

Performance Audit of Saint Paul's Recreation Centers

January 1999



Saint Paul City Council Council Research Report

PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE AUDIT

The Saint Paul City Council established the Performance Audit Program to help fulfill two major legislative oversight responsibilities:

- Ensure City practices are consistent with City policies; and
- Assess the degree of efficiency and effectiveness with which City policies are being carried out.

This performance audit examines the activities of the Parks and Recreation Division's units that are responsible for the operation of the City's recreation centers. These activities include: Special Programs, Municipal Athletics, Recreation Center Programs, Building Maintenance and Construction, Maintenance Support, and Recreation Maintenance. No effort was made to evaluate the Parks and Recreation Division as a whole or the division's superintendent.

CITY POLICIES

In its effort to identify policy statements that govern recreation center activities, Council Research reviewed City Ordinances, City Council resolutions and 1997 Budget Performance Plans. The City's Comprehensive Plan Chapter entitled "Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Plan" (1996), 1996-97 Action Plan found in the City's Comprehensive Plan and the plan entitled "A Strategy for Neighborhoods in Transition," were also reviewed.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The City Council wants to know if the City's recreation centers are operating at an optimal level of quality and, if not, what can be done to remedy any deficiencies preventing the centers from achieving the level of excellence expected. Information needed to review recreation centers was obtained by document review, site visits, interviews and a division-wide survey. The seven criteria used to assess organizational development and to identify quality organizations are: planning, leadership, training and development, information and analysis, processes for improvement, results, and customer focus.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Parks and Recreation Division should be credited with making both long- and short-term planning a priority.
- The division's senior leaders do not provide staff with a clear vision for the future and do not fully enlist staff to make the division's vision a reality.
- Formal evaluation efforts of key functions, such as the activities of neighborhood service delivery teams and Neighborhood in Transition centers, are minimal.
- While informal customer survey efforts exist, nonusers of recreation centers are not being studied.

More Findings →

Performance Audit of Saint Paul's Recreation Centers

January 1999



Saint Paul City Council Council Research Report

PURPOSE OF PERFORMANCE AUDIT

The Saint Paul City Council established the Performance Audit Program to help fulfill two major legislative oversight responsibilities:

- Ensure City practices are consistent with City policies; and
- Assess the degree of efficiency and effectiveness with which City policies are being carried out.

This performance audit examines the activities of the Parks and Recreation Division's units that are responsible for the operation of the City's recreation centers. These activities include: Special Programs, Municipal Athletics, Recreation Center Programs, Building Maintenance and Construction, Maintenance Support, and Recreation Maintenance. No effort was made to evaluate the Parks and Recreation Division as a whole or the division's superintendent.

CITY POLICIES

In its effort to identify policy statements that govern recreation center activities, Council Research reviewed City Ordinances, City Council resolutions and 1997 Budget Performance Plans. The City's Comprehensive Plan Chapter entitled "Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Plan" (1996), 1996-97 Action Plan found in the City's Comprehensive Plan and the plan entitled "A Strategy for Neighborhoods in Transition," were also reviewed.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The City Council wants to know if the City's recreation centers are operating at an optimal level of quality and, if not, what can be done to remedy any deficiencies preventing the centers from achieving the level of excellence expected. Information needed to review recreation centers was obtained by document review, site visits, interviews and a division-wide survey. The seven criteria used to assess organizational development and to identify quality organizations are: planning, leadership, training and development, information and analysis, processes for improvement, results, and customer focus.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Parks and Recreation Division should be credited with making both long- and short-term planning a priority.
- The division's senior leaders do not provide staff with a clear vision for the future and do not fully enlist staff to make the division's vision a reality.
- Formal evaluation efforts of key functions, such as the activities of neighborhood service delivery teams and Neighborhood in Transition centers, are minimal.
- While informal customer survey efforts exist, nonusers of recreation centers are not being studied.

More Findings →

- The methods for collecting data are not standardized. Additionally, data are being used primarily by senior leaders, but data providers benefit little from their data collection efforts.
- The division does not systematically collect and use data to measure organizational results. Furthermore, comparisons with other similar organizations do not take place.
- The division has not succeeded in recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers who are racially and culturally representative of the communities served by the City's recreation centers.
- Many staff believe the division does not create a work environment that is supportive of women and minorities.
- The City's recreation centers do not have a written policy governing the waiver of fees due to financial hardship. Currently, each recreation center has its own method for deciding who is eligible for waivers without the assistance of division-wide policy.

EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS RATINGS

Council Research developed a summary rating system we believe conveys the essence of our findings concerning the City's recreation centers and the seven efficiency and effectiveness criteria used in their assessment. Each area assessment was assigned a "star" rating based on how fully developed and practiced a criterion was throughout the organization.

Key to Efficiency and Effectiveness Ratings

★★★★	→ Criteria fully developed and practiced throughout the organization.
★★★	→ Criteria well developed and practiced throughout most of the organization
★★	→ Criteria present and practiced in some parts of the organization.
★	→ Criteria sometimes present and occasionally practiced in parts of the organization.

Recreation Centers Summary Efficiency and Effectiveness Ratings

★★★★ Planning	★★ Processes for Improvement
★★ Leadership	★ Results
★★ Training and Development	★★★★ Customer Focus
★½ Information and Analysis	

RECOMMENDATIONS

Thirty-six recommendations are made concerning practices not in alignment with policy and eleven recommendations are offered concerning the efficiency and effectiveness criteria. The most significant recommendations pertain to:

- the leadership provided to the City's recreation centers;
- limited data analysis and evaluation;
- the measurement of results;
- diversity issues; and
- the lack of written fee-waiver policy.

FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR A COPY OF THE REPORT PLEASE CONTACT

Gerry Strathman, Council Research Director
at

(651) 266-8575 or gerry.strathman@stpaul.gov

CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH REPORT

Performance Audit of Saint Paul's Recreation Centers



Saint Paul City Council
Council Investigation and Research Center
Saint Paul, Minnesota

**Saint Paul City Council
City Council Investigation &
Research Center
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102**

651.266.8560

<http://www.stpaul.gov/council/circ.html>

**Performance Audit
Of Saint Paul's
Recreation Centers**

Director

Gerry Strathman

Policy Analysts

David Godfrey

Marcia Moermond

Kirby Pitman

Intern

Jessica Bakkene

Questions?

If you have questions regarding
this report please contact

Gerry Strathman at

651.266.8575 or

gerry.strathman@stpaul.gov

City Council Research Report
Performance Audit of Saint Paul's Recreation Centers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1	Safety and Security	32
Scope of Performance Audit	1	Facility Improvements	34
Organizational Chart	2	Fees, Finance and Donations	36
City Policies	3	Maintenance	38
City Ordinances and Council Resolutions	4		
Comprehensive Plan	4	Community Relationships	41
Action Plans	5	Community Building	41
Neighborhoods in Transition Plan	5	Outreach	43
Budget Performance Plan	5	Partnerships	46
Efficiency and Effectiveness	6	Diversity	50
Research Methods	7	Special Needs	51
Review of Documents	7		
Site Visits and Interviews	7	Sports and Other Programming	53
Survey	8	Sports	53
		Other	55
POLICY ALIGNMENT	8		
Internal Management Processes	8	ORGANIZATIONAL QUALITY	
Planning	8	ASSESSMENT	58
General Planning Activities	9	Introduction	58
Services and Facilities Planning	11	Quality Categories	58
Community Needs Planning	13	Criteria Ratings	58
Information Management	14	Summary Ratings	60
Evaluation	15	Planning	60
		Leadership	61
Organizational Infrastructure: Staff and		Training and Development	63
Facilities	19	Information and Analysis	65
Staff	19	Processes for Improvement	66
Staff and Volunteer Diversity	21	Results	68
Training and Education	21	Customer Focus	69
Resources to Augment City General			
Funds	22	CONCLUSION	71
Models for Improving Work Practices .	23		
Flexibility in Service Provision	23	APPENDIX A: NIT Recommended Staff	
Recognition of Volunteers and Staff ..	24	Improvements	74
Volunteers	24		
Neighborhoods in Transition	24	APPENDIX B: NIT Facility Improvement	
1998 Recreation Center		Needs	76
Hours Allocation	26		
Hours of Operation	27	APPENDIX C: Recreation Center	
Three-Tier Organization of Recreation		Schedules	80
Centers	28		
Recreation Center Cumulative Open			
Hours	29		

INTRODUCTION

The City Council, as the governing body of the City of Saint Paul, is responsible for establishing City policies and ensuring that City practices are consistent with these policies. As the body responsible for approving the City Budget, the City Council must also assess the efficiency and effectiveness of City operations. Therefore, The City Council established a Performance Audit Program in the fall of 1996 to help it fulfill these legislative oversight and budgetary responsibilities and directed Council Research to conduct performance audits of City operations. Performance audits analyze the consistency of departmental practices with City policies as well as provide insight into how policy directives are being implemented.

Scope of Performance Audit

This performance audit is specifically focused on the City's 41 recreation centers. In order to conduct a performance audit of the recreation centers, several units and budget activities within the Parks and Recreation Division are examined. The two units of the Parks and Recreation Division audited are Recreation Services and Operations.

In the Recreation Services unit, Special Programs, Municipal Athletics and Recreation Center Programs are covered by the performance audit. The budget activities in the Recreation Services Unit which are not covered by the recreation center performance audit are Community Education—because of the shared responsibility of this program with the school district and the Rice and Arlington Sports Center—because Recreation Services assumed responsibility for management of this facility only recently.

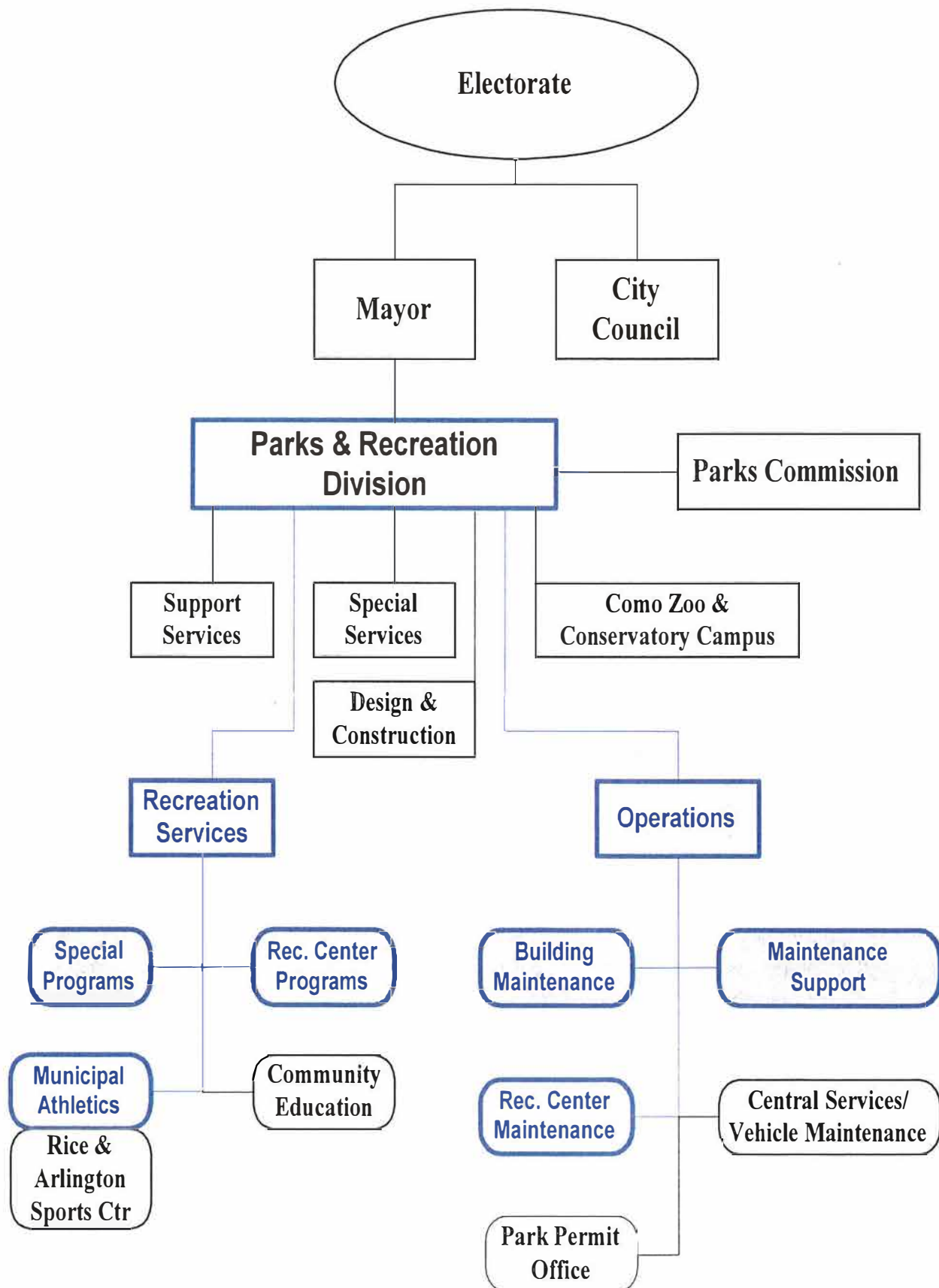
In the Operations Unit, Building Maintenance, Recreation Center Maintenance and Recreation Support Maintenance are covered by the performance audit. The budget activities in the Operations unit which are not covered by the recreation center performance audit are the Park Permit Office—because the office issues permits for parks and is not involved in the operation of recreation centers and Central Services/Vehicle Maintenance—because this office serves the entire Parks and Recreation Division and it does not directly affect the daily operation of recreation centers.

The primary responsibilities of the Recreation Services and Operations units are described below. Audited activities are identified by bold type. The organizational chart on page two graphically indicates the areas reviewed in the performance audit.

Recreation Services Unit

Special Programs provides programs, training and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities and seniors; 8.3 full-time equivalents (FTEs).

Municipal Athletics provides athletic programs for residents and workers in the City of Saint Paul; 6 FTEs.



Recreation Center Programs is responsible for programming and operating the City's 41 recreation centers; 98.3 FTEs.

Community Education Program is a partnership with Independent School District 625 to provide educational, recreational, cultural, social and leisure activities. This activity was not audited because it is not under the sole control of the City of Saint Paul; 4.5 FTEs.

Rice and Arlington Sports Dome provides for the year-round operation of a domed sports facility for recreational activities. This activity was not audited because the Parks and Recreation Center began management of the facility in mid-1998; 6 FTEs.

Operations Unit

Building Maintenance and Construction performs maintenance for the Division's 134 buildings and the equipment for 82 children's play areas (also known as tot lots). Approximately one third of this activity's work is devoted to recreation centers; 11 FTEs.

Maintenance Support provides maintenance personnel to service park sites and athletic facilities. The activity also provides support services for the entire division in the form of supplies, equipment, furniture moving, equipment repairs and athletic field/court buildings and maintenance. Approximately one-third of this activity's work is devoted to recreation centers; 8.9 FTEs.

Recreation Center Maintenance provides maintenance services, including labor, equipment, parts and supplies to year-round recreation center sites and remote seasonal athletic field sites; 31.1 FTEs.

Parks Permits Management manages the parks permit process. This activity was not included in the performance audit because it issues permits for parks and is peripheral to the operation of recreation centers; 1 FTE.

Parks and Recreation Fleet Maintenance and Management maintains and repairs vehicles and equipment for the division and outside customers. This activity was not included in the performance audit because it serves the entire division and has no significant effect on the daily operation of recreation centers; 8.3 FTEs.

City Policies

The City Council establishes policies to govern the operations of all City activities including the City's recreation centers. While there are many general City policies which affect all City activities, this report addresses only specific policies which apply to the operation, management and programming of recreation centers. In order to determine the extent to which recreation center activities are consistent with City policies, it is necessary to identify policies the City Council has established regarding recreation centers. To this end, we have reviewed City Ordinances, City Council Resolutions, the City's Comprehensive Plan chapter entitled "A Plan for the Parks and Recreation Division," the 1996-1997 Action Plan and the plan entitled "A Strategy for

Neighborhood in Transition" for policy statements regarding recreation center activities. In addition, we examined the 1997 Budget Activity Performance Plans to isolate any policies adopted by the City Council as part of the annual budget process. Budget policy directives for 1997, rather than 1998, are used in order to examine policies that should have been fully implemented prior to the performance audit. The first section of this report identifies City policies with regard to recreation center activities and assesses the extent to which actual practices are consistent with City policies.

Where discrepancies are found, the reason offered for these differences will be provided along with recommendations to bring policies and practices into alignment. These recommendations may suggest changes in division practices, City policies or both.

City Ordinances and Council Resolutions

We have searched the City Charter, the Legislative and Administrative Codes, and City Council Resolutions for policies pertaining directly to activities of the Recreation Services and Operations units. A number of relevant policies were found in the Legislative and Administrative Codes, although we found little in the Charter or Council resolutions which is relevant to the activities of the Recreation Services and Operations units.

The City's Administrative Code is the compilation of City Ordinances which pertain to how City government is structured and operates. The Legislative Code is the compilation of ordinances which regulate citizens and property owners of the City. The City Code is usually explicit and leaves little room for administrative discretion concerning the execution of ordinances. The Council would view failure to comply with the City Code to be a serious matter. The sections of this report which focus on the Administrative and Legislative Code will identify any differences between ordinances and practices and provide explanations of these differences and offer recommendations to resolve these inconsistencies.

Comprehensive Plan

The City of Saint Paul maintains a Comprehensive Plan that defines the City's plan for most City services. The chapters of the Comprehensive Plan are created through a careful and usually lengthy process involving many parties and interest groups. The most recent version of the Parks and Recreation Division's chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, "Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Plan," was formally adopted by the City Council in August, 1996. This plan was developed by Parks and Recreation Division and Planning and Economic Development Department staff for the Park Planning Task Force. The Park Planning Task Force was comprised of representatives from both the Parks Commission and the Planning Commission, as well as citizens. The task force held public meetings to review the plan and garner public input on issues to be addressed in the new plan. Subsequently, the Parks Commission and Planning Commission recommended adoption of this chapter for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan and it was formally adopted by the City Council. It stands as a written statement of the City Council's policy expectations with respect to recreation center activities.

Since the chapter represents a plan and not a explicit policy directive, some differences are expected between the Comprehensive Plan and actual activities. However, such

differences should be periodically resolved by either changes in practice or revisions of the Comprehensive Plan. This report will identify the differences between policies, as stated in the Comprehensive Plan, and current practices in recreation center activities and offer recommendations to resolve any inconsistencies.

Action Plans

To implement many of the policies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, the Parks and Recreation Division develops two-year action plans. The action plan reviewed for this performance audit identifies the action steps the division was to undertake in 1996 and 1997. The Parks and Recreation Division is currently developing a new action plan for 1998 and 1999.

The intent of the action plan is to provide a realistic work plan that will help focus the activity of the Parks and Recreation Division for a two-year period. The action plan is updated by staff biennially, presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission for review and approval, and adopted by the City Council.

Neighborhood in Transition Centers Plan

The plan titled "A Strategy for Neighborhoods in Transition" describes and recommends an enhanced role for 10 recreation centers that will help stabilize and strengthen the communities in which they are located¹. The Parks and Recreation Commission held 37 public meetings to receive input from community members and gather information about the strengths and needs of each recreation center. After receiving public input, the Parks and Recreation Division wrote the report which was subsequently approved by the Parks Commission and adopted by the City Council in 1993. The report stands as the City Council's policy expectations with respect to the implementation of the Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) Centers' efforts. This report will identify differences between policies, as stated in the NIT plan, and current practices in the Parks and Recreation Division and offer recommendations to resolve these inconsistencies.

Budget Performance Plan

Each year, as part of the City budget process, the Parks and Recreation Division presents Activity Performance Plans for the Recreation Services and Operations units to the City Council for approval. These plans identify both the ongoing and annual objectives of each budget activity. The City Council then adopts these objectives as part of its adoption of the annual City budget. The City Council's allocation of funds is directly related to these performance plans and, as such, these objectives represent City policies.

While the Council understands that objectives set as part of the budget process may be ambitious and are sometimes thwarted by unforeseen developments, the City budget is an official City policy document and the Parks and Recreation Division is responsible for operating in conformance with these adopted policy statements. The sections of this report which focus on budget performance plans will identify differences between

¹ Eleven centers were originally designated as Neighborhood in Transition centers. However, one of the centers, Valley has since become a Boys and Girls Club site.

policies and practices and provide the division's explanations of these differences. Recommendations will also be offered to minimize such differences in the future.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

The City Council is very interested in the value received by citizens for money expended. Taxpayers rightly expect that money provided for Recreation Services and Operations will be spent to achieve the best result with the least expenditure of public funds. The efficiency and effectiveness of government operations can be assessed in many ways. One common approach is for auditors to examine an organization at a micro-level to try to determine if the organization is following sound procurement practices, properly protecting its resources, and complying with the requirements of laws and regulations. This micro-level approach to auditing is closely related to financial auditing and is often conducted by accountants who spend a great deal of time and effort examining the inner workings of the organization. While we accept there are situations where this type of micro-level auditing is appropriate, such as when fraud is suspected, we believe a higher level audit is most appropriate here. The City Council is less concerned with the minutia of daily operations and more concerned with knowing if this is a top-quality organization. If not, what can be done to remedy any deficiencies preventing them from achieving the level of excellence expected.

Fortunately, there is a vast body of knowledge and experience about the characteristics of high-performing organizations. While this knowledge and experience extends back many decades, it has been crystalized by the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. Public Law 100-107 (1987) established the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and gave the responsibility for developing and administering the Award to the Secretary of Commerce and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Pursuant to this charge, criteria for this award were established at the national level defining the characteristics of top-performing organizations. Assessment methods designed to examine these characteristics have been developed and refined over the past ten years. In addition, state Councils for Quality are now established throughout the nation with the Minnesota Council for Quality in the forefront of this movement. The Minnesota Council for Quality has not limited itself to the national model and has expanded this model into the public and not-for-profit sectors. For example, Council Research was a participant in the 1996 Minnesota Quality Award process as were the Eden Prairie School District and the Minnesota Division of the American Cancer Society.

