



City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Master Plan

October 2016



GREAT FALLS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
VISION STATEMENT

OFFERING A REWARDING EXPERIENCE... EVERYDAY!



GREAT FALLS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
MISSION STATEMENT

***THE GREAT FALLS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT IS COMMITTED TO
PROVIDING INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES TO ENHANCE THE
ENVIRONMENT AND ENCOURAGE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.***

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOAL	1
1.3 PROJECT PROCESS.....	2
1.4 GREAT FALLS MASTER PLAN ORGANIZATION	3
1.5 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	3
1.6 ACTION PLAN.....	17
CHAPTER TWO – ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PARKS AND RECREATION.....	18
2.1 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL STUDY	19
2.2 SUMMARY	19
CHAPTER THREE - MARKET ANALYSIS	20
3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS	20
3.2 RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS	27
3.3 OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION TRENDS.....	32
3.4 NATIONAL CAMPING TRENDS	34
CHAPTER FOUR - COMMUNITY INPUT	43
4.1 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY	43
4.2 QUALITATIVE INPUT	43
4.3 QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY	49
4.4 SUMMARY	73
CHAPTER FIVE - PROGRAM AND EVENTS ASSESSMENT	75
5.1 OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES AND CORE PROGRAM AREAS	75
5.2 SURVEY FINDINGS	77
5.3 AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS	78
5.4 LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS	78
5.5 PROGRAM AND SERVICE CLASSIFICATION	80
5.6 OTHER KEY FINDINGS	86
5.7 OTHER KEY RECOMMENDATIONS.....	86
5.8 PROGRAM NEEDS ANALYSIS AND INVESTMENT RANKING	87
5.9 SUMMARY	88
CHAPTER SIX – PARK AND URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENTS	89
6.1 PARK AND URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE KEY FINDINGS.....	89
6.2 PARK AND URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	91
CHAPTER SEVEN - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS AND SERVICE LEVELS ANALYSIS	99
7.1 PARK CLASSIFICATION AND PARK DESIGN PRINCIPLES	99
7.2 TECHNICAL NEEDS ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS.....	110
7.3 PARK/FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS	128

7.4 PARK AND FACILITY NEEDS ANALYSIS	136
7.5 SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS ANALYSIS	138
CHAPTER EIGHT - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	140
8.1 CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS – MAINTAINING WHAT WE HAVE	141
8.2 SUSTAINABLE RECOMMENDATIONS – IMPROVING WHAT WE HAVE.....	143
8.3 VISIONARY RECOMMENDATIONS – DEVELOPING NEW OPPORTUNITIES.....	144
8.4 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY	144
CHAPTER NINE - FUNDING OPTIONS	145
9.1 PRIORITY FUNDING SOURCE – PARK MAINTENANCE DISTRICT	145
9.2 FUNDING SOURCES FOR FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS.....	145
9.3 FUNDING SOURCES FOR ACTION PROJECTS	148
9.4 FUNDING SOURCES FOR VISION PROJECTS	149
9.5 OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	151
CHAPTER TEN - STRATEGY MATRIX.....	153
APPENDIX 1 - MARKETING PLAN GUIDELINES.....	156
APPENDIX 2 - RECREATION PROGRAM STANDARDS	162
APPENDIX 3 - VOLUNTEER POLICY	165
APPENDIX 4 - SPONSORSHIP POLICY	168
APPENDIX 5 - PARTNERSHIP POLICY	171
APPENDIX 6 - LAND ACQUISITION AND DIVESTITURE GUIDELINES	174

CHAPTER ONE - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the heart of Montana, the Big Sky Country, Great Falls is surrounded by spectacular natural wonders and scenery. It is nestled between rich, productive farm land only miles away from the majestic Rocky Mountains to its west and Little Belt Mountains to the east.

The city was settled around the mighty Missouri River, one of nature's most magnificent waterways. The Missouri River provides Great Falls with its name. As the Missouri cuts through the city it drops over 500 feet in a series of rapids and five breathtaking waterfalls -- the great falls of the Missouri.

Great Falls is an exciting community of over 58,000 people with various recreational opportunities for citizens and visitors alike.

Known as "The Electric City", Great Falls has a long tradition of history which began with the famous expedition of Lewis and Clark in 1805. They explored the newly purchased Louisiana Territory filled with herds of buffalo roaming the prairies. The Great Falls area had long been inhabited by tribes of Native American Indians, mainly the Blackfeet.

Lewis and Clark were the first known white explorers to catch sight of the "great falls" of the Missouri River...they heard the roaring of the falls more than seven miles away.

Their expedition took nearly a month to portage around the falls. Before the party left in mid-July of 1805, they celebrated the Fourth of July in the new territory at White Bear Island.

The stage was set for the creation of Great Falls. It was ready for a man named Paris Gibson.

Gibson came west in May of 1882. He made plans for a city, then laid them out before James Hill, a man of great importance in the railroad industry. Hill gave his financial backing to Gibson, knowing that a city in such an area would make a valuable connection for the railroads.

Unlike many other western cities, Great Falls was planned by a practical and extremely thoughtful man. While organizing the town, Gibson made sure the streets were laid out in a precise, arrow-straight pattern, plus he set aside 886 acres for city parks. Gibson believed beauty was important in a city and personally made sure that elm, ash, and fir trees were planted on every street and boulevard.

In addition to managing and maintaining the parks system and boulevards, the City of Great Falls' Park and Recreation Department plans all City-sponsored recreation classes, programs, and special events, and strives to enhance the quality of life for residents. The department oversees the operation of the swimming pools, golf courses, tennis courts, the Community Recreation Center, Riverside Rail Yard Skate Park and the crown jewel of the system - River's Edge Trail.

1.2 PROJECT PURPOSE AND GOAL

An integral part of the city's vision is to be a destination for outdoor recreation and natural beauty. The Park and Recreation Department is in need of a strategic master plan to determine how best to meet the specific desires of the community. The primary outcomes of the Master are to:

- Based on community feedback and direction, identify vision and overarching direction for the Park and Recreation Department.
- Determine the level of needs met by the Park and Recreation Department's current offerings (programming, events and parks/facilities).

- Identify unmet needs, level of desire for new programs, events and parks/facilities.
- Complete initial testing on how to fund desired enhancements or new programs/facilities.
- Identify possible parks/facility components for new/future facilities.

1.3 PROJECT PROCESS

The process of developing the Great Falls Park and Recreation *Master Plan* followed a logical planning path as illustrated below:



The foundation of the *Master Plan* was to “mine” local knowledge through the use of a creative and comprehensive public participation process. It was important to engage community members who enjoy the opportunity to participate in planning as well as to encourage thoughts from other stakeholders that typically do not voice their opinions. The public input process incorporated a variety of methods that included interviews, focus group meetings, and public forums. The data generated from these critical community interactions was used to aid the consulting team when accurately articulating the true unmet needs, addressing key operational issues, providing recommendations for business related changes, and strategizing to move the Park and Recreation Department forward for optimum results.

1.3.1 ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

The planning process for the *Master Plan* was completed with City of Great Falls staff and included:

- The collection and analysis of available relevant information.
- Data analysis to determine inventory and condition of current facilities.
- Determination of supply and demand within the community.

- The recommendations for meeting the needs of the community through an analysis of improved programs and facilities.

The data collected from the staff and onsite facility assessments allowed the consulting team to identify key factors, issues, and concerns regarding the parks and recreation system and how the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department manages operations.

1.4 GREAT FALLS MASTER PLAN ORGANIZATION

This *Master Plan* presents the overall analysis, findings, and recommendations of the consulting team related to the areas outlined in the scope of services. This study begins with an Executive Summary that provides an overview, and the following sections respond to the desired categories outlined in the study scope to reveal findings, determine needs and to offer operational and capital improvement recommendations.

1.5 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the assessment of the Great Falls Parks and Recreation system, the PROS Consulting Team identified a variety of opportunities to support the implementation of the *Master Plan*. These recommendations for the operational, programming, facility, and financial recommendation elements will guide decision-making for the next five to ten years.

1.5.1 MARKET ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS

- **Demographic Analysis:** The City of Great Falls' population is projected to grow slightly (only 3.8%) over the next 15 years. This growth is far below national averages (1% annually). It is anticipated that the unique makeup of the Great Falls' population will change only in that it is expected to age significantly, whereas by 2030, 37.4% of the population will be 55 and older.
- **Trend Analysis:** After analysis of several forms of survey inquiry, interest in parks and recreation is strong and growing. It is critically important for the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to understand the national participation trends in recreation activities. In doing so, the department can gain general insight into the lifecycle stage of recreation programs and activities (emerging, stable and declining) and thereby anticipate potential changes in need and demand for the programs and activities that it provides to the residents of Great Falls. Locally, participation in outdoor recreation programs is strong and indicate an opportunity to grow these services.

COMMUNITY INPUT KEY FINDINGS

Input from the community revealed that the Great Falls parks and recreation system has a physical and operational presence in the community. Participants also see the system as one that is well maintained with great staff. They also enjoy the numerous programs and amenities offered. Unmet needs exist, however, as the demand for select services is currently outweighing the available facilities and/or existing amenities. The following summarizes the themes of community input:

QUALITATIVE INPUT SUMMARY

Discussion with staff, community leaders and citizens revealed the following key themes related to parks and recreation in Great Falls.

- The community values parks and recreation, in particular, open space, special events and aquatics.

- There is strong advocacy for the department and the programs and services that it provides.
- The department provides a high level of customer service, however, can be over-accommodating at times. The downfall of being over-accommodating is that in the absence of formal policies and procedures, precedents can be established that change how the department operates.
- The department has entered into many partnerships with community based organizations that are not “viewed” as equitable.
- Golf is highly valued in the community, however, questions arose regarding the long term sustainability of the department’s ability to operate two, eighteen-hole golf courses.
- The Park and Recreation Department lacks community parks and quality indoor facilities, which, in turn, limits its ability to meet programmatic needs.

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY SUMMARY

The following summarizes the key themes derived from the results of the statistically-valid survey.

- Usage of parks and trails is high.
- Satisfaction is high with the condition and quality of parks, trails and facilities.
- Though participation is low, satisfaction is very high with the quality of programs, services and events.
- Survey participants felt that parks and recreation system makes Great Falls a more desirable place to live.
- Survey participants agree that the health and condition of public trees in parks and along streets is important.
- Satisfied ratings with overall value is high.
- Walking and biking trails are highly important to, and highly needed by, Great Falls residents. These results are in-line with national benchmarks.
- Adult fitness and exercise programs are highly important to, and highly needed by Great Falls residents. These results are in-line with national benchmarks and trends.
- Great Falls residents highly value community special events.
- Unmet needs exist, and are considerably higher for programs than facilities as a percentage of need.
- Strong support exists for attracting recreation tourism dollars to Great Falls and constructing facilities that would attract tourism.
- Support for upgrading and renovating the existing system far outweighs support for constructing new parks or facilities that would serve residents.
- There is mild support for increasing taxes on Great Falls residents to support parks and recreation facilities, programs, services and events.

1.5.2 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS ASSESSMENT

KEY FINDINGS

- **Program Plan:** The department is limited in fully developing a program plan due to the lack of programmable space and facilities within the system.
- **Program Standards:** Formalized recreation program standards that guide consistent service delivery are not in place.
- **Program Evaluation:** Assessment and evaluation tools to measure the success of programs and services are in place, but utilization is inconsistent.
- **Partnerships:** The department has numerous partnerships in place, however, a formal partnership policy is not in place.
- **Program Classification:** Prior to a staff workshop in 2016, functional groupings of programs and services did not exist and were not classified by core, important, and value-added, and do not have specific cost recovery goals.
- **Program Participation:** Enrollment in formal registered programs frequently approach capacity.
- **Market Definition:** The department primarily serves residents, however, this statement is based on qualitative input as non-residents as a percentage of enrollment is not measured.
- **Environmental Assets:** River's Edge Trail provide tremendous opportunity for expanded outdoor recreation programs.
- **Age Segmentation:** A successful recreation plan requires a balanced delivery of programs and events across distinct "programming" age segments of a person's life. Opportunity exists to expand programming for preschoolers and recent retirees.
- **Unmet Needs:** In reviewing the current program offerings against the desired program offerings of the community, there is an opportunity to expand programming. Per the statistically valid survey conducted by ETC, based on the estimated number of households in the City of Great Falls whose needs for Parks and Recreation Programs are only being 50% met or less: 10,829 households have significant unmet needs for community special events. Other unmet needs include: Adult fitness and wellness programs (7,888 households) and programs for adults ages 55+ (5,699 households).
- **Staffing:** The Aquatic and Recreation Divisions offer a combined 144 programs and events annually to the community with a minimal staff. The divisions combined have only FOUR full-time employees to develop, organize, administer, implement and evaluate the programs. Additionally, staff is responsible for the hiring, training, supervising and evaluating a plethora of part-time employees (8.18 FTEs or 17,014 annual man-hours) and contracted employees.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Expand programs and services in the areas of greatest demand:** Ongoing analysis of the participation trends of programming and services in Great Falls is significant when delivering high quality programs and services. By doing so, staff will be able to focus their efforts on the programs and services of the greatest need and reduce or eliminate programs and services where interest is waning. Specific efforts should be made to increase programming in the areas of greatest UNMET need as identified in the statistically valid survey.
- **Participation Data Analysis:** Through ongoing participation data analysis, refine program offerings to reduce number of low enrollment and cancelled programs. This, in turn, will allow

the divisions to offer best practice programs and create a more efficient utilization of resources, including but not limited to, facility scheduling, instructors, marketing and administrative support.

- **Continue to Maximize Facility Utilization to Meet Community Need:** The creation of formal allocation guidelines will encourage the maximum utilization of facilities during non-prime time hours. By encouraging formal groups to utilize facilities during non-prime time hours, the Aquatic and Recreation Divisions may have the opportunity to better meet the programmatic needs of the community, including the demand for lap swimming and fitness exercise classes. A framework of the key elements for the development of newly designed allocation guidelines can be found in the Appendix of the plan.
- **Partnerships:** Develop and adopt a partnership policy and utilize the policy to evaluate and develop win-win partnerships with all community based organizations. A framework of the key elements for the development of a partnership policy can be found in the Appendix of the plan,
- **Evaluation:** Implement the program assessment and evaluation tool as recommended.
- **Adopt Recreation Program Standards:** Recreation program standards are developed to support core programs and services. The standards focus on delivering a consistent high quality experience while achieving operational and cost recovery goals as well as marketing and communication standards that are needed to create awareness and customer loyalty.
- **Program Staffing:** The Consulting Team recommends the following additions to the Recreation and Aquatic Division staffs to increase staffing capacity to better meet existing needs of the community within the limitations of the department's facilities:

STAFF POSITION	CLASSIFICATION	STATUS	ACTION	TIMELINE
Special Events Coordinator	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 1 year
Recreation Manager	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 2 years
Marketing/Technology Coordinator	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Assistant Aquatic Supervisor (Programs)	Full-time	UPGRADE	Re-Classification	Within 3 years

1.5.3 PARK AND TRAIL MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENT

- **Lines of Service:** The core lines of service (functions) performed by the Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions are numerous and are as follows:
 - Aquatic Maintenance
 - Contract Management
 - Equipment Maintenance
 - Furniture, Fixture and Amenity Maintenance
 - Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
 - Irrigation Maintenance
 - Landscape Maintenance
 - Open Space/Wetland Maintenance
 - Playground Maintenance

- Response to Citizen Inquiries
 - Snow and Ice Removal
 - Special Event Facilitation
 - Special Projects
 - Streetscape Maintenance
 - Turf Maintenance
 - Urban Forestry
- **Maintenance Standards and Development of Work Plans** - Through the review of limited data and workshops with staff, the PROS Consulting team determined that the Parks and Urban Forestry divisions do have “institutional and informal” routine maintenance practices in place. However, the maintenance practices have limited written standards and accompanying standard operating procedures, are based on “one-size-fits-all” approach to parks maintenance, are inconsistently applied in the field and minimal maintenance is completed in natural areas, primarily due to lack of staffing capacity.
 - **Work Order Management System** - The Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions does have a Work Order Management System that identifies maintenance and asset replacement schedules, however, it is not effectively utilized.
 - **Resources:** Staff does not lack the necessary equipment or resources to perform tasks at a high level, however, lack of staff create hardships when managing turf, trees and landscaping.
 - **Third Party Contracting of Services** - Given the “varying” cycles of the economy, it is imperative that the divisions continually evaluate the capacity and cost of service in the private sector. Currently without a work order management system, Parks and Urban Forestry cannot track unit activity costs and therefore cannot analyze the unit cost to perform work internally against the unit cost to perform work by a third party vendor. Without this level of analysis the division is unable to determine if it is more effective and efficient to perform work “in-house” or to “contract it out”.
 - **Park Division Staffing:** The Parks Division is comprised of 11 FTEs. Best practice ratio of staff per neighborhood park acres maintained at a Level 2 maintenance standard is 1:20 acres. With the responsibility of actively managing 450.6 acres, the staff lacks the capacity to manage the parks system consistently at a Level 2 maintenance standard.
 - **Urban Forestry Division Staffing:** The Urban Forestry Division is comprised of 5 FTEs. Unlike parks, there is not a best practice staffing ratio for Urban Forestry. However, the current pruning cycle for established trees in Great Falls is one time every 21 years. This cycle is THREE times longer than that of best practice, which recommends that every tree be pruned one time every seven years.

1.5.4 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Development of a Citywide Parks Maintenance District:** It is recommended that the Great Falls City Commission consider the adoption of a resolution that would create a Citywide Parks Maintenance District to supplement current funding and create a sustainable funding source for the purposes of providing the park and recreation system services including:

- Maintenance, repair, replacement, upkeep, installation, improvement, operational enhancement, construction, reconstruction, land acquisition;
- Implementation of measures required to maintain public health and safety or meet legal or regulatory requirements;
- Purchasing, replacing, and/or maintaining equipment, tools and/or vehicles necessary to carry out park maintenance functions
- Any other functions, labor, supplies and/or materials necessary for management and maintenance of City-owned facilities, lands and equipment under the responsibility and care of the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department including but not limited to: public parks and park areas (as described in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Great Falls) recreation facilities, trails, open space, urban forest, medians, boulevards, pathways, sidewalks, public easements, and other facilities which are located in the City limits and/or are owned by the City.
- **Professional Development:** Develop a strong ongoing professional development program to ensure operational sustainability. Each maintenance staff person should have a training matrix and checked off as completed or not completed as part of their annual evaluation.
- **Utilize the Work Order Management System:** A work order system will be used to track lifecycle maintenance requirements that are tied to weekly and monthly work order requirements. This will help the staff to stay ahead of preventative maintenance requirements and limit breakdowns. Further, utilizing the system will provide staff the necessary “actual cost” data for work being performed.
- **Systematic Approach to Contracting Services:** Through the development of management processes, the Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions must begin to track unit activity costs through the implementation of a work order management system and in turn, would internally analyze the unit cost to perform work internally against the unit cost to perform work by a third party vendor.
- **Parks and Urban Forestry Division Staffing:** The consulting team recommends the following staffing additions for the Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions (which could be funded through the establishment of a Citywide Parks Maintenance District):

STAFF POSITION	CLASSIFICATION	STATUS	ACTION	TIMELINE
Park Planner	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Integrated Pest Management Specialist	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Irrigation Specialist	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Parks Laborers (8 FTES)	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Forestry Foreman	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Arborists - Boulevard (2)	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Arborists - General Parks (2)	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Park and Urban Forestry Equipment Mechanic	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years

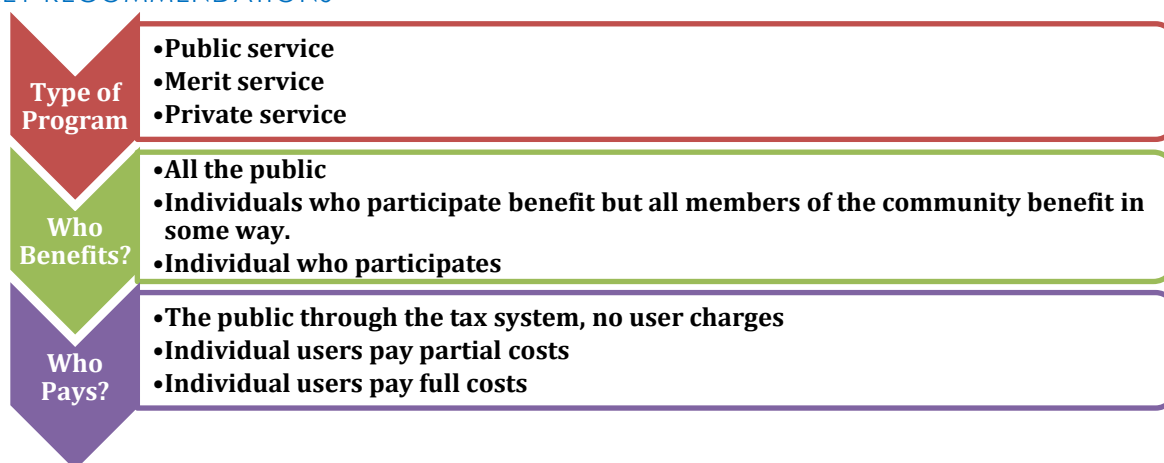
- **Standard Operating Procedures:** Standard Operating Procedure manuals should be developed.
- **Urban Forest Master Plan:** The Urban Forestry division should develop and implement an Urban Forest Master Plan.
- **Create Work Plans Based on Maintenance Standards:** Maintenance standards are based on a Level (1), (2) and (3) modes (tasks and frequencies of each task) and follow best practices as established by the National Recreation and Park Association. The division can customize the

standards based on the park and recreation values of the Great Falls community and need to be adopted and implemented by staff and followed regardless of whether work is performed by City staff or third party contractors.

1.5.5 SERVICE CLASSIFICATION KEY FINDING

The *Park and Recreation Department currently does not classify its programs and services*. Classifying programs and services is an important process for an agency to follow in order to remain aligned with the community's interests and needs, the mission of the organization, and to sustainably operate within the bounds of the financial resources that support it. The criteria utilized and recommended in program classification stems from the foundation's concept detailed by Dr. John Crompton and Dr. Charles Lamb. In Marketing Government and Social Services, they purport that programs need to be evaluated on the criteria of type, who benefits, and who bears the cost of the program. This is illustrated below:

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



- **Implement the Classification of Services and Cost Recovery Goals:** In workshops with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department in 2016 facilitated by the consulting team, the major functional program areas were assessed and classified based on the criteria established in the previous section of the plan. This process included determining which programs and services fit into each classification criteria. Then cost recovery goals were established based on the guidelines included in this plan. The percentage of cost recovery is based on the classification of services and will *typically* fall within these ranges, *although anomalies will exist*:
 - Core 0-35%
 - Important 35-75%
 - Value Added 75%+
- **Implement a New Pricing Policy:** To gain and provide consistency among the Great Falls City Commission, user groups, staff, and the community, a revised pricing policy must be adopted in order for the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to operate effectively and efficiently to meet the program cost recovery goals identified in the Master Plan.
- **Develop Pricing Strategies:** As the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department embarks on the implementation of a new pricing policy, it will be necessary to develop pricing strategies

that will not only increase sales but also maximize the utilization of Great Falls' parks, programs and recreation facilities.

- Consider a pricing strategy that provides a discount for non-primetime program offerings and facility rentals.
- Consider a pricing strategy that introduces a non-resident fee for programs that are of primary need.

1.5.6 LEVEL OF SERVICE AND FACILITY ANALYSIS

KEY FINDINGS

- **Current System Inventory and Level of Service:** The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department currently has a quality staff that operates and manages a limited but unique system of parks, facilities, centers and open spaces that are generally in good condition. The current facility and amenity level of service is illustrated in the chart to the right:

SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS				
PARK TYPE	Great Falls Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population		
Neighborhood Parks	165.41	2.80	acres per	1,000
Community Parks	339.98	5.76	acres per	1,000
District/Special Use Parks	273.01	4.63	acres per	1,000
Open Space/Undeveloped Parks	437.04	7.41	acres per	1,000
Total Park Acres	1,215.44	20.61	acres per	1,000
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:				
Large Covered Picnic Areas	8.00	1.00	site per	7,373
Diamond, Baseball (90 foot bases)	2.00	1.00	site per	29,491
Diamond, Youth Baseball/Softball	31.00	1.00	field per	1,903
Rectangle Fields (All)	14.00	1.00	field per	4,213
Outdoor Sport Courts (basketball)	15.00	1.00	court per	3,932
Tennis Courts	24.00	1.00	court per	2,458
Playgrounds	28.00	1.00	site per	2,106
Dog Parks/Off leash Areas	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Golf Courses (18 hole)	2.00	1.00	course per	29,491
Skate Parks	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	3.00	1.00	site per	19,660
INDOOR AMENITIES:				
Swimming Pool (Natatorium)	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Recreation Center	16,000.00	0.27	SF per	person

- **Unmet Facility Needs:** Per the statistically valid survey conducted by ETC: 0% meeting needs far exceed 100% meeting needs. Based on the number of households who indicated their needs were only being met 50% or less, 7,444 households indicated an unmet need for an adventure area. Other unmet needs include: Outdoor exercise and fitness area (6,403 households), covered picnic areas (4,286 households), and swimming pools and water parks (4,110 households).
- **Opportunity Exists:** The opportunity exists not only due to community demand, but also due to low availability of facilities in the region as a whole. The following chart illustrates the opportunity that exists:

SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS					2016 Facility Standards				2030 Facility Standards		
PARK TYPE	Great Falls Inventory	Recommended Service Levels; Revised for Local Service Area			Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed		2018 Calculation n:	Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	
Neighborhood Parks	165.41	2.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	43	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
Community Parks	339.98	3.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	156	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
District/Special Use Parks	273.01	4.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	-	28	Meets Standard	-	-
Open Space/Undeveloped Parks	437.04	5.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	131	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
Total Park Acres	1,215.44	14.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	358	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:											
Large Covered Picnic Areas	8.00	1.00	site per	5,000	Need Exists	4	Sites(s)	(4)	Need Exists	4	Sites(s)
Diamond, Baseball (90 foot bases)	2.00	1.00	site per	12,000	Need Exists	3	Sites(s)	(3)	Need Exists	3	Sites(s)
Diamond, Youth Baseball/Softball	31.00	1.00	field per	5,000	Meets Standard	-	Field(s)	18.75	Meets Standard	-	Field(s)
Rectangle Fields (All)	14.00	1.00	field per	5,000	Meets Standard	-	Field(s)	1.75	Meets Standard	-	Field(s)
Outdoor Sport Courts (basketball)	15.00	1.00	court per	5,000	Meets Standard	-	Court(s)	2.75	Meets Standard	-	Court(s)
Tennis Courts	24.00	1.00	court per	10,000	Meets Standard	-	Court(s)	17.88	Meets Standard	-	Court(s)
Playgrounds	28.00	1.00	site per	3,000	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)	8	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)
Dog Parks/Off leash Areas	1.00	1.00	site per	30,000	Need Exists	1	Site(s)	(1)	Need Exists	1	Site(s)
Golf Courses (18 hole)	2.00	1.00	course per	50,000	Meets Standard	-	-	1	Meets Standard	-	-
Skate Parks	1.00	1.00	site per	60,000	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)	(0.02)	Need Exists	0	Site(s)
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	3.00	1.00	site per	50,000	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)	1.78	Meets Standard	-	Site(s)
INDOOR AMENITIES:											
Swimming Pool (Natatorium)	1.00	1.00	site per	50,000	Meets Standard	-	-	(0.22)	Need Exists	0	-
Recreation Center	16,000.00	1.00	SF per person		Need Exists	42,981	Square Ft	(45,240)	Need Exists	45,240	Square Ft

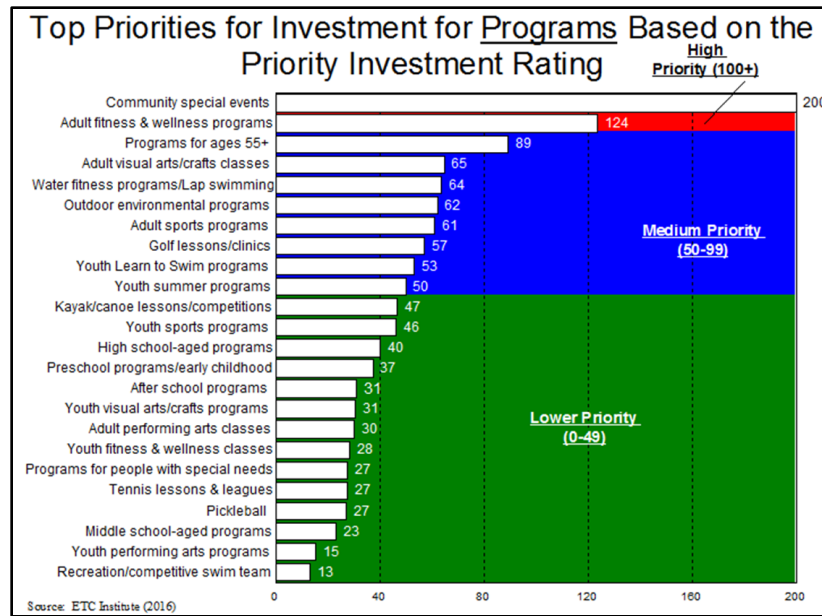
FACILITY LEVEL OF SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on a thorough review of the parks and recreation system and extensive public input, it is recommended that the City pursue further development of specific parks and recreation amenities. Specific recommendations include the addition of large covered picnic areas, baseball fields, dog parks and indoor recreation space and are based on increasing the current level of service standard for the projected population in 2030.

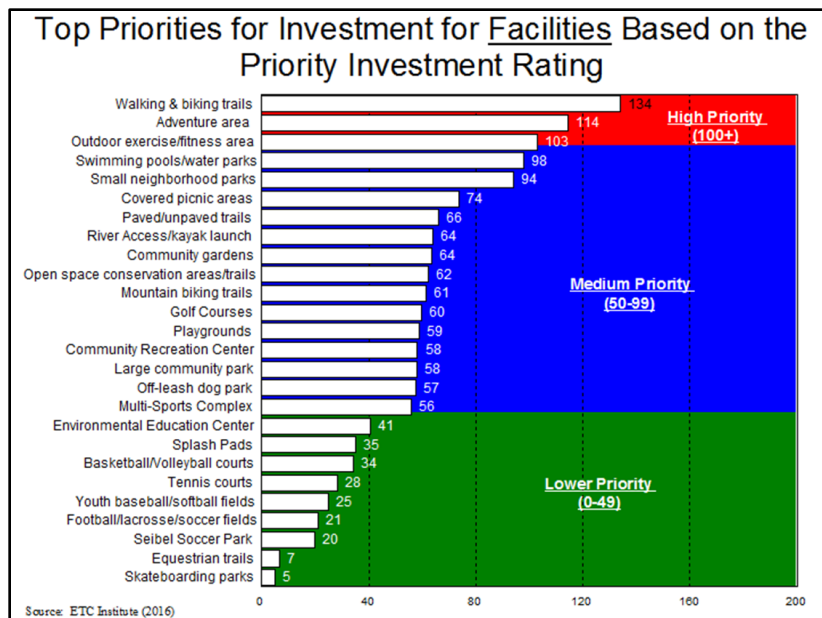
1.5.7 PRIORITIZED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

For the City of Great Falls, it is critical to understand the park and recreation needs of the community in order to provide offerings that are focused on a mix of traditional and emerging activities, so as to serve the market while maintaining affordability. Each need that has been identified will support the investment in the parks and recreation system that is required to assist in meeting community expectations. These recommended priorities are a result of both qualitative and quantitative analyses to create and maintain an appropriate balance for planning and operations.

PROGRAM NEEDS



FACILITY AND AMENITY NEEDS



1.5.8 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

In order to plan and prioritize capital investments, the consulting team recommends that the Park and Recreation Department applies specific guiding principles that balances the maintenance of current assets over the development of new facilities. The departmental CIP framework is also utilized to determine and plan CIP projects and make budget decisions that are sustainable over time. These criteria (e.g., safety compliance, commitment, efficiency, revenue) and priorities are also focused on maintaining the integrity of the current infrastructure and facilities before expanding and/or enhancing programs and facilities.

The synthesis of data from this planning process indicates strong support for this concept of prioritization. Even with the indications of a modest economic turnaround, funding is not sufficient to take care of all existing assets and build new facilities.

The result is the recommendation to develop a three-tier plan that acknowledges a stark fiscal reality, leading to the continuous rebalancing of priorities and their associated expenditures. Each tier reflects different assumptions about available resources.

- The **Critical Alternative** has plans for prioritized spending within existing budget targets. The intention of this alternative is to refocus and make the most of existing resources with the primary goal being for the department to maintain services. The actions associated with the Fiscally Constrained Alternative address deferred maintenance at existing facilities and is funded through existing tax dollars.
- The **Sustainable Alternative** describes the extra services or capital improvement that should be undertaken when additional funding is available. This includes strategically enhancing existing programs, beginning new alternative programs, adding new positions, or making other strategic changes that would require additional operational or capital funding. In coordination with the City Manager's Office and City Commission, the Park and Recreation Department would evaluate and analyze potential sources of additional revenue, including but not limited to capital bond funding, partnerships, program income, grants, and existing or new taxes.
- The **Visionary Alternative** represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community. It is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the community, and by providing a long-range look to address future needs and deficiencies. In this Master, the Vision Alternative addresses aging facilities to make improvements in operational effectiveness and the overall sustainability of the park and recreation system. Funding for vision projects would be derived from partnerships, private investments and new tax dollars.

CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS – MAINTAINING WHAT WE HAVE

This section outlines the projects and unit costs of each that should be accomplished within existing department funding and focus on the maintenance of existing facilities and amenities.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	
CRITICAL	
PARK/FACILITY	COST
American's Little League	\$102,575
Belview Park	\$5,750
Bloomington Park	\$3,950
Boston Heights Park	\$114,010
Carter Park	\$33,540
Centene Stadium	\$2,500
Charles Russel Park	\$1,020,000
Chowen Springs Park	\$6,500
Clara Park	\$398,520
Community Hall Park-Westside Orchard Garden	\$4,600
Don Olson 90ft Baseball Field	\$6,000
Dudley Anderson Park	\$6,350
Eagles Crossing Park	\$65,020
Elks Riverside Park	\$8,000
Fox Hollow Park	\$4,000
Garden Home Park	\$6,000
Gibson Park	\$2,935,000
Grande Vista Park	\$102,575
Graybill Park	\$69,900
Highland Multi-Sport Complex	\$1,235,000
Highland Portion - Electric City BMX Park	\$3,000
Hyland Heights Park	\$85,875
Jaycee Gallatin Park	\$625,000
Jaycee Pool	\$100,000
Kiwanis North Park	\$95,270
Kiwanis West Park	\$90,000
Kranz Park	\$205,510
Lions Park	\$300,000
Madison Park	\$7,420
Mitchell Pool - Electric City Water Park	\$500,000
Meadowlark Park	\$1,000
Memorial Park	\$110,510
Natatorium	\$600,000
Noah's Ark Park	\$46,170
Oddfellows Park	\$205,000
Overlook Park	\$114,900
Pinski Park	\$457,480
Rhodes Park	\$118,110
River's Edge Trail	\$100,000
Riverview Little League Park	\$14,900
Riverview Park	\$194,790
Roosevelt Park	\$110,510
Sacajawea Park	\$183,300
Skyline Heights Park	\$275,670
Skyline Park	\$269,130
Sunnyside Park	\$5,010
Valleyview Park	\$390,440
Verde Park	\$387,875
Wadsworth Park Site Specific Master Plan	\$100,000
Warden Park	\$18,000
Water Tower Pool	\$50,000
West Bank Park	\$445,000
TOTAL	\$12,614,160

SUSTAINABLE RECOMMENDATIONS – IMPROVING WHAT WE HAVE

Options described in this section provide the extra services or capital improvement that could be undertaken when additional funding is available to meet need(s) with a focus on enhancements to existing facilities. The following provides a summary of the sustainable options recommended by the consulting team.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	
SUSTAINABLE	
PROJECT	COST
Convert 6 existing Tennis Courts to Pickleball Courts	\$100,000
Add 5 Large Covered Picnic Shelters at the following parks:	\$500,000
*Gibson Park	
*Grande Vista Park	
*Jaycee Park	
*Kiwanis Park	
*Meadowlark Park	
Add 2 Dog Parks at the following parks	\$150,000
*Clara Park	
*Montana Park	
Develop Site Specific Master Plans for the following parks	\$350,000
^Garden Home Park	
*Skyline Park	
*Wadsworth Park	
Conduct an Athletic Field Master Plan	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$1,150,000

VISIONARY RECOMMENDATIONS – DEVELOPING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Recommendations described in this section represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community. It is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the community, and by providing a long-range look to address future needs and deficiencies. The following new development and redevelopment projects have been identified as relevant to the interests and needs of the community and are relevant to the city’s focus because they feature a high probability of success.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	
VISIONARY	
PROJECT	COST
Construct a 50,000 sq. ft. Multi-Generational Center that replaces the existing Recreation Center and Morony Natatorium	\$20,000,000
Re-Master Plan Eagle Falls Golf Course and convert Campground/Adventure Area through private public partnership	\$250,000
TOTAL	\$20,250,000

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY		
Project Type	Estimated Total Project Cost	Years in which to be completed
CRITICAL PROJECTS	\$12,614,160	1-5
SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS	\$1,150,000	5-10
VISIONARY PROJECTS	\$20,250,000	5-15
TOTAL	\$34,014,160	

1.6 ACTION PLAN

An Action Plan in matrix form presenting a summary of all major recommendations, specific actions and priorities is presented as a separate document from this report. This matrix is organized by the following categories:

- Community Value 1: Community Mandates
 - Renovate and upgrade open spaces, parks, trails and recreational facilities to promote community interaction, healthy lifestyles and safety.
- Community Value 2: Standards
 - Continually update and utilize best standards for operations and maintenance of parks, trails, and recreational facilities in alignment with City of Great Falls policy.
- Community Value 3: Programs and Services
 - Provide balance and consistency in the delivery of programs and services that meet the needs of the residents of City of Great Falls.
- Community Value 4: Business Practices
 - Manage parks, trails, and recreational facilities, and programs that support the financial goals and policies of the City of Great Falls.
- Community Value 5: Community Outreach and Partnerships/Sponsorships
 - Maximize resources through mutually acceptable partnerships that leverage parks, trails, and recreational facility development and program and service opportunities.

The Action Matrix can be used to develop and prioritize work plans. It can be used as a road map for continued improvements in the department. The key to success for the department is to continue to build on current success and address the major issues and recommendations in a systematic manner. This requires retaining what the department has achieved while adding programs, services, and facility improvements that will generate revenue, reduce operational expenditures, and enhance the experience for the users. In addition, focus needs to be placed on filling the off-peak times through effective pricing, and programming. The most important consideration is to keep the department fresh through programming and strategic improvements for the users and guests to ensure long-term success.

CHAPTER TWO – ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The following summarizes the research findings of the Center for Regional Analysis on the economic impact of local and regional public park systems' spending in the United States. This research, commissioned by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), adds to the growing body of evidence that the benefits of parks extend well beyond their role as a public amenity and an enhancement to quality of life in their communities.

The analyses reported here cover three areas: a national-level study, state-level assessments, and economic impacts of selected case study parks. Key characteristics of the research include the following:

- The study is focused exclusively on the direct, indirect (business transactions of park agency vendors) and induced (employees spending their earnings) effects local and regional park agencies' spending have on economic activity. The research does not measure the effects of visitor spending or the benefits local and regional park agencies generate for the environment, health and wellness, and property values.
- Data for this analysis come from the U.S. Census Bureau survey of local government employment and spending data from 1,169 local and regional park agencies accessed from NRPA's PRORAGIS database and/or park system budget data posted online. Data for the case study park analysis were supplied by the relevant park agencies.
- The analyses provide estimates of economic activity (output or the value of transactions), value added (equivalent to gross domestic product), labor income (salaries, wages and benefits) and employment (headcount jobs).

A light tan map of the United States serves as a background for the infographic text.

America's local and regional public park agencies generated nearly
\$140 BILLION IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY
and supported almost
1 MILLION JOBS
from their operations and capital spending alone in 2013

2.1 KEY FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL STUDY

Operations and capital spending by local and regional public park agencies generated nearly \$140 billion in economic activity and supported almost 1 million jobs in 2013.

- Local and regional public park agencies directly provided more than 356,000 jobs in the United States during 2013, equating to nearly \$32.3 billion in operations spending.
- Operations spending by park agencies generated nearly \$80.0 billion in total economic activity, boosted the gross domestic product (GDP) by \$38.8 billion and supported nearly 660,000 jobs that paid in excess of \$24 billion in salaries, wages and benefits.
- Local and regional park systems spent an estimated \$22.4 billion on capital programs, leading to about \$59.7 billion in economic activity, a contribution of \$29.2 billion to the GDP, \$19.6 billion in labor income and more than 340,000 jobs.
- In total, the nation's local and regional public park agencies spent nearly \$54.7 billion in 2013, leading to \$139.6 billion in economic activity, just under \$68.0 billion in contributions to the GDP, and nearly 1 million jobs that generated labor income of \$43.8 billion in 2013.

Economic Impact of Local and Regional Public Parks on the United States Economy 2013

	Operating Impacts	Capital Spending Impacts	Total Impact of Local and Regional Parks' Spending
Economic Activity	\$79,972,818,000	\$59,655,408,000	\$139,628,226,000
Value Added (GDP)	\$38,782,352,000	\$29,169,189,000	\$67,951,541,000
Labor Income (salaries, wages, benefits)	\$24,176,431,000	\$19,613,750,000	\$43,790,181,000
Employment (jobs)	658,478 jobs	340,604 jobs	999,082 jobs

2.2 SUMMARY

The industry of Parks and Recreation not only contributes to the quality of life of communities, but as shown by the data above, has a profound economic and financial impact as well.

CHAPTER THREE - MARKET ANALYSIS

The Market Analysis provides greater insight into the community that the Park and Recreation Department serves. In this chapter, the consulting team provides analytics derived from the database of the Environmental Systems Research Institute. This study assesses the current and future demographics of the City of Great Falls including a five mile service radius around the city. Park and Recreation needs of the community are identified via the results of recently completed qualitative studies, a statistically valid survey, and a comparative analysis of the parks and recreation services.

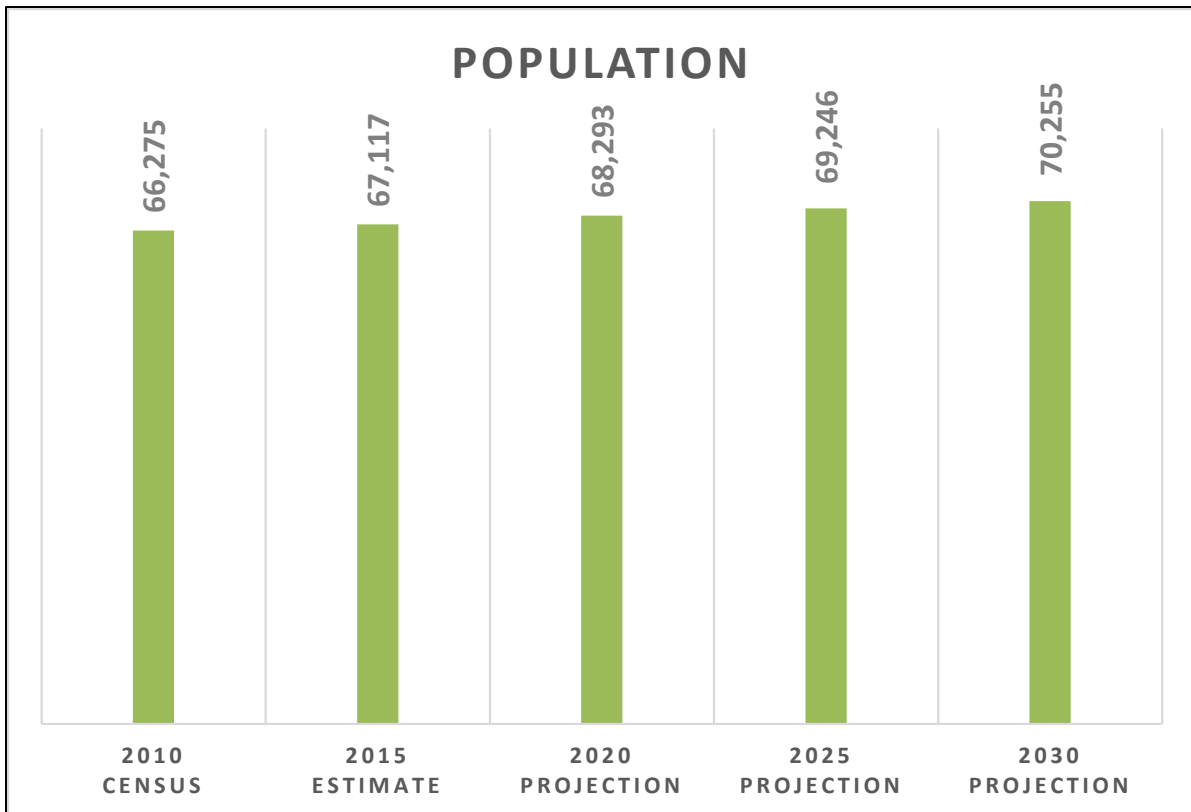
3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

An analysis of the local demographic makeup is helpful when understanding the population of the City of Great Falls including the five mile service radius. This analysis is reflective of the total population and its key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race, and ethnicity.

It is important to note that future projections will be based on historical patterns and the potential for unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the use and economic projections. The shifts in these issues may have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections offered in this study.

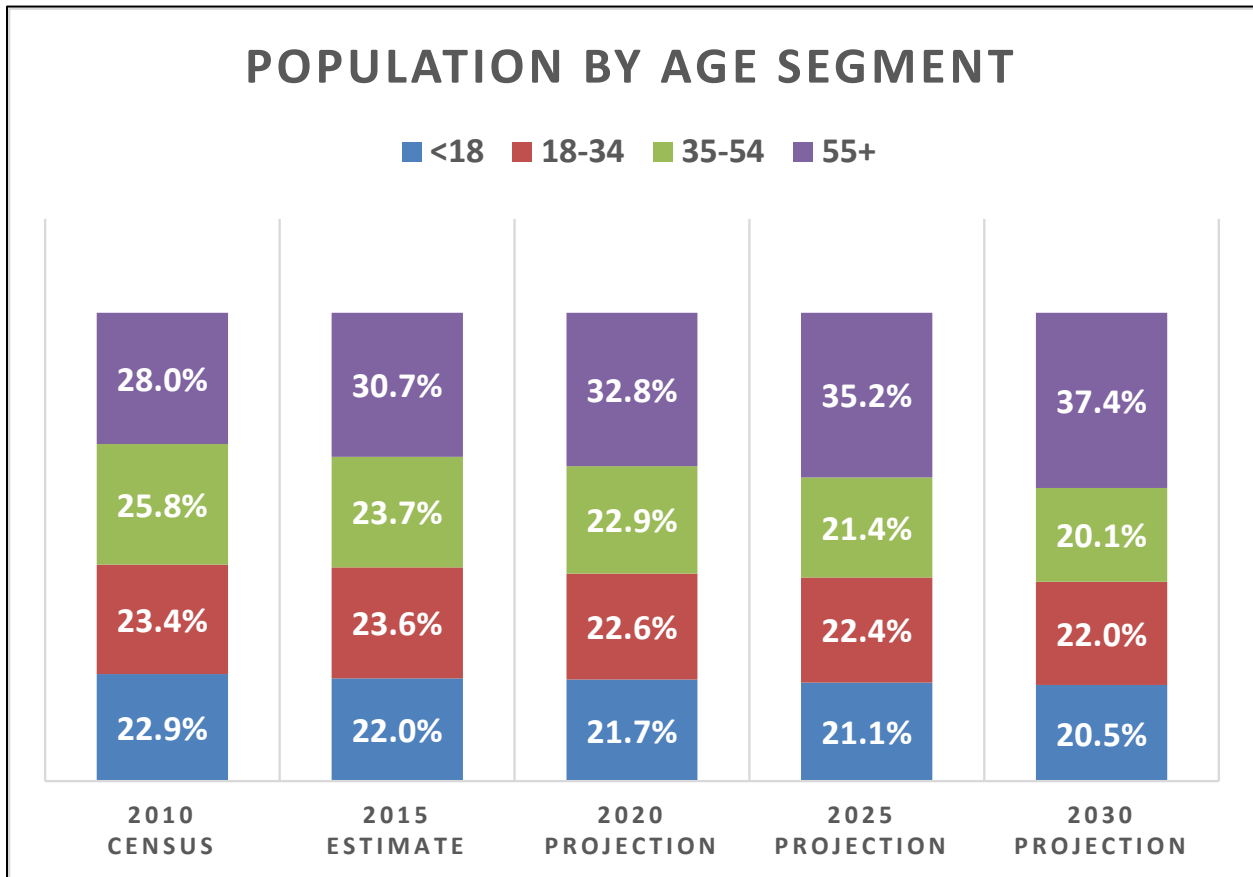
3.1.1 POPULATION

The population of the City of Great Falls including the five mile service radius has increased slowly since the last official US Census from 66,275 residents in 2010 to 67,117 in 2015. This represents an increase in the total population by an annual rate of 0.25%. This rate is significantly below the national growth averages of 1% annually. Projecting forward, the growth rate is expected to continue to rise at an annual rate of just over 0.3% for the next 15 years. Based on those assumptions, the expected population of the service area is approximately 70,255 residents in 2030.



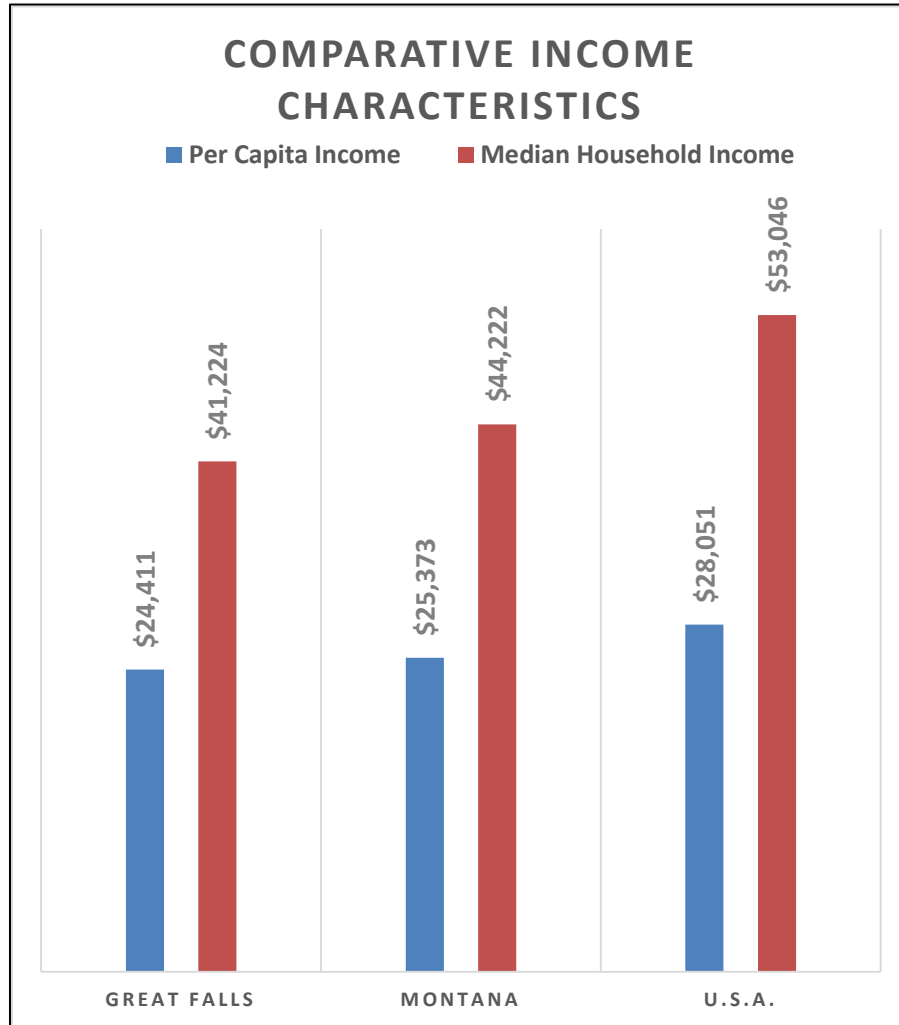
3.1.2 AGE SEGMENTATION

By 2030, it is projected that the active adult population (55+) will, far and away, become the highest age segment in Great Falls. This group is projected to make up 37.4% of the population. This age group echoes a national trend as a result of increased life expectancies. The movement of the baby boomer generation through the lifespan also contributes to an aging Great Falls population. It can be noted that recreation needs of the 55+ population will continue to diversify into the future.



