



Parks and Recreation Citizen Review Committee

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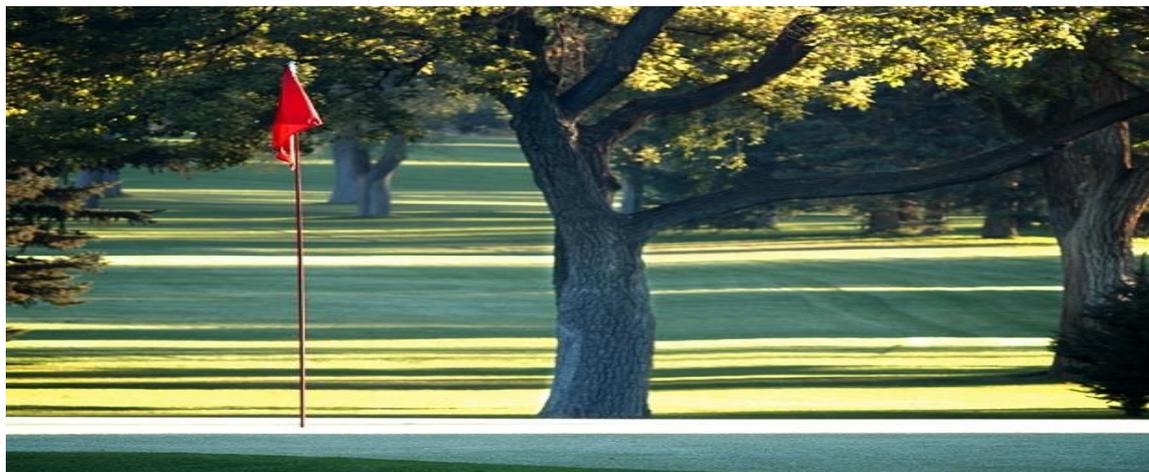


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Executive Summary

The Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation Department is a major contributor to the quality of life for the citizens of Idaho Falls. The Department is responsible for 52 parks, three golf courses, a zoo accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), an aquatic center, a recreational center, rodeo grounds, two cemeteries, and many other facilities, all of which provide numerous recreational and educational opportunities. The mayor, in an effort to increase public scrutiny of City operations, established citizen review committees and asked them to conduct a review of each department's operations and activities. This report is the product of the citizen's review for the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Parks and Recreation Department is organized around four major divisions: Parks, Recreation, Zoo, and Golf. The committee was able to review each of these divisions, but to varying degrees. For instance, the committee did not examine closely the golf operations since they had undergone an intensive review within the last couple of years and were successfully following a five-year business plan. In a similar manner, the zoo had just recently been reaccredited by the AZA, so the committee focused their review on the non-animal aspects of zoo operations. There are additional limitations of this review, which are identified in the body of this report.

The committee notes the very large number of programs, activities, and facilities that are maintained by the Department. For the most part the committee found that the facilities, though aging, are well maintained and the staff engaged. This review did, however, identify many areas for improvement and posed well over a hundred recommendations. Two overarching themes drove many of the others.

1. There is a need for further administrative/institutional controls in the area of planning. The City needs a master plan that clearly articulates their vision for the Parks and Recreation Department. The Department then needs a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan that details the steps needed to achieve this vision. The plan should include goals, measurable objectives, and performance metrics that show progress. Without these plans in place, it is impossible to definitely state how well the Department is performing.

In a similar manner, the committee was unable to determine if the Department was using its funds effectively. The committee did not uncover any wasteful spending, and found the staff to be very cost conscious and able to account for all monies. These are admirable attributes, but unless they are tied to the achievement of the goals and objectives in a master plan and tracked on a regular basis, no verdict on effective use of funds can be rendered. The committee recommends that Standards developed by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) be used to craft the necessary plans and procedures.

2. The second major theme is the condition of several of the major recreational and zoo facilities. The committee found that these recreational facilities are too old, too crowded, and inadequate to fulfill the City's needs. For instance, the Aquatic Center is 26 years old and unable to offer the water recreation amenities that are most popular with today's communities. It is increasingly difficult to maintain and is unable to accommodate the demands of the various user groups.

The Recreation Center is over 75 years old, and its age, space limitations, and maintenance and accessibility concerns do not represent the City well. The Ice Arena is unable to accommodate the demand for ice time and is located in an area not amenable to expansion.

Lastly, the educational facilities and offices for the zoo staff are woefully inadequate. While the committee was disheartened to find no plans to address these major shortcomings, their absence (and anticipated creation) does create the opportunity to take a "big-picture" view. Also, when creating anew the necessary plans, management can suggest alternatives to the current piecemeal approach.

For instance, the committee believes that a recreational complex could be developed that would be home to a new Recreation Center, a new Aquatic Center, a relocated and new Ice Arena, and room for other activities. Such a complex would be a major benefit to the citizens and would address the recreational needs of the community for decades to come. The existing Ice Arena facility could be repurposed to become the zoo educational facility, office space for the zoo staff, and a larger gift shop.

This report contains many additional recommendations that followed on our concerted investigation into the operations of the Parks and Recreation Department. Many of these recommendations are subsidiary to the two main issues: Proper planning documents and their assessment-of-success measurements; and the presence of many aging physical facilities that preclude successful renovation or retro-fitting.

The top recommendations follow. The entirety of all recommendations on Department Administration and the four P&R Divisions may be found in a spreadsheet in Exhibit 3 at the end of this report.

TOP RECOMMENDATIONS

ADMINISTRATION

1. Develop a capital facilities plan for each major facility, showing future building and replacement needs. Ensure that funding for such capital spending is included, in detail, in all budgets.
2. Pursue Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation, with the first stage (self-assessment) to be completed in the 2016 fiscal year. These standards will aid in updating approaches to planning and projects and identifying new ideas.
3. Develop a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.
4. City to prepare a City Master Plan, which would include the vision for the Parks and Recreation Department.
5. Improve and extend community outreach in an active way (e.g., use of Facebook and other social media, web pages, talks at community fairs, schools, senior center, clubs, etc.) so that the community is aware of P&R activities well BEFORE they occur.
6. Increase opportunities for public participation in program and activity design.
7. City to establish, and publish, a policy on how the City (and by extension, P&R) is to handle its dealings with public partners of all types. Such a policy will assure the City that all partners comply with City regulations and laws, and agreed-upon practices of accountability, non-discrimination, accessibility, and other City goals and policies.
 - Policy should describe how such partnerships are to be documented.
 - Memoranda of Understanding (or Memoranda of Agreement) should document such partnership agreements.
 - City should keep files on each such partner (by-laws, mission, goals)
 - City should periodically review such partnerships, via minutes, annual reports, etc. from the partnering organization.
8. As major facilities become too old, too crowded, and inadequate to fulfill the City's needs, the committee recommends that the City take a big-picture, holistic view for possible solutions rather than addressing them individually. For example, resolve the current issues with the Rec Center, Aquatic Center, Ice Arena, and Zoo facilities by planning a Recreational Complex that could be the nexus for our Connecting Our Community project. It would house a new Rec Center, a relocated Ice Arena, and a new Aquatic Center, and include for other activities and future growth. The present

Ice Arena could be repurposed to accommodate a new Zoo Education Facility, a larger Zoo gift shop, office space for Zoo staff, and much needed storage space for the Zoo. This would also free up additional space for much needed parking.

9. Create a project matrix to provide information, at any point during an annual cycle, on the many projects being undertaken by the P&R Department. The matrix must show, at a minimum, both the current status and progress of existing projects and plans for future projects.
10. Develop a policy to determine the efficacy of continuing (or discontinuing) commitment to projects that have outlived their usefulness or require more resources (either human or financial) than the City can provide budgeting for or do not (as in the case of private developers) meet City rules.
 - The policy should delineate a process by which the Department decides whether (or not) to take on new property, facilities, and programs.
 - Such policy should include routine analysis that identifies those areas and programs that are least relevant to the Department and provides a means for divesting the City of such, or of determining means of repurposing or reusing them.
 - Cease the acquisition of properties or lands if the Department has no means of providing ongoing maintenance and improvements.
 - Ensure that private developers follow City rules for areas (such as retention ponds and rights-of-way) for which the City must provide maintenance. If possible, developers should build in lower-cost or revenue-producing uses.
11. Develop a Five-Year Plan for each major facility and program. Such plan should include regular, specific, measurable facilities revenues, use, and development plans for each major facility or program.

BUDGET

1. Standardize the budget process throughout the Department. The process should be consistent among Department, Divisions, and Programs and should be focused on goals and objectives, and not merely be an annual update of the preceding year's report. Measurable metrics must be included.
2. Establish a MERF-like fund for small buildings such as storage sheds, equipment housing, picnic shelters, fences, restrooms, etc.
3. Make volunteer hours a budget line item. At present, volunteers make up a very large component of the work done in the P&R Department. Those hours should be captured and reported in the budget as a neutral line item in order to highlight the magnitude of this positive contribution.

4. Establish a revenue policy, including a cost-recovery plan, to balance considerations of age, affordability, and other demographics in setting user fees across all programs. Include consideration of the services P&R provides regionally, and periodically examine the contribution to Idaho Falls P&R funding from non-resident users from other cities, the county, etc.
5. Evaluate the costs and benefits of partial or full privatization of one or both cemeteries. Point of fact: The current annual expenditure to maintain the cemeteries is substantial.

STAFFING

1. Hire an Assistant Director for the Department. The current situation does not allow the Director the time to accomplish long-range planning and evaluation on the Department level.
2. Hire a department-level Volunteer Management Coordinator. Moving these tasks functions to the Department level would allow more cost-effectiveness and better coordination for all segments of the Department (e.g., Division, Program).
3. Hire a department-level Grant Writer. As with #2 above, this person could pursue and write grants at all levels of the Department.
4. Appoint a Zoo Director. There is a great need for the Director to be engaged in strategic and long-range planning, and fundraising, among others.
5. Write a detailed Staffing Plan, identifying succession candidates and workforce development strategies.
6. The above-mentioned Staffing Plan(s) must also ensure that proper training, certifications, and re-certifications are both planned and budgeted for.

FACILITIES

1. Begin analysis and planning for an orderly replacement of the old and inadequate Recreation Center with a new facility that accommodates the current unmet need, anticipates expected City growth, offers a balanced municipal fitness and class program for all people in the community, and adds the cost efficiencies and ADA functionality of a more up-to-date facility. CAPRA Standard 7.11 will be helpful in this regard.
 - Ensure that projected costs of such replacement are incorporated into City financial planning.
2. Establish a vision for enhanced, up-to-date infrastructure (see ADMINISTRATION #8 above). Multiple aging facilities are rapidly becoming too old, too crowded, and

inadequate to the City's needs. The committee urges that these infrastructure needs be promptly addressed by developing new facilities plans for the Rec Center, the Aquatic Center, the Ice Arena, and Zoo staff and education facilities through a single, big-picture view rather than as piecemeal, partial solutions. For example, design a City recreational complex that can combine aquatic, ice, and other recreational activities.

3. Build (or re-purpose the existing ice arena as) a multi-function building for the Zoo. It would house the education unit, adequate and up-to-date employee offices, a larger gift shop, and adequate storage.

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

1. Develop a policy for Department-wide sharing of personnel. Functions that apply across Divisions and Programs within the Department (such as volunteer management, grant-writing, advertising, events planning, fees-tracking, and some maintenance functions) could be more cost-effective and more easily coordinated from the Department level.
2. Prepare an analysis of playground needs with the intent of bringing them up to ADA and safety standards.
3. Continue/complete ADA and energy audits. Continue and increase attention to environmental and sustainability issues.
 - Make available an annual list of ADA audit findings, the remaining barriers to completing them, and the schedule for ameliorating them.
 - Balance mechanical improvements that improve energy efficiency against the cost of implementation, especially in buildings already reaching (or past) their life spans.
4. Develop guidelines for P&R in which the needs entailed in acquiring new facilities or acreage or equipment are delineated. If there is no budget or staff to work with, it would be best not to acquire in the first place. Private developers must follow these guidelines and City rules to allow City takeover of maintenance in such a way that it is doable, more cost effective, and possibly even revenue-producing
5. Strengthen and improve the relationship with the Tautphaus Park Zoological Society in the following ways:
 - Move the Zoo membership sales and management into Parks & Rec Zoo operations for improved cost-effectiveness and accountability.
 - Review services and facilities furnished without charge by the city to the TPZS (see Form 990-EZ Part III) for cost-effectiveness and accountability.

- Review ongoing improvements in the TPZS-City agreement to ensure completion, including a written Memorandum of Understanding as suggested in pp26-28 of the report (Cooperative Programming Policy).
6. Provide a technology upgrade for the Zoo. Provide staff with mobile electronic devices in order to facilitate communication, data collection and analysis, report preparation, research, and grant preparation. Convert the Zoo's watering system to a computerized operation similar to the P&R's centrally controlled irrigation system.

PERFORMANCE METRICS

1. Establish a system of performance metrics that establishes goals and shows progress towards desired CAPRA accreditation.
2. Conduct systematic studies to assess who Department users are and to move away from the "anecdotal" approach to planning specific programs/activities. Department should then evaluate existing programs and community needs and develop a Recreation Programming Plan for people of all ages and abilities.
 - Carry out a formal survey of parks usage by time/day, demographics, and activity types.

2015 Parks and Recreation Citizen Review

The goal, process (charge questions), phases, and reporting format for the Parks and Recreation (P&R) Citizen Review Committee were established in the “2015 Citizen Review Committees” guidance issued by the Mayor’s office (Exhibit 1). The P&R Citizen Review Committee report generally follows the format suggested in the guidance, but it does vary somewhat, as will be explained below.

Goal: Idaho Falls deserves efficient and innovative government. Because our city is not a private company, public scrutiny is not just useful, it is desirable and vital. To invite this scrutiny, Citizen Review Committees (CRCs) will be established to provide a top-to-bottom review of city divisions and departments.

Charge Questions: The CRCs will consist of a wide variety of citizens. Each committee will review a separate department (including its divisions, facilities, and programs) and answer the following questions:

1. What should be the top priorities for this department given the goals of fidelity to law, solving city problems, economic growth, and enhancement of city assets?
2. What does this department do well?
3. Can this department achieve any of its goals more effectively?
4. Can this department use public funds differently?

Committee Review Process Methodology: The committee followed the Mayor's recommended three-phase approach:

Phase I – Data-gathering

Phase II – Fact-finding, deliberation, writing

Phase III - Reporting

Phase I – Data-gathering

This phase began with an orientation meeting with the P&R Department and its administration. Greg Weitzel conducted the meeting in order to familiarize its members with the Department, its goals, and the overall responsibilities of the Department, and its divisions, facilities, and programs. After the initial orientation, and recognizing that the scope of Parks and Recreation is very large and work is conducted by a diverse group of individuals in widely dispersed geographical locations and facilities, four distinct day-long field trip/tours were determined to be necessary.

The committee toured and reviewed Recreation operations on March 10, Golf operations on March 24, Zoo operations on April 7, and Parks operations on April 21. Each tour was followed by a detailed budget presentation given by the responsible program/activity manager, with the Department Director in attendance.

Phase II – Fact-finding, Deliberation, Writing

Phase II began immediately after the final tour and continued into September 2015. Subcommittees were established for the Department and its four divisions: Recreation, Zoo, Golf, and Parks. Numerous meetings were held and follow-up discussions with department personnel occurred. On July 7, 2015, the Parks and Rec Committee provided the Department Director and Mayor with a preliminary presentation of the committee's observations and findings to date.

Phase 3 – Reporting

Phase III considered the following elements, as requested in the aforementioned charge questions:

General Findings and Observations – positive and negative

- A. Administration/Budgeting
- B. Management
- C. Policy
- D. Political

Fact-Finding and Reporting Limitations

It is very important that the reader understand the assumptions and limitations of the observations and conclusions drawn in this report. The key assumptions and limitations are as follows:

1. No information was obtained from any public surveys, or from surveys of employees or volunteers.
2. The majority of the information used to create this report was provided by Department staff. We assumed that this information was correct and current.
3. We conducted no in-depth review of specific budget line items. We assumed that this information had been more than thoroughly reviewed by Department staff, the Mayor's office and the City Council.
4. While the September timeframe for completing our work limited the scope of our investigations, the committee members have had literally tens of thousands of hours of experience with many Department activities to support a majority of the observations and recommendations.

5. With the exception of the review of the cemetery costs, no comparisons with other similar programs in the region were made.
6. We did not, as a group, attend any meetings of the committees that meet regularly on behalf of individual programs and operations within P&R. Nor were any formal interviews conducted with members of these committees.
7. No in-depth review of the major Parks Division facilities, such as Idaho Falls Raceway, Sandy Downs Race Track, or Melaleuca Field, was performed.

Charge Questions

Based upon the observations and findings from the above Department-Level portion of this report, the CRC has addressed the following charge questions based upon the Mayor's charter to the CRC.

Charge Question 1 - The top priorities for this department?

Please see *Top Recommendations* in the preceding section for a full listing.

Charge Question 2 - What does this department do well?

Following are some of the highlights from among many findings of the committee, across all Divisions.

- Overall, the P&R Department is directed by an excellent, highly qualified professional P&R Director who benefits from experience in different cities and regions, recognizes the professional needs of a viable P&R Department, and has the necessary training and commitment to take P&R to the next level of professionalism.
- The Department has demonstrated a willingness to be proactive and innovative with new approaches and events in order to engage and involve the community.
- The involvement of volunteers, especially at the Zoo, is admirable.
- Recreation Division staff appear to have long experience in their positions and are energetic and enthusiastic.
- Recreation Division facilities are conspicuously clean, showing the pride employees take in maintaining them well, even where age of the buildings makes this difficult.
- The Recreation Division's good leadership combines with the long experience and dedication of their facilities managers and maintenance staff to ensure that major strides are made each year in remodeling, repair, and improvements.
- As with other Recreation facilities, the Activity Center is kept scrupulously clean and conscientiously maintained.
- The present Zoo staff is both highly professional and dedicated to the Zoo.

- The Zoo is an attractive facility and presents a pleasing outward appearance to the visiting public.
- The three golf courses are managed by knowledgeable and qualified professionals.
- The golf superintendent's at all three courses show a high degree of professionalism and stewardship.
- The three golf courses are well maintained.
- The clubhouse staff and the course maintenance personnel are enthusiastic and courteous.
- The Parks Division is run by competent, energetic, and enthusiastic managers.
- As with the Recreation Division, the Parks Maintenance staff appear to take great pride in carrying out even routine tasks to a high standard of quality.
- The committee was impressed with the attitude of Horticulture and Urban Forestry employees. They have a can-do attitude, and it is obvious that they like what they do.

Charge Question 3 - Can this department achieve any of its goals more effectively?

Please refer to *Top Recommendations* above, the spreadsheet in Exhibit 4 at the end of the report, and the detailed specifics in each section of the report.

Charge Question 4 - Can the department use public funds more effectively?

Please read *Recommendations for Budget* in each section of the report.

DEPARTMENT-LEVEL REPORT

Department-Level Report

The Director of the Parks and Recreation Department (P&R) envisions developing a parks and recreation system that will be accredited by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). CAPRA is the recognized national standard for quality public parks and recreation programs at all levels (including county, municipal, and military), first formalized in 1989 from over two decades of professional research.

Idaho Falls already meets nationally recognized standards with the Zoo (through Association of Zoos and Aquariums [AZA] accreditation), as well as in golf (through Professional Golf Association [PGA] and Golf Course Superintendents Association of America [GCSAA]). Professionals in aquatics, horticulture and other areas also participate in relevant certification and training programs. By pursuing CAPRA accreditation, Parks & Recreation will create a department-wide "umbrella" for bringing all of our diverse parks and recreation resources under a single set of effective management policies meeting the overall quality standard of CAPRA.

The Parks and Recreation CRC heartily endorses the Director's goal of CAPRA accreditation. A growing number of other mid-sized Western cities such as Logan UT, Golden CO, and Glendale AZ have secured CAPRA accreditation as a clear signal to policy makers, department staff, tax payers and the general public that their parks and recreation has been independently evaluated as meeting established benchmarks of effectiveness. The CAPRA seal of approval tells prospective new residents and businesses that the city values parks and recreation and ensures they are managed to the highest standards.

With CAPRA accreditation, the Idaho Falls Department of Parks and Recreation will become the first accredited agency in the state of Idaho, and join more than 144 other accredited park and recreation agencies across the United States. To that end, the CRC uses references to CAPRA and National Recreation and Park Association (NARPA) standards throughout this report. These references are not meant to be compliance/non-compliance-based; they are, however, meant to be meaningful benchmarks or validations of recommendations and considerations.

The CRC review of the Parks and Recreation Department at the Department level has identified five key areas (as described in the following sections) during the review. Recommendations are provided for each of these areas as both key recommendations that should receive a response and general recommendations that will further enhance the Department if implemented.

Department Strengths

During the review process the CRC identified several strengths with the management of the P&R Department. These strengths are emphasized below to promote awareness and to encourage continued emphasis on these areas.

Parks and Recreation is a direct reflection of the quality of life in our community. The Department provides identity for citizens, and its programs and activities are a major factor in the perception of our quality of life. Parks and Recreation services are often cited as one of the most important factors in surveys of how livable communities are.

Overall, the P&R Department is directed by an excellent, highly qualified professional P&R Director who benefits from experience in different cities and regions, recognizes the professional needs of a viable P&R Department, and has the necessary training and commitment to take P&R to the next level of professionalism.

The Department has demonstrated a willingness to be proactive and innovative with new approaches and events in order to engage and involve the community. Ryder Park, Noise Park, Connecting Our Community, the new signage initiative, centralized management of the City irrigation system, and other initiatives clearly demonstrate this. Additionally, the Horticulture and Forestry program and beautification of the greenbelt and other areas represent a significant improvement to our city.

The City's parks provide gathering places for families and social groups of every age and economic status, regardless of their ability to pay for access. Studies show that access to P&R opportunities has been strongly linked to reductions in crime and to reduced juvenile delinquency.

Parks and Recreation programs provide significant direct and indirect revenues to the local and regional economy. Golf/sports tournaments and special events such as arts festivals, concerts, and other outdoor activities stimulate economic activity. These events involve the hospitality services of the area, tourism venues, and fuel and recreational equipment retailers, among other private-sector businesses. These involvements offer sustained value to the local and regional economy.

The presence of parks also improves the local tax base and increases property values. National studies have shown that private property values increase the closer such land is to parks. Such value increases property tax revenues, thereby improving the local economy. Our parks have a value to our community that transcends the dollar values for maintaining the facilities. Parks also provide a sense of public pride and cohesion in Idaho Falls.

The involvement of volunteers, especially at the Zoo, is admirable and shows the broad community support for quality Parks and Recreation, even while protocols for good use of volunteers can be strengthened.

Comprehensive Mission Statement and Master Plan

A comprehensive City master plan is needed. Evaluating the effectiveness of the P&R Department requires systematic evaluation of not simply what is performed (outputs) but information on how widely and well these outputs work (outcomes). This probably requires a citywide demographics study. To make this study meaningful, information must be more than anecdotal. It must address questions of who is served (or underserved); it must identify City and regional trends in P&R usage; it should assess how programs are being maintained and improved to reach future goals for the fullest range of demographics, in a systematic, planned, and effective way.

The P&R Department needs a comprehensive mission statement that fulfills the City's vision, as should be expressed in the recommended City master plan (see recommendation #1 below). As CAPRA 1.4 notes, this "...establishes the long-term strategy and direction for the agency services and activities," placing these in the context of the City's culture, needs, and trends in a way that is far more structured, benchmarked, and measurable than the current P&R mission statement. The current mission statement is limited to only three goals (be cost-effective, provide quality, and serve community needs), and none is defined in any way that can be measured, benchmarked, or evaluated as to actual effectiveness.

The P&R CRC notes the large scope of activities and the numerous facilities that are maintained by P&R. The facilities are mostly very well maintained, and the staff appears engaged and effective. A steady growth in facilities, programs, paths, etc., has occurred. However, no overall master plan exists to ensure both immediate- and long-range management. Without a master plan that outlines the overarching strategy and vision, the functions appear piecemeal. Without systematic evaluation of the results, it is not only piecemeal but potentially vulnerable to underuse, under-appreciation, and the vagaries of both funding and being pushed (not always in desirable directions) by the politics of interest groups.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Mission Statement and City Master Plan

1. The City should develop a comprehensive City master plan, to include why Idaho Falls has a P&R Department, and defining the value of the P&R Department to the City, assessing the Department's performance, defining users demographically, and setting goals, among others.

2. P&R Department should write a comprehensive mission statement that follows on the vision established by the City in its City master plan (recommended action in #1 above).
3. Write a P&R master plan outlining the Department's overarching strategy and vision and prepare a strategic plan that will effectively achieve implementation of the Master Plan.
4. With City approval, the Department should develop a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open-Space Plan.

Measurable Performance Metrics

To measure progress, evaluate the accomplishment of goals, and provide an ongoing system to evaluate progress, P&R needs to establish a system of performance metrics that aligns with established goals. These metrics should be reviewed on an ongoing basis (at least annually) and actions taken when metrics show goals are not being achieved or where areas of added emphasis are identified. In addition to the P&R metrics, there should be progress metrics to show accomplishments towards desired CAPRA accreditation.

The committee observed that there needs to be a "starting point" for establishing CAPRA credentials and therefore recommends setting a specific date by which the first step in that process will be completed.

A further reason for continuous, comprehensive, and systematic evaluation of results is that the process can be two-way. While the Department learns how well it is serving its public, the public learns how the Department serves public needs, goals, and desires. An informed, involved, and supportive public that can help the Department formulate and fulfill its goals is the best kind of citizen engagement.

The Department's "2015 Division of P&R Goals and Objectives," lists over 50 goals and objectives ranging widely in scope and complexity. It appears to be a to-do list rather than goals with objectives to achieve those goals. These goals should be prioritized, and the criteria for effecting this prioritization should be made clear. In addition, there are high priorities that are not even in the current list, such as producing a webpage listing, or preparing a handout/brochure summarizing the costs for use of cemeteries (e.g., plot or niche purchase, opening/closing fees, and other basic info and rules).

Summary of Findings and Observations for Measurable Performance Metrics

1. Establish a system of performance metrics that establishes goals and shows progress towards desired CAPRA accreditation.
2. Pursue CAPRA accreditation, with the first stage (self-assessment) to be completed in the 2016 fiscal year.

3. Prioritize the Department's goals and objectives (in the annual report of that name), and include the criteria used in the prioritization.

Budgeting Process

The CRC recognizes that this function is a City responsibility. However, the impacts of establishing a budget that ensures P&R Department accomplishment of established goals are enormous down the line. The CRC strongly supports the Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation Department. The budgeting for the P&R Department needs to be evaluated to ensure that, once well-defined goals are established, the existing budget will allow accomplishment of those goals. It was noted that no inappropriate use of public funds was observed.

The various Programs within the P&R Department do a good job of tracking expense information so that the individual Division and Program/Operations expenditures are tracked and understood. However, each Division or Program tracks its expenditures (and to varying degrees, their cost variance from the budget) in different formats, making it difficult to measure success and evaluate performance. Some areas of the budget process, such as inter-department work for others, are difficult to understand and to evaluate as to cost effectiveness. The development of budgets with well defined, measurable objectives is lacking. This makes it difficult to determine the impacts budgetary decisions have on achieving goals and objectives. The budget information presented to the CRC from the Divisions did not reflect a budgeting approach that could be aligned with long-range goals. Instead, most budgeting information was an update from the previous year, with some adjustments for various expected expenses. The budget approach is not developed to look into future projects and/or overall Department needs such as long-term facility maintenance and replacement. Additionally, identification of funding to adequately address capital equipment and maintenance needs, and initial movement towards CAPRA accreditation and standards, are difficult at best to sort out from the various budget presentations.

There are many efforts to “make do” with decreased funding. Such budget reductions have resulted in delayed and/or unmet maintenance, cramped or non-existent staff operating space, and a general atmosphere of operating “on the cheap.” This is penny-wise and pound-foolish. Further, it conveys a poor impression to employees, job applicants, or volunteers regarding the value of public work in Idaho Falls.

It was unclear to the CRC whether user fees are consistently being retained for program/facility needs and if not, whether they are included in the general fund in a way that recognizes their origination from P&R activities.

Goals that are identified should reflect the budgeting process, with well-defined metrics that show planned expenses vs. actual expenses on a periodic basis. This methodology needs to be consistent among the various P&R Divisions and Programs so that performance to the budgets for these (and the overall Department performance) are measured and evaluated on a continuing basis.

The apparent preoccupation with how much money an activity such as the zoo, golf courses, etc., can generate detracts from the core objectives of why we have these facilities in the first place. Development and approval of the aforementioned P&R City master plan would redirect the discussion and facilitate the Department's ability to attain its goals.

The 2014 City budget cut the P&R budget dramatically (this also happened to other departments). Some of these cuts have been restored in the planned 2016 budget. However, given remaining budget shortfalls and continued growth of the Department, P&R should explore priority-based planning, which could result in discontinuance of some services and/or parks entirely. For example, 16 of 25 playgrounds were identified as noncompliant by P&R, and the city council has not, over several budget cycles now, approved funding to address these noncompliance issues. Trying to do too much with too little can result in mediocre performance and risk. A more effective use of very limited budget resources may be to align with the priorities of the council by potentially discontinuing, or significantly reducing, work in the areas they wish not to fund rather than continuing to limp along in this mediocre way.

The cost of using services from other departments needs to be evaluated. The current practice, as presented to the CRC, indicates that P&R pays for services (including overhead) that are apparently already covered in the performing department's budget, thus ensuring that the performing department is paid twice for a single employee's service.

The Department needs to develop a budgeting approach that is consistent in details and long-range planning among Divisions and Programs. The budget should have identified metrics, and measured performance against those metrics, on a periodic basis. Additionally, budgets should include desired grants, donations, and the value of volunteer labor. The budget should reflect benefits that are attained from grants, donations, and volunteer labor, as noted for each division where volunteers make significant contributions.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Budgeting

1. Develop a budget process and reporting system that are consistent among Department, Division, and Programs. The process/reporting should be focused on goals and objectives and not merely an annual update of the preceding year's report. This should include measurable performance metrics.

