# VIII Park Operations, Recreation Programming & Operations, Administration, Staffing & Operations

OVERVIEW

The Wood Dale Park District, as part of this CAP Plan, requested recommendations as indicated in the project objectives presented below.

1. Prepare refined recommendations by category for:

   • Recreation Services and Programs

   • Administration, Staffing, Operations, Maintenance

2. Rank recommendations in categories of high, medium and low.

In order to ascertain recommendations for administration, staffing and operations, first a review of the various departments must be addressed. The purpose of this review is to determine the organization's needs as they pertain to carrying out this CAP Plan and is not a full assessment of the districts' capabilities to carry out its function as a local unit of government. Further, it addresses primarily recreation and park department issues with respect to administration, staffing and operations while reviewing some aspects of administration, staffing and operations of the district overall as it relates to supporting recreation and park services.
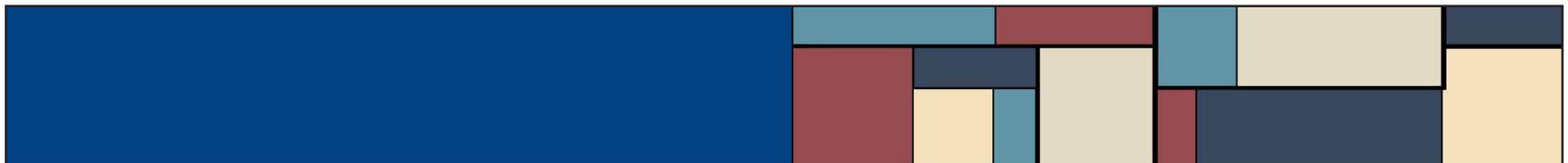
METHODOLOGY

Methodology to collect data included both qualitative and quantitative processes that included the following.

Qualitative Assessment
- Facility tour
- Interviews and department focus groups with full time staff
  □ Administrative
  □ Board Representative
  □ Finance
  □ Marketing
  □ Parks
  □ Recreation
- Office organization assessment
- Park tour
- Vehicle & equipment review

Quantitative Assessment
- Capital budget review
- Capital improvement plan review
- Checklist review
- Customer response process review
- Fee development process
- Goals and objectives review
- Operating budget review
- Process search
- Program development review
- Program location process
- Program outcome development and review
- Technology methods
- Work plan review

The documents identified above were those being sought as part of the quantitative assessment. Some of those documents were submitted by staff as part of this process. Others either did not exist or were not submitted. Those collected included the following.

- 2013 & 2014 Program Participant Reports

- Annual Financial Reports (2008 – 2013)
- Brand-identity Guidelines
- Budgets (2013, 2014, 2015)
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Cooperative Programs List
- Employee Satisfaction/Expectations Questionnaire (2014 and 2013 Comparisons)
- Full Time Employee Strength Finder Summary
- Function/Program Operating Indicators (2007-2014)
- Job Descriptions
- Prior-Year Comparative Income Statement (2013-2014)
- Program Cancellation Policy/Procedure
- Program Guides: Fall 2013, 2014; Winter 2014, Spring 2014, Summer 2014
- Water Park Gender Statistics (2014)

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Interviews and Department Focus Groups

Through six one-on-one interviews and two department focus groups, district representatives were asked 21 questions regarding community and organizational need. The purpose of the inquiry was to compare the results of the community survey with organizational perceptions as well as to determine existing organization methodologies to enhance the delivery of park and recreation services.

Below is a summary of the interviews and department focus groups. Results are presented as follows.
- External Issues
- Internal Issues

Respondents believed upgrades to parks and facilities (35.63%) and addressing community interest and participation levels (27.69%) were the top two external issues facing the district. Improving programs and program variety

(18.39%) as well as recognizing the cultural and demographic changes (10.34%) in the community was also important tallying together 28.73% of the responses. While not a driving force in staff opinion, there was some recognition that fees and the ability to pay as well of a need for land and facility space may need attention.

Comparison to Community Wide Survey

Administration, staffing, operations, maintenance, recreation services and programs are all affected by the district's capacity to deliver park and recreation services. The discussion that follows states the findings regarding both staff and community responses to various issues for the purpose of analyzing, and later providing recommendations, that will enable the district to address community need through improved systems. Without an understanding of community need, operational and infrastructure capacity, the district cannot match that need with results. Below, staff perceptions are matched with the community survey results to gain a better understanding of the synergy that must follow for the district to respond to its constituents.

District staff identified six categories representing areas of improvement. Results from that input prioritized the categories in order of importance as follows.
1. Park & Facility Upgrades
2. Community Interest/Participation Levels
3. Program Improvements/Variety
4. Community Culture/Demographics
5. Fees/Ability to Pay
6. Need for Land and Facility Space

Within each of the categories above, staff identified specific issues for improvement. For example, within the category of Community Interest/Participation Levels, staff identified the following issues that need to be addressed in

External Issues

Areas of Improvement Category/Issue	Category Responses	Issue Responses	Percent
Park & Facility Upgrades	**31**		**35.63%**
General Park Improvements		*11*	*35.48%*
Maintenance Issues		*6*	*19.35%*
Pool Needs		*5*	*16.13%*
Improve Dog Park		*2*	*6.45%*
Cabin Improvements		*1*	*3.23%*
Restroom Needs		*1*	*3.23%*
Basketball Court Needs		*1*	*3.23%*
Large Soccer Fields		*1*	*3.23%*
Outdoor Fitness		*1*	*3.23%*
Playground Upgrades		*1*	*3.23%*
Ball Field Upgrades		*1*	*3.23%*
Community Interest/Participation Levels	**24**		**27.59%**
Low Participation		*11*	*45.83%*
Lack of Interest		*6*	*25.00%*
Lack of Awareness		*3*	*12.50%*
Poor District Reputation		*2*	*8.33%*
Railroad Tracks Obstacle		*1*	*4.17%*
Not Enough Time		*1*	*4.17%*
Program Improvements/Variety	**16**		**18.39%**
New Programs		*10*	*62.50%*
Special Event Needs		*3*	*18.75%*
Outdoor Programming Needs		*1*	*6.25%*
Public Agency Collaboration		*1*	*6.25%*
Improve Senior Programs		*1*	*6.25%*
Culture/Demographics	**9**		**10.34%**
Demographics		*3*	*33.33%*
Culture		*2*	*22.22%*
Language		*2*	*22.22%*
Transportation		*1*	*11.11%*
Socio-economics		*1*	*11.11%*
Fees/Ability to Pay	**4**		**4.60%**
Fee Elasticity		*2*	*50.00%*
Lower Fees		*1*	*25.00%*
Free Programs		*1*	*25.00%*
Land and Facility Space	**3**		**3.45%**
More Land		*1*	*33.33%*
Program Space		*1*	*33.33%*
Soccer Field Space		*1*	*33.33%*

Table 1: Focus Group & Interview External Issues Results

order of priority. Those included:

1. Low Program Participation
2. Lack of Interest
3. Lack of Awareness
4. Poor District Reputation
5. Railroad Tracks Obstacle
6. Not Enough Time

Table 1 identifies the categories and issues within those categories by order of priority as identified by the district staff.

Park and Facility Upgrades

With respect to park and facility upgrades, the community survey posed the question of interest for park and facility improvements in questions 14 and 16 of the survey.

14. In the next 2-5 years, what importance do you think should be placed on expanding/improving each of the following?

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing "not at all important" and 5 representing "very important" respondents rated the following areas of interest as presented below.

