CITY OF SEATTLE
Seattle Legislative Department

Seattle Parks & Recreation

RECREATION DIVISION EVALUATION

August 23, 2018
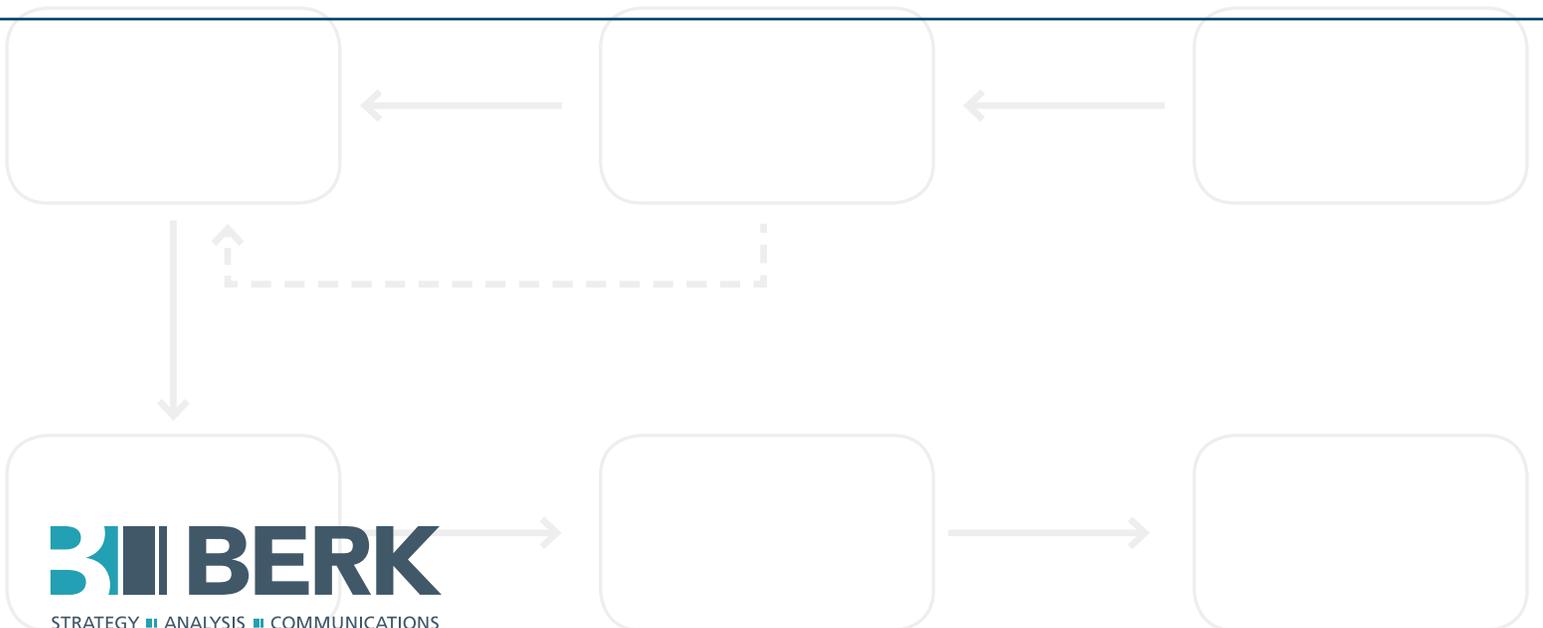
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Seattle Legislative Department
SPR Recreation Division Evaluation
August 23, 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) provides recreation opportunities that help Seattle residents of all ages and backgrounds, and with all manner of interests, relax, stay healthy, and learn new skills. This study is intended to *describe* how SPR's Recreation Division operates, *evaluate* SPR's performance, and *recommend* opportunities for improvement. This evaluation is in support of providing enhanced accountability for voters following the creation of the Seattle Park District in 2014. The evaluation was conducted through a financial and document review, staff and stakeholder engagement, and a comparison of SPR to peer recreation service providers.

As a publicly-supported provider, recreation offerings provided by the SPR are intended to be lower-cost options than comparable opportunities provided by the private sector. Per its Vision, the Recreation Division intends to "To provide high quality, equitable recreation programming opportunities for everyone with an emphasis on underserved communities."

A few additional features define SPR's recreation service delivery model:

- Recreation services are delivered citywide, in a variety of spaces, including pools, sprayparks, wading pools, Community Centers, Teen Life Centers, and others. Some programming is organized by audience, including teens, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and others.

- In addition to traditional recreation and Aquatics programming, Community Centers are home to child care and preschool programs that constitute a significant share of activity.

- In addition to programming that occurs during "public hours," some facilities operate additional hours financed by ARC and the user fees it collects for these programs.

- For the most part, SPR operates under a fee-for-service model in which participation fees are used to supplement resources provided through the City's General Fund and the Metropolitan Park District (MPD). While there are important exceptions to this rule, including free drop-in programs at Community Centers and a variety of free Aquatics resources, scholarships and discounted participation fees are used to improve access for lower-income participants.

- SPR partners with ARC, a non-profit organization, that helps support and implement recreation programs. In addition to substantial supplemental support, ARC plays a central role in recreation program delivery by hiring and supervising many of the instructors that deliver programming in facilities provided and managed by SPR, as well as at Seattle Public School facilities.

- Advisory Councils are responsible for supporting individual facilities and some citywide programs through ARC budget oversight, fundraising, serving as a connection to the local community, and advocating on behalf of the program.

Evaluation Framework

This report relies on a consistent evaluative framework and central questions to frame analysis and identify opportunities for improvement.

- Usage + Access
  - Is the use of the system high and growing as Seattle grows?

- □   Are SPR resources accessible to all residents?
- ▪ Resource Efficiency
  - □   Are opportunities to earn revenue employed to supplement SPR resources?
  - □   Is the best use being made of limited resources?
- ▪ Quality + Impact
  - □   Are customers satisfied?
  - □   Are programs generating desired benefits for participants?
- ▪ Operational Practices
  - □   Is SPR employing promising practices demonstrated by peer agencies?

Key Findings

The following key findings are noted as informing this report's 12 Recommendations, which are summarized below.

The effectiveness of the Recreation Division must be considered in tandem with consideration of ARC and the Advisory Councils.

ARC plays an essential and integrated role in delivering SPR's recreation offerings. The ability of ARC and SPR organizations and staff to work together effectively is essential. SPR and ARC are currently engaged in a review and update of their relationship to align goals and roles and to establish clear accountability for desired outcomes. The partners would then use these agreed-upon updated roles in the next Master Services Agreement (MSA), a ten-year agreement governing the partnership, expected to be updated in 2018.

Recruitment of Advisory Council members and meeting support varies significantly across the system, with inconsistent management structures. There also is wide variation in the overall level of participation among Advisory Councils, including the number of active members and the roles they play in fundraising, budget oversight, community engagement, volunteering, and advocacy. These ideas are addressed by **Recommendations 1 and 2.**

Increased data collection, strengthened performance measures, and additional work on fee setting are needed to measure success and target programs and services to priority populations.

The Recreation Division owns a large and complicated array of programs offered at different facilities, via different service models, and targeting different customer groups. Considering this complexity, it is essential that SPR create a way to report its successes, shortcomings, and aspirations to community members and decision makers in a simple and consistent fashion. SPR's mission and vision motivates it to prioritize services for "underserved communities." To make the case for this focus, additional data collection and reporting is needed. To effectively serve this population, additional analysis of fees, scholarships, and other factors will be necessary. Related topics are addressed by **Recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8.**

There is an opportunity to improve customer service.

Recreation is a service business and has a strong focus on welcoming facilities and customer service is critical to attracting and retaining satisfied customers. This is true both for customers with the ability to pay for for-profit alternatives, and for the populations that have been traditionally underserved or have fewer alternatives. Suggestions for how to improve customer service are contained in **Recommendation 7**.

Standardized operating and marketing practices, as well as the development of a culture and capacity for learning will enable SPR to be more effective.

Individual Community Centers seem to operate independently in many ways, setting their own fees and operational practices. While a "one-size-fits-all" approach is not appropriate given the true variety across Seattle neighborhoods and would diminish the ability of staff to make decisions based on their insights as recreation professionals; guidelines, parameters, and preferred options should be established for operations, trainings, and staff roles. This has implications related to customer service; program design, pricing, and marketing; and day-to-day operations. **Recommendations 9 and 11** explore these opportunities.

Continued staff training will be essential to improvement.

As with any service business, staff are essential to SPR's success in Recreation. Staff of some Community Centers spend a significant portion of their time providing social supports to customers and/or ensuring safety and security. This can include everything from providing referrals to social service agencies, to helping a child whose parent is addicted to drugs, to dealing with disruptive or mentally ill customers. These functions are performed admirably by many staff, but more could be done to acknowledge and support these demands at the system level. **Recommendation 10** addresses these ideas.

Recommendations

A detailed summary of BERK's recommendations for strengthening the Recreation Division's operations and offerings begins on page 151. In this summary and below, recommendations are not listed sequentially as they are in the report, but in three categories of related topics:

Advancing as a Learning Organization

- Recommendation 3.   Leverage past data and enforce class performance standards to focus on desired programs.

- Recommendation 8.   Simplify and roll-up reporting measures that establish balance and triangulate on competing goals.

- Recommendation 9.   Test, document, evaluate, and share marketing techniques.

- Recommendation 11. Standardize practices and expectations across the recreation system.

Focusing on SPR's Vision and Target Customers

- Recommendation 4.   Continue to expand on SPR's statements of its recreation-related vision, goals, and target customers.

- Recommendation 5.   Continue to reduce barriers and encourage the participation of traditionally underserved groups and those with less access to alternatives.

- Recommendation 6.   Continue to align resources and fees to prioritize participation by low-income communities while earning revenues as appropriate.

Strengthening the System

- Recommendation 1.   Review and update the SPR/ARC partnership.

- Recommendation 2.   Reform the role and functioning of Advisory Councils.

- Recommendation 7.   Strengthen customer service.

- Recommendation 10. Acknowledge and buttress the role staff play in providing social supports and ensuring safety and security.
  [tracking staff time and impact of providing devoted to social services and social supports and ensuring safety and security feeds into **Recommendation 8**]

- Recommendation 12. Ensure buildings and other facilities are used as much as possible.

I. EVALUATIVE FRAMEWORK AND ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) provides recreation opportunities that help Seattle residents of all ages and backgrounds, and with all manner of interests, relax, stay healthy, and learn new skills. This study is intended to *describe* how SPR's Recreation Division operates, *evaluate* SPR's performance, and *recommend* opportunities for improvement.

Evaluative Framework for this Study

The remainder of this report is devoted to both descriptive and evaluative content. The evaluative material investigates how SPR is performing relative to goals set by SPR itself or by others. Recommendations are made throughout, including suggestions designed to improve operations and how performance might better be evaluated and addressed by the Recreation Division on an ongoing basis.

Based on our review of the material described above and considering the purpose of SPR's recreation functions, the BERK team developed Central Questions anchored by three Evaluative Categories shown in Figure 1. The report evaluates the Recreation system and major organizational units around these questions and evaluative categories.

Figure 1. Summary of Central Questions and Evaluative Categories

Is use of the system high and growing as Seattle grows?

Are SPR resources accessible to all residents?

USAGE + ACCESS

Are customers satisfied?

Are programs generating desired benefits for participants?

Are opportunities to earn revenue employed to supplement SPR resources?

Is the best use being made of limited resources?

Performance Management

QUALITY + IMPACT

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

Is SPR employing promising practices demonstrated by peer agencies?

There are explicit tensions among the evaluative framework's three dimensions:

- Increasing usage and access for all implies a reduction in fees and therefore a diminishment of revenue generation. Likewise, a focus on cost recovery and revenue generation may lead to higher fees, reducing accessibility for lower income residents.

- A sole focus on program quality and customer satisfaction might lead to increases in program costs that would negatively impact accessibly or cost recovery targets.

This complexity and need to balance or triangulate these conflicting dimensions to achieve desired outcomes serve to strengthen the framework and make it a useful structure for thinking about the tradeoffs inherent in managing a city recreation program with limited resources that serves a population with varying wealth and access to alternatives. A simpler framework would belie these tradeoffs and the tough decisions that must be made, particularly given limited resources.

Organization of this Report

The initial three chapters of this report focus at the division level, considering issues that apply to the entire Recreation Division:

- **Chapter II – Overview of SPR's Recreation Division.** Introduces SPR's strategic direction, overall service delivery model, organizational structure, and resources.

- **Chapter III – Systemwide Issues.** Examines SPR's partnership with the Associated Recreation Council (ARC), and considers how the full system performs in terms of usage, access and revenue generation, and quality and impact. This section concludes with consideration of SPR's performance management system.

The next three chapters delve into more detail around the Recreation Division's primary specific service points:

- **Chapter IV – Focus on Community Centers.**

- **Chapter V – Focus on Aquatics.**

- **Chapter VI – Focus on Programs for Specific Populations.**

The final chapter broadens again to summarize our recommendations, with a focus on implementation:

- **Chapter VII – Summary of Recommendations and Discussion of Implementation.**

II. OVERVIEW OF SPR's RECREATION DIVISION

This chapter describes SPR's focus, as defined formally and informally, and provides a summary of its service delivery model, offerings, and the staff and financial resources deployed to deliver these offerings.

SPR's Formal Strategic Direction

SPR Overall

The 2014 Parks Legacy Plan states SPR's Mission, Values, and Outcomes as follows:

Mission

Seattle Parks and Recreation provides welcoming and safe opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community, and promotes responsible stewardship of the land. We promote healthy people, a healthy environment, and strong communities.

Values

- Access
- Opportunity
- Sustainability

Outcomes

- Healthy People
- Healthy Environment
- Strong Communities
- Financial Sustainability

The Parks & Open Space Plan refers to SPR's Mission statement. Section 1.2 of the Community Center Strategic Plan refers to SPR's Mission, Values, and Desired Impacts, but does not cite them.

SPR leadership and staff often refer to "Healthy, Healthy, Strong" as a short-hand reference to SPR's focus and desired outcomes.

Recreation Division

The Legacy Plan and Parks & Open Space Plan provide additional direction to recreation functions in particular, focusing on a desire to provide "a diverse array" or a "variety" of recreation opportunities. The Community Center Strategic Plan cites goals related to affordability, safety, vibrancy, and social equity.

Newly drafted language shown in Figure 2 articulates Recreation Division-specific Vision, Mission, and strategic goals. These statements are effective at outlining a broad focus on a range of benefits for all residents ("welcoming and safe opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community"), as well as a "an emphasis on underserved communities." This emphasis is supported by two of the four strategic goals:

- **Providing free or reduced-fee programming in "low-opportunity" areas of the city** to increase public access to and opportunities for recreation programs.

- **Serving more people, especially underserved communities and people living on the margins.**

This strategic direction articulates the balance the Recreation Division must seek between providing value to all residents and emphasizing opportunities for populations that would not have access to recreation resources without a publicly subsidized option.

Figure 2. Recreation Division Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals

SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION MISSION

Seattle Parks and Recreation provides welcoming and safe opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community, and promotes responsible stewardship of the land. We promote healthy people, a healthy environment, and strong communities.

SPR RECREATION VISION

"Creating Community through People and Programs"
To provide high quality, equitable recreation programming opportunities
for everyone with an emphasis on underserved communities,
and to be recognized as a leader in innovative, diverse programming.

With our department mission and division vision in mind, SPR's Recreation Division's broad strategic goals include:

- **Providing free or reduced-fee programming in "low-opportunity" areas of the city** to increase public access to and opportunities for recreation programs. Consider modifying the current fee-based system and make it free for some residents or available on a sliding scale. We are creating a pilot at Magnuson Community Center with Brettler Place residents. Aligns with Mayor's Affordable Seattle/Future Seattle priority.

- **Serving more people, especially underserved communities and people living in the margins** through proactive outreach and marketing and the use of "community ambassadors." Builds on the success of the Get Moving program, which used ambassadors to expand participation and access to recreation programs that increase physical activity and health awareness in communities that disproportionally experience health disparities. Aligns with Mayor's Building Safer, More Just Communities.

- **Developing community centers as central and primary neighborhood gathering spaces.** Beyond recreation, community centers can serve as hubs for community building; we intend to make changes to ensure the spaces are inviting, affordable and programmed in a way that reflects the demographics, interests and needs of the surrounding community. Aligns with Mayor's priorities for Affordable Seattle and for Seizing Opportunities for a More Vibrant United Seattle for the Next Generation.

- **Maintaining and adapting public facilities to meet the needs of our changing city** though strategic planning, partnerships and investment. We will continue to provide necessary maintenance and improvements to aging infrastructure (especially pools and community centers) to maximize the life cycles of these well-used buildings. Aligns with Mayor's Delivery Essential Services priority.

2014 Parks Legacy Plan (link)

The Recreation Goal Statement is: "Create opportunities for people to explore and enrich themselves by providing a diverse array of recreation opportunities." (page x) The Plan lists a numbered Goal Statement for each of the programs provided by the Recreation Division, including Aquatics, Community Centers, Lifelong Recreation, Specialized Programs, and Teens.

Draft 2017 Parks and Open Space Plan (link)

Goal #2 states: "Continue to provide opportunities for all people across Seattle to participate in a variety of recreational activities" (page 9).

2016 Community Center Strategic Plan (link)

This document takes Mayor Edward Murray's Vision for Seattle as planning guidance and aligns its recommendations with City priorities, including affordability, safety, vibrancy, and social equity. (Section 1.2 Planning Guidance, pages 10-12) Statements include:

- **Affordability:** "Seattle Parks and Recreation's vision is that any resident can walk in the door of any community center to find a variety of free or low-cost recreation and learning opportunities."

- **Safety:** "Community centers provide safe places for children and youth to gather, learn, play, and be safe and secure."

- **Vibrancy:** "Community centers serve as the living rooms for the people who live nearby, creating places for neighbors of all generations to mix, talk, and learn."

- **Social Equity:** "Community centers should serve as the bedrock for a recreation system based on racial and social equity, with open doors for all, and free or low-cost community-centric programs. This is in keeping with the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities. For underserved and vulnerable individuals and communities in our city, community centers provide a link to the neighborhood, opportunities for personal development and education, and a safe place."

The Community Center Strategic Plan also contains five Guiding Principles which were used by SPR to identify recommendations and prioritize resource allocation. These are summarized in the Plan's Executive Summary (page 4) as follows:

1. **Meet the needs of a changing community.** Every decision we make is grounded by a desire to meet the ever evolving needs of Seattle residents.

2. **Promote social equity.** With limited resources, we focus on meeting the needs of unserved and underserved people and communities, including communities with limited access to recreation alternatives.

3. **Be effective and efficient.** We use ongoing evaluation and learning to achieve the greatest gains from limited resources.

4. **Ensure safety, cleanliness, and accessibility.** We will ensure sufficient staffing to maintain a safe environment, and prioritize safety, cleanliness, accessibility, and other immediate needs.

5. **Build and maintain our great team.** While or facilities are important, our people are critical. Key to our success will be our ability to attract, develop, and retain the best staff.

Service Delivery Model

A few key features define SPR's recreation service delivery model. The summary below is augmented by additional description of these factors throughout the remainder of the document.

- Recreation services are delivered citywide, in a variety of spaces, including pools, sprayparks, wading pools, community centers, Teen Life Centers, and others. Some programming is organized by audience, including teens, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and others.

- In addition to traditional recreation and Aquatics programming, Community Centers are home to child care and preschool programs that constitute a significant share of activity (see analysis of the mix of programs and registrations beginning on page 29).

- In addition to programming that occurs during "public hours," some facilities operate additional hours financed by ARC (described below), and the user fees it collects for these programs. For these non-public hours, these funds are used to pay for an SPR staff person to serve as a "building monitor," responsible for opening and managing the facility.

- For the most part, SPR operates under a fee-for-service model in which participation fees are used to supplement resources provided through the City's General Fund and the Metropolitan Park District (MPD). While there are important exceptions to this rule, including free drop-in programs at Community Centers and a variety of free Aquatics resources, scholarships and discounted participation fees are used to improve access for lower-income participants.

- SPR partners with ARC, a non-profit organization, that helps support and implement recreation programs. In addition to substantial supplemental support, ARC plays a central role in recreation program delivery by hiring and supervising many of the instructors that deliver programming in facilities provided and managed by SPR, as well as at Seattle Public School facilities. The relationship between SPR and ARC is discussed in more detail in Chapter V. ARC also manages licensed child care and preschool programs independently.

- Advisory Councils are responsible for supporting individual facilities and some citywide programs through ARC budget oversight, fundraising, serving as a connection to the local community, and advocating on behalf of the program.

- Aquatics and Community Centers operate somewhat differently in some important ways. Aquatics programs tend to be consistent year to year and from facility to facility. Community Center programs may change yearly because staff have leeway to develop and market programs that cater to their local populations. Those Community Centers with surplus user fees and funds from other sources have historically carried a "funds balance" that was managed by the Advisory Council to support local needs, while excess funds from Aquatics' facilities are distributed across the system. Community Center fund balances are now being handled more centrally to address inequities among centers.

SPR's Organizational Structure

Figure 3 presents the organizational structure of the Recreation Division, which includes the following major units:

- **Aquatics.** The Aquatics program grants residents access to various water-based activities, and includes 10 swimming pools, 20 wading pools, 10 sprayparks, 9 beaches, 7 boat ramps, and 2 small craft centers. SPR lifeguards and/or attendants staff many of these locations.

- **Community Centers.** Seattle's 27 Community Centers (including Lake City, which is staffed by SPR as of January 2018) provide recreation and child care programs for residents. Activities include both ongoing programs and drop-in activities. Community Centers are equipped with kitchens and other amenities allowing them to serve a variety of purposes, including special event rentals. Program instructors are generally employed by ARC.

- **Out-of-School Time.** The Out-of-School Time unit oversees the following programs: Youth Athletics; scholarships for both child care and general recreation; Community Learning Centers; Summer Learning Programs; summer playground and expanded recreation; Preschool; and School-age Care.

- **Special Units.**
    - **Lifelong Recreation** provides programming for adults 50 and older.
    - **Specialized Programming** serves individuals with disabilities
    - **Adult Sports** manages leagues and tournaments for adults.

- **Teen & Young Adult.** Teen programs include recreation, social opportunities, academic support, career training, and service learning opportunities for youth. Programs include Teen Life Centers, Service Learning, Career Training, and Outdoor Opportunities.

- **Environmental Learning.** This unit manages Environmental Learning Centers at Camp Long, Carkeek Park, Discovery Park, and Seward Park, but was transferred from the Recreation Division to the Parks and the Environment Division in 2017. Responsibility for Camp Long remains with Recreation, as do the two FTE associated with its operation.

Figure 3. Recreation Division Organization
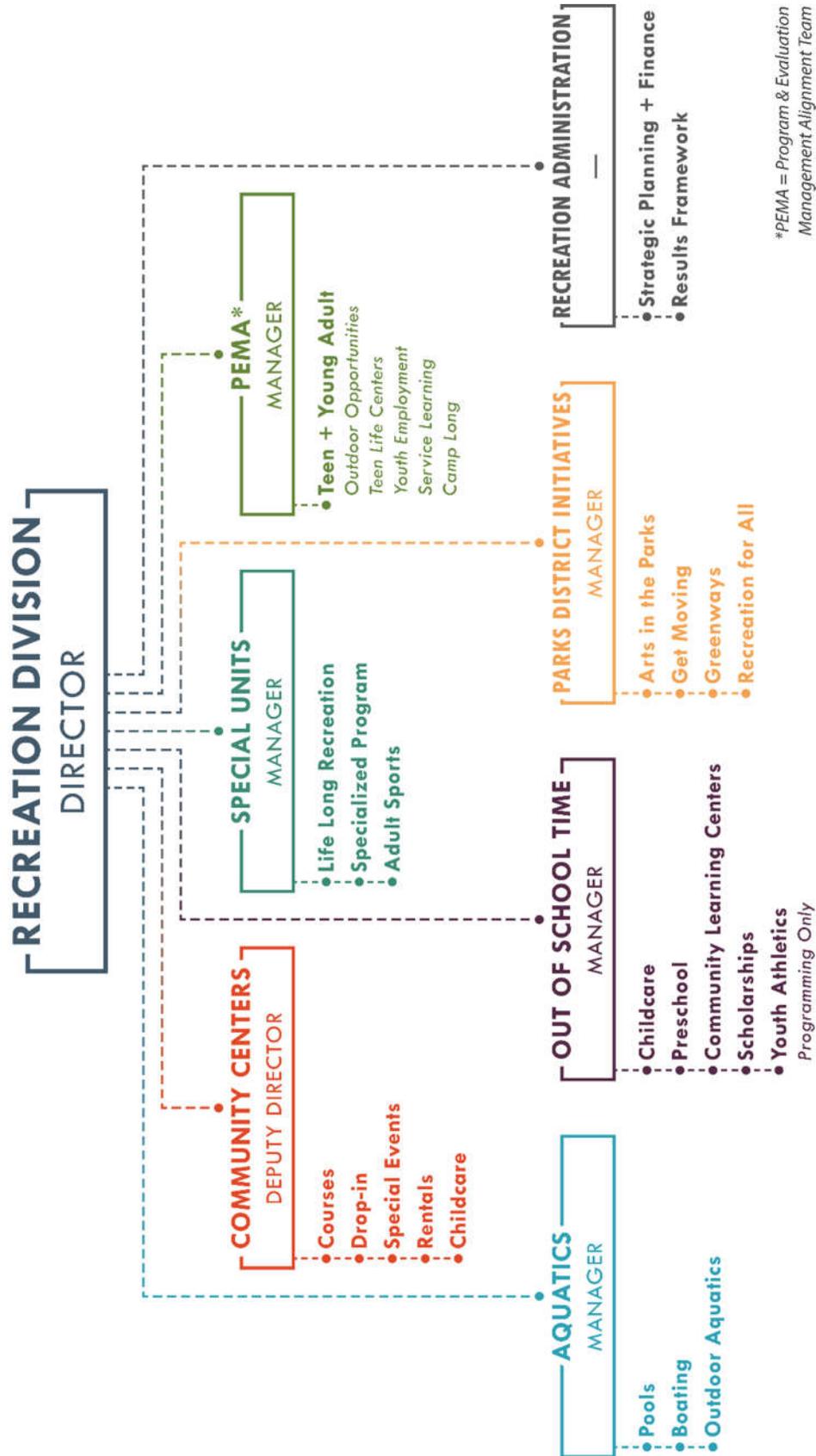
Source: BERK, 2017.

SPR Resources

This section provides an overview of the SPR Recreation Division's financial resources over the past seven years. Actual revenue and expenditure data were provided by SPR and broken down by major expense and revenue categories. In addition to primary data from SPR, our analysis incorporated information from the Parks Legacy Plan and the SPR website to describe SPR's funding for recreation and staffing. Limited information about ARC staffing is included.

SPR EXPENDITURE OVERVIEW

SPR's operating budget shows total actual expenditures for all activities grew by $34M over the past seven years (2010-2016). Figure 4 compares Recreation Division's share of SPR's total expenditures to all other SPR expenditures for those years, and shows that it's declining, with the Recreation Division constituting 25% of SPR's total expenditures in 2016.

Amounts are presented as "year-of-expenditure" dollars or actuals and have not been adjusted for inflation. The value of money decreases over time, so if we were to adjust Recreation Division's expenditures for inflation, we would likely see a slight decline in actual its purchasing power between 2010 and 2017.

> ### Recreation Division Capital Facilities
>
> While the focus of this section, and of this report overall, is on operations, it is important to note that Recreation activities occur in or at the following facilities:
>
> - 10 pools, 20 wading pools, 9 spray parks, and 9 beaches.
> - 27 Community Centers, 3 Teen Life Centers.
> - 29 school-based facilities.

Figure 4. SPR Total Actual Expenditures, 2010-2016

Recreation Division expenditures (dark green) are a share of total expenditures in Figure 5, also in dark green.

Year	Recreation Division	Other SPR	Total
2010	28%	72%	$121M
2011	27%	73%	$119M
2012	28%	72%	$121M
2013	25%	75%	$136M
2014	26%	74%	$133M
2015	26%	74%	$145M
2016	25%	75%	$155M
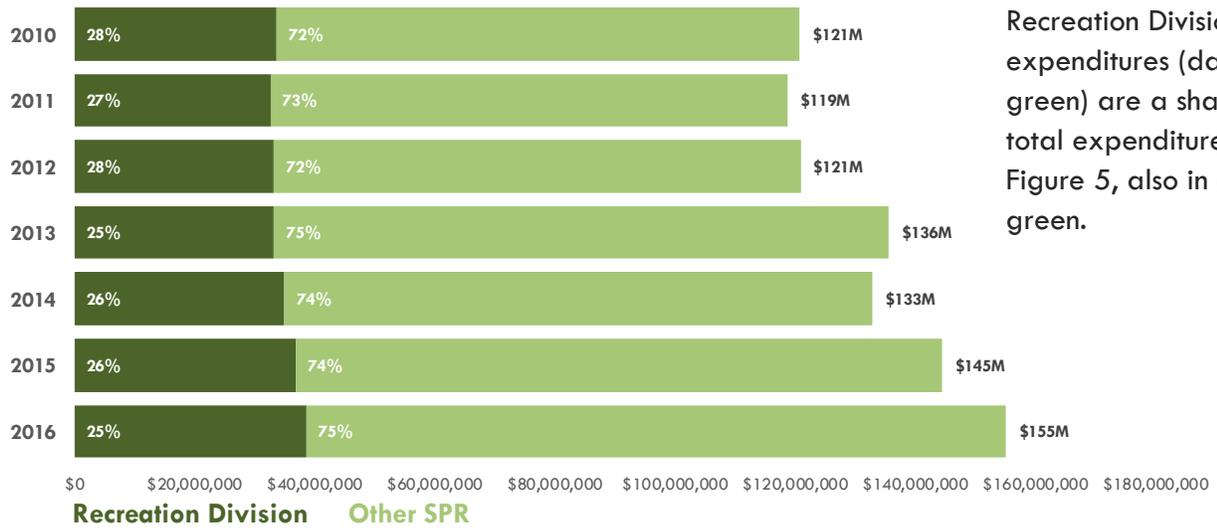
Note: These expenditures do not include funding from the Capital Improvement Program that is used to construct and repair community centers, athletic field, and other Recreation Division capital projects.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

RECREATION DIVISION REVENUES

Figure 5 shows revenues for SPR's Recreation Division and ARC from 2010 to 2016. In 2016, the Division had revenues of approximately $39M. This is an increase of 30% since 2010. ARC's revenues grew 46% over the same period, from $11M to $16M. However, again, these values are not inflation adjusted so Recreation Division's purchasing power has not increased by as large a percentage.

Figure 5. SPR and ARC Revenues, 2010-2016

RECREATION DIVISION REVENUE

Recreation Revenues   MPD   General Fund

Year		Value
2010	36% / 64%	$30M
2011	39% / 61%	$28M
2012	41% / 59%	$29M
2013	38% / 62%	$32M
2014	32% / 68%	$33M
2015	31% / 69%	$35M
2016	28% / 3% / 69%	$39M

ARC REVENUES

Participation Fees   Other Revenues

Year		Value
2010	80% / 20%	$11M
2011	82% / 18%	$11M
2012	79% / 21%	$12M
2013	83% / 17%	$13M
2014	83% / 17%	$14M
2015	85% / 15%	$15M
2016	85% / 15%	$16M

Seattle Recreation Division Revenues

Year		Value
2010	35% / 16% / 27% / 20%	$11M
2011	36% / 22% / 5% / 10% / 16%	$11M
2012	33% / 13% / 21% / 9% / 10% / 5%	$12M
2013	36% / 14% / 21% / 12% / 3% / 5%	$12M
2014	52% / 19% / 17% / 4% / 5%	$11M
2015	53% / 17% / 20% / 2% / 5%	$11M
2016	53% / 17% / 19% / 7%	$11M

Legend:
- Aquatics
- Community Centers
- Citywide Athletics
- Out-of-School Time Programs
- Youth & Young Adult Services
- Environmental Programs
- Lifelong Recreation/Special Programs
- Admin
- Other

Notes: The revenues above do not include the Amy Yee Tennis Center or the Golf Programs Section. The Golf Program was separated from the Recreation Division beginning in 2013, when it represented approximately $9-10M annually in both revenues and expenditures. The Amy Yee Tennis Center was made part of the Recreation Division starting in 2011 and reassigned in 2013; at which time its expenditures and revenues were approximately $1M annually. Parts of Citywide Athletics was transferred to other divisions in 2014.

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

Revenue Sources

Most of the Recreation Division's funding — 69% in 2016 — comes from the City's General Fund. 28% comes from direct revenues, including participant fees, facility rentals, and grants, while a small amount comes from the Seattle MPD (3%).

General Fund

In year-of-expenditure dollars (not accounting for inflation), General Fund support for SPR Recreation Division has increased from $19M in 2010 to $25M in 2016, an increase of 31%.

Direct Revenues

Between 2010 and 2016, direct revenues have generally been around $10M annually in year-of-expenditure dollars. As direct revenues remained fairly consistent in dollar value, total Recreation Division expenses covered by direct and other revenues increased. While the dollar value of direct revenues has increased, they are covering less as a share of total expenditures.

Some direct revenues are fees from program participants, such as entry fees for pools, while others come from grants, facility rentals, and other sources. Participant fees can be split into two groups — those fees that are subject to the ARC Master Services Agreement (MSA) and those fees that are not. The MSA is a formal partnership between SPR, and to coordinate to provide recreation opportunities and services.

Figure 6 details the revenue sharing model used by SPR and ARC, and shows the different collection processes for these two groups of fees. In general:

- If ARC provides the instructor for a program offering, 96% of the participant (PAR) fee will go to ARC and 4% will be remitted to the City. ARC provides other support to SPR in addition to the remitted PAR fee, as negotiated by the MSA.[1]

- If the City provides a program instructor or oversight, the fee is deposited directly to the City.

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[1] Note: This difference between PAR fees (the 4% PAR fee remitted to SPR) and additional support paid to SPR using received PAR fees causes inconsistency in how the term "PAR fee" is used. Here, "PAR fee" refers only to the 4% PAR fee remitted, and "other support" refers to additional ARC payments to SPR.

Figure 6. SPR Recreation Division and ARC Revenue Sharing Flow, 2016

For programs provided by SPR instructors   *For programs provided by ARC instructors*

Fees Collected by SPR Staff

Booked by SPR

Placed into a holding account

Transferred to ARC

Booked by ARC

ARC remits 4% of fees and other support

Share of fees booked by SPR
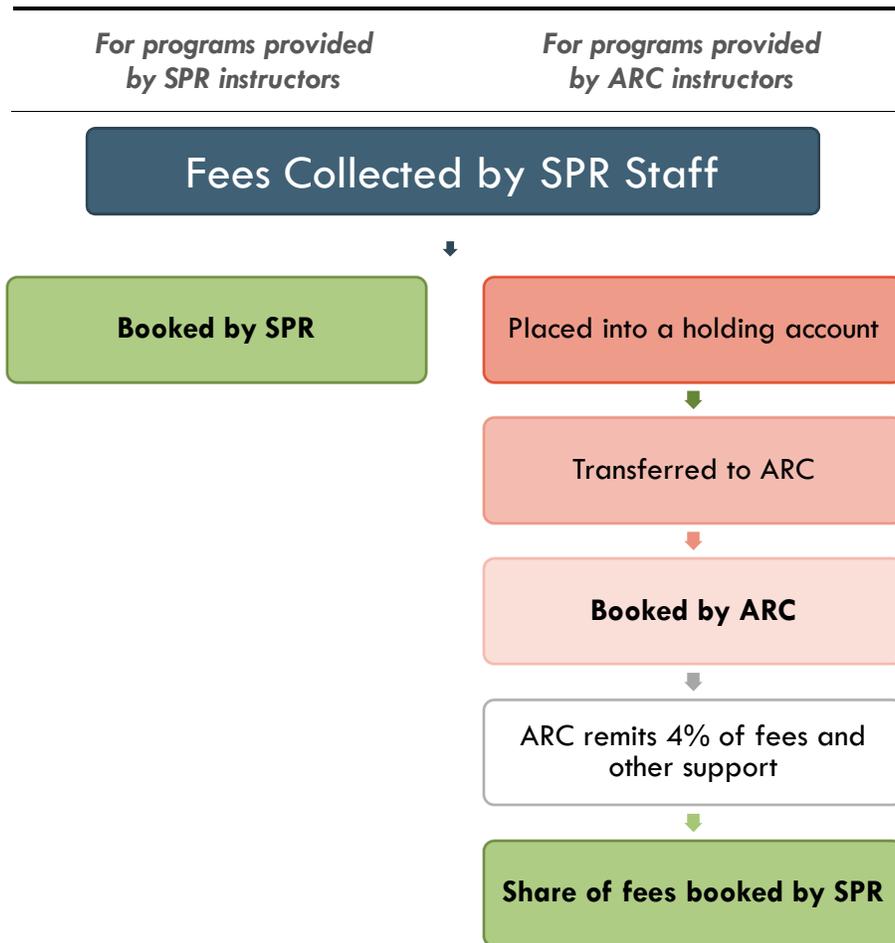
Source: BERK Consulting, 2017.

Figure 7 shows this model in play, using 2016 actuals. SPR retained $8.8M in direct revenue, passing $13.8M on to ARC. ARC remitted $0.06M in PAR fees to SPR, and provided $1.2M in other support to SPR.

Figure 7. SPR Recreation Division and ARC Revenue Sharing Flow, 2016 Actuals
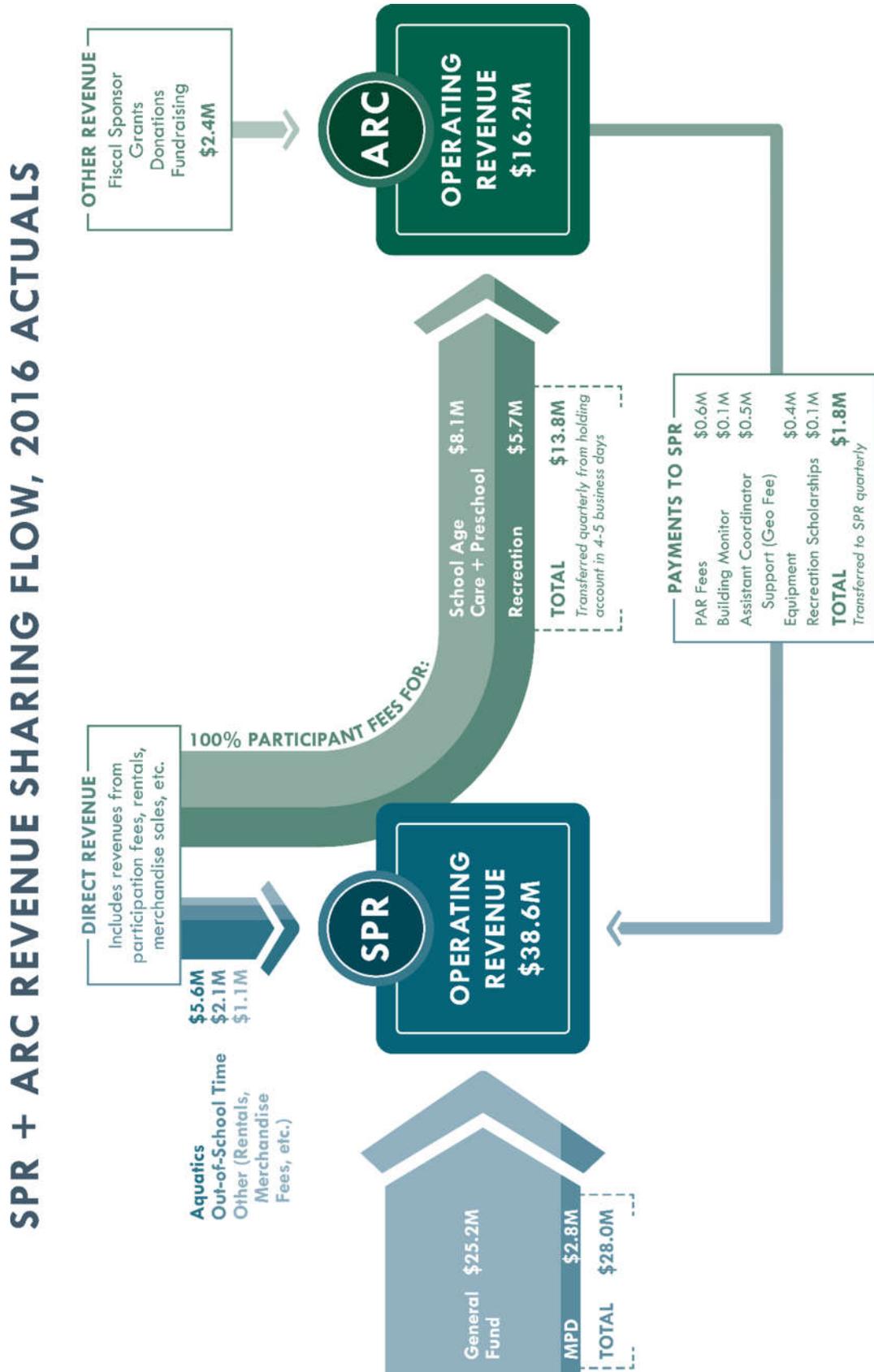
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; ARC, 2016; SPR, 2016.

Aquatics has consistently been the single largest source of direct revenues because all user fees generated from pool programming go to SPR. Community Centers, which also have large fee revenues, offer programming that is generally staffed by ARC, so most of the Community Center-collected fees are subject to the ARC MSA. The direct revenue for Community Centers is almost entirely the 4% "PAR fee" remittance from ARC, along with other support ARC provides to SPR including salary support for Assistant Coordinators, Building Monitors, and equipment.

Changes in organization structure, such as the partial transfer of Citywide Athletics, explain part of the variance in annual revenue. Some larger units that were part of the Recreation Division for a portion of the study period were excluded, such as the Amy Yee Tennis Center and the Golf Programs.

Seattle Metropolitan Park District

The City of Seattle has limited resources available to fund preservation, maintenance, and investment in parks and recreation facilities and programs. The Parks Legacy Plan Citizens' Advisory Committee recommended creating a metropolitan park district, which may levy and impose various taxes and fees to generate revenues to fund maintenance, operations, and improvement of parks, community centers, pools, and other recreation facilities and programs. The Seattle City Council concluded that the creation of a MDP within the boundaries of the City would enhance and stabilize funding. The measure went before Seattle voters, who approved the formation of the MPD, Seattle Park District, on August 5, 2014.

The Seattle Park District is governed by a Board of Park Commissioners, consisting of Seattle City Councilmembers serving independently as ex officio members. SPR retains responsibility for the management and control of the City's public parks and green spaces, and works cooperatively under an interlocal agreement with the Seattle Park District.

Spending of MPD funds has lagged collections – in 2016, $47.6M was collected and $17.1M was expended, or 36% of collected revenues; of that, most of the funding was used for capital projects (81%). $2.8M was spent on Recreation Division-related projects (16%) for both capital and operations. The majority of unused funding will go towards capital projects, which take time to plan, design, and build. Funding for operations is almost completely expended.

Figure 8. MPD Capital and Operating Expenditures, 2016


| Capital, Recreation, and All Other $13.8M | Operations, All Other $2.0M |
| | Operations, Recreation $1.3M |

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; Seattle Park District, *Seattle Park District Budget,* 2016; SPR, 2016.

RECREATION DIVISION EXPENDITURES

SPR expenditures include personnel costs, both permanent and temporary, and non-labor costs such as utilities, fleet, and equipment. Expenditures do not include major maintenance, which falls under the Maintenance Division. Without maintenance costs, expenditures and discussions of cost recovery are limited, but match how the Recreation Division and SPR as a whole currently account for expenditures. With the move to the City's new accounting model in 2018, additional indirect costs capturing maintenance will be trackable and should be included in such calculations.

The Admin and Other categories for 2010 and 2011 include expenses associated with Community Centers before the geographic division was instituted in 2012. When considering actuals, as shown in Figure 9, expenditures have steadily increased as Seattle has recovered from the Great Recession, however, this may not be the case if inflation is considered.

Figure 9. Recreation Division Major Expenditures, 2010-2016
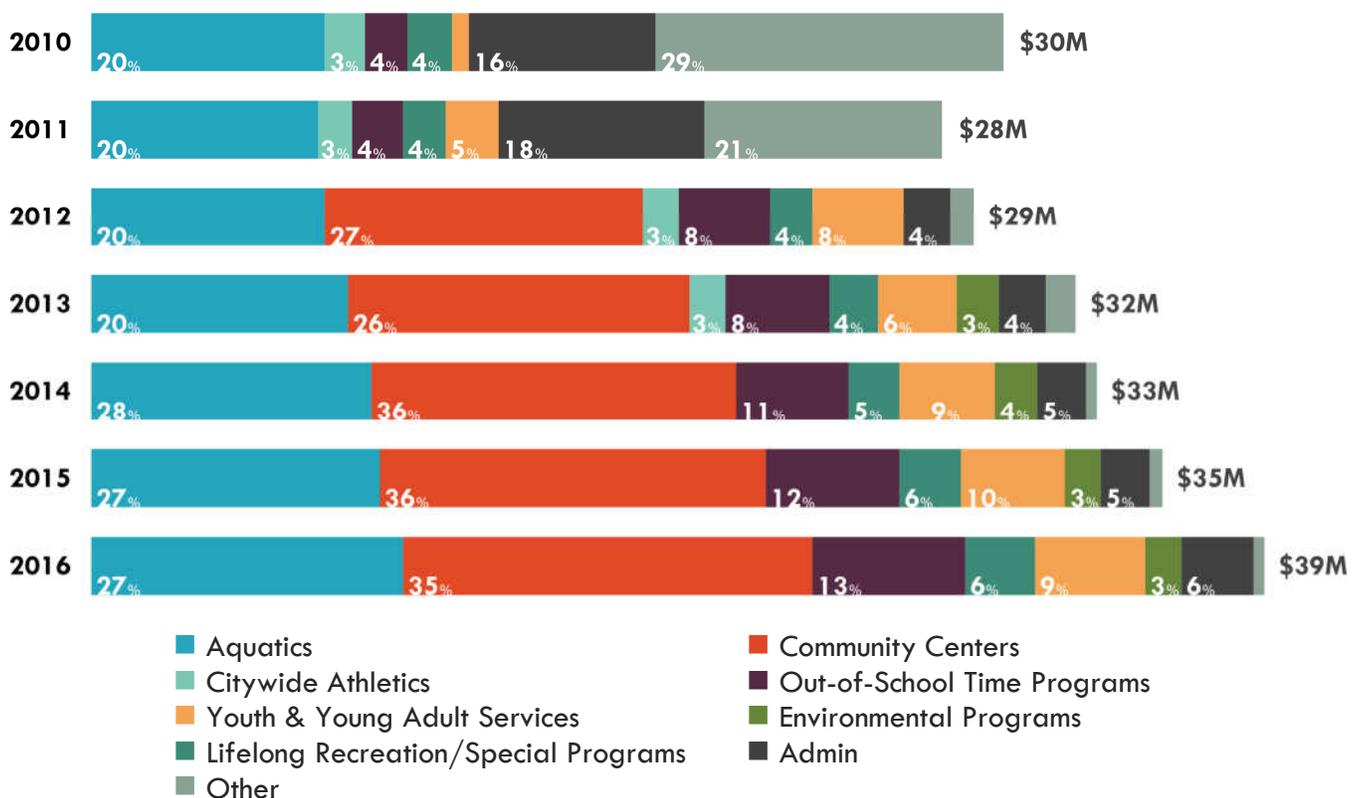
Notes: Amounts are presented in year-of-expenditure dollars and have not been adjusted for inflation. The value of money decreases over time, so the increases in expenditures are not as pronounced in real dollar terms.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

RECREATION DIVISION STAFFING

SPR has 913.0 FTE budgeted for 2017, including both regular and temporary positions (City of Seattle, *2017-2018 Proposed Budget*, page 113). Of the 913 FTE, 270.5 permanent FTE are allocated for the Recreation Division (30%). The Recreation Division, like SPR as a whole, has both regular and temporary FTE staff supporting operations. Consistent with SPR, the Recreation Division has increased FTE compared to the lows of the recession, but regular/permanent staffing has not returned to 2010 levels. This shift

aligns with what is seen in the Department's expenses and revenues from the same period.

Figure 10. SPR Recreation Division Permanent and Temp Staffing in FTE, 2010-2017
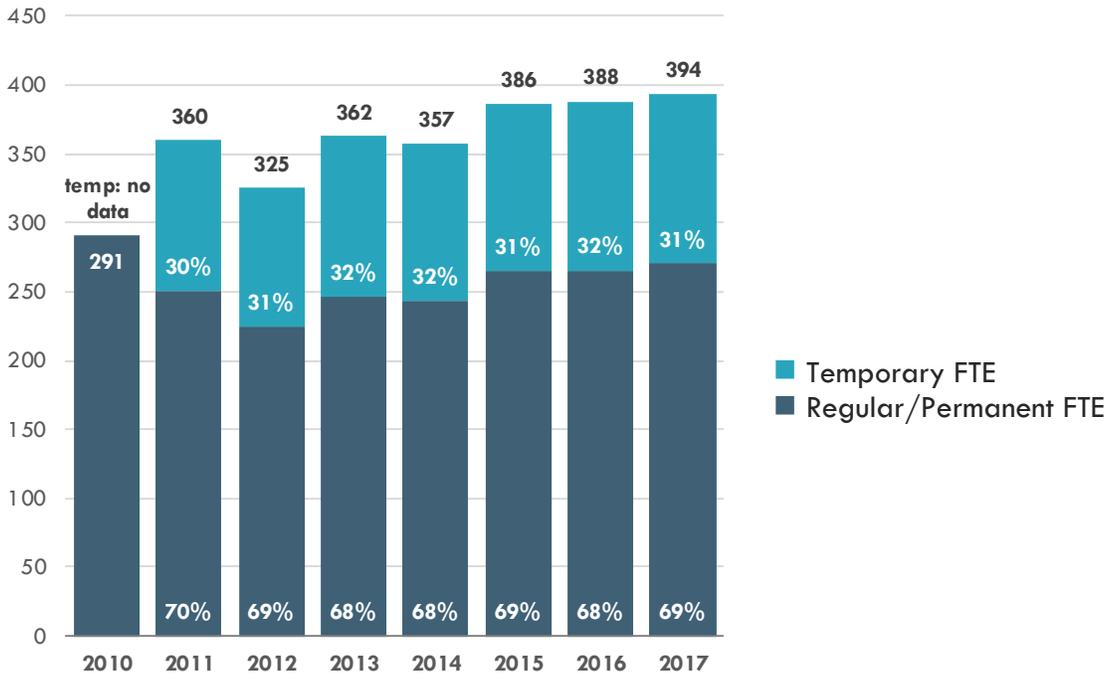
Notes: Temporary staffing FTE data are not available for 2010 due to a change in accounting systems. However, total salary spending on temporary staff is available for the period covered in the graph above. In 2010, Recreation Division spent $3.32M on temporary staff salary and in 2011, spent $3.26M, a reduction of almost $60,000 in year-of-expenditure dollars. All SPR staffing numbers are based on budgeted FTE data, at the direction of Recreation Division staff.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2017.

