
chapter four: standards and
needs analyses



p a r k l a n d

Level of Service Standards

Park systems are gauged in a number of ways. Establishing standards and using them to measure strengths and weaknesses has been a common practice for many years. Today, many municipalities strive for connectivity within their park systems as well as connectivity between the system and other lands uses. Creating a vision and direction for the park system is arguably the most important step in the park planning process. Standards, then, aid in measuring quantities of specific park types within the overall vision of the park system to determine if and where deficits may exist. These standards should be used as a general guide towards achieving the goals of the community.

There are national organizations, such as the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Urban Land Institute (ULI) which have established such standards for use as a guide nationwide. Each organization, whether national or local, typically classifies their parks into a number of categories, which do not coincide in many cases. See Table 4.1: Comparative Park Standards. Table 4.2 compares the proposed 2001 standards to the existing 1983 standards.

Regional parks should be provided at an average of 10 acres per 1000 people served, according to the NRPA.

Community parks require large land areas in order to accommodate all the recreational needs that they should provide. The NRPA recommends that a municipality have 5 to 8 acres of community park land per 1000 people. Little Rock should provide 5 acres of community parks per 1000 residents, in addition to special facilities which aid in providing community recreational services.

Neighborhood parks require less land area than community parks to facilitate the needs of adjacent neighborhoods. The NRPA recommends 1 to 2 acres per 1000 people for this need, and the ULI recommends 2 acres per 1000 people. In addition, the NRPA recommends 0.25 to 0.50 acres of mini-parks per 1000 people. The services provided by **mini parks** and neighborhood parks should be combined into one group – neighborhood parks. Additional mini-parks should not be constructed, except in instances where recreational demands cannot be met with larger park parcels. Therefore, for Little Rock, the recommended acreage for neighborhood parks is 2 acres per 1000 people. (1.5 acres for neighborhood parks + 0.50 acres for mini-parks).



Rebsamen Golf Course is one example of a regional park.



Southwest Little Rock is an example of a community park



Kiwanis Park is an example of a neighborhood park in Little Rock

Needs Analysis

A general analysis was compiled which compares Little Rock's current land holdings and gauges them against the 2001 standards, in order to measure general levels of service and deficits of park land within various areas of the city. This analysis aids in determining which areas of the city need additional park services.

The Little Rock Parks and Recreation Master Plan addresses citywide concepts for an overall park system. Therefore, the integration of each park or open space parcel into a comprehensive park system holds greater priority than meeting established standards of each specific park type.

The numbers outlined in the following tables are general and are intended to measure the current service levels of existing park land and facilities, to indicate deficiencies within the park system, and to guide the system in an overall direction. The numbers are not absolute indications of additional acres to be acquired. In addition, a thorough analysis is necessary to determine whether or not an agency has met a particular recreational need.

Only developed parks were tabulated to determine current levels of service; undeveloped parks and open space were not calculated, see Table 4.3: Park Land Needs Analysis. Land holdings were divided into Regional, Community, and Neigh-

borhood park categories. Undeveloped parks were subtracted from area deficits, since future development of these parcels will aid in meeting the recommended levels of service.

Regional Parks

By the 2001 standard of 10 acres per 1000 people, significant deficits among current *developed* regional parks exist within the east central, west, and southwest areas. Deficits in the east central and southwest areas should be accommodated by the environmentally-sensitive development of Fourche Bottoms. Development of the recently acquired Regional Park 2000 should alleviate deficits for regional park land in the west.

Since regional parks serve the entire city and surrounding area, geographic placement of such parks is not as critical as the placement of smaller community and neighborhood parks for targeted service areas. Overall, the city will exceed the NRPA standard of 10 acres per 1000 people, when Fourche Bottoms, Alexander, Gillam, Regional Park 2000, and other parcels are developed.

Community Parks and Neighborhood Parks

Little Rock's current park system does not meet the 2001 standards for community and neighborhood parks overall (citywide). While some areas have adequate park service, the west and east central areas of the city demonstrate noticeable deficits. North central and southwest Little Rock are also under-served, according to the analysis.