Item	Rating
Parks and Playgrounds	3.5
Restrooms in Parks	3.5
Trails and Paths in Parks	3.3
Water Park "The Beach"	3.2
Salt Creek Golf Course/Clubhouse	3.0
Log Cabin Nature Center	2.9
Community Park/ Mixon Fields	2.8
White Oak Dog Park	2.8

16. When considering the future (5+ years), what changes to the District would most interest your household?

When asked what existing and new features the district should address, respondents presented the following.

Existing Features	
Expand Fitness Center	28%
Maintain Open Space/ Existing Parks	26%
Renovate Water Park "The Beach"	26%
Renovate Log Cabin Nature Center	19%
Renovate Rec Complex	17%
Renovate Salt Creek Club	15%
Replace Playground Equipment	14%
Renovate Athletic Fields	7%
Expand Parking	7%

Build/Add New	
Walking Trails	40%
Restrooms	34%
Shelters/Pavilions	20%
Neighborhood Splash Pads	20%
Indoor Sport Athletic Facility	15%
Acquire More Open Space	11%
Outdoor Performing Arts Space	10%

Outdoor Tennis Courts	10%
Dance Studio	8%
Gym	8%
Preschool Facilities	6%
Athletic Fields	3%
Other	9%

Regardless of the specific issue, staff and survey respondents agree that improvements to parks and facilities are important to the community. The survey gives the district a glimpse of priorities as viewed by the public and should be prioritized according to financial ability. Improvements driven by program need must further be analyzed with respect to market vitality in order to ensure the costs of improvements are supported by sufficient participants to warrant the outlay of capital investments.

Community Interest/Participation Levels

Of significant interest is the low participation numbers in some of the district's programs. Survey respondents were asked to identify reasons for non-program participation in question 2, which is stated below.

2. What are the reasons your household does not use the District's parks, programs and facilities more often?

Reason	Percent
Not enough time	36%
Nothing matches our interests	25%
Scheduled when we cannot participate	18%

Costs/fees are too high	15%
Use other area recreation providers	14%
Other	14%
No facilities match my needs	10%
Program cancellations	6%
Quality of programs does not meet needs	6%
Do not know what is offered	6%
Location	3%
Safety concerns	2%
Classes are full	2%
Access/transportation	1%
Custom service by staff	0%
ADA accessibility	0%

Staff believed that low participation mostly was a result of a lack of interest, and certainly that is highly represented by survey respondents. Not enough time represents more than a third of the responses and not much can be done with respect to overcoming the fact that people are busy. While not having enough time is a significant issue, a cumulative response of 64% by respondents provided different reasons for not using district parks, programs and facilities more often. Most of these can be addressed by the district to reduce the number of non-participants and will be discussed under recommendations later in this chapter.

Program Improvements/Variety

The need for program improvements and variety is evident by the survey responses to question 2 above, specifically:

Reason	Percent
Nothing matches our interests	25%
No facilities match my needs	10%
Quality of programs does not meet needs	6%
Cumulative Total	41%

Collectively, a cumulative total of 41% by respondents indicated that their needs are not being met by existing parks, programs and facilities. This does not include the tangential reasons driving potential participants away either to other providers or just not participating at all. Therefore, those needs must be identified. To assist the district in helping provide programs and facilities not available by the Wood Dale Park District, cooperation with neighboring districts has been undertaken. Cooperative programs with adjacent districts, as identified by the Wood Dale Park District are as follows:

Cooperative Agency	Program/Facility
Addison Park District	Indoor swimming, teen programs, soccer
Bensenville Park District	Adult trips, teen programs, soccer
Bloomingdale Park District	Teen programs, soccer
Elk Grove Village Park District	Gymnastics, fencing
Glen Dale Heights	Teen programs, soccer
Itasca Park District	Itasca/Wood Dale basketball league, teen programs, soccer

Cooperative Agency	Program/Facility
Medinah Park District	Computer classes, kid rock/tot rock classes, teen programs, soccer
Roselle Park District	Teen programs, soccer
School District 7	Use of facilities for basketball league, dance recital, after school programs

Also contributing to adding variety and new programs is the district's program practices. In an effort to gain additional participation and to reduce the number of unsuccessful programs the following summary of district current guidelines are presented below.

- Programs not offered if after one year the program is not run.
- Programs not successful after one year can be renamed or tweaked. If not successful after two years, the program is no longer offered.
- Large core programs, that don't see a decline in participation, are tweaked to add more variety or structure to increase participation.

Culture/Demographics

Changing demographics also has an impact on participation whether in parks, programs or facilities. Limited responses by ethnic groups to the survey were produced; therefore, interest of these demographic groups is difficult to measure. Understanding where minority and/or ethnic populations are located can assist in target marketing these population segments.

The website www.city-data.com provides such information regarding multiple factors in understanding the populations of communities. A quick purview of the website suggests that households of Polish descent have their heaviest concentration in Area D followed by Areas E

and C identified in the map on page four of the survey document according to the following breakdown:

Neighborhood Area	Percent of Polish Descent
Area D	21.4%
Area E	17.8%
Area C	11.5%

Households speaking Spanish at home have their heaviest concentration north of Irving Park Road with as many as 30% of households speaking that language. Census block information is also available on the website, which allows for the percentages of races within each block to be identified.

Fees/Ability to Pay

Staff and survey respondents collectively recognize that the cost of services and programs may be an issue to some. Costs and fees that are too high are a factor by some residents' (15%) decision not to participate in programs and services as presented above. While not a substantial percentage, the district should evaluate its fees to ensure affordability, cost-recovery, and competitiveness.

Land and Facility Space

Land is a resource difficult to acquire once developed for other purposes. Most, if not all, the land in Wood Dale is currently functioning with specific land uses dedicated to residential, commercial, and institutional purposes. This includes park, schools, and other governmental uses. Residents identified land acquisition (11%) as one of the things important to them regarding building or adding new facilities to the district. From a programming perspective this is an important issue, since lack of land has an impact on the district's ability to offer certain programs,

facilities and services.

INTERNAL ISSUES

Most of the administration and operations of a district go largely unseen by the public, yet, the impact of how a district functions internally affects the delivery of service to the community. As such, it is important for an organization to operate both effectively and efficiently in order to get predictable and consistent results. To determine recommendations for administrative, staffing, operations, maintenance, recreation services and programs it is necessary to investigate how the district functions and/or is perceived by the staff. Therefore, an inquiry to the district's internal issues was conducted as part of the staff interviews and focus groups. The results are summarized in Table 2.

Internally, responses from four issues were needed to reflect a collective majority of 61.73% from the above table, which included the following.

- Organizational Morale/Communication (19.14%)
- Organizational Improvements (15.43%)
- Direction/Focus (13.58%)
- District Identity/Marketing (13.58%)

Regarding Staff Issues (11.11%), Other Issues (9.88%), Improvements/Positive Culture (9.26%), and Funding/Revenue Issues (8.02%) two categories require some further clarification.

