

## CHAPTER ONE RECREATION PROGRAMS ASSESSMENT

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

As part of the Comprehensive Parks and Recreation System Plan process, the consulting team performed a Recreation Program Assessment of the programs and services offered by the Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation Department (SFPR). The assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities regarding programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents.

The consulting team based these program findings and comments from a review of information provided by SFPR's staff including program descriptions, financial data, partnership agreements, promotion methods, etc. This report addresses the program offerings from a systems perspective for the entire portfolio of programs, as well as individual program information.

#### 1.1.1 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

SFPR offers a wide gamut of programs ranging from Aquatics to Cultural Arts to Health & Wellness. The following section is a brief overview of all program offerings provided by the SFPR and more detailed analysis can be found in the specific sections of each key performance indicator.

Below are some overall observations that stood out when analyzing the program assessment sheets:

- Overall the **program descriptions** effectively communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area.
- **Age segment distribution** is strong with approximately 76% of the City's population falling between the ages of 18-75+ years old, it is fitting that the 'Adult' segments are highly catered to. Programming *Youth* (12 & under) is appropriate considering similar provider services. SFPR needs to ensure segments such as *Teens* (13-17) aren't being underserved. The Age Segment distribution should be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics and resources.
- **Program lifecycles:** 46% of the current program offers are in the Decline and Saturation stages, which shows concern that underperforming programs are likely being sustained for too long. There are 37 out of 57 programs that are considered legacy. For the 20 programs that are not legacy programs, they should be retired and new programs identified in the recreation trends and community survey priority investment should be developed to keep a fresh supply of programming to meet resident's needs. A complete description of Lifecycle Stages can be found in **Section 1.5**.
- The City uses a streamlined **volunteer program** which allows residents and organizations to get involved easily to give back to the community which could be improved by identifying opportunities that are ongoing and specific seasonal tasks. Providing information on various volunteer opportunities, special events, and programs on the website in advance would assist in a more proactive approach. The website should also include online registration for volunteers that is an icon and easily visible to be easy and convenient. This best practice should be continued and augmented as needed to ensure a volunteer force that adequately fills the need of the City.
- From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: online program guides, the City's website, brochures and flyers, email blasts, PSA's, paid advertisements, newsletters, special events, in-facility promotions/ signage, social media and digital marketing (introduced in 2019) as a part of the marketing mix.

- SFPR would benefit from identifying marketing Return on Investment (ROI) for all marketing initiatives
- Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions such as Live Well SF, The Library, Transit, and other public and nonprofit service providers. This will increase the reach and should be reciprocated to organizations that partner on this effort.

Currently, the collection of **customer feedback** is rather robust, as identified in section 1.15 of this report. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the SFPR continues utilizing several platforms to obtain public input. Furthermore, lost customer and on-site surveys are additional tools that the Department may want to consider using in the future to track customer feedback

- **Pricing strategies** are rather limited. Currently, the only used approaches include: age and ability to pay. Some additional pricing tactics the Department should consider utilizing in the future include cost recovery rates, residency rates, competition (market) rates, and group discounts. In order to successfully implement cost recovery rates, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals. More detail on this can be found in section 1.12.2 of this report.
- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to begin tracking cost recovery for all program areas. When doing so, the staff should factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the SFPR's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability. More information on financial performance can be found in section 1.12.2 of this report

## 1.2 EXISTING CORE PROGRAM AREAS

Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. To help achieve the mission, it is important to identify Core Program Areas based on current and future needs to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. The philosophy of the Core Program Area assists staff, policy makers, and the public focus on what is most important. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency's overall budget.
- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- The program area has wide demographic appeal.
- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the programs area's offerings.
- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- SFPR controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

In consultation with SFPR staff, the planning team identified the following Core Program Areas currently being offered:

1. Aquatics
2. Cultural Arts
3. Enrichment
4. Health & Wellness

5. Outdoor Recreation
6. Youth & Adult Sports

### 1.2.1 AQUATICS

The Aquatics Core Program Area provides a lifelong safety skill while also offering fitness opportunities such as strength and coordination. Additionally, Aquatics can provide confidence in the water and motivation to improve skill proficiencies. The goal is to provide a safe and enjoyable aquatic experience for all persons. Examples of Aquatic Programs include:

- Outdoor Swim Lessons
- Open Swim
- Aquatic Fitness Classes
- Flick & Float
- Water Walking
- Lap Swimming



### 1.2.2 CULTURAL ARTS

The Cultural Arts Core Program Area promotes a sense of social connectivity within the City. These programs are designed to be accessible to the novice event goer as well as entertaining for those who frequent cultural arts programs. The goal is to introduce the community to cultural programs in a way that is accessible to a wide population of the City.

Examples of Cultural Arts Programs include:

- Storyland Children's Theatre
- Theatre Camps
- Music Classes
- Book Walks
- Theatre in the Parks



### 1.2.3 ENRICHMENT

The Enrichment Core Program Area provides opportunities for lifelong hobbies and interests through numerous classes and special events. The goal is to continue to develop and enhance the hobbies and interests of community members. Examples of Enrichment Programs include:

- Frosty Frolics
- Science Education
- Youth Hobbies & Interests
- Senior Education
- Sensory Classes



#### 1.2.4 HEALTH & WELLNESS

The Health & Wellness Core Program Area provides opportunities for lifelong health and wellbeing through indoors and outdoors fitness and wellness classes. The goal of this Core Program Area is to increase the physical and nutritional wellbeing of Sioux Falls’ residents. Examples of Health & Wellness Programs include:

- 5K Events Fun Run/Walks
- Fun & Fit
- Yoga in the Park
- Land Fitness
- Cooking and Nutrition
- Youth Cross Country Meets
- Outdoor Road Races



#### 1.2.5 OUTDOOR RECREATION

The Outdoor Recreation Core Program Area provides numerous programs and activities that introduce or enhance the citizens understanding, appreciation, and general interest in nature pursuits. The goal of Outdoor Recreation is to develop an understanding, appreciation, and general interest in nature pursuits throughout the Sioux Falls Area. Examples of Outdoor Recreation Programs include:

- Fishing
- Recreational Hikes
- Ecology Camp
- Nature Arts
- Archery



### 1.2.6 YOUTH & ADULT SPORTS

The Youth & Adult Sports Core Program Area provides facilities for and assists with implementation of recreational activities for all ages. The goal of this Core Program Area is to provide a wide variety of recreational activities for youth and adults resulting in a lifelong active lifestyle. The community and tournament visitors appreciate the field availability and level of maintenance. Tournaments include local leagues, regional tournaments and national tournaments. Examples of Youth & Adult Sports include:



- Volleyball Tournaments
- Adult Basketball
- Youth Sports/Camps
- Adult Kickball
- Senior Games
- Youth Triathlon

## 1.3 DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS

### 1.3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Based on population data from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and PROS' analysis of the data, the City's population has recently experienced a significant growing trend, and is currently estimated at 181,739 individuals. Based on predictions through 2033, the City is expected to have 236,780 residents living within 94,528 households.

