

# **Performance Audit of the Leisure Services Department**

**ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY UNIFIED  
GOVERNMENT**

**DRAFT**

**matrix**   
consulting group

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## **1. INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This first chapter of this report introduces the analysis, outlining principal objectives, how the analysis was conducted and presenting an executive summary.

### **1. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS STUDY**

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted a comprehensive management and operations analysis of the Leisure Services Department's existing operations, service levels, asset management, and staffing levels. The analysis was fact-based and included all aspects of services provided by the Department. The scope of the operations review was comprehensive. It included the following issues:

- **Management Practices** – The management philosophy, effectiveness of the management team, management and supervisory practices;
- **Organization** – The organizational structure and reporting relationships;
- **Staffing** – The number and allocation of staff, assigned job duties, and workforce planning;
- **Operations and Program Management** - Operational planning, resource availability and capabilities, work scheduling, work reporting, quantity and quality of work produced, efficiency, and performance measures.

The objective of this assessment was to identify opportunities for improvement in the operational effectiveness and efficiency of the Department and practical opportunities for enhancing the quality of its product and services for the future.

## **2. PROJECT METHODOLOGIES**

The Matrix Consulting Group utilized a fact-driven data collection and analytical process in conducting the operations review of the Leisure Services Department. The methodologies are summarized below.

- The Matrix Consulting Group collected data for the operations review to ensure a clear understanding by the Leisure Services Department of the scope of the project, obtained the views and perspectives of Department management and staff, and obtained an initial understanding of the Leisure Services Department including goals, objectives, business processes, service level targets, performance indicators, and initial issues and opportunities for improvement.
- The Matrix Consulting Group conducted interviews of the Mayor, County Manager, the Department Director, divisional managers, certain Department staff, and selected County department heads.
- The project team collected data regarding service delivery by the Department including organization of services, the structure and functions of the Department, budgets, workload data, management systems, inventory of the infrastructure, etc.
- The project team compared the practices and programs of the Leisure Services Department to various industry practices in the leisure services industry.
- The project team conducted four public input sessions during which participants provided valuable information regarding strengths and improvement opportunities for programming, amenities and services provided by the Leisure Services Department. These are summarized in Appendix C of this report.

The following section provides examples of the strengths of the Leisure Services Department.

## **3. THE LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT EMPLOYS A NUMBER OF BEST PRACTICES.**

A management and operations analysis, by its nature, focuses on opportunities for improvement. However, there are a number of strengths in the Leisure Services Department. Examples of these strengths are portrayed below.

- An inventory has been developed for most of the assets maintained by the Department such as bridges, park amenities, paths, etc. This inventory has been entered into, and maintained in, a geographical information system (GIS).
- The Department has recently installed a new registration system, Rec One, that allows program participants to easily view programs, and to register and pay for these programs on-line.
- The Recreation Division provides an on-line survey for parents of children who attend camps, and receives a high rating, with over 97% reporting that they would recommend the camps to another family.
- The Department provides a full array of programming, and also has access to some unique facilities, such as the Morton Theatre and the Lyndon House Arts Center.
- The Sandy Creek Nature Center has developed a strong relationship with the Schools in bringing in hundreds of school children each year to observe the natural environment, and even offers customized programs on request.
- The Bear Hollow Zoo offers visitors opportunities to observe indigenous wildlife in their natural habitats, with self-guided tours available, as well as staff who provide educational talks.
- The Department offers summer camps that attract hundreds of participants each year.

These strengths provide a sound basis for further enhancement of operations and represent only selected best practices that are already in place.

#### **4. KEY THEMES IDENTIFIED IN THE REPORT.**

Before summarizing the major recommendations, it is important to put the recommendations into context. The evaluation of the Leisure Services Department resulted in some key themes emerging that are critical to understanding the resulting recommendations:

- Although the Leisure Services Department has made admirable strides in recording the work it performs in maintaining parks, trails and open spaces, it has not implemented a true asset management approach to maintaining these assets.

- The Department has not established comprehensive performance measures in its divisions, or as an organization. The reporting of achievement of specific performance goals is a critical component of strategic planning, and the department should begin to establish these measures.
- The Department does not have an adopted cost recovery policy, and is only recovering between 15% and 16% of its programmatic costs.
- The Department has not focused attention on its “branding.” Branding should be focused on relating the values of the organization, its people and programs, and should be viewed as a strategic element rather than a tactical one.
- The Department has not focused on soliciting sponsorships, for example for bridges, scholarships for children and families, etc. This should be a focus of the Director to minimize the impact on fees and on the general fund appropriation to the Department.
- With over 40 miles of trails and 77 bridges, and two full time and two part time employees, the Trails and Open Space section of the Division is unable to inspect its areas of responsibility more than monthly.
- Maintenance of the parks is fragmented among multiple agencies, which can lead to uncoordinated maintenance, and a lack of accountability for the overall appearance of parks.
- The Department’s scholarship program has numerous deficiencies. It is contributing to the relatively low cost recovery ratio, and it is also resulting in frequent instances in which scholarship recipients are failing to attend programs for which they are registered, keeping others from attending in their place.

The following section outlines the key recommendations for the Leisure Services Department.

## **5. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

The table on the following pages summarizes the improvement opportunities identified and recommended by the Matrix Consulting Group in the performance audit of the Leisure Services Department. The chapters within this report should be read, however, for a detailed discussion and analysis of each recommendation. Additional minor adjustments in operations, or minor improvement opportunities, are also contained

in the detailed best practices assessment that is attached as Appendix B. For each recommendation listed below, a priority and recommended timeframe for initiating the effort has been provided.

#### **Summary of Recommendations**

<b>Rec. No.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Chapter 2 – Organization</b>			
1	The Department should create a new Division within the Department with the responsibility for the maintenance of passive parks and open spaces, as well as instructional services provided at the Sandy Creek Nature Center. This will require the creation of a new position of Division Administrator, at a total cost of approximately \$72,881.	Medium	FY 17-18
2	The Department should transfer the Internal Services Division's Operations Administrator along with the Sandy Creek Nature Center to a newly-formed unit in the County that consolidates all environmental protection and stewardship functions.	Medium	FY 17-18
3	The County should consolidate the maintenance of parks under the Parks Services Division in order to insure the greatest degree of accountability for their appearance, and to maximize the efficiency of the labor required to maintain them.	High	FY 17-18
4	The Department should merge the financial, budgetary and human resources functions with those of the Current Internal Services Division to form the Division of Administration reporting to the Department Director.	Low	Winter, 2017
<b>Chapter 3 – Administration and Internal Services</b>			
5	Create a "brand" for the Department of Leisure Services that generates interest, increases program participation and promotes the values of leisure services to the community.	Medium	Immediate and ongoing
6	The Department should develop a marketing plan that expands the use of the website and uses social media to promote the values of parks and recreation and promotes the programs and services offered by the Department of Leisure Services.	Medium	Spring 2018

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Rec. No.	Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe
7	The Department should establish a new Department of Leisure Services website, separate from, but linked to the County website, to create a more user-friendly, interactive, exciting website presence that engages the user, makes program registration and scholarship application processes user-friendly and motivates participation in department sponsored programs.	Medium	Winter 2017
8	The Department should develop a marketing style guide that establishes policies and guidelines for all employees in the use of the Department of Leisure Services “brand” campaign and provide agency-wide training for all personnel to ensure its appropriate use and implementation.	Low	Following development of marketing plan
9	The Department should request that the Mayor and Commission approve the concept presented in the 2015 Cost Recovery Study prepared by Green Play Consulting and engage the firm to further assist the department staff in the implementation of the Cost Recovery Policy and Model.	High	September 2017
10	The County should establish a comprehensive recruitment and selection process for the Leisure Services Director position to ensure an open and inclusive process and selection of the best qualified candidate for the position.	High	Immediate
11	The Department should convene a task force to consider the consistent application of policies related to the Scholarship Program. The project team further recommends that the County Commission establish annual maximum numbers of scholarships awarded, as well as the values of these scholarships.	High	FY 17-18
12	The Department should adopt measures to transition from a performance measures program to a true performance management system.	Medium	FY 18

**Chapter 4 – Parks Services**

13	The Department should analyze the appropriateness of the Public Utilities Department’s computerized maintenance management system for its own maintenance functions and asset management needs. Should this system prove to be a viable option, the Department should investigate the feasibility of utilizing that CMMS.	High	Immediate
14	Should the Public Utilities Department’s CMMS be judged to not meet the needs of the Leisure Services Department, it should purchase and install a computerized maintenance management system. The cost of the system will depend upon the functionality chosen, however in the project team’s experience, the cost is estimated to be in the range of \$80,000 to \$100,000.	High	Following assessment of Public Utilities CMMS appropriateness

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Rec. No.	Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe
15	The Department should begin to define work activities that are commonly performed. These activity definitions should be utilized consistently and should not vary from employee to employee regarding the type of work that is performed.	Medium	Immediate
16	The Parks Services Division should begin to define service levels for each of its major work activities. These should define the desired level of service to be accomplished, and should be reflective of available personnel and financial resources.	Medium	Immediate
17	The Division should develop and implement a formal plan and schedule for all major maintenance events for the year.	Medium	Immediate
18	The Parks Services Division Administrator should generate a monthly performance report on the accomplishment of projected work, and discuss the work accomplished with the Department Director.	Medium	Immediate
19	The Parks Services Division should hire a second Maintenance Worker II position in the Trails and Open Space section. The total cost of this position is estimated to be \$45,444, including salary at the minimum of the salary range, plus fringe benefits of 40%.	High	Fall 2017
20	The Leisure Services Department should, in conjunction with the County's Purchasing Division, develop and issue a Request for Proposals for custodial service provision in its remaining facilities.	Medium	Spring 2018
21	The Parks Services Division should ensure conformance to park, trails and open space rules and regulations by hiring Park Rangers to patrol these areas. These Park Rangers can be full or part time, however the Division should ensure coverage for 84 hours per week. If these employees are part time, non-benefitted, the hourly cost is estimated to be \$9.16, and the total annual cost would be \$40,010 at this hourly rate.	Low	Fall 2017
22	The Leisure Services Department should more actively pursue private sponsorships for its parks, special events and capital projects.	High	Immediate and ongoing

**Chapter 5 – Recreation Division**

23	The Division should develop a Recreational Five-year Comprehensive Recreation Strategic Plan that supports the goals and objectives of the Department of Leisure Services	Medium	Winter 2017
24	The Recreation Division should conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment process to identify underserved groups and future recreation program interests and needs in the community.	Medium	Winter 2017

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Rec. No.	Recommendation	Priority	Timeframe
25	The Division should establish an in-house task force process to explore and develop program alternatives and strategies to increase participation from current program participants and underserved groups in the community.	Low	Spring 2018
26	The Division should establish a process to create greater opportunities for participant and resident input in recreation programs to increase the overall effectiveness of and support for departmental programs and services.	Low	Spring 2018
<b>Chapter 6 – Arts and Nature Division</b>			
27	The Program Leader should begin to record the attendance at the Lyndon House Arts Center during each hour of the day in order to better align hours of operation with patron desires.	Low	Ongoing
28	The Lyndon House Arts Center should assess patrons' desires for access to the Center's studios during extended daytime hours. Should it determine that these extended hours are feasible and desired, the Center should hire a part time Program Leader to monitor and supervise activities in these studios an estimated annual cost of approximately \$17,130.	Low	Fall 2017

## **2. ORGANIZATION**

This chapter of the report analyzes the current organizational structure of the Leisure Services Department and makes recommended enhancements.

### **1. THE LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS UNDERGONE SEVERAL CHANGES IN ITS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE IN RECENT YEARS.**

The Leisure Services Department has undergone several organizational changes over the past several years. In 2011, the Department was comprised of six separate divisions, including the following:

- Athletics
- Arts
- Internal Services
- Natural Resources
- Park Services
- Recreation.

In 2013, the Department's structure was altered to consolidate Athletics and Recreation, and Arts and Natural Resources with a resulting four divisions:

- Arts and Nature
- Recreation
- Internal Services
- Park Services

Recently, the Financial function was removed from the Internal Services Division, and placed as a direct report to the Department Director. Additionally, the Department

turned over the responsibility for facilities maintenance of its parks facilities to the County's General Services Department.

It is within this context that the project team analyzes the current organizational structure of the Department in the following sections.

**2. THE LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT SHOULD ALTER ITS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO STREAMLINE OPERATIONS AND TO CAPITALIZE ON DEPARTMENTAL STRENGTHS.**

Designing the optimal organization is a highly subjective and imprecise endeavor. Given the same set of functions, staffing levels and expertise, different individuals may suggest multiple designs for the same organization. With this caveat, however, the principles on which sound organizational design are based are relatively standard and well-established, and include the following:

- **A Department should be organized on a form-folows-function basis with a clear, distinct and comprehensive sense of purpose or mission for each division.** Functions are grouped consistent with their periodic interaction, management systems, delivery of services, and are linked in some way, resulting in functional cohesion.
- **The organizational structure should foster accountability.** The organizational structure fosters accountability among management, supervisory staff and staff.
- **The plan of organization should enhance communication and coordination.** The number of handoffs and exchanges required among different divisions providing service to the public is minimized. The structure enhances shared knowledge and understanding among divisions with similar mission goals and objectives. The channels of communication are clear and consistent.
- **Staff resources should be utilized efficiently.** The plan of organization minimizes administrative overhead. Workload can be distributed and shared to maximize the productivity of staff through peaks and valleys and offer cross-utilization capabilities. Processes can be fully standardized to enhance the efficiency and customer responsiveness of services.
- **The potential of human capital should be maximized.** The plan of organization enhances career development opportunities, training, recruitment and retention.

- **The spans of control of managers are appropriate.** Appropriate spans of control are functions of several factors, including the skills of staff, the autonomy of staff over the conduct of work assignments, geographical dispersion of staff, and the degree to which managers are engaged in the provision of direct work assignments
- **The number of layers of management should not result in a tall, narrow configuration for the organization.** Organizations with many layers of supervision are associated with vertical decision-making that is becoming less common due to the need to rapidly effectuate change. Flatter organizations facilitate decentralized decision-making, as more authority for making decisions is given to the front line employees.

As was noted above, the Leisure Services Department has been reorganized a number of times in recent years. And although these efforts at reorganization were intended to address specific issues and concerns, taken as a whole, they did not incorporate sound organizational principles as outlined above.

The following sub-sections address the current Departmental organizational structure and make specific recommendations for streamlining the organization by adhering, to a greater degree, to sound organizational principles.

**(1) The Department Should Create a New Division with the Responsibility for Open Parks Spaces.**

In the latest reorganization of the Leisure Services Department, the Sandy Creek Nature Center was placed organizationally with the Lyndon House Arts Center, the East Athens Dance Center and the Morton Theatre to create a new Arts and Nature Division. In interviews, the project team discerned that the rationale for this combination was that it capitalized on the instructional functions of each of the components of the newly-formed division. And although there is merit to this rationale, the nature of the instruction at the Sandy Creek Nature Center is dissimilar in most respects to that of the arts. Further, the expertise required to manage the arts and the Nature Center are dissimilar as well, and

it is rare to find a manager with the depth of knowledge and experience in the arts who also possesses sufficient knowledge and expertise in the functions of the Sandy Creek Nature Center, which include such environmentally-oriented services as outdoor exploration, educational exhibits including reptiles, amphibians, marine and freshwater aquariums, and other features. The converse would be true as well, with the result that it is likely that any manager over this grouping of functions, as they are currently composed, would advocate for either the arts or the nature function to the detriment of the other. From this aspect, then, the current grouping of functions in the Arts and Nature Division fails to maximize human capital. Further, as the arts functions of the Division have little, if any, commonality of function with each other, there is similarly little need to communicate and share experiences.

For the reasons stated above, the project team recommends that the Leisure Services Department create a new division with the responsibility for open parks space, which would include not only the Sandy Creek Nature Center, but other passive parks such as the Greenway, Ben Burton Park, Dudley Park, and Sandy Creek Park.

This recommendation will result in either the hiring of a new Division Administrator, or the elevation of a current staff member into the position. The minimum salary for this position is \$52,058. Adding 40% for fringe benefits, the total cost of the position is \$72,881.

***Recommendation 1: The Department should create a new Division within the Department with the responsibility for the maintenance of passive parks and open spaces, as well as instructional services provided at the Sandy Creek Nature Center. This will require the creation of a new position of Division Administrator, with a total cost of approximately \$72,881.***

**(2) The Internal Services Division's Operations Administrator Should Be Transferred with the Nature Center to the Newly-Created Environmental Services Department.**

Within the Internal Services Division of the Department is the position of Operations Administrator. This position's duties have changed frequently over a period of years, with the incumbent current responsible for a variety of responsibilities, including the following:

- Manages approximately 2,000 acres of land, including parks, fields, trails and greenspace
- Uses SPLOST funds to purchase land for greenspace as parcels come available
- As part of the Managed Forests Project, conducts controlled burns
- Researches the narrative in historic gardens at Lyndon House for purpose of developing interpretation panels
- Develops consistent approach to signage in parks
- Writes condition assessments on the four dams in the County, and approaches in maintaining them
- Advises on the uses of SPLOST funds

As can be seen, many of the functions that the Operations Administrator performs are related to environmental protection and stewardship, which are functions that the project team has recommended to be consolidated in a single County department whose mission and objectives are similarly-aligned. Likewise, the project team recommends that the Operations Administrator be transferred with the Sandy Creek Nature Center to this newly-created unit of the County government. As is discussed below, the Internal Services Division lacks unity of mission, with disparate functions being performed by the personnel within the Division. The Operations Administrator's duties and responsibilities

have little similarity to any others in the Internal Division, but would align far more closely with those of environmental protection and stewardship.

***Recommendation 2: Transfer the Internal Services Division's Operations Administrator along with the Sandy Creek Nature Center to a newly-formed unit in the County that consolidates all environmental protection, hiking, indigenous species, and stewardship functions.***

**(3) The County Should Consolidate the Maintenance of Its Parks under a Single Department in Order to Enhance Accountability.**

The County's Central Services Department is responsible for the landscaped areas in the parks, as well as the facilities with hard roofs. The Recreation Division of the Leisure Services Department is responsible for the lining, mowing and manicuring of athletic fields, while the Parks Services Division of the Leisure Services Department is responsible for scoreboards, bleachers, amenities, sidewalks, courts, aquatics facilities, outdoor amphitheater, etc.

The maintenance of the County's parks is highly fragmented, and makes the determination of which agency is accountable for their overall appearance extremely difficult. Further, this fragmentation fails to efficiently utilize the employees engaged in the performance of parks maintenance, as the performance of certain functions such as athletic field preparation, landscaping, mowing, bleacher maintenance, etc., require low or semi-skilled labor that could be provided by the same employees. Currently, however, there are three agencies involved in the performance of these activities, sometimes simultaneously.

The project team recommends that the maintenance of Leisure Services Department landscaped areas in the parks, the mowing and manicuring of fields, as well as the maintenance of the parks amenities be consolidated under the Parks Services

Division in order both to enhance accountability for maintenance, but to enhance the efficiency of the use of the labor involved in performing this maintenance. This will require the transfer of the Central Services Department employees engaged in maintaining the parks' landscaped areas to the Leisure Services Department. Further, it will require the transfer of Recreation Division personnel engaged in field preparation to the Parks Services Division, which include a Parks Maintenance Supervisor and the portion of 16 part time Park Assistants who line and chalk athletic fields for games and practices.

***Recommendation 3: The County should consolidate the maintenance of parks under the Parks Services Division in order to insure the greatest degree of accountability for their appearance, and to maximize the efficiency of the labor required to maintain them.***

**(4) The Internal Services Division Should Be Merged with Administration**

The Internal Services Division is comprised of a Division Administrator position and six employees, including an Administrative Secretary, an Operations Administrator, a Program Specialist for Public Information, a Community Outreach Coordinator, a Program Specialist over the Volunteer program, and a Program Specialist over Special Events. Although the Division is nominally referred to as having an Internal Service orientation, many of its functions are, in fact, directed outside the organization. For example, the Division's Public Information Officer disseminates information about the Leisure Service Department to external constituents. Further, the Program Specialist over Special Events coordinates events that are coordinated, not with and for internal departmental personnel, but with external groups.

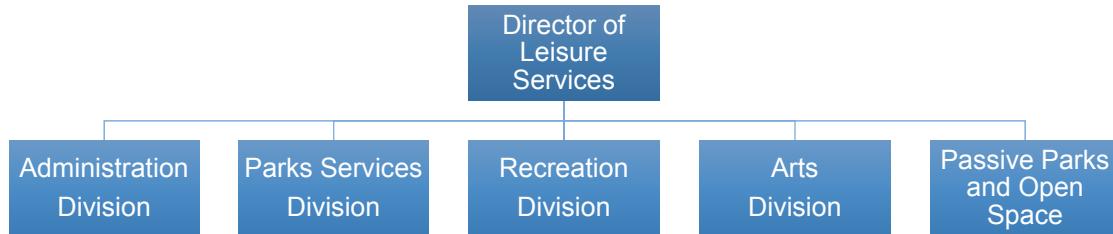
In addition, the Internal Services Division's services are, in many respects, dissimilar from each other. Specifically, the Division provides public information, volunteer coordination, special events coordination, greenway acquisition, management

of forest projects, and the CAPRA certification initiative. Of these, only the CAPRA certification initiative can be clearly classified as an internal service function.

As described in the previous section, one of the basic elements in the development of a sound organizational structure is that the functions provided in the unit have a clear, distinct and comprehensive sense of purpose or mission. This is clearly not the case in the functions provided by Internal Services. Further, the grouping of the functions in the Division does not enhance communication and coordination, as there is little commonality of function among the personnel involved in service provision. Finally, the organizational structure does not utilize staff resources efficiently. As the recently-issued report by the Office of Operational Analysis details in some length, the large number of volunteers serving in the various units of the Leisure Services Department has resulted in not all volunteers undergoing background checks. Therefore, although the Department is attempting to manage this program centrally, through the Internal Services Division, it is failing to manage the program efficiently with a single employee.

Currently, the Department's financial, budgetary and human resources functions are performed by three staff members reporting directly to the Department Director. In fact, these functions are much more closely related to internal services function than are many in the Internal Services Division itself. The project team recommends that the Department consolidate the functions performed in the Internal Services Division with the financial, budgetary and human resources functions currently reporting to the Leisure Services Department Director to form a Division of Administration. Elsewhere in this report, the project team also makes recommendations regarding the composition of this

Division, however the overall structure of the reconstituted Department is portrayed in the following chart.



***Recommendation 4: The Department should merge the financial, budgetary and human resources functions with those of the Current Internal Services Division to form the Division of Administration reporting to the Department Director.***

### **3. ADMINISTRATION AND INTERNAL SERVICES**

The following issue discussion and recommendations apply to the overall Leisure Services Department operation presented here for inclusion in the Administration Chapter.

**1. CREATING A “BRAND” FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES ALONG WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AGENCY-WIDE MARKETING PLAN TO MAXIMIZE THE BRANDING IMPACT WILL ATTRACT MORE COUNTY RESIDENTS TO ACC’S PARKS, ARTS, NATURE AND RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

The Department of Leisure Services has undertaken a variety of efforts to market and promote the current parks, arts, nature and recreation services to ACC residents including the development of print materials, press releases, the website and increased use of social media. The Department’s Public Information Officer (PIO) provides the basic public information direction and support functions including the administration of the Department’s web pages on the County government website. The following are examples of the current marketing and promotional activities utilized to promote Department programs and services.

- The PIO maintains the Department’s web pages on the County website with information about recreation-sponsored programs, parks and facilities, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and recreation and facility-related policies. Individual program sections of the website are produced, updated and maintained by individual program personnel.
- The PIO produces a variety of print materials including seasonal program guides providing details of recreation, arts and nature programs and services, guides to park facilities, open space and natural areas and amenities which are distributed online and at selected locations throughout the community.
- The PIO also maintains a web calendar of monthly events being offered by the Department of Leisure Services and publishes an eNewsletter featuring the Department-sponsored programs and services available to residents.

- The Department maintains a Facebook page which features information about upcoming activities, events and programs and recaps events and activities when completed.
- Individual programs and selected park sites also maintain separate Facebook pages designed and maintained by division or program personnel to feature events, programs and announcements specific to the program or facility.

Programs can only be successful if residents know about the offerings. Failure to adequately publicize program opportunities and increase awareness of the values of participation will impact the participation level of programs.

There are a number of opportunities for the Department to expand and enhance its current marketing and promotional activities in order for residents to become familiar with and better informed about department sponsored programs, parks and amenities, trails, community centers, arts and cultural programs and unique facilities such as the Nature Center and Zoo, and be motivated to participate. Developing and implementing a campaign to “brand” the Department of Leisure Services as an important community asset that focuses on health and wellness, safety and offers extensive social benefits will increase the visibility and effectiveness of the Leisure Services Department programs and park facilities.

As an example of a successful branding campaign, the California Parks and Recreation Society (CPRS) established a branding/marketing effort that focuses on the slogan “Parks Make Life Better” to promote the benefits of recreation and parks. Municipal parks and recreation agencies throughout California have instituted the campaign and have seen positive results, increased agency awareness, greater program participation, an improved understanding of value of leisure services programs and increased community support for agencies. (see details at [www.cprs.org](http://www.cprs.org) )

The California Parks and Recreation Society campaign to assist agencies in positioning themselves as an essential community service is an excellent model for a successful department-wide public information and marketing effort. The following are suggested actions that the Department of Leisure Services can implement to market and promote its programs and services to the community utilizing a brand such as “Parks Make Life Better”:

- Create a “brand” slogan (byline) for the Department after consultation with department staff, community organizations and related community focus groups that focuses on the Department’s mission. As an example of a “brand” for the Department of Leisure Services that is part of the Department mission statement and would define the Department to the community might be “learn, create, play.”
- Develop opportunities for resident participation in describing what leisure services means to them to gain an understanding of what is important to the community and to assist in the development of the agency slogan byline.
- Develop a new Department of Leisure Services logo that complements the “brand” and generates excitement about visiting parks and participating in Department sponsored programs.
- Using the newly developed “brand” and logo, incorporate a variety of tools to promote the values of leisure services utilizing a coordinated marketing campaign that includes advertising, promotional materials, signs, banners, media presentations, website upgrading, Facebook and Twitter campaigns, electronic newsletters, print materials, and a variety of other marketing strategies.
- Establish a new Department of Leisure Services website, separate from, but linked to the County website, to create a more user-friendly, interactive, exciting website presence that engages the user, makes program registration and scholarship application processes user-friendly and motivates participation in Department sponsored programs. The new site should also be linked to all individual Facebook and individual program websites.
- Expand the Department of Leisure Services social media presence on the website, in electronic newsletters, and on the agency’s Facebook and Twitter pages using these vehicles to promote recreation activities with regular photos of events, activities and program promotional information to generate interest in the parks and recreation programs and services being offered.

- Establish a signage program that incorporates the new “brand” added to existing park signs and included on future park sites and facilities.
- Establish guidelines and train all appropriate Department staff to ensure the consistent implementation of the branding/marketing program, provides consistent signage, use of logos, color schemes, and verbiage in all Department communications to the community.

The development of a Department of Leisure Services “brand” and an expanded marketing effort will increase awareness, participation and revenue generation in the programs and services being offered. The development of a Department “brand” should focus on the health and wellness, safety, family and social benefits of parks, open space, arts, nature and recreation participation and establish the Department as the major leisure resource serving children, youth, adults and families in Athens-Clarke County.

Incorporating these marketing strategies and efforts along with the expanded use of the existing website and social media will result in greater awareness of recreation and parks programs and facilities, increase participation, develop community support for recreation and parks services and increase generated revenues.

***Recommendation 5: Create a “brand” for the Department of Leisure Services that generates interest, increases program participation and promotes the values of leisure services to the community.***

***Recommendation 6: Develop a marketing plan that expands the use of the website and uses social media to promote the values of parks and recreation and promotes the programs and services offered by the Department of Leisure Services.***

***Recommendation 7: Establish a new Department of Leisure Services website, separate from, but linked to the County website, to create a more user-friendly, interactive, exciting website presence that engages the user, makes program registration and scholarship application processes user-friendly and motivates participation in department sponsored programs.***

***Recommendation 8: Develop a marketing style guide that establishes policies and guidelines for all employees in the use of the Department of Leisure Services “brand” campaign and provide agency-wide training for all personnel to ensure its appropriate use and implementation.***

**2. A WRITTEN COST RECOVERY POLICY AND MODEL WOULD ASSIST THE RECREATION DIVISION IN ESTABLISHING CONSISTENT PROGRAM FEES AND AN APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF PROGRAM COST RECOVERY.**

A “best practice” currently being implemented and administered by public parks and recreation agencies throughout the country is the development and implementation of a Cost Recovery Plan and Policy to be used as a financial guide in developing and evaluating the cost effectiveness of recreation programs. The purpose of a cost recovery policy is to determine the costs of providing programs and to set a level of fees and charges for these programs that is acceptable to the community. In implementing the policy both the direct costs (those directly attributable to the program implementation) and the indirect costs (administrative overhead) are considered in the calculations of program fees.

A cost recovery plan and policy will guide the Department in ensuring the consistent application of fees and charges for programs and services offered in individual program units in the Division and the recovery of comparable costs based on the predetermined cost recovery percentages applied to each program or program unit. An important component of the cost recovery policy is the determination of the degree to which selected program costs should be covered by those user groups benefiting from the experience balanced with the percentage of cost recovery assigned to programs which provide core services to the broader community and are maintained at minimal or no cost recovery percentage. This decision must be based on further discussion and deliberation by the Commissioners in order to provide appropriate direction to the Recreation Division.

Developing a formal Cost Recovery Plan and Policy is a viable business practice that ensures the development of an appropriate fee structure and recovery at identified percentage levels of the cost for programs, assists in evaluating the cost effectiveness of individual programs and services, allows for consistent program budgeting and still provides opportunities for participants who may not have the ability to pay to be able to participate through the Department of Leisure Studies scholarship program.

At the current time the Recreation Division has a Revenue and Pricing Policy which was adopted in 2006. The policy was intended “to establish a standardized approach in assessing fees for residents and nonresidents for the use of ACC Leisure Services Department facilities and programs.” The policy provides guidelines to determine fees and cost recovery percentages while ensuring that “low income portions of the population will not be denied access.”

