INDY PARKS & RECREATION

Comprehensive Master Plan

December 2016

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the many citizens, staff and community groups who provided extensive community input for the development of this Indy Parks Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan. The efforts of the community through this plan will continue to ensure the success of Indy Parks.

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Project Staff

Linda Broadfoot-Director

Don Colvin

Andre Denman

Julee Jacob

Elaine Dillahunt

Angela Clark

Indy Parks Board

Josh Bowling

Kristen Schunk Moreland

Andrea Scott

Joseph L. B. Wynns

Consulting Team

PROS Consulting

Grand Slam

MKSK

Gardner Consulting

ETC Institute

Shrewsberry & Associates

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 1

1.1 INDY PARKS “BY THE NUMBERS” 1

1.2 INTRODUCTION 4

1.3 PROJECT PROCESS & PURPOSE 4

1.4 CURRENT PARKS MAP & DEFINITION OF PLANNING AREA 6

1.5 PARK BOARD / DEPARTMENT INFORMATION 8

1.6 PURPOSE, VISION, MISSION, AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES 10

1.7 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS 11

1.8 CONCLUSION 15

1.9 ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS 16

CHAPTER TWO- COMMUNITY INPUT 20

2.1 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY 20

2.2 FOCUS GROUP AND KEY STAKEHOLDER SUMMARY 22

2.3 PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY 29

2.4 STATISTICALLY-VALID NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY 53

2.5 ELECTRONIC SURVEY 70

CHAPTER THREE- COMMUNITY PROFILE 82

3.1 NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPE 82

3.2 CULTURAL LEGACY 95

3.3 CURRENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AT SPECIFIC PARKS 105

3.4 INDY PARKS PARTNERSHIPS TO CONSIDER IN THE FUTURE 106

3.5 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS 106

3.6 TRENDS ANALYSIS 113

3.7 PLANNING CONTEXT 122

3.8 ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN 123

3.9 ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE SHEET 125

3.10 BENCHMARK ANALYSIS 126

CHAPTER FOUR- PARKS, FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE & PROGRAM NEEDS ANALYSIS 132

4.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY ASSESSMENTS 132

4.2 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS AND LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS 150

4.3 SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS/EQUITY MAPPING 167

4.4 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT 186

4.5 PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS 199

4.6 PRIORITY RANKINGS 217

4.7 PRIORITY RANKINGS BY TOWNSHIP 220

CHAPTER FIVE- OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL STRATEGIES 223
5.1 ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT 223
5.2 PROPOSED FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE 227
5.3 FINANCIAL PLAN 229
5.4 PARTNERSHIP POLICY 231
CHAPTER SIX- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND FUNDING PLAN 235
6.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 235
6.2 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES 241
6.3 FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES 244
CHAPTER SEVEN- IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 255
7.1 VISION STATEMENT 255
7.2 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS 256
CHAPTER EIGHT- CONCLUSION 264

APPENDICES (UNDER SEPARATE COVER):

Appendix 1 – Strategic Action Implementation Plan

Appendix 2 – Public Input

Appendix 3 – Statistically Valid Survey

Appendix 4 – Park Assessments

Appendix 5 – Township Demographic Analysis

CHAPTER ONE
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INDY PARKS "BY THE NUMBERS"

This Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan was developed to provide a vision for how Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department (Indy Parks) manages the needs and resources of residents for the next five to ten years. The Comprehensive Master Plan will inform residents where Indy Parks is currently positioned and what the future can hold for parks, public spaces, trails, recreation facilities, and programs in this great city.

Every great city looks to a great park system as a catalyst to the quality of life for the residents and to attract residents and visitors. The park system that Indianapolis residents desire encompasses the entire public domain. This master plan illustrates all the positive elements of the park and recreation system and clarifies areas that need to be addressed to help make Indianapolis an even greater city for all of its residents. For this to occur, the park system needs to be observed as a quality of life and economic tool. Much needs to be done to achieve this vision.

To begin the process of the Indy Parks Master Plan, it is important that the community understand its park system.

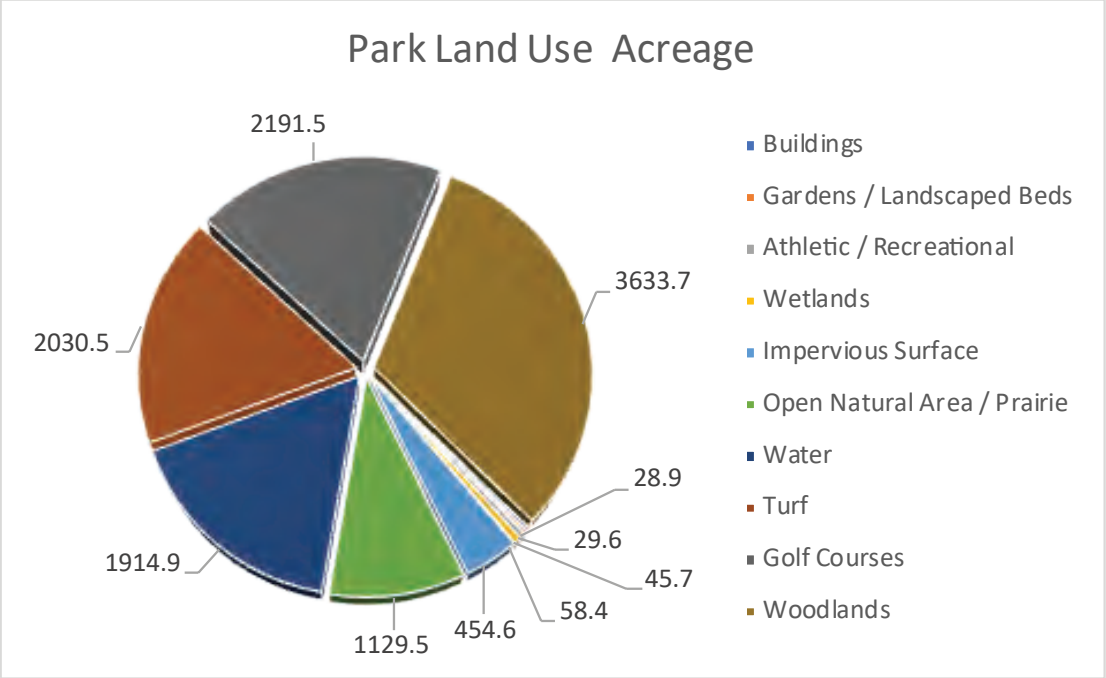
The following information illustrates what Indy Parks is responsible for managing. This data provides insight to the park system amenities offered to the residents in the community.

- Garfield Park, Indianapolis' first park, acquired in 1873
- Indy Parks manages 11,254 acres of park property
- Eagle Creek, Indy Parks' largest park at 4,279 acres, acquired in 1962
- $198 million in assets, less land and amenities valued at $100,000 or less
- 125 full time staff that manage 210 park properties
- Indy Parks amenities include:
  - 23 recreation centers and nature centers
  - 563,548 square feet of built space
  - 15 outdoor pools
  - 13 public golf courses
  - 125 playgrounds
  - 22 free public spray grounds
  - 87 youth ball fields
  - 68 soccer, football and cricket fields
  - 135 miles of trails
  - 96 basketball courts
- Operating Budget (2014 actual): $23,730,503
- Per capita operational spending: $25.93
- Capital spending (2015 budget): $3,452,080
- Operational cost recovery as part of the Operating Budget: 23.59%
- Percent of the population within walking distance (1/2) mile: 32%

1.1.1 PARK LAND USE ACREAGE

The following table outlines the park land use by type and associated acreage in Indy Parks.

CATEGORY	ACRES
Buildings	28.9
Gardens / Landscaped Beds	29.6
Athletic / Recreational	45.7
Wetlands	58.4
Impervious Surface	454.6
Open Natural Area / Prairie	1129.5
Water	1914.9
Turf	2030.5
Golf Courses	1928.7
Woodlands	3633.7
GRAND TOTAL	**11,254.5**



1.2 INTRODUCTION

Beginning in early 2015, Indy Parks began the process of updating the previously adopted 2009 Indianapolis-Marion County Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. Many changes have occurred over the last seven years in the City of Indianapolis and in Marion County. Demographic growth of the region continues to enhance the need for more open space and for the protection of natural resources, which includes the need for quality parks, recreation facilities, and program services. In an effort to remain ahead of development, Indy Parks chose to create a Comprehensive Master Plan to address the expressed needs of residents for the next five to ten years. The goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan include:

- Engage the community, leadership, and stakeholders in meaningful and innovative public input to build a shared vision for parks and recreation that supports the economic and community goals for the City of Indianapolis
- Utilize a wide variety of data sources and best practices including a statistically-valid survey to forecast trends and patterns of use and how to address unmet needs in the city
- Determine unique Level of Service Standards for the city to project appropriate actions regarding services, open space, connectivity, infrastructure, and programs that continue to rebuild and sustain Indy in the future
- Shape financial and operational preparedness through innovation and "next" practices in revenue generation to achieve the strategic objectives, recommended actions, and implementation strategies outlined in the plan
- Develop a dynamic and realistic action plan that can ensure long-term success and financial sustainability for the city's parks and recreation system

As with any quality comprehensive planning process, the community was highly involved in the development of the master plan through focus groups, stakeholder meetings, intercept surveys, public meetings, a crowd-sourcing public website, online survey, and a statistically-valid citizen household survey. These strategies were used to prioritize and identify the issues that needed to be addressed in the master plan and to support the key recommendations that need to be implemented over the next five years. The master plan is a living document with many moving elements that must be achieved simultaneously.

In an effort to continue to keep citizens involved beyond this Master Plan process it is suggested that Indy Parks leadership and the mayor's office convene on an annual basis a "Great Park Summit". The summit would include key corporate leaders, foundations and partners. The intent would be to address shortfalls of the park system and to embrace a new vision – a vision that parks are an economic tool worth long lasting investments, and to raise the bar on expectations and funding. These commitments will demonstrate to residents, and newcomers, the value of living in Indianapolis through the development of a great park system. The resulting practice will demonstrate that great parks are the foundation of great cities.

1.3 PROJECT PROCESS & PURPOSE

The foundation of the Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan included many public participation processes. It was very important to engage people who are always participating in the planning process and to encourage involvement from others who typically do not participate. The outcomes, as outlined in this plan, provide guidance for short-term and long-term goals in a financially sustainable and achievable manner. The plan represents Marion County's renewed commitment to providing a quality park and recreation system. The process of developing the Comprehensive Master Plan followed a logical planning path, as described below.

This document is not intended to be an end product. The plan is rather a means to guide the provision of parks and recreation and to advance the overall mission and vision of Indy Parks. The goal is to guide the delivery of excellent parks, trails, public facilities, activities, programs, and services that will contribute to community prosperity and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to Indianapolis.

The purpose of this plan is three fold. First, it puts into place a systematic inventory, analysis, and assessment of the park system that helps address unmet needs, now and in the future. Second, the master plan will determine the context and provision of needs for park and recreation facilities and programs city wide. Third, it will specifically measure the effectiveness of programs and services, as well as park amenities system wide for years to come. Ultimately, this work will guide Indy Parks in an appropriate direction for current and future programs and services, and provide specific means to meet the vision and mission. This study is essentially a process of determining: "Where are we, where do we want to be, and how do we get there?"

As part of the master plan update, public involvement was conducted to vet, or refine, community values and issues leading Indy Parks' vision. The PROS Consulting Team utilized its Community Values Model™ as the foundation of the study. The Community Values Model™ is an innovative approach used to gather comprehensive public input and insight. Insight is gained from extensive discussions with key community leaders, stakeholders, the general public, and users of the system. The results of this research help to define the overall guiding principles and values of the community that are related to the delivery of parks, recreation facilities, and program services.

The Community Values Model™ is used as the basis for developing, or reaffirming the vision, mission, and community values' strategic objectives. The strategic objectives address six unique areas of parks and recreation planning that include:

Community / Mandates Priorities	Standards	Levels of Services	Financial / Revenue	Partnerships	Governance / Organization
Safety & Health / Wellness	Land and Open Space	Levels of Service Delivery	Funding Mechanisms to Support Operations & Capital	Public / Public	Design / Align Organization to Support Vision and Values to Community
Principles of Community	Facilities	Core Services		Public / Not-for-Profit	
Mandatory Elements for Facilities, Programs & Services	Programs	Role in Delivery vs. Other Service Providers		Public / Private	
	Maintenance				

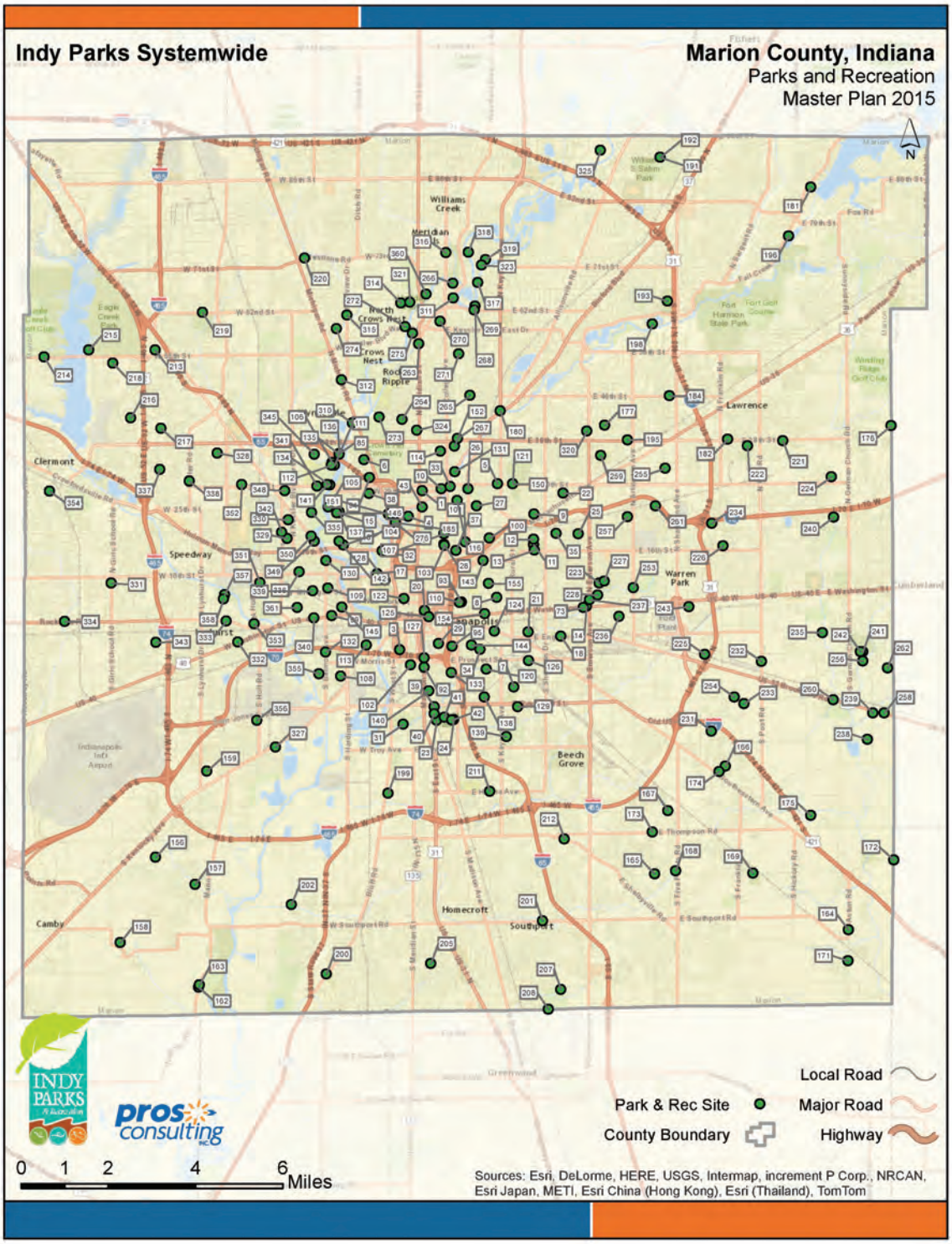
The utilization of this model provides Indy Parks a roadmap and clear direction to develop a park and recreation system that will lead the community into the future.

The values that developed from the Community Values Process are as follows:

- "Health and safety"
- "Equity"
- "Access"
- "Connectivity"
- "Sustainability"
- "Beauty"
- "Multiple Benefits"
- "Quality Maintenance"
- "Inspirational Experiences"
- "Updated Infrastructure"

1.4 CURRENT PARKS MAP & DEFINITION OF PLANNING AREA

The planning area for the master plan includes all areas within the boundaries of Marion County. While this plan recognizes that the actual service areas of some Indy Parks' facilities, parks, and programs may extend beyond the defined boundaries of the planning area, the primary purpose of this plan is to, first and foremost, identify and address the park and recreation needs of Indianapolis residents. The Indy Parks map depicts the planning area and location of Indy Park sites, as well as other municipal facilities within Marion County.



Number Key for Systemwide Maps

Map #	Site Name	Map #	Site Name	Map #	Site Name
1	Al E. Polin Park	136	Riverside Golf Course	237	Kin Hubbard Memorial
3	Babe Denny Park	137	Riverside Park	238	Kitley & Troy Park
4	Barton Park	138	Sandorf Park	239	Kitley Woods
5	Beckwith Memorial Park	139	Sarah Shank Golf Course	240	Lappin Way
6	Bertha Ross Park	140	Sexson Park	241	Paul Ruster Dog Park
7	Bethel Park	141	Soap Box Derby Hill	242	Paul Ruster Park
8	Beville Park	142	South Grove Golf Course	243	Pennsy Trail
9	Brightwood Park	143	Spades Park	253	Pleasant Run Golf Course
10	Broadway & 29th Park	144	Stacy Park	254	Raymond Park
11	Brookside Family Center	145	Stringtown Park	255	Shadeland Maintenance Facility
12	Brookside Memorial Grove	146	Taggert Memorial	256	Stable Chase Nature Sanctuary
13	Brookside Park	150	Washington Park	257	Virginia Lee O'Brien Park
14	Brown's Corner	151	Watkins Park	258	Warren Township Little League
15	Burdsal Parkway Esplinades	152	Watson Road Bird Preserve	259	Wes Montgomery Park
17	Cancer Survivors Park	154	Willard Park	260	Whispering Hills Golf Course
18	Christian Park	155	Woodruff Place Esplinades	261	Windsor Village Park
20	City Market Plaza	156	Carson Park	262	Wright's Fields
21	Clayton & LaSalle Park	157	Dollar Hide Creek Park	263	Alice Carter Place
22	Colorado & 29th Park	158	Griffin Woods	264	Andrew Ramsey Park
23	Confederate POW Memorial	159	Seerley Creek Park	265	Arsenal Park
24	Conservatory & Sunken Gardens	162	Southwestway Park	266	Art's Center Canoe Launch
25	DeQuincy Park	163	Winding River Golf Course	267	Boulevard Station
26	Douglass Golf Course	164	Acton Park	268	Broad Ripple Dog Park
27	Douglass Park	165	Basswood Park	269	Broad Ripple Park
28	Dr Martin Luther King Jr Park	166	Century Park	270	Dan Wakefield Park
29	Edna Balz Lacy Park	167	Copper Grove	271	Canterbury Park
31	Emhardt Park	168	Five Points & Edgewood Park	272	Crows Nest Entrance
32	Graham E Martin Park	169	Franklin Township Community Park	273	Elwood & Mary Black Park
33	Fall Creek & 30th Park	171	Retherford Park	274	Fox Hill Manor
34	Finch Park	172	Southeastway Park	275	Friedman Park
35	Forest Manor Park	173	Thompson Park	276	Greenway - Fall Creek
37	Frank and Judy O'Bannon Soccer Fld.	174	Wildwood Park	310	Greenway - White River
38	Frank Young Park	175	Wolf Run Park	311	Greenways Depot
39	Garfield Memorial Grove	176	Carroll Road & 42nd Street Park	312	Highwoods Park
40	Garfield Pagoda	177	Doris Cowherd Park	314	Holliday Park
41	Garfield Park	180	Fall Creek Pkwy Preserve	315	Juan Solomon Park
42	General Lawton Monument	181	Fall Creek Trail at Geist Dam	316	Marott Park
43	George E. Kessler Park	182	Franklin & 38th Park	317	North Broad Ripple Park
48	Greenway - Fall Creek	184	Gardner Park	318	Ravenswood Overlook Park
73	Greenway - Pleasant Run	185	Greenway - Fall Creek	319	Riverwood Park
85	Greenway - White River	191	Sahm Golf Course	320	Roselawn Park
92	Hendricks Park	192	Sahm Park	321	Ruins at Holliday Park
93	Highland Park	193	Skiles Test Nature Park	323	Stamm Park
94	Highway Parcel #15	195	Talley Park	324	Tarkington Park
95	Hot Shot Tot Lot	196	Upper Fall Creek Loop Trail	325	Town Run Trail Park - Mtn Biking
99	Indianola Park	198	Woolens Gardens	327	Bel Aire Park
100	John Ed Park	199	Bluff Park	328	Bowman Park
101	JTV Hill Park	200	Glenns Valley Nature Park	329	Centennial & 20th Park
102	Kelly Park	201	Gray Park	330	Centennial & Groff Park
103	Kennedy-King Park Center	202	Greenway - Little Buck Creek	331	Chapel Hill Park
104	Kuntz Soccer & Sports Complex	205	Perry Park	332	Christina Oaks Park
105	Lake Indy - Boating	207	Smock Dog Park	333	Chuck Klein Sports Complex
106	Lake Sullivan	208	Smock Golf Course	334	Cloverleaf Conservation Area
107	Landmark for Peace Memorial	211	Southside Park	335	Coffin Golf Course
108	LaShonna Bates Indoor Aquatics Ctr	212	Tolin-Akeman Park	336	Denver Park
109	Lentz Park	213	Eagle Creek Dog Park	337	Faculty Park
110	Little Valley Park	214	Eagle Creek Golf Course	338	Gustafson Park
111	Major Taylor-BMX Track	215	Eagle Creek Park	339	Haughville Park
112	Major Taylor-Skate Park	216	Eagle Highlands Neighborhood P	340	Hawthorne Park
113	McCarty Triangle Park	217	Gateway West Park	341	Iron Skillet - Restaurant
114	McCord Park	218	Mayor's Garden	342	James Foster Gaines Park
116	Monon Acres Park	219	Northwestway Park	343	Krannert Park
120	Orange Park	220	WISH Park	345	Major Taylor Sports Complex
121	Oscar Charleston Park	221	Bellamy Park	348	Moreland Park
122	Peace Park	222	Dubarry Park	349	Municipal Gardens
124	Porter Playfield	223	Ellenberger Park	350	Municipal Gardens Memorial Grove
125	Presidential Place	224	Grassy Creek Regional Park	351	Olin Park
126	Pride Park	225	Grassy Creek Wood Conservation Are	352	Patricia Park
127	Ranger Station at Nobel Place	226	Greene Park	353	Ridenour Park
128	Ransom Place	227	Greenway - Ellenberger	354	Robey Park
129	Red Maple	228	Greenway - Pleasant Run	355	Ross Claypool Park
130	Rev Mozel Sanders Park	231	Hanover North Park	356	Stout Field Park
131	Rev. Charles R. Williams Park	232	Indianapolis World Sports Park	357	Thatcher Golf Course
132	Rhodius Park	233	Indy Island Indoor Aquatics Ctr	358	Thatcher Park
133	Ringgold Park	234	Indy Urban Acres Park	360	Blickman Trail
134	Riverside - Marina	235	Iron Gate Conservation Area	361	Central Green
135	Riverside Golf Academy	236	Irvington Circle		

1.5 PARK BOARD / DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

1.5.1 CURRENT INDY PARKS ORGANIZATION AND BUDGET

Indy Parks provides parks, greenways, recreation facilities and programmed experiences throughout the City of Indianapolis and Marion County, Indiana. Indy Parks enforces city ordinances and state laws pertaining to parks and recreation facilities. It has the authority to levy general property taxes to acquire, operate and maintain park and recreation facilities and it also has the power to issue General Obligation Bonds for the same purpose. The Indy Parks budget is reviewed and approved by the Mayor and the City County Council. A five-member board, administered by the Director, oversees Departmental policies, reviews the annual budget and approves all contracts. The Board of Parks and Recreation consists of the Director of the Department who is appointed by the Mayor, two members appointed by the Mayor and two members appointed by the City County Council. The Indy Parks Director serves as the Chair of the Board. The four members serve renewable one year terms.

1.5.2 INDY PARKS ORGANIZATION

The Indy Parks organizational structure has changed since the last Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2009, primarily due to decreases in budget and staffing levels. Over the last six years Indy Parks has lost over 24 Full Time positions. Many areas of responsibility have been combined so that the responsibilities remain the same, but have been reassigned to create efficiencies. Prior to 2009, the Park Rangers were moved to the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department. The most significant recent changes have occurred within the areas of Park Maintenance and Resource Development. In an effort to increase efficiencies, Park Maintenance has been moved to the Department of Public Works- Operations Division. Resource Development is now part of the Department of Public Works- Engineering Division. The current organizational functions within Indy Parks are as follows:

- **Administration/Finance**- Budget Administration, Revenue Facilities, Human Resources, Payroll, Contract Administration, Auditing, Special Facilities, Lease Management, Golf Contract Management
- **Communications**- Public Information, Website Management, Customer Service, Community Outreach, Community Relations
- **Operations**- Center South Region, Center North Region, North Region, Southwest Region, Southeast Region (includes Facility Management, Sports, Environmental Education, Arts), Aquatics, Camps and Programs, Training and Risk Management

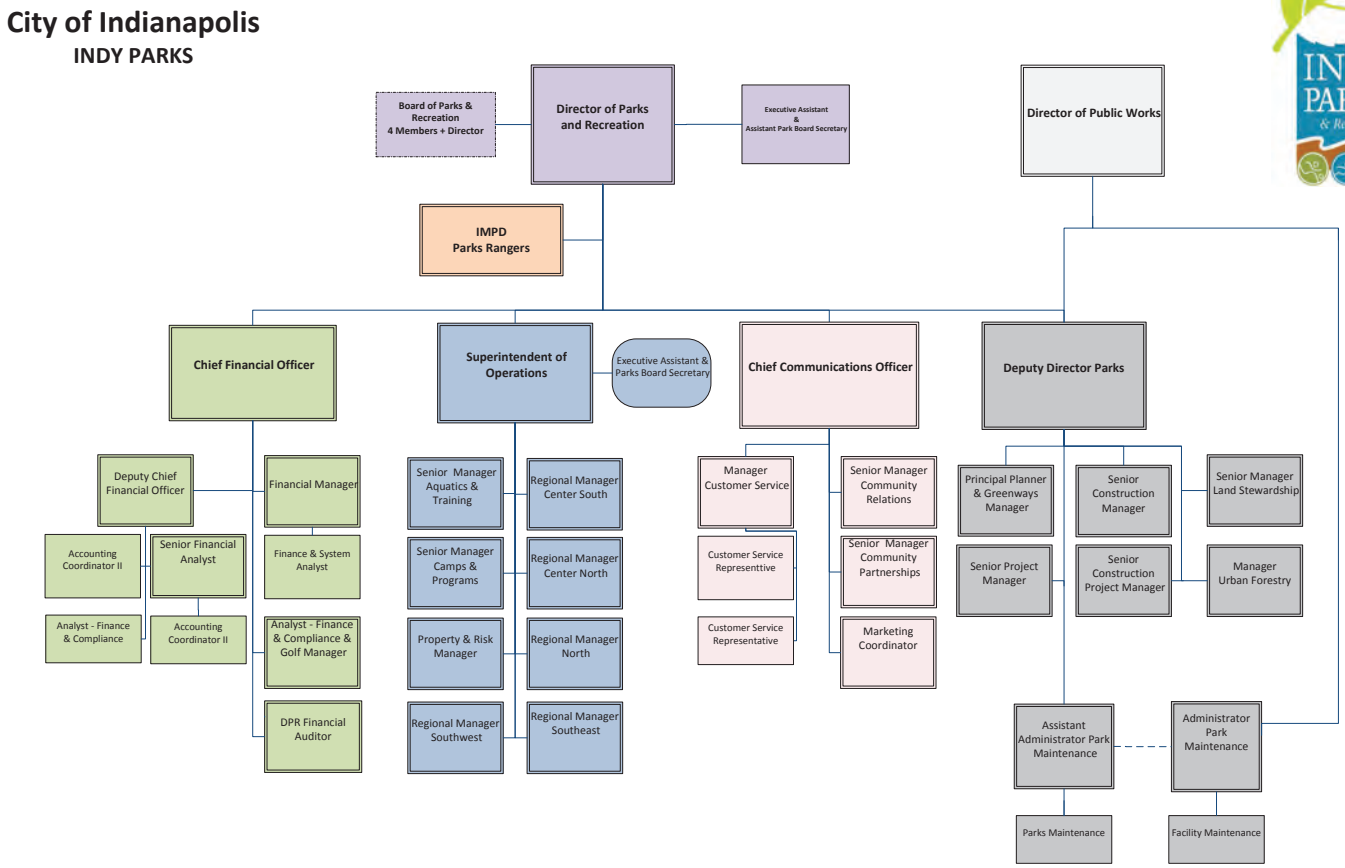
The results of these realignments have been mixed. Some of the positives include the ability of the Department of Public Works to fund work within the park system beyond what is available within the Indy Parks capital budget. Having a combined workforce allows for employees to be fully utilized during all times of the year with no seasonal down times. Also, having the planning staff working closely with DPW Engineering has provided additional staff resources for management of park projects and the benefit of closer collaboration on project planning.

The challenges have been effective communication between departments and communication with the general public-many do not have a clear idea of who is responsible for what. Establishing priorities within a limited budget is always a challenge, especially when dealing with maintenance requests and unforeseen events. There is also a perception that the level of maintenance has been negatively affected. But, it is a reality that in all areas of Indy Parks there are fewer staff doing more work with fewer resources. Closing facilities has, so far, been avoided by finding efficiencies. Having fewer staff available in facilities translates to limited facility operational hours, less building coverage and fewer program offerings. Inadequate resources for maintenance dictate a lowering of expectations. A critical component of this plan must be finding new revenue sources to offset budgetary restrictions, developing new partnerships that provide support to the Indy Parks mission and expanding the role of volunteers for service projects.

In order to address the maintenance issues, Indy Parks and DPW have agreed to share the position of Deputy Director of Parks. This position will administer Park Planning, Park Capital Improvements, Land Stewardship, Forestry and Beautification, Greenways/ Trails and Park Maintenance. A new position, Administrator of Park Maintenance, has been created, which will now report to the Deputy Director of Parks. This change in management should address communication and prioritization issues. In order to fully address the level of maintenance it is recommended that current practices be analyzed to determine what level of service is provided with existing resources, what level of service is desired for the future and what will be required to get to that level. New assets that are brought on line should have costs to operate and maintain identified up front and, when using private funding sources; establishment of maintenance endowments should be explored.

For the first time since Park Maintenance and Resource Development was transferred to DPW, the 2017 budget will now show the expenses for Park Maintenance and Resource Development/ Capital Improvements in the Indy Parks budget. These expenses will be shown as a chargeback to DPW from Indy Parks for services rendered. Additionally, the two Departments have agreed to finalize a mutually acceptable Memorandum of Understanding which outlines the responsibilities of each Department as it relates to Maintenance and Capital Improvements.

The current Indy Parks organizational structure is detailed below:



1.6 PURPOSE, VISION, MISSION, AND ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

1.6.1 VISION STATEMENT

The following vision presents how Indy Parks desires to be viewed in the future:

"With over a century of history advancing the value of parks, Indy Parks is committed to protecting and enhancing the community's assets for the future. We will be a leader in making Indianapolis a vibrant, happy, and healthy place to live. By providing premier greenspaces and recreation opportunities, we will connect all residents to nature, to the community, and to themselves. Our work is vital to contributing to the economic, social, and environmental health of our city."

1.6.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The following is the mission for how Indy Parks will implement the vision:

"We connect communities by providing places and experiences that inspire healthy living, social engagement, and a love of nature."

1.6.3 TAG LINE

Creating places and experiences that inspire.

1.6.4 ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

The organizational values that Indy Parks incorporates into its daily operations include the following:

- Fun…we love what we do, the people we serve, and we enjoy doing it
- Inclusion…we respect each other and those we serve
- Collaboration…we work together as an organization and with the community
- Sustainability…we create the capacity to endure and thrive
- Innovation…we are creative and challenge the status quo in every segment of our work

1.6.5 GOALS, STRATEGIES, INITIATIVES AND TACTICS, AND MEASUREMENTS

- Goals: confirm the vision and mission.
- Recommendations: indicate how the goal will be accomplished.
- Initiatives and Tactics: demonstrate what process will be used to fulfill the recommendations and measurements tell the team what is expected, why it is important, who is involved, when it is to occur, and which attributes are important.

1.7 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1.7.1 COMMUNITY VISION FOR PARKS

"Our vision is to ensure adequate parkland, facilities, and programs are available in all townships by meeting recommended levels of service standards."

GOAL:

Seek to achieve a minimum land acquisition goal of 12 acres per 1,000 residents in each township.

STRATEGIES:

- Where possible, explore use of impact ordinance in underserved areas
- Complete the Greenways Plan by 2024 with a completion goal of 18 miles/year
- Make neighborhood park enhancements to support revitalization and livability with 10 neighborhood parks updated annually
- Create 10 signature parks through multiple funding sources to demonstrate the value of parks and ensure that all age groups are represented in the park with appropriate levels of amenities
- Seek a 70%-30% balance of use for all park land. 70% allowed for development and 30% allowed to not be developed and left as undeveloped open space
- Finish one (1) site specific park master plan, annually, so the park can achieve the desired participation levels desired, cost recovery, and economic value to the community or neighborhood
- Eliminate underutilized amenities in the system and introduce exciting amenities that will energize and inspire the community surrounding the park and create a stronger sense of place
- Customize facilities and park-related programs to the demographics of the people served

1.7.2 COMMUNITY VISION FOR FACILITIES

"Our vision for facilities is to make them as inviting as possible to maximize their use and productivity for people of all ages."

GOAL:

Update three (3) key recreation facilities each year as it applies to recreation centers, pools or sports fields.

STRATEGIES:

- Evaluate capacity utilization for each community recreation facility and ways to maximize use through capital improvements
- Implement the Eagle Creek Park, Garfield Park and Sports Fields Business Plans, as outlined in the development of the Comprehensive Master Plan
- Program underutilized facilities through effective partnerships with the community surrounding the facility
- Develop new amenities that follow national trends for sports, outdoor adventure and education, community recreation facilities, and aquatic based facilities in the city
- Using the asset maintenance report developed for Indy Parks, determine what assets need to be updated that will support the future needs of the community
- Develop an amenity replacement schedule for playgrounds, sports lighting, restrooms, parking lots, sports courts, pools, shelters, and trails in the system

1.7.3 COMMUNITY VISION FOR PROGRAMMING

"Our vision for programming is to increase program participation from Indianapolis residents from 15% to 30% over 5 years by offering programs that target unmet community needs and activating parks and facilities."

GOAL:

Establish 10 core program areas to service the recreation needs of Indianapolis residents.

STRATEGIES:

- Establish a regional approach to achieve a level of service standard for recreation programs across all townships
- Develop new programs for active adults 55+ and older, expand adult sports, outdoor adventure, fitness and wellness, urban youth programs, family programs, and outdoor education programs
- Restore lost recreation programmers (14) and use these programmers for core program areas to activate spaces in parks and recreation facilities
- Promote interpretation and education of historic, cultural, and natural resources in parks
- Partner with Visit Indy to provide authentic experiences for residents and visitors alike
- Reprice program services based on cost of service and service classifications
- Create equitable program partnerships across the system

1.7.4 COMMUNITY VISION FOR OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

"Ensure that Indy Parks is actively connected with other city departments and initiatives, enhancing the notion of "One City", where all goals are collaboratively aligned."

GOAL:

Indy Parks and the Department of Public Works will work closely to enhance the quality of park maintenance in city park facilities to meet the community's expectations.

STRATEGIES:

- Institute demonstrated management practices and measure performance in park and recreation services based on NRPA Annual Field Report
- Seek support for a dedicated funding source to support operations and maintenance standards
- Develop maintenance standards and communicate their importance to maintenance staff
- Allow Indy Parks to keep the revenues earned though a non-reverting funds policy to support operational costs and raise the operational budget to manage the system to the level of service desired by the users of the system
- Develop earned income opportunities to support capital and operational needs
- Engage a goal to increase volunteer support to 15% of the entire organizational employee hours

1.7.5 COMMUNITY VISION FOR FINANCING

"Seek to create a per capita spending goal of at least $50 from the existing $26 to properly operate and maintain the system."

GOAL:

Work to develop creative financing options for the department using all available resources.

STRATEGIES:

- Seek to become 50% self-supporting with cost recovery goals for each core program area and recreation facility
- Enhance "friends" and volunteer groups for recreation facilities/parks programs, as well as create new "Friends of" groups throughout the city
- Explore the development of a Business Development GAPS office (grants, alliances, partnerships, and sponsorships) to create more earned income
- Develop stronger partnerships for signature facilities that are capable of raising more operational and capital dollars for the system, and ensure all partnership agreements incorporate mutual goals with measurable outcomes
- Collaboration with Indianapolis Parks Foundation to support incremental capital improvements and marketing needs of the department
- Maintain what the park system owns and invest in rebuilding the infrastructure while creating new parks and facilities in underserved areas of the city

1.7.6 COMMUNITY VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"Our vision for economic development is to create the entire park system as an economic tool through strong parks, outstanding facilities, and programs that make living in the city a decision people choose."

GOAL:

Demonstrate through an economic impact study that parks provide far greater economic impact than the money the city currently spends on the system.

STRATEGIES:

- Tie the parks system to Plan 2020 initiatives, Neighborhood Quality of Life Plans, Great Places 2020, Promise Zone, 16 Tech, etc.
- Track and communicate the economic value (housing and commercial) of parks and trails to the city on a yearly basis
- Tie parks, recreation facilities, and programs to health and wellness, food deserts, and public safety through appropriate design of parks, trails, and recreation facilities
- Partner with Indiana Sports Corp for future sports facility development to target more sports tourism through parks and recreation facilities in Marion County
- Create more trailside development (parks and amenities) to lift the property values and create an enhanced park experience using redevelopment funding

1.7.7 COMMUNITY VISION FOR MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

"Our vision for marketing and communications is to enhance the systems visibility and awareness to drive more use and revenue."

GOAL:

Increase citizen awareness of Indy Parks services to 80%+ using parks and 30%+ involved in park programs.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop an updated marketing and branding plan for the system
- Update existing website to a responsive design site and build a mobile app.
- Dedicate increased resources for marketing and communications staff – i.e. best practices are 3%- 4% of operational value nationwide
- Incorporate technology, analytics, and data-based decision making into marketing practices to maximize decisions on users of the system

1.8 CONCLUSION

Park and recreation services are essential when establishing and maintaining a healthy, livable city. Availability and accessibility to recreation opportunities and parks provide a host of positive benefits and outcomes. Critical to the future vitality of Indianapolis is a parks system that can provide recreational opportunities, inclusive of all users, that promote physical and mental well-being, provide immaculate settings that create memorable experiences, and unite citizens in a positive, supportive, and fun environment.

The Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan was developed to provide Indy Parks a roadmap for managing the future. This planning process incorporates a comprehensive series of analyses to understand the workings of Indy Parks and integrates a strong community engagement process to inform key recommendations.

The Comprehensive Master Plan includes a system-wide approach for accomplishing short and long-term goals, initiatives, and tactics to ensure Indy Parks continues to protect the region's park assets and provide quality services, programs, and facilities to the community for many years to come. Indy Parks has been an undervalued asset in Indianapolis in both awareness and funding. Not since the early 1970s has the system had the level of public investment in funding to meet a growing city that desires a strong neighborhood livability climate that can attract people of all ages to want to live in the city.

In order to meet the recommendations outlined in this plan, Indy Parks will serve as an enabler/facilitator for the development and/or provision of some parks and recreation services and as a direct provider for some services. Indy Parks must continue to incorporate effective partnerships in the development of trails and recreation facilities.

This master plan outlines a sustainable framework from which to operate. New funding opportunities are outlined to support operational costs if the administration will allow the park system to retain dollars earned. The park system has never had the opportunity to ask the taxpayers to invest in the system. Maybe the time is now.

If given the opportunity, Indy Parks can deliver on the recommendations in this master plan. Delivery of these recommendations require a total commitment by the city, community partners, and leaders, who have helped many other community-based institutions to grow and prosper by helping them to "right size" their organizations. Indy Parks needs all stakeholders of the system to support the operational and capital improvement recommendations outlined in this plan to move forward. Given the opportunity, Indy Parks is poised to capitalize and build upon its previous successes. For Indianapolis to continue to thrive, parks and public open spaces must be a part of an economic strategy to encourage people to want to live in the city. Great Parks are the foundation of Great Cities.

1.9 ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS

1.9.1 PARK BOARD

General Resolution No. 41, 2016

Board of Parks and Recreation

Consolidated City of Indianapolis

Be It Resolved That the Board Hereby Approves:

the adoption of the 2016 Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan. This plan reflects the Indy Parks vision for the future;

"With over a century of history advancing the value of parks, Indy Parks is committed to protecting and enhancing the community's assets for the future. We will be a leader in making Indianapolis a vibrant, happy, and healthy place to live. By providing premier greenspaces and recreation opportunities, we will connect all residents to nature, to the community, and to themselves. Our work is vital to contributing to the economic, social, and environmental health of our city."

This plan was developed with substantial public involvement and contains a Strategic Implementation Action Plan which outlines the ways we will implement our mission:

"We connect communities by providing places and experiences that inspire healthy living, social engagement, and a love of nature."

FURTHER, RESOLVED that the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation is hereby authorized and directed to implement the 2016 Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan for and on behalf of the Department.

BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CONSOLIDATED CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

Linda Broadfoot, Chairman

David Lichtenberger
Assistant Corporation Counsel

Joshua Bowling

Louvenia Holstein, Secretary

12-15-16
Date

Joseph Wynns

Andrea M. Scott

Ms. Kristen Schunk Moreland

COPY

1.9.2 METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-CPS-R-001

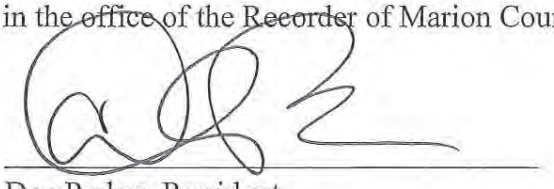
RESOLUTION 2017-CPS-R-001, authorizes amending a segment of the Comprehensive or Master Plan of Marion County, Indiana, by adding Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan 2016-2021, which shall replace any previous versions of the Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan.

Be it resolved that, pursuant to I.C. 36-7-4, the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, hereby amends the Comprehensive or Master Plan for Marion County, Indiana, by the adoption of the Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan 2016-2021, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as an amendment to the Comprehensive or Master Plan of Marion County, Indiana.

Be it further resolved that this 2016-2021 version of the Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan shall replace any previously adopted version of the Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan.

Be it further resolved that the Secretary of the Metropolitan Development Commission is directed to certify copies of this Resolution 2017-CPS-R-001 amending the Comprehensive or Master Plan of Marion County, Indiana, by adding Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan 2016-2021.

Be it further resolved that the Director of the Department of Metropolitan Development is directed to mail or deliver certified copies of this Resolution 2017-CPS-R-001, to the Mayor of the City of Indianapolis, the City-County Council of Indianapolis and Marion County, the Board of Commissioners of Marion County, Indiana and to the legislative authorities of the incorporated cities and towns of Marion County, Indiana that are directly affected by this plan: Beech Grove, Lawrence, Southport, Speedway, Clermont, Crows Nest, Cumberland, Highwoods, Homecroft, Meridian Hills, North Crows Nest, Rocky Ripple, Spring Hill, Warren Park, Williams Creek, and Wynnedale. The Director shall also file one (1) copy of the Resolution and one (1) summary of the plan in the office of the Recorder of Marion County.



Dan Parker, President
Metropolitan Development Commission

Date: 2.1.17

APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM
AND ADEQUACY THIS 3rd
DAY OF JANUARY 2017.

Christopher Steinmetz
Assistant Corporation Counsel

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA

STATE OF INDIANA)

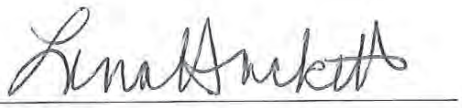
) SS:

COUNTY OF MARION)

CERTIFICATION

I, Lena Hackett, Secretary of the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, do hereby certify that the attached Resolution 2017-CPS-R-001 AMENDING A SEGMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE OR MASTER PLAN OF MARION COUNTY, INDIANA – Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan 2016-2021 – is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana, following a public hearing at a meeting of said commission on February 1, 2017, and that the original of said resolution is on file of record in the office of the Department of Metropolitan Development of Marion County, Indiana.

Witness my hand and official seal of the Metropolitan Development Commission of Marion County, Indiana this 1st day of February 2017.



Lena Hackett, Secretary
Metropolitan Development Commission
of Marion County, Indiana

CHAPTER TWO
COMMUNITY INPUT

2.1 COMMUNITY INPUT SUMMARY

2.1.1 PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

In early March 2015, eleven (11) public meetings were completed in each of the nine (9) townships. Center Township had three (3) public meetings as the majority of parks are located in Center Township and a lunchtime public meeting to capture the downtown workforce. Approximately 260 community participants attended these meetings. Many methods for publicizing these workshops were utilized including press releases, email blasts, radio advertising, note cards, multiple social media outreach methods, many mentions on local news media outlets, and word of mouth communication.

All public meetings followed a consistent format of educating the community and soliciting public input and their vision for the future. This included the sharing of information on the planning process, demographic shifts in each township, and nation-wide recreational trends.

Residents were also asked to identify system-wide strengths, opportunities and single highest priority outcome of the master plan through spoken comments. Further public input was solicited through an open house format and discussion where residents identified their top five (5) program, facility, and marketing and communications priorities from a list provided on planning boards.

In early October 2015, five (5) public meetings were conducted to present findings and offer preliminary recommendations. Fifty-eight residents attended these meetings. The meetings included an update on the planning process, summary of public engagement, park assessment highlights, equity mapping, and priority rankings, as well as a summary of recommendations.

2.1.2 FOCUS GROUP AND KEY STAKEHOLDER SUMMARY

As part of the process for the update of the Comprehensive Master Plan, PROS Consulting conducted a combination of 18 focus groups, which included approximately 75 participants, as well as more than 35 individual stakeholder interviews. These meetings included elected officials, key partners of Indy Parks, as well as local non-profits and community organizations.

This process of community involvement helps establish priorities for the future improvement and direction of management and planning for Indy Parks. The focus groups and stakeholder interviews enable Indy Parks to learn what users of the system value, their concerns, and the identification of unmet needs.

2.1.3 CROWDSOURCING WEBSITE, WEB SURVEY & INTERCEPT SURVEYS

Through the crowdsourcing project website, www.planindyparks.com, 266 web surveys were completed. This medium for solicitation remained open until the results of the statistically-valid survey was completed in August 2015. Also, the website had over 10,500+ unique visitors throughout the project, which may have included non-users and users of the parks system.

Also, 64 intercept surveys were completed at two (2) special events: the Indy Parks Summer Kick-off Event held at Garfield Park Sunken Gardens in April 2015, as well as the Pints for Parks fundraising event at Flat 12 Brewery. The survey asked residents to rank how well Indy Parks is meeting their needs in providing parks and program opportunities.

2.1.4 STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

A total of 915 statistically-valid surveys were completed, with at least 100 in each of the nine townships. This information both non-users and users of the system as it was a random, statistically-valid sampling. Highlights include the following:

- Use of parks is high while the condition of the parks is rated lower than the average community- the excellent ratings were very low
- 50% of households have visited Eagle Creek Park, very high
- Broad Ripple is the park most respondents supported to be converted to a signature park
- Participation in programs is very low
- Trails, small neighborhood parks, picnic areas/shelters/natural areas/large regional parks and large signature parks are the most important facilities
- Adult fitness programs are the most important program expansion area. Less than half the households who indicate adult fitness as an important program responded that they use Indy parks as a prime location for these programs. Potential exists to improve programming in that area
- A majority of households support at least 50% of program costs being supported through fees, except for programs for low income residents and programs for those with disabilities
- Word of mouth is the most common way to learn about programs and activities, which is not good. Very few respondents are learning from the Fun Guide
- Biggest barriers for use included: I do not know what is being offered; we are too busy; and, activity is too far from our residence
- Most important actions are: improving existing small neighborhood parks; improving existing trails; developing new trails; developing new indoor spaces; and improving existing large community signature parks

2.1.5 SWOT ANALYSIS

As part of the process, PROS Consulting conducted a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis with Indy Parks staff in April 2015. Approximately 60 staff members from the Operations and Programming Divisions, as well as Department of Public Works participated. This process of the SWOT analysis helped establish priorities for the future improvement and direction of management and planning for Indy Parks. This analysis identified the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve Indy Parks objectives.

2.2 FOCUS GROUP AND KEY STAKEHOLDER SUMMARY

2.2.1 WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF INDY PARKS THAT WE NEED TO BUILD ON FOR THIS MASTER PLAN?

Participants agree that there are many strengths for Indy Parks to build upon in the master plan. The city's park real estate is a tangible asset that could be leverage as needed. Among this inventory are the many strengths of the department. Strengths include the "Signature" or "Destination" parks, the amount and accessibility of green inventory, trails, specialty programming, and certain sports facilities.

Eagle Creek Park, Garfield Park, Ellenberger and Holliday Park represent examples for future developments to the Indy Parks and Recreation Department. Their iconic presence, user support (e.g., "Friends of…"), and ability to attract visitors from across the county, and beyond, place them high on the development hierarchy.

Overall, residents are proud of their parks; and most are users of parks and green spaces within Marion County. Locals express that the variety and quality of the parks and park facilities encourage more active lifestyles, provide opportunity to recreate, and foster a sense of community. Respondents generally equated good parks to healthier families and healthier community.

In general, parks and greenspaces are recognized for their impact on home values. Parks have an influence on choices made by families (at every income strata) when home-buying. Parks are a benefit to the city's community development and quality of life agendas.

Respondents expressed high regard for current trails, including the Monon Trail and the Cultural Trail. The city's trails collectively represent potential for great connectivity between neighborhoods and people and the opportunity for both recreation and economic development.

The diversity of inventory in Indy Parks is voiced as a strength. The inventory ranges from the simple "pocket park" to the 18-hole golf courses. The parks system's golf courses remain a strength so long as they are not permitted to burden the Indy Parks budget.

Families and professional users have benefited from youth programming, state-of-the-art recreation and sports facilities, and nature experiences. Today, there is concern that this foundation has not been maintained and has eroded with time. This concern is balanced with the hopeful expression that the parks system possesses the ingredients to become much better. Park professionals, health and recreation service providers, developers, conservationists, and others are willing to contribute expertise and resources to achieve a much better park system. Parks that are located in proximity to private greenspaces (e.g., college campus) are in strong position for partnership opportunities.

Local foundations and several corporations promise their continued support for parks and recreation based on sound, visionary proposals.

Participants agree that parks department employees are courteous and helpful. Stakeholders agree the current free lunch program provided by the parks department in underserved areas is a vital component of programming and meets the needs of the community.

2.2.2 WHAT ARE YOUR GENERAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM THAT NEED IMPROVEMENT?

Based on stakeholder and focus group responses, there is a need to improve advocacy and financial support on behalf of Indy Parks.

There is a need for more, and improved, communication, in general, between Indy Parks, other city departments, and stakeholder agencies in the community. In addition to the general ability to share information, there is a need for demonstrated engagement of Indy Parks in critical planning and development efforts going forward in the community. Indy Parks has not been, but should be, an integral participant in several of the community plans developed in the past two years and in planning efforts currently underway. There is a concern that this represents disinterest and disconnection from the city. Several community plans address quality of life concerns, and concerns regarding health, public safety, and conservation. Most plans refer to, and address, utilization of park spaces and facilities. However, there may not be adequate input and/or buy-in by Indy Parks' representatives.

Long-time residents and park advocates recall when there was more active and productive partnership between city officials and local agencies to sustain "clean and safe" parks and to bring about meaningful programming. It was expressed that such partnerships, in quality and quantity, no longer exist, and that on-going partnerships are a strength that will need to be a part of the solution to restore and/or improve the Indy Parks system.

Stakeholders and focus group participants were able to discuss specific concerns for the general condition of their park's grounds, buildings within their park, and the associated amenities. Lack of lighting was specifically and frequently mentioned, among other items. There is a perception that Indy Parks may own more property than it can properly maintain. There has been a gradual deterioration of park assets over the past 10 years due to lack of resources. Informants want "clean and safe" parks and amenities first and foremost. They also see importance in a more balanced distribution of support resources (maintenance/upkeep and capital investment in parks) but perceive that the "signature parks" have influential supporters and these pull more funding to the detriment of the smaller ones. Participants expressed their concern that if, in fact, there are too many parks (or park facilities), what (fair) means will be used in each location to judge and prioritize the improvement and use of those parks.

Respondents suggest that national-level best practices be adopted to evaluate and to improve Indianapolis' parks and facilities. There is the sense that, at a minimum, a basic level of acceptability and usability of parks facilities and amenities is feasible and expected. Many expressed that disparity (and disenfranchisement) exists and represents a source of dissent and apathy among residents. Therefore, Indy Parks and the city will need to be transparent in their considerations and welcoming of a broader-base of input. This should establish an expectation of fairness in the face of limited resources. General comments suggested that a "par" be identified for each park type and that each park be improved to meet the established par. If par cannot be achieved, the park leadership must take steps to become leaner through the reduction of asset quantity. Those parks that remain need to be made excellent. This option is preferred rather than sustain too many parks that are marginal or worse. Thus, Indy Parks may need to eliminate parks and/or the facilities that the system cannot support.

Many residents would like to see more specialized (and modern) amenities in the parks. One example is the trend to replace swimming pools (i.e., aquatic centers) with spray facilities. Spray parks are less costly to install and to maintain. Other respondents were outspoken about the importance of "city pools" in the center-city. Swimming pools are the single-most important resource to prevent drowning deaths among children in poor neighborhoods.

A city park was once an extension of the neighborhood center and an adjunct to local human services programming, such as summer day camp. This notion has not been the case in recent years. Access fees for many programs serving youth have become burdensome due to budget challenges. Rather than competing for the same budget dollar, Indy Parks could be more creative and collaborative. Operating in silos is counter-productive: Kids learn from summer jobs and are "inexpensive labor". They can clean parks and help with the delivery of park programs.

Focus group and stakeholder participants see a need for more competition-quality sports fields and facilities in the parks. These fields bring groups to the parks from across the county, and have capability to draw from outside the county and the state. Competition-quality sports fields will put additional burden on city resources (public safety, maintenance, utility costs); however, this type of activity engenders civic pride, broader support, and sense of ownership for park spaces, in addition to increasing tourism revenues. The public process has brought forward several private groups/event organizers who express willingness and capacity to underwrite development and operating costs of facilities, amenities, and events pertaining to their particular hobby or sport.

Residents in general see growing dangers in many of the city's parks due to deteriorated facilities, reduced programming, and general lack of interest. There is a need to improve and foster conditions in the parks, as they (signature park, neighborhood park, or pocket park) can be destinations for recreation activity year-round.

There is also a need to improve the marketing of the parks and recreation system. Much can be achieved by marketing and promoting the Indy Parks system and its offerings. The department is missing a huge opportunity to increase participation and generate revenues by failing to effectively communicate inter-departmentally and externally. In recent years, basic promotion and advertising of park programs and events have been reduced. Many respondents are not aware of all the services available and events organized by and through Indy Parks. Residents are prospective users and supporters of Indy Parks. However, concern is expressed that news and information is not readily accessible, even on the Indy Parks website. In general, participants believe a marketing strategy and an energetic information dissemination capability will create value for residents, which will, in a short time, lead to increased use of Indy Parks and Recreation assets.

2.2.3 WHAT ARE THE KEY OUTCOMES YOU DESIRE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE COME FROM THIS MASTER PLAN?

Stakeholders and focus group participants concur that a comprehensive and well-conceived master plan will serve as an important guide when leading city officials, stakeholders, and the general community in a productive direction as they contemplate a park system for the future.

Participants view the master plan as a potential tool for decision-making. The master plan can help define our community values. Choices for moving forward need to be made from the community values. The Master Plan should describe the intrinsic value we see in parks and greenspaces.

Residents expect a clear plan that 1) establishes an identity for the parks department; 2) recognizes opportunities for growth and development; 3) has attainable goals and appropriate metrics to provide for an objective evaluation of the parks system as progress takes place. The plan needs to inventory the assets of Indianapolis Parks Department. These assets need to be evaluated for current operating conditions through the remaining lifespan. Department personnel are the primary assets; and personnel needs to be identified by their core competencies, cumulative experience, and function.

A desired outcome of the master plan is an objective cost-benefit analysis of inventory by township (or by neighborhood) based on criteria established in advance. Need and value are not uniform from township to township, care should be taken when comparing one township or neighborhood park system with another. Comparisons need to be conducted fairly. Respondents seemed willing to accept that some park resources may need to go away, but fairness and equal access were repeated as a theme.

In deference to limited resources, the master plan will ideally provide a mechanism to prevent approval of "questionable ventures" that overextend the department.

The master plan must be structured to help improve equity across the county. Park inventory might be better distributed by township and/or population size so funding is fairly distributed.

The master plan might be a compilation of "Indy Parks Township Plans".

There was mention that the master plan might examine and grade the agreements that currently exist between Indy Parks and partners (e.g., for golf courses management firms) to ensure that they are structured to promote efficiency and produce promised revenue. Healthy partnership arrangements will benefit all parties and promote the notion of additional partnering.

Respondents advocated for development and implementation of a strategic marketing plan to create better awareness of Indy Parks' offerings and to increase use of the available facilities and programs.

2.2.4 WHAT ARE THE KEY PROGRAM SERVICES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE MASTER PLAN?

Interview participants agree that Indy Parks and Recreation Department needs to offer a wider range of programming (as it has done in the past). Parks programming should (better) represent "Best Practices" in the park industry on a national level.

Park program services are key for 1) all age groups (youth, adult, seniors); 2) all health/physical needs (fitness, rehab, disabilities); and, 3) for educational and social development (sports, conservation, "family time").

Regardless of programming quality, if parks are not safe places, the community will not use them (for intended purpose). Parks can be/need to be safe havens for use. Parks need to be used to contribute to public safety, reduce youth delinquency, and provide for summer jobs.

Parks should re-connect to schools and help connect schools to one another. Particularly when kids are out of school, Indy Parks could step up and fill the gap. Because school calendars are no longer uniform, this presents an added challenge. However, the original "safety net" for youth included, in-park engagement of children and families.

Park programming must be exciting/interesting enough to get kids off the video games and electronics, and back to physical "play" and the type of play that encourages interaction with other kids (i.e., social development). The absence of constructive play produces high(er) probability of anti-social behavior. There seems a sense of nostalgia by the community in the expressions about kids and play…that new generation is missing out on good times.

AmeriCorps, JobCorps, National Guard, ROTC represent opportunities for indirect tax dollars to be applied to enhance park programming. All bring human capital to bear on budget problems and make more programming possible.

Schools can adopt a park and vice versa. Schools and parks can trade and achieve greater impact, e.g., schools perform parks maintenance in exchange for access to park amenities such as swimming pools. Utilization by human service agencies diminish as entry fees increase.

Indy Parks leadership will need to assure that this master plan relates to and considers the findings and recommendations of the several other plans that are in development by other agencies/organizations.

Participants would like to see signature parks become even better at attracting visitors from beyond Indianapolis area.

Inner city parks may not have affluent users and/or "Friend of" organizations to help raise funds and to help assure that "fair-share" dollars are allocated. Residents of our poorer neighborhoods are usually reticent (if not apathetic). For these reasons, inner city parks are always under-funded, which needs to be addressed in the master plan.

2.2.5 WHAT RECREATION FACILITIES AND/OR AMENITIES IN THE COMMUNITY ARE MOST NEEDED?

There is a pervasive theme expressed that too many areas are under-served; that too many park properties have "lost their luster;" and that too many parks are not safe. There is also a message that "hobbyists" are organized and vocal, and that the interests of the few are allowed to prevail over the needs of the many.

There is a change in the recreation marketplace that should be better understood. For example, golf is not as popular as it once was. Young families and urban families are not choosing to play the traditional 18-hole game; and golf remains a relatively expensive recreation. However, golf activities could become of interest to this audience if modified. New golf games like foot golf and speed golf are examples of shorter games that may fit better within urban parks. With a shift in interest, are 13 golf courses needed in Marion County?

It is imperative that Indianapolis improve its ranking on the national scale, beginning with its facilities and amenities. Other cities have begun to replace golf and golf courses with soccer and soccer fields. Non-traditional games and recreation are becoming in-demand. New sports quickly gain popularity today as result of our electronic and social media; a prime example is the recently completed cricket field. Park planners and managers will be challenged more than ever to provide fields and facilities that are convertible and lend themselves to multi-sport use.

There are new themes in "eco-recreation" that young families seek. It will be important to incorporate facilities and attractions that are more rugged, physically-challenging, and inspired by nature.

A significant amenity in our parks is trees which are protected from removal (felling). However, the trees in our parks are not getting the professional care that they require. If our trees are lost to disease, insects, or human encroachment, it may be impossible to restore these resources.

Stakeholder and focus group participants offered anecdotal reports of needs within the parks. They indicated that when such "needs are reported to downtown," there is no response and no remedy (e.g., a water fountain broken and repeatedly reported over a 3-year period).

Each park needs to show families there is a reason to visit (i.e., presentation, accommodation, activities programmed to their needs and interests). Parks must be a "safe haven" for young people and for the older people. The park is the "3rd Place" after Home, Work/School.

If encouraging field sports activity, there must be restrooms and refreshment facilities so visitors can be comfortable for 2 – 3 hours. Field sports are generally team sports, so in addition to comfort facilities, teams need places for equipment storage and for meeting/teaching. Lighting is another amenity that is useful where field sports are played.

Indy Parks need to follow national trends, particularly for programs. Visitors have expectation if they have traveled to other parks/had other park experiences (e.g. "GoApe Treetop Challenge," full-service waterparks, and others). If Indy Parks does not offer similar experiences, the city will lose the potential for tourism revenue.

2.2.6 ARE THERE OPERATIONAL OR MAINTENANCE ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED?

Stakeholders and focus group participants expressed a common concern that Indy Parks facilities, equipment, and grounds need improvement. The Park System gets a "C" grade for the services offered, mainly because so much is in need of maintenance. Many could state a personal observation of something that needed fixing, cleaning, or painting. Some participants spoke about duplication that might be eliminated to produce cost-savings.

Respondents are concerned for safety: without park rangers, park staff, general lighting and robust activity, the parks do not feel like safe places.

Respondents are concerned for basic amenities such as clean and accessible toilets. An anecdote shared: Restroom facilities at a sports fields remained locked through the day even though the sports field was reserved in advance and the associated use was approved.

The Indy Parks system includes a variety of park facilities; and some require special knowledge for proper operation and for proper maintenance, especially in some of the specialty areas. Result is improper, inadequate attention to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and to preventative maintenance protocol. Specialized knowledge and experience is required in many areas of current parks programming. If these skills are not available via staff/employees, they need to be gained via staff training or contractual purchase. Deer culling was offered as recent example of need for specialized knowledge and "special handling."

Respondents are concerned that policy is not being consistently applied when 1) reviewing "Public-Private Partnership Agreements;" 2) reviewing Agency-Agency Partnership Agreements; 3) reviewing applications (from the community) to reserve facilities. The general public cannot navigate the Indy Parks-Department of Public Works organizational structure well. The general public can feel intimidated, or become frustrated, when seeking information or following a prescribed procedure.

Respondents are concerned that there is no communication from Indy Parks to the general public about its programs and events. Subsequently, there is disappointment that programs and events are not well-attended. It is suspected that poor-attendance leads to reduced budgeting/programming. Then there is even less funding to promote Indy Parks programs and events.

2.2.7 WHAT AREAS OF THE SYSTEM NEED MORE FOCUS (SUCH AS TRAIL DEVELOPMENT, LAND ACQUISITION, PARK MAINTENANCE, PROGRAM SERVICES, FACILITY DEVELOPMENT, ETC.)

Stakeholders and focus group participants agree that the parks system needs to focus on getting kids/ families back into the parks.

The stakeholders and focus group participants agree that Indy Parks needs to focus on maintaining current inventory, and not adding new; and that reduction in inventory may be an appropriate consideration.

The current system has the basic infrastructure to support greater connectivity of one township to another; one park to another; and one agency/organization to another. More focus on effectiveness and efficiency of operation is desired.

There is merit in considering bumping Riverside Park up to "Signature Park" status. The location, constituency, and current configuration lends it to multi-level, strategic development. Another candidate suggested for signature park status is Washington Park.

There is a desire for more focus on park waterways other than Eagle Creek; e.g., Broad Ripple's Waterway is seldom noticed by passers-by, has very few access points, and is maintained by Broad Ripple Village merchants (or it would get no attention at all).

It is important to consider promoting parks and communicating with all publics about park programs and events. Lower-income populations and those lacking language skills, electronic equipment, or transportation are frequently unaware of park programs and events.

2.2.8 DO YOU FEEL THE DEPARTMENT IS ADEQUATELY FUNDED? WHAT FUNDING SOURCES DO YOU FEEL THE COMMUNITY WOULD MOST SUPPORT (E.G. BOND ISSUE, MILL LEVY, IMPACT FEES, PROPERTY TAX INCREASE, USER FEES)?

Consensus among respondents is that the Indy Parks is not adequately funded. There is not a fair distribution of the limited funds to the individual parks.

Respondents feel that city officials have unrealistic expectation that the parks are able to generate revenue and be self-sustaining. The community seems to have a more realistic understanding that 1) many parks have no means to generate revenue, and 2) the value of parks is not considered in their ability to generate revenue but to serve the community as a "city service."

The community would lend greater support to a strategic mix of funding sources, including generated revenue. However, revenue from user fees needs to be fair to residents/visitors with lower income levels.

Respondents suggest that creative means to generate park revenue needs to be explored. Many could cite examples from parks they have visited in other communities. Revenue streams already exist, but are not capitalized upon. One example is the rental of park facilities to private individuals, organizations, businesses to host events. These are typically corporate meetings, weddings, and family reunions. These spaces are not promoted, rented, or managed in a business-like manner. These opportunities could be offered as potential for increased revenue.

Respondents feel city officials need to survey park allocations as an industry best practice (e.g., as percent of municipal budget). From the analysis, consideration whether the current allocation to Indy Parks from the city's budget is comparable to what is being spent in other cities. While comparing Indianapolis against benchmarks and best practice may be an unpopular or tedious undertaking, City officials should want to emulate park systems that represent 21st Century facilities and programming.

Respondents feel that the Indy Parks Master Plan must coincide with other local plans that are completed or in development because funding mechanisms will overlap and integrate one to the other.

2.2.9 AS YOU SEE THE CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS AND MARION COUNTY CHANGING IN THE FUTURE, WHAT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS DO YOU FEEL WILL NEED THE MOST ATTENTION AND NEED TO BE MADE A PRIORITY?

Stakeholders and focus group participants readily agree that metro-Indianapolis will continue to grow and develop. Populations will increase in the center-city of Indianapolis. At the same time, population will grow in northern suburban areas. The city's population generally will be older and more diverse.

The infrastructure of metro-Indianapolis is changing and will continue to change at a rapid pace. Housing construction activity in the center-city is projected to be on-going. Much of housing construction requires inclusion of green space in the design. The metro infrastructure development will also address transit needs; public service needs; and the needs of business and tourism.

The City of Indianapolis/Marion County has an over-arching vision for its future. City-county officials must assign a true and meaningful value to its parks system in light of this vision and re-dedicate to an improved park system. The stakeholders and focus group respondents agree that the needs are many and diverse. The process to prioritize and implement progressive change in the face of limited resources requires leadership, transparency, and inclusion.

2.2.10 STAKEHOLDER PRIORITIES

- Recruit and retain nationally renowned leadership
- Recruit and establish robust partnerships for program development
- Upgrade parks maintenance and deferred maintenance budgets
- Enhanced safety through "Environmental Design"
- Increase connectivity of all parks with an upgraded trail system
- Develop iconic features at signature parks to improve tourism potential
- Improve system-wide access based on changing population demographics and geographic trends
- Significantly upgrade communications and information dissemination

2.3 PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

In early March 2015, eleven (11) public meetings were completed in each of the nine (9) townships with three (3) conducted in Center Township. Many methods for publicizing these workshops were utilized including press releases, email blasts, radio advertising, note cards, multiple social media outreach methods, many mentions on local news media outlets, and word of mouth.

Residents were also asked to identify system-wide strengths, opportunities, and single highest priority outcome of the master plan through spoken comments. Further public input was solicited through an open house and discussion format where residents identified their top 5 program, facility, and marketing and communications priorities from a list provided on planning boards.

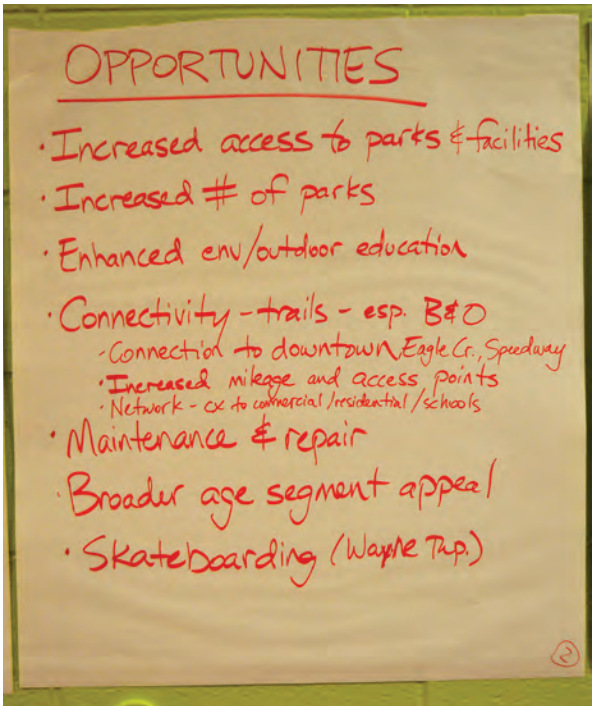
The following pages summarizes and highlights the results of each public meeting.

2.3.1 WAYNE TOWNSHIP (MARCH 3, 2015)

Location: Krannert Park Family Center; 605 S. High School Rd.
Attendance: 26

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS FROM THE WORKSHOP

- Strengths:
  - The trail system is off to a good start. Continuous sidewalks was mentioned as a strength for connectivity
  - Residents expressed their support for current programming, specifically for families, kids. Concerts were an important program
  - Eagle Creek Park, Garfield Park, and other signature parks are supported by the community
  - The city's bike lane initiative is supported by residents
  - Volunteer support in the city through partnerships with businesses is a strength. The coordination of the many partners
  - Residents enjoy the recreation centers as they provide opportunities for all ages
- Opportunities:
  - Increased access to parks and facilities was expressed
  - Opportunities for park system expansion is desired by residents
  - Enhancement of environmental outdoor education programming
  - Connectivity through an expanded trail system is desired, specifically, for the B& O Trail to connect downtown, Eagle Creek Park, and Speedway
  - Residents desire an increase in mileage of the trail system and access points to parks, businesses, schools, and neighborhoods
  - Enhancement to maintenance quality and keeping up with capital improvements
  - Broader age segment appeal for park amenities and program is desired
  - Additional opportunities for skateboarding
  - Expand upon reoccurring volunteer support through volunteer management and cultivation
- Top Priority:
  - Additional trails and increased connectivity
  - Natural surface trails
  - Maintenance and improvement of existing facilities through a balance of care between new and existing
  - Diversify funding sources and opportunities for revenue generation
  - Encourage participation and use of the parks system as it leads to greater safety
  - Increase partnership to increase funding and recreation experiences



TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

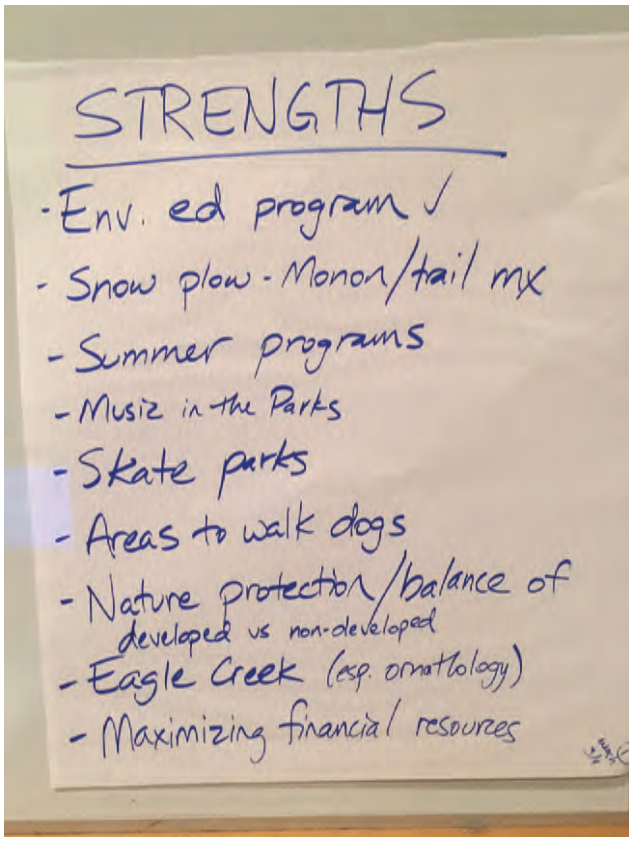
The top five priorities for programs, facilities and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Adult fitness & wellness programs (7)
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (6)
  - Youth / teen sports programs (6)
  - Before & after school programs (5)
  - Preschool programs (5)
  - Senior programs (5)
  - Other: trail programs / geocaching (16)
- Facilities
  - Paved walking & biking trails (23)
  - Mountain bike trails (16)
  - Playground equipment & play areas (10)
  - Nature trails (8)
  - Community gardens (6)
- Marketing & Communications
  - Email Blast (13)
  - Facebook (9)
  - A printed/ hard copy program guide (5)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (4)
  - Radio ads (AM/FM) (4)
  - Other: Signage along trails (10) & Text alerts (6)

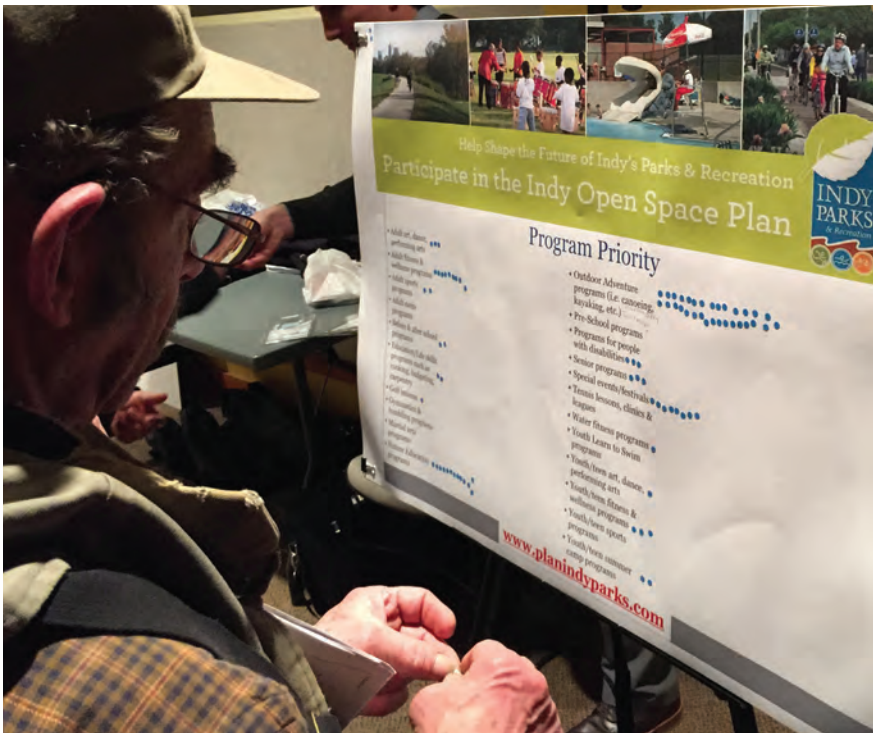
2.3.2 WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP (MARCH 4, 2015)

Location: Holliday Park Nature Center (6439 Spring Mill Rd.)
Attendance: 27

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS



- Strengths:
  - Environmental education programs
  - Maintenance of the Monon Greenway, especially as it relates to snow removal
  - Summer programs for youth
  - Skate parks are supported by residents
  - The many opportunities to walk dogs
  - Nature protection and the balance of developed versus non-developed land
  - The department's ability to maximize its financial resources
  - Proximity of parks to residents
  - Residents appreciate that they feel safe in parks and on trails
  - Cleanliness of facilities and parks is a strength of the department
  - The department does a great job on using friends groups in partnerships of signature parks
  - The department's communication with residents
  - The city's uniqueness in natural resources
- Opportunities:
  - Additional natural areas are desired
  - Extended hours of the Monon Greenway and in parks, especially during the evening
  - Engaging with reconnecting our waterways to ensure residents have opportunities to recreate on this natural resource
  - Engaging with neighborhoods to sustain and care for facilities through partnerships
  - Connect and organize more with community partnerships regarding programs
  - Interpretive elements in the park system can be stronger, especially as it relates to park namesakes from a historical standpoint
  - Additional youth programs and engagement, especially for pre-teens, is desired. Possibly with natural area management
  - A youth jobs initiative is desired
  - Additional pocket parks along trails, especially for youth
  - Enhanced security presence by park ranger
  - Ensure that underserved areas of the city have equitable parkland
  - Better access through public transport to parks is desired
  - Conversion of vacant space is an opportunity for the city
  - Additional dog parks for residents
  - Expand community gardens and butterfly gardens
  - Address the high fees at Eagle Creek Park to ensure they are equitable
  - Enhance marketing efforts to increase awareness of parks and promote the benefits of the city's natural areas
  - Find sustainable funding resources for the department
  - Integrate and fully implement the Full Circle Greenways Master Plan
- Highest Priority:
  - Engage our youth more effectively
  - Funding for maintenance, safety and cleanliness
  - Natural area protection
  - Additional natural surface trails
  - More skate parks



TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (43)
  - Nature education programs (23)
  - Adult fitness & wellness programs (10)
  - Special events/festivals (8)
  - Youth/ teen fitness wellness programs (5)
  - Youth/ teen sports programs (5)

Facilities:

  - Mountain bike trails (35)
  - Skateboard park (27)
  - Nature trails (15)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (9)
  - Community gardens (6)
  - Park shelters & picnic areas (6)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Facebook (17)
  - Email blast (15)
  - E-newsletters (15)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (11)
  - Instagram (7)

2.3.3 FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP (MARCH 4, 2015)

Location: Southeastway Park Nature Center (5624 S Carroll Rd).
Attendance: 12

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Variety of parks and services
  - Department's signature parks (e.g. Eagle Creek, Garfield)
  - Staff is great and helpful
  - Great programs
  - Website is easy to navigate
  - Marketing and awareness
  - Safe/security in parks
  - Cultural trail is great
- Opportunities:
  - Connectivity of trail network to neighborhoods
  - Add mountain bike trails
  - Build a skate/bike park combo
  - Build a dog park with an agility course
  - Build an outdoor family aquatic center with zero depth entry
  - Work more with non-profits/volunteer groups
  - More multi-purpose trails
  - Foot golf (soccer golf)
  - Additional parking need at special events in parks (e.g. White River, Bug Festival)
  - More awareness of department's program offerings
- Highest Priority:
  - Combine art, music, skateboards
  - Repurpose empty, unused site into indoor skate park
  - More community involvement with department and offerings
  - Connectivity of trail system
  - More mountain bike trails
  - Skate dots (skate elements at existing sites)
  - Develop and activate Acton Road Park
  - Utility vehicle at Southeastway Park
  - Improve and better maintenance of hiking and biking trails
  - Better publicity and community from the department to residents

TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

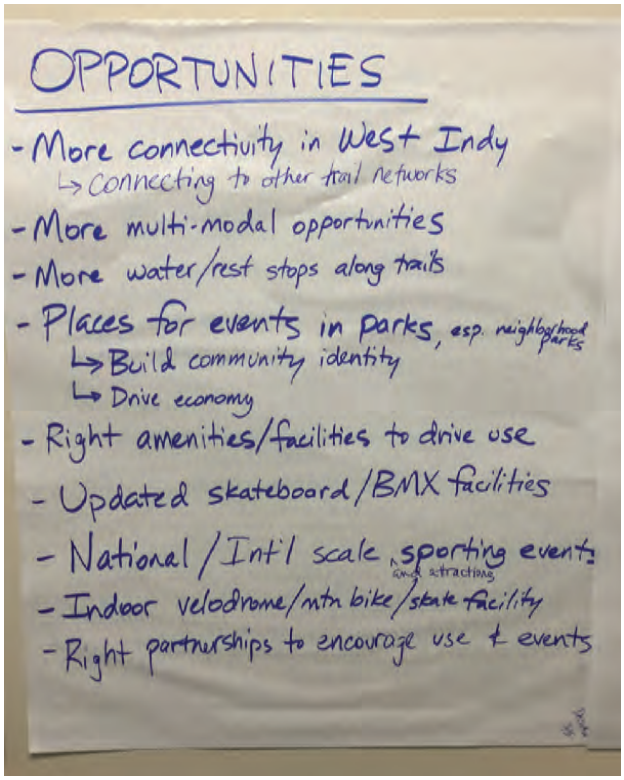
The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (20)
  - Special events & festivals (7)
  - Education / life skills programs such as cooking, budgeting, carpentry (5)
  - Nature education programs (5)
  - Youth/ teen summer camp programs (4)
- Facilities:
  - Mountain bike trails (19)
  - Skateboard park (10)
  - Nature trails (5)
  - Outdoor swimming pool & spraygrounds (5)
  - Paved walking &biking trails (4)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Twitter (19)
  - Instagram (8)
  - Website (via mobile device) (7)
  - Over the phone customer service 327-PARK (5)
  - E-newsletters (5)

2.3.4 DECATUR TOWNSHIP (MARCH 5, 2015)

Location: MSD of Decatur Township Administrative Office Board Room (5275 Kentucky Ave.)
Attendance: 14

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS



- Strengths:
  - The department is in tune with trends for the next generation
  - The city has a lot of open space and the potential to gain additional
  - Connectivity is a priority of the department
  - The department does a good job communicating with community organizations and partners
  - Signage and wayfinding
  - Variety of facilities/parks such as the signature parks (e.g. Eagle Creek, Garfield)
  - The city offers many places to recreate passively to escape
- Opportunities:
  - More connectivity in west Indy by connecting to existing trail networks
  - Opportunities for water/rest stops along trail networks
  - Places for special events in parks, especially in larger community parks, to build community identity and drive the local economy
  - Create destination amenities/facilities to drive use
  - An updated skateboard/BMX facility as the current one is crowded and in need of maintenance
  - National/international scale attractions and sporting events
  - Indoor velodrome/mountain bike/skate facility.
  - Create partnerships to encourage use by residents
  - Recreation opportunities for residents to balance the city's efforts for tourism attractions
  - Partnerships to acquire additional park land
  - Enhancements to restrooms and family parks
  - Additional aquatic facilities
- Highest Priority:
  - Updated skate park
  - Connectivity
  - Additional parks and green space
  - Expansion of mountain bike trails
  - Enhanced communication / marketing by the department, especially in social media
  - Partnership communications

TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (20)
  - Adult fitness & wellness programs (5)
  - Special events/festivals (4)
  - Before & after school programs (3)
  - Nature education programs (3)
- Facilities:
  - Mountain bike trails (16)
  - Nature trails (7)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (4)
  - Off-leash dog park (3)
  - Skateboard park (3)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Website (via tablet) (8)
  - Facebook (7)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (6)
  - E-newsletters (6)
  - Parks staff (4)

2.3.5 WARREN TOWNSHIP (MARCH 9, 2015)

Location: World Sports Park (1313 S. Post Road)
Attendance: 32

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

Strengths:

- Pennsy Trail is a great asset and enjoy being out in the country
- Community rooms and centers and the ability to use for rentals
- Splash parks are outstanding and economical from an operational standpoint
- Dog parks provide gathering places and areas for dogs to run
- Signature parks provide many great opportunities for special events
- Multi-use trails and their ability to be used for mountain biking, horseback rides, and hiking
- Partnerships with community organizations and the school districts
- Holliday Park's nature trails, nature center, and river access
- Accessibility to community centers

- Opportunities:
  - Increase walkability through trails and sidewalks
  - Aquatic programming expansion of opportunities and extend hours
  - Extend park hours beyond "dawn to dusk"
  - Add more mountain bike trails and adventure bike parks
  - Update Ellenberger Park with a new multi-generation community center. This could also include a water mark
  - Expand pickle ball programming at underperforming tennis courts and convert some courts to permanent pickle ball courts. Opportunities for tournaments. Expand Sahm Park pickleball courts
  - Increase promotion and marketing efforts of the department
  - Enhance maintenance of pools and dog parks
  - Complete the Pennsy Trail to Cumberland
  - Add shelter and running water at the dog parks. Enhance maintenance with gravel or straw
  - Need for a regional park in the southeast portion of the city
- Highest Priority:
  - Water at dog park
  - Multi-generation community center at Ellenberger Park
  - Permanent conversion of tennis courts to pickleball courts
  - Expand and complete Pennsy Trail
  - Continue to expand connectivity throughout the city
  - Enhance maintenance at Paul Ruster Park
  - Multi-use trails for hiking and biking
  - Better communication and engagement of stakeholders and the community by the department
  - Mountain bike trails at Eagle Creek Park
  - Add a family center and more aquatic opportunities at Grassy Creek Regional Park
  - Creative use of open space that is multi-use
  - Additional greenways
  - Utilize internal resources of the department and the city
  - Equity of access and recreation offerings throughout the city

TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Pickleball (16)
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (12)
  - Adult fitness & wellness programs (8)
  - Special events/festivals (6)
  - Senior programs (5)
- Facilities:
  - Pickleball courts (15)
  - Off-leash dog park (13)
  - Mountain bike trails (9)
  - Community or recreation center (8)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (5)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Facebook (8)
  - Print ads (7)
  - TV (cable or off air) (7)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (6)
  - Website (via mobile device) (5)

2.3.6 LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP (MARCH 9, 2015)

Location: Sterrett Center (8950 Otis Ave.)
Attendance: 18

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Connected and adjacent parks to Lawrence Township
  - Open space to protect or develop
  - Pickleball facilities and waterpark at Sahm Park
  - Recycling in parks
  - Safety
  - Well-kept and clean
  - Existing bodies of water (lakes and streams)
  - Fall Creek Greenway
  - Existing volunteers and partnerships
  - Response to EAB's (emerald ash borers)
- Opportunities:
  - Additional parkland in more neighborhoods (partner or acquire)
  - Partnership with YMCA and other organizations with City of Lawrence
  - Increase connectivity and access to Fall Creek Pkwy and other trails
  - Develop park at 38th and Franklin
  - More pickleball courts that support tourneys, evening play, and that could be indoor and outdoor
  - Additional senior programs
  - Sustainability for existing parks
  - Biking opportunities for all ages (additional facilities adjacent to trails)
  - Additional dog parks
  - More beautification in parks
  - Additional basketball court at Sahm Park
  - Improve restrooms to encourage park use (restrooms should be accessible, clean, and up-to-date)
  - 42nd and Post need additional greenspace
  - Increase access in far NE (north of Lawrence) and additional parks
  - Utilize rivers and waterways
- Highest Priority:
  - Involve City of Lawrence in planning
  - Additional pickleball courts (expand facility)
  - Maintenance of existing trails
  - Additional access and connectivity of trails
  - Integrate sidewalk plan/ use of sidewalks for connections to trails
  - Veterans Park (City of Lawrence) partner with city for additional programs
  - Additional mountain bike trails
  - Better communication with community
  - Higher priority for funding for parks and recreation

TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

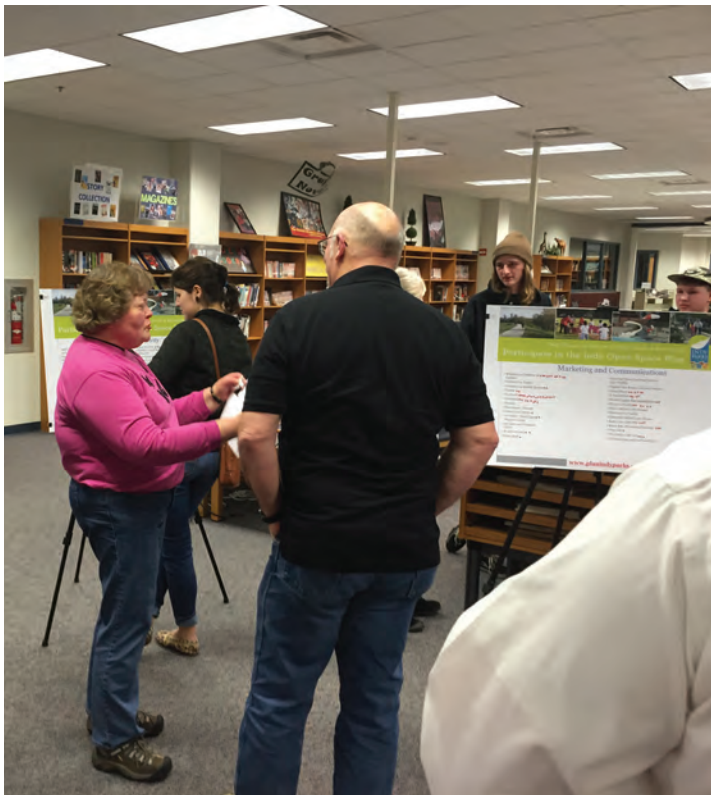
- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (19)
  - Pickleball (5)
  - Education / life skills programs such as cooking, budgeting, carpentry (5)
  - Adult art, dance, performing arts (3)
  - Special events/festivals (3)
  - Youth/ teen fitness wellness programs (3)
  - Bike safety (3)
- Facilities:
  - Pickleball courts (16)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (11)
  - Mountain bike trails (10)
  - Community gardens (3)
  - Nature trails (3)
  - Off-leash dog park (3)
  - Park shelters & picnic areas (3)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (11)
  - Website (via mobile device) (6)
  - Facebook (3)
  - An electronic program guide (3)
  - Email Blast (3)
  - E-newsletters (3)

2.3.7 PERRY TOWNSHIP (MARCH 10, 2015)

Location: Perry Meridian High School (401 W. Meridian School Rd.)
Attendance: 22

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Residents enjoy the paved trails for walking and are excited about the plans for the interurban trail
  - Enjoy the hockey opportunities for youth at Perry Park as there is not any other ice opportunities on the south side of the city
  - Enjoy the limited amount of parks in Perry Township
  - Great partnerships with the school district and the parks department
- Opportunities:
  - Additional neighborhood parks are needed in the community
  - Perry Township needs an anchor/signature park that offers many different experiences
  - Connectivity to Southport and downtown is needed, as well as to parks
  - A small, functional skate park is needed in Perry Township and residents believe that skateboarders can assist in taking care of and designing through a partnership with the city
  - Possibility of using the library that is closing for indoor programming space
  - Pickleball courts are an opportunity throughout the city, both indoor and outdoor
  - Year round ice at Perry Park
  - A multi-generational center is needed on the south-side of the city
  - Addition of loop trails to existing parks
- Priorities:
  - Creation of a friends group at Perry Park
  - Addition of a skate park in Perry Township
  - Indoor pool in Perry Township
  - Bring Perry Township up to other townships in the city as it relates to parkland
  - Pickleball courts that are standalone, both indoor and outdoor
  - Indoor program space that is multi-functional
  - Additional year-round hockey opportunities on the south side of the city
  - Create fundraising opportunities for parks
  - Increase funding from city council for parks



TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Skateboard (28)
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (7)
  - Pickleball (7)
  - Adult fitness & wellness programs (5)
  - Nature education programs (5)
  - Senior programs (5)
- Facilities:
  - Skateboard park (32)
  - Pickleball courts (20)
  - Ice skating / hockey (indoor or outdoor) (10)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (8)
  - Nature trails (6)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Facebook (17)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (11)
  - Instagram (8)
  - Email Blast (6)
  - Flyers in facility (4)