When analyzing only those park lands available for active recreation, a similar result occurred, with east central, west, and southwest Little Rock having the greatest need for active park lands (see table 4.4).



Hindman Community Park in west central Little Rock



Urban plazas are accommodated within the neighborhood park standards.

Table 4.1: Comparative Park Standards

	NRPA: 1983 and 1995 Standards	ULI	Louisville, KY	Kansas City, MO	Plano, TX	1983 Master Plan Standards: Little Rock *	Current Conditions: Little Rock * (1983 Standards)
Regional Park							
Recommended Size (Ac.)	200+ ¹	500-1000 acres	N/A	500+ acres	N/A	250+ acres	250+ acres
Recommended Service Radius	1 hour drive ¹	10 miles		entire region		one hour drive	
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	5.0-10.0 ¹	15.0		12		12.0	8.9
City-wide or Large Urban							
Recommended Size (Ac.)	50+; 75+ optimal ²	N/A	100+ acres	100-500 acres	50-700 acres	100+ acres	100-200 acres
Recommended Service Radius	entire community ²			several communities	30 minutes	30 minutes drive	
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	5.0 ¹			7	5	9.0	3.8
District							
Recommended Size (Ac.)	N/A	100-200 acres	20-100 acres	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Recommended Service Radius		3 miles					
Recommended Acres/1000 Population		2.0					
Community							
Recommended Size (Ac.)	20-50 ²	40-100 acres	10-20 acres	15-100 acres	25-100 acres	20-100 acres	20-100 acres
Recommended Service Radius	0.5-3 miles ²	2 miles		several neighborhoods	2 miles	1-2 miles	
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	5.0-8.0 ¹	3.5		7.5	5.0	3.0	3.3
Neighborhood							
Recommended Size (Ac.)	5-10 ²	5-10 acres	<10 acres	5-15 acres	5-10 acres	5-20 acres	5-20 acres
Recommended Service Radius	0.25-0.5 miles ²	0.5 miles		one neighborhood	0.5 miles	0.5-1 mile	
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	1.0-2.0 ¹	2.0		3.5	1.5	2.0	0.88
Playfield/Playground/Mini-park							
Recommended Size (Ac.)	2500 s.f. - 1 acre ²		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	under 5 acres
Recommended Service Radius	less than 0.25 miles ²						
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	0.25-0.50 ¹	3.0					0.14

¹ 1983 NRPA Standard

² 1995 NRPA Standard

* Based on 1999 population estimate of 173,500; developed park acres only

Table 4.2: Comparative Park Standards - Little Rock 1983 Standards and 2001 Standards Comparison

	NRPA: 1983 and 1995 Standards	1983 Master Plan Standards: Little Rock *	Current Conditions: Little Rock * (1983 Standards)	2001 Master Plan Standards Little Rock *	Current Conditions: Little Rock * (2001 Standards)
Regional Park					
Recommended Size (Ac.)	200+ ¹	250+ acres	250+ acres	performance-based	performance-based
Recommended Service Radius	1 hour drive ¹	one hour drive		entire city	entire city
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	5.0-10.0 ¹	12.0	8.9	10.0	11.1
City-wide or Large Urban					
Recommended Size (Ac.)	50+; 75+ optimal ²	100+ acres	100-200 acres	N/A	N/A
Recommended Service Radius	entire community ²	30 minutes drive			
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	5.0 ¹	9.0	3.8		
Community					
Recommended Size (Ac.)	20-50 ²	20-100 acres	20-100 acres	over 20 acres	over 20 acres
Recommended Service Radius	0.5-3 miles ²	1-2 miles		several neighborhoods	several neighborhoods
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	5.0-8.0 ¹	3.0	3.3	5.0	2.5
Neighborhood					
Recommended Size (Ac.)	5-10 ²	5-20 acres	5-20 acres	5-20 acres	5-20 acres
Recommended Service Radius	0.25-0.5 miles ²	0.5-1 mile		neighborhood	neighborhood
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	1.0-2.0 ¹	2.0	0.88	2.0	0.88
Playfield/Playground/Mini-park					
Recommended Size (Ac.)	2500 s.f. - 1 acre ²	N/A	under 5 acres	under 5 acres	under 5 acres
Recommended Service Radius	less than 0.25 miles ²				
Recommended Acres/1000 Population	0.25-0.50 ¹		0.14	0.00	0.14