Similar to Table 1, staff identified internal categories of importance in order of priority. Within each category, staff identified specific issues again in order of priority. The number indicates the responses followed by the percentage for each category or specific issue. Training was mentioned in both Organizational

Internal Issues Category/Issue	Category Responses	Issue Responses	Percent
Organizational Morale/Communication	**31**		**19.14%**
Teamwork Improvements		14	45.16%
Communication Improvements		8	25.81%
Morale Improvements		5	16.13%
Micro-managing Occurs		4	12.90%
Organizational Improvements	**25**		**15.43%**
Computer/Phone		7	28.00%
Planning		10	40.00%
Personnel Policy Issues		3	12.00%
Process Improvement		3	12.00%
Systems Training		2	8.00%
Direction/Focus	**22**		**13.58%**
District is Mission/Vision Centered		10	45.45%
Planning Need		8	36.36%
Time Management Discipline		4	18.18%
District Identity/Marketing	**22**		**13.58%**
Expanding Market/Reaching Customer		7	31.82%
Branding Consistency		5	22.73%
Knowing the Customer		5	22.73%
Marketing/Methods/ Tools to reach Segments		5	22.73%
Staff Issues	**18**		**11.11%**
Job Training		9	50.00%
Staffing Levels Shortages		7	38.89%
Quality Improvements		2	11.11%
Other	**16**		**9.88%**
Operations		7	43.75%
Projects		5	31.25%
Miscellaneous		2	12.50%
Programming		2	12.50%
Improvements/Positive Culture	**15**		**9.26%**
Good Staff		6	40.00%
Organizational Improvements Effective		3	20.00%
Good Customer Service		2	13.33%
Effective Leadership		2	13.33%
Task Focused		2	13.33%
Funding/Revenue Issues	**13**		**8.02%**
Resource Need		8	61.54%
Programming Revenue Consistency		3	23.08%
Effective Management		2	15.38%

Table 2: Focus Group & Interviews Internal Issues Results

Improvements and Staff Issues; however, they pertained to different areas of interest. Training under the category of Organizational Improvements pertained to a need for training around such things as computer training, policies and other operational items that cross all departments. Training with respect to staff issues reflected a need for job training pertaining to individual responsibilities. The category of Improvements/Positive Culture represented issues in which staff believed improvements have been made over the last year.

District identity and marketing efforts are also recognized by staff as an important issue. The district has brand-identity guidelines that identify consistent use of the district's logo.

However, a systematic approach to marketing to reach potential participants is not evident. District internal discussions on methodologies are on-going, which will likely result in an agreed upon process. Recommendations for marketing strategies are presented later in this document.

An important comparison to the staff interview and focus groups responses regarding Improvements/Positive Culture and Organizational Morale/Communication is the Employee Satisfaction/Expectation Questionnaire implemented in 2013 and 2014. A summary of the main categories followed by a brief discussion is presented in Table 3. Percentages were tabulated from individual questions, averaged and rounded to the nearest whole number.

Part time staff was not included in this plan's staff interviews and focus groups; however, as seen in Table 3, part time staff opinion has remained largely consistent between 2013 and 2014 with the exception of team values.

The strongest area of improvement as revealed

by full time staff is with respect to a clearly defined mission and vision. This is supported by the qualitative inquiry regarding Direction/Focus in which 45.45% of the 22 responses indicated a similar opinion. Improvements in communication support efforts to communicate the purpose of the organization to staff. In addition to a clear mission, staff interviews and focus groups indicated a need for planning on a departmental level in addition to the mission and vision and organizational planning such as this master plan.

Variances of less than five percent in four of the categories presented above for full time employees are not significant, however, monitoring of these opinions need to be addressed over time to see if a trend develops. Results from full time employees pertaining to customer service and the employees job itself saw a downturn from 2013 to 2014. A potential source of that downturn may be explained by the reduction in program participation resulting in diminished expectations and a correlation between resources and results. Further study of these issues also should be investigated to determine if a trend continues.

Recommendations

The District is organized and currently staffed at levels that support most operations. The need for staff is dictated by the amount of measured work, or output, required per position. Often, without defined methods, including standards, processes and checklists along with a lack of measurement tools to compare work output against requirements, accurate projections for additional staff cannot be quantified. As such, staff tends to feel overwhelmed with work when

all it might be is a need to organize the work for better efficiency and effectiveness. Before making recommendations to add significant staff, the development of tools to identify and measure work output must first be addressed.

Planning on a weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual and long-term basis is also important in determining work activity. While the organization can deliver long-range plans such as this master plan, strategic plans and other visioning documents, it is up to the departments to develop work plans to achieve these longer view plans. Without such efforts, work piles up with seemingly little relationships to district goals, and as such, overwhelm staff with work not directly related to desired outcomes.

These factors impact staff morale but are easily addressed. Current efforts to make organizational improvements are underway in response to the Employee Satisfaction/Expectation Questionnaires. From data received from the interviews, focus groups and Employee Satisfaction/Expectation Questionnaires, the following goals are presented in order of priority, that either represents on-going plans, enhance

| | Agree (strongly or somewhat) | | | |
Category	Full Time 2014	Part Time 2014	Full Time 2013	Part Time 2013
Agency Image & Service	79%	91%	81%	87%
Mission & Purpose	93%	89%	65%	83%
Leadership	63%	87%	66%	88%
(Note: Leadership represents board, executive director, department heads and supervisors collectively)				
Communication	64%	83%	56%	82%
Customer Service	59%	89%	67%	87%
My Job	71%	84%	80%	88%
Staff Morale	39%	82%	43%	78%
Team Values	65%	71%	60%	83%
(Note: Team values represent board, executive director, department heads and supervisors collectively)				

Table 3: Employee Satisfaction/Expectation Questionnaire (*Source: Wood Dale Park District*)

existing plans, or identify additional approaches.

INTERVIEWS/FOCUS GROUP & EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE

Issues: Organizational Morale/ Communication; Leadership, Communication, Staff Morale, Team Values

Priority:

High

1. Inquire of staff the specific recommendations necessary to address the need to improve morale, communication, leadership and team values

2. Identify leadership, management, supervisor, and team roles and responsibilities

Medium

3. Identify team and teamwork techniques

4. Identify effective communication techniques

5. Provide communication, team, leadership, management, and supervisor training to staff

Issues: Organizational Improvements; Customer Service

Priority:

High

1. Identify department planning needs

2. Assign planning document development to appropriate staff for completion

Medium

3. Identify specific organizational and customer service improvement needs

4. Develop plans to address organizational and customer service improvements

5. Identify systems training needs

6. Develop a plan to implement training needs

Low

7. Identify process development needs

8. Develop processes starting with the five most important and continue until complete

Issues: Direction/Focus; Mission & Purpose

Priority:

High

1. Continue with successful efforts to communicate district mission and vision

2. Identify organizational planning needs

3. Develop plan to complete district planning needs

Low

4. Identify obstacles to effective time management

5. Develop individual staff goals and objectives to address time management obstacles

Issues: Staff

Priority:

Medium

1. Identify individual job training needs

2. Develop individual job training plan for staff

3. Identify customer service quality standards

4. Develop training plan for customer service standards

Low

5. Identify staffing level requirements based on quantitative analysis including but not limited to:
   a. Man-hours required by task
   b. Existing workload man-hours currently planned
   c. Identify existing available man-hours
   d. Identify workload man-hours required
   e. Compare required man-hours to available man-hours
   f. Develop plan to address gap in required man-hours and available man-hours

6. Identify work task quality standards

7. Develop a training plan for work task quality standards

Issues: Funding/Revenue

Priority:

High

1. Develop a program cost recovery policy to ensure consistent approaches to program revenue

2. Identify budget and financial management training needs of staff

3. Develop a plan to provide effective budget and financial management for staff

Low

4. Identify the labor, material, supplies and equipment costs necessary to complete annual work task by department

5. Identify available financial resources by department

6. Identify the gap between available resources and needed resources

7. Identify other revenue sources to fund unfunded need

8. 8. Identify labor, material, supplies and equipment for elimination or deferral based upon funding capability

District Identity/Marketing from the interviews and focus groups and Agency Image and Service are addressed later in this section.

RECREATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The Wood Dale Park District offers programs and services similar to most public park and recreation agencies in the Chicagoland area. Efforts are made to provide programs and services reflective of community need mostly through qualitative methods. In response to how the district ensures that community need is being met, staff presented 25 responses of which 23 are qualitative and two are quantitative. Those responses are identified below.

