



05

# PROGRAM ANALYSIS

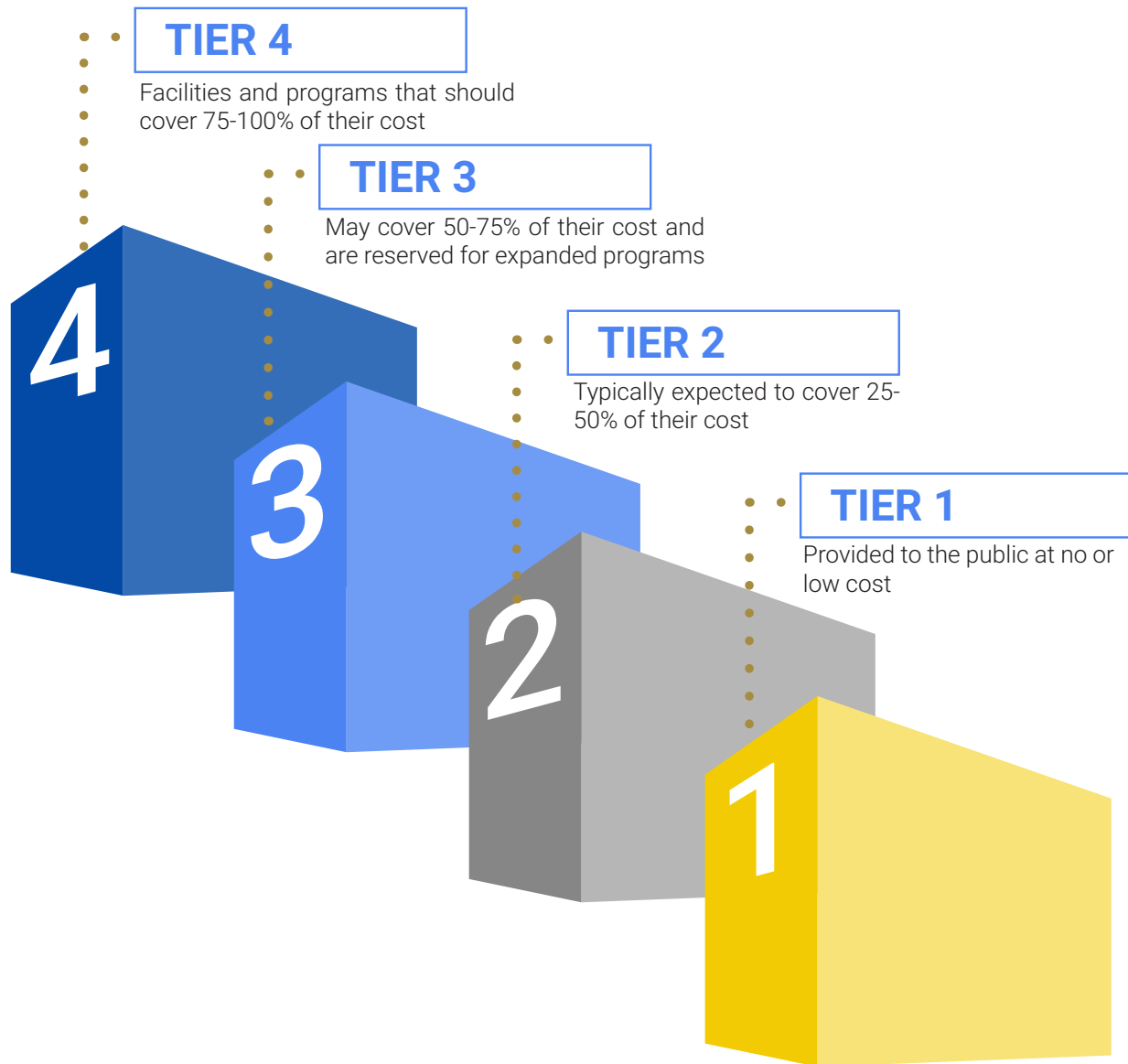
## Introduction

Recreation Programming should be at the core of every parks and recreation agency. Programming is about promoting and providing outdoor adventures, leisure experiences, engagement, active lifestyle choices, exercise, cultural exposure, socialization, and so much more. Providing outstanding programming choices for the well-being and overall quality of life for the citizens of Little Rock is of the greatest importance. Unfortunately, the importance of programming is sometimes underestimated in agencies across the country and minimized when developing future facilities and parks. This is a shortsighted approach that needs to be avoided.

*Source: NRPA Thinking Strategically About Your Agency's Recreation Programming by M. Mulvaney, W. Clevenger, R. Buhr, and J. Gower, December 6, 2017*

Programming for adults, children, and families with specific goals, measurable objectives, and a continuous evaluation component built-in for review and improvement needs to be a top priority for every recreation department across the country. There should be a data-driven approach that analyzes participation numbers, strengths, areas for improvement, and revenue generation numbers.





Consider a tiered approach to programming with recovery costs and types of classes/events/programs offered for each tier:

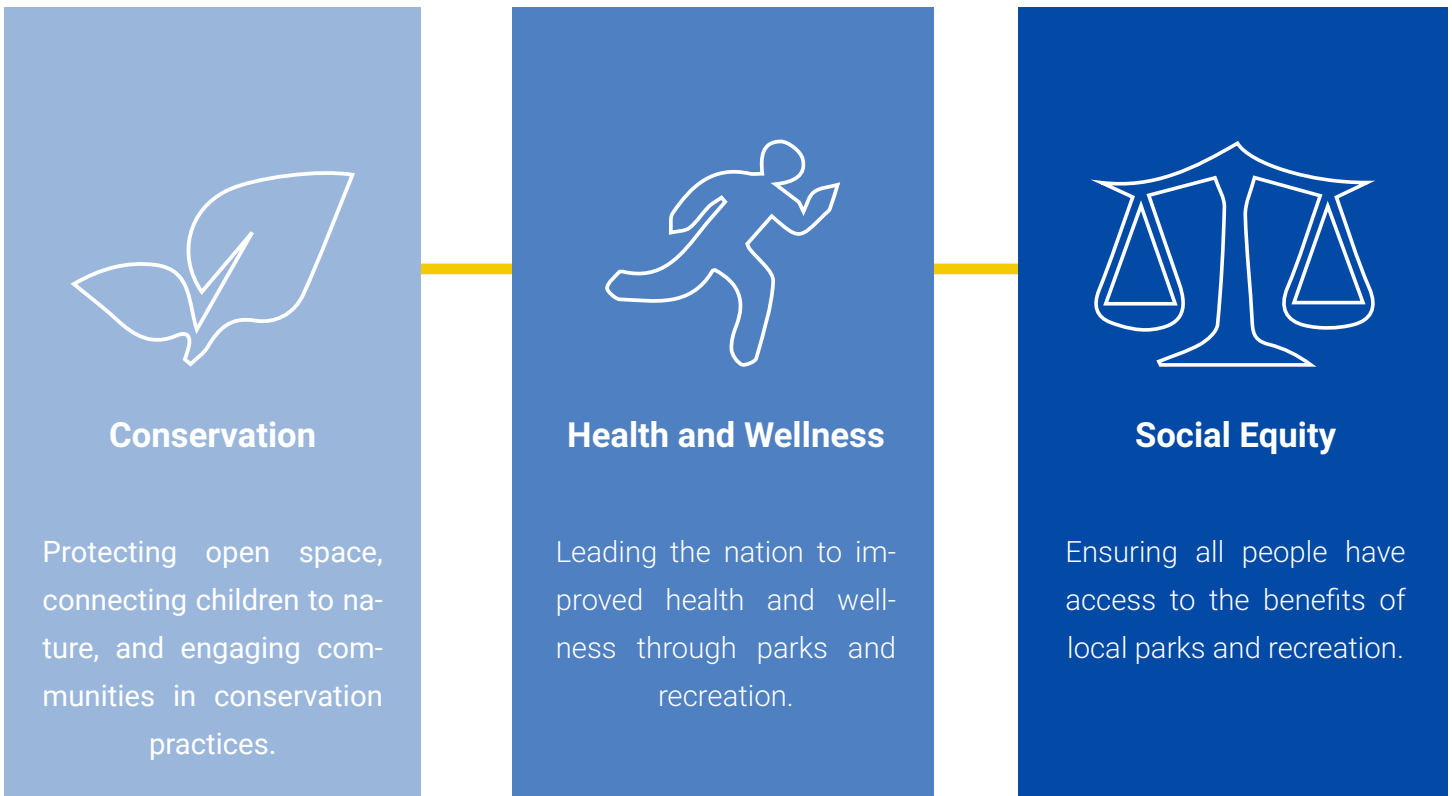
1. Tier-one programs would be provided to the public at no or low cost and would not require revenue to cover the full cost of the basic services. Examples of this type of programming include open gyms, outdoor events, and summer concerts, which typically cover 0%-25% of their cost.
2. Tier-two programs would typically cover 25%-50% of their cost and examples could include senior classes, special holiday programs, and family programs.
3. Tier-three programs would require a more detailed organization and a higher skill set from staff. Usually, 50%-75% of their costs would be covered and include camps, senior wellness programs, and swim programs.
4. Tier-four programs would cover 75%-100% of the costs. These programs are revenue generators and examples consist of field, pool, and shelter rentals, fitness training, and all adult sports programs.

Sources: *Thinking Strategically About Your Agency's Recreation Programming* by M. Mulvaney, W. Clevenger, R. Buhr, and J. Gower, December 6, 2017 (NRPA) and *Program and Services Management* by C. Edginton and J. O'Neill in *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*

## Benefits of Community Recreation

Effective and responsive parks and recreation departments offer quality, diverse, and beneficial opportunities and experiences. Understanding the importance of growth and development for the citizens of Little Rock will assist Little Rock Parks and Recreation (LRPR) in designing, revising, and establishing programs that are high quality offerings. It is important to make programming decisions based on public and staff input, participation levels, current research, data analysis, and revenue generation.

National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) has created Three Pillars, or goal areas, that define the critical role of parks and recreation in our communities. The Three Pillars are:



The Three Pillars are supported by a body of research that confirms the importance of parks and recreation in addressing societal issues, improving the well-being of individuals, and creating positive economic impacts for communities.