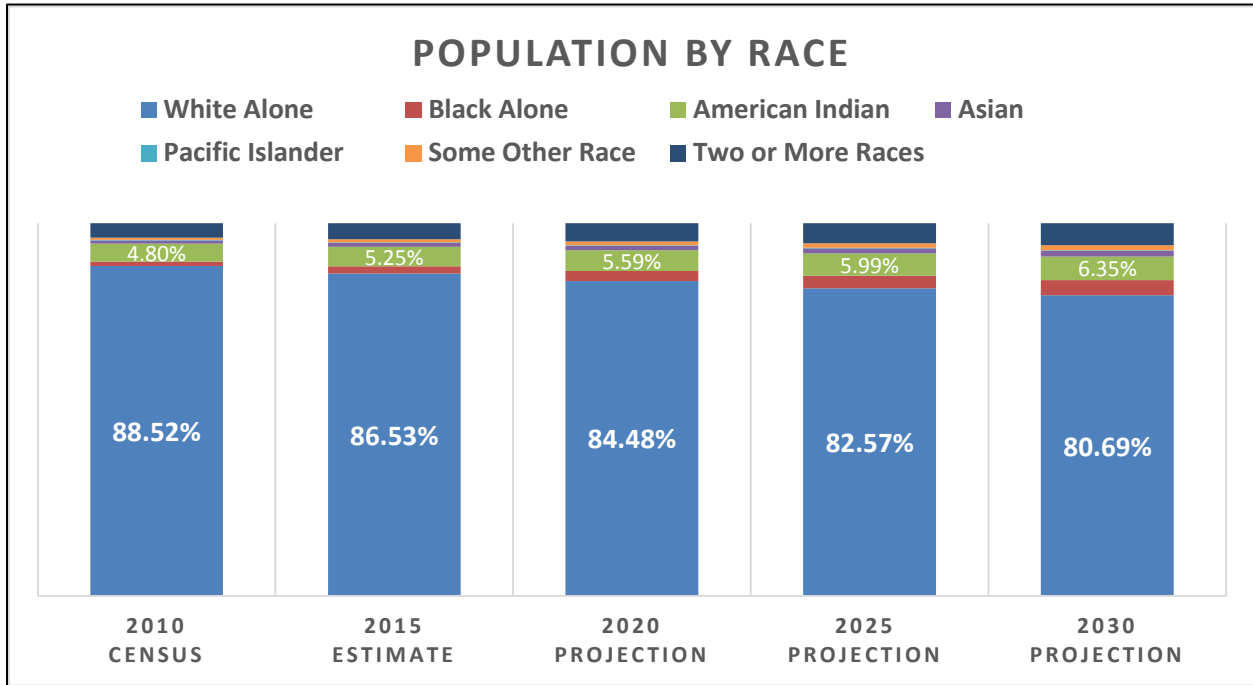
3.1.3 INCOME

Per capita income and household income are significantly lower than that of national averages, but in line with the State of Montana averages.



3.1.4 RACE

From a race standpoint, the service area has a very limited landscape. The diversity in the community is projected to stay relatively constant as nearly four out of every five residents in service area in the year 2030 will be White Alone.



3.1.5 TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION

Tapestry segmentation provides an accurate, detailed description of Great Falls' neighborhoods in which distinctive segments are identified based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition and then further classified into the segments of LifeMode and Urbanization Groups.

Many cities have 10+ tapestry segments that make up the majority of its population. Great Falls has FIVE segments that comprise 63.7% of its population. The five tapestry segments identified in the City of Great Falls are illustrated in the chart below as well as how they compare to the United States.

Tapestry Segment	% of Great Falls Households	% of US Households
Set to Impress	17.3%	1.4%
Midlife Constraints	16.4%	2.5%
Old and Newcomers	15.8%	2.3%
Rustbelt Traditions	7.9%	2.2%
Retirement Communities	6.3%	1.2%

Simply, the make-up of the City of Great Falls is very unique. Understanding the tapestry segmentation data is useful information in assisting the department on how to meet the recreational needs of the community.

The following provides a brief description of the four tapestry segments in Great Falls.

SET TO IMPRESS

Set to Impress is depicted by medium to large multiunit apartments with lower than average rents. These apartments are often nestled into neighborhoods with other businesses or single-family housing. Nearly one in three residents is 20 to 34 years old, and over half of the homes are nonfamily households. Although many residents live alone, they preserve close connections with their family. Income levels are low; many work in food service while they are attending college. This group is always looking for a deal. They are very conscious of their image and seek to bolster their status with the latest fashion. Set to Impress residents are tapped into popular music and the local music scene.

MEDIAN AGE: 33

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$29,000

MARKET PROFILE:

- They listen to a variety of the latest music and download music online.
- Majority have cell phones only, no landlines.
- They use the Internet for social media and managing finances.
- They own used, imported vehicles.
- They shop at Walgreens.
- They enjoy leisure activities including going to rock concerts, night clubs, and the zoo.

MIDLIFE CONSTRAINTS

Midlife Constants residents are seniors, at or approaching retirement, with below average labor force participation and above average net worth. Although located in predominantly metropolitan areas, they live outside the central cities, in smaller communities. Their lifestyle is more country than urban. They are generous, but not spendthrifts.

MEDIAN AGE: 46

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$48,000

MARKET PROFILE:

- Prefer practical vehicles like SUVs and trucks (domestic, of course).
- Sociable, church-going residents belonging to fraternal orders, veterans' clubs and charitable organizations and do volunteer work and fund-raising.
- Contribute to arts/cultural, educational, political, and social services organizations.
- DIY homebodies that spend on home improvement and gardening.
- Media preferences: country or Christian channels.
- Leisure activities include scrapbooking, movies at home, reading, fishing, and golf.

OLD AND NEWCOMERS

This market features singles' lifestyles, on a budget. The focus is more on convenience than consumerism, economy over acquisition. Old and Newcomers is composed of neighborhoods in transition, populated by renters who are just beginning their careers or retiring. Some are still in college; some are taking adult education classes. They support environmental causes and Starbucks. Age is not always obvious from their choices.

MEDIAN AGE: 39

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$39,000

MARKET PROFILE:

- Residents are strong supporters of environmental organizations.
- They prefer cell phones to landlines.
- Entertainment features the Internet (dating sites and games), movies at home, country music, and newspapers.
- Vehicles are basically just a means of transportation.
- Food features convenience, frozen and fast food.
- They do banking as likely in person as online.

RUSTBELT TRADITIONS

The backbone of older industrial cities in states surrounding the Great Lakes, Rustbelt Traditions residents are a mix of married-couple families and singles living in older developments of single-family homes. While varied, the work force is primarily white collar, with a higher concentration of skilled workers in manufacturing, retail trade, and health care. Rustbelt Traditions represents a large market of stable, hard-working consumers with modest incomes but above average net worth. Family oriented, they value time spent at home. Most have lived, worked, and played in the same area for years.

MEDIAN AGE: 38

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$49,000

MARKET PROFILE:

- Residents take advantage of convenience stores for fueling up and picking up incidentals.
- Watching television is a common pastime; many households have more than four TVs.
- Favorite programming ranges from ESPN, Animal Planet, and AMC to children's shows on Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network.
- Residents are connected; entertainment activities like online gaming dominate their Internet usage.
- Favorite family restaurants include Applebee's, Outback Steakhouse, and Texas Roadhouse.
- Radio dials are typically tuned to classic rock stations.

RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

Retirement Communities neighborhoods combine single-family homes and independent living with apartments, assisted living, and continuous care nursing facilities. Over half of the housing units are in multiunit structures, and the majority of residents have a lease. This group enjoys watching cable TV and stays up-to-date with newspapers and magazines. Residents take pride in fiscal responsibility and keep a close eye on their finances. Although income and net worth are well below national averages, residents enjoy going to the theater, golfing, and taking vacations. While some residents enjoy cooking, many have paid their dues in the kitchen and would rather dine out.

MEDIAN AGE: 52

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$35,000

MARKET PROFILE:

- Enjoy hard-cover books, book clubs, crossword puzzles, and Sudoku.
- Contribute to political organizations and other groups.
- Entertainment preferences: bingo, opera, and the theater.
- Watch QVC, Golf Channel, CNN, and sports on TV.
- Like to travel—including visits to foreign countries.
- Shop at large department stores for convenience.

3.1.6 DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

The City of Great Falls' population is projected to grow slightly (only 3.8%) over the next 15 years. This growth is far below national averages (1% annually). It is anticipated that the unique makeup of the Great Falls' population will change only in that it is expected to age significantly, whereas by 2030, 37.4% of the population will be 55 and older.

3.2 RECREATION TRENDS ANALYSIS

Information released by Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2016 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report reveals that the most popular sport and recreational activities include: fitness walking, treadmill, running/jogging, free weights and road bicycling. Most of these activities appeal to both young and old alike, can be done in most environments, are enjoyed regardless of level of skill, and have minimal economic barriers to entry. These popular activities also have appeal because of their social application. For example, although fitness activities are mainly self-directed, people enjoy walking and biking with other individuals because it can offer a degree of camaraderie.

Fitness walking has remained the most popular activity of the past decade by a large margin, in terms of total participants. Fitness walking participation last year was reported to be nearly 110 million Americans. Although fitness walking has the highest level of participation, it did report a 2.4% decrease in 2015 from the previous year. This recent decline in fitness walking participation paired with upward trends in a wide variety of other activities, especially in fitness and sports, suggests that active individuals are finding new ways to exercise and diversifying their recreational interests. In addition, the popularity of many outdoor adventure and water-based activities has experienced positive growth based on the most recent findings; however, many of these activities' rapid increase in participation is likely a product of their relatively low user base, which may indicate that these sharp upward trends may not be sustained long into the future.

From a traditional team sport standpoint, basketball ranks highest among all sports, with approximately 23.4 million people reportedly participating in 2015. In general, nearly every sport with available data experienced an increase in participation, which is a reversal from the five-year trend of declining participation in sports. Sports that have experienced significant growth in participation are squash, boxing, lacrosse, rugby, roller hockey, and field hockey - all of which have experienced growth in excess of 30% over the last five years. More recently, roller hockey, racquetball, indoor soccer, boxing, and flag football were the activities with the most rapid growth during the last year.

According to the Physical Activity Commission, an "inactive" is defined as an individual that doesn't take part in any physical activity. Over the last five years, the number of inactive individuals has increased 7.4% from 76 million in 2010 to 81.6 million in 2015. However, looking at just the past year, from 2014 to 2015, the US saw a slight decrease of 0.6% from 82.7 to 81.6 million individuals. Although this recent shift is very promising, inactivity remains a dominant force in society, evidenced by the fact that 27.7% of the population falls into this category.

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2016 was utilized to evaluate national sport and fitness participatory trends. The study is based on survey findings by the Physical Activity Commission from a total of 32,658 online interviews carried out in 2015. The purpose of the report is to establish levels of activity and identify key participatory trends in recreation across the US.

3.2.1 NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

The most heavily participated in sports for 2015 were golf (24.1 million) and basketball (23.4 million), which have participation figures well in excess of the other activities in the general sports category. The popularity of golf and basketball can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants. Golf also benefits 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 2010, squash and other niche sports, like boxing, lacrosse and rugby, have seen strong growth. In the general sports category, squash has emerged as the overall fastest growing sport, as it has seen participation levels rise by 66% over the last five years as noted in the table below. Based on the five-year trend, boxing (59%), rugby (44%), lacrosse (47%), roller hockey (39%), and field hockey (32%) have also experienced significant growth. In the most recent year, the fastest growing sports were roller hockey (10%), racquetball (8%), squash (7%), indoor soccer (6%), and boxing (6%). During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include touch football (-25%), wrestling (-22%), slow pitch softball (-16%), and racquetball (24.9% decrease).

Overall, activities in the general sports categories show very promising growth in the most recent year. Only three activities experienced a dip in participation, but none of these declined by more than 3%. In general, the strong recent growth in sports is a reversal of the five-year trends, as nearly every activity declining in the long run has tipped the scale to show positive growth in the past year.

National Participatory Trends - General Sports					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2010	2014	2015	14-15	10-15
Golf	26,122	24,700	24,120	-2.3%	-7.7%
Basketball	25,156	23,067	23,410	1.5%	-6.9%
Tennis	18,719	17,904	17,963	0.3%	-4.0%
Baseball	14,198	13,152	13,711	4.3%	-3.4%
Soccer (Outdoor)	13,883	12,592	12,646	0.4%	-8.9%
Badminton	7,645	7,176	7,198	0.3%	-5.8%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	8,477	7,077	7,114	0.5%	-16.1%
Football, Touch	8,663	6,586	6,487	-1.5%	-25.1%
Volleyball (Court)	7,315	6,304	6,423	1.9%	-12.2%
Football, Tackle	6,850	5,978	6,222	4.1%	-9.2%
Football, Flag	6,660	5,508	5,829	5.8%	-12.5%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,920	4,530	4,813	6.2%	-2.2%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,752	4,651	4,785	2.9%	0.7%
Gymnastics	4,418	4,621	4,679	1.3%	5.9%
Ultimate Frisbee	4,571	4,530	4,409	-2.7%	-3.5%
Track and Field	4,383	4,105	4,222	2.9%	-3.7%
Racquetball	4,603	3,594	3,883	8.0%	-15.6%
Cheerleading	3,134	3,456	3,608	4.4%	15.1%
Ice Hockey	2,140	2,421	2,546	5.2%	19.0%
Pickleball	N/A	2,462	2,506	1.8%	N/A
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,513	2,424	2,460	1.5%	-2.1%
Lacrosse	1,423	2,011	2,094	4.1%	47.2%
Wrestling	2,536	1,891	1,978	4.6%	-22.0%
Roller Hockey	1,374	1,736	1,907	9.9%	38.8%
Squash	1,031	1,596	1,710	7.1%	65.9%
Field Hockey	1,182	1,557	1,565	0.5%	32.4%
Boxing for Competition	855	1,278	1,355	6.0%	58.5%
Rugby	940	1,276	1,349	5.7%	43.5%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

3.2.2 NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATIC ACTIVITY

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport, and all aquatic activities have experienced participation growth among the American population. In 2015, fitness swimming is the absolute leader in overall participation (26 million) for aquatic activities, due in large part to its broad, multigenerational appeal. In the most recent year, competition swimming reported the strongest growth (7%) among aquatic activities, followed by fitness swimming (4%) and aquatic exercise (1%). It should be noted, in 2011, recreational swimming was broken into competition and fitness categories in order to better identify key trends.

Aquatic Exercise also has a strong participation base, and has experienced steady growth since 2010. Aquatic exercise has paved the way as a less stressful form of physical activity, while allowing similar benefits as land based exercises, including aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and better balance. Doctors are now recommending aquatic exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems, due to the significant reduction of stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, muscles, and also the effect of the water in reducing swelling from injuries.

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2010	2014	2015	14-15	10-15
Swimming (Fitness)	N/A	25,304	26,319	4.0%	N/A
Aquatic Exercise	8,947	9,122	9,226	1.1%	3.1%
Swimming (Competition)	N/A	2,710	2,892	6.7%	N/A
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)	

3.2.3 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 people to improve their health 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 nearly anyone with no time restrictions.

The most popular fitness activity by far is fitness walking, which had nearly 110 million participants in 2015, which represents a 2.4% decrease from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on total number of participants include treadmill (50 million), running/jogging (48 million), hand weights (43 million), stretching (36 million), and stationary cycling (36 million).

Over the last five years, the activities growing most rapidly are non-traditional / off-road triathlons (119%), trail running (63%), traditional road triathlons (57%), high impact aerobics (41%), and yoga (20%). In the last year (2014-15), activities with the largest gains in participation included non-traditional / off-road triathlons (24%), traditional / road triathlons (13%), barre (12%), and trail running (8%). It should be noted that many of the activities growing most rapidly have a relatively low user base, which allows for more drastic shifts in terms of percentage. The recent decline in the extremely

popular activities of fitness walking and running / jogging paired with widespread growth in activities with lower participation levels, may suggest that those engaging in fitness activities are actively looking for new forms of exercise.

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness					
Activity	Participation Levels			% Change	
	2010	2014	2015	14-15	10-15
Fitness Walking	112,082	112,583	109,829	-2.4%	-2.0%
Treadmill	52,275	50,241	50,398	0.3%	-3.6%
Running/Jogging	46,650	51,127	48,496	-5.1%	4.0%
Free Weights (Hand Weights) under 15 lbs	N/A	41,670	42,799	2.7%	N/A
Stretching	35,720	35,624	35,776	0.4%	0.2%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent/Upright)	36,036	35,693	35,553	-0.4%	-1.3%
Weight/Resistant Machines	39,185	35,841	35,310	-1.5%	-9.9%
Free Weights (Dumbbells) over 15 lbs	N/A	30,767	31,409	2.1%	N/A
Elliptical Motion Trainer	27,319	28,025	27,981	-0.2%	2.4%
Free Weights (Barbells)	27,194	25,623	25,381	-0.9%	-6.7%
Yoga	20,998	25,262	25,289	0.1%	20.4%
Calisthenics/Bodyweight Exercise	N/A	22,390	22,146	-1.1%	N/A
Choreographed Exercise	N/A	21,455	21,487	0.1%	N/A
Aerobics (High Impact)	14,567	19,746	20,464	3.6%	40.5%
Stair Climbing Machine	13,269	13,216	13,234	0.1%	-0.3%
Cross-Training Style Workout	N/A	11,265	11,710	4.0%	N/A
Stationary Cycling (Group)	7,854	8,449	8,677	2.7%	10.5%
Pilates Training	8,404	8,504	8,594	1.1%	2.3%
Trail Running	4,985	7,531	8,139	8.1%	63.3%
Cardio Cross Trainer	N/A	7,484	7,982	6.7%	N/A
Boot Camp Style Cross-Training	N/A	6,774	6,722	-0.8%	N/A
Cardio Kickboxing	6,287	6,747	6,708	-0.6%	6.7%
Martial Arts	6,002	5,364	5,507	2.7%	-8.2%
Boxing for Fitness	4,788	5,113	5,419	6.0%	13.2%
Tai Chi	3,193	3,446	3,651	5.9%	14.3%
Barre	N/A	3,200	3,583	12.0%	N/A
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	1,593	2,203	2,498	13.4%	56.8%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	798	1,411	1,744	23.6%	118.5%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over					
Legend: <div> <div>Large Increase (greater than 25%)</div> <div>Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)</div> <div>Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)</div> <div>Large Decrease (less than -25%)</div> </div>					

3.2.4 ASPIRATIONAL INTEREST

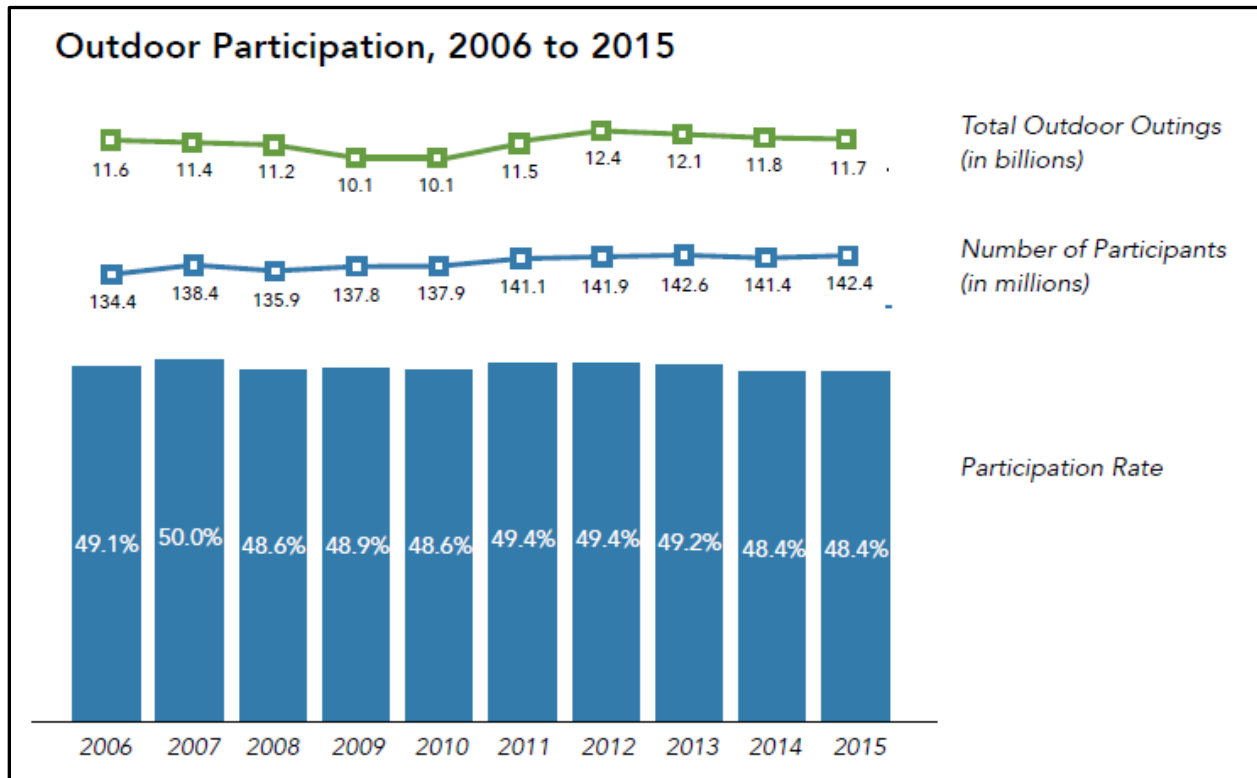
Though it is important to understand the trends of participants in all activities, it is equally if not more important to understand the interest of nonparticipants. Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2016 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation reveals swimming for fitness continues to be the most popular "aspirational" sport amongst most age groups.

Aspirational Trends Analysis			
Ages 6-12	Ages 13-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 25-34
Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness
Bicycling	Camping	Bicycling	Bicycling
Camping	Bicycling	Hiking	Camping
Hiking	Working Out with Weights	Trail Running	Hiking
Running/Jogging	Working Out using Machines	Running/Jogging	Working Out with Weights
Ages 35-44	Ages 45-54	Ages 55-64	Ages 65+
Hiking	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness
Working Out with Weights	Working Out Using Machines	Bicycling	Working Out using Machines
Swimming for Fitness	Bicycling	Working Out with Weights	Hiking
Camping	Hiking	Hiking	Fitness Classes
Bicycling	Camping	Working Out using Machines	Working Out with Weights

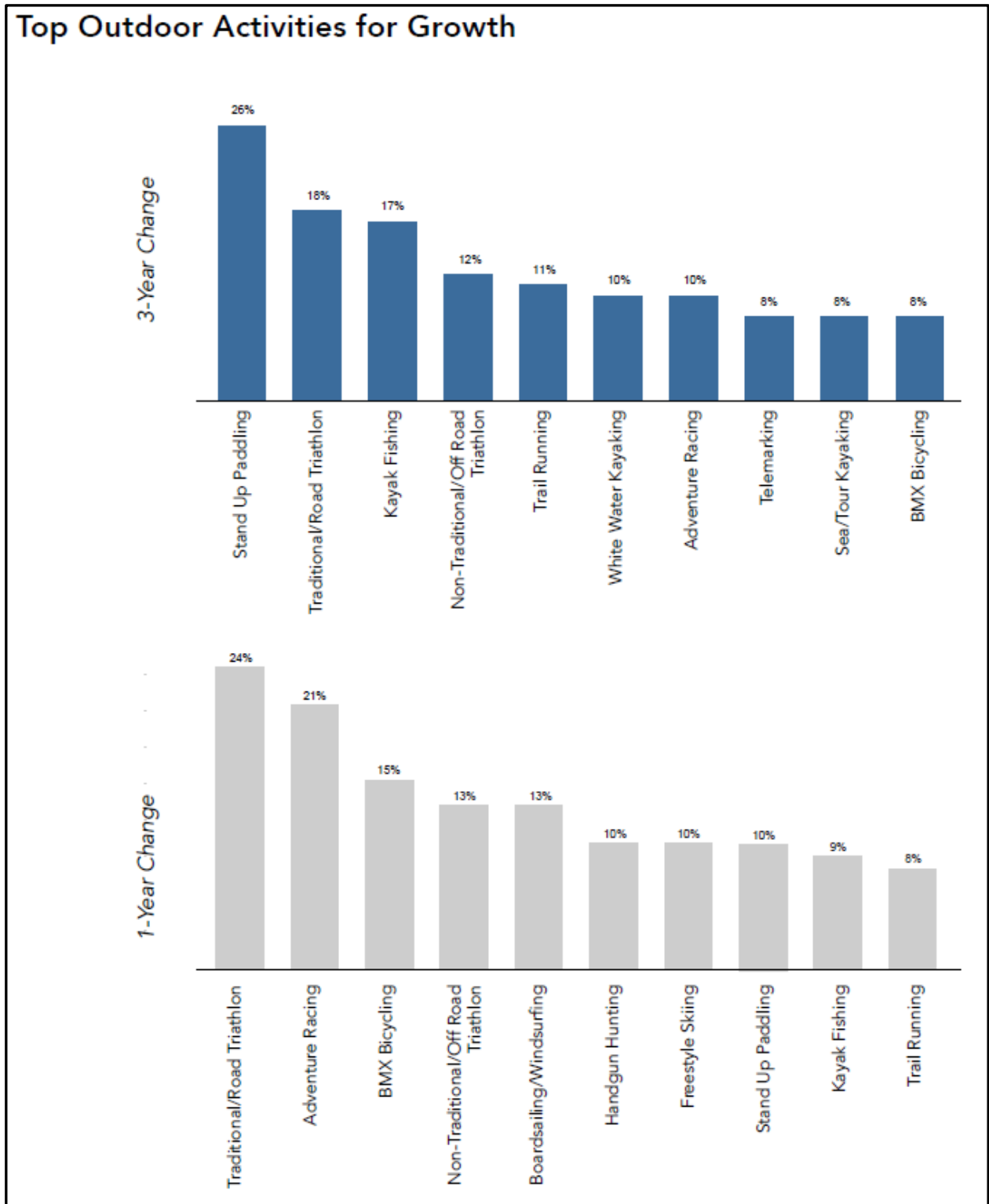
3.3 OUTDOOR RECREATION PARTICIPATION TRENDS

Every year, the Outdoor Foundation publishes the Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report, which is a special report that provides a snapshot of participation in outdoor activities among Americans. The information analyzed for this report is derived from a nationwide online survey of nearly 33,000 Americans age 6 and older. These are the same survey results utilized for the SFIA's 2016 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation Report, except that results are narrowed to only analyze activities taking place outdoors, with a heavy focus on youth and young adult participants.

Survey results show that nearly half (48.4%) of all Americans participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2015, which represents 142.4 million participants totaling 11.7 billion outdoor outings. While the total number of outdoor participants increased by one million in the most recent year, the overall rate of participation remained flat due to population increase. The chart below describes the total number of outdoor outings, number of participants, and participation rates for outdoor activities since 2006.



The charts below reveal the top outdoor activities in terms of participation growth in recent years by assessing the 3-year average and 1-year change. Over the last three years, racing activities and water sports have emerged as the fastest growing outdoor activities; while the most recent year has seen strong growth from a variety of racing activities.



By segmenting results from the survey, we can distinguish between youth / young adult (ages 6-24) and adult (ages 25+) participation in outdoor activities during 2015. Data from the study shows the top five most popular outdoor activities by participation rate and the top five favorite outdoor activities by participation frequency for youth / young adult and adult age segments.

Youth / young adult participants were reported to have engaged in 4.7 billion outdoor outings in 2015, which equates to 96.5 average outings per participant. The charts below describe the most popular (rate) and favorite (frequency) outdoor activities for youth ages 6-24.

Most Popular Youth Outdoor Activities (ages 6-24)		
Activity	% of Youth	Total Youth Participants
Running, Jogging, Trail Running	24.2%	19.9 million
Bicycling (Road, Mountain, BMX)	20.6%	16.9 million
Camping (Car, Backyard, RV)	18.2%	15.0 million
Fishing (Fresh, Salt, Fly)	18.0%	14.8 million
Hiking	13.1%	10.8 million

Favorite Youth Outdoor Activities (ages 6-24)		
Activity	Avg. Outings per Participant	Total Youth Outings
Running, Jogging, Trail Running	97.4	1.9 billion
Bicycling (Road, Mountain, BMX)	76.5	1.3 billion
Skateboarding	62.4	285.9 million
Fishing (Fresh, Salt, Fly)	17.9	265.1 million
Camping (Car, Backyard, RV)	12.2	182.0 million

Adult participants were reported to have engaged in 7 billion outdoor outings in 2015, which equates to 74.9 average outings per participant. The charts below describe the most popular (rate) and favorite (frequency) outdoor activities for adults over the age of-24.

Most Popular Adult Outdoor Activities (ages 25+)		
Activity	% of Adults	Total Adult Participants
Running, Jogging, Trail Running	14.9%	31.6 million
Fishing (Fresh, Salt, Fly)	14.6%	30.9 million
Hiking	12.5%	26.4 million
Bicycling (Road, Mountain, BMX)	12.3%	26.1 million
Camping (Car, Backyard, RV)	11.8%	25.0 million

Favorite Adult Outdoor Activities (ages 25+)		
Activity	Avg. Outings per Participant	Total Adult Outings
Running, Jogging, Trail Running	87.1	2.8 billion
Bicycling (Road, Mountain, BMX)	54.2	1.4 billion
Fishing (Fresh, Salt, Fly)	20.1	621.5 million
Birdwatching	40.6	422.3 million
Wildlife Viewing	26.4	413.4 million

3.4 NATIONAL CAMPING TRENDS

Although participation in camping has experienced a decline in recent years, camping remains a popular activity in the U.S. based on sheer volume of participants. This popularity is due in large part to the inherent flexibility and affordability of the camping experience. Camping has evolved to accommodate a wide range of users and lifestyles and brings variety of peripheral outdoor experiences to campers. The following statistics are the findings from the most recent *2014 American Camper Report*, conducted through the partnership of The Outdoor Foundation and Coleman Company, Inc.

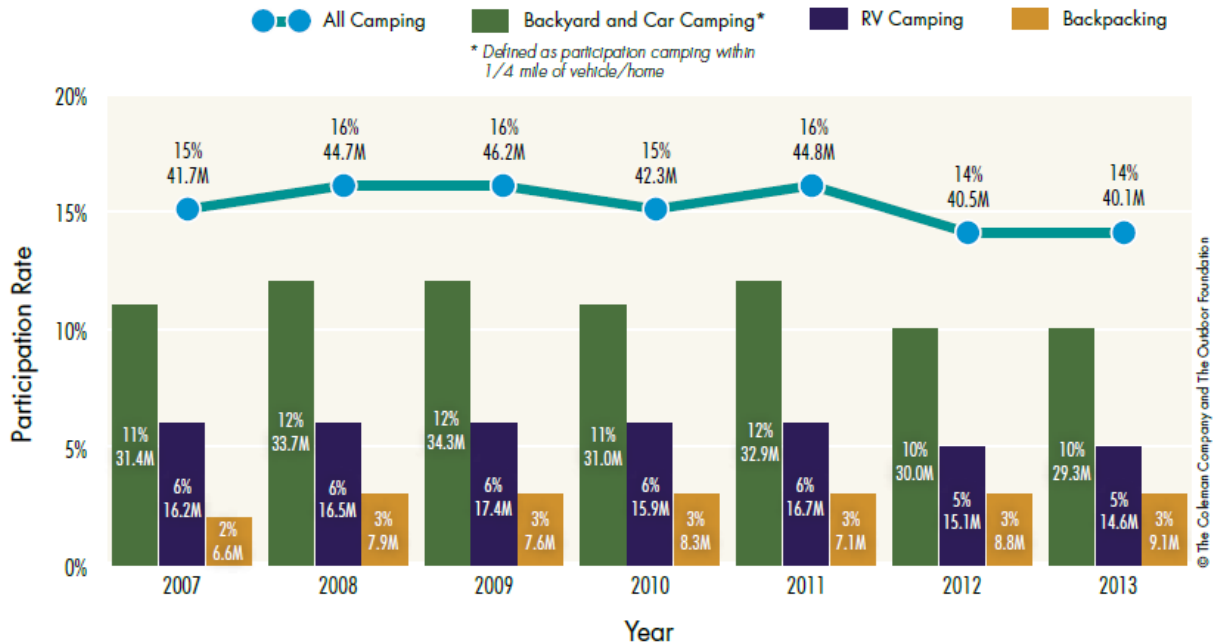
3.4.1 OVERALL CAMPING PARTICIPATION

The chart below describes the total number of American campers over 6 years old each year from 2007 to 2013, as well as the number of campers for the three most popular types (backyard/car camping, RV camping, and backpacking). Percentages for each category represent how these figures stack up against the U.S. population as a whole.

Just over 40 million Americans reported they went camping in 2013, which was a minimal decline from the 2012 total. Since 2007, total number of campers has followed an up and down trend, and the recent stagnation suggests that participation figures may be on the rise in upcoming years. Participation by camping type remained fairly steady in 2013, as backyard/car camping (29.3 million)

was the most popular form, followed by RV camping (14.6 million) and backpacking (9.1 million). The research also reveals that Americans went camping a total of 597.7 million days in 2013, which means the average camper went camping for a total of 14.9 days during the year.

All Americans, Ages 6+



Note: Some campers participated in both backyard/car camping and RV camping.

***Source: 2014 American Camper Report**

3.4.2 DEMOGRAPHICS OF CAMPERS

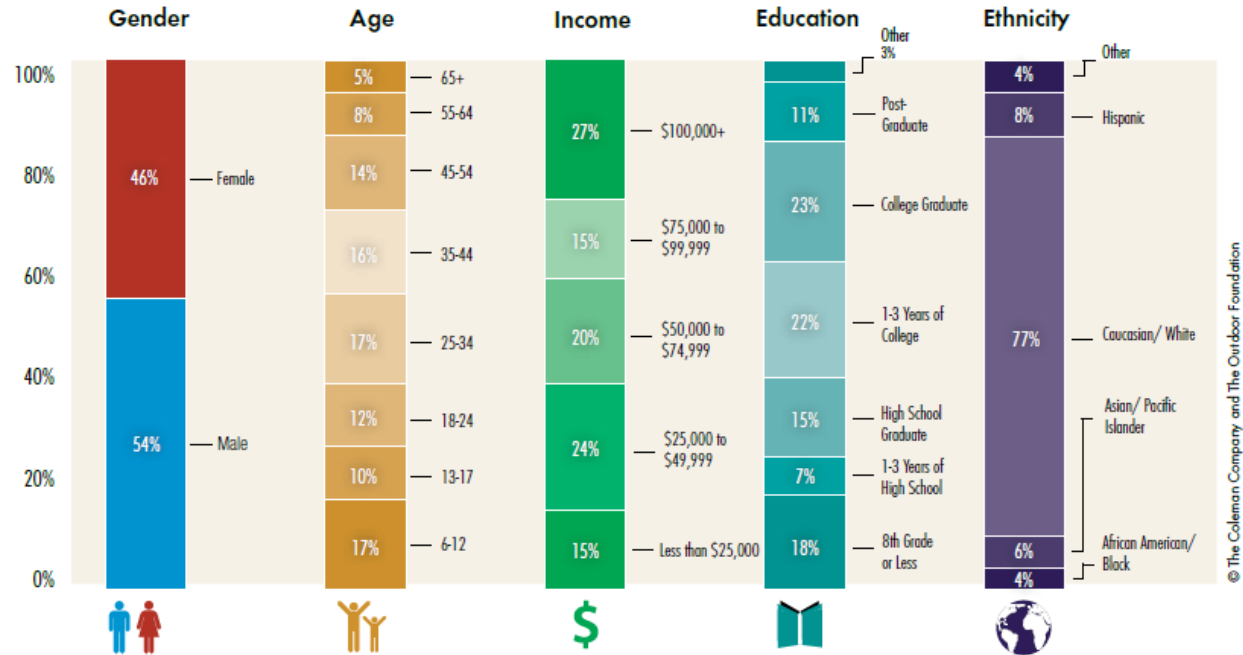
The graphic below describes the demographic characteristics of campers as reported in 2013. Over forty percent of campers have an income of \$75,000 or more, with a full 27% reporting income in excess of \$100,000. Also, nearly 60% of campers have at least some college education, so campers tend to be affluent and well educated.

Caucasians make up 84% of campers, followed by Hispanics (8%), Asian/Pacific Islander (6%), and African Americans (4%). Participation in camping among Hispanics has been trending upwards in recent years, which is of particular interest to the future design of camping experiences considering their social tendencies of being family oriented and gathering in large groups.

The median age of campers in the U.S. is around 32 years old, which is a year younger than the median age for the previous five years. There is a correlation between young adults and middle-age campers and youth participants due to the fact that many camping trips involve families. Although the 55+ segment only represents 13% of campers, many researchers believe that this group of campers will begin to rise dramatically as more retiring baby boomers hit the outdoors.

Demographics

Camper, Ages 6+



*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

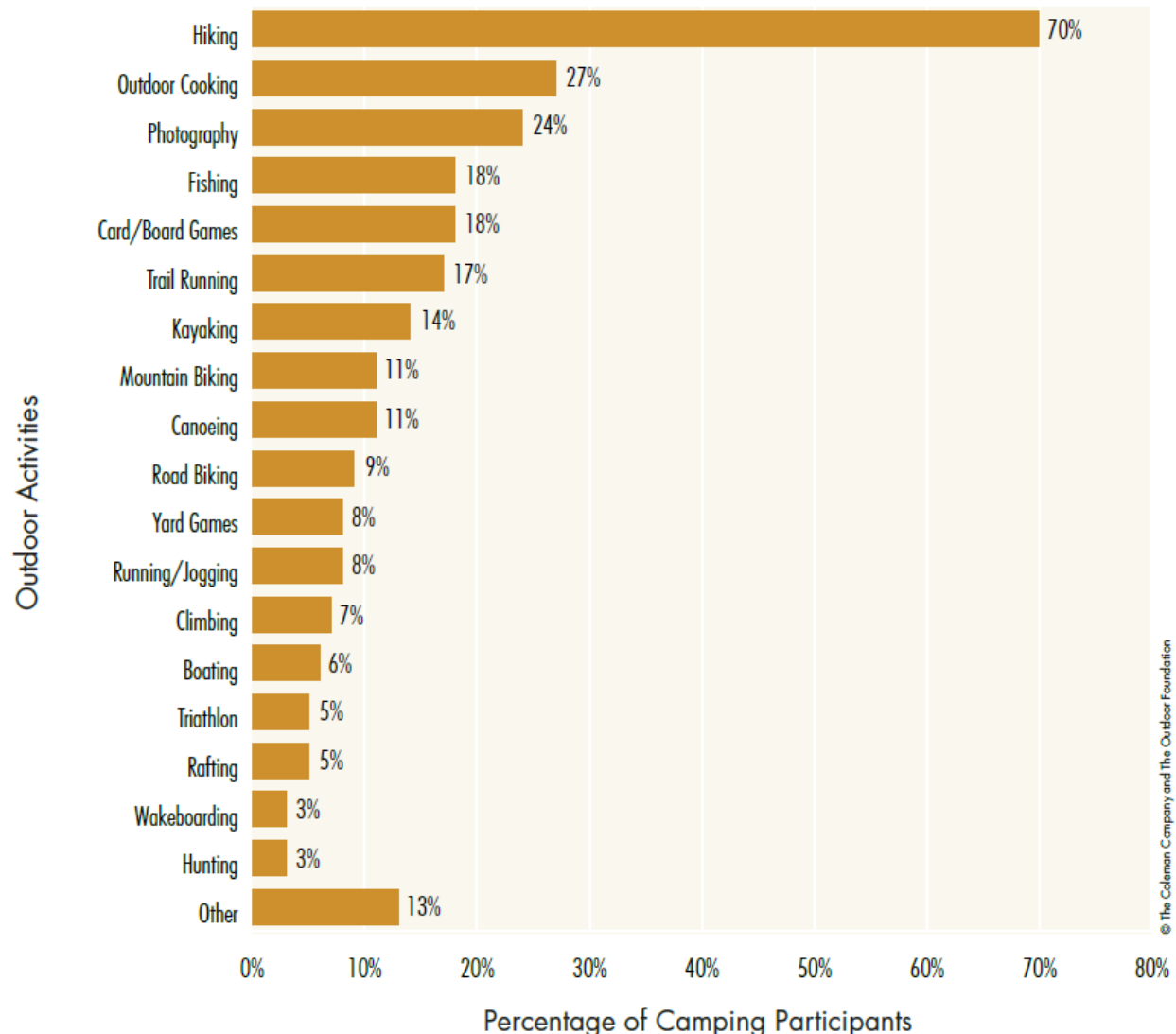
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3.4.3 CAMPING AS A GATEWAY ACTIVITY

Camping is considered a gateway activity because it often leads to participants engaging in additional outdoor activities. Statistics show that 87% of campers participated in some other outdoor activity during their camping trip, so it is very important that camping experiences have a wide variety of supporting amenities and activities for participants. The chart below reveals the most popular sport and leisure activities campers over the age of 18 participate in during their trip.

Favorite Activities while Camping

Campers, Ages 18+

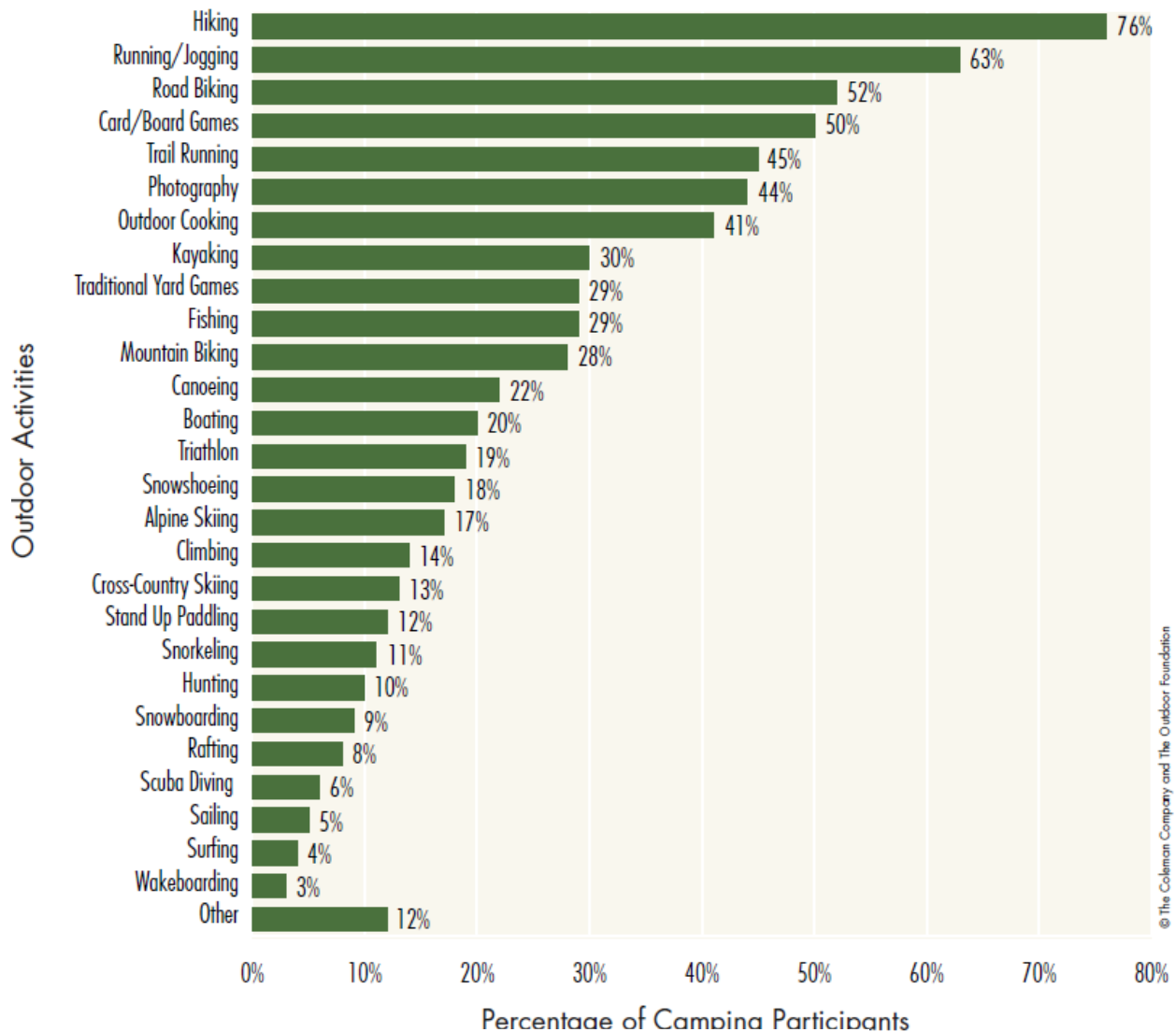


*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

With the understanding that the previous chart has some limitations in describing user behavior based on the amenities and activities that are present in each setting, it is also insightful to examine the most popular activities among participants when they aren't camping. The chart below describes the general sport and leisure participation among campers over the age of 18. This information provides an understanding of activities campers are interested in that can be useful in determining the types of activities that would be most sought after from a camping experience.

General Sports and Leisure Participation

Campers, Ages 18+

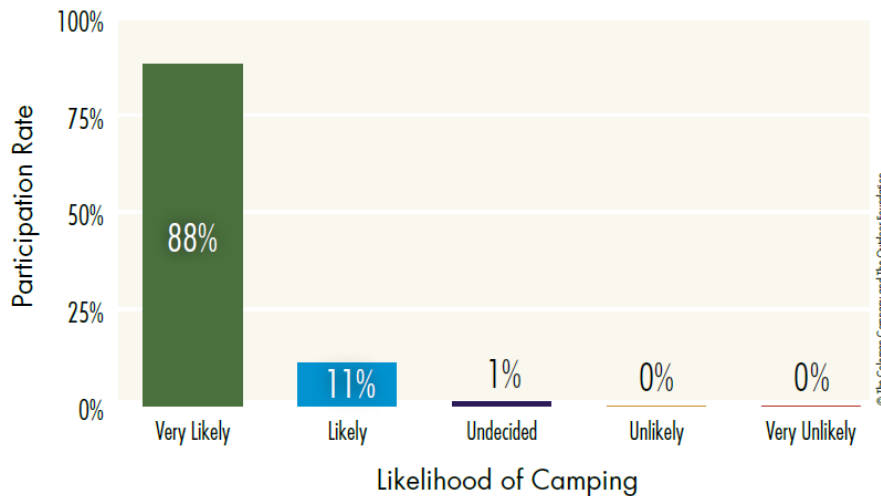


3.4.4 REPEAT CUSTOMERS

Based on survey findings, campers tend to be very loyal customers, as they plan to repeat their experience within the next year at a very high rate. The diagram below shows that 88% of campers say they are 'very likely' to camp in the next year, with an additional 11% stating their chances are 'likely'. Only 1% were 'undecided' whether they would camp in the near future, and none of those surveyed believed a repeat experience was 'unlikely' or 'very unlikely'.

Likelihood of Camping Next Year

Campers, Ages 18+

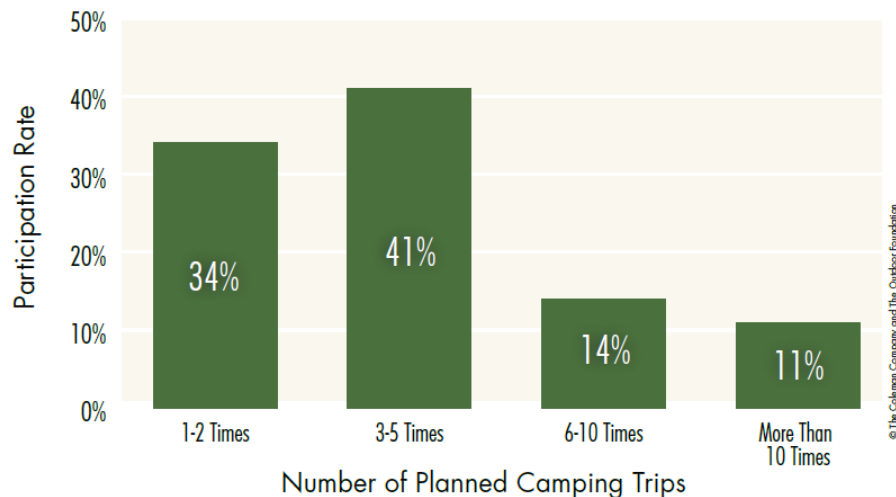


*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

As seen below, campers are not only likely to return, they are also repeating at a frequent rate. Based on the number of camping trips planned in the next year, we find that 66% of them expect to do so more than three times.

Number of Trips Planned

Campers, Ages 18+



*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

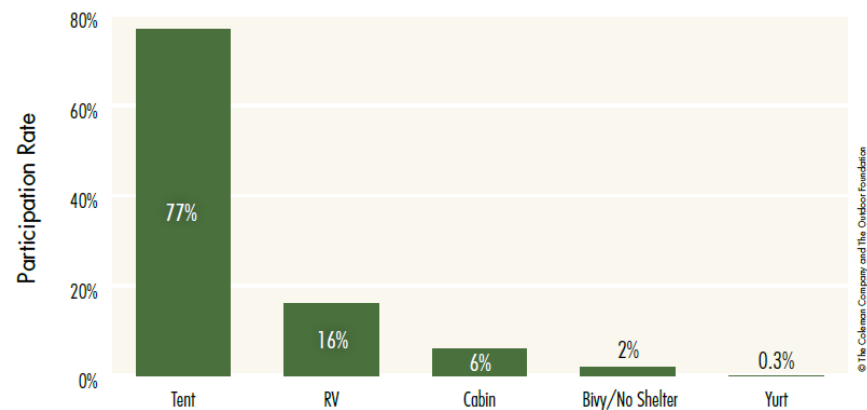
3.4.5 TYPES OF CAMPING

Different types of camping can accommodate different styles of campers. A variety of available camping options were identified in the *American Camper Report*, including tents, RVs, cabins, bivy/no shelter, and yurts. Overwhelmingly, tent camping (77%) is the preferred type of camping for all campers age 18 or older, followed by RV (16%) and cabin (6%).

Primary Type of Camping Shelter

All Campers

Ages 18+



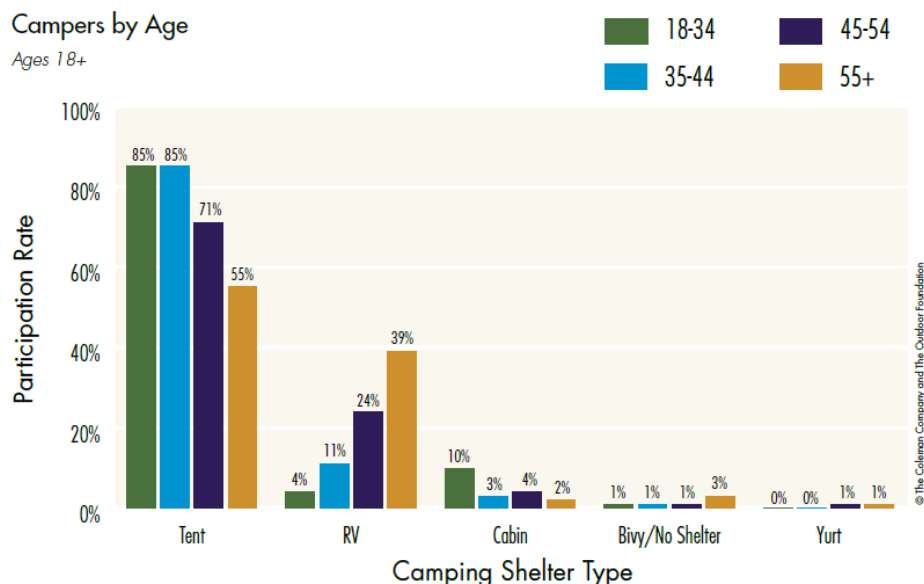
Camping Shelter Type

*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

The chart below assesses the age of participants by camping shelter type. This reveals that the younger segments are primarily camping in tents, while the older segments prefer more diverse camping experiences. Surprisingly, the oldest age group is participating in the most rugged experience (i.e. bivy/no shelter) at a higher rate, although this style of camping pales in comparison to the more popular forms. As the baby boomer population continues to swell and enter retirement, the 55+ generation is expected to be a prime target for the RV lifestyle due to an increase in leisure time and disposable income.

Campers by Age

Ages 18+



Camping Shelter Type

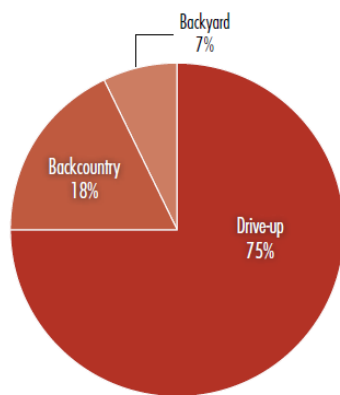
*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

3.4.6 PLACE AND TIME OF EXPERIENCE

This section explores where camping typically takes place, along with the duration and seasonality of the experience.

The charts below describe the setting and the distance traveled for camping experiences. Three-fourths of camping trips take place in a drive-up setting, followed by backcountry (18%) and backyard (7%) camping. Survey data shows that adult campers traveled an average of 186.7 miles from home to reach their camping destination. Sixty percent of campers travel between 51-300 miles to camp, while only 23% stay within 50 miles of home and nearly 20% travel over 300 miles. These figures show that camping experiences can draw users from long distances.

