

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

1.1 METHODOLOGY

PROS Consulting and City of Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation (SFPRD) identified operating metrics to benchmark against comparable parks and recreation agencies. The goal of the analysis is to evaluate how SFPRD is positioned among peer agencies, as it applies to efficiency and effectiveness practices. The benchmark assessment is organized into specific categories based on peer agency responses to targeted questions that lend an encompassing view of each system's operating metrics as compared to the SFPRD.

Information used in this analysis was obtained directly from each participating benchmark agency. Agency selections included departments with CAPRA accreditation and selected peers from SFPRD staff. Due to differences in how each system collects, maintains, and reports data, variances may exist. These variations can impact the per capita and percentage allocations, and the overall comparison must be viewed with this in mind. The benchmark data collection for all systems was complete as of July 2019, and it is possible that information may have changed since the original collection date. The information sought was a combination of operating metrics that factor budgets, staffing levels, and inventories. In some instances, the information was not tracked or not available. A good example of this is the Outdoor Ice Rinks with only Sioux Falls, Saint Paul, and Des Moines managing ice rinks that the other agencies do not. These types of instances have an impact on the overall expenses of these agencies taking considerably more resources to provide these services.

The table below lists each benchmark agency in the study, arranged by total population served, and reveals key characteristics of each jurisdiction. Peer agencies represent broad geographical coverage from coast to coast, and those selected have demographic and organizational characteristics similar to SFPRD. For all agencies examined, Sioux Falls represents a lower population (183,200) when compared to the other selected agencies. SFPRD has a lower population density (2,321 residents per sq. mi.) with an almost similar jurisdiction size (78.94 sq. mi.) as Boise (79.36 sq. mi.), Des Moines (80.87 sq. mi.), and Grand Prairie (81.00 sq. mi.).

Agency	State	Population	Jurisdiction Size (Sq. Mi.)	Population per Sq. Mi.	CAPRA (Year)
Saint Paul	MN	306,621	55.44	5,531	Yes (2003)
Boise	ID	246,000	79.36	3,100	No
Des Moines	IA	216,853	80.87	2,682	No
Grand Prairie	TX	189,430	81.00	2,339	Yes (2017)
Sioux Falls	SD	183,200	78.94	2,321	Yes (2010)
Shawnee County	KS	178,725	556.00	321	Yes (2018)

1.2 BENCHMARK COMPARISON

1.2.1 PARK ACRES

The following table provides a general overview of each system’s park acreage and expresses the key performance metric of total acres per 1,000 residents. SFPRD ranks near the middle of the benchmark for total park sites (80). Even though SFPRD is near the bottom on total acres owned or managed (3,349) among its peers, they rank near the top for developed acres (2,985). Assessing the total acres per 1,000 residents, SFPRD is also near the median of the benchmark with 18.28 acres which is greater than NRPA medians of 10.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Agency	Population	Total Park Sites	Total Acres Owned or Managed	Developed Acres	Developed Acres as % of Total	Total Acres per 1,000 Residents
Boise	246,000	101	7,450	1,756.0	24%	30.28
Grand Prairie	189,430	56	5,002	4,435.0	89%	26.41
Des Moines	216,853	75	4,031	1,500.0	37%	18.59
Sioux Falls	183,200	80	3,349	2,985.0	89%	18.28
Shawnee County	178,725	109	2,685	n/a	n/a	15.02
Saint Paul	306,621	180	4,123	n/a	n/a	13.45
<i>NRPA Median 2016-2018 = 10.1 Acres per 1,000 Residents</i>						

1.2.2 FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTES)

This section compares levels of staffing for each system by comparing full-time equivalents (FTEs) to total population. Total FTEs per 10,000 residents is a key performance metric that assesses how well each agency is equipped, in terms of human resources, to serve its jurisdiction. Among peer agencies, SFPRD ranks second to last in staffing relative to the population served, with 12.28 FTEs per 10,000 residents. The national median for similar-sized agencies is 8.3 FTEs per 10,000, which is well below the current staffing level for SFPRD.