¹ 1983 NRPA Standard

² 1995 NRPA Standard

* Based on 1999 population estimate of 173,500; developed park acres only

Table 4.3: Park Land Needs Analysis

CITYWIDE OR REGIONAL PARKS	Current Park Land Acres	2004 Population	Current Level of Service (acres per 1000 pop.)	Recommended Ac./1000 Pop.	Total Acres Req'd to Fulfill Recommendation	Undeveloped Park Land Acres ¹	Deficit: Additional Acres Req'd to Fulfill Recommendation
Downtown	72.0	1,617	44.53	10.0	16.2	0.0	(55.8)
East	0.0	6,801	0.00	10.0	68.0	377.0	(309.0)
East Central	71.0	25,522	2.78	10.0	255.2	1315.0	(1130.8)
North Central	696.0	42,272	16.46	10.0	422.7	0.0	(273.3)
West ²	0.0	32,820	0.00	10.0	328.2	617.0	(288.8)
West Central	243.0	24,753	9.82	10.0	247.5	0.0	4.5
Southwest	147.0	37,158	3.96	10.0	371.6	80.0	144.6
TOTALS	1229.0	170,943	7.19	10.0	1709.4	2389.0	(1908.6)

COMMUNITY PARKS	Current Park Land Acres	2004 Population	Current Level of Service (acres per 1000 pop.)	Recommended Ac./1000 Pop.	Total Acres Req'd to Fulfill Recommendation	Undeveloped Park Land Acres ²	Deficit: Additional Acres Req'd to Fulfill Recommendation
Downtown	0.0	1,617	0.00	5.0	8.1	0.0	8.1
East	57.0	6,801	8.38	5.0	34.0	0.0	(23.0)
East Central	25.0	25,522	0.98	5.0	127.6	0.0	102.6
North Central	103.0	42,272	2.44	5.0	211.4	0.0	108.4
West ⁴	0.0	32,820	0.00	5.0	164.1	0.0	164.1
West Central	137.0	24,753	5.53	5.0	123.8	40.0	(53.2)
Southwest	123.0	37,158	3.31	5.0	185.8	0.0	62.8
TOTALS	445.0	170,943	2.60	5.0	854.7	40.0	369.7

NEIGHBORHOOD & MINI PARKS	Current Park Land Acres	2004 Population	Current Level of Service (acres per 1000 pop.)	Recommended Ac./1000 Pop.	Total Acres Req'd to Fulfill Recommendation	Undeveloped Park Land Acres ³	Deficit: Additional Acres Req'd to Fulfill Recommendation
Downtown	0.0	1,617	0.00	2.0	3.2	0.0	3.2
East	21.0	6,801	3.09	2.0	13.6	0.0	(7.4)
East Central	41.0	25,522	1.61	2.0	51.0	0.0	10.0
North Central	51.0	42,272	1.21	2.0	84.5	3.0	30.5
West ⁴	5.0	32,820	0.15	2.0	65.6	0.0	60.6
West Central	25.0	24,753	1.01	2.0	49.5	0.0	24.5
Southwest	33.0	37,158	0.89	2.0	74.3	0.0	41.3
TOTALS	176.0	170,943	1.03	2.0	341.9	3.0	162.9

¹ Undeveloped Regional Park parcels: William J. Clinton Presidential Center, Fourche Creek, Gillam, Alexander, and Regional Park 2000

² Undeveloped Community Park parcels: Hindman South

³ Undeveloped Neighborhood Park parcels: Grandview Addition

⁴ Passive open space parcels not included in inventory totals for active recreation parks: Two Rivers, River Mountain, Rock Creek, Taylor Loop