Type of Trip

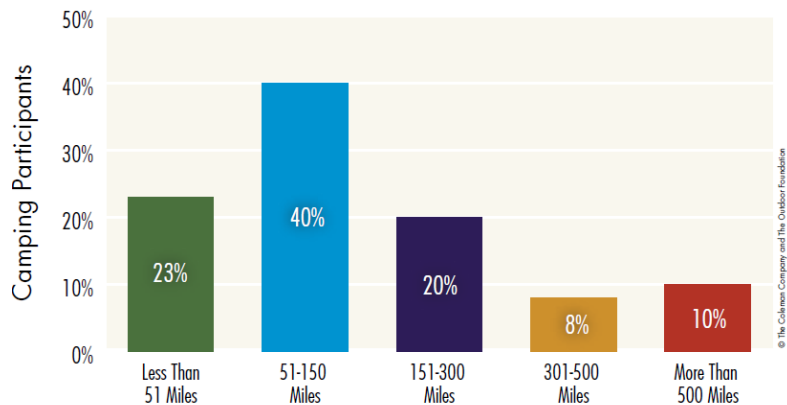


Campers, Ages 18+

© The Coleman Company and The Outdoor Foundation

Distance from Home

Campers, Ages 18+



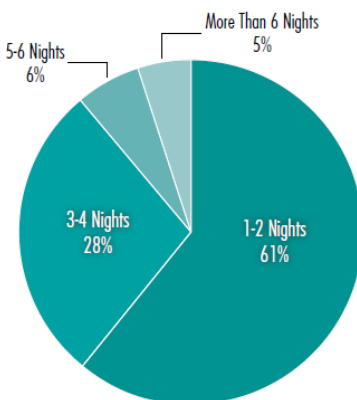
Distance Traveled for Camping Trip

© The Coleman Company and The Outdoor Foundation

*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

As seen below, the majority of campers' length of stay is 1-2 nights (61%), followed by 3-4 nights (28%) and 5+ nights (11%). The seasonality of camping trips affect the length of stay, as the summer months average a duration of 2.5 nights, with winter surprisingly reporting the second longest average stay at 2 days.

Length of Trip

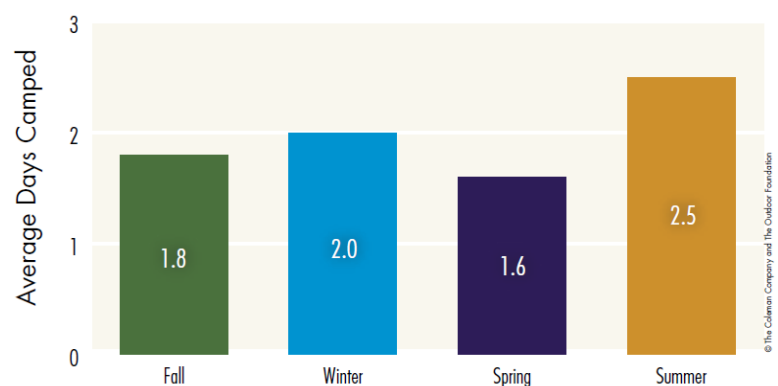


Campers, Ages 18+

© The Coleman Company and The Outdoor Foundation

Camping Days by Season

Campers, Ages 18+



Season

© The Coleman Company and The Outdoor Foundation

*Source: 2014 American Camper Report

3.4.7 LOCAL TRENDS - MARKET POTENTIAL

A Market Potential Data (MPI) measures the probable demand for a service in the target area. The MPI communicates the likelihood that a resident of the service area will exhibit certain consumer behavior when compared to the US National average. The National average is 100, therefore above 100 would represent a higher than average participation rate. The following chart illustrates the index of the greatest recreation market potential in Great Falls and the correlating programmatic and facility needs.

Consumer Behavior	Market Potential Index	Program Need	Facility Need
Participated in boating (power) in last 12 months	115	Outdoor Recreation	Access to Rivers
Participated in canoeing/kayaking in last 12 months	113	Outdoor Recreation	Access to Rivers/Lakes
Participated in fishing (fresh water) in last 12 months	112	Outdoor Recreation	Access to Rivers/Lakes
Participated in golf in last 12 months	110	Golf	Golf Course
Participated in archery in last 12 months	108	Outdoor Recreation	Archery Range
Participated in bicycling (mountain) in last 12 months	108	Outdoor Recreation	Access to Mountain Bike Trails
Participated in softball in last 12 months	105	Youth and Adult Sports	Diamond Athletic Fields
Participated in backpacking in last 12 months	104	Outdoor Recreation	Trails
Participated in hiking in last 12 months	104	Outdoor Recreation	Access to Hiking Trails
Participated in target shooting in last 12 months	103	Outdoor Recreation	Target Shooting/Skeet Range
Participated in volleyball in last 12 months	103	Youth and Adult Sports	Indoor Volleyball Courts
Participated in walking for exercise in last 12 months	102	Health and Fitness	Trails
Participated in bicycling (road) in last 12 months	101	Outdoor Recreation	Bike Lanes and Trails
Participated in swimming in last 12 months	101	Youth and Adult Sports	Swimming Pools (indoor and outdoor)
Participated in Frisbee in last 12 months	100	Youth and Adult Sports	Disc Golf
Participated in football in last 12 months	99	Youth and Adult Sports	Multi-purpose Athletic Fields
Participated in horseback riding in last 12 months	98	Outdoor Recreation	Equestrian Trails
Participated in weight lifting in last 12 months	98	Health and Fitness	Community Recreation Center
Participated in baseball in last 12 months	96	Youth and Adult Sports	Diamond Athletic Fields
Participated in yoga in last 12 months	95	Health and Fitness	Community Recreation Center
Participated in basketball in last 12 months	94	Youth and Adult Sports	Indoor and Outdoor Basketball Courts
Participated in aerobics in last 12 months	93	Health and Fitness	Community Recreation Center
Participated in jogging/running in last 12 months	92	Health and Fitness	Trails
Participated in ice skating in last 12 months	89	Youth and Adult Sports	Indoor or Outdoor Ice Rink
Participated in tennis in last 12 months	89	Youth and Adult Sports	Tennis Courts
Participated in Pilates in last 12 months	88	Health and Fitness	Community Recreation Center
Participated in soccer in last 12 months	81	Health and Fitness	Soccer Fields

3.4.8 RECREATION TRENDS SUMMARY

It is critically important for the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to understand the national participation trends in recreation activities. In doing so, the department can gain general insight into the lifecycle stage of recreation programs and activities and thereby anticipate potential changes in need and demand for the programs and activities that it provides to the residents of Great Falls.

Locally, participation in outdoor recreation programs as well as team sports are strong and indicate an opportunity to grow these services.

CHAPTER FOUR - COMMUNITY INPUT

When conducting a study that is more reflective of community value than the research described in the previous chapter it is necessary to understand if the needs or desires of the residents in Great Falls resemble the wishes of the responses that were generated in the broader context of recent studies. Thus, a key consideration to creating a vision for parks and recreation in Great Falls is to understand current community values, needs, and desires. The assessment of these values is accomplished by triangulating information generated from stakeholder interviews, a series of focus groups, and reinforced thru a statistically valid survey. The survey is written so it reflects issues and wishes that emerged from the qualitative data gathering. Triangulation occurs when findings of the qualitative work is supported by the quantitative work. The following paragraphs discuss this process and resulting findings.

4.1 QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The qualitative data collected included several leadership workshops, focus groups, open houses, and community meetings. A summary of the public input opportunities is provided below.

- Five (5) leadership interviews and twelve (12) stakeholder focus groups were conducted to be representative, but not exhaustive of interests affecting aquatics in the City of Great Falls. These sessions included:
 - Master Steering Committee
 - City administration, Mayor and City Commission, department leadership
 - Users groups of the system
 - Partners and competitors
- Two (2) community open houses were conducted in order to capture representative interests, needs, and priorities of residents through an open forum. The meetings were organized and conducted by PROS Consulting.
- The Master Steering Committee, the Parks and Community Services Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee have provided input throughout the project.

4.2 QUALITATIVE INPUT

The following summarizes the key discussion points gleaned from the focus group meetings and stakeholder interviews that were conducted.

4.2.1 KEY AREAS OF FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

- AGE EQUITY: More things for young people... losing young people...
- ACCESSIBILITY: Accessible parks areas
- PARTNERSHIPS: Equitable and stronger partnerships in particular between city and the schools
- YEAR ROUND PROGRAMMING: More year round services
 - Ice skating on Gibson Pond

- Sledding hill
- Snow shoeing or cross country skiing at golf course
- Different use of golf courses
- NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PROGRAMS/FACILITIES: Programming of neighborhood parks ... Low income level of community equates to need to provide neighborhood facilities
- DEMOGRAPHICS: A vision that takes into consideration that Great Falls has many households that have two working parents -
- LESS TENNIS COURTS: Tennis facilities under used...
- EVENTS: More state-wide athletic events in Great Falls
- PICKLEBALL: Dedicated Pickle ball facility
 - State wide tournaments
 - Senior Olympics
 - Indoor/outdoor space
 - Lions convert to Pickleball
- OPERATING HOURS: Expansion of hours for neighborhood park pools
- NATATORIUM RENOVATION: Renovation of the Natatorium
- GOLF COURSE SUBSIDY: Answering the question if the Golf Courses should be subsidized...
- INTERNAL SERVICE FUND EQUITY/IMPACT
- MAINTENANCE: Maintain the existing system
- TRAILS: Complete the trails system...
- COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENTS
- PARKING: Better parking at some parks.
- CAMPGROUND/RV PARKS - is there a need for them in the community?
- PARK RANGERS: Develop a Park ranger system (1 to every 20,00 people)
- DAY CAMPS: Additional summer day camps
- MARKETING: Better marketing of programs
- ADVOCACY: Build on the support that the city has for new ideas and programs
- FUNDING: Department needs individual funding support (park district)
- RESTROOMS: More restrooms
- PLANNING: Manage the system forward based on need/unmet need
- DATA: Focus on data to make decisions
- SUSTAINABILITY: Creating a sustainable system
- OUTCOMES FOR PARKS: Define the purpose for each park.

- POLICY/PROCEDURE/PROCESS OVERKILL - make it easier to use the park
- DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES: If there will be new developments, there should be park development guidelines.
- LIFECYCLE REPLACEMENT “Capital improvements need to happen before they become large capital improvements (proactive versus reactive)”
- STANDARDS: Do we have too many parks that we are trying to maintain? Do we need to cut some in order to maintain them better?
- RIVER ACCESS: Utilize the river as a recreational opportunity
- IRRIGATION: Improvement of Irrigation systems are very old in the parks

4.2.2 UNIQUENESS OF GREAT FALLS

- GREAT OUTDOORS: Montana is amazing and known for the great outdoors
- ACCESS TO WATER: River running through it...
- LOCATION: Centrally located - on the path from Yellowstone to Glacier...
- SPECIAL EVENTS
- DESTINATION LOCATION FACILITIES: Skate park, golf courses and waterpark...
- TRAIL SYSTEM
- MUSEUMS
- SHOPPING
- MOUNTAIN BIKING in state parks
- WATER FALLS
- LARGE MILITARY BASE
- EXTREME SPORT OPPORTUNITIES
 - Windsurfing
 - Kayaking
 - White water rafting
 - Surf the river in Missoula
 - Opportunities below the dam
- AGING POPULATION
- BLUE COLLAR: Great Falls is a lower income, blue collar community
- BIKE FRIENDLY/WALKABILITY
- UNDEVELOPED PARK LAND in the community
- ATHLETIC FIELDS
- RESISTANT TO CHANGE

- HISTORY AND CULTURE

4.2.3 UNMET NEEDS

- FUNDING: Lack of funding - need for strategic plan
- MORE PROGRAMS: More programs but staffing becomes an issue.
- AFFORDABILITY: Free or affordable recreation programs especially for kids
- REVENUE PRODUCING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS: Create programs and events to raise money
- FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING OF PROGRAMS: Park and Rec needs to have flexibility in schedule to accommodate different groups and activities
- INDOOR FACILITIES: Indoor facility for all sports.
- UTILIZATION: See what the utilization is for the parks and figure out if there is an issue that can be corrected
- EXPAND AQUATICS: Indoor water park
- MARKETING: Increased and more diverse marketing
- PRICING POLICY: Is there a correlation to the fee and attendance that needs to be addressed.
- REGIONALISM/TOURISM: How can we use parks and recreation to increase visitation to Great Falls
- EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS: Collaboration between groups

4.2.4 QUALITATIVE INPUT SUMMARY

Using a park system core element framework that will be utilized in the remainder of the report, the following tables summarizes the qualitative input received during the Master Plan project:

PARK SYSTEM ELEMENT	QUALITATIVE INPUT SUMMARY	
	Qualitative Input Value Index	Opportunities Identified for Improvement
Adventure Area	Valued	Yes
Centene Stadium	Valued	No
Community Gardens	Valued	Yes
Community Parks	Valued	No
Diamond, Baseball (90 foot bases)	Valued	Yes
Diamond, Youth Baseball/Softball	Valued	Yes
District/Special Use Parks	Neutral	No
Dog Parks/Off leash Areas	Highly Valued	Yes
Golf Courses (18 hole)	Valued	Yes
Large Covered Picnic Areas	Valued	Yes
Multi-Sports Complex	Highly Valued	Yes
Neighborhood Parks	Highly Valued	Yes
Open Space/Undeveloped Parks	Highly Valued	Yes
Outdoor Basketball Courts	Neutral	Yes
Outdoor Wellness and Fitness Area	Valued	Yes
Pickle Ball Courts	Highly Valued	Yes
Playgrounds	Highly Valued	Yes
Recreation Center	Valued	Yes
Rectangle Fields (All)	Valued	Yes
River Access	Valued	Yes
River's Edge Trail	Highly Valued	Yes
Seibel Soccer Complex	Highly Valued	Yes
Skate Parks	Valued	No
Swimming Pool (Mitchell Complex)	Highly Valued	No
Swimming Pool (Natatorium)	Highly Valued	Yes
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	Valued	No
Tennis Courts	Highly Valued	Yes

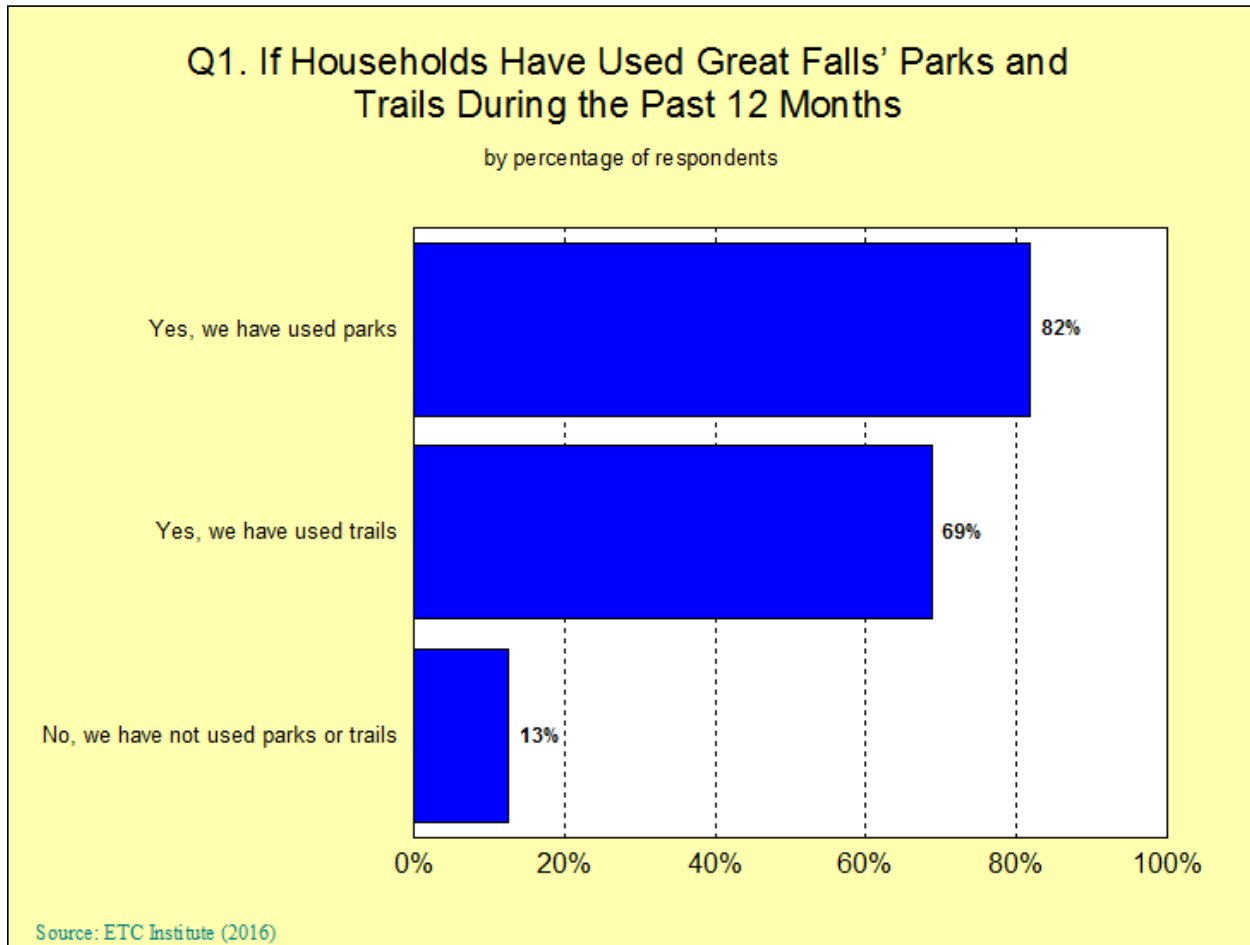
4.3 QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute conducted a Community Interest and Opinion Survey for the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department during the spring of 2015 to help determine parks, recreation priorities for the community. The survey was mailed to a random sample of approximately 3,000 households in the City of Great Falls. An option to complete the survey in Spanish or online was also available to residents who had that preference.

Once the surveys were mailed, resident households who received the survey were contacted by phone alerting them that they would be receiving a survey in the mail and encouraging them to provide feedback by completing the survey. A total of 404 households completed the survey. The results for the sample of 404 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision rate of at least $\pm 4.9\%$. The following summarizes the major findings of the report and how the results compare to national benchmarks (where data exists). The complete survey and results can be found in the Appendix of the report.

4.3.1 PARK AND TRAIL USAGE AND RATINGS

- **Visitation of Parks and Trails:** Eighty-two percent (82%) of households visited parks over the past 12 months and sixty-nine percent (69%) of households have visited trails over the past 12



months.

The national benchmark for visitation of parks is 79%.

- **Condition Ratings of Parks and Trails:**
 - Of households who visited parks, 21% rated the parks they had visited as “excellent”.
The national benchmark for excellent is 31%.
 - Of households who visited trails, 33% rated the trails they had visited as “excellent”.
- **Reasons Preventing the Use of Parks and/or Trails:** Based on the 13% of households who indicated they have not used parks or trails over the past 12 months, 6% indicated “none”. Other reasons include:
 - Other (5%), lack of features (1%), do not feel safe (1%), lack of handicap accessibility (1%), distance from residence (1%), and not aware of parks or trails locations (1%).

4.3.2 PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND RATINGS

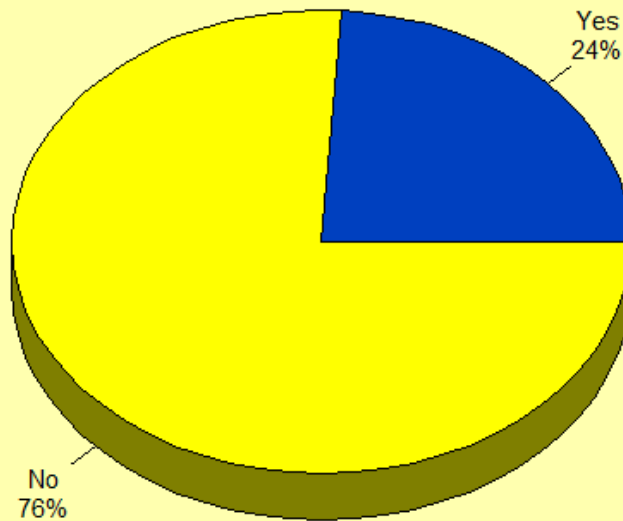
- **Program Participation and Ratings:** Twenty-four percent (24%) of households participated in the City Great Falls Park and Recreation Department programs over the past 12 months.

The national benchmark for program participation is 34%.

- Of households who participated in programs, 23% percent rated the programs as “excellent”.

Q2. If Respondent Households Participated in Any Great Falls Parks and Recreation Programs Over the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents

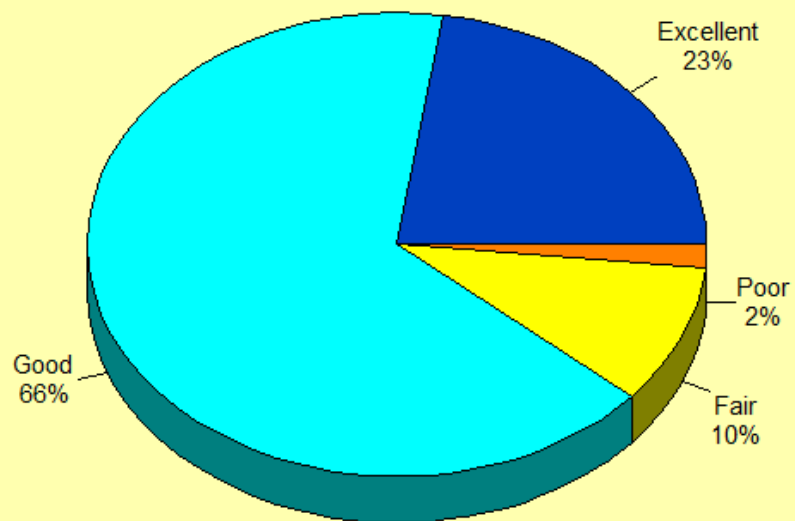


Source: ETC Institute (2016)

The national benchmark for excellent is 35%.

Q2-2. How Respondents Rate the Overall Quality of Recreation Programs Participated in

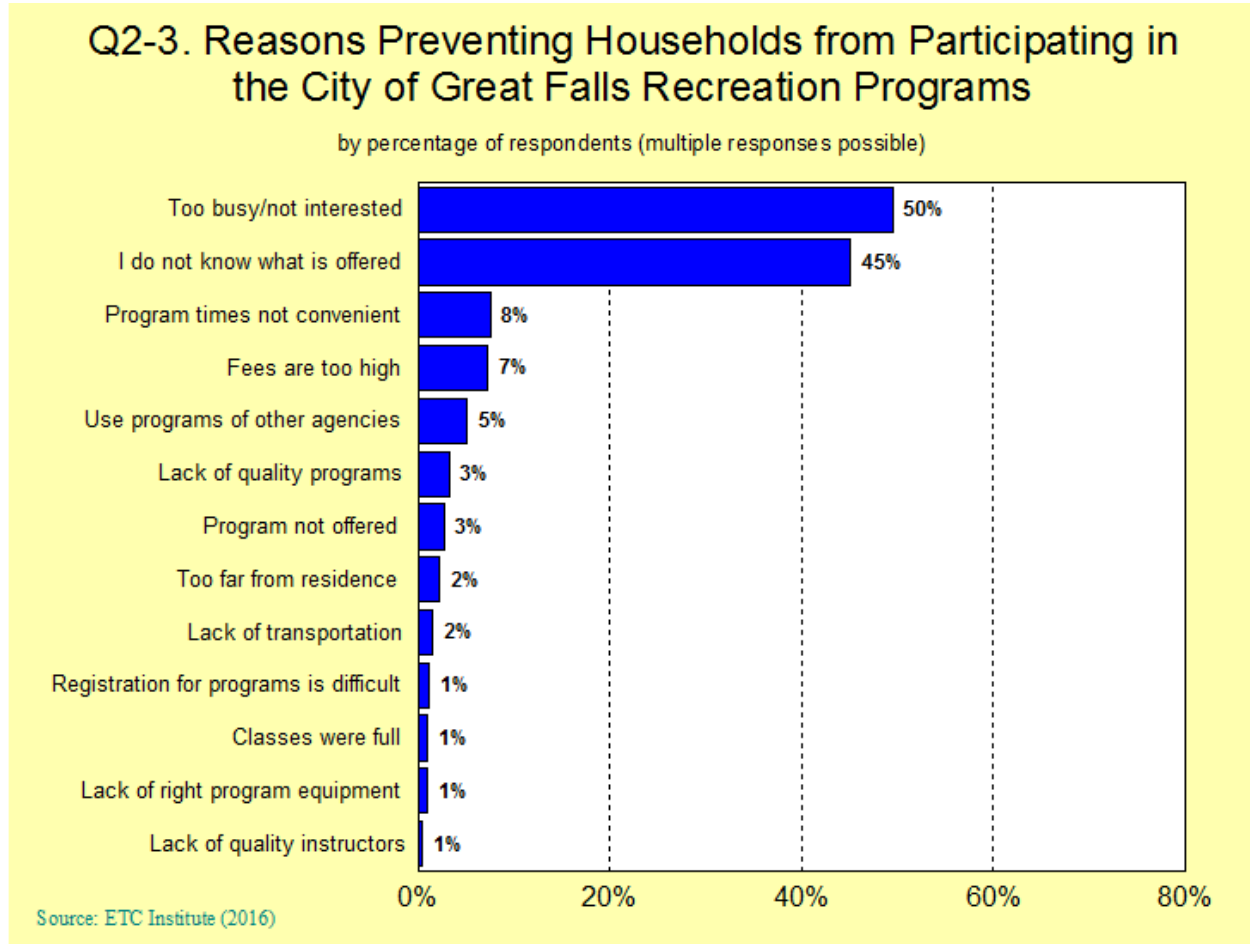
by percentage of respondents who have used parks during the past 12 months



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

- **Reasons Preventing Program Usage:** The two major reasons that prevent program usage are (1) too busy/not interested (50%) and (2) I do not know what is offered (45%).

The national benchmark for too busy/not interested is 34% and for not knowing what is offered is 22%.

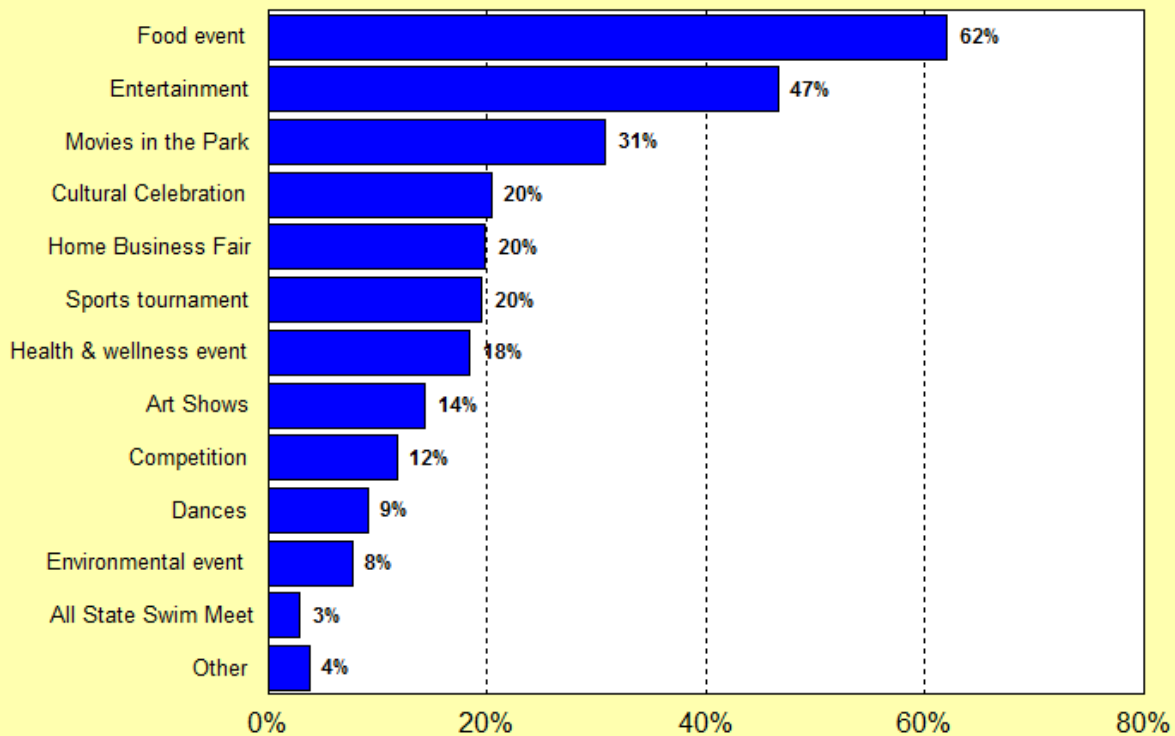


Respondents' were asked to indicate from a list of 14 special events, which events their household had participated in over the past 12 months. Respondents were then asked to rate the overall quality of the events they had participated in. Respondents were then asked to indicate from 12 potential event concepts that could be incorporated in the parks and recreation system, which three they were most interested in.

- **Special Event Participation:** Sixty-two percent (62%) of households participated in the Montana State Fair over the past 12 months. Other special events that households have participated in include: Christmas stroll (43%), Mansfield Center Events (35%), Alive@5 (31%), and car shows (31%).
- **Special Event Ratings:** Eighty-seven percent (87%) of households rated the overall quality of special events they had participated in over the past year as either “excellent” or “good”.
- **Special Event Concepts Households Are Most Interested:** Sixty-two percent (62%) of households are the most interested in food events. Other events of interest include: Entertainment (47%), movies in the park (31%), cultural celebration (20%), home business fair (20%), sports tournament (20%), and health and wellness event (18%).

Q4. Event Concepts Respondent Households are Interested In

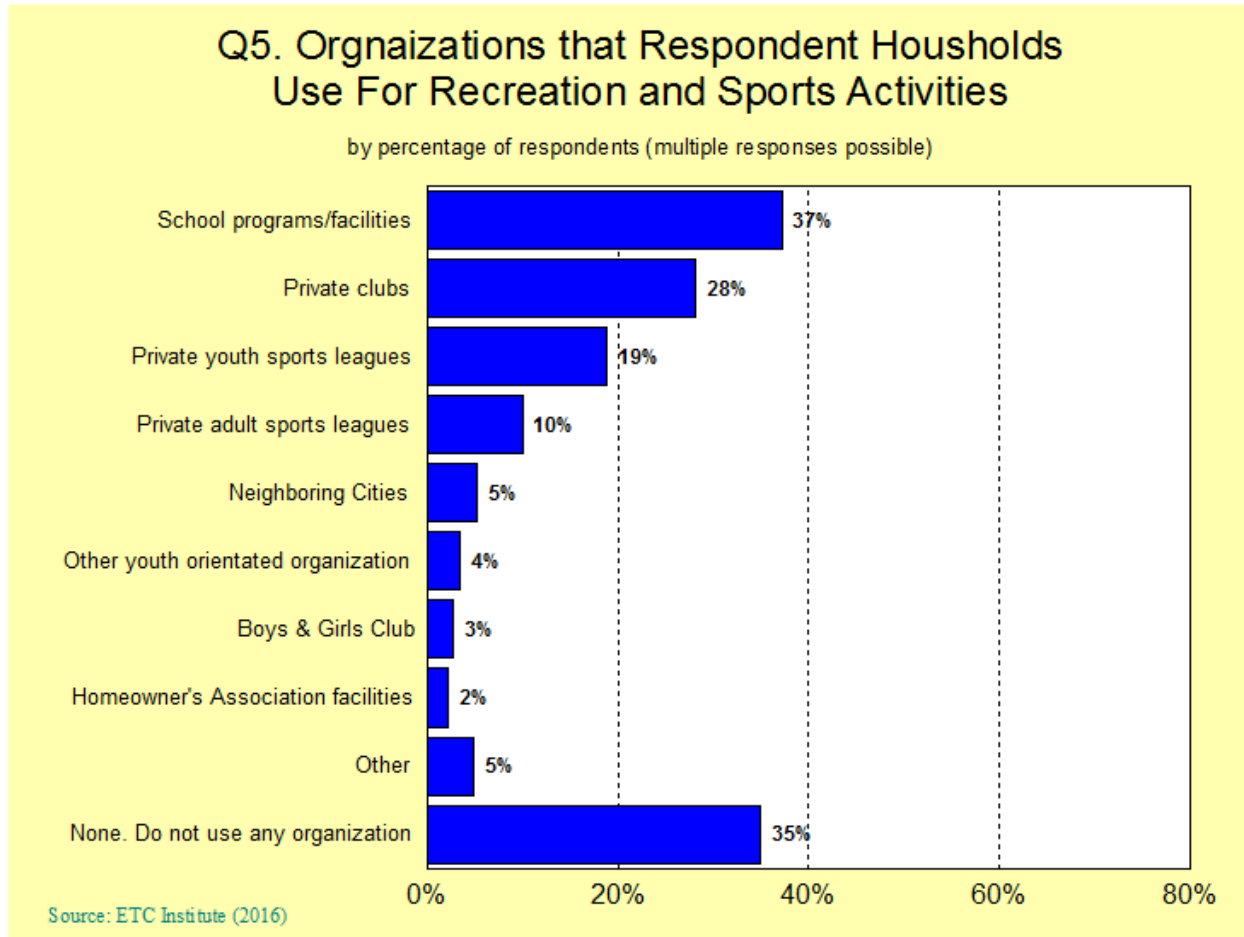
by percentage of respondents (multiple responses possible)



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.3.4 ORGANIZATIONS HOUSEHOLDS USE FOR RECREATION AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES

Respondents were asked from a list of eight potential organizations which ones they use for their indoor/outdoor and sports activities. Thirty-seven percent (37%) indicated they used school programs and facilities. Other organizations used include: Private clubs (28%) and private youth sports leagues (19%).



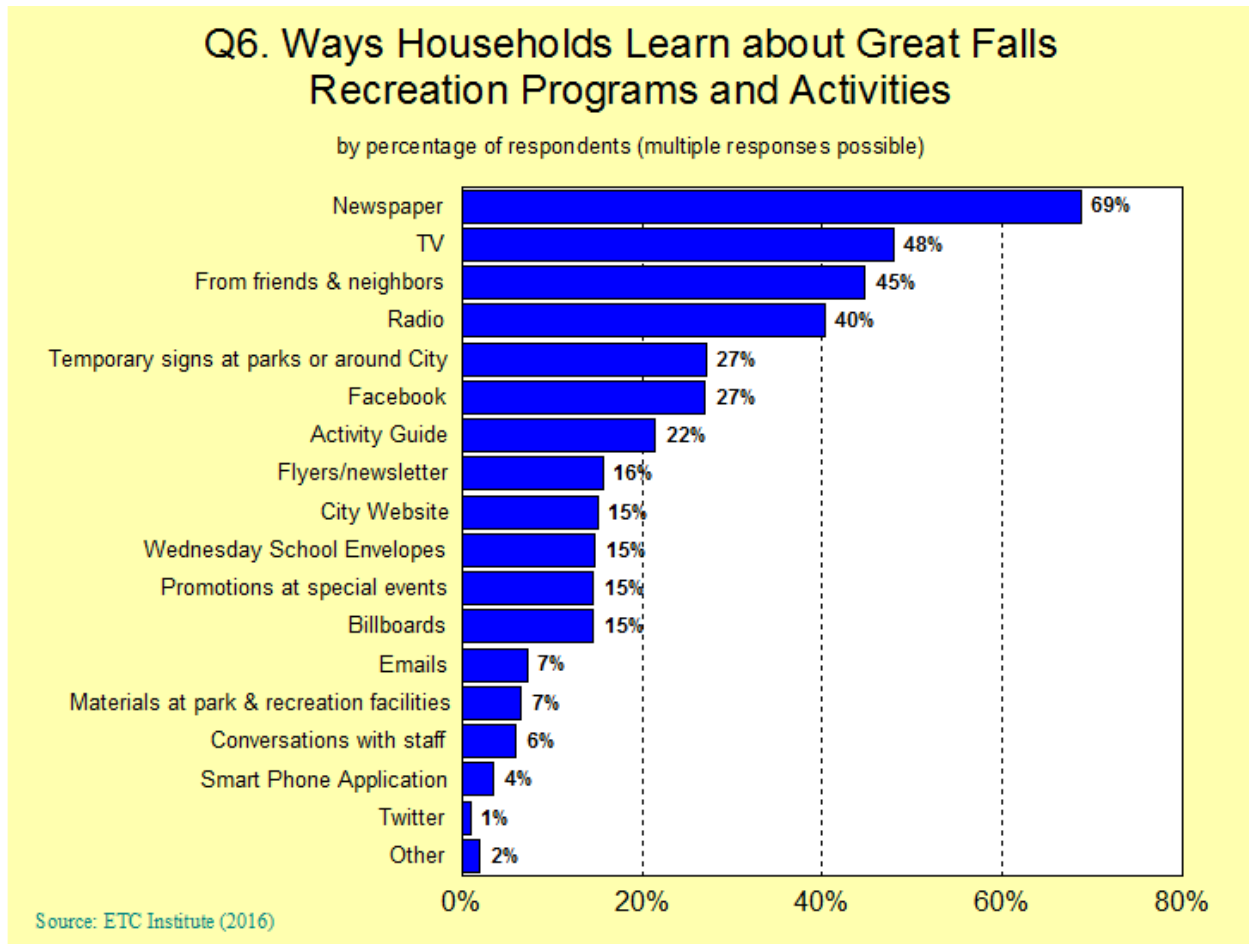
4.3.5 WAYS HOUSEHOLDS LEARN ABOUT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The Newspaper Was the Most Utilized Source of Information When Learning About Program and Activity Offerings. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of households indicated they utilize the Newspaper as an information source. Other most used sources include: TV (48%), from friends and neighbors (45%), and radio (40%).

The national benchmark for newspaper is 39%.

The national benchmark for radio is 11%.

The national benchmark for TV is 10%.



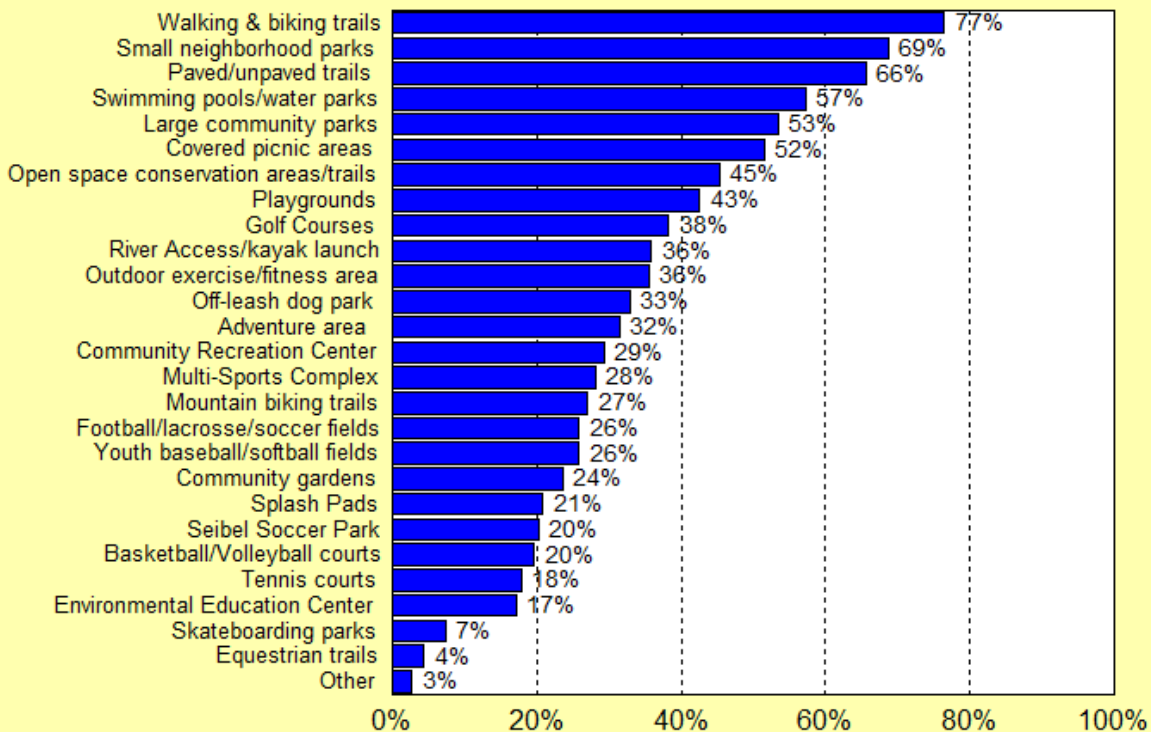
4.3.6 FACILITY NEEDS AND IMPORTANCE

Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of 26 facilities whether or not they had a need. If the respondent indicated a need for the facility, they were then asked to rate how well their needs were being met.

- Facility Needs:** Seventy-seven percent (77%) or 19,355 households indicated a need for walking and biking trails. Other most needed facilities include: Small neighborhood parks (69% or 17,382 households), paved/unpaved trails (66% or 16,597 households), swimming pools/water parks (57% or 14,472 households), large community parks (53% or 13,511 households), and covered picnic areas (52% or 13,030 households).

Q7. Households That Have a Need for Parks and Recreation Facilities

by percentage of respondents

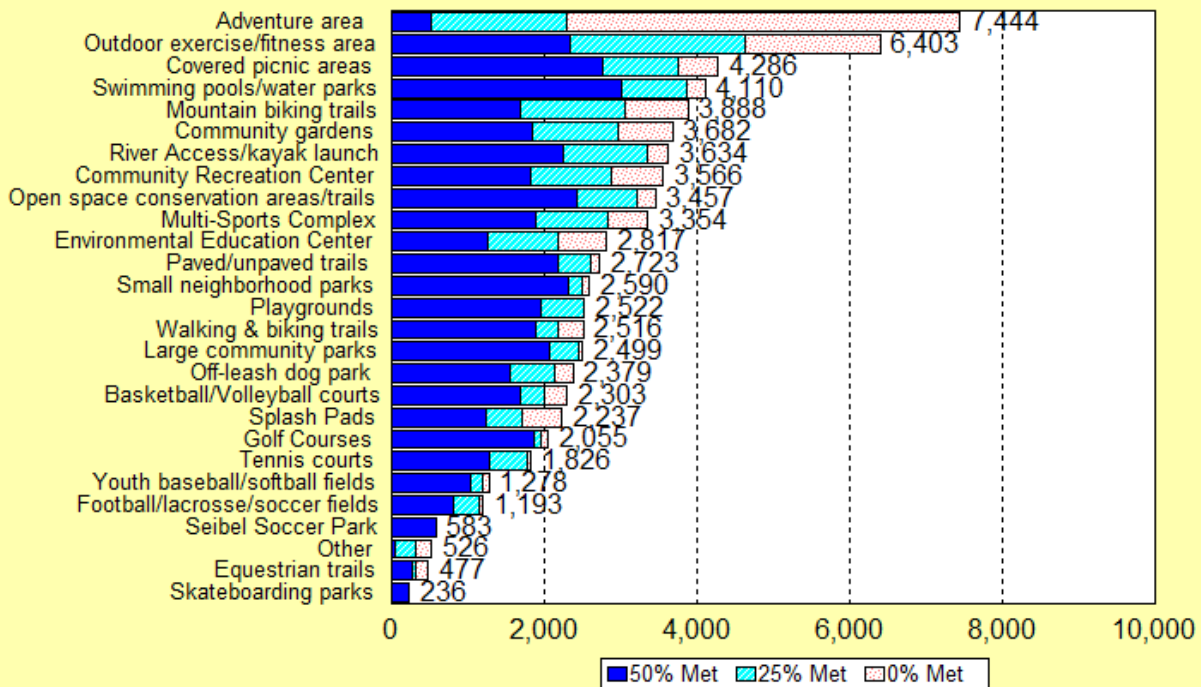


Source: ETC Institute (2016)

- **How Well Household Needs Are Being Met for Facilities:** Based on the number of households who indicated their needs were only being met 50% or less, 7,444 households indicated an unmet need for an adventure area. Other unmet needs include: Outdoor exercise and fitness area (6,403 households), covered picnic areas (4,286 households), and swimming pools and water parks (4,110 households).

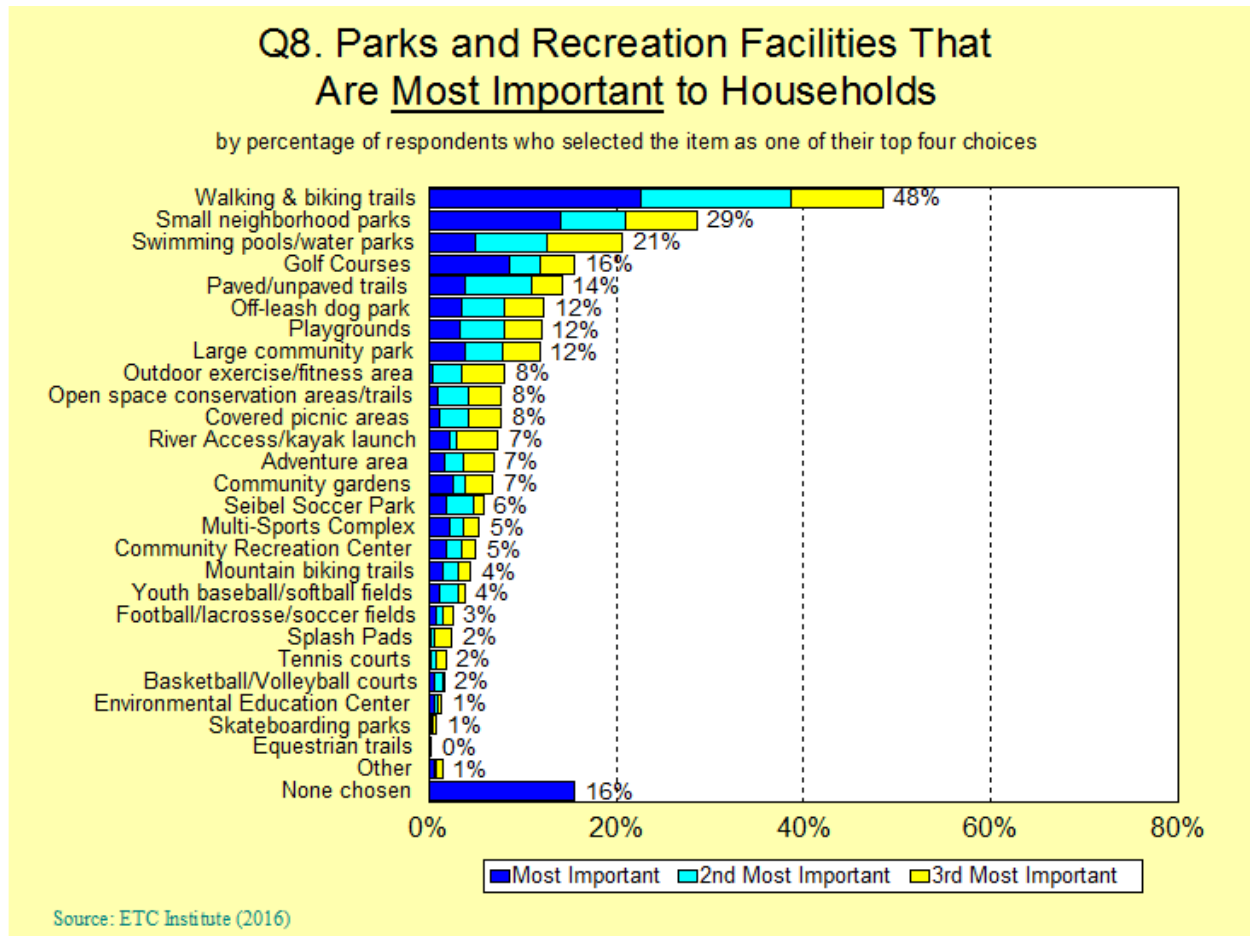
Q7-3. Estimated Number of Households for Great Falls Parks and Recreation Department Whose Needs for Facilities Are Only Being 50% Met or Less

by number of households based on 25,301 households in Great Falls



- Facility Importance:** Based on the sum of respondents' top three choices, 48% indicated walking and biking trails were the most important to their household. Other most important facilities include: Small neighborhood parks (29%), swimming pools/water parks (21%), golf courses (16%), and paved and unpaved trails (14%).

National benchmark for trails is 42%.

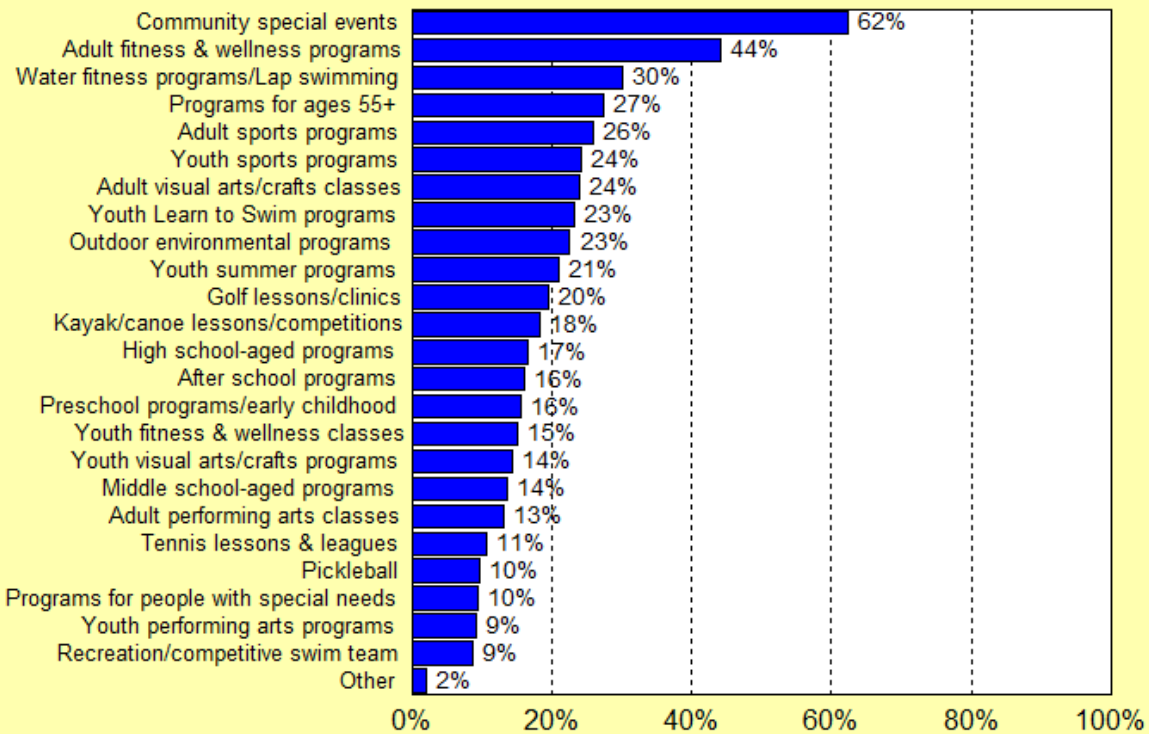


4.3.7 PROGRAM NEEDS, IMPORTANCE, AND USAGE

- **Program Needs:** Sixty-two percent (62%) or 15,763 households indicated a need for community special events. Other most needed programs include: Adult fitness and wellness programs (44% or 11,158 households) and water fitness programs/lap swimming (30% or 7,641 households).

Q9. Households That Have a Need for Parks and Recreation Programs

by percentage of respondents

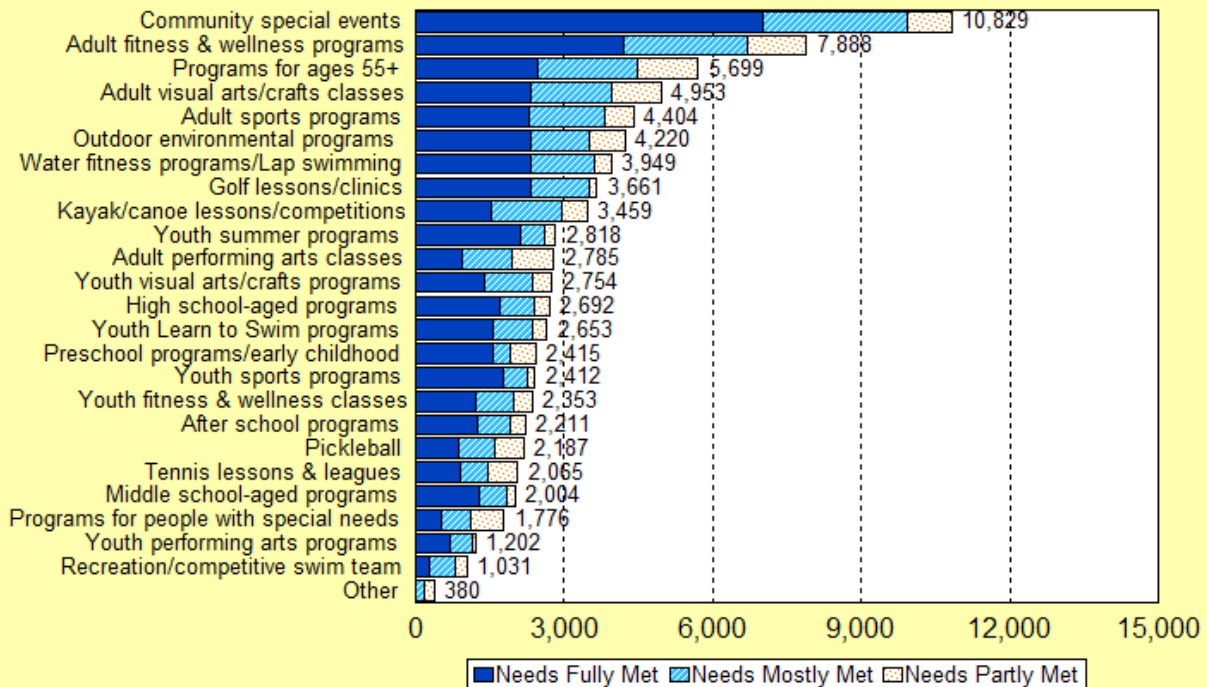


Source: ETC Institute (2016)

- **How Well Needs Are Being Met for Programs:** Based on the number of households who indicated their needs were only being met 50% or less, 10,829 households. Other unmet needs include: Adult fitness and wellness programs (7,888 households) and Programs for adults ages 55+ (5,699 households).