Staffing Consistency and Succession Planning

In interviews with field staff, several supervisors described challenges with staff vacancies and turnover, whether due to staff working Out of Class, taking Family and Medical Leave, or leaving SPR. Interviewees stated that this can lead to an increase in supervisor time spent recruiting and training new staff. For Community Centers that have only a handful of permanent staff, having two vacancies at the same time can be a significant burden. Interviewees noted one Community Center currently has a Recreation Attendant position vacant and an Assistant Coordinator working Out of Class, while another Center has a Coordinator on paternity leave for two months and Recreation Attendant out due to an injury.

SPR does not see this as a significant systemic challenge and there is no system in place nor any current plans to address this as a department. We recommend that management keep an eye on vacancies and staff turnover so new trends can be identified and resolved before they become disruptive across the system.

The Recreation Division has made attempts to cross-train the senior management team for succession planning. The Rec Leader Academy prepares staff for the Assistant Coordinator role and the Assistant Coordinator Academy prepares Assistant Coordinators to step into the Coordinator role.

ARC STAFFING LEVELS

As described above, the ARC helps support, manage, and teach recreation programs. ARC staff contract with and supervise program instructors who deliver programming at facilities provided and managed by SPR.

ARC's administrative positions and Field Supervisors have grown in recent years, as shown in Figure 11. ARC created the Field Supervisor position in 2006, largely to manage licensed School-age Care programs. Enrollment for the School Age Care program has grown and ARC took over day-to-day management of SPR's Preschool program in 2011. In addition, SPR's Enrichment program, which provides youth recreation programming at Seattle Public Schools, expanded from three sites in 2012 to 17 sites in 2017. All told, registrations for all School Age Care, preschool, and camp programs have by approximately 76% between 2011 and 2016. The number of Field Supervisors has grown as well and today constitute 11 FTE. ARC recently changed the Field Supervisor model from a geographic basis to a programmatic basis, with five Field Supervisors overseeing School Age Care, three overseeing Enrichment, and two managing Preschool.

Figure 11. ARC Staffing, 2005-2016
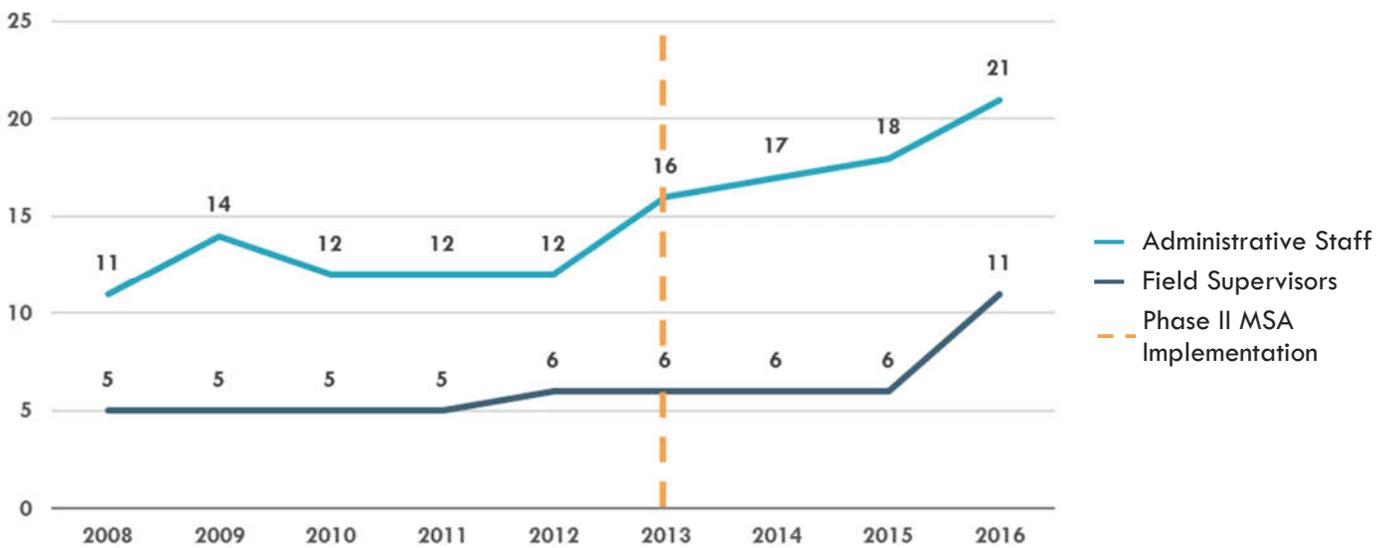
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; ARC, 2005-2016.

ARC has also expanded its Human Resources, Accounting, Marketing, and Development staff. ARC hired its first Development Director, Marketing Coordinator, and Marketing Specialist in 2013.

Field Supervisors are responsible for overseeing the instructors who deliver most recreation programming and their increase in numbers generally coincides with growth in the programs managed directly by ARC, including licensed School-Age Care and Preschool, as well as the "enrichment" recreation programming held at Seattle Public School sites. Figure 12 shows the number of staff ARC has employed as instructors over time. These are <u>not</u> FTEs, but simply a count of the number of individuals who were employed by ARC in a given year. Most of these are likely part-time positions for course and program offerings. This

may have been for one course for some individuals, and full-time or near full-time for others. Our understanding is that ARC is gradually increasing a cadre of preferred instructors that it contracts with on a more consistent basis. Increased ARC staffing overall coincides with increases in programming, including child care and enrichment numbers.

While it is difficult to compare ARC instructor position counts to SPR FTE counts in Figure 10, it is obvious that ARC employs the bulk of the labor force necessary to deliver recreation programming. This model has been adopted to maximize resource efficiency and staffing flexibility. **Chapter V** explores how SPR and ARC work together to deliver Community Center-based programming, as well as some of the benefits and challenges of this model.

Figure 12. ARC Program Staff, 2005-2016
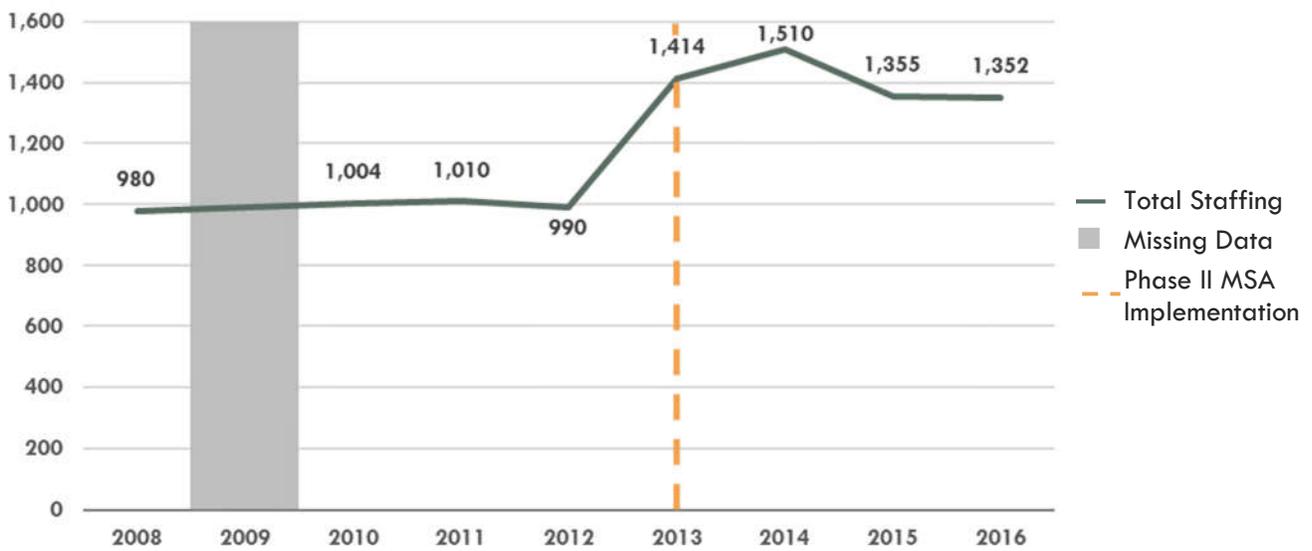
Notes: No data on program staff are available for 2009. Implementation of the Phase II of the MSA included additional duties that required more staff.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; ARC, 2005-2016.

Figure 13 displays summary ratios for ARC and SPR staffing, describing how staffing levels have changed relative to service volumes. This shows that ARC's supervisory and administrative capacity has increased relative to service delivery volume, while SPR's has decreased. ARC's increase is not necessarily an indication of inefficiency, as it is clearly important to have appropriate level of instructor supervision and administrative support in place to ensure safety and program quality for participants.

Figure 13. Summary Ratios for ARC and SPR Staffing, 2011-2016

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ARC Staffing (Position Counts)						
Classes with Registrants	9,593	9,781	10,142	10,608	11,386	11,728
Total Registrants in Classes	118,500	118,605	129,779	137,194	161,554	151,548
Total Class Hours with Registrants	201,646	184,012	155,182	157,348	167,731	169,283
Average Length of Courses (in Hours)	18	17	14	13	13	13
ARC Staffing (Position Counts)						
Program Staff	1,010	990	1,414	1,510	1,355	1,352
Field Supervisors	5	6	6	6	6	11
Administrative Staff	12	12	16	17	18	21
Total Staff	**1,021**	**1,027**	**1,008**	**1,436**	**1,533**	**1,379**
Program Staff per Field Supervisor	202	165	236	252	226	123
Classes per Field Supervisor	1,919	1,630	1,690	1,768	1,898	1,066
Registrants per Field Supervisor	23,700	19,768	21,630	22,866	26,926	13,777
Total Class Hours per Field Supervisor	40,329	30,669	25,864	26,225	27,955	15,389
Program Staff per Administrative Position	84	83	88	89	75	64
Classes per Administrative Position	799	815	634	624	633	558
Total Class Hours per Administrative Position	16,804	15,334	9,699	9,256	9,318	8,061
Registrants per Administrative Position	9,875	9,884	8,111	8,070	8,975	7,217
Classes per All Positions	9	10	7	7	8	8
Registrants per All Positions	115	118	90	89	117	110
Total Class Hours per All Positions	196	183	108	103	122	122
SPR Staffing (FTE)						
Regular (Permanent) Staff	285	259	280	243	265	265
Temporary Staff	118	108	125	114	121	123
Total Staff FTE	**403**	**368**	**405**	**357**	**386**	**388**
Classes per all FTE (Regular and Temp)	24	27	25	30	29	30
Registrants per all FTE (Regular and Temp)	294	322	320	384	418	390
Total Class Hours per all FTE (Regular and Temp)	425	439	339	399	385	398

Notes: Unlike the analysis of SPR Resources starting on page 11, course information in Figure 13 include all ran classes, which includes courses at Environmental Learning Centers that have been moved out of Recreation Division. Recreation Division had a supervisory role over these courses during the study timeframe and these courses cannot accurately be separated from the CLASS database. The average course length has decreased as SPR has increased the number of personal swim lessons and offered more enrichment programming, both of which have shorter course lengths.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS database).

Figure 14. Organization Personnel Spending, 2010-2016 (in $1,000s)
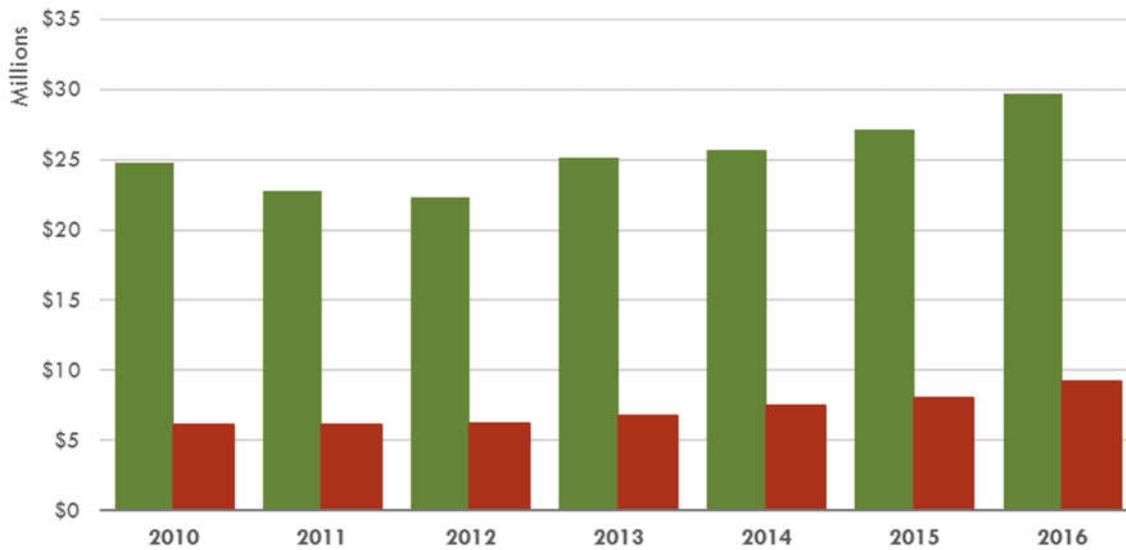
Personnel Expenses	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	$ change	% change
SPR	$24,785	$22,780	$22,365	$25,215	$25,700	$27,180	$29,675	$4,890	20%
ARC	$6,115	$6,120	$6,215	$6,735	$7,430	$7,990	$9,175	$3,060	50%
Total	**$30,900**	**$28,900**	**$28,580**	**$31,950**	**$33,130**	**$35,170**	**$38,850**	**$7,950**	**26%**

Sources: ARC, 2017; SPR, 2017; BERK Consulting, 2018.

III. SYSTEMWIDE ISSUES

This chapter reviews key issues raised by our evaluative framework that apply across the Recreation Division. The following chapters delve into related detail for major service delivery points. In some cases, findings and recommendations contained in this chapter are supported by more in-depth examination of how they apply to Community Centers, Aquatics, and Programs for Special Populations in Chapters IV, V, and VI.

Partnership with the Associated Recreation Council

SPR has relied on a unique partnership with ARC to deliver quality recreation programming. This relationship is codified in Seattle's Municipal Code (Chapter 18.04), established in 1976. ARC was created to coordinate and support the advisory councils (discussed below), including providing financial management, accounting, and material support. Over time and especially over the past 15 years, ARC'r role has grown to include delivery of both recreation and child care programs on behalf of SPR.

The partnership is governed by a MSA; the current MSA was passed by the Seattle City Council in 2007, and is expected to be negotiated in 2018 or 2019. In addition, each year there is a Yearly Service Agreement between SPR and ARC which sets specific parameters for that year.

In ARC's early years, it functioned largely as a fiscal agent, with ARC instructors largely reporting to SPR staff, and central staff consisting primarily of accounting functions. Starting in the late 1990s, SPR leadership pursued more separation between the two organizations. A few years later, SPR began providing School-age Care in partnership with ARC, licensed by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). SPR then requested ARC take over the management of School-age Care, while it remained under the authority of SPR. ARC continued to implement recreation programming for SPR.

ARC RECREATION STAFFING

SPR contracts with ARC to hire and manage the instructors who deliver recreation programming. Instructors are employees of ARC, but are generally recruited by SPR Coordinators or Assistant Coordinators, who often work closely with them on programming. ARC also hires staff responsible for implementing and managing Preschool and licensed Child Care; they also have a large role in Enrichment programming at Seattle Public Schools.

In general, SPR staff play the role of recreation specialists, charged with developing programming that is responsive to the community. They maintain contact with the community, design programs, and evaluate success, while ARC functions to hire and manage instructors that meet SPR specifications.

PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS

The partnership between SPR and ARC is unique and provides a number of benefits, including:

- **Increased resource flexibility.** Using staff from an outside organization to provide recreation and child care programs provides added flexibility to respond to changes in demand. Staffing costs are also likely lower for ARC employees than SPR employees. This flexibility also extends to financial resources such that the SPR and ARC partnership was likely better positioned to handle the recession than purely public systems elsewhere in the country.

- **Volunteer involvement.** The ARC Advisory Councils have been a source of dedicated volunteers for the past 40 years, with members volunteering at events and raising money to pay for programs. In addition, some Advisory Council members advocate for funding and pursue other strategies to support facilities and programs.

- **Fundraising potential.** As a non-profit organization, ARC can raise private donations in ways that SPR cannot.

PARTNERSHIP CHALLENGES

SPR and ARC have been through many changes in the past ten years, including recession-era cuts to SPR hours and staffing, along with growth in ARC-managed school-age-care and preschool programs. These changes have led to tension and role confusion among staff of both organizations. Some SPR staff perceive that ARC growth has come at SPR's expense, that ARC has taken over some SPR-designated roles, and that ARC doesn't remit sufficient user fees (generated through use of facilities) to SPR. There is also unease about the growth in the number of ARC Field Supervisors, and a perception that ARC is not consulting SPR when it should.

For ARC's part, staff are grappling with a growing organization, growing enrollment, and issues of balancing fee revenue with staff pay and other expenses. For example, ARC has increased wages for School-age Care and other staff recently to match pace with increases in Seattle's minimum wage, however this increase in expenses was not fully made up for by higher participant fees, leading ARC to operate in a deficit in 2017.

Additional specific challenges include:

- **Instructor Oversight.** The nature of the employment model can be challenging. While ARC supervises contractors and employees who teach programs, Community Center staff work closely with instructors on a day-to-day basis. This includes recruiting instructors, and then negotiating pay rates with ARC. Center staff are also on-site and know if there are performance issues with an instructor. Customers often go to SPR staff with complaints about instructors, not knowing that ARC is a separate organization, and SPR staff do not have authority to follow-up with instructors or discipline instructors, and depend on ARC Field Supervisors or other staff to take these actions. While this is true during day-to-day operations, SPR is leading an effort with ARC to implement stronger evaluations at the conclusion of courses. To encourage customer feedback, the system may leverage ACTIVE Net and/or the use of tablets passed hand to hand during the final class.

- **Field Staff Coordination.** SPR staff are responsible for what happens at SPR facilities or sponsored activities, but have limited authority over some ARC decisions, which can create frustration and confusion. Some SPR staff perceive that ARC staff do not consult SPR when appropriate, for example, when cancelling or changing programs. In addition, some SPR staff find ARC Field Supervisors difficult to reach on time-sensitive issues. Relationships and trust between field staff in the two organizations need improvement.

- **Coordinated Communication to Staff.** Employees of both organizations report that they haven't received clear, coordinated information about policy changes. Human resources leaders have been working toward better coordination, but some staff have not seen the benefits of this investment.

CURRENT PARTNERSHIP REVIEW EFFORTS

SPR and ARC are currently engaged in a review and update of their relationship to align goals and roles and to establish accountability for desired outcomes. The partners will use these agreed-upon updated roles in the next MSA, a ten-year agreement governing the partnership, scheduled for 2018.

As part of this review the partners are establishing Guiding Principles to govern the partnership. These Principles explicitly establish the purpose of the partnership as advancing SPR's Mission; clarify the roles of the two partners; and set expectations for communication and coordination.

In addition, because formal agreements such as the MSA and Yearly Service Agreements are insufficient for addressing changing circumstances and needs in the partnership, SPR and ARC are laying the groundwork for ongoing joint business planning to ensure organizational alignment around shared goals and priorities for each coming year. This process would inform workplan and budget development, and be done on a rolling three-year basis (meaning they would occur each year, and look at the following three years). Implementation of this annual strategic planning will be supported by regular, scheduled communication and established mechanisms for making coordinated ad hoc decisions.

Recommendation 1.   Review and update the SPR and ARC partnership.

The relationship between SPR and ARC has evolved incrementally over time. The partners are currently engaged in a review and update of this relationship to align goals and roles and to establish clear accountability for desired outcomes. The goal is to then use these agreed-upon updated roles in the next Master Services Agreement (MSA), a ten-year agreement governing the partnership.

Our recommendations are:

- Adopt and implement the draft Guiding Principles and Joint Planning Framework described above.

- Establish a shared understanding of when the partners will collaborate on decision making and when they will coordinate. Clarify when partners will be Consulted (i.e., when they have a say in the decision and when they can raise questions or make suggestions) and when they will be Informed (i.e., when they do not have a say, but will be notified of a change before it is implemented).

- When policy changes will affect both organizations, communications should be jointly issued by SPR and ARC (signed by leadership of both organizations) or in a coordinated fashion. SPR and ARC leadership should plan these communications, with clear responsibilities and timelines.

- Prioritize strengthening communications between Community Center staff and Field Supervisors and continue joint field meetings.

- Jointly establish a model for ARC and SPR field staffing that determines how many are needed and what their capacity and role is.

- Set up a working group composed of human resources and field staff from both organizations. Jointly review current MSA standards as well as common practices on hiring and overseeing instructors. Determine if current MSA standards are sufficient and whether they are being followed.

- Elevate expectations for ARC's fundraising in the next MSA Update. As a separate non-profit organization, ARC is better positioned to fundraise than SPR, and may be able more meaningfully supplement core public funding, particularly in areas that may be compelling to donors, such as recreation scholarships for underrepresented populations.

ROLE OF ADVISORY COUNCILS

As shown in Figure 15, there are currently 36 Advisory Councils: one for 25 Community Centers (Belltown and Lake City do not have Advisory Councils), 3 for Environmental Learning Centers, and 8 for special facilities such as the Amy Yee Tennis Center and citywide programs such as Lifelong Recreation and Adult Sports or Specialized Programs.

Recruitment of Advisory Council members and meeting support varies significantly across the system, with some Advisory Councils managed by ARC, others by Community Center staff, and others almost entirely inactive. There also is wide variation in the overall level of participation among Advisory Councils, including the number of active members and the roles they play in fundraising, budget oversight, community engagement, volunteering, and advocacy. These roles are explored below.

Figure 15. Advisory Councils

Community Center Councils

- Alki Advisory Council
- Ballard Advisory Council
- Bitter Lake Advisory Council
- Delridge Advisory Council
- Garfield Advisory Council
- Green Lake Advisory Council
- Hiawatha Advisory Council
- High Point Advisory Council
- International District/Chinatown Advisory Council
- Jefferson Advisory Council
- Laurelhurst Advisory Council
- Loyal Heights Advisory Council
- Magnolia Advisory Council
- Magnuson Advisory Council
- Meadowbrook Advisory Council
- Miller Advisory Council
- Montlake Advisory Council
- Northgate Advisory Council
- Queen Anne Advisory Council
- Rainier Advisory Council
- Rainier Beach Advisory Council
- Ravenna-Eckstein Advisory Council
- South Park Advisory Council
- Van Asselt Advisory Council
- Yesler Advisory Council

Environmental Education Center Councils

- Camp Long Advisory Council
- Carkeek Park Advisory Council
- Discovery Park Advisory Council

Citywide Councils and Other

- Amy Yee Tennis Center Advisory Council
- Lifelong Recreation Advisory Council
- Mt. Baker Boating Advisory Council
- Rowing Advisory Council
- Seattle Canoe & Kayak Advisory Council
- Southwest Advisory Council
- Specialized Programs Advisory Council
- Sports Advisory Council

Source: ARC website, 2017.

Fundraising and Budget Oversight

As described the section Partnership with the Associated Recreation Council, Advisory Councils were created largely to solicit and manage donated funds. This led to Advisory Councils being responsible for overseeing ARC-funded budgets in coordination with the SPR staff responsible for the Community Center's public budget. This role may be diminishing as a new system is implemented in which the fund balance from individual Community Centers is pooled and used to improve access across the system.

Community Engagement

Another primary purpose of Advisory Councils has been to engage neighborhood residents and ensure their interests are communicated to SPR staff. Questions have been raised about how representative the Councils are of the local community, with staff saying the time commitment and application process serve as barriers to lower income community members. For example, at one Community Center in southeast Seattle there are only two members on its Advisory Council, both of whom are white, while the community is largely non-white.

Regardless of how closely Advisory Council membership reflects actual community demographics, there are questions of how effective they are in serving as a conduit for community interests, which is an essential function of running an effective Community Center or other facility. Conversations with SPR staff indicate that many reach far beyond their Advisory Council to keep in touch with the community, gather input and feedback, and develop programming.

University of Washington (UW) Study

In 2015, a UW class around Community Oriented Public Health Practice, in partnership with the non-profit Neighborhood House, undertook a study of Advisory Councils in High Point and Yesler Terrace. The goal was to strengthen the Advisory Councils and strengthen their connection to their communities. The study found that many community members involved at served by the Centers High Point and Yesler Community Centers had suggestions for programming, but were unaware of the respective Advisory Councils.

The study's recommendations were to:

- Strengthen Advisory Councils by providing training to council members.

- Increase Advisory Council visibility.

- Lower barriers to participation Advisory Councils by simplifying the application process, translating materials, and other means.

- Increase collaboration with other organizations.

SPR and ARC have expressed a commitment to implement the recommendations of the UW study, and are in the process of implementing other recommendations to improve equity. In 2018, ARC is implementing new trainings for Advisory Council members that emphasize their fundamental roles and responsibilities, as well as race and social justice principles. SPR staff will attend these same trainings.

Recommendation 2.   Reform the role and functioning of Advisory Councils.

Advisory Councils have played an important role in the history of SPR, providing dedicated volunteers, fundraising services, and a connection to the community. But today many Advisory Councils are not representative of the local population, and thus are not providing a voice to bring community needs to SPR staff. Further, recruitment, training, and retention of Advisory Council members is uneven at best, and roles and responsibilities often overlap between SPR and ARC staff.

2.1   Strengthen Advisory Councils immediately.

Implement recommendations to strengthen Advisory Councils included from a 2015 study by a UW class in Community Oriented Public Health Practice, including: provide training to members; increase visibility; lower barriers to participation (by simplifying the application process, translating materials, and other means); and increase collaboration with other organizations. Providing training for current Advisory Council members and coordination between the SPR and ARC staff that work with Advisory Council members should be a primary focus.

2.2   Fundamentally reshape the role, structure, and diverse composition of Advisory Councils.

SPR and ARC should go beyond the ideas raised in the 2015 study to reconsider the role of the Advisory Councils on a deeper level, setting appropriate, non-fiduciary roles for voluntary groups and considering the best structure, which may reduce the number of Advisory Councils by creating regional or systemwide groups. Common expectations for the role of Advisory Councils should be set and adhered to. Responsibility for recruiting, training, and supporting Advisory Council members should be clearly assigned to SPR or ARC as appropriate. Reshaping of the Advisory Council system should involve significant engagement with SPR field staff, ARC staff, and existing Advisory Council members.

PROGRAMS THAT REQUIRE REGISTRATION

The data below reflect programs with online registration through the CLASS registration system. Data are generally shown by "brochure category" (the categories used in SPR's brochures) with some categories combined (Arts with Performing Arts, Martial Arts with Fitness, Athletics Leagues, and Athletics Instruction). In addition, the smallest categories were moved to "Other." Program registrations for Specialized Programs and most Teen programs are not included in this dataset; rather participation data for those programs are shown in Chapter VII.

The number of registered courses or programs is shown first below, followed by the number of registrations, by year and program type.

Number of Courses

As shown in Figure 16, the number of classes offered grew by 13% from 2011 to 2016. The biggest increases were in Aquatics and Boating (24%) and Child Care & Out-of-School Time (15%), while the number of courses in Arts and "Other" declined. Aquatics & Boating has the most classes, followed closely by the Arts. The Camps category was first tracked in 2014, as SPR began offering more specialty enrichment summer programs, separate from licensed School-age Care programs.

Figure 16. Number of Course Offerings by Category, 2011-2016
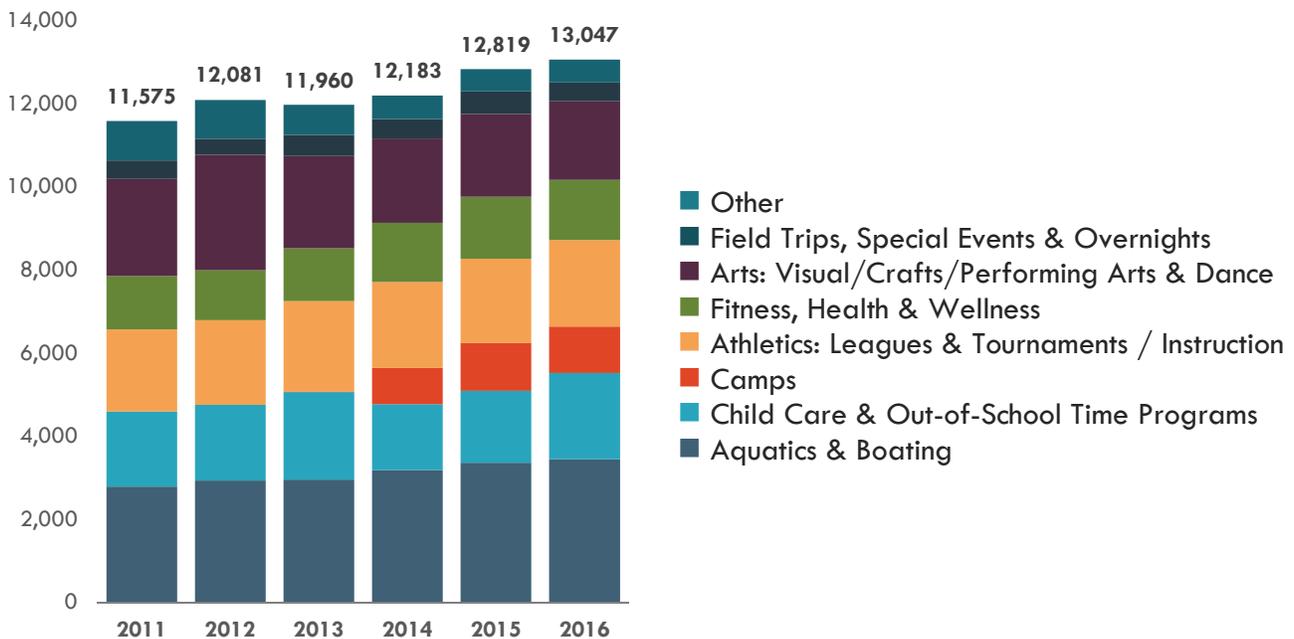
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Aquatics & Boating	2,778	2,923	2,950	3,175	3,354	3,436
Childcare & Out-of-School Time	1,810	1,826	2,102	1,586	1,732	2,074
Camps	NA	NA	13	870	1,150	1,119
Athletics: Leagues & Tournaments/ Instruction	1,972	2,034	2,176	2,070	2,023	2,079
Fitness, Health & Wellness	1,288	1,202	1,267	1,426	1,495	1,452
Arts: Visual/Crafts/ Performing Arts & Dance	2,330	2,773	2,223	2,022	1,986	1,888
Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights	442	389	506	471	546	452
Other	955	934	723	563	533	547
All Categories	**11,575**	**12,081**	**11,960**	**12,183**	**12,819**	**13,047**

Note: This figure includes all CLASS brochure categories, which includes courses at Environmental Learning Centers that have been moved out of Recreation Division. Recreation Division had a supervisory role over these courses during the study timeframe and these courses cannot accurately be separated from the CLASS database.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS Database).

Number of Registrations

Figure 17 shows that the number of registrations grew 28% from 2011 to 2016 overall, but decreased between 2015 and 2016. Child care & Out-of-School Time was the category with the greatest number of registrants through 2013, and in 2014 fell to second most as Aquatics & Boating became the top category. Camps consistently registered the third most individuals from 2014 on. The other categories

remained stable, with the exception of double the usual number of registrants for Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights in 2015.

Figure 17. Registrations by Category, 2011-2016
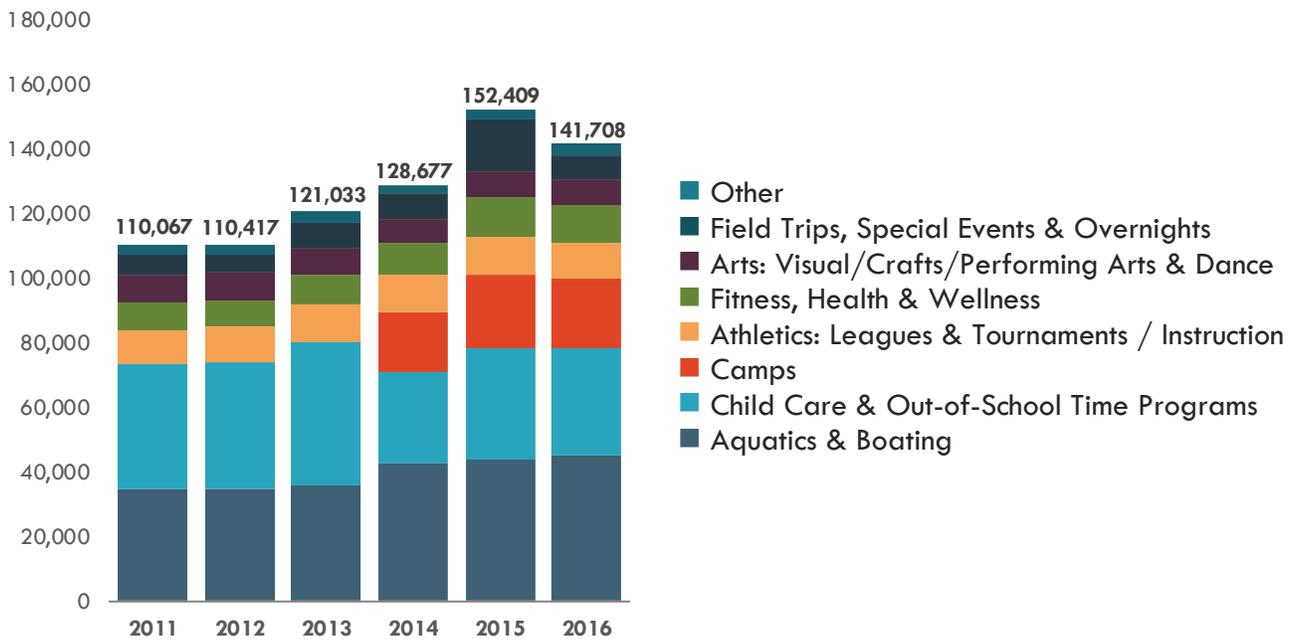
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Aquatics & Boating	34,559	34,696	35,806	42,355	44,108	44,900
Childcare & Out-of-School Time	39,095	39,333	44,580	28,510	34,278	33,465
Camps	NA	NA	72	18,678	22,982	21,475
Athletics: Leagues & Tournaments/ Instruction	10,446	10,981	11,173	11,546	11,572	11,113
Fitness, Health & Wellness	8,637	8,186	9,396	9,802	12,367	11,798
Arts: Visual/Crafts/ Performing Arts & Dance	8,515	8,199	8,150	7,485	7,720	7,993
Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights	6,053	5,791	7,768	7,621	15,763	7,373
Other	2,762	3,231	4,088	2,680	3,619	3,591
All Categories	**110,067**	**110,417**	**121,033**	**128,677**	**152,409**	**141,708**

Note: This figure includes all CLASS brochure categories, which includes courses at Environmental Learning Centers that have been moved out of Recreation Division. Recreation Division had a supervisory role over these courses during the study timeframe and these courses cannot accurately be separated from the CLASS database.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS Database).

USAGE RELATIVE TO CHANGES IN POPULATION

Usage relative to population change is a more meaningful measure than absolute usage. Figure 18 presents a comparison of changes in usage relative to changes in Seattle's population. This shows that registrations in courses overall between 2011 and 2016 increased by 28.7%, while Seattle's population grew by 12%. Child care & Out-of-School Time, Arts programming, and Athletics grew less quickly, while Aquatics & Boating, Fitness, and Other grew more quickly.

Another way of looking at the same data is presented in Figure 19. For both charts, it is important to consider that some portion of program registrants may be repeat customers rather than representing growing per capita participation.

Recommendation 3 encourages SPR to use customer data from ACTIVE Net to inform future programming decisions. We encourage SPR to use this information, as well as additional input from program participants, to ensure its offerings are aligned with community interests and not duplicative of other offerings in the marketplace.

Figure 18. Changes in Population and Usage, 2011 to 2016

	2011	2016	Change	More (less) than Pop Change
Seattle Population	612,100	686,800	12.2%	NA
Aquatics & Boating	34,559	44,900	29.9%	17.7%
Childcare & Out-of-School Time	39,095	33,465	(14.4%)	(26.6%)
Camps	NA	21,475	NA	NA
Athletics: Leagues & Tournaments/ Instruction	10,446	11,113	6.4%	(5.8%)
Fitness, Health & Wellness	8,637	11,798	36.6%	24.4%
Arts: Visual/Crafts/ Performing Arts & Dance	8,515	7,993	(6.1%)	(18.3%)
Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights	6,053	7,373	21.8%	9.6%
Other	2,762	3,591	30.0%	17.8%
All Categories	**110,067**	**141,708**	**28.7%**	**16.5%**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS Database); OFM, April 1, 2017 Population Estimates.

Figure 19. Registrations as a Percent of the Seattle Population, 2011-2016

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Aquatics & Boating	5.6%	5.6%	5.7%	6.6%	6.7%	6.5%
Childcare & Out-of-School Time	6.4%	6.4%	7.1%	4.5%	5.2%	4.9%
Camps			0.0%	2.9%	3.5%	3.1%
Athletics: Leagues & Tournaments/ Instruction	1.7%	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%
Fitness, Health & Wellness	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%	1.5%	1.9%	1.7%
Arts: Visual/Crafts/ Performing Arts & Dance	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%	1.2%	2.4%	1.1%
Other	0.5%	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%
All Categories	**18.0%**	**17.9%**	**19.3%**	**20.1%**	**23.0%**	**20.6%**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS Database); OFM, April 1, 2017 Population Estimates.

CANCELLED AND UNDER-MINIMUM CLASSES

Cancelled Course and Program Offerings

A percentage of course and program offerings are cancelled each year, generally from a lack of registrants. Of the 11,000-13,000 course and program offerings scheduled each program year, approximately a range of 10% to 19% were cancelled between 2011 and 2016. The percent of classes cancelled is lower in the past three years (2014-2016) than in the first three years (2011-2013), with the peak in 2012. Figure 20 contains a summary of the courses that were cancelled by category, as well as percent of cancelled courses and program offerings within each category. The Arts category aligned with the overall trend, and consistently contributed the highest percentage of cancelled classes, although this percentage has been decreasing. The fewest cancelled classes were in Aquatics & Boating.

Recommendation 3 encourages SPR to use customer data from ACTIVE Net to inform future programming decisions.

Figure 20. Cancelled Course and Program Offerings by Category, 2011-2016
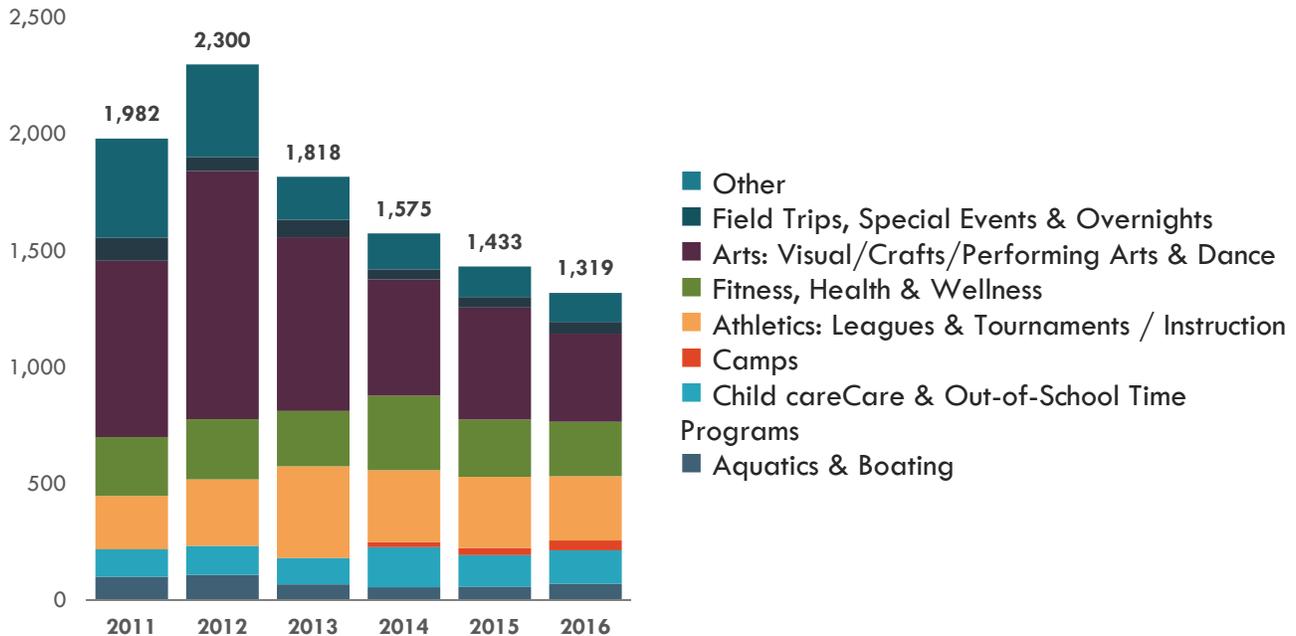
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Aquatics & Boating	3.6%	3.7%	2.3%	1.7%	1.7%	2.0%
Childcare & Out-of-School Time	6.5%	6.8%	5.3%	10.9%	7.8%	6.9%
Camps	NA	NA	15.4%	2.5%	2.6%	3.8%
Athletics: Leagues & Tournaments/ Instruction	11.6%	14.0%	18.1%	14.9%	15.2%	13.3%
Fitness, Health & Wellness	19.6%	21.5%	18.8%	22.4%	16.4%	16.1%
Arts: Visual/Crafts/ Performing Arts & Dance	32.5%	38.4%	33.6%	24.6%	24.3%	20.1%
Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights	22.6%	15.4%	15.0%	9.3%	8.2%	11.1%
Other	44.5%	42.5%	25.4%	27.5%	24.6%	22.7%
All Categories	**17.1%**	**19.0%**	**15.2%**	**12.9%**	**11.2%**	**10.1%**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS Database).

Course and Program Offerings with Fewer than Minimum Registrants

Each course entered in the CLASS system has a minimum and maximum number of participants listed. The minimum figure is generally established by the Assistant Coordinator or person who developed the program, to ensure there is sufficient fee revenue to cover the costs. Courses may be run even if they fall below this minimum threshold for a number of reasons, including when marketing and building interest in new programs, programs that are perceived to have inherent value, and external commitments such as grant funding. Courses with fewer than the minimum registrants cannot recover the cost of offering the course under the City's fee structure and should be managed more carefully than they have been to-date. As noted in Recommendation 3, SPR has an opportunity to better use customer data from ACTIVE Net to inform future programming decisions.

Figure 21 shows that the number of classes held with fewer than the "minimum" participants fluctuated over the six-year period. Between 12% and 16% of course and program offerings are run with fewer than the set minimum number of registrants, with a peak in 2013 and the lowest level reached in 2015. Fitness, Health & Wellness held the greatest number of classes with fewer than the designated minimum number of registrants. This category was followed closely by Child Care & Out-of-School Time. Aquatics and Boating had the lowest share of courses that ran with fewer than minimum numbers.

Figure 21. Course and Program Offerings with Fewer than Minimum Registrants by Category, 2011-2016
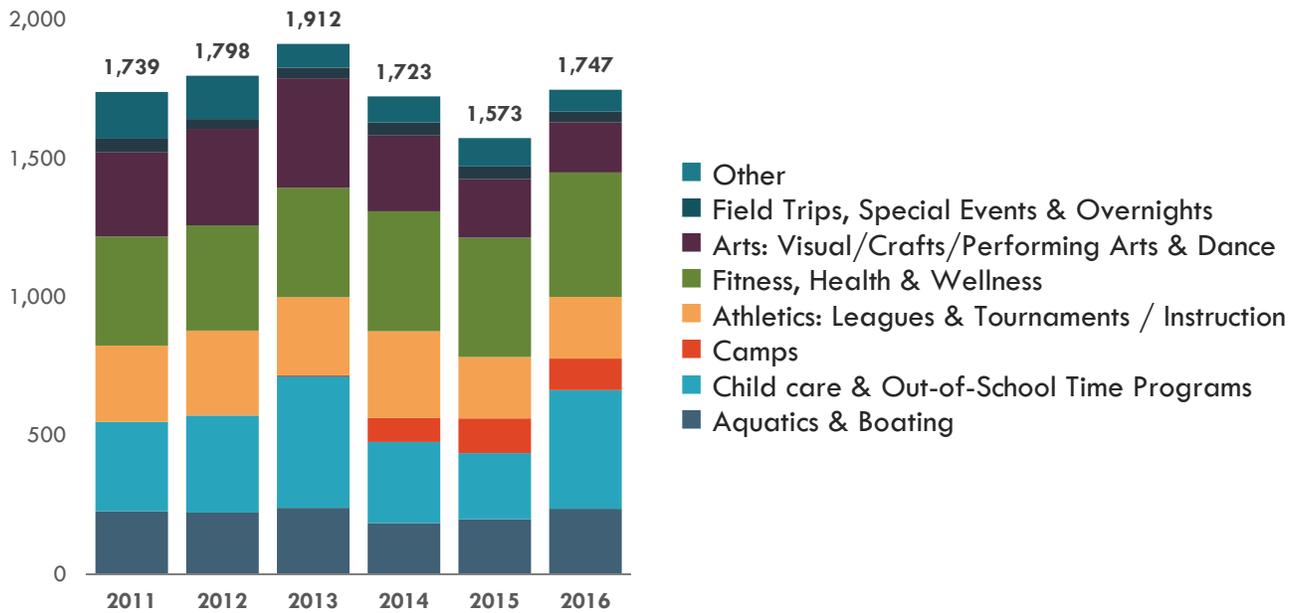
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Aquatics & Boating	8.1%	7.6%	8.1%	5.8%	5.9%	6.9%
Childcare & Out-of-School Time	17.8%	19.2%	22.5%	18.5%	13.8%	20.6%
Camps	NA	NA	38.5%	9.9%	10.9%	10.1%
Athletics: Leagues & Tournaments/ Instruction	14.0%	15.1%	12.9%	15.1%	10.9%	10.7%
Fitness, Health & Wellness	30.5%	31.5%	31.2%	30.4%	28.8%	30.9%
Arts: Visual/Crafts/ Performing Arts & Dance	13.0%	12.5%	17.8%	13.5%	10.7%	9.6%
Field Trips, Special Events & Overnights	11.3%	9.3%	7.5%	10.0%	8.4%	8.4%
Other	17.6%	16.7%	11.8%	16.7%	19.1%	14.4%
All Categories	**15.0%**	**14.9%**	**16.0%**	**14.1%**	**12.3%**	**13.4%**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (CLASS Database).

Recommendation 3. Leverage past data and enforce class performance standards to focus on desired programs.

[Performance Management]

SPR can improve the accuracy of program development by creating a clearer link between program development and past performance, including participation rates from ACTIVE Net and outcomes captured through the Results Framework.

When developing and marketing new programs, staff should have a clear goal for the number of participants and a plan for attracting them, particularly in categories or at sites with a history of low attendance. Under-minimum or cancelled programs should only be repeated if there is a clear plan for increasing participation or reasons why lower participation is acceptable. Programs cancelled due to low registrations or held with fewer than the minimum number of participants can be a drag on system efficiency, pushing up the subsidy required per participant and/or showing that SPR programs are not reflecting community needs or are not sufficiently publicized. At the same time, there may be legitimate reasons for cancellations and running classes below the minimum number of participants, including marketing investments in new programs that start with lower participation.

The new ARC budgeting tool provides a mechanism for determining the minimum number of participants in a program, to cover direct costs such as the instructor and supplies, but it appears these standards have not been consistently enforced systemwide to this point. Clearer standards for participation and tracking of why participants cancel will help SPR better manage programming to serve the most people. As noted in **Recommendation 8**, it is also important to track the number and characteristics of new customers.

Systemwide Access and Revenue Generation

- *Are participation fees and scholarships used to balance access and revenue generational goals?*

The topics of systemwide access and revenue generation are combined in this section to focus on their intersection and the impacts that revenue generation through participant fees can have on affordability and access. The focus is first on a discussion of who SPR seeks to serve with its recreation resources, followed by a discussion of data collection, fee setting, scholarships, and cost recovery.

WHO DOES SPR SEEK TO SERVE?

In recent planning documents, including the 2014 Parks Legacy Plan, the 2016 Community Center Strategic Plan, and the Draft 2017 Parks and Open Space Plan, SPR refers to the intended users of recreation services in four ways: 1) all people; 2) the changing Seattle community; 3) in relation to social equity; and 4) specific demographic groups. It is clear that SPR intends for its services to be available and used by everyone in Seattle; that it wants to keep offerings relevant as both demographics and recreation trends and desired change; and that there are specific groups of people it is trying harder to engage and serve. This includes those with less access to recreation alternatives (relates to group 3, above) and specific demographic groups that have distinct programming needs (relates to group 4, above, and includes teens, older adults, and people with disabilities).

1) "All People"

As befits a citywide public service funded by tax receipts, many of SPR's goal statements refer to the Department's service to "all people."

2014 Parks Legacy Plan

- **Recreation Goal/Athletics:** "Ensure all people have access to athletic opportunities."

Draft 2017 Parks and Open Space Plan

- **Goal 1:** "Provide spaces throughout the city for all people to play, learn, contemplate, and build community."

- **Goal 2:** "Continue to provide opportunities for all people across Seattle to participate in a variety of recreational activities."

2) Changing Community

In several documents, SPR states that it will meet the evolving recreation needs of a changing Seattle community. Changes in Seattle demographics are explored, as well as results of surveys showing how Seattle residents participate in, value, and view the recreation services offered in the city. SPR wants to remain relevant by changing its services and facilities as the needs and desires of Seattle residents change.

2014 Parks Legacy Plan

- Under the Recreation goal statement, Community Centers are described as "…offering programs, activities, and events to Seattle's changing population."

- The City's changing demographics are explored in the plan. Primary findings include: a slight decline in the share of the population that describes itself as white only; a growing share of people in the 20-34 age group; and a stable share of people age 65 and older.

  - The Plan explores how people of different ages, ethnic groups, and incomes use and view recreation services, based on a 2012 phone survey. Survey findings include:

    - The top reason for valuing parks and recreation differed by race. For white respondents, the top response was "exercise and fitness," while among people of color, the top response was socializing with family and neighbors. The implication being that facilities and programming that offer opportunities for socializing, including community centers and picnic shelters, are important.

    - Immigrant respondents were less likely to participate in activities on a daily or weekly basis than survey respondents as a whole.

    - Families with children use SPR spaces and programs the most, but constitute a relatively small share of Seattle's population (19% in 2007-2011).

    - People with lower incomes are much less likely than wealthier individuals to participate in recreation activities, with two exceptions: accessing Community Centers and picnic areas.