Many leading businesses in the nation (i.e., Motorola, Westinghouse, Federal Express, AT&T.) and in Minnesota (i.e., Allina, Dayton's, Ecolab, Honeywell, IBM, 3M) are using these assessment criteria to evaluate their progress. In fact, three Minnesota businesses (IBM-Rochester, Custom Research and 3M-Dental Division) have won the national Malcolm Baldrige award in recent years. In Saint Paul city government, the Minnesota Council for Quality used these criteria to assess Council Research and we used similar criteria in the 1997 performance audit of Fire Operations.

Some terminology used in this report are adaptations of the national and state criteria. These adaptations are necessary because some language popular in the private sector is not commonly used in the public sector. For example, we have substituted the public sector terms of "development" and "integration" for the less familiar private sector terms

of "approach" and "deployment." We believe that these adaptations improve the understanding of our public sector audience while retaining the essence of ideas involved.

Research Methods

To ensure all aspects of Recreation Services and Operations are reviewed, we employed an array of methods to gather information from a wide variety sources. To make certain this performance audit was comprehensive and that everyone in Recreation Services and Operations had an opportunity to participate, we used four distinct methods for gathering information.

Review of Documents

There are numerous City documents pertaining to Recreation Services and Operations. We have sought to locate and examine all of them. Among the many documents we reviewed, the most important have been the chapter in the City Comprehensive Plan titled "A Plan for Parks and Recreation Services" (August, 1996), Parks and Recreation Division Action Plan (August, 1996), and the 1997 budget documents. The report entitled "A Strategy for Neighborhood in Transition" (1993, Resolution 93-255) also yielded a significant amount of information regarding Neighborhood in Transition Centers. We also searched the City Charter, the Legislative and Administrative Codes, and City Council Resolutions and located several relevant policies. Additionally, the Parks and Recreation Division prepared a comprehensive listing of joint-use agreements simultaneously with preparation of this report. Because these joint-use agreements require adoption by the City Council, they should be considered City policies and used in the preparation of future performance audits.

Site Visits and Interviews

It is important that researchers have first-hand knowledge of the mission and activities of the organization being studied. Therefore, to supplement our general knowledge of the Parks and Recreation Division, research staff spent time observing the activities of the Recreation Services and Operations and touring a number of facilities. In addition, almost all field interviews were conducted at the work-site. While we may not fully understand every nuance of the Recreation Services and Operations, we do have a good understanding of their work based on our study of written materials and from information obtained during the site visits and tours.

The best way to obtain accurate information about Recreation Services and Operations policies and practices is to talk with people who work there. We conducted numerous structured interviews with a broad cross-section of the Recreation Services and Operations staff. We interviewed not only managers and supervisors in each activity, but also front-line employees like the building maintenance staff and recreation center leaders. In total, we conducted 14 structured interviews typically involving from five to ten individuals and lasting from two to eight hours each. These structured interviews served to not only obtain answers to prepared questions but also as an opportunity for interviewees to explain the reasons for their answers and to suggest additional issues about which they thought we should be aware.

Survey

A survey was administered to all employees in the audited units in the Parks and Recreation Division who were not sick or on vacation. Surveys were completed either during an interview session with Council Research or during a regularly scheduled staff meeting to which Council Research staff were invited. A survey was also administered to all recreation leaders at a required "verbal judo" training. This ensured that nearly all staff completed the survey. The total number of respondents was 201. All respondents were assured individual anonymity.

POLICY ALIGNMENT

The Policy Alignment Chapter presents the policies under which the division is expected to operate, and then discusses the degree to which current division practices are consistent with those policies. The policies Council Research considered are gathered from a number of sources, including ordinances, resolutions, the City's Comprehensive Plan and the City's budget. Over 200 policies were identified and reviewed with staff from the Parks and Recreation Division. For purposes of discussion, they are divided into the following four broad policy areas and subcategories:

- ☐ Internal Management Processes
 - ☐ Planning
 - ☐ Information Management
 - ☐ Evaluation
- ☐ Department Infrastructure
 - ☐ Staff
 - ☐ Hours of Operation
 - ☐ Safety and Security
 - ☐ Facility Improvements
 - ☐ Maintenance
- ☐ Community Relations
 - ☐ Community Building
 - ☐ Outreach
 - ☐ Partnerships
 - ☐ Diversity
 - ☐ Fees, Finances and Donations
- ☐ Programming
 - ☐ Sports
 - ☐ Other Programming

Within each of these categories, the intent of the divisions policies are reviewed, and Council Research findings and recommendations presented. It was not Council Research's intent to make specific findings on every individual policy statement. Rather, we tried to focus on groups of policies pertaining to specific topics, and draw conclusions about these topical areas. It is our belief that this approach is more useful to both policy makers and division staff.

Internal Management Processes

■ PLANNING POLICY ALIGNMENT

The Parks and Recreation Division has fourteen policies pertaining to planning activity. The division has a record of making planning a priority which is reflected in the number of plans available for review. Generally speaking, the division's planning policies fall into three categories:

- General Planning Activity: Policies which encourage planning throughout the organization;
- Service and Facilities Planning: Policies which encourage review of service provision and facility adequacy; and
- Community Needs Planning: Policies which encourage planning activities to take place in the context of changing neighborhood needs and which encourage a greater level of community involvement on the part of recreation centers, especially in "neighborhoods in transition."

General Planning Activity Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #61.

Review, and revise if necessary, plan objectives and policies on a biannual basis, when a new two year action plan is developed.

Administrative Code: Chapter 105. Parks and Recreation Commission Sec. 105.06. Plan and capital program review.

(a) *The commission's responsibility.* The commission shall review and comment upon recommendations for the parks and recreation element of the city's comprehensive plan, related studies and amendments, and regional park master plans submitted to the office of the mayor through the division of parks and recreation.

The commission shall also review and comment upon recommendations for the ten-year program for capital improvements submitted by the division of parks and recreation to the city planning commission.

The commission shall also recommend to the mayor the initiation of such planning studies as it deems necessary for the proper preparation of the comprehensive plan element, capital program or master plans. All such studies transmitted to the city council through the mayor's office shall contain the recommendations of both the division of parks and recreation and the commission.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Project Objective

Priority 2. To assist the Division with developing an integration action plan that is consistent with ADA.

Findings

The Parks and Recreation Division has many policies which deal with encouraging planning activity and setting measurable goals to ensure plan completion. In fact, planning has frequently been identified as an area of importance in formal statements by the division. However, actual department procedures for plan implementation, communication about planning, and performance measures to inform the planning process tend to be mostly informal. The policies identified as addressing general planning activities are enumerated in the preceding table.

Based on data gathered in interviews and from other sources, several specific findings have been made by Council Research pertaining to the policies found in the table. Notably, the division is in compliance with the policies in this category. However, there are some useful findings.

- 1) There is very little knowledge within the organization about the development of two-year action plans which are intended to ensure implementation of policies from the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- 2) An action plan for 1998-99 has yet to be developed, although action plans for 1996 and 1997 were developed and published in the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 3) The Recreation Services unit completed a strategic plan in the fall of 1998, following the performance audit process. The development of this plan reportedly involved a variety of staff from different levels of the division.
- 4) The Parks Commission is reviewing and initiating plans and studies as it is charged to do. However, vacancies on the nine-member commission during 1997 and 1998 have hindered both its ability to review plans and its ability to be as proactive as it would like. The Parks Commission currently has nine commissioners appointed.
- 5) The Parks and Recreation Division has been successful in making Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) Recreation Centers a priority with additional funding for basic recreational services provided by recreation leaders and assistants. The division has also provided additional maintenance/cleaning crews on weekends when possible. NIT centers are the first priority for new programming efforts.
- 6) The planning required of the division to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has occurred. However, there is concern at several levels that there are not sufficient resources to deal with a number of possible circumstances which would be very expensive for individual Recreation Centers to handle within their budget. Such circumstances could include the hiring of an unusually high number of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or significant building changes to ensure accessibility.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. The Parks and Recreation Division and the Parks Commission should strive to keep nine Parks Commissioners appointed at all times and make this an organizational priority.

Recommendation 2. The Parks and Recreation Division should analyze the potential usefulness of developing a fund for helping with ADA-associated costs which now must be born at the recreation center level. Such an analysis should consider past expenditures and the possible ADA-associated needs of the community in coming years.

Recommendation 3. The Parks and Recreation Division should complete development of its 1998-99 two-year action plan. This planning process may be an opportunity for the division to pilot various methods of communicating to staff throughout the organization goals, objectives and associated action steps. The implementation of the recently completed strategic plan should provide a similar opportunity.

Recommendation 4. Future planning efforts should include a broader base of participants both in plan development and implementation activities. Planning process

participants may include youth and adult users, maintenance staff, recreation center directors, recreation leaders, and volunteers. (See Quality discussion of planning.)

Services and Facilities Planning

Broadly speaking, the Parks and Recreation Division services and facilities planning policies present a case study in how to do more with less. A review of the division budget reveals that it, like other City departments, has been cutting its budget for a number of years. Policies indicate that resource allocation decisions are to be information-based; however, the interview data suggests that data is only gathered informally in many cases. Additionally, concerns were voiced that budget cuts have led to insufficient upkeep of division grounds and facilities—thus potentially exposing the City to increased future costs associated with replacement and major rehabilitation, rather than current costs of upkeep and maintenance. (See also discussion of Facility Improvement Policies and Maintenance Policies.)

Services and Facilities Planning Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #47.

Develop a process to periodically evaluate and review existing facilities and services to determine their efficiency and effectiveness and measure use and demand.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objective

5. Continue to work with community support groups in identifying programs and services and providing resources.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Project Objectives Priority 1. The Division of Parks and Recreation will work with the Parks and Recreation Commission to review the delivery of neighborhood recreation services. A broad based task force will be established to analyze how we are providing services and to better meet the public's recreational needs. The task force will be composed of a chair from the Parks and Recreation Commission and 14 members, (7) from the council wards, the business community (1), cooperating recreation agencies (2), park system users (2), school district (1) and Capital Improvement Budget Committee (1). The task force will evaluate current recreation services and recommend the appropriate quality, quantity and type for our City.

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objective

8. Seek out ways to reduce spending and make better use of our facilities.

1997 City Budget: Basketball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

4. Work with St. Paul Municipal Athletics Board in planning and implementing Basketball/Volleyball program.

Findings

- 7) Demand and use of recreation center facilities is measured through the collection of attendance data on all program offerings.
- 8) Recreation center programming, management and operations are not measured for efficiency and effectiveness. An example of this type of measurement would involve not only measuring attendance, but analyzing attendance information in the context of optimum staffing levels for programming and maintenance personnel.

- 9) There are no specific processes for evaluation and subsequent use of that information for future planning efforts, with the exception of sports activities and post-season reviews.
- 10) Flow of information on use of facilities and services seems to be upward only, not back to the recreation center level to assist in planning and management decisions. Examples of this upward, but not outward flow of information include attendance data for programming and maintenance work orders.
- 11) There is no articulated policy on proactive planning for future facility improvement needs. Rather, they "respond to circumstances as they emerge." Services and facilities planning is particularly important for the Parks and Recreation Division which has a much higher ratio of buildings and grounds (capital and real assets) to human resources than other city departments.
- 12) The task force proposed and approved in the City's 1997 budget never convened. The City Council was not formally notified of this change. The \$75,000 allocated for this purpose was placed in the Budget Office's 1997 budget. Some of the activities the committee was to supervise are underway in the Parks and Recreation Accounting section, although the scope of the work has been scaled back. The charge is for staff to review recreation center staffing levels. There was an understanding that this Task Force would look specifically at the relationship between facility improvements and needed changes in staffing.²

Recommendations

Recommendation 5. The Parks and Recreation Division should improve its organizational communication by establishing systems for "the downtown office" to provide information and feedback to "the field." Information measuring use and demand on facilities, as well as maintenance of facilities and grounds should be shared by those who develop the data and those who use it for management purposes.

Recommendation 6. The Parks and Recreation Division should develop means to periodically measure efficiency and effectiveness. These measures could then be integrated into the division's activity performance plans in its annual budget requests.

Recommendation 7. The Parks and Recreation Division should formally report to the City Council on the study of staffing levels and make a recommendation to the City Council on the best way to develop a policy for staffing newly built and expanded facilities.

Recommendation 8. The Parks and Recreation Division should develop a means to periodically and proactively review long-term facility and grounds upgrade, replacement and expansion plans. This review should occur within the context of user and non-user need and interest information.

² The Budget Office would like us to note that the Parks and Recreation Division is one of their pilot areas (the others being Fire and Finance) for looking at and reporting on the achievement of budget goals and objectives by the end of the first quarter of the following year.

Community Needs Planning

The final group of planning policies to be reviewed are those which encourage planning activities to take place in the context of changing neighborhood needs and which encourage a greater level of community involvement on the part of recreation centers, especially in "neighborhoods in transition." Under the leadership of the Parks Commission, recreation centers in general have continued to sharpen their focus on the communities and neighborhoods they serve. This is especially true for recreation centers which have been designated as Neighborhood in Transition recreation centers (NIT centers) where extra resources have been dedicated to increasing community connectedness and providing more service. NIT centers were selected based on several neighborhood-based demographic factors and neighborhood input indicating that the affected areas would "benefit from an intensive revitalization effort."³

Community Needs Planning Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #15

In the Local Parks and Recreation System the City will give priority to all of the following:

- g. Review of existing demographic and economic data for possible changes to identified *Neighborhood in Transition* centers

Comprehensive Plan Policy #50.

Give priority to recreation centers located in *Neighborhoods in Transition* areas when distributing resources for programs, services, and facilities.

1996-97 Action Plan 21

Design and implement programs that respond to the needs of residents of varying background by:

- b. Improving community assessment
- c. Inviting residents of varying backgrounds to provide input on services

1997 City Budget: Neighborhoods in Transition: Project Objective

- Priority 1. Establish criteria for adding or deleting recreation centers from Neighborhoods in Transition.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 12.

The Division of Parks and Recreation should develop an action plan for implementing the Neighborhoods in Transition policies.

Findings

13) The reviews of recreation centers to determine NIT status have been conducted according to plan.

14) The Parks and Recreation Division has been successful in making Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) Recreation Centers a priority by providing additional funding for

³ Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission, "A Strategy for Neighborhoods in Transition." May 1993.

the basic recreational services provided by recreation leaders and assistants and additional maintenance crews when possible. NIT centers are also the first priority for new programming efforts.

- 15) There is a lack of understanding among staff and Parks Commissioners as to how and when NIT center status is determined.

Recommendation

Recommendation 9. Parks and Recreation Division management should provide the information and methods used for determining NIT center status to all community and neighborhood recreation center directors. If possible, the recreation center directors should be included in the Parks and Recreation Division process used for determining any recommended NIT center changes to the Planning Commission.

■ **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT POLICY ALIGNMENT**

The use of computer technology to process and analyze data and the subsequent use of that information has an increasingly significant effect on the productivity of organizations. The Parks and Recreation Division has several policies that focus on these issues. The policies in this category come from the Comprehensive Plan and Budget Objectives.

Information Management Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #58.

Improve data collection, coordination and analysis capabilities to strengthen capacity to provide adequate information for planning, evaluation and management.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Maintenance Support: Project Objective

Priority 1. To develop an accurate accounting and reporting system for equipment deliveries.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Maintenance: Project Objective

Priority 2. To improve information access regarding recreation center maintenance through the use of a friendlier software database program.

Findings

- 1) A significant amount of data relating to programming and maintenance activities is collected by division staff. Special Programming staff use evaluation forms and collect information on requests for programs and registration numbers. This information is in a data base which extends back two years. Recreation Center Maintenance staff maintain informal histories of the work they complete. Municipal Athletic staff track registration numbers for program participants. Despite this front-line data collection, it appears there is little analysis of the data by upper-level staff. Furthermore, data collection is not coordinated nor is data centrally stored. Finally, many staff do not perceive benefits in data collection because they do not have access to the information collected and do not always understand why they are collecting data.

- 2) Currently, work orders are processed by the computer system used by the Building Maintenance section. However, the computer software developed to assist with the work orders is not adequate. Building maintenance staff receive work orders and submit information regarding the work completed through the system. However, staff are unable to receive any additional information from the system which would increase their productivity such as previous work or parts histories. The program was custom built for the section and the designer of the program is no longer with the division and no manual was developed to instruct new users. Staff have the software but they do not know how to fully utilize it.
- 3) The Recreation Center Maintenance section has recently begun to upgrade their software. Currently, they need help entering information into the data base. Recreation Center Maintenance staff indicated in interviews they would like to receive some computer training with new software. However, staff report they have been repeatedly turned down for classes because management does not perceive the link between computer usage and the work staff perform. However, it is our belief that the attainment of these skills is important to the development of employees and the organization through increasing employee satisfaction and productivity.

Recommendations

Recommendation 10. Parks and Recreation Division upper-level management should develop a centralized and standardized data collection strategy. Such a strategy would enable front-line staff to collect data that is consistent. Data should be stored at a central point and all staff should have access to the information. Increased efforts should be made by management to analyze the data collected. Further analysis, sharing of findings and actions would demonstrate to staff the benefits of data collection and assist the division in its planning efforts. The data analyzed should be integrated into day-to-day management activities of the division.

Recommendation 11. The Parks and Recreation Division should support training which teaches all staff skills in information collection and use for their day-to-day activities. Ongoing computer training for staff should be a part of this effort, as should computer training for staff who have not traditionally used computers on the job. This type of training will benefit the division by increasing the productivity of its workforce.

■ EVALUATION POLICY ALIGNMENT

Evaluation is an important tool used to determine if the stated goals and objectives of an organization or program are being met. For the purpose of this performance audit, formal evaluation is defined as a systematic, data-based inquiry which provides leaders with information to assist them in the decision-making process. Formal evaluation should also be used to inform stakeholders about the activities of the division. The Parks and Recreation Division has several policies that focus on evaluating programs, staff, operations and maintenance. The policies in this category come from the Budget Objectives, Comprehensive Plan's Action Plan and the Neighborhoods in Transition Plan.

The policies of the Parks and Recreation Division address two particular aspects of evaluation:

- (1) Policy directives to conduct evaluations; and
- (2) Evaluation methods.

Parks and Recreation Division policies mandate evaluations be done for recreation center programs, athletic programs, special recreation programs and the activities of Neighborhood In Transition (NIT) Centers. Despite existing policies, the division has done little formal evaluation. Parks and Recreation Division policies also outline a number of methods that should be employed when conducting evaluations. Survey and other evaluation instruments are not standardized and the use of specified evaluation methods are inconsistent across recreation centers.

Evaluation Policies

1996-97 Action Plan 9

Evaluate programs and services at Neighborhood in Transition facilities to determine the effectiveness in helping stabilize the community.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objective

4. To make recommendations for staffing, programming and operating based on evaluations and user/non-user survey information.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Project Objective

- Priority 3. To improve the opportunity for program expansion by re-evaluating each weekly group and merging groups where possible, shifting some groups to outreach status and training the remaining groups to become more self-sufficient.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 12.

An evaluation on the revitalization at each center [should be conducted].

At a minimum, [an evaluation] should include a written evaluation provided by every participant to assess program satisfaction and a visual inspection to determine if levels of cleanliness have improved over time.

Evaluation may also include but not limited to the following:

- increase of program participants of all ages (including seniors)
- increase in inter-cultural staff and programs that reflect community ethnic backgrounds
- perception of safety and security by community
- increased "customer" satisfaction.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 12.

A review of accomplishment should be held with staff at the end of two years (>May 1994). [NIT page 12]

A second set of public hearings will be [conducted] in each of the eleven neighborhoods at the end of two years (>May 1994). [NIT page 12]

Findings

- 1) The Parks and Recreation Division, according to the Recreation Center 1997 Budget Objectives, is expected to use evaluation in order to make recommendations for staffing, programing and operating. In 1997, no formal evaluations were conducted. The division is not basing staffing, programming and operating decisions on evaluations. Reports from the interviews Council Research conducted indicate informal evaluation occurs occasionally but formal evaluation efforts are non-existent.
- 2) The Division's Municipal Athletics 1997 Budget Objectives also mandate the athletic/recreational needs of the public be evaluated. This policy is not being fully implemented. To the extent it is done, evaluation of Municipal Athletics programs takes place by reviewing registration numbers. While registration numbers do, to a modest extent, indicate what programs interest the public, the method is limited and reactive. Municipal Athletic staff repeatedly stated they do not have the resources to formally evaluate their programs. A few recreation center directors reported evaluating athletic programs beyond assessing registration numbers.
- 3) Parks and Recreation Division policies also state programs and services offered at Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) facilities will be evaluated to determine whether they help stabilize the community. However, no formal evaluations have been conducted at NIT centers. Parks and Recreation staff and the Parks Commission are currently planning an evaluation but it has yet to be decided if the evaluation will be conducted by staff or a consultant. Staff did collect data on staffing, facility physical condition, square feet, facility needs, community involvement and other topics in 1996 from NIT centers. While the information collection did not constitute an evaluation, it will serve as a good foundation from which to conduct a formal evaluation. According to the Parks and Recreation Division's policies, an evaluation on the revitalization at each NIT center should have also been conducted in 1997. While Parks Commissioners visited all centers, no formal evaluation was conducted. Staff continue to collect and analyze data informally.
- 4) According to the division's NIT policies, ongoing evaluation of NIT centers must include a review of the following subject areas: 1) whether there has been an increase in the number of program participants; 2) whether there has been an increase of inter-cultural staff and programs that reflect community ethnic backgrounds; 3) if perception of safety and security by the community has improved; and 4) whether there has been an increase in customer service. Information was systematically gathered for all of these research questions for the 1996-1997 data collection effort, with the exception of measuring the increase in inter-cultural staff and programs. Data for this topic were collected informally by division staff. The division also reports performing ongoing visual inspection to determine whether levels of cleanliness have improved at NIT centers.
- 5) The division's use of surveys is limited. Recreation center users are occasionally surveyed; however, it varies considerably by recreation center. Some centers formally survey users from time-to-time. Most, if they do it at all, survey informally. There is no systematic process established for formally surveying users or non-users. Currently, no effort exists to survey nonusers.