Q9-3. Estimated Number of Households for Great Falls Parks and Recreation Department Whose Needs for Programs Are Only Being 50% Met or Less

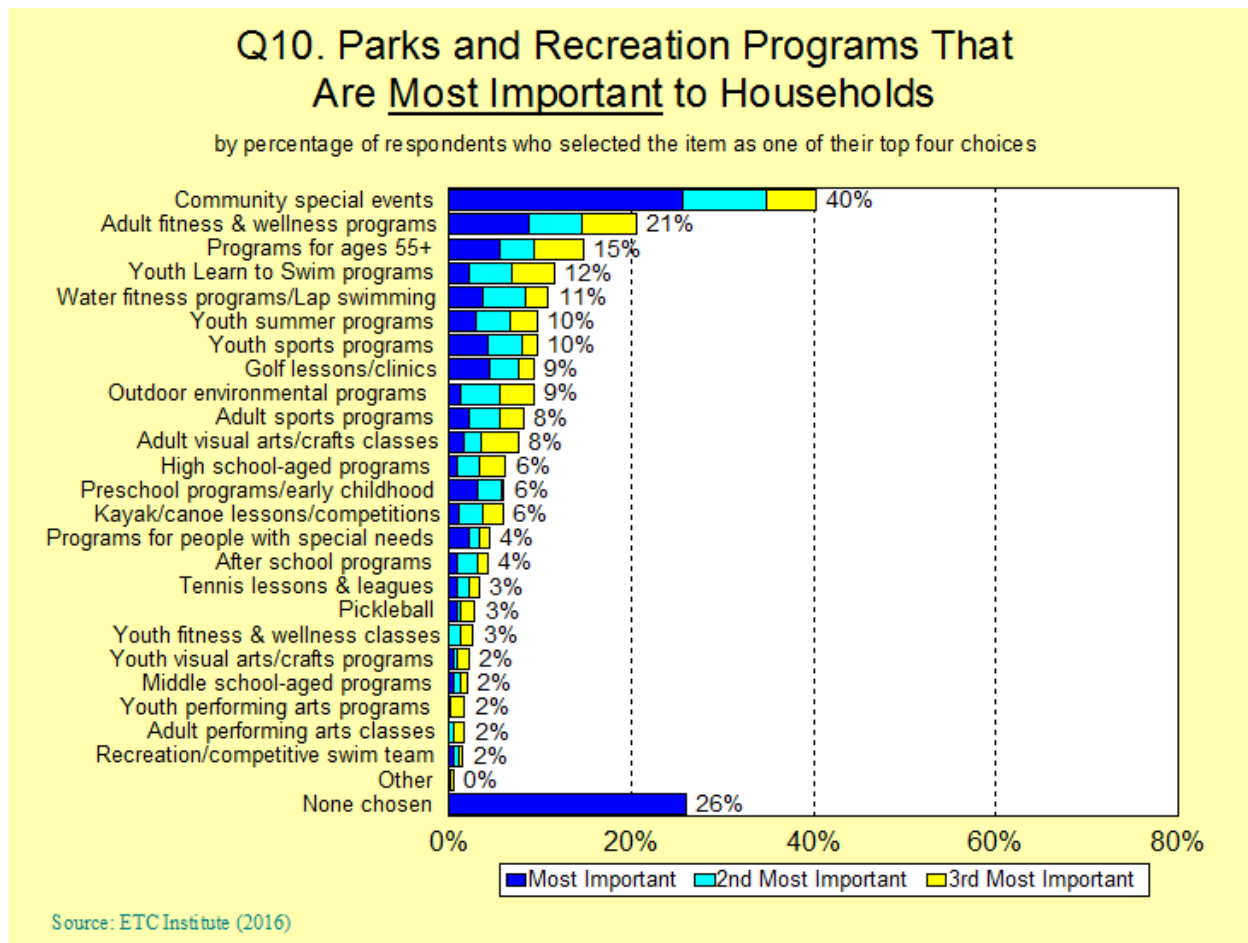
by number of households based on 25,301 households in Great Falls



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

- **Program Importance:** Based on the percentage of households who indicated the program as one of their top three choices, 40% indicated community special events were the most important to their household. Other most important programs include: Adult fitness and wellness programs (21%) and programs for adults' ages 55+ (15%).

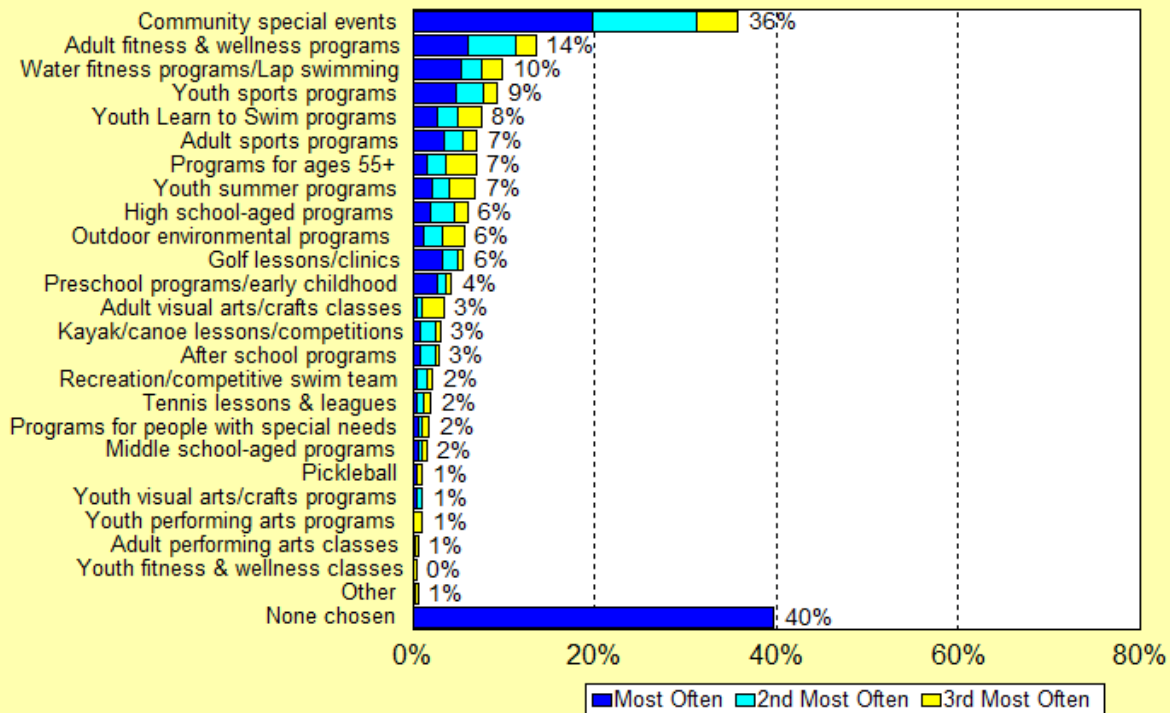
Note: Community events as a first choice, was more important than any other first, second, or third choices combined.



- Program Usage:** Based on the percentage of households who indicated the program as one of their top three choices, 36% indicated they use community special events the most often. Other most used programs include: Adult fitness and wellness programs (14%) and water fitness programs/lap swimming (10%).

Q11. Parks and Recreation Programs That Households Currently Participate In Most Often

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

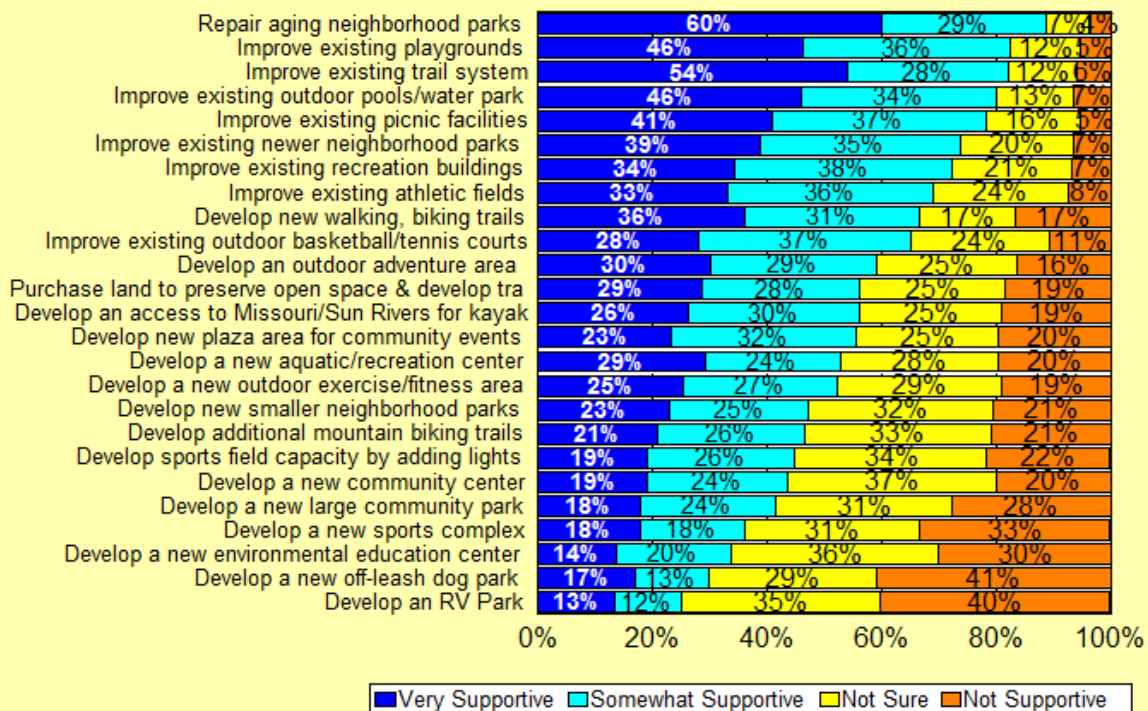
4.3.8 SUPPORT TO IMPROVE PARKS, TRAILS, AND THE RECREATION SYSTEM

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for 25 potential actions that the City of Great Falls could take to improve the parks, trails, and recreation system.

- **Supported Actions:** Based on the percentage of respondents who indicated they were either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive”, 89% indicated repair aging neighborhood parks. Other most supported actions include: Improve existing playgrounds (82%), improve existing trail system (82%), improve existing outdoor pools/water park (80%), and improve existing picnic facilities (78%).

Q12. Respondent Level of Support for New/Improved Parks, Trails, and Recreation System

by percentage of respondents

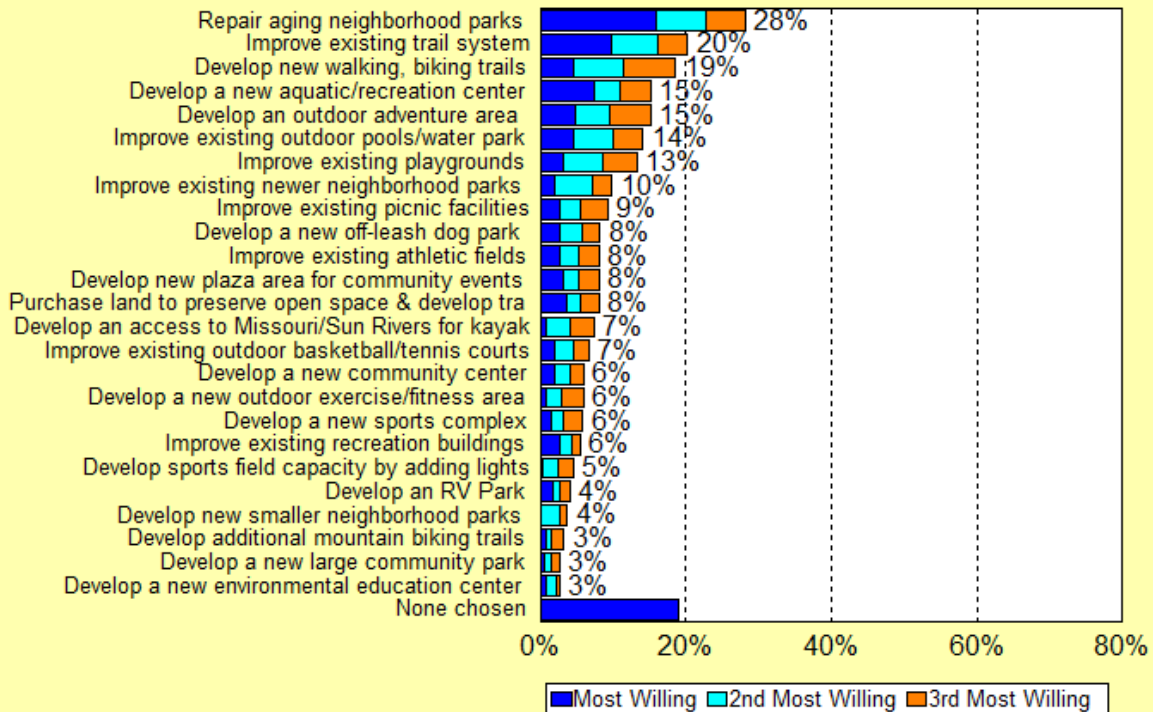


Source: ETC Institute (2016)

- Most Supported Actions:** Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents indicated they were the most willing to fund the repair of aging neighborhood parks. Other items respondents are the most willing to fund include: improve existing trail system (29%), develop new walking and biking trails (19%), develop a new aquatic/recreation center (15%), develop an outdoor adventure area (15%), improve existing outdoor pools/water park (14%), and improve existing playgrounds (13%).

Q13. Actions That Respondents are Most Willing to Fund

by percentage of respondents

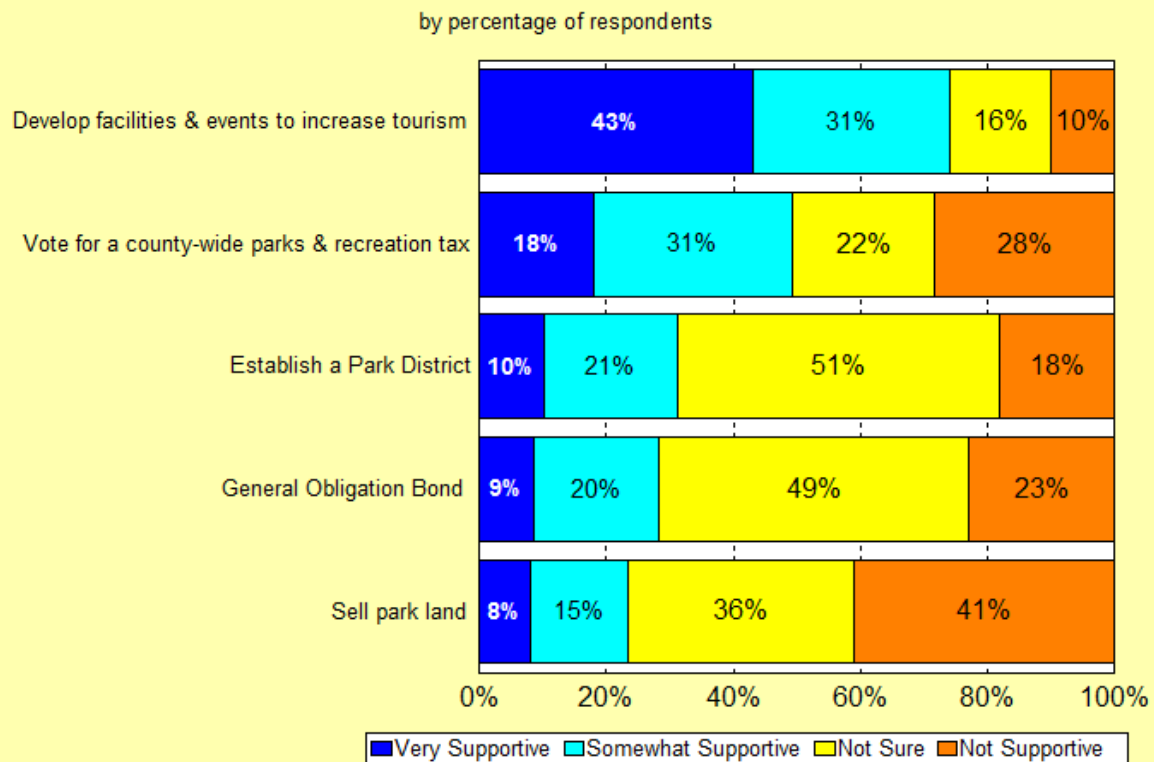


Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.3.9 SUPPORT TO FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW/IMPROVED RECREATION AMENITIES

- Based on the percentage of respondents who were either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive”, 74% support the development of facilities and events to increase tourism.
- Based on similar levels of support, respondents second most support a vote for a countywide parks and recreation tax. Respondents were the most “not sure” about the City establishing a Park District. Respondents were the most “unsupportive” of the City to sell Park Land.

Q14. Respondent Level of Support for Revenue Streams Usable to Fund Construction of New and Improved Recreation Amenities



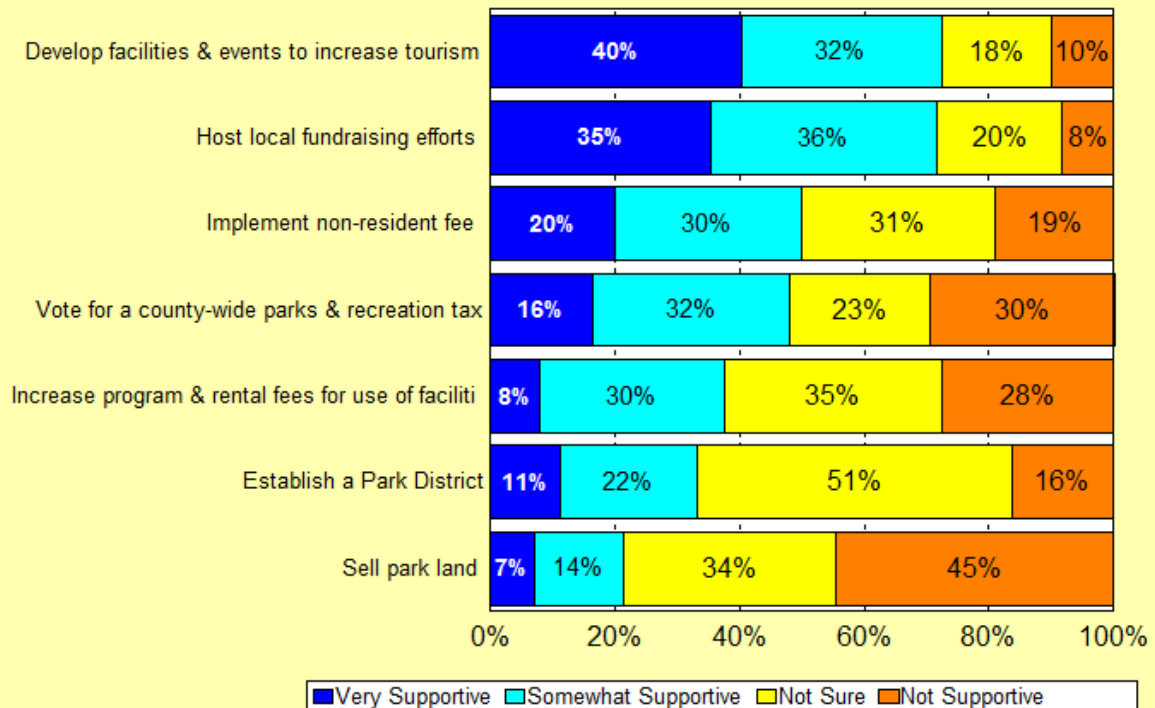
Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.3.10 SUPPORT FOR METHODS TO OPERATE NEW/ IMPROVED RECREATION AMENITIES

- Based on the percentage of respondents who were either “very supportive” or “somewhat supportive”, 72% support the development of facilities and events to increase tourism.
- Based on similar levels of support, respondents second most support the City to host local fundraising efforts (71%). Respondents were the most “not sure” about the City establishing a Park District. Respondents were the most “unsupportive” of the City to sell Park Land.

Q15. Support for Methods to Operate New and Improved Recreation Amenities

by percentage of respondents



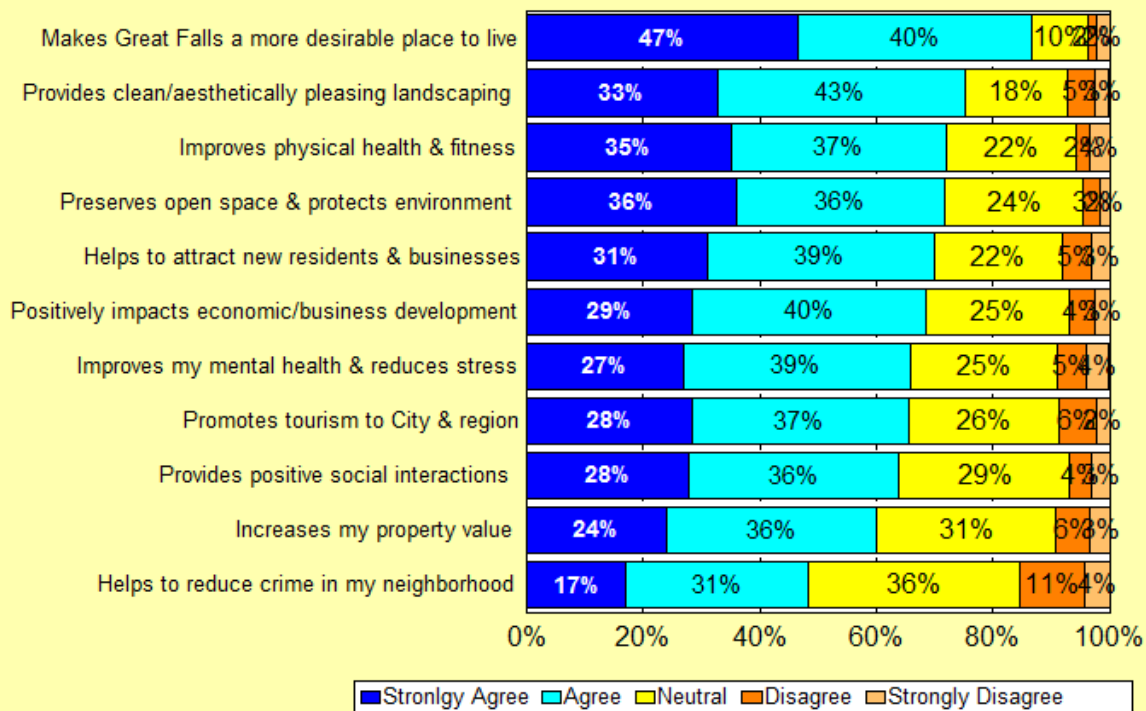
Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.3.11 AGREEMENT WITH BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM

- Agreement with Benefits:** Based on the sum of households who either “strongly agree” or “agree”, 87% agree that the parks and recreation system makes Great Falls a more desirable place to live. Other similar levels of agreement include: Provides aesthetically pleasing landscaping (76%), improves physical health & fitness (72%), and preserves open space & protects the environment (72%).

Q16. Agreement with Benefits Provided By the Parks and Recreation System

by percentage of respondents (excluding don't know)

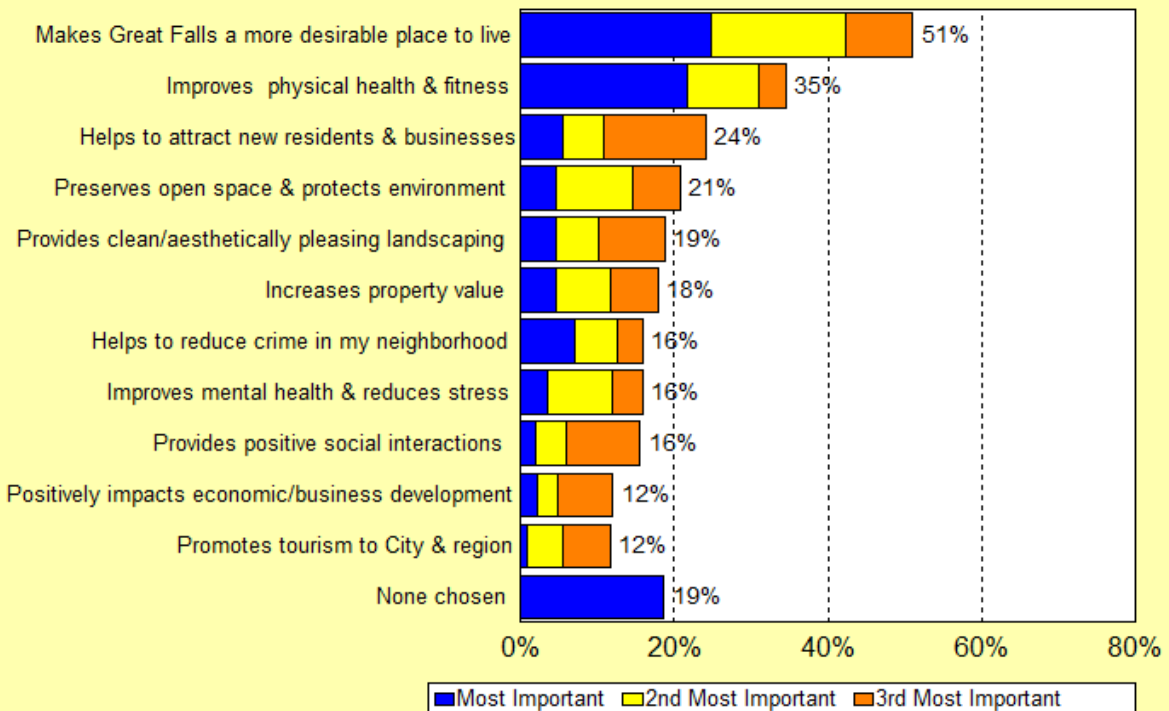


Source: ETC Institute (2016)

- Most Important Benefits:** Based on the sum of households top three choices, 51% indicated that the benefit most important to their household is that the parks and recreation system makes Great Falls a more desirable place to live. Other most important benefits include: Improve physical health and fitness (35%) and helps to attract new residents and businesses (24%).

Q17. Benefits Most Important to Respondent Households

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top three choices



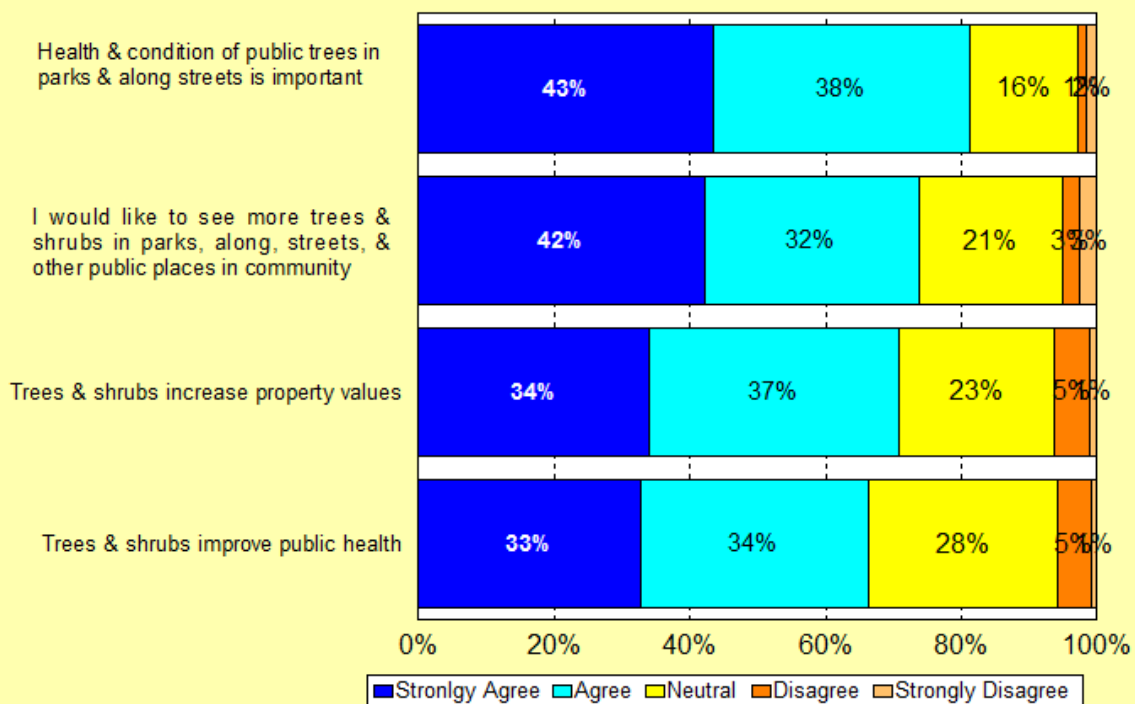
Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.3.12 AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS ABOUT TREES IN GREAT FALLS

- Based on the sum of respondents who either “strongly agree” or “agree”, 81% of respondents agree that the health and condition of public trees in parks and along streets is important. Other similar level of agreement include: I would like to see more trees and shrubs in parks, along streets, and other public areas (74%), trees and shrubs increase property values (71%), and trees and shrubs improve public health (67%).

Q18. Agreement with Statements About Trees in Great Falls

by percentage of respondents (excluding don't know)



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

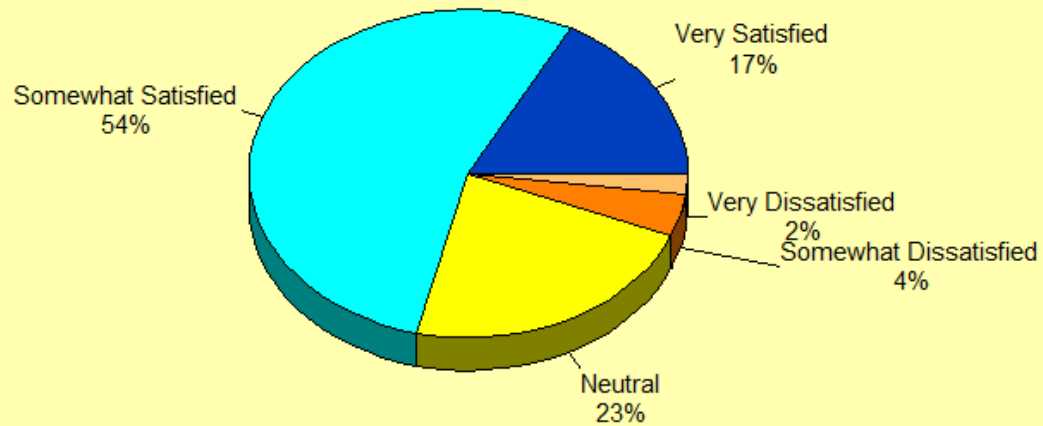
4.3.13 SATISFACTION WITH THE OVERALL VALUE RECEIVED

- Seventeen percent (17%) of households were “very satisfied” with the overall value their household receives from the Park and Recreation Department. Other levels of satisfaction include: Somewhat satisfied, (54%), neutral (23%), somewhat dissatisfied (4%), and very dissatisfied (2%).

National benchmark for very satisfied is 27%.

Q19. Satisfaction with Overall Value Households Receive from Great Falls Parks and Recreation Department

by percentage of respondents who have used the facilities in the past 12 months (excluding don't know)



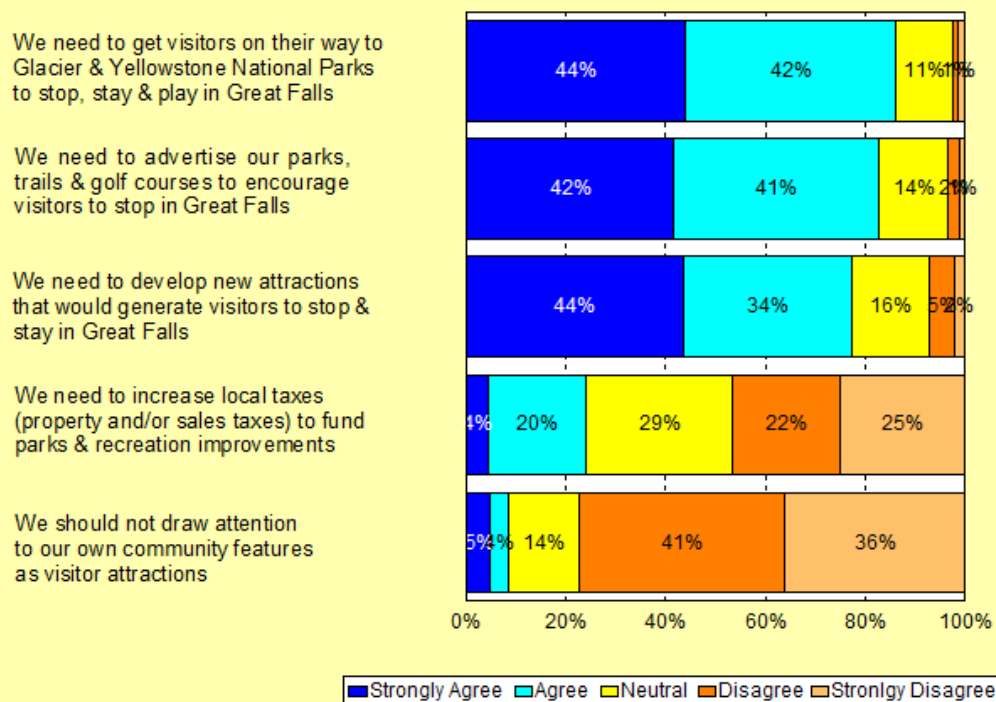
Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.3.14 AGREEMENT WITH STRATEGIES TO INCREASE REVENUES TO IMPROVE P&R AMENITIES

- Based on the sum of respondents who either “strongly agree” or “agree”, 86% agreed that we need to get visitors on their way to Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks to stop, stay and play in Great Falls. Other similar level of agreement include: We need to advertise our parks, trails, and golf courses to encourage visitors to stop in Great Falls (83%) and we need to develop new attraction that would generate visitors to stop & stay in Great Falls (78%).

Q20. Agreement with Strategies to Increase Revenues in Great Falls

by percentage of respondents (excluding don't know)



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

4.4 SUMMARY

The following summarizes the key themes derived from the results of the statistically-valid survey.

- Usage of parks and trails is high
- Satisfaction is below the national average with the condition and quality of parks, trails and facilities
- Satisfaction is below the national average with the quality of programs, services and events
- Survey participants felt that Great Falls' system has a strong operational presence in the community.
- Satisfied ratings with overall value is below the national average.

- Walking and biking trails are highly important to, and highly needed by, Great Falls residents. These results are well above national benchmarks.
- Great Falls residents highly value community special events.
- Adult fitness and exercise programs are highly important to, and highly needed by Great Falls residents. These results are in-line with national benchmarks and trends.
- Unmet needs exist, and are equitably distributed for facilities and programs as a percentage of need.
- Strong support exists for attracting recreation tourism dollars to Great Falls and constructing facilities that would attract tourism.
- Support for upgrading and renovating the existing system far outweighs support for constructing new parks or facilities that would serve residents.
- Mild support exists for increasing taxes on Great Falls residents to support parks and recreation facilities, programs, services and events

CHAPTER FIVE - PROGRAM AND EVENTS ASSESSMENT

5.1 OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES AND CORE PROGRAM AREAS

The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department has a professional staff that annually delivers over 144 aquatic, recreation and special event programs. Department staff are responsible for the management and implementation of a diverse array recreation programs, special community-wide events, and the operation of multiple facilities. Employees are engaged year round in planning, implementing, conducting, and evaluating programs and events.

All functions within the Department combine to provide hundreds of offerings in the areas of youth camps and after school programs, aquatics, sports, health, fitness, and special events. But in addition to the provision of services provided directly by the Department, partnerships with other organizations are utilized throughout the service area. Through formal and informal cooperative relationships with various school districts and nonprofit agencies, partners assist with delivering select programs, training of staff, granting access to specialized facilities, and providing support to programs with supplies and materials.

5.1.1 CORE PROGRAM APPROACH

The vision of the Department is to be one of the premier park and recreation systems in Montana providing all residents access to high-quality programs and experiences. Part of realizing this vision involves identifying Core Program Areas to create a sense of focus around activities and outcomes of greatest importance to the community as informed by current and future needs. However, public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people, especially in a community such as Great Falls. 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.

5.1.2 GREAT FALLS PARKS AND RECREATION CORE PROGRAM AREAS

The Department currently offers programs and services in nine Core Program Areas, identified in the table below.

CORE PROGRAM AREAS		
Core Program Area	Brief Description	Internal Goals and/or Desired Outcomes
Adult Sports	To provide competitive sports leagues and instructional programs that meet the recreational needs of the community and enhance the quality of life of residents.	Enhance personal development through competitive participation in various sports; Improve sport specific skills and abilities; Develop friendships and increase social interactions; Improve social skills (respect, cooperation, caring, etc).
Aquatics	Are provided to promote water safety awareness while providing a broad variety of programs, services and activities to meet the need and interests of the community	Increase knowledge of water safety; Improved swimming skills and abilities; Increased strength and endurance; Improved overall health and conditioning; Improved self confidence around water
Special Events	Provide a diverse range of City/non-city special event and activities that promote community engagement	Provide opportunities for residents to enhance quality of life; Promote and educate the public in regards to diverse cultures
Sports Camps	Provide a variety of summer programs which meet the recreational needs and interest of the elementary and middle-school age population	Increase social, recreational and developmental growth; Increase personal satisfaction through participation in programs; Improve social skills; Enhance development of knowledge, skills and abilities in recreation and leisure activities; Improve mental, physical and social well-being
Summer Camps	Provide a variety of summer programs which meet the recreational needs and interest of the elementary and middle-school age population	Increase social, recreational and developmental growth; Increase personal satisfaction through participation in programs; Improve social skills; Enhance development of knowledge, skills and abilities in recreation and leisure activities; Improve mental, physical and social well-being
Youth Out of School	To provide a variety of recreation, enrichment and leisure activities which meet the needs of school age children and their families	Increase social interaction and develop friendships; Improve social skills; Enjoy participating in activities in a safe, positive and friendly environment; Enhance physical and/or emotional well being; Enhance development of knowledge, skills, and abilities through participation in recreation, enrichment, and leisure activities.
Youth Sports	To provide competitive sports leagues and instructional programs that meet the recreational needs of the community and enhance the quality of life of residents.	Enhance personal development through competitive participation in various sports; Improve sport specific skills and abilities; Develop friendships and increase social interactions; Improve social skills (respect, cooperation, caring, etc.); Personal enjoyment

5.1.3 ENSURING THE RIGHT CORE PROGRAM MIX

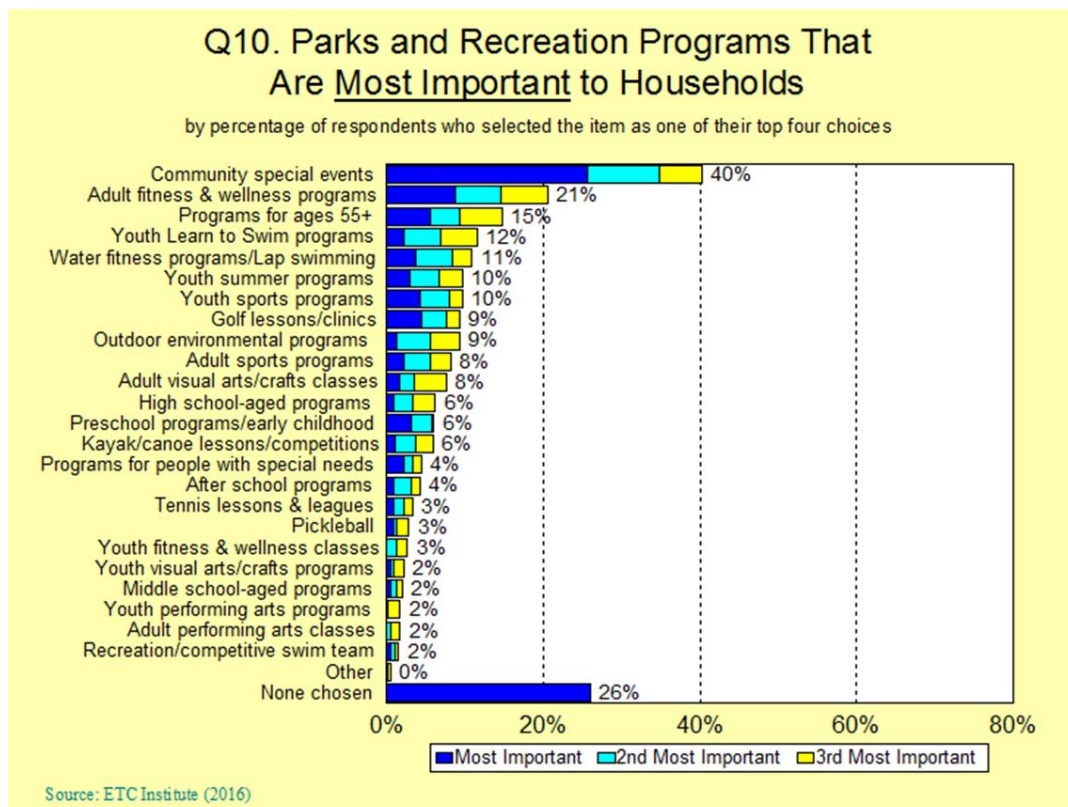
The Core Program Areas provided by Great Falls currently appear to meet some of major needs of the Great Falls community, but the program mix must be evaluated on a regular and recurring basis to ensure that the offerings within each Core Program Area - and the Core Program Areas themselves - align with changing leisure trends, demographics, and needs of residents. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends that six determinants be used to inform what programs and services are provided by the Department. According to NRPA, those determinants are:

- **Conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure** - Programs and services should encourage and promote a degree of freedom, choice, and voluntary engagement in their structure and design. Programs should reflect positive themes aimed at improving quality of life for both individuals and the overall community.
- **Organizational philosophy, mission, and vision** - Programs and services should support the Department's mission and vision statements, values, goals, and objectives. These generally center on promoting personal health, community well-being, social equity, environmental awareness, and economic vitality.
- **Constituent interests and desired needs** - Departments should actively seek to understand the recreational needs and interests of their constituency. This not only ensures an effective (and ethical) use of taxpayer dollars, but also helps to make sure that programs perform well and are valued by residents.

- **Creation of a constituent-centered culture** - Programs and services should reflect a departmental culture where constituents' needs are the prime factor in creating and providing programs. This can be reflected not only in program design, but in terms of staff behaviors, architecture, furniture, technology, dress, forms of address, decision-making style, planning processes, and forms of communication.
- **Experiences desirable for clientele** - Programs and services should be designed to provide the experiences desirable to meet the needs of the participants/clients in a community, and identified target markets. This involves not only identifying and understanding the diversity of needs in a community, but also applying recreation programming expertise and skills to design, implement, and evaluate a variety of desirable experiences for residents to meet those needs.
- **Community opportunities** - When planning programs and services, a Department should consider the network of opportunities afforded by other organizations such as nonprofits, schools, other public agencies, and the private sector. Departments should also recognize where gaps in service provision occur and consider how unmet needs can be addressed.

5.2 SURVEY FINDINGS

As part of the process for developing a Park and Recreation Master Plan, ETC conducted a statistically valid citizen survey to identify satisfaction with park and recreation facilities, identify needed park and recreation facilities and programs, and gain input from citizens that will assist city officials in park and recreation resource allocation, budget and policy decisions. A total of 549 residents participated in the survey. Participants rated the City of Great Falls as having a current or anticipated need for the following recreation programs, ranked in order of importance (full results on this topic can be found in a separate document):



5.3 AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS

The table below depicts each Core Program Area and Sub-Area along with the age segments they serve. Recognizing that many Core Program Areas serve multiple age segments, Primary (noted with a ‘P’) and Secondary (noted with an ‘S’) markets were identified.

Age Segment Analysis - Current Segments Served

AGES SERVED						
Primary Market or Secondary Market						
Core Program Area	Preschool (5 and Under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Adult (18+)	Senior (55+)	All Ages Programs
Adult Sports	S	S	S	P	S	S
Aquatics	P	P	P	P	P	P
Social Events	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sports Camps	S	P	P	S	S	S
Summer Camps	S	P	S	S	S	S
Youth Out of School	S	P	P	S	S	S
Youth Sports	S	P	S	S	S	S

Findings from the analysis show that the Department provides a good balance of programs across all age segments. All segments are targeted as a primary market for multiple Core Program Areas. Based upon this analysis and findings from the community survey, however, the Department should consider an increase in programming targeted to the pre-school and senior populations.

This balance should be maintained moving forward, and the Department should update this Age Segment Analysis every year to note changes in Core Program Areas or to refine age segment categories. Given the growing population trend for residents ages 55 and over and the growing demand for services in this age bracket, it is also recommended that the Department further segment this group into 55-65 and over 65. These two sub-segments will have increasingly different needs and expectations for programming in coming years, and program planning will be needed to provide differing requirements.

Age Segment Analyses should ideally be done for every program offered by the Department, not just for each Core Program Area. Program coordinators/managers should include this information when creating or updating program plans for individual programs. An Age Segment Analysis can also be incorporated into Mini Business Plans for comprehensive program planning.

5.4 LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS

A lifecycle analysis involves reviewing every program identified by Great Falls staff to determine the stage of growth or decline for each as a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall recreation program portfolio. This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data, but rather is based on staff members’ knowledge of their program areas. The table below shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Division’s recreation programs. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff.

Recreation Program Lifecycle Analysis - Current Distribution and Recommendations

System-wide: Lifecycle Stage				
	Percentage	Number	Actual Distribution	Best Practice Distribution
Introduction	4%	2	40%	50-60%
Take-Off	22%	11		
Growth	14%	7		
Mature	33%	17	33%	40%
Saturated	18%	9	27%	0-10%
Decline	9%	5		
Total	100%	51		

Overall, the lifecycle analysis results indicate a slight unbalanced distribution of all programs across the life cycle. A combined total of 40% of programs fall into the **Introduction**, **Take-off** and **Growth** stages. The consulting team recommends that this total be between 50-60%.

While it is important to provide new programs to align with trends and help meet the evolving needs of the community, it is also important to have a stable core segment of programs that are in the Mature stage. Currently, the Department has about 33% of their programs in this category. The consulting team recommends this be about 40% so as to provide stability to the overall program portfolio, but without dominating the portfolio with programs that are advancing to the later stages of the lifecycle. Programs in the Mature stage should be tracked for signs they are entering the Saturation or Decline stages. There should be an on-going process to evaluate program participation and trends to ensure that program offerings continue to meet the community's needs.

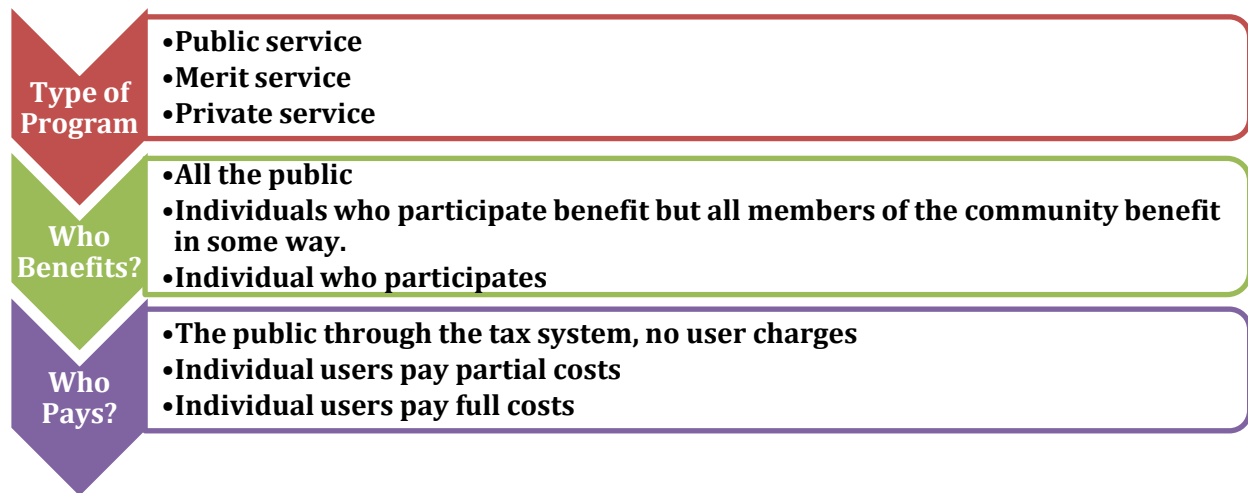
A total of 27% of programs are saturated or declining. The consulting team recommends keeping as few programs as possible in these two stages, but it is understood that programs eventually evolve into saturation and decline. If programs never reach these stages, it is an indication that staff may be “over-tweaking” their offerings and abbreviating the natural evolution of programs. This prevents programs from reaching their maximum participation, efficiency, and effectiveness. For departments challenged with doing the most they can with limited resources, this has the potential to be an area of concern.

As programs enter into the Decline stage, they must be closely reviewed and evaluated for repositioning or elimination. When this occurs, the consulting team's recommendation is to modify these programs to begin a new lifecycle with the Introductory stage or to add new programs based upon community needs and trends.

Staff should complete a lifecycle review on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance. Furthermore, the Department could include an annual performance measure for each program area to track the percentage of new programs offered as an incentive for additional innovation and alignment with community trends.

5.5 PROGRAM AND SERVICE CLASSIFICATION

As noted previously, the Park and Recreation Department currently does not classify its programs and services. Classifying programs and services is an important process for an agency to follow in order to remain aligned with the community's interests and needs, the mission of the organization, and to sustainably operate within the bounds of the financial resources that support it. The criteria utilized and recommended in program classification stems from the foundation's concept detailed by Dr. John Crompton and Dr. Charles Lamb. In Marketing Government and Social Services, they purport that programs need to be evaluated on the criteria of type, who benefits, and who bears the cost of the program. This is illustrated below:



The approach taken in this analysis expands classifying services in the following ways:

- For whom the program is targeted
- For what purpose
- For what benefits
- For what cost
- For what outcome

5.5.1 PARAMETERS FOR CLASSIFYING PROGRAM TYPES

The first milestone is to develop a classification system for the services and functions of the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department. These systems need to reflect the statutory obligations of the agency, the support functions performed, and the value-added programs that enrich both the customer's experience and generate earned revenues in mission-aligned ways to help support operating costs. In order to identify how the costs of services are supported and by what funding source, the programs are to be classified by their intended purpose and what benefits they provide. Then funding source expectations can be assigned and this data used in future cost analysis. The results of this process is a summary of classification definitions and criteria, classification of programs within the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department and recommended cost recovery targets for each service based on these assumptions.

Program classification is as important as financial performance (cost recovery) goals are established for each category of services. This is then linked to the recommendations and strategies for each program

or future site business plan. These classifications need to be organized to correspond with cost recovery expectations defined for each category. In this section of the Master, each program area will be assigned specific cost recovery targets that align with these expectations.

5.5.2 SERVICE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

The service classification process consists of the following steps:

1. Develop a definition for each program classification that fits the legislative intent and expectations of the division; the ability of the division to meet public needs within the appropriate areas of service; and the mission and core values of City of Great Falls' Park and Recreation Department.
2. Develop criteria that can be used to evaluate each program and function within the division, and determine the classification that best fits.

5.5.3 PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTIONS

The program classification matrix was developed as a guide for the division staff to follow when classifying programs, and how that program needs to be managed with regard to cost recovery. By establishing clarification of what constitutes a “Core Public Service”, “Important Public Service”, and “Value Added Service” will provide the division and its stakeholders a better understanding of why and how to manage each program area as it applies to public value and private value.

Additionally, the effectiveness of the criteria linked to performance management expectations relies on the true cost of programs (direct and indirect cost) being identified. Where a program falls within this matrix can help to determine the most appropriate cost recovery rate that should be pursued and measured. This includes being able to determine what level of public benefit and private benefit exists as they apply to each program area. Public benefit is described as, “everyone receives the same level of benefit with equal access”. Private benefit is described as “the user receives exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit”.