2. Ensure that funding for capital equipment and maintenance needs is included in detail in the budgets.
3. Include acknowledgement and funding of steps to be taken towards CAPRA accreditation in the budgets.
4. Clarify whether or not user fees related to P&R activities and programs are consistently being retained for P&R program/facility needs. If they are not, does the general fund overtly recognize that P&R activities are the source of the funds?
5. Address the practice of "borrowing" the services of an employee from another department and paying him/her a fee in addition to the salary he is already making from his own department.

Staffing Plan

The CRC found that City policy appears to be either unclear or nonexistent in defining staffing aspects such as personnel/labor sharing, budgeting, sharing skills and resources, and billing.

As a whole, the P&R Department appears to have a very committed and capable staff; however, staffing levels are not at necessary levels in at least some areas. Particularly, the P&R Department Director's office appears to be understaffed. The Department Director has little time for planning or evaluation, both of which are vital for systematic progress and proof of effectiveness. Additionally, the Department Director is allowed very little time to step back and manage the entire Department from a strategic perspective. At times, he functions as a Division or Program manager instead of a Department Director. The communication, outreach/advertising, public information, grant-writing, all seem to be handled largely by the individual Divisions and Programs.

The Department needs a detailed staffing plan that clearly identifies succession candidates and workforce development strategies. Multiple, single points of failure exist in the staffing area. As part of the staffing plan, the Department should evaluate the assignment of a Volunteer Management Coordinator to ensure proper and consistent recruitment, training, use evaluation, and recognition of volunteers throughout the P&R Department.

The staffing plan also needs to address the importance of training and certification of City employees. Proper training and certification constitute a key element to ensuring individuals assigned throughout the Department have the technical expertise to perform their duties in a cost-effective, compliant, and safe manner. Ensuring that training and certification are performed, as well as recertification, need to be addressed in developing the overall staffing plan.

Additionally, Department-wide grant-writing and maintenance staff positions should be considered in the plan.

The use of volunteers was noted in various areas throughout the department. The CRC considers community involvement and the use of volunteers in various programs and divisions to be noteworthy. However, there needs to be a more formalized process for the assignment, assurance of training, and impact of volunteer involvement.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Staffing Plan

1. Hire an assistant director for the Department to give the Director time to accomplish long-range planning and evaluation on the Department level.
2. Write a detailed staffing plan, identifying succession candidates and workforce development strategies.
3. Move tasks such as grant-writing, advertising, events planning, and fees-tracking that apply across several programs to the departmental level for more cost-effectiveness and better coordination. Explore intra-departmental staff sharing that could help address these needs in common.
4. Evaluate hiring or funding a Department-level grant writer, and hiring or funding a volunteer management coordinator responsible for recruiting training evaluation, etc.
5. The staffing plan needs to address the elements of training, certification, and recertification of City employees, ensuring that these are both planned and budgeted for.

Cooperative Programming Policy

Many of the current P&R activities in Idaho Falls are offered in cooperation with various clubs, user groups, nonprofits, or other agencies. In CAPRA standards, these types of activities are broken out as two types: Facilitated Programs and Services (standard 6.1.5), and Cooperative Programming (6.1.6). Under both arrangements, the City collaborates with a volunteer group, club, nonprofit, or other agency to provide various parts of an activity, including funding, staff, management, advertising, equipment, and other resources. Often the partner group provides overall planning and onsite direction, along with some of the material resources, while the City provides the land or facility and covers some or all of the costs of its use.

Many examples of such arrangements exist in every city. In Idaho Falls, clubs and user groups have started up sports teams, built facilities, organized instructors, and provided coaches. Community groups and nonprofits have worked with the City to create sites for skateboarding, a Japanese Pavilion, the Greenbelt, community gardens, a new dog park, the state-of-the-art Snake River Animal Shelter, the raceway, and more. The Idaho State Fish and Game agency has collaborated to create the popular Ryder Park and its fishing programs. These partnerships are a vital part of every thriving city.

However, the committee observed that these partnerships also span a range of effectiveness in terms of upholding City and community goals, policies, and legal requirements for accessibility, accountability, timeliness, and governance. Groups that benefit from P&R promotion, assistance, funding, and other resources need to be as committed as the City is to serving fairly, effectively, and accountably.

The gap in effectiveness and accountability is partly due to the City's lack of a clear policy on how such partnerships should be developed and maintained. Parks and Recreation is involved in many such relationships and the committee found that there is no departmental policy or consistency. In fact, key staff are not even always aware of groups that are supposedly under their sponsorship. Needless to say, then, there are widely varying standards of performance. Some groups have been asked to execute detailed Memoranda of Agreement (or Memoranda of Understanding) with the City, specifying many details of how the group will carry out its activity. Other groups have "handshake" agreements made long ago, with staff that are since retired and may not even have been in the P&R department. These go unreviewed for years and may drift from original bylaws and purposes.

The CRC is aware of several groups sponsored by, or working with, P&R that have met every requirement for good governance as clubs or registered nonprofits, and also keep to every documented requirement of the City. Such groups have websites and/or publications that identify their officers, explain clearly their mission and structure and membership rules, announce their meetings, publish their minutes, and remain accountable and transparent to the public. Other groups work with the City well, but do not provide clear accounts of their goals and activities for the public or their members. Some, alternatively, serve their members well but have rocky relations with the City. Finally there are groups, of which several examples have come to the CRC's attention, in which money, memberships, meetings, minutes, officer selection, and other practices have drifted out of alignment with community expectations, public goals, and good nonprofit practice. These groups pose potential difficulties for both the Department and the City.

There is no systematic policy or guideline within P&R either for development of cooperative agreements, or for regular review to ensure that the public is being served well, legally, and with fair rates and recompense. The committee observed examples of significant problems arising from this lack in several Division and Programs, including Recreation, the Zoo, and Parks. CAPRA Standards 6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.2 address the need for objectives and activities of partners to comply with good practices and City goals, indicating that this is a common need for all P&R agencies, with common solutions.

A clear, written, public policy on cooperative agreements has several benefits. First, it will help community groups offer programs in ways that enhance and align with the City's

needs, goals, and requirements. Secondly, it will ensure that Department oversight is adequate but not uneven or excessive across groups. This will help groups meet City needs without undermining community trust in the process. Third, it will allow Department staff, as well as other City and County staff, to stay informed about what exists.

Finally, a public listing of which clubs, nonprofits, and other cooperating agencies are working with the City on which activities or programs will help everyone, including planners and grant-writers, to see opportunities. With greater and more transparent information, better synergies and efficiencies can emerge. Failures and duplications are more easily avoided. Parks and Recreation has the ability to coordinate this information, and as the largest provider of such programs directly, and through various kinds of support, is the logical guide and model for good practice.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Cooperative Programming Policy

1. Establish, at the City level, a policy on how P&R partners with nonprofits, clubs, user groups, and other entities, public and private. The policy must identify how partnership or sponsorship will be documented in writing. The City shall require documentation of agreement for such programming, (such as Memoranda of Understanding) and shall keep on file current copies of partner or sponsored entities' bylaws, mission, and related description of goals. The City shall periodically review minutes, annual reports, and other records of these partners as evidence that the partner or sponsored entity remains in compliance with the agreed goals and with general best practices of accountability, non-discrimination, accessibility, and other City goals and policies.
2. Develop and maintain a publicly accessible list of all facilitated and cooperative programs and services, including the names of clubs, nonprofits, and other entities that enter into agreement with the City to provide recreation and leisure programs, and the types of programs offered.
3. Facilitate assistance (at the City and Department level) to groups that provide or want to provide recreation programs, facilities, and events (see CAPRA standard 6.1.5) such as publicity, a suitable location, staff support, or program evaluation assistance in order to help them become and remain self-sustaining, well operated, and of benefit to the City. This assistance could involve other departments, such as Community Services.

Program Awareness and Outreach

Outreach, both passive (magazine, brochures, social media, etc.) and active (talks at community fairs, schools, senior center, club meetings, etc.) should receive far more development. The current emphasis is mainly on passive advertising. Systematic public

outreach is needed to inform the community of opportunities found in the Department's many kinds of sport, leisure, educational, recreational, and special-event opportunities. This goal includes proactive outreach to diverse underserved populations (CAPRA Standard 6.3.1); community education in health, wellness, and for leisure process (CAPRA Standards 6.4. and 6.4.1); community involvement in planning (CAPRA 2.9); and a comprehensive public information policy (CAPRA 3.4).

The CRC noted several instances where programs or activities were offered and people in the community were unaware that these events were current. In many cases community members were not aware of the activities until after they occurred and they read about them or heard about them from friends who had participated, or in news releases describing the events.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Program Awareness and Outreach

1. Outreach, both passive (magazine, brochures, social media, etc.) and active (talks at community fairs, schools, senior center, club meetings, etc.) needs to receive far more development to increase community awareness prior to events occurring.
2. Increase opportunities for public participation in program and activity design.

Connecting Our Community Plan: General Findings and Observations Administration/Budgeting

The committee commends the Department for their development of the *Connecting Our Community Plan*. The degree of public involvement was admirable. Two areas of concern: First, as we understand it, developers are not required to include Connecting Our Community projects in their developments. Secondly, cooperation with the canal companies needs considerable improvement in order to facilitate implementation of the plan.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Connecting Our Community

1. Require developers to consider Connecting Our Community in their plans.
2. Encourage the City to engage in a serious negotiation with the canal companies to facilitate the Connecting Our Community objective of adding pathways on canal banks.
3. Lower-priority and lower-cost projects should be considered when minor funds, grants, or volunteers are available.

DIVISION-LEVEL REPORTS

Recreation Division

General Findings and Observations

The CRC toured four recreation facilities: the Aquatic Center, the Ice Arena, the Activity Center on north Skyline, and the downtown Recreation Center. The Recreation Division Superintendent guided the tour, answered questions, and gave a presentation afterward on the Division's offerings, budget, achievements, and concerns. In addition, we spoke with administrative staff briefly at the Activity Center, Aquatic Center, and the Recreation Center. Some members of the CRC toured facilities at different or additional times. No information from users, advisory groups, or other staff was drawn upon, except as arising in the course of this review or through personal acquaintance or past involvement.

Our committee observations have been combined into the following findings and recommendations on three areas of the Recreation Program: Administration (including budget), Facilities, and Programs. Some of these refer to the relevant CAPRA Standards. These national standards were used only as general and aspirational guidance for understanding the benchmarks of good practice, in keeping with the P&R Director's goal of securing CAPRA accreditation by meeting those standards.

Management (and Budget)

Findings and Observations

Staff appear to have long experience in their positions and are energetic and enthusiastic. Seasonal employees and volunteers are crucial to many of the programs. Staff appear to be constantly busy with active daily management of the many diverse programs and events.

The Recreation Division superintendent's "2015 Recreation Goals and Objectives" includes completing a "program evaluation and needs assessment" in order to develop a "city-wide program plan" that addresses community needs and opportunities for "all ages and abilities." The CRC heartily endorses this objective and agrees that it is an immediate and high priority in order to guide both existing and new programming. As discussed below under "Programs," the evaluation of program outcomes across demographics is critically missing and is, therefore, a key need. This should include regional (non-City residents) needs and the cost of including those needs in a program. Staff have not historically been able, however, to prioritize and meet this need.

Some staff positions appear to have little backup or succession plan. This is most notable in Maintenance. This human resources issue needs attention. Training appears to be another budget item frequently cut. Such absence of training impairs the ability of management to offer the menu of up-to-date, interesting, and professionally designed and managed programs that keep a city outstanding.

Volunteers are a key element of the Recreation Program's success. Several recent improvements to the effective and safe use of volunteers include background checks for coaches, and the purchase of uniforms (t-shirts). Management of volunteers, however, includes many facets, such as recruitment, selection, orientation, retention, recognition, evaluation, supervision, and liability coverage. The CRC did not have time to go into the details of Recreation's volunteer management, but two things are clear: first, that the staff work hard to make their volunteers successful, and second, that their effective use of volunteers would benefit from more training and tools, such as Department-wide policies and coordinated oversight of the entire volunteer program on which so much of P&R depends.

Outreach is essential to community engagement, not just through passive advertising (including websites and Facebook posts), but also through coordinated efforts to involve "all ages and abilities." Recreation Division outreach to diverse underserved populations, and community education about health and leisure benefits, do not appear to be extensive or regular. As with many of the Division's programs, the major obstacles to this activity appear to include lack of time and training, along with little history of doing or developing such outreach.

Many of the Recreation staff recognize the need for better outreach and public involvement, and would like the time and tools to do it. This year's monthly "wellness" lectures at the library are evidence of the willingness and ability of P&R to work with a variety of other organizations, such as the hospital, on health and wellness outreach. Administration support is needed, however, to help coordinate the activities, identify the demographic targets, ally with other groups, partner with agencies and nonprofits focused on underserved populations (such as seniors, teens, minorities, and people with disabilities), develop presentations, evaluate outcomes for desired improvement, and above all, craft a Department-wide plan and policy to guide outreach effectively.

Recreation staff currently carry many tasks, such as grant-writing, advertising, events planning, and fees tracking, that might be more cost-effective and better coordinated if carried out at the Department level, for all P&R Divisions and Programs.

Both observations and written information suggest to this CRC that staff are fully occupied with day-to-day management of many programs and facilities. This may account for the historic absence of master plans for this Division, or collection of the annual empirical data on community recreation use, needs, and interests to support such systematic planning. It is commendable that this gap was identified as an objective for 2015, but unlikely that existing staff will be able to fill it because of their regular daily work. Additional staffing or contract labor may be needed, at least short-term, to begin meeting the goals for planning.

In the area of budget, Recreation has worked to ensure that user fees remain affordable, while also offsetting the costs of programs and, especially, facilities. Sports facilities are expensive to build and to maintain. With public help and support, Idaho Falls operates both an ice rink and an indoor swimming pool. Each is heavily used, with some user groups always wanting more hours. Facility managers must balance the needs of all groups,

including learners taking lessons, team practices and competitions, seniors and others seeking exercise, and families enjoying the public use times.

A recent revision of the Ice Arena user fees demonstrates the need to regularly review and analyze all fees and charges. This is needed as part of a consistent department-wide policy on cost recovery across all Divisions, programs, and facilities. It is also needed to ensure that user fees are fair and equitably applied. The City compared fees, hours, and use types with other regional rinks. This is an excellent means to identify ways to improve facility use and fee structure. Similar information on all Division programs and assets would be beneficial, not just for fee structuring, but for tracking and demonstrating projected needs for expansion or remodeling.

At the same time, it was difficult for the committee to follow where the fees go in the Departmental, Division, Program, and City budget structures. Raw budget spreadsheets did not allow clear analysis, and some nomenclature was confusing and/or conflicting. (For instance, it was not clear where the Recreation Fund comes from, and what it pays for.) The CRC saw that the staff are conscientious in the proper tracking and use of their moneys, but the City's budgeting system is so complex, it is difficult for citizens to understand. Nowhere can one find a program's net property taxpayer cost. Again, the staff of this Division appear to lack the time, and possibly support, needed to turn the bookkeeping data they use into the analyses that the CRC hoped for. Any recommendations for more effective use of the Recreation Division's budget thus require more transparency in the budget, along with regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the programs it is used for.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Recreation Management and Budget

1. Evaluate existing programs and community needs (addressed under the Programs section, below) to develop a Recreation Programming Plan that addresses community needs and opportunities for people of all ages and abilities. This is a necessary priority to guiding both existing and new programming. Given the shortage of staff time for more than day-to-day management of existing programs, the City must consider additional contract or short-term expert labor to catch up on this longstanding shortfall in performance measures and data-driven, priority-based planning. (See CAPRA standards 6.1 Recreation Programming Plan; 6.1.1. Programs and Service Determinants; 6.1.2. Participant Involvement; 6.2. Program Objectives, and others.)
2. Ensure that all positions have back-up training and a succession plan.
3. Restore and enhance funding for training so a broader menu of engaging and satisfying fitness, sports, and other leisure activities for all community members is possible.
4. Develop a Department-wide policy, leadership, and system for management of volunteers.
5. Continue to develop comprehensive, coordinated outreach and public participation.
6. Move tasks such as grant-writing, advertising, events planning, and fees-tracking that apply across several programs to the departmental level for more cost-

effectiveness and better coordination. Explore inter-departmental staff sharing that could help address these needs in common.

7. Work with the City to clarify budget structures and methods of analysis. If it cannot be communicated very clearly to this CRC, and is presented largely in “raw” rather than summarized – and analyzed – form, it may not be very clear to the Department or Division staff, either. And it should be.
8. Develop regular reviews of user fees for all programs and facilities that draw on comparative data across time, across demographic and user types (including non-City participants), and across similar programs and facilities in the region. Use these data to adjust user fees in keeping with a comprehensive revenue policy. (See CAPRA standards 5.1.1 and 7.2.)
9. Ensure that fees are equitable and affordable, while considering their proportionality (e.g., a range of fees reflecting who gets a larger share of time or the best time slots, who lives in city limits, or are underserved demographics).
10. Continue building capacity to include all elements of quality recreation planning and programs. Several that need strong steps to begin, or increase, their incorporation into a sound program are listed in various CAPRA standards, such as outreach to underserved demographics (6.3.1), involvement of participants in program and activity design (6.1.2), consideration of sustainability and zero-waste issues (7.8 through 7.9.1), community relations (2.9 and 3.4), and education for health and wellness (6.4.1).

Facilities

Findings and Observations

Recreation Division facilities are conspicuously clean, showing the pride employees take in maintaining them well, even where age of the buildings makes this difficult. Unfortunately, with the exception of parts of the Ice Arena, the buildings have aged to where their size or condition presents limits, some quite severe, on the range and type of programming that can be made available. Maintenance, repairs, and upgrades also present increasing difficulties. The single most common overall comment from committee members was that our recreational facilities are too old, too few, often too crowded, and thus inadequate to our city’s needs and our desired reputation.

Capital facilities plans are needed for each facility to schedule and plan for replacements. Continuous repair of aging and outgrown buildings is neither infinitely possible nor cost-effective. At the same time, each building that is in use, of whatever age, would benefit from an activity- or building-specific 5-Year Plan, such as the Golf division has so effectively implemented. Such plans should consider use, costs, revenues, marketing and maintenance needs, among other things.

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is not simply a requirement; it is a demonstration of the City’s commitment to serve all residents, whatever their age, income, and ability. Thus it is commendable that the Recreation program has taken strong

steps to complete ADA audits and retrofitting for accessibility across all of its facilities. Remodeling for ADA accessibility can be difficult and expensive in older buildings. Aspects of building design, as well as budget, have prevented full accessibility. For instance, the upper story of the Aquatic Center, currently used for bleachers, meetings, and birthday parties (through rental of the meeting room), is only accessible by a stairway, so alternate accommodations are available downstairs. The downtown Recreation Center is considerably more hampered by steep stairways and narrow halls.

Accessibility to recreational facilities and programs also, more broadly, requires an ability to reach the location. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as developed, must coordinate with the City's and/or region's transit plans and programs (such as they are), as well as with the Connecting Our Community Plan, to ensure that area transportation integrates with Parks, Recreation, and other public facilities to serve all neighborhoods and demographics equitably and well. Even where a facility is located within a neighborhood, such as the Aquatic Center, and offers opportunities for seniors and people with disabilities, those services are inaccessible if the neighborhood is unwalkable due to traffic, broken sidewalks, etc.

First steps to full accessibility to all include identifying the types of bus service, bike routes, and safely walkable routes by which users of all ages and abilities can reach all P&R facilities, and making that information part of Division and event advertising. Parking also needs to be evaluated when recreation events take place at parks. Community Park and others can present significant problems finding parking that is safe and accessible to seniors and people with disabilities.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Recreation Facilities

1. Continue and complete ADA audits. Some accessibility issues are not yet solved for these older buildings. Make available annually a list identifying remaining barriers and the schedule for ameliorating them. (See CAPRA standard 2.10, ADA Transition Plan.)
2. Continue and complete energy audits, but balance mechanical improvements that improve energy-efficiency against the cost of implementation, especially in buildings already reaching or past their life span.
3. Continue and increase attention to environmental and sustainability issues, which are only just starting to be addressed. These include recycling by both staff and public users, which requires clear informational postings and convenient recycling stations or systems; purchasing of more sustainable alternatives in materials and supplies; provision of healthy, preferably local, snack foods and beverages; and encouragement to enjoy the city's drinking fountains instead of using water in disposable bottles. (See CAPRA standards 7.8, 7.9, and 7.9.1.)
4. Develop a capital facilities plan that shows future building and replacement needs.
5. Ensure full accessibility to parks, recreation, and related events through coordinating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with City/county transit plans and the *Connecting Our Community Plan*.

6. Emulate the Golf Division's successful 5-Year Plan with regular, specific, measurable facilities revenue, use, and development plans for each major facility or program.
7. Develop a "big-picture" thinking approach for holistic solutions to multiple aging facilities that are too old, too crowded, and inadequate to the City's needs. These include not only the Rec Center, Ice Arena, and Aquatic Center, but also several facilities in the Zoo, including staff areas and education areas. Develop new facilities plans that incorporate multiple solutions, such as a City recreational complex that combines aquatic, ice, and other recreational activities; re-use of the old Ice Arena as the Zoo education center; and siting new facilities as hubs for the *Connecting our Community Plan*.

Wes Deist Aquatic Center

The Aquatic Center is 26 years old and, as indicated in the recent "Idaho Falls Future of Aquatics" report, is not able to offer the water recreation amenities that are most popular with today's communities. The facility is increasingly difficult to maintain.

On the positive side, the Division's good leadership combines with the long experience and dedication of the Aquatic Center and maintenance staff to ensure that major strides are made each year in remodeling, repair, and improvements. Recent examples include removing the redwood deck, shifting from chlorine gas to tablets, installing efficient "swipe card" computer membership control, and remodeling locker rooms to provide family/ADA accessibility.

However, as the facility ages and public needs change, more problems crop up, such as rusting banks of lockers, lack of storage and staff meeting space, lack of ADA access to the second floor, other ADA accessibility issues in pool areas, and unsafe deteriorating exterior stucco. Some of these can be fixed, some are currently too costly to fix, and some cannot be addressed because of the building's limitations. The dehumidifiers, for instance, need to be replaced, but this considerable expense has not yet been funded.

Perhaps the greatest problem is simply that the facility no longer meets the demand either in size, amenities, or space available.

One result, as the "Future of Aquatics" report notes, is that program-heavy usage, such as swim teams, is crowding out open public-swim time. Open public-swim usage returns more revenue than program swim such as swim clubs, which makes open public-swim time a vital part of the mix for an aging facility that has increased maintenance costs. Open, public usage is also a key part of a balanced municipal swim program that serves all users, of all ages and water interests and abilities.

A second lack that is not addressed in the existing building's budget is the demand for "fun features" such as a waterslide or pool climbing wall. These additions, as recommended in the "Future of Aquatics" analysis, are feasible in the existing building and would create wider interest in pool visits, and thus, higher revenues.

Finally, the building is also no longer big enough to host high school or regional swim meets, further decreasing its revenues and desirability.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Aquatic Center

1. Begin analysis and planning for an orderly replacement of the aging Aquatic Center with one or more new aquatic facilities that would accommodate the current unmet need, anticipate expected city growth, offer a balanced municipal aquatic program for all users, and add the cost-efficiencies and ADA functionality of a more up-to-date facility. (See CAPRA standard 7.11, specifying that there shall be a depreciation and replacement schedule for all park and recreation capital assets including buildings. The useful life and associated costs of replacement should be shown. The projected costs of replacement should be reflected in the agency's financial plan.)
2. Implement recommendations of the previous "Future of Aquatics" analysis for additional pool features that will increase and broaden pool use, and thus revenues.
3. Buy new dehumidifiers if the old building is to be retained and used indefinitely.

Recreation Center

The Rec Center on Memorial Drive is 75-plus years old, more than eligible for the National Historic Register. It is limited both by its age and the fact that it was originally an armory, not designed for city-wide recreational use, nor easily repurposed for such needs. Our committee did not delve into the history around past efforts to fund a modern, purpose-built Recreation Center for Idaho Falls, but the need for such a facility was apparent to all. Every committee member commented on the limitations of the existing Rec Center. Despite the constant and creative efforts of the managers and staff to fit in a variety of sports, fitness activities, and classes, as well as departmental and divisional staff offices and administration functions, the building cannot and does not accommodate our city's needs. Its age, lack of amenities, accessibility issues, and space limitations do not represent our city well.

The building itself presents severe challenges to maintenance. For example, the committee learned that the wood floor of the basketball court (the building's major area and heaviest use) can no longer be sanded down and refinished as regularly required for a safe, smooth, and enjoyable playing surface. After so many years, the wood is now too thin. Other areas, including restrooms, are hard to keep up and repair, or to remodel for accessibility. Office space is inadequate, classrooms are neither comfortable nor appropriate to the current purposes of the new and larger programs that the community requests.

The range of programs offered in the Rec Center is severely limited by the building configuration. A weight room is available, but inadequate in size and thus in equipment, and is not easily accessed because of its location off the far side of the often crowded basketball court. Racquetball or volleyball courts round out the main floor activity areas.

No running track is available. Upstairs are several small classrooms, less than ideal for most classes.

Restrooms and changing areas are barely adequate. Anyone touring the Rec Center who has used rec centers elsewhere, whether municipal, private, or university-based, is struck by the absence of expected activity areas and amenities: no snack or juice bar areas; no quick-visit, open-plan exercise equipment areas; no well-designed, dedicated fitness, dance, yoga, and martial arts spaces; no childcare area; no areas for sale, trade, repair, and rental of sports gear; and more.

All of these absences mark the Rec Center out as a limited building, which limits the Recreation Division's effectiveness and our community's participation.

At the same time, the Rec Center building may also be the greatest opportunity for its own replacement, as it sits on prime downtown real estate looking out on the Snake River and its beautiful riverside parks. The possibility of leveraging this facility location against the City's need for a better Rec Center that provides more programs, serves more people, and operates more efficiently, must be considered. The time to begin this process is now, before the existing building's limitations increase to the point of non-functionality.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Recreation Center

1. Begin analysis and planning for an orderly replacement of the old and inadequate Rec center with a new facility that accommodates the current unmet need, anticipates expected city growth, offers a balanced municipal fitness and class program for all people in the community, and adds the cost-efficiencies and ADA functionality of a more up-to-date facility. (See CAPRA standard 7.11 requiring a depreciation and replacement schedule for all capital assets including buildings, which should identify the useful life and associated costs of replacement.)
2. Ensure that the projected costs of replacing the aging and limited Recreation Center are incorporated into the City's financial planning. Attractive, accessible, affordable indoor recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities are important for Idaho Falls for economic, social, health-related, and other reasons.

Joe Marmo/Wayne Lehto Ice Arena

The Ice Arena has undergone substantial recent remodeling and shows many improvements. At the same time, more improvements are needed, not only to accommodate specific groups (such as spectators and figure skaters), but also to accommodate continued demand in excess of available ice time. The Recreation Department and other City staff have worked hard to allocate the limited time equitably, and to adjust fees in a way that is comparable with other regional ice sheets, aids in meeting facility costs, and remains affordable to the arena's diverse users.

Again, however, the age of the facility, along with its location, have created limitations as the City moves forward in fitness interests and population growth. According to Program

staff, the original land use agreement requires removal of the ice for several months each year, even though public interest in skating is year-round. So many hours of ice time are requested (even very early morning, late night, and Sunday slots are full). Finally, the location in Tautphaus Park limits both parking and room for expansion.

The CRC applauds the work of the various user groups in remaining outstandingly committed, personally and financially, to helping the City maintain and improve this successful ice arena. We also applaud the work of City staff in researching and documenting the complexities of the funding of this public-private partnership, along with the comparable fees and schedules and user group allocations in many other regional ice rinks, in order to ensure that use and cost are equitable to diverse user groups while still offsetting facility costs. The continued demand for more ice time, together with the strong public user base, should spur development of solutions.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Ice Arena

1. Begin planning for more ice, either through construction of a second sheet adjacent to the existing building, or by renegotiating the existing structure agreement to allow year-round use, or both.
2. Continue monitoring user fees and time allocations in comparison to use trends, as well as relative to other regional ice rinks, in order to maintain equitable levels of cost recovery.
3. Identify an area for more parking or other means of transit for users and/or spectators.
4. Coordinate future development and use within the overall Tautphaus Park master plan.
5. Consider the possibility of building new ice arena facility elsewhere and turning the current arena (and its land) over to the Zoo.

Idaho Falls Activity Center

The Activity Center on north Skyline is another repurposed building, this one built by the Navy in the early 1950s. As with other Recreation facilities, the CRC found the building scrupulously clean and conscientiously maintained. A fenced and controlled storage area to the rear of the building is used by the Parks Program to store equipment and operate Weed and Environmental Control. Outside are: limited parking, a small lawn and picnic area, lush flowerbeds, and a bus route. The building has undergone ADA and energy audits. Inside the Activity Center are some half dozen classrooms and meeting rooms, as well as a small gym or multipurpose space, and a commercial kitchen. The rental prices on these are affordable and in line with similar rooms in the community, and the kitchen appears to be unique in its equipment, usability, cost and availability. However, even though the current use nearly pays for the Activity Center's operating expenses, that use falls well below potential because of the building's layout and limitations.

Parts of the building have not yet been remodeled for recreation or class use. A range of classroom and meeting room sizes is available, but there is no building Wi-Fi (a user group

has temporarily provided limited Wi-Fi, but this is not a sustainable, dependable state of affairs) and no rooms are equipped for PowerPoint or video, requiring users to rent or bring, and set up, their own.

The gym is usable for fitness classes or as a multi-purpose room and hosts some fitness activities, as well as occasional private parties and other events, but the absence of air-conditioning makes the entire building, particularly the gym, too hot in warm weather or for any active or large gathering, such as a dance.

