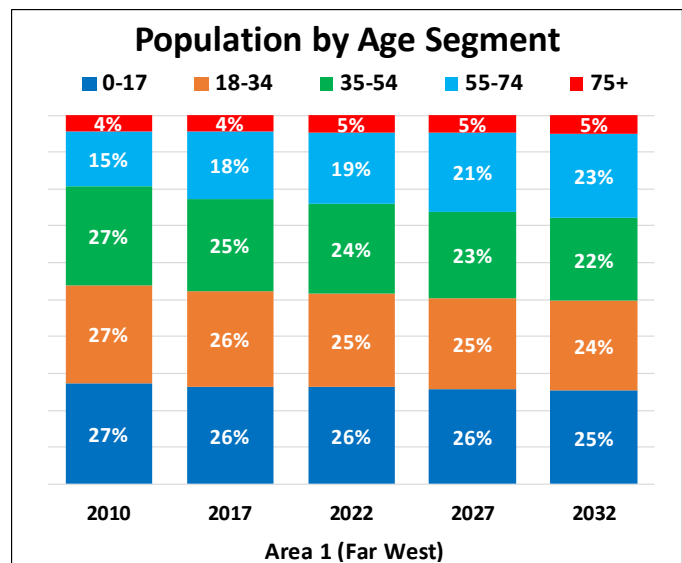

Figure 10: Area 2 (Central) Total Number of Households

AGE SEGMENT

Evaluating the service area by age segments, Area 2 has the youngest population of all 5 Planning Areas, having a median age of just 27.6. An estimated 82% of the target area's residents are under the age of 55 years old, with 47% falling in the 18-34 age segment. Over the next 15 years, Area 2 is projected to undergo a slight aging trend. While the 54 and under age segments are expected to all experience decreases in population percentage; the 55+ age segments are projected to continue increasing. This will result in approximately 22% of the population being 55+ by 2032.
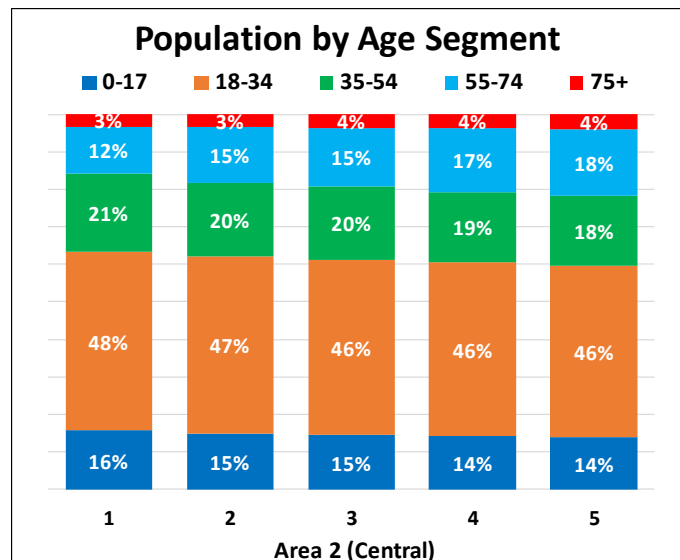
Figure 11: Area 2 (Central) Population by Age Segments

RACE

In analyzing race, Area 2's current population is very diverse. The 2017 estimate shows that exactly half (50%) of the population falls into the Black Alone category, while the White Alone category (41%) represents the largest minority. Predictions for 2032 expect the population by race to become slightly more diverse, as the White Alone population decreases to 39% the Asian and Two or More Races populations increase.
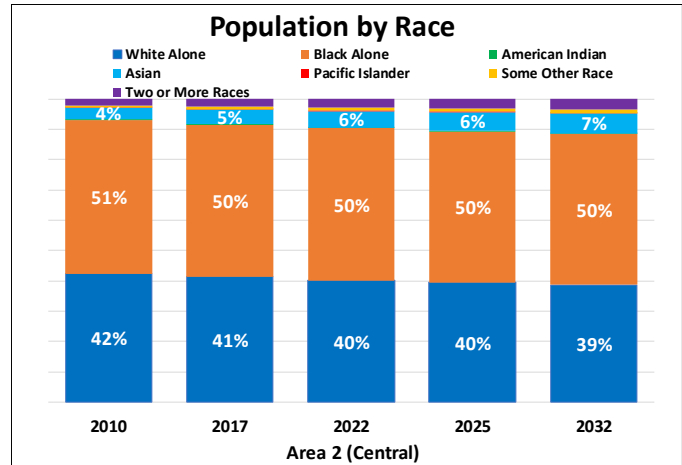
Figure 12: Area 2 (Central) Population by Race
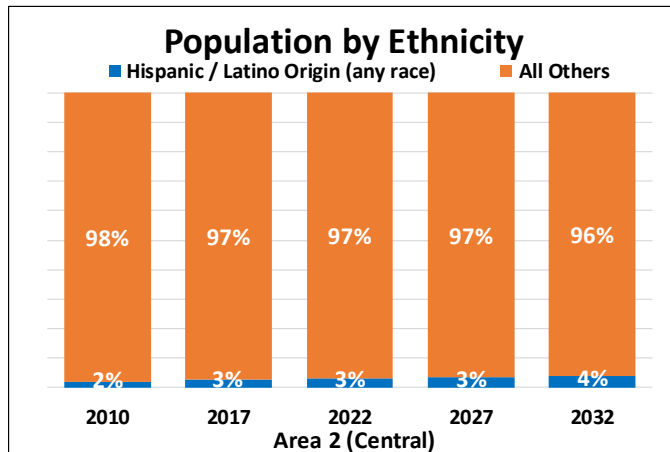
ETHNICITY

Looking at ethnicity, Area 2 is currently only estimated at 3% Hispanic/Latino. Based on the 15-year forecast, the Hispanic/Latino population is expected to only increase 1% by 2032, resulting in 4% of the target area's residents being Hispanic/Latino.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As seen in **Figure 14**, Area 2's current per capita income in estimated at $21,924 while the median household income project to be $24,513. This median household income is well below the national average ($56,124) and is the lowest of all 5 Planning Areas.
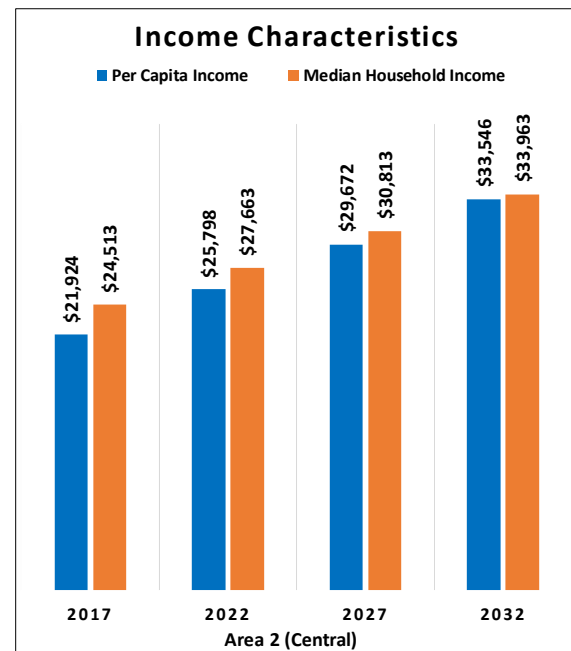
Figure 14 Area 2 (Central) Income Characteristics

2.1.5 AREA 3 (CENTRAL) POPULACE

POPULATION

Area 3's population has recently experienced a modest growing trend in recent years (0.37% per year), with the total population increasing roughly 2.62% since 2010. Currently, Area 3 is the smallest Planning Area in term of population, with only 44,832 residents. This equates to roughly 14.4% of the City's total population. Based on predictions through 2032, the target area is expected to continue its slow growth, reaching 46,886 residents.
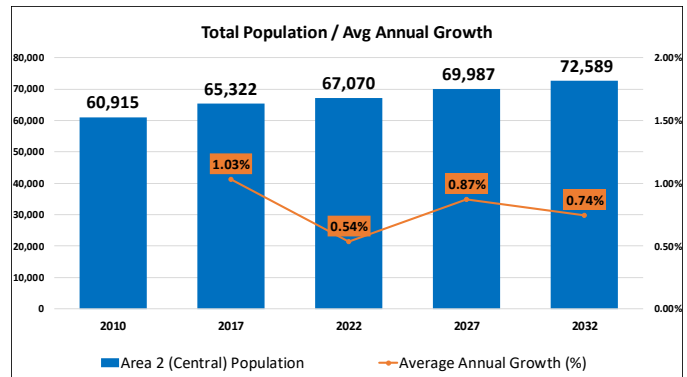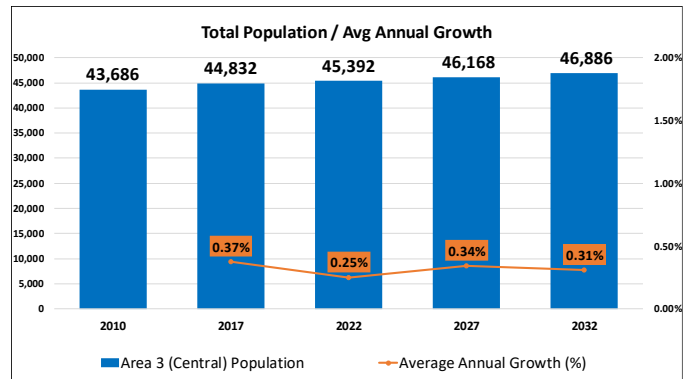

Figure 15: Area 3 (Central) Total Population
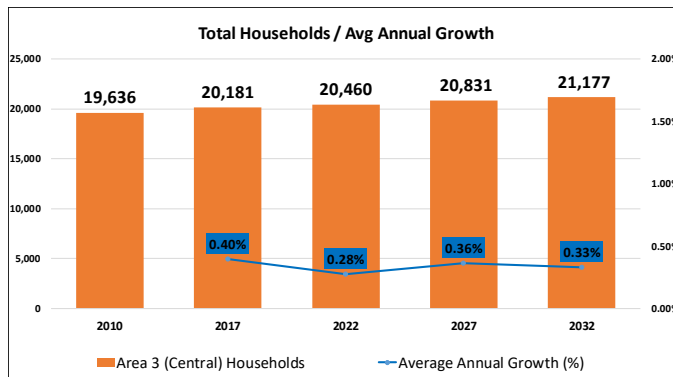
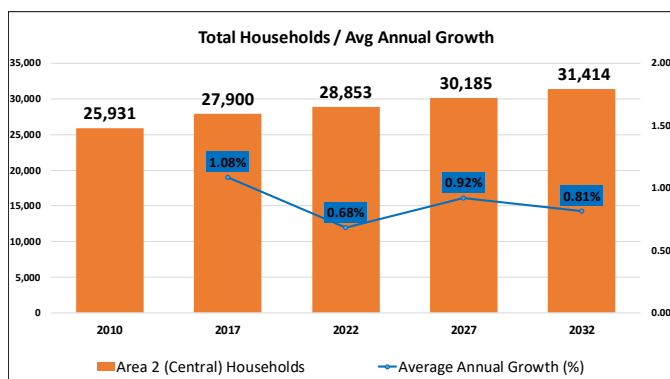**Figure 16: Area 3 (Central) Total Number of Households**

HOUSEHOLDS

The total number of households have also increased in recent years (2.78% since 2010). Currently, households are estimated at 20,181 which is approximately 14.4% of the City's total households. Projecting ahead, the total number of households is expected to continue to grow over the next 15 years. Based on predictions through 2032, the service area is expected to have 21,177 households.

AGE SEGMENT

Area 3 has a median age of 38.6 years old which makes it the oldest population of all 5 Planning Areas. Over the next 15 years, the target area is projected continue aging. The 55+ age segments are projected to grow from 31% (2017) up to approximately 38% of the total population by 2032.
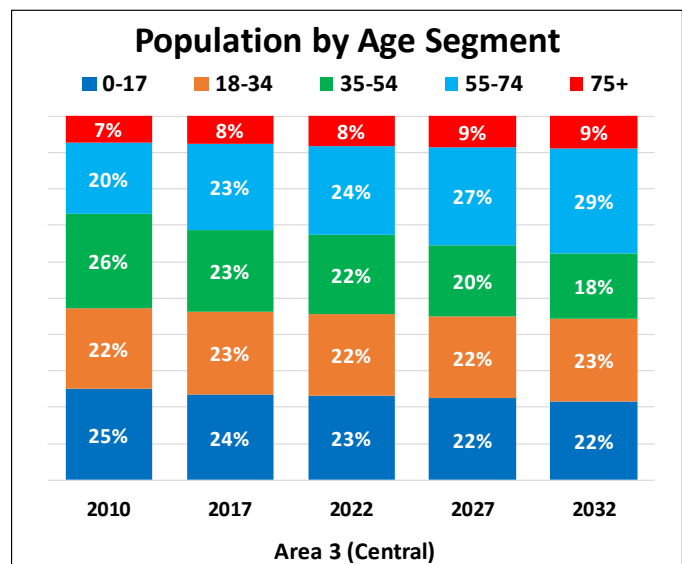
Figure 17: Area 3 (Central) Population by Age Segments

RACE

Based on racial distribution, Area 3 represents the largest Black Alone population, when compared to the other Planning Areas, with 75% of its population falling into this category. Roughly 20% of the target areas residents are White Alone, while the remaining 5% of the population is dispersed amongst the other race categories. Predictions for 2032 expect the population by race to remain relatively unchanged over the next 15 years.
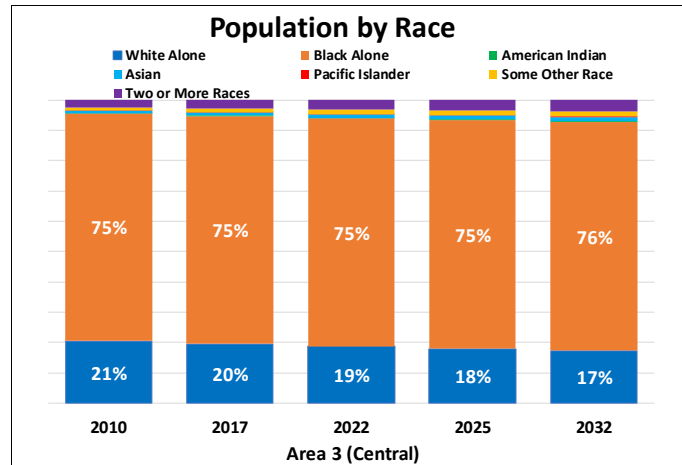
Figure 18: Area 3 (Central) Population by Race
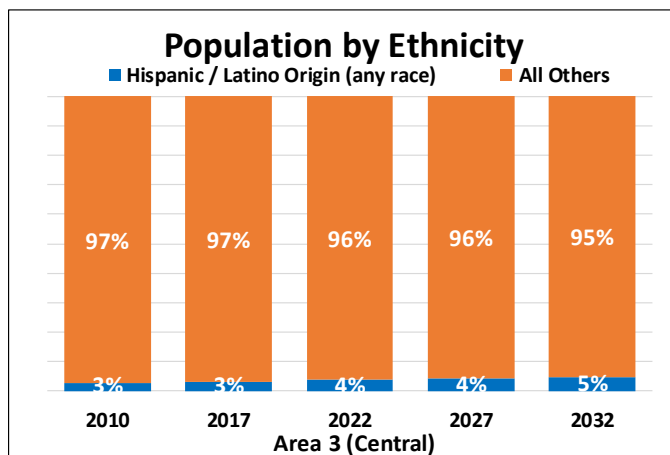
Figure 19: Area 3 (Central) Population by Ethnicity

ETHNICITY

Assessing ethnicity, this Planning Area is only estimated at 3% Hispanic/Latino. Based on the 2032 projections, the Hispanic/Latino population is expected to experience minimal growth, increasing just 2% over the next 15-years.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Area 3's current per capita income $19,642 and median household income $27,755 are both well below the national averages ($30,820 & $56,124). However, over the next 15 years, both of Area 3's income characteristics are expected to experience increases, growing to $27,862 and $34,103 (respectively).
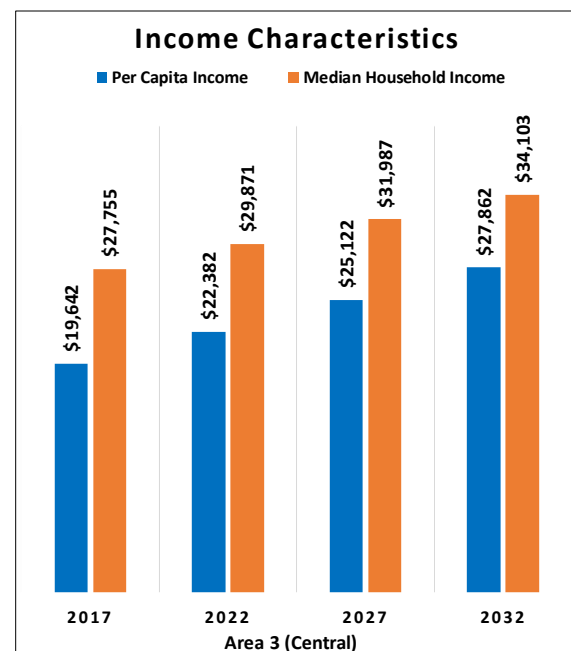
Figure 20: Area 3 (Central) Income Characteristics

2.1.6 AREA 4 (CENTRAL) POPULACE

POPULATION

Area 4's population has experienced minimal growth in recent years (0.33% per year), with the total population increasing roughly 2.30% since 2010. Currently, this service area is estimated at 50,447 residents. Over the next 15 years, Area 3 is expected to have the slowest growth rate of all 5 Planning Areas, only increases 3.96% by 2032. This will result in a total population of 52,445 residents.
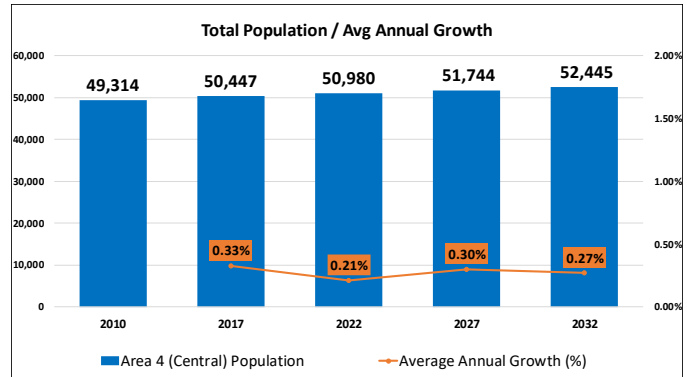
Figure 21: Area 4 (Central) Total Population

Figure 22: Area 4 (Central) Total Number of Households

HOUSEHOLDS

Similar to the population, the total number of households has also seen a slight increase in recent years (4.16% since 2010). Currently, households are estimated at 22,551 which is approximately 16.1% of the City's total households. Projecting ahead, the total number of households is expected to continue to grow at a moderate rate over the next 15 years. Based on predictions through 2032, the service area is expected to have 23,515 households.

AGE SEGMENT

Planning Area 4's age segment distribution is rather comparable to the national age distribution. The current median age of this target area is 34.8 years old, which is slightly younger than the U.S. median age of 38.2. Projecting ahead, the population is expected to undergo an aging trend resulting in the 55+ age segments increasing 6% over the next 15 years. Meaning by 2032 approximately 32% of the population will be 55+.
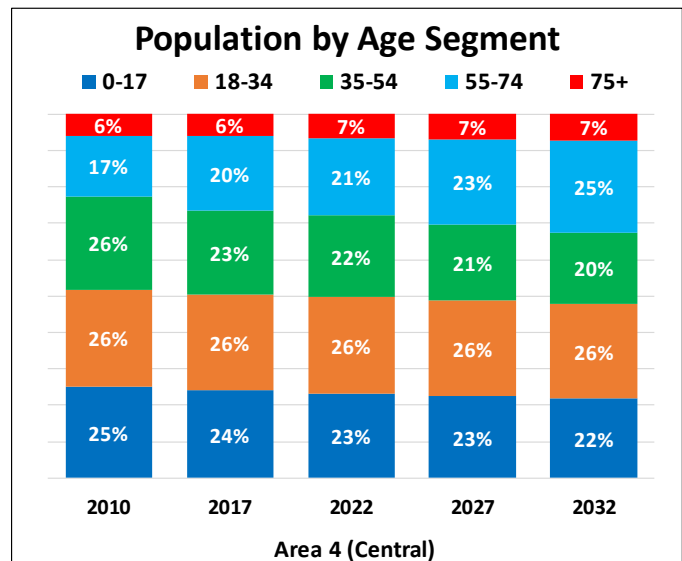
Figure 23: Area 4 (Central) Population by Age Segments

RACE

Analyzing Area 4 by race, the 2017 estimates show over half of the population falls into the Black Alone (53%) category. The remaining 47% of the population either identified as being White Alone (40%), Two or More Races (4%), or all other race categories (3%). Predictions for 2032 expect the White Alone population to drop approximately 4%, while all other race categories experience slight increases.
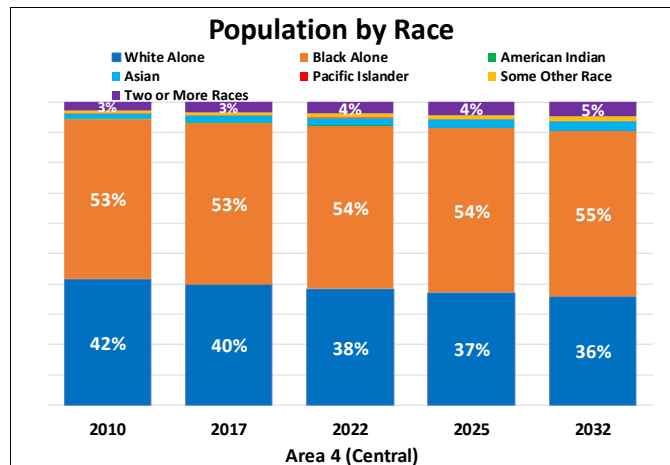
Figure 24: Area 4 (Central) Population by Race
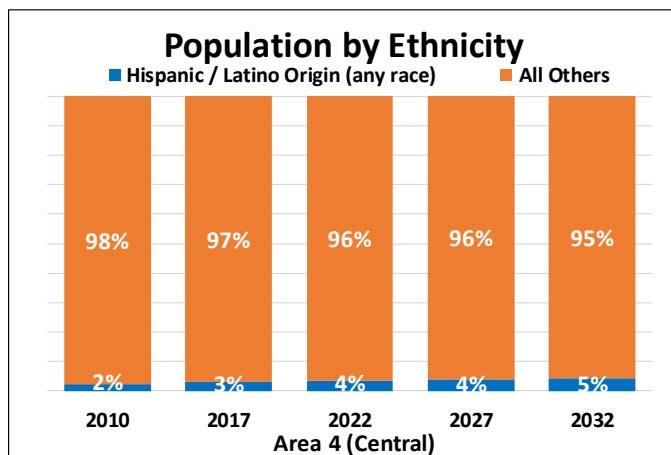
Figure 25: Area 4 (Central) Population by Ethnicity

ETHNICITY

Assessing ethnicity, the service area's current population is estimated at 3% Hispanic/Latino. Based on the 2032 projections, the Hispanic/Latino population is expected to continue increasing marginally over the next 15-years, reaching 5% of the target area's total population by 2032.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As seen in **Figure 26**, the service area's per capita income ($24,335) and median household income ($33,171) are both projected to continue growing over the next 15 years increasing 51.9% and 36.4% (respectively).
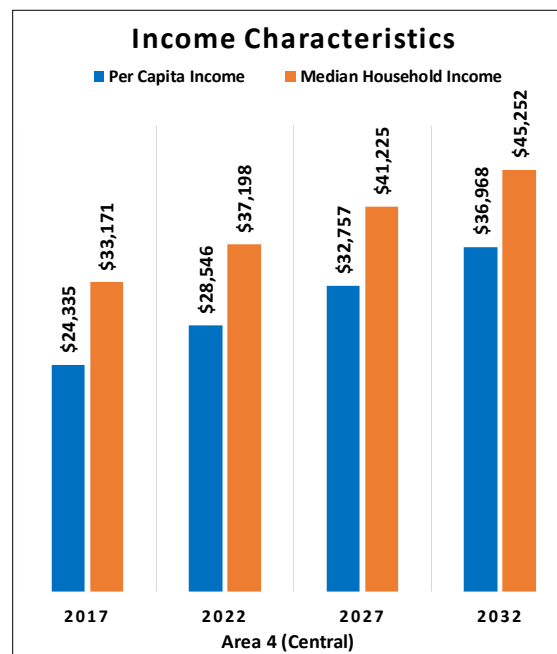
Figure 26: Area 4 (Central) Income Characteristics

2.1.7 AREA 5 (FAR EAST) POPULACE

POPULATION

Area 5's population has experienced slight growth in recent years (0.53% per year), with the total population increasing 3.68% since 2010. Currently, this Planning Area is the second largest in term of population percentage (23.5%) with 73,055 residents. Projecting ahead, the target area is expected to continue growing, reaching 77,728 residents by 2032.
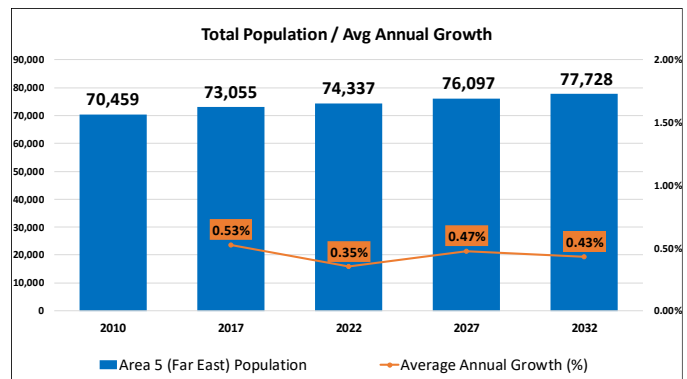
Figure 27: Area 5 (Far East) Total Population
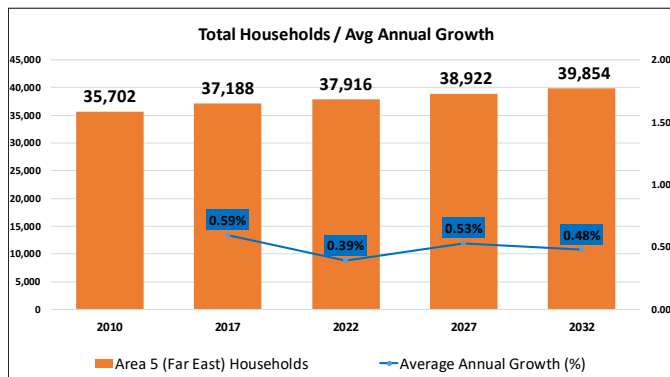
Figure 28: Area 5 (Far East) Total Number of Households

HOUSEHOLDS

As seen in **Figure 28** the service area's households experienced a similar growing trend as the population, increasing 4.16% since 2010. Currently, Area 5 has the greatest number of households when compared to the other Planning Areas with approximately 37,188 houses. This computes to 26.6% of the City's total households. This number is project to continue growing over the next 15 years totaling 39,854 households by 2032.

AGE SEGMENT

This service area has the second oldest population in regard to Planning Areas, with a median age of 37.6 years old. By 2032, this population is expected to have aged resulting in 33% of the total population being 55+.
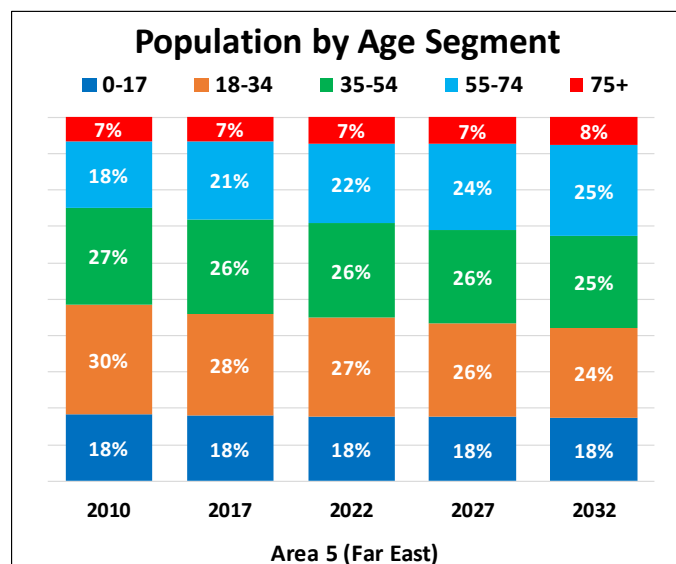
Figure 29: Area 5 (Far East) Population by Age Segments

RACE

Based on racial distribution, Area 5's current population is predominately White Alone. Based on 2017 predictions 71% of the population falls into the White Alone category with Black Alone (22%) representing the largest minority. Predictions for 2032 expect the population by race to become slightly more diverse as the White Alone population decreases to 67% and the Black Alone, Two or More Races, and Asian populations all experience slight increases.
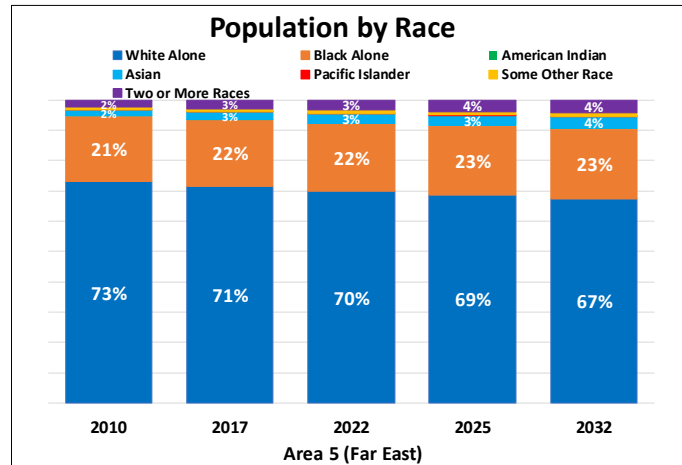
Figure 30: Area 5 (Far East) Population by Race
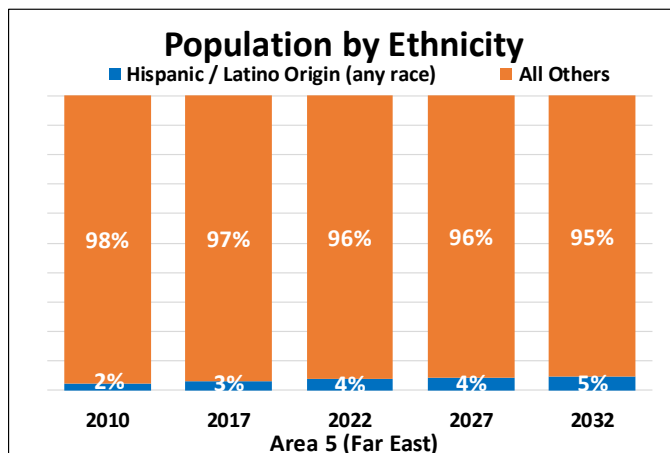
Figure 31: Area 5 (Far East) Population by Ethnicity

ETHNICITY

Assessing ethnicity, Area 5's population is very similar to all other Planning Areas, having just 3% Hispanic/Latino. Based on the 2032 projections, the Hispanic/Latino population is expected to experience minimal growth over the next 15-years, increasing to 5% of the of the service area's total population.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

As seen in **Figure 32**, Area 5's per capita income is currently estimated at $46,072, which is significantly higher than the national average ($30,820). The service area's median household income of $58,814 is also above the national average ($56,124).
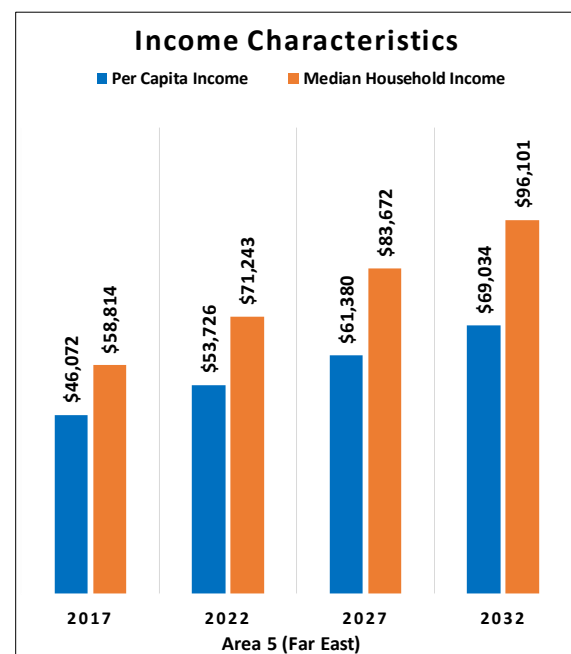
Figure 32: Area 5 (Far East) Income Characteristics

2.1.8 AGENCY DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARATIVE SUMMARY

The table below is a summary of all five Planning Areas' demographic figures. This snapshot allows CRC to see how each Planning Area's population compares to one another. These figures are then compared to US population. This type of analysis lets the Department see how their population compares on a national scale.