The population of the City is predominately White Alone. The 2018 estimates show that 81% of Sioux Falls' population is classified as White Alone, while the Black Alone population (7%) represents the largest minority. Future projections show that by 2033 the overall composition of population will become slightly more diverse. Forecasts of the target area through 2033 project a decrease in the White Alone population (to 75%), coinciding with increases amongst all other race segments.

The per capita income (\$31,172) and median household income (\$56,857) for the City are both above the state averages and slightly below the national averages. The overall composition of the population is relatively young with half (49%) of the total population falling below 35-years old. Projecting ahead, the City's population is expected to experience a minor aging trend. The 55+ age segment is projected to increase an additional 3% by 2033.

### 1.3.2 NATIONAL RECREATION TRENDS

Information released by Sports & Fitness Industry Association's (SFIA) 2018 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report reveals that the most popular sport and recreational activities include:

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Fitness walking | • Yoga          |
| • Treadmill       | • Paddleboard   |
| • Free weights    | • Water Fitness |
| • Running/jogging |                 |
| • Hiking          |                 |

From a traditional team sport standpoint, basketball ranks highest among all sports, with approximately 23.4 million people reportedly participating in 2017. Golf and Tennis round out the top three. Sports that have experienced significant growth in participation over the past five years are:

- Rugby
- Boxing
- Lacrosse
- Roller hockey
- Field Hockey

According to the Physical Activity Council, an “inactive” is defined as an individual that doesn’t take part in any physical activity. Over the last 5-years the rate of inactivity has remained flat, but due to the population increase there were 2.0 million more inactive people in 2017 than in 2012.

### 1.3.3 EXPECTED LOCAL PARTICIPATION

The following chart shows the expected percentage of resident participants for the City in regards to recreational activities. These percentages are correlated to MPI scores and can serve as another tool for programmatic decision-making that allows SFPR to quantify the expected participants by activity.

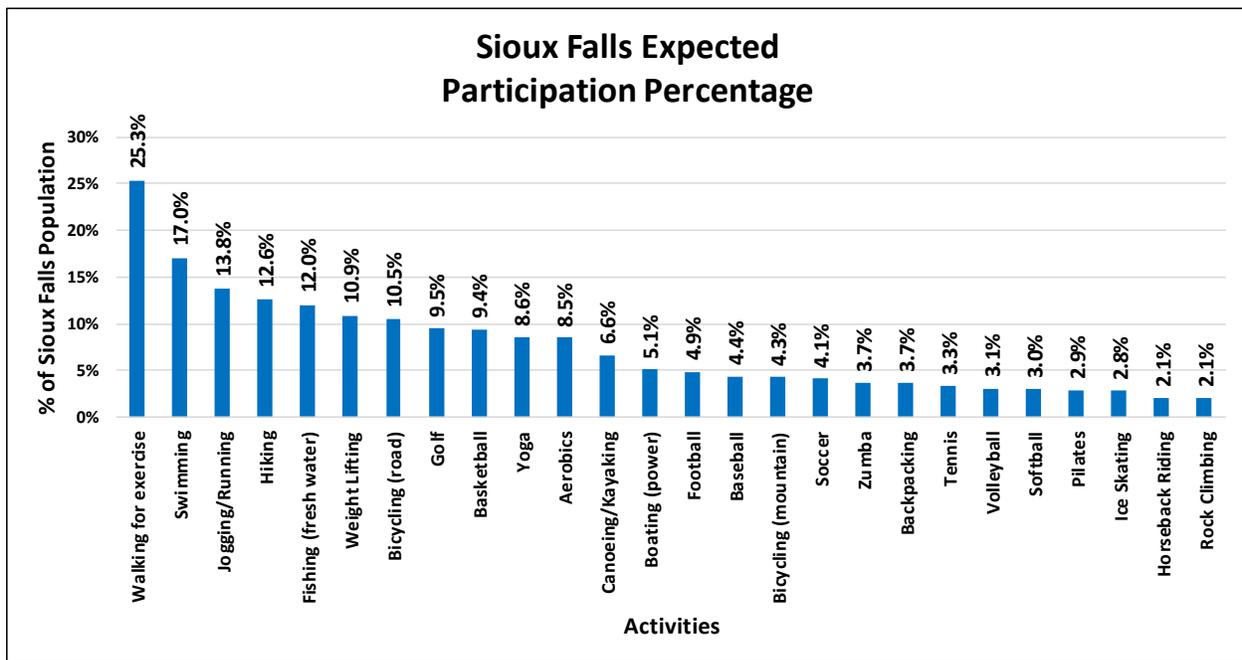


Figure 1: Expected Recreation Participation

### 1.3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Core Program Areas listed in Section 1.2 provide a generally well-rounded and diverse array of programs, currently well-suited to address the programmatic needs of the existing population.

The City should be mindful of higher than average income levels when pricing programs and services, while considering lower income residents who fall outside the averages. This is most valuable for programs and services developed after the initial plan recommendations as direction for the staff. With the Department evolving to be more focused on revenue generation, understanding the market value, target market, and classification of the program or service will help price appropriately for revenue or for community good.



- Based on best practices and demographic and recreations trends information, the City staff should evaluate Core Program Areas and individual programs, ideally on an annual basis to ensure offerings are relevant to evolving demographics in an aging community.
- Develop new high priority investment programs identified by residents from the community survey within the Core Program Areas of Aquatics, Cultural Arts, Enrichment, Health & Wellness, and Outdoor Recreation. See the Core Program Areas with high and medium priorities in the Appendix.

### 1.4 AGE SEGMENT ANALYSIS

The table below depicts each Core Program Area and the most prominent age segments they serve. Recognizing that many Core Program Areas serve multiple age segments, Primary (noted with a ‘P’) and Secondary (noted with an ‘S’) markets are identified.

Core Program Area	Preschool	Elementary (Grade K-5)	Middle School (Grades 6-8)	High School (Grades 9-12)	Young Adult (Ages 18-24)	Adults (Ages 25-44)	Middle-age Adults (Ages 45-64)	Senior Adults (Ages 65+)	Families
Aquatics	P	P	P	S	S	S	P	P	P
Cultural Arts	P	P	S	S	P	P	P	P	P
Enrichment	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Health & Wellness	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	S
Outdoor Recreation	P	P	S	S	S	P	P	S	P
Youth & Adult Sports	S	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

Figure 2: Age Segment Analysis

This type of analysis exhibits an over-arching view of the age segments served by different program areas, while displaying any gaps in segments served. It is also useful to perform an Age Segment Analysis by individual programs, in order to gain a more nuanced view of the data. Based on the age demographics noted previously in this report, current programs seem to be fairly well-aligned with the community’s age profile. With approximately 76% of the City’s population falling between the ages of 18-75+ years

old, it is fitting that the ‘Adult’ segments are highly catered. Furthermore, there are many similar providers for youth services within the City that help to provide opportunities for the various segments of youth. The staff are conscious of areas where services can be duplicated and areas where services are adequately provided by similar providers. There is no need to duplicate services in these areas and dilute the impact so instead, the City has several partnerships with these organizations to limit the duplication and increase resources.