Opening onto the multi-purpose room is a well equipped, restaurant-quality kitchen that meets commercial licensing requirements. It has additional storage and classroom space, as well as dishes, cookware, and other equipment for rent. This kitchen has been used in the past for area high-school culinary classes and would meet both teaching and entrepreneurial needs as well as group and family uses. However, despite its amenities and a relatively low rental fee, the kitchen, like the rest of the building, sees low use. Equipping and promoting the Activity Center for a broader range of classes, programs, and events will increase the building's use, increase its revenue, and benefit a wider range of the community.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Activity Center

1. Continue mechanical improvements, specifically air conditioning, to keep the indoor climate reasonable during warm months and for large or physically active groups.
2. Enhance usability by installing internet and video capability in at least one room of each size class.
3. Make an area usable for children's play or daycare, and add full ADA accessibility (e.g., a family/ADA accessible restroom).
4. Develop a marketing plan for this underutilized resource, based on the improvements mentioned above, along with market research for understanding customer needs, wants, concerns, and behaviors. (See CAPRA standard 3.4.3.)

Recreation Division Programs

Findings and Observations

Recreation activities take place at the four recreation facilities as well as on numerous playing fields, tennis courts, etc, located in the city's parks that are maintained by the Parks Program. The recreational, fitness, and educational activities offered by the Recreation Division include mainly well-established "traditional" youth sports such as soccer, swimming, and skating lessons, as well as common adult sports such as softball, volleyball, and basketball. Newer programs include skateboard clinics and competition, taiko drumming, yoga and Pilates, and various types of dance (the latter only for children). Breakfast with Santa, Daddy Daughter Date, fishing clinics, and family Movies in the Park or Dive In Movies (in the pool) are also oriented to children and young families.

According to the 2014 Division of Parks and Recreation Annual Report, the Recreation programs total over 200 offerings annually, counting both programs and special events. This output is impressive, especially given a budget that requires heavy reliance on volunteers and seasonal employees.

However, the committee noted that, despite annual growth, this output is limited in several significant ways. First, while the Recreation Division seeks to provide opportunities “for people of all ages and abilities,” as spelled out on the 2015 divisional Goals and Objectives list, the current focus is largely around traditional team sports and youth sports on a regional non-City basis, rather than the more balanced mix needed for “all ages and abilities” (which should also include people of different income levels and interests).

Edged out or unrepresented are newer sports increasingly popular in our region such as bocce ball, whiffle ball, nature play, geocaching, and mountain bike “technical challenge” training. Also underrepresented are assistive or adaptive sports that accommodate people with disabilities; “life sports” that can engage seniors, teens, and individuals; extreme sports; and leisure and recreation alternatives that show strong nationwide increases in popularity, such as arts classes, nature viewing, historical tours, and community gardening. All of these draw different people out to learn, move, reflect, and get actively engaged. While the Recreation Division should and must continue their excellent offerings of youth sports and team sports, the city’s growth, health, and attractiveness to newcomers and visitors, as well as to currently nonparticipating demographics, will benefit from considering how broader programming can attract other interests and abilities.

Secondly, the pattern of “doing what we have always done” (with modest annual additions of new programs, such as the popular Movies in the Park) appears to result partly from the lack of program evaluation and research, along with the absence of a comprehensive programming plan. This is not meant to single out this Division; it appears to the committee to reflect a historical tendency for the Department as a whole that has only in the last few years begun to be addressed through a stronger focus on developing both Department-wide and Division plans, such as the 2013 Golf Business Plan.

The Recreation Superintendent’s 2015 Recreation Goals and Objectives recognized this in calling for an evaluation and needs assessment of the Recreation Division, in order to develop a citywide plan that provides opportunities for all ages and abilities.

The data provided underscore this need. Several reports included a list of various programs offered, and how many people participate in them, but this information was seasonal, program-specific, and in several ways incomplete. Little data on trends or comparisons were seen. There are also inconsistencies in program names among different reports, making it difficult to try to combine them for a bigger picture.

A single-page “City-wide Program Plan – Program Report” showed only formal (staff-led) programs and events, such as sports camps, teams, and one-time events, and only for four years (2011-2014). This is not enough time to show clear trends. There is little to no breakdown of demographics of any sport or class to show how they serve community

members of different ages and abilities and thus, to help identify underserved demographics.

No data were available for the self-directed programs and services, such as independent use of tennis courts or the Rec Center weight room. Data on cooperative programming, that is, programs run jointly with other public or nonprofit entities, are available for some based in recreation facilities, such as hockey and team swimming. For other cooperative programs, such as the community gardens that are sponsored by P&R, linked on their website, and located on City land, no data are available from either P&R or the community groups that run those programs. For many such programs, there is thus very little evidence to show who they serve, or how well.

The historic lack of comprehensive planning for parks and recreation, coupled with the shortage of staff and/or time to collect the data needed in order to form the plan, to regularly evaluate its success, and to update it in response to changes in the community, with its changing needs and resources, creates a cyclical deficit that the current staff recognize and would like to address.

The current situation also leads to the collection of data that, while valuable, are insufficient. The available reports reveal a disconnect between the recorded, known outputs, or number of events/classes offered, and the entirely unrecorded, unknown outcomes, or resulting changes in people's fitness, knowledge, health, etc. The staff measure outputs by counting numbers of teams, players, movies, etc. To measure outcomes, however, the Division needs to begin systematic use of standard social science methods for evaluating program effectiveness, in terms of the measurable changes in behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, conditions, or skills that result from joining those teams, learning those sports, or coming to those movies.

The goals of recreation include improved public fitness, health, engagement, skill, etc. Offering classes and sports is a means to that end. The focus should shift from counting the activities provided to understanding who benefits from them, and how. These data can then drive a comprehensive programming plan designed to meet the full range of needs in our community. That plan can, in turn, be evaluated for its success through continuing assessment of outcomes.

The value of a shift to evaluating outcomes is that the program benefits, when accurately measured, provide the solid framework within which new programs can be justified on more than a "hunch." Old programs can be adjusted or defended, or ended, with impartiality instead of acrimony. And new facilities such as recreation centers can be shown as priorities, within data-driven plans.

The superintendent's goal of developing data for evaluating program usage and benefits requires supporting time and, possibly, expert assistance, to implement. Without knowing what the community's needs and interests are, programs cannot be planned and delivered to all ages and abilities, across the full community.

Again relating to the absence of a comprehensive programming plan, the present Recreation publications and website do not readily identify what is available to persons of different ages, interests, and abilities, or how those program offerings can be developed. Listings of what is available to meet different needs and interests will help engage varied groups such as seniors, people with various disabilities, people seeking a challenge, or people who want to relax and also learn something (such as through art classes or nature viewing), and will simultaneously help develop the active outreach needed.

Again, Recreation is well aware of the need for improvements in program planning, measurement, and evaluation, as well as outreach. The CRC's recommendations for programming thus speak mainly to these two highest priorities, along with other actions that both support and follow from them. Only after these actions are accomplished can we answer the question of whether the current programs are cost-effective and meet our community's needs.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Recreation Programs

1. Provide staff time, training, and departmental support as needed to carry out Division-wide program evaluation and needs assessment. This is an immediate and highest priority to guide current and future programming. Additional (outside) expertise may be needed on a short-term basis to catch up with the existing data gaps (i.e., for community survey, methodology design, etc.). (See CAPRA Section 10.0 for standards on Evaluation, Assessment, and Research.)
2. Provide staff time, training, and departmental support as needed to implement, and assess outcomes of, a citywide program plan that addresses community needs and opportunities for all ages and abilities. (See Administration section recommendations, above, including the need for a comprehensive Parks and Recreation master plan to ground the Recreation Division's plans.)
3. Based on program evaluation results, enhance and regularize outreach to diverse underserved populations, and develop community education for leisure and for health and wellness promotion. (See CAPRA 6.3.1. through 6.4.1.) Initial steps include compiling a grid (usable for both planning and for website and other publications) that shows different programs and activities available for diverse demographics (for example, seniors, teens, short-stay visitors, people with disabilities, etc.).
4. Make publicly available a list, updated periodically, of all user groups, sponsored clubs, community groups, non-profits, and other agencies that Recreation collaborates with or assists to provide activities and programs. Regularly review the bylaws, annual reports, fee structure, etc., of those groups to identify what goals and populations the programming serves. Maintain a file of written agreements with partner groups. Provide assistance to help partner groups carry out the joint mission in ways that align with the City's legal obligations, goals, and needs.
5. Identify the process and schedule whereby new programming, activities, or events are evaluated for introduction into the Recreation mix. Indicate publicly how community members can be involved in this process. (See CAPRA 2.9.)

6. Develop a city-wide pass system allowing users to access most or all facilities and programs through a single card.

Zoo Division

General Findings and Observations

The recent Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) reaccreditation is a notable achievement and a significant indicator of a hard-working professional staff. The AZA ensures that zoos across the U.S. provide quality animal care, educate the public, and have species survival programs in place. According to statistics from the AZA, of the more than 2,400 animal exhibitors registered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, only 229 are accredited by the AZA.

The zoo is an attractive facility and presents a pleasing outward appearance to the visiting public. The AZA inspection team, in its report to the Accreditation Commission in 2014, agreed, stating “Attention to landscaping and plantings throughout the zoo is commendable and adds to the geographic theming of the animal exhibits.”

The Zoo is a positive addition to the community, providing conservation and educational opportunities, a satisfying guest experience, and community engagement. The Zoo has more than 350 individual animals, representing 129 species from around the globe, and participates in 44 national Species Survival Plans. The AZA inspection team stated that the Zoo is to be highly commended for its level of participation in the species management programs ~ 34% of its total species holdings. In 2014, over 117,000 visitors enjoyed the Zoo. Furthermore, the Spring 2010 Economic Impact Study estimated that the Zoo returns to the economy 4.71 times the amount the City of Idaho Falls contributes to the Zoo's functioning.

Strategic and Long-Range Planning Findings and Observations

The Zoo is a long-term City asset, and the planning horizon should extend longer than five years. Twenty years would not be unreasonable. Funding should be identified to accomplish the plan's goals and objectives. This sentiment was echoed by the AZA inspection team: “A strategic plan to ensure that growth is coordinated and can be supported financially and with manpower is very important. The zoo could benefit from overall master and strategic plans.”

The CRC understands from David Pennock that a five-year strategic business plan for the Zoo is underway and will focus on short-term specific steps. The CRC also understands that a Master Plan for Tautphaus Park is under development. It is critical that the Zoo be adequately represented in the development of this master plan.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Strategic and Long-Range Planning

1. Create both strategic and long-range plans that complement both the Tautphaus Park Master Plan and the Parks and Recreation Department Mission and Vision.
2. Ensure that the Zoo is adequately represented in the development of the Tautphaus Park Master Plan.

Staffing

Findings and Observations

The present staff is both highly professional and dedicated to the Zoo. This observation has been affirmed by the recent reaccreditation by the AZA. However, there are four areas where additional staffing or resource allocation is needed.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Staffing

1. Fill the Director position so he or she can address "big-picture" items such as strategic and long-range planning, fundraising, etc.
2. Fund additional animal keeper resources. Operating 7 days a week, year round, with just six keepers, leaves little margin for sick leave, vacation, training opportunities, volunteer coordination, enrichment time for the animals, possible enhanced hours of operation, and increased public interaction. Having the former keeper supervisor acting as the interim superintendent has exacerbated this shortage.
3. Fund additional maintenance resources. The Zoo has many old structures, facilities, and equipment that are in need of constant maintenance and repair. In the off season, the Zoo is without a maintenance employee over 30% of the time.
4. Hire an additional education staff member. The one full-time curator of education is currently doing two jobs: education and marketing. As education is one of the primary missions of the Zoo, it should be staffed appropriately. The education curator told us that, in just under eleven months, the education program was responsible for 244 classes, shows, and programs enlightening over 11,000 people. Additionally, 44 Junior Zoo Corps were instructed. Similarly, if the Zoo is going to optimize its revenue-generating capability, marketing needs to be a primary activity for an employee, not a "when you have time" task.

Volunteers

Findings and Observations

The operation of the Zoo is highly dependent upon volunteers. The Zoo's 2014 annual report states that over 15,000 volunteer hours were recorded during that year. This large

contribution from volunteers is a positive from the standpoint of community involvement and support but proves to be a negative because it disguises the true cost of operating and maintaining the Zoo. It is also a vulnerability in that the capability, quantity, and availability of the volunteers are highly variable.

To optimize the contributions of volunteers, a planned, concerted effort is needed. As an example, the Idaho Fish and Game for several years had a person assigned to coordinate their volunteers, but the position was not funded and, as a result, the activity was spotty and ineffective. Recently they have funded the activity, and the volunteer program is robust and beneficial to both the agency and the volunteers. According to their Volunteer Management Coordinator, the volunteer hours went from around 700 hours per year to over 7,000 hours per year!

Summary of Findings and Observations for Volunteers

1. Capture and identify the contribution of the volunteers as a neutral budget line item. This will highlight the magnitude of this positive contribution.
2. Fund a volunteer management coordination activity (the position perhaps shared at Department level by several Divisions). There are at least seven different categories of volunteers at the Zoo: community service, work release, junior zoo corps, zoo corps, zoo educators, interns, and group-specific. And there are at least that many types of volunteer activities.
3. Use the untapped resource of professors and students from local and regional universities to conduct more sophisticated activities. For instance, they could provide an updated economic analysis or they could develop a smart phone app for the Zoo. A team of mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering graduate students could be formed to do an in-depth analysis of the condition of the facilities and structures. Students working with the curator of education could update the educational materials and approaches.
5. Fill the Director position so he or she can address "big-picture" items such as strategic and long-range planning, fundraising, etc.

Education Facility

Findings and Observations

One of the overarching goals of the Zoo is education. The present educational setup is, in a word, awful (i.e., a very tiny classroom that is 19 ft x 11 ft in an 80-year old log building that was formerly a monkey house!!!). There is little to no storage and no up-to-date audio-visual capability. Funding for a new zoo education and learning center should be a major goal for both the Zoo and the City. Relying on the Tautphaus Park Zoological Society to raise the necessary funding is not aggressive enough.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Education Facility

1. Set a major goal (for both Zoo and City) to fund a new Zoo education and learning center.
2. Provide adequate work space and storage for the educator and her/his staff.
3. Consider relocating the ice arena and repurposing it as the zoo education facility, office space for the staff, larger gift shop, and storage.

Staff Facilities

Findings and Observations

The office facilities for the staff are woefully inadequate. The present office space for the six keepers is only 120 square feet! This space also is used for their lockers and break room. Computer equipment is beyond inadequate, making it nearly impossible to trace records of any given activity. For instance, if you wanted to know how often the chinchilla got a dust bath last year, you would have to leaf through 365 pages of daily habitat reports. Not very efficient. Total reliance on paper is inefficient and woefully out of date.

Work space for the educator and her seasonal staff is very cramped, with little or no storage. Up to four employees occupy an office space of only 180 square feet in a building built in the 1930s.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Staff Facilities

1. Provide electronic devices, such as mobile devices or tablets, for all staff in order to facilitate communication, report creation, data collection and analyses, research, grant preparation, etc.
2. Provide an improved work environment with adequate work and storage space.

Funding for Replacement of Facilities and Structures

Findings and Observations

There doesn't appear to be any funding identified for the refurbishment and replacement of existing facilities and structures. CAPRA Standard 7.11 specifies that there shall be a depreciation and replacement schedule for all park and recreation capital assets, including buildings. The projected costs of replacement should be reflected in the financial plan.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Funding for Replacement of Facilities and Structures

1. Establish a process/fund that would plan for and fund the eventual refurbishment and/or replacement of systems such as electrical, HVAC, and water, and of structures such as animal enclosures, storage buildings, and shops.

Maintenance/Operations

Findings and Observations

As mentioned above, maintenance is a problem at the Zoo. Dependence on one full-time employee, who has many years of zoo-specific knowledge but is close to retirement age, is an operational risk. As the zoo structures, facilities, and equipment age, maintenance becomes an increasingly critical component to the successful operation of the Zoo and care of the animals.

One area of operations that needs improvement is watering the exhibits. At present all irrigation is performed manually, and there is only one hour a day when the public is not present. This makes it very difficult to adequately water the exhibits and yet have the animals out on exhibit for the public. Additionally, the Zoo is conducting an overall evaluation of water usage to ensure that this important resource is being used wisely and efficiently.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Maintenance/Operations

1. Develop and fund a preventive maintenance plan designed to optimize the lifetime of the structures, facilities, projects, and equipment.
2. Convert the Zoo's watering system to a satellite computerized operation similar to the P&R's centrally controlled irrigation system.

Parking

Findings and Observations

Inadequate parking space is a significant concern. Competition with other park activities exacerbates the problem. As described in the May 1998 Master Plan: "The number of parking spaces immediately available to zoo visitors is woefully inadequate. Poor parking facilities are frustrating to potential zoo visitors and can be a deterrent to zoo visitation and seriously impact repeat visits." There are also safety concerns with the tight parking and presence of small children.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Parking

1. Join with Tautphaus Park in order to address parking problems via the Tautphaus Park Master Plan and the Idaho Falls Zoo Strategic Plan.

Signs

The signs for both the Zoo and the park are in need of improvement. The City has recognized this need and has developed the "Idaho Falls Signage and Way Finding Master Plan." The sooner the park and Zoo signs are replaced, the sooner the goals of enhanced visitor experience and increased attendance can be achieved.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Signs

1. Implement the Zoo portion of the "Idaho Falls Signage and Way Finding Master Plan" as soon as possible.

Security Findings and Observations

Present security measures at the Zoo are inadequate. While we were writing this report, a break-in occurred and several thousand dollars of damages were incurred. Fortunately no animals were harmed. In earlier discussions with Linda Beard, she stated that, while infrequent, the Zoo has experienced break-ins in the past. **Update: As a result of a recent break-in at the Zoo, a robust security system is being installed.**

Summary of Findings and Observations for Security

NONE

Revenue/Cost Recovery Findings and Observations

While the CRC supports optimizing the opportunities for revenue generation to assist in cost recovery, we caution against compromising the primary goals of the Zoo: those of conservation, education, public participation, and care of our animal friends. Following are recommendations that would increase revenue without compromising the integrity of the Zoo's missions.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Revenue/Cost Recovery

1. Increase publicity about the Zoo.
2. Increase memberships by promotions and special membership times.
3. Increase attendance by promotions, coupons etc.
4. Provide additional weekday evening hours.
5. Encourage organizations to have special event nights at the Zoo.
6. Build a larger gift shop.
7. Ensure that the Zoo is adequately represented in the development of the Tautphaus Park Master Plan.

Tautphaus Park Zoological Society

Findings and Observations

The Tautphaus Park Zoological Society (TPZS) is a 501 (c) 3 corporation established to promote and improve the Zoo. Since TPZS is one of the major sources of revenue for the zoo through its fundraising and membership activities, the CRC deemed it appropriate to take a look at their activities. Even though they are technically not part of the City or the Parks and Recreation Department, they are intertwined in that the City provides meeting space for them, provides personnel support for the fund-raising activities at the zoo, includes them in their annual report, etc. Further, if the Society were to lose its tax exempt status, there would be a significant impact to Zoo funding.

As part of the CRC's March 2015 zoo tour and overview of its budget, management, programs, etc., the TPZS membership coordinator, a paid TPZS employee, explained their integral role and handed out samples of the monthly TPZS newsletter ("Animal Challenge") and membership brochure. The TPZS handles all memberships for the zoo, with roughly half of its annual income coming from membership revenues (mainly season passes sold at the gate), while the rest comes from fundraisers and direct contributions. The bulk of these memberships are sold by Zoo personnel at the entrance gate, with the moneys, however, being transferred to the TPZS and a percentage of it being returned to Zoo funds after TPZS takes out operating expenses, including their employee salary.

It was unclear to the CRC how much money is donated to the Zoo by the TPZS. The organization does have a presence within the City of Idaho Falls website. However there is no information available or online such as annual reports, fundraising targets and progress, board members, officers, meeting announcements or minutes. The TPZS does have a Facebook page, but only for occasional announcements of zoo information or events. The board is listed in the Parks & Recreation Department's quarterly Discover magazine in the section dedicated to the Zoo.

The Zoo subcommittee held a meeting in August with the TPZS membership coordinator, treasurer (who is also the past president), and two other board members. This meeting, and subsequent information review, led to several CRC concerns:

- The overhead is ~25%. The CRC is concerned about this cost relative to the benefits provided to the Zoo.
- The one paid employee (Membership Coordinator), is the spouse of an executive board member (formerly the president, now the treasurer). The CRC is concerned about a potential for conflict of interest.

- Following review of the TPZS' informational returns (IRS Form 990-EZ, available online at <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/820452111>) for years 2002-2013, the CRC has concerns about whether the income and expenditures are aimed at the best benefit to the zoo.
- Society members are not notified of board meetings, with the exception of the annual picnic. The annual budget and financials are not sent to the membership.
- There have been no focused membership drives in recent years.

The conclusion of the CRC is that while the TPZS is both vital to the zoo and highly motivated by their mission, their policy and practice has led to less than desirable levels of information, transparency and public accountability. This is not beneficial for the zoo, the organization, or the many citizens who support them. Currently, the TPZS is working with the Director of Parks and Recreation and the City Attorney to update their Memorandum of Understanding. The CRC recommends a clear, robust, "Cooperative Programming Policy" for all Parks & Recreation partners (see pp. 26-28 of this report).

The CRC strongly emphasizes that these actions must strengthen the TPZS' functionality through improving clarity and currency in policies, practices, and public reporting, so that the public may be assured that TPZS supports the Zoo with the greatest effectiveness and integrity.

Recommendations for the TPZS

1. Move the Zoo membership sales and management into Parks & Rec Zoo operations for improved cost-effectiveness and accountability.
2. Review services and facilities furnished without charge by the city to the TPZS (see Form 990-EZ Part III) for cost-effectiveness and accountability.
3. Review ongoing improvements in TPZS-City agreement to ensure completion, including a written Memorandum of Understanding as suggested in pp 26-28 of this report (Cooperative Programming Policy).

Golf Division

General Findings and Observations

The City owns and operates three championship golf courses and a six-hole/par 3 course, which are a significant benefit to both residents and visitors to the city and metropolitan area. They also are a motivating factor for businesses and people moving into the area. Studies show that golf teaches essential life skills to young people such as sportsmanship, respect, integrity, honesty, and self-control. Golf facilities provide a vital community service in offering a place to recreate and socialize, serving as a hub of community social interaction. Another vital community service is that they offer a place and activity for nonprofits and other organizations to hold fund-raising events.

Over 120,000 rounds of golf are played at the City courses annually. The courses hosted over 60 formal corporate outings in 2014 and 37 major men's and women's golf championships. The golf courses have a strong five-year business plan (Golf Operations 5-Year Business Plan, November 2012), which they appear to be following closely, though they need to track and document their progress. The three golf courses are managed by knowledgeable and qualified professionals. The superintendent's at all three courses show a high degree of professionalism and stewardship. The courses are well maintained, but some minor upgrades are needed, and major renovations such as a new sprinkler system at Pinecrest are looming. Physical facilities are minimal at best. The maintenance crews are doing an outstanding job of saving funds by fabricating new benches and tee markers and maintaining their equipment.

Facilities

Findings and Observations

Maintenance of facilities at all three courses is only adequate, mainly as a result of aging buildings. Sandcreek's use of old rail cars for storage is questionable. The clubhouse facilities at Pinecrest and Sandcreek are lacking. Pinecrest clubhouse is in need of an ADA bathroom facility. The clubhouse and restaurant at Sandcreek are too small for the number of people who use them. Sage Lakes facilities are adequate at this time. Energy audits by Idaho Falls Power have been done at Sandcreek and Sage Lakes. The age of the facilities at Pinecrest has made energy conversion and/or upgrades difficult.

Management

Findings and Observations

Management is actively pursuing new customers by promoting innovative ideas such as family golf day, big-hole golf, and using several media sources to promote the sport.

Attention is starting to be given to environmental issues such as energy and water use, runoff control, and wildlife habitat. The three professionals meet frequently and evaluate their budget and determine if planned projects are finished in a timely manner. However, the results of these evaluations must be documented. The information system is adequate, but there is a glitch at the Municipal Services level that causes delays in reviewing costs. The Maintenance Equipment Replacement Fund (MERF) has been a big plus for golf as they have excellent equipment and a 2015 balance of greater than \$100,000. The status of the Capital Improvement Fund should be defined.

Staffing

Findings and Observations

The clubhouse staff and the course maintenance personnel are enthusiastic and courteous. Staffing levels are about 10% below national averages. Seasonal employees are hard to find because of the difficulty of the work and the low wages. Plans are not in place for replacing key personnel as they retire.

Budgeting

Findings and Observations

Management's preoccupation with seeing that the golf operations are self-sustaining concerns the CRC. Because golf provides many social and economic benefits, we feel that attention should also be directed at other important aspects of a successful golf program, such as increasing participation, especially by underserved groups. This could be accomplished by keeping user fees low or altering the fee schedule to encourage participation by other groups. We believe that self-sustainability is a worthy goal, but the goal of wider participation is also noteworthy.

Concerns

The CRC would like the historical "feel" of the Pinecrest clubhouse to be maintained when changes are made to conform to ADA standards. Specifically, we suggest adding on to the existing building to make such ADA accommodations rather than altering the current building. This was accomplished effectively when the 19th Hole was expanded. Public input should be solicited before any changes are considered.

The CRC also feels strongly that the City should pursue placing the Pinecrest clubhouse on the National Register of Historic Places.

The golf courses provide an outstanding value to our community and should be considered as an important "quality of life" benefit. They are well run and maintained and should be considered a priority for adequate funding. The impact of golf is a key to the vitality of life

in Idaho Falls. The CRC applauds the major operational changes made since 2012, including the City's assuming control of the operations, raising fees, a new scheduling system, and bringing former contractors in as employees.

Summary of Findings and Observations for the Golf Program

1. Track and document progress of the 5-Year Business Plan annually, revising as necessary. Publically post annual progress assessments.
2. Continue robust reliance on user input and public participation through surveys, advisory group, and collection of numerical data. Such an activity allows Golf management to understand where the program has both successes (to be continued and improved) and difficulties (so that services can be provided more efficiently and effectively and new ideas can be implemented).
3. Ensure that Pinecrest clubhouse becomes ADA compliant. This needs to be done after soliciting public comment and without altering the historic “feel” of the building. The clubhouse should also be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
4. Fund and install a new sprinkler system for Pinecrest.
5. Fund and build a new and/or expanded clubhouse for Sandcreek.
6. Construct new storage facilities to replace the rail cars at Sandcreek.

Parks Division

General Findings and Observations

Parks is the largest division in the Parks and Recreation Department, with the greatest and most diverse responsibilities. The Division has the largest number of full-time employees, overseeing the largest acreage. Administratively, Parks is subdivided into five areas: Parks Maintenance, Horticulture and Urban Forestry, Weed and Environmental Control, Irrigation Management, and Cemeteries.

Materials provided to the CRC by the Parks Division showed the substantial scale of its operations. Its portfolio includes:

- 8 neighborhood parks (20th St, Kate Curley, Antares, Bel-Aire, Dunes, Liberty, Poitevin, and Willowbrook);
- 6 civic parks (Civitan Plaza plus five riverfront/greenbelt segments);
- 25 urban/community parks;
- 3 open spaces (Ernest Dr., Saturn Area, and the new Heritage park site);
- 31 non-park properties maintained by the Division (such as parkways, highway entrances, high school tennis courts, many lawns around both Parks & Rec and non-departmental buildings, and various street islands and triangles);
- 44 rights-of-way;
- 45 stormwater retention ponds (most built by developers but now maintained by the City);
- 15 snow dump sites.

The parks and open spaces alone total over 1000 acres. To water these properties in a cost-effective and water-saving way, Parks operates the nation's largest single-master-controlled Hunter irrigation system. The Urban Forester has responsibility for over 17,000 trees.

Two of the community parks are major facilities, Sandy Downs and Idaho Falls Raceway at Noise Park. Parks also operates and maintains two city-funded cemeteries, Rose Hill and Fielding Memorial. Other buildings and equipment maintained by the Parks Division include:

- 24 shelters and pavilions;
- 25 public restrooms;
- 25 playgrounds;
- a fishing pond;
- a disc golf course;
- an archery range;
- a dog park;
- hundreds of picnic tables;
- hundreds of trash containers, regularly emptied by Parks staff; and

- several dozen playing fields with their goals, nets, dugouts, fences, backstops, etc.

Major contributions to the attractiveness of the city are provided by 120 hanging baskets and several hundred flower beds, planted and maintained by the Parks Division's Horticulture staff and volunteers, using annuals grown in the greenhouse at Rose Hill Cemetery through the generous continuing bequest of Maxine Elliott Kussy for City beautification.

A series of memorial trees and benches, along with other artworks like the topiary elk, moose, buck and doe in the riverfront parks, have recently added aesthetic and individual touches. Most of these are purchased by families or through grants, but all are maintained by Parks.

Various lands were also added from 2009-2015, as noted in the April 20, 2015 PowerPoint presented to the committee: 13 new properties totaling 118.5 acres, each requiring additional planning, construction and/or maintenance for landscape and tree care, trails and playing fields, restrooms, trash collection, and snow removal. Several, such as the newly gifted Heritage Park site, also require extensive planning for development of suitable and attractive amenities.

Limitations of Parks Division Review

Out of all this size and diversity, the CRC saw less than a dozen parks and other areas in our tour. We began with an introduction to Weed and Environmental Control, based at the Skyline Activity Center. In the secured storage yard behind the center, we viewed the pumping area for weed and lawn chemicals, a small greenhouse where some of the city's many annuals are grown, and the new automated (side-arm) trash truck that allows use of new larger, more cost-efficient trashcans.

Driving out to the Soccer Butte complex, we paused by Reinhart Park to see where a spray-park children's water play area is proposed to be built on the site of the disused old swimming pool. At the Soccer Butte complex, we viewed and discussed the use of stormwater retention ponds as playing fields; playing field turf maintenance; and the cost savings from Parks-staff-built restrooms and using recycled asphalt for temporary parking lot surfacing.

We toured the newly re-opened, successful Idaho Falls Raceway (previously Noise Park). Returning into the city, we paused at Ryder Park to observe its success, even though this park, being developed in cooperation with Idaho State Fish and Game, is still only partly completed. We then toured the Horticulture and Urban Forestry facility, Fielding Cemetery, Sandy Downs, and the building at Community Park in which the irrigation master controls are located.

No stops were made at other parks, although the return trip circled through Tautphaus Park and passed by or near Community Park, parts of the riverfront (greenbelt) parks, and the Japanese Pavilion, which is being built by a volunteer group under an agreement with Parks.

The committee's findings and observations are thus more limited for Parks than for any other division. Although we saw two large facilities, Sandy Downs and the Raceway, one of the two cemeteries (Fielding) and some of the work areas for Horticulture and Urban Forestry, Irrigation Management, and Weed and Environmental Control, we visited or discussed only a few of the more than 100 parks and other spaces maintained by the Parks division. As a result, we acquired less in-depth understanding of Parks compared to other parts of Parks & Recreation.

This lower level of familiarity was offset in a few areas where one or more committee members has professional experience (Horticulture and Urban Forestry) or we investigated a particular issue (Cemeteries), or we collectively have the experience of any group of long-time, active residents of the city (parks programs, planning, and maintenance).

As a result, we suspect that the disparate operations, extensiveness, and many interrelationships with clubs, volunteers, schools, and others, may merit a deeper review of the Parks division, in more detail than was available to the CRC. We also wonder, based on this experience, if the division size may be approaching the bounds of its effectiveness.

Our observations, findings, and recommendations are organized below, starting with Administration; Budget; Programs (including major facilities); and Parks Maintenance. Following are sections on the other major subdivisions within Parks: Horticulture and Urban Forestry; Weed and Environmental Control; Irrigation Management; and, finally, Cemeteries.

Parks Administration

Findings and Observations

The Parks Division is run by competent, energetic, and enthusiastic managers. Although the professional training budget has been scant for this Division, as for others (particularly as a result of recent budget cuts), the management team operates with the benefit of long experience in this division. Staff appear to have good cross-training and backup.

Good strides in new equipment and approaches have clearly been made in recent years, especially recently, under new Department leadership. However, the Division staff still sometimes appear to do things "the way they have always been done." For example, policies and provisions for recycling are only just being adopted, and only in a passive approach, i.e., by putting out containers at events without signs or staff (including

volunteers) to encourage the public to sort and recycle correctly. The Weed and Environmental Control staff have no practice of maintaining some of the City's dozens of non-park areas without herbicides or cutting, in order to provide natural areas for nature viewing and nature play, as well as helping to restore local ecological services. Vital species like honeybees depend on early spring food sources such as dandelions, and many native birds are declining in number through loss of native food sources and nesting sites in tall grasses and forbs. We believe starting the CAPRA accreditation process will readily show where changes can bring all areas up to the division's professional goals.

At the same time, when presented with a new opportunity, the staff have the vision and energy to turn it into a significant asset. Examples of this ability include:

- Ryder Park, under development (still incomplete) with Idaho Fish and Game
- Heritage Park, a significant new parks gift on the river
- Idaho Falls Raceway at Noise Park, renovated and reopened in 2013
- Sandy Downs, under plans for redevelopment

In many specific areas, the Parks division executes effectively. An example is the installation, or plans for, solar lighting and timed lighting, such as at the Skate Park in Tautphaus Park. These small elements are key to quality. We were also impressed with their ability to successfully implement new ideas such as the centrally controlled irrigation system, the use of recycled asphalt in parking lots, and turning the defunct pool at Reinhart Park into a Spray Park (also still in the planning stage). The riverfront parks (under any name) continue to improve every year, and the newest "rock gardens" (or Riverwalk section) not only won awards from parks and landscape professionals, they consistently impress visitors from all over.

Every year, the Division relies on many volunteers to help plant the floral planters dotted along downtown streets and the annual flowerbeds in parks. Over many years, one of the most impressive features of Idaho Falls has been the development of the riverfront park system, known as the River Walk or Greenbelt, in partnership with the Downtown Rotary Club. Both clubs and nonprofits contribute substantially to annual activities, as well as to special events and projects, such as the Japanese Pavilion and Friendship Park.

As detailed in the Department-Level section above in this report, there are crucial needs to (a) recognize the contributions of clubs and volunteers; (b) establish a cooperative programming policy, to enable adequate monitoring and assistance for success, as well as a public record of such partnerships; (c) carry out all aspects of volunteer management, as identified in CAPRA Standard 4.7.1-4.7.5; and (d) clearly attribute the substantial contribution of volunteers in each annual budget to show the cost savings derived. We believe hiring a departmental Volunteer Management Coordinator would be highly beneficial in meeting all of these needs.

We suggest adding a Grant Writer to the department's central staff, as well, to help Parks as well as other divisions seek out and apply for grants (or, like the Rotary Club, produce the matching funds for larger grants--including government). Receipt of such grants would improve Parks' ability to further enhance the City's environment.

Planning is a critical need for the entire Parks and Recreation Department, and no less so for the Parks Division. The CRC informational handouts included several Park Master Plans for Ryder Park, Sandy Downs, the Downtown Greenbelt (western side, Broadway to Johns Hole Bridge), and a sample spray park. No master plans were seen for the recently redeveloped Raceway or any other parks. No overarching list was available of how many projects are currently underway, or timetables for their completion.

The greenbelt plan was prepared in 2013 and, thanks to State Highway Department grants, is underway at this time. The Ryder Park Master Plan is dated 2008 and shows that only about one-third has been finished, with the second pond, a much-needed river water pumping system, and extensive trails, plantings, etc., still unrealized. The Sandy Downs Master Plan "Concept" is dated 2007, and most or all of what it shows is unrealized. The splash or spray park plan is undated and appears to be simply a generic example of what is envisioned for Reinhart Park, to replace the aged, defunct, and un-restorable small swimming pool with a popular, active, and far less costly attraction. So far, the funding and plans for this do not appear to have been set.

New parks and projects are numerous in the Parks Division's PowerPoint listing, which includes the greenbelt renovation, along with 10 other projects in an "On the Horizon" list. This list is confusing both in what it includes and what it leaves out, and the status of each. Park Master Plans for Tautphaus and the new Heritage site are included but not the incomplete or unstarted projects at Ryder Park, Sandy Downs, and Reinhart. It is not clear whether the Tautphaus Park Master plan embraces the Zoo and other non-parks facilities, all of which are jostling for more room.

A "Mountain Bike Park" is on the list, which is good, because the many recreational and youth (club) sport mountain bikers have been asking for one for some years. However, the P&R Director notes the unsuitability of one proposed location west of the City because there is gun use throughout the area. While many of the mountain bike community – as well as the CRC – agree, no feasible alternative area has been offered, much less a plan developed.

Clearly, there is a need for a clear, single, publicly available matrix showing all projects that the sprawling Parks Division is involved in, along with the status of their planning, funding, scheduling, public involvement activities, etc. Neither the citizens nor the policymakers of Idaho Falls can effectively support Parks projects that are unclear in their status or even

their existence. A Parks project matrix, available online, and regularly updated, would be similar to what many other cities have.

With a project matrix showing what the status of planning is; how much funding is allocated, and from what source; when public participation in design will begin and be completed; what the schedule and progress are; and other details such as the “real” (or at least most current) name, the public will gain considerable understanding, and administrators can avoid the confusion that occurs at present because they have no way to track these shifting, changing plans. As of now, there appears to be no such centralized listing of projects planned or possible – or once planned, and now in limbo. The CRC finds it impossible to comment on the effectiveness of the Parks program overall, in the absence of any overall “birds-eye view.”

The Parks and Recreation Department as a whole has been described as the “catchall” department for whatever other City departments can’t accommodate, or don’t want. The Parks Division appears to be the part where all these “extra” programs, properties, and maintenance duties come to rest. While it is admirable that Parks offers itself as a home, (and probably inevitable that some part of any city serve this need), there appears to be a constant pattern of enlargement and mission “creep” that logically has to have an end.

The CRC’s review of Parks was sometimes mind-boggling, as we discovered all the things Parks does, and we wondered why Parks is doing some of them – shoveling snow off other departments’ sidewalks, for instance. At the same time, there seems less integration with other operations than might be practical – for instance, having irrigation at Tautphaus Park separate from that of the Zoo, which is in the same Department. For any program or facility within the Department (as for the City as a whole), there is a need to know when “to stop.” A policy should be developed that identifies the least relevant areas of the Division, and those least supported by either revenues or public desire, and plan for their divestment or new use.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Parks Administration

1. Continue innovative and exciting development of Idaho Falls’ best assets – its beautiful parks, plantings, and trees.
2. Use CAPRA standards to update approaches and identify new ideas.
3. As detailed in the Department-Level section, develop and follow a written standard policy for all cooperative programming with clubs, nonprofits, other agencies, etc., and document these partnerships online for better public understanding and success.
4. Work with the Department’s administration and/or the City to hire and share a Volunteer Management Coordinator and a Grant Writer.
5. Develop a Parks master plan and strategic plan under the overall structure of the (recommended) comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space master plan.

6. Develop and implement a public participation policy for design of all park master plans (e.g., Heritage, Tautphaus) and related programs (e.g., mountain bike park).
7. Develop a publicly posted, regularly updated Project Matrix showing names, locations, schedule, progress, availability of funds, partnerships, and public involvement opportunities for ALL projects planned, on hold, and in progress.
8. Develop a policy and routine analysis that identifies those areas and programs that are least relevant to Parks (in terms of the P&R Master Plan), and/or least supported by revenues or public desire, and divests or reuses them.

Parks Budget

Findings and Observations

As noted, the identification in the budget of the considerable contributions of volunteers, as well as clubs, non-profits, and other partners, is essential to demonstrate to City policymakers, taxpayers, and the general public how substantially the City's parks rely on donated labor and other resources. These cost contributions must be indicated and respected for the sizable public investment they represent in our parks – over and above fees and taxes paid – and thus a good measure of how deeply desirable a diverse, high quality parks system is to the citizens of Idaho Falls.

Many Parks staff in particular areas have required and specific certifications (e.g., in chemical application, in arboriculture, and in playground equipment safety inspection). However, the budget for professional training of Parks staff, in all areas, has been cut back recently and should be restored in order for the staff to continue developing the skills and abilities needed to advance the quality and cost-effective management of the Parks assets.

Parks staff use and exchange many services with other City departments, such as plowing sidewalks and parking areas, mowing lawns, and maintaining stormwater retention areas. It is unclear whether these uses of labor and/or resources between departments are adequately planned and billed. The CRC would like to see more clarity as to whether interdepartmental services are used cost-effectively. In the same vein, better analysis is needed, on a regularly updated basis, to compare in-house versus contract costs. For example, the in-house construction of restrooms (as at the Soccer Complex) was presented as a good budget-saving activity, but it was unclear whether it was an optimal use of staff resources, training, and budget. Cost savings for this and similar activities need to be researched and fully documented in order to justify their addition as special activities.

Since much, if not all, of the revenues generated by the Parks Division goes to the General Fund, it is important to attribute them clearly, so as to recognize the amounts that originate from Parks activities. Actions and incentives of these and other sorts will maintain and increase motivation to generate additional revenues.

The Municipal Equipment Replacement Fund (MERF) system is working well for Parks, which used it to anticipate the need for a new garbage collection truck. Thanks to the MERF, the money was available when needed, without sudden stress, and even allowed for the purchase of a better, more cost-efficient vehicle. However, some Parks vehicles don't have sheds to protect them from winter weather, and similarly, other buildings and facilities incur wear and tear and deterioration without any MERF-like provision to anticipate for their construction or replacement. The CRC recommends that all small buildings, including equipment sheds and picnic shelters and restrooms, have a MERF-like Building or Facility replacement fund to provide continuity in these equally important areas. Major buildings and facilities need capital facilities plans to show future repair and replacement needs.

A chief problem for parks nationwide, according to the 2015 National Recreation and Park Association Field Report, is the decreased use of parks due to a less active population, shifts to indoor and digital recreation (texting, videos, online games), and the decreased walkability of park neighborhoods. Decreased park use means decreased support, and leads to decreased funding. Recreation programming in Idaho Falls parks has bolstered the use and revenues, as does site-specific income such as at the Raceway. These are commendable approaches.

At the same time, it is worth considering which of the dozens of non-park holdings may not be appropriate properties for Parks to continue maintaining at the current level. Returning some areas to natural habitat may be feasible and cost-effective. Converting areas to community gardens is another approach recommended nationally, where the gardeners will take over maintenance by converting otherwise unused space to actively gardened plots. A third approach is to extend more responsibility to the partners where Parks is maintaining lawns, etc., around non-departmental or non-city buildings and spaces.

Also noted is the tendency for developers of some subdivisions and other areas to create, as required, stormwater ponds, open spaces, and plantings of trees, etc., and then turn these over to the City for perpetual maintenance. The CRC recommends that land use policies be reviewed to ensure that such future Parks properties are not only completely and correctly built and planted, but also adequately funded. Where possible, such areas may be better if designed for use as natural areas rather than automatically turfed so that they have to always after be mowed, irrigated, sprayed for weeds, etc. Rental to a user such as a nature play constituency, a community garden, or a beekeeper, may also be publicly acceptable and more revenue-friendly.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Parks Budget

1. Identify the contributions of volunteers as a budget line item to show the amount "recovered" from these community contributions.
2. Restore the budget for regular professional training and development.
3. Establish a clear, accountable, and cost-justified basis for the sharing of interdepartmental labor and resources. Verify regularly whether it is cheaper to hire an independent contractor, to use interdepartmental resources, or to carry work out in-house.
4. Ensure that Parks fees and revenues are recognized when added to the General Fund.
5. Develop a program similar to MERF to cover small buildings such as storage sheds, picnic shelters, fences, restrooms, etc.
6. Develop a capital facilities plan for each major facility that shows future building and replacement needs.
7. Continue to identify and support cost recovery where feasible and fair. Consider divesting, or alternatively, more cost-effective uses, for non-park properties. The practice of increasing acreage without having a maintenance strategy and funding for improvements in place should stop.
8. Identify options for divestment of maintained non-park areas (retention ponds, rights-of-way, etc.) into more cost-sustaining uses that are publicly beneficial, such as natural habitat, community gardens, apiaries, dog parks, and bike-pedestrian paths.
9. Make sure developers providing plantings, paths, stormwater ponds, etc., do so in ways that are appropriate under City rules (e.g., for tree types and locations), cost-effective for the City to take over maintenance on, and where possible, built in ways that allow lower-cost or revenue-producing uses.

Parks Programs

Findings and Observations

The Idaho Falls Raceway (previously Noise Park) was a featured element of the CRC's tour. The committee applauds the use of a renowned motocross course designer to rebuild the motocross part of the Raceway, which helped ensure record entries when races were resumed. Also noted were the crowd's good reviews on other aspects of the rebuilt raceway, in particular the clean restrooms. The gradual rebuilding of the stock-car track and other areas, all involving much volunteer help, along with the expected grant to begin building and operating dirt bike trails and training, promise to help make this new City facility a good revenue earner. Ideally, a 5-year business plan such as the one Golf is following will be developed to ensure that the Raceway is marketed and maintained with an eye to sustainability.

Sandy Downs is a large complex that has several types of redevelopment and/or new uses proposed and/or underway. The addition of some form of gaming will enhance the

revenues of this aging facility, offsetting the cost of renovation, which takes a chance on the future of horse-related activities in the face of a national trend downward for equine recreation and sports. The Master Plan for Sandy Downs is dated 2007 and it is not clear whether this plan is being followed, is on schedule, or even ever started. As with the Raceway, a solid business plan must be developed to ensure that appropriate future building and use is viable, and cost recovery is possible.

The Citywide Signage and Wayfinding project seems to be a part of Parks (at least as reflected in the PowerPoint overview the CRC was shown) and several budget and capital plan spreadsheets. While the CRC received no information or tour of the Division's work improving various highway interchanges, city entrances, and so forth, virtually all the committee have noted these improvements (such as at Broadway and I-15) with great approval. However, it should be considered whether it is appropriate for an already large and sprawling Division of the Parks and Recreation Department to also be asked to implement the wayfinding plans. The portfolio of Parks is expanding every year into ever more diverse areas. The committee wonders when staffing and training, among other things, will be exceeded.

Formalizing and managing the Remembrance/Memorial Trees and Benches is needed. There is no central online listing of where these trees and benches are, or where they may be optimally placed, or of what the associated costs are for each. The Horticulture professionals recently collaborated with the Shade Tree Commission, the Idaho Falls Community Forestry Department, and other area experts to produce a detailed guide on "Trees and Shrubs for Idaho Falls: Selection and Care," provided to the CRC by the Urban Forester in our tour. When that booklet was printed, the pictures that were available for each tree did not include local examples, such as are included in many Idaho Falls parks, and as Memorial Trees. Ideally, the Memorial tree website should recommend varieties in the tree booklet list, and in turn, pictures of those that are already in the City's parks and Greenbelt could be placed online, with GPS and/or address location, so that people can go see which kinds they like.

Despite the number of volunteers and community groups partnering with Parks to carry out a wide variety of tasks, there seems to be little outreach to the broader public about what is new, what opportunities are available, which partners are offering what programs, and what kinds of public involvement (in planning, for example) are available. There is a community garden association listed on the Parks website, but no coordination with this group to ensure their best success. An experienced and well-run dog training club offers classes in Tautphaus Park, but this and other community organizations are not listed or publicized. The Japanese Pavilion is being built in Friendship/Pederson Park, but nothing informs people about how Parks helps sponsor it or how people can become involved.

Good examples of drawing more people into the parks are seen with The “Movies in the Park” program and the revitalized disc golf offerings this summer at Freeman Park, but there is a need to review what there is in each park, analyze what gaps exist in either programs or advertising of them, and use public input to help develop more systematic offerings.

As recommended under the Department-wide section, improved public outreach, and active public involvement in planning, are strong needs. This will be complemented by professional volunteer management and a clear policy for cooperative programming, also detailed under the Department-Level section.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Parks Programs

1. Emulate the Golf Program's successful 5-Year Plan with regular, specific, measurable facilities revenue, use, and development plans for each major facility or program, including the Raceway, Sandy Downs, Archery Range, etc.
2. Identify whether citywide programs like the signage and wayfinding plan are most appropriately, and cost-effectively, administered from within Parks. Ensure that staffing, training, and budget are adequate for a constantly expanding Division, or consider splitting the Division.
3. Systematize the Memorial/Remembrance Tree and Bench programs with clear listings of opportunities, needs, costs, and recommendations online. List all existing trees and benches with their locations (GPS). Coordinate with the Trees for Idaho Falls listing so that examples in the parks can be seen by people considering them.
4. Coordinate with Department-wide efforts on improved public outreach, active public participation in planning, coordinated volunteer management, and a documented, consistent policy for cooperative programming.

Parks Maintenance

Findings and Observations

The most frequent comment made at the newly reopened Idaho Falls Raceway, we were told, was praise for the super-clean restrooms. As with the Recreation Division, the Parks Maintenance staff appear to take great pride in carrying out even routine tasks to a high standard of quality. The flowerbeds and baskets that appear each summer are a conspicuous asset. Most well-used trails and parks have trash cans. In our brief introduction to Parks Maintenance, we saw the new side-arm automated trash truck (able to be purchased thanks to the excellent working of the MERF fund) and some of the new, larger trash cans that it uses. They will not need emptying as often, so the new system will cut costs on maintenance as well as eliminating one of the main risks for worker injury.

The diligence of Parks Maintenance is commendable, but maintenance is in some respects inconsistent. Neighborhood parks, in particular, are too often described by residents and passers-by as weedy and run-down. Soil is often compacted from decades of recreational use, and while care of the trees is generally excellent, compacted soil has an inevitable impact on tree roots and growth. Litter and dog waste are too often present, especially in parks without good trash cans, signage, and available “mutt mitts.” The committee noted that even in the new, award-winning, and remarkably beautiful “Rock Garden” or riverwalk park (north of Pancheri), there are zero trash cans seen even as recently as August. Many people picnicking, fishing, and walking through this park do not take their trash home, and the beauty of this new park is diminished substantially.

Loose dogs and dogs on leads longer than allowed under City ordinance (8 feet) are not only an annoyance in parks, they present a health and safety hazard. The committee recommends that the Division either work with the Police Department and City Attorney to find a means to sign and enforce dog ordinances better, or revise the laws so that people know they enter the parks at their own risk.

Amenities in neighborhood parks are also scanty. Not only do loose dogs and litter pose active problems, but aside from picnic tables and playground equipment, there has been no effort to develop attractive or distinctive features that will bring neighbors into these parks. It is not uncommon to drive by a neighborhood or smaller community park and see none or very few visitors. Furthermore, the CRC learned with concern that the recent playground equipment safety inspection found 16 out of our total of 25 out of compliance. This is a safety issue and could present legal liabilities. The need for safe playgrounds must be addressed.

In the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) 2015 Field Report, the number one issue identified as a trend impacting the future of parks is that “programs are key to park attendance.” Without reasons to visit parks, the public decreases support and funding, which further decreases the quality and attractions of parks, and so on until there are no parks or playgrounds left.

The CRC would like to see park use surveys for ALL of our Idaho Falls parks, and plans made with public input to re-energize neighborhood parks, in particular. Our neighborhood parks were envisioned as, and can become, uniquely attractive, walkable centers for activity including varied levels of recreation, quiet reflection, social engagement, nature viewing, and more. Residents should not have to drive past local parks to find running trails, or take a walk among flowers, or get productive exercise through community gardening, or meet friends to play an easy sport. Walkable neighborhood parks (with varied paths inside as well as safe walking to them) should be a cornerstone of the *Connecting Our Community Plan*.

The CRC would like to see more interesting walks at parks that already have paths, and paths at parks that have none. Benches with beautiful views are already an asset at Freeman Park. Other features can be added at non-river parks, such as outdoor fitness systems (for adults, not just playgrounds for kids), bocce ball courts, nature interpretation and birding information, nature play areas, varied types of gardens such as native plant xeriscaping, butterfly gardens, community gardens, or therapy gardens.

The perennial plantings at the Rock Gardens (aka Riverwalk Park north of Pancheri) are a welcome change from annual plantings. The perennials give a constantly changing show of color, form, and flowers that is inviting to visitors in every season. There is no information on the species and varieties, however, online or in the garden, as markers or on a kiosk or as a self-guided tour. As both inspiration to local gardeners and information to naturalists, these details need to be provided. Here, as elsewhere, there are opportunities for interpretive and educational elements going unmet. Cooperation with local garden or naturalist clubs, or service learning with local K-12-college students, would be one way to work with the public in providing this information.

Where local parks have no internal or varied paths, such as at Kate Curley or Rollandet or Community, the CRC recommends small-scale projects to add paths that can be carried under the Connecting Our Community goals, so that parents or grandparents who are watching their kids play sports, for example, can walk around the park instead of just sitting or texting while they wait.

Recycling the proper materials in the proper containers is a pain for many people, but resource conservation, including through recycling, is increasingly important for many reasons. The CRC commends Parks Maintenance for beginning to provide recycling containers for at least some events, but would like to see more active information and more numerous stations, particularly in parks.

Security is a concern in all public parks. While instances of dog bites, assaults, and vandalism are thankfully low in Idaho Falls, they still occur. The CRC notes with approval various improvements in pathway lighting, especially solar lights, and encourages this trend. Security at Tautphaus Park should be tied in with the Zoo, just as every effort should be made at other facilities to coordinate and integrate security, fencing, lighting, paving, irrigation, or any other system that is more cost-effective when combined.

The 2007 Sandy Downs master plan has one small part identified as for a “natural area.” Heritage Park, as proposed, will have some natural area, and when completed, Ryder Park may have some as well. There are hundreds of properties administered by Parks, however, which means there are far too few “natural areas” in them, or even proposed for them. Nature viewing and activities of many types (nature play, nature photography, naturalist studies, etc.) are a strongly trending outdoor activity across the nation; in the West,

particularly, people often choose to live somewhere that is “close to nature.” Idaho Falls residents should not have to own a car and drive outside of town to enjoy nature, or to see that our local environment is being restored and/or protected.

The Parks Division administers many non-park properties, such as stormwater retention ponds, rights-of-way, open spaces, etc. Many of these may be appropriate for natural management or restoration, including xeriscaping. Such areas might be less costly to maintain if re-naturalized, and would simultaneously become available for nature recreation use (natureplay, nature viewing, birding, etc.) as well as contributing to restoration of local ecosystems. Stormwater retention ponds already provide ecosystem services – water retention and return; adding other ecosystem services such as nesting habitat would seem an easy and logical continuation.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Parks Maintenance

1. Continue the diligent attention to details like clean restrooms, adequate trash cans, etc., as well as the updating of equipment and systems to maintain quality, safety, and cost-effectiveness.
2. Address maintenance needs in neighborhood parks, for example litter, compacted soil, and dog waste.
3. Emulate Community Park in providing both signage warning against loose dogs and dog waste, and mutt mitts to encourage its prompt and proper disposal. Work with I.F.P.D. and others as needed to properly post and enforce dog ordinances effectively.
4. Prepare an analysis of playground needs to bring them up to ADA and safety standards.
5. Continue and increase “programs in the parks” to increase use and satisfaction, considering both events (e.g., Movie Night) and features (e.g., fitness trails, miniature golf, bocce ball, community gardens, bird and nature areas, multiple paths with views, benches).
6. Carry out a formal survey of parks usage by time/day, demographics, and activity types, etc.
7. Begin outreach to neighborhood and user groups to identify effective ways to increase use of neighborhood parks through restoration, distinctive features, and other improvements as well as targeted use opportunities (“programming in the parks”).
8. Find partnerships if needed to create interpretive materials for parks with special plantings and materials, such as the perennials in the Riverwalk rock gardens.
9. Build small paths in parks as part of the *Connecting Our Community Plan* to encourage parents who are there for children’s sports to walk while they wait.

10. Continue to increase recycling through stations and information across all parks and sponsored events.
11. Integrate security and other services – irrigation, fencing, lighting, paving, etc. – with neighboring non-Parks facilities (e.g., Zoo) wherever cost-effective.
12. Improve natural areas within parks and consider converting non-Park properties (storm ponds, open spaces, etc.) to natural areas for recreational enjoyment and natural systems restoration.

Horticulture and Urban Forestry

General Findings and Observations

The City of Idaho Falls is committed to maintaining a healthy, sustainable Horticulture and Urban Forestry Operation. More than 17,000 trees are located on public property, for which the City Forester is responsible. Trees are maintained in order to maximize the benefits that trees offer to the community, as well as to avoid public safety issues. This is specialized work, with a certain degree of danger for City employees. Tree managers are Certified Arborists, certified by the International Society of Arboriculture, and they receive training annually to maintain the certification.

Idaho Falls has been a Tree City USA for 23 years, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to a healthy city.

The committee believes the City of Idaho Falls is fortunate to have good people working for them. Employees are keenly aware of financial difficulties and do what they can to save money by doing things in-house.

The many flower gardens and downtown pots are the envy of neighboring communities. They also provide a positive impact on travelers and residents alike. Providing shade and beauty at community entrances encourages people to slow down and conduct commerce in our city.

The CRC is impressed with the attitude of City employees. They have a can-do attitude and it's obvious that they like what they do. The addition of Greg Weitzel as Director of the Department has had a positive effect on City employees.

Horticulture and Urban Forestry Facilities

Findings and Observations

Idaho Falls has made a significant investment in specialized equipment that allows city employees to do the tree pruning, stump removal, wood waste removal. The equipment is well maintained.

The greenhouse at the Rose Hill cemetery is also a huge asset, allowing the Horticultural Specialists flexibility when making plans for plant selection and providing a great deal of quality control. Additionally, there is a financial savings to the City by not requiring that plants be purchased from business.

The Forestry office is adequate, with enough room for staff and a basement for storage. And it is ADA accessible.

Horticulture and Urban Forestry Staffing

Findings and Observations

The budget cuts that took away some of the seasonal, temporary employees have had a negative effect on the quality of maintenance. We expect our City employees to pick up the slack when they don't have as many people on the staff. Parks and Recreation is fairly seasonal, with most work responsibilities occurring in the spring and summer months. The advisability of removing those people should be reconsidered.

Additionally we would recommend appointing a Volunteer Management Coordinator. There are people looking for service projects and we feel that this resource could be expanded.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Horticulture and Urban Forestry Staffing

1. Reconsider the wisdom of removing seasonal employees during their off-seasons. Perhaps their skills can be used throughout the year in some other area of the Department as a whole.
2. Aid employees who require certifications and recertification's by easing the method by which such training will occur.
3. Hire a Volunteer Management Coordinator.

Horticulture and Urban Forestry Budgeting

Findings and Observations

While we recognize that budgets are not unlimited, we believe we should strive to maintain what we have. New tree-planting projects and new landscaping should have a budget for maintenance. We can't keep planting and not expect to have a maintenance obligation.

There is no interdepartmental storm response plan. In the event of a cataclysmic storm event, response would be better if everyone knew what he or she was responsible for.

Certifications require continuing education units. We should make it easier for employees to attain the required certifications.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Horticulture and Urban Forestry Budgeting

1. Do not plant unless there is a budget for maintaining the new plantings.
2. Develop an interdepartmental storm response plan.

Weed and Environmental Control

Findings and Observations

This subdivision was described briefly to the CRC. The main activity we heard about was spraying for dandelions. Staff are all properly trained and certified in use of landscape chemicals. The committee questioned, however, why so many properties are being sprayed, when ecological restoration is a significant concern for many residents. Honeybees, for example, have suffered tremendous declines (from colony collapse disorder and other impacts), and they need the first spring flower, such as dandelions, perhaps more than any other food source after our long cold winters. Cutting down weeds or replacing with turf grass not only destroys food sources for important insects and birds, it also eliminates needed nesting areas for many bird species, including ones that are declining in number.

The committee was not assured that there is any policy to maintain some of the city's dozens of non-park areas chemical-free and uncut, but this would not only help restore local ecological services, but would also provide natural areas for nature viewing and nature play. However, the staff in this sub-division were interested to learn more, so we would encourage an investigation of current practices in other cities and regions to find cost-effective ways to increase our city's conservation and restoration of natural areas and their ecological services.