Recommendations

Recommendation 12. A system should be established for all recreation center directors to periodically survey users and nonusers in the center's service area. It is inefficient for evaluation activities to occur without coordination across recreation centers. This would be an appropriate activity for district supervisors to coordinate in order to maintain some level of consistency across recreation centers and to provide support in the analysis of survey data. It is critical that survey instruments should be standardized so results can be compared across recreation centers and over time. The division should pilot a survey and evaluation effort, examining issues identified in this report and other division concerns, at several recreation centers during 1999. In the year 2000, a formal citywide survey should be conducted and evaluated in the context of the census. This survey could be modeled on the one developed by Council Research for use in the neighborhoods served by both the Griggs Recreation Center and the North Dale Recreation Center.

Recommendation 13. Program evaluation efforts of municipal athletics should be formalized and expanded. Recreation center and municipal athletics evaluation could be coordinated.

Recommendation 14. The division should continue to take steps to formalize NIT evaluation efforts. Data collected thus far by staff regarding the activities of NIT centers should be examined and used to form the basis for a formal evaluation.

Recommendation 15. Given the City's significant commitment of resources to the division's NIT centers, it is vital that the division comprehensively evaluate whether these centers are achieving their intended goals. While the division is collecting information on important questions regarding NIT centers' performance, a number of other important issues are being overlooked. The division should consider evaluating factors that impact NIT center's infrastructure, such as hours and staff. In addition, it should consider developing measurable outcomes it expects from NIT centers which would allow for comparisons among NIT centers. The same measurable outcomes could also be applied to non-NIT centers for comparison to provide better measurement of the impact of the NIT effort.

Organizational Infrastructure: Staff and Facilities

■ STAFF POLICY ALIGNMENT

The Parks and Recreation Division has a surprisingly large number of policies having to do with their staff and volunteers. This speaks well of the division in that staff policies are a priority and are incorporated into its plans, policies and management documents. The findings discussed below are organized into the following eight topic areas:

- staff and volunteer diversity;
- training and education;
- resources to augment city general funds;
- models for improving work practices;
- flexibility in service provision;
- recognition of volunteers and staff;
- volunteers;
- Neighborhoods in Transition.

Each of these topic areas include staff policies relating to that particular area. For example, all training and education policies for Parks and Recreation staff are found in that section. Some policies pertaining to staff may also be found in other sections of this report. Overall, the division is in compliance with the majority of policies pertaining to staff.

Staff Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #39 (Physical barriers, Social Barriers, Economic barriers)

Ensure staff are prepared to work with a diverse public through:

- a. Recruitment and training of staff and volunteers who are sensitive to the City's park users, including ethnic and language barriers.
- b. Recruitment and retention of people of color for staff and volunteer positions.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #45.

Proactively recruit and retain people of color and bilingual people for staff and volunteer positions.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #52

Pursue opportunities to secure federal, state, and private resources (e.g., grants, partnerships) when and where possible to:

- b. Provide the organizational capacity to change service delivery, including the provision of new services.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #54.

Provide on-going skills training and development programs to improve and expand staff skills and capabilities.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #55.

Establish models to build staff capacity to work independently, as teams, or in partnerships to deliver services.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #57.

Consistently reward and recognize staff and volunteers for their contributions to the park and recreation system.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #59.

Encourage flexibility in facility use, programming, and staffing (including volunteers).

1996-97 Action Plan 27

Use neighborhood services delivery teams to improve programs and services.

1996-97 Action Plan 38

Establish models that build staff capacity to work independently. Complete the neighborhood service delivery team staffing model.

1996-97 Action Plan 10

Develop a volunteer base at selected recreation centers so that programs, services and facility hours can be augmented.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies

- a. Staffing Improvements. In order to provide the level of security and recreational programming needed in these communities, the Commission recommends targeted program staff increases. New positions are also recommended for outreach and to coordinate the additional services that each community decides should be provided at the recreation centers. Increased maintenance staff under the direct supervision of the facility director is also recommended to provide well-maintained facilities. Safety is essential for these community recreation centers, so adequate maintenance and appropriate staffing is required. (page 4)

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies

- c. Community Outreach Worker. This position is a new role for Parks and Recreation staff. The Commission feels this role is essential in these communities if the recreation program is to have a real impact. The position will work out in the community promoting the recreation center programs with individuals and groups, so they better understand the recreation program and will begin to participate. This position also conducts surveys and assists with program development that will attract people who are currently not participating at the center. The outreach worker will also serve as liaison and referral agent for children and adults in need who want to reach out to a safe, knowledgeable person, and work with businesses, schools and other service providers. (pages 5-6)

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objective

9. Recruit, train, schedule, and evaluate sports officials.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Ongoing Program Objectives

8. To continue to provide volunteer opportunities for all programming aspects.
9. To provide education and training for staff to provide professional services to senior citizens and people with disabilities.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Project Objective

- Priority 1. To research, develop and implement a plan to recruit and train a senior citizen from the RCOIC 55+ Worker Program.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Activities: Ongoing Program Objective

6. To provide supplemental in-service training for part-time staff and volunteers.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Maintenance: 1997 Project Objective

- Priority 1. Target and provide more training on pertinent safety issues, equipment operation and work procedures to enhance quality, efficiency and provide a safer environment for all.

Findings

Staff and Volunteer Diversity

Two policies in the Comprehensive Plan address the issue of the diversity of staff influencing the ability of the recreation centers to serve their individual neighborhoods well. These policies articulate the need to recruit and retain bilingual people and people of color for both staff and volunteer positions. They also address the need for staff and volunteers who are sensitive to people different from themselves. These policies are in addition to those which address overall diversity issues in the recreation centers discussed on pages 50 and 51 of this audit. No definition of diversity was articulated with the policies on this topic. Council Research received interview responses addressing almost all aspects of diversity, including race, gender, culture, income, sexual orientation, language and age.

- 1) The City, as an employer, and therefore the Parks and Recreation Division, is faced with the sometimes competing demands of the civil service or merit system, neighborhood preferences and the need to have staff and volunteers reflect the community they serve. The civil service system is used for hiring all recreation center staff, except recreation assistants and, of course, volunteers.
- 2) The division is also faced with competing interests in the assignment of its minority and bilingual directors to specific recreation centers. On one hand, neighborhoods with significant numbers of minority and/or bilingual residents may have a strong interest in having a director who, by virtue of language or race, is possibly better able to connect with the neighborhood. On the other hand, it is not in the City's or division's interest to circumscribe the employment opportunities of any of its recreation center directors.
- 3) Recreation center staff receive periodic training in cultural, gender and gay-lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues. Recreation center directors have also received training on working with Southeast Asians. Special Programs staff who work with seniors are also trained on gerontology issues. Special Programs staff working with populations requiring adaptive programming also train recreation center staff to integrate disabled recreation center users.
- 4) The Parks and Recreation Division has an informal, but reportedly effective, policy to recruit adults and youth from neighborhoods for staff and volunteer positions at the recreation centers. They also report that finding people with bilingual skills can be challenging, especially in the case of Asian languages.
- 5) The division addresses the issue of tolerance in its hiring process with a question on its recreation leader exam about experience working with people of different economic and cultural backgrounds.

Training and Education

Six of the 18 staff policies being examined have to do with training and education. One of the policies supporting training and education is a broad statement in the

comprehensive plan. The remainder are specific policy statements in the budget. Three of these policy statements are for Special Programs, and there is one each for Municipal Athletics and Recreation Center Maintenance.

Providing training and education to staff requires several types of commitment from the division: time for staff to attend offerings; money to pay fees for courses, conferences and associated travel; and the ongoing commitment to integrate training and education programs into everyday work. (See also the discussion of Training and Development on pages 63 to 65 of this report.)

- 6) In its interviews, Council Research heard many staff indicate that although their supervisors were supportive of education and training, it was often difficult to schedule time away without significantly affecting the provision of services at the centers. This is due to the fact that individual centers have a relatively small number of staff and feel pressured to offer increasing numbers and types of programming.
- 7) The division appears to be committed to paying for the education and professional development of most of its staff. However, the amount of money allocated in the division's budget for such undertakings is small. Building Maintenance and Construction employees indicated there was little time or money available to do the training necessary to maintain their licenses and, therefore, they needed to pay for and attend trainings on their own.
- 8) The division seems to have integrated into its regular work activities an ongoing commitment to the training and education of its staff. It offers in-service training, has an annual division conference and there are regular discussions at staff meetings. For example, it offered "verbal judo" classes for all recreation leaders early last summer. However, access to outside training and education is spotty at best for most staff.

In the maintenance area, some types of training are mandatory, such as annual training for fork lift operators and underground utility workers. A relatively recent example of in-house training for Recreation Center Maintenance staff was one provided on restroom care at Hillcrest Recreation Center. There have also been offerings on workplace conduct and diversity. Safety is reportedly discussed at every staff meeting as a matter of protocol. The current Recreation Center Maintenance budget indicates that it is a priority to provide more training on safety and equipment. Maintenance staff are trained how to do their jobs by more senior maintenance staff on a one-to-one basis. However, there is an ongoing concern among maintenance staff regarding the adequacy of quality control and safety training for temporary and seasonal employees.

Resources to Augment City General Funds

- 9) In accordance with its policy directive in the comprehensive plan, the division reports that it is always trying to pursue opportunities for additional funding.

Models for Improving Work Practices

- 10) The Comprehensive Plan and 1996 Action Plan outline the division's priority of developing alternative models for providing services. The most specific of these policies indicate the division will develop "neighborhood service delivery teams." During the audit process, staff interviewed characterized the neighborhood service delivery teams as intending to provide a forum for recreation center directors and community education coordinators to work together on issues of joint interest. Division management have clarified that the teams are intended to better serve neighborhoods with available resources. These policies also address the importance of building the capacity of staff as individuals and teams.
- 11) During the performance audit process there were two neighborhood services delivery teams and plans to add two more in the future. In the fall of 1998, two more neighborhood service delivery teams were put into place. Although, not all teams are fully staffed at this time, all areas of the City are now covered by the teams. The purpose of these teams is to do some joint promotion and information sharing. Through these activities it is hoped that efficiencies will be gained and that jointly undertaking some projects for a larger area will facilitate activities that would otherwise not have occurred. The neighborhood services delivery teams work in geographically-focused areas. The individual teams include members from most of the recreation centers within the district supervisor's area covered. Recreation center directors also report they put together their own informal teams for joint undertakings. The division has been slow to evaluate the impact of the neighborhood services delivery teams and there has been no evaluation examining their efficacy.
- 12) Special Programs staff work in two teams which are based on the populations they serve: senior and adaptive. Staff indicate that the teams are effective.
- 13) Building Maintenance and Construction staff work in composite crews for work orders that require multiple trades people. They also put together *ad hoc* working groups as needed on individual projects.
- 14) Both Recreation Center Maintenance and Recreation Support Maintenance report they have used different staffing configurations for different types of projects. Staff reported that the activities of those teams vary and that the teams are highly dependent on the supervisor of the relevant area for development and continuity.

Flexibility in Service Provision

- 15) The Comprehensive Plan states that it is a goal of the division to encourage flexibility in facility use, programing and staffing—including the use of volunteers. Staff at recreation centers think there are too many mandates, especially with respect to hours of operation. At the same time, central management staff indicate that very little is mandated.

Recognition of Volunteers and Staff

- 16) The Comprehensive Plan makes clear recognizing staff and volunteers for their contributions is important. This recognition occurs both formally and informally. (See also Quality Assessment Leadership Section.) Management staff interviewed indicated that although there are several mechanisms for the formal recognition of staff and volunteers, they believe there is insufficient acknowledgment of special staff contributions made on a daily basis.
- 17) Staff are formally recognized for their contributions through several forums, which include the "Good News" section in the recreation program's weekly notes and presentations at the annual division-wide conference. Other means of acknowledging contributions include the City's employee of the month program and, the now defunct, Star Program in the division which provided star pins for exceptional employee efforts. Both of these programs have been unsuccessful with line staff for two reasons. First, there was inconsistent supervisor "buy-in" to these programs, and therefore they were not taken seriously. Second, this type of program emphasizes single individual efforts that may be extraordinary, but they tend to overlook the ongoing high quality work of teams.
- 18) Municipal Athletics staff reported that sports officials get rewarded for their contributions by being sent to tournaments.
- 19) Volunteers have been recognized and thanked for their contributions by the City Council through certificates of appreciation presented at Council meetings and at an annual volunteer banquet. Several division staff mentioned writing thank you notes to volunteers for their work on specific projects. A high level of acknowledgment is necessary for a division which is so volunteer-dependent.

Volunteers

- 20) The volunteer policies speak to the importance of using volunteers to augment programs, services and hours at the recreation centers and in special programs. In practice, the division has come to the conclusion that the use of volunteers for expansion of recreation center hours is not appropriate because of liability concerns and need for professional staff to resolve conflicts among center users. Both the recreation center directors and district supervisors believe paid professional staff should be at the centers when volunteers are present. Volunteers have been used successfully to increase services and programming, and are used in almost all programming aspects.

Neighborhoods in Transition

- 21) Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) plan policies indicate a need for three types of staffing improvements: outreach workers; increased maintenance under the supervision of recreation center directors; and overall increases in staffing to improve safety and security. A federal grant provided for outreach workers for one year at all NIT centers. Following the expiration of the grant, the outreach worker position at

McDonough was the only one continued with division funds.⁴ Maintenance staffing at the NIT centers has not been measurably different from maintenance staffing for other recreation centers over the last five years. However, during 1998 NIT centers did receive a small allocation of maintenance staff to help on the weekends. Finally, some additional staffing has been provided by the division to both enhance program offerings at NIT centers and improve safety and security. The table on page 26 indicates the numbers of additional recreation leader hours funded at these centers as "NIT Leaders."

Recommendations

Recommendation 16. Parks and Recreation should continue and increase community outreach to recruit and retain volunteers and entry-level recreation center employees from the City's neighborhoods. The division should be credited with making these policies a priority; however, staff and volunteers need to become more representative of the community they serve linguistically, racially and culturally. Given the way the merit system operates, it is important to get people from the neighborhoods into volunteer and entry-level positions, so that eventually the upper levels of management can become more balanced.

Recommendation 17. The Parks and Recreation Division should encourage more active support at the supervisory level of training activities. Specifically, supervisors should be encouraged by upper-level management to help staff get time away from their jobs to pursue professional development opportunities.

Recommendation 18. Parks and Recreation Division should cultivate greater budgetary support for training and professional development. Even in tight budget times, the division cannot abandon training and professional development, including that which is necessary for management staff.

Recommendation 19. Evaluate the efficacy of neighborhood service delivery teams and more clearly define and communicate the teams' purpose. Ideally, this evaluation would have occurred prior to the expansion of team usage. However, given the central role these neighborhood service delivery teams play, evaluation of their effectiveness is critical. The evaluation should be conducted by the division in partnership with Human Resources organizational development staff, or other experts on work processes and communication.

Recommendation 20. The Parks and Recreation Division should develop meaningful ways to recognize the contributions of both individuals and teams.

³ The McDonough position has been continued because of the cultural and linguistic barriers to participation for McDonough residents who are predominantly Southeast Asian.

1998 RECREATION CENTER HOURS¹ ALLOCATION

Center	Directors	Recr. Leaders	NIT Leaders	Recr. Assistants	Sunday Hours ²	Maintenance ³	Total Hours/ Total FTE's
<i>Arlington</i>	2,080	2,080	1,040		136	1,227	6,563 / 3.2
Baker*	2,080	2,600		520	136	1,830	7,166 / 3.5
Battle Creek	1,898	2,600		520	136	1,539	6,693 / 3.2
Conway	1,898	3,120		1,040	136	2,142	8,336 / 4.0
<i>Dayton's Bluff</i>	2,080	2,080	1,040		136	603	5,939 / 2.9
Desnoyer	208	1,100				549	1,857 / 0.9
Duluth & Case	2,080	2,080		520	136	1,539	6,355 / 3.1
Dunning	2,080	1,000				549	3,629 / 1.7
Eastview	2,080	2,080		520	136	1,539	6,355 / 3.1
Edgumbe*	2,080	2,600		520	136	2,194	7,530 / 3.6
<i>El Rio Vista*</i>	2,080	2,080	1,040		136	1,539	6,875 / 3.3
Front	234	1,100		520		1,098	2,952 / 1.4
Frost Lake	416	2,080		520		603	3,619 / 1.7
Griggs	208	1,100		520		549	2,377 / 1.1
Groveland	2,080	2,080		520	136	1,098	5,914 / 2.8
Hancock	1,872	2,080		705	136	549	5,342 / 2.6
Hayden Heights	1,898	2,600		520	136	1,539	6,693 / 3.2
Hazel Park	2,080	2,080			136	1,539	5,835 / 2.8
Highwood Hills	364	2,080		520		603	3,567 / 1.7
Hillcrest*	2,080	2,600		1,040	136	3,293	9,149 / 4.4
Homecroft	2,080	2,080		520	136	549	5,365 / 2.6
<i>Jimmy Lee</i>	2,080	3,120	1,040		136	549	6,925 / 3.3
Langford	1,924	2,080		670	136	1,317	6,127 / 3.0
Linwood*	2,080	2,600		520	136	3,293	8,629 / 4.2
<i>Margaret</i>	2,080	3,120	1,040		136	1,539	7,915 / 3.8
<i>ML King</i>	2,080	3,120	1,040		136	1,317	7,693 / 3.7
<i>McDonough*</i>	2,080	4,160	5,200		272	1,317	13,029 / 6.3
Merriam Park	1,872	2,600		520	136	1,098	6,226 / 3.0
North Dale	2,080	2,600		520	136	1,317	6,653 / 3.2
NW Como	2,080	2,080		520	136	878	5,694 / 2.7
Orchard	1,846	2,080		520	136	1,098	5,680 / 2.7
Palace	1,872	2,080		705	136	1,317	6,110 / 2.9
Phalen	2,080	2,080		520	136	1,539	6,355 / 3.1
Prosperity	1,898	2,080		520	136	1,539	6,173 / 3.0
Rice*	2,080	2,600		520	136	659	5,995 / 2.9
Saint Clair	208	1,100				659	1,967 / 1
<i>Scheffer</i>	2,080	2,080	2,080		136	878	7,254 / 3.5
S. St. Anthony	156	1,100				878	2,134 / 1.0
Sylvan*	2,080	2,080		520	136	1,539	6,355 / 3.1
<i>W. Minnehaha</i>	2,080	3,120	1,040		136	2,194	8,570 / 4.1
<i>Wilder</i>	2,080	3,120	2,080		136	1,830	9,246 / 4.5

Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) Centers in Bold Italics

¹ Hours represent all paid hours; vacation and sick leave have not been deducted.

² Sunday hours run from the first Sunday in December until the last Sunday in March.

³ Maintenance hours are calculated by adding the FTE assigned to the center and the proportion of central crew time weighted to reflect the staff investment at the individual recreation centers.

* Recreation center has extra funds to pay for additional hours. The number of additional hours varies by recreation center. Additional hours are funded through grants, booster clubs or revenue-generating programs at the recreation centers.

■ HOURS OF OPERATION POLICY ALIGNMENT

The hours for which recreation centers are available for programming and sports activities are a critical component in ensuring their ability to serve individual neighborhoods. Ideally, recreation center directors would know all the community and Citywide recreation needs and have the resources to ensure that the centers were open at the right times to meet those needs. There are four key policies listed in the following table which address the hours of operation of recreation centers. The two themes that run through these policies are:

- Neighborhoods benefit by increases in the hours of operation of their local recreation center, especially on weekends; and
- Given ongoing resource limitations, the neighborhood which an individual recreation center serves should play an active role in defining the most appropriate hours of operation.

Hours of Operation Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #31

Provide recreation programming that helps build a sense of community through:

- d. Keeping recreation centers open seven days a week as need and available resources permit.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #41. (Physical barriers, Social Barriers, Economic barriers)

Provide recreation programs and services at times convenient to the community.

1996-97 Action Plan 26

Schedule programs and services at times that respond to priorities identified by the community.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objective

- 3. Continue to improve services to the public through the full implementation of the three-tiered organization of recreation centers:
 - a. Community recreation centers offer a broad program of activities for all ages.
 - b. Neighborhood recreation centers focus on youth with limited programs for adults and seniors.
 - c. Part-time centers provide a limited recreation program close to home for elementary age children.

Findings

- 1) The Parks and Recreation Division continues to organize its recreation centers according to a three-tier organization system. The recreation centers and their classifications within this system appear in the following table.
- 2) Status as a Neighborhood in Transition center does not seem to provide additional hours of operation to address the extra needs that have been identified in these neighborhoods. See the table on pages 29-30 for a summary of hours of service.