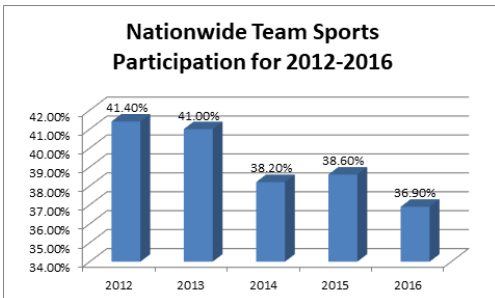
*Source: NRPA – Agency Performance Report, 2018*

Programming should exist for health benefits and enjoyment of the community. There should be a variety of options for all ages by creating fun, healthy, and interesting activities for the value of all who participate. To combat the alarming increase in rates of childhood obesity, diabetes, and mental health issues, appropriate programming needs to exist. Specifically, a focus on nurturing children is essential in developing successful, well-rounded adults. Children need to spend time outdoors each day with unstructured play. Health benefits include reducing obesity, gang/crime prevention, and reconnecting children with the outdoors, according to the Trust for Public Land. Richard Louv, renowned expert in the impact of nature on children, strongly asserts that nature is essential for healthy child development and causes children to become less stressed, have increased levels of concentration, and have increased self-esteem.

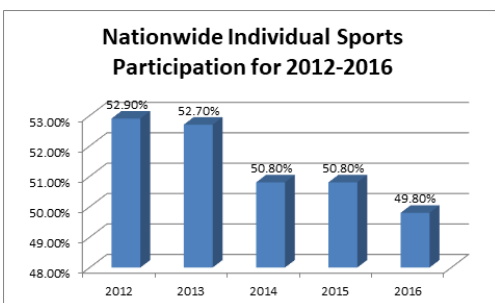
*Sources: The Health Benefits of Parks by the Trust for Public Land and Last Child in the Woods by R. Louv, Originally published April 25, 2005*



**Figure 5.1** Nationwide Team Sports for 2012-2016



**Figure 5.2** Nationwide Individual Sports for 2012-2016



Sources: Sports & Fitness Industry Association, Aspen Institute by J. Bogage, Washington Post and 2018 Outdoor Participation Report, Outdoor Industry Association, July 17, 2018

## Trends and Emphasis on Health and Wellness

Health and Wellness is a current topic and issue for communities across the country. With the rapid rise of diabetes, obesity, and chronic health problems, parks and recreation agencies are offering assistance on a variety of levels. Parks and recreation staff are leaders who are trained to assist individuals and communities by offering effective programs and facilities for fitness, weight loss, athletic training, and health classes. They are leaders in being responsive listeners to the public and by staying current with the variety of health issues that are affecting the community.

Working towards growing a healthier community should be a major goal for any park agency. Collaborating with multiple community partners to review current research as to which communities are making positive progress in assisting their community member's lead healthy lifestyles, then trying to replicate what is successful in their own community needs, to be a continual goal. An especially concerning area is the rapid growth of major chronic health concerns in children, which needs to be at the forefront of every community effort.

Source: NRPA's Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness

## Participation in Sports, Physical Activities and Recreation Programs

The Sports & Fitness Industry Association and the Aspen Institute recently published a report about an alarming issue with youth athletics in this country. Over the past 10 years, participation has taken a steady decline or remained the same in most areas of the country. Especially troublesome is the lack of access to athletics for youth who come from poor households versus the participation level for youth whose household income is over \$100,000. Youth with less financial resources have their chance of participating cut in half, compared to their counterparts.

Participation fees, sports gear, and equipment can be expensive and cost prohibitive for less affluent youth and their families. Some of the less expensive sports to participate in include basketball, track, swimming, and soccer. Examples of the most expensive sports include hockey, horseback riding, football, and skiing. For local parks and recreation agencies, before/after school care and summer school opportunities for students living in low income situations can provide equal access opportunities for all youth. An additional option for addressing the lack of access would be providing scholarships for youth in need.

Source: Youth Sports Study: Declining Participation, Rising Costs and Unqualified Coaches by J. Bogage, September 6, 2017

Outdoor recreation continues on a slight upward increase from 2014-2017, with 1.7 million additional participants in 2017. Specifically, interest in backpacking, day hiking, camping, and fishing across all age levels is on the rise. An additional high interest area is swimming for fitness and paddling activities; these water-based activities saw the highest increases in outdoor participation with stand-up paddling at the top of the growth list at 20%. Increased socialization is becoming more important on trails and pathways as well. Being outdoors, making friendships, and enjoying exercise combine to help communities get healthier.

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation conducted a survey and reported that almost half of all Americans (48.4%) participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2015. The data also showed that walking for fitness continued to be the most popular activity with half of all outdoor participants indicating that they also walked. The study also asked the survey respondents which activities they “aspire” to participate, rather than the activities that they had participated. Camping, swimming, and bicycling ranked in the top three among all age groups. Basketball, ranked 10th by the 44+ age group, was the only traditional team sport that appeared in the top 10 aspirational activities. The following represents the top 10 Activity Aspirations by age group.

The Physical Activity Council's annual study tracks participation in **123** different sports and activities. Findings include:

- Trends continue toward less frequency in most activity levels
- Majority of activity is with fitness sports
- Senior population is less active than in 2012
- Increased interest in outdoor recreation

**Table 5.1** Top 10 Activity Aspirations by Age Group

Ages 6-12	Ages 13-17	Ages 18-24	Ages 25-34	Ages 35-44	Ages 44+
Camping	Camping	Camping	Swimming for Fitness	Camping	Camping
Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness	Bicycling	Camping	Swimming for Fitness	Swimming for Fitness
Bicycling	Bicycling	Swimming for Fitness	Bicycling	Bicycling	Bicycling
Basketball	Working Out with Machines	Hiking	Hiking	Hiking	Working Out with Machines
Running/ Jogging	Running/ Jogging	Backpacking	Running/ Jogging	Working Out with Weights	Hiking
Soccer	Hiking	Working Out with Weights	Canoeing	Working Out with Machines	Fishing
Fishing	Fishing	Running/ Jogging	Backpacking	Running/ Jogging	Working Out with Weights
Football	Working Out with Weights	Martial Arts	Working Out with Machines	Fishing	Birdwatching/Wildlife Viewing
Swimming on a Team	Shooting	Working Out with Machines	Working Out with Weights	Canoeing	Running/ Jogging
Hiking	Martial Arts	Climbing	Kayaking	Backpacking	Basketball

Sources: 2016 Participation Report - The Physical Activity Council's Annual Study Tracking Sports, Fitness, and Recreation Participation in the US and 2018 Outdoor Participation Report from the Outdoor Industry Association, July 17, 2018

In a study entitled 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review – Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks, the percent of agencies that offer specific types of programming was identified as follows:

**Table 5.2** Percent of Agencies Offering Specific Programs

<i>Programming Offered</i>	<i>Percent of Agencies</i>
<i>Team Sports</i>	86%
<i>Themed Special Events</i>	84%
<i>Social Recreation Events</i>	81%
<i>Health and Wellness Education</i>	78%
<i>Fitness Enhancement Classes</i>	78%
<i>Safety Training</i>	71%
<i>Aquatics</i>	69%
<i>Individual Sports</i>	68%
<i>Trips and Tours</i>	64%
<i>Racquet Sports</i>	62%
<i>Performing Arts</i>	62%
<i>Martial Arts</i>	61%
<i>Cultural Crafts</i>	58%
<i>Visual Arts</i>	56%
<i>Natural and Cultural History Activities</i>	53%
<i>Golf</i>	47%

Source: 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review – Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks, p. 12

## Camps and Programs for Individuals with Disabilities

Summer camps are a favorite childhood memory for many adults and they want to replicate that experience for their own children. Parks and recreation staff are leaders in this area. Many departments provide day and overnight camps for specified periods of time, primarily in the summer. With an emphasis on providing experiences for ALL children, many creative camps have come to the forefront, sometimes specific to one’s disability, medical condition, or age. Frequent obstacles to running successful camps can include space, properly trained staff, or sufficient funding.

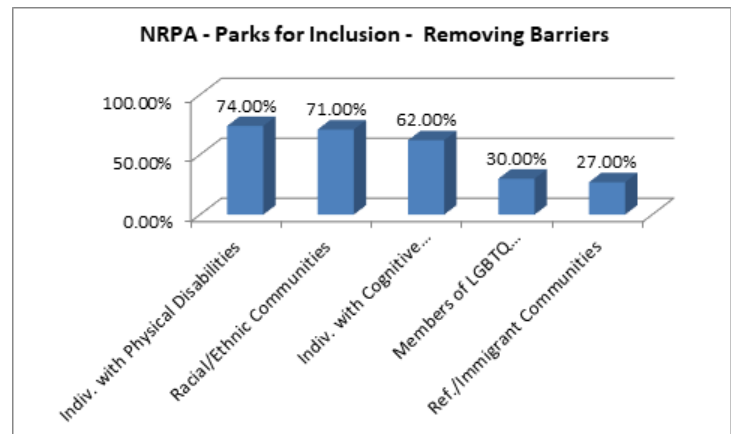
NRPA’s Social Equity Pillar focuses on ensuring all people have safe access to quality park and recreation facilities. The very philosophy of public parks and

recreation is that all people—regardless of race, ethnicity, age, income level, physical ability, sexual orientation, gender or religion—are able to take advantage of quality programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great.





**Figure 5.3** NRPA Parks for Inclusion - Removing Barriers



Source: NRPA – 2018 Park and Recreation Inclusion Report

Ensuring inclusive play for all is a challenge, but should be included in the top priorities for parks and recreation agencies. Both a physical and social event, inclusive play is not solely about physically accessing an environment, but what happens once an individual gets there. A truly inclusive and embracing play experience addresses the developmental needs of the whole child by intentionally providing opportunities for physical, cognitive, communicative, social/emotional, and sensory development.

Source: 7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design, <https://www.playcore.com/programs/me2>

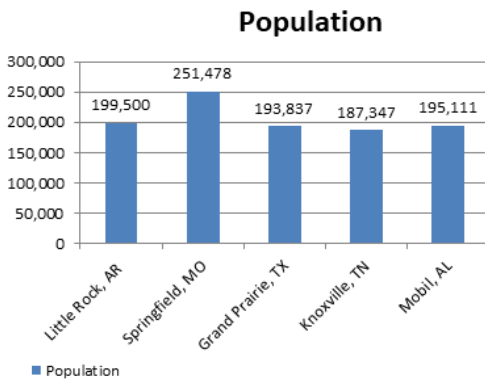
Summer camps are a staple of parks and recreation departments. The results for agencies targeting programs for children, seniors and individuals with disabilities is provided below and includes the percent of agencies serving 100,000 to 250,000 people that provide various types of programs.