In 2015 the firm of Green Play Consulting prepared and presented a study proposing a cost recovery policy and model for use in the development and administration of consistent program fees and charges for programs offered by the Department of Leisure Services. The study updates the 2006 policy but to date, no action has been taken to approve the study and implement the cost recovery policy and model. The Leisure Services Department staff supports the study and are prepared to implement the proposed cost recovery program if it is approved by the Mayor and Commission.

As a first step in the implementation of a cost recovery program the project team recommends that the Mayor and Commission approve the concept presented in the 2015 Green Play Consulting study and further, engage the firm to further assist the department staff in the implementation of the Cost Recovery Policy and Model. This initial step is

important in ensuring that the cost recovery plan and model is clearly established and implemented in a consistent manner through all divisions of the Leisure Services Department. The project team further recommends that the department provide the Mayor and Commission with regular status reports on the progress of the implementation of the adopted Cost Recovery Policy and Model program.

***Recommendation 9: Request the Mayor and Commission to approve the concept presented in the 2015 Cost Recovery Study prepared by Green Play Consulting and engage the firm to further assist the department staff in the implementation of the Cost Recovery Policy and Model.***

**3. CONDUCTING AN OPEN, COMPREHENSIVE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS FOR THE NEW DIRECTOR OF LEISURE SERVICES POSITION IS CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

The position of Leisure Services Director, under direction from the County Manager, provides leadership and guidance to the entire Leisure Services Department including the Internal Operations, Recreation, Arts and Nature, and Parks and Natural Resources Divisions. The position directs and motivates Department professional and administrative staff toward the implementation of the Department's goals and objectives, long range and strategic plans, and the provision of leisure services to the citizens of Athens-Clarke County. The Director is responsible for the development, management and administration of programs and facilities, implementation of the annual operating and capital budgets, and implementation of departmental policies and procedures. The Director represents the Department, and its programs and services, to the Mayor and Commission, other governmental departments and agencies, nonprofit organizations and in interactions with citizens in the community.

The Leisure Services Director position requires an individual with a breadth of professional experience in parks, recreation, arts and natural resources management

experience, an understanding of the complexities of public administration, and a leadership style that is inclusive, engaging, communicative and motivational in working with diverse sectors of the Athens-Clarke County organization, the Leisure Services Department and the entire community.

Feedback from residents participating in the public engagement process, conducted as a part of the project team's analysis of the Department of Leisure Services, suggested that the current culture of the Department has been averse to their input, whereas the Department should welcome community input and resident leadership. The preliminary results of the Department of Leisure Services Employee Survey, also conducted as a part of the Department analysis, (included as Appendix D of this report) highlighted employee survey responses indicating a need for improvement in communications throughout the departmental organization, recognition of and encouragement of staff input, and the need for improving the Department's leadership and organizational structure. These issues identify important qualities and skill sets required of an effective leadership and should be considered in the selection of the new Leisure Services Director.

The recruitment and selection process for the new Leisure Services Director is a critical step in ensuring that the individual selected for the position has not only the professional experience and expertise needed to provide leadership and direction to the internal operations of the Department, but also has the qualities needed to build strong, positive interactions and working relationships with the community and its citizens.

The project team recommends that a consultant with expertise in the recruitment of public sector executive level positions be engaged to assist in the recruitment and

selection process of the new Leisure Services Director to ensure an open and inclusive process. The costs for a typical recruitment process conducted by an outside public sector executive recruiting consultant would range between \$20,000 and \$40,000 depending on the inclusion of the following recruitment process elements:

- Involvement of the Mayor and Commission, County Manager's office, Department personnel, and key community stakeholders in defining the experience, skill sets, qualities, and characteristics of the successful candidate for the position. A position profile would be developed and incorporated in the recruitment process.
- Implementation of a regional or national recruitment effort to attract a pool of qualified candidates.
- Initial resume screening, candidate vetting and individual interviews would be conducted by the consultant to select a group of the most highly qualified candidates for review by the Mayor, Commission and County Manager's office to identify the final 6 to 8 candidates for the position.
- Implementation of an assessment center process in which the final candidates participate in a variety of exercises designed to provide the candidates an opportunity to present their qualifications, address current issues facing the organization and meet and interact with members of the Commission, county staff, department managers and staff and citizens to assess each candidate's qualifications, management philosophy and leadership style and "fit" in the organization. Candidates would be evaluated and rated by those participating in the process, and input from the assessment center process would be shared with making the final hiring decision.
- Further interviews and background investigations may be conducted by the consultant and those making the final decision on the selection of the successful candidate prior to the selection and announcement of the new Leisure Services Director.

Implementing a recruitment and selection process that is open and inclusive as described provides an opportunity for significant input in the selection process from elected officials, county administration, Department personnel and community stakeholders while retaining the final decision making authority with the County Manager or Mayor and Commission.

***Recommendation 10: Establish a comprehensive recruitment and selection process for the Leisure Services Director position to ensure an open and inclusive process and selection of the best qualified candidate for the position.***

**4. IMPROVING THE DEPARTMENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM WILL INCREASE ITS EFFECTIVENESS AND PROVIDE EQUITABLE AND CONSISTENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION.**

The Leisure Services Department established a scholarship program to ensure that all Athens-Clarke County residents have opportunities to participate in Department-sponsored programs for those who may otherwise be unable to participate. Applicants are currently asked to submit an application for scholarship assistance at least one week prior to program registration. Approval of the scholarship is based on the information contained in the application and applicants are guaranteed that their personal information will not be shared or discussed outside the Department. Scholarships offer qualified residents reduced or no fees and charges for registration in available Department sponsored programs based on the following guidelines:

- The youth program has a fee in excess of \$10 per person
- Program participant is under 18 years of age
- Requesting party is a resident of Athens-Clarke County
- The scholarship application form is completed, including income information, signed and verified by staff
- Scholarships are not awarded for entrance, admission or rental fees
- Scholarships are awarded based on the current annual Federal Poverty Level table
- There is a maximum of two scholarship cards given per household
- Scholarships are issued in incremental percentages of the registration fee ranging from 20 to 100% of the program fee
- Scholarship eligibility is valid for one year from the date of qualification

Applications are currently reviewed by the Division Administrative Secretary in either the Recreation Division or Arts and Nature Division to ensure that applicants meet the eligibility requirements. The percentage of program fees to be awarded is determined by comparing the applicant's income level and number of household members to the Scholarship Table or using the guidelines established by the form of income verification agency. Applicants are notified of approval or denial by email. The existing Scholarship Policy does not provide any process for appealing scholarship application decisions.

The following table presents an historical view of the annual subsidy for program scholarships in the Leisure Services Department. The scholarship subsidy actually results in a loss of revenue from the amount of program revenues presented in the annual budget.

<b>Leisure Service Department Annual Scholarship Subsidy</b>	
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Subsidy</b>
FY12	\$200,973
FY13	\$243,014
FY14	\$244,912
FY15	\$257,158
FY16*	\$270,016

\*Forecast amount

Interviews by the project team with key Department staff and their review of departmental reports, along with input obtained during the public engagement process conducted as a part of the Department analysis, identified several improvement opportunities related to the Scholarship Program. In addition, the results of the Department of Leisure Service Employee Survey ranked the Scholarship Program as the

sixth most important departmental improvement opportunity. The following are issues that impact the effectiveness of the scholarship program and policy:

- There is no limit on the amount of scholarship funds utilized by an individual
- There is no cap on the amount of scholarship funds utilized by a family
- There is no minimal registration fee required of scholarship recipients
- The staff survey suggested that 100% scholarships decrease the perceived value of the program and results in poor program attendance although the “no show policy” implemented in 2013 appears to have improved program attendance.
- Scholarship opportunities are not promoted consistently throughout the Department
- The Scholarship Program may not be administered consistently at the Community Center or program level
- The Scholarship Program results in a decrease in Departmental revenues that is not considered in setting program fees or the current cost recovery efforts

In an effort to improve the Scholarship Program the Leisure Services Department should establish a Department-wide task force including representatives from the Recreation, Arts and Nature, and Administration divisions who are directly involved in the implementation of the Scholarship Program to review and make recommendations that improve the overall administration of the Scholarship Program and Policy. Suggested improvement opportunities to improve the Scholarship Program and Policy that could be considered by the task force include:

- Establish an annual maximum dollar allocation on the value of individual scholarships
- Establish an annual maximum cap of the scholarship value per family
- Establish a minimum program registration fee requirement (e.g., \$10) for each program registration using a scholarship

- Evaluate the current Scholarship Table and tables used to establish scholarship levels to ensure they are up-to-date and equitable
- Establish guidelines for the consistent promotion and administration of the scholarship application process at the program level
- Review and improve the Department application approval process to ensure that it is administered consistently throughout the Department Divisions
- Establish a separate scholarship fund in the Department budget with an annual maximum allocation of funds for scholarships to accurately reflect the revenues lost by the Scholarship Program and to replace revenues that should be generated by Department sponsored programs

The Scholarship Program is not directly funded, but rather the number of scholarships is theoretically unlimited. In fact, as was shown in the table in this section, the value of these scholarships has increased each year since FY 2012. As the amount allocated to the Scholarship Program is treated as lost revenue to the Department, it has important policy implications for not only the Department, but for the County Commission. The project team recommends that the County Commission develop a policy that continues to support the implementation of the scholarship program while establishing a maximum cap on the amount of scholarship funds available annually and, also establishes a process for increased and consistent management and oversight of the scholarship program. It is also important that the Commission establish a separate fund for the administration of the scholarship program so that scholarship funds do not impact the projected program revenue estimates in the annual department budget thus, reflecting a more accurate picture of actual program revenues generated by the Department.

***Recommendation 11: The Department should convene a task force to consider the consistent application of policies related to the Scholarship Program. The project team further recommends that the County Commission establish a separate scholarship fund for the administration of the program with a maximum cap on the amount of scholarship funds available annually and a process for providing increased management and oversight to the scholarship program.***

**5. THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD DEVELOP AND REPORT PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR EACH OF ITS DIVISIONS**

The Leisure Services Department collects information sufficient to report certain workload, efficiency and effectiveness measures for use in the County's annual budget document. These include such metrics as amount of acres managed and maintained, number of volunteer hours received, number of pool patrons, number of scholarship enrollees, and certain others. These measures may be valuable in some contexts, however, as statements of participation numbers, acres maintained, etc., they fall short of providing the reader with information relating to how efficiently the Department utilizes its resources in providing services.

Efficiency measures include such measures as cost per park design plan completed, number of acres maintained per FTE, cost of custodial maintenance per square foot maintained, as well as others. Measures of effectiveness include the percentage of trail miles rated satisfactory or good, the percentage of program participants rating programs as "good" or "excellent", and others.

Although the divisions collect and report certain measures of performance, the project team noted certain potential refinements that could be implemented to enhance the performance measures program. These are included below:

- The Parks Services Division reports, not workloads, but rather infrastructure. It is useful to know, for example, how the number of acres maintained has grown from 2,132 in FY13 to 2,429 in FY17, however knowing this does not provide any meaningful information related to how well or efficiently the acreage was maintained.
- The performance measures related to cost are stated in current-year dollars. For example, the dollar value of scholarship subsidies in FY13 is not directly comparable to the value in FY17, and will be even less so in subsequent years. This invalidates comparisons of measures over extended periods of time.

- The performance measures do not provide targeted levels of service or accomplishment. Without proper context, the measures are less meaningful.

The information provided by the Department in the County budget document constitutes a set of performance and workload *measures*, but falls short of being a well-functioning performance *management* system. This is a critical distinction, as the intent of a performance management system is to allow managers to make actionable decisions regarding the performance of the various divisions of the Department based on continuous feedback on the attainment of critical objectives. Therefore, the quality of the selected measures is more important than the quantity.

One pitfall of performance management programs is in over-reporting workloads. A common complaint about these performance management programs is that the effort expended in accumulating the data required for the cyclical reporting constitutes too large of a percentage of available time and, further, there is little benefit to some of the data that are reported. Therefore, it is critical that managers focus on the most important elements of the work performed in order to allow them to quickly gauge the overall health of their organizations.

To accomplish this, many organizations have instituted a “dashboard” approach to reporting performance targets and measures. The table below provides an example of such a dashboard. (Figures, ratings and comments are provided as examples only, and do not represent actual performance of the divisions.)

**ATHENS –CLARKE COUNTY UNIFIED GOVERNMENT**  
**Final Report on the Leisure Services Department Performance Audit**

Division/Measure	Qtr 2 Target	Qtr 2 Performance	Rating	Comment
<b>Parks Services</b>				
Developed acres maintained per FTE	30	30	Good	
Number of square feet maintained per Custodial FTE	100	110	Good	
Percent of pool preventive maintenance events performed within 24 hours of schedule	97%	90%	Fair	Absences impacted the PM program, as well as certain other maintenance events in the parks
<b>Recreation</b>				
Percentage of program registrants attending programs	100%	75%	Poor	Program XXX had disproportionate effect, with only one of 12 registered participants actually attending
Percentage of athletic programs that were injury-free during the period	100%	100%	Good	
Percentage of program participants rating programs “good” or “excellent”	90%	75%	Fair	Two new program offerings experienced start-up problems.

Note that the Rating column in the table provides not only a textual grade (i.e., “Good”, “Fair”, “Poor”), but also a color code that allows the reader to quickly scan for areas of particular concern. In addition, the Comment column allows the Department to provide any explanations necessary in interpreting the data.

The project team recommends that the Leisure Services Department enhance the performance measures it utilizes by not only expanding the number of these measures, but by providing meaningful measures of efficiency and effectiveness. Certain measures that are now reported are simply reflections of workload or cannot be easily influenced by

changes in the productivity, or amount, of resources. Further, they do not provide the reader with any context within which to assess whether the actual performance meets standards of acceptable performance. The project team, therefore, recommends the following process for the establishment of a more effective performance management plan for the Leisure Services Department..

- The divisions of the Leisure Services Department should assess the usefulness of each of its workload, efficiency and effectiveness measures. Division Administrators may critically assess these measures and find that some do not provide any actionable options by which to influence change. Others may be deemed to require a greater effort to accumulate them than the value they provide and should be discarded.
- The divisions should establish “stretch” targets against which to measure success. Currently, the divisions within the Department do not report targeted performance, leaving the reader with no context within which to evaluate whether the actual performance reported by a particular division represents high levels of achievement or low. However, the divisions should not simply define targeted service levels as those that have been historically achieved, but rather they should be “stretch” levels of achievement that can be attained through higher levels of productivity with existing resources. Naturally, if resources are either added or removed, the targeted service levels should be amended accordingly. However, assuming static levels of resources over a particular reporting cycle, division administrators should establish challenging targets in defining success.
- The Department should adopt a dashboard reporting format that quickly shows readers areas of success, failure and potential areas needing attention. The project team has provided a suggested sample, above, that may be used as is or modified to suit the Department’s needs.

By implementing the above recommended improvements, the Leisure Services Department will provide a more meaningful set of performance measures that provide actionable information to managers that will consume less staff time to accumulate.

***Recommendation 12: The Leisure Services Department should adopt measures to transition from a performance measures program to a true performance management system.***

## **4. PARKS SERVICES DIVISION**

The Park Services Division provides maintenance, operational, and planning support for the entire Leisure Services system with operational responsibility for 6 of the system's 14 parks and the Greenway.

The Division's Maintenance Office provides management and oversight for all maintenance, renovation, and construction within developed park areas. Key functions include daily pool maintenance; monthly playground inspections; special event equipment rental management; coordination with Facilities Management, Landscape Management, and SPLOST; and operation of the Department's work order system.

The Division's Trails and Open Spaces Office provides management and oversight for all maintenance, renovation, and construction for all undeveloped park areas. Key functions include ongoing site inspections, garbage and litter pickup routes, trail maintenance, bridge inspections, greenspace operations in conjunction with the County's Environmental Coordinator, and coordination with volunteer organizations such as SORBA, the Weed Warriors, and the Boulevard Woods Neighborhood Association. This Office also provides backup operational support for the Department's Work Order System and acts as a programmer for the system's 40+ miles of trails.

The Division's Facility Preparation Office provides janitorial service for all 48 of the Department's buildings including more than 100 restrooms. Key functions include garbage pickup, cleaning, special event support, and the role as the Department's Recycling Coordinator.

The Division's Park Planning Office provides planning and design support including coordination of public input, master plan and construction document development; the support of data driven decision making by facilitating the development, use and interpretation of geospatial data used by department staff, citizen advisory committees, and other ACCUG Departments; graphic design; the development of park facility standards; and construction observation. Key

roles include providing support for the Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission including revisions to the Greenway Network Plan, taking a lead in the design and development of construction documents for the World of Wonder Park, providing design support for the Tallassee Forest Master Plan study and various in-house maintenance projects.

In addition to the above system-wide functions, Park Services also staffs, manages, and operates Sandy Creek Park, Ben Burton Park, Boulevard Woods, Dudley Park, North Oconee River Park, Reese Pope Park, and the Greenway system.

The Parks Services Division has the responsibility for operating, event planning, and programming at Sandy Creek Park which is the Department's largest park. Sandy Creek Park generates over \$140,000 yearly in admissions, shelter rentals, and special events. The Park serves over 100,000 patrons each year and offers the County its only outlet for disc golf, private dog parks, and the most extensive shelter rentals in the Department.

This chapter provides an analysis of improvement opportunities in the Parks Services Division.

**1. THE PARKS SERVICES DIVISION HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT STRIDES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM, HOWEVER THERE ARE ADDITIONAL STEPS THAT IT SHOULD TAKE.**

The Maintenance and the Trails and Open Space sections of the Parks Services Division have made commendable strides in the development of an asset management plan for the Division. This has included the development of an inventory of all assets, their locations, their attributes and, importantly, the targeted service levels for each. Further, the Maintenance Supervisor has created a work order system that records all labor, materials and equipment used in each of the Division's maintenance activities.

The Division has clearly taken many strides in the development of a true asset management system, the components of which are depicted in the following graphic.

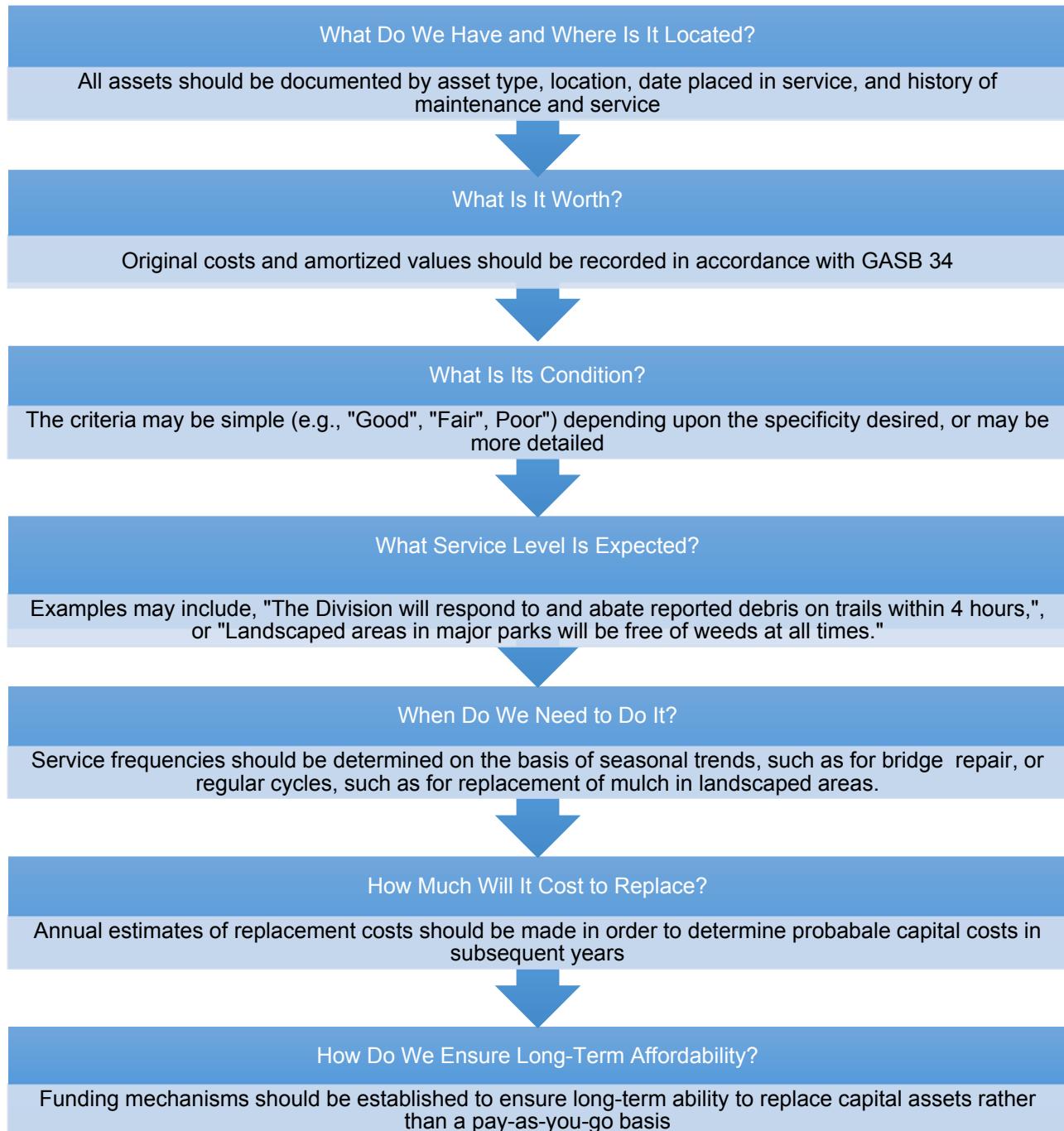


As can be seen in the graphic, there are multiple dimensions in the creation of a well-functioning asset management system, and the Parks Services Division, in conjunction with other maintenance service providers in the County, has addressed and implemented many of these, including the following:

- The creation of an asset inventory. Although there are still some specific assets that have not, as yet, been inventoried, the majority of these have, and the Division continues to update the inventory list as new assets are added, and older ones retired or replaced.
- The development of a computerized maintenance management system. The Division has made a commendable effort in utilizing an electronic spreadsheet program to serve as its work order management system. The system captures labor, materials and equipment data for each maintenance activity performed by the staff.
- The provision of activity reporting. Although the Division should refine the provision of activity data (see later discussion in this report), it does provide an

annual report of work accomplished, as well as the labor and materials used, in an aggregate manner. Additionally, Division Administrators, the Department Director and even Facility Supervisors are encouraged to submit requests for data related to the maintenance work accomplished by the Parks Services Division.

Although the Department has taken significant initial steps, there are others that are necessary in the development of a comprehensive asset management plan. The framework for building from the development of an asset inventory and reporting system to a true asset management plan includes the following chronologically-ordered questions.



The overall goal of the asset inventory and management process is not to simply list all assets and their locations, but rather to minimize the life cycle cost associated with each asset. Therefore, each of the steps shown in the graphic above is a critical component of ensuring that all assets are recorded, that they are prioritized in terms of

condition assessment, that values are placed on current assets, that levels of service are established to prolong lives of assets, and that they are ranked in terms of risks associated with failing to replace the assets. Only then can the Parks Services Division definitively state that life cycle costs have been minimized to the County. As noted, the Parks Services Division has made significant strides in the development of a viable asset management system. There are, however, some elements of the system that should be expanded. The following sub-sections analyze these areas and make recommendations for enhancements.

**(1) The Leisure Services Department Should Purchase and Install a Computerized Maintenance Management System to Collect and Report Work-Related Data and Information.**

The Leisure Services Department currently utilizes an electronic spreadsheet as its computerized maintenance management system (CMMS). And although it is functioning as well as a tool of this type can function, it is limited in its usefulness as an enterprise-wide management system, and clearly has limitations as a comprehensive asset management system.

There are many benefits of a CMMS, which include not just the obvious advantages associated with tracking and justifying the dates, employees, locations, and descriptions of work performed, but they also include the definition of appropriate service levels that are achievable with a given number of labor hours, and at a defined level of productivity. Currently, work assignments are issued to crews and individual staff members with no empirically-determined basis for instruction as to the expected duration of each. This has the effect of both allowing the employee or crew to determine the level of productivity required, and the potential expansion of time taken for the tasks into the

amount of time available to perform them. The benefit of using the CMMS to accumulate standard times for specific tasks is that it leads to greater productivity of available resources, and increased productivity ensures that the same work levels may be accomplished at less cost. Alternatively, more work may be accomplished for the same cost, with work quality remaining constant.

The Leisure Services Department should utilize a CMMS to enable the identification of the services provided (e.g., park bench repair, field light replacement, etc), the levels of service (e.g., each bench should be inspected quarterly, bench anchors replaced once per five years, etc.), the outputs of each of these services (e.g., the number of park benches inspected per quarter), and the cost of those services in terms of the total cost and the cost per unit of output.

This maintenance management system should be a standard one, and should incorporate the following basic elements:

- The ability to plan and schedule preventive maintenance. Preventive maintenance should constitute the majority of the Park Services Division's work when staffing levels are sufficient to do more than react to emergency repairs.
- The ability to record and manage the work performed in the Division and the Department. Work activities should be defined for the significant maintenance work that is performed. The project team's analysis of the data dictionaries for such assets as trails and amenities, field lights, park signs, etc., indicates that there are far too many of these to simply commit to memory as to the frequency of maintenance required, the last maintenance procedure on the asset, etc. Therefore, it is imperative to enter these into a CMMS that allows managers to plan and schedule required maintenance activities. As work is accomplished against these work activity codes, data such as the crew member, date, labor hours, equipment hours and materials used should be entered as well.
- The ability to run and analyze reports on the maintenance of an asset, and on the productivity of the staff in maintaining it. Analysis of trends in maintaining an asset may indicate either a need to replace the asset, or the need for greater skills and training of the staff who maintain it. Anecdotal reports of these trends may suffice when there are relatively few assets being maintained by a few number of staff

members, however they are insufficient in providing meaningful analysis of the number of assets under management by the Leisure Services Department, and the Parks Services Division in particular. A CMMS would allow the Department to isolate these trends and to make decisions regarding asset replacement as well as skills development.

- The ability to measure performance. Currently, the Department issues certain statistics related to the accomplishment of its workload. Redesigning work practices to ensure that all work, materials and equipment are associated with specific jobs and categories of work will allow the Department to analyze and report on the efficiency with which the work was accomplished.

To ensure that the analysis of data is meaningful, it is necessary that all crew members in each division performing maintenance to report work in the same manner, and against the same sets of activity codes. It is unrealistic to expect that the crews will immediately begin to report work in the consistent and comprehensive manner that will ultimately be necessary to maximize the usefulness of the CMMS. The basic information that should be required on each work order should include the following:

- Crew Member Name (or Numeric identifier).
- Location of Work. Ideally, this would incorporate a geo-coded location, however in the absence of this, a park name, a street segment or intersection will suffice.
- Job Number. This should be a unique numeric assignment associated with a definable activity. Should the work activity span multiple days, the same numeric identifier should be used, however different dates of activity should be noted, as in the next category.
- Date of Work.
- Equipment Used. This should reflect the number of hours a specific piece of equipment was used. It should reflect the total time at the work site, and not simply the number of engine hours or mileage accumulated.
- Materials Used. This should reflect the quantities and their costs.
- Contracted Costs. Bills from contractors should be reflected in the work order and should reflect the dates of accomplishment, hours, materials and equipment billed, and total labor hours.

- Activity Code. As will be described in the following section, the Department should develop activity codes that describe the work accomplished. For example, the alpha numeric code, “B-001” may describe bridge repair, whereas “T-001” may describe trail mowing.

The cost of a CMMS will depend a great deal upon the functionality desired. The County’s Public Utilities Department has installed a work order management system, CityWorks, that the Department should analyze for applicability and appropriateness for the maintenance functions it performs. Although the project team has no firm estimates from CityWorks, additional licenses for existing software is normally less than \$10,000. In addition to standardizing data capture across the County, utilizing the same CMMS already in existence elsewhere in the County has other advantages, including:

- Potentially minimizing cost. Since there would be no initial installation of a new software system, the County would likely only pay for an expanded number of users of the existing system.
- Capitalizing on the experience of the Public Utilities Department. The Public Utilities Department has undoubtedly dealt with many of the idiosyncrasies of the system and can share these with the Leisure Services Department, thus reducing the learning period.
- Minimizing the number of systems supported by the County’s Information Technology Department. The fewer systems that IT must support, the greater the time it has to develop expertise in any one of them.

Should the Leisure Services Department find that the Public Utilities Department’s CMMS does not meet its needs, it should develop specifications for a CMMS and work with the County’s Purchasing Agent to issue a request for proposals. In the project team’s experience, the cost of such a system should be in the range of \$80,000 to \$100,000 for an operation the size of Athens-Clarke County.

There are several steps that need to be accomplished before the automated maintenance management system can be effectively utilized, and these are described in the following sub-sections.

***Recommendation 13: The Department should analyze the appropriateness of the Public Utilities Department's computerized maintenance management system for its own maintenance functions and asset management needs. Should this system prove to be a viable option, the Department should investigate the feasibility of utilizing that CMMS.***

***Recommendation 14: Should the Public Utilities Department's CMMS be judged to not meet the needs of the Leisure Services Department, it should purchase and install a computerized maintenance management system. The cost of the system will depend upon the functionality chosen, however in the project team's experience, the cost is estimated to be in the range of \$80,000 to \$100,000.***

**(2) The Leisure Services Department Should Develop an Inventory of Major Work Activities It Performs in Maintaining Assets.**

As noted previously, the Parks Services Division, in concert with other County maintenance providers, is in the process of developing a comprehensive asset listing and data dictionary. This will identify the location and specific attributes of each asset for which it has maintenance responsibility. However, in addition to the identification and location of assets, the Division should also define the major work activities that are required to maintain them at a pre-defined level of service. Examples may include, “Irrigation of landscaped areas at Bishop Park”, “repair of basketball backboard”, etc.

The Division Administrator, Maintenance Supervisor, Trails and Open Space Coordinator should define the work activities performed by their crews, including those that consume the majority of staff work hours and all forms of leave. In other words, all staff hours for each employee’s year of work should be included within the system. The work activities need to be carefully defined to assure that the same terminology is used for the work performed by staff, so that the same activity is recorded the same way, and

in the same category, each time it is performed. Each of these work activities should define the unit of measure in order to enable the Department to derive standard times and costs for specific activities.