The highlighted cells represent key takeaways from the comparison between Planning Areas and the national population.

(green)	= Significantly higher than the National Average
(red)	= Significantly lower than the National Average

2017 Demographic Comparison		Area 1 (Far West)	Area 2 (Central)	Area 3 (Central)	Area 4 (Central)	Area 5 (Far East)	U.S.A.
Population	Percent of Total Population (2017)	24.9%	21.0%	14.4%	16.2%	23.5%	N/A
	Annual Growth Rate (2010-2017)	0.62%	1.03%	0.37%	0.33%	0.53%	0.87%
	Projected Annual Growth Rate (2017-2032)	0.47%	0.74%	0.31%	0.26%	0.43%	0.83%
Households	Annual Growth Rate (2010-2017)	0.51%	1.08%	0.40%	0.35%	0.59%	0.79%
	Owned Housing Units (2017)	37.0%	18.2%	32.0%	39.2%	48.1%	62.7%
	Rented Housing Units (2017)	63.0%	81.8%	68.0%	60.8%	51.9%	37.3%
Age Segment Distribution	Ages 0-17	26%	15%	24%	24%	18%	22%
	Ages 18-34	26%	47%	23%	26%	28%	24%
	Ages 35-54	25%	20%	23%	23%	26%	26%
	Ages 55-74	18%	15%	23%	20%	21%	22%
	Ages 75+	4%	3%	8%	6%	7%	6%
Race Distribution	White Alone	52.8%	41.4%	19.6%	39.9%	71.5%	70.2%
	Black Alone	39.3%	50.2%	75.1%	53.3%	21.9%	12.8%
	American Indian	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	1.0%
	Asian	1.1%	4.8%	1.0%	2.1%	2.6%	5.6%
	Pacific Islander	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%
	Some other Race	2.7%	0.8%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	6.8%
	Two or More Races	3.5%	2.5%	2.8%	3.3%	2.9%	3.4%
Hispanic/Latino Population	Hispanic / Latino Origin (any race)	5.2%	2.6%	3.2%	3.0%	3.1%	18.1%
	All Others	94.8%	97.4%	96.8%	97.0%	96.9%	81.9%
Income Characteristics	Per Capita Income	$19,101	$21,924	$19,642	$24,335	$46,072	$30,820
	Median Household Income	$34,059	$24,513	$27,755	$33,171	$58,814	$56,124

Figure 33: Agency Demographic Comparative Summary Table

KEY DEMOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

- Area 1 is shown to have the highest percent of total population (24.9%) amongst the five Planning Areas, whereas Area 3 is indicated as having the lowest population percentage (14.4%)
- Area 2's annual population growth rate (1.03%) is well above the national growth rate (0.87%), while Area 3 & 4 have significantly lower annual growth rates (0.37% & 0.33%) when compared to the U.S.
- Area 2's annual household growth rate (1.08%) is also higher than the U.S.'s household growth rate (0.79%), while Area 3 & 4's annual household growth rates (0.40% & 0.35%) are both well below the national rate
- When looking at age segments, Area 2 is the only Planning Area that shows much variants from the national population, with a smaller percentage of 0-17 and 55-74-year-olds and a much higher percent of 18-34-year-olds
- When analyzing race breakdown, all 5 Planning Areas vary drastically from each other. When compared to the national population, Areas 2, 3, & 4 all have significantly smaller White Alone populations and much larger Black Alone populations.
- All 5 Planning Areas have similar Hispanic/Latino populations in term of percentage breakdown, ranging from 2.6%-5.2%. These are all much lower than the national average of 18.1% Hispanic/Latino
- Area 1 & 3 have the lowest per capita incomes ($19,101 & $19,642) when compared to the other Planning Areas and Area 2 & 3 have the lowest household incomes ($24,513 & $27,755). Area 5 is the only Planning Area that has above average income characteristics when compared to the national average.

2.2 RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Trends Analysis provides an understanding of national, regional, and local recreational trends. This analysis examines participation trends, activity levels, and programming trends. It is important to note that all trends are based on current and/or historical patterns and participation rates.

2.2.1 NATIONAL TRENDS IN RECREATION

METHODOLOGY

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) *Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2018* was utilized in evaluating the following trends:

- National Trends in Sport and Fitness Participation
- Core vs. Casual Participation
- Activity by Generation

The study is based on findings from surveys carried out in 2017 and the beginning of 2018 by the Physical Activity Council, resulting in a total of 30,999 online interviews – both individual and household surveys. A sample size of 30,999 completed interviews is considered by SFIA to result in a high degree of statistical accuracy. A sport with a participation rate of five percent has a confidence interval of plus or minus 0.27 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval. Using a weighting technique, survey results are applied to the total U.S. population figure of 298,325,103 people (ages six and older). The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the U.S. SFIA does not break down their participation statistics by race and gender.

CORE VS. CASUAL PARTICIPATION

In addition to overall participation rates, SFIA further categorizes active participants as either core or casual participants based on frequency. Core participants have higher participatory frequency than casual participants. The thresholds that define casual versus core participation may vary based on the nature of each individual activity. For instance, core participants engage in most fitness and recreational activities more than 50 times per year, while for sports, the threshold for core participation is typically 13 times per year.

In a given activity, core participants are more committed and tend to be less likely to switch to other activities or become inactive (engage in no physical activity) than causal participants. This may also explain why activities with more core participants tend to experience less pattern shifts in participation rates than those with larger groups of casual participants.

INACTIVITY RATES / ACTIVITY LEVEL TRENDS

SFIA also categorizes participation rates by intensity, dividing activity levels into five categories based on the caloric implication (i.e., high calorie burning, low/med calorie burning, or inactive) and the frequency of participation (i.e., 1-50 times, 50-150 times, or above) for a given activity. Participation rates are expressed as 'super active' or 'active to a healthy level' (high calorie burning, 151+ times), 'active' (high calorie burning, 50-150 times), 'casual' (high calorie burning, 1-50 times), 'low/med calorie burning', and 'inactive'. These participation rates are then assessed based on the total population trend over the last five years, as well as breaking down these rates by generation.

NATIONAL SPORT AND FITNESS PARTICIPATORY TRENDS
NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

The sport's most heavily participated in the United States were Golf (23.8 million in 2016) and Basketball (23.4 million), which have participation figures well in excess of the other activities within the general sports category. The popularity of Golf and Basketball can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants. Even though Golf has experienced a recent decrease in participation, it continues to benefit from its wide age segment appeal and is considered a life-long sport. Basketball's success can be attributed to the limited amount of equipment needed to participate and the limited space requirements necessary, which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at the majority of American dwellings as a drive-way pickup game.
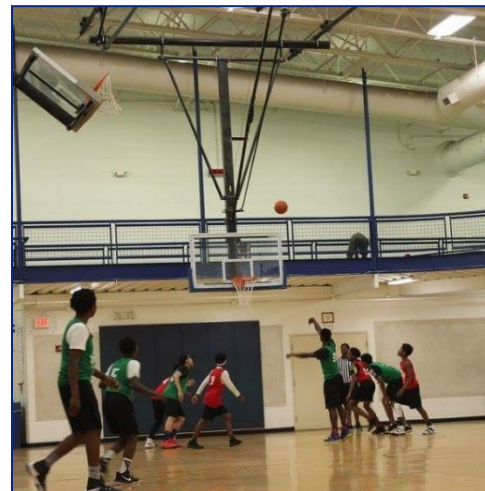
Since 2012, Rugby and other niche sports, like Boxing, Lacrosse, and Roller Hockey have seen strong growth. Rugby has emerged as the overall fastest growing sport, as it has seen participation levels rise by 82.8% over the last five years. Based on the five-year trend, Boxing for Competition (42.6%), Lacrosse (35.1%), and Roller Hockey (34.2%) have also experienced significant growth. In the most recent year, the fastest growing sports were Boxing for Competition (13.1%) and Pickleball (11.3%).

During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include Ultimate Frisbee (-39.1%), Touch Football (-22.8%), Tackle Football (-16.0%), and Racquetball (-13.4%). For the most recent year, Ultimate Frisbee (-14.9%), Badminton (-12.6%), Gymnastics (-10.7%), and Volleyball-Sand/Beach (-9.9%) underwent the largest declines.

In general, the most recent year shares a similar pattern with the five-year trends; suggesting that the increasing participation rates in certain activities have yet to peak in sports like Rugby, Lacrosse, Field Hockey, and Competitive Boxing. However, some sports that increased rapidly over the past five years have experienced recent decreases in participation, including Squash, Ice Hockey, Roller Hockey and Volleyball-Sand/Beach. The reversal of the five-year trends in these sports may be due to a relatively low user base (ranging from 1-5 million) and could suggest that participation in these activities may have peaked.

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

The most popular sports, such as Basketball and Baseball, have a larger core participant base (engaged 13+ times annually) than casual participant base (engaged at least 1 time annually). Less mainstream, less organized sports such as Ultimate Frisbee, Roller Hockey, Squash, and Boxing for Competition have larger casual participation. Although these sports increased in participation over the last five years, the newcomers were mostly casual participants that may be more inclined to switch to other sports or fitness activities, resulting in the declining one-year trends.

National Participatory Trends - General Sports					
Activity	**Participation Levels**			**% Change**	
	2012	**2016**	**2017**	**5-Year Trend**	**1-Year Trend**
Golf * (2011, 2015, and 2016 data)	25,682	24,120	23,815	-7.3%	-1.3%
Basketball	23,708	22,343	23,401	-1.3%	4.7%
Tennis	17,020	18,079	17,683	3.9%	-2.2%
Baseball	12,976	14,760	15,642	20.5%	6.0%
Soccer (Outdoor)	12,944	11,932	11,924	-7.9%	-0.1%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	7,411	7,690	7,283	-1.7%	-5.3%
Football, Flag	5,865	6,173	6,551	11.7%	6.1%
Badminton	7,278	7,354	6,430	-11.7%	-12.6%
Volleyball (Court)	6,384	6,216	6,317	-1.0%	1.6%
Football, Touch	7,295	5,686	5,629	-22.8%	-1.0%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,617	5,117	5,399	16.9%	5.5%
Football, Tackle	6,220	5,481	5,224	-16.0%	-4.7%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,505	5,489	4,947	9.8%	-9.9%
Gymnastics	5,115	5,381	4,805	-6.1%	-10.7%
Track and Field	4,257	4,116	4,161	-2.3%	1.1%
Cheerleading	3,244	4,029	3,816	17.6%	-5.3%
Racquetball	4,070	3,579	3,526	-13.4%	-1.5%
Pickleball	N/A	2,815	3,132	N/A	11.3%
Ultimate Frisbee	5,131	3,673	3,126	-39.1%	-14.9%
Ice Hockey	2,363	2,697	2,544	7.7%	-5.7%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,624	2,467	2,309	-12.0%	-6.4%
Lacrosse	1,607	2,090	2,171	35.1%	3.9%
Wrestling	1,922	1,922	1,896	-1.4%	-1.4%
Roller Hockey	1,367	1,929	1,834	34.2%	-4.9%
Rugby	887	1,550	1,621	82.8%	4.6%
Field Hockey	1,237	1,512	1,596	29.0%	5.6%
Squash	1,290	1,549	1,492	15.7%	-3.7%
Boxing for Competition	959	1,210	1,368	42.6%	13.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

*2017 information not available for **Golf.** Information to be released by National Golf Foundation. Participation figures above reflect 2011, 2015, and 2016 data.

Figure 34: General Sports Participatory Trends

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NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

Overall, national participatory trends in fitness have experienced strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among Americans to improve their health and enhance quality of life by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities also have very few barriers to entry, which provides a variety of options that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by most individuals.

The most popular fitness activity, by far, is Fitness Walking, which had about 110.8 million participants in 2017, increasing 2.7% from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on total number of participants include Treadmill (52.9 million), Free Weights (52.2 million), Running/Jogging (50.7 million), Weight/Resistance Machines (36.2 million), and Stationary Cycling (36.0 million).

Over the last five years, the activities growing most rapidly are Non-Traditional / Off-Road Triathlons (74.7%), Trail Running (57.6%), and Aerobics (32.7%). Over the same time frame, the activities that have undergone the most decline include: Boot Camps Style Cross Training (-11.3%), Stretching (-7.5%), and Weight/Resistance Machines (-6.9%).

In the last year, activities with the largest gains in participation were Triathlon Non-Traditional/Off Road (10.1%), Running/Jogging (7.1%), and Trail Running (6.6%). From 2016-2017, the activities that had the most decline in participation were Traditional/Road Triathlon (-8.9%), Cardio Kickboxing (-3.0%), and Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise (-2.6%).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

It should be noted that many of the activities that are rapidly growing have a relatively low user base, which allows for more drastic shifts in terms of percentage, especially for five-year trends. Increasing casual participants may also explain the rapid growth in some activities. For instance, core/casual participation trends showed that over the last five years, casual participants increased drastically in Non-Traditional/ Off Road (119.6%) and Tai Chi (26.9%), while the core participant base of both activities experienced significantly less growth.

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness				
Activity	**Participation Levels**			**% Change**	
	2012	**2016**	**2017**	**5-Year Trend**	**1-Year Trend**
Fitness Walking	114,029	107,895	110,805	-2.8%	2.7%
Treadmill	50,839	51,872	52,966	4.2%	2.1%
Free Weights (Dumbbells/Hand Weights)	N/A	51,513	52,217	N/A	1.4%
Running/Jogging	51,450	47,384	50,770	-1.3%	7.1%
Weight/Resistant Machines	38,999	35,768	36,291	-6.9%	1.5%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	35,987	36,118	36,035	0.1%	-0.2%
Stretching	35,873	33,771	33,195	-7.5%	-1.7%
Elliptical Motion Trainer*	28,560	32,218	32,283	13.0%	0.2%
Free Weights (Barbells)	26,688	26,473	27,444	2.8%	3.7%
Yoga	23,253	26,268	27,354	17.6%	4.1%
Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise	N/A	25,110	24,454	N/A	-2.6%
Choreographed Exercise	N/A	21,839	22,616	N/A	3.6%
Aerobics (High Impact)	16,178	21,390	21,476	32.7%	0.4%
Stair Climbing Machine	12,979	15,079	14,948	15.2%	-0.9%
Cross-Training Style Workout	N/A	12,914	13,622	N/A	5.5%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	8,477	8,937	9,409	11.0%	5.3%
Trail Running	5,806	8,582	9,149	57.6%	6.6%
Pilates Training	8,519	8,893	9,047	6.2%	1.7%
Cardio Kickboxing	6,725	6,899	6,693	-0.5%	-3.0%
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	7,496	6,583	6,651	-11.3%	1.0%
Martial Arts	5,075	5,745	5,838	15.0%	1.6%
Boxing for Fitness	4,831	5,175	5,157	6.7%	-0.3%
Tai Chi	3,203	3,706	3,787	18.2%	2.2%
Barre	N/A	3,329	3,436	N/A	3.2%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	1,789	2,374	2,162	20.8%	-8.9%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	1,075	1,705	1,878	74.7%	10.1%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

*Cardio Cross Trainer is merged to Elliptical Motion Trainer

Figure 35: General Fitness National Participatory Trends

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NATIONAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

Results from the SFIA report demonstrate a contrast of growth and decline in participation regarding outdoor / adventure recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or within a group, and are not as limited by time constraints.

In 2017, the most popular activities, in terms of total participants, from the outdoor / adventure recreation category include: Day Hiking (44.9 million), Road Bicycling (38.8 million), Freshwater Fishing (38.3 million), and Camping within ¼ mile of Vehicle/Home (26.2 million).

From 2012-2017, BMX Bicycling (83.4%), Adventure Racing (56.3%), Backpacking Overnight (38.3%), and Day Hiking (30.1%) have undergone the largest increases in participation. Similarly, in the last year, activities growing most rapidly include: BMX Bicycling (10.0%), Backpacking Overnight (8.1%), and Day Hiking (6.6%).

The five-year trend shows activities declining most rapidly were In-Line Roller Skating (-20.7%), Camping within ¼ mile of Home/Vehicle (-16.5%), and Birdwatching (-9.2%). More recently, activities experiencing the largest declines were Adventure Racing (-15.7%), Traditional Climbing (-9.4%), and In-Line Roller Skating (-2.1%).

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN OUTDOOR RECREATION

Regarding the national trend of outdoor activities participation is on the rise, all activities, except for In-Line Roller Skating and Freshwater Fishing, underwent increases in casual participation over the last five years. Any decline in participation over the last five years was mainly ascribed to decreases in core participants for activities such as In-Line Roller Skating (-32.6%), Skateboarding (-10.7%), Road Bicycling (-10.4%), Camping Recreational Vehicle (-10.0%), and Archery (-3.2%).

National Participatory Trends - Outdoor / Adventure Recreation					
Activity	**Participation Levels**			**% Change**	
	2012	**2016**	**2017**	**5-Year Trend**	**1-Year Trend**
Hiking (Day)	34,519	42,128	44,900	30.1%	6.6%
Bicycling (Road)	39,790	38,365	38,866	-2.3%	1.3%
Fishing (Freshwater)	39,002	38,121	38,346	-1.7%	0.6%
Camping (< 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	31,454	26,467	26,262	-16.5%	-0.8%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	15,903	15,855	16,159	1.6%	1.9%
Fishing (Saltwater)	12,000	12,266	13,062	8.9%	6.5%
Birdwatching (>1/4 mile of Vehicle/Home)	13,535	11,589	12,296	-9.2%	6.1%
Backpacking Overnight	7,933	10,151	10,975	38.3%	8.1%
Bicycling (Mountain)	7,265	8,615	8,609	18.5%	-0.1%
Archery	7,173	7,903	7,769	8.3%	-1.7%
Fishing (Fly)	5,848	6,456	6,791	16.1%	5.2%
Skateboarding	6,227	6,442	6,382	2.5%	-0.9%
Roller Skating, In-Line	6,647	5,381	5,268	-20.7%	-2.1%
Bicycling (BMX)	1,861	3,104	3,413	83.4%	10.0%
Adventure Racing	1,618	2,999	2,529	56.3%	-15.7%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,189	2,790	2,527	15.4%	-9.4%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Figure 36: Outdoor / Adventure Recreation Participatory Trends

NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATIC ACTIVITY

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport, which is most likely why it has experienced such strong participation growth among the American population. In 2017, Fitness Swimming is the absolute leader in overall participation (27.1 million) for aquatic activities, due in large part to its broad, multigenerational appeal. In the most recent year, Fitness Swimming reported the strongest growth (2.0%) among aquatic activities, while Aquatic Exercise and Competitive Swimming experienced decreases in participation.

Aquatic Exercise has had a strong participation base of 10.4 million, however it also has recently experienced a slight decrease in participants (-1.1%). Based on previous trends, this activity could rebound in terms of participation due largely to ongoing research that demonstrates the activity's great therapeutic benefit coupled with increased life expectancies and a booming senior population. Aquatic Exercise has paved the way as a less stressful form of physical activity, while allowing similar benefits as land-based exercises, such as aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and balance. Doctors are still recommending Aquatic Exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems. Compared to a standard workout, Aquatic Exercise can significantly reduce stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, and muscles, while also reducing swelling.

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics					
Activity	**Participation Levels**			**% Change**	
	2012	**2016**	**2017**	**5-Year Trend**	**1-Year Trend**
Swimming (Fitness)	23,216	26,601	27,135	16.9%	2.0%
Aquatic Exercise	9,177	10,575	10,459	14.0%	-1.1%
Swimming (Competition)	2,502	3,369	3,007	20.2%	-10.7%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Figure 37: Aquatic Participatory Trends

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN AQUATIC ACTIVITY

While all activities have undergone increases in participation over the last five years, most recently, casual participation (1-49 times) is increasing much more rapidly than core participation (50+ times). For the five-year timeframe, casual participants of Competition Swimming increased by 56.2%, Aquatic Exercise by 24.8%, and Fitness Swimming by 21.0%. However, core participants of Competition Swimming decreased by -6.5% and Aquatic Exercise declined by -4.6% (from 2012 to 2017).

NATIONAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

The most popular water sports / activities based on total participants in 2017 were Recreational Kayaking (10.5 million), Canoeing (9.2 million), and Snorkeling (8.3 million). It should be noted that water activity participation tends to vary based on regional, seasonal, and environmental factors. A region with more water access and a warmer climate is more likely to have a higher participation rate in water activities than a region that has long winter seasons or limited water access. Therefore, when assessing trends in water sports and activities, it is important to understand that fluctuations may be the result of environmental barriers which can greatly influence water activity participation.

Over the last five years, Stand-Up Paddling (138.9%) was by far the fastest growing water activity, followed by White Water Kayaking (33.1%), Recreational Kayaking (28.7%), and Sea/Tour Kayaking (20.8%). Although the five-year trends show water sport activities are getting more popular, the most recent year shows a different trend. From 2016-2017 Stand-Up Paddling Recreational Kayaking reflect much slower increases in participation (3.3% and 5.2%), while White Water Kayaking (-2.0%), Sea/Tour Kayaking (-5.4) both show decreases in participation numbers.

From 2012-2017, activities declining most rapidly were Jet Skiing (-22.6%), Water Skiing (-19.4%), and Wakeboarding (-10.8%). In the most recent year, activities experiencing the greatest declines in participation included: Boardsailing/Windsurfing (-9.4%), Canoeing (-8.2%), and Scuba Diving (-7.6%).

National Participatory Trends - Water Sports / Activities					
Activity	**Participation Levels**			**% Change**	
	2012	**2016**	**2017**	**5-Year Trend**	**1-Year Trend**
Kayaking (Recreational)	8,187	10,017	10,533	28.7%	5.2%
Canoeing	9,813	10,046	9,220	-6.0%	-8.2%
Snorkeling	8,664	8,717	8,384	-3.2%	-3.8%
Jet Skiing	6,996	5,783	5,418	-22.6%	-6.3%
Sailing	3,841	4,095	3,974	3.5%	-3.0%
Water Skiing	4,434	3,700	3,572	-19.4%	-3.5%
Rafting	3,756	3,428	3,479	-7.4%	1.5%
Stand-Up Paddling	1,392	3,220	3,325	138.9%	3.3%
Wakeboarding	3,368	2,912	3,005	-10.8%	3.2%
Kayaking (Sea/Touring)	2,446	3,124	2,955	20.8%	-5.4%
Scuba Diving	2,781	3,111	2,874	3.3%	-7.6%
Surfing	2,545	2,793	2,680	5.3%	-4.0%
Kayaking (White Water)	1,878	2,552	2,500	33.1%	-2.0%
Boardsailing/Windsurfing	1,372	1,737	1,573	14.7%	-9.4%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

Figure 38: Water Sports / Activities Participatory Trends

CORE VS. CASUAL TRENDS IN WATER SPORTS / ACTIVITIES

As mentioned previously, regional, seasonal, and environmental limiting factors may influence the participation rate of water sport and activities. These factors may also explain why all water-based activities have more casual participants than core participants, since frequencies of activities may be constrained by uncontrollable factors.

ACTIVITY BY GENERATION

Analyzing participation by age for recreational activities reveals that fitness and outdoor sports were the most common activities across all generations. Breaking down activity level by generation shows a converse correlation between age and healthy activity rates.

Generation Z (born 2000+) were the most active, with only 17.6% identifying as inactive. Approximately 65% of individuals within this generation where active in 2017; with 26.3% being active to a healthy level, 18.5% being active & high calorie, and 20.1% being casual active & low/med calorie.

Almost half (46.7%) of **millennials (born 1980-1999)** were active to a healthy level (35.4%) or active & high calorie (11.3%), while 24.0% claimed they were inactive. Even though this inactive rate is much higher than Generation Z's (17.6%), it is still below the national inactive rate (28%).

Generation X (born 1965-1979) has the second highest active to a healthy level rate (35.0%) among all generations, only being 0.4% less than Millennials. At the same time, they also have the second highest inactive rate, with 28.1% not active at all.

The Boomers (born 1945-1964) were the least active generation, with an inactive rate of 33.3%. This age group tends to participate in less intensive activities. Approximately 34% claimed to engage in casual & low/med calorie (4.3%) or low/med calorie (29.6%) burning activities.

2017 PARTICIPATION RATES BY GENERATION
US population, Ages 6+

🟦 **Active to a Healthy Level**   🟧 **Active & High Calorie**   ⬜ **Casual & Low/Med Calorie**   🟨 **Low/Med Calorie**
🟦 **Inactive**
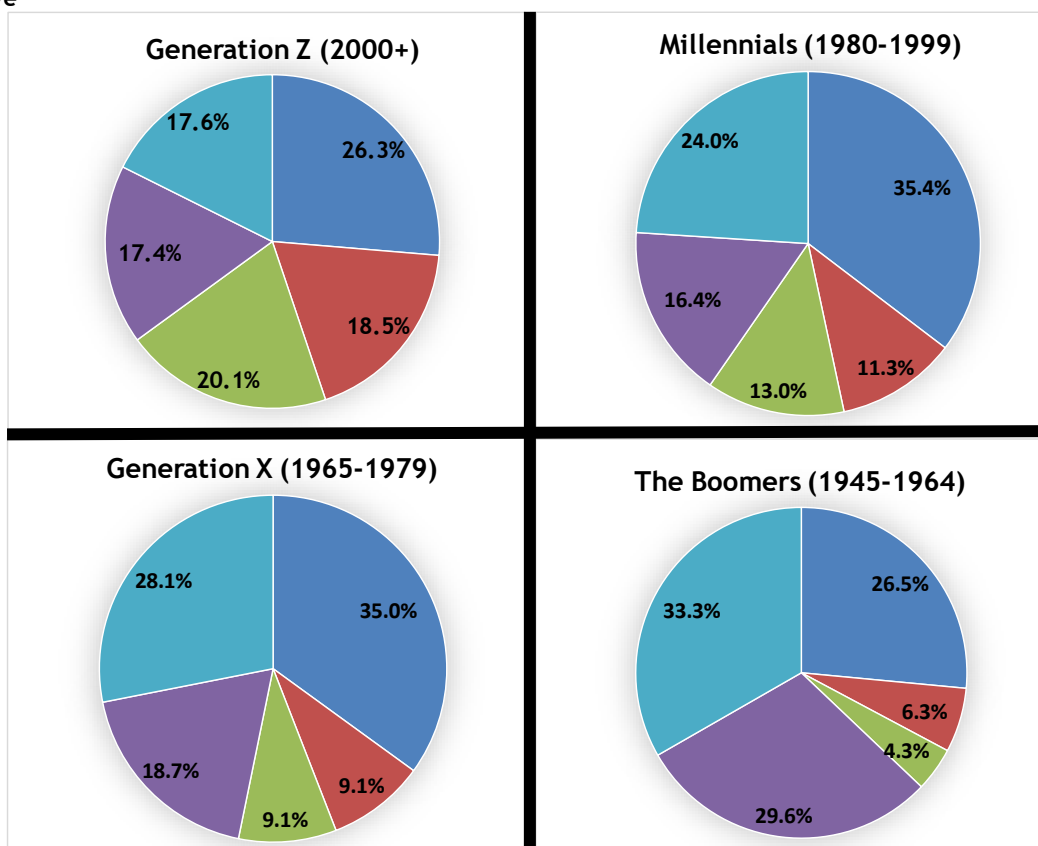
*Times per year: Casual (1-50), Active (51-150), Active to Healthy Level (151+)

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMING TRENDS
PROGRAMS OFFERED BY PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES (GREAT LAKES REGION)

NRPA's *Agency Performance Review 2018* summarize key findings from NRPA Park Metrics, which is a benchmark tool that compares the management and planning of operating resources and capital facilities of park and recreation agencies. The report contains data from 1,069 park and recreation agencies across the U.S. as reported between 2015 and 2017.

The report shows that the typical agencies (i.e., those at the median values) offer 161 programs annually, with roughly 60% of those programs being fee-based activities/events.
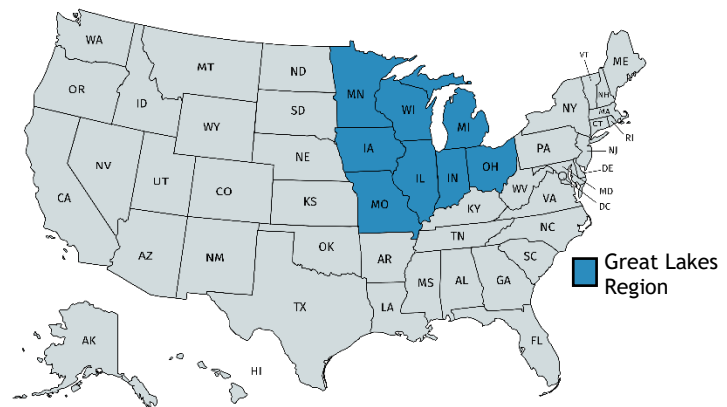
According to the information reported to the NRPA, the top five programming activities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies, both in the U.S. and regionally, are described in the table below **(Figure 39)**. A complete comparison of regional and national programs offered by agencies can be found in **Figure 40**.

When comparing Great Lakes agencies to the U.S. average, team sports, themed special events, fitness enhancement classes, and health and wellness education were all identified as top five most commonly provided program areas offered regionally and nationally.

Top 5 Most Offered Core Program Areas (Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies)	
U.S. (% of agencies offering)	**Great Lakes Region (% of agencies offering)**
• Team sports (86%)	• Themed special events (84%)
• Themed special events (84%)	• Team sports (81%)
• Social recreation events (81%)	• Social recreation events (81%)
• Fitness enhancement classes (78%)	• Health and wellness education (78%)
• Health and wellness education (78%)	• Fitness enhancement classes 76%

Figure 39: Top 5 Core Program Areas

In general, Great Lakes park and recreation agencies offered programs at a very similar rate as the national average. However, based on a discrepancy threshold of 5% or more, Great Lakes agencies are offering natural and cultural history activities at a higher rate than the national average. Contradictory, the Great Lakes Region is trailing the national average in regard to team sports.

Core Program Areas Offered by Parks and Recreation Agencies
(Percent of Agencies)

■ U.S. ■ Great Lakes

Program Area	U.S.	Great Lakes
Team sports	86%	81%
Themed special events	84%	84%
Social recreation events	81%	81%
Fitness enhancement classes	78%	76%
Health and wellness education	78%	78%
Safety training	70%	71%
Aquatics	69%	69%
Individual sports	68%	65%
Trips and tours	64%	65%
Racquet sports	62%	58%
Martial arts	61%	57%
Performing arts	61%	65%
Cultural crafts	58%	58%
Visual arts	56%	57%
Natural and cultural history activities	53%	59%
Golf	47%	51%

Figure 40: Programs Offered by Parks and Recreation Agency

TARGETED PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, SENIORS, AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

For better understanding of targeted programs by age segment, the NRPA also tracks program offerings that cater specifically to children, seniors, and people with disabilities, on a national and regional basis. This allows for further analysis of these commonly targeted populations. According to the 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review, approximately 79% of agencies offer dedicated senior programming, while 62% of park and recreation agencies provide adaptive programming for individuals with disabilities.

Based on information reported to the NRPA, the top three activities that target children, seniors, and/or people with disabilities most frequently offered by park and recreation agencies are described in the table below **(Figure 41)**. A complete comparison of regional and national programs offered by agencies can be found in **Figure 42**.