Some of the many non-park properties (stormwater retention ponds, rights-of-way) may be good candidates for ecological service areas. Local conservation groups may be good partners for such a project. Use of non-park properties (and where suitable, park areas too) as natural areas may be cheaper than establishing and maintaining them in turf grass, and may cause them to also become more attractive for nature play, nature viewing, birding, and other increasingly popular nature-related activities.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Weed and Environmental Control

1. Investigate and develop ways to sustain vital ecological services through establishing or restoring natural habitat in appropriate non-park and park areas.

Irrigation Management

Findings and Observations

The CRC toured the Parks Division's central irrigation control center in a building in Community Park. We learned that the City operates the largest single-control Hunter system in the country. The staff appear extremely knowledgeable about the system and its operation.

It is not clear if there are any plans to expand this system to serve related City facilities (such as the Zoo, for example). If practical, this might be a good cost savings for the Department or City. As well, use of a sophisticated irrigation system is a good way to minimize water and use it only when and where needed.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Irrigation Management

1. Continue using innovative technology and systems to operate cost-efficient, water-saving irrigation of city parks. Expand as practical.

Cemeteries Findings and Observations

The City operates two cemeteries, Rose Hill and Fielding Memorial. Both cemeteries are kept in good condition and the staff shows a high level of respect for the grounds and the deceased. According to the sexton, the cemeteries handle more than 250 burials a year, mainly at Fielding. More than 25,000 headstones, niche walls, and over 100 acres of land are maintained.

Rose Hill is sold out and the only plots available are now being sold by private owners who no longer expect to use them. Many unused plots are "orphans" purchased decades ago, whose current legal owners cannot be located. Also because of its age, Rose Hill has markers, landscaping, and other features that pose difficulties for maintenance, yet with no plots left to sell, there is no return to the budget for this maintenance operation.

Fielding is still expanding, is easier to maintain due to the use of flat headstones, and does generate some revenue. The CRC strongly encourages the development of a "perpetual-maintenance fee" as a way to balance costs. The committee also recommends that the city evaluate whether privatization of one or both cemeteries would be more cost-effective.

Many of the roads in the cemeteries are gravel and with our wet winter weather and summer irrigation they are often muddy and quite messy. The committee suggests consideration of paving these roads, with adequate shoulders for parking. Fencing at Fielding should also be considered, as there is no fence on the west and south sides and the

property is not as secure from animals and vandalism as it needs to be. As traffic and buildings continue to increase around Fielding, these concerns are only likely to grow.

An alternative source of water for both cemeteries must be explored. During times when the canals are not filled, the cemeteries are irrigated with water from the City's potable water system which is not cost-effective, and in coming years may prove environmentally unsustainable. A capital improvement plan should be implemented to carry out paving and development of a new water supply, which could include gray water.

Rumors of "gray market" pricing for plots sold in the private market surfaced during our fact finding. It was said that some people with unused plots will sell them themselves or to the funeral homes, which then sell them to people who need them. After visiting with Wood's Funeral Home, Parks Superintendent Brent Martin, and the city clerk's office, the CRC could not find any evidence that the plots are sold for a profit on the open market, or that the funeral home sells them for over the listed price. However, there is also no evidence that this could not occur, and there is no system in place to prevent such practices.

The system in place for re-selling unused plots consists of bulletin boards at the cemeteries on which anyone can put up an informal advertisement. The ads observed by the committee vary widely in their details and prices. More than 25 ads were observed in August, reselling over 100 plots. Those with prices listed showed a range from \$200 to \$400, with an average of nearly \$350. This informal system incorporates no controls over the resale process or price. The committee recommends strongly that the city re-evaluate how plots are resold, and consider whether a system wherein the City repurchases all unused plots might be fairer, and also ensure better availability over the long run.

During the committee's tour, we were told that fees at privately run cemeteries are much higher than those the City charges, because perpetual-maintenance fees are included. In order to assess the need for more comparable pricing, the committee carried out a brief comparative survey of area prices. Results reveal that Idaho Falls is about average in fees. Idaho Falls charges \$400 to \$500 for a plot, depending on the marker used (flat or upright), and has an opening/closing fee of \$275 to \$575, depending on seasonal and/or weekend variables. The least expensive plots were Rexburg's, at \$100 to \$200 for a plot, dependent on residency in Madison County. Madison's opening/closing fees were also the least expensive, at \$200 to \$250. Ammon Cemetery's rates are slightly lower than Idaho Falls, with plots prices of \$250 to \$500 and opening/closing fees of \$275 to \$400. Higher prices were found at the City of Pocatello's two cemeteries, Rest Lawn and Mountain View. Their plots run \$805 for a city resident and \$940 for a non-city resident. The opening/closing fees are equal to our higher winter rate at \$575. Detailed information on the basis for the

various regional rates, including whether, and to what extent, perpetual maintenance is factored in was not obtained. The committee strongly recommends that the price structure for our cemeteries be evaluated in comparison to local and regional standards, with particular attention to how long-term maintenance is paid for.

Summary of Findings and Observations for Cemeteries

1. Evaluate the costs and benefits of partial or full privatization of one or both cemeteries.
2. Identify more cost-effective ways, such as a perpetual-maintenance fee, to help meet the costs of long-term maintenance.
3. Revise cost structures to be in line with regional and industry standards.
4. Establish a policy for resale of unused, privately owned plots that ensures fairness both to buyers and to the City. Consider a policy for repurchasing unused plots to ensure better control over their long-term availability.
5. Develop a means, or draw on a capital improvement fund, to plan for current and future infrastructure needs, including road surfacing and improvements, development of a new, more sustainable, irrigation water source, and perimeter fences at Fielding.

Submitted October 9, 2015

Greg B. Wray, Chairman

Robert Nitschke, Vice Chair

Gerry Bates

James S. Freeman

James L. Gregory

Richard A. Kenney

Claudia Pine

Anne Staton Voillequé

List of Exhibits

1. "2015 Citizen Review Committees" guidance
2. Sources of Information
3. Spreadsheet of All Recommendations
4. Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Standards



Exhibit 1

2015

Citizen Review Committees

The City of Idaho Falls has formed Citizen Review Committees to encourage city-wide efficiency and innovation in an open atmosphere. The city needs committees that reflect a broad array of interests and opinions about local government. Applications from the public have been solicited and screened for city residency, employment, family relationships, and other potential financial or other conflicts with the goal of obtaining balanced committees. Over 70 applications were received. It is hoped that “fresh eyes” will reveal new or exciting directions for city management, budgeting and innovation.

Timeline. The following timeline will offers target dates (not hard deadlines) to encourage a timely process.

- Dec 5 Committee applications available
- Jan 5 Applications due
- Jan 23 Committee rosters finalized
- Feb 7 Committee Orientation/Establish Working Schedule
- June 1 Preliminary committee reports
- Sept 1 Final committee reports due

Process. The committee process will have three main phases:

Phase I—Data Gathering (8-10 hours)

- Meeting 1: Orientation—Process and Division
- Meeting 2: Field Trip/Facility Tours as needed
- Meeting 3: Budget Review, Historic data, Trends

Phase II—Fact Finding, Deliberation, Writing (10-30 hours)

- Meetings: As needed—Committees may divide workload into subcommittees
Q&A With Divisions.

Phase III—Reporting (5-15 hours)

- Meeting 1: Prepare Preliminary Report(s)
- Meeting 2: Review findings with Division Director
- Meeting 3: Review findings with Mayor
- Meeting 4: Final Report/Presentation to City Council

Reporting Format. The written reports are the key by-product of this process. A unanimous committee will be most persuasive, therefore consensus is encouraged. However, if there are divergent views that cannot be reconciled in the committee report, a

minority report may be submitted. Reports should be signed by the committee members who participate in their formation. To facilitate uniform and comprehensive reporting, the following format is recommended. City resources are available to support preparation and duplication of the final reports before they are presented to the Mayor and Council.

- Section 1: Title Page—Committee Title and Membership
- Section 2: General Findings and Observations—positive and negative
 - a. Administration/Budgeting
 - b. Management
 - c. Policy
 - d. Political
- Section 3: Recommendations—Listed in a Spreadsheet Format
- Section 4: Signature Page
- Section 5: Director’s Response

Access. Members of the public and news media are invited and encouraged to observe the review process. To this end, all official Citizen Review Committee meetings will be advertised as public meetings. To preserve the quality of committee deliberations and discourse, the committee members and chairs may opt to provide a forum for public participation and input in committee meetings.

Scope and Limits. The committee review can be as broad or as specific as the committee desires. However, any confidential personnel matters or other city business that might otherwise be considered exempt from Idaho’s Open Meeting Law (Idaho Code §§67-2340 through 67-2347) may not be made available for committee members to review. Recommendations shall not be aimed or focused upon individual city employees by name. Other legal limits may apply and the city attorney will serve as the final arbiter when questions arise.

Exhibit 2

Sources of Information Used by Citizen Review Committee

Parks and Recreation 2015

Department-Wide Information*

City of Idaho Falls, Division of Parks and Recreation, 2013 Annual Report. 24 pp.

City of Idaho Falls, Division of Parks and Recreation, 2014 Annual Report. 32 pp.

Weitzel, Greg A., Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation Division. PowerPoint presentation to Citizen Review Committee February 7, 2015. 17 pp.

Weitzel, Greg A., 2015 Division of Parks and Recreation Goals and Objectives. 2 pp.

Parks and Recreation Division Capital Plan Update FY 2014-2019. Revised June 5, 2014. 3 pp.

Discover Idaho Falls, Your Community Directory to Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation. 2014-2015 Fall-Winter (Sept-March). 48 pp.

City of Idaho Falls, City Council Meeting, Final Signage Plan. January 22, 2015. Prepared by Hunt Design, Pasadena California. 19 pp.

"Connecting Our Community: A Plan for Connecting the Idaho Falls Area Through Walking and Biking." Prepared for the Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation Division and the Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Organization by Alta Planning + Design. May, 2014. 27 pp. plus appendices A: Facility Design Guidelines, 84 pp; B: Project Information, 20 pp; and C: Priority Projects, 21 pp.

CAPRA Standards 2014 (5th edition). National Accreditation Standards of the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). National Recreation and Park Association. Fifth edition, April 2014. 60 pp.

City of Idaho Falls, Division of Parks and Recreation, Capital Plan Update, Budget Year 2014-2015. 3 pp.

NRPA's 2015 Field Report. A Parks and Recreation National Database Analysis. National Recreation and Park Association. 2015. 24 pp.

Recreation Division

Holm, P.J., 2015 Goals and Objectives, Recreation Superintendent. 2 pp.

Holm, P.J., Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation, Recreation Division. PowerPoint presentation to Citizen Review Committee March 10, 2015. 11 pp.

City of Idaho Falls 2014-2015 Budget Spreadsheets, Recreation. 12 pp

City of Idaho Falls, Estimated Revenues, FY 2014-2015, Recreation Fund 011. March 10, 2015. 1 pp.

City of Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation, Recreation Division. Citywide Program Plan – Program Report, 2011-2014. 1 pp.

Idaho Falls Future of Aquatics. Prepared for City of Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation by Aqua Design International. No date (approx. 2014). 16 pp.

Parks Division

Martin, Brent. Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation, Parks Department. PowerPoint presentation to Citizen Review Committee, April 20, 2015. 13 pp.

Downtown Greenbelt Renewal Master Plan. Prepared for City of Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation by Pierson Land Works LLC. November 22, 2013. 16 pp.

Ryder Park Master Plan. Prepared for City of Idaho Falls Parks and Recreation by Pierson Land Works LLC. November 7, 2008. 1 pp.

Sandy Downs Park Master Plan Concept. Prepared for City of Idaho Falls by Pierson Land Works, Inc. Jackson, Wyoming. August 28, 2007. 1 pp.

Spray Park Conceptual Plan. Prepared by Green Origins Designs. No date. 1 pp

City of Idaho Falls 2014-2015 Budget Spreadsheets, Parks. 13 pp.

City of Idaho Falls, Estimated Revenues, FY 2014-2015. As of April 20, 2015. 5 pp.

City of Idaho Falls, Parks inventory. Spreadsheet listing of locations, numbers and acreage of parks, planters, ponds, rights of way, snow dumps, and cemeteries. 5 pp.

Trees and Shrubs for Idaho Falls: Selection and Care. City of Idaho Falls Division of Parks and Recreation, in collaboration with the Idaho Falls Shade Tree Commission and the Idaho Falls Community Forestry Department. No date. 64 pp.

Golf Division

City of Idaho Falls Division of Parks and Recreation, Golf Operations Five-Year Business Plan. November 2012. 45 pp.

Reinke, Tim, Golf Department State of the Year 2014. December 31, 2014. 6 pp.

Reinke, Tim, History of Idaho Falls Golf Courses and Information on Golf Staff. Includes miscellaneous handouts on leagues, sponsors, and youth programs. Prepared for Citizen Review Committee. April 2015. 12 pp.

Weitzel, Greg A., and Tim Reinke., “Beyond the Tee Box: Promoting Municipal Golf in Today’s Marketplace.” PowerPoint originally prepared for annual meetings of the National

Recreation and Parks Association. Presented to Citizen Review Committee April 5, 2015. 34 pp.

City of Idaho Falls 2014-2015 Budget Spreadsheets, Golf. 24 pp.

Zoo Division

Tautphaus Park Zoo Master Plan. Prepared for City of Idaho Falls, Parks and Recreation by Bassett Associates and Earl B. Wells. May, 1998. 22 pp.

Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Final Report of the Visiting Committee to the Accreditation Commission, Tautphaus Park Zoo, Idaho Falls, Idaho. September 14, 2014. Includes Tautphaus Park Zoo Accreditation Inspection Narrative Report, June 30-July 2, 2014. 33 pp.

Tautphaus Park Zoo Written Response to 2014 Accreditation Inspection List of Concerns. August 1, 2014. 11 pp

Certificate of Accreditation for Tautphaus Park Zoo by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. September 14, 2014. 1 pp.

City of Idaho Falls 2014-2015 Budget Spreadsheets, Zoo. 3 pp.

Tautphaus Park Zoo Economic Impact Study, Market Analysis, and Market Plan. Prepared by Shaune Pack, Joanne Alcorn, Michael Douglas, Suprawee Pongthongcharoe, and Travis Rowberry. Spring 2010. 48 pp.

Tautphaus Park Zoological Society of Idaho Falls, "The Animal Challenge," Newsletter of the Tautphaus Park Zoological Society. February 2015. 8 pp.

Tautphaus Park Zoological Society of Idaho Falls. Membership Brochure. No date.

"Zoo-to-You and Tours." Brochure from Idaho Falls Zoo at Tautphaus Park describing on-site and outreach group educational programs. No date.

"Get a Little WILD: Visit Idaho Falls Zoo at Tautphaus Park." Advertising card for hotels, tourism sites, etc., describing zoo attractions, opportunities, and hours of operation. No date.

* Note on document titles: All document titles reflect the pre-2015 nomenclature that identifies Parks and Recreation as a Division, containing four departments. This has now been reversed so that Parks and Recreation is a city Department, with four divisions. While this report reflects that change of nomenclature, no change has been made to the titles of any documents created before the new designations.

EXHIBIT 3

**CITIZEN REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR PARKS AND RECREATION
DEPARTMENT
OCTOBER 2015**

SPREADSHEET OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

Exhibit 3. Summary of All Parks & Recreation Citizen Review Committee Findings & Observations

Finding / Observation

Star (★) and bold-faced text indicates findings and observations contributing to the list of Top Recommendations following the Executive Summary.

Department-Wide

Mission Statement and Master Plans:	1	★ The City should develop a master plan, to include why Idaho Falls has a P&R Department, define the value of the P&R Department to the City, and identify P&R priorities.
	2	P&R Department should write a comprehensive mission statement that follows on the vision established by the City in its City master plan (above).
	3	Write a P&R master plan outlining the Department's overarching strategy and vision.
	4	★ With the City, the Department should develop a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open-Space Plan.
Measurable Performance Metrics:	1	★ Establish a system of performance metrics that establishes goals AND shows progress towards desired CAPRA accreditation.
	2	★ Pursue CAPRA accreditation with the first stage, self-assessment, completed in the 2016 fiscal year.
	3	Prioritize the Department's goals and objectives (in the annual report of that name), and include the criteria used in the prioritization.
Department-Wide Budgeting:	1	★ Develop a budget process and report that are consistent among Department, Division, and programs. The process/reporting should be focused on goals and objectives and not merely an annual update of the preceding year's report. This should include measurable performance metrics.
	2	★ Ensure that funding for capital equipment and maintenance needs is included in the budgets.
	3	★ Include acknowledgement and funding of steps to be taken towards CAPRA accreditation.
	4	Clarify whether or not user fees related to P&R activities and programs are consistently being retained for P&R program/facility needs. If they are not, does the general fund overtly recognize that P&R activities are the source of the funds?

5 Address the practice of "borrowing" the services of an employee from another department and paying him/her a fee in addition to the salary s/he is already making from his own department.

6 ★ Establish a revenue policy, including a cost-recovery plan, to balance considerations of age, affordability, and other demographics in setting user fees across all programs. Include consideration of the services P&R provides regionally, and periodically examine the contribution to Idaho Falls P&R funding from non-resident users from other cities, the county, etc.

Department-Wide Staffing Plan:

1 ★ Hire an assistant director for the Department to give the Director time to accomplish long-range planning and evaluation on the Department level.

2 ★ Write a detailed staffing plan, identifying succession candidates and workforce development strategies.

3 ★ Move tasks such as grant-writing, advertising, events planning, and fees-tracking that apply across several programs to the departmental level for more cost-effectiveness and better coordination. Explore inter-departmental staff sharing that could help address these needs in common.

4 ★ Evaluate hiring or funding a Department-level grant writer, and hiring or funding a volunteer management coordinator responsible for recruiting training evaluation, etc.

5 ★ The staffing plan needs to address the elements of training, certification, and recertification of City employees, ensuring that these are both planned and budgeted for.

Cooperative Programming Policy:

1 ★ Establish a policy on how Parks and Recreation partners with nonprofits, clubs, user groups, and other entities, public and private. The policy should identify how partnership or sponsorship will be documented in writing and reviewed periodically for compliance with community goals.

2 ★ Establish a publicly accessible list of all facilitated and cooperative programs and services, including the names of clubs, nonprofits and other entities that enter into agreement with the city to provide recreation and leisure programs, and the types of programs offered.

3 Facilitate assistance to groups that want to provide programs, facilities, and events including, for example, publicity, location, staff support, or program evaluation, to help them become self-sustaining, well-operated, and beneficial to the City. This assistance could involve other departments, such as Community Services.

Program Awareness and Outreach:

1 ★ Outreach, both passive (magazine, brochures, social media, etc.) and active (talks at community fairs, schools, senior center, club meetings, etc.) needs to receive far more development to increase community awareness prior to events occurring.

2 ★ Increase opportunities for public participation in program and activity design.

Connecting Our Community Plan:

1 Require developers to consider Connecting the Community in their plans.

2 Encourage the City to engage in a serious negotiation with the canal companies to facilitate the Connecting the Community objective of adding pathways on canal banks.

3 Lower-priority and lower-cost projects should be considered when minor funds, grants, or volunteers are available.

Recreation Division

Recreation Management and Budget:

1 ★ Evaluate existing programs and community needs to develop a Recreation Programming Plan providing opportunities for all ages and abilities, using additional contract or short-term expert labor as needed to produce performance measures and a data-driven, priority-based plan. Provide for regular review of Plan and constituent measures.

2 ★ Ensure that all positions have back-up training and a succession plan.

3 ★ Restore and enhance funding for training to broaden the menu of engaging, satisfying fitness, sports and other leisure activities for all.

4 ★ Develop a department-wide policy, leadership and system for volunteer management.

5 ★ Continue to develop comprehensive, coordinated outreach and public participation.

6 ★ Move tasks such as grant-writing, advertising, events planning, and fees tracking that apply across several divisions to the departmental level for more cost-effectiveness and better coordination.

7 ★ Work with the City to clarify budget structures and methods of analysis.

8 ★ Develop regular reviews of user fees for all programs and facilities drawing on comparative data across time, across demographic and user types, and regionally. Use this data to adjust user fees in keeping with a comprehensive revenue policy.

9 ★ Ensure that fees are equitable, affordable, and proportional.

-
- 10 Continue building capacity to include all elements of quality recreation planning and programs, including outreach to underserved demographics, participant involvement in program design, resource conservation, and education for health and wellness.
-

All Recreation Facilities:

- 1 ★ **Develop a capital facilities plan that shows future building and replacement needs.**
 - 2 ★ **Continue and complete ADA audits. Make available annually a list identifying remaining barriers and the schedule for ameliorating them.**
 - 3 ★ **Continue and complete energy audits, balancing energy-efficiency improvements against the implementation costs, especially in buildings already reaching or past their life span.**
 - 4 ★ **Continue and increase attention to environmental and sustainability issues, which are only just starting to be addressed. These include recycling by both staff and public users; purchasing; and healthy food and sustainable water options.**
 - 5 Ensure full accessibility to parks, recreation, and related events through coordinating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with City/county transit plans and the Connecting Our Community Plan.
 - 6 ★ **Emulate the Golf Program's successful 5-Year Plan with regular, specific, measurable facilities revenues, use, and development plans for each facility.**
 - 7 ★ **Develop a "big-picture" approach and holistic solutions for multiple aging facilities that are too old, too crowded, and inadequate to the City's needs, including the Rec Center, Ice Arena, Aquatic Center, and several facilities in the Zoo. Design new facilities plans to incorporate multiple solutions, such as a City recreational complex that combines aquatic, ice, and other recreational activities; re-use of the old Ice Arena as the Zoo education center; and siting new facilities as hubs for the *Connecting our Community Plan* .**
-

Wes Diest Aquatic Center:

- 1 ★ **Begin analysis and planning for an orderly replacement of the ageing Aquatic center with one or more new facilities that accommodates current unmet need, anticipates expected city growth, offers a balanced municipal aquatic program for all users, and adds the cost-efficiencies and ADA functionality of a more up to date facility.**
 - 2 Implement recommendations of the previous "Future of Aquatics" analysis for additional pool features that will increase and broaden pool use and, thus, revenues.
-

-
- 3 Budget and schedule for replacement of dehumidifiers if the old building is to be retained and used indefinitely.
-

Recreation Center:

- 1 **★ Begin analysis and planning for an orderly replacement of the old and inadequate Rec center with one or more new facilities that accommodates current unmet need, anticipates expected city growth, offers a balanced municipal fitness and class program for all users, and adds the cost-efficiencies and ADA functionality of a more up to date facility.**
-

- 2 Ensure that the projected costs of replacing the aging and limited Recreation Center are incorporated into the city's financial planning. Attractive, accessible, affordable indoor recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities are important for Idaho Falls for economic, social, health, and many other reasons.
-

Joe Marmo/ Wayne Lehto Ice Arena:

- 1 **★ Begin planning for more ice, through construction of a second sheet adjacent to the existing building, by renegotiating the existing structure agreement to allow year-round use, or both.**
-

- 2 **★ Continue monitoring user fees and time allocations in comparison to use trends, as well as relative to other regional ice rinks, in order to maintain equitable levels of cost recovery.**
-

- 3 Identify an area for more parking or other means of transit for users and/or spectators.
-

- 4 Coordinate future development and use within the overall Tautphaus Park master plan, including through consideration of transferring the existing building to zoo education use and building a new ice rink in another location that allows for year-round use and better access.
-

- 5 **★ Consider the possibility of building new ice arena facility elsewhere and turning the current arena (and its land) over to the Zoo to facilitate traffic and educational center expansion.**
-

Idaho Falls Activity Center:

- 1 Continue mechanical improvements, specifically air conditioning to keep the indoor climate reasonable during warm months and for large or physically active groups.
-

- 2 Enhance usability by installing internet and video capability in at least one room of each size class.
-

- 3 **★ Make an area usable for children's play or daycare, and add full ADA accessibility (e.g., a family/ADA accessible restroom).**
-

-
- 4 ★ **Develop a marketing plan for this underutilized resource, based on improvements above along with market research for understanding customer needs, wants, concerns and behaviors.**
-

Recreation Programs:

- 1 ★ **Provide staff time, training, and departmental support as needed to carry out a program evaluation and needs assessment. This is an immediate and highest priority to guide current and future programming. Additional (outside) expertise may be needed on a short-term basis to catch up with the existing data gaps, i.e. for community survey, methodology, design, etc.**
-

- 2 Provide staff time, training, and departmental support as needed to implement a city-wide recreation programming plan that addresses current and anticipated community needs through providing opportunities for all ages and abilities. Include provisions for regular evaluation, review and revision.
-

- 3 Based on program evaluation results, enhance and regularize outreach to diverse underserved populations, and community education for leisure and wellness promotion. Initial steps include compiling a grid usable for both planning and for website and other publications that shows different programs and activities available for diverse demographics (such as seniors, teens, short-stay visitors, people with disabilities, etc.).
-

- 4 ★ **Make publicly available a list, updated periodically, of all user groups, sponsored clubs, community groups, non-profits, and other agencies that the division collaborates with or assists to provide activities and programs. Regularly review bylaws, annual reports, fees, etc., of those groups to identify what goals and populations are served. Maintain file of written agreements with partner groups. Provide assistance to help partner groups carry out the joint mission in ways that align with the city's legal obligations, goals and needs.**
-

- 5 ★ **Identify the process and schedule whereby new programming, activities or events are evaluated for introduction into the recreation mix. Indicate publicly how community members can be involved in this process.**
-

- 6 Develop a city-wide pass system allowing users to access most or all facilities and programs through a single card.
-

Zoo Division

Strategic and Long-Range Zoo Planning:

- 1 Create both strategic and long-range plans that complement both the Tautphaus Park Master Plan and the Parks and Recreation Department Mission and Vision are critical. Identify funding to accomplish this recommendation.
-

- 2 Ensure that the Zoo is adequately represented in the development of the Tautphaus Park Master Plan
-

Zoo Staffing:	1 ★ Fill the director position to begin addressing big picture items: strategic and long range planning, fund raising, etc.
	2 Fund additional animal keeper resources to have a margin for sick leave, vacation, training, volunteer coordination, enrichment time for the animals, additional public interaction, and possible longer hours of operation, as well as to compensate for the former keeper supervisor now acting as interim director.
	3 Fund additional maintenance resources.
	4 Hire an additional education staff member.
Zoo Volunteers:	1 ★ Capture and identify the contribution of the volunteers as a neutral budget line item.
	2 ★ Fund an activity for management of the 7-plus categories of volunteers at the Zoo. Explore sharing the position at the Department level with other Divisions.
	3 Use the untapped resource of professors and students from local and regional universities to conduct more sophisticated activities. For example: economic analysis, a smart phone app, analysis of the condition of the facilities and structures, educational materials and approaches.
Zoo Education Facility:	1 ★ Set a major goal (for both Zoo and City) to fund a new Zoo education and learning center.
	2 Provide adequate work space and storage for the educator and her seasonal staff.
	3 ★ Consider relocating the ice arena and repurposing it as the zoo education facility, office space for staff, larger gift shop, and storage.
Zoo Staff Facilities:	1 ★ Provide desktop computers or tablets for all staff to digitize record-keeping, improve communication, and enable more efficient reporting, database analyses, research, and grant preparation.
	2 ★ Provide an improved work environment with adequate work and storage space.
Funding for Replacement of Zoo Facilities and Structures:	1 Establish a process/fund that would plan for and fund the eventual refurbishment and/or replacement of all facilities such as electrical, HVAC and water and structures such as animal enclosures, storage buildings and shops.
Zoo Maintenance/Operations:	1 ★ Develop and fund a preventative maintenance plan to optimize the lifetime of the structures, facilities, and equipment.
	2 ★ Convert the Zoo's watering system to a satellite computerized operation similar to the Parks division's centrally controlled irrigation system, or tie into that existing system, both to increase water efficiency and to facilitate the irrigation of the exhibits.

Zoo Parking:	1	Join with Tautphaus Park in order to address parking problems via the Tautphaus Park Master Plan and the Idaho Falls Zoo Strategic Plan.
Zoo Signs:	1	Implement the Zoo portion of the "Idaho Falls Signage and Way Finding Master Plan" as soon as possible.
Zoo Revenue/Cost Recovery:	1	★ Increase publicity about the Zoo.
	2	Increase memberships by promotions and special membership times.
	3	★ Increase attendance by promotions, coupons etc.
	4	Provide additional weekday evening hours.
	5	★ Encourage organizations to have special event nights at the Zoo.
	6	Build a larger gift shop.
Tautphaus Park Zoological Society:	1	<p>★ Strengthen and improve the relationship with the Tautphaus Park Zoological Society as follows:</p> <p>(1) Move the Zoo membership sales and management into Parks & Rec Zoo operations for improved cost-effectiveness and accountability.</p> <p>(2) Review services and facilities furnished without charge by the city to the TPZS (see Form 990-EZ Part III) for cost-effectiveness and accountability.</p> <p>(3) Review ongoing improvements in TPZS-City agreement to ensure completion, including a written Memorandum of Understanding as suggested in pp 26-28 of this report (Cooperative Programming Policy).</p>

Golf Division

Golf Administration:	1	★ Continue evaluating completion of all goals in 5-year plan, revising as necessary. Publicly post annual progress assessments.
	2	★ Continue robust reliance on user input and public participation through surveys, advisory group, and collection of numerical data.
	3	Appoint one of the superintendents the "head" superintendent to oversee all three courses.
Golf Maintenance/Operations:	4	★ Ensure that Pinecrest clubhouse becomes ADA compliant. This needs to be done after soliciting public comment and without altering the historic "feel" of the building. The clubhouse should also be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
	5	Fund and install a new sprinkler system for Pinecrest.
	6	Fund and build a new and/or expanded clubhouse for Sandcreek.

7 Construct new storage facilities to replace the rail cars at Sandcreek.

Parks Division

Parks Administration: 1 Continue innovative and exciting development of Idaho Falls' best assets – its beautiful parks, plantings, and trees.

2 ★ Use CAPRA standards to update approaches and identify new ideas.

3 ★ As detailed in the Department-Level section, develop and follow a written standard policy for all cooperative programming with clubs, nonprofits, other agencies, etc., and document these partnerships online for better public understanding and success.

4 ★ Work with the Department's administration and/or the City to hire and share a Volunteer Management Coordinator and a Grant Writer.