Agency	Population	Total FTEs	FTEs per 10,000 Residents
Boise	246,000	765	31.10
Shawnee County	178,725	420	23.50
Saint Paul	306,621	564	18.39
Grand Prairie	189,430	237	12.51
Sioux Falls	183,200	225	12.28
Des Moines	216,853	113	5.23
<i>NRPA Median 2016-2018 = 8.3 FTEs per 10,000 Residents</i>			

1.2.3 OPERATING EXPENSE PER CAPITA

Agencies participating in the benchmark study are spending on parks and recreation operations. Dividing the annual operational budget by each service area's population allows for a comparison of how much each agency is spending on a per resident basis. SFPRD ranks third among peer agencies for both total operating expense (\$17,197,750) and expense per resident (\$93.87), which is above the NRPA median of \$78.69 per resident.

Agency	Population	Total Operating Expense	Operating Expense per Resident
Saint Paul	306,621	\$ 60,807,671	\$ 198.32
Boise	246,000	\$ 33,013,298	\$ 134.20
Sioux Falls	183,200	\$ 17,197,750	\$ 93.87
Shawnee County	178,725	\$ 13,704,416	\$ 76.68
Grand Prairie	189,430	\$ 14,085,502	\$ 74.36
Des Moines	216,853	\$ 12,087,123	\$ 55.74
<i>NRPA Median 2016-2018 = \$78.69 Operating Expense per Resident</i>			

1.2.4 NON-TAX REVENUE

By comparing each agency's annual non-tax revenue to the population, the annual revenue generated on a per resident basis can be determined. As seen below, there is a variation in revenue-generating capabilities among benchmark agencies, with SFPRD representing the middle of the study for earned income generated per resident (\$21.15). Placing SFPRD near NRPA's median (\$20.11) revenue per resident.

Agency	Population	Total Non-Tax Revenue	Revenue per Resident
Saint Paul	306,621	\$ 16,903,976	\$ 55.13
Boise	246,000	\$ 10,534,092	\$ 42.82
Des Moines	216,853	\$ 4,593,223	\$ 21.18
Sioux Falls	183,200	\$ 3,875,011	\$ 21.15
Grand Prairie	189,430	\$ 3,657,082	\$ 19.31
Shawnee County	178,725	\$ 2,349,630	\$ 13.15
<i>NRPA Median 2016-2018 = \$20.11 Revenue per Resident</i>			

1.2.5 COST RECOVERY

Operational cost recovery is a key performance indicator, arrived at by dividing total non-tax revenue by total operating expense, which measures how well each Departments' revenue generation covers the total cost of operations. The current 23% cost recovery for SFPRD ranks near the bottom among benchmark peers and is below the national median of 27% cost recovery for similar agencies. This is performance measure that should be tracked overtime and expected to improve as revenue generation for the Department strengthens and operational efficiencies are achieved.

Agency	Total Non-Tax Revenue	Total Operating Expense	Operational Cost Recovery
Des Moines	\$ 4,593,223	\$ 12,087,123	38%
Boise	\$ 10,534,092	\$ 33,013,298	32%
Saint Paul	\$ 16,903,976	\$ 60,807,671	28%
Grand Prairie	\$ 3,657,082	\$ 14,085,502	26%
Sioux Falls	\$ 3,875,011	\$ 17,197,750	23%
Shawnee County	\$ 2,349,630	\$ 13,704,416	17%
<i>NRPA Median 2016-2018 = 27% Cost Recovery</i>			

1.2.6 CAPITAL INVESTMENT

The table below reveals the actual capital investment in the most recent year and compares it to each jurisdiction's population. Each agency has also provided their budget capital improvement plan for 2019. SFPRD invests around \$8 million 2018 in capital improvements, which is above the benchmark median. NRPA median for agencies with 1,501 to 2,500 population per square mile for a five-year capital budget spending is \$5,371,748.

Agency	Population	2018 Capital Spending	Capital Spending per Resident (2018)	2019 CIP Budget
Boise	246,000	\$ 22,084,779	\$ 89.78	\$ 42,690,587
Sioux Falls	183,200	\$ 8,276,300	\$ 45.18	\$ 9,918,178
Saint Paul	306,621	\$ 9,510,785	\$ 31.02	n/a
Grand Prairie	189,430	\$ 4,567,187	\$ 24.11	\$ 4,177,791
Des Moines	216,853	\$ 4,515,489	\$ 20.82	\$ 15,394,255
Shawnee County	178,725	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

1.2.7 MARKETING SPENDING

Marketing spending for parks and recreation agencies are typically less than the private sector, but the industry is beginning to realize the value of investing in marketing and the potential return on investment (ROI) that can be achieved. Compared to peers reporting figures, SFPRD ranks near the bottom for total marketing expense (\$27,368), marketing spending per resident (\$.15). SFPRD increased the marketing budget \$61,732 which will be about (\$.49) per resident in 2019. Best practice peer agency is Grand Prairie with \$1.27 per resident. The overall marketing budget for Grand Prairie (\$280,880) is 1.9% of their total operating budget.