**Table 5.3** Percent of Agencies Targeting Programs for Children

<b>Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors and People With Disabilities</b>	<b>% of Agencies</b>
Summer Camp	85%
Specific Senior Programs	80%
Specific Teen Programs	73%
Programs for People with Disabilities	69%
After-School Programs	62%
Preschool	31%
Before-School Programs	35%
Full Daycare	12%

Source: NRPA - 2016 Park Metrics Field Report

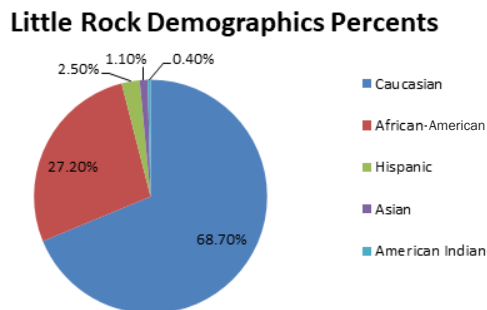
**Figure 5.4 Population Comparison**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 2018 Population Estimate

Source: An Overview of the Demographics of Little Rock by A. Galiano, August 5, 2017

**Figure 5.5 Little Rock Demographics Percents**



## Demographics of Little Rock

The City of Little Rock is a growing community with an identified 2018 population count of 199,500. Little Rock is currently the fastest growing city in Arkansas, with a projected growth rate of 2% per year. Future projections are for a continual, steady growth, with an increase of younger people moving into the city. The following table shows population size comparisons with other Midwest cities in the region.

Many cities throughout the country are working with and planning for an aging population boom. In Little Rock, this is not the case. The median age in Little Rock is 34.5, which is 5% lower than the average in the state of Arkansas. Of the population, 14.3% live below the poverty line, with only 9% of those below the poverty line being 65 years and older. However, Senior Programs remain very important and LRPR programming should include input by this specific population.

Source: Wikipedia, Little Rock, Arkansas

When planning occurs, attention should be paid to the location of all parks and facilities. There are sections/neighborhoods that are showing growth and others that are remaining the same or declining. Updated and/or new facilities, combined with responsive programming, need to be located where the population is growing in order to meet their needs. With Little Rock’s location in the middle of Arkansas, it is the perfect place to upgrade athletic fields and facilities in order to attract state and national championships. Long term planning and collaboration with partners, such as the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Center, will assist LRPR into becoming more competitive for tourism dollars. Facilities should be considered for areas of the city that are easily accessible from interstates and that offer opportunity for future growth. A feasibility study and market analysis should be conducted to determine the focus of the type and number of sports fields that would create the greatest impact for the community.

Sources: LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan – Updated October 2018 and LRCVB Staff, Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau <https://www.littlerock.com/about/LRCVBstaff>

Growth Rate

**2%**

PER YEAR

**LITTLE ROCK IS CURRENTLY THE FASTEST GROWING CITY IN ARKANSAS.**



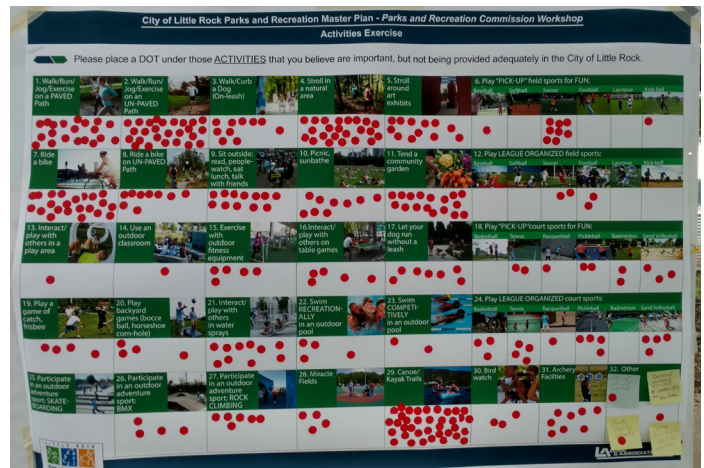
The Little Rock School District's enrollment declined 405 students during the past year from 23,164 in 2016-2017 to 22,759 in 2017-2018. This has a direct impact on the financial operations of the district. Because the district is funded on a per pupil basis, the loss of 405 students will cause a reduction of approximately \$5.5 million dollars. Staffing costs are the majority of funds expended for all districts; therefore, this reduction will include position reductions of the following: 30 teachers, 20 paraprofessionals, 18 building-level administrators, central office jobs, and other support staff positions. An interesting note is the increase in enrollment at two primary charter schools in Little Rock. It is important for LRPR to work collaboratively with public, private, charter, and home-school entities to assist with serving students in a variety of before/after school opportunities, youth athletics, summer programs, and sharing of facilities for these activities.

Sources: *School District in Little Rock No Longer Biggest in State*, Arkansas Democrat Gazette, September 8, 2018 <https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2018/sep/03/school-district-in-lr-no-longer-biggest/> and *The Shrinking Little Rock District*, Arkansas Times, April 27, 2018 <https://www.arktimes.com/ArkansasBlog/archives/2018/04/27/the-shrinking-little-rock-school-district>

## LRPR Programming and Citizen Input

Little Rock Parks and Recreation strives to offer a variety of programs for varying populations of the community. Ensuring access to quality parks, facilities, and programming is a focus of importance for LRPR. Accessibility and engagement in activities allows people to connect to each other and nature. According to National Recreation and Parks Association's article, *Why Parks and Recreation are Essential Public Services*, there are three values that make parks essential: 1) *Economic value*, 2) *Health and Environmental benefits*, and 3) *Social importance*. Several studies about the effect of the location of parks and open spaces, relative to property values, by one of the most respected researchers and authors, John Crompton, still holds importance over time. For 20 out of 25 investigations, the property value did, in fact, increase because of the proximity of parks and open spaces.

Sources: *NRPA Parks and Recreation Inclusion Report - Social Equity*, NRPA *Why Parks and Recreation are Essential Public Services*, January, 2010, and *The Proximate Principle: Impact of Parks on Property Value* by J. Crompton and S. Nicholls, October 2005



As part of creating the Master Plan for LRPR, citizen participation was encouraged and documented throughout the process. All comments and/or suggestions were recorded and thoroughly reviewed. Citizens of Little Rock have offered suggestions for programming that will highlight their interests and needs by participating in "Pop-Up" surveys across the city in several different locations. The citizens ranked their top choices as follows:

- Nature programs
- Community special events (concerts, green markets, etc.)
- Adult fitness/wellness
- Movies in the park
- Teen programs
- Cooking classes
- Camps (summer/school break)
- Before and after school programs
- Outdoor dining
- Programs for people with disabilities
- Youth fitness/wellness
- Adult learn to swim
- Youth learn to swim
- GED/continuing education (degree, trade)

Sources: *Little Rock Parks and Recreation – Pop-up Surveys on Programming Compilation 2018*

## LRPR's Fees and Charges

An important fact for Little Rock Parks and Recreation (LRPR) to consider is that registration fees for programming are the largest source of non-tax revenue for most agencies. Currently, LRPR's Fee Schedule includes recommendations for fee increases for instructional classes, memberships, and athletic programs. Fee increases are based on a number of factors: 1) Review of neighboring program fees, 2) Increase based on successful program analysis, 3) Program and marketing costs, 4) Review of pricing from other agencies, and 5) cost of doing business and running the program.

*Sources: 2018 NRPA Agency Performance Review and LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan – Updated October 2018*

LRPR's fees and charges for programming are well below the national average and need revamping with an organized, tiered level approach for manageable increases. In order for the City of Little Rock's citizens to have appropriate and innovative programming, as they have clearly stated as a need in the parks and recreation surveys that have been conducted, LRPR must make an adjustment to the fee structure to be at least the same as competing agencies. Without an increase in the fee schedule, the citizens of Little Rock will not gain the quality programming and services they deserve. *Public parks and recreation are the gateway to a healthier America.*

*Source: NRPA Role of Parks and Recreation on Health and Wellness*



## LRPR Department Program Offerings

Little Rock Parks and Recreation was initially accredited by the Commission for Accredited Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) on October 11, 2006. Recently reaccredited in 2016, no additional evaluation visits are required until Spring 2021. This recognition is an earned honor and validates that the LRPR staff is continually striving for excellence by meeting the high benchmarks established by CAPRA. These national standards include 10 areas that are evaluated, including Chapter 6 – Programs and Services Management. Programming decisions should only be made after carefully analyzing all of the benefits/outcomes for any additions or changes. LRPR has created a *Program Procedure Policy* that includes:

## Program Establishment

- Determine program name
- Determine program audience
- Determine program revenue goal
- Establish program objective
- Establish program goals – must be specific
- Establish program budget
- Establish program staff and volunteers
- Establish list of supplies and equipment needed for program
- Establish program rules and regulations
- Determine marketing/promotion strategies for program
- Establish a calendar of events for program
- Complete program report

## Program Execution

- Plan meetings for customer (coaches, player, and parent meeting)
- Execute planned events for program (awards program, field trip, practices, games)

## Program Completion

- Complete survey distribution, pick-up, and totals
- Complete final program report

Source: LRPR Program Procedure Policy

Following this established procedure, it is essential that all programs be evaluated on a regular basis to determine if participation is adequate and the citizens are satisfied with the offerings. Participants are asked to participate in a survey at the completion of each program and the results are analyzed for possible revisions to continuously improve.

Little Rock Park and Recreation Department is home to 63 developed and 12 undeveloped parks throughout the city. Programming exists for the developed parks under the following categories:

**Table 5.4** Current Park Programming

<b>PROGRAMMING</b>	<b>LARGE UR-BAN PARKS (50 ACRES+)</b>	<b>COMMUNITY PARKS (20-50 ACRES)</b>	<b>NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS (5-20 ACRES)</b>	<b>MINI-PARKS (UNDER 5 ACRES)</b>	<b>SPECIAL FACILITIES</b>
<i>Playground</i>	8	9	14	12	3
<i>Basketball</i>	7	8	10	13	0
<i>Volleyball</i>	6	2	0	0	0
<i>Tennis Courts</i>	5	27	8	4	4
<i>Soccer Fields</i>	7	5	0	0	0
<i>Football Fields</i>	2	1	2	0	0
<i>Softball Fields</i>	6	0	0	0	0
<i>Baseball Fields</i>	2	7	15	0	1
<i>Community Center</i>	0	2	2	2	1
<i>Pools and/or Splashpad</i>	0	2	0	0	1
<i>Pavilions</i>	22	4	3	1	4
<i>Fishing</i>	4	1	4	0	2
<i>Picnic Tables</i>	106	63	45	17	38
<i>Path/Trail Miles</i>	28.4	6.3	2.5	0.3	3.3
<i>Mountain Bike Trails</i>	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Equestrian Trails</i>	6	0	0	0	0

## LRPR Programs

Little Rock Parks and Recreation Division offers programs, activities, and events throughout the year. The Recreation Division publishes a general overview for offerings annually. Full-time and part-time employees work at the following facilities to provide quality programs, responding to community needs and requests:

- Centre at University Park
- West Central Community Center
- Nat Hill Community Center
- Dunbar Community Center
- Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatics Center
- Hindman Golf Course
- MacArthur Military Museum
- Rebsamen Golf Course
- Rebsamen Tennis Center
- Southwest Community Center
- Stephens Community Center
- War Memorial Golf Course





The Recreation Division has recently established specific Recreation Action Steps to align the 2018 LRPR Strategic Plan with the most recent LRPR Master Plan (2001). The subsequent Action Steps maintain an overarching influence from the goals and objectives.

1. Provide a diverse range of programs of after-school, summer, teen and senior programs that offer the opportunity to participate in meaningful life skills, recreational, and educational activities that contribute to growth and achievement.
2. Examine all programs to ensure they emphasize health and wellness which encourage healthy bodies and minds.
3. Develop and provide opportunities and programs that allow all ages with disabilities and developmental delays the ability to participate in activities within a stimulating and non-threatening environment that promote both motor and socialization skills.
4. Through daily inspections, ensure community centers, facilities, ball fields and playgrounds meet specified safety standards and report all damages, hazards and repairs to designated staff for corrective measures.
5. Advocate for the construction of trails and walking paths to promote healthy exercise and implement programs to educate the public about nature, history, culture, the environment and conservation.
6. Provide opportunity for cultural and historical significance by integrating a variety of programs and visits to local historical institutions and exhibits.
7. Examine developing revenue streams to supplement general funds.

Source: LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan – Updated October 2018

## Current Programming

LRPR provides a wide variety of program offerings for adults, seniors, and youth in the Little Rock community. These specific types of programs and events are delineated in the following sections.

### Adult Athletics Programs

Adult Athletic Programs are provided for adult athletes (ages 18-55). These recreational athletic programs are for people who enjoy fun competition and exercise through the promotion of recreation and sportsmanship. There are a variety of leagues offered for men and women. Included below are some examples of Adult Athletic Programs for LRPR:

- Fall Basketball Leagues
- Men's Summer Basketball League
- Men's 30 & Over and 40 & Over Basketball League
- Softball Leagues
- Volleyball League

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*

### Adult Instructional Programs

Adult Instructional Programs provide active adults recreational instruction classes as a means of enjoyment, health benefits, social engagement, exercise, and fun for ages 18-55. Participants are surveyed at the completion of each class. The surveys are read and analyzed for program improvements. Participant numbers are also tabulated to see which classes will continue and which classes will be dis-continued.

Listed to the right are several class options:

- Aerobic Classes
- Aqua Zumba
- Badminton
- Body Blitz
- Body Conditioning
- Body Sculpt
- Cardio Sculpt
- Dance
- Get Fit
- Healthy Habits
- Karate
- Kettle Burn Blast
- Line Dance
- Piano
- Pickleball
- Spanish
- Step/Weights
- Swimming
- Table Tennis
- Total Fit
- Yoga
- Zumba

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*

## Aging and Active Programs

Aging and Active (Senior) Programming is a rapidly growing area in most parks and recreation departments across the nation. Currently, programs are being held in 70% of the parks and recreation agencies and they are serving several millions of seniors annually. In Little Rock, the median age is 34.5 and is 5% lower than the Arkansas median age. However, Aging and Active Programming has strong participation and examples of specific programs are listed below:



- Arts and Crafts
- Black History Program
- Bridge Club
- Cardio Fusion
- Ceramics
- Christmas in July
- Computer Tech Class
- Exercise Programs

- Field Trips
- Games – Checkers, Chess, Bingo
- Health Fairs
- Line Dance
- Low Impact Aerobics
- Mardi Gras Celebration
- Seniorcise Aerobics
- Seniorcise Stretch/Tone
- Seniorcise Weights
- Sistahs of Color Reading Group
- 60 Swingers Square Dance Club



- T.O.P.S (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)
- Senior Tacky Day
- Yoga

Sources: NRPA Park Programming and Better Health, 2018; Wikipedia, Little Rock, AR; LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan – Updated October 2018; and Community Centers Directory 2016

## Aquatics Programs

From a beginning swimmer to competitive swim teams, swimming is a great way to exercise. Aquatics Programs need to include everyone, especially those at a young age. However, a recent study coming from the 2018 USA Swimming Trends Report, discussed the challenges for diverse children learning to swim: **64 percent of African-American children, 45 percent of Hispanic children and 40 percent of Caucasian children have no/low swimming ability, putting them at risk for drowning. A concerning finding was that 87 percent of swimmers with no or low ability plan to go to a swimming facility this summer at least once and 34 percent plan to swim 10 or more times this summer.** An important note to consider is: **Children who swim with their family are 2.7 times more likely to be good swimmers.** Parks and recreation agencies are well suited for encouraging family swims and early swimming by children.

Sources: 2018 USA Swimming Trends Report and 2018 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report



Within LRPR, opportunities to swim include instructional classes, training, fitness, health and wellness. A twenty-five yard swimming pool, diving board, full locker room, shower facilities, kid's pool, and a whirlpool are available for daily use. Illustrations of Aquatics Programs are included below:

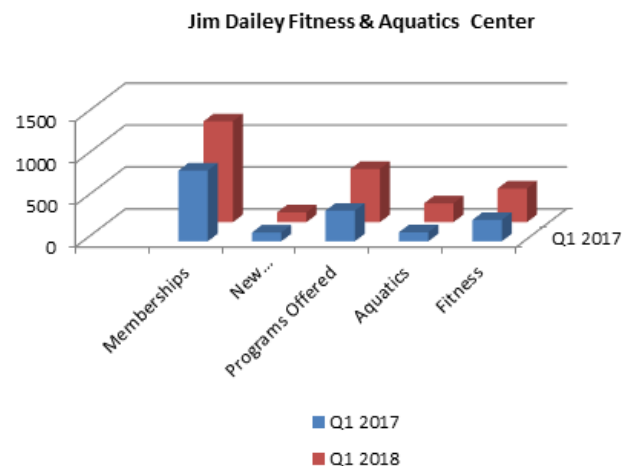
- Aqua Abdominal – 30 minutes of isolated exercises for the abdominal muscles
- Aqua-Fit – 30 minutes of medium intensity aerobic activity
- Aqua Power – Calisthenics combined with jogging for a high intensity workout
- Arthritis Foundation – 30-45 minutes of gentle body movements aided by water.
- Lane Swimming
- Learn to Swim
- Lifeguard Training
- Open Recreational Swimming
- Swim Exercise Classes
- Swimming Lessons

Source: Community Centers Directory 2016

Examples of classes/activities that exist at the Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatic Center include: Indoor jogging/walking track, Cybex Weight machines, aerobic equipment, gymnasium, multi-purpose indoor court area, multipurpose activity room, swimming pool, whirlpool, and tennis courts are available for use. Professional staff is accessible for Health and Fitness Counseling and Monitoring Fit-4-All Fitness Evaluations, massage therapy, and children's activities.

Attendance at the Aquatics Center in the first quarter of 2018 is up when compared to the previous year. This increase is depicted in the following figure.

Figure 5.6 Attendance for Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatics Center



Source: 2018 LRStat by Quarter Recreation



## Community Centers

LRPR has a number of community and recreation centers including Dunbar CC, Nat Hill CC, Southwest CC, and Stephens CC. Each center has a rich heritage and is strategically located to residents of all ages in Little Rock. It is the fastest growing city in Arkansas, especially in west Little Rock. This area is the push of new development and outward expansion of the city with no community centers or programming. Citizens from west Little Rock have requested facilities and programming for their area of the city, and combined with the growth rate, LRPR should consider these factors in their long-range planning.

Numerous benefits for participants at the community centers include:

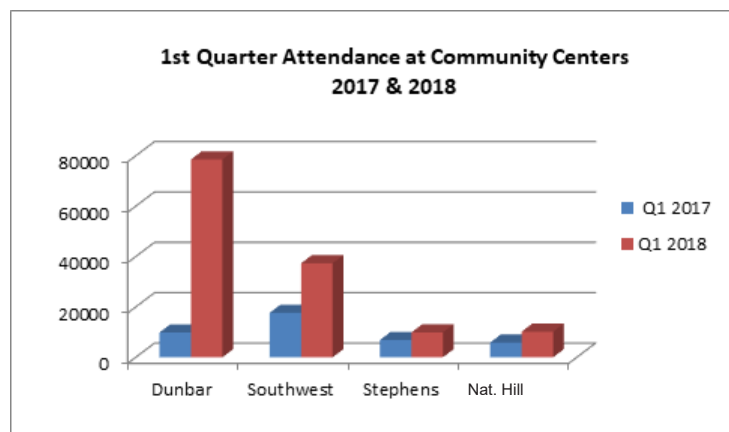
- Taking care of Latch Key children – educate
- Control weight, look better, build strong bodies
- Lower chance of disease – decrease insurance premiums – live longer
- Build self-esteem
- Reduce Stress – relax
- Promote sensitivity to cultural diversity
- Increase community pride – strengthen neighborhood involvement
- Reduce crime, diminish gang violence, provide safe places to play
- Meet friends-create memories
- Lower health care costs
- Enhance relationship skills – teach vital life skills

Sources: *Community Centers Directory 2016*; *Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatics Center Flyer*; and *LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan – Updated October 2018*



Attendance at Community Centers in the first quarter of 2018 is up when compared to the previous year, particularly at the Dunbar and Southwest Centers. This increase is depicted in the following figure.

**Figure 5.7** 1st Quarter Attendance at Community Centers 2017-2018



Source: 2018 LRStat by Quarter Recreation for Community Centers

## Cultural Programs

Cultural Programs are offered throughout the year in Little Rock. As shared in the Recreation Programming Plan 2018, the purpose of presenting cultural programs is to inform a variety of audiences about local Little Rock history and to build well-rounded, educated citizens who understand cultural diversity. From tours that are given at the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History for youth and adults to scavenger hunts and movies, learning about history and understanding diversity are skills that LRPR staff collaborates with partners to continue to foster in participants.

The following Cultural Programs are offered:

- Youth Museum Tour
- Adult Museum Tour
- Diversity Month Programs
- Special Outreach Programs
- MacArthur Park Fishing Derby Expo
- MacArthur Park Scavenger Hunt
- History Detective Reading Program
- History on the Run Annual Race
- Movies at MacArthur

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*





## Golf Programs

Golf Programs are offered to provide quality golfing experience for citizens and visitors of Little Rock. The following information is for the three golf courses owned and operated by LRPR:

**Hindman Golf Course** - closed for operation in 2019, this park space should be studied for future use to best serve the residents of Little Rock

**Rebsamen Golf Course** - Nestled comfortably in a bend of the Arkansas River, this eighteen (18) hole championship course was designed to accommodate golfers of all levels. Rebsamen's open fairways and Champion Dwarf Bermuda grass green help frame some of the most breathtaking views found on any Arkansas golf course. A nine (9)-hole executive course provides golfers a shorter playtime and offers Champion Dwarf Bermuda grass greens.

**War Memorial Golf Course** - closed for operation in 2019, this park space should be studied for future use to best serve the residents of Little Rock

*Source: LRPR Little Rock Golf Courses <https://www.littlerock.gov/for-residents/parks-and-recreation/golf-courses/>*

**Jack Stephens Youth Golf Academy** – Home of the First Tee of Central Arkansas, which features a nine (9) hole regulation course (Champion's Course) with three sets of tees as well as a nine (9) hole par three course. The department took over operational control of this facility in 2019.

*Source: The First Tee of Central Arkansas <https://www.thefirstteecentralarkansas.org/about/our-course/>*

Programming at the golf courses includes lessons, tournaments, and open play. The following examples of activities that are offered are listed below:

- Junior Golf Tournaments
- Adult Golf Tournaments
- Metro Junior Golf Program –for ages 8-18 for inner-city participants
- Beginner Golf Lessons

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*

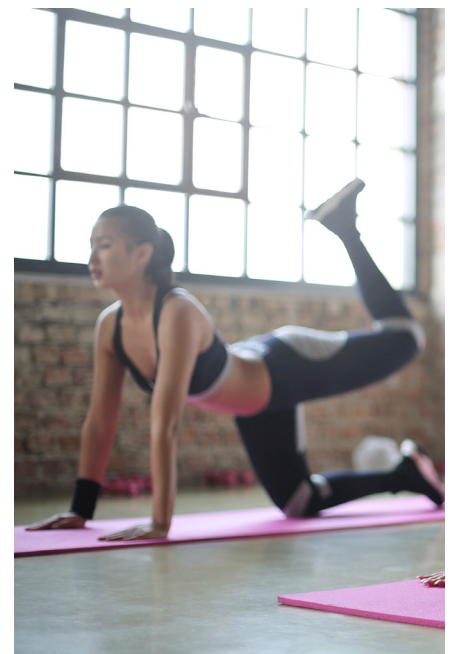


## Health, Wellness and Fitness Programs

Health, Wellness, and Fitness Programs are designed to promote health benefits to the participants. Programs are designed to help people develop healthy lifestyles through education and exercise. Let's Walk and Get in the Gym are two programs that work on balance, increasing muscle tone, alleviating body pain, and strengthening bones. Participants have input into additional classes that are created. The Health, Wellness and Fitness offerings are included below:

- Aerobics
- Beginner Body Sculpt
- Body Clinic
- Body Conditioning
- Body Sculpt
- Boot Camp
- Cardio Resistance Training
- Extreme Turbo
- Hardcore Abs
- Hip-Hop Combo
- Hooping & Step/Combo-Hooping!
- Intermediate Yoga
- Pilates Fusion
- Pickleball
- Seniorcise Aerobics
- Seniorcise Weights
- Seniorcise Stretch/Tone
- Step Aerobics
- Step & Weight/Combo
- Total Fit
- Turbo Kick
- Yoga
- Zumba

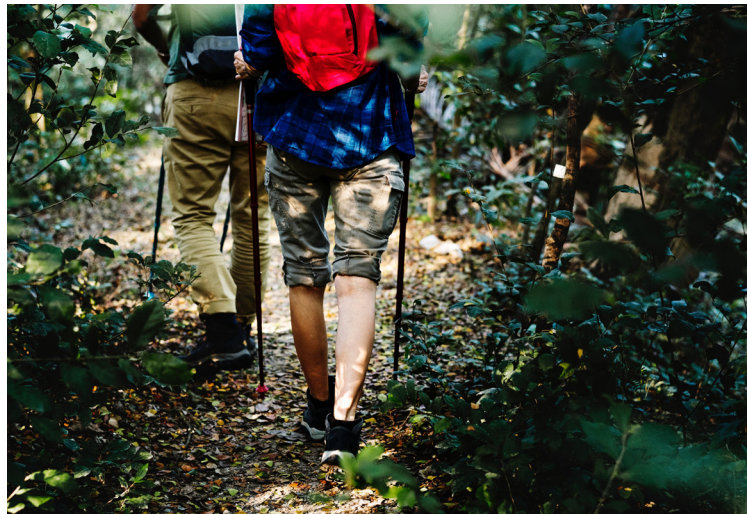
*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*





## Outdoor Programs

Nationally, Outdoor Programming is seeing participation increases across all age spans. The largest increases were seen in backpacking and hiking, with a small decrease seen in canoeing. Activity examples include fishing, biking, camping, and swimming for fitness. For LRPR, which is located in Pulaski County, this is an exciting time for outdoor programming with the expansion of water sports centered around Riverfront Park.



Together, the City of Little Rock and Pulaski County own Two Rivers Park, which consists of 1000 acres including the Arkansas and Little Maumelle Rivers. Together, in 1992, these two entities created a joint Master Plan. This plan included a vision for outdoor recreational use for individuals and families. Currently, Riverfront Park has eleven blocks located on the south side of the Arkansas River. This beautiful, picturesque park, located in downtown Little Rock, boasts of 33 acres for outdoor recreation and events, and programming for enjoyment.



LRPR sent out a request for proposal in February 2017 for a vendor who could provide a paddle sports complex to house a rowing program and staff for training participants to row, along the Little Maumelle and Arkansas Rivers. The goal of hiring an experienced company was to expand and grow rowing and water activities in Little Rock. A private vendor is managing water activities on the Arkansas River with kayaking and canoeing. Possible additions could occur in the future by accessing Fourche Creek.

Sources: 2018 Participation Report from the Physical Activity Council <https://pulaskicounty.net/two-rivers-par>, and <https://www.littlerock.com/little-rock-destinations/riverfront-park>

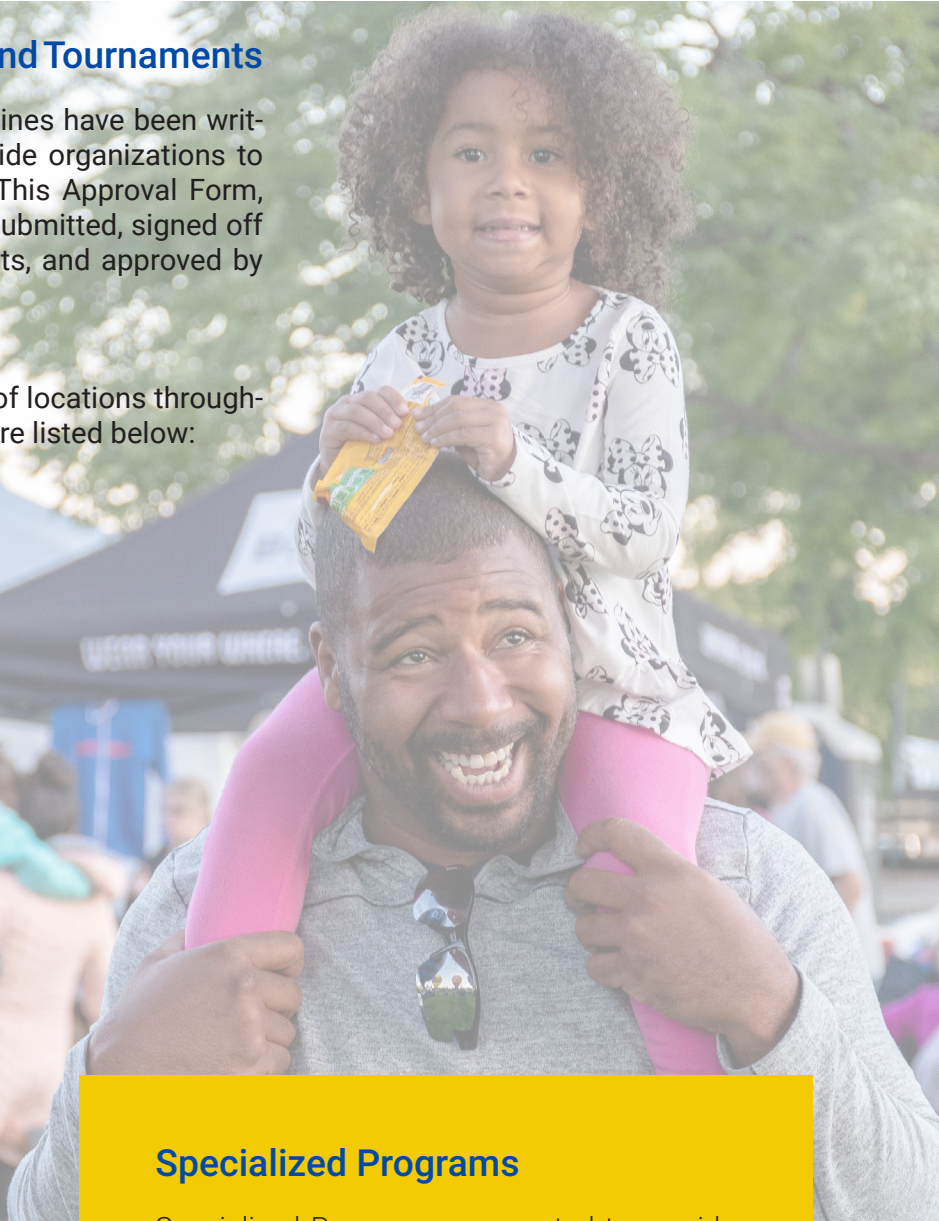
## Special Events, Festivals, Concerts and Tournaments

Special Events in the Parks Procedural Guidelines have been written and include an application form for outside organizations to complete when planning a particular event. This Approval Form, with proof of insurance, must be completed, submitted, signed off by the Little Rock Fire and Police Departments, and approved by the Director.

Special Events in the parks occur at a variety of locations throughout each year in Little Rock. Some examples are listed below:

- Art Festival
- Breakfast with Santa
- Spring Break Blast Week
- Latchkey Graduations
- End of the School Year Parties
- Lights On Afterschool Showcase
- Summer Bash Week
- Halloween Bash
- Fall Festival
- State Parks Field Trips
- Commit to Health Festival
- Valentine's Sweetheart Party

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*



## Specialized Programs

Specialized Programs are created to provide opportunities for youth outside of regular school time with a variety of activities that promote health and wellness, socialization, and active learning. These types of programs are listed below:

- Fishing Derby
- Summer Life Skills Program
- Dunbar Garden Project Program

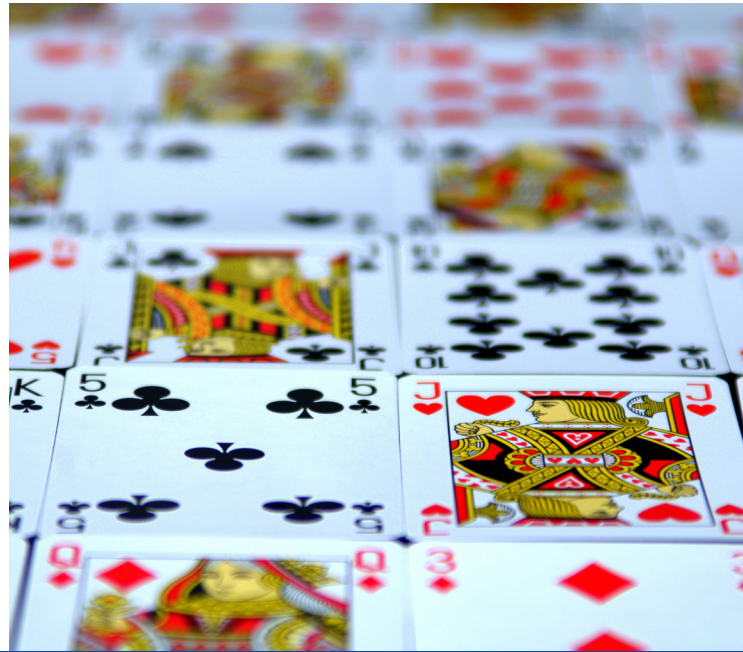
*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*



## Summer Playground Program

As reported through several resources, the Summer Playground Program continues to thrive at enrollment capacity. The playground program offers a wide-range of on-site and off-site activities. On-site activities include passive games like checkers and cards, as well as more active games like softball, kickball, soccer, and football. Off-site examples include: Wild River Country, swimming, skating, fishing, museums, parks, and nature centers. Currently, there are programs at several elementary schools, as well as one TEEN Camp at a middle school. Hours of operation are Monday-Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for ages 6-15, for eight weeks. Online registration is available.

*Sources: Summer Playground Program Brochure 2016; Parks and Recreation Division Reports-May 2016; and Community Centers Directory 2016*



## Tennis Programs

Tennis Programs are created to provide a unique opportunity for a quality tennis experience for citizens. Programming includes lessons, tournaments, open play, and examples are included below:

- Inner-City Tennis
- Pee Wee Group Tennis Lessons
- Junior Beginning Group Tennis Lessons
- Advanced Youth Group Tennis Lessons
- Junior Tennis Tournaments
- Adult Beginner Tennis Group Lessons
- Adult Tennis League
- Adult Team Tennis
- Adult Tennis Tournaments

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*

## Therapeutic Recreation Programs

The Therapeutic Program Division has created a strong presence on the LRPR website, providing current programming information to prospective participants. There are a variety of offerings that provide youth and adults with *opportunities to participate in community outings, healthy and active programs, volunteer service opportunities, skills classes, special events and social activities*. There is an annual Therapeutic Recreation Arts Festival that occurs in May and usually attracts over 1,000 people each year. Craft and activity booths are run by a variety of agencies and organizations.

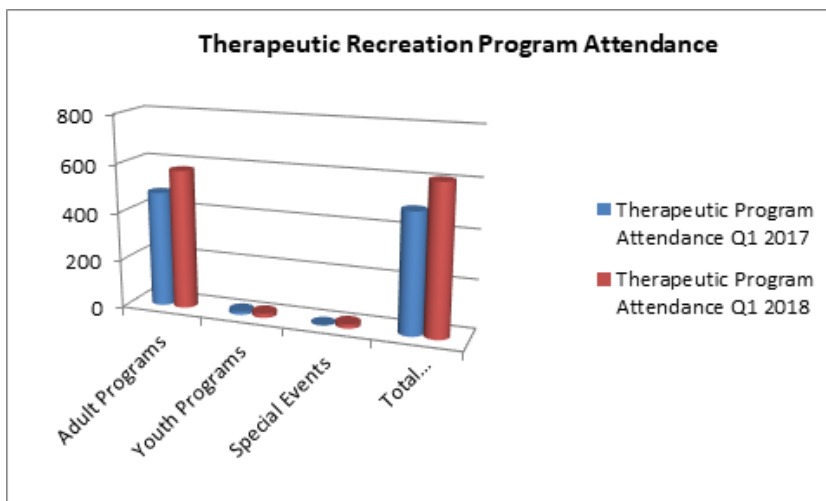
Listed below are several programming examples:

- Adventure Club
- Basketball
- Branch Out Program
- Community Outings
- Cooking Classes
- DeGray Lake State Park Annual Field Trip
- Little Rockers TR Marathon
- Summer Day Camp for Youth and Adults
- Therapeutic Arts Festival
- Weekend Warriors/Kids Night Out

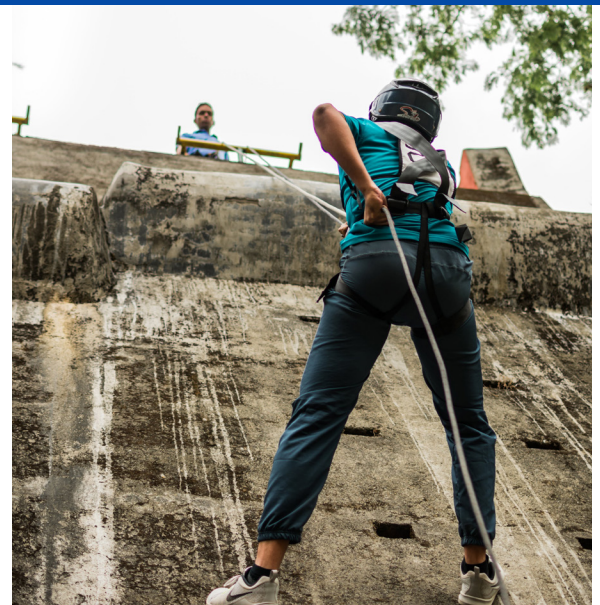
Sources: LRPR Division Reports – May 2016 and Community Centers Directory 2016

Attendance in Therapeutic Recreation activities has increased in 2018 over the previous year, which is shown in the figure below.

Figure 5.8 Therapeutic Recreation Program Attendance



Source: 2018 LRStat by Quarter Recreation





## Trails and Pathways

Socialization on and around trails has increased dramatically over the past several years, especially for women. Creating walkable and bikeable pathways by providing connectivity throughout a community is a high priority as identified by the citizens of Little Rock. A somewhat newer concept is to create “pocket parks” that include “play pockets” and playgrounds along the trails/pathways. There is a continually rising increase of socialization during trail use and this phenomenon will need further study. Understanding the increased interest in socialization will assist planners in creating future trails and pathways.

**CURRENT PERCEPTION:** Trails = (physical activity + health) = socializing

**RECENT FINDINGS:** Trails = (physical activity + socializing) = health

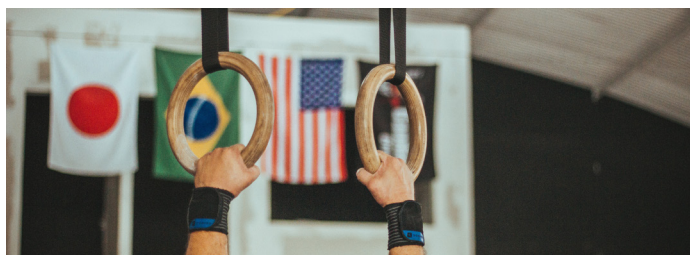


Sources: *The Health Benefits of a Bicycle-Pedestrian Trail*, December 1, 2016, by L. Gezon, E. McKendry-Smith, and A. Hunter and *Pathways for Play – Best Practice Guidelines by PlayCore*, 2018 (Partnered with the Natural Learning Initiative, College of Design, North Carolina State University)

## Youth Afterschool Programs

Providing a safe haven for children before and after school and during the summer months is a community effort for which most parks and recreation agencies share responsibility. A combination of recreation, education, and enrichment activities should be well-blended into the overall program. Inclusion of children from diversified backgrounds and abilities will be important in order to serve the community well. For many children, it will be a unique opportunity for exposure to nature and outdoor activities that will contribute to their overall health. Providing healthy and nutritious snacks and meals will assist many children who are experiencing food insecurity issues. One key finding in this study stated that one out of every six children come to their programs hungry. Parks and recreation staff can help alleviate this concern by adding a food component of snacks and meals, especially in high areas of poverty.

Sources: *NRPA Out-of-School Time Report, 2018 and Me2 – 7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design, PlayCore with K. Christensen of Utah State University's Center for Persons with Disabilities (CPD), 2018*



LRPR Afterschool Programs are in session during the school year, from August to June. The *Latch Key Program* provides parents an affordable program with structured activities, staff supervision, homework time, athletics, recreational activities, and meal and snack times daily and on days when school is not in session. Other Afterschool Programs include:

- Gymnastics
- Cooking Class
- Karate
- Hip-Hop Dance
- Lights on Afterschool Program during the school year
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant
- Kids Night Out
- Community Outings?
- Adventure Club
- Little Rockers Kids Marathon

Source: *Community Centers Directory 2016*

## Youth Athletics Programs

The goal of Youth Athletics Programs is to provide youth age 3-17 recreational activities and participation in team sports. These opportunities help to develop participants, create opportunities and provide a positive and fun experience for youth in Little Rock.

- Baseball League
- Basketball League
- Cheerleading
- Football League
- Soccer League
- Softball League
- T-Ball League
- Track and Field
- Volleyball League
- Baseball Camp
- Basketball Camp
- Football Camp

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*



## Youth Recreational and Instructional Programs

Youth Recreational and Instructional Programs are providing youth, ages 3-15, exciting and challenging activities across Little Rock. A wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities are scheduled to encourage engagement and socialization in a relaxed setting. Programs are also created for afterschool and summer care for Latchkey children. Examples of activities are listed below:

- Latchkey Program
- Kid's Marathon
- Gymnastics
- Drama
- Cheerleading
- Badminton
- Running Club
- Fun & Games
- Skills & Drills

*Source: Community Centers Directory 2016*



## Program Assessment

Within the LRPR's Recreation Division, there is a standardized program assessment. At a minimum, staff meets annually to review currently offered programs based on goals and objectives, program/class participant surveys, trends in the field of recreation, and requests made by the public for future programs/classes.



*The Recreation Division evaluates the quality of its program and services based on participant feedback provided during the program and through completed surveys. Participant Evaluations are distributed at the end of each program. Completed evaluations are submitted to the Program Manager responsible who then compiles the results and submits a tally report of all evaluations submitted for review.*

*Sources: LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan, Updated October 2018 and LRPR Recreation Division Programming Plan, 2016*

## Program Staffing

For every new program that is added, additional staffing needs to be considered unless a current program is being removed. When making changes, all current programs need to be analyzed for attendance/participation rates and revenue generating ability. Following the completion of a recommendation to write consistent standards for creating new programs in LRPR, all offerings should be analyzed for effectiveness. If programs do not meet the requirements of the newly written guidelines, then staffing can be shifted to fit within the revised parameters. Any future development of facilities, parks, or programming comes with additional staffing needs.



# LRPR Programming Recommendations

A series of recommendations for improvement have been written focusing specifically on the areas of Golf, Tennis and Pickleball as well as a series of overall Key Recommendations. These recommendations are delineated in the following sections.

## Golf Recommendations

- Immediately request a study to review all LRPR golf courses and facilities from USGA standards: Rebsamen Park Golf Course, and First Tee. Include in the USGA study appropriate space needed for Clubhouses.
- The Director requested a “Punch List” of all items that need repairing at the three golf courses. After USGA reviews LRPR’s golf courses, compare with the current “Punch List”, and then incorporate all information into the Budget Priorities.
- Request a visit by the PGA National/Regional Teaching Professional Officials to access advice on (new) programming to be added to all golf courses and hire PGA certified professionals to teach these new programs.
- Programming needs to begin immediately. Creation of Ladies Leagues, Jr. Golf development opportunities, Men’s Leagues, Senior Leagues (a.m.), and Couples’ Leagues should bring immediate revenue for LRPR.
- Following the PGA visit, review the analysis of the LRPR golf courses. Convene a broader Facility Review Committee to study each facility, gather community input, review experts’ analyses, and make facility recommendations, both short-term and long-term, that are directly tied to LRPR budget and future tax issues.
- Once recommendations are made, programs are added, and a phased-in approach for budgeting is included, an immediate increase in revenue should occur. This budget needs to include achievable goals and objectives. Revenue should offset expenditures within three years of revamped courses and new programming.
- After the USGA visit, an insignia banner will be received, which should be displayed proudly. Include the event on LRPR’s website.
- Review all contracts and/or MOU’s related to all golf courses with the City of Little Rock’s Legal Department to ensure fairness for both parties.
- Collaborate with instructors and students from the Dale Bumpers College of Agriculture, Food, and Life Sciences to study the latest research pertaining to golf course grasses, watering plans, and low maintenance beautification projects that are ongoing. Also, encourage collegiate students to intern with LRPR. Using current research on top rated golf courses combined with USGA recommendations, design an integrated approach to improving and maintaining LRPR’s golf courses.
- Seek advice on how to lower maintenance costs through using alternative watering plans. Seek advice from the USGA officials when a visit occurs, as well as from the University of Arkansas-Little Rock instructors who would understand watering systems and ecofriendly procedures that produce professional results for golf courses.
- Hire a PGA Pro for each course to build revenue with private and group lessons. This position should support more league and tournament play as they are well-trained professionals and understand how to increase revenue. The Pro could offer suggestions on course improvement and maintenance based on PGA guidelines.
- Goal should be to host a USGA National Championship, once improvements are made to the golf courses. The hired PGA professionals could run these championship events.
- Seek donors for Clubhouse Renovations, Golf Leagues, and Tournaments.
- Create a Jr. Golf Course featuring synthetic grass (complete with a Junior development training system) and have it totally funded by a private donor.
- Seek information on inclusion of LRPR’s golf courses on the Four State Golf Card. Arkansas courses such as Stonebridge Meadow Golf Club have appeared on this special player’s card. Golfers fees pay for the carts and current participating agencies are



seeing an average of 2-3 return trips. The cost of the card averages \$38-\$45 on a yearly basis. This could be a great marketing tool for LRPR golf courses.

- Consider asking the City of Little Rock for a loan to complete the first tier of maintenance, operations, or course and clubhouse upgrades with a payback plan in place based on increased revenue.

## Tennis Recommendations

- Contact the Southern Region, the largest region of USTA, for their assistance with facility and program review to optimize tennis in Little Rock.
- Ask for a site visit to determine how the Southern Region of USTA can help and how LRPR can “grow” tennis in Little Rock. With revenue from the US Open, USTA can provide free equipment, tablets, tech support, and promotion examples to use with the public.
- Once USTA has visited, reviewed the facility and the programming options, LRPR will be awarded a banner (A USTA Member Organization). Display the banner to build confidence with the citizens.
- Make sure that LRPR’s USTA or-

ganizational membership is current.

- Focus on USTA’s Net Generation information for all tennis centers.
  - The Tennis Director (and instructors) must be registered as a provider in order to receive all of the Net Generation benefits from USTA. Through USTA Net Generation programming, apply for teaching and equipment grants.
- Use “Try, Learn, Play, and Compete” developed by a top marketing group in the world for USTA. This is a great way to communicate and market tennis and other sports pro-grams. (An example is included in the Reference Book.)
- City of LR 2018 Annual Operating Budget Book (p. 233). Develop future goals for community tennis programs. Review the LRPR Tennis Budget and focus on revenue generating ideas to create a successful budget plan.
- After reviewing the current Tennis Professional Lesson Fees from the three comparable agencies, interview and add additional PTR and PTA teaching professionals who can give lessons on a regular basis for a fee. Develop a fee structure based on the certification level of the teaching professionals.
- USTA can provide free background checks for all teaching staff, which is a great double check system for LRPR’s tennis staff.
- Enclose the current tennis complex with fencing to increase controlled court usage and needed security. Consider adding another court location to be able to teach more lessons. Also, LRPR needs indoor tennis facilities.
- Cover eight existing tennis courts at Rebsamen Tennis Center with a bubble. This will add the opportunity for year-round programming, annual membership sales, paid permanent court time rentals, and special events.

## Pickleball Recommendations

- Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country and is a high revenue generator. Read all documents that have been submitted to LRPR about Pickleball from Brio2 Solutions. Purchase rackets and other necessary Pickleball equipment to initiate lessons out in the community.
- The Professional Tennis Registry and the USA Pickleball Association have combined to provide certified Pickleball professional instructors. Consider having selected tennis staff members become certified as USA Pickleball coaches.
- Develop a long-range plan on how to stripe Pickleball Courts, indoor and outdoor, as soon as possible.
- Review all current programs and consider adding new



programs based on the LRPR *Establishing Program Policy criteria*. Add the strongest revenue generators first and continue to promote USTA League Teams. Create a tiered leveling of positions for tennis based on experience and certification with one of the certified tennis professionals becoming an assistant of Tennis and Pickleball.

- **Director:** With further development of the Mayor's Youth Master Plan and Workforce Development, representatives from the Park Board need to be included on these very important committees. Seek a position in order to participate in these discussions. Continue to offer positions at LRPR directly tied to the Workforce Development component.
- **Director:** Team up with LRSD and the University of AR-Little Rock for fishing, canoeing, and kayaking teams at the high school level leading to scholarships at the collegiate level.
- **Director and Administration:** Using LRPR's Recreation Program Development Policy as the guiding standard, all current programs/offers need to be reviewed for revenue generation and attendance

numbers. Each program

should have goals and measurable objectives and should not receive funding without the appropriate analysis and documentation.

- **Director and Administration:** When conducting surveys, include basic demographic information, such as range of ages, gender, and ethnicity. Explore the comparable agencies for successful Cultural Diversity programs. Springfield Sister Cities Association is a SGCPB program that reaches to Isesaki, Japan and Tlaquepaque, Mexico. (Information on this effort is included in the References Book).
- **Director and Administration:** Contact the Racial and Cultural Diversity Commission, which falls under the auspices of the City of Little Rock, in order to gain knowledge about their goals for equity and start building a collaborative effort for the future. Contact information: Ericka Benedicto, Diversity Program Manager, [ebenedicto@littlerock.gov](mailto:ebenedicto@littlerock.gov) or 501-244-5483. Study the *City Connections-Connecting the Church and the City Action Plan: Economic Development Program for the Latino Community*, Arkansas 2016-2017.
- **Director and Administration:** Consider partnering with the local Arts Council for a variety of programs for children and adults throughout the community.
- **Director, Administration, and Operations:** Following a review of facility locations in Little Rock, consider building a new Family Center in the area of the city that has the fewest facilities. Create programming based on community input and ability to generate revenue. Review the phased-in approach to the Dan Kinney Family Center in Springfield, Missouri. (This information is included in the References Book. Phase I was 40,000 square feet at a cost of \$9 million, with Phase II plans of adding a second gym and an Aquatics Center in the future.)
- **Administration:** Review *City of LR 2018 Annual Operating Budget (p. 201)-Human Resources 2018 Department Goals:* 1) Develop a Wellness Program that will assist in driving down healthcare cost and keep employees engaged. LRPR selected staff should offer to assist and bring examples, such as the Springfield Public Schools Wellness Program that allows staff to be 100% reimbursed for working out



in approved centers if they attend a minimum of 12 times per month or 50% reimbursement if they attend at least eight times. This program is greatly appreciated by staff and helps generate extra funds in approved centers across Springfield. (Information on this program is included in the Resources Book.)