5 ★ Develop a Parks master plan and strategic plan under the overall structure of the (recommended) comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space master plan.

6 ★ Develop and implement a public participation policy for design of all park master plans (e.g., Heritage, Tautphaus) and related programs (e.g., mountain bike park).

7 ★ Develop a publicly posted, regularly updated Project Matrix showing names, locations, schedule, progress, availability of funds, partnerships, and public involvement opportunities for ALL projects planned, on hold, and in progress.

8 ★ Develop a policy and routine analysis that identifies those areas and programs that are least relevant to Parks (in terms of the P&R Master Plan), and/or least supported by revenues or public desire, and divests or reuses them.

Parks Budget: 1 ★ Identify the contributions of volunteers as a budget line item to show the amount "recovered" from these community contributions.

2 ★ Restore the budget for regular professional training and development.

3 ★ Establish a clear, accountable, and cost-justified basis for the sharing of interdepartmental labor and resources. Verify regularly whether it is cheaper to hire an independent contractor, to use interdepartmental resources, or to carry work out in-house.

4 Ensure that Parks fees and revenues are recognized when added to the General Fund.

5 ★ Develop a program similar to MERF to cover small buildings such as storage sheds, picnic shelters, fences, restrooms, etc.

-
- 6 ★ Develop a capital facilities plan for each major facility that shows future building and replacement needs.
-
- 7 ★ Continue to identify and support cost recovery where feasible and fair. Consider divesting, or alternatively, more cost-effective uses, for non-park properties. The practice of increasing acreage without having a maintenance strategy and funding for improvements in place should stop.
-
- 8 ★ Identify options for divestment of maintained non-park areas (retention ponds, rights-of-way, etc.) into more cost-sustaining uses that are publicly beneficial, such as natural habitat, community gardens, apiaries, dog parks, and bike-pedestrian paths.
-
- 9 ★ Make sure developers providing plantings, paths, stormwater ponds, etc., do so in ways that are appropriate under City rules (e.g., for tree types and locations), cost-effective for the City to take over maintenance on, and where possible, built in ways that allow either lower cost or revenue-producing uses.
-

Parks Programs:

- 1 ★ Emulate the Golf Program's successful 5-Year Plan with regular, specific, measurable facilities revenue, use, and development plans for each major facility or program, including the Raceway, Sandy Downs, Melaleuca Field, Archery Range, etc.
-
- 2 ★ Identify whether citywide programs like the signage and wayfinding plan are most appropriately, and cost-effectively, administered from within Parks. Ensure that staffing, training, and budget are adequate for a constantly expanding Division, or consider splitting the Division.
-
- 3 Systematize the Memorial/Remembrance Tree and Bench programs with clear listings of opportunities, needs, costs, and recommendations online. List all existing trees and benches with their locations (GPS). Coordinate with the Trees for Idaho Falls listing so that examples in the parks can be seen by people considering them.
-
- 4 ★ Coordinate with Department-wide efforts on improved public outreach, active public participation in planning, coordinated volunteer management, and a documented, consistent policy for cooperative programming.
-

Parks Maintenance:

- 1 Continue the diligent attention to details like clean restrooms, adequate trash cans, etc., as well as the updating of equipment and systems to maintain quality, safety, and cost-effectiveness.
-
- 2 Address maintenance needs in neighborhood parks such as litter, compacted soil, and dog waste.
-

3 Emulate Community Park in providing both signage warning about leash laws and dog waste, and mutt mitts to encourage its prompt and proper disposal. Work with I.F.P.D. and others as needed to properly post and enforce dog ordinances effectively.

4 **★ Prepare an analysis of playground needs to bring them up to ADA and safety standards.**

5 Continue and increase “programs in the parks” to increase use and satisfaction, considering both events (e.g., Movie Night) and features (e.g., fitness trails, miniature golf, bocce ball, community gardens, bird and nature areas, multiple paths with views, benches).

6 **★ Carry out a formal survey of parks usage by time/day, demographics, and activity types, etc.**

7 **★ Begin outreach to neighborhood and user groups to identify effective ways to increase use of neighborhood parks through restoration, distinctive features, and other improvements as well as targeted use opportunities (“programming in the parks”).**

8 Find partnerships if needed to create interpretive materials for parks with special plantings and materials, such as the perennials in the Riverwalk rock gardens.

9 Build small paths in parks as part of the *Connecting Our Community Plan* to encourage parents who are there for children’s sports to walk while they wait.

10 **★ Continue to increase recycling through stations and information across all parks and sponsored events.**

11 Integrate security and other services – irrigation, fencing, lighting, paving, etc. – with neighboring non-Parks facilities (e.g., Zoo) wherever cost-effective.

12 Improve natural areas within parks and consider converting non-Park properties (storm ponds, open spaces, etc.) to natural areas for recreational enjoyment and natural systems restoration.

Horticulture and Urban Forestry Staffing:

1 Reconsider the wisdom of removing seasonal employees during their off-seasons. Perhaps their skills can be used throughout the year in some area of the Department as a whole.

2 **★ Aid employees who require certifications and recertifications by easing the method by which such training will occur.**

3 **★ Hire a Volunteer Management Coordinator or combine such needs with a department-wide position.**

Horticulture and Urban Forestry

1 **★ Do not plant unless there is a budget for maintaining the new plantings.**

Budgeting:	2	Develop an interdepartmental storm response plan.
Weed and Environmental Control:	1	Investigate and develop ways to sustain vital ecological services through establishing or restoring natural habitat in appropriate non-park and park areas.
Irrigation Management:	1	Continue using innovative technology and systems to operate cost-efficient, water-saving irrigation of city parks. Expand as practical.
Cemeteries:	1	★ Evaluate the costs and benefits of partial or full privatization of one or both cemeteries.
	2	Identify more cost-effective ways, such as a perpetual-maintenance fee, to help meet the costs of long-term maintenance.
	3	Revise cost structures to be in line with regional and industry standards.
	4	Establish a policy for resale of unused, privately owned plots that ensures fairness both to buyers and to the City. Consider a policy for repurchasing unused plots to ensure better control over their long-term availability.
	5	Develop a means, or draw on a capital improvement fund, to plan for current and future infrastructure needs, including road surfacing and improvements, development of a new, more sustainable, irrigation water source, and perimeter fences at Fielding.

EXHIBIT 4

COMMISSION FOR ACCREDITATION OF PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCIES (CAPRA) STANDARDS

COMMISSION FOR ACCREDITATION OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS



- Fifth Edition -
Revised April 2014
Amended July 2015

Sponsored by
National Recreation and Park Association

Created by the
Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies
Revised April 2014

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Association

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Introduction

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Standards for National Accreditation provide an authoritative assessment tool for park and recreation agencies. Through compliance with these national standards of excellence, CAPRA accreditation assures policy makers, department staff, the general public and tax payers that an accredited park and recreation agency has been independently evaluated against established benchmarks as delivering a high level of quality.

Every park and recreation agency, whatever its focus or field of operation, is rightfully concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. With the importance of park and recreation programs and services to the quality of life, each agency has an essential role in the lives of the people it serves. CAPRA accreditation is a quality assurance and quality improvement process demonstrating an agency's commitment to its employees, volunteers, patrons and community.

Accreditation Process

Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with the 151 standards for national accreditation. To achieve accreditation, an agency must comply with all 37 Fundamental Standards, which are indicated by the ★ icon in this publication, and 104 of the 114 Non-Fundamental Standards upon initial accreditation and 108 of the 114 Non-Fundamental Standards upon reaccreditation.

List of Fundamental Standards

- 1.1 Source of Authority
- 1.4 Mission
 - 1.4.1 Agency Goals and Objectives
- 1.5 Vision
 - 1.6.1 Administrative Policies and Procedures
- 1.7 Agency Relationships
- 2.2 Involvement in Local Planning
- 2.4 Park and Recreation System Master Plan
- 2.5 Strategic Plan
- 2.9 Community Involvement
- 3.1 Organizational Structure
- 3.3 Internal Communication
- 3.4 Public Information Policy and Procedure
- 3.5.1 Management Information Systems
- 4.1 Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
 - 4.1.1 Code of Ethics
 - 4.1.3 Equal Opportunity Employment and Workforce Diversity
 - 4.1.5 Background Investigation
- 4.2 Staff Qualifications
- 4.3 Job Analyses for Job Descriptions
- 4.4 Chief Administrator
- 5.1 Fiscal Policy
 - 5.1.1 Comprehensive Revenue Policy
- 5.2 Fiscal Management Procedures
 - 5.2.2 Purchasing Procedures
- 5.3 Accounting System
 - 5.3.4 Independent Audit
- 5.4 Annual or Biennial Budget
- 6.1 Recreation Programming Plan
- 6.2 Program Objectives

- 6.3.1 Outreach to Diverse Underserved Populations
- 7.5 Maintenance and Operations Management Standards
- 8.1 Codes, Laws, and Ordinance
- 8.2 Authority to Enforce Laws by Law Enforcement Officers
- 8.5 General Security Plan
- 9.1.1 Risk Management Plan and Procedures
- 10.1 Systematic Evaluation Processes

CAPRA accreditation is a five-year cycle that includes three phases, development of the agency self-assessment report, the onsite visitation, and the Commission's review and decision. The onsite visitation follows the agency's development of its self-assessment report. If accreditation is granted by the Commission at its meeting following the onsite visit, the agency will develop a new self-assessment report and be revisited every five years. Within each of the four years between onsite visits, the agency will submit an annual report that addresses its continued compliance with the accreditation standards. The complementary publication, *CAPRA Accreditation Handbook*, sets forth in detail the accreditation process and procedures and can be found online at <http://www.nrpa.org/CAPRA>.

Understanding Standards

A standard is a statement of desirable practice as set forth by experienced professionals. In evaluating an agency for accreditation, the standards are a measure of effectiveness using the cause and effect ("if...then") approach. If one acts in a certain way, then it is expected that there will be a certain outcome. In practice, if an agency complies with a given standard, then it is expected that the agency's operations related to that standard will be positively affected. Viewed holistically, if an agency complies with the vast majority of the standards (i.e., all fundamental standards and at least 85% of the remaining), then it is understood that the agency is performing a quality operation. Standards enable evaluation by comparing what is found within an agency operation to what is accepted by professionals as desirable practices.

These standards are not a quantitative measure of the local availability of funds, lands, personnel, etc. and should be distinguished from other types of standards which address specific elements, such as open space standards, which are population-based, and playground equipment standards, which are product-based. These qualitative standards for accreditation are comprehensive, dealing with all aspects of agency operations.

The standards provide an effective and credible means of evaluating a park and recreation agency's overall system. The standards apply to all park and recreation systems, inasmuch as they are considered to be the elements for effective and efficient operations. Most agencies administer both park and recreation functions; however, some agencies only administer recreation programs and services, not park systems, and others only administer park systems, not recreation programs and services. Additionally, the jurisdictional structure of agencies differs throughout the country, with many agencies operating under municipal authority, while others operate under county, park district, or other structures. Further, the standards apply to agencies of all sizes in terms of personnel, budget, and population served. It is recognized that each community is unique and may meet the standards in differing ways.

History of CAPRA Standards for National Accreditation

A forerunner of the CAPRA standards was a document titled, *Evaluation and Self-Study of Public Recreation and Park Agencies*, first issued in 1965. The standards in the document were initially determined by leading professionals in the Great Lakes District of the then National Recreation Association. Eight years later, in 1972, a statewide study in Pennsylvania encompassing thirty municipal park and recreation departments resulted in the document being updated and revised; and, after twenty years, it was replaced by the CAPRA standards.

The CAPRA standards were developed by a special committee initiated in 1989 by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The standards and accreditation process were field tested at park and recreation agencies of varying characteristics. In 1993, the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies was established to implement and administer the accreditation program. Since then, the CAPRA standards have been reviewed and revised several times, notably in 1996, 2001, and 2009.

In 1998 work was begun to adapt the accreditation program to military recreation. An Army version of the standards, developed by the Army, was approved in 1999 and a representative of military services was added to the Commission board. In 2007, the Department of Defense proposed a revised set of military standards that applies to all military services; and was approved by the Commission in 2008 for use by all military services. The military accreditation standards are available as a separate document.

About the Commission

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies is a thirteen-member board composed of representatives from:

- American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (4 representatives)
- National Recreation and Park Association (4 representatives)
- International City/Council Management Association (1 representative)
- Council of State Executive Directors (1 representative)
- American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (1 representative)
- National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (1 representative)
- Armed Forces Recreation Society (1 representative)

The Commission is administratively sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association, but acts with independence and under its own authority in determining accreditation standards and conferring accreditation of applicant agencies.

Using this Publication

This publication includes all of the CAPRA standards for national accreditation. Standards are ordered numerically by section. Each section covers a specific component of, or within, an agency's operations. The numerical ordering of standards is hierarchical and the relationship of the standards is identified by the numerical order (i.e., 3.4.1.1 is a sub-standard of 3.4.1, which is a sub-standard of 3.4).

A Suggested Evidence of Compliance section is included for each standard in order to identify acceptable means of demonstrating compliance with a standard. Agencies may have different evidence for standards depending on the size, complexity and diversity of the agency. It is important to understand that these are only suggestions and that other evidence may be more appropriate for a given agency and standard. The burden of proof regarding compliance rests with the agency. Where appropriate, an agency is encouraged to provide more than one example of evidence of compliance for some standards.

For some standards, the Suggested Evidence of Compliance will include the visitation team being able to observe that the standard is being implemented by conducting site visits or tours and interviewing personnel.

After each standard, the chapter and page reference from the *Management of Parks and Recreation Agencies, 3rd Edition* is noted in [blue text](#).

Writing Guidelines

Agency Self-Assessment

A well-developed and executed self-assessment document is essential for reviewers to both determine agency readiness to proceed and enable the visitation team to do a thorough verification. Lead and second reviewers, as well as the visitation team chair and team, will look for relevance to the standard, accuracy, specificity and completeness.

When the agency provides evidence of compliance (EOC) with the self-assessment, the EOC must be correctly identified, thoroughly organized and referenced, and consistently presented throughout the self-assessment to avoid ambiguity and vagueness. Without appropriate references, the EOC lacks credibility and significance.

Text Format

- Use the most current self-assessment template to help assure proper formatting and content.
- Include a narrative for each standard that provides a focused, concise and complete explanation of how the agency meets the standard.
- Correctly name and address references to electronic links and online documents.
- Number pages in either the header or footer.
- Place the full agency name at the top of each page, e.g. put in header.
- Use 1.5 inch margins.
- Use a simple font (e.g., Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial) in size 12-point font.

Evidence of Compliance (EOC) Format

- Present the narrative and documented EOC in a consistent format for each standard. Refer only to those documents for which there is evidence presented. Number and list each piece of EOC as it is mentioned in the narrative. Do not list documents if they are not referenced in the narrative.
- When the EOC is an entire plan or manual, include only the title, date of publication, table of contents and, where required, the adoption or approval by the appropriate governing authority.
- When the EOC is only part of a multi-page document, plan or manual provide the title, date of publication, and page or pages with the relevant passage marked or highlighted. The report narrative or embedded electronic link must direct the visitation team to the exact page, paragraph and line on which the evidence is referenced.
- List all evidence in the self-assessment in the same order in which it is listed in the narrative to facilitate easy retrieval and review. The narrative should be a brief explanation of how the agency meets the standard.
- Onsite files must be well organized to facilitate quick visitor access. Documents must be available in hard copy or electronic format.
- Electronic links and online documents must be named exactly as referenced in the corresponding narrative.
- Focus on providing only the required EOC; do not include extra materials that are not necessary.

Writing Guidelines

- Use proper grammar, syntax (sentence structure) and punctuation.
- Eliminate all spelling errors.
- Use abbreviations only after the abbreviation or acronym has been fully described, e.g. when the agency provides evidence of compliance (EOC) with the self-assessment, the EOC must be correctly identified.
- Use succinct and factual sentences to produce a tightly-scripted document.
- Refrain from using proper nouns when referencing individuals; use pronouns, where possible.
- Write the self-assessment in a consistent “voice.” Identify and correct shifts in verb tense. Use the active voice and when appropriate eliminate passages written in the passive voice.
- Refrain from using overstatement and hyperbole.
- Include titles, dates and page numbers in EOC references.

- Include, revision, adoption and approval dates for tracking purposes, e.g. revision of the 1995 policy on encroachment was adopted on October 2, 2013.
- Never cut and paste or copy word-for-word from any agency report or website, unless properly cited.

Consequences for Failure to Follow Format and Writing Guidelines

- If a self-assessment does not meet the above requirements, it will be returned.
- The CAPRA Commission, at its discretion, may allow the report be resubmitted within a specific time period.

Observable Standards

A tour of the agencies parks and/or facilities must be granted to view the system to verify compliance with standards. This is required as part of the visit.

Resources

More information about CAPRA national accreditation, including how to apply for accreditation, the current CAPRA Handbook, and the list of currently accredited agencies, is available online at www.nrpa.org/CAPRA. An additional resource is the publication, *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies, 3rd Edition*. This publication is based in part on the CAPRA standards and covers in detail best management practices for managing a park and recreation agency. This publication is available through the NRPA store at <http://ipv.nrpa.org/store/>

For questions or concerns, please contact:

Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA)
c/o National Recreation and Park Association
22377 Belmont Ridge Road
Ashburn, VA 20148
Tel (703) 858-2141
Fax (703) 858-0794
Email CAPRA@nrpa.org

1.0 - Agency Authority, Role, and Responsibility

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Delineation of jurisdiction and authority are the foundation upon which the park and recreation agency is organized. Policy and rule-making functions and the development of procedures to implement policy create the organizational framework. The mission establishes the organizational purpose, and goals and objectives establish the strategic direction. Organization values affect how the agency through its leadership and staff relate to other governing bodies, agencies, organizations and how it incorporates input from citizens and staff.

1.1 - Source of Authority ★

Standard: The source of agency authority or legal basis of operation and the extent of powers shall be identified in a legal document such as the state statute, local charter, city ordinance, or park district code.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide legal citation and, if appropriate, date of resolution by local governing entity or legal authority (i.e., enabling act, support documentation, ordinance; if permissive state authority, provide charter).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 - Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 41-42.

1.1.1 - Approving Authority/Policy Body

Standard: The agency organizational structure shall provide for one public entity responsible for policy-making functions. This entity usually has taxing power and must approve the budget; it holds title to property. It also serves an important function in providing input to improve and expand park and recreation programs, services, and facilities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a chart or diagram and narrative description of the organizational structure, interrelationship of organizational components and powers of authority over policy-making; show the relationship of the agency to its approving authority and provide the approving authority bylaws or charter.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 - Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 38-52.

1.1.2 - Citizen Advisory Boards/Committees

Standard: There shall be citizen boards/committees that are advisory to the agency and the approving authority that appoints them. Advisory boards engage the community and serve as advocates for the advancement of programs, facilities, and services.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide list of boards/committees with membership, authority, responsibilities and duties, terms of office, meeting minutes.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 - Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 53-54.

1.2 - Periodic Timetable for Review of Documents

Standard: All documents designated for periodic review shall be reviewed on a regular basis according to an established agency review schedule. For example, if the agency has determined that a document should be reviewed annually, the agency shall provide evidence that the document is reviewed annually and include a copy of the most recent annual review. Several standards in the accreditation process require that adopted plans, policies and procedures be reviewed and updated at various intervals. In those cases, the agency shall provide evidence that the document was reviewed and updated pursuant to the period specified in the standard.

Standards with a review requirement are:

- 1.4.1 Agency Goals and Objectives
- 1.6.1 Administrative Policies and Procedures
- 2.4 Park and Recreation System Master Plan
- 2.5 Strategic Plan
- 3.4.2 Community Relations Plan
- 3.4.3 Marketing Plan
- 3.6 Records Management Policy and Procedures
- 3.6.1 Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and Procedures
- 4.1 Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
- 4.1.2 Recruitment Process
- 4.1.8 Compensation Plan
- 4.3 Job Analyses for Job Descriptions
- 4.5 Workforce Health and Wellness Program
- 4.6.1 Employee Training and Development Program
- 5.1.1 Comprehensive Revenue Policy
- 6.1 Recreation Programming Plan
- 6.2 Program Objectives
- 6.4 Community Education for Leisure Process
- 7.1 Parkland Acquisition Procedures
- 7.2 Area and Facilities Development Policies and Procedures
- 7.5 Maintenance and Operations Management Standards
- 7.5.1 Facility Legal Requirements
- 7.9.1 Recycling and/or Zero Waste Plan
- 8.5 General Security Plan
- 8.6.2 Emergency Risk Communications Plan
- 9.1 Risk Management Policy
- 10.4 Needs Assessment
- 10.5.1 Recreation and Leisure Trends Analysis

Suggested evidence of compliance: Provide the agency review schedule for the document, program, policy or procedure referenced in the enumerated standards.

1.2.1 - Document Approval Authority

Standard: All documents designated for approval by the appropriate approving authority shall be approved or adopted in a manner consistent with the agency process and procedure for adoption of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures, except that the agency budget and park and recreation system master plan must be adopted or approved by the entity responsible for policy-making.

Standards with an adoption or approval requirement are:

- 1.5 Vision
- 2.3.1 Community Comprehensive Plan with Park and Recreation Component
- 2.4 Park and Recreation System Master Plan
- 2.5 Strategic Plan
- 2.10 ADA Transition Plan
- 3.4 Public Information Policy and Procedure
- 4.4.1 Leadership Succession Procedure
- 5.4 Annual or Biennial Budget
- 8.1 Codes, Laws, and Ordinances
- 9.1 Risk Management Policy
- 9.1.1 Risk Management Plan and Procedures

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that the agency budget and park and recreation system master plan have been duly adopted or approved by the entity responsible for policy-making and that other documents designated for approval by the appropriate approving authority have been approved in a manner consistent with the agency process and procedure for approval of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures.

1.3 - Jurisdiction

Standard: The specific geographical boundaries of the agency's jurisdiction shall be set forth by geographical description and map.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a map with geographical boundaries of jurisdiction and service areas, including location of facilities identified.

[Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, \(2010\), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 604-606.](#)

1.4 - Mission

Standard: There shall be an established mission statement that defines the direction and purpose of the agency. The agency mission is the purpose or reason for the existence of the agency and establishes the long-term direction for the agency services and activities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the established mission statement.

[Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, \(2010\), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 71-72.](#)

1.4.1 - Agency Goals and Objectives

Standard: There shall be established, measurable goals and objectives for the agency and for each organizational component within the agency. Such goals and objectives shall be directed toward accomplishing the agency mission, be reviewed periodically, and distributed to all appropriate personnel.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the measurable goals and objectives for each organizational component, with evidence of periodic review and distribution.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 72-73; Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 220-224; Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, Customer Service, p. 360.

1.4.2 - Personnel Involvement

Standard: The agency shall have an established process for acquiring and considering input from personnel at various levels of the organization in the development of goals and objectives.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of the methods utilized to obtain input from personnel at various levels of the organization (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.) and how the organization's goals and objectives are communicated to all personnel.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 72.

1.5 - Vision

Standard: The agency shall provide an adopted Vision Statement that is aspirational, far reaching, and states where the agency is going. It should be available to the approving authority, staff, and participants.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence of adopted Vision statement that is available to the approving authority, staff, and participants.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 4 – Politics and Advocacy, p. 58; Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 72-73; Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 115-116.

1.6 - Policies, Rules, Regulations, and Operational Procedures

Standard: There shall be delegation of responsibilities for the policy-making functions of the approving authority and the administrative functions of the chief administrator and staff.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Show delegation of responsibilities among approving authority, chief administrator, and staff regarding development and implementation of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 2 – Management and the Law, p. 20; Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 87.

1.6.1 - Administrative Policies and Procedures ★

Standard: There shall be policies and procedures, encompassing administrative aspects of the organization that are kept up-to date, reviewed periodically, and made available to pertinent administrative and supervisory personnel.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide access to the agency policies and procedures, demonstrate how they are made available to personnel, and provide evidence of periodic review by the approving authority and administrators.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 – Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 43-44; Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 87-88.

1.7 - Agency Relationships ★

Standard: There shall be ongoing liaison roles with complementary organizations, such as nearby park and recreation agencies, social service organizations, and other governmental units and regulatory bodies.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence of cooperative efforts, including a list of staff with liaison responsibility. This information may be evidenced through Memoranda of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, Cooperative Agreements, etc.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 2 – Management and the Law, p. 28; Chapter 4 – Politics and Advocacy, p. 66; Chapter 6 – Partnerships, pp. 95-110; Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 110-122.

1.7.1 - Operational Coordination and Cooperation Agreements

Standard: There shall be established agreements with other agencies, organizations, or individuals that entail cooperative use and maintenance of facilities, programming, facility design, land development, finances, etc.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of cooperative agreements.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 6 – Partnerships, pp. 109-107.

2.0 - Planning

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Planning activities are essential to effective agency management. Frequently, they are the responsibility of a permanent component of the agency; however, they may be performed by staff from various units or contracted to an outside professional consultant. Complex demands for services and limited public resources require that the park and recreation agency carefully research operational alternatives and plan future programs. Precise guidelines should establish the parameters of planning tasks and responsibilities.

The strength of the planning unit's leadership is a major ingredient in a productive and effective planning effort. This competence may be reflected both in academic training and in prior professional experience. The chief administrator should be closely involved in the planning process. A direct relationship between planning personnel and the chief administrator enhances the ability for the planning personnel to collect data and make recommendations, and the chief administrator's ability to make informed decisions.

Strategic planning is vital to high performing organizations and involves organizational and community input to identify and come to agreement on vision, mission, and values that support and guide the systems, structures, and strategies as a framework for organizational progress to achieve results.

These standards examine the types of planning necessary for administrators to efficiently and effectively manage both day-to-day and long-term operations of a park and recreation agency.

[Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, \(2010\), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 111-125.](#)

2.1 - Overall Planning Function within Agency

Standard: The agency shall have planning functions with established responsibilities, including at least one staff member or consultant with planning capability.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the responsibilities and functions of the planning entity. Provide resumes of training and experience for staff and/or consultants who have planning capabilities.

[Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, \(2010\), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 120-121.](#)

2.2 - Involvement in Local Planning ★

Standard: The agency shall be involved in local planning, e.g. comprehensive planning, strategic planning, and capital improvement planning by reviewing development proposals, monitoring the decisions of planning and zoning boards or commissions and participating on task forces and committees that will impact parks and recreation services within the jurisdiction.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Demonstrate the role of the agency in local planning through personnel assignments and documentation of involvement, e.g. minutes, agendas, and cooperative agreements.

[Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, \(2010\), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 120.](#)

2.3 - Planning with Regional, State, and Federal Agencies

Standard: The agency shall have a working relationship with the regional, state, and federal agencies to ensure the coordination of planning efforts that affect the delivery of parks and recreation services within the jurisdiction.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Define the role of agency personnel and documentation of involvement (minutes, agendas, cooperative agreements) in regional, state, and federal agencies planning.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 120.

2.3.1 - Community Comprehensive Plan with Park and Recreation

Component

Standard: The jurisdiction with land use authority within which the agency operates shall have a comprehensive plan adopted by the governing authority that dictates public policy in terms of transportation, utilities, public facilities, land use, recreation, and housing. In some jurisdictions the comprehensive plan is called the general plan or the land use plan. Zoning for the jurisdiction is based upon the comprehensive plan. To meet this standard, the comprehensive plan shall have a park and/or recreation component that discusses how the jurisdiction intends to meet the needs for parkland and public recreation facilities in concert with other land use priorities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current plan, with date of official approval.

2.4 - Park and Recreation System Master Plan

Standard: The agency shall have a comprehensive park and recreation system plan that provides recommendations for provision of facilities, programs and services; parkland acquisition and development; maintenance and operations; and administration and management. The plan shall be officially adopted by the policy-making body, updated periodically and linked with a capital improvement budget and a phased development program. The system master plan shall implement policies adopted in the comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction. Interested and affected agencies, organizations, and groups shall be engaged in the planning process.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current plan with documentation of official approval; describe update process; and describe a phased implementation program with linkage to the agency's capital improvement budget. The system master plan shall include:

- a. Agency mission (1.4);
- b. Agency objectives (1.4.1);
- c. Recreation and leisure trends analysis (10.5.1);
- d. Needs assessment (10.4);
- e. Community inventory (10.5.2); and
- f. Level of service standards (10.3.1).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 120.

2.5 - Strategic Plan

Standard: An agency shall have a strategic plan, approved by the approving authority, stating how the agency will achieve its mission, goals, and objectives over an extended period of time, typically three to five years. The strategic plan shall be reviewed annually. The goals and objectives of the plan shall be measurable to demonstrate progress and results. The strategic plan shall support the priorities and initiatives of the whole organization. The strategic plan is a tool to implement the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's strategic plan, date of approval by approving authority, evidence of last review, and indicate progress being made in implementing the plan.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 114-120.

2.6 - Feasibility Studies

Standard: Studies shall be conducted to determine the feasibility of proposed facilities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of recent feasibility studies such as market, cost benefit, site, transportation, environmental and economic analyses.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 215-215.

2.7 - Site Plans

Standard: There shall be site plans to guide the use of existing and the development of future areas and facilities. A site plan is a depiction of a park site of that is drawn to scale and delineates features such as building and facility locations, roads and trails, use areas and utility easements.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a representative sampling of the agency's area and facility site plans.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 230-232.

2.8 - Historical and Cultural Resource Management Plans

Standard: Historical and cultural plans include an inventory of historical, cultural resources and strategies for how they will be managed. These resources may be addressed as part of the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan or the agency's park and recreation system master plan.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the historical and cultural plan(s).

2.9 - Community Involvement

Standard: The agency shall include community involvement in the planning process that includes ongoing and systematic outreach to include the entire community. It is critical that the diversity of individuals (i.e., all cultures, ages, and abilities) and local, regional, and national non-governmental community organizations, agencies, businesses, and service providers such as the Red Cross, Sierra Club, Trust for Public Land, YMCA/YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, and local foundations and employers are afforded opportunities for input.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe how the diverse interests (community organizations, businesses and individuals) of the community were involved in the planning process.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, p. 220

2.10 - ADA Transition Plan

Standard: The agency shall develop and adopt a phased plan for the removal of barriers at existing recreation facilities, parks, and amenities owned or operated by the agency, pursuant to the requirements of the US Department of Justice Title II regulation issued September 14, 2010 and effective March 15, 2011.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Submit minutes of the approving authority meeting approving the transition plan, or a copy of the plan noting the dates and times when plan tasks were completed.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 188; Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, p. 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, p. 253; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 288 and 400.