2.3.8 PIKE TOWNSHIP (MARCH 10, 2015)

Location: Pike Township Small Claims (5665 Lafayette Rd.)
Attendance: 31

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Trail system
  - The abundance of environmental education (especially programs offered at Eagle Creek)
  - The closeness/proximity of recreation opportunities to residents
  - Staff and volunteers at Eagle Creek Park
  - The exposure and abundance of nature within Indianapolis
  - Cleanliness of parks
  - Dog parks
  - Appreciation of volunteers that help maintain amenities and facilities in parks
  - Indianapolis' waterways
  - The park foundation
  - Eagle Creek Park
- Opportunities:
  - Residents and city officials need to value Indy Parks (parks, amenities, facilities, etc.)
  - Re-purpose/re-develop vacant homes and brownfield sites
  - Re-purpose/re-develop Lafayette Square Mall
  - Create and build new partnerships
  - Additional volunteers are needed to help Indy Parks maintain parks and facilities
  - Continue to connect existing trails
  - Look for re-development/conversion opportunities (such as Lafayette Square Mall into community gardens/famer market locations, skate park)
  - Keep improving Eagle Creek Park (additional opportunities to expand programs, add amenities, and improve maintenance)
  - Look for partnerships with the arts (especially at Eagle Creek Park)
  - Streetscapes are underdeveloped
  - Have environmental, self-sustainable considerations be a part of the plan
- Priorities:
  - Additional mountain bike trails
  - Add additional natural surface trails
  - The connectivity of trails
  - Upgrade neighborhoods parks (usability)
  - Green technology lighting implemented into the park system
  - Eagle Creek Park improvements
  - Maintenance and maintain existing facilities and amenities
  - Underserved areas
  - Build a dedicated park for handicap and individuals with disabilities
  - Conservation of natural habitats
  - Build upon and look for new partnerships

TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

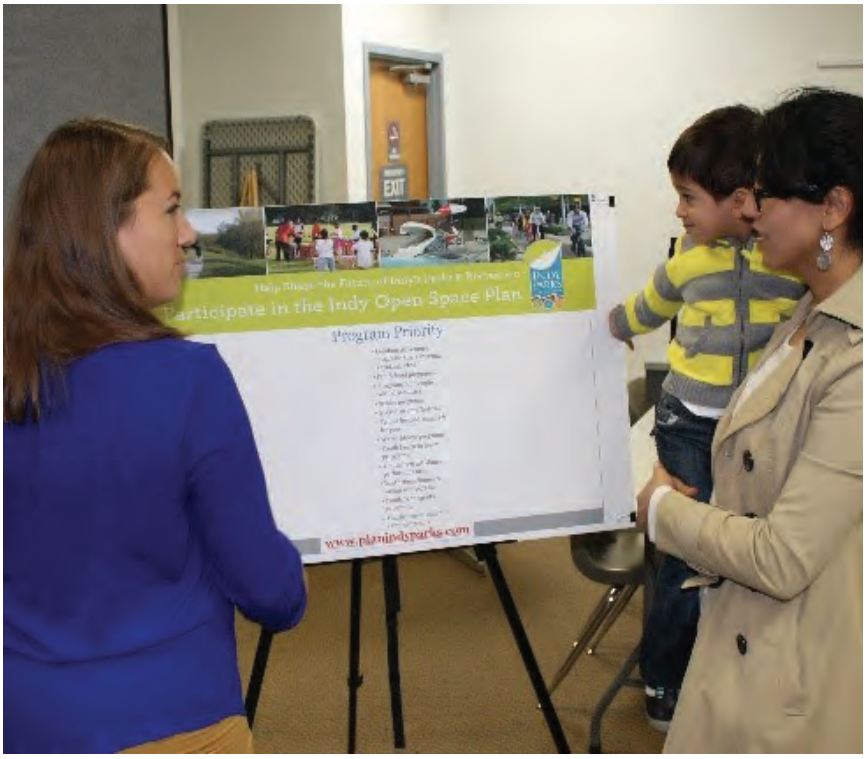
The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (19)
  - Adult fitness & wellness programs (11)
  - Nature education programs (11)
  - Youth/ teen fitness wellness programs (10)
  - Education / life skills programs such as cooking, budgeting, carpentry (7)
  - Programs for people with disabilities (7)

Facilities:

  - Nature Trails (31)
  - Mountain Bike Trails (28)
  - Park shelters & picnic areas (7)
  - Nature centers (5)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (5)

- Marketing & Communications:
  - E-newsletters (11)
  - Park staff (8)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (7)
  - Website (via mobile device) (7)
  - An electronic program guide (7)

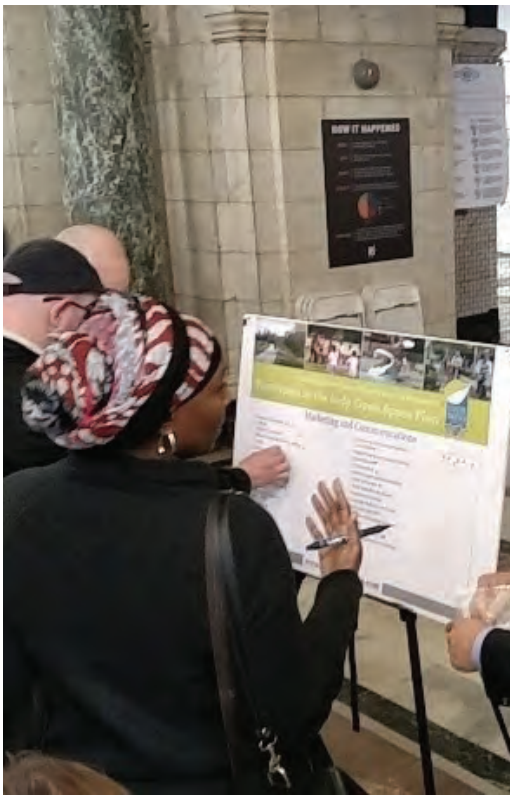


2.3.9 CENTER TOWNSHIP (MARCH 11, 2015)

Location: Old Town Hall (202 N. Alabama)
Attendance: 39

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Diversity of experiences
  - Parks bring community together
  - Number of parks
  - Interaction with nature for city dwellers
  - Performing arts in parks
  - Amenities available at water parks
  - Interactive, caring, engaged community
  - Development of greenways / improved connectivity
  - Opportunities for learning / environmental education
  - Committed, professional parks staff
  - After school programs
  - Community support for parks and nature
  - Updated playground equipment
  - Plenty of room for growth
- Opportunities:
  - Convert concrete into useful spaces (i.e., community gardens)
  - Use parks to make the city more attractive and encourage economic development
  - Reach out and connect with special interest groups / inclusion of all user groups
  - Increase partnerships with library (i.e., small libraries in parks)
  - Internet access in parks
  - Parks as information hubs / community resource centers
  - Rehabilitate and revitalize historic parks
  - Increase community pride and ownership of parks
- Priorities:
  - More parks / facilities in outlying areas of the county
  - Upkeep / improvement of existing inventory
  - Lengthen hours of operation and season for pools
  - Keep arts alive in the city through parks
  - Keep community engaged / involved
  - Affordable public access to parks / facilities
  - Preservation of parkland
  - More parks staff / additional funding for staff
  - Find alternative / non-traditional revenue sources
  - Improve accessibility of parks / facilities
  - Enhance security
  - Provide programs that give youth an outlet
  - Park features that increase community ownership
  - Bold / innovative design
  - Programs for youth volunteers / jobs for kids in the parks



TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

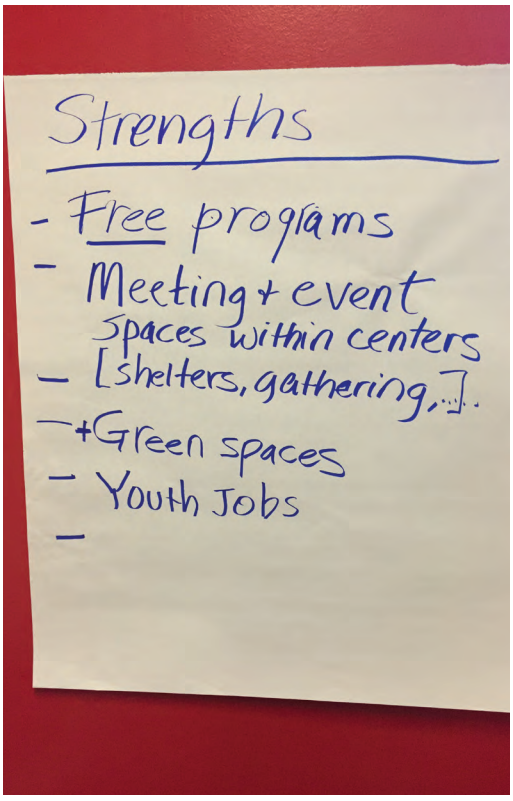
- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (20)
  - Nature education programs (12)
  - Before & after school programs (11)
  - Youth/ teen sports programs (10)
  - Education / life skills programs such as cooking, budgeting, carpentry (9)
  - Special events/festivals (9)
- Facilities:
  - Skateboard park (19)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (14)
  - Mountain bike trails (12)
  - Nature trails (10)
  - Nature center (9)
  - Outdoor amphitheaters (9)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Website (via mobile device) (13)
  - E-newsletters (12)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (9)
  - Marketing through schools (9)
  - Parks staff (7)

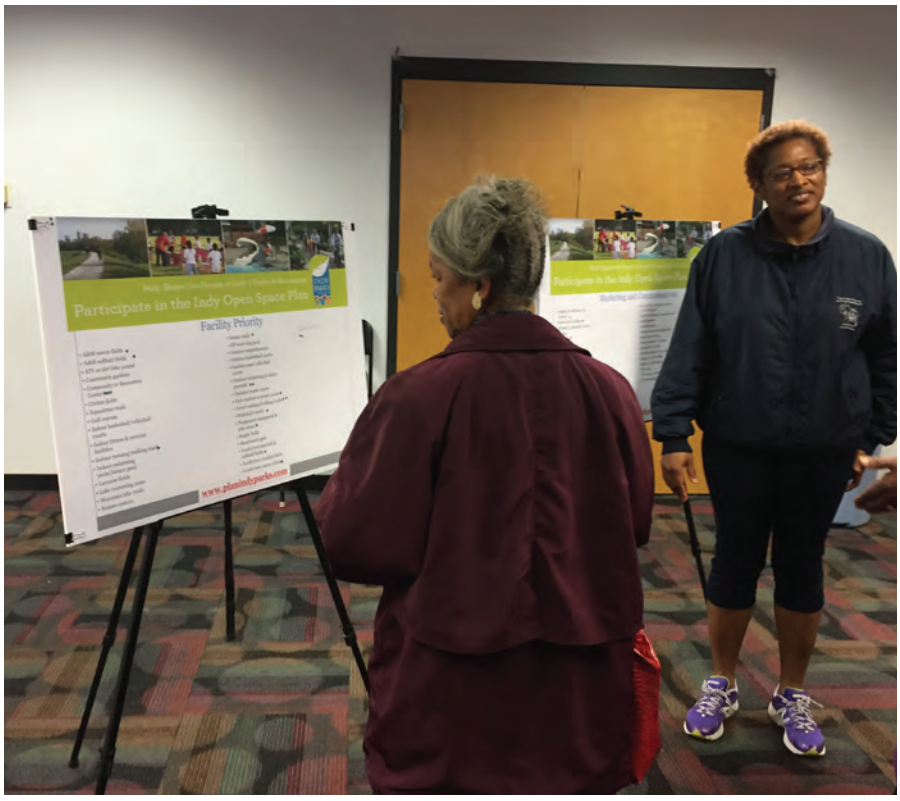
2.3.10 CENTER TOWNSHIP (MARCH 11, 2015)

Location: Washington Park Family Center (3130 E. 30th Street)
Attendance: 15

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Free and inexpensive programming that is well done
  - Meeting and event rental opportunities at the centers and shelters that allow for gathering space
  - The city offers many opportunities to enjoy green space
  - Provides job opportunities for youth
- Opportunities:
  - Enhance maintenance to make parks cleaner, safer and more hospitable, especially in Center Township
  - Deferred maintenance is needed at many facilities and amenities in the parks. Need to take care of what we already have
  - Continue to enhance partnerships with IPS and parks so that they are equitable partnerships
  - Continue to work with the corporate community in partnerships
  - Need to add pools back in the parks, especially in Center Township parks, as many have been removed. It is a necessity to teach children how to swim
  - Enhanced access to green spaces throughout the city is needed, especially along the Fall Creek Corridor
  - There is an opportunity to enhance mentorship programming at family centers throughout the city
- Priorities:
  - Security and safety at our parks is a necessity
  - Enhance youth programming
  - Improve amenities and maintenance at Washington Park
  - Maintenance throughout the system is in need of improvement
  - Allow park staff to have more authority at each center
  - Extended hours at parks
  - Accessibility to green space





TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Youth/ teen fitness wellness programs (6)
  - Before & after school programs (4)
  - Youth learn to swim programs (4)
  - Adult art, dance, performing arts (3)
  - Senior programs (3)
- Facilities:
  - Community or recreation center (4)
  - Nature trails (4)
  - Outdoor swimming & spray grounds (3)
  - Adult softball fields (2)
  - Community gardens (2)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Facebook (4)
  - Parks staff (4)
  - Over the phone customer service (327-PARK) (4)
  - Email Blast (4)
  - Flyers in facility (4)

2.3.11 CENTER TOWNSHIP (MARCH 11, 2015)

Location: Garfield Park Burello Family Center (2345 Pagoda Drive)
Attendance: 26

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Strengths:
  - Greenways
  - The art center in Garfield Park
  - Supportive staff
  - Great park design/layout throughout Indy
  - Abundant park space
  - Fields of Garfield Park
  - Volunteer programs
  - Food service programs
  - Existing pickleball courts and programs
  - Art in the parks (music/plays)
  - Aquatic facilities and programs
  - Newly upgraded fountains and fountain lights
  - Garfield Park
- Opportunities:
  - Additional swim lesson programs
  - Maintenance of trails
  - Communication of special events in neighborhood parks
  - Addition and better displays of signage throughout parks and facilities
  - Skate parks
  - Dedicated playgrounds for handicap children
  - Additional mountain bike trails
  - Connectivity of trails to parks
  - Indoor/outdoor pickleball courts that could hold tournament play
  - Frisbee/disc golf
  - Safety of roadways in Garfield Park
  - Safety in parks and facilities throughout Indy
  - Better signage on existing centers
  - Connect park trails to city destination spots
  - Signage on trails
  - Additional entrance points into Garfield Park
  - Improved marketing and communication efforts
  - Maintain existing facilities and amenities in Garfield park
  - Additional passive areas/parks
  - Job training for high school students for the parks and recreation field
  - Maintenance of parkways

- Priorities:
  - Pickleball courts and programs
  - Additional funding for system
  - Safety in parks
  - Additional staffing to help care for parks, amenities, and facilities
  - Additional park space/acres
  - Welcoming, signage/visibility in signature parks
  - Maintenance and cleanliness of waterways

TOP 5 PRIORITIES FROM THE OPEN HOUSE

The top five priorities for programs, facilities, and marketing and communications from meeting attendees is described below:

- Programs:
  - Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.) (18)
  - Education / life skills programs such as cooking, budgeting, carpentry (12)
  - Pickleball (10)
  - Nature education programs (9)
  - Special events/festivals (6)
  - Before & after school programs (6)
- Facilities:
  - Mountain bike trails (18)
  - Pickleball courts (16)
  - Skateboard park (12)
  - Paved walking & biking trails (9)
  - Community gardens (9)
- Marketing & Communications:
  - Parks staff (11)
  - TV (cable or off air) (10)
  - Website (via desktop or laptop) (9)
  - Facebook (8)
  - E-newsletters (7)

2.3.12 SUMMARY OF PRIORITY BY CATEGORY

PROGRAMS

Program Priority	Total	Wayne Township	Franklin Township	Washington Township	Decatur Township	Warren Township	Lawrence Township	Pike Township	Perry Township	Center Township (Old City Hall)	Center Township (Garfield Park)	Center Township (Washington Park)
Outdoor adventure programs (i.e. canoeing, kayaking, etc.)	**186**	6	20	43	20	12	19	19	7	20	18	2
Nature education programs	**72**	1	5	23	3	2	1	11	5	12	9	0
Adult fitness & wellness programs	**55**	7	0	10	5	8	2	11	5	1	4	2
Special events/festivals	**51**	0	7	8	4	6	3	5	2	9	6	1
Education / life skills programs such as cooking, budgeting, carpentry	**50**	4	5	2	1	3	5	7	1	9	12	1
Youth/ teen fitness wellness programs	**45**	4	3	5	0	3	3	10	2	4	5	6
Senior programs	**44**	5	3	3	2	5	2	5	5	6	5	3
Before & after school programs	**41**	5	2	4	3	1	0	5	0	11	6	4
Pickleball	**38**	0	0	0	0	16	5	0	7	0	10	0
Adult art, dance, performing arts	**31**	3	3	3	0	3	3	2	1	5	5	3
Youth/ teen sports programs	**29**	6	3	5	0	0	0	0	1	10	2	2
Skateboard	**28**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	0	0	0
Youth/ teen summer camp programs	**27**	4	4	4	0	0	0	2	0	7	4	2
Programs for people with disabilities	**23**	1	0	3	2	2	2	7	0	1	4	1
Youth learn to swim programs	**20**	4	3	0	0	0	2	4	2	1	0	4
Youth/ teen art, dance, performing arts	**16**	1	3	1	0	3	0	3	0	4	0	1
Trail programs/geocaching	**16**	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adult swim programs	**14**	4	0	0	0	4	0	1	1	2	2	0
Water fitness programs	**14**	3	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	4	0
Adult sports programs	**10**	0	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	0	1
Pre-school programs	**10**	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0
Tennis lessons, clinics & leagues	**8**	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	2	1
Gymnastics & tumbling programs	**7**	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	2
Golf lessons	**5**	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0
Martial arts programs	**4**	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0
Non-traditional sports such as archery, fencing, etc.	**4**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Bike safety	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Youth training for future employment/jobs in park and recreation industry	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

FACILITIES

Facility Priority	Total	Wayne Township	Franklin Township	Washington Township	Decatur Township	Warren Township	Lawrence Township	Pike Township	Perry Township	Center Township (Old City Hall)	Center Township (Garfield Park)	Center Township (Washington Park)
Mountain bike trails	**165**	16	19	35	16	9	10	28	2	12	18	0
Skateboard park	**109**	5	10	27	3	0	0	1	32	19	12	0
Nature trails	**99**	8	5	15	7	4	3	31	6	10	6	4
Paved walking & biking trails	**94**	23	4	9	4	5	11	5	8	14	9	2
Pickleball courts	**71**	1	0	2	0	15	16	0	20	0	16	1
Off-leash dog park	**42**	3	2	4	3	13	3	5	1	1	7	0
Community gardens	**37**	6	2	6	0	1	3	2	0	6	9	2
Community or recreation center	**37**	3	2	1	1	8	2	3	3	7	3	4
Nature centers	**37**	2	3	4	1	2	0	5	4	9	7	0
Park shelters & picnic areas	**29**	1	2	6	0	2	3	7	2	3	2	1
Outdoor swimming & spray grounds	**28**	3	5	1	0	3	1	4	0	5	3	3
Outdoor amphitheaters	**24**	0	3	1	1	3	0	4	0	9	2	1
Playground equipment & play areas	**23**	10	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	5	1	2
Indoor fitness & exercise facilities	**18**	5	1	1	1	3	0	3	1	1	1	1
Indoor running/ walking track	**15**	4	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	1
Indoor swimming pools/ leisure pool	**13**	2	2	0	0	2	1	4	2	0	0	0
Ice skating / hockey (indoor or outdoor)	**12**	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
Adult soccer fields	**8**	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	2	0	1
Adult softball fields	**5**	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2
Equestrian trails	**5**	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0
Golf courses	**5**	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lake swimming areas	**5**	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0
Outdoor tennis courts	**5**	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0
ATV or dirt bike course	**4**	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Youth/ teen baseball & softball fields	**4**	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Open green space	**4**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Outdoor basketball courts	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Rugby fields	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
Youth/ teen football fields	**3**	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Youth/ teen soccer fields	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Comfort station (restroom and water)	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Public art	**3**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
Cricket fields	**2**	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Outdoor sand volleyball courts	**2**	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Bicycle parking	**2**	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frisbee golf	**2**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Flexible use of outdoor spaces	**2**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Lacrosse fields	**1**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Natural surface trails	**1**	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Indoor basketball/ volleyball courts	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Marketing & Communication Priority	Total	Wayne Township	Franklin Township	Washington Township	Decatur Township	Warren Township	Lawrence Township	Pike Township	Perry Township	Center Township (Old City Hall)	Center Township (Garfield Park)	Center Township (Washington Park)
Facebook	**102**	9	19	17	7	8	3	5	17	5	8	4
Website (via desktop or laptop)	**79**	4	4	11	6	6	11	7	11	9	9	1
E-newsletters	**71**	2	5	15	6	5	3	11	4	12	7	1
Email Blast	**55**	13	0	15	0	3	3	5	6	4	2	4
Website (via mobile device)	**53**	1	7	5	3	5	6	7	2	13	4	0
Parks staff	**45**	1	5	2	4	1	1	8	1	7	11	4
Instagram	**39**	1	8	7	3	5	0	0	8	6	1	0
TV (cable or off air)	**36**	3	2	3	1	7	1	2	3	3	10	1
Flyers in facility	**27**	1	1	3	0	0	1	4	6	2	5	4
Radio ads (AM/FM)	**25**	4	2	0	0	3	0	3	3	1	5	4
A printed/ hard copy program guide	**24**	5	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	6	1	0
Website (via tablet)	**23**	1	1	0	8	2	0	4	0	2	4	1
An electronic program guide	**22**	1	2	3	0	1	3	7	0	3	2	0
Word of mouth	**20**	1	0	2	0	2	0	4	2	2	5	2
Twitter	**18**	2	1	4	3	1	0	3	2	2	0	0
Print ads	**18**	0	1	3	0	7	1	2	1	0	3	0
Over the phone customer service (327-PARK)	**15**	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	2	4
Signage along trails	**15**	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Marketing through schools	**9**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0
Radio ads (streaming internet)	**7**	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	1
Search engine recommendation	**6**	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	0
Non-traditional community engagement	**5**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
Flyers mailed to my house	**4**	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Postcards mailed to my house	**4**	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0
TV (streaming such as Hulu Plus	**4**	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
Text alerts	**4**	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Outreach (meetings, door to door)	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pinterest	**2**	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Other social media	**2**	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Postcards in facility	**2**	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Digital chat room customer service	**1**	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maps (print)	**1**	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
On-Site Banners	**1**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Foursquare/ Swarm	**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

2.4 STATISTICALLY-VALID NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

2.4.1 OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

ETC Institute conducted the City of Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Citizen Survey during the summer of 2015. The purpose of the survey was to establish priorities for the future improvement of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services within the City of Indianapolis as part of its Parks and Recreation Master Plan update. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households, both users and non-users of Indy Parks, throughout the City of Indianapolis. The survey was administered by mail, web, and phone.

ETC Institute worked extensively with the City of Indianapolis officials in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to help plan the future system.

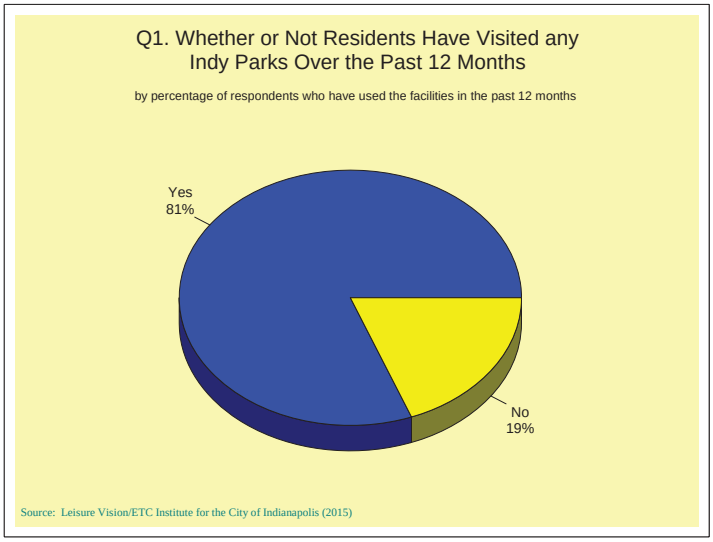
A seven-page survey was mailed to a random sample of households throughout the City of Indianapolis (9,000 total, with 1,000 surveys in each of the 9 Townships). Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed each household that received a survey also received an automated voice message encouraging them to complete the survey.

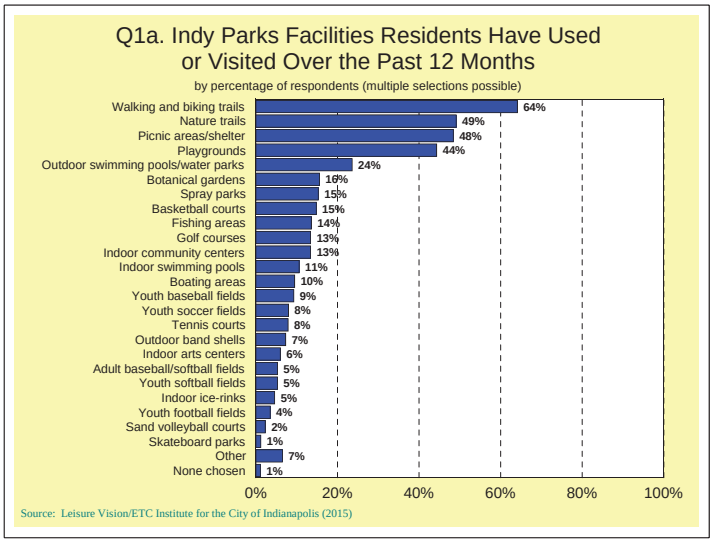
The goal was to obtain a total of at least 900 completed surveys. ETC Institute met that goal with a total of 915 surveys completed. The results of the random sample of 915 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision rate of at least +/-3.2%. The following pages summarize major survey findings.

2.4.2 PARK USAGE AND RATINGS

WHETHER OR NOT RESIDENTS HAVE VISITED ANY INDY PARKS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS

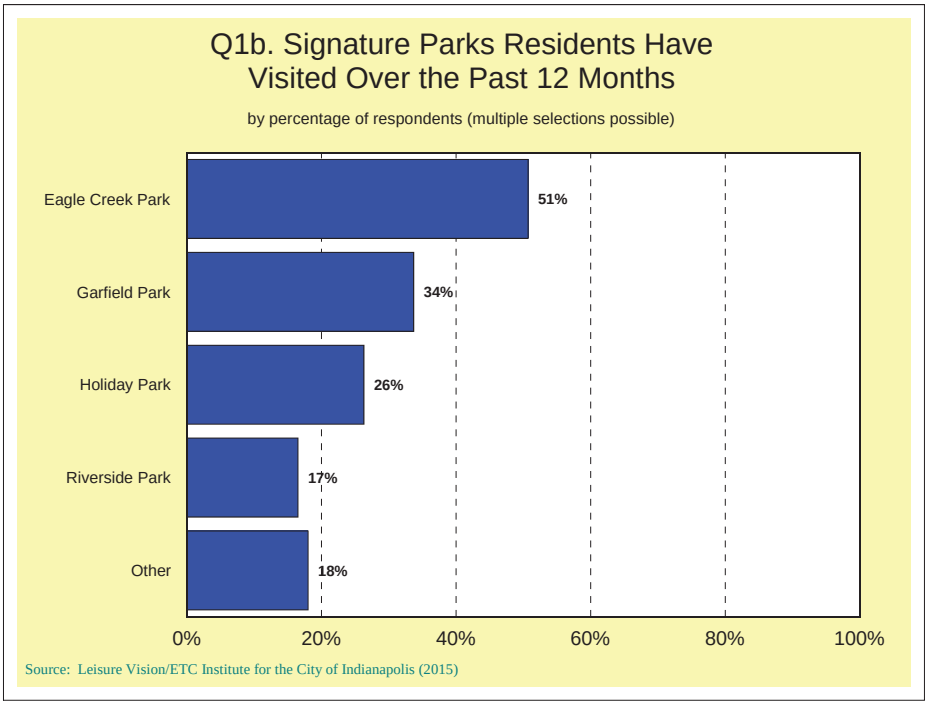
Eighty-one percent (81%) have used the facilities over the past 12 months, while 19% indicated they had not used parks. Of households who have visited parks, 64% used walking and biking trails the most. Other most used facilities include: Nature trails (49%), Picnic areas/shelter (48%), Playgrounds (44%), and Outdoor swimming pools/water parks (24%).





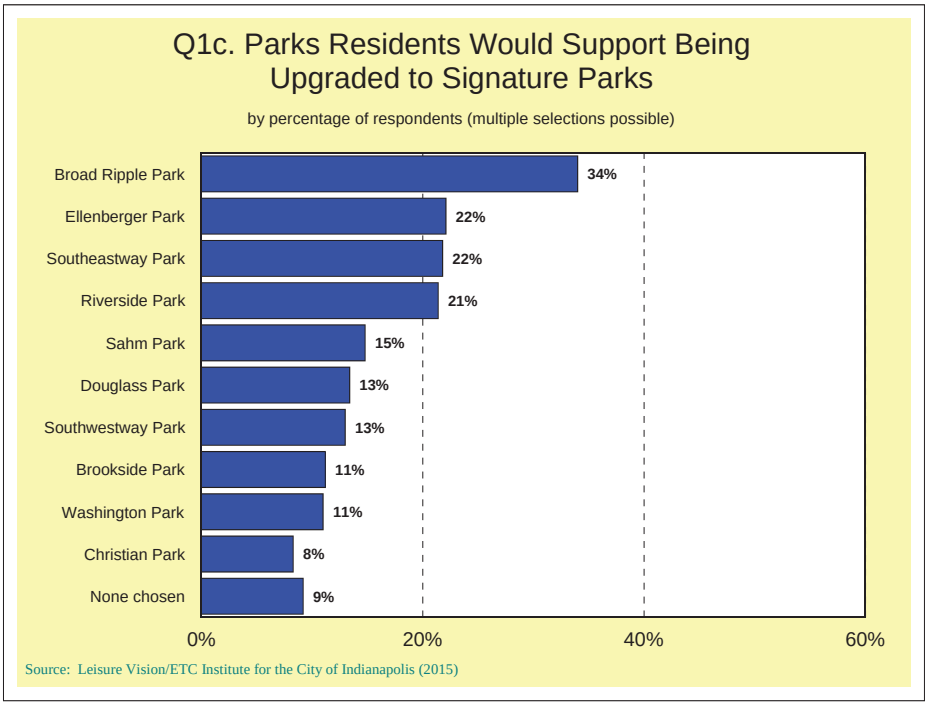
SIGNATURE PARKS THAT HOUSEHOLDS HAVE VISITED DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Based on the percentage of respondent households who used or visited signature parks, 51% used the Eagle Creek Park. Other signature parks visited include: Garfield Park (34%), Holliday Park (26%), Riverside Park (17%), and Other (18%).



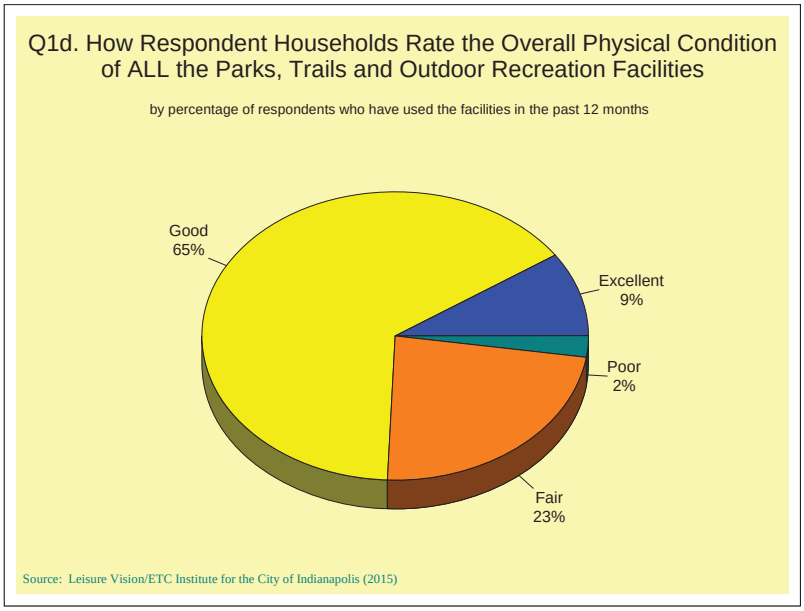
PARKS RESIDENTS WOULD SUPPORT BEING UPGRADED TO SIGNATURE PARKS

Residents were asked to check the two parks most supportive of being upgraded to signature parks. Thirty-four percent (34%) of respondent households would support Broad Ripple Park being upgraded to a signature park. Other parks residents would support being upgraded to a signature park: Ellenberger Park (22%), Southeastway Park (22%), and Riverside Park (21%).



HOW RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS RATE THE OVERALL PHYSICAL CONDITION OF ALL THE PARKS, TRAILS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

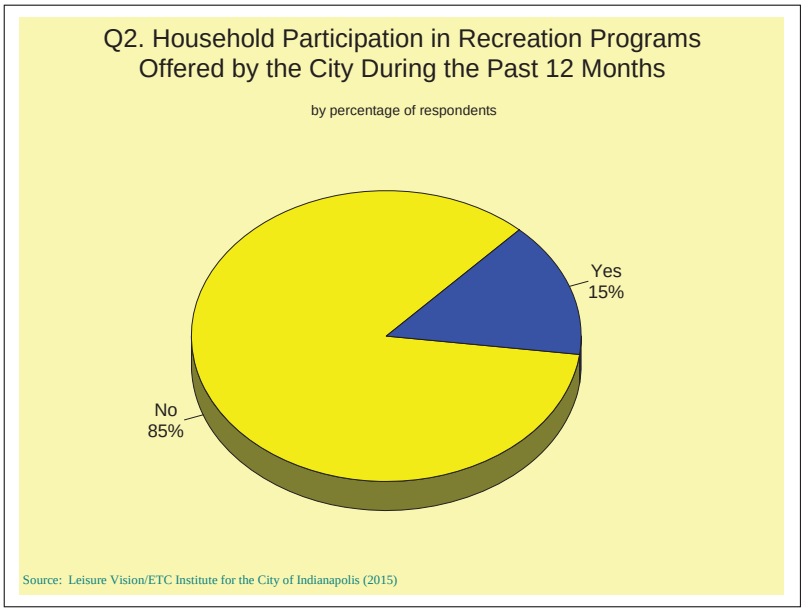
Sixty-five percent (65%) of respondent households rate the overall physical condition of the parks, trails and outdoor recreation facilities visited over the past 12 months as good. Other ratings include: Fair (23%), excellent (9%), and poor (2%).



2.4.3 PROGRAM USAGE AND SATISFACTION

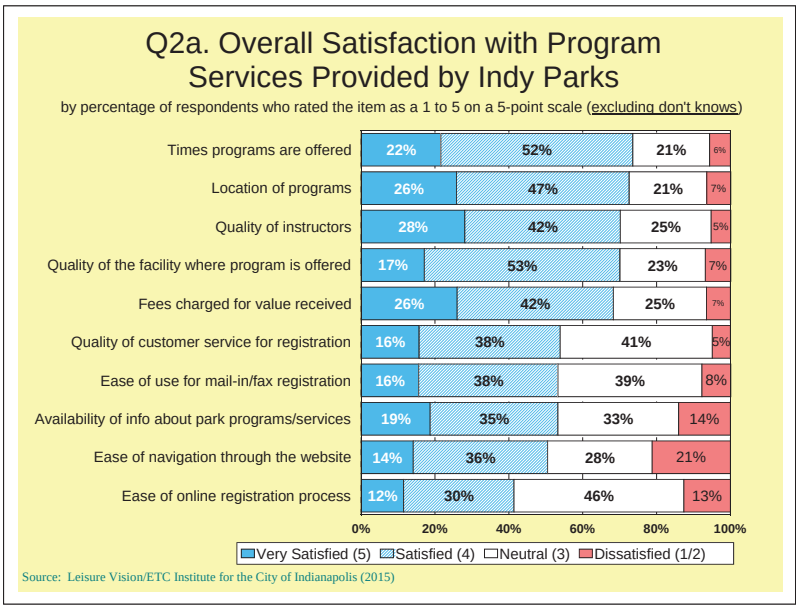
HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION PROGRAMS OFFERED BY THE CITY DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Eighty-five percent (85%) have not participated in recreation programs offered by the city during the past 12 months, Fifteen percent (15%) have participated in recreation programs offered by the city during the same time period.



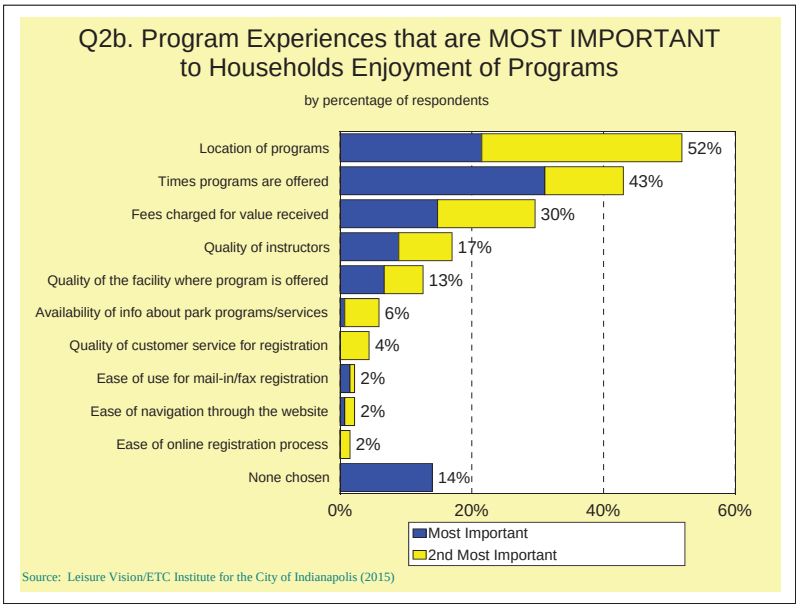
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH PROGRAM SERVICES PROVIDED BY INDY PARKS

Based on the percentage of respondent households who were either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied," Seventy-two percent (72%) are satisfied with the times programs are offered. Respondent households are also satisfied with the location of programs (73%), quality of instructors (70%), and quality of the facility where the program is offered (70%).



PROGRAM EXPERIENCES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS ENJOYMENT OF PROGRAMS

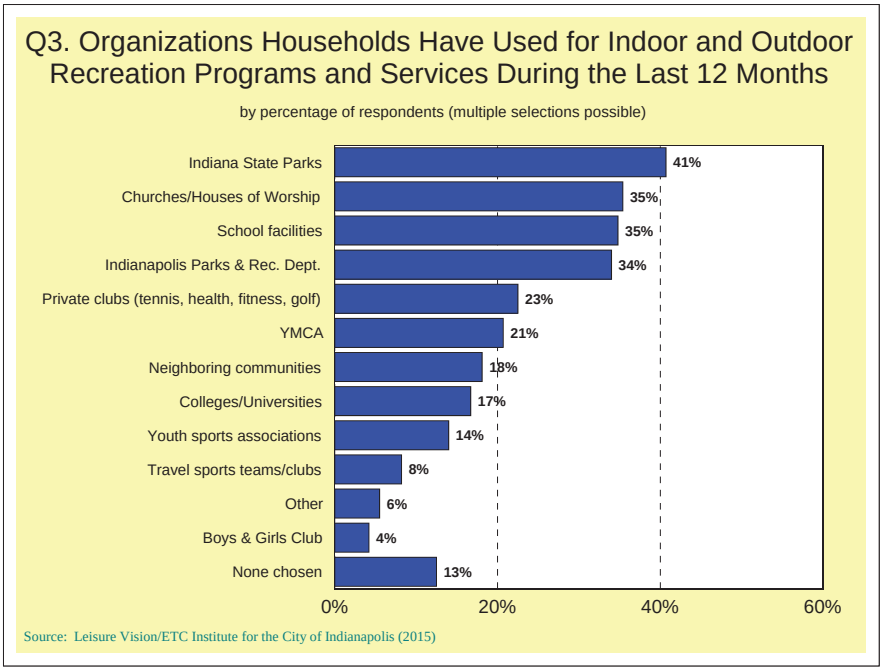
Based on the percentage of respondents who chose the program experience as one of their top two choices, (52%) chose location of programs. Other most important program experiences include: times programs are offered (43%), fees charged for value received (30%), and quality of instructors (17%).



2.4.4 USE OF ORGANIZATIONS

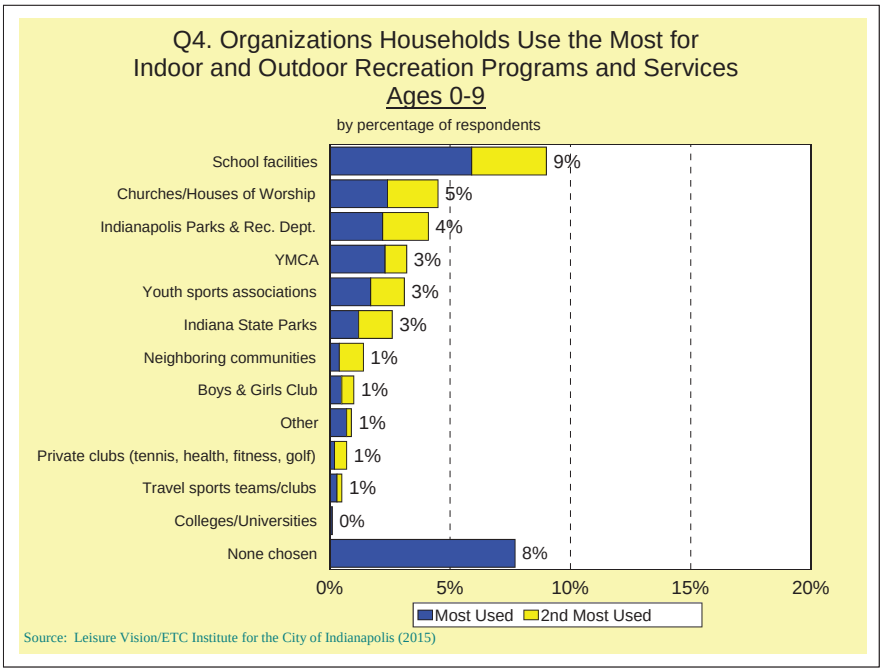
ORGANIZATIONS HOUSEHOLD HAVE USED FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Based on the percentage of respondent households who used organizations for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services, (41%) used Indiana State Parks over the past 12 months. Other most used organizations include: Churches/Houses of Worship (35%), school facilities (35%), Indy Parks (34%), and private clubs (23%).



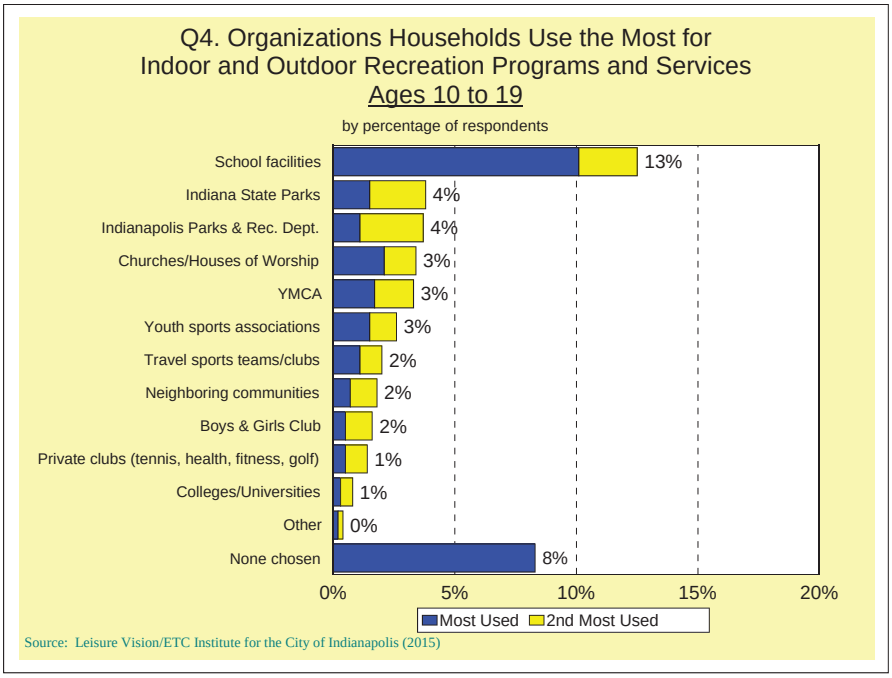
USAGE BY AGES 0-9

Based on the percentage of respondent households with Ages 0-9 who used organizations for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services, (9%) used school facilities over the past 12 months. Other most used organizations include: Churches/Houses of Worship (5%), and Indy Parks (4%).



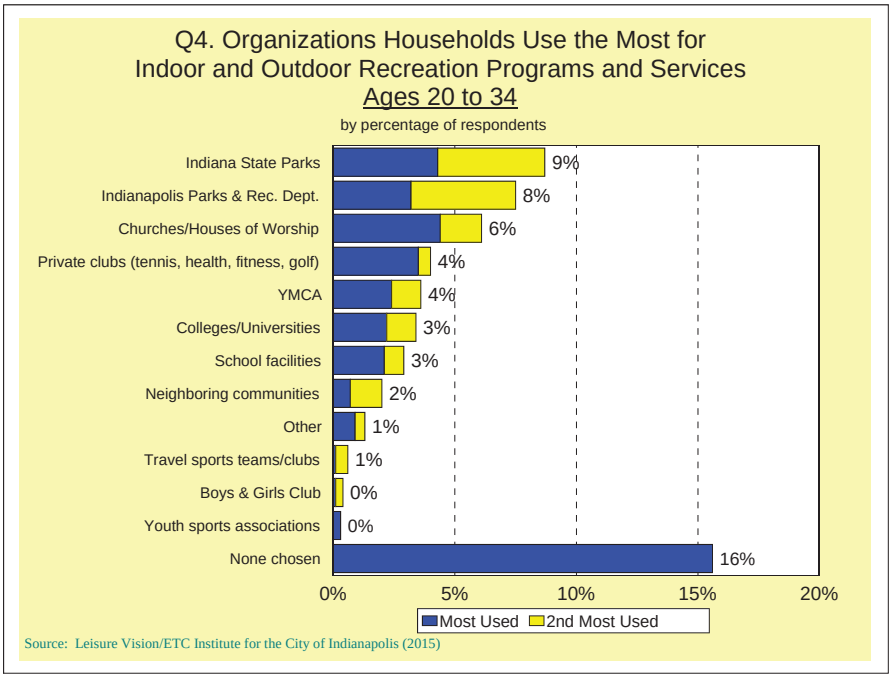
USAGE BY AGES 10-19

Based on the percentage of respondent households with Ages 10-19 who used organizations for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services, (13%) used school facilities over the past 12 months. Other most used organizations include: Indiana State Parks (4%), and Indy Parks (4%).



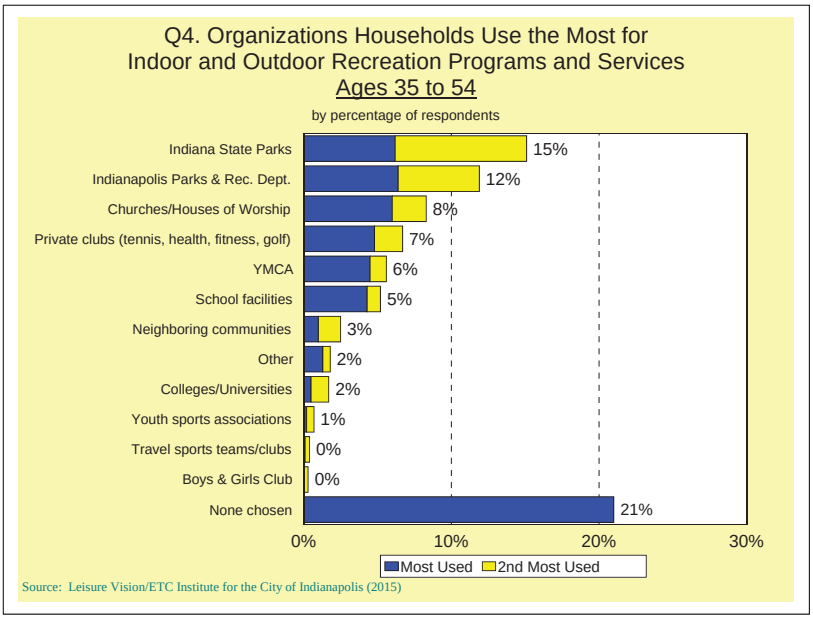
USAGE BY AGES 20-34

Based on the percentage of respondent households with Ages 20-34 who used organizations for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services, (9%) used Indiana State Parks over the past 12 months. Other most used organizations include: Indy Parks Department (8%), and Churches/Houses of Worship (6%).



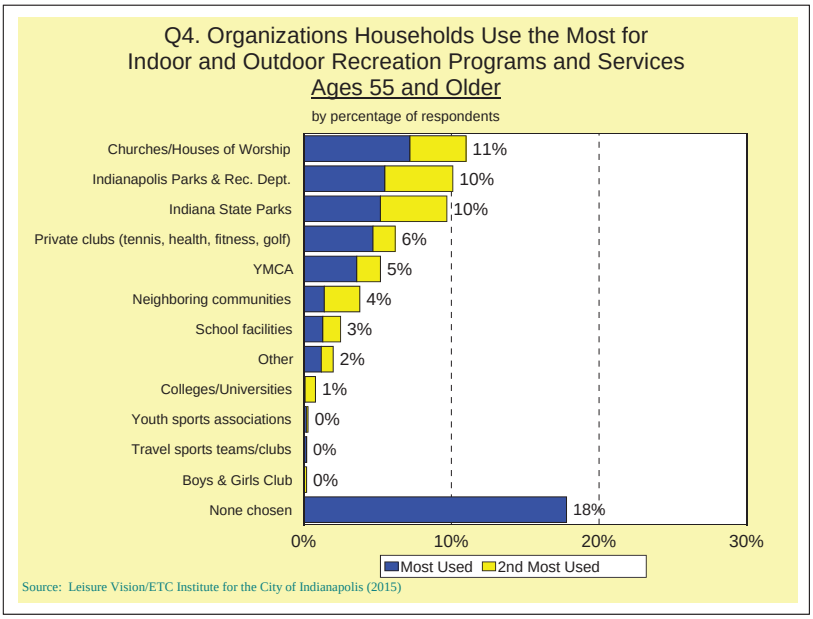
USAGE BY AGES 35-54

Based on the percentage of respondent households with Ages 35-54 who used organizations for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services, (15%) used Indiana State Parks over the past 12 months. Other most used organizations include: Indy Parks (12%), and Churches/Houses of Worship (8%).



USAGE BY AGES 55 AND OLDER

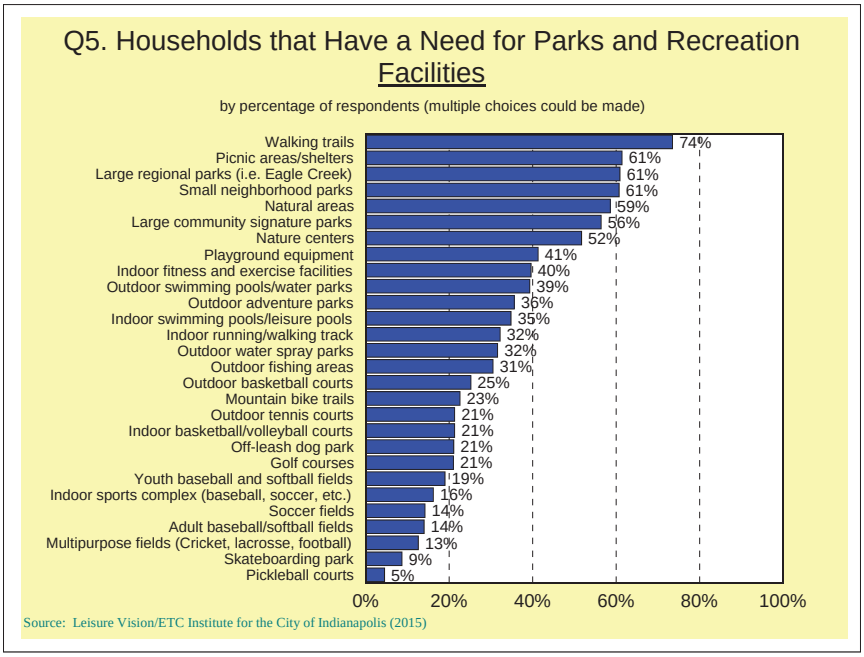
Based on the percentage of respondent households with Ages 55 and older who used organizations for indoor and outdoor recreation programs and services, (11%) used Churches/Houses of Worship over the past 12 months. Other most used organizations include: Indy Parks (10%), and Indiana State Parks (10%).



2.4.5 FACILITY NEEDS AND IMPORTANCE

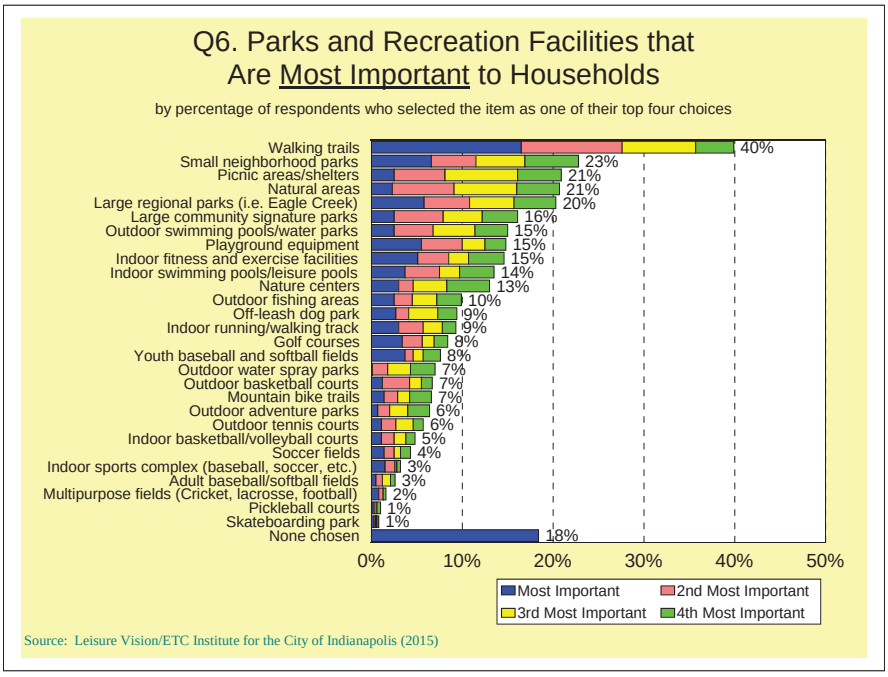
HOUSEHOLDS THAT HAVE A NEED FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Seventy-four percent (74%) of respondents or 244,166 households have a need for walking trails. Other programs respondent households have a need for include: Picnic areas/shelters (61% or 203,970 households), large regional parks (61% or 202,309 households), and small neighborhood parks (61% or 201,645 households).



RECREATION FACILITIES THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS

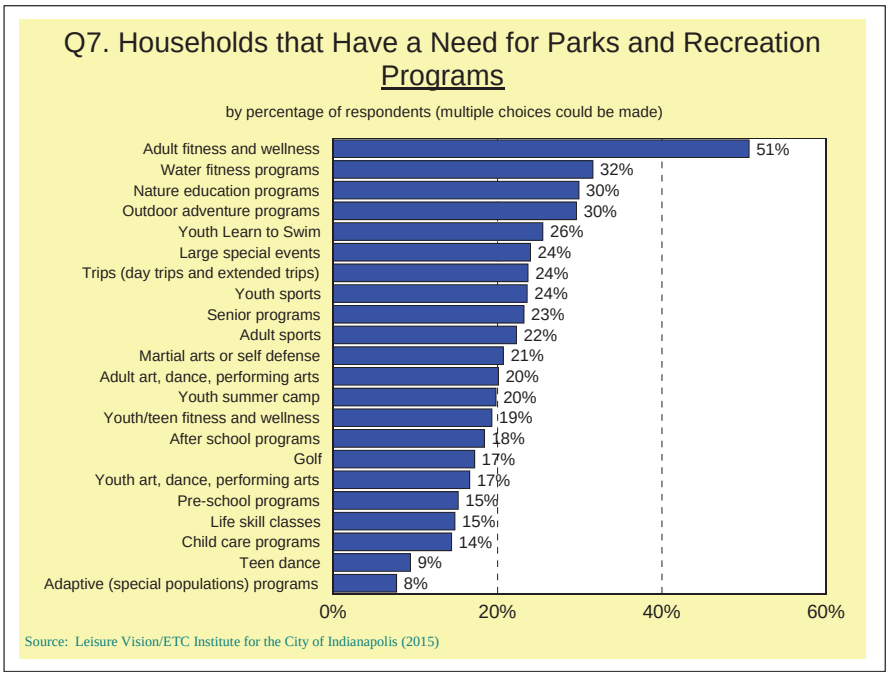
Based on the percentage of respondents who chose the facility as one of their top four choices, 40% indicated walking trails as the most important facility to their household. Other most important programs include: Small neighborhood parks (23%), picnic areas/shelter (21%), and natural areas (21%).



2.4.6 PROGRAM NEEDS, IMPORTANCE, AND USAGE

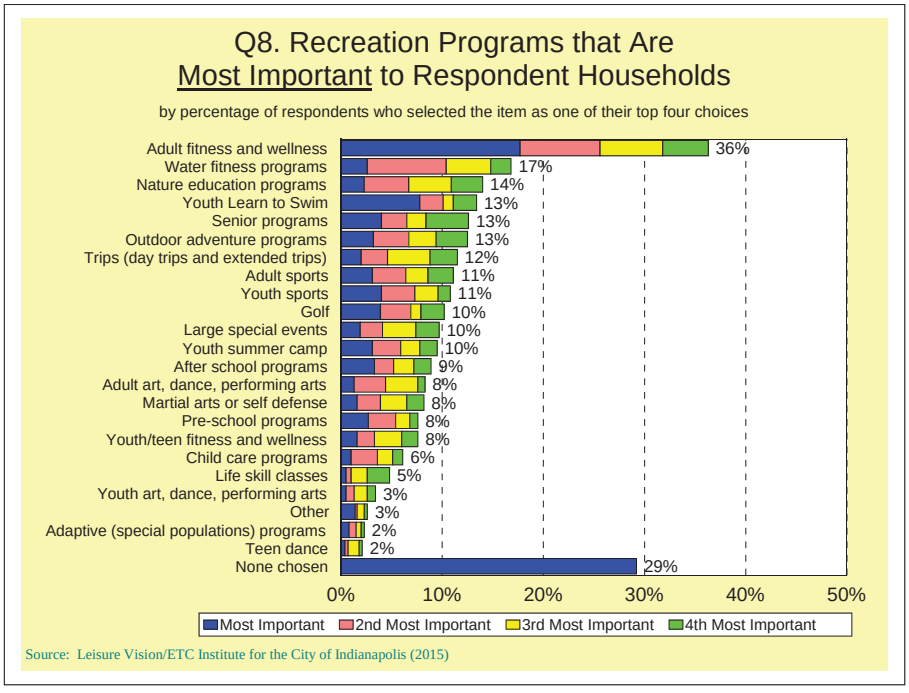
HOUSEHOLDS THAT HAVE A NEED FOR PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

Fifty-one percent (51%) of respondents or 168,093 households have a need for adult fitness and wellness. Other programs respondent households have a need for include: water fitness programs (32% or 104,975 households), nature education programs (30% or 99,328 households), and outdoor adventure programs (30% or 98,331 households).



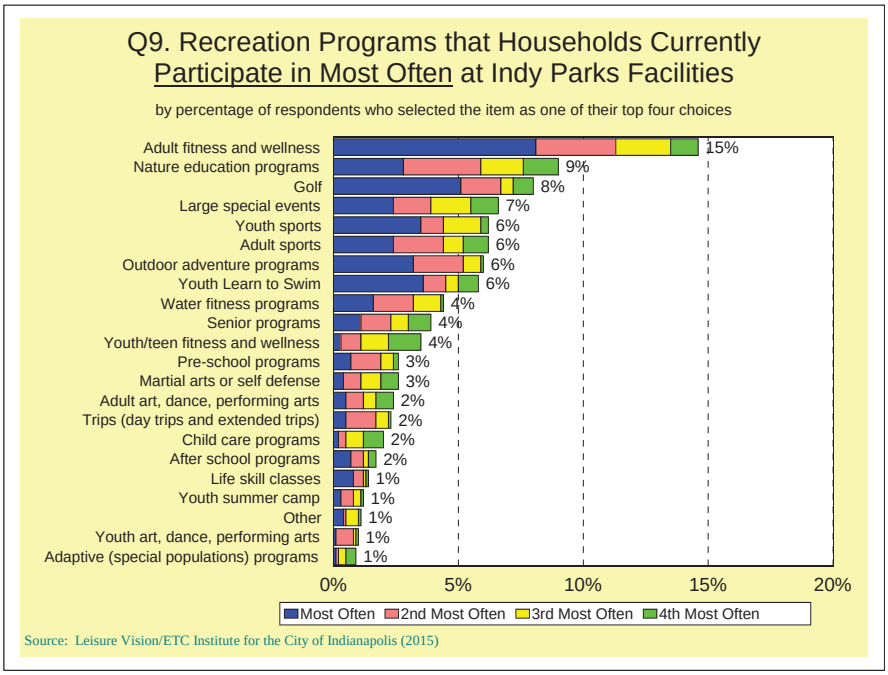
RECREATION PROGRAMS THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS

Based on the percentage of respondents who chose the facility as one of their top four choices, 36% indicated adult fitness and wellness as the most important program to their household. Other most important programs include: Water fitness programs (17%), nature education programs (14%), and youth learn to swim programs (13%).



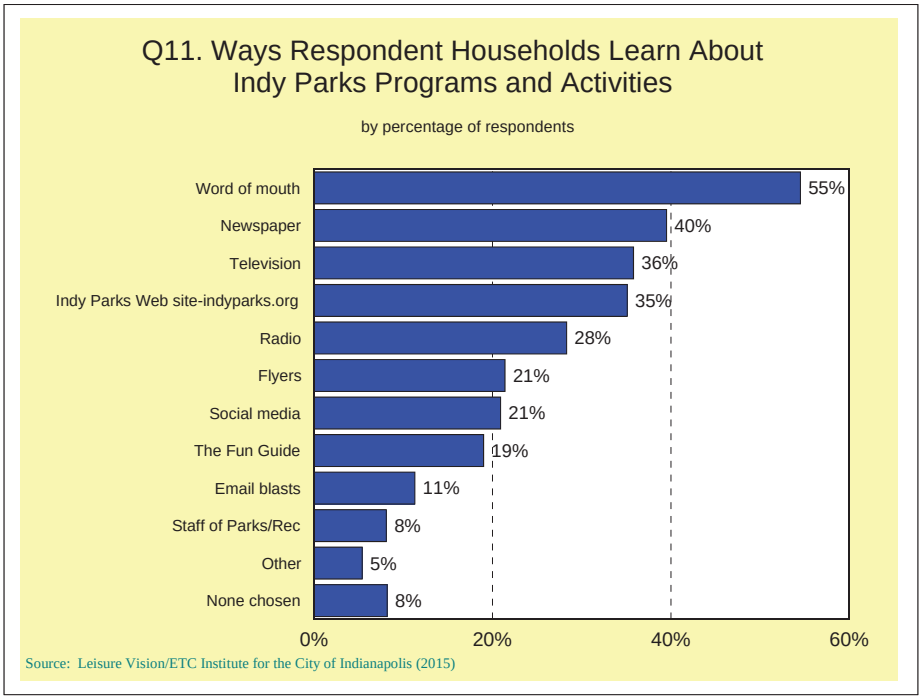
RECREATION PROGRAMS THAT RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS PARTICIPATE IN MOST OFTEN

Based on the percentage of respondents who chose the facility as one of their top four choices, 15% used adult fitness and wellness programs most often. Other programs respondents participate in most often include: Nature education programs (9%), golf (8%), and large special events (7%).



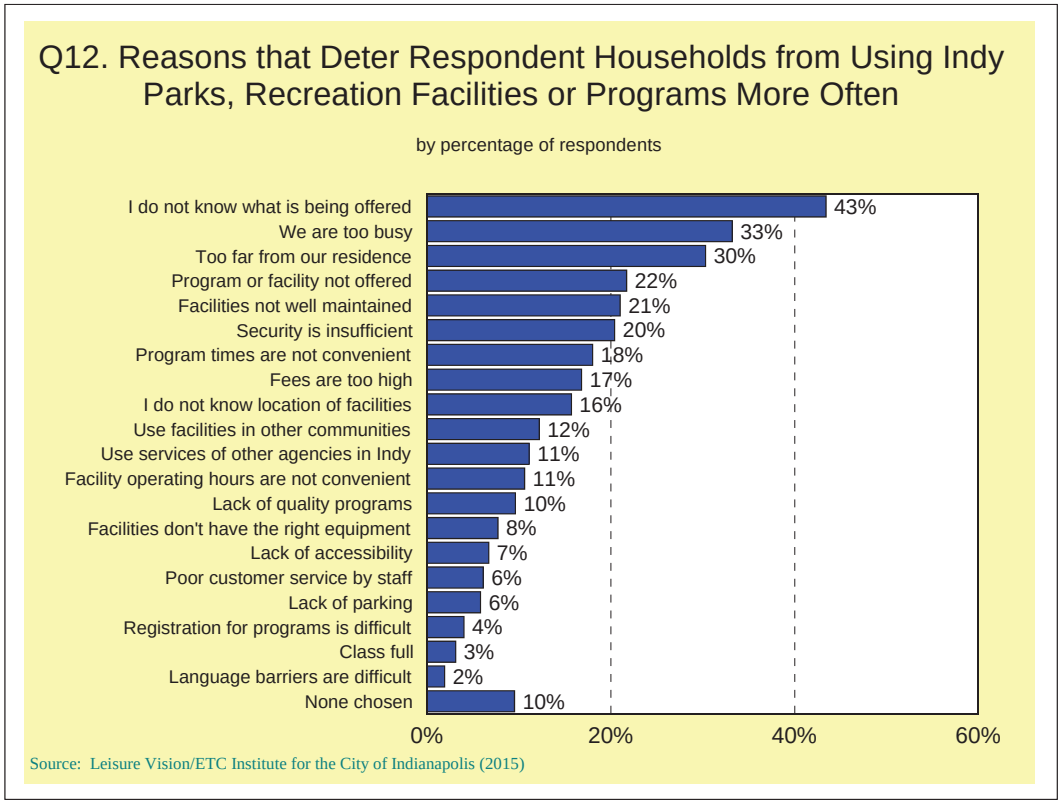
WAYS RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS LEARN ABOUT INDY PARKS PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Fifty-five percent (55%) of respondent households learn about city programs and activities through word of mouth. Other ways respondent households learn about programs and activities offered by the Indy Parks include: Newspaper (40%), television (36%), and from Indy Parks website (27%).



REASONS THAT DETER RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS FROM USING INDY PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES OR PROGRAMS MORE OFTEN

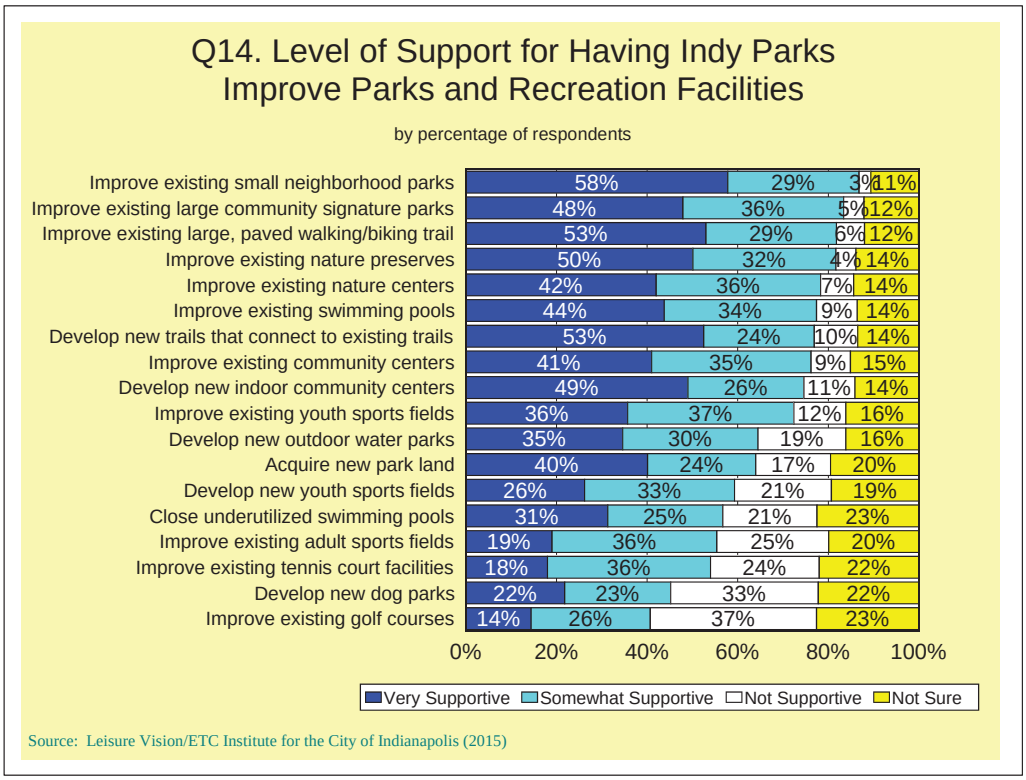
Forty-three percent (43%) of respondent households did not use facilities or programs more often because they did not know what is being offered. Other reasons include: Too busy (33%), too far from residence (30%), program or facility not offered (22%), and facilities not well maintained (21%).



2.4.7 SUPPORT FOR FUTURE POTENTIAL ACTIONS

LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR HAVING INDY PARKS IMPROVE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

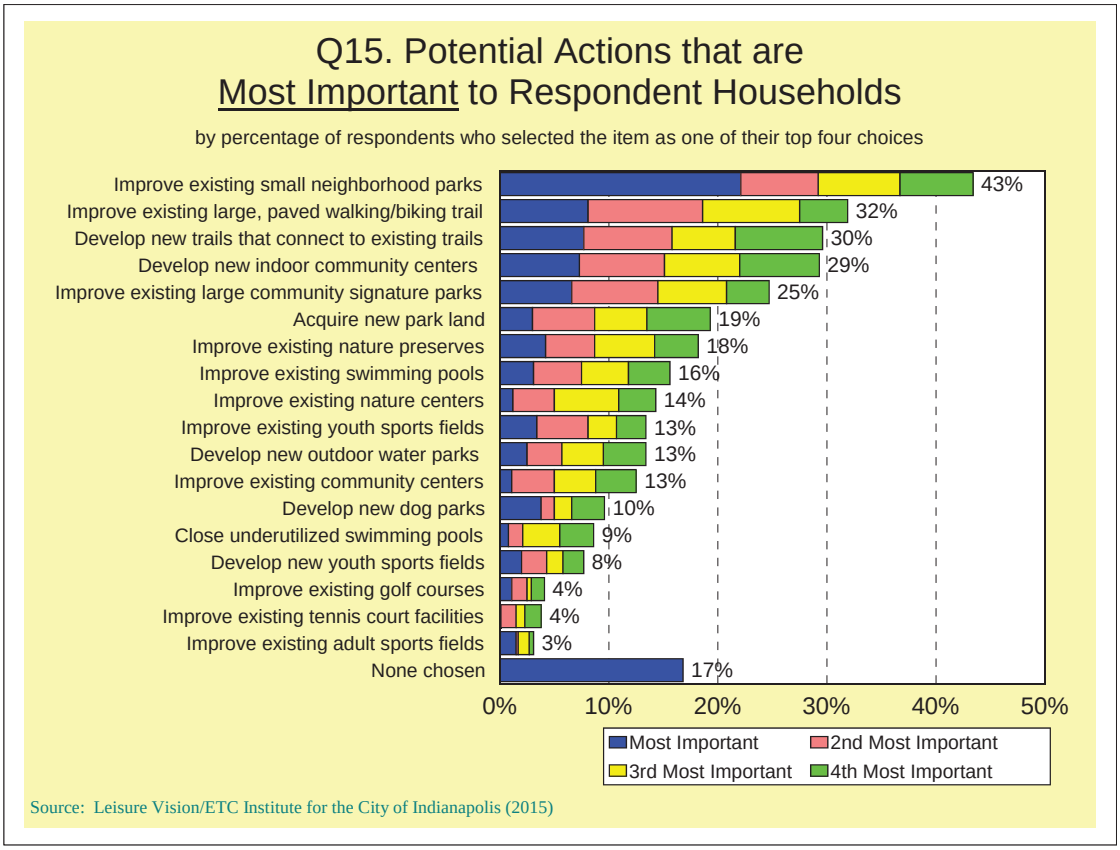
Based on the percentage of respondent households who were either "very supportive" or "somewhat supportive," 87% support the improvement of existing small neighborhood parks. Other similar levels of support include: Improve existing large community signature parks (84%), improve existing large, paved walking and biking trails (82%), improve existing nature preserves (82%), and improve existing nature centers (78%).



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute for the City of Indianapolis (2015)

POTENTIAL ACTIONS THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS

Based on the percentage of respondents who chose the action as one of their top four choices, (43%) indicated improve existing small neighborhood parks as the most important action to their household. Other most important actions include: improve existing large, paved walking and biking trails (32%), develop new trails that connect to existing trails (30%), and develop new indoor community centers (29%).

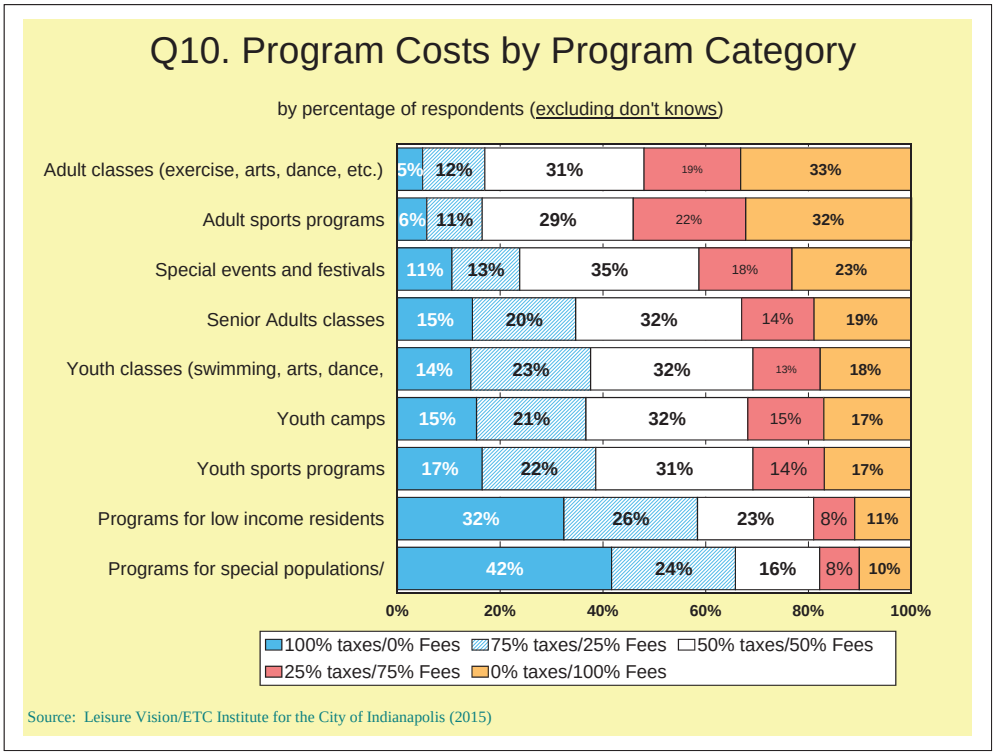


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute for the City of Indianapolis (2015)

2.4.8 FUNDING

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAM COSTS RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS THINK SHOULD BE PAID BY TAXES AND USER FEES

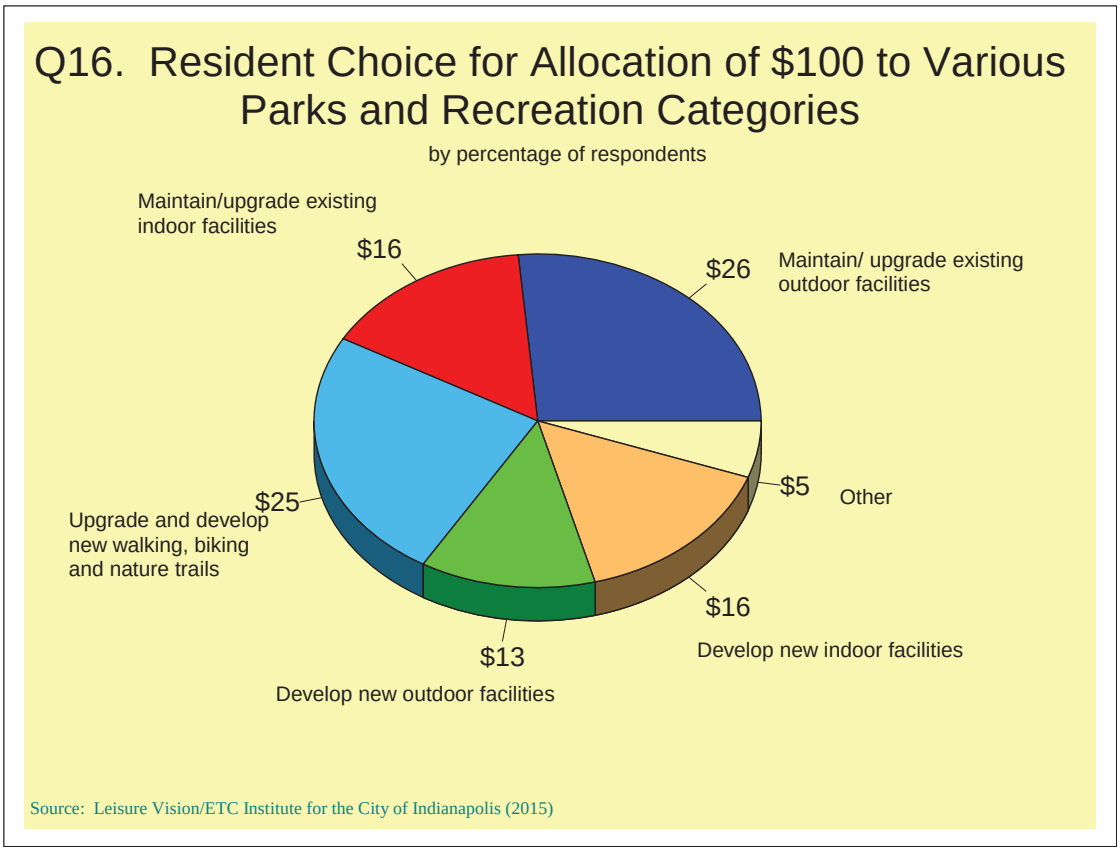
Based on the percentage of respondent households who think costs should be paid by "100% fees/0% taxes" or "75% fees/25% taxes," fifty-two percent (52%) indicated adult classes should be paid mostly in fees. Other programs that respondents indicated should be paid mostly in fees are: adult sports programs (54%) and special events and festivals (41%). Based on the percentage of respondent households who think costs should be paid by "100% taxes/0% fees" or "75% taxes/25% fees," sixty-six percent (66%) indicated programs for special populations should be paid mostly by taxes. Other programs that respondents indicated should be paid mostly by taxes are: programs for low income residents (58%) and youth sports programs (39%).



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute for the City of Indianapolis (2015)

HOW RESPONDENTS WOULD ALLOCATE $100 FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN INDIANAPOLIS

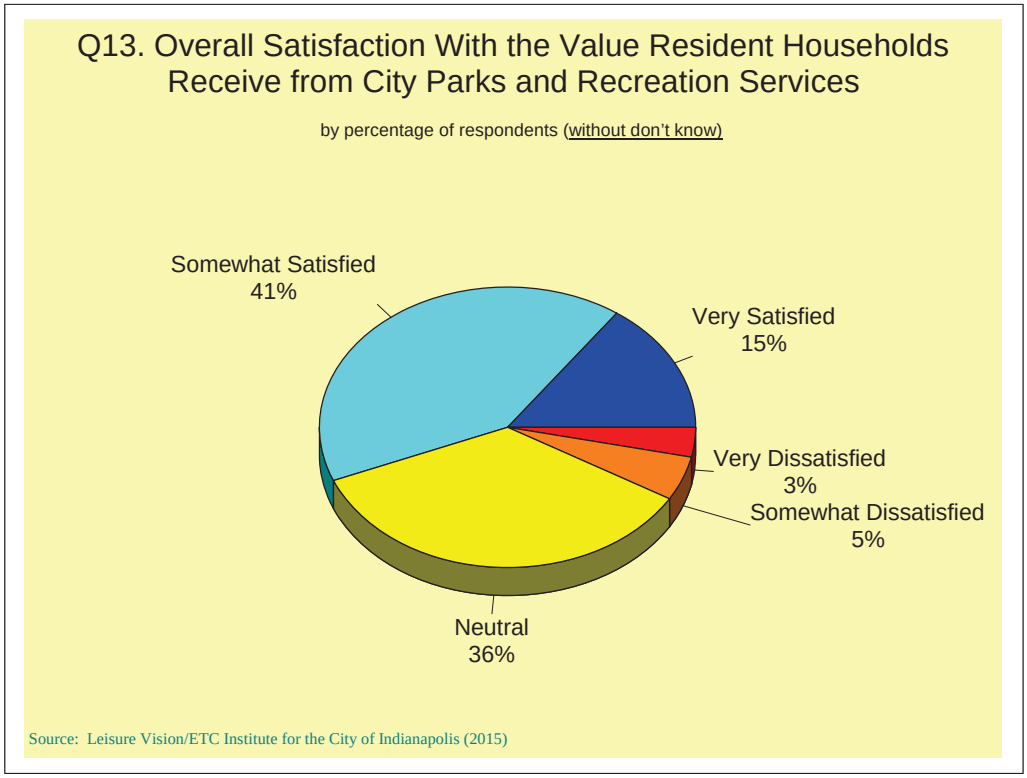
Based on dollar amount, residents would allocate $26 to maintain/upgrade existing outdoor facilities. Other allocations of dollar amounts include: Upgrade and develop new walking, biking, and nature trails, maintain/upgrade existing indoor facilities ($16), develop new indoor facilities ($16), develop new outdoor facilities ($13), and other ($5).



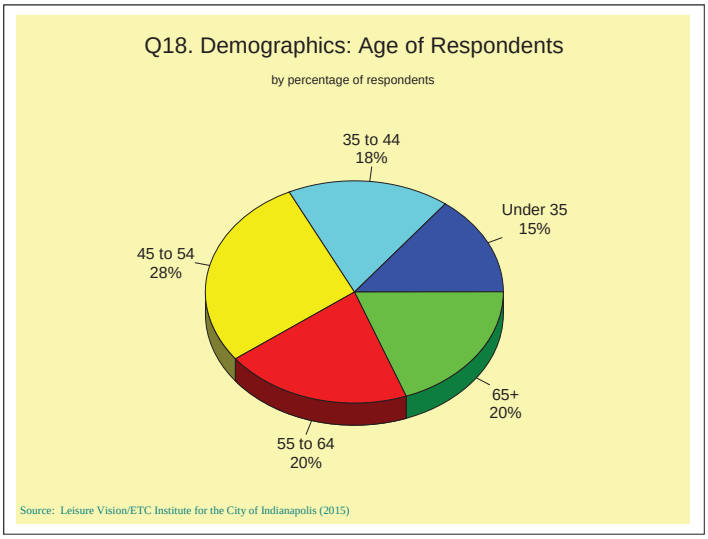
2.4.9 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

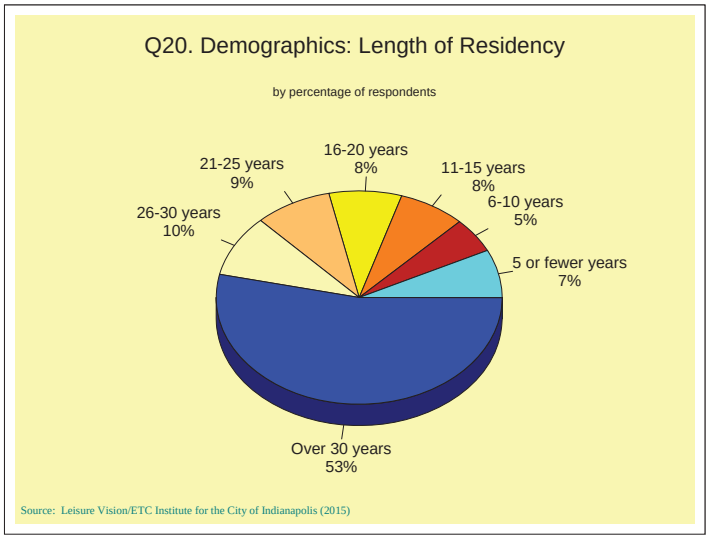
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH THE VALUE RESPONDENTS RECEIVE FROM CITY PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

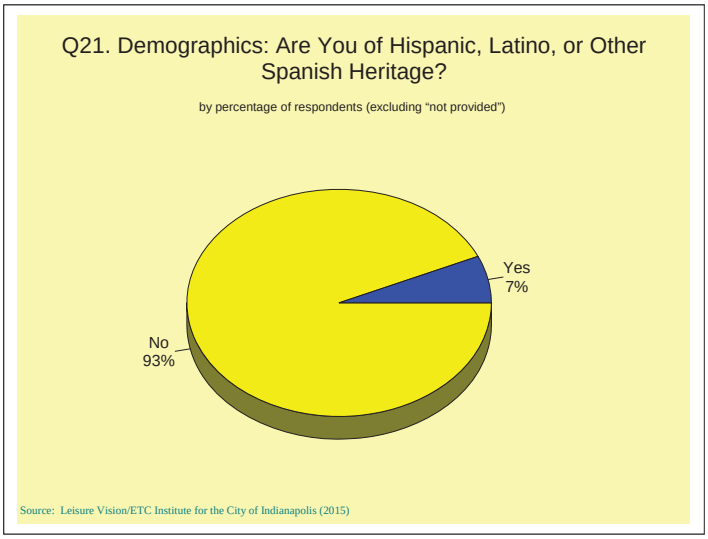
Forty-one percent (41%) of respondent households are somewhat satisfied with the value their household receives from the city parks and recreation services. Other levels of satisfaction include: Very satisfied (15%), neutral (36%), somewhat dissatisfied (5%), and very dissatisfied (3%).

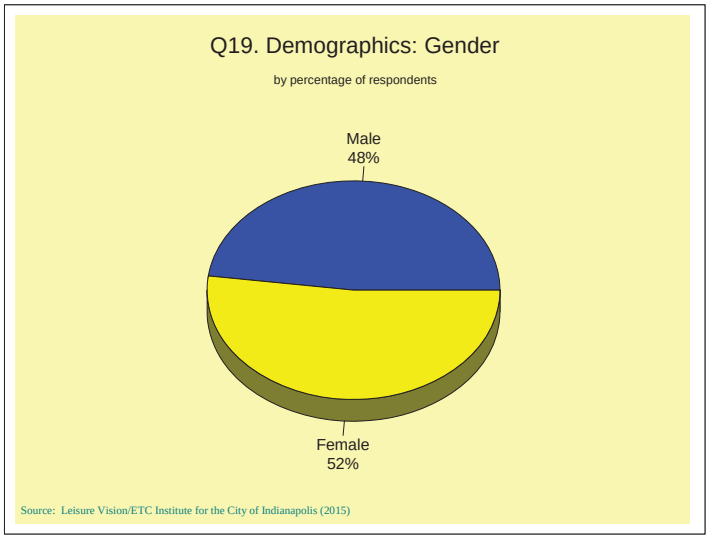


2.4.10 DEMOGRAPHICS









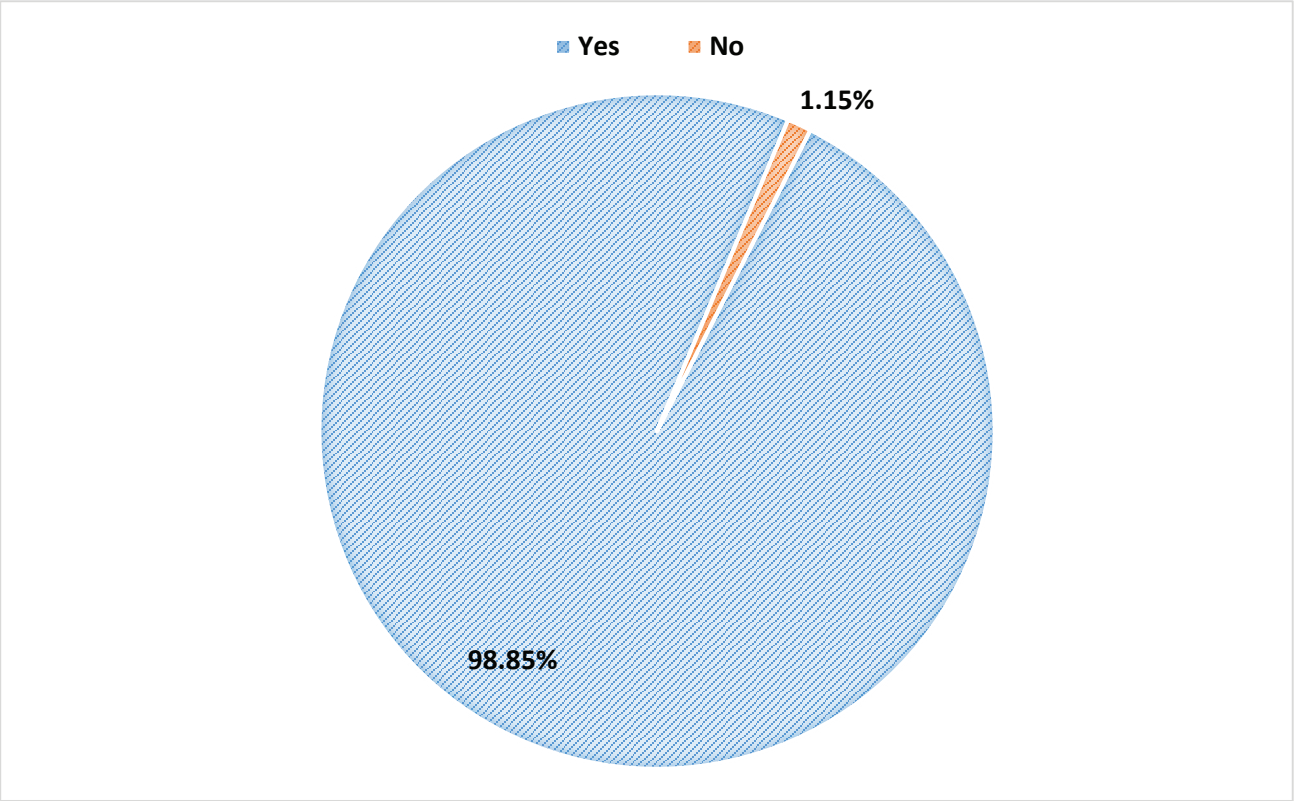
2.5 ELECTRONIC SURVEY

Through the crowdsourcing project website, www.planindyparks.com 266 surveys were completed. This medium for solicitation remained open until the results of the statistically-valid survey was completed in August 2015.

As part of the community input process, PROS and Indy Parks conducted an online survey for a better understanding of the characteristics, preferences, and satisfaction levels of Indianapolis residents in relation to parks and recreation activities. The survey went live in April of 2015 and received a total of 266 responses through August of 2015.

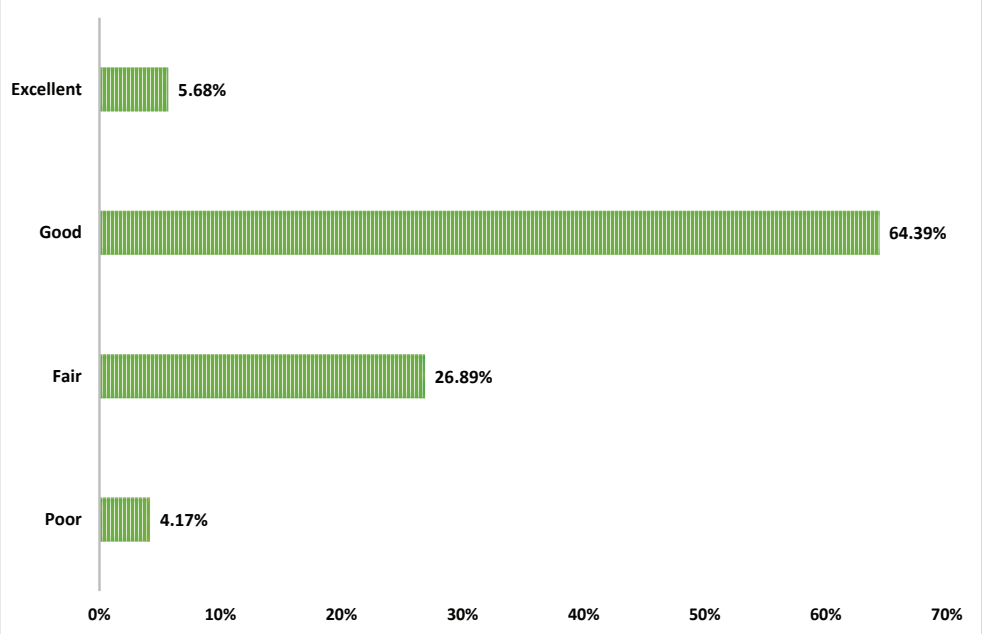
2.5.1 HAVE YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISITED ANY INDY PARKS DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

Nearly 99% of respondent households have visited Indianapolis parks within the past 12months.