Top 3 Most Offered Core Program Areas	
(Targeting Children, Seniors, and/or People with Disabilities)	
U.S. (% of agencies offering)	**Great Lakes Region (% of agencies offering)**
• Summer camp (84%)	• Summer camp (84%)
• Senior programs (79%)	• Senior programs 79%)
• Teen programs (63%)	• Teen programs (63%)

Figure 41: Top 3 Core Target Program Areas

Agencies in the Great Lakes tend to offer targeted programs at an almost identical rate as the national average. The only significant discrepancy is when it comes to preschool and before school program, which the Great Lakes Region offers at a higher rate than the national average.
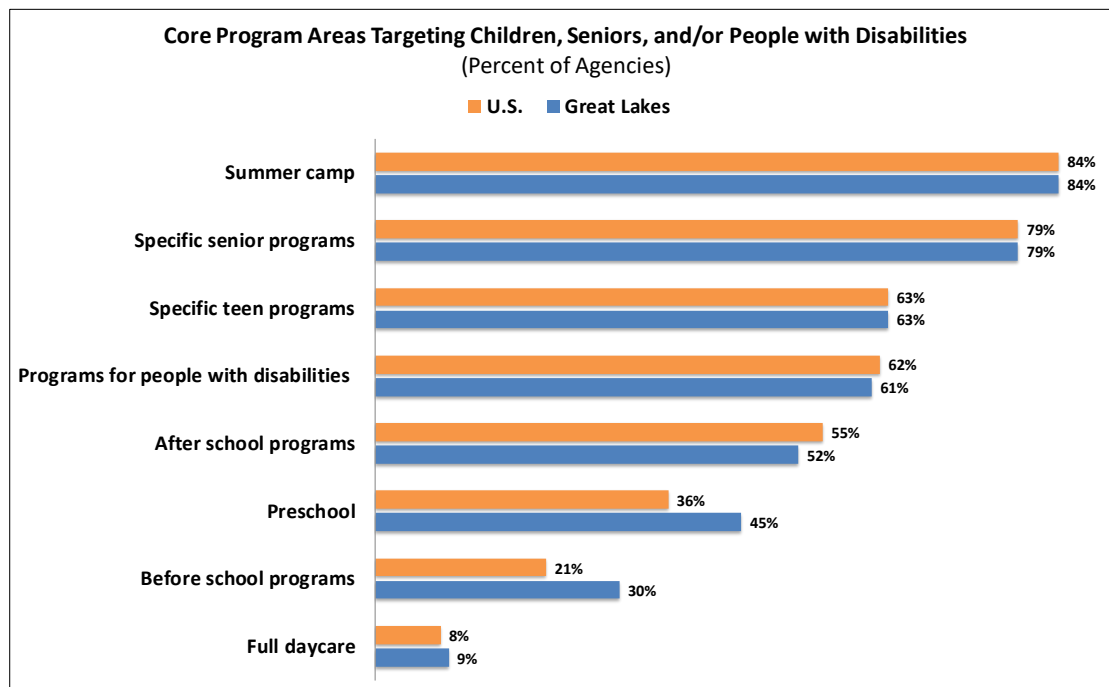
Figure 42: Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors, and People with Disabilities

LOCAL SPORT AND LEISURE MARKET POTENTIAL

MARKET POTENIAL INDEX (MPI)

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data for the five CRC Planning Areas, as provided by ESRI. A Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service within each of the Planning Areas. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident living within each service areas will participate in certain activities when compared to the U.S. national average. The national average is 100; therefore, numbers below 100 would represent lower than average participation rates, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rates. The service area is compared to the national average in three (3) categories – general sports, fitness, and outdoor activity.

Overall, CRC's Planning Areas exhibit slightly above average MPIs scores. This is noticeable when assessing baseball, volleyball, and softball, which display 100+ MPI scores across all 5 Planning Areas. Analysis individual Planning Areas, Area 2 and Area 5 both stand out for having consistently high MPI numbers, on the contrary Area 1 and Area 3 have primarily below average MPI's.

While low MPI scores are only relative to the national tendency, by comparing the scores of each Planning Area, the data offers CRC an objective perspective on the appropriate types and locations of recreation programs to pursue. For example, there seems to be a disconnect between Planning Areas in regard to golfing participation. Golf appears to be rather popular amongst Area 3 and Area 5 residents when compared to the remain Planning Areas. This participation trend may be a result of current accessibility of facilities, possibility signify a need for additional golf courses or better allocation of excessing facilities.

GENERAL SPORTS MARKET POTENTIAL
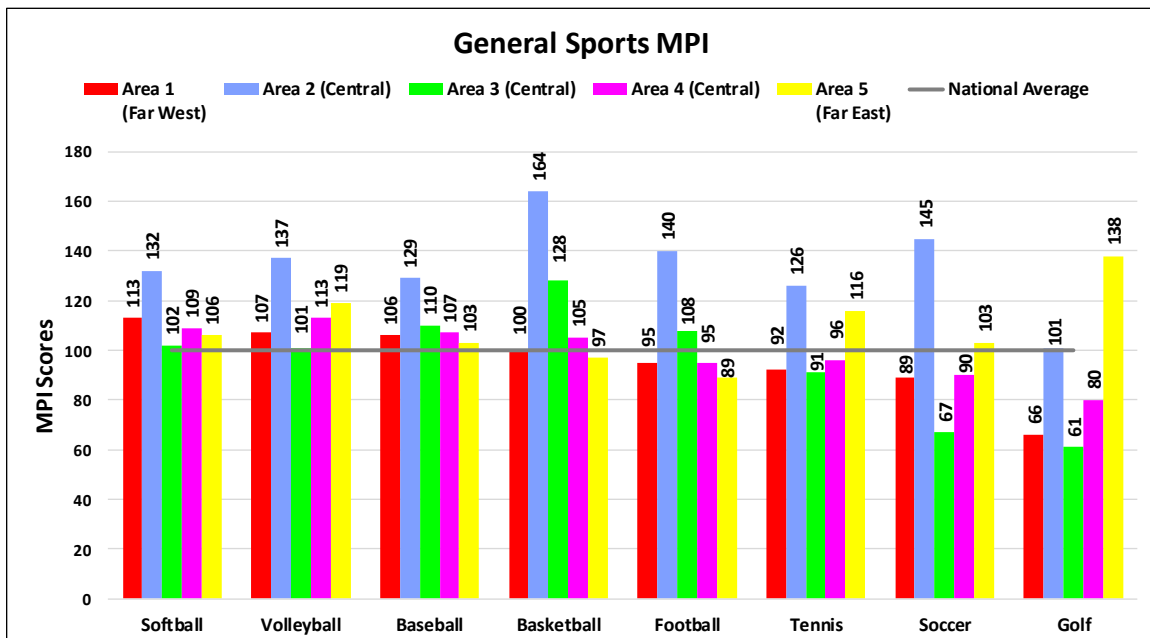
Figure 43: General Sports Participation Trends

FITNESS MARKET POTENTIAL
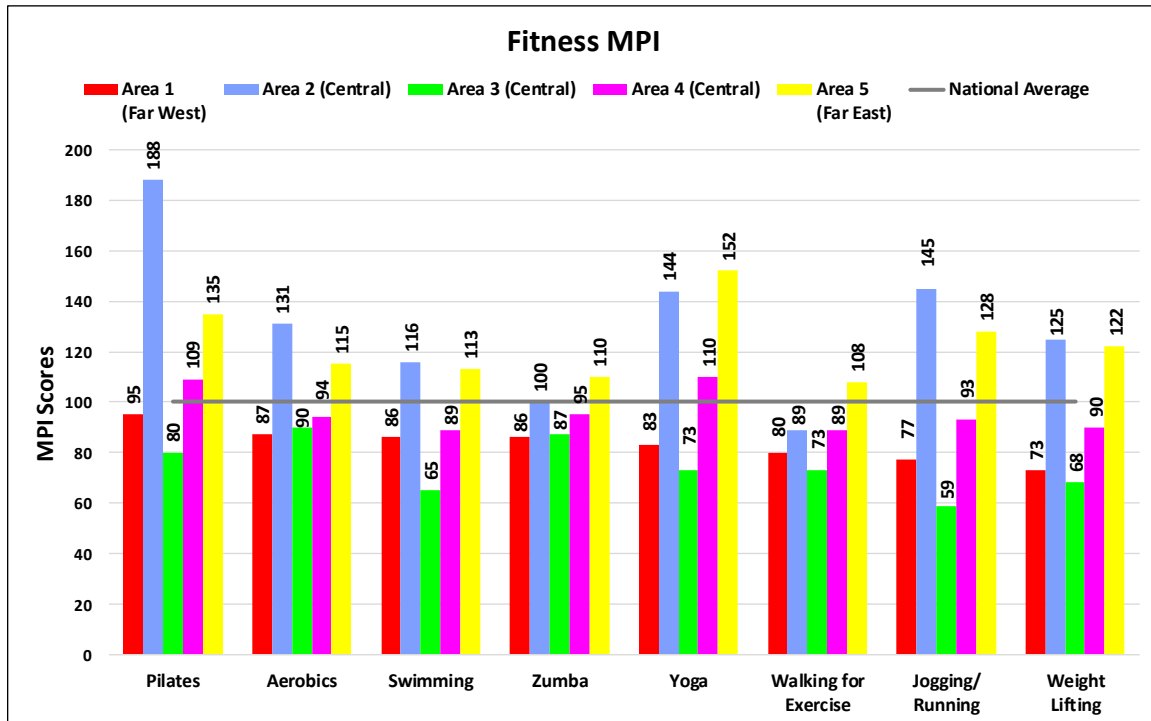
Figure 44: Fitness Participation Trends

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY MARKET POTENTIAL
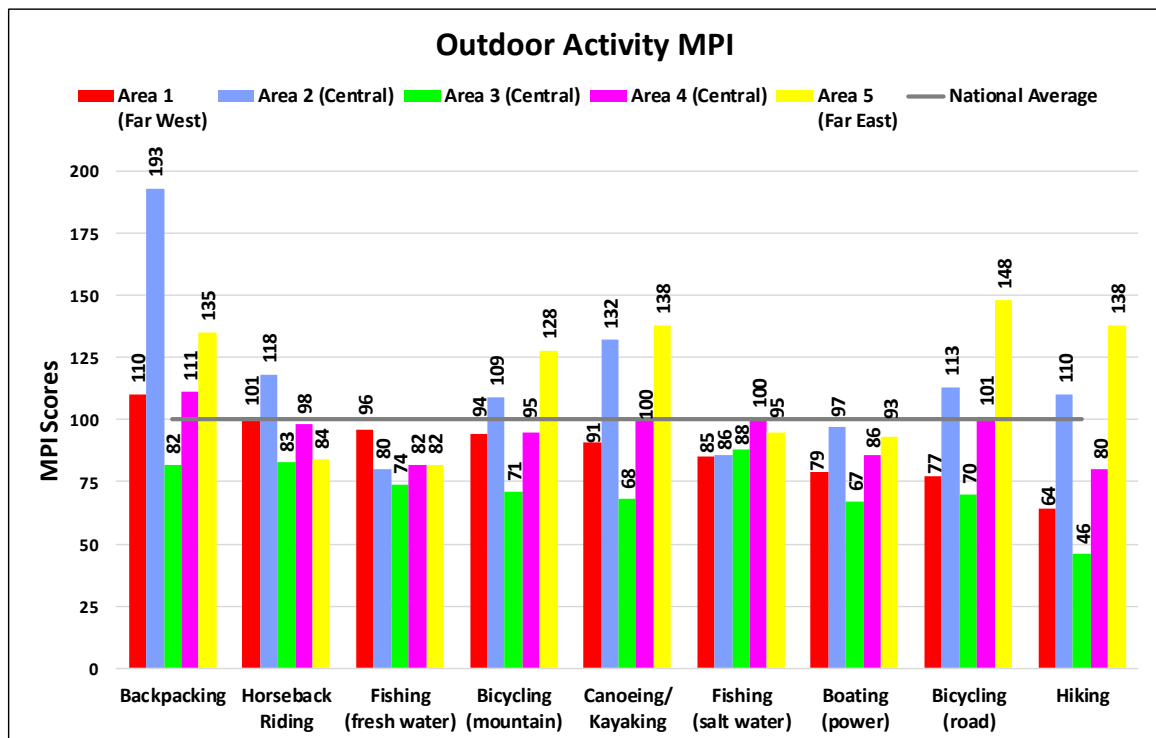
Figure 45: Outdoor Participation Trends

EXPECTED LOCAL PARTICIPATION

The following charts show the expected percentage of resident participants for each of the five Planning Areas in regard to recreational activities. These percentages are correlated to MPI scores previously introduced, and can serves as another tool for programmatic decision-making that allows CRC to quantify the expected participants by activity and by service area.

AREA 1 (FAR WEST) EXPECTED PARTICIPATION RATE BY ACTIVITY

Area 1 (Far West) Expected Participation Percentage

Activity	% of Area 1 Population
Walking for exercise	21.7%
Swimming	13.4%
Fishing (fresh water)	11.5%
Jogging/running	10.3%
Basketball	8.4%
Bicycling (road)	7.9%
Weight lifting	7.4%
Aerobics	7.2%
Hiking	6.7%
Yoga	6.3%
Golf	5.8%
Canoeing/kayaking	5.3%
Baseball	4.8%
Football	4.8%
Boating (power)	4.0%
Soccer	3.9%
Bicycling (mountain)	3.8%
Zumba	3.7%
Softball	3.7%
Volleyball	3.6%
Backpacking	3.5%
Fishing (salt water)	3.5%
Tennis	3.5%
Pilates	2.5%
Horseback riding	2.3%

Area 2 (Central) Expected Participation Percentage

Activities	% of Area 2 Population
Walking for exercise	24.0%
Jogging/running	19.5%
Swimming	18.0%
Basketball	13.8%
Weight lifting	12.7%
Bicycling (road)	11.6%
Hiking	11.4%
Yoga	10.9%
Aerobics	10.8%
Fishing (fresh water)	9.6%
Golf	8.8%
Canoeing/kayaking	7.7%
Football	7.1%
Soccer	6.3%
Backpacking	6.2%
Baseball	5.9%
Pilates	5.0%
Boating (power)	4.9%
Tennis	4.8%
Volleyball	4.6%
Bicycling (mountain)	4.5%
Zumba	4.3%
Softball	4.3%
Fishing (salt water)	3.6%
Horseback riding	2.7%

% of Area 2 Population

Area 3 (Central) Expected Participation Percentage

Activity	% of Area 3 Population
Walking for exercise	19.8%
Basketball	10.8%
Swimming	10.1%
Fishing (fresh water)	8.9%
Jogging/running	7.9%
Aerobics	7.4%
Bicycling (road)	7.1%
Weight lifting	6.9%
Yoga	5.6%
Football	5.5%
Golf	5.3%
Baseball	5.0%
Hiking	4.8%
Canoeing/kayaking	4.0%
Zumba	3.7%
Fishing (salt water)	3.6%
Tennis	3.5%
Boating (power)	3.4%
Volleyball	3.4%
Softball	3.3%
Bicycling (mountain)	2.9%
Soccer	2.9%
Backpacking	2.6%
Pilates	2.1%
Horseback riding	1.9%

Activities (y-axis) — **% of Area 3 Population** (x-axis)

Area 4 (Central) Expected Participation Percentage

Activity	% of Area 4 Population
Walking for exercise	23.9%
Swimming	13.9%
Jogging/running	12.5%
Fishing (fresh water)	12.0%
Hiking	10.4%
Bicycling (road)	10.2%
Weight lifting	9.2%
Basketball	8.9%
Yoga	8.4%
Aerobics	7.7%
Golf	7.0%
Canoeing/kayaking	5.8%
Boating (power)	5.0%
Baseball	4.9%
Football	4.8%
Bicycling (mountain)	4.1%
Fishing (salt water)	4.1%
Zumba	4.1%
Soccer	3.9%
Volleyball	3.8%
Tennis	3.7%
Softball	3.6%
Backpacking	3.2%
Pilates	2.9%
Horseback riding	2.3%

Area 5 (Far East) Expected Participation Percentage

Activities	% of Area 5 Population
Walking for exercise	29.1%
Swimming	17.6%
Jogging/running	17.3%
Bicycling (road)	15.2%
Hiking	14.3%
Golf	14.3%
Weight lifting	12.4%
Yoga	11.6%
Fishing (fresh water)	9.9%
Aerobics	9.5%
Basketball	8.2%
Canoeing/kayaking	8.0%
Bicycling (mountain)	5.2%
Boating (power)	4.7%
Zumba	4.7%
Baseball	4.7%
Football	4.5%
Tennis	4.4%
Soccer	4.4%
Backpacking	4.3%
Volleyball	4.0%
Fishing (salt water)	3.9%
Pilates	3.6%
Softball	3.5%
Horseback riding	1.9%

% of Area 5 Population

CHAPTER THREE - COMMUNITY INPUT

3.1 KEY LEADERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

The consultant team conducted stakeholder focus groups and interviews over a two-day period in early January 2018. Stakeholder focus groups and interviews provide a foundation for identifying agency issues and key themes along with understanding question topics that would be beneficial for the statistically-valid community survey. The consultant team developed a facilitation guide that included a series of questions that spurred conversation. Follow up questions were asked as appropriate. Invited stakeholders included:

- Cincinnati Public Schools
- Cincinnati Area Township Community Councils
- Great Parks of Hamilton County
- City of Cincinnati
- Price Hill Will
- Wallick Communities
- Girl Scouts of Western Ohio
- MVK Most Valuable Kids
- Community Learning Center Institute
- Neighborhood Allies
- Childhood Food Solutions
- Madisonville Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation
- YMCA of Greater Cincinnati
- Keep Cincinnati Beautiful
- Cincinnati Better Business Bureau
- Entertaining hearts
- Xavier University
- Talbert House

3.1.1 SYNTHESIS

After speaking with many stakeholders and interest groups, it is clear that there is a lot of "respect" for the City of Cincinnati Recreation Commission. There are many organizations that collaborate to make the recreation commission what it is today and help with social needs around the City. It will be important for the Cincinnati Recreation Commission Business Plan to identify all the ways that existing and potential partnerships/collaborations can help to meet the many needs of the greater Cincinnati area. As part of this, it is important to determine the best structure for services that will streamline the commission's efforts to continue being a provider of recreation and a conduit for social needs to be addressed.

As evidenced by on-site observations and personal communication, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission provides community recreation centers to residents across the City that otherwise would be non-existent. These centers are community hubs for recreation, community gathering, civic organization meetings, childcare, health/wellness, social events, weather emergency centers, life skill education, and even life's most basic needs. These facilities are so many things to so many people in so many neighborhoods, that a comprehensive look into what the core focuses should be is very necessary. With a diverse mix of interior/exterior spaces, it will be important to develop a strategy moving forward that will address underutilized spaces and the equitable distribution of community amenities.

Additionally, funding the system will require out-of-the-box thinking as there are needs that currently are not addressed in a way to be sustainable for an extended period of time. It will be important to consider alternative approaches to make up for the general fund cuts that seem to have been a repeated pattern negatively impacting ongoing operations, maintenance, and capital expenditures.

The following key takeaways emerged from the various interest groups spoken to during the consultant visit.

3.1.2 KEY TAKEAWAYS

Cincinnati Recreation Commission's **Role** should be

- It is a unique role that serves so many different types of people in the city.
- Not so clear as to their focus, priority, and role. Seems like a lot of duplication of services and overlap.
- Unique to each neighborhood. Internally there should be similarities on how things are done. Implement with more consistency while maintaining the uniqueness "Standards".
- If you look at the parks by Cincinnati Parks and by CRC, there is a stark difference between the standard of the two. It is visible that there is not enough staff and not enough money to maintain them appropriately.
- Huge task for a budget that gets perpetually slashed. Fantastic job with what they have.
- They do a great job with limited resources. Would love to see more.
- 90 years ago, it was probably not so much about the business. Now, it must be about the business.

Most important function CRC **should provide**

- CRC centers should be a safe and nurturing place that is the hub of neighborhoods.
- Afterschool care including; coordination of snow days & PD days with CPS, transportation, scholarships, support for teens, life skills, music, art, health exams, nutrition and intramural sports for kids.
- Provide better hours for the communities to participate in programs, use the centers, and use the pools. Open in evenings and on weekends.
- CRC sports teams such as volleyball, soccer, baseball, basketball, dodgeball, etc.
- The Agency should have guidelines on how employees manage homeless people dropping in the center. A policy could include that the homeless have a function when on the site. They cannot just be laying around.
- Instruction on how to use the equipment in the center.
- CRC should focus on the mission to provide recreation.
- Partner on social services in the centers could go a long way.

Most important issues facing CRC

- Funding, Funding, Funding…. More partnerships to stay ahead of funding, it is not what it needs to be to address the poverty areas.
- Facilities – updating them, infrastructure and structures. It appears there is not equity from one neighborhood to the other.
- Better service – seems like rec center is drop in. Consistency in operations from Director to Director for the centers.
- Communication should be addressed to improve and increase awareness
- Collaboration – with any and all public services to expand and improve offerings
- Childhood poverty, Kids and teen programming, more scholarships
- Expansion of hours to include weekends. Pool hours in the evening and on the weekend.

- Getting strong people in the neighborhoods and support for the operations. People that they hire need to have the appropriate skills (or be trained) to handle situations that they will have to manage when they occur.

Key outcomes of the Business Plan

- Take the agency to the next level including;
  - o Focus and accountability,
  - o prioritization of actions,
  - o equity in service across the City,
  - o strengthen existing and new partnerships,
  - o Communication needs to be more multifaceted, amped up, and a marketing strategy with this business plan,
  - o An knowing who customers are and are not, then attracting the new.
- Capitalize on the strengths of staff from one center and use the talent system-wide. Center staff should collaborate with each other.
- Update facilities, have better hours when people can participate, and improve technology use thus creating spaces that address new trends and serve the gathering needs (casual & formal) to socialize.
- An influential and active CRC Foundation is needed.

Biggest need for park & recreation additions

- Staff with vibrant personalities to draw people to the facilities.
- Better programming to bring energy to the centers.
- Computer labs including; up-to-date computers, WiFi, printers, copiers, space for families to take care of their technology needs. Partner with a manufacturer or retailer of computers.
- Splashpad equity among the neighborhoods.
- Awareness of the facilities and programs not just via internet, distribute through the schools. School will distribute fliers, but they want for all the students, they will deliver them for CRC

Recreation **programs missing** in communities

- There are great programs, but inconsistency from facility to facility with ease of access. Including;
  - o Gardening, cooking, nutrition,
  - o Teen life skills for the workforce,
  - o Mental health – even if it is someone to talk to,
  - o Youth sports and youth leagues – not competitive, but recreation to keep playing,
  - o More outdoor programming connecting people to nature play,
  - o Intergenerational programming
  - o History of the communities.
- One-stop-shop for needs, many people are navigating the governmental programs and need help with the enrollment and details. Partnering and avoiding over extending the system.

Facilities that **need** the **most attention** not served by others

- It is not efficient for facilities to be open when people are at work, kids at school, and closed on weekends when people have the time to participate. Who has ever heard of a successful agency or business that is not available when the participants or customers are available?
- Small rooms for music and art

- Indoor pools are needed.
- More connectivity instead of loop trails. It would be great to have the distance associated with the path.

CRC's ability to meet needs and communicate them

- Not a strength. I do not know the CRC message. I am not too sure that there is enough communication of addressing the needs.
- Challenges are improving programming with staff. Staff are needing to explore new programming opportunities.
- Staffing and personnel have never been coordinated properly. The flexibility of staff to move around and have their talents provide services all over the system.
- The hours and communication are why people are not participating.
- Seniors needs are being met, teens are not, people with young children would be a mix of yes and no.

How should **CRC be funded** to grow commensurate with the City

- Not adequately funded. They do not control the narrative as the time when you hear about CRC the most is when funding is in jeopardy. Not the positive information. It creates a negative perception about the agency.
- License the childcare to be able to bring in funds to offset any shortfall from user's ability to pay.
- Put a quality product in your weight rooms and the justification is there to increase the pricing for the memberships. Still provide scholarships.
- Don't put more on the agency than it can handle. CRC is capable of handling the needs of the community in the future. There just needs to be more of a focus.
- CRC Membership is not comparable to the market for those areas that can afford to pay for this.

How should **CRC be funded** to grow commensurate with the City

- Centers are so individualized, and no one is certain who they partner with and what they are partnering to do.
- Feeling that if it fits within the model that the City has set in place, the partnership flourishes, if not then there is a rigid approach.
- AAU, Soccer Leagues, sports leagues, and organize it more for the users.
- Libraries, social and emotional organizations, sports associations, Girls on the Run, Hispanic ministries, Neighborhood Allies,
- More corporate partnerships
- Can CRC find someone (partner) to run the facilities, so CRC is just the conduit or provider of the facility, so they are not stretched so thin.
- Reach out to homeschool groups and provide programming for them during typical school hours.

Is **CRC overextended,** how to better balance

- When you walk in there is nobody in them. There are spurts, but there could be a saturation when there is a Y, Boys/Girls Club and CRC center all within a ten-minute walk.
- Some of the services could be more of a partnership and CRC not having to take on all of the burden.
- They could be, we hear that they are threatening to close pools each year due to lack of funding.
- The staff are energetic and giving it their all, but they seem stretched and some days like they could fall right where the stand.
- It is site to site and community to community, More Focus.

- Not happening, we do not see anything that CRC could give up. It is too valuable and vital to the City

Anything else to share, we have not asked

- The CRC is vital to the vibrancy of the community. The next generation of recreation centers need to be energy centers and not drop in when you want the centers to serve a wider audience.
- Strategy is needed that encompasses leadership, staff, focus, priority, and who they should and want to be in order to improve.
- Data collection is a must!!! CRC should be using google analytics and have updated technology.
- Better maintenance/cleaning of facilities
- I am concerned about the Mission of CRC – You can write any mission for any need or desire. We don't want anything taken away, but you would not be looking for these services (fitness equipment, sports, etc.) when you are looking to just meet your basic needs.
- We cannot quite see what their focus is.
- What is there for an adopt-a-center concept like adopt-a-road?
- There are many outreach divisions within businesses where they want to be attached to a public agency as a partner and demonstrate the level of effort the company is making to help solve inner city issues. Kroger and hunger as an example.
- Anyone within the CRC should be able to recite the Mission and Core Values, tagline and what you are doing to achieve goals. Performance measures are needed.
- There is a big lack of programming. They are seen more as a facility provider with some great, and some not so great. Programs are fillers, but do not have a specific outcome that meets current trends and interests.
- Operations need to change in order to complete the mission and get the budget needed to run the system. Consider changing the titles of staff to be more functional.
- Separation of Parks and Recreation (90 years). Because both have facilities, and both do recreation, it can be confusing to know which one you need to go to for the service.
- Change the name of CRC and offer new things at each center.
- Is there an ability to charge non-resident rates to go to a center that is not in your neighborhood? CRC services are a steel.

3.2 COMMUNITY FORUM SUMMARY

In March of 2018, the consultant team returned to host public community forums designed to further engage residents of the community. The public forums, hosted at Corryville Recreation Center and Westwood Town Hall Recreation Center, followed a casual, open-house format, intended to provide a status update of the project and share initial findings from the work completed thus far, as well as an opportunity for residents to offer feedback of the current system and provide opinions on its future development. Approximately 30 participants, representing a variety of interests throughout the community, were present at the community forums. Feedback was captured through a brief survey, open dialogue, and 'dot voting' on communication boards.

3.2.1 STRENGTHS

Responses focus on the well-being of the surrounding community and whether CRC is fulfilling its full potential to provide recreational services well. CRC offers a safe haven for young adults to retreat to and find an abundance of resources available for them. Mentorship, safe interactions and a place of comfort is where the youth can expect. There's also recreation for Seniors that's affordable for them to utilize. Through the strength of partnership and advocacy, CRC can continue to provide the necessary services for the community and allow the community to flourish.

3.2.2 IMPROVEMENTS

There seems to be a strong consensus of a need for more support by the city to help promote the recreational centers, and the programs that exist within. There needs to be more partnerships, not only with the city, but with surrounding organizations, businesses, as well as the Recreation Foundation to help strengthen awareness and outreach of the CRC's services. Also, this builds better relations with neighboring organizations that provide similar services and opens up opportunities to help one another deliver on their individual promises within their mission. Finally, consolidation of underutilized parks is requested. It's recommended these parks and open spaces should be re-evaluated because they can be used by CRC to help provide current programs, events or activities; also offering newer programs with natural trails and green spaces.

3.2.3 TOP PRIORITY

The responses derive from a question regarding the biggest needs for the CRC at this moment. Funding and capital development are major key points to moving in the proper direction for success. The relationships developed with the CRC Foundation, local/city political figures and appropriate community organizations can lead to prosperous associations. There seems to be a slight disconnect between the youth and seniors. Thoughts are arising to bridge this gap and help strengthen the relations between the two generations. This, in return, can create an uplifting program that both can benefit from. This too can also generate more activities and opportunities to keep the kids off the streets and away from trouble (i.e. drug related).

3.2.4 BIGGEST COMMUNITY NEEDS

The connections and outreach need to be a huge priority in order to build advocates for the CRC. Building relationships with the local neighborhoods and community councils will build excitement around CRC and the marketing will work itself. The more people that are on board with the organizations vision and goals will increase advocacy, as well as promote awareness. Common efforts are developing relationships with the school systems. This can develop into a partnership for more programming and summer events or activities. These efforts can create programming such as cooking classes, gardening, and many other life enriching skill base

programs the community needs to help grow the youth. The partnership can develop opportunities for grants to get new technology to increase youth interest and ease transitional development of new programs surrounding technology. The CRC needs to be a beacon within the community and centralized to where it's more accessible to community members, this is why the awareness needs to increase.

3.2.5 FUNDING

There seems to be little to no communication between the CRC and its community members. The needs for funding and where it need to go has to be discussed amongst the community; this place is designed to offer opportunities for them, so they should be aware of the discussions. The advocacy is so important, so the needs can be shared with community council and city figures to get the requests across. The community is aware of what the CRC needs, but now need direction on how they can advocate for the necessary funding. Efforts to get the word out has to be exhausted so communication can reach far and wide. It's clear the funding is not top priority for the CRC from the city but allow the community to be the foot soldiers to get the necessary communication out to express the CRC needs; should be joint efforts.

3.2.6 FUTURE GOALS: 5-YEAR PLAN

It's imperative the community is made aware of what is being done in the community on behalf of CRC to build their trust. There needs to be discussions with community council members and members within the neighborhoods to assist with identifying the mission or goals of the CRC going forward. If the community isn't onboard or is not aware of what is being done, how will the CRC move forward? There should be more collaborations for programs in order to reach more individuals. Partnerships can help alleviate the isolation amongst these various remote areas. Once the community and CRC are aligning within the needs of the community and surrounding neighborhoods, it will allow these goals within the next 5 years to be attainable.

3.2.7 KEY OUTCOMES OF THE BUSINESS PLAN

Once again, it's about the partnerships and the relationships with the inner community that will allow the CRC to progress forward. Developing these relationships will provide more resources to the CRC. This will in return make an opportunity to make more programs for the youth, design training for the staff, or even gain access to resources to implement new technology for the CRC. It's imperative to come to resolution to figure ways to improve the CRC, strengthen the relationships with the community and city, as well as catapult the CRC into the 20th Century.

3.2.8 COMMUNICATION BOARDS

One key approach for soliciting feedback from attendees of the public forum was the use of communication boards for 'dot voting'. A set of five dot stickers were provided at each of the three stations, which allowed participants to vote on facilities, programs, and communication methods that are most important to their households. Each station featured a board for voting that offered a variety of suggestions with sample images for context, as well as the opportunity for write-in responses to be included in the voting. The following reveals the results for each of the three areas of interest.

FACILITIES

Public forum participants indicated the facilities most important to their households were: Outdoor Swimming Pools/ Water Parks (5), Outdoor Basketball Courts (5), and Small Neighborhood Parks (5). Facilities receiving no votes from attendees included: Lawn Games, Skateboard Park, Indoor Sports Fields, Golf Courses, and Mountain Bike Park. Below is an image of the actual voting board for facilities, superimposed with results, that was used at the public forum. No demographics of the participants in the public forums were taken as part of the public forums.

PROGRAMS

Program areas receiving the most votes by attendees were: Youth Mentoring Programs (8), Youth Learn to Swim Programs (4), Farmer's Market (4), Youth Sports (4), and Adult Programs for 50 years and older (4). Programs that received no votes included: Preschool Programs, Before and After School Programs, Birthday Parties, Tennis Lessons and Leagues, Art, Dance, and Performing Arts, Adult Sports, Nature Programs/ Environmental Education and Golf Lessons & Leagues.
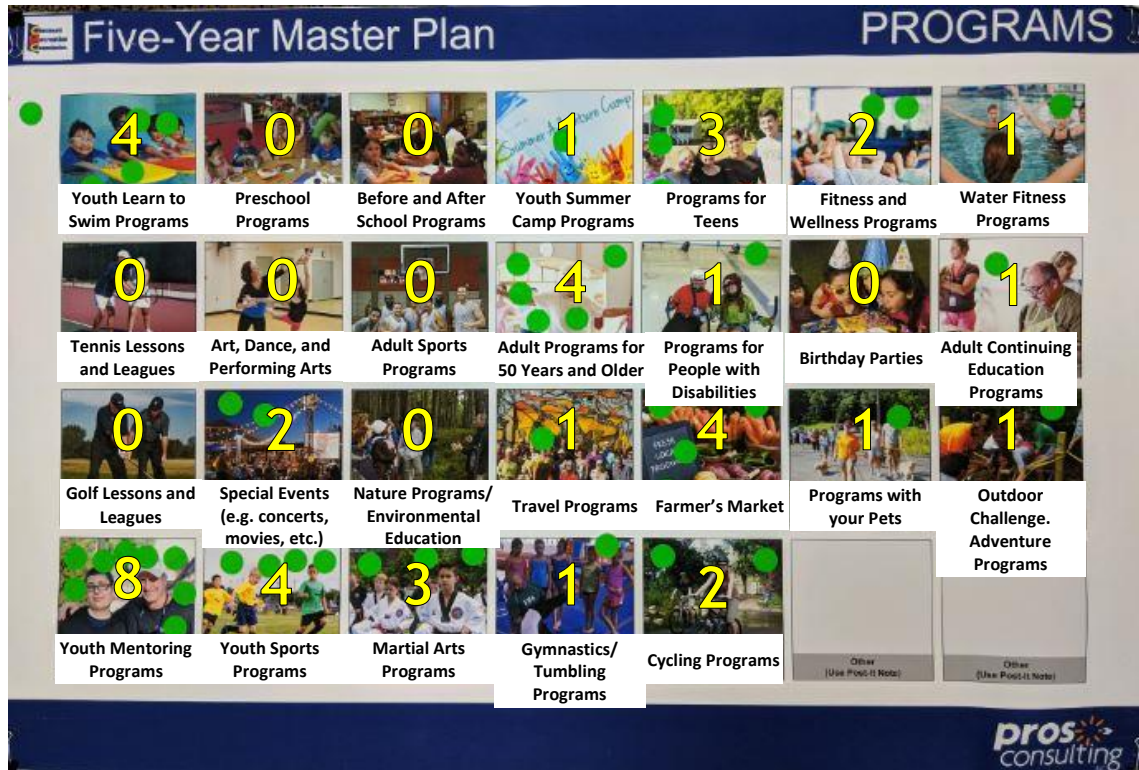
COMMUNICATION METHODS

Based on participant votes, the most effective means of communicating information for the Cincinnati Recreation Commission activities are: Email (14), Mail (8), Facebook (4) From Friends and Neighbors (4), and School Fliers and Newsletters (4).

3.3 STATISTICALLY-VALID SURVEY RESULTS

3.3.1 OVERVIEW

ETC Institute administered a community interest and opinion survey for the City of Cincinnati Recreation Commission during the summer of 2018. The survey was administered as part of the City's comprehensive review of its recreation system. The survey will help the City develop community-driven approach to making decisions that will guide the future of the recreation system and programs. The results will guide the City in establishing priorities for the future improvement of recreation facilities, programs, and services within the community.

3.3.2 METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Cincinnati. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it on-line at www.CRCSurvey.org.

Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails and placed phone calls to the households that received the survey to encourage participation. The emails contained a link to the on-line version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of the City of Cincinnati from participating, everyone who completed the survey on-line was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered on-line with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the on-line survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 500 residents. A total of 507 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 507 households have a precision of at least +/-4.35% at the 95% level of confidence. The entire report is included in the **Appendix** and contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey (Section 1)
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and programs (Section 2)
- Benchmarking analysis comparing the City's results to national results (Section 3)
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey (Section 4)
- A copy of the survey instrument (Section 5)

The major findings of the survey are summarized on the following pages.

3.3.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

OVERALL FACILITY USE

Seventy-four percent (74%) of households surveyed indicated they had visited any of the City of Cincinnati Recreation Commission facilities or recreational areas during the past 12 months.

Q1. Have You or Members of Your Household Visited Any of Cincinnati Recreation Commission Facilities or Recreational Areas During the Past 12 Months?

by percentage of respondents

Yes 74%

No 26%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
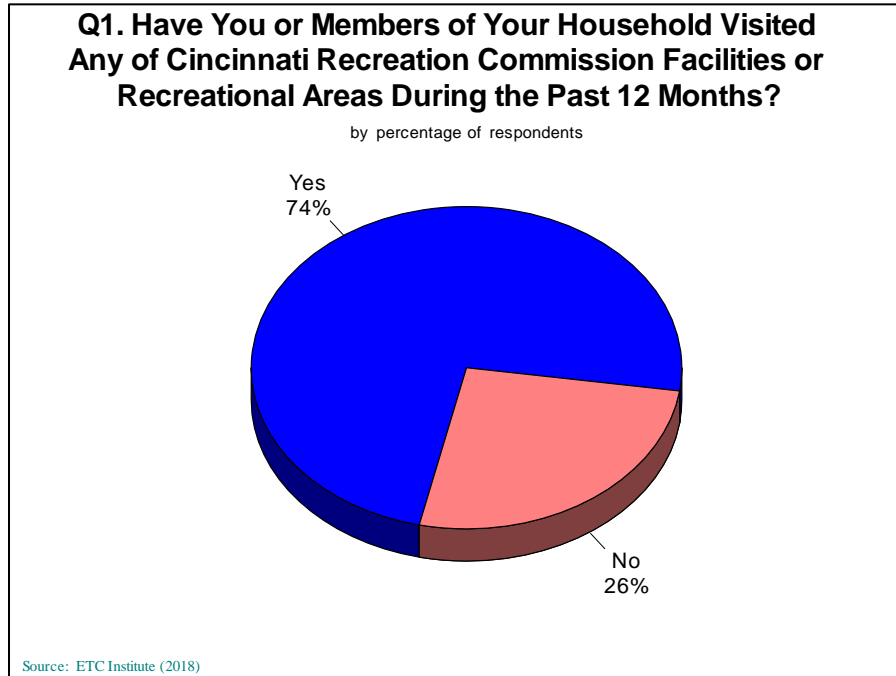
The three most used/visited facilities were walking and biking trails (56%), playgrounds (44%), picnic areas/shelters (42%), outdoor swimming pools/water parks (40%), and nature trails (39%).

Q1a. Facilities Households Have Used or Visited During the 12 Months

by percentage of households that have used facilities in the past 12 months

Facility	Percentage
Walking & biking trails	56%
Playgrounds	44%
Picnic areas/shelter	42%
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	40%
Nature trails	39%
Indoor community centers	27%
Spray parks	26%
Basketball courts	18%
Golf courses	14%
Adult baseball/softball fields	12%
Tennis courts	11%
Youth baseball fields	9%
Fishing areas	9%
Indoor swimming pools	9%
Youth soccer fields	7%
Sand volleyball courts	6%
Youth softball fields	5%
Youth football fields	4%
Skateboard parks	3%
Pickleball courts	1%
Archery Range	1%
Other	8%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents indicated the physical condition of all the parks, trails, and outdoor recreation facilities they have used is either "excellent" (23%) or "good" (60%). Forty-eight percent (48%) of households have used recreational areas, 43% have used trails, and 41% have used recreation facilities.

Q1b. How Respondents Would Rate the Physical Condition of All Parks, Trails, & Outdoor Recreation Facilities
by percentage of households that have used facilities in the past year

Excellent 23%
Poor 1%
Fair 16%
Good 60%
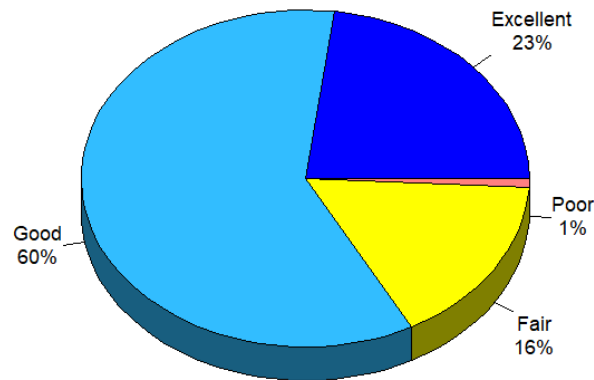
Source: ETC Institute (2018)

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND RATINGS

Twenty-five percent (25%) of households surveyed indicated that they had participated in programs offered by the City of Cincinnati Recreation Commission during the past 12 months.

Q5. Have You or Members of Your Household Participated in Any Recreation Programs Offered by Cincinnati Recreation Commission During the Past 12 Months?
by percentage of respondents

Yes 25%
No 75%
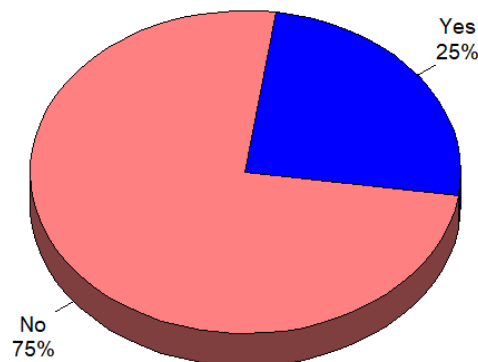
Source: ETC Institute (2018)

When asked how many different recreation programs or activities their household have participated in 36% of respondents who had participated in a program within the past 12 months indicated they participated in at least one program, 49% participated in 2-3 programs, 12% participated in 4-6 programs, and 3% participated in 7 or more programs.

Q5a. How Many Different Recreation Programs Have You or Members of Your Household Participate in Over the Past 12 Months?
by percentage of households that have participated in programs in the past 12 months

- 1 program 36%
- 2 to 3 programs 49%
- 4 to 6 programs 12%
- 7 to 10 programs 2%
- 11 or more programs 1%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
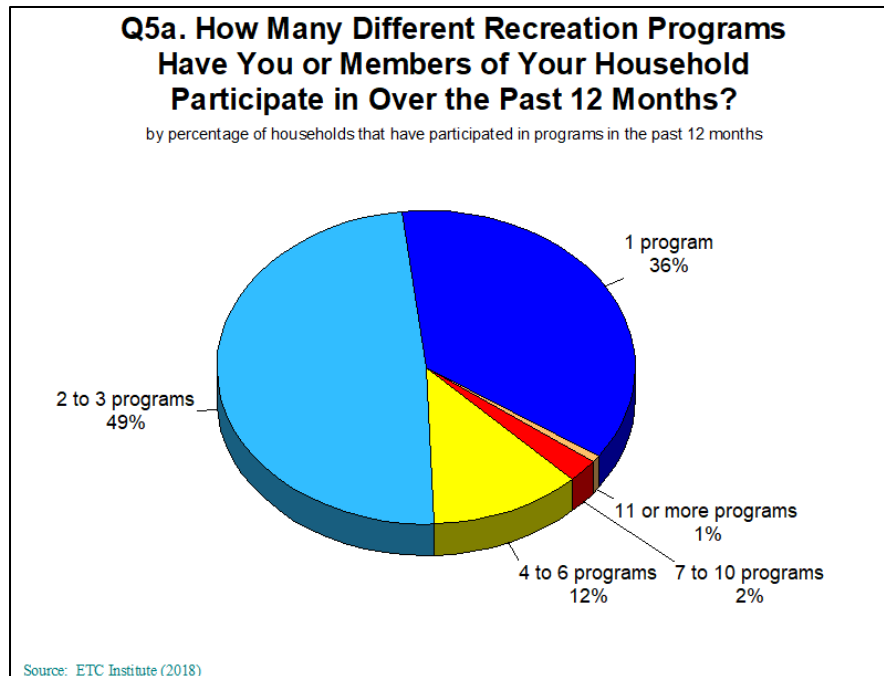
Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents indicated the reason they patriciate is because of the location of the program facility, 39% indicated it was the time the program is offered, and 34% indicated it was because of the quality of program instructors.

Q5b. Primary Reasons Households Have Participated in Programs
by percentage of households that have participated in programs in the past 12 months

Reason	Percentage
Location of the program facility	76%
Times the program is offered	39%
Quality of program instructors	34%
Fees charged for the program	31%
Friends participate in the program	30%
Quality of the program facility	26%
Dates the program is offered	17%
Quality of youth sport coaches	10%
Other	8%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

BARRIERS TO PARK, FACILITY AND PROGRAM USAGE

Respondents were asked from a list of 19 potential reasons to identify what prevents them from using recreation facilities or programs offered by the City of Cincinnati Recreation Commission more often. The top four reasons selected were: lack of awareness about what is offered (45%), no time to participate (25%), not knowing the location of facilities (23%), and program or facility they are interested in is not offered (22%).

Q8. Reasons Preventing Households From Using Recreation Facilities or Programs More Often
by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)

Reason	Percentage
I do not know what is being offered	45%
No time to participate	25%
I do not know locations of facilities	23%
Program or facility not offered	22%
Too far from our residence	20%
Program times are not convenient	16%
Fees are too high	15%
Facilities are not well maintained	15%
Lack of quality programs	13%
Facilities lack the right equipment	13%
Operating hours are not convenient	12%
Security is insufficient	11%
Use facilities of other agencies	9%
Poor customer service by staff	9%
Use services of other agencies	8%
Lack of parking	7%
Lack of/insufficient childcare	6%
Registration process is difficult	3%
Class full	2%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

FACILITY NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 31 recreation facilities and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. The three recreation facilities with the highest percentage of households that indicated a need for the facility were: neighborhood parks (73%), bike and pedestrian hard surface trails (54%), and picnicking areas and shelters (50%).

Q3. Facilities That Households Have a Need For
by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)

Facility	Percentage
Neighborhood parks	73%
Bike & pedestrian hard surface trails	54%
Picnicking areas & shelters	50%
Hiking & running natural surface trails	49%
Playgrounds	43%
Community gardens	41%
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	41%
Outdoor aquatic centers	34%
Indoor recreation centers	33%
Biking natural surface trails	29%
Indoor pool	29%
Outdoor amphitheaters	28%
Off-leash dog parks	27%
Lake recreation	24%
Soccer/Football/Multipurpose fields	22%
Bicycle park	22%
Outdoor basketball courts	20%
River recreation	19%
Sledding areas	17%
Outdoor tennis courts	17%
Outdoor volleyball	15%
Youth baseball & softball fields	14%
Golf courses	14%
Adult baseball & softball fields	14%
Frisbee golf	11%
Skate park	10%
Indoor turf facility	9%
Archery Area	7%
Equestrian trails	5%
Pickleball courts	5%
BMX track	4%
Other	3%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

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When ETC Institute analyzed the needs in the community, only one facility, neighborhood parks, had a need that affected more than 100,000 households.

Q3. Estimated Number of Households That Have a Need for Various Facilites

by number of households based on 161,162 households in the City of Cincinnati

Facility	Households
Neighborhood parks	117,648
Bike & pedestrian hard surface trails	87,350
Picnicking areas & shelters	80,420
Hiking & running natural surface trails	79,453
Playgrounds	69,944
Community gardens	65,432
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	65,432
Outdoor aquatic centers	54,634
Indoor recreation centers	52,700
Biking natural surface trails	46,737
Indoor pool	46,415
Outdoor amphitheaters	44,803
Off-leash dog parks	44,158
Lake recreation	38,518
Soccer/Football/Multipurpose fields	34,972
Bicycle park	34,650
Outdoor basketball courts	31,427
River recreation	29,815
Sledding areas	27,398
Outdoor tennis courts	27,075
Outdoor volleyball	24,497
Youth baseball & softball fields	22,885
Golf courses	22,563
Adult baseball & softball fields	22,563
Frisbee golf	16,922
Skate park	15,310
Indoor turf facility	14,343
Archery Area	11,443
Equestrian trails	7,897
Pickleball courts	7,252
BMX track	5,963
Other	5,157

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

ETC Institute estimates a total of 41,484 of the 161,162 households in the City of Cincinnati have unmet needs for community gardens. The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 31 facilities that were assessed is shown below.

Q6. Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Facilities Are Being 50% Met or Less

by number of households based on 161,162 households in the City of Cincinnati

Facility	Households
Community gardens	41,484
Bike & pedestrian hard surface trails	40,792
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	37,689
Hiking & running natural surface trails	36,390
Indoor pool	34,858
Picnicking areas & shelters	32,410
Neighborhood parks	30,471
Biking natural surface trails	28,883
Off-leash dog parks	28,658
Outdoor aquatic centers	26,443
Bicycle park	25,918
Outdoor amphitheaters	24,731
Playgrounds	24,131
Indoor recreation centers	23,346
Lake recreation	22,880
Sledding areas	20,028
River recreation	17,204
Outdoor volleyball	17,099
Outdoor basketball courts	15,557
Soccer/Football/Multipurpose fields	13,254
Outdoor tennis courts	11,209
Indoor turf facility	10,585
Skate park	10,472
Adult baseball & softball fields	10,334
Archery Area	9,304
Frisbee golf	8,884
Youth baseball & softball fields	6,545
Golf courses	5,461
Equestrian trails	5,409
BMX track	3,578
Pickleball courts	3,263

■50% Met ▨25% Met ▨0% Met

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

In addition to assessing the needs for each facility, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each facility. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the three most important facilities to residents were: neighborhood parks (51%), bike and pedestrian hard surface trails (28%), and hiking and running natural surface trails (26%). The percentage of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown below.

Q4. Facilities That Are Most Important to Households
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices

Facility	Percentage
Neighborhood parks	51%
Bike & pedestrian hard surface trails	28%
Hiking & running natural surface trails	26%
Playgrounds	23%
Picnicking areas & shelters	22%
Community gardens	19%
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	19%
Outdoor aquatic centers	15%
Off-leash dog parks	15%
Indoor recreation centers	12%
Indoor pool	12%
Soccer/Football/Multipurpose fields	8%
Biking natural surface trails	8%
Lake recreation	8%
Golf courses	7%
Outdoor amphitheaters	6%
Outdoor basketball courts	6%
Youth baseball & softball fields	5%
Bicycle park	5%
Outdoor tennis courts	5%
River recreation	4%
Outdoor volleyball	3%
Adult baseball & softball fields	2%
Frisbee golf	2%
Skate park	2%
Indoor turf facility	2%
Archery Area	1%
Sledding areas	1%
BMX track	1%
Pickleball courts	1%
Equestrian trails	0%
Other	3%

Legend: ■ Most Important ■ 2nd Most Important □ 3rd Most Important ■ 4th Most Important

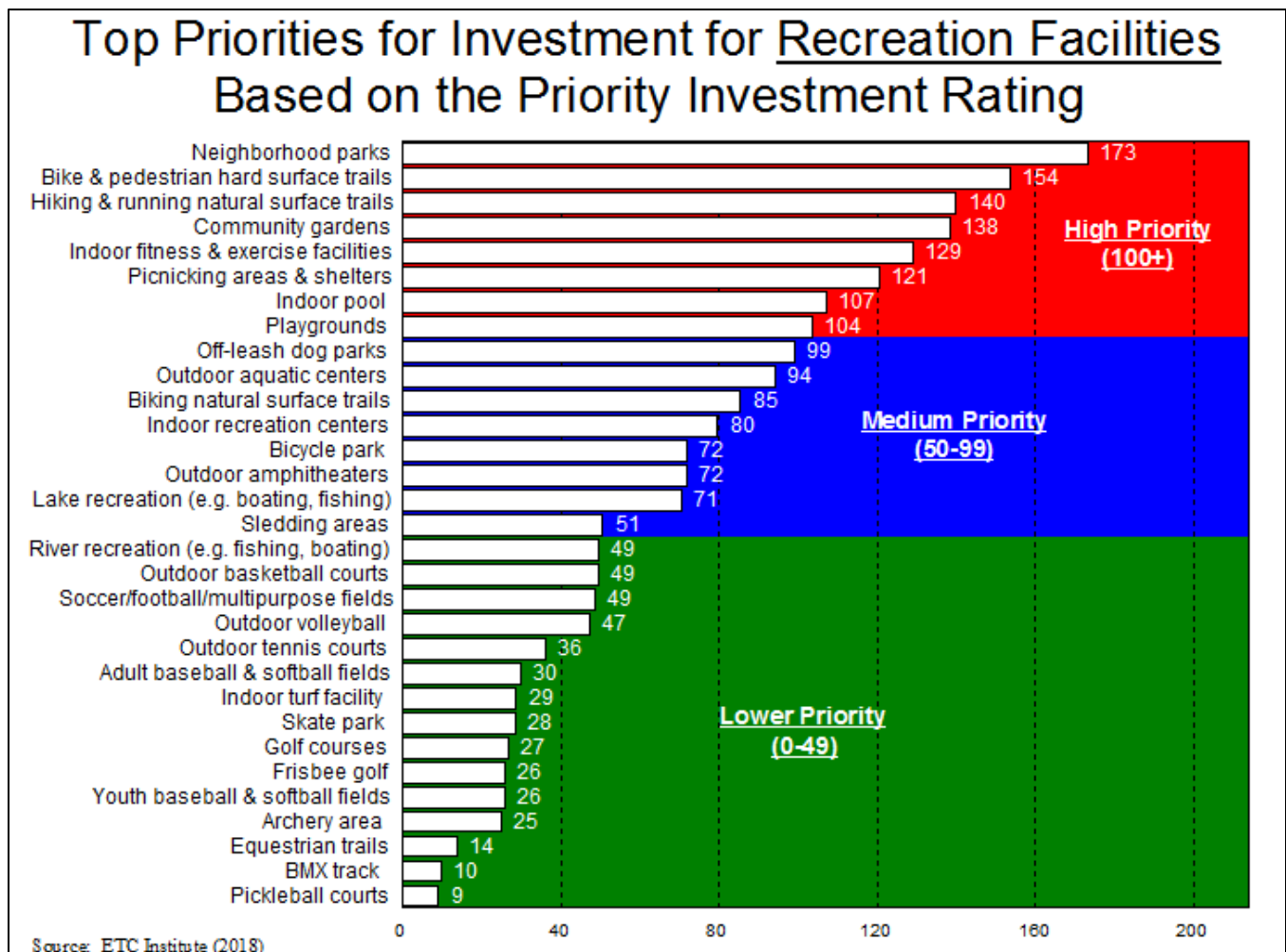Source: ETC Institute (2018)

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PRIORITIES FOR FACILITY INVESTMENTS

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on Parks and Recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility.

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following eight facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Neighborhood parks (PIR=173)
- Bike and pedestrian hard surface trails (PIR=154)
- Hiking and running natural surface trails (PIR=140)
- Community gardens (PIR=138)
- Indoor fitness and exercise facilities (PIR=129)
- Picnicking areas and shelters (PIR=121)
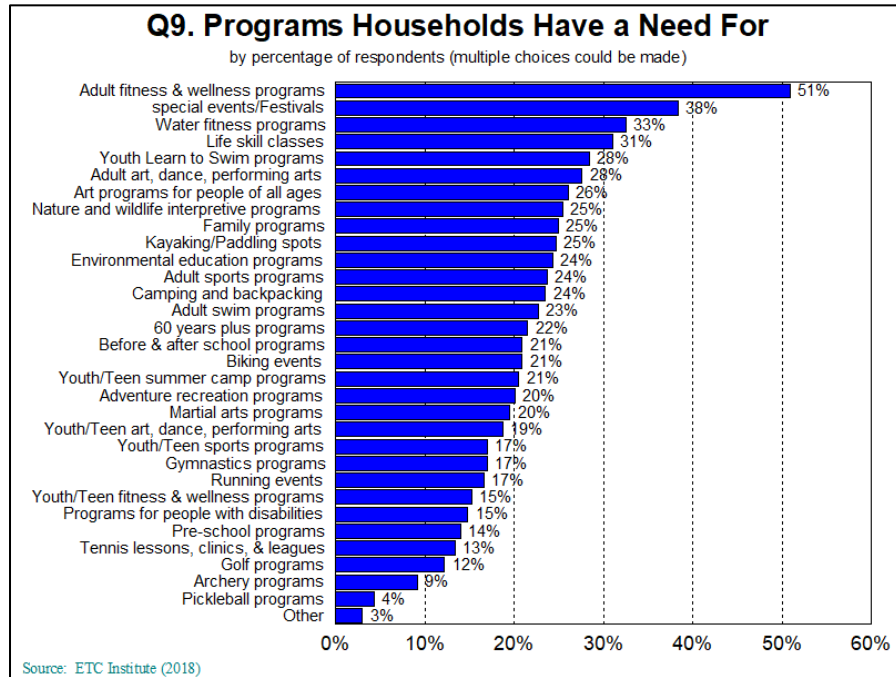- Indoor pool (PIR=107)
- Playgrounds (PIR=104)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 31 facilities/amenities that were assessed on the survey.

Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Facilities Based on the Priority Investment Rating

Facility	PIR
Neighborhood parks	173
Bike & pedestrian hard surface trails	154
Hiking & running natural surface trails	140
Community gardens	138
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	129
Picnicking areas & shelters	121
Indoor pool	107
Playgrounds	104
Off-leash dog parks	99
Outdoor aquatic centers	94
Biking natural surface trails	85
Indoor recreation centers	80
Bicycle park	72
Outdoor amphitheaters	72
Lake recreation (e.g. boating, fishing)	71
Sledding areas	51
River recreation (e.g. fishing, boating)	49
Outdoor basketball courts	49
Soccer/football/multipurpose fields	49
Outdoor volleyball	47
Outdoor tennis courts	36
Adult baseball & softball fields	30
Indoor turf facility	29
Skate park	28
Golf courses	27
Frisbee golf	26
Youth baseball & softball fields	26
Archery area	25
Equestrian trails	14
BMX track	10
Pickleball courts	9

High Priority (100+)
Medium Priority (50-99)
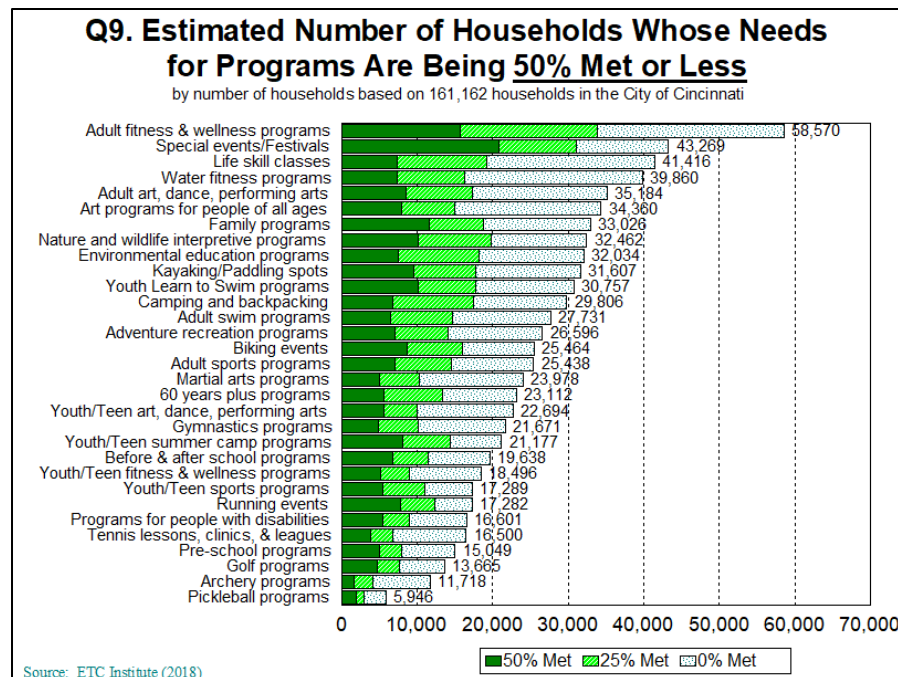Lower Priority (0-49)

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

PROGRAMMING NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Respondents were also asked to identify if their household had a need for 31 recreational programs and rate how well their needs for each program were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had "unmet" needs for each program.

The three programs with the highest percentage of households that had needs were: adult fitness and wellness programs (51%), special events/festivals (38%), and water fitness programs (33%).

Q9. Programs Households Have a Need For
by percentage of respondents (multiple choices could be made)

Program	%
Adult fitness & wellness programs	51%
special events/Festivals	38%
Water fitness programs	33%
Life skill classes	31%
Youth Learn to Swim programs	28%
Adult art, dance, performing arts	28%
Art programs for people of all ages	26%
Nature and wildlife interpretive programs	25%
Family programs	25%
Kayaking/Paddling spots	25%
Environmental education programs	24%
Adult sports programs	24%
Camping and backpacking	24%
Adult swim programs	23%
60 years plus programs	22%
Before & after school programs	21%
Biking events	21%
Youth/Teen summer camp programs	21%
Adventure recreation programs	20%
Martial arts programs	20%
Youth/Teen art, dance, performing arts	19%
Youth/Teen sports programs	17%
Gymnastics programs	17%
Running events	17%
Youth/Teen fitness & wellness programs	15%
Programs for people with disabilities	15%
Pre-school programs	14%
Tennis lessons, clinics, & leagues	13%
Golf programs	12%
Archery programs	9%
Pickleball programs	4%
Other	3%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

ETC Institute estimates a total of 58,570 households have unmet needs for adult fitness and wellness programs and 43,269 households have unmet needs for special events/festivals. The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 31 programs that were assessed is shown below.

Q9. Estimated Number of Households Whose Needs for Programs Are Being 50% Met or Less
by number of households based on 161,162 households in the City of Cincinnati

Program	Number
Adult fitness & wellness programs	58,570
Special events/Festivals	43,269
Life skill classes	41,416
Water fitness programs	39,860
Adult art, dance, performing arts	35,184
Art programs for people of all ages	34,360
Family programs	33,026
Nature and wildlife interpretive programs	32,462
Environmental education programs	32,034
Kayaking/Paddling spots	31,607
Youth Learn to Swim programs	30,757
Camping and backpacking	29,806
Adult swim programs	27,731
Adventure recreation programs	26,596
Biking events	25,464
Adult sports programs	25,438
Martial arts programs	23,978
60 years plus programs	23,112
Youth/Teen art, dance, performing arts	22,694
Gymnastics programs	21,671
Youth/Teen summer camp programs	21,177
Before & after school programs	19,638
Youth/Teen fitness & wellness programs	18,496
Youth/Teen sports programs	17,289
Running events	17,282
Programs for people with disabilities	16,601
Tennis lessons, clinics, & leagues	16,500
Pre-school programs	15,049
Golf programs	13,665
Archery programs	11,718
Pickleball programs	5,946

Legend: 50% Met ■ 25% Met ▨ 0% Met ☐

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

pros consulting inc.

In addition to assessing the needs for each program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents place on each program. Based on the sum of respondents' top four choices, the three most important programs to residents were: adult fitness and wellness programs (31%), youth learn to swim programs (16%), and special events/festivals (15%). The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown below.

Q10. Programs That Are Most Important to Households
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices

Program	Percentage
Adult fitness & wellness programs	31%
Youth Learn to Swim programs	16%
special events/Festivals	15%
Life skill classes	15%
Before & after school programs	14%
Water fitness programs	12%
60 years plus programs	12%
Adult swim programs	12%
Adult art, dance, performing arts	11%
Family programs	10%
Adult sports programs	9%
Art programs for people of all ages	8%
Nature and wildlife interpretive programs	8%
Youth/Teen summer camp programs	8%
Kayaking/Paddling spots	8%
Biking events	7%
Martial arts programs	6%
Environmental education programs	6%
Pre-school programs	6%
Running events	6%
Youth/Teen sports programs	6%
Camping and backpacking	6%
Youth/Teen art, dance, performing arts	5%
Adventure recreation programs	5%
Youth/Teen fitness & wellness programs	5%
Gymnastics programs	5%
Golf programs	4%
Programs for people with disabilities	4%
Tennis lessons, clinics, & leagues	4%
Pickleball programs	2%
Archery programs	1%
Other	2%

■Most Important ■2nd Most Important □3rd Most Important ■4th Most Important

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

Based the priority investment rating (PIR), which was described briefly in the PIR for facilities and in in more detail in the Appendix of this report, the following five programs were rated as "high priorities" for investment:

- Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=200)
- Special events/festivals (PIR=124)
- Life skill classes (PIR=119)
- Water fitness programs (PIR=108)
- Youth learn to swim programs (PIR=104)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for each of the 31 programs that were rated.

Top Priorities for Investment for Recreation Programs Based on the Priority Investment Rating

Program	PIR
Adult fitness & wellness programs	200
Special events/festivals	124
Life skill classes (e.g. cooking, computers)	119
Water fitness programs	108
Youth Learn to Swim programs	104
Adult art, dance, performing arts	95
Family programs	89
Adult swim programs	86
Art programs for people of all ages	86
Nature & wildlife interpretive programs	82
60 years plus programs	79
Kayaking/paddling sports	79
Before & after school programs	78
Environmental education programs	76
Adult sports programs	72
Camping & backpacking	69
Biking events	66
Martial arts programs	62
Adventure recreation programs	62
Youth/teen summer camp programs	61
Youth/teen art, dance, performing arts	56
Gymnastics programs	52
Youth/teen sports programs	48
Running events (including triathlons)	48
Youth/teen fitness & wellness programs	47
Pre-school programs	46
Programs for people with disabilities	42
Tennis lessons, clinics, & leagues	41
Golf programs (e.g. lessons, tournaments)	38
Archery programs	24
Pickleball programs	17

High Priority (100+)

Medium Priority (50-99)

Lower Priority (0-49)

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

TAXES AND USER FEES

Respondents were informed that the cost to provide recreation programs are funded through a combination of participant fees and general tax revenues. They were then given a list of nine program categories and were asked to indicate their preference as to what percent of the program costs should be paid by taxes and what percent by user fees for each. The programs respondents believed should be funding primarily through taxes included: programs for special populations/disabled, youth sports programs, and youth camps. Adult classes and adult sports programs were the two program categories that respondents indicated should be funded more by fees.

Q11. Preference of What Percent of Program Costs Should be Paid by Taxes and What Percent by User Fees

by percentage of respondents

Program	100% Taxes/0% Fees	75% Taxes/25% Fees	50% Taxes/Fees	25% Taxes/75% Fees	0% Taxes/100% Fees
Programs for special populations/disabled	43%	25%	19%	7%	7%
Youth sports programs	23%	30%	29%	10%	9%
Youth camps	21%	30%	31%	11%	8%
Senior adult classes	24%	26%	24%	13%	13%
Youth classes	21%	29%	27%	14%	10%
Family programs for all residents	19%	23%	33%	15%	11%
Special events and festivals	17%	19%	32%	16%	16%
Adult classes	8%	16%	28%	25%	24%
Adult sports programs	7%	17%	32%	23%	22%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)

Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents indicated they would be either "very supportive" (35%) of "somewhat supportive" (38%) of the city exploring alternative financial resources in the form of a tax levy to fund necessary improvements to the city's recreation centers.

Q16. How supportive would you be of the city exploring alternative financial resources in the form of a tax levy to fund necessary improvements to the recreation centers?

by percentage of households

Very supportive 35%
Somewhat supportive 38%
Not sure 9%
Not supportive 18%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
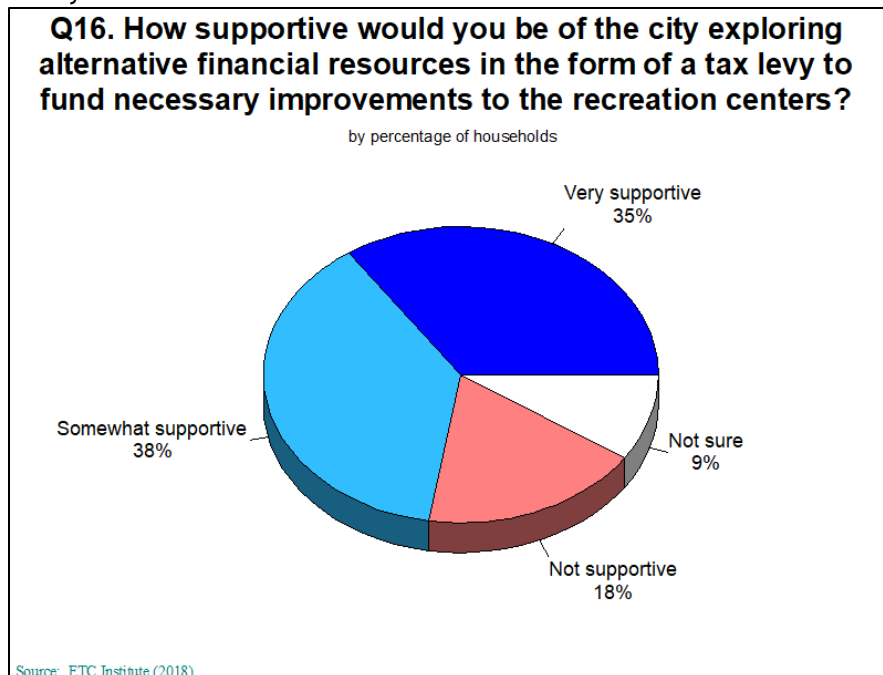
Seventy percent (70%) of respondents indicated they would be either "very supportive" (21%) of "somewhat supportive" (49%) of the City increasing user fees to expand the operating hours for the city's recreation centers.

Q17. How supportive would you be of increasing user fees to expand the operating hours for the city's recreation centers?
by percentage of households

- Very supportive 21%
- Not sure 10%
- Not supportive 20%
- Somewhat supportive 49%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
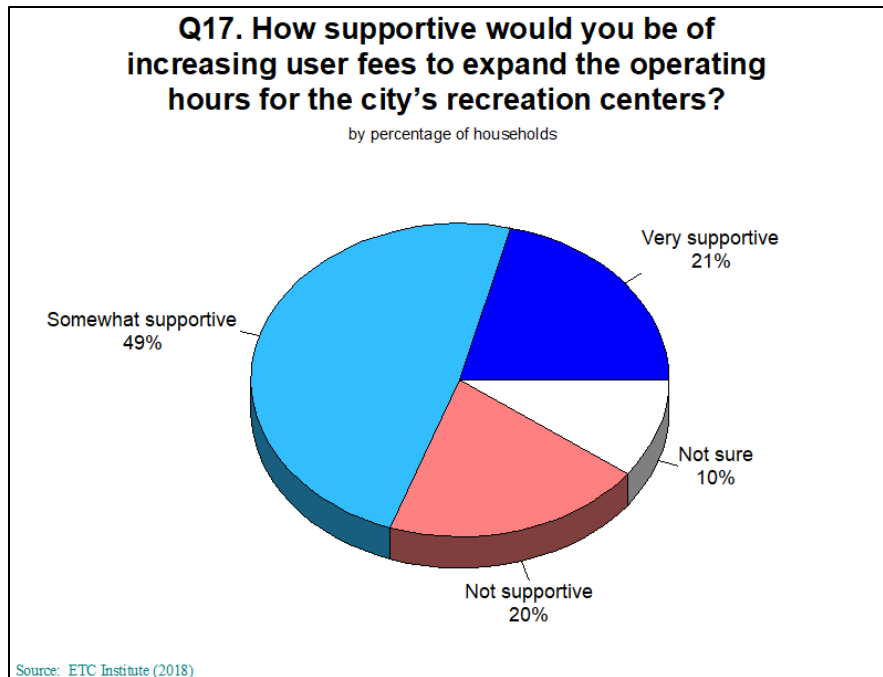
Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents indicated they would be either "very supportive" (13%) of "somewhat supportive" (30%) of the City reducing operating hours or closing some recreation centers to focus resources on the recreation centers that are most used by residents with the highest level of program experiences.

Q18. How supportive would you be of reducing operating hours or closing some recreation centers to focus resources on the recreation centers that are most used by residents with the highest level of program experiences?
by percentage of households

- Somewhat supportive 30%
- Very supportive 13%
- Not sure 15%
- Not supportive 42%

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
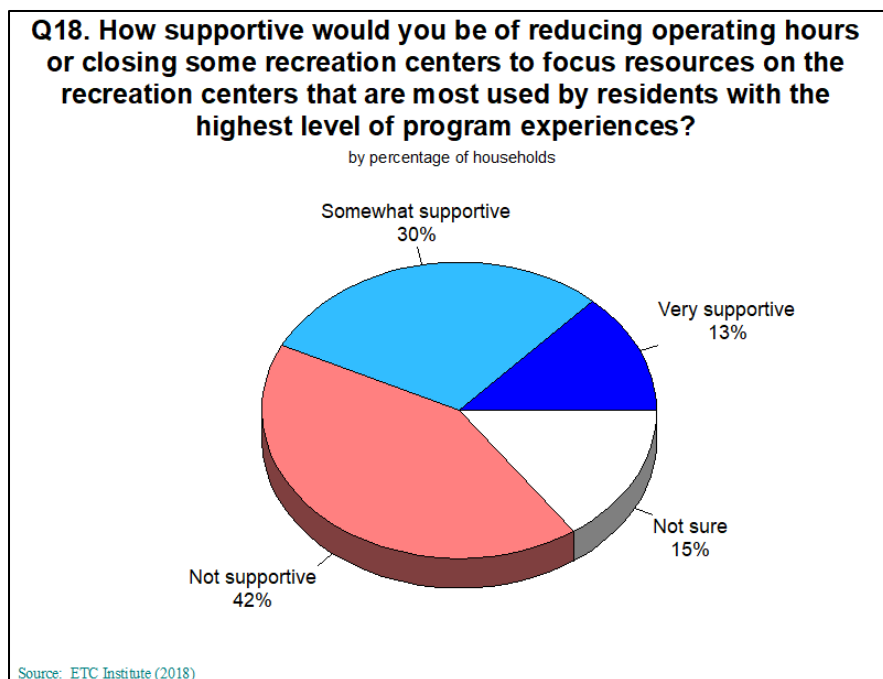
ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Fifty-eight percent (58%) of respondents indicated they learn about programs and activities from friends and neighbors, 34% use community/city signs, and 30% use signage/flyers at facilities.
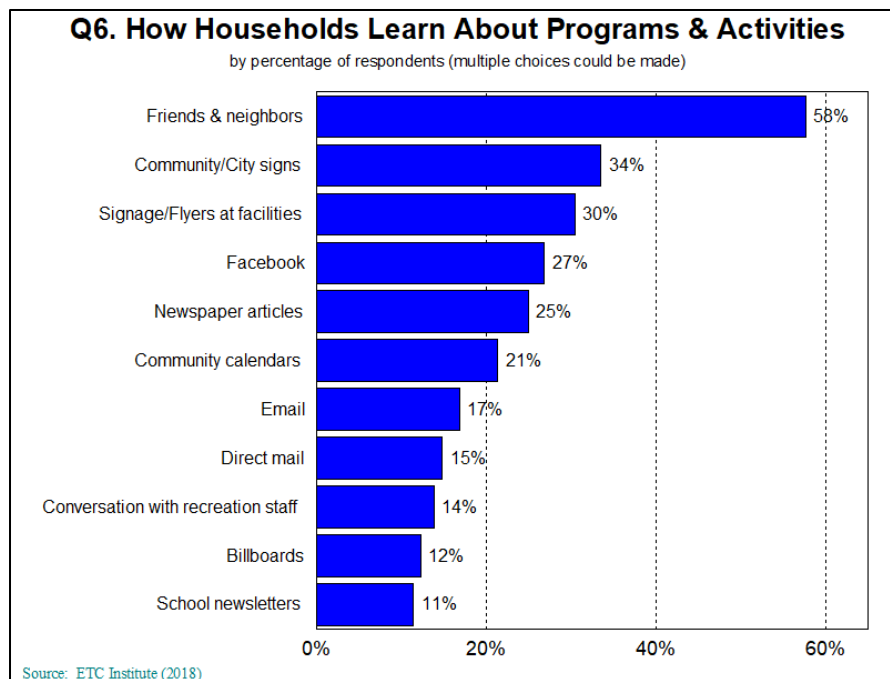
Email (36%), Facebook (31%), and from friends and neighbors (30%) are the most preferred methods of communication.
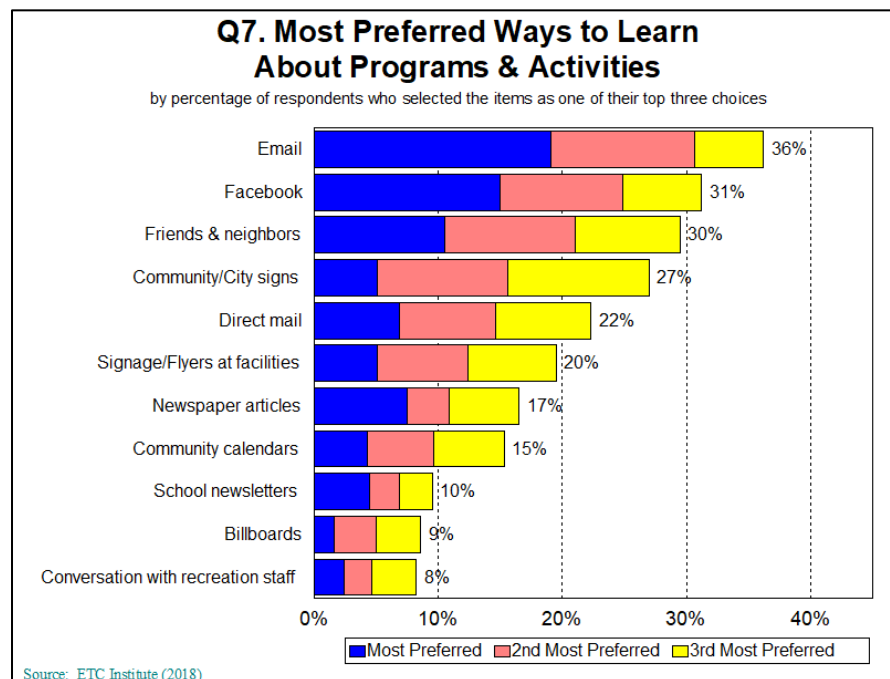
Respondents indicated they most support maintaining or repairing park buildings, shelters, playgrounds, and trails and upgrading existing indoor recreation centers and aquatic centers when asked to indicate how supportive they would be of various actions that could be taken to improve Cincinnati's parks and recreation services. Maintaining or repairing park buildings, shelters, playgrounds, and trails was the item most (50%) of respondents would be willing to fund with their tax dollars.

Q13. Actions Most Willing to Fund With Tax Dollars
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
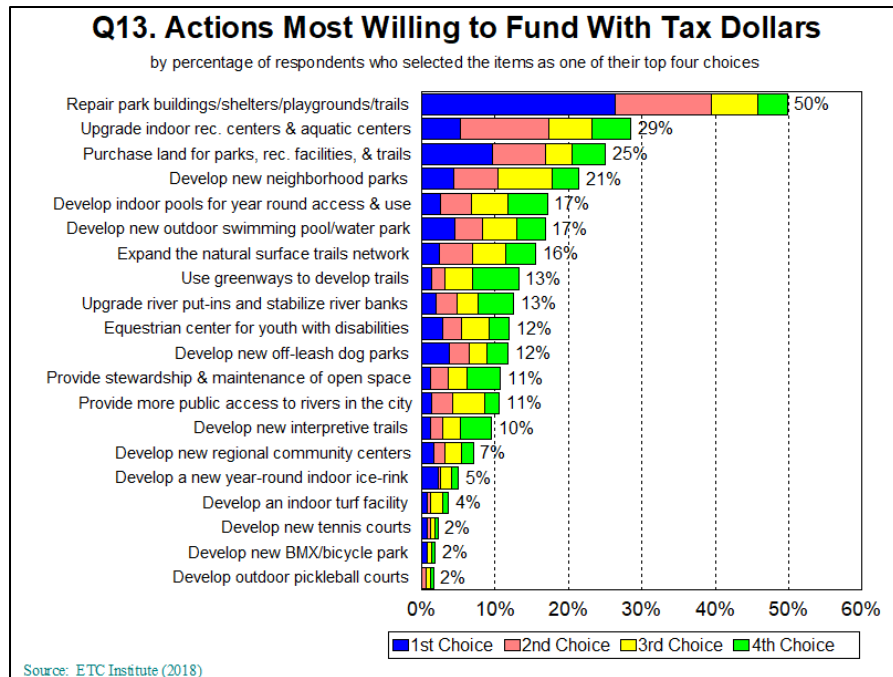
Respondents indicated that availability of information about programs and facilities should receive the most attention from the Cincinnati Recreation Commission over next two years followed by fees charged for recreation programs and hours of operation of recreation facilities.

Q15. Services That Should Receive the Most Attention From the Cincinnati Recreation Commission Over the Next 2 Years
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices

Source: ETC Institute (2018)
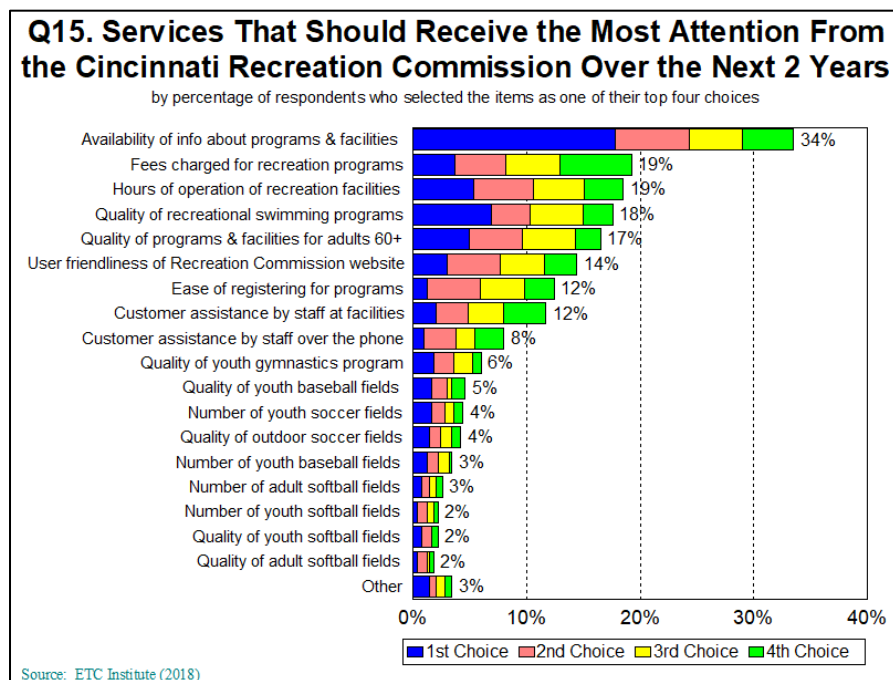
CHAPTER FOUR - SITE ASSESSMENTS

4.1 OVERVIEW

As part of the Program & Facilities Business Plan, the Cincinnati Recreation Commission desired an assessment of the community centers and select park sites. In November 2017, a team of CRC staff and PROS Consulting visited 23 facilities of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. These facilities consisted of parks and community centers across the City. At each center, consultants asked questions of staff, toured the facility, and assessed interior and exterior conditions. The park sites were drive through tours. A full report can be found in the **Appendix.**

4.2 METHODOLOGY

For each recreation center and park site, consultant observations included first impressions, interior/exterior spaces, equipment, visual aesthetics, branding, safety and cleanliness. From these observations the consultant categorized the findings into Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities. The following facilities were assessed during the three-day review period:

- Bond Hill Recreation Center
- Bush Recreation Center
- Clifton Recreation Center
- College Hill Recreation Center
- Corryville Recreation Center
- Dunham Recreation Center
- Evans Recreation Area
- Evanston Recreation Center
- Hartwell Recreation Center
- Hirsch Recreation Center
- Leblond Recreation Center
- Lincoln Recreation Center
- Linwood Park
- Madisonville Recreation Center
- McKie Recreation Center
- Millvale Recreation Center
- Mt. Auburn Indoor Pool
- Mt. Washington Recreation Center
- North Avondale Recreation Center
- Oakley Recreation Center
- Otto Armleder Memorial Park & Recreation Complex
- Over-the-Rhine Recreation Center
- Pleasant Ridge Recreation Center
- Price Hill Recreation Center
- Riverside Park
- Ryan Sports Complex
- Sayler Park Recreation Center
- Schmidt Recreation Complex
- Westwood Town Hall Recreation Center
- Winton Hills Recreation Center

4.3 SYSTEM SUMMARY

Overall, the greatest strength of the CRC community centers is the highly-dedicated staff. The majority of CRC staff have been with the agency for several years. There are shortcomings in several facilities that involve structural age, cleanliness, maintenance, and operating hours. The greatest challenge for the older community centers is the functional requirements necessary to achieve utilization of spaces for current trends. A strategic and standards-based approach is needed to address the facility designs and management issues affecting the system.

The agency, through the implementation of this business plan, also needs to plan for the total lifecycle cost of facility operation at a system level and communicate its corresponding action plan to center staff and stakeholders. In conjunction with this planning, centers should take steps to more closely coordinate and cooperate to create programs, share staff, and complement each other's hours of operations. Achieving this level of coordination will require empowering center managers to make adjustments to their operations, but also holding them accountable for providing an enhanced level of service.

This approach should also look at each center individually while also viewing them as a sum of the whole. To achieve this, each center should consider the community needs, underserved populations, current trends, and possibly a regional draw including market areas with the potential for growth to create a plan that updates facilities to balance the level of service provided to the city. Since the need for updating and improvements can feel significant, a strategy that targets and prioritizes facilities in a scheduled manner should be considered.

The report contains additional detail on findings from the perspective of staff, users, and the consulting team. Results and narrative are presented for each center, organized in alphabetical order. System wide observations that are prominent in most, if not all, centers are:

4.3.1 STRENGTHS

- Dedicated energetic staff, many of whom have come up through the CRC from participant to part-time employee and from part-time to fulltime employee.
- Diverse programs offered throughout the Cincinnati Recreation Commission.
- History of the CRC with over 90 years of providing services to Cincinnati.
- Successful partnerships for centers with community organizations & businesses.
- The number of recreation centers, pools, tennis courts, game fields are far above the national average on a per capita basis.
- Some facilities very well maintained and other no so much.
- Most recreation centers have good amenities to compliment indoor spaces such as tennis courts, sports fields, playgrounds, pools, basketball courts, walking trails etc.
- Staffing levels are good for some sites and poor in other sites and need to be addressed.
- Best programs are summer camps, after school programs, senior services, art programs, gym sports programs for kids, fitness classes and community rentals of space.
- Staff are innovative with how they maximize the use of their building's spaces to try to meet customer needs, but in some cases is more of a negative than a positive.
- The Department makes good use of federal grants for the youth food programs in the areas they serve.

4.3.2 CHALLENGES

- Fitness equipment in many of the centers is handed down from another center, worn down and not inviting to a user.
- Spaces within underperforming centers needs to be rededicated and repurposed to specific needs of the residents served.
- Facilities need deep cleaned annually and schedule necessary repairs/painting during a period when staff can do this uninterrupted. Currently there is no time that exists for this work to occur.
- Cluttered message areas with too many flyers and pamphlets makes it difficult for a user to grasp what is important to focus on as a user.
- Recreation centers do not have consistent hours of operations and are open on a very selected basis on weekends. Most are closed on weekends.
- Many recreation centers have a poor design as it applies to entrances, size of multi-purpose rooms, fitness spaces are too small, poor lighting, low levels of sunlight in the building, lack of storage areas, poorly designed restrooms, ventilation and infrastructure issues like leaking roofs.
- Many of the recreation facilities have very low use during the day from 9-3pm and need to evaluate hours that support user needs versus low use.
- Most of the recreation centers offer similar type of core programs with no theming to build up a wider audience. This causes some centers to compete with each other.
- For the most part recreation centers are not classified by size, hours or amenities.
- There is limited use of performance measures by staff to demonstrate the efficient and productive use of recreation facilities and staff.
- Some facilities are enormously well maintained and others not so well.
- Hours are limited to primarily Monday through Friday 6am-9pm and or 9am to 9pm with a few centers open on Saturday's for 4 or 5 hours. This makes it difficult for recreation centers to serve people who want to recreate on weekends.
- The backgrounds of staff vary greatly. There is not a lot of cross training on how the best recreation centers operate to maximize their use as well as what great programming standards look like.
- Staff do not have good market data to make good decisions in the field as to what the community needs as it applies to recreation services. Data development and tracking needs to be made a priority.
- Most of the recreation centers need some program room improvements such as floating dance floors in dance rooms, appropriate floor mats for fitness areas, lighting, color schemes and use of murals to energy up their respective centers.
- Classification of core essential services, important services and value-added services are not outlined for staff to manage to. This would create new energy in their centers if this could be created.
- Membership prices are difficult to understand, to market to users, as well as needing daily rates.
- Managers have no say in how aquatics are managed at their sites but are approached with complaints from visitors. This needs to be addressed.
- Athletics is centralized but should include center staff involvement in how developed and managed on site.
- There is lack of consistent signage and branding of CRC in the recreation centers. Some are good, and some are not so good.
- The system has an enormous amount of paper signs and needs signage plans in buildings to direct users appropriately.
- Signage outside needs a complete redo in most recreation facilities PROS evaluated.

4.3.3 OPPORTUNITIES

- Updating the recreation centers is imperative to the future success of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission. This includes technology, fitness equipment, façade, and internal software systems that place valuable data in the hands of managers on a daily basis.
- Centralize communication and marketing design standards to create templates that empower staff to create information pieces as needed needs to occur.
- Bring CRC we are…. Campaign into the facilities. This could be done in key focal areas of each facility. An example would be in the gyms with a thick stripe in the middle of the wall that encompasses the whole area and defines what CRC is. This would bring some branding and energy to these facilities.
- Update older recreation centers with the CRC logo and branding, when possible add to the middle of gym floors.
- Video boards inside the facilities could assist with uncluttering the message areas and provide a direct consistent message to users of what programs are available, when and how to get involved. With technology today, this could also help attract attention to the facility signs outside the facility. These are also relatively simple and quick to update with new messaging.
- Vision/Mission/Values at each site, enlarged (poster size), professionally framed, and mounted at the entrances along with a greeting ("Welcome to…" and then a "Thank you for visiting" as you exit).
- CRC recreation centers could benefit greatly from updated design standards for defined spaces within the facility that address unmet needs through identified programming moving forward. This could include upbeat color schemes that are inviting to the user and makes the facilities more attractive. Hiring an interior facility designer to look at each site with the goal of updating three or four sites a year to make sites more attractive and inviting to the user. Also, space standards for size of fitness rooms, art rooms, dance rooms, child watch and preschools spaces, should be established to maximize the value and use of space. All spaces should be made to be as multi-functional as possible to not have too many single focused spaces. This will provide maximum programming to recreation center staff.
- Mini business plans can have a powerful impact on big picture direction, motivating staff, defining the goals, creating performance measures and ultimately accountability to maximize the use of facilities and program spaces in recreation centers.
- SAC & CCD with great program offerings that have high participation should develop those programs into a training program that can be implemented into the other center throughout the system.
- Consistency in facility signage and emergency action plans within each room is needed.
- Some recreation centers could be a silver sneakers provider site to entice greater participation levels by seniors and provide another revenue source especially those with a walking track.
- Need a consistent marketing campaign and pricing program for recreation center memberships.
- Classification of the recreation centers needs to be established such as: (family, community, regional, neighborhood, etc.).
- Consistency in staff uniforms. Managers should stand out and appear more business/business casual in attire. T-shirts are acceptable for part-time and volunteers.
- Up lighting the outside of recreation centers would help highlight the facilities to the community and draw awareness to them.
- Center Directors need to be more involved in how the outside of their buildings are programmed so they can coordinate better with the community on the services provided.
- Certain rooms should have TV's and music playing in them to create the right atmosphere for users.
- Need to consider" Welcome To ____ Center" signs and "Thank You for Visiting Your ____Recreation Center" in the buildings.

- Need better consistency for staff as it applies to location of name tags, uniforms to create a consistent look. Some center staff were better defined that others.
- Cleaning standards need to be established for each Center for what needs to be done on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis.
- Rotating Center Directors should be considered for the future to grow the talent level of staff in the system.
- Balancing the staff ages should be considered in recreation centers so the agency can relate to all the different users in the facility.
- Kitchens need to be certified as well as child care spaces.
- When renovating spaces, indoor playgrounds or play features can add some energy to the facilities.

CHAPTER FIVE - RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the Program and Facilities Business Plan (Plan) process, the consulting team performed a series of Recreation Program Assessments of the programs and services offered by the Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC). These assessments offer an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings within each of the five Planning Areas, shown below, as well as an overall view of the special services offered system-wide.

The following chapter is an overview which identifies strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities regarding programming from each of the six Recreation Program Assessments. The assessment also helps in identifying core program areas, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents.

The consulting team based these program findings and comments from a review of information provided by the Department's staff including program descriptions, financial data, partnership agreements, promotion methods, etc. This report addresses the program offerings from a systems perspective for the entire portfolio of programs, as well as individual program information.

Area 1 (Far West)	Area 2 (Central)	Area 3 (Central)	Area 4 (Central)	Area 5 (Far East)
• Dunham Recreation Center	• Bush Recreation Center	• Bond Hill Recreation Center	• Clifton Recreation Center	• Leblond Recreation Center
• Price Hill Recreation Center	• Corryville Recreation Center	• Hartwell Recreation Center	• College Hill Recreation Center	• Madisonville Recreation Center
• Sayler Park Recreation Center	• Evanston Recreation Center	• Hirsch Recreation Center	• McKie Recreation Center	• Mt. Washington Recreation Center
• Westwood Town Hall	• Lincoln Recreation Center	• North Avondale Recreation Center	• Millvale Recreation Center	• Oakley Recreation Center
		• Winston Hills Recreation Center		• Pleasant Ridge Recreation Center

5.1.1 SYSTEM-WIDE OVERVIEW

The Department offers a wide gamut of programs ranging from sports and athletics to arts and crafts to nature and outdoors. The following section is a brief overview of all program offerings provided.

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** need to effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area, while being consistent throughout all recreation centers. This should be somewhat centralized, in that, program staff and marketing should collaborate on developing benefits for each core program area that are used consistently in messaging.

- **Age segment distribution** is good but needs to be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics. There are many "Primary" age segments which speaks to the need for greater focus on core services, quality service delivery, and to build participation and reach. There should be a centralized determination on which core services are to be provided as primary to each planning area and city-wide special services.

- **Program lifecycles** are inconsistent amongst the planning areas and city-wide special services. While there are benefits to centralize some of these key performance indicators, this is one that should not be, as participation levels will vary across planning areas and even recreation centers.

- The Department's **volunteer program** allows residents to easily get involved and give back to the community through various volunteer opportunities; special events, programs, etc. This is an area where the staff within each planning area can build community advocates and partners within the system. Setting centralized guidelines for establishing, coordinating, educating and executing as direction for the staff can keep the approach to volunteers consistent and help with tracking.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: print program guides, the Department's website, brochures and flyers, marquees, and in-facility promotions/signage as a part of the marketing mix.

  o Better identify marketing Return on Investment for all marketing initiatives

  o Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.

  o Be more intentional with social media to create a unified perception in the city.

- Currently, **customer feedback methods** are rather limited and seldom utilized. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating user feedback as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. This should be a centralized driven process that includes marketing. This will help ensure quality recreation programs making the marketing of services better. Plus, customer feedback results can be used in social media to communicate how the participants feel about a service.

- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the board. Currently, the different approaches used are cost recovery rates, customers' ability to pay rates, location rates, and age segment rates. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to better incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. There are various approaches to cost recovery across the planning areas. In addition, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals. Pricing strategies should be a centralized approach with guidelines that build in flexibility for

staff to adapt to local economic factors. Documenting these strategies and the local factors are key to avoid losing sight of the outcomes.

- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being fully utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. Knowing the total cost of service is important. It does not mean that it is only for determining cost recovery, but it can also be beneficial in a cost benefit analysis of programming to determine whether or not CRC should continue to provide the service.

5.2 PLANNING AREA ONE: PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Planning area (area 1) incorporates the following recreation centers:

- Dunham Recreation Center
- Price Hill Recreation Center
- Sayler Park Recreation Center
- Westwood Town Hall Recreation Center

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** need to effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area, while being consistent throughout all recreation centers. Planning area staff should collaborate with marketing to developing benefits for each core program area that are used consistently in messaging, system-wide and in facilities.

- **Age segment distribution** is good but needs to be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics. There are many "Primary" age segments which speaks to the need for greater focus on core services, better quality service delivery, build participation and reach. There should be a centralized determination on which core services are to be provided as primary to each planning area and city-wide special services. Defining the focus can help increase quality, increase awareness, and build a stronger bond within each community. The local perspective will be important to this approach.

- **Program lifecycles** amongst the four-recreation center in Area 1 have the same program in different lifecycle stages across recreation centers. This can appear to be inconsistent when in fact there is a local perspective that needs to be taken into account. Collectively, Area 1 mirrors the recommended program distribution. Recreation Centers with a very high number of programs in the Mature stage, need new programming as a countermeasure. Recreation Centers with good lifecycle distribution, should prepare new programs and implement them as older programs are retired. Recreation Centers with a higher percentage of programs in decline, should develop new programs for people with the same interest to retain participation and build up from there.

- The Department's **volunteer program** allows residents to easily get involved and give back to the community through various volunteer opportunities; special events, programs, etc. This is an area where the staff within each planning area can build community advocates and partners within the system. Using a set of centralized guidelines, recreation center staff should coordinate opportunities, educate the volunteers on the work and the benefits to the system from their assistance, execute the work and track

volunteers with a sign in sheet. Take pictures of the workers having fun and completing the tasks. When educating the volunteers increase their perspective by giving context to the magnitude of the work. As an example, flowerbed plantings, educate them on the number of plants, the square footage of landscaped areas, and the lifecycle of the plants. High level numbers can be shared at the beginning but give them a half sheet with more details that they can take and share. This will give volunteers an opportunity to post and share their experience.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: print program guides, the Department's website, brochures and flyers, marquees, and in-facility promotions/signage as a part of the marketing mix.

  o Better identify marketing Return on Investment for all marketing initiatives

  o Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.

- Currently, **customer feedback methods** are rather limited and seldom utilized. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating user feedback as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Marketing should have a list of questions that help define customer satisfaction, identify repeat customers, and open-ended responses that might be used as testimonials.

- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the board. Currently, the different approaches used are cost recovery rates, customers' ability to pay rates, location rates, and age segment rates. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to better incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. In addition, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.

- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being fully utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. Knowing the total cost of service is important. It does not mean that it is only for determining cost recovery, but it can also be beneficial in a cost benefit analysis of programming to determine whether or not CRC should continue to provide the service.

5.3 PLANNING AREA TWO PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Planning area (area 2) incorporates the following recreation centers:

- Bush Recreation Center

- Corryville Recreation Center

- Evanston Recreation Center

- Lincoln Recreation Center

- OTR Recreation Center

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** need to effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area, while being consistent throughout all recreation centers. Planning area staff should

collaborate with marketing to developing benefits for each core program area that are used consistently in messaging, system-wide and in facilities.

- **Age segment distribution** is good but needs to be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics. There are not too many "Primary" age segments in this planning area. Greater focus on core services and which programs are essential will help maintain focus and quality delivery. There should be a centralized determination on which core services are to be provided as primary to each planning area and city-wide special services. The local perspective will be important to this approach and offering programs that fit a current need or trend.

- **Program lifecycles** are consistently high in the introductory stages amongst the four-recreation center in Area 2. Collectively, Area 2 is high in the percentage of introductory lifecycle stages. Recreation Centers with a very high number of programs in the Introductory Stages, need to ensure program participation is monitored by looking at the last three to five times the program was offered and identifying the participation levels. Programs that do not meet an existing need or current trend will transition through the lifecycle stages rather quickly. To combat this, a pipeline of new programming should begin using data from the program Priority Investment Rating (survey results) to offer programs in activities that are of high interest.

- The Department's **volunteer program** allows residents to easily get involved and give back to the community through various volunteer opportunities; special events, programs, etc. This is an area where the staff within each planning area can build community advocates and partners within the system. Using a set of centralized guidelines, recreation center staff should coordinate opportunities, educate the volunteers on the work and the benefits to the system from their assistance, execute the work and track volunteers with a sign in sheet. Take pictures of the workers having fun and completing the tasks. When educating the volunteers increase their perspective by giving context to the magnitude of the work. As an example, flowerbed plantings, educate them on the number of plants, the square footage of landscaped areas, and the lifecycle of the plants. High level numbers can be shared at the beginning, but give them a half sheet with more details that they can take and share. This will give volunteers an opportunity to post and share their experience.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: print program guides, the Department's website, brochures and flyers, marquees, and in-facility promotions/signage as a part of the marketing mix.

  o Better identify marketing Return on Investment for all marketing initiatives

  o Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.

- Currently, **customer feedback methods** are rather limited and seldom utilized. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating user feedback as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Marketing should have a list of questions that help define customer satisfaction, identify repeat customers, and open-ended responses that might be used as testimonials.

- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the board. Currently, the different approaches used are cost recovery rates, customers' ability to pay rates, location rates, and age segment rates. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to better incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. In addition, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.

- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being fully utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. Knowing the total cost of service is important. It does not mean that it is only for determining cost recovery, but it can also be beneficial in a cost benefit analysis of programming to determine whether or not CRC should continue to provide the service.

5.4 PLANNING AREA THREE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Planning area (area 3) incorporates the following recreation centers:

- Bond Hill Recreation Center

- Hartwell Recreation Center

- Hirsch Recreation Center

- North Avondale Recreation Center

- Winston Hills Recreation Center

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** need to effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area, while being consistent throughout all recreation centers. Planning area staff should collaborate with marketing to developing benefits for each core program area that are used consistently in messaging, system-wide and in facilities.

- **Age segment distribution** is good for Planning Area 3, but needs to be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics. The primary served in this area are youth with one recreation center only serving youth in the Leisure Skills & Education core program area. Identifying the "Primary" age segments targeted with core essential programs at each recreation center can help define focus and manage workload with quality services.

- **Program lifecycles** for the four operating recreation centers in Area 3 are collectively heavy in the Growth and Decline stages. Bond Hill, Hartwell and North Avondale recreation centers have the bulk of programs in the Growth stage and Hartwell has the most in Decline stage. More attention needs to be placed on creating the pipeline of new programs for Bond Hill and Hartwell to replace the programs that transition from Growth to Mature and Saturated stages in order to retain customers.

- The Department's **volunteer program** allows residents to easily get involved and give back to the community through various volunteer opportunities; special events, programs, etc. This is an area where the staff within each planning area can build community advocates and partners within the system. Using a set of centralized guidelines, recreation center staff should coordinate opportunities, educate the volunteers on the work and the benefits to the system from their assistance, execute the work and track volunteers with a sign in sheet. Take pictures of the workers having fun and completing the tasks. When educating the volunteers increase their perspective by giving context to the magnitude of the work. As an example, flowerbed plantings, educate them on the number of plants, the square footage of landscaped areas, and the lifecycle of the plants. High level numbers can be shared at the beginning but give them a half sheet with more details that they can take and share. This will give volunteers an opportunity to post and share their experience.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: print program guides, the Department's website, brochures and flyers, marquees, and in-facility promotions/signage as a part of the marketing mix.

    o Better identify marketing Return on Investment for all marketing initiatives

    o Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.

- Currently, **customer feedback methods** are consistently used by some recreation centers and seldom utilized by others. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating consistent user feedback as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Marketing should have a list of questions that help define customer satisfaction, identify repeat customers, and open-ended responses that might be used as testimonials.

- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the recreation centers in Area 3. Currently, the different approaches used are not consistent across the recreation centers for each core program area. Strategies used include cost recovery rates, customers' ability to pay rates, location rates, and age segment rates. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to better incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. In addition, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.

Financial performance measures such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being fully utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. Knowing the total cost of service is important. It does not mean that it is only for determining cost recovery, but it can also be beneficial in a cost benefit analysis of programming to determine whether or not CRC should continue to provide the service.

5.5 PLANNING AREA FOUR PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Planning area (area 4) incorporates the following recreation centers: This grouping was provided by staff to the Consulting Team.

- Clifton Recreation Center

- College Hill Recreation Center

- McKie Recreation Center

- Millvale Recreation Center

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** need to effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area, while being consistent throughout all recreation centers. Planning area staff should collaborate with marketing to developing benefits for each core program area that are used consistently in messaging, system-wide and in facilities.

- **Age segment distribution** is good but needs to be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics. Some recreation centers in Area 4 serve all age segments and should be determined if this is sustainable and programs are being delivered at a consistent level of quality.

- **Program lifecycles** collectively amongst the four-recreation center in Area 4 have the best distribution. While they are heavy in the three introductory stages, eventually, these will transition through the lifecycles. These centers should be prepared for programs to transition into Mature and Saturated stages by having planned future programs to fill in when others are retired.

- The Department's **volunteer program** allows residents to easily get involved and give back to the community through various volunteer opportunities; special events, programs, etc.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: print program guides, the Department's website, brochures and flyers, marquees, and in-facility promotions/signage as a part of the marketing mix.

  o Better identify marketing Return on Investment for all marketing initiatives

  o Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.

- Currently, **customer feedback methods** are rather limited and seldom utilized. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating user feedback as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Marketing should have a list of questions that help define customer satisfaction, identify repeat customers, and open-ended responses that might be used as testimonials.

- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the board. Currently, the different approaches used are cost recovery rates, customers' ability to pay rates, location rates, and age segment rates. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to better incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. In addition, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.

- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being fully utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. Knowing the total cost of service is important. It does not mean that it is only for determining cost recovery, but it can also be beneficial in a cost benefit analysis of programming to determine whether or not CRC should continue to provide the service.

5.6 PLANNING AREA FIVE PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Planning area (area 5) incorporates the following recreation centers:

- Leblond Recreation Center

- Madisonville Recreation Center

- Mt. Washinton Recreation Center

- Oakley Recreation Center

- Pleasant Ridge Recreation Center

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** need to effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area, while being consistent throughout all recreation centers. Planning area staff should

collaborate with marketing to developing benefits for each core program area that are used consistently in messaging, system-wide and in facilities.

- **Age segment distribution** is good but needs to be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics. One recreation center has all age segments served as "Primary" and should look to see if this is sustainable over time. One other recreation has 51 of 63 as "Secondary". Are these secondary age segments providing substantial participation or is it mostly auxiliary, where if they sign up, it is marked as a "Secondary" age segment? If very little to no effort is being placed on targeting these age segments with messaging, then they may not be secondary.

- **Program lifecycles** collectively create a good distribution.   The recreation centers with a high level of programming gin the "Growth" and "Mature" stages should begin preparing new programs to replace those that transition into Declining stages. In recreation centers where the distribution is high in the Declining stages, the staff should also prepare to inject new programming.

- The Department's **volunteer program** allows residents to easily get involved and give back to the community through various volunteer opportunities; special events, programs, etc. This is an area where the staff within each planning area can build community advocates and partners within the system. Using a set of centralized guidelines, recreation center staff should coordinate opportunities, educate the volunteers on the work and the benefits to the system from their assistance, execute the work and track volunteers with a sign in sheet. Take pictures of the workers having fun and completing the tasks. When educating the volunteers increase their perspective by giving context to the magnitude of the work. As an example, flowerbed plantings, educate them on the number of plants, the square footage of landscaped areas, and the lifecycle of the plants. High level numbers can be shared at the beginning but give them a half sheet with more details that they can take and share. This will give volunteers an opportunity to post and share their experience.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: print program guides, the Department's website, brochures and flyers, marquees, and in-facility promotions/signage as a part of the marketing mix.

    o   Better identify marketing Return on Investment for all marketing initiatives

    o   Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions.

- Currently, **customer feedback methods** are rather limited and seldom utilized. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department begins incorporating user feedback as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Marketing should have a list of questions that help define customer satisfaction, identify repeat customers, and open-ended responses that might be used as testimonials.

- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the board. Currently, the different approaches used are cost recovery rates, customers' ability to pay rates, location rates, and age segment rates. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to better incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. In addition, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.

- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being fully utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be

beneficial to the Department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. Knowing the total cost of service is important. It does not mean that it is only for determining cost recovery, but it can also be beneficial in a cost benefit analysis of programming to determine whether or not CRC should continue to provide the service.

5.7 CITY-WIDE SPECIAL SERVICES PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

As Department and its offerings continue to evolve, it will be crucial for staff to ensure key metrics are being tracked and monitored on an annual basis. Below are some City-wide Special Services takeaways that were identified throughout the Program Assessment Analysis:

- The Department has identified the following as **City-wide Functions**:

- Athletics

- Aquatics

- Seniors

- Therapeutics

- Marketing

o **Age segment distribution** is broad among all City-wide Functions. Given the City's existing and projected demographics, there is a potential need to enhance programs targeted toward seniors and those under the age of 18. The City should continue to monitor the shift and trends in programming for older populations to ensure the needs of residents are still being met. Where segments are not able to be fully served by CRC, partners should be sought out to augment efforts.

- **Program Lifecycles:** Staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis on the basis of tracked participation numbers, ideally on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance.   Furthermore, the City-wide Functions could include annual performance measures for each Core Program Area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of new programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.

- The current **Program Classification** breakdown is relatively favorable. City-wide Functions staff should update the program classification analysis on an annual basis to track the evolution. This information can also be valuable when analyzing needs, trends, and "No Go" programs to ensure the right mix for the community is being achieved.

- The Department should utilize these classifications when generating **Cost Recovery Goals**.

- The Department's existing **volunteer program** allows residents to get involved through various projects, special events, and programs. Staff should ensure volunteer opportunities are promoted and easily available to residents. A centralized system-wide approach to volunteering should be used and metrics tracked for reporting purposes.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the Department uses a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs. Most common methods utilized are print and online program guides, the website, email blasts, and brochures/flyers. It is recommended that the staff keep its marketing mix consistent throughout all City-wide Functions, maintains brand consistency and continues to tell its story through social media. Use the survey results identifying how people learn about programs and the

preferred way to learn about programs to reach potential customers. Preferred ways include; email, Facebook, friends & neighbors, community signs, direct mail, flyers at facilities as the top six.

5.8 EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREAS

Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. To help achieve this mission, it is important to identify Core Program Areas based on current and future needs in order to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. The philosophy of the Core Program Area assists staff, policy makers, and the public focus on what is most important. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.

- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency's overall budget.

- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.

- The program area has wide demographic appeal.

- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the programs area's offerings.

- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.

- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.

- The agency controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

In consultation with Department staff, the planning team identified the following Core Program Areas currently being offered:

- Arts & Crafts

- Games & Hobbies

- Health & Fitness

- Leisure Skills & Education

- Nature & Outdoors

- Sports & Athletics

- Trips, Travel & Events

When **developing program plans** and strategies, it is useful to consider all the Core Program Areas and individual program analysis discussed in this Program Assessment. Lifecycle, Age Segment, Classification, and Cost Recovery Goals should all be tracked, and this information along with the latest demographic trends and community input should be factors that lead to program decision-making. As seen in the following figures, community input can help staff focus in on specific program areas to develop new opportunities in and what group of citizens to target including the best marketing methods to use.

A simple, easy-to-use tool similar to the table below will help compare programs and prioritize resources using multiple data points, rather than relying solely on one. In addition, this analysis will help staff make an informed, objective case to the public when a program is in decline, but beloved by a few, is retired.

Program Idea *(Name or Concept):* _____

Internal Factors

Priority Ranking:	High	Medium	Low

Program Area:	Core	Non-core

Classification	Essential	Important	Discretionary

Cost Recovery Range	0-40%	60-80%	80+%

Age Segment	Primary	Secondary

Sponsorship/Partnership

Potential Partnerships	Monetary	Volunteers	Partner Skill	Location/Space

Potential Sponsors	Monetary	Volunteers	Sponsor Skill	Location/Space

Market Competition

Number of Competitors	_____

Competitiveness	High	Medium	Low

Growth Potential	High	Low

If the program / service is determined to have strong priority, appropriate cost recovery, good age segment appeal, good partnership potential, and strong market conditions the next step is to determine the marketing methods using the figure below.

Marketing & Promotion Methods

Program Idea *(Name or Concept):* _____

Marketing Methods	Content Developed	Contact Information	Start Date
Activity Guide			
Website			
Newspaper Article			
Radio			
Social Media			
Flyers - Public Places			
Newspaper Ad			
Email Notification			
Event Website			
School Flyer/Newsletter			
Television			
Digital Sign			
Friends & Neighbors Groups			
Staff Promotion @ Events			

5.9 COST OF SERVICE & COST RECOVERY

Cost recovery targets should be identified for each Core Program Area, at minimum, and for specific programs or events where possible. The previously identified Core Program Areas would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics, which would theoretically group programs with similar cost recovery and subsidy goals.

Determining cost recovery performance and using it to inform pricing decisions involves a three-step process:

- Classify all programs and services based on the public or private benefit they provide (as completed in the previous section).
- Conduct a Cost of Service Analysis to calculate the full cost of each program.
- Establish a cost recovery percentage, through Planning Area policy, for each program or program type based on the outcomes of the previous two steps and adjust program prices accordingly.

The following provides more detail on steps 2 & 3.

5.9.1 UNDERSTANDING THE FULL COST OF SERVICE

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting needs to be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and program staff should be trained on this process.

A Cost of Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (i.e., program-specific) and indirect (i.e., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost of Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program but provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs. The figure below illustrates the common types of costs that must be accounted for in a Cost of Service Analysis.

The methodology for determining the total Cost of Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants

- Number of tasks performed

- Number of consumable units

- Number of service calls

- Number of events

- Required time for offering program/service

Agencies use Cost of Service Analyses to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by the Planning Area between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost of Service totals have been calculated. Program staff should be trained on the process of conducting a Cost of Service Analysis, and the process should be undertaken on a regular basis.

5.9.2 CURRENT COST RECOVERY

Currently, cost recovery performance is not tracked at a program level. PROS recommend using Core Program Areas as a basis for categorization. Cost recovery targets should be identified for each core program area, at least, and for specific programs or events if necessary. The previously identified core programs would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics, which would theoretically group programs with similar cost recovery and subsidy goals.

Targets should reflect the degree to which the program area provides a public versus private good. Programs providing public benefits should be subsidized more; programs providing private benefits should seek to recover costs and/or generate revenue for other services. Generally, value-added programs, which are less critical to the organizational mission, should aim to yield a higher cost recovery rate to sustain them, leaving the limited tax-based appropriations to fund core-essential programs.

To assist in the planning and implementing of cost recovery policies, PROS has developed the definitions presented in the pyramid below to help classify specific programs within program areas.
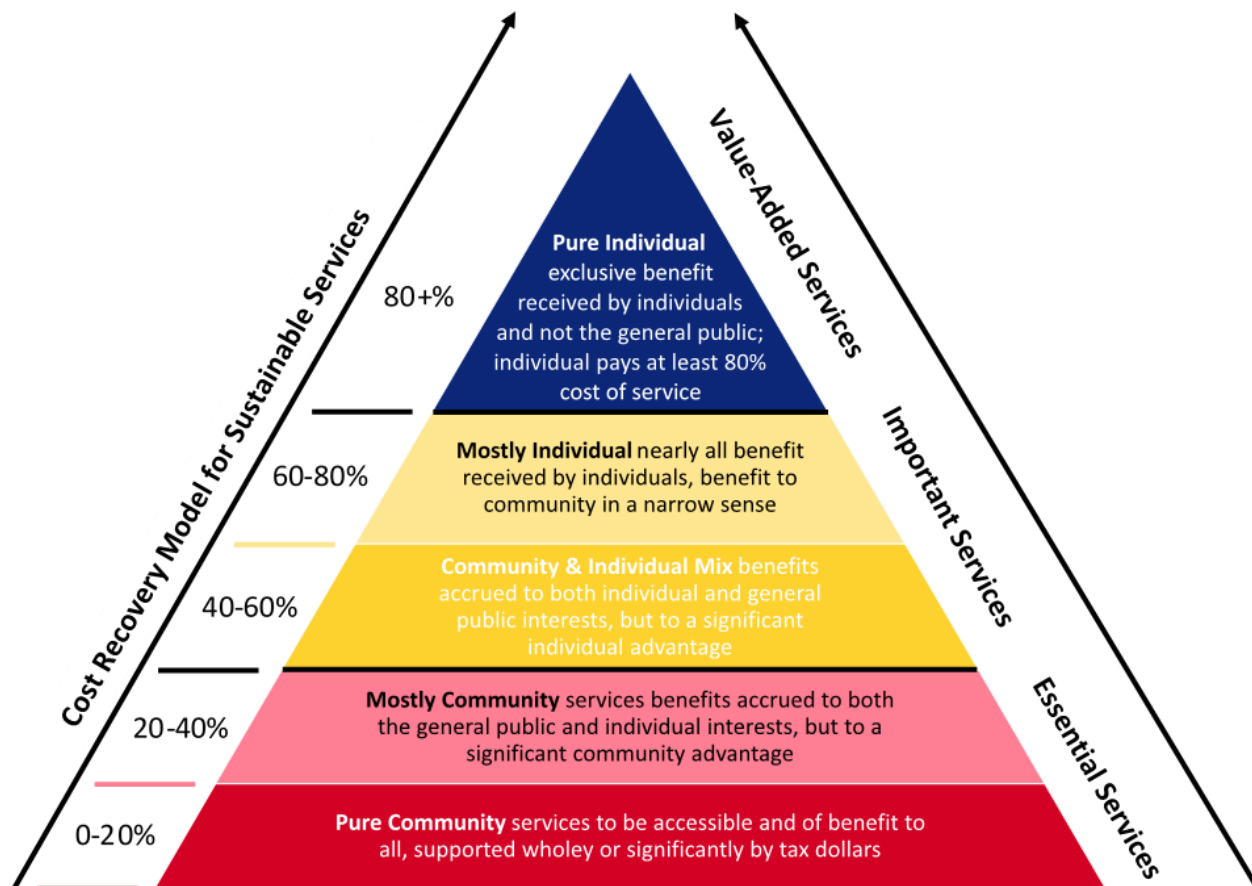
Programs in the Essential category are critical to achieving the departmental mission and providing community-wide benefits and, therefore, generally receive priority for tax-dollar subsidization. Programs falling into the Important or Value-Added classifications generally represent programs that receive lower priority for subsidization. Important programs contribute to the organizational mission but are not essential to it; thus, cost recovery for these programs should be high (i.e., at least 80% overall). Value Added programs are not critical to the mission and should be prevented from drawing upon limited public funding, so overall cost recovery for these programs should be near or in excess of 100%.

5.10 SPONSORS / PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

5.10.1 SPONSORS / PARTNERS

Currently, the Department has several community partners with the recreation centers and within the planning area. CRC is currently implementing best practice with regards to documenting, tracking and managing partnerships through a database. The current partners with recreation centers within Planning Area 1 are listed below by recreations center.

In order to truly sell the potential benefits of partnering with the system, there is a need for a strong focused sponsorship campaign. Currently the Department highlights sponsorship opportunities and special events on their website. CRC sponsorship opportunities include camp scholarships, athletic leagues, memberships and recreation facilities or sponsoring the annual golf outing benefiting youth services. CRC is also willing to work with corporate and individual sponsorship through an in-kind donation. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the Department develop a detailed listings of participation numbers and user demographics for each core program area, larger programs, and events. This will assist potential sponsors in identifying how well the park system participants align with their target market and will allow them to choose the right fit.

Additionally, these metrics will also help the Department evaluate its return on investment (ROI) for sponsorships / partnerships for various programs/events. Additionally, it would be beneficial for the Department to publish these metrics in reports, on the website, social media, and promote them aggressively.

Other recommendations for Sponsorship include:

SPONSOR RECOGNITION

Continue recognizing all existing or past sponsors for their support strengthening the working relationships with sponsors. The brochure's imagery could provide illustrations of promotions that may have been done or could be done to demonstrate sponsorship positioning. The Department should consider adding a page in the brochure or annual report thanking all of their current partners.

PACKAGE OFFERINGS

It has been seen that the greater the opportunities to package the offerings, the more the likelihood of selling sponsorship. Packaging sponsorship opportunities for Events as well as Signature Parks and Facilities including the recreation centers, Otto Armleder Memorial Park & Recreation Complex, Riverside Park, Schmidt Recreation Complex, etc. could be a viable option to provide additional sponsor value as well.

Providing sample packaging options that tie-in some signature special events with some of the smaller events would ensure that the staff up-sells events that may not be sold otherwise, while the partners receive more bang for their buck.

CROWDFUNDING

Crowdfunding websites such as Kickstarter.com, Mightycause.com, Indiegogo.com, etc. have extremely successful examples of public agencies that have successfully partnered and raised revenue to build or enhance parks and facilities, offer programs and even design marketing materials. The Town of Blacksburg Virginia previously raised over $7,600 for a Mountain Biking Skills Park matching grant with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/blacksburg-mountain-biking-skills-park

5.10.2 VOLUNTEER RECOMMENDATIONS

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission is proud of its history with volunteers. More than 35,000 volunteer hours are logged each year to help the organization improve its parks, programs and facilities. The Cincinnati Recreation Commission has several volunteer opportunities which allow residents to give back to the community. Two key areas which are specifically highlighted on the website are volunteering within the neighborhood recreation centers and volunteering for Southwest Ohio Senior Olympics.

It is recommended the Department to continue fostering a system-wide centralized approach to volunteer recruitment and management. Ensuring streamlined procedures, background checks for volunteers working directly with children, and standardized guidelines for volunteer management are critical to making volunteers an effective complement to paid personnel and a valuable asset in reducing operational costs. When managed with respect and used strategically, volunteers can also serve as the primary advocates for the Department and its offerings. A fulltime volunteer coordinator position to manage all aspects of best practices with a volunteer program is recommended due to the amount of communication and tracking.
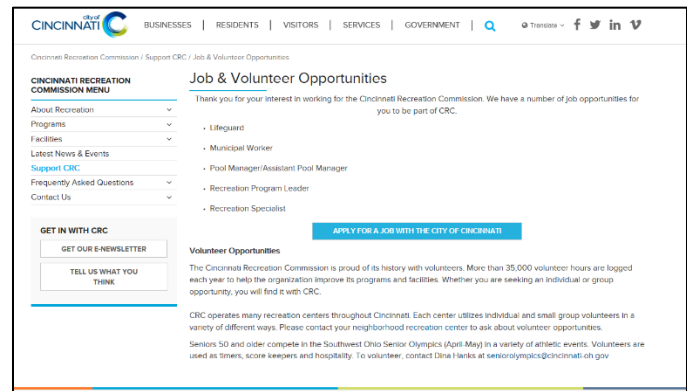
A key part of maintaining the desirability of volunteerism in the Department is developing a good reward and recognition system. The consultant team recommends using tactics similar to those found in frequent flier programs, wherein volunteers can use their volunteer hours to obtain early registration at programs, or discounted pricing at certain programs, rentals or events, or any other Department function.

Other best practices that the Department should be aware of in managing volunteers include:

- Identify volunteer opportunities system-wide, develop job descriptions and acceptance conditions for volunteers (such as background checks).

- Utilize online sources such as www.volunteermatch.org to recruit volunteers.

- Develop a tracking system to quantify the number of volunteer hours according to program area and specific function and document cost savings in more detailed ways.

- Develop documented volunteer recruitment, retention, and recognition systems.

- Involve volunteers in cross-training to expose them to various departmental functions and increase their skill. This can also increase their utility, allowing for more flexibility in making work assignments, and can increase their appreciation and understanding of the Department.

- Add steps to formally document resignation or termination of volunteers. Also, include ways to monitor and track reasons for resignation/termination.

5.11 MARKETING PLATFORMS

5.11.1 MARKETING

This section reviews the Department's marketing and promotions as gleaned from the program worksheets. The number and types of mediums used are certainly varied throughout the system. Developing a true branding plan to create and propagate a message that resonates will be important to maximize the effectiveness of the marketing mediums listed below.

As stated in the program assessment worksheets provided by staff, most programs are promoted via the print program guides, the Department's website, brochures/flyers, marquees, in-facility promotions/signage, and word of mouth. There are also some instances of social media promotions, such as Facebook posts. Areas of opportunity that the Department might want to consider moving forward include: building an App and begin using SMS Marketing and QR Codes.

Given the limited marketing dollars available, it would be helpful for the Department to undertake a marketing return on investment (ROI) assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the marketing mediums undertaken and tailor future marketing spending to focus on the most effective mediums. This could be done by ensuring every registrant and as many on-site users as possible are asked 'How did you hear about us?' Tying the participant responses to marketing mediums would allow for a better understanding of marketing spending and enable greater effectiveness of existing ones while eliminating non-effective mediums.

Cross promoting at special events would be highly recommended. It is imperative that the Department take advantage of the presence of high numbers of relative captive audience in the special event environment to promote its other offerings, programs, facilities, and rentals. Similar cross-promoting programs targeted towards the same age group audiences too should be highly encouraged.

5.11.2 WEBSITE

The current website is user-friendly and quick links on the CRC homepage make it easy for the user to access desired information. The mobile friendly website is a good addition and a key tool in today's times of increased smartphone utilization. The "Latest News" section is a good practice which continuously keeps residents informed on the recent changes or updates that may impact users.

The use of Web 2.0 technology must be increased beyond what is currently used: Facebook and Instagram to other mediums such as YouTube, Twitter, and/or Pinterest. The key to successful implementation of a social network is to move the participants from awareness to action and creating greater user engagement. This could be done by:

- Allowing controlled 'user generated content' by encouraging users to send in their pictures from the Department's special events or programs

- Introducing Facebook-only promotions to drive greater visitation to Facebook

- Leverage the website to obtain customer feedback for programs, parks and facilities and customer service

- Expand opportunities for Crowd-sourcing information on an ongoing basis

  o Some existing resources include **www.mysidewalk.com** and **www.peakdemocracy.com** which can be evaluated if the agency has the resources and can utilize it on an on-going basis

- Provide opportunities for Donations or Crowd-funding through the website

  o **www.kickstarter.org** / **www.indiegogo.com** / **www.razoo.com** for Crowd funding options including printing program guides or developing marketing material

- Maximize the website's revenue generating capabilities

- Conduct annual website strategy workshop with the staff to identify ways and means that the website can support the Department

5.11.3 SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS

SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

Over the last decade, social media has become one of the county's fastest growing trends. With only 24% of the country using social media in 2008; today, an estimated 81% of the U.S. population is currently using some form of social media. With such a large percentage of the population using these online media platforms in their daily lives, it becomes essential for the Department to take advantage of these marketing opportunities. Social media can be a useful and affordable tool to reach current and potentially new system users. Such platforms as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter are extremely popular with not only today's youth but also young and middle-aged adults.

Percentage of U.S. Population Who Currently Use Any Social Media

Year	Percentage
2008	24%
2009	34%
2010	48%
2011	52%
2012	56%
2013	62%
2014	67%
2015	73%
2016	78%
2017	81%
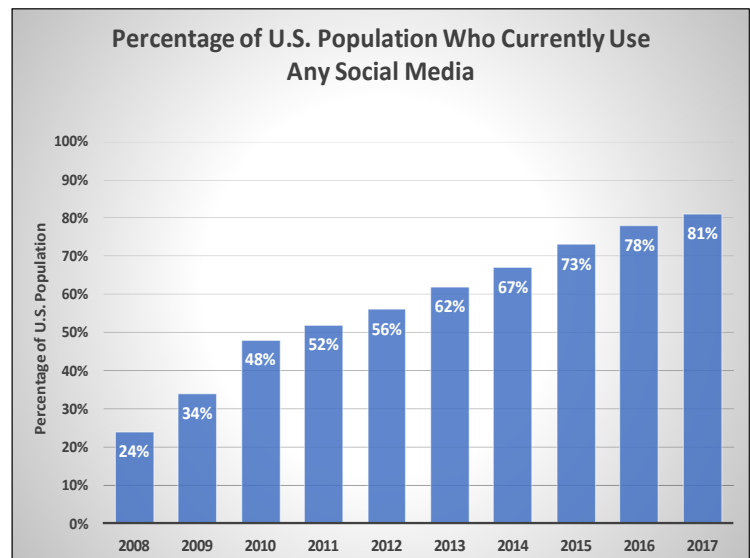
Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/273476/percentage-of-us-population-with-a-social-network-profile/
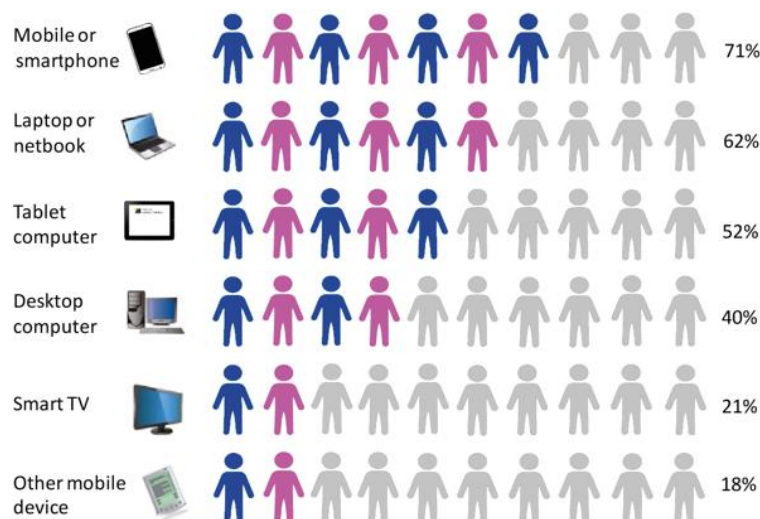
SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

Below is a chart that depicts the most frequently used social media sites throughout the world. As of March 2017, Facebook stands out as the most heavily trafficked social media platform, with an estimated 1.9 billion visitors per month. That is nearly double and triple the number of monthly visitors YouTube and Instagram receive (respectively).