Three -Tier Organization of Recreation Centers

Community Recreation Centers <i>offer a broad program of activities for all ages</i>	Neighborhood Recreation Centers <i>focus on youth with limited programs for adults and seniors</i>	Part-Time Recreation Centers <i>provide a limited recreation program close to home for elementary age children</i>
Baker Battle Creek Conway Edgumbe Hayden Heights Hillcrest Linwood Margaret Martin Luther King (MLK) Merriam Park North Dale Rice West Minnehaha Wilder	Arlington Dayton's Bluff Duluth & Case Eastview El Rio Vista Groveland Hancock Hazel Park Homecroft Jimmy Lee	Langford McDonough Northwest Como Orchard Palace Phalen Prosperity Scheffer Sylvan Desnoyer Dunning Front Frost Lake Griggs Highwood Hills Saint Clair South Saint Anthony

Neighborhood in Transition Recreation Centers in Bold Italics

- 3) The division reports that in 1992 it expanded its hours to a standard 6-day week during the school year at neighborhood and community recreation centers, excluding part-time recreation centers. The additional hours were made possible through resource re-allocations.
- 4) The division opened its neighborhood and community recreation centers on Sundays during its winter calendar, again excluding part-time centers (except for Griggs, which is open on Sundays). Sunday hours are covered by a specific allocation that allows the centers to be open on Sundays without cutting back hours on other days of the week. Appendix B indicates for each recreation center which hours on each day of the week they are open. The table on the following two pages indicates the total number of hours each center is open by week and season for the last year. The winter calendar in 1998 runs from January 5 to March 29, during which time the centers were open for four hours on Sundays. Several centers are open on Sundays during other seasons of the year, for example Jimmy Lee and Martin Luther King were open in the summer of 1997 on Sunday afternoons. In the fall of 1997 Baker, Langford, Martin Luther King and McDonough were open on Sundays. In the spring of 1998, Martin Luther King, Merriam Park and West Minnehaha were open on Sundays. Finally, in the fall of 1998 Hancock, Martin Luther King, Jimmy Lee, Linwood, McDonough and West Minnehaha are open on Sundays.

RECREATION CENTER CUMULATIVE OPEN HOURS**1998 Weekly Hours****1998 Total Hours**

<i>Rec. Center</i>	winter	spring	summer	fall	winter	spring	summer#	fall§	TOTALS
<i>Arlington</i>	37	32 ^a	50	36	451	305	620	566	1,942
Baker	80	76 ^b	70	80	960	742	910	1,266	3,878
Battle Creek	39	32 ^c	49	36	478	300	607	559	1,944
Conway	72	65	57	68	864	650	741	1,074	3,329
<i>Dayton's</i>	33	33	0	31	412	330	0	479	1,221
Desnoyer	16 ^d	16	24	16 ^e	252	160	312	252	976
Duluth &	38	33 ^f	52	32 ^g	463	310	640	508	1,921
Eastview	42 ^h	42	51	40	515	420	633	614	2,182
Edgcumbe	55	54	60	71	664	540	780	1,119	3,103
<i>El Rio Vista</i>	44	37	51 ⁱ	40	533	365	633	614	2,145
Front	16	16	32	20	216	160	416	316	1,108
Frost Lake	22	22	24	20 ^j	282	220	312	359	1,173
Griggs	31 ^k	16	28	16 ^l	268	160	364	232	1,024
Groveland	37 ^m	31	43	35	453	305	559	542	1,859
Hancock	40	28 ⁿ	48	36 ^o	492	265	594	558	1,909
Hayden Hts.	56	37	52	50	677	370	646	788	2,481
Hazel Park	37 ^p	33	41	47 ^q	439	330	527	741	2,037
Highwd. Hills	27	20	30	18	341	200	360	330	1,231
Hillcrest	73	78	55 ^r	69	870	780	715	1,070	3,435
Homecroft	35	32	47 ^s	34	429	315	581	525	1,850
<i>Jimmy Lee</i>	37	32	47	37	455	320	581	577	1,933
Langford	43	32	45	36	523	320	555	564	1,962
Linwood	84	80	75	84 ^t	1,008	800	975	1,330	4,113
<i>Margaret</i>	41	37	60	47	503	370	750	729	2,352
<i>M. L. King</i>	37	36	52 ^u	36	450	360	646	562	2,018
<i>McDonough</i>	29 ^v	34	63	39	369	340	823	607	2,139
Merriam Park	42	34	49	41	507	340	607	654	2,108
North Dale	39	37	57	41	481	370	741	645	2,237
NW Como	40	32	54	37	491	320	666	569	2,046
Orchard	35	31	46	36 ^w	434	310	568	547	1,859
Palace	42 ^x	33	49	37	515	330	607	569	2,021
Phalen	47	36	37 ^y	38	574	360	481	583	1,998
Prosperity	38	34	44	46	468	380	542	714	2,104

Rice	37	38	58	36	451	375	748	555	2,129
St. Clair	16	16	28	16	216	160	334	300	1,010
<i>Scheffer</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>444</i>	<i>320</i>	<i>562</i>	<i>562</i>	<i>1,888</i>
S. St.	23	16	34	16	300	160	442	300	1,202
Sylvan	41	36	57	55	498	355	735	857	2,445
<i>W. M'haha</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>566</i>	<i>340</i>	<i>672</i>	<i>780</i>	<i>2,358</i>
<i>Wilder</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>531</i>	<i>415</i>	<i>741</i>	<i>661</i>	<i>2,348</i>

Neighborhood in Transition Centers in Bold Italics

- * Winter hours include extended hours for the period of March 23-29 (Spring Break). All centers, with the exception of Baker, Conway, Hillcrest and Linwood, had extended hours for this period.
- # Calculation of summer hours include the hours centers were open for the summer free-lunch program. This program operated from June 8-August 14.
- § Hours for fall include extended hours for the period of December 20, 1998 - January 2, 1999. All centers, with the exception of Baker, Conway, Hillcrest and Linwood, had extended hours for this period.

Additional hours listed below are not included in weekly hours or total hours.

- a Arlington is open during the Spring of 1998 from 10-3 on Saturdays until May 16.
- b Baker is open during the Spring of 1998 from 10-4 on Saturdays until May 16.
- c Battle Creek is open during the Spring of 1998 from 11-4 on Saturdays until May 16.
- d Desnoyer is open during the Winter of 1998 from 12-4 on Sundays for skating. Also Desnoyer is closed for three weeks in March
- e Desnoyer is closed during three weeks in November.
- f Duluth & Case is open during the Spring of 1998 from 10-3 on Saturdays until May 16.
- g Duluth and Case is open during September of 1998 from 10-2:30 on Saturdays.
- h Eastview is open during the Winter of 1998 from 9-4 on January 10.
- i El Rio Vista has special events on Saturdays during their summer hours.
- j Frost Lake is open as needed on Sundays and Saturdays during the fall.
- k Griggs is open during the Winter of 1998 from 4-8 on Fridays for skating, 1-8 on Saturdays and 1-5 on Sundays. Also, Griggs is closed from March 1-31.
- l Griggs is closed for November 1-31.
- m Groveland is open during the Winter of 1998 from 1-4 on Saturdays for skating.
- n Hancock is open during the Spring of 1998 from 11-4 on Saturdays until May 16.
- o Hancock is open from 12-4 on Saturdays starting September 19.
- p Hazel Park is open during the Winter of 1998 from 12-4 on Saturdays through February.
- q Hazel Park is open from 8am-12pm Saturdays during the Fall.
- r Hillcrest is open from 11:30am-1:30pm on Sundays during the Summer for rentals. Hillcrest is also open on Saturdays for rentals as needed.
- s Homecroft is open during the Summer on Saturdays as needed for rentals.
- t Linwood is open December 1 from 12-4.
- u MLK is open on Saturdays during the summer as needed for rentals.
- v McDonough is open during the Winter of 1998 from 10-4 on Saturdays for basketball, 12-4 on Sundays for movies and 4-8 on Wednesdays for Gym Mississippi.
- w Orchard is open on Saturdays during the Fall from 10am-3pm after September 25.
- x Palace is open during the Winter of 1998 from 9-2 on Saturdays for Cub Basketball League.
- y Phalen Summer hours vary on Saturdays.

- 5) There appears to be only informal means of gathering information on the community's overall needs and expectations of recreation centers. There is also only informal information gathering on community preferences for hours of operation. Recreation center directors typically gather this information through informal conversation with recreation center users. This informal method of gathering information on community preferences is problematic in several ways. First, it does not provide for input from residents who are infrequent or non-users of recreation centers. Second, it does not ensure that the many and diverse types of recreation center users provide feedback due to the scheduling of the activities in which they are involved. Finally, it does not allow for documentation of the community's articulated needs which could then be used to justify programming changes or additions.
- 6) Interview information indicates a need for some neighborhoods to have additional programming hours, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.
- 7) Recreation Services seems to be cognizant of many of its current users needs. For example, special programs staff who work with seniors indicated that most of their programming occurs Monday through Friday from 8:00 - 4:30 to minimize senior concerns about personal safety and potential difficulty driving at night. At the same time, they also discussed the importance of more Sunday programming opportunities, citing information that seniors are most likely to feel isolated and lonely on that day of the week. Special programs adaptive staff explained their programming tended to occur during non-traditional working hours; such as early evenings, evenings and weekends in order to adjust to their client requirements.
- 8) According to most staff interviewed, there is an important connection between the hours a recreation center is open and the necessity of having at least one paid staff on premises at all times. In the case of Neighborhood in Transition Recreation Centers, there is a requirement that two paid staff be on premises at all times. Security and liability concerns have kept the division from allowing volunteers to be alone at a recreation center without staff supervision. Several policy discussions have occurred over the years to explore possible ways to expand center hours without needing to expand paid staff time. See the Staff Policy Alignment section for further discussion of this issue.

Recommendations

Recommendation 21. The division should formally use surveys to better assess community needs for recreation center hours of operations. Information should be gathered on a citywide basis, including from both users and nonusers of recreation centers, as discussed in recommendation 12. However, this time-intensive undertaking may not be possible except on a periodic basis.

Recommendation 22. The Division should continue to explore alternative ideas for opening recreation centers for more hours with less necessity for the presence of paid staff. The situation appears to be especially problematic in the case of the Neighborhood in Transition Recreation Centers, which are located in areas of the City experiencing high levels of hardship. These centers are not open for hours that exceed those of recreation centers in less needy areas of the City. Given the goal of making

recreation centers a central neighborhood hub offering a variety of services and activities, especially NIT areas, additional hours of operation would likely be useful for the community.

■ SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICY ALIGNMENT

The policies pertaining to safety and security in the recreation centers deal with issues of staffing, safety checks and physical surroundings. As public spaces, all recreation centers have safety concerns for staff and volunteers as well as the general public. Council Research examined six policies which relate to the safety and security of recreation centers. In almost all cases there was agreement in staff interviews that the policies were being followed.

Safety & Security Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #18

Provide resources to support site and facility maintenance that:

- c. Maximizes safety and security

Comprehensive Plan Policy #28.

Provide adequate staffing of park facilities to maximize safety and security.

1996-97 Action Plan 25

Develop and implement Division security/emergency plans for key Division facilities.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Building Maintenance and Construction: Ongoing Program Objective

- 2. Complete intrusion alarm installation in Parks and Recreation facilities and continue upgrading of system through additional installation of mechanical failure, low or high temperature, and fire alarms.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Maintenance Support: Ongoing Program Objective

- 8. Provide maintenance and repair service for tot and playground apparatus at 88 locations.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Maintenance: Ongoing Program Objective

- 6. Maintain and perform weekly safety inspections on 43 tot lot play areas.

Findings

- 1) There is broad-based consensus that the safest way to staff a recreation center is to have two paid staff on site at all times. It is division policy that the Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) recreation centers operate in this fashion at all times. There is an additional allotment of hours for recreation leaders at the NIT centers to compensate for this policy. Some Booster Club presidents indicated they were concerned the price of increased security through staffing may result in a decrease in programming. Recreation Services managers indicated this policy has decreased the number of incidences reported to police. Other staff interviewed said that the number of incidences requiring police attention has not decreased. Non-NIT recreation centers use two paid staff on duty at the same time as the director sees fit and as resources allow.

- 2) Safety is a critical concern for seniors attending programming at recreation centers. Often senior programs are conducted during regular business hours, so seniors can go to and return home from the centers in daylight. Staff report many seniors prefer to travel in the day not only for reasons of perceived personal safety, but also because of night vision problems. Staff also indicated that a single incidence of theft is likely to prevent the affected senior, and potentially others, from attending future programming.
- 3) The level of perceived safety in recreation centers varied across the different staff groups which were interviewed. Some indicated the centers were quite safe, especially for youth who have the attention of paid staff, and often of volunteers. Other staff indicated there are ongoing safety concerns which arise from working with the public in a public space. These concerns include the potential for youth or adults to be carrying a concealed weapon, and the difficulty of removing youth or adults who behave inappropriately, or even violently, from recreation centers and grounds.
- 4) Improved lighting at recreation centers is considered to be central to improving the security situation, especially outdoors and in parking lots. Recreation center directors report lighting is a priority both for maintenance and upgrading. District supervisors indicated that federal Weed and Seed money has been used to improve lighting and other security concerns.
- 5) Vandalism and graffiti are very high priorities for the Operations staff, and are dealt with as quickly as possible. Although vandalism and graffiti may not directly affect the personal safety of recreation center users, its presence has an unsettling effect on the neighborhood and decreases the community's perception of safety at the recreation centers.
- 6) One key area considered in the design and development of recreation center building plans is safety and security. The considerations include lighting, security cameras, sight lines and entrances.
- 7) Recreation Services staff all receive training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid on a regular basis. Operations staff discuss safety at all of their staff meetings and try to make available in-house trainings and other resources as funds permit.
- 8) Maintenance staff report children's play areas, formerly known as tot lots, are inspected at least weekly, and often inspections are conducted daily.
- 9) All buildings have intrusion alarm systems and some upgrading of these systems is occurring. Fire, mechanical failure, and high-and-low temperature alarms are in place at some recreation centers, but not all.

Recommendation

Recommendation 23. Given the importance of the issues of safety in recreation centers, it would be prudent to periodically evaluate the safety of recreation centers. Such an

evaluation could include a forum at the division conference to discuss safety concerns and a brief staff analysis of police incidences at recreation centers and their grounds. Ideally, the Police Department and local crime prevention coordinators would be a part of this evaluation process. Although staffing and lighting are key activities in maintaining the safety and security of recreation centers, there are likely other useful steps which could be identified and pursued, even with limited resources.

■ FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The Comprehensive Plan contains two policies relating to facility improvements. The Plan gives priority to completion of new community recreation centers at North Dale and Battle Creek. It also gives priority to upgrading Neighborhood in Transition centers. The 1997 budget calls for the improvements in fields at McMurray, Rice and Arlington along with the maintenance and upgrade of fields and facilities used by Municipal Athletics.

Facility Improvements Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #15

In the Local Parks and Recreation System the City will give priority to all of the following:

- a. Completion of Community Recreation Centers (North Dale and Battle Creek)

Comprehensive Plan Policy #15

In the Local Parks and Recreation System the City will give priority to all of the following:

- b. Focus on upgrading identified *Neighborhoods in Transition* centers

1997 City Budget: Softball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

5. Upgrade lighting at McMurray on softball fields.
6. Work with private group to upgrade Rice and Arlington fields.

1997 City Budget: Football Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

5. Upgrade McMurray soccer fields.

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objective

7. Maintain and upgrade conditions of fields and facilities.
13. Upgrade McMurray for soccer and softball use.

Findings

- 1) Priority is being given to the completion of community recreation centers at North Dale and Battle Creek. Battle Creek is budgeted to receive \$4,410,000 between 1998 and 2000. This center is being built in partnership with the county and the school district. Completion of the North Dale project is expected by 2003. Funding for design in the amount of \$60,000 was provided in 1998. Jimmy Lee is also scheduled for major improvements with \$3,697,000 budgeted from 1998 -2002.

- 2) Neighborhood in Transition centers appear to have been given priority for upgrades. Many improvements have been made in NIT centers particularly in programming. The Youth Initiative funds have been focused in NIT centers with \$2,000,000 being directed to five centers. Maintenance requests for NIT centers are reported to have been given high priority. Also, programming has been upgraded through partnerships at some centers.
- 3) The lighting at McMurray softball fields has not been upgraded. The reason given is that the future use of these fields is unclear. It is expected that at some point in the future the fields at either McMurray or Dunning will be lighted. It is also suggested that McMurray does not have the neighborhood constituency need to be successful in the Capital Improvement Budget process.
- 4) The dome at Rice and Arlington has been built. There are plans to upgrade the lighting but these plans have not been completed.
- 5) The soccer fields at McMurray have been upgraded. A sprinkler system has been installed. The sprinkler system covers two soccer fields with the potential to be expanded to cover the whole site. New sod has also been planted.
- 6) The upgrade and maintenance of fields and facilities are inhibited by a lack of staff, which is reportedly exacerbated by a lack of training and experience. This shortage, coupled with the heavy use of ball fields, makes it impossible to properly maintain fields. Degraded maintenance is thought to be a factor in some teams ceasing use of City ball fields. It is, however, noted the baseball fields at McMurray have been improved, two new fields have been built at Como and every year 44 fields are restored and four are rebuilt. The 1997 and 1998 budgets specified a goal of rebuilding 20% of the division's 174 fields on a five-year cycle. This was accomplished for those years. Notably, the proposed budget for 1999 cuts that level in half to 10%. The implication of this cut is that the already heavily-used fields will deteriorate further given a 10-year, rather than a 5-year rejuvenation cycle. Additionally, there are no plans for rebuilding any of the City's 104 tennis courts. Staff indicate that approximately 1/2 have deteriorated to a point where rebuilding is necessary.
- 7) McMurray has been upgraded for soccer but softball fields were lost because of the new soccer fields. Maintenance workers are occasionally critical of the design and planning for these new soccer fields. They believe that the designs sometimes fail to properly look at the soil which resulted in drainage problems. Lack of proper drainage results in wet fields that are easily damaged.

Recommendation

Recommendation 24. Maintenance staff should be consulted regarding the design and location of new athletic fields. They have knowledge and experience with the soils and use conditions that should be considered during the design phase of these projects.

■ FEES, FINANCE AND DONATIONS POLICY ALIGNMENT

The collection of fees for use of recreation centers and participation in recreation programming is addressed in both the Comprehensive Plan and the 1997 City budget. These policies are directed toward maximizing the self-sufficiency of recreation centers and ensuring that no one is excluded from participation due to an inability to pay fees. These policy objectives create a tension that must be managed through the establishment and application of reasonable policies. The Comprehensive Plan states that public access should be maintained through the establishment of a fee policy and review process that ensures fees and equipment charges do not create barriers to participation. The Comprehensive Plan also directs the pursuit of federal, state and private resources to ensure free access to programs or facilities. The 1997 City budget objectives address matters relating to collection and management of funds and the operation of athletic associations

Fees, Finance and Donations Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #36

Maintain public access to parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs through:

- d. Establishment of a fee policy and review process that ensures fees and equipment charges do not create barriers to participation

Comprehensive Plan Policy #52

Pursue opportunities to secure federal, state, and private resources (e.g., grants, partnerships) when and where possible to:

- a. Ensure free access to programs or facilities

1996-97 Action Plan 22

Encourage community use of recreation facilities by:

- b. Establishing space use charge guidelines that encourage community use at a reasonable cost.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Enterprise Accounts: Ongoing Program Objectives

- 2. To receive small benevolent donations from booster clubs, service organizations, and individuals.
- 3. To purchase vending machine supplies and pay sales tax.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programming Support: Ongoing Program Objective

- 2. When programming and space permits, to rent facilities to individuals/groups for exclusive use. Fees will cover costs.
- 3. To conduct the Winter Carnival Softball on Ice Tournament with Municipal Athletics as a fund raiser to carry out the Junior Royalty Program.

1997 City Budget: Hockey Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

- 2. Funds are used for:
 - a. payment of 40 officials on a regular basis
 - b. purchase of awards and trophies
 - c. rental of hours of indoor ice time
 - d. purchase of specialize equipment and supplies
 - e. payment of a rink attendant
 - f. maintenance of broom ball rinks

1997 City Budget: Basketball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

2. Funds are used for:
 - a. payment of 80 officials on a regular basis
 - b. purchase of awards and trophies
 - c. registration fees for teams to compete in M.S.F. state tournaments
 - d. rental of gym facilities
 - e. purchases of specialized equipment and supplies
 - f. payment of 6 seasonal gym attendants

Findings

- 1) There is an informal, unwritten policy governing the collection of fees from citizens for whom payment of fees is perceived to constitute a financial hardship. This policy is that no one is to be excluded from recreation center programming because of an inability to pay fees. There is, however, a strong belief that fees are appropriate and necessary. Fees are seen as useful for increasing commitment from participants and necessary to help pay for actual costs. The collection of fees is currently essential to some programming.
- 2) Each recreation center director and/or booster club has their own procedures for deciding who should receive financial assistance. These policies differ from director to director and from neighborhood to neighborhood.
- 3) The waiver of fees is currently governed by a "charity" model rather than an "entitlement" model. It is left to recreation center directors to determine who they believe needs financial assistance and then to find ways to resolve this shortcoming through either waiving fees or finding another funding source, such as a booster club. There are no formal tests or standards for determining who will and who will not be offered waivers or financial assistance. The recreation center directors believe that they know the neighborhood and the financial condition of the citizens in their service area well enough to make these judgements.
- 4) Arrangements are sometimes made for people to work out a payment schedule for recreation center fees or to do volunteer work in the center in lieu of paying fees.
- 5) Grants for funds to reduce access fees are frequently written and received.
- 6) Charges for the use of recreation facilities are seen as very reasonable. Most feel the costs are a "give away" or "so cheap it is ridiculous." Even though these fees are seen as modest, it is admitted they may still be prohibitive in some areas.
- 7) Adult athletic programs are seen by some as an appropriate source of funds to help keep down the cost of youth athletic programs.
- 8) Most recreation centers receive funds from booster clubs, service organizations and individuals. Also, revenues from vending machines are channeled into programing. The procedures for receiving and allocating these funds differ from center to center.

- 9) The City acts as a fiscal agent for the Hockey Athletic Association and the Basketball Athletic Association. The activities of these associations is entirely fee supported.