Qualitative Methods

- By email
- Focus groups
- Idea card from brochure
- Look at other park district brochures
- Our opinion
- Participant comments
- Patron request
- People just tell us
- Previous success
- Providing community needs
- Residents tell us
- Staff discussion
- Staff tells us
- Suggestion box
- Supervisor choice
- Supervisors and instructors
- Talking to customers
- The historical built relationships with patrons
- Trial and error
- Verbal communication
- Visiting other park districts
- Website research
- Working with them to determine what they want

Quantitative Methods

- Program surveys
- Community surveys

Survey Results

6.   How would your household rate each of these sources that provide information regarding the District?

Item	Excellent/Good
Seasonal program brochure	84%
Park District staff	74%
Wood Dale Park District website	71%
Mailers and flyers	67%
Neighbors/friends/relatives	57%
E-blasts	55%
Newspaper (print)	52%
Newspaper (online)	49%
School flyers	44%
Social media (Facebook, Twitter)	30%

Respondents indicate very high levels of satisfaction with the program brochure and very good levels of satisfaction with district staff, website, and mailers and flyers. However, participation levels are lower than expectations so a further inquiry to factors that may cause these levels must be evaluated.

Referring back to reasons respondents don't participate revealed that interest levels didn't match with district offerings, facilities and the quality of programs didn't match their need. To determine needs first we must look at what is being offered.

Program Category	Tot (<3)		Preschool (3 to 5)		Youth (6 to 12)		Teen (13 to 17)		Adult (18+)		Older Adults (50+)		Family	
	P	C	P	C	P	C	P	C	P	C	P	C	P	C
Aquatics-Swim Lessons	2	17	2	17	10	157	1	11	3	15				
Aquatics-Swim Team					1	1								
Aquatics-Zumba							2	2	2	2	2	2		
Special Events													23	23
Rainbow Playschool	2	6	1	7										
Early Childhood	3	15	3	14										
Extended School					6	38								
Camp			4	18	4	32								
Youth					17	100								
Dance					6	56	4	25	2	5	2	4		
Youth Athletics			13	54	21	106	20	84						
Jr. High					9	9	13	13	1	1	1	1		
Tween & Teen Trips					6	6	6	6						
Stay and Play	4	8	4	8	4	8								
Fitness Studio							4	4	12	60	12	60	4	4
Adult Athletics					1	2	4	10	5	12	5	12	3	9
Adult Group Fitness							2	28	14	118	3	36		
Adult Trips/Older Adult									8	9	25	40		
Total	11	46	27	118	85	515	56	183	47	222	50	155	30	36

P = Program
C = Class

Table 4: Programs and Classes Offered

Table 4 tallies 306 programs representing 1,275 individual class opportunities from the district's program brochures. The Participant Report for 2013 and 2014 provided by the district tallied 1,047 classes offered. The reason the inventory above is greater is that the 1,275 classes presented in Table 4 represent programs that were available to more than one age group and were counted more than once. For example, some of programs that appear in the brochures under one age group are open to other age groups. In other words, the dance programs are primarily offered to youth and teens, but in the program brochure the class is open to adults. The same is true for the Jr. High program. The 1,047 classes from the Participant Reports do not include duplicates, and for measurement purposes is the correct number for calculating held and cancelled programs. Table 5 identifies the actual number of classes held and cancelled by the district from the fall of 2013 to the summer of 2014.

Program Category	Total Classes 2013/2014 Budgeted	Percent Classes Offered Budgeted	Total Classes Offered Held Actual	Percent Classes Held Aggregate Actual	Classes Cancelled	Percent of Classes Cancelled Category	Percent of Classes Held Category
Aquatics	175	16.71%	76	9.48%	99	56.57%	43.43%
Aquatics (Lessons and Aqua)	43	4.11%	42	5.24%	1	2.33%	97.67%
Adult Programs	9	0.86%	9	1.12%	0	0.00%	100.00%
Adult Fitness/Athletics	201	19.20%	177	22.07%	24	11.94%	88.06%
Adult/Family Events/Trips	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Camps	83	7.93%	82	10.22%	1	1.20%	98.80%
Dance	54	5.16%	50	6.23%	4	7.41%	92.59%
Early Childhood	85	8.12%	79	9.85%	6	7.06%	92.94%
Fitness Studio	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
Special Events	23	2.20%	22	2.74%	1	4.35%	95.65%
Senior Programs/Trips	39	3.72%	21	2.62%	18	46.15%	53.85%
Teen/Youth Events/Trips	4	0.38%	2	0.25%	2	50.00%	50.00%
Youth Programs	208	19.87%	140	17.46%	68	32.69%	67.31%
Youth Athletics	123	11.75%	102	12.72%	21	17.07%	82.93%
Total	**1047**	**100.00%**	**802**	**100.00%**	**245**	**23.40%**	**76.60%**

Table 5: Programs and Classes Budgeted and Held

The data presented in Table 5 and provided by the district is an excellent example of measuring program success. A direct comparison of program offerings presented in the brochure with the Participant Reports isn't made since the program categories differ in some cases. None-the-less, the data gives a good perspective of what is successful and what needs improvement. A side by side comparison of programs presented in the brochure and the Participant Reports reveals the following:

Program Category (Report)
Aquatics
Aquatics (Lessons and Aqua)
Adult Programs
Adult Fitness/Athletics
Adult/Family Events/Trips
Camps
Dance
Early Childhood
Fitness Studio
Special Events
Senior Programs/Trips
Teen/Youth Events/Trips
Youth Programs
Youth Athletics

Program Category (Brochure)
Adult Athletics
Adult Group Fitness
Adult Trips & Classes
Aquatics
Older Adult (50+)
Summer Camp
Dance
Early Childhood
Extended School
Fitness Studio
Jr. High
Rainbow Playschool
Special Events
Stay and Play
Tween & Teen Trips
Youth

For future reporting, measurement of program participation could be more easily tracked if using the same categories presented in the program brochure. However, the data provided can be used to compare program offerings with program interests and/or satisfaction from the survey. Data indicates that survey respondents are looking for more programs that meet their needs. Summarizing Table 5 and comparing it to programs offered and cancelled is presented at right.

The conclusion drawn from the data suggest that programs that draw regular participants do well with respect to the percentage of classes held. However, some program categories such as aquatics, senior programs/trips, teen/youth/trips, and to some degree youth programs are not drawing participants from the community at expected levels. Further, survey results suggest that a number of potential participants are not registering for district programs and are either not participating or they are finding other venues to meet their need. This is somewhat borne out by the survey responses to survey question 4 as follows.

4. *Through which organizations did your household participate in recreational activities/programs during the last 12 months?*

Category	Percent
Indicated at least one	72%
Library	45%
None	25%
Neighboring park districts	22%
Churches	21%
Wood Dale Park District affiliates	20%

Program Category (Report)	% of Classes Held Category	Program Category (Survey)	Meets or Somewhat Meets Need
Aquatics	43.43%	Aquatics	29%
Aquatics (Lessons and Aqua)	97.67%	Adult Programs & Trips	31%
Adult Programs	100.00%	Adult Group Fitness	28%
Adult Fitness/Athletics	88.06%	Adult Athletics	26%
Adult/Family Events/Trips	0.00%	Older Adults (50+)	37% (46% for over 65)
Camps	98.80%	Extended School	17% (45% for households with children under 20 and <45)
Dance	92.59%	Rainbow Playschool	13% (45% for less than 45)
Early Childhood	92.94%	Dance	15% (34% for less than 45)
Fitness Studio	0.00%	Youth Programs	15% (48% for less than 45)
Special Events	95.65%	Teen Trips	9% (32% for less than 45)
Senior Programs/Trips	53.85%	Jr. High Programs	8% (32% for less than 45)
Teen/Youth Events/Trips	50.00%	Fitness Studio	41%
Youth Programs	67.31%	Special Events	48%
Youth Athletics	82.93%		

Public or private schools	18%
Private fitness facility	10%
Private providers	10%
Other	5%
No answer	3%
Area colleges	2%
YMCA	2%

Thirty-seven percent of survey respondents indicated that they or members of their household do not use district parks and facilities. The question did not inquire of park district program use so a direct correlation between not using parks and facilities and programs cannot be made. However, a reasonable conclusion, from

other data presented, is that residents of the community do not participate in programs and services at levels desired by the district due to the factors raised earlier. Further, residents have other options to meet those needs as seen above.