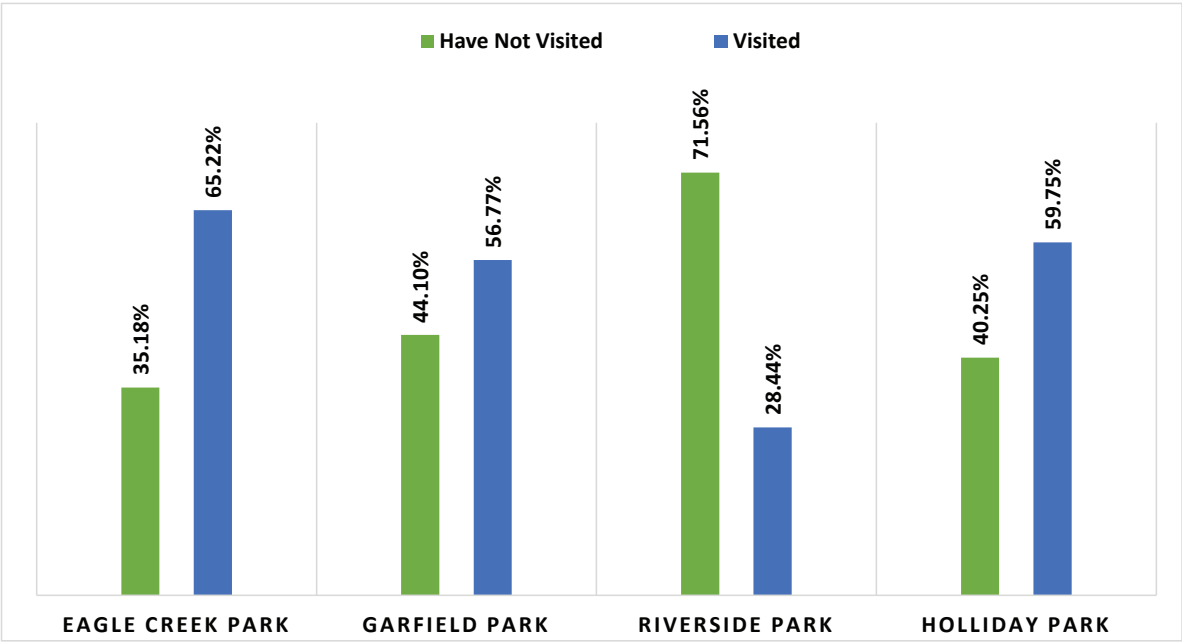
2.5.2 OVERALL HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF ALL THE PARKS, TRAILS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES IN INDY PARKS YOU HAVE VISITED?

Over 70% percent gave a positive rating of either excellent (5.68%) or good (64.39%), while the other 30% consider parks, trails, and facilities to be in either fair (26.89%) or poor (4.17%) condition.



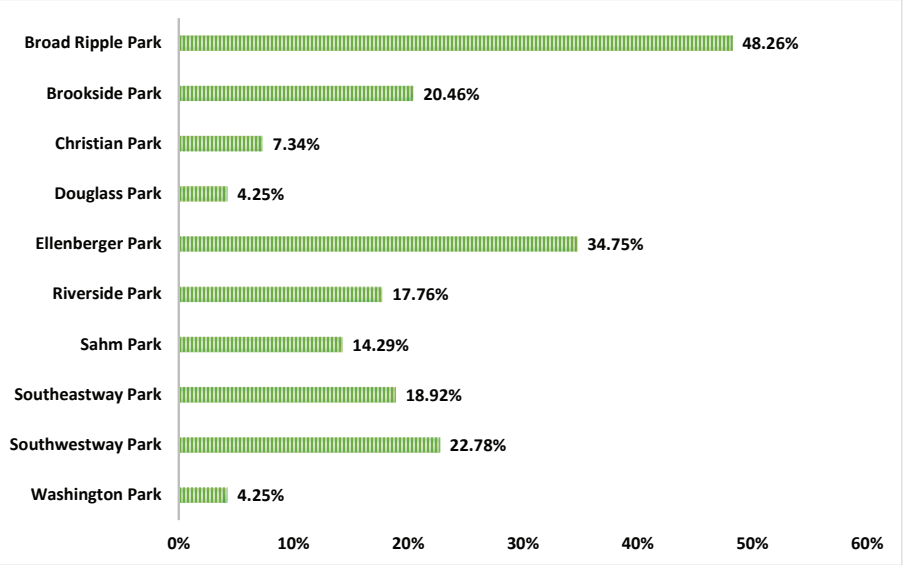
2.5.3 SIGNATURE PARKS ARE DEFINED AS HIGHLY RECOGNIZABLE AND OFTEN TIMES PARKS WITH DEEP HISTORIES THAT SERVE ALL AGES OF RESIDENTS THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY WITH A WIDE RANGE OF AMENITIES AND EXPERIENCES. FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST, PLEASE CHECK ALL THE SIGNATURE PARKS YOU HAVE VISITED IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

Of the four signature parks listed below, Eagle Creek Park (65.22%) was the most visited by those surveyed followed by Holiday Park (59.75%). The signature park visited the least in the past 12 months was Riverside Park (28.44%).



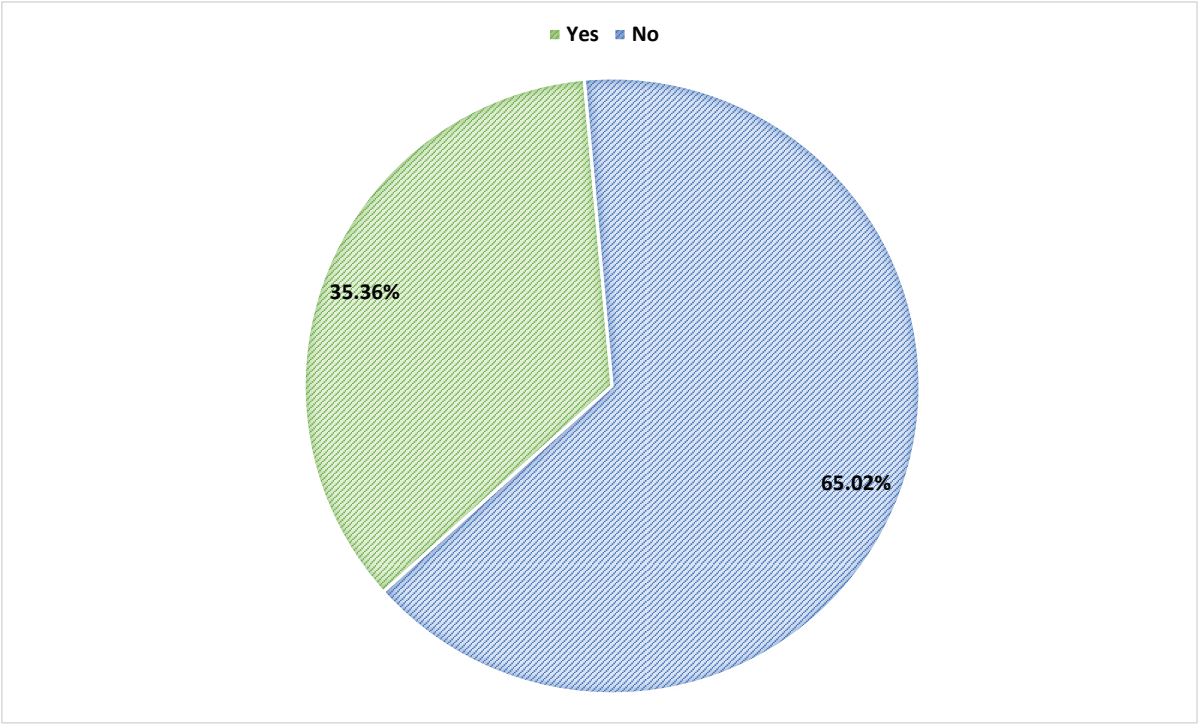
2.5.4 INDY PARKS IS CONSIDERING UPGRADING SEVERAL EXISTING PARKS TO SIGNATURE / DESTINATION PARKS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADDITIONAL AMENITIES AND EXPERIENCES FOR ALL AGES. FROM THE PARKS LISTED BELOW, PLEASE CHECK THE TWO PARKS YOU WOULD SUPPORT BEING UPGRADED TO SIGNATURE PARKS.

Of the ten parks listed below, Broad Ripple Park (48.26%) and Ellenberger Park (34.75%) were the most supported in being upgraded to signature parks. Christian Park and Washington Park both tied for last with only 4.25% or people surveyed wanting these parks to be upgraded into signature parks.



2.5.5 OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS HAVE YOU OR ANY MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATED IN ANY PROGRAMS OFFERED BY INDY PARKS?

Just over one-third (35.36%) of those surveyed claimed they have participated in recreation programs offered by the department over the past 12 months.



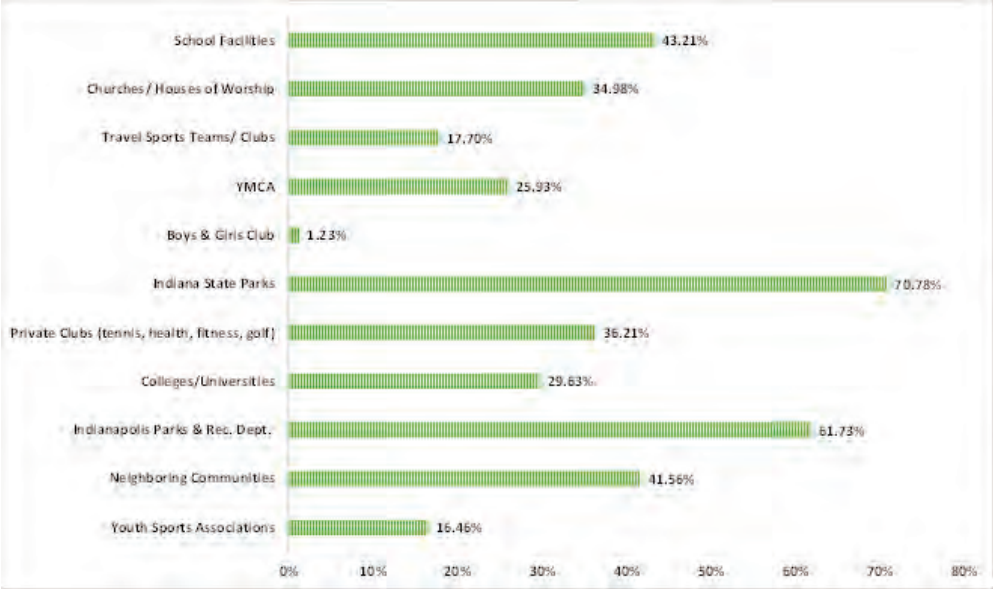
2.5.6 PLEASE USE A SCALE OF 5 TO 1, WHERE 5 MEANS "VERY SATISFIED" AND 1 MEANS "VERY DISSATISFIED," TO RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM SERVICES PROVIDED BY INDY PARKS.

In combining ratings of 4's and 5's, respondents indicated the highest level of satisfaction with fees charged for value received (61%), quality of instructors (53%), times programs are offered (52%). The highest level of dissatisfaction (derived from combining ratings of 1's and 2's) among respondents included ease of navigation through the website (23%), availability of information about programs and services on the website (20%), and quality of the facility where program is offered (11%).

Program Services	5 Very Satisfied	4	3	2	1 Very Dissatisfied
Times programs are offered	18.47%	34.39%	38.22%	7.01%	1.91%
Location of programs	20.25%	31.65%	37.97%	6.96%	4.43%
Quality of instructors	24.16%	28.86%	42.95%	2.01%	2.68%
Fees charged for value received	28.10%	33.33%	33.33%	3.92%	3.27%
Quality of the facility where program is offered	15.48%	32.90%	41.94%	5.81%	5.81%
Ease of use for mail-in/fax registration	16.08%	24.48%	48.95%	5.59%	4.90%
Availability of information about Indy Park System programs and services on the website	10.83%	29.30%	40.13%	15.29%	5.10%
Ease of navigation through the website	8.33%	29.49%	39.74%	13.46%	10.26%
Ease of online registration process	10.20%	27.89%	50.34%	7.48%	4.08%
Quality of customer service for registration	15.75%	31.51%	47.95%	2.74%	2.05%

2.5.7 FROM THE FOLLOWING LIST, PLEASE CHECK ALL THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAVE USED FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

The most utilized organizations for recreation programming among respondents were Indiana State Parks (70.78%), Indy Parks (61.73%), followed by School Facilities (43.21%), and Neighboring Communities (41.56%).



2.5.8 FROM THE LIST BELOW, PLEASE CHOOSE THE TOP 5 MOST IMPORTANT PROGRAMS TO YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

Survey respondents indicated that the most important programs to their households were adult fitness and wellness programs (47.69%), outdoor adventure programs (42.82%), and nature education programs (41.82%). The least important programs included teen dance programs (7.86%), child care programs (11.87%), golf programs (11.97%), and senior programs (12.78%).

Programs	1	2	3	4	5
Youth Learn to Swim	9.76%	8.04%	2.23%	3.73%	6.53%
Pre-school programs	3.66%	4.91%	2.60%	1.87%	3.73%
Child care programs	2.93%	2.23%	1.49%	1.49%	3.73%
After school programs	3.90%	3.13%	2.60%	4.10%	5.36%
Youth summer camp	5.61%	5.36%	4.46%	2.99%	5.59%
Youth sports	5.61%	2.23%	5.20%	4.10%	4.66%
Youth/teen fitness and wellness	4.88%	3.13%	4.46%	5.60%	3.26%
Adult fitness and wellness	12.44%	9.82%	8.18%	9.33%	7.93%
Water fitness programs	2.20%	8.93%	5.58%	5.97%	3.50%
Martial arts or self defense	2.44%	3.13%	5.20%	2.61%	2.33%
Youth art, dance, performing arts	2.68%	2.23%	3.35%	4.48%	4.66%
Teen dance	2.68%	0.89%	2.23%	1.12%	0.93%
Adult art, dance, performing arts	3.41%	5.36%	4.46%	5.22%	4.43%
Adult sports	4.63%	7.59%	6.69%	6.34%	5.13%
Adaptive (special population) programs	3.41%	1.34%	4.83%	1.87%	2.80%
Trips (day trips and extended trips)	2.44%	2.23%	4.09%	2.99%	3.26%
Large special events	4.88%	4.91%	7.06%	6.72%	5.59%
Outdoor adventure programs	6.59%	9.82%	7.81%	10.45%	8.16%
Nature education programs	5.37%	8.93%	8.92%	8.58%	10.02%
Senior programs	2.68%	1.34%	2.97%	2.99%	2.80%
Golf	4.39%	1.34%	2.23%	2.61%	1.40%
Life skill classes	3.41%	3.13%	3.35%	4.85%	4.20%

2.5.9 FROM THE LIST BELOW, PLEASE CHOOSE THE TOP 5 MOST IMPORTANT FACILITIES / AMENITIES TO YOU OR MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD.

From the list provided, respondents considered walking trails (42.27%), small neighborhood parks (35.30%), and large regional parks (31.15%) to be the most important facilities / amenities. The least important from survey results were pickleball courts (6.41%), adult baseball/softball fields (7.61%), and indoor basketball/ volleyball courts (8.15%).

Facilities / Amenities	1	2	3	4	5
Soccer fields	3.56%	1.67%	1.84%	1.68%	2.35%
Youth baseball and softball fields	2.94%	1.67%	1.84%	1.34%	1.17%
Multipurpose fields (Cricket, lacrosse, football)	2.52%	1.67%	2.76%	1.34%	1.96%
Adult baseball/softball fields	2.31%	0.00%	3.37%	1.34%	0.59%
Outdoor tennis courts	2.73%	1.67%	3.68%	3.36%	3.13%
Outdoor basketball courts	1.89%	2.50%	2.76%	0.67%	1.76%
Nature centers	5.87%	4.17%	5.83%	4.36%	7.05%
Small neighborhood parks	7.55%	8.33%	4.91%	8.05%	6.46%
Large community signature parks	3.98%	8.33%	6.44%	6.71%	5.28%
Large regional parks (i.e. Eagle Creek)	2.73%	7.50%	7.36%	6.71%	6.85%
Playground equipment	6.08%	5.42%	3.99%	6.38%	5.28%
Outdoor adventure parks	2.73%	2.92%	6.13%	5.70%	6.46%
Picnic areas/shelters	2.10%	3.75%	3.37%	4.36%	5.87%
Skateboarding park	1.68%	2.92%	2.45%	1.34%	0.98%
Walking trails	9.01%	12.50%	6.44%	5.70%	8.61%
Natural areas	4.61%	7.92%	3.99%	7.05%	6.46%
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	4.19%	6.67%	3.99%	7.05%	4.11%
Outdoor water spray parks	2.31%	4.17%	3.99%	4.03%	3.33%
Outdoor fishing areas	1.26%	1.67%	2.15%	2.35%	2.35%
Off-leash dog park	3.77%	1.67%	2.15%	2.35%	2.35%
Mountain bike trails	8.18%	1.67%	3.68%	3.02%	5.09%
Golf courses	2.52%	0.83%	1.53%	2.01%	1.37%
Indoor sports complex (baseball, soccer, etc.)	2.31%	1.25%	2.76%	1.01%	2.15%
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pools	3.35%	2.08%	2.15%	3.36%	1.96%
Indoor basketball/ volleyball courts	1.68%	1.25%	1.84%	2.01%	1.37%
Indoor running/walking track	2.10%	2.50%	4.60%	1.34%	2.54%
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	3.35%	2.92%	2.45%	4.03%	2.74%
Pickleball courts	2.73%	0.42%	1.53%	1.34%	0.39%

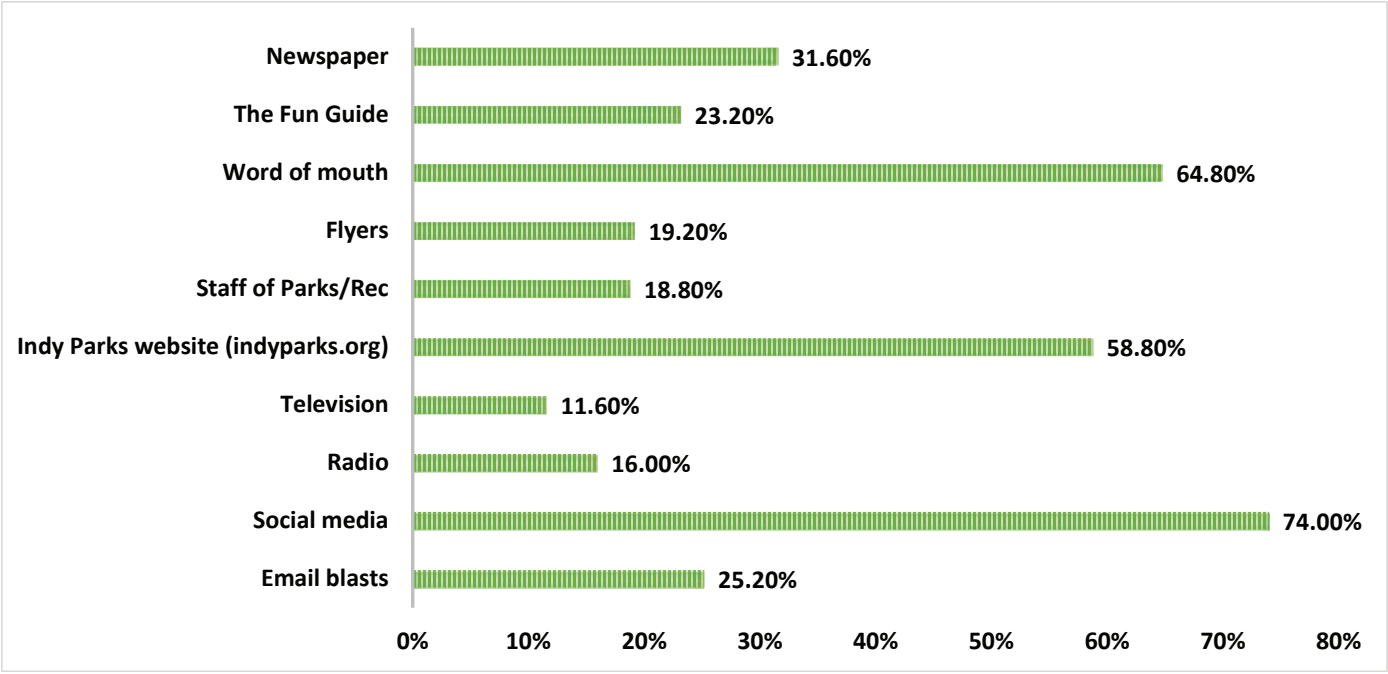
2.5.10 THE COSTS TO PROVIDE RECREATION PROGRAMS ARE FUNDED THROUGH A COMBINATION OF PARTICIPANT FEES AND GENERAL TAX REVENUES. THE FOLLOWING ARE CATEGORIES OF PROGRAMS OFFERED BY INDY PARKS. FOR EACH PROGRAM CATEGORY PLEASE INDICATE WHAT PERCENT OF THE PROGRAM COSTS SHOULD BE PAID BY TAXES AND WHAT PERCENT BY USER FEES.

The table below reveals the percentage of responses for each subsidy level for each program category. The most prevalent subsidy level is highlighted in yellow for each line item. Programs for special populations/disabled and programs for low income residents were the categories that respondents felt need the highest level of subsidy. Adult sports programs and adult classes were identified as the categories that should be supported primarily by fees.

Programs	100% Taxes, 0% Fees	75% Taxes, 25% Fees	50% Taxes, 50% Fees	25% Taxes, 75% Fees	0% Taxes, 100% Fees
Youth sports programs	11.16%	21.03%	37.34%	17.60%	13.73%
Adult sports programs	1.76%	6.61%	22.03%	32.16%	38.77%
Youth camps	7.46%	23.68%	39.91%	17.11%	13.16%
Adult classes (exercise, arts, dance, etc.)	0.88%	8.37%	24.67%	32.16%	35.24%
Youth classes (swimming, arts, dance, etc.)	8.48%	26.34%	39.73%	14.73%	11.61%
Senior adults classes	8.11%	22.97%	37.84%	15.77%	15.77%
Special events and festivals	9.42%	13.45%	27.80%	23.77%	26.46%
Programs for low income residents	34.98%	34.53%	19.28%	5.83%	6.28%
Programs for special population/ disabled	43.81%	23.89%	22.57%	5.31%	5.75%

2.5.11 PLEASE CHECK ALL THE WAYS YOU LEARN ABOUT INDY PARKS PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.

The most effective marketing methods for survey participants were social media (74.0%), word of mouth (64.8%), and the Indy Park website-indypark.org (58.8%). The least effective mediums were television (11.6%), radio (16.0%), and staff of parks and recreation (18.8%).



2.5.12 PLEASE CHECK ALL THE REASONS THAT DETER YOU OR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD FROM USING INDY PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES OR PROGRAMS MORE OFTEN.

Survey respondents are most deterred from using parks, facilities, and programs due to I don't know what is being offered (37.17%), facilities are not well maintained (35.84%), and programs/facilities being too far from our residence (33.19%). The least cited that limited participation included language barriers are difficult (0.44%), registration for programs is difficult (3.54%), and poor customer service by staff (3.54%).

I do not know what is being offered	**37.17%**
Facilities are not well maintained	**35.84%**
Too far from our residence	**33.19%**
We are too busy	**31.86%**
Program or facility not offered	**28.32%**
Program times are not convenient	**24.34%**
Facility operating hours are not convenient	**15.49%**
Security is insufficient	**13.72%**
Fees are too high	**12.39%**
Lack of quality programs	**11.50%**
Facilities don't have the right equipment	**11.50%**
Use services of other agencies in Indy	11.06%
Use facilities in other communities	9.73%
I do not know location of facilities	9.29%
Lack of parking	4.87%
Class full	4.42%
Lack of accessibility	3.98%
Poor customer service by staff	3.54%
Registration for programs is difficult	3.54%
Language barriers are difficult	0.44%

2.5.13 IF AN ADDITIONAL $100 WERE AVAILABLE FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES IN INDIANAPOLIS, HOW WOULD YOU ALLOCATE THE FUNDS AMONG THE CATEGORIES LISTED BELOW? [PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOUR ALLOCATION ADDS UP TO $100.]

The chart below reveals the average dollar amount survey respondents would spend on a variety of improvements. Upgrade/develop new walking, biking, and nature trails ($40) was identified as the top priority, followed by maintain/upgrade existing outdoor facilities ($30), and maintain/upgrade existing indoor facilities ($22).

Facilities	Average Dollar Amount
Maintain/upgrade existing outdoor facilities (small/large parks, pools, sports fields, etc.)	$ 30.00
Maintain/upgrade existing indoor facilities (community centers, pools/ice rinks, etc.)	$ 22.00
Upgrade and develop new walking, biking and nature trails	$ 40.00
Develop new outdoor facilities (sports fields, family aquatic centers, signature parks, etc.)	$ 20.00
Develop new indoor facilities (fitness areas, walking tracks, gyms, family aquatics, etc.)	$ 16.00

2.5.14 CHOOSE THE FIVE MOST PREFERRED TIMES SLOTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES TO BE OFFERED.

The charts below highlight the top selection for the top five preferences by day and time slot. The most preferred day for offering programs and activities among respondents is Saturday, with Sunday ranking second for the top preference. The overwhelming preference for time of day was the 5pm-8pm time slot.

Day	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1st Preference	15.19%	10.76%	10.13%	2.53%	2.53%	3.80%	55.70%
2nd Preference	29.22%	7.79%	12.34%	9.74%	6.49%	0.00%	35.71%
3rd Preference	12.68%	7.75%	16.20%	11.27%	12.68%	13.38%	26.76%
4th Preference	20.15%	8.21%	10.45%	17.16%	14.18%	7.46%	23.88%
5th Preference	25.58%	6.98%	5.43%	14.73%	18.60%	16.28%	13.95%

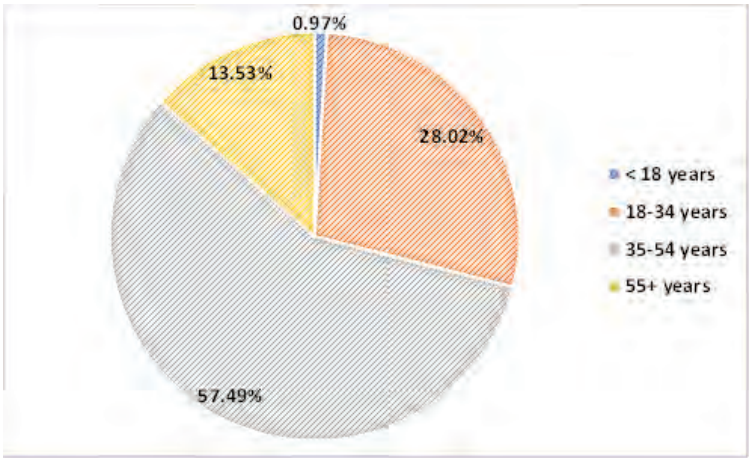
Time	5am - 8am	8am - 11am –	11am - 2pm –	2pm - 5pm	5pm - 8pm
1st Preference	3.16%	36.71%	27.22%	11.39%	22.15%
2nd Preference	2.63%	16.45%	24.34%	29.61%	27.63%
3rd Preference	4.32%	14.39%	15.83%	21.58%	44.60%
4th Preference	2.29%	12.21%	17.56%	19.85%	49.62%
5th Preference	2.38%	10.32%	8.73%	23.81%	54.76%

2.5.15 PLEASE RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE OVERALL VALUE YOUR HOUSEHOLD RECEIVES FROM INDY PARKS AND ITS OFFERINGS.

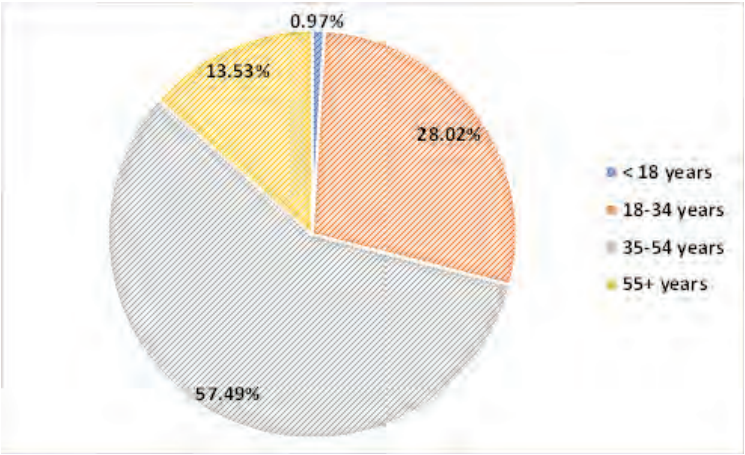
Approximately 69% of survey respondents are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the overall value received from Indy Parks and its offerings. Less than one-sixth (13%) of those surveyed were dissatisfied to some level, while another 19% were neutral or did not know.

2.5.16 SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

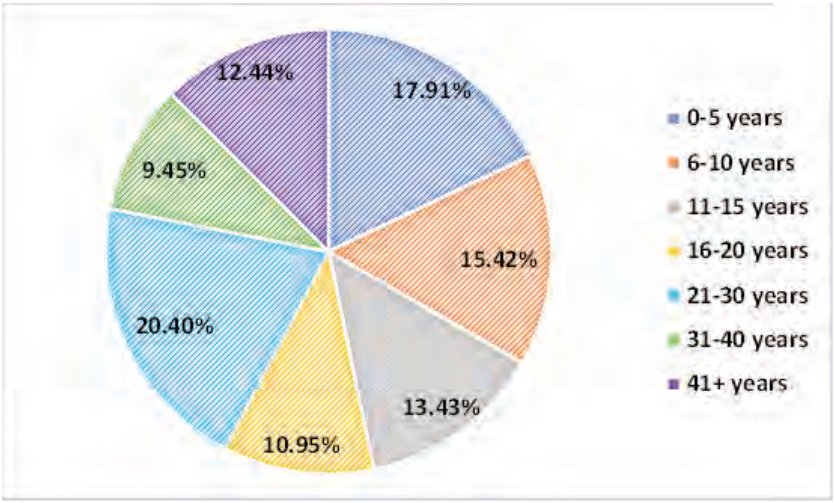
WHAT IS YOUR AGE?



WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?



HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU LIVED IN INDIANAPOLIS?

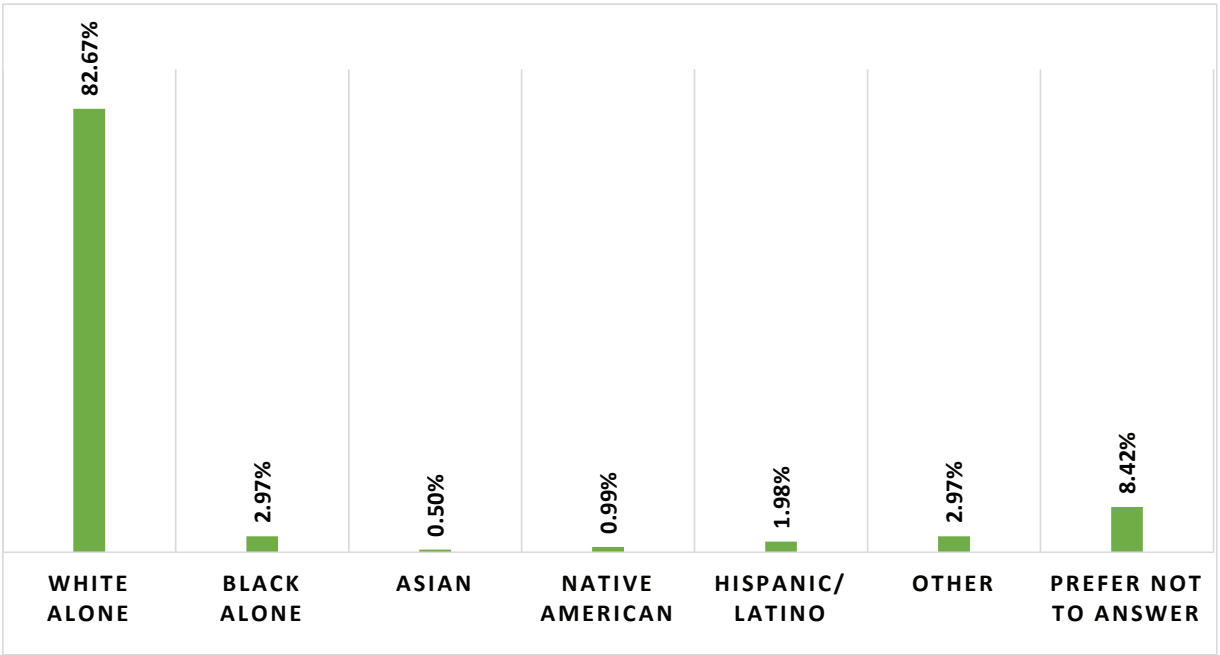


COUNTING YOURSELF, HOW MANY PEOPLE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD ARE...

Under age 5	39.09%
Ages 5-9	32.49%
Ages 10-14	27.92%
Ages 15-19	24.37%
Ages 20-24	18.78%
Ages 25-34	37.56%
Ages 35-44	45.18%
Ages 45-54	35.53%
Ages 55-64	25.89%
Ages 65-74	14.21%
Ages 75+	12.18%

WHAT IS YOUR TOTAL ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME?

WHAT IS YOUR RACE / ETHNICITY?



CHAPTER THREE
COMMUNITY PROFILE

3.1 NATURAL FEATURES AND LANDSCAPE

This section describes the natural areas in Indianapolis Parks and Greenways and the restorative management in relation to recreation and quality of life.

3.1.1 INTRODUCTION

Parks departments around the world are looked upon to protect and manage natural areas. Natural areas help mitigate pollution generated by the developed landscape, which accounts for the majority of the land use in Marion county. These natural systems can improve the air and the water quality in our rivers and streams. The City of Indianapolis – Marion County has been actively managing natural areas in parks and greenways for over twenty years, thus doing a great service to the local community and to furthering global initiatives in natural resource protection.

Indianapolis is fortunate to have many natural areas in the park system. Some of these areas have endangered, threatened or rare species of plants and animals and several ecosystem types in are listed as state significant and globally rare. Proper planning and proactive management of these natural areas will help ensure the greatest ecosystem service benefits to the community.

The natural areas in parks and greenways are categorized by three main land cover types, followed by subcategories:

- Woodlands
  - Old second growth
  - Disturbed woods
  - Woody successional
- Open Natural Area
  - Herbaceous to early woody successional
  - Prairie
  - Reforestation planting
  - Wetland – sedge meadow
  - Native plant landscaping
  - Rain gardens/bioswales
  - Buffer to natural area
  - Former agriculture/fallow field
- Water
  - Open Wetlands- constructed and natural
  - Streams and Rivers
  - Reservoirs and Ponds

3.1.2 RECREATION IN NATURAL SETTINGS

The majority of surveyed respondents from the Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan Citizen Survey and within a group polled by the IDNR – Division of Outdoor Recreation prefer self-directed, passive, recreational opportunities such as walking, hiking and jogging. In response to this need, much emphasis is placed on managing a proportional quantity of the park land for passive recreation. Natural areas are particularly suited for passive recreation.

Properly managed natural areas can provide many types of recreation opportunities to park users. Planned recreational use (individuals or groups) broadly fits into two categories relating to natural area land cover:

- Passive
  - Walking, hiking, jogging, running
  - Relaxation and contemplation
  - Nature observation and education
- Active
  - Sports related (mountain biking, marathons, disc golf, outdoor adventure events, cross country skiing)
  - Other (challenge/teams initiative course, fitness course, canoeing – sailing, geocaching)

Natural areas in parks and greenways were classified by GIS analysis which is paired with the recommended recreational uses. These are general outlines. Variables in site size, topography and restoration management goals help determine the capacity for quality, sustainable, recreation opportunities.

Passive and active recreation activities for land cover categories:

- Woodland- Old-second growth
  - Walking, hiking, jogging, running
  - Relaxation and contemplation
  - Nature observation and education
- Woodland – Disturbed woods
  - Walking, hiking, jogging, running
  - Relaxation and contemplation
  - Nature observation and education
  - Sports related (mountain biking, marathons, disc golf, outdoor adventure events)
  - Other – Geocaching, orienteering
- Open Natural Area
  - Walking, hiking, jogging or running
  - Relaxation and contemplation
  - Nature observation and education
  - Sports related (mountain biking, marathons, disc golf, outdoor adventure events)
  - Other – Geocaching, orienteering
- Water
  - Streams and Rivers
    - Canoeing/Kayaking/Motorboat related
    - Fishing
    - Nature observation and education
  - Open Wetlands- constructed and natural
    - Nature observation and education
  - Reservoir/Ponds
    - Canoeing/Kayaking/Sailing
    - Fishing
    - Nature observation and education

The majority of uses recommended for natural areas are forms of passive and self-directed recreation. However, active recreation activities are also welcomed in natural areas. Careful planning is required so that people can enjoy the varied recreation that occurs in natural surroundings. For example:

- Quiet and uncrowded surroundings allow park visitors to move at their own pace and listen to birds and other sounds of nature.
- Natural areas that have an active recreation use are generally less well-suited for walking and nature observation since more attention has to be directed to being safe (e.g. stepping off the trail to let fast moving bikes past). Conversely, if too many hikers were to use mountain bike trails in times of heavy use, this would interfere with the mountain bike recreational experience.
- Sports events are sometimes planned and held within natural areas and during that time activities like bird watching or a family walk with children, the elderly or their pets are not recommended.

Planning for adequate space and separation for the various forms of recreation is an ongoing challenge. The amount of park land available is lagging behind the growing population and increasing demand for outdoor activities.

3.1.3 MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL AREAS – LAND STEWARDSHIP

Selected natural areas in the park and greenway system are extensively managed by the Land Stewardship office. The Land Stewardship section was founded in 1992 with Park Board approval of the Land Stewardship policy and implementation a program to manage natural areas within parks and greenways. In the last five years, rain gardens and bioswales (green infrastructure) in right-of-way areas were added for maintenance.

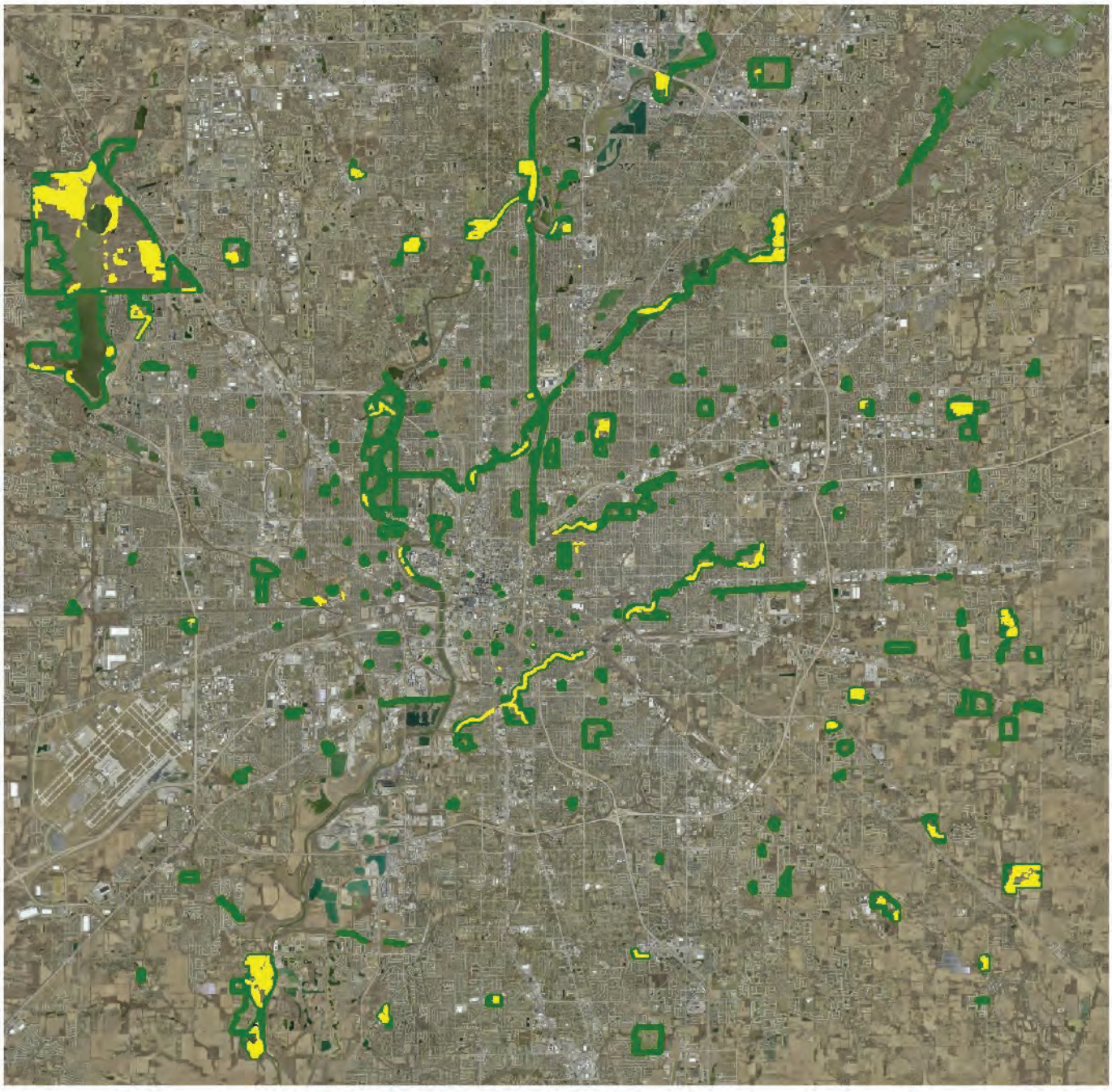
Ecosystem restoration, the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed, is the main focus when managing the natural features and associated landscapes.

Natural area and land management goals can influence the following ecosystem services:

- Ability of the land cover to provide critical public services
  - Water related
    - Stormwater capture and flood attenuation
    - Groundwater aquifer recharge
    - Non-point source pollution reduction
  - Conditioning of the air
    - Reduction of ozone
    - Reduce heat island effect
    - Increase carbon sequestration
  - Natural heritage related
    - Wildlife habitat
    - Biodiversity preservation
  - Other environmental
    - Noise abatement,
    - Positive mental and physical health benefits of green space
    - Violent crime reduction
- Sustainability
  - A long-term budget available for the proposed level of service
  - Planned management and usage that promotes positive impacts on natural environment
  - Recreational uses that are compatible with natural attributes of the land and wildlife resources
  - Implementation of safeguards to protect financial investments and natural resource related values
- Social
  - Planned uses that are compatible among the user groups
    - Passive recreation within a park is carefully planned to reduce user conflicts
    - Park capacity threshold- relationship between park size, the number of users and the type of recreation considered
    - Carefully plan any proposed use that pairs active with passive recreation
    - Health and safety of user groups
- Relationship of vegetation height and appearance as it relates to the presence of crime in the area
- Public review process

3.1.4 LAND STEWARDSHIP - PROJECT TRACKING

A geographic information system (GIS) is used to monitor progress and plan management. The relative size and distribution of the park areas under Land Stewardship management are shown on the map below. The yellow highlighted areas receive cyclical management every 1-3 years. The main emphasis is on invasive species control and natural area regeneration.



2016 Ecological Restoration: Active Management – 13% of the Parkland

Green – Indianapolis Parks and Greenways (11,255 acres)

Yellow – Land Stewardship Service Areas (42 park locations, 1512.5 acres)

City of Indianapolis- Marion County

3.1.5 LAND STEWARDSHIP RESTORATION MANAGEMENT

Today's natural plant communities are isolated fragments lacking the stability of larger ecosystems and thus very susceptible to degradation. One negative impact of this fragmentation is biological pollution in the form of non-native plant and animal species, many of which invade and displace native plant communities. The healthiest natural areas are those that support a diverse population of native plants and animals. Much of the living environment, in natural areas that provide habitat for native animals, insects and other organisms, is reduced when exotic plants invade and take over their space. When this happens, the natural diversity, or biodiversity of an ecosystem is compromised.

Over 50 plants are known to be invasive in Marion County; examples are:

- Bush honeysuckle spp.
- Wintercreeper vine
- Oriental bittersweet vine
- Japanese stilt grass
- Burning bush
- Garlic mustard
- Tree-of-heaven
- Siberian elm
- Callery pear (Bradford pear)

Successful natural area management requires an active invasive plant control program. This is an integral part of the ecological restoration management which is discussed below.

- The remnant forests are a primary management focus. These parcels are listed as globally rare and/or state significant. The adjoining buffer areas are also important restoration zones to expand habitat and better protect the core remnant forests from invasive plants which can dominate previously cleared sites with a history of farming or residential land use. The remnant forests support rare, endangered and threatened species of plants and animals. Nature enthusiasts take advantage of the opportunity to experience ephemeral wildflowers and stands of older trees in these areas.
- Some of the largest ecological restoration sites are implemented on land formerly in agriculture. Reforestation and wetland restoration practices have converted hundreds of acres to native plant communities. Although not an original ecosystem in Marion County, prairie plantings can have an important role. Prairie offers insect pollinator and bird habitat in addition to providing air and water quality benefits and carbon sequestration. These transition areas are very active wildlife habitats where park visitors can enjoy an interesting mix of plants, birds and insects. Nature photography and birding are common activities.
- Linear stretches of greenways and isolated park turf landscape can be converted into native plant communities. These sites are costlier to maintain because of their size and condition and are much less important for rare, endangered or threatened species of wildlife. Professional and public opinion are mixed as to whether or not small turf areas are well-suited for the taller native plant landscapes. The use of native, manicured, gardens/beds can be a good choice in the small areas if the high cost of maintenance is justified. Using landscape architecture concepts and careful design are important in keeping these urban recreational areas people-friendly, while offering benefits to wildlife.

3.1.6 MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL AREAS – RESTORATION ALONG GREENWAYS

City personnel and outside groups have voiced interest in restoration costs, mainly associated with invasive plant control and wildflower plantings along greenways. The Land Stewardship staff was asked to briefly cover the pros and cons of planting wildflowers in place of turf grass along greenways.

Site condition, topography and access availability taken into account with the short-range goals and long-range management objectives are considered in determining: 1) one to three year costs during initial work for a management unit, 2) intermediate four to five year costs, and 3) annual costs after the given plant community is established. These factors and others lead to the approximate costs and considerations stated below in the Pros and Cons outline.

TURF TO NATIVE CONVERSION – FULL SUN TO PARTIAL SHADE

Pros – installed herbaceous native plant communities along linear greenway areas

Perceived and real ecosystem benefits and user enjoyment

- Less reliance on fossil fuels for maintenance and the reduction of greenhouse gases
- Better carbon sequestration than turf
- Reduced storm water runoff
- Provides better habitat for wildlife
  - Benefits pollinators-moths, bees, butterflies and hummingbirds
  - Improves predator/prey relationships
  - Supplies foraging opportunities for common and migrating birds (winter seed for birds)
- Can provide color and variation of structure in the landscape, especially June through August
- Can be used for educational programming for day camps and schools
- Nature observation opportunities are increased for activities like bird watching, wildlife photography, and art/nature related activities

Cons – installed herbaceous native plant communities along linear greenway areas

Effective management requires specialized services to be sustainable long term. Public/park user interaction can vary based on perceived or real threats (sight distance issues, can look neglected etc.)

- Forbs, grasses and shrubs native to the county/region tend to be tall and limit sight distances for trail users; they also can conflict with best management practices in landscape architecture as it relates to historical aspects of the greenway.
  - Setback requirements away from park trails, stormwater structures, utility and roads are necessary for planting and managing taller vegetation.
  - Native planting areas are sometimes promoted and installed by neighborhood partner organizations, are often without a long-term maintenance plan, making it difficult for the city teams to plan for success.
- Native seed mixes can thrive but not without targeted use of specialty herbicides, especially for linear plots that are much more susceptible to weedy pressure.
  - Invasive, exotic and native weedy plants intermix and compete with the preferred native plant community
  - Requires specialized knowledge to monitor and prescribe work plans using adaptive management techniques
    - Unlike traditional turf maintenance by a routine labor force, selective mowing and weed control by staff experienced in ecological restoration is required.
    - Areas taken out of turf still require routine work like trash and limb or tree removal, a point which is often not emphasized to maintenance crews.
- The cost of managing native plant communities is, in most cases, higher than mowing but rarely less unless the area is large and blocky versus narrow, linear strips.
  - Ecological restoration work done along greenways lessens the amount spent on managing globally rare or state significant natural areas.
  - Mowing and trash and limb pickup for turf areas is about $28 per cycle/acre (2017-2019 contract cost projection).
    - Yearly cost per acre is ~$616 for mowing per acre (22 cycles).
    - Native plant maintenance after a three-year period can run ~$400 to $800 an acre depending on weed pressure and access restrictions
    - Wildflower/Prairie – pollinator habitat installation can be up to $3500 an acre (8 cents per square foot), or more depending on the amount and length of time for preparation, usually a full growing season.
    - The costs and complexity of native establishment and maintenance is increased partially due to the no-mow or reduced mow areas that were instituted years ago, which allowed more invasive plants to spread and go to seed.
- Research suggests areas that look “unkempt” can be more susceptible to crime, and dumping.
  - Lack of routine maintenance (like mowing) in parks and greenways can detract from the intentionally managed natural areas, especially where the two zones adjoin.
- Management along federal floodways and levees requires 4-inch mown turf maintenance to be compliant with standards.

RIPARIAN WOODLAND RESTORATION – FULL SHADE TO PARTIAL SHADE

One of the most successful projects along greenways is the removal of invasive bush honeysuckle and other exotic trees, vines and shrubs. Below are some of the pros and cons of streamside restoration, including the introduction of native forest structure.

Pros – restoration of an invasive plant-infested woodland to native herbaceous and shrub, understory tree and overstory tree structure

- Affords better views of the waterway
- Positive comments from users in these areas report "having a safe (sight distance related), less closed-in space to walk"
- Trash and dump piles formerly hidden can be removed
- Reduces storm water runoff, once layers of native vegetation start to regenerate
- Provides more habitat for wildlife
  - Benefits pollinators- moths, bees, butterflies and hummingbirds
  - Provides better animals (insects, etc.) for food chain – predator/prey relationships, especially for migrating and nesting neo-tropical birds.
  - Supplies foraging habitat for seed-eating birds that overwinter
- Can provide color variation of structure in the landscape
- Better habitat for mammals including beaver, mink and muskrat
- Provides many opportunities for civic engagement with planting native vegetation and removing invasive plant sprouts once initial removal is accomplished.

Cons - restoration of an invasive plant-infested woodland to native herbaceous and shrub, understory tree and overstory tree structure

- Views of the stream become obstructed once objectives of the restoration become realized
- The regenerating woodlands of native herbaceous and shrub, understory tree and overstory tree are not possible unless the large invasive trees are removed.
- Once management begins, reseeding of native plants and retreatment of invasive plants needs to be done almost every year.
- The initial cost can be as high as $31,250 an acre for a two-year, phased approach with many large invasive trees to remove.
- The annual maintenance cost for years three through seven and beyond can be $400- $800 an acre, not including administrative staff time for contract management and monitoring.
- Management has to continue in perpetuity or the investments are lost and the site will revert back to the prior state, a weedy invasive-infested area

3.1.7 PLANNED ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION 2017-2020

Expansion of the ecological restoration program for the next five years is priority based. It often comes down to what do we (citizens/park users) have to lose and what does the community has to gain. In the "lose" category are core habitats associated with remnant forest fragments large enough to support rare endangered, threatened or species of concern. These higher quality natural areas, once they become degraded due to lack of management, become very difficult to restore to past ecological integrity/function. Second, restorations on large agricultural areas that are managed as reforestation plots, wetland sites or prairie habitat are a medium priority. An example is the 56-acre prairie/successional area at Eagle Creek Park converted from agriculture fields. This unit now has the Henslow's sparrow, a state endangered bird, breeding on site. Lastly are the small "turf to native" plant conversions and linear greenway sites that incorporate riparian enhancements to provide pollinator habitat while also having a positive effect on ecosystem service delivery like clean air and water. This last example is the remaining 10% of the land area in parks and along greenways that receive invasive species control and reintroduction of native grasses and wildflowers, shrubs and trees. The three main priority areas mentioned above have been a standard for many years.

Below is a table of the existing categories of managed sites as of 2016:

Active management categories	ACRES
Natural Area Buffer	50.5
Native Plant Landscaping	0.3
Rain Garden/Bioswale	1.5
Early Successional	9.0
Reforestation	185.5
Open Woods	37.3
Prairie	256.4
Wetland	35.1
Woodland Restoration	935.9
Pond Edge Enhancement	1.2

GENERAL CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Natural Area Buffer – highly disturbed open or wooded land, managed for invasive species to protect adjoining core habitats

Native Plant Landscaping – small beds of native flowers, grasses and sedges used in the landscape for educational purposes and to fulfill functional roles of beautification and pollinator habitat

Rain Garden/Bioswale – often called green infrastructure, these areas are in parks and along greenways and road right-of-ways to filter stormwater runoff and provide neighborhood beautification and pollinator habitat

Early Successional – an area maintained for native woody shrub and tree establishment- old agricultural field reverting back into a wooded state

Reforestation – managed areas previously in agriculture, prairie or turf that are planted with an appropriate selection of native trees and shrubs, often incorporated to expand the size of existing forests/woodlands

Open Woods – an old agricultural or turf site converted to a native herb understory, often with scattered shrubs and overstory trees that is managed to be open – full woody succession is usually suppressed

Prairie – a grass/wildflower ecosystem native to north-central and northwestern Indiana (and other areas of the Midwest). It is planted in old agricultural areas and to replace turf areas. This is a fire/disturbance dependent plant community known to be very beneficial for pollinator habitat as well as for its ability to reduce stormwater runoff. This community is often used as a transition habitat, initially planted as an effective means to suppress weeds/invasive plant species and provide wildlife benefit, later to succeed into woody succession or planted as a reforestation plot. In most cases the prairie community has to be replanted after 10-15 years if a diverse mix of wildflowers and grasses are to be sustained (not native to Marion County).

Wetland – a category classified for this purpose as an open/non-forested wet site that is managed for wet-loving plants as well as amphibians and reptiles which depend on this habitat. Open wetlands can have a great diversity of plants and animals. Wooded wetlands like fen/seeps and flatwoods wetlands are not listed here, but instead are lumped under woodland restoration.

Woodland Restoration – the largest of all the categories. Includes a number of natural forest remnants that are high quality and protected by state code – called State Dedicated Nature Preserves (IDNR-Division of Nature Preserves), owned and managed by the City of Indianapolis- Marion County. The county was covered almost entirely by woodland prior to Anglican settlement, except for areas too wet to grow trees such as swamps (bogs and marshes). The bogs were drained and excavated and drainage infrastructure later reduced most of the marshes. The majority of the remaining wooded fens (or seeps) and ephemeral wetlands in parks and greenways are protected and managed for the benefit of the recreational user for other ecosystem services (i.e. clean air and water) and to protect important habitat for birds that attract many sightseers annually.

Pond Edge Enhancement – Some ponds in parks have been planted with emergent wetland plants and shoreline vegetation. This enhancement protects the shoreline from erosion and allows a greater diversity of aquatic insect life, fish and other wildlife. Some of the urban ponds have been enhanced with prairie grasses and wildflowers to add an aesthetic component and to help keep overabundant geese from spoiling the pond shore with their droppings.

3.1.8 FUTURE EXPANSION OF NATURAL AREA MANAGEMENT

It is difficult to predict where grants and other funding will be successful but potential expansion should be based on priority. Care is taken to not relax the management of existing natural areas when taking on more areas in parks and greenways. Below is a projection of the various types of management as ecological restoration services are extended beyond the 13% of park and greenway currently managed by the Department of Public Works – Land Stewardship office.

Potential Expansion Categories (5 yrs.)	ACRES
Rain Garden/Bioswale	0.1
Successional/Buffer	21.3
Reforestation	67.5
Open Woods	33.3
Prairie	16.6
Wetland	48.5
Woodland Restoration	520.5

Examples of what is planned.

FOREST REMNANT AND ADJOINING BUFFER AREAS MANAGEMENT:

- Eagle Creek Park: Eagle Creek is the largest park in the park system. The park has two state dedicated nature preserves that are under management. In addition, there are other large forested sites converted from agriculture to native cover types actively managed to enhance the habitat for wildlife and buffer the forest remnants. Old agricultural areas are currently being managed as reforestation plots and prairie grass and wildflower sites. Below is a current example of a wetland restoration that has a state endangered species and aquatic species of concern. This is the headwaters of Falcon Creek.
  - 120 acre flatwoods wetland complex
    - The southeast region of Eagle Creek Park is undergoing ecological restoration which started in 2015. The area includes moderately disturbed wooded habitats that were damaged from grazing and woodlands that were completely removed for row crop agriculture. Spring Pond Nature Preserve, a remnant Central Till Plains Flatwoods ecosystem, is adjoining and also part of the management. In 2016, an intensive management effort involving clearing of invasive shrubs began on more than 60 acres. Prior to restoration efforts, reptile, amphibian and breeding bird surveys were conducted for a number of years to record the baseline presence of wildlife. Ongoing surveys will provide information on the species present, including the state endangered Kirtland snake and other species of concern, which will help guide restoration of the wetland complex and success of the ongoing restoration efforts. To expand the wetlands, old agricultural field tiles will be broken so the hydrology and planted vegetation will trend back to a more native state capable of sustaining greater plant and animal diversity. Full restoration of the site will be ongoing for decades as this initiative unfolds and water quality and onsite flood storage lift environmental quality.
- Southwestway, Southeastway, Eagle Creek, Wolf Run, Grassy Creek and Skiles Test Parks are among some of the largest parks under management. Other parks with important natural significance will receive ongoing maintenance to maintain species richness but will not involve expansion of area under management.
  - Size sets these parks apart from other parks that are currently under restoration. These parks have sizeable habitat and expansion is needed to support conservative species of wildlife as well as water quality and other ecological service benefit.
  - Due to the size and quality of habitat, cyclic treatment for control of invasive plants will continue as well as planting of native trees, shrubs and wildflowers when appropriate.
  - Infrastructure, such as park trails, is being added. At Grassy Creek Regional Park a new trail installed in 2016 will provide access to recreational users who walk and run for exercise and for those who want to bird watch at one of the largest open wetlands in the county.
  - Expansion of management in Grassy Creek, and these other parks, will make available new habitat that may support conservative species of breeding birds which are on the decline. The restorative efforts will increase the quality of the sensory experience of park users as the diversity of vegetation and wildlife increases.
  - An integrated approach combines adjacent park areas using a variety of restoration strategies. This strategy seeks to balance the need for core habitat and wildlife corridors for wildlife with the growing interests of partner groups and grant opportunities, especially in underserved neighborhoods. This integrated management approach is relevant as the community becomes more involved with urban ecology and sustainability.

OTHER PROPERTIES IN RESTORATION MANAGEMENT:

- Areas of moderate size that will have continued natural area management, some with limited expansion potential.
  - Raymond Park: Old-second growth flatwoods, wetland and prairie. Expansion of the existing wetland complex is dependent on grant or outside funding.
  - Holliday Park: Largest wooded fen/seep wetland in the county, old – second growth woodland with a diverse native plant community. One of the best woodland wildflower displays locally and a nature center and native plant landscaping.
  - Woollens Gardens: This is a state-dedicated nature preserve that exhibits old-second growth characteristics and adjoins Fall Creek and Skiles Test Park
  - Marott Park Nature Preserve: A large state-dedicated nature preserve with an older growth 16-acre section in the northwest corner of the preserve. The older growth area is in need of funding to manage overused trails and to stabilize Williams Creek.
  - Town Run Trail Park: An old abandoned gravel quarry and floodplain forest area in transition to managed prairie and open woods with some expansion occurring for reforestation. This site features a mountain bike trail managed by the Hoosier Mountain Bike Association. The trail begins in the adjoining Town Run North.
  - Washington Park: This large park was formerly the site of the Indianapolis Zoo. A planted six-acre prairie and highly disturbed woodland are being managed as one of the largest inner city parks in Indianapolis. More funding is needed to better manage the vegetation in this large urban park.
  - Acton Park: The vegetation in the park is highly disturbed. Prairie was installed to provide pollinator habitat and benefits to the adjoining stream.
  - Paul Ruster Park: Disturbed and second growth forest with floodplain and turf grass to prairie conversion. This park has a stream, as well as a planted prairie and managed woodland with some areas of large trees and high quality native understory.
  - Franklin Township Community Park: Disturbed and second growth forest, wetland and prairie that adjoins two schools. Large trees and wetlands can be found in the park, especially in the south portion of the park.
  - Five Points and Edgewood Park: Large open area being proposed for natural area restoration.
  - Broad Ripple Park: 10-acre woodland was cleared of bush honeysuckle with help from a partnership with the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society. Work continues to restore the understory so forest regeneration can occur to replace the large cherry, beech and red oak on the site.
- Other parks in restorative management:
  - Gray Park: Prairie and disturbed floodplain woodland
  - Perry Park: Second-growth woodlot
  - Hanover Park: Turf to Prairie
  - Juan Solomon: Moderately disturbed second-growth woodland/Crooked Creek runs through the property
  - Northwestway Park: Prairie and mature reforestation management
  - Krannert Park: Turf to prairie
  - Watson Road Bird Sanctuary: Turf to shade understory planting
  - Garfield Park: Streambank management
  - Dubarry Park: Disturbed second-growth woodlot restoration
- Greenways in restorative management:
  - Pleasant Run Golf Course: Streambank restoration site
  - Pleasant Run (includes Ellenberger and Christian Park)
  - Pogues Run (Spades Park)
  - Fall Creek (includes Barton Park)
  - White River (includes Blickman Educational Trail and Broad Ripple Park)

3.1.9 CONCLUSION

The City of Indianapolis- Marion County, Department of Parks and Recreation and Department of Public Works continues to support natural area restoration across the county. While much work is left to be done, the Land Stewardship office, the City's many support staff, skilled ecological restoration contractors and planning consultants all work to improve the recreational experience.

Protecting and managing natural areas increases the quality of life by providing an enriched passive and active recreational opportunity. Natural areas and the natural system as a whole are providing the only source of clean water and air. As this plan reaches maturity in 2021, more wildlife and habitats will be available for the growing generation of recreational users. Thank you to all of the partners and funding organizations that make ecological restoration work possible. It is hoped that the community and the many partner organizations work to educate and inspire the citizenry to help restore their own properties, helping to sustain clean water and water resources within the community.

3.2 CULTURAL LEGACY

The man-made or Cultural Legacy section of the inventory describes the historic and modern features of the built environment as they relate to recreation opportunities in the county.

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION

The National Park Service (NPS) has developed guidelines for identifying, categorizing and preserving cultural features (landscapes, archeological sites and historic properties). A complete Cultural Landscape Inventory of the county is beyond the scope of this park comprehensive plan. However, these guidelines will be used to inventory the primary existing cultural features that are associated with recreation opportunities located here. Future actions, which are identified in this Plan, will identify cultural features associated with recreation and leisure activities in the county that are owned by Indy Parks.

3.2.2 PEOPLE

In recognizing the importance of the cultural history of Indianapolis and Marion County as a part of the recreational experience, a brief history of its people is included here.

HISTORIC COMMUNITIES

According to James J. Divita in the Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, "Indianapolis' first residents were squatters along the banks of White River, Fall Creek, Pogues Run and Pleasant Run." Among them were John McCormick and George Pogue. Later early residents of the area included Cheney Lively Briton, Alexander Ralston's housekeeper and probably the first permanent African-American resident; Calvin Fletcher, and Nicholas McCarty. Appendices in Peopling Indiana show a total population in Marion County of 24,103 in 1850, with 1945 (8.09%) foreign born. The influx of immigrants peaked in 1910, when the census showed a foreign born population of 21,210 but still, 8.04% of the total population. Other appendices show that the primary countries' of origin in 1869 were Canada, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, and Wales.

Near its peak, in 1910, the largest numbers of foreign born originated in Austria, Canada, England, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Russia, and Turkey-Europe. In 1869 and 1910 the largest foreign born population originated in Germany with 69% and 42%, respectively, of the immigrants. The influence of German immigrants is still evident today with the popular annual Oktoberfest held at the privately owned German Park (30 acres, 8600 South Meridian Street), and at the Athenaeum (401 East Michigan Street), the German cultural and social center. The Athenaeum originally housed a gymnasium, restaurant, bowling alleys, concert-hall ballroom, and a wall-enclosed beer garden with concert pavilion. Today, the Athenaeum is still a social and cultural center that includes a YMCA location, a theater group, and a restaurant.

In a similar time period, the Native-American population rose from 4 people in 1870 to 2,181 people in 2000. There were a reported 650 African-Americans in Marion County in 1850, and 207,964 in 2000. Indianapolis does not have as diverse of an ethnic heritage as other cities, such as Chicago and Detroit, however, its moniker of being the "Crossroads of America" speaks to the growth of contemporary communities here.

3.2.3 PLACES

Recreation places and the types of leisure activities have changed as the social and economic context of the world has evolved. Placing the development of parks in this context is a means to understand the correlation between park type, activities and needs and the growth of the city from a small settlement on the White River to its position as the 12th largest city in the United States. The following history of parks in Indianapolis documents the development of its park and recreation activities.

HISTORY OF PARKS & RECREATION

The following text was written by Michelle D. Hale for The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis.

A time sequence of specific park development was inserted by the planners to establish a history and con text for park acquisition and development. Text located in brackets [ ] is written by the planners. During the early planning and development of the city there seemed no need for planned public parks.

Alexander Ralston's original plan (1821) of the Mile Square did not include any designated public spaces. Early residents used pastures, cemeteries, and all undeveloped land about them as recreational areas.

As the Civil War approached and the city experienced congestion for the first time, however, citizen action in favor of public parks began slowly to build. In 1859 Timothy Fletcher donated a plot of land to the city with the provision that it be improved and used as a park. The City Council, believing Fletcher's gesture was a ruse to elevate the value of his adjacent land, refused his offer. Other private donations were also viewed with suspicion, and the council chose not to act upon them.

Using a different tactic, George Merritt was responsible for the first public park in Indianapolis. He repeatedly petitioned state and local authorities for donation of state land for use as a public park. Governor Oliver P. Morton offered the land now known as Military Park for use as a recreation area, and in 1864 the City Council took over protective control of Military Park as well as University Square and the Governor's Circle.

[Although the Civil War slowed the development of new, urban Romantic landscapes like that at Central Park (1857) in New York; the city still followed the trend for large urban parks designed for passive recreation. The example set by Central Park and emulated in park design throughout the United States provided a "variety of rural scenes" (open meadows, canopied areas, ponds, rock formations) and separate pedestrian and vehicular routes. As is typical for the Midwest, efforts for such development lagged behind coastal areas, but still moved forward. Midwestern land scape architects and architects, (e.g. Jens Jensen and Frank Lloyd Wright, etc.) eventually applied a Midwestern "hand" to park and residential design. These designers and their peers, emulated the Midwestern natural landscape, using stratified limestone, winding stream-like water features and native plant species in the planting beds. The following paragraph identifies the first examples in Indianapolis of the larger, strolling parks located around the periphery of the existing city.]

By the 1870s citizens became more vocal in their desire for public parks, and the City Council launched a tentative program for park purchases. In 1870 the city acquired Brookside Park from the heirs of Calvin Fletcher. Three years later a group of northside residents petitioned the council for a park along Fall Creek, with seven citizens donating 91.5 acres. The northside project failed to gain council support, but similar efforts by a group of southside residents ultimately led to the purchase of Southern Park, later renamed Garfield Park. Again the council did not develop this property, and the city leased it to the Indiana Trotting Association between 1877 and 1880.

By the 1880s residents privately and in combination with the city [another typical Midwestern action] improved all these park lands. Merritt funded Military Park's original improvements and subsequently installed a playground. Neighbors of the University Square property voluntarily landscaped the park, and the Odd Fellows of Indiana erected a statue of Vice-

President Schuyler Colfax there. Citizens planted trees in Garfield Park and carried other improvements funded by the council. Additionally, residents in the area of St. Clair Square created their own park, collecting subscriptions, laying walks, and planting trees. These 19th century public parks were intended for use as passive recreation areas where middle class and wealthy citizens could relax and enjoy nature.

[The time period commencing after the Civil War and ending at the turn of the century can best be described as a transitional period in landscape design. The early manipulation of the North American landscape was transformed in the 20th century into an American de sign entity that was based in social, political, technical, and environmental principles that elevated "design" to a new role. At the same time that social concerns were being strengthened by the revitalization of the country after the war, the increasing numbers of city dwellers were becoming less interest d with the passive activities offered at the public parks and demanded more active recreation facilities.

The 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia showed the acculturation of the United States as a world class country. Among various exhibits of industrial and commercial affluence; planting beds featured exotic and ornamental specimens planted in various geometric shapes. This departure from the naturalistic landscape approach was inspired by the writings of British horticulturist, J. C. Loudon, who advocated non-native species and "artistic" arrangements of plants. Color, variety of species and the visual impact of individual features were more important than the cohesiveness of a unified design. Planting designs using "bedding" plants were in spired by this exposition and remain popular today.

According to Pregill & Volkman in Landscapes in History, "To Victorians, leisure represented the opportunity for educational and morally uplifting travel, social contacts and physical recreation." The Romantic landscapes were "improved" with features that were less a part of a unified design statement and more an embellishment on the land. The public expected entertainment, variety, and organized activities at the parks. Improvements included formal promenades, bandshells, conservatories, zoos, floral displays and amusement areas. Garfield Park (1873) was "improved" using these principles.]

[During this same period, the two small parcels of land (Indianola-1896, McCarty Triangle-1897) were acquired for parks.]

[Near the end of the 19th century, the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, significantly changed the way a city was planned. The two cultural ideals of the 19th century—the physical improvement of the environment, and the moral improvement of society—coalesced, and were given an American identity called the City Beautiful Movement. The four components of the movement were (1) Civic Design, (2) Civic Art, (3) Civic Reform, and (4) Civic Improvement. Among the objectives of the movement were to establish hygienic urban conditions, create focal points in the streetscape to visually unify the city, and to treat open spaces as a critical urban need, emphasizing active rather than passive recreation.]

City officials immediately consulted nationally prominent park designers to guide park development. The Commercial Club initially hired Joseph Earnshaw, who recommended that sites be purchased and developed along White River and Fall Creek, connected by a chain of small parks and interconnecting parkways. Once established, the park board conducted a survey of possible park sites and commissioned John C. Olmsted, stepson of Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. to develop a plan for future parks. The Olmsted plan, like the Earnshaw plan, recommended that local waterways be the focus of a system that would include small parks, boulevards, several larger local parks, and a large public reservation.

Mayor Thomas Taggert, who assumed office in 1895, was a strong supporter of parks and was instrumental in laying the foundations for the park system. At his behest the council approved a limited version of the Olmsted Plan and authorized the purchase of over 1,100 acres of land, including much of what now is Riverside Park. [Brookside (1898), Spades (1898) and Highland Park (1898) were acquired at this time.]

Much of the land bought at this time had previously been used as unauthorized dumping grounds. The park department saw its job as ridding the city of unclean and unhealthy areas as well as providing beautiful recreation spaces. Park improvements included landscaping, building water features, and adding walking paths and benches, with the bulk of the work focusing on Riverside and Garfield parks. Parks also began to provide entertainment such as the 18-hole golf course, zoo, and steamboat cruises on White River at Riverside Park.

In 1905 the Board of Park Commissioners learned of George Kessler (1862-1923), who was both a city planner and a landscape architect, and his excellent work on the Kansas City park and boulevard system. Kessler was hired in 1908 as the Consulting Landscape Architect and secretary of the park board. He retained the landscape architect position until 1915. During his employment, Kessler proceeded to update many of the earlier plans and introduced ideas that quickly added to the beauty of Indianapolis. In 1909 he helped pass a new park law that allowed the department to levy taxes for park purchases and improvements. Other laws enacted in 1913 and 1919 increased the department's self-sufficiency and taxing power. The legislation enabled the department to expand, acquire new property, and begin boulevard construction.

Despite the city's official sponsorship, citizens continued to actively support park development during the early 1900s by donating property or funding park improvements. The be quests of Alfred Burdsal and George Rhodius in 1911 funded the purchase and development of Willard Park (1907), Burdsal Parkway, and Rhodius Park (1913). [Pleasant Run Parkway was established in 1912, Fall Creek Parkway in 1914, and White River Parkway in 1916. The establishment of Pleasant Run Parkway began the connection of Ellenberger Park (1911) to Garfield Park. South Grove Golf Course (1902), Irvington Circle (1904), Wilbur Sha w Hill (1908) were all a response to the need for variety in recreation activities. The Iron Skillet Restaurant (1908) overlooks the Coffin Golf Course (1920).] Woolens Gardens (1909) was donated to the city by William Watson Woolens, who asked that the land be pre served as a bird sanctuary and botanical study area. John H. Holliday (1916) deeded his 80- acre estate to the city for use as a public park. Municipal Gardens (1915) was originally called Casino Gardens, a private canoe and yacht club, and then dance hall. It was renamed Municipal Gardens in 1927.]

[Another important topic that was beginning to be addressed in the leisure parks of the late 19th century was that of active recreation. Organized sports were becoming popular as a result of social concerns for the well-being of poorer urban children and the assimilation of non-English speaking immigrants. In other, more well-to-do neighborhoods, active recreational activities were in vogue, perhaps as a result of the national organization of such activities as football (1895) and gymnastics (1881). Hundreds of adults and children participated in sandlot activities.

These activities and other active sports, required more space, equipment and constructed features and led to more "improvements" in the already existing parks. The national trend for active recreational opportunities resulted in the development of play grounds. With the encouragement of President Theodore Roosevelt, the great outdoorsmen, the Playground Association of America was organized in 1906. Large cities allocated money and land to develop these facilities. The city of Boston authorized the development of 20 playgrounds, and the city of Chicago allocated $1,000,000 for the construction of small parks and pleasure grounds containing not more than 10 acres.]

[Early playgrounds were little more than a barren lot with play equipment (swings and teeter-totters, etc.) installed. Other small play grounds were developed on school property if space permitted, offering school children year-round opportunities for supervised activities and exercise. As money and interest developed, later playgrounds were designed by landscape architects and typically displayed a better sense of organization, circulation, function and safety.

The "typical" playground, although officially called a park, offered a variety of activities for all ages of people. Norman T. Newton describes the playgrounds in Design on the Land in the following way: Age groups were given distinctive areas, appropriately furnished: play spaces for children, open-air exercise areas for men and women, usually divided by sexes, courts for games, wading and swimming pools, and fieldhouses for indoor recreation. In each case the park… included a bit of greenery thought essential to a visual oasis in a neighborhood. Land scape features that were associated with playground design include a central pavilion or fieldhouse set among trees, a large open space for ball games, a perimeter path, space for exercise equipment, and perimeter trees to define the site. The number of park-school complexes located historically in Indianapolis is unclear at this time, but the following neighborhood parks were acquired in this time period. Watkins Park (1913), Lot K (1915) and Fall Creek and 30th Park (1910) were established as a node on the parkway, and other small land acquisitions included Noble Place (1912), Brightwood (1916), and Greer Park (1917).]

During World War I the city suspended most park activities and funding. In the 1920s the department resumed park purchases and expansion. The park system grew to include 24 parks and parkways, with land totaling approximately 1,900 acres.

During the 1920s, a comprehensive plan for park development was prepared by landscape architect Lawrence V. Sheridan. This plan incorporated the early work of Olmsted, Powers and Kessler into an even larger plan that encompassed the entire county. Sheridan's plan was excellent for its time, however, it was not regularly updated by subsequent planners; with the result that population growth began to outstrip development.

The idea that public parks should provide active, as well as passive recreation originally surfaced before WWII, but recreational programming did not become a high priority until later. As early as 1910 the park board joined with public school and library officials to provide recreational programs, gradually accepting more of this responsibility. In 1919 a new park law transferred the recreation division from the City's health department to the public parks department, which began constructing a system of playgrounds, pools, and community recreational centers in parks. Parks soon provided a variety of year round athletic programming, classes, clubs, and special events. The centers also provided bathing facilities, day nurseries, dental clinics, and served as a neighborhood headquarters for welfare agencies.

[Recreation and sports centers that were opened at this time included Garfield (1922), Emhardt Stadium (1923), and Brookside (1928). Golf courses included Pleasant Run (1922), Douglass (1926), and Sarah Shank (1928). Specialty parks included Miniature Park (1923) and the Watson Road Bird Preserve (1925).

The influence of the Playground Association and the increased interest in active recreation is evidenced by the number of neighborhood parks that were established in the 1920s. A total of 15 neighborhood parks were built and included the following:

- J. T. V. Hill (1921)
- Alice Carter Place (1922)
- Haughville (1922)
- Kelly (1922)
- Frank Young (1922)
- Babe Denny (1923)
- Hawthorne (1923)
- Porter Playfield (1924)
- Bertha Ross (1925)
- Denver (1925)
- John Ed (1925)
- Centennial & Groff (1926)
- Broadway & 61st (1928)
- Lentz (1928)
- Arsenal (1929)

At the same time that small playgrounds were being developed in neighborhoods to realize the Playground Association's goal of "a playground for every child, within one-half mile of its home," larger parks with a variety of amenities were also being developed. These parks, because of their acreage, offered a variety of recreational opportunities that could not be offered in smaller playgrounds. Larger community parks that were acquired at this time were Christian Park (1921) and Washington Park (1923-The zoo was not built until 1964).]

During the 1930s the system of neighborhood parks, playgrounds, boulevards, and recreation areas in Indianapolis grew despite the Great Depression. The department, however, began to charge fees for some of its operations, such as the golf courses, swimming pools, and community houses, to make them self-sustaining. At the same time volunteers from women's groups, civic organizations, and WPA and CWA workers augmented the parks' work force. Park activities focused on city beautification projects and year-round recreational activities: completing Lake Sullivan, constructing wading pools, staffing summer playgrounds, landscaping the boulevards and public properties, and sponsoring dances. Park community houses became popular, low-cost centers of activity during the 1930s, housing many clubs and classes as well as providing space for other groups.

[The length of the following list of properties acquired in the 1930s supports evidence that the expansion of the parks was greater in the 1920s, before the Great Depression, and improvements in existing parks were more popular in the 1930s. Christian Park Recreation Center was opened in 1932, and only four neighborhood parks were acquired (Acorn (1930), Reverend Mozel Sanders (1931), Bethel Park (1935), and Forest Manor (1937).]

Despite the expansion of park facilities and programs, a Charity Organization Society study in 1937 found only 20 percent of public park acreage was within a two-mile radius of half of the residential population. The park department's major strategies for land acquisition had been to receive donations or purchase cheap land on the outskirts of town, the intended policy of buying small parcels of land within walking distance of all residents throughout the city remained largely unimplemented by the 1940s. [This is evidenced by the addition of only one neighborhood park before the war—Ross-Claypool (1940).]

The World War II years added temporary new responsibilities for the public parks—running canteens and clubs for servicemen and providing land for postwar veteran and emergency housing.

[The end of World War II brought the Baby Boom to the United States. The increased population brought a need for more single-family houses (the American Dream), created suburbs, and demanded the expansion of schools and school playgrounds and parks to satisfy the need of the public. The acquisition of more parkland was not the immediate need, however, as evidenced by the few parks that were acquired in the late 1940s. Broad Ripple Park, the former amusement park, and Marott Park were both donated in 1945. Three neighborhood parks—Barton (1946-gift), Tarkington (1945), and Centennial & 20th (1946-gift)—were acquired. Another donation to the park department was the Sarge Johnson Boxing Center (1945).]

After the war and into the 1950s however, the park department again turned its attention to recreation and city beautification. The playground system expanded, and parks continued to sponsor a growing number of clubs, classes, and "teen canteens." Although the parks had long hosted festivals, the 1950s saw the increase of music festivals, carnivals, and dances, many of which were revenue-producing projects. By the late 1940s the city renewed its efforts to beautify and restore its parks. Much of the park property and existing facilities had not had significant improvements made to them in at least 20 years, and large bond issues in the early 1950s helped pay for much of the renovation.

Athletics became increasingly important after the 1940s and the parks provided sites for many boxing, basketball, and baseball leagues and tournaments, including some of national significance; …one of which was the 1958 AAU national championship swimming meet at Broad Ripple Park. Golfing also became a high priority during these years, with the parks department hiring golf pros to assist patrons and oversee courses.

[Parks that were acquired during the 1950s were primarily smaller neighborhood and mini-parks. The neighborhood parks were:

- Moreland (1953)
- Virginia Lee O'Brien (1956)
- Ridenour (1956)
- Bowman (1959)
- Sandorf (1959)

Mini-parks:

- DeQuincy (1953)
- Windsor Village (1953)
- Doris Cowherd (1956)
- Beville (1959)
- Canterbury (1959)

Northwestway Park, a community park, was acquired in 1957, as a beginning response to the city moving further from downtown.]

The population boom, which occurred following World War II, found the open space situation worsening and prompted important changes in the county's park management. Prior to 1963, all public parks were under the jurisdiction of one or another of the county's municipalities, the majority being found in Indianapolis. City and county officials recognized the metropolitan character of the county and the need to provide park facilities to those residents living outside of incorporated municipalities, as no suitable areas of sufficient size remained within the corporate boundaries.

This precipitated the creation, in 1963, of the Metropolitan Board of Park Commissioners. It replaced the City Board of Park Commissioners and extended jurisdiction throughout the county with the exception of the towns of Speedway, Lawrence, Beech Grove, and Southport.

Rising rates of suburbanization and competition with private sources of recreation during the 1960s forced park officials to change the focus of public parks. Downtown properties increasingly received less attention as the park department devoted resources to parks nearer the suburbs and purchased park land in suburban townships. Financed by Indianapolis and Marion County taxes, the park department purchased Northeastway (now Sahm Park-1961), Southeastway (1961), [Southwestway (1961)], and Eagle Creek Park (1962).

[The 1960s experienced the acquisition of large tracts of land near the county perimeters. Two community parks were acquired--Gustafson (1961) and Perry (1961). Golf courses were constructed at Sahm (1964), Thatcher (1967), and Southwestway (1968); swimming pools were installed at Sahm (1962), Douglass (1968), and Gustafson (1968); and recreation and special leisure facilities--Post Road (1960), Bush Stadium (1967), and the Woodruff Place Esplanades (1962) were acquired. Neighborhood parks were also important acquisitions 11 parks were acquired during this time period:

- Faculty Drive (1961)
- Martin Luther King (1961)
- Bellamy (1962)
- Gardner (1962)
- Gateway West (1963)
- Foxhill Manor (1964)
- Carson (1965)
- Southside (1966)
- Dubarry (1967)
- Olin (1967)
- Roselawn (1968)
- Pride mini-park (1968)]

Not all downtown efforts were forsaken, however, the department began a perennial effort at park promotion by encouraging neighborhoods, clubs, and civic groups to "adopt" and help maintain a park. Changes continued during the 1970s. A unified government (UNIGOV) expanded the Indianapolis service boundaries to include all of Marion County and reorganized the Department of Parks and Recreation. Citizen interest in parks fell as suburbanization and park vandalism increased. Public parks also competed for space and resources with urban expansion and renewal efforts. The parks department responded by experimenting with new programs and projects. Using millions of dollars from federal grants and local bond issues, it constructed a system of small, special use parks known as "tot lot" and "vest pocket" parks along highways, refurbished deteriorating facilities, built new facilities, expanded recreational programs, and made extensive improvements to Eagle Creek Park, which opened in 1974. The parks department also renamed many central city parks after notable local and national African-Americans, reflecting the changing nature of park visitors. [The following lists illustrate the expansion of the parks in the 1970s:

Recreation Centers:

- Southeastway (1972)
- Thatcher (1976)

Golf Courses:

- Eagle Creek (1975)
- Smock (1975)

Swimming Pools:

- Riverside (1970)
- Wes Montgomery (1971)
- Rhodius (1971)
- Martin Luther King (1972)
- Perry (1972)
- Thatcher (1972)
- Bethel (1973)
- Ellenberger (1973)
- Brookside (1978)
- Willard (1978)
- Garfield (1979)

Community Parks:

- Wes Montgomery (1970)
- Franklin/Edgewood (1970)
- Paul Ruster (1970)
- German Church & 30th (1971)
- Pedigo Farms (1971, Raymond Park)
- Krannert (1972)
- Oxford Terrace (1972, Oscar Charles ton)
- Thatcher (1973)
- Skiles Test (1974)

Neighborhood Parks:

- Beckwith (1970) Franklin & 16th (1971)
- Smock (1970) Juan Solomon (1971)
- Tibbs & 21st (1971) Robey (1972)
- Stout Field (1974)

Tot lots (Mini-parks):

- Stringtown (1970)
- Christina Oaks (1971)
- Andrew Ramsey (1971)
- Clayton & LaSalle (1972)
- Ringgold (1973)
- Sexson (1973)
- Talbot & 29th (1973)
- Hot Shot Tot Lot (1975)]

While these efforts resulted in notable success, such as the institution of the Indianapolis/Scarborough Peace games, a general lack of park usage, inadequate maintenance, and vandalism became serious problems, especially for central city parks. Parks on the outer edges of the city, especially Eagle Creek Park, and the golf courses, however, offered first rate facilities and programs.

A new parks administration began a greater focus on amateur sports during the 1980s, which inspired a resurgence in park usage and image. The department, in an effort to supply a unique recreation need to the community, began to phase out smaller central city parks in favor of large natural-setting parks and linear parks equipped with fitness and bike paths. Eagle Creek Park became the showcase of the park system during the 1980s, offering a lake, nature trails, and many recreation facilities. Large bond issues funded amateur sports facilities, such as the Lake Sullivan Sports Complex and the Major Taylor Velodrome, which along with the eleven golf courses became venues for special events as well as local and national competitions. The Indianapolis Zoo also relocated from Washington Park in 1986 to the new White River State Park. [The shift in priorities is evidenced by the shortness of the following list of acquisitions:

Special Leisure Facilities:

- Indianapolis Soccer & Sports Center (1984)
- Little League Regional Center (1989)

Neighborhood Parks:

- Kessler & Illinois (1982, Friedman Park)
- Eagle Highland (1989)
- Linwood & Shelbyville (1989, Tolin-Akeman)

Mini Parks:

- Highway Parcel # 15 (1980)
- Finch (1988)]

As of the early 1990s, the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation continued to fight vandalism and public apathy. While the department offered a wide variety of traditional recreational and nature programs, many were underused due to competition from private and commercial providers of recreation al facilities.

The park system of the early 1990s claimed 73 properties, 16 community centers, 13 pools, and 12 golf courses. [Park acquisitions in the 1990s include:

- Whispering Hills Golf Course (1990)
- Post Road Community Park (1990)
- Glenn's Valley Park (1992)
- Juan Solomon Park Addition (1995)
- WISH Park (1995)
- Thompson Park (1999)
- Golc Soccer Fields (1999)

Beginning in the mid 1990's an emphasis has been placed on providing recreation lands to the public through the use of Recreation and Conservation Easements or long term leases. These low cost partnerships have allowed the additions of Town Run Trail Park, The Frank and Judy O'Bannon Soccer Fields and the Golc Soccer Fields. Another avenue for acquiring parkland has been advocacy for donations from land developers. As a part of re-zoning negotiations, acreage has been donated for neighborhood parks as well as floodplain natural areas. Some have included playground and trail improvements or the funds to construct amenities. Examples include Thompson Park, Cloverleaf Conservation Area, the Little Buck Creek Greenway, and Retherford Park.

In the early 2000's, the Department partnered with the Indianapolis Parks Foundation, local donors and worked to secure grant funds to purchase 187 acres adjacent to Southwestway Park. The Cottonwood Lakes and Mann Property additions make Southwestway Park the second largest park in Marion County at 586 acres including Winding River Golf Course. In 2003 Indy Parks partnered with the Department of Public Works to open 43 acres of the Pogues Run Detention Basin to the public for recreational use.

The 1.5 miles of trail offer an opportunity for exercise and offer a venue for future art installations. Through a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, Indy Parks has embarked on a significant expansion of its programmed facilities in recent years. New family recreation centers at Washington Park and Bethel Park, as well as additions at Christian Park, Municipal Gardens, and Rhodius Parks greatly expanded the Departments ability to offer low cost recreation programs in additional City neighborhoods.

The renovation of the Indy Parks (Garfield) Arts Center provided a center of focus for County-wide visual, performing and literary arts programs. The Eagle Creek Park Earth Discovery Center allowed for expansion of environmental education. The extension of the Monon Trail from Fall Creek south to 10th Street connected much of Indianapolis' north side to downtown. Park acquisitions included:

- Grassy Creek Park (2000)
- Town Run Trail Park (2000)
- Little Buck Greenway (2001)
- Mann Property Addition (2002)
- Frank and Judy O'Bannon Soccer Fields (2003)
- Cottonwood Lakes Addition (2003)
- Basswood Park (2003)
- George E. Kessler Park (2003)
- Pogues Run Basin (2003)

Beginning in 2004, the Department received 185 of the 384 acres acquired during this period via donations from numerous sources. During this time the department installed 1.5 miles of Fall Creek Greenway (Kessler to Skiles Test Nature Park) and added its third Canine Companion Zone at Paul Ruster Park. In 2007, the Department was the primary host for National Recreation and Park Association's National Exposition and Congress that included over 10,000 delegates from park systems all over the world. New Family and Nature Centers were completed or started at Eagle Creek's Earth Discovery Center and Windsor Village Park and new club houses were finished at Smock and Thatcher Golf Courses. Park acquisitions included:

- Griffin Woods Park (2004)
- Riverwood Park (2004)
- Retherford Park (2004)
- Stamm Park (2004)
- Franklin & 38th Park (2004)

- Edgewood & 21st Park (2004)
- Peace Park (2004)
- Emhardt Park (2004)
- Acton Park (2004)
- Blickman Trail (2004)
- Wight Fields (2004)
- Grassy Creek Regional Park (2006)
- Broad Ripple Canoe Launch (2006)
- Dollar Hide Creek Park (2006)
- Colorado & 29th Park (2006)
- Hanover Park North Park (2006)
- Copper Grove Park (2007)
- Red Maple Park (2007)
- Kitley & Troy Park (2007)

Since 2007, the following park acquisitions have occurred:

- Wildwood Park (2008)
- Wolf Run Park
- Century Park (2010)
- Five Points and Edgewood Park (2011)
- Bel Aire Park (land exchange) (2013)
- Carson Park (addition to existing park) (2014)

3.2.4 INTERACTION WITH ARTS, HISTORICAL, AND OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

Indy Parks interacts with many arts, historical and historic sites throughout Marion County. The following pages outline these partnerships, as well as potential partnerships the Department should consider in the future. Each partner's relationship is followed by the specific park where they interact with Indy Parks.

3.3 CURRENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AT SPECIFIC PARKS

- Indianapolis Parks Foundation- All Indy Parks
- Warren GED – Windsor Park
- Boner Center (Contract)- Brookside
- National Junior Tennis League- Brookside, Garfield, Broad Ripple, Ellenberger, Perry, Krannert, Neighborhood Parks
- Indy in Motion- Washington Park, Douglass, Municipal Gardens, Riverside, Raymond Park, Krannert, Christian, Garfield
- Second Helpings- Bethel, Brookside, Christian, Pride, Rhodius
- Orchid Club- Garfield Conservatory, Holliday Park
- Sierra- Holliday, Eagle Creek
- Audubon Society- Holliday, Eagle Creek
- Charter Schools- Paramount at Brookside, Vision Academy and Kuntz Soccer Stadium, Oaks Academy and JTV Hill
- Other Charter Schools- Bethel, Neighborhood Parks
- Ivy Tech- Garfield
- Kayak Club – Washington School, Thatcher
- Karate Club- Christian and Garfield
- Oasis- Krannert, Broad Ripple, Raymond Pk., Garfield Arts, Neighborhood Parks
- Catch a Star- Washington Park
- Sarge Johnson Boxing- Washington Park
- Police Athletic League- Hill, Douglass
- Friends of Irving Circle- Irvington Circle Park, Ellenberger
- Irvington Garden Club- Ellenberger
- Friends Groups – Bethel, Garfield, Holliday, Eagle Creek, Christian, Broad Ripple, Douglass, Neighborhood Parks
- Toys for Tots – Windsor, Brookside, Municipal Gardens, Washington
- Riverside Civic League- Riverside
- CICOA- KKPC
- Forest Manor Multi Service Center- KKPC
- Hub Club- George Washington Community School
- IPL- Gustafson, Krannert, Mozel Sanders, Olin, Watkins and Thatcher
- IU Health- Washington Park, Broad Ripple, Eagle Creek, GWCSP
- USA Swimming- All Pools
- Purdue Extension- Pride, Krannert, KKPC, Municipal Gardens, Eagle Creek, Holliday
- Sports Corporation- Aquatics Lifeguard Training
- Boys and Girls Clubs- Beckwith
- Scouts- Garfield, Rhodius, Eagle Creek, Southwestway, Holliday, Bethel, Garfield Arts
- Summer Servings – Department of Education
- Libraries – Broad Ripple, Douglass, Krannert, EC, Windsor, Christian, Garfield
- AARP- KKPC
- Marion County Health Department- Bethel, Neighborhood Parks
- Garfield Master Gardeners- Garfield Conservatory
- Indianapolis Bonsai- Garfield Conservatory
- IFD- Broad Ripple, Garfield, Neighborhood Parks
- Sheriff's Department- Summer Food Summer Fun Sites, Neighborhood Parks
- IMPD- Garfield, Broad Ripple, Municipal Gardens, Brookside, Christian and Washington
- Red Cross- Neighborhood Parks
- Peace Learning Center- Neighborhood Parks
- Storytelling Inc.- Summer Food Summer Fun Sites, Neighborhood Parks
- Oasis- Krannert, Broad Ripple
- School Partnerships & Agreements – Raymond Pk. , Rhodius, Washington Sch., Bates, Broad Ripple HS, Scecina
- Shepherd Community- Willard
- HIMBA – Town Run, Southwestway

3.4 INDY PARKS PARTNERSHIPS TO CONSIDER IN THE FUTURE

- Registered Community Development Corporation(s)- KKPC
- Employment and Job Training- Brookside, Christian, Pride
- Bright House- Bethel, Brookside, Christian, Garfield, Neighborhood Parks, Pride, Rhodius
- Comcast- All Facilities
- Medical/ Fitness/ Wellness Companies- Could be done in all Centers
- Pregnancy Prevention- Christian, Garfield
- Humane Society- Brookside, Christian, Garfield
- Indy Synchronized Swimming – Rhodius, GWCSP, could be done at Brookside, Douglass
- Masters Swimming- Rhodius, GWCSP
- Ice and Figure Skating Organizations- Perry Ice Rink
- IMA – All Facilities
- Eiteljorg Museum – All Facilities
- Professional and Semi-Professional Sports Teams- Bethel, Brookside, Christian, Garfield, Douglass
- Community Centers of Indianapolis- Garfield
- Home School Community- All Facilities
- MCHD- Christian, Garfield, Garfield Arts, Pride, Rhodius
- CEBA- All Family Centers
- Girls Inc.- Brookside, Christian, Garfield Arts, or other Family Centers
- St. Francis- Garfield, Pride
- Grow N Indy- Brookside, Christian, Neighborhood Parks, Pride, Rhodius
- Indy Urban Acres- Christian, Neighborhood Parks, Pride, Rhodius

3.5 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS

Demographic Analysis provides an understanding of the population within Indianapolis-Marion County, Indiana. This analysis is reflective of the total population, and its key characteristics such as age segments, income levels, race, and ethnicity.