Recommendation

Recommendation 25. Parks and Recreation should develop a formal written policy governing the waiver of fees due to financial hardship. This policy should be conspicuously posted in every recreation center. While it may be appealing to believe recreation center directors have sufficient knowledge of the financial condition of each of the thousands of families living in their service area, such a belief is not credible. There is, in fact, no way for recreation center directors to acquire the information needed to make fair and unbiased decisions regarding ability to pay. This is especially the case given that recreation center directors change and the high mobility of many neighborhoods. Also, the secret and individualistic manner in which these decisions are presently made invites racism, sexism and other types of discrimination. An "entitlement" policy based on school lunch eligibility or some other objective criteria is much more appropriate for a publicly funded and operated facility.

■ MAINTENANCE POLICY ALIGNMENT

There are a large number of policy statements which we have identified as falling into the "maintenance" category. The vast majority of the policies are specific and read very much like a work plan for the areas being examined. These statements clearly outline the importance of both standard maintenance and cleaning activities, as well as necessary upgrades and preventative maintenance practices. The few broad policy statements articulated speak to the importance of sound maintenance in order to provide quality services at the recreation centers.

As mentioned earlier, there are units within the Operations section of the division which are considered to have the most impact on the maintenance of recreation centers. These are: Recreation Center Maintenance, Recreation Support Maintenance and Building Maintenance and Construction. Approximately one-third of the workload for Recreation Support Maintenance and Building Maintenance and Construction is with the recreation centers, the remainder of their responsibilities have to do with other Parks and Recreation facilities and grounds. Recreation Center Maintenance works exclusively with the recreation centers.

Maintenance Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #18

Provide resources to support site and facility maintenance that:

- a. Is appropriate to the size and use of the facility
- b. Enhances visibility and attractiveness
- c. Maximizes safety and security

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objective

7. Maintain and upgrade conditions of fields and facilities.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Building Maintenance and Construction: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. Continue categorizing work orders in seven groups: Requested Maintenance, Preventive Maintenance, Emergency, Vandalism, Construction, Special Events and Graffiti.
3. Continue the door replacement program.
4. Concrete replacement and sealing of sidewalks for safety purposes.
5. Calking and tuckpointing of buildings to prevent further deterioration of roofs and walls.
6. Replacement of old-damaged restroom partitions.
7. Replacement of worn, unsafe carpeting and floor tile.
8. Replacement of old, broken plexiglass, and plate glass windows.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Construction:
Priority 1. Attempt to keep up with the current workload and reduce emergency work loads.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Maintenance Support: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. Rejuvenate 20% of 212 existing Baseball/Softball fields in a 5 year maintenance cycle.
2. Totally rebuild or construct new agrilime Softball/Baseball fields.
3. Collaborate with 03172 to layout, line and maintain 66 football/soccer fields for a 12 week season. Layout, line and maintain 5 soccer fields for a 6 month season.
4. Supply tennis nets and perform court maintenance for 104 tennis courts.
5. Collaborate with 03172 to erect, maintain, and remove 34 hockey rinks. Layout, develop and maintain 58 general skating rinks.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Maintenance: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. Perform custodial duties at 36 recreation center buildings with interior space of 287,000 square feet.
2. Provide all outside maintenance services at eleven of the sites which are joint-use facilities with the School District, including areas around schools.
3. Perform grounds maintenance services, i.e., litter removal, turf care, tree care, snow and ice removal, asphalt and sidewalk repairs, etc., on 254 acres.
4. Lay out and maintain 139 softball/baseball fields and 56 football/soccer fields.
5. Assemble, maintain and disassemble 29 hockey rinks. Also maintain another 40 general skating rinks.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 12

The evaluation should include a visual inspection to determine if levels of cleanliness have improved over time.

Findings

- 1) The maintenance situation at the recreation centers involves a stable or decreasing number of staff being responsible for increasingly large spaces. There is an estimated 10% increase in the square footage of the City's recreation centers from 1996 through 1999. The 10% increase is part of an ongoing trend. Indeed, since the mid-1970s the division has been pursuing policies which create a smaller number of recreation centers which are themselves larger buildings offering a broader array of programming options. Specifically, in 1977 there were 53 recreation centers open year-round. In 1987, the number of recreation centers had decreased to 49 and they

were organized into a three-tier system outlining the types of services offered. By 1997, there were 42 recreation centers, still organized in a three-tier system. Currently, at the end of 1998, there are 41 recreation centers. Notably, the amount of outdoor field space has remained stable for at least 25 years.

Despite the fact that the number of recreation centers is decreasing, the square footage of the City's recreation centers continues to increase dramatically. In 1989, Conway Recreation Center increased in size by 17,500 square feet. In 1991, the Linwood Recreation Center increased its size by 18,341 square feet. In 1993 Hillcrest Recreation Center increased in size by 19,000 square feet. In 1995, 3,600 square feet were added to El Rio Vista. In 1997, 14,268 square feet were added at a total of three Parks and Recreation sites, including McMurray Field facilities, Groveland and Hazel Park Recreation Centers. In 1998, 19,564 square feet are being added to Dayton's Bluff.

- 2) The aforementioned 10% square footage increase for recreation centers over the last four years took place in the context of a 3% increase in Recreation Center Maintenance staff, no increase in Building Maintenance and Construction staff, and decreases in Recreation Support Maintenance.
- 3) The long-term impact of larger multi-service buildings used as recreation centers is unclear. Efforts have been made to increase the efficiency of the buildings for maintenance purposes by involving maintenance staff in the design phase of the construction process. No empirical research has been conducted to determine if the maintenance and supply needs of the new recreation centers introduce efficiencies to offset the increased square footage requiring maintenance.
- 4) The Comprehensive Plan specifically states the City should "provide resources to support site and facility maintenance that is appropriate to the size and use of the facility." The size and use of facilities are undergoing significant and ongoing change. The division reviews maintenance staffing in light of these changes within the annual budget process.
- 5) Special projects are seen to take priority over other maintenance responsibilities. The next highest priority is emergency work orders, followed by vandalism and finally everyday maintenance.
- 6) Building Maintenance and Construction staff report the backup on work orders continues to be significant. This results in routine maintenance work orders receiving a very slow response. Additionally, preventative maintenance rarely occurs. There is likely a long-term cost for this deferred maintenance.
- 7) Building Maintenance and Construction staff also report a reduction in emergency work orders received.
- 8) The computer system used for tracking work orders and information on the supplies and nature of work completed is not currently accessible to the maintenance staff. Therefore, any records available to these staff on past experiences with a particular problem is available exclusively through an individual staff member's own notes or recollections on work completed.

- 9) Fields are perceived to be very overused through over-programming and "all-season" use which allows grass little, if any, time to recover between intensive uses. Staff are also behind schedule for upgrading fields. Additionally, staff mentioned concern over the state of the City's tennis courts, many of which require upgrading.
- 10) Maintenance staff are generally perceived as being competent and caring by other division staff. However, maintenance staff themselves are concerned about maintaining this quality and commitment while their ranks are increasingly made up of part-time, seasonal and temporary employees.
- 11) There has been some policy focus on the connection of maintenance and safety issues. The division has responded primarily with efforts to improve lighting in and around the recreation centers.
- 12) Programming staff report that they are currently performing some maintenance functions at the recreation centers in order to prepare spaces for basic recreation programming.

Recommendations

Recommendation 25. The division should review its level of maintenance staff in the context of the increasing number of square feet of interior space for which those staff are responsible.

Recommendation 26. The division should study the feasibility of re-programming the work order computer system so that it can provide information on past repairs to the trades staff in their everyday work.

Recommendation 27. Policies and practices for building and field upgrades should be reviewed with special attention paid to issues of deferred maintenance and upgrading.

Community Relationships

■ COMMUNITY BUILDING POLICY ALIGNMENT

Community building policies are intended to cultivate a greater sense of community or belonging for neighborhood residents. The policies are structured to strengthen individual and organizational relationships within the neighborhood served by the recreation center. The Parks and Recreation Division community building policies codify the division's philosophy that recreation centers are more than just places for youth to participate in sports—these policies characterize recreation centers as places which help define and support the neighborhoods in which they are located. This is especially true in the case of the Neighborhood in Transition (NIT) recreation centers which were selected for extra resource investment because of the high level of economic need in those neighborhoods.

Overall, the division has a good record of implementing its community-building policies. However, areas for improvement were identified by staff, the Parks Commission and

Booster Clubs in the interview process. Generally, the groups interviewed attributed deficiencies in policy implementation to a lack of staff resources to do necessary community outreach.

Community Building Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #42.

Involve all constituents (residents, park users,, interest groups) in setting balanced priorities for planning, development, programming, maintenance, use of facilities, physical enhancement or development of facilities and/or open spaces, and other park related matters.

1996-97 Action Plan 22

Encourage community use of recreation facilities by:

- a. Promoting the availability of recreation centers for community events;
- c. Working with neighborhood organizations in planning functions and events.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objectives

- 5. Continue to work with community support groups in identifying programs and services and providing resources.

1997 City Budget: Neighborhoods in Transition: Ongoing Program Objectives

- 1. Remove barriers to participating by: Increasing Community involvement at each center to advise staff about programs and services.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 6.

The community advisory board or booster club at the NIT Rec Centers will determine the mix of service providers that would be appropriate for their neighborhood .

Findings

- 1) Some recreation programming enhances and celebrates neighborhood identity. For example, many recreation centers partner with local organizations and service providers to sponsor neighborhood events which include the Rice Street Festival, Highland Fest, Rondo Days, Cinco de Mayo and the McDonough Family Picnic.
- 2) Recreation centers host a number of neighborhood events and functions. Several district council offices are housed in recreation centers, and many district councils hold meetings at the centers. Other examples of events hosted by recreation centers include occasional family reunions for neighborhood residents and the ice cream social for the Lex-Ham neighborhood. Recreation center staff stated in interviews that this was an area where recreation centers could do more if there were money for additional staffing and hours of operation.
- 3) Involving all constituents in setting balanced priorities for the recreation centers presents an ongoing challenge to the division. Constituents include all neighborhood residents, not just those who are currently users of the center. Priorities for recreation centers potentially include planning, programming, maintenance, use of facilities and capital improvements.

Over the last 50 years, Booster Clubs have been developed at most recreation centers and they are typically comprised of parents of participants in the youth sports offerings at the center. The last five years have seen the development of booster clubs at all recreation centers. Those interviewed indicated there are two potential difficulties with this situation. First, the Booster Clubs may or may not be representative of the neighborhood served by the recreation center in terms of race, programming interests, or other characteristics. Therefore, there may be needs in the neighborhood that Booster Clubs are not representing. Second, meaningful inclusion of Booster Club priorities is dependent upon a good working relationship between the Booster Club president and the recreation center director.

Recommendation

Recommendation 28. The Parks and Recreation Division should continue and expand the outreach activities to ensure that as many neighborhood resident interests as possible are represented in planning future undertakings. Additionally, the division should continue and increase its communication to all staff on the importance of neighborhood participation in planning. Booster Clubs and neighborhood residents are vital to recreation centers as advocates and partners.

■ **OUTREACH POLICY ALIGNMENT**

A wide array of policy documents and sources address the importance of outreach activities in the Parks and Recreation Division, including the Comprehensive Plan, action plans, City Code and City budget. There is also a wide variety of opinion on whether division practices are in alignment with these policy statements. Outreach policies are those which speak to the importance of having the community informed about, and involved in, almost all aspects of Parks and Recreation Division activities. Outreach activities tend to be focused on the provision of information regarding offerings, events and diminishing barriers to participation.

Outreach Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #31

Provide recreation programming that helps build a sense of community through:

- c. Improved outreach to all residents, including those not currently using recreation services

Comprehensive Plan Policy #40 (Physical barriers, Social Barriers, Economic barriers)

Improve outreach efforts by fostering:

- a. Strategic targeting of promotional efforts
- b. Continuous, on-going public information programs
- d. Effective distribution of public information materials

1996-97 Action Plan 21

Design and implement programs that respond to the needs of residents of varying background by:

- a. Improving outreach;
- d. Identifying and contacting residents not using services to determine their interests and needs.

1996-97 Action Plan 22

Encourage community use of recreation facilities by: a. Promoting the availability of recreation centers for community events;

Administrative Code Chapter 92. Child Care

Sec. 92.02. Role of the city in increasing number and variety of child care opportunities.

(f) The city will provide information and assistance to child care providers so they can better use city resources to improve the quality of their programs. In addition, the city will make city resources for children and families more accessible for parents who work full time during the week.

(6) The division of parks and recreation will work in coordination with the school district's Community Education Program to provide evening programming for younger children so that parents can attend community education programs while having activities available for children.

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objectives

5. Promote and publicize Municipal Athletic's program.

11. Continue to assimilate Southeast Asian population into our facilities and programs.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Project Objective

Priority 7. To publish two separate newsletters for future events for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Project Objective

Priority 5. To develop and implement marketing strategies in an effort to expand adaptive programs for youth.

1997 City Budget: Neighborhoods in Transition: Ongoing Program and Project Objectives

1. Remove barriers to participating by: b. Continuing outreach efforts.

Findings

1) It appears the division does very little outreach to all residents outside of the delivery of community education catalogs. The majority of other outreach activities tend to focus on current recreation center users. There are several factors which contribute to this situation:

- there is only one outreach worker, who works at McDonough with the Hmong community where the language barrier is considered to be significant;
- the public information specialist position in the division was transferred to the Citizens Services Office four years ago;
- there have been no funds to conduct a citywide survey to assess needs of both users and nonusers, despite interest among management and the Parks Commission in replicating the citywide survey conducted approximately ten years ago;
- some recreation center directors expressed concern that even though current outreach activities were inadequate, programs could not accommodate any significant increase in participation; and
- outreach activities are decentralized and occur primarily at the individual recreation center level.

- 2) Outreach activities which are currently underway include: flyers, use of neighborhood newspapers, the City's Resident's Guide, advertizing on Channel 18 and SPNN, newsletters and the *What's Up?* hotline. Use of these modes of communication is very uneven across different recreation centers and programming efforts. There are legitimate differences in the best method for communication with different populations and different programming efforts. However, there is too much reliance on the public relations skills of individual recreation center directors and staff who are primarily responsible for the provision of programming.
- 3) The division has had some difficulty in designing and implementing programs that respond to the needs of people from varying backgrounds. The outreach activities described above tend to have the effect of reaching traditional recreation center users, but not changing the mix of types of users, or expanding the number of users. The activities may be characterized as allowing the division to maintain its current level of participants, but not expand that level. Similarly, because the division has not conducted a citywide survey of users and nonusers alike, the interests and needs of residents not currently using recreation centers has not been assessed.
- 4) Two neighborhood service delivery teams are reported to be examining ways to improve outreach activities.
- 5) The prevalence of magnet schools in Saint Paul has made the dissemination of information of offerings and events more difficult and less effective. This is because a large proportion of the students attending schools in the neighborhoods served by individual recreation centers may not be residents of the area. This has increased reliance on methods of communication that do not "saturate" the target population, in this case youth, nearly as effectively with programming information.
- 6) Special Programs is in a unique position with both its senior and adaptive programs in that many of the participants and potential participants can be communicated with through means other than a "blanketing" of information through newspapers or other means. Both senior and adaptive programs use mailing lists and newsletters to communicate with current program participants. Potential participants may become informed about the City's recreational offerings through existing referral networks, agencies and even through senior or group home housing management.
- 7) Municipal Athletics also uses a mailing list to provide information to teams which have participated in City athletics programs in the past. Municipal Athletics staff indicated they believe more could be done to publicize athletic programs. They also indicated that some athletic programs, such as the senior men's leagues, were more likely to get good coverage in local and neighborhood newspapers.
- 8) The availability of recreation centers for community events is occasionally promoted by recreation center directors. Generally, most of the community events are connected to district councils, which may have their meetings at recreation centers. Some district councils also have offices in the recreation centers. Additionally, recreation centers are available to the community on a rental basis.
- 9) Municipal Athletics has made a significant effort to assimilate the City's Southeast Asian population into facilities and programming. Particular attention is being paid to

the high level of Southeast Asian youth interest in soccer. Furthermore, Municipal Athletics is continuing to try to recruit their first Southeast Asian soccer official.

- 10) The Neighborhoods in Transition (NIT) plan articulated the need for outreach at recreation centers. In fact, the NIT Plan facilitated federal funding of an outreach worker at each NIT recreation center for one year, 1994. Currently, there is only one outreach worker at any of the recreation centers: an outreach worker at the McDonough Recreation Center to work with the Hmong community. The outreach work at McDonough has had the effect of decreasing barriers for participation in programming. The outreach workers at the other NIT centers who were only on staff for one year were not perceived as being effective. However, the ineffectiveness is generally attributed to the short length of time the outreach workers were on staff. It is likely that there continues to be a need for the outreach function to be integrated more fully into the work of the NIT recreation centers. The conditions resulting in the recommendation that the positions be institutionalized have not diminished since the publication of the NIT Plan.
- 11) The City Code policies on daycare and recreation centers are intended to help remove barriers to participation in recreation center programming. Staff indicated that to the extent possible they inform local daycare and home care providers of programming at the recreation centers, although home care providers are much more likely to take advantage of services. Parks and Recreation has also adjusted its youth programming schedule to accommodate the needs of parents working traditional hours by scheduling youth leagues in the evenings so parents can coach and attend.

Recommendations

Recommendation 29. The Parks and Recreation Division should consider methods, in addition to a citywide survey, for determining the interests and needs of both users and non-users of the City's recreation centers. The division has used a "town meeting" format in the past with some limited success. This method, or others that the division believes would be effective, should be implemented.

Recommendation 30. The Parks and Recreation Division should develop and implement an action plan for improving outreach. The environment within which recreation centers operate has changed significantly in the last five years from the perspective of outreach activities. For example, outreach and public information positions have been cut and magnet schools have changed the ways recreation centers inform their neighborhoods about youth activities.

■ PARTNERSHIPS

All current policy documents for Parks and Recreation contain policies requiring the division to create and maintain partnerships with other organizations. These partnerships are to involve sports organizations, community organizations and schools. These partnerships are to include sports programs, shared use of facilities, joint promotional efforts and the financial participation of other governmental and private entities.

Partnerships with Sports Organizations Policies

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Project Objective

- Priority 3. Work with national and regional sports organizations to enhance youth athletics to under served populations.

1997 City Budget: Softball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

3. Affiliate with A.S.A. (Amateur Softball Association).
4. Work with St. Paul Municipal Athletics Board in planning and implementing Softball program.

1997 City Budget: Football Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

3. Affiliate with M.S.F. (Minnesota Sports Federation).
4. Coordinate youth usage of Municipal Stadium with stadium personnel

1997 City Budget: Baseball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

3. Affiliate with M.B.A. (Minnesota Amateur Baseball Association).
4. Work with St. Paul Municipal Athletics Board in planning and implementing program.
5. Work with surrounding communities for senior baseball field usage.

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objective

4. Work with Sport Association Board to enhance programs.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Ongoing Program Objective

3. To act as consultants for Minnesota Special Olympics, Area 12 Special Olympics and the Minnesota Sports and Recreation Association organizations.

1997 City Budget: Basketball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

3. Affiliate with M.S.F. (Minnesota Sports Federation)

Partnerships with the Community and Schools

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objective

3. Continue to collaborate with school district to share facilities and programs.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Project Objective

- Priority 2. Work with community agencies in providing after school activities throughout the city.

1997 City Budget: Baseball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

6. Work with neighborhood groups for cooperative and better use of facilities.

1997 City Budget: Neighborhoods in Transition: Project Objective

- Priority 2. Continue to develop after school programs by collaborating with other service providers.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 6.

Establish cooperative relationships with other service providers at the NIT Rec Centers to provide services on site. Shared office space will be available at recreation centers for non-profit and governmental service providers one or two days each week. The community outreach worker will work to bring these services to recreation centers via cooperative arrangements and work on-going basis with these service providers.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 6.

The community advisory board or booster club at the NIT Rec Centers will determine the mix of service providers that would be appropriate for their neighborhood.

Partnerships with Others

Comprehensive Plan Policy #15

In the Local Parks and Recreation System the City will give priority to all of the following: e. Improvement of facilities that support opportunities for coordination and partnership

Comprehensive Plan Policy #34.

Encourage cooperative facility arrangements and joint use agreements with other service providers that contribute to improved service and access for the public.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #40 (Physical barriers, Social Barriers, Economic barriers)

Improve outreach efforts by fostering: c. Effective joint promotional efforts

Comprehensive Plan Policy #49.

Encourage mutually beneficial joint use arrangements and other alternative means of delivering recreation services, both formal and informal, *before* provision of new facilities or programs.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #52

Pursue opportunities to secure federal, state, and private resources (e.g., grants, partnerships) when and where possible to: a. Expand services beyond the general fund budget (e.g., specialist contracts, community education), provided that the intent of the Parks Division is to expand access or opportunities for citizens and not develop programs or expand services only to solely generate revenues or establish a special revenue fund.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #53.

Pursue mutually beneficial opportunities to involve the corporate/business community and neighborhood organizations in partnerships providing supplemental resources (e.g., leases, sponsorships, maintenance agreements).

1996-97 Action Plan 23

Compile an inventory of all joint use agreements that Parks and Recreation has with various schools, universities, and other institutions in order to publicize the opportunities for parks users. Furthermore, in light of recent facility expansions by the Saint Paul School District, Parks and Recreation needs to clarify the legal status of those documents.

Administrative Code Chapter 73. Cultural and Recreational Programs--Acquisition and Disposition of Real Property Sec. 73.01. City may acquire and dispose of real property; certain purposes.

In operating a program of public recreation and playgrounds under Minnesota Statutes, Sections 471.15 through 471.191 (the "Act") and for the purpose of constructing, equipping and maintaining recreational facilities as defined in the Act, the city may acquire and dispose of a fee or such lesser interest as the council may determine in any real property, including improvements to the realty and equipment located thereon, as authorized by Sections 13.01 and 13.04 of the Saint Paul City Charter or as authorized and in the manner provided in the Act or other applicable law.

Administrative Code. Chapter 74. Partner's Mini-Grant Program. 74.01. Partner's Mini-Grant Program established.

There is hereby established for the City of Saint Paul a partner's mini-grant program to be administered by the division of parks and recreation of the department of community services. The purpose of the program is to make "seed money" directly available to local citizen organizations for implementation of innovative and cost-effective neighborhood volunteer efforts in parks and recreation related areas.

Findings

- 1) The Parks and Recreation Division has many partnership arrangements with organizations of all types. They estimate there are between 160 and 200 partnership agreements currently in effect. Partnerships are a central operating principle of the division. The examples of such partnerships are too numerous to list but they cover almost every aspect of the division including the recreation centers. Division leadership states that partnerships are a prime directive for the operation of the division and the evidence supports this claim. The division clearly takes the charge to seek partnerships very seriously and is highly successful in developing and maintaining these partnerships.
- 2) The division pursues opportunities to secure funding from federal, state and private sources and has been very successful in these efforts.
- 3) An inventory of all joint use agreements that Parks and Recreation has with other organizations is being prepared.
- 4) The Partner's Mini-Grant Program is dormant due to lack of funding.
- 5) The division does collaborate with the school district to share facilities and programs.
- 6) The division has created its own athletic committee composed of recreation center directors and district supervisors to plan and implement sports programs. This committee is used instead of the Saint Paul Municipal Athletic Board mentioned in official policies.
- 7) The division works with surrounding communities for senior baseball field usage.
- 8) The division continues its almost 20-year involvement with Minnesota Special Olympics.
- 9) The division continues to work with organizations such as Wilder, Campfire Kids, East Side Arts Council and others on after-school programs.
- 10) The success of the community outreach program at NIT centers was reportedly uneven. There are no longer community outreach workers at NIT centers as this was a one-year undertaking, except at McDonough. Recreation center directors reported that the short-term (one year) outreach workers were not in place long enough to establish effective relationships with the community being served. The availability of office space also varies among the centers.
- 11) The community advisory boards for NIT centers have not been successfully implemented. Booster clubs are now used as the source for community information regarding service providers for the neighborhood.

Recommendations

Recommendation 31. The inventory of joint use agreements with Parks and Recreation that is being prepared should be completed.

Recommendation 32. The community outreach function envisioned for NIT centers should be reevaluated to determine what outreach activities are effective and necessary for the centers and division to undertake. This examination should take into account lessons learned in the 1994 community outreach efforts funded by the federal government.

■ DIVERSITY POLICY ALIGNMENT

Parks and Recreation Division diversity policies generally follow two themes. First, they articulate the need for staff and volunteers to be reflective of the neighborhoods they serve, linguistically and culturally. Policies pertaining to recruitment, training and retention of staff and volunteers are discussed in the Staff section of this report on pages 19 to 26 of this report. Second, they speak to the importance of encouraging participation in programming from all population groups within the neighborhoods served. No definition of diversity is articulated with the policies on this topic. As mentioned earlier, Council Research received interview responses addressing almost all aspects of diversity, including: race, gender, culture, income, sexual orientation, language and age. Eleven diversity policies were reviewed by Council Research. Although there was general agreement in interviews that the policies are being implemented, there was a relatively high level of confusion on how some policies in particular were to be put into practice.

Diversity Policies

1996-97 Action Plan 21

Design and implement programs that respond to the needs of residents of varying background by: c. Inviting residents of varying backgrounds to provide input on services;

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objectives

11. Continue to assimilate Southeast Asian population into our facilities and programs.
12. Continue to work with Southeast Asian Community to find space for soccer tournaments and festival.

Neighborhoods in Transition Policies from page 12.

An evaluation on the revitalization at each center [should be conducted].

At a minimum, [an evaluation] should include a written evaluation provided by every participant to assess program satisfaction and a visual inspection to determine if levels of cleanliness have improved over time.

Evaluation may also include but are not limited to the following:

- increase of program participants of all ages (including seniors)
- increase in inter-cultural staff and programs that reflect community ethnic backgrounds
- perception of safety and security by community
- increased "customer" satisfaction.

Findings

- 1) Inviting residents of varying background to provide input on services is supposed to occur so that programs respond to their needs. There have been three approaches to achieving this end. First, Booster Clubs are intended to play this role. Second, the division has employed, with the assistance of Council Research, the use of a neighborhood survey to seek input on potential changes to the Griggs Recreation Center and later the North Dale Recreation Center. Third, targeted outreach has been used at the McDonough Recreation Center to encourage Southeast Asian participation.
- 2) Booster Clubs help provide more diverse perspectives about the needs and desires of neighborhood residents. However, their ability to do so is directly connected to their own diversity. Therefore, it is important for the division and individual recreation centers to continue activities that garner input from nonusers as well as users of recreation center services.
- 3) There is an expectation on the part of several management and supervisory level staff that because recreation centers are neighborhood-based, they provide programs that respond to the diverse needs of residents. This perspective is not shared by recreation center directors or Booster Club presidents who believe additional outreach to under-served populations still needs to occur.
- 4) There is an informal division policy to recruit recreation center volunteers from the neighborhoods served, thus encouraging a staff and volunteer composition to more closely reflect the neighborhood.

Recommendation: See *Outreach and Staff Policy recommendations*.

■ SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM POLICY ALIGNMENT

Special needs program policies have to do with both the special programs offered for seniors and for disabled members of the community. The eight policies relating to special needs programming are all excerpted from the City's budget. There are a number of other policies which pertain to the themes and topics presented in the policies below which may be found in the diversity section on pages 50 to 51. There is consensus among all staff interviewed that policies in this section are being followed.

Special Needs Policies

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. To provide programs for people with disabilities and to improve and reinforce social and physical skills while educating the community to their needs and potentials.
2. Improve programs at 13 senior group sites while providing the following specialized activities: hiking, annual planting day, chorus, swimnastics, golf, cross country skiing, senior royalty, country line dancing, tours, arts and crafts, and special events.
4. To coordinate Winter Carnival activities for senior citizens as well as people with disabilities.
5. To integrate people with disabilities into Parks and Recreation and Community Education activities whenever appropriate.
6. To provide transportation for participants according to program needs.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Programs: Project Objectives

- | | | |
|----------|----|---|
| Priority | 2. | To assist the Division with developing an integration action plan that is consistent with ADA. |
| Priority | 4. | To act as a resource of recreational opportunities that may be accessed by people with special needs. |
| Priority | 5. | To develop and implement marketing strategies in an effort to expand adaptive programs for youth. |

Findings

- 1) Programs are being provided for people with disabilities. These programs are reported to improve and reinforce social skills. Adaptive programming staff indicate that conducting the programs at the recreation centers helps educate the community about the needs and potentials of these populations.
- 2) People with disabilities are integrated into most aspects of Parks and Recreation programs. While some programs are devised specifically for people with disabilities, special programs staff work to make available whatever Parks and Recreation programming people with disabilities are interested in pursuing.
- 3) Special Programs have two wheelchair-accessible vans which it uses to transport participants to programming activities. The use of the vans is limited only by the time necessary for transportation, as transportation time reduces the time available for programming. The vans are also available for use by other Parks and Recreation and City staff.
- 4) Special Programs staff have traditionally acted as a resource on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) concerns within the Parks and Recreation Division. Several years ago staff presented a major training session on the ADA for the division. In more recent years, they have been used more in a consulting capacity. Notably, many Parks and Recreation Division programming staff expressed concerns about the potential financial implications of the ADA in terms of necessary building adaptations and programming modifications, such as increased use of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. Management has made a commitment, which has been communicated throughout the organization, to finance necessary expenditures.

- 5) Special Programs staff who work with seniors coordinate senior participation in Winter Carnival activities which include: senior royalty, senior day at the Landmark, parades, and the senior royalty luncheon, judging and coronation.

Recommendations: None.

Sports and Other Programming

■ SPORTS

Sports for both youth and adults are a major locus of activity within Parks and Recreation. These sports activities frequently take place in recreation centers or on the surrounding grounds. Recreation center directors play a major role in planning these activities on a citywide basis and oversee the use of their facility as a sports venue. Municipal Athletics provides sports programs for both youth and adults who live or work in Saint Paul.

Sports Policies

Comprehensive Plan Policy #15(c)

Provision of facilities to accommodate emerging sports and other activities.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #32.

Consider providing facilities or programming for alternative, emerging recreation trends, particularly those that meet the recreational needs of youth.

1997 City Budget: Municipal Athletics: Ongoing Program Objective

1. Provide organized athletic program for residents and workers who work and reside in the City of St. Paul.
3. Promote, organize, and administer leagues for adults and children.
6. Serve as a resource for agencies and individuals.
10. Continue to work with Recreation Directors to enhance youth athletic programs.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Activities: Ongoing Program Objective

3. To conduct a youth and adult tennis tournament in conjunction with National Public Parks Tennis Tournaments. This is a direct service to the public.

1997 City Budget: Softball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objective

1. To assist, coordinate and facilitate the operation of the City of St. Paul's Recreational Softball Program.

1997 City Budget: Softball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

2. Funds are used for:

- a. payment of 150 umpires on a regular basis
- b. purchase of awards and trophies
- c. sponsor of champions awards banquets for 400 people
- d. registration fees for member teams to compete in regional and national tournaments
- e. improvements to facilities; i.e., fencing, scoreboards, etc.
- f. purchase of specialized equipment and supplies
- g. payment of 12 seasonal field and gym attendants

1997 City Budget: Baseball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. To assist, coordinate and facilitate the operation of the City of St. Paul's Municipal Recreational Baseball program.

2. Funds are used for:

- a. purchase of awards and trophies
- b. travel expenses and registration fees for member teams
- c. for league and tournament play
- d. improvements to facilities
- e. purchase of specialized equipment and supplies

1997 City Budget: Football Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. To assist, coordinate and facilitate the operation of the Football & Soccer recreational programs for the City of St. Paul.

2. Funds are used for:

- a. payment of officials on a regular basis
- b. purchase of awards and trophies
- c. registration fees for member teams for league affiliation to M.S.F. and state tournaments
- d. payment of 5 seasonal field/rink attendants
- e. purchase of specialized equipment and supplies
- f. rental of indoor ice time

1997 City Budget: Hockey Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. To assist, coordinate and facilitate the operating of the City of St. Paul's Recreational Hockey and Broomball programs.

2. Funds are used for:

- d. payment of 40 officials on a regular basis
- b. purchase of awards and trophies
- c. rental of hours of indoor ice time
- d. purchase of specialize equipment and supplies
- e. payment of a rink attendant
- f. maintenance of broomball rinks

1997 City Budget: Basketball Athletic Association: Ongoing Program Objectives

1. To assist, coordinate and facilitate the operation of the City of St. Paul's Municipal Recreational Basketball/Volleyball program.

2. Funds are used for:

- a. payment of 80 officials on a regular basis
- b. purchase of awards and trophies
- c. registration fees for teams to compete in M.S.F. state tournaments
- d. rental of gym facilities
- e. purchases of specialized equipment and supplies
- f. payment of six seasonal gym attendants

Findings

- 1) Softball leagues are very successful with the fall leagues demonstrating the most strength and summer leagues showing some decline. Playing fields continue to be a problem with some fields being lost to other activities and other fields suffering from overuse and insufficient maintenance.
- 2) Touch football is available for both men and women but there is no adult soccer.
- 3) Twenty-four mens senior baseball teams play during the summer. There are no women's baseball teams.
- 4) Programs are provided for adults in softball, baseball, football, hockey, basketball, boot hockey and broomball.
- 5) Staff need additional training in marketing and promotion.
- 6) City hockey programs were discontinued in 1994 except for Phalen, Edgumbe and Battle Creek. The cost of indoor ice time is prohibitive for most recreation centers.
- 7) Basketball and volleyball involves in excess of 100 teams.
- 8) While there is much discussion of emerging sports, the overwhelming share of City sponsored recreational programs continue to be traditional in nature. The number of soccer fields has been increased along with programs for girls basketball and girls hockey. Other new sports such as rollerblading and skateboarding have been avoided because of the lack of suitable facilities and concerns about liability for injuries. However, kato is being provided at some recreation centers.

Recommendations

Recommendation 33. Staff in key positions should receive professional training in marketing and promotion.

Recommendation 34. Greater efforts should be made to integrate emerging sports into City sports programming. Some greater risks need to be taken to stay current with today's rapidly changing sports scene. The needs of women and girls also merit greater attention.

■ OTHER PROGRAMING

The City Council has established policies relating to programming activities other than sports. These policies, found in the Comprehensive Plan and the 1997 Budget, cover a broad range of programming activities. Some are very specific, such as to conduct a day camp program, while others deal with broader maintenance and community relations activities.

Other Programming Policies

Comprehensive Policy #44

Provide programs that are familiar and attractive to under-served populations.

Comprehensive Plan Policy #59.

Encourage flexibility in facility use, programming, and staffing (including volunteers).

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objectives and Project Objectives

1. Continue to improve services to the public through the full implementation of the three tiered organization of recreation centers:
 - a. Community recreation centers offer a broad program of activities for all ages.
 - b. Neighborhood recreation centers focus on youth with limited programs for adults and seniors.
 - c. Part-time centers provide a limited recreation program close to home for elementary age children.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs: Ongoing Program Objective

2. To continue close coordination with Community Education to expand program offerings and avoid unnecessary duplication of services.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programs Project Objective

Priority 4. To enhance programs that engage the public with the Mississippi River.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Enterprise Accounts: Ongoing Program Objective

1. To facilitate programming operations at recreation centers. These accounts are also used to purchase class supplies and materials.

1997 City Budget: Special Recreation Activities: Ongoing Program Objective

2. To conduct a special event to Valleyfair for recreation center participants.
5. To conduct day camp and river camp programs for youth ages 8 to 14.

1997 City Budget: Recreation Center Programming Support: Ongoing Program Objective

1. To provide various recreational opportunities such as aerobics, tap dancing, jazzercise, crafts, and small people classes through the use of instructors paid by user fees.

1997 City Budget: Parks and Recreation Maintenance Support: Ongoing Program Objective

6. Provide delivery, setup, and operation of 2 showmobiles for city wide special events.
7. Provide support services for entire division for special events, programs, etc., through delivery of tables, chairs, stages, moving furniture, equipment, etc. 75,000 pieces of equipment moved annually.

Findings

- 1) Opinions differ concerning the success of Parks and Recreation in providing programs that are familiar and attractive to under-served populations. These differences of opinion are based, in large part, on different understandings of what "under-served populations" mean. Some understand this to refer to minority groups such as Asians and African-Americans. Others understand the term to refer to girls

while still others believe that it refers to adults or adult subgroups such as 20 to 30-year-old males. Still, others understand it refers to families or homeless people. Given the lack of a consensus on what "under-served populations" means, it is impossible to determine if this policy is being followed.

- 2) There are differences of opinion within the division concerning "flexibility" in programming. There is a widely held belief that every neighborhood is different and that recreation center directors should have wide latitude in determining the type of programming and the hours these programs should be offered. Conversely, there are some mandates which define the hours when facilities will be open and, sometimes, which programs are to be offered.
- 3) Staff and the unions have been helpful in creating more flexibility in the types of personnel that are available to do a variety of tasks and, as well, in adjusting work hours to better meet programming needs.
- 4) Specific special programming activities that were promised for 1997 did take place, except the trip to Valley Fair which was rained-out.
- 5) Maintenance support services for special programming activities were provided as promised.

Recommendations

Recommendation 35. The policy regarding the provision of programming services to "under-served populations" should be clearly defined so division staff understand what is meant by this term.

Recommendation 36. Policies should be clarified regarding the stated desire for flexibility in programming and other policies requiring recreation centers to be open for specified hours.

ORGANIZATIONAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Quality Categories

The study of high-performing organizations has identified seven characteristics believed to be essential for an organization to achieve excellence. These criteria have been identified from studies over many years and are widely accepted as indicators of organizational excellence. The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the Minnesota Quality Award use the following types of criteria to assess organizational development and to identify quality organizations:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Processes for Improvement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Results |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training and Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Focus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information and Analysis | |

Both the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and the Minnesota Quality Award use a system in which applicant organizations prepare a self-assessment used as a basis for an evaluation by outside examiners. Outside examiners study the self-assessment report and conduct a site visit to seek clarifications and verify claims with respect to the quality criteria. Awards are based on the findings and evaluations of the outside examiners. Since we are seeking to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of Recreation Services and Operations, we used a different process for this study.

We believe that the best way to assess the level of organizational development is to ask those most knowledgeable about the organization — the people who work in that organization. We believe that the people who work in Recreation Services and Operations best know the strengths and weakness of their organizations and will, when asked, candidly report their opinions. Therefore, we have gone directly to employees to ask them about organizational quality. To this end we conducted 14 structured interviews with key groups within Recreation Services and Operations and a survey was administered to employees in these units. The organizational assessment reports in this section are based on these employee interviews and surveys.

In the employee interviews and the survey, we asked questions designed to elicit evaluative information regarding each of the seven organizational quality criteria. Two analysts conducted each interview and independently recorded the information provided by employees. The analysts then compared their recorded notes and resolved any differences with clarification from the division. There was a very high degree of consistency between the assessments recorded by the analysts during the interviews.

Criteria Ratings

We have gathered a wealth of information about Recreation Services and Operations while conducting this performance audit. While capturing all of this information in any rating system is impossible, we believe that a rating system will help decision-makers grasp the essence of the information. We have developed a simple summary rating system that we believe conveys the essence of our findings. We intend this system to reflect what management and staff have told us about the organization. While

organizations consist of individuals, we intend these ratings to reflect current organizational practices and should not be interpreted as judgements about individuals. The ratings used in this section are built upon our assessments regarding development and integration of the seven quality criteria.

Development, as used in this rating system, reflects the extent to which high-valued characteristics are in evidence. High-valued characteristics are contrasted with low-valued characteristics below.

<u>High Level of Development</u>	<u>Low Level of Development</u>
Manifest	Obscure
Systematic	Unorganized
Proactive	Reactive
Fact-based	Anecdotal
Evaluated	Untested

Therefore, a criterion, such as planning, which might be manifest, systematic, proactive, fact-based and evaluated would be considered highly developed. In contrast, a criterion, such as leadership, which might be obscure, unorganized, reactive, anecdotal and untested, would be considered at a low level of development. Criteria evidencing some, but not all, characteristics of a highly-developed criterion would be judged to be at intermediate levels of development. The table below shows the levels of development that will be used in this report.

Levels of Development

☆☆☆☆	Criteria fully developed
☆☆☆	Criteria well developed
☆☆	Criteria present
☆	Criteria somewhat present

Integration refers to the extent to which the criteria are practiced throughout an organization. It is possible, indeed likely, for criteria to be practiced in some parts of an organization, but not in others. The table below shows the levels of integration used in this study.

Levels of Integration

☆☆☆☆	Criteria practiced throughout the organization
☆☆☆	Criteria practiced throughout most of the organization
☆☆	Criteria practiced in some parts of the organization
☆	Criteria occasionally practice in parts of the organization

Summary Ratings

Summary ratings are intended to portray both the level of development and the level of integration on a single scale for ease of reference and understanding. The summary ratings used in this section are:

- ★★★★ → Criteria fully developed and practiced throughout the organization.
- ★★★ → Criteria well developed and practiced throughout most of the organization
- ★★ → Criteria present and practiced in some parts of the organization.
- ★ → Criteria sometimes present and occasionally practiced in parts of the organization.

Planning

Summary Rating: ★★★

The pursuit of excellence requires a strong future orientation and a willingness to make long-term commitments. Planning must anticipate many types of changes including those that may affect customers' expectation of services, technological developments, changing demographics, evolving requirements and community expectations. Plans, strategies and resource allocations need to reflect these commitments and changes. Quality organizations make both long-term plans extending three years or more and short-term plans covering the next one to two years. These plans should not only be developed, they need to be carried out and updated frequently.

Planning Development ☆☆☆½

Long-term plans have been developed. The "Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Plan" Chapter of the City's Comprehensive Plan includes important strategies and objectives dealing with Recreation Services and Operations activities. These plans have been developed on a ten-year cycle going back at least three decades. The division also participates in the development of the City's Capital Improvement Budget. This is a five-year plan updated annually. This long-term planning history reflects a real and continuing commitment to a strong future orientation and a serious attempt to anticipate and respond to the future. This is particularly laudable as long-term planning does not have strong cultural support in City government.

The "Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Plan" also includes a two-year action plan. The first action plan, included in the August 28, 1996 Comprehensive Plan chapter, addresses the years 1996 and 1997. There is also a 1996-1997 Strategic Plan developed by the unit manager and a plan for the Neighborhood in Transition recreation centers. A 1998-1999 action plan is also reportedly being developed.

While Parks and Recreation does exceptionally well in the development and maintenance of plans, there is some concern about how they develop these plans. Even though staff

and resources are clearly being dedicated to planning, the planning processes are not sufficiently deep and broad. That is, planning seems to be an activity involving only a few.

Planning Integration ☆☆

Since Parks and Recreation develops and maintains both long-term and short-term plans, we are struck by how few staff report knowing about these plans. Most of the staff we interviewed reported having no knowledge of any plans. This lack of knowledge is reflected in all activities and all levels of the organization. Even staff in key positions, such as recreation center directors, frequently reported they did not know anything about organizational plans. They often stated that this is something that goes on "downtown" and they were not involved in the planning process and have never seen whatever plans that might exist.

In the survey data, between 47% and 53% of the respondents choose the "don't know" response to the questions about planning activities. While the responses of recreation leaders heavily influence these percentages (59% selected the "don't know" response), it is particularly concerning that from five (17%) to ten (34%) of the 29 recreation center directors selected "don't know" in response to planning questions. The "don't know" responses were even higher among building maintenance workers where from nine (75%) to 11 (92%) of the 12 respondents selected the "don't know" response to the planning questions.

It is clear from both the interview and survey data that planning efforts in Recreation Services and Operations are not integrated into the organization. While plans are developed, most staff are not included in the planning process and few know of these plans. Expecting staff to commit to the accomplishment of plans is unrealistic if they do not participate in the planning process or understand their roles in plan implementation.