The market share of those agencies, not including the Wood Dale Park District, that offer program opportunities for the residents can be seen from data collected from the survey. The library garners the largest share of the market. What percentage of the market is occupied by the park district cannot be calculated from the data since it was not included as a selection in the survey. However, it's reasonable to suggest that the park district has the largest share of the market for recreation and program opportunities. None-the-less, from the data presented below, residents

have options regarding where they will participate, and given existing district program participation levels, residents are exercising those options as needed.

Agency	Market Share of Others Not Including WDPD	Survey Responses
Library	29%	113
Neighboring park districts	14%	55
Churches	13%	52
Wood Dale Park District affiliates	13%	51
Public or private schools	12%	46
Private fitness facility	6%	24
Private providers	6%	24
Other	3%	12
Area colleges	1%	5
YMCA	1%	5
Total	100%	387

Reasons why survey respondents are not participating in district parks, facilities and programs was addressed earlier. A correlation between the lack of participation and respondents opinion regarding their levels of satisfaction with existing programs can be made as seen from the data presented in Table 6.

Additional reasons for lack of participation may come from the fact that program listings in the brochure appear in different places. Some programs are located on pages maybe not seen

Program Category	Meets or Somewhat Meets Need	Not Meet or Somewhat Not Meed Need
Special Events	**48%**	**18%**
Fitness Studio	**41%**	**35%**
Older Adult Programs (All)	**37%**	**32%**
65+	46%	32%
45 to 64	25%	36%
55+ Male	41%	26%
55+ Female	45%	33%
Adult Programs & Trips (All)	**31%**	**34%**
65+	34%	39%
45 to 64	26%	31%
<45	28%	28%
55+ Male	35%	27%
55+ Female	34%	39%
Aquatics	**29%**	**50%**
Adult Group Fitness (All)	**28%**	**42%**
65+	18%	53%
45 to 64	34%	30%
<45	35%	39%
55+ Male	19%	43%
55+ Female	22%	47%
Adult Athletics (All)	**26%**	**43%**
65+	15%	56%
45 to 64	30%	34%
<45	44%	30%
55+ Male	21%	47%
55+ Female	20%	49%

Table 6: Survey Respondent Program Meet Need Results

by program users. For example, Belly Dance Fusion is located under the category Dance and sometimes it's located under Adult Group Fitness. Aqua Zumba is located under Aquatics but other times under Adult Group Fitness. This occurs from time to time with other programs such as Chair Piyo for Seniors which is located

Program Category	Meets or Somewhat Meets Need	Not Meet or Somewhat Not Meed Need
Extended School (All)	**17%**	**61%**
<45	45%	25%
4 Programs or more/year	58%	42%
1 to 3 Programs/year	16%	61%
Households with children <20	45%	34%
Youth Programs (All)	**15%**	**58%**
<45	48%	15%
4 Programs or more/year	46%	23%
1 to 3 Programs/year	19%	56%
Households with children <20	38%	31%
Dance (All)	**15%**	**57%**
<45	34%	23%
4 Programs or more/year	50%	33%
1 to 3 Programs/year	18%	52%
Households with children <20	36%	27%
Rainbow Playschool (All)	**13%**	**60%**
<45	39%	24%
4 Programs or more/year	30%	50%
1 to 3 Programs/year	21%	56%
Households with children <20	29%	33%
Teen Trips (All)	**9%**	**62%**
<45	32%	31%
4 Programs or more/year	27%	55%
1 to 3 Programs/year	12%	59%
Households with children <20	21%	37%
Jr. High Programs (All)	**8%**	**62%**
<45	32%	31%
4 Programs or more/year	27%	55%
1 to 3 Programs/year	15%	57%
Households with children <20	22%	41%

Table 6 (continued)

in Adult Group Fitness but not Older Adults. In order to reach the market segment consistently all programs should be listed in the program where participants can find those programs easily. This may be the cause of some residents not participating as they stated in the community survey "they don't know what is offered."

Age groups for participation are varied. Granted some are determined by safety concerns or specific program requirements but others appear to be random. An example is programs for older adults. The brochure indicates that older adults are considered 50 years old or older, yet some programs set the limit at 55 or older.

Thanksgiving Craft is offered for those 45 and older. Holiday Wreath Crafting is offered for ages 50 and over. Wine Glass Painting is offered for those 25 and older. Bingo, Pinochle Club, and Rules of the Road are listed under Older Adult (50+) in some brochures and listed under Adult Trips & Classes in another. Adult Table Tennis is listed for 7 to 15 year olds in one program guide and 16 and over in another. Again, to reach the market segment consistently, programs should be offered to defined age groups without variance.

Local and National Offerings and Trends

The Wood Dale Park District program offerings are similar to most other park and recreation agencies. However, the availability of local facilities and community interest impact all agencies program decisions on what programs to offer their residents. With respect to adjacent communities an inventory of program categories offered by park and recreation districts produced the following comparison, shown in Table 7.

Although the program categories differ in some cases, the majority of programs offered for each district are similar. Some of the program

Wood Dale Park District Program Categories	Addison Park District Program Categories	Bensenville Park District Program Categories	Itasca Park District Program Categories
Adult Athletics	Active Adults	Adult Programs & Leagues	Active Adults
Adult Group Fitness	Adult Activities	Before & After School	Adults
Adult Trips & Classes	Aquatics	Birthday Parties	Birthday Parties
Aquatics	Birthday Parties	Camps	Fitness
Camps	Camps	Golf Lessons	Kids Korner & Youth
Dance	Club Fitness	Group Fitness	Nature Programs
Early Childhood	Girls Sports	Preschool & Tot	Open Gym
Extended School	Golf Lessons	Senior Programs	Preschool
Fitness Studio	Open Gym	Special Events	Sports
Jr. High	Rec Club	Teen Programs	Tween/Teen
Older Adult (50+)	Soccer Club	Trips	
Rainbow Playschool	Special Events	Water Park & Splash Pad	
Soccer	Trips	Youth Programs, Fitness & Leagues	
Special Events	Tweens & Teens		
Stay and Play	Youth (Includes Art, Baton, Dance, Gymnastics/Tumbling, Keypers Days Off Fun, Before & After School, Music, Preschool, Sports, Tots)		
Tween & Teen Trips			
Youth			

Table 7: Local Park District Program Offerings

categories under the adjacent districts have listings not stated in the Wood Dale Park District program categories, but are included as subsets of others. For example, open gym is offered by WDPD, but it is part of the Jr. High, Youth Athletics and Adult Athletics program offerings.