Table 4.4: Active Use Park Land Comparison by Parks Planning Area

Planning Area	Neighborhood & Mini Parks	Community Parks	Citywide or Regional Parks*		Undeveloped Parks		Active Rec. Parks	2004 Projections	
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Name	Acres	Name	Total Acres	2004 Population	Acres per 1000 people
Downtown	0	0	72	Riverfront, MacArthur	0	n/a	72	1,617	44.53
East	21	57	0	n/a	27	William J. Clinton Presidential Center	105	6,801	15.44
East Central	41	25	71	Interstate	0	n/a	137	25,522	5.37
North Central	51	103	696	Allsopp, Murray, Rebsamen	3	Grandview Addition	853	42,272	20.18
West	5	0	0	n/a	200	Regional Park 2000 (1/3 of total acreage)	205	32,820	6.25
West Central	25	137	243	Boyle	40	Hindman South	445	24,753	17.98
Southwest	33	123	147	Otter Creek	80	Alexander	383	37,158	10.31
TOTALS	176	445	1,229		350		2,200	170,943	12.87



r e c r e a t i o n a l f a c i l i t i e s

As with park land standards, the NRPA also recommends level of service (LOS) standards for facilities. Table 4.5 provides a complete listing of NRPA LOS standards, along with the current levels of service provided by other communities.



Needs Analysis: Current Levels of Service

The needs analysis for recreation facilities was based on NRPA standards, community input, current recreation facilities levels of service, and future trends. A two-day workshop was held in which community input and current facilities were evaluated and recommendations made to accommodate current and future recreational needs.



Level of Service Standards

The following pages are arranged by facility type and address current facilities and programs, and recommended standards. For actions relating to each facility type, see Chapter Six, Goal Two. For a summary of proposed standards, see Table 4.6.

Table 4.5: Current Level of Service

Facility Type	NRPA	Louisville, KY	Memphis, TN	Knoxville, TN	Chattanooga, TN	Current LOS: Little Rock	1983 Standard: Little Rock
Community Centers	No Standard	1 per 37,500	1 per 27,500	1 per 9,300	1 per 8,800	1 per 24,800	1 per 20,000
Baseball Fields	1 per 5,000	1 per 7,300	1 per 5,100	1 per 3,400	1 per 2,600	1 per 9,640 **	1 per 4,000 *
Softball Fields	1 per 5,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per 28,900 **	1 per 4,000 *
Soccer Fields	1 per 10,000	1 per 15,400	1 per 13,000	1 per 20,000	1 per 21,500	1 per 24,800	1 per 4,000 *
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	1 per 5,000	1 per 6,600	1 per 8,500	1 per 8,800	1 per 16,700	1 per 4,690	1 per 3,000
Football Fields	1 per 20,000	1 per 67,600	1 per 71,000	1 per 60,000	1 per 30,100	1 per 43,400	1 per 4,000 *
Playgrounds	No Standard	1 per 6,100	1 per 6,400	1 per 3,200	1 per 4,900	1 per 3,700	1 per 3,000
Open Play Fields	No Standard	Count not taken	N/A	1 per 6,800	1 per 5,400	N/A	N/A
Pools	1 per 20,000	1 per 45,000	1 per 43,500	1 per 46,000	1 per 75,200	1 per 43,400	1 per 20,000
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	1 per 3,200	1 per 6,600	1 per 2,300	1 per 2,600	1 per 3,340	1 per 3,000
Golf	1 per 50,000	1 per 90,100	1 per 65,000	1 per 43,000	1 per 50,100	1 per 43,375	1 per 50,000
Walking/Jogging Trails	No Standard	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 mile per 8,420	N/A

Based on 1999 population estimate of 173,500

* Little Rock's 1983 Park System Master Plan designates "Sports Fields" at 1 per 4,000