	ESSENTIAL Programs	IMPORTANT Programs	VALUE-ADDED Programs
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High public expectation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High public expectation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High individual and interest group expectation
Financial Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs • Requires public funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees cover some direct costs • Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees cover most direct and indirect costs • Some public funding as appropriate
Benefits (i.e., health, safety, protection of assets).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public and individual benefit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily individual benefit
Competition in the Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited or no alternative providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative providers readily available
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open access by all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open access • Limited access to specific users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access to specific users

5.5.4 CLASSIFICATION OF SERVICES-KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to improve the fiscal performance and delivery of programs and services, the consulting team makes the following recommendations.

- **Implement the Classification of Services and Cost Recovery Goals:** In workshops with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department in 2016 facilitated by the consulting team, the major functional program areas were assessed and classified based on the criteria established in the previous section of the plan. This process included determining which programs and services fit into each classification criteria. Then cost recovery goals were established based on the guidelines included in this plan. The percentage of cost recovery is based on the classification of services and will *typically* fall within these ranges, *although anomalies will exist*:
 - Core 0-35%
 - Important 35-75%
 - Value Added 75%+

The below table represents a summary of programs and services, the classification of those programs, as well as recommended cost recovery goals:

Programming Lines of Service	Benefit Level	Classification	Pricing Strategy	Recommended Total Cost Recovery
Active Senior	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Adult Enrichment (18-54)	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Adult Sports Instructional	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Adult Sports Leagues	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
After Hour Rentals	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Arthritis/MS Specialty Classes	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Environmental/Outdoor	Community	Core	General Fund	25%
Facility Based Special Events	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Facility Rentals	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Fee Based Special Events	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
First Aid/CPR/AED Courses	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Fitness and Wellness	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Group Outings	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	100%+
Holiday Special Events	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
Home School	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Home School Groups	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Learn to Swim Lessons	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
Lifeguard/WSI Training Courses	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Low Income Youth Programming	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%
Open Lap Swim	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Open Recreational Swim	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	100%
Private Swim Lessons	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Swim Teams/Meets	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Traditional Senior	Community	Core	General Fund	25%
Volunteer Management	Community	Core	General Fund	0%
Water Exercise Classes	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Youth Enrichment (2-17)	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Youth Out of School	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Youth Sports Instructional	Individual	Value Added	User Fees	100%
Youth Sports Leagues	Merit	Important	General Fund/User Fees	50%

5.5.5 UNDERSTANDING THE FULL COST OF SERVICE

To properly fund all programs, either through tax subsidies or user fees, and to establish the right cost recovery targets, 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 Great Falls between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost of Service totals have been calculated. Department staff should be trained on the process of conducting a Cost of Service Analysis and the process undertaken on a regular basis.

Currently, the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department does track revenue, expenditures and cost recovery goals as lines of service as shown in the table below:

COST RECOVERY			
Core Program Area	Cost Recovery Goal (percentage)	Actual Cost Recovery for most recent FY (percentage)	Notes/Comments
Adult Sports	100%	110%	All costs are covered
Aquatics	100%	75%	Debt paid off; ECWP should be 100%+; Neighborhood Pools - 60%; Natatorium - 60%+ (should be higher)
Special Events	Not yet determined, but would like to be 75% at least	65%	Easter Egg Hunt has sponsorship to cover cost; Ice Breaker was down this year, but expectation is 100% (87% w/out volunteer consideration, 99% with volunteer consideration); Pet and Doll Parade 20%
Sports Camps	100%	231%	
Summer Camps	100%	184%	
Youth Out of School	100%	237%	
Youth Sports	See notes	0%	The departments focus is to lease land out to youth sports organizations; we get limited rent from the leasee. We do not have a cost recovery rate established

To more accurately track cost of service and cost recovery, the consulting team recommends the following:

- Develop New Pricing Policy Based on Classification of Programs and Services:** Given the shift in philosophical approach as noted previously, it is important to refocus the division on cost recovery goals by functional program area or line of service. Pricing based on established operating budget recovery goals will provide flexibility to maximize all pricing strategies to the fullest. Allowing the staff to work within a pricing range tied to cost recovery goals will permit them to set prices based on market factors and differential pricing (prime-time/non-primetime, season/off-season rates) to maximize user participation and also encourage additional group rate pricing where applicable.

To gain and provide consistency among the Great Falls City Commission, user groups, staff, and the community, a revised pricing policy must be adopted in order for the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to operate effectively and efficiently to meet the program cost recovery goals identified above. In short, it is important that the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department state its policy in all publications, on its website, and in its reservation processes to describe how they establish a price for a service or use of a facility. Example:

“The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department’s funding that is derived from taxpayers is focused on mission-based facilities and services. The programs and facilities that are furthest from our mission, that provide an individual benefit, or that provide exclusive use will require higher fees from users or other sources to help offset operating costs.”

It is recommended that the Great Falls City Commission adopt the recommended cost recovery goals for the Park and Recreation Department as presented in this Master Plan. In order to achieve the cost recovery goal, it is expected that the Great Falls Park and Recreation

Department will strive to meet the cost recovery goals established for each program area as recommended. In order to meet these goals, efforts must be made to:

- Consistently deliver high quality programs and services
- Strategically price programs and services
- Solicit sponsorships and donations to develop a sustainable earned income stream
- Increase the utilization of volunteers to offset operational expenditures
- Expand marketing to increase the volume of participation in programs and services

The cost recovery goals are expected to be achieved over a 5 year period and there should be no expectation that they be realized immediately. It is expected that an iterative implementation process of introducing the classification methodology and a new pricing policy along with the refinement of department's cost of service analysis will occur over the next 5 years. This process will have an impact of cost recovery as it will result in the refinement of foundational business elements including but not limited to service levels, service delivery, pricing and the guidelines developed to secure external operational funding sources such as grants, donations and partnerships. Additionally, external factors such as economic conditions and changes to the City's financial policies will have a bearing on achieving the 50% cost recovery goal.

- **Develop Pricing Strategies:** As the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department embarks on the implementation of a new pricing policy, it will be necessary to develop pricing strategies that will not only increase sales but also maximize the utilization of Great Falls parks, programs and recreation facilities. By creating pricing options, customers are given the opportunity to choose which option best fits their schedule and price point. The consulting team recommends that the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department continue to explore pricing strategies that create options for the customer.

The following table offers examples of pricing options.

• Primetime	• Incentive Pricing
• Non-primetime	• Length of Stay Pricing
• Season and Off-season Rates	• Cost Recovery Goal Pricing
• Multi-tiered Program Pricing	• Level of Exclusivity Pricing
• Group Discounting and Packaging	• Age Segment Pricing
• Volume Pricing	• Level of Private Gain Pricing

The most appropriate strategies for Great Falls to consider are as follows:

- **Primetime and Non-primetime pricing strategy** - The price is set based on the time of the day. Primetime is considered to be the time of day in which the demand for the service is highest. Fees for the rental of the facility during this time would be set at rate that would recover 125-150% of costs incurred. To lessen the demand for "primetime", the department can lower prices for rentals of the pool or parks during times in which demand is lower. This will assist in maximizing the utilization of its facilities.
- **Premium pricing** - The price set is high to reflect the exclusiveness of the product. An example of this would be a user group paying higher rental fees for the exclusive use of a facility that prohibits the general public or other groups from participating.

- Consider a pricing strategy that provides a discount for online registration of programs.
- Consider a pricing strategy that introduces a non-resident fee for programs that are of primary need.

5.6 OTHER KEY FINDINGS

- **Program Plan:** The department is limited in fully developing a program plan due to the lack of programmable space and facilities within the system.
- **Program Standards:** Formalized recreation program standards that guide consistent service delivery are not in place.
- **Program Evaluation:** Assessment and evaluation tools to measure the success of programs and services are in place, but utilization is inconsistent.
- **Partnerships:** The department has numerous partnerships in place, however, a formal partnership policy is not in place.
- **Program Participation:** Enrollment in formal registered programs frequently approach capacity.
- **Market Definition:** The department primarily serves residents, however, this statement is based on qualitative input as non-residents as a percentage of enrollment is not measured.
- **Staffing:** The Aquatic and Recreation Divisions offer a combined 144 programs and events annually to the community with a minimal staff. The divisions combined have only FOUR full-time employees to develop, organize, administer, implement and evaluate the programs. Additionally, staff is responsible for the hiring, training, supervising and evaluating a plethora of part-time employees (8.18 FTEs or 17.014 annual man-hours) and contracted employees.
- **Environmental Assets:** River's Edge Trail provide tremendous opportunity for expanded programs.
- **Marketing:** The department lacks a marketing plan beyond the guidelines established for the development of the summer-only activity guide. As mentioned previously, this is directly tied to the lack of staffing capacity necessary to develop and implement a marketing plan. Guidelines for the development of a marketing plan can be found in the Appendix of the plan.

5.7 OTHER KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Expand programs and services in the areas of greatest demand:** Ongoing analysis of the participation trends of programming and services in Great Falls is significant when delivering high quality programs and services. By doing so, staff will be able to focus their efforts on the programs and services of the greatest need and reduce or eliminate programs and services where interest is waning. Specific efforts should be made to increase programming in the areas of greatest UNMET need as identified in the statistically valid survey.
- **Partnerships:** Create a win-win partnership with Great Falls Public School District for utilization of the Great Falls school district facilities in an effort to offer more sports, enrichment and performing arts programs to meet high community need.
- **Evaluation:** Implement the program assessment and evaluation tool as recommended. Assessment and evaluation tool is provided as an Excel spreadsheet as a stand-alone separate document.

- **Adopt Recreation Program Standards:** Recreation program standards are developed to support core programs and services. The standards focus on delivering a consistent high quality experience while achieving operational and cost recovery goals as well as marketing and communication standards that are needed to create awareness and customer loyalty.

5.8 PROGRAM NEEDS ANALYSIS AND INVESTMENT RANKING

Prioritizing needs provides the Department with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The priority needs rating (PNR) reflects the importance residents place on items (sum of top 3 choices) and the unmet needs (needs that are only being partly met or not met) for each facility/program relative to the facility/program that rated the highest overall. Since decisions related to future investments should consider both the level of unmet need (UNR) and the importance of facilities and programs (IR), the priority needs rating weights each of these components equally.

The PNR reflects the sum of the Unmet Needs Rating and the Importance Rating as shown in the equation below:

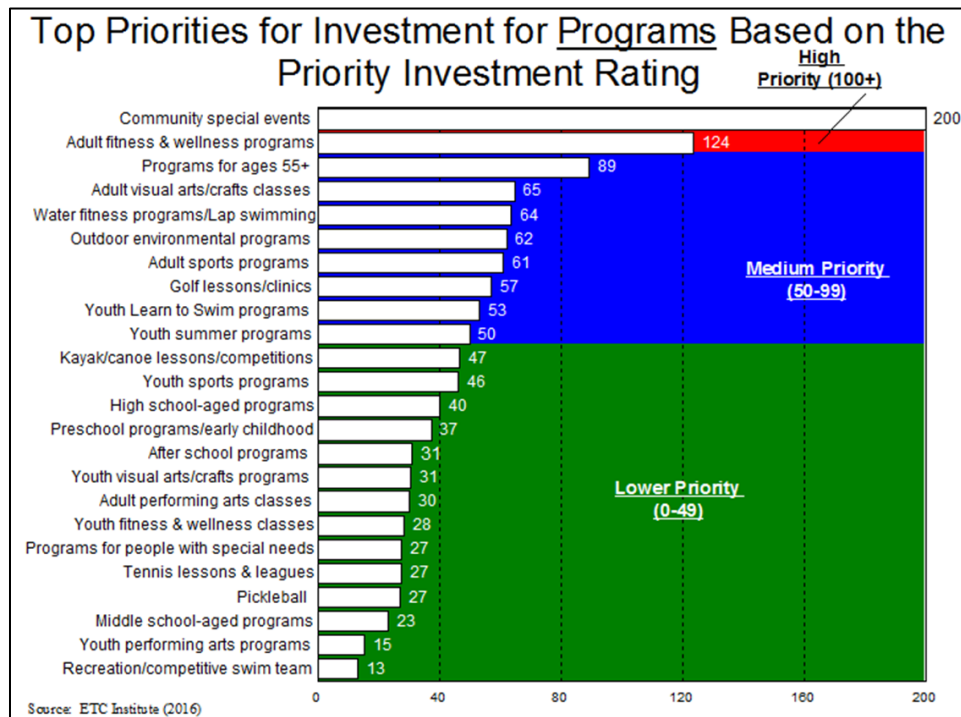
- $PNR = UNR + IR$

For example, suppose the Unmet Needs Rating for playgrounds is 26.5 (out of 100) and the Importance Rating for playgrounds is 52 (out of 100), the Priority Needs Rating for playgrounds would be 78.5 (out of 200).

Interpreting the PNR Scale:

- High Priority Areas are those with a PNR of at least 100. A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high level of unmet need and residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements in this area are likely to have a positive impact on the greatest number of households.
- Medium Priority Areas are those with a PNR of 50-99. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.
- Low Priority Areas are those with a PNR below 50. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and residents do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations are being targeted.

The table on the following page illustrates the prioritized need and investment rating for programs, services and special events.



5.9 SUMMARY

The Department is delivering quality programs, services and events to the community, *but is significantly constrained to expand program given the limited staffing capacity and limited facilities.* The chart to the right provides a summary of the variables that have undue influence in developing a program plan to meet the needs of residents.

PROGRAM	PRIORITIZED NEED	STAFF CAPACITY	BEST PRACTICE FACILITY/ LOCATION CAPACITY
Community Special Events	HIGH	MODERATE	HIGH
Adult Fitness and Wellness	HIGH	LOW	LOW
Programs for 55+	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
Visual Arts and Crafts – Adults	MEDIUM	MODERATE	LOW
Water Fitness programs and Lap Swimming	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
Outdoor Environmental Programs	MEDIUM	MODERATE	HIGH
Adult Sports Programs	MEDIUM	MODERATE	HIGH
Golf Lessons	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
Youth Learn to Swim Programs	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
Youth Summer Programs	MEDIUM	HIGH	MODERATE
Kayak Canoe Lessons/Competitions	LOW	LOW	HIGH
Youth Sports Programs	LOW	LOW	HIGH
High School Aged Programs	LOW	LOW	MODERATE
Preschool Aged Programs	LOW	MODERATE	LOW
After School Programs	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE
Youth Visual Arts and Crafts Programs	LOW	MODERATE	LOW

With an expansive and growing menu of aquatic and recreation programs and special events offered to Great Falls residents, the need to continually effectively, efficiently and creatively manage them is lacking. The consulting team recommends the following additions to the Recreation and Aquatic Divisions to increase staff capacity that is dedicated to the organization, implementation and evaluation of programs and events in Great Falls:

STAFF POSITION	CLASSIFICATION	STATUS	ACTION	TIMELINE
Special Events Coordinator	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 1 year
Recreation Manager	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 2 years
Marketing/Technology Coordinator	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Assistant Aquatic Supervisor (Programs)	Full-time	UPGRADE	Re-Classification	Within 3 years

CHAPTER SIX – PARK AND URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE ASSESSMENTS

Parks and amenities that are clean and functioning efficiently are a critical element to delivering high quality programs and services. The following chart illustrates the acreage and service provider of the maintenance of the parks system in Great Falls (not including right of way acreage).

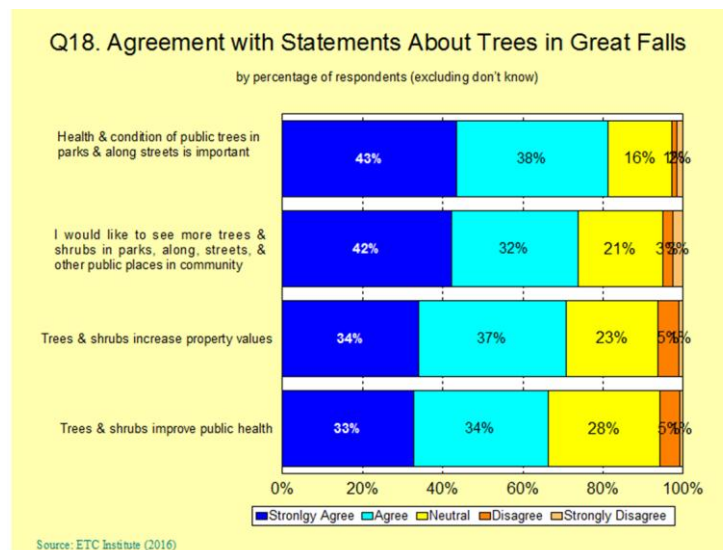
PARK TYPE	Great Falls Inventory
Neighborhood Parks	165.41
Community Parks	339.98
District/Special Use Parks	273.01
Open Space/Undeveloped Parks	437.04
Total Park Acres	1,215.44

6.1 PARK AND URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE KEY FINDINGS

- **Lines of Service:** The core lines of service (functions) performed by the Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions are numerous and are as follows:
 - Aquatic Maintenance
 - Contract Management
 - Equipment Maintenance
 - Furniture, Fixture and Amenity Maintenance
 - Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
 - Irrigation Maintenance
 - Landscape Maintenance
 - Open Space/Wetland Maintenance
 - Playground Maintenance
 - Response to Citizen Inquiries
 - Snow and Ice Removal
 - Special Event Facilitation
 - Special Projects
 - Streetscape Maintenance
 - Turf Maintenance
 - Urban Forestry
- **Maintenance Standards and Development of Work Plans** - Through the review of limited data and workshops with staff, the PROS Consulting team determined that the Parks and Urban

Forestry divisions do have “institutional and informal” routine maintenance practices in place. However, the maintenance practices have limited written standards and accompanying standard operating procedures, are based on “one-size-fits-all” approach to parks maintenance, are inconsistently applied in the field and minimal maintenance is completed in natural areas, primarily due to lack of staffing capacity.

- **Work Order Management System** - The Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions does have a Work Order Management System that identifies maintenance and asset replacement schedules, however, it is not effectively utilized.
- **Resources:** Staff does not lack the necessary equipment or resources to perform tasks at a high level, however, lack of staff create hardships when managing turf, trees and landscaping.
- **Third Party Contracting of Services** - Given the “varying” cycles of the economy, it is imperative that the divisions continually evaluate the capacity and cost of service in the private sector. Currently without a work order management system, Parks and Urban Forestry cannot track unit activity costs and therefore cannot analyze the unit cost to perform work internally against the unit cost to perform work by a third party vendor. Without this level of analysis the division is unable to determine if it is more effective and efficient to perform work “in-house” or to “contract it out”.
- **Park Division Staffing:** The Parks Division is comprised of 11 FTEs. Best practice ratio of staff per neighborhood park acres maintained at a Level 2 maintenance standard is 1:20 acres. With the responsibility of actively managing 450.6 acres, the staff lacks the capacity to manage the parks system consistently at a Level 2 maintenance standard.
- **Urban Forestry Division Staffing:** The Urban Forestry Division is comprised of 5 FTEs. Unlike parks, there is not a best practice staffing ratio for Urban Forestry. However, the current pruning cycle for established trees in Great Falls is one time every 21 years. This cycle is THREE times longer than that of best practice, which recommends that every tree be pruned one time every seven years.
- **Value of Trees:** According to the ETC statistically valid survey, the residents of Great Falls value trees. Below is a chart that summarizes residents’ agreement regarding the value of trees in Great Falls.



6.2 PARK AND URBAN FORESTRY MAINTENANCE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Development of a Citywide Parks Maintenance District:** It is recommended that the Great Falls City Commission consider the adoption of a resolution that would create a Citywide Parks Maintenance District to create a sustainable funding source for the purposes of providing the park and recreation system services including:
 - Maintenance, repair, replacement, upkeep, installation, improvement, operational enhancement, construction, reconstruction, land acquisition;
 - Implementation of measures required to maintain public health and safety or meet legal or regulatory requirements;
 - Purchasing, replacing, and/or maintaining equipment, tools and/or vehicles necessary to carry out park maintenance functions
 - Any other functions, labor, supplies and/or materials necessary for management and maintenance of City-owned facilities, lands and equipment under the responsibility and care of the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department including but not limited to: public parks and park areas (as described in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Great Falls) recreation facilities, trails, open space, urban forest, medians, boulevards, pathways, sidewalks, public easements, and other facilities which are located in the City limits and/or are owned by the City.
- **Professional Development:** Develop a strong ongoing professional development program to ensure operational sustainability. Each maintenance staff person should have a training matrix and checked off as completed or not completed as part of their annual evaluation.
- **Utilize the Work Order Management System:** A work order system will be used to track lifecycle maintenance requirements that are tied to weekly and monthly work order requirements. This will help the staff to stay ahead of preventative maintenance requirements and limit breakdowns. Further, utilizing the system will provide staff the necessary “actual cost” data for work being performed.
- **Systematic Approach to Contracting Services:** Through the development of management processes, the Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions must begin to track unit activity costs through the implementation of a work order management system and in turn, would internally analyze the unit cost to perform work internally against the unit cost to perform work by a third party vendor.

- **Parks and Urban Forestry Division Staffing:** The consulting team recommends the following staffing additions for the Parks and Urban Forestry Divisions (which could be funded through the establishment of a Citywide Parks Maintenance District):

STAFF POSITION	CLASSIFICATION	STATUS	ACTION	TIMELINE
Park Planner	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Integrated Pest Management Specialist	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Irrigation Specialist	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Parks Laborers (8 FTES)	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Forestry Foreman	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Arborists - Boulevard (2)	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Arborists - General Parks (2)	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years
Park and Urban Forestry Equipment Mechanic	Full-time	NEW	Future Hire	Within 3 years

- **Standard Operating Procedures:** Standard Operating Procedure manuals should be developed.
- **Urban Forest Master Plan:** The Urban Forestry division should develop and implement an Urban Forest Master Plan.
- **Create Work Plans Based on Maintenance Standards:** Maintenance standards are based on a Level (1), (2) and (3) modes (tasks and frequencies of each task) and follow best practices as established by the National Recreation and Park Association. The division can customize the standards based on the park and recreation values of the Great Falls community and need to be adopted and implemented by staff and followed regardless of whether work is performed by City staff or third party contractors.

GENERAL PARK MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

GENERAL PARKS MAINTENANCE

Both the frequency and timeframe vary for each level.

Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Turf			
Mow/Trim/Blow Clippings	1x/5 days	1x/7 to 10 days	1 or 2x/year
Aerate	2x/year	1x/year	As needed
Overseed	1x/year	As needed	Not performed
Fertilize	2 to 4x/year	1x/year	Not performed
Apply weed control	1x/year and as needed	As needed	As needed
Trim Shrubs	1x/month and as needed	1x/year	As needed
Pick up trash prior to mowing	1x/5 days	1x/10 days	1x/10 days
Control pests	As needed	As needed	As needed
Manage leaves	2x/year and as needed	2x/year and as needed	1x/year
Line Trim	1x/week	1x/week	Monthly
Edge	1x/month	1x/year	As needed
Pavilion/Shelters			
Clean and sweep	1x/week	As needed	As needed
Remove and/or replace Garbage Bags and Trash cans	Daily	As needed	As needed
Paint Pavilion	1x/year	1x/2 years	As needed
Power wash	1x/week	2x/year	As needed
Inspect Electrical System Limited to Power Supply	1x/year	1x/year	1x/year
Inspect Picnic Tables	1x/week	1x/week or as needed	Monthly
Restrooms			
Clean and restock	2x/day (weekdays); 2x/day (weekends)	1x/day (weekdays); 2x/day (weekends)	Daily
Odor removal	7x/week	7x/week	Weekly
Repair vandalism	As needed	As needed	As needed
Remove and/or replace Garbage Bags and Trash cans	7x/week	7x/week	2x/week
Mechanical Inspection (plumbing)	1x/month	1x/month	1x/month
Schedule Lighting, Mechanical Systems	1x/week	1x/week	1x/year
Seasonal start-up and close-up	2x/year	2x/year	1x/year
Fence			
Inspect	1x/week	1x/year and following storms	1x/year and following storms
Repair	As needed	As needed	As needed
Replace	As needed	As needed	As needed
Repaint	As needed	As needed	As needed
Vegetation Control	1x/year and as needed	1x/year and as needed	1x/year and as needed
Mulching			
Apply Mulch	2x/year	1x/year	As needed
Weed Control	2x/year	1x/year	As needed

PLAYGROUNDS MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

PLAYGROUNDS

The difference in levels is the frequency of the task. Timeframes are the same for every level.

Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Inspect and document	Weekly	Monthly (7x/year)	Bi-Monthly(4x/year)
Major Annual Inspection	Annually	Annually	Annually
Repair	As needed	Monthly	As needed
Clean and pickup trash	Daily	Weekly	Weekly
Remove graffiti	As needed	As needed	As needed
Inspect water fountains, where applicable	Weekly	Monthly	As needed
Rake fiber mulch	Weekly	Monthly	Monthly
Seal rubberized, poured in place	Annually	Annually	Every 2 years
Supplementing Fiber Mulch	Annually	Every two years	As needed
Replace	Every 15 years	Every 15 years	As needed
Inspect for Pests/Bees/etc	Weekly	Monthly	As needed

FLORAL MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

FLORAL

Both the frequency and timeframe vary for each level.

Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Plant landscape flowers (perennial)	2x/year	1x/year	1x/year
Flowerbed preparation	1-2x/year	1x/year	1x/year
Mulch	1x/year and as needed	1x/year	1x/year
Aeration, Fertilizer, Weed Control	1x/2 weeks or as needed	1x/monthly	Annually
Create floral display	3x/year	1-2x/year	As needed/requested
Clean weeds from beds	1x/week or as needed	Monthly	2x/year
Prune and deadhead flowers	1x/week	Monthly	Bi-Monthly
Edge Beds	1x/year and as needed	Every 2 years	Every 2 years
Cut back ornamental grasses and plants	1x/year	1x/year	Annually
Water (hand watering)	As needed	As needed	As needed
Inspect and adjust irrigation heads	1x/week	Monthly	As needed
Replace/supplement Bulbs	1x/2 years	1x/3 years	1x/3 years

GENERAL GROUNDS MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Both the frequency and timeframe vary for each level.

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Task	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
General Maintenance			
Mow/Trim/Blow Clippings	1x/5 days	1x/7 to 10 days	1 or 2x/year
Aerate	2x/year	1x/year	As needed
Overseed	1x/year	As needed	Not performed
Fertilize	2 to 4x/year	1x/year	Not performed
Apply weed control	1x/year and as needed	As needed	As needed
Trim Shrubs	1x/month and as needed	1x/year	As needed
Pick up trash prior to mowing	1x/5 days	1x/10 days	1x/10 days
Control pests	As needed	As needed	As needed
Manage leaves	2x/year and as needed	2x/year and as needed	1x/year
Line Trim	1x/week	1x/week	Monthly
Edge	1x/month	1x/year	As needed
Monuments			
Inspect	1x/week	4x/year and following storms	1x/year and following storms
Repair	As needed	As needed	As needed
Replace	As needed	As needed	As needed
Graffiti Removal	As needed	As needed	As needed
Vegetation/Weed Control	4x/year	2x/year	1x/year and as needed
Mulching			
Apply Mulch	2x/year	1x/year	As needed
Weed Control	2x/year	1x/year	As needed

NATURAL TURF ATHLETIC FIELDS MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

NATURAL TURF ATHLETIC FIELDS

Both the frequency and timeframe vary for each level.

Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Athletic Fields - Baseball / Softball / Soccer / Multi-use			
Mow grass at 1.5-2" height per mowing	3x/week	2x/week	1x/week
Overseed	Twice/year	Once/year	Once/year
Fertilizer	3x/year	2x/year	1x/year
Line/Field Prep	As needed	As Needed	As Needed
Aerate	2x/year	1x/year	1x/year
Pick up trash and clean during events	Twice Daily	Daily	1x/week
Inspect bleachers /scoreboards / security lighting/fencing	Monthly	2x/year	2x/year
Water (1 inch / week)	Daily	As Needed	As Needed
Paint Backstops	Every 2 years	Every 3 years	Every 5 years
Set up recreational amenities	Daily	Daily	Daily

PATHWAYS/TRAILS MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

PATHWAYS/TRAILS

The difference in levels is the frequency of the task. Timeframes are the same for every level.

Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Clean and sweep	Once/week	Once/month	As needed
Minor Surface Repair	Within 1 week of deficiency noted	Within 1 month fo deficiency noted	Annually
Minor Edge Repair	Within 1 week of deficiency noted	Within 1 month of deficiency noted	Annually
Major Inspection	Monthly	Twice/year	Annually
Clean and sweep	Weekly	Monthly	As needed
Striped/Marked	Yearly	Every two years	As needed
Mowed on both sides	Twice Monthly	Monthly	Twice/year
Check/Repair signs	Monthly	Twice/year	Annually
Overlays	As needed	As needed	As needed
Crack sealing	Annually	Every two years	As needed
Trim/Prune Tree Overhang	Twice/year	Annually	As needed
Spray weed control	Monthly	Twice/year	Annually

NATURAL AREA/OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

NATURAL AREAS/OPEN SPACE

The difference in levels is the frequency of the task. Timeframes are the same for every level.

Task	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Tracking Invasives	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Inventory/Map Natural Community	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Inventory/ Map Native Plants	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Wildlife Inventory	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Species Introduction/ Translocation	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
GPS/ GIS	Bi-annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Ground-truth	As needed	Every 2 years	As needed
Photomonitoring	4x/year	2x/year	Every 2 years
Treatment Monitoring	project-specific	project-specific	project-specific
Cutback/Herbicide	2x/year	2x/year	Annually
Plant/ Seed	Annually	Annually	As needed
Collect Seed	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Create Burn Break	Annually	As needed	As needed
Brushhogging	Annually	Annually	Annually
Tree Removal	Annually	As needed	As needed
Prescribe Burn	3-yr rotation or as needed	As needed	As needed
Install/ Repair Nestbox	Annually	Every 2 years	As needed
Install/Remove/Replace Signage	Annually	As needed	As needed
Perimeter Walk	2x/year	Annually	Annually
Perimeter Clearing	Monthly	Annually	Annually
Remove Trash	Monthly	Bi-Monthly	3x per year
Close Trail	As needed	As needed	As needed
Weedeat trail shoulders	Monthly	3x per year	2x/year
Suspend Mowing	As needed	As needed	As needed
Mitigate Dam	As needed	As needed	As needed
Mulch/ Compost	As needed	As needed	As needed
Transport/ Deliver Materials	As needed	As needed	As needed
Inventory/ Repair Field Equipment	2x/year	1x/year	As needed
Stock First-Aid Supplies	2x/year	2x/year	Annually
Chip	As needed	As needed	As needed
Clean Casting Pond	As needed	As needed	As needed
Install Erosion Control	As needed	As needed	As needed
Install/ Remove Fencing	As needed	As needed	As needed

- **Cost Avoidance:** Maintenance operations are typically spend divisions that do not have direct revenue sources that can offset expenditures. There are opportunities, however, to reduce expenditures through the following strategies.
 - **Adopt-a-Trail Programs:** These are typically small-grant programs that fund new construction, repair or renovation, maps, trail brochures, and facilities (bike racks, picnic areas, birding equipment, etc.), as well as providing maintenance support. These programs are similar to the popular “adopt-a-mile” highway programs most states utilize. Adopt-a-trail programs can also take the form of cash contributions in the range of \$12,000 to \$16,000 per mile to cover operational costs.
 - **Adopt-a-Park Programs:** These are small-grant programs that fund new construction and provide maintenance support. Adopt-A-Park programs can also take the form of cash contributions in the range of \$1,000 to \$5,000 per acre to cover operational costs.
 - **Operational Partnerships:** Partnerships are operational funding sources formed from two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a public agency, or a private business and a public agency. Two partners jointly share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths of each partner.

CHAPTER SEVEN - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS AND SERVICE LEVELS ANALYSIS

7.1 PARK CLASSIFICATION AND PARK DESIGN PRINCIPLES

In developing design principles for parks it is important that each park be programmed, planned, and designed to meet the needs of its service area and classification within the overall parks and recreation system. The term programming, when used in the context of planning and developing parkland, refers to a list of uses and facilities and does not always include staff-managed recreation programs. The program for a site can include such elements as ball fields, spray parks, shelters, restrooms, game courts, trails, natural resource stewardship, open meadows, nature preserves, or interpretive areas. These types of amenities are categorized as lead or support amenities. The needs of the population of the park it is intended to serve should be considered and accommodated at each type of park.

Park Design Principles in this document should apply to existing and future parks needing Master Plans.

Every park, regardless of type, needs to have an established set of outcomes. Park planners /designers design to those outcomes, including operational and maintenance costs associated with the design outcomes.

Each park classification category serves a specific purpose, and the features and facilities in the park must be designed for the number of age segments the park is intended to serve, the desired length of stay deemed appropriate, and the uses it has been assigned. Recreation needs and services require different design standards based on the age segments that make up the community that will be using the park. A varying number of age segments will be accommodated with the park program depending on the classification of the park. The age segments are:

- Ages 2-5
- Ages 6-8
- Ages 9-12
- Ages 13-17
- Ages 18-24
- Ages 25-34
- Ages 35-44
- Ages 45-54
- Ages 55-64
- Ages 65-75
- Ages 76+

7.1.1 DEFINITIONS USED IN THE PARK DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Land Usage: The percentage of space identified for either passive use or active use in a park. A park master plan should follow land usage recommendations.

Programming: Can include active or passive (i.e. none). Active means it is organized and planned with pre-registration by the user. Examples of active programming include sports leagues, day camps, and aquatics. Passive programming is self-directed by the user at their own pace. Examples of passive programming include playground usage, picnicking, Disc golf, reading, or walking the dog.

Park/Facility Classifications: Includes Pocket Park, Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Regional Park, Sports Complex Facility, Special Use Park/Facility, Greenbelts/Trails/Paseos, and Open Space/Natural Area. Appendix A identifies sport field amenities.

Revenue Facilities: These include facilities that charge to play on them in the form of an access fee, player fee, team fee, or permit fee. These could include pools, golf courses, tennis courts, recreation centers, sport field complexes, concession facilities, hospitality centers, reservable shelters, outdoor or indoor theatre space, and special event spaces.

Signature Facility/Amenity: This is an enhanced facility or amenity which is viewed by community as deserving of special recognition due to its design, location, function, natural resources, etc.

Design Principles for each park classification are as follows.

7.1.2 POCKET PARKS

According to the NRPA, a pocket park is a small outdoor space, usually less than 0.25 acres up to 1 acre, most often located in an urban area surrounded by commercial buildings or houses. Pocket parks are small, urban open spaces that serve a variety of functions, such as: small event space, play areas for children, spaces for relaxing and socializing, taking lunch breaks, etc. Successful pocket parks have four key qualities: they are accessible; allow people to engage in activities; are comfortable spaces that are inviting; and are sociable places. In general, pocket parks offer minimal amenities on site and are not designed to support programmed activities. The service area for pocket parks is usually less than a quarter-mile and they are intended for users within close walking distance of the park.

This type of park is not commonly found in a public park system, and is normally designed, constructed and maintained as a common's area within a Homeowner's Association.

7.1.3 NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

A neighborhood park should be three to 10 acres; however, some Neighborhood Parks are determined by use and facilities offered and not by size alone. The service radius for a neighborhood park is one half mile or six blocks. Neighborhood Parks should have safe pedestrian access for surrounding residents; parking may or may not be included but if included accounts for less than ten cars and provides for ADA access. Neighborhood Parks serve the recreational and social focus of the adjoining neighborhoods and contribute to a distinct neighborhood identity.

- Size of park: Three to 10 acres (usable area measured). Preferred size is eight acres
- Service radius: 0.5 mile radius
- Site Selection: On a local or collector street. If near an arterial street, provide natural or artificial barrier. Where possible, next to a school. Encourage location to link subdivisions and linked by trails to other parks
- Length of stay: One hour experience or less
- Amenities: One signature amenity (e.g. playground, spray ground park, sport court, gazebo); no restrooms unless necessary for signature amenity; may include one non-programmed sports field; playgrounds for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements; no reservable shelters; loop trails; one type of sport court; no non-producing/unused amenities; benches, small picnic shelters next to play areas. Amenities are ADA compliant
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience
- Revenue facilities: none
- Land usage: 85 percent active/15 percent passive

- Programming: Typically none, but a signature amenity may be included which is programmed
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities may require Level 1 maintenance
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience
- Parking: Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide 5-10 spaces within park including handicap spaces. Traffic calming devices encouraged next to park
- Lighting: Security only. Lighting on all night for security
- Naming: Consistent with the Town's ordinances for naming of parks, or may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- Other: Customized to demographics of neighborhood; safety design meets established Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) standards; integrated color scheme throughout

7.1.4 COMMUNITY PARK

Community Parks are intended to be accessible to multiple neighborhoods and should focus on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. Community Parks are generally larger in scale than neighborhood parks, but smaller than regional parks and are designed typically for residents who live within a three mile radius. When possible, the park may be developed adjacent to a school. Community Parks provide recreational opportunities for the entire family and often contain facilities for specific recreational purposes: athletic fields, swimming pool, tennis courts, extreme sports amenity, recreation center, loop trails, picnic areas, reservable picnic shelters, sports courts, permanent restrooms with drinking fountains, large turf and landscaped areas and a playground or spray ground. Passive outdoor recreation activities such as meditation, quiet reflection, and wildlife watching also take place at Community Parks.

Community Parks generally range from 10 to 100 acres depending on the community. Community Parks serve a larger area - radius of one to three miles and contain more recreation amenities than a Neighborhood Park.

- Size of park: 20 to 60 acres normally. Can be up to 100 acres (usable area measured).
- Service radius: One to three mile radius
- Site Selection: On two collector streets minimum and preferably one arterial street. If near an arterial street, provide natural or artificial barrier. Minimal number of residences abutting site. Preference is streets on four sides, or three sides with school or municipal use on fourth side. Encourage trail linkage to other parks
- Length of stay: Two to three hours experience
- Amenities: Four signature amenities at a minimum: (e.g., trails, sports fields, large shelters/pavilions, community playground for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements, recreation center, pool or family aquatic center, sports courts, water feature); public restrooms with drinking fountains, ample parking, and security lighting. Amenities are ADA compliant. Sport Fields and Sport Complexes are typical at this park.

- Revenue facilities: One or more (e.g. pool, sports complex, pavilion)
- Land usage: 65 percent active and 35 percent passive
- Programming: Minimum of four essential program services (e.g. sports, day camps, aquatics)
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities may require Level 1 maintenance
- Parking: Sufficient to support the amenities; occupies no more than 10 percent of the park. Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to the park
- Lighting: Amenity lighting includes sport field light standards. Security lighting on dual system with 50 percent of lights off at a set time and 50 percent on all night for security
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience. May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout park
- Naming: Consistent with the Town's naming right ordinance, may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- Other: Strong appeal to surrounding neighborhoods; integrated color scheme throughout the park; partnerships developed with support groups, schools and other organizations; loop trail connectivity; linked to Regional Park, trail or recreation facility; safety design meets established CPTED standards.

7.1.5 REGIONAL PARK

A regional park serves a large area of several communities, residents within a town, city or county, or across multiple counties. Depending on activities within a regional park, users may travel as many as 60 miles for a visit. Regional parks include recreational opportunities such as soccer, softball, golf, boating, camping, conservation-wildlife viewing and fishing. Although regional parks usually have a combination of passive areas and active facilities, they are likely to be predominantly natural resource-based parks.

A common size for a regional park is 100 to 1,000 acres but some parks can be 2,000 to 5,000 acres in size. A regional park focuses on activities and natural features not included in most types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity. Facilities could include those found in a Community Park and have specialized amenities such as an art center, amphitheater, boating facility, golf course, or natural area with interpretive trails. Regional parks can and should promote tourism and economic development. Regional parks can enhance the economic vitality and identity of the entire region. Twin Coves Park is a regional park.

- Size of park: 100 to 1,000 acres
- Service radius: Three mile or greater radius
- Site Selection: Prefer location which can preserve natural resources on-site such as wetlands, streams, and other geographic features or sites with significant cultural or historic features.

Significantly large parcel of land. Access from public roads capable of handling anticipated traffic.

- Length of stay: All day experience
- Amenities: 10 to 12 amenities to create a signature facility (e.g. golf course, tennis complex, sports complex, lake, regional playground, 3+ reservable picnic shelters, camping, outdoor recreation/extreme sports, recreation center, pool, gardens, trails, zoo, specialty facilities); public restrooms with drinking fountains, concessions, restaurant, ample parking, special event site. Sport Fields and Sport Complexes are typical at this park. See details in Sport Complex classification and Appendix A - Sport Field Amenities for more information
- Revenue facilities: More than two; park designed to produce revenue to offset operational costs
- Land usage: Up to 50 percent active/50 percent passive
- Programming: More than four recreation experiences per age segment with at least four core programs provided
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities may require Level 1 maintenance
- Parking: Sufficient for all amenities. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to park
- Lighting: Amenity lighting includes sport field light standards. Security lighting on dual system with 50 percent of lights off at a set time and 50 percent on all night for security
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience, May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout park
- Naming: Consistent with the Town's naming ordinance, may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- Other: Safety design may meet CPTED safety standards; integrated color scheme throughout the park; linked to major trails systems, public transportation available, concessions, food and retail sales available, dedicated site managers on duty. Telephone/Cable TV conduit.

7.1.6 SPORTS COMPLEX

Sports complexes at Community Parks, Regional Parks, and stand-alone Sports Complexes are developed to provide four to 16 fields or courts in one setting. A sports complex may also support extreme sports facilities, such as BMX and skateboarding. Sports Complexes can be single focused or multi-focused and can include indoor or outdoor facilities to serve the needs of both youth and adults. Outdoor fields should be lighted to maximize value and productivity of the complex. Agencies developing sports complexes focus on meeting the needs of residents while also attracting sport tournaments for economic purposes to the community.

Sport field design includes appropriate field distances for each sport's governing body and support amenities designed to produce revenue to offset operational costs.

Signature sports complexes include enhanced amenities such as artificial turf, multipurpose field benches and bleachers, scoreboards, amplified sound, scorer's booths, etc. Enhanced amenities would be identified through discussion between Town and Schools and or sports associations and dependent upon adequate funding.

- Size of park: Preferably 40 or more acres for stand-alone complexes
- Service radius: Determined by community demand
- Site Selection: Stand-alone sports complexes are strategically located on or near arterial streets. Refer to community or regional Park sections if sport complex located within a park. Preference is streets on four sides, or three sides with school or municipal use on fourth side.
- Length of stay: Two to three hours experience for single activities. Can be all day for tournaments or special events
- Amenities: Four to sixteen fields or sports courts in one setting; public restrooms, ample parking, turf types appropriate for the facility and anticipated usage, and field lighting. Amenities are ADA compliant.
- Revenue facilities: Four or more (e.g. fields, concession stand, picnic pavilion)
- Land usage: 95 percent active and 5 percent passive
- Programming: Focus on active programming of all amenities
- Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding. Plan for Level 1 and sometimes 2 level of maintenance standards at signature facility
- Parking: Sufficient to support the amenities. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to park
- Lighting: Amenity lighting includes sport field light standards. Security lighting on dual system with 50 percent of lights off at a set time and 50 percent on all night for security
- Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience. May include kiosks in easily identified areas of the facility
- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. Enhanced landscaping at entrances and throughout complex
- Naming: Consistent with the Town's naming ordinance, may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- Other: Integrated color scheme throughout the park; safety design meets established Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) standards.

7.1.7 SPECIAL USE PARK/FACILITY

Special Use facilities are those spaces that don't fall within a typical park classification. A major difference between a Special Use facility and other parks is that they usually serve a single purpose whereas other park classifications are designed to offer multiple recreation opportunities. It is possible for a Special Use facility to be located inside another park. Special Use facilities generally fall into three categories:

- **Historic/Cultural/Social Sites** - unique local resources offering historical, educational, and cultural opportunities. Examples include historic downtown areas, commercial zones, plaza parks, performing arts parks, arboretums, display gardens, performing arts facilities, indoor theaters, churches, and amphitheaters. Frequently these are located in Community or Regional Parks
- **Golf Courses** - Nine and 18-hole complexes with ancillary facilities such as club houses, driving ranges, program space and learning centers. These facilities are highly maintained and support a wide age level of males and females. Programs are targeted for daily use play, tournaments, leagues, clinics and special events. Operational costs come from daily play, season pass holders, concession stands, driving range fees, earned income opportunities and sale of pro shop items
- **Indoor Recreation Facilities** - specialized or single purpose facilities. Examples include community centers, senior centers and community theaters. Frequently these are located in Community or Regional Parks
- **Outdoor Recreation facilities** - Examples include aquatic parks, disk golf, skateboard, BMX, and dog parks, which may be located in a park
 - Size of park: Depends upon facilities and activities included. Their diverse character makes it impossible to apply acreage standards
 - Service radius: Depends upon facilities and activities included. Typically serves special user groups while a few serve the entire population
 - Site Selection: Given the variety of potential uses, no specific standards are defined for site selection. As with all park types, the site itself should be located where it is appropriate for its use.
 - Length of stay: varies by facility
 - Amenities: varies by facility
 - Revenue facilities: Due to nature of certain facilities, revenue may be required for construction and/or annual maintenance. This should be determined at a policy level before the facility is planned and constructed
 - Land usage: varies by facility
 - Programming: varies by facility
 - Maintenance Standards: Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding. Seek a goal of Level 2 maintenance standards. Some amenities (i.e., rose gardens) will require Level 1 maintenance
 - Parking: On-street or off-street parking is provided as appropriate. Design should include widened on-street parking area adjacent to park. Goal is to maximize usable park space. As necessary, provide a minimum of five to 10 spaces within park including handicap spaces. Traffic calming devices encouraged next to park
 - Lighting: Security or amenity only. Lighting on dual system with 50 percent of lights off at a set time and 50 percent on all night for security
 - Signage: Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience

- Landscape Design: Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience
- Naming: Follows Town ordinance for naming or may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark
- Other: Integrated color scheme throughout the park; safety design meets established Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) standards. Cable TV conduit as appropriate.

7.1.8 GREENBELTS/TRAILS

Greenbelts/Trails are recognized for their ability to connect people and place and often include either paved or natural trails. Trails can also be loop trails in parks. Linking neighborhoods, parks, recreation facilities, attractions, and natural areas with a multi-use trail fulfills two guiding principles simultaneously: protecting natural areas along river and open space areas and providing people with a way to access and enjoy them. Multi-use trails also offer a safe, alternative form of transportation; provide substantial health benefits, habitat enhancements for plants and wildlife, and unique opportunities for outdoor education and cultural interpretation.

- Size: Typically at least 30-foot width of unencumbered land for a Greenbelt. May include a trail to support walk, bike, run, equestrian type activities. Typically an urban trail is 10-foot wide to support pedestrian and bicycle uses. Trails incorporate signage to designate where a user is located and where the trails connect in the Town.

Equestrian uses can occur in both urban and open space settings by adding 10 more feet of space to separate equestrian usage from pedestrian/bike usage. In urban settings, equestrian use includes five foot of decomposed granite plus a five foot landscaped separation from the pedestrian/bike trail. In open space settings, equestrian use includes five foot of harrowed soil plus a five foot natural separation from the pedestrian/bike trail

- Site Selection: Located consistent with approved Trails Master Plan
- Amenities: Parking and restrooms at major trailheads. May include small parks along the trail
- Maintenance standards: Demand based maintenance with available funding
- Lighting: Security lighting at trailheads is preferred. Lighting on dual system with 50 percent of lights off at a set time and 50 percent on all night for security
- Signage: Mileage markers at half mile intervals. Interpretive kiosks as deemed appropriate
- Landscape Design: Coordinated planting scheme in urban areas. Limited or no planting in open space areas
- Other: Connectivity to parks or other Town attractions and facilities is desirable

7.1.9 OPEN SPACE/NATURAL AREA

Open Space/Natural Areas are undeveloped but may include natural or paved trails. Grasslands under power line corridors are one example; creek areas are another. Open Space contain natural resources that can be managed for recreation and natural resource conservation values such as a desire to protect wildlife habitat, water quality and endangered species. Open Space also can provide opportunities for nature based, unstructured, low-impact recreational opportunities such as walking and nature viewing.

- Amenities: May include paved or natural trails, wildlife viewing areas, mountain biking, disc golf, interpretation and education facilities
- Maintenance standards: Demand-based maintenance with available funding. Biological management practices observed.
- Lighting: None
- Signage: Interpretive kiosks as deemed appropriate
- Landscape Design: Generally none. Some areas may include landscaping, such as entryways or around buildings. In these situations, sustainable design is appropriate.

7.1.10 SPORT FIELD AMENITIES

Basic sport field amenities provided by the Town are listed below.

BASEBALL FIELD AMENITIES - YOUTH SIZE

- Field size: Preferred: 225-foot outfield fence with minimum 4-foot high outfield fence. Alternate: 215-foot outfield fence with 8-foot high outfield fence.
- Baselines and infield: 60-foot and 70-foot skinned baseline w/ base sleeves w/ grass infield. Ball field mix extends from backstop down sidelines to fence opening at end of dugout. Home plate included. Bases specified by Town and provided by user groups.
- Permanent backstop. Preferred: 2-foot high concrete block w/ safety padding and 18-foot vertical fence (black vinyl coated chain link).
- Fencing: 8-foot high fence (Preferred: black vinyl coated chain link) from backstop to end of skinned infield. On 225-foot field, 4-foot high sideline and outfield fence (black vinyl coated chain link). On 215-foot field, outfield fence increases to 8-foot high. Yellow safety top on outfield fence. Foul poles at outfield fence. 12-foot wide dual-gate opening on one sideline fence for field maintenance equipment access.
- Concrete block bin: 6-foot by 6-foot for ball field mix located adjacent to 12-foot fence opening.
- Dugout: 21-foot by 7-foot including 15-foot long players bench with backrest. 8-foot high fencing around dugout. Dugout opens onto field at home base side of dugout. 2-foot safety wing fencing inside dugout to prevent foul ball entry. Slatted roof over dugout.
- Raised pitching mound with two pitching rubbers (46-foot and 50-foot to home plate). Equipment installed by Town maintenance staff.
- Interior warm up/practice pitching mound along sideline fences backing up to outfield fence (46-foot distance from pitching rubber to plate). Slats or padding in fence to maintain fence longevity.
- Three row bleachers (21-foot long) on concrete pad both baselines.
- 12-foot by 8-foot concrete pad for storage box. Equipment storage unit funded by user group - approved and installed by Town maintenance staff on same side as field mix bin.
- Conduit and pull boxes from power source to backstop, and from backstop to outfield field for future scoreboard. Scoreboard/controller provided by user group.

- Field lighting at community and regional parks.
- Concrete behind dugouts and in dugouts connected to park walkways on all fields.
- Quick disconnect for water behind pitcher's mound.

SOFTBALL FIELD AMENITIES – YOUTH SIZE

- Field size: Preferred: 225-foot outfield fence with 10-foot warning track with 4-foot high outfield fence. Alternate: 215-foot outfield fence with 8-foot high outfield fence.
- Baselines and infield: 50-foot and 60-foot baseline w/ base sleeves on completely skinned infield. Home plate included. Bases specified by Town and provided by user groups.
- Permanent backstop. 2-foot high concrete block w/ safety padding and 18-foot vertical fence (black vinyl coated chain link).
- Fencing: 8-foot high fence (black vinyl coated chain link) from backstop to end of skinned infield. On 225-foot field, 4-foot high sideline and outfield fence (black vinyl coated chain link). On 215-foot field, outfield fence increases to 8-foot high. Yellow safety top on outfield fence. Foul poles at outfield fence. 12-foot wide dual-gate opening on one sideline fence for field maintenance equipment access.
- Concrete block bin: 6-foot by 6-foot for ball field mix located adjacent to 12-foot fence opening.
- Dugout: 21-foot by 7-foot including 15-foot long players bench with backrest. 8-foot high fencing around dugout. Dugout opens onto field at home base side of dugout. 2-foot safety wing fencing inside dugout to prevent foul ball entry. Slatted roof over dugout.
- No pitching mound. Three pitching rubbers (30-foot/35-foot/40-foot to home plate). Equipment installed by Town maintenance staff.
- Interior warm up/practice pitching area along sideline fences backing up to outfield fence (30-foot/35-foot/40-foot to home plate distance from pitching rubber to plate). Slats or padding in fence to maintain fence longevity.
- Three row bleachers (21-foot long) on concrete pad both baselines.
- 12-foot by 8-foot concrete pad for storage box. Equipment storage unit funded by user group - approved and installed by Town maintenance staff on same side as field mix bin.
- Conduit and pull boxes from power source to backstop, and from backstop to outfield field for future scoreboard. Scoreboard/controller provided by user group.
- Field lighting at community and regional parks.
- Concrete behind dugouts and in dugouts connected to park walkways on all fields.
- Quick disconnect for water behind pitcher's mound.

SOFTBALL FIELD AMENITIES – ADULT SIZE

- Field size: 300-foot outfield fence with 10-foot warning track and 8-foot high outfield fence.
- Baselines and infield: 60-foot/ 65-foot/ 70-foot/ 80-foot baseline w/ base sleeves on skinned infield. Home plate included. Bases specified by Town and provided by user groups.