However, there are some program categories offered by adjacent districts that are not offered by the Wood Dale Park District, which include the following:
- Birthday Parties
- Golf Lessons
- Nature Programs

Program	2010	2011	2012	2013	WDPD
Before & After School	46.5%	44.9%	48.0%	41.8%	X
Community Gardens	37.8%	43.1%	41.1%	46.3%	
Environmental Programs	64.7%	59.1%	58.4%	64.2%	
Fitness	88.4%	86.7%	85.7%	86.5%	X
Full Day Care	9.5%	6.4%	9.0%	6.9%	
Golf Programs	61.5%	55.1%	56.0%	52.4%	
Health & Wellness	90.2%	84.7%	86.2%	85.0%	X
Martial Arts	70.8%	67.9%	68.6%	59.5%	X
Organized Team Sports	82.9%	82.6%	83.2%	80.0%	X
Performing Arts	68.5%	64.1%	63.9%	58.5%	X
Preschool	40.0%	33.1%	39.0%	32.7%	X
Programs for the Disabled	66.5%	59.6%	61.8%	59.9%	X1
Senior Programs	77.0%	72.9%	72.4%	70.4%	X
Special Events	73.1%	79.3%	82.2%	86.5%	X
Summer Camps	81.5%	78.6%	76.5%	72.7%	X
Teen Programs	69.2%	62.6%	62.8%	60.1%	X
Tennis Programs	80.0%	76.5%	79.7%	73.4%	
Trips & Tours	73.3%	69.7%	69.8%	67.2%	X
Visual Arts & Crafts	78.8%	75.7%	76.9%	75.7%	X
Water Safety Programs	77.0%	66.0%	68.8%	67.2%	

1 Through NESDRA

Source: National Recreation & Park Association, Parks & Recreation Database, 2014

Table 8: Comparison of Wood Dale Park District Program Offerings to NRPA Reports from 2010-2013

While the district has a golf course, lessons is not part of its stated program offerings. On a national level, the district's program offerings were compared to programs and recreational opportunities reported by the 2014 National Recreation and Park Association's Parks and Recreation Database Report for the years 2010 through 2013, which is presented in Table 8.

Not included in programs and opportunities in the NRPA database are aquatic programs and swim lessons. The Water Safety Programs category includes programs that are related to lifeguard training and recreational water safety programs such as boating, canoeing, etc. While not presented, it's reasonable to assume that many park and recreations agencies include aquatic programs and opportunities for their residents as does the Wood Dale Park District.

Of important note is that all planning is local and adjacent community and national program offerings should not be used as a database for program development in Wood Dale. The local and national data does provide a source for information and trends for idea generation, but the district should develop a program mix based upon the specific and unique market it serves determined by quantifiable market and community interest data.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Programming

Lowering enrollments and increasing program participation are two key factors identified by district representatives. Responses from the survey give good insight to some of the causes to these issues. In order to increase participation, first an understanding of what drives participation must first be discussed. Program participation is affected by three factors:

- Did the program meet participant need?
- Did the participant equate the fee comparable to the program offered?
- Were the participants satisfied to a level they would participate in the program again?

Those questions can be answered through post program surveys which the district administers. However, increasing participation requires a process of market evaluation beyond opinion surveys starting with understanding the program behaviors of existing participants. Post program surveys alone do not provide all the data needed in order to make a complete informed decision about program offerings. By tracking certain participant behavior with respect to program enrollment, future behavior can be reasonably estimated for both existing and future program participants.

In order to increase enrollment in all programs the district should develop quantitative methods for determining community and participant need by tracking the following data for its programs on a quarterly basis. This information should be used to market existing and new programs to population and demographic segments of the community.

- Age of participant
- Participant name
- Participant interests
- Participant satisfaction
- Day participant enrolls in programs
- Fee and fee range of participant
- Fee comparison to other providers
- Neighborhood and community planning area of participant
- Month participants enroll in programs
- Program venue (facility/park, etc.) used by program participants
- Time of day program participation enroll in programs

Hoping for increased participation without a systematic approach will likely produce random levels of success regarding participation levels. Tracking the enrollment behavior of all participants will enable the district not only to increase enrollment, but provide information for the development of new programs and thus reduce the number of cancelled programs and classes.

Qualitative methods of determining community need and interest such as those currently being used are good methods when combined with statistical measurements. However, qualitative data by itself cannot be relied upon to give consistent and reliable projections.

In order to effectively and efficiently track data, the task for such entry must be assigned to one individual so the process loop can be closed. Due to the use of computers by all staff, the administrative function inside organizations has been decentralized. However, administrative duties taken on by functional staff typically results in both the loss of functional responsibilities and administrative efficiencies and benefits. A staff member, existing or new, should be given the responsibility of tracking program data daily and reporting on weekly and quarterly to program and marketing staff for evaluation.

Marketing

Market data starts with the program information gathered and tracked as stated above. This leads to specific target marketing, which will enable the district to spend its resources more efficiently. In order to maximize the return on marketing efforts, marketing techniques should be left to the marketing experts. Program staff can provide data to the marketing department but more effective marketing will be evident when tools to reach potential program participants are managed by marketing personnel.

GOAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Observations made earlier in this report indicated that program offerings are located in different places in the brochure and that age groups for participation vary with respect to range. In order to enhance opportunities for potential participants to find programs of interest and have consistent opportunities for participation according to ages, the following recommendations are made according to priority. While presented in order of priority, many of the goals that follow can be accomplished simultaneously.

Issues: Program & Marketing

Priority:

High

1. Identify successful program factors
2. Identify unsuccessful program factors

Medium

3. Develop a marketing plan to accomplish the following:
   a. Increase participation
   b. Enhance public awareness
   c. Brand identification
   d. Specific direct market campaigns for programs
4. Develop Permanent Program Age Groups
   a. Infant to Toddler (3 to 24 months)
   b. Toddler (2 to 3 years)
   c. Pre-school (3 to 5 years)
   d. Youth (6 to 9 years)
   e. Tween (10 to 12 years)
   f. Teen (13 to 17 years)
   g. Adult (18 to 55 years)
   h. Older Adult (55+ years)
5. Assign and/or hire administrative staff to enter and track program participation data

6. List programs under the same category in each brochure rather than changing it from time to time
7. Enable participants to find programs that are available to their age group in one place in the brochure
8. Identify market segments such as but not limited to:
   a. Ethnic groups
   b. Neighborhood location
   c. Age
   d. Gender
   e. Past participants
   f. New participants
   g. Program interest
   h. Users of other providers
   i. Fee and fee range of existing participants
   j. Venue used by participants
   k. Day and month participants enroll in programs
9. Track program participation and other data according to the same program age groups presented in the brochure
10. Target market according to both individual market segments and combined market segments
11. Enter program participation on a daily and/or weekly basis
12. Report program participation data on a monthly and quarterly basis
13. Offer programs based upon measured participant interest and behavior

Low

14. Establish partner relationships with ethnic population organizations
15. Increase marketing presence at member district programs and events
16. Increase elected officials exposure within the community
17. Review and/or revise program cancellation criteria consistent with new marketing and program strategies
18. Minimize class cancellations to maintain positive relationships with participants
19. Use program participation data to validate indoor and outdoor facility need
20. Offer program participation incentives such as "sign up for five programs get the next program for half-price"
21. Offer a resident discount versus a non-resident rate

Park Operations & Maintenance

The parks department consists of staff with longevity at the district with respect to management, supervision and park workers. This has led to a stable environment in which a common understanding of operations exists. However, as a result, little in the way of documented performance standards, processes and checklist exist. Rather, the quality of work is determined by individual capabilities and their interpretation of expectations.

Given the lack of a systematic approach to maintenance, the parks and building exteriors vary in level of maintenance. As part of the operations and maintenance assessment required of this CAP Plan, each park, outdoor recreation improvements, infrastructure and building façade were inventoried and rated according to a five point scale as indicated in Table 9.