** LOS for baseball and softball fields combined (i.e. Multi-purpose fields): 1 per 7,230

Table 4.6: Recommended Level of Service Standards

Facility Type	NRPA	Louisville, KY	Memphis, TN	Knoxville, TN	Plano, TX	Recommended: Little Rock
Community Centers	No Standard	1 per 20,000	No Standard	No Standard	1 per 37,142	1 per 50,000
Baseball Fields - game	1 per 5,000	1 per 5,000 **	1 per 5,500	1 per 5,000	1 per 3,150 **	1 per 10,000
Softball Fields - game	1 per 5,000	1 per 5,000 **	No Standard	1 per 5,000	1 per 3,150 **	1 per 10,000
Soccer Fields - game	1 per 10,000	1 per 10,000	1 per 10,000	1 per 10,000	1 per 2,750 **	1 per 5,000 - 7,000
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	1 per 5,000	1 per 5,000	1 per 6,000	1 per 5,000	1 per 6,046	1 per 5,000
Football Fields - game	1 per 20,000	1 per 50,000	1 per 75,000	1 per 20,000	1 per 2,750 **	provide as required
Playgrounds	No Standard	1 per 5,000	1 mile of res. areas	No Standard	1 per 5,000	1 per active rec. park
Open Play Fields	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard
Swimming Pools	1 per 20,000	1 per 40,000	1 per 50,000	1 per 20,000	1 per 43,333	1 per 40,000 - 50,000
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	1 per 4,000	1 per 6,000	1 per 2,000	1 per 2,680	1 per 4,000
Golf	1 per 50,000	18 holes per 75,000	1 per 75,000	1 per 50,000	1 course per 130,000	1 per 30,000
Walking/Jogging Trails	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard	No Standard	1 mile per 3,666	No Standard

COMMUNITY CENTERS

Current Facilities

- Seven community centers, some are small and meet only modest recreational demands
 - East Little Rock
 - Granite Mountain
 - Ottenheimer (with senior programs in the mornings)
 - Southwest Little Rock
 - South Little Rock
 - Dunbar (with senior programs in the mornings)
 - Stephens
- Two senior centers
 - Adult Leisure Center
 - East Little Rock

Current Programs

- 2/3 target ages 6-18
- Seniors targeted 2nd
- Fitness & sports related

Recommended Standard

- 1 per 50,000 people;
- 1 square foot per person
- Need 175,000 square feet total in 4 or 5 centers

FITNESS CENTERS

Current Facilities

- One fitness center: War Memorial

Recommended Standard

- Two or three fitness centers

SWIMMING POOLS

Current Facilities

- Five swimming pools at four locations

Current Programs

- "Learn to swim"
- Spray features and aquatic play equipment
- Aquatic fitness

Recommended Standard

- One swimming pool per 40,000 - 50,000 people





BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

Current Facilities

- 24 fields throughout the city

Current Programs

- T-ball (6-8)
- Youth softball (9-12)
- Baseball (9-12)
- Baseball camp (6-15)
- Many leagues coordinated by youth sports associations

Recommended Standard

- One field per 5,000 people
- Need 35 - 40 fields total

SOCCER

Current Facilities

- 13 fields distributed in six parks; some half fields
- Fields at Interstate shared with football

Current Programs

- Offered by youth sports associations
- City leagues 6-12
- Increasing participation

Recommended Standard

- One field per 5,000 - 7,000 residents
- Need 23 - 35 fields TOTAL (game plus practice)

FOOTBALL

Current Facilities

- Five practice fields

Current Programs

- Youth football; LRPR offers the only youth tackle football in the city

Recommended Standard

- Provide as required

TENNIS

Current Facilities

- 52 courts in 20 parks
- Complexes at Rebsamen Tennis Center (17) and Walker (6)

Current Programs

- Rebsamen Tennis Center successful with various program types and skill-levels
- Tournament hosting ability
- School partnerships and programs to expand tennis participation
- Community support

Recommended Standard

- One court per 4,000 residents
- Currently exceeds standard

BASKETBALL

Current Facilities

- 37 outdoor basketball pads distributed throughout the city
- Six indoor courts

Current Programs – Outdoor Basketball

- Youth leagues (6-13)
- Late night basketball (13-19)
- Adult leagues (18+)
- Basketball camp (6-15)