The objectives in this particular step are to allow for an objective evaluation of productivity of staff, and to allow for job-costing on a standardized basis.

***Recommendation 15: The Department should begin to define work activities that are commonly performed. These activity definitions should be utilized consistently and should not vary from employee to employee regarding the type of work that is performed. Further, the Department should ensure that the same field work activity is not defined in the inventory listing under different terms.***

**(3) The Department Should Define the Levels of Service for All Major Work Activities.**

The main objectives of the Parks Services Division are to maintain the County's parks assets, pools, trails and open space, and to respond to reported requests for service related to these assets. Without an agreed-upon set of service levels, however, the degree to which the Division achieves satisfactory results will be subjective, and will vary according to the individual making the assessment.

The Parks Services Division should, in conjunction with the Department Director, and even other maintenance service providers in other County departments, develop levels of service that are commensurate with the financial and personnel resources at its disposal. These service levels should be defined in terms of response times to requests, how the services will be delivered, and how long they will take. Examples may include the following:

- Responses to reports of hazards on trails will occur within four hours of request.
- Once requests for service have been accomplished, the service requestor shall be called or visited within 48 hours to ensure that services were accomplished in accordance with the request.

- Landscaped areas in parks shall be free of weeds at all times.
- All athletic equipment at fields will receive preventive maintenance in accordance with manufacturers' guidelines, or in accordance with more frequent service levels defined by the Department's policy and procedures manual.

Some judgment will be needed in applying the standards, but they should provide specific and useful guidelines in terms of what maintenance should be performed and what maintenance can be deferred. The result of this step in the overall process of developing an asset management plan is to define the levels of service that can be achieved with the levels of staff and financial resources available to the Division. Labor hours, materials and equipment should be estimated for each level of service. Should this exercise indicate that insufficient resources currently exist to provide these service levels, the service levels should either be reduced to be commensurate with available resources, or additional resources should be obtained to provide the agreed-upon service levels. In the absence of a formal definition of these service levels, each observer of the Division's services may have a different view as to the services to be provided.

***Recommendation 16: The Parks Services Division should begin to define service levels for each of its major work activities. These should define the desired level of service to be accomplished, and should be reflective of available personnel and financial resources.***

**(4) The Division Should Develop and Implement a Work Planning and Scheduling System.**

The Parks Services Division is currently insufficiently staffed to allow it to fully program and schedule all maintenance events in a proactive manner. Therefore, the usefulness of a planning and scheduling system is minimal under current conditions. However, planning and scheduling of preventive maintenance of parks assets are critical in the development and implementation of a fully-functioning asset management system.

The project team has, in a previous section of the report, made a recommendation to standardize these work activity identifiers, and reiterates that recommendation here. These work activity identifiers should be provided on each work order, and each work order should be generated by the CMMS on a regular schedule.

The Division should develop a formal work scheduling system to both plan the work, and to ensure that the planned amount of work is done. The Division Administrator, Maintenance Supervisor, and Trails and Open Space Coordinator should develop this plan based on a discussion of the work to be done, and with final approval by the Department Director. The Director should apply the standards for levels of service for these proactive tasks, as developed in an earlier task, assign resources and costs to them, and develop a schedule to accomplish the work.

After the annual work program is approved, the Maintenance Supervisor and Trails and Open Space Coordinator must have a simple method of authorizing and scheduling work to ensure that the work program is carried out as planned. To accomplish this, a monthly schedule should be prepared, using the annual work calendar as a guide. To the extent possible, the planned work should be carried out and every effort should be made to stay on schedule. However, if activities such as storm damage repairs and cleanup, unexpected pool repairs, etc., are greater than planned, the work program will have to be adjusted or additional funds will be requested to complete the planned work. The plan should incorporate the following elements:

- Work description (e.g., inspect playgrounds)
- Planned dates of accomplishment (e.g., June 6 through July 12)
- Materials needed

- Equipment needed
- Personnel needed (this should be stated in terms of the crew sizes and position categories)

Each of the planned events should be developed in this manner and matched with available resources, and with the dates of their need. As unplanned event arise, schedules should be adjusted, and resources rearranged to fit the needs. Some unscheduled events may necessitate the movement of scheduled events so that a projected lack of resources occurs, and this will likely happen from time to time. However, the benefit of having developed a longer-term schedule for planned events is that it gives the Division the maximum amount of time to prepare for alternative methods of delivering services, which may include contracting for service or hiring temporary labor.

***Recommendation 17: The Division should develop and implement a formal plan and schedule for all major maintenance events for the year.***

**(5) The Department Should Begin to Report the Activities It Accomplishes.**

This last step of the planning and work programming initiative involves the development of a work reporting system. A system should be developed to summarize the daily work reports on a monthly basis to produce performance measurement reports. The Parks Services Division does, in fact, produce annual reports that summarize labor and materials costs, and these are provided both for the Division Administrator and the Department Director. These reports provide useful information in the aggregate, however they do not serve the purpose of providing the reader with information regarding either the efficiency with which the work was accomplished, nor whether it was accomplished according to the planned amount of work.

The Parks Service Administrator should be required to provide a monthly status

report to the Department Director, which should be more than a simple statement of the work that was accomplished. It should reflect not only this, but also the efficiency and effectiveness of the resources utilized, and the degree to which the actual performance met the objectives stated in the monthly plan. For example, the performance measurement data generated by this report could include:

- A comparison of planned versus actual staff hours per work activity for the previous month and year-to-date for each work activity;
- A comparison of actual versus planned work output per month and year-to-date for each work activity;
- A unit cost analysis that compares the planned versus actual unit costs for each work activity per month and year-to-date; and
- A comparison of actual productivity (work output per staff hour) versus the expected productivity as stated in the performance standards.

The activity report should be viewed as a discussion document between the Division Administrator and the Director to discuss the accomplishment of work, any reasons for not accomplishing the planned amount of work, and the action steps necessary to revise to work plan to ensure that the work is accomplished.

***Recommendation 18: The Parks Services Division Administrator should generate a monthly performance report on the accomplishment of projected work, and discuss the work accomplished with the Department Director. As plans change, adjustments to these plans should be discussed in this monthly meeting.***

**2. THE PARKS SERVICES DIVISION REQUIRES AN ADDITIONAL MAINTENANCE WORKER POSITION TO ENABLE IT TO MAINTAIN TRAIL ASSETS.**

The Trails and Open Space section of the Parks Services Division currently is staffed with a Coordinator position, one Maintenance Worker II and two part time Park Assistants. Although the Coordinator position does perform certain maintenance duties, such as removing invasive plants from greenspaces, the position should primarily be

scheduling and performing quality assurance on the work of subordinates. The two Park Assistants primarily perform custodial work at 13 different park sites. Therefore, the vast majority of the maintenance of the 40 miles of trails is conducted by a single Maintenance Worker II.

The Parks Services Division has defined a service frequency of maintaining the landscaped areas on natural surface trails one time per month, which is a reasonable objective. Depending upon the level of service provided at each of these landscaped areas, the maintenance of one mile of trail areas may take between six and eight hours. Therefore, maintaining 40 miles of surface trails may consume between 240 and 320 hours, which is more than are available in a single month, and the number of trail miles is expanding each year.

In addition to the landscape maintenance of the trails, however, the Maintenance Worker II in the Trails and Open Space section is responsible for maintaining bridges, maintaining the stormwater systems across trails, removing trees across trails and other undeveloped property, and removal of debris and vandalism from trails. Currently, in order to cover the workload demands related to landscape maintenance on the trails, the Maintenance section of the Division loans staff to the Trails and Open Space section, thereby creating a backlog of work orders in the latter section.

The Parks Services Division should hire a second Maintenance Worker II to cover the increasing workload in the Trails and Open Space section. This additional employee will not only allow the Division to accomplish the cyclical maintenance required in landscaped trail areas, but will alleviate the backlogged work order issue in the Maintenance section.

***Recommendation 19: The Parks Services Division should hire a second Maintenance Worker II position in the Trails and Open Space section. The total cost of this position is estimated to be \$45,444, including salary at the minimum of the salary range, plus fringe benefits of 40%.***

**3. THE PARKS SERVICES DIVISION SHOULD OUTSOURCE THE CUSTODIAL SERVICES THAT ARE CURRENTLY PERFORMED WITH INTERNAL STAFF.**

Currently, the Parks Services Division provides most of its custodial services with internal personnel. These are typically the three Maintenance Workers II in the Facilities unit of the Division. The Division does contract for custodial services at the Lyndon House and Morton Theatre, however there are other buildings in the parks that are not serviced on contract, but rather are serviced by these Maintenance Worker II positions.

The project team analyzed the recent costs for custodial services, and although the services performed at the Morton Theatre, for example, are likely more intensive than those that would be required at many of the park facilities currently serviced by the Parks Services Division personnel, the associated costs provide a basis for comparison to inform the decision regarding the feasibility of outsourcing these services.

The current contract for custodial services at the Morton Theatre, with the Service Fort, is for \$24,000 annually, and includes general cleaning, cleaning of hard surface and carpeted floors, walls, fixtures, furniture, glass, kitchen area, elevators, handrails, auditorium, exterior litter pickup, and cleaning before and after events on a requested basis. The County's Request for Proposals (RFP) requires that the contractor expend a minimum of 750 hours annually, however invoices from the contractor do not provide a detail of the hours expended. Assuming, though, that the contractor expends the minimum number of hours required by the RFP, and assuming that 60% of the contractual

billings are for labor (the other 40% being cleaning supplies and overhead), the likely hourly rate for these custodial services is approximately \$19.20.

The current range within which Maintenance Workers II are compensated is between \$32,460 and \$51,936 annually. Assuming that the three incumbents in this classification are compensated at the average of the range, this equates to \$42,198, or \$20.29 per hour. When fringe benefits of an assumed 40% are added, this equates to approximately \$28.40 per hour compared to the likely contractual hourly rate of \$19.20, making the provision of custodial services with internal staff a relatively cost-ineffective use of personnel resources.

The project team recommends that the Leisure Services Department, in conjunction with the County's Purchasing Division, develop and issue an RFP for private custodial service provision for the remaining facilities for which it is responsible. As noted above, it is likely that many, if not all of these buildings, will require less intensive services than those provided at the Morton Theatre, however this should be discussed internally, with the services clearly outlined in the RFP, as was done for the Morton Theatre contract.

Most custodial services in the County are provided under contract, and in the experience of the project team, this is a very common model, as there are typically multiple service providers in an urban setting such as in Athens.

***Recommendation 20: The Leisure Services Department should, in conjunction with the County's Purchasing Division, develop and issue a Request for Proposals for custodial service provision in its remaining facilities.***

### **3. THE PARKS SERVICES DIVISION SHOULD DEPLOY PARK RANGERS TO MONITOR ITS PARK ASSETS.**

The Parks Services Division currently has no means by which it can routinely monitor park conditions, public safety hazards and ensure conformance to park rules and

regulations. To provide a minimal amount of enforcement, the Parks Services Division Administrator spends each Friday morning patrolling parks and trails to ensure that they are free of hazards and to inform unauthorized visitors of the need to leave the premises.

The use of a Division Administrator's time for park enforcement is costly, and fails to maximize the utility of the position, which should be engaged in planning, scheduling and managing the Division's activities. However, the County's parks, trails and open spaces should be monitored on a regular basis in order to ensure conformance to rules and regulations, to abate safety hazards, to remove litter, and even to inform visitors of safety tips. Other duties that should be performed by park rangers include the following:

- Issue citations for misconduct and other violations of park rules and regulations.
- Provision of basic emergency medical assistance and aid.
- Write daily reports of activities at each park, trail and open space area.
- Answer questions that park visitors may have about regulations, or even the history of the park itself.

The Parks Services Division is not staffed sufficiently to ensure that Divisional employees are at each park frequently enough to enforce rules and regulations, and are engaged in maintenance activities in any case. Therefore, the Division should initiate an enforcement function and staff this function with park rangers, whose presence would coincide with the park hours, which are generally 8:00 am till sunset. These can be part time or full time employees, but the hours of work should be designed to coincide with the open hours of the parks which is assumed to be an average of 10 hours per day.

The number of parks in the system, as well as their geographic dispersion throughout the County, will require two Park Rangers working throughout the day. Although the hours of work may be staggered, the parks should be covered for the

duration of the times during which they are open. The project team recommends that the County hire two part time Rangers, each working six hours per day, with a two hour overlap to provide for communication with the Parks Division Administrator, as well as with each other.

The position of Park Ranger does not currently exist in the County's classification system, however if it can be assumed that the hourly rate for this position is the same as that for park Assistant, the rate would be \$9.16 per hour. Given that the County requires an estimated 84 hours per week for coverage of the parks, this equates to an annual cost of approximately \$40,010.

***Recommendation 21: The Parks Services Division should ensure conformance to park, trails and open space rules and regulations by hiring Park Rangers to patrol these areas. These Park Rangers can be full or part time, however the Division should ensure coverage for 84 hours per week. If these employees are part time, non-benefitted, the hourly cost is estimated to be \$9.16, and the total annual cost would be \$40,010 at this hourly rate.***

**4. THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD MORE ACTIVELY PURSUE PRIVATE SPONSORSHIPS FOR PARKS, SPECIAL EVENTS AND CAPITAL PROJECTS.**

The Leisure Services Department's services are primarily funded by the County's General Fund, as well as from program fees paid by direct participants. As local governments' General Fund support for recreational services, as well as new and expanded facilities, is on the decline, many local governments are exploring creative ways to expand their funding base. One of these ways is through the solicitation of private sponsorships.

The Leisure Services Department has not historically actively sought to maximize sponsorships. Data provided to the project team indicates that the Department had received approximately \$207,600 in sponsorships from 2014 through 2016, with the

Sandy Creek Nature Center receiving \$103,000 of this amount, or about 50%. The Lyndon House Arts Center received \$82,200, and accounted for 23 of the 33 total sponsorships. Therefore, the sponsorships appear to be narrowly focused in two facilities. In fact, there is no avenue available for interested sponsors to explore any sponsorship opportunities on the Department's web site. These opportunities should also be made available at parks, trails, special events, and at the facilities at these locations. Many parks and recreational departments have even solicited naming rights for capital projects either partially or fully-funded by private sponsors.

The project team recommends that the Department develop a policy regarding not only the appropriateness of sponsorships, but the types of sponsorships allowed. For example, the Department may wish to allow sponsorships for special events; projects such as the printing of brochures, facility maps, etc.; programs; sites, or other category.

***Recommendation 22: The Leisure Services Department should more actively pursue private sponsorships for its parks, special events and capital projects.***

## **5. RECREATION DIVISION**

This chapter will focus on an analysis of the Recreation Division of the Department of Leisure Services identifying the positive features of the Division's operation and presenting recommendations to address identified improvement opportunities.

The mission of the Department of Leisure Services is "to build a healthier and more livable community by providing opportunities to learn, to create, and to play in quality parks, programs and facilities that are valued by our citizens." The Recreation Division, with its broad range of recreational opportunities and experiences, plays a significant role in contributing to the achievement of the mission of the Department of Leisure Services.

The Recreation Division operates a year-round program which includes programs and services for youth through adults ranging from toddler programs to gymnastics, afterschool activities, sports programs and leagues, aquatics, summer camps, and unique experiences such as the zoo. The programs are available to the residents of Athens-Clarke County at Lay Park, East Athens and Rocksprings Park Community Centers and at a variety of multi-use park, aquatic and sports field facilities including Bishop Park, Holland Youth Sports Complex, Satterfield Park, Trail Creek Park, Southeast Clarke Park, the Tennis Center and Memorial Park and Zoo.

The Recreation Division budget represents the largest division budget in the Leisure Services Department, representing 37.8% of the total Department budget. The FY16 budget totals \$2,675,900 with the projected FY17 budget totaling \$2,871,400, an increase of 7.3%. Projected revenues generated by the Recreation Division total \$452,695 for FY16 and are anticipated to be \$459,520 for FY17, an increase of 1%. The

Recreation Division revenue projections represent 45.5% of the total Leisure Services Department revenues for FY16 and 44.5% of total revenues generated for FY17.

The Recreation Division's budget is impacted by the Department's scholarship program subsidy. The FY16 participant scholarship projections forecast enrollees at 4,784 recipients and 5,071 recipients for FY17, resulting in a projected budget subsidy of \$273,166 in FY16 and \$289,554 in FY17.

The Division is staffed by 32 full-time employees and three part-time employees along with a cadre of 150 part-time and seasonal employees and independent contractors. The Division programs, facilities and services are also supported by a significant number of volunteers. In FY15-16 over 1,500 individual volunteers provided 19,829 hours of direct volunteer service to Recreation Division programs which is valued at \$497,906 based on the hourly monetary value determined by the Independent Sector organization. The following section provides an analysis of improvement opportunities in the Recreation Division.

**1. THERE ARE OPERATIONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES THAT CAN STRENGTHEN THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES OFFERED BY THE RECREATION DIVISION.**

The project team's analysis of the Recreation Division also identified several operational and programmatic improvement opportunities that can increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Recreation Division's programs and services in meeting the goals of the Department of Leisure Services. These improvement opportunities identify the primary framework for this study of the Recreation Division and include the following:

- While there is a draft strategic plan and goals and objectives for the Department, the Recreation Division does not have a strategic plan to guide the development and implementation of Division resources, operations and programs and services.
- Performance measures that evaluate program effectiveness, cost recovery, and overall program benefit have not been established for the Recreation Division.
- There appear to be gaps in programming opportunities for several age groups and interest areas that should be addressed in future planning.
- There is inequality and inconsistent support of sports programs across the community including those offered by community/nonprofit organizations. Sports leagues lack community input into programs and coordination in field use and scheduling.
- The aquatics program needs to expand its season, program offerings and hours of operations hours specifically for public swim time, and consider incorporating added pool amenities and concessions to create a hospitable environment at pool facilities.
- Inservice training and staff development programs are needed to ensure that leadership staff in specialty areas have appropriate backgrounds and skills, along with a willingness to be inclusive and accept community input.
- The website is ineffective in meeting the needs of users as it is not user-friendly, interactive or have capacity to provide app integration nor identify alternatives for those disadvantaged during program registration by not having a computer.
- The Division should provide greater opportunities for affordable camp programs and address the gap in starting age for camps for children graduating from kindergarten at 5 years and not able to participate in summer camps until age 6.
- Program participants do not have the opportunity to evaluate and comment on the effectiveness of the programs and services offered by the Division nor make suggestions for improvements in individual programs.
- Community Centers need to be open when schools are closed and work toward developing expanded partnerships with schools and community/nonprofit organizations.
- Programs at Community Centers are not coordinated or integrated so that centers can utilize and share programs and services, and provide consistent community-wide recreation experiences and maximize program resources while meeting the needs of center users.

- The cost recovery policy and plan is not implemented consistently throughout individual programs offered by the Division.
- The recruitment and selection process for seasonal and part-time program personnel is not user friendly, cumbersome and eliminates potentially good candidates from progressing through the hiring process. Recreation Division staff indicated that returning employees have reported difficulty completing the online application process or making changes or corrections to the application, resulting in their disqualification from the selection process. These disqualifications result in the loss of experienced and qualified staff being rehired by the division.
- The Department scholarship program policy, criteria and guidelines are administered inconsistently.
- Recreation facilities are not consistently maintained and repaired to ensure compliance with health and safety codes.

**2. DEVELOPING A FIVE-YEAR COMPREHENSIVE RECREATION DIVISION STRATEGIC PROGRAM PLAN WILL CLARIFY THE MISSION, VISION AND GOALS AND ESTABLISH A FUTURE DIRECTION FOR THE RECREATION DIVISION.**

Developing a five-year comprehensive Recreation Division Strategic Plan that identifies goals, objectives, standards and performance measures and establishes priorities for Recreation Division programming would increase the effectiveness of the recreation operations. Establishing a comprehensive plan for the Recreation Division, consistent with the goals and objectives established for the County and Department of Leisure Services, will provide a strong foundation for the development of recreation programs and services in the future.

The Department of Leisure Services has previously undergone processes to establish comprehensive strategic plans for programs, facilities and services. These processes have produced draft strategic plans, but have not been authorized, and therefore, not implemented. The following are the goals that have been established by the Department of Leisure Services for FY16 to FY18.

- Complete a parks and programs master plan to identify and prioritize unmet needs within community facilities and services of the Leisure Services Department.
- Achieve national accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) to maximize operational efficiencies and organizational effectiveness of the Leisure Services Department.
- Re-align Leisure Service Department program and service resources with community values while reducing the Department's reliance on the general fund.
- Complete the development of the Greenway Network Plan to provide recommendation for the protection of natural and cultural resources, recreation and transportation choices, and the support of economic developments.

A comprehensive Recreation Division Strategic Plan can identify a focused direction and process for achieving the goals identified by the Leisure Services Department. A comprehensive strategic plan that establishes goals, objectives, and performance measures for division programs and services that are in support of the Leisure Services Department goals and objectives can create several valuable operational benefits including:

- Provide direction to the Recreation Division's current and future program offerings, improve its capacity to manage, and evaluate its personnel, facilities and fiscal resources more effectively
- Assess the value and benefit of the programs and services being offered
- Evaluate the cost effectiveness of programs and services being offered
- Identify unmet needs, interests and underserved groups
- Determine when it is appropriate to eliminate ineffective programs and services
- Expand its spectrum of program service models and delivery systems and easily document the benefits of the facilities, programs and services it provides the residents of Athens-Clarke County

An important element of the strategic planning process includes a division-wide assessment of existing recreation facilities used by the Division for programming, along

with an assessment of improvements needed to these facilities and an analysis of the facility requirements for future recreation programming. This analysis must also include an inventory of non-Department recreation facilities, including schools, university, business and non-profit agency facilities in the community that could be available for recreation programming.

A second critical element in the strategic planning process is the understanding of community needs and interests related to parks and recreation programs and services. The implementation of a community needs assessment process, as part of the strategic planning process, will provide data that are needed to make critical decisions related to future programming and service delivery priorities.

In addition to the community needs assessment, another important element in the strategic planning process is the inventory and assessment of Department recreation facilities used by the Division for programming. Identifying needed facility improvements and upgrades to existing facilities, identifying gaps in current facility resources, assessing non-County facilities that may provide opportunities for programming spaces, and evaluating future needs for facility spaces for recreation programming are key elements of the facility inventory assessment component of the strategic planning process.

Involving the Leisure Services Director and key Recreation Division management and program staff is critical in developing a comprehensive strategic plan for programs and services. Obtaining input from the Parks Maintenance Division, representatives from advisory committees, other related county departments, active businesses, community recreation-related agencies and community organizations utilizing Department resources

as part of the planning process will strengthen the comprehensive plan and develop support for its current and future implementation.

The National Recreation and Parks Association has developed suggested components and criteria for the development of a comprehensive recreation strategic plan which can be used as a guide in developing a Recreation Division Strategic Plan for the Department of Leisure Services. The exhibit on the following page provides an overview of the components of a comprehensive plan as recommended by NRPA:

<b>NRPA Components of Comprehensive Recreation Strategic Program Plan</b>	
<b>Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Environmental Scan</b>	Includes analysis of current demographic and economic data, social problems, physical resources, technology, environmental quality and political environment.
<b>Community Inventory</b>	Profiles organizations providing recreation services. Assesses current recreation facility uses and the need for future facility development.
<b>Community Niche</b>	Identifies constituent groups served, programs and services and use of facilities to avoid duplication.
<b>Constituent Needs Assessment</b>	Uses program data and involves community in identifying program preferences.
<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	Builds on Department's Strategic Plan to create vision and goals.
<b>Critical Issues</b>	Identifies contributions programs make to Department priorities.
<b>Basic Premises</b>	Establishes basic operational paradigm such as funding, staffing.
<b>Operational Database</b>	Inventory of physical assets, human resources, statistical data, and standards for desirable programs.
<b>Program Segmentation</b>	Elements of programs by age/person, facility, geography, etc.
<b>Program Master Plans</b>	Provides goals and objectives and performance measures for each planning area.
<b>Resources Needed</b>	Identifies human, physical and financial resources required for implementation.
<b>Interagency Partnerships</b>	Creates community inventory of program offerings.

**NRPA Components of Comprehensive Recreation Strategic Program Plan**

<b>Prioritizing and Timelines</b>	Sets priorities and timelines for meeting priorities.
<b>Annual Review</b>	Develops qualitative and quantitative assessment processes.
<b>Program and Service Evaluation</b>	Establishes framework for evaluation of programs and services.

Development of a comprehensive Recreation Division Strategic Plan that is consistent with and focused on the achievement of Leisure Services Department goals and objectives will provide important future direction and guidance for Recreation Division management and leadership in ensuring that Division programs and services are responsive to the needs and interests of the residents throughout the county.

***Recommendation 23: Develop a Recreation Division Five-year Comprehensive Recreation Strategic Plan that supports the goals and objectives of the Department of Leisure Services and identifies goals, objectives, performance measures and facility needs and priorities to guide the future direction of recreation programs and services provided by the Recreation Division.***

**3. CONDUCTING A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS WILL IDENTIFY UNDERSERVED GROUPS AND GAPS IN RECREATION PROGRAM AREAS AMONG ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY RESIDENTS.**

There are two key components in the recreation strategic planning process identified by the National Park and Recreation Association that are particularly critical to strategic plan development. These are the “identification of constituent groups currently being served and those groups who are currently underserved,” and secondly, “identifying constituent program and service preferences.” These two components in the strategic planning process can best be accomplished by the development and implementation of a community-wide needs assessment process that identifies current program service levels, programming preferences, gaps in program interest areas and underserved populations.

Opportunities could be available through the local university to obtain assistance in the development and implementation of a needs assessment instrument that could be administered using a variety of data collections techniques including:

- Mail survey instrument sent randomly to all or a percentage of households
- Door to door canvas of home owners using volunteers
- Online electronic survey instrument
- Written survey instrument administered through local churches, farmer's markets and other community facilities
- Newspaper insert with mail-in response
- Telephone administered survey instrument

Providing an opportunity for citizens to express their preferences for future programming and identifying the needs and interests of non-users will greatly benefit the Recreation Division programming personnel in identifying community interests and needs, current programming gaps and the needs of underserved segments of the population. These data can then be used in the development of the comprehensive Recreation Division Strategic Plan and in identifying the facilities and budgetary resources required to meet the future recreation needs of the community.

***Recommendation 24: Conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment process to identify underserved groups and future recreation program interests and needs in the community.***

**4. EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE EXISTING RECREATION PROGRAMS WILL IMPROVE DIRECT SERVICES TO CURRENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS AND ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CURRENTLY UNDERSERVED GROUPS.**

The Recreation Division provides a variety of programming opportunities for the residents of ACC and is careful to not duplicate services being provided by other

community recreation agencies. The project team identified several opportunities to improve recreation programming for current program participants and to address the needs of currently underserved groups in the community.

Consider the following table which illustrates the continuum of leisure services delivery models developed by Dr. James F. Murphy, former Chair, Recreation and Leisure Studies Department at San Francisco State University:

<b>Leisure Services Program Continuum</b>			
<b>Direct Services</b>	<b>Facilitated Services</b>	<b>Enabled Services</b>	<b>Advocacy Services</b>
Programs and services developed and implemented by the Department as the lead agency. Most of ACC program offerings fall in this section of the continuum.	Programs and services facilitated by, but not necessarily provided by, the Division as a direct program or service. ACC facilitates the program or service provided by another agency or collaboration of agencies.	Programs and services are offered by other agencies with the agency providing the vehicle for their implementation. An example of enabled services is ACC providing park facilities for a race or event sponsored by an outside group.	Programs and services advocated by ACC on behalf of a specific group or agency to another governmental or regulatory agency. An example of advocacy would be efforts to obtain more programs for persons with disabilities.

The continuum describes a model of leisure services delivery systems that can be utilized by the Recreation Division to develop and implement a range of delivery systems including direct services, facilitated services, enabled services and advocacy services. Most recreation programs and services offered by the Recreation Division fall in the direct service sector of the continuum, which often means high levels of direct program costs, staffing and supervisory resources and facility requirements. Offering recreation programs and services that fall in the facilitated, enabled or advocacy quadrants often requires developing higher levels of collaboration, cooperation and resource sharing with other agencies resulting in less financial and staffing resource commitment from the recreation division, yet continuing to provide quality services to the community. When

planning comprehensive recreation programs and services, agencies need to consider the full continuum of leisure delivery system models as it develops, plans and implements future program opportunities.

**(1) A Number of Improvement Opportunities in Current Recreation Division Offerings Can Improve Programs and Services and Increase Participation in Division Programs and Services.**

The project team's interviews with Recreation Division staff members, its review of the seasonal program brochures and marketing materials, and the input received during the public engagement process identified several improvement opportunities in the Division's spectrum of current recreation programming and services. The following table presents suggested program-related improvement opportunities that have been identified through the public engagement process:

<b>Improvement Opportunities in Existing Recreation Division Programs</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Improvement Opportunities</b>
<b>Aquatics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase swim season to begin earlier in May on weekends and evenings and extend summer season until Labor Day</li><li>• Extend pool hours for public use later in the evening</li><li>• Increase opportunities for open public swim</li><li>• Program for multiple interests during operating hours, (e.g., offer swim team practice and lap swim at same times)</li><li>• Provide tables, parent waiting areas, concessions, etc. to improve environment at swimming pools</li></ul>
<b>Sports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide greater opportunities for community input from youth sports organizations regarding program operations</li><li>• Ensure that sports organizations are treated consistently throughout the community</li><li>• Coordinate the field use and scheduling with sports groups</li><li>• Establish an effective communication process regarding field and schedule changes</li></ul>
<b>Summer Camps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish consistent summer camp program fees throughout the community</li><li>• Create more affordable summer camp programs</li><li>• Change starting age eligibility for participants who graduate kindergarten at 5 years but cannot enroll in until age 6</li></ul>

<b>Improvement Opportunities in Existing Recreation Division Programs</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Improvement Opportunities</b>
<b>Community Centers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open and provide programs at Community Centers during school closures times throughout the school year</li><li>• Extend hours of operation later to accommodate greater use</li><li>• Ensure that programs and services are offered consistently at all centers</li><li>• Ensure that centers share programmatic resources throughout the community</li></ul>

It is recognized that many of these suggested improvement opportunities will require added financial and staff resources. It is incumbent upon the Recreation Division staff to thoroughly study and analyze each of these suggestions and to explore the most effective ways of delivering these services as presented in the program continuum. These suggestions provide opportunities for the Division staff to work in collaboration with community groups, volunteers, schools, and interested parents and participants to identify creative, cost-effective approaches to providing these expanded and desired improvement opportunities.