Each improvement in the park was identified and individually rated and then summarized by category. For example, all the bleachers frames/slats were rated in each park then added together to determine that particular improvements rating throughout the entire park system. The same was done for all outdoor improvements. The results of that assessment are as follows:

Rating Scale	Observation	Item Rating
Level 5	Little repair and maintenance required	5
	Majority of service life remains	
Level 4	Minor repair and maintenance required, annual budget issue	4
	Majority of service life remains	
Level 3	Minor repair and maintenance required, annual budget issue	3
	Approaching end of useful service life	
Level 2	Major repair and maintenance required and/or issue needs addressing	2
	Approaching end of useful service life	
Level 1	Major repair or replacement needed and/or issue needs addressing	1
	Beyond useful service life	
Turf Rating	Excellent-no weeds, thick growth, dense roots	5
	Very good-few to no weeds, good density	4
	Good- a few weeds, average density, signs of bare areas	3
	Fair - significant weeds competing with grass blades	2
	Poor - mostly weedy, thin coverage of grass blades	1

Table 9: Rating Scale

Park Improvements	Rating
Bleachers Frames/Slats	5.00
Parking & Ball Field Lights	4.50
Basketball Court Standards/Hoops/Nets	4.00
Bleachers Overall Rating	4.00
Concrete Sidewalks	4.00
Picnic Tables	4.00
Backstop/Sideline Fence	4.00
Basketball Courts Overall Rating	3.83

Park Improvements	Rating
Maintenance Shop	3.75
Basketball Court Surface	3.67
Buildings/Structures Exterior	3.53
Playground Equipment	3.50
Volleyball Courts	3.50
Miscellaneous Amenities	3.41
Fencing	3.38
Playgrounds Overall Rating	3.30
Asphalt Parking Lot	3.29
Park & Player Bench Frames/Slats	3.25
Playground Mulch	3.22
Landscaping-Shrubs	3.17
Landscaping-Trees	3.15
Asphalt Path	3.14
Landscaping Overall Rating	3.04

Park Improvements	Rating
Bleacher Setting	3.00
Playground Area Edging	3.00
Park & Player Bench Overall Rating	2.76
Landscape Beds	2.71
Turf	2.71
Ball Field Infields	2.67
Gravel Parking/Walkways	2.50
Park & Player Bench Setting	2.33
Total	105.31
Average Rating	3.37
Median Rating	3.29
Variance	2.67

While the summary of the results indicate an average and median between 3 and 4 on the rating scale, the variation is quite high from the lowest rated item to the highest rated item. This supports the fact that during the quantitative search a systematic approach in which there is consistency of outcomes due to written requirements was not evident. To determine individual park ratings, the facilities within each park from the categories presented above were tabulated resulting in the following ratings for each individual park:

Park	Rating
Community Park/James Mixon Fields	3.66
Wood Dale Water Park	3.63
Recreation Center Complex	3.58
Brookwood Park	3.47
Calvary Park	3.38
Central Park	3.33
Lionwood Park	3.10
White Oak Park	3.03
Georgetown Park	3.00
Lake Mini Ha-Ha	3.00
Terrace Park	3.00
Franzen Grove	2.88
Mohawk Park	2.61
Ash Woods Park	2.25
Total	43.92
Average Rating	3.14
Median Rating	3.07
Variance	1.41

The average and median ranking were just slightly above a rating of 3.0, and again there was a variance of almost 1 ½ points between the highest rated park and the lowest rated park.

This validates the fact that random results are produced rather than consistent, predictable results.

None-the-less, the public does not perceive the level of maintenance to be a critical issue. Ratings by the survey respondents were slightly higher than the field observations. This is mostly due to the casual nature of the public's use and the fact that they have not specifically inspected the parks and facilities at the level done so in this report. However, it is important to note that the public is generally satisfied with the level of maintenance as indicated by their response to question 8 as presented below.

8. How would your household rate each of the following District areas?

Survey respondents rated the district parks and facilities using a similar five point scale. However, the survey scale ranging from poor to excellent did not define the rating, leaving it up to the participants to define those terms. Regardless, the results do give a good description of the public's perception about the quality of maintenance. The results from the survey are presented below.

Park Improvement	Survey Rating
Recreation Complex Landscaping (trees/shrubs/flowers, etc.)	4.1
Recreation Complex Outdoor lighting	4.1
Athletic Field Lighting	3.7
Athletic Field Safety	3.8
Athletic Field Maintenance	3.7
Athletic Field Availability	3.8
Park Maintenance	3.7

Park Improvement	Survey Rating
Landscaping (trees/shrubs/flowers, etc.)	3.6
Athletic Field Amenities (bleachers/benches, etc.)	3.6
Park Cleanliness (litter/trash containers, etc.)	3.7
Athletic Field Turf	3.6
Park Safety	3.6
Playgrounds	3.6
Park Amenities (benches/paths, etc.)	3.6
Outdoor tennis courts	3.4
Average Rating	3.7
Median Rating	3.6
Variance	0.7

Survey respondents rated the individual park improvements slightly higher than the overall park ratings according to the field observation ratings. While the survey did not inquire about as many park improvements as observed by the field study, the categories, for the most part included many of the same items. As such, the survey and field observations measured similar items and came away with similar conclusion. That conclusion is that maintenance levels have room for improvement, but as far as their general appearance is concerned, the public and this assessment, rate the park and outdoor facility maintenance as good, representing an average rating midway between 3.0 and 4.0.

As part of the assessment, existing successful maintenance operational methods and areas needing improvement were investigated. In addition, communication, performance standards, processes, checklist, training, level of autonomy, required job skills, knowledge and abilities were evaluated. Department responses to internal operations questions produced the following.

Question Subject	Response Summary	Response Percent
Department Needs	Operation improvements	37.5%
	Recognition	25.0%
	Staff shortages	12.5%
	Training	12.5%
	Park plans	12.5%
Working Well	Enjoyable work	50.0%
	Good staff	40.0%
	Good equipment	10.0%
Needs Improvement	Direction/ planning	62.5%
	Communication	25.0%
	Organization	12.5%
Ensuring Consistent Results	Varying standards/ observations	100.0%
Work Plan Management	No written work plan	100.0%
	No written management plan	100.0%
Performance Standards	No written standards	100.0%
Work Processes	No written processes	100.0%
Goals & Objectives	Self-determined	100.0%

Question Subject	Response Summary	Response Percent
Work Measurements	Visual inspection	42.8%
	Time to complete	28.6%
	Learn from mistakes	28.6%
Determine Resident Needs	Verbal	87.5%
	Don't know	2.5%
Needed Skills	Landscape maintenance	40.9%
	Trade skills	22.7%
	Tool & equipment use	22.7%
	Pool operations	4.5%
	Safety training	4.5%
	Playground equipment repair	4.5%
Training Needs	Landscape maintenance	33.3%
	Computer skills	11.1%
	General maintenance	11.1%
	Management skills	11.1%
	Playground inspector	11.1%
	Pool certification	11.1%
	Trade skills	11.1%
Expense Budgets Determined	Previous year	50.0%
	Current need	50.0%
Expenses Monitored	Monthly reports	100.0%

The observations from the qualitative and quantitative assessments suggest a need for a systematic approach to maintenance operations. The results of these assessments produce the following conclusions with respect to the most important internal issues:

- There is a need for operation improvements
- The work is enjoyable and the staff is good
- There is a need for more direction and planning within the department
- Standards vary due to lack of performance standards, processes and checklists
- Work plans and a management plan do not exist
- Goals and objectives are self-determined
- Work measurements are mostly visual
- Resident needs are determined by verbal feedback
- Landscape skills are the most needed skill
- Landscape training is the most important training need
- Expense budgets based on previous year and current need
- Expenses are monitored by monthly reports

Written performance standards that define the expectation for work performed do not exist as indicated by the respondents. Given management, supervision and staff experience, expectations are commonly known although variation in performance does exist. Lack of written performance standards leave room for interpretation and thus, have the potential for variation in the work performed, which can lead to a disagreement on the level of quality. The most significant issue regarding the lack of written performance standards is when personnel leave the organization, which results in the knowledge of accepted standards leaving with them. Currently, the district benefits from longevity among staff which keeps the knowledge

within the district; however, at some point the district faces the possibility of having to redefine performance standards in the event of staff turnover.