In addition to the analysis at the city-county level, the consulting team also examined similar demographic characteristics for each of the nine townships within Indianapolis-Marion County (see Appendix). Understanding the demographic features at the township level is important in providing a more detailed analysis of the service area that will lead to better delivery of programs and services specific to each township. The nine individual townships that comprise Indianapolis-Marion County are:

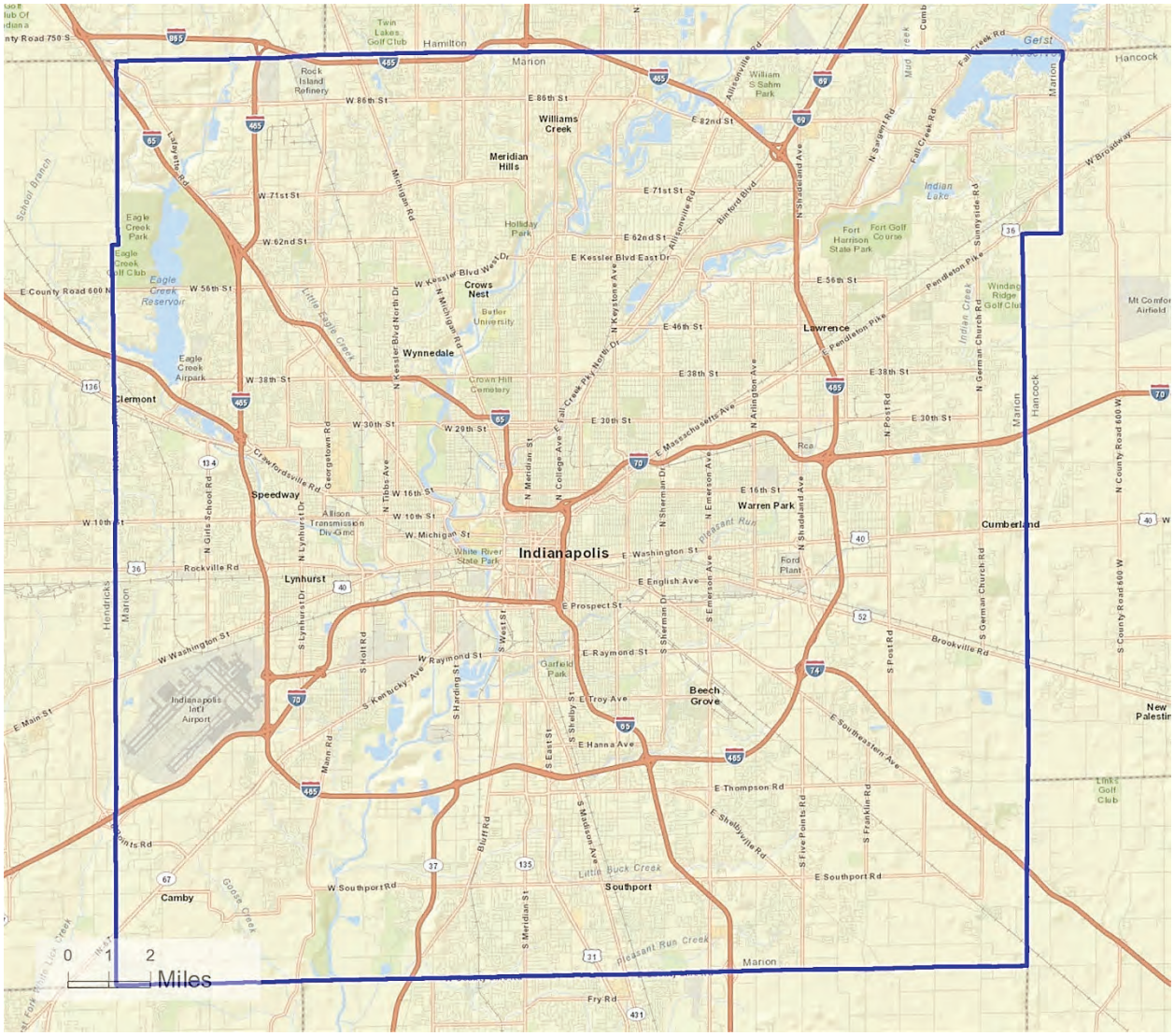
- Center Township
- Decatur Township
- Franklin Township
- Lawrence Township
- Perry Township
- Pike Township
- Warren Township
- Washington Township
- Wayne Township

It is important to note that future projections are all based on historical patterns and unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the projections could have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections.

3.5.1 METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends.

All data was acquired in March 2015 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2010 Census and estimates for 2014 and 2019 as obtained by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for projected 2024 and 2029 demographics. The Indianapolis-Marion County geographic boundary was utilized as the demographic analysis boundary shown below.



RACE AND ETHNICITY DEFINITIONS

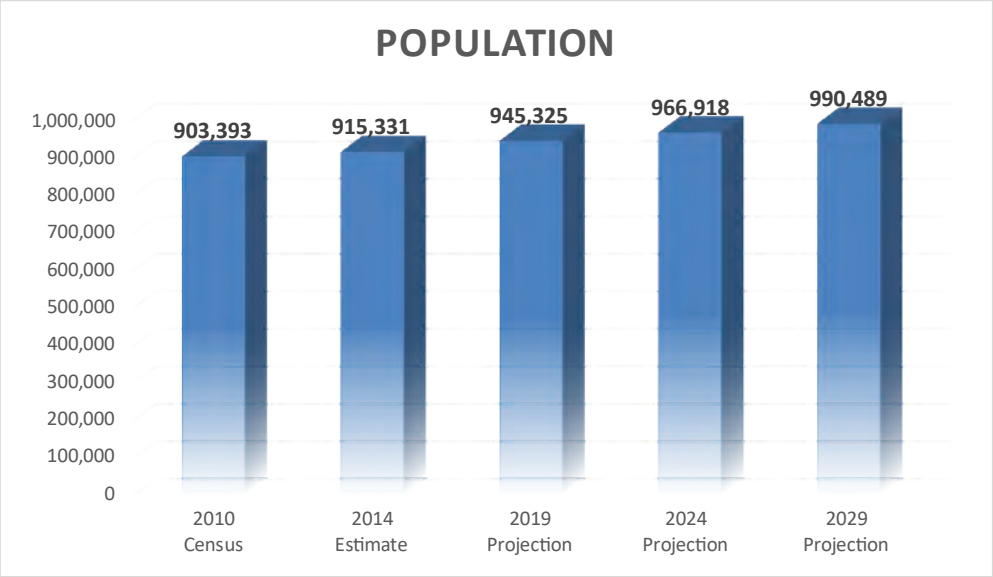
The minimum categories for data on race and ethnicity for Federal statistics, program administrative reporting, and civil rights compliance reporting are defined as below. The Census 2010 data on race are not directly comparable with data from the 2000 Census and earlier census reports; caution must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

- American Indian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment
- Asian – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam
- Black – This includes a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands
- White – This includes a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa
- Hispanic or Latino – This is an ethnic distinction, a subset of a race as defined by the Federal Government; this includes a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race

3.5.2 INDIANAPOLIS-MARION COUNTY POPULACE

POPULATION

City of Indianapolis has observed minimal growth in recent years. From 2010 to 2014, the target area's total population experienced a slight increase of 1.3% or an annual rate of 0.3%. This is less than half of the national population growth average, which is around 0.7% annually. Projecting ahead, the city's population is expected to continue to slowly grow over the next 15 years. Based on projections through 2029, the target area is expected to have approximately 990,489 residents living within 366,176 households.



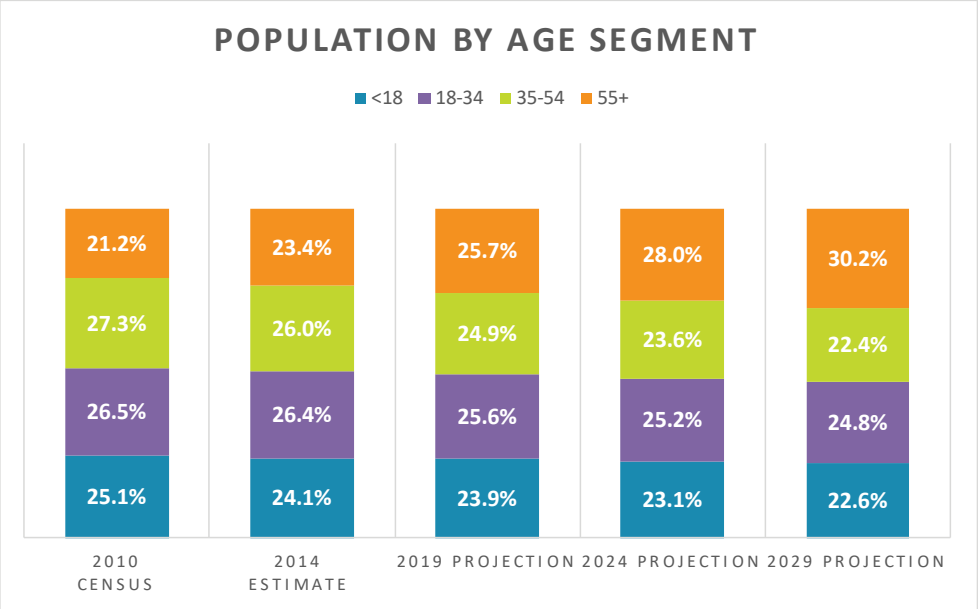
IMPLICATION

The increasing population is projected to experience 5% growth rate over the next 15 years. The number of households is projected to experience an 8% growth rate over the same timeframe. With a growing population, recreation services must grow commensurate to the population. Additionally, development will continue over the next 15 years and the parks and recreation system will need to strategically invest, develop, and maintain facilities in relation to housing development areas.

AGE SEGMENT

When evaluating the distribution by age, Indianapolis-Marion County is fairly balanced across the four major age segments. In 2014, the highest segments by population are the 18-34 and 35-54 age groups, which each represent approximately 26% of the total. The smallest segment in 2014 is the <18 group, which constitutes over 23% of the population.

Over the next 15 years, the city is expected to undergo an aging trend. Future projections through 2029 indicate that the 55+ population will gradually increase in size, while all other age segments slowly decrease. The 55+ segment is expected to represent approximately 30% of the population by 2029, while the three younger segments fall between 22%-25% of the total. This is consistent with general national trends where the 55+ age group has been growing as a result of increased life expectancies and the baby boomer population entering that age group.

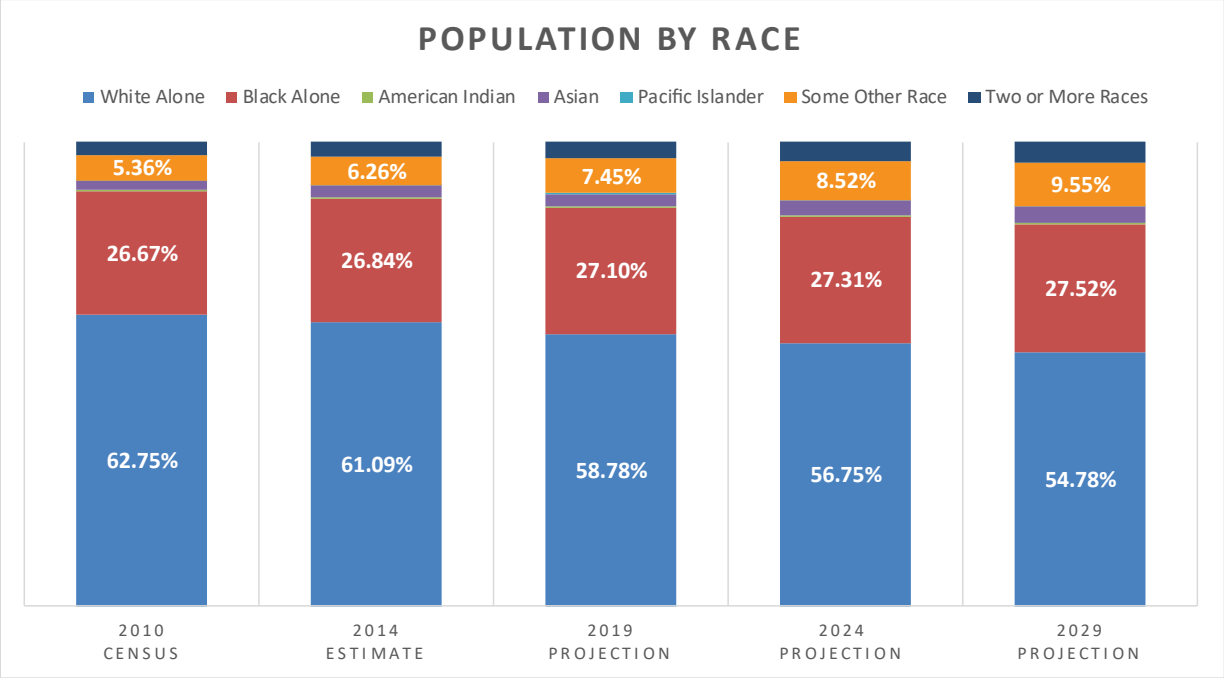


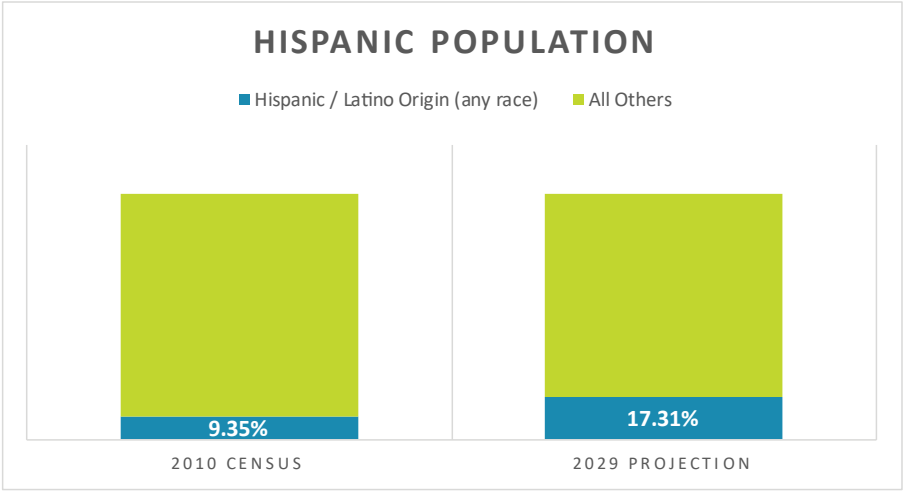
IMPLICATION

The County's aging trend is significant because programs and facilities focused on an actively adult (55+ population) will assume an even greater importance as the population changes in the years to come. Age segments have different likings towards activities. For example, older adults may enjoy passive recreation activities more so than active. However, with the millennial generation surpassing the baby boomer population, multi-generational facilities and services will be crucial to help support different age segments throughout Indianapolis-Marion County in the years to come.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

When analyzing race and ethnicity, the service area is somewhat diverse. The 2014 estimate shows that the majority of the population identifies as White Alone (61.09%), with Black Alone (26.84%) representing the largest minority. Projections for 2029 expect the city to experience a slight shift in racial composition, with the majority White Alone population dropping to 55%, while Black Alone remains steady as the largest minority (28%) and Some Other Race (10%) expects the most rapid growth among all racial segments. Those of Hispanic/Latino Origin are expected to experience significant growth based on future projections, from 9% of the 2010 population to 17% by 2029.



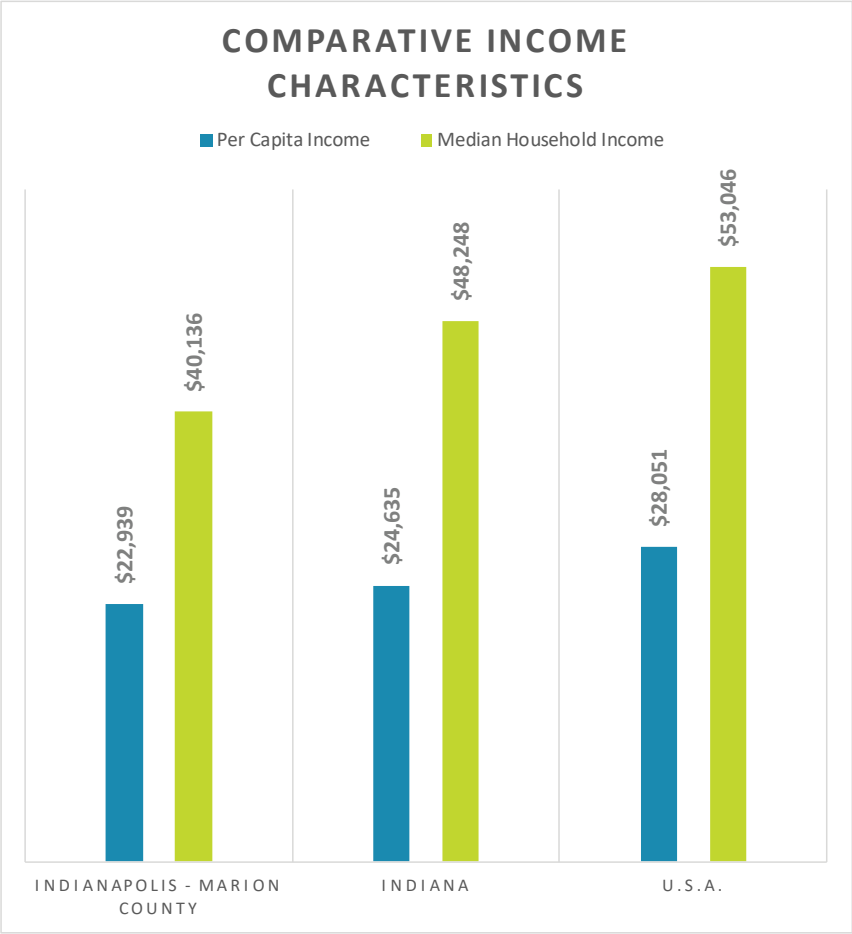


IMPLICATION

A more diverse population will require continued foresight and planning on the Parks & Recreation system's behalf. Traditional programming and service offerings may not be appropriate for a population comprised of a large minority population. For example, the Hispanic/Latino population may use passive recreation differently than other user groups and for different durations. Picnic shelters for large (typically multi-generational) families may be more important to the Hispanic/Latino population whereas it may not be as high significance to the White Alone population. Understanding how different races and ethnicities, found within Indianapolis-Marion County, use park amenities and learn about park programs can help the system better plan for new developments and market programs.

INCOME COMPARATIVE

Indianapolis-Marion County's median household income of $40,136 is well below the state ($48,248) and national ($53,046) averages. The target area's Per Capita Income of $22,939 is also below the state ($24,635) and national ($28,051) averages.



IMPLICATION

With a median and per capita household income lower than state and national averages, it would be important for the system to provide offerings that are focus on the value of money with still offering a good quality product. It would also benefit the system to look into different funding and revenue strategies to help the Department cover costs.

POVERTY LEVEL

Poverty status is determined by comparing annual income to a set of dollar values called poverty thresholds that vary by family size, number of children, and age of householder. If a family's before-tax income is less than the dollar value of their threshold, then that family and every individual in it are considered to be in poverty. For people not living in families, poverty status is determined by comparing the individual's income to his or her poverty threshold. Marion County poverty level (21%) is high for the State of Indiana, for the State of Indiana is 15.6%. (Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

IMPLICATION

While this data tells us that a majority of residents may struggle to afford to pay for desired park amenities and programs, it is important to remember that parks and recreation services were created to improve everyone's quality of life regardless of their ability to pay. It is important that Indy Parks continue to develop recreation fee assistance programs and offer free programs to the community.

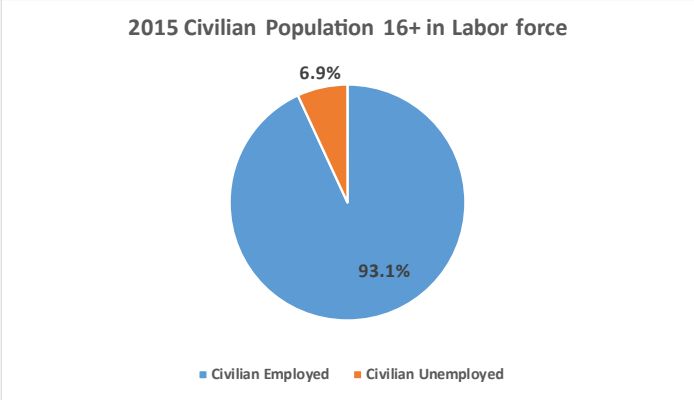
BUSINESS SUMMARY & UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Over 35,500 businesses are located in Marion County that employ more than 608,000 individuals. Below is a breakdown of types of businesses located in the county and the percent they make up of total businesses. Services make up 40% of all business found in the county followed by retail trade (20.8%), and finance/insurance/real estate (13.4%). Examples of services are hotels and lodging, automotive services, health services, legal services, education institutions and libraries, etc. (Source: ESRI).

Business Summary

Services	40.8%
Retail Trade	20.8%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	13.4%
Construction	6.3%
Wholesale Trade	4.3%
Manufacturing	3.5%
Unclassified Establishments	3.0%
Transportation/Utilities	2.9%
Government	2.3%
Agriculture/Mining	1.6%
Communications	1.1%

The current estimate for unemployment is 6.9% is observed in the table below (Source: ESRI).



IMPLICATION

Marion County has a high level of employment. It also has several large companies within Indy Parks' service area. Indy Parks should review access to parks and recreation services from a different perspective. Access, as defined by time constraints, will continue to be a growing concern as additional businesses locate to the area. Residents with employment during second and/or third shifts may have needs for access during non-traditional times for future parks and recreation facilities. The park staff will need to remain conscious of the need for access before and after traditional hours of operation.

3.6 TRENDS ANALYSIS

The following tables summarize the findings from the Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2014 Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report. The local market potential index data compares the demand for recreation activities and spending of Indianapolis-Marion County residents to the national averages.

Summary of National Participatory Trends Analysis

Summary of National Participatory Trends Analysis

1. Number of "inactives" decreased slightly, those active to a healthy level on the rise
   a. "Inactives" down 0.4% in 2013, from 80.4 million to 80.2 million
   b. Approximately one-third of Americans (ages 6+) are active to a healthy level
2. Most popular sport and recreation activities
   a. Fitness Walking (117 million)
   b. Running/Jogging (54 million)
   c. Treadmill (48 million)
3. Most participated in team sports
   a. Basketball (23.7 million)
   b. Tennis (17.7 million)
   c. Baseball (13.3 million)
4. Activities most rapidly growing over last five years
   a. Adventure Racing – up 159%
   b. Non-traditional/Off-road Triathlon – up 156%
   c. Traditional/Road Triathlon – up 140%
   d. Squash – up 115%
   e. Rugby – up 81%
5. Activities most rapidly declining over last five years
   a. Wrestling – down 45%
   b. In-line Roller Skating – down 40%
   c. Touch Football – down 32%
   d. Horseback Riding – down 29%
   e. Slow-pitch Softball – down 29%

Summary of Local Market Potential Index Analysis

1. Indianapolis-Marion County exhibits below average market potential for sport and leisure activities
2. Top recreation activities in Indianapolis-Marion County compared to the national average
   a. Football
   b. Basketball
   c. Visited a zoo
   d. Attended college basketball game

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) Sports, Fitness & Recreational Activities Topline Participation Report 2014 was utilized to evaluate national sport and fitness participatory trends. SFIA is the number one source for sport and fitness research. The study is based on online interviews carried out in January and February of 2014 from more than 19,000 individuals and households.

Information released by SFIA's 2014 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation reveals that the most popular sport and recreation activities include: fitness walking, treadmill, running/jogging, free weights and bicycling. Most of these activities appeal to both young and old alike, can be done in most environments, are enjoyed regardless of level of skill, and have minimal economic barriers to entry. These popular activities also have appeal because of their social advantages. For example, although fitness activities are mainly self-directed, people enjoy walking and biking with other individuals because it can offer a degree of camaraderie.

Fitness walking has remained the most popular activity of the past decade by a large margin. Walking participation according to data available in 2013, reported over 117 million Americans had walked for fitness at least once.

From a traditional team sport standpoint, basketball ranks highest among all sports, with nearly 24 million people reportedly participating in 2013. Team sports that have experienced significant growth in participation are rugby, lacrosse, field hockey, ice hockey, gymnastics, beach volleyball, and ultimate Frisbee–-all of which have experienced double digit growth over the last five years. Most recently, rugby, field hockey, and lacrosse underwent the most rapid growth among team sports from 2012 to 2013.

In the past year, there has been a slight 0.4% decrease of "inactives" in America, from 80.4 million in 2012 to 80.2 million in 2013. According to the Physical Activity Council, an "inactive" is defined as an individual that doesn't take part in any "active" sport. Even more encouraging is that an estimated 33.9% of Americans above the age of 6 are active to a healthy level, taking part in a high calorie burning activity three or more times per week.

NOTE: In 2012, the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) came into existence after a two-year strategic review and planning process with a refined mission statement-- "To Promote Sports and Fitness Participation and Industry Vitality". The SFIA was formerly known as the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association (SGMA).

3.6.1 NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL SPORTS

Basketball, a game originating in the U.S., is the most participated in sport among the traditional "bat and ball" sports with almost 24 million estimated participants. Popularity can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants, the limited amount of equipment needed to participate, and the limited space requirements necessary – the last of which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at the majority of American dwellings as a drive-way pickup game.

Since 2008, squash and other niche sports like lacrosse and rugby have experienced strong growth. Squash has emerged as the overall fastest growing sport, as participation levels have increased by nearly 115% over the last five years. Based on survey findings from 2008-2013, rugby and lacrosse have also experienced significant growth, increasing by 80.9% and 66% respectively. Other sports with notable growth in participation over the last five years were field hockey (31.4%), ice hockey (27.9%), gymnastics (25.1%), and beach volleyball (18.5%). From 2012 to 2013, the fastest growing sports were rugby (33.4%), field hockey (19.2%), lacrosse (12.8%), and squash (9.6%). During the last five years, the sports that are most rapidly declining include wrestling (45.2% decrease), touch football (down 32%), and slow pitch softball (28.9% decrease).

In terms of total participants, the most popular activities in the general sports category in 2013 include basketball (23.7 million), tennis (17.7 million), baseball (13.3 million), outdoor soccer (12.7 million), and slow pitch softball (6.9 million). Although three out of five of these sports have been declining in recent years, the sheer number of participants demands the continued support of these activities.

National Participatory Trends - General Sports											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Baseball	15,539	14,429	14,198	13,561	12,976	13,284	2.4%	-2.0%	-6.4%	-7.9%	-14.5%
Basketball	26,108	25,131	25,156	24,790	23,708	23,669	-0.2%	-4.5%	-5.9%	-5.8%	-9.3%
Cheerleading	3,192	3,070	3,134	3,049	3,244	3,235	-0.3%	6.1%	3.2%	5.4%	1.3%
Field Hockey	1,122	1,092	1,182	1,147	1,237	1,474	19.2%	28.5%	24.7%	35.0%	31.4%
Football, Flag	7,310	6,932	6,660	6,325	5,865	5,610	-4.3%	-11.3%	-15.8%	-19.1%	-23.3%
Football, Tackle	7,816	7,243	6,850	6,448	6,220	6,165	-0.9%	-4.4%	-10.0%	-14.9%	-21.1%
Football, Touch	10,493	9,726	8,663	7,684	7,295	7,140	-2.1%	-7.1%	-17.6%	-26.6%	-32.0%
Gymnastics	3,975	3,952	4,418	4,824	5,115	4,972	-2.8%	3.1%	12.5%	25.8%	25.1%
Ice Hockey	1,871	2,018	2,140	2,131	2,363	2,393	1.3%	12.3%	11.8%	18.6%	27.9%
Lacrosse	1,092	1,162	1,423	1,501	1,607	1,813	12.8%	20.8%	27.4%	56.0%	66.0%
Racquetball	4,611	4,784	4,603	4,357	4,070	3,824	-6.0%	-12.2%	-16.9%	-20.1%	-17.1%
Roller Hockey	1,569	1,427	1,374	1,237	1,367	1,298	-5.0%	4.9%	-5.5%	-9.0%	-17.3%
Rugby	654	720	940	850	887	1,183	33.4%	39.2%	25.9%	64.3%	80.9%
Soccer (Indoor)	4,487	4,825	4,920	4,631	4,617	4,803	4.0%	3.7%	-2.4%	-0.5%	7.0%
Soccer (Outdoor)	13,996	13,957	13,883	13,667	12,944	12,726	-1.7%	-6.9%	-8.3%	-8.8%	-9.1%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2,331	2,476	2,513	2,400	2,624	2,498	-4.8%	4.1%	-0.6%	0.9%	7.2%
Softball (Slow Pitch)	9,660	9,180	8,477	7,809	7,411	6,868	-7.3%	-12.1%	-19.0%	-25.2%	-28.9%
Squash	659	796	1,031	1,112	1,290	1,414	9.6%	27.2%	37.1%	77.6%	114.6%
Tennis	17,749	18,546	18,719	17,772	17,020	17,678	3.9%	-0.5%	-5.6%	-4.7%	-0.4%
Track and Field	4,604	4,480	4,383	4,341	4,257	4,071	-4.4%	-6.2%	-7.1%	-9.1%	-11.6%
Ultimate Frisbee	4,459	4,636	4,571	4,868	5,131	5,077	-1.1%	4.3%	11.1%	9.5%	13.9%
Volleyball (Court)	7,588	7,737	7,315	6,662	6,384	6,433	0.8%	-3.4%	-12.1%	-16.9%	-15.2%
Volleyball (Sand/Beach)	4,025	4,324	4,752	4,451	4,505	4,769	5.9%	7.1%	0.4%	10.3%	18.5%
Wrestling	3,335	3,170	2,536	1,971	1,922	1,829	-4.8%	-7.2%	-27.9%	-42.3%	-45.2%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over											
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)				

3.6.2 NATIONAL TRENDS IN AQUATIC ACTIVITY

Swimming is unquestionably a lifetime sport. Swimming activities have remained very popular among Americans, and both competition and fitness swimming have experienced an increase in participation. Fitness swimming is the absolute leader in multigenerational appeal with over 26 million reported participants in 2013, a 13.5% increase from the previous year. NOTE: In 2011, recreation swimming was separated into competition and fitness categories in order to better identify key trends.

Aquatic exercise has a strong participation base, but has recently experienced a downward trend. Aquatic exercise has paved the way for a less stressful form of physical activity, allowing similar gains and benefits to land based exercise, including aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and better balance. Doctors have begun recommending aquatic exercise for injury rehabilitation, mature patients, and patients with bone or joint problems due to the significant reduction of stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, muscles, and also the affect that the pressure of the water assists in reducing swelling of injuries.

National Participatory Trends - Aquatics

Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Aquatic Exercise	9,512	8,965	8,947	9,042	9,177	8,483	-7.6%	-6.2%	-5.2%	-5.4%	-10.8%
Swimming (Competition)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,363	2,502	2,638	5.4%	11.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Swimming (Fitness)	N/A	N/A	N/A	21,517	23,216	26,354	13.5%	22.5%	N/A	N/A	N/A

NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over

Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)	Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)	Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)	Large Decrease (less than -25%)

3.6.3 NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL FITNESS

National participatory trends in general fitness have experienced some strong growth in recent years. Many of these activities have become popular due to an increased interest among people to improve their health by engaging in an active lifestyle. These activities also have very few barriers to entry, which provides a variety of activities that are relatively inexpensive to participate in and can be performed by nearly anyone with no time restrictions.

The most popular fitness activity by far is fitness walking, which had over 117 million participants in 2013. This change represents 2.9% increase from the previous year. Other leading fitness activities based on number of participants include running/jogging (over 54 million), treadmill (48.1 million), and hand free weights (43.2 million), and weight/resistant machines (36.3 million).

Over the last five years, the activities that are growing most rapidly are high impact aerobics (up 47.1%), yoga (up 36.9%), running/ jogging (up 31.9%), cardio kickboxing (28.7% increase), and group stationary cycling (up 27.8%). Most recently, from 2012-2013, the largest gains in participation were in boxing for fitness (8.7% increase), Tai Chi (up 8.3%), and high impact aerobics (up 7.1%).

National Participatory Trends - General Fitness											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Aerobics (High Impact)	11,780	12,771	14,567	15,755	16,178	17,323	7.1%	10.0%	18.9%	35.6%	47.1%
Aerobics (Low Impact)	23,283	24,927	26,431	25,950	25,707	25,033	-2.6%	-3.5%	-5.3%	0.4%	7.5%
Aerobics (Step)	9,423	10,551	11,034	10,273	9,577	8,961	-6.4%	-12.8%	-18.8%	-15.1%	-4.9%
Boxing for Fitness	N/A	N/A	4,788	4,631	4,831	5,251	8.7%	13.4%	9.7%	N/A	N/A
Calisthenics	8,888	9,127	9,097	8,787	9,356	9,356	0.0%	6.5%	2.8%	2.5%	5.3%
Cross-Training	N/A	N/A	N/A	7,706	7,496	6,911	-7.8%	-10.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cardio Kickboxing	4,905	5,500	6,287	6,488	6,725	6,311	-6.2%	-2.7%	0.4%	14.7%	28.7%
Elliptical Motion Trainer	24,435	25,903	27,319	29,734	28,560	27,119	-5.0%	-8.8%	-0.7%	4.7%	11.0%
Fitness Walking	110,204	110,882	112,082	112,715	114,029	117,351	2.9%	4.1%	4.7%	5.8%	6.5%
Free Weights (Barbells)	25,821	26,595	27,194	27,056	26,688	25,641	-3.9%	-5.2%	-5.7%	-3.6%	-0.7%
Free Weights (Dumbells)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	32,309	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Free Weights (Hand Weights)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	43,164	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Martial Arts	6,818	6,643	6,002	5,037	5,075	5,314	4.7%	5.5%	-11.5%	-20.0%	-22.1%
Pilates Training	9,039	8,770	8,404	8,507	8,519	8,069	-5.3%	-5.1%	-4.0%	-8.0%	-10.7%
Running/Jogging	41,097	42,511	46,650	50,061	51,450	54,188	5.3%	8.2%	16.2%	27.5%	31.9%
Stair Climbing Machine	13,863	13,653	13,269	13,409	12,979	12,642	-2.6%	-5.7%	-4.7%	-7.4%	-8.8%
Stationary Cycling (Group)	6,504	6,762	7,854	8,738	8,477	8,309	-2.0%	-4.9%	5.8%	22.9%	27.8%
Stationary Cycling (Recumbent)	11,104	11,299	11,459	11,933	11,649	11,159	-4.2%	-6.5%	-2.6%	-1.2%	0.5%
Stationary Cycling (Upright)	24,918	24,916	24,578	24,409	24,338	24,088	-1.0%	-1.3%	-2.0%	-3.3%	-3.3%
Stretching	36,235	36,299	35,720	34,687	35,873	36,202	0.9%	4.4%	1.3%	-0.3%	-0.1%
Tai Chi	3,424	3,315	3,193	2,975	3,203	3,469	8.3%	16.6%	8.6%	4.6%	1.3%
Treadmill	49,722	50,395	52,275	53,260	50,839	48,166	-5.3%	-9.6%	-7.9%	-4.4%	-3.1%
Weight/Resistant Machines	38,844	39,075	39,185	39,548	38,999	36,267	-7.0%	-8.3%	-7.4%	-7.2%	-6.6%
Yoga	17,758	18,934	20,998	22,107	23,253	24,310	4.5%	10.0%	15.8%	28.4%	36.9%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over											
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)				

3.6.4 NATIONAL TRENDS IN GENERAL RECREATION

Results from the SFIA's Topline Participation Report demonstrate increased popularity among Americans in numerous general recreation activities. Much like the general fitness activities, these activities encourage an active lifestyle, can be performed individually or with a group, and are not limited by time restraints. In 2013, the most popular activities in the general recreation category include road bicycling (over 40 million participants), freshwater fishing (nearly 38 million participants), and day hiking (over 34 million participants).

From 2008-2013, general recreation activities that have undergone very rapid growth are adventure racing (up 159%), non-traditional/off-road triathlons (up 156%), traditional/road triathlons (up 139.9%), and trail running (up 49.7%). In-line roller skating, horseback riding, and skateboarding have all seen a substantial drop in participation, decreasing by 40%, 29.4%, and 21.8% respectively over the last five years.

National Participatory Trends - General Recreation											
Activity	Participation Levels						% Change				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	12-13	11-13	10-13	09-13	08-13
Adventure Racing	809	1,005	1,214	1,202	1,618	2,095	29.5%	74.3%	72.6%	108.5%	159.0%
Archery	6,180	6,368	6,323	6,471	7,173	7,647	6.6%	18.2%	20.9%	20.1%	23.7%
Bicycling (Mountain)	7,242	7,367	7,152	6,989	7,265	8,542	17.6%	22.2%	19.4%	15.9%	18.0%
Bicycling (Road)	38,527	39,127	39,730	39,834	39,790	40,888	2.8%	2.6%	2.9%	4.5%	6.1%
Bicycling (BMX)	1,896	1,858	2,090	1,958	1,861	2,168	16.5%	10.7%	3.7%	16.7%	14.3%
Camping (Recreational Vehicle)	16,343	16,977	16,651	16,282	15,903	14,556	-8.5%	-10.6%	-12.6%	-14.3%	-10.9%
Camping (Within 1/4 Mile of Vehicle/Home)	32,531	34,012	32,667	31,961	31,454	29,269	-6.9%	-8.4%	-10.4%	-13.9%	-10.0%
Climbing (Sport/Indoor/Boulder)	4,642	4,541	4,542	4,445	4,355	4,745	9.0%	6.7%	4.5%	4.5%	2.2%
Climbing (Traditional/Ice/Mountaineering)	2,175	2,062	2,017	1,904	2,189	2,319	5.9%	21.8%	15.0%	12.5%	6.6%
Fishing (Fly)	5,849	5,755	5,523	5,581	5,848	5,878	0.5%	5.3%	6.4%	2.1%	0.5%
Fishing (Freshwater)	42,095	40,646	39,911	38,864	39,002	37,796	-3.1%	-2.7%	-5.3%	-7.0%	-10.2%
Fishing (Saltwater)	14,121	13,054	12,056	11,896	12,000	11,790	-1.8%	-0.9%	-2.2%	-9.7%	-16.5%
Golf	28,571	27,103	26,122	25,682	25,280	24,720	-2.2%	-3.7%	-5.4%	-8.8%	-13.5%
Hiking (Day)	31,238	32,542	32,534	33,494	34,519	34,378	-0.4%	2.6%	5.7%	5.6%	10.1%
Horseback Riding	11,457	10,286	9,782	9,335	8,423	8,089	-4.0%	-13.3%	-17.3%	-21.4%	-29.4%
Hunting (Bow)	3,770	3,974	4,067	4,271	4,354	4,079	-6.3%	-4.5%	0.3%	2.6%	8.2%
Hunting (Handgun)	2,734	2,575	2,493	2,690	3,112	3,198	2.8%	18.9%	28.3%	24.2%	17.0%
Hunting (Rifle)	10,490	10,729	10,632	10,479	10,485	9,792	-6.6%	-6.6%	-7.9%	-8.7%	-6.7%
Hunting (Shotgun)	8,638	8,611	8,276	8,370	8,426	7,894	-6.3%	-5.7%	-4.6%	-8.3%	-8.6%
Roller Skating, In-Line	10,211	8,942	8,128	7,451	6,647	6,129	-7.8%	-17.7%	-24.6%	-31.5%	-40.0%
Shooting (Sport Clays)	4,199	4,232	4,291	4,296	4,544	4,479	-1.4%	4.3%	4.4%	5.8%	6.7%
Shooting (Trap/Skeet)	3,523	3,519	3,489	3,453	3,591	3,784	5.4%	9.6%	8.5%	7.5%	7.4%
Skateboarding	8,118	7,580	7,080	6,318	6,227	6,350	2.0%	0.5%	-10.3%	-16.2%	-21.8%
Target Shooting (Handgun)	12,551	12,919	12,485	13,638	15,418	14,370	-6.8%	5.4%	15.1%	11.2%	14.5%
Target Shooting (Rifle)	12,769	12,916	12,637	13,032	13,853	13,023	-6.0%	-0.1%	3.1%	0.8%	2.0%
Trail Running	4,537	4,845	4,985	5,373	5,806	6,792	17.0%	26.4%	36.2%	40.2%	49.7%
Triathlon (Non-Traditional/Off Road)	543	634	798	819	1,075	1,390	29.3%	69.7%	74.2%	119.2%	156.0%
Triathlon (Traditional/Road)	943	1,148	1,593	1,686	1,789	2,262	26.4%	34.2%	42.0%	97.0%	139.9%
NOTE: Participation figures are in 000's for the US population ages 6 and over											
Legend:	Large Increase (greater than 25%)		Moderate Increase (0% to 25%)		Moderate Decrease (0% to -25%)		Large Decrease (less than -25%)				

3.6.5 LOCAL SPORT AND MARKET POTENTIAL

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data from ESRI. A Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service in the target area. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident of the city-county will participate in certain activities when compared to the US National average. The National average is 100 therefore numbers below 100 would represent a lower than average participation rate and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rate. The city is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports by activity, fitness by activity, outdoor activity, and commercial recreation.

The general sports category produced the most positive market potential index figures for Indianapolis-Marion County. Every activity in this category was on par with, or above, the national averages. This is promising in that it shows that residents are actively participating in sporting activities that should be core recreational offerings through departmental programming and amenities.

Outside of general sports, market potential indexes were below average for the majority of activities analyzed, and the reversal of the current trends should be a priority of the Department. This deviation from the national average might indicate a lack of awareness among potential users, programs that don't align with community needs and interests, a lack of available amenities and/or a need to motivate residents to participate in offerings at a higher level.

The fact that activities in the fitness category are lagging behind presents a prime opportunity for Indy Parks. National trends for fitness have been on the rise in recent years and parks and recreation agencies across the country have capitalized on these trends by offering a variety of fitness programming and developing amenities, such as multi-use trails, that allow users to engage in healthy, active lifestyles. Because earning capabilities among residents are also below average, fitness programming and amenities are a great way to boost participation levels, due to the fact that these activities generally have low barriers to entry and can be provided minimal cost. Research and trends suggest that fitness programming is a critical component to a healthy community, and parks and recreation departments tend to be a driving force behind active, healthy lifestyles for residents.

As observed in the tables below, the following sport and leisure trends are most prevalent for residents within the Indianapolis-Marion County, and compares participation for each activity to the national average.

GENERAL SPORTS MARKET POTENTIAL

Local Participatory Trends - General Sports				
Activity	Estimated Participants	% of Population		MPI
		Indpls-Marion	USA	
Basketball	65,805	9.5%	8.3%	**114**
Golf	64,262	9.3%	9.5%	**98**
Football	39,818	5.7%	5.0%	**115**
Baseball	30,947	4.5%	4.5%	**99**
Tennis	30,428	4.4%	4.3%	**103**
Volleyball	26,020	3.7%	3.5%	**106**
Soccer	25,818	3.7%	3.7%	**99**
Softball	25,444	3.7%	3.5%	**107**

FITNESS MARKET POTENTIAL

Local Participatory Trends - Fitness				
Activity	Estimated Participants	% of Population		MPI
		Indpls-Marion	USA	
Walking for exercise	177,785	25.6%	28.1%	**91**
Swimming	102,056	14.7%	15.8%	**93**
Jogging/running	83,302	12.0%	12.8%	**94**
Weight lifting	70,533	10.2%	10.6%	**96**
Aerobics	59,278	8.5%	8.9%	**96**
Yoga	49,597	7.1%	7.1%	**100**
Pilates	18,574	2.7%	2.8%	**96**

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY MARKET POTENTIAL

Local Participatory Trends - Outdoor Activity				
Activity	Estimated Participants	% of Population		MPI
		Indpls-Marion	USA	
Fishing (fresh water)	85,182	12.3%	12.4%	**99**
Went overnight camping	81,688	11.8%	12.8%	**92**
Hiking	70,653	10.2%	10.0%	**102**
Bicycling (road)	65,293	9.4%	9.8%	**96**
Canoeing/kayaking	35,472	5.1%	5.4%	**95**
Boating (power)	32,451	4.7%	5.3%	**88**
Birdwatching	29,296	4.2%	4.7%	**89**
Bicycling (mountain)	28,262	4.1%	4.1%	**101**
Backpacking	21,219	3.1%	3.0%	**104**
Horseback riding	15,906	2.3%	2.4%	**94**

COMMERCIAL RECREATION MARKET POTENTIAL

Local Participatory Trends -Commercial Recreation				
Activity	Estimated Participants	% of Population		MPI
		Indpls-Marion	USA	
Attended sports event	154,769	22.3%	23.5%	**95**
Visited a theme park	116,529	16.8%	18.1%	**93**
Visited a zoo	87,616	12.6%	11.7%	**108**
Visited a Museum	79,444	11.4%	12.8%	**89**
Attended baseball game - MLB reg seas	60,453	8.7%	9.6%	**91**
Spent $250+ on sports/rec equip	44,688	6.4%	7.0%	**92**
Spent $100-249 on sports/rec equip	43,313	6.2%	6.5%	**96**
Attended football game (college)	40,350	5.8%	5.6%	**103**
Spent $1-99 on sports/rec equip	39,544	5.7%	6.0%	**95**
Attended high school sports	33,702	4.9%	4.7%	**105**
Attended football game - NFL weekend	30,031	4.3%	4.6%	**93**
Visited indoor water park	22,530	3.2%	3.1%	**104**
Attended basketball game - NBA reg seas	22,282	3.2%	3.1%	**102**
Attended basketball game (college)	22,077	3.2%	3.0%	**108**
Attended ice hockey - NHL reg seas	17,573	2.5%	2.7%	**91**
Attended football game - NFL Mon/Thurs	16,489	2.4%	2.6%	**92**

3.6.6 DEMOGRAPHIC AND TRENDS FINDINGS

- The population in Indianapolis-Marion County is growing, but much slower than the national annual growth rate. Center Township contains the most residents, representing 15.8% of the city's population, while Decatur Township has the smallest population, with only 3.6% of the total population. Franklin Township underwent the most rapid growth from 2010-2014 at an annual rate of 1.2%.
- With a median age of 34.6 years in 2014, Indianapolis-Marion County is younger than the national average of 37.2 years. The service area is expected to undergo an aging trend, as the 55+ segment is projected to increase to 30.2% of the population by 2029. Decatur is currently the youngest (32.5 years) township in the county, while Warren Township reports the oldest (35.8 years) median age. Pike is expected to age faster than all other townships, as the 55+ segment is projected to increase its representation by 7.7% by 2029.
- The service area is predominately White Alone (61%), with Black Alone (27%) and Some Other Race (6%) representing the largest minorities. The racial composition of Indianapolis-Marion County is projected to gradually become more diverse. Those of Hispanic/Latino Origin represent 9% of the population, and are expected to rapidly increase to over 17% of the total by 2029. Analyzing race by township, Franklin is the least diverse, while Pike is the most diverse. Wayne Township has the highest concentration of Hispanic/Latinos at 17%, and is expected to reach nearly 30% of the township's population by 2029.
- Median household income ($40,136) and per capita income ($22,939) for Indianapolis-Marion County residents fall well below state and national averages. Center Township reports the lowest median household income ($26,316) and per capita income ($15,111) among the nine townships of Marion County. Townships with the highest income characteristics were Franklin for median household income ($63,723) and Washington on a per capita basis ($31,219).
- Local market potential for recreation and leisure activities was relatively low among Indianapolis-Marion County residents overall. When compared to the national averages, the service area did report average, to above average, MPI figures in the general sports category, while general fitness, outdoor activity, and commercial recreation reported below average participation levels for local residents.

3.7 PLANNING CONTEXT

The context of this planning process is influenced by a great many planning efforts and initiatives that are currently underway in the City of Indianapolis. These efforts which are sponsored by government agencies, grass roots organizations, private companies or not-for- profit entities will have an impact on the future direction of Indy Parks, both system-wide and at the neighborhood level. It is important for Indy Parks to continue to participate in these efforts in order to ensure that parks and recreation issues are included in decision making, that Indy Parks continue to play a role in the betterment of the community and that Indy Parks shares in the financial resources that are brought to support the various initiatives. These include:

- Connectivity Initiatives
  - Indy Connect Transit Plan
  - Regional Bikeways Plan
  - Indianapolis Bikeways Master Plan
  - The Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy of Gene and Marilyn Glick
  - Reconnecting To Our Waterways
  - Bikeshare Program
  - Adoption of Complete Streets Ordinance
- Planning and Neighborhood Initiatives
  - Indianapolis-Marion County Comprehensive Master Plan 2014 Update
  - Indy Rezone Initiative
  - Plan 2020
  - Regional Center Plan Update
  - Marion County Land Use Plan Update
  - Quality of Life Plans
  - Great Places 2020
- Environmental and Sustainability Initiatives
  - Citizens Energy Group CSO/Deep Rock Tunnel Project
  - City of Indianapolis-Office of Sustainability
- Health and Wellness Initiatives
  - Top 10 By 2020
  - Let's Move Outside Initiative

3.8 ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN

3.8.1 STATEMENT OF ACCESIBILITY

Indy Parks and Recreation is a fully inclusive agency. We encourage everyone to use our parks and to participate in our programs. If you or a family member have special needs and would like to participate in a program or use a facility, Indy Parks would be happy to address your needs. Please indicate on the registration form or call 327-7251, if any accommodations are necessary.

3.8.2 UNIVERSAL ACCESS

The City of Indianapolis proudly engages in a continuous self-assessment process in order to maintain and enhance accessibility for residents and visitors with disabilities and seniors as programs and infrastructure evolve. This practice has been the norm over the course of many mayoral administrations in recognition of the dynamic nature of inclusive design, construction, planning, and programming.

The purpose of a transition plan is to provide a first step in a municipality's self-evaluation process. The City of Indianapolis is well beyond this first phase and regularly updates its transition/accessibility implementation plans through its capital improvement planning process. The Office of Disability Affairs partners with city departments and articulates the City's philosophy and inclusive approach with contractors throughout the design and construction process. The City of Indianapolis recognizes the dynamic nature of inclusive design construction planning and programming and values the participation of all community members. As accessibility implementation plans must be continually evaluated and updated, the City of Indianapolis' most recent transition/accessibility implementation plan was developed in 2013.

Indy Parks is aware and sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities. The Department's philosophy is to create an environment that is the least restrictive possible. In doing this, we can improve the quality of life for all people within our community.

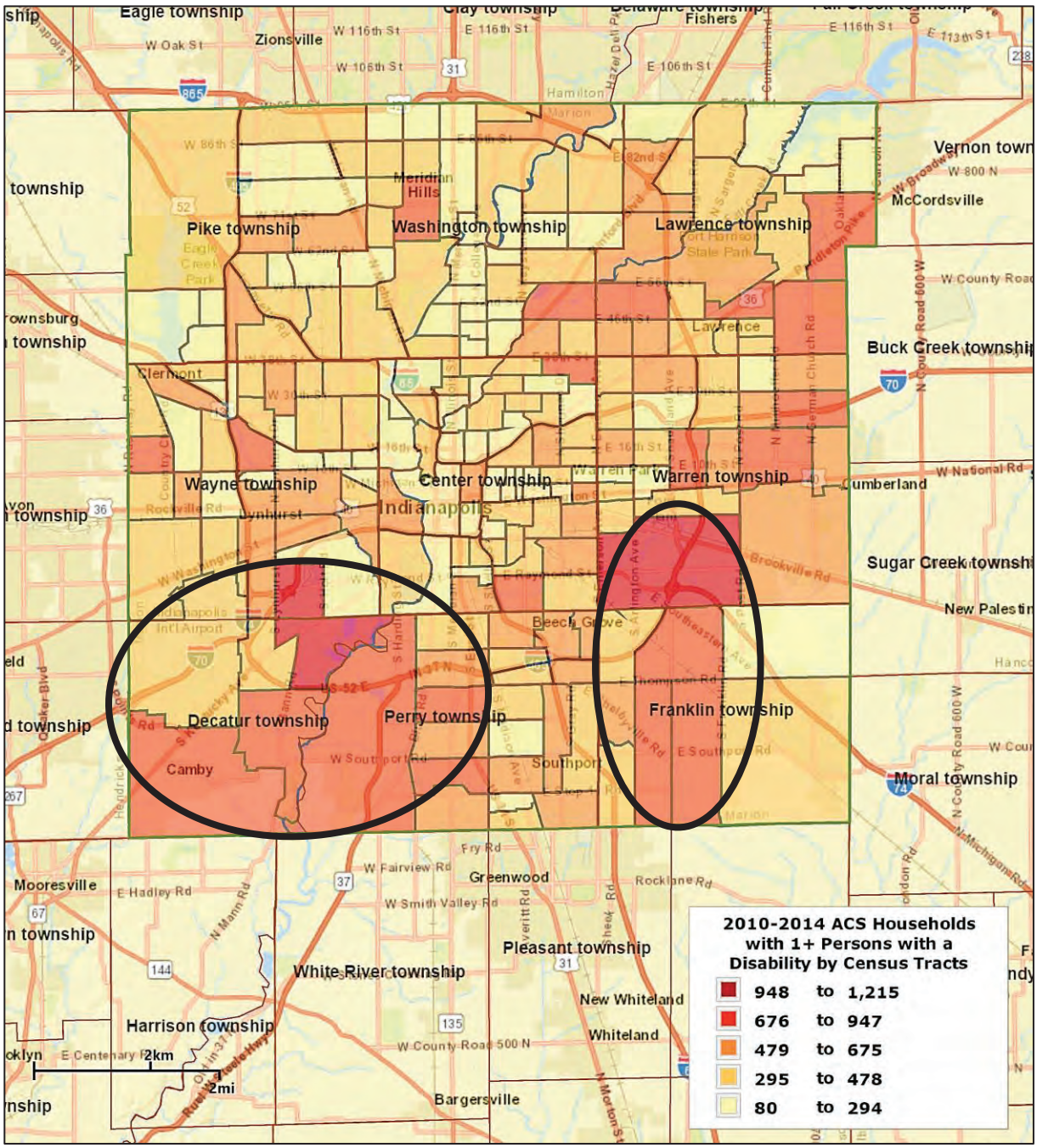
Indy Parks and Recreation is committed to helping people with disabilities participate at their optimal level of independence. We strive to provide services that focus on leisure-related skills, attitudes, and knowledge. The promotion of programs that improve social skills, self-awareness, and leisure skill development is also a key area of interest within our department. We do not want our participants to be involved in programs that just take up time. Our programs are designed and delivered with the intention of eliciting positive change in the individual.

To support its wide range of events and programs, Indy Parks is making continuous improvements to its existing facilities. From bathhouse renovations and picnic shelter construction to playground replacement each of these projects is undertaken with universal accessibility in mind. Staff and hired professionals keep abreast of changes in the law and design practice to provide the best possible facilities for all. All construction, whether new or renovations, within the parks system is planned to, at a minimum, meet ADA requirements, and in most cases exceeds it.

The heat map depicts the distribution of the number of households with at least one person with a disability. Darker shaded areas indicate a higher number of households with disabilities whereas lighter shaded areas indicate a lower number of households. The circled areas depicted on the map point to a higher disability area.

Indy Parks should continue to strive to providing customers with disabilities full access to programs, services, and facilities. Any new facility renovations and new developments should conform to ADA guidelines. When looking at areas with a higher number of households with disabilities, the Department should consider adding ADA playgrounds, miracle fields, adaptive and inclusive programs.

The heat map used for the analysis was obtained from ESRI, and all data was acquired in September 2016. (ESRI, 2016)



3.9 ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE SHEET

1.1 ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE SIGN-OFF SHEET

ASSURANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE WITH:
ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT of 1968 (As Amended);
SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 (As Amended);
AND TITLE II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (As Amended)

The Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation (Applicant) has read the guidelines for compliance with the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (As Amended); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (As Amended); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (As Amended) and will comply with the applicable requirements of these Acts.

SIGNATURE _____

APPLICANT PRESIDENT

Linda Broadfoot, Director

(President's printed name)

SIGNATURE _____

Louvenia Holstein

(Secretary's printed name)

3.10 BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

3.10.1 INTRODUCTION

PROS Consulting, along with insight from Indy Parks, identified operating metrics to be benchmarked against comparable industry leading park and recreation systems nationwide. The benchmark agencies selected for analysis included jurisdictions with geographic and demographic characteristics similar to the Indianapolis-Marion County, as well as departments that are CAPRA accredited or were finalists or winners of the NRPA Gold Medal Award in recent years. The complexity in this analysis was ensuring direct comparison through a methodology of statistics and ratios in order to provide comparable information, as best as possible.

It must be noted that the benchmark analysis is only an indicator based on the information provided. Information for Indy Parks was obtained internally, while benchmark agencies' info were sourced from the NRPA's PRORAGIS database and/or existing master plans. The information sought was a combination of operating metrics with budget figures, staffing levels, and inventories. In some instances, the information was not tracked or not available. The attributes considered for selection of comparable agencies included:

- Regional Location
- Population size
- Jurisdiction type
- Winner or finalist of NRPA Gold Medal Award since 2010
- CAPRA accreditation

Careful attention was paid to incorporate a mix of systems that are comparable industry leaders and they include:

Agency	State	Jurisdiction Type	Jurisdiction Size (sq. mi.)	Population	CAPRA Accredited (Year)
Indy Parks	**IN**	**City/County**	**396**	**915,331**	**No**
Austin	TX	City	323	910,833	Yes (2007)
Columbus	OH	City	217	835,957	No
Dallas	TX	City	340	1,241,162	No
Denver	CO	City/County	154	663,862	No
Fort Wayne	IN	City	111	258,522	Yes (2004)
Kansas City	MO	City	319	467,007	Yes (1999)
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	NC	City/County	526	1,012,539	Yes (2009)

Due to differences in how each system collects, maintains and reports data, variances exist. These variations have an impact on the per capita and percentage allocations within the budget, and the overall comparison must be viewed with this in mind.

The benchmark data collection for all systems was done as of January 2016. While it is possible that there may have been changes or updates in the data provided, in order to ensure consistency in data collection the original figures obtained at that time have been used in the benchmark.

In addition to agency specific comparisons, the consultant team also utilized information from the 2015 City Park Facts Report from The Trust for Public Land (TPL). The TPL report provides comprehensive data for parks and recreation assets in the top 100 most populous cities in the U.S. Information from the TPL report includes inventory counts for all agencies operating within each metropolitan area, which would explain any discrepancies in data from the initial benchmark comparisons based on PRORAGIS and individual system master plans. TPL is a national leader in conservation research, and acts as a valuable resource on parks and other natural areas.

The goal was to evaluate where Indy Parks is positioned among peer agencies as it applies to efficiency and effectiveness practices. The benchmark assessment is organized into specific categories and questions to obtain data that offers an encompassing view of each system's operating metrics in comparison to the Indy Parks.

3.10.2 BENCHMARK COMPARISON – PRORAGIS AND SYSTEM MASTER PLANS

GENERAL COMPARATIVE OF SYSTEM JURISDICTIONS

This section provides a general overview of each system within the benchmark analysis. The table below describes the jurisdiction size, population, and density (Figure 2).

Indy Parks is one of the larger agencies in terms of jurisdiction size and population, ranking in the top three in square mileage and total population. Although Indy Parks is one of the larger jurisdictions in the study, its ratio for population density falls in the middle among benchmarked systems.

Agency	Jurisdiction Size (sq. mi.)	Population	Population per Square Mile
Kansas City	319	467,007	1,464
Charlotte - Meck Co	526	1,012,539	1,925
Indy Parks	**396**	**915,331**	**2,311**
Fort Wayne	111	258,522	2,329
Austin	323	910,833	2,824
Dallas	340	1,241,162	3,650
Columbus	217	835,957	3,852
Denver	154	663,862	4,311

SYSTEM ACREAGES AND TRAIL MILES

This section compares the total acreage and total trail miles managed by each agency. These totals are further dissected to identify the percentage of developed acres and current level of service per 1,000 population for park acres and trail miles.

Indy Parks is well ahead of the curve for benchmark agencies in terms of percentage of developed acres, with 94%. This may indicate a need for more natural open space and preservation areas, as well as a need for greater staffing levels dedicated to maintenance than other benchmark agencies. The high percentage of developed acres and low population density lends itself to adequate levels of parkland per 1,000 population for Indy Parks, which trails only Dallas, Austin, and Mecklenburg County.

System	Population of Jurisdiction	Total Acres Owned or Managed by System	Total Developed Acres	Percentage of Developed Acres	Total DevelopedAcres Per 1,000 Pop.
Dallas	1,241,162	23,331	18,347	79%	14.78
Austin	910,833	20,175	13,135	65%	14.42
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	1,012,539	21,122	14,023	66%	13.85
Indy Parks	**915,331**	**11,217**	**10,515**	**94%**	**11.49**
Denver	663,862	6,220	5,970	96%	8.99
Kansas City	467,007	12,243	3,623	30%	7.76
Columbus	835,957	14,397	5,690	40%	6.81
Fort Wayne	258,522	2,805	1,739	62%	6.73

In assessing trail mileage, Indy Parks falls near the bottom among benchmark agencies, with only 0.15 trail miles per 1,000 population. Best practice agencies report trail mileage per 1,000 population from 0.25 miles, upwards of 0.5 miles.

System	Population of Jurisdiction	Total Trail Miles	Trail Miles per 1,000 Pop.
Denver	663,862	278	0.42
Fort Wayne	258,522	90	0.35
Kansas City	467,007	119	0.25
Austin	910,833	212	0.23
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	1,012,539	215	0.21
Indy Parks	**915,331**	**135**	**0.15**
Columbus	835,957	92	0.11
Dallas	1,241,162	135	0.11

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET AND COST RECOVERY

This portion covers two parts, the annual budget and cost recovery. Budget items in this section include the most recent figures available for operating expenses and capital expenditures for each agency. Operating expenses are compared to the population of each jurisdiction to determine the operational cost per capita. The operational cost recovery is determined by dividing total non-tax revenue by total operating expense. The operational cost recovery is a critical performance indicator that measures how well each department's revenue generation covers the total operating costs.

Based on expenditure figures, the largest operational budgets belong to Dallas and Austin, which outpace the benchmark agencies by a large margin. In comparison, Indy Parks' budget is one of the lowest in the study, especially when assessing its expense per capita, which is the lowest among peer agencies by a large margin. Most agencies in the benchmark study report operating expense per capita in the $40-$90 range.

System	Jurisdiction Population	Total Operating Expenses	Operating Expense Per Capita
Austin	910,833	$ 83,462,865	$ 91.63
Kansas City	467,007	$ 38,158,822	$ 81.71
Denver	663,862	$ 54,000,000	$ 81.34
Dallas	1,241,162	$ 93,739,984	$ 75.53
Columbus	835,957	$ 34,126,907	$ 40.82
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	1,012,539	$ 39,000,000	$ 38.52
Indy Parks	**915,331**	**$ 23,730,503**	**$ 25.93**

Indy Parks also trails most benchmark agencies in revenue generation and revenue per capita, ranking third from the bottom for both. Most agencies are reporting revenue per capita in the middle to upper teens, but Indy Parks is earning approximately $6 per resident, which speaks volumes to the limited earned income generation of the department.

System	Jurisdiction Population	Total Non-Tax Revenues	Revenue Per Capita
Kansas City	467,007	$ 8,550,123	$ 18.31
Austin	910,833	$ 16,527,454	$ 18.15
Dallas	1,241,162	$ 20,037,916	$ 16.14
Denver	663,862	$ 8,300,000	$ 12.50
Indy Parks	**915,331**	**$ 5,597,018**	**$ 6.11**
Columbus	835,957	$ 5,048,649	$ 6.04
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	1,012,539	$ 5,000,000	$ 4.94

When assessing operating cost recovery, Indy Parks stands out as a benchmark leader, recovering close to one-fourth of its operational costs. While the cost recovery level is promising, the overall low revenue and expense figures reported by the department factor heavily into this relative advantage.

System	Total Non-Tax Revenues	Total Operating Expenses	Operational Cost Recovery
Indy Parks	**$ 5,597,018**	**$ 23,730,503**	**23.59%**
Kansas City	$ 8,550,123	$ 38,158,822	22.41%
Dallas	$ 20,037,916	$ 93,739,984	21.38%
Austin	$ 16,527,454	$ 83,462,865	19.80%
Denver	$ 8,300,000	$ 54,000,000	15.37%
Columbus	$ 5,048,649	$ 34,126,907	14.79%
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	$ 5,000,000	$ 39,000,000	12.82%

COST PER MAINTAINED ACRE

This category assesses the cost to maintain each park system. This figure is obtained by taking the operational budget and dividing it by the amount of maintained acres. This does not take into account the total amount of acreage for each system.

Indy Parks has, by far, the lowest cost per maintained acre among benchmark agencies. While keeping the cost per acre down should be a priority as an efficiency measure, the significant deviation from the benchmark median ($6,354) might suggest the need to increase expenditures to effectively maintain and manage Indy Parks' green spaces and facilities.

System	Total Operating Expenses	Total Developed Acres	Cost Per Maintained Acre
Kansas City	$ 38,158,822	3,623	$ 10,532
Denver	$ 54,000,000	5,970	$ 9,045
Austin	$ 83,462,865	13,135	$ 6,354
Columbus	$ 34,126,907	5,690	$ 5,998
Dallas	$ 93,739,984	18,347	$ 5,109
Charlotte - Meck Co	$ 39,000,000	14,023	$ 2,781
Indy Parks	**$ 23,730,503**	**10,211**	**$ 2,324**

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS

This section compares levels of staffing for each system by comparing full-time equivalents (FTEs) to total population and developed park acres. It should be noted that the park maintenance staff is not included in the total FTEs for the department because they are considered an extension of the Public Works Division.

When comparing staffing levels to the overall population of each service area, Indy Parks' ratio is substantially lower than the benchmark average with 0.28 FTEs per 1,000 residents. This is a telling comparison that indicates that the department's human resources may be severely strained and limited in relation to the population it serves.

System	Total FTE's	Population	Total FTE's per 10,000 Pop.
Denver	824	663,862	12.41
Dallas	938	1,241,162	7.56
Charlotte - Mecklenburg Co	667	1,012,539	6.59
Fort Wayne	170	258,522	6.58
Kansas City	288	467,007	6.17
Indy Parks	**255**	**915,331**	2.79

*Note: Austin and Columbus FTE's unavailable

3.10.3 TPL CITY PARK FACTS COMPARISON OF BENCHMARK AGENCIES

The 2015 City Park Facts Report provides a snapshot of the existing parkland assets and resources for the 100 most populous U.S. cities. Since each of the cities included in this benchmark study are also included in the TPL report, the data included in the City Park Facts Report helps supplement our comparison and strengthen the analysis. The following figures will likely vary from those previously stated in the benchmark study due to the fact that the TPL measures the combined park assets of all park agencies and conservation bodies operating within each metropolitan area. Indy Parks accounts for all but 250 acres (White River State Park) of the 11,246 park acres within the Indianapolis city limits, so the following data provides a solid benchmark for the department to compare with other major cities in terms of park assets. (Source: Center for City Park Excellence, The Trust for Public Land)

It should be noted that some of Indianapolis' figures in the following tables were adjusted to reflect data uncovered during this master planning process to more accurately represent how the city compares to the benchmark municipalities. As mentioned above, there may variances for agencies benchmarked against from the figures that were revealed in previous sections of this analysis due to differences in jurisdiction definition and methodologies for collecting data.

PERCENT OF CITY POPULATION WITH WALKABLE PARK ACCESS

The City Park Facts Report assesses the quality of accessibility for each cities' population by determining what percent of residents have the ability to reach a publicly owned park within a half-mile, unobstructed walk. This detailed measure only includes the top 60 most populous U.S. cities. The following reveals how benchmark agencies rank within the report. Indianapolis ranks 57th out of the 60 most populous cities.

TPL Rank	City	Residents within 1/2 Mile of a Park	Percent of Population with Walkable Park Access
13	Denver	524,809	84%
31	Kansas City	301,818	64%
37	Dallas	681,278	54%
45	Columbus	368,890	49%
46	Austin	381,613	48%
55	Nashville / Davidson	238,674	37%
57	Indianapolis	261,595	32%
58	Louisville / Jefferson	234,589	32%
60	Charlotte / Mecklenburg	211,747	27%

TOTAL SPENDING ON PARKS AND RECREATION PER RESIDENT

This section assesses each city's total spending on parks and recreation and compares it to the local population. Total spending includes operational and capital spending by parks and recreation agencies within each city. Indianapolis ranks 86th out of 100 with approximately $31 in spending on parks and recreation per resident.

TPL Rank	City	Population	Total Spending	Total Spending per Resident
27	Kansas City	467,007	$ 53,680,120	$ 115
29	Austin	885,400	$ 98,280,978	$ 111
32	Denver	649,495	$ 67,236,612	$ 104
33	Nashville / Davidson	658,602	$ 67,152,939	$ 102
37	Columbus	822,553	$ 76,227,184	$ 93
55	Fort Wayne	256,496	$ 1,800,434	$ 70
72	Dallas	1,257,676	$ 63,043,348	$ 50
80	Charlotte / Mecklenburg	990,977	$ 39,720,763	$ 40
85	Louisville / Jefferson	756,832	$ 26,192,385	$ 35
86	Indianapolis	915,331	$ 28,485,131	$ 31

*Note: Indianapolis' total spending was adjusted to include Indy Parks' actual spending for 2014, which includes DPW contributions for maintenance and capital improvements. Indianapolis' total population reflects the actual 2015 total identified in the demographic findings for this Master Plan.

CAPITAL SPENDING PER RESIDENT

By assessing the total capital spending within each city and comparing it to the local population, we arrive at a dollar amount per resident that is dedicated to capital improvement. Investment in capital is critical to the vitality of park and recreation departments and the scale of capital spending within a system has lasting implications for the future of each city and its residents. Indianapolis ranks 71st out of the 100 largest cities, with around $4 of capital spending per resident.

TPL Rank	City	Capital Spending	Capital Spending per Resident
8	Nashville / Davidson	$ 33,225,978	$ 50
10	Columbus	$ 39,413,276	$ 48
12	Austin	$ 41,042,530	$ 46
22	Kansas City	$ 13,655,557	$ 29
39	Denver	$ 11,535,204	$ 18
58	Louisville / Jefferson	$ 5,278,748	$ 7
62	Charlotte / Mecklenburg	$ 6,600,000	$ 7
63	Fort Wayne	$ 1,706,501	$ 7
71	Indianapolis*	$ 3,479,838	$ 4
78	Dallas	$ 1,744,227	$ 1

*Indianapolis' Capital Budget was adjusted to reflect contributions from DPW as they appear in Indy Parks' financial statements in 2014. Indianapolis' total population reflects the actual 2015 total identified in the demographic findings for this Master Plan.

REGULAR NON-SEASONAL FTE'S PER 10,000 RESIDENTS

The table below provides the total number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) dedicated to parks and recreation operations for each city, then compares the staffing levels to each city's population. This measurement is key in understanding how well each city is equipped to deliver quality experiences. Indy Parks ranks 75th out of 100 cities, with 2.8 FTE's per 10,000 residents.

TPL Rank	City	Population	FTE's	Employees per 10,000 Residents
24	Denver	649,495	468	7.2
25	Kansas City	467,007	333	7.1
26	Austin	885,400	627	7.1
27	Dallas	1,257,676	862	6.9
42	Nashville / Davidson	658,602	363	5.5
51	Fort Wayne	256,496	120	4.7
52	Louisville / Jefferson	756,832	344	4.5
58	Columbus	822,553	326	4.0
75	Indianapolis*	915,331	255	2.8
86	Charlotte / Mecklenburg	990,977	268	2.7

*Indianapolis' total population and FTE count were adjusted to represent actual data collected for this Master Plan.

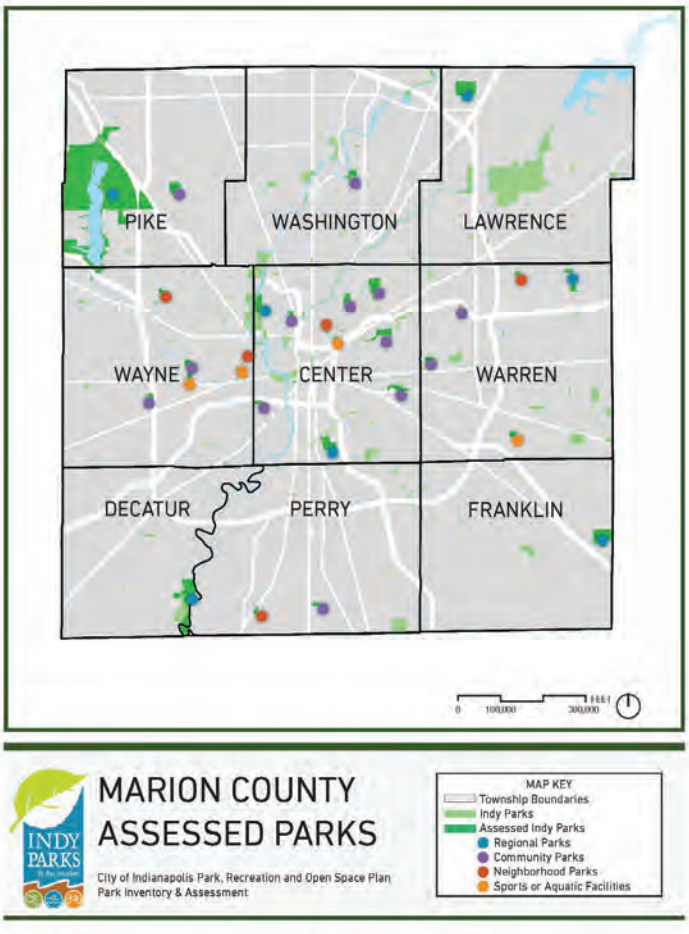
CHAPTER FOUR

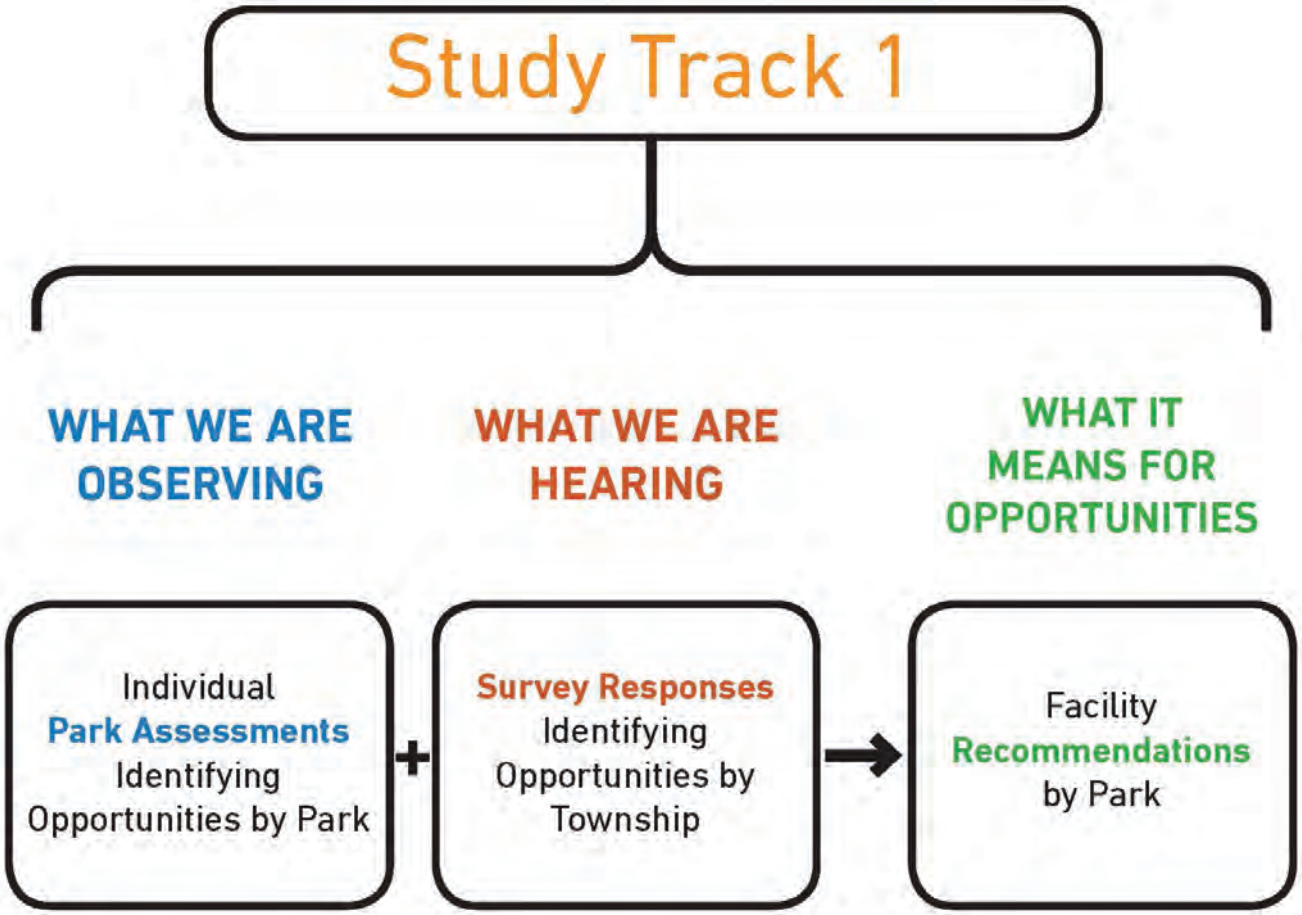
PARKS, FACILITIES, OPEN SPACE & PROGRAM NEEDS ANALYSIS

4.1 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

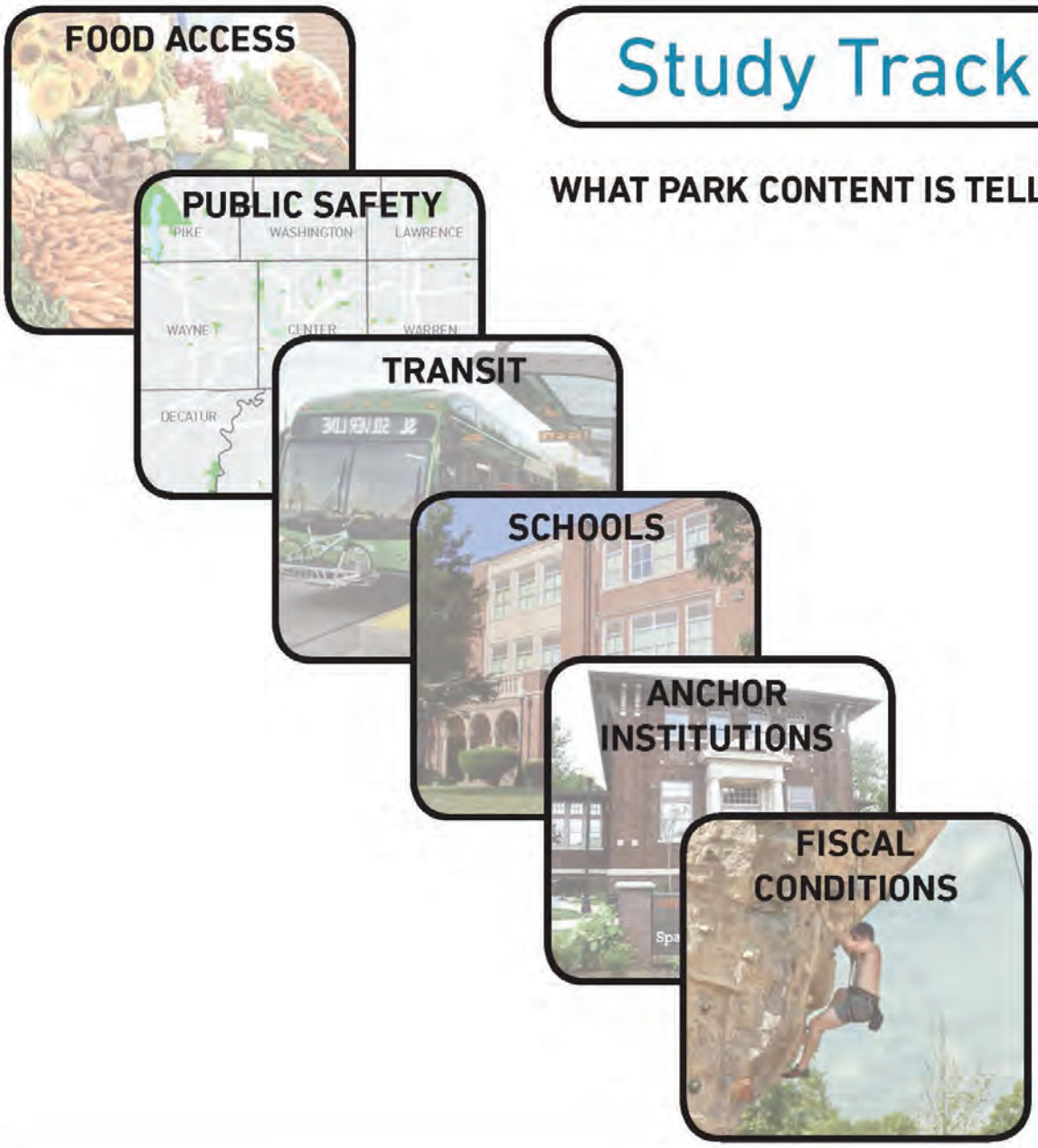
As part of the planning process, 29 parks were selected by Indy Parks for assessment. For a detailed assessment of each park, please refer to the Appendix. The assessed parks included the following:

- Regional Parks
  - Eagle Creek, Garfield, Grassy Creek, Riverside, Sahm, Southeastway, Southwestway
- Community Parks
  - Brookside, Broad Ripple, Christian, Douglass, Ellenberger, Krannert, Northwestway, Perry, Rhodius, Thatcher, Washington, Watkins, Windsor Village
- Neighborhood Parks
  - Dubarry, Glenns
  - Valley, Gustafson, Haughville, Martin Luther King Jr.
- Sports or Aquatic Facilities
  - Central Greens, Chuck Klein, Indy Island, O'Bannon




Study Track 1
WHAT WE ARE OBSERVING
WHAT WE ARE HEARING
WHAT IT MEANS FOR OPPORTUNITIES
Individual Park Assessments Identifying Opportunities by Park
+
Survey Responses Identifying Opportunities by Township
Facility Recommendations by Park

INDY PARKS & Recreation
PARK ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES
City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment



Study Track 2

WHAT PARK CONTENT IS TELLING US

INDY PARKS & Recreation

PARK ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

WHAT STUDYING...		TELLS US
	→	About possibility for fresh food interventions (example: community gardens, urban farms, farmers market, grocery).
	→	About possibility of activating parks to promote safe, neighborhood-based activities, encourage sense of pride in community, and increase positive foot traffic in parks.
	→	About the opportunity for neighborhood stabilizing development that is integrated with transit.
	→	About joint land use and programming possibilities.
	→	About activating parks and/or improving parks to enhance and support anchor institutions.
	→	About opportunities for park-specific regional attractions and park-specific revenue-generation.

PARK ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

Study Track 1 + Study Track 2

=

Synthesis of Content

Strategic recommendations that position parks as assets that promote neighborhood stabilization and economic development.

PARK ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

Under Used Open Space

Large amounts of unprogrammed turf areas are present at several of the assessed Indy Parks. Many of these areas are not being used by the surrounding community. The large amount of turf area leads to a high level of grounds maintenance. Passive open space in selective areas with community support can be repurposed as native habitat to help reduce maintenance.

Failing Infrastructure

Due to budget constraints, most of the assessed Indy Parks have failing infrastructure. This includes, but is not limited to: roads, walks, parking lots, benches, lighting, bridges, and signs. Failing infrastructure creates unsafe conditions for park users.

Connectivity

Multi-use paths and sidewalks connecting to and throughout the parks are limited. Several existing sidewalks are cracking, disintegrating, and/or flooding. Many of the assessed Indy Parks lack sufficient signage and wayfinding.

Deteriorating Amenities

Several amenities in the surveyed Indy Parks are deteriorating. Shelters and family centers are in disrepair. Several restroom facilities are unusable and closed. Elements within sports fields, such as field goals and benches, make the field unusable for the intended sport.

Overall Level of Maintenance

The overall necessary maintenance for the Indy Parks system is high. Regular maintenance is needed throughout the parks for mowing and the upkeep of infrastructure and amenities.

INDY PARK SYSTEM WEAKNESSES

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

Diverse Habitats

Throughout the Indy Parks system, there is a variety of diverse habitats. These habitats include prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. The diversity of habitats increases wildlife and creates educational opportunities for the community. Natural areas could also provide stormwater mitigation.

Park Diversity

The Indy Park system consists of a wide variety of park types, including nature centers, sports complexes, and neighborhood parks. Included within the parks is a wide range of amenities from playgrounds and pools to mountain biking courses. This park diversity accommodates a wide range of park users.

Adjacent to Water

Several of the Indy Parks are located adjacent to or surrounding bodies of water. Access to water increases user activities and provides educational opportunities.

Community Engagement

Parks are centers for community engagement. Some Indy Parks have community involvement programs such as volunteer days or friends of the park. This gives community members a chance to develop a sense of ownership and take pride in the park. This strengthens community image and sense of place.

INDY PARK SYSTEM STRENGTHS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

Walks & Trails

Throughout the Indy Park system, there are opportunities to improve and expand the walking trails and sidewalks. Mulit-use paths and trials create connections between park amenities, drawing users to these elements. Walking loops create safe areas for community members to exercise.

Natural Areas

The addition of natural areas maintains open space while reducing the need for mowing turf. Natural areas can be prairie plantings, reforestation, or enhancing wetland and stream habitats. This increases and protects wildlife habitats while providing educational opportunities for the community in the right areas with community support.

External Connectivity

The Indy Parks system lacks external connection to the surrounding community. Creating multiple safe walkways to a park is essential to connect the surrounding neighborhood. These walkways could be extended to connect to existing nearby community trails. Very few of the assessed parks have bus stops at the park.

Signage

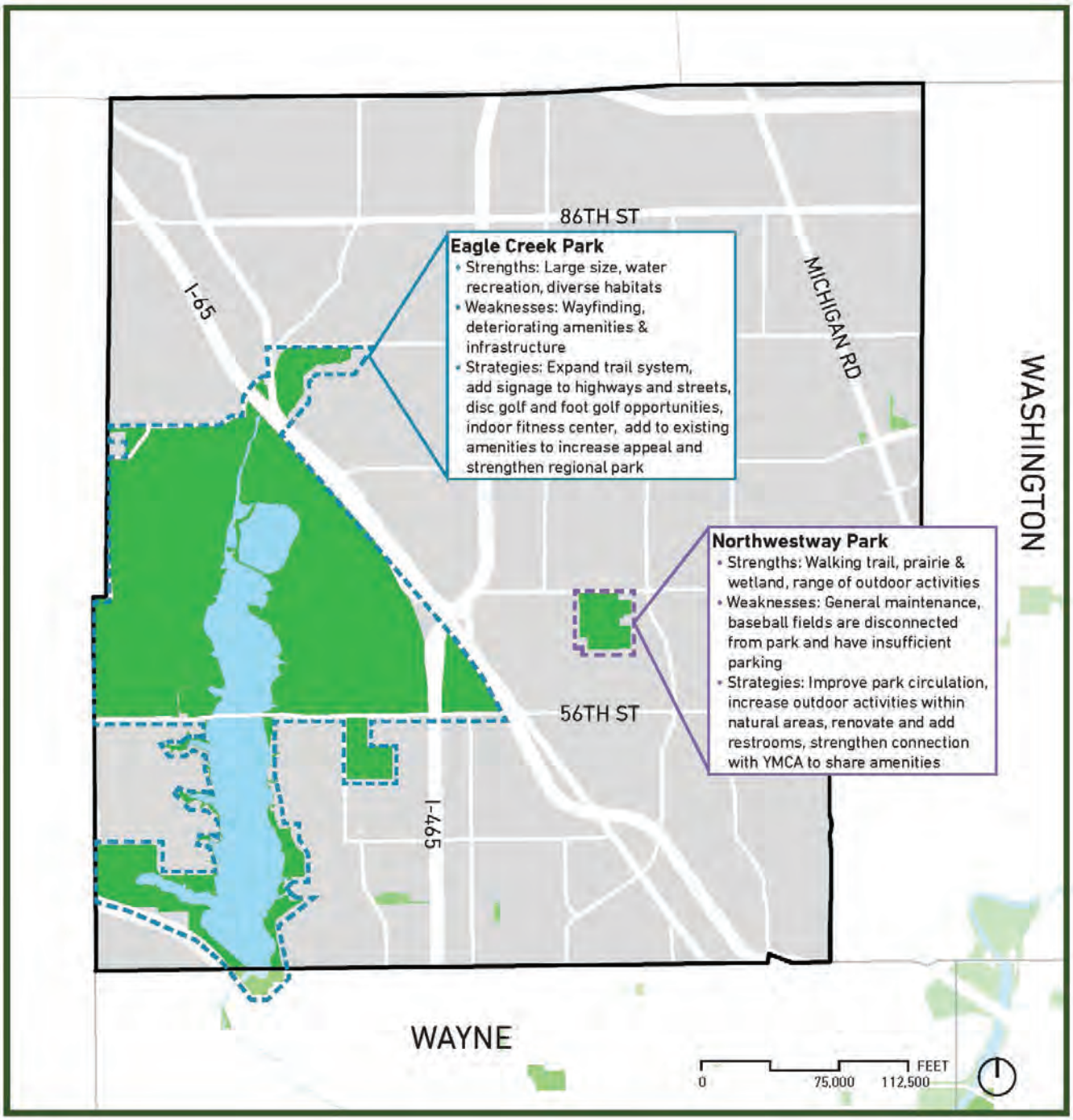
There is an opportunity to add to the existing, limited signage at the Indy Parks. This includes wayfinding and educational signs. Digital signage can be used to show daily and weekly programming to inform the community about park events.

Updated Amenities

Updated park amenities are important to provide safe, usable activities for park visitors. Keeping park amenities current also attracts and retains youth.