However, there may be opportunities to create programming for specific age segments that would have specific messages and marketing to attract a specific age segment to participate. The City already has specific age segments targeted and could do the same with some special events. In addition, special events and fitness programs for youth such as kids adventure expo, conditioning for adventure, and life skills are opportunities where programming could be introduced to address the need of Outdoor adventure identified as a top priority for investment identified from the 2019 Needs Assessment Survey results. It could also be useful for the staff to perform an age segment analysis of current participants by individual program, in order to gain a more detailed perspective of the data. This could open up opportunities for expanding program participation in the current age segment or expand the reach into other age segments and demographics.

It would be best practice to establish a plan including what age segment to target, establish the message, identify which marketing methods to use, create social media campaigns for new programming, and determine what to measure for success before allocating resources towards a particular effort. An example of this would be a youth fair. This would have youth focused activities, a specific message geared towards youth and their most involved parent to entice participation.

### 1.5 PROGRAM LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS

A Program Lifecycle Analysis involves reviewing each program offered by the SFPR to determine the stage of growth or decline for each. This provides a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall mix of programs managed by the agency to ensure that an appropriate number of programs are “fresh” and that relatively few programs, if any, need to be discontinued.

This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data but, rather, is based on staff members’ knowledge of their program areas. The following table shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of SFPR’s programs. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff members. *Please note a complete lifecycle breakdown can be found in Appendix 2.2.*

Lifecycle Stage	Description	Actual Program Distribution		Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	4%	26% total	50-60% total
Take-Off	Rapid participation growth	5%		
Growth	Moderate, but consistent participation growth	17%		
Mature	Slow participation growth	28%	28%	40%
Saturation	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	37%	46% total	0-10% total
Decline	Declining participation	9%		

Figure 3: Lifecycle Analysis

Only 26% of all programs fall within the beginning stages (Introduction, Take-Off, & Growth). This is well-below the recommended 50%-60%. Furthermore, approximately 46% of the current program offers are in the Decline and Saturation stages, which appears to be much higher than the recommended program distribution. This is attributed to the majority of programs (37/57) being Legacy Programs. If a program is in Saturation stage, it may not necessarily need to be retired - it could be that it is a legacy program that is beloved by the community or are capped due to lack of resources to expand. Eventually Legacy Programs are retired as trends change. The underperforming programs need to be retired and spin-off programs developed where appropriate. This will help to capture the current participation and retain these customers. When this occurs, it is absolutely necessary to conduct surveys of remaining participation to help develop services that will help retain these customers. When this is not possible, staff should develop a similar provider list with services that could be recommended to existing participants. This should include messaging of the Department's caring brand for residents to continue their quality of life with another organization.

It is useful to look at attendance trends - do you have fewer participants over the last few offerings? If so, the community may be looking for a different type of program. While there are exceptions, most programs in the Saturation and Decline stages are ready to retire, including the Legacy Programs as identified above.

Staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance. Furthermore, SFPR could include annual performance measures for each Core Program Area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of new programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.



### 1.6 PROGRAM CLASSIFICATION

Conducting a classification of services informs how each program serves the overall organization mission, the goals, and objectives of each Core Program Area. Additionally, it also assists with how programs should to be funded with regard to tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. How a program is classified can help to determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies.

Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides a public benefit versus a private benefit. A public benefit can be described as everyone receiving the same level of benefit with equal access, whereas a private benefit can be described as the user receiving exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.

This plan proposes a classification method based on three indicators: Essential, Important, and Value-Added. Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, financial sustainability, personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, as well as access by participants. The infographic to the right describes each of the three program classifications.

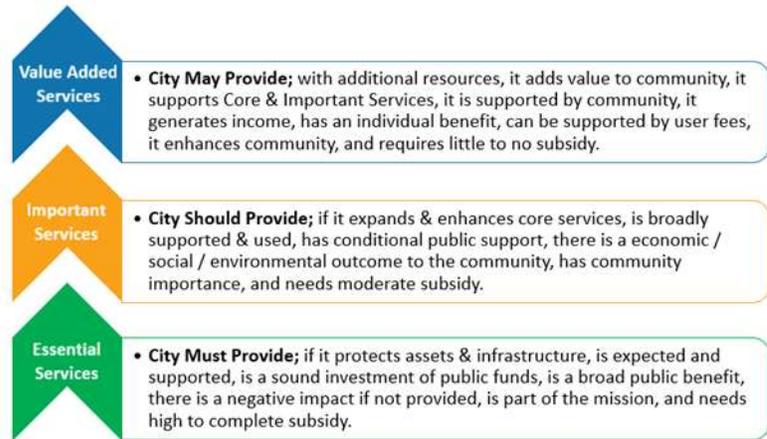


Figure 4: Program Classification Descriptions

Another way to describe these three classifications is to analyze the degree to which the program provides a community versus an individual benefit, as seen in Figure 5.

Program Classification Metrics	ESSENTIAL Programs	IMPORTANT Programs	VALUE-ADDED Programs
<i>Benefits (i.e., health, safety, protection of assets)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Public and individual benefit</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Primarily individual benefit</i></li> </ul>
<i>Access</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Open access by all</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Open access</i></li> <li>• <i>Limited access to specific users</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Limited access to specific users</i></li> </ul>
<i>Financial Sustainability</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs</i></li> <li>• <i>Requires public funding</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fees cover some direct costs</i></li> <li>• <i>Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fees cover most direct and indirect costs</i></li> <li>• <i>Some public funding as appropriate</i></li> </ul>
<i>Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>High public expectation</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>High public expectation</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>High individual and interest group expectation</i></li> </ul>
<i>Competition in the Market</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Limited or no alternative providers</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alternative providers readily available</i></li> </ul>

Figure 5: Program Classification Metrics

With assistance from SFPR staff, a classification of programs and services was conducted for all of the recreation programs currently being offered. The results are presented in the chart below.

Approximately 22% of programs were deemed Essential by SFPR staff, with 28.8% considered to be Important, and the remaining 49.2% being Value-Added. This distribution breakdown is used to identify the current distribution and make recommendations that help the agency achieve a balance that helps achieve cost recovery goals.