**(2) Several Population Groups Were Identified as Underserved as a Result of the Analysis of Recreation Division Programs and Services.**

The review of current recreation programs, along with input obtained during the public engagement process, identified several underserved groups among Athens-Clarke County residents including:

- Junior High School and High School age groups
- Youth and adults interested in a variety of emerging non-competitive sports activities
- Active Baby Boomers and Retirees
- Senior Citizens and the Elderly

The following table presents suggestions for programming opportunities to increase the participation of currently identified underserved groups in the community. As noted in the discussion of program improvement opportunities, the Recreation Division staff should consider the Leisure Services Program Continuum to identify the most effective service delivery models for providing new or expanded programs and services to meet the needs of these underserved population groups.

<b>Recreation Programs Suggestions to Meet the Needs of Underserved Populations</b>	
<b>Underserved Group</b>	<b>Recreation Program Suggestions</b>
<b>Youth and Teens</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adventure Camps</li><li>• Fitness Classes and Camps</li><li>• Co-Ed Recreational Sports Leagues and Programs (volleyball, dodge ball, Pickle Ball, Foot Golf, etc.)</li><li>• Hiking and Backpacking</li><li>• Dances/Music Events</li><li>• Bicycling</li><li>• Skate Boarding Classes and Events</li><li>• Trips to out of town venues</li><li>• Teen Swim Nights</li><li>• After School Program (6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades)</li><li>• Leadership Training Program</li></ul>
<b>Alternative Sports Programs (Teens and Adults)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marshall Arts</li><li>• Yoga</li><li>• Pickle Ball Clinics and Leagues</li><li>• Pilates, Bocce Ball Clinics and Leagues</li><li>• Bicycling</li><li>• Hiking</li><li>• Cheerleading Clinics, Team training</li><li>• Dodge Ball Leagues</li><li>• Flag Football</li></ul>
<b>Active Baby Boomers and Retirees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water Aerobics</li><li>• Fitness Programs (Zumba, Feldenkrais, Pilates)</li><li>• Yoga</li><li>• Marshall Arts</li><li>• Pickle Ball</li><li>• Foot Golf</li><li>• Hiking, Walking Classes</li><li>• Daytime Swim Programs</li><li>• Dance Classes (tap, ballet, social dance)</li><li>• Golf and Tennis Leagues and Instructional Classes</li><li>• Meditation</li><li>• Bocce Ball Leagues and Instruction</li></ul>

**Senior Citizens and  
Elderly**

- Fitness, Strength and Balance Classes (Chair Yoga/Aerobics, Pilates)
- Computer Instruction and Lab)
- Arts Classes and Open Studio (knitting, crochet, jewelry, quilting)
- Music Classes (guitar, ukulele, vocal)
- Bocce Ball
- Trips
- Card and Game Room/Events
- Indoor Sports (ping pong, pool)
- Speaker Series (health, nutrition, travel)
- Fundraising Activities (rummage sales, art sales)

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The suggestions listed above are recreation programs and activities that can be incorporated with the existing programs and services offered at all community centers and other recreation facilities where programming takes place such as the gymnastics center, swimming pools and park facilities. It is also important to coordinate and collaborate with related community organizations that may also be providing services to these underserved population groups. For example, the Athens-Clarke County Council on Aging offers a variety of day-time recreation programs and activities for seniors and the elderly through its Center for Active Living including classes, trips, social activities, support groups and transportation services. The Recreation Division could work with the Center to offer some of their classes or recreation activities at existing Community Centers sites for residents in the neighborhoods served by the centers. This collaboration would result in the Division facilitating leisure opportunities for seniors and the elderly closer to their homes and potentially filling a need for services to an underserved group in the community who might otherwise not participate.

In addition to considering the program continuum and service delivery models in program planning for these underserved groups, there are several factors affecting the implementation of new or expanded recreation programs that the Recreation Division should consider to ensure that recreation program participation is available to all segments of the population. These include:

- Decentralizing programming venues to ensure that residents throughout the city have access to programming opportunities closer to their neighborhoods.
- Increasing hours of program operation to maximize facility use and ensure greater potential for program participation.
- Utilizing schools, university and other community facilities for programming to relieve over-utilized sites and increase the potential for greater program participation.
- Collaborating with other community groups, nonprofit organizations and/or businesses to sponsor and provide recreation programs and services will increase recreation opportunities for the community with potentially minimal impact on division staffing and resources.

Addressing these factors creates opportunities to expand the programs and services offered by the Division in addition to addressing the need for more convenient access to programs.

Expanding recreation opportunities for currently underserved population groups will increase recreation program experiences for all residents of the community and attract new participants to the services offered by the Recreation Division.

Creating a division task force process in which selected supervisory and program managers form committees to further explore the potential for individual program initiatives and implementation strategies can ensure that recreation opportunities are developed to meet the needs of these identified underserved populations. Where appropriate, community representatives could be included in the task force process to provide added input and program support. After a time-limited meeting process, specific proposals should be reviewed by the entire Division management team and proposed for implementation in accordance with staffing and budget parameters. This process draws on the internal expertise of the division as a team, along with community input to assess

issues, develop workable solutions for meeting the needs of underserved groups and assist in determining the future direction of the department.

***Recommendation 25: Establish an in-house task force process to explore and develop program alternatives and strategies to increase participation from current program participants and underserved groups in the community.***

**5. CREATING GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTICIPANT AND RESIDENT INPUT IN RECREATION PROGRAMS COULD INCREASE THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS AND SUPPORT FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

Creating opportunities for program participants and residents to provide input regarding the quality and content of recreation programs could provide Recreation Division program personnel with important information to assist in making improvements to programs, increasing the overall effectiveness of programs, identifying program gaps, identifying new community resources and responding to customer interests for new program development.

There are several options for increasing participant and resident input that could be considered by the Recreation Division:

- Recreation Division Advisory Committee: Establish a commission-appointed committee of ACC residents that meets regularly with Division staff to discuss and provide input on recreation programs and services offered by the Recreation Division. Suggestions offered by the advisory committee would then be reviewed and considered by the recreation managers and Department administration. Significant changes in programs or services may require approval by the County Manager, Mayor and/or Commission.
- Individual Program Advisory Committees: Establish committees of participants and citizens interested in a specific program area (e.g. community centers, sports and aquatics) to provide input on the programs and services offered and to identify opportunities to support the programs through fundraisers, sponsors and in-kind support and/or by volunteering.
- Community Focus Group Process: Establish a bi-monthly or quarterly focus group process in which program participants and citizens are invited to focus groups to

provide input on program areas, policy development or specific program issues that the Recreation Division is currently addressing or evaluating.

- Establish an Online Resident Survey Process: Establish a bi-monthly or quarterly online survey (using Rec 1 software or an existing online survey tool such as Survey Monkey) to obtain input and data from participants and/or residents regarding specific program areas, policy or program issues or future program interests.

Utilizing any or several of these vehicles to obtain input and participant or resident feedback on department programs, services and operations can provide valuable data to assist program staff in making changes to division operations, improving the quality of programs and services, identifying new program interests, and making decisions that guide the future development of Recreation Division programs and services.

***Recommendation 26: Establish a process to create greater opportunities for participant and resident input in recreation programs to increase the overall effectiveness of and support for departmental programs and services.***

## **6. ARTS AND NATURE DIVISION**

The Arts and Nature Division of the Leisure Services Department provides cultural enrichment to visitors to the Lyndon House Arts Center, Morton Theatre, East Athens Dance Center and to the Sandy Creek Nature Center.

The rehabilitated Morton Theatre seats 500 and is supported in part by the Morton Theatre Corporation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The theatre operates as a rental facility hosting live theatre, public ceremonies, music concerts, church services, weddings, dance concerts, film screenings, receptions, seminars, awards shows, pageants, community events, and more.

The Lyndon House Arts Center benefits residents of the County by providing gallery exhibitions, historic house museum, festivals, workshops, art meetings, special events, and art classes. The Lyndon House was renovated and expanded through SPLOST funds and was re-opened in 1999.

The renovated East Athens Educational Dance Center opened in 2005, and offers a variety of dance classes for youth and adults. The Center is comprised of 15,500 square feet of space and includes dance studios and a 5,000 square foot multipurpose area. The Center also has an audio-visual sound system.

The Sandy Creek Nature Center is comprised of 225 acres of woodlands and wetlands with over 4 miles of trails, including an ADA interpretive trail and connections to the North Oconee River Greenway and Cook's Trail. The Education and Visitor Center includes live reptiles, amphibians, marine and freshwater aquariums, interactive natural history exhibits, and an incredible resource library, all housed in an eco-friendly building. There is also a circa 1815 log house and several wildlife observation areas on site.

**1. THE LYNDON HOUSE ARTS CENTER SHOULD ENSURE THAT IT ALIGNS ITS HOURS OF OPERATION WITH THE HOURS OF GREATEST PATRONAGE.**

Currently, as patrons enter the Lyndon House Arts Center, a Program Leader who serves as the primary greeter of patrons records the attendance of these patrons at the Center. These attendance data, however, record only the fact of a patron's visit, but not the time of day during which the visit occurred.

The following table provides the current hours of operation at the Center.

Day of Week	Hours of Operation
Sunday	Closed
Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Noon-9:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Thursday	Noon-9:00 pm
Friday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm

As is common for centers of this type, the Lyndon House Arts Center is closed on Sundays and Mondays, and therefore there are no attendance data available for these days. However, given that the Program Leader does, in fact, attempt to record patrons' visits on the other five days of the week, the project team recommends that the Program Leader begin recording attendance data during each hour of the day in order to better align patrons' desires for exhibits and programs with hours of operation. Further, attendance should drive the hours during which the Center makes Program Leaders available for exhibits, the educational area, Open Studio Membership program, and others.

***Recommendation 27: The Program Leader should begin to record the attendance at the Lyndon House Arts Center during each hour of the day in order to better align hours of operation with patron desires.***

**2. THE LYNDON HOUSE ARTS CENTER SHOULD ENHANCE THE UTILITY OF ITS STUDIOS.**

The Lyndon House Arts Center has studios dedicated to such crafts as jewelry-making, metal working, photography, fiber, and others. Typically during the evenings, the Arts Center provides adult classes in these crafts, however during other hours of the day, these studios are largely unutilized.

Patrons utilizing the Center use supplies, equipment and chemicals in their craft work and as such require supervision by an Arts Center employee who provides these supplies, ensures the cleanliness of the studios, and even provides some instruction.

The provision of a part time employee at the Arts Center has the potential to increase its patronage during hours of the day during which there are open studios. The Arts and Nature Division may wish to formally canvass the community, or even the current patrons of the Center, to determine the actual demand for extended access to these studios during daytime hours prior to hiring a part time Program Leader, however it appears that there is significant current under-utilization of the studios. Should this canvassing indicate that there is sufficient interest in opening these studios, the project team recommends that the Lyndon House Arts Center hire an additional part time Program Leader at an hourly rate of \$16.47. Assuming that the position works an average of 20 hours per week, this equates to a cost of approximately \$17,130 annually for this non-benefitted position.

***Recommendation 28: The Lyndon House Arts Center should assess patrons' desires for access to the Center's studios during extended daytime hours. Should it determine that these extended hours are feasible and desired, the Center should hire a part time Program Leader to monitor and supervise activities in these studios an estimated annual cost of approximately \$17,130.***

## **APPENDIX A - DESCRIPTIVE PROFILE OF THE LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

This document provides a descriptive profile of the parks and programmatic services provided by the Leisure Services Department of the Athens-Clarke-County Unified Government (ACCUG). The purpose of the descriptive profile is to document the project team's understanding of the plan of organization for Leisure Services, allocation of staff by function, principal assigned responsibilities of staff and selected workload metrics. Data contained in this profile were developed based on the work conducted by the project team including:

- Interviews with managers, supervisors and line staff.
- Interviews with Commission members, and members of various stakeholder groups.
- Collection of various data describing organization and staffing, workload, budgets, service levels and costs associated with the services provided.
- Observations of selected parks and facilities.

The structure of this descriptive profile includes an overview of each of the divisions, organizational charts, a summary description of key roles and responsibilities of positions, and a description of programs and services.

The descriptions of responsibilities provided in the “Summary of Key Roles and Responsibilities” section summarize the team's understanding of the major programs and service activities in the Leisure Services Department. These descriptions are not intended to provide the level of detail of a typical job description. Rather, they describe the basic responsibilities and reporting relationships for each position.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Leisure Services Department is to “... build a healthier and more livable community by providing opportunities to learn, to create and to play in quality parks, programs and facilities that are valued by our citizens.”

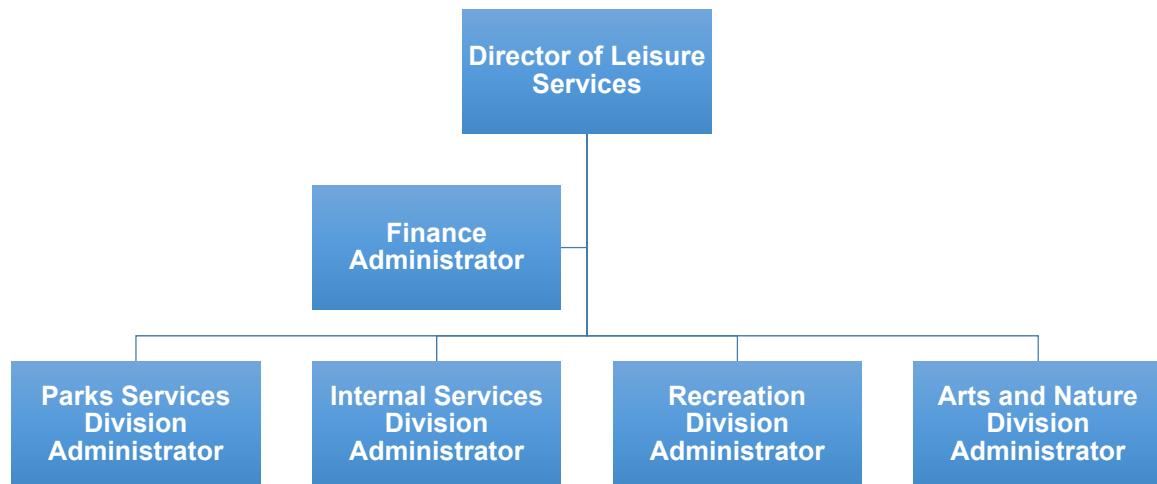
The Department offers a year-round schedule of recreation programs and events to the residents of Athens-Clarke County during the summer, spring and fall/winter program cycles. Program offerings include activities for children and youth, teens, adults and the community at large with a focus on aquatics, sports, gymnastics, dance, classes and camps, trails and open space, theatre and the arts, special needs programs and community-wide events. The Department consists of 73 full time positions, and varying numbers of part time and seasonal staff. A listing of the full and part-time staff is provided in the table below.

Position	Authorized Number
<b>Administration (4 FT)</b>	
Director	1
Finance Administrator	1
Budget Technician	1
Sr. Administrative Assistant (HR/Payroll)	1
<b>Internal Services Division (7 FT)</b>	
Division Administrator	1
Administrative Secretary	1
Operations Administrator	1
Program Specialist, Public Information	1
Community Outreach Coordinator	1
Program Specialist, Volunteers	1
Program Specialist, Special Events	1
<b>Parks Services Division (20 FT/5 PT)</b>	
Division Administrator	1
Administrative Secretary	1
Maintenance Supervisor	1
Crew Leader (Maintenance)	2
Maintenance Worker II (Maintenance)	2
Facility Supervisor (Facility Preparation)	1
Maintenance Crew Leader (Facility Preparation)	1
Maintenance Worker II (Facility Preparation)	3
Maintenance Worker I (Facility Preparation)	1
Park Assistant (Facility Preparation) (PT)	2
Park Planner III (Park Planning)	1
Park Planner II (Park Planning)	1
Park Technician (Park Planning) (PT)	1
Park Coordinator (Sandy Creek Park)	1
Recreation Assistant (Sandy Creek Park)	2

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<b>Position</b>	<b>Authorized Number</b>
Trails and Open Space Coordinator (Trails and Open Space)	1
Maintenance Worker II	1
Park Assistant Trails and Open Space) (PT)	2
<b>Arts and Nature Division (21 FT/2 PT)</b>	
Division Administrator	1
Administrative Secretary	1
Program Supervisor (Lyndon House)	1
Program Specialist (Lyndon House)	2
Program Leader (Lyndon House) (FT)	1
Program Leader (Lyndon House) (PT)	3
Security Guard (Lyndon House) (PT)	1
Facility Supervisor (Morton Theatre)	1
Program Specialist (Morton Theatre)	2
Theatre Assistant (Morton Theatre)	2
Facility Supervisor (East Athens Educational Dance Center)	1
Program Specialist (East Athens Educational Dance Center)	1
Theatre Assistant (East Athens Educational Dance Center)	1
Facility Supervisor (Sandy Creek Nature Center)	1
Program Specialist (Sandy Creek Nature Center)	2
Program Leader (Sandy Creek Nature Center)	1
Recreation Assistant (Sandy Creek Nature Center)	1
<b>Recreation Division (30 FT/5 PT)</b>	
Division Administrator	1
Administrative Secretary	1
Facility Supervisor (Bishop Park)	1
Gymnastics Program Specialist (Bishop Park)	1
Gymnastics Program Leader (Bishop Park)	1
Aquatics and Adult Sports Program Specialist (Bishop Park)	1
Park Assistant (PT) (Bishop Park)	4
Program Supervisor (East Athens Community Center)	1
Program Specialist (East Athens Community Center)	1
Recreation Assistant (East Athens Community Center)	1
Park Assistant (East Athens Community Center) (PT)	1
Facility Supervisor (Rocksprings Community Center)	1
Program Leader (Rocksprings Community Center)	2
Facility Supervisor (Memorial Park and Zoo)	1
Recreational Assistant (Memorial Park and Zoo)	1
Zoo Coordinator (Memorial Park and Zoo)	1
Zoo Program Specialist (Memorial Park and Zoo)	1
Park Assistant (Memorial Park and Zoo) (PT)	4
Facility Supervisor (Lay Park)	1
Program Specialist (Lay Park)	1
Program Leader (Lay Park)	1
Recreational Assistant (Lay Park)	1
Youth Athletics and Tennis Programs Supervisor	1
Gymnastics Program Supervisor	2
Tennis Program Specialist	1
Youth Athletic Program Specialist	1
Parks Maintenance Supervisor (Athletic Fields)	1

The Leisure Services Department's organizational structure is represented in the following chart. Divisional organizational charts are provided in later sections of this descriptive profile.



The following section provides budgets and actual expenditures for the Leisure Services Department.

## **2. BUDGET**

The Leisure Services Department's approved FY17 budget is \$7,587,900, which represents an increase of \$273,000, or 3.7%, over its FY16 budget of \$7,314,900. The table below provides the actuals for FY 14 and FY15, and budgets for FY16 and FY17.

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<b>Revenues</b>	<b>FY14 Actual</b>	<b>FY15 Actual</b>	<b>FY16 Original</b>	<b>FY17</b>
Charges for Services	\$1,015,600	\$1,086,900	\$995,000	\$1,022,600
Intergovernmental	\$28,800	\$16,200	\$0	\$0
Other	\$33,300	\$19,700	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$1,077,700</b>	<b>\$1,122,800</b>	<b>\$1,005,000</b>	<b>\$1,032,600</b>
Expenditures				
Salary and Benefits	\$4,912,200	\$5,073,100	\$5,252,900	\$5,526,800
Operating	\$1,924,800	\$2,074,800	\$2,062,000	\$2,061,100
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$6,837,000</b>	<b>\$7,147,900</b>	<b>\$7,314,900</b>	<b>\$7,587,900</b>

The following table provides the actuals and budgets for the same years for each of the divisions within the Leisure Services Department.

<b>Expenditures by Division</b>	<b>FY14 Actual</b>	<b>FY15 Actual</b>	<b>FY16 Original</b>	<b>FY17</b>
Administration	\$1,045,900	\$1,023,800	\$1,095,400	\$1,145,300
Arts and Nature	\$1,635,200	\$1,681,000	\$1,729,300	\$1,760,900
Parks Services	\$1,908,400	\$1,770,900	\$1,814,300	\$1,810,300
Recreation	\$2,247,500	\$2,672,200	\$2,675,900	\$2,871,400
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$6,837,000</b>	<b>\$7,147,900</b>	<b>\$7,314,900</b>	<b>\$7,587,900</b>

As was noted above, the current budget represents a 3.7% increase over FY16. Other highlights from a review of the two budget tables include the following.

- The Department's FY17 budget represents an increase of 11% over FY14 actual expenditures.
- FY17 budgeted revenues are 13.6% of budgeted expenditures. This represents a decrease from 15.8% in FY14, and 15.7% in FY15.
- The Recreation Division budget is the largest of the four divisions, at 37.8% of the total. This Division's budget has also increased by 27.8% from FY14 actual levels, which is also the largest increase of any of the divisions.

The next section provides details regarding the Administration Division.

### **3. ADMINISTRATION**

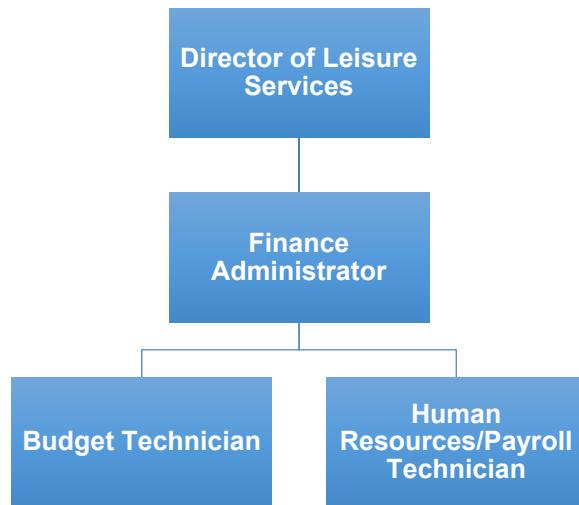
The following section provides an overview of the Administration Division of the Leisure Services Department.

**(1) Overview**

The Administration Division provides strategic, operational and administrative direction and guidance to the operating divisions of the Leisure Services Department. Staff also provide administrative, financial and clerical support to the Department.

**(2) Organizational Structure**

The following organizational chart provides an overview of the organizational structure and staffing allocation of the Administration Division.



**(3) Summary Description of Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
<b>Administration</b>			
Director	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of goals, missions and objectives of the Leisure Services Department.</li> <li>• Recommends policies, plans and programs, and provides the City Manager, Mayor and Commission with information necessary for operational and policy-making functions.</li> <li>• Supervises the provision of leisure services programs of recreation that meet the needs and desires of residents.</li> <li>• Organizes and supervises the administrative organization for the Department. Develops, reviews, analyzes and implements operational procedures required to effectively manage daily operations and implements County-approved policies.</li> <li>• Oversees the development and maintenance of all ACC parks and facilities.</li> <li>• Develops and approves the Departmental budget.</li> <li>• Guides the short and long range planning of the Department.</li> <li>• Recruits and hires personnel for the department</li> <li>• Supervises and evaluates assigned staff; handles all employee concerns, counseling and disciplining when necessary; completes employee performance appraisals</li> <li>• Coordinates services with other departments and local agencies</li> <li>• Develops and recommends government ordinances pertaining to the department</li> <li>• Negotiates and develops legal agreement documents between non-profit affiliates and government</li> <li>• Prepares agenda reports; produces correspondence for the Manager and Mayor &amp; Commission</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Finance Administrator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports to Leisure Services Department Director</li> <li>Oversees financial management and systems including financial data management, budget development, customer service, payroll, cost recovery performance and special projects.</li> <li>Manages financial data analysis related to CIP projects, program evaluation, payroll, cost recovery and budget.</li> <li>Creates and manages internal systems to track 20 cost centers in department including budget development, budget transfers and provides monthly cost analysis and forecasts.</li> <li>Manages CIP financial systems including facility improvement projects, equipment replacement and park development projects.</li> <li>Oversees internal asset management inventory.</li> <li>Reviews department payroll every two weeks for full and part-time personnel.</li> <li>Provides financial management for department CIP and SPLOST programs.</li> <li>Develops finance related policies and procedures for implementation by cost centers.</li> <li>Oversees division P-Card process.</li> <li>Implements special finance-related studies and projects as needed.</li> </ul>
Budget Technician	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes twice-weekly cash and check deposits.</li> <li>Prepares various reports for delivery to the Finance Department.</li> <li>Prepares monthly report of donations to the Department</li> <li>Reports expenditures by total and by specific usages, such as internal billing, copier billing, print shop billing, fleet maintenance, etc.</li> <li>Reviews budget transfers that the divisions of the Department submit.</li> <li>Updates the scholarship table annually.</li> </ul>
Human Resources and Payroll Technician	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accumulates payroll sheets from Excel and re-enters hours worked onto “Blue sheets” that are submitted to Human Resources.</li> <li>Processes all new employee paperwork such as I-9, withholding amounts, personnel action forms, etc.</li> <li>Inputs budget appropriation summaries; checks budget transfers to ensure their accuracy.</li> <li>Obtains records of all income received at each Leisure Services Department location from Rec1; uploads into Excel file, and reports income by cost center; reconciles amount in Rec1 with actual cash received from locations.</li> </ul>

#### 4. PARKS SERVICES

The following section provides an overview of the Parks Services Division of the Leisure

Services Department.

**(1) Overview**

The Park Services Division provides maintenance, operational, and planning support for the entire Leisure Services system with operational responsibility for 6 of the system's 14 parks and the Greenway.

The Division's Maintenance Office provides management and oversight for all maintenance, renovation, and construction within developed park areas. Key functions include daily pool maintenance; monthly playground inspections; special event equipment rental management; coordination with Facilities Management, Landscape Management, and SPLOST; and operation of the Department's work order system.

The Division's Trails and Open Spaces Office provides management and oversight for all maintenance, renovation, and construction for all undeveloped park areas. Key functions include ongoing site inspections, garbage and litter pickup routes, trail maintenance, bridge inspections, greenspace operations in conjunction with the County's Environmental Coordinator, and coordination with volunteer organizations such as SORBA, the Weed Warriors, and the Boulevard Woods Neighborhood Association. This Office also provides backup operational support for the Department's Work Order System and acts as a programmer for the system's 40+ miles of trails.

The Division's Facility Preparation Office provides janitorial service for all 48 of the Department's buildings including more than 100 restrooms. Key functions include garbage pickup, cleaning, special event support, and the role as the Department's Recycling Coordinator.

The Division's Park Planning Office provides planning and design support including coordination of public input, master plan and construction document development; the support of data driven decision making by facilitating the development, use and interpretation of geospatial data used by department staff, citizen advisory committees, and other ACCUG Departments; graphic design; the development of park facility standards; and construction observation. Key

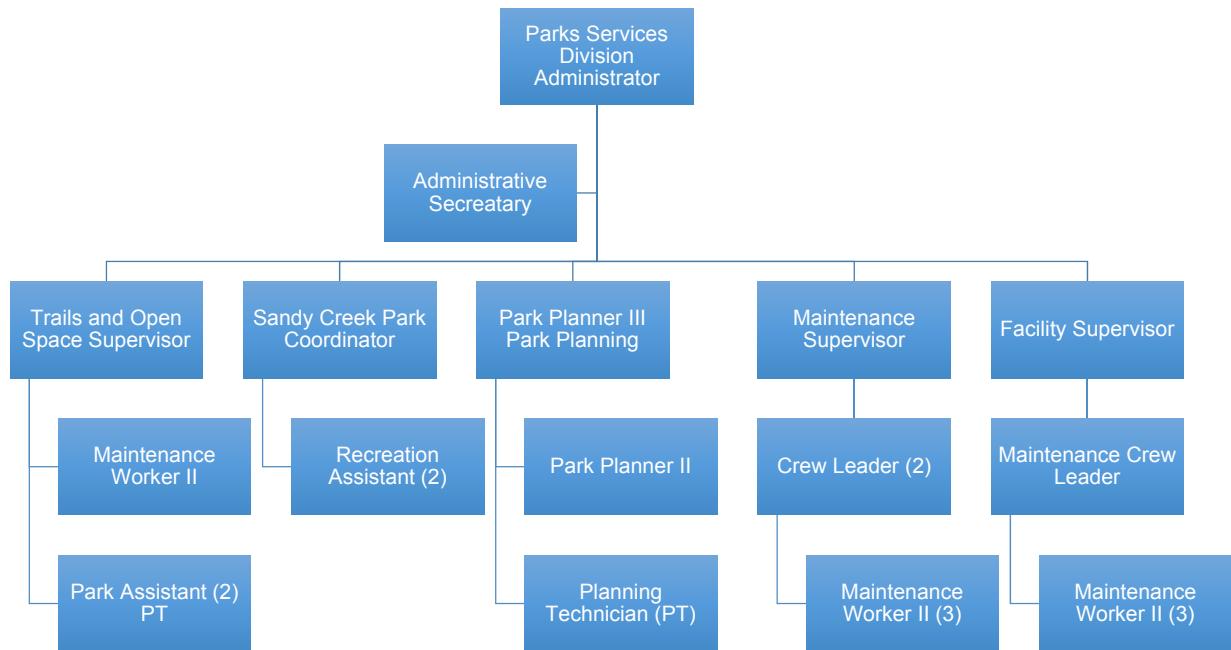
roles include providing support for the Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission including revisions to the Greenway Network Plan, taking a lead in the design and development of construction documents for the World of Wonder Park, providing design support for the Tallassee Forest Master Plan study and various in-house maintenance projects.

In addition to the above system-wide functions, Park Services also staffs, manages, and operates Sandy Creek Park, Ben Burton Park, Boulevard Woods, Dudley Park, North Oconee River Park, Reese Pope Park, and the Greenway system.

The Parks Services Division has the responsibility for operating, event planning, and programming at Sandy Creek Park which is the Department's largest park. Sandy Creek Park generates over \$140,000 yearly in admissions, shelter rentals, and special events. The Park serves over 100,000 patrons each year and offers the County its only outlet for disc golf, private dog parks, and the most extensive shelter rentals in the Department.

## **(2)     Organizational Structure**

The following organizational chart provides an overview of the organizational structure and staffing allocation of the Parks Services Division. This structure does not include any seasonal or temporary staff.