2016 Community Center Strategic Plan

- **Guiding Principle #1:** "Meet the needs of a changing community. Every decision we make is rounded by a desire to meet the ever evolving needs of Seattle residents."

2017 Parks and Open Space Plan

- Statement under **Goal 2:** "As Seattle's population changes, we are working to ensure that our programs and facilities meet the evolving needs of all the people that live in Seattle."

- The demographic information documented in this Plan is similar to what was stated in the 2014 Parks Legacy Plan.

3) Social Equity: Unserved and Underserved People and Communities

Several planning documents talk about the importance of social equity. This is generally defined as helping achieve more equitable outcomes by prioritizing services to people and groups with fewer opportunities, such as low-income individuals, racial and ethnic minorities, and immigrants and refugees. In some cases, SPR focuses services on particular communities because of relatively poor health outcomes. For example, the Get Moving Assessment cites higher rates of obesity among blacks, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders as a reason for focusing on those groups.

2014 Parks Legacy Plan

References the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative and states related goals:

- "A major goal of the Legacy Plan is to increase access and opportunities for recreation for communities of color, immigrant and refugee populations, and historically underrepresented communities—moving toward greater racial equity."

- Examples of SPR outreach to diverse communities and resulting programming and facility changes are provided.

2016 Community Center Strategic Plan

- **Guiding Principle #2:** "Promote social equity. With limited resources, we focus on meeting the needs of unserved and underserved people and communities, including communities with limited access to recreation alternatives. In this, we are guided by the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative. This principle means that centers in neighborhoods with fewer opportunities, lower incomes, and more barriers to access may be prioritized for public funding."

2017 Parks and Open Space Plan

- Language under **Goal 2:** "We focus on meeting the needs of unserved and underserved people and communities, including communities with limited access to recreation alternatives."

4) Specific Target Groups

Three demographic groups – teens, older adults, and people with disabilities – are served with specific recreation programs, and goal statements for each group are listed in some planning documents.

2014 Parks Legacy Plan

As part of the Goal Statement for Recreation, the Legacy Plan lists goals for each of the programs or services provided by the Recreation Division. Along with Community Centers, Aquatics, Environmental Education, and Athletics, three programs/groups specific to demographic groups are listed:

- **Lifelong Recreation:** Create recreation and social engagement opportunities so older adults remain healthy and actively involved and engaged as part of our community.

- **Specialized Programs:** Provide welcoming, accessible, and affordable recreation and social programs and activities to enrich the lives of people with disabilities and their families and welcome them as part of the community.

- **Teens**

  - Capture young people in their hope stage of development by engaging teens with opportunities that help them to build their identity, connect with their passion, and acquire skills that lead to a healthy and productive adulthood.

  - Give teens and young adults job and life skills.

  - Connect teens and young adults to nature by providing outdoor and environmental opportunities.

The Park District's 2015-2020 funding cycle provides funds targeted to these same three groups.

2016 Community Center Strategic Plan

- One goal statement in this plan specifically addresses teens; under **"A Safe City"** it states "The Late Night Program for teens and the Great Night program for those aged 18 to 30 engage young people in safe recreation, learning activities and classes."

- Although other goal statements do not specifically address teens, it is clear from the description of programs as well as the outreach to teens in creating this plan, that teens are a key target demographic group for SPR to serve at community centers.

Recommendation 4. Continue to expand on SPR's statements of its recreation-related Vision, Goals, and target customers.

[Performance Management]

Excellent service delivery generally requires a sense of urgency (answering the question, "Why does this really matter?") and clarity of intentions. SPR and the Recreation Division are equipped with a Vision, Mission, and Goal statements, some of which genuinely resonate with staff, namely the shortening of "Healthy People, Healthy Environment, Strong Communities" to "Healthy, Healthy, Strong."

More can be done to establish an explicit shared understanding of why recreation matters and the particular role played by SPR. The Recreation Division's new Vision, Mission, and strategic goals (page 5) do an excellent job of articulating the tension between serving the full community and emphasizing services for those populations that might not otherwise have access to recreation opportunities. Continued development – and discussion – of these ideas is important to create a shared understanding of these issues among Recreation Division and ARC staff. We suggest:

- Acknowledging the tensions implicit in BERK's Evaluative Framework (usage + access, quality + impact, and resource efficiency) and link to a performance management system that triangulates in on these factors (see **Recommendation 8**).

- Continuing to define who the Recreation Division serves, acknowledging the tension among goals to serve all City residents and taxpayers; to prioritize those with relatively less access to alternative opportunities for recreation; and competing for the participation (and fees) of those who can afford alternatives offered by the private sector.

- Incorporating the Preschool and Child Care programs that constitute a significant portion of the Recreation Division's efforts, but are somewhat obscured by a focus on traditional "recreation" functions and programs.

DATA COLLECTION: UNDERSTANDING WHO IS AND IS NOT USING RECREATION SERVICES

While staff are likely very cognizant of the makeup of the communities their facilities serve, SPR does not, for the most part, collect demographic data on participants, making a systemwide look at who the Division is serving (and who it is not serving) somewhat difficult. The discussion of data collection touches on the differences in Registered Recreation Programs and Drop-in Programs and the ability to know who those programs serve.

Registered Recreation Programs

The current registration system, CLASS, captures a minimum of demographic information, including address, age, and gender, though age is a not a required field. It does not ask for race/ethnicity or income level. Therefore, there is limited data on who is being served in these programs. SPR is in the process of procuring a new registration software system, called ACTIVE Net, which will bring the capacity to collect demographic and other data, such as when users create accounts. In determining what information to collect, SPR must balance the ability to make informed decisions and provide reports with the desire to minimize barriers to participation.

Peer Practices: Tracking Demographic Data

Aside from age and gender, the four cities examined for this project have mixed policies on collecting and using demographic data such as race, ethnicity, or income from program participants. Those that do collect the data find that if it's optional and the response rate is low, its usefulness may be limited.

The Chicago Park District provides the option for participants to provide demographic information, including race and ethnicity, household income, and education level, when they create an account to register for classes. However, the response rate for those questions and how the data is used is unclear.

Figure 22. Excerpt from Chicago Park District ACTIVE Net User Account Sign-Up

How did you hear about the Chicago Park District?

[▼]

Demographic questions are for information purposes only and will be used to help the Chicago Park District obtain grants and funding. Please select the ethnic category that best describes this customer:

○ American Indian

○ Asian or Pacific Islander

○ Black or African-American (Non-Hispanic)

○ Hispanic/Latino

○ White (Non-Hispanic)

Source: Chicago Park District, 2017.

In the past, Portland Parks and Recreation asked participants to self-identify their race and ethnicity using Census categories, but has recently put that practice on hold. Denver Parks and Recreation does not ask for race, ethnicity, or income information.

The NRPA has launched a "Parks for Inclusion" initiative, reflecting the current focus on this topic nationwide. The NRPA website includes space for a compilation of resources to provide parks and

recreation professionals and others with resources to support inclusive activities; NRPA is continuing to collect resources and this online space may be of greater use as it grows over time.

Results Framework Data

For programs that are covered by the Results Framework (programs that are instructor-led and multi-session), some demographic data is available. Participant feedback forms gathered at the end of the quarter ask participants for their race/ethnicity, age, and gender, and results are summarized for staff. The graphic below shows an excerpt from the Winter 2017 Results Report on Martial Arts Programs, showing demographics of participants. The report reflects the 167 people who filled out a feedback form. **Recommendation 8.3** makes recommendations for strengthening data gathering to understand who is using SPR's resources.

Figure 23. Excerpt from Results Framework Winter 2017 Report, Citywide Martial Arts Programs
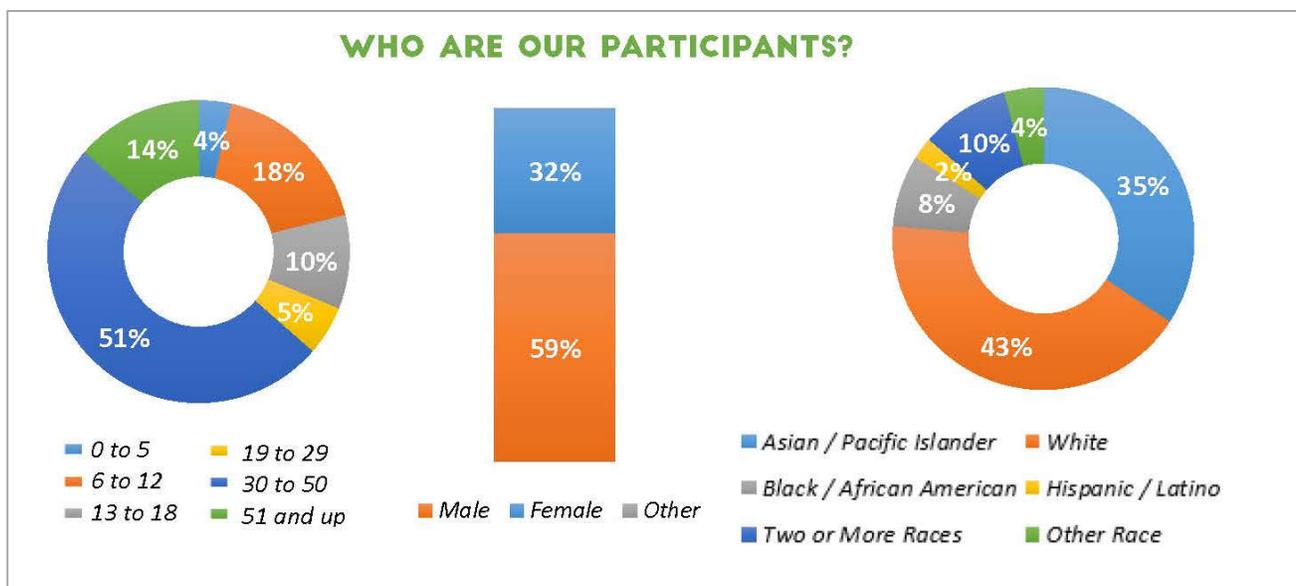
Source: SPR, 2017.

Scholarship Recipient Data

SPR collects income data for all scholarship applicants and recipients, and requests ethnicity information, although that information is only provided on a voluntary basis. Additional demographic data will be collected on scholarship recipients with the implementation of ACTIVE Net.

FEE SETTING

Fees have a direct, positive impact on earned revenue generation and a negative impact on affordability and access. As with SPR, most recreation agencies in the United States charge fees to offset program delivery costs, though some are fully supported by tax revenues. For agencies that charge a fee, the calibration of fees and scholarships is a critical balancing act.

There are a few universal features of SPR's recreation fee setting:

- Some fees for recreation programs are uniform citywide, including for Aquatics and Child Care, while fees for recreation programs held at Community Centers are set at the individual center level.

- SPR fees for youth and older adults are generally lower than standard adult fees.

- For the programs covered by this study, SPR does not charge a different fee to non-residents. SPR does charge 10% higher nonresident fees at the Amy Yee Tennis Center (not part of the Recreation Division). ACTIVE Net will improve SPR's ability to identify non-Seattle residents and apply differential fees. As described below, some other cities charge much higher program fees to non-residents (40% higher for Portland, 50% higher for Minneapolis, and 100% higher for Chicago).

Aquatics

Fees for admissions to pools and for swim lessons and water fitness classes are uniform throughout the system, and are approved by City Council. Pool entry fees include volume discount products for a 10-entry pass and a 30-day unlimited pass. All entry fees are discounted for older adults, youth, and other special populations, with discounts ranging from a 25% to 32% reduction in the standard adult fee. A more detailed discussion of Aquatics is available in Chapter VI.

Community Centers

Participation in **Community Center drop-in programs** is free. In some Community Centers, this includes use of the fitness rooms, toddler gym play time, athletic activities, dance, games, and more. The free drop-in for fitness differs from cities like Denver which sell memberships to Recreation Centers, primarily for use of fitness equipment; however, Denver's fitness facilities are likely more extensive than those at SPR's Community Centers.

Fees for **School-age Care and Preschool programs** are uniform systemwide, and are set by SPR in coordination with ARC each year.

Fees for **recreation programs held at Community Centers** are set by the Center Coordinator or Assistant Coordinator. Historically, these fees have differed by location, in part due to the characteristics of the surrounding community and ability to pay. Programs in neighborhoods with a higher proportion of low-income residents, such as Rainier Valley or South Park, may charge less or arrange for free programming if funding sources are available.

As described below in the Community Center Program Development section, Assistant Coordinators develop a budget and fee for each program, which requires knowing the direct costs which usually must be covered by fees (instructor pay and supplies), and estimating the minimum number of participants needed to pay the direct costs. Community Centers desiring to charge participants a lower fee may have to offer lower pay for instructors, which can cause a problem with recruiting.

BERK did a spot check of SPR fees for similar recreation programs at different locations in October of 2017, using the SPARC registration system. This check found that prices for Pilates classes with the same name and of the same length varied from $7 (at Jefferson) to $11 per class (at Montlake), as shown in Figure 24. Prices were even higher at Laurelhurst, possibly due to different class content. The lowest prices were for classes designed for adults age 50 and older. Other activity classes for older adults also priced at $4 to $5 per class. As there is no low-income requirement for the older adult classes, it's likely that SPR is charging its lowest rate to some individuals with higher incomes.

Figure 24. Example of Pilates Class Fees, Fall 2017

Class Name	Age	Location	Class Length	# of Classes	Price	Cost per Class
Pilates	15-85	Belltown	45	5	$30	$6
Pilates	15-85	Belltown	45	5	$30	$6
Pilates - Tues	18+	Jefferson	60	10	$70	$7
Pilates - Tue	18+	Jefferson	60	5	$35	$7
Pilates Plus	18+	Laurelhurst	60	15	$225	$15
Pilates and Yoga	18+	Laurelhurst	60	13	$195	$15
Pilates	12+	Loyal Heights	60	4	$32	$8
Pilates	12+	Loyal Heights	60	2	$16	$8
Pilates	12+	Loyal Heights	60	3	$24	$8
Pilates	50+	Loyal Heights	60	11	$45	$4
Pilates - Mon	18+	Montlake	60	4	$44	$11
Pilates NG	50+	Northgate	60	11	$55	$5
Pilates RE	50+	Ravenna-Eckstein	60	11	$55	$5

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR SPARC, 2017.

See more information on program fees and scholarships in the Community Centers and Aquatics sections.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are available for both child care programs and for recreation, and are one important way of promoting access to those who may not be able to afford standard fees or have access to alternative recreation options.

Funding Sources

Child care scholarships are funded through the City's General Fund and through an allocation of 1.5% of all revenue from Aquatics and Community Center programs. Total funding for child care scholarships is approximately $1.4M each year.

Prior to 2015, **recreation scholarships** were funded by individual Community Center Advisory Councils, through fund balance that included excess fee revenue that was not needed to pay for instructors or program expenses. Under that funding system, Community Centers in poorer neighborhoods with less fee revenue had less money available for scholarships, and had to make requests for scholarship funds from other Advisory Councils.

Starting in 2017, the revenue from Community Center fund balances has been consolidated, leading to the creation of a more centralized process for funding scholarships. A major new source of funding also came with the MPD, which now provides $400,000 a year for recreation scholarships.

Scholarship Application Process

To apply for a recreation or child care scholarship, SPR customers must visit an Aquatics or Community Center facility in person to fill out forms and provide financial documentation. Site staff can make a preliminary determination on eligibility for recreation scholarships, with final eligibility is determined at the Out of School Time central office.

SPR also works with several family shelters to find families eligible for child care scholarships. Caseworker referrals verify family eligibility, and SPR provides a 100% scholarship. Approximately 2% to 6% of scholarship recipients are estimated to be from shelters.

For child care scholarships, customers generally request funds for a full school year. Child care scholarships come with an attendance requirement: children must attend at least 60% of the course days, or the scholarship can be revoked. According to conversations with staff, many scholarship recipient families receive scholarships multiple years in a row.

Other than for homeless families, the maximum scholarship amount is 90% of program cost for child care, and 80% of cost for recreation programs.

Staff noted that the process for scholarship applications and information needs are both difficult for members of the public to understand and time consuming to administer. In addition, staff reported that 2017 recreation scholarship funds ran out early in the year, leaving some Community Centers with reduced registrations when participants could not pay through scholarships.

Scholarship Use

All scholarship funds were used in 2017, as shown in Figure 25. These funds, which came from SPR's General Fund, the Seattle Park District, and ARC contributions, were fully exhausted early in the year. SPR did not track the number of individuals requesting funds once the budgeted amounts were reached but in 2018, moved to set quarterly limits to ensure scholarship funds were available throughout the year. As this report was finalized, SPR reported that funds set aside for Q1 were completely exhausted. SPR has not collected demographic information on scholarship recipients and will begin to do so as part of ACTIVE Net implementation.

Figure 25. Park District, School Age Care, and Learn to Swim Scholarship Funds, 2017

Fund Source	Budgeted	Awarded	# of Unique Recipients
Park District-funded Scholarships	$399,511	$399,511	
ARC Supplement to Park District	$102,000	$100,198	2,776
Learn to Swim scholarships	$75,000	$74,823	
General Fund **School Age Care** Scholarships	$1,462,923	$1,448,836	
ARC Supplement to School Age Care	$160,982	$160,982	1,553
TOTAL BUDGET: $2,199,339	**$2,200,416**	**$2,184,350**	**4,329**

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2017.

PEER PRACTICES: BALANCING ACCESS AND EFFICIENCY THROUGH FEE SETTING AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Interviews with four other park and recreation agencies revealed that fee setting is often seen as a challenge for balancing equity and efficiency. Many agencies do not want cost to be a barrier for lower-income residents, and use scholarships, discounts, and free access or programming to ensure access. Reducing barriers for youth is often a priority, and Chicago and Minneapolis have policies ensuring youth will not be turned away for lack of ability to pay, Denver provides free access to recreation centers and pools for youth through its MyDenver program, and Portland generally charges lower fees for youth.

Some cities with more extensive fitness equipment than SPR, including Chicago, Denver, and Portland, charge membership fees for access to recreation centers while providing discounts or free access to some groups. For those not eligible for discounts, this is a higher charge than for SPR's now free drop-in activities, although it provides access to a higher level of facilities.

Management fees, scholarships, and fee waivers implemented vary among the cities interviewed. While several cities, including Seattle, charge different fees for the same program in different locations based on neighborhood socioeconomic conditions, others find that the public does not necessarily understand this policy and that the practice of deploying different prices for the same class is problematic.

Examples of noteworthy policies from the four agencies with whom interviews were conducted are provided here.

Chicago Park District

The District has differing prices for the same program in different locations, due to differing socioeconomic factors in neighborhoods and differing ability to pay. As stated in its 2017 budget, "because Chicago has such a wide and diverse economy, fee structures may vary from community to community and local socio-economic factors may be considered" (page 23).

Chicago charges a nonresident fee for classes, which is generally twice the resident level.

Denver Parks and Recreation

Denver offers memberships and visit passes to its recreation centers, which include access to fitness equipment as well as drop-in fitness and aqua-fitness classes; participation in classes is generally an extra fee. There are three levels of recreation centers (regional, local, and neighborhood) with different sizes, amenities, and schedules. Fees are generally highest at regional centers (which have the most amenities and are open the most) and lowest at neighborhood centers.

Denver provides discounts and scholarships based on age and income:

- The "MyDenver" access card is available to all Denver youth age 5 to 18 and provides free access to recreation centers and pools, as well as libraries and cultural facilities. A similar access card program for adults age 60 and older will be started in 2018 providing discounted access to recreation centers; it is anticipated to cover approximately 3,000 eligible older adults who aren't covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or insurance.

- Denver also offers both discounted memberships and programs to low-income individuals through its "PLAY" program ("Parks and Recreation Looking to Assist You"). Discounts range from 10 to 90%

and are based on household income.

Denver does not have a cost recovery target for recreation programming, with the exception of Golf and Citywide Adult Sports.

Portland Parks and Recreation

As of 2017, Portland charged different prices for the same class. Portland expects to move to a more consistent systemwide pricing structure, with some flexibility to charge different prices based upon geography. There will be some differentiation of classes in different neighborhoods to create some ability to charge different prices in different neighborhoods. Portland will also change from using program discounts to scholarships. Under the 2017 discount program, a site loses revenue when it provides the discount, as there is no central funding to replace the value of the discount. The new scholarship system will be centrally funded, which will also allow for better tracking.

Portland charges a different rate for recreation programs to non-residents, which is generally 40% higher than the resident rate.

All Portland departments that provide fee-for-service programs and receive a public subsidy are required to do regular "cost of service" studies, to determine the cost of providing the service. Portland is in the process of updating its last cost of service study (2014).

Portland City Council adopted a formal cost recovery policy for Portland Parks and Recreation in 2004. It sets fee targets based on age group and neighborhood income profile, as follows:

Figure 26. Portland Parks and Recreation Cost Recovery Goals

	Direct	Total
Median/above- income neighborhood:		
Adult	110%	63%
Youth	80%	42%
Mixed	95%	53%
Low-income neighborhood:		
Adult	50%	26%
Youth	40%	23%
Mixed	45%	25%
All	**70%**	**30%**

Source: Portland Parks and Recreation, Cost of Service Report, May 2014. Available at: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/491511.

Portland's systemwide cost recovery target is 70% for direct costs (those that can be controlled by programming activities, such as personnel, materials, and supplies) and 39% total recovery (direct costs plus indirect costs – maintenance, utilities, capital replacement, and overhead). This target has been exceeded in the past few years, largely due to increased fees. The agency may update its cost recovery targets as part of the new cost of service study. There is concern that fee increases over the past few years may be reducing access and equity for Portland residents. As stated in the agency's FY 2017-18 Requested Budget:

"…recent years' general fund discretionary budget reductions have largely been met with increased

*revenue targets, and associated fee increases, as the bureau has tried to maintain service levels. In order to meet the increasing revenue targets, program managers had to move away from more highly subsidized programming toward programs that generated enough revenue to cover increasing costs in place of lost discretionary funding. This budgetary approach has contributed to the upward shift in cost recovery, and while overall service levels have been maintained, **price increases may have had the effect of reducing access for some Portlanders.**"* [emphasis added]

Recommendation 5. Continue to reduce barriers and encourage the participation of traditionally underserved groups and those with less access to alternatives.

USAGE + ACCESS

To supplement the resource- and affordability-focused approaches described above, SPR is doing more to encourage participation among target groups programmatically. This entails understanding and addressing current barriers, devising appropriate programming, and effectively marketing the availability of recreation resources.

▪ **Continue to seek to understand the barriers to participation and desired programming,** building on previous engagements, revising Advisory Councils to be more effective in this role, and leveraging insights from trusted public and non-profit partners. Centralize this information so it is commonly understood by staff across the system and use it to inform ongoing learning and continuous improvement conversations among staff who recruit for classes and other services. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169.

▪ **Be truly welcoming.** While customer service is important to serving all customers well, it has particular import for reaching and retaining customers for whom a public facility is not necessarily a welcoming place, namely refugees, immigrants, and non-native speakers of English. Special skills, translation, and deliberate marketing in Community Centers and in communities are all important to this.

▪ **Continue to learn** from others, including staff of other City programs that serve the same population, as well as recreation agencies across the country striving to improve outreach to, programming for, and affordability for underserved groups.

These efforts may be strengthened by **Recommendation 2,** which seeks to improve the role and functioning of Advisory Councils. Councils have had a traditional role of providing a voice to community needs, but not all perform this function well.

Recommendation 6.   Continue to align resources and fees to prioritize participation by low-income communities while earning revenues as appropriate.

SPR has made positive strides in addressing historic elements of the system that favor the participation of some. Scholarships and discounts are being used to increase access to child care, recreation programs, and aquatics resources among those with limited resources. Community Center financial resources are being concentrated in the Southwest and Southeast of the City which have greater numbers of lower income community members (see discussion around Figure 36). Our recommendations build on these efforts, focusing on **resource allocation**, maintaining **affordable access** for those with limited means, and maximizing opportunities to generate system revenues through **participation fees.**

6.1   *Concentrate operating resources to facilitate access for lower income community members.*

Our analysis shows that SPR is concentrating public (General Fund and MPD) resources in lower income neighborhoods to buttress access to Community Center amenities and programming (see discussion around Figure 36). This focus should be maintained and refined as a deliberate strategy, with ongoing performance measurement used to adjust the system over time to achieve desired goals.

In addition to public resources, SPR and ARC are changing the way ARC fund balances function, moving toward a more equitable, systemwide approach. Previously, individual centers retained funds they raised from year to year; beginning in 2018, the ARC Equity Fund pools surplus resources and makes them available to other Centers twice a year by request.

In 2016, individual ARC community councils raised funds ranging from $100 to a high of $41,000 at Garfield. ARC is looking to consolidate revenues across the system. This should continue, with monitoring for adverse effects that may come from introducing possible disincentives for individual Community Centers to raise funds through program fees, Advisory Council fundraising, and other means.

6.2   *Study and set fee levels to capture appropriate revenues from those who can afford to pay.*

Recreation programs are a classic example of a public services that can be partially supported through user fees. SPR has the ability to generate additional revenue through participant fees from those who can afford to pay more to support its recreation mission and subsidizing access for the underserved.

Participant fees are currently geographically uniform across the system for Aquatics and more variable for Community Center programs – see Figure 36. It is not well understood whether current fees are appropriately set relative to other alternatives and the price sensitivity of customers. Opportunities to increase this source of earned revenue must be balanced with other goals, particularly creating affordable access for residents at all income ranges.

Discounted participation fees should be intended to improve affordability based on ability to pay. SPR should explore the pros and cons of reducing fee discounts not related to income, such as for those over age 50 or with disabilities. While these programs are currently offered for free, it would be more consistent to charge for these courses and offer scholarships for those with limited resources.

SPR should conduct a review of its recreation fee and scholarship structure:

1) Conduct a fee study to see if fees are properly set relative to market rates for comparable services (adjusted downwards to reflect taxpayer investment in the system) and willingness to pay. As part of this review, compare SPR rate setting practices and rates to those of comparable communities.

2) Model the likely financial and participation outcomes associated with fee adjustments and commensurate modification of scholarship budget and criteria.

3) Evaluate fee setting, scholarship, and model options together.

Model options are outlined below for consideration.

Option	Pros	Cons
1. **Eliminate community center program fees for all services**	▪ Increases access. ▪ Simple to administer.	▪ Requires substantial additional funding to replace lost fee revenue while subsidizing residents who can afford to pay. ▪ Negatively affects private- and non-profit providers. ▪ Discourages competition and innovation in service provision.
2. **Set system-wide community center program fees based on market rates.** Offset potential fee increases with increased funding for scholarships or discounts for lower-income community members per Recommendation 3.4. Refine the current scholarship system to reduce barriers to participation and promote access.	▪ Generates revenue from participants who can afford to pay, which can be used to subsidize access for the underserved. ▪ Prioritizes limited public dollars on those with the greatest need and fewest alternatives. ▪ Fundraising for scholarships may be compelling.	▪ May provoke negative community response. ▪ May deter participation among those charged higher fees. ▪ Requires careful management of limited scholarship funds.

Option	Pros	Cons
3. **Set community center program fees based on neighborhood income levels (current model).**	▪ Facilitates segmented fee setting. ▪ Can increase access for the underserved. ▪ Attempts to prioritize public funding for the underserved. ▪ Simpler to administer than scholarships.	▪ Raises questions about why fees for the same course vary by geography. ▪ Discriminates against lower income community members in relatively wealthier neighborhoods and may charge low fees for the some who are relatively wealthier.

6.3   Explore opportunities to charge higher rates for non-Seattle residents.

Detailed figures on nonresident use of SPR recreation programs was not available for this analysis, but an estimate based on user ZIP codes showed different levels of nonresident usage in 2016:

- Community Center programs   6%

- Aquatics programs   5%

- Boating programs   18% (moorage fees will likely change with pending new contract)

- Facility Rentals   Not determined

As these individuals do not contribute General Fund and MPD tax revenues to support the system, it is reasonable to charge an additional increment for use of Seattle Public Schools resources. Peer cities Minneapolis, Portland, and Chicago all charge higher fees to nonresidents, ranging from 40% to 100% higher than resident fees. SPR charges nonresident fees for programs at the Amy Yee Tennis Center (not addressed by this report) that are approximately 10% higher. Some neighboring cities, including Mountlake Terrace and Renton charge higher pool fees for non-residents.

6.4   Study the need to increase funds available for scholarships and strengthen their administration to support access for low income communities.

As a fee-based system, there is a balance between generating revenue and enabling access. SPR's use of scholarships and discounts helps increase opportunities for people with limited ability to pay while establishing a higher base rate for those who can afford to pay.

Particularly if the fee study recommended in Recommendation 3.2 results in base fee increase, SPR and the City of Seattle overall should further study the need to expand and promote scholarships and discounts, targeting low-income community members (see information on demand for scholarships in the section beginning on page 44).

Systemwide Quality and Impact

▪ *Are Recreation Division customers satisfied?*

▪ *Are programs generating desired benefits for participants?*

Our Evaluative Framework contains two primary measures of quality and impact: customer satisfaction and results. The Results Framework is introduced on page 59 and is addressed in more detail in Chapter V, beginning on page 100. Program quality and customer satisfaction is a systemwide concern and is addressed here.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer service is important for SPR to ensure its public facilities and programs are welcoming to all and easy to use. The primary components of customer service in the Recreation Division take place at facility front desks and by phone, and include responding to questions and complaints, registering participants for classes and programs, and taking payment. A broader view of customer service also includes ease-of-use of the website and registration system.

One complication in providing customer service is the relationship between SPR and ARC staff in interacting with customers. Whereas ARC employs program instructors, participants often see SPR as the service provider and make complaints to SPR staff, who must then coordinate with ARC to resolve the issue. See more information on coordination with ARC, following.

Staff Expectations and Job Descriptions

Facility Supervisors

SPR expectations for supervisors at Aquatics and Community Center facilities are described in SPR's "Basic Expectations for Facility Supervisors," dated July 10, 2015. The document includes the following language on customer service:

> **ASSURE CUSTOMER SERVICE**: *Establish a high standard of customer service with staff and within facilities to provide a climate of welcoming everyone, cleanliness and attention to each citizen's needs. Examples of good customer service include: information is readily available both verbally and in writing; staff are versed in center programs and operations and in Parks and Recreation's mission and services and can provide accurate and timely information and responses to the public; staff answers phones within four rings; return calls within 48 hours; staff provide appropriate and informative messaging on after hours voicemail; facility is clean and stocked with needed supplies and materials; customers walk away with a good feeling about their interaction with staff; staff demonstrate a "How can I help you" attitude. Attention to greeting patrons with a smile.*

The document lists the following customer service training opportunities: SPR videotape library and City of Seattle Personnel classes: *Learning from the Customer*, *How and When to Conduct Customer Surveys*, and *Thinking on Your Feet*.

Recreation Attendants

At Community Centers, Recreation Attendants are often the front-line staff member interacting with

customers and fielding their inquiries. SPR managers estimate that Recreation Attendants spend about 50% of their time answering customer inquiries, taking registrations, and providing other customer services. As such, the job description, evaluation process, and training for this position contribute to customer service results.

According to the SPR job description for Recreation Attendants, the position includes:

- Answering phone inquiries.

- Monitoring customers in the building and grounds to ensure compliance with rules.

- Assisting with organized recreational activities.

- Registering participants, collecting money, writing receipts.

One field staffer interviewed stated that not all front desk say "hello" when a customer walks in the building, attributing this to uneven training and staff expectations. They suggested that a simple instruction from SPR leadership would go a long way in stating and enforcing standards.

Cashiers

The Cashier position is located primarily at Aquatics Centers and includes the following stated roles relating to customer service:

- Greet customers on entry and provide information on the facility, program, event, or activities.

- Resolve customer complaints.

- Answer customer questions and provides information on procedures and policies.

- Assist customers on the phone and in person.

Staff Training

Training Binder. SPR has a Customer Service Training Binder titled "Yes, We Can!," which was last updated in 2017 and is distributed to new staff as part of an orientation. The binder includes general background on customer service, SPR's Mission and Values, the City of Seattle's Customer Bill of Rights, and a guide to working with people. Specific guidelines for SPR customer service activities are also included, such as how to greet people on the phone or in person. The binder addresses working with customers from diverse backgrounds, including English Language Learners and persons with disabilities.

One basic expectation laid out in the binder, smiling and greeting people when they enter a facility, is not followed consistently throughout SPR, according to some staff interviews.

Other Training. Aside from the binder, new SPR front-

Seattle Parks & Recreation
healthy people healthy environment strong communities

Yes, We Can!

A guide to providing outstanding customer service in programs, parks and facilities

2017 Edition

line staff receive an online training in customer service, as well as direct training from their site supervisor. Ongoing training includes quarterly SPR-wide meetings for Recreation Attendants and other front-line staff.

Staff Accountability

All staff receive an annual performance evaluation from their supervisor. The Recreation Division will be piloting a new City of Seattle staff evaluation process which is more goal-oriented and includes regular check-ins.

Registration Communications

Usability of systems such as program registration and notifications is an important element of customer service. SPR's current online registration system lacks some features that other park agencies include, such as: confirmations, notifications, or reminders. SPR will be switching to ACTIVE Net for its registration software in 2018, which has the capability of providing many of these functions.

Customer Service Metrics and Results

It is our understanding that SPR does not set goals for customer service satisfaction other than the Results Framework, and does not measure satisfaction on a regular basis. An April 2017 survey of Seattle households seeking to assess priorities for and satisfaction with parks and recreation did not ask questions specific to satisfaction with recreation facilities and programs. Some facilities have done their own assessments of customer satisfaction, including surveys and secret shopper programs.

Surveys. Some Community Centers have conducted their own customer surveys at their front counters. While this method does not necessarily ensure a random sample of customers to measure satisfaction, it can be a valuable way of uncovering problems.

Secret Shopper Programs. Staff reported that there have been secret shopper programs in the past to evaluate customer service, but that the results were not shared among staff. South Park Community Center has used Secret shopper programs to evaluate programs, engaging teens to participate and report back on their findings. This was used in part to examine comfort for LGBTQ persons in particular programs, and results led to additional staff training.

While a secret shopper customer service evaluation was not part of this project, BERK staff did visit

Personal Experience

Personal experience from one of the study authors at BERK shows how changes in the registration system could be helpful for customers. The person in question found signing up for a Pilates class seemed more difficult than she thought it ought to be, with. First, she found when creating a note on the SPR website new account that it can take up to two business days to get an account be approved.

Once the account was completed, she registered for a Pilates class. When it came time for the class, she realized she never received an email confirmation with the date and time, so she checked back on the website. Then, about two days before the class, she got a voicemail message from an SPR staff member, notifying her that the day of week for the class had changed. This seemed like late notice, but she was able to accommodate the change, and took the class, which she enjoyed.

The next time she signed up for the same class, she showed up at the Center and was notified that the class day had changed, and the instructor was supposed to have contacted her. She cancelled her registration, as the new day didn't work for her.

multiple Community Centers on trips to interview staff, and took note of how we were greeted by staff. In general for the six Centers visited, we received a friendly and helpful greeting from front-desk staff.

SPR Staff Comments

Some field staff interviewed have suggested that customer service could be improved. Examples were given of staff not providing complete information to customers on the phone, or not saying "hello" and welcoming customers in person. Causes were attributed to staff turnover, vacancies, and a lack of standard expectations and training among Community Centers. As one staffer said:

> *"…one thing we can all do that doesn't take money and time is have customer service where people feel like you want them to be there. Answer phone in a couple of rings. We can all be distracted, but if you feel eyes on your back, turn around and address the person, 'how can I help you?' That's customer service, and it's not that hard."*

Peer Practices: Customer Service

Of the four peer cities we reviewed, Denver has the most extensive system of both training for customer service and measuring results. This program is outlined in the Appendix.

Promising practices from peer cities include the following:

- Staffing

  - Denver Parks and Recreation requires two years of customer service experience for its Recreation Service Representative position, which fills all front counter staffing.

  - The Denver Guest Relations group, a centralized, dedicated customer service team helps ensure resources and accountability.

- Accountability

  - Denver Parks and Recreation connects secret shopper scores with staff evaluations.

- Registration Communications

  - Several peer cities using the ACTIVE Net registration system enable customers to sign up for email or text messages for notifications about their programs.

- Tracking Satisfaction

  - Portland Parks and Recreation mails a customer satisfaction survey each year to a random sample of 1,000 registered users.

  - Denver uses a secret shopper program to assess staff customer service performance, as well as facility cleanliness and appearance at every recreation center, every month.

Recommendation 7.   Strengthen customer service.

QUALITY +
IMPACT

Depending upon one's point of view or the piece of literature being consulted, customer service can be seen as essential or a distraction from a more fundamental focus on helping customers achieve their desired outcomes. While the Results Framework admirably focuses on the latter, we suggest that recreation is a service business and that a strong focus on welcoming facilities and customer service is critical to attracting and retaining satisfied customers. This is true both for customers with the ability to pay for for-profit alternatives, and for the populations that have been traditionally underserved or have fewer alternatives.

7.1   Focus the Division and individual staff on the importance of customer service through culture- and expectation-setting.

Although customer service is an avowed management focus for SPR, little has been done in a standardized way systemwide to train staff, hold staff accountable, and understand changes over time. Recommended steps to improve focus on customer service include:

- Emphasize the importance of a customer orientation through guiding statements (Vision, Mission, or Values) and communications by leadership to establish a Division-wide culture of customer service. This has been done to some degree but can be expanded upon.

- Continue and strengthen ongoing customer service training for all customer-facing positions such as Recreation Attendants. This has been done to some degree but can be expanded upon.

- Set clear expectations for staff, tying customer service to job descriptions and performance evaluations. Include expectations that staff will "greet every customer who walks in the door and proactively offer information about programs and services" in job descriptions and personnel evaluations.

- Consider requiring customer service experience for positions with significant front-line public and customer interactions. (Minimum qualifications for the Recreation Services Representative position with Denver Parks and Recreation includes two years of customer service work in recreation, retail, hospital, or a related industry.)

- Encourage customer-serving staff to share their insights and observations of what matters to customers based on their day-to-day interactions. Staff often have good ideas about improving the customer experience, but not the authority or responsibility for implementing them. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169.

- Give staff the encouragement and tools to put themselves "in the customer's shoes," using customer personas or other methods to explore the customer experience of a wealthy resident, a teen, or a non-English speaking refugee new to the United States.

- Train staff, including temporary staff, in learning from customers through daily interactions and observations or by holding conversations with individuals or groups (avoid the off-putting term "focus groups.") and see this as a core function of recreation specialists.

7.2   Add new tools to gather customer satisfaction information from program participants.

In addition to current tools, SPR should implement new systems to understand and track customer satisfaction. Peer cities may serve as an inspiration and practical example as summarized in the Appendix beginning on page 176. Chicago, Denver, and Portland have all implemented efforts such as a secret shopper program or systemwide randomized surveys of customers. The full implementation of ACTIVE Net will strengthen SPR's ability to survey program participants and this opportunity needs to be fully explored and taken advantage of.

The results of this customer input should integrate into SPR's performance management system as noted in **Recommendation 8.**

Performance Management

SPR'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Measuring Our Success

The SPR 2015 "Measuring Our Success" guide (link) for staff describes several purposes for performance management at SPR:

- Improvement ("Be our best").

- Communication ("Tell our story").

- Alignment with the mission and values of the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative.

SPR's overarching Outcomes are: Healthy People, Healthy Environment, and Strong Communities; and Organizational Excellence/Financial Stability to support their mission.

SPR has one staff member dedicated full-time to performance management and the Recreation Division includes an MPD-funded position that is one-third performance management, one-third budget, and one-third special projects.

In 2014, SPR adopted a **Performance Management Work Plan**, and in 2015 SPR created a staff resource guide – **Measuring Our Success** – to roll out a new performance management initiative. The guide is organized by the three outcomes of Healthy People, Healthy Environment, and Strong Communities. The guide describes a strategy for using performance management to improve, communicate, and connect to the City's race and social justice initiative. It includes direction for staff for quantifying services. Department-wide objectives are provided in three realms as summarized below:

Healthy People

- *Provide quality programs that meet ever-changing interests and needs of the community.*

- *Improve access to programs through free programs, scholarships, stipends and grants.*

BACKGROUND: WHAT IS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT?

Purposes

Measuring an organization's performance can serve multiple purposes, which help determine which types of performance management are most useful. Harvard professor Robert Behn described eight purposes of performance management: evaluation, control, budget, motivation, promotion (communication), celebration, learning, and improvement.

What to Measure: Outputs vs Outcomes

Performance measures help answer the question: How will we know we are on track, doing the activities we said we would and creating the desired impact?

There are different types of measures:

Output Measures are simple volumes or counts.

- Number of courses delivered.

- Number of program participants.

- Number of Lean processes completed.

Benchmark Measures: these take output measures a step further, identifying targets or analyzing a proportion or trend.

- Percent of classes delivered by certified instructors.

- Percent of program participants who complete the full course.

Outcome Measures: describe the impact of our work.

- Changes in participant behavior.

- Efficiencies gained through application of Lean process improvement.

SPR is currently using a mix of measures in its performance management systems, as discussed later in this document.

- *Offer excellent and consistent customer service.*

- *Increase awareness by publicizing programs and services.*

Healthy Environment

- *Prolong the life and usefulness of facilities through integrated asset management.*

- *Preserve, expand and reclaim park property for public use and benefit.*

- *Provide clean, safe, welcoming and accessible parks and facilities.*

- *Steward an environmentally sustainable parks system for the next generation.*

Strong Communities

- *Connect the public with a diversity of opportunities to gather, play and celebrate.*

- *Improve access and reduce barriers for underrepresented and underserved communities.*

- *Activate Downtown Parks to create a welcoming environment for all.*

- *Encourage community engagement and volunteerism.*

Results Framework

In 2015, SPR started a new outcome-based performance assessment program called the Results Framework. The Results Framework is a process for defining, tracking, and verifying participant accomplishment in recreation programming; it is generally designed for multi-session, instructor-led recreation programming, and primarily focuses on *participant outcomes* as opposed to *outputs*.

To "apply" the Results Framework to a program, SPR collaborates with SPR and ARC staff and program instructors to: (i) develop a program logic model to set evidence-based program outcomes that will be consistent across similar programs, wherever they are held; (ii) lead programs with these outcomes ("results") in mind; (iii) measure how well participants achieved results achieved the results on a regular basis; and (iv) make improvements to the program based on participant feedback. SPR staff work with ARC to ensure instructors are trained and held accountable to results.

SPR began setting up the Results Framework in 2015, with the first programs measured in in 2016. Each quarter, the Department has identified a select set of programs to focus on, starting with martial arts as described in Chapter 5, beginning on page 100. SPR began implementation of the Results Framework with Community Center recreation programming standards, developing 10 program logic models, including Dance, Fitness, Martial Arts, and others. Beginning in 2018, SPR will engage Aquatics, Lifelong Recreation, Specialized Programs, and others in applying the Results Framework process. With current resources, SPR reports that it has capacity to slowly build out this system to cover all potential program areas over the next several years, focusing on three to five programs per quarter. This could be expedited and deepened with additional resources (in the form of staff support for data collection, analysis, and reporting, and automated analysis and reporting tools).

Recreation Division leadership and staff are meeting in Fall 2017 to map out a schedule for full rollout of the Results Framework and to explore how unit-specific goals and data gathering will roll up to a system level view.

SPR Staff Feedback on the Results Framework

Recreation field staff had several comments on the benefits of the Results system, which are in many ways broader than just performance management:

- The process brings together SPR and ARC staff to have an intentional discussion about specific programming, including a review of relevant literature and evidence-based findings. These conversations help align organizational expectations and establish goals for ARC-hired instructors.

- Post-class surveys are helpful in uncovering desire for different types of classes, or the need for different age groupings, which led to changes in programming.

- The direct participant feedback to teachers is a valuable way for the teacher to consider doing things differently.

Staff also noted that Parks has so far used Results only for the most successful programs, whose customers they have a rapport with, and the findings may not be representative of all programs systemwide.

According to staff, SPR is working on developing a more integrated performance management system that pulls data sets from various platforms and links them to performance and financial information. Automation of data collection and reporting is also a goal over the next few years.

Recommendation 8.4 summarizes our suggestions related to the Results Framework.

EXTERNAL MEASURES

In addition to measures set by SPR, others have set expectations for the agency's work.

MPD Evaluation Requirements

The MPD funds several discrete recreation programs, in addition to general Community Center operations. Each program has an annual performance goal, and performance is reported in the annual Park District report. See below for information on Park District goals.

City of Seattle Performance Management

In 2016, Mayor Edward Murray created Performance Seattle, a staff team working with department leaders on performance and accountability measures. The City tracks performance data on the Performance Seattle website for all departments and services.

As of June 2017, the website lists five metrics for SPR of which two apply directly to Recreation: swim lessons conducted and community center visits.

Figure 27: SPR Performance Seattle Metrics, June 2017

Metric	2017 Target	How Measured
Permitted uses of park facilities	64,000	Total number of permits issued for all uses: youth and adult athletics, picnics, ceremonies, special events, day camps, and indoor rentals.
Swim lessons conducted	**300,000**	**Lesson registrations. (Online registration used for pool lessons and on-site registrations for beach lessons.)**
Community Center visits	**3,750,000**	**"People counters," installed in 2013, track people entering Community Centers.**
Volunteer hours	Not listed	The Volgistics tracking system documents volunteers.
Parkland reforestation	Not listed[2]	Acres enrolled in restoration.

Source: City of Seattle, Performance Seattle, https://performance.seattle.gov/, 2017.

In March 2017, Mayor Murray signed Executive Order 2017-02 directing City departments to expand their use of data and analysis in management and decision making.[3] The order directs the Performance Seattle team to:

- Create an inventory of department performance measures.

- Analyze where data is needed but not available.

- Build dashboards to make data available to City officials.

- Create a long-term plan for data management and analysis.

NATIONAL BENCHMARKS

While extensive work has been conducted nationally to provide guidance for setting level of service for access to capital facilities and land for active and passive recreation, much less focus has been given to standards related to recreation programming.

CAPRA Evaluation Requirements

SPR has indicated that it may pursue accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA). The CAPRA Standards 5th Edition (2014) include the following Fundamental Standard for Evaluation, Assessment, and Research:

The agency shall have systematic processes for evaluating programs, facilities and services, and operational efficiency and effectiveness.

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[2] Goal is 2,500 acres enrolled by 2025. 1,374 acres enrolled as of April 2016, per Performance Seattle website.
[3] See: http://murray.seattle.gov/mayor-murray-signs-executive-order-expanding-use-performance-data/

And includes the following suggested evidence of compliance:

Describe what is evaluated and the methods and frequency of evaluation of programs facilities and services. Evaluation is the process of determining the effectiveness of current practice and procedures.

National Recreation and Parks Association

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) gathers data from agencies across the country and provides resources it describes as "the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies." Results are summarized in an annual Agency Performance Review that summarizes metrics by agency size in an electronic document, as well as in an online interactive format.

In practical terms, however, there is little here that is useful in comparing Seattle to other agencies. Parks and recreation agencies vary tremendously in size (budget, population served), organization (some focus solely on parks, some on recreation, and many on both), services and range of programming offered, service delivery model, and resources. This complicates comparisons tremendously, making easy "apples to apples" comparisons of key performance metrics specific to recreation truly impossible.

Of potential interest to this study, the Agency Performance Review touches on:

- **Programming offerings**. This section describes what percentage of agencies offer different types of programming, such as team sports, golf, cultural crafts, or targeted programs for children, older adults, and people with disabilities. A quick review indicates that Seattle provides all or nearly all of programming offered by at least 60% of agencies plus others offered by just larger jurisdictions.

- **Staffing**. NRPA provides FTE counts, but these are not a useful basis of comparison for this study, as they are reported at the agency level, which will include parks functions for many, but not all agencies, in addition to recreation functions. An interesting data point is that 34% of park and recreation agencies surveyed have workers covered by collective bargaining.

- **Budget.** As with staffing figures, budget data are presented on an agency-wide basis and cannot be used to compare budget specific to recreation.

PEER PRACTICES: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Working with City Council and agency staff, BERK identified four peer agencies with strong reputations that are considered to be comparable to Seattle, including Chicago, Denver, Minneapolis, and Portland. Through a series of interviews and data requests, we explored how these peers are engaging with challenges and opportunities relevant to SPR's recreation functions. Content from this learning is interspersed throughout this report when it is relevant to the issue at hand, with more detailed information presented in the Appendix. Peer agencies' approaches to performance management in particular are described beginning on page 171.

Recommendation 8. Strengthen SPR's performance management system to provide simple reports and nuanced consideration of competing goals.

8.1 Create simple dashboards that communicate, at a glance, the volume of SPR's recreation activities.

The Recreation Division owns a large and complicated array of programs. In the face of this complexity, it is essential that SPR create a way to report to community members and decision makers in a simple and consistent fashion. There are many ways to measure usage of SPR's recreation resources:

- Registered courses, including Community Center- and pool-based classes, child care, and other, are tracked through the CLASS system.

- Every passage through a Community Center door is recorded by a "People Counter," whether that trip is a registered participant in a scheduled course (in which case they are also tracked in the CLASS database), a caregiver dropping off or picking up a child, a SPR staff person, or a delivery service.

- Attendance at beaches, wading pools, and sprayparks are measured by staff observations, while pool attendance is captured by staff cashiers.

SPR does not have a good way to succinctly display a topline summary of different kinds of usage. A good example to review is Denver Parks and Recreation's monthly dashboard report on metrics including usage shown in Figure 28. A copy of SPR's dashboard concept is shown on page 170.

Figure 28

Figure 28. Denver Parks and Recreation Dashboard Metrics Report, July 2017

Recreation Dashboard: Mission Level Metrics

Report Date Range: January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017
Report Date: August 15, 2017

MEMBERSHIP USAGE

By Tier	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Regional Centers	78,959	74,276	84,172	76,884	76,884	86,545	80,479	0	0	0	0	0	557,736
Local Centers	35,619	34,785	41,724	35,548	38,502	41,840	36,446	0	0	0	0	0	264,464
Neighborhood Centers	11,946	13,047	14,664	13,388	12,746	15,408	12,385	0	0	0	0	0	94,584
Employee Fitness Center	4,339	4,188	5,086	4,360	4,446	4,519	4,031	0	0	0	0	0	30,969
Outdoor pools	0	0	0	0	0	45,753	53,161	0	0	0	0	0	98,919
Total	130,863	126,296	145,646	130,180	133,115	194,070	186,502	0	0	0	0	0	1,046,672
Program Enrollments	3,420	2,030	9,359	2,907	7,597	5,217	3,830	0	0	0	0	0	34,370

2017 Total Usage by Month

Highest Usage Centers
Central Park — 25,910
Washington Park — 14,909
Montclair — 12,569

Centers with Most Increase from Previous Month
Montclair — 5%

Centers with Most Decrease from Previous Month
Swansea — -49%
St. Charles — -48%
Platt Park — -30%

→ Budget Book Usage Goal: 1,485,532
→ Percentage of Budget Book Usage Goal Achieved: 70%
→ Monthly usage is up 1% from the same month a year ago.
→ Annual usage is up 2% from the previous year

*Usage data comes from ActiveNet

PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS

2017 Program Registrations by Month

→ Monthly registrations are down 27% from the same month a year ago.
→ Annual registrations are down 7% from the previous year

Recreation Dashboard   1

8.2   Refine comprehensive performance reporting to reflect the tensions between the competing goals of our Evaluative Framework.

Usage and Access

- Create a summary dashboard view of the use of recreation resources. Keep it simple, like Denver's example and clearly show magnitude and trends in usage. Include class registrations and estimated volumes for drop-in resources.

- Ensure that all programs are tracking and contributing usage data, including as new programs get added, such as **Get Moving** and **Recreation for All**. Participation data (as well as the demographic data described below) are important to report for these individual programs, and for summing in Division-wide reports of the number of individuals served.

- Compare changes in usage to changes in population.

- Track new customers and their characteristics.

- Report on operating expenditures, including scholarships, and usage at Geo level, ZIP code, block group, or individual level to understand how effectively SPR is investing in access for lower income populations.

- Report on scholarship usage, including the demographics of recipients.

- While maintaining open and inviting facilities and programs, seek to collect information on the demographics of users to understand who is being served and how that population differs from the overall population of the neighboring community. Integrate GIS, demographic, and user information to connect programming decisions with facility locations and geographic distribution of need.

Quality and Impact

- Track repeat customers and their characteristics.

- Report on customer satisfaction over time. This should be done more consistently across the system. **Aquatics**, for example, should find ways to integrate customer satisfaction questions with the registration process or in follow-up to a class.

- Integrate Results Framework measures of customer outcomes in systemwide evaluation and reporting.

- Capture and share stories related to the impact Recreation staff can have on the lives of individuals and families in need.

Resource Efficiency

- Create a dashboard for facility rentals, describing the volume of rentals (number and hours), revenues, discounts, and impact on other programming.

- Track class cancellations and classes that run with fewer than the minimum registrants.

- Track downtime and unplanned closures of facilities.

- Consider more specific cost recovery goals and tracking based on facility capacity and the full costs

of both direct and indirect (maintenance and capital) factors. This will inform **Recommendation 12** regarding facility rentals.

To track some of the recommended measures listed above, SPR will have to make investments in facilitating technology, including ACTIVE Net, possibly replacement of People Counters, and staff capacity to collect, analyze, and report out on division-wide data. These resource requirements are summarized in the section beginning on page 169.

It is important to appreciate the tensions and tradeoffs associated with tracking and reporting on this data, including investments in staff time and technology and the impacts to customers, including potentially making facilities or services less welcoming. In some cases, in the face of such practical tradeoffs, it may be wise to sacrifice "perfect" data for observational data that is likely to be accurate to an appropriate level of magnitude. For example, the physical design of some centers may make it prohibitive to install automated counters to capture the number of people who enter the building or the number of participants in a particular class. Headcounts by staff may be an entirely appropriate solution, as long as the data is integrated with other automatically calculated data. Similarly, staff could estimate demographic information in broad categories based on observations, understanding some individuals will be miscategorized, rather than asking all participants to provide demographic data.

8.3   Strengthen the ability to understand who is using SPR's recreation resources.

With the move to ACTIVE Net, SPR will have greater ability to track and report on the demographic characteristics of recreation users and scholarship recipients. This data will be essential for supporting Access-related goals and **Recommendations 5 and 6**. Collection of this data must be calibrated with the need to keep facilities and programming open and welcoming to participants. The collection of demographic data be calibrated based on changes in practices by other organizations and the level of comfort that different Seattle communities have with sharing this information, including refugees and immigrants who may have a general distrust of government based on past experiences.

8.4   Continue to build out the Results Framework system.

The Results Framework model is both 1) a process that instigates productive conversations among SPR and ARC staff responsible for program development and delivery; 2) a product that measures the effectiveness or outcomes associated with effective recreational programming. A clear timeline should be established to expand SPR's pilot work to other relevant programming. As noted above, Results Framework data should be integrated with other performance data as a way of triangulating in on multiple desired outcomes. Results Framework data should also be leveraged for program developed as noted in **Recommendation 3**.

IV. FOCUS ON COMMUNITY CENTERS

Background and Operational Overview

Most Seattle residents live within a mile and half of a Community Center (2016 Community Center Strategic Plan, p 45). Seattle's 27 Community Centers provide:

- **Scheduled programs**, including recreation programs and licensed child care and preschool programs, with instructors generally employed by ARC.

- **Drop-in resources and activities** such as toddler gym and play rooms; fitness rooms; basketball, pickleball, dodgeball, and volleyball; pool tables; and table games like Bridge or Mahjong. In an effort to make drop-in activities more accessible, SPR eliminated $1.00-$3.00 fees for drop-in activities under the 2016 Community Center Strategic Plan, using MPD funding to supplant these user fees.

Most Community Centers are equipped with kitchens and other amenities to serve a variety of purposes, including renting them out for special events. Community Centers host special events and provide a number of other non-recreation services. In addition to Center-based programs, Community Center staff oversee Enrichment activities for youth that take place at Seattle Public Schools.

Beginning in 2012, SPR instituted a geographic division of the City's Community Centers as part of a restructuring and cost-cutting measure. The geographic distribution was adjusted in 2016 from the original five areas to four areas. Before 2012, the functions of Community Centers were coded to budget categories that were shared with administrative functions. These budget categories have continued to be used for administrative expenditures, so at this time, we cannot separate 2010-2011 Community Center costs from other administrative costs.

The expenditures and revenues associated with Community Centers in Figure 29 do not include program fees paid to ARC or expenses paid by ARC, such as course and program instructors. City revenues include rental fees, program fees that go directly to the City, and 4% PAR Fees remitted by ARC. Additionally, City expenses include City staff and some non-labor expenditures, such as utilities and equipment, these expenses do not include maintenance costs, which fall under the Maintenance Division. With the pending move to a new Citywide accounting model, these expenses will be more assignable to the recreation functions they support.

Figure 29. Community Centers Expenditures and Direct Revenues, 2010-2016 Actuals
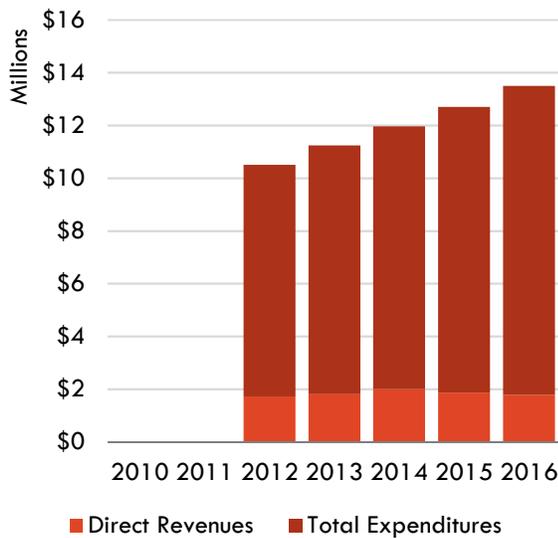
Staffing for 2017

- 127.3 permanent FTE

- 42.1 part-time / seasonal FTE

Notes: Before 2012, Community Center revenues and expenses primarily appear in administrative budget categories. "Direct Revenues" are fees collected for course and program offerings with City-staffed instruction, some merchandise sales, facility rentals, and 4% "PAR Fees" remitted from ARC. Community Center expenditure also include a portion of Community Center staff time paid by ARC. Expenditures include personnel costs, both permanent and temporary, and non-labor costs such as utilities, fleet, and equipment. Expenditures do not include major maintenance, which falls under the Maintenance Division.

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

COMMUNITY CENTER SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

System and Individual Center Management

Community Center programs are classified in six categories:

- Arts and culture

- Environmental stewardship

- Lifelong recreation

- Out-of-school

- Special events

- Wellness, fitness, and sports

All Community Centers are expected to meet system-wide expectations, including providing programming in each of the six categories, serving diverse communities, and more. As stated in the "Basic Expectations for Facility Supervisors" document:

"Each Recreation facility will endeavor to provide programing opportunities in each category. Program planning should be sensitive and proactive in meeting the needs of our diverse communities. Utilize available resources (facility spaces, equipment, and staff) effectively, and offer, market and recruit participants for a variety of programs within these categories, to span multiple age groups and development levels. Insure staff uses [Race and Social Justice Initiative] tool kit to insure community outreach to underserved communities is achieved."

In 2016, staff at each Community Center developed a Center-specific Business Plan to guide programming and outreach so that it is aligned with the needs of constituents. These Plans include summaries of local community demographics and general goals for programming, partnerships, and participation.

Programs also must be able to meet a minimum participant level and program fee revenue (described in more detail below) to be maintained, though there is some allowance for new programs that may need some time to attract participants.

In Development: Hub Programming

SPR is in the process of developing Community Center Hubs, a model of providing tailored services for specific populations. Programs could include an adult enrichment model, international community center, or a teen/senior-focused hub. SPR is developing criteria for ranking proposed hub concepts, including alignment with mission, filling a needs gap, filling facility capacity, access, opportunities for partnerships, and measurable outcomes. Two Senior Coordinators have been hired to advance the hub programming concept in three areas.

- SPR is developing a potential "hub programing and partnership" model at Lake City and Magnuson Community Centers. Given these centers are not funded at the same level as a typical community centers, space available at each center is limited, and special needs for each neighborhood, SPR is exploring a different service model that may better serve these communities. Implementation is anticipated in 2019 based on research and identified funding.

- *Destination Summer Camps* is intended to provide enriching summer opportunities that will support 60-100 youth a day and an estimated 400 unique participants at Garfield Community Center that will counteract the educational dip known as "summer slide" that particularly impacts children from low income families. This opportunity was selected based on data revealing a disparity in access to summer activity camps for youth in Central and Southeast Seattle, and will be supported by more than $130,000 in scholarships and materials funds from ARC. These programs will be offered in summer of 2018.

- The *Enhanced Recreation* project completed a program gap analysis of the Adult Sports unit, and improved programming and customer service by creating a centralized point of contact for coordinating large sport club rental contracts, and by initiating a pickleball pilot program to establish a new sustainable program model for working adults outside of operating hours. These programs will begin in spring of 2018.

COMMUNITY CENTER STAFFING MODEL

As noted above, SPR moved to the current Geo model in 2016, with 6-7 centers in each sub-region. Staffing is provided by SPR.

- Each Geo has a **Recreation Manager** and 3-4 **Assistant Coordinators** who share the responsibility to program multiple centers and are assigned to work primarily at one or two centers.

- Each Community Center is assigned a **Center Coordinator**, a **Recreation Leader**, a **Recreation Attendant**, and a **Building Custodian**.

Within each Geo, **Recreation Managers** and **Assistant Coordinators** play the following roles related to programming:

Example Community Center Staffing Structure

Southeast Geo

Geo Manager	1.0
Floater Recreation Leader	0.75

Garfield Community Center

Center Coordinator	1.0
Assistant Coordinator	1.0
Recreation Leader	1.0
Recreation Attendant	0.75
Recreation Attendant (currently vacant)	0.75
Maintenance Laborer	1.0

Note: The SE Geo includes Garfield, International District, Jefferson Park, Rainier, Rainier Beach, and Van Asselt Community Centers.

Sources: Correspondence SPR staff, 2017; SPR, *Recreation 2017 Org Chart*, 2017

- **Geo Managers** are responsible for overall supervision and coordination of Community Centers in their region. Examples of work duties include: monitoring SPR and ARC budgets and making projections; approving building hours and staff schedules; coordinating programs between the Geo and neighboring public schools; meeting with partner agencies and neighborhood associations; and working with Coordinators to identify and respond to problems and issues.

- **Assistant Recreation Coordinators** report to Center Coordinators at individual Community Centers. They are responsible for developing recreation programs, including understanding needs, finding instructors, developing the program budget, marketing the program, and evaluating programming once complete. Most Assistant Coordinators are responsible for programming at two Community Centers, though some work at just one busy site (such as Rainier Beach).

Within individual Community Centers:

- **Center Coordinators** are also involved with programming development, to different extents at different sites. Center Coordinators have final say on which programs happen at their sites, and on scheduling. In addition to this involvement in programming, Coordinators are responsible for the overall function of their center, including maintaining facilities and managing staff.

- **Recreation Attendants** provide information to customers, register customers, and help with set up and clean up.

Other SPR Staff involved in programming include staff who focus on programming for specific populations:

- **Lifelong Recreation Specialists** who develop programs for older adults.

- **Specialized Program staff** who develop and implement programming for youth and adults with disabilities.

- **Recreation Leaders** responsible for supporting youth programming and operations.

Chapter VII focuses on programs for specific populations, some of which may occur within Community Center walls.

Identifying and Training Temporary Replacements

Methods for filling in when staff are out for illness or other reasons can be a challenge. One field staff member suggested the Department use a broader array of staff to fill in at Community Centers, including Lifelong Recreation Specialists or Special Population staff. Division management discounted this as these staff are reported to be at capacity and lacking the knowledge or background needed to manage Community Center operations.

PROGRAM SCHEDULING, MARKETING, AND DELIVERY

This section that begins on the following page describes the process for developing and delivering scheduled programs at Community Centers. The process is similar for Aquatics, though Aquatics programming is more consistent from year-to-year, with less focus on developing and marketing new program types.

Note that the process for developing and delivering **drop-in programs** is similar to the process for scheduled programs described below, including obtaining input from customers, knowledge of and interaction with the community and local partners. Drop-in programs do not require hiring an instructor and, following changes implemented via the Community Center Strategic Plan, are now free, making the development process simpler. The process for brochure printing is the same as for scheduled programs, described below in Process Step 3. The evaluation process for drop-in programs is more informal, based on perceived participation, community need, and space availability.

Programs Which Require Registration

The process for developing recreation programs at Community Centers includes ongoing activities (connecting with the community to determine needs), and a specific, defined process for creating, scheduling, and delivering each program. SPR and ARC staff work together to develop and deliver programming. These steps and roles are summarized in Figure 30 and described in more detail on the pages that follow.

Figure 30. Process to Develop and Implement a New Program
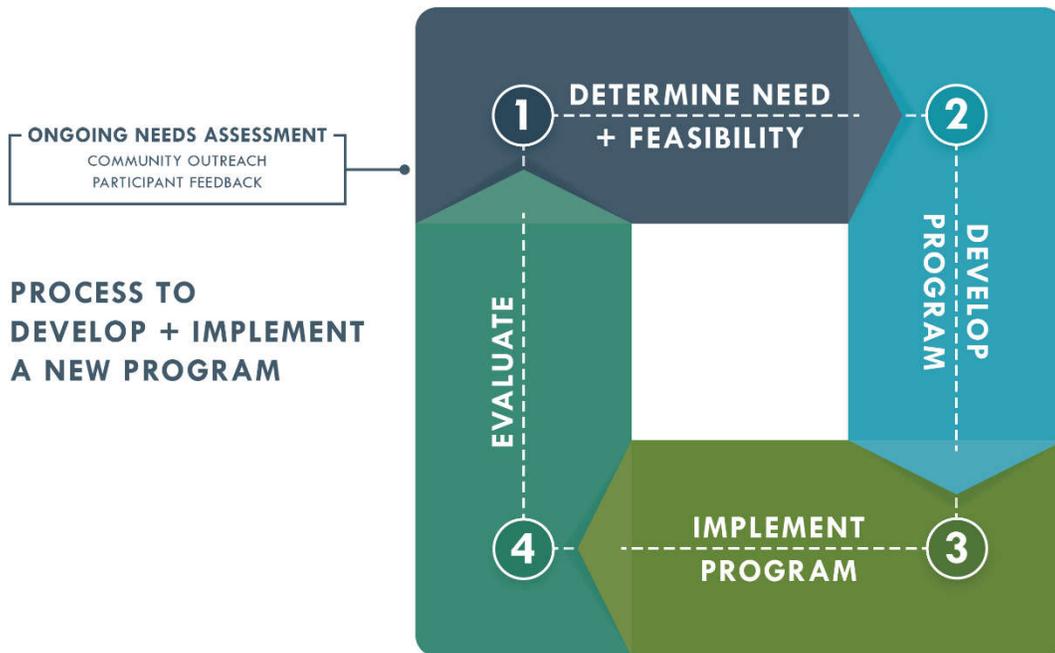
1. **Determine Need and Feasibility**
   - Assistant Coordinator reviews feedback, surveys, demographics, space, instructor, supplies.
   - Coordinator conducts ongoing community outreach, considers space constraints.

2. **Develop Program**
   - Assistant Coordinator determines instructor, fee, and schedule; Coordinator approves.
   - Assistant Coordinator drafts brochure language.

3. **Implement Program: Marketing, Registration, and Delivery**
   - ARC publishes brochure.
   - Participants register using online portal.
   - ARC instructor delivers program.

4. **Evaluate**
   - Assistant Coordinator and Instructor review feedback forms, participation numbers.

Source: BERK Consulting, 2017.

A variety of ongoing activities undertaken by Assistant Coordinators, Coordinators, and Lifelong Recreation Specialists determine recreation needs of the community, connect to partners, and set overall goals for programming and participation:

- **Include and balance all six categories of programming:** arts/culture, environmental stewardship, lifelong recreation, out-of-school, special events, and wellness/fitness/sports.

- **Evaluate past programs,** including the number of participants and their demographics (reflecting the local community), as well as any participant feedback forms. All programs must meet a minimum participant level and generate a minimum revenue amount.

- **Reach out** to local organizations and partners, including schools, community groups, and non-profits to understand the community and its needs.

> As noted below, **Advisory Council** members may also suggest programming based on input from community members, but this process is informal and inconsistent across the system. This function is addressed by **Recommendation 2**.

- **Update Advisory Council** members on programming. While Advisory Council members may make suggestions for programs based on input they have received from the community, such contributions vary significantly across the system.

- **Review requests** from current visitors. Community Center staff speak frequently with participants and parents and listen to their requests for new programming, schedule changes, etc.

- **Generate and review survey data**. Some Community Centers survey the community for programming ideas. Surveys are publicized through neighborhood listservs and blogs.

- **Review demographic** characteristics of the surrounding community, compared to participant demographics (as viewed by staff). Make adjustments to programming (through outreach) if the community is not being reflected.

Holding a program requires a qualified, available instructor, a suitable place and time to hold the program, supplies, and an estimate of minimum and maximum participation, fee level, and instructor pay. Assistant Coordinators generally handle these roles, in coordination with Center Coordinators.

Community Outreach

SPR staff reach out to the community in a variety of ways to determine recreation needs. This includes partnerships with local non-profits or schools, surveys to neighborhood blogs, and more. For example:

- Surveying people who attend Community Center-sponsored special events. Survey topics include why they're at the event, if they're aware of other Community Center programs, and what types of programs they would like to see.

- Some Centers with large child care programs closely follow the projections for local elementary schools, to keep up with trends and see what future demand will be, and look for additional space. This includes using space in elementary school buildings for preschool.

- Online surveys of the community, to help with determining future programming.

Coordination and Avoiding Duplication

When deciding whether and how to create a new program at a Community Center, staff are encouraged to connect with both SPR staff at other Community Centers and with community partners to ensure that programs at different facilities in a neighborhood fit together. At the same time, if demand is high enough to fill similar classes at nearby sites, then duplication is not viewed as a problem – the primary evaluation of whether a class is doing well is participation.

Coordination with Other Community Centers. Assistant Coordinators are encouraged to work with the other Assistant Coordinators in their Geo to share information on programming development. This could include creating a program designed for multiple locations, balancing the dates and times, or a more specialized program for a single location. In our conversations with staff, some mentioned alternating programs like a Tot Gym between neighboring Centers.

Coordination with Non-City Entities. Community Center Coordinators are expected to work closely with local partners to assess community needs and limit service duplication, as laid out in SPR's "Basic Expectations for Facility Supervisors, 2015." In conversations with Center staff, some do not see duplication with non-City providers as a concern, because private providers such as YMCA or gyms have a different service model requiring membership. Staff also pointed out that SPR child care programs are licensed by DSHS, whereas many private sites are not.

Recommendation 3 relates to these functions.

2 DEVELOP PROGRAM

Formally creating the program requires a program description and goals, the approval of the Center Coordinator, an available instructor, a program budget, a space, and supplies. Assistant Coordinators then input this information into a database.

Scheduling

Most programs and classes are scheduled six months in advance, for printing in brochures quarterly. Scheduling space takes into account the needs of differing populations and programs. A basic start to scheduling often involves age groups: toddler programs in the morning, School-Age Care in the afternoon, and adult programs in the evening. Lifelong Recreation programs are generally offered during the daytime. Center Coordinators have the final say in setting a Center's schedule. One Center Coordinator mentioned examples of revising scheduling to meet community needs and requests:

- Opening the gym for drop-in during lunch time, which was used by young professionals.

- Adding a toddler program in the evening, for working parents.

- Adding special events for families on Saturdays, per requests from working parents.

Budgeting

As described above, Assistant Coordinators must develop a budget for all programs. This process is now done through a new ARC budgeting tool. The program budget requires: estimated pay for instructor and cost of any supplies; fee; and minimum number of participants.

Assistant Coordinators and Coordinators generally recruit instructors and may recommend pay rates to ARC, but ARC has final say on the pay. The need to recruit instructors six months or more in advance can prove difficult, and successful recruitment is not always accomplished leading to a risk of not finding an appropriate instructor after a program has been advertised. The use of ACTIVE Net to generate course catalogs promises to significantly decrease production time, meaning staffing decisions can be made closer to the course offering and allow greater flexibility. This is reflected in **Recommendation 9**.

IMPLEMENT PROGRAM

Implementing the program includes marketing, registering participants, and instruction.

Marketing

Marketing includes brochures, word-of-mouth, social media, signage at the Community Center, promotion at special events, text blasts, partnering with community organizations, and outreach to neighborhood blogs and listservs.

SPR and ARC coordinate much of the systemwide marketing tasks in a coordinated fashion, based on an annual marketing plan and charter, and overseen by a joint marketing committee. As described by staff, the Marketing Committee focuses on a few big picture goals each year to focus on, such as free programming or scholarships.

Brochures. The biggest use of staff time and SPR budget for marketing is developing, printing, and distributing brochures. There are four brochures for Community Centers printed each quarter, one for each Geo region. SPR used to mail general brochures to interested residents, but ended that practice to save money.

Brochure content is generally created about six months before printing, with most of the content created by Assistant Coordinators. According to staff interviews, this is a time-consuming process for staff, requiring both laborious data input by both Assistant Coordinators and the Business Service Center, as well as scheduling coordination for each location, verification of instructor availability, and more.

In addition, specialty brochures are produced for Lifelong Recreation, Specialized Populations, and other groups. Some of these are mailed out.

Other Tactics. Other than brochures, marketing for programs is done in partnership with ARC and varies considerably between Centers. Of the field staff interviewed, the most common means of marketing programs were word-of-mouth and signs at Centers. Much of current marketing appears to be targeted primarily to current or previous users of Community Center programs, while smaller efforts are aimed at building new clientele.

SPR staff report that outreach works best when specific strategies are used for certain groups. For example:

- In-person workshops and meet and greets work best for immigrant and refugee families.

- Marketing in ethnic media has been beneficial for reaching specific language or cultural groups.

- In general, forging relationships with community organizations has also been helpful for underserved communities.

- Millennials and parents with young children respond well to social media.

Marketing to Current Customers

Word-of-mouth is a direct recruitment tool primarily aimed at people who have already use or frequent Community Centers, by telling people in person directly about upcoming programs. Related to word-of-mouth is the tactic of calling registrants for a program and asking them to recruit friends for the program, to prevent cancellation.

An expansion on word-of-mouth, also targeted to current or past Community Center users, is "text blasting," sending group text messages to current or previous users of the Community Center. This was explained by one Community Center staffer, who had found it effective, but not a practice deployed by all Community Centers.

Finding New Customers

Marketing tactics that can reach new customers include: partnerships with community groups, social media posts and advertising, promotion at special events, and outreach to neighborhood blogs and listservs.

One example of a partnership is the Ballard Community Center working with the neighboring elementary school, whose counselor gets program information and scholarship forms to students, particularly new immigrants.

Special events, such as harvest festivals or Easter egg hunts, can be an opportunity for Community Centers to gain exposure to a larger number of customers who may not use SPR programs regularly. Some Community Centers make a point of surveying participants at special events to find out about their needs.

Peer Practices: Marketing

Marketing practices vary among the four recreation agencies interviewed for this project. Printed and mailed brochures are an important component for Portland, but Chicago and Minneapolis do not print brochures, and Denver prints only a limited number of citywide brochures.

One challenge facing many park and recreation agencies, and articulated by an interviewee is, "We're good at marketing to current customers, but not so good at marketing to new customers."

Special events and community partnerships were mentioned by other park and recreation agency interviewees as methods to reach out beyond current customers, both to help determine community needs (step #1 described above) and to then market scheduled programs. Special events can draw large numbers of people who have not used a Community Center before. Distributing brochures to attendees, surveying them about their needs (described above), and having conversations with them are ways to

build awareness of recreation program offerings and increase connections to community centers and other facilities.

Recommendation 9. Test, document, evaluate, and share marketing techniques.

While many site staff are using creative techniques to understand community needs and market programs (such as surveys at special events or text blasting), it's unclear that techniques are being evaluated, documented, and shared. In addition, brochure development and production has been identified as an activity taking significant staff time and resources, and opportunities for efficiencies should be investigated.

9.1   Plan and track the results of Community Center-specific marketing efforts.

Community Center Business Plans or other mechanisms should be used to plan and coordinate outreach efforts with ARC, and to tap into promising practices in use elsewhere in the system. The results of this outreach should be reported on and adaptations made to be as effective and efficient as possible in these efforts.

9.2   Learn from techniques that work and consolidate efforts around proven practices.

Site staff should continue developing and testing specific marketing techniques for reaching their communities, and should document these techniques, track what works and why, share with colleagues, and learn from each other. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169. Implementation will require coordination with ARC.

9.3   Adapt a more efficient approach to promoting classes.

SPR should continue to transition away from traditional printed brochures, which are both labor intensive to develop and require a long production period, meaning content can be outdated by the time the brochure is printed. The second phase of ACTIVE Net implementation will allow SPR develop a "Quick List" for the public, with a web page serving as the main source of program information. This approach is similar to practices already employed in Denver and other cities.

Registration

Registration for most programs can be completed online, with the exception of Specialized Programs and child care programs that require in-person registration the first time. Registration is also available over the phone or in person.

SPR's current registration system, called SPARC, will be replaced in 2018 with a new system called ACTIVE Net, used by many park and recreation agencies across the country.

Instruction

The final and most important step for implementing the program is the instruction. Other than Specialized Programs (described in Chapter VI), programs are generally led by ARC employees or contractors.

④ EVALUATE

After a program has run, the Assistant Coordinator evaluates it, summarizing the number and demographic characteristics of participants, and feedback. A description SPR's recreation programming-focused Results Framework begins on page 100.

COMMUNITY CENTER STAFF TIME DISTRIBUTION

As described in the Community Center Staffing Model section above, a number of SPR staff positions are involved in running Community Centers, developing and delivering programs, helping customers, and performing other day-to-day tasks.

Figure 31 summarizes how staff in these positions generally spend their time. It is important to recognize that staff in the same position at different places in the system may have radically different experiences based on community context, staffing, programming level, and number of rentals and community partnerships. In particular, demands related to providing social supports and addressing issues of safety and security may vary across the system as described on the pages that follow. Staff time for social support would fall under "customer service and communications" in the matrix below.

The numbers below are a summary of data provided by SPR's Recreation Deputy Director. They represent an estimated systemwide average, recognizing that staffing needs at each Community Center are different.

Figure 31. Community Center Staff Roles: Estimated Time Distribution

Work Category	Center Coordinator	Assistant Coordinator	Specialist LLR*	Leader	Attendant
Program Development ▪ Needs assessment and recruitment. ▪ Logic model development. ▪ Program planning and budgeting. ▪ Developing contracts with instructors. ▪ Editing and inputting data/brochure info.	10%	25%	30%	15%	0%
Program Implementation ▪ Marketing, including brochure development. ▪ Instructor engagement and support. ▪ Performance measurement. ▪ Special events.	5%	25%	30%	40%**	15%
Partnership Development and Management ▪ Community outreach and engagement. ▪ Coordination of Advisory Councils. ▪ MOA creation and management.	15%	5%	15%	10%	0%
Budget and Financial Management and Monitoring ▪ Monthly reporting on actuals and projections. ▪ Monitor revenue and expenses for SPR and ARC.	5%	5%	5%	5%	0%
Customer Service and Communications ▪ Front desk operations and customer interactions. ▪ Program registration and cash handling. ▪ Providing information in person, via phone, and email. ▪ Conflict resolution and ensuring proper facility use. ▪ Safety and security: emergency or incident response.	20%	15%	15%	10%	55%
Staff and Volunteer Supervision/Facility Operations ▪ Hiring, training, and evaluating performance. ▪ Scheduling, making work assignments, arranging substitutes.	35%	15%	5%	5%	0%
Facility Rental Coordination ▪ Marketing and providing public information. ▪ Scheduling and confirmation paperwork (including fee reduction requests). ▪ Day-of customer service. ▪ Scheduling rental staff and custodial support.	5%	5%	0%	10%	25%
Facility Maintenance Management ▪ Coordinate work orders and maintenance. ▪ Coordinate with custodian.	5%	5%	0%	5%	5%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

* LLR = Lifelong Recreation
**Recreation Leaders spend much of this time organizing and leading recreation activities for at-risk teens.
Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2017.

The following non-recreation uses are available in Community Centers:

- Bathroom and shower access for individuals who are homeless.

- Emergency preparedness shelters.

- Access to information, including print news, public access computers, and public wireless internet.

- Pickup sites for subscribers to Community Supported Agriculture providers (CSAs).

These functions generate demands on the time and skills of Community Center staff in two areas:

- Providing social supports (below).

- Addressing safety and security concerns. (page 82).

Providing Social Supports

A significant part of the work of the Recreation Division is providing social support for customers in need – a role not emphasized in SPR's Mission, Values, or performance metrics. Much of this role takes place at Community Centers, serving the general public, particularly youth. Services provided by staff include referrals to public or non-profit agencies for assistance, general relationships and emotional support, collecting donations, and more.

Working with customers who are unsheltered, mentally unstable, or suffering from drug addiction, can also put both emotional and time demands on staff.

Emotional Support and Long-Term Relationships

Many field staff referenced the importance of the relationships Community Center staff form with customers, particularly youth, who may not have other supports in their life. For example, staff might talk to kids before or after participating in a drop-in program. Through conversation, staff may see that the kid needs some support, and spends time with them. This was reported to BERK largely by Community Center Assistant Coordinators and Coordinators, not by staff who are specifically assigned to work with teens and youth.

Statements from interviewed staff paint a picture of the range of issues that come before them:

"Kids come to you when their parent is struggling with drug addiction. I work with the family and teen to come up with a safety plan. This type of thing happens a lot. We are the family these kids have. This is their safe haven, where they come."

"People might not have money for programs, but they come to the Center for a safe, familiar place, with people they see every day. Who knows where parents are. We spend more time with these kids than they spend at home: they depend on us. When there's a crisis, we're the first place they come."

"We're on the front lines. We're support, family. We're a lot of these kids' safe place. They don't have a home, can't go home, parents at work. We're the village. We deal with a wide array of kids, that may be in local gangs, may come under the influence, kids on the verge of going the wrong way, we pull them back. Deal with it all; with love and compassion. Find a way to get through to them."

"We had three young men who were frequently truant and would drink or do graffiti. People in the

senior housing next door were worried. And had people off their meds coming in to Center. I had to build trust with the truant teens, work with the senior center, and engage with the bi-polar guy."

"A lot of what we do is not trackable. That's what hurts my feelings. You have to see it. You can't track the compassion we show kids. …We have zero parent involvement. These kids are so damaged by the environment, damaged by life itself. It's hard to get through to them."

Other staff comments describe the perceived magnitude of time spent on such issues at some sites:

"At least 80% of my day was more like social work… The emotional state of kids drives so much of what our day is spent on."

"Social work is 40% of my work. Other Community Centers focus on leisure and sports; ours functions as a community lifeline. We have to be familiar with what's going on, know about resources and where to turn — when people come in here, we're referring them. This Community Center functions as social services."

"Some of the customer interactions take more time, such as interacting with someone with a language barrier, or someone with limited resources in dire needs. We look for resources within and without to see what we can provide. Also, homelessness has increased our interactions — some days 70-80% of my time is spent on these kinds of issues."

Working with "Disruptive" Customers

Staff have given examples of individuals with mental illness coming to Community Centers. Staff would try to help them integrate and use services, but also had to ensure they followed rules and other customers felt safe.

One staff member gave an example of serving an unsheltered customer, by inviting him to the lobby and introducing him to customers. One day he played guitar when ballet class was ending, to the delight of the children.

Green Lake offers free public showers, which are used by 60 to 80 people each day. This valuable public service can also bring issues of mental illness and substance abuse to the Center for staff to address.

As some staff have stated, "not all clicks of the People Counter are equal." Saying "hi" to a kid from a stable background before heading to class may take a few seconds, while working with a mentally ill person or a teen whose parent is addicted to drugs, could take a couple of hours.

SPR recently re-established a code of conduct at its facilities, in part due to the increased presence of unsheltered people at sites. Activities prohibited in SPR buildings include:

- Conduct that creates an unreasonable and substantial risk of harm to any person.

- Conduct that unreasonably deprivers others of their use or enjoyment of a park or building.

- Disruption of any Seattle Parks and Recreation business, event, or other sponsored activity.

Staff Skills

Because of the wide variety of customers coming to community centers, including homeless persons, mentally ill, and troubled youth, counseling skills could be useful for staff. One field staffer mentioned

that when they hire intermittent staff, they often look for people who have experience with mental health services, because of who is served at that Community Center and the need to respond well to crises and situations. Some staff mentioned that it would be helpful to have a formal partnership with an agency that provides social services or mental health services, especially if able to provide on-site services.

From a review of SPR job descriptions, expectations, and available training materials, it does not appear that the types of social service activities provided by SPR staff, whether emotional support or diffusing disruptive customers, are usually included in expectations or training for staff.

- The **Basic Expectations for Facility Supervisors** document does not include expectations for providing social, emotional, or referral support to customers in need, nor does it reference skills or activities for diffusing difficult situations.

- The SPR **Customer Service binder** does include instructions for interacting with disruptive or dangerous guests.

- In reviewing basic **job descriptions** for Recreation Attendants, Recreation Center Coordinators, Recreation Leader, and other positions, there is little to no mention of these tasks.

Referrals and Donations

Community Center staff frequently refer customers to other agencies for social services, such as for housing or food. Examples include connecting older adults with the Metro Access program or helping customers with utility discounts. In this way, Community Centers cover some of the functions of the City of Seattle's Customer Service Centers (formerly called "Neighborhood Service Centers"). In addition, some field staff reported that they do drives for toys, clothes, and other goods, largely for children and youth. This includes back-to-school clothes and a giving tree for holiday donations.

Peer Practices: Providing Social Supports

Peer agencies interviewed have all found that providing social supports is a key part of the work they do, particularly at locations in lower-income neighborhoods. Denver, Minneapolis, and Portland staff mentioned staff roles in providing referrals to other agencies. In addition, Denver provides free recreation center memberships to employed homeless persons. Denver also brings in outside partners to provide additional services to customers, such as a visiting nurse. Going one step further, Minneapolis leases space in a recreation center to a social service organization which provides direct service to clients at that location.

Addressing Safety and Security Concerns

Because SPR programs are held in public locations open to all, there is the possibility for safety issues. Field staff described examples of drug use and dealing, threats and violence, vandalism, lockdowns, and more. Parking lots were often the site of these activities, as well as inside Community Centers.

This section includes analysis of SPR incident reports, a description of SPR's safety procedures and training, and information from other park and recreation agencies.

Incident Reports

SPR staff are instructed to fill out an "E-09 Incident Report" for situations such as vandalism, burglary, accidents, fire, violence, etc. at SPR facilities. For a 16-month period between January of 2016 and August of 2017, SPR Recreation Division staff reported 381 incidents at Community Centers and swimming pools. Noted categories include burglary, violence/fights, bullying, drug activity, harassment, inappropriate behavior, and more. The 381 incidents equal approximately 22 incidents per month, systemwide. At the 27 Community Centers and 10 pools, this equals 0.6 per location per month, or one every other month. Of the 381 incident reports, 88 were reports of violence or altercations (23%). The number of incidents varies by location, with a high of 24 at Rainier Beach Community Center and a low of one at Magnolia Community Center. Locations with 15 or more incidents are shown in Figure 32.

Figure 32. Locations With 15 Or More Incidents Reported, January 2016-August 2017

Location	Incidents	Violent Incidents
Rainier Beach CC	24	12
Green Lake CC	22	8
Queen Anne Pool	20	1
Evans Pool	19	1
Madison Pool	19	0
Ballard Pool	18	0
Bitter Lake CC	18	4
Garfield CC	17	4
Northgate CC	16	3
Queen Anne CC	16	8
Southwest CC	16	7
Rainier Beach Pool	15	3
Yesler CC	15	6

Source: SPR, 2017.

Incident reports do not include lockdowns caused by active shooters reported in the vicinity of an SPR facility.

SPR Training and Security

Community Centers and pools do not generally have armed security. Many Centers work with the local community policing officers, who may occasionally drop by the facility. Some field staff interviewed feel that staff need more protection, and one advocated for having Park Rangers regularly walk through Community Centers, feeling that police officers are too busy to give adequate attention.

Staff have referenced that people with mental illness can sometimes feel threatening to staff. In addition, frequent lockdowns can take a toll on Community Center or pool staff.

Prevention

Staff may take a variety of actions to prevent the opportunity for crime. One Community Center Coordinator stated that she has found it helpful to hold interagency meetings with the Seattle Police Department, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle City Light, King County Metro, and

SPR staff responsible for security and grounds keeping. After discussing safety issues at the Community Center, these other agencies took action to repair street lights and trim bushes for visibility.

Peer Practices: Safety and Security

Notable practices from peer agencies relating to safety training include:

- The Chicago Park District's Workforce Development Department offers several trainings related to safety, including "Keeping Children Safe," crisis prevention and intervention, and more. In 2016, the Security Department led an active shooter training for all Park District staff.

- At Denver Parks and Recreation, all staff are required to participate in active shooter trainings, which are provided by the Safety Department.

- At Portland Parks and Recreation, managers and supervisors receive several types of training related to safety and security, including active shooter, verbal judo, FEMA, and overall crisis management. Represented staff receive some of these trainings, and relevant information is provided to seasonal staff.

Recommendation 10. Acknowledge and buttress the role staff play in providing social supports and ensuring safety and security.

QUALITY + IMPACT

Staff of some Community Centers spend a significant portion of their time providing social supports to customers and/or ensuring safety and security. This can include everything from providing referrals to social service agencies, to helping a child whose parent is addicted to drugs, to dealing with disruptive or mentally ill customers. These functions are performed admirably by many staff, but more could be done to acknowledge and support these demands at the system level:

10.1 Understand, report on, and acknowledge the demands these roles have on staff and the positive impacts they have on customers.

- Recognize these roles more explicitly in SPR's Mission, Values, and guiding documents such as strategic plans.

- Incorporate this role in job descriptions and interview processes so potential new employees understand this may be part of their day-to-day role and to better understand the interest and skillset of applicants as it relates to this topic.

- Create mechanisms for staff to record the impact of these demands on their time so it can be understood and managed.

- Acknowledge the immense positive impact individual staff members can have on the children, youth, and adults they serve. Celebrate day-to-day heroism and the positive impact it has on families. Tell these stories to supplement quantitative measures in SPR's performance reporting (see **Recommendation 8**).

10.2 Support Recreation staff who provide social supports to customers.

- Create trainings and offer guidance and access to resources to support staff who provide significant

levels of social supports based on their Community Center assignment.

- Explore opportunities to increase access to social services provided through the City and by community-based organizations. Consider formal partnerships to leverage dedicated capacity and expertise. Denver brings in outside partners to provide additional services to customers, such as a visiting nurse. Going one step further, Minneapolis leases space in a recreation center to a social service organization which provides direct service to clients at that location.

10.3 Strengthen staff ability to deal with safety issues.

- Ensure safety standards are being met, prioritizing the safety of SPR and ARC staff.

- Share lessons learned and successful strategies across Community Centers, such as at the interagency meetings.

- Review training on safety and look for areas to improve. Some peer cities provide staff trainings on crisis intervention, active shooter, verbal judo, and more.

COMMUNITY CENTER OPERATING STANDARDS AND CONSISTENCY

Community Center sites operate fairly independently in many areas. From a programming and marketing perspective, while they are expected to offer courses in key categories and meet specified budget targets, Community Center staff effectively manage their Community Centers as independent businesses. They establish programming schedules, determine participant and instructor fees, schedule facility rentals, and have their own Advisory Council. This model relies on professional recreation staff to learn and respond to the particular needs and interests of the surrounding community.

In addition to programming latitude, there appears to be a lack of standard operational practices among Community Centers, with staff roles, daily operating procedures, and staff expectations and training largely left up to the preferences of each site's Coordinator. This can lead to inefficiencies and inconsistencies in important areas, as identified in staff interviews. An example raised by staff and explored in more detail beginning on page 52 is customer service. This was described as varying across sites, with different training and expectations for staff. This topic is a current focus of SPR leadership, as this is seen as an essential issue that will benefit from a stronger systemwide approach.

Another example cited of inconsistencies among centers relates to the use of temporary staff. Some sites train temporary staff thoroughly, while others place them at the front-counter without much training, according to some interviewees. In addition, inconsistent standards and operations can lead to more training needs, as it becomes more difficult for temporary staff to fill in at different sites that operate differently.

Recommendation 11. Standardize practices and expectations across the recreation system.

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

11.1 Create additional capacity for cross-system learning and consolidation around proven practices.

Individual Community Centers seem to operate independently in many ways, setting their own fees and operational practices. While a "one-size-fits-all" approach is not appropriate given the true variety across Seattle neighborhoods and would diminish the ability of staff to make decisions based on their insights as recreation professionals; guidelines, parameters, and preferred options should be established for operations, trainings, and staff roles. This has implications related to customer service; program design, pricing, and marketing; and day-to-day operations. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169.

11.2 Employ Lean Management Tools to focus Division resources on generating value for the customer.

Lean Management techniques seek to prioritize what is most important to the customer and to reduce waste in workflows. By focusing on what is most important to the customer, this philosophy seeks to use resources as efficiently and effectively as possible. By training staff on Lean Performance Improvement principles and tools (perhaps as a pilot in some programs or a few Community Centers), processes may be streamlined and focused on generating value for the customer. This philosophy would strengthen organizational values around customer satisfaction and resource efficiency. Resources are available to train staff in Lean techniques, including free options provided by the State Auditor's Office.

Usage and Access

- *Is usage of the Community Center system high and growing as Seattle grows?*

- *Are Community Center resources accessible to all residents?*

This section addresses how well used Community Centers are, as well as how equitable access appears to be across the community.

USAGE

Community Center usage is tracked differently for different kinds of activity.

- **Total Foot Traffic.** "People Counters" at each Center record the number of people who pass through the doors. While these devices can distinguish entries from exits, logging only traffic into the building while ignoring passage out of the building to avoid double counting, they cannot distinguish actual users from Center staff, deliveries, parents dropping off children, or other reasons people may enter a building. The counters operate on a 24/7 basis, so record occasional late-night entries, as well as traffic associated with facility rentals and other uses of the buildings beyond traditional recreation offerings.

- **Registered Programs.** The CLASS database tracks participation in recreation programs held at Community Centers, pools, and other facilities. This data was summarized beginning on page 29.

- **Drop-in Programming.** Capturing participation of Drop-in services has become more challenging with the move to make these services free and open, without registration. While the individuals will be captured in overall Community Center visitation rates by the People Counters and staff use headcounts and a "free" button on the point of sale interface to estimate participation, the full number of people using Drop-in services may not be captured any longer.

  Although the Community Centers brochures state that the activities require a Quickcard (a free card issued by Community Centers to participants that get swiped when someone checks in), staff have indicated that some participants do not use a Quickcard. While Quickcards could be made mandatory, we do not recommend this option, as it would detract from the sense of welcoming and customer service that Community Center managers and staff cultivate. Staff should encourage use of Quickcards through individual interactions with participants. SPR is planning a media campaign to promote use of the cards more broadly.

ACCESS

This section looks at how well Community Centers do ensuring all Seattle residents have access to recreation opportunities.

Population Living Near Each Center

Community Centers across the City have varying sized populations living nearby, which could be considered their target audience for programming and usage. Analysis done for the Community Center Strategic Plan shows that the number of people within a 5-minute drive of each Center varies from a low of 12,480 for South Park to a high of 50,198 for Garfield, as shown in Figure 33.

Figure 33. Estimated 2016 Population Within 5-Minute Drive of Each Community Center
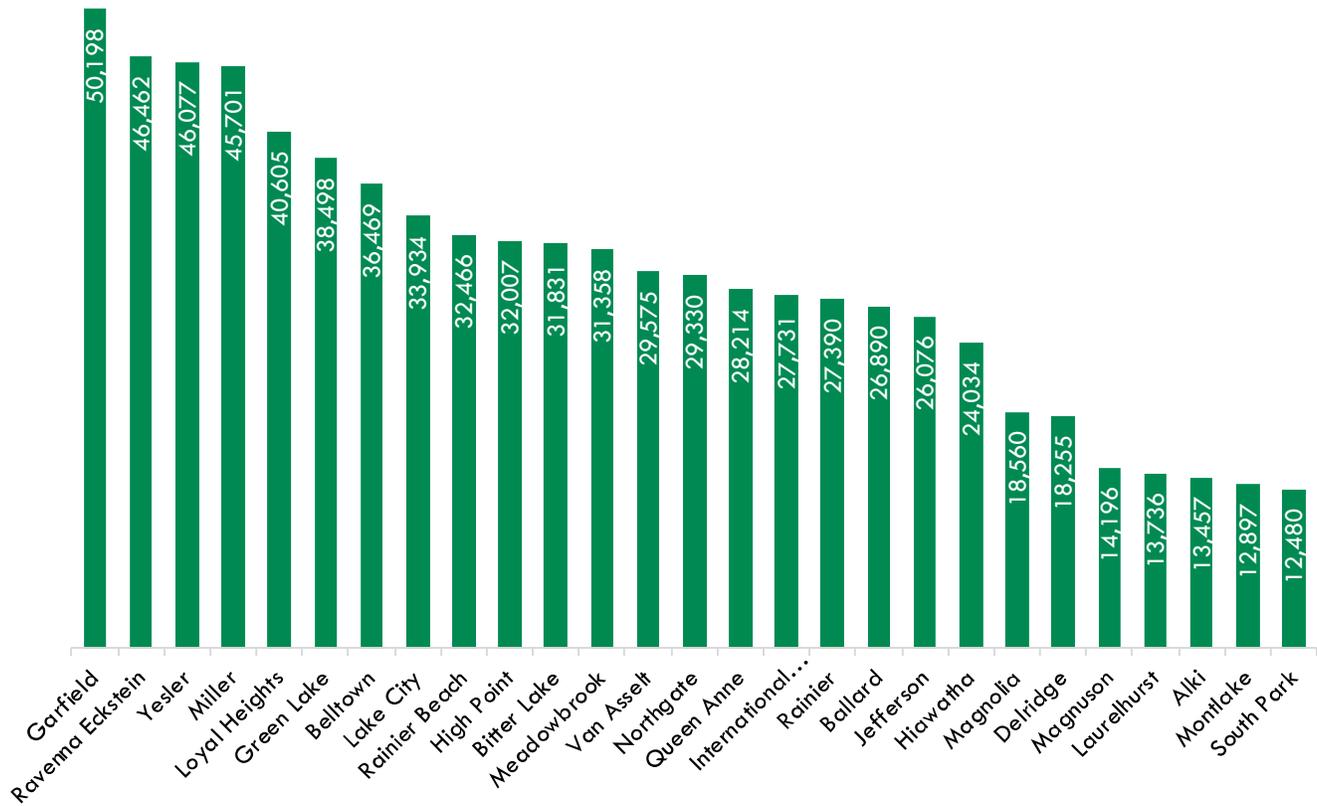
Sources: BERK 2016; National Recreation and Park Association, 2016.

The characteristics of residents near each Community Center also vary widely, including the percentage of residents living in poverty, as shown in Figure 34. The five Centers with the highest proportion of residents in poverty are all located in the Southeast Geo.

Figure 34. Percent of Residents Within 5-Minute Drive Who Are Below 200% of Federal Poverty Line
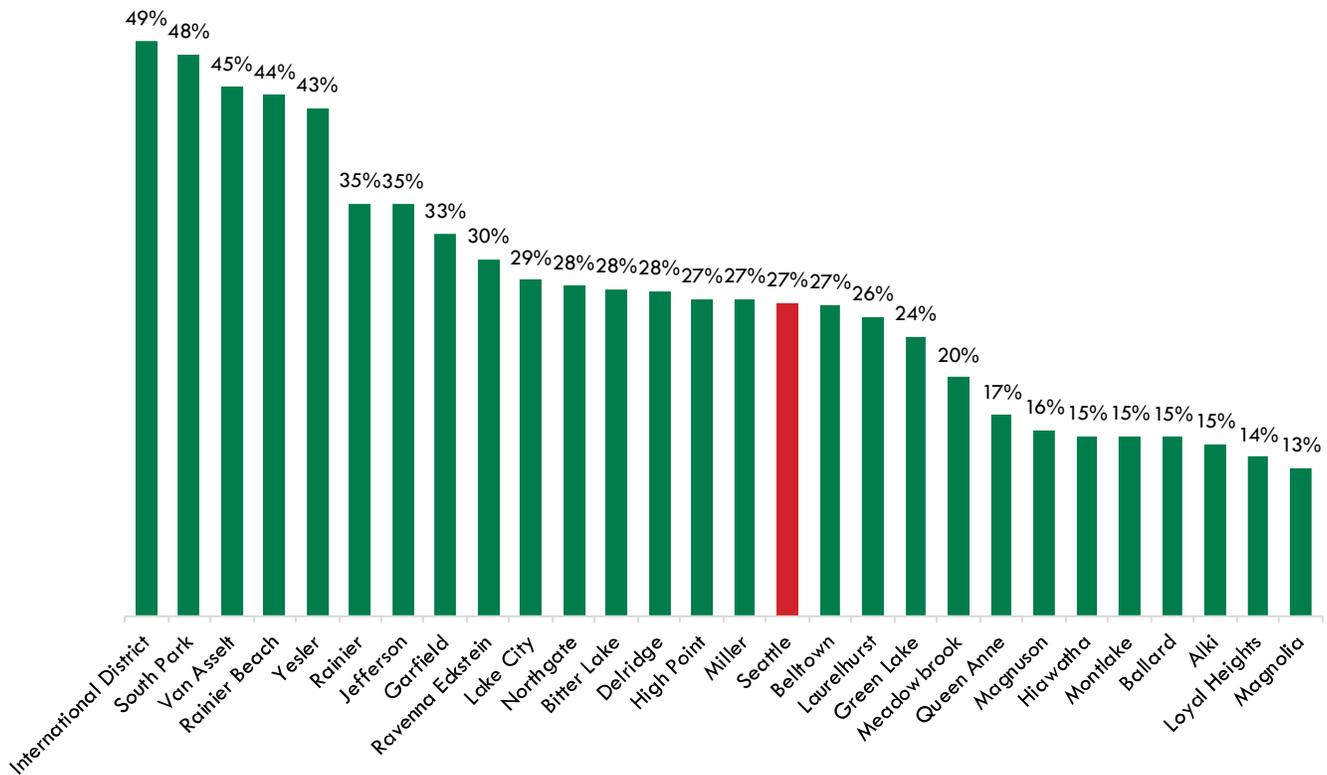
Note: The citywide average for Seattle is shown in red.
Sources: BERK 2016; National Recreation and Park Association, 2016.

In its Community Center Strategic Plan, SPR used a service provided for parks and recreation agencies by the NRPA that summarizes community characteristics near each Community Center. An example for the South Park community is shown in Figure 35. This data provides a potentially useful snapshot to understand the characteristics of the potential market or customer base for each Community Center. The following section looks at SPR's current ability to compare actual users to this demographic profile, and delves into what data is available to look at the representativeness of the current customer base.

Figure 35. Sample Community Demographic Profile

SOUTH PARK

Community Demographic Profile (5-minute drive area from community center)

APPENDIX A
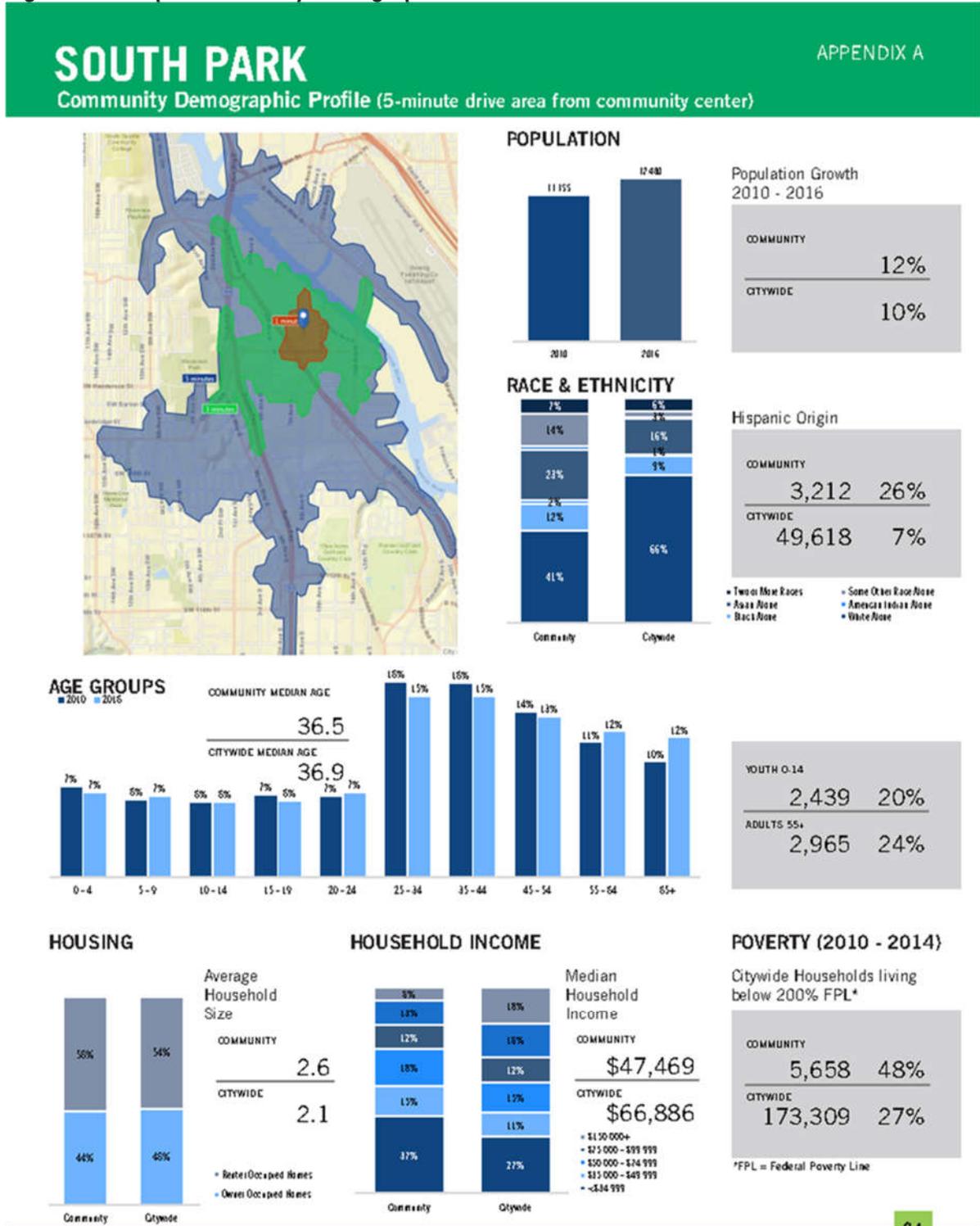
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2016; SPR, 2016.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND USAGE ACROSS THE COMMUNITY CENTER SYSTEM

While the nearby, accessible presence of a Community Center is perhaps the most fundamental ingredient to have in place to ensure access, related resources on the operations side are also critically important. Figure 36 provides a variety of measures for each Community Center as well as averages by Geo which adjust for the fact that there are seven Community Centers in the Northeast and Northwest Geos, while the Southeast and Southwest each have six.

For key categories in the Figure (such as total hours or number of registrants), the 27 Community Centers are ranked; those in the top third have a green arrow, in the middle third have a yellow line, and in the bottom third have an orange line. For example, under the column "SPR: Public Dollars Per Visit," those with the highest public expenditures per visit have a green arrow, including Miller, Montlake, and Northgate.

The purpose of this exhibit is to examine the level of SPR and ARC resources invested in each center, the commensurate operating hours and course volume, and the level of community use. As the volume of use is measured by People Counter ticks, it goes beyond course participation and includes volumes related to drop-in hours, facility rentals, and other visits. Key takeaways from this analysis include:

- Public resources are more heavily invested in the Southeast and Southwest than in the Northeast or Northwest. This can be seen in the higher public hours, average public-sector expenditures by Geo, as well as the % Public Dollars by Geo. This shows that SPR is concentrating public resources in communities that are home to more low-income populations, in line with the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative and the Recreation Division's stated focus goal of serving those communities with lower access to alternative forms of recreation.

- While the Southwest Geo has two Community Centers in the top third of Public Hours, it has no Community Center in the top third of Total Hours. This reflects fewer non-public hours funded solely by participant fees. The number of courses offered at Delridge and High Point are relatively high, with a lower registration level than in other Geos.

- The Northeast Geo is the smallest public dollar budget per Community Center, though it has the highest expenditure level per visit, both in terms of public dollars and total (SPR + ARC) dollars.

Additional notes:

- Icons (▲ ▬ ▼) identify low, medium, and high figures as grouped in thirds for the column.

- The Total Hours figures are likely imprecise and reflect a variety of uses, including non-public hours, after hours facility rentals, and other uses. Such uses are likely contributing to high figures in Ballard and Northgate, for example.

- Registrant data is derived from the CLASS database according to the building where the activity took place, which includes activities not supervised by the Community Center, such as Adult Athletics. This better matches the People Counter data that track entry into the building than data screened by supervisor.

- Visitor data shown for Hiawatha are lower than are truly reflective of this Center's level of activity, some of which occurs in a separate building. The total activity is better reflected by the Earned Revenue figures.

- Visitors numbers for the Rainier Beach pool were provided by SPR and removed from the figures shown for Rainier Beach Community Center.

The sources for the data shown in Figure 36 include:

- Tier and open hours: Included in SPR's people counter data.

- Course information: CLASS which include registrants, revenue, and course categorization data.

- Visits: People Counter data installed at each Community Center.

- Expenditures: SPR and ARC accounting systems.

Figure 36. Resources and Usage by Community Center and Geo

By Community Center, 2016$ Sorted by Total Open Hours by Geo	Tier	Open Hours Total Hours	Public Hours	% Public Hours	Courses and Visits (SPR & ARC) Number Courses	Number Registrants	Number Visits	Expenses (SPR & ARC) Total Expenditures	Per Visit	SPR Expenditures	ARC Expenditures	SPR % Public Dollars	SPR Public Dollars per Visit	Revenues (SPR & ARC) Earned Revenue	SPR General Fund & MPD	Cost Recovery (SPR & ARC) Earned Revenues / Expenditures
Northeast Geo		34,188	12,431	36%	1,680	23,718	305,108	$6,862,230	$22.49	$2,886,264	$3,975,966	42%	$9.46	$4,417,929	$2,444,301	64%
Meadowbrook Community Center	1	5,626	3,427	61%	314	4,669	104,410	$1,391,567	$13.33	$455,621	$935,946	33%	$4.36	$979,940	$411,626	70%
Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center	2a	5,326	2,537	48%	450	7,774	62,245	$1,529,120	$24.57	$478,278	$1,050,842	31%	$7.68	$1,131,996	$397,124	74%
Miller Community Center	2b	5,099	1,299	25%	126	1,225	21,493	$672,527	$31.29	$402,623	$269,904	60%	$18.73	$345,146	$327,382	51%
Montlake Community Center	2a	4,970	1,275	26%	309	4,138	40,709	$1,358,957	$33.38	$469,395	$889,562	35%	$11.53	$973,590	$385,367	72%
Northgate Community Center	2a	4,940	1,275	26%	187	2,430	33,155	$916,921	$27.66	$463,908	$453,013	51%	$13.99	$539,114	$377,806	59%
Laurelhurst Community Center	2b	4,119	1,275	31%	221	2,346	18,349	$462,954	$25.23	$243,803	$219,151	53%	$13.29	$275,301	$187,653	59%
Magnuson Community Center	2b	4,108	1,343	33%	73	1,136	24,747	$530,185	$21.42	$372,637	$157,548	70%	$15.06	$172,842	$357,343	33%
Northwest Geo		36,696	15,729	43%	1,912	26,788	588,663	$6,198,633	$10.53	$3,053,440	$3,145,193	49%	$5.19	$3,581,813	$2,616,820	58%
Green Lake Community Center	2a	6,168	2,464	40%	446	5,451	135,217	$845,752	$6.25	$515,233	$330,519	61%	$3.81	$346,405	$499,346	41%
Bitter Lake Community Center	1	5,970	3,444	58%	128	1,462	143,718	$1,067,325	$7.43	$619,558	$447,767	58%	$4.31	$509,133	$558,192	48%
Ballard Community Center	2b	5,323	1,275	24%	266	4,839	47,609	$990,028	$20.79	$405,333	$584,695	41%	$8.51	$709,763	$280,265	72%
Queen Anne Community Center	2a	5,302	2,314	44%	406	6,100	111,090	$1,136,502	$10.23	$527,666	$608,836	46%	$4.75	$647,905	$488,598	57%
Loyal Heights Community Center	1	5,290	3,145	59%	317	3,260	78,571	$718,868	$9.15	$434,784	$284,084	60%	$5.53	$310,944	$407,924	43%
Magnolia Community Center	2b	5,082	1,812	36%	280	5,405	61,973	$1,254,689	$20.25	$386,813	$867,876	31%	$6.24	$958,250	$296,439	76%
Belltown Community Center	2b	3,561	1,275	36%	69	271	10,485	$185,469	$17.69	$164,053	$21,416	88%	$15.65	$99,412	$86,057	54%
Southeast Geo		31,925	16,205	51%	1,435	19,933	478,366	$5,010,587	$10.47	$3,384,257	$1,626,330	68%	$7.07	$1,957,159	$3,053,428	39%
Rainier Bch Community Center	1	6,178	3,635	59%	659	10,067	126,318	$1,278,677	$10.12	$973,663	$305,014	76%	$7.71	$406,391	$872,286	32%
Jefferson Community Center	1	5,836	3,396	58%	223	3,208	116,492	$1,080,635	$9.28	$549,356	$531,279	51%	$4.72	$552,260	$528,374	51%
Rainier Community Center	1	5,609	3,206	57%	253	2,758	90,589	$906,841	$10.01	$614,634	$292,207	68%	$6.78	$363,382	$543,459	40%
Garfield Community Center	1	5,239	3,428	65%	127	1,496	87,468	$837,727	$9.58	$597,548	$240,179	71%	$6.83	$282,242	$555,485	34%
Van Asselt Community Center	2b	4,543	1,265	28%	87	1,479	36,651	$543,358	$14.83	$353,546	$189,812	65%	$9.65	$223,967	$319,392	41%
Int'L District/Chinatown Community Center	2b	4,520	1,275	28%	86	925	20,848	$363,348	$17.43	$295,509	$67,839	81%	$14.17	$128,916	$234,432	35%
Southwest Geo		30,112	14,415	48%	1,349	14,918	375,718	$5,627,860	$14.98	$2,817,641	$2,810,219	50%	$7.50	$3,114,797	$2,513,063	55%
Yesler Community Center	2a	5,247	2,231	43%	75	752	75,565	$615,834	$8.15	$533,018	$82,816	87%	$7.05	$119,198	$496,635	19%
South Park Community Center	2a	5,245	2,292	44%	143	2,235	59,917	$812,158	$13.55	$540,362	$271,796	67%	$9.02	$307,580	$504,578	38%
High Point Community Center	1	5,222	3,602	69%	536	3,061	97,393	$738,892	$7.59	$487,937	$250,955	66%	$5.01	$302,270	$436,623	41%
Hiawatha Community Center	2a	4,907	2,715	55%	179	3,437	76,284	$1,859,578	$24.38	$527,414	$1,332,164	28%	$6.91	$1,404,930	$454,648	76%
Delridge Community Center	2a	4,905	2,300	47%	284	2,928	46,315	$738,692	$15.95	$412,283	$326,409	56%	$8.90	$350,388	$388,304	47%
Alki Community Center	2b	4,586	1,275	28%	132	2,505	20,244	$862,706	$42.62	$316,627	$546,079	37%	$15.64	$630,431	$232,275	73%
Total		132,921	58,780	44%	6,376	85,357	1,747,855	$23,699,310	$13.56	$12,141,602	$11,557,708	51%	$6.95	$13,071,697	$10,627,612	55%

By GEO Area, 2016$	Estimated Catchment Population	Open Hours (ARC and SPR) Total Hours	Public Hours	% Public Hours	Courses and Visits (ARC and SPR) Number Courses	Number Registrants	Number Visitors	Expenses (ARC and SPR) Total Expenditures	Per Visit	SPR Expenditures	ARC Expenditures	SPR % Public Dollars	SPR Public Dollars per Visit	Revenues (ARC and SPR) Earned Revenue	SPR General Fund & MPD	Cost Recovery (ARC and SPR) Earned Revenues / Expenditures
Average Community Center by GEO																
NE	163,074	4,884	1,776	36%	240	3,388	43,587	$980,319	$22.49	$412,323	$567,995	42%	$9.46	$631,133	$349,186	64%
NW	213,874	5,242	2,247	43%	273	3,827	84,095	$885,519	$10.53	$436,206	$449,313	49%	$5.19	$511,688	$373,831	58%
SE	136,847	5,321	2,701	51%	239	3,322	79,728	$835,098	$10.47	$564,043	$271,055	68%	$7.07	$326,193	$508,905	39%
SW	95,711	5,019	2,403	48%	225	2,486	62,620	$937,977	$14.98	$469,607	$468,370	50%	$7.50	$519,133	$418,844	55%
Systemwide Average	152,377	5,112	2,261	44%	245	3,283	67,225	$911,512	$13.56	$466,985	$444,527	57%	$9.07	$502,758	$408,754	55%

Sources: BERK, 2017; SPR 2017.

WHAT IS KNOWN OF CURRENT USERS OF COMMUNITY CENTERS

As described in the section that describes the lack of user information system-wide (page 40), SPR currently collects very little demographic information from users. This is true for Community Centers as well as other parts of the system. Per our staff interviews, Community Center staff may request sign-ins for some drop-in activities or Community Center visits. Demographic information such as language spoken at home may be asked, to help Community Center staff with planning activities and staffing. As described in the previous section on this topic, SPR is moving to a new registration system that will enable additional demographic data collection to better understand who is using Community Center services, particularly classes that require registration. Opportunities to better track participation in free drop-in programs are discussed on page 87.

In **Recommendation 8**, above, we recommend that SPR begin tracking additional demographic data to better understand who is using the system. In the remainder of his section, we explore the limited data that is currently collected.

Examination of Existing Data

When individuals register for scheduled classes, several pieces of data *are* currently collected including age, gender, and mailing address. The following sections examine this data for these program categories:

- Academic Preparedness, Career & Continuing Education
- Arts: Visual/Crafts
- Athletics – Instruction
- Athletics – Leagues & Tournaments
- First Aid & Safety
- Fitness Health and Wellness
- Hobbies, Clubs, & Lifestyles
- Lifelong Learning & Career Development
- Martial Arts & Self-Defense
- Nature & the Environment
- Performing Arts & Dance

Age and Gender

Program registrations for Community Centers by identified gender and age are shown in Figure 37. Age is not currently a required field, so these statistics may be skewed. The graphic on the left shows the breakdown of Community Center participants by gender and age, compared to the City of Seattle distribution shown on the right. Community Center class participants tend to be younger and more female than the population of Seattle. At the other end of the age spectrum, registrations over the age of 60 are underrepresented when compared to the City as a whole. The American Community Survey most recently released demographic data for the year 2015, so that year was used to compare City data to

community center registrations.

- In 2015 56% of Community center registrations were female, compared to 50% citywide.

- 75% of class registrations are under 14 years old, compared to 13% citywide.

- 5% of registrations are over the age of 60, compared to 17% citywide.

Figure 37. Community Center Program Registrants' Age and Identified Gender Compared to City of Seattle Population, 2015
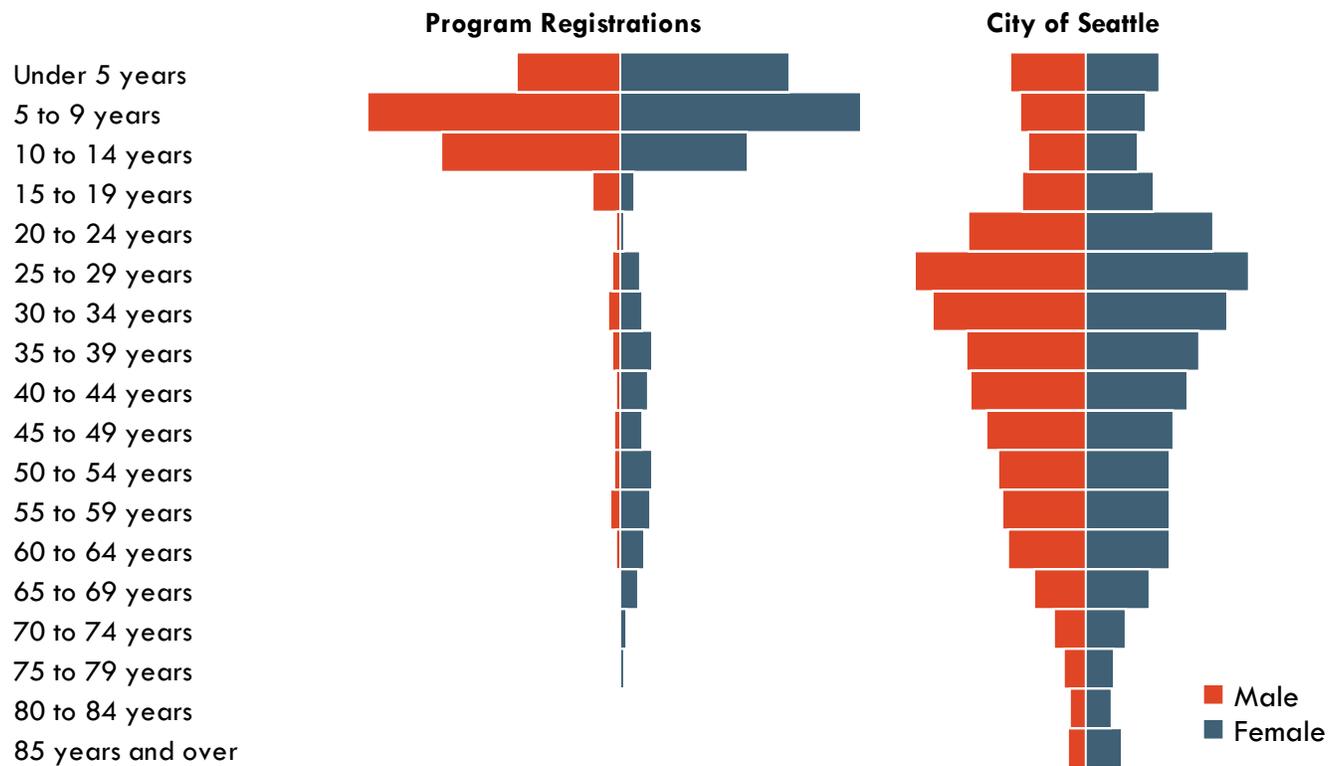
Source: BERK 2017, SPR 2015, ACS 5-Yr S0101, 2015.

Geographic Distribution

While SPR has the ability to view detailed street addresses, to protect participant privacy, staff redacted specific addresses before sharing this information with BERK, leaving us with registrant ZIP codes only. There appears to be very little relationship between registrations and ZIP code characteristics, as shown in Figure 38, when compared toper 1,000 and population, median income, or the presence of households with children under the age of 15. This is evidenced by the low correlation figures at the bottom of this table: 0.0 for population, 0.4 for income, and 0.2 for households with children. The same analysis is done for swimming and boating courses on pages 128 and 130 respectively. They show similarly low correlations.

Note that for this rough analysis, ZIP codes that extend beyond Seattle City limits were used, so population totals for all codes don't match true Seattle population figures. ZIP codes located outside of Seattle accounted for 6% of such registrations in 2016.

Additional mapping of registration rates against the location of Community Centers or pools would be interesting, as it is possible that proximity to a facility is a bigger driver than the other factors analyzed

here. This was beyond the scope of our work, which focused on operations rather than the location of capital facilities.

Figure 38. Community Center Registrations by ZIP Code, 2016

ZIP Code	Population	Median Income	HH with Children 0-14	Registrations Total	Per 1,000
Fully In Seattle					
98101	12,741	$ 51,159	260	80	6.3
98102	23,647	$ 75,155	1,348	348	14.7
98103	48,477	$ 81,330	5,929	935	19.3
98104	14,841	$ 32,568	630	202	13.6
98105	48,269	$ 49,647	3,960	1,370	28.4
98106	24,327	$ 53,848	4,429	832	34.2
98107	24,428	$ 77,170	2,537	520	21.3
98109	25,891	$ 85,957	1,663	549	21.2
98112	22,183	$ 103,816	3,223	945	42.6
98115	48,362	$ 92,039	8,523	2,876	59.5
98116	23,209	$ 77,781	3,715	1,116	48.1
98117	32,411	$ 92,316	5,554	1,079	33.3
98118	45,727	$ 55,725	8,340	1,542	33.7
98119	23,475	$ 73,794	2,463	682	29.1
98121	17,249	$ 73,874	418	128	7.4
98122	35,212	$ 60,563	3,365	828	23.5
98126	22,291	$ 68,342	4,684	1,269	56.9
98134	651	$ 52,981	17	-	NA
98136	15,281	$ 90,625	2,343	742	48.6
98144	28,667	$ 62,633	3,991	816	28.5
98154	-	-	-	-	NA
98155	33,517	$ 75,839	5,521	160	4.8
98164	146	$ 85,670	-	-	NA
98168	34,279	$ 49,188	6,709	150	4.4
98195	-	-	-	31	NA
98199	20,386	$ 87,486	3,506	1,464	71.8
Partially In Seattle					NA
98108	23,856	$ 53,143	5,183	1,015	42.5
98125	39,866	$ 54,561	6,045	1,068	26.8
98133	46,663	$ 53,836	5,698	445	9.5
98146	27,895	$ 58,429	5,293	312	11.2
98177	19,760	$ 92,938	2,803	230	11.6
98178	25,397	$ 60,839	5,276	529	20.8

Correlation with:

Registration rate	**0.0**	**0.4**	**0.2**		

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016.

SPR'S OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING TO INCREASE ACCESS

SPR has undertaken significant outreach and programming efforts to engage targeted groups, including low-income families and individuals, people of color, and recent immigrants. SPR's efforts have been to identify needs and barriers, and adjust programming and services, both at the local Community Center level and systemwide. In this section, we review the barriers to participation identified by SPR, efforts to reduce those barriers, and examine SPR's outreach and programming for underserved communities. The following section summarizes peer agency practices in this area.

Identified Barriers to Participation

When developing the 2016 Community Center Strategic Plan, SPR conducted several surveys and meetings with underrepresented communities to help determine barriers to participation. The outreach found the following barriers to using Community Centers:

▪ Insufficient operating hours

▪ Cost of programs

▪ Staff not speaking their language

▪ Poor customer service

▪ Concerns about safety

▪ Lack of transportation

SPR's Efforts to Reduce Barriers

In the one year since the Community Center Strategic Plan was implemented, SPR has made some efforts to reduce these barriers, as described below.

Hours and Program Cost

The Strategic Plan recommended adding operating hours at several Community Centers in neighborhoods with lower incomes and ending fees for drop-in programs systemwide. These two steps, which were funded by the City Council for the 2017 budget, were designed to help increase access by boosting operating hours and reducing the cost of programs. MPD-funded programs including Get Moving, Recreation for All, and other, are dedicated to increasing access.

Safety and Transportation

We are unaware of major, systemwide efforts by SPR to address safety concerns of current or potential Community Center users. Regarding access to transportation to get to Community Centers, that is not included in the scope of this study, but will be addressed in SPR's future facilities planning work.

Language and Customer Service

Scholarship forms are now being translated into several languages. In addition to providing forms in multiple languages. SPR committed in its Strategic Plan to addressing these barriers through:

▪ Professional development and customer service training for staff.

Investigating options to make Centers more welcoming to non-English speakers, such as additional translation services.

Outreach and Programming for Underserved Communities

SPR has increased outreach to underserved communities, both in general and via specific programs, some of which are funded through the MPD, including the Get Moving and Recreation for All programs, Dementia-Friendly Recreation, LGBTQ Rainbow Recreation programs, and a coordinator for Food and Fitness programs.

At the Community Center

Much of SPR's outreach to and programming for underserved communities is organized and conducted at the Community Center level. In SPR's "Basic Expectations for Facility Supervisors" document, outreach to underserved communities is listed as an expectation when developing community partnerships and providing programming, through use of a staff Race and Social Justice tool kit.

In addition, each Community Center developed a Center Business Plan in 2016, which includes a brief analysis of current Center users, whether they reflect the demographics of the area, and their needs. The documents do not list specific goals for reaching out to underserved communities. As noted in **Recommendation 9**, we are suggesting that Center Business Plans be used to plan and coordinate outreach efforts with ARC, and to tap into promising practices in use elsewhere in the system.

Role of Advisory Councils with Underserved Communities

One of the roles of the Advisory Councils is to serve as a connection with the community, communicating community interests and issues to SPR staff. This and other roles of the Advisory Councils are explored beginning on page 26.

PEER PRACTICES: OUTREACH AND PROGRAMMING TO INCREASE ACCESS

Portland Parks and Recreation

One of the goals in Portland's Five-Year Racial Equity Action Plan (2017) is focused on outreach: "Strengthen outreach and public engagement for communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities." Six strategies are included for accomplishing this goal:

- Develop partnerships with organizations of color.

- Improve communications with communities of color and refugee/immigrant communities through appropriate tools, such as translations and distribution avenues.

- Develop culturally responsive marketing materials.

- Ensure participation on advisory boards and committees is reflective of City demographics and includes representatives from communities of color and refugee/immigrant communities.

- Improve involvement in the Portland annual budget process; and promote racial equity goals with partners organizations.

Examples of related performance metrics include:

- Create and distribute translated materials on digital platform to reach identified 10 languages.

- 80% of partner organizations view Portland Parks and Recreation as a collaborative partner by 2019.

- Portland Parks and Recreation boards, commissions, and committees are comprised of 35% people of color, refugee and immigrant populations, and people living with disabilities.

- 100% of friends and partner groups complete racial equity training.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Minneapolis is in the midst of a three-year initiative called "RecQuest" to ensure that recreation centers and programs are keeping pace with the City's changing demographics and recreation trends. Minneapolis is applying a racial equity lens to this planning process to ensure the needs of underrepresented and underserved communities are included in the final plan.

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation's 2017-2018 Racial Equity Action Plan includes the following goal: "The MPRB provides programs and services that are responsive and reflective of community needs." One Action under this goal is to:

"Address programming needs of historically underserved communities as part of RecQuest - Develop guiding principles to ensure that programming is responsive and reflective of needs of historically underserved communities. Collect data on the usage of MPRB programs across the system on participation by neighborhood with racial and ethnic demographics, types of programs, and affordability of programs. The action includes community engagement."

BERK's suggestions related to outreach are addressed in **Recommendation 9**.

Quality and Impact

- *Are Community Center customers satisfied?*

- *Are Community Center programs generating desired benefits for participants?*

QUALITY + IMPACT

As described in the systemwide consideration of quality and impact beginning on page 52, SPR currently has few measures of program quality, such as customer satisfaction ratings or a measure of repeat customers. SPR has invested significantly in measuring impact, however, with a particular focus on scheduled recreation programs as explained below.

IMPACT

The Results Framework

While other types of activities take place inside Community Centers (drop-in activities, special events, etc.), the Results Framework applies primarily to multi-session, instructor-led programming (see Results Framework section for more information). The Results Framework examines *participant outcomes* – changes in program participants (such as knowledge, skills, and behaviors), rather than outputs – services provided by the agency. The Results Framework includes several steps for setting up, achieving, and measuring outcomes:

- A staff group of Assistant Coordinators sets system-wide outcome goals for similar programs, focused on participant achievement, in the form of a "logic model" showing inputs, outputs, and outcomes. See example below for Martial Arts programs. ARC instructors are involved in this process, but it is led by Assistant Coordinators.

- At the Community Center level, Coordinators or Assistant Coordinators set targets for programs at specific sites for the coming quarter. This includes goals for number of participants and the percentage who fully achieve the desired outcomes.

- ARC instructors lead the program with these goals in mind.

- Participants are surveyed at the end of class (see example below).

- Staff (both SPR staff and the ARC instructor) review reports on their program based on participant feedback.

- Assistant Coordinators revise programs based on feedback.

Program Roll-Out

As noted in the introduction to the Results Framework on page 59, SPR began setting up the Results Framework in 2015, with the first programs measured in in 2016. Over 1,000 participant feedback forms were received in 2016. SPR's goal is to have logic models in place for all multi-session, instructor-led programs at all sites at the category level (e.g. Cooking and Nutrition, Senior, etc.) by the end of 2017.

SPR staff set targets for their programs, including both the number of participants in the program and the percent of participants who will fully achieve the desired results. Goals are not set for participant

demographics, although demographics are tracked in feedback forms.

Figure 39. Example of a Logic Model in the Results Framework: Martial Arts

MARTIAL ARTS LOGIC MODEL

Seattle Parks & Recreation
healthy people   healthy environment   strong communities

Situation: Our community members—especially young people—spend less time active and more time in front of screens than previous generations. Families are seeking activities that engage themselves and their children in physical activity to increase their health and wellness, develop social and emotional skills, and provide mentorship. In addition, many community members experience aggression and violence in their lives, and hope to learn and practice skills in self-control, conflict resolution, and self-defense. In many cases, private programs that provide these activities are costly and have specific access requirements, leaving families searching for more inclusive, affordable options.

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	Participation	Milestones	Results	Impact
Money	Create budget	Participants	*During the program, we work to make sure the participant…*	*As a result of the program, the participant…*	Healthy People
Instructors	Market	Decision makers			
Space for class/storage	Enroll participants	Volunteers	Increases awareness of physical strength, flexibility, and surroundings	Makes healthier life choices	Strong Communities
Class Materials & Supplies	Hire/Train/Orient instructors	Families		Repeats exercises outside of class to increase physical fitness, enhance self-control, and be free from agitation	
Equipment	Create Curriculum	Partner agencies and funders	Adopts the belief that applying discipline and self-control are important for accomplishment		
Marketing Materials (include translation)	Hold Open House			Responds more effectively to challenges using discipline to make good decisions	
Staff time	Conduct classes, tournaments, field trips		Begins to experience enhanced body image and self-esteem, and to value personal growth		
Partnerships	Assess			Uses feedback to enhance personal growth	
Sponsors	Partner		Consistently plans ways to continue learning and increasing capacity to perform		
Insurance				*…and we do formal verification to make sure they made it to the outcomes.*	
Research base			*…and we do informal assessments to make sure the participant is meeting these milestones.*		

Source: SPR, 2017.

Figure 40. Martial Arts Feedback Form

Seattle Parks & Recreation
healthy people healthy environment strong communities

Thank you for taking part in our Martial Arts programs!
Please take a moment to tell us about its value…

Site: _____ Program Name: _____

1. **How did you find out about today's program?** *Please check all that apply.*

   ◯ Online   ◯ Printed brochure   ◯ Friends   ◯ Parks or ARC staff

   ◯ Some other way: _____

   If you selected Online: *Where online did you find the program, and what prompted you to go online?*

   _____

2. **How satisfied were you with this program?** *(1 means you were very unhappy, 7 means you not only liked it but that you gained something that adds value to your life.)*

   | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

   (Highly Satisfied)   *(Highly Unsatisfied)*

3. **Please name up to three ways you will apply what you learned from this program.**

4. **As a result of this program, do you…**

   (Absolutely)   *(Not At All)*

Repeat the exercises you learned outside of class?	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Use discipline to make good decisions and respond to challenges?	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Use feedback to enhance personal growth?	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

   Please turn over for a few more questions…

Source: SPR, 2017.

Figure 41. Martial Arts Results Report, Winter 2017

Source: SPR, 2017.

Resource Efficiency

- *Are Community Centers pursuing opportunities to earn revenue to supplement SPR resources?*

- *Are Community Centers making the best use of limited resources?*

The biggest component of revenue generation – fee setting – is addressed in Chapter III as a systemwide issue. Here, we discuss Community Center facility rentals and Advisory Council fundraising. It is important to acknowledge that facility rentals are both a service and a revenue generating line of business. This section also looks at cancelled classes and classes that run with fewer than the minimum specified number of registrants.

COMMUNITY CENTER FACILITY RENTALS

SPR considers facility rentals both to be a community service, allowing access to spaces for community-based programming and events, as well as an opportunity to generate revenue. These aims must be balanced, just as revenue generation from participant fees for recreation programs must be balanced with access goals. The timing of facility rentals must also be balanced with other potential uses for the space, as rentals preclude use of the site for other purposes during the rental period. SPR uses People Counter data to adjust operating hours and identify slower time periods and make them available for rentals.

The Recreation Division manages a variety of facilities that are rented out for private use, including: Pools; Community Center meeting rooms, kitchens, and gymnasiums; Small Craft and Rowing & Sailing Centers; and Teen Life Centers.

Community Center rentals are currently managed by staff at each site, who try to schedule rentals during non-operating hours to avoid conflict with programs and drop-in hours. Events with alcohol are not allowed during public hours.

Managing rentals can be a significant use of time for Community Center staff. Facility rentals is estimated to take an average of 25% of Recreation Attendant time, and lesser amounts from Leaders, Coordinators, and Assistant Coordinators (see Figure 31). Tasks include marketing and providing information on rentals; scheduling and paperwork; day-of customer service; and arranging staff.

Management of some specialized facility rental sites (including Alki Bathhouse, Golden Gardens Bathhouse, Dakota Place, and the Cal Anderson Shelter House) was recently moved from Recreation to SPR's scheduling and contracts office. SPR is now considering moving all Community Center rentals to this group as well.

Balancing Rentals with Other Goals

SPR staff noted that there is not an established policy giving direction to rentals, and that achieving the mission/revenue balance is more art than science. SPR sees an increasing Seattle population leading to growing demands for recreation services and would prefer to reduce rentals and increase open hours and programming. Revenues from rentals can be substantial, however, and must be considered carefully, along with the staff time required to manage rentals, whether in the Recreation Division or elsewhere at SPR.

In 2016, approximate rental revenue ranged from $9,975 at Delridge to $108,936 at Northgate. As a percentage of total expenditures at each Community Center, rental revenue ranged from one percent at several Centers to a high of 12 percent at Miller and Northgate. These variations are to be expected as the type and condition of facilities varies widely, as does local demand for rentals and ability to pay.

Although each Community Center has a rental revenue goal, the revenue is not retained directly by that Community Center, and therefore Coordinators are not necessarily incentivized to maximize rental revenue. Information on this topic was not solicited from peer agencies. Gross 2016 rental revenue is shown in Figure 42 and Figure 43.

Figure 42. Systemwide Facility Rental Information, 2011-2016

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of rentals	9,868	10,257	9,814	10,176	9,343	10,530
Rental hours	37,158	43,959	48,579	38,536	30,137	33,811
Gross Fee	$1,011,144	$1,126,848	$997,013	$1,128,981	$1,012,740	$1,419,172

Sources: BERK, 2017; SPR 2011-2016.

Figure 43. Systemwide Facility Rental Information by Center, 2016

	# Rentals	Hours	Gross Fees
Ballard Community Center	251	897	$57,823
Bitter Lake Community Center	397	1,202	$61,423
Green Lake C.C. & Evans Pool	1,301	1,386	$99,610
Loyal Heights Community Center	185	451	$23,988
Magnolia Community Center	85	308	$19,148
Queen Anne Community Center	227	707	$39,463
Laurelhurst Community Center	311	2,102	$32,546
Magnuson Brig (bldg 406)	831	9,559	$148,865
Magnuson Community Center (bldg 47)	267	1,159	$55,225
Meadowbrook Community Center	322	724	$40,307
Miller Community Center	534	1,381	$76,855
Montlake Community Center	316	904	$45,369
Northgate Community Center	547	1,605	$117,891
Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center	194	560	$34,348
Alki Community Center	15	42	$3,116
Delridge Community Center	97	268	$14,390
Hiawatha Community Center	74	215	$10,786
High Point Community Center	333	768	$45,773
South Park Community Center	228	877	$28,595
Yesler Community Center	339	996	$54,880
Garfield Community Center	360	776	$38,089
International District/Chinatown C.C.	242	513	$31,312
Jefferson Community Center	148	598	$34,161
Rainier Beach Pool & Community Center	2,011	3,125	$182,161
Rainier Community Center	767	2,240	$99,316
Van Asselt Community Center	148	450	$23,735
NW GEO subtotal	2,446	4,950	$301,453
NE GEO subtotal	3,322	17,994	$551,405
SW GEO subtotal	1,086	3,166	$157,540
SE GEO subtotal	3,676	7,701	$408,773
Total for all Community Centers	**10,530**	**33,811**	**$1,419,172**

Sources: BERK, 2017; SPR 2011-2016.

Recommendation 12. Ensure buildings and other facilities are used as much as possible.

While public recreation hours are a top priority, non-public (ARC-funded) programming and facility rentals also provide service to residents and generate revenue to support the system. All three uses must be balanced in a way that best serves the public and makes maximum use of capital facilities.

12.1   Restructure facility rentals to better serve the public and generate revenues.

Responsibility for facility rentals should be centralized within SPR to leverage shared expertise and a dedicated focus on this service, recognizing that it is fundamentally different than recreation programming and creating clear incentives for appropriately maximizing rental revenues. Facility rentals should, however, be managed to achieve targets that balance the tensions within our Evaluative Framework, providing access to an affordable shared community resource while generating income to supplement public resources. A more complete understanding of the full incremental costs associated with facility rentals and the fees set by competing facilities in the market should inform rental fee setting, with use of discounts to enable access for those individuals, families, or groups with fewer resources. People Counter data can be used to identify more suitable times for rentals that don't interfere with programming hours.

12.2   Round out public-funded programing with other productive uses.

While we understand that SPR has a preference for prioritizing public hours over non-public programming, this may not always be the best use of overall public resources. We note that Minneapolis made a decision to focus public hours and funding for staff positions during times with the highest usage. Other programs such as preschool, rentals, and senior programs occur during non-public hours, but are not staffed by front-desk staff. SPR should collaborate with ARC and other partners to identify the most cost-effective ways to activate facilities and generate public benefit on as many days and for as many hours as possible. Creative solutions may be necessary to address potential challenges related to needed supporting services, including facility oversight from a risk management point of view or janitorial services.

COMMUNITY BUILDING AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Advisory Councils were initially created as a way to raise and manage funds donated to individual Community Centers by members of the local community. For a period of time, donations to support holiday celebrations or other activities were informally held and managed by SPR staff. This was seen to be inappropriate and so independent non-profits were established for this purpose, resulting in a series of organizations popping up across Seattle, largely associated with wealthier neighborhoods whose population could support giving. Eventually, these independent organizations were knit together under one umbrella: the Associated Recreation Council (ARC).

Advisory Councils have long been responsible for both raising funds and managing ARC-generated participant fees associated with individual Community Centers. As described elsewhere in this report, these fund balances are being consolidated to facilitate a more equitable distribution of resources across the system.

As shown in Figure 44, fundraising by ARC constitutes a very small share of expenditures, with a systemwide total of $234,000, or 1%. Individual centers range from raising $104 (Van Asselt) to $41,000 (Garfield), with the highest share of total expenditures achieved by Garfield, at 3.2%. SPR notes that event expenses must be deducted from these revenues; in the face of very modest net revenues, staff say that community building is the real benefit generated by these events. In **Recommendation 1**, we suggest that ARC's responsibility for fundraising be elevated in the next Master Services Agreement Update. As a separate non-profit organization, ARC is better positioned to do that than SPR, and may be able to more meaningfully supplement core public funding, particularly in areas that may be compelling to donors, such as recreation scholarships for underrepresented populations.

Figure 44. ARC Fundraising by Community Center, 2016

		ARC Fundraising	ARC Course Fees
Northeast Geo		**$91,175**	**2.3%**
Meadowbrook Community Center	▲	$22,467	2.4%
Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center	▲	$11,075	1.1%
Miller Community Center	▬	$4,713	1.7%
Montlake Community Center	▬	$2,193	0.2%
Northgate Community Center	▲	$22,220	4.9%
Laurelhurst Community Center	▬	$7,650	3.5%
Magnuson Community Center	▲	$20,857	13.2%
Northwest Geo		**$53,797**	**1.7%**
Green Lake Community Center	▲	$8,931	2.7%
Bitter Lake Community Center	▲	$27,025	6.0%
Ballard Community Center	▬	$8,169	1.4%
Queen Anne Community Center	▼	$521	0.1%
Loyal Heights Community Center	▬	$8,294	2.9%
Magnolia Community Center	▼	$732	0.1%
Belltown Community Center	▼	$125	0.6%
Southeast Geo		**$66,497**	**4.1%**
Rainier Bch Community Center	▲	$9,303	3.1%
Jefferson Community Center	▲	$14,744	2.8%
Rainier Community Center	▼	$990	0.3%
Garfield Community Center	▲	$41,053	17.1%
Van Asselt Community Center	▼	$104	0.1%
Int'L District/Chinatown Community Center	▼	$303	0.4%
Southwest Geo		**$22,864**	**0.8%**
Yesler Community Center	▼	$208	0.3%
South Park Community Center	▬	$8,249	3.0%
High Point Community Center	▼	$1,690	0.7%
Hiawatha Community Center	▬	$6,078	0.5%
Delridge Community Center	▼	$1,644	0.5%
Alki Community Center	▬	$4,995	0.9%
Total		**$234,333**	**2.0%**

Icons (▲ ▬ ▼) identify low, medium, and high figures as grouped in thirds for the column.

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016.

V. FOCUS ON AQUATICS

Background and Operational Overview

The Aquatics Unit provides residents with access to various water-based activities, and includes 10 swimming pools (8 year-round indoor and 2 outdoor seasonal), 9 beaches, 10 sprayparks, 20 wading pools, 7 boat ramps, and 2 boating centers. Lifeguards and/or attendants staff many of these locations.

Aquatics programming includes swim lessons, water fitness, and rowing and sailing classes. Unlike Community Centers, most Aquatics programming is delivered by City staff and not by employees of ARC. The Green Lake and Mt. Baker Small Craft Centers are exceptions and are staffed by ARC employees. Also unlike Community Centers, user fees for pools and swim lessons go directly to the City, rather than to ARC. User fees for programs at the Boating Centers go to ARC, with a PAR fee distributed back to SPR.

Figure 45. Aquatics Expenditures and Direct Revenues, 2010-2016 Actuals
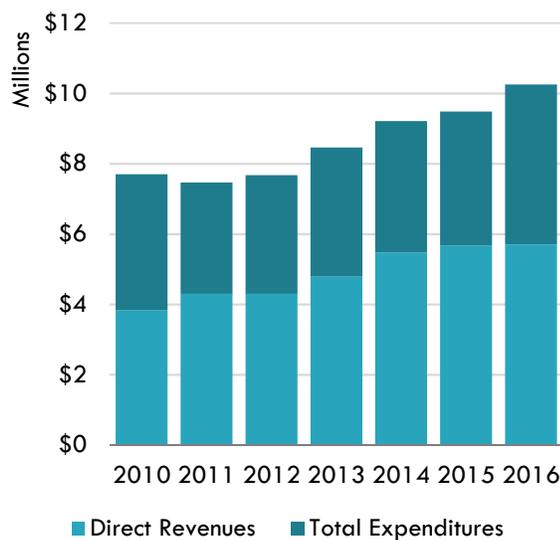
Staffing for 2017

- 60.6 permanent FTE (92 full-time or part-time positions).

- 64.4 temporary FTE (approximately 450 seasonal staff).

- 70 ARC instructors.

Notes: "Direct Revenues" are fees collected for course and program offerings with City-staffed instruction, some merchandise sales, facility rentals, and 4% "PAR Fees" remitted from ARC. Expenditures include personnel costs, both permanent and temporary, and non-labor costs such as utilities, fleet, and equipment. Expenditures do not include major maintenance, which falls under the Maintenance Division.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

POOLS

Activities at pools include unscheduled recreation (lap swim, family swim, etc.), public and private classes, and pool rentals. Schedules are developed by the Coordinators for each pool. Schedules, lessons, and classes tend to be fairly consistent throughout the year and from one year to the next. Decisions on pool schedules are informed by a combination of factors, including historic trends, balancing competing community needs, participation trends, and revenue goals. Revenue goals are often met by increasing the amount of private lessons, although this is balanced against the need of serving more people through groups lessons, public swims, etc. Scheduling must also accommodate agreements with Seattle Public Schools for swim meet space and time for maintenance.

Lessons and classes at pools are all delivered by SPR permanent and temporary staff. Unlike other SPR Recreation units, no ARC staff serve as instructors at pools.

OUTDOOR AQUATICS

Summer beaches, sprayparks, and wading pools make up SPR's outdoor aquatics programs (boating is listed separately below). These locations are all operated free of charge for the public.

- **Sprayparks.** SPR's 10 sprayparks are generally open every day from Memorial Day to Labor Day, unless thunder and lightning are present, from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm. Unlike wading pools, sprayparks are not staffed, but are monitored by an attendant who is responsible for multiple sites.

- **Wading pools.** SPR's 20 wading pools are generally open from late June through late October, on sunny days when the temperature is forecast to be 70 degrees or above. Hours are generally noon to 7:00 or 8:00 pm. During budget cuts in 2010, the wading pool program was cut back, but the City Council added funding starting in 2017, and the number of open pools increased from 14 in 2016 to 20 in 2017.

- **Summer beaches.** SPR has nine lifeguarded summer beaches. Opening days vary from late May to late June, depending on location, and closing dates vary from late August to early September. Beach hours for 2017 were noon to 7:00 pm weekdays and 11:00 am to 7:00 pm weekends, weather permitting. SPR provides free beginning swimming lessons for youth each summer, with registration on-site.

BOATING

SPR operates two public boating centers: the Green Lake Small Craft Center (GLSCC) and the Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center (MBRSC). These sites host classes and clubs for rowing, sailing, paddling, and more. Each Boating Center is managed by a SPR Coordinator, and classes are taught by ARC instructors. MBRSC has one ARC Advisory Council and GLSCC has two (one for rowing and one for canoeing and kayaking).

SPR also operates seven public boat launches. Permits are required for ramp use, and come in single-day ($12), overnight ($12), and annual ($150) options. Fees are paid through on-site kiosks, and SPR staff provide enforcement during busy times.

PERFORMANCE METRICS

Aquatics currently tracks the following metrics, organized by the Evaluative Categories established for this study.

Category	Current Measures Tracked by SPR
Usage + Access	▪ Usage data. ▪ Number of swim lessons conducted annually (Performance Seattle goal). ▪ Number or percent of swim lessons and swim discounts covered by scholarships.
Quality + Impact	▪ The Results Framework has been applied to the Late-Night lifeguard training program at Rainier Beach. A second program, Summer Swim League is in process.
Resource Efficiency	▪ Revenue targets and cost recovery. ▪ Private swim lessons. ▪ Class and program cancellations.

SPR hired an Aquatics Manager in December 2017, who is developing goals and performance metrics for wading pools, sprayparks, lifeguarded beaches, and boat ramps.

Usage and Access

- *Is usage of the Aquatics system high and growing as Seattle grows?*

- *Are Aquatics resources accessible to all residents?*

Although this study does not focus on physical facilities, it's worth noting that SPR pools are not distributed evenly around the City. This section addresses overall usage and access as relates to Aquatics, looking at: 1) attendance; 2) participation in Aquatics courses; and 3) access by income, age, gender, and ZIP code.

Of the eight year-round pools, all but two (Southwest and Rainier Beach) are north of downtown, with Medgar Evers serving the Central District, as shown in Figure 46.

Figure 46. Map of SPR Pools

Source: SPR brochure titled "Water Fitness Programs and Wellness Activities for Adults and Senior Adults."

Sprayparks and wading pools appear to be more evenly distributed around the City, providing access to residents across the City.

Figure 47. Map of SPR Sprayparks and Wading Pools

Source: City of Seattle, http://www.seattle.gov/parks/find/spray-parks-and-wading-pools.
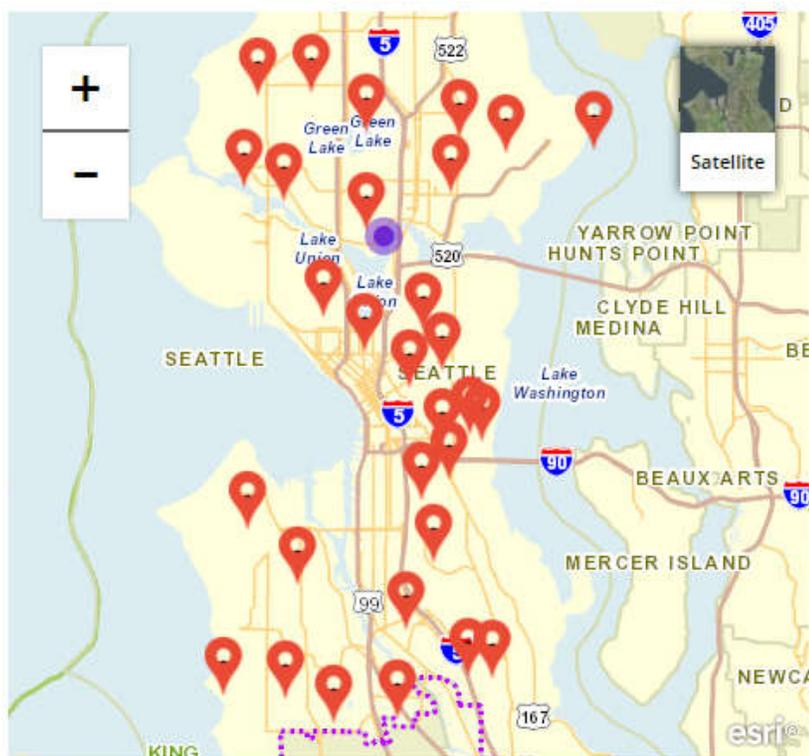
1) ATTENDANCE

SPR measures attendance at pools, wading pools, and lifeguarded beaches. Sprayparks are not staffed and therefore usage is not measured. Attendance at public boating centers is generally measured through course and program registrations.

We have heard anecdotal information that wading pools and sprayparks are closed because of mechanical failures more frequently than is desirable. Data was not available to explore the frequency of these events. The new Asset Management Work Order system will help determine the frequency of closures due to mechanical issues or maintenance. Wading pools have no pumps and are not closed due to mechanical failures. If they pools are closed it is due to glass in the pool or a contamination. Sprayparks have had mechanical issues in the past, but have improved greatly the past year with more staffing support provided through the MPD.

Pools

Activities at pools include public swim, family swim, lap swim, children pool playland, as well as swim lessons, specialty courses, and fitness programs. Admissions for SPR pools from 2011 through 2016 is shown in Figure 3, with the exception of 2013, for which data was unavailable. While it appears that admissions have grown significantly during this time period, the higher admissions starting in 2014 can be largely attributed to the re-opening of the Rainier Beach pool, closed in 2011 and 2012. Rainier Beach drew over 244,000 visits in 2014, about 79% of the nearly 310,000 additional visits in 2014 compared to 2012.

Annual totals for admissions include visits associated with public swims, lessons, Seattle Public Schools events, swim meets, and facility rentals. "Spectators," a category accounting for approximately 31% of admissions, refers to people who enter to watch an activity and do not pay; the largest category of spectators is parents who watch their child(ren) during swim lessons. Between 2011 and 2016, spectators, rentals, and lesson visits grew the most (70%, 40%, and 27%, respectively), while general admissions and Seattle Schools grew more modestly (12% and 10%) and swim meet attendance declined.

Figure 48. Pool Admissions by Category, 2011-2016
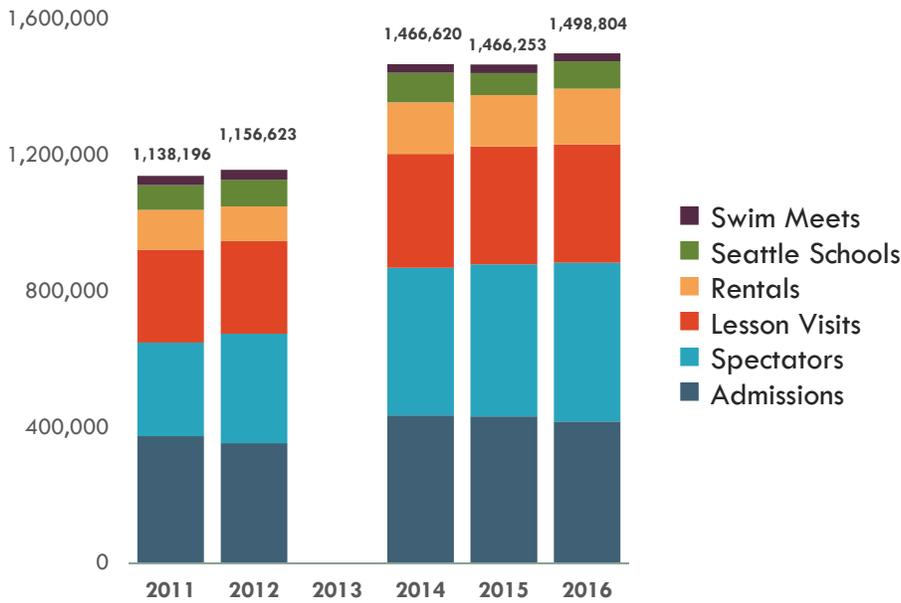
Category	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Change, 2011-16	% Change, 2011-16
Admissions	372,819	352,664	NA	433,311	430,650	415,982	43,163	12%
Spectators	274,986	321,490	NA	435,077	447,847	466,658	191,672	70%
Lesson Visits	273,143	272,816	NA	334,419	345,793	347,974	74,831	27%
Rentals	117,272	101,995	NA	151,854	151,501	163,980	46,708	40%
Seattle Schools	73,122	77,857	NA	86,528	64,980	80,653	7,531	10%
Swim Meets	26,854	29,801	NA	25,431	25,482	23,557	-3,297	-12%
Total	**1,138,196**	**1,156,623**		**1,466,620**	**1,466,253**	**1,498,804**	**360,608**	**32%**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (Aquatics Dataset).

General admissions and lesson visits by pool in 2016 are shown in Figure 49. Seven pools had higher general admissions than lesson visits, while Ballard, Madison, and Southwest had more lesson visits.

Figure 49. General Admissions and Lesson Visits by Location, 2016
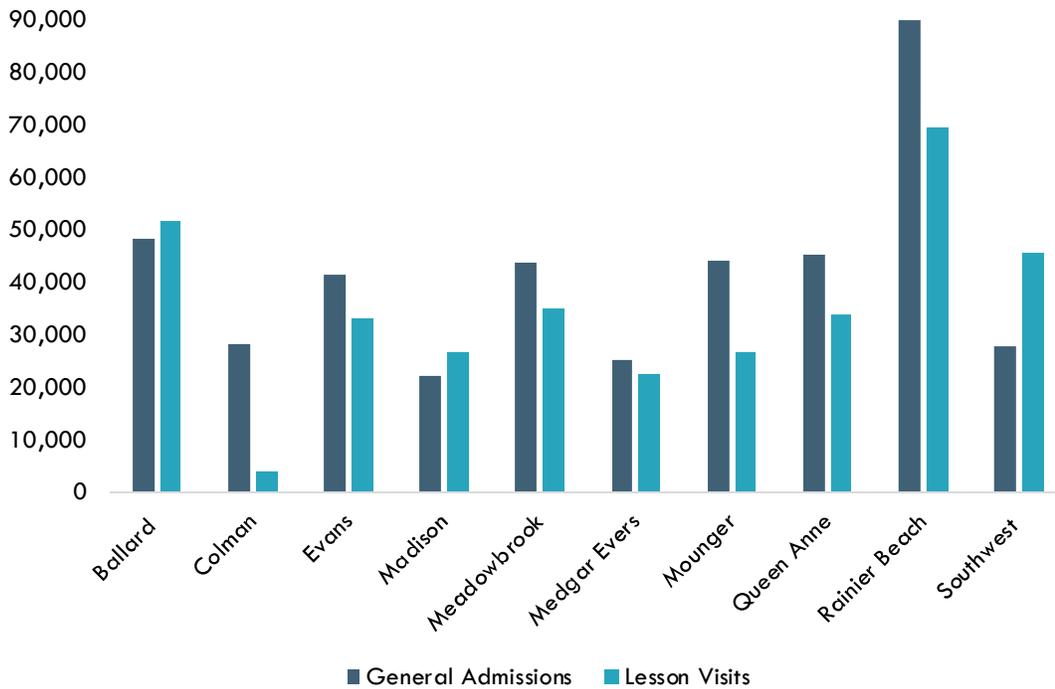
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016 (Aquatics Dataset).

Medgar Evers has the highest percentage of low income lessons and SPR staff report that the fee increase to $38 negatively impacted community participation. There is less interest in (or ability to afford) personal lessons, and SPR is considering whether it should continue to offer them there.

Pool closures for maintenance can affect visits. Closures in 2016 were:

- Evans: August 22 - September 2.

- Madison: September 26 - October 7.

- Meadowbrook: March 14-25.

- Queen Anne: April 4-15.

- Southwest: June 20-24 and October 23 - November 12.

Wading Pools

SPR operated 14 wading pools between 2014 and 2016 (the years for which attendance data is available). Wading pools are open on sunny days in the summer when the forecast is 70 degrees or more. Systemwide attendance at wading pools declined from 2014 through 2016, as shown in Figure 50. Although there were fewer open days in 2016, average visits per open day also declined, from 231 in 2014 to 215 in 2016. Attendance at all outdoor aquatics can be affected by weather conditions; wading pools also do not open if the weather is rainy or below 70 degrees.

Figure 50. Wading Pool Attendance, 2014-2016

	2014	2015	2016
Total Attendance	102,962	92,165	93,669
Total Days Open (All Pools)	446	420	435
Daily Average Attendance	231	219	215

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2014-2016 (Wading Pool Attendance Dataset).

Average attendance per open day varies considerably by wading pool, as shown in Figure 51. Green Lake has by far the most visits each year, with over twice as many as the next most popular wading pool, Volunteer Park, in 2016. The least visited pools were Cal Anderson and South Park.

Figure 51. Wading Pool Average Attendance per Open Day, 2014-2016
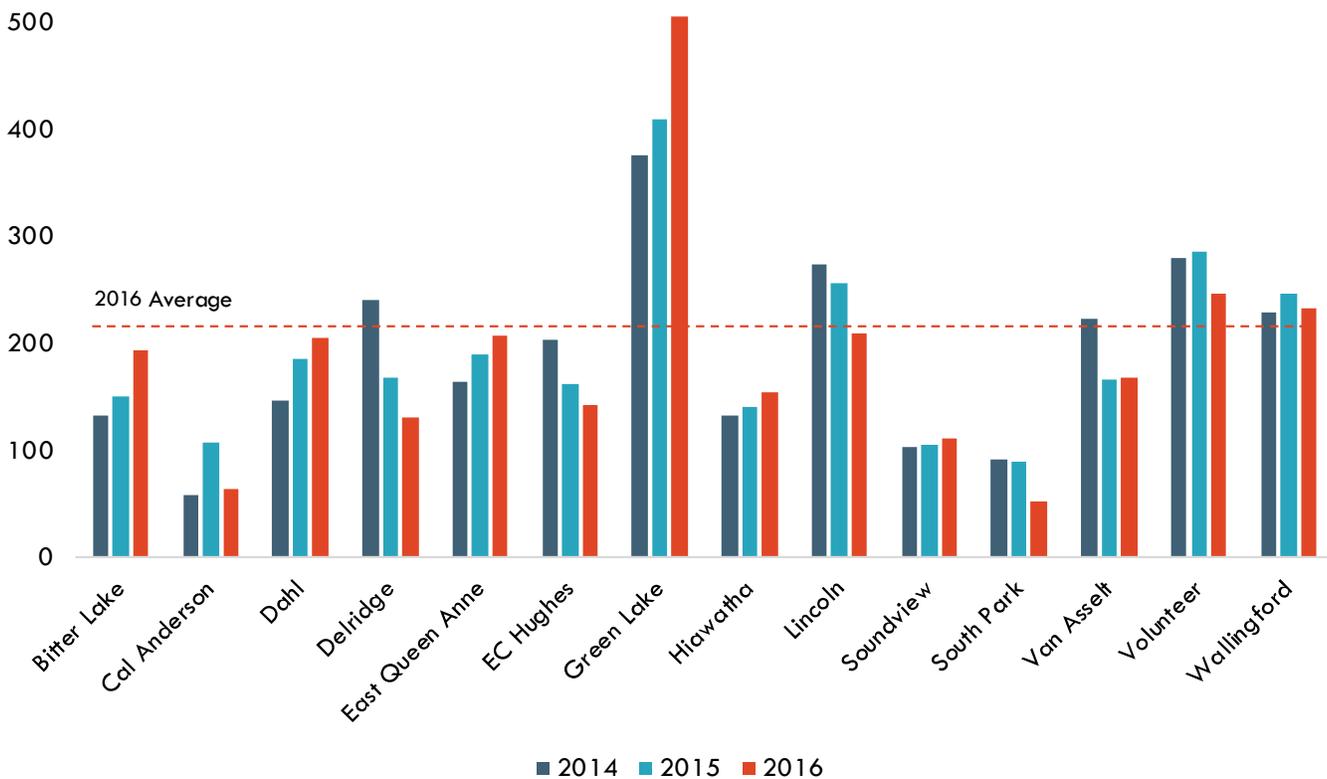
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2014-2016 (Wading Pool Attendance Dataset).

Summer Beaches

Attendance at SPR's nine lifeguarded beaches gradually increased from 2010 to 2015, and then declined in 2016, as shown in Figure 52. Madison consistently had the highest number of visits. Differences in attendance each year is likely due in part to weather conditions. Beach attendance is estimated by lifeguards.

Figure 52. Beach Attendance, 2010-2016
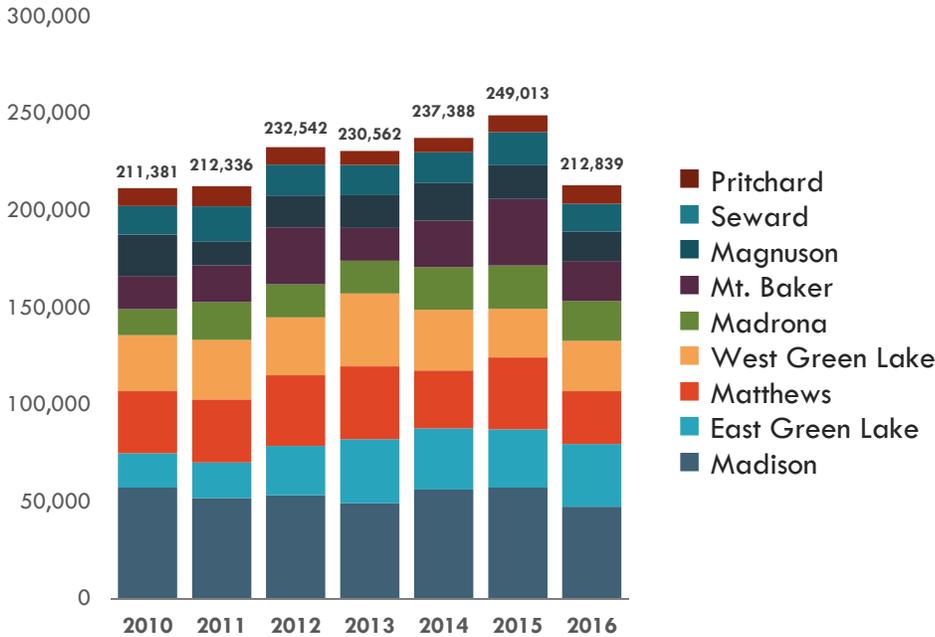
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Madison	57,198	51,791	53,199	49,105	56,088	57,180	47,229
East	17,586	18,225	25,453	32,875	31,602	29,901	32,353
Matthews	31,969	32,526	36,298	37,546	29,797	37,128	27,279
West	28,936	30,580	29,874	37,582	31,291	25,134	25,867
Madrona	13,459	19,520	17,006	16,954	21,956	22,150	20,701
Mt. Baker	17,073	18,968	29,450	16,902	23,984	34,275	20,483
Magnuson	21,268	12,488	16,309	16,865	19,332	17,447	15,175
Seward	14,766	17,915	15,879	15,533	15,942	17,048	14,272
Pritchard	9,126	10,323	9,074	7,200	7,396	8,750	9,480
Total Attendance	**211,381**	**212,336**	**232,542**	**230,562**	**237,388**	**249,013**	**212,839**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016 (Beach Attendance Dataset).

Average daily attendance in 2016 at each of the nine SPR beaches is shown in Figure 53. Daily visits per open day ranged from a high of 647 at Madison to a low of 146 at Pritchard.

Figure 53. Average Daily Beach Attendance, 2016

Beach	Total 2016 Visits	Days Open	Ave. Visits/ Open Day
Madison	47,229	73	647
Matthews	27,279	73	374
W Green Lake	25,867	73	354
E Green Lake	32,353	93	348
Mt. Baker	20,483	73	281
Magnuson	15,175	65	233
Madrona	20,701	93	223
Seward	14,272	73	196
Pritchard	9,480	65	146

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR Aquatics Attendance, 2016.

2) PARTICIPATION IN AQUATICS COURSES

SPR offers courses in a variety of water-based activities, including swimming, fitness, canoeing, sailing, and more. The courses below are divided between those held at pools and those held at boating centers. SPR also provides free swimming lessons at lifeguarded beaches each summer.

The number of classes offered at each facility and the number of registrations is explored in this section. Private swim lessons are covered under the Resource Efficiency section beginning on page 132, as are course cancellations.

Courses at Pools

SPR offers group swimming lessons as well as fitness classes, lifeguard training, and other programs at its 10 pools. The number of registrations each year, by pool, is shown in Figure 54, with pools organized by Geo region. Outdoor pools Mounger and Colman are open only in summer and have fewer courses offered. The Rainier Beach pool was closed in 2011 and 2012.

Figure 54. Number of Registrations by Pool, Organized by Geo Area, 2011-2016
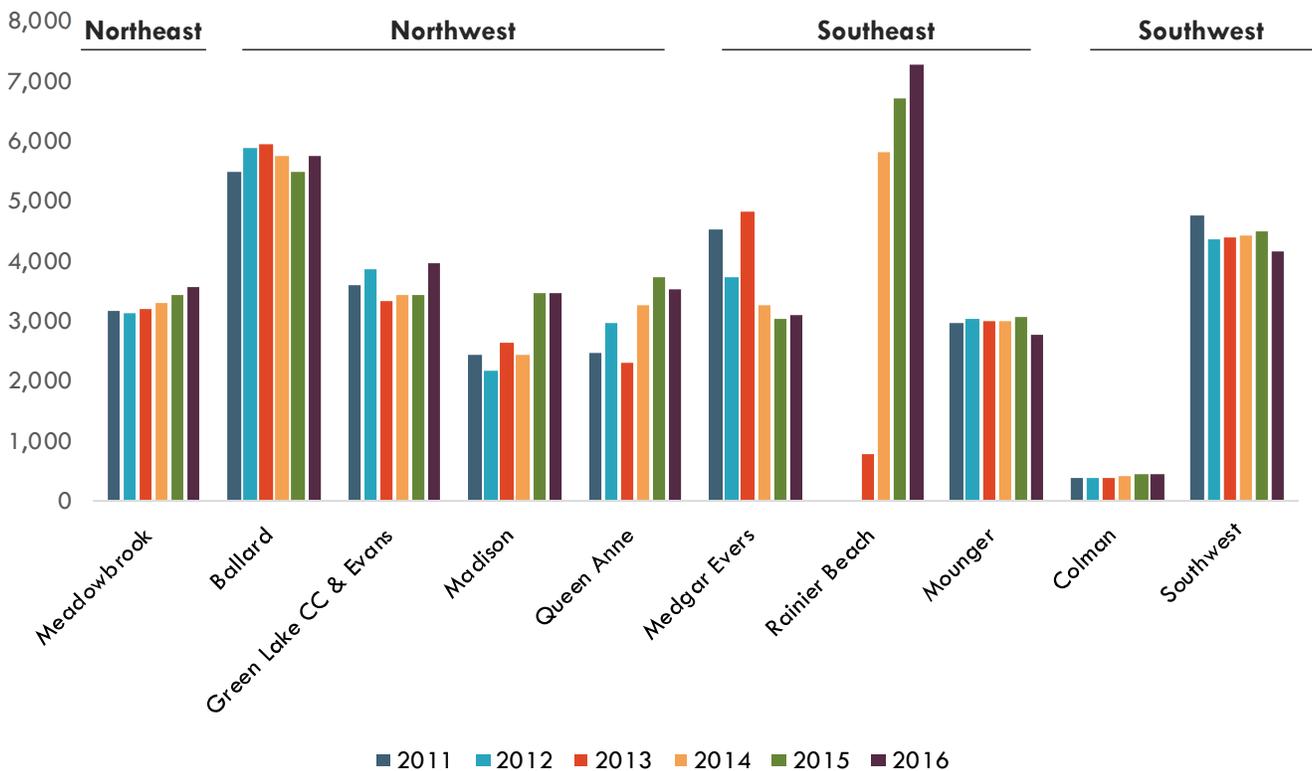
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR CLASS Programming Data, 2016.

Swimming Lessons at Summer Beaches

SPR provides free beginner swim lessons to youth at all nine summer lifeguarded beaches. In 2017, lessons were held each weekday at 12:15pm at all beaches, and Monday and Thursday evenings at four beaches (Madrona, Mt. Baker, Pritchard, and Seward). Registration is done either at the beach in person or by phone or email to the beach supervisor. In 2016 there were 703 registrations in swim lessons at summer beaches.

A Performance Seattle goal is to "teach our community to swim," with a target of at least 300,000 swim lessons completed by the end of 2017. Swim lessons counted in this goal may be for an individual or for groups, and may be paid and registered classes at pools or free lessons at beaches with on-site registration. The goal refers to the number of lessons, not the number of course registrations; most course registrations include between seven and 14 separate lessons. SPR suggests what will be tracked through Performance Seattle and will have the opportunity in 2018 to incorporate some outcome-oriented figures from the Results Framework.

The 300,000 lesson target was exceeded in 2014, 2015, and 2016, and SPR is on track to exceeding the goal in 2017. If Performance Seattle targets are intended to set stretch goals for City departments to strive for, a more ambitious target may be needed, keeping in mind constraints on the amount of pool space available.

Private Swim Lessons

Private swim lessons systemwide have increased significantly over the past ten years, growing 155% from 2007 to 2016 as shown in Figure 55. Figure 56 shows that some pools have had larger gains, such as Queen Anne, which grew by 1,549%, while Medgar Evers has seen its private lessons decrease by 54% over that period.

Figure 55. Private Swim Lessons Systemwide, 2007-2016
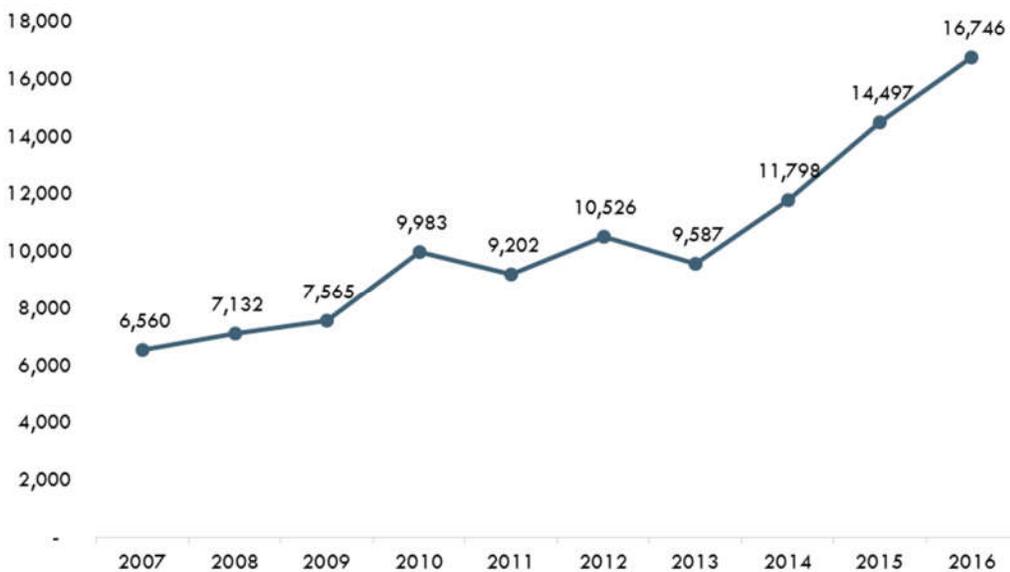
Sources: BERK 2017; SPR, 2007-2016.

Figure 56. Private Swim Lessons by Pool, Change From 2007 to 2016

Pool	2007	2016	% Increase
Ballard	960	2,953	208%
Evans	266	1,450	445%
Madison	210	389	85%
Meadowbrook	1,426	1,953	37%
Medgar Evers	446	203	-54%
Queen Anne	172	2,837	1,549%
Rainier Beach	270	2,806	939%
Southwest	936	2,203	135%
Colman	70	126	80%
Mounger	1,804	1,826	1%

Sources: BERK 2017; SPR, 2007-2016.

The table above shows large increases in personal swim lessons for Ballard, Evans, Madison Queen Anne, Rainier Beach, Southwest, and Colman. While prioritizing group lessons, which it sees as more mission-aligned, SPR has tried to grow this service to increase revenue generation when space is available. Facility staff seek to add personal instruction during peak times when there is not room for group classes or when the demand for group classes is not as strong. Some communities have greater demand for personal lessons, which are more expensive, than others.

Boating Courses

SPR boating courses include canoeing, kayaking, fitness and conditioning programs, regattas, rowing, and sailing. The data below reflects courses held at the Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center (MBRSC) and the Green Lake Small Craft Center (GLSCC). MBRSC consistently runs far more courses than GLSCC, but GLSCC surpassed MBRSC in number of registrations in 2014 and 2016 as shown in Figure 57.

Figure 57. Number of Registrations Per Center, 2011-2016

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR CLASS Programming Data, 2011-2016.

3) ACCESS BY INCOME, AGE, GENDER, AND ZIP CODE

SPR aims to ensure access to aquatics programs for all Seattle residents, with an emphasis on those who are historically disadvantaged or have fewer alternatives. This could be measured through usage statistics by demographic group or for low-income discount programs, as well as assessing outreach and offerings to disadvantaged groups. This section addresses: 1) pricing and discounts, and 2) program registrations by demographics and geography.

Access by Income: Pricing and Discounts

Equitable access to Aquatics facilities and programs means that all Seattle residents have an equal ability to use these programs, regardless of ability to pay. SPR prices and discounts, which are approved by the City Council, attempt to improve access for lower-income individuals while balancing revenue needs.

SPR sets uniform admissions fees to all 10 pools systemwide, broken down in three primary categories: recreation programs, fitness programs, and passes and punch cards. Recreation programs refer to public swim, lap swim, etc. while fitness programs include water fitness classes. Passes and punch cards generally provide volume discounts. Aquatics admission rates for 2017 and 2018 were adopted by the City Council in November of 2016, and include a general recreation rate of $5.50 for adult and $3.75 for youth, older adults, and special populations. A bulk swim card is $50 for 10 adult admissions, discounted 50 cents off the general rate. Prices for swim lessons in 2017 vary by age and class size, with the most common group lesson rate (minimum of four students) of $7.50 per lesson.

Low-Income Discounts

SPR started a discount admissions program in 2014. The price is $2 for recreation programs (compared to the $5.25 general price) and $3 for fitness swims (compared to $6.50). Discount admissions are also offered for the senior/youth/special populations rate.

SPR has offered discounted swim lessons for many years, at 50% the general rate. With new funding for scholarships from the Metropolitan Park District, qualifying participants can now get an additional 40% off, for a total discount of 90% off lessons.

SPR also provides a free "lifeguard training team" program for teens, an eight-week program to train and certify youth in lifesaving skills. SPR does not provide a discount for personal swim lessons, which are priced in 2017 at $38 for a 30-minute, one-on-one lesson.

To use discount pricing for admissions or lessons, customers must complete a scholarship form and attach a copy of their 1040 tax form. The SPR scholarship office then reviews and processes the application.

SPR made a significant push to advertise swimming discounts when the new admissions discount was rolled out in 2014, through community partnerships and advertising (such as the poster at right).

Discount Program Participation

This section describes participation in 1) discount pool admissions; and 2) discount swim lessons.

1) Discount Pool Admissions

Total discount admissions by pool for 2016 is shown in Figure 58. Rainier Beach accounted for over 60% of discount admissions, with Southwest and Medgar Evers pools showing the next-highest participation.

Figure 58. Total Discount Admissions Attendance by Pool, 2016
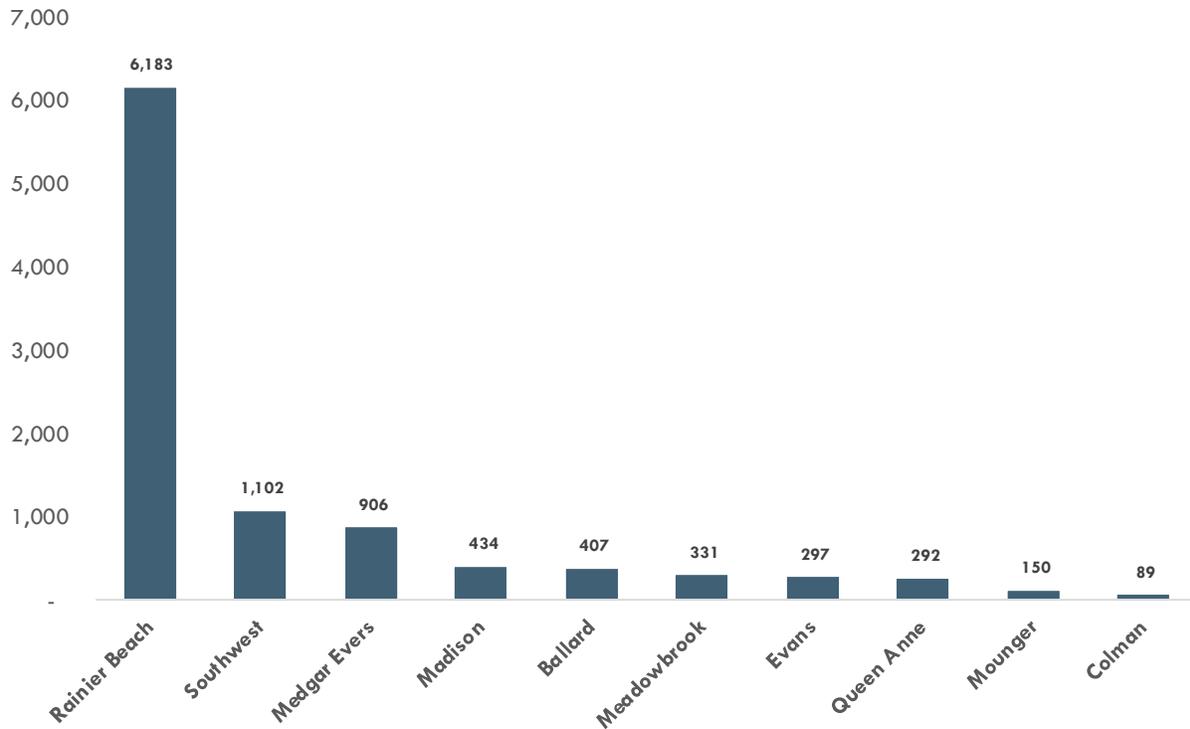
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016.

As shown in Figure 59, general recreation (lap swim, family swim, etc.) had much higher participation than fitness programs (masters workout, water polo, etc.). At most locations, participation was higher for the senior/youth/special population group than for adults.

Figure 59. Low Income Discount Admissions by Type and Pool, 2016

| Pool | Recreation | | Fitness | | Total |
	Adult	Sr/ Youth/ Special Pop	Adult	Sr/ Youth/ Special Pop	
Ballard	142	250	14	1	407
Colman	52	36	1	-	89
Evans	216	44	8	29	297
Madison	82	333	8	11	434
Meadowbrook	76	206	13	36	331
Medgar Evers	240	598	56	12	906
Mounger	56	91	2	1	150
Queen Anne	101	170	14	7	292
Rainier Beach	2,222	3,649	208	104	6,183
Southwest	447	552	32	71	1,102
Total	**3,634**	**5,929**	**356**	**272**	**10,191**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016.

2) Discount Swim Lessons

Participation in low-income discount lessons has increased steadily, with the number of registrations nearly tripling since 2008, from approximately 2,000 to nearly 6,000 per year. As a percentage of all lessons, discount lesson participation grew from 7.6% to nearly 16% over the same timeframe.

Figure 60. Registrations in All Group Swim Lessons and Discount Lessons, 2008-2016
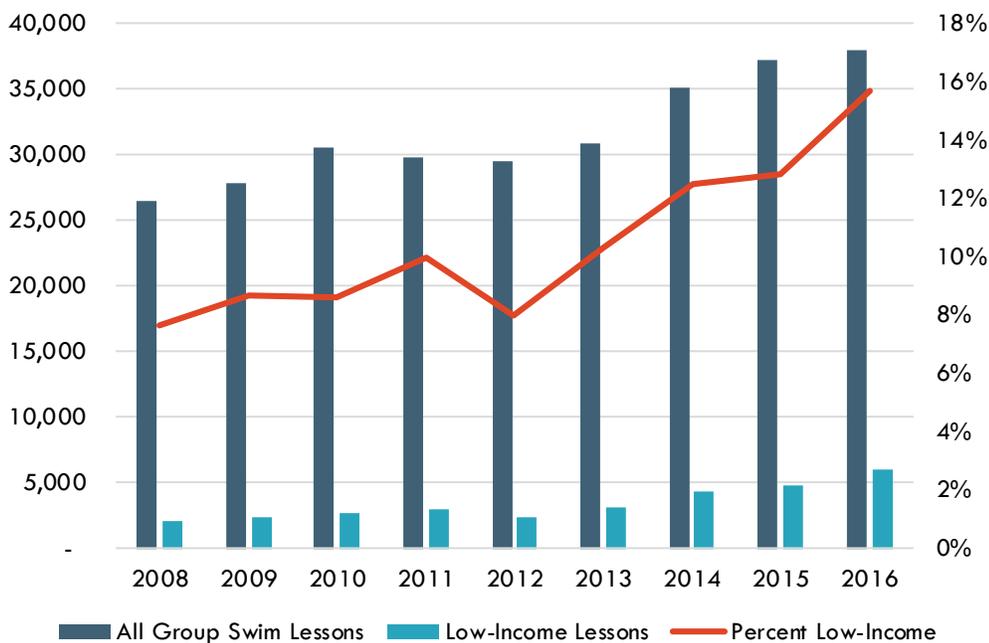
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
All Group Swim Lessons	26,485	27,789	30,536	29,821	29,494	30,840	35,045	37,219	37,983
Low-Income Lessons	2,020	2,404	2,622	2,970	2,361	3,184	4,370	4,781	5,961
Percent Low-Income	8%	9%	9%	10%	8%	10%	12%	13%	16%

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2008-2016.

As with discount admissions, use of discount lessons is heavily concentrated in south Seattle and the Central District, at Rainier Beach, Southwest, and Medgar Evers. Registrations at each pool in 2016 is shown in Figure 61.

Figure 61. Low-Income and Full-Price Swim Lessons by Location, 2016
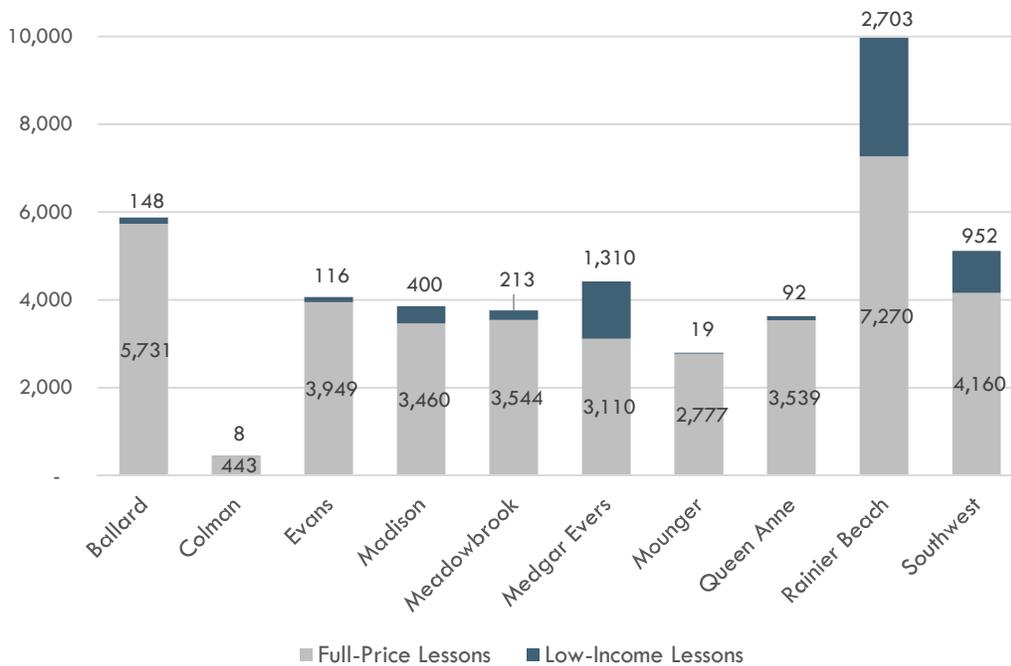
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016.

The proportion of low-income lessons at each pool over the past nine years is shown in Figure 62. Most striking is the growth at Medgar Evers, Southwest, and Madison pools.

Figure 62. Proportion of Swim Lesson Registrations Discounted, By Pool, 2008-2016

Pool	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Ballard	1%	0%	1%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Colman	3%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Evans	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
Madison	7%	7%	11%	10%	9%	11%	11%	9%	12%
Meadowbrook	4%	4%	3%	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%	6%
Medgar Evers	14%	17%	17%	31%	30%	34%	42%	40%	42%
Mounger	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Queen Anne	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Rainier Beach	34%	36%	25%	NA	NA	23%	27%	30%	37%
Southwest	4%	8%	10%	14%	13%	15%	16%	18%	23%

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2008-2016.

The fee-setting review contained in **Recommendation 6** applies to Aquatics as well as the rest of the Recreation Division. While the Aquatics business model and cost structure is fundamentally different than that of Community Centers and the rate structures of the two systems should not be compared, the same approach to reviewing fee and scholarship levels should be applied to Aquatics as discussed previously for other recreation programming.

Aquatics Program Registration by Age, Gender, and ZIP Code

As described earlier, SPR currently collects very little demographic information from users. When individuals register for scheduled classes, several pieces of data that are collected include age, gender, and mailing address. This section examines this data for Aquatics programs.

Swimming Lessons

Characteristics of registrants in swimming classes in 2015 was examined. Note that this does not include "fitness" classes, including those for older adults, which take place at pools, as that data was not available.

Age and gender of swim class participants in 2015 are shown in Figure 63. The graphic on the left shows the breakdown of Aquatics participants by gender and age, compared to the City of Seattle distribution shown on the right. This shows that the vast majority of participants are children under 15 years old, accounting for 95% of registrations.

The distribution of swim lesson participants by ZIP code in 2015 is shown in Figure 64. As with similar analysis for Community Centers and boating courses, correlations show very little relationship between registration rate per 1,000 population with population (0.1), median income (0.4), and households with children under 15 (0.3).

ZIP codes located outside of Seattle accounted for 5% of swim class registrations in 2016.

Figure 63. Aquatics Registrants' Age and Identified Gender Compared to City of Seattle Population, 2015
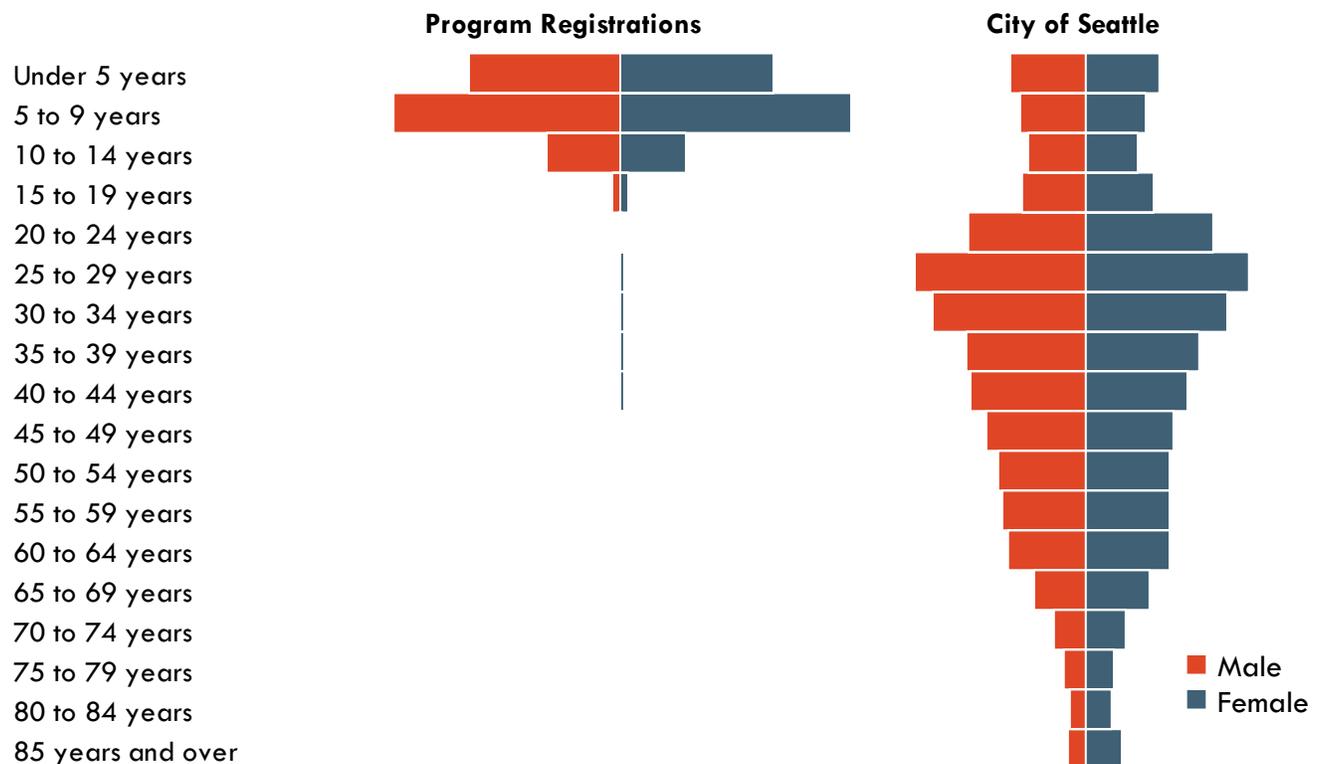
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016; American Community Survey 5-Yr, 2015.

Figure 64. Swim Lesson Registrations by ZIP Code, 2015

ZIP Code	Population	Median Income	HH with Children 0-14	Registrations Total	Registrations Per 1,000
Fully In Seattle					
98101	12,741	$ 51,159	260	73	5.7
98102	23,647	$ 75,155	1,348	260	11.0
98103	48,477	$ 81,330	5,929	2,878	59.4
98104	14,841	$ 32,568	630	200	13.5
98105	48,269	$ 49,647	3,960	1,374	28.5
98106	24,327	$ 53,848	4,429	1,207	49.6
98107	24,428	$ 77,170	2,537	1,308	53.5
98109	25,891	$ 85,957	1,663	1,300	50.2
98112	22,183	$ 103,816	3,223	524	23.6
98115	48,362	$ 92,039	8,523	3,416	70.6
98116	23,209	$ 77,781	3,715	1,221	52.6
98117	32,411	$ 92,316	5,554	2,982	92.0
98118	45,727	$ 55,725	8,340	3,280	71.7
98119	23,475	$ 73,794	2,463	1,798	76.6
98121	17,249	$ 73,874	418	177	10.3
98122	35,212	$ 60,563	3,365	825	23.4
98126	22,291	$ 68,342	4,684	968	43.4
98134	651	$ 52,981	17	-	NA
98136	15,281	$ 90,625	2,343	859	56.2
98144	28,667	$ 62,633	3,991	1,741	60.7
98154	-	-	-	-	NA
98155	33,517	$ 75,839	5,521	150	4.5
98164	146	$ 85,670	-	-	NA
98168	34,279	$ 49,188	6,709	163	4.8
98195	-	-	-	-	NA
98199	20,386	$ 87,486	3,506	2,620	128.5
Partially In Seattle					
98108	23,856	$ 53,143	5,183	1,634	68.5
98125	39,866	$ 54,561	6,045	1,978	49.6
98133	46,663	$ 53,836	5,698	1,273	27.3
98146	27,895	$ 58,429	5,293	620	22.2
98177	19,760	$ 92,938	2,803	546	27.6
98178	25,397	$ 60,839	5,276	906	35.7

Correlation with:

Registration rate	**0.1**	**0.4**	**0.3**		

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016; American Community Survey 5-Yr, 2015.

Boating Courses

As described above, SPR offers registered courses and programs in canoeing and kayaking, fitness and conditioning, regattas, rowing, and sailing at its two public boating centers. Participation is highest for youth age 10 to 19, and is roughly equal between males and females, as shown in Figure 65.

Figure 65. Age and Gender of Boating Course Registrants and City of Seattle Residents, 2015
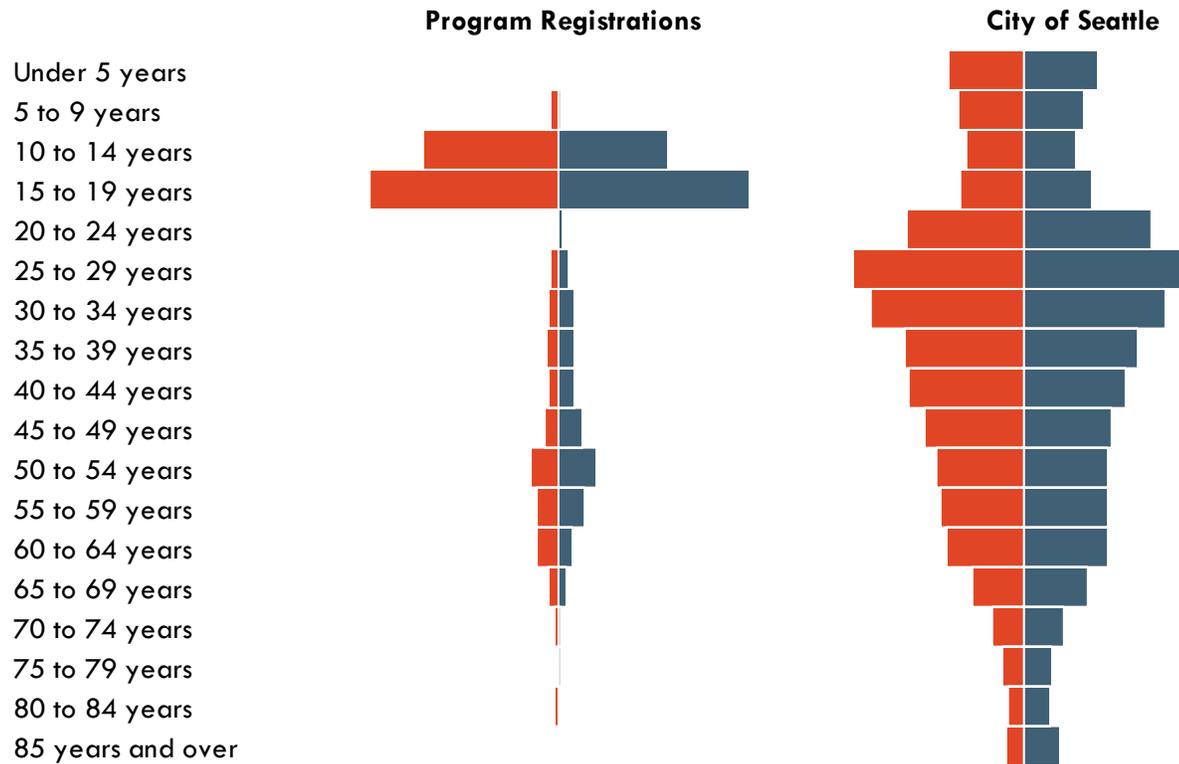
Sources: BERK, 2017; SPR, 2016; American Community Survey 5-Yr, 2015.

Boating Registration by ZIP Code

Boating course registrations by ZIP code are shown in Figure 66, with low correlations of registration rate per 1,000 population with population (0.4), median income (0.3), and households with children under 15 (0.4).

ZIP codes located outside of Seattle accounted for 18% of boating registrations in 2016.

Figure 66. Boating Characteristics by ZIP Code, 2015

ZIP Code	Population	Median Income	HH with Children 0-14	Registrations Total	Registrations Per 1,000
Fully In Seattle					
98101	12,741	$ 51,159	260	-	-
98102	23,647	$ 75,155	1,348	44	1.9
98103	48,477	$ 81,330	5,929	547	11.3
98104	14,841	$ 32,568	630	17	1.1
98105	48,269	$ 49,647	3,960	102	2.1
98106	24,327	$ 53,848	4,429	22	0.9
98107	24,428	$ 77,170	2,537	122	5.0
98109	25,891	$ 85,957	1,663	74	2.9
98112	22,183	$ 103,816	3,223	373	16.8
98115	48,362	$ 92,039	8,523	415	8.6
98116	23,209	$ 77,781	3,715	131	5.6
98117	32,411	$ 92,316	5,554	217	6.7
98118	45,727	$ 55,725	8,340	901	19.7
98119	23,475	$ 73,794	2,463	28	1.2
98121	17,249	$ 73,874	418	5	0.3
98122	35,212	$ 60,563	3,365	331	9.4
98126	22,291	$ 68,342	4,684	56	2.5
98134	651	$ 52,981	17	-	NA
98136	15,281	$ 90,625	2,343	88	5.8
98144	28,667	$ 62,633	3,991	516	18.0
98154	-	-	-	-	NA
98155	33,517	$ 75,839	5,521	65	1.9
98164	146	$ 85,670	-	-	-
98168	34,279	$ 49,188	6,709	1	0.0
98195	-	-	-	-	NA
98199	20,386	$ 87,486	3,506	32	1.6
Partially In Seattle					
98108	23,856	$ 53,143	5,183	64	2.7
98125	39,866	$ 54,561	6,045	133	3.3
98133	46,663	$ 53,836	5,698	64	1.4
98146	27,895	$ 58,429	5,293	30	1.1
98177	19,760	$ 92,938	2,803	90	4.6
98178	25,397	$ 60,839	5,276	62	2.4

Correlation with:

Registration rate	0.4	0.3	0.4		

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2016; American Community Survey 5-Yr, 2015.

Quality and Impact

- *Are Aquatics customers satisfied?*

- *Are Aquatics programs generating desired benefits for participants?*

ARE AQUATICS OFFERINGS HIGH QUALITY?

The Aquatics unit has done some customer satisfaction surveys and, as noted in **Recommendation 8.2**, should expand and routinize this effort.

IS AQUATICS ACHIEVING ITS DESIRED IMPACT?

According to SPR staff, the Results Framework does not apply well to the swim lesson model, but has been used for one Aquatics program to date: the Late-Night Lifeguard Training program at Rainier Beach Pool, which is held through a partnership with Teen programs. A second program, the Summer Swim League, is in the process of applying the Results Framework at all sites.