INDY PARK SYSTEM OPPORTUNITIES

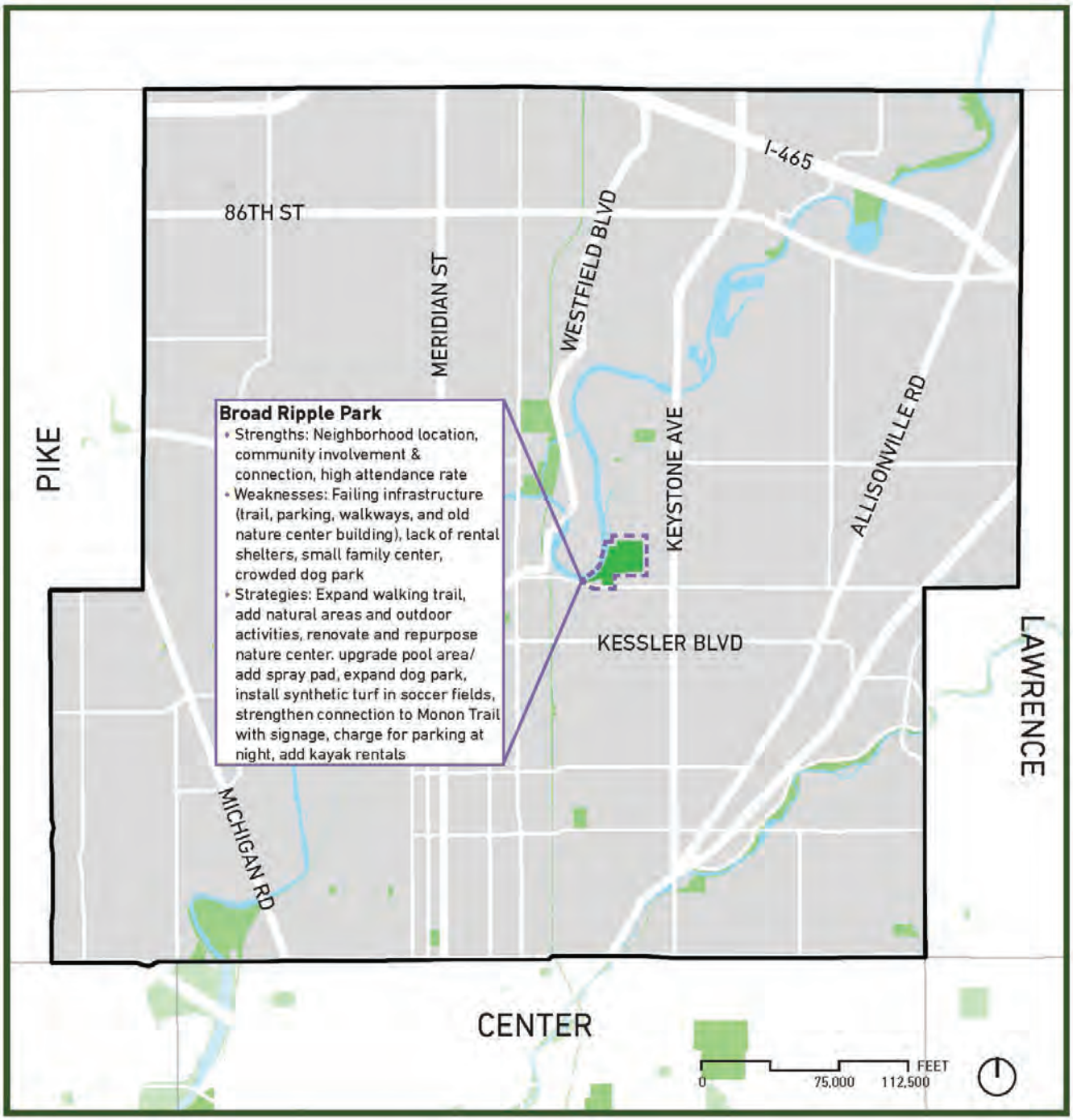
City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment



PIKE TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

MAP KEY
- Township Boundaries
- Indy Parks
- Assessed Indy Parks
- Regional Parks
- Community Parks
- Neighborhood Parks
- Sports or Aquatic Facilities



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

MAP KEY
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- Indy Parks
- Assessed Indy Parks
- Regional Parks
- Community Parks
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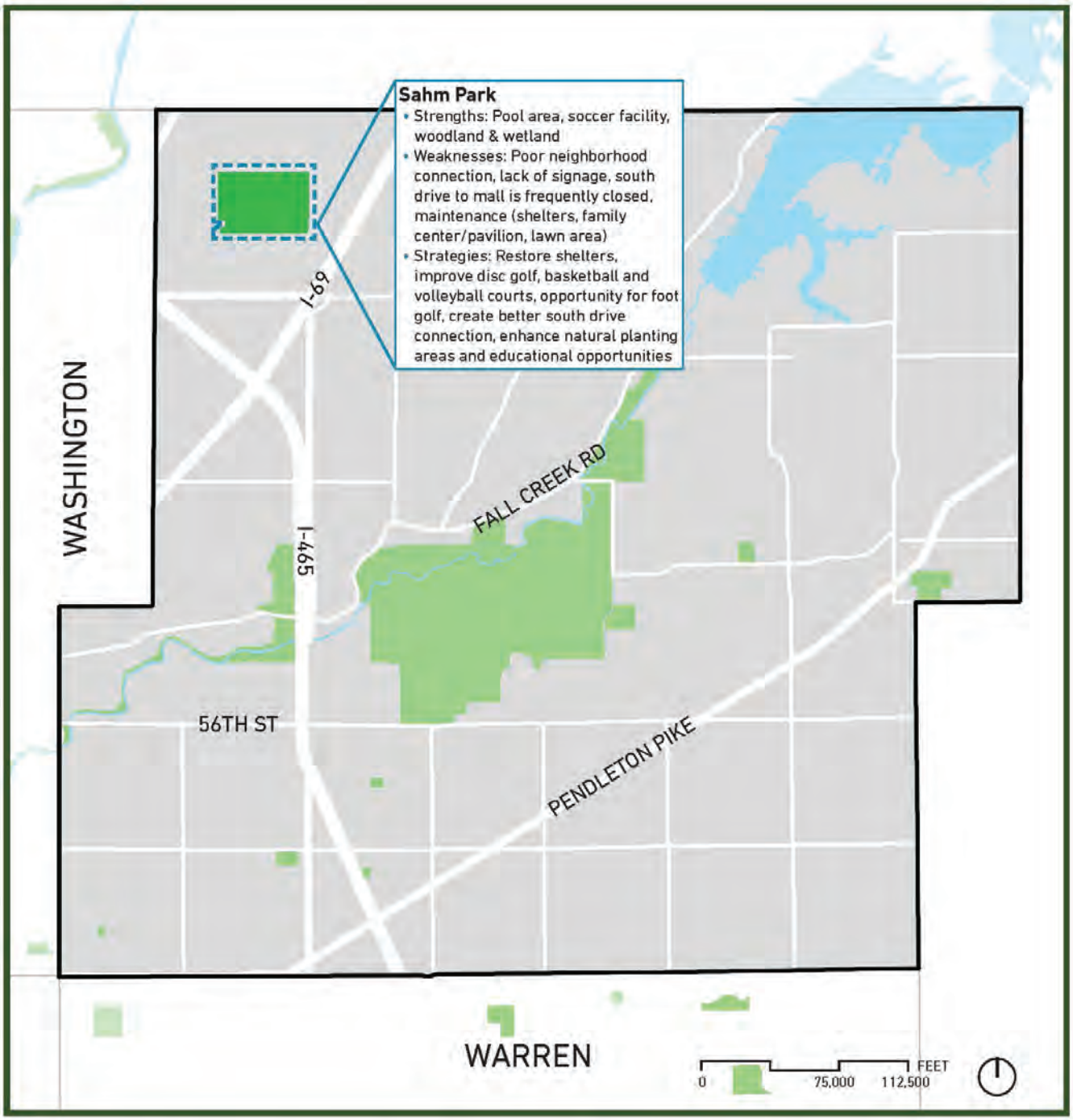

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

MAP KEY
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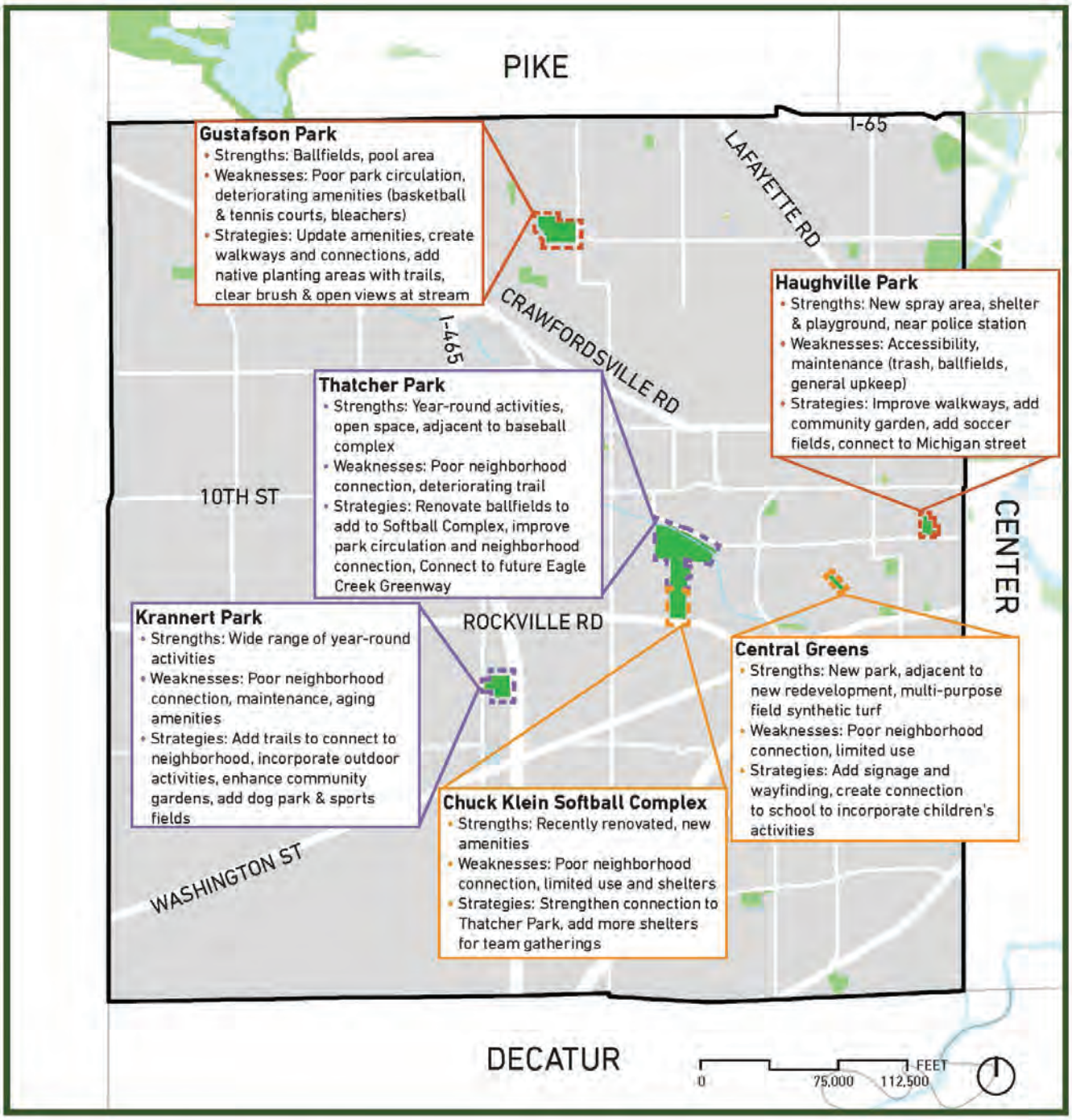

INDY PARKS & Recreation

WAYNE TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
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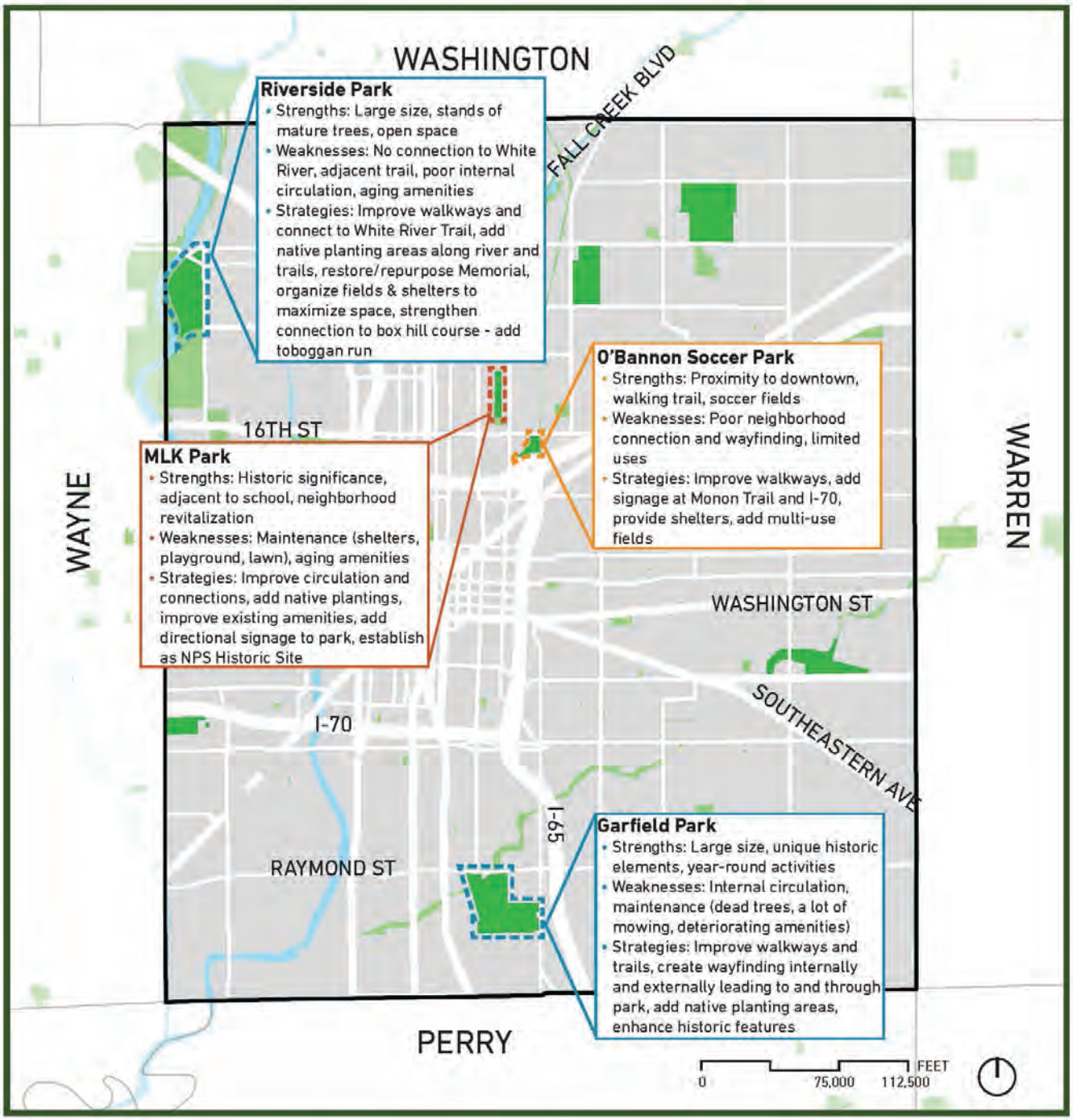

CENTER TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

REGIONAL, NEIGHBORHOOD, & SPORTS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

MAP KEY
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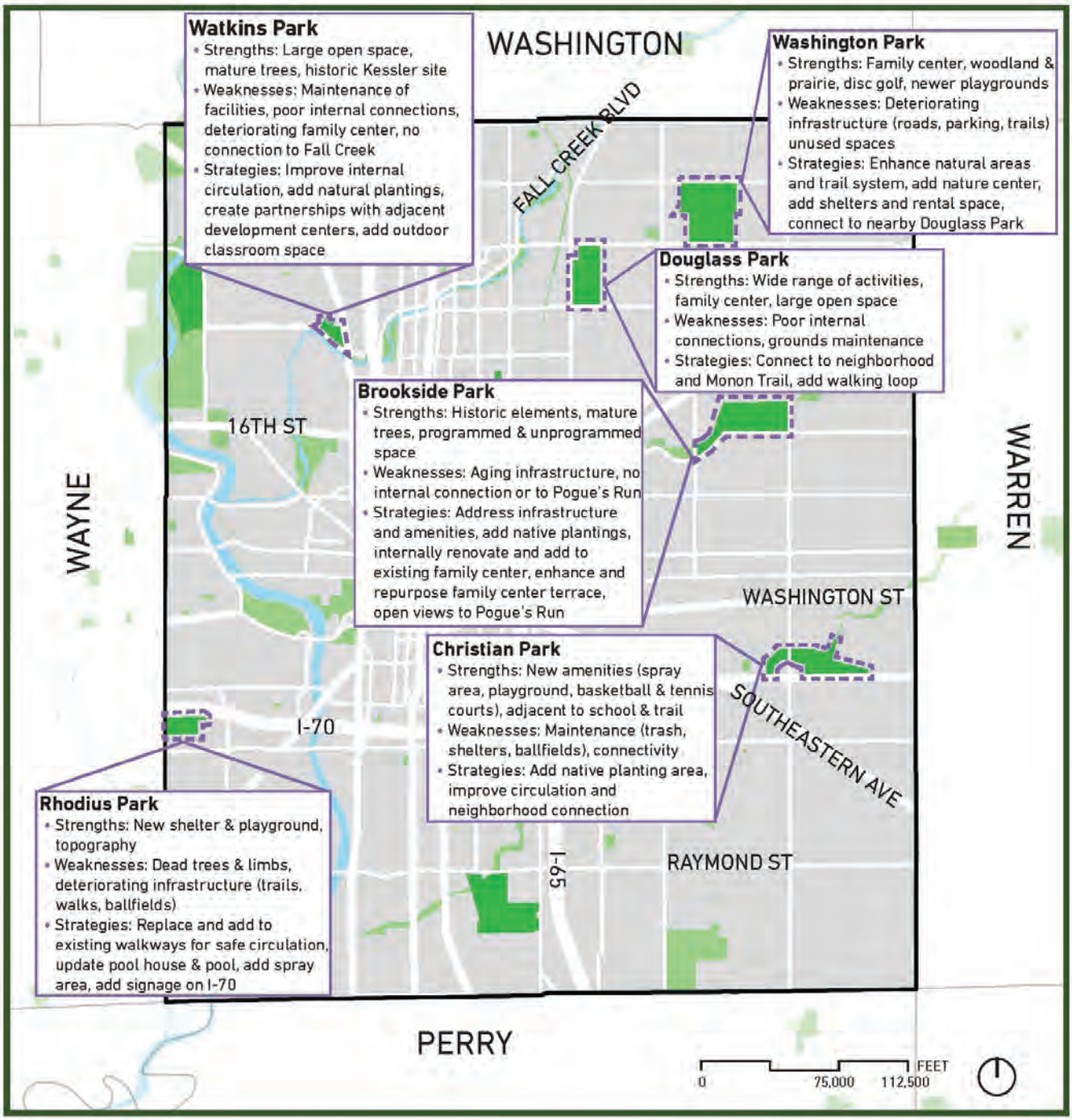

CENTER TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS COMMUNITY

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

MAP KEY
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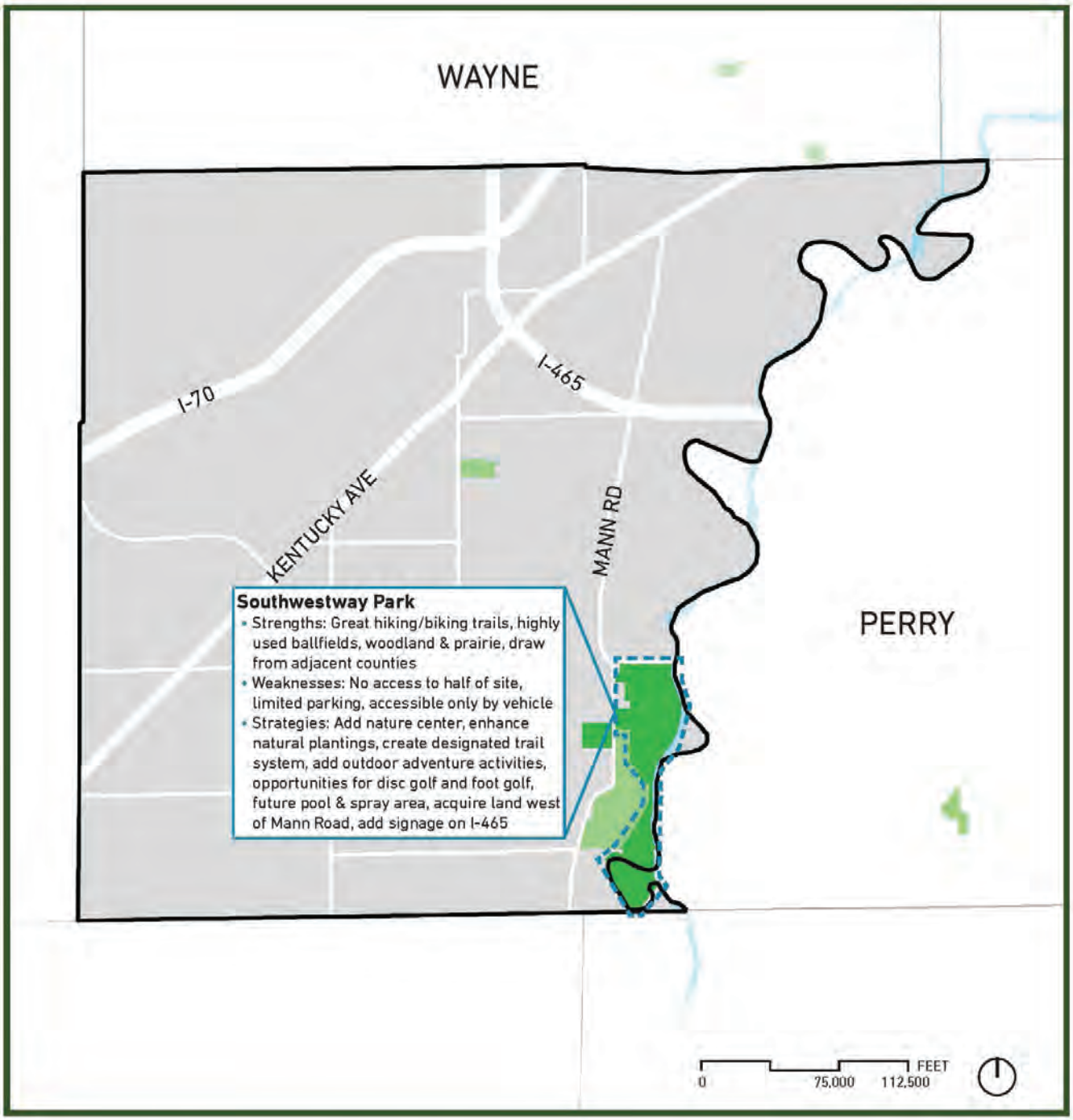

DECATUR TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

MAP KEY
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- Indy Parks
- Assessed Indy Parks
- Regional Parks
- Community Parks
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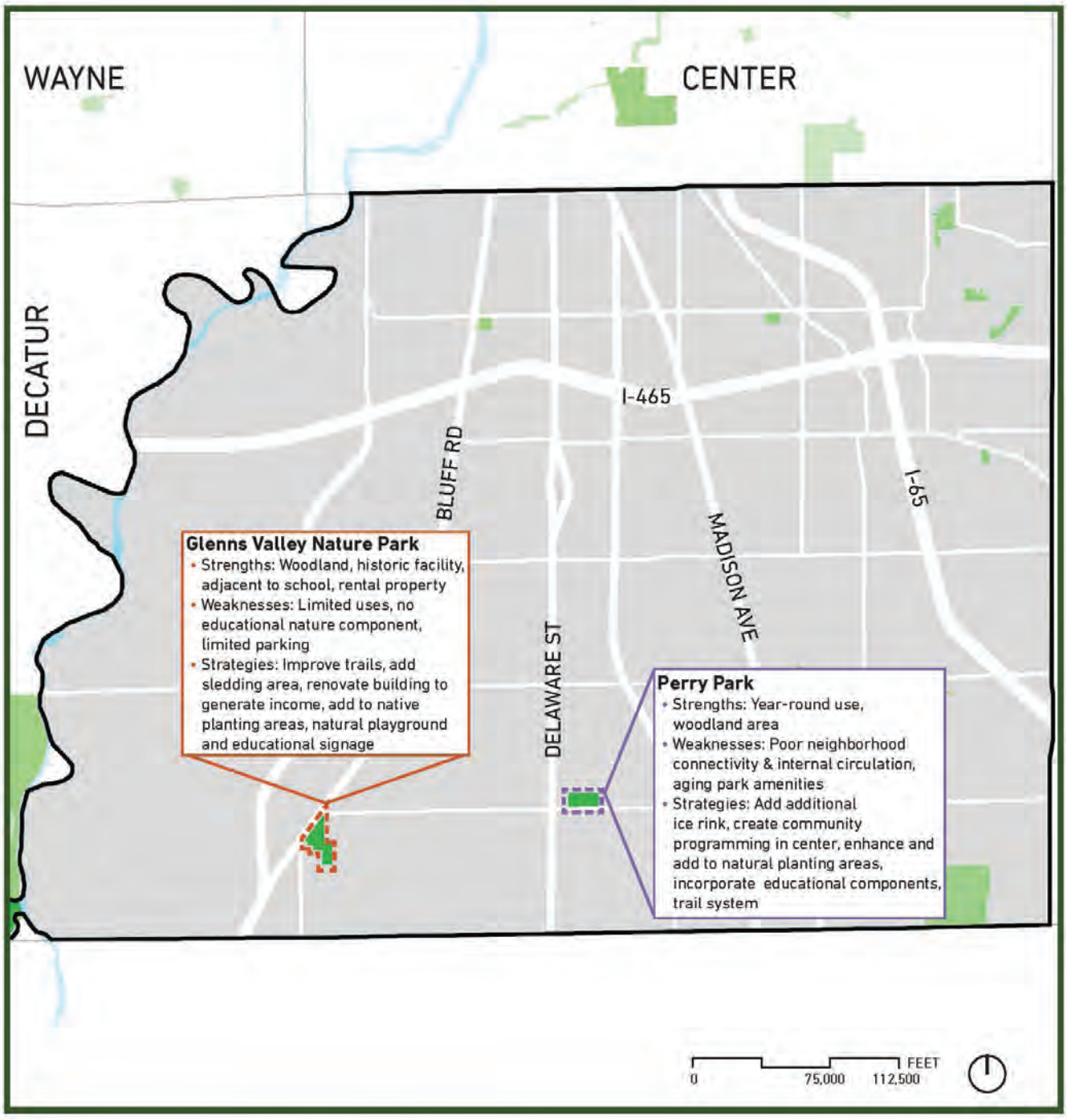

PERRY TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

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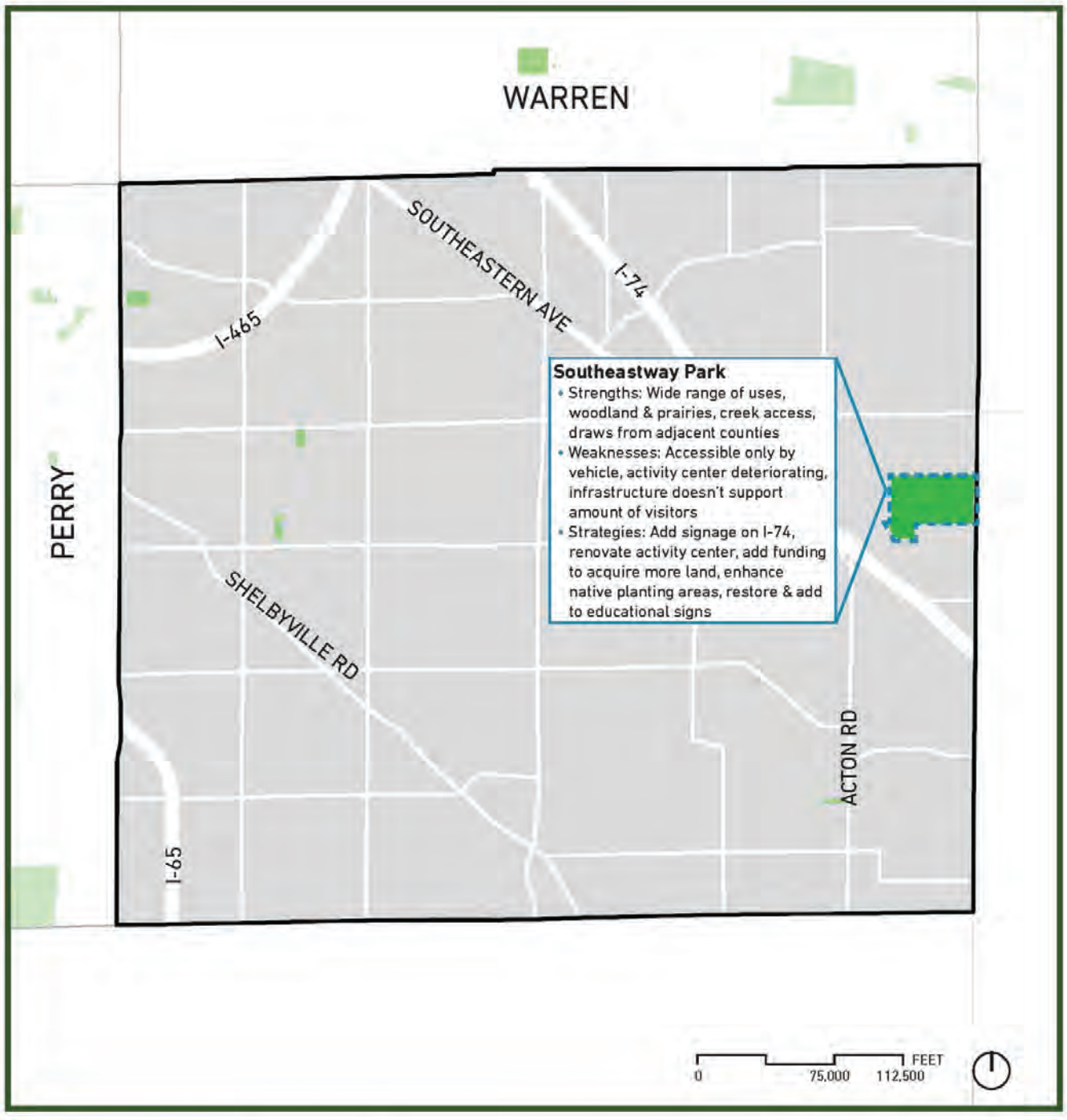

FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
Park Inventory & Assessment

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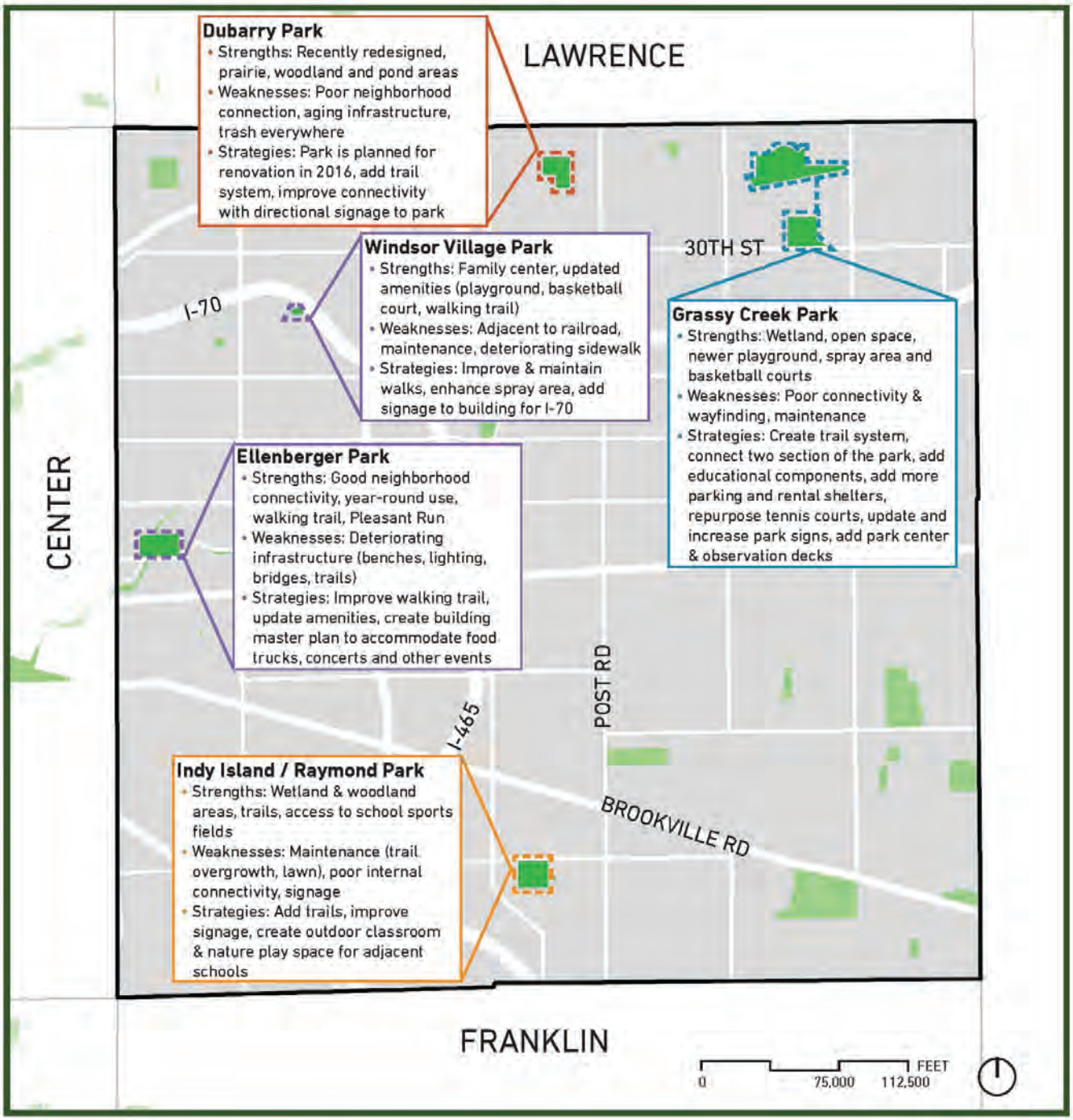

WARREN TOWNSHIP ASSESSED PARKS

City of Indianapolis Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
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4.2 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS AND LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

4.2.1 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

The Indy Parks Master Plan includes the following park classifications for the parks system. These park classifications are used to define current levels of service and to determine park land needs. These categories were developed based on observation of existing parks and the types of uses that could be commonly found within them. It should be noted that there can be exceptions to each description that follows, however these exceptions will be few. The temptation to place facilities and programs where convenient, or politically encouraged, should be resisted in order to maintain integrity of the park system.

REGIONAL PARKS

The regional parks offer county residents the opportunity to participate in a variety of park experiences capable of entertaining the entire family for extended time periods. It may provide a natural setting or sense of remoteness from the common urban fabric or enrich participants about our cultural heritage. Because regional parks are designed for both active and passive recreation, and are centered on unique terrain, extensive natural areas, scenic views, a lake, river, or cultural features, they typically attract a large number of persons from throughout the county. These parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. The focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.

SIZE: Regional Parks are a minimum of 50 acres with 75 or more acres being optimal.

SERVICE AREA: Their service area includes several adjacent communities in addition to all of Marion County. The normal drive time is 1 hour or less. Depending on the amenities offered, Regional Parks draw from all of Central Indiana with a focus on Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Hancock, Morgan, Johnson, and Shelby counties. The recommended level of service standard is 6 acres per 1,000 population.

CHARACTER: A variety of terrain, scenic views, cultural amenities and extensive natural areas are important features as well as both passive and active recreational opportunities.

LOCATION: Areas of significant natural characteristics that are easily accessible to surrounding communities.

TYPICAL FACILITIES: Regional Parks may have recreation centers, nature centers, aquatic facilities, golf courses, play grounds, athletic fields/courts, trails, shelters, and open space. Regional parks may also have unique features such as designated nature preserves, a conservatory, velodrome, horse trails, or a soap box derby hill.

PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES: Regional Parks may include resources that allow for a variety of recreation programming. Passive self-directed programming such as walking, nature study, picnicking, and fishing may be augmented by active programs including athletics, music and theater programs, and special events. Regional Parks may have unique natural resources that influence the makeup and mix of programs offered at the site.

Many Regional Parks also contain aquatic centers and/or Family Centers that provide drop-in and organized programming for youth, families, adults and seniors. Core program services for Regional Parks include sports and fitness, art and culture, self-enrichment, environmental education, therapeutic and inclusion, and senior programs.

Regional Parks are larger in size and are often the parks of choice for large events that require adequate parking, open space, facilities, and traffic flow. Typical special events may include musical concerts, outdoor movies or theater programs, cultural events, sporting events or gatherings for families, corporations or neighborhoods.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF REGIONAL PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Garfield Park	122.91	2450 S Shelby St	Center	Regional Park
Riverside Park	95.68	2420 N Riverside EDr	Center	Regional Park
Southwestway Park	410.71	8400 S Mann Rd	Decatur	Regional Park
Southeastway Park	185.86	5624 S Carroll Rd	Franklin	Regional Park
Sahm Park	66.29	6801 E 91st St	Lawrence	Regional Park
Eagle Creek Park	4,279.03	7840 W 56th St	Pike	Regional Park
Grassy Creek Regional Park	175.52	10510 E 30th St	Warren	Regional Park
Total:	**5,336.00**			

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community Parks fall between Regional and Neighborhood Parks in size and scope of services. Their focus is on meeting the recreation needs of several neighborhoods or large sections of the community, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. They allow for group activities and offer other recreation opportunities not feasible, nor perhaps desirable, at the neighborhood level. As with neighborhood parks, they should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities.

SIZE: In addition to minimum size of 25 to 100 acres, a park may be classified as a community park, solely on the amenities and programs offered to a particular neighborhood.

LOCATION CRITERIA: A community park should serve two or more neighborhoods. Although its service area should be 0.5 to 3.0 miles in radius, the quality of the natural resource base should play a significant role in its site selection. The site should be serviced by arterial and collector streets and easily accessible from throughout its service area by way of interconnecting trails. The recommended level of service standard is 2 acres per 1,000 population.

SITE SELECTION GUIDELINES: The site's natural character should play a very significant role in its site selection, with an emphasis on sites that pre-serve unique landscapes within the community and/or provide recreation opportunities not otherwise available. Ease of access from throughout the service area, geographically centered, and relationship to other park areas are also key concerns in site selection.

The site should exhibit physical characteristics appropriate for both active and passive recreation use. It should have suitable soils, positive drainage, varying topography, and a variety of vegetation. Where feasible, it should be adjacent to natural resource areas and greenways. These linkages tend to expand the recreation opportunities within the community and enhance one's perception of surrounding open space.

Depending upon their individual character and use, lakes, ponds, and rivers may be associated with either community parks or natural resource areas. Community Park and Natural Resource Area classifications differ in that the former is generally more developed for passive recreation use than the latter.

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS: Neighborhood and community input through the public meeting process should be the primary determinant of developing programs for the park.

Community parks are typically developed for both active and passive uses. Although active recreation, facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner, reserved and programmed use is compatible and acceptable. However, community parks are not intended to be used extensively for programmed adult athletic use and tournaments.

A menu of potential active recreation facilities includes large play structures and/or creative play attractions, game courts, informal ball fields for youth play, tennis courts, volleyball courts, horseshoe areas, ice skating areas, swimming pools, swimming beaches, and disc golf areas. Passive activity facilities include extensive internal trails (that connect to the community trail system), individual and group picnic/sitting areas, general open space and unique landscapes/features, nature study areas, and display gardens. Facilities for cultural activities, such as plays and concerts in the park, are also appropriate. The distribution of land area between active and passive recreation, reserve, display, conservation, and cultural areas is determined on a site by site basis.

PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES: Community Parks offer open space and developed recreation areas to accommodate both passive and active recreation programs.

Community Parks are capable of providing services to several neighborhoods and often offer programs in all of the core program areas of sports and fitness, art and culture, aquatics, environmental education, self-enrichment, therapeutic and inclusion programs and senior services. Community Parks offer at least one major indoor recreation facility such as a Family Center, Ice Rink or Nature Center. Many also include a pool or aquatic center.

Community Parks may occasionally be used for large special events drawing park users from a larger service area for an isolated event.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF COMMUNITY PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Bethel Park	14.51	2850 Bethel Ave	Center	Community Park
Brookside Park	95.68	3500 Brookside Pkwy SDr	Center	Community Park
Christian Park	73.15	4125 English Ave	Center	Community Park
Douglass Park	27.58	1425 E 25th St	Center	Community Park
JTV Hill Park	9.76	1806 N Columbia Ave	Center	Community Park
Pride Park	0.50	1229 S Vandeman St	Center	Community Park
Rhodius Park	25.39	1720 W Wilkins St	Center	Community Park
Washington Park	128.14	3130 E 30th St	Center	Community Park
Watkins Park	19.11	2360 Dr M L King Jr St	Center	Community Park
Perry Park	21.00	451 E Stop 11 Rd	Perry	Community Park
Ellenberger Park	37.40	5301 E St Clair St	Warren	Community Park
Raymond Park	35.22	8300 E Raymond St	Warren	Community Park
Windsor Village Park	7.72	6510 E 25th St	Warren	Community Park
Broad Ripple Park	56.20	1500 Broad Ripple Ave	Washington	Community Park
Holliday Park	95.30	6349 Spring Mill Rd	Washington	Community Park
Krannert Park	28.42	605 S High School Rd	Wayne	Community Park
Municipal Gardens	5.05	1831 N Lafayette Rd	Wayne	Community Park
Thatcher Park	22.31	4649 W Vermont St	Wayne	Community Park
Total:	**702.44**			

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks remain the basic unit of the park system and serve as the recreation and social focus of the neighborhood. They should be developed for both active and passive recreation activities geared specifically for those living in the service area. Accommodating a wide variety of age and user groups, including children, adults, senior citizens, and special populations, is important. Creating a sense of place by bringing together the unique character of the site with that of the neighborhood is vital to successful design. The neighborhood park is designed to provide the types of recreation one would expect to be able to walk to rather than be required to drive to gain access. Neighborhood Parks offer small areas of open space and a sampling of park resources to service individual neighborhoods.

SIZE CRITERIA: Demographic profiles and population density within the park's service area are determinants of a neighborhood park's size. Generally, 5 acres is accepted as the minimum size necessary to provide space for a variety of recreation activities. 7 to 10 acres is considered optimal, up to 25 acres would be ideal.

SERVICE AREA: A neighborhood park is limited by geographical or social limits (maximum 20 minutes walking distance). The park primarily serves the local neighborhoods located within a radius of 1/4 to 1/2 mile of the park, without physical or social barriers to the boundaries. The recommended level of service standard is 1.75 acers per 1,000 population.

CHARACTER: Able to support intensive use. Ideally level and open with some shady areas.

LOCATION CRITERIA: A neighborhood park should be centrally located within its service area, which encompasses a 1/4 to 1/2 mile distance uninterrupted by arterial roads and other physical barriers. It should be located away from railroads, main streets and other hazardous barriers. The distances might vary depending on development diversity. The site should be accessible from throughout its service area by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks, or low-volume residential streets. Ease of access and walking distance are critical factors in locating a neighborhood park.

SITE SELECTION GUIDELINES: Ease of access from the surrounding neighborhood, central location, and linkage to greenways are the key concerns when selecting a site. The site should exhibit the physical characteristics appropriate for both active and passive recreation uses. Since one of the primary reasons people go to a park is to experience a pleasant outdoor environment, the site should exhibit some innate aesthetic qualities. "Left-over" parcels of land that are undesirable for development are generally un- desirable for neighborhood parks as well and should be avoided. Additionally, it is more cost effective to select a site with inherent aesthetic qualities, rather than try to create them through extensive site development. Given the importance of location, neighborhood parks should be selected before a subdivision is platted and acquired as part of the development process. Ideally, it should be connected to other park system components such as natural resource areas, lakes, ponds, and greenways.

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS/RECREATION ACTIVITY: Since each neighborhood in a community is unique, neighborhood input should be used to determine the development program for the park. The guidelines presented here should be used as a framework to guide program development and ensure consistency with other park system components.

Development of a neighborhood park should seek to achieve a balance between active and passive park uses. Active recreation facilities are intended to be used in an informal and unstructured manner. With the exception of limited use by youth teams, neighborhood parks are not intended to be used for programmed activities that result in overuse, noise, parking problems, and congestion.

A menu of potential active recreation facilities includes play structures, court games, "informal" (i.e. non-programmed) play field or open space, tennis courts, volleyball courts, shuffleboard courts, horse- shoe area, ice skating area and spray area. Facilities for passive activities include internal trails (that could connect to the greenway system), picnic/sitting areas, general open space, and "people watching" areas. As a general rule, active recreation facilities should consume roughly 50% of the park's acreage. The remaining 50% should be used for passive activities, reserve, ornamentation, and conservation as appropriate. Developing an appealing park atmosphere should be considered an important site element.

The site should accommodate 7 to 10 off street parking spaces, for use by those who choose or need to drive to the park.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS: Neighborhood parks are smaller in size than Community Parks and contain no indoor facilities or programming staff. The parks may have two to three developed areas for sports activities, picnicking, fitness trails and playgrounds. These parks serve as centers for self-directed recreation programs and some structured programming usually organized by local neighborhood organizations, churches or other partners in the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Parks are limited in the amount of parking, and available open space and are accessed by smaller neighborhood streets. Most use is walk-in users from the local neighborhood. Neighborhood Parks are not designed to accommodate special events that draw participation from beyond the local neighborhood.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Al E. Polin Park	1.56	100 E 29th St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Babe Denny Park	1.14	900 S Meikel St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Barton Park	6.07	2334 N Capitol Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Beckwith Memorial Park	5.24	2302 E 30th St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Bertha Ross Park	15.41	3700 N Clifton St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Clayton & LaSalle Park	3.78	401 S LaSalle St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Colorado & 29th Park	5.20	2802 Colorado Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Dr Martin Luther King Jr Park	14.00	1702 N Broadway St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Edna Balz Lacy Park	2.14	700 Greer St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Graham E Martin Park	66.99	Graham E Martin Park	Center	Neighborhood Park
Fall Creek & 30th Park	11.25	2925 E Fall Creek Pkwy NDR	Center	Neighborhood Park
Forest Manor Park	18.12	2000 N Forest Manor Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Hendricks Park	3.01	1313 Madison Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Highland Park	4.05	1100 E New York St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Indianola Park	2.05	1900 W Washington St	Center	Neighborhood Park
John Ed Park	4.00	2000 E Roosevelt Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Kelly Park	2.45	30 Wisconsin St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Lentz Park	3.40	700 N Traub St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Monon Acres Park	13.48	2637 Winthrop Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Oscar Charleston Park	22.11	2800 E 30th St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Red Maple	1.42	2255 S Oxford St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Rev Mozel Sanders Park	29.00	1300 N Belmont St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Sandorf Park	6.41	2020 Dawson St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Spades Park	31.00	1800 Nowland Ave	Center	Neighborhood Park
Stringtown Park	2.22	1605 W Ohio St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Willard Park	10.89	1901 E Washington St	Center	Neighborhood Park
Carson Park	25.56	5400 S High School Rd	Decatur	Neighborhood Park
Acton Park	21.46	7400 Acton Rd	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Basswood Park	6.93	6420 E Edgewood Ave	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Century Park	28.13	3101 Wildwood Farms Blvd	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Copper Grove	10.55	4510 Pantina Way	Franklin	Neighborhood Park

EXISTING INVENTORY OF NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS (CONTINUED)

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Five Points & Edgewood Park	34.68	5750 Five Points Rd	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Franklin Township Community Park	99.00	8801 E Edgewood Ave	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Retherford Park	5.35	8020 Acton Rd	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Thompson Park	8.31	6451 Thompson Rd	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Wildwood Park	8.78	8100 Southeastern Ave	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Wolf Run Park	53.23	10050 E Thompson Rd	Franklin	Neighborhood Park
Carroll Road & 42nd Street Park	19.60	4020 N Carroll Road	Lawrence	Neighborhood Park
Doris Cowherd Park	2.59	4050 N Irvington Ave	Lawrence	Neighborhood Park
Gardner Park	13.08	6900 E 46th St	Lawrence	Neighborhood Park
Bluff Park	10.39	555 W Hanna Ave	Perry	Neighborhood Park
Southside Park	7.84	1941 E Hanna Ave	Perry	Neighborhood Park
Tolin-Akeman Park	5.52	4459 Shelbyville Rd	Perry	Neighborhood Park
Eagle Highlands Neighborhood P	14.32	4201 Eagle Creek Pkwy	Pike	Neighborhood Park
Gateway West Park	4.99	6150 Gateway Dr	Pike	Neighborhood Park
Northwestway Park	117.00	5253 W 62nd St	Pike	Neighborhood Park
WISH Park	16.15	2602 Westlane Rd	Pike	Neighborhood Park
Bellamy Park	6.82	9501 E 36th Pl	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Dubarry Park	26.92	3698 Dubarry Rd	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Greene Park	10.25	1700 Franklin Rd	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Hanover North Park	14.01	7850 Wolfgang Pl	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Paul Ruster Park	82.07	11300 E Prospect St	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Virginia Lee O'Brien Park	3.62	2300 N Bolton Ave	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Wes Montgomery Park	36.79	3400 N Hawthorne Ln	Warren	Neighborhood Park
Andrew Ramsey Park	2.12	310 W 42nd St	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Arsenal Park	12.36	1400 E 46th St	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Broadway & 61st Park	2.71	6051 N Broadway St	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Canterbury Park	1.66	5510 N Carvel Ave	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Elwood & Mary Black Park	2.00	4241 Fairview Terrace	Washington	Neighborhood PARK
Highwoods Park	0.46	5115 Michigan Road	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Juan Solomon Park	44.14	6100 Grandview Dr	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Riverwood Park	15.00	7201 Crittenden Ave	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Roselawn Park	11.00	5000 Roselawn Ave	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Tarkington Park	10.32	45 W 40th St	Washington	Neighborhood Park
Bel Aire Park	14.70	2901 S Mooresville Rd	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Bowman Park	4.46	3600 Auburn Rd	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Centennial & Groff Park	3.61	2300 N Centennial Ave	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Chapel Hill Park	4.97	900 Girls School Rd	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Christina Oaks Park	2.36	4205 W Washington St	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Denver Park	2.45	1024 N Sharon Ave	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Faculty Park	6.17	3307 Ashway Drive	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Gustafson Park	32.32	3110 Moller Rd	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Haughville Park	5.59	520 N Belleview Pl	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Hawthorne Park	4.51	75 N Belleview Pl	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
James Foster Gaines Park	9.92	2100 N Tibbs Ave	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Moreland Park	6.14	2935 N Moreland Ave	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Olin Park	8.00	702 N Olin Ave	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Ridenour Park	5.46	3800 W Creston Drive	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Robey Park	20.44	8801 W 30th Street	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Ross Claypool Park	3.80	2300 Howard St	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Stout Field Park	13.65	3820 W Bradbury Rd	Wayne	Neighborhood Park
Total:	**1230.65**			

MINI PARKS

The mini park is designed to offer green space in those urban locations where yards are limited or in areas not served by any other park. They are established when larger acreage is unavailable, particularly in densely populated, developed areas. The cost of development and maintenance of mini parks is very high relative to the number of people served. Therefore, mini parks are only created when neighborhoods enter into a long-term partnership with Indy Parks.

As part of the community partnership commitment they bring development and maintenance endowment dollars as well as sweat-equity to the project. Land most frequently used for such a facility has been vacant lots scattered throughout the inner city, although newer suburban sub-divisions are setting land aside land for mini parks. Such parks are usually designed for the use by a specific age group (i.e., preschool children, teens or senior citizens) living within the immediate neighborhood. They also address limited or isolated recreation needs. They may be located where dense residential populations limit the availability of open space. Recreation resources include both active and passive use.

SIZE: Mini parks are between 2500 square feet and one acre in size. However, park areas less than 5 acres would technically be considered a mini-park. Anything larger would be considered a neighborhood park.

SERVICE AREA: Several city blocks or less than 1/4 mile in a residential setting. The recommended level of service standard is 0.02 acres per 1,000 population.

CHARACTER: The character may be one of intensive use or aesthetic enjoyment. Low maintenance of these facilities is essential. Area residents should be encouraged to assist in policing and the day-to-day maintenance of this type of park. The primary function of such a park is to provide passive recreation space to those areas of the county where population densities limit the available open space.

LOCATION CRITERIA: Location is determined by the needs of the neighborhood, partnership opportunities and the availability and accessibility of land.

Although demographics and population density play a role in location, the justification for a mini park lies more in servicing a specific recreation need or taking advantage of a unique opportunity. Given the potential variety of mini park activities and locations, services will vary. In a residential setting, however, the service area is usually less than 1/4 mile in radius. Accessibility by way of interconnecting trails, sidewalks, or low-volume residential streets increases use opportunities and therefore is an important consideration

SITE SELECTION GUIDELINES: Servicing a specific recreation need, ease of access from the surrounding area, and linkage to the community pathway system are key concerns when selecting a site.

The site should exhibit the physical characteristics appropriate for its intended uses. It should have well-drained and suitable soils. Usually these sites are fairly level. Vegetation (natural and planted) can be used to enhance its aesthetic qualities rather than impede development. Ideally, it will have adjacency to other park system components, most notably greenways, and the trail system.

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS/RECREATION ACTIVITY: Customer input through the public meeting process needs to be the primary determinant of the development program for this type of park. Although these parks often included elements similar to that of a neighborhood park, there are no specific criteria to guide the development of facilities. Given their size, they are typically not intended to be used for programmed activities.

Parking is typically not required. Site lighting is typically used for security and safety.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS: Mini Parks are not de- signed to accommodate more than very limited recreation use. They are typically able to provide recreation use for one user group such as a playground for pre-school, benches for walkers, landscape and trails for enjoyment of the natural environment or display of artwork for the local neighborhood.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF MINI PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Beville Park	0.25	400 N Beville St	Center	Mini Park
Brightwood Park	0.96	2350 N Olney St	Center	Mini Park
Broadway & 29th Park	0.13	2921 N Park Ave	Center	Mini Park
DeQuincy Park	0.58	1980 N DeQuincy St	Center	Mini Park
Emhardt Park	1.75	200 W Pleasant Run Pkwy SDr	Center	Mini Park
Finch Park	0.89	801 S State Ave	Center	Mini Park
Frank Young Park	0.72	1000 Udell St	Center	Mini Park
Highway Parcel #15	1.28	3100 Rader St	Center	Mini Park
Hot Shot Tot Lot	0.14	948 Elm St	Center	Mini Park
Little Valley Park	1.65	1052 York St	Center	Mini Park
McCarty Triangle Park	2.39	1100 W McCarty St	Center	Mini Park
McCord Park	1.60	3600 Watson Rd	Center	Mini Park
Orange Park	1.07	1900 E Pleasant Run Pkwy NDr	Center	Mini Park
Peace Park	0.08	360 Indiana Ave	Center	Mini Park
Porter Playfield	1.11	404 S St Paul St	Center	Mini Park
Ransom Place	0.28	801 N Indiana Ave	Center	Mini Park
Ringgold Park	0.21	1500 Ringgold St	Center	Mini Park
Sexson Park	0.57	200 Beecher St	Center	Mini Park
Stacy Park	0.25	1503 E Hoyt Ave	Center	Mini Park
Talley Park	2.27	5900 E 38th St	Lawrence	Mini Park
Alice Carter Place	1.84	5700 N Meridian Ave	Washington	Mini Park
Centennial & 20th Park	0.38	1919 N Centennial Ave	Wayne	Mini Park
Patricia Park	1.17	4326 Patricia St	Wayne	Mini Park
Total:	**21.57**			

SPECIAL USE FACILITIES

Special use areas are those spaces and facilities that don't fall within a typical park classification. A major difference between a special use area and other parks is that they usually serve a single purpose whereas typical parks are designed to offer multiple recreation opportunities. Special uses generally fall into three categories:

Historic/Cultural/Social sites—unique local resources offering historical, educational, and cultural opportunities. Examples include historic downtown areas, performing arts parks, arboretums, display gardens, performing arts facilities, indoor theaters, churches, public buildings, and amphitheaters.

Recreation Facilities—specialized or single purpose facilities. Examples include community centers, senior centers, community theaters, hockey arenas, marinas, golf courses and aquatic parks. Frequently community buildings are located in neighborhood and community parks.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities—Examples include tennis centers, softball complexes, sports stadiums, skateboard parks, and bark parks.

SIZE: Depends upon facilities and activities included. Their diverse character makes it impossible to apply acreage standards.

SERVICE AREA: Depends upon facilities and activities included. Typically serves special user groups while a few serve the entire population. The recommended level of service standard is 0.3 acers per 1,000 population.

CHARACTER: Depends upon facilities and activities included.

LOCATION CRITERIA: Recreation need, community interests, the type of facility, and land availability are the primary factors influencing location. Special use facilities are considered as strategically located community-wide facilities rather than as serving a well-defined neighborhood or areas. Accessibility is an important consideration from arterial and collector streets, where feasible. It should also be accessible from the light traffic system as well. The location varies from urban setting to remote areas depending upon user and facility requirements.

SITE SELECTION GUIDELINES: Where feasible, a geographically central site is optimal. Given the variety of potential special uses, no specific standards are defined for site selection. As with all park types, the site should exhibit the physical characteristics appropriate for its use.

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS/RECREATION ACTIVITIES: Since each special use facility is unique, community input through surveys and focus group meetings needs to be the primary determinant of its development program.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS: Special use facilities are designed and developed for a specific identified recreation activity and may draw users from throughout the county to access a particular facility. Examples of special use facilities include the Velodrome, BMX and Skate Park, the Rowing Course at Eagle Creek and Soap Box Derby Hill. While priority for programming is given to the use for which the facility was built, many of these facilities are expanding programming in unique ways to maximize the use of the facility by a variety of user groups.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF SPECIAL USE PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Kennedy-King Park Center	4.11	601 E 17th St	Center	Special Use
Lake Indy - Boating	103.01	2610 White River Pkwy EDr	Center	Special Use
LaShonna Bates Indoor Aquatics Ctr	0.21	1450 S Reisner St	Center	Special Use
Major Taylor-BMX Track	2.19	3649 Cold Spring Rd	Center	Special Use
Major Taylor-Skate Park	1.47	3649 Cold Spring Rd	Center	Special Use
Ranger Station at Nobel Place	1.04	1147 S Madison Ave	Center	Special Use
Riverside - Marina	1.03	3001 White River Pkwy WDr	Center	Special Use
Soap Box Derby Hill	8.44	2010 W 30th St	Center	Special Use
Smock Dog Park	3.78	3910 E County Line Rd	Perry	Special Use
Eagle Creek Dog Park	9.40	5700 N High School Rd	Pike	Special Use
Mayor's Garden	3.27	5425 Reed Road	Pike	Special Use
Indy Island Indoor Aquatics Ctr	0.55	8575 E Raymond St	Warren	Special Use
Indy Urban Acres Park	8.00	7700 E 21st St	Warren	Special Use
Paul Ruster Dog Park	5.12	11300 E Prospect St	Warren	Special Use
Broad Ripple Dog Park	1.88	1550 Broad Ripple Ave	Washington	Special Use
Town Run Trail Park - Mtn Biking	124.50	5325 E 96th St	Washington	Special Use
Iron Skillet - Restaurant	1.42	2489 W 30th St	Wayne	Special Use
Art's Center Canoe Launch	0.65	900 E 67th St	Washington	Special Use
Shadeland Maintenance Facility	2.34	6820 E 32nd St	Warren	Administrative
Boulevard Station	0.33	1050 E 38th St	WASHINGTON	Administrative
Greenways Depot	0.29	902 E 64th St	Washington	Administrative
Total:	**283.03**			

GOLF COURSES

Golf courses provide specialized and land-intensive facilities to an estimated 160,000 Marion County golfers. Indianapolis-Marion County has an abundance of golf courses. The residents have access to 13 public golf courses totaling 1,928 acres. It should be pointed out that the seven surrounding county residents also use Marion County courses.

The trends in the golf industry revolve around environmental aspects of course maintenance. A growing perception is that golf courses are bad for the environment. To enhance the golf industry image, course designers and managers have begun to participate in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for golf courses. This program is designed to lessen environmental impacts to wildlife, vegetation and water resources. At this time Smock and Winding River Golf Courses participate in this program.

SIZE: Par 3 (18 hole) with average length varies be- tween 600 – 2700 yards. Requires a minimum of 50– 60 acres. A 9-hole standard course has an average length of 2250 yards with a minimum of 50 acres. An

18-hole standard has an average length of 6500 yards and is a minimum of 110 acres. The preferred size is 145 to 180 acres.

SERVICE AREA: A 9-hole standard course will accommodate 350 per day and serve a population of +/- 25,000. An 18-hole course will accommodate between 500-550 people per day and serve a population of +/- 50,000. The recommended level of service standard is 2 acres per 1,000 population.

CHARACTER: Ideally the course is designed to include a variety of landforms and water features that enhance the natural lay of the land. Golf courses must be developed and maintained in the highest quality conditions to attract the maximum number of players each day.

LOCATION: Depends on available land and documented need. The golf course may be located in a regional, community or neighborhood park. Ideal driving time is 1/2-1 hour to reach a course.

TYPICAL FACILITIES: Club house, pro-shops, snack bars, banquet rooms, shelters, irrigation, golf cart rentals, cart paths, parking and driving range.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF GOLF COURSES

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Douglass Golf Course	41.26	2901 Dr AJ Brown Ave	Center	Public Golf Course
Riverside Golf Academy	57.78	3702 White River Pkwy WDr	Center	Public Golf Course
Riverside Golf Course	138.37	3600 White River Pkwy WDr	Center	Public Golf Course
Sarah Shank Golf Course	118.25	2901 S Keystone Ave	Center	Public Golf Course
South Grove Golf Course	130.97	1804 Riverside Dr	Center	Public Golf Course
Winding River Golf Course	175.84	8327 Mann Rd	Decatur	Public Golf Course
Sahm Golf Course	167.14	6811 E 91st St	Lawrence	Public Golf Course
Smock Golf Course	159.78	3910 E County Line Rd	Perry	Public Golf Course
Eagle Creek Golf Course	487.37	8802 W 56th St	Pike	Public Golf Course
Pleasant Run Golf Course	102.80	601 N Arlington Ave	Warren	Public Golf Course
Whispering Hills Golf Course	132.30	10751 Brookville Rd	Warren	Public Golf Course
Coffin Golf Course	150.90	2401 N Cold Spring Rd	Wayne	Public Golf Course
Thatcher Golf Course	65.96	4500 W Vermont St	Wayne	Public Golf Course
Total:	**1928.72**			

NATURAL RESOURCE PARK

Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering. These lands consist of:

- Individual sites exhibiting natural resources
- Lands that are unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential
- Parcels with steep slopes and natural vegetation, drainage ways and ravines, surface water management areas (man-made ponding areas), and utility easements
- Protected lands, such as wetlands/lowlands and shorelines along waterways, lakes, and ponds

The intent of the Natural Resource Parks is to enhance the livability and character of a community by preserving as many of its natural amenities as possible

Examples of these types of resources include:

- Geologic features
- Functioning ecosystem biodiversity maintenance areas aquifer recharge areas watershed
- Protected habitat areas for rare, threatened or endangered species
- Forests/woodlands
- Wildlife habitat areas/corridors open space

Interlinking the diversity of parks, greenways, trails, and natural resource areas is what defines the concept of a city park. Integration of the human element with that of the natural environment that surrounds them enhances the overall experience.

LOCATION CRITERIA: Resource availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining location.

SIZE CRITERIA: As with location, resource availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining size. Through an array of creative real estate strategies, many acres can be preserved as community open lands. Often blighted areas such as abandoned waterfront sites, industrial sites, quarries, and abandoned landfills, have the potential to be converted from community liabilities to community open land resources. Reclaimed wetlands and wetland banks fall into this category.

SERVICE AREA: The recommended level of service standard is 1 acre per 1,000 population.

SITE SELECTION GUIDELINES: Resource quality is the primary determinant in site selection. Sites that exhibit unique natural resources or remnant landscapes of the region need to be considered a high priority. Many of these areas serve as recreation connectors and habitat corridors.

Out lots and un-developable/protected lands should be selected on the basis of enhancing the character of the community, buffering, and providing linkages with other park components protecting natural systems and processes.

DEVELOPMENT PARAMETERS/RECREATION ACTIVITY: Although natural resource areas are resource rather than user based, they can provide some passive recreation opportunities such as nature study and bird watching. They can also function as greenways. Ideally, development is kept to a level that preserves the integrity of the resource.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Rev. Charles R. Williams Park	7.46	3252 Sutherland Ave	Center	Natural Resource Area
Kitley & Troy Park	60.00	11400 E Troy Ave	Warren	Natural Resource Area
Lake Sullivan	29.10	3649 Cold Spring Rd	Center	Natural Resource Area
Watson Road Bird Preserve	4.00	900 Watson Rd	Center	Natural Resource Area
Dollar Hide Creek Park	16.97	5398 Milhouse Rd	Decatur	Natural Resource Area
Griffin Woods	10.43	7425 Mendenhall Rd	Decatur	Natural Resource Area
Seerley Creek Park	17.80	3415 S Lynhurst Dr	Decatur	Natural Resource Area
Fall Creek Pkwy Preserve	12.11	5770 Fall Creek Pkwy NDr	Lawrence	Natural Resource Area
Fall Creek Trail at Geist Dam	64.42	10053 Fall Creek Rd	Lawrence	Natural Resource Area
Franklin & 38th Park	12.00	8150 E 38th St	Lawrence	Natural Resource Area
Skiles Test Nature Park	80.91	6828 Fall Creek Rd	Lawrence	Natural Resource Area
Upper Fall Creek Loop Trail	62.56	9545 Fall Creek Rd	Lawrence	Natural Resource Area
Woolens Gardens	43.02	6800 E Fall Creek Pkwy NDr	Lawrence	Natural Resource Area
Glenns Valley Nature Park	29.95	8015 Bluff Rd	Perry	Natural Resource Area
Gray Park	7.76	Southport Rd & Sherman Dr	Perry	Natural Resource Area
Grassy Creek Wood Conservation Area	20.69	10505 Prospect St	Warren	Natural Resource Area
Iron Gate Conservation Area	11.24	545 Crossfield Dr	Warren	Natural Resource Area
Kitley Woods	3.93	2600 S Kitley Rd	Warren	Natural Resource Area
Lappin Way	18.53	10700 E 21st St	Warren	Natural Resource Area
Stable Chase Nature Sanctuary	16.07	11525 Prospect Street	Warren	Natural Resource Area
Blickman Trail	13.02	6399 N Meridian St	Washington	Natural Resource Area
Fox Hill Manor	9.20	5900 Woodside Dr	Washington	Natural Resource Area
Friedman Park	17.84	5670 Stonehill Dr	Washington	Natural Resource Area
Marott Park	99.22	7350 N College Ave	Washington	Natural Resource Area
North Broad Ripple Park	0.29	6660 Riverfront Ave	Washington	Natural Resource Area
Ravenswood Overlook Park	1.68	7301 Ravenswood Blvd	Washington	Natural Resource Area
Stamm Park	3.45	1616 E 71st St	Washington	Natural Resource Area
Cloverleaf Conservation Area	19.15	8355 Rockville Rd	Wayne	Natural Resource Area
Wright's Fields	38.91	1450 S Carroll Rd	Warren	Natural Resource Areas
Total:	**731.71**			

HISTORICAL, MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS AND STATE PARKS

Historical, monuments, memorials and state parks represent significant lands in the City of Indianapolis. These parks serve a unique role in the city by preserving the monuments and memorials, providing programmed historic interpretation, attracting tourists and offering passive recreation opportunities such as trails. Examples vary from the Confederate POW Memorial to the Fall Creek and Pleasant Run Greenways, as well as Fort Harrison State Park.

SIZE: The size of this area is dependent on an appropriate scale of land acreage to communicate the memorial experience.

SERVICE AREA: The service area varies, according to the subject matter of the historical, monument, memorial or state park. The recommended level of service standard is 2 acre per 1,000 population.

CHARACTER: The character of the historical, monument, memorial or state park area also varies depending on the feature and design. Active, or structured recreation activities would probably be inappropriate for most memorial areas, considering they are built responses to a loss of something that was dear to someone or some group.

LOCATION: The location also varies depending on the historical, monument, memorial or state park subject matter, and the instructions or requests of a memorial partner.

TYPICAL FACILITIES: Typical facilities vary per location.

EXISTING INVENTORY OF HISTORICAL, MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS AND STATE PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Burdsal Parkway Esplinades	6.55	1600 Burdsal Pkwy	Center	Historic Feature
Conservatory & Sunken Gardens	0.00	2505 Conservatory Dr	Center	Historic Feature
Garfield Pagoda	0.00	2350 Pagoda Dr	Center	Historic Feature
George E. Kessler Park	1.16	2501 Pennsylvania St	Center	Historic Feature
Woodruff Place Esplinades	3.87	735 Woodruff Place EDr	Center	Historic Feature
Irvington Circle	0.10	236 S Audubon Rd	Warren	Historic Feature
Ruins at Holliday Park	0.00	6363 Spring Mill Rd	Washington	Historic Feature
Brookside Family Center	0.38	3500 Brookside Pkwy SDr	Center	Historic Feature
Greenway - Fall Creek	4.19	Capital to Illinois	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	4.18	Illinois to Meridian	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	5.94	Meridian to Delaware	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	5.33	Delaware to Central	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	17.65	320 Fall Creek Blvd	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	3.82	510 Fall Creek Blvd	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	10.39	615 E Fall Creek Pkwy NDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	29.83	34th St & Fall Creek Pkwy NDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	0.61	South of Pennsy Corridor	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	0.81	Brookville Rd to Pleasant Run Pkwy	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	27.79	1705 E Pleasant Run Pkwy NDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	1.11	4950 E Pleasant Run Pkwy NDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	9.90	4745 E Pleasant Run Pkwy NDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	24.88	750 E Pleasant Run Pkwy SDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	31.76	110 E Pleasant Run Pkwy SDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	7.16	16th St to Lake Indy	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	1.29	Lake Indy to 30th St	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	0.87	I-65 to 28th St Trailhead	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	32.90	3650 White River Pkwy WDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	42.28	3250 White River Pkwy WDr	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	1.57	30th St to I-65	Center	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	10.99	Emerson Ave to Kessler Blvd	Lawrence	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	73.09	6250 E Fall Creek Pkwy NDr	Lawrence	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Ellenberger	4.33	850 Ellenberger Pkwy E Dr	Warren	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	4.96	5765 E Pleasant Run Pkwy SDr	Warren	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Pleasant Run	11.41	5250 E Pleasant Run Pkwy SDr	Warren	Historic Park and Bouleva
Crows Nest Entrance	0.50	5935 Springmill Rd	Washington	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	60.68	46th St to DeQuincy St	Washington	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	0.42	Millersville to IWC	Washington	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	0.18	38th St to 39th St	Washington	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - Fall Creek	23.85	SR 37 to 46th St	Washington	Historic Park and Bouleva
Greenway - White River	10.82	3950 White River Pkwy WDr	Washington	Historic Park and Bouleva
General Lawton Monument	0.00	2505 Conservatory Dr	Center	Monument/Memorial
Landmark for Peace Memorial	0.00	1702 N Broadway St	Center	Monument/Memorial
Brookside Memorial Grove	3.52	3450 Brookside Pkwy NDr	Center	Monument/Memorial
Brown's Corner	3.22	5050 E Washington St	Center	Monument/Memorial
Cancer Survivors Park	1.10	985 Indiana Ave	Center	Monument/Memorial
City Market Plaza	1.05	222 E Market St	Center	Monument/Memorial
Garfield Memorial Grove	6.26	2235 Pagoda Dr	Center	Monument/Memorial
Presidential Place	0.51	301 E Washington St	Center	Monument/Memorial
Kin Hubbard Memorial	0.33	5100 E New York St	Warren	Monument/Memorial
Municipal Gardens Memorial Grove	3.76	2000 Cold Spring Rd	Wayne	Monument/Memorial
Confederate POW Memorial	0.00	2475 Pagoda Dr	Center	Monument/Memorial
Taggert Memorial	0.00	1800 Burdsal Pkwy	Center	Monument/Memorial
Total:	**497.30**			

SPORTS COMPLEX PARKS

Sports complex parks can be developed to provide single focused or multi-focused activities and can include indoor or outdoor facilities to serve the needs of both youth and adults. Lighting outdoor fields tend to maximize value and productivity of the complex. Agencies developing athletic and recreation facilities focus on meeting the needs of residents while also attracting sport tournaments for economic purposes to the community. Sport field design includes appropriate field distances for each sport's governing body and support amenities designed to produce revenue to offset operational costs. Athletic and recreation facilities include enhanced amenities such as artificial turf, multipurpose field benches and bleachers, scoreboards, amplified sound, scorer's booths, etc. Kuntz Stadium and Chuck Klein Sports Complex are examples of sports complex parks.

SIZE: Preferably 40 or more acres for stand-alone complexes.

SERVICE AREA: Determined by community demand. The recommended level of service standard is 0.2 acres per 1,000 population.

SITE SELECTION: Stand-alone sports complexes are strategically located on or near arterial streets. Refer to community or regional park sections if a sport complex located within a park. Preference is streets on four sides, or three sides with school or municipal use on fourth side.

AMENITIES: Four to sixteen fields or sports courts in one setting; public restrooms, ample parking, turf types appropriate for the facility and anticipated usage, and field lighting. Amenities are ADA compliant.

PROGRAM OFFERINGS: Focus on active programming of all amenities

EXISTING INVENTORY OF SPORTS COMPLEXES PARKS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Frank and Judy O'Bannon Soccer Fld.	10.50	1001 E 16th Street	Center	Sports Complex
Kuntz Soccer & Sports Complex	14.97	1502 W 16th St	Center	Sports Complex
Indianapolis World Sports Park	40.88	1313 S Post Rd	Warren	Sports Complex
Warren Township Little League	23.69	11850 E Brookville Rd	Warren	Sports Complex
Central Green	8.40	150 Steeples Blvd	Wayne	Sports Complex
Chuck Klein Sports Complex	21.80	4702 Rockville Rd	Wayne	Sports Complex
Major Taylor Sports Complex	41.38	3700 Cold Spring Rd	Wayne	Sports Complex
Total:	**161.62**			

GREENWAYS/BOULEVARD

Greenways include natural and built corridors that typically support trail-oriented activities, such as walking, jogging, biking, skating, etc. Greenways function as linear parks by linking features together and providing green buffers. Greenways may be located along abandoned railroad lines, transportation or utility rights-of-way, riparian corridors, or elongated natural areas and defined topographical changes. Greenways and linear parks may be of various lengths and widths, and these corridors typically support facilities such as viewing areas, picnic tables, and trailheads. Greenways and trails between key destinations can help create more tightly-knit communities, provide opportunities for non-motorized transportation, and link to the regional trail system. The Pennsy Trail Greenway is an example.

Size: Typically, unencumbered land at least 30 feet wide. It may include a trail to support walk, bike, run, equestrian type activities. Trails incorporate signage to designate where a user is located and where the trials connect in the city.

SITE SELECTION: Location is consistent with the approved Greenways Master Plan

SERVICE AREA: The recommended level of service standard is 0.5 acres per 1,000 population.

AMENITIES: Parking and restrooms at major trailheads. May include small parks along the trail

SIGNAGE: Mileage markers at half mile intervals. Interpretive kiosks as deemed appropriate

PROGRAMMING OFFERINGS: Connectivity to parks or other community attractions and facilities is desirable

EXISTING INVENTORY OF GREENWAYS

Site Name	Acres	Street Address	Township	Classification
Pennsy Trail	0.26	65 S. Shortridge Rd	Warren	Greenway
Greenway - Little Buck Creek	1.15	6537 Redland Way	Perry	Greenway
Greenway - Little Buck Creek	0.72	6708 S Harding	Perry	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	5.99		Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	5.75		Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	3.44		Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	2.33		Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	2.08	115 S Bonar Ave	Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	1.45	Parcel ID 7035783	Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	2.53	Parcel ID 7037105	Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	3.05	Parcel ID 7039745	Warren	Greenway
Pennsy Trail	1.35	131 S. Mitthoefer Rd	Warren	Greenway
Total:	**30.10**			

RECREATION CENTERS

Recreation centers are intended to provide indoor leisure facilities and programs at a reasonable cost. Recreation centers also serve as meeting facilities for local social gatherings and other public events. Recreation centers are designed to be a hub of recreation activity.

SIZE: Depends on nature of facility and service area.

SERVICE AREA: The recommended level of service standard is 2 square feet per person.

CHARACTER: Ideally provides for intensive use, offering leisure facilities and programs to all age groups. Organized activities must be tailored to the needs of the service area and supervised by professionally trained personnel.

LOCATION: Regional or Community Parks.

TYPICAL FACILITIES:

- Gym with showers and lockers
- Quiet meeting rooms and classrooms
- Swimming pool
- Kitchenette facilities
- Exercise room
- Game room
- Library or distance learning facilities

PROGRAM OFFERINGS: Recreation centers often consist of gyms, fitness and weight rooms, class rooms, computer labs, game rooms, libraries, and multi-use areas that can provide a wide diversity of program opportunities for a large volume of users. Some recreation centers may also offer indoor or outdoor aquatic facilities. Recreation centers have professional recreation management and programming staff that provide direct programming. Partnering with other agencies, neighborhood groups, faith-based organizations, and schools are beneficial to maximize program services available to the public.

AQUATIC CENTERS / OUTDOOR SWIMMING POOLS

Americans love to swim and the residents of Indianapolis are no exception. A variety of surveys and studies conducted throughout the nation have confirmed the importance of swimming as a leisure activity. The trend today is to develop family aquatic centers that offer families, adults, children, and the physically challenged the opportunity to become active participants at our swimming facilities. Indy Parks currently manages 22 pools that are open to the public.

SIZE: Depends on nature of facility and service area.

SERVICE AREA: Depends on nature of facility and service area. A service area with a minimum population of 25,000 has been used as a standard for traditional type pools. A family aquatic center may serve a population of 40,000 to 50,000. The recommended level of service standard is 1 site per 40,000 population.

CHARACTER: It is best to provide a variety of water-related recreation opportunities. Sun angles, site visibility, turf and landscape areas; large deck surfaces, adequate parking, and connections to other park and school facilities are important considerations.

LOCATION: Depends on nature of facility and service area. Typically found in regional and community parks. Easy accessibility is important, yet visually buffered from residential areas.

TYPICAL FACILITIES: Depends on nature of facility, zero depth pool, water playground, water flume slide, open and lap swimming lanes, a lazy river, sunny and shady areas, and concession stand.

4.2.2 LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Level of Service Standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support investment decisions related to parks, facilities, and amenities. Level of Service Standards can and will change over time as the program lifecycles change and demographics of a community change.

Park Facility Standards were evaluated using a combination of resources. These resources included: National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines, recreation activity participation rates reported by the Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2014 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Participation as it applies to activities that occur in the United States and the Indianapolis area, community and stakeholder input, findings from the prioritized needs assessment report and general observations. This information allowed standards to be customized for Indy Parks.

These standards should be viewed as a conservative guide for future planning purposes. The standards are to be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community. By applying these facility standards to the City of Indianapolis, gaps and surpluses in park and facility/amenity types are identified.

The Level of Service Standards help to determine community unmet needs based on the statistically-valid needs assessment survey, NRPA National Standards, and best practices in Midwest communities of similar size and nature.

Indianapolis-Marion County Park and Recreation Level of Service Standards

PARKS:	2014 Inventory - Developed Facilities																				2014 Facility Standards			2019 Facility Standards		
Park Type	Indy Parks Inventory	Lawrence	Beech Grove	Southport	Speedway	Department of Metropolitan Development	INDOT	Department of Public Works	IWC	State	YMCA	Boys & Girls Club	Other	Total Inventory	Current Service Level based upon population			Recommended Service Levels; Revised for Local Service Area			Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed		Meet Standard/ Need Exists	Additional Facilities/ Amenities Needed	
Mini Parks	21.57	0.39												21.96	0.02	acres per	1,000	0.02	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
Neighborhood Parks	1,230.65	98.85	51.20	3.78	31.94									1,416.42	1.55	acres per	1,000	1.75	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	185	Acre(s)	Need Exists	238	Acre(s)
Community Parks	702.44	145.00	11.54											858.98	0.94	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	972	Acre(s)	Need Exists	1,032	Acre(s)
Regional Parks	5,336.00													5,336.00	5.83	acres per	1,000	6.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	156	Acre(s)	Need Exists	336	Acre(s)
Special Use Parks	283.03					15.95		43.01					0.39	342.38	0.37	acres per	1,000	0.30	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
Sports Complex	161.62													161.62	0.18	acres per	1,000	0.20	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	21	Acre(s)	Need Exists	27	Acre(s)
Golf Courses	1,928.72													1,928.72	2.11	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
Natural Resource Area	731.71	34.65											7.22	773.58	0.85	acres per	1,000	1.00	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	142	Acre(s)	Need Exists	172	Acre(s)
Historical, Monuments, Memorials, State Parks	497.30									1,807.38				2,304.68	2.52	acres per	1,000	2.00	acres per	1,000	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)	Meets Standard	-	Acre(s)
Greenway/Boulevard	30.10					73.07	3.27	9.13	22.06				130.85	268.48	0.29	acres per	1,000	0.50	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	189	Acre(s)	Need Exists	204	Acre(s)
Total Park Acres	10,923.14	278.89	62.74	3.78	31.94	89.02	3.27	52.14	22.06	1,807.38	-	-	138.46	13,412.82	14.65	acres per	1,000	15.77	acres per	1,000	Need Exists	1,022	Acre(s)	Need Exists	1,495	Acre(s)
OUTDOOR AMENITIES:																										
Picnic Shelters	154.00	1.00	5.00	1.00	5.00					4.00				170.00	1.00	site per	5,384	1.00	site per	4,500	Need Exists	33	Sites(s)	Need Exists	40	Sites(s)
Practice Multi-Use Fields (Soccer, Football, Lacrosse, Rugby)	73.00	22.00								5.00	3.00		1.00	104.00	1.00	field per	8,801	1.00	field per	7,000	Need Exists	27	Field(s)	Need Exists	31	Field(s)
Competitive Soccer, Football, and Cricket Fields	73.00													73.00	1.00	field per	12,539	1.00	field per	10,000	Need Exists	19	Field(s)	Need Exists	22	Field(s)
Youth Ball Fields	87.00	22.00	5.00	1.00	4.00						2.00		1.00	122.00	1.00	field per	7,503	1.00	field per	6,000	Need Exists	31	Field(s)	Need Exists	36	Field(s)
Adult Ball Fields	17.00													17.00	1.00	field per	53,843	1.00	field per	15,000	Need Exists	44	Field(s)	Need Exists	46	Field(s)
Basketball Courts (Full and Half Courts)	96.00			1.00						1.00	1.00			99.00	1.00	court per	9,246	1.00	court per	7,000	Need Exists	32	Court(s)	Need Exists	36	Court(s)
Tennis Courts (Lighted and Non-Lighted) & Pickleball Courts	111.00				2.00									113.00	1.00	court per	8,100	1.00	court per	7,000	Need Exists	18	Court(s)	Need Exists	22	Court(s)
Playgrounds	125.00	6.00	2.00	1.00	2.00								1.00	137.00	1.00	site per	6,681	1.00	site per	4,500	Need Exists	66	Site(s)	Need Exists	73	Site(s)
Sand Volleyball	12.00		1.00		1.00									14.00	1.00	site per	65,381	1.00	site per	40,000	Need Exists	9	Site(s)	Need Exists	10	Site(s)
Disc Golf Course	4.00													4.00	1.00	site per	228,833	1.00	site per	75,000	Need Exists	8	Site(s)	Need Exists	9	Site(s)
Off Leash Dog Parks	4.00	1.00	1.00							1.00				7.00	1.00	site per	130,762	1.00	site per	60,000	Need Exists	8	Site(s)	Need Exists	9	Site(s)
Skate Park	1.00	1.00												2.00	1.00	site per	457,666	1.00	site per	100,000	Need Exists	7	Site(s)	Need Exists	7	Site(s)
Trails (Miles Loop)	24.36				1.25					0.70			14.10	40.41	0.04	miles per	1,000	0.06	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	15	Mile(s)	Need Exists	16	Mile(s)
Trails (Miles Greenways)	43.70					10.20	7.20	19.30	19.20					99.60	0.11	miles per	1,000	0.15	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	38	Mile(s)	Need Exists	42	Mile(s)
Trails (Miles Soft Surfaces)	67.31									9.10				76.41	0.08	miles per	1,000	0.10	miles per	1,000	Need Exists	15	Mile(s)	Need Exists	18	Mile(s)
Spraypads	20.00													20.00	1.00	site per	45,767	1.00	site per	35,000	Need Exists	6	Site(s)	Need Exists	7	Site(s)
Outdoor Pools	15.00										5.00		1.00	21.00	1.00	site per	43,587.19	1.00	site per	40,000	Need Exists	2	Site(s)	Need Exists	3	Site(s)
INDOOR AMENITIES:																										
Recreation/Aquatic Centers (Square Feet)	563,548.00										309,482.00	97,020.00	160,000.00	1,130,050.00	1.23	SF per	person	2.00	SF per	person	Need Exists	700,612	Square Feet	Need Exists	760,600	Square Feet

2014 Estimated Population	915,331
2019 Estimated Population	945,325

Notes:

4.3 SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS/EQUITY MAPPING

Service area maps (equity maps) and standards assist staff and key leadership when: assessing where services are offered; determining equitable service distribution and delivery across the Indy Parks service area; the effectiveness of the service as it compares to the demographic densities.

In addition, guideline reviews with reference to population enables Indy Parks to assess gaps in services and overlaps with respect to a specific facility or amenity. This examination allows the department to make appropriate capital improvement/development decisions based upon need for a system as a whole and the consequences that may have on a specific area. Service area maps were developed for each of the following major assets:

- Baseball Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Community Parks
- Dog Parks
- Natural Resource Areas
- Neighborhood Parks
- Outdoor Pools
- Picnic Shelters
- Playgrounds
- Recreation Centers
- Regional Parks
- Skate Parks
- Soccer / Football / Cricket Fields
- Softball Fields
- Sports Complex
- Spray Pads
- Tennis Courts
- Unimproved Multi Use Fields

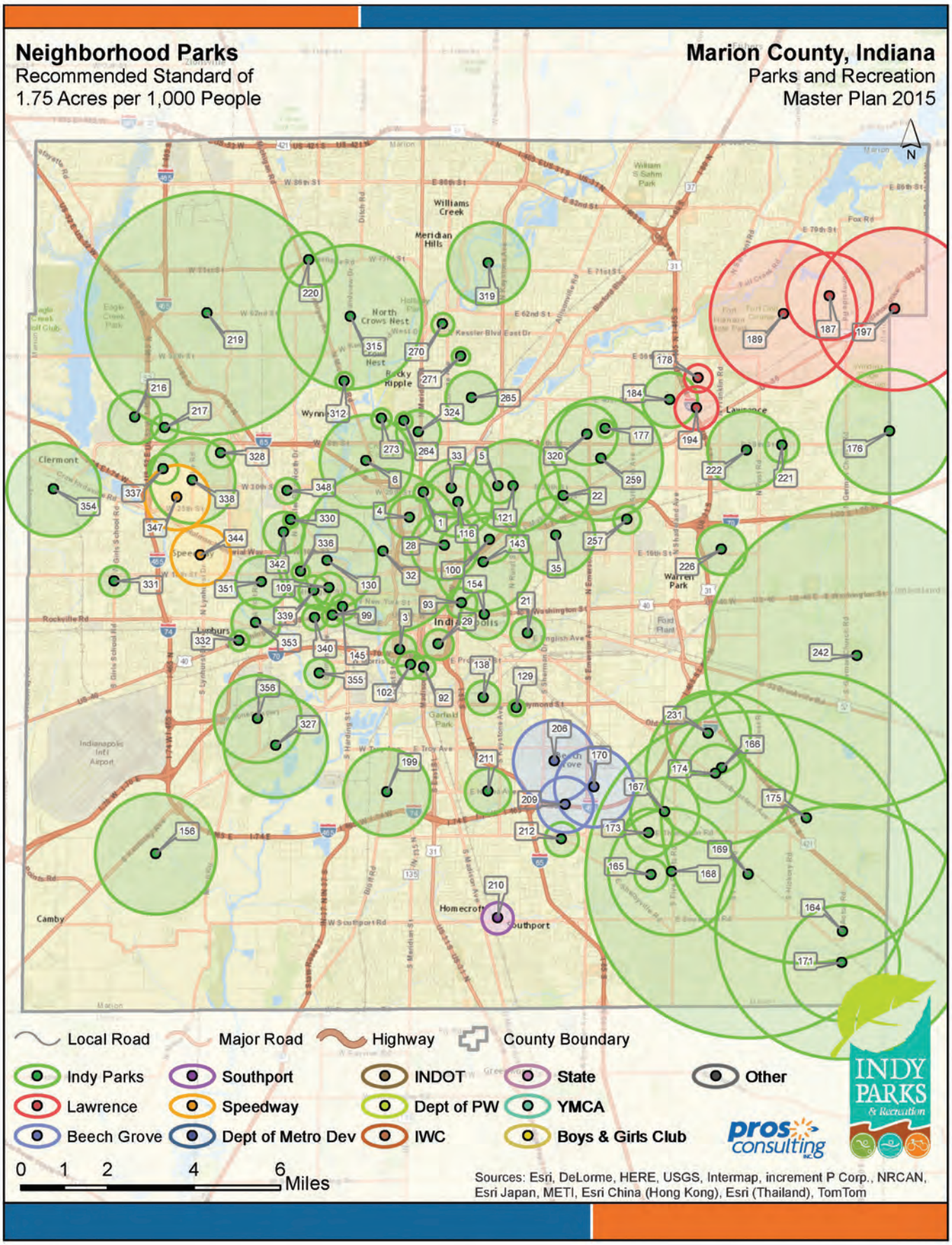
The 2014 estimated population and projected 2019 population as reported by Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI) is the source used for the development of the standard. Estimated population for 2014 is 915,331; 2019 population is projected at 945,325.

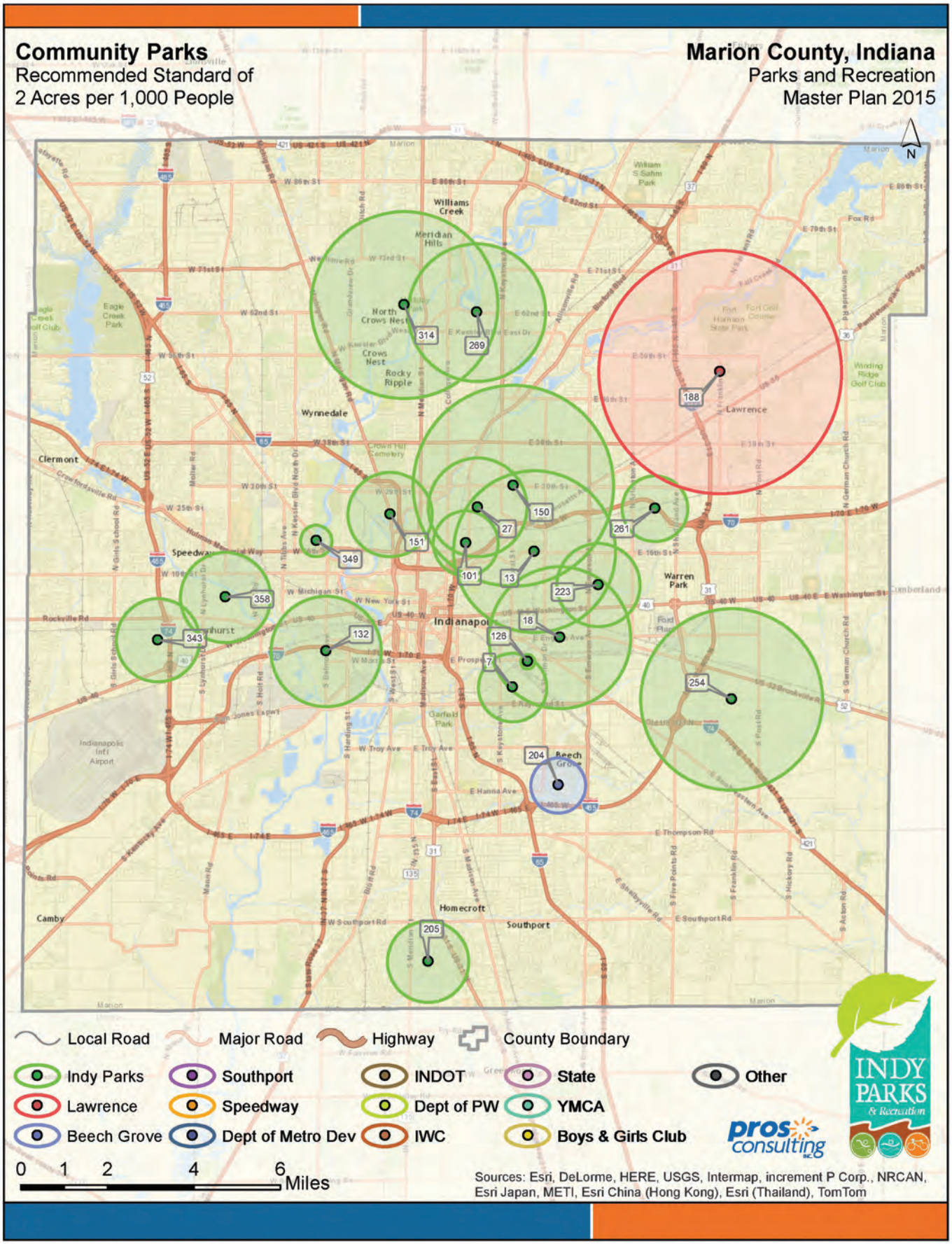
The shaded areas in the equity maps indicate the service level (e.g. the population being served by that park type/amenity) as outlined in the facility/amenity levels of service matrix. Thus, the central point inside the ring indicates the location of the facility or amenity. The ring extends to how far that amenity serves the population. This is based on the number of amenities at that location, the levels of established service standards, and the density of the population.