**(3) Summary Description of Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
<b>Administration</b>			
Division Administrator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports to Leisure Services Department Director</li> <li>• Six direct reports, 15.5 FTE positions and additional part time personnel</li> <li>• Provides overall leadership and direction to four units including Park Planning, Park Maintenance, Trails and Open Space Areas, and Facilities Preparation.</li> <li>• Directs and manages division goals and objectives, budget, policies and procedures, human resource functions, planning and evaluation of division services.</li> <li>• Oversees park planning unit including creation of park development standards, capital improvement planning, Greenway Master Plan development and implementation, and park GIS data collection.</li> <li>• Works directly with citizen park and natural resources related advisory committees.</li> <li>• Manages maintenance and operations of 2000 acres of open space and 40 miles of trails.</li> <li>• Oversees park maintenance unit including pool maintenance, zoo improvements, capital improvement project implementation, playground inspections, inspections of bridges and boardwalks and park maintenance contracted services.</li> <li>• Oversees park custodial services at 21 sites including restroom and facility inspections, garbage pickup, coordination of work camp labor, and provides set up and custodial services for 9 to 12 major events each year.</li> <li>• Coordinates facility maintenance activities with Central Services.</li> <li>• Coordinates development of property inventory and SPLOST capital improvement program.</li> </ul>
Administrative Secretary	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides administrative support to the Parks Services Division staff.</li> <li>• Answers phones, types and files correspondence, schedules meetings, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Maintenance</b>			

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Maintenance Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates and distributes work orders for crews.</li> <li>Develops and manages staff schedules and work plans.</li> <li>Updates and develops maintenance plans and policies.</li> <li>Conducts inspections.</li> <li>Serves and liaison with the Central Services Facilities Management Division, Central Services Landscape Management Division and SPLOST Office.</li> <li>Monitors construction projects in the parks system.</li> <li>Develops and manages life cycle plans.</li> <li>Develops scopes of work, and writes RFQs and RFPs.</li> <li>Manages the maintenance operations budget.</li> <li>Certified pool inspector.</li> <li>Manages Special Event Equipment rentals.</li> <li>Operates Park Closings public information website.</li> <li>Serves as the Department's 24/7 on-call contact</li> <li>Currently serving as Safety Coordinator for the Department</li> <li>Acts as the Lead Buyer for Park Services obtaining quotes and creating requisitions.</li> <li>Certified Playground Inspector</li> <li>CPR/First Aid/AED Certified</li> </ul>
Crew Leader	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates the completion of assigned work orders.</li> <li>Typically works with one Maintenance Worker II, and supervises the work of the position. Supervises inmates on occasion.</li> <li>Conducts parks inspections, and reports work order status to the Supervisor.</li> <li>Acts as a Buyer for daily maintenance supply needs.</li> <li>Sets up and tears down for special events.</li> <li>Certified pool inspector.</li> <li>CPR/First Aid/AED Certified</li> </ul>
Maintenance Worker II	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typically works with Crew Leader to assist on assigned work orders.</li> <li>Supervises inmates.</li> <li>Sets up and tears down for special events.</li> <li>Certified pool inspector.</li> <li>CPR/First Aid/AED Certified</li> </ul>
<b>Facility Preparation</b>			

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develops and manages the full time Facility Preparation staff, and ensures that appropriate levels of service are performed.</li> <li>Conducts periodic inspections of parks, as well as the work performed by Facility Preparation staff.</li> <li>Provides oversight of custodial contract services.</li> <li>Serves as Departmental recycling coordinator.</li> <li>Develops and manages the warehouse.</li> <li>Tracks and reports the use of resources and supplies.</li> <li>Obtains quotes, and writes scopes of services for work.</li> <li>Generates RFPs and RFQs.</li> <li>Manages the Facility Preparation budget.</li> </ul>
Maintenance Crew Leader	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performs specialized custodial tasks as scheduled.</li> <li>Sets up and breaks down rental equipment.</li> <li>Implements custodial schedules.</li> <li>Covers daily routes when custodial staff are absent.</li> <li>Supervises Maintenance Worker IIs and inmates.</li> </ul>
Maintenance Worker II	3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performs daily custodial tasks as scheduled and assigned.</li> <li>Sets up and breaks down rental equipment.</li> <li>Supervises inmates.</li> </ul>
<b>Park Planning</b>			
Park Planner III	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guides the development and maintenance of the Department's comprehensive park plan.</li> <li>Coordinates the development of facility and park master plans.</li> <li>Guides the development and implementation of SPLOST, CIP and grant-funded projects.</li> <li>Guides the development of site level plans and construction documents.</li> <li>Serves as Department's SPLOST liaison.</li> <li>Develops policies and procedures for land acquisition.</li> <li>Manages project scopes, schedules and stakeholder input in relation to projects.</li> <li>Serves as liaison with consultants related to Department planning and design projects.</li> <li>Serves as liaison with community groups and government agencies relating to park planning and design projects.</li> <li>Develops and maintains Department design, sign, amenity and architectural standards.</li> <li>Generates RFPs and RFQs.</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Park Planner II	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists with the development of the Department's comprehensive plan.</li> <li>Assists with the development of facilities and parks master plans.</li> <li>Researches costs, materials and methods for standards and projects.</li> <li>Develops site level plans and construction documents for internal and community projects.</li> <li>Assembles supporting documents for projects, plans and presentations.</li> <li>Guides inventories of Departmental facilities and parks; integrates into GIS.</li> <li>Serves as liaison with community groups relating to volunteer-built or funded projects.</li> <li>Maintains the Department's GIS database.</li> <li>Assists with planning and design projects.</li> <li>Performs inspections of construction projects.</li> <li>Assists in developing project scopes, schedules and stakeholder input.</li> </ul>
Planning Technician (PT)	1	1	
<b>Sandy Creek Park</b>			
Park Coordinator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates special events</li> <li>Manages natural resource park, recreational lake, trails, rental facility, disc golf course</li> <li>Serves as liaison with Parks Services Maintenance Supervisor and Facility Preparation Supervisor to ensure safe and clean facilities and Park operations.</li> <li>Conducts routine maintenance on trails and disc golf course and coordinates additional maintenance and inspections with Trails and Open Space staff.</li> <li>Manages the Sandy Creek Park budget as well as the web site and social media presence.</li> <li>Facilitates agreements with vendors.</li> <li>Develops seasonal schedules for maintenance.</li> <li>Coordinates with the Department of natural Resources regarding fisheries and recreational water health and safety of Lake Chapman.</li> <li>Ensures federally mandated water quality tests and standards are strictly adhered to with assistance from the ACC Water Quality Lab.</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Recreation Assistant	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Books facility rentals and coordinates with facility preparation staff so facilities are cleaned and ready.</li> <li>Coordinates inspections of facilities and grounds.</li> <li>Supervises community service workers and part time staff.</li> <li>Purchases supplies and materials for facility.</li> <li>Oversees the volunteer program and works with Internal Services staff to provide volunteer projects.</li> <li>Serves as Supervisor when Coordinator is absent.</li> <li>Manages vehicle maintenance and issues.</li> <li>Coordinates additional staff training such as CPR/First Aid and Community Service supervisory training with Organizational Development.</li> </ul>
<b>Trails and Open Space</b>			
Trails and Open Space Coordinator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees the operation and maintenance of ~1,500 acres of greenspace and 40 miles of trails</li> <li>Collects, and oversees the collection of, attribute data in greenspace and trails, as well as the material composition of these attributes and assessments of condition. Inputs these data into “Arc Collector” which populates the County GIS.</li> <li>Inspects the 82 bridges on park lands annually.</li> <li>Oversees contractor work on, e.g., tree removal, bridge repairs, masonry, etc.</li> <li>Creates work orders for maintenance staff.</li> <li>Directs the work of volunteers.</li> <li>Removes invasive plants from greenspace and trails.</li> <li>With the Program Specialist in the Internal Services Division, reviews special event applications; ensures no conflicts in usage.</li> </ul>
Maintenance Worker II	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performs routine and emergency maintenance of all trails and open space properties including landscaping and bridge and amenity maintenance</li> <li>Inventories and maintains small tools and equipment</li> <li>Assists with volunteer work day and special event set-up</li> </ul>
Park Assistant (PT)	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performs custodial services at sites, removing trash, etc., at 13 sites twice weekly.</li> <li>Conducts site inspections once monthly, at minimum.</li> <li>Utilizes GPS to collect data on criminal activity, vandalism of signs, benches.</li> <li>Supervises volunteer work days</li> <li>Works 12-20 hours per week.</li> </ul>

## 5. INTERNAL SERVICES DIVISION

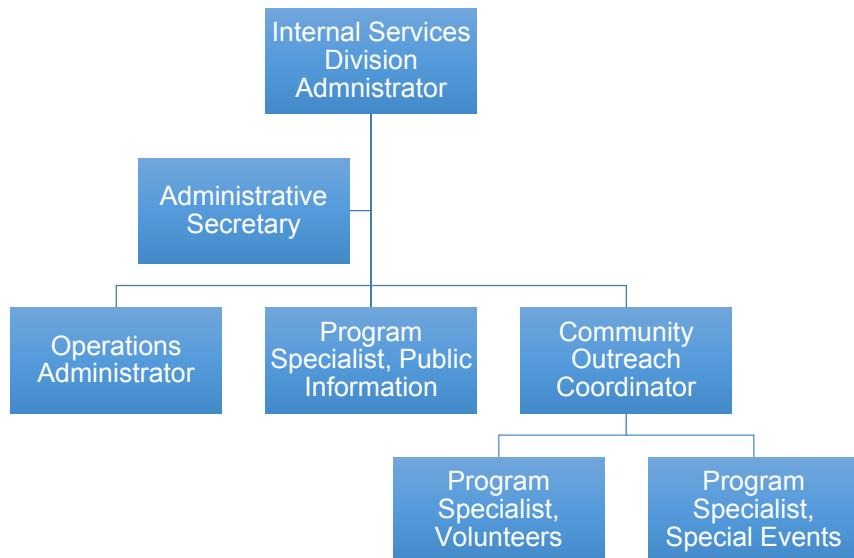
The following section provides an overview of the Internal Services Division of the Leisure Services Department.

## **(1) Overview**

The Internal Services Division provides internal support to the Leisure Services Department, including public outreach, coordination of volunteers, coordination of special events at parks sites, dissemination of information to the public, as well as the management of over 2,000 acres of park lands, trails and greenspace.

## **(2) Organizational Structure**

The following organizational chart provides an overview of the organizational structure and staffing allocation of the Internal Services Division.



**(3) Summary Description of Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Internal Services Administrator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports to the Leisure Services Department Director</li> <li>Serves as Assistant Director of the Department, filling in as Director in that position's absence.</li> <li>Directs the work of staff in the Internal Services Division.</li> <li>Provides support to other divisions in the accomplishment of their objectives.</li> <li>Oversees the writing of grants</li> <li>Communicates with not-for-profits (NFPs) in the use of the Department's facilities and grounds.</li> <li>Oversees the writing of policies and procedures in advance of CAPRA accreditation.</li> <li>Oversees supporting operation for department including outreach, public relations, marketing, volunteer coordination, purchasing, public information, grant writing, sponsorships and special events.</li> <li>Develops consistent procedures for implementation of 40 annual special events including the Farmers Market.</li> <li>Develops policies, procedures and training for safety programs and training for department program staff, facility inspections procedures, and AED inspections.</li> <li>Implements special studies such as contract labor study as needed.</li> </ul>
Administrative Secretary	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides administrative support to the Internal Services Division staff.</li> <li>Answers phones, types and files correspondence, schedules meetings, etc.</li> </ul>
Operations Administrator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manages approximately 2,000 acres of land, including parks, fields, trails and greenspace.</li> <li>Uses SPLOST funds to purchase land for greenspace as parcels come available.</li> <li>As part of the Managed Forests Project, conducts controlled burns.</li> <li>Researches the narrative in historic gardens at Lyndon House for purpose of developing interpretation panels.</li> <li>Develops consistent approach to signage in parks.</li> <li>Writes condition assessments on the four dams in the County, and approaches in maintaining them.</li> <li>Advises on the uses of SPLOST funds</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Program Specialist, Public Information	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates Department web site with new programs, events, etc.</li> <li>• Communicates with the public on initiatives in the Department</li> <li>• Coordinates Department messaging with the County Public Information office.</li> <li>• Writes and distributes news releases for Department</li> <li>• Supervises part-time graphic design intern to create custom designed brochures, flyers, graphics, and publications</li> <li>• Maintains social media presence for Department</li> <li>• Creates and distributes quarterly newsletter to area places of worship</li> <li>• Creates and distributes monthly bi-lingual school newsletter</li> <li>• Creates and distributes internal newsletter</li> <li>• Creates bi-weekly e-newsletter</li> <li>• Provides photographic support</li> <li>• Coordinates grand openings</li> </ul>
Community Outreach Coordinator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervises the special events program</li> <li>• Serves as liaison between the Department and the “Friends of the Parks” groups.</li> <li>• Supervises and evaluates assigned staff; directs work assignments; completes performance appraisals</li> <li>• Manages the recruitment and implementation of a department wide volunteer program</li> <li>• Manages planning and promotion of large scale special events for the department and community, as assigned</li> <li>• Handles special projects such as the CAPRA accreditation efforts of the Department.</li> <li>• Researches, develops, promotes and writes grants, partnerships, alliances, and sponsorships for the department.</li> <li>• Develops, implements and evaluates fund raising efforts</li> <li>• Manages, promotes and evaluates the department Internship Program</li> <li>• Maintains community outreach partnerships and establishes new ones to effectively address community needs</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Program Specialist, Volunteers	1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruits volunteers for department activities and programs; develops and maintains positive relationships with community organizations</li> <li>• Works with staff to assess volunteer needs for programs and facilities; promotes needs to groups and individuals</li> <li>• Oversees the volunteer management software; maintains data base and develops related reports</li> <li>• Manages background screening programs for volunteers; develops and implements related policies and procedures</li> <li>• Assists with department and site specific volunteer training</li> <li>• Plans, organizes and implements annual volunteer recognition event</li> <li>• Uses social media to recruit and promote volunteerism in the department</li> <li>• Manages large scale volunteer events such as the annual MLK Day of Service</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Program Specialist, Special Events	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with groups wishing to use a County park.</li> <li>• Issues permits that outline “conditions of use” of the parks.</li> <li>• Reviews applications for groups’ uses of parks; determines whether there are issues that require further discussion or clarification.</li> <li>• Ensures that groups possess proper insurance.</li> <li>• Conducts pre-event walk-throughs with applicants to ensure common understanding of terms of use.</li> <li>• Follows up with event coordinators to collect any uncollected expenses.</li> <li>• Works with parents and/or caregivers when ADA program modifications are necessary.</li> <li>• Manages the volunteer program while Volunteer Coordinator position is vacant, conducting background checks.</li> <li>• Serves as primary department contact for all programmatic and facility issues related to ADA and accessibility.</li> <li>• Works with facility staff and organizing groups to permit and implement special events in department parks and facilities.</li> <li>• Works in conjunction with other staff to plan, implement and evaluate department special events.</li> <li>• Manages all expenses related to outside special events and invoices organizing groups accordingly.</li> <li>• Serves as the department liaison for long term agreements for facility and park usage with outside groups</li> <li>• Plans and develops programs for special needs populations.</li> <li>• Works in conjunction with programming division staff to coordinate and conduct programs for special needs populations.</li> <li>• Works with staff from programming divisions to plan inclusive programs and to accommodate individuals with disabilities into general programs. Manages all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) related support staff.</li> <li>• Serves as department representative on various special needs committees/organizations.</li> </ul>

## **6. RECREATION DIVISION**

The following section provides an overview of the Recreation Division of the Leisure Services Department.

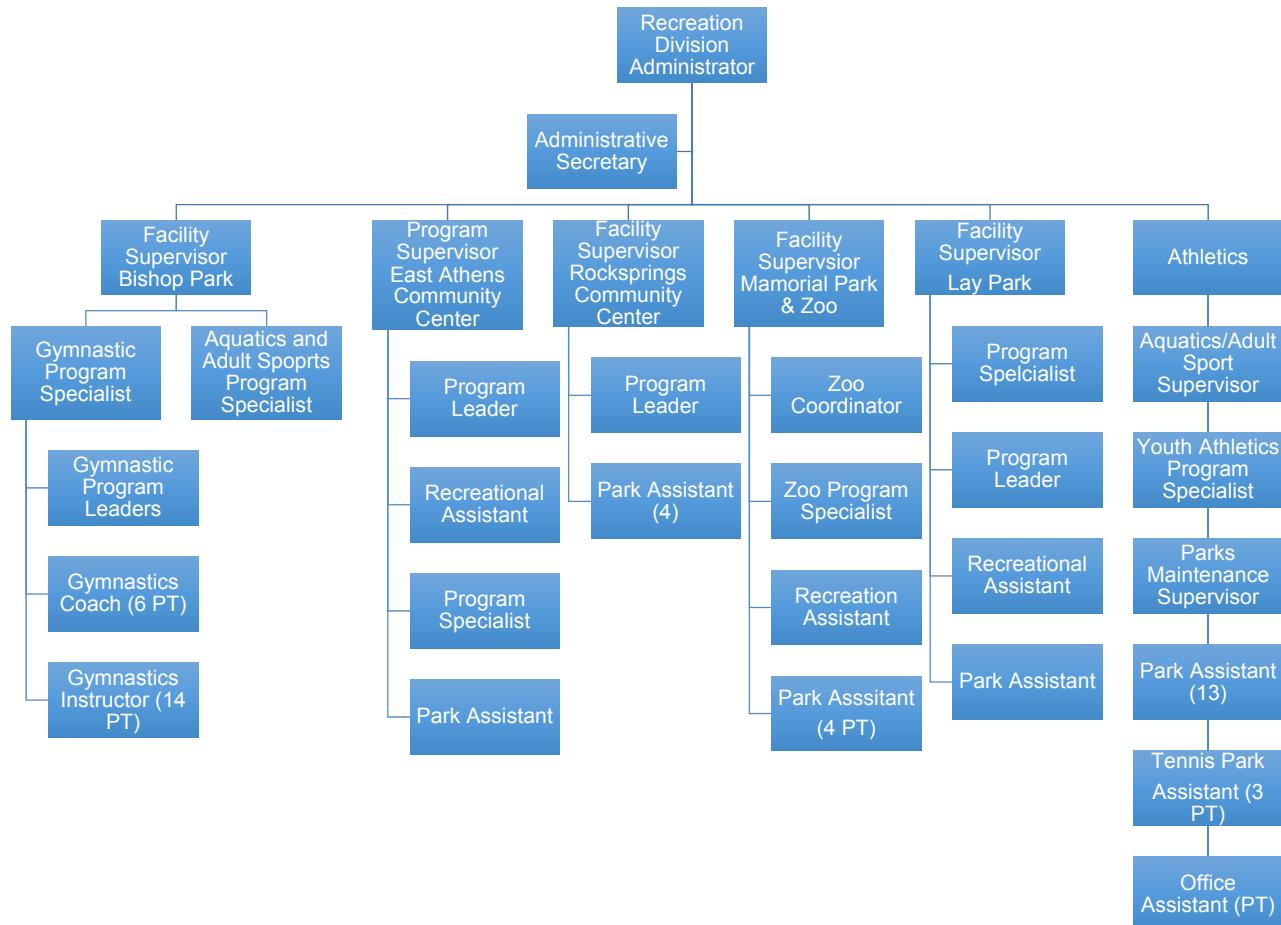
### **(1) Overview**

The Recreation Division is responsible for youth and adult recreational programming, including gymnastics, aquatics, tennis, after school programming, summer camps, and others. The Division is also responsible for the programming at three community centers, as well as at the Memorial Park and Zoo, which houses native Georgia wildlife.

### **(2) Organizational Structure**

The following organizational chart provides an overview of the organizational structure and staffing allocation of the Recreation Division.

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**(3) Summary Description of Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
<b>Administration</b>			
Division Administrator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports to Leisure Services Department Director, with 7 direct reports, 23 FTE positions with over 150 seasonal and part-time personnel.</li> <li>Directs Recreation Division including recreation centers, aquatics, athletics, gymnastics, afterschool classes and camps, and various facilities.</li> <li>Directs and manages division goals and objectives, budget, policies and procedures, human resource functions, program planning and evaluation of division services.</li> <li>Oversees three community centers and various multi-use parks and programs and facilities including afterschool programs, camps, classes, holiday events and open play opportunities and facility rental programs.</li> <li>Oversees aquatics programming at 5 pool and 2 splash pads including lessons, lap swim, open swim, camps and classes and swim team programs.</li> <li>Oversees sports programs unit including adult sports leagues, youth sports programs, gymnastics and tennis programs housed at Bishop Park, Southeast Clarke Park, Holland Youth Sports Complex, Satterfield Park, and the Tennis Center</li> <li>Oversees operation at Memorial Park including event space, Zoo, amphitheater, and programs.</li> <li>Maintains partnerships with outside sports leagues using fields and facilities.</li> <li>Reviews and makes initial approval of all timesheets and contract labor hour vouchers in Division</li> <li>Approves purchases made via P-card or thought invoicing for all divisional facilities. Oversees divisional budgets.</li> <li>Serves as division liaison to related governmental, nonprofit, and community organizations.</li> <li>Coordinates recreation division maintenance with Park Services Division.</li> <li>Oversees the system administrator (Bishop Park Facility Supervisor) for the Rec1 information system and assists with oversight of the program and data.</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Administrative Secretary	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides administrative support to the personnel in the Division.</li> <li>Answers phones.</li> <li>Files correspondence.</li> <li>Maintains records and contracts.</li> <li>Reviews and approves or denies all scholarship applications received by Divisional staff, totaling over 1000 in any given year.</li> <li>Schedules staff meetings and staff appreciation activities</li> <li>Orders office supplies and maintains inventory of supplies at Memorial Park.</li> <li>Reconciles all p-card receipts with Bank of America and pays all Divisional invoices.</li> <li>Reviews and checks timesheets for Divisional employees and contract labor vouchers.</li> <li>Processes refunds and transfers.</li> </ul>
<b>Bishop Park</b>			
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees and is responsible for the operation of activities and programs at Bishop Park.</li> <li>Develops schedules of staff hours.</li> <li>Supervises, trains and evaluates staff.</li> <li>Serves as primary point of contact for patrons of the parks; assists patrons in resolving any issues, and answers questions.</li> <li>Incumbent serves as Departmental system administrator of the Rec 1 registration software, and provides technical assistance for all registration periods.</li> <li>Administers the facility budget.</li> </ul>
Gymnastics Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In charge of the gymnastics program at the park, with approximately 400 youth participants each semester; focuses on instructional classes and competitive team gymnastics.</li> <li>Hires, coordinates, trains, supervises and evaluates all part time gymnastics staff.</li> <li>Coordinates and trains staff.</li> </ul>
Gymnastics Program Leader	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists Program Specialist with coordination of the Gymnastics programming, part-time staff supervision, and instructs classes and programs</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Aquatics and Adult Sports Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedules fall and spring softball and soccer, employee sports (bowling, volleyball)</li> <li>Schedules the Dolphin swim team and serves as its liaison.</li> <li>Oversees contract labor scorekeepers and officials and prepares their contracts each year.</li> <li>Manages the operations and staff of all aquatic facilities and trains aquatics staff before the beginning of the pool season.</li> <li>Conducts lifeguard certification classes, First Aid &amp; CPR classes and schedules all Red Cross equipment for the Department</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff	34	34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aquatics staff managing and assisting with the operations of pools and splashpads. Includes pool managers, assistant pool managers, lifeguards and pool clerks.</li> </ul>
Park Assistant (PT)	4	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some Park Assistants work from 9:00 am till 1:00 pm. Others work 4:30 pm till closing.</li> <li>First shift workers book rentals, accept payments for rentals, process scholarships, assist with aquatics passes, answer phones, file correspondence, etc.</li> <li>Second shift workers clean up after adult softball, lock up gates, pick up and empty trash, monitor the parks</li> </ul>
<b>Lay Park Community Center</b>			
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directs and oversees the staff and the programming at Lay Park. The facility is open from 8:00 am till 9:00 pm M-F, from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm on Saturday, and from 2:00 pm till 6:00 pm on Sunday.</li> <li>Ensures that all policies of the Center are observed.</li> <li>Supervises, supports, assists and schedules staff.</li> <li>Ensures the security of the Community Center.</li> <li>May assist in receiving and accounting for fees for service.</li> <li>Oversees and approves programs at the Center.</li> <li>Administers the facility budget.</li> </ul>
Recreation Assistant	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answers phones and manages front desk operations, greeting and assisting visitors.</li> <li>Reserves the facility for rentals, etc.</li> <li>Takes payments for programs and services and prepares deposits.</li> <li>Maintains attendance and volunteer records.</li> </ul>
Program Leader	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans, conducts and leads programs at the Center</li> <li>Determines supplies and materials needed for programs, and makes supply purchases..</li> <li>Supervises youth in after school educational and recreational activities.</li> <li>Assists with summer day camp programming.</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans, conducts and leads programs at the Center</li> <li>Determines supplies and materials needed for programs and makes supply purchases.</li> <li>Supervises youth in after school educational and recreational activities.</li> <li>Oversees the summer day camp programming</li> <li>Transports program participants when necessary</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff	12	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists in operation of the summer camp for 6 to 12 year olds</li> </ul>
Park Assistant	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides supervision on nights and weekends and enforces facility rules. Answers phones</li> <li>Assists patrons at the Center</li> <li>Assists with sign in/sign out</li> </ul>
<b>East Athens Community Center</b>			
Program Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directs and oversees the staff and the programming at East Athens Community Center. The facility is open from 8:00 am till 9:00 pm M-F, from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm on Saturday, and from 2:00 pm till 6:00 pm on Sunday.</li> <li>Ensures that all policies of the Center are observed.</li> <li>Supervises, supports, assists and schedules staff.</li> <li>Ensures the security of the Community Center.</li> <li>May assist in receiving and accounting for fees for service.</li> <li>Oversees and approves programs at the Center.</li> <li>Administers the facility budget.</li> </ul>
Recreational Assistant	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answers phones and manages front desk operations, greeting and assisting visitors.</li> <li>Reserves the facility for rentals , etc.</li> <li>Takes payments for programs and services, prepares deposits</li> <li>Maintains attendance and volunteer records</li> </ul>
Program Leader	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans, conducts and leads programs at the Center</li> <li>Determines supplies and materials needed for programs and makes supply purchases.</li> <li>Supervises youth in after school educational and recreational activities.</li> </ul>
Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans, conducts and leads programs at the Center</li> <li>Determines supplies and materials needed for programs and makes supply purchases.</li> <li>Supervises youth in after school, educational, and recreational activities.</li> <li>Oversees the summer day camp programming</li> <li>Transports program participants when necessary</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff	12	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists in operation of the summer camp for 6 to 12 year olds</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Park Assistant (PT)	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answers phones</li> <li>• Assists patrons at the Center</li> <li>• Assists with sign in/sign out</li> <li>• Provides supervision on nights and weekends and enforces facility rules.</li> </ul>
<b>Rocksprings Community Center</b>			
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs and oversees the staff and the programming at Rocksprings Community Center. The facility is open from 9:00 am-6:00 pm pm M-F. Summer hours reflect the hours of Summer Day Camp.</li> <li>• Ensures that all policies of the Center are observed.</li> <li>• Supervises, supports, assists evaluates, and schedules staff.</li> <li>• Ensures the security of the Community Center.</li> <li>• May assist in receiving and accounting for fees for service.</li> <li>• Develops and approves programs at the Center.</li> <li>• Administers the facility budget.</li> </ul>
Program Leader	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans, conducts and leads programs at the Center</li> <li>• Determines supplies and materials needed for programs and purchases program supplies.</li> <li>• Supervises youth in after school educational and recreational activities.</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff	8	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assists in operation of the summer camp for 6 to 12 year olds.</li> </ul>
Park Assistant	4	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides supervision on nights and weekends and enforces facility rules.</li> <li>• Answers phones</li> <li>• Assists patrons at the Center</li> <li>• Assists with sign in/sign out</li> </ul>
<b>Memorial Park and Zoo</b>			
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs and oversees the staff and the programming at Memorial Park and Zoo. The park and zoo are open from 8:00 am till sunset, Sunday-Saturday. Office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00 am -5:00 pm.</li> <li>• Ensures that all policies of the Park and Zoo are observed.</li> <li>• Supervises, supports, assists and schedules staff.</li> <li>• Ensures the security of the Park and Zoo.</li> <li>• May assist in receiving and accounting for fees for service.</li> <li>• Develops and approves programs at the Park and Zoo.</li> <li>• Oversees annual contract with UGA Veterinary Hospital that ensures that all animals get annual physicals and needed medical treatment.</li> <li>• Oversees necessary training and permits of Zoo staff.</li> <li>• Administers the facility budget.</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Recreational Assistant			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answers phones</li> <li>Reserves the facility for rentals, recreation hall, picnic shelter, etc.</li> <li>Takes payments for programs and services and prepares deposits.</li> </ul>
Zoo Coordinator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures the proper care of animals. Obtains medical assistance for animals as required.</li> <li>Researches proper diets for animals.</li> <li>Serves as the primary liaison with the UGA Veterinary School</li> <li>Trains and supervises volunteers who are studying wildlife; ensures that volunteers follow procedures.</li> <li>Oversees the activities of interns at the Zoo.</li> <li>Secures and maintains necessary permits and certification for zoo operations.</li> <li>Oversees all zoo events</li> </ul>
Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedules group visits to the Park and Zoo</li> <li>Teaches programs such as environmental education; designs custom programs such as for group, school, or scout programs on reptiles, endangered species, etc.</li> <li>Oversees the work of volunteer docents.</li> <li>Plans and coordinates all zoo programming and events.</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff	14	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists in operation of the summer camp for 6 to 12 year olds and zoo camp. Includes camp directors and counselors.</li> </ul>
Park Assistant	4	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two are in the Zoo, and two are in the Park.</li> <li>Answer telephones and takes reservations.</li> <li>Cleans the grounds at the Park and the Zoo.</li> <li>Sets up rental areas with tables and chairs and breaks down after rentals. Cleans picnic shelters between rentals.</li> <li>Assists with staffing after-hours rentals and programs.</li> <li>Enforces rules and park policies.</li> <li>When assigned to zoo, cleans animal areas, prepares diets, locks up/opens zoo, animal training/enrichment, animal encounters and school tours, and general cleaning and maintenance.</li> </ul>
<b>Southeast Clarke Park and Tennis Center</b>			

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Aquatics/Adult Sports Program Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reports to Recreation Division Administrator</li> <li>Supervises program specialist positions and the parks maintenance supervisor for athletic fields</li> <li>Oversees youth sports camps including soccer and basketball</li> <li>Supervisors part-time and seasonal employees, contractual instructors, and volunteers</li> <li>Coordinates with outside non-profit youth sports organizations including Little League, football and soccer programs who use fields</li> <li>Ensures personnel, contractors and volunteers meet background certification requirements for working with youth</li> <li>Oversees operations, staffing, and programming at Tennis Center, Southeast Clarke Park, Satterfield Park, Holland Youth Sports Complex, and Trail Creek Park</li> <li>Administers the facilities' budgets.</li> </ul>
Youth Athletics Programs Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures contractors meet background certification requirements for working with youth</li> <li>Plans and executes in-house youth athletic programming and leagues in soccer, basketball, sports time, and summer camps in cheerleading, triathlon, skateboarding, and soccer.</li> <li>Trains volunteer coaches and ensures all required concussion, child abuse reporting, and background checks are completed before coaches begin.</li> </ul>
Tennis Center Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees operation of Tennis Center with 12-lighted hard courts and tennis programming at all Leisure Services sites</li> <li>Supervises full range of tennis programs including lessons, clinics, tournaments, summer camps, and workshops for youth through adults</li> <li>Supervises 10 contract tennis instructors and prepares their contracts</li> <li>Coordinates rental of facilities for tennis leagues</li> <li>Serves as a tournament director when necessary for tennis tournaments</li> </ul>
Office Assistant (PT)	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answers phone, takes reservations and payments and provides assistance to facility patrons. Maintains records and prepares deposits.</li> </ul>

<b>Position(s)</b>	<b>No. of Positions</b>		<b>Key Roles and Responsibilities</b>
	<b>Auth</b>	<b>Cur.</b>	
Parks Maintenance Supervisor (Athletic Fields)	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develops and manages the part-time facility preparation staff, and ensures that appropriate levels of service are performed.</li><li>Manually grooms, lines, chalks athletic fields for practices and games. Rebuilds pitcher's mounds, fills in infield dirt, and edges field areas as necessary to maintain safe play surfaces.</li><li>Conducts periodic inspections of fields, as well as the work performed by part-time field prep staff. Coordinates with Landscape Management on larger scale field maintenance projects.</li><li>Provides on-site supervision at Holland Youth Sports Complex.</li></ul>
Park Assistant (PT)	16		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Field Prep park assistants work in a crew to line and chalk athletic fields for games and practices and removing water and debris from fields following inclement weather.</li><li>Other park assistants are assigned to supervise activities and enforce rules at Trail Creek Park, Holland, Satterfield, and Southeast Clarke Park on evenings and weekends.</li><li>Tennis Center park assistants work at the front desk of the facility during evening and weekend hours providing patrons with assistance, answering phone calls, and accepting payments for resale items and registrations.</li></ul>

## **7. ARTS AND NATURE DIVISION**

The following section provides an overview of the Arts and Nature Division of the Leisure Services Department.