CHART KEY
Aquatics
Cultural Arts
Enrichment
Health & Wellness
Outdoor Recreation
Youth and Adult Sports

ESSENTIAL Programs	IMPORTANT Programs	VALUE-ADDED Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indoor Swim Lessons</li> <li>Outdoor Swim Lessons</li> <li>Open Swim</li> <li>Mondays at McKennan</li> <li>Storyland Children’s Theatre</li> <li>Theatre in the Parks</li> <li>Municipal Band</li> <li>Kids Nite</li> <li>Touch a Truck</li> <li>Independence Day Celebration</li> <li>Frosty Frolics</li> <li>Playground Program</li> <li>Open Skate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certification &amp; Training Classes</li> <li>Aquatic Fitness Classes</li> <li>Lap Swim</li> <li>Water Walking</li> <li>Paws in the Park</li> <li>Defrightful Family Fun</li> <li>5K Events</li> <li>Fun &amp; Fit</li> <li>Yoga in the Park</li> <li>Land Fitness</li> <li>Paddling Fair</li> <li>Fishing</li> <li>Toddler/Preschool Sports</li> <li>Youth Sports/Camps</li> <li>Developmental Track Meets</li> <li>Road Races</li> <li>Senior Games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flick &amp; Float</li> <li>Wibit Events</li> <li>Reindeer Games</li> <li>Cardboard Boat Race</li> <li>Youth Triathlon</li> <li>Lazy 5K</li> <li>Theatre Camps</li> <li>Music Classes</li> <li>Book Walks</li> <li>Senior Bike Trail Tour</li> <li>Science Education</li> <li>Holiday Parties</li> <li>Strider Bike</li> <li>Sensory Classes</li> <li>Senior Education</li> <li>Adult Hobbies &amp; Interests</li> <li>Youth Hobbies &amp; Interests</li> <li>Cooking and Nutrition</li> <li>Recreational Hikes</li> <li>Snowshoeing</li> <li>Archery</li> <li>Nature Arts</li> <li>Ecology Camp</li> <li>VB Tournaments</li> <li>Adult Basketball</li> <li>Adult Indoor Volleyball</li> <li>Adult Sand Volleyball</li> <li>Adult Kickball</li> <li>Drop - In Pickleball</li> </ul>
<b>22%</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>49.2%</b>

It is recommended that the Department continues operating with its current distribution, where Important and Value-added percentages are higher than essential programs. This will help the City with operational revenues while still ensuring the City’s lower income residents have ample opportunities to participate.

### 1.7 COST OF SERVICE & COST RECOVERY

Currently, SFPR does not have cost recovery goals. Moving forward, it is recommended that cost recovery targets be identified for each Core Program Area, at minimum, and for specific programs or events where possible. The previously identified Core Program Areas would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics, which would theoretically group programs with similar cost recovery and subsidy goals.

Determining cost recovery performance and using it to inform pricing decisions involves a three-step process:

1. Classify all programs and services based on the public or private benefit they provide (as completed in the previous section).
2. Conduct a Cost of Service Analysis to calculate the full cost of each program.
3. Establish a cost recovery percentage, through City policy, for each program or program type based on the outcomes of the previous two steps, and adjust program prices accordingly.

The following provides more detail on steps 2 & 3.

#### 1.7.1 UNDERSTANDING THE FULL COST OF SERVICE

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting needs to be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and program staff should be trained on this process.

A Cost of Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (i.e., program-specific) and indirect (i.e., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost of Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program, but provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs. The figure below illustrates the common types of costs that must be accounted for in a Cost of Service Analysis.

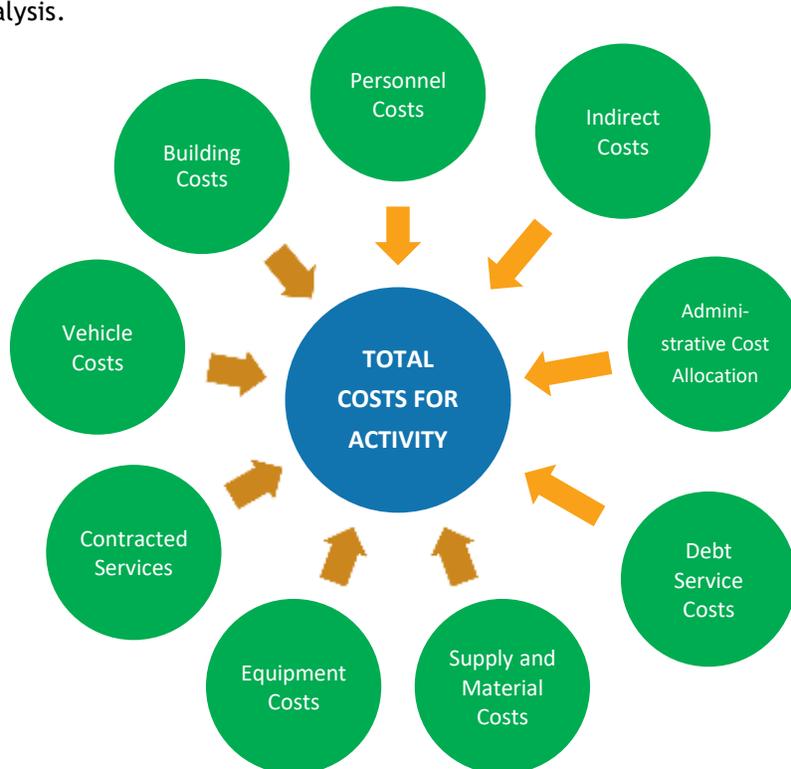


Figure 7: Types of Costs

The methodology for determining the total Cost of Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants
- Number of tasks performed
- Number of consumable units
- Number of service calls
- Number of events
- Required time for offering program/service

Agencies use Cost of Service Analyses to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by SFPR between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost of Service totals have been calculated. Program staff should be trained on the process of conducting a Cost of Service Analysis, and the process should be undertaken on a regular basis.

### 1.7.2 CURRENT COST RECOVERY

With regard to SFPR programs, services, and events, methods to measure and track cost recovery have not been developed up to this point. It is best practice to have cost recovery goals at the core program area level, and over time, evolve into implementing cost recovery goals at the individual program level as well. The below table shows cost recovery best practices for those core program areas identified. Setting, tracking, and reaching cost recovery goals for every core program area will help the Department justify program expense and make a case for additional offerings in the future.

<b>COST RECOVERY</b>	
<b>Core Program Area</b>	<b>Best Practice in Cost Recovery</b>
<b>Aquatics</b>	<b>50-100%</b>
<b>Cultural Arts</b>	<b>40-60%</b>
<b>Enrichment</b>	<b>50-75%</b>
<b>Health &amp; Wellness</b>	<b>50-100%</b>
<b>Outdoor Recreation</b>	<b>25-75%</b>
<b>Youth &amp; Adult Sports</b>	<b>50-100%</b>

Figure 8: Cost Recovery Goals

As shown in the table above, cost recovery targets can vary based on the core program area, and even at the program level within a core program area. Several variables can influence the cost recovery target, including lifecycle stage, demographic served, and perhaps most important, program classification. These are best practices for core program areas. Programs within each core program area will vary in price and subsidy level. The program mix within each core program area will determine the cost recovery capabilities. The department should determine the current cost recovery of each core program area to begin establishing goals. With an approved cost recovery goal, annual tracking, and quality assurance cost recovery goals will improve. Use this key performance indicate in Figure 9 and update it annually to include the actual cost recovery achieved. Each core program area can be benchmarked against itself on an annual basis.

The pricing of programs should be established based on the Cost of Service Analysis, overlaid onto program areas or specific events, and strategically adjusted according to market factors and/or policy goals.

Overall, the degree to which SFPR utilizes pricing strategies is somewhat limited. Current pricing tactics include age and ability to pay. The pricing strategies not currently used in the program portfolio are family/household status, residency, weekday/weekend rates, prime/non-prime time, group discounts, location, market rate, and cost recovery. These strategies are useful to help stabilize usage patterns and help with cost recovery for higher quality amenities and services.