3.0 – Organization and Administration

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

The organizational structure provides alignment of responsibility and delegation of authority to enable the agency to carry out its mission. The roles, responsibilities and structure should be clearly understood by staff and the public.

Administrative reporting systems provide management information on the activities of the agency. Properly designed administrative reports will reflect comparative data and trends on activities. An effective administrative reporting system ensures communications throughout the chain of command.

Public information, community relations, and marketing are complementary functions within the agency. The functions overlap because they all deal with an organization's relationships and employ similar communication tools. While they have the same ultimate purpose of helping assure an organization's success, the purpose of each differs and each approaches the task from a different perspective.

To operate effectively, a park and recreation agency must have the support of its community. An agency can obtain such support by informing the public and news media of events that affect the lives of citizens in the community. By providing the news media and the community with information on agency administration and operations, a relationship of mutual trust, cooperation, and respect can be maintained.

An agency should make use of the many community organizations that exist in its jurisdiction and establish relationships with them. The park and recreation agency should play an active role in organizing community groups where they do not exist. By establishing such links with the community, the park and recreation agency learns of issues, needs, and opportunities and responds to them before they become problems. A well-organized community relations effort can act as an effective means of eliciting public support and can serve to identify problems in the making.

Effective market research, planning, product and program development, strategies, and objectives for delivering demand-driven, high quality programs and services contribute to successful park and recreation operations. Marketing is a process for accomplishing agency mission and objectives by developing, pricing, making accessible, and providing accurate and timely information about recreational opportunities that satisfy the wants/desires of target markets.

All park and recreation agencies perform certain marketing functions; the scope of their work however, depends on their size and mandate. Among the functions are user inquiry, development of an agency marketing philosophy and marketing plan, and development of operational procedures and policy guidelines to implement that philosophy. The complexities of marketing and related research functions require that all agency staff be appropriately educated about marketing and its application across functions.

3.1 - Organizational Structure ★

Standard: The agency shall establish a staff organizational structure that reflects its methods of operation, its relationship to the community, and the relationships among the different organization components.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a chart showing the agency's organizational structure, interrelationships among organizational components, and the function of each component. Organizational components are the major subdivisions of the organization, e.g. departments and divisions. Indicate how this information is made available to staff and the public.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 73-87.

3.2 - Administrative Offices

Standard: The agency administrative offices shall be accessible to the public and staff. There shall be administrative, meeting and storage space, and equipment adequate to perform the agency's functions and responsibilities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that describes the types of office space and administrative equipment used by the agency and how access is provided to the staff and the public.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 90.

3.2.1 - Support Services

Standard: Sufficient and appropriate equipment, technology, clerical and administrative staff shall be provided to enable the professional staff to perform their appropriate functions.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe the equipment, technology, and services used to support professional staff.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 90-91.

3.3 - Internal Communication ★

Standard: A communication system shall be established to ensure the accurate and timely transfer of internal information among staff.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a communication matrix illustrating how internal communications are managed by the agency.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 86-87.

3.4 - Public Information Policy and Procedure ★

Standard: The agency shall have approved policies that govern what information shall be released, when it should be released, and by whom it should be released and that demonstrate the agency's commitment to inform the community and news media of events involving the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the written statement of policy and procedure, indicating approval by the proper authority.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 375-377.

3.4.1 - Public Information and Community Relations Responsibility

Standard: A specific position in the agency shall be designated to direct the public information and community relations functions. The position serves as a point of control for information dissemination to the community and the media. The intent of the standard is to establish the authority and responsibility for developing and coordinating the agency's community relations function in an identifiable position.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position description that reflects responsibilities for public information and community relations functions.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 375-377.

3.4.2 - Community Relations Plan

Standard: The agency shall have an established community relations plan that identifies and addresses community needs for all segments of its service population, which is evaluated periodically for effectiveness.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the community relations plan and latest evaluation. The community relations plan shall address the following:

- a. Community relations policies for the agency;
- b. Process and procedure for establishing contact with community organizations and other community groups;
- c. Training needs for staff and community.

The community relations plan and marketing plan is often included in a single document.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 375-377.

3.4.3 - Marketing Plan

Standard: The agency shall have an established marketing plan, based on market research that is evaluated periodically for effectiveness. The fundamental principle of marketing is to gain an understanding of customer needs, wants, concerns and behaviors. The marketing plan addresses the appropriate mix of communications tools to promote agency programs, facilities, events and services and to provide accurate, timely and useful information to the various segments of the target audience.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the plan and latest evaluation. The plan shall include:

- a. Marketing objectives;
- b. Situation assessment, to include:
 1. Examination of demographic trends
 2. Economic climate
- c. Market coverage by alternative providers;
- d. Segmentation, targeting, and positioning;
- e. Marketing mix;
- f. Marketing methods
- g. Evaluation criteria and methods.

Research is important to support segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Common evaluation methods include surveys, focus groups, customer comment cards, and mystery shopping.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 359-377.

3.4.3.1 - Marketing Responsibility

Standard: A specific position shall be designated to direct the marketing function. Marketing functions shall be the responsibility of a permanent position of the agency that works closely with all agency units in developing, coordinating, and implementing the agency marketing plan.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position description that includes responsibility for marketing.

3.5 - Utilization of Technology

Standard: Technology shall be used to enable the agency to operate more efficiently and effectively. The agency should research and apply such resources progressively.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of progressive adoption, upgrade, installation, and/or use of technology. Examples could include but are not limited to communications and security systems, energy and records management systems, data management and sharing systems, lighting and irrigation systems, work orders and work assignment applications, financial systems, and class registration systems.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 305-345.

3.5.1 - Management Information Systems ★

Standard: The Agency shall have management information systems that can produce reliable statistical and data summaries of agency activities, such as daily, monthly, and annual reports for use in management decision-making. The reports shall provide comparative data and statistics.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of recent statistical and data summaries and describe their use in management decision-making.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 310-313.

3.6 - Records Management Policy and Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established policy and procedures for control, maintenance, and retention of records that are periodically reviewed. Records management policies and procedures address retention, disposal, access, disclosure and distribution of documents, including freedom of information requests, and they must be consistent with legal requirements.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide records management policy and procedures and a copy of the most recent review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 312-313.

3.6.1 - Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and Procedures

Standard: There shall be an established records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures that are periodically reviewed for protecting records, storing them and recovering critical information after a disaster.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures and a copy of the most recent review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 325-330.

4.0 - Human Resources

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

To produce the level of quality that customers have come to expect, organizations must employ qualified employees. Qualified personnel bring to the organization the knowledge, skills, and abilities in specialized areas that are needed to design and deliver the benefits that customers seek from recreation and park experiences. Organizations that employ quality individuals who are capable of packaging and delivering experiences can attract and retain a strong and satisfied customer base; organizations that compromise on hiring quality may face difficulties in remaining competitive.

Employing qualified individuals is not only one of the most important functions of recreation, park, and leisure services organizations; it is also one of the most expensive. Generally, more than half of the operational expenditures of recreation and park organizations are allocated to personnel salaries and benefits. Considering the vital importance of hiring quality employees and the associated expense, it is essential for management to have a working knowledge of the principles, practices, and procedures for employing personnel in the recreation, park, and leisure services field. A well-prepared personnel policies and procedures manual provide a consistent road map for human resources decision making as well as standardized procedures. The development of a personnel policies and procedures manual may include a systematic and comprehensive outline of how the organization administers the policies and procedures for both the professional and non-professional employees, fair employment practices, and how it communicates to all employees the specific expectations of employment and finally, how the organization deals with complaints, grievances, and morale problems.

4.1 - Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual ★

Standard: There shall be established policies that are reviewed periodically and govern the administration of personnel procedures for both professional and nonprofessional employees. The personnel policies and procedures manual shall be available to each employee, as appropriate to the position.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the personnel policies and procedures manual and the date of latest review. The personnel practices shall include procedures for

- a. Selection, hiring, and dismissal;
- b. Benefits including retirement, insurance, leaves, and other benefits;
- c. Salary schedule;
- d. Incentive system; and
- e. Staff development program.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 443-444; Compendium Section 17-7.

4.1.1 - Code of Ethics ★

Standard: There must be an established statement of ethical principles for agency personnel that provide a clear understanding of ethical responsibility involving issues as related to the park and recreation system, business dealings with other entities, interrelationships with other organizations and agencies, and interactions with participants.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the code of ethics.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 422-423.

4.1.1.1 - Staff Acceptance of Gifts and Gratuities

Standard: The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and gratuities by staff members.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and gratuities by staff members.

4.1.2 - Recruitment Process

Standard: There shall be a comprehensive recruitment process to attract qualified personnel that is based upon established recruitment procedures with specific recruitment objectives that are reviewed periodically. It is understood that in certain cases an agency is required to handle its personnel through a state or local civil service merit system, and is, therefore, linked to that system in the recruitment of its park and recreation personnel. Agencies are obligated to comply with all applicable statutes and policy statements.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide recruitment procedures, recruitment objectives, and last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 404-406.

4.1.3 - Equal Opportunity Employment and Workforce Diversity ★

Standard: There shall be an established policy regarding diversity with evidence of implementation that assures equal opportunities for employment, promotion, and equity in employment working conditions and that complies with the American Disabilities Act.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the equal opportunity and workforce diversity policy and show evidence of implementation.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 437-438.

4.1.4 - Selection Process

Standard: There shall be comprehensive procedures for hiring personnel. The agency shall also have a role in determination of skills and the personal attributes required for positions.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide selection process procedures and evidence that procedures are being followed. The procedures shall include information about the purpose, development, validity, utility, fairness, adverse impact, administration, scoring, and interpretation of all elements used in the selection process.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 408-414.

4.1.5 - Background Investigation ★

Standard: The agency process for hiring personnel shall include procedures for a national background investigation prior to appointment, including verification of a candidate's qualifying credentials, review of a candidate's civil and criminal record, particular attention to drug and child/adult-abuse records, and driving record for employees assigned to operate motor vehicles.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the background investigation procedures and examples of background checks completed.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 412-413.

4.1.6 - Employee Benefits

Standard: There shall be an established employee benefits plan. Each of the benefits provided to employees shall be described in terms of what is provided, under what conditions, and the extent of the benefit. Types of benefits often include administrative leave, holiday leave, sick leave, vacation leave, retirement program, health insurance program, disability and death benefits program, liability protection program, provision of clothing and equipment used by employees in performing park and recreation functions, employee education benefits, if any, and personnel support services to employees.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the employee benefits plan.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 416-422.

4.1.7 - Supervision

Standard: There shall be constructive and effective supervision of all personnel to help them grow professionally and improve programs and services. Supervision is an on-going and systematic process that is helpful for the well-being of the individual and agency. Important characteristics of effective supervision are the ability to communicate expectations, delegate authority commensurate with the assigned tasks, provide feedback, and motivate. There should be supervisory processes, procedures, or tools that highlight staff orientation, staff coaching, mentoring and training, performance review, and human resource policies affecting supervision of staff such as those dealing with harassment and discipline.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of processes, procedures, or tools used to assure constructive and effective employee supervision.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 18 – Supervision of Personnel, pp 461-484.

4.1.8 - Compensation Plan

Standard: There shall be an established compensation plan that establishes equity of compensation among units within the agency that is reviewed periodically. The compensation plan for an agency shall take into account agency employment standards, agency skill needs, and compensation levels offered by other local employers.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the compensation plan and a copy of its most recent review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 414-422.

4.1.9 - Performance Evaluation

Standard: There shall be a fair and systematic procedure for annual or periodic appraisal of job performance. Personnel evaluation shall be utilized for the development and improved quality of the individual's performance on the job, as well as a basis for promotion, monetary increments, and dismissal. Although evaluation is a day-by-day process, there shall be periodic specific reviews with the employee. An employee's personnel file shall include a written annual evaluation.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures and a sample of completed performance evaluations without identifying personal information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 445-448.

4.1.10 - Promotion

Standard: There shall be an established policy and procedures available to all employees defining the promotion process and the agency's role. The park and recreation agency may rely upon a state or local civil service commission, or other public or private external organization to administer one or more elements of the process in accordance with legal, professional, and administrative requirements.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy and procedures, and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 445-448.

4.1.11 - Disciplinary System

Standard: There shall be an established disciplinary system based on the code of conduct and performance. The system shall specify the conduct expected of employees. Prohibitions should be specific, whereas approved behavior may be stated in general terms (e.g., courtesy, punctuality).

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the code of conduct and performance and the policies and procedures that guide the disciplinary system and how this information is communicated and made accessible to employees. Include copies of disciplinary action steps included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable. This system shall address the following topics:

- a. Compliance with agency statements;
- b. Unbecoming conduct;
- c. Appropriate appearance;
- d. Use of alcohol and drugs;
- e. Acceptance of gratuities, bribes, or rewards;
- f. Abuse of authority; and
- g. Proper care and maintenance of equipment.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 423-427.

4.1.12 - Grievance Procedures

Standard: There shall be an established grievance procedure, available to all employees. The procedure shall identify matters that are grievable; establish time limitations for filing or presenting the grievance; establish steps and time limitations at each step in the grievance procedure; and establish criteria for employee representation. Formal grievance procedures shall be written in clear, concise terms.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the grievance procedures and indicate how the procedures have been communicated to the employees. Include grievance procedures included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 427-430.

4.1.13 - Termination and End of Employment

Standard: There shall be established policies and procedures for termination and end of employment.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the termination and end of employment policies and procedures, and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, p. 426.

4.2 - Staff Qualifications ★

Standard: The agency shall employ staff qualified to develop and operate programs and services in furtherance of goals and objectives. Staff shall be qualified for the positions as provided in the job descriptions and possess specified licenses and certificates. Park and recreation personnel shall have certification and/or educational training appropriate to the position.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide job descriptions for a representative sample of key positions and resumes for the current incumbents.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 451.

4.3 - Job Analyses for Job Descriptions ★

Standard: Established job descriptions for all positions shall be based on the job analysis and reviewed periodically.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a job description for a full-time, part-time, temporary and internship position, and, if applicable, an example of a job analysis with last review. The job descriptions shall include, at a minimum:

- a. Duties of each position;
- b. Responsibilities of each position;
- c. Tasks of each position; and
- d. Minimum level of proficiency necessary in the job-related skills, knowledge, abilities, and behaviors.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp.439-441.

4.4 - Chief Administrator

Standard: The agency shall have a chief administrator responsible to the approving authority for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the agency and with authority to perform such responsibilities. The chief administrator shall be employed full-time, year-round, and be qualified by experience, education, certification, and/or training in park, recreation, leisure services, tourism, or related disciplines. These qualifications shall be verified and demonstrated specifically as to how it is related to park and/or recreation management.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the chief administrator position description and the resume of the current incumbent. If she/he is from a related discipline, provide a summary of how the person's qualifications relate to park and/or recreation management.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 433-438.

4.4.1 - Leadership Succession Procedure

Standard: The agency shall have an established procedure to ensure that leadership is available when the agency's chief administrator is incapacitated, off duty, out of town, or otherwise unable to act.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the written procedure, such as continuity plan, which indicates approval by the proper authority.

4.5 - Workforce Health and Wellness Program

Standard: The agency shall have an employee health and wellness program showing periodic evaluation of the program status.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence of the agency's employee health and wellness program, level of participation and most recent evaluation.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 441-442.

4.6 - Orientation Program

Standard: There shall be an orientation program for all personnel employed by the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide outline of the orientation program and a representative example of materials distributed at an orientation. The orientation program should include:

- a. Philosophy, goals, and objectives;
- b. The history and development of the agency;
- c. Pertinent sociological and environmental factors of the community and specific neighborhoods in which the individual is to serve (environmental scan); and
- d. Review of program/parks policies and procedures manuals, job duties, staff procedures, first aid and safety concerns and guidelines and forms review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 442-443.

4.6.1 - Employee Training and Development Program

Standard: There shall be a program of employee development which is available to employees throughout the agency. It should be based on needs of individual employees, future organizational needs, and is evaluated and updated periodically. The program must notify personnel of available and/or required training, maintain training records, and assure that required training programs are attended. The program should incorporate in-service training and succession planning to ensure the continued effective performance of the organization after the departure of key staff.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe the scope and components of the employee development and training program, provide an outline of training offered (mandatory and discretionary), and provide lists of participants for the prior calendar year, and last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 448-451.

4.6.2 - Professional Certification and Organization Membership

Standard: Professional staff shall be active members of their professional organization(s) and pursue professional certifications within their respective disciplines. "Active" means more than holding membership, including attendance at meetings, making presentations, participating in committee work, holding elected and appointed positions, and participation in educational opportunities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a list of staff with professional certifications and also provide a list of staff that have actively participated in a professional organization during the prior calendar year, indicating the nature of participation. The following are examples for park and recreation professionals e.g. Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE), Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) for park and recreation professionals.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 451.

4.7 - Volunteer Management

Standard: There shall be a volunteer management function within the agency, including a comprehensive volunteer management manual that includes policies and procedures related to the management of volunteers.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the volunteer management manual.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 454-458.

4.7.1 - Use of Volunteers

Standard: Volunteers shall be used by the agency in a variety of positions.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide list of functions in which agency volunteers are used, the extent of use, and examples of volunteer position descriptions.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 455-456.

4.7.2 - Volunteer Recruitment, Selection, Orientation, Training, and Retention

Standard: There shall be an on-going function within the agency for the recruitment, selection, orientation, training and retention of volunteers, including procedures on background screening. Background investigations shall be made for all volunteers who work routinely with vulnerable populations, especially youth, senior adults, and persons with disabilities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's recruitment, selection, orientation, training, and retention procedures. Provide the agency's background investigation procedures for volunteers and evidence of implementation.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 456-457.

4.7.3 - Supervision and Evaluation of Volunteers

Standard: Agency volunteers shall be monitored, shall receive supervisory visits, and be evaluated regarding performance. Supervision and evaluation of volunteers is important to ensure adequate training is provided and to verify satisfactory conduct and performance. The degree to which the agency supervises and evaluates volunteers may vary depending on the role of the volunteers.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide written description of the monitoring system including current practices for supervisory visits, and examples of evaluations.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 457.

4.7.4 - Recognition of Volunteers

Standard: There agency shall recognize volunteers for their contributions. Recognition may take many forms, depending on the nature of volunteer roles.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a description of the recognition program and recognitions given over the past calendar year.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 457-458.

4.7.5 - Liability Coverage for Volunteers

Standard: Agency volunteers shall be covered for negligence liability.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation indicating coverage of volunteers for negligence liability.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 458.

4.8 - Consultants and Contract Employees

Standard: The agency shall have policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 458-459.

5.0 - Financial Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Financial management is the process of planning for, acquiring, and using funds to achieve predetermined organizational goals and objectives. The increasing demand for more and better services, continuing upward spiral of costs, increasing emphasis on fiscal responsibility and accountability, and the unwillingness of taxpayers support higher taxes, are all forcing park and recreation organizations to become more effective and efficient in all aspects of their financial operations. Parks and recreation managers must possess the ability to secure, organize, and control the financial resources of the organization to assure the success and survival of their organizations.

Formal fiscal control and monitoring procedures enable an agency to establish accountability, to comply with funding authorizations and restrictions, to ensure that disbursements are for designated and approved proposes and to alert agency management to possible problems.

5.1 - Fiscal Policy ★

Standard: Fiscal policies setting guidelines for management and control of revenues, expenditures, and investment of funds shall be set forth clearly in writing, and the legal authority must be clearly established.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide fiscal policies and legal authority.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 487-494.

5.1.1 - Comprehensive Revenue Policy ★

Standard: There shall be an established revenue policy that is periodically updated regarding fees and charges for services and the strategies and methodologies for determining fees and charges and levels of cost recovery.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy on fees and charges, the current fee schedules or cost-recovery procedures, and the most recent review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 500-515.

5.1.2 - Agency Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

Standard: The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and donations.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and donations.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 511-514.

5.1.3 - Grants Procedures

Standard: Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall procure regional, state, federal and/or other applicable agency grants to supplement funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement grant opportunities. Prior to grant procurement, agencies shall evaluate how application, approval, implementation and management processes will be coordinated.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedure to procure grants along with a summary of grants received by the agency for the past five years, including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor, date awarded, grant amount and agency match.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 508-509.

5.1.4 - Private, Corporate, and Non-Profit Support Procedures

Standard: Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall solicit private, corporate, and non-profit support to supplement agency funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement alternative funding options. Prior to acceptance of support the agency shall evaluate the terms of acceptance and how the implementation and management process will be coordinated.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedure to solicit private, corporate and non-profit support along with a summary of such support received by the agency for the past five years including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor/sponsor, date awarded, and value of the contribution and method of recognition.

5.2 - Fiscal Management Procedures

Standard: There shall be established procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

5.2.1 - Authority and Responsibility for Fiscal Management

Standard: The agency's chief administrator shall be designated as having the authority and responsibility for the fiscal management of the agency. Although an agency's chief administrator is ultimately responsible for all agency fiscal matters, the size and complexity of the agency may dictate the need to delegate responsibility for fiscal management functions to an identifiable person or component within the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation demonstrating clear delegation of fiscal authority for the agency.

5.2.2 - Purchasing Procedures ★

Standard: Agencies shall have established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services, including:

- a. Bidding procedures;
- b. Criteria for the selection of vendors and bidders; and
- c. Procedures for disbursement of petty cash and issuance; and
- d. Use of procurement cards, if applicable.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 515-517.

5.2.2.1 - Emergency Purchase Procedures

Standard: There shall be established procedures for emergency purchases within the agency to secure equipment or services in a swift and efficient manner.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for emergency purchases.

5.3 - Accounting System ★

Standard: The agency shall have a comprehensive accounting system to ensure an orderly, accurate, and complete documentation of the flow of funds. The accounting system shall facilitate rapid retrieval of information on the status of appropriations, expenditures and revenue any time the information is required.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a description of the accounting system.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 517-519.

5.3.1 - Financial Status Reports

Standard: The agency shall periodically, monthly at a minimum, provide financial status reports. Each appropriation and expenditure shall be classified according to function, organizational component, activity, object, and program.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide financial status reports for the previous three months.

Financial status reports shall include, at a minimum:

- a. Initial appropriation for each account (or program);
- b. Balances at the commencement of the regularly defined period;
- c. Expenditures and encumbrances made during the period;
- d. Unencumbered balances; and
- e. Revenue status.

5.3.2 - Position Authorization Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established procedures for maintaining control over the number and type of authorized filled and vacant positions to ensure that persons on the payroll are legally employed and that positions are in accordance with budget authorizations.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position authorization procedures and budgeted positions.

5.3.3 - Fiscal Control and Monitoring Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established procedures used for collecting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds. The procedures shall enhance security and accountability of all monies received by the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the fiscal control and monitoring procedures. The fiscal control and monitoring procedures shall include:

- a. Maintenance of an allotment system, if any, or records of appropriations among organizational components;
- b. Preparation of financial statements;
- c. Conduct of internal audits; and
- d. Persons or positions authorized to accept or disburse funds.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 20 – Budgeting, pp. 572-576.

5.3.4 - Independent Audit

Standard: There shall be an independent audit of the agency's fiscal activities conducted annually or at a time stipulated by applicable statute or regulation. The audit may be performed by the government's internal audit staff (external to the agency being audited) or by an outside certified public accounting firm.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the most recent independent audit and management letter, or most recent Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and provide the response to the audit recommendations.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 520-523.

5.4 - Annual or Biennial Budget

Standard: There shall be an annual or biennial operating and capital improvements budgets, including both revenues and expenditures. Operating budgets include both capital and operating expenses, cover a one-year or two-year period and capital improvements may extend five or six years with annual review. The nature of an agency's budgetary system may be determined by the kind of system in use by its governmental authority.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current and approved operating and capital improvements budgets.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 20 – Budgeting, pp. 527-576.

5.4.1 - Budget Development Guidelines

Standard: The agency shall establish guidelines to inform the heads of organizational components of the essential tasks and procedures relating to the budget preparation process. The guidelines shall include instructions for preparing budget request documents and for providing adequate justification for major continuing expenditures or changes in continuing expenditures of budget items. Information should be included regarding operating impact.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the budget development guidelines.

5.4.2 - Budget Recommendations

Standard: Major organizational components shall provide recommendations, based on operational and activity analysis, for use in the development of the agency's budget.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of agency component recommendations and evidence of their consideration in the budgeting process. Recommendations shall include:

- a. Assessment of current and future personnel needs;
- b. Costs per program element;
- c. Line items.

5.5 - Budget Control Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have procedures for budget control with periodic reporting of revenues and expenditures, and continuous management review.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for budget control within the agency and examples of periodic reports.

5.5.1 - Supplemental/Emergency Appropriations Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established procedures for requesting supplemental or emergency appropriations and fund transfers to meet circumstances that cannot be anticipated by prior fiscal planning efforts. Mechanisms of adjustment may include transferring funds from one account to another and/or requesting that additional funds be granted for agency needs.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the supplemental/emergency appropriations procedures.

5.5.2 - Inventory and Fixed Assets Control

Standard: The agency shall have established procedures for inventory control of property, equipment, and other assets to prevent losses and unauthorized use, and to avoid both inventory excesses and shortages. There shall be a complete and current listing of agency assets.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide procedures for inventory and fixed asset control.

6.0 - Programs and Services Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

A program is a means to leisure and recreation as well as a vehicle to deliver benefits to participants. High-quality programming is a dynamic process that continues as the recreation experience unfolds. A systematic and well-researched analysis should be completed in determining what programs and services should be provided by the agency. The public park and recreation program should be coordinated with related programs of other governmental, for-profit and non-profit organizations in the community, such as schools, voluntary agencies, and churches, to provide maximum coverage with a minimum of duplication, as well as to reduce competition.

The primary responsibility of the park and recreation professional is to provide programs by which leisure and recreation experiences and environments enhance the well-being and quality of life for participants. Certain program and service determinants give direction to what is provided and assessed. These determinants are: conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure; agency philosophy, goals and objectives; constituent interests and desired needs; and community opportunities for the public. Program and service objectives must be benefits-focused. Many agencies put objectives in “SMART” format (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed) to assure that objectives are measurable and they use logic modeling to focus their objectives on outcomes and impacts.

The recreation programming plan includes all elements and services of the public park and recreation agency’s programming functions, including activity selection, type and scope of programs and outreach initiatives. While related to a master or comprehensive plan, the recreation programming plan shall be an outgrowth of other strategic and program forecasting tools.

Park and recreation agencies should have a program that educates the public about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits that leisure (time, activity, experience) and participation in self-directed and leader-directed recreation activities provide. It should include the three (3) behavior domains: psychomotor (manipulation and coordination of physical skills and abilities), affective (interests, appreciations, attitudes and values) and cognitive (intellectual skills and abilities).

A leisure education program consists of six (6) components:

1. Awareness of self in leisure;
2. Appreciation of leisure;
3. Understanding self-determination in leisure;
4. Making decisions regarding leisure participation;
5. Knowledge and use of resources for facilitating leisure; and
6. Promoting social interaction.

Examples include:

- Cooperative agreements with local schools to develop classes, workshops or events to inform children and adolescents of leisure benefits.
- Community presentations regarding leisure benefits at libraries, senior citizen centers, special recreation associations, and at business and industry meetings.
- Distributing a “benefits” CD or website hyperlink to educate, publicize, and inform of agency programs and services through various social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and public cable TV channels.
- Organizing and categorizing agency publications and photos according to the benefits associated with targeted programs and services, e.g., benefits of nature walks for senior populations and

benefits of outdoor play for children.

- Marketing and advertising the benefits message in agency telephone messages, employee newsletters, and policy manuals, on staff apparel, facility and vehicle signage.
- Including benefit statements in brochures and program descriptions so that prospective participants will see what they can gain from participating in programs.
- Including the question of “*How have you benefited from this program?*” in program evaluations, causing the participant to reflect on the benefits of the program.
- Including the benefits of programs and services on agency websites and in email/e-blasts, press releases and public service announcements.
- Conducting benefits-based program research studies.
- Conducting and reporting follow-up assessments and data analyses.

6.1 - Recreation Programming Plan ★

Standard: The agency shall have a recreation programming plan covering 3-5 years that is updated periodically and a current-year implementation plan. The plan shall address all programs and services of the agency’s programming functions, including activity selection, type and scope of programs and outreach initiatives.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current recreation programming plan and describe the update process. This plan shall address how the agency delivers services to persons of all ages and abilities, how it develops program offerings and it shall include the following elements:

- a. Program objectives (6.2);
- b. Program and service statistics (10.5);
- c. Program and service determinants (6.1.1);
- d. Recreation and leisure trends analysis (10.5.1); and
- e. Community inventory (10.5.2).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 137-138.

6.1.1 - Program and Service Determinants

Standard: A systematic and studied approach shall be taken in determining what programs and services shall be provided by the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation and examples demonstrating that the six (6) program and service determinants are used in providing programs and services. The programs and services provided by the agency shall be based on the

- a. Conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure;
- b. Organizational agency philosophy, mission and vision, and goals and objectives;
- c. Constituent interests and desired needs;
- d. Creation of a constituent-centered culture;
- e. Experiences desirable for clientele; and
- f. Community opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 155-159.

6.1.2 - Participant Involvement

Standard: The development of agency programs and services shall involve participants.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe the process and provide examples of how the agency obtains and utilizes participant input. Participants shall have involvement in:

- a. Recommending policy;
- b. Planning activities;
- c. Conducting activities; and
- d. Sponsoring activities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 176-177.

6.1.3 - Self-Directed Programs and Services

Standard: The agency shall offer self-directed recreation opportunities for individuals and groups to participate without leadership, under only general supervision. Examples include picnic facilities, tennis courts, roadways in scenic areas, bridle trails, self-guiding nature trails, and open playgrounds.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how the agency provides self-directed recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 161.