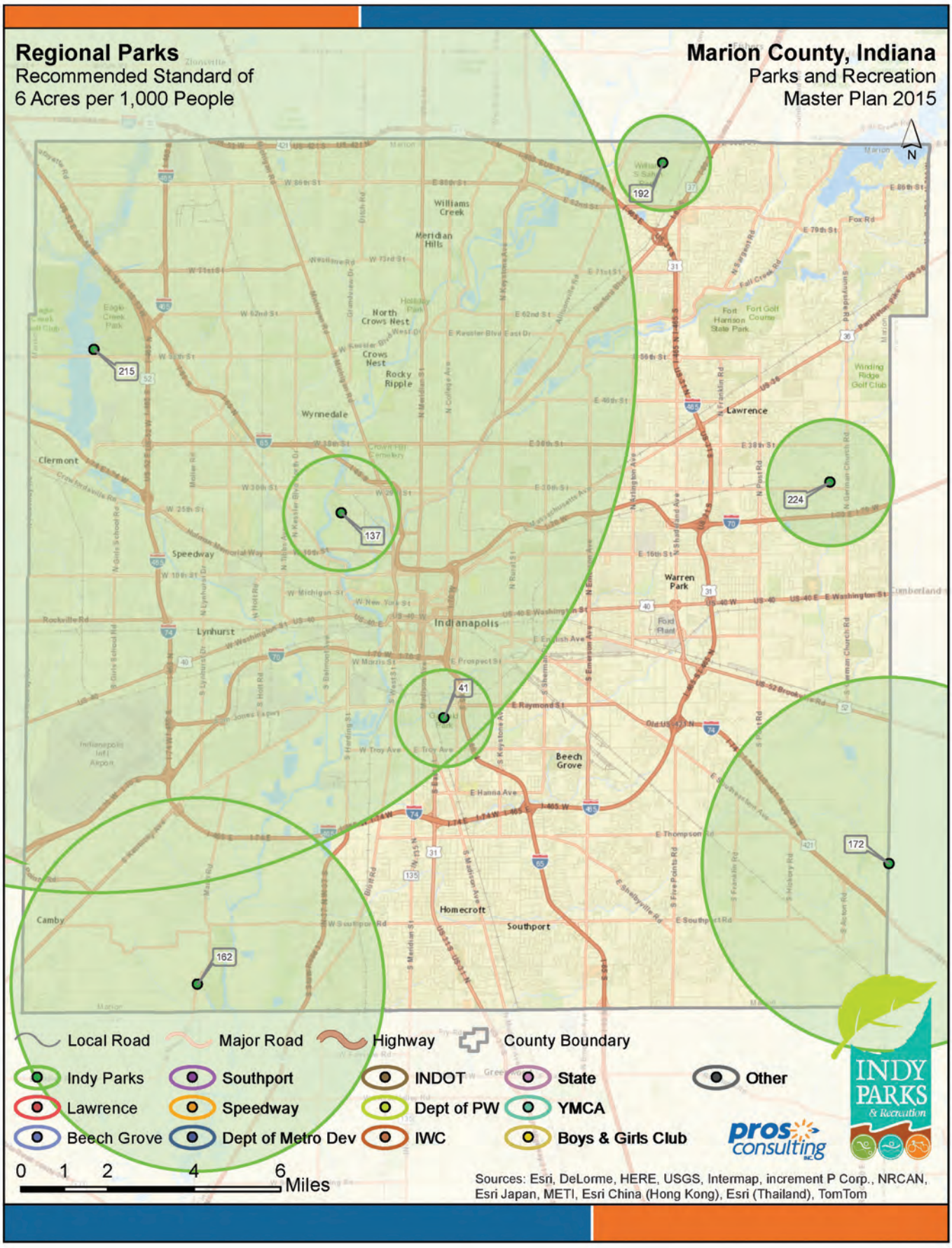
The following number key depicts the park name by number on each map.

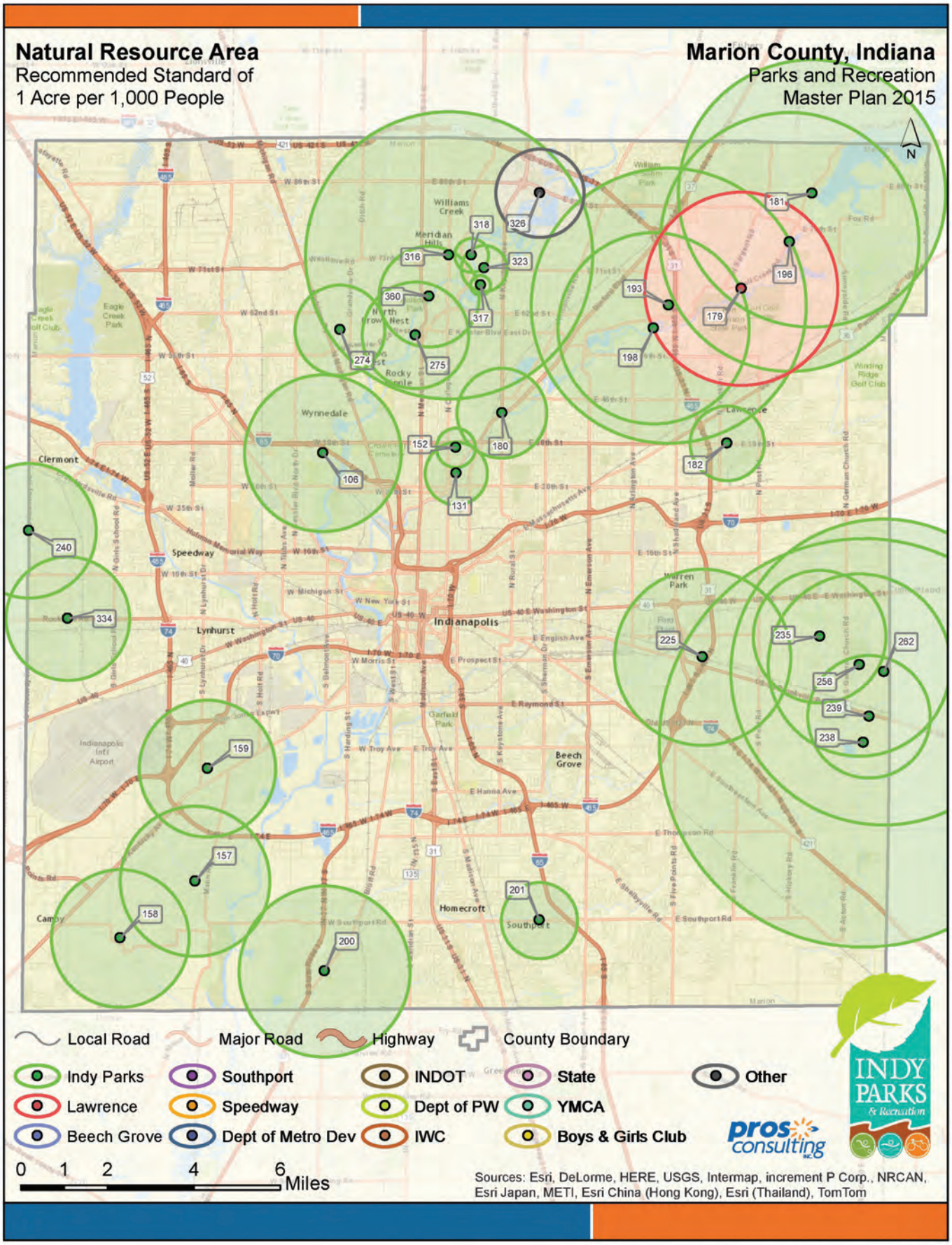
Number Key for Equity Maps

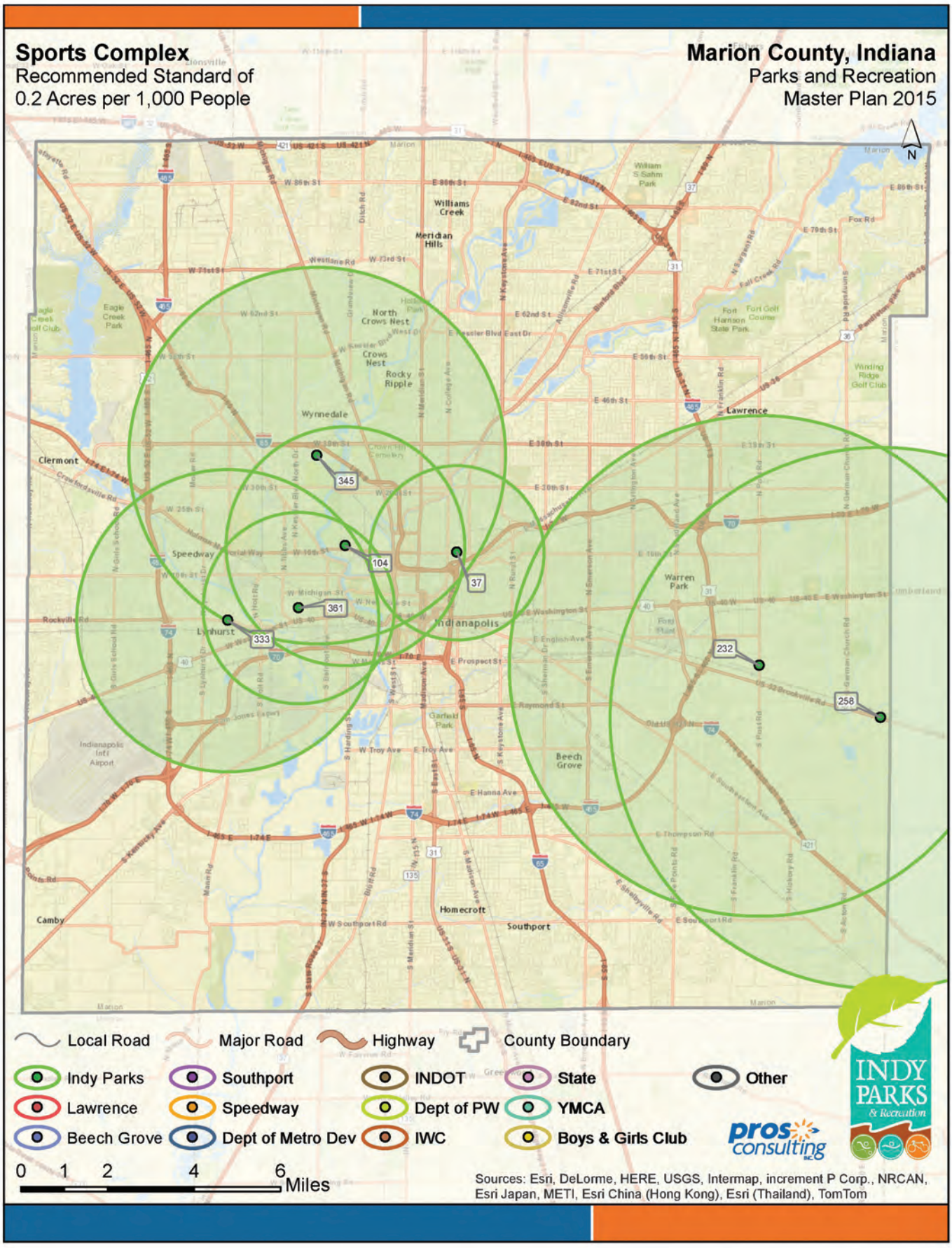
Map #	Site Name
1	Al E. Polin Park
2	American Legion Mall
3	Babe Denny Park
4	Barton Park
5	Beckwith Memorial Park
6	Bertha Ross Park
7	Bethel Park
7	Bethel Park (Bath House)
7	Bethel Park (family Center)
8	Beville Park
9	Brightwood Park
10	Broadway & 29th Park
11	Brookside Family Center
11	Brookside Park (Family Center)
12	Brookside Memorial Grove
12	Brookside Park (Bath House)
13	Brookside Park
14	Brown's Corner
15	Burdsal Parkway Esplinades
16	Canal Walk
17	Cancer Survivors Park
18	Christian Park
18	Christian Park (Family Center)
20	City Market Plaza
21	Clayton & LaSalle Park
22	Colorado & 29th Park
25	DeQuincy Park
26	Douglass Golf Course
27	Douglass Park
27	Douglass Park (Bath House)
27	Douglass Park (Family Center)
28	Dr Martin Luther King Jr Park
28	Dr. Martin Luther King Park (Bath House
28	Dr. Martin Luther King Park (Family Cent
29	Edna Balz Lacy Park
30	Eiteljorg Museum
31	Emhardt Park
32	Graham E Martin Park
33	Fall Creek & 30th Park
34	Finch Park
35	Forest Manor Park
37	Frank and Judy O'Bannon Soccer Fld.
38	Frank Young Park
39	Garfield Memorial Grove
41	Garfield Park
41	Garfield Park (Art Center)
41	Garfield Park (Conservatory)
41	Garfield Park (Family Center + bath)
43	George E. Kessler Park
52	Greenway - Fall Creek
52	Greenway - Fall Creek
52	Greenway - Fall Creek
57	Greenway - IWC Canal Towpath
76	Greenway - Pleasant Run
81	Greenway - White River
88	Greenway - White River
92	Hendricks Park
93	Highland Park
94	Highway Parcel #15
95	Hot Shot Tot Lot
96	IMAX Theatre
97	Indiana War Memorial
98	Indianapolis Zoo
99	Indianola Park
100	John Ed Park
101	JTV Hill
101	JTV Hill Park
102	Kelly Park
103	Kennedy-King Park Center
104	Kuntz Soccer & Sports Complex
104	Kuntz Soccer Stadium (bleachers)
104	Kuntz Soccer Stadium (concession)
104	Kuntz Soccer Stadium (offices)
105	Lake Indy - Boating
106	Lake Sullivan
108	LaShona Bates Aquatics Center
108	LaShonna Bates Indoor Aquatics Ctr
109	Lentz Park
110	Little Valley Park
111	Major Taylor-BMX Track
112	Major Taylor-Skate Park
113	McCarty Triangle Park
114	McCord Park
115	Military Park
116	Monon Acres Park
117	Monument Circle
118	Nat'l Institute for Fitness &
119	NCAA HQ
120	Orange Park
121	Oscar Charleston Park
122	Peace Park
123	Pogues Run Art and Nature Park
124	Porter Playfield
125	Presidential Place
126	Pride Park
127	Ranger Station at Nobel Place
128	Ransom Place
129	Red Maple
130	Rev Mozel Sanders Park
131	Rev. Charles R. Williams Park
132	Rhodius Park
132	Rhodius Park (Bath House)
132	Rhodius Park (Family Center)
133	Ringgold Park
134	Riverside - Marina
135	Riverside Golf Academy
136	Riverside Golf Course
137	Riverside Park
137	Riverside Park (Family Center + Bath
138	Sandorf Park
139	Sarah Shank Golf Course
140	Sexson Park
141	Soap Box Derby Hill
142	South Grove Golf Course
143	Spades Park
144	Stacy Park
145	Stringtown Park
147	University Park
148	Veteran's Memorial Plaza
149	Victory Field (Indians Baseball)
150	Washington Park
150	Washington Park Family Center
151	Watkins Family Center
151	Watkins Park
152	Watson Road Bird Preserve
153	White River State Park HQ
154	Willard Park
154	Willard Park (Bath House)
155	Woodruff Place Esplinades
156	Carson Park
157	Dollar Hide Creek Park
158	Griffin Woods
159	Seerley Creek Park
162	Southwestway Park
163	Winding River Golf Course
164	Acton Park
165	Basswood Park
166	Century Park
167	Copper Grove
168	Five Points & Edgewood Park
169	Franklin Township Community Park
170	Hornet Park
171	Retherford Park
172	Southeastway Park
173	Thompson Park
174	Wildwood Park
175	Wolf Run Park
176	Carroll Road & 42nd Street Park
177	Doris Cowherd Park
178	Explorer Park
179	Fall Creek Park
180	Fall Creek Pkwy Preserve
181	Fall Creek Trail at Geist Dam
182	Franklin & 38th Park
183	Ft Harrison State Park
184	Gardner Park
187	Jen Air Park & Dog Park
188	Lawrence Community Park
189	Lee Road Park
190	Oaklandon Play Park
191	Sahm Golf Course
192	Sahm Park
192	Sahm Park (Aquatic Concession bldg)
192	Sahm Park (Bath House)
192	Sahm Park (Corporate Shelter)
193	Skiles Test Nature Park
194	Soccer Park
195	Talley Park
196	Upper Fall Creek Loop Trail
197	Veteran's Park
198	Woolens Gardens
199	Bluff Park
200	Glenns Valley Nature Park
201	Gray Park
202	Greenway - Little Buck Creek
204	Hartman Park
205	Perry Park
206	Sarah Bolton Park
207	Smock Dog Park
208	Smock Golf Course
209	South Grove Park (Don Challis Park)
210	Southport Park
211	Southside Park
212	Tolin-Akeman Park
213	Eagle Creek Dog Park
214	Eagle Creek Golf Course
215	Eagle Creek Park
215	Eagle Creek Park (Beach Bath House)
215	Eagle Creek Park (Earth Discovery Cent
215	Eagle Creek Park (EELLs Bldg)
215	Eagle Creek Park (Marina Retreat)
215	Eagle Creek Park (Ornithology Center)
215	Eagle Creek Park (Park Office)
215	Eagle Creek Park (Peace Learning Cent
215	Eagle Creek Park (Rowing Center)
215	Earth Discovery Center - Eagle Creek Pa
215	Greenway - Eagle Creek
216	Eagle Highlands Neighborhood P
217	Gateway West Park
218	Mayor's Garden
219	Northwestway Park
219	Northwestway Park (Bath House)
220	WISH Park
221	Bellamy Park
222	Dubarry Park
223	Ellenberger Park
223	Ellenberger Park (Center + Bath)
224	Grassy Creek Regional Park
225	Grassy Creek Wood Conservation Area
226	Greene Park
227	Greenway - Ellenberger
231	Hanover North Park
232	Indianapolis World Sports Park
232	World Sports Park
233	Indy Island Indoor Aquatics Ctr
234	Indy Urban Acres Park
235	Iron Gate Conservation Area
236	Irvington Circle
237	Kin Hubbard Memorial
238	Kitley & Troy Park
239	Kitley Woods
240	Lappin Way
241	Paul Ruster Dog Park
242	Paul Ruster Park
252	Pennsy Trail
253	Pleasant Run Golf Course
254	Indy Island - Raymond Park
254	Raymond Park
255	Shadeland Maintenance Facility
256	Stable Chase Nature Sanctuary
257	Virginia Lee O'Brien Park
258	Warren Township Little League
259	Wes Montgomery Park
260	Whispering Hills Golf Course
261	Windsor Village Family Center
261	Windsor Village Park
262	Wright's Fields
263	Alice Carter Place
264	Andrew Ramsey Park
265	Arsenal Park
266	Art's Center Canoe Launch
267	Boulevard Station
268	Broad Ripple Dog Park
269	Broad Ripple Park
269	Broad Ripple Park (Bath House)
269	Broad Ripple Park (Family Center)
269	Broad Ripple Park (Old LS Bldg)
270	Dan Wakefield Park
271	Canterbury Park
272	Crows Nest Entrance
273	Elwood & Mary Black Park
274	Fox Hill Manor
275	Friedman Park
278	Greenway - Fall Creek
284	Greenway - IMA Lake
295	Greenway - Monon
311	Greenways Depot
312	Highwoods Park
314	Holliday Park
315	Juan Solomon Park
316	Marott Park
317	North Broad Ripple Park
318	Ravenswood Overlook Park
319	Riverwood Park
320	Roselawn Park
323	Stamm Park
324	Tarkington Park
325	Town Run Trail Park - Mtn Biking
326	White Owl Nature Sanctuary
327	Bel Aire Park
328	Bowman Park
329	Centennial & 20th Park
330	Centennial & Groff Park
331	Chapel Hill Park
332	Christina Oaks Park
333	Chuck Klein Sports Complex
334	Cloverleaf Conservation Area
335	Coffin Golf Course
336	Denver Park
337	Faculty Park
338	Gustafson Park
338	Gustafson Park (Bath House)
339	Haughville Park
340	Hawthorne Park
341	Iron Skillet - Restaurant
342	James Foster Gaines Park
343	Krannert Family Center/Pool
343	Krannert Park
344	Leonard Park
345	Major Taylor Sports Complex
347	Meadowood Park
348	Moreland Park
349	Municipal Gardens
349	Municipal Gardens Family Center
350	Municipal Gardens Memorial Grove
351	Olin Park
352	Patricia Park
353	Ridenour Park
354	Robey Park
355	Ross Claypool Park
356	Stout Field Park
357	Thatcher Golf Course
358	Thatcher Park
359	Washington Community School Pool
360	Blickman Trail
361	Central Green
362	Shambaugh Park
363	Wheeler-Dowe Boys & Girls Club
364	Keenan-Stahl Boys & Girls Club
365	LeGore Boys & Girls Club
367	Finish Line Boys & Girls Club
JCC1	Arthur M. Glick Jewish Com. Center
YMCA1	YMCA (The Athenaeum)
YMCA2	YMCA (Avondale Meadows)
YMCA3	YMCA (Baxter)
YMCA4	YMCA (Benjamin Harrison)
YMCA5	YMCA (Indy Bike Hub)
YMCA6	YMCA (Jordan)
YMCA7	YMCA (Pike)
YMCA8	YMCA (Ransburg)
YMCA9	YMCA City Way

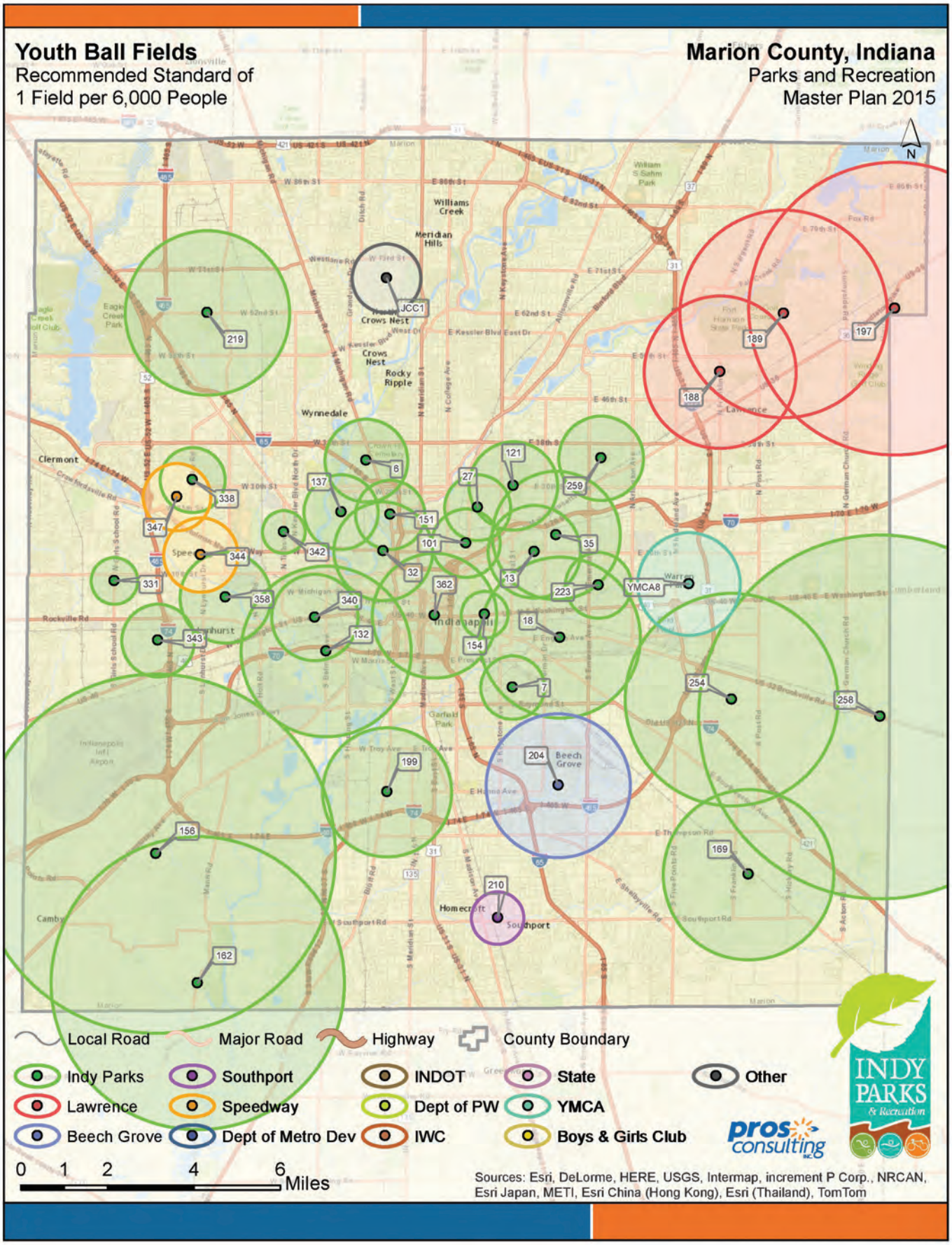

Neighborhood Parks
Recommended Standard of
1.75 Acres per 1,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom

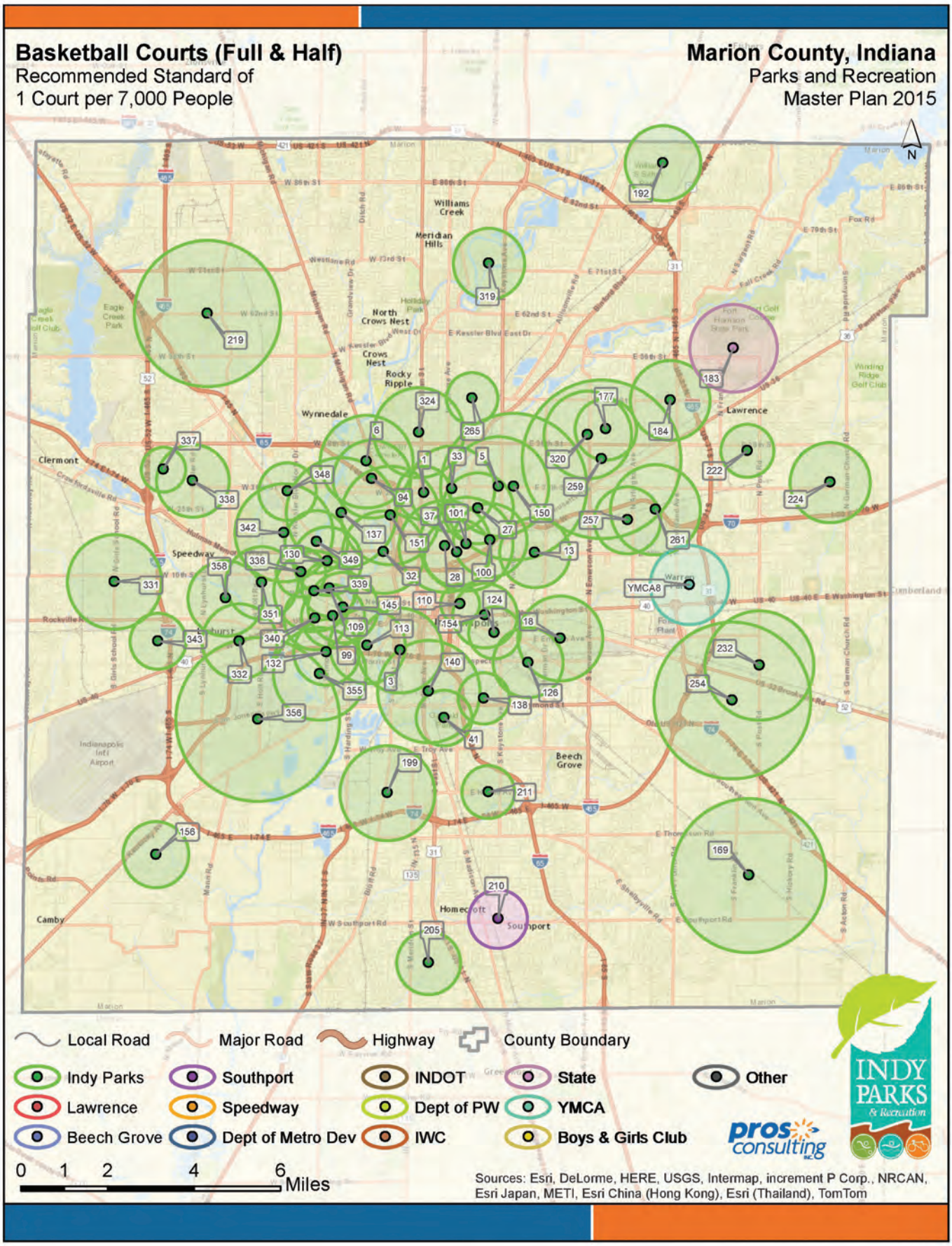

Community Parks
Recommended Standard of
2 Acres per 1,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Williams Creek
Meridian Hills
North Crows Nest
Crows Nest
Rocky Ripple
Wynnedale
Clermont
Speedway
Indianapolis
Lawrence
Warren Park
Beech Grove
Homecroft
Southport
Camby
Eagle Creek Park
Fort Harrison State Park
Winding Ridge Golf Club
Indianapolis Intl Airport
314
289
188
150
27
261
151
349
101
13
223
358
343
132
126
18
7
254
204
205
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting INC

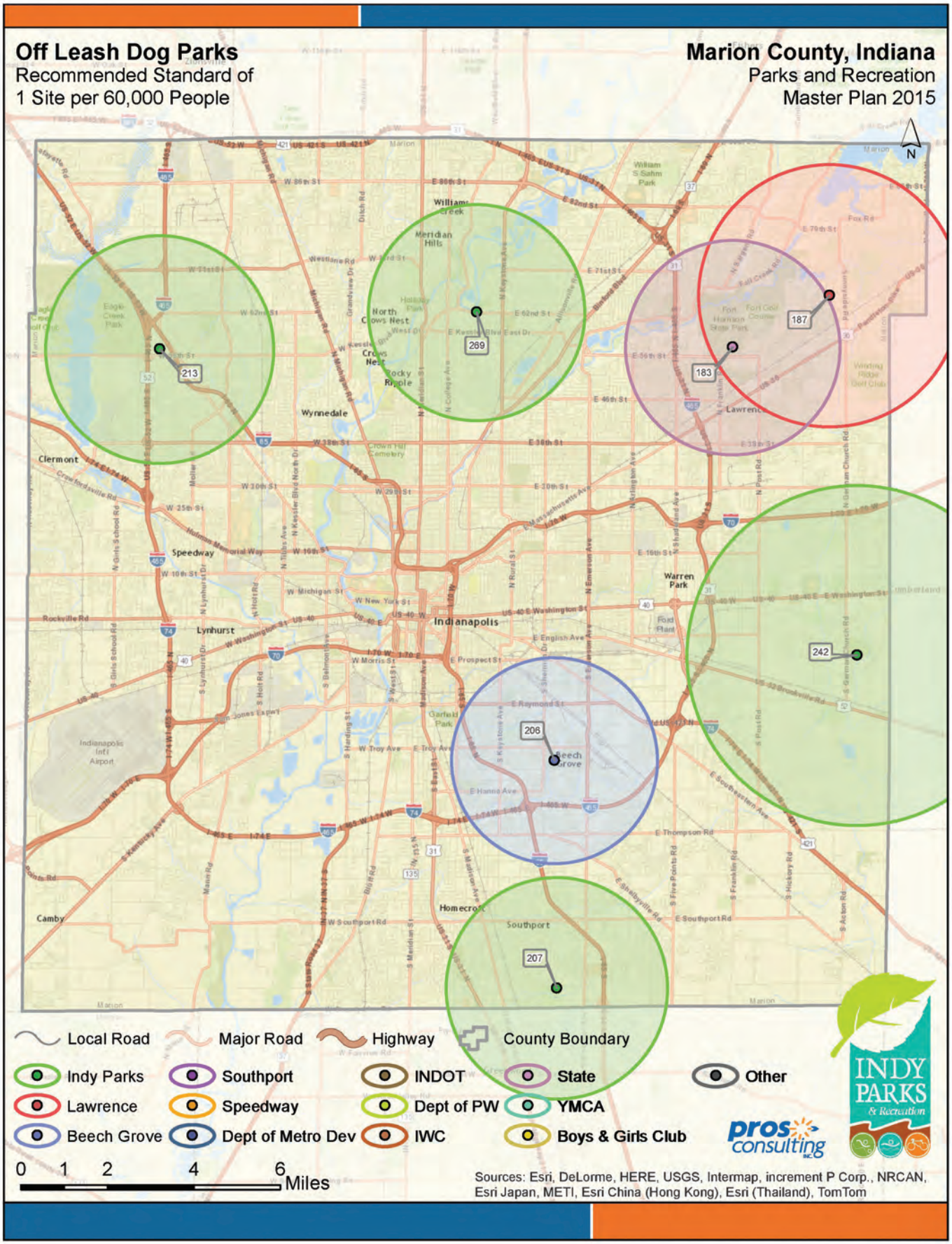

Regional Parks
Recommended Standard of
6 Acres per 1,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
192
215
137
224
41
162
172
Williams Creek
Meridian Hills
North Crows Nest
Crows Nest
Rocky Ripple
Wynnedale
Clermont
Speedway
Lynhurst
Indianapolis
Warren Park
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Homecroft
Southport
Camby
Fort Harrison State Park
Fort Golf Course
Winding Ridge Golf Club
Eagle Creek Park
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Southport
Speedway
Dept of Metro Dev
INDOT
Dept of PW
IWC
State
YMCA
Boys & Girls Club
Other
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting

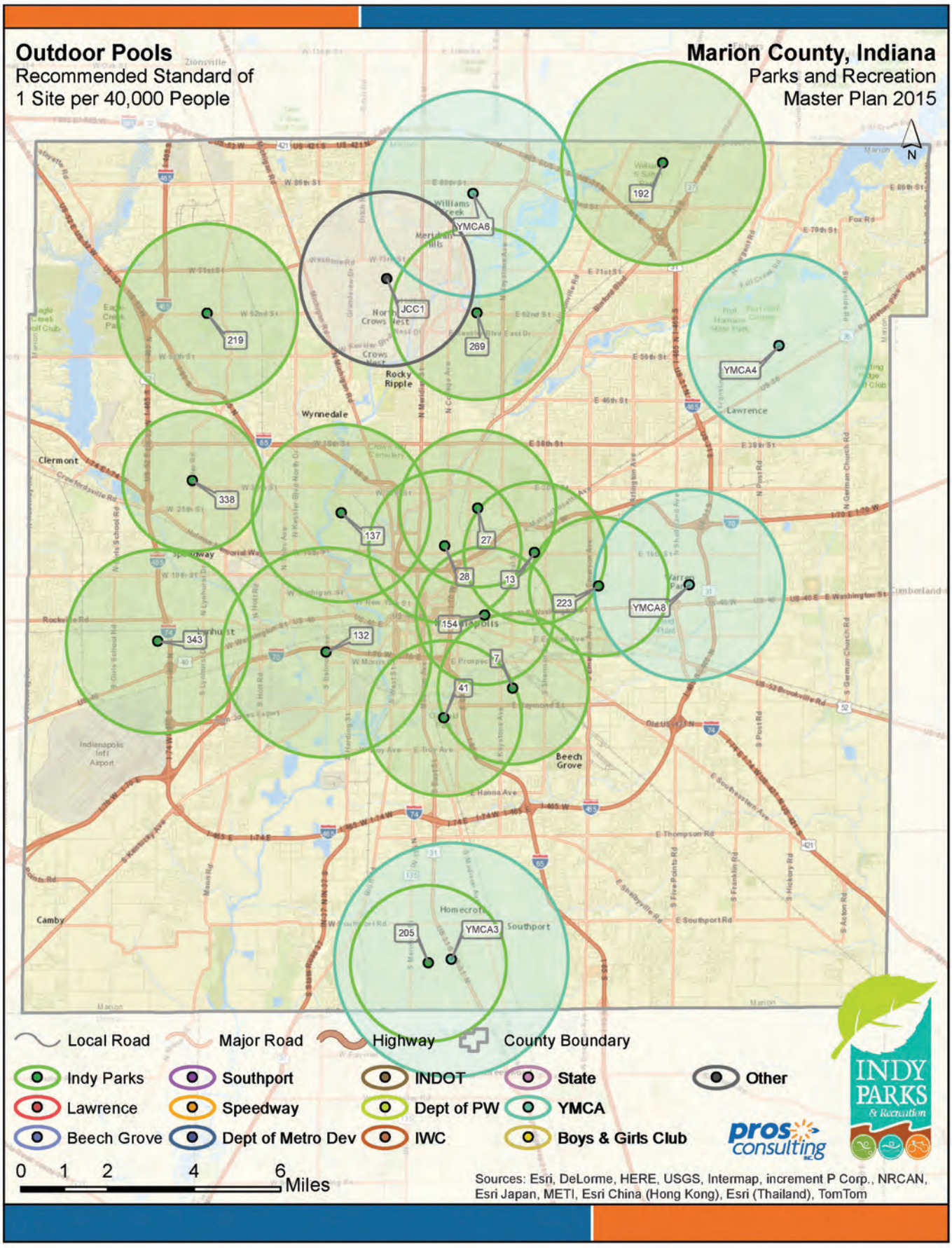

Natural Resource Area
Recommended Standard of
1 Acre per 1,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting

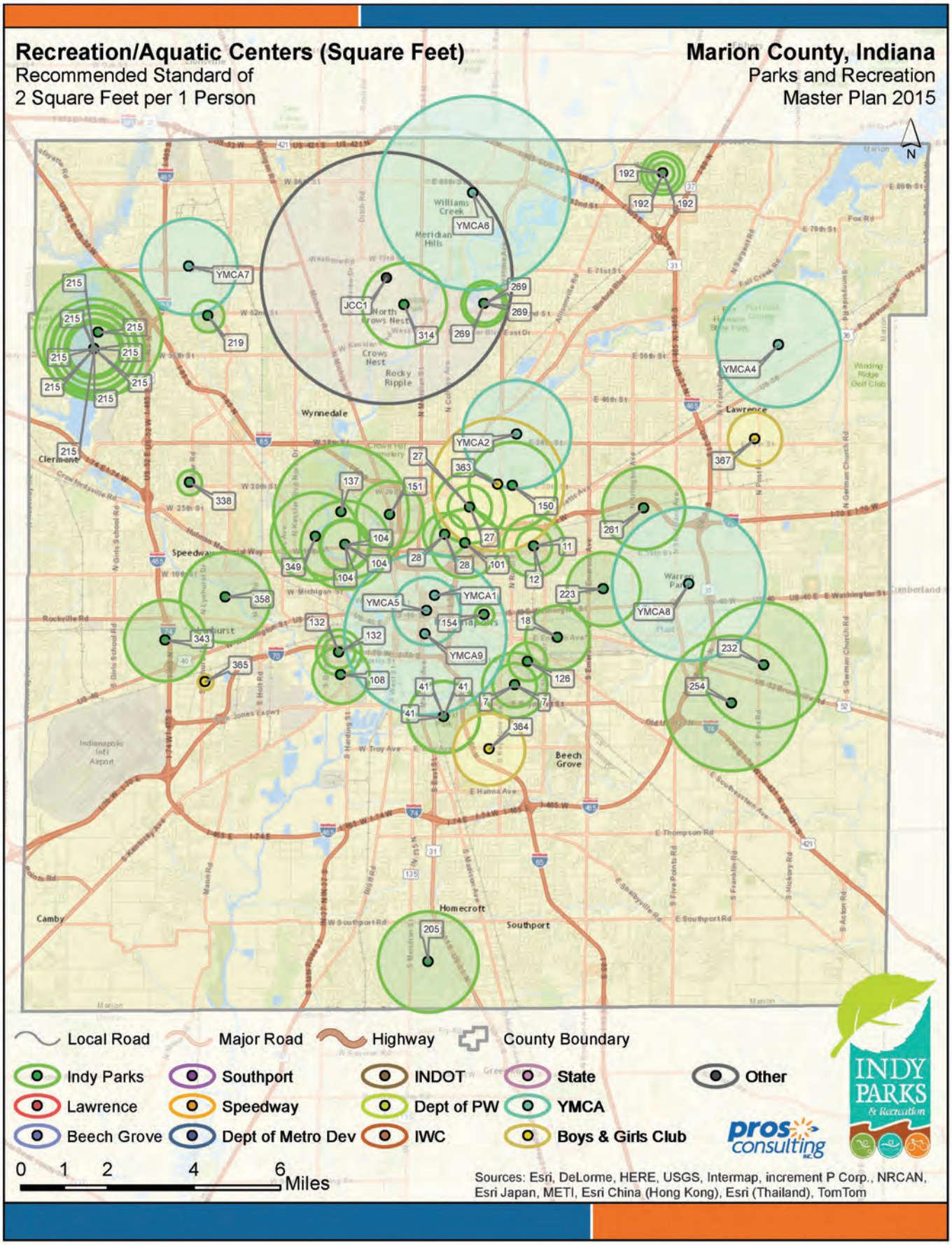

Sports Complex
Recommended Standard of
0.2 Acres per 1,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
345
104
37
381
333
232
258
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom

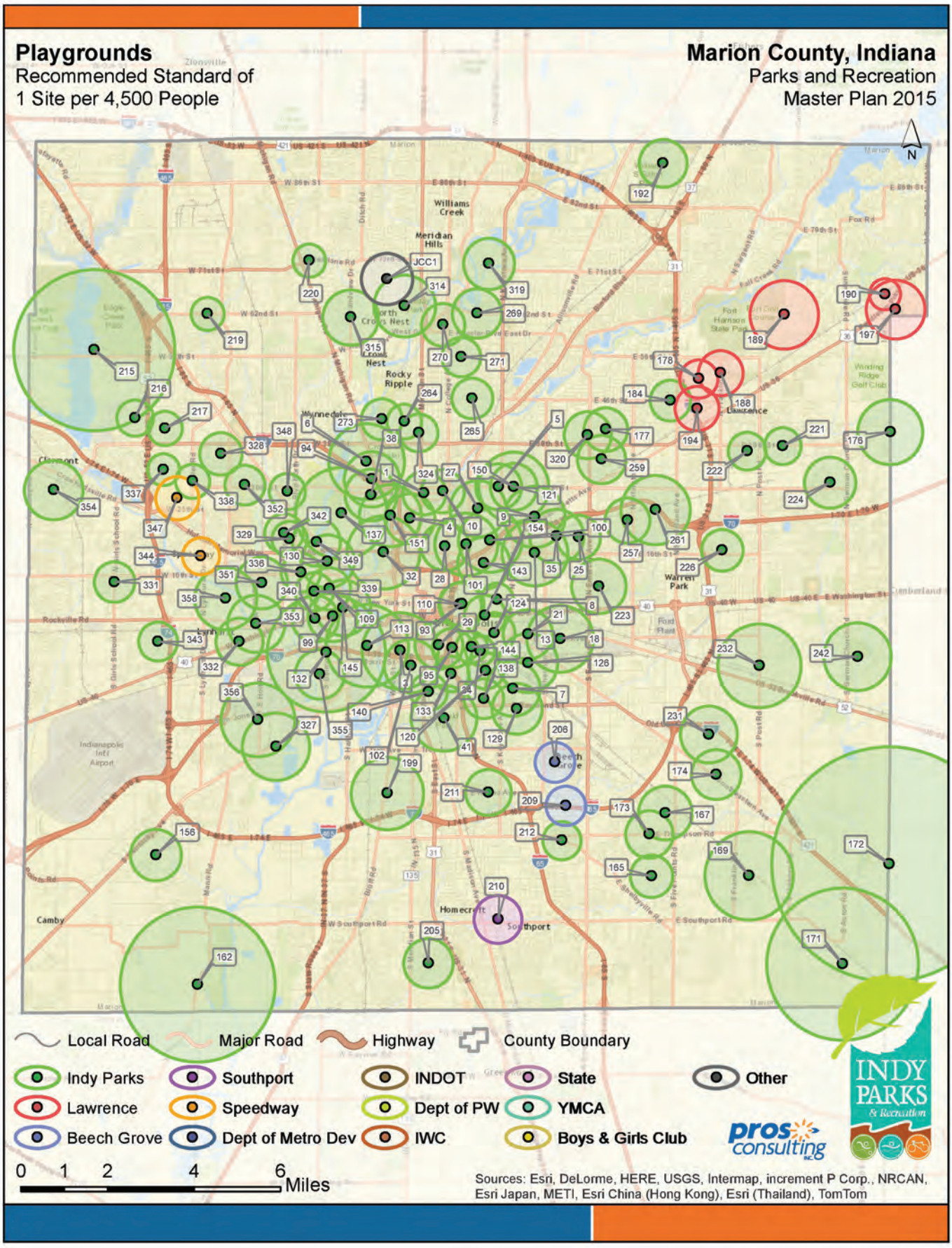

Youth Ball Fields
Recommended Standard of
1 Field per 6,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting

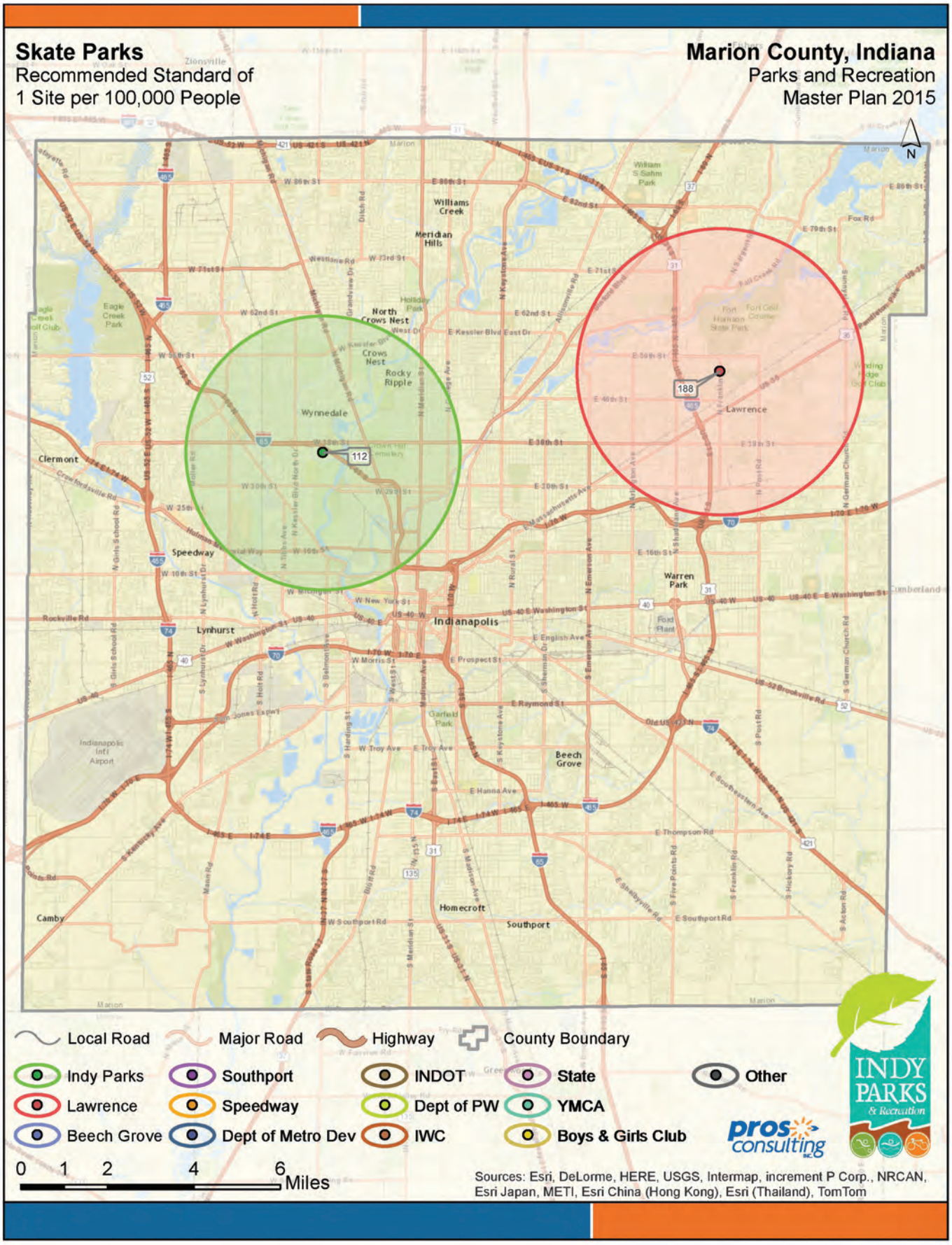

Basketball Courts (Full & Half)
Recommended Standard of
1 Court per 7,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting

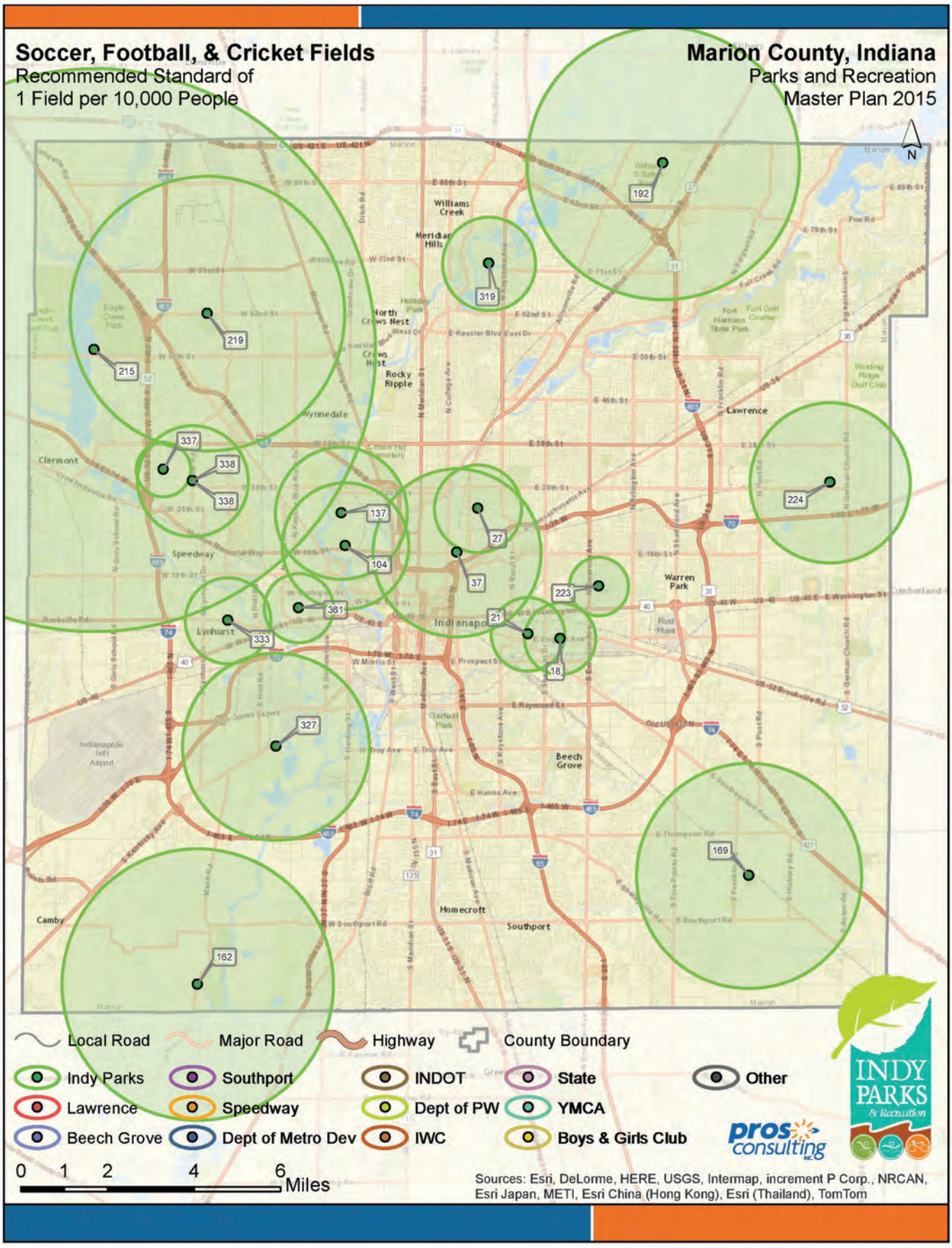

Off Leash Dog Parks
Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 60,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
213
269
187
183
242
206
207
Wynnedale
Clermont
Speedway
Lynhurst
Indianapolis
Warren Park
Beech Grove
Southport
Homecroft
Camby
Lawrence
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting

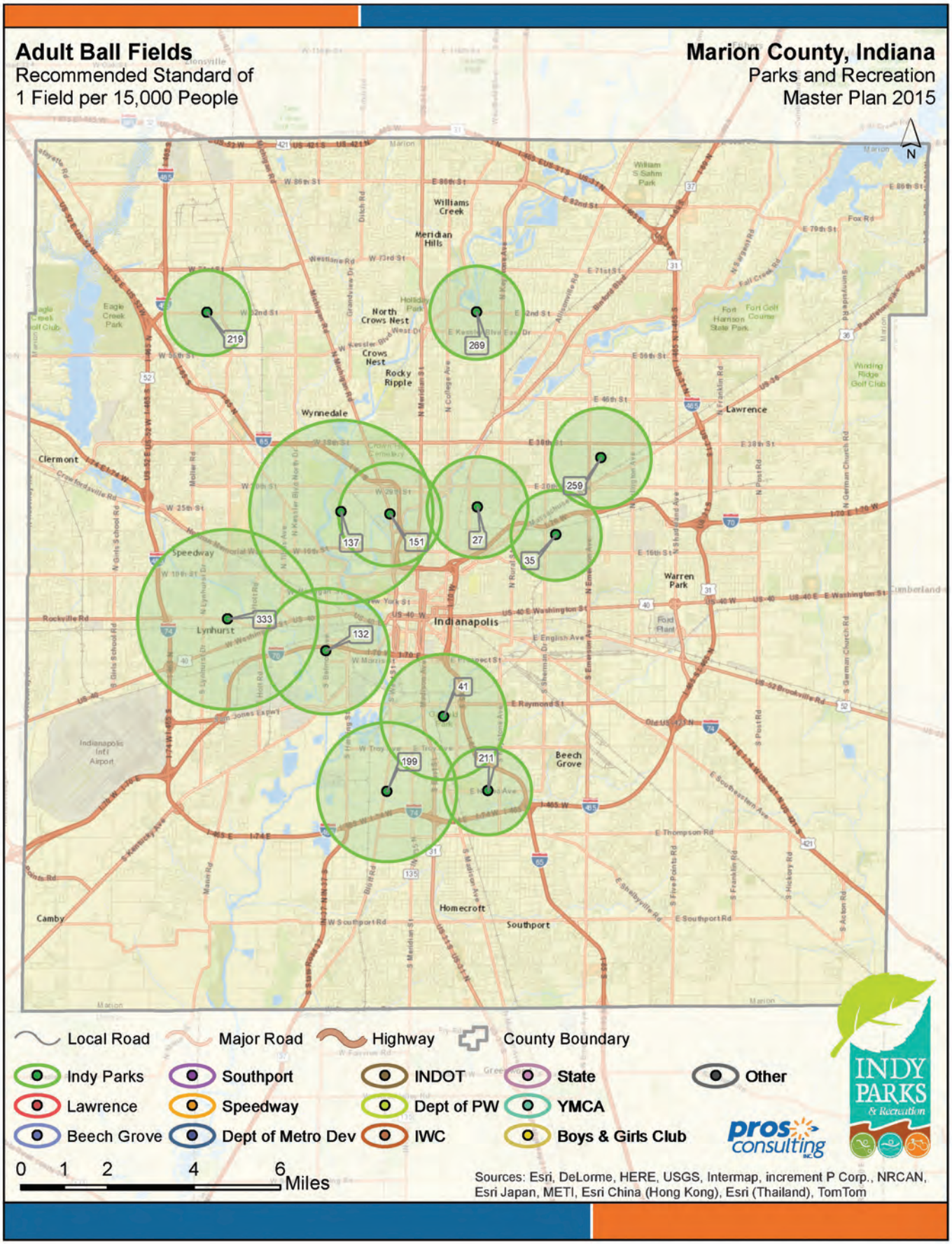

Outdoor Pools
Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 40,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
YMCA6
192
JCC1
219
269
YMCA4
Rocky Ripple
Wynnedale
Lawrence
Clermont
338
137
27
28
13
223
YMCA8
154
343
132
7
41
Beech Grove
Homecroft
205
YMCA3
Southport
Cumberland
Camby
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom

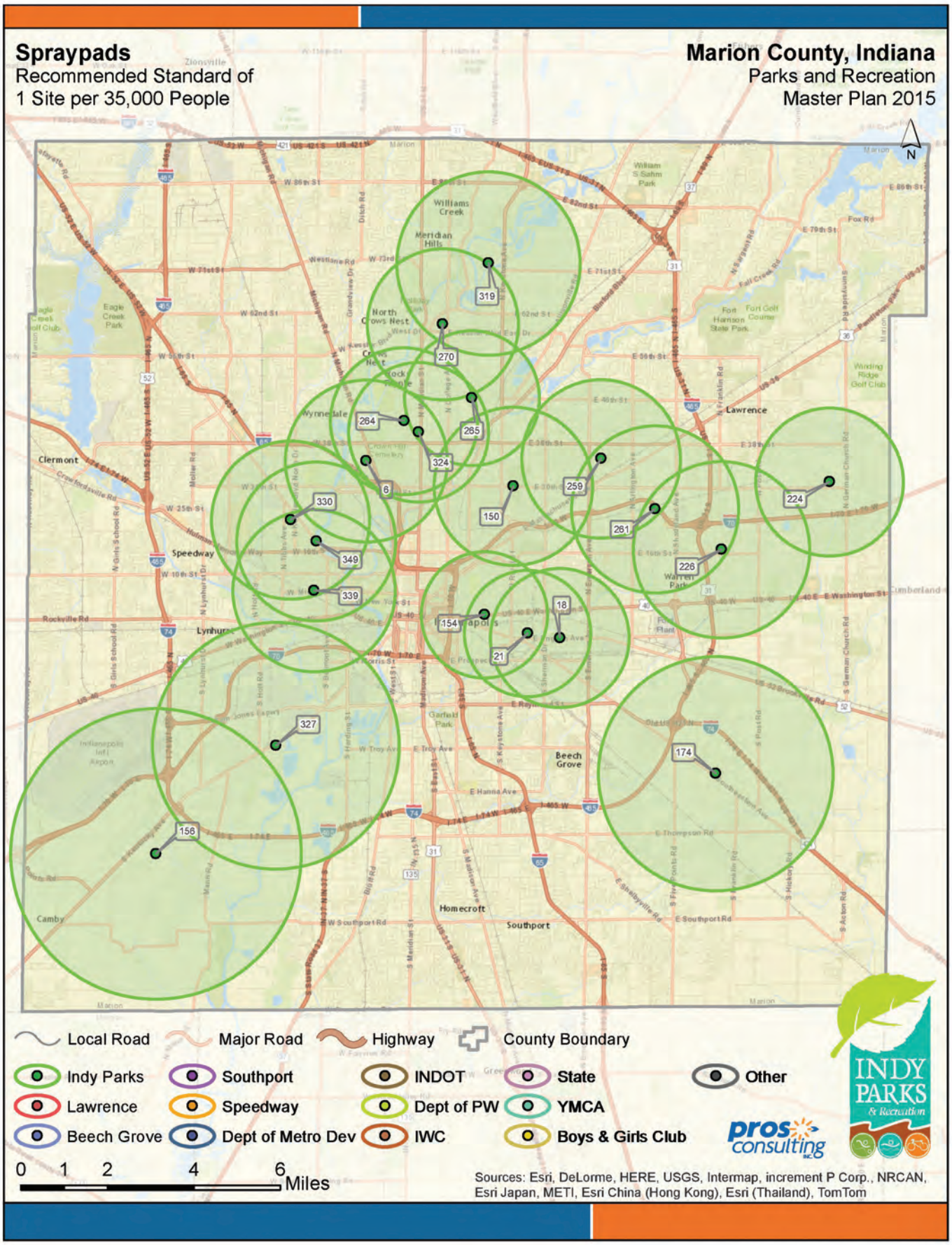

Recreation/Aquatic Centers (Square Feet)
Recommended Standard of
2 Square Feet per 1 Person
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
YMCA6
YMCA7
JCC1
YMCA4
YMCA2
YMCA5
YMCA1
YMCA8
YMCA9
Wynnedale
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Southport
Homecroft
Camby
Clermont
Speedway
Rocky Ripple
Crows Nest
Meridian Hills
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting

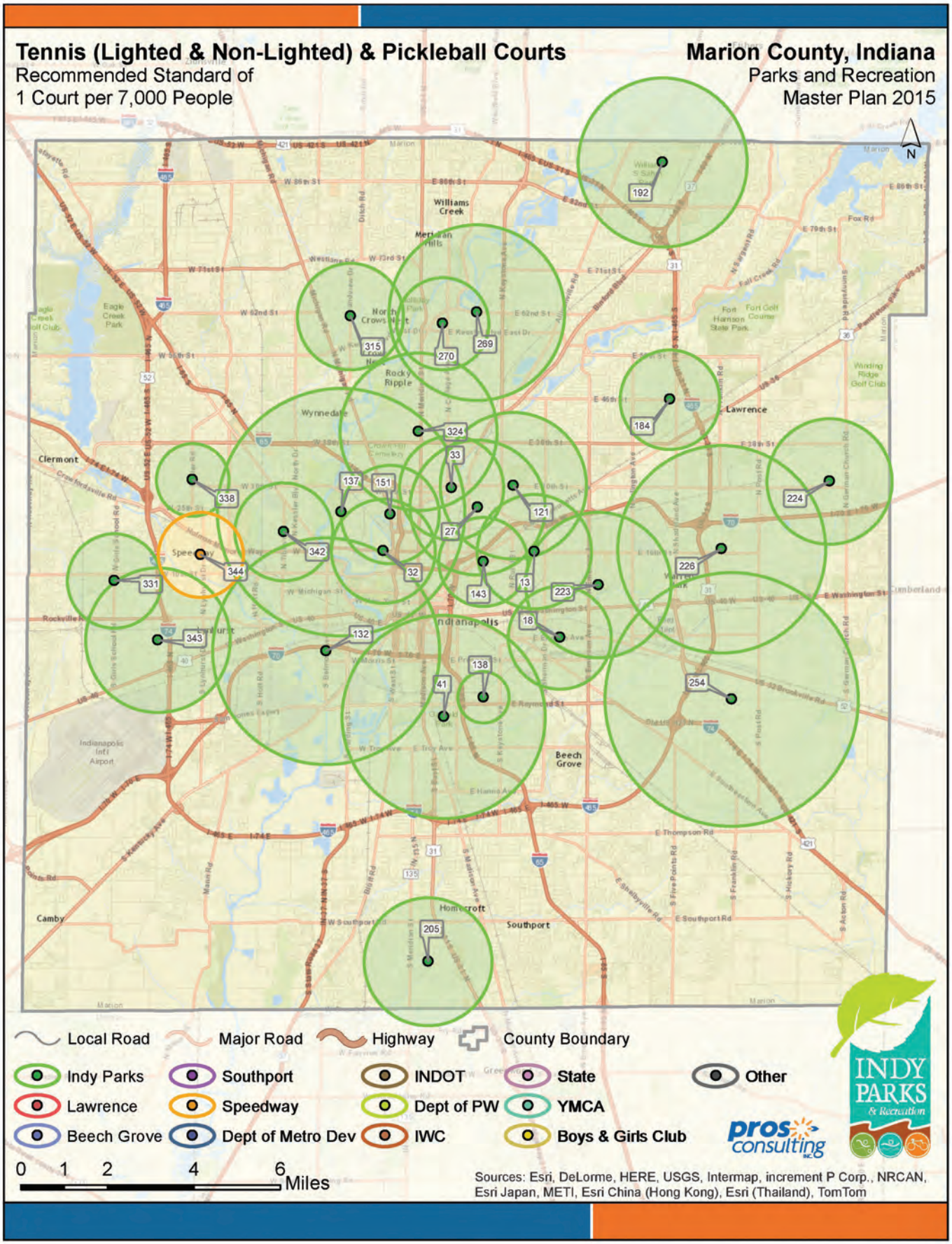

Playgrounds
Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 4,500 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Southport
Speedway
Dept of Metro Dev
INDOT
Dept of PW
IWC
State
YMCA
Boys & Girls Club
Other
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom

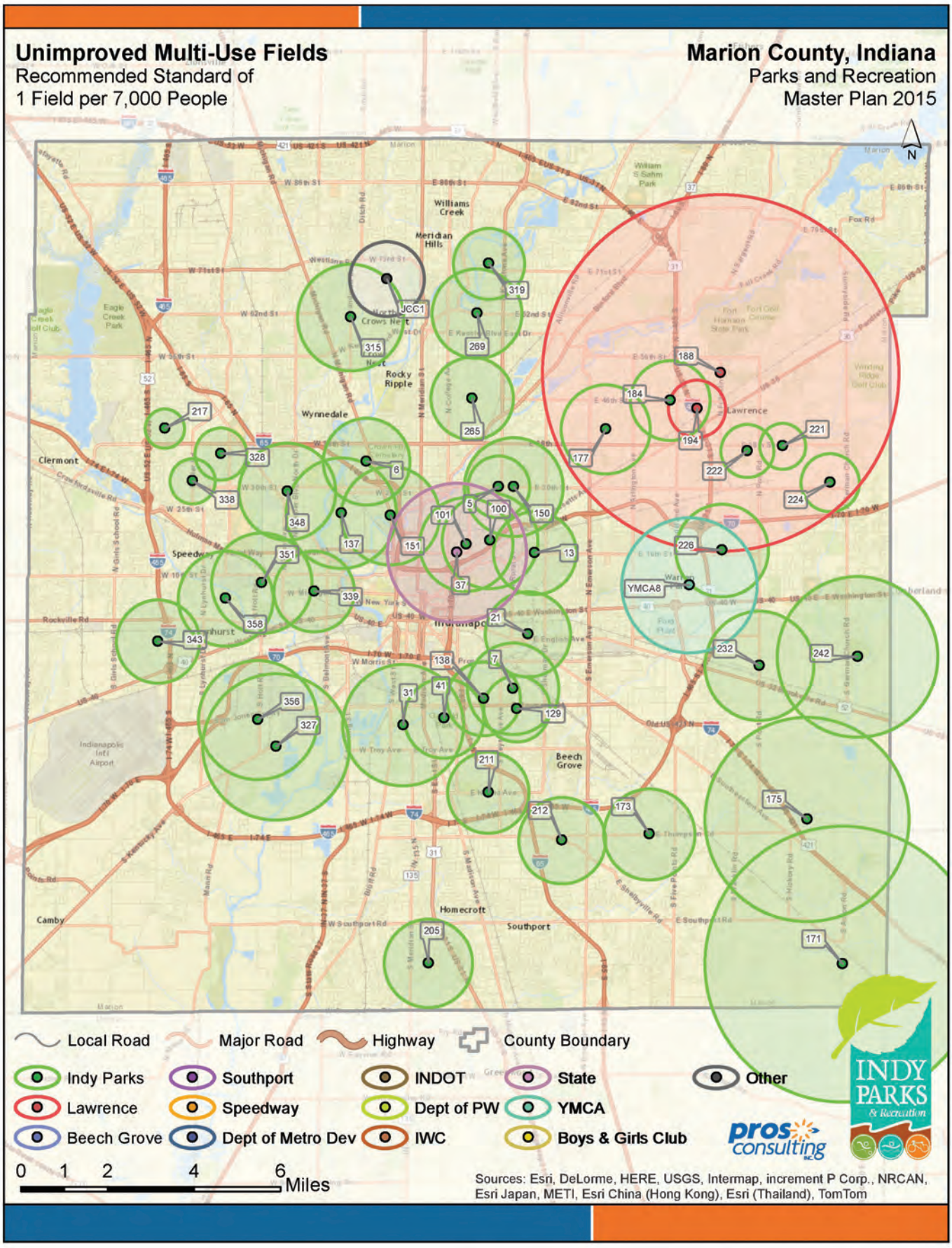

Skate Parks
Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 100,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
112
188
Wynnedale
Lawrence
Indianapolis
Speedway
Lynhurst
Clermont
Beech Grove
Southport
Homecroft
Camby
Warren Park
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Southport
Speedway
Dept of Metro Dev
INDOT
Dept of PW
IWC
State
YMCA
Boys & Girls Club
Other
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting


Soccer, Football, & Cricket Fields
Recommended Standard of
1 Field per 10,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom


Adult Ball Fields
Recommended Standard of
1 Field per 15,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Williams Creek
Meridian Hills
North Crows Nest
Crows Nest
Rocky Ripple
Wynnedale
Lawrence
Clermont
Speedway
Lynhurst
Indianapolis
Warren Park
Beech Grove
Homecroft
Southport
Cumberland
Camby
Indianapolis Intl Airport
219
269
259
137
151
27
35
333
132
41
199
211
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Southport
Speedway
Dept of Metro Dev
INDOT
Dept of PW
IWC
State
YMCA
Boys & Girls Club
Other
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting


Spraypads
Recommended Standard of
1 Site per 35,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Southport
Speedway
Dept of Metro Dev
INDOT
Dept of PW
IWC
State
YMCA
Boys & Girls Club
Other
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting


Tennis (Lighted & Non-Lighted) & Pickleball Courts
Recommended Standard of
1 Court per 7,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom
INDY PARKS & Recreation
pros consulting


Unimproved Multi-Use Fields
Recommended Standard of
1 Field per 7,000 People
Marion County, Indiana
Parks and Recreation
Master Plan 2015
N
Williams Creek
Meridian Hills
Rocky Ripple
Wynnedale
Clermont
Speedway
Lawrence
Beech Grove
Homecroft
Southport
Camby
Indianapolis Intl Airport
YMCA8
JCC1
Local Road
Major Road
Highway
County Boundary
Indy Parks
Southport
INDOT
State
Other
Lawrence
Speedway
Dept of PW
YMCA
Beech Grove
Dept of Metro Dev
IWC
Boys & Girls Club
0 1 2 4 6 Miles
Sources: Esri, DeLorme, HERE, USGS, Intermap, increment P Corp., NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom

4.4 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

As part of the planning process, an assessment of the programs and services offered by Indy Parks was completed. The assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities regarding programming for residents in parks and recreation facilities. The program assessment also assists in identifying what are considered core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide program issues, and areas for improvement when determining future programs and services for residents.

The program findings and comments are based on a review of information provided by staff that includes program descriptions, participation statistics, financial data, website content, focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and discussions with staff. It identifies key issues and presents recommendations for these issues, summarized at the end of this section.

4.4.1 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND OVERVIEW

The department offers a wide variety of programs ranging from sports leagues to senior programs, trips, and classes. An evaluation of the overall program offering indicates that the recreation program offerings are on the upswing but need more consistency and improved measurements to ensure maximum accountability and efficiency. Some overall observations from the program assessment sheets that were completed follow:

- **The program descriptions** overall do a good job promoting the benefits of participation
- **Age segment distribution** is good, but needs to be monitored annually to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics
- **Program lifecycles:** Very few programs are in the introduction stage with a large number in the saturated to decline stage, which is not ideal (See page 182 of this report for discussion)
- **Program performance measures** are tracked in several areas, though it is inconsistent system-wide and is not measured or communicated department-wide
- Some system-wide volunteer support and tracking of volunteer hours exists. Programs such as youth basketball and youth baseball have good volunteer support from community members. However, the same cannot be said of all program areas. Developing a system-wide volunteer management program is be advisable
- **From a marketing and promotions** perspective, the staff undertakes a variety of promotions with a number of programs using the brochures and flyers, website, in-facility signage, website, Facebook, and direct mail as a part of the marketing mix. A mobile friendly website and a custom app is recommended
  - Identify and improve marketing Return on Investment analysis for all marketing initiatives
  - Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions
  - Use of Web 2.0 technologies including micro-blogging, blogs / webinars / podcasts could be expanded
- Most commonly used **customer feedback methods** are post program evaluations, user surveys, and the website
- Pre-program surveys are non-existent. Pre-program surveys are useful to determine potential user interest before offering programs so as to limit cancellation rates and maximize resources
- Lost customer surveys would also be a valuable addition, particularly for programs with high attrition rates. By utilizing available information for all past and present users, the staff can track lost customers on an annual basis. These former participants could then be surveyed to identify reasons for customer drop-outs
- On-going online surveys through www.surveymonkey.com are utilized and must be continued
- **Pricing strategies** are varied across the board. Strategies used include cost recovery rates, group discounts, age segments or residency. These are good practices and must be continued but there is an opportunity to incorporate variable pricing strategies system-wide. It is essential to understand current cost of service to provide a program in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals
- Greater use of strategies using prime-time/non-prime time and weekday/weekend rates could be employed to help alleviate some capacity utilization issues, where applicable
- **Financial performance measures** are low. It is important to factor in all direct and indirect costs in computing true cost recovery goals. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the department's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability
  - Sunk Costs (costs that have been created by a decision made in the past and that cannot be changed by the decision at hand) should not be included in the initial financial analysis of a program. These costs may be rolled back during post-program activity based costing methods, but is improper for determining the feasibility of a new activity. These sunk costs include:
    - Administrative overhead that exist regardless of if the program proceeds or not
    - Building and building operation expenses that exist regardless of if the program proceeds or not
    - Facility staff overhead not directly tied to the operation of the program if the overhead would exist regardless of if the program proceeds or not

4.4.2 EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREAS

The PROS team believes in the importance of identifying core programs based on current and future needs. This assists in creating a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people, especially in a community as diverse as Indianapolis. The core program philosophy assists staff in being able to focus on what is most important. Programs are categorized as core programs if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years)
- Offered 3-4 sessions per year
- Wide demographic appeal
- Includes 5% or more of recreation budget
- Includes a tiered level of skill development
- Requires full-time staff to manage the program area
- Has strong social value
- High level of customer interface exists
- High partnering capability
- Facilities are designed to support the program

The core program areas for the department are listed below. It is important to recognize that limits on the department's staffing, resources, and availability of space may hinder some staff efforts to maintain or expand core programs; therefore, it is essential staff commit to a concerted effort towards managing and prioritizing core program areas throughout fluctuations in resource availability.

AQUATICS

Provide a wide variety of opportunities for citizens to enrich their lives through aquatic leisure, aquatic fitness, family-oriented opportunities, and aquatic safety.

- Goal- Provide recreation, educational, competitive, fitness, and family-oriented aquatic opportunities

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Provide programming to the general public at Eagle Creek (ECP), Holliday (HP), Garfield Park Conservatory (GPC) or Southeastway (SEW) Parks. Engage participants through naturalist-led programs to foster a deeper connection with and appreciation for Indiana's natural and cultural resources. The Environmental Education parks offer a wide variety of program topics to specific audience groups (preschool, family, after-school, adult workshops, special/seasonal events, etc.) Programs vary in duration from a one-time, one-hour program to in-depth, on-going series. Most are fee-based, some are offered as free drop-in programs.

- Goal – Provide participants the opportunity to enjoy, learn about, and gain an appreciation for the natural world

HEALTH & FITNESS

Provide a wide variety of opportunities for citizens to participate and enrich their lives through health & fitness programs.

- Goal – Provide recreation, educational, competitive, fitness, and family-oriented program health and wellness opportunities

SPECIAL EVENTS

Provide special events in various city parks within Marion County. Special events are designed to benefit individuals and families from all socio-economic demographics. Some special events include concerts, community events, sporting events, art fairs, bug fest, community wide themed events. Most are low fee or no cost programs.

- Goal – Provide participants the opportunity to recreate with a variety of passive/active events and showcase the diversity of park facilities/programming

YOUTH SPORTS

Provide contracted leagues, in house programs, and drop in sports opportunities. Contracted leagues are managed and organized by outside groups that utilize Indy Parks land and sports related space. They are all on a Use and License Permit basis.

- Goal – Provide recreational opportunities for youth

DAY CAMPS

Provide multiple weeks of summer day camp programming at 13 Indy Park locations. Participants spend their days under the watchful supervision of energetic, thoroughly trained, professional staff. The summer day camp program offers a wide variety of opportunities including swimming, arts, nature, science, sports and recreation. All camps follow a set of high program standards and are accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA).

- Goal – To provide youth with structured and diverse recreation opportunities to engage in over the summer months

ARTS, CONCERTS, & MOVIES

Engage visitors and the wider community in diverse artistic and cultural exhibitions, arts classes, and special events. The galleries, rich with exhibitions of local and regional art, are open to the public at no charge.

- Goal – Make a variety of art forms as accessible as possible and widen audience participation through impactful programming, outreach activities, and marketing initiatives

ENRICHMENT

Provide enrichment programs and enhance the quality of life by engaging the participant in a fun, safe, learning environment. Participants explore, create, express, learn, and develop skills that enhance the quality of life by broadening personal experiences.

- Goal – Provide an environment where participants are able to gain new skills, increase confidence in their abilities, and be inspired to seek lifelong learning opportunities.

RECOMMENDED NEW CORE PROGRAM AREAS

ADULT SPORTS

Provide competitive and recreation league play for high school students and adults ages 18+.

- Goal- Provide recreation opportunities for individuals through competition in team sports for high school aged to adult (18+ years)

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE PROGRAMS

Nationally, outdoor skills/adventure programming is a growing trend and this could be an area that has the potential to become a core program. Currently, the staff offers a Summer Adventure Camp program. This program can be extended to a year-round offering targeting a wider age segment. Program types can include rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, paragliding, dirt biking, mountain biking, driving off-road vehicles, running, and triathlons. The staff can also add outdoor adventure trips as a new program area.

From an endurance/triathlon, there is an opportunity to create a branded special event for the department in conjunction with Indiana Sports Corp with a potential to leverage Eagle Creek Park as a location. The largest growth segment by age for triathlons is the youth market. In particular, the women's market is the fastest growing segment in the sport of triathlon. According to USA Triathlon, USAT female membership has increased from 11% in the early 90s, to 37% today. Also mud run events are very popular, highly competitive and bring a national crowd.

Outdoor adventure is a mainstream core program area nationwide. It is in top three highest priority program areas in Indianapolis based on the citizen survey results conducted as part of this master plan and the program priority rankings provided in this report. Private Service providers such as GoApe already provide zip line offerings at Eagle Creek Park. Leveraging an existing asset such as Eagle Creek Park and internally creating adventure races, team building courses, etc., could be potential opportunities to serve an underserved community need and a growing program trend nationwide.

SENIOR PROGRAMS

Senior programs targeted for active senior adults could be considered by Indy Parks as a core program. The park system has time available in existing recreation centers to support senior related active programs. Most recreation centers are set up to be multi-generational and could provide senior programs with available staff. Many of these programs can be provided within existing facilities in the park system. Typical programs for seniors include:

- Sports such as tennis, pickle ball, softball, golf are very popular
- Community gardening
- Walking, running events
- Trips
- Volunteerism
- Card games
- Water fitness classes
- Fitness and wellness programs
- Birding
- Hiking and bicycling
- Music, arts
- Volunteering

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Indy Parks has never really provided after school programs as a core program and have primarily left these types of programs to the Boys and Girls Club and YMCA. It was interesting to note that the Center Township after school programs showed up as a priority. The park system might consider a core program of this type for just Center Township. This would require support for program funding. Indy Parks need to work with the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club to make sure services are not duplicated in areas that they have covered in Center Township. Typical after school programs include:

- After school learning and tutoring
- Holiday camps
- Themed months for sports, arts, life skills, food and nutrition, wellness and fitness
- Birthday months
- Reading and learning about history
- Outdoor education and recreation
- Holiday traditions
- Play fun

4.4.3 LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS

The program assessment included a lifecycle analysis completed by staff members. The listing of programs is included in the chart on the following page. This assessment was not based on quantitative data, but based on staff's knowledge of their program areas. These lifecycles can, and often do, change from year to year or over time depending on how the programs fare in terms of popularity with the community.

The following table shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Department's recreation programs as listed by the staff:

Lifecycle Stage	Description	Actual Program Distribution		Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	8%	57% total	50-60% total
Take-Off	Rapid participation growth	11%		
Growth	Moderate, but consistent population growth	38%		
Mature	Slow participation growth	29%	29%	40%
Saturation	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	**5%**	**13% total**	0-10% total
Decline	Declining participation	**8%**		

Program Lifecycle Distribution

These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs identified in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed in the program worksheets. The PROS team recognizes that while there is no statistically sound method for obtaining the percentage breakout of all programs within lifecycle stages, the overall pattern and trends are apparent in the Program Lifecycle Table.

The lifecycles trends depict the following:

1. High number Decline stage (8%) / Too Low for Introduction Stage (8%)- This can be an indicator that underperforming programs are being sustained for too long and that the existing programs may not be aligned with community needs. This category needs to be addressed by repositioning and/or eliminating programs in that area in order to add new programs in the Introduction Stage.
2. Number of Mature Stage programs in range (29%) – It is important to ensure this percentage remains or increases. Increases may be limited due to the lack of available space. The statistically-valid survey identified this as a key barrier to participation. Lack of awareness about offerings will be an ongoing concern and increased emphasis on marketing outreach will be key to ensuring increases in program participation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The PROS team recommends that the staff track program lifecycles on an annual basis to ensure there are a decreasing number of programs in the Saturated to Decline stage while ensuring an increased number of programs in the Introduction stage. It is recommended that programs from Saturated to Decline should comprise no more than 10% of the total program mix.

Additionally, the bottom 5% of all poorly performing programs must be eliminated or repositioned to ensure the cycle of program innovation continues. Programs, such as open swim, may be declining due to maintenance issues or marketing and outreach. This area could be looked at closely to identify opportunities to improve participation numbers in a given program area. It would also be beneficial to establish a performance metric to ensure a set percentage of programs is achieved. Any program that exists in the Decline or Saturation Stage for two years needs to be repositioned or eliminated in favor of new programs.

Stage in Program Lifecycle					
Introduction	**Take-Off**	**Growth**	**Mature**	**Saturated**	**Decline**
Multi-site personal Trainers	Multi-site- Dance - Ballroom/Swing - Adult	Multi-site-Walk-in weight room	Multi- site- Martial Arts Programs-Adult & Youth	Enrichments- Punt Pass and Kick	Multi-site Step Aerobics - Adult
Multi site- KinderJam - Youth	Multi-site - Senior Dances/Socials	Multi- Site Indy In Motion - Youth & Adult	Multi site- Zumba - Adult	Enrichments- Pitch Hit and Run	Chalk Art Festival
Multi-site Homeschool	Garfield Park - Trad	Multi- siteOasis Senior Programs	Multi site - Low Impact Aerobics - Adult	Enrichments- Hershey's Track and Field	Irvington Artists
Butler University Bark for Life	Garfield Park - Arts	Multi- site- Registered Programs	Multi-site- Gymnastics/tumbling Youth	Enrichements- Jr. NBA Basketball	Junior Lifeguard Training: LaShonna Bates
Light Your Summer	Eagle Creek/Orinthology	Multi- site- General Adult Recreation	Site specific- Belly Dancing - Adult	Site Specific- Broomball	Junior Lifeguard Training: George Washington
RBI Opening Day Celebration	DINO Trail Run	Multi-site- Fitness Rooms	GATHER on the move (special needs)	Site Specific- Stick & Puck	Junior Lifeguard Training: Indy Island
ICC American Div. World Cup Qualifier	Dash for Disabilities	Multi-site -Self Defense - Adults	GATHER (special needs)	Site Specific- Free Style Skating	Junior Lifeguard Training: Garfield
Nate Walk 2015	TrueSport Cycling Grand Prix 1.0	Multi- site-Dance Ballet - Youth	Christian Park LL Opening Day & Parade	Teen Night Swimming: George Washington	Junior Lifeguard Training: Northwestway
Indy Pride Picnic / Bat-n-Rouge Softball Game	Holiday Trail Run	Multi Site- Dance Combination - Youth	Mayor's Veteran's Family Appreciation Day	CPR/First Aid	Junior Lifeguard Training: Sahm
Walk for Christ - Community Festival	ECPF Annual Kid's Fishing Derby	Multi -site -Dance Hip Hop - Youth	Irvington Farmer's Market	Youth/Afterschool Programs (HP)	Junior Lifeguard Training
Turn Festival - Transforming Urban Neighborhoods	Indy Pet Pride	Multi- site Parent/Child Classes	East Side Reunion Picnic	Older Adult/Senior Programs (GPC)	Junior Lifeguard Training
OWL Music Fest	Alpha Tau Omega 5k	Multi- site- Sports Readiness - Youth	Outback Scramble (West Side)	School/Scout Field Trips (SEW)	Scuba Diving Classes: George Washington
Field Trips	Personal Best 5 Miler	Site specific- Fencing - Youth & Adult	Mayor Dust Bowl	Family Programs (GPC)	Kayak Classes: Thatcher
Site Specific- Cricket	Bug Fest	Multi- site- Movement Classes - Youth	Riverside Reunion	Adult Programs (GPC)	Open Recreational Swimming: Douglass
Multi-Sites-Volleyball	Homeschool events/Jamborees	Broad Ripple Trad.	Riverside Civic League Parade	Free Drop-In Programs (HP)	Open Recreational Swimming: LaShonna Bates
Site Specific- Lacrosse	Kids Trialthlon	Ellenberger-Trad.	Indianapolis Alley Cats Professional Ultimate Frisbee	Free Drop-In Programs (ECP)	Open Recreational Swimming: Perry
Community CPR, 1st Aid Training: Krannert	Touch A Truck	Ellenberger Arts Camp	Indy Burn (Kapsalis) Soccer Cup	Free Drop-In Programs (GPC)	Open Recreational Swimming: George Washington
Community CPR, 1st Aid Training: Thatcher	Site Specific- Ultimate Frisbee	Krannert Park- trad.	Gallery Exhibits		Open Recreational Swimming: Eagle Creek Beach
Community CPR, 1st Aid Training: Indy Island	Site Specific- Gaelic Athletics	Christian Park- trad.	Visual Arts Classes		Open Recreational Swimming:Riverside
Community CPR, 1st Aid Training: Lashonna Bates	Multi-Sites-Pickleball	Douglass Park- trad.	Performing Arts Classes		Pottery
Community CPR, 1st Aid Training: George Washington	Site Specific- Futsal	Riverside Park-trad.	Autumn Art Fair		Poetry
Pack the Pools: All locations	Site Specific- Badminton	ECP/EDC- Preschool	Youth Sports Contracts- Bishop Chatard High School, Inc		Music Engagement
Toddler Swim Times: Brookside	Site Specific- Pickleball	ECP/EDC- EE	Youth Sports Contracts- Cardinal Ritter High School, Inc		Language Classes - ESL, Spanish
Toddler Swim Times: Indy Island	Multi-Sites- Futsal	Holliday -preschool	Youth Sports Contracts- Carnine RBI West, Inc		Financial Fitness
Toddler Swim Times: Krannert	Private Swim Lessons: Broad Ripple	Holliday - EE	Youth Sports Contracts- Christian Little League, Inc		Older Adult/Senior Programs (HP)
Toddler Swim Times: Perry	Private Swim Lessons: Ellenberger	Southeastway- preschool	Youth Sports Contracts- Christian Park Youth Football, Inc		Preschool Programs (ECP)
Toddler Swim Times: Sahm	Private Swim Lessons: Garfield	Southeastway-EE	Youth Sports Contracts- Coach Alonzo Watford Sr. Inner City Youth Football League, Inc		Adult Programs (SEW)
Older Adult/Senior Programs (ECP)	Private Swim Lessons: Indy Island	Kennedy King Memorial Ceremony (Annual)	Youth Sports Contracts- Decatur Baseball & Softball, Inc		Free Drop-In Programs (SEW)
Special Events- EE Based (ECP)	Private Swim Lessons: Krannert	Jumpin' for Jazz	Youth Sports Contracts- Decatur Township Girls Softball, Inc		
	Private Swim Lessons: King	Penticostal Youth Celebration Walk	Youth Sports Contracts- Decatur United Soccer Club, Inc		
	Private Swim Lessons: Lashonna Bates	Big Ten Rowing Championships	Youth Sports Contracts- Douglass Little League, Inc		
	Private Swim Lessons: Northwestway	IMPD - MSE Community Day	Youth Sports Contracts- Eagle Creek Little League, Inc		
	Private Swim Lessons: Perry	41st Annual Dulcimer Folk Festival	Youth Sports Contracts- Eagledale Little League, Inc		
	Private Swim Lessons: Sahm	Summer Night Trail Marathon (East Side)	Youth Sports Contracts- Edgewood Athletic Association, Inc		
	Private Swim Lessons: Thatcher	America We Remember	Youth Sports Contracts- Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, Inc		
	Indy Parks Swim School: King	Ravenswood Fireworks	Youth Sports Contracts- Freewill Faith and Family Center, Inc		
	Toys for Tots	Go-Girl Triathlon	Youth Sports Contracts- Franklin Township Youth Football Club, Inc		
	Observation of Environment	Walk with Us to Cure Lupus	Youth Sports Contracts- Green Machine Youth Softball Corp		
	Special Events- EE Based (SEW)	Fountain Fest	Youth Sports Contracts- Indiana Invaders		
	Special Events- Other (ECP)	Old School 41 Reunion	Youth Sports Contracts- Indiana Vipers		
		Bel Aire Gospel Fest and Chili Cook-off	Youth Sports Contracts- Soccer Community Organization for Recreation and Education, Inc		
		Norwood Block Party	Youth Sports Contracts- Indianapolis Boxing Club, Inc		
		ECP Fdn Annual Iron Eagle Paddle/Run	Youth Sports Contracts- Indianapolis Rowing Club, Inc		
		Town Run Night Ride	Youth Sports Contracts- Indianapolis Soap Box Derby, Inc		
		Planet Adventure Winter Trail Marathon	Youth Sports Contracts- M.G. Dad's Club Youth Football, Ltd		
		Feast of Lanterns	Youth Sports Contracts- National Junior Tennis League of Indianapolis, Inc		
		Zumba for the Paws	Youth Sports Contracts- Northwest Youth Football League, Inc		
		Drum Corps	Youth Sports Contracts- United Soccer Alliance of Indiana, Inc		
		El Grito Mexican Independence Day	Youth Sports Contracts- Soccer Time, Inc		
		Polar Plunge	Youth Sports Contracts- Starlings VBC, Indianapolis, LLP		
		Town Run Night Ride	Youth Sports Contracts- The Indiana Amateur Baseball Association, Inc		
		State of IN Classic Womens & Mens Race	Youth Sports Contracts- Warren Township Youth Baseball/Softball, Inc		

Stage in Program Lifecycle					
		Eagle Creek Cycling Grand Prix 1	Youth Sports Contracts- TAB		
		Indiana March Madness	Drop In- Basketball		
		Lemonade day	Adult Leagues- Soccer		
		Making a Dream a Reality	Site Specific- Rugby		
		Tour de Campus (Butler) 8K	Adult Leagues- Softball		
		Pops Series	Drop In- Volleyball		
		Shakespeare in the Park	School PE Classes: Indy Island		
		Blues in the Hood	School PE Classes: LaShonna Bates		
		Jazz in the Park	School PE Classes: George Washington		
		Arts for All	Water Fitness / Aerobics (Adult & Seniors): Krannert		
		Performing Arts Events	Water Fitness / Aerobics (Adult & Seniors): Thatcher		
		Vintage Movie Night	Water Fitness / Aerobics (Adult & Seniors): George Washington		
		Movies on the Lawn	Water Fitness / Aerobics (Adult & Seniors): Indy Island		
		Music in the Gardens	Water Fitness / Aerobics (Adult & Seniors): LaShonna Bates		
		Symphony in the Park	Open Recreational Swimming: Broad Ripple		
		In Concert with Nature	Open Recreational Swimming: Brookside		
		Jazz on the Point	Open Recreational Swimming: Northwestway		
		Holliday Park Summer Concerts	Open Recreational Swimming: Garfield		
		Broad Ripple Summer Concerts	Open Recreational Swimming: Ellenberger		
		City Wide- Peace Bowl	Open Recreational Swimming: Sahm		
		City Wide- Latino Soccer Cup	Open Recreational Swimming: Willard		
		City Wide-Futsal	Open Recreational Swimming: Krannert		
		City Wide- Track and Field	Indy Parks Swim School: Krannert		
		DPR Youth League-Pee Wee softball	Indy Parks Swim School: Thatcher		
		DPR Youth League-Watkins SuperStar basketball	Indy Parks Swim School: Garfield		
		DPR Youth League-Thatcher basketball	Indy Parks Swim School: Sahm		
		DPR Youth League- Riverside baseball	Lap Swimming: Krannert		
		DPR Youth League-Garfield basketball	Lap Swimming: Thatcher		
		DPR Youth League-Riverside football	Lap Swimming: Indy Island		
		DPR Youth League- Municipal Gardens basketball	Lifeguard Training Classes: George Washington		
		DPR Youth League-Douglass Lacrosse	Tim Bray Memorial Lessons: Douglass		
		Drop In youth Basketball	Mentoring		
		Drop In youth volleyball	Theater		
		Drop in youth Futsal	Clubs		
		Multi-Sites- Tennis	Second Helpings		
		Multi-Sites-Basketball	Reading Engagement		
		Drop In- Pickleball	Food Pantry		
		Make A Splash: All locations	Scouting		
		Indy Parks Swim School: Broad Ripple	Job Readiness		
		Indy Parks Swim School: Brookside	Life Skills - gardening, cooking, sewing		
		Indy Parks Swim School: Ellenberger	Party Time Dance		
		Indy Parks Swim School: Indy Island	Homeschool Programs (GPC)		
		Indy Parks Swim School: Northwestway	Homeschool Programs (SEW)		
		Indy Parks Swim School: Perry	Youth/Afterschool Programs (SEW)		
		Swim Indy: Douglass	Youth/Afterschool Programs (GPC)		
		Swim Indy: Willard	Adult Programs (HP)		
		Swim Indy: King	Family Programs (ECP)		
		Swim Indy: Brookside	Family Programs (HP)		
		Open Recreational Swimming: Indy Island	School/Scout Field Trips (GPC)		
		Open Recreational Swimming: Thatcher	Special Events- EE Based (HP)		
		Open Recreational Swimming: Bethel	Special Events- Seasonal (GPC)		
		Open Recreational Swimming: Rhodius			
		Open Recreational Swimming: Gustafson			
		Open Recreational Swimming: King			
		Swim Team: King			
		Swim Team: Brookside			
		Swim Team: Indy Island			
		Swim Team: Krannert			
		Swim Team: Ellenberger			
		Swim Team: Thatcher			
		Swim Team: Broad Ripple			
		Swim Team: Sahm			
		Swim Team: Rhodius			
		Swim Team: Gustafson			
		Swim Team: Garfield			
		Aqua Arthritis: Krannert			
		Aqua Arthritis: Thatcher			
		Dance/Movement			
		Social Development			
		Strengthening Families			
		College Preparedness			
		GED			
		Preschool Programs (HP)			
		Preschool Programs (GPC)			
		Adult Programs (ECP)			
		School/Scout Field Trips (ECP)			
		School/Scout Field Trips (HP)			
		Special Events- Seasonal (HP)			
		Older Adult/Senior Programs (SEW)			
		Homeschool Programs (ECP)			
		Homeschool Programs (HP)			
		Family Programs (SEW)			
8%	**11%**	**38%**	**29%**	**5%**	**8%**
29	40	134	103	17	28
351	351	351	351	351	351
New program; modest participation	Rapid participation growth	Moderate, but consistent participation growth	Slow participation growth	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	Declining participation
Source: Client					

Stage in Program Lifecycle

4.4.4 AGE SEGMENT DISTRIBUTION

In addition to the lifecycle analysis, staff also assessed age segment distribution of programs.