Lessons organized through the two Small Craft Centers have similar characteristics to classes at Community Centers, and thus could be tracked through participation data as well as Results Framework outcomes.

Resource Efficiency

- *Is Aquatics pursuing opportunities to earn revenue to supplement SPR resources?*

- *Is Aquatics making the best use of limited resources?*

Efficiency is used here to refer to course efficiency (low cancellation), cost recovery, and use of space. It's important to keep in mind that some of these goals can trade off with equity and access.

COURSE EFFICIENCY

As described in the Community Centers section, a portion of course and program offerings are cancelled each year, generally from a lack of registrants. While the cancellation rate systemwide has ranged from 10-19% over the past six years, rates for Aquatics and Boating courses and programs are much lower, ranging from 1-3% for Aquatics and 4-15% for Boating, as shown in Figure 67. There are a number of explanations for this, including high demand relative to supply with fewer pools and swim class slots per capita compared to Community Center programming. If a participant cancels, staff are able to go to a wait list and invite someone else to participate. Staff report that they track registration attendance as their primary method for putting together the course offering and sites spend a good amount of time managing waitlists to see where demand is.

Figure 67. Percentage of Aquatics and Boating Courses Cancelled, 2011-2016
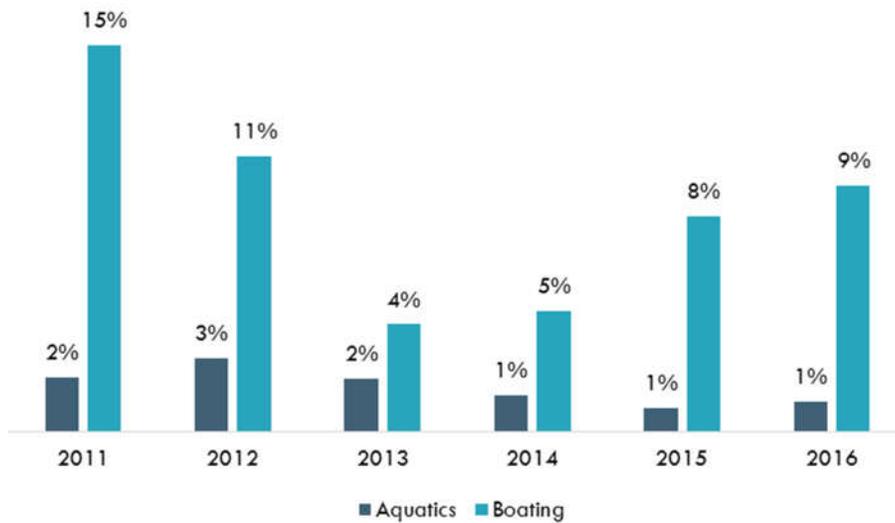
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2011-2016.

EARNED REVENUES, EXPENDITURES, AND COST RECOVERY FOR POOLS

This section examines earned revenues, expenditures, and cost recovery for pools, a subset of Aquatics total offerings. Data for public boating centers is not included here, although similar analysis could be done for those operations.

From a financial point of view, the model for SPR's pools is fundamentally different than the traditional, but evolving, way that Community Centers have operated. While individual Community Centers traditionally retained excess earned revenue as a fund balance for reinvestment in the same center, pools act as a system, with revenues from one supporting operations and scholarships for another.

Earned Revenues

The largest source of earned revenue for Aquatics is swim lessons, accounting for about 50% in 2015 and 2016, as shown in Figure 68. This was followed by admissions fees and rental fees.

Figure 68. Aquatics Earned Revenue by Category, 2015-2016

	2015		2016	
	Dollars	*Percent*	*Dollars*	*Percent*
Lessons	$ 2,843,563	50%	$ 2,896,522	51%
Admissions	$ 1,399,163	25%	$ 1,365,887	24%
Rentals	$ 660,500	12%	$ 683,122	12%
Fitness	$ 270,184	5%	$ 267,569	5%
Locker	$ 21,142	0.4%	$ 18,964	0%
Other	$ 478,100	8%	$ 403,135	7%
Total	**$ 5,672,651**	**100%**	**$ 5,635,200**	**100%**

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2015-2016.

Free Services

In considering Aquatics' revenues, expenditures, and cost recovery, it is important to consider the value of services provided for free, as discussed in more detail in the section related to Usage and Access, above. In 2016, Aquatics provided a total of nearly $500,000 in value as free and reduced cost services per Figure 69.

Nearly half of this foregone revenue was related to use by Seattle Public Schools, with whom SPR has a joint agreement to exchange free use of pools for use of school gyms and ball fields. Over a third of foregone revenue was for low-income discount swim lessons. SPR also provides free use for ARC daycamps and free swimming to City of Seattle firefighters. In looking at individual facilities, Rainier Beach had the most foregone revenue and the most number of people served through programs that reduce costs for pool customers.

Figure 69. Foregone Revenue by Service and Pool

Service	2016		Participants	
	Dollars	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*
Seattle Public Schools	$ 245,371	49%	NA	NA
Low Income Swim Lessons	$ 188,491	38%	5,961	20%
Daycamp	$ 20,029	4%	5,341	18%
Adult Discounted Rec Swim	$ 11,811	2%	3,634	12%
Sr/Y/SP Discounted Rec Swim	$ 10,376	2%	5,929	20%
Free Staff	$ 8,390	2%	1,428	5%
Family Pass	$ 6,341	1%	1,409	5%
Group Disc	$ 3,992	0.8%	5,322	18%
Fire	$ 2,111	0.4%	402	1%
Adult Discounted Fitness	$ 1,246	0.2%	356	1%
Parks Internal	$ 879	0.2%	NA	NA
Sr/Y/SP Discounted Fitness	$ 272	0.1%	272	0.9%
Partnership Waived Rentals	$ 243	0.0%	NA	NA
Total	**$499,548**	**100%**	**$ 30,054**	**100%**

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2016.

Expenditures

Aquatics expenditures, which in this data do not include major maintenance, are primarily for personnel, followed by utilities and operations, as shown in Figure 70. Personnel costs increased 9.3% between 2015 and 2016, likely due in part to wage increases and additional hours for summer aquatics.

Figure 70. Aquatics Expenditures by Category, 2015-2016

	2015		2016		Change	
	Dollars	**Percent**	**Dollars**	**Percent**	**Dollars**	**Percent**
Personnel	$ 7,861,576	83%	$ 8,590,662	84%	$ 729,086	9%
Utilities	$ 887,106	9%	$ 897,168	9%	$ 10,062	1%
Operations	$ 730,333	8%	$ 763,124	7%	$ 32,791	4%
Total	**$ 9,479,015**	**100%**	**$ 10,250,954**	**100%**	**$ 771,939**	**8%**

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2015-2016.

Cost Recovery

SPR sets an annual cost recovery goal for each pool and for the system overall. The goal and the calculation of the cost recovery figure for each facility excludes maintenance and capital costs. These are obviously real and significant costs, so this definition of cost recovery is important to keep in mind.

Figure 71 shows budgeted and actual revenues, expenses, and cost recovery for each part of Aquatics' operations in 2016, as well as the difference between budget/target and actual results. Overall, the system was very close to its target, missing the mark by just 0.4%, with both revenues and expenses slightly higher than projected. Some pools exceeded their targets in 2016, while others missed theirs.

Figure 71. Cost Recovery by Pool, Budget and Actual, 2016

	Budget			Actual			Difference		
Pools	Expenditures	Revenue	Recovery Target	Expenditures	Revenue	Recovery Actuals	Expenditures	Revenue	Percent
Colman	$ 227,572	$ 215,700	95%	$ 249,698	$ 214,524	86%	$ 22,126	$ (1,176)	-9%
Mounger	$ 559,742	$ 538,000	96%	$ 542,308	$ 455,386	84%	$ (17,434)	$ (82,614)	-12%
Medgar Evers	$ 789,859	$ 332,000	42%	$ 798,308	$ 347,560	44%	$ 8,449	$ 15,560	2%
Queen Anne	$ 792,710	$ 575,300	73%	$ 825,857	$ 601,993	73%	$ 33,147	$ 26,693	0%
Southwest	$ 803,843	$ 503,000	63%	$ 914,198	$ 489,453	54%	$ 110,355	$ (13,547)	-9%
Meadowbrook	$ 818,596	$ 460,800	56%	$ 848,693	$ 488,725	58%	$ 30,097	$ 27,925	1%
Madison	$ 819,107	$ 427,300	52%	$ 871,574	$ 454,773	52%	$ 52,467	$ 27,473	0%
Evans	$ 841,723	$ 522,500	62%	$ 860,451	$ 496,503	58%	$ 18,728	$ (25,997)	-4%
Ballard	$ 881,741	$ 711,500	81%	$ 897,057	$ 710,534	79%	$ 15,316	$ (966)	-1%
Rainier Beach	$ 1,184,045	$ 732,000	62%	$ 1,197,904	$ 926,473	77%	$ 13,859	$ 194,473	16%
Subtotal	*$ 7,718,938*	*$ 5,018,100*	*65%*	*$ 8,006,049*	*$ 5,185,925*	*65%*	*$ 287,111*	*$ 167,825*	*0%*
Boating Centers									
GLSCC	$ 206,258	$ 62,500	30%	$ 208,259	$ 61,698	30%	$ 2,001	$ (802)	-1%
MBRSC	$ 256,496	$ 93,000	36%	$ 263,733	$ 113,618	43%	$ 7,237	$ 20,618	7%
Subtotal	*$ 462,754*	*$ 155,500*	*34%*	*$ 471,992*	*$ 175,317*	*37%*	*$ 9,238*	*$ 19,817*	*4%*
Other Services									
Boat Ramps	$ 154,535	$ 265,000	171%	$ 125,044	$ 220,087	176%	$ (29,491)	$ (44,913)	5%
Lifeguard	$ 21,057	$ -	0%	$ 18,638	$ -	0%	$ (2,419)	$ -	0%
Summer Aquatics	$ 653,356	$ -	0%	$ 648,385	$ 6,526	1%	$ (4,971)	$ 6,526	1%
Wading Pools	$ 164,855	$ -	0%	$ 151,808	$ 12,100	8%	$ (13,047)	$ 12,100	8%
Subtotal	*$ 993,803*	*$ 265,000*	*27%*	*$ 943,876*	*$ 238,713*	*25%*	*$ (49,927)*	*$ (26,287)*	*-1%*
Administration and Operations									
Administration	$ 774,695	$ 25,600	3%	$ 796,837	$ 35,246	4%	$ 22,142	$ 9,646	1%
Operations	$ 55,690	$ -	0%	$ 32,200	$ -	0%	$ (23,490)	$ -	0%
Subtotal	*$ 830,385*	*$ 25,600*	*3%*	*$ 829,037*	*$ 35,246*	*4%*	*$ (1,348)*	*$ 9,646*	*1%*
Total	**$10,005,880**	**$ 5,464,200**	**55%**	**$10,250,954**	**$ 5,635,200**	**55%**	**$ 245,074**	**$ 171,000**	**0.4%**

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2016.

Cost Recovery Over Time for Pools

Actual cost recovery for pools has increased over time, from 51% in 2006 to 65% in 2016, as shown in Figure 72. Colman and Mounger pools can achieve more than 100% cost recovery as defined by SPR in some years, however each pool is only open in summer, when demand is greatest. Indoor pools that are open year-long cannot match these cost recovery levels.

Costs for utilities can differ by pool, as differences in facilities can lead to differences in utilities and other costs. This affects cost recovery. In addition, pool closures for maintenance, as described earlier, generally lead to decreases in revenue.

Figure 72. Cost Recovery Actuals by Pool, 2006-2016

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Ballard	59%	66%	66%	68%	77%	84%	87%	90%	86%	83%	79%
Evans	50%	48%	52%	53%	54%	61%	62%	63%	66%	65%	58%
Madison	43%	41%	45%	42%	48%	48%	49%	55%	57%	58%	52%
Meadowbrook	54%	55%	53%	52%	57%	56%	56%	57%	59%	61%	58%
Medgar Evers	41%	42%	47%	44%	48%	61%	56%	56%	45%	47%	44%
Queen Anne	48%	44%	58%	59%	59%	66%	71%	68%	75%	74%	73%
Rainier Beach	42%	40%	31%	31%	32%	Closed		42%	68%	80%	77%
Southwest	39%	43%	35%	45%	51%	57%	58%	61%	64%	66%	54%
Colman	82%	76%	89%	80%	75%	100%	85%	99%	99%	102%	86%
Mounger	91%	87%	93%	91%	79%	105%	100%	104%	100%	101%	84%
Total	**51%**	**52%**	**53%**	**53%**	**56%**	**67%**	**67%**	**67%**	**69%**	**71%**	**65%**

Sources: BERK Consulting 2017; SPR, 2006-2016.

EFFICIENT USE OF SPACE

Pool space is a limiter for both serving the public and for generating revenue for SPR. One technique used by the Aquatics Unit to maximize use of space and staff and to generate revenue is private swim lessons. While group lessons generate more total revenue, we understand that private lessons are easier to fit into small spaces. Thus, SPR has attempted to increase the number of private swim lessons, while not overly displacing other activities that serve more people, like group lessons or public swims.

VI. FOCUS ON PROGRAMS FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

This chapter describes programs that target specific populations. These services can take place at a Community Center, pool, or other location. They are programmed by dedicated staff who coordinate with other Recreation Division staff (including Aquatics and Community Center programming staff) as appropriate. This chapter is organized per the Recreation Division's organizational chart (Figure 3):

- Out-of-School Time

- Special Units

    □ Lifelong Recreation

    □ Specialized Programming

    □ Adult Sports

- Teen and Young Adult

This chapter concludes with a brief description of MPD-funded programs (Get Moving and Recreation for All) and a description of programs for Seattle's LGBTQ population.

Out-of-School Time

The Out-of-School Time Unit (OST) oversees the following programs: Youth Athletics; scholarships for child care and general recreation; Community Learning Centers; Summer Learning Programs; summer playground and expanded recreation; Preschool; and licensed School-Age Care. While ARC is the service provider for Preschool and School-Age Care, OST establishes policies and procedures and manages the licensing. OST staff manage scholarship applications and allocations, working with other units.

Figure 73. Out-of-School Time Expenditures and Direct Revenues, 2010-2016 Actuals
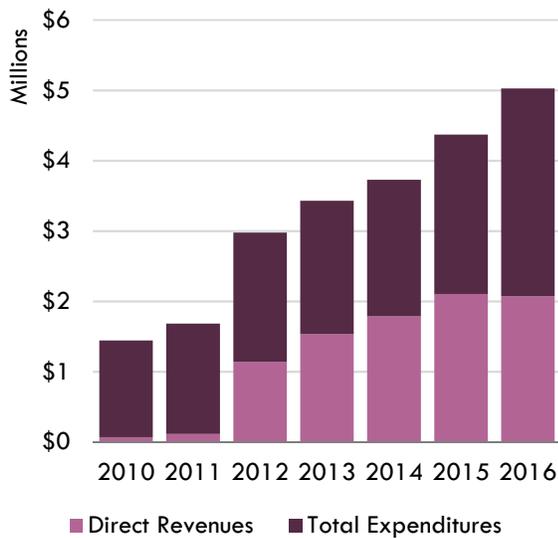
Staffing for 2017

- 12.5 FTE permanent staff
- 1.5 temporary FTE

Notes: "Direct Revenues" are fees collected for course and program offerings with City-staffed instruction, some merchandise sales, facility rentals, and 4% "PAR Fees" remitted from ARC. Expenditures include personnel costs, both permanent and temporary, and non-labor costs such as utilities, fleet, and equipment. Expenditures do not include major maintenance, which falls under the Maintenance Division.

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

LICENSED SCHOOL-AGE CARE

SPR partners with ARC to provide school-age care for children age 5 through 12, licensed by the Washington State Department of Early Learning. ARC is the service provider, while OST establishes policies and procedures, approves fees, and manages licensing. With the creation of the Seattle Preschool Program, staff are managing schedules and space use within Community Centers to avoid displacing longstanding ARC-provided child care.

PRESCHOOL

SPR also partners with ARC to operate half-day preschool programs in Community Centers. These programs are not licensed and are being displaced by the Seattle Preschool Program administered by the Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL). While these programs generate rental revenues for SPR, the displacement of ARC-administered preschool programs is causing a revenue loss for ARC.

COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS

This program, funded primarily through the Families and Education Levy, offers extra academic support for students, with a goal of helping all students achieve academically and to reduce achievement gaps. Community Learning Centers (CLCs) operate at several Seattle public middle schools and an elementary school, during after school hours, in partnership with each school.

CLCs are designed to support academic and social/emotional growth for students who are struggling academically. Programs are developed by SPR and Seattle Public Schools staff, with overall program coordination by SPR staff. Individual class instructors can be certificated teachers, contracted instructors, or SPR staff.

CLCs have measurable outcomes determined by DEEL regarding student enrollment, attendance, and growth in reading and math scores. In addition, the Youth Program Quality Assessment is used to assess quality through external assessment, and student survey data are collected.

SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAMS

Summer Learning programs are an extension of the school year CLC programs, providing intensive five to six-week full-day academic, enrichment, and recreation opportunities for students who are struggling academically. These programs are located at the same schools as school-year CLC programs, and are also funded primarily through the City of Seattle Families and Education Levy, as well as other grant resources. As with CLCs, programs are developed by SPR staff, working collaboratively with Seattle Public Schools staff, with overall program coordination by SPR staff.

Individual class instructors and evaluation measures are similar to CLCs.

SUMMER EXPANDED RECREATION AND FOOD SERVICE

This free program aims to address youth summer food insecurity and provide healthy, free opportunities for recreation. The program is offered at 19 outdoor park locations, in partnership with United Way of King County (UWKC) and Seattle Human Services Department (HSD) to provide access to healthy meals for youth. UWKC assigns AmeriCorps Volunteers in Service to America (VISTAs) to the sites, which are open 10:00am to 4:30pm, Monday to Thursday, for ten weeks during the summer. Lunch and afternoon snacks are provided while offering recreation activities such as team sports, group games, field days, face painting, board games, and arts and crafts.

Program development is done collaboratively between SPR, HSD, and UWKC. Due to summer food service program requirements, location areas must meet federal and state eligibility requirements. The overall program is developed by SPR staff in partnership with UWKC staff. Site-based programs and activities are implemented by the AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers under the leadership of SPR staff.

Outcome metrics include number of meals served, partner debrief evaluation meetings, and AmeriCorps VISTA surveys.

Special Units

The Recreation Division's Special Units includes three programs: 1) Lifelong Recreation, 2) Specialized Programs, and 3) Adult Sports.

Figure 74. Special Units Expenditures and Direct Revenues, 2010-2016 Actuals
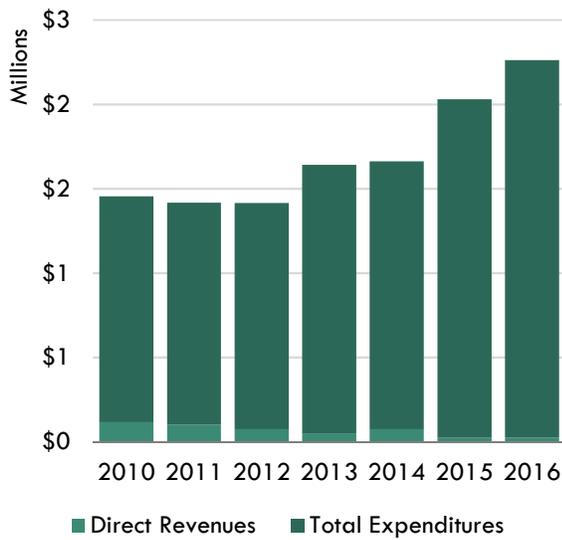
Staffing for 2017

- 19 FTE permanent staff
  - 9 FTE Lifelong Recreation
  - 8.8 FTE Specialized Programs
  - 1 FTE Adult Sport
- 4.5 temporary FTE

Notes: "Direct Revenues" are fees collected for course and program offerings with City-staffed instruction, some merchandise sales, facility rentals, and 4% "PAR Fees" remitted from ARC. Expenditures include personnel costs, both permanent and temporary, and non-labor costs such as utilities, fleet, and equipment. Expenditures do not include major maintenance, which falls under the Maintenance Division.

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

LIFELONG RECREATION

The Mission of the Lifelong Recreation Program is to "provide quality, accessible and affordable citywide recreation programs, and to promote physical activity, healthy lifestyles and social engagement for our diverse population of people age 50 and better, and Adult Sports programs" (Lifelong Recreation Strategic Marketing Plan, 2016).

Lifelong Recreation includes both programming developed in each Geo as well as several citywide programs, including Dementia-Friendly Recreation, the Sound Steps Walking Group, and the Food and Fitness Group.

Lifelong Recreation serves people age 50 and older with recreational and social programs. Programs are organized in two ways: by Geo (similar to Community Centers) and signature citywide programs. These are described below.

There is an Advisory Council for Lifelong Recreation that meets once a month and provides a connection with the communities served. Members sometimes offer new ideas for programs or trips. Lifelong Recreation produces its own quarterly brochure, which is mailed to interested members of the public.

Programs by Geographic Region

Much of Lifelong Recreation programming is organized by Geo. There are five Lifelong Recreation Specialists, including one for each Geo and one for the City overall. These individuals develop and directly provide programming within their region, primarily held at Community Centers, and also including field trips. Programs include classes, drop-in sports, social programs, and special events.

Other staff include a Manager, a Dementia-Friendly Recreation Coordinator, a Sound Step and Food and Fitness Coordinator, a Management Systems Analyst, a Recreation Program Coordinator, and an

Administrative Assistant for the Section. These staff provide building monitor coverage during non-operating hours for Lifelong Recreation Programs.

Lifelong Recreation Specialists interact with the Assistant Coordinators and Coordinators in their Geo to find space and time for the programs they want to run. Limited hours at Community Centers and other demands for space during high-demand hours can make finding space a challenge.

Lifelong Recreation partners with Senior Centers to coordinate complementary programs and market each other's events. For example, monthly potlucks in Southeast Seattle are held with multiple organizations, including the Senior Center. Staff feel that Lifelong Recreation is a complementary service to Senior Centers, not duplicative, because of different clienteles and services. Senior Centers provide social services and tend to have less active participants, for example.

Figure 29 shows the number of recreation classes and participants.

Figure 75. Number of Lifelong Classes and Recreation Participants, 2005-2016

Classes

Participants
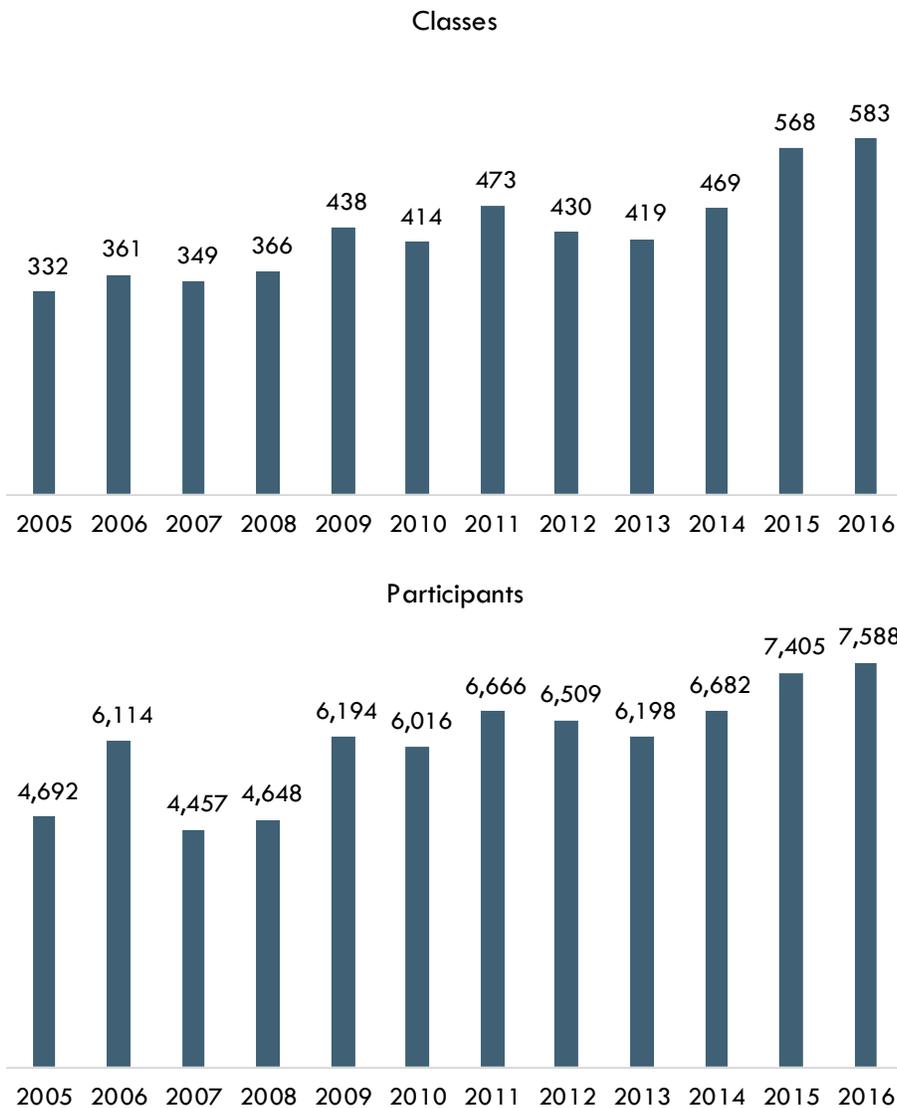
Sources: BERK, 2017; SPR, 2017.

Citywide Programs

Lifelong Recreation also has several citywide programs:

- **Dementia-Friendly Recreation**, launched in 2015, includes programs like walking groups, dance, painting, and more for people with early-stage memory loss. Programs take place in various locations, including Community Centers, parks, and Camp Long. The program partners with many organizations, including Senior Centers, the Alzheimer's Association, and others. SPR has one Dementia-Friendly Recreation Specialist.

- **Enhance Fitness** is a program run in partnership with Sound Generations, the University of Washington, and Kaiser Permanente to offer group exercise classes.

- **Food and Fitness** provides opportunities for older adults to congregate and celebrate their culture and language through weekly gatherings that include a communal lunch and a social, educational, and fitness component. SPR offers different meetups that may change with each brochure, but has included East African, Vietnamese, Korean, and others.

- **Sound Steps** is a volunteer-supported walking program designed to get adults age 50 and older to increase physical activity and social connection. Participants connect with volunteer leaders for walks.

Focus on Immigrant and Refugee Communities

Along with Recreation for All and Get Moving, Lifelong Recreation engages immigrant and refugee communities through the Food and Fitness program, which provides fitness and meal sharing celebrating Eritrean, Ethiopian, Korean, Somali, and Vietnamese cultures. The program is designed to serve adults over the age of fity.

Enhance Fitness Program Outcomes

"Enhance Fitness" is a long-running outcome-based program offered by Lifelong Recreation in partnership with Sound Generations, Kaiser Permanente, and the University of Washington. Classes are generally held at Community Centers and are designed to improve endurance, strength, balance, posture, and flexibility through adaptable exercise movements.

Outcomes consist of participants' ability to make specific functional moves (such as chair stands, "up and go," and arm curls). Participants are tested on these moves when they join, then regularly thereafter to look for change in ability. A summary of SPR Enhance Fitness outcomes for 2016 showed results for 73 participants, including between 77% and 88% of participants maintaining or improving, with 8-21% declining in movement ability.

Lifelong Recreation Program Outcomes

The Lifelong Recreation 2016 Marketing Plan lists outcomes in three categories – Health and Wellness, Life Enrichment, and Community Connections – with specific outcomes under each.

Category	Outcomes
Health and Wellness	▪ Maintain and improve health and fitness by providing a variety of programs at varying levels. ▪ Provide programs that target specific health and wellness issues such as dementia, Parkinson's, fall prevention, balance, and osteoarthritis. ▪ Reach underserved populations through culturally specific fitness opportunities like Food and Fitness, Dementia-Friendly Recreation, and the younger Boomer population.
Life Enrichment	▪ Provide low-cost opportunities (scholarships) to increase exposure to experiences that broaden a sense of community and self-worth. ▪ Offer educational opportunities in arts and culture. ▪ Increase social engagement by offering day trips to destinations around the greater Seattle area and opportunities to participate in league play.
Community Connections	▪ Improve quality of life through social connections, civic engagement, and volunteerism. ▪ Increase and improve partnerships with outside service providers. ▪ Educate and promote Lifelong Recreation programs to the public and within SPR.

SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

The Mission of Specialized Programs is to provide exceptional, accessible, and affordable citywide recreation programs and resources for individuals with disabilities and their families. The programs are suited to people with a range of cognitive and physical disabilities, and are conducted by trained staff. Programs are generally led by SPR staff, who are trained in therapeutic recreation, rather than by ARC instructors as in other units.

Programs include: arts and crafts, swimming, field trips, Special Olympics, social activities, cooking, theater, dance, fitness, community service, camps (including overnight at Camp Long. Specialized divides its programs by age group and ability levels. Age groups are youth (age 4-21), teen (13-21), transition (16-30), and adult. Specialized Programs partners with non-profits such as Seattle Adaptive Sports, which holds wheelchair basketball and other programs at Miller Community Center.

Programs take place at Community Centers, schools, Teen Life Centers, and field trip locations such as the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival and other regional points of interest.

Specialized Programs differs from general Community Center programming in several ways. First, they serve a citywide population due to the resources needed (trained staff, accessible facilities), rather than a neighborhood population. In addition, programs are led by Specialized Programs staff, not by ARC instructors, because of the training needed. Registration must be done through the Specialized Programs Office, so staff can check on the medical condition of registrants and ensure a good match.

Specialized Programs has an Advisory Council whose members educate decision-makers and the community about the program's success, and describe the needs of people with disabilities.

Outcomes

Seattle Park District performance metrics for Specialized Programs in 2016 was: "Serve an additional 79 youth each summer through expanding overnight camp (55 youth served) and a teen activity club on Fridays (32 served); also serve 200 additional participants during the school year through new programs such as a baking club, a community service club, creative dance, pottery and flag football." According to SPR staff, this goal was met.

ADULT SPORTS

The Mission of Adult Sports is to create exciting sports programming that serves all of Seattle's diverse communities. The program includes leagues and tournaments in sports such as softball, pickle ball, lacrosse, roller derby, flag football, track and field, and more. The softball program alone has 165 teams that play in 22 leagues in all five geographic sectors. Recently added programs include pickle ball and lacrosse tournaments, roller derby instructional classes, and a competitive flag football league.

Future plans for this program include: participating in a LGBTQ Sports expo; supporting new and emerging sports; reestablishing basketball leagues; expanding women only leagues; adding a Special Olympic Unified Team in softball; and adding more opportunities for ages 50 and over to compete in leagues and tournaments. (Lifelong Recreation Marketing Plan, 2016)

After 2014, scheduling of City fields was moved from Adult Sports to another SPR division, Enterprise and Partnerships in Community (EPIC).

Citywide Young Adult Programs

Citywide Young Adult Programs (CYAP) provide recreation, social opportunities, academic support, career training, and service learning opportunities for youth. The Vision Statement "Empowered self-driven young adults who manage their life course successfully." The Mission Statement is "Inspiring excellence through quality programs, workforce development and continuous improvement."

CYAP has six lines of business which are listed below, along with their Mission Statement.

▪ **Arts & Cultural Enrichment.** Provide equitable opportunities in the realm of arts and culture for all young adults in the greater Seattle area.

▪ **Employment & Service Learning.** A strong alignment of the workforce, education & economic development products; and improving the structure and delivery in the system to assist Young Adults in achieving a family-sustaining wage while providing employers with the skilled workers they need to compete on a global level.

▪ **Family Engagement & Parenting.**

▪ **Health & Wellness.**

▪ **Leadership & Civic Engagement.** To engage and challenge young adults by providing opportunities for community involvement civic engagement and learning experiences that build skills, and create confident leaders in society.

▪ **Outdoor Education & Environmental Stewardship.** Expose multi-ethnic teens to environmental education, urban conservation, and stewardship, while creating an environment for community leadership and empowerment.

Citywide Teen and Young Adult Programs does not have an ARC Advisory Council.

Figure 76 summarizes the number of youth and young adults served by CYAP in 2016. If these activities are held in a Community Center, participants would register on People Counters. These participants are not included in CLASS figures reported elsewhere in this document. Figure 77 presents a summary of expenditures, direct revenues, and staffing in 2016.

Figure 76. Youths and Young Adults Served by CYAP Programming in 2016

	2016
Late Night	42,000
Teen Life Centers	40,000
Great Night	2,200
Outdoor Opportunities	1,020
Special Events	1,000
Youth Employment and Service Learning	843
Performing Arts	90
All Programs	**87,153**

Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017, SPR, 2016.

Figure 77. Youth and Teen Expenditures and Direct Revenues, 2010-2016 Actuals

Legend: ■ Direct Revenues ■ Total Expenditures
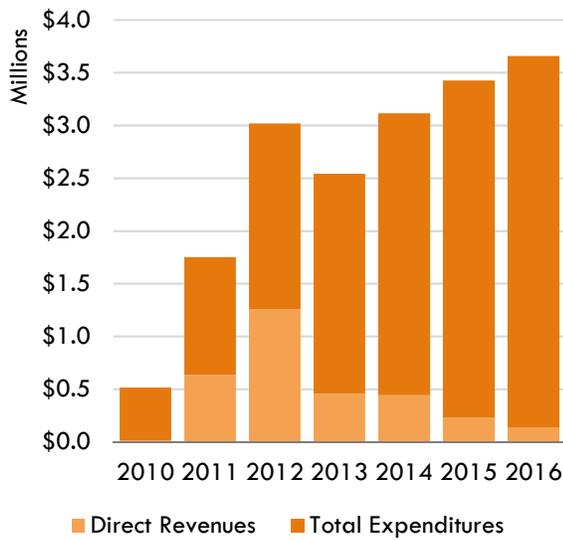
Staffing for 2017

- 20.1FTE permanent staff

- 9.3 temporary FTE (approximately 80 part-time and seasonal staff)

Notes: "Direct Revenues" are fees collected for course and program offerings with City-staffed instruction, some merchandise sales, facility rentals, and 4% "PAR Fees" remitted from ARC. Expenditures include personnel costs, both permanent and temporary, and non-labor costs such as utilities, fleet, and equipment. Expenditures do not include major maintenance, which falls under the Maintenance Division.
Sources: BERK Consulting, 2017; SPR, 2010-2016.

CYAP PROGRAMMING

CYAP programs that implement these lines of business are described on the following pages. Programs are generally developed by CYAP staff, including Recreation Leaders and other positions. Many are developed and implemented with a wide range of partner organizations. Programs take place at a variety of locations, either in the outdoors or on-site in the community.

Outdoor Opportunities (O2)

Outdoor Opportunities is an outdoor expedition program to expose multi-ethnic, high school teens to environmental education, urban conservation, and stewardship. The program includes workshops, service projects, and outdoor excursions, all of which are free. O2 is staffed by two Recreation Leaders. The target group for the O2 program are teens ages 14-19, equal gender, citywide, and with a target population of low income and ethnically diverse participants.

Figure 78. Programs Offered by O2

	2016
After school environmental education workshops	66
Overnight trips	19
Summer multi-day Trips	5
Indoor climbing sessions	10
Outdoor climbing summer sessions	5
Summer day trips	22
Snowboarding sessions	5
All Programs	**132**

Sources: BERK, 2017, SPR, 2016.

Teen Life Centers

There are three Teen Life Centers (at Garfield, Meadowbrook, and Southwest) that provide recreation, employment readiness, academic support, mentoring, and artistic and culinary programs. They are generally open 2:00 to 8:00pm and until midnight on Friday and Saturdays. The Centers target teens aged 13-19.

Late Night

Late Night is a safe and supportive environment for teens, held on Fridays and Saturday evenings 7pm-midnight with a focus on positive teen interactions and engagement. The program is supportive of the City's Race and Social Equity framework, including education and employment readiness programs. This program has been moved to the Community Centers Unit. In 2016, an estimated 42,000 attendees were served by Late Night programming, which are included in CLASS data reported elsewhere in this report. There are ten Late Night locations, including the three Teen Life Centers. Late Night programming targets teens aged 13-19.

Great Night

Great Night is similar to the Late Night program, but for young adults ages 19 and up. It is held at Jefferson Community Center on Fridays and Saturday evenings from 7:00pm to midnight, and focuses on job and life skills. It helps young adults built life skills through workshops and trainings, and offers other services necessary for young adults such as voter registration.

Youth Employment and Service Learning

Youth Employment and Service Learning (YESL) coordinates employment readiness and leadership programs for middle and high school youth. YESL programs are structured, project-based, outcome-driven, multiple-week experiences that include both training and service elements. It administers four programs related youth employment and job training: Youth Engaged in Service (YES), Summer of Service (SOS), The Able Teens (TAT), and Service Learning.

Each program integrates team building activities, leadership development, job readiness workshops, and academic enrichment. Most programs provide a stipend, and some offer service learning hours. YESL partners with community based organizations to develop meaningful projects that address a community need. Targeted recruitment is placed on underrepresented groups including low income, immigrant, refugee, foster/kinship care, and youth with special needs. Each program targets different age groups. YES targets ages13-18, SOS targets ages 11-15, TAT targets ages 14-25, and Service Learning is open to all youth.

Performing Arts

Programs include the Teen Summer Musical, in partnership with the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute, offering summer programing for public performances by teens. It targets ages 8-18 for its programming.

Special Events

CYAP coordinates several special events for youth each year, including a Martin Luther King youth march, Week Without Violence, and Youth Appreciation Week.

CYAP offers events and programs that obtains large number of attendants for events, classes, and other offerings, as well as more targeted programming that serves fewer people. Other event offerings include a Youth Education Career Fair, Mayor's Town Hall, and the Puget Sound Heart Walk.

YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY ASSESSMENT

SPR judges success in CYAP programs in part through use of the Youth Program Quality Assessment (PQA). This is a national evaluation tool developed by the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality that is used to assess programs for young people, in grades 4-12. (The School-Age PQA is used for children in grades K-6.)

The PQA evaluates the quality of youth experiences in workshops, classes, group projects, meetings, and program activities. The program is used to help staff improve programs. PQA assesses best practices in seven domains: safe environment; supportive environment; interaction; engagement; youth-centered policies and practices; high expectations for youth and staff; and access. Assessment is done through observation and interview, either by program staff or outside specialists who observe activities, take notes, and interview the program administrator.

SPR began piloting YPQA for teen programs in 2015, and as of June 2017, 21 programs have been assessed through MPD funding. Over 60 SPR staff have received PQA training, with 13 recognized by the Weikart Center as endorsed assessors.

Six programs assessed beginning in Fall 2016 were: 206 Forward, Garden Squad, Garfield Teen Life Center's Young Mens Group, Ladies First, Grub Club - Southwest Teen Life Center, and Young Leaders Group. Results compare scores for these programs with a national sample of programs. Total instructional score for these programs was 3.66 (out of 5) compared to 3.18 in the national sample. The "Safe Environment" domain scored highest (4.54) and Engagement scored lowest (3.14).

Park District-Funded Programs

The passage of the MPD included funding for two programs managed by the Recreation Division that provide grants to community groups.

GET MOVING

The Get Moving program, funded by the MPD, provides grants to community groups that provide culturally relevant events or projects to increase participation in community sports, recreation and physical fitness activities for under-resourced communities, such as immigrant populations, people of color, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ. The goal of Get Moving is to increase participation in physical activities, prioritizing neighborhoods where health disparities are prevalent.

In 2016, grants were awarded to 16 organizations, with amounts ranging from $900 to $15,000. Examples of grantees include:

- Garinagu Hounga: organizes dance classes for the Garifuna community

- Lao Women Association: hosts dance and cultural activities to support the Lao community

- Vision Loss Connections: manages a Goal Ball league for blind and low-vision community

Get Moving also hires individuals from participating communities as Community Engagement

Ambassadors, who help their peers access Get Moving programs and serve as a liaison between community groups and the Get Moving administrative team.

As reported in the assessment, the vast majority of Get Moving participants in 2016 were persons of color, as shown in Figure 79.

Figure 79. Get Moving Participants Ethnic and Racial Composition, 2016
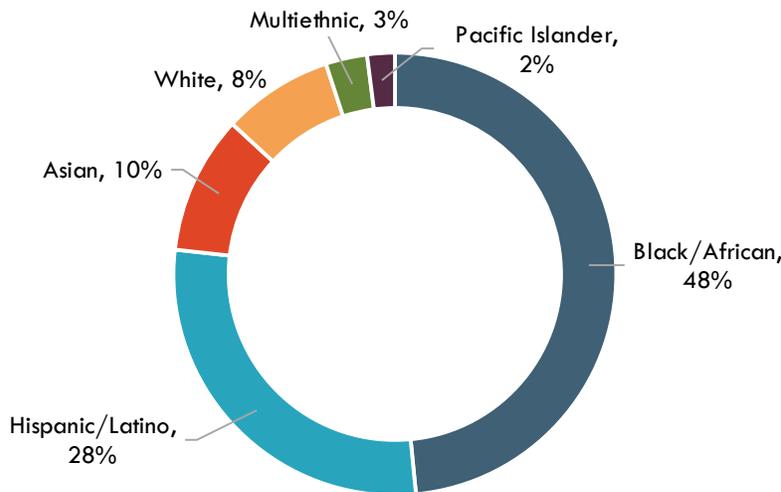
Sources: University of Washington Community Oriented Public Health Practice, 2017; BERK Consulting, 2017.

As noted with Recreation for All and reflected in **Recommendation 8.2**, more needs to be done to track data on participants and outcomes related to Get Moving programs

RECREATION FOR ALL

The Recreation for All fund supports local non-profit organizations, small businesses, and community groups in providing culturally relevant physical and enrichment programming to under-resourced communities in neighborhoods where health and enrichment disparities are prevalent. Target groups to serve include people of color, immigrant/refugee populations, young adults, people with disabilities, intergenerational, and LGBTQ. In 2016, partnerships were developed with 36 organizations, with over $200,000 in grant funding provided. As noted with Get Moving and reflected in **Recommendation 8.2**, more needs to be done to track data on participants and outcomes related to Recreation for All programs.

Resources for Seattle's LGBTQ Community

The Seattle Parks District offers financial support through the Recreation for All fund to support culturally relevant programs for different groups. It funds two organizations that serve LGBTQ youth: OUT There Adventures and Three Dollar Bill Cinema.

In addition, the following programs are specifically offered for members of Seattle's LGBTQ community.

All Gender Swim

In 2017, SPR Aquatics began hosting public swims for people of all gender identities at Medgar Evers Pool. The events feature gender-neutral changing rooms, with two family/private changing rooms. Swims were scheduled for September 30th and November 18th.

Aging with Pride

SPR offers programs and classes for people ages 50 and over and in the LGBTQ community. The programs offered include healthy aging programs for physical wellness, including general fitness, T'ai Chi, Yoga, and other low impact fitness programs targeting older adults. The Aging with Pride programs also offer social and artistic classes and events, which include trips to museums and wineries, painting, movies, and more.

VII. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND DISCUSSION OF IMPLEMENTATION

Individual chapters throughout this evaluation contain recommendations based on findings and practices in other jurisdictions. This section summarizes these recommendations and provides an estimate of additional staff and technology resources that may be required for implementation beginning on page 169.

In this summary, recommendations are not listed sequentially as they are in the report, but in three categories of related topics:

Advancing as a Learning Organization

- Recommendation 3. Leverage past data and enforce class performance standards to focus on desired programs.

- Recommendation 8. Simplify and roll-up reporting measures that establish balance and triangulate on competing goals.

- Recommendation 9. Test, document, evaluate, and share marketing techniques.

- Recommendation 11. Standardize practices and expectations across the recreation system.

Focusing on SPR's Vision and Target Customers

- Recommendation 4. Continue to expand on SPR's statements of its recreation-related vision, goals, and target customers.

- Recommendation 5. Continue to reduce barriers and encourage the participation of traditionally underserved groups and those with less access to alternatives.

- Recommendation 6. Continue to align resources and fees to prioritize participation by low-income communities while earning revenues as appropriate.

Strengthening the System

- Recommendation 1. Review and update the SPR/ARC partnership.

- Recommendation 2. Reform the role and functioning of Advisory Councils.

- Recommendation 7. Strengthen customer service.

- Recommendation 10. Acknowledge and buttress the role staff play in providing social supports and ensuring safety and security.
  [tracking staff time and impact of providing devoted to social services and social supports and ensuring safety and security feeds into **Recommendation 8**]

- Recommendation 12. Ensure buildings and other facilities are used as much as possible.

Advancing as a Learning Organization

The recommendations contained in this section relate to SPR's ability to consolidate and share insights and best practices obtained through data analysis, evaluation, and experimentation. Existing regular meetings of Assistant Coordinators at the Geo- and system-wide levels provide an appropriate venue for ensuring such learnings are distributed across the organization. In addition, as noted on page 169, a new Manager-level position could be useful to facilitate this learning process.

Recommendation 3. Leverage past data and enforce class performance standards to focus on desired programs.

SPR can improve the accuracy of program development by creating a clearer link between program development and past performance, including participation rates from ACTIVE Net and outcomes captured through the Results Framework.

- Report location: page 35

When developing and marketing new programs, staff should have a clear goal for the number of participants and a plan for attracting them, particularly in categories or at sites with a history of low attendance. Under-minimum or cancelled programs should only be repeated if there is a clear plan for increasing participation or reasons why lower participation is acceptable. Programs cancelled due to low registrations or held with fewer than the minimum number of participants can be a drag on system efficiency, pushing up the subsidy required per participant and/or showing that SPR programs are not reflecting community needs or are not sufficiently publicized. At the same time, there may be legitimate reasons for cancellations and running classes below the minimum number of participants, including marketing investments in new programs that start with lower participation.

The new ARC budgeting tool provides a mechanism for determining the minimum number of participants in a program, to cover direct costs such as the instructor and supplies, but it appears these standards have not been consistently enforced systemwide to this point. Clearer standards for participation and tracking of why participants cancel will help SPR better manage programming to serve the most people. As noted in **Recommendation 8**, it is also important to track the number and characteristics of new customers.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 3

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: High

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous efforts)
- Better programming choices will increase service efficiency, with less time spent on unpopular or ineffective programs, and provide better service to the community.	- Better programming choices will increase service efficiency, with less time spent on unpopular or ineffective programs, and provide better service to the community.	- Creating schedule of community focus groups which will inform programming; researching national trends and developing thorough marketing plan when programs have been identified - This is an area where ACTIVE Net could be helpful; SPR is currently working on what data points to collect and types of reporting.

Recommendation 8. Strengthen SPR's performance management system to provide simple reports and nuanced consideration of competing goals.

Recommendation 8.1. Create simple dashboards that communicate, at a glance, the volume of SPR's recreation activities.

The Recreation Division owns a large and complicated array of programs. In the face of this complexity, it is essential that SPR create a way to report to community members and decision makers in a simple and consistent fashion. There are many ways to measure usage of SPR's recreation resources:

- Registered courses, including Community Center- and pool-based classes, child care, and other, are tracked through the CLASS system.
- Every passage through a Community Center door is recorded by a "People Counter," whether that trip is a registered participant in a scheduled course (in which case they are also tracked in the CLASS database), a caregiver dropping off or picking up a child, a SPR staff person, or a delivery service.
- Attendance at beaches, wading pools, and sprayparks are measured by staff observations, while pool attendance is captured by staff cashiers.

SPR does not have a good way to succinctly display a topline summary of different kinds of usage. A good example to review is Denver Parks and Recreation's monthly dashboard report on metrics including usage shown in Figure 28. A copy of SPR's dashboard concept is shown on page 170.

Recommendation 8.2. Refine comprehensive performance reporting to reflect the tensions between the competing goals of our Evaluative Framework.

Usage and Access

- Create a summary dashboard view of the use of recreation resources. Keep it simple, like Denver's example and clearly show magnitude and trends in usage. Include class registrations and estimated volumes for drop-in resources.
- Ensure that all programs are tracking and contributing usage data, including as new programs get added, such as Get Moving and Recreation for All. Participation data (as well as the demographic data described below) are important to report for these individual programs, and for summing in Division-wide reports of the number of individuals served.
- Compare changes in usage to changes in population.
- Track new customers and their characteristics.
- Report on operating expenditures, including scholarships, and usage at Geo level, ZIP code, block group, or individual level to understand how effectively SPR is investing in access for lower income populations.
- Report on scholarship usage, including the demographics of recipients.
- While maintaining open and inviting facilities and programs, seek to collect information on the demographics of users to understand who is being served and how that population differs from the overall population of the neighboring community. Integrate GIS, demographic, and user information to connect programming decisions with facility locations and geographic distribution of need.

Quality and Impact

- Track repeat customers and their characteristics.
- Report on customer satisfaction over time. This should be done more consistently across the system. Aquatics, for example, should find ways to integrate customer satisfaction questions with the registration process or in follow-up to a class.
- Integrate Results Framework measures of customer outcomes in systemwide evaluation and reporting.

- Capture and share stories related to the impact Recreation staff can have on the lives of individuals and families in need.

Resource Efficiency

- Create a dashboard for facility rentals, describing the volume of rentals (number and hours), revenues, discounts, and impact on other programming.
- Track class cancellations and classes that run with fewer than the minimum registrants.
- Track downtime and unplanned closures of facilities.
- Consider more specific cost recovery goals and tracking based on facility capacity and the full costs of both direct and indirect (maintenance and capital) factors. This will inform **Recommendation 12** regarding facility rentals.

To track some of the recommended measures listed above, SPR will have to make investments in facilitating technology, including ACTIVE Net, possibly replacement of People Counters, and staff capacity to collect, analyze, and report out on division-wide data. These resource requirements are summarized in the section beginning on page 169.

It is important to appreciate the tensions and tradeoffs associated with tracking and reporting on this data, including investments in staff time and technology and the impacts to customers, including potentially making facilities or services less welcoming. In some cases, in the face of such practical tradeoffs, it may be wise to sacrifice "perfect" data for observational data that is likely to be accurate to an appropriate level of magnitude. For example, the physical design of some centers may make it prohibitive to install automated counters to capture the number of people who enter the building or the number of participants in a particular class. Headcounts by staff may be an entirely appropriate solution, as long as the data is integrated with other automatically calculated data. Similarly, staff could estimate demographic information in broad categories based on observations, understanding some individuals will be miscategorized, rather than asking all participants to provide demographic data.

Recommendation 8.3. Strengthen the ability to understand who is using SPR's recreation resources.

With the move to ACTIVE Net, SPR will have greater ability to track and report on the demographic characteristics of recreation users and scholarship recipients. This data will be essential for supporting Access-related goals and **Recommendation 5** and **Recommendation 6**. Collection of this data must be calibrated with the need to keep facilities and programming open and welcoming to participants. The collection of demographic data be calibrated based on changes in practices by other organizations and the level of comfort that different Seattle communities have with sharing this information, including refugees and immigrants who may have a general distrust of government based on past experiences.