Social Media Platforms by Monthly Visitors

Platform	Monthly Visitors
FACEBOOK	1,940,000,000
YOUTUBE	1,000,000,000
INSTAGRAM	700,000,000
TWITTER	313,000,000
REDDIT	250,000,000
VINE	200,000,000
ASK.FM	160,000,000
PINTEREST	150,000,000
TUMBLR	115,000,000
FLICKR	112,000,000
GOOGLE+	111,000,000
LINKEDIN	106,000,000
VK	90,000,000
CLASSMATES	57,000,000
MEETUP	30,300,000

Source: https://www.dreamgrow.com/top-15-most-popular-social-networking-sites/

MEDIUMS USED TO ACCESS THE INTERNET

The following graphic depicts the various devices used to access the internet. With 71% of internet users utilizing smartphones, it is crucial that all websites offer a mobile friendly option. Additionally, with smartphones being so heavily used, social media sites have become even easier to access and more frequently visited. The Department should be mindful of these trends when creating their marketing mix.

Device	%
Mobile or smartphone	71%
Laptop or netbook	62%
Tablet computer	52%
Desktop computer	40%
Smart TV	21%
Other mobile device	18%

Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2016

5.12 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND FEEDBACK

Customer service is at the root of the success of any organization. A true community-service organization prides itself on identifying its customers' preferences and acting in accordance to help fulfill their needs. In order to do this, an ongoing and system-wide feedback mechanism is of vital importance and the Department's willingness to undertake an extensive customer service training initiative for its staff is a big step in the right direction.

Currently, there is not a system wide approach to customer feedback, with only a select few Core Program Areas collecting user feedback at this time. Post-program evaluations, user surveys, website comments, and online-surveys are sporadically used across the system but not consistently conducted. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that CRC begins incorporating user feedback, on a more frequent and consistent basis, as a key performance measure that can be tracked over time. Additionally, it is recommended that the Department provide customer service training to the entire staff in order to effectively identify and address customer issues as well as enhance the user experience.

5.13 CONCLUSION

As the Department and its offerings continue to evolve, it will be crucial for staff to ensure key metrics are being tracked and monitored on an annual basis. The Recreational Program Assessment will assist the Department in doing so. Below are some overall significant takeaways that were identified throughout the Program Assessment Analysis:

- The Department has identified the following as **Core Program Areas**:

  o Arts & Crafts

  o Games & Hobbies

  o Health & Fitness

  o Leisure Skills & Education

  o Nature & Outdoors

  o Sports & Athletics

  o Trips, Travel & Events

- **Age segment distribution** is heavily primary. The Department needs to ensure there is a focus on two to three segments in each core program area that are primary, identify the secondary where efforts are still beneficial to the community/Department and identify those where efforts are not needed to avoid spreading resources too thin. Where segments are not able to be fully served by CRC, partners should be sought out to augment efforts.

- **Program Lifecycles:** Staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis on the basis of tracked participation numbers, ideally annually, and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance. Furthermore, the Planning Area could include annual performance measures for each Core Program Area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of new programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.

- The current **Program Classification** breakdown is relatively favorable. recreation center staff update the program classification analysis on an annual basis to track the evolution. This information can also be valuable when analyzing needs, trends, and "No Go" programs to ensure the right mix for the right community is being achieved.

  o The Department should utilize these classifications when generating Cost Recovery Goals.

- The Department's existing **volunteer program** allows residents to get involved through various special events and programs. Staff should ensure volunteer opportunities are promoted and easily available to residents. A centralized system-wide approach to volunteering should be used and metrics tracked for reporting purposes.

- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the Department uses a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs. Most common methods utilized are print and online program guides, the website, email blasts, and brochures/flyers. It is recommended that the staff keep its marketing mix consistent throughout all Core Program Areas, maintains brand consistency and continues to tell its story through social media. Use the survey results identifying how people learn about programs and the preferred way to learn about programs to reach potential customers. Preferred ways include; email, Facebook, friends & neighbors, community signs, direct mail, flyers at facilities as the top six.

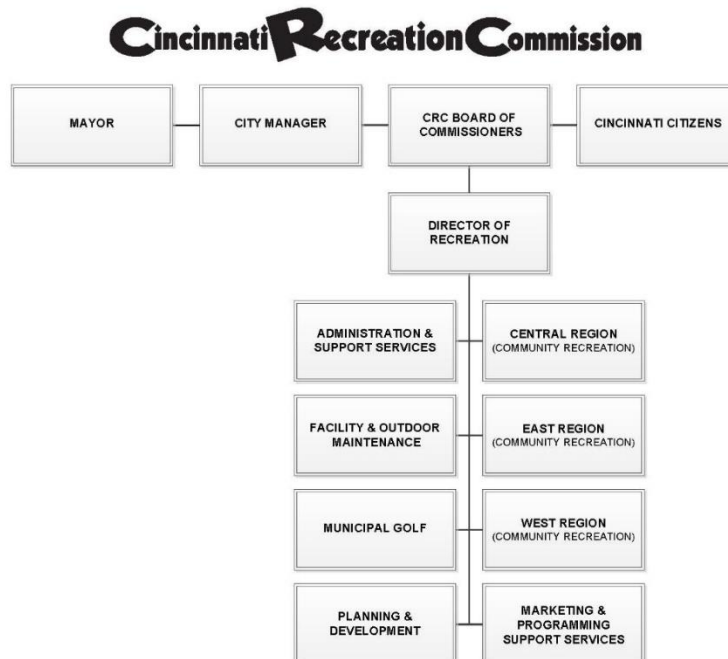# CHAPTER SIX - ORGANIZATIONAL REALIGNMENT

The following pages outline the CRC's organizational realignment. PROS analyzed the following structures:

- Governance Structure
- Administration
- Community Recreation Centers
- SRC Central
- SRC East
- SRC West
- Marketing & Programming Support Services

These existing structures align with best practices of other similar type of departments and of government board and commission structures. These structures demonstrate the Commission oversees the organization through planning, policies and procedures that the Director of Recreation then implements with support staff. In addition, these are in line with best practices to build the organization capacity using functions or service lines as the foundation as the organization evolves. Recommendations for new type of positions can be aligned with the existing organizational structure in place. PROS recommend adding to the Department with a fulltime volunteer coordinator and a training coordinator. Until these can be added, CRC should seek to use volunteers to assist where it makes sense. These two positions can be added into the Administration Structure under the function of Human Resources.
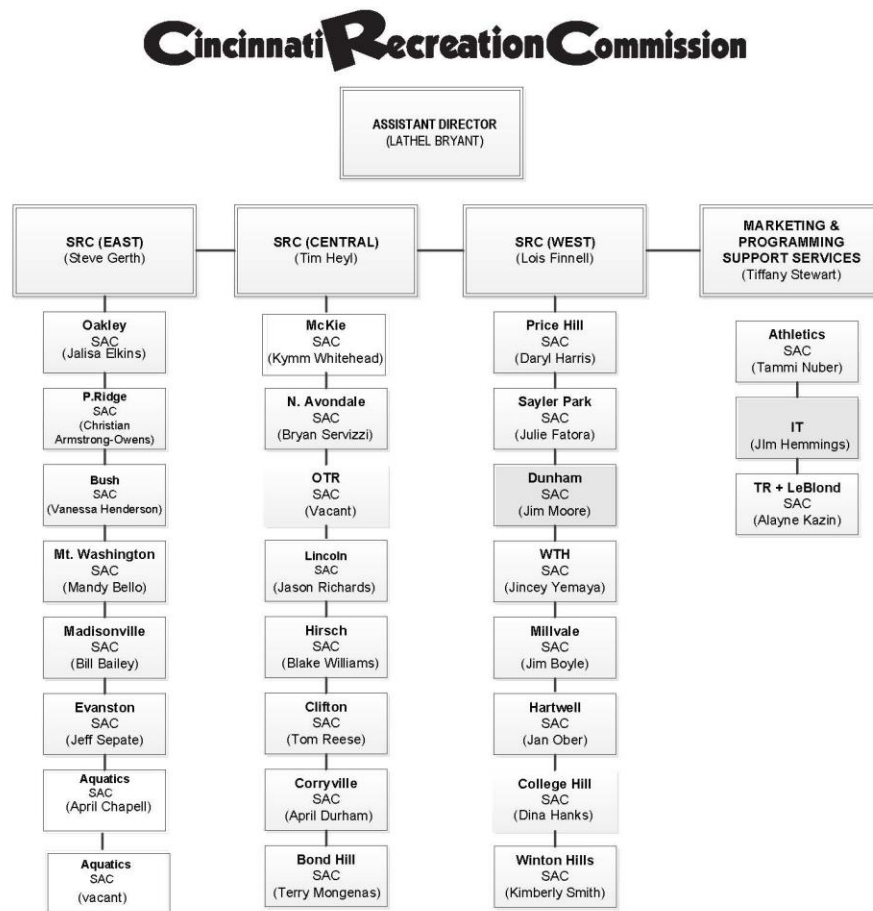
6.1 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The following Organizational Charts for various areas of the system is recommended to stay in place to achieve the development of this Business Plan.
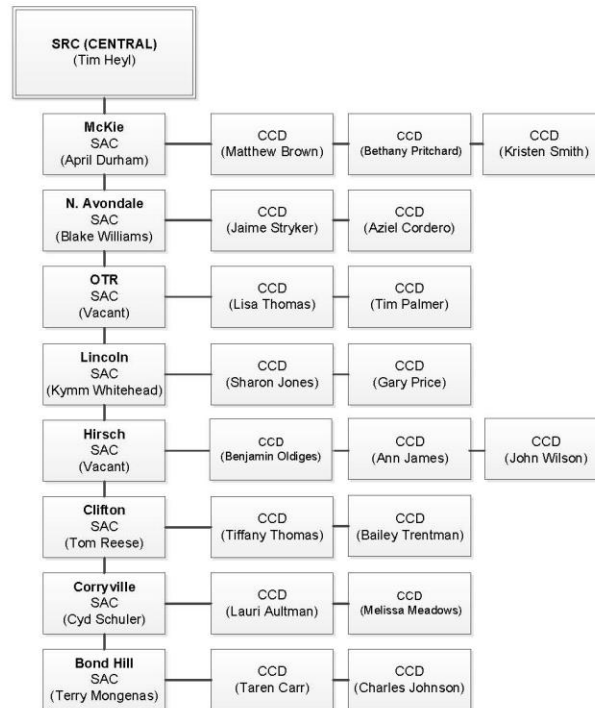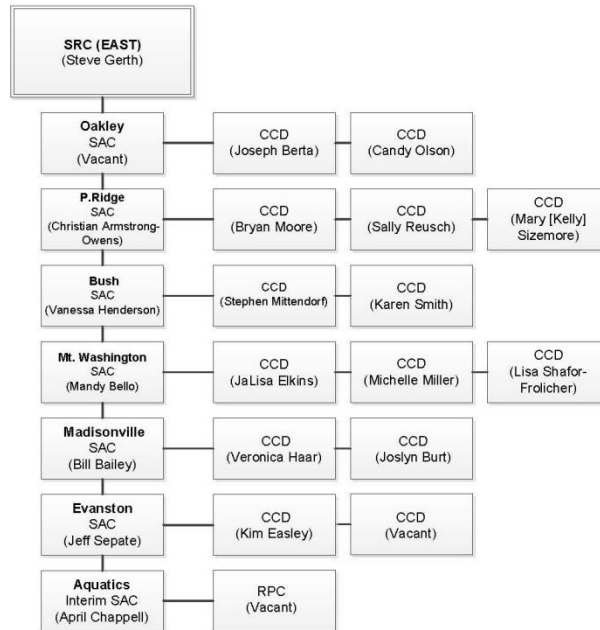
6.2 ADMINISTRATION

Cincinnati Recreation Commission

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
(LATHEL BRYANT)

SRC (EAST)	SRC (CENTRAL)	SRC (WEST)	MARKETING & PROGRAMMING SUPPORT SERVICES
(Steve Gerth)	(Tim Heyl)	(Lois Finnell)	(Tiffany Stewart)

SRC (EAST)	SRC (CENTRAL)	SRC (WEST)	MARKETING & PROGRAMMING
Oakley SAC (Jalisa Elkins)	**McKie** SAC (Kymm Whitehead)	**Price Hill** SAC (Daryl Harris)	**Athletics** SAC (Tammi Nuber)
P.Ridge SAC (Christian Armstrong-Owens)	**N. Avondale** SAC (Bryan Servizzi)	**Sayler Park** SAC (Julie Fatora)	**IT** (Jlm Hemmings)
Bush SAC (Vanessa Henderson)	**OTR** SAC (Vacant)	**Dunham** SAC (Jim Moore)	**TR + LeBlond** SAC (Alayne Kazin)
Mt. Washington SAC (Mandy Bello)	**Lincoln** SAC (Jason Richards)	**WTH** SAC (Jincey Yemaya)	
Madisonville SAC (Bill Bailey)	**Hirsch** SAC (Blake Williams)	**Millvale** SAC (Jim Boyle)	
Evanston SAC (Jeff Sepate)	**Clifton** SAC (Tom Reese)	**Hartwell** SAC (Jan Ober)	
Aquatics SAC (April Chapell)	**Corryville** SAC (April Durham)	**College Hill** SAC (Dina Hanks)	
Aquatics SAC (vacant)	**Bond Hill** SAC (Terry Mongenas)	**Winton Hills** SAC (Kimberly Smith)	

6.3.1 SRC (CENTRAL)

6.3.3 SRC (WEST)

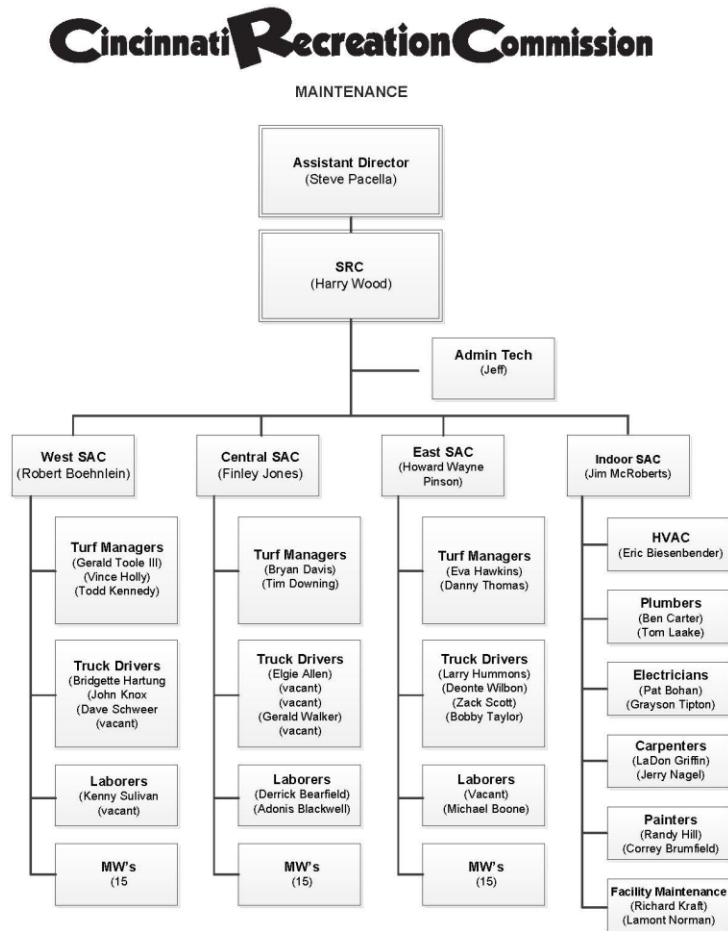## 6.4 MARKETING & PROGRAMMING SUPPORT SERVICES

CincinnatiRecreationCommission
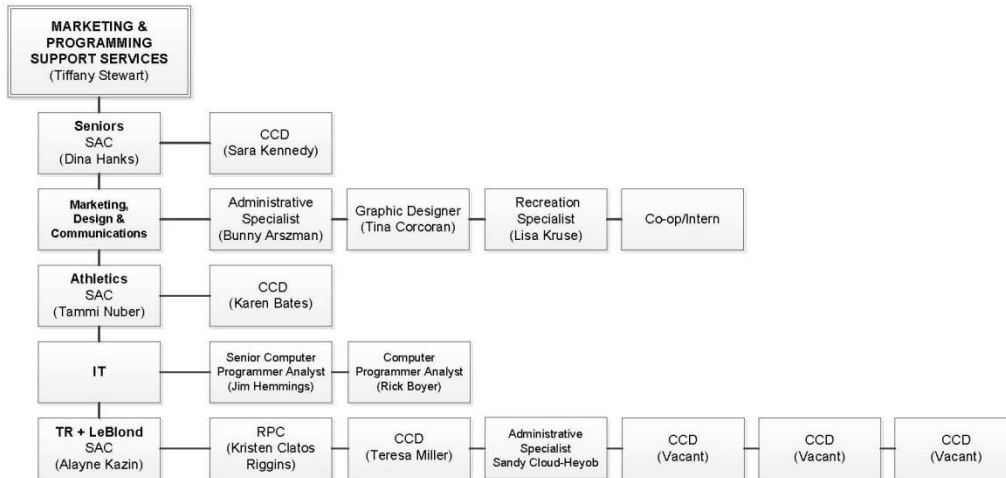
UNFUNDED CRC POSITIONS
Grant Writer
Training & Safety Coordinator
Foundation Board & ED
Contracts & Vendors
Volunteer Coordinator
Diversity Coordinator

6.5 MAINTENANCE

CHAPTER SEVEN - FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The section of the report presents the financial assessment of the Cincinnati Recreation Commission, as a part of the strategic plan process. As a key element of the Plan, PROS Consulting reviewed available information to assess the financial situation of the Department. The revenues, expenditures and capital funds were analyzed to identify trends and assess the Department's financial integrity. The cost recovery for facilities, programs and services at major functional levels has been analyzed to access the cost of service readiness.

7.1.1 2018 SUMMARY

The Department prepared the summary of the 2018 Budget and Actual Revenues and Expenditures. The 2018 Budget with planned cost recovery rates is shown below.

Budget for Fiscal Year 2018						
	Community Center Operations	Maintenance	City-Wide Services	Administration	Total	
Fund 050/302 Appropriation/Approved Budget	7,336,785	3,732,042	2,734,338	2,668,385	16,471,550	Fund 050 General Fund; Fund 302 Income Tax-Infrastructure (taxes)
Fund 323 Appropriation/Approved Budget	3,913,177	0	1,100,745	200,748	5,214,670	Fund 323 Recreation Special Activities (fees)
Total Budget	11,249,962	3,732,042	3,835,083	2,869,133	21,686,220	
Actual Fund 323 Revenue	3,614,866	64	941,294	82,220	4,638,444	
Cost Recovery	32%	0%	25%	3%	21%	

The 2018 results with cost recovery rates are show below. The Department cost recovery is 24% and is greater than planned recovery.

Actual for Fiscal Year 2018					
	Community Center Operations	Maintenance	City-Wide Services	Administration	Total
Fund 050/302 Actual Expenditures	6,866,818	2,805,430	3,101,618	2,059,824	14,833,690
Fund 323 Actual Expenditures	3,577,884	0	828,828	137,741	4,544,453
Total Expenditures	10,444,702	2,805,430	3,930,445	2,197,566	19,378,142
Actual Fund 323 Revenue	3,614,866	64	941,294	82,220	4,638,444
Cost Recovery	35%	0%	24%	4%	24%

The 2018 appropriated capital expenditures are shown below:

	Capital Fund 980
Recreation Facilities Renovation	2,035,800
Aquatics Facilities Renovation	356,700
Athletics Facilities Renovation	287,500
Outdoor Facilities Renovation	230,000
Compliance with ADA	9,000
Total Appropriation/Approved Budget	2,919,000

7.1.2 DATA REVIEWED

The PROS Team reviewed the detailed cost and activity information prepared by the Department staff. Following is a list of the cost and activity data reviewed by PROS:

- Revenues and Expenditures for 2014 through 2017

- 2019 Six-year Capital Budget

- Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ending June 30, 2017

7.2 OPERATING REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

The revenues and expenditures for fiscal years ending 2014 through 2018 are shown in the table below.

Revenues	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
West Region	605,050	695,917	685,484	732,725	902,293
East Region	1,116,708	1,278,110	1,355,500	1,486,570	1,577,975
Central Region	750,412	893,885	990,600	1,034,038	1,176,330
Maintenance	678	860	422	298	64
Athletics/TR/Seniors/Aquatics	919,321	940,620	846,252	956,565	963,850
Administration	34,437	31,630	125,139	83,938	93,361
Total	3,426,607	3,841,022	4,003,398	4,294,133	4,713,874

Expenditures	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
West Region	2,801,073	2,786,140	2,748,300	2,659,340	2,896,750
East Region	2,114,460	2,149,012	2,079,170	2,061,695	1,962,040
Central Region	2,793,370	2,702,203	2,652,890	2,582,545	2,519,435
Maintenance	4,894,660	4,770,075	4,717,100	4,784,190	3,867,120
Athletics/TR/Seniors/Aquatics	2,669,540	2,552,280	2,660,930	2,808,640	2,973,800
Administration	1,580,380	1,455,735	1,434,090	1,692,090	2,252,405
Total	16,853,483	16,415,445	16,292,480	16,588,500	16,471,550

Cost Recovery	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
West Region	21.60%	24.98%	24.94%	27.55%	31.15%
East Region	52.81%	59.47%	65.19%	72.10%	80.43%
Central Region	26.86%	33.08%	37.34%	40.04%	46.69%
Maintenance	0.01%	0.02%	0.01%	0.01%	0.00%
Athletics/TR/Seniors/Aquatics	34.44%	36.85%	31.80%	34.06%	32.41%
Administration	2.18%	2.17%	8.73%	4.96%	4.14%
Department	20.33%	23.40%	24.57%	25.89%	28.62%

The revenues from Fees and Charges for Services result in a cost recovery between 20.33% and 28.62% for the study period. The cost recovery is lower than PROS generally sees for similar operations.

PROS anticipates cost recovery from similar recreation activities between 40% to 80%.

The East Region operations is in the PROS anticipated cost recovery range. The West Region and Central Regions are below anticipated. The Central Region did achieve a 40% cost recovery in 2017 reflecting a positive change in operational pricing.

The Athletics program cost recovery is between 31.80% and 36.85% for the study period.

7.3 SELECTRED PROGRAMS

7.3.1 THERAPEUTIC RECREATION

The cost recovery for Therapeutic Recreation is 12.83% to 15.93% over the study period. PROS anticipates the similar programs to have cost recovery between 20% and 60%.

Therapeutic Recreation	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Revenues	117,221	104,275	104,235	94,942	109,063
Expenditures	735,721	733,002	734,880	740,135	740,135
Cost Recovery	15.93%	14.23%	14.18%	12.83%	14.74%

7.3.2 SENIORS

The cost recovery for Seniors programs is 7.18% to 12.30% over the study period. PROS anticipates the similar programs to have cost recovery between 40% and 80%.

Seniors	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Revenues	24,068	22,386	21,345	29,133	27,398
Expenditures	195,740	285,674	297,420	308,865	308,865
Cost Recovery	12.30%	7.84%	7.18%	9.43%	8.87%

7.3.3 AQUATICS

The cost recovery for Aquatics programs is 23.65% to 31.32% over the study period. PROS anticipates the similar programs to have cost recovery between 40% and 60%.

Aquatics	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Revenues	284,451	355,870	283,425	359,864	366,716
Expenditures	1,202,650	1,136,160	1,253,950	1,410,350	1,410,350
Cost Recovery	23.65%	31.32%	22.60%	25.52%	26.00%

7.3.4 TENNIS/PLAYFIELD

The cost recovery for Aquatics programs is 231.84% to 593.20% over the study period. PROS anticipates the similar programs to have cost recovery between 80% and 100%. The Tennis/Playfield is significantly higher than anticipated. Tennis programs and League play are generally able to recover 100% or more of costs.

Tennis/Playfield	Fiscal Years				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Revenues	100,771	88,145	101,081	93,312	40,479
Expenditures	29,250	29,720	17,040	17,460	17,460
Cost Recovery	344.51%	296.58%	593.20%	534.43%	231.84%

7.4 STAFFING

Staffing, shown in the table below, demonstrates the Department's capacity to operate and maintain facilities. The CRC has a 2.4% decrease in the number Full-Time Employees

Fiscal Years	2014	2015	2016	2017
Employees	402.04	415.77	415.17	392.43

Nationally, municipal park operations have experienced a significant decrease in personnel due to economic conditions. The County demonstrates commitment to parks facilities by maintaining a commitment to staffing.

7.5 AMENITIES

The CRC amenities are summarized in the table below. The Commission's amenities have decreased in each category. This reflects funding issues related to maintaining facilities and programs.

Recreation Amenties	2014	2015	2016	2017	% Change
Acreage	984	954	954	954	-3.0%
Recreation and Senior Centers	27	24	23	23	-14.8%
Play Areas	100	98	98	99	-1.0%
Swimming Pools/Aquatics Facilities	34	31	30	29	-14.7%
Tennis Courts	97	97	90	90	-7.2%

The choice to close or eliminate amenities is preferable to continuing decreases maintenance on a large system.

7.6 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

The Commission has prepared a 6-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP.) The program describes the project and project costs. The CIP demonstrates the Commission's desire to continue to provide quality facilities and programs.

Summary of Capital Costs
6 Year Projection

	Recreation Facilities	Aquatic Facilities	Athletic Facilities	Outdoor Facilities	Compliance with ADA	Information Systems Acquisitions	Total
2019	$11,967,800	$9,154,436	$4,774,700	$3,825,323	$200,000	$100,000	$30,022,259
2020	$5,504,467	$5,934,772	$1,538,265	$2,521,702	$200,000	$100,000	$15,799,206
2021	$7,032,533	$4,442,144	$2,006,750	$1,125,931	$200,000	$100,000	$14,907,358
2022	$5,628,506	$9,586,196	$1,239,325	$1,552,012	$200,000	$100,000	$18,306,039
2023	$4,918,750	$3,793,160	$754,975	$2,973,850	$200,000	$100,000	$12,740,735
2024	$6,138,800	$7,576,744	$2,304,000	$2,885,111	$200,000	$100,000	$19,204,655
Total:	$41,190,856	$40,487,452	$12,618,015	$14,883,929	$1,200,000	$600,000	$110,980,252

7.7 FINANCIAL POLICIES

The CRC should consider the adopted financial policies including:

- Donation Policy: Donations, Promotions, Gifts, Bequests

- Grant Policy

- Establishing Fees and Charges Policy

7.7.1 DONATION POLICY

A Donation Policy provides the Department with a framework for making donations from the Department. The policy provides guidelines for the promotion of the facilities. General guidelines include framework for gifts and bequests, passes and certificates, exchange for services or goods to the Department.

7.7.2 GRANT POLICY

A Grant Policy provides the Department with a framework review of requirements, application and implementation of grants.

7.7.3 PARTNERSHIP AND SPONSORSHIP POLICY

A Partnership and Sponsorship Policy establishes criteria for participation and the process for implementing partnerships and sponsorships.

7.7.4 COST RECOVERY POLICIES

A Fees and Charges policy defines the process for fees and charges including an annual review. The policy may also establish non-resident and member pricing structures.

The Cost Recovery Guidelines provide priorities for price setting and general categories for cost recovery.

CHAPTER NINE - FUNDING OPTIONS

The following financial options for CRC should be considered for the future to help offset the existing tax dollars received by the Commission from the City of Cincinnati.

There are two ways for CRC to achieve financial sustainability. The first way is to incorporate sustainability principles and the second is to create more funding options.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to professionally manage the business elements of a Recreation Commission like CRC there are areas of emphasis in which the recreation system must be proficient. These areas include the following:

- Fundraising
- Partnering
- Government Finance
- Cost Recovery
- Enterprise Management
- Operational Management

This is a series of best practice suggestions and recommendations CRC incorporate these options into their management practices.

No two recreation agencies are alike. Their differences stem from how they are governed to how they are funded and operated. The purpose of this assessment is to assist CRC leaders and managers and Key City of Cincinnati leaders to identify the things that they will need to address to insure future financial sustainability for their agency.

If an agency selects a clear path for resolving these important issues, the future sustainably of their agency will be successful.

CRC represents the primary land holder of the city and a large portion of total assets estimated at over $200 million dollars.

9.2 TOPICS OF IMPORTANCE

9.2.1 FUNDRAISING

- Establishing more park related Friends Groups and can grow CRC's Recreation Foundation presence in the city as a valued partner to help raise money for the system or a specific recreation facility needs to continue. The existing Recreation Foundation needs to have a stronger presence in the city to help support the needs of the Commission. Average park foundations in cities the size of Cincinnati typically raise $4-5 million a year for their recreation system they represent.

- Find philanthropists in Cincinnati Recreation Commission that will support users who do not have the ability to pay for services and have them invest in these users through the recreation foundation or friends group established for this purpose.

9.2.2 PARTNERING

- Never allow a private or a not-for-profit group to make money off city owned facilities without CRC receiving a share of the gross revenue. Make sure CRC spilt covers the true costs and then the revenue desired based on operating pro-forma from the event they are creating in the park or recreation facility it is being provided in.

- Privatize services where CRC does not have the capital dollars to operate and maintain the facility, park or service that the system owns to a competitive level.

- Have working, signed agreements with all types of partners to include (public/private, public/not for profit and public/public partners). This requires separate operational policies on each type of partnership that is established.

- Do not partner with any single group unless CRC has their own direct and indirect costs determined. Understand the equitable investment the partner or partners are putting into the relationship.

- All partnerships must have working agreements with measurable outcomes. They are to be reviewed at least every two years as one means to hold each other accountable.

- Ask the private sector to develop team building days in CRC recreation facilities by creating cleanup and fix up days. This builds community support and it will overnight enhance CRC facilities to a much higher level and it gives the corporate partner a selling point to their value in the community.

- Determine sponsorship opportunities and levels of sponsorships for the CRC system every five years. Hire a private sponsorship contractor who knows the value of sponsorships for a percentage of the total amount raised instead of doing it yourself.

9.2.3 GOVERNMENT FINANCE

- Know the value of your CRC system less land value for what CRC assets are worth and where those assets are in their life cycle. This will allow CRC to determine where capital improvements need to be made and the cost benefit of those improvements to the system. Best practice agencies are investing, at a minimum, 3-5% a year to protect the assets they own. This would require CRC to invest (6 to 10) million dollars a year in those assets they own. New assets developed would be outside of this amount of money. Example; Columbus Ohio has a similar system as CRC in size, and it currently invests $30 million a year in maintaining the public assets they own now. This was accomplished by a voter bond issue in 2014 for the next ten years.

- CRC needs to find dedicated funding sources they can count on annually to support their operational and capital needs. CRC has limited dedicated funding sources now and operates primarily out of the general fund. New dedicated funding sources need to be established to carry the system forward.

- Develop a Business Development division within CRC to pursue grants, establish effective partnerships, create earned income, and develop business plans with staff managing revenue producing facilities to maximize their earned income capability. In addition, CRC needs to be able to keep the dollars earned.

- CRC needs to consider setting up business enterprise systems for revenue producing parks or facilities like the golf courses. This could include some recreation centers and aquatic facilities and some regional community centers.

- Develop a cost benefit analysis on all capital improvement projects prior to developing these future parks or facility sites to determine if it is financially feasible and whether operational dollars will be available to support the proposed project CRC doesn't continue the downward spiral of building something they can't maintain.

- Allow the Commission to submit two budgets for approval. One that is only tax support and one that is earned income revenue only. This way elected officials can focus on tax related budget items only and revenue related items second.

- Know how to properly execute an annual budget. There is a lot of time spent in the formulation of a budget, but it is the execution of the budget that saves a system. Issues like review, explaining variances, adjustments, operating within it, and insuring that all managers are aware of its importance to the financial stability of the agency.

- Understand the real details of "Capital." What are the carrying costs of land, facilities, and equipment? Do not burden CRC with capital projects that cost the agency more to own than what the land is worth it is sitting on.

9.2.4 COST RECOVERY

- Replace revenue-producing equipment every 5 years to keep the user experience relevant and competitive.

- Include senior management staff on all design decisions. Force landscape designers and facility architects to outline the maintenance costs on all parks and facilities they design to ensure their design is aligned with CRC maintenance and recreation operating budget.

- Know your true costs to deliver program services, maintain parks, trails and recreation facilities, both direct and indirect costs so that CRC can determine the true costs of services on a unit cost basis. This helps to determine how to establish equitable partnerships and when to outsource tasks that are too expensive to staff with public employees.

- Develop individual mini-business plans on any program service or facility that CRC operates that costs more to operate than $100,000 a year with a goal to deliver a cost recovery goal. The mini-business plans will establish cost recovery goals customized to each facility or program area based on unique circumstances of each service area / audience.

- Classify CRC services based on core "essential," "important" and "value added" criteria and then price services that are furthest away from their mission at full cost recovery levels.

9.2.5 ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

- Set up business enterprise systems for revenue producing facilities and programs.

- Design parks and recreation facilities for efficiency, productivity and to produce revenue that will offset operational costs at a predetermined cost recovery goal.

- Develop a financial policy that allows CRC to keep all earned income revenue in your operating budget without lowering tax dollars received. CRC should not be penalized for generating revenue to keep the system well positioned for the future.

- Every three years bid out services CRC costs are higher than the private sector to keep Parks costs competitive in the market place.

- Develop an annual revenue plan for CRC.

- Find dedicated funding sources CRC can count on annually.

- When CRC builds a park or trail system, require an agreement from your elected officials that you will receive the appropriate amount of operational funding to ensure that CRC can maintain these facilities once developed so you do not put undue pressure on the agency budget. This requires that the staff develop an operational impact cost for each capital improvement developed for the system.

- Budget for marketing and branding of revenue producing facilities at 3-5% of total operational costs.

- Price your services to the 80% of users who can pay versus the 20% who are unable.

- Do not give any group in your community a larger than necessary discount because of their age, their occupation, their military service etc. All citizens are valuable and should be treated the same. Understand the size of the market for core programs and facilities and how much of the market CRC controls. Is there opportunity to penetrate the market further?

- Study and understand market strategies that will make a measurable difference and improve the economic positioning of the program or facility the system is targeting.

- Inform users and partners of what CRC' costs are so they appreciate the value CRC puts into place into the facility or service. This strategy will help to reduce entitlement.

- Track user analytics to understand who and how often the system is being used by patrons.

- Understand concession management, what it takes to make it worth the time and investment for CRC to provide the service versus an outside contractor. Don't allow special interest groups to have exclusive rights to concession operations without paying CRC some level of gross revenue.

9.2.6 OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Stop maintaining things in the recreation system that nobody uses and remove them from the recreation centers or park sites.

- Manage by standards and track costs to implement each type of standard.

- Train staff regularly on business principles, cost recovery, cost of service and customer service.

- Understand the size of the market for core programs and facilities and how much of the market CRC controls.

- Know the demographics of your users to determine their needs and capability of supporting programs and capital costs.

- Track population trends and figure out how demographic changes will affect CRC in the future.

- Track employee costs of similar sized park systems. Understand the wages and benefits for all positions every five years to understand how competitive CRC wages are with other systems. Judge if you are below an acceptable level with or above the standard desired for wages and benefits. The goal should be no more than 55-60% of total operational budget costs tied to employee cost which includes both direct (salary) and indirect costs (benefits).

- Employ the right people for the right job, for the right pay, to achieve the right outcome and benefit to the agency. Learn and apply the correct functionality and desired productivity of key positions.

- Reward employees for efficiency and productivity.

- Train staff to understand the management strategies of their supervisors as one way to prepare them for positions at the next level of responsibility.

- Develop annual revenue and efficiency work sessions with your staff.

- Properly train staff in business management of concession operations.

- Hold employees accountable to productivity standards of facilities and programs and cost recovery levels and give them measurable outcomes to manage to and report out quarterly or every six months.

- Develop sustainability performance outcomes to hold all divisions accountable.

9.3 FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

Park and Recreation systems across the United States today have learned to develop a clear understanding of how to manage revenue options to support parks and recreation services in an urban municipality-based system with limited availability of tax dollars. Park and Recreation systems no longer rely on taxes as their sole revenue option but have developed new sources of revenue options to help support capital and operational needs.

A growing number of municipalities have developed policies on pricing of services, cost recovery rates and partnership agreements for programs and facilities provided to the community. They also have developed strong partnerships that are fair and equitable in the delivery of services based on whom receives the service, for what purpose, for what benefit and for what costs. In addition, agencies have learned to use parks and recreation facilities, amenities, programs and events to create economic development as it applies to keeping property values high around parks and along trails through increased maintenance, adding sports facilities and events to drive tournaments into the city that create hotel room nights and increase expenditures in restaurants and retail areas. They have learned to recognize that people will drive into their community for good recreation facilities such as sports complexes, pools, and for special events if presented correctly and well managed. Cincinnati Recreation Commission gets economic development when it comes to music, sports and special events, they just need to do more of them.

In CRC some of these policies and management practices are not in place and should be considered for the future as well as new revenue sources. PROS has outlined several revenue options for CRC to consider. PROS feels that some if not all these sources should be considered as an option to support the capital and operational needs of CRC as will be outlined in the Business Plan.

CRC needs to re-establish a Business Development office to go after grants, alliances, partnerships and sponsorship including earned income opportunities. This office should also help write business plans for recreation centers, aquatic centers, golf, special events and core program areas.

9.3.1 FUNDING SOURCES FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DOLLARS AND OPERATING COSTS

The following financial options outline opportunities for CRC to consider in supporting the capital improvements outlined in the Business Plan as well as operational costs associated with managing the system for the future. Many of these funding sources may not be allowed now by the City or have never been used but should be pursued through legislative means should CRC see the value in pursuing these funding sources.

General Obligation Bond: A general obligation bond is a municipal bond secured by a taxing authority to improve public assets that benefits the municipal agency involved that oversee some of the parks and recreation facilities in the city. General Obligation Bonds are a tool used by local governments to borrow money. The bonds are guaranteed by the governing body's full faith and credit and backed by property tax revenues. The city can use revenue generated from the sale of general obligation bonds to fund a park project and repay the bonds and interest with future property tax revenue.

General Obligation Bonds should be considered for park and recreation facility projects; such as an update to Neighborhood, Community and Regional recreation centers, aquatic centers, or sports complexes. Improvements to parks should also be covered by these funding sources because there are very little operational revenues associated with these parks to draw from and some of the CRC parks improvements need upgrades and renovations limiting the uses of other revenue sources. These CRC parks help frame the City's image and benefit a wide age segment of users. Also, updating these CRC parks will benefit the community and stabilize neighborhoods and other areas of the city. This must be viewed as an economic impact improvement to stabilize neighborhoods an invite people to live in these neighborhoods because of the quality of parks in their neighborhood. If the parks are maintained to a higher level than the neighborhood it raises the value of property. If parks are maintained below the level of existing homes in the neighborhood it will bring the property values down.

Independent Municipal Districts like a Recreation District should be considered that can issue debt up to 2% of the debt limit of the city in most states for bond funding. This opportunity is subject to approval of city council.

Local Option Income Tax for Public Safety- Many cities in Ohio has used this funding source to help support law enforcement in parks in the city and other cities have incorporate this option and moved dollars related to supporting park and recreation infrastructure to help augment the improvements in their parks and facilities in Ohio.

Economic Impact Income Tax- **EDIT Funds**. These funds are used to support economic impact projects in parks in many cities. This may be an opportunity to create this funding source for CRC for park related economic improvements in the city by Cincinnati Recreation Commission.

Levy on Property Tax: Public agencies around the country receive funding through property tax revenues. State laws vary on how these funds can be used, whether applied to operating cost or capital investments.

Special Purpose Levies: Public agencies, including recreation districts can receive funding through a tax levy designated to a specific purpose and generally for a limited period. This could be a one-time, special purpose levy implemented for a limited time period.

Recreation and Park Impact Fees: The City could implement recreation impact fees if the City wanted to pursue these funds from developers. Impact fees generally provide some capital funds but rarely are they enough to provide full funding for large projects.

Internal Park Improvement Fund: This funding source is created from a percentage of the overall park admissions to attractions such as sport complexes, golf courses, aquatic centers, fieldhouses or special events in a park and would allow a percentage (usually in the range of 3-5% of gross revenues) to be dedicated to the recreation facility for existing and future capital improvements. This type of user fee does not require voter approval but is set up in a dedicated fund to support the existing recreation facility for future capital, maintenance and facility improvements.

Tax Increment Finance District: Commonly used for financing redevelopment projects, a Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) involves the issuance of tax-exempt bonds to pay front-end infrastructure and eligible development costs in partnership with private developers. These can be focused on Quality of Life improvements. TIFs capture increases in property tax revenue within a designated geographic area and allocate it for a specific public purpose. TIF revenue has been used towards park acquisition, maintenance, and recreation facility improvements in certain cities. As redevelopment occurs in the City, the "tax increment" resulting from redevelopment projects is used to retire the debt issued to fund the eligible redevelopment costs. The public portion of the redevelopment project funds itself using the additional taxes generated by the project. TIFs can be used to fund park and recreation improvements and development as an essential infrastructure cost. These funds would work well in the downtown park redevelopment areas of Cincinnati and in trail development.

Sales Tax: Some cities and states allocate a percentage of local or state-wide sales taxes specifically for parks and recreation facilities. A general sales tax applies to a broad base of goods, which means that a substantial amount of revenue can be generated with a relatively low tax rate. This keeps the burden on household's low. This has been used in Texas to fund many city park and recreation departments from the sale of outdoor recreation equipment and in other states to fund trails and city-wide improvements.

Developer Cash-in-Lieu of meeting the Open Space Requirement: Ordinances requiring the dedication of open space within developments to meet the park and recreation needs of the new residents often have provisions allowing cash contribution to substitute for the land requirement.

Park Dedication Fee: A park dedication fee requires that a portion of any housing or commercial/industrial development (the ordinance determines the specific applicability) be dedicated to public use, in the form of parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, etc. Alternatively, the development may pay cash in lieu of a land dedication, which would be put in a special fund and used for future park acquisition.

Business Improvement District: The public private partnership collects additional taxes from business within a designated area. The fees are used for public projects, based on the notion that a well-maintained public space will increase commerce for local businesses. Generally used in downtown areas, a Business Improvement District is a useful strategy for pooling revenue to support a common goal. BID funding is managed by a nonprofit corporation created through the District. Findley area of Cincinnati would benefit from a BID.

Facility Authority: A Facility Authority is sometimes used by park and recreation agencies to improve a specific park or develop a specific improvement such as a stadium, large recreation center, large aquatic center, or sports venue for competitive events. Repayment of bonds to fund the project usually comes from a sales taxes on food and beverages. A facility authority could oversee improvements for the large facilities; such as an aquatic center, field house and sports field complex. The City could seek out a private developer to design/build a field house facility for the Recreation Commission with the City paying back these costs over a 20-year period. The Facility Authority could include representation from the schools, the City and private developers.

Utility Lease Fee: In some instances, utility lease fees have been used to support parks and recreation amenities. The dollars come from utility easements, storm water runoff fees or revenues related to development rights below the ground. This funding source is derived from fees on property owned by the City based on measures such as the amount of impervious surface as well as fees from utility companies having access through the park. It is used by many cities to acquire and develop greenways and other open space resources that provide improvements in the park or development of trails. Improvements can include trails, drainage areas, and retention ponds that serve multiple purposes such as recreation, environmental protection, and storm water management. This could be a source for the utilities to contribute to support the recreation facilities and amenities in the future.

Transient Occupancy Tax: This funding source is used by many cities to fund improvements to parks and recreation facilities from hotels that benefit from the recreation commission in the form of sporting events where participants stay in hotels when they use city owned sports complexes or competitive facilities. The Transient Occupancy Taxes are typically set at 3-5% on the value of a hotel room or a 1% sales tax that can be dedicated for park and recreation improvement purposes as well. Because of the value that parks could provide in the way of events, sports, entertainment and cultural events, hotels in the area that benefit could be set up with a portion of their occupancy funds going to support park and recreation related improvements. This funding source should be implemented progressively by other communities as the City increases the number of events it sponsors or develops. Tracking the economic value back to the hotels is important to build trust with the Hotel business community.

Food and Beverage Tax: A 1% sales tax on food and beverage is currently used by other cities on fast food and restaurants only. These dollars can come from the local community as well as visitors to the city to help pay for a bond to finance future park and recreation related improvements. Food and Beverage Taxes are very well accepted in most communities.

Special Service District: Many cities have moved parks and recreation services to a Special District especially in Ohio, Illinois, California and Oregon. Businesses and property owners within a designated area can request that a city authorize a Special Service District. Within the district, property owners and businesses pay a service charge for special services, such as park improvements for operations and maintenance.

Capital Improvement Fee: A capital improvement fee can be added to an admission fee to a recreation facility or park attraction to help pay back the cost of developing the facility or attraction. This fee is usually applied to golf courses, aquatic facilities, recreation centers, stadiums, amphitheaters, and special use facilities such as sports complexes. The funds generated can be used either to pay back the cost of the capital improvement on a revenue bond that was used to develop the facility. Capital improvement fees normally are $5 per person for playing on the improved site or can be collected as a parking fee or admission fee.

Capitalizing Maintenance Costs: Levies and bonds for new projects do not always account for the ongoing maintenance and operations funding that will be needed by those projects. By capitalizing maintenance costs, cities include those anticipated costs into the specific levy or bond proposal and then set the funding aside in an endowment to cover the future costs.

Lease Back: Lease backs are a source of capital funding in which a private sector entity such as a development company buys the park land site or leases the park land and develops a facility such as a park, recreation attraction, recreation center, pool, or sports complex; and leases the facility back to the municipality to pay off the capital costs over a 20 to 30-year period. This approach takes advantage of the efficiencies of private sector development while relieving the burden on the municipality to raise upfront capital funds. This funding source is typically used for recreation and aquatic type facilities, stadiums, civic buildings, and fire stations.

Capital Improvement Fund Purpose. The purpose of the Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund is to allow for the collection of fees, donations, and revenue from vending machines, and to allow for depositing those fees, donations, revenues from vending machines in the fund for the purpose of future land acquisition or specific capital improvements as may be deemed necessary by the Recreation Commission Board for future improvement or expansion of the Recreation District. Fees may be established and collected by the Recreation Commission Board for particular special events held on CRC park property as the Board may deem necessary for that specific event. Private organizations who hold their event on CRC park property and who charge admission for the event shall donate a portion of those charges to The Recreation Capital Improvement Fund. Revenue from all vending machines placed on park property and accessible to the public shall be placed in the fund. Fees, donations and revenue from vending machines collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in a separate account to be known as CRC Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund Account, and may thereafter be expended, with appropriation, at the discretion of the Recreation Commission Board for any department purpose reasonably related to land acquisition or specific capital improvements to existing land or facility under the Board's direct supervision.

Partnerships: CRC has an enormous number of partnerships in place. Most do not have equitable agreements for how the partnership is financed. Establishing policies for public/public partnerships, public/not-for-private partnerships and public private partnerships needs to be established with measurable outcomes for each partner involved. CRC can gain a lot of operational monies back to the department if they can manage their partnerships in a more equitable manner.

Land Leases/Concessions: Land leases and concessions are public/private partnerships in which the municipality provides land or space for private commercial operations that will enhance the park and recreational experience in exchange for payments to help reduce operating costs. They can range from food service restaurant operations, cell towers, parking lots that charge for parking, to full management of recreation attractions. Leases usually pay back to the city a percentage of the value of the land each year in the 15% category and a percentage of gross from the restaurant or attractions. They also pay sales tax and employee income taxes to the city which supports the overall government system in the city.

Admission to the Park: Many park and recreation systems in the United States have admission fees on a per car, per bike and per person basis to access a park that can be used to help support operational costs. Car costs range from $3 to $5 a car and $2 dollars a bicycle or $2 dollars a person. This is occurring in many park and recreation systems especially in large regional parks. This is occurring in Great Parks now in the city. This could apply to regional parks or special use sports complexes in city if it is considered. This fee may be useful for large events and festivals that have the capability to be set up as a fee-based park at least on weekends.

Parking Fee: Many park and recreation system that do not charge an admission fee charge a parking fee. Parking rates range from $3 to $4 dollars a day. This funding source could work for helping to support special events, festivals and tournaments. City park and recreation systems in Florida and Maryland charge parking fees for beaches, sports complexes and special event sites. They also have parking meters in parks to support the system or individual park and this could be applied to some parks in Cincinnati Recreation Commission that have high levels of people parking for free in city parks and going to work close by.

User Fees: User fees are fees paid by a user of recreational facilities or programs to offset the costs of services provided by CRC in operating a golf course, a recreation facility or in delivering programs and services. A perception of "value" must be instilled in the community by CRC staff for what benefits the system is providing to the user. As the Department continues to develop new programs, all future fees should be charged based on cost recovery goals developed in a future Pricing Policy. The fees for the parks and/or core recreation services are based on the level of exclusivity the user receives compared to the general taxpayer. It is recommended that user fees for programs be charged at market rate for services to create value and operational revenue for CRC. For services where the City feels that they cannot move forward on adequate user fees to obtain the required cost recovery, consider contracting with a not-for-profit and/or private company to help offset service costs. This would save the system dollars in their operational budgets while still ensuring the community receives the service to keep the quality of life at a high standard.

Corporate Naming Rights: In this arrangement, corporations invest in the right to name an event, facility, or product within a park in exchange for an annual fee, typically over a ten-year period. The cost of the naming right is based on the impression points the facility or event will receive from the newspapers, TV, websites, and visitors or users to the park. Naming rights for park and recreation facilities are typically attached to sports complexes, amphitheaters, recreation centers, aquatic facilities, stadiums, and events. Naming rights are a good use of outside revenue for parks, recreation facilities or special attractions in the City.

Corporate Sponsorships: Corporations can also underwrite a portion, or all the cost of an event, program, or activity based on their name being associated with the service. Sponsorships typically are title sponsors, presenting sponsors, associate sponsors, product sponsors, or in-kind sponsors. Many agencies seek corporate support for certain types of activities.

Advertising Sales: on sports complexes, scoreboards, gym floors, trash cans, playgrounds, in locker rooms, at dog parks, along trails, flower pots, and as part of special events held in the City to help support operational costs have been an acceptable practice in parks and recreation systems for a long time and should be considered for CRC to support operational costs.

Maintenance and Facility Endowment Fund: This is a fund dedicated exclusively for a park's maintenance, funded by a percentage of user fees from programs, events, and rentals and is dedicated to protecting the asset where the activity is occurring.

Park and Recreation Revenue Revolving Fund: This is a dedicated fund to be used for park purposes only that is replenished on an ongoing basis from various funding sources such as grants, sponsorships, advertising, program user fees and rental fees within the park system. CRC could establish a revolving fund supported by all the funding sources identified in this section and kept separate from the tax general fund.

Permit Fees: This fee is incorporated for exclusive reservations for picnic shelters, sports fields, special events that are provided by CRC for competition tournaments held in the City by other organizations that make a profit off CRC owned facilities. Permit fees include a base fee for all direct and indirect costs for CRC to provide the space on an exclusive basis plus a percentage of the gross for major special events and tournaments held on park owned permitted facilities. Alcohol permits should be explored and if determined worthwhile, added to these permits. These would generate more dollars for CRC for these special use areas. These dollars could be applied to a Recreation and Park Revolving Fund to help support park improvements and operations in the future.

Land Leases: Many communities across the United States allow land leases for commercial retail operations along trails as a source of funding. The communities that have used land leases look for retail operations that support the needs of recreation users of the trails. This includes coffee shops, grill and food concessions, small restaurants, ice cream shops, bicycle shops, farmer's markets and small local business. The land leases provide revenue to maintain the trails and/or to be used for in-kind matching. This is done quite well in the city of Indianapolis along the Monon Trail.

Sale of Development Rights below the Ground: Some public agencies have sold their development rights next to greenways and parks below the ground for fiber optic lines and utility lines for gas and electric on a lineal foot basis.

9.3.2 PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

Hire a Grant Writer: CRC does not have a grant writer to pursue grants. There are many local and national grant writers who can help the system acquire local, state and national grants.

Business/Citizen Donations: Individual donations from corporations and citizens can be sought to support specific improvements and amenities.

Exclusive Product Placement: Many cities have an official drink of parks and recreation, buying the right to be exclusively sold at kiosks and concession stands.

Private Foundation Funds: Nonprofit community foundations can be strong sources of support for CRC and should be pursued for specific park and recreation amenities. This can come from a community foundation or a private foundation. Most large park urban systems have their own parks foundation as well.

Nonprofit Organizations: Nonprofit organizations can provide support for recreation facilities in parks in various ways. Examples include:

> **Friends Organization:** This type of nonprofit is devoted to supporting a specific recreation facility like a community center or golf course. These Friends Groups are a major funding source for parks in the United States and should be considered for CRC.

Local Private-Sector Funding: Local industries and private businesses may agree to provide support for individual recreation facilities through one or more of the following methods:

- Donations of cash to a specific user segment.
- Donations of services by large corporations to reduce the cost of a community center, including equipment and labor to construct and install improvement elements of a specific component as part of an adoption program.
- Reductions in the cost of materials purchased from local businesses that support recreation facility implementation and can supply essential products for facility development.

9.3.3 VOLUNTEER SOURCES

Adopt-an-Area of a Park or Recreation Facility: In this approach local neighborhood groups or businesses make a volunteer commitment to maintaining a specific area of a recreation facility.

Adopt-a-Trail: This is like Adopt-a-Park but involves sponsorship of a segment of a trail (e.g., one mile) for maintenance purposes.

Volunteerism is an indirect revenue source in that persons donate time to assist the organization in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces the organization's cost in providing the service plus it builds advocacy into the system. Best practice agencies have at least 10-15% of the entire work force hours made up by volunteers

Community Service Workers: Community service workers are assigned by the court to pay off some of their sentence through maintenance activities in parks, such as picking up litter, removing graffiti, and assisting in painting or fix up activities. Most workers are assigned 30 to 60 hours of work. This would seem to be a good opportunity for the parks to work with the sheriff's department on using community service workers.

9.3.4 OPERATIONAL FUNDING COSTS OPPORTUNITIES

CRC has numerous revenue sources to draw from to support operational and management costs that include long term capital replacement costs. The following are funding options to consider in operations of the system.

Concessions: Concessions can be leased out to a private operator for a percentage of gross profits. Typically, 15%-18% of gross profits for concessions of a profit center or a recreation site could manage concessions.

Parking Fees: During major special events in the parks, the park system could charge a $5 parking fee.

Field Permits: CRC can issue recreational use permits for activities, practice or games. Permits should cover the operational cost of each field and management costs. If a private operator desires to rent the site for a sporting tournament for private gain, CRC should provide a permit fee plus a percentage of gross from the event for the exclusive use of the fields.

Admission Fee: An admission fee to an event in park or recreation site can be utilized.

Walking and Running Event Fees: Event fees for walking and running events in a park can be assessed to cover safety staff managing the event in the park.

Advertising Revenue: Advertising revenue can come from the sale of ads on banners in the parks or recreation sites. The advertising could include trashcans, sports field fencing, trail markers, tee boxes, scorecards, and in restrooms.

Wi-Fi Revenue: CRC can set up a Wi-Fi area whereby a Wi-Fi vendor is able to sell the advertising on the Wi-Fi access banner to local businesses targeting the users of the site. This revenue has amounted to $20,000-$50,000 in revenue for similar systems.

Cell Tower: Cell tower leases can be used. This revenue source would support $35,000-$50,000 annually for the site if cell towers in areas needing cell towers.

Special Event Sponsors: Special events provide a great venue for special events sponsors as it applies to a concert, stage, entertainment, and safety.

Room Reservations: Rental of rooms in the park system can gain operational revenues from these amenities with a typical range of $200-$500 a day for exclusive rental reservations.

Special Fundraiser: Many agencies hold special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover specific programs and capital projects to be dedicated to a facility or the Commission as a whole.

9.3.5 OTHER GOVERNMENT FUNDNING SOURCES

Governmental Funding Programs: A variety of funding sources are available from federal and state government for park-related projects. For example, the **Land and Water Conservation Fund** funding program has been reinstated for 2019 levels at $200 million and can provide capital funds to state and local governments to acquire, develop, and improve outdoor recreation areas. **Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG**) funds are used to support open space related improvements including redevelopment and new development of parks and recreation facilities. **Transportation Enhancement Funds** available through SAFETELU, the current approved federal transportation bill, can be used for trail and related green space development, **AmeriCorps Grants** can be used to fund support for park maintenance. These examples are outlined below:

SAFETULU Funds as well as Safe Routes to School Funds should be pursued for the trail improvements outlined in the plan as well and **Transportation Enhancement Funds**. **Transportation Enhancement Funds** monies require a 20% match by the City and Safe Routes to School Funds require no match by the City.

CDBG (Community Development Block Grants) funds are used by many cities to enhance recreation facilities and parks. These funds should be used to support the re-development of major facilities based on its location in the City and what it will do to enhance the neighborhood and schools surrounding the park which is the purpose for CDBG monies.

AmeriCorps Grants should be pursued by CRC to support park maintenance and cleanup of drainage areas in the City.

Federal Housing Grants can also help support parks and recreation facilities near federal housing areas and should be pursued if appropriate.

Economic Development Grants for Public Works and Development of Facilities: The U. S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), provides grants to states, counties, and cities designated as redevelopment areas by EDA for public works projects that can include developing trails and greenway facilities. There is a 30-percent local match required, except in severely distressed areas where federal contribution can reach 80 percent.

Design Arts Program: The National Endowment for the Arts provides grants to states and local agencies, individuals and nonprofit organizations for projects that incorporate urban design, historic preservation, planning, architecture, landscape architecture, and other community improvement activities, including greenway development. Grants to organizations and agencies must be matched by a 50-percent local contribution. Agencies can receive up to $50,000.

CHAPTER TEN - IMPLEMENTATION

10.1 OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

10.1.1 GOAL

Create a model recreation system for the state of Ohio that promotes a positive image of Cincinnati and the services provided.

10.1.2 STRATEGIES

- **Develop maintenance and cleaning standards for all facilities and park grounds** to match the community's expectations for safe, clean, updated, modern and inviting indoor and outdoor spaces.

- **Establish the appropriate staffing of fulltime, part-time and seasonal staff** based on increasing the hours of recreation centers and pools to meet public expectations with larger centers and pools having longer hours while creating destination facilities.

- **Update all recreation centers and pools** over a 10-year period to stay relevant.

- **Eliminate some recreation centers and pools that are underutilized** and past their useful life to avoid overextending the system more than it currently is today through a three-year review/elimination process.

- **Implement a technology plan** for each recreation center, pool operation and program registration area that is internally functional easy to implement, and easy to use from a consumer perspective.

- **Develop and implement a marketing and communication plan** for the system that positions CRC for the future with measurable outcomes.

10.2 RECREATION FACILITIES

10.2.1 GOAL

Enhance existing recreation facilities to support the program needs of all residents increasing the use of facilities and programs while creating a sense of place for people of all ages to experience.

10.2.2 STRATEGIES

- **Re-design recreation facilities** to be multi-generational and multi-functional and with adequate spaces to provide a diverse set of programs for people of all ages using established design and program standards.

- **Update or convert sports fields to meet a diverse user base** and re-establish youth and adult sports programs as a core service, system wide.

- **Eliminate all underutilized or unplayable facilities** and amenities and repurpose those sites with modern amenities that the public will use and appreciate.

- **Consider development of three indoor field houses** to support turf sports, basketball, volleyball, soccer, Lacrosse along with an indoor pool while eliminating underutilized and underappreciated facilities and operate these facilities at a high cost recovery level.

10.3 RECREATION PROGRAMS

10.3.1 GOAL

Provide innovative professional developed recreation programs that are creative, fun, safe, and that promote healthy lifestyles and support a diversity of users for people of all ages.

10.3.2 STRATEGIES

- **Recruit and retain quality recreation professionals and staff** that drive energy and passion into their programs and facilities they manage.

- **Develop effective partnerships** with other service providers working together to serve basic community recreational program needs, including effective management of recreation facilities to serve the entire community this would include public/public partners, public/not-for-profit partners and public/ private partners.

- **Add five new core programs** in senior services, special events, art programs, life skill programs for teens and adults, and license preschool to maximize existing recreation facilities.

- **Programs need to drive design of all facilities** being updated or creating new.

- **Eliminate programs competing with each other in recreation centers within close proximity in planning** areas, especially if they are in the saturated and declining stages of the program lifecycle. Combining efforts to one location can cut down on expenses and still provide the benefit to the planning area.

10.4 FINANCIALS

10.4.1 GOAL

Ensure the public trust through responsible management of public funds.

10.4.2 STRATEGIES

- **Develop mini-business plans** for all recreation centers, sports facilities and pools in the system to meet a cost recovery goal established for the area in the city where it is located.

- **Maintain fee schedules** with current market conditions to maximize financial sustainability.

- **Develop a dedicated funding source** for capital, operations and maintenance via establishing a Recreation District or a dedicated levy from a voter approved funding plan.

- **Create permanent partnerships** within the city to help offset operational and capital costs with the school district, city, Great Parks, Cincinnati Parks, and the Redevelop Authority.

10.5 PARKLAND

10.5.1 GOAL

Maximize the value of park lands, amenities and trails as community assets that residents will use and connect with for generations to come.

10.5.2 STRATEGIES

- **Establish a true partnership with Cincinnati Parks** on what are their park responsibilities and CRC park responsibilities and rewrite the management plan with them for the next ten years.

- **Establish a working partnership with Great Parks** on parks within the city that would give them a presence where the property could potentially be transferred to them decreasing the financial stress of CRC.

- **Update existing parks that are underutilized with new park master plans** repurposing these parks to enhance their value and use throughout the community and the neighborhoods they serve.

- Develop loop trails within CRC parks as well as connect to regional trails where possible.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – CONCLUSION

The CRC is at a crossroads as the system is overextended with the money and resources it has available to try to deliver recreation facilities, programs and services equitably across the City. The City has not adequately funded the system, both operationally and capital wise, to meet the community's expectations and has continually added elements to the system.

To achieve the recommendations in the plan it may require some job titles and job description changes that will need to be audited and revised. CRC Board and CRC leadership will need support from local unions, city administrators, and elected officials to revise job titles and job descriptions to put people in the right places to accomplish the recommendations in the plan.

Additionally, many of the recreation facilities and park amenities have been allowed to deteriorate, which has reduced the community's use of these resources. Most of the facilities are only open five days a week versus seven days a week which hasn't served the community well.

The Business Plan was developed to address these concerns using government business principles to guide the process. This will require a cultural shift within the CRC, as well as in the City leadership to address the problems outlined. These issues are not the fault of any one person, group, or political body, but a combination of all involved over a number of years.

To recover the system to community expectations of the CRC, will take time, money, and the ability to say "no" gracefully to the residents and key city leadership when resources are not in place to meet expectations. This will take a combined effort between the City leaders, the Cincinnati School District, corporate partners, and not-for-profit partners, as well as the general public to step up and help reposition the system for the future.

It will not be easy, but it can be accomplished with the right attitude and perspective to achieve the vision outlined in the Business Plan. The CRC Board and staff are committed and equipped to address these challenges; let the process begin!