Despite the fact that the adult and senior population represent roughly 50% of the local population (median age 34.6 years), the balance of age segment distribution for programs is skewed towards youth. Based on the program list provided by the staff, 54% of all programming is geared towards ages 24 and below. While it is typical nation-wide for agencies to focus heavily on youth and families, it does leave out a growing portion of the middle-age and older population that tends to be underserved.

Only 22% of programs cater to the 45+ population. Based on future projections, the 55+ population is expected to grow to over 30% of total population by 2029. It would be appropriate for the staff to view the age segment distributions on an annual basis to ensure continued rebalancing takes place in programming among skewed categories. Also, if possible, given the differences in how the active adults (55+) participate in recreation programs, the trend is moving toward having at least two different segments of older adults.

Per research from NRPA, even in communities that have a high retiree population, senior centers have evolved from small meeting room spaces to fitness centers, therapeutic pools, walking tracks, multi-use spaces for social activities such as dancing and drama performances, and variously equipped spaces for arts and craft clubs and related activities. Many even have sales centers where center participants sell the products they make in their clubs.

The department could further evaluate splitting program offerings into 55–74 and 75+program segments. The 55-74 year old seniors are far more active seniors than the previous generation and are engaged in a variety of active sports, trips and adventures, and self-improvement and life skill learning opportunities. Skill based volunteering is also attractive to these groups where they can use their experience to provide thoughtful leadership.

The older group of seniors—people who are less physically capable, typically only travel during the daylight hours. Their activity may depend on provided meals to help economic decision making. They are generally older (75 and above) and find themselves more isolated than more active peers. More recently, park and recreation departments are providing program services and opportunities for socialization for this age group. Meal delivery also takes place in some instances during the weekdays.

ENGAGING TEEN PARTICIPATION

Teenagers make up a critical user group for parks and recreation departments. This age segment tends to be one of the most elusive in terms of overall participation in programs. It is important to engage teens in recreation offerings to ensure that youth have an opportunity to pose a positive impact in the community. Furthermore, a department that is effective in capturing the teen segment is potentially tapping into strong volunteer resource to aid in the development of future leaders.

Challenges in customer acquisition among teenagers has encouraged Indy Parks to team with Ball State University's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management (NREM) to offer an immersive learning course titled Environmental Programs Proposed to Engage Teenagers in Indy Parks. Students were challenged to propose ideas for programs that Indy Parks could use to better engage teens in environmental and recreation programs, using the resources at Eagle Creek Park.

In general, Indianapolis teenagers do not participate in parks and recreation programs. They are an underserved population in the Indy Parks system. Ball State students researched and conceptualized new ideas for programs that Indy Parks could adopt in the future to improve environmental awareness and shared stewardship of natural resources among teenagers. The semester-long project resulted in technical reports, brochures highlighting the proposed programs, and final presentation at the Building Better Communities Showcase event.

The following key themes and recommendations resulted from the study:

- **Outdoor Challenge Programs** - Students proposed a series of environmental skills programs to be completed by teenagers. A combination of outdoor activities would serve as challenges to be completed. It envisioned that teenagers would earn points or rewards after completing the challenges. Students could complete the mini-skill programs over a period of weeks or months. The program incorporated competition that could lead to specific rewards or outcomes. A possible proposed reward was a camping trip or a GoApe adventure.
- **Connecting to Popular Culture and Trends** - An interesting element of the outdoor skill-based program was archery. The rise in archery programs relates to teenage interest in popular culture and movies that have promoted archery. The year 2012 saw the popularity of the Hunger Games and also a rise in interest in archery in the U.S. Archery programs in several cities saw growth in participation.
- **Comparing Ideas to Other Parks Departments** - When evaluating Ball State students' projects, we can consider what other park and recreation departments are doing to better engage teenagers in the United States. Other city parks offer outdoor skill development programs. These may include actual work programs, such as conservation crews to help clean up the parks. Researchers have noted the importance of rites of passage programs for youth, particularly for minority youth (Pinckney et al., 2011). Parks and recreation departments may be able to facilitate rites of passages programs. One component of these programs is the need for community projects so that youth can form identities that include giving something back to their communities. At the same time, it may be important to respect their cultural identity and role of family, particularly for children of immigrants. This was noted as important by researchers of Hispanic youth, that their cultural identity should not be lost in efforts for acculturation or assimilation (Rodriguez et al., 2012.) Examples from cities with high minority populations, such as Detroit, include neighborhood cleanup projects and urban garden initiatives. (For more information, please see http://detroit.cbslocal.com/top-lists/best-volunteer-opportunities-for-kids-in-detroit/). Detroit also created a year-round youth program for helping maintain its parks
- **Evaluating Student Ideas for Programs**- When evaluating student projects, it is important to consider their relevance to the Indy Parks system. The Eagle Creek Park Foundation website also lists other activities consistent with the NREM students' proposal for environmental skill development, such as photography shoots, sailing lessons, pistol ranges, and endurance events. The idea of endurance events that challenge young adults to stretch themselves to new levels of physical fitness and professional skill development leads to another group proposal for Parkour and Obstacle Course programs.
- **Parkour and Obstacle Course**- The Parkour student group's rationale was that teenagers want something challenging and physically strenuous to do in a park setting. This group was particularly excited about their proposed program. Even though this group stretched the limits of what would be considered an environmental program for teenagers, they did think creatively about what might attract teenagers to public parks. Apparently, groups promoting Parkour exist in other parts of Indiana, such as in West Lafayette and Fishers. The Ball State students' idea of Parkour was "thinking outside the box" in some ways of what is traditionally thought of as acceptable in a public park setting. However, it is similar to the philosophy of the existing ropes course at Eagle Creek Park. The Go Ape Course (Available: http://goape.com/zip-line/indiana-eagle-creek-park) also represents challenge and risk as well as adventure.
- **Obstacle Courses as an Alternative**- While Parkour was met with some concern, given liability issues expressed by the Eagle Creek Park staff, it may be possible to have some other version of a physically challenging program with goals and a course to maneuver through stations. Obstacle courses could be an alternative. These obstacle courses could be available on a short-term basis and allow for lower risk and liability concerns. An example is provided from Winchester, Virginia Parks and Recreation Department. They are providing the World Explorer Obstacle Course in June of 2016. Participants will "jump, dash, crawl, weave, balance, and slip slide through ten different country-themed obstacles." (Available from: http://www.winchesterva.gov/international-festival/world-explorer-obstacle-course, para. 1). Note that this would involve less risk to participants than higher elements associated with a Parkour course. An obstacle course could have a competitive dimension. Winners could be awarded prizes or general incentives for participation and places in the competition.
- **Rewards and Incentives Programs** – The proposed Outdoor Challenge and Parkour programs suggest the importance of incentives or reward programs. One of the ideas of the NREM students was to provide a small sample of teenagers with a wilderness adventure or camping trip away from Indianapolis, after they had participated in programs at Eagle Creek Park. An example of a wilderness or camping trip provided to a small group of teenagers can be reviewed with the Portland, Oregon Parks and Recreation. Portland offers a wilderness skills overnight program for five days for teenagers ages 11-17. Portland also offers some other innovative teenager programs. In addition to a wilderness adventure, they offer programs close to home. This could be offered as a reward system for teenagers who volunteer to do conservation work in their local parks. Portland also provides examples of skill development programs. For example, a youth conservation crew and summer naturalist programs. Their GRUNT program (Greenspaces Restoration & Urban Naturalist Team) combines skill development in outdoor settings with professional career mentoring and environmental awareness. A junior naturalist program already exists with Indiana State Parks. Frank Rouse from Indy Parks contributed to the curriculum. Existing colleagues in Indiana staff could provide some suggestions on

implementing such a program at Eagle Creek Park. Although Eagle Creek Park has a Nature Day Camp Head Counselor position, it appears to be for older young adults, such as college-aged students. It may be possible to have junior naturalists, i.e., younger teens, mentored by the college students to have more young adults involved in camps. Teenagers would learn skills with environmental systems and work with children. Part of the motivation for the immersive learning course was that college students would be able to relate to the teenage years and propose relevant ideas.

- **Outdoor Skills Programs and Indiana Curriculum**- Indiana has natural resource curriculum for teenagers. The Junior Indiana Master Naturalist Statewide Curriculum was a combined effort of Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Purdue Extension, and others (Available http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/files/IMN-Curriculum-HostGuideJr.pdf). The guide includes language about orienteering and other outdoor skill development. Two student teams chose to focus their efforts on geocaching programs, an outdoor recreation activity, in which participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) or mobile device to hide and seek containers, called "geocaches" or "caches". As with Junior Naturalist Programs, Indiana DNR State Parks have provided examples of implementing geocaching programs throughout the state. Geocaching is a trending activity that has been attracting more interest among people of all ages
- **Geocaching**- The students in NREM 405/505 had some interesting ideas about developing geocaching at Eagle Creek Park. Social media was proposed for teenagers to record their participation in geocaching in the park and grow interest in outdoor activity. Competitive elements were also considered to engage teenagers. The two college teams that developed ideas for geocaching had some different ideas about the programs. One team proposed using geocaching locations to teach participants about different habitats, such as wetlands or forests, or to help locate them close to the Earth Discovery Center. The other Ball State Geocaching team suggested locations in various places, in order to encourage participants to visit many different areas within the Eagle Creek Park. One hope with geocaching activities being proposed by the college students was that it would combine technology with outdoor recreation and thereby connect to teenagers through modern technological tools, with which they are already familiar. For example, some cell phones have GPS capability installed, and teenagers are very aware of cell phone technology.

Additionally, there are a number of other programs nationwide that engage in similar ventures. For example:

The Challenge Cost Share Program supports National Park Service parks and programs that are aligned with partners that promote urban outreach, youth engagement, and/or connecting people to the outdoors. The initiative requires a 1:1 match by the local recipient — resulting in greater financial leverage and impact. The key program priorities include:

- **Urban Outreach**: Projects to promote active healthy living, restore or conserve community natural and cultural assets, or promote close-to-home access to recreation within an urban setting
- **Youth Engagement**: Projects to engage youth participants to play, learn, serve, and work associated with National Park Service sites and programs
- **Connecting People to the Outdoors**: Projects to enhance tangible and/or intangible access to the outdoors that provide increased outdoor recreation opportunities

Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation is an example of an agency that successfully obtained funding from this to engage at-risk teens in outdoor activities as well as summer trips to Mammoth Cave National Park.

Other examples of youth engagement initiatives include:

- **Abuelitos Project** engage Latino youth in regular outdoor service projects – especially those focused on supporting elderly community members. To start, every two weeks young volunteers devote several hours to help neighborhood 'grandparents' or Abuelitos clean their yard and plant a community garden
- **Yaakw Yees (Young Canoe)** carve two traditional canoes at the University of Alaska SE to immerse the community in Tlingit culture and reconnect the historical and modern day cultures. This pilot program educates a broad audience on Alaska Native Heritage and outdoor issues
- **NYC 'Own It' Program** expose and educate local young people about their outdoor opportunities through outdoor activities and clean-up service projects at local parks
- **On the Go** work with multiple organizations such as youth groups, places of worship, the artistic community, and even retirement homes to bring together a diverse group to discover new ways to participate in the outdoors – forming new relationships with nature and with each other based on various interests and experiences
- **Team Priority** organize community members to influence outdoor policies and raise awareness and support for outdoor programs by using a combination of social media and on-the-ground grassroots organizing
- **Walk Your Block** work with local officials to close off and transform an urban street in Dallas into an accessible place for people of all ages to enjoy recreation along with informative stations that provide information on outdoor opportunities and resources

Additionally, integrating technology opportunities and bringing connectivity to parks will drive greater park visitation by youth and thus drive additional peer to peer outreach as well.

The City of Los Angeles has engaged in a public-private partnership in collaboration with American Park Network with support from Toyota to bring free Oh, Ranger! Wi-Fi™ to park visitors. The City of Plano, Texas provides free Wi-Fi at all their parks and facilities in a partnership with Toyota.

New York State has a similar public Wi-Fi initiative, bringing free connectivity to iconic spots like Niagara Falls and Jones Beach while Arizona State Parks is working with concession partner Aramark to install free public Wi-Fi in popular destinations like Kartchner Caverns and Patagonia Lake State Park, with plans to expand the service throughout the entire system.

4.5 PROGRAM CLASSIFICATIONS

The service classification matrix was developed by PROS Consulting in conjunction with department staff through an iterative work session process. It will serve as a guide for department staff to follow when classifying programs and for how a program needs to be managed with regard to cost recovery.

By establishing clarification of what constitutes a "core essential public service," "important public program", and "value added program" the department and its stakeholders are provided a better understanding of why and how to manage each program area as it applies to public value and private value. Additionally, the effectiveness of the criteria linked to performance management expectations relies on the true cost of programs (direct and indirect cost) being identified.

Where a program falls within this matrix can help to determine the most appropriate cost recovery rate that needs to be pursued and measured. This includes being able to determine what level of public benefit and private benefit exists as they apply to each program area. To help implement cost recovery policies, PROS has developed the following definitions presented in Table 3 to help classify specific programs within program areas.

Category	Description	Cost Recovery	Subsidy
Core-Essential	• Part of the organizational mission • Serves a majority of the community • "We must offer this program."	None to moderate (0%- 30%)	High to complete
Important	• Important to the community • Serves large portions of the community • "We should offer this program."	Moderate (30%- 70%)	Moderate
Value-Added	• Enhanced community offerings • Serves niche groups • "It would be nice to offer this program."	High to Full recovery (70% and higher)	Little to none

Table 1 - Cost Recovery and Subsidy Program Categories

Programs falling into the Important or Value-Added classifications generally represent programs that receive lower priority for tax subsidization. Important programs contribute to the organizational mission but fall into 50% public value and 50% private value and are still important to provide it; therefore, cost recovery for these programs should be high (i.e., at least 50% overall). Value-added programs are not critical to the mission but provide individual based services. These programs need to be prevented from drawing upon limited public funding. Overall cost recovery for these programs needs to be near to or in excess of 100%.

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost accounting is to be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and the department's program staff should be trained on this process and how to price the service correctly.

The following table represents where the Department's staff portrays the classification of each program:

Program Area Classification		
Essential	***Important***	***Value-Added***
Multi Site-Walk-in weight room	Multi- site- Indy In Motion - Youth & Adult	Multi- site- Personal Trainers
Multi Site- Fitness Rooms	Multi site-Oasis Senior Programs	Multi- site - Senior Dances/socials
Multi- site General Adult Recreation	Multi site- Registered Programs	Multi-siteKinderJam - Youth
Arts for All	Multi- site-Martial Arts Programs	Multi-site - Homeschool programming
Drop In youth Basketball	Multi-site- Zumba - Adult	Arts Camp at Garfield
Drop In youth volleyball	Multi- site-Self Defense - Adults	Arts Camp at Ellenberger
Drop in youth Futsal	Multi- Site- Low Impact Aerobics - Adult	GATHER on the Move -Special Needs
Drop In- Basketball	Multi- site -Step Aerobics - Adult	GATHER -Special Needs/therapeutic camps
Drop In- Volleyball	Multi- site- Dance Ballet - Youth	Environmental Education Camp- Southeastway
Drop In- Pickleball	Multi-site- Dance Combination - Youth	Environmental Education Camp- Eagle Creek EDC
Make A Splash	Multip site- Dance Hip Hop - Youth	Environmental Education Camp- Holliday
Open Recreational Swimming	Multi- site Parent/Child Classes	Environmental Education Camp- Eagle Creek OC
Mentoring	Multi- site Gymnastics - Youth	Pre School Camps- EE @ Eagle Creek EDC
Family Programs	Multi- site Sports Readiness - Youth	Pre School Camps- EE @ Eagle Creek OC
School/Scout Field Trips	Site specific- Fencing - Youth & Adult	Pre School Camps- EE @ Holliday Park
	Site Specific- Belly Dancing - Adult	Pre School Camps- EE @Southeastway
	Multi-Site-Dance - Ballroom/Swing - Adult	Singles Dash
	Multi Site- Movement Classes - Youth	Outback Scramble
	Broad Ripple Traditional Day Camp	Kennedy King Memorial Ceremony (Annual)
	Krannert Traditional Day Camp	Polar Plunge
	Riverside Traditional Day Camp	Town Run Night Ride
	Christian Park Traditional Day Camp	State of IN Classic Women & Men's Race
	Riverside Traditional Day Camp	Indiana March Madness
	Ellenberger Traditional Day Camp	Holliday Trail Run
	Douglass Traditional Day Camp	Butler University Bark for Life
	Garfield Park Traditional Day Camp	Tour de Campus (Butler) 8K
	Drum Corps International World Championship	Big Ten Rowing-
	Mayor's Dust Bowl	Indianapolis Alley Cats Professional Ultimate Frisbee
	Seasonal Events - Halloween, Christmas, Easter, etc.	Light The Summer-Indy Parks Summer Kickoff
	IMPD Community Days (3)	Eastside Reunion Picnic
	ECPF Annual Kid's Fishing Day	Personal Best 5 Miler
	Music in the Gardens	Old School 41 Reunion
	Symphony in the Park	Bel Aire Gospel Fest
	In Concert with Nature	and Chili Cook-off Norwood Block Party
	Jazz on the Point	Feast of Lanterns
	Holliday Park Summer Concerts	Zumba for the Paws
	OWL Music Fest	Making the Dream a Reality
	Irvington Artists	Indy Burn (Kapsalis) Soccer Cup
	Broad Ripple Summer Concerts	Lemonade Day
	Pops Series	El Grito Mexican Independence Day
	Blues in the Hood	Christian Baseball Parade
	Jazz in the Park	Irvington Farmer's Market
	City Wide- Peace Bowl	Touch A Truck
	City Wide- Latino Soccer Cup	Planet Adventure Winter Trail Marathon
	City Wide-Futsal	Jumpin for Jazz
	City Wide- Track and Field	Town Run Night Ride
	DPR Youth League-Pee Wee softball	Eagle Creek Cycling Grand Prix 1
	DPR Youth League-Watkins SuperStar basketball	DINO Trail Run
	DPR Youth League-Thatcher basketball	Riverside Reunion
	DPR Youth League- Riverside baseball	Indy Pet Pride
	DPR Youth League-Garfield basketball	America We Remember
	DPR Youth League-Riverside football	ECP FdnAnnual Iron Eagle Paddle/Run
	DPR Youth League- Municipal Gardens basketball	Kids Triathlon
	DPR Youth League-Douglass Lacrosse	Mayor's Latino Soccer Cup
	Youth Sports Contracts- Bishop Chatard High School, Inc	Riverside Civic League Parade
	Youth Sports Contracts- Cardinal Ritter High School, Inc	RBI Opening Day Celebration
	Youth Sports Contracts- Carnine RBI West, Inc	ICC American Div. World Cup Qualifier
	Youth Sports Contracts- Christian Little League, Inc	Nate Walk 2015
	Youth Sports Contracts- Christian Park Youth Football, Inc	Indy Pride Picnic / Bat-n-Rouge Softball Game

Program Area Classification		
	Youth Sports Contracts- Coach Alonzo Watford Sr. Inner City Youth Football League, Inc	Walk for Christ - Community Festival
	Youth Sports Contracts- Decatur Baseball & Softball, Inc	Turn Festival - Transforming Urban Neighborhoods
	Youth Sports Contracts- Decatur Township Girls Softball, Inc	Fountain Fest
	Youth Sports Contracts- Decatur United Soccer Club, Inc	Annual Dulcimer Folk Festival
	Youth Sports Contracts- Douglass Little League, Inc	Summer Night Trail Marathon (East Side)
	Youth Sports Contracts- Eagle Creek Little League, Inc	Field Trips
	Youth Sports Contracts- Eagledale Little League, Inc	Vintage Movie Night
	Youth Sports Contracts- Edgewood Athletic Association, Inc	Performing Arts Events
	Youth Sports Contracts- Father Thomas Scecina Memorial High School, Inc	Performing Arts Classes
	Youth Sports Contracts- Freewill Faith and Family Center, Inc	Visual Arts Classes
	Youth Sports Contracts- Franklin Township Youth Football Club, Inc	Movies on the Lawn
	Youth Sports Contracts- Green Machine Youth Softball Corp	Autumn Art Fair
	Youth Sports Contracts- Indiana Invaders	Shakespeare in the Park
	Youth Sports Contracts- Indiana Vipers	Gallery Exhibits
	Youth Sports Contracts- Soccer Community Organization for Recreation and Education, Inc	Chalk Art Festival
	Youth Sports Contracts- Indianapolis Boxing Club, Inc	Enrichments- Punt Pass and Kick
	Youth Sports Contracts- Indianapolis Rowing Club, Inc	Enrichments- Pitch Hit and Run
	Youth Sports Contracts- Indianapolis Soap Box Derby, Inc	Enrichments- Hershey's Track and Field
	Youth Sports Contracts- M.G. Dad's Club Youth Football, Ltd	Enrichements- Jr. NBA Basketball
	Youth Sports Contracts- National Junior Tennis League of Indianapolis, Inc	Adult Leagues-Softball
	Youth Sports Contracts- Northwest Youth Football League, Inc	Adult Leagues- Kickball
	Youth Sports Contracts- United Soccer Alliance of Indiana, Inc	Site Specific- Cricket
	Youth Sports Contracts- Soccer Time, Inc	Site Specific- Ultimate Frisbee
	Youth Sports Contracts- Starlings VBC, Indianapolis, LLP	Site Specific- Stick & Puck
	Youth Sports Contracts- The Indiana Amateur Baseball Association, Inc	Site Specific- Free Style Skating
	Youth Sports Contracts- Warren Township Youth Baseball/Softball, Inc	Site Specific- Rugby
	Youth Sports Contracts- TAB	Site Specific- Lacrosse
	Multi-Sites- Futsal	Site Specific- Broomball
	Multi-Sites-Pickleball	Site Specific- Cricket
	Multi-Sites- Tennis	Site Specific- Gaelic Athletics
	Multi-Sites-Basketball	Site Specific- Futsal
	Multi-Sites-Volleyball	Site Specific- Badminton
	Indy Parks Swim School	Site Specific- Pickleball
	Swim Indy	Adult Leagues- Soccer
	School PE Classes	Private Swim Lessons
	Water Fitness / Aerobics	Swim Team
	Lifeguard Training Classes	Lap Swimming
	CPR/First Aid	Teen Night Swimming
	Food Pantry	Scuba Diving Classes
	Second Helpings	Kayak Classes
	Scouting	Community CPR, 1st Aid Training
	Theater	Toddler Swim Times
	Clubs	Pack the Pools
	Dance/Movement	Aqua Arthritis
	Observation of Environment	Tim Bray Memorial Lessons
	Life Skills - gardening, cooking, sewing	Junior Lifeguard Training
	Music Engagement	Job Readiness
	Preschool Programs	GED
	Youth/After School Programs	Reading Engagement
	Homeschool Programs	Social Development
	Adult Programs	Party Time Dance
	Older Adult/Senior Programs	Language Classes - ESL, Spanish
		Strengthening Families
		Financial Fitness
		Pottery
		Poetry
		Toys for Tots
		College Preparedness
		Special Events- Seasonal
		Special Events- EE Based
		Special Events- Other (endurance races, etc.)
		Free Drop-In Programs
Part of the Mission / Serves majority of the Community / Highest Level of Subsidy offered	*Important to the community / Serves the broad community / Some level of subsidy offered*	*Enhanced Community Offering / Serves niche groups / Limited to no subsidy*

Program Category

4.5.1 SPONSORS / PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

SPONSORS / PARTNERS

Currently, the department has several partners such as the University of Indianapolis, United Soccer Alliance of Indiana Inc., Girl Scouts, Make a Splash USA Swimming, Second Helpings, Indianapolis Public Library, etc. All of the partners have either formal or informal agreements with the department that help raise money to provide their services and/or occupy spaces for their programs and events, cover the program cost, and work together with Indy Parks to provide a valuable service.

In order to truly sell the potential benefits of partnering with Indy Parks, there is a need to develop a focused sponsorship campaign and a proposal for tiered sponsorship levels. However, there is no information on the website about becoming a sponsor/partner of the department. This information needs to be highlighted front and center on the website describing how to become a sponsor/partner and the benefits of becoming a partner.

Additionally, to garner sponsorship dollars it would be helpful for the department to provide details listing each event, the participation numbers, and user demographics. This would help potential sponsors to identify how well the park system participants align with the sponsor's target market and thus, choose the right fit for them.

These metrics will also help the department evaluate its return on investment (ROI) for sponsorships/partnerships for various events. Some other recommendations would be to publish these metrics on the website and promote them aggressively.

Other recommendations for sponsorship include:

Sponsor Recognition- Recognizing all existing or past sponsors for their support would strengthen working relationships with sponsors. The brochure's imagery could provide illustrations of promotions that may have been done or could be done to demonstrate sponsorship positioning. The department should consider adding a page in the brochure thanking all of their current partners.

Tiered Sponsorship Levels- It is essential to create tiered levels of sponsorship in order to allow all potential sponsors the ability to choose the level of support they wish to exhibit.

Package Offerings- It has been the experience of others that the greater the opportunities to package the offerings, the more the likelihood of selling a sponsorship. Packaging sponsorship opportunities for events as well as signature parks and facilities including the Eagle Creek Park, Garfield Park, Nature Center, The World Sports Park etc. could be a viable option to provide additional sponsor value.

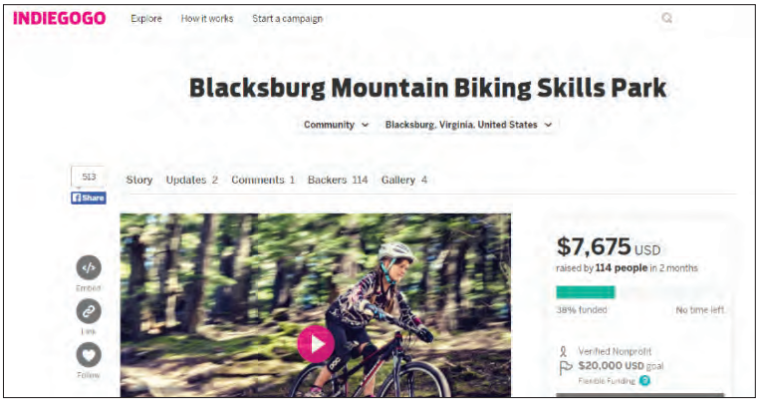
Providing sample packaging options that tie-in some signature special events with some of the smaller events would ensure that the staff up-sells events that may not be sold otherwise, while the partners receive more recognition for their sponsorship investment.

Agencies are also partnering with vendors and partners for healthy eating options through concessions or vending. The idea is to include more 'healthy' options geared towards users, especially young people. (e.g. www.healthyvending.com)

Crowdfunding

This area can be managed in conjunction with the Indy Parks Foundation's projects when looking for specific opportunities. Crowdfunding websites such as Kickstarter.com, Razoo.com, Indiegogo, etc. have extremely successful examples of public agencies that have successfully partnered and raised revenue to build or enhance parks and facilities, offer programs, and even design marketing materials. The Town of Blacksburg recently raised over $7,600 for a Mountain Biking Skills Park matching grant with the South Carolina Commission of Conservation and Recreation.

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



VOLUNTEERS

PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS

The department has a wide variety of volunteers to help with their core programs. Indy Parks has an excellent volunteer page on its website that answers the most frequent questions asked by potential volunteers; along with instructions on how to become a volunteer. This easily accessibly page can be partially credited for the high quantity of volunteers Indy Parks receives each year.

PROS encourages the department to foster a system-wide approach to volunteer recruitment and management. Streamlined procedures and standardized guidelines for volunteer management are critical to making volunteers an effective complement to paid personnel and a valuable asset in reducing operational costs. When managed with respect and used strategically, volunteers can also serve as the primary advocates for the department and its offerings.

A key part of maintaining the desirability of volunteerism in the department is developing a good reward and recognition system. The consultant team recommends using tactics similar to those found in frequent flyer programs, wherein volunteers can use their volunteer hours to obtain early registration at programs, or discounted pricing at certain programs, rentals or events, or any other department function.

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

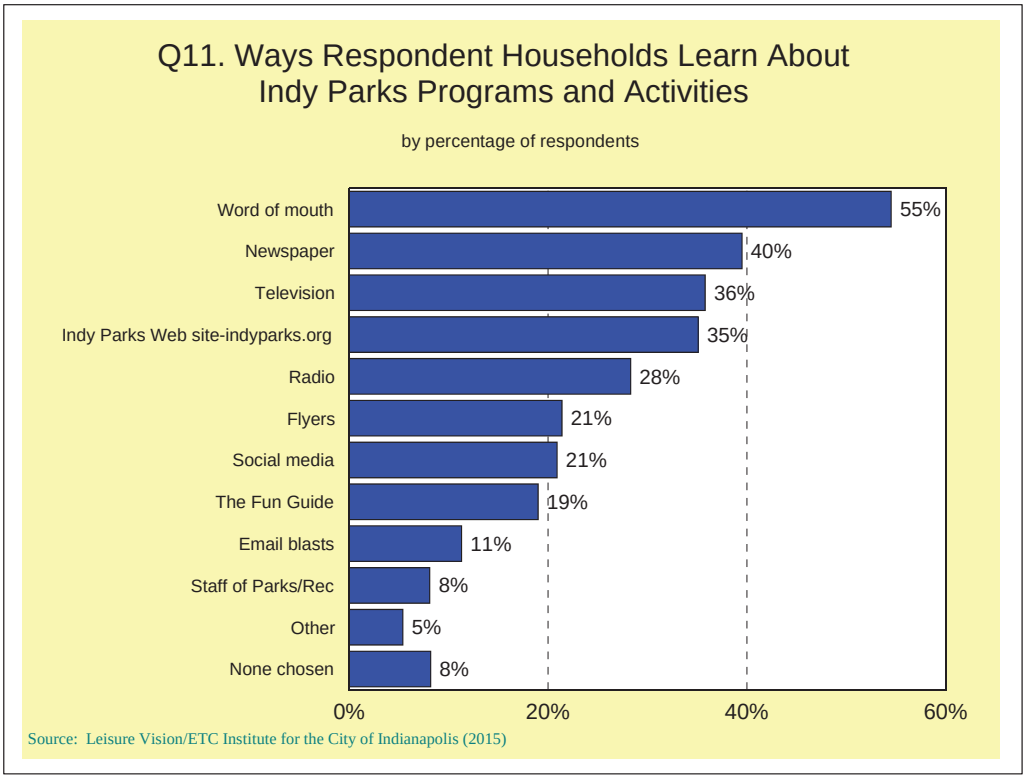
- Identify volunteer opportunities system-wide, develop job descriptions and acceptance conditions for volunteers (such as background checks)
- Utilize online sources such as www.volunteermatch.org to recruit volunteers
- Develop a tracking system to quantify the number of volunteer hours according to program area and specific function and document cost savings in more detailed ways as well as leveraging time for grants that require in-kind support
- Develop documented volunteer recruitment, retention, and recognition systems
- Involve volunteers in cross-training to expose them to various recreation functions and increase their skill. This can also increase their utility, allowing for more flexibility in making work assignments, and can increase their appreciation and understanding of the department
- Add steps to formally document resignation or termination of volunteers. Also, include ways to monitor and track reasons for resignation/termination
- Involve volunteers in cross-training to expose them to various departmental functions and increase their skill. This can also increase their utility, allowing for more flexibility in making work assignments, and can increase their appreciation and understanding of the department

4.5.2 MARKETING AND WEBSITE

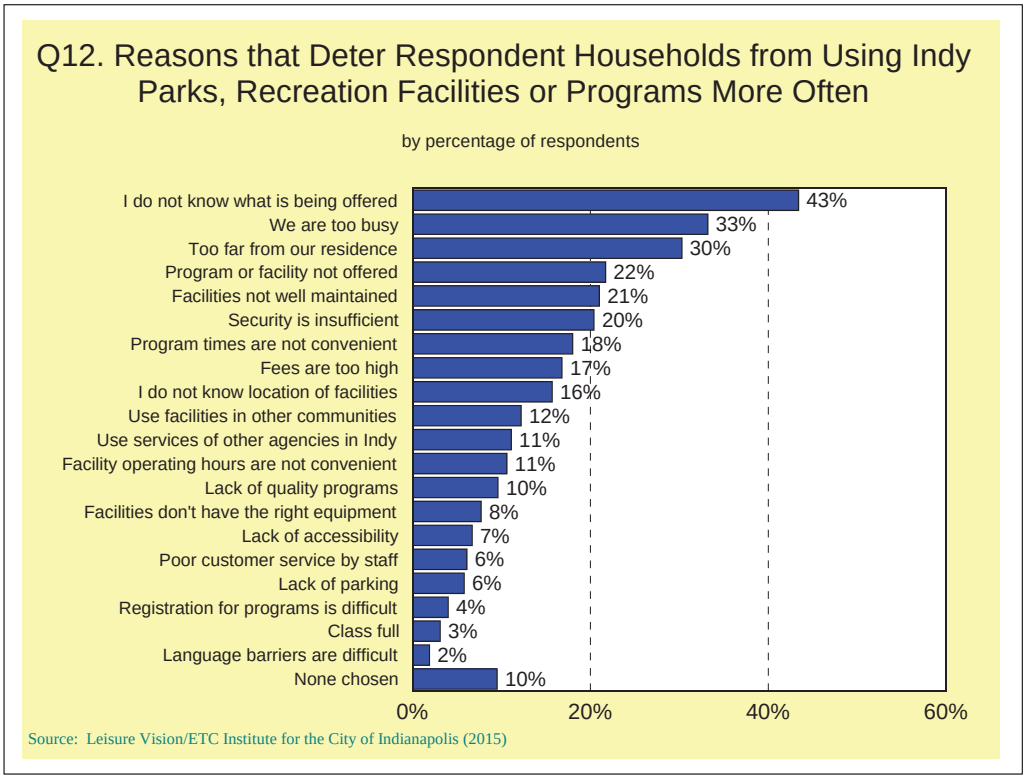
MARKETING

This section reviews the department's marketing and promotions as gleaned from the program worksheets. Given below are the responses from the statistically-valid survey and ways in which respondent households learn about Indy parks, programs, and activities.

By far the single most cited answer was Word of Mouth (55%) of all respondents stating that followed by Newspaper (40%), Television (36%), and Indy Parks Website (35%). Social media (21%) and The Fun Guide (19%) were chosen by about one out of every five respondents only. Even though the survey respondents tend to skew older in age which might have influenced a higher response rate towards more traditional media, the limited number that chose social media or emails indicate that those mediums of communication could keep growing. The website percentage has potential to increase in use while newer options such as a department App could help maximize the outreach opportunities.



In terms of barriers to participation, respondents chose "I don't know what is being offered" as the biggest reason preventing them from using parks, recreation facilities or programs more often. Lack of marketing and awareness is the biggest barrier to participation per the survey results and an area that must be given immediate importance if the department is to increase participation and financial sustainability. Areas of opportunity mentioned most frequently include creating a Smart Phone Enabled Website and a department-wide App.



As stated in the program assessment worksheets provided by staff, most programs are promoted via printed/online program guides, the website, in-facility promotions, special events, and flyers/brochures. There are also some instances of social media use, paid advertisements, and even some radio and TV advertising of specific programs.

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

Cross promoting at special events would be highly recommended. It is imperative that the department take advantage of the presence of high numbers of relative captive audience in the special event environment to promote its other offerings, programs, facilities, and rentals. Similar cross-promoting programs targeted towards the same age group audiences should also be encouraged. An example would be cross-promoting day camp programs at special events such as Christmas at Garfield Park or the Eggscellent Easter Egg Hunt.

WEBSITE

While the home page provided through active net (see above) is visually appealing and lists a variety of programs/activities and park locations, the actual home page (top left image) could be improved. It would be good to have images of actual users on the home page versus icons. The listing under Future Activities indicates no current activities matching the user, which doesn't accurately convey the variety of user offerings.

The search bar is rather prominent and easy to locate making it easy to look for information while the direct call-to-action to register for program and offerings is a good tactic to encourage user registration. The icons provide an easy way to navigate to the desired areas of interest. However, the extra white space on the home page makes it seem empty and incomplete. Some recommendations include:

- Ensure consistency in the icons by adding text under each icon and not just some of them
- Ensure that the vision and mission are visible and highlighted on the Home Page
- Provide pictures of staff and individual instructors/trainers is a great way of creating greater personal relations and interactions
- It would be ideal to have a stand-alone branded website for Indy Parks that can be linked to the Indy.gov website but has a web presence that easily resonates with the community and is aligned with the department's messaging and branding ideas. E.g. The City of Arlington, TX has a presence on the city's website but also has its independent website titled www.naturallyfun.org which is also the tagline for their brand: Naturally Fun

Indy Parks is fairly active on social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.). It does engage with its users and employs a good combination of information and education. The continued use of Web 2.0 technology such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest is critical. The key to successful implementation of a social network is to move the participants from awareness to action and creating greater user engagement. This could be done by:

- Allowing controlled 'user generated content' by encouraging users to send in their pictures from the department's special events or programs
- Continue to leverage the website and social media to obtain poll customer feedback for programs, parks and facilities, and customer service
- Expand opportunities for Crowd-Sourcing
  - Some resources include www.mindmixer and www.peakdemocracy.com
- Provide opportunities for donations or Crowd-funding through the website
  - www.kickstarter.org / www.indiegogo.com / www.razoo.com for Crowd funding options including printing program guides or developing marketing material or evaluate a submittal to the National Recreation and Park Association's crowdfunding website www.fundyourpark.org
- Conduct annual website strategy workshop with the staff to identify ways and means that the website can support the department
- Overall, it would be ideal if the marketing efforts were supported by a department–wide marketing and branding plan, supplemented by business plans for core programs and facility operations.

SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS

Based on information on social media usage available from 2013- 2015, this section details recent trends related to estimated numbers of users, frequency of use, and mediums used to access social media sites.

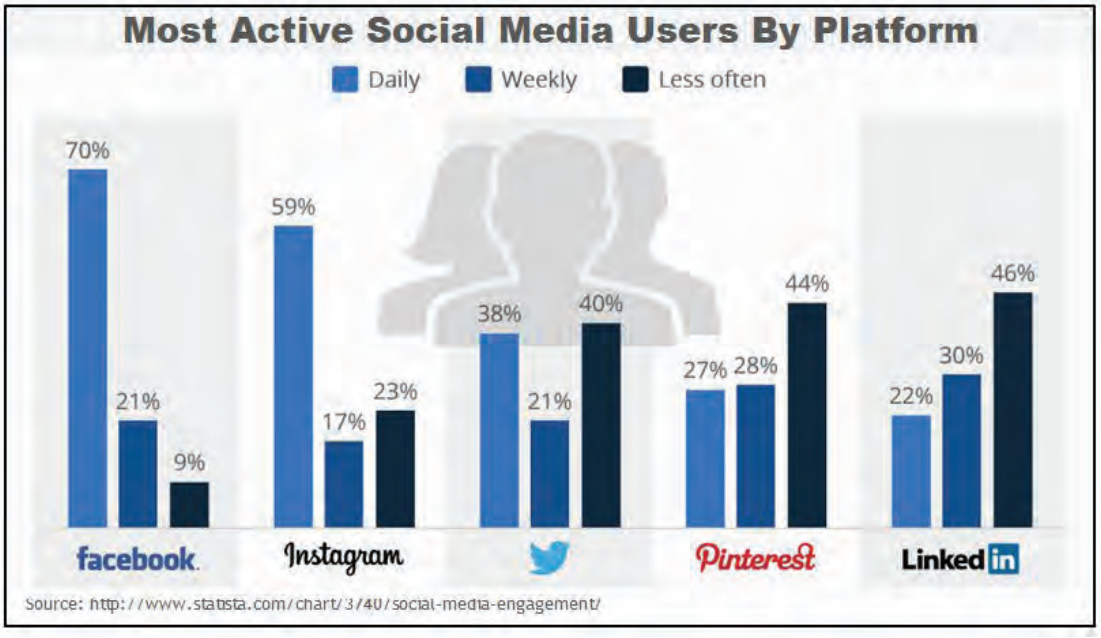
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ACTIVE MONTHLY USERS

The estimated numbers of active monthly users for the most popular social media platforms are as follows:

- Facebook- 1.55 billion
- Instagram- 400 million
- Twitter- 320 million
- Pinterest- 100 million
- Linked In- 100 million

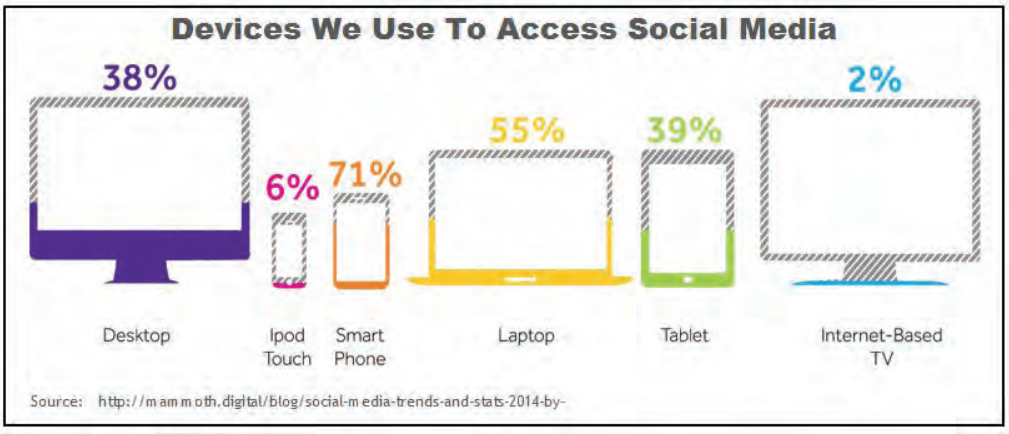
FREQUENCY OF USE BY PLATFORM

This chart describes the frequency at which active users are accessing various social media platforms. This information shows that Facebook and Instagram are consistently used on a daily basis; while Pinterest and LinkedIn are generally used less than once a week.

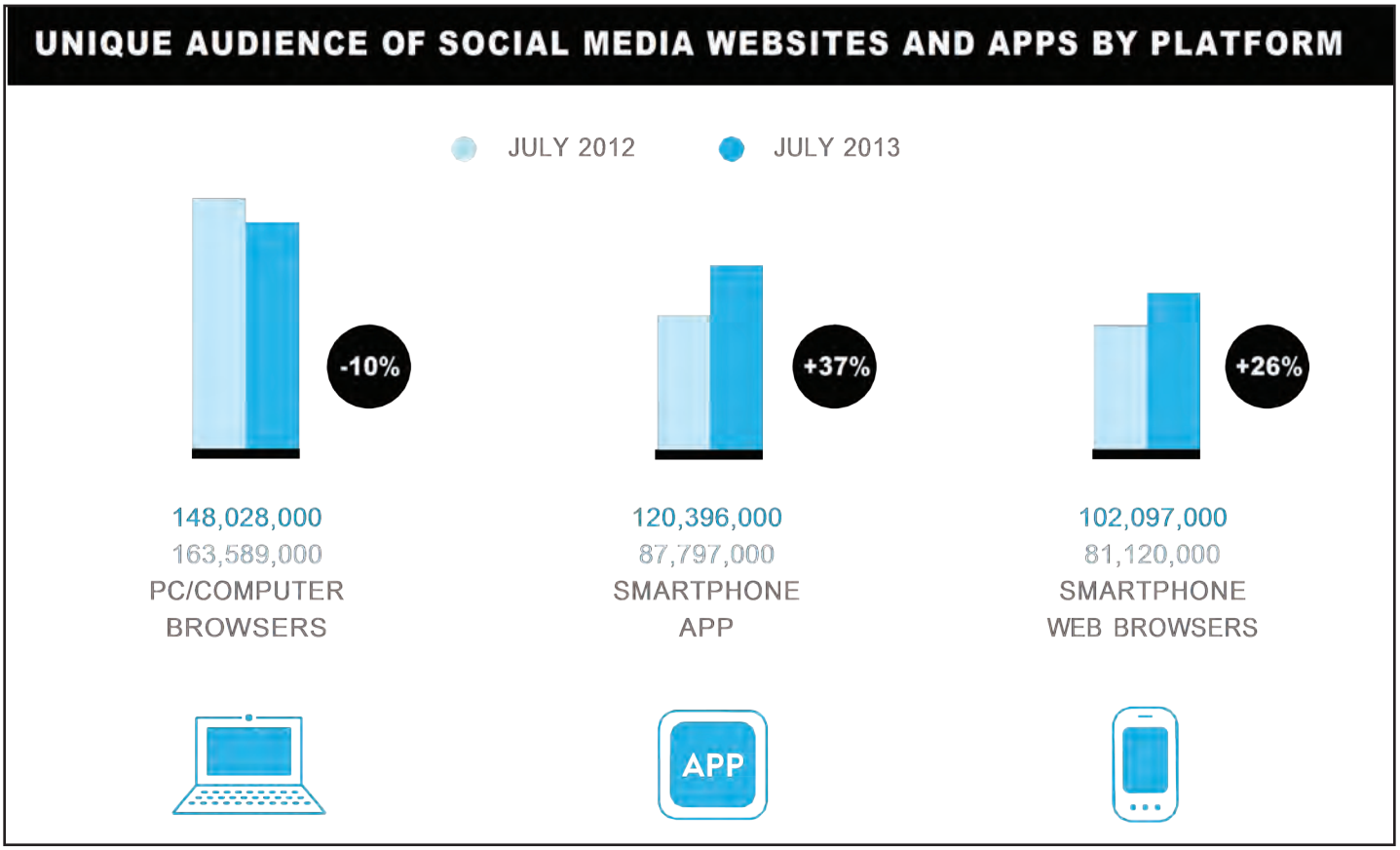


MEDIUMS USED FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

The following graphic depicts the various devices used to access social media sites. This indicates that smartphones (71%) are the most heavily used medium by social media users; followed by Laptops (55%), Tablets (39%), and Desktop Computers (38%). In today's times, any social media campaign or outreach strategy needs to be designed first with smart phones in mind in order to maximize its effectiveness and reach.



From the 2014 Nielsen's *The Digital Consumer* report, the following chart shows unique audience of social media websites and apps by platform. The chart illustrates that individuals are starting to reach for their smartphone more frequently, versus a traditional computer to access social media platforms.



SOCIAL MEDIA PERFORMANCE METRIC

An important aspect of using social media is being able to monitor its overall performance. In order to do so, there are three key performance indicators (KPI's) that every social marketer should be aware of: conversion rate, engagement rate, and audience reach. All three of these KPI's directly influence one another and should be continually monitored and measured.

- **Conversion Rate**- the percentage of visitors that take a desired action on a website.
  - Conversion Rate= (Web Conversions/Web Visitors)
- **Engagement Rate**- a "consistent calculation" meant to measure the level of engagement across all pieces of content shared on a particular platform, most notably Facebook.
  - Engagement Rate= (Total Engagements (Comments, Likes, Shares, etc.)/Total Posts Published) x 100
- **Reach**- the total number of people your content is served to.

According to Wordstream.com, the median conversion rate of all social media accounts is roughly 2.35%. The top 25% percent of all social media accounts has a median conversion rate of nearly twice that (5.31%). When looking at engagement rates, the average account has a rate between 0.5%-0.99%. Any account with an engagement rate over 1% is considered to be doing very good at interacting with their followers.

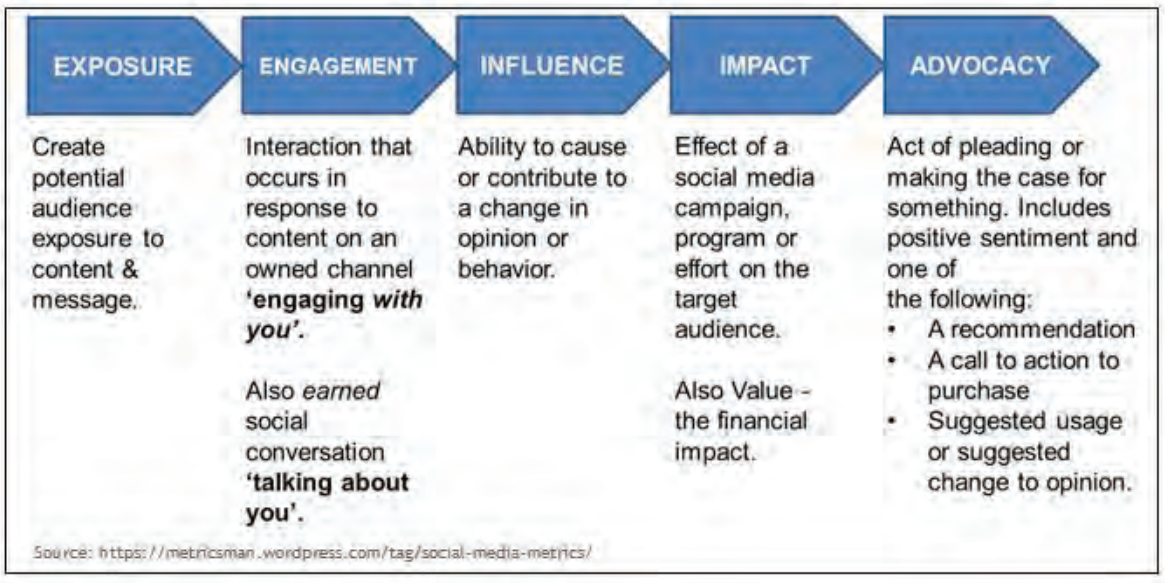
Below is a snapshot of how Indy Parks' social media figures stack up against other comparable park agencies, as of February 4, 2016. Indy Parks currently are benchmark leaders when it comes to number of followers on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Recently, Indy Parks has gained 283 Periscope followers.

Park Agency	City/County, State	Population	Facebook	% of Pop.	Twitter	% of Pop.	Instagram	% of Pop.	Pinterest	YouTube	LinkedIn
Indy Parks and Recreation	Indianapolis, IN	848,788	25,606 Likes	3.02%	10,203 Followers 5,287 Tweets 873 Likes	1.20%	1,488 Followers	0.18%	252	31 Subscribers 50 Videos 65,076 Views	271 Followers
Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation	Mecklenburg County, NC	1,012,539	3,304 Likes	0.33%	856 Followers 900 Tweets 48 Likes	0.08%	N/A	-	36 Followers 16 Pins 0 Likes	N/A	N/A
Columbus Recreation and Parks	Columbus, OH	835,957	5,744 Likes	0.69%	1,911 Followers 1,079 Tweets 312 Likes	0.23%	N/A	-	75 Followers 393 Pins 3 Likes	389 Subscribers 37 Videos 128 Views	N/A
KC Parks	Kansas City, MO	470,800	5,647 Likes	1.20%	4,664 Followers 4,740 Tweets 1,405 Likes	0.99%	2,783 Followers	0.59%	N/A	101 Subscribers 311 Videos 39,117 Views	N/A
Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation	Fort Wayne, IN	258,522	7,980 Likes	3.09%	4,188 Followers 2,390 Tweets 15 Likes	1.62%	N/A	-	N/A	8 Subscribers 26 Videos 9,720 Views	N/A
Denver Parks and Recreation	Denver, CO	663,862	7,059 Likes	1.06%	4,713 Followers 2,330 Tweets 338 Likes	0.71%	542 Followers	0.08%	N/A	65 Subscribers 23 Videos 11,684 Views	N/A
Dallas Park and Recreation	Dallas, TX	1,281,047	2,733 Likes	0.21%	3,725 Followers 2,974 Tweets 493 Likes	0.29%	144 Followers	0.01%	75 Followers 644 Pins 0 Likes	N/A	N/A
Austin Parks and Recreation	Austin, TX	912,791	11,806 Likes	1.29%	2,282 Followers 1,784 Tweets 1,175 Likes	0.25%	461 Followers	0.05%	N/A	30 Subscribers 34 Videos 6,499 Views	N/A

Note:
*All figures were collected on February 4, 2016
*Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn were not compared to the population due to the limited number of followers/subscribers for these platforms

In addition to a strong Facebook page, Indy Parks has undertaken an effort to provide many park locations with a branded Facebook location page, which is nestled under the brand page. As of February 2016, there were 173 such pages with a total, since inception, of 39,382 likes (not including the brand page.) One such location, Eagle Creek Park, features 7,116 total page likes or 0.8% of the Indianapolis population topping many of the benchmark department pages.

In order to help ensure the department's social media pages perform at a high level, the consulting team has included a social media model below. These metrics breakdown and define the five major components required for any social media platform to be successful.



Lastly, the following is a list of potential sources and online mediums that the city's offerings are presently on or could be used for the future. It is understood that this is not an all-inclusive list and that city and department staff should continue to keep up with trends and technologies as they emerge.

Type	URL	Description and Use for Indy Parks
App	http://www.arlingtontx.gov/app/ http://www.thealaskaapp.com/	Develop a smartphone and tablet app highlighting City offerings such as the one developed by Arlington or Alaska.
Wikipedia	www.wikipedia.com	Among Top 10 most visited websites in the world. List all parks, facilities, events and monitor links on it constantly
Online Reviews	www.yelp.com	List all parks, facilities, events on it. Seek, monitor and respond to reviews
	www.tripadvisor.com	Highlight local attractions and things to do in Indy Parks; monitor and respond to reviews
Video	www.vine.com	7 second video clips for rentals/events etc.
	www.youtube.com	Large videos, dedicated YouTube channel highlighting events, facilities, parks etc.
Deals	www.groupon.com www.livingsocial.com www.savelocal.com	Deals and promotions to access various Indy-area offerings
Pay-per-click ads	adwords.google.com	Pay-per-click ads based on select key words for targeted outreach locally and regionally or by language through Google
	https://www.facebook.com/advertising	Pay-per-click ads based on select key words, interests, groups, affiliations for targeted outreach locally and regionally or by language through Facebook
Check-Ins	https://www.facebook.com/about/location	Facebook Places letting people know they are at an Indy park or facility

4.5.3 RECREATION PROGRAM STANDARDS

In reviewing the program assessment information, there are limited numbers of performance measures used throughout the system to understand resulting performance. Recreation programs should have standard measures in place. Some examples include:

- Customer retention
- Customer satisfaction toward the registration system
- Specific cleanliness ratings
- Cost recovery rates
- Household percentage of program participation
- Percent of programs in introduction and growth stage
- Market penetration by age group
- Program distribution by age group

Currently, the department has limited standards in place. System-wide standards reduce service variation and provide customers with reliable and consistent service throughout the system. They help to reinforce to part-time and seasonal staff what is most important to customers and significantly help with the brand building process. Standards include such items as:

- Facility cleanliness standards
- Safety standards
- Signage standards
- Program cancellation standards
- Instructional quality standards, such as instructor toolkits
- Internal communication standards for part time and seasonal staff, such as instructors
- Class minimums and maximums
- Registration process standards
- Telephone answering standards
- Customer service standards

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS OF PROGRAMS

Another method of ensuring quality programming is to develop an annual program review process, in which recreation staff present their yearly goals for program areas to other divisions and senior management of the department. This would include policy reviews, financial and registration performance, customer issues, and plans for the future. This helps to ensure good communication and cooperation for supporting divisions, such as parks, administration, and technology.

DOCUMENTED PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This is required in order to reduce service variation and assist in training new staff. This is a how-to-process map that provides guidance to staff in consistently developing new programs. It will help to diminish the learning curve for new staff and reinforce program development as a core competency. This is created in a flow chart format showing the steps in the process for program development including writing class descriptions, process steps, hiring staff, using contractual employees, and the list of standards.

IDENTIFICATION OF CUSTOMER REQUIREMENTS

Staff should also identify customer requirements for core program areas. Again, this is important to emphasize with staff that directly interface with customers. Customer requirements relate to service and product attributes that are most important to a customer. A core program area should include a listing of approximately five key customer requirements. For example, in a youth gymnastics program, key requirements could include: overall safety of the program, instructional quality, convenience and ease of registration, cost of the program, and skill development.

Key requirements should be identified by customers and can be included as part of an importance/performance matrix (asking what is most important and asking how Indy Parks and Recreation is performing). Key requirements should be reinforced in the training process. Additionally, in developing surveys or program evaluations, the survey questions should relate to the key requirements.

Lastly, the staff needs to undertake a trends research process to identify program opportunities for the future (a good source is American Sports Data and Outdoor Recreation Trends report).

SIMILAR PROVIDER/COMPETITOR ANALYSIS – BENCHMARKING WITH BEST-IN-CLASS AGENCIES

Another good practice includes a similar provider review. This includes identifying key competitors or similar providers of core program areas. This information can build on the benchmark information comparing park acreages, budgets, and employee counts that the department's staff can use to determine current program positioning against other providers.

Every two years or so, staff should develop a matrix of information to compare services in areas that have the greatest importance to customers. Benchmarking other nationally renowned agencies also can provide a process to continuously improve programming

EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION PROGRAM

Training program for staff, particularly customer service training

ON-GOING POLICY REVIEW

This must be undertaken to ensure relevance and effectiveness of established policies

INSTRUCTOR TOOLKIT

An Instructor toolkit that outlines information about the department, including mission, vision, values, goals, organizational structure, etc.

ON-GOING PROCESS TO CONNECT PART-TIME PROGRAMMING STAFF WITH THE DEPARTMENT

Connect part-time programming staff with the department through meetings, email, newsletters, staff recognition, and random visits by management. It is important to determine levels of job satisfaction

ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

Root cause analysis to determine cause of turnover, quantifying resultant associated costs

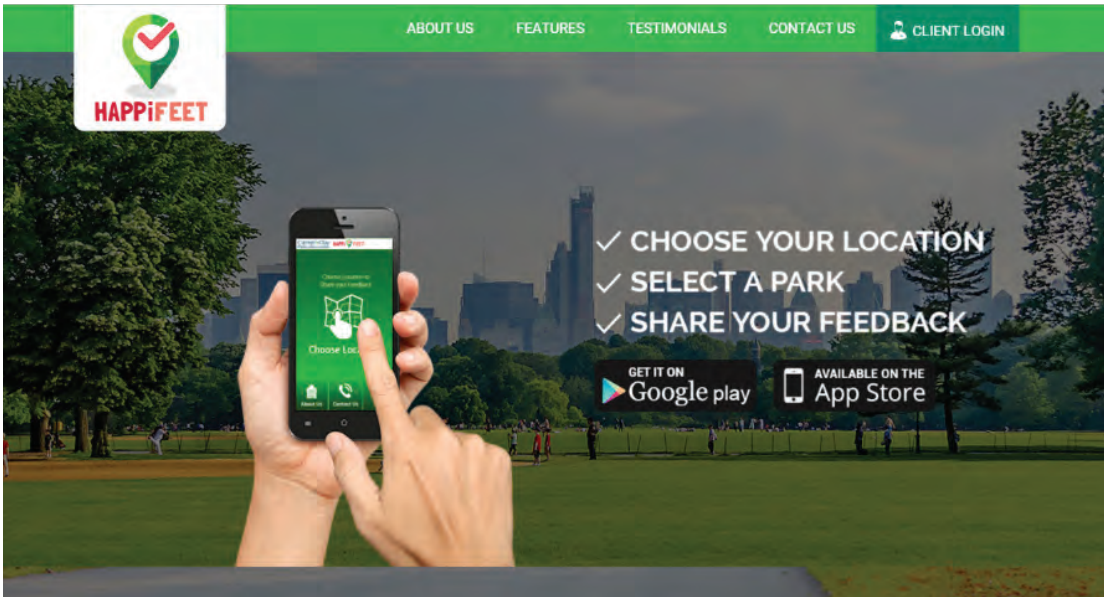
HIGH QUALITY SERVICE STANDARDS

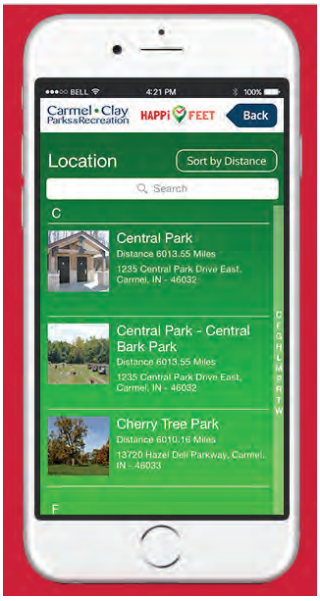
For core services, the following standards must be in place to promote a high-quality experience:

- Instructor or program coordinators' qualifications are consistent with in-the-field experience in the program specialty for which they are responsible
- The instructor-to-participant ratios are appropriate for the participant to feel safe and attended to
- The program is provided in the appropriate safe and clean recreation space, either indoor or outdoor, designed for that program
- Minimum and maximum numbers of participants are set for the program or class that will allow for a high-quality experience
- Recreation equipment or supplies that are used by the participant are high quality, safe, and appropriate for the participants to use or consume
- The length of the program is commensurate with the attention capability of the participants to respond effectively and enjoy themselves in the activity
- Appropriate support staff or volunteers are in place to help guide participants and support teachers or program supervisors
- Staff is trained in first aid and CPR. Volunteers are trained in first aid and CPR when appropriate
- A first aid kit is readily available and accessible in less than a minute
- Staff and volunteers are trained in customer service and diversity training to make all participants feel welcome and appreciated
- Pricing of services is explained to participants and/or parents on the level of investment they are making in the program and the level that the Department is investing in their experience
- Each instructor or program supervisor will be provided a toolbox that includes their class or program roster, with phone numbers or email addresses, name tags for participants, customer evaluations for users, registration forms, a program guide, pertinent recreation information and emergency phone numbers, thank you cards for participants at the end of the class, and an introduction sheet of what will occur in the program or class, how it will be conducted, and what outcomes we hope to achieve
- All class or program policies are available to the instructor or program supervisor to adequately explain policies to the user
- Appropriate recognition and awards are given at the end of the program to participants based on outcomes achieved or skills learned
- New staff, volunteers, and contract employees working with children will have background checks by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department
- Any disciplinary actions taken by an instructor or program supervisor with a program participant will be written and documented
- Class, program curriculum, or work plans will be prepared by the instructor and program supervisor before the class or program begins and is signed off by the appropriate program staff within the recreation division
- Drivers that transport participants must have the appropriate license, certifications, and authorization
- Equipment or program space will be inspected prior to the class or program; noted by the instructor or program supervisor; and recorded daily, weekly, and monthly
- Performance measures tracked will be shared with instructors or program staff at the end of each session
- Exit interviews will be conducted with part-time staff before they leave each season and noted in their file as to re-hire or not
- A class or program budget will be prepared for each activity and shared with the instructor or supervisor on how class monies are spent. Final budget results will be documented at the end of the program area and shared with the supervisor or manager
- Appropriate required licenses and certifications set by law will be reviewed and filed before programs begin

OPERATIONAL AND PRICING STANDARDS FOR PROGRAMS

- Pricing of services will be established based on cost-of-services and overlaid into programs or classes based on primetime and non-primetime rates, location, time, age segment, group, and level of exclusivity that users receive over and above use by general taxpayers. Staff will be trained in setting prices
- Scholarship programs will be in place for those that require financial assistance in order to participate in Indy Parks recreation facilities and programs
- Quarterly results of cost of service for programs will be posted and shared with staff on all services regardless of whether they are underperforming, meeting, or exceeding the recovery goals
- Each year, competitor and other service providers will be benchmarked and evaluated for changes they are making and how they compare with division efforts in their core services provided
- Partnerships with core program services will be updated yearly, their level of contribution will be documented, and tracking performance measures will be shared with each partner
- Non-core services will be evaluated yearly and reduced, eliminated, or transferred to other service providers reducing the impact on staff time





4.5.4 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND FEEDBACK

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

Currently, there is not a system wide approach to customer feedback but more through individual programs offered by the department. Indy Parks should look at transitioning into a more system wide approach in order to better compare programs overall level of success as a whole.

Best practice systems such as Carmel-Clay Parks and Recreation, Indiana are starting to utilize real-time customer feedback reporting apps to gather location-based feedback at all programs, parks or facilities throughout the city. Check out www.keephappifeet.com for more details on the app.

CONSISTENCY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

It is important for the department to manage service as an overall system in which all program areas consistently apply similar service standards. This is first and foremost in working on continuously improving overall service excellence. One method to achieve this is to follow established standards for customer satisfaction. This can be accomplished through a cross functional 'voice-of-the-customer' team.

ISO 9000:2001 (International Standards Organization) develops standards for various industries worldwide). These are best-practice components that are employed across multiple industries as a mechanism of developing an overall excellent customer satisfaction system. The department might consider adopting portions of these standards to improve customer satisfaction. These four components include:

- Top management commitment
- On-going needs assessment of customers
- Overall customer satisfaction system
- Overall customer dissatisfaction system

Top management commitment is demonstrated by allocating resources to continuously improve services, such as technology, registration system improvements, staffing to support excellent service, development of overall service training, and recognizing staff for excellent service. Part-time staffing recruitment, retention, salary, and benefits are all typical areas to focus on for delivering excellent service. Top management should regularly review data relating to customer satisfaction. This can be achieved by including customer feedback as a regular discussion item in staff meetings.

The statistically-valid needs assessment surveys are a good starting point in determining customer needs. This formalized approach should be completed approximately every five years. In interim years, it is helpful to do less formal approaches in determining customer needs by core program areas through customer feedback apps (e.g. HAPPi FEET Carmel-Clay), ongoing program evaluations, consumer advisory panels, secret shoppers, intercept surveys, and focus groups. Good service systems identify future customer needs as well as current needs.

Customer satisfaction rates should be included as part of a performance measurement system. Results should be shared with the Indy Parks Board, staff, and the public. It is important to ensure that the evaluation criteria match the key customer requirements which should be established for each program area.

Customer satisfaction processes should occur not only with recreation programs, but also with general park maintenance and athletic field quality, new park design, and community events.

Another best-practice suggestion for enhancing the customer satisfaction process is to use the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) score criteria, developed at the University of Michigan. Their customer satisfaction index includes three overall satisfaction scores:

- How satisfied are customers with the Department overall?
- How likely is it that the customer will repurchase the program or service?
- How likely is it that the customer will refer the service to a friend?

The averages of all three percentages are then included as one overall score. These questions should be included on all surveys and program evaluations

Survey questions need to correlate with the most important customer requirements. No standardized process exists for determining customer requirements. The most effective method to determine important customer requirements is through interviews/focus groups with customers. Staff input into the process is valuable as well; particularly staff who interface with customers on a regular basis.

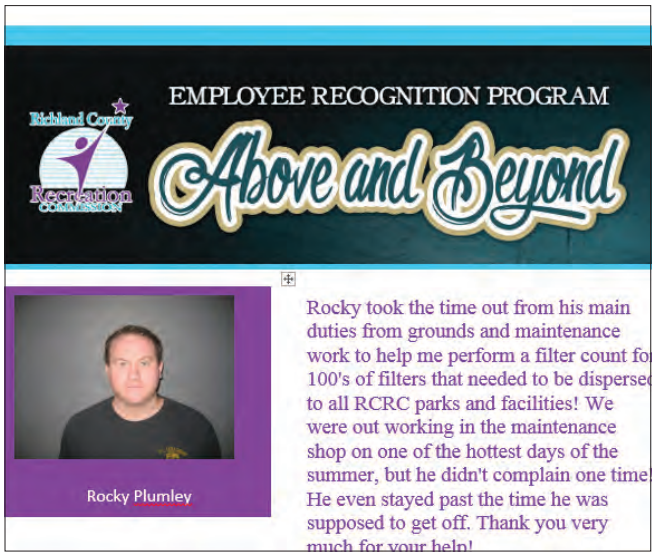
Another component of excellent standards for customer satisfaction is the development of a system wide approach to handling customer dissatisfaction. Standards should exist for handling complaints and inquiries. Furthermore, if one does not already, then a database should exist that tracks all of the inquiries or comments about needed improvements. This information should be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the senior management team. Consistent suggestions for improvements or dissatisfaction areas should become a focus for the following year's strategic objectives.

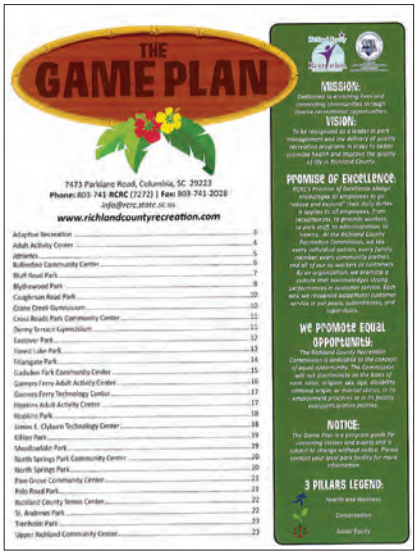
As mentioned previously, a voice-of-the-customer team can be responsible for overseeing the service system. This is a cross-functional team comprised of several staff interested in service quality and they assume responsibility for overseeing the organization's service system.

This process ensures consistency in the customer experience throughout the entire organization. This team should have the responsibility of developing an overall customer satisfaction measurement system, the development of standards, and the development of customer requirements for core program areas. The team should also monitor customer service training.

The team should identify specifications for excellent service and develop an audit system to verify that specifications are being met by staff. The audit system could be performed by secret shoppers or staff members who do not have direct responsibility for an audited area. Audits can be as simple as a listing on a check list of important service requirements.

The voice-of-the-customer team can develop a department-wide approach to service, supplemented by site-specific individual training and orientation.





PROMISE OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM - SAMPLE

Richland County Recreation Commission (RCRC) which includes the City of Columbia, SC is the first nationally accredited agency in the state. They have developed some good practices and employee recognition tools as well. One of them is their Promise of Excellence customer service program.

Service Excellence is RCRC's pledge to provide exceptional customer service to patrons, employees, and valued community partners. All RCRC employees receive training in orientation devoted to delivering world class service.

RCRC's Promise of Excellence pledge encourages all employees to go "above and beyond" their daily duties. It applies to all employees, from receptionists, to grounds workers, to park staff, to administration, to interns. An example of the employee recognition program is also provided here.

Some key components of that program that the Indy Parks staff can incorporate include this example:

Components of Excellence Program Staff From RCRC:

- All incoming staff receives customer service training during the orientation process and must sign the customer service policy
- The RCRC Facility Operations Staff Development and Evaluation Program was created and Implemented in 2013, which strongly emphasized customer service
- All staff who has been with the agency had to sign the customer service policy when it was updated in 2013 as part of the "Promise of Excellence" program
- In 2014, the "Excellence Employee Recognition Program" was implemented in an effort to recognize staff for the excellent work they do for patrons and co-workers. The completed forms are placed in the employees' personnel file

Patrons

- Promise of Excellence statement is on the inside cover of all Game Plans
- It was the theme of the 2013-14 Annual Report
- "Promise of Excellence" Table Top Banners were created and placed in all RCRC facilities
- The website features an "Excellence" tab where visitors and patrons can provide their "Excellent" experience
- During events staff utilizes an IPad that features a Survey Monkey so that the agency can capture real time feedback
- Evaluations are distributed during events to capture feedback
- Excellence forms are available for patrons to fill out about employees who they would like to recognize
- The RCRC Facebook page has also been utilized by patrons when they want to provide feedback on a particular program or service

4.5.5 CONCLUSION

Indy Parks and Recreation needs to make a stronger commitment to how they deliver programs to people of all ages and to a more diverse community. Over the last five years the department has lost 24.7 FTE positions which primarily involved direct program staff. Because of this, the department has moved to mostly managing recreation facilities and parks versus creating programs to enhance and activate some recreation facilities and parks, and manage them as part of a complete and balanced park system. This requires a much stronger effort in adding staff that are great urban programmers. Too many of the Indy Parks recreation facilities have unused time available. Programming these spaces during all hours will help to support the development of improving existing core programs and the development of new core program areas as outlined in this program report and desired by the community.

Key leadership of the city need to combat the perception that recreation is an activity that occurs in left over time, in left over space with left over money. Recreation is the act of selecting, participating in, and re-living experiences that result in achieving and maintaining the balance required to live life fully, and in the realization of human potential! It is always dangerous to have a large group of people around who have nothing to do, and nothing to lose.

Indy Parks and Recreation must provide programs that provide all citizens with opportunities to experience the following:

- Mastery
- Independence
- Connections/kinship
- Individuation
- Power
- A reason to be hopeful

In order to design and deliver effective recreation programs, the organizational culture must be recreation. Culture is the soul of the organization-the beliefs and values, how they are manifested. Culture holds the system together and gives it life. These characteristics can be described as:

- Innovation and risk taking
- Attention to detail
- Outcome and people focused
- Teamwork
- Aggressive and progressive approach to program services
- Stability and consistency in how programs get delivered

Indy Parks must become an inclusive team that believes in the power of communication, collaboration, and partnerships that optimize the collective strengths and diversity of the system. The department can and will get better at providing programs and services to celebrate their successes and embrace fun. The department needs to be committed to excellence and consistently strive to be the best with the programs and services they provide to the community. Staff need to be given responsibility to impact the agency's vision and desire to deliver "best-practice" services.

The department has been limited in their delivery of services they are capable of because of lack of staff which has disrupted their ability to maximize existing spaces. Indy Parks must create an organization that magnifies rather than reduces the imagination and human spirit of their staff. Indy Parks staff can deliver great programs given the opportunity, but it comes down to an investment in the community and a commitment that programmers will and can activate parks and facilities to serve all people of Indianapolis. This program plan demonstrates what needs to be done and how it can be accomplished through investment, effective work plans, ongoing training, a desire to be the best in the city in the delivery of programs, and effective management of recreation facilities.

4.6 PRIORITY RANKINGS

The purpose of the Facility and Program Priority Rankings is to provide a prioritized list of facility / amenity needs and recreation program needs for the community served by Indy Parks.

This rankings model evaluated both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data includes the statistically valid community survey, which asked residents of Indianapolis to list unmet needs and rank their importance. Qualitative data includes resident feedback obtained in community input, level of service standards, and demographics and trends.

Both sources of information were able to glean input from both, users and non-users of the system. The qualitative data had over 12,000 unique website visitors several of whom shared input through the open comment section or by taking the online survey on the website.

The statistically-valid survey, by virtue of being random and anonymous, ensured that the respondents across all townships were a combination of users and non-users as well as reflective of the overall community demographics for gender, age, race, ethnicity and income.

A weighted scoring system was used to determine the priorities for parks and recreation facilities / amenities and recreation programs. For instance as noted below, a weighted value of 3 for the Unmet Desires means that out of a total of 100%, unmet needs make up 30% of the total score. Similarly, importance ranking makes up 30% while Consultant Evaluation makes up 40% of the total score, thus summing up to a total of 100%.

This scoring system considers the following:

- Community Survey
  - Unmet needs for facilities and recreation programs – This is used as a factor from the total number of households mentioning whether they have a need for a facility / program and the extent to which their need for facilities and recreation programs has been met. Survey participants were asked to identify this for 28 different facilities / amenities and 22 recreation programs. Weighted value of 3
  - Importance ranking for facilities and recreation programs – This is used as a factor from the importance allocated to a facility or program by the community. Each respondent was asked to identify the top four most important facilities and recreation programs. Weighted value of 3
- Consultant Evaluation
  - Factor derived from the consultant's evaluation of program and facility priority based on survey results, demographics, trends, and overall community input. Weighted value of 4

These weighted scores were then summed to provide an overall score and priority ranking for the system as a whole. The results of the priority ranking were tabulated into three categories: High Priority (top third), Medium Priority (middle third), and Low Priority (bottom third).

The combined total of the weighted scores for Community Unmet Needs, Community Importance and Consultant Evaluation is the total score based on which the Facility / Amenity and Program Priority is determined.

4.6.1 FACILITY / AMENITY PRIORITY RANKINGS

As seen below, walking trails, small neighborhood parks, indoor fitness and exercise facilities, picnic areas/shelters, and natural areas were the top five priorities for the community.

Indianapolis-Marion County Facility / Amenity Priority Rankings	
	Overall Ranking
Walking trails	1
Small neighborhood parks	2
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	3
Picnic areas/shelters	4
Natural areas	5
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pools	6
Indoor running/walking track	7
Large regional parks (i.e. Eagle Creek)	8
Large community signature parks	9
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	10
Nature centers	11
Playground equipment	12
Outdoor fishing areas	13
Outdoor adventure parks	14
Off-leash dog park	15
Outdoor water spray parks	16
Outdoor basketball courts	17
Mountain bike trails	18
Youth baseball and softball fields	19
Golf courses	20
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	21
Outdoor tennis courts	22
Indoor sports complex (baseball, soccer, etc)	23
Soccer fields	24
Multipurpose fields (cricket, lacrosse, football)	25
Adult baseball/softball fields	26
Skateboarding park	27
Pickleball courts	28

4.6.2 PROGRAM PRIORITY RANKINGS

As illustrated below, adult fitness and wellness, water fitness programs, outdoor adventure programs, youth learn to swim programs, and nature education programs were the top 5 programs priorities for the community.

Program Priority Rankings	
	Overall Ranking
Adult fitness and wellness	1
Water fitness programs	2
Outdoor adventure programs	3
Youth Learn to Swim programs	4
Nature education programs	5
Senior programs	6
Trips (day trips and extended trips)	7
Adult sports	8
Adult art, dance, performing arts	9
Large special events	10
Martial arts or self defense	11
Youth sports	12
Youth summer camp programs	13
Youth/teen fitness and wellness	14
After school programs	15
Pre-school programs	16
Golf	17
Child care programs	18
Life skill classes	19
Youth art, dance, performing arts	20
Adaptive (special populations) programs	21
Teen dance	22

4.7 PRIORITY RANKINGS BY TOWNSHIP

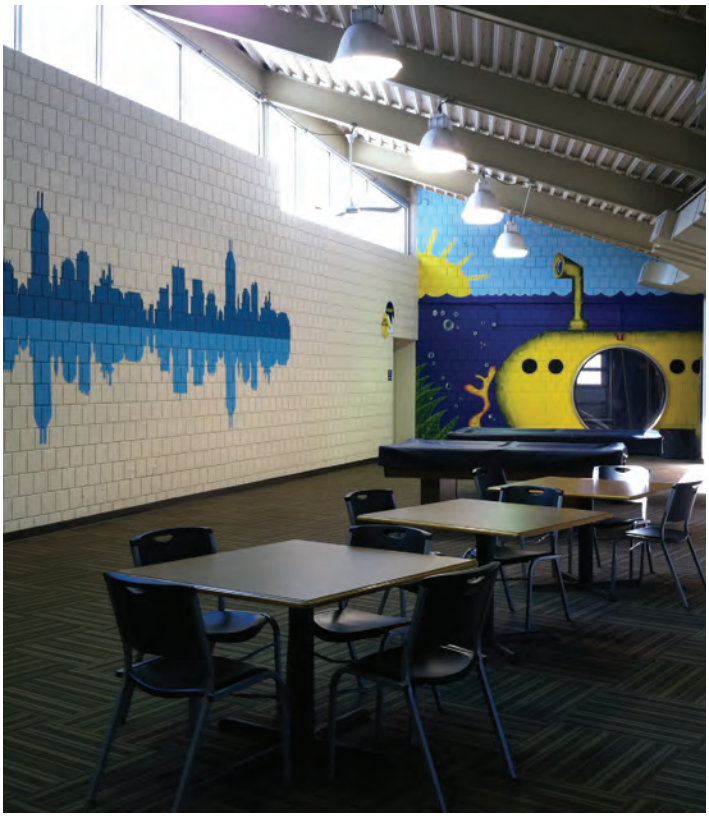
4.7.1 FACILITY/AMENITY PRIORITY RANKINGS BY TOWNSHIP

Analyzing facility/amenity rankings by the nine townships, many townships demonstrated preferences similar to the overall rankings, such as all had walking trails as a top three priority and many had small neighborhood parks in the top three. But there were variations such as Decatur Township had indoor swimming pools/leisure pools as a top 2 priority and Lawrence Township had nature centers as a top three priority.

Indianapolis-Marion County Facility / Amenity Priority Rankings	Overall Ranking	Center	Decatur	Franklin	Lawrence	Perry	Pike	Warren	Washington	Wayne
Walking trails	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1
Small neighborhood parks	2	2	3	3	2	4	7	1	2	3
Indoor fitness and exercise facilities	3	3	6	6	13	7	2	5	3	5
Picnic areas/shelters	4	4	7	12	4	14	8	2	10	2
Natural areas	5	7	11	5	10	2	11	9	6	8
Indoor swimming pools/leisure pools	6	8	2	14	14	5	5	4	8	10
Indoor running/walking track	7	5	12	7	5	12	3	7	4	9
Large regional parks (i.e. Eagle Creek)	8	14	18	9	6	9	4	16	7	4
Large community signature parks	9	12	8	8	8	10	6	8	5	13
Outdoor swimming pools/water parks	10	10	5	4	11	3	9	6	18	11
Nature centers	11	6	10	11	3	8	12	12	11	7
Playground equipment	12	9	9	2	9	15	13	11	9	14
Outdoor fishing areas	13	13	4	15	15	6	19	14	21	6
Outdoor adventure parks	14	15	13	10	7	13	15	10	13	18
Off-leash dog park	15	19	14	16	16	11	10	13	19	12
Outdoor water spray parks	16	18	15	13	17	22	22	15	24	17
Outdoor basketball courts	17	11	20	20	21	18	20	20	12	15
Mountain bike trails	18	20	17	18	18	16	14	27	17	16
Youth baseball and softball fields	19	17	19	17	20	19	23	19	25	19
Golf courses	20	26	23	19	12	21	21	21	16	21
Indoor basketball/volleyball courts	21	21	16	21	24	20	18	17	23	20
Outdoor tennis courts	22	25	21	22	19	17	16	25	20	22
Indoor sports complex (baseball, soccer, etc)	23	22	26	25	22	24	17	24	14	25
Soccer fields	24	24	25	23	25	28	24	18	15	23
Multipurpose fields (cricket, lacrosse, football)	25	16	27	27	23	23	25	23	27	26
Adult baseball/softball fields	26	23	22	24	26	25	26	28	26	27
Skateboarding park	27	27	24	28	28	26	27	22	28	24
Pickleball courts	28	28	28	26	27	27	27	26	22	28

Summary of Facility Findings

Overall	Walking Trails and Small Neighborhood Parks are consistently high priorities across all Townships
Center	Nature Centers, Playground Equipment and Multi-Purpose fields are a higher priority here compared to the others; Large Regional Parks and Large Community Signature Parks are slightly lower priorities compared to others
Decatur	Indoor Swimming pools/leisure pools, Indoor basketball / volleyball courts, Outdoor Swimming Pools and Outdoor Fishing Areas are a slightly higher priority here compared to the others; Natural Areas and Large Regional parks are lower priorities in comparison
Franklin	Playground Equipment and Outdoor Swimming Pools are a much higher priority compared to the others; Picnic Areas/Shelters and Indoor Swimming Pools/Leisure Pools are lower priorities in comparison
Lawrence	Nature Centers and Outdoor Adventure Centers are a higher priority compared to all other townships; Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities and Indoor Swimming Pools/Leisure Pools are lower priorities
Perry	Outdoor Swimming Pools / Water Parks, Outdoor fishing areas are much higher while Outdoor Tennis courts are slightly higher priority compared to the others; Outdoor water / spray parks, Picnic areas / shelters and Indoor Running / walking tracks are lower priorities
Pike	Indoor Running/Walking Track, Indoor Sports Complex, Outdoor Tennis Courts and Large Regional Parks are a higher priority here compared to the others; Indoor Swimming Pools/Leisure Pools are a slightly lower priority in comparison to the others
Warren	Picnic Areas/Shelters are a slightly higher priority compared to the others; Large Regional Parks are lower priorities in comparison to the other townships
Washington	Large Community Signature Parks are a higher priority compared to the others; Picnic Areas/Shelters, Outdoor Fishing Areas and Outdoor Water Spray Parks are lower priorities in comparison to the other townships
Wayne	Outdoor Fishing Areas, Nature Centers and Picnic Areas/Shelters are a higher priority compared to the others; Indoor Swimming Pools/Leisure Pools are lower priorities in comparison to the other townships



4.7.2 PROGRAM PRIORITY RANKINGS BY TOWNSHIP

Analyzing facility / amenity rankings by the nine townships, many townships demonstrated preferences similar to the overall rankings, such as all had adult fitness and wellness programs as a top two priority. But there were variations such as Center Township had after school programs as a top 4 priority and Washington Township had senior programs as a top two priority.

Program Priority Rankings	Overall Ranking	Center	Decatur	Franklin	Lawrence	Perry	Pike	Warren	Washington	Wayne
Adult fitness and wellness	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Water fitness programs	2	3	1	4	6	2	2	2	6	2
Outdoor adventure programs	3	7	6	5	3	3	4	7	7	10
Youth Learn to Swim programs	4	2	4	2	8	8	5	5	9	5
Nature education programs	5	5	9	3	9	5	3	4	4	3
Senior programs	6	6	3	8	5	6	6	3	2	8
Trips (day trips and extended trips)	7	13	5	15	2	4	7	6	11	4
Adult sports	8	14	7	6	7	12	11	9	10	7
Adult art, dance, performing arts	9	16	11	14	10	9	9	10	3	6
Large special events	10	18	16	9	11	7	12	15	8	12
Martial arts or self defense	11	15	10	20	16	10	10	8	5	9
Youth sports	12	8	8	10	13	11	8	19	15	14
Youth summer camp programs	13	9	13	12	15	15	13	14	20	16
Youth/teen fitness and wellness	14	12	14	11	14	17	16	13	14	13
After school programs	15	4	17	17	12	19	15	12	22	17
Pre-school programs	16	11	12	7	19	14	17	16	17	15
Golf	17	20	18	18	4	13	14	22	12	21
Child care programs	18	10	19	19	17	16	19	18	21	19
Life skill classes	19	19	21	13	21	18	22	11	13	11
Youth art, dance, performing arts	20	17	15	16	20	20	21	17	18	18
Adaptive (special populations) programs	21	22	20	22	18	21	20	21	16	22
Teen dance	22	21	22	21	22	22	18	20	19	20

Summary of Program Findings

Overall	Adult Fitness and Wellness / Water Fitness Programs are consistently high priorities across all Townships
Center	After School / Preschool / Childcare programs are a much higher priority here compared to the others; Trips, Adult sports, art, dance, performing arts and large special events are lower priorities compared to others
Decatur	Preschool programs and youth sports are a slightly higher priority here compared to the others; Nature education programs and large special events are lower priorities in comparison.
Franklin	Preschool and Life skills programs are a much higher priority compared to the others; Trips, martial arts / self-defense programs are lower priorities in comparison
Lawrence	Golf is a significantly higher priority compared to all other townships. Nature education programs and large special events are lower priorities in comparison.
Perry	Large special events and golf are a slightly higher priority here compared to the others; youth learn to swim programs, after school programs and adult sports are a slightly lower priority in comparison to the others
Pike	Youth sports and teen dance are a slightly higher priority here compared to the others; adult sports are a slightly lower priority in comparison to the others
Warren	Life skill programs are a much higher priority compared to the others; Large special events, Youth sports programs and Golf are lower priorities in comparison to the other townships
Washington	Adult art, dance , performing arts, martial arts / self-defense, golf and life skill programs are a much higher priority compared to the others; Youth learn to swim, trips, youth summer camp and after school programs are lower priorities in comparison to the other townships
Wayne	Life skill classes, trips, are a much higher priority compared to the others; Youth Summer Camps, Golf, and Outdoor Adventure programs are lower priorities in comparison to the other townships

CHAPTER FIVE
OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL STRATEGIES

5.1 ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

As part of the process for the update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a SWOT analysis was completed with Indy Parks staff in April 2015, which included approximately 60 staff members from the Operations and Programming Divisions. This process of the SWOT analysis helps establish priorities for the future improvement and direction of management and planning for Indy Parks. This analysis identifies the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve Indy Parks objectives.

5.1.1 DEFINITIONS

STRENGTHS

Strengths are an internal analysis of what an organization does well and it is useful to think of strengths as special capabilities or expertise. These are things that have enabled the organization to be successful to this point, and how it has prepared to compete in the future.

WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are also considered to be an internal analysis and is the opportunity for an organization to identify areas of improvement. They include problems that need to be corrected, deficiencies recognized through a comparison with other agencies or best practices, or deficiencies such as lacking the resources to grow.

OPPORTUNITIES

Once strengths and weaknesses have been identified, the SWOT analysis becomes more external in nature and involves identifying ways in which the organization can better position itself for increased success in the future.

Opportunity seeking is an external analysis of strategic factors that can enhance or improve services the organization offers (both new and existing services), and a defined customer group at which that service is targeted (again including new and existing customers)

THREATS

Threat identification is also external in nature as "internal threats" are considered to be weaknesses. Threats are external trends or forces that adversely affect the organization that cannot be left unaddressed or even ignored.