- Permanent backstop. 2-foot high concrete block w/ safety padding and 18-foot vertical fence (black vinyl coated chain link).
- Fencing: 8-foot high fence (black vinyl coated chain link) from backstop to end of skinned infield. 8-foot high sideline and outfield fence (black vinyl coated chain link). Foul poles at outfield fence. 12-foot wide dual-gate opening on one sideline fence for field maintenance equipment access.
- Concrete block bin: 6-foot by 6-foot for ball field mix located adjacent to 12-foot fence opening.
- Dugout: 27-foot by 9-foot including 21-foot long players bench with backrest. 8-foot high fencing around dugout. Dugout opens onto field at home base side of dugout. 2-foot safety wing fencing inside dugout to prevent foul ball entry. Slatted roof over dugout.
- No pitching mound. Two pitching rubbers (50-foot /54-foot to home plate). Equipment installed by Town maintenance staff.
- Three row bleachers (21-foot long) on concrete pad both baselines.
- 12-foot by 8-foot concrete pad for storage box. Equipment storage unit funded by user group - approved and installed by Town maintenance staff on same side as field mix bin.
- Conduit and pull boxes from power source to backstop, and from backstop to outfield field for future scoreboard. Scoreboard/controller provided by user group.
- Field lighting at community and regional parks.
- Concrete behind dugouts and in dugouts connected to park walkways on all fields.
- Quick disconnect for water behind pitcher's mound.

MULTIPURPOSE FIELDS (SOCCER/FOOTBALL/LACROSSE/FIELD HOCKEY)

- Field size: Regulation field - 360-foot by 240-foot. Limited space field- 210-foot by 150-foot. 25-foot buffer on same plane as field with no obstructions or drainage fixtures. Buffer applies to both field sizes.
- Goals: Portable, with size specified by user group and provided by Town.
- No bleachers or players benches.
- Field lighting at community and regional parks.

RESTROOM/CONCESSION BUILDING

- Restroom: typically installed at 1 per 20 acres of Community Park, Regional Park, or Sports Complex. Minimum of one restroom with drinking fountains at parks with programmed fields.
- Concession Building: Provided when three or more fields exist at a Community Park or Regional Park. Owned by Town. Rental agreement required for user group use of facility, which includes cost of building depreciation, building upkeep, and utilities. Building includes shelving, electrical, three-partition sink with hot water, and separate sink for hand washing. Facility built to health code requirements. Equipment supplied by user group.

7.2 TECHNICAL NEEDS ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS

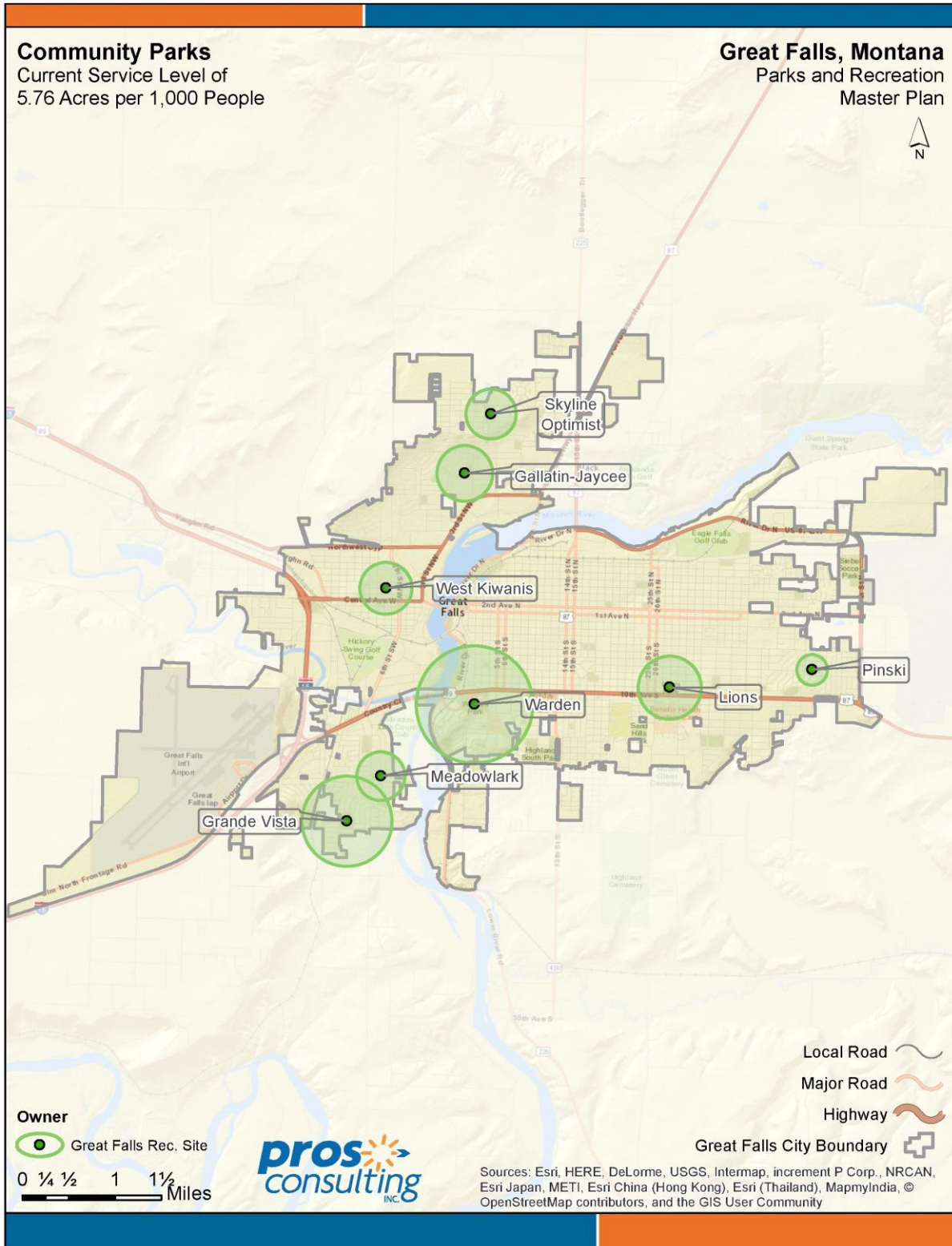
7.2.1 EQUITY MAPPING

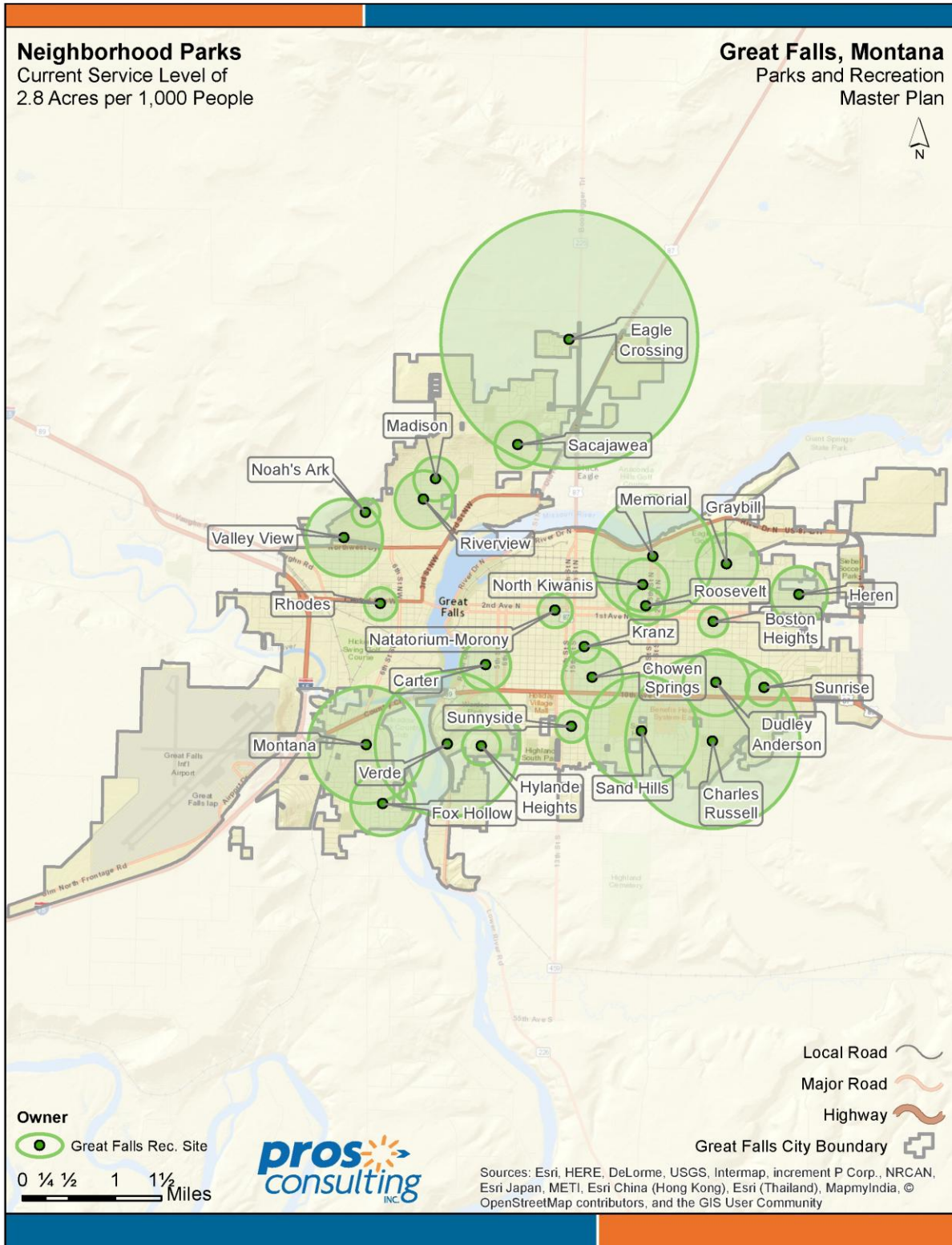
The City of Great Falls Parks and Recreation has “evolved over time” and distribution of sites and facilities throughout the community as reflected in the current site locations.

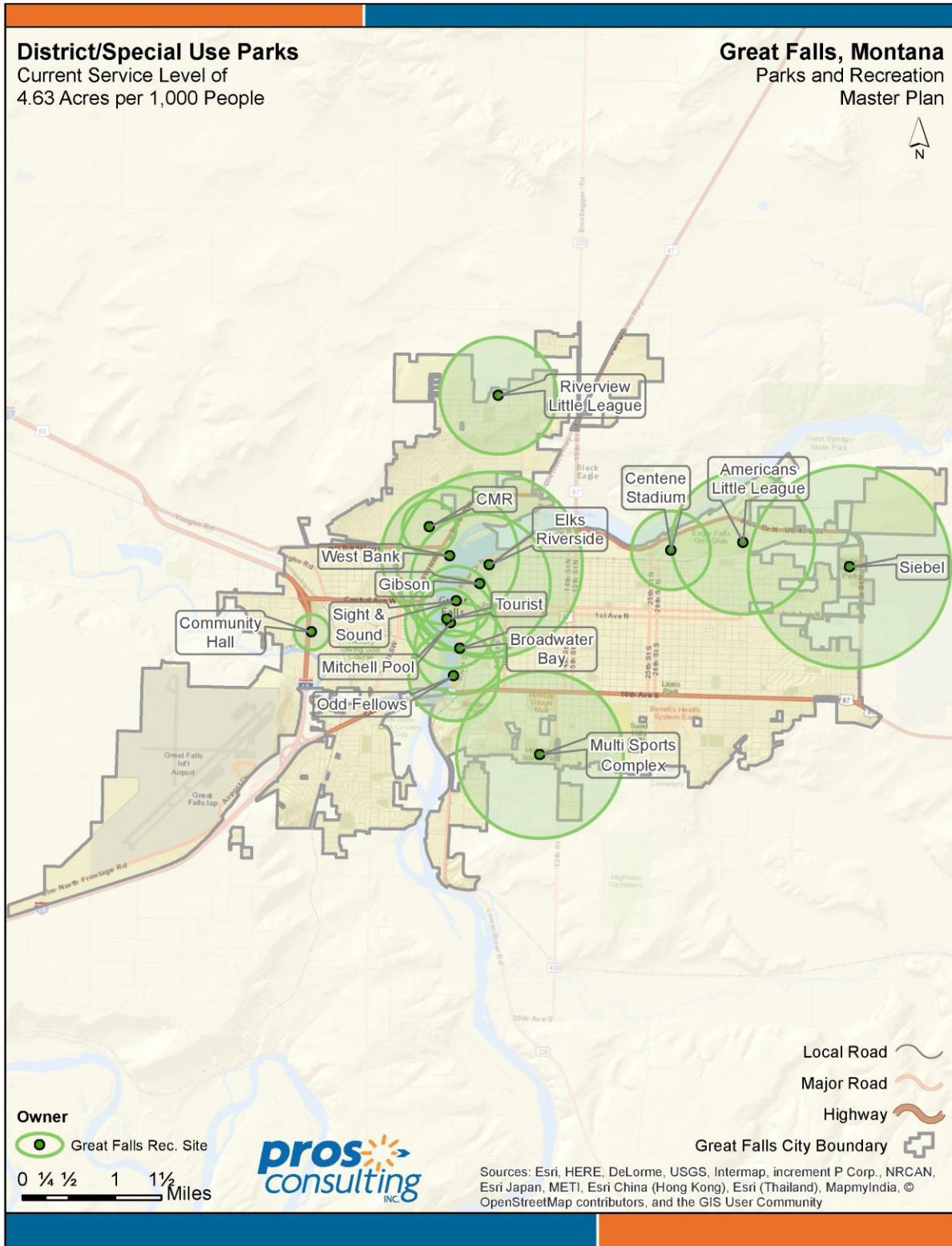
To further illustrate the distribution of current park types and park assets of the parks and recreation system across the entire community, an equity-mapping analysis was conducted. The maps included show the service areas of the *current* inventory of park types and park assets based on the *current* level-of-service standard. The current standard established per 1,000 residents per acre of park type or 10,000 residents per type of park asset are also indicated in the map title. The service area is calculated by the quantity of inventory of each site extended in a uniform radius until the population served by the recommended standard is reached. Shaded areas indicate the extent of the service area based on recommended inventories; unshaded areas indicate locations that would remain outside of the standard service area for each park type or park asset. Unshaded areas are not always the most appropriate location for future parks or park assets. They only represent areas that might be more thoroughly reviewed for potential additional facilities. Although there are occasions when the service area may extend beyond the border of Great Falls, only Great Falls resident populations were utilized for calculating service-area standards in this analysis.

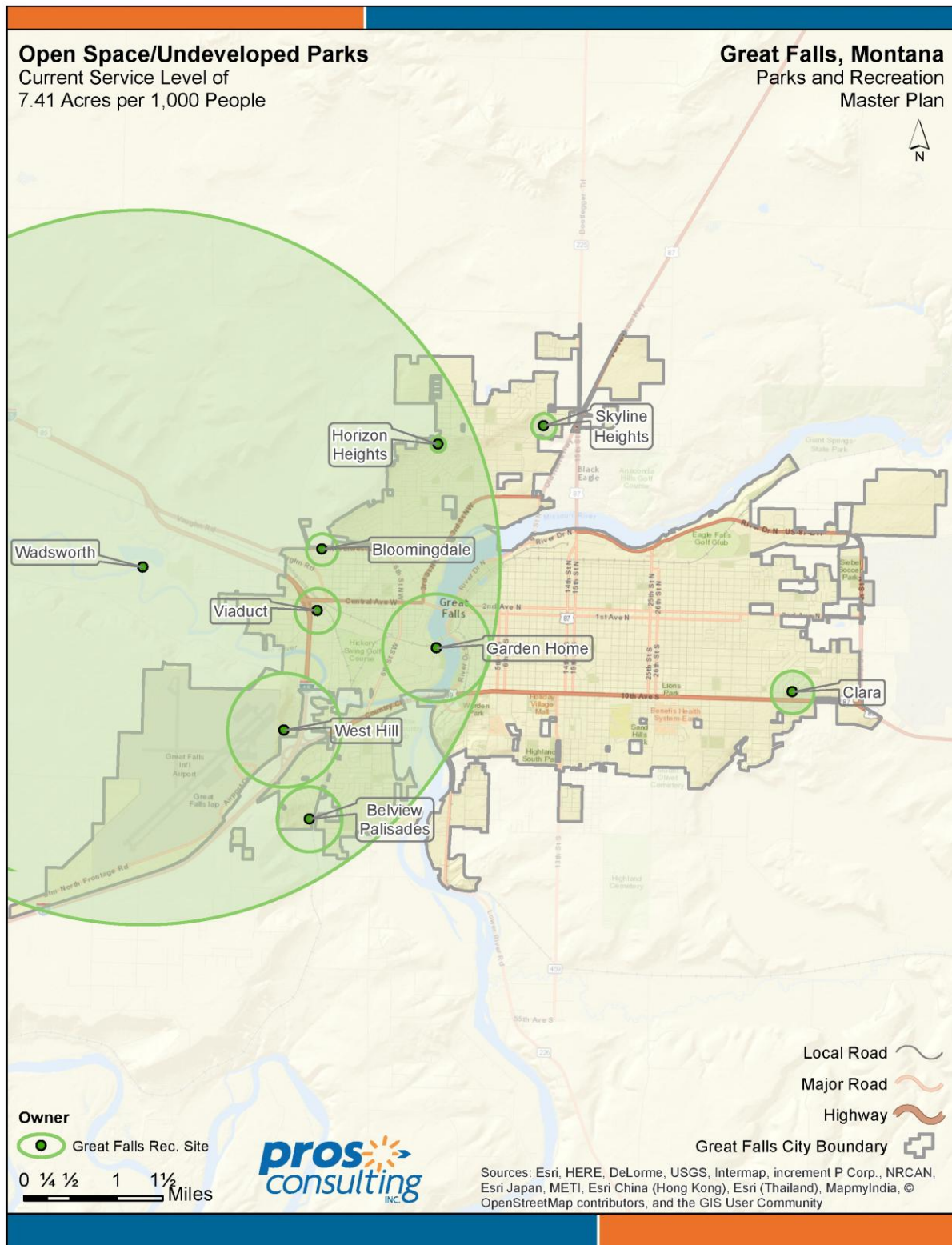
Community-wide maps of park types, or classifications, identified in this master plan, as well as the major park assets, are provided in the pages that follow. The maps on the following pages identify:

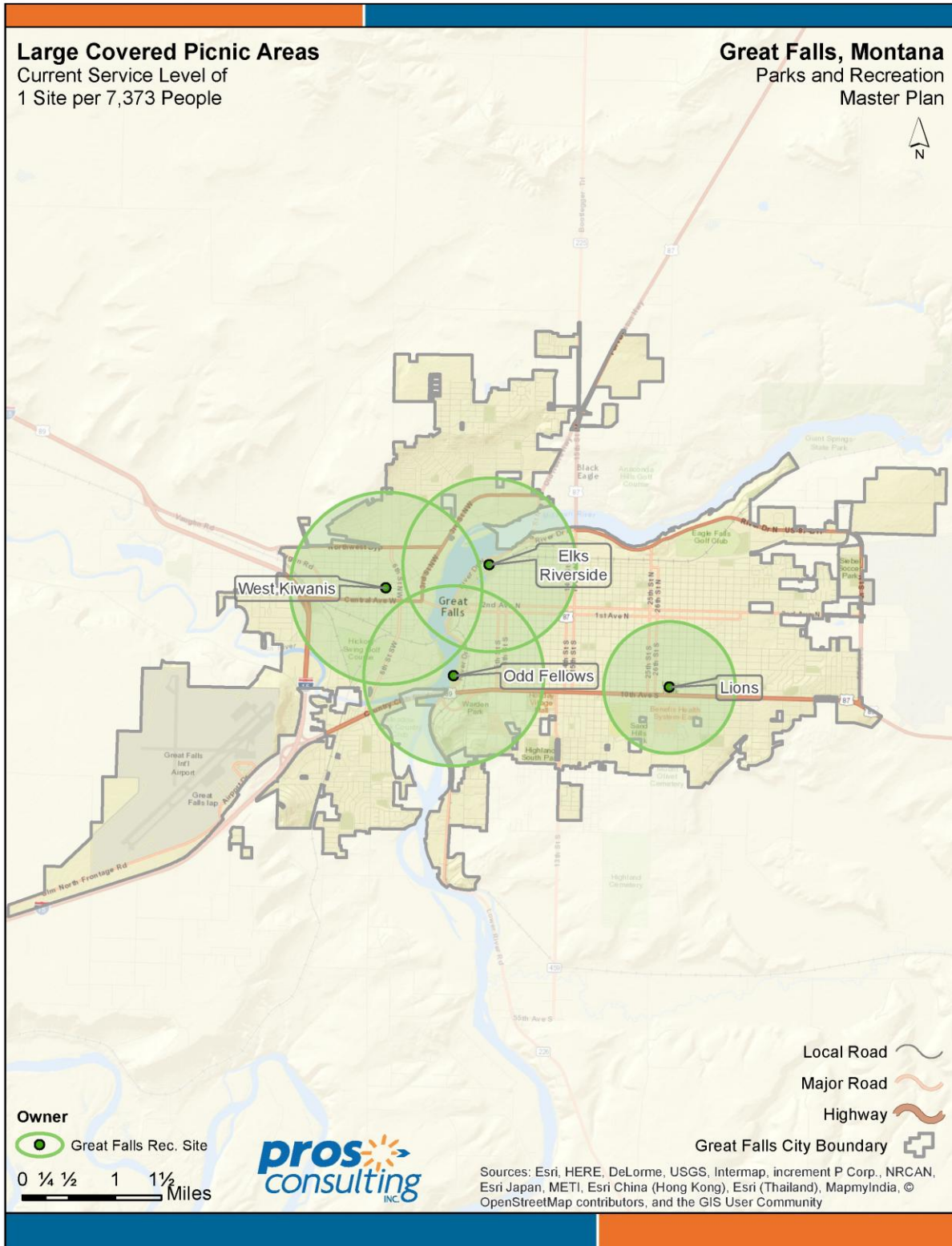
1. Community Parks
2. Neighborhood Parks
3. District/Special Use Parks
4. Open Space/Undeveloped Parks
5. Large Covered Picnic Areas
6. Diamond, Baseball 90 foot bases
7. Diamond, Baseball/Softball (Youth)
8. Rectangle Fields (All)
9. Golf Courses
10. Dog Parks/Off-Leash Areas
11. Playgrounds
12. Outdoor Sports Courts (basketball)
13. Tennis Courts
14. Skate Parks
15. Recreation Centers
16. Swimming Pools (outdoors)
17. Swimming Pools (indoors)