Staff should continue to monitor the effectiveness of the various pricing strategies they employ and adjust as necessary within the policy frameworks that guide the overall pricing philosophies. A Recreation Programming Plan has been established to provide direction to staff during program development. It is important to continue monitoring and benchmarking against competitors and other service providers in the local market, on an annual basis and update pricing and pricing strategies. The table below details pricing methods currently in place by each core program area. Additional recommendations for strategies to implement over time can be found in the Recommendations Chapter.

Types of Pricing Strategies	Description	Currently Used
Age Segment	Different prices offered for different ages	X
Family/ Household Status	Different prices offered for family / household groups	
Residency	Different prices for resident vs non-resident	
Weekday/ Weekend	Different prices for different days of the week	
Prime/Non-Prime Time	Different prices for different times of the day	
Group Discounts	Different prices for groups	
By Location	Different prices at different locations	
By Competition (Market Rate)	Competitors' prices influence your price	
By Cost Recovery Goals	Dept. cost recovery goals influence your price	
By Customer's Ability to Pay	Scholarships, subsidies, discounted rates offered for low-income	X

Figure 9: Current Pricing Strategies

## 1.8 SPONSORS / PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

### 1.8.1 SPONSORS / PARTNERS

Currently, SFPR has several partnerships with various organizations such as Sioux Falls School District, Sioux Falls YMCA, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Sioux Falls Youth Hockey, South Dakota Senior Games, etc. These organizations have either verbal or written agreements with the City to assist with providing volunteers, sponsoring events, running programs, providing spaces for programs and events, etc.

In order to truly sell the potential benefits of partnering with the system, there is a need to develop a focused sponsorship campaign and a proposal for tiered sponsorship levels. However, there is no information on the website about becoming a sponsor of the Department. This information should be highlighted front and center on the website describing how to become a sponsor/partner and the benefits of becoming a partner.

Additionally, to help garner sponsorship dollars the Department provides detailed listing of each event, the participation numbers, and user demographics which help potential sponsors to identify how well the program/event participants align with the sponsor's target market to assist in choosing the right fit for them.

These metrics can also help SFPR evaluate its return on investment (ROI) for sponsorships / partnerships for various events.



Other recommendations for Sponsorships include:

### Sponsor Recognition

Recognizing all existing or past sponsors for their support would strengthen working relationships with sponsors. Create a sponsorship brochure that highlights programs and events that need sponsors. The City should consider adding a page in the brochure thanking all of their current partners.



**Tiered Sponsorship Levels** - It is essential to create tiered levels of sponsorship in order to allow all potential sponsors the ability to choose the level of support they wish to exhibit.

**Package Offerings** - Agencies who package sponsorship opportunities tend to have a higher likelihood of selling sponsorships. Packaging sponsorship opportunities for Events as well as Signature Parks and Facilities could be a viable option to provide additional sponsor value as well. Providing sample packaging options that tie-in some signature special events with some of the smaller events would ensure that the staff up-sells events that may not be sold otherwise, while the partners receive more bang for their buck.

## 1.8.2 VOLUNTEERS

### VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The City currently receives help from thousands of volunteers, on an annual basis, offering assistance to clean up trails and parks to assisting with recreational programming. The City currently uses The Helpline Center's Volunteer Connection Program <https://www.helplinecenter.org/volunteer-connections/> for civic organizations, businesses and other groups and individuals to sign up for opportunities. This service provides a way for people to connect with what matters to them and to give back to the community.



A key part of maintaining the desirability of volunteerism in the City is developing a good reward and recognition system. The consultant team recommends using tactics similar to those found in frequent flier programs, wherein volunteers can use their volunteer hours to obtain early registration at programs, or discounted pricing at certain programs, rentals or events, or any other SFPR functions.

Other best practices that the City should be aware of in managing volunteers include:

- Identify volunteer opportunities system-wide, develop job descriptions and acceptance conditions for volunteers (such as background checks).
- Develop documented volunteer recruitment, retention, and recognition systems.
- Involve volunteers in cross-training to expose them to various departmental functions and increase their skill. This can also increase their utility, allowing for more flexibility in making work assignments, and can increase their appreciation and understanding of the City.
- Add steps to formally document resignation or termination of volunteers. Also, include ways to monitor and track reasons for resignation/termination.

## 1.9 MARKETING PLATFORMS



### 1.9.1 MARKETING

This section reviews SFPR’s marketing and promotions as gleaned from the program worksheets. The number and types of mediums used are certainly varied through the system. Developing a true branding plan to create and propagate a message that resonates will be important to maximize the effectiveness of the marketing mediums listed below.

As stated in the program assessment worksheets provided by staff, most programs are promoted in the online program guides, the City’s website, brochures and flyers, email blasts, PSA’s, newsletters, in-facility promotions/signage, special events, and social media. There are also some instances of paid advertisements, such as digital marketing. Additional marketing methods that could be considered moving forward include direct mail, marquee signs, SMS marketing, and QR codes.

Given the limited marketing dollars available, it would be helpful for SFPR to undertake a marketing return on investment (ROI) assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of the marketing mediums undertaken and tailor future marketing spending to focus on the most effective mediums. This could be done by ensuring every registrant and as many on-site users as possible are asked ‘How did you hear about us?’. Currently, the City is asking this question in program surveys and recruitment process. Tying the participant responses to marketing mediums would allow for a better understanding of marketing spending and enable greater effectiveness of existing ones while eliminating non-effective mediums.

Continue to maximize cross promoting at special events. It is imperative that the SFPR take advantage of the presence of high numbers of relative captive audience in the special event environment to promote its other offerings, programs, facilities, and rentals. Similar cross-promoting programs targeted towards the same age group audiences are highly encouraged. An example would be cross-promoting Family Movie Nights and Flick & Float events, and vice versa.



The image shows two promotional flyers. The top flyer is for 'FREE FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT ALL AGES' on Fridays at 6:30 P.M. at Kenny Anderson C.C. The bottom flyer is for 'Flick and Float' at Midco Aquatic Center on Sunday, April 14, at 2 p.m. Two green curved arrows labeled 'Cross Promotion' point from the top flyer to the bottom flyer and vice versa, indicating that the events are being promoted to each other's audiences.

### 1.10 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND FEEDBACK

Customer service is at the root of the success of any organization. A true community-service organization prides itself on identifying its customers' preferences and acting in accordance to help fulfill their needs. In order to do this, an ongoing and system-wide feedback mechanism is of vital importance and the Department's willingness to undertake an extensive customer service training initiative for its staff is a big step in the right direction.

Regarding customer input, the Department currently utilizes several user feedback tools including: pre/post program evaluations, user surveys/comment cards, focus groups, statically-valid surveys, SFPR website, and online survey platforms. Moving forward, it is also recommended that SFPR begins incorporating lost customer surveys as part of their user feedback in order to help identify and address customer issues as well as enhancing the user experience.

Did you find what you were looking for

Yes

No

Powered by Mouseflow

#### 1.10.1 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS RELATED TO PROGRAMMING

A statistically-valid community survey was conducted with a random sample to obtain public input. These questions were developed based on information provided as part of the focus groups, key leadership interviews, staff focus groups and the public forums. The importance of this type of community engagement approach is that it captures users and non-users of the parks and recreation system. The following graphs represent the community's needs as it relates to programs and services.