Current Programs – Indoor Basketball

- Whole court basketball offered at War Memorial for ages 16+

Recommended Standard

- One court per 5,000 people
- Exceeds standard at one court per 4,800 people





PLAYGROUNDS

Current Facilities

- 49 playgrounds
- Most existing parks have playgrounds

Current Programs

- Basic playgrounds

Recommended Standard

- One playground in each active-use park

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Current Facilities

- Three community gardens
- Two Rivers, Curran Conway, and Dunbar
- Two non-city gardens

Current Programs

- Some educational and youth programming

Recommended Standard

- Provide as necessary

GOLF

Current Facilities

- Four courses totaling 81 holes
 - Rebsamen Golf
 - Hindman Golf
 - War Memorial Golf
 - Jack Stephens Youth Golf Academy

- Approximately five additional private daily fee courses in the metro area

Current Programs

- Youth golf: First-Tee Program

Recommended Standard

- Recommended Standard: one course per 30,000
- No additional courses needed, since several daily fee courses are located in Central Arkansas

OTHER FACILITIES

Trails: Actions

- No standard
- Provide a variety of types
- Greenways utilizing streetscape and sidewalks to connect community to parks
- Walking loops within individual parks
- Environmental interpretive trails
- Cultural trails
- Challenge trails (equestrian, hiking, or biking)
- Map and mark trails to enhance public awareness & safety
- Stripe and sign bike lanes on existing roads
- Comfort stations, water fountains
- Events along trails

Open Play Fields: Actions

- No standard
- Provide in neighborhood and community parks (design issue)
- Unmarked fields accommodating practice for various sports, free play, and pick-up games
- Retrofit unused practice fields to open play fields

ALL FACILITIES: GENERAL ACTIONS

- *Maintain and improve existing fields, courts, roads, etc.*
- Improve lighting
- Improve signage to all parks
- Maintain and enhance restroom facilities



programs analysis

As part of determining future program needs within the parks system, existing programs offered by Little Rock Parks and Recreation were analyzed. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified for various programs and facilities.

Findings: overall

- The staff does a good job of gathering as much information on their programs as possible.
- Marketing and promotions are limited in each of the sections analyzed. Efforts to promote programs do not seem to be a organization effort.
- There is an inconsistent image to park program information.
- Program standards are missing from many of the program areas or were not listed with the provided information.
- Subsidy levels were difficult to determine because there is no consistent manner of tracking expenses.
- The parks and recreation system lacks a computerized registration software package to track usage and revenue.
- There doesn't seem to be an understanding of benefits of programs.
- The pricing formulas were not included in the information. There doesn't seem to be



a consistent approach to pricing of programs.

- The use of partnerships was limited.
- The staff does utilize volunteers to assist in the programs' operations and seem to have a good foundation of volunteers.
- Standards for the contractual instructors were not mentioned.
- Some of the staff are aware of the external factors that affect programs such as demographic growth in certain areas of the city.
- The operational manuals were very comprehensive.
- There seems to be a limited amount of sponsorships.
- Program evaluations were not used in many areas, but the staff did conduct some primary research through surveys.
- The hours of operations in most cases were customer friendly.

Tennis Lessons

Strengths

- They offer a wide variety of lesson programs matching all skill levels.
- The site hosts tournaments on a local, regional and statewide basis.
- They work with schools for practice, play and tournaments.
- Partnerships exist with churches and other non-profit organizations to offer programs.
- Nationally tennis is a declining sport, but there are good participation levels at Rebsamen.

- The expansion of the program could be accomplished with the development of an indoor complex.
- There is a pro shop and a tennis racket stringing services.
- There is a possibility of expanding the program to include wheelchair tennis.
- The sport can be played more than half the year.
- The center is the largest in the state.