Recommendation 8.4. Continue to build out the Results Framework system.

The Results Framework model is both 1) a process that instigates productive conversations among SPR and ARC staff responsible for program development and delivery; 2) a product that measures the effectiveness or outcomes associated with effective recreational programming. A clear timeline should be established to expand SPR's pilot work to other relevant programming. As noted above, Results Framework data should be integrated with other performance data as a way of triangulating in on multiple desired outcomes. Results Framework data should also be leveraged for program developed as noted in **Recommendation 3**.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 8

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: High

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous efforts)
▪ Accessible roll-ups of performance measures will generate additional support for SPR's services among public and decision makers. They should also help to highlight emerging challenges or waste, leading to more efficient use of resources. ▪ Effective use of Results Framework feedback and instructor incentives will lead to more effective programming and greater customer satisfaction.	▪ Additional staff capacity will be needed to collect, analyze, and report on data. See summary at the end of this section for staff and technology needs related to this Recommendation.	▪ SPR's goal for 2018 is to create quarterly performance reporting for key Rec priorities and data sources, including: (i) People Counter, (ii) Program Registration and Drop-In, (iii) Scholarships and other access efforts. (See draft dashboard at end of this section.) ▪ SPR intends to continue the Results Framework effort, and roll it out to Teen and Aquatics programs in 2018. This is a labor-intensive effort that requires ongoing coordination and facilitation, both with SPR staff and ARC staff and instructors. This could be made more efficient with technology for automation of data collection, analysis, and reporting, but this will also require investment.

Recommendation 9. Test, document, evaluate, and share marketing techniques.

While many site staff are using creative techniques to understand community needs and market programs (such as surveys at special events or text blasting), it's unclear that techniques are being evaluated, documented, and shared. In addition, brochure development and production has been identified as an activity taking significant staff time and resources, and opportunities for efficiencies should be investigated.

▪ Report location: page 77

Recommendation 9.1. Plan and track the results of Community Center-specific marketing efforts.

Community Center Business Plans or other mechanisms should be used to plan and coordinate outreach efforts with ARC, and to tap into promising practices in use elsewhere in the system. The results of this outreach should be reported on and adaptations made to be as effective and efficient as possible in these efforts.

Recommendation 9.2. Learn from techniques that work and consolidate efforts around proven practices.

Site staff should continue developing and testing specific marketing techniques for reaching their communities, and should document these techniques, track what works and why, share with colleagues, and learn from each other. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169. Implementation will require coordination with ARC.

Recommendation 9.3. Adapt a more efficient approach to promoting classes.

SPR should continue to transition away from traditional printed brochures, which are both labor intensive to develop and require a long production period, meaning content can be outdated by the time the brochure is printed. The second phase of ACTIVE Net implementation will allow SPR develop a "Quick List" for the public, with a web page serving as the main source of program information. This approach is similar to practices already employed in Denver and other cities.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 9

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: Medium

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
▪ This effort must be implemented in partnership with ARC, which holds responsibility for some marketing efforts. ▪ This effort should lead to the use of marketing techniques that are proven to be more efficient and effective, leading to an increase usage of recreation services, particularly among target customers identified in **Recommendation 4**.	▪ Some advances can be made here without additional resources by creating a shared network drive to capture marketing efforts implemented at different centers. These could be reviewed twice a year, along with Results Framework input, with suggestions and best practices shared system wide. This relates to additional capacity under **Recommendation 11** for organizational learning.	▪ ACTIVE Net may allow access and capacity to send email updates; SPR is still exploring and determining privacy policies. ▪ Part of the MSA negotiation.

Recommendation 11. Standardize practices and expectations across the recreation system.

Recommendation 11.1. Create additional capacity for cross-system learning and consolidation around proven practices.

Individual Community Centers seem to operate independently in many ways, setting their own fees and operational practices. While a "one-size-fits-all" approach is not appropriate given the true variety across Seattle neighborhoods and would diminish the ability of staff to make decisions based on their insights as recreation professionals; guidelines, parameters, and preferred options should be established for operations, trainings, and staff roles. This has implications related to customer service; program design, pricing, and marketing; and day-to-day operations. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169.

Recommendation 11.2. Employ Lean Management Tools to focus Division resources on generating value for the customer.

Lean Management is an organizational development structure focusing on reducing waste in workflows and prioritizing customer service. By training staff on Lean Performance Improvement principles and tools (perhaps as a pilot in some programs or a few Community Centers), processes may be streamlined and focused on generating value for the customer. This philosophy would strengthen organizational values

around customer satisfaction and resource efficiency. Resources are available to train staff in Lean techniques, including free options provided by the State Auditor's Office.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 11

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: High

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous efforts)
▪ Leadership capacity will be needed to review data and to assemble and share proven practices. ▪ Results should enhance both effectiveness and efficiency of SPR's work.	▪ Additional staff capacity will be review data and practices and to share the results across the system. See summary at the end of this section.	▪ Current practices (i.e. – rental, fee waivers) under review by Recreation Managers. ▪ Any changes or new practices will be communicated through trainings, in-person meetings and electronically (i.e. – storing on SharePoint).

Focusing on SPR's Vision and Target Customers

Recommendation 4. Continue to expand on SPR's statements of its recreation-related Vision, Goals, and target customers.

Excellent service delivery generally requires a sense of urgency (answering the question, "Why does this really matter?") and clarity of intentions. SPR and the Recreation Division are equipped with a Vision, Mission, and Goal statements, some of which genuinely resonate with staff, namely the shortening of "Healthy People, Healthy Environment, Strong Communities" to "Healthy, Healthy, Strong."

▪ Report location: page 40

More can be done to establish an explicit shared understanding of why recreation matters and the particular role played by SPR. The Recreation Division's new Vision, Mission, and strategic goals (page 5) do an excellent job of articulating the tension between serving the full community and emphasizing services for those populations that might not otherwise have access to recreation opportunities. Continued development – and discussion – of these ideas is important to create a shared understanding of these issues among Recreation Division and ARC staff. We suggest:

▪ Acknowledging the tensions implicit in BERK's Evaluative Framework (usage + access, quality + impact, and resource efficiency) and link to a performance management system that triangulates in on these factors (see **Recommendation 8**).

▪ Continuing to define who the Recreation Division serves, acknowledging the tension among goals to serve all City residents and taxpayers; to prioritize those with relatively less access to alternative opportunities for recreation; and competing for the participation (and fees) of those who can afford alternatives offered by the private sector.

Incorporating the Preschool and Child Care programs that constitute a significant portion of the Recreation Division's efforts, but are somewhat obscured by a focus on traditional "recreation" functions and programs.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 4

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: Ongoing

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
▪ Clarity in service priorities will ensure that limited resources are used as effectively and efficiently as possible, guiding tradeoffs and resource allocations. ▪ This work is necessary to serve those with greatest need, fulfilling SPR's focus and the City's racial and social justice goals.	▪ Programming budget impact will depend on whether City moves to eliminate program fees for low income youth and seniors; biggest implication of this would be to ARC budget and PAR fee received by SPR. ▪ Associated costs would include interpretation services, staff training, and marketing. ▪ Additional study and community engagement will be necessary to track changing barriers and evaluate potential responses. ▪ As with **Recommendation 4**: programming impact will depend on whether City moves to eliminate program fees for youth, older adults; biggest implication will be to ARC budget and PAR fee received by SPR.	▪ See new Recreation Division Vision, Mission, and strategic goals on page 7. ▪ Eliminated drop-in fees for weight rooms, basketball, tot play. ▪ Implemented Women Only Swims, LGBTQ Swims requested by public. ▪ Scholarship application is available in 6 languages and has been combined with registration form, going from 4-pages to 1-page, front and back. ▪ Now piloting third party income verification at Magnuson CC with Brettler Place residents; Mercy Housing will verify, eliminating the need to collect income verification paperwork (federal, state mandate to receive DSHS payments). ▪ Staff can apply to ARC Equity Fund for additional program resources or to add RSJ-focused programs. ▪ Piloting summer "HUB" program at Garfield CC that offers enhanced or specialty camps for youth ages 7-14.

Recommendation 5. Continue to reduce barriers and encourage the participation of traditionally underserved groups and those with less access to alternatives.

To supplement the resource- and affordability-focused approaches described above, SPR is doing more to encourage participation among target groups programmatically. This entails understanding and addressing current barriers, devising appropriate programming, and effectively marketing the availability of recreation resources.

▪ Report location: page 48

To supplement the resource- and affordability-focused approaches described above, SPR is doing more to encourage participation among target groups programmatically. This entails understanding and addressing current barriers, devising appropriate programming, and effectively marketing the availability of recreation resources.

▪ **Continue to seek to understand the barriers to participation and desired programming,** building on previous engagements, revising Advisory Councils to be more effective in this role, and leveraging insights from trusted public and non-profit partners. Centralize this information so it is commonly understood by staff

across the system and use it to inform ongoing learning and continuous improvement conversations among staff who recruit for classes and other services. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169.

- **Be truly welcoming**. While customer service is important to serving all customers well, it has particular import for reaching and retaining customers for whom a public facility is not necessarily a welcoming place, namely refugees, immigrants, and non-native speakers of English. Special skills, translation, and deliberate marketing in Community Centers and in communities are all important to this.

- **Continue to learn** from others, including staff of other City programs that serve the same population, as well as recreation agencies across the country striving to improve outreach to, programming for, and affordability for underserved groups.

These efforts may be strengthened by **Recommendation 2**, which seeks to improve the role and functioning of Advisory Councils. Councils have had a traditional role of providing a voice to community needs, but not all perform this function well.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 5

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: Ongoing

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
■ This work is necessary to serve those with greatest need, fulfilling SPR's focus and the City's racial and social justice goals.	■ Associated costs would include interpretation services, staff training, and marketing. ■ Additional study and community engagement will be necessary to track changing barriers and evaluate potential responses. ■ As with Recommendation 4: programming impact will depend on whether City moves to eliminate program fees for youth, older adults; biggest implication will be to ARC budget and PAR fee received by SPR.	■ Eliminated drop-in fees for weight rooms, basketball, tot play. ■ Implemented Women Only Swims, LGBTQ Swims requested by public. ■ Scholarship application is available in 6 languages and has been combined with registration form, going from 4-pages to 1-page, front and back. ■ Now piloting third party income verification at Magnuson CC with Brettler Place residents; Mercy Housing will verify, eliminating the need to collect income verification paperwork (federal, state mandate to receive DSHS payments). ■ Staff can apply to ARC Equity Fund for additional program resources or to add RSJ-focused programs. ■ Piloting summer "HUB" program at Garfield CC that offers enhanced or specialty camps for youth ages 7-14.

Recommendation 6. Continue to align resources and fees to prioritize participation by low-income communities while earning revenues as appropriate.

SPR has made positive strides in addressing historic elements of the system that favor the participation of some. Scholarships and discounts are being used to increase access to child care, recreation programs, and aquatics resources among those with limited resources. Community Center financial resources are being concentrated in the Southwest and Southeast of the City which have greater numbers of lower income community members (see discussion around Figure 35). Our recommendations build on these efforts, focusing on resource allocation, maintaining affordable access for those with limited means, and maximizing opportunities to generate system revenues through participation fees.

Recommendation 6.1. Concentrate operating resources to facilitate access for lower income community members.

Our analysis shows that SPR is concentrating public (General Fund and MPD) resources in lower income neighborhoods to buttress access to Community Center amenities and programming (see discussion around Figure 35). This focus should be maintained and refined as a deliberate strategy, with ongoing performance measurement used to adjust the system over time to achieve desired goals.

In addition to public resources, SPR and ARC are changing the way ARC fund balances function, moving toward a more equitable, systemwide approach. Previously, individual centers retained funds they raised from year to year; beginning in 2018, the ARC Equity Fund pools surplus resources and makes them available to other Centers twice a year by request.

In 2016, individual ARC community councils raised funds ranging from $100 to a high of $41,000 at Garfield. ARC is looking to consolidate revenues across the system. This should continue, with monitoring for adverse effects that may come from introducing possible disincentives for individual Community Centers to raise funds through program fees, Advisory Council fundraising, and other means.

Recommendation 6.2. Study and set fee levels to capture appropriate revenues from those who can afford to pay.

Recreation programs are a classic example of a public services that can be partially supported through user fees. SPR has the ability to generate additional revenue through participant fees from those who can afford to pay more to support its recreation mission and subsidizing access for the underserved.

Participant fees are currently geographically uniform across the system for Aquatics and more variable for Community Center programs — see Figure 35. It is not well understood whether current fees are appropriately set relative to other alternatives and the price sensitivity of customers. Opportunities to increase this source of earned revenue must be balanced with other goals, particularly creating affordable access for residents at all income ranges.

Discounted participation fees should be intended to improve affordability based on ability to pay. SPR should explore the pros and cons of reducing fee discounts not related to income, such as for those over age 50 or with disabilities. While these programs are currently offered for free, it would be more consistent to charge for these courses and offer scholarships for those with limited resources.

SPR should conduct a review of its recreation fee and scholarship structure:

1) Conduct a fee study to see if fees are properly set relative to market rates for comparable services (adjusted downwards to reflect taxpayer investment in the system) and willingness to pay. As part of this review, compare SPR rate setting practices and rates to those of comparable communities.

2) Model the likely financial and participation outcomes associated with fee adjustments and commensurate modification of scholarship budget and criteria.

3) Evaluate fee setting, scholarship, and model options together.

Recommendation 6.3. Explore opportunities to charge higher rates for non-Seattle residents.

Detailed figures on nonresident use of SPR recreation programs was not available for this analysis, but an estimate based on user ZIP codes showed different levels of nonresident usage in 2016:

- Community Center programs 6%
- Aquatics programs 5%
- Boating programs 18% (moorage fees will likely change with pending new contract)
- Facility Rentals *not determined*

As these individuals do not contribute General Fund and MPD tax revenues to support the system, it is reasonable to charge an additional increment for use of Seattle Public Schools resources. Peer cities Minneapolis, Portland, and Chicago all charge higher fees to nonresidents, ranging from 40% to 100% higher than resident fees. SPR charges nonresident fees for programs at the Amy Yee Tennis Center (not addressed by this report) that are approximately 10% higher. Some neighboring cities, including Mountlake Terrace and Renton charge higher pool fees for non-residents.

Recommendation 6.4. Study the need to increase funds available for scholarships and strengthen their administration to support access for low income communities.

As a fee-based system, there is a balance between generating revenue and enabling access. SPR's use of scholarships and discounts helps increase opportunities for people with limited ability to pay while establishing a higher base rate for those who can afford to pay.

Particularly if the fee study recommended in **Recommendation 3.2** results in base fee increase, SPR and the City of Seattle overall should further study the need to expand and promote scholarships and discounts, targeting low-income community members (see information on demand for scholarships in the section beginning on page 47).

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 6

Timeframe: Medium-term | Priority: Medium

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
▪ Implementation of this Recommendation is essential to achieving the Recreation Division's focus on serving non-traditional populations while generating income sufficient to maintain desired level of service targets across the system.	▪ Resources will need to be invested in a fee study. This effort could focus on select programming (and perhaps facility rentals) rather than taking on all of Recreation Division's programs. ▪ By balancing fee increases for some and scholarships for other, the net impact may be cost neutral while strengthening the ability of the system to focus limited public resources on providing services for those with limited access to alternatives. ▪ Charging differential fees for non-Seattle residents should lead to a modest revenue increase, though some non-residents may decrease their use of the system if fees go up.	▪ SPR and ARC are reviewing their fee setting model through the current cost sharing analysis. ▪ Charging differential fees for non-Seattle residents is being tested at the Amy Yee Tennis Center. ACTIVE Net will help identify Seattle and non-Seattle residents.

Strengthening the System

Recommendation 1. Review and update the SPR and ARC partnership.

The relationship between SPR and ARC has evolved incrementally over time. The partners are currently engaged in a review and update of this relationship to align goals and roles and to establish clear accountability for desired outcomes. The goal is to then use these agreed-upon updated roles in the next Master Services Agreement (MSA), a ten-year agreement governing the partnership.

▪ Report location: page 25

Our recommendations include:

▪ Adopt and implement the draft Guiding Principles and Joint Planning Framework described above.

▪ Establish a shared understanding of when the partners will collaborate on decision making and when they will coordinate. Clarify when partners will be Consulted (that is, when they have a say in the decision and when they can raise questions or make suggestions) and when they will be Informed (that is, when they don't have a say, but will be notified of a pending change before it is implemented).

▪ When policy changes will affect both organizations, communications should be jointly issued by SPR and ARC (signed by leadership of both organizations) or in a coordinated fashion. SPR and ARC leadership should plan these communications, with clear responsibilities and timelines.

▪ Prioritize strengthening communications between Community Center staff and Field Supervisors and continue joint field meetings.

▪ Jointly establish a model for ARC and SPR field staffing that determines how many are needed and what their capacity and role is.

- Set up a working group composed of human resources and field staff from both organizations. Jointly review current MSA standards as well as common practices on hiring and overseeing instructors. Determine if current MSA standards are sufficient and whether they are being followed.
- Elevate expectations for ARC's fundraising in the next MSA Update. As a separate non-profit organization, ARC is better positioned to fundraise than SPR, and may be able more meaningfully supplement core public funding, particularly in areas that may be compelling to donors, such as recreation scholarships for underrepresented populations.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 1
Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: High

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
- Alignment of these key partners should lead to greater efficiency and stronger service for customers, with shared accountability for providing high quality recreation programming.	- Leadership of both organizations will need to devote time for coordinated planning and communication. - Budget impacts will be clearer when partnership cost sharing study is complete (Spring 2018).	- Alignment of these key partners should lead to greater efficiency and stronger service for customers, with shared accountability for providing high quality recreation programming. - SPR and ARC are collaborating on a work product that will recap the history, benefits, and challenges of the partnership; a plan for ongoing joint planning; and recommendations for strengthening the partnership. The document will be completed in 2018and shared with staff of both organizations. - This work will inform a new 10-year MSA.

Recommendation 2. Reform the role and functioning of Advisory Councils.

Advisory Councils have played an important role in the history of SPR, providing dedicated volunteers, fundraising services, and a connection to the community. But today many Advisory Councils are not representative of the local population, and thus are not providing a voice to bring community needs to SPR staff. Further, recruitment, training, and retention of Advisory Council members is uneven at best, and roles and responsibilities often overlap between SPR and ARC staff.

- Report location: page 28

Recommendation 2.1. Strengthen Advisory Councils immediately.

Implement recommendations to strengthen Advisory Councils included from a 2015 study by a UW class in Community Oriented Public Health Practice, including: provide training to members; increase visibility; lower barriers to participation (by simplifying the application process, translating materials, and other means); and increase collaboration with other organizations. Providing training for current Advisory Council members and coordination between the SPR and ARC staff that work with Advisory Council members should be a primary focus.

Recommendation 2.2. Fundamentally reshape the role, structure, and diverse composition of Advisory Councils.

SPR and ARC should go beyond the ideas raised in the 2015 study to reconsider the role of the Advisory Councils on a deeper level, setting appropriate, non-fiduciary roles for voluntary groups and considering the best structure, which may reduce the number of Advisory Councils by creating regional or systemwide groups. Common expectations for the role of Advisory Councils should be set and adhered to. Responsibility for recruiting, training, and supporting Advisory Council members should be clearly assigned to SPR or ARC as appropriate. Reshaping of the Advisory Council system should involve significant engagement with SPR field staff, ARC staff, and existing Advisory Council members.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 2

Timeframe: Short-term for 2.1 and Medium-term for 2.2 | Priority: Medium

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
▪ The short-term strengthening of the Advisory Council system should create moderate performance improvements. Greater benefits will be seen with more wholesale reform called for in **Recommendation 2.2**.	▪ Time and energy will be required by ARC staff to train and support existing Advisory Councils.	▪ ARC is currently implementing a new training system for Advisory Council members which should improve the functioning of the current system while other options are explored through **Recommendation 2.2**.

Recommendation 7. Strengthen customer service.

Depending upon one's point of view or the piece of literature being consulted, customer service can be seen as essential or a distraction from a more fundamental focus on helping customers achieve their desired outcomes. While the Results Framework admirably focuses on the latter, we suggest that recreation is a service business and that a strong focus on welcoming facilities and customer service is critical to attracting and retaining satisfied customers. This is true both for customers with the ability to pay for for-profit alternatives, and for the populations that have been traditionally underserved or have fewer alternatives.

▪ Report location: page 56

Recommendation 7.1. Focus the Division and individual staff on the importance of customer service through culture- and expectation-setting.

Although customer service is an avowed management focus for SPR, little has been done in a standardized way systemwide to train staff, hold staff accountable, and understand changes over time. Recommended steps to improve focus on customer service include:

▪ Emphasize the importance of a customer orientation through guiding statements (Vision, Mission, or Values) and communications by leadership to establish a Division-wide culture of customer service. This has been done to some degree but can be expanded upon.

▪ Continue and strengthen ongoing customer service training for all customer-facing positions such as Recreation Attendants. This has been done to some degree but can be expanded upon.

▪ Set clear expectations for staff, tying customer service to job descriptions and performance evaluations. Include expectations that staff will "greet every customer who walks in the door and proactively offer information about programs and services" in job descriptions and personnel evaluations.

▪ Consider requiring customer service experience for positions with significant front-line public and customer interactions. (Minimum qualifications for the Recreation Services Representative position with Denver Parks and Recreation includes two years of customer service work in recreation, retail,

hospital, or a related industry.)

- Encourage customer-serving staff to share their insights and observations of what matters to customers based on their day-to-day interactions. Staff often have good ideas about improving the customer experience, but not the authority or responsibility for implementing them. This ongoing learning could be facilitated via meetings of Assistant Coordinators as mentioned on page 152 and by a Manager-level position described on page 169.
- Give staff the encouragement and tools to put themselves "in the customer's shoes," using customer personas or other methods to explore the customer experience of a wealthy resident, a teen, or a non-English speaking refugee new to the United States.
- Train staff, including temporary staff, in learning from customers through daily interactions and observations or by holding conversations with individuals or groups (avoid the off-putting term "focus groups.") and see this as a core function of recreation specialists.

Recommendation 7.2. Add new tools to gather customer satisfaction information from program participants.

In addition to current tools, SPR should implement new systems to understand and track customer satisfaction. Peer cities may serve as an inspiration and practical example as summarized in the Appendix beginning on page 175. Chicago, Denver, and Portland have all implemented efforts such as a secret shopper program or systemwide randomized surveys of customers. The full implementation of ACTIVE Net will strengthen SPR's ability to survey program participants and this opportunity needs to be fully explored and taken advantage of.

The results of this customer input should integrate into SPR's performance management system as noted in **Recommendation 8**.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 7

Timeframe: Ongoing | Priority: Ongoing

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
While there will be up-front costs associated with training and tool development, these should result in better service and greater customer satisfaction. This can increase repeat customers, including those with access to alternative forms of recreation.	- Ideal would be $300 per year per staff for training for a total of about $60,000. Park District funding could be used to supplement the Department training budget. - Resources will be needed to design and implement new customer satisfaction tracking mechanisms per **Recommendation 7.2**. These efforts may be a refocusing of existing staff and funding, or may require new resources.	- Current trainings staff will receive by end of 2018: - Gender Identity training; how it changes program descriptions - Working with homeless population (request made to DES; SPR safety team identifying other trainers, resources) - Recreation Division Customer Service Retreat. - This is an area where ACTIVE Net might help with data collection, tracking, and reporting.

Recommendation 10. Acknowledge and buttress the role staff play in providing social supports and ensuring safety and security.

Staff of some Community Centers spend a significant portion of their time providing social supports to customers and/or ensuring safety and security. This can include everything from providing referrals to social service agencies, to helping a child whose parent is addicted to drugs, to dealing with disruptive or mentally ill customers. These functions are performed admirably by many staff, but more could be done to acknowledge and support these demands at the system level:

- Report location: page 84

Recommendation 10.1. Understand, report on, and acknowledge the demands these roles have on staff and the positive impacts they have on customers.

- Recognize these roles more explicitly in SPR's Mission, Values, and guiding documents such as strategic plans.
- Incorporate this role in job descriptions and interview processes so potential new employees understand this may be part of their day-to-day role and to better understand the interest and skillset of applicants as it relates to this topic.
- Create mechanisms for staff to record the impact of these demands on their time so it can be understood and managed.
- Acknowledge the immense positive impact individual staff members can have on the children, youth, and adults they serve. Celebrate day-to-day heroism and the positive impact it has on families. Tell these stories to supplement quantitative measures in SPR's performance reporting (see **Recommendation 8**).

Recommendation 10.2. Support Recreation staff who provide social supports to customers.

- Create trainings and offer guidance and access to resources to support staff who provide significant levels of social supports based on their Community Center assignment.
- Explore opportunities to increase access to social services provided through the City and by community-based organizations. Consider formal partnerships to leverage dedicated capacity and expertise. Denver brings in outside partners to provide additional services to customers, such as a visiting nurse. Going one step further, Minneapolis leases space in a recreation center to a social service organization which provides direct service to clients at that location.

Recommendation 10.3. Strengthen staff ability to deal with safety issues.

- Ensure safety standards are being met, prioritizing the safety of SPR and ARC staff.
- Share lessons learned and successful strategies across Community Centers, such as at the interagency meetings.
- Review training on safety and look for areas to improve. Some peer cities provide staff trainings on crisis intervention, active shooter, verbal judo, and more.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 10

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: Medium

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
▪ Investments in staff training and supportive partnerships will both provide better services for community members with specific needs and better support staff, strengthening morale and retention. ▪ Better telling this story will do more to communicate the full value that SPR provides to the community, which goes beyond the benefits associated with traditional recreation opportunities.	▪ **Recommendation 10.1** relates to SPR's ability to track and report on performance data (**Recommendation 8**). The data in this case includes i) how staff spend their time (specifically the investment of time in providing social support services to customers and addressing safety and security); ii) the impact of these efforts, which may be personal stories of individual customers; and iii) the number of safety/security events that occur. ▪ **Recommendations 10.2** and 10.3 relate directly to staff training which is also in **Recommendation 7**.	▪ SPR currently provides some safety and emergency response training. ▪ Additional consideration is needed to determine the best way to track time by staff providing social support services to customers and addressing safety and security

Recommendation 12. Ensure buildings and other facilities are used as much as possible.

While public recreation hours are a top priority, non-public (ARC-funded) programming and facility rentals also provide service to residents and generate revenue to support the system. All three uses must be balanced in a way that best serves the public and makes maximum use of capital facilities.

▪ Report location: page 106

Recommendation 12.1. Restructure facility rentals to better serve the public and generate revenues.

Responsibility for facility rentals should be centralized within SPR to leverage shared expertise and a dedicated focus on this service, recognizing that it is fundamentally different than recreation programming and creating clear incentives for appropriately maximizing rental revenues. Facility rentals should, however, be managed to achieve targets that balance the tensions within our Evaluative Framework, providing access to an affordable shared community resource while generating income to supplement public resources. A more complete understanding of the full incremental costs associated with facility rentals and the fees set by competing facilities in the market should inform rental fee setting, with use of discounts to enable access for those individuals, families, or groups with fewer resources. People Counter data can be used to identify more suitable times for rentals that don't interfere with programming hours.

Recommendation 12.2. Round out public-funded programing with other productive uses.

While we understand that SPR has a preference for prioritizing public hours over non-public programming, this may not always be the best use of overall public resources. We note that Minneapolis made a decision

to focus public hours and funding for staff positions during times with the highest usage. Other programs such as preschool, rentals, and senior programs occur during non-public hours, but are not staffed by front-desk staff. SPR should collaborate with ARC and other partners to identify the most cost-effective ways to activate facilities and generate public benefit on as many days and for as many hours as possible. Creative solutions may be necessary to address potential challenges related to needed supporting services, including facility oversight from a risk management point of view or janitorial services.

Implementation Specifics for Recommendation 12

Timeframe: Short-term | Priority: High

Anticipated Benefits	Potential Resource Implications	Status (including relevant previous strategies)
▪ Alignment of these key partners should lead to greater efficiency and stronger service for customers, with shared accountability for providing high quality recreation programming.	▪ Leadership of both organizations will need to devote time for coordinated planning and communication. ▪ Budget impacts will be clearer when partnership cost sharing study is complete (Spring 2018).	▪ Current MSA ended 2017; working now under a one-year agreement. ▪ SPR and ARC are collaborating on a work product that will recap the history, benefits, and challenges of the partnership; a plan for ongoing joint planning; and recommendations for strengthening the partnership. The document will be completed in 2018 and shared with staff of both organizations. ▪ This work will inform a new 10-year MSA.

Summary of Additional Staff and Technology Resources Required

While some of the recommendations above can be advanced with existing resources, others will require additional staff time and/or expertise, as well as supporting technologies.

Staff Training

- Recommendation 7.   Strengthen customer service.

- Recommendation 10.   Acknowledge and buttress the role staff play in providing social supports and ensuring safety and security.

These Recommendations call for additional training for SPR staff in areas that are not related to mandatory training. This reflects the demands of serving a changing community and the role that Community Centers play, serving as gathering places for populations with high needs.

Performance Management and Organizational Learning

- Recommendation 3.   Leverage past data and enforce class performance standards to focus on desired programs

- Recommendation 8.   Simplify and roll-up reporting measures that establish balance and triangulate on competing goals.

- Recommendation 9.   Test, document, evaluate, and share marketing techniques

- Recommendation 11.   Standardize practices and expectations across the recreation system.

Taken together, this suite of recommendations constitutes an important effort to strengthen SPR as a learning organization, improving its use of data and strengthening its capacity to identify and spread the use of proven practices. To do so effectively will require additional investment in staff capacity and technology.

Staff Capacity
- Additional staff will be needed whose sole responsibility is to collect, analyze and report out on division-wide data. This could be included in the next round of Park District funding.
    - 1 FTE Admin Staff Analyst (ASA). 0.5 FTE Research & Eval. Aide (REA).
    - 2018 #'s ASA $109,561; REA $43,937.

- A Manager-level position may be needed to consolidate and act on learnings from data analysis and review of promising practices from across the system. A key position is needed to provide leadership in implementation and consistent application of the new or changing practices.
    - 1 FTE Manager 1 - $109,561.

One-time Technology Investments
- Technology for automation of data collection and analysis: $3,000-5,000.
- People Counter replacement (SPR is submitting a Budget Issue Paper for 2019 for funding to replace old system).

Ongoing Technology Costs
- Annual licenses for Tableau or other reporting technology: $3,000.
- Possible increased costs associated with ACTIVE Net.

Template...

Division Goal Statement

Top-Line Metric

% Suite of 3 to 5 additional detailed indicators
#

Connect the public with a diversity of opportunities to gather, play, and celebrate.

3,750,000 Community Center Visits

Participants in Programs for Older Adults

% Increase in Visits

Participants in Programs for People with Disabilities

Support healthy youth development through job skills training, academic support, and safe spaces.

843 Youth Employed   **#** Youth reaching Academic Goals

$ Youth earned in stipends

Meals served to youth in parks and playgrounds

Participants in Late Night programs

Improve access to programs through scholarships, fee reductions, and free programs.

$1,000,000 in Scholarships Provided

$ Park District Scholarships

Youth & Adult recipients of scholarships or discounted fees

$ ARC Scholarships

$ Discounted Fees provided

Participants in free drop-in activities

Provide quality programs that improve the health and wellness, life skills, and social connections of participants.

75% Program Participants Achieving Evidence-Based Results

Program youth and adult program participants

Youth & Adult recipients of scholarships or discounted fees

% Increase in participation

Participants in free drop-in activities

Provide excellent customer service.

92% Highly-Satisfied Customers

**%**

#

Provide accessible, culturally-relevant programs to diverse participants through community partners.

3,500 Participants in innovative partner-led programs

Participants in Rec for All Programs

$ Funding to community-based organizations

Participants in Get Moving

Community partners

APPENDIX: Peer Practices

BERK interviewed staff and reviewed budget and program documents from four peer park and recreation agencies: the Chicago Park District, Denver Parks and Recreation, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Portland Parks and Recreation. Interviewee names and the standard interview questions are listed below.

Interviewees

Agency	Interviewee
Chicago Park District	Tim O'Connell, Deputy Chief Program Officer
Denver Parks and Recreation	John Martinez, Deputy Executive Director of Recreation
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Larry Umphrey, Director of Recreation Centers and Programs
Portland Parks and Recreation	Craig Vanderbout, Recreation Supervisor, Citywide Recreation
	Josh Wells, Senior Management Analyst

Information from these interviews is interwoven throughout the preceding pages of this report. The following topics are summarized in more detail in this Appendix:

- Performance Management (below)

- Customer Service (page 176

- Social Supports (page 183)

- Safety and Security (page 184)

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Chicago Park District

The Chicago Park District Strategic Plan (2012) notes implementation of a performance management system with established metrics for each department. The Chicago Park District (CPD) annual Budget Summary document includes performance data and goals for each department, linked to goals and core values from the Strategic Plan. Many of these metrics relate to participation data, which is generated through the ACTIVE Net registration system. An examples of program description and performance metrics from the Chicago Park District 2017 budget summary is shown in Figure 80 for the gymnastics program.

Figure 80. Example of Chicago Park District Performance Measures, 2017 Budget

Department Summaries

Community Recreation - Gymnastics

Overview

The Gymnastics unit manages 9 gymnastics centers, servicing 4,000+ youth weekly in programs in early childhood movement and development, tumbling and artistic gymnastics at the recreational and competitive levels. Center operations and program implementation are guided by USA Gymnastics, the sole national governing body for the sport in the United States. The unit also develops program curricula, implements trainings, educational workshops, provides certification opportunities and/or technical support to park field staff and Sports 37 Teen Apprenticeship participants who implement recreational level tumbling, gymnastics and cheer programs at park locations in addition to the 9 gymnastics centers.

Department Expenditures			
Account	2015 Actual	2016 Budget	2017 Budget
Personnel Services	$334,261	$404,215	$467,122
Materials & Supplies	$13,077	$23,321	$24,762
Small Tools & Equipment	$17,106	$34,201	$37,963
Contractual Services	$80,825	$98,291	$96,181
Program Expense	$52,857	$52,845	$46,483
Total	$498,125	$612,873	$672,510
Personnel FTE	6.5	8.2	9.2
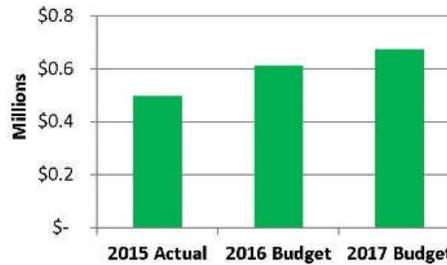
Note: Actuals may reflect expenses originally budgeted at the park level while budget amounts do not reflect Gymnastics personnel expenses budgeted at the park level.

Goals

Core Value: Children First

- Expand the success of the mini-session to two sessions, resulting in the creation of 8,000 additional enrollment spots for children, youth and teens.
- Partner with Chicago Public Schools to run congruent Cheerleading and Pom Poms programs city wide, increasing the total time particpants will have to practice their skills.
- Create an additional CPD-CPS partnership to include Gymnastics as part of their IHSA Sports.
- Implement a three-year plan to host a major regional or national competition in Chicago.

Performance Data

	2017 Target	2016 Actual to Date	2016 Target	2016 % Target	2015 Actual	2014 Actual
All Instructional Programming						
Gymnastics	20,665	18,288	19,718	93%	15,457	13,176
By Center						
Avondale Park	861	751	820	92%	710	661
Broadway Armory	2,755	2,294	2,624	87%	2,427	2,277
Calumet Park	1,255	867	1,195	73%	811	819
Garfield Park	487	616	464	133%	568	463
Harrison Park	1,719	1,235	1,637	75%	1,182	1,315
Jesse White	1,802	2,088	1,716	N/A	1,435	106
McKinley Park	1,458	1,183	1,388	85%	1,251	1,268
Morgan Park Sports Complex	3,990	4,087	3,800	N/A	1,387	-
Peterson Park	5,432	4,280	5,173	83%	4,862	5,444
Shabbona Park	942	887	897	99%	824	823
By Program						
Twinkle Stars	5,319	4,656	4,584	102%	4,150	3,576
Mom, Dads & Tots Gymnastics	3,761	3,460	3,176	109%	2,979	2,954
Rising Stars	1,443	1,324	1,092	121%	1,035	795

Source: Chicago Park District, 2017.

Denver Parks and Recreation

Denver Parks and Recreation tracks metrics such as usage and enrollment on a monthly basis. See Figure 81 for an example of a monthly metrics dashboard report. Staff report using performance metrics reports to make management decisions. One example is examining usage rates at community centers during time of day, and making adjustments to open hours based on times of highest demand, which is generally when school is not in session. (Preschool, older adult programs programs, and other activities may take place in the buildings when they are not publicly open, requiring fewer staff.)

Figure 81. Denver Parks and Recreation Dashboard Metrics Report, 2017 (Partial Year)

Recreation Dashboard: Mission Level Metrics
Report Date Range: January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017
Report Date: August 15, 2017

MEMBERSHIP USAGE

By Tier	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Regional Centers	78,959	74,276	84,172	76,884	76,421	86,545	80,479	0	0	0	0	0	557,736
Local Centers	35,619	34,785	41,724	35,548	38,502	41,840	36,446	0	0	0	0	0	264,464
Neighborhood Centers	11,946	13,047	14,664	13,388	13,746	15,408	12,385	0	0	0	0	0	94,584
Employee Fitness Center	4,339	4,188	5,086	4,360	4,446	4,519	4,031	0	0	0	0	0	30,969
Outdoor pools	0	0	0	0	0	45,758	53,161	0	0	0	0	0	98,919
Total	130,863	126,296	145,646	130,180	133,115	194,070	186,502	0	0	0	0	0	1,046,672

| Program Enrollments | 3,420 | 2,030 | 9,359 | 2,907 | 7,597 | 5,217 | 3,830 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 34,370 |

2017 Total Usage by Month

Highest Usage Centers
Central Park 25,910
Washington Park 14,909
Montclair 12,569

Centers with Most Increase from Previous Month
Montclair 5%

Centers with Most Decrease from Previous Month
Swansea -49%
St. Charles -48%
Platt Park -30%

→Budget Book Usage Goal: 1,485,532
→Percentage of Budget Book Usage Goal Achieved: 70%
→Monthly usage is up 1% from the same month a year ago.
→Annual usage is up 2% from the previous year

*Usage data comes from ActiveNet

PROGRAM ENROLLMENTS

2017 Program Registrations by Month

→Monthly registrations are down 27% from the same month a year ago.

→Annual registrations are down 7% from the previous year

Recreation Dashboard 1

Source: Denver Parks and Recreation, 2017.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Like many park and recreation agencies, Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board reports on its performance measures in its annual budget. Shown in Figure 82 below is an excerpt from the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board 2017 budget, showing goals and performance measures for urban teen programming, a part of the Recreation Centers and Programs division.

Figure 82. Excerpt from Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board Performance Measures, 2016

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board 2016 Goals & Performance Measures						
Department: Rec Centers & Programs **Fiscal Year:** 2016 **Manager:** Larry Umphrey			**Date of Last Revision:**	12/31/2016	Comp Plan Goal:	Strategic Direction
GOAL:						
Develop and implement a procedure and evaluation tool for operations of Urban Teen Programming through a thorough evaluation of nationwide best practices, sampling of experiences, and input of stakeholders.					People play, learn, and develop a greater capacity to enjoy life; Parks provide a center for community living	B, 1, 2, 3, 4
PERFORMANCE MEASURES:		Target Date	Completion Date	Results		
Form group of staff to lead the policy development.		3/31/2016	1/29/2016	Formed team with representatives from each service area.		
Perform research on best practices for urban teen programming from other organizations across the country. Engage staff from various organizations and research through City Park Alliance, NRPA, and other professional organizations.		9/1/2016	10/1/2016	Research complete. Chicago, Denver, Dallas, and Oakland were points of research.		
Write draft procedure for review based on research findings.		10/15/2016		Goal delayed due to staffing changes. New target date 1/31/17.		
Present draft procedure to Assistant Superintendent.		10/30/2016		New target date 2/15/17.		
Revise and infuse any suggestions or edits from Assistant Superintendent/ Executive Team.		11/30/2016		New target date 3/1/17.		
Implement informational sessions for staff.		12/31/2016		New target date 4/1/17.		

Source: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, 2016.

Portland Parks and Recreation

Strategic direction for Portland Parks and Recreation (Portland Parks and Recreation) comes from several planning documents, including the Parks 2020 Vision (2001), the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan, and the Five-Year Racial Equity Plan (2015). The 2012 Strategic Plan guides performance measures through two primary result areas: improving service delivery and managing and improving assets. There are three strategic themes under improving service delivery: health, recreation programs, and access and equity.

Portland Parks and Recreation performance measures cover four primary topics: asset management, recreation programs, sustainability, and access and equity. Excerpts from Portland Parks and Recreation's 2016 Performance Report are shown below in Figure 83, including both recreation measures and excerpts from Access and Equity measures which relate to recreation. The information is made available online in a very accessible format at www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/538613.

Recreation Theme Goals:

▪ Connect more youth to the outdoors, physical activity, and their communities.

▪ Improve the recreation service delivery model through coordinated programming, integrated marketing, and supporting services.

Access and Equity Goals:

▪ Provide equitable access to parks and natural areas within walking distance for all residents.

▪ Improve recreation opportunities for underserved communities.

Figure 83. Portland Parks and Recreation 2016 Performance Measures for Recreation

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	TARGET	2016 PERFORMANCE	NOTES
Recreation Programs			
Total cost recovery	39%	N/A	Measured through Cost of Service studies
Percentage of residents satisfied or very satisfied with the **affordability** of recreation programs	65%	69%	Measured through City Auditor's Annual Community Survey
Percentage of residents who rate overall **quality** of recreation centers and activities as good or very good	80%	72%	
Total value of **scholarships** granted	Undefined	$627,402	
Quality of instruction, coaching, and leadership within recreation programs	70%	61%	
Percentage of residents **participating** in a Portland Parks and Recreation recreation activity	35%	34%	Measured through City Auditor's Annual Community Survey
Access and Equity, related to Recreation			
Percentage of households living within 3 miles of a full service community center	100%	70%	
Employees of color as a percentage of FTEs	28%	20%	
Employees of color as a percentage of all employees	28%	31%	
Female employees as a percentage of all FTEs	50%	37%	
Female employees as a percentage of all employees	50%	[error in reporting]	

Source: Portland Parks and Recreation 2016 Performance Report. (www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/538615)

Portland Parks and Recreation also has performance measures in its Five-Year Racial Equity Plan. Examples include:

▪ 80% of employees agree that the work environment values racial diversity

▪ Create and distribute translated materials on digital platform to reach identified 10 languages.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Denver Parks and Recreation

Denver uses a variety of methods to highlight and improve service to customers.

Training and Support

Denver has a three-person Guest Relations Team, whose responsibility is to train staff on customer service and customer experience. The team senior supervisor also has responsibility for supervising a recreation center. The two coordinators conduct trainings for all full-time and on-call staff, including an eight-hour training for new employees which covers a variety of topics, including customer service. The team also provides a 5-hour training for the ACTIVE Net registration system.

Front Counter Staff

Previously, Denver had a variety of positions staffing recreation center front counters, including instructors and coordinators, but now has one specific position, the Recreation Service Representative, in this role. Among the list of essential duties for the position is: "Greets and communicates with recreation guests via personal contact or telephone using F.A.C.E. philosophy (friendly, attentive, consistent, empowered) regarding recreation services/activities." The position requires two years of customer service experience, in recreation, retail, hospitality, or other industries.

Secret Shopper Program

Denver uses a consultant to conduct a secret shopper program to evaluate customer service at recreation centers. Each center gets one phone secret shopper and one in-person secret shopper each month. The shoppers evaluate the center both on customer service and on facility cleanliness. Customer service criteria for staff include a welcoming and helpful greeting, professional image, length of time waiting at counter, and more. An excerpt from the secret shopper scoring criteria is in Figure 84.

Figure 84. Excerpt from Denver Parks and Recreation Secret Shopper Scoring Criteria

Source: Denver Parks and Recreation, 2017.

The results of secret shopper evaluations are tied to performance measures for staff. After getting results, Managers hold coaching sessions with staff and meet with center supervisors to strategize how to improve scores, using the direct feedback from the secret shopper in the discussion. See Figure 85 for an excerpt from the coaching guide.

Figure 85. Excerpt from Denver Parks and Recreation Customer Service Coaching Guide

Source: Denver Parks and Recreation, 2017.

Results of secret shopper evaluations are also reported in Denver's performance dashboard, as shown in Figure 86.

Figure 86. Excerpt from Denver Performance Dashboard, Customer Service, July 2017

Customer Service Outcomes
Report Date Range: January 1, 2017 to July 31, 2017
Report Date: August 15, 2017

	Actual	Goal	% of Goal	Evals*
Phone Surveys	74%	90%	82.6%	27
Visit - Facility Presentation	85%	90%	94.6%	26
Visit - Customer Experience	84%	90%	93.8%	26
Visit - Total Score	85%	90%	94.1%	26
Combined Score	81%	90%	90.3%	27

→Budget Book Annual Customer Service Goal is 90%
→% of Annual Budget Book Goal   90.3%

Source: Denver Parks and Recreation, 2017.

The secret shopper program was started about three years and is scheduled to run through 2018, at an annual cost of approximately $34,000. Denver staff report that it has been a valuable program, but they may decide to run an in-house program in the future.

Customer Service Surveys

Denver conducts a customer experience survey for recreation customers, distributed to a sampling of customers through the ACTIVE Net system and advertised at recreation centers. The survey asks customers to rate their experience with Recreation Center staff, environment, amenities and equipment, programs, and more. An excerpt on staff questions is provided in Figure 87.

Figure 87. Excerpt from Denver Parks and Recreation Customer Experience Survey

Source: Denver Parks and Recreation, 2017.

Chicago Park District

Customer service is included in the stated mission of the Chicago Park District, stated as: "Create a customer-focused and responsive park system that prioritizes the needs of children and families."

Staff training in customer service is accomplished in part through Chicago Park District's Workforce Development Department (formed in 2013), which provides both in-person and online training for staff. The Department provided 8,122 hours of training for staff in 2016. The Department is budgeted for a little over $900K and approximately 10 FTE in 2017.

Registration System

The Chicago Park District uses ACTIVE Net for program registration. See an example of the user interface in Figure 88. The system provides several methods for contacting customers about their scheduled programs, including the option to sign up for text message or email alerts.

Figure 88. Excerpt from Chicago Park District, Account Creation Webpage

Source: Chicago Park District, 2017.

The Chicago Park District is collecting customer feedback on its registration system through an online survey. The four-question survey, live as of October 2017, asked how well the website registration system meets customer needs, and how easy it is for customers to find what they are looking for.

Portland Parks and Recreation

Portland Parks and Recreation undertakes several types of surveys to understand customer satisfaction, along with recreation needs. Customer surveys include:

- **Random sample participant surveys.** Every year, Portland Parks and Recreation surveys a random sample of people who have participated in a recreation program. They typically contact around 1,000 people, through a mailing to a sample of registered users from the past year, and generally get a response rate of 8% to 10%. They use the surveys to identify year-to-year changes in satisfaction levels, which can then be addressed. The survey includes optional demographic questions, including education, race/ethnicity, and household income. See excerpt from the draft 2017 survey in Figure 89.

- **Site surveys.** Portland Parks and Recreation also has surveys at individual recreation centers, at the discretion of the local supervisor. This can include handing out paper surveys at the end of a class, and comment cards.

Figure 89. Excerpt from Draft Portland Parks and Recreation 2017 Customer Satisfaction Survey

Source: Portland Parks and Recreation, 2017.

Other Park and Recreation Agencies

Other examples of customer service practices at park and recreation agencies include:

The **Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority** has "Customer Service Champions" in each operation who meet quarterly as the customer service committee. The role of the champions includes: enforcing training standards, conducting customer service meetings, maintaining and using a customer service toolkit, distributing a customer service newsletter, and more.

The city of **Plant City, Florida** has "Standards for Customer Service Best Practices," a citywide document provided to new staff at employee orientations. The standards include responding to all contacts by the end of the same business day, and being courteous, honest, professional, and respectful in all customer interactions.

SOCIAL SUPPORTS

Noteworthy examples from peer agencies about their role in providing social supports is provided below.

Denver Parks and Recreation

Denver partners with the City's Office of Children Affairs to provide healthy meals and snacks in Recreation Centers, with Center staff and instructors serving the meals.

Denver partners with other City agencies on the "Denver Day Works" pilot program that provides work experience for people experiencing homelessness. Denver employs people experiencing homelessness through the program and also provides memberships for people who are homeless and employed. Staff have noted that providing showers and other facilities for people experiencing homelessness can require education of other customers, about everyone's right to access a public facility and be treated equally.

Denver partners with outside organizations to provide additional services to customers, such as bringing in a visiting nurse to provide health services for those in need, or help with taxes, or utility savings programs.

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Minneapolis performs social services in several ways, including making referrals to other agencies, providing meal programs, and collecting donations of food and clothing.

Perhaps more unusual is the Minneapolis Recreation Center which leases space to a social service organization, East Side Neighborhood Service, to directly serve clients at that location. Staff expressed that the arrangement is working well, and that they would expand this type of arrangement if they had the space available.

Staff mentioned that recreation professionals provide activities and do not have formal traning in social services or child protection. However, many of these centers have access to people who need social services.

Portland Parks and Recreation

Portland staff connect individuals and families with resources, such as non-profits and other city agencies on issues such as finding housing, paying utility bills, and more. In addition, Community Centers have served as emergency shelters for the homeless and others during cold or heat events.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Chicago Park District

The Chicago Park District has a Security Department that provides security services throughout the park and recreation system, and coordinates security for events on Chicago Park District properties. The Department had a budget of $8.4M in 2017, with 82 FTE. In 2016 the Department created an active shooter policy and led an active shooter training for all Park District staff. The Department works closely with the Chicago Police Department and other city agencies to share information about events, concerns, or emergencies.

In 2016 the Chicago Park District developed a **Crisis Management Support Manual** in partnership with local schools and hospitals. The Chicago Park District Workforce Development Department offers several trainings related to safety, including "Keeping Children Safe," Crisis Prevention and Intervention, and more.

Denver Parks and Recreation

All Denver staff are required to participate in Active Shooter trainings, which are provided by the Safety Department, both online and in-person. Staff are also trained in first aid and CPR. Denver also coordinates closely with the city police department, including providing off-duty security at events like teen programs.

Portland Parks and Recreation

Portland managers and supervisors receive several types of training related to safety and security, including active shooter, verbal judo, FEMA, and overall crisis management. Represented staff receive some of these trainings, and both supervisors and represented staff provide the relevant training or information to seasonal staff.

Portland does not provide security staff in Community Centers. Its Park Ranger program serves the system as a whole and Rangers respond to Community Center issues as time permits. Extra ranger support is also provided at Community Center teen nights.