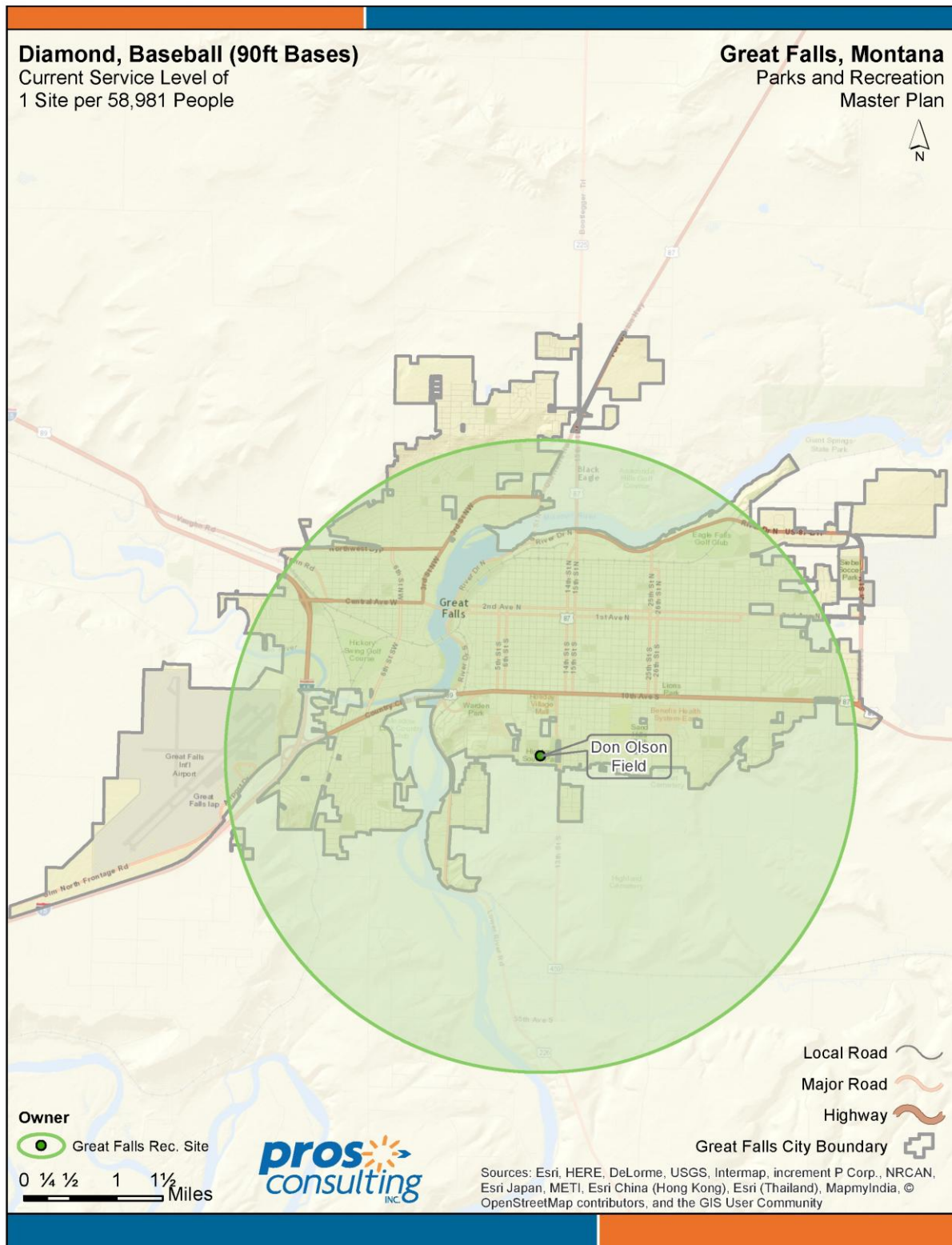


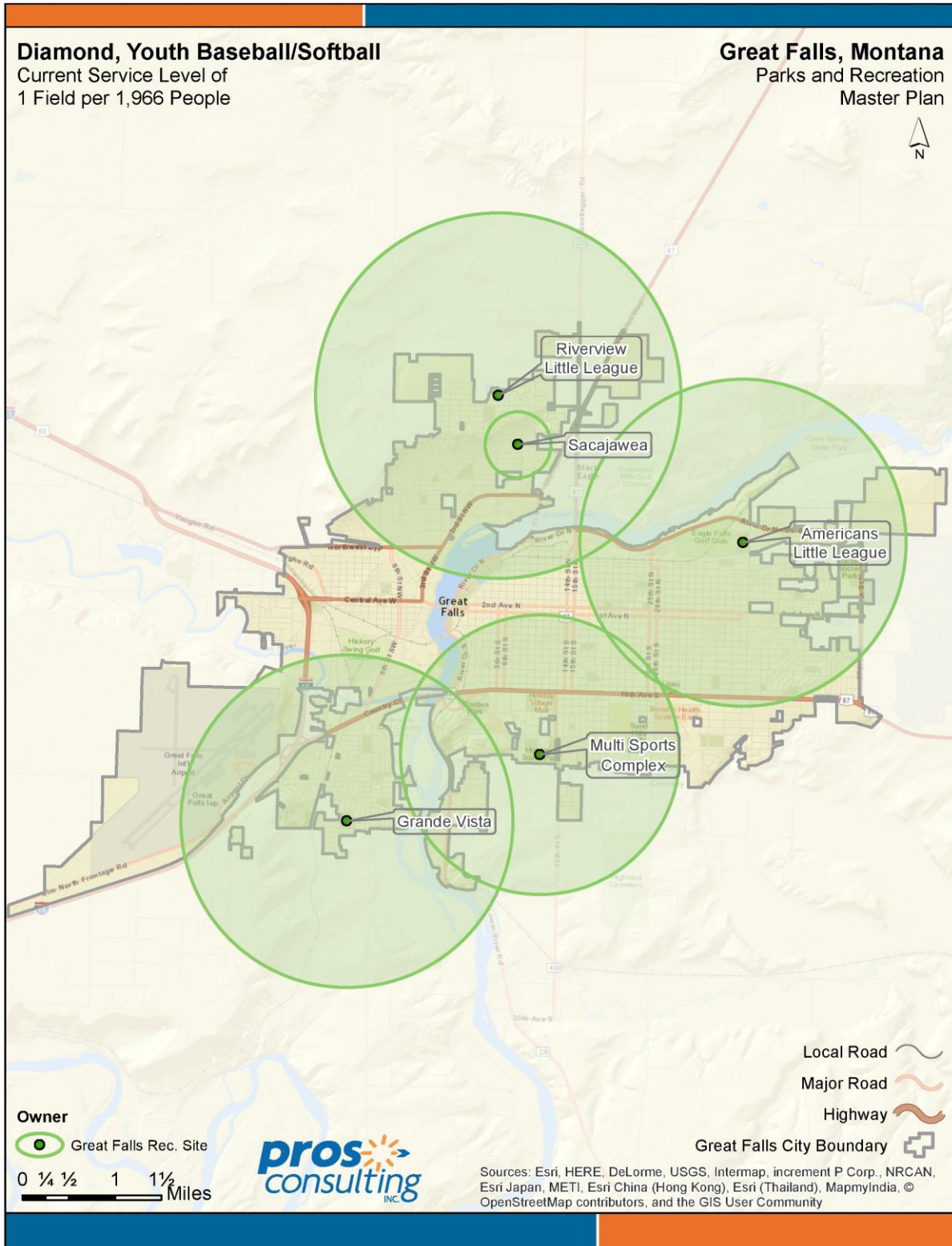


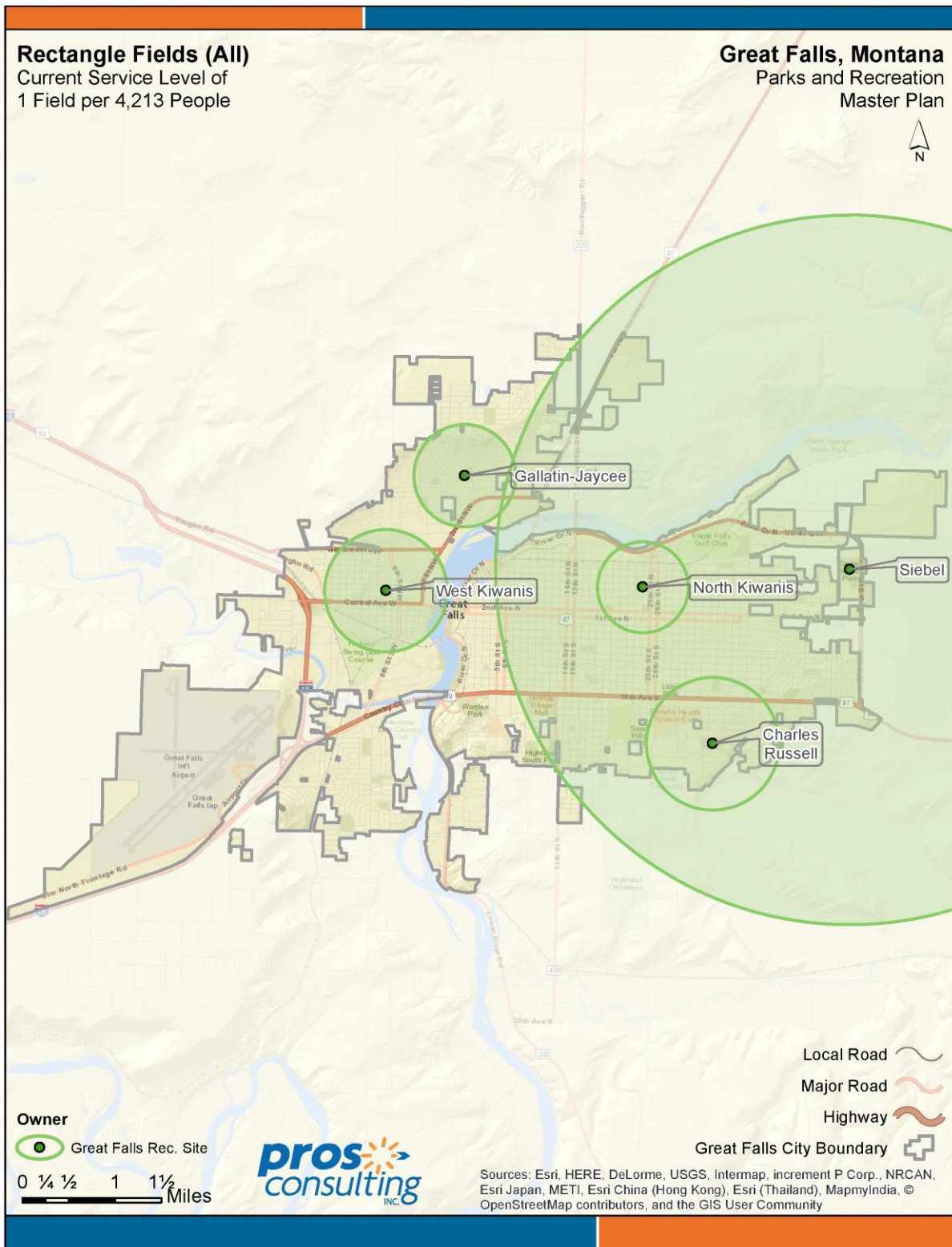


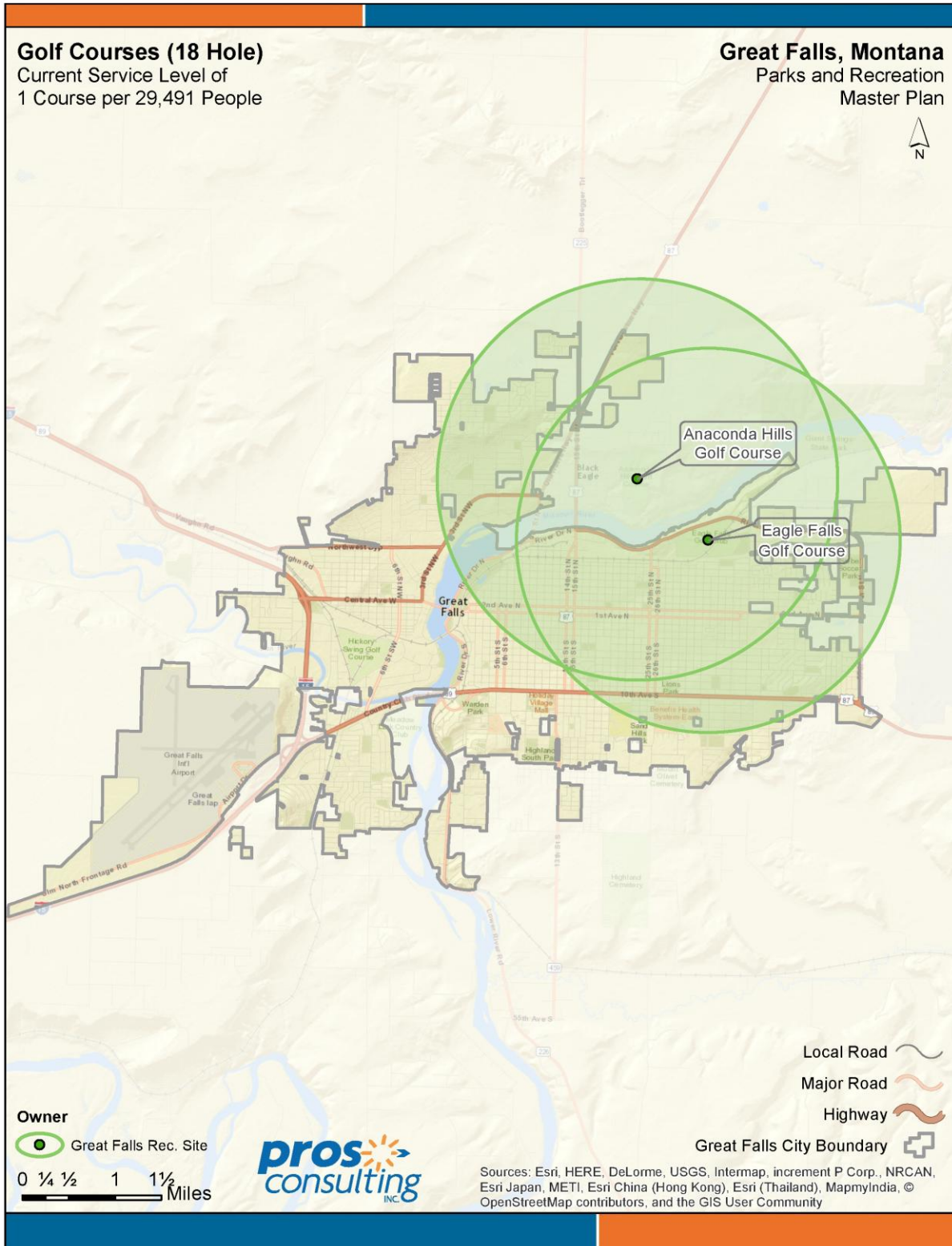


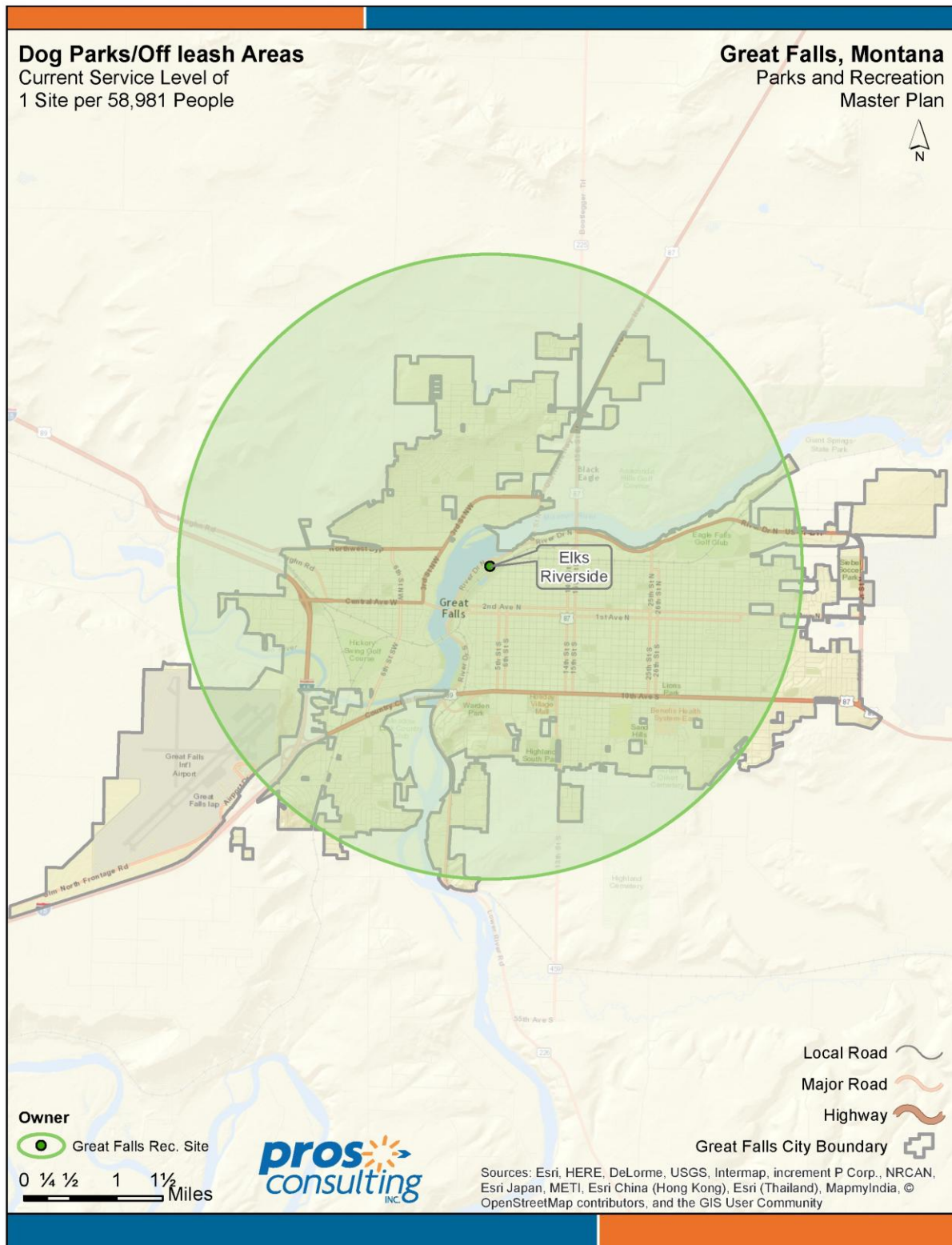


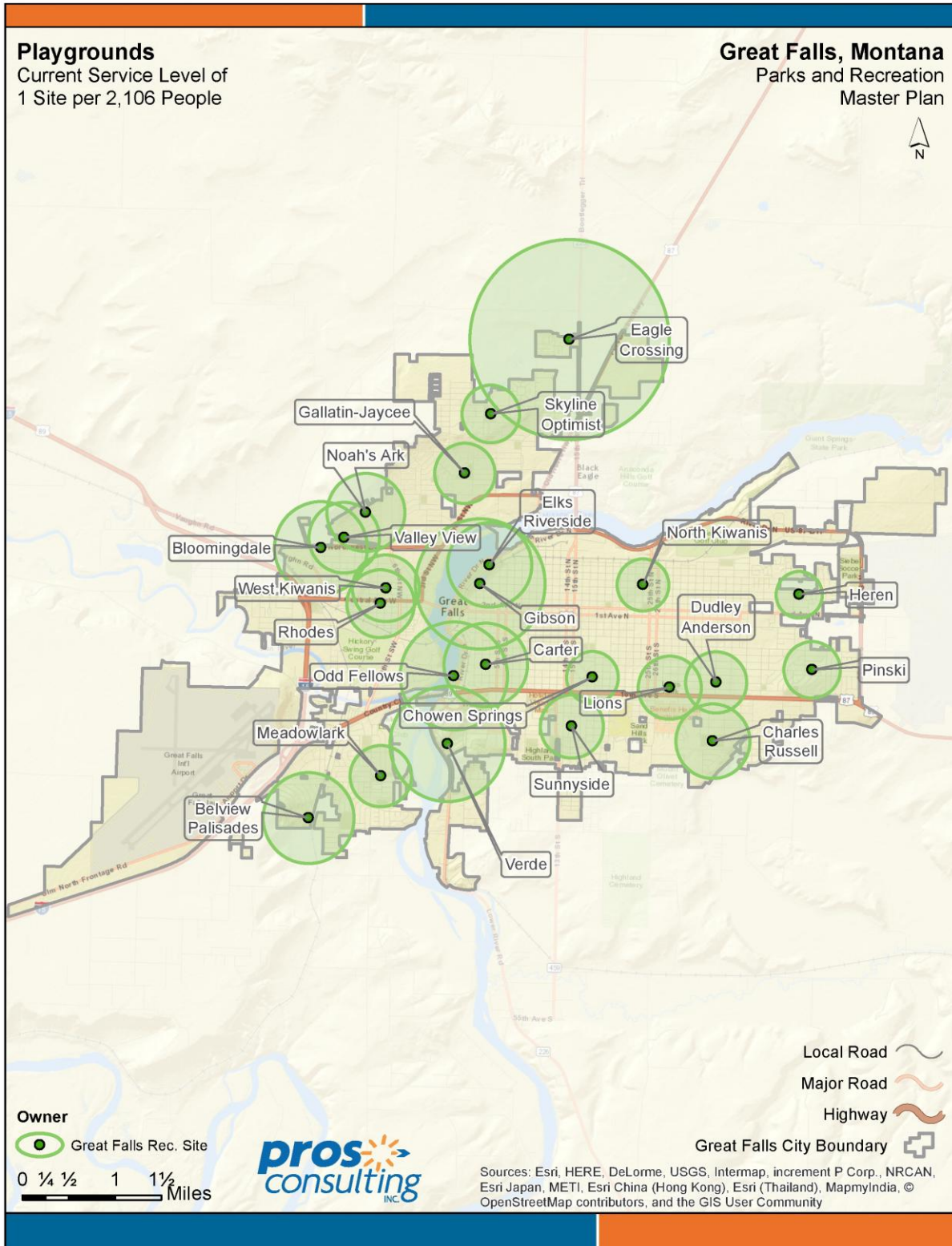




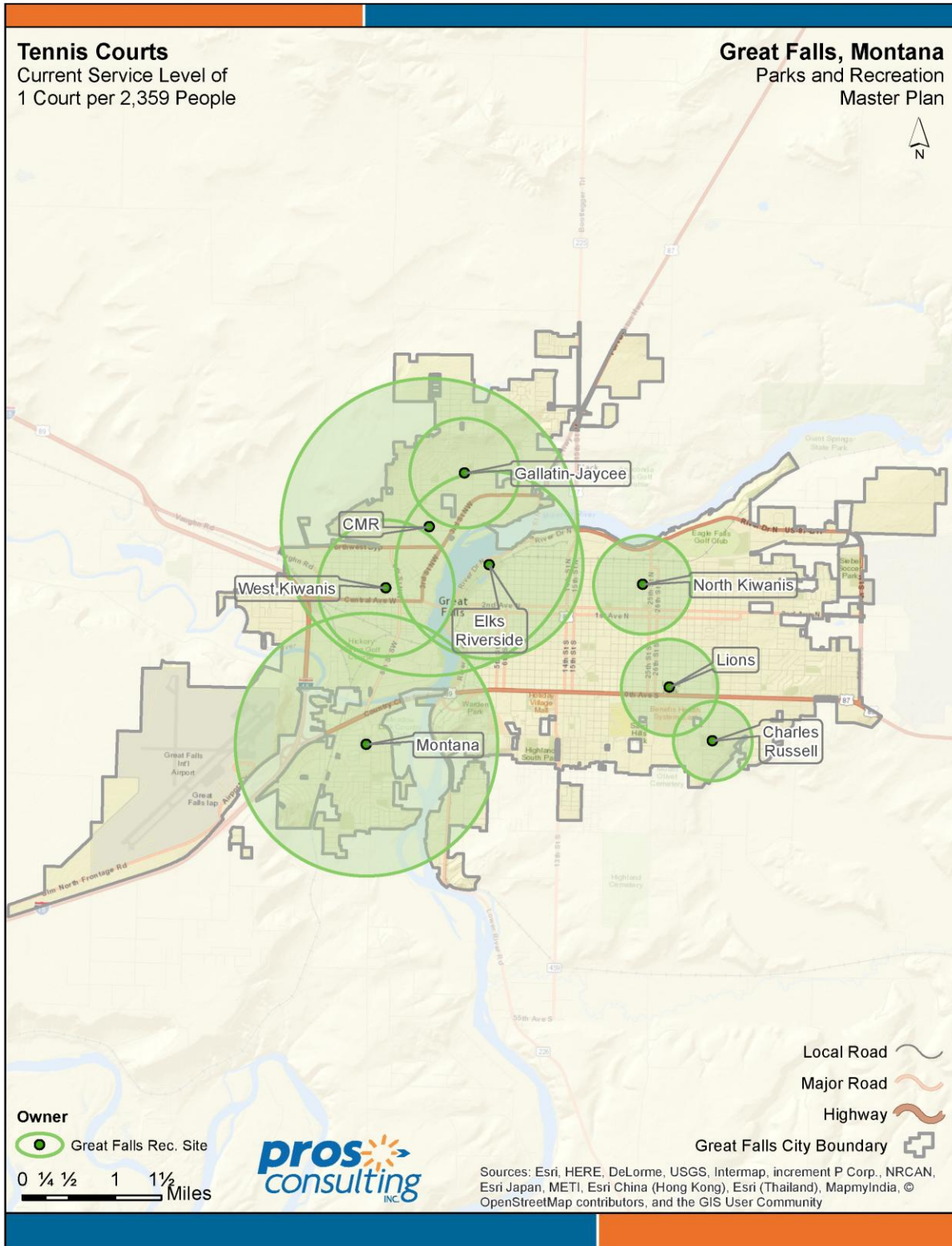


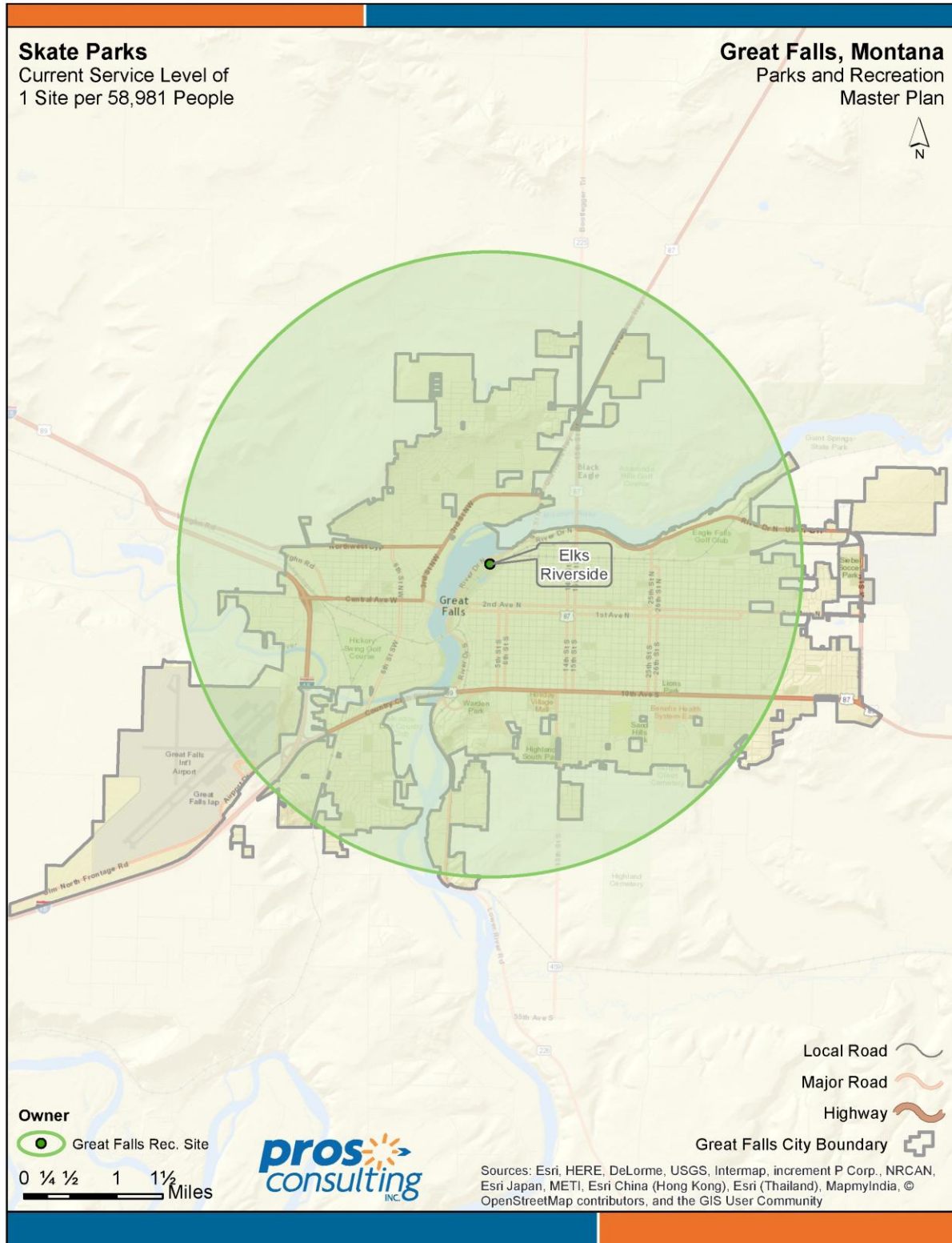


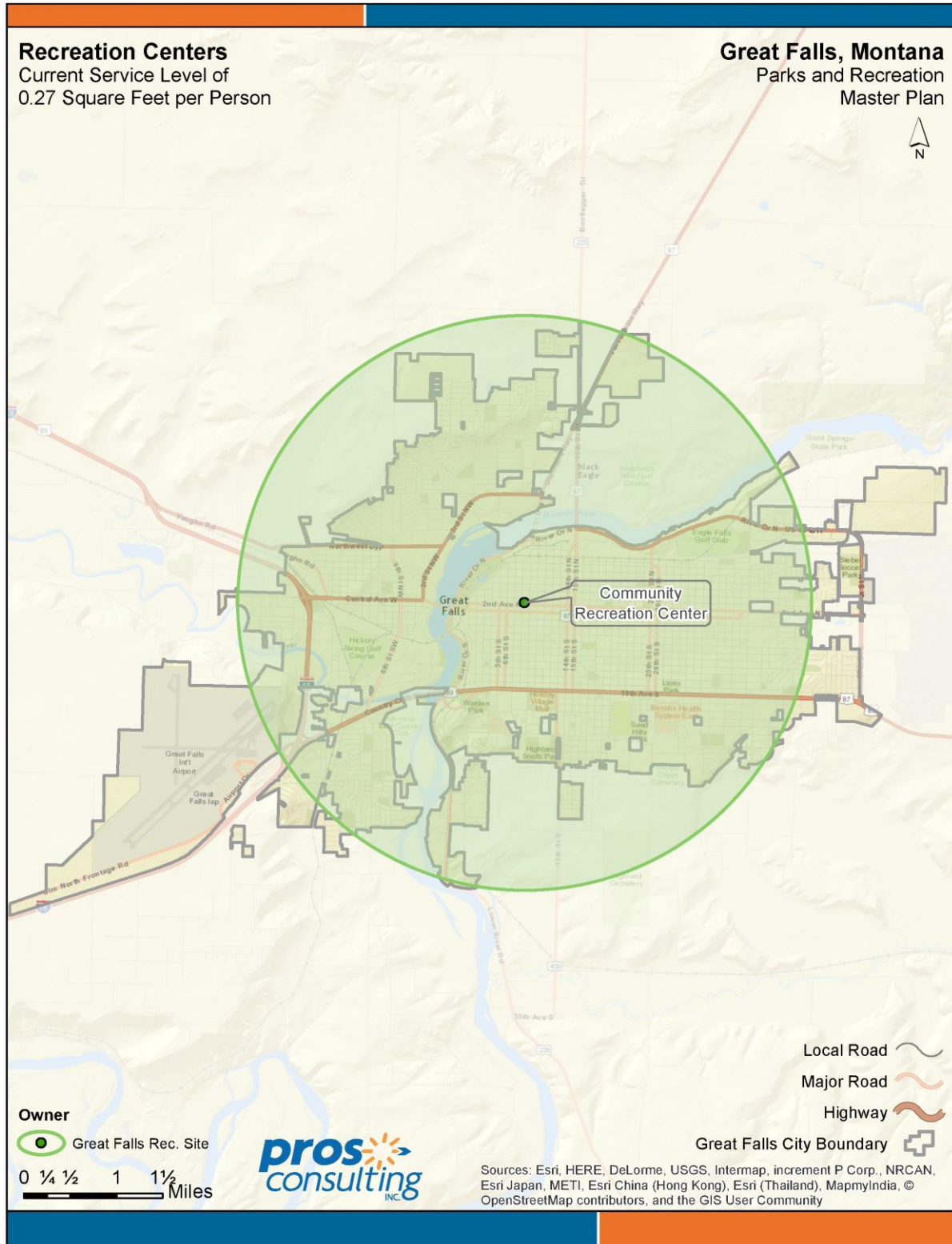


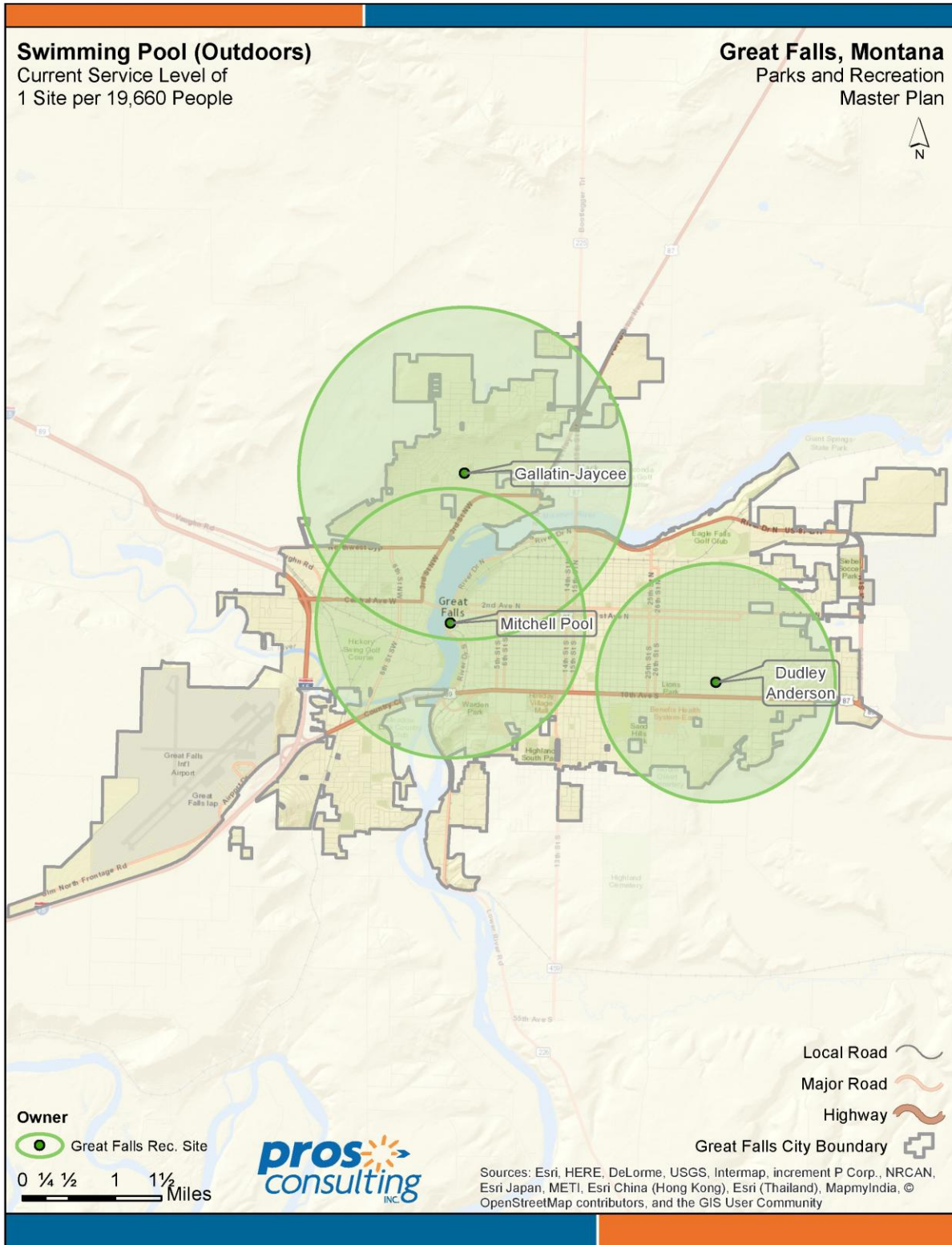


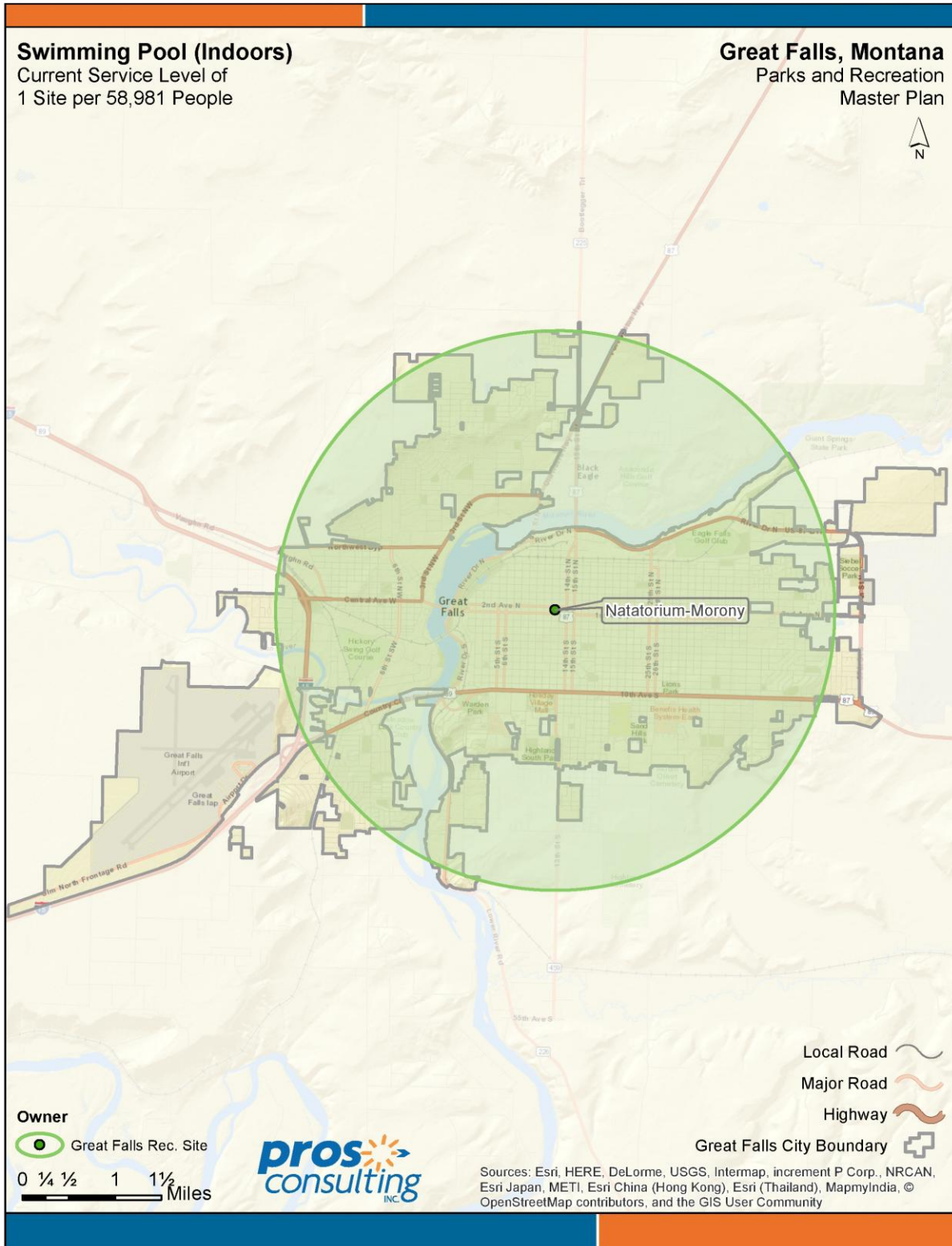












7.3 PARK/FACILITY INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Utilizing the aforementioned criteria, the consulting team prepared an assessment and completed a general onsite inspection of each park and facility managed by the City. The following tables summarizes the City's parks and recreation system as identified by the consulting team:

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
15th Street Island	Traffic Island	Light	B	None	None
44th Street Island	Traffic Island	Light	B	None	None
American's Little League Complex	Sports Complex/Special Use	Heavy	C	Baseball/Softball/T-ball Fields, Wood Bleachers, Dugouts, Gravel Parking Lot, Concession Stand/Restrooms, Shed, Metal Bleachers, Picnic Table, Ball Pen, Maintenance Garage, Flag Pole, Announcer Stand, Rock Display, Port-a-Potty, Trash Receptacle (moveable), Paths (gravel/asphalt), Fencing	Safety evaluation of bleachers, remove damaged units from the premises; Complex is currently not ADA accessible
Anaconda Hills Golf Course	Golf Course	Moderate	B	Parking Lot (gravel w/ curb stops), Clubhouse, Pro-Shop, Concession Area, Restrooms, Office, Exterior Patio, Picnic Tables, Benches, Trash Receptacle, Fire Pit, Planting Beds, Railing on Steps, Driving Range, Maintenance Area, Paths, Golf Carts, Barn (condemned), Port-a-Potty Restrooms, Tees, Fairways, Greens, Practice Putting Greens. Irrigation	Weed & re-mulch shrub beds, Improve Hole 17 (issue with slicing into adjacent neighborhood)
Belview	Neighborhood Park	Light	A	Sign, Pet Waste Station, Asphalt Path, Trash Can Enclosure, Bench, Swing Set, Play Structure, Picnic Table, Grass, Drinking/Pet Fountain	Re-mulch play area; Crack seal asphalt path
Belview Island	Traffic Island	Light	B	None	None
Bloomingtondale	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Welcome to Great Falls sign, Picnic Table, Bench, Roof over Picnic Table/Bench, Bulk Water Station, Trash Can, Play Structure, Sign, Grass	Re-mulch sign planter; Re-paint Welcome to Great Falls sign; Re-mulch play area
Boston Heights	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Sign, Grass, Parks Maintenance Building with Bathroom & Shower Stall	Fill hole by sidewalk on 1st Ave N; New fascia on Parks Maintenance Building; There are no facilities or amenities, needs irrigation upgrades
Broadwater Bay	Regional Park (Part of East Bank Parks)	Heavy	B	Parking Lot, Bench, Trash Can, Asphalt Trail, Sign, Picnic Table, Invasive Species Sign, Restrooms (locked), Trash Enclosure, Grass, Pet Waste Station, Memorial, Dock, Park Rules Sign, Boat Ramp	None
Carter	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Bench, Basketball Court Asphalt, Sidewalk, Baseball Back Stop, Sign, Grass, Picnic Shelter, Picnic Table, Trash Can, Play Structure, Little Free Library	Replace heaved/cracked sidewalk; Replace roof on shelter; re-mulch play area

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Centene Stadium	Baseball Stadium	Moderate	B	Teen/Adult Sized Baseball Field, Bleachers (covered/uncovered, metal/plastic), Playground, Parking Lot (gravel/paved), Office, Suites, Stadium Lights, Concession Stand (at field/under bleachers), Patio, Ball pin, Dugout, Announcer Box, Trash Receptacle (moveable), Restrooms, Drinking Fountain, Protection Netting	Put railing at dug out (safety issue)
Charles Russell	Neighborhood Park	Heavy	B	Little Free Library, Sign, Playground, Bench, Trash Can (in enclosure), Picnic Shelter, Barbecue, Picnic Tables, Concrete Sidewalk, Fences, Parking Lot, Pet Waste Station, Bike Rack, Tennis Court/Basketball Court, Monument, Asphalt Path, Gazebo w/ Benches	Resurface tennis courts, needs irrigation upgrades
Chowen Springs	Neighborhood Park	Heavy	B	Sidewalk, Swing Set, Play Area, Picnic Tables, Basketball Court, Football/Soccer Field, Trash Can Enclosure, Trash Can, Grass, Used as Detention Pond	Re-mulch swing/play area; Safety check play structure; Weed control program; Heavy use shorter life cycle replacement needs
Clara	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Sign, Trash Can/Enclosure, Walking Path (asphalt & sand), Pet Waste Station, No Motor Vehicles Sign, Corp. of Discovery Marker Bench, Picnic Table, Water Tower Fence	Remove/Replace picnic table, potential for dog park would need water/irrigation
Community Hall / Westside Orchard Garden	Special Use	Moderate	C	Picnic Table, Bench, Planter Areas, Pole Barn (under construction)	Wider Gate (current gate is too narrow and delivery trucks are tearing up neighbor's yard entering the garden)
Don Olson Baseball Field	Special Use	Heavy	B	90-foot baseball field, dugouts, bleachers, concession stand, restrooms, parking lot, fencing, ball pin, sheds, picnic tables	Spray grass for weeds, evaluate bleachers for safety
Dudley Anderson	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Pet Waste Area, Trash Can, Sign, Picnic Shelter/Table, Sidewalks, Grass, Playground, Swing set, Bench, Picnic Table, Splash Pad, Play Equipment, Asphalt Path	Re-mulch play area; Re-stain/seal wood tables; Update one incorrect sign
Eagle Falls Golf Course	Golf Course	Heavy	B	Parking Lot (gravel w/ curb stops), Clubhouse, Pro-Shop, Concession Area, Restrooms, Office, Interior/Exterior Patio, Steps, Planting Beds, Driving Range, Maintenance Area, Practice Putting Green, Practice Sand Bunker, Practice Chipping Green, Paths, Golf Carts, Port-a-Potty Restrooms, Tees, Fairways, Greens, Bunkers, irrigation System	Remove lightening shelter; Weed & re-mulch shrub beds; Four greens need to be reworked & updated irrigation per previously developed plans; Drainage issues in low areas, redesign cart paths to alleviate compaction at end by tees; Replace golf carts

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Eagles Crossing	Neighborhood Park	Light	C	Sign, Grass, Bench, Play Structure	Weed control inside play area; Re-mulch play area; Mostly undeveloped, drainage issues
Elks Riverside	Regional Park (Part of East Bank Parks)	Heavy	B	Art, Trash Can, Bench, Picnic Table, Skate Park, Unused concession building, Pet Station, Horseshoe area, River's Edge Trail, Tennis Courts, Playground, Picnic Shelter, Barbecue, Swing, Restroom (wet)	Horseshoe backstop replacement, consider addition of bocce courts; some walks/trails need upgrades; Concession area is boarded up and not used, City should consider leasing
Fox Farm Island	Traffic Island	Light	B	None	None
Fox Hollow	Neighborhood Park	Light	B	Sign, Trash Can, Pet Waste Station	Repair storm drain inlet; No Amenities
Garden Home	Community Park	Moderate	A	Parking Lot (asphalt), Post & Cable Fence, Benches (concrete), River's Edge Trail, Grass, Trash Can, Trash Enclosure, Trail Mile Post, Picnic Table (concrete), Trailhead Sign, Bat House	Stain/seal roof over picnic table; remove placards and stain/seal; Remove trash from wetlands; repair fence south of railroad bridge
Gibson	Regional Park	Heavy	B	Picnic Table, Bench, Trash Can, Fountain, Barbecue, Asphalt Trail, Statue of Liberty Monument, Lion Monument, Sign, Light Poles, Paris Gibson Garden, Vin. Jones Cabin, Sign/Kiosk, Chess Table, Duck Pond, Basketball Court, Restroom, Playground swings, Band Shelter, Bleachers, Paris Gibson Monument	Very heavily used park, well maintained, frequent life cycle replacement will be necessary, replace irrigation system
Grande Vista	Community Park	Heavy	C	Sign, Irrigated Grass, Tee ball/Baseball Fields, Bleachers, Picnic Table, Walking Paths (asphalt), Pet Waste Station, Trash Can, Slide, Basketball Hoops & Blacktop, Little Free Library	Remove broken bleachers; Re-pave paths
Graybill	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	C	Asphalt Basketball Court, Sidewalk, Sign, Swing Set, Picnic Shelter, Picnic Table, Trash Can, Gravel Parking, Pet Waste Station, Grass	Repair basketball court; Trim low branches over parking; Re-mulch swing set area
Heren	Neighborhood Park	Heavy	B	Sign, Benches, Little Free Library, Asphalt Running Path, Trash Can, Swing Set, Play Area, Picnic Shelter, Picnic Tables, Pet Waste Station	Address gophers; life cycle replacement of amenities

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Highland Multi-Sports Park	Special Use	Heavy / Moderate	C	Ball Field, Trash Cans, Dug Outs, Concessions Stand/Announcers Stand, Restrooms, Bleachers (wood/metal), Ball Pen, Shed, Gravel Parking Lot, Asphalt Parking Lot, Maintenance Garage, Ticket Booth, Small Climbing Structure, Portable Toilet	Fix broken ball pen, lower 4 fields need to be redone, new backstops, dugouts, in field lips, Concessions need redone, restrooms at upper fields need upgrades, some bleachers need replacement, fencing upgrades, tree pruning
Highland Portion BMX	Special Use	Moderate	C	Sign, Bleachers (wood/metal), Picnic Tables, Concessions Building, Trash Can, Shed, Parking Lot (gravel), Fence	General maintenance (thistles in grass discourage use of park)
Horizon	Neighborhood Park	Light	B	Retention Pond	
Hylande Heights	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Grass, Bench, Walking Path, Pet Waste Station, Garbage Can, Decorative Boulder Formation, Sign	Re-pave path
Jaycee Gallatin	Community Park	Heavy	C	Playground, Picnic Table, Benches, Swing Set, Basketball Half (gravel), Trash Can, Little Free Library, Sign, Baseball Backstop, Parking, Tennis Courts	Re-surface/Remove tennis courts, resurface basketball court, upgrade backstop or remove, upgrade irrigation
Jaycee Pool	Neighborhood Pool	Heavy	B	Building, Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Showers, Lockers, Pool, Splash Park	Upgrade urinal system; Replace slides every 7 years; Upgrade shade; No picnic tables; Stucco on building is peeling
Kiwanis North	Neighborhood Park	Heavy	C	Grass, Sidewalk, Basketball Hoop/Court, Tennis Court, Picnic Tables, Sign, Bench, Play Structure, 4-Square Field, Drinking Fountain	Sand/paint west end sign; Stain/seal wood picnic tables; Re-surface sports courts; Re-mulch play area
Kiwanis West	Neighborhood Park	Heavy / Moderate	B	Sign, Tennis Court, Basketball Court, Trash Can, Pavilion w/ Bathrooms, Picnic Tables, Bench, Play Structure, Swing Set, Open Space, Grass	Re-surface basketball court, Tennis Court needs resurface
Kranz	Neighborhood Park	Light	B	Signs, Grass, Trash Can, Parking Area Asphalt, Sidewalk	Reseed grass in the NE corner, Irrigation Upgrade, parking lot needs overlay, implement master plan
Lions	Community Park	Heavy	B	Sign, Swing Set, Picnic Table, Trash Can, Play Area, Tennis Court (2), Parking Area, Trash Can Enclosure, Asphalt Path, Sidewalk, Bench, Flag & Dedication Monument, Plane Display, Memorial Plaque, Pavilion/Restrooms, Little Free Library, Play Structure, Fence	Re-surface/repurpose tennis courts to pickle ball; Replace boards/stain/seal wood benches; Repaint pavilion

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Madison	Neighborhood Park	Light	C	Sign, Trash Can, Swing Set, Slide, Low Post & Cable Fence, Grass, Baseball Backstop	Weed control; Replace broken chain-link & boards on baseball backstop; Remove graffiti from slide sign
Margaret	Community Park	Heavy	B	Sign, Picnic Table, Bench, Lights	None
Morony	Neighborhood Park	Heavy / Moderate	C	Sign, Electronic Sign, Swing Set, Trash Can, Benches, Pool Parking Lot, Bike Racks, Planter Beds, Sidewalks, Grass	Re-mulch swing area; Replace wood on benches by basketball court; Re-surface basketball court; Replace basketball nets; Fix "N" over electronic sign; needs irrigation upgrades
Morony Natatorium	Community Pool	Moderate	D	Pool, Liner, ADA Lift, Access Doors, Ventilation System, Coping, Drinking Fountain, Showers, Restroom, Changing Rooms, Family Locker Room, Office & Entry Desk, Mechanical Equipment, Pool Equipment, Boiler System	Replace door jams in locker rooms; Replace outdoor vent, foundation upgrades, see 2011 assessment, community facility in neighborhood park
Meadowlark	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Sign, Picnic Table, Trash Can, Drinking Fountain, Little Free Library, Pet Waste Station, Trash Can Enclosure, Bench, Play Structures, Swing Set, Grass	Fix bent bench on picnic table
Memorial Park	Neighborhood Park	Heavy / Moderate	B	Sidewalks, Sign, Benches, Swing Set, Trash Enclosures, Drinking Fountain, Barbecue, Dedication Stone, Central Planter & Flag Pole, Picnic Gazebo, Grass, Play Structure	Irrigation Upgrade
Mitchell Pool & Electric City Water Park	Regional Park (Part of East Bank Parks)	Heavy	C	Historical Bath House Building, Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Showers, Lockers, Pool, Splash Park, Drinking Fountain, Water Slides, Concessions Building, Benches, Trash, Sidewalks, Storage Building, Flow Rider & Lazy River, Pump Building	Upgrade urinal system; Entry sidewalk is not ADA compliant; Exterior stucco replacing; Add dressing rooms to locker rooms; Replace power pole; Replace slide within 5 years; Resurface Flow Rider Pad every 2-3 years; Walls of Lazy River need repair; Replace slides within 5 years; New door on pump building
Montana	Neighborhood Park	Light	C	Sign, Grass, Trash Can, Tennis Court	Remove or repurpose tennis courts; opportunity for Master Plan for Park
Noah's Ark Park	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Sign, Trash Can, Play Structure, Basketball Court, Sidewalk	Re-surface basketball court
Oddfellows	Regional Park (Part of East Bank Parks)	Heavy	B	Parking Lot, Bench, Trash Can, Asphalt Trail, Sign, Picnic Table, Invasive Species Sign, Free Portage Shuttle Sign, Trailhead Sign, Restrooms, Picnic Shelter, Trash Enclosure, Basketball Court, Play Structure	Overseed thin grass; upgrade restroom; small parking lot (available power)
Overlook	Special Use	Heavy	B	Overlook Flag, Lewis & Clark Statues, Informational Boards, Parking Lot, Split Rail Fence, Visitor Center, Picnic Table, Benches, Law Enforcement Memorial, Sidewalk, Power Pedestals, Garbage Cans	Re-surface parking lot; Replace informational boards
Park Island	Special Use	Light	B	Sidewalk, Irrigated Grass, Parking Lot (gravel)	None

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Park Garden Island	Special Use	Light	B	Sidewalk, Irrigated Grass, Parking Lot (gravel)	None
Pinski Park	Neighborhood	Moderate	B	Sign, Grass, Backstop, Playground Structure, Picnic Shelter, Picnic Table, Garbage Can, Basketball Court Asphalt, Sidewalk	Move tree in front of sign; Mulch in shrub beds/playground; remove or replace basketball court; needs irrigation upgrades
Recreation Center	Recreation Facility	Moderate	D	ADA Restroom (Kiddy Camp Area), Lift in Stairwell, Flooring, Storage Room, Media Room, Bleachers, Basketball Hoops, Scoreboard, Stage, Workout Area on Stage, Climbing Wall, Stairs, Co-ed Steam/Sauna, Lockers, Free Weights, Nautilus Area, Breakroom/Sitting Area, Dance Studio, Showers, Restroom Stalls, Conference Area, Picnic Tables, Playground, Parking Lot, Trash Receptacle, Bike Rack	Replace flooring in Kiddy Camp area; Chemical spill on flooring in mezzanine; Check railing for safety requirements; Replace lights in gym; No lift - need traction for runners - in Fitness Center; Insufficient space for Fitness Center lockers; Fitness Center not ADA accessible; Free weight/Nautilus area equipment is dated; Dance studio needs acoustic insulation for noise; Locker rooms need additional lockers; Conference area carpet needs replaced; Update ADA doors for Main floor entryway; General updates in Good Eats Restaurant, including replacing carpet, remove/paint wood paneling, update light fixtures; Child's World Daycare - basement is lacking windows and there is no ADA access; Grading issues in parking lot; poor overall layout
Rhodes	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Little Free Library, Monument, Picnic Table, Trash Enclosure, Sign, Sidewalk, Play Structure, Swing Set, Grass	Remulch play area; Evaluate picnic tables; needs irrigation upgrades
River's Edge Trail North & West Bank	Trail	Heavy	B	Trail (Concrete/Asphalt), Roofed Trailhead Sign, Informational Display, Mileage Sign, Bench (concrete), Picnic Table (Concrete), Covered Picnic Area, Vault Toilet, Trash Cans, Sculptures, Drinking Fountain, Dedication Display, Accent Boulders, Retaining Wall, Chain-link Fencing, Post & Cable Fencing, Non-Public Boat Launch, Pedestrian Bridge, Central Avenue Bridge, 9th Street Bridge, 15th Street Bridge, Parking Lot	Upgrade deteriorating asphalt sections of Trail to concrete
River's Edge Trail South Bank	Trail	Heavy	B	Roofed Notice Boards, Bench, Trail (asphalt), Bridge, Picnic Table, Vault Toilet, Sculpture, Drinking Fountain, Dedication Stone, Railcar Display, Trash Can, Trail Rules Sign, Informational Display, Rail Fence, Fishing Pier, South Short Trails Mileage Sign, Pet Waste Station	Stain/seal wood notice boards; Replace aged information displays
Riverview	Neighborhood Park	Light	B	Sign, Trash Can, Sidewalk	No amenities, adjacent to school with playground and other facilities; needs irrigation upgrades

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Riverview Little League	Special Use	Heavy	D	Baseball Fields, Bleachers (wood/metal), Dugouts, Parking Lot (gravel) Shed, Picnic Table, Concession Stand, Restrooms, Ball Pen, Maintenance Garage	Safety evaluation of bleachers; general maintenance
Roosevelt	Neighborhood Park	Light	B	Sidewalk, Grass, Sign, Bench, Picnic Table, Sculpture	Needs Irrigation
Sacajawea	Special Use	Moderate / Light	C	Sign, Baseball Diamond	Replace failing wood bleachers, backstops & dugouts; batting cage needs to be removed/upgraded; Weed control on infield; needs irrigation upgrades
Sandhills	Neighborhood Park	Light	B	Sign, Grass (non-irrigated), Trash Can, Asphalt Path; Retention Pond	None
Siebel Soccer Complex	Special Use	Heavy	B	Soccer Fields, Concessions Pavilion, Restrooms, Playground, Parking Lot (paved), Maintenance Facilities, Sidewalks, Flag Pole, Entry Monument	Add more sidewalks around park; No curb stops at parking lot could deteriorate the asphalt; Replace dead trees; Add trees for shade at SW parking lot
Sight & Sound	Regional Park (Part of East Bank Parks)	Light	B	Picnic Table, Trash Can, Picnic Table Shelter, Benches, Parking (asphalt), River's Edge Trail (asphalt)	Opportunities for private investment (available power)
Skyline Optimist	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Playground, Benches, Basketball Court, Picnic Table, Trash Receptacle, Sign	Irrigation to develop play field; Replace bark mulch at playground
Skyline Heights	Undeveloped	Rare	C	None	None
Sunnyside	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Bench, Picnic Shelter, Picnic Table, Dog Station, Little Free Library, Trash Receptacle, Sign, Playground, Basketball Court (asphalt), Sidewalks, Grass	Mulch around playground
Sunrise	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	C	Sign, Trash Can, Swing Set, Basketball & Tennis Court, Sidewalks, Grass	Re-mulch swing set area; Resurface sports courts; Weed kill edge of sidewalk
Trailside Dog Park	Community Park	Heavy	A	Bench, Trash, Picnic Table, Parking Lot (asphalt), Pet Station, Drinking Fountain (pet), Vault Toilet, Picnic Shelter, Large Dog Area, Small Dog Area, Picnic Table w/ Shelter	None

City of Great Falls Park & Facility Inventory & Assessment Summary					
Site	Classification	Usage Level	General Condition	Site Amenities (Quantity)	Opportunities for Improvement
Valleyview	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Sign, Picnic Table (concrete), Trash Can, 4-way Teeter-Totter, Swing Set, Play Structure, Bench, Barbecue, Grass	needs irrigation upgrades
Verde	Neighborhood Park	Moderate	B	Grass, Covered Picnic Tables, Trash Can, Sign, Field Stone Wall, Gravel Parking Areas, Play Structure, Swing Set	Re-mulch; Stain/seal picnic tables; Overseed grass near west end; Parking; needs irrigation upgrades
Veteran's Memorial (Legion Park)	Special Use	Heavy / Moderate	A	Memorial Walls, Bench, Grass	None
Wadsworth	Regional Park	Heavy	C	Rail Fence, Pad for Picnic Table, Pond, Picnic Table, Trash Can, Bench, Trash Can Enclosure, Dock, Picnic Table Roof, Rules Signs, Portable Toilet, Gravel Access Road, Boy Scout Camp, Archery Club, Saddle Club, Horse Trail	Update Master Plan
Warden	Community Park	Heavy	B	Sign, Disc Golf Course, Grass, River's Edge Trail & Trailhead, Sing Set, Parking Lot, Bench, Picnic Tables, Portable Toilet, Gazebo & Viewing Area, Garbage Cans, Gravel Path	Re-mulch swing set area; Overseed worn areas in disc golf course
Water Tower Pool	Neighborhood Pool	Heavy	B	Building, Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Showers, Lockers, Pool, Splash Park	Upgrade urinal system; Replace slide every 7 years; Provide more picnic tables
Water Treatment Plant	Special Use	Light	A	Picnic Table, Trail (concrete), Grass	None
West Bank	Regional Park	Moderate	B	Pedestrian Bridge, River's Edge Trail (Concrete/Asphalt), Bench, Disc Golf Course, Trash Can, Parking (gravel/asphalt), Picnic Shelter w/ Table, Picnic Table w/ Barbecue, Outhouse, Picnic Shelter (large), Picnic Table, Art (bear w/ seating), Signage, Pumphouse, Restroom, Boat Launch	Implement Master Plan
West Hill	Undeveloped		C	None	None
West Viaduct	Undeveloped	Light	C	None	None
Westwood / CMR Tennis Courts	Special Use	Moderate	A	Tennis Courts, Bleachers (metal), Parking Lot, Trash Cans, Portable Toilet	Re-pave parking lot
Whittier	Community Park	Heavy	B	Sign, Historic Information Board, Bike Rack, Trash Can, Picnic Table, Bench, Lights	None

Detailed assessments are provided in separate documents.

7.4 PARK AND FACILITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department currently has a quality staff that operates and manages a unique system of parks, facilities, and trails.

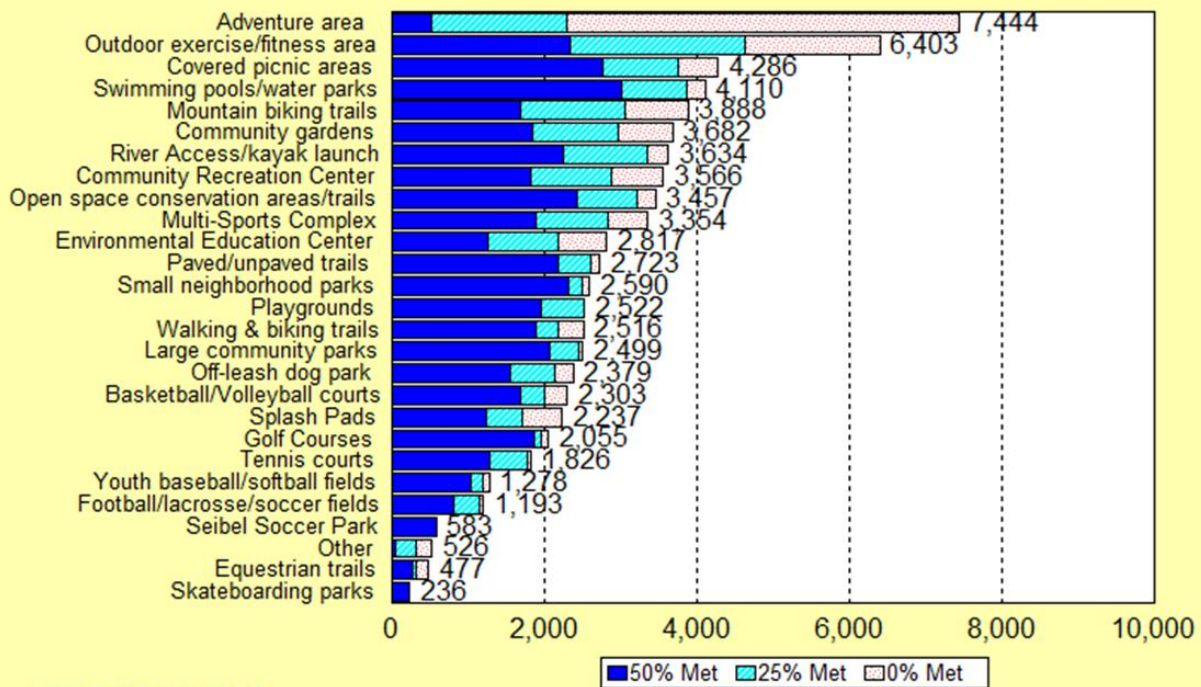
7.4.1 MEETING FACILITY NEEDS

In reviewing the current facility offerings against the desired facility offerings of the community, there is great need to expand or add facilities.

Per the statistically valid survey conducted by ETC: Based on the number of households who indicated their needs were only being met 50% or less, 7,444 households indicated an unmet need for an adventure area. Other unmet needs include: Outdoor exercise and fitness area (6,403 households), covered picnic areas (4,286 households), and swimming pools and water parks (4,110 households).

Q7-3. Estimated Number of Households for Great Falls Parks and Recreation Department Whose Needs for Facilities Are Only Being 50% Met or Less

by number of households based on 25,301 households in Great Falls



Source: ETC Institute (2016)

7.4.2 PARK AND FACILITY INVESTMENT RATING

Prioritizing needs provides Great Falls with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The priority needs rating (PNR) reflects the importance residents place on items (sum of top 3 choices) and the unmet needs (needs that are only being partly met or not met) for each facility/program relative to the facility/program that rated the highest overall. Since decisions related to future investments should consider both the level of unmet need (UNR) and the importance of facilities and programs (IR), the priority needs rating weights each of these components equally.

The PNR reflects the sum of the Unmet Needs Rating and the Importance Rating as shown in the equation below:

- $PNR = UNR + IR$

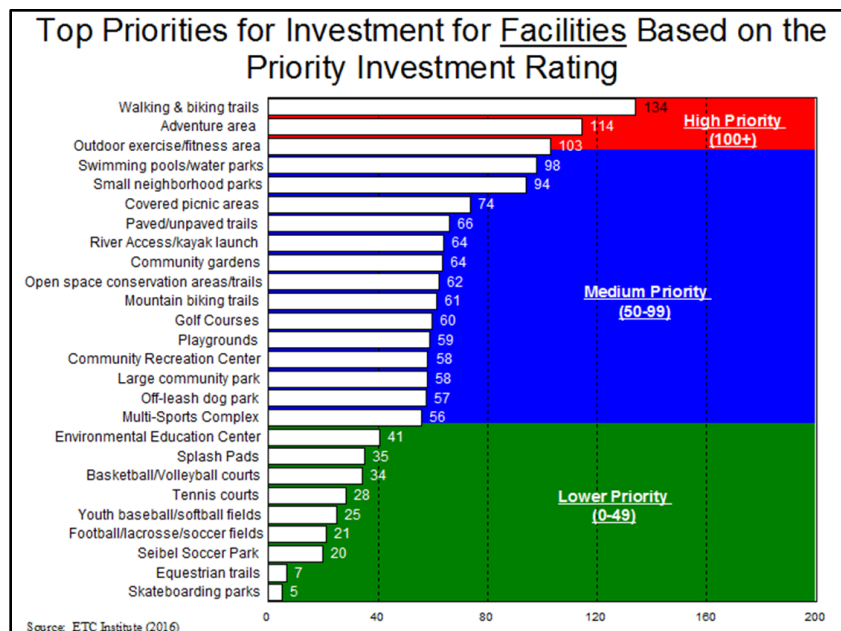
For example, suppose the Unmet Needs Rating for playgrounds is 26.5 (out of 100) and the Importance Rating for playgrounds is 52 (out of 100), the Priority Needs Rating for playgrounds would be 78.5 (out of 200).

Interpreting the PNR Scale:

- High Priority Areas are those with a PNR of at least 100. A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high level of unmet need and residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements in this area are likely to have a positive impact on the greatest number of households.
- Medium Priority Areas are those with a PNR of 50-99. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.
- Low Priority Areas are those with a PNR below 50. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and residents do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations

are

being targeted.



7.5 SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS ANALYSIS

The service level standards analysis is a review of the inventory of parks and major park assets in relation to the total population of the study area and community needs. Ultimately, these standards should be used as goals for Great Falls leadership to use in measuring service levels and making decisions about providing park facilities and assets. The standards **should not** be the sole determinant of how Great Falls will invest in its parks, recreation facilities and trails system over the next 10 years.

7.5.1 CURRENT LEVEL-OF-SERVICE STANDARDS

The current level-of-service standards are displayed below. Some amenities were not included in this analysis because they are based on the number and distribution of parks and not on the community's resident population.

Amenities included in a population-based level-of-service analysis are:

- Neighborhood Parks
- Community Parks
- Special District/Use Parks
- Undeveloped/Open Space Parks
- Large Covered Picnic Areas
- Diamond, Baseball (Adult and Youth)
- Diamond, Softball (Adult)
- Rectangle Fields (All)
- Outdoor Basketball Multi-Use Courts
- Tennis Courts
- Playgrounds
- Dog Parks/Off leash Areas
- Golf Courses
- Swimming Pool (Outdoor)
- Swimming Pool (Indoor)
- Recreation Center

<i>City of Great Falls Parks and Recreation System</i>				
SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS				
PARK TYPE	Great Falls Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population		
Neighborhood Parks	165.41	2.80	acres per	1,000
Community Parks	339.98	5.76	acres per	1,000
District/Special Use Parks	273.01	4.63	acres per	1,000
Open Space/Undeveloped Parks	437.04	7.41	acres per	1,000
Total Park Acres	1,215.44	20.61	acres per	1,000
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:				
Large Covered Picnic Areas	8.00	1.00	site per	7,373
Diamond, Baseball (90 foot bases)	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Diamond, Youth Baseball/Softball	31.00	1.00	field per	1,903
Rectangle Fields (All)	14.00	1.00	field per	4,213
Outdoor Sport Courts (basketball)	15.00	1.00	court per	3,932
Tennis Courts	24.00	1.00	court per	2,458
Playgrounds	28.00	1.00	site per	2,106
Dog Parks/Off leash Areas	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Golf Courses (18 hole)	2.00	1.00	course per	29,491
Skate Parks	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	3.00	1.00	site per	19,660
INDOOR AMENITIES:				
Swimming Pool (Natatorium)	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981
Recreation Center	16,000.00	0.27	SF per	person

PLEASE NOTE: Trails were not calculated in this population-based service level analysis because they are based on resource location and connected networks rather than the city's resident population.

7.5.2 SERVICE LEVELS RECOMMENDATION

The current service levels adopted have served Great Falls well and provide a basis for measuring park system performance. Coupled with the park system assessments, community input and analysis conducted, it is recommended that the City adopt the Service Level Standards as recommended by the consulting team.

Further service delivery analysis should be undertaken to ensure equitable access to parks, trail connectivity and management of natural and cultural resources.

SERVICE LEVEL STANDARDS							
PARK TYPE	Great Falls Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population			Recommended Service Levels; Revised for Local Service		
Neighborhood Parks	165.41	2.80	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000
Community Parks	339.98	5.76	acres per	1,000	3.00	acres per	1,000
District/Special Use Parks	273.01	4.63	acres per	1,000	4.00	acres per	1,000
Open Space/Undeveloped Parks	437.04	7.41	acres per	1,000	5.00	acres per	1,000
Total Park Acres	1,215.44	20.61	acres per	1,000	14.00	acres per	1,000
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:							
Large Covered Picnic Areas	8.00	1.00	site per	7,373	1.00	site per	5,000
Diamond, Baseball (90 foot bases)	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981	1.00	site per	12,000
Diamond, Youth Baseball/Softball	31.00	1.00	field per	1,903	1.00	field per	5,000
Rectangle Fields (All)	14.00	1.00	field per	4,213	1.00	field per	5,000
Outdoor Sport Courts (basketball)	15.00	1.00	court per	3,932	1.00	court per	5,000
Tennis Courts	24.00	1.00	court per	2,458	1.00	court per	10,000
Playgrounds	28.00	1.00	site per	2,106	1.00	site per	3,000
Dog Parks/Off leash Areas	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981	1.00	site per	30,000
Golf Courses (18 hole)	2.00	1.00	course per	29,491	1.00	course per	50,000
Skate Parks	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981	1.00	site per	60,000
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	3.00	1.00	site per	19,660	1.00	site per	50,000
INDOOR AMENITIES:							
Swimming Pool (Natatorium)	1.00	1.00	site per	58,981	1.00	site per	50,000
Recreation Center	16,000.00	0.27	SF per	person	1.00	SF per	person

7.5.3 SUMMARY OF SERVICE LEVELS RECOMMENDATION

The following chart summarizes the consulting team's recommendation for Great Falls Service Level Standards for core park and facility types.

CHAPTER EIGHT - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

This section of the plan reflects the capital improvement recommendations that are necessary to fulfill the facility needs of the community. In order to plan and prioritize capital investments, the consulting team recommends that the Park and Recreation Department applies specific guiding principles that balances the maintenance of current assets over the development of new facilities. The departmental CIP framework is also utilized to determine and plan CIP projects and make budget decisions that are sustainable over time. These criteria (e.g., safety compliance, commitment, efficiency, revenue) and priorities are also focused on maintaining the integrity of the current infrastructure and facilities before expanding and/or enhancing programs and facilities.

The community, through this planning process, has indicated strong support for this concept of prioritization. Even with the indications of a modest economic turnaround, funding is not sufficient to take care of all existing assets and build new facilities.

The result is the recommendation to develop a three-tier plan that acknowledges a stark fiscal reality, leading to the continuous rebalancing of priorities and their associated expenditures. Each tier reflects different assumptions about available resources.

- **The Critical Alternative** has plans for prioritized spending within existing budget targets. The intention of this alternative is to refocus and make the most of existing resources with the primary goal being for the department to maintain services. The actions associated with the Fiscally Constrained Alternative address deferred maintenance at existing facilities and is funded through existing tax dollars.
- **The Sustainable Alternative** describes the extra services or capital improvement that should be undertaken when additional funding is available. This includes strategically enhancing existing programs, beginning new alternative programs, adding new positions, or making other strategic changes that would require additional operational or capital funding. In coordination with the City Manager's Office and City Commission, the Park and Recreation Department would evaluate and analyze potential sources of additional revenue, including but not limited to capital bond funding, partnerships, program income, grants, and existing or new taxes.
- **The Visionary Alternative** represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community. It is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the community, and by providing a long-range look to address future needs and deficiencies. In this Master, the Vision Alternative addresses aging facilities to make improvements in operational effectiveness and the overall sustainability of the park and recreation system. Funding for vision projects would be derived from partnerships, private investments and new tax dollars.

The following pages detail the recommended capital improvement projects - developed in conjunction with staff - for the three-tier spending plan.

8.1 CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS – MAINTAINING WHAT WE HAVE

This section outlines the projects and estimated capital costs of each that focus on the lifecycle replacement of existing facilities and amenities.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	
CRITICAL	
PARK/FACILITY	COST
American's Little League	\$102,575
Belview Park	\$5,750
Bloomington Park	\$3,950
Boston Heights Park	\$114,010
Carter Park	\$33,540
Centene Stadium	\$2,500
Charles Russell Park	\$1,020,000
Chowen Springs Park	\$6,500
Clara Park	\$398,520
Community Hall Park-Westside Orchard Garden	\$4,600
Don Olson 90ft Baseball Field	\$6,000
Dudley Anderson Park	\$6,350
Eagles Crossing Park	\$65,020
Elks Riverside Park	\$8,000
Fox Hollow Park	\$4,000
Garden Home Park	\$6,000
Gibson Park	\$2,935,000
Grande Vista Park	\$102,575
Graybill Park	\$69,900
Highland Multi-Sport Complex	\$1,235,000
Highland Portion - Electric City BMX Park	\$3,000
Hyland Heights Park	\$85,875
Jaycee Gallatin Park	\$625,000
Jaycee Pool	\$100,000
Kiwanis North Park	\$95,270
Kiwanis West Park	\$90,000
Kranz Park	\$205,510
Lions Park	\$300,000
Madison Park	\$7,420
Mitchell Pool - Electric City Water Park	\$500,000
Meadowlark Park	\$1,000
Memorial Park	\$110,510
Natatorium	\$600,000
Noah's Ark Park	\$46,170
Oddfellows Park	\$205,000
Overlook Park	\$114,900
Pinski Park	\$457,480
Rhodes Park	\$118,110
River's Edge Trail	\$100,000
Riverview Little League Park	\$14,900
Riverview Park	\$194,790
Roosevelt Park	\$110,510
Sacajawea Park	\$183,300
Skyline Heights Park	\$275,670
Skyline Park	\$269,130
Sunnyside Park	\$5,010
Valleyview Park	\$390,440
Verde Park	\$387,875
Wadsworth Park Site Specific Master Plan	\$100,000
Warden Park	\$18,000
Water Tower Pool	\$50,000
West Bank Park	\$445,000
TOTAL	\$12,614,160

8.2 SUSTAINABLE RECOMMENDATIONS – IMPROVING WHAT WE HAVE

Options described in this section provide the extra services or capital improvement that could be undertaken when additional funding is available to meet need(s) with a focus on enhancements to existing facilities. The following provides a summary of the sustainable options recommended by the consulting team.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	
SUSTAINABLE	
PROJECT	COST
Convert 6 existing Tennis Courts to Pickleball Courts	\$100,000
Add 5 Large Covered Picnic Shelters at the following parks:	\$500,000
*Gibson Park	
*Grande Vista Park	
*Jaycee Park	
*Kiwanis Park	
*Meadowlark Park	
Add 2 Dog Parks at the following parks	\$150,000
*Clara Park	
*Montana Park	
Develop Site Specific Master Plans for the following parks	\$350,000
^Garden Home Park	
*Skyline Park	
*Wadsworth Park	
Conduct an Athletic Field Master Plan	\$50,000
TOTAL	\$1,150,000

8.3 VISIONARY RECOMMENDATIONS – DEVELOPING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Recommendations described in this section represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community. It is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the community, and by providing a long-range look to address future needs and deficiencies. The following new development and redevelopment projects have been identified as relevant to the interests and needs of the community and are relevant to the city’s focus because they feature a high probability of success.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	
VISIONARY	
PROJECT	COST
Construct a 50,000 sq. ft. Multi-Generational Center that replaces the existing Recreation Center and Morony Natatorium	\$20,000,000
Re-Master Plan Eagle Falls Golf Course and convert Campground/Adventure Area through private public partnership	\$250,000
TOTAL	\$20,250,000

8.4 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SUMMARY

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY		
Project Type	Estimated Total Project Cost	Years in which to be completed
CRITICAL PROJECTS	\$12,614,160	1-5
SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS	\$1,150,000	5-10
VISIONARY PROJECTS	\$20,250,000	5-15
TOTAL	\$34,014,160	

CHAPTER NINE - FUNDING OPTIONS

In order to continue to build and maintain the parks and recreation system, funding should be pursued for operations and capital improvement projects, such as those presented in this section.

New, sustainable funding sources are essential to implementing a capital improvement plan. There is substantial potential for increasing revenues for the parks and recreation system while still providing affordable recreation opportunities. The following are high level funding options that should be vetted as the department updates its Master Plan and develops a five to ten year capital improvement program in 2016:

9.1 PRIORITY FUNDING SOURCE – PARK MAINTENANCE DISTRICT

It is recommended that the Great Falls City Commission consider the adoption of a resolution that would create a Citywide Parks Maintenance District to supplement and create a sustainable funding source for the purposes of providing the park and recreation system services including:

- Maintenance, repair, replacement, upkeep, installation, improvement, operational enhancement, construction, reconstruction, land acquisition;
- Implementation of measures required to maintain public health and safety or meet legal or regulatory requirements;
- Purchasing, replacing, and/or maintaining equipment, tools and/or vehicles necessary to carry out park maintenance functions
- Any other functions, labor, supplies and/or materials necessary for management and maintenance of City-owned facilities, lands and equipment under the responsibility and care of the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department including but not limited to: public parks and park areas (as described in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the Great Falls) recreation facilities, trails, open space, urban forest, medians, boulevards, pathways, sidewalks, public easements, and other facilities which are located in the City limits and/or are owned by the City.

9.2 FUNDING SOURCES FOR FISCALLY CONSTRAINED PROJECTS

9.2.1 COMMUNITY AND PARKS FOUNDATION

The People's Parks and Recreation Foundation is a joint-development funding source or operational funding source between a foundation and a government agency. The foundation operates as a non-profit organization, working on behalf of the public agency to raise needed dollars to support its vision and operational needs.

The dollars raised by the foundation are tax-exempt. Foundations promote specific causes, activities, or issues that a park-and-recreation system needs to address. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, sales of park-related memorabilia, etc.

Private donations may be received in the form of cash, securities, land, facilities, recreation equipment, art, or in-kind services. Donations from local and regional businesses as sponsors of events or facilities should be pursued.

9.2.2 GREENWAY FOUNDATIONS

Many agencies have turned to greenway foundations to help develop and maintain trails and green corridors. The City of Indianapolis Greenway Foundation, for example, develops and maintains the greenways throughout the city and seeks land leases along the trails as a funding source, as well as “selling” miles of trails to community corporations and non-profits. In addition, cities sell the development rights along the trails to local utilities for water, sewer, fiber optics, and cable lines on a mile-by-mile basis, which further helps to develop and manage these corridors.

9.2.3 FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

Friends associations are a foundation that typically are formed to raise money for a single purpose, such as a park facility or program that will better the community as a whole and, at the same time, meet special interests.

9.2.4 CORPORATE AND PERSONAL LEAD GIVING

Corporate and personal giving involves the department seeking corporate lead funds or personal lead gifts via a foundation partner or through personal contacts that are used to catalyze wider giving in support of a specific project or operation. The lead donations set the precedent for additional giving over a period of one year up to five years. Often those who have given or pledged contributions are invited to a recognition event, which may include additional opportunities for contribution through auctions, for example.

9.2.5 DONATIONS

Private donations are a popular form of fundraising by public agencies, particularly for facilities and services that are highly visible and valued by the public. Donations can be channeled through a foundation or conservancy aligned with the parks and recreation system’s priorities. Donations can be made through one or more of the following methods:

- Donations of cash to a specific park or trail segment by community members and businesses
- Donations of services by large corporations to reduce the cost of park or trail implementation, including equipment and labor to construct and install elements of a specific park or trail
- Reductions in the cost of materials purchased from local businesses that support parks and trails implementation, and can supply essential products for facilities

9.2.6 ADOPT-A-TRAIL PROGRAMS

These are typically small-grant programs that fund new construction, repair or renovation, maps, trail brochures, and facilities (bike racks, picnic areas, birding equipment, etc.), as well as providing maintenance support. These programs are similar to the popular “adopt-a-mile” highway programs most states utilize. Adopt-a-trail programs can also take the form of cash contributions in the range of \$12,000 to \$16,000 per mile to cover operational costs.