Weaknesses

- Expenses were not listed in order to determine subsidy levels.
- Marketing tactics seemed to be limited to flyers and the park brochure.
- Evaluations seem to be missing from the program operations.
- The staff to maintain the courts is limited to one maintenance person.
- There are other service providers in the area to offer competition to Rebsamen.
- There was no indication of waiting lists or if people weren't being served by the existing number of programs.
- There is excess capacity during the daytime.

Adult Softball and Basketball

Strengths

- The number of games offered in both areas is significant.
- Advertising included an ad placed in the newspaper for leagues.
- There are opportunities to offer more leagues and tournaments if facilities were available.
- There was a survey conducted to have feedback on the program.
- The softball facilities are good.
- There seems to be good participation in the leagues.

Weaknesses

- There is no clear understanding of features, advantages and benefits in programs, but some were listed.
- There are other service providers in the area, which are competitors.
- There is a participation pattern of increase/decrease every other year with summer softball and winter basketball.
- Expenses were not reflective of total operational costs. Costs included only personnel, both contractual and staff.
- The schedule is reliant on schools for gyms, which can cause conflicts (basketball).
- Both sports are slightly declining according to national statistics. Softball is declining more than basketball.
- Location is an issue for softball. The popu-



lation is growing on the opposite side of the where the softball complex is located.

- Fees are considered high.
- There is a need for more umpires.
- There was no mention of tournaments beyond the local leagues.
- Tracking of participants is not being done.

Outdoor Recreation

Strengths

- The program initiative is very positive and innovative.
- The program uses partnerships to strengthen the overall outdoor recreation experience.
- The targeted audience is defined.
- The program is new and has the potential for reaching a lot of new users. It is attractive to a large audience.
- These programs can be expanded beyond serving youth and can be offered at many of the facilities.
- There is promotion on a web site.
- The program has potential for grants especially for the inner city youth segment.
- The program can highlight the city's natural resources and more undeveloped park areas.

Weaknesses

- There was no mention of grants, which would be available to support the program.
- The program is probably heavily subsidized.

There was no budget included that listed program expenses. The expenses that were listed were not inclusive of all costs.

- Marketing and promotional efforts are minor. With new programs, promotions should be more intensive.
- It is limited to a certain demographic age and socio-economic group.
- Many of the classes are free.
- There was no clear understanding of the features, advantages and benefits of the program.
- There was no mention of evaluations of the programs.
- Many of the programs could be feeder programs into other programs. This is done with the canoeing. Sequential positioning and promoting could be better.

Summer Playground

Strengths

- The program is well organized.
- There is a manual, which covers all aspects of program operations.
- There are a wide variety of activities for the children to do while in the program.
- There are areas throughout the city that can offer the program.
- The criteria for selecting staff are a higher standard.
- The program includes two meals for the children and has federal funding to support the expense.

- There is a large age group served by the program, 6-15.
- Transportation is provided and the cost is included in the fees.

Weaknesses

- The program is heavily subsidized.
- Playground program is viewed as a day care for the children.
- The fees are minimal for the program and are a lump sum.
- The program has about 6% of market.
- There was no indication of the ratio of instructor to participant. The brochure listed that two or more individuals would supervise the playgrounds. Some of the playgrounds had more than 100 kids registered.
- There is not a clear understanding of the benefits of the program.
- There was no mention of partnerships or sponsorships for the program.
- There are pre-registration problems listed but no details.
- It is not clear if the age groups are separated for the various activities. The age groups should be separated into more appropriate groups.

Senior Citizens

Strengths

- Seniors are a growing population in the area.
- There are a variety of programs offered to

the members.

- Participation/membership is good.
- There was a survey completed for this program area to garner feedback on desired activities.
- The activities are offered on a daily basis.
- There was a comparison study completed that compared costs, funding, activities, attendance and hours of operations. It is good information.
- The staff provided good information on the senior population locally as well as national statistics on seniors.

Weaknesses

- Fees are minimal and do not cover the costs of the program. The program is probably heavily subsidized.
- The market controlled is close to 50% or less. The registration or participation may be duplicated and/or is beyond the city's boundaries and incorporates more senior population in neighboring cities.
- There are limited promotions for the program.
- Programs are limited to a more passive type of structure. There were not many active programs for the more athletic seniors.
- Staff pay is low and may cause higher turnover rates.
- There were no partnerships listed.
- There was not a clear understanding of features, advantages and benefits.