Processes are a step-by-step procedure for specific tasks that ensure consistency in work performance, the use of resources, and efficiency. In addition, coupled with performance standards, they become a training tool for employees that enable them to do their job well in accordance with defined expectations and for the most part do not exist.

There are some checklists and forms; however, their use and application is random, and there is a lack of consistency in their design, which appears to have been developed over a long period of time with little, if any, updating. As such, collecting and tracking labor, material, supplies and equipment for job performance is difficult, if not impossible.

Tracking and use of labor, material, supplies and equipment are not widely measured and thus actual costs of work performance cannot be done accurately. This results in budget development being constructed upon similar budgets from prior years with an added factor for inflation and known increases such as labor expenses.

Within organizations there are five functional levels: leadership, management, supervision, administration, and staff a summary of which are defined as follows:

- Leadership - provides direction, vision and purpose, represents department
- Management - ensures effective and efficient use of resources, measures and monitors, results, plans job strategy and timelines, determines performance standards and processes, develops budget and determines resource need

- Supervision - ensures job performance, measurement and monitoring, collaborates in planning, job strategy and timelines, performance standards and processes, develops checklists, collaborates on budget and resource need
- Administration - provides support through data input, filing, and office organization
- Staff - implements job activities as directed, collaborates on performance standards, processes and checklists

The levels are replicated within departments, since all departments need those functions to perform at the most efficient and effective levels. Typically, leadership and management are combined and can include some supervision responsibility if necessary. In the case of the parks department the functions of leadership and management roles are under developed. Much time is spent on supervision, leaving little time for management. The administrative function is spread amongst staff; however, the effectiveness of that function is limited due to time constraints and the lack of skills in the department to complete those duties.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As described above, the results of the parks department's operations are rated good. To improve to a higher level of success a systematic method for maintenance operations is contingent upon defining standards and then replicating those standards across all areas of responsibility. The current service level is subject to change over time through staff attrition. Keeping knowledge, performance standards, processes and information in the organization is crucial to obtaining quality, predictable, consistent results.

Steps the district can implement to ensure continued success that can be implemented over the next three years include the following in order of priority.

Issue: Organizational Effectiveness

Priority:

High

1. Add part time administrative position

2. Develop and implement formal methods to obtain resident feedback on maintenance operations and results

Medium

3. Develop written performance standards for all work activities on all items, facilities and structures starting with the most important and continue until complete

4. Develop processes for all work activities that include the identification of the performance standard, sequential steps for completion, and all labor, material, supplies and equipment necessary for effective and efficient completion of the job task

5. Develop checklists for all job tasks

6. Design all performance standard, process and checklist forms so there is consistency in layout

7. Identify all job knowledge, skills and abilities needed in the department and provide training to ensure staff has the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform all work tasks

8. Meet with other departments to determine what processes, checklists, forms and documents they need to develop for services provided by the parks department

9. Develop method to file and utilize data from processes, checklists, forms and other documents for budget and management decisions

10. Collect and track all data from processes and checklist with respect to resources to identify actual cost of all job tasks

11. Use tracked data from work plans, performance standards, processes and checklists for the purpose of developing accurate budgets

12. Develop budget reports that monitor budget actuals to the budget from year to year for the purpose of developing budgets that reflect accurate expenditures over the average of three years

13. Develop an annual work plan and use to develop quarterly, monthly and weekly work schedules including man-hours, material, supplies and equipment needs

Low

14. Evaluate all vehicles and equipment to determine if a surplus exists and to eliminate any overhead and storage requirements as necessary

15. Consider the purchase of a computerized work order system and fleet management system that enable the department to track all costs, provide systematic written work orders, schedule preventative maintenance work for the purpose of identifying true costs, preparing monitoring reports, and developing accurate budgets

16. Develop a long term asset management plan that identifies all parks, park improvements, vehicles, equipment, and indoor facilities, in detail, including frequency of maintenance and the labor, material, supplies and equipment required; and use that information to create an annual preventative maintenance plan based upon maintenance and management plan for all parks, park improvements, vehicles, equipment, and indoor facilities

In the development of tools to aid in the management of district assets some guidelines are worth considering and are discussed below.

Performance standards - The expectation of quality and end result of the work. They can be determined by district staff based upon their own experience, stakeholder need and research from peer agencies. They should be custom standards that serve the needs of the end user.

Process - The defined and acceptable method for doing the work that ensures the most efficient, effective, predictable, consistent results.

Checklists - The identification of all work that should be completed when the work is finished. Checklists should be custom to the work being performed but consistently designed across all work categories and tasks.

BUDGET & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The district has a well-defined Budget Policy and Financial Assumptions document as well as a Budget Overview statement and Proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP document provides guidelines for the development of a plan that presents the following:
• Definitions & Standards
• Capital Plan Prioritization Process
• Capital Plan Funding
• Capital Plan Format
In the Introduction of the CIP, the purpose and forecast for the plan is stated as follows.

"The Capital Improvement Plan was created to act as a mechanism for the identification of the capital projects and assets which will not only require funding but will receive attention during the next fiscal year. This Budget Plan identifies and itemizes the capital needs of the Park District over the course of the entire fiscal year."

Prior to the development of these capital improvement planning guidelines, prior capital plans consisted mainly of a list of capital plans for a given budget year or replacement schedules such as the Vehicle & Equipment Inventory & Replacement Schedule. The introduction of guidelines for capital planning will greatly position the district to evaluate the need, and criteria for, capital assets. Capital planning can be, and often is, presented with the long-term view in mind. Some plans forecast capital need for a period of five years. Some plans extend the outlook to ten years, and others project needs up to twenty years or more. In order to provide a longer term view, this master plan recommends extending the forecast for capital need to at least ten years for the following reasons.

• This master plan will make recommendations that require capital funding beyond one year

• Revenue sources for funding should be identified over a longer period of time to ensure planning of expenses by priority can be planned in a systematic way

• Expense planning over multiple years reflect matching expense to revenue and enable projects to be coordinated with other projects

The following format as shown in Table 10 is recommended as a guideline for multiple year planning.

Revenues Source	Phase I Total	Phase I 2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Phase II (2020-2024)	Phase III (Future)
CAB Issue								
Interest								
Grants								
Transfers NEDSRA								
TopGolf Revenue								
Revenue Total								
Expense Summary	**Phase I Total**	**Phase I 2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**Phase II (2020-2024)**	**Phase III (Future)**
Parks								
Facilities								
Office Equipment								
Vehicles/Equipment								
Expense Summary Total								
Expense Detail	**Phase I Total**	**Phase 1 2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**Phase II (2020-2024)**	**Phase III (Future)**
Parks								
Park Name								
Projects								
Etc.								
Total Parks								
Facilities								
Facility Name								
Projects								
Etc.								
Total Facilities								
Office Equipment								
Items								
Etc.								
Total Equipment								
Vehicles/Equipment								
Items								
Etc.								
Total Vehicles								
Expense Detail Total								

Table 10: Format Guidelins for Multiple-Year Planning