9.2.7 ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAMS

These are small-grant programs that fund new construction and provide maintenance support. Adopt-A-Park programs can also take the form of cash contributions in the range of \$1,000 to \$5,000 per acre to cover operational costs.

9.2.8 PARTNERSHIPS – DEVELOPMENT AND/OR OPERATION

Partnerships are joint-development funding sources or operational funding sources formed from two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a public agency, or a private business and a public agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue-producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths of each partner.

9.2.9 USER FEES

User fees are fees paid by a user of recreational facilities or programs to offset the costs of services in operating a park or a recreation facility, or in delivering programs. In Great Falls, facility usage is greatly underpriced. A perception of “value” needs to be instilled in the community for the benefits the agency is providing to the user for exclusive use. Future fees could be charged by the agency based on cost-recovery goals for the parks and core recreation services, based on the level of exclusivity the user receives compared to the general taxpayer. The consultant highly recommends that user fees for programs and facilities continue to be charged in order to create value and provide operational revenues.

If the agency feels that it cannot increase user fees, then it might consider contracting with a non-profit entity to manage its recreation facilities and programs. The agency then could take the dollars it has invested in staff members and in subsidized recreation facilities, and use those dollars to support an improvement bond for existing parks and to build new parks and recreation facilities. This would change the role of the agency to that of a facility provider only versus a facility provider and program operator. The cost savings could be substantial.

9.2.10 RECREATION SERVICE FEES

This is a dedicated user fee, which can be established by local ordinance for the purpose of constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all activities that require a reservation. Examples of such activities include adult basketball, volleyball, tennis, and softball leagues, youth baseball, soccer, football and softball leagues, and special-interest classes. The fee allows participants an opportunity to contribute toward the upkeep of the facilities being used.

9.2.11 PARK REVOLVING FUND

This is a dedicated fund replenished on an ongoing basis from various funding sources such as grants, sponsorships, advertising, program-user fees, and rental fees within one or more parks. The agency could establish a revolving fund to supported maintenance at multiple parks.

9.2.12 ADVERTISING SALES

Advertising can occur with trash cans, playgrounds, dog parks, trails, flower pots, and as part of special events to pay for operational costs.

9.2.13 MAINTENANCE ENDOWMENT FUND

This is a fund dedicated exclusively for a park’s maintenance and is funded by a percentage of user fees from programs, events, and rentals. The fee is paid by users and is added to a dedicated fund for facility and equipment replacement, such as fitness equipment, water slides, lights, artificial turf, and park-maintenance equipment.

9.2.14 REGIONAL “CANNED” EVENTS

Many agencies have contracted for special events that produce large revenues. The agency can support the event with volunteers, and the event is managed by the private, franchised agency for a set access fee that is paid by either the agency or its partners, who then receive a percentage of gross revenues from the event. Events like these have reliably produced similar-sized communities with \$300,000 a year in net revenue.

9.3 FUNDING SOURCES FOR ACTION PROJECTS

Each of these sources can be evaluated in more detail to determine the level of funding they would yield if pursued aggressively.

9.3.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FEES

Many park-and-recreation systems add a capital-improvement fee onto an existing user fee when they develop or enhance major recreation facilities. This is usually applied to golf courses, aquatic facilities, recreation centers, ice rinks, amphitheaters, and special-use facilities like sports complexes. The dollars gained either offset the cost of the capital improvement or the revenue bond that was used to develop or enhance the special-use facility. Once the capital improvement is paid off, the fee typically expires and is discontinued.

9.3.2 GRANTS

The grant market continues to grow annually. Grant writers and researchers are essential if the Department is to pursue grants. Matching dollars are required for most federal grants and many state grants. The types of grants available to the Department include:

- Safe Routes to Schools
- Federal Transportation Enhancement Grants (FHWA)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- HUD Block Grants for Environmental Review (HUD)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants
- Storm-water grants that limit the storm-water runoff in and through parks
- Trail Enhancement Grants for regional trails systems
- Development grants from community foundations to support specific park projects
- Redevelopment grants to support parks and facilities that will increase revenue from the enhanced value of property or from activities that create sales and tourism taxes

9.3.3 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TO PARKS AND TRAILS

Many municipalities seek developer contributions for parklands and also for the development of trails that run through the property being developed. The developer perceives the enhanced value such improvements mean for her or his development. Park or trail dedication as a requirement of subdivision development is a reliable means for maintaining equity of access to parks and trails.

9.3.4 IRREVOCABLE REMAINDER TRUSTS

These trusts are established for individuals who typically have more than \$1 million in wealth. They agree to leave a portion of their wealth to a park-and-recreation system in a trust fund that grows over time. The system is able to use a portion of the interest to support specific facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

9.3.5 PARK, OPEN SPACE, AND TRAIL BOND ISSUES

Agencies typically seek park bonds to meet park-related needs. The key is to use debt financing through bonds to address needs that are both unmet and clearly a community priority. It is best to propose a capital-bond project that serves a variety of users and needs. Even in the worst economic downturn, bond issues have been passing because communities are the direct recipient of the money, and it benefits families on a personal basis.

9.4 FUNDING SOURCES FOR VISION PROJECTS

9.4.1 FACILITY AUTHORITIES

Facility authorities are used by park-and-recreation systems to improve a specific park or develop a specific improvement, such as a stadium, large recreation center, large aquatic center, or sports venues for competitive events through bonding. The revenues that repay the bonds usually come from sales and/or property taxes. The City of Indianapolis has created several community venues for recreation purposes and for national-competition events that promote the local economy. The facility authority is responsible for managing the sites and operating them in a self-supporting manner.

9.4.2 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FEES

Many park-and-recreation systems add a capital-improvement fee onto an existing user fee when they develop or enhance major recreation facilities. This is usually applied to golf courses, aquatic facilities, recreation centers, ice rinks, amphitheaters, and special-use facilities like sports complexes. The dollars gained either offset the cost of the capital improvement or the revenue bond that was used to develop or enhance the special-use facility. Once the capital improvement is paid off, the fee typically expires and is discontinued.

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9.4.4 FACILITIES, IMPROVEMENT, OR BENEFIT DISTRICTS

Many agencies are also a part of regional trails systems that have developed a trails district to meet costs and manage requirements for development and maintenance. Sometimes this includes multiple counties, and usually is funded through a bond issue or various tax initiatives. A facilities or trails district can also provide major impetus for raising external financial support from foundations, individuals, corporate sponsors, and grants, among other sources.

A benefit district is similar to an improvement district and identifies the benefits derived from an improvement. A sales or property tax is then established to support the capital cost associated with the acquisition and development of the property. This approach is usually applied to community parks, regional parks, downtown districts, event plazas, signature parks, and special attractions. The benefit districts are usually in downtown areas or in regions slated for redevelopment.

9.4.5 GRANTS

The grant market continues to grow annually. Grant writers and researchers are essential if the Department is to pursue grants. Matching dollars are required for most federal grants and many state grants. The types of grants available to the Department include:

- Safe Routes to Schools
- Federal Transportation Enhancement Grants (FHWA)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- HUD Block Grants for Environmental Review (HUD)
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- Storm-water grants that limit the storm-water runoff in and through parks
- Trail Enhancement Grants for regional trails systems
- Development grants from community foundations to support specific park projects
- Redevelopment grants to support parks and facilities that will increase revenue from the enhanced value of property or from activities that create sales and tourism taxes

9.4.6 SALES TAX

One potential funding source for the parks and recreation system is an additional percentage sales tax that is committed to maintaining park sites, infrastructure, recreational fields, and trails. The advantage of a sales tax is that it collects revenues from both residents and non-residents who do business in Great Falls.

9.4.7 FOOD AND BEVERAGE TAX

Agencies utilize a 1/4- or 1/8-cent sales tax on retail food and beverages to support park and recreation systems, especially through improvement bonds for park-and-recreation improvements. These dollars come from the local community as well as visitors to the area.

9.4.8 DEDICATED MILLAGE

This source provides the opportunity for the park-and-recreation system to demonstrate how well it is meeting the community's needs through a voter-approved millage. In the last five years in the United States, 93% of all park-related bond and millage issues have passed. Communities demonstrate the value of parks when given the opportunity to vote on an increase.

9.5 OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

9.5.1 LEASE BACKS

This is another source of capital funding wherein banks or private placement-fund companies develop a park or recreation attraction, complex by buying the land, developing a recreational attraction, and then leasing it back to the agency to pay off the land or capital costs over a 30- to 40-year period. Agencies may find this source attractive because typically they can increase operational budgets more easily than finding capital dollars to pay off the lease over a set period of time.

9.5.2 REAL-ESTATE TRANSFER FEES

This is among the newest forms of funding. Many agencies and states have used these fees to acquire parklands and develop them. The money comes from the transfer of real estate from one owner to another owner, and the agency retains ½ percent (0.5%) of the value of the property at the time of sale. It is paid by the buyer, not the seller. It is possible to consider this fee to raise monies that are reserved for the development of the parks and recreation system.

9.5.3 FRANCHISE FEE FOR UTILITY RIGHT-OF-WAYS

Many agencies have sold the development rights below the ground to utility companies for fiber optic lines, water, sewer, electricity lines, and cable conduits on a linear-foot basis. King County in Washington (Seattle) sold the development rights below its greenway network and generates \$300,000 a year from the utilities involved.

9.5.4 STORM-WATER UTILITY FEES

This funding source is used in many municipalities as a way to develop greenways and trail corridors from the storm-water tax on utilities that residents pay as part of their utility bills. Improvements can include trails, drainage areas, retention ponds used for recreation purposes and natural protection of waterways. An example is available in the City of Houston. It uses this source to develop and maintain the bayous in the city and to improve access to and use of bayous for flood control and recreation.

9.5.5 HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATION FEES

This funding source is used widely across the United States for developing and maintaining parks. Association members tax themselves with a fee for landscaping of roadways, boulevards, and neighborhood parks and for ongoing park maintenance. These improvements can raise the value of homes and the quality of the neighborhood.

9.5.6 CATERING PERMITS AND SERVICES

This allows caterers to work in the park-and-recreation system on a permit basis with a set fee or a percentage of food sales returning to the department. Many departments have their own catering-service contracts and receive a percentage (10-15%) from the sale of food and drinks. This may be most suitable for large or special events occurring on publicly-owned properties. Another form of fee income is the temporary business license.

9.5.7 SOLID WASTE FEES

Many agencies charge a tipping fee at landfills to support parks and recreation facilities, including acquiring and developing parklands. Tipping fees add \$5 dollars per tipping from the user and is collected from more than just city residents.

9.5.8 PRIVATE CONCESSIONAIRES OPERATING WITHIN A LAND LEASE

Contracts with private businesses to provide and operate desirable recreational activities provide compensation to the agency through a land lease. Contractors may include coffee shops, grill and food concessions, small restaurants, ice cream shops, bicycle shops, farmers markets, and small businesses. Land leases are usually based on 15% of the value of the land plus a percentage of gross revenues from the contractor on an annual basis.

9.5.9 TAX-ALLOCATION OR TAX-INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT

Commonly used for financing redevelopment projects, a Tax Allocation District (TAD) or a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District involves the issuance of tax-exempt bonds to pay front-end infrastructure and eligible development costs in partnership with private developers and local businesses that benefit from the improvement. As development occurs in Great Falls, the tax increment” resulting from redevelopment projects is used to retire the debt that was issued to fund the eligible redevelopment costs. The public portion of the redevelopment project funds itself using the additional taxes generated by the project. TADs or TIFs can be used to fund park improvements and development as an essential infrastructure cost. This approach works well in downtown redevelopment, regional park improvements, and in trail development. The City of Valparaiso, Indiana, has used this funding source extensively for redevelopment of its downtown area and pathways system.

CHAPTER TEN - STRATEGY MATRIX

The consultant synthesized its findings to develop a framework of strategies and recommendations for the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department. The Community Values Model features recommended strategies that align with five major categories of best practices: Community Mandates, Standards, Program/Services, Business Practices, and Community Outreach and Partnerships/Sponsorships.

The Community Values Model should be evaluated and refined as political and economic circumstances shift and be used to validate the vision and mission of the Great Falls.

Community Value 1: Community Mandates	
Renovate and upgrade open spaces, parks, trails and recreational facilities to promote community interaction, healthy lifestyles and safety.	
Strategy	Maintain and enhance the quality of current park sites, facilities, and amenities of the Great Falls Park and Recreation system
Strategy	Redevelop facilities with equitable access by residents throughout the city and that reflect the ability to serve a diverse public, as well as meeting all ADA-compliance requirements and other special needs.
Strategy	Establish a lifecycle maintenance-improvement plan for parks, recreation, and aquatic facilities as part of the 2016 Master Plan Update.
Strategy	Pursue renovations and new improvements for parks, trails, and recreational facilities in areas of greatest growth and unmet needs as part of the 2016 Master Plan Update
Strategy	Maintain the importance and value of parks and recreation as a City-provided service by organizing events, festivals, and programs that build the community.

Community Value 2: Standards	
Continually update and utilize best standards for operations and maintenance of parks, trails, and recreational facilities in alignment with City of Great Falls policy.	
Strategy	Utilize consistent design standards in the development of park and recreational-facility landscaping, amenities, signage, and infrastructure.
Strategy	Develop, implement and utilize best practice maintenance standards.
Strategy	Enhance communications in marketing and promoting City parks, trails, human services and recreational facilities in order to improve community awareness of programs, services, and facilities, as well as to diversify the use of amenities and expand public-feedback opportunities.
Strategy	Maintain updated standards for asset- and amenity-management in order to maximize and expand their useful lifespan.

Community Value 3: Programs and Services	
Provide balance and consistency in the delivery of programs and services that meet the needs of the residents of City of Great Falls.	
Strategy	Increase full-time employee program staffing levels to enhance the delivery of programs of greatest need.
Strategy	Develop and maintain high-quality programs that promote health and wellness, family participation, athletic skills and abilities, life skills, socialization, personal safety, and new experiences based on the recommended standards.
Strategy	Engage residents in programs that build community and reflect its values, especially in connection with special events.
Strategy	Continue to monitor and evaluate services, events, and programs that may be provided to the public and that are either complementary to or competitive with the programs and services of the City of Great Falls.
Strategy	Provide access to high-quality programs, services, and partnerships/sponsorships that meet the specialized needs of the community's residents.

Community Value 4: Business Practices	
Manage parks, trails, and recreational facilities, and programs that support the financial goals and policies of the City of Great Falls.	
Strategy	Update the Department's pricing policy and pricing plan to reflect classification of services, total costs of service, levels of service, cost-recovery goals, characteristics of the users, and a sustainable approach to managing programs and facilities.
Strategy	Maintain an appropriate balance of affordability and entrepreneurship in the programs and services of the Department.
Strategy	Maximize the capability of new and existing technology to enhance business effectiveness within the Division.
Strategy	Develop and/or update policies and procedures as recommended in the Master Plan.

Community Value 5: Community Outreach and Partnerships/Sponsorships	
Maximize resources through mutually acceptable partnerships that leverage parks, trails, and recreational facility development and program and service opportunities.	
Strategy	Develop partnership/sponsorship policies with public, non-profit, and for profit entities. Include strategies for engaging neighborhoods and community organizations in helping to maintain park, trails, and recreation facilities, programs, and services.
Strategy	Review and update terms of agreements with existing partners/sponsors who utilize City of Great Falls parks and facilities for public or private events.

Strategy	Maintain and monitor services provided by the Department to the community to assure the Department's local active role in the network of services and opportunities available to residents, organizations, and businesses.
Strategy	Pursue and develop a formal youth-services partnership/sponsorship plan with other service providers such as Boys and Girls Club.
Strategy	Enhance the level of partnership/sponsorship with schools in the interest of improved equity and to increase access to recreation.

APPENDIX 1 - MARKETING PLAN GUIDELINES

It is important for Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to develop a working marketing plan for staff to follow that allows the Public Relations/Marketing staff to work to enhance revenue operations, increase visitation, as well as improve the awareness, value and image of the department to the community.

DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM OF USERS AND PROFILE INFORMATION FOR GREAT FALLS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT:

Staff will collect point-of-sale data on users of the services when people use Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.

- Youth Sports Programs
- Adult Sports Programs
- Enrichment Programs
- Senior Citizen Programs
- Outdoor Recreation/Environmental Education Programs
- Facility Rentals
- Special Events
- Health Fitness and Wellness
- Aquatics

ADVANCE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY ON MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS OF KEY PROGRAMS AND GREAT FALLS RECREATION AS AN ATTRACTION:

Technology Information to be created from the use of various sources to include the following:

- Point-of-sale information from entrance fees and program fees
- Centralized Reservation System for programs, events and amenities
- Intercept Survey Management of users and non-users

EXPAND CUSTOMER TRAINING AND FOCUS OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS ON SELLING THE VALUE OF GREAT FALLS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO CITIZENS AND USERS

Customer Service Training and Philosophy will focus on the basics of customer service for staff, part-time staff and volunteers. Additional training will be developed based on direct business planning unit requests to the Revenue Development staff within the department. Customer satisfaction levels will be tracked in all divisions, reported to the Revenue Development Staff for assessment and training will be determined based on the results. All part-time and seasonal staff will view a customer training video as part of their training and put into practice at their respective program sites. Customer services standards will be developed for all recreation attractions in the system and for core program areas and evaluation forms will evaluate how well those standards were met.

The goal will be to obtain 90% or greater in customer satisfaction levels at all attractions and in all programs through effective implementation and training of customer service standards. The Marketing and Communication Staff will track and manage the customer satisfaction levels and report out by attraction and core program area how well the department is performing against those standards. Staff will use user post evaluations, focus groups, trailer calls, on-site surveys and mystery shoppers to determine the customer service levels and standards met that are in place and what level of training is needed for improvement. Customer service training will be done prior to each program season for all full-time staff, part-time staff and volunteers working with users and visitors.

- Survey Monkey for gaining access from users based on their experience
- Social Media transformation
- Great Falls Park and Recreation Department purchased online advertising
- Fishing for Feedback

SUPPORT AND PROMOTE PROGRAMS THAT GENERATE INTEREST IN GREAT FALLS RECREATION

Strategies and program themes for each program area will come from the program staff and the Marketing/Communications staff working together. It is important to establish a core set of events that can be promoted across the system.

These program and or special events will be developed a year in advance to build a strong strategy for encouraging the media to participate in the event and gaining sponsors for the event to help support the operational costs. The goal is to get people and youth to visit facilities and to build awareness of the recreation opportunities available to them in programs and facilities.

INCREASE VISITATION TO GREAT FALLS PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

To increase visitation to all Great Falls Park and Recreation Department programs and attractions the Marketing/Public Relations Staff with the Program staff will develop a yearly marketing and program plan for the department and the key attractions that is targeted to all age segments. The visitation goal is to increase participation by 15% by 2018. The goal is to energize the community to appreciate and value what Great Falls Recreation provides to them in a quality facilities, key attractions, programs and services and how that translates into support for gaining more private investment in the system.

IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

The Marketing staff will work with the staff to develop an annual Communication Plan that seeks to strengthen Great Falls Park and Recreation Departments Brand in the community, increase participation in programs, services and attractions, optimize revenue opportunities, and make a positive impact on the community. The challenge is producing a consistent brand message at each customer touch point using one brand and one voice, to communicate multiple messages. The solution is a strategic process known as integrated marketing communications.

The integrated marketing communications plan serves as a comprehensive source of information regarding best ways to reach targeted audiences utilizing available resources. It establishes parameters, guidelines, and policies for promotional decision making. It is designed to build efficiencies within the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.

Given the variety of communication vehicles available, a combination of tools have been chosen based on their costs-effective ability to achieve the Marketing Plan objectives. Staff will use the Communication Plan as a guide to develop an understanding of each of the tools, which to use, and the process for successful utilization. This effectively enables everyone in the organization to become a marketer for Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.

Information for the Communication Plan should be collected and updated regularly. This should include the following:

- Capture, Analyze and Report - Use information from the Business Plan to evaluate performance of marketing activities and calculate return on investment of time and money.
- Refine revenue and participation data. Were the objectives and outcomes achieved? Discuss what worked and what didn't relative to program, price, place, and promotions?
- Define marketing objectives based on cost recovery goals.
- Use Media Plan to refine or define resource and budget allocation.
- Submit marketing recommendations for future planning and tie to the recommendations in the Business Plan.
- Use the Communications Plan as guide for reaching target audiences utilizing available resources.
- Submit Marketing Requests by specific date for review and approval of the Executive Director.
- Use the core service model from the recommended pricing policy in the Business Plan to cross-reference activity reports.
- Update Promotions Plan with marketing requests information.
- Submit Promotions Plan to the Director or his designee for quantity, cost, and scheduling information.
- Cross promote with other web-sites in the area to include the hotels, ski companies, restaurants, Historic Sites, Chamber of Commerce, Visitors Bureau, State Parks and the City Park's System by developing linkages to their sites and their sites linking to Great Falls Recreation's website.

PRESENT PROMOTIONS PLAN TO STAFF AND GREAT FALLS CITY COMMISSION FOR FINALIZATION MISSION FOR HOW TO GET THERE

The Mission of the Marketing/Public Relations Division within Great Falls Park and Recreation Department is "To create strong awareness for the value of Great Falls Parks and Recreation to people of all ages in the region and to encourage citizens of Great Falls to experience their Great Falls Parks and Recreation through effective communication, market research, effective programs and attractions that create memorable experiences".

MARKETING GOALS FOR EACH CORE BUSINESS OF THE GREAT FALLS RECREATION

- Strengthen Great Falls Park and Recreation Department's Brand and awareness
- Develop and execute collaborative city-wide marketing programs

- Educate the Great Falls City Commission and staff on the value of marketing and the return on investment from the facilities and programs provided to residents
- Advance the use of technology on marketing products and services for staff to make better decisions
- Expand customer service training to enhance users coming back to Great Falls Recreation more often
- Promote future meeting and hospitality spaces in the system
- Market Great Falls Park and Recreation Department attractions as destination facilities for the whole family to increase capacity and use that translates into more operational revenue
- Develop Mini-marketing and business plans for each attraction in the system
- Track effective data on customers who use the system and how to communicate and retain them as users and customers
- Create wider-age segment appeal of users for the recreation amenities and programs

BRAND MESSAGE TO BUILD THE MARKETING PLAN

Example: “Expect the Unexpected in your Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.” Use the Brand Message the Staff establishes and includes the follow elements where possible:

- Pictures of the key elements in the system
- Facility Attractions within the system
- Cost friendly benefits spelled out
- Programs that spell out the benefits users will receive for enrolling in the programs
- Staff and Volunteers skills and experience
- Special Events that create interest
- Music and entertainment
- Enhanced maintenance and safety of the recreation attractions in the system
- Trails that include hard surface, soft surface, mountain bike and equestrian trails
- View sheds for taking pictures of family and friends
- Amenities that demonstrate the system is serving all age segment of users and ethnic groups
- Sporting events that are held in the system
- Family Gathering Places

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SURVEY MANAGEMENT

The Marketing staff will develop a consistent survey instrument for each of the major attractions in the system that focuses on the following:

- Who the users are (age segments served)?
- Why do they use Great Falls Recreation for their recreation experience?

- How long do they stay?
- How much do they spend?
- What do they value most about the program, attraction and the experience?
- What would make them stay longer?
- What experiences are they looking for that are not available that would encourage them to use the system or attraction more often?
- How they would rate the customer service?
- How they would rate the safety and cleanliness of the system?
- How would they rate their experience (recreation facilities, programs, services, staffing, safety, etc.)?
- How would they rate the value they paid and the experience they received?
- Would they tell their friends to visit the facilities?
- What could the staff do to make their experience more enjoyable?
- What are the available hours from staff or volunteers to do this work, outcomes desired and dollars available to implement and evaluate these surveys?
- Who will be assigned to do the work?

OPERATIONAL BUDGET FOR THE MARKETING DEPARTMENT

Great Falls Recreation's Marketing Budget will be at least 3-6% of the total budget for the department. The following information is a sample of how marketing dollars can be allocated.

The breakout of the Marketing Budget into hours available should be broken down in the following manner:

- Staffing Hours available, Full-time, Part-time, Seasonal, Volunteer - Budget: \$_____
- Web-site Management and Analysis - Budget: \$_____
- Publications - Budget: \$_____
- Advertising - Budget: \$_____
- Research and data collection - Budget: \$_____
- Survey Development - Budget: \$_____
- Mailing Costs - Budget: \$_____
- Art Services - Budget: \$_____
- Signage - Budget: \$_____
- Contract services-media buyer, research, photographer, promotional items - Budget: \$_____
- Geo-coding needs to be tied out to Marketing-primary and secondary function on visitation, how far they drive- Establish staff or volunteers dedicated to do this task - Budget: \$_____
- Social Media Management - Budget: \$_____

The department will seek intern support to help them in their marketing efforts. They will work with the local media outlets to provide information to them on a timely basis. This would include newspapers, department program guide, school districts, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- **Facebook**
 - Great Falls should focus on on-going engagement
 - Continue with themed promotional initiatives. Provide correct responses to questionnaires posed to the audience.
 - Create Facebook contests and promotions
 - Assure current content on every section of the page
 - Update the events listing and provide links to view or sign-up for events
 - Highlight staff members and volunteers as a way of enhancing familiarity and ensuring reward and recognition
- **Twitter**
 - This is the next-most-effective social network to add to the marketing mix
 - The key to success on Twitter is to build a personalized relationship with the target audience and create active participation
 - Share tweets and other information frequently
 - Utilize the Department's Social Media and Crowdsourcing intern to actively listen to the users and respond to tweets from the target audience on a regular and timely basis
 - Cross-promote other initiatives, including website, other social networks, and offline initiatives
 - Keep tweets short - add hash tags and, most importantly, amplify the message by asking followers to Retweet

Three other social networks that are burgeoning in popularity and thus impacting social behavior and user engagement are **Google +**, **Pinterest**, and **Instagram**.

- **Google+** is the closest competitor to Facebook in terms of overall user adoption, brand awareness, and scale of complementary services available to make it a viable social network.
- **Pinterest**, where users “pin” images of designs, ideas, and even recipes onto a board that is viewed by their **friends/followers**, witnessed over 1000% year-over-year growth
- **Instagram** is a photo-sharing website that is becoming increasingly popular, especially with the younger audience. Its recent acquisition by Facebook ensures effective integration with the larger social network.

APPENDIX 2 - RECREATION PROGRAM STANDARDS

Recreation program standards are developed to support core recreation services. The standards focus on delivering a consistent high quality experience while achieving operational and cost recovery goals as well as marketing and communication standards that are needed to create awareness and customer loyalty.

To assist staff in its continual pursuit of delivering high quality consistent programs to the community and in achieving the cost recovery goals, the following are the standards by which programs need to be developed and administered.

HIGH-QUALITY EXPERIENCE STANDARDS

For core services, the following standards must be in place to promote a high-quality experience:

- Instructor or program coordinators' qualifications are consistent with in-the-field experience in the program specialty for which they are responsible.
- The instructor-to-participant ratios are appropriate for the participant to feel safe and attended to.
- The program is provided in the appropriate safe and clean recreation space, either indoor or outdoor, designed for that program.
- Minimum and maximum numbers of participants are set for the program or class that will allow for a high-quality experience.
- Recreation equipment or supplies that are used by the participant are high quality, safe, and appropriate for the participants to use or consume.
- The length of the program is commensurate with the attention capability of the participants to respond effectively and enjoy themselves in the activity.
- Appropriate support staff or volunteers are in place to help guide participants and support teachers or program supervisors.
- Staff is trained in first aid and CPR. Volunteers are trained in first aid and CPR when appropriate.
- A first aid kit is readily available and accessible in less than a minute.
- Staff and volunteers are trained in customer service and diversity training to make all participants feel welcome and appreciated.
- Customer feedback methods are in place to seek input from participants on their expectations of the program and the results of their experience. This should include pre- and/or post-evaluation focus groups or trailer calls.
- Pricing of services is explained to participants and/or parents on the level of investment they are making in the program and the level that Great Falls Park and Recreation Department is investing in their experience.

- Each instructor or program supervisor will be provided a toolbox that includes their class or program roster, with phone numbers or email addresses, name tags for participants, customer evaluations for users, registration forms, a program guide, pertinent recreation information and emergency phone numbers, thank you cards for participants at the end of the class, and an introduction sheet of what will occur in the program or class, how it will be conducted, and what outcomes we hope to achieve.
- All class or program policies are available to the instructor or program supervisor to adequately explain policies to the user.
- Appropriate recognition and awards are given at the end of the program to participants based on outcomes achieved or skills learned.
- New staff, volunteers, and contract employees working with children will have background checks by the Great Falls Police Department.
- Any disciplinary actions taken by an instructor or program supervisor with a program participant will be written and documented.
- Class, program curriculum, or work plans will be prepared by the instructor and program supervisor before the class or program begins and is signed off by the appropriate program staff within the Park and Recreation Department.
- Staff will be dressed in the appropriate Great Falls recreation uniform that includes a nametag.
- Drivers that transport participants must have the appropriate license, certifications, and authorization.
- Equipment or program space will be inspected prior to the class or program; noted by the instructor or program supervisor; and recorded daily, weekly, and monthly.
- Performance measures tracked will be shared with instructors or program staff at the end of each session.
- Exit interviews will be conducted with part-time staff before they leave each season and noted in their file as to re-hire or not.
- A class or program budget will be prepared for each activity and shared with the instructor or supervisor on how class monies are spent. Final budget results will be documented at the end of the program area and shared with the supervisor or manager.
- Appropriate required licenses and certifications set by law will be reviewed and filed before programs begin.

OPERATIONAL AND PRICING STANDARDS FOR PROGRAMS

- Pricing of services will be established based on cost-of-services and overlaid into programs or classes based on primetime and non-primetime rates, location, time, age segment, group, and level of exclusivity that users receive over and above use by general taxpayers. Staff will be trained in setting prices.
- Scholarship programs will be in place for those that require financial assistance in order to participate in Great Falls recreation facilities and programs.

- Quarterly results of cost of service for programs will be posted and shared with staff on all services regardless of whether they are underperforming, meeting, or exceeding the recovery goals.
- Each year, competitor and other service providers will be benchmarked and evaluated for changes they are making and how they compare with division efforts in their core services provided.
- Partnerships with core program services will be updated yearly, their level of contribution will be documented, and tracking performance measures will be shared with each partner.
- Non-core services will be evaluated yearly and reduced, eliminated, or transferred to other service providers reducing the impact on staff time.
- Maintenance and recreation staff will discuss standards for programs taking place in recreation amenities in Great Falls Park and Recreation Department annually.

APPENDIX 3 - VOLUNTEER POLICY

PURPOSE AND GOAL

The purpose of the Volunteer Program is to offer opportunities for residents, organizations, and friends of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to volunteer their skills and time in meaningful work that advances ongoing programs.

The purpose of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department's Volunteer Policies is to support the Volunteer Program with guidance, structure and direction for staff and volunteers in the areas of:

- Rights of and responsibilities of individual volunteers
- Staff planning and volunteer training for meaningful work
- Personnel practices affecting volunteers

The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department may recommend guidelines and procedures that further support the Volunteer Program. Examples of possible guidelines and procedures are given at the end of this policy document. The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department may also develop a Volunteer Manual or Handbook to be provided to each volunteer.

Volunteer recruitment and retention must be addressed through creative procedures, which are of the utmost importance. Such procedures will be developed by the

The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department staff, based on consultation with experienced volunteer coordinators in other similar organizations.

ISSUES ADDRESSED

The adoption of volunteer policies will address these issues:

- Indicate the importance of the Volunteer Program and individual volunteers
- Bring increased structure and predictability into the management of volunteers
- Require improved planning for volunteer activities and training for volunteers, within the ongoing programs
- Avoid misunderstandings and mistakes regarding volunteer personnel practices, especially with an increasing number of volunteers
- Development of advocacy

EXPECTED BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

- A commitment by the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to its Volunteer Program will yield increased volunteer accomplishments of necessary recreation projects for which funding is not available
- A business-like approach to volunteer management will increase volunteer participation and satisfaction
- Communication of adopted volunteer personnel policies will assure volunteers of fair treatment while performing tasks

- Well-planned volunteer projects, combined with the necessary volunteer training, will generate increased motivation and greater contribution of time and skills
- Advocacy among volunteers will increase as a natural outcome of the volunteer experience
- Stewardship volunteers will gain understanding and experience useful in communicating and demonstrating the importance of land stewardship to others in the community

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM POLICIES

These policies are organized within the following sections:

- Rights and Responsibilities of Individual Volunteers
- Volunteer Training and Safety
- Rights and Responsibilities of Individual Volunteers

DEFINITION OF "VOLUNTEER"

A "volunteer" is anyone who, without compensation, performs a task at the direction of, and on the behalf of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.

ORIENTATION

Volunteers shall be given an orientation to that will include an introduction to the Division and its staff, the policies that guide the volunteer's relationship with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department, (the Volunteer Manual), and the programs and plans within which volunteers may work.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Participation as a volunteer for Great Falls Park and Recreation Department shall be open to any individual, and no individual shall be discriminated against or harassed based upon race, gender, sexual preference, marital or parental status, national origin, age, or mental or physical handicap.

MINIMUM AGE

The minimum age for volunteers on non-hazardous assignments is 14 years. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have the written consent of a parent or guardian before volunteering. The volunteer duties assigned to a minor will comply with all appropriate laws and regulations on child labor.

Special permission must be given for groups of individuals under the age of 14 (e.g. Cub Scouts) who wish to serve in a voluntary capacity for the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department. Adult supervision will be required for all of those under 14 years of age.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department has approved an annual Volunteer Recognition program which will be offered for each volunteer who has given a minimum of 10 hours in the preceding year.

DRESS CODE

Volunteers shall dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties, and to present a good image to the community. Volunteers shall follow the current dress code adopted by the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING AND SAFETY

SUPERVISOR

Based on the volunteer's interests and strengths, as well as the needs of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department, each volunteer will be assigned to work with a staff member or a trained and qualified adult volunteer, who will provide training, guidance and supervision. The supervisor shall be available to the volunteer for consultation and assistance.

PLAN OF WORK

Each volunteer will be provided with a scope of work job description and assistance in understanding the expectations of her/his service.

TRAINING

The supervisor will provide the proper on-the-job training for each volunteer, and provide information and tools to perform her/his duties. Other training opportunities may arise in the form of workshops and meetings. Some activities may require the volunteer to have specific qualifications.

WORKING ALONE PROHIBITED

At no time shall any volunteer work alone at a work site. The volunteer's supervisor or an adult volunteer leader shall be present at all times.

SAFETY

Volunteers are responsible for:

- Supporting efforts to promote safe working conditions and habits
- Making full use of safety equipment and safeguards provided for assigned tasks
- Reporting immediately all unsafe work conditions to their supervisor

RESPONSIBLE STAFF MEMBER

An Great Falls Park and Recreation Department staff member or adult volunteer leader who is directly responsible for the project shall be on the premises or readily accessible in case of an emergency or unanticipated need.

WORK SITE

The work site shall be provided with the necessary equipment, facilities, and space to enable the volunteer to effectively and comfortably perform her/his duties. Volunteer work sites are subject to the same safety requirements as are all recreation work sites.

ACCESS TO PROPERTY AND MATERIALS

Volunteers shall have access to Great Falls Park and Recreation Department property and materials necessary to fulfill their duties, and shall receive training in the operation of any necessary equipment. Property and materials shall be used only when directly required for the volunteer's task.

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Volunteers shall have access to information pertinent to the performance of their work assignments, except for information which Great Falls Park and Recreation Department deems to be confidential.

APPENDIX 4 - SPONSORSHIP POLICY

PURPOSE AND GOAL

The goal of this sponsorship policy is to provide guidelines for the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to gain support from external financial resources. It will establish procedures to coordinate efforts to seek sponsorships with the corporate community, business partners, and not for profit partners to enhance services of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department. It is designed to ensure that all marketing of sponsorships support the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department's goals for services to the community and remain responsive to the public's needs and values. This Sponsorship Policy will recognize that corporate and business sponsorships provide an effective means of generating new revenues and alternative resources to support Great Falls Park and Recreation Department Foundation's facilities and programs. The policy will ensure that the corporate, business or not for profit sponsorships will not result in any loss of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department's jurisdiction or authority.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The institution of the Sponsorship Policy will establish guidelines and principles to maintain flexibility in developing mutually beneficial relationships between the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department and corporate, business, and not for profit sectors.

The recognition for sponsorships must be evaluated to ensure the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department is not faced with undue commercialism and is consistent with the scale of each sponsor's contribution.

There will be restrictions on sponsors whose industries and products do not support the goals of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department on the services provided to the community and to remain responsive to the public's needs and values.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

- Acquire revenue from sources to enhance the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department programs and facilities
- Sponsorship is a way of contributing to the community while promoting the sponsor's business and brand awareness
- A number of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department events, programs and amenities may take place in the community because of the sponsor's financial contribution
- Sponsors will get a "return on sponsorship." The sponsor looks forward to the community becoming familiar with the sponsor and/or its services and becomes a customer through the partnership with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department
- Sponsorships help to raise the awareness of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department and builds its image in the community
- Events, programs, facilities, plus maintenance of properties and recreation areas will be affordable to the community because of the financial contributions that sponsors can provide to the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department

GUIDING PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

- The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department will put out annually an ad in the local newspaper to advertise the opportunities for sponsorships for the coming year.

- Seek sponsors directly via a proposal request by staff.
- The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department may put their sponsorships out for auction at an auction event. The following process will be required when Great Falls Park and Recreation Department is involved in a sponsorship

PROCESS SUBMIT FOR A SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL

- All proposals for sponsorship must be submitted in writing on a Sponsorship Proposal form to the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.
- The Director or his designee will review the proposal and make a decision on the proposal.
- The Director will draft a sponsorship agreement. The agreement will include the contract relationship, the term and renewal opportunities; description of the program, facility, property, natural area or event to be sponsored; description of fees and/or benefits provided to the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department, the marketing rights and benefits provided to the sponsor, termination provisions, and performance measures expected on behalf of the sponsor and the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.
- All sponsorships require payment in advance by the sponsors at the contract signing of the sponsorship agreement made out to the City of Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.
- The Director may use, but is not limited to the following criteria when evaluating a sponsorship proposal; in all cases, the Director will have the prerogative to accept or reject a proposal:
 - Compatibility of the sponsor's products, customers and promotional goals with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department's goals.
 - The sponsor's past record of involvement with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department and other community projects.
 - The timeliness or readiness of the sponsor to enter into an agreement.
 - The actual cash value, or in-kind goods or services of the proposal in relation to the benefit to the sponsor and the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.
 - Potential community support for or opposition to the proposal.
 - The operating and maintenance costs associated with the proposal on behalf of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.
 - The sponsor's record of responsible environmental stewardship.
- All sponsorship activities once approved will be coordinated by the Director.
 - The Director will be responsible to work with staff on making sure the terms of the agreement are followed as outlined and provide assistance and advice to staff of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department and the sponsors.
 - Provide guidance to the sponsor regarding the interpretation and application of this policy.
 - Review and assist in the development of the sponsorship agreement as requested.
 - Track and report the results and outcomes of the sponsorship agreement as outlined.

- All sponsors will have a responsible party and an executed agreement.
 - Each sponsor involved in the sponsorship will designate a person to be responsible for their portion of the contract and/or agreement.
 - The contract or agreement will outline appropriate terms and timeliness to be implemented by each party.

SPONSORSHIP PRICING POLICY PROCEDURES

Once the proposals have been submitted the staff will evaluate these proposals as outlined.

- Set objectives, baselines and articulate measurable objectives to be achieved with the sponsorship dollars.
- Know the sponsorship costs both (direct/indirect) and level of cost recovery as it applies to the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.
- Create a measurement plan and determine what will be measured and what measures will be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of the sponsorship.
- Implement the measurement plan—visibility, communications and visitor behavior.
- Calculate “return on sponsorship”—analyze, communicate and revise as needed.
- Meet with the sponsor to review the final contract and expectations with timelines to be completed
- All promotional pieces developed by the sponsor for their involvement with the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department must be approved in advance before it goes public.

EVALUATION OF THE SPONSORSHIP

Once the sponsorship effort has been completed, staff from the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department will meet with the sponsor to review the results and discuss changes that need to occur if appropriate and make a decision about supporting the next sponsorship effort. The results of the meeting will be presented to the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The following opportunities have been identified as sponsorship opportunities for the coming year:

- Program Guide
- Special Events
- Food for Programs and Events
- Drink Sponsor
- Event Sponsor
- Give-a-ways at events
- Banner on website

APPENDIX 5 - PARTNERSHIP POLICY

Today's economic climate and political realities require the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to seek productive and meaningful partnerships in order to deliver high quality and seamless services to the needs of the community over the next 10 years. The following sections provide an overview of opportunities and strategies for developing partnerships within the community that position the Department as the hub of a network of related providers and partner organizations.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

The initial step in developing multiple partnerships in the community that expand upon existing relationships (e.g., agreements with schools for gymnasium, classroom, auditorium, and field usage, etc.) is to have an overall partnership philosophy that is supported by a policy framework for establishing and managing these relationships. The policies recommended below will promote fairness and equity within existing and future partnerships while helping staff members to avoid conflicts internally and externally. The recommended partnership principles are as follows:

- All partnerships require a working agreement with measurable outcomes and evaluation on a regular basis. This should include reports to the Division on the performance of the partnership vis-à-vis the agreed-to goals and objectives.
- All partnerships should track costs associated with the partnership investment to demonstrate the appropriate shared level of equity.
- A partnership culture should emerge and be sustained that focuses on collaborative planning on a regular basis, regular communications, and annual reporting on performance.

The following policies are recommended for implementation by the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department staff over the next several years.

PARTNERSHIP POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Partnerships can be pursued and developed with other public entities, such as neighboring cities, schools, colleges, state or federal agencies; private, non-profit organizations; and private, for-profit organizations.

ALL PARTNERSHIPS

- Each partner will meet with or report to the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department staff on a regular basis to plan activities and shared activity-based costs.
- Partners will establish measurable outcomes and work through key issues in order to meet the desired outcomes.
- Each partner will focus on meeting the balance of equity agreed to and will track investment costs accordingly.
- Measurable outcomes will be reviewed quarterly and shared with each partner, with adjustments made as needed.
- A working partnership agreement will be developed and monitored together on a quarterly or as-needed basis.
- Each partner will assign a liaison to each relevant City agency for communications and planning purposes.

- If conflicts arise between partners, the Director of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department or his designee, along with the other partner's highest-ranking officer assigned to the agreement will meet to resolve the issue(s) in a timely manner. Any exchange of money or traded resources will be based on the terms of the partnership agreement. Each partner will meet with the other partner's respective board or managing representatives annually to share updates and report the outcomes of the partnership agreement.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PRIVATE, FOR-PROFIT ENTITIES

The recommended policies and practices for public/private partnerships that may include businesses, private groups, private associations, or individuals who desire to make a profit from the use of City facilities or programs are detailed below. These can also apply to partnerships where a private party wishes to develop a facility on city property, provides a service on city-owned property, or has a contract to provide a task or service on the City's behalf at Great Falls Park and Recreation Department facilities. These partnership principles are as follows:

- Upon entering into an agreement with a private business, group, association, or individual, the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department staff and City leadership should recognize that the importance of allowing the private entity to meet its financial objectives within reasonable parameters that protect the mission, goals, and integrity of the City.
- As an outcome of the partnership, the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department must receive a designated fee that may include a percentage of gross-revenue dollars less sales tax on a regular basis, as outlined in the contract agreement.
- The working agreement of the partnership must establish a set of measurable outcomes to be achieved, as well as the method of monitoring those outcomes. The outcomes will include standards of quality, financial reports, customer satisfaction, payments to the City, and overall coordination with the Division for the services rendered.
- Depending on the level of investment made by the private contractor, the partnership agreement can be limited to months, one year, or multiple years.
- If applicable, the private contractor will provide a working management plan annually to ensure the outcomes desired by the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department. The management plan will be negotiated if necessary. Monitoring the management plan will be the responsibility of both partners. The Department should allow the contractor to operate freely in its best interest, as long as the agreed-to outcomes are achieved and the terms of the partnership agreement are adhered to.
- The private contractor should not lobby the Great Falls City Commission for initial establishment or renewal of a contract. Any such action will be cause for termination of the contract. All negotiations must be with the Department Director or that person's designee.
- The Great Falls Park and Recreation Department has the right to advertise for privately-contracted partnership services or to negotiate on an individual basis using a bid process based on the professional level of the service to be provided.
- If conflicts arise between both partners, the highest-ranking officers from both sides will try to resolve the issue before turning to litigation. If no resolution can be achieved, the partnership shall be dissolved.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The recommended partnership policies encourage four classifications of partner - public not-for-profit, public for-profit, private not-for-profit, and private for profit. This section of the partnership plan further organizes partners within these classifications as having an area of focus relevant to the type of service/benefits being received and shared. The five areas of focus are:

- Operational Partners - Other entities and organizations that can support the efforts of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to maintain facilities and assets, promote amenity- and recreation-usage, support site needs, provide programs and events, and/or maintain the integrity of natural/cultural resources through in-kind labor, equipment, or materials
- Vendor Partners - Service providers and/or contractors that can gain brand association and popularity as a preferred vendor or supporter of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department in exchange for reduced rates, services, or some other agreed-upon benefit.
- Service Partners - Organizations and/or friends-of-recreation groups that support the efforts of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department to provide programs and events, including serving specific constituents in the community collaboratively.
- Co-branding Partners - Organizations that can gain brand association and notoriety as a supporter of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department in exchange for sponsorship or co-branded programs, events, marketing and promotional campaigns, and/or advertising opportunities.
- Resource Development Partner - Organizations with the primary purpose to leverage private-sector resources, grants, other public-funding opportunities, and resources from individuals and groups within the community to support the goals and objectives of the Great Falls Park and Recreation Department in mutually-agreed-to strategic initiatives.

APPENDIX 6 - LAND ACQUISITION AND DIVESTITURE GUIDELINES

ACQUISITION CRITERIA

A challenge found in many municipal regulations is that the design standards for what constitutes high-quality parklands are not adequately detailed. This ambiguity can result in the designation of lands that are largely unusable as public parks. The following recommended changes to regulations are intended to improve the quality of donated parklands as usable public parks with meaningful recreational value.

Recreation Parks

If the parcel is intended to become a recreation park, it should provide a benefit to the area that surrounds it. The following questions can help determine the value of the parcel. These questions are relative to the park's classification (pocket, neighborhood, community, or regional) and general location (rural or urban).

Basic Attributes

1. Is the land of an appropriate size and shape?
2. Is the character of the land (topography, drainage, soils, etc.) appropriate?
3. Does the land have inherent economic value comparable to the lands adjoining it?
4. Is this land suitable, upon development, to provide the recreation experiences designated for the area?
5. Would the use of this land (as specified by its classification) harm the natural environment?

Location

1. Is the land situated appropriately?
2. Would this land contribute to the equitable distribution of parks in the planning region?

Access

1. After completion, would this land, upon casual observation, be easily identifiable as a public park?
2. Will the land be appropriately accessible to the public?

Developments

1. Is the supporting infrastructure (utilities, access, etc.) available in the form and scale needed?
2. Is the land free of infrastructure (high-tension power lines, sewage lagoons, etc.) that would limit appropriate park uses?
3. Is the land free of easements (drainage, effluent disposal, mineral extraction, motorized access, etc.) that would limit appropriate park uses?
4. Does the land have any special cultural or historical significance?

Hazards and Costs

1. Are there physical hazards, limitations or restrictions that would hinder the intended use of the land?

2. Would the benefits offered by this land outweigh the potential liabilities?
3. Would the benefits offered by this land outweigh foreseeable maintenance costs?

Contribution to the Park System

1. Does the land complement other nearby parklands?
2. Does the land serve as a linkage or corridor to other parklands?
3. Do non-motorized travel-ways exist between this park and residences, schools, and other parks and open space?

Harmonious Existence with the Built Environment

1. Would the use of this land (as specified by its classification) conflict with adjacent land use?
2. Does adjacent land use conflict with the intended uses of this land?

Conservation Parks

If the parcel is intended to become a conservation park, it should provide for the protection of important natural values. The following questions can help determine the value of the parcel:

Physical Landform

1. Does the land contain a riparian area?
2. Does the land contain unique geomorphic features?
3. Is the landform essentially in its natural state, or can it be returned to such a state?

Flora and Fauna

1. Does the land serve an important biological purpose in the area?
2. Is the majority of the vegetation native to the area?
3. Does the land contain habitat unique to the area?
4. Does a diversity of plant species exist on the site?
5. Does a diversity of animal species exist on the site?
6. Is the land large enough and of high-enough quality to provide self-contained habitat?
7. Does the land provide for wildlife linkages to other habitat areas?
8. Do any sensitive or rare plant or animal species live on or use this land?
9. Does the land buffer adjacent lands that contain sensitive or rare plants or animals?
10. Is the habitat largely unaltered from its natural state, or can it be restored to such a state?

Human Uses

1. Will human use of this land harm the natural habitat?
2. If the land is intended to serve as a non-motorized linkage to other areas, is it suitable for such a purpose?

3. Does the land provide educational opportunities?
4. Is the land threatened by other uses?

Contribution to the Conservation Land System

1. Is the land in an area identified as having important natural resources?
2. Does the land link other conservation lands?
3. Does the land contribute to the diversity of conservation lands in the area?

Harmonious Existence with the Built Environment

1. Does (or will) adjacent land use degrade the naturalness of the land?
2. Will it be possible to prevent intrusions from undesirable plants, domestic animals, and other threats?

DIVESTING CRITERIA

Another challenge associated with many municipal regulations is that the criteria for disposal of parklands are not adequately detailed. This ambiguity has resulted in the designation of lands that are largely unusable as public parks. The following recommended changes to regulations are intended to provide guidelines for the divestiture of parklands that do not have meaningful recreational value.

Recreation Parks

If the parcel is intended to remain a recreation park, it should provide a benefit to the area surrounding it. The following questions can help determine if the parcel has value as a park. These questions are relative to the park's classification (pocket, neighborhood, community, or regional) and general location (rural or urban).

Basic Attributes

1. Is the land of an appropriate size and shape?
2. Is the character of the land (topography, drainage, soils, etc.) appropriate?
3. Does the land have inherent economic value comparable to the lands adjoining it?
4. Is this land suitable for the recreation experiences intended for the area?
5. Is the use of the land causing harm to the natural environment?

Location

1. Is the land situated appropriately?
2. Does the land contribute to the equitable distribution of parks in the planning region?

Access

1. Is the land, upon casual observation, easily identifiable as a public park?
2. Is the land appropriately accessible to the public?

Developments

1. Is the supporting infrastructure (utilities, access, etc.) available in the appropriate form and scale needed?
2. Is the land free of infrastructure (high-tension power lines, sewage lagoons, etc.) that would limit appropriate park uses?
3. Is the land free of easements (drainage, effluent disposal, mineral extraction, motorized access, etc.) that would limit appropriate park uses?
4. Does the land have any special cultural or historical significance?

Hazards and Costs

1. Are there physical hazards, limitations or restrictions that hinder the use of the land?
2. Do the benefits offered by this land outweigh the potential liabilities?
3. Do the benefits offered by this land outweigh current and future maintenance costs?
4. Is the park continually subjected to criminal uses or occupation?

Contribution to the Park System

1. Does the land complement other nearby parklands?
2. Does the land serve as a linkage or corridor to other park lands?
3. Do non-motorized travel-ways exist between this park and residences, schools, and other parks and open space?

Harmonious Existence with Built Environment

1. Does the use of this land (as specified by its classification) conflict with adjacent land use?
2. Does adjacent land use conflict with the uses of this land?

Conservation Parks

If the parcel is a conservation park, it should provide for the protection of important natural values. The questions that follow can help determine the value of the parcel.

Physical Landform

1. Does the land contain a riparian area?
2. Does the land contain unique geomorphic features?
3. Is the landform essentially in its natural state, or can it be returned to such a state?

Flora and Fauna

1. Does the land serve an important biological purpose in the area?
2. Is the majority of the vegetation native to the area?
3. Does it contain habitat unique to the area?

4. Does a diversity of plant species exist on the site?
5. Does a diversity of animal species exist on the site?
6. Is the land large enough and of high-enough quality to provide self-contained habitat?
7. Does the land provide for wildlife linkages to other habitat areas?
8. Do any sensitive or rare plant or animal species live on or use this land?
9. Does the land buffer adjacent lands that contain sensitive or rare plants or animals?
10. Is the habitat largely unaltered from its natural state, or can it be restored to such a state?

Human Uses

1. Does human use of this land harm the natural habitat?
2. Does the land serve as a non-motorized linkage to other areas?
3. Does the land provide educational opportunities?
4. Is the land threatened by other uses?

Contribution to the Conservation Land System

1. Is the land in an area identified as having important resources?
2. Does the land link other conservation lands?
3. Does the land contribute to the diversity of conservation lands in the area?

Harmonious Existence with Built Environment

1. Does adjacent land use degrade the naturalness of the land?
2. Is it possible to prevent intrusions from undesirable plants, domestic animals, and other threats?