- **Administration:** Review the Silver Sneakers contract provided by SGCPB (Located in the References Book). This is a highly successful program in many agencies across the country. If adopted by the City of Little Rock, it should help generate new revenue for LRPR.
- **Administration:** Use partnership opportunities, sponsorship support, and citizen requests for creating special events by LRPR.
- **Administrator and Volunteer Coordinator** -Assign the Volunteer Coordinator the responsibility of building a relationship with the Master Gardeners. This organization is pivotal in helping create the beautification of Little Rock parks. Master Gardeners possess in-depth knowledge of what/where to plant, have expertise in plant information, grasses, shrubs, and trees and understand planting schedules. The Master Gardeners in Springfield, Missouri are the nucleus at the Botanical Center and are responsible for a large number of gardens. They care for the

gardens, have periodic plant sales, and membership drives to fund the planting activities at the Botanical Center. Leaders or experts within the organization teach classes to community members on how to plant and maintain personal gardens. It will be very important for LRPR to build a positive relationship with these garden experts.

- **Marathon Coordinators:** Review creative programs at the comparable agencies, such as the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Turkey Trot with SGCPB (Included in the References Book). "It is Springfield's largest timed 5K run/walk of the year and the largest Thanksgiving Day 5K in Missouri, attracting more than 7,000 participants a year. Proceeds from the event benefit the SGCPB Scholarship Fund and the Developmental Center of the Ozarks. The Park Board Youth Recreation Scholarship Fund offers scholarships for youth to participate in sports, summer camps and other programs designed to build skills and confidence while maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Turkey Trot also serves as one of the largest one-day food drives of the year for Ozarks Food Harvest, with more than 6,500 meals donated at the event last year." The cost to participate in the race is: \$30/adults and \$25/kids 12 and younger. Early bird registration is \$20/adults and \$15/kids 12 and younger. Turkey Trot began

in 1995 with 142 participants and had over 7,500 in 2018. Because it is for the scholarship fund, most organizations that assist with the race, donate goods/services. Organizations or private donors also pay for the police officers' salaries that assist in the logistics for the race. Sponsors match dollars raised which assists in the overall revenue generation.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Consider creating a *Master Plan for Play* throughout the city. Summer Programs should include outside play on playgrounds. Make sure all playgrounds are safe and if they are unsafe or aging include playground replacement in the requested budget priorities and in the new LRPR's *Master Plan for Play*.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Programs should be provided to all community members across Little Rock. Complete a geographical study of the location of programs and use the information to plan future programming and facilities based on need, participation number projections, and revenue generation ability.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Consider programming outside

of community centers to include partnership locations and parks.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Analyze program offerings from comparable agencies to see what is generating revenue and is well attended. Prioritize revenue generating programs, from highest to lowest. Develop a seasonal brochure and online registration process for class registration and for renting facilities. Consider updating and adding all programming brochures in English and Spanish.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Review, align, and update (if needed) the following documents: 1) Community Centers Directory 2016, 2) Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatics Center Facility Hours & Amenities Offered to All Members, 3) Jim Dailey's Aerobic Class Descriptions, 4) Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatic Center Gymnasium Schedule, 5) Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatic Center Aerobics Schedule, 6) Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatic Center Indoor Aquatic Schedule, and 7) Jim Dailey Indoor Lane Schedule.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Review all completed surveys from the Summer School and Afterschool Programs to determine the rate of success for goal completion and if revisions need to be made for the future.
- **Recreation and Special Events**

**(new position):** For Afterschool Programs, consider a rotation system for children (Homework Help, Recreation Activities, and Enrichment). If the Afterschool Program is located at a school, ask teachers if they would like to create/teach classes of their choice afterschool and pay them an hourly rate (try to pay slightly above what teachers are paid for afterschool tutoring). Then, teachers can recruit students to fill their classes and a portion of the revenue pays for all necessary supplies. Each class must meet a minimum number of students to at least break even financially or make a profit, which is then reinvested into other programming provided by LRPR.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Staff stated this is the first time they have applied for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program grant. If the grant is received, closely monitor the progress throughout the year and pay close attention to LRPR's write-up of the evaluation (this is a very important piece). Applying for additional grants next year is highly recommended to further serve young people in the community and to help defray some programming costs. Conduct collaborative training with LRSD and LRPR staff with the Read 180 program. LRPR staff can assist with follow-up activities

in the afterschool and summer school programs, working collaboratively with school personnel.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Develop a relationship with the Home School Network and develop classes at centers or facilities according to their needs. One example is Springfield-Greene County Park Board which offers sports and classes for Home Schoolers: Horticulture for 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup>, and high school; Spring Amateur Softball Association; and a Community Athletic Schedule.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Review the MOU between LRPR and LRSD to insure both parties are satisfied with the contract (include the City of LR Legal Department). Assign one LRPR liaison to be the School-Park Liaison, who schedules regular meetings (one time per month or each quarter) with the LRSD appointed person. Revisit items that were promised earlier (resurfacing courts) and establish joint expectations. Items for discussion include: strengthening the partnership through the possible joint equipment purchases (portable bleachers), co-writing grants for before/after school programs, Parent's Night Out, School's Out, Summer School Programs, non-competitive sports, and collaborative plans for athletic facil-





ities that can be shared. A yearly meeting should be held between the point people and the Athletic Director for LRSD to schedule all shared facilities and fields, specifically soccer fields, where there is a great need. If there are none, then begin with one facility or field and schedule it for one year, then add others as the trust grows between the two entities.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Allow participants to use one pass to enter all community centers. LRPR's customer satisfaction and usage should increase if people are allowed to workout at a center near their home or at a different center near where they work. Being flexible and supportive of community members is appreciated and remembered.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Increase the operating hours at all community centers to accommodate people's schedules and to be more competitive with private facilities. Open at 5:00 am and close at 11:00 pm. Monitor participation every hour for the year in the changed schedule to see if other modifications might need to be made.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Monitor the times used with the new cardio and strength equipment recently purchased for Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatic Center. Analyze

data on a regular basis to see if additional equipment is justified or if a class to teach how to properly use the equipment is needed, always responding to customer need.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Currently, there are 230 classes held per month at the Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatic Center. A concern was cited that there are too many classes, many with small participation numbers. Understanding that in 2017, the Jim Dailey Fitness and Aquatics Center faced the largest decrease in participation in the history of the facility (built in 1992) of 1,100 people, revisioning the future for JDFAC needs to be immediately organized with a timeline included for improvements to the facility and to programming. Classes need to produce revenue, so a "break even or profit number" of participants can be established and consistency practiced at all community centers. If the number falls below the "break even or profit number", the class is canceled.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position):** Study Little Rock's demographics related to the aging population. Review what is offered for Senior Programming and ask for input from seniors living in Little Rock for programming ideas.
- **Recreation and Special Events**

**(new position):** The Programming Division needs to have the attitude of revenue generation for all programs. Programs should also be responsive to citizen interest and request AND meet the minimum participation numbers. Initially, focus on top rated, high interest programs. If a program is unsuccessful, appropriately delete the program and communicate the reason for deletion with all participants. It is better to have fewer, high producing programs than numerous programs that take staff time, have low membership, and are not revenue producing.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Operations:** Review successful Urban Gardens, Farm Parks, Community Gardens, and Garden to Table Classes in the comparable agencies. Look for successful programs as determined by participation, satisfaction level of participants, and revenue generation.
- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Operations:** Consider a program for Farm to Table. Community gardens are providing access to healthy food for millions of people across the nation. More than ¼ of parks and recreation agencies lead and/or assist with Farmer's Markets. Additionally, places like Rutledge Wilson Farm Park (SGCPB – Included in References Book),



rent growing plots of land for a nominal fee. Classes are offered at the Farm Park to educate and encourage citizens to grow their own food. Source: *NRPA Park Programming and Better Health*, 2018

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Operations:**

Analyze the success of Outdoor Initiative Programs at the comparative agencies. Review the information from Columbia, Missouri Parks and Recreation (Included in the References Book), since they are the state leaders in the Outdoor Initiative Area in Missouri and rely 100% on self-revenue. Offer domestic trips to Yellowstone (Included in the References Book) and other areas of interest. This area of programming is really growing and what is especially important is to teach people in the community to protect the natural resources.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Operations:**

Continue to explore all possibilities related to canoeing, kayaking, and fishing teams at the high school level, as well as collegiate scholarship opportunities; consider adding an Olympic Training Center (Five Rivers in Dayton County information is included in the References Book).

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Operations:**

Review programs from Five Rivers Metroparks in Dayton, Ohio:

Backpacking, Boating, Camping, Conservation & Citizen Science, Cycling, Entertainment, Fishing, Fitness, Flora & Fauna, Food: Earth to Table, Gardening, Geocaching, Hiking, Heritage & History, Horseback Riding, Ice Skating, Mountain Biking, Nature Appreciation, Outdoor Play, Outdoor Skills & Safety, Paddling, Photography & Art, Sustainable Home, Winter Sports, Experiences, Active Outdoors, Adult Nature Exploration, Earth-Friendly Living, Families, Youth & Teens, Community Groups & Training.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Operations:**

Involve the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services and the National Wildlife Federation in LRPR's programming and activities when it is suitable.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Rebsamen Tennis Facility Supervisor:**

Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the country. Purchase the basic equipment and send a supervisor and a recreation specialist out into LRPR facilities to model how to play Pickleball. Purchase a supply of rackets and balls to allow citizens to borrow the equipment while they play and make a long-range plan for taping courts during Pickleball play and to promote this sport everywhere.

- **Recreation and Special Events (new position) and Therapeutic**

**Recreation Supervisor:** Therapeutic Recreation has an impressive presence on the LRPR website, raises funds, has developed a number of programs, and appears highly organized and successfully functioning. Have Therapeutic Recreation serve as a model for developing new programs within LRPR. Have the TR Manager present to other staff within LRPR about the process for revenue generating and creating/sustaining programs.