Recommendation 37. Parks and Recreation should revise its planning processes to include a much broader and deeper base of participation. They should include staff from all areas and levels in planning processes so that planning becomes more than just a "downtown" activity involving a few participants. Additionally, serious and continuing efforts need to be made to ensure employees fully understand all plans and are regularly reminded of how they can contribute to the achievement of these plans.

Leadership

Summary Rating: ★★

Senior leaders (Superintendent, Recreation Services Manager and Operations Manager) need to set directions, create a customer orientation, establish clear values and have high expectations. Reinforcing values and expectations requires personal commitment and involvement. The leaders need to take part in the creation of strategies, systems and methods for achieving excellence and building capabilities. These systems and methods need to guide all activities and decisions of the organization. Senior leaders need to commit to the development of the entire work force and should encourage creativity and participation by all employees.

Leadership Development ☆☆

Staff describe senior leaders as only sometimes creating and reinforcing a clear vision for the future. In interviews, staff generally reported that senior leaders "occasionally" or "rarely" provide a clear vision for the future. In the survey, 57 percent of respondents reported a lack of visionary leadership. Particularly concerning is 12 (41%) of 29 recreation center directors reported that senior leaders "rarely" articulate a clear vision of the future. Senior leaders themselves, however, report that they are much more visionary. Therefore, while leadership may be somewhat proactive and manifest, it does not seem to be very systematic nor is it based on facts or evaluation.

Leadership Integration ☆★

In response to interview questions about vision, staff frequently cited the annual division conference as a time when senior leaders described their vision for the future. While many seemed to think it is a useful forum, the negative attitude of some staff to this conference is disturbing. This was most notable with maintenance workers, many of whom expressed extreme distaste for this conference and suggested they would rather work than be required to attend. There were also references to weekly meetings of district supervisors with the unit director and newsletters. These methods, while possibly useful, do not seem effective in reaching all staff.

Senior leaders received mixed reviews when it came to recognizing staff contributions. While almost half the respondents to the survey (42 percent) reported senior leaders frequently, or at least occasionally, recognize staff contributions, interviewees were less positive. A striking contrast exists between positive evaluations of the interviewees in the upper levels of the organization and the rather negative judgements of line staff. Maintenance workers and, to a lesser extent, recreation center directors seem to feel particularly unappreciated.

Questions regarding support for female employees generally elicited quite positive responses. Senior leaders believe the work environment for women is excellent and take considerable pride in pointing to the number of women in key positions. There are, however, those who are less positive. Eight (27%) of the 29 recreation center directors rated the work environment for women as only "fair" and 30 (24%) of the 126 recreation leaders rated the work environment for women as "fair" or "poor." Interestingly, among recreation center maintenance workers, who are predominately male, seven (63%) of 11 rated the work environment for women as "fair" or "poor."

A similar pattern is apparent with the reported work environment for minorities. Most groups such as management, booster clubs, Parks Commission, municipal athletics and special programming report the work environment for minorities to be "good" or "excellent." However, other groups are much less positive. Almost half the recreation center directors, 13 (45%) of 29, report the environment is either "fair" or "poor." Five (50%) of 10 recreation center maintenance staff report similar negative views. Also, 34 (27%) of 126 recreation leaders report a "fair" or "poor" work environment for minorities. Perceptions regarding the favorability of the work environment clearly differ considerably. We suspect, based on comments in the interviews, that the views of younger and minority employees are far less positive than those of older and majority employees.

Staff also reported only limited support for professional development. All seem to agree this is largely the result of budgets that do not make professional development a priority. Some activities do permit participation in professional activities during work time, but there is little direct financial support. Recreation center maintenance workers report receiving almost no support for professional development. Interestingly, although almost all agree that there is little organizational support for professional development, only some seem concerned or upset about this. The idea that there is no money for these types of activities seems to have permeated the organization for so long they have come to expect little.

Recommendation 38. Senior leaders must do a better job of articulating a clear vision for the future and enlisting staff in this vision. They need to create many more opportunities to express their vision to employees on a continuing basis. Likewise, they must develop an ongoing process for ensuring that every employee fully understands how they can individually and collectively participate in making this vision a reality. Senior leaders need to begin thinking of themselves as "leaders" rather than just administrators. They need to spend less time "downtown" administrating and more time in the field promoting their visions of the future to staff. A part of this involves greater personal recognition of the contributions of staff who are advancing the vision. Also, despite management efforts to make the annual conference more interesting and useful, the conference continues to lack relevance for many staff. Therefore, redesign of the conference should be pursued with input from all staff levels.

Recommendation 39. While there is a widely held belief that a supportive work environment for women and minorities is maintained, there are clearly those, particularly young people and minorities, who do not share this positive evaluation. More needs to be done to find out why many staff, particularly recreation center directors and recreation leaders, feel the work environment is only fair or poor for women and minorities. We recommend that experts be engaged to investigate this matter further.

Training and Development *Summary Rating: ★★*

Employees in successful organizations are provided the tools they need to produce quality services. These same employees are given encouragement and the resources to develop a set of skills that allows them to contribute effectively to the organization. For example, if an organization values continuing education for its employees, it will provide workers the opportunity and resources needed for them to attend classes, seminars and in-house trainings. If an organization values promoting from within, it will have well-defined advancement systems that are attainable through hard work and adherence to organizational priorities. Successful organizations also link the training and development of their employees to the organization's goals and priorities. This linkage occurs through the development and implementation of a long-term strategic plan tied to basic organizational values.

Training and Development *Development* ☆☆

The senior leaders and managers in both Recreation Services and Operations believe they create opportunities for most, if not all, staff to contribute effectively to organizational goals. However, many staff do not share this view. While some recreation directors (38%) agree with this assessment, a greater percentage (55%) report that only some or a few are provided such opportunities. This finding is more dramatic with maintenance workers. In Recreation Center Maintenance, nine (90%) of the ten of those who responded to this question said only some or a few have opportunities to contribute. Similarly, in Building Maintenance eight (80%) of the ten who responded to this question said only some or a few have opportunities to contribute. This is not so, however, in Municipal Athletics, Special Programs, the Parks Commission or with Booster Clubs. In these areas most or all were seen as having opportunities to contribute. Recreation leaders were more evenly divided on this question with 41 (33%) seeing opportunities for at least most staff while 47 (41%) felt these opportunities are available to only some or few. There is a clear disconnect here between managers who believe they are creating opportunities and many staff who see few such opportunities. This problem is particularly acute with maintenance workers who clearly feel they are not given meaningful opportunities to contribute to organizational goals.

The general sense from both the interviews and the survey is that there are opportunities for staff to use education and training to improve their performance. Recreation center directors are an exception to this generally positive assessment with 13 (44%) of 29 reporting such opportunities were rarely or never available to them. In interviews with recreation center directors, there was frequent mention of in-service training and some citywide training programs, but little training specifically designed to help recreation center directors improve their job performance.

Since maintaining a positive work environment that is conducive to the well-being and growth of all employees is seen as the foundation for improved work performance, we investigated this issue in both interviews and surveys. The findings again showed strong differences among groups. Managers and most of the smaller work groups, such as municipal athletics and special programs, were generally positive. Members of larger work groups, such as maintenance workers, recreation leaders and recreation center directors were far less positive. Eighteen (62%) of 29 recreation center directors reported that their work environment was fair or poor. Nine (31%) of them report the environment to be poor. All 11 (100%) of the recreation center maintenance respondents indicated that the environment was fair or poor. Among building maintenance workers six (50%) chose fair or poor to describe their work environment. Also, 53 recreation leaders (50%) reported their work environment to be only fair or poor. Many employees find their current work environment to be less than satisfactory.

Training and Development *Integration* ☆☆

While many employees in Recreation Services and Operations clearly believe they have opportunities to use training and education to improve themselves, many do not share these views. The managers, district supervisors and senior leaders share a particularly rosy view on these points. It is not possible to know if the positive perspective is because things look better from above, or if they have risen to higher positions because of their positive attitude. Whatever the case, these positive views are not shared

throughout the organization. Indeed, there are many in this organization who are quite negative. Many recreation center directors, recreation leaders and most maintenance workers see little opportunity, feel little support and are often dissatisfied with their work environment.

Recommendation 40. Recreation Services should directly address the high levels of dissatisfaction and alienation among recreation center directors. While there are clearly recreation center directors who seem happy with their situation, there are many who feel discounted, unsupported and alienated. Training specifically designed to help recreation center directors improve their work performance and that connects them to organizational goals is a critical need. Far too many feel they do not have a clear vision of the future and a clear understanding of and support for their participation in this organization's future. Many feel isolated and ignored. Perhaps Recreation Services has gone too far in letting recreation center directors "do their own thing."

Recommendation 41. Operations must confront the disconnection of maintenance workers from the organization. Maintenance workers do not know where the organization is trying to go nor how they can contribute to this achievement of organization goals. They, even more than recreation center directors, feel isolated, unsupported, overworked and ignored by the organization. Sending them to an annual conference does not begin to meet their needs. They need training specifically designed for them. They must be allowed to be more than just "invisible" people who fix and clean things. They must be recognized as valued employees who can play important roles in achieving something bigger than just completing their daily tasks.

Information and Analysis Summary Rating: ★¹/₂

Information and analysis are a vital part of any organization. Awareness of how one's organization is doing at all times is important. Performance improvement information includes customer, service performance, operations, supplier, employee-related, cost and financial data. Organizations should concentrate on collecting and using data that relate to their goals and plans.

Collecting data serves little purpose if it is not analyzed and used to make improvements. It is very important to extract larger meaning from data to support evaluation and decision making at various levels within the organization. Analysis should include trends, projections, comparisons and cause-effect correlations. Using data and analysis systematically in setting priorities is important in properly setting goals, developing plans and allocating resources. Information should be deployed throughout the organization and used to evaluate the organization and assess progress. Information is essential in monitoring performance against measurable goals and it should play a key role in the decision-making process.

Information and Analysis Development ☆☆

We found from interviews and site visits that data are collected throughout the division. For Recreation Services the data collected are mainly attendance records. In Operations

the data mostly relate to work orders. All categories of survey respondents and interviewees reported that data are being collected on at least some activities. Many report data are being collected for most, and in some cases, all activities. Broad agreement exists that the data collected are being used. Occasional use is most often reported. Maintenance workers, however, tend to see data used only occasionally or rarely. There are some computerized information systems in place but they generally are seen as not even close to meeting organizational needs for access to information.

Information and Analysis Integration ☆

The data collected seems to flow almost exclusively in an upward direction. That is, data are collected and sent downtown but little information or analysis based on these data is returned to the field. For example, recreation center directors tell us that they collect and report attendance data for their individual centers regularly but seldom, if ever, receive information or analyses based on these data. The data are collected but are generally perceived as falling into a "black hole" never to be seen or heard from again.

Both Recreation Services and Operations managers and staff believe their computer systems are inadequate. There were frequent reports of difficulty getting access to computer systems and of inadequate and difficult-to-use software. Many statistical reports are still done by hand. The interview and survey responses revealed a widespread dissatisfaction with the current computer systems.

Recommendation 42. Senior leaders need to analyze the data being collected. Also, the results of these analyses must be shared with the data providers for their use and to create an interest in the quality of the data. Much of the value of data collection is lost if the data providers receive no information and, therefore, no direct benefit from their data collection efforts.

Recommendation 43. Recreation Services and Operations need to greatly improve their computerized information systems and data analysis capabilities. Also, the potential efficiencies from computerized work order systems need to be fully realized in the Operations unit.

Processes for Improvement Summary Rating: ★★

This section reviews the design, management and improvement of internal organizational processes. Improvement processes should be part of the daily work within the organization. They should seek to eliminate problems at their source and be driven by opportunities to improve, as well as by problems that must be corrected. Improvements may be of several types: (1) enhancing value through new and improved services; (2) improving responsiveness; and (3) improving efficiency in the use of all resources. Improvement must contain cycles of planning, implementation and evaluation which require information and methods for assessing progress. Such information and methods should provide direct links between performance goals and internal operations. It is critical that all processes be continuously evaluated to identify problems and successes.

It is also important that there be vendor requirements in place as they provide needed goods and services to the organization. Vendor performance should be systematically evaluated to ensure the organization is receiving efficient and dependable service from vendors. Organizations should have requirements for its vendors, measures used to assess performance, a procedure for determining whether or not they are meeting those requirements, and a system for giving them feedback.

Processes for Improvement Development ☆☆

We found that practices of the division are occasionally changed to improve performance. Managers, however, tend to report more frequent changes in work practices. In contrast, maintenance employees, particularly those who work in recreation center and building maintenance tend to believe improvements in work practices are rare. The overall sense that emerges from both the interview and survey data is that work practices do change from time to time in response to a new idea or a changed circumstance. There is, however, little evidence of any systematic review and evaluation of current practices or of a systematic search for better ways of conducting business.

Most staff reported that methods used to evaluate employees are rarely changed. While a few managers reported in the survey that methods for evaluating employees are frequently reviewed for improvement, we found little evidence to support this claim. One respondent suggested that the methods for evaluating employees had changed over time. Another said that methods had changed once. There seems to be a broad consensus that this area for improvement is inert.

With respect to changes in methods of making work assignments, most staff, except the district supervisors and the director saw such changes as rare. This difference in perception between higher level managers who see frequent changes and other employees who see little or no change is difficult to explain. Perhaps methods for determining work assignments are very dynamic at the higher echelon of the organization and static at the lower levels. Alternatively, perhaps high-level managers see change that is invisible to the remainder of the organization.

A broad consensus exists within the organization that administrative changes occur relatively infrequently. Staff report that forms are changed from time to time. There is an administrative guide for recreation center directors which was written in 1986 and is currently being updated. Administrative changes seem to be driven by immediate needs rather than any systematic process for review and improvement.

The performance of vendors is occasionally reviewed for improvement. The division uses a bid process to select vendors. Periodically, a special-purpose group evaluates equipment to be used for maintenance, grass cutting or snow removal. Also, recreation center directors report they often share information with each other when there is a particularly positive or negative experience with a vendor. The distribution of this information seems to be more a product of personal relationships than a systematic exchange of information. It is fair to say that there are few, if any, formalized processes in place to evaluate the performance of vendors.

Processes for Improvement *Integration* ☆☆

In the rare cases when Parks and Recreation has developed methods to improve organizational processes, there seems to be an implementation issue. This issue is most apparent when one contrasts the differing views on process improvement reflected by district supervisors and the remainder of the organization. It seems clear from the data that whatever processes managers report as being developed and integrated are largely unseen and unappreciated by non-managers. It seems unlikely, however, that processes for improvement would be so difficult to detect if they were, in fact, being implemented throughout the organization.

Recommendations 44. Parks and Recreation should establish a procedure to systematically review processes to identify areas for improvement. The division should also review its processes for dealing with vendors to ensure vendor performance requirements exist and they are meeting those requirements. The key areas Parks and Recreation needs to focus on are methods for reviewing work practices, evaluating employees, determining work assignments, reviewing administrative practices and assessing vendor performance. The division should ensure that adequate and appropriate data is collected to assess improvement processes and they are implemented.

Results

Summary Rating: ★

Successful organizations know how well they are performing. By using results they can calculate their efficiency and effectiveness. A common way for an organization to evaluate its performance is to measure its results. For example, if the goal of the organization is to provide customer satisfaction, then the organization would collect and analyze data indicative of customer expectations, work practices to meet these expectations and the resulting levels of customer satisfaction. The organization can track its performance over time and compare its results with those of other organizations. These comparisons with other similar organizations can represent benchmarks against which to compare outcomes, efficiency and effectiveness.

Results *Development* ☆

The measurement of results is not a very highly developed concept in Parks and Recreation. Most respondents associated with the programming of recreation centers generally said they measure results occasionally. They do generally measure the number of program participants, but there is little measurement of such things as resource consumption and program outcomes. The development of measures for customer satisfaction is even less developed. They generally reported the measurement of customer satisfaction occurs only rarely and then it is informal and unstructured. Casual conversations with a few parents or youth cannot substitute for systematic measurement of customer satisfaction. Most managers recognize the need to do more in this area but expressed frustration due to the lack of funds to conduct what they considered a proper customer survey. One was done ten years ago but no funds have been made available to repeat such a survey in recent years.

There is no development with respect to making comparisons with other organizations. This is the case with both outcomes and customer satisfaction. Except for a few anecdotal accounts, no one was able to provide any data comparing the outcomes achieved by Parks and Recreation with similar activities in other jurisdictions or other recreation services in Saint Paul.

Results Integration ☆

The measurement of results, to the extent it takes place, is more common with respect to recreation center programming than in maintenance activities. Interviewees working in the maintenance areas reported that measurement of the results of their efforts is rare. No one from the maintenance areas cited any systematic processes to give them feedback about the outcomes of their work. Results seem to receive somewhat more attention in recreation center programming but seem to be limited to annual reviews as part of the City's annual budget process. District supervisors report that they are very focused on recreation center results but were unable to identify any systematic processes that are in place to measure such outcomes.

Recommendation 45. Parks and Recreation needs to establish systematic and regular processes to collect and use data to measure outcomes. They should make comparisons with other similar organizations regularly. They should make these comparisons concerning organizational results. They should give particular attention to focusing on results in the maintenance area where such information is almost completely lacking.

Customer Focus

Summary Rating: ★★ ★

Attention to customer needs is crucial if an organization is striving toward excellence. Organizations that excel in customer satisfaction have obtained information by creating and managing relationships with their customers. The organization gathers information from its customers on service requirements, near and long-term expectations and degrees of customer satisfaction. The successful use of customer satisfaction information is integrally linked to an organization's ability to gather and analyze data concerning customer requirements.

Knowing the requirements of its customers enables an organization to develop service standards which are designed to enhance customer satisfaction. In order for these standards to be effective they must be distributed throughout the organization and understood by everyone.

Customer Focus Development ☆☆☆½

Most respondents believe that Parks and Recreation has a good understanding of who its customers are. In our survey 62 percent of respondents report that the division knows most or all of its customers. In interviews, many described the division as very active in trying to identify and program for present and prospective customers. There were, however, several observations during interviews that the division is too narrowly focused on youth and is failing to respond adequately to the needs of the growing seniors

population. They also suggested that recreation centers too frequently limit their view of customers to those who currently come to recreation centers. There are many potential customers who never come to the recreation centers and little is being done to identify these potential customers and respond to their needs.

Most employees believe they understand their customer's needs and expectations. The recreation center directors, with a few notable exceptions, believe they have a firm grasp on which types of programming are needed in their neighborhood. They apparently gain this information through a combination of informal opinions and trial and error. Most recreation center directors are extremely confident that they know what is needed in their service area. Few, however, were able to provide any evidence to support these beliefs. It is very concerning that recreation leaders, who have a very high level of interaction on a daily basis with customers and who tend to be closer in both age and ethnicity to most recreation center customers, are far less confident that the recreation centers know who their customers are or what customers need and expect. Almost half the recreation leaders who responded to the survey stated that the division only somewhat understands or does not at all understand customer needs and expectations.

Customer Focus Integration ☆☆☆

The importance of having a strong customer focus is well established throughout most of the organization. There is little doubt that those working in recreation centers know that they are expected to understand and meet the needs of those who come to the centers. There is, however, inadequate attention paid to the needs and expectations of citizens who do not currently use the centers. Managers have recognized this weakness and are trying to respond by seeking funds for a citywide customer survey. There is also recognition that they need more outreach to seniors. The idea of customer service standards has yet to become integrated into the organization as a whole. The standards that exist are largely informal. Considerable improvement is possible in this area by establishing and monitoring written customer service standards for use throughout the organization. While such standards are weak in many areas, their absence is particularly acute in the maintenance areas. Maintenance workers understand how they are to interact with customers. This is, however, largely due to the good instincts of individual maintenance workers rather than to adherence to formal customer service standards.

Recommendation 46. Parks and recreation should clearly articulate exactly who its customers are and how they are to be served. They should communicate this information to every employee so that they know exactly how they are to serve each type of customer.

Recommendation 47. Parks and Recreation should conduct a citywide survey of customer needs and expectations and adjust its service offerings to correspond to these needs. We also believe that recreation center directors have far too much discretion in determining what programming is to be offered at the center they direct. The needs of customers do not change every time a recreation center director changes. Yet new recreation center directors are often allowed to change programming to suit their preferences or their own impression as to what is needed. While there is value in recreation center directors tailoring their programs to meet the specific community needs, such changes should be based on careful study and analysis of customer needs and expectations. There is no evidence that any such study and analysis currently takes place.

Summary and Conclusion

This performance audit has reviewed the practices of Saint Paul's recreation centers to determine if they are consistent with existing City policies. A wide array of policies and practices were examined and the division's activities are largely consistent with official City policy. The performance audit also considered the efficiency and effectiveness of recreation center activities in the context of the nationally-recognized Malcolm Baldrige quality criteria.

It is in the nature of this type of review to identify organizational weaknesses and deficiencies, and make recommendations for their correction. However, in the process of conducting the performance audit Council Research also identified several strengths which are worthy of note. The division should be credited with making both long- and short-term planning a priority. It has invested resources in the development of plans which have helped guide its actions in times of diminishing revenues. The division has also pioneered many partnerships with other service providers, corporate citizens, educational institutions and others. These partnerships have facilitated the provision of services to recreation center users and have helped to more deeply integrate recreation centers in the fabric of the neighborhoods and the City.

The City's recreation centers also have some weaknesses which have been identified and discussed in this performance audit. There are five themes which we believe characterize the most significant problems outlined in this performance audit. These issues were consistent themes apparent in our study of the division's policy alignment and in the organizational quality assessment. The following is an overview of the recommendations we believe most significantly address these deficiencies.