5.1.2 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

	Helpful to achieving the objective	**Harmful** to achieving the objective
Internal origin	**Strengths (Internal – You can Control)**	**Weaknesses (Internal – You can Control)**
	• Very good at reacting to problems • Maintenance, when supported, is a strength • Institutional knowledge • Have very good partnerships • Staff is educated, committed and dedicated to the people of the City	• Lack of resources, whether financial or in staff. • Too reactionary, but the Department does a good job fixing problems • Relies too heavily on institutional knowledge • Supportive maintenance • Increase in assets, but not an increase in budget • Not enough personnel to keep up with the system, especially in full time staff • Internal communication and understanding between DPW and Indy Parks • No extended learning programs for additional certifications • Deferred maintenance is overwhelming • Department does not tell its story well • Compensation is not high enough • Not as specialized when Parks had its own maintenance department (e.g. horticulture)
External origin	**Opportunity (External – You may not be able to Control)**	**Threats (External – You may not be able to Control)**
	• Additional opportunities for park partnerships such as adopt-a-park programs • Possibilities of Advocacy Groups (e.g. Friends Groups or Foundations) similar to Eagle Creek, Garfield or Holliday Park • Corporate presence for in-kind services or for funding • Neighborhoods and user groups embrace parks • Alternative funding sources (e.g. volunteer groups / sponsorships / individual donations)	• Partnerships need to be effective as some are more work than the output • Organizational uncertainty at the city level • Third party groups attempting to take over park assets as perception is Indy Parks cannot handle • Revenue not staying in the Department to care for maintenance and operations • Loss of institutional knowledge with staff turn over

5.1.3 RECREATION FACILITIES AND PARKS

	Helpful to achieving the objective	**Harmful** to achieving the objective
	Strengths (Internal – You can Control)	**Weaknesses (Internal – You can Control)**
Internal origin	• Variety of facilities and parks • Neighborhoods embrace parks and facilities • Great partnerships with advocacy groups at Garfield Park, Holliday Park and Eagle Creek Park • Beautiful park properties • Loyal customer base • Diversity of patrons • Affordable • Unused non-prime time capacity in facilities	• Lack of communication and promotion of the system • Department lacks brand identity and needs to tell story better • Internal communication and understanding between DPW maintenance • Better facility upkeep, especially in preventative maintenance • Organizational policies often slow things down • Facilities compete with one another • More informative signage needed • Neighborhood parks are becoming difficult to manage • Security lighting and security presence • Distribution of facilities / parks not equitable • Better use of technology • Age of facilities and amenities such as pools, playgrounds, basketball courts
	Opportunity (External – You may not be able to Control)	**Threats (External – You may not be able to Control)**
External origin	• Outreach to diverse population segments • More partnerships at parks properties • Funding for new buildings, amenities, parking and park land • Closing underutilized facilities • Technology- mobile apps / online registration / reservations could be improved • Transportation to centers and parks	• Overuse of some parks and facilities • Lack of funding • Security concerns at parks and facilities • School calendar being balanced • Lack of capital funding • Political environment causes readjustment • External service providers having nicer facilities and parks

5.1.4 EDUCATION AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

	Helpful to achieving the objective	**Harmful** to achieving the objective
	Strengths (Internal – You can Control)	**Weaknesses (Internal – You can Control)**
Internal origin	• Affordable programs • Loyal customer base • Diversity of programming • Well attended programs • Quality instructors • Partnerships	• Staff fatigue • Adaptation to change • Data on our users of programs • Marketing on the Website and no Fun Guide • Lack of full time, part time and contractors • Communication on pricing and program offerings at each site • Organizational policies often slow things down • Customer service resolution on issues • Membership passes at recreation centers • Better alignment of programs with partnerships
	Opportunity (External – You may not be able to Control)	**Threats (External – You may not be able to Control)**
External origin	• Additional volunteer support • Public and alternative transportation • Increase in sports programming • Addition of a grant writer on staff • Partnerships on the arts • Outreach to diverse population segments • Programming and facility trends- (e.g. adventure biking, skateparks, community gardens, pickleball etc.) • Health and wellness e.g. childhood obesity issues	• Lack of funding • Customer service between users and the Mayor's Action Center on park specific issues • External service providers having greater resources • Balanced schedule for schools and its effect on demand and staffing • Equipment deterioration • Weather • Marketing against our competition (e.g. website must be upgraded) • Loss of institutional knowledge through staff turnover / attrition

5.1.5 POLICY NEEDS

- Policies in need of enhancements:
  - Rental agreements that are stronger
  - Pricing policy needs to be more firm
  - Refund policy
  - A new policy manual is needed for the system as the department is outdated
  - Policies need to be less restrictive
  - Finance policies are needed
  - Special recreation policy needed that is redefined
  - Special events policy needs to be updated
  - Donation policy should be revamped
    - Cash handling policy
    - Gift catalogue
  - Redefined foundation policy – create a memorandum of understanding

5.1.6 MOST IMPORTANT OUTCOME

Indy Parks staff were each asked the one outcome they would each like for the department. The following summarized these opportunities:

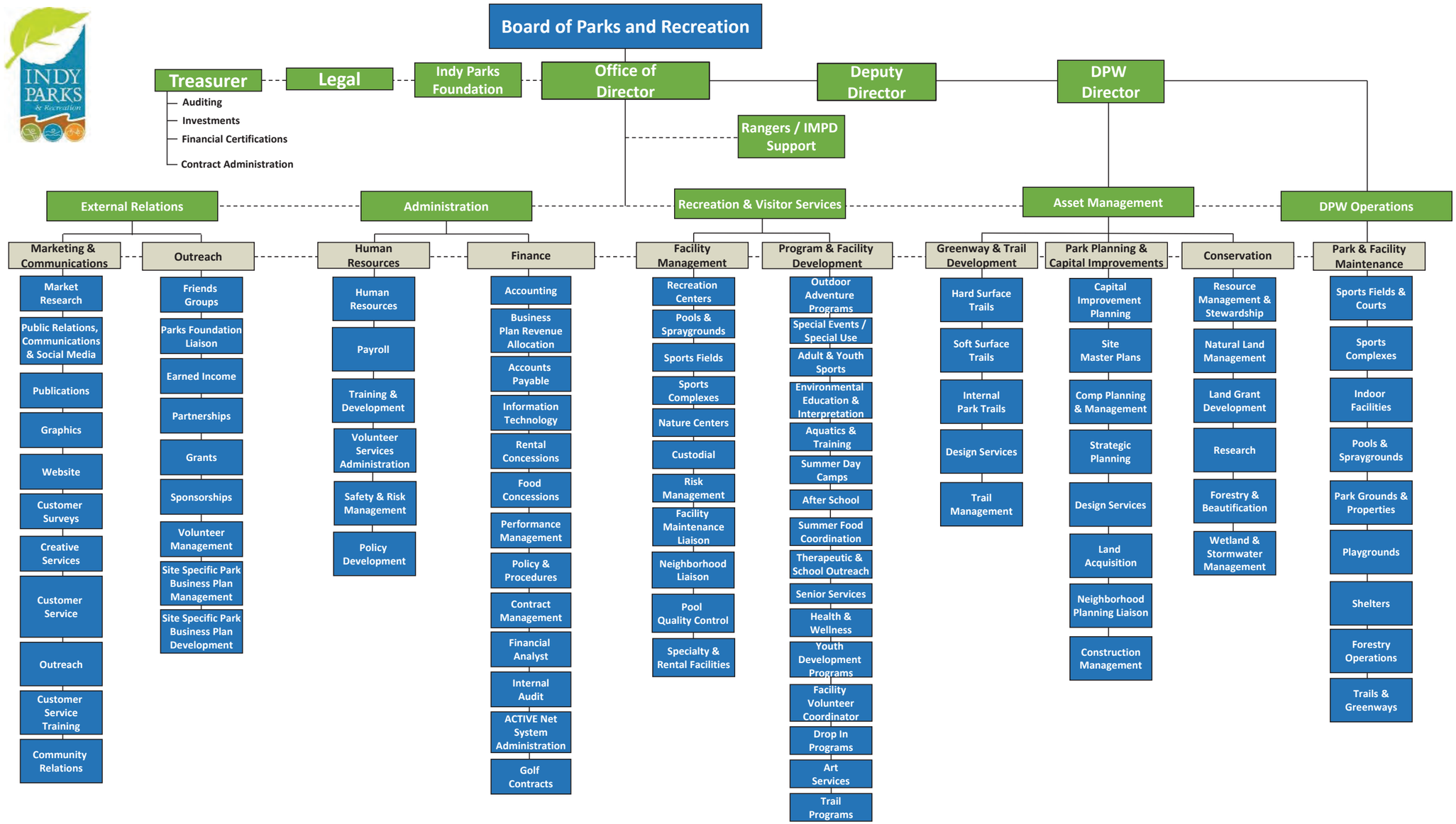
- Additional staffing to support the work expected by the community
- Maintenance model is not working and this must be remedied as staff does not have any control on how problems are addressed
- Figure out disconnect between maintenance and recreation staff
- Maintenance of parks and facilities must be improved
- Support functions should not be leading the organization and this must be reversed
- Additional financial support for the department
- New website and brand recognition
- Update facilities and amenities at parks
- Allocation of funding to areas of need
- Budget funding and maintenance of parks and facilities
- Additional Ice at Perry Park
- Preventative maintenance and ability to purchase equipment
- Amenities at Worlds Sports Park
- Internal evaluation of our program plan on an ongoing basis
- Work better with our vendors/contractors to ensure we are offering high quality not just the lowest price
- Be more proactive instead of reactive
- Staffing process – budgeting hiring
- See additional programming in the parks
- Increase percentage of taxes that is dedicated to parks
- Need additional staff to increase programming
- Marketing to new users
- Increase environmental education programming
- Routine maintenance on swimming pools
- Reduce administrative work of each program center
- Enhanced relationship between maintenance and the Indy Parks
- Turf contractor needed on our sports fields
- Security lighting needs enhancement
- Program sports in-house versus using contractors
- Staff recognition program is needed
- Paperwork reduction is needed
- Clean and adequate restrooms in all parks
- Competitive wages for staff
- Need a stronger mission statement that is just not all revenue oriented
- Protection of natural areas is imperative

5.2 PROPOSED FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Organizational Analysis addresses and evaluates the system's capability to achieve the vision and act on the existing recommendations with existing staff. The department operates in a very efficient manner currently but needs to address how they can act on achieving the goals and recommendations outlined in this master plan. This will require some slight organizational changes.

The functional organizational structure was developed for City leadership and Indy Parks Board to consider. The goal of establishing a functionally-based organizational structure is to align to the duties and responsibilities of the department, while meeting the expectations of City leadership and the community to achieve the goals outlined in the master plan.

Recommended Indy Parks Functional Organizational Structure



5.3 FINANCIAL PLAN

5.3.1 OPERATING SOURCES

The operating sources for fiscal years ending 2009 through 2015 and 2016 budget are shown in the chart below. Over the period, funding decreased by 34%. Consolidated county funding is flat. General fund resources decreased by 31% and federal grants increased by 61%. Capital improvement funds averaged $3.4 million from 2010 through 2013 and were eliminated for 2014 and 2015. Non-reverting funds were eliminated after 2014.

The Department of Public Works provides maintenance resources and some capital improvements for the park operations that are not included.

FUND	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
CONSOLIDATED COUNTY	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000
PARKS GENERAL (PARKS)	$ 16,910,351	$ 16,374,882	$ 15,256,367	$ 15,002,341	$ 14,598,499	$ 13,408,835	$ 14,659,010	$ 15,569,961
PARKS SPECIAL RECREATION NON REVERTING	$ 81,182	$ 82,271	$ 79,832	$ 46,705	$ 63,628	$ 71,118	n/a	n/a
FEDERAL GRANTS	$ 917,681	$ 811,674	$ 1,103,987	$ 1,256,255	$ 892,824	$ 1,288,213	$ 1,525,000	$ 1,478,088
CITY CUMULATIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT (PARKS)	$ 7,119,536	$ 3,455,581	$ 3,376,164	$ 3,468,990	$ 3,388,512	n/a	n/a	n/a
	$ 26,028,750	$ 21,724,408	$ 20,816,350	$ 20,774,291	$ 19,943,463	$ 15,768,166	$ 17,184,010	$ 18,048,049

5.3.2 REVENUES

The system revenues from fees, charges, and grants are shown in in the chart below. Grant revenues increased by 104%. The total park revenues decreased by 13%.

FUND	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
CONSOLIDATED COUNTY	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
PARKS GENERAL (PARKS)	$ 4,685,791	$ 4,158,543	$ 4,325,748	$ 4,042,083	$ 3,912,611	$ 4,005,770	$ 4,055,528	$ 4,145,751
PARKS SPECIAL RECREATION NON REVERTING	$ 101,874	$ 119,421	$ 115,824	$ 94,514	$ 91,523	$ 95,443	$ -	$ -
FEDERAL GRANTS	$ 724,922	$ 679,938	$ 799,495	$ 955,664	$ 1,213,091	$ 1,195,805	$ 1,525,000	$ 1,478,087
CITY CUMULATIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT (PARKS)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 10,700	$ 5,717	$ 300,000	$ -	$ -
Total	$ 5,512,587	$ 4,957,902	$ 5,241,067	$ 5,102,961	$ 5,222,942	$ 5,597,018	$ 5,580,528	$ 5,623,838

5.3.3 EXPENDITURES

The chart below shows the historical expenditures from fiscal years ending 2009 through 2014, and budgeted amounts for 2015 and 2016, including maintenance costs provided by other departments. The expenditures for fiscal years ending 2012 through 2014 have decreased by 18%. The decrease between Actual 2009 and Budgeted 2016 is 8%.

FUND	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget
CONSOLIDATED COUNTY	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000
PARKS GENERAL (PARKS)	$ 16,910,351	$ 16,374,882	$ 15,256,367	$ 15,002,341	$ 14,598,499	$ 13,408,835	$ 14,659,010	$ 15,569,961
PARKS GENERAL (DPW)	*$ 7,226,692*	*$ 5,889,126*	$ 6,966,922	$ 7,066,036	$ 7,371,829	$ 7,962,337	$ 7,913,944	$ 8,122,053
PARKS SPECIAL RECREATION NON REVERTING	$ 81,182	$ 82,271	$ 79,832	$ 46,705	$ 63,628	$ 71,118	n/a	n/a
FEDERAL GRANTS	$ 917,681	$ 811,674	$ 1,103,987	$ 1,256,255	$ 892,824	$ 1,288,213	$ 1,525,000	$ 1,478,088
CITY CUMULATIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT (PARKS)	$ 7,119,536	$ 3,455,581	$ 3,376,164	$ 3,468,990	$ 3,388,512	$ -	$ -	$ -
CITY CUMULATIVE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT (DPW)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ 3,479,838	$ 3,452,080	$ 4,300,000
	$ 33,255,442	$ 27,613,534	$ 27,783,272	$ 27,840,327	$ 27,315,292	$ 27,210,341	$ 28,550,034	$ 30,470,102

Sources: Appropriations/Expenditures by FUND (this has nothing to do with revenue collected, this is simply actual expenditures for 2009-2014 and appropriations for 2015-2016) with DPW funding

NOTE: The Parks Special Recreation Non Reverting Fund is not something the council has to appropriate annually. That is why 2015 and 2016 #s are blank. We will have spending in 2015 and 2016.

NOTE: Maintenance moved fiscally to DPW in 2011. This is why there is an appropriation showing for PARKS GENERAL (DPW). Even though it did not move until 2011. The reason there are amounts shown in the fund in 2009-2010 is because the controller's office "adjusted for history/normalized" history to reflect more consistancy for the council to follow when reviewing budgets and appropriating.

NOTE: Capital moved fiscally to DPW in 2014. This is why there is an appropriation showing for PARKS GENERAL (DPW). The Controller's Office did not do an "adjustement for history/normalization" process with Capital as they did with Maintenance.

5.3.4 STAFFING

Indy Parks and Recreation staffing between fiscal years ending 2009 and Budget 2016 decreased 10% and the related costs have increased by 3% as shown in below. The decrease in staffing indicates a significant decrease in quantity and/or quality of programs and services. The staffing and costs do not include maintenance, planning, land stewardship, and capital operations.

	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual	2014 Actual	2015 Budget	2016 Budget	Cumulative Change
Personal Services Costs	$9,148,410	$8,978,375	$8,953,275	$8,794,132	$8,686,826	$8,250,225	$9,419,542	$9,438,844	3%
Council Authorized Full Time Equivelent (FTE)	280.78	280.78	274.41	277.99	268.00	255.00	254.00	254.00	-10%

5.3.5 PARK OPERATIONS

The table below shows the summary for Park Operations presented below from fiscal years ending 2012 through 2014 including maintenance costs provided by other departments. The expenditures for fiscal years ending 2012 through 2014 have decreased by 1%. The personnel services costs decreased by 3% and maintenance decreased by 21%. Supplies increased by 15%, contracts and services increased by 61%, and equipment costs increased by 75%. The revenues increased by 4%. The cost recovery increased by 2% to total recovery of 57%.

Summary	2012	2013	2014
Personnel Services	1,626,864	1,529,308	1,581,862
Supplies	87,690	105,912	100,695
Contracts and Services	324,318	362,497	521,917
Equipment	12,306	11,190	21,545
Maintenance	994,396	835,304	789,224
Capital	-	-	-
Total Expense	3,045,574	2,844,210	3,015,243
Total Revenue	1,667,362	1,671,769	1,733,299
Net	(1,378,212)	(1,172,442)	(1,281,944)
Cost Recovery	55%	59%	57%

5.4 PARTNERSHIP POLICY

This policy is designed to guide the process for Indy Parks in their desire to partner with private, non-profit, or other governmental entities for the development, design, construction, and/or operation of possibly partnered recreation facilities and/or programs that may occur on Indy Parks owned, or leased, property.

Indy Parks would like to identify for-profit, non-profit, and governmental entities that are interested in proposing to partner with them to develop recreation facilities and/or programs. A major component in exploring any potential partnership will be to identify additional collaborating partners that may help provide a synergistic working relationship in terms of resources, community contributions, knowledge, and political sensitivity. These partnerships should be mutually beneficial for all proposing partners including Indy Parks, and particularly beneficial for the citizens of Indianapolis.

5.4.1 ISSUES ADDRESSED

Indy Parks has developed partnerships over many years that have helped to support the management of parks and recreation facilities and programs services, while also providing educational and recreation opportunities for the citizens of Indianapolis. The recommended policy will promote fairness and equity within the existing and future partnerships while helping staff to manage against what may cause conflicts internally and externally. Certain partnership principles must be adopted by Indy Parks Recreation and Parks Board for existing and future partnerships to work effectively. These partnership principles are as follows:

- All partnerships will require an upfront presentation to the Indy Parks Board that describes the reason for creation of the partnership and establishes an outcome that benefits each partner's involvement
- All partnerships will require a working agreement with measurable outcomes that hold each partner accountable to the outcomes desired and to each other and will be evaluated on a yearly basis with reports back to the Indy Parks Board on the outcomes of the partnership and how equitable the partnership remains
- All partnerships will track direct and indirect costs associated with the partnership investment to demonstrate the level of equity each partner is investing
- Each partner will not treat one another as a client-to-client relationship, but will create a partnership culture that focuses on planning together on a yearly basis, or as appropriate; communicating weekly/or monthly on how the partnership is working; and annually reporting to each other's board or owners on how well the partnership is working and the results of their efforts to the taxpayers of Indianapolis
- Full disclosure by both partners to each other will be made available when issues arise
- Annual informing of each other's staff on the respective partner's values and yearly goals and work plans so both partners are in-tune with issues the partners may be dealing with that could affect the partnership policy or agreement as it applies to finances, staffing, capital costs, political elements or changes in operating philosophies

5.4.2 EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

- Increased visibility
- Increase in services and programs
- Tax dollars spent on services are maximized through collaboration
- Public believes in and supports the role of Indy Parks in partnerships
- Promotes a positive image
- Public involvement enriches their understanding of Indy Parks
- Engaged public enhances current and future development of programs and facilities
- Provides alternatives for manpower, recreation sites, financial resources, supplies, materials, etc. for a more comprehensive system
- Shared vision and goals
- Allow us the opportunity to make a vision a reality
- Reach more people, provide more services, reduce expenditures, and generate more revenue
- Eliminate duplication of efforts, strengthen communities, and achieve greater outcomes

5.4.3 GUIDING PROCEDURES

PUBLIC/PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

The policy for public/public partnerships is evident with Indy Parks based on their working with other cities, townships, schools, and other municipal services in the area. Working together on the development, sharing, and/or operating of parks and recreation facilities and programs will be as follows:

- Each partner will meet with the Indy Parks Board and staff annually to plan and share activity-based costs and equity invested by each partner in the partnership
- Partners will establish measurable outcomes and work through key issues to focus on for the coming year between each partner to meet the outcomes desired
- Each partner will focus on meeting a balance of 50% equity for each agreed-to partnership and track investment costs accordingly
- Each partner will assign a liaison to serve each partnership agency for communication and planning purposes
- Measurable outcomes will be reviewed quarterly and shared with each partner, with adjustments made as needed
- Each partner will act as an agent for the other partner, thinking collectively as one, not two separate agencies for purposes of the agreement
- Each partner will meet with the other partner's respective board or owner annually, to share results of the partnership agreement
- A working partnership agreement will be developed and monitored together on a quarterly or as-needed basis
- If conflicts arise between partners, the Indy Parks Director along with the other public agency's highest ranking officer will meet to resolve the partnership issue. It should be resolved at the highest level or the partnership will be dissolved
- If applicable, no exchange of money between partners will be made until the end of the partnership year. A running credit will be established that can be settled at the end of the planning year with one check or will be carried over to the following year as a credit with adjustments made to the working agreement to meet the 50% equity level desired

PUBLIC/NOT-FOR-PROFIT PARTNERSHIPS

The partnership policy for public/not-for-profit partnerships with Indy Parks and the not-for-profit community of service providers is seen in associations working together in the development and management of facilities and programs within the Indy Parks system. These principles are as follows:

- The not-for-profit partner agency or group involved with Indy Parks must first recognize that they are in a partnership with the department to provide a public service or good; conversely, the department must manage the partnership in the best interest of the community as a whole, not in the best interest of the not-for-profit organization
- The partnership working agreement will be year-to-year and evaluated based on the outcomes determined for the partnership agencies or groups during the planning process at the start of the partnership year. At the planning workshop, each partner will share their needs for the partnership and outcomes desired. Each partner will outline their level of investment in the partnership as it applies to money, people, time, equipment, and the amount of capital investment they will make in the partnership for the coming year
- Each partner will focus on meeting a balance of 50% equity or as negotiated and agreed upon as established in the planning session with Indy Parks. Each partner will demonstrate to the other the method each will use to track costs, and how it will be reported on a monthly basis, and any revenue earned
- Each partner will appoint a liaison to serve each partnering agency for communication purposes
- Measurable outcomes will be reviewed quarterly and shared with each partner, with adjustments made, as needed
- Each partner will act as an agent for the other partner to think collectively as one, not two separate agencies. Items such as financial information will be shared if requested by either partner when requested to support a better understanding of the resources available to the partnership

Each partner will meet the other's respective board on a yearly basis to share results of the partnership agreement

- If conflicts should arise during the partnership year, the Indy Parks Director and the highest-ranking officer of the not- for-profit agency will meet to resolve the issue
- It should be resolved at this level, or the partnership will be dissolved. No other course of action will be allowed by either partner
- Financial payments by the not-for-profit agency will be made monthly to Indy Parks as outlined in the working agreement to meet the 50% equity level of the partnership

PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The policy for public/private partnerships is relevant to Indy Parks and includes businesses, private groups, private associations, or individuals who desires to make a profit from use of Department facilities or programs. It would also be evident if the business, group, association, or individual wishes to develop a facility on park property, to provide a service on Department-owned property, or who has a contract with the Department to provide a task or service on the Department's owned facilities. The partnership principles are as follows:

- Upon entering into an agreement with a private business, group, association, or individual, Indy Parks Board and staff must recognize that they must allow that entity to make a profit
- In developing a public/private partnership, the Indy Parks Board and staff, as well as the private partner will enjoy a designated fee from the contracting agency, or a designated fee plus a percentage of gross dollars less sales tax on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis, as outlined in the contract agreement
- In developing a public/private partnership, the Indy Parks Board and staff, as well as contracted partners will establish a set of measurable outcomes to be achieved. A tracking method of those outcomes will be established and monitored by Indy Parks Staff. The outcomes will include standards of quality, financial reports, customer satisfaction, payments to the Department, and overall coordination with the Department for the services rendered
- Depending on the level of investment made by the private contractor, the partnership agreement can be limited to months, a year or multiple years
- The private contractor will provide on a yearly basis a working management plan they will follow to ensure the outcomes desired by the Indy Parks Board and staff to achieve the goals of the partnership set out in the partnership recital. The work management plan can and will be negotiated, if necessary. Monitoring of the work management plan will be the responsibility of both partners. The Indy Parks Board and staff must allow the contractor to operate freely in their best interest, as long as the outcomes are achieved
- The department has the right to advertise for private contracted partnership services, or negotiate on an individual basis with a bid process based on the professional level of the service to be provided
- If conflicts arise between both partners, the Director of Indy Parks and the highest ranked officer from the other partnership will try to resolve the issue before going to each partner's legal councils. If none can be achieved, the partnership shall be dissolved

5.4.4 THE PARTNERING PROCESS

The steps for the creation of a partnership with Indy Parks are as follows:

- Indy Parks will follow a public notification process as established by the City of Indianapolis rules and policies that will help inform any and all interested partners of the availability of partnerships with Indy Parks. This will be done through notification in area newspapers, listing on the website, or through any other notification method that is feasible.
- The proposing partner takes the first step to propose partnering with Indy Parks.

To help in reviewing both the partnerships proposed, and the project to be developed in partnership, Indy Parks asks for a Preliminary Proposal according to a specific format as outlined in Part Two- Proposed Partnership Outline Format.

- If initial review of a Preliminary Proposal yields interest and appears to be mutually beneficial based on Indy Parks Mission and Goals, and the Selection Criteria, a Indy Parks staff person or appointed representative will be assigned to work with potential partners.
- The Indy Parks representative is available to answer questions related to the creation of an initial proposal, and after initial interest has been indicated, will work with the proposing partner to create a checklist of what actions need to take place next. Each project will have distinctive planning, design, review, and support issues. The Indy Parks representative will facilitate the process of determining how the partnership will address these issues. This representative can also facilitate approvals and input from any involved Indy Parks staff member, providing guidance for the partners as to necessary steps.
- An additional focus at this point will be determining whether this project is appropriate for additional collaborative partnering, and whether this project should prompt Indy Parks to seek a Request for Proposal (RFP) from competing/ collaborating organizations.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Trigger: In order to reduce concerns of unfair private competition, if a proposed project involves partnering with a private “for profit” entity and a dollar amount greater than $5,000, and Indy Parks has not already undergone a public process for solicitation of that particular type of partnership, then Indy Parks will request Partnership Proposals from other interested private entities for identical and/or complementary facilities, programs or services through a formal RFP process. A selection of appropriate partners will be part of the process.

- For most projects, a formal proposal from the partners for their desired development project will need to be presented for the Indy Park’s official development review processes and approvals. The project may require approval by the Legal Counsel of the City.
- Depending on project complexity and anticipated benefits, responsibilities for all action points are negotiable, within the framework established by law, to assure the most efficient and mutually beneficial outcome. Some projects may require that all technical and professional expertise and staff resources come from outside the Indy Parks staff, while some projects may proceed most efficiently if Indy Parks contributes staff resources to the partnership.
- The partnership must cover the costs the partnership incurs, regardless of how the partnered project is staffed, and reflect those costs in its project proposal and budget. The proposal for the partnered project should also discuss how staffing and expertise will be provided, and what documents will be produced. If Indy Parks staff resources are to be used by the partnership, those costs should be allocated to the partnered project and charged to it.
- Specific Partnership Agreements appropriate to the project will be drafted jointly. There is no specifically prescribed format for Partnership Agreements, which may take any of several forms depending on what will accomplish the desired relationships among partners. The agreements may be in the form of:
  - Lease Agreements
  - Management and/or Operating Agreements
  - Maintenance Agreements
  - Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs)
  - Or a combination of these and/or other appropriate agreements

Proposed partnership agreements might include oversight of the development of the partnership, concept plans and project master plans, environmental assessments, architectural designs, development and design review, project management, and construction documents, inspections, contracting, monitoring, etc. Provision to fund the costs and for reimbursing Indy Parks for its costs incurred in creating the partnership, facilitating the project’s passage through the Development Review Processes, and completing the required documents should be considered.

- If all is approved, the Partnership begins. Indy Parks is committed to upholding its responsibilities to Partners from the initiation through the continuation of a partnership. Evaluation will be an integral component of all Partnerships. The agreements should outline who is responsible for evaluation; the types of measures used, and detail what will occur should the evaluations reveal Partners are not meeting their Partnership obligations.

Indianapolis is fortunate to have many natural areas in the park system. Some of these areas have endangered, threatened or rare species of plants and animals and several ecosystem types in are listed as state significant and globally rare. Proper planning and proactive management of these natural areas will help ensure the greatest ecosystem service benefits to the community.

CHAPTER SIX
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND FUNDING PLAN

6.1 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This priorities and action schedule outlined in the section detail the projection of physical improvements to the park system for the 2017-2021 scheduled project activities. The Master Plan document identifies several potential funding sources and this report provides a potential "blueprint" for spending priorities to support the desired outcomes of the Plan. A key recommendation of the plan is to "develop a dedicated capital improvement program for the department and seek several funding sources to help support it".

One of the primary responsibilities of Indy Parks administration is to preserve and protect existing park system assets. The Statistically-valid Community Survey, conducted as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, found that residents expect the park system to be well maintained. In essence, the public directed Indy Parks to "Maintain / upgrade existing outdoor facilities" and "Upgrade and develop new walking, biking and nature trails." With this mandate in mind, a comprehensive CIP will need to provide necessary funding for the ongoing capital maintenance or replacement of existing assets.

The recommendation of completion of a comprehensive CIP should be developed and implemented as a working document, updated at least annually to reflect actual revenue collections, refined cost projections, and potential changes in community or park system needs. The total cost of capital improvement needs for the system far exceed the revenue projections from current funding streams. This Capital Improvement Plan is based on critical needs that have an allocation of $4.3M annually for the next five years. Available opportunities for new funding sources and/or partnerships to help share costs will need to be explored to accelerate new capital development during the planning period.

The following pages outline the 2017-2021 capital needs that have been identified to support the plan. Each of the park improvement projects detail the project number, project name, description, activity (e.g. planning, design, construction, land acquisition, or miscellaneous) and the anticipated cost amount.

6.1.2 2017 SCHEDULED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Parks Improvement Program

2017 - 2021 Scheduled Project Activities

Department of Public Works INDIANAPOLIS

Project Number	Project Name	Description	Activities					Yearly Cost Amount
			Planning	Design	Construction	Land Acquisition	Miscellaneous	
2017 Projects								
Aquatic/Pools								
PA-17-014	Aquatic Shade Structures	Purchase and Install Shade Structures at Aquatic Centers		X				$ 25,000
Buildings								
PA-16-015	Eagle Creek Hideaway Septic System Replacement	Replace Hideaway Septic System due to failure of existing system.			X			$ 155,000
PA-16-019	Garfield Arts Center Building Exterior Water Proofing	Water Proof Exterior of Arts Center Building to Prevent Moisture from Entering the Building.			X			$ 145,000
PA-16-022	Northwestway Restroom Renovation	Renovate existing Restroom and Concession Building at Northwestway Park.			X			$ 185,000
PA-16-023	Public Safety Upgrades System Wide	Upgrade all Building Sonitrol Panels, Add Video Camera System and TV Monitor, Panic Buttons, in Indy Parks Buildings. Add Personal Wireless Intercom System.			X			$ 360,000
PA-16-031	Riverside Family Center North Wall Replacement	Replace North Wall in Old Pool Area and Structural Beam Supports.			X			$ 200,000
PA-16-036	Ranger Station Sewer & Storm Drainage Repairs	Fix site, roof drainage that leaks into the building and sewer drains that back-up in the women restroom.			X			$ 130,000
PA-17-012	Eagle Creek Earth Discovery Center Deck Replacement	Replace Rotten Wood Deck with Masonry Pavers		X	X			$ 60,000
PA-17-013	Thatcher Park Family Center Structural Renovation	Renovate Structural Walls, Gym Windows and Paint the Exterior		X				$ 40,000
Facilities								
PA-35-001	Kitley & Troy Land Purchase (2007) 11500 E. Troy, Parcel 7003396	Land Purchase from County for Future Park				X		$ 60,000
Greenways/Trails								
PA-12-003	Fall Creek Trail Rehabilitation from Keystone Ave. to 56th Street	Repave trail - low areas becoming overwhelmed by silt			X			$ 1,220,000
PA-18-006	Pennsy Trail from Ritter Ave to German Church Road - ROW	Land Acquisition, Appraisals, Parcel Surveys for the Pennsy Greenway Trail.				X		$ 440,000
Sitework								
PA-14-005	Bel-Aire Park Community Center in partnership with IPF site development	Build New Community Center with meeting room, restrooms, kitchen in addition to installing playground equipment, soccer field, two shelters and Sonitrol.			X			$ 5,000
PA-15-151	Perry Park Ice Arena Driveway Expansion	Expand Zamboni Driveway Width and Gravel Nature Trail			X			$ 20,000
PA-16-012	Dubarry Park Renovate Multi-Purpose Sports Field	Install donated Colts Football Goals, Irrigation, Grade Field as matching investment toward IPF			X			$ 235,000
PA-16-024	Metal Trash Containers	Purchase 50 Metal Trash Containers to use throughout the Parks. Trying to Standardized Indy Parks Trash Containers.					X	$ 65,000
PA-17-010	Whispering Hills Environmental Remediation	Monitor Wells and Add Additional Soil to Cover Landfill			X			$ 525,000
Study								
PA-00-500	Greenway Trails and Parks Data Collection Services	Trustees of Indiana University shall provide data collection services along 30 Greenway Trails or Park properties.	X					$ 55,000
PA-16-018	Eagle Creek Deer Management Program	Deer Management Program at Eagle Creek	X					$ 65,000
PA-17-002	Riverside Park Master Plan	Develop a Riverside Park Master Plan - Including all assets from 38th Street to Rev. Mozel Sander Park on both side of the River.	X					$ 310,000
2017 Anticipated Project Costs								**$4,300,000**

6.1.3 2018 SCHEDULED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Parks Improvement Program

2017 - 2021 Scheduled Project Activities

Department of Public Works INDIANAPOLIS

Project Number	Project Name	Description	Activities					Yearly Cost Amount
			Planning	Design	Construction	Land Acquisition	Miscellaneous	
2018 Projects								
Aquatic/Pools								
PA-11-004	Broad Ripple Park Pool and Water Spray Area	Renovate Pool, Water Spray Area and Add Large Slide		X				$ 110,000
PA-15-002	Gustafson Bath House Renovation	Renovate Building Electrical, Plumbing, Floor Layout and Replace Roof	X	X	X			$ 345,000
PA-18-005	Washington Park Sprayground Renovation	Rehabilitate the Sprayground		X	X			$ 650,000
PA-18-103	Arsenal Park Spray Pad Renovations	Renovate Spray Pad - Concrete Deck, Walks, Pumps, Water Lines and Spray Features		X	X			$ 500,000
PA-31-001	Rhodius Park Spray Area	Renovate Old Baby Pool into Pool Spray Feature		X	X			$ 470,000
Buildings								
PA-17-003	Riverside Family Center Building Renovation	Building Renovation & HVAC Replacement		X				$ 185,000
PA-18-104	Brookside Park Bathhouse Renovation	Renovate Bathhouse Electrical, Plumbing and Exterior Restroom		X	X			$ 345,000
Greenways/Trails								
PA-14-018	Greenways Trails Signage	Greenways -Replace all GW signage on Pleasant Run			X			$ 35,000
PA-16-003	Soft Trail Renovation and Maintenance - Upper Fall Creek	Upper Fall Creek Loop Trail - Install Gravel Surface, Improve Drainage and Connect to Geist Trail		X	X			$ 500,000
PA-17-006B	Central Canal Towpath from 16th St. to 29th St. CN/NS	CSX abandon railroad line from 29th Street to 16th St. running along side of the Central Canal Towpath.		X				$ 200,000
Sitework								
PA-15-007	Dog Park Shade Structures (Quote)	Install Shade Structures			X			$ 40,000
PA-15-008	Holliday Park & Eagle Creek #20 Shelter Installation	Holliday Park and Eagle Creek Park #20		X	X			$ 200,000
PA-15-010	Sport Field Repairs	Replace Irrigation, Field Grading and Turf Establishment			X			$ 100,000
PA-17-001	Lake Sullivan Skate Park Lighting	Improve Lighting and Phase 2 Add Streetscape Skateboard Features & Bowl			X			$ 115,000
PA-19-003	Eagle Creek Ornithology Building Embankment Eroision	Restore Eroded Embankment		X	X			$ 375,000
Study								
PA-00-500	Greenway Trails and Parks Data Collection Services	Trustees of Indiana University shall provide data collection services along 30 Greenway Trails or Park properties.	X					$ 60,000
PA-16-018	Eagle Creek Deer Management Program	Deer Management Program at Eagle Creek	X					$ 65,000
2018 Anticipated Project Costs								**$4,300,000**

6.1.4 2019 SCHEDULED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Parks Improvement Program

2017 - 2021 Scheduled Project Activities

Department of Public Works INDIANAPOLIS

Project Number	Project Name	Description	Activities					Yearly Cost Amount
			Planning	Design	Construction	Land Acquisition	Miscellaneous	
2019 Projects								
Aquatic/Pools								
PA-11-004	Broad Ripple Park Pool and Water Spray Area	Renovate Pool, Water Spray Area and Add Large Slide			X			$ 700,000
PA-34-003	Indy Island Renovation	Replace slide structure footers and columns		X				$ 60,000
Buildings								
PA-17-003	Riverside Family Center Building Renovation	Building Renovation & HVAC Replacement			X			$ 1,030,000
Greenways/Trails								
PA-15-004	Trail Renovation and Maintenance	Various Trails		X				$ 75,000
PA-17-006B	Central Canal Towpath from 16th St. to 29th St. CN/INS	CSX abandon railroad line from 29th Street to 16th St. running along side of the Central Canal Towpath.			X			$ 1,890,000
Sitework								
PA-14-014	Chapel Hill Park - Renovate Basketball Courts	Renovate 1 1/2 basketball courts and fencing	X		X			$ 90,000
PA-15-148	Gustafson Basketball Courts - Renovate 1 1/2 Courts	Replace/Renovate 1 1/2 Basketball Courts and Goals 3110 Moller Road		X	X			$ 175,000
PA-16-002	Northwestway Park Basketball Court Renovation	Construct new courts at Northwestway Park		X	X			$ 135,000
PA-24-004	Rev. Mozel Sanders Park	Sitework Complete Field and Park Facility Development		X				$ 85,000
Study								
PA-00-500	Greenway Trails and Parks Data Collection Services	Trustees of Indiana University shall provide data collection services along 30 Greenway Trails or Park properties.	X					$ 60,000
2019 Anticipated Project Costs								**$4,300,000**

6.1.5 2020 SCHEDULED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Parks Improvement Program

2017 - 2021 Scheduled Project Activities

Department of Public Works INDIANAPOLIS

Project Number	Project Name	Description	Activities					Yearly Cost Amount
			Planning	Design	Construction	Land Acquisition	Miscellaneous	
2020 Projects								
Aquatic/Pools								
PA-34-003	Indy Island Renovation	Replace slide structure footers and columns			X			$ 465,000
Buildings								
PA-11-003	Broad Ripple Park Center and Entrance Renovations	Buildings Renovations		X	X			$ 390,000
Facilities								
PA-16-001	Facility Upgrades	HVAC Systems, Roof Replacements, Electrical Upgrades etc.	X					$ 830,000
PA-16-005	Brookside Park Playground Renovation	Surface	X	X	X		X	$ 650,000
Greenways/Trails								
PA-04-027	Marrott Park Trail Renovation	Renovate Trail from Parking Lot to Hill Top, Add Observation Deck and Board Walk Across Swale.		X	X			$ 375,000
PA-15-004	Trail Renovation and Maintenance	Various Trails			X			$ 525,000
Playgrounds								
PA-20-002	Orange Park Playground Renovation	Renovate Playground Equipment, Add Synthetic Play Surfacing and Walkways		X	X			$ 185,000
Sitework								
PA-24-004	Rev. Mozel Sanders Park	Sitework Complete Field and Park Facility Development			X			$ 820,000
Study								
PA-00-500	Greenway Trails and Parks Data Collection Services	Trustees of Indiana University shall provide data collection services along 30 Greenway Trails or Park properties.	X					$ 60,000
2020 Anticipated Project Costs								**$4,300,000**

6.1.6 2021 SCHEDULED PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Parks Improvement Program

2017 - 2021 Scheduled Project Activities

Department of Public Works INDIANAPOLIS

Project Number	Project Name	Description	Activities					Yearly Cost Amount
			Planning	Design	Construction	Land Acquisition	Miscellaneous	
2021 Projects								
Aquatic/Pools								
PA-17-014	Aquatic Shade Structures	Purchase and Install Shade Structures at Aquatic Centers			X			$ 450,000
PA-21-005	Centennial & Groff Spray Pad Renovation	Renovate/Replace Spray Pad, Add Walks, Shade Structures		X	X			$ 350,000
PA-21-006	Windsor Village Spray Pad Renovation	Renovate/Replace Spray Pad, Add Walks, Shade Structures and Close Filtration System		X	X			$ 500,000
Buildings								
PA-17-013	Thatcher Park Family Center Structural Renovation	Renovate Structural Walls, Gym Windows and Paint the Exterior			X			$ 405,000
PA-21-001	Eagle Creek Lilly Lake Restroom Renovation	Renovate Lilly Lake Restroom Interior and Exterior		X	X			$ 185,000
PA-21-003	Washington Park Restroom Renovation	Renovate Building Interior, Electrical, Plumbing, HVAC and Roof		X	X			$ 185,000
Playgrounds								
PA-21-004	Arsenal Park Playground Renovation	Replace Playground Equipment with Modern Multi-Generational Play Features, Synthetic Play Surface and Concrete Walkways		X	X			$ 550,000
Sitework								
PA-18-004	Bulge - Monon Dog Park	Install fencing, entrance with gate and parking			X			$ 100,000
PA-19-002	Garfield Park Fountain Limestone Caps	Renovate/Replace Limestone Fountain Caps and Garden Stairs		X	X			$ 350,000
PA-21-002	Wilbur Shaw Soap Box Derby Hill Bridge	Renovate Exterior Surface, Strip, Prep & Paint Steel Structure. Repair Concrete Slab Base		X	X			$ 25,000
PA-21-007	World Sports Park Restroom & Concession Building	Build New Restroom and Concession Facility Near Multi-Purpose Fields		X	X			$ 1,200,000
2021 Anticipated Project Costs								**$4,300,000**

6.2 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES

In an effort to help park and recreation agencies achieve financial sustainability, the following sustainability principles have been developed as part of Indy Parks' Master Plan.

6.2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to professionally manage the business elements of a park and recreation agency, either public or private, there are areas of emphasis in which the park and recreation leader must be proficient. These areas include the following:

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

This is a series of best practice suggestions and also recommendations for Indy Parks.

No two park and recreation agencies are alike. Their differences stem from how they are governed to how they are funded and operated. The purpose is to assist Indy Parks and Recreation Managers to identify the things that they will need to address to ensure financial sustainability for their agency.

If an agency clearly is familiar with how they resolve these important issues, the future sustainably of their agency will be successful.

6.2.2 TOPICS OF IMPORTANCE

FUNDRAISING

- Establish Friends Groups, Foundations, or Park Conservancy's to help raise money for the system or a specific park.
- Find philanthropists in your community that will support users that do not have the ability to pay for services and have them invest in these users through a the Parks Foundation or friends group established for this purpose.
- Communicate with your Boards and Committees that Friends Groups, Conservancy's and Park Foundations are not in competition with your agency but need to act as your advocate. Management agreements between each fundraising group needs to be completed every year with goals, dollars to be raised for what purpose and benefit to the agency.

PARTNERING

- Never allow the private or a not-for-profit group to make money from your facilities without you receiving a share of the gross revenue. Make sure your split covers your true costs and then the revenue desired based on an operating pro-forma from the event they are creating in your park or recreation facility.
- Explore partnerships or private services where you do not have the capital dollars to staff, operate or maintain the facility, park or service that you own to a competitive level
- Have working, signed agreements with all types of partners to include (public/private, public/not for profit, and public/public partners). This requires separate operational policies on each type of partnership that is established
- Do not partner with any single group unless you have your own direct and indirect costs determined. Understand the equitable investment the partner or partners are putting into the relationship
- All partnerships must have working agreements with measureable outcomes. They are to be reviewed at least every two years as one means to hold each other accountable
- Ask the private sector to develop team building days in your parks and facilities by creating cleanup and fix up days. This builds community support and it will overnight enhance your park or facility to a much higher level and it gives the corporate partner a selling point to their value in the community
- Determine sponsorship opportunities and levels of sponsorships for your parks system every five years. Use a private sponsorship contractor who knows the value of sponsorships for a percentage of the total amount raised instead of doing it yourself

GOVERNMENT FINANCE

- Know the value of your park system less land value for what your assets are worth and where those assets are in their life cycle. This will allow you to determine where capital improvements need to be made and the cost benefit of those improvements to the system
- Find dedicated funding sources you can count on annually to support your operational and capital needs
- Ask your public for a capital improvement levy or bond, paid for from sales tax or property taxes every 10 years or whenever your asset lifecycle of your system falls below 50% of useful life
- Develop a Business Development division within your department or agency to pursue grants, establish effective partnerships, create earned income, and develop business plans with staff managing revenue producing facilities to maximize your earned income capability
- Set up business enterprise systems for revenue producing facilities and programs
- Develop a cost benefit analysis on all capital improvement projects prior to developing these parks or facility sites to determine if it is financially feasible
- Develop an annual revenue plan for your agency
- Know how to properly execute an Annual Budget. There is a lot of time spent in the formulation of a budget but it is the execution of the budget that saves you. Issues like review, explaining variances, adjustments, operating within it, insuring that all managers are aware of its importance to the financial stability of the agency
- Reviewing your current financing options sometimes create big savings. Agencies need to have access to cheap capital and refinance if necessary to free up needed debt service capabilities
- Understand the real details of “Capital.” What are the carrying costs of land, facilities, and equipment? Do not burden an agency with capital projects that cost the agency more to own than the land is worth

COST RECOVERY

- Budget 3-5% of your total operating budget to support and maintain existing capital improvements and assets
- Replace revenue-producing equipment every 5 years to keep the user experience relevant and competitive
- Include your senior management staff on all design decisions. Force landscape designers and facility architects to outline the maintenance costs on all parks and facilities they design to ensure their design is aligned with your maintenance operating budget
- Acquire additional land along trails to setup land leases for concession operations for a land lease to help support operational costs of the trail
- Know your true costs to deliver program services, maintain parks, trails, and facilities, both direct and indirect costs so that you can determine your true costs of services on a unit cost basis
- Develop business plans on any program service or facility that you operate that costs more to operate than $100,000 a year with a goal to deliver a cost recovery goal
- Classify your agency’s services based on core essential, important, and value added criteria, then price services that are furthest away from your mission at full cost recovery levels

ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT

- Explore setting up business enterprise systems for revenue producing facilities and programs
- Design parks and recreation facilities for efficiency, productivity, and to produce revenue that will offset operational costs at a predetermined cost recovery goal
- Develop a financial policy that allows the agency to keep all earned income revenue in your operating budget without lowering tax dollars received. The agency should not be penalized for generating revenue to keep the department well positioned for the future
- Every three years bid out services where your costs are higher than the private sector to keep your costs competitive in the market place
- Develop an annual revenue plan for your agency
- Find dedicated funding sources you can count on annually
- Budget 3-5% a year of your operating budget to support existing capital improvements
- When you build a park or trail system, require an agreement from your public officials that you will receive the appropriate amount of operational funding to ensure that you can maintain these facilities once developed so you do not put undue pressure on the agency budget. This requires that the staff develop an operational impact cost for each capital improvement developed for the system
- Budget for marketing and branding of revenue producing facilities at 3-5% of total costs
- Price your services to the 80% of users who can pay versus the 20% who are unable
- Do not give any group in your community a larger than necessary discount because of their age, their occupation, their military service etc. All citizens are valuable and should be treated the same. Understand the size of the market for core programs and facilities and how much of the market your agency controls. Is there opportunity to penetrate the market further?
- Study and understand market strategies that will make a measurable difference and improve the economic positioning of the program or facility you are targeting
- Inform users and partners of what your costs are so they appreciate the value you place into the facility or service. This strategy will help to reduce entitlement
- Track user analytics to understand who and how often the system is being used by patrons
- Understand concession management, what it takes to make it worth the time and investment for you to provide the service versus an outside contractor. Don't allow special interest groups to have exclusive rights to concession operations without paying the agency some level of gross revenue

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Stop maintaining things in your park system that nobody uses and remove them from your park system
- Manage by standards and track costs to implement each type of standard
- Train staff, regularly, on business principals, cost recovery, cost of service, and customer service
- Understand the size of the market for core programs and facilities and how much of the market your agency controls
- Know the demographics of your users to determine their needs and capability of supporting program and capital costs
- Track population trends. Communities should track population trends and figure out how demographic changes will affect the agency in the future
- Agencies need to know how to properly "right size." We need to shed excess or unnecessary labor. Using contractors is not a bad thing. Have a flexible as possible workforce so that there is little or no carrying costs with the peak seasons are over. Know your true direct and indirect costs to deliver program services, maintain parks, trails, and facilities to understand true cost of service on a unit cost basis
- Hold staff accountable to cost recovery goals for programs, facilities, and parks you maintain with revenue to support those services
- Track employee costs of similar sized park systems. Understand the wages and benefits for all positions every five years to understand how competitive your wages are with other systems. Judge if you are below an acceptable level with or above the standard desired for wages and benefits. The goal should be no more than 60-65% of total operational costs tied to employee cost which includes both direct and indirect costs
- Employ the right people for the right job, for the right pay, to achieve the right outcome and benefit to the agency. Learn and apply the correct functionality and desired productivity of key positions
- Reward employees for efficiency and productivity
- Train staff to understand the management strategies of their supervisors as one way to prepare them for positions at the next level of responsibility
- Develop annual revenue and efficiency work sessions with your staff
- Properly train staff in business management of concession operations
- Hold employees accountable to productivity standards and cost recovery levels by giving them measurable outcomes to manage by and report performance results quarterly, or every six months
- Develop sustainable performance outcomes to hold all divisions accountable
- Understand all available revenue sources used by parks and recreation agencies within a given region, state or on a national level that applies best to your local operation. Know the terminology and how to implement them into your system. There are over 150 funding options available to understand and potentially implement
- Develop a cost benefit analysis on all capital improvement prior to development to determine if it is worth the financial and operational commitment to the agency

6.3 FUNDING AND REVENUE STRATEGIES

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

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

In Indy Parks some of these policies and management practices are not in place and should be considered for the future as well as new revenue sources. The following pages outline several options for Indy Parks to consider. In any event, it is recommended that some, if not all, of these sources should be considered as an option to support the capital and operational needs of Indy Parks, as outlined in the master plan

Indy Parks needs to re-establish a GAPS office to go after grants, alliances, partnerships, and sponsorships, including earned income opportunities. This office should also help write business plans for recreation centers, aquatic centers, and core program areas.

6.3.1 FUNDING SOURCES FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT DOLLARS AND OPERATING COSTS

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

General Obligation Bond: A general obligation bond is a municipal bond secured by a taxing authority such as the **Capital Improvement Board or DPW** to improve public assets that benefits the municipal agency involved that oversee some of the parks and recreation facilities in the city. The city/county Government of Indianapolis has not recently done a General Obligation Bond for parks and recreation facilities but could if they wanted to move on the infrastructure needs of the parks system by setting up a park district. **Park districts in Indiana** can issue debt in Indiana up to 2% of the debt limit the city can issue for bond funding. This opportunity is subject to approval of the City County Council. The City of Greenwood, Lebanon, and Lake County Parks have used this funding source.

General Obligation Bonds should be considered for the park and recreation facility projects; such as an update to Neighborhood, Community, and Regional Parks, trails, recreation centers, aquatic centers, or a sports complexes. Improvements to parks should also be covered by these funding sources because there is very little operational revenues associated with these parks to draw from and some of the city/county parks improvements are in need of upgrades and renovations limiting the uses of other revenue sources. These parks help frame the city's image and benefit a wide age segment of users and updating these parks will benefit the community as a whole and stabilize neighborhoods and other areas of the county.

Local Option Income Tax for Public Safety- City of Ft Wayne has used this funding source to help support law enforcement in parks in the city and other cities have incorporate this option and moved dollars related to park infrastructure to help improve the improvements in parks in Indiana. Crime can be high in neighborhood parks and community when they are allowed to be run down and not taken care of.

Governmental Funding Programs: A variety of funding sources are available from federal and state government for park-related projects. For example, the **Land and Water Conservation Fund** funding program has been reinstated for 2016 levels at 150 million and can provide capital funds to state and local governments to acquire, develop, and improve outdoor recreation areas. **Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** funds are used to support open space related improvements including redevelopment and new development of parks and recreation facilities. **Transportation Enhancement Funds** available through SAFETELU, the current approved federal transportation bill, can be used for trail and related green space development, **AmeriCorps Grants** can be used to fund support for park maintenance. These examples are outlined below:

FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) Act as well as Safe Routes to School Funds should be pursued for the trail improvements outlined in the plan as well and **Surface Transportation Block Grant** program that set-asides for "transportation alternatives."

CDBG (Community Development Block Grants) funds are used by many cities and counties to enhance parks. These funds should be used to support the re-development of major facilities based on its location in the City or county and what it will do to enhance the neighborhood and schools surrounding the park which is the purpose for CDBG monies. Indianapolis is focusing on redevelopment of neighborhoods and should seek out these funds as redevelopment occurs for neighborhood parks.

AmeriCorps Grants should be pursued by the Parks Division of the county to support park maintenance and cleanup of drainage areas where trails are located and small neighborhood parks in the city and the county.

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

If applying for these grants is an issue, the city should work with the Metropolitan Planning Department staff should seek out a grant writer to write application.

Conservation Reserve Program: The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through its Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, provides payments to farm owners and operators to place highly erodible or environmentally sensitive landscapes into a 10-15-year conservation contract. The participant, in return for annual payments during this period, agrees to implement a conservation plan approved by the local conservation district for converting sensitive lands to less intensive uses. Individuals, associations, corporations, estates, trusts, cities, counties, and other entities are eligible for this program. Funds from this program can be used to fund the maintenance of open space and non-public-use greenways along bodies of water and ridgelines.

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP): USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps American Indian tribes, state and local governments and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands.

Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention (Small Watersheds) Grants: The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) provides funding to state and local agencies or nonprofit organizations authorized to carry out, maintain, and operate watershed improvements involving less than 250,000 acres. The NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to eligible projects to improve watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, public water-based fish and wildlife enhancements, and recreation planning. The NRCS requires a 50-percent local match for public recreation and fish and wildlife projects.

Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program: The USDA provides small grants of up to $10,000 to communities for the purchase of trees to plant along city streets, greenways, and parks. To qualify for this program, a community must pledge to develop a street-tree inventory, a municipal tree ordinance, a tree commission, committee or department, and an urban forestry-management plan.

Small Business Tree-Planting Program: The Small Business Administration provides small grants of up to $10,000 to purchase trees for planting along streets and within parks or greenways. Grants are used to develop contracts with local businesses for the plantings.

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

National Recreational Trails Program: These grants are available to government and nonprofit agencies, for amounts ranging from $5,000 to $50,000, for the building of a trail or piece of a trail. It is a reimbursement grant program (sponsor must fund 100% of the project up front) and requires a 20% local match. This is an annual program with an application deadline at the end of January. The available funds are split such that 30% goes toward motorized trails, 30% to non-motorized trails, and 40% is discretionary for trail construction.

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

Recreation and Park Impact Fees: The city could implemented recreation impact fees if the city wanted to pursue these funds from developers. The current deficiencies in park land could be alleviated in certain parts of the county that are short of park land and trails. The City of Indianapolis' Comprehensive Plan 2020 is being updated and future funds being collected could help support the Department's capital improvements for playgrounds, shelters, restrooms, land, trails, and tennis courts. Impact fees generally provide some capital funds but rarely are they sufficient to provide full funding of large projects.

Internal Park Improvement Fund: This funding source is created from a percentage of the overall park admissions to attractions such as sport complexes, golf courses, Eagle Creek Park, Garfield Park or special events in a park and would allow a percentage usually in the 3-5% of gross revenues to be dedicate to the park or recreation facility for existing and future capital improvements. This funding source is used for sports complexes, aquatic parks, regional parks, and fee based parks. This type of user fee does not require voter approval but is set up in a dedicated fund to support the existing park for future capital, maintenance and improvements. This could be done for Eagle Creek Park and has been done for golf in the past in the city.

Tax Increment Finance District: Commonly used for financing redevelopment projects. A Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) involves the issuance of tax-exempt bonds to pay front-end infrastructure and eligible development costs in partnership with private developers that are considered quality of life improvements. As redevelopment occurs in the city or county, the "tax increment" resulting from redevelopment projects is used to retire the debt issued to fund the eligible redevelopment costs. The public portion of the redevelopment project funds itself using the additional taxes generated by the project. TIFs can be used to fund park improvements and development as an essential infrastructure cost. These funds would work well in the downtown park redevelopment and in trail development. The City of Valparaiso Indiana has used this funding source extensively for their redevelopment of the downtown area and trails and has made a huge impact on the image and impact to parks and business in the downtown area of Valparaiso. Indianapolis has done its first TIF in Tarkington Park off of 38th and Meridian in 2015.

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

Facility Authority: A Facility Authority is sometimes used by park and recreation agencies to improve a specific park or develop a specific improvement such as a stadium, large recreation center, large aquatic center, or sports venue for competitive events. Repayment of bonds to fund the project usually comes from a sales tax in the form of food and beverage. A facility Authority could oversee improvements for the large facilities; such as an aquatic center and sports field complex. The city could seek out a private developer to design build a field house facility for Parks and Recreation with the city paying back these costs over a 20 year period. The Facility Authority could include representation from the schools, the city, and private developers. This was very successful for a similar project in Roanoke County, Virginia, with the County Parks and Recreation Department.

Utility Lease Fee: Utility lease fees have been used to support parks in the form of utility companies supporting a park from utility easements, storm water runoff, and paying for development rights below the ground. This funding source is derived from fees on property own by the city/county based on measures such as the amount of impervious surfacing, as well as fees from utility companies having access through the park. It is used by many cities and counties to acquire and develop greenways and other open space resources that provide improvements in the park or development of trails. Improvements can include trails, drainage areas, and retention ponds that serve multiple purposes such as recreation, environmental protection, and storm water management. This could be a source for the utilities to make a contribution to support the parks and trails in the future. This has been very successful in Houston along their bayous and in King County Washington.

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

Food and Beverage Tax: This 1/8% sales tax is currently used by other cities and counties in Indiana and requires voter approval. These dollars can come from the local community as well as visitors to the city and county to help pay for a bond to finance future park and recreation related improvements. Food and beverage taxes are very well accepted in most Midwest communities.

Accumulated Building Funds: In Indiana under code 36-10-3 cities and counties can establish a Cumulative Building fund for Indy Parks. These funds can provide money for building, remodeling and repairing park and recreation facilities. In addition the city and counties can purchase land with these funds for park and recreation purposes. The Cumulative Building Fund must be proposed by a Park Board and then approved by the city or county council in order to levy the tax. The Cumulative Building Fund can provide capital funds that are best utilized for improvements to existing park and recreation amenities and facilities in the system.

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

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

Capital Improvement Fund Purpose. The purpose of the Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund is to allow for the collection of fees, donations, and revenue from vending machines, and to allow for depositing those fees, donations, revenues from vending machines in the fund for the purpose of future land acquisition or specific capital improvements as may be deemed necessary by the Board for future improvement or expansion of the Parks Department.

Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund. Fees, donations, and revenue from vending machines established. Fees may be established and collected by the Park and Recreation Board for particular special events held on park property as the Board may deem necessary for that specific event. Private organizations who hold their event on park property and who charge admission for the event shall donate a portion of those charges to The Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund. Revenue from all vending machines placed on park property and accessible to the public shall be placed in the fund.

(a) Collection and expenditure of fees, donations, and revenue from vending machines. Fees, donations, and revenue from vending machines collected pursuant to this section shall be deposited in a separate account to be known as Indy Parks Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund Account, and may thereafter be expended, with appropriation, at the discretion of the Park and Recreation Board for any department purpose reasonably related to land acquisition or specific capital improvements to existing land or facility under the board's direct supervision.

(b) Rental fees to Indy Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund. Fees, donations, and revenue collected by the Park and Recreation Board associated with the rental of the park and recreation facilities and collected pursuant to § 40.10 shall be deposited in "The Indy Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund Account" and may thereafter be expended, with appropriation, at the discretion of the Park and Recreation Board for any department purpose reasonably related to land acquisition or specific capital improvements to existing land or facilities under the board's direct supervision.

(c) Retention of funds. Money in the capital improvement fund account shall be kept in an account in a place and manner as directed by the Clerk-Treasurer, and a semi-annual report shall be made to the Park and Recreation Board of account balances and interest accrued.

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

Limited Special Purpose Commission: The city should consider allowing Indy Parks to operate like the library system in Indianapolis. The park and recreation department provides ten times more users than a library system does and could follow this model for self-management and control with City Council and Mayor oversite. The library system has worked well in Indianapolis and this example should be considered for Indy Parks.

6.3.2 FUNDING SOURCES FOR OPERATIONAL DOLLARS

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

Admission to the Park: Many park and recreation systems in the United States have admission fees on a per car, per bike, and per person basis to access a park that can be used to help support operational costs. Car costs range from $3 to $5 a car and $2 dollars a bicycle, or $2 dollars a person. This would really only apply to regional parks or special use sports complexes in city if it is considered. This fee may be useful for large events and festivals that have the capability to be set up as a fee based park at least on weekends. This is not unusual for city/county parks to have fees to access regional parks to support the operations. Indy Parks uses this system now at Eagle Creek Park.

Parking Fee: Many parks that do not charge an admission fee will charge a parking fee. Parking rates range from $3 to $4 dollars a day. This funding source could work for helping to support special events, festivals, and tournaments. City and county park systems in Florida charge parking fees for beaches, sports complexes, and special event sites. They also have parking meters in parks to support the system or individual park and this could be applied to Indy Parks at certain parks in the system.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tipping Fees. In Michigan some park systems get tipping fees collected at city/county owned landfills are redirected back to their parks systems to help pay for the cost of litter pick up in city and county parks.

Land Leases: Many communities across the United States have allowed land leases for commercial retail operations along trails as a source of funding. The communities that have used land leases look for retail operations that support the needs of recreation users of the trails. This includes coffee shops, grill and food concessions, small restaurants, ice cream shops, bicycle shops, farmers markets and small local business. The land leases provide revenue to maintain the trails and/or to be used for in-kind matching. Indy Parks is using this now and it should continue.

Sale of Development Rights below the Ground: Some public agencies have sold their development rights next to greenways below the ground for fiber optic lines and utility lines for gas and electric on a lineal foot basis. This has occurred in King County, Washington.

6.3.3 PRIVATE FUNDING SOURCES

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

Private Foundation Funds: Nonprofit community foundations can be strong sources of support for the Department and should be pursued for specific park and recreation amenities. The department has a parks foundation in place and it needs to continue but stronger efforts to have the Foundation support the park systems needs should be explored.

Nonprofit Organizations: Nonprofit organizations can provide support for green space and parks in various ways. Examples include:

Conservancy or Friends Organization: This type of nonprofit is devoted to supporting a specific park like Eagle Creek Park or Garfield Park. These Park Conservancy's or Friends Groups are a major funding source for parks in the United States and should be considered for Indy Parks. The friends of Holiday Park are the closes agency that resembles this funding source.

Greenway Foundations: Greenway foundations focus on developing and maintaining trails and green corridors on a County-wide basis. The city/county could seek land leases along their trails as a funding source, in addition to selling miles of trails to community corporations and nonprofits in Marion County. The development rights along the trails can also be sold to local utilities for water, sewer, fiber optic, and cable lines, on a per mile basis, to support development and management of these corridors. The Greenway Foundation has a specific Greenway Trail license plate they have had in place for over 20 years to help support the development and maintenance of trails in the city and should be expanded.

Floodway Funding Sources: Many cities and counties have used floodway funding sources to support development and operations of greenways. This funding source is used extensively in Houston, Texas, and Cleveland, Ohio.

Greenway Trust Fund: Another strategy used by several communities is the creation of a trust fund for land acquisition and facility development that is administered by a private greenway advocacy group, or by a local greenway commission. A trust fund can aid in the acquisition of large parcels of high-priority properties that may be lost if not acquired by private sector initiative. Money may be contributed to the trust fund from a variety of sources, including the municipal and county general funds, private grants, and gifts.

Greenway Fundraising Programs: Agencies across the United States have used greenways for not-for-profit fundraisers in the form of walks, runs, bicycle races, and special events. The local managing agency usually gets $2-$5 per participants in the events to go back to support the operations and maintenance costs.

Greenways Conservation Groups: Conservation groups adopt green corridors to support the operations and capital costs for specific greenway corridors. These groups raise needed money for designated greenways for capital and operations costs.

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

- Donations of cash to a specific greenway segment.
- Donations of services by large corporations to reduce the cost of greenway implementation, including equipment and labor to construct and install elements of a specific greenway.
- Reductions in the cost of materials purchased from local businesses that support greenway implementation and can supply essential products for facility development.

Adopt-A-Foot Program: These are typically small grant programs that fund new construction, repair/renovation, maps, trail brochures, facilities (bike racks, picnic areas, birding equipment) as well as provide maintenance support. The Adopt-A-Foot program is in the form of cash contributions that range from $2,640 to $26,400 over a five-year period.

State Water Management Funds: Funds established to protect or improve water quality could apply to a greenways/trails project if a strong link exists between the development of a greenway and the adjacent/nearby water quality. Possible uses of these funds include the purchase of critical strips of land along rivers and streams for protection, which could then also be used for greenways; develop educational materials, displays; or for storm water management.

Estate Donations: Wills, estates, and trusts may be also dedicated to the appropriate agency for use in developing, and/or operating, the greenway system

6.3.4 VOLUNTEER SOURCES

Adopt-a-Area of a Park: In this approach local neighborhood groups or businesses make a volunteer commitment to maintaining a specific area of a park. Adopt-a-area of a park arrangements are particularly well-suited for the department.

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

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

VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE AND SMALL-SCALE DONATION PROGRAMS

Greenway Sponsors: A sponsorship program for greenway amenities allows for smaller donations to be received both from individuals and businesses. The program must be well planned and organized, with design standards and associated costs established for each amenity. Project elements that may be funded can include mile markers, call boxes, benches, trash receptacles, entry signage and bollards, and picnic areas.

Volunteer Work: Community volunteers may help with greenway construction, as well as conduct fundraisers. Organizations that might be mobilized for volunteer work include the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts.

6.3.5 GRANTS THROUGH PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS AND CORPORATIONS

Many communities have solicited greenway funding from a variety of private foundations and other conservation-minded benefactors. Some of these grants include:

American Greenways Eastman Kodak Awards: The Conservation Fund's American Greenways Program has teamed with the Eastman Kodak Corporation and the National Geographic Society to award small grants ($250 to $2000) to stimulate the planning, design, and development of greenways.

REI Environmental Grants: Recreational Equipment Incorporated awards grants to nonprofit organizations interested in protecting and enhancing natural resources for outdoor recreation. The company calls on its employees to nominate organizations for these grants, ranging from $500 to $8,000, which can be used for the following:

- Protect lands and waterways and make these resources accessible to more people.
- Better utilize or preserve natural resources for recreation.
- Increase access to outdoor activities.
- Encourage involvement in muscle-powered recreation.
- Promote safe participation in outdoor, muscle-powered recreation, and proper care for outdoor resources.

Coors Pure Water 2000 Grants: Coors Brewing Company and its affiliated distributors provide funding and in-kind services to grassroots organizations that are working to solve local, regional, and national water-related problems. Coors provides grants, ranging from a few hundred dollars to $50,000, for projects such as river cleanups, aquatic habitat improvements, water quality monitoring, wetlands protection, pollution prevention, water education efforts, groundwater protection, water conservation, and fisheries.

World Wildlife Fund Innovative Grants Program: This organization awards small grants to local, regional, and statewide nonprofit organizations to help implement innovative strategies for the conservation of natural resources. Grants are offered to support projects that accomplish one or more of the following: (1) conserve wetlands; (2) protect endangered species; (3) preserve migratory birds; (4) conserve coastal resources; and (5) establish and sustain protected natural areas, such as greenways.

Innovative grants can help pay for the administrative costs for projects including planning, technical assistance, legal, and other costs to facilitate the acquisition of critical lands; retaining consultants and other experts; and preparing visual presentations and brochures or other conservation activities. The maximum award for a single grant is $10,000.

Bikes Belong: Bikes Belong coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. The grant program is a national discretionary program with a small budget, to help communities build TEA-21-funded projects. They like to fund high-profile projects and like regional coalitions. An application must be supported by the local bicycle dealers (letters of support should be attached). Bikes Belong also offers advice and information on how to get more people on bikes. Government and nonprofit agencies are eligible, and no match is required. The maximum amount for a grant proposal is $10,000. Applications may be submitted at any time and are reviewed as they are received.

Steelcase Foundation: Steelcase Foundation grants are restricted to locally sponsored projects in areas where there are Steelcase Inc. manufacturing plants. In general, Steelcase does not wish to be the sole funder supporting a program. Grants are also only made to nonprofit organizations. It does support educational and environmental projects, and is particularly interested in helping the disadvantaged; disabled, young, and elderly to improve their quality of life. Applications may be submitted anytime and are considered by the Trustees four times a year.

Wal-Mart Foundation: This foundation supports local community and environmental activities and educational programs for children (among other things). An organization needs to work with the local store manager to discuss application. Wal-Mart Foundation only funds 501(c)3 organizations.

6.3.6 PARKS AND RECREATION ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

The following funding sources can provide revenue opportunities for Indy Parks, but it will take a dedicated staff person to investigate and pursue the source and manage for the future. The following are funding sources that can be developed for the city.

Community Forest and Open Space Program: Federal Grant with Estimated Total Program Funding of $3,150,000. Individual grant applications may not exceed $400,000. The program pays up to 50% of the project costs and requires a 50% non-federal match. Eligible lands for grants funded under this program are private forests that are at least five acres in size, suitable to sustain natural vegetation, and at least 75% forested.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program-fund: This source is for transportation projects that improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion. Projects can include bicycle and pedestrian projects, trails, links to communities, bike rack facilities. Average grant size $50-$100,000.

Community Facilities Grant and Loan Program-Grant Program: This source is established to assist communities with grant and loan funding for the expansion, renovation, and/or remodeling of former school facilities or existing surplus government facilities that have an existing, or future, community use. Facilities may be space for community gatherings and functions, recreational athletic facilities for community members, particularly youth. These include space for non-for-profit offices, childcare, community education, theater, senior centers, youth centers, and after school programs. CFP match requirements for requests up to $250,000 are 10-% eligible project costs. For requests over $250,000 to $1 million, the match is 15%.

American Hiking Society: Fund on a national basis for promoting and protecting foot trails and the hiking experience.

The Helen R. Buck Foundation: This foundation provides funding for playground equipment and recreation activities.

Deupree Family Foundation: The Deupree Family Foundation provides grants for Recreation, parks/playgrounds, and children/youth, on a national basis. This foundation supports building/renovation, equipment, general/operating support, program development, and seed money.

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation: Children/youth services grants as well as support for capital campaigns, general/operating support, and program development.

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

6.3.7 OPERATIONAL FUNDING COSTS OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

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

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

Admission Fee: An admission fee to an event in the park can be utilized.

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

Food and Equipment Sponsors: Official drink and food sponsors can be utilized for the district. Each official drink and food sponsor pays back to the district a set percentage of gross. Typically, this is 15%-20% of costs for being the official product and receiving exclusive pouring and food rights to the complex. Likewise official equipment sponsors work well for trucks, mowers, and tractors.

Advertising Revenue: Advertising revenue can come from the sale of ads on banners in the parks. The advertising could include trashcans, trail markers, visitor pull trailers, tee boxes, scorecards, and in restrooms.

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

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

Program Fees: Program fees to support existing programs can be employed in the form of lessons, clinics, camps, life skill programs, and wellness and fitness. These types program help support the operations of the park and recreation system as a whole.

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

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

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

Catering: The Department has many sites that set up well to have high, medium, and low level caterers on contract that groups can use. Caterers usually provide the parks with a fixed gross rate on food and beverage at 12%-15% of the cost of food and 18% of drink back to the department.

CHAPTER SEVEN
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

7.1.1 VISION STATEMENT

The following vision presents how Indy Parks desires to be viewed in the future:

"With over a century of history advancing the value of parks, Indy Parks is committed to protecting and enhancing the community's assets for the future. We will be a leader in making Indianapolis a vibrant, happy, and healthy place to live. By providing premier greenspaces and recreation opportunities, we will connect all residents to nature, to the community, and to themselves. Our work is vital to contributing to the economic, social, and environmental health of our city."

7.1.2 MISSION STATEMENT

The following is the mission for how Indy Parks will implement the vision:

"We connect communities by providing places and experiences that inspire healthy living, social engagement, and a love of nature."

7.1.3 TAG LINE

Creating places and experiences that inspire.

7.1.4 ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

The organizational values that Indy Parks incorporates into its daily operations include the following:

- Fun…we love what we do, the people we serve, and we enjoy doing it
- Inclusion…we respect each other and those we serve
- Collaboration…we work together as an organization and with the community
- Sustainability...we create the capacity to endure and thrive
- Innovation…we are creative and challenge the status quo in every aspect of our work

7.1.5 GOALS, STRATEGIES, INITIATIVES AND TACTICS, AND MEASUREMENTS

- Goals: confirm the vision and mission.
- Recommendations: indicate how the goal will be accomplished.
- Initiatives and Tactics: demonstrate what process will be used to fulfill the recommendations and measurements tell the team what is expected, why it is important, who is involved, when it is to occur, and which attributes are important.

7.2 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

7.2.1 COMMUNITY VISION FOR PARKS

“Our vision is to ensure adequate parkland, facilities, and programs are available in all townships by meeting recommended levels of service standards.”.”

GOAL:

Seek to achieve a land acquisition goal of 12 acres per 1,000 residents in each township at a minimum.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Where possible, explore use of impact ordinance in underserved areas
  - Determine the policy parameters for such an ordinance with city legal counsel similar to other cities in Indiana
  - Seek support from the Mayor’s office and the Parks Board
  - Develop an implementation process working with developers to support park land needs in underserved townships
  - Work towards a balance of park related amenities and programs in each township area of the city where possible
- Complete the Greenways Plan by 2024 with a goal of 18 miles/year completed
  - Work with the Department of Public Works to develop greenways in underserved areas
  - Connect existing greenways to each other where possible
  - Continue to seek federal grants to support a match development program
  - Seek Indianapolis Parks Foundation support to assist with matching dollars
  - Seek to develop a dedicated capital maintenance funding source for greenways to maintain and improve existing greenways in an acceptable condition for years to come
- Make neighborhood park enhancements to support revitalization and livability with 10 neighborhood parks updated annually
  - Work with Dept. of Metropolitan Development to determine which Neighborhood Parks will need to be updated to support key neighborhood revitalization plans.
  - Establish 20% of the capital dollars available for Indy Parks to support neighborhood park redevelopment
  - Seek partnerships with foundations including leveraging the Indy Parks Foundation to support neighborhood park revitalization initiatives
  - Explore use of TIF and other modes of public financing where available to tackle capital projects

- Create 10 signature parks through multiple funding sources to demonstrate the value of parks and ensure that all age groups are represented in the park with appropriate levels of amenities
  - Define list of 10 parks to be developed as signature parks
  - Evaluate the existing site master plans for each and update as needed
  - Develop a site business plan for each signature park on how to maximize the use, cost to operate, and how to fund the improvements necessary
  - Seek Friends groups or a park conservancy to support each park
- Seek a balance of (70%) of all park land to be allowed for development and 30% of land will be allowed to not be developed, but left for pure open space
  - Evaluate areas maintained that could be reverted to a natural state
  - Establish design principles for each park to leave as much natural area as possible
  - Monitor and track natural areas against developed areas to keep the balance as optimal as possible

Finish one (1) site specific park master plan annually so the park can achieve the full participation levels desired, cost recovery, and economic value to the community or neighborhood

  - Identify those parks where master plans are needed and determine the cost to finish them
  - Seek funding to complete the master plans from grants, partnerships, foundations, and individuals.
  - Track the impact of full use of parks which have been developed following a master plan. Track cost recovery goals and the economic impact to the neighborhood/city
- Eliminate underutilized amenities in the system to introduce exciting amenities that will energize and inspire the community surrounding the park and create a stronger sense of place
  - Work with park maintenance staff and program staff to determine amenities that receive little to no use that could be taken out of the system
  - Work with the neighborhoods or communities on what could replace the existing amenity that would create higher levels of use in the park
  - Determine the cost to maintain the new amenity so the operational dollars are in place to maintain it
- Customize facilities and park-related programs to the demographics of the people served
  - Incorporate design principles for updated parks based on who lives close to the parks or based on redevelopment numbers planned for through the redevelopment groups in town
  - Incorporate design principles for all sports fields in the future using the information from the typology listed in the master plan
  - Design parks and facilities to produce revenue even if the system is not charging now for the service or permit

7.2.2 COMMUNITY VISION FOR FACILITIES

"Our vision for facilities is to make them as inviting as possible to maximize their use and productivity for people of all ages."

GOAL:

Update three (3) key recreation facilities each year as it applies to recreation centers, pools or sports fields.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Evaluate capacity utilization for each community recreation facility and ways to maximize its use through capital improvements
  - Determine the demographic changes occurring in the area surrounding the site and how best to update the facility to meet the needs of the community it is serving
  - Develop mini site business plans to maximize the programs that should be provided at the site, the pricing of services, and the use of the building or outdoor amenity
  - Market the improvements to the site and the program being provided in the facility as part of the business plan
  - Incorporate the appropriate levels of staffing to deliver a strong sense of place that energizes the community to use the site
- Implement the Eagle Creek Park, Garfield Park, and Sports Fields Business Plans as outlined in the development of the System Master Plan
  - Hire the appropriate staff to achieve the recommendations in the business plans to program the park and deliver strong services
  - Seek to establish a MOU with the Indianapolis Department of Public Works on the maintenance levels required for the three park sites to enhance the use, value, and safety of users of the park
  - Update pricing levels for partnerships using the park so Indy Parks is not subsidizing those partner's programs or events through an effective cost of service accounting process
  - Implement the capital improvement needs in each park to maximize its use and safety of users in the park over the next six years
  - Enhance existing sports complexes to create greater use, higher level of cost recovery, and stronger economic impact to the city through sports tourism
- Program underutilized facilities through effective partnerships with the community surrounding the facility
  - Hire staff where underutilized facilities exist to provide programs to re-energize the community to use the site
  - Identify appropriate partners who may need space to deliver their programs/service in a way that does not duplicate Indy Parks programs but complements their offerings and provides a needed service to the community
  - Incorporate a business approach to all recreation facilities, and remove those facilities that are not, or cannot be, productive to the community. Examples may include poor design of the facility, lack of money to invest in the site or the site has outlived its useful life and lifecycle of users based on trends in the market place
- Develop new amenities that follow national trends for sports, outdoor adventure and education, community recreation facilities, and aquatic based facilities in the city
  - Develop a feasibility study for each type of facility before it is developed to determine the market and program need in the community to be served by the facility, cost to operate and staff the facility, and revenue dollars to help maintain the site
  - Determine if there are partners who also have program needs and space needs that could be combined into one facility to maximize the community good of the site
  - Develop a market and promotional strategy for the site before it is open to maximize the value and good it can provide to the community
- Using the asset maintenance report developed for Indy Parks, determine what assets need to be updated that will support the future needs of the community
  - Develop a funding strategy for updating each park related asset identified in the asset lifecycle management report that identifies the cost to make the needed repairs and preventative maintenance requirements with DPW that accomplishes an effective ongoing asset management program
  - Specifically outline maintenance standards for each park, and include those standards in an MOU with DPW to deliver the service.
  - Determine facilities that may have outlived their lifecycles and eliminate or reposition the sites, as appropriate
  - Determine the maintenance cost to update the facilities once improved to keep the facilities as productive as possible and create a maintenance MOU with DPW to enhance maintenance to meet the community's expectations and extend the use
- Develop an amenity replacement schedule for playgrounds, sports lighting, restrooms, parking lots, sports courts, pools, shelters, and trails in the system
  - Establish a working amenity replacement schedule for all amenities in the system with DPW and Indy Parks as part of an ongoing MOU
  - Update the Mayor's Office on an annual basis where those items are in the replacement schedule and capital improvement needs for the coming year

7.2.3 COMMUNITY VISION FOR PROGRAMMING

"Our vision for programming is to increase program participation from Indianapolis residents from 15% to 30% over 5 years by offering programs targeting unmet community needs and activating parks and facilities."

GOAL:

Establish 10 core program areas to service the recreation needs of Indianapolis residents.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Establish a regional approach to achieve a level of service standard for recreation programs across all townships
  - Evaluate other service providers in each township to determine program needs and what is being provided by whom, where, and to what scale
  - Determine target market captured by each core program area
  - Determine facilities needed to support each core program area and its unmet needs
  - Establish recreation center business plans for each regional service area and adjust offerings to fit the service area plan
  - Evaluate how each existing center and proposed new center could be expanded to support more program spaces or new spaces
  - Determine the cost recovery levels desired and programs to achieve those levels
  - Update pricing strategies based on levels of service classification
- Develop new programs for active adults 55+ and older, expand adult sports, outdoor adventure, fitness and wellness, urban youth programs, family programs, and outdoor education programs
  - Determine where these new core programs can be provided and hire appropriate staff to oversee and manage these programs across the city
  - Market these services through all media outlets, partners, such as the school district, the website, and program catalogs to get users to invest their recreation time in these services
- Restore lost recreation programmers (14) and use these programmers for core program areas to activate spaces in parks and recreation facilities
  - Develop one or two new core programs a year over the next five years with a cost recovery goal determined and price these programs accordingly
  - Develop program standards based on how the citizen survey desires the programs to be delivered
  - Develop program partnerships to help deliver the programs in each facility where they will be provided
  - Work with the Mayor's Office to determine how these positions can be restored and funded
  - Develop a cost recovery goal for each program person with a goal of generating 8x the person's salary through program provided at a minimum
- Promote interpretation and education of historic, cultural, and natural resources in parks
  - Develop a program plan specifically for these areas and contract or hire people to deliver programs across the city in these areas
  - Develop a cultural and natural resource program plan
- Partner with Visit Indy to provide authentic experiences for residents and visitors alike
  - In conjunction with Visit Indy, develop a variety of authentic user experiences and leverage Visit Indy, Indianapolis Airport Authority, and other similar partners to promote those offerings to visitors
  - Train program staff on maximizing co-branding and cross marketing opportunities via event coordinators in the city
  - Develop special events around major events in Indianapolis e.g. Final Four, Big Ten Championships etc. similar to the model employed by Las Vegas Events and Nashville Events
- Re-price program services based on cost of service and service classifications
  - Develop cost of service training for all program and facility staff to determine cost per experience, cost per user, cost per hour, cost per program, cost per field, cost per game etc.
  - Establish minimums and maximums for each program provided to help determine the price of the service
  - Identify sponsorship or crowdfunding for a scholarship programs to assist low income users as programs are repriced
  - Pursue the possibility that program fees will be allowed to flow into a non-reverting fund to support the cost of the programs
- Create equitable program partnerships across the system
  - Develop a separate policy for public/ public partnerships, public/nonprofit partnerships, and public/private partnerships
  - Evaluate the direct and indirect cost of all partnerships that Indy Parks has in place. Make adjustments in the partnership agreements to make the partnership as equitable as possible between the parties involved
  - Institute partnership agreements with all partners over the next five years

7.2.4 COMMUNITY VISION FOR OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

"Ensure that Indy Parks is actively connected with other city departments and initiatives, enhancing the notion of "One City", where all goals are collaboratively aligned."

GOAL:

Indy Parks and DPW will work closely to enhance the quality of park maintenance in parks facilities in the city to meet the community's expectation.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Institute demonstrated management practices and measure performance in parks and recreation services based on NRPA Annual Field Report
  - Establish maintenance standards for all facilities managed by Indy Parks and track how often the standards are met
  - Update maintenance practices to ensure amenity repairs are based on a 24 and 48-hour turnaround times
  - Train maintenance staff to meet the desired standards. Meet weekly with maintenance staff to review previous week's work and plan for the upcoming week.
- Seek support for a dedicated funding source to support operations and maintenance standards
  - Work with DPW and Indy Parks staff to determine the cost to maintain an acre of parks, a sports field, a mile of trail, playground, shelter, restroom in parks
  - Properly assess the direct and indirect cost to maintain existing amenities designed to generate operational revenue and price services and permits to the cost recovery goal desired for that amenity, based on level of exclusive use the user receives
- Develop maintenance standards and communicate their importance to maintenance staff
  - Share weekly user feedback, positive and negative, with maintenance staff
  - Work to hire maintenance staff who have a desire to work in and a passion for parks
  - Create a MOU with DPW to deliver a higher level of maintenance standards for parks and sports fields
  - Engage park maintenance volunteers, corporate workdays, and youth work programs to augment the work of Parks and DPW staff
- Allow Indy Parks to keep the revenues earned thru a non-reverting funds policy to support operational costs and raise the operational budget to manage the system to level of service desired by the users of the system
  - Seek Mayor and City Council approval to all the parks system to create a non-reverting fund for the department so they can keep the revenues earned to go back into staff and equipment needs of the department
  - Inform users of the system that the fees that they pay will go directly back into the program areas where it came from to support staffing in programs and maintenance
  - Track the impact of the revenue on customer service and on quality of customer satisfaction
- Develop earned income opportunities to support capital and operational needs
  - Determine which earned income opportunities the department wants to pursue and go after these opportunities
  - Utilize a grants and sponsorship writer to develop grants and sponsorships for the department
  - List out all opportunities that can be pursued by grants
  - Develop the cost of service for all partnerships and seek to develop working relationships that are equitable across the system
- Engage more volunteer support with a goal of 15% of the entire organizational employee hours supported by volunteers
  - Track volunteer hours consistently across the system and tally on a quarterly basis
  - Train staff on how to work with volunteers
  - Recruit, train, and place volunteers in all areas of the department and track the hours for use as in-kind dollars for grants

7.2.5 COMMUNITY VISION FOR FINANCING

"Seek to create a per capita goal of at least $50 to properly operate and maintain the system."

GOAL:

Work to develop creative financing options for the Department using all available resources.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Seek to become 50% self-supporting with cost recovery goals for each core program area and recreation facility
  - Teach and train staff on cost of service, pricing, cost recovery, and earned income to achieve this goal of 50% self-supporting
  - Train staff on customer service on how to deliver great service and get people to come back as often as possible
  - Seek to make partnerships equitable as possible
- Enhance "Friends" and volunteer groups for recreation facilities/parks programs, as well as create new "Friends of" groups throughout the city
  - Determine where "Friends" groups should be established
  - Develop working agreements with all volunteers
- Explore the development of a Business Development office (grants, alliances, partnerships, and sponsorships) to create more earned income
  - Establish revenue goals for partnerships, grants, and earned income opportunities for the system
  - Explore sponsorship opportunities that are available and the value of the asset for a sponsor
  - Seek to raise $2 million a year for the operations of the system
- Develop stronger partnerships for signature facilities that are capable of raising more operational and capital dollars for the system, and ensure all partnership agreements incorporate mutual goals with measurable outcomes
  - Track results of partnership agreements on the system
  - Create a major sponsorship strategy for the department
  - Update all polices for partnerships with the goal that all partnerships will have a working agreement and report out annually on how well the partnership is working
  - Evaluate existing partnerships in place, in terms of how each partnership feels about the services provided, and determine how to increase revenues between them
  - Look at all revenue opportunities and how each partner can create more revenue to support each other and Indy Parks
  - Track and report results to the Parks Board on a yearly basis
- Collaboration with Indianapolis Parks Foundation to support incremental capital improvements and marketing needs of the department
  - Seek to have a working agreement with Indianapolis Parks Foundation to achieve yearly revenue goals for Indy Parks and for funding existing projects
  - Communicate the program needs of the system and what kind of dollars can be committed to those needs
  - Determine with the Parks Foundation what matching grants they can support for park related improvements
- Maintain what the park system owns and invest in rebuilding the infrastructure of the system while creating new parks and facilities in underserved areas of the city
  - Demonstrate the capital improvement dollars needed on a yearly basis that can be used for needed park capital improvements through the budget process and the return on investment to the city
  - Expand or build new recreation multi-generational centers in underserved service areas- target 45,000 to 50,000 sf for new recreation centers at a minimum in size to achieve the operational revenue desired.
  - Seek support from philanthropic and corporate community for support to update the park system for the next 15 years
  - Explore additional dedicated funding sources for capital improvements and operational cost through a dedicated funding source to bring the system up to an acceptable level
  - Explore possibility for a future voter bond issue for capital improvements for parks on the ballot to reinvest in park system assets
  - Put together a Park Supported Leadership Team from community leaders in the city to support a bond issue and develop a voter campaign around the needs of the department

7.2.6 COMMUNITY VISION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"Our vision for economic development is to develop the entire park system as an economic tool through strong parks, outstanding facilities, and programs that make living in the city a decision people choose."

GOAL:

Demonstrate through an economic impact study that parks provide far greater economic impact than the money the city currently spends on the system.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Tie the Parks system to Plan 2020 initiatives, Neighborhood Quality of Life Plans, Great Places 2020, Promise Zone, 16 Tech, etc.
  - Incorporate the recommendations in these various plans to the park and recreation systems programs and services, and track the economic impact of this effort
  - Complete an economic impact study of the park systems value to the city of Indianapolis
  - Work with IMPD to develop a safety plan for parks in high crime areas to make parks part of the solution
  - Incorporate and track economic impact events sponsored by Indy Parks through a yearly impact report
- Track and communicate the economic value (housing and commercial) of parks and trails to the city on a yearly basis
  - Track the proximity value of homes along trails and next to, or near, parks on the value of housing and the economic impact it creates in additional property taxes
  - Track the economic impact of parks before they have been updated and when updated, what it did for home values
  - Track the effect of trails on home values before, and after, the trail was put in and report the results
- Tie parks, recreation facilities, and programs to health and wellness, food deserts, and public safety through appropriate design of parks, trails, and recreation facilities
  - Develop a health strategy around neighborhoods that have high obesity and health related issues, and create programs and amenities, such as heart healthy trails or loop trails in these areas of the city
  - Create a goal that Indianapolis will be a top ten city in the United States for healthy lifestyle practices and amenities by partnering with other health related agencies, and design parks and programs to support this effort and goal
- Partner with Indiana Sports Corp for future sports facility development to target sports tourism in a greater way through parks and recreation facilities in Marion County
  - Meet with the Indiana Sports Corporation on what sporting events they would like to develop on Indy Parks property to support sports tourism in the city
  - Create a sports field house in the downtown area to host youth and adult sport tournaments in basketball, volleyball, cheerleading, soccer, lacrosse, and other related activities
- Create more trailside development (parks and amenities) to lift the property values and create an enhanced park experience using redevelopment monies
  - Track the property values before the trail went in at selected sites and now after three or four years
  - Create a tracking instrument for future trails as part of the economic impact plan for the future
  - Track the health and wellness changes over the next five years, based on trail availability through heat maps in designated neighborhoods

7.2.7 COMMUNITY VISION FOR MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

"Our vision for marketing and communications is to enhance the systems visibility and awareness to drive more use and revenue to the system."

GOAL:

Increase citizen awareness of Indy Parks services to 80%+ using parks and 30%+ involved in park programs.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS:

- Develop an updated marketing and branding plan for the system
  - Work to update the existing Indy Parks marketing plan with survey data and strategies outlined in the master plan
  - Update the staffing needs of the marketing and communications office to inform the community of the services available
  - Update Indy Parks brand identity through the website, park signage, access to parks, program guides, and informational videos in all recreation facilities owned by Indy Parks
  - Update park maps to show locations of existing amenities as some park maps are outdated
  - Create a memorable slogan / tag line that helps 'tell the story' of Indy Parks
- Update existing website to a responsive design site and build a mobile app.
  - Redesign the existing website to be mobile friendly – responsive design
  - Develop a standalone app to provide focus on customer feedback and / or share all relevant information about existing parks, facilities, and programs (e.g. HAPPi-FEET app used for Carmel Clay)
  - Track website and app analytics to identify user behavior and preferences in order to ensure constant website updates
- Dedicate increased resources for marketing and communications staff – best practices 3%- 4% of operational value nationwide
  - Develop a marketing team that includes skillsets for technology and data analysts, as well as creative and social media competencies
  - Engage interns to augment the work of the communications team.
- Incorporate technology, analytics, and data-based decision making into marketing practices to maximize decisions on users of the system
  - Teach and train staff on how to interpret market analytics to influence program design and facility improvements
  - Teach staff how to ready the cross tabs from the survey for programs offered in each township and what citizens are wanting from the park system in the way of programs and facilities

CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSION

Park and recreation services are essential when establishing and maintaining a healthy, livable city. Availability and accessibility to recreation opportunities and parks provide a host of positive benefits and outcomes. Critical to the future vitality of Indianapolis is a parks system that can provide recreational opportunities, inclusive of all users, that promote physical and mental well-being, provide immaculate settings that create memorable experiences, and unite citizens in a positive, supportive, and fun environment.

The Indy Parks Comprehensive Master Plan was developed to provide Indy Parks a roadmap for managing the future. This planning process incorporates a comprehensive series of analyses to understand the workings of Indy Parks and integrates a strong community engagement process to inform key recommendations.

The Comprehensive Master Plan includes a system-wide approach for accomplishing short and long-term goals, initiatives, and tactics to ensure Indy Parks continues to protect the region's park assets and provide quality services, programs, and facilities to the community for many years to come. Indy Parks has been an undervalued asset in Indianapolis in both awareness and funding. Not since the early 1970s has the system had the level of public investment in funding to meet a growing city that desires a strong neighborhood livability climate that can attract people of all ages to want to live in the city.

In order to meet the recommendations outlined in this plan, Indy Parks will serve as an enabler/facilitator for the development and/or provision of some parks and recreation services and as a direct provider for some services. Indy Parks must continue to incorporate effective partnerships in the development of trails and recreation facilities.

This master plan outlines a sustainable framework from which to operate. New funding opportunities are outlined to support operational costs if the administration will allow the park system to retain dollars earned. The park system has never had the opportunity to ask the taxpayers to invest in the system. Maybe the time is now.

If given the opportunity, Indy Parks can deliver on the recommendations in this master plan. Delivery of these recommendations require a total commitment by the city, community partners, and leaders, who have helped many other community-based institutions to grow and prosper by helping them to "right size" their organizations. Indy Parks needs all stakeholders of the system to support the operational and capital improvement recommendations outlined in this plan to move forward. Given the opportunity, Indy Parks is poised to capitalize and build upon its previous successes. For Indianapolis to continue to thrive, parks and public open spaces must be a part of an economic strategy to encourage people to want to live in the city. Great Parks are the foundation of Great Cities.

INDY PARKS & RECREATION

Comprehensive Master Plan

Appendices

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