- There was no listing of new programs to offer for the future.
- The center and programs need to be expanded. The indication was this program was not meeting the needs of the community.

War Memorial Fitness

Strengths

- The facility has reached almost maximum capacity during normal peak times for fitness facilities, which is early morning, and after work hours.
- Fees seem to be a market rate similar to YMCA/YWCA.
- There is a stratified pricing structure for memberships.
- There are a variety of activities and amenities offered at the facility.
- Open seven days a week in order to be more customer friendly.
- There has been incredible growth in the participation/memberships.
- Evaluations and surveys have been completed for this center. The results have initiated changes in some of the center's program offerings.
- There has been some innovative partnerships developed to increase usage.

Weaknesses

- There was no sinking fund established when the construction of the facility was completed. It now is as an enterprise fund, which will assist in purchasing new equipment, but the center will be in a "catch-up" mode for a while.
- There hasn't been, or it wasn't indicated, an accurate tracking of the programs offered. It is difficult to tell if they are meeting the demand or not or if the programs have good attendance.
- The facility is small for a city of this size.
- There is staff turnover due to low salaries or hourly wages.
- There was no budget included in the information to determine if it is breaking even or if it is being subsidized.
- Marketing and promotions are limited.
- There was also no indication of tracking membership usage.

Nathaniel Hill Community Complex

Strengths

- This is a community service that is assisting low-income families with day care.
- Offer medical and dental care with the other services.
- There was a partnership involved in putting this program together and funding the building.
- Volunteers are used to support the program's operations.

- The program reaches a demographic group that may not be able to access parks and recreation programs due to income or other limitations.
- The program is well accepted by the community it serves due to its proximity to the participants.
- Participation levels are increasing.
- The program has been established for since the seventies and has a good history.
- The staff is promoting the program heavily.

Weaknesses

- The participation was up, but there was no indication of the number.
- There was not a budget included in the information, so it was difficult to determine whether the program was breaking even or being subsidized.
- It is questionable that this may not be a core service of a parks and recreation department.
- There was no mention of grants that may be supporting the program.
- There is not enough staff for this program.
- Budget cuts may decrease services available to the participants.
- The capacity of the program was not listed. It was difficult to determine if the facility or the program is reaching maximum capacity.

University Park Adult Leisure Center

Strengths

- Participation level is up.
- There are a wide variety of activities for adults to become involved.
- There are more promotions and marketing done for this facility than most of the others.
- The fees are minimal for the programs.
- The staff is dedicated to the program.
- There was a survey conducted to gain feedback for future programs and activities.

Weaknesses

- There is not an understanding of advantages and benefits.
- Staff shortages impact the abilities to offer quality programs.
- Parking is an issue.
- There is a lack of equipment for programs.
- There were no partnerships listed for this facility or programs.
- Many of the programs are passive and there is a lack of active structured programs for the athletic senior.
- The program is heavily subsidized.
- The facility and programs need equipment and space.
- Partnerships with neighborhood associations were not well defined.
- The salaries for staff are low.





Community Centers Facilities

Strengths

- There are a wide variety of programs offered at the facilities.
- Some of the brochures have a consistent look.
- The participation was listed as “good”.
- The staff are marketing the programs.
- Sites are located throughout the city.
- Fees are low for the activities and memberships.

Weaknesses

- No participation numbers were listed. It is uncertain how it was determined that there has been an increase or how there is an 8% control of the market place.
- There doesn't seem to be a good tracking of expenses to determine subsidy rates.
- Marketing seems to be limited to the staff's availability.
- Personnel is an issue due to staff turnover, inadequate staffing, and undertrained staff.
- Benefits are not clearly defined.
- Swimming attendance is declining.
- Program descriptions were missing in the brochures.
- Tracking of participation usage and levels did not seem to be done for these areas.
- There is competition for the same services.