#### PRIORITIES FOR RECREATION PROGRAM INVESTMENTS

The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on recreation programs and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the type of recreation program. The following eight programs were rated as "high priorities" for investment:

- Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=200)
- Outdoor adventure (camping, backpacking, etc.) (PIR=177)
- Nature programs (PIR=154)
- Canoeing and kayaking (PIR=137)
- Travel and tourism (day trips) (PIR=133)
- Youth Learn to Swim programs (PIR=130)
- Water fitness programs (PIR=122)
- Special events (PIR=107)

The Department should invest in the programs areas and integrate them into the current Core Program Areas. A detailed analysis of high priority programming and the potential opportunity to integrate into each Core Program Area can be found in the Appendix 2.1. The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for each of the 24 programs that were rated.

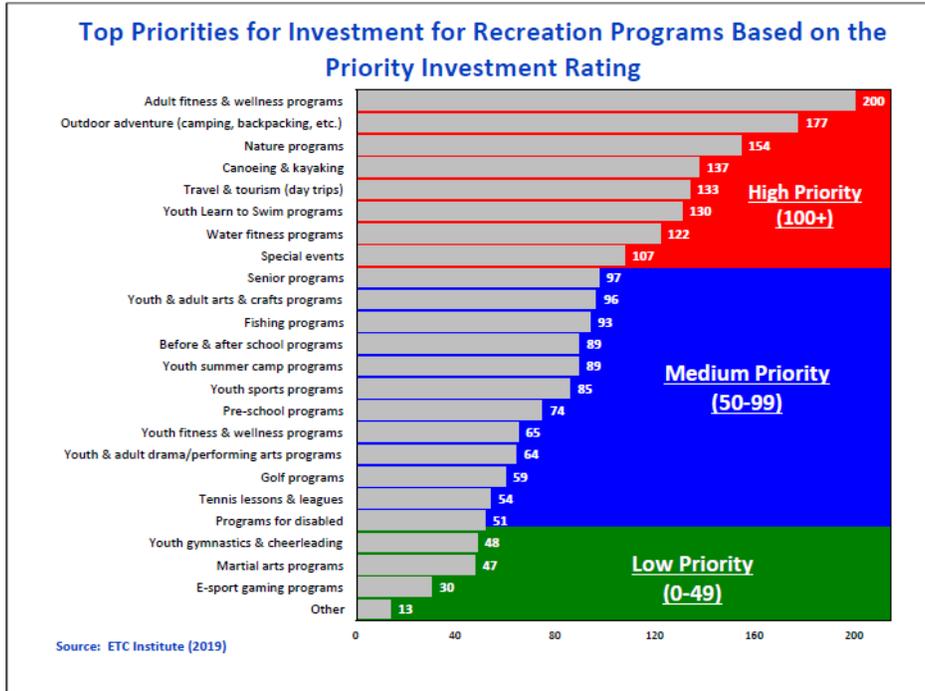
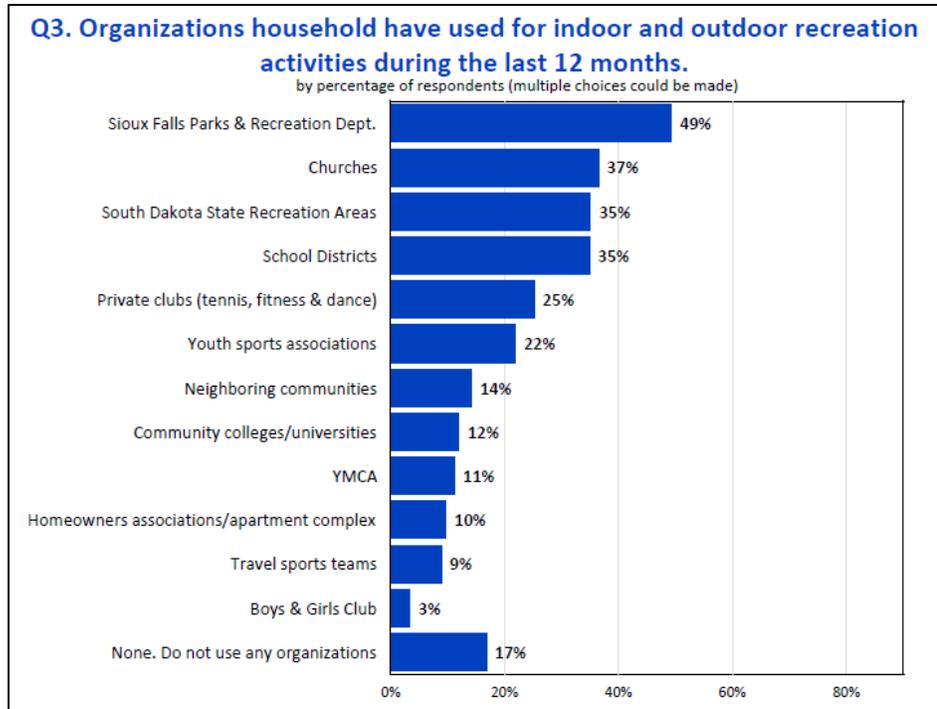


Figure 10: Top Recreation Program Priorities for Investment

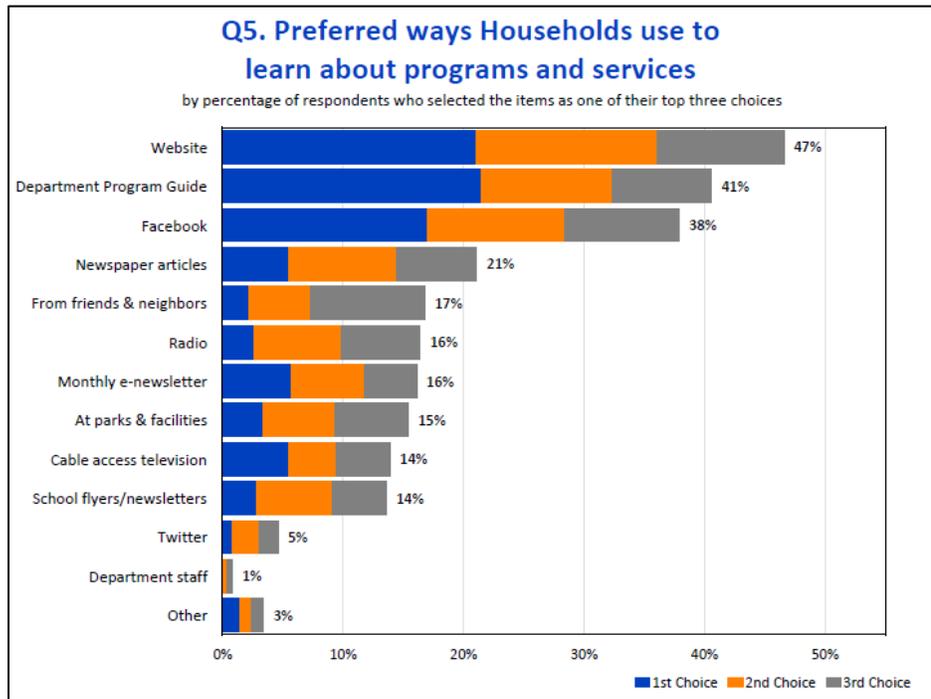
## ORGANIZATIONS RESIDENTS USE FOR RECREATION

The organization used the most for indoor and outdoor recreation activities is the City of Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation. This is most likely due to the wide segment appeal of parks, facilities, and programs. The top four are rounded out by churches, the South Dakota State Recreation Areas and the School Districts.



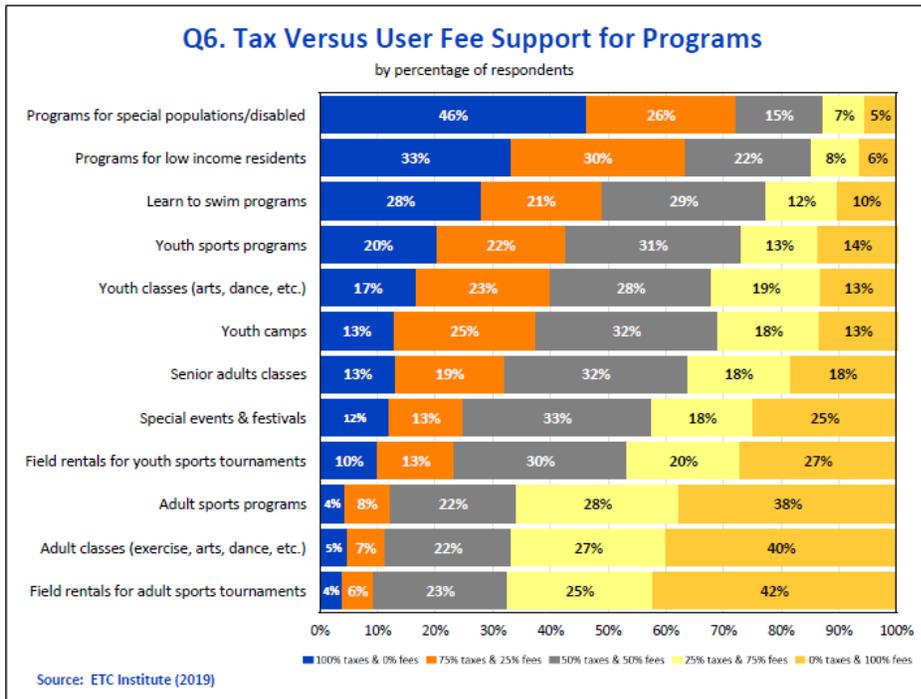
### PREFERRED WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Respondents were asked to identify their preferred method to learn of programs and services. The top three preferred methods are the City’s website, the Department’s program guide, and the Department’s Facebook page. This helps the department to know where to invest in marketing.



### TAX DOLLARS VERSUS USER FEE SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS

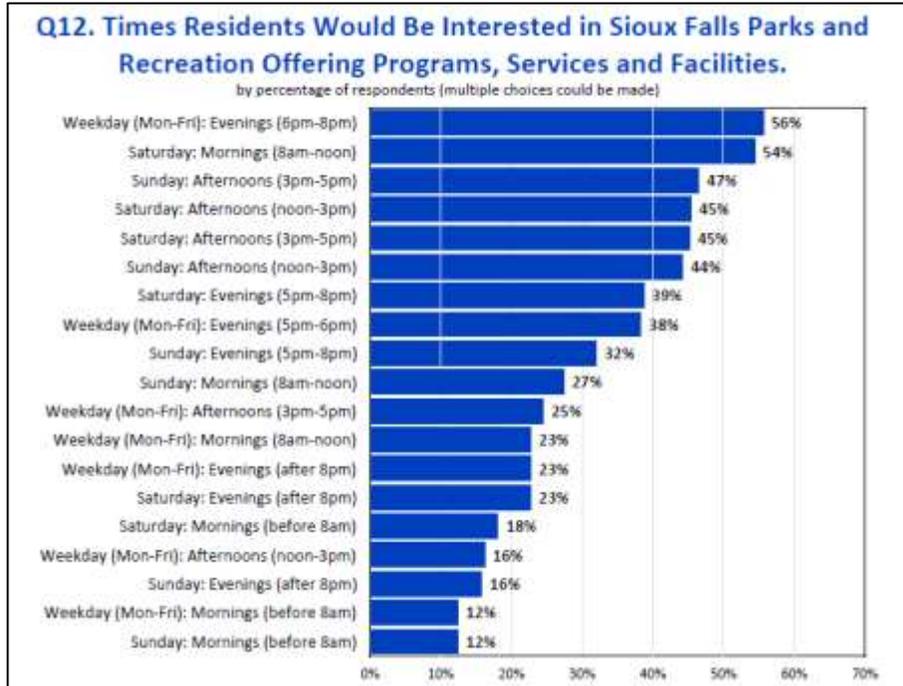
Respondents were informed that several programs offered by Sioux Falls Parks and Recreation require a fee to offset the full cost of providing the program. From a list of 12 programs and services, respondents were asked to indicate what they believe is the appropriate mix of support from taxes versus user fees.



Most respondents indicated that the programs for special populations/disabled and programs for low income residents should be supported by taxes or an even mix of taxes and user fees. The chart below shows the distribution of responses.

### BEST TIMES TO OFFER RECREATION PROGRAMS

Respondents were asked to identify the day and times interested in participating in programs. The top tier for preferred days and times are Weekday evenings (6pm-8pm) and Saturday mornings (8am-Noon). The second tier of preferred days and times - are Sunday afternoons (3pm-5pm), Saturday afternoons (Noon-3pm), Saturday afternoons (3pm-5pm), and Sunday afternoons (Noon-3pm). These are followed closely by Saturday evening (5pm-8pm) and Weekday evenings (5pm-6pm).



The Department should overlay this information with the cross tabs by age segment to determine the best time to offer programs based on the target market. This information will increase the potential that the program will fit within the schedule of the target market increasing participation potential.



## 1.11 CONCLUSIONS

### 1.11.1 RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

As SFPR and its offerings continue to grow, it will be crucial for staff to review the Recreational Program Assessment to ensure key metrics are being tracked and monitored on an annual basis. Below are some overall significant takeaways that were identified throughout the Program Assessment Analysis:

- Recreation Program Plan should be updated and provide direction to staff from the Parks and Recreation System Plan. Include in this plan the program standards, key performance indicators and defined outcomes for success.
- SFPR has identified the following as **Core Program Areas**:
  - Aquatics
  - Cultural Arts
  - Enrichment
  - Health & Wellness
  - Outdoor Recreation
  - Youth & Adult Sports
- Core Program Areas will need to be added to better align with the community needs over the next five to six years. The **Core Program Areas** that should be added are:
  - Active Adults (senior services)
  - Outdoor Adventure
  - Special Events
  - Youth Sports (not covered by youth sport organizations)
  - Adaptive Recreation (for people with disabilities)
  - Family Programs
- **Age segment distribution** is strong with approximately 76% of the City's population falling between the ages of 18-75+ years old, it is fitting that the 'Adult' segments are highly catered to. Programming *Youth* (12 & under) is appropriate considering similar provider services. The SFPR needs to ensure segments such as *Teens* (13-17) are not being underserved. The Age Segment distribution should be annually monitored to ensure program distribution aligns with community demographics and resources.
- **Program lifecycles:** 46% of the current program offers are in the Decline and Saturation stages, which shows concern that underperforming programs are likely being sustained for too long. There are 37 out of 57 programs that are considered legacy. For the 20 programs that are not legacy programs, they should be retired and new programs identified in the recreation trends and community survey priority investment should be developed to keep a fresh supply of programming to meet resident's needs. A complete description of Lifecycle Stages can be found in **Section 1.5**.
- The City uses a more streamlined **volunteer program** which allows residents and organizations to get involved easily to give back to the community which could be improved by identifying opportunities that are ongoing and specific seasonal tasks. Providing information on various volunteer opportunities, special events, and programs on the website in advance would assist in a more proactive approach. The website should also include online registration for volunteers that is an icon and easily visible to be easy and convenient. This best practice should be continued and augmented as needed to ensure a volunteer force that adequately fills the need of the City. From a **marketing and promotions** standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods when promoting their programs including: online program guides, the City's website, brochures and flyers, email blasts,

PSA's, paid advertisements, digital marketing, newsletters, special events, in-facility promotions/ signage, and social media as a part of the marketing mix.

- SFPR would benefit from identifying marketing Return on Investment (ROI) for all marketing initiatives
- Opportunity to increase the number of cross-promotions
- Currently, the collection of **customer feedback** is rather robust. Moving forward, it is highly recommended that the SFPR continues utilizing several platforms to obtain public input. Furthermore, lost customer and on-site surveys are additional tools that the Department may want to consider using in the future to track customer feedback
- **Pricing strategies** are rather limited. Currently, the only used approaches include: age and ability to pay. Some additional pricing tactics the Department should consider utilizing in the future include cost recovery rates, residency rates, competition (market) rates, and group discounts. In order to successfully implement cost recovery rates, it is essential to understand current cost of service in order to determine ideal cost recovery goals.
- **Financial performance measures** such as cost recovery goals aren't currently being utilized by the Department. Moving forward, it is recommended for staff to begin tracking cost recovery for all program areas. When doing so, the staff should factor in all direct and indirect costs pertaining to programming. A focus on developing consistent earned income opportunities would be beneficial to the SFPR's overall quest for greater fiscal sustainability.



CHAPTER TWO APPENDIX

2.1 CORE PROGRAM AREAS AND PRIORITY INVESTMENT PROGRAMS

Core Program Areas	Needs Assessment High Priorities
Aquatics	Adult Fitness & Wellness Programs (200)
Cultural Arts	Outdoor Adventure (177)
Enrichment	Nature Programs (154)
Health & Wellness	Canoeing & Kayaking (137)
Outdoor Recreation	Travel & Tourism (133)
Youth & Adult Sports	Youth Learn to Swim Programs (130)
	Water Fitness Programs (122)
	Special Events (107)
<b>Core Program Areas with High Priorities</b>	
Aquatics	Youth Learn to Swim Programs
	Water Fitness Programs
	Special Events
Cultural Arts	Travel & Tourism
	Special Events
Enrichment	Travel & Tourism
Health & Wellness	Adult Fitness & Wellness Programs
	Water Fitness Programs
Outdoor Recreation	Outdoor Adventure
	Nature Programs
	Canoeing & Kayaking
	Travel & Tourism
	Special Events
Youth & Adult Sports	No high priority -

<b>Core Program Areas</b>		<b>Needs Assessment Medium Priorities</b>	
Aquatics		Senior Programs (97)	
Cultural Arts		Youth Arts & Crafts Programs (96)	
Enrichment		Fishing Programs (93)	
Health & Wellness		Before & After School Programs (89)	
Outdoor Recreation		Youth Summer Camp Programs (89)	
Youth & Adult Sports		Youth Sports Programs (85)	
		Preschool Programs (74)	
		Youth Fitness & Wellness Programs (65)	
		Youth & Adult Drama/Performing Arts Programs (64)	
		Golf Programs (59)	
		Tennis Lessons & Leagues (54)	
		Programs for Disabled (51)	
<b>Core Program Areas with Medium Priorities</b>			
Aquatics		No Medium Priorities Listed	
		Preschool Programs	
Cultural Arts		Senior Programs	
		Youth & Adult Arts & Crafts Programs	
		Programs for Disabled	
		Youth & Adult Drama/Performing Arts Program	
Enrichment		Senior Programs	
		Youth & Adult Arts & Crafts Programs	
		Before & After School	
		Youth Summer Camp Program	
		Programs for Disabled	
		Preschool Programs	
Health & Wellness		Senior Programs	
		Youth Fitness & Wellness	
Outdoor Recreation		Fishing Programs	
		Programs for disabled	
Youth & Adult Sports		Youth Sports Programs	
		Preschool Programs	
		Golf Programs	
		Tennis Lessons & Leagues	

2.2 LIFECYCLE DETAILED ANALYSIS

Lifecycle Stage	Program Offering	
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reindeer Games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yoga in the Park</li> </ul>
Take-Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lazy 5K</li> <li>Fishing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational Hikes</li> </ul>
Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indoor Swim Lessons</li> <li>Certification &amp; Training</li> <li>Aquatic Fitness Classes</li> <li>Flick &amp; Float</li> <li>Wibit Events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cardboard Boat Race</li> <li>Paddling Fair</li> <li>Snowshoeing</li> <li>Archery</li> <li>Drop - In Pickleball</li> </ul>
Mature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdoor Swim Lessons</li> <li>Open Swim</li> <li>Lap Swim</li> <li>Water Walking</li> <li>Youth Triathlon</li> <li>Nature Arts</li> <li>Ecology Camp</li> <li>Fun &amp; Fit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mondays at McKennan</li> <li>Touch a Truck</li> <li>Independence Day Celebration</li> <li>Paws in the Park</li> <li>Defrightful Family Fun</li> <li>Senior Bike Trail Tour</li> <li>Developmental Track Meets</li> <li>Road Races</li> </ul>
Saturation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open Skate</li> <li>5K Events</li> <li>Land Fitness</li> <li>Storyland</li> <li>Theatre in the Parks</li> <li>Municipal Band</li> <li>Theatre Camps</li> <li>Kids Nite</li> <li>Family Night Out</li> <li>Science Education</li> <li>Holiday Parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strider Bike</li> <li>Sensory Classes</li> <li>Senior Education</li> <li>Adult Hobbies &amp; Interests</li> <li>Youth Hobbies &amp; Interests</li> <li>Adult Basketball</li> <li>Adult Outdoor Volleyball</li> <li>Toddler/Preschool Sports</li> <li>Youth Sports/Camps</li> <li>Senior Games</li> </ul>
Decline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playground Program</li> <li>Cooking and Nutrition</li> <li>Frosty Frolics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Indoor Volleyball</li> <li>Adult Kickball</li> </ul>