Leadership

- *Maintain a fully staffed Parks Commission* – A fully staffed Parks Commission would enable and facilitate division efforts for new initiatives and the review of existing plans.
- *Staff must be enlisted to make division's vision a reality* – Many staff of the Recreation Services and Operations units feel disconnected from the division's goals. This finding was particularly apparent in responses from recreation center directors and maintenance staff. This alienation could be alleviated if division leaders provide staff with the opportunity to participate in the creation of organizational goals. Personal recognition of staff who are advancing division goals would also be an effective method to enlist staff in making the division's vision a reality. Lastly, the division should redesign the annual conference to make it more interesting and useful to staff.
- *Senior leaders must provide a clear vision for the future* – Senior leaders need to spend more time in the field continually promoting their visions of the future, the organizations goals, and the importance of individual staff to the organization.

Evaluation

- *Survey users and nonusers of recreation centers* – The division should consider establishing a system to formally and periodically survey the needs of the neighborhoods they serve. It is crucial that nonusers of recreation centers, as well as users, be surveyed. Survey efforts should be coordinated by District Supervisors to maintain some level of consistency across recreation centers and provide support in the analysis of survey data. Notably, a few efforts to survey users of recreation centers are underway; however, these efforts are not coordinated across recreation centers.
- *Evaluate the efficacy of Neighborhood Service Delivery teams* – Within the division there is a great deal of confusion about the purpose and little knowledge about the impact of Neighborhood Service Delivery teams. An evaluation of these teams should help the division clarify their purpose and determine their effectiveness.
- *Evaluate the safety of recreation centers* – The security of recreation centers is a major concern for both staff and the neighborhoods served by recreation centers. The division, with the assistance of the Police Department, should conduct an evaluation of the safety and security of recreation centers.
- *Evaluate the activities of the NIT centers* – A formal evaluation of NIT Centers has not taken place. Preliminary data has been collected by staff which could be used as the basis for such an evaluation.

Results

- *Establish systematic and regular processes to collect and use data to measure outcomes* – Comparisons should regularly be made with other similar organizations and these comparisons should focus on organizational results. Particular attention should be given to focusing on results in the maintenance area, where such information is almost completely lacking.

Data Collection and Analysis

- *Improve division-wide information sharing* -- The results of analyses must be shared with data providers to create an interest in the quality of the data. Currently, data is collected by front-line staff for upper-level management. However, information and analysis derived from the data is not being shared with staff after its initial collection. Analyses should also be shared with others in the division who would benefit. In particular, the Parks and Recreation Division needs to share information about the use and maintenance of facilities with all staff who would benefit from this information. Much of the value of data collection is lost if the data providers receive no information and, therefore, no direct benefit from their data collection efforts. Sharing data with the staff who collect the information also provides staff with systematic feedback on how well they are performing tasks on which they or their work groups will be evaluated.

Diversity

- *Increase community outreach to recruit and retain volunteers and staff* – Recruitment of staff and volunteers who are linguistically, racially and culturally representative of the community they serve is a clearly stated goal of the Parks and Recreation Division. Increased community outreach efforts will enable the division to identify a greater number of people from neighborhoods for volunteer and entry-level positions.
- *Determine why many staff believe work environment is only fair or poor for women and minorities* – Many staff, particularly young people and minorities, believe the division does not create a positive environment for women and minorities. Experts should be engaged to investigate this matter further.

Fees

- *Develop a formal written policy governing the waiver of fees due to financial hardships* – Recreation center directors currently decide who is eligible for fee waivers without the assistance of a division-wide policy. We do not believe recreation center directors, no matter how talented, have the ability to know the exact financial condition of each of the thousands of families living in their service areas. The fee policy should include objective criteria for waiving fees and should be conspicuously posted in every recreation center.

The issues outlined above are the most significant opportunities for improvement facing the City's recreation centers. There is an abundance of talent and energy within the division, and its strengths in planning and building partnerships will help in the process of addressing areas for improvement in the months and years to come.

APPENDIX A

RECOMMENDED STAFFING IMPROVEMENTS
A Strategy for Neighborhoods in Transition, May 1992

ARLINGTON	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.5	.5	NO	1	NO	\$43,146
Actual 1998	yes	yes	yes	no	none	no	

DAYTON'S BLUFF	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.5	.5	NO	1	NO	\$43,146
Actual 1998		yes	yes	no	yes	no	

EL RIO VISTA	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.5	.5	.5	1	1.75	\$79,391
Actual 1998	NC	1.5	same	1	0	0	

JIMMY LEE	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.75	.5	.5	1	1	\$70,936
Actual 1998		yes	no	no	no	no	

MARGARET	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.5	NC	.5	1	1	\$50,877
Actual 1998		2.0		0	0	0	

M. L. KING	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.5	.5	NO	1	NO	\$43,146
Actual 1998		yes	no		shl. term		

McDONOUGH	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	1.0	.5	.5	1	1	\$75,133
Actual 1998		yes, we received the FTE from Valley when it closed					

SCHEFFER	Director	Rec	Park	Park	Outreach	Receptionist	Total
Proposed	NC	.75	.5	NO	1	NO	\$47,764
Actual 1998		1040 hr	no		no		

VALLEY	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.5	.5	NO	1	NO	\$47,764
Actual 1998							

WEST MINNEHAHA	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.75	NC	.5	1	1	\$55,495
Actual 1998		1@1040			no	no	

WILDER	Director	Rec Leader	Park Worker	Park Aide	Outreach Worker	Receptionist	Total New Cost
Proposed	NC	.75	NC	.5	1	1	\$55,495
Actual	NC	3	1	no	no	no	

APPENDIX B

FACILITY IMPROVEMENT NEEDS [NIT pages 9, 10 and 11]

ARLINGTON

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Exterior lights, office window, children's play area, paint, drinking fountain, doors, signage, cabinets, shelves, trophy case, and floor tile.	Doors are planned. No cabinets or trophy case.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Replace children's play area. Redesign office with reception area expansion.	Children's play area was completed and it's a big improvement. No reception area expansion was completed.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Purchase additional space for parking. Field and building expansion. Rebuild field space, provide parking lot, sitework. Expand building.	None

DAYTON'S BLUFF

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Exterior lights; office window; paint; mirrors; signage; doors; carpet.	Completed
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Replace children's play area; add light pole in parking lot; add outdoor multi-purpose court (kato/volleyball).	Will happen with new building.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Rebuild outdoor site; replace building.	Completed All facility improvements have been made.

EL RIO VISTA

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> New management agreement; youth annex addition; volleyball standards; doors; signage; office fan; entrance lights; alarm system; drinking fountain; restroom partitions.	Yes, there is a new management agreement. The youth annex addition was completed in 1995 and includes: doors; office fan; entrance lights; alarm system; drinking fountain; restroom partitions. New volleyball standards have been completed. Signage will probably be completed in 1999. There are funds coming in from the State for the signage.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Replace gym floor; add youth annex; add air conditioning.	Gym floor has not been replaced. Youth annex was added in 1995. Air conditioning was added in 1995 as well.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Purchase land and build parking lot.	No land has been purchased. This would be very difficult to do as little land is available.

JIMMY LEE

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> New management agreement; Signs; Basketball backboards; Trophy cases.	We have new signs.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Upgrade outdoor basketball court; Repair stage.	Basketball court was upgraded. The stage was not repaired.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Purchase additional space; Expand facility.	No additional space was purchased.

MARGARET

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Air conditioning and dehumidification systems; paint windows.	Air conditioning works in gym, but was installed incorrectly for use upstairs. Dehumidifier is working. Windows and walls need painting.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Add reception area; add monitoring system for children's play area.	We do have a camera overlooking play area and parking lot. However, the one overlooking the parking lot is not working. The monitor is not in the office.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Purchase additional space for field and parking.	No additional space added.

MARTIN LUTHER KING

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> More programming space; signage; shelves; ceiling tiles; vandal lights; windows; alarm system; reseal gymnasium floor.	Programming space, ceiling tiles and signage have not been completed. Vandal lights, shelves in maintenance room and alarm community service did.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i>	
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i>	

McDONOUGH

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> New management agreement; soccer goals; mirrors; lights; multi-purpose court; signage; carpet; drinking fountain; tile; windows; bulletin boards; mechanical.	The following were completed: New soccer goals; lights; signage; carpet; drinking fountain; tile (some); windows; bulletin boards; mechanical.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Install air conditioning; improved entrance from Timber Lake Road; add storage space.	Air conditioning was installed. Improved entrance from Timber Lake Road was added.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i>	New front counter and hallway as well as a new children's gym were added.

SCHEFFER

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Office window; doors; drinking fountain; play area; paint; drinking fountain; doors; signage; cabinets; shelves; trophy case; floor tile.	Play area and paint are new. We have a trophy case and drinking fountain. To my knowledge the rest has not been done.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Redesign office for reception area.	Has not been done.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Purchase space for off-street parking; expand building.	Has not been done.

VALLEY

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Volleyball standards; signage; lights; mirrors; remodel wood shop; kitchen stove; paint; exhaust fan; windows; trophy case; brochure rack; air conditioning; cabinets; counter tops; handicapped accessibility.	
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Air condition building.	
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i> Expand building.	

WEST MINNEHAHA

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Air conditioning; exterior lights; mirrors; paint; carpet.	Don't know about paint and carpet. Air conditioning is completed. Don't know about exterior lights. Only one mirror in boys bathroom.
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Add reception are; air condition gym.	Reception area not done. Air conditioning in gym is done.
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i>	
Increased maintenance; trade workers; field maintenance. Increased leader hours; increased supply budget from \$350.00 a year.	

WILDER

Recommended Improvements	Actual 1998 Improvements
<i>Recommended 1992 Physical Improvements:</i> Counter tops; cabinets; lights; window blinds; paint; windows; air conditioning; carpet; tile.	
<i>Recommended Short-Term Physical Improvements:</i> Landscape outdoor site; add vandal light in children's play area; rebuild children's play area; add reception area.	
<i>Recommended Strategic Physical Improvements:</i>	

RECREATION CENTER HOURS
FALL 1998: September 8-December 21

CENTER and Phone #	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Arlington 298-5701	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	10am-3pm
Baker 292-7244	12-4pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	10am-4pm
Battle Creek 298-5737	1-5pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-7pm	8am-2pm
Conway 298-5742	12-4pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-6pm	9am-4pm
Dayton's Bluff 298-5703	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	
Desnoyer 298-5753		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm		
Duluth & Case 298-5709	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	10-2:30pm
Eastview 298-5710	12-4pm	2-9pm	2-9pm	2-9pm	2-9pm	2-5:30pm	10am-4pm
Edgumbe 298-5770	12-4pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	8am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-3pm
El Rio Vista 298-5659	1-5pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-8pm	10am-2pm
Front 298-5659		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm		
Frost Lake 298-5712		3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm		As Needed
Griggs 298-5755		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm		
Groveland 298-5775	1-5pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-7pm	9am-2pm
Hancock 298-4393	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	12-4pm
Hayden Heights 298-5716	9am-1pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	12-4pm
Hazel Park 298-5739	12-4pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-8pm	8am-12pm
Highwood Hills 298-5749		3:30-8pm	3:30-8pm	3:30-8pm	3:30-8pm		
Hillcrest 298-5779	11:30am- 4pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9:30am- 1:30pm
Homecroft 298-5794	11am-3pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-7pm	11am-3pm

Jimmy Lee 298-5760	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	1-5pm
Langford 298-5765	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	10am-3pm
Linwood 298-5660	12-4pm	7am-9pm	6am-9pm	7am-9pm	6am-9pm	7am-9pm	9am-5pm
Margaret 298-5719	12-4pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-6pm	10am-4pm
MLK 298-5661	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	1-5pm
McDonough 558-2171	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	7-10am 3-7pm	12-4pm
Merriam Park 298-5766	1-4pm	3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	3-6pm	9am-4pm
North Dale 298-5812	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	9am-5pm
NW Como 298-5813	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	9am-12:30pm
Orchard 298-5816	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-5:30pm	10am-3pm
Palace 298-5677	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	10am-2pm
Phalen 298-5721	12-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	10am-3pm
Prosperity 298-5722	12-4pm	1:30-9:30pm	1:30-9:30pm	3-9pm	1:30-9:30pm	1-8pm	9am-3pm
Rice 298-5819	12-4pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-6pm	10am-2pm
St. Clair 298-5730		3-7pm	4-8pm	3-7pm	4-8pm		
Scheffer 298-5823	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	9am-1pm
So. St. Anthony 298-		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm		
Sylvan 298-5821	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	9am-9pm	3-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-5:30pm
W Minnehaha 298-5823	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	10am-2pm
Wilder 298-5727	10am-2pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-10pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-10pm	2:30-8pm	8:30-1:30pm

RECREATION CENTER HOURS
SUMMER 1998: June 6-September 7

CENTER and Phone #	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Arlington 298-5701		10am- 8:30pm	10am- 8:30pm	10am- 8:30pm	10am- 8:30pm	10am- 6pm	
Baker 292-7244		7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	
Battle Creek 298-5737		11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-8pm	
Conway 298-5742		9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-6pm	
Dayton's Bluff 298-5703		U N D E R	C O N S T R	U C T I O N			
Desnoyer 298-5753		2-8pm	2-8pm	2-8pm	2-8pm	Closed	
Duluth & Case 298-5709		10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-5:30pm	
Eastview 298-5710		10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-5:00pm	
Edgcumbe 298-5770		9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	
El Rio Vista 298-5659		10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-5pm	
Front 298-5659		12-8pm	12-8pm	12-8pm	12-8pm	Closed	
Frost Lake 298-5712		2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	Closed	
Griggs 298-5755		1-8pm	1-8pm	1-8pm	1-8pm	Closed	
Groveland 298-5775		1-9pm	10am-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	10am-6pm	
Hancock 298-4393		11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-7pm	
Hayden Heights 298-5716		10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-6pm	
Hazel Park 298-5739		1-9pm	1-9pm	9am-9pm	1-9pm	1-5:30pm	
Highwood Hills 298-5749		12-6pm	12-6pm	12-6pm	12-6pm	12-6pm	
Hillcrest 298-5779		7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	
Homecroft 298-5794		11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-6pm	

Jimmy Lee 298-5760		12- 9pm	12- 9pm	12- 9pm	12- 9pm	12- 7pm	1-5pm
Langford 298-5765		12-9pm	10am-9pm	12-9pm	10am-9pm	12-5pm	
Linwood 298-5660		7am-9pm	6:30am-9pm	7am-9pm	6:30am-9pm	7am-9pm	9am-12pm
Margaret 298-5719		10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-9pm	10am-6pm	10am-6pm
MLK 298-5661	1-5pm	10am-8pm	10am-8pm	10am-8pm	10am-8pm	10am-6pm	
McDonough 558-2171		8:45am-9pm	8:45am-9pm	8:45am-9pm	8:45-9pm	8:45-7pm	12-4pm
Merriam Park 298-5766		10:30am-9pm	10:30am-9pm	10:30am-9pm	10:30am-9pm	10:30am-5:30pm	
North Dale 298-5812		9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-6pm	
NW Como 298-5813		11am-8:30pm	11am-8:30pm	11am-8:30pm	11am-8:30pm	11am-5pm	
Orchard 298-5816		11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-5pm	
Palace 298-5677		11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-8pm	
Phalen 298-5721		1-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-9pm	1-6pm	
Prosperity 298-5722		12-9pm	12-9pm	10am-9pm	12-9pm	12-6pm	
Rice 298-5819		9am-8:30pm	9am-8:30pm	9am-8:30pm	9am-8:30pm	9am-8:30pm	
St. Clair 298-5730		12-7pm	12-7pm	12-7pm	12-7pm	Closed	
Scheffer 298-5823		11:30-9pm	11:30-9pm	11:30-8pm	11:30-9pm	11:30-8pm	
So. St. Anthony 298-5770		1-8pm	9-12 1-8pm	1-8pm	9-12 1-8pm	Closed	
Sylvan 298-5821		9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-5:30pm	
W Minnehaha 298-5823		11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	11am-9pm	10am-2pm
Wilder 298-5727		8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-8pm	8am-5pm	

RECREATION CENTER HOURS
SPRING 1998: March 30-June 5

CENTER and phone #	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Arlington 298-5701		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	10am- 3pm
Baker 292-7244		7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	10am-3pm
Battle Creek 298-5737		3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-8pm	11am-4pm
Conway 298-5742		9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-6pm	9am-5pm
Dayton's Bluff 298-5703	UNDER CONSTRUCTION						
Desnoyer 298-5753		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Duluth & Case 298-5709		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6:30pm	10am-3pm
Eastview 298-5710		9am-12pm 2-9pm	2-9pm	9am-12pm 2-9pm	2 - 9 p.m.	2 - 6 pm	10am-2pm
Edgumbe 298-5770		9am-12pm 3-9 pm	9am-12pm 3-9 pm	9am-12pm 3-9 pm	8am-12pm 3-9 pm	9am-12pm 3-9 pm	9am-5pm
El Rio Vista 298-5659		2:30-9 pm	2:30-9 pm	2:1130-9	2:30-9 pm	2:30-8 pm	10-3pm
Front 298-5659		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm		
Frost Lake 298-5712		3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-5:30pm	
Griggs 298-5755		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Groveland 298-5775		3:30-9 pm	3:30-9 pm	3:30-9 pm	3:30-9 pm	3:30-7pm	9am-2pm
Hancock 298-4393		3-9 pm	3-9 pm	3-9 pm	3-9 pm	3-7 pm	11-4pm
Hayden Heights 298-5716		10 am-12pm 3-9pm	9:30-11:30am 3-9pm	10 am-12pm 3-9pm	10 am-12pm 6-9pm	10am-6pm	
Hazel Park 298-5739		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	12-4pm
Highwood Hills 298-5749		3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	Closed	
Hillcrest 298-5779		7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	7am-9pm	9am-5pm

Homecroft 298-5794		3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	11am-3pm
Jimmy Lee 298-5760		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	1-5pm
Langford 298-5765		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	10am-3pm
Linwood 298-5660		7am-9pm	6am-9pm	7am-9pm	6am-9pm	7am-9pm	9am-5pm
Margaret 298-5719		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	10am-5pm
MLK 298-5661	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	1-5pm
McDonough 558-2171		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	10am-5pm
Merriam Park 298-5766		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	9-4pm
North Dale 298-5812		3-9pm	3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	9am-5pm
NW Como 298-5813		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	10am-1pm
Orchard 298-5816		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-5pm	10am-3pm
Palace 298-5677		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	10am-2pm
Phalen 298-5721		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	9am-5pm
Prosperity 298-5722		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	11am-3pm
Rice 298-5819		2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	10am-3pm
St. Clair 298-5730		4-8pm	3-7pm	3-7pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Scheffer 298-5823		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	1-5pm
So. St. Anthony 298-5770		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Sylvan 298-5821		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6pm	9:30-5pm
W Minnehaha 298-5823		3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	10am-2pm
Wilder 298-5727		2:30-9pm	2:30-10pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-10pm	2:30-8pm	8am-4pm

RECREATION CENTER HOURS
WINTER 1997-98: January 5-March 29

CENTER and phone #	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Arlington 298-5701	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6:30pm	11am-4pm
Baker 292-7244	12-4pm	7-9pm	7-9pm	7-9pm	7-9pm	7am-9pm	10am-4pm
Battle Creek 298-5737	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	11am-4pm
Conway 298-5742	12-4pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-5pm
Dayton's Bluff 298-5703	12-4pm	3-8pm	3-8pm	3-8pm	3-8pm	3-7pm	10am-3pm
Desnoyer 298-5753		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Duluth & Case 298-5709	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-6:30pm	10am-3pm
Eastview 298-5710	12-4pm	2-9pm	2-9pm	2-9pm	2-9pm	2-6pm	10am-4pm
Edgcumbe 298-5770	12-4pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-4pm
El Rio Vista 298-5659	11am- 5:30pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-8pm	8:30-2pm
Front 298-5659		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Frost Lake 298-5712		3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-8:30pm	3:30-5:30pm	
Griggs 298-5755	1-5pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	1-8pm
Groveland 298-5775	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	1-4pm
Hancock 298-4393	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	8am-4pm
Hayden Hts 298-5716	9am-1pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	9am-12pm 3-9pm	10am-12pm 3-9pm	9-12pm 3-9pm	10-12pm 3-9pm	8:30am- 3pm
Hazel Park 298-5739	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	12-4pm
Highwood Hills 298-5749		3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	Closed	9am-2pm
Hillcrest 298-5779	11:30-4pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-9pm	9am-5pm

Homecroft 298-5794	11am-3pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-9pm	3:30-7pm	11am-3pm
Jimmy Lee 298-5760	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	1-5pm
Langford 298-5765	12-4pm	3-9pm	10am-1pm 3-9p.m	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	9am-3pm
Linwood 298-5660	12-4pm	7am-9pm	6am-9pm	7am-9pm	6am-9pm	7am-9pm	9am-5pm
Margaret 298-5719	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	9am-5pm
MLK 298-5661	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7:30pm	9am-5pm
McDonough 298-5810	12-4pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	10am-4pm
Merriam Park 298-5766	1-4pm	3-9pm	10-12pm 3-9pm	3-9pm	10-12pm 3-9pm	3-6pm	9am - 4:30pm
North Dale 298-5812	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	9am-5pm
NW Como 298-5813	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	9am-4pm
Orchard 298-5816	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-5pm	10am-3pm
Palace 298-5677	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	8am-5pm
Phalen 298-5721	12-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	9am-9pm
Prosperity 298-5722	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7pm	9am-3pm
Rice 298-5819	12-4pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-8:30pm	2:30-6pm	10am-3pm
St. Clair 298-5730		3-7pm	4-8pm	3-7pm	4-8pm	Closed	
Scheffer 298-5823	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	3-9pm	3-8pm	1-5pm
So St Anthony 298-5770		4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	4-8pm	Closed	9am-4pm
Sylvan 298-5821	12-4pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-9pm	3-7:30pm	9am-5pm
W Minnehaha 298-5823	1-5pm	3-9pm	3-10pm	9am-9pm	3-9pm	3-10pm	9am-2pm
Wilder 298-5727	10am-2pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-9pm	2:30-8pm	8am-4pm