### **(1) Overview**

The Arts and Nature Division of the Leisure Services Department provides cultural enrichment to visitors to the Lyndon House Arts Center, Morton Theatre, East Athens Dance Center and to the Sandy Creek Nature Center.

The rehabilitated Morton Theatre seats 500 and is supported in part by the Morton Theatre Corporation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The theatre operates as a rental facility hosting live theatre, public ceremonies, music concerts, church services, weddings, dance concerts, film screenings, receptions, seminars, awards shows, pageants, community events, and more.

The Lyndon House Arts Center benefits residents of the County by providing gallery

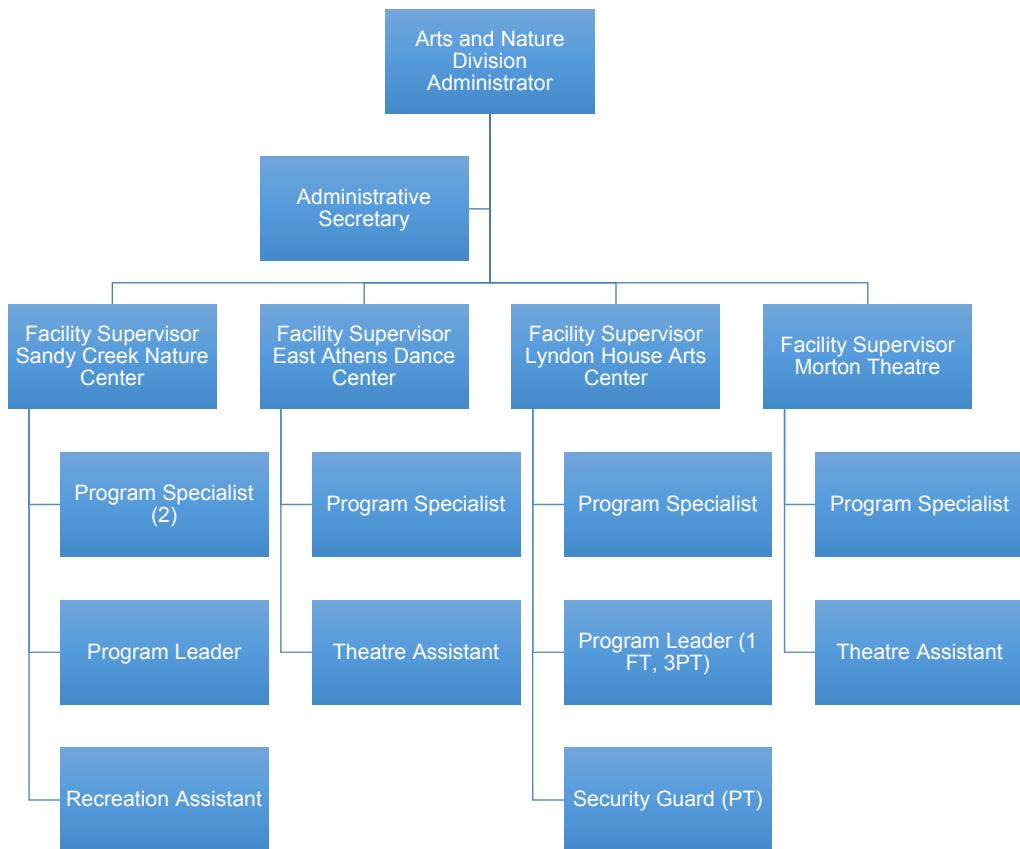
exhibitions, historic house museum, festivals, workshops, art meetings, special events, and art classes. The Lyndon House was renovated and expanded through SPLOST funds and was re-opened in 1999.

The renovated East Athens Educational Dance Center opened in 2005, and offers a variety of dance classes for youth and adults. The Center is comprised of 15,500 square feet of space and includes dance studios and a 5,000 square foot multipurpose area. The Center also has an audio-visual sound system.

The Sandy Creek Nature Center is comprised of 225 acres of woodlands and wetlands with over 4 miles of trails, including an ADA interpretive trail and connections to the North Oconee River Greenway and Cook's Trail. The Education and Visitor Center includes live reptiles, amphibians, marine and freshwater aquariums, interactive natural history exhibits, and an incredible resource library, all housed in an eco-friendly building. There is also a circa 1815 log house and several wildlife observation areas on site.

## **(2)      Organizational Structure**

The following organizational chart provides an overview of the organizational structure and staffing allocation of the Arts and Nature Division.



**(3) Summary Description of Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
<b>Administration</b>			
Division Administrator	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs and oversees the operations of the Arts and Nature Division of the Department.</li> <li>• Develops budgets for the Division.</li> <li>• In concert with staff, makes programming decisions at all Arts and Nature facilities.</li> <li>• Manages and evaluates staff.</li> <li>• Prepares and implements divisional short and long term goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Serves as the primary contact between the Division and County not-for-profit and private organizations.</li> <li>• Negotiates, drafts, reviews and recommends contracts and agreements.</li> <li>• Serves as the primary person in the Division in the Department's initiative to attain CAPRA accreditation.</li> <li>• Researches, writes, manages and administers donations and grants for program and facility enhancements.</li> </ul>

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Administrative Secretary	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes determination on whether scholarship applications meet required guidelines (e.g., income, number in household, etc.)</li> <li>Tracks internal expenditures to provide up-to-date budgets</li> <li>Attends Supervisor meeting to record and distribute minutes</li> <li>Collects timesheets and tracks payroll expenditures for the Division</li> <li>Responsible for issuing program refunds with Administrator's approval</li> <li>Assists division facilities with programming as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Sandy Creek Nature Center</b>			
Facility Supervisor <i>Sandy Creek Nature Center</i>	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administers the operations of the Sandy Creek Nature Center, serving as the primary point of contact for communications.</li> <li>Discusses new programs with staff, and makes decisions regarding how and whether to proceed.</li> <li>Develops and monitors the budget for the Center.</li> <li>Recruits and trains staff and volunteers.</li> <li>Assists customers at the Center.</li> </ul>
Program Specialist	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These positions are alternatively referred to as "Naturalists."</li> <li>Educate patrons of the Center regarding the wildlife and vegetation at the Center.</li> <li>Supports the development of programs.</li> <li>Performs maintenance on the trails.</li> </ul>
Animal Caretaker	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repairs and maintains animal collection and the five major exhibits.</li> <li>Performs graphic design.</li> </ul>
Recreation Assistant	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serves as Receptionist at the Center.</li> <li>Performs bookkeeping functions.</li> <li>Registers program participants.</li> <li>Assists in preparing for programs and exhibits.</li> <li>Opens and closes the building.</li> </ul>
Seasonal Staff	14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists in operation of the summer camp for 7 to 12 year old children, and Teen camp.</li> </ul>
Intern	2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each of the two interns works 20 hours per week. Work part time from Tuesday through Friday, and full time on Saturday.</li> <li>Conducts birthday parties for children.</li> <li>Assists in event and exhibit preparation.</li> </ul>
<b>East Athens Educational Dance Center</b>			

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Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinates the provision of dance classes</li> <li>Discusses new programs and classes with staff, and makes decisions regarding how and whether to proceed.</li> <li>Develops and monitors the budget for the Dance Center.</li> <li>Recruits and trains staff.</li> <li>Assists customers at the Dance Center.</li> </ul>
Program Specialist	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teaches dance classes</li> <li>Works with instructors teaching classes at the Dance Center</li> </ul>
Theatre Assistant	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assists patrons with registration</li> <li>Ensures that dance instructors sign in/sign out</li> <li>Processes paperwork</li> <li>Answers phones</li> </ul>
<b>Lyndon House Arts Center</b>			
Program Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees the operations of the 40,000 sq ft Lyndon House.</li> <li>Oversees and approves exhibits in the Lyndon House.</li> <li>Markets the Lyndon House and its programs and events to the public through social media, flyers, web site, monthly newsletter.</li> <li>Oversees the planning and presentation of events at the Lyndon House, such as the Anchor Show, Hands-On Art for Kinds, classes for adults, the Gallery Shop, and others.</li> <li>Manages the expense and revenue budgets of the Lyndon House.</li> </ul>
Program Specialist	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One Program Specialist coordinates and provides art education.</li> <li>One Program Specialist coordinates and manages art exhibits.</li> </ul>
Program Leader FT Program Leader PT	1 3	1 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The full time Program Leader greets the public, completes daily revenue reports from gallery sales, coordinates business operations on the floor, and records attendance at the Lyndon House and oversees rentals of the facility.</li> <li>One part time Program Leader works in the exhibit area, managing the gallery shops and setting up exhibits. One part time Program Leader works in the education area, teaching 7-11 year old children in spring break and summer camps. One part time PL works with communications and social media. One part time PL oversees the new Open Studio Membership program.</li> <li>One PT Program Leader works 25 hours per week on a flexible schedule throughout the year. One works 16-17 hours per week for approximately 44 weeks in the years, and the third works 30 hours per week for eight (8) weeks during summer camp.</li> </ul>

Position(s)	No. of Positions		Key Roles and Responsibilities
	Auth	Cur.	
Security Guard PT	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works Tue and Thur, 5:00 pm till 9:00 pm (additional hours as necessary)</li> <li>• Observes activities at the Lyndon House, reporting any illegal or unusual activities in or around the House.</li> </ul>
<b>Morton Theatre</b>			
Facility Supervisor	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for the daily operations of the Morton Theatre.</li> <li>• Plans and schedules staff time at the Theatre.</li> <li>• Coordinates rentals of the Theatre.</li> </ul>
Program Specialist	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaches classes and coordinates with instructors.</li> <li>• Prepares objectives for programs and events at the Theater.</li> <li>• Coordinates the use of volunteers at the Theater.</li> <li>• Creates publicity materials for Theater.</li> <li>• One Specialist oversees all technical aspects of the Morton Theatre and its renters.</li> <li>• Develops, implements and evaluates theater programming. Oversees rentals of Morton Theatre and Quinn Hall.</li> </ul>
Theater Assistant	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist with facility rental contracts.</li> <li>• Receive monies for ticket sales.</li> <li>• Post events and other communications on social media.</li> <li>• Prepares office correspondence.</li> <li>• Assists in planning and implementing theater productions.</li> <li>• May oversee the work of volunteers at the Athens Creative Theater, or Morton Theater.</li> <li>• Creates publicity materials for Theatre</li> <li>• Theatre Assistant assigned to ACT programs also assists with teaching and the musical and directing aspects of all theatre productions and programs.</li> </ul>

## **8. LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT ASSETS**

The following table provides a summary of the Leisure Services assets through which the ACC provides recreational, athletic, community center, arts, nature and other passive recreational services to its residents and visitors.

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Facility	Description
Ben Burton Park (35 acres)  616 Mitchell Bridge Road	Fishing Nature Trails Canoe/kayak boat launch Picnics
Bishop Park (33 acres)  705 Sunset Drive	Softball Fields Outdoor Basketball Court Paved Walking Path (0.7 miles) Picnic Shelter with 2 sides, seating 50 people per side Kitchen available for rent Playground Pool Tennis Courts (9 outdoor, 2 covered) Aquatics programming Gymnasium –gymnasium programming
Dudley Park (8.5 acres)  100 Dudley Park Drive	Fishing Paved Walking Path Nature Trail
East Athens Community Center  400 McKinney Drive	Multipurpose Fields Outdoor Basketball Court Picnic Shelter with capacity of 25 people Playground Pool Tennis Courts Aquatics programming Full-service kitchen Arts and crafts room Fitness equipment Gymnasium Game room Library resource room Computer lab Meeting/activity rooms
East Athens Educational Dance Center (15,500 square feet dance space)  390 McKinley Drive	3 dance studios Performance hall Rental kitchen Locker room facilities
Greenway	Linear paved corridor for pedestrians and non-motorized Vehicles. Connects parks to people and places.
Holland Youth Sports Complex (62 acres)  250 Vincent Drive	Baseball/Softball Fields Football/Soccer Fields Playground 3 concessions stands

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Facility	Description
Lay Park (7.0 acres)  297 Hoyt Street	Baseball/Softball Fields Outdoor Basketball Court Picnic Shelter (1) accommodates 25 Playground Pool Tennis Courts Aquatics programming Fitness equipment Computer lab Game Room Resource library Arts and crafts room Gymnasium Full service kitchen Meeting/activity rooms
Lyndon House Arts Center  293 Hoyt Street	Arts Classes Crafts Gift Shop Historic House Museum Art Exhibitions Festivals 5 arts galleries Art studios Children's studio Rental space – community room, lounge, catering, kitchen, atrium Historic gardens
Memorial Park (72 acres)  293 Gran Ellen Drive	Outdoor Basketball Court Dog Park Lake Fishing Birchmore Trail – 1.3 miles Lake Path - .375 miles Picnic Shelter (3) each with 6 tables, each accommodating 50 Playground Pool Nature Trail Bear Hollow Zoo – free admission Quin Hall – flexible performing arts area Aquatics programming Recreation hall with kitchen for programming and rentals
Morton Theatre  195 West Washington Street	Theatre (500 seats) for in house programming and rentals Dance Concerts Live Concerts Meetings, Receptions, Conferences Plays, performances Reception or concessions area with kitchen
North Oconee River Greenway	Fishing Paved Walking Path Nature Trails Picnics

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Facility	Description
North Oconee River Park (20 acres)  MLK Parkway	Fishing Nature Trails Paved walk path Picnics
Reese and Pope Park  395 Pope Street	Outdoor Basketball Court Picnic Shelter (1) accommodates 30 Playground
Rocksprings Park (5 acres)  291 Henderson Ext.	Outdoor Basketball Court Picnic Pavilion with grill, accommodating 40 Playground Pool Splash Pad Aquatics programming Computer Lab Game Room Multipurpose ball field Arts and crafts room Senior programming room Multipurpose room for programs and rentals
Sandy Creek Nature Center (225 acres)  205 Old Commerce Road	Picnic Shelter/outdoor classroom (1) on first come first served basis  ADA Interpretive Trail (0.2 miles), walker and wheelchair accessible  Brick Factory Loop an Log House Loop Claypit Pond Trail (0.5 miles) Crossridge Trail (0.1 miles) Hooded Warbler Trail (0.2 miles) Kestral Trail (0.7 miles) Kingfisher Pond Trail (0.3 miles) Levee Trail (0.9 miles) Oconee Trail (0.2 miles) Pine Ridge Trail (0.4 miles) Exhibit hall Planetarium Educational classrooms Gift shop Historic log cabin Walker Hall and Fireside cabin programming and rental space

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Facility	Description
Sandy Creek Park (782 acres)  205 Bob Holman Road	Multipurpose fields Outdoor Basketball Court Dog Park Fishing lake Buckeye Horse Trail (4.1 miles) Picnic Shelters and large group pavilions (7) Playground Lakeside Trail Tennis Courts Swim beach (open all year) – boating on Lake Chapman (260 acres) Canoe/kayak rentals Meeting room/multipurpose space with kitchen Campfire ring Boat launch Fishing docs and pier Disc golf course Sand volleyball court Picnic grounds
Satterfield Park (13 acres)  3208 Cherokee Park	Baseball/Softball Fields Playground Tennis Courts Concessions stand
Southeast Clarke Park (124 acres)  4440 Lexington Road	Baseball/Softball Fields Dog Park Football/Soccer Field Paved Walking Path Picnic Shelter (1) one accommodates 30 Playground Walking Path (0.6 miles) Tennis Courts Skate Park Nearby (14,000 square feet) Concessions stand Nature trails
Tennis Center  4460 Lexington Road	Tennis Courts (12) Pro Shop Outdoor Event Space Meeting room
Trail Creek Park (113 acres)  200 Trail Creek Street	Baseball/Softball Fields Mountain Bike Trail (1.7 miles) Paved Walking Path Picnic Shelter Playground Splash Pad Nature Trails Outdoor Fitness Zone Meeting room

## **APPENDIX B - DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT OF THE LEISURE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

While the Performance Audit for the Leisure Services Department is designed to provide an analysis of operations, organizational structure, and staffing, a comparison to “best practices” represents an important step for the project team to report findings and issues. In order to make the assessments of operational strengths and improvement opportunities, the project team developed a set of performance measures which we call “best management practices” against which to evaluate the Department and its component divisions.

The measures utilized have been derived from the project team’s experience and represent the following ways to identify organizational strengths as well as improvement opportunities:

- Statements of “effective practices” based on the study team’s experience in evaluating operations in other agencies or “industry standards” from other research organizations.
- Identification of whether and how the Department meets the performance targets.
- A brief description of potential alternatives to current practice.

In completing this best practices assessment for the Department, certain themes emerged. And although the Leisure Services Department meets or exceeds best practices in many areas, the following are points that the project team wishes to stress at this time, in preparation for the development of the draft final report.

**ADMINISTRATION**

The Leisure Services Department does not have a strategic plan to guide decision-making. As this is a standard of accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the Department should embark on a strategic planning process in the very near future.

The Division should cross-train its staff to cover for absences, and to ensure a full understanding of all processes.

The Department has not established comprehensive performance measures in its divisions, or as an organization. The reporting of achievement of specific performance goals is a critical component of strategic planning, and the department should begin to establish these measures.

The Department follows the recently-completed pricing study completed by a consulting firm, however it is only recovering between 15% and 16% of its programmatic costs. The last pricing policy approved by the Mayor and Commission was in 2006.

The Department does not have a safety plan in place.

The Department has not focused attention on its “branding.” Branding should be focused on relating the values of the Department, its people and programs, and should be viewed as a strategic element rather than a tactical one.

The various divisions are responsible for posting content on their web pages. This risks creating a non-standard message, and conflicts with the objective of “branding” the Department more successfully.

The Department has not focused on soliciting sponsorships for, e.g., bridges, scholarships for children and families, etc. This should be a focus of the Director to minimize the impact on fees and on the general fund appropriation to the Department.

**PARKS SERVICES**

With over 40 miles of trails and 77 bridges, and two full time and two part time employees, the Trails and Open Space section of the Division is unable to inspect its areas of responsibility more than monthly.

Maintenance of the parks is fragmented among multiple agencies, which can lead to uncoordinated maintenance, and a lack of accountability for the overall appearance of parks.

Although the Division has made a commendable effort in instituting an electronic spreadsheet-based work order system, it is not robust enough to function as an enterprise-wide system, and cannot function as a comprehensive asset management system.

The Division, and in fact the Department, has not developed a comprehensive outsourcing policy.

#### **RECREATION**

The Department's fee structure is essentially unchanged from 2006, and is failing to recover the targeted 20% overall.

The Department's scholarship program has numerous deficiencies. It is contributing to the relatively low cost recovery ratio, and it is also resulting in frequent instances in which scholarship recipients are failing to attend programs for which they are registered, keeping others from attending in their place.

The Division should communicate community center programs and schedules more clearly on its web site.

#### **ARTS AND NATURE**

Some studios at Lyndon House Arts Center (e.g., welding, dark room, clay room, etc.) cannot be opened to the public due to lack of staff to supervise and monitor them, and to ensure that there are adequate materials available for the patrons

Although the Division's web site is functional, it does not offer a great deal of description for classes and programs, which are generally one-sentence descriptions without graphics or pictures of participants engaged in the particular class.

The Division should collect and analyze data regarding the average numbers of patrons by hour and by day of the week at the Arts Center in order to determine whether altering hours of operation is feasible and desirable.

In the following pages, the project team provides a more detailed analysis of the Department's performance against best management practices for each of its divisions.

## 1. ADMINISTRATION

Performance Target	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>		
The Department has developed a strategic plan to guide operations and provide direction for future initiatives.		<p>Although the Department recently engaged in a master planning process, facilitated by a third party, it has not developed a strategic plan to guide operations and provide direction for future initiatives. The development and adoption of a strategic plan are standards for accreditation by CAPRA, which the Department is attempting to obtain. Specifically, the accreditation standard states:</p> <p>“An agency shall have a strategic plan, approved by the approving authority, stating how the agency will achieve its mission, goals, and objectives over an extended period of time, typically three to five years. The strategic plan shall be reviewed annually. The goals and objectives of the plan shall be measurable to demonstrate progress and results. The strategic plan shall support the priorities and initiatives of the whole organization. The strategic plan is a tool to implement the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan.”</p>
The Department has centralized the budgeting effort and aligned the operating and capital budgeting effort with strategic goals and objectives.	The Department has centralized the budgeting effort within the Administrative Division. The Leisure Services Department (LCD) is one of only a few County departments with a dedicated financial/budgetary function separate from the County Finance Department.	There are no explicitly stated goals and objective, as there is no strategic plan.

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Performance Target	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Financial staff are cross-trained for critical accounting and financial purposes.		The Budget Technician and the Senior Administrative Assistant (HR/Payroll) are not fully cross-trained. Cross-training should be viewed as a critical element of operations to ensure continuity of service provision. This is especially true in small organizations such as the Administration Division in which there are only two clerical staff members.
Operating budgets provide readable, comprehensive information on budgeted expenditures, staffing, and revenue, and the goals and objectives and performance measures.	<p>The County operating budget provides readable information, and provides the Department's mission, goals and objectives for the coming fiscal year. The budget also provides the reader with explanations regarding budget changes and highlights.</p> <p>The budget also provides some performance measures.</p>	<p>The County budget does not provide great detail regarding divisional expenditures, with only summary level budget figures provided for each. Nor does it provide a breakdown of revenues, with only a single line providing the reader with the total collections for the Department.</p> <p>There are only a few performance measures provided in the Annual Operating and Capital Budget document, and these may be more accurately classified as workload and inventory measures. For example, the number of acres managed/maintained is provided, but there are no measures related to the efficiency with which the acreage was maintained.</p>
Operating and capital expenditures are monitored on an ongoing basis to assure actual expenditures do not exceed the authorized budget.	The Department has dedicated staff who monitor the budget on a daily basis. This primarily accomplished by the Finance Administrator.	
The Department has an established fund reserve policy.	The Department maintains a 10% to 15% contingency for capital projects.	

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Performance Target	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<p>The Department has established cost recovery goals for certain functions (i.e. – enterprise services) and has established fees at a level sufficient for the designated operation to be self-funding.</p>	<p>The Department recently contracted with a consultant to develop a cost recovery model. This model was based on a “pyramid” structure that outlined varying cost recovery targets for the Department’s different programs, and for the clientele within these programs. The overall goal was established at 20% cost recovery.</p>	<p>The cost recovery model was not adopted, and the Department is reportedly charging fees that were charged in 2006.</p> <p>The Department is achieving only 15% to 16% of total programmatic costs on a Department-wide basis.</p>
<p>The Administration Division provides information to other divisions of the Department to help monitor budget versus actual expenditures. Financial performance is reviewed periodically.</p>	<p>For General Fund budget management purposes, Division Administrators (DA) and staff can query cost center budget balances real-time using the County’s EDEN financial system. Each month-end, Finance sends out cost center budget balance reporting (which comes out around the 10th after prior month closed). The LSD Finance Administrator generates reporting at the Division and Department levels each month-end, creates forecasts and dashboard reporting, and holds review meetings with DA’s on current budget performance vs. historical performance (LSD is highly seasonal, therefore it is imperative to look at prior year percentage of budget spent trends).</p>	<p>The financial system only reports percentage of budget spent for current year only - no comparison to prior years, so it has limited usefulness. This requires that the Finance Administrator create other trend reporting formats that are maintained and discussed with the DA’s (i.e., utilities, part-time labor, indirect expenses, revenues, etc.) throughout the fiscal year.</p>
<p>Accounting policies, procedures and systems are in place.</p>	<p>The Leisure Services Department adheres to the accounting and financial policies and procedures of the County, but has adopted specific ones related to cash receipting and deposits and donation boxes.</p>	
<p>Policies, procedures, and work practices are in place to assure the prompt and frequent reconciliation of all cash.</p>	<p>Cash receipts are physically transported to the Finance Administrator and staff on Tuesday and Fridays. The Budget Technician reconciles these on the day they are received</p>	

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Performance Target	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
On-line payments have been implemented to increase public access to Department Services and provide 24/7 access to payment options.	As of November, 2015, participants may register and pay on-line for programs.	
Existence of a Department-wide safety plan.	The Interim Director reports that the Department will be issuing safety procedures to all divisions in the near future.	<p>At the time of the project team's on site assessment, these procedures had not yet been developed or disseminated. There are two elements to this issue. One is that there is no comprehensive safety and risk program within LSD for its employees. The program should include monthly safety meetings particularly for those employees whose job duties require outdoor, or strenuous, work. A Department Safety Coordinator should be appointed who has the responsibility for developing safety meeting agendas, procuring external resources for safety talks, "brown bag" lunch talks, and spot checks of field crews to ensure compliance with safety procedures.</p> <p>The second element to this initiative should be to routinely ensure that parks and trails are safe for patrons. This should include not only rigorous inspections of playground and athletic equipment, but also weekly walk-throughs of trails and natural spaces to ensure that walkways are clear, and that there are no tripping hazards, dangerous overhanging limbs, etc.</p>
<b>MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS</b>		

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Performance Target	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
The Department has developed a consistent brand for Department communications and marketing efforts.	<p>The Department will reportedly be instituting a topic-driven “Talk Tuesday” program in which interested parties may call in to talk about a particular recreational topic.</p> <p>The Department will also reportedly be conducting site-specific public meetings to better connect with the communities.</p>	<p>The Department has not focused attention on its “branding.” Branding should be viewed as distinct from the Department’s marketing efforts. Whereas marketing is focused on effectively announcing and promoting programs and services, “branding” should be viewed as the expression of “who we are” as a Department. Branding should be focused on relating the values of the organization, its people and programs, and should be viewed as a strategic element rather than a tactical one. Whereas marketing may be accomplished by a small core of individuals within LSD, branding must be understood and believed by all employees.</p>
The Department has a centralized effort to provide publications, communications, and marketing efforts to the public.	<p>Some marketing efforts are centralized, such as flyers (done in English and Spanish) sent home with children in the schools. Also the Public Information Officer contacts all faith-based organizations to post programs, services and events.</p> <p>Some specialized marketing is done at the divisional level, as is appropriate.</p>	
Web content is developed with a consistent look and feel throughout the Department.	<p>The divisional web pages are designed with a consistent look and feel. Further, the pages are informative (e.g., Parks Services describes each park, its amenities and features, and has pictures of each), and provide straightforward sub-menus to allow visitors to easily find desired services.</p>	

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Performance Target	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
A comprehensive volunteer recruitment program is in place to augment and support staff efforts.	The recruitment of volunteers is centralized in the Department.	The Volunteer Coordinator position is currently vacant.
A central webmaster is designated to manage the content of the Department's website.	The Public Information Officer monitors all divisional web pages and makes any necessary and appropriate corrections.	The various divisions are responsible for posting content on their web pages. This risks creating a non-standard message, and conflicts with the objective of "branding" the Department more successfully.
The Department actively solicits sponsorships for capital projects, scholarships, and other potential areas.		The Department has not focused on soliciting sponsorships for, e.g., bridges, scholarships for children and families, etc. This should be a focus of the Director to minimize the impact on fees and on the general fund appropriation to the Department.

## 2. PARKS SERVICES

Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Staff periodically inspect the condition of the parks and related facilities.	There are multiple organizations in the County responsible for the condition of parks and facilities, and these are monitored daily by at least one organization.	With over 40 miles of trails and 77 bridges, and two full time and two part time employees, the Trails and Open Space section of the Division is unable to inspect its areas of responsibility more than monthly. Parks conditions are monitored from a maintenance standpoint during working hours, however the Department does not have Park Rangers to ensure compliance with park rules, and to monitor the presence of trash and other debris during evening hours.
Quality standards have been developed for park-related maintenance.	Parks Services is not responsible for all park-related maintenance, however it develops, in conjunction with the County's Central Services Department, a service delivery plan on a bi-annual basis. Central Services is responsible for the landscaped areas in the parks, as well as the facilities with hard roofs. The Recreation Division of the Leisure Services Department is responsible for the lining, mowing and manicuring of athletic fields. The Parks Services Division of LSD is responsible for scoreboards, bleachers, amenities, sidewalks, courts, aquatics facilities, outdoor amphitheater, etc.	Maintenance of the parks is fragmented among multiple agencies, which can lead to uncoordinated maintenance, and a lack of accountability for the overall appearance of parks.

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Levels of service have been developed that define the frequency with which various maintenance tasks are to be performed.	<p>The Division has defined service levels and frequencies, and has developed a dictionary of all assets for which it has responsibility at each park site, facility and trail. The Division is in the process of geo-coding the locations of each of these assets as well.</p> <p>This is a particular strength of the Department, and exceeds best management practices for this function.</p>	
The levels of service provided have been formally adopted and classified as level “A,” level “B,” level “C,” or “level D” (or similar classification system) to ensure a linkage between policy-level decision-making (community expectation) and actual service delivery.		The Division has not defined levels of service in these terms.
The Division keeps a comprehensive list of park-related inventory such as the square feet of turf, linear feet of edging, square feet of sidewalks, number of picnic areas, etc.	The Division has developed a dictionary of all assets for which it has responsibility at each park site, facility and trail. The Division is in the process of geo-coding the locations of each of these assets as well.	
The Division maintains and uses information on the full unit costs of maintenance activities.	Although the Division lacks a custom work order software system, it has developed an electronic spreadsheet system that is used not only to assign work to staff, but captures labor by employee, materials and equipment used for each task assignment. This allows for a reporting of full unit costs for all maintenance activities.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
An annual maintenance calendar has been developed that identifies when seasonal tasks will be performed	Although a formal calendar is not developed, the Division has established maintenance frequency levels for each park and trail for which it has responsibility.	
A computerized maintenance management system (CMMS) is in place to handle and schedule preventive, routine, and emergency maintenance service requests.	The Division has developed an electronic spreadsheet that serves as its CMMS. The Division utilizes this system to record descriptions of work, staff performing the work, location, date, materials and supplies used.	The electronic spreadsheet, while sufficient for use in a relatively small organization such as Parks Services, is not an enterprise-wide solution that, for example, interfaces with the County's Human Resources Information System (HRIS), the accounting system (EDEN) and the GIS. The system is not in use in other divisions of LSD, nor in the County generally. It has served the needs of the Parks Services Division in the recent past, however the lack of interface with other County systems limits its functionality.
Alternative service delivery methods are periodically assessed to determine if there are cost-effective alternative service delivery options.		The Division and, in fact the Department, does not have a standard policy regarding outsourced services. By example, most custodial services in the County are outsourced, however custodial services are provided by staff in the Parks Services Division.
A cost-effective balance between full-time versus part-time and volunteer staff is utilized.	The Division has a very limited staff, and maintain 14 parks and the Greenway, pools, playground inspections, trails, bridges and undeveloped park areas. It supplements its full time staff with a large contingent of seasonal and part time staff, as well as volunteers from such organizations as SORBA, the Weed Warriors, and the Boulevard Woods Neighborhood Association.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<p>The Department makes effective use of pre- and post-emergent chemicals for pest control. This should be part of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program.</p>	<p>Herbicides and pesticides are applied by the Central Services Department.</p>	<p>This is an example of the fragmented nature of the maintenance responsibilities for parks and trails in the County. The maintenance of trails, open space and undeveloped parks areas is nominally the responsibility of the Parks Services Division, however Central Services has responsibility for a vital element of the appearance of these assets, which further complicates the issue of organizational accountability.</p>
<p>Management, supervisory, and line staff have obtained appropriate certification in their profession. Pesticide applicators possess state-required applicators licenses. Pool maintenance personnel are Certified Pool Operators.</p>	<p>As noted above, the Parks Services Division does not apply pesticides and herbicides. This is the purview of Central Services.</p> <p>The Maintenance Crew Leaders and Maintenance Workers II are all Certified Pool Operators.</p> <p>The Division has one Certified Playground Inspector, and another is working toward this certification.</p>	
<p>Safety reviews of facilities, parks, playground equipment and other resources are conducted at an appropriate frequency level (such as: playground equipment – daily to weekly; facilities and parks – monthly, etc.)</p>	<p>Playgrounds are inspected monthly.</p>	<p>As noted above, trails are inspected only monthly, which is not frequent enough to identify potential hazards and maintenance needs.</p>
<p>Continuous training programs are provided to keep step with state-of-the-art advances and continuously improve workers' knowledge and skills in safety, park care and maintenance practices.</p>	<p>The Division ensures that certified personnel maintain their certifications through required training and continuing education, such as for the Master Trail Builder, Certified Pool Operators, Planners, etc. The Division also periodically finds webinars that are appropriate for specific employees.</p>	<p>There is no ongoing training for custodial staff.</p>

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
The division is organizationally placed with similar functions, and the structure fosters communication and accountability, and results in the maximum utilization of resources.		The County has fragmented the maintenance of its parks and facilities between the Parks Services Division and Central Services. Further, the Recreation Division is responsible for the lining of fields.
Asset management system provides up to date functionality asset management, maintenance management, performance measurement, business planning, and cost reporting.	The Division has embarked on a commendable initiative to geocode the locations of all parks and trails assets. Further, it records all time, materials and equipment used in all maintenance activities.	The Division does not have a true asset management system that defines service levels, the resources needed to achieve these levels, and the risks associated with failing to achieve these service levels. Asset management should be the goal of the Division, and although it incorporates the recording of assets and time expended in maintaining the assets, it should be viewed as a management system that ensures that assets are maintained according to a pre-determined plan.

### **3. RECREATION**

Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Customer service is maximized through hours of operation, on-site contact, online, telephone assistance.	Hours of operation vary among recreational locations and are tailored to the specific clientele. Memorial Park and Zoo, for example, is open from 9:00 am till 5:00 pm, M-F. East Athens Community Center and Lay Park Community Center are open from 8:00 am till 9:00 pm, M-F, 9:00 am till 6:00 pm Saturdays and 2:00 pm till 6:00 pm on Sundays. Rocksprings Community Center is open from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm M-F, but not on weekends.	Could Rocksprings Community Center patrons benefit from weekend hours? The Division should assess community interest in weekend hours, particularly as this location has a splash pad.
Inservice training and continuing education program are in place to ensure that staff receives appropriate training and professional development for their position.	The Division ensures that required training is provided to those who maintain certifications, such as Zoo staff, gymnastics staff, aquatics staff, Certified Sports Administrators, Certified Therapeutic Recreational Specialists, etc. The Division also recently provided customer service skills training and interview skills training.	There is no documented commitment to minimum in-service training hours provided to non-certified staff in the Division.
An aggressive marketing effort is in place to inform citizens of program opportunities.	The Division utilizes multiple media to communicate with potential program participants, such as print media, ACTV, social media, advertisements in local newspapers, E-newsletter, flyers that go home with school children, and others.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Registration systems make program registration as easy as possible for participants and encourage program participation.	The Department recently successfully implemented the Rec 1 registration software system. The project team simulated a registration and found the software to be very intuitive and simple to use.	There were reports of some parents registering their children for multiple programs that occurred at the same time. However, this is not the norm, and these events should be, and are, handled as they occur, in order to educate those users who have this particular issue.
Opportunities are available for customer feedback on programs and services.	The Recreation Division provides an on-line survey for parents of children who attend camps, and receives a high rating, with over 97% reporting that they would recommend the camps to another family.	The Division provides an array of recreational programs, and surveys should be administered for all, at least on a periodic basis.  In addition to surveying participants' satisfaction with existing programs and services, the Division should also routinely survey the community for programs and services that are desired, but not currently offered.
A recruitment and selection process tailored specifically for recreation personnel is in place.	The Division has, over the years, developed avenues for the recruitment of both full and part time employees. The proximity of the University of Georgia aids greatly in these efforts, as the Division personnel attend the UGA summer job fairs, UGA Outdoor Recreation, etc. The Division also queries previous staff members for recommendations, and uses the GRPA web site. Specialty sites, such as for tennis, are also utilized to recruit.	
A cost recovery plan is in place.	The Department engaged a consultant to develop a cost recovery plan, however the plan was not adopted.	The Department's fee structure is essentially unchanged from 2006, and is failing to recover the targeted 20% overall.

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
A long-range facility plan is in place to identify facility and space needs required to support recreation programs and services.	The Department develops a long-range capital improvement plan that projects annual funding requirements for the first five years for all facilities and equipment, and lump sum requirements for the subsequent five year period. Examples of near-term requests include pool repairs and renovations, bridge and boardwalk inspection and replacement, and park equipment. A \$5.3 million expansion of the Gymnastics Center is projected for the FY22-FY26 time period, which is the most significant projected capital expenditure.	
An advisory committee is in place to provide input on programs and services.	The Department has an internal capital planning committee that consists of the Director, the Finance Administrator and the Parks Services Maintenance Supervisor.	
<b>RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING</b>		
Department facilities provide opportunities for a variety of recreation programs, services and events for residents of the County.	The facilities in the County provide opportunities for a full array of services, including tennis, gymnastics, football, soccer, aquatics, baseball/softball, basketball and others.	
The Recreation Department offers a variety of unduplicated programs for all ages, skill levels and interests in the community.	Most programs and services are unduplicated in the private community.	The Recreation Division does provide gymnastics and tennis programs, which are available through local private providers.
Recreation facilities are maintained in compliance with health and safety codes to ensure participant and staff safety.	The USDA inspects the food that the Zoo provides to animals.  The Summer Lunch program is monitored by the Housing Authority.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
The Division makes recreational programming available to individuals and families of all income levels.	The Division, and the Department generally, provides scholarships for any individual and/or family regardless of ability to pay.	<p>Scholarship participants in many programs outnumber paying participants. Any scholarship is treated as lost revenue to a program, which inhibits the ability of the Department to reach cost recovery targets. Further, many scholarship recipients fail to attend the classes and programs for which they are registered, resulting in both a loss of revenue and a lost opportunity for another individual to attend.</p> <p>Interviews indicate that there is no policy regarding the limit of lost revenue that the County has targeted. However, the Department implemented a “no show” policy several years ago to address the issue of registered participants not showing up for programs, however “no shows” are not tracked by the Department.</p>
Programs are offered and accommodations made for special populations and persons with disabilities.	The Department has a Special Olympics program as well as senior adult programs, however it is focused on inclusion rather than therapeutic services. The Department reports that it got low participation rates when these programs were previously offered.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Community Centers provide information regarding programming, and are continuously soliciting and incorporating feedback on needed services.		Although regular visitors to the community centers are aware of the scheduled programming at their particular center, there is little general information on this programming available to those who are not regular visitors. In this regard, the web site is not helpful in informing visitors as to the events planned for a particular day. Other facilities in the Department (e.g., the Zoo, Theatre, Dance Center, etc.) have posted events on the calendar on the web site, however, there is no such listing for any of the community centers.

#### **4. ARTS AND NATURE**

<b>Best Management Practice</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>
The organizational structure makes authority, responsibility and accountability clear	The Division is organized into four sections, including the Sandy Creek Nature Center, East Athens Dance Center, the Lyndon House Arts Center and the Morton Theatre. Lines of authority are clear, as the four sections' operations occur at discrete geographical locations.	
Adequate full and part-time positions are in place to ensure effective operations and program implementation.	Staffing levels are reasonable at the Nature Center, Dance Center and Morton Theatre.	Some studios at Lyndon House Arts Center (e.g., welding, dark room, clay room, etc.) cannot be opened to the public due to lack of staff to supervise and monitor them, and to ensure that there are adequate materials available for the patrons.  Since minimum student to teacher ratios must be maintained, the Arts Center cannot add children to the programs and camps who want to attend.
Appropriate office space and equipment are available for employees carry out the roles and responsibilities of their positions.	Facilities are adequate for the performance of position duties in all four sections of the Division.	
Customer service is maximized through hours of operation, on-site contact, online, telephone assistance.		As noted above, some studios at the Lyndon House Arts Center cannot be opened to the public during some hours due to lack of staff to monitor and supervise them.

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Inservice training and continuing education program are in place to ensure that staff receives appropriate training and professional development for their position.		The Department has a budget of \$10,000 to conduct training. This equates to only \$133 per employee per year.
A volunteer program is in place to augment staff efforts.	<p>The Volunteer Program is administered at the Department level. Sandy Creek Nature Center uses at least five volunteers on each day that schools are visiting. Two are animal care volunteers and others are trail-keepers.</p> <p>The East Athens Dance Center uses volunteers for ushering and backstage supervision for performances, various projects (organizing archives &amp; costumes, designing posters &amp; wall hangings)</p> <p>Lyndon House Arts Center uses volunteers as tour guides and gallery attendants, organizing archives, assisting with community wide events such as festivals, exhibition openings and Holiday open houses, assisting with youth programs and summer camps</p> <p>The Morton Theatre uses volunteers as ushers, will call attendants, backstage assistance, concessions, CITs (counselors in training), interns (marketing and volunteer coordination), assisting at the daytime reception desk at peak times, production assistants, Hit the Pit musicians, street team, service on boards and committees, and various special projects organizing, cleaning, filing, archiving, etc.</p>	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
An aggressive marketing effort is in place to inform citizens of program opportunities.	The Public Information Officer of the Department sends out monthly public service announcements.	Removal of marketing responsibilities from the actual service providers may be failing to reach all potential target audiences.
The Division website is user friendly, engages users and encourages participation in Divisional program opportunities.	The programs offered by the Division are adequately described in the web sites. Potential program participants follow links that go to Rec1, where they may register for programs.	Although the site is functional, it does not offer a great deal of description for classes and programs, which are generally one-sentence descriptions without graphics or pictures of participants engaged in the particular class.
Opportunities are available for customer feedback on programs and services.	The Division has a Facebook page through which it may receive a variety of general comments such as programmatic offerings, hours of operation, etc.. In addition, the Dance Center, the Theatre and Arts Center each administer surveys to participants that elicit feedback on programs, classes, camps, etc., that they, and/or their parents, may provide input.	
A long-range facility plan is in place to identify facility and space needs required to support programs and services.	The Department has a 20-year capital budget which has identified renovations to Sandy Creek Nature Center in FY20 in the amount of \$458,600.	
An advisory committee is in place to provide input on programs and services.	The Morton Theatre has a Corporation Board that advises the Division and enables staff to carry out their mission.  The Lyndon House Arts Center has an Arts Foundation that works to advance the arts in the County through a coalition of several groups.	

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
<p>The Arts and Nature Division formally assesses the continuing viability of its programs, and has effective measures in place to determine whether these programs are meeting the needs of participants and potential participants</p>	<p>The Division Administrator is relatively new, and has initiated a review of attendance levels at programs at each of the facilities. Overall, attendance can be characterized as good, with many running at near-maximum capacity. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• East Athens Dance Center classes are at 72% capacity, with 38% of programs running at 90% or higher, and 50% running at 80% or higher. About 22% of classes were at levels low enough to be canceled.</li><li>• Lyndon House Arts Center programs were at 81% of capacity, with 57% of these at least 90% of capacity. About 14% of programs fell below minimum established enrollment levels.</li><li>• Morton Theatre's programs were at very high participation levels, with only one program at less than 100% capacity.</li><li>• Sandy Creek Nature Center's participation levels were high, at 83% capacity, and 55% of classes/programs at 90% capacity or higher. About 20% of programs fell below minimum established enrollment levels.</li></ul>	<p>The Division does not have easy access to participation levels prior to 2015, which limits the ability to make firm inferences about the success of programmatic offerings.</p>

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Best Management Practice	Strengths	Opportunities for Improvement
Programs are offered and accommodations made for special populations and persons with disabilities.	<p>The Division works through the Internal Services Division to accommodate people with special needs to acquire one-to-one aides, for example.</p> <p>The Division also provides “Monologues and More” for communication skills for people with cognitive disabilities.</p>	
The Nature Center works in partnership with schools and community organizations to maximize educational and increased knowledge of natural systems and processes.	This appears to be a particular strength of the Division, as there are hundreds of school children who come to the Sandy Creek Nature Center on a routine basis during the school year on organized visits.	
The Division maintains arts facilities and program hours of operations to ensure optimal use by visitors.	The Lyndon House Arts Center is closed on Mondays in order to allow open hours on Saturdays	<p>Are extended hours of operation possible on certain days of the week?</p> <p>The Division should collect and analyze data regarding the average numbers of patrons by hour and by day of the week in order to determine whether altering hours of operation is feasible and desirable.</p>

## **APPENDIX C – RESULTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

As part of the Matrix Consulting Group analysis of the Athens-Clarke County Department of Leisure Services, the project team conducted a public engagement process to provide residents an opportunity to comment on the strengths of the Department's program offerings and facilities as well as identify potential areas for improvement and enhancement. The project team conducted three public input sessions along with individual interviews at the Bishop Park Farmer's Market. A total of 47 residents participated in the process.

### **1. INTRODUCTION TO FORMAT AND STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS.**

The public engagement process was designed to provide residents of Athens-Clarke County an opportunity to express their thoughts about the Department of Leisure Services and provide input to the future direction of the Department and its programs, facilities and services. The open forums were designed to solicit comments and discussion on a variety of themes including:

- Adequacy and comprehensiveness of programming offerings.
- Overall satisfaction with programs, services, parks and amenities.
- Overall satisfaction with the availability and access to parks and services.
- Satisfaction with the level of diversity of programs and services offered.
- Conditions of parks, fields, playgrounds and equipment.
- Communications and responsiveness of Leisure Services staff.

- Potential new programs and services.

The three public comment sessions were schedule for two hours in length to ensure adequate opportunities for input, with one evening session scheduled on Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at the downtown Cine followed by morning and afternoon sessions conducted on Friday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> at the ACC Library. Individual interviews were also conducted by the project team on Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Bishop Park Farmer's Market site.

Marketing and notification for the public input sessions were provided by the Office of Operational Analysis along with facility arrangements and onsite logistics. In addition to these community input sessions, the Office of Operational Analysis also conducted a separate community survey process at a variety of locations during the month of July.

The format for the input sessions included participant sign-in, an explanation of the process and session agenda, participant introductions and four 10-to-15-minute input sessions related to the programs, facilities and services provided by Department of Leisure Services. Participant responses to each input topic were recorded on large paper by the project team facilitator. Participants were given the opportunity to amend their individual responses to ensure their comments were accurately recorded or to add comments not previously addressed. The recorded response sheets were posted around the room for participants to view. The four discussion/input questions posed to the participants for their individual thoughts and input are included in the following table along with specific topic prompts for discussion:

Department of Leisure Services Public Engagement Process Discussion Questions and Topics	
Questions	Discussion Topics
What works in the Department of Leisure Services? What are the overall positive features of its parks, recreation, nature and arts programs and services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation programs-scope/variety</li> <li>• Parks and amenities</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Availability of services</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Fees and charges</li> <li>• Value of services</li> </ul>
What improvements could be made to the recreation, nature and/or arts programs and services offered by the Department?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additions of programs- types</li> <li>• Deletion of existing programs</li> <li>• Age ranges</li> <li>• Availability</li> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• Program schedules</li> <li>• Geographic locations</li> <li>• Fees and charges</li> <li>• Diversity of services</li> <li>• Program leadership</li> <li>• Underserved segments</li> </ul>
What improvements could be made to the parks and open space facilities and amenities offered by the Department?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park areas</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Playgrounds</li> <li>• Amenities</li> <li>• Fields</li> <li>• Equipment</li> <li>• Maintenance conditions</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Park and Open Space improvements</li> </ul>
What overall improvements could the Department make to improve its services to the citizens of Athens-Clarke County?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications about programs and services</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Program Information</li> <li>• Responsiveness to requests</li> <li>• Citizen input in programs</li> <li>• Registration processes</li> <li>• Marketing and programs publicity</li> <li>• Fees</li> <li>• Access to program personnel</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>

At the conclusion of the input sessions participants were asked to review all the participant responses and select their top three priorities for improvements in Recreation, Nature and Arts Divisions, Parks and Open Space Facilities Division and, overall Department Improvement Opportunities. All of the comments made by participants and the identified priority improvement opportunities are included in the table at the end of this report.

The following sections provide a review of the positive features of the Department of Leisure Services and the priority improvement opportunities identified during the public engagement process.

## **2. A NUMBER OF POSITIVE FEATURES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES WERE IDENTIFIED.**

Participants in the public engagement process identified a number of positive features of the programs and services currently offered by the Department of Leisure Services. The following table presents the positive features highlighted during the input process and categorized by general department features, recreation, nature and arts programs and services and park and natural resource features:

<b>Positive Features of the Department of Leisure Services</b>	
Department Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Department staff are helpful</li><li>• Diversity of programs offered</li><li>• Variety of volunteer opportunities available</li><li>• Programs are low cost</li><li>• Scholarships ensure low income access to programs</li><li>• Quality program and front line staff</li><li>• Overall programs and services are a good value</li></ul>
Recreation, Nature and Arts Programs and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programs are provided for all age groups</li><li>• Dance programs</li><li>• Variety of sports programs and leagues offered</li><li>• Activities have been offered for ACC employee</li><li>• Summer Camp programs</li><li>• Variety of programs and facilities with vast opportunities for age groups and scholarship opportunities</li><li>• Current fees for swimming pools</li></ul>

<b>Positive Features of the Department of Leisure Services</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Programs for children have strong participation and are expanding</li><li>• Opportunities to play and expand the Pickle Ball program</li><li>• Non-profit football programs</li><li>• Overall Nature Center programs offered to the community</li><li>• Lyndon House arts programs and exhibits</li></ul>
Parks and Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Overall park maintenance</li><li>• Parks provide different amenities</li><li>• Skate Park is free and available for teens interested in non-team sport activities</li><li>• Unique parks and trails</li><li>• Parks within walking distance of neighborhoods</li><li>• Swimming pool network and amenities offered</li></ul>

The features identified by residents highlight the participants' response to the current levels of service provided by the Department of Leisure Services. The positive features of the Department of Leisure Services can be summarized as follows:

- The Department offers a variety of diverse programs and services for all age groups and interests including classes, sports, summer camps, arts and nature related programs.
- The Department provides a variety of unique park facilities and trails for use by the community including community centers, swimming pools, a nature center, zoo and arts facilities, many within walking distance from neighborhoods.
- Department sponsored programs are provided at low cost and considered a good value.
- The scholarship program ensures that all residents have opportunities to participate in programs offered by the Department.
- The Department works with community groups to facilitate volunteer lead, new, continuing and expanded programs.
- The Department employs quality front line program and service level staff to implement department programs and services.

**3. A VARIETY OF IMPROVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES WERE IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS DURING THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS.**

Participants in the public engagement process identified a variety of areas in which the Department of Leisure Services could improve its services to the residents of Athens-Clarke County. The following sections summarize those improvement opportunities that were identified by participants as the highest priority improvement opportunities for recreation, arts and nature programs and services, parks and natural resources, and for the overall effectiveness of the Department:

**(1) Priority Improvement Opportunities in Recreation, Arts and Nature Programs and Services**

The following list summarizes the highest priority improvement opportunities selected by participants through the public engagement process for the Recreation and Arts and Nature Divisions:

- There is inequality and inconsistent divisional support of sports programs across the community including those offered by community/nonprofit organizations. Sports leagues lack community input into programs and coordination in field use and scheduling.
- The aquatics program needs to expand its season and hours of operations specifically for public swim time, incorporate added pool amenities and concessions and create a hospitable environment at pool facilities.
- The existing arts programs need direction, added staff training, and qualified staff, specifically at the Morton Theater, in the dance program and at the Lynton Art Center.
- Staff development programs are needed to ensure leadership staff in specialty areas have appropriate backgrounds and skills, along with a willingness to be inclusive and accept community input.
- The Department website needs to be user-friendly with a new look and capacity to provide app integration and identify alternatives for those disadvantaged during program registration by not having a computer.

- The Department should provide greater opportunities for affordable camp programs and address the gap in starting age for camps for children graduating from kindergarten at 5 years and not able to participate in summer camps until age 6.
- The Morton Theater program needs an improved website, more publicity and greater reflection of its historic value and diversity.
- Community Centers need to be open when schools are closed and work toward developing expanded partnerships with schools, and community/nonprofit organizations.
- Capital funding is needed for Skate Park Phase II expansion to provide new learning opportunities for beginning skaters.
- Better transportation services are needed to provide greater access to parks, programs, and trails.
- Sandy Creek Park is often confused with the Nature Center.

## **(2) Priority Improvement Opportunities in Parks and Natural Resources**

The following list presents a summary of the highest priority improvement opportunities selected by participants through the public engagement process for the Parks and Natural Resources Division.

- The Natural Resources operation has no dedicated staff and is fragmented. The Natural Resources policy, education and preservation focus need to be placed together in a separate, more responsive division.
- Park maintenance operations are underfunded and as a result, create safety and aesthetic issues in park and natural areas that need to be addressed.
- The lack of minority representation in park use results from lack of public transportation access to parks.
- The Greenway project expansion has been minimal, lacks adequate funding, Department cooperation, program development and trail maintenance. The project needs to complete and connect trails to neighborhoods and green spaces from east to west and provide increased safety lighting.
- Memorial Park, Zoo, Ben Burton Park, Sandy Creek Park, Cook's Trail need maintenance and facility improvements.

- More parking is needed at Trail Creek and Memorial Parks.
- Dedicated facilities for the Pickle Ball program are needed.

**(3) Priority Improvement Opportunities for the Department of Leisure Services**

The following list presents a summary of the highest priority improvement opportunities selected by participants through the public engagement process for the Department of Leisure Services:

- The current Department culture is averse to citizen input, needs to adopt a new servant leadership style to pull staff together, welcome citizen input and community leadership, recognize internal strengths and utilize internal resources.
- The Leisure Services Department needs to be restructured into three separate departments: Parks and Recreation, Nature, and Arts, recognizing the different missions of each entity.
- The current Department website needs to be a more user-friendly website and separate of the existing county website. In addition, the Department should increase communications with residents including making hard copies of program information available for those without computer access.
- Programs at all Community Centers should be integrated so the centers can utilize and share programs and services across the community thereby maximizing resources.
- Programs for teens, 12 to 15 years, are lacking during the summer season and should include jobs programs and non-sports programs for at-risk youth.
- Ensure that programs and facilities establish hours of operation that provide maximum accessibility to residents and expanded opportunities to participate in programs. Pool facility hours of operation should be increased and consistent throughout the season to allow greater community access.
- Develop more partnerships with community organizations to improve overall communications and coordination of programs and facilities and establish detailed expectations and guidelines for groups.

**4. FINDINGS OBTAINED THROUGH THE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES.**

The public engagement process, established as a component of the Matrix Consulting Group study of the Athens-Clarke County Department of Leisure Services, provided opportunities for residents of the community to identify strengths and improvement opportunities for the programs and services currently being offered by the Department of Leisure Services. These data will be incorporated in subsequent analyses of the Department and in the formation of recommendations for the future operations of the Recreation, Nature and Arts, Parks and Natural Resources and the Administration Divisions of the Department of Leisure Services.

## APPENDIX D – RESULTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEISURE SERVICES EMPLOYEE SURVEY

The Matrix Consulting Group conducted a survey of the Department of Leisure Services employees in order to gauge their attitudes and opinions concerning departmental operation, employee engagement, and organizational issues. Anonymous surveys were distributed to employees via an online survey link in June 2016. The survey received 60 total responses, of which 51 contained complete answers that could be analyzed.

### 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE SURVEY

The survey consisted of three sections. The first section documented general information about the employee, and is used for statistical analysis purposes. The last two sections were designed to assess employees' opinions on various attributes of the Leisure Services Department. The sections are summarized in the following bullet points.

- **General Information:** Employees responded to statements regarding their employment status (full time or part time) and the division for which they work (Administration, Park Services, etc.).
- **Multiple Choice Statements:** Employees were asked to respond to a set of 35 statements about the Department and select one of the following responses: "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." The statements in this section of the survey were designed to provide an understanding of the perceptions, attitudes, and opinions of Department employees. This section also asked respondents to rate their workload with a series of choices.
- **Open-Ended Responses:** The final section concerned strengths and improvements. Employees were asked to provide three strengths within the Department and three opportunities for improvement. These responses were open-ended, and there were no suggested answers. This section also provided an open-response section for employees to make any statements they chose.

While the survey was confidential, respondents were asked to indicate their current employment status and divisional assignment. As the tables below show, the overall response rate was 58.8%. The highest response rate was in the Parks Services Division, with over 73%, and the lowest response rate was in the Recreation Division, at 40%.

Divisional Assignment	Number of Respondents	# Employees in Division	Response Rate
Administration	7	-*	-*
Arts & Nature	12	23	52.2%
Internal Services	4	7	57.1%
Park Services	14	19	73.7%
Recreation	14	35	40.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>		

\*More responses indicated “Administration” than employees that are designated to Administration (4 FTE). This indicates that employees in Administrative roles from other Divisions responded with this answer.