Agency	Population	2018 Marketing Expense	Marketing Expense per Resident (2018)	2019 Marketing Budget
Grand Prairie	189,430	\$ 240,868	\$ 1.27	\$ 280,880
Boise	246,000	\$ 271,191	\$ 1.10	\$ 326,519
Shawnee County	178,725	\$ 144,238	\$ 0.81	\$ 169,890
Des Moines	216,853	\$ 174,158	\$ 0.80	\$ 203,944
Sioux Falls	183,200	\$ 27,368	\$ 0.15	\$ 89,100
Saint Paul	306,621	n/a	n/a	n/a

1.2.8 LEVEL OF SERVICE COMPARISON

The table below provide the raw data of inventory levels from the benchmark systems, as well as a side by side comparison of the level of service for each amenity type population of jurisdiction served. Inventory data for each of the benchmark agencies were directly obtained from each agency.

Agency:	Sioux Falls Current Service Level based upon population			Boise Current Service Level based upon population			Des Moines Current Service Level based upon population			Grand Prairie Current Service Level based upon population			Saint Paul Current Service Level based upon population			Shawnee County Current Service Level based upon population		
PARK ACRES:																		
Total Developed Acres	16.29	acres per	1,000	7.14	acres per	1,000	6.92	acres per	1,000	23.41	acres per	1,000	n/a	acres per	1,000	n/a	acres per	1,000
Undeveloped Acres/Land Bank	1.99	acres per	1,000	23.15	acres per	1,000	11.67	acres per	1,000	2.99	acres per	1,000	n/a	acres per	1,000	n/a	acres per	1,000
Total Park Acres	18.28	acres per	1,000	30.28	acres per	1,000	18.59	acres per	1,000	26.41	acres per	1,000	13.45	acres per	1,000	15.02	acres per	1,000
OUTDOOR BALLFIELDS:																		
Multi-Purpose Fields (Soccer, Football, Cricket, Lacrosse, Other)	1.00	field per	2,510	1.00	field per	5,348	1.00	field per	4,819	1.00	field per	8,236	1.00	field per	4,867	1.00	field per	715
Ball Diamonds (Baseball, Softball)	1.00	field per	1,728	1.00	field per	4,920	1.00	field per	13,553	1.00	field per	5,120	1.00	field per	2,086	1.00	field per	4,359
Total Ballfields	1.00	field per	1,023	1.00	field per	2,563	1.00	field per	3,555	1.00	field per	3,157	1.00	field per	1,460	1.00	field per	614
OUTDOOR SPORT COURTS:																		
Basketball Courts	1.00	court per	7,633	1.00	court per	9,111	1.00	court per	9,857	1.00	court per	15,786	1.00	court per	8,069	1.00	court per	6,619
Pickleball Courts	1.00	court per	30,533	1.00	court per	24,600	1.00	court per	43,371	1.00	court per	-	1.00	court per	13,937	1.00	court per	9,929
Sand Volleyball Courts	1.00	court per	11,450	1.00	court per	27,333	1.00	court per	108,427	1.00	court per	94,715	1.00	court per	153,311	1.00	court per	22,341
Tennis Courts	1.00	court per	4,580	1.00	court per	3,037	1.00	court per	3,943	1.00	court per	14,572	1.00	court per	3,982	1.00	court per	4,255
Total Sport Courts	1.00	court per	2,510	1.00	court per	2,033	1.00	court per	2,383	1.00	court per	7,016	1.00	court per	1,881	1.00	court per	2,352
PLAYGROUNDS:																		
Traditional Play	1.00	playground per	2,510	1.00	playground per	3,237	1.00	playground per	3,804	1.00	playground per	6,111	1.00	playground per	3,982	1.00	playground per	508
Inclusive Play	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	216,853	1.00	playground per	189,430	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	-
Nature Play	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	246,000	1.00	playground per	72,284	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	306,621	1.00	playground per	-
Indoor Play	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	-	1.00	playground per	189,430	1.00	playground per	306,621	1.00	playground per	-
Total Playgrounds	1.00	playground per	2,510	1.00	playground per	2,033	1.00	playground per	3,739	1.00	playground per	5,920	1.00	playground per	3,982	1.00	playground per	508
INDOOR / OUTDOOR FACILITIES:																		
Recreation / Community Centers	1.00	site per	36,640	1.00	site per	41,000	1.00	site per	108,427	1.00	site per	37,886	1.00	site per	9,582	1.00	site per	19,858
Indoor Aquatic Centers	1.00	site per	183,200	1.00	site per	246,000	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	94,715	1.00	site per	306,621	1.00	site per	-
Outdoor Aquatic Centers / Pools	1.00	site per	30,533	1.00	site per	41,000	1.00	site per	43,371	1.00	site per	63,143	1.00	site per	102,207	1.00	site per	25,532
Splash Pads / Spraygrounds	1.00	site per	91,600	1.00	site per	123,000	1.00	site per	30,979	1.00	site per	189,430	1.00	site per	76,655	1.00	site per	89,363
Outdoor Ice Rinks	1.00	site per	30,533	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	216,853	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	10,221	1.00	site per	-
Indoor Ice Rinks	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	123,000	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	-	1.00	site per	-
Amphitheaters / Band Shells	1.00	site per	61,067	1.00	site per	123,000	1.00	site per	108,427	1.00	site per	63,143	1.00	site per	61,324	1.00	site per	89,363
INDOOR / OUTDOOR FACILITY SPACE (SQURE FEET)																		
Recreation / Community Centers	1.00	SF per	person	0.18	SF per	person	0.19	SF per	person	1.38	SF per	person	n/a	SF per	person	0.80	SF per	person
Indoor Aquatic Centers	0.33	SF per	person	0.16	SF per	person	-	SF per	person	0.49	SF per	person	n/a	SF per	person	-	SF per	person
Outdoor Aquatic Centers (Pool Surface Only)	0.31	SF per	person	0.14	SF per	person	0.26	SF per	person	0.06	SF per	person	n/a	SF per	person	0.45	SF per	person
Splash Pads / Spraygrounds	0.04	SF per	person	0.01	SF per	person	0.07	SF per	person	0.06	SF per	person	n/a	SF per	person	0.04	SF per	person
Ice Rinks Refrigerated	-	SF per	person	0.14	SF per	person	0.03	SF per	person	-	SF per	person	n/a	SF per	person	-	SF per	person
Ice Rinks Unrefrigerated	1.24	SF per	person	0.23	SF per	person	-	SF per	person	-	SF per	person	n/a	SF per	person	-	SF per	person

1.2.9 INVENTORY COMPARISON

The table below provides a snapshot of inventory for benchmark systems. To assist with the comparison, the last column is the average of the data provided by each benchmark agencies.

Agency:		Sioux Falls	Boise	Des Moines	Grand Prairie	Saint Paul	Shawnee County	Average
PARK ACRES:								
Total Developed Acres	acres per	2,985.00	1,756.00	1,500.00	4,435.00	n/a	n/a	2,669.00
Undeveloped Acres/Land Bank	acres per	364.00	5,694.00	2,531.00	567.00	n/a	n/a	2,289.00
Total Park Acres	acres per	3,349.00	7,450.00	4,031.00	5,002.00	4,123.00	2,684.86	
OUTDOOR BALLFIELDS:								
Multi-Purpose Fields (Soccer, Football, Cricket, Lacrosse, Other)	field per	73	46	45	23	63	250	83.33
Ball Diamonds (Baseball, Softball)	field per	106	50	16	37	147	41	66.17
Total Ballfields	field per	179	96	61	60	210	291	
OUTDOOR SPORT COURTS:								
Basketball Courts	court per	24	27	22	12	38	27	25.00
Pickleball Courts	court per	6	10	5	-	22	18	10.17
Sand Volleyball Courts	court per	16	9	2	2	2	8	6.50
Tennis Courts	court per	40	81	55	13	77	42	51.33
Total Sport Courts	court per	73	121	91	27	163	76	
PLAYGROUNDS:								
Traditional Play	playground per	73	76	57	31	77	352	111.00
Inclusive Play	playground per	-	-	1	1	-	-	
Nature Play	playground per	-	1	3	-	1	-	
Indoor Play	playground per	-	-	-	1	1	-	
Total Playgrounds	playground per	73	121	58	32	77	352	
INDOOR / OUTDOOR FACILITIES:								
Recreation / Community Centers	site per	5	6	2	5	32	9	9.83
Indoor Aquatic Centers	site per	1	1	-	2	1	-	
Outdoor Aquatic Centers / Pools	site per	6	6	5	3	3	7	5.00
Splash Pads / Spraygrounds	site per	2	2	7	1	4	2	3.00
Outdoor Ice Rinks	site per	6	-	1	-	30	-	
Indoor Ice Rinks	site per	-	2	-	-	-	-	
Amphitheaters / Band Shells	site per	3	2	2	3	5	2	2.83
INDOOR / OUTDOOR FACILITY SPACE (SQARE FEET)								
Recreation / Community Centers	SF per	182,686	44,552	40,250	260,828	n/a	143,577	134,378.60
Indoor Aquatic Centers	SF per	60,000	39,683	-	93,634	n/a	-	
Outdoor Aquatic Centers (Pool Surface Only)	SF per	55,914	33,370	56,703	10,640	n/a	79,806	47,286.68
Splash Pads / Spraygrounds	SF per	7,500	2,500	14,500	12,000	n/a	6,649	8,629.80
Ice Rinks Refrigerated	SF per	-	34,000	7,200	-	n/a	-	
Ice Rinks Unrefrigerated	SF per	227,300	56,524	-	-	n/a	-	

LEVEL OF SERVICE COMPARISON

SFPRD represents above average to benchmark agencies in the areas of developed acres (2, 985), number of ball diamonds (106), Sand Volleyball Courts (16), outdoor aquatic centers (6) and square feet of recreation/community center (182,686). SFPRD represents the higher standards of services from the peer agencies in unrefrigerated ice rink (227,300 Square Ft). Areas where SFPRD falls below the average are undeveloped land (364 acres), multipurpose fields (73), pickleball courts (6), and recreation centers (5).

1.3 SUMMARY OF BENCHMARK FINDINGS

Compared to benchmark peers, SFPRD represents a lower population, with a lower population density, and similar jurisdiction sizes. Ranking near the top in developed acres over 80 park sites, SFPRD has fewer acres than the benchmarked peers. The department has placed value on improving land they already maintain. Based on the data presented in the benchmark analysis, SFPRD is positioned around the benchmark average to slightly below the benchmark average. Some factors that may be impacting this are the City represents a lower than average population, a lower population density, and a lower average jurisdiction size. When compared to its peers, Sioux Falls still excels in developed acres and total acres per 1,000 (18.28) is well above the NRPA Median of 10.1 acres per 1,000. The commitment to a strong quality of life is present with the consistent investment in capital improvements

Operation expense (\$93.87) per resident plus capital improvement (\$45.18) per resident equals \$139.05 per resident to maintain and improve operations of the SFPRD. SFPRD manages six ice rinks, which may affect budget comparisons. Earned income per resident in non-tax revenue recovers 23% of the operation costs. SFPRD had the lowest representation in marketing at \$0.15 per resident which is also well below what is considered best practice in the industry (3-4% of the overall expenses). However, they have plans of a significant budgeted increase for 2019. This budgeted increase may help the non-tax revenue and increase the cost recovery for the department

Sioux Falls is also spending at a high rate per resident in its operational budget (\$93.87) and earning (\$21.15) per resident which is slightly above the NRPA Median of \$21.11. This is the result of providing essential services to neighborhoods at little to no cost as a philosophical approach to changes earlier in the City's jurisdictional growth. The need to reach these areas with services was a priority during these sprawling growth periods.

Benchmarks data is used by many agencies in the industry to identify key performance indicators where improvement will have the greatest impact overall on the system. Setting a tangible goal based in part on the NRPA Metrics medians or average of peer communities is an approach that allows the Department to benchmark regularly a trusted resource for the parks and recreation industry.