6.1.4 - Leader-Directed Programs and Services

Standard: The agency shall offer leader-directed recreation opportunities that provide recreation opportunities where participant involvement is directed by a leader, including skills instruction classes. Examples include tennis, crafts, dance; synchronized swimming performance; creative dramatics for children.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how the agency provides leader-directed recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 161.

6.1.5 - Facilitated Programs and Services

Standard: The agency shall facilitate assistance to individuals and groups of individuals that provide or want to provide recreation programs and leisure services independently from the agency. An example of facilitated programs and services is an individual or group that wishes to start a community theater organization; the agency may help initially by providing a meeting place, some administrative help in publicity, and "seed money" with the intent that the organization will become self-sustaining. Demonstration projects may be utilized for this purpose.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how the agency provides facilitated recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 161-162.

6.1.6 - Cooperative Programming

Standard: The agency shall enter into cooperative agreements with public, commercial, and nonprofit entities to provide programming.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide current examples of cooperative programming with documentation, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), Memoranda of Agreement (MOA), or partnership agreements.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 6 – Partnerships, pp. 98-102; Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 159.

6.2 - Program Objectives

Standard: There shall be specific objectives established for programs and services that are reviewed periodically. Objectives shall be specific and measurable as to the actual outcome or impact desired by the program or service so that progress on meeting objectives can be evaluated (see standard 10.2 Outcomes Assessment). Objectives shall be defined by program area, such as nature, dance, music, sports, fitness, special events and they can be further defined into levels such as beginner, intermediate and advanced.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide measurable objectives for each program and service area and the last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 165-172.

6.3 - Scope of Program Opportunities

Standard: The content of agency programs shall be related directly to stated program objectives and shall provide for individual differences of interests, abilities (mental, social, physical), and backgrounds. Activities selected shall be suited to and contribute toward fulfillment of the basic physical, emotional, social, and intellectual requirements of individuals. The agency should take into consideration the total community offerings; some opportunities may be offered by other organizations, private, public, and non-profit.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a matrix or listing of programs by fields, demonstrating clearly how the agency provides opportunities for proficiency levels, socioeconomic levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, and genders.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 163-165, 174-179.

6.3.1 - Outreach to Diverse Underserved Populations

Standard: The agency shall proactively extend programs and services to residents who may be underserved in the community. To encourage participation in parks and recreation programs and services, agencies shall identify and address barriers that may limit access including physical, social and mental abilities and financial, geographic and cultural barriers. Financial barriers may be addressed through reduced fees and scholarships. Agencies should offer inclusionary support services to ensure access to programs and services for people of all abilities and socioeconomic status.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Identify underserved populations (provide methodology and data used for this analysis), describe specific barriers within the community that limit participation and provide examples of outreach programs and services offered by the agency to meet the needs of these populations and overcome barriers to access.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, p. 139; Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 177.

6.4 - Community Education for Leisure Process

Standard: The agency shall have a process to educate the general citizenry about the use of leisure time and the outcomes, benefits, values, and positive impacts of leisure and recreation services. The process shall be periodically evaluated for effectiveness. Educating the public about leisure and recreation shall be ongoing and systematic and should be done in cooperation with the community, e.g., schools, other leisure agencies, business, industry, and commercial recreation establishments.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of the methods utilized by the agency to educate the community on the benefits, values, and impacts of leisure and recreation services to a diverse range of participants and non-participants. Provide the last review of effectiveness.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 172-174.

6.4.1 - Community Health and Wellness Education and Promotion

Standard: The agency shall have policies, procedures, or programs to educate and promote health and wellness in the community.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's policies, procedures, or programs to educate and promote health and wellness in the community such as:

- a. Physical activity;
- b. Healthy food and beverage offerings;
- c. Nutrition education;
- d. Substance abuse prevention.

Also provide examples of implementation.

6.5 - Participant and Spectator Code of Conduct

Standard: The agency shall have "code of conduct" guidelines for appropriate participant and spectator conduct at programs and events, and the agency shall proactively inform and remind staff, coaches, participants and spectators about the code of conduct.

Suggested Evident of Compliance: Provide the code of conduct for participants and spectators and describe how program participants, coaches, and spectators are informed of the code of conduct. The agency should collaborate with affiliate groups providing training for youth and coaches to inform and educate about the participant and spectator code of conduct.

7.0 - Facility and Land Use Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Physical resource planning is a process focusing on physical resources. The planning process conforms to the vision and mission statement of the controlling agency. Natural resources planning stretches across a continuum that has strict preservation at one end and complete modification at the other.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 207-238.

The planning, development and management of physical resources are functions of all park and recreation managers, whether they are in the public, nonprofit, or for-profit sectors. Physical resources include natural undeveloped lands and waters, and developed areas including urban parks, special complexes (such as sports and aquatics), and buildings of various functions (such as fitness centers, community centers and interpretive centers).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 239-266.

Ready access to accurate land and facility records is a basic requirement for program planning and facility management. Floor plans with square foot areas for each program space allow programmers and facility managers to determine how to most efficiently use program spaces. Building plans and specifications are invaluable for facilities management and capital programming because they provide insight into the design, materials, and equipment used in construction. Information from these documents is often used to determine the remaining useful life of building systems. Grants to purchase parkland and construct recreation facilities from such programs as the 1965 Land and Water Conservation Act (LAWCON) and the 1978 Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR) place restrictions on use and disposition.

High-performing maintenance operations organizations ensure quality experiences through well-managed spaces and places. Customized systems' approaches and solutions to operations management satisfy accreditation standards through the development, consistent use, and periodic review of management plans, policies, programs, and procedures as well as inspections and assessment schedules and records.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267-304.

7.1 - Parkland Acquisition Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the acquisition of lands for park, recreation, conservation, and historical-cultural purposes that are backed by legal authority and periodically reviewed. This authority usually originates in state enabling acts, is delegated to local governments and is implemented through local charters and ordinances.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide policy and procedures for land acquisition, the citation of legal authority to acquire lands, and last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 207-229.

7.2 - Areas and Facilities Development Policies and Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the development of park and recreation land and facilities that are reviewed periodically. Policies and procedures should consider market projections, applicable open space and design standards and coordination with overall planning for the jurisdiction.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide land development policies and procedures, with the last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 230-236.

7.2.1 - ADA Existing Facility and Site Access Audit

Standard: The agency shall complete an access audit of all existing sites and facilities. Pursuant to the US Department of Justice Title II regulation at 35.105, the agency must evaluate its existing facilities and sites against the most current final and enforceable Standard for Accessible Design.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Submit completed checklists, digital images and site reports as evidence of completion of the access audit.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 226 and 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 253 and 263; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, p. 288.

7.3 - Defense Against Encroachment Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have procedures for protecting park and recreation lands and facilities from encroachment. The procedures should include progressive steps to address escalated encroachment issues.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures regarding defense against encroachment.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208 and 224.

7.4 - Disposal of Lands Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have established procedures regarding the disposal of park and recreation lands to ensure that public recreational benefits are not diminished through the sale or transfer of parkland.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for disposal of park and recreation land.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208, 210-213; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, p. 250; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 286 and 290.

7.5 - Maintenance and Operations Management Standards

Standard: The agency shall have established maintenance and operations standards that are reviewed periodically for management of all park and recreation areas and facilities, including specialty facilities such as marinas, ice rinks, golf courses, zoological facilities, equestrian facilities, aquatic or athletic facilities, nature centers, where applicable. Parks, facilities and other recreational elements should be identified according to the intended use of the area, ranging from heavily used and high developed areas to those that are lightly used and less developed via a park classification or maintenance classification system. Each of these areas should be assigned an appropriate set of maintenance standards including both recommended frequency and acceptable quality.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the maintenance standards for all parks, facilities and specialty areas, including evidence of park maintenance classification according to the intended use of the area, ranging from heavily used and high developed areas to those that are lightly used and less developed. Provide the most recent review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 253 and 263; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 290-300.

7.5.1 - Facility Legal Requirements

Standard: There shall be a regular review of legal requirements related to facilities, such as licenses, sanitary regulations, fire laws, and safety measures, and inspections of adherence thereto. Special attention should be given aquatic facilities, child care facilities, concessions, kitchens, and zoos.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a matrix showing a representative sample of facilities and the types of regulatory permits, licenses or inspections that are required including copy of last review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208-210, 214-216, 225-227, 231; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 251, 259, 263; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267, 269, 286, 291.

7.5.2 - Preventative Maintenance Plan

Standard: There shall be a comprehensive preventative maintenance plan to provide periodic, scheduled inspections, assessment and repair, and replacement of infrastructure, systems and assets. This includes certifying, checking or testing for optimum operation based on applicable industry standards, local guidelines, city requirements and/or manufacturer's recommendation for maintenance and replacement of parks, with the intent to ensure that park assets are maintained for optimum use and safety and have the ability to reach or extend its full life cycle and expected return on investment.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the preventative maintenance plan and examples of detailed preventative maintenance programs for identified parks, recreation areas and facilities with special attention given to playground equipment, aquatic facilities, pedestrian pathways, building infrastructure and other high impact assets, along with copies of completed, recent inspections and safety checks for a sampling of facilities/areas.

7.6 - Fleet Management Plan

Standard: The agency shall have an established fleet management plan comprised of an inventory of all vehicles, rolling stock and other major equipment and inspection and replacement schedules.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the fleet management plan.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 296-297, 299-300.

7.7 - Agency-Owned Equipment, Materials, Tools, and Supplies Policies and Procedures

Standard: There shall be policies and procedures for the management of and accountability for agency-owned equipment, materials, tools, and supplies, including procedures for purchase and distribution to authorized persons, proper training of appropriate personnel in use of equipment, safe and secure storage of equipment, and maintenance of all equipment in operational readiness and working order. Such property includes supplies, materials, tools, expendable items, vehicles, installed and mobile equipment, and personal wear items used by agency personnel.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide policy and procedures regarding agency-owned equipment and property.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 213, 217, 229, 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 251, 253-255, 259-259, 261, 264; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267, 277-278, 282-284, 292-293, 295-300.

7.7.1 - Building Plans and Specifications

Standard: The agency shall have on file floor plans, specifications, and/or as-built drawings for major facilities constructed since 1965. These records contain information necessary for efficient programming, quality facility maintenance and effective capital project programming. Projects funded with funds from governmental grant programs such as LAWCON and UPARR place restrictions on use and disposition.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence that plans and specifications for facilities with greater than 10,000 square feet of indoor space constructed since 1965 are on file.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 139-141; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 239, 243, 250-256; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267, 276-275, 278-288, 299.

7.7.2 – Land and Lease Records

Standard: The agency shall have records on file of all lands owned or property leased by or for the agency. Each record shall include ownership, leases, legal description, and easements and covenants that restrict use or disposition. The records shall also include date and manner of acquisition. The manner of acquisition can limit right to use and dispose of parkland, for example acquisitions funded with funds from governmental grant programs such as LAWCON and UPARR place restrictions. Gifts and bequests often contain restrictive covenants that reflect the desires of donors.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence that land records for land acquired since 1965 are on file.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208-213, 216-217.

7.8 - Environmental Sustainability Policy and Program

Standard: The agency shall have an established policy on environmental sustainability that states the agency position on energy and resource conservation. The policy should address sustainable product purchasing; reduction and handling of waste; wise use and protection of land, air, water and wildlife; and sustainable design/construction of buildings and facilities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency’s environmental sustainability policy and examples of projects and initiatives that demonstrate the agency’s commitment to implementation. Examples include ecosystem and green infrastructure plans/programs, capital improvements utilizing green/sustainable designs, carbon footprint analysis and reduction goals, internal/external communication and outreach programs.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 210, 215-216, 226, 232-233, 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 240, 247; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 286-295.

7.9 Natural Resource Management Plans and Procedures

Standard: There shall be natural resource management plans for environmentally unique or sensitive areas such as valuable wetlands, riverbanks and woodlands and there shall be environmental protection procedures, such as for erosion control, conduct of nature studies, wildlife and habitat preservation, and protection of water supply reservoirs and water recharge areas. Even if the agency does not own or control the natural resource, there shall be procedures to encourage and ensure environmental stewardship through volunteer steward programs and/or interpretive education and other learning opportunities. The agency should work with other agencies to meet and promote environmentally sound maintenance and land management standards.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the natural resource management plan(s) and procedures and examples of outreach and education.

7.9.1 - Recycling and/or Zero Waste Plan

Standard: There shall be a recycling and/or zero waste plan for park and recreation facilities and administrative offices that is systematically monitored and periodically reviewed. The plan shall also include an educational component for both users and employees. The recycling and/or zero waste plan should include all major products suitable for recycling in the given region with an emphasis on making the recycling process easy and convenient for park and recreation users.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a description of the recycling and/or zero waste plan for facilities and administrative offices and provide the last review with statistics on the amounts of materials recycled or the percent of total waste recycled for the most recent reporting period.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 290-292.

7.10 - Maintenance Personnel Assignment Procedures

Standard: The agency shall have procedures for the assignment of competent personnel with clearly defined duties for routine maintenance, repairs, and improvement of areas, facilities, and equipment, including responsibility for general cleanliness and overall attractiveness. Effective maintenance of grounds and facilities requires the selection, training, and supervision of workers in a wide variety of tasks ranging from seasonal laborers to skilled trades. Supervisory staff must be able to focus on maintenance management, such as workload control, as well as supervise the technical details of maintenance work.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of methods used by the agency to assign staff.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 254 and 259; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 284 and 295.

7.11 - Capital Asset Depreciation and Replacement Schedule

Standard: The agency shall have an established depreciation and replacement schedule for all park and recreation capital assets including buildings, facilities, and equipment that have predictable life cycles. Schedules should identify the useful life of each element and the associated costs of replacement. Capital asset depreciation and replacement schedules, including projected costs of replacement, should be reflected in the agency's financial plan.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the capital asset depreciation and replacement schedule.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208, 213-215, 217-218, 220, 225-259, 231; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 240 and 247; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 289 and 294.

8.0 - Public Safety, Law Enforcement, and Security

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Laws and ordinances provide the foundation for controlling activities and behavior within the jurisdiction of the agency. General municipal codes, laws and ordinances and state and federal laws are applicable to parks and recreation areas and facilities. However, these laws generally have broad application and lack specificity as they relate to the control and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. Special laws and ordinances may be enacted to specifically address and guide public use and behavior and may delegate authority to issue and enforce permits, licenses, rules and regulations applicable to parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Agency staff are first-in-line to gain compliance with ordinances, rules and regulations. Regardless of whether the agency employs law enforcement officers or contracts for law enforcement services, agency staff have responsibility to educate patrons on the proper use of parks, recreation areas and facilities. However, when patrons fail to comply, enforcement becomes the responsibility of sworn law enforcement officers.

For agencies relying on the services of law enforcement officers from other jurisdictions or departments, it is essential that formalized liaison relationships be established between agency staff and the official law enforcement organization.

Particular attention should be given to national, state and local emergency plans and procedures directed toward large-scale natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, forest fires, and floods. Plans should include evacuation procedures, inventories and locations of equipment and materials, displacement plans for facility residents and activities, and provision of psychological aid for staff affected by emergencies.

8.1 - Codes, Laws, and Ordinances ★

Standard: Public safety and law enforcement within parks and recreation areas and facilities shall be governed by codes, laws, and ordinances, some of which may be enacted specifically for the control and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The codes, laws and ordinances shall be posted or readily available to park patrons.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation of the codes, laws, and ordinances that pertain specifically to areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency and describe how they are posted or otherwise readily available to park patrons.

Informational reference in the [Management of Park and Recreation Agencies](#), (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 2 – Management and the Law, pp. 19-22.

8.1.1 - Staff Liaison to Law Enforcement Officers

Standard: There shall be established liaison assignments for agency staff to the official law enforcement officers providing public safety and law enforcement service to the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide current documentation of staff liaison assignment(s) with the law enforcement authority responsible for enforcement of laws and ordinances within the parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, p. 604.

8.2 - Authority to Enforce Laws by Law Enforcement Officers ★

Standard: The authority of law enforcement officers to enforce laws and ordinances pertaining specifically to activity within parks, recreation areas, and facilities shall be clearly established to ensure that enforcement actions are upheld. Authority to enforce laws and ordinances within parks and recreation areas and facilities must be established through assignment within the agency, by contract with another agency, or by policy of the government jurisdiction in which the agency operates.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that establishes the authority of law enforcement officers to enforce laws and ordinances within parks, recreation areas, and facilities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 606-612.

8.3 - Law Enforcement Officer Training

Standard: Law enforcement officers with the authority to enforce laws within areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency must have proper training in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a summary of the current training program for law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within the parks and recreation agency, including provision for refreshers and updates.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 612-616.

8.4 - Public Information on Laws, Ordinances, Rules, Regulations, and Policies

Standard: Agency staff shall participate in educating and informing the public on laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies that apply to parks and recreation areas and facilities. This role shall be established through policy directive.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that defines the role of agency staff in providing public information and education on laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies. Provide examples of education and provision of information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 616-617.

8.4.1 - In-Service Training for Staff on Public Safety and Law Enforcement

Standard: Agency staff shall understand their role in public safety and law enforcement and relationships with law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within parks and recreation areas and facilities. The purpose of this training to ensure that staff understand where their authority ends and when an incident should be referred to law enforcement. In-service training shall be extended to front line staff such as lifeguards and park attendants to assure they are fully prepared to respond to law-enforcement incidents.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation of most recent in-service training for agency staff, defining their role in public safety and law enforcement, including agendas and attendance rosters

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, p. 614.

8.4.2 - Handling of Disruptive Behavior Procedures

Standard: There shall be established procedures for agency staff on response to disruptive behavior at agency areas and facilities. Procedures shall identify the role of staff in intervention when an incident occurs, documentation of behavior and delineation of law enforcement roles in handling behavioral issues.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide current procedures regarding handling of disruptive behavior.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 620-624.

8.4.3 - Traffic Control, Parking Plans, and Crowd Control

Standard: The agency shall coordinate with the official law enforcement agency having jurisdiction on large-scale events hosted or facilitated by the agency that require planning and coordination of traffic, parking and crowd control. Plans shall specifically define the roles of the event sponsor, agency staff, and the law enforcement agency regarding traffic layouts at the venue, traffic routes and personnel assignments.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a recent example of coordination with law enforcement on traffic control, parking plans and crowd control for activities and events hosted or facilitated by the agency.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 624-637.

8.4.4 - Handling of Evidentiary Items Procedures

Standard: Procedures shall be established that guide agency staff in the preservation and handling of evidence until transferred to the appropriate law enforcement authority. Procedures shall be established in coordination with the appropriate law enforcement agencies to define staff roles in ensuring that evidentiary items are preserved until the proper law enforcement agency assumes command of the scene.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures defining the role and responsibility of agency staff in the discovery, preservation and handling of evidentiary items.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 622-623.

8.5 - General Security Plan

Standard: The agency shall have a comprehensive general security plan addressing areas, buildings and facilities under its jurisdiction that is updated periodically. Plans for each major area, building or facility should be available at each site. The general security plan may be a compilation of security plans from each major area, building or facility. Hazardous or flammable materials storage areas should be clearly identified in plans and at each specific site. Signage at each site should be installed in accordance with the unified signage system. To be effective, the security plan should be updated when a new area, building or facility is added, security systems are modified or when legislation requires change.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's general security plan or compilation of security plans from each major area, building or facility with the most recent review or update. At a minimum, these plans should include:

- a. Locking key systems and associated assignments;
- b. Alarm system and assignment of security codes;
- c. Opening and closing procedures;
- d. Fire alarm and fire suppression systems;
- e. Emergency evacuation procedures; and
- f. Critical incident response procedures.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 627-637.

8.6 - Emergency Management Planning

Standard: The agency shall be aware of emergency operations planning within their jurisdiction and its role in emergency management systems. Roles may vary depending on the scope of services provided by the agency and the location of its facilities. Recreation agencies, having roles in emergency management systems within their local jurisdiction, shall be aware of the applicable operations plan. The agency's specialized staff, buildings and equipment may be integral to the plan and may be deployed in the event of a large-scale emergency. The U. S. Office of Homeland Security provides guidance and support for the preparation and maintenance of emergency management plans.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the applicable emergency management plan with the most recent date of approval. If, due to security concerns, the emergency management plan is not available for public review, provide the emergency management plan table of contents.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 634-637.

8.6.1 - In-Service Training for Staff on General Security and Emergency Management

Standard: Through in-service training, agency personnel shall understand their role in ongoing security and emergency management. In-service training should inform staff of their role in response to critical incidents and emergencies and provide specific procedures for routine operations.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation of in-service training programs on general security and emergency management, including a dated outline of the presentation topics and a roster of participants.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, p. 636.

8.6.2 - Emergency Risk Communications Plan

Standard: There shall be a communications plan that is reviewed and updated periodically, to accurately and effectively communicate with the public and experts during a catastrophic event that attracts significant media attention, such as a health emergency, terrorist attack, earthquake or storm. The crisis communication plan shall delineate individuals responsible for communicating with the press, chain of command on notifying proper people of the incident and communicating status updates.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a copy of the Emergency Risk Communications Plan and the most recent review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 634-637.

8.6.3 - Care and Shelter Procedures

Standard: There shall be procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter to those in need during disasters or emergencies.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter during emergencies.

9.0 - Risk Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

A comprehensive risk management plan is essential to minimize legal liabilities and personal injuries. The agency shall implement approaches for identification and control of risks based on the specific needs of the agency. There is no prescriptive method for identification of all risks suitable for all entities; the method and tools used will vary. Risk management is an on-going process that must be systematically evaluated for effectiveness and adjustments made as appropriate. Responsibilities must be assigned and structure set in place to implement an effective plan. The analysis shall include the direct costs (staffing, insurance, prevention) and indirect costs (time lost from work by injured employees, damage to equipment and facilities, failure to provide services and loss of income).

In some cases, the risk management plan and function may occur outside the park and recreation agency by another government authority. Special cooperative arrangements should be in place with other public departments and agencies, private contractors, and community organizations.

9.1 - Risk Management Policy

Standard: The agency shall have a policy for risk management that sets direction and gives appropriate authority for implementing operational practices and procedures that is approved by the proper authority.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the risk management policy including indication of approval by the proper authority.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 579-598.

9.1.1 - Risk Management Plan and Procedures ★

Standard: The agency shall have an established risk management plan and operating procedures that are reviewed periodically, accessible to all agency personnel and approved by the proper authority that encompasses analysis of risk exposure, control approaches and financial and operational impact for the agency. The plan shall analyze the programs/services offered and facilities/areas managed for personal injury and financial loss potential and identify approaches to manage such injury, loss, and business and operational impact.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current risk management plan with approval by the proper authority, the most recent review, and indication of how the plan and procedures are available to staff. The risk management plan shall reflect all three phases of risk management:

- a. Identification and assessment;
- b. Response strategies; and
- c. Management planning.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 583-596.

9.1.2 - Accident and Incident Report Procedures

Standard: There shall be established procedures for accident and incident reporting and analysis of accident and incident reports. There shall be an accident/incident report form available to all employees. Data shall be obtained in an appropriate manner to support planned and coordinated accident prevention programs within the agency.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the accident/incident form(s) and the procedures for documenting and analyzing accidents and incidents. The accident/incident form(s) shall include identification information (who), specific location of accident (where), and description of accident in terms of sequence of activity (what).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 583-589.

9.1.3 - Personnel Involvement and Training

Standard: The agency risk management function shall involve and train personnel at all levels on risk management procedures.

Suggested Evidences of Compliance: Demonstrate how personnel at all levels are involved and trained regarding risk management.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 594-596.

9.2 - Risk Manager

Standard: A specific position within the agency shall be designated with risk management responsibility and authority to carry out the policies established for risk management.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position description that includes responsibility for risk management.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 582-583.

9.3 - ADA Compliance and Face-to-Face Resolution

Standard: There shall be a policy or procedure available to all members of the public and staff which address issues pertaining to ADA compliance, either in a written or electronic format.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a written policy or procedure available to the public and staff that outlines the steps to resolve questions, concerns, or complaints of accessibility along with a reasonable timeline for completion and have a process for face-to-face meetings is in place.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 Physical Resource Management, p. 253; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, p. 287; Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, p. 400; Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 584-588.

10.0 - Evaluation, Assessment, and Research

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Evaluation and research are systematic processes that park and recreation professionals use to better understand the impacts of their efforts on the communities they serve. What is learned through evaluation and research is used to demonstrate the value of what is provided and to learn how to make improvements. Analyses of reliable data and qualitative information are essential to track progress in implementing master plans and strategic initiatives. Products of evaluation, measurement, and research become important components to support planning, development and programming decisions.

Benchmarking is the process of making comparisons to the processes, programs, and services of other providers. Comparisons are most frequently made to other park and recreation agencies, but benchmarking can be done also with business and non-profit organizations. The National Recreation and Park association developed PRORAGIS, which is a tool to capture uniform data on park and recreation agencies across the nation. PRORAGIS is the only national benchmarking tool for the park and recreation profession. As such, it can be successful as a reliable research tool only with broad participation from park and recreation agencies.

10.1 - Systematic Evaluation Processes ★

Standard: The agency shall have systematic processes for evaluating programs, facilities and services and operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe what is evaluated and the methods and frequency of evaluation of programs facilities and services. Evaluation is the process of determining the effectiveness of current practice and procedures.

Informational reference in the [Management of Park and Recreation Agencies](#), (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, pp. 641-647.

10.1.1 - Responsibility for Evaluation

Standard: The agency shall assign specific responsibility for managing elements of the evaluation program, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide job descriptions for the person(s) (staff or consultants) responsible for supporting and monitoring evaluation processes, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis. If consultant services are used, provide the current contracts or service agreements. The documentation should also include the resumes of persons providing the service, including experience and training.

Informational reference in the [Management of Park and Recreation Agencies](#), (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p 644.

10.1.2 - Staff Training on how to Evaluate Programs, Services, and Facilities

Standard: The agency shall provide training on how to evaluate programs, services and facilities for personnel involved in managing facilities and delivering programs and services.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of recent evaluation trainings completed by the agency, including curriculum content, training dates and participant lists. Examples of training subjects could include but are not limited to qualitative and quantitative measurement, identification of applicable evaluation tools, data analysis and use of findings.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 644.

10.2 - Outcomes Assessment

Standard: The agency shall use evaluation results to assess the outcomes of park and recreation programs, services, and facilities and assess the operational effectiveness of the organization. Outcomes show the relationship between resource inputs and the resulting impacts and benefits of the outputs. Outcomes are measurable changes in behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, conditions or skills.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how evaluation results are used to determine levels of performance and effectiveness in the organization and how evaluation are used to determine if specific programs, services or facilities are achieving planned or projected results.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, p. 151; Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 167-171; Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 642.

10.3 - Performance Measurement

Standard: The agency shall have a procedure for tracking and monitoring data trends and measuring performance against targets linked to achievement of goals and objectives.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide performance targets and measurement in use by the agency. Describe the process and frequency of performance measurement and cite examples for how the results have been used by the agency to affect decisions. The measures may include data gathered from the following qualitative and quantitative sources:

- a. Recreation and demographic trends;
- b. Needs assessment;
- c. Community inventory;
- d. Surveys;
- e. Program and service statistics;
- f. Inspections;
- g. Customer feedback;
- h. Program evaluation;
- i. Risk management reports; and
- j. Budget and financial reports.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 222-224; Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 656.

10.3.1 - Level of Service Standards

Standard: The agency shall have level of service (LOS) standards for provision of land, facilities and services within the jurisdiction. LOS standards are a type of performance measure associated with equitable provision service, such as the number of facilities per 1,000 residents in a service area or facilities available within a designated travel distance or travel time, e.g. percent of population that have a park within a 10 minute walk. LOS standard can also address other dimensions of equitable access, such as connectivity, maintenance and affordability, e.g. percent of parkland connected to the trail network.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the LOS standards and describe how LOS standards are used to establish facility and service priorities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 223-224.

10.4 - Needs Assessment

Standard: The agency shall periodically conduct an assessment of assets and needs to identify existing and projected gaps in service and determine land, facility and service priorities. Need assessments are used to help determine priorities for developing services with the agency. Needs assessments can use a variety of methods to obtain input from the community, including focus groups, advisory boards, forums, and surveys.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current needs assessment, describe the procedural steps in conducting the assessment, describe the frequency of updates, and describe the use of the assessment in agency planning.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 - Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 107; Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 133-134; Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, p. 228.

10.5 - Program and Service Statistics

Standard: The agency shall collect and analyze statistics on its programs and services for evaluation and future program and service development.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of statistics collected, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of the information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 226-227; Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 370-372; Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, pp. 660-663.

10.5.1 - Recreation and Leisure Trends Analysis

Standard: The agency shall assess periodically societal and local recreation and leisure trends and determine how those trends impact existing and projected user populations.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide trends analysis, describe frequency of updates, and describe linkage to agency goals and objectives.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 644.

10.5.2 - Community Inventory

Standard: The agency shall compile a complete and current inventory of parkland and recreation facilities, programs and services in the service area, including those provided by the agency and those offered by schools and other alternative public, private, non-profit providers.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a complete and current inventory of parkland, programs and services available in the community, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of this information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 129-130.

10.5.3 - PRORAGIS

Standard: The agency shall create a profile in the national PRORAGIS database that includes, at a minimum, completion of “Agency Summary” and “General Park Sites” forms.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a copy of the agency Custom Report from the PRORAGIS database.

10.6 - Research Investigation

Standard: The agency shall conduct at least one experimental exploration or research investigation each year related to park and recreation operations. These are demonstration or pilot projects where performance data are collected before and after the test to determine effectiveness.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a report on a current or recent experimental or demonstration research project designed to improve a product or to test a new process or procedure, including methods used and research findings; provide brief descriptions of other research investigations undertaken over the past five (5) years.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, pp. 658-659.

10.6.1 - Quality Assurance

Standard: The agency shall monitor and evaluate the quality of its programs, services and facilities from the user perspective. Examples include but are not limited to customer comment cards, secret/mystery shopper surveys, user satisfaction surveys, program evaluations and focus groups.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide recent examples of methods used to collect, monitor and evaluate quality assurance data from users.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 370-372.