Employment Status	Number of Respondents	# Employees Distributed To	% of Total Responses
Full-Time	47	80	58.8%
Part-Time	4	-**	-**
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>		

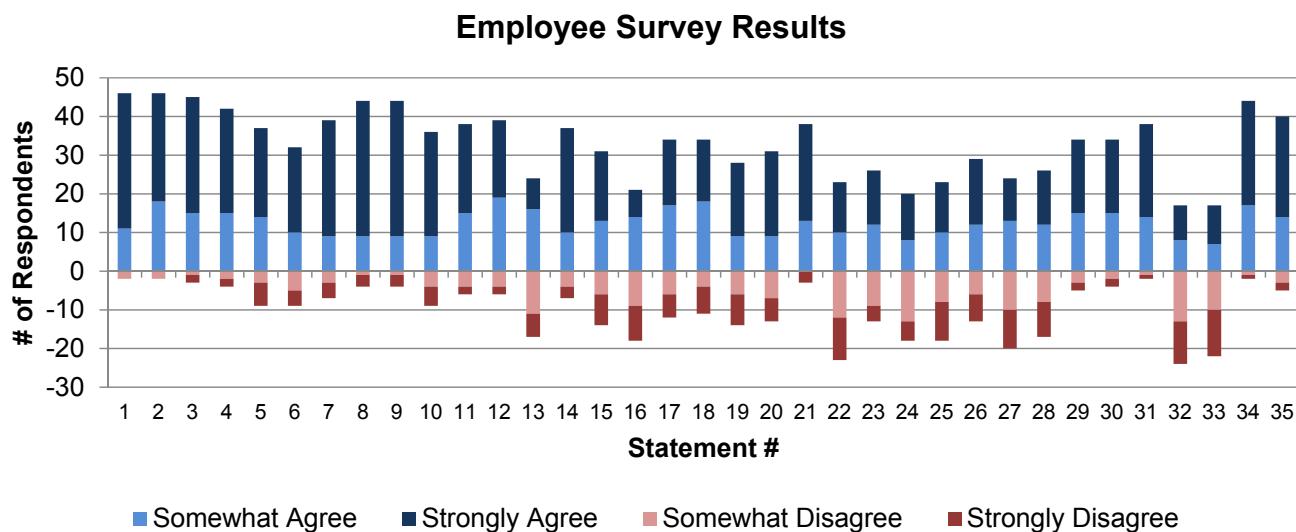
The open-ended responses were presented to respondents as one set of questions, but were designed to assess different attributes of the organization. The questions were generally arranged in the following categories.

- Customer Service
- Performance and Management
- Workload Management and Professional Development
- Organizational Structure and Policy
- Strategy and Change Management
- Staffing Levels and Accountability

Descriptions and analysis of the questions and responses to each of these sections will be discussed in the following sections.

**2. EMPLOYEES WERE GENERALLY POSITIVE ABOUT SERVICES DELIVERED BUT HIGHLIGHTED OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN ACCOUNTABILITY AND STRATEGY.**

Looking at the survey broadly, employees felt generally that they provide a high level of customer service and quality of service to the community. Overall, there were many more positive responses (“agree” or “strongly agree”) to the questions than there were negative responses (“disagree” or “strongly disagree”). The following chart provides a visual representation of the number of agree and disagree responses to each statement in the multiple choice section of the survey. For each of the statements, all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value and respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> For example, -5 on the chart means that 5 respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

As the chart shows, there was a wide range of opinions from statement to statement, with some statements clearly garnering much more favorable reactions, and others far less so. Overall, employees felt that they provided a high level of service and that the services they provided were valuable to the community. The survey revealed, however, some desire to improve organizational structure, operating efficiency, and staff accountability. The following subsections examine responses to each question in more detail.

### **(1) Customer Service**

The table below contains employees' responses to statements regarding customer service within the Leisure Services Department and their prioritization of customer issues.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1. My Department provides a high level of service to the residents of ACC.	90.2%	3.9%	5.9%
2. My Department places a high priority on customer service.	92.0%	4.0%	4.0%
3. In my Division, our services meet the expectations of our customers.	88.2%	5.9%	5.9%

The following graph presents a visual representation of the number of agreeing (blue) and disagreeing (red) responses to each statement in this category. For each of the statements all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value, while the number of respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value.



The responses show that employees feel that they provide a high level of service to the community. The statements regarding customer service received some of the highest levels of agreement among staff, indicating a general prioritization of customers and their needs.

- **Statement #1 – level of service:** 90.2% of respondents agreed that the Department provides a high level of customer service, with about three-quarters of those who agreed indicating that they “strongly agree”.
- **Statements #2 – priority on service:** this question received the highest level of agreement of any statement in the survey, with 92.0% of respondents in agreement.
- **Statements #3 – meeting customer expectations:** the final question regarding customer service again garnered high levels of agreement, with 88.2% of respondents agreeing, two-thirds of whom strongly agreed. This question also received 5.9% disagreement: two-thirds of which was strong disagreement. This may reflect that while priority is put on service, there is still a gap between customer expectations and delivery.

Overall, employees felt very positive regarding customer service. As the final question of this section indicates, however, there may be some issues with delivering to the full expectations of customers—though it appears these issues are not widely felt.

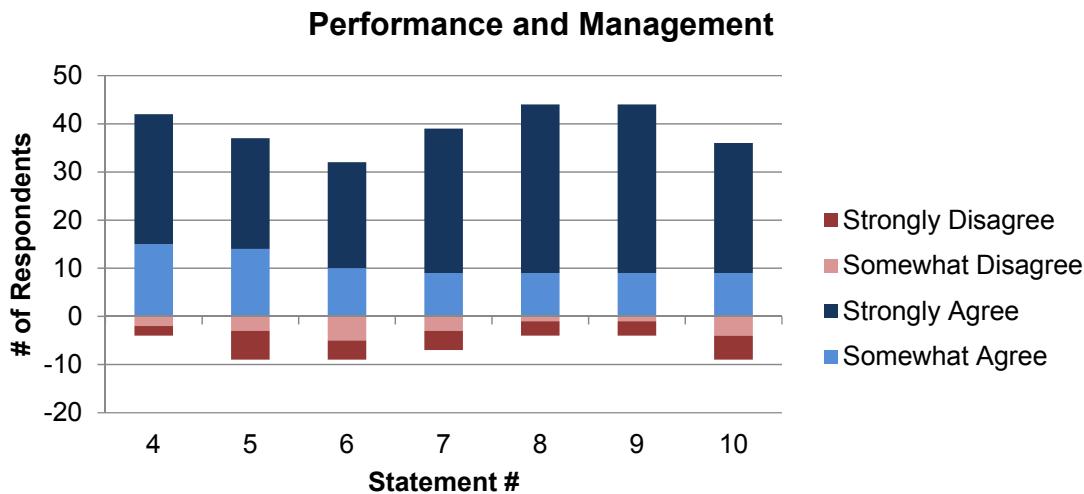
Whether these issues are efficiency-based, organizational, or potentially a lack of communication with customers, will be explored in the following sections.

## **(2) Performance and Management**

The following table contains employees' responses to statements concerning workplace expectations, goal-setting, performance, and management/supervisory quality.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
4. I know what is expected of me at work.	82.4%	7.8%	9.8%
5. I understand how my job aligns with my Department's goals.	72.5%	17.6%	9.8%
6. We have high performance expectations in my Department.	62.7%	17.6%	19.6%
7. I receive recognition from my immediate supervisor when I do a good job.	76.5%	13.7%	9.8%
8. My immediate supervisor is accessible when I need him/her.	86.3%	7.8%	5.9%
9. My immediate supervisor is open and honest with me.	86.3%	7.8%	5.9%
10. My immediate supervisor does an effective job of coaching and mentoring me.	70.6%	17.6%	11.8%

The graph on the following page presents a visual representation of the number of agreeing (blue) and disagreeing (red) responses to each statement in this category. For each of the statements all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value, while the number of respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value.



As is shown in the graph, employees responded to this series of questions with majorities in the positive “agree” or “strongly agree” categories. There is, however, less agreement than was apparent in the customer service questions. The following points provide further analysis on these results:

- **Statement #4 & 5 – expectations and goals:** An 82.4% majority of employees felt that they knew expectations of their work. A lower percentage—72.5%—agreed that they understood how their job function aligns with Department goals. This may reflect some frustration with organizational structure or efficiency, or a lack of communication regarding organizational goals.
- **Statements #6 – performance expectations:** This statement received 62.7% agreement with 37.3% of respondents either disagreeing or remaining neutral. This reflects that many employees do not feel that performance expectations are high or that employees are not held to high expectations.
- **Statements #7 through #10 – management and supervisory feedback:** these four statements reflect different aspects of management feedback. It is notable that statements 8 and 9 received the same response rate, indicating that employees felt that supervisors were generally accessible and open. Statements 7 and 10 concerning recognition and coaching, however, received lower agreement. This may indicate that there is a lack of coaching, performance modeling, and effective feedback tools such as objective/enforced performance reviews.

While these statements generally reflect that a majority of respondents feel positively about these aspects of the Leisure Services Department, there are some

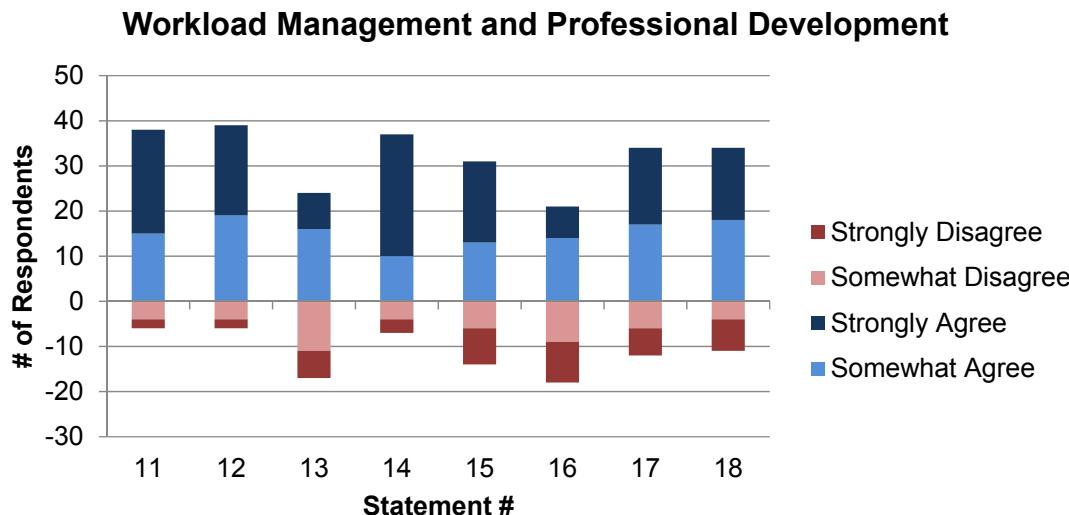
potential issues surrounding how roles fit into Departmental goals, maintaining high performance expectations, and effectively coaching and/or mentoring staff. These issues may indicate a need to clearly state goals, roles, and implement effective coaching that strives for high performance.

### **(3) Workload Management and Professional Development**

The following tables contain employees' responses to statements relating to the management of workloads, efficiency, and professional development for employees.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
11. We do a good job in my Division of managing work.	74.5%	11.8%	13.7%
12. We do a good job in my Division of coordinating the work to be done.	76.5%	11.8%	11.8%
13. There is good teamwork among departments at ACC.	47.1%	33.3%	19.6%
14. My Division performs work that is not duplicated by other divisions.	72.5%	13.7%	13.7%
15. My Department makes good use of my skills and experience.	62.0%	28.0%	10.0%
16. We have a strong emphasis on training in my Department.	41.2%	35.3%	23.5%
17. I have the technology I need to do my job efficiently and effectively.	66.7%	23.5%	9.8%
18. I am given real opportunities to improve my skills in my work unit.	66.7%	21.6%	11.8%

The following graph presents a visual representation of the number of agreeing (blue) and disagreeing (red) responses to each statement in this category. For each of the statements all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value, while the number of respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value.



As shown in the table and chart, questions regarding workload management and professional development received mixed levels of agreement. Particular areas of disagreement with the statements related to teamwork between divisions and opportunities for training.

- **Statements #11 & 12 – workload management:** A majority of employees felt that their Division does a good job at managing and coordinating work.
- **Statement #13 & 14 – inter-divisional teamwork and efficiency:** Employees had a mixed reaction regarding inter-divisional aspects of work. Less than half of respondents, 47.1%, agreed that good teamwork exists between divisions; 33.3% disagreed with this statement. A majority, 72.5%, felt that work was not duplicated between departments. This indicates that the poor level of teamwork is not an issue of “stepping on toes” within the department or duplicating functions. It appears there is a need for greater Departmental-wide cohesion.
- **Statements #15 & 16 – leveraging skills and training:** Statements regarding how the Department leverages its employees’ skillset and the provision of training opportunities received low agreement at 62% and 41.2%, respectively. Employees felt that there is not a strong emphasis on training, with 35.3% disagreeing (half of those “strongly”) and 23.5% remaining neutral.
- **Statements #17 & 18 – technology and skills improvement:** About two-thirds of employees felt that technology was sufficient to perform their role effectively. A similar majority felt that there were opportunities to improve their skills in their unit. This latter majority is an interesting feature of respondents, given their low agreement regarding training opportunities.

These statements regarding workload management and professional development reveal additional areas of potential improvement for the Leisure Services Department. While workload appears to be generally well-managed, there is low agreement among staff regarding inter-departmental relations and emphasis on training. These two areas should be high-priority areas for improvement within the Department.

The survey also asked employees about their personal workload with a set of statements ranging from “I could take on more work,” to “I am always busy.” The response rates to these statements is summarized below.

Statement	Number	Percentage
I could take on more work given my available time.	0	0.0%
I have about the right balance of work and available time.	9	17.6%
I am often busy but can usually keep up.	30	58.8%
I am always busy and can never catch up.	12	23.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The responses indicated that, generally, workload was at a good level between “right balance” and “often busy”: 76.5% of respondents fell into this category. Nearly a quarter—23.5%—felt that they could never catch up, and no respondents felt that they could take more on. These responses support the findings from statements #11 and #12, but the significant proportion who feel that they cannot catch up may indicate an unbalanced division of labor among staff in the Department.

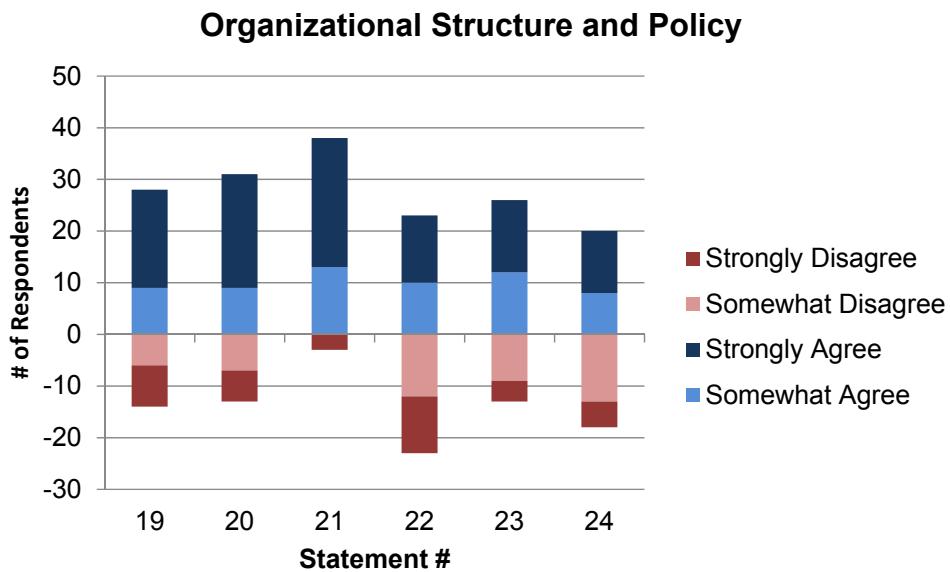
#### **(4) Organizational Structure and Policy**

The following table contains employees’ responses to statements regarding the current staffing levels, volunteer involvement, shelter environment, facilities maintenance, organizational structure, and typical workload for staff.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
19. The organizational structure of my Division is well suited to its responsibilities.	54.9%	27.5%	17.6%

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
20. The organizational structure of my Division promotes the efficient delivery of services.	60.8%	25.5%	13.7%
21. In my Division, we do a good job of planning and scheduling our work.	74.5%	5.9%	19.6%
22. The work practices in my Department are efficient.	45.1%	45.1%	9.8%
23. Our internal policies and procedures are up to date.	51.0%	25.5%	23.5%
24. Our internal policies and procedures assist me in performing my job efficiently and effectively.	39.2%	35.3%	25.5%

The graph on the following page presents a visual representation of the number of agreeing (blue) and disagreeing (red) responses to each statement in this category. For each of the statements all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value, while the number of respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value.



As depicted in the graph, there were highly mixed opinions regarding these statements, with some very low rates of agreement on some. Statement #24 received the third-lowest rate of agreement on the survey, and Statement #22 received the second-highest rate of disagreement. Further detail is provided in the following points:

- **Statement #19 & 20 – organizational structure:** A slight majority of 54.9% of respondents felt that their Division's organizational structure was appropriate, with 27.5% disagreeing. This represents a significant proportion of employees seeing

a problem in organizational structure. Similar rates of disagreement were seen regarding organizational structure and efficient delivery of services.

- **Statements #21 & 22 – efficiency:** 74.5% of employees felt that their Division did well planning work, with only 5.9% disagreeing. This is in contrast to work efficiency: only 45.1% of employees agreed that work practices were efficient, with the same percentage (45.1%) disagreeing. This demonstrates that a lack of efficiency is not related to workload planning or scheduling, and is potentially organizational or process related.
- **Statements #23 & 24 – policy and procedure:** Statements regarding policy and procedure reflected very low levels of agreement. A very slight majority—51.0%—felt that internal policies and procedures were up to date, with 25.5% disagreeing. The lowest rate of agreement in this set of questions related to if policies and procedures assist employees in performing their role: only 39.2% agreed, 35.3% disagreed, and 25.5% remained neutral.

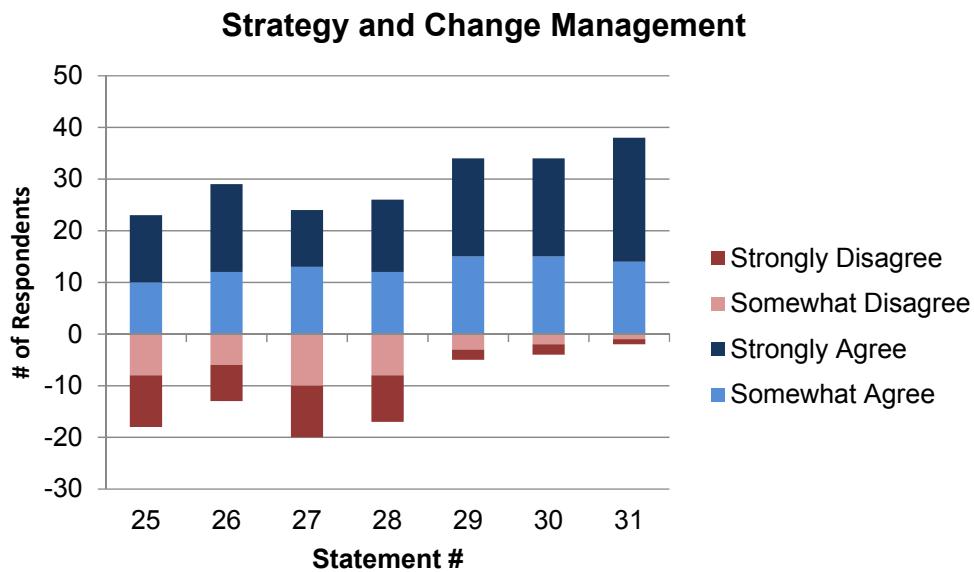
The statements in this section revealed areas for significant improvement for the Department. Many employees felt that there are improvements available with regard to organizational structure. In addition, the Department's policies and procedures do not appear to be effective or relevant for staff in their current roles. Employees also cited efficiency issues, although probably not related to workload planning, potentially pointing to organizational or process inefficiencies.

## **(5) Strategy and Change Management**

The following table contains employees' responses to statements regarding how the Department manages strategic change, input from staff, and ability to handle ongoing improvements.

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
25. Managers in my Department are open to change.	45.1%	35.3%	19.6%
26. I am encouraged by managers and supervisors in my Department to identify better ways to provide services.	56.9%	25.5%	17.6%
27. Managers and supervisors in my Department have a clearly-defined strategic direction.	48.0%	40.0%	12.0%
28. I am kept informed of what is happening in my Department.	52.0%	34.0%	14.0%
29. My Division is rarely in a crisis mode.	66.7%	9.8%	23.5%
30. There are opportunities in my Department to improve how we deliver services.	66.7%	7.8%	25.5%
31. The work handled by our Division corresponds to the Department's and to the core values of ACC.	74.5%	3.9%	21.6%

The following graph presents a visual representation of the number of agreeing (blue) and disagreeing (red) responses to each statement in this category. For each of the statements all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value, while the number of respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value.



Statements regarding the Department's ability to manage change and improve services garnered mixed responses. Further analysis regarding these statements is noted in the following points:

- **Statements #25 through #27 – strategic change and improvement:** 45.1% of respondents agreed that their management was open to change, with 35.3% disagreeing. This indicates possible organizational reticence to changing

operations. Similarly, having clear strategic direction received 48.0% to 40.0% agreement to disagreement ratio. More positively, 56.9% of employees felt that they were encouraged to find better ways to provide service, but still 25.5% disagreed with this statement.

- **Statement #28 & #29 – communication and crises:** A slight majority felt that they were kept apprised of what is happening in the Department, but 34.0%—over one-third of employees—felt that they were not. Departmental communication appears to be lacking. A majority of two-thirds of respondents felt that their Division was rarely in crisis mode, with only 9.8% of respondents feeling that they did operate in crisis mode.
- **Statements #30 & #31 – improving delivery.** Two-thirds of respondents felt that there were opportunities to improve service delivery. Combined with the low levels of open-ness to change in item #25, there may be opportunity to more effectively engage with staff to solicit new ideas. Notably, 74.5% of employees felt that their work was part of the core values of the County, with only 3.9% disagreeing.

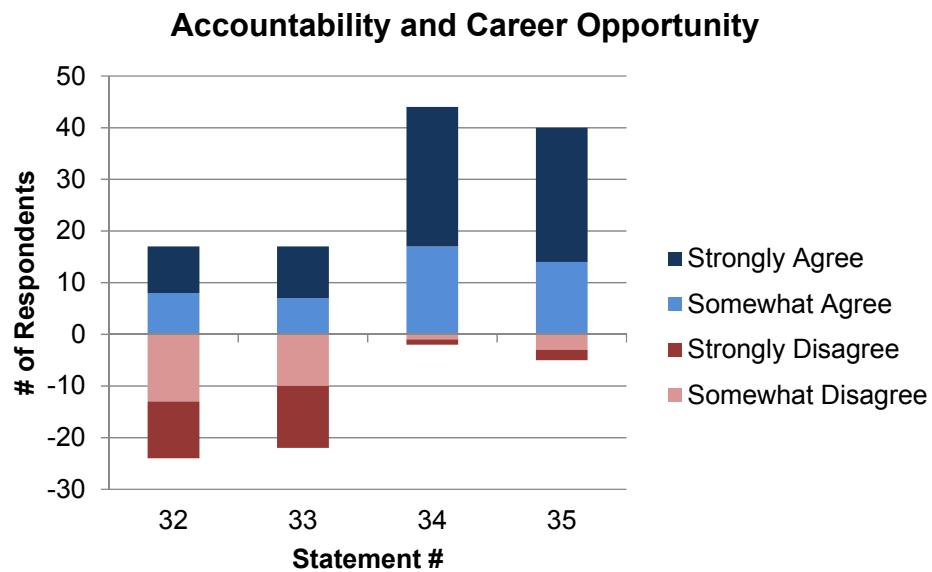
The statements in this section indicate that there may be significant opportunity to improve the Department's ability to manage change. A strong majority of employees feel that there are available opportunities for improvement, but many also feel that management is not particularly open to these ideas. Engaging with staff and allowing their input to affect organizational direction may be an important pathway towards improvement for Leisure Services.

## **(6) Staffing Levels and Accountability**

The following table contains employees' responses to statements concerning staffing levels, accountability among staff, and general sentiments regarding working for the Leisure Services Department.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>
32. Staffing levels in my Department are adequate for the work to be performed.	33.3%	47.1%	19.6%
33. Poor performers in my Division are dealt with adequately.	33.3%	43.1%	23.5%
34. Athens-Clarke County is a good place to work.	86.3%	3.9%	9.8%
35. I feel that I can make a career with the ACC.	78.4%	9.8%	11.8%

The following graph presents a visual representation of the number of agreeing (blue) and disagreeing (red) responses to each statement in this category. For each of the statements all respondents that agreed were assigned a positive value, while the number of respondents that disagreed were assigned a negative value.



The statements in this section revealed some of the lowest levels of agreement among staff, particularly with respect to staffing levels and staff accountability. These issues, however, are not as grave as might be supposed, as statements regarding overall attitude toward working at the Leisure Services Department garnered strongly positive responses.

- **Statement #32 & 33 – staffing and accountability:** A minority of staff, 33.3%, agreed that their Department had adequate staff for the work performed. The same minority agreed that poor performers were dealt with adequately. In both statements, a higher proportion of employees disagreed than agreed.
- **Statements #34 and #35– overall workplace and career:** It is important to note the positive results of these final questions. 86.3% of employees felt that the county was a good place to work, with only 3.9% disagreeing. 78.4% felt that the County was a good place for a career, although nearly 10% disagreed with this statement.

There appears to be an opportunity for improvement within the Leisure Services Department regarding employee accountability. A majority of employees either disagreed or were neutral regarding the Department's dealing with poor-performing colleagues. Improving the performance of these employees would also have impacts on completing workload, which would impact the need for additional staff indicated in statement #32. It is important to note, however, that despite some negative responses throughout the survey, employees still felt that the County was a good place to work.

**3. IN NARRATIVE RESPONSES, STAFF INDICATED STRONG EMPLOYEES AND PROGRAMMING AS STRENGTHS; AND SOLICITING MORE INPUT FROM STAFF AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR IMPROVEMENT.**

As a supplemental tool to assess opinions regarding departmental operations, staff were asked to provide three strengths of the department and three opportunities for improvement. These were open-ended responses, allowing staff to enter any answer they felt best. There were no suggestions of potential answers provided to respondents, to ensure impartiality in response. Still, the project team found a number of repeated themes in the responses.

Responses were grouped into thematic groups, such as “Strength of Staff” or “Affordability”. Each response was assigned a score for their rank: first rank was scored with a 3, second rank was scored with a 2, and third rank was scored with a 1. These scores were combined in each thematic group to come up with a “scored rank” to get a sense of the top strengths and opportunities for improvement facing the Department.

**(1) Strengths of the Department**

Employees indicated the top three attributes that they felt were strengths in the Department. These strengths fell in to a total of 18 thematic categories. The following

table summarizes the thematic categories, their scored rank, and the number of times they were mentioned in either first, second, or third. The top five responses are highlighted in yellow.

Thematic Attribute	Scored Rank	Ranked #1 (3 points)	Ranked #2 (2 points)	Ranked #3 (1 point)
Strong Staff	77	16	12	5
Diverse Programming and/or Facilities	34	8	3	4
Strong Programming and/or Facilities	26	3	4	9
Customer Service	16	3	3	1
Service to the Community	14	2	4	0
Commending a Specific Program/Office	12	2	2	2
Green Space and/or Quality of Parks	7	1	1	2
Leadership and Supervisory Strength	7	1	2	0
Community Support	5	1	0	2
Camp	5	1	1	0
Diverse Staff	3	1	0	0
Rules/Enforcement of Rules	3	1	0	0
Mission and/or Strategic Direction	3	0	1	1
Standards and/or Procedures	2	0	1	0
Resources/Funding	2	0	1	0
Relations w/ other Departments	2	0	1	0
Technology/Online Services	2	0	0	2
Affordability	2	0	0	2

As shown in the table, having a strong (other words used include dedicated, talented, and committed) staff was the top strength cited by employees. Then followed the Department's diverse programming that caters to a population that wants many different programs from the department. Closely related, and third in the scoring, was strong programming. This differed from diverse programming in that employees cited that programming was particularly good, rather than varied or diverse. Following behind those were customer service and service to the community, which is in line with findings in the multiple choice statements.

## **(2) Opportunities for Improvement**

Employees also indicated the top three areas for improvement within the Department. These opportunities were slightly more diverse than the strengths, with a

total of 21 thematic categories for improvement. The following table summarizes the thematic categories, their scored rank, and the number of times they were mentioned in either first, second, or third. The top five responses are highlighted in yellow.

Thematic Attribute	Scored Rank	Ranked #1 (3 points)	Ranked #2 (2 points)	Ranked #3 (1 point)
Encouraging Staff Input and/or Properly Handling Grievances	23	4	4	3
Leadership	22	4	4	2
Organizational Structure	19	3	4	2
Funding	15	1	6	0
Communication (between staff)	14	3	2	1
Modifying Discount Programming/Scholarships	14	3	2	1
Utilization and Empowerment of Staff and/or Distribution of Work	14	2	4	0
Streamline Processes/Efficiency	13	4	0	1
Staff Development/Training	12	2	2	2
Vision/Strategic Direction	9	2	1	1
Investment in Facilities/Infrastructure	8	0	2	4
Specific Programs	8	2	1	0
Marketing/Telling Story to Public and Officials	7	1	0	4
Level of Staffing	6	2	0	0
Communication/Coordination (between Departments/Divisions)	5	0	2	1
Staff Morale	5	1	0	2
Technology	5	1	1	0
Commission/Political Support	5	1	0	2
Holding Staff Accountable	3	1	0	0
Budget Scrutiny	3	0	1	1
Partnerships and Sponsorships	2	0	0	2

The top-three responses were very closely ranked in score and were, in order: encouraging staff input and/or properly handling grievances; improving Departmental leadership; and improving organizational structure. Comments regarding these top three issues generally had to do with feeling that management did not always value the input of line-level staff, that the organization tended to be top-heavy as opposed to flat, and a lack of commitment to being open and honest about Departmental decision-making. It is worth noting that communication was the fifth-highest opportunity for improvement. When communication levels are low, the other issues mentioned above can occur alongside:

staff do not feel welcome to submit input, do not understand leadership decisions, and are not always aware of the work that management is doing. These top results may highlight a need for increased communication channels within the department.

Additional opportunities for improvement included funding and modifying discount/scholarship programming. It is worth noting that properly utilizing all staff, distribution of work, and staff development were also among the top issues, which is in line with the findings of the multiple choice section.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

It is important to note the strengths that are within the Leisure Services Department, including a high priority on customer services, a talented and dedicated staff, and a general feeling that the County is a good place to work. There is room for improvement as highlighted by the employees, notably in communication, cultivating staff input, and ensuring that organizational structure is efficient and appropriate. These findings will inform later stages of the analysis process of the Leisure Services Department.