

Community

Parks & Recreation

An Introduction



Christopher R. Edginton • Samuel V. Lankford

Rodney B. Dier • Christopher J. Kowalski

<http://www.sagamorepub.com/products/community-parks-and-recreation>

Community

Parks & Recreation

An Introduction

Christopher R. Edginton
Samuel V. Lankford
Rodney B. Dieser
Christopher L. Kowalski

SAGAMORE  **VENTURE**

<http://www.sagamorepub.com/products/community-parks-and-recreation>

©2017 Sagamore-Venture Publishing LLC

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any means without permission from the publisher.

Publishers: Joseph J. Bannon/Peter Bannon

Sales and Marketing Manager: Misti Gilles

Marketing Assistant: Kimberly Vecchio

Director of Development and Production: Susan M. Davis

Graphic Designer: Marissa Willison

Technology Manager: Mark Atkinson

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2017941213

ISBN print edition: 978-1-57167-789-1

ISBN ebook: 978-1-57167-790-7

Printed in the United States.

SAGAMORE  **VENTURE**

1807 N. Federal Dr.

Urbana, IL 61801

www.sagamorepub.com

For our families, our most important and immediate community.

Contents

About the Authors.....	xi
Preface	xiii
Acknowledgments.....	xv

Part I

History and Philosophical Foundations of Public Parks and Recreation

1	Introduction to Community Parks and Recreation.....	1
	Chapter Objectives.....	1
	Introduction.....	1
	Philosophical Foundations and Perspectives	2
	Mission Statements and Community Parks and Recreation	4
	Parks and Recreation Professionals as Public Servants.....	5
	Why Parks and Recreation Services Move People	8
	What is a Community?.....	9
	Why are Community Parks and Recreation an Asset?.....	10
	Building Community Livability	11
	Strategies Used in Community Organization.....	13
	The Organization of Community Parks and Recreation.....	14
	Summary	16
	Discussion Questions	17
	References.....	18
2	History of Public Parks and Recreation	19
	Chapter Objectives.....	19
	Introduction.....	19
	Factors Influencing the Historical Development of Parks and Recreation	20
	Municipal Parks.....	22
	Metropolitan/Comprehensive Park Systems	27
	The Recreation Movement	30
	Professional Societies/Organizations.....	34
	Summary	36
	Discussion Questions	37
	References.....	37
3	Serving Diverse Communities and Populations	39
	Chapter Objectives.....	39
	Introduction.....	39
	Key Terms and Concepts.....	40
	Leisure Constraint Theory	45

	Preventing and Overcoming Leisure Constraints.....	47
	Homeless Populations.....	51
	Commitment to Diversity	54
	Summary	57
	Discussion Questions	57
	References.....	58
4	Benefits and Impacts of Parks and Recreation	61
	Chapter Objectives.....	61
	Introduction.....	61
	The Transformational Influence of Parks and Recreation	62
	Optimizing Net Benefits: Can Parks and Recreation Services Cause Harm?.....	68
	The Mayo Clinic/Foundation and Rochester Parks and Recreation: A Partnership Case Study.....	71
	Summary	74
	Discussion Questions	75
	References.....	75

Part II

Managerial and Administrative Perspectives of Public Parks and Recreation Systems

5	Organizational and Administrative Practices	79
	Chapter Objectives.....	79
	Introduction.....	79
	Organizational and Administrative Processes and Procedures	80
	Ways of Enabling Municipal/County Services	86
	Structuring the Parks and Recreation System	87
	Roles and Functions.....	92
	Summary	103
	Discussion Questions	104
	References.....	104
6	Planning for Parks and Recreation	107
	Chapter Objectives.....	107
	Introduction.....	107
	Importance of Planning	108
	Comprehensive Community Plans, General Plans, and Parks and Recreation Master Plans.....	109
	Parks and Recreation Elements to Comprehensive Plans.....	110
	Parks and Recreation Master Plans.....	112
	Strategic Planning	113

	Roles and Responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Planner	117
	The Planning Process.....	120
	Summary	121
	Discussion Questions	122
	References.....	124
7	Social Marketing	125
	Chapter Objectives.....	125
	Introduction.....	125
	What is Social Marketing?	126
	Exchange Theory	127
	Repositioning Community Parks and Recreation Agencies	128
	What is a Target Market in the Recreation Field?.....	128
	The Four Ps of Marketing.....	129
	Public Relations and Social Marketing	138
	Summary	138
	Discussion Questions	139
	References.....	139
8	Budgeting and Financial Management for Parks and Recreation	143
	Chapter Objectives.....	143
	Introduction.....	143
	Sources of Revenue	144
	Expenditures	149
	Budget Types.....	150
	Financial Trends.....	158
	Summary	159
	Discussion Questions	160
	References.....	160
9	Boards and Commissions	163
	Chapter Objectives.....	163
	Introduction.....	163
	Types of Boards and Commissions.....	164
	Why Do We Have a Board or Commission?	171
	Board, Commission, and Policy-Making.....	174
	The Role of a Board Member	175
	Structuring the Parks and Recreation Board.....	180
	Parks and Recreation Foundation Boards.....	182
	Summary	184
	Discussion Questions	185
	References.....	185

10	Engaging the Community	187
	Chapter Objectives	187
	Introduction	187
	Foundations of Civic Engagement	188
	Volunteer Engagement	193
	Evaluation and Recognition of Volunteers	197
	Summary	198
	Discussion Questions	199
	References.....	199
11	Acquisition of Parks and Open Space	201
	Chapter Objectives	201
	Introduction.....	201
	Need for Parkland and Open Space Acquisition.....	202
	Partnerships for Land Acquisition.....	203
	Other Common Tools for Parks and Open Space Acquisition— Fee and Less Than Fee Examples.....	206
	Acquisition and the Capital Improvement Program	211
	Summary	213
	Discussion Questions	214
	References.....	214

Part III

Public Sector Service Provision in Parks and Recreation

12	Programming	217
	Chapter Objectives.....	217
	Introduction.....	217
	Essential Elements of Programming.....	219
	Examples of Program Approaches.....	228
	Programming in Community Parks.....	232
	Summary	236
	Discussion Questions	237
	References.....	238
13	Services for Children and Youth	241
	Chapter Objectives.....	241
	Introduction.....	241
	Programming for Children and Youth.....	242
	Child- and Youth-Centered Programming.....	243
	Children Today.....	243
	Lifestyle Profile of Children	244
	Organizational Patterns for Children’s Programs	244

	Children’s Program Benefits	246
	Typical Children’s Programming	247
	Issues and Children’s Programming	249
	Youth Today	250
	Lifestyle Profile of Youth	250
	Organizational Patterns for Providing Youth Programs	250
	Youth Program Benefits.....	252
	Typical Youth Programs	252
	Issues and Youth Programming	260
	Summary	262
	Discussion Questions	262
	References.....	263
14	Services for Adults and Seniors	265
	Chapter Objectives.....	265
	Introduction.....	265
	Programmatic Guidelines	266
	The Impact of Baby Boomers On Senior Programming.....	268
	Why Prioritize Older Adult Recreation Programming?	271
	Intergenerational Programs	273
	Senior Programmer Positions.....	274
	Summary	279
	Discussion Questions	279
	References.....	280
15	Event Management	283
	Chapter Objectives.....	283
	Introduction.....	283
	Purpose of Special Events	284
	Typologies of Special Events	286
	Factors of Success and Management for Community Special Events	289
	Managing and Planning Successful Events.....	291
	Summary	297
	Discussion Questions	297
	References.....	298
16	Community-Based Therapeutic Recreation/Inclusive Recreation	299
	Chapter Objectives.....	299
	Introduction.....	299
	The Nature and Spectrum of Disability and Human Variation	301
	Historical Link Between Community Parks and Recreation and Therapeutic Recreation	303
	Inclusion Through Accessibility, Accommodations, Adaptations	307
	Special Recreation as Inclusion	314

	Accessible Playgrounds and Aquatic Environments	314
	Summary	317
	Discussion Questions	317
	References.....	318
17	Area and Facility Management	321
	Chapter Objectives.....	321
	Introduction.....	321
	Types of Areas and Facilities.....	322
	Planning and Management Considerations	322
	Staffing and Supervision.....	336
	Universal Design and Accessibility.....	340
	Safety and Risk Management.....	341
	Summary	352
	Discussion Questions	354
	References.....	354
18	Trends, Issues, and Opportunities	357
	Chapter Objectives.....	357
	Introduction.....	357
	Digital Influence in Public Parks and Recreation	358
	Trends in Leisure Programming	359
	Trends in Financing Parks and Recreation	360
	Generational Marketing	360
	Cross Training of Staff	361
	Community Livability and Quality of Life.....	362
	Building Community-Expanding Social Capital	363
	Partnerships and Building Collaborative Relationships	363
	Blurring of Traditional Limits on What Parks and Recreation Does.....	364
	Areas and Facilities	365
	Global Climate Change	366
	Mental Health	368
	Obesity.....	370
	Diversity	371
	Accountability.....	372
	Relevance and Importance of Parks and Recreation Planning	372
	Importance of Engaging the Public for Planning and Future Decision Making.....	373
	Acquisition of Parks and Open Space	374
	Sustainability: An Area of Concern for All.....	375
	Summary	376
	Discussion Questions	377
	References.....	377
Index	381

About the Authors

Christopher R. Edginton is the R.J. McElroy Professor of Youth Leadership Studies, School of Kinesiology, Allied Health, and Human Services at the University of Northern Iowa. From 1991-2010, he served as professor and director of the School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services. In 1985, he founded the nationally award-winning Camp Adventure™ Child & Youth Services program. Since its inception, the program has provided contracted services for children and youth worldwide. From 2004–2014, he served as secretary general of the World Leisure Organization, a nongovernmental organization operating in consultative status with The United Nations. He is the cofounder of the Global Forum for Physical Education Pedagogy (GoFPEP), a worldwide social movement aimed at rethinking, reframing, and refocusing physical education pedagogy and the training of health and physical education teachers. Edginton has authored over 350 articles, over 30 books, and over 30 chapters in books. He has been identified as the leading proponent of the application of contemporary management concepts in the park and recreation field.

Samuel V. Lankford is professor and chair, Department of Recreation Administration, Fresno State University. Formerly he served as a professor and founding director of the Sustainable Tourism and the Environment Program at the University of Hawaii and University of Northern Iowa. He has a PhD with a focus in tourism planning and development and a master of urban and regional planning degree from the University of Oregon. He holds a master of arts in recreation and park planning and a BA in geography from CSU-Chico. He was a board member for *World Leisure* for six years, the president and treasurer for Hawaii and Recreation Association, and the Northern California Educator Representative for California Parks and Recreation Society. He was recognized as a Senior Fellow for the American Leisure Academy. Dr. Lankford has been a practicing planner in both staff and consulting roles in California, Oregon, Washington, Iowa, and Hawaii. He has conducted planning, needs assessments, community impact studies, carrying capacity studies, and market research in those states and other countries. He specializes in tourism and recreation development.

Rodney B. Dieser is a professor in the School of Kinesiology, Allied Health, and Human Services at the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), graduate coordinator of the master's of art degree in Philanthropy and Nonprofit Development at UNI, and works 10 hours a week as a licensed mental health counselor (tLMHC). He is also a certified therapeutic recreation specialist. Rod has published over 100 articles with over 60 being academic publications and has published three other textbooks. Rod has served as an associated editor for the *Therapeutic Recreation Journal* and *Leisure/Loisir* (academic journal of the Canadian Association for Leisure Studies) and has served as a guest editor for the *World Leisure Journal* and the *International Leisure Review*. His research and teaching interests include (1) cross-cultural therapeutic recreation/inclusive recreation and leisure service

delivery; (2) leisure education intervention; (3) leisure and mental health; (4) historical and philosophical foundations of leisure, youth, and nonprofit human services, including Hull House, 1889-1953; and (5) the philanthropic labor and leisure endeavors of Bruce Springsteen.

Christopher L. Kowalski is an associate professor, School of Kinesiology, Allied Health, and Human Services, at the University of Northern Iowa. He joined the faculty of the Division of Leisure, Youth & Human Services in 2000. He also serves as a research coordinator for the Sustainable Tourism and Environment Program at the University of Northern Iowa. He holds a doctorate from the University of Northern Iowa, a master of science in recreation management from the University of Idaho, and a BA in psychology, sociology, and criminal justice from Creighton University (Nebraska). He has supervised community and youth recreation programs for over 20 years in Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, and Texas, as well as abroad in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. His research interests are coaching, youth leadership, and self-efficacy in the recreation field.

Preface

The inspiration for the development of the book *Community Parks & Recreation: An Introduction* was drawn from three sources. First and perhaps most important was the efforts of the senior authors in leading doctoral course work focused on the topic of community building. In this effort, two social constructs were used to discuss the topic of community. They were (1) sustainable environmental development and (2) social capital. In modern times, Rachel Carson's treatise, *Silent Spring* (1962), and Kenneth E. Boulding's essay, *The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth* (1966), addressed the importance of the interaction of the economy and the environment and gave way to the need for sustainable environmental development. Robert Putnam's book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (2001), discusses the loss of social capital in American communities and the need for greater social bonding and social bridging.

The aforementioned social constructs are directly related to the work of community park and recreation organizations. The greening and beautification of communities as well as tying recreation services to clean economic development provide a direct connection between the work of public park and recreation departments and community development. Over the past 150 years, communities have focused their attention on enhancing quality of life, health, and wellness, and the greening of their environments through the provision of park and recreation services and amenities. Further, such services have galvanized communities to provide programs as mechanisms of social reform to address issues related to poverty, immigration, crowding, and the anonymity that comes from urban life. In contemporary times, the writings of Richard Florida, including his seminal book, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), and *Who's Your City* (2008), have pointed to the importance of creating livable innovative community environments.

In our discussion with doctoral students, we asked them to consider what are the most important elements of a livable community? In what type of community would they like to live? How important are building social connections amongst family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and others? How are such relationships developed and sustained? What types of organizations are more likely to create such opportunities for building one's social capital? What agencies in the community are concerned with addressing environmental degradation and on the flip side enhancing community beautification and greening? All of these questions pointed toward the importance of public parks and recreation and its community development efforts.

Second, as we reviewed the literature, it was interesting to note that few books in more contemporary times addressed the topic of community parks and recreation. As the profession of parks and recreation was historically tied to municipal services, we began to ask ourselves, is there a turn in the profession away from services offered at the local level? Although we did not come to a definitive conclusion regarding this matter, it became some-

what evident to us that much of the literature available to academics today was not in fact focused on municipal park and recreation services. Simply, it may be that job opportunities have been diminished in the public sector, and therefore the academic preparation of students is being directed elsewhere. With this effort, we hope to reenergize and rekindle a focus on community parks and recreation as an area of academic interest and study.

Third, we all had a deep interest in community parks and/or recreation services. At various times in one or more of our careers, we have served as playground leaders, recreation specialists, youth leaders, community therapeutic recreation specialists, recreation center directors, recreation supervisors, and/or director of parks and recreation. In preparing this book, it was as if we were coming full circle in our professional careers. We all started with a strong commitment to community parks and recreation, and this fact highlighted our commitment to the topic.

The book is organized into three major parts. Part I focuses on the “History and Philosophical Foundations of Public Parks and Recreation.” The major intent of this section is to provide an underpinning to assist the student in understanding the major dimensions of public parks and recreation and its impact socially, culturally, environmentally, and economically. Part II of the book focuses on “Managerial and Administrative Aspects of Park and Recreation Systems.” This section of the book provides practical strategies for administrative activities, planning, marketing, budgeting, engaging the public, and land acquisition. Part III of the book is focused on “The Public Sector Service Provision in Parks and Recreation.” This section of the book focuses on program and service delivery, including chapters dealing with programming for community recreation, youth programming, programming for adults and seniors, programming special events, and community-based therapeutic recreation.

In the preparation of *Community Parks & Recreations: An Introduction*, each author was responsible for the preparation of four chapters. Therefore, we all equally shared in the authorship of the book. In addition, we all share the authorship of the final two chapters of the book. As such, there is no senior author, and each of our names could have been listed first or in some other order in the book.

Christopher R. Edginton

Samuel D. Lankford

Rodney B. Dieser

Christopher L. Kowalski

References

- Boulding, K. E. (1966). The economics of the coming spaceship earth. Environmental quality issues in a growing economy. In H. Jarrett (Ed.), *Environmental quality in a growing economy* (pp. 3–14). Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.
- Carson, R. (1994). *Silent spring*. First printing, 1962. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Putnam, R. D. (2001). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
- Florida, R. L. (2002). *The rise of the creative class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community, and everyday life*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Florida, R. (2008). *Who's your city?* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank our doctoral students who have joined us in this journey of dialogue and discovery. At times, the conversation has been meaningful and relevant, leading to new insights and perspectives. Among those doctoral students we would like to acknowledge and thank are Amani Mohammed, Andrea Anderson, Chen Kong, Gale Carlson, Michelle Cook, Belinda Creighton-Smith, Amy Davison, Noha Fadlaldin, Tom Flack, Abubakarr Jalloh, Theodora Jn Baptiste, Elizabeth Majewski, Nate Newman, Michelle Rhoades, Junu Shrestha, Chris Denison, David Goodson, Don Briggs, Oksana Grybovych, Tony Ford, Jeff Farland, Brad Tan, Jim Hall, Wade Kooiman, Stanley Chiang, Ariana Cela, Jonell Pedescleaux, Germaine Jackson, and Tony Smothers. These individuals have enabled us to form an inspirational community of scholars.

We would also like to acknowledge support received from our colleagues in the College of Education to develop and continue our doctoral program in Allied Health, Recreation and Community Services. The program was previously identified as Leisure, Youth and Human Services, but we expanded the dimensions of the program to ensure that it was more inclusive and reflective of contemporary trends linking themes related to leisure and health, sustainable environmental development, social capital, and community development. Among those whom we would like to thank for their continued support are Mary Herring, Linda Fitzgerald, Rod Boody, Bill Callahan, and Vickie Robinson. All of these individuals have worked to reform the Doctorate of Education (EdD) to ensure that reflected guidelines established by the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). CPED has worked to differentiate the doctorate of the EdD degree from the PhD degree as a degree that is focused on professional practice.

In addition, we would like to thank Al Oberlander and Scott Crawford of RDG Planning & Design for providing us with graphic illustrations and articles from projects with which they have been associated. We appreciate their support for this activity and also valued RDG's activities in designing the University of Northern Iowa's award-winning Wellness/Recreation Center. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Jack Carey and Millie Keith of the Freeport Park District and Mark Ripplinger of Cedar Falls, Iowa Parks and Recreation. We would like to thank Mike Nigbur from the City of Rochester (MN) Parks and Recreation Department for providing us the historical documents of this City's Parks and Recreation services and for outlining the collaborative work between Parks and Recreation Department and the prestigious Mayo Clinic. We would also like to thank Dr. Johanna Rian, Director, Mayo Clinic, Dolores Jean Lavins Center for Humanities in Medicine (Rochester MN Campus); Ryan Harren at the History Center of Olmstead County (Rochester MN); and Dr. Kenneth Mobily at The University of Iowa.

Chris Edginton would like to extend his appreciation to his wife, Susan, who has continuously supported his professional career for many, many years. Her work in managing Camp Adventure Child and Youth Services has been laudatory. The program has profited from her commitment, dedication, and passion for the program. The author would also like to thank his daughter, Carole. Carole is an adjunct instructor at the University of Northern

Iowa, Upper Iowa University, and Mount Mercy University. Every semester she teaches a full load of courses and is an outstanding professor. She has two daughters, Hanna and Lily. These are two very special granddaughters, with great interest in art and music. My son, David, is a Foreign Services Officer with the U.S. Department of State. His tours of duty have taken him to the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Bahrain, Iraq, New Zealand, and Saudi Arabia. David has two sons, Jacob and Joseph. Both boys are exceedingly handsome and very, very bright. I would also like to thank my coauthors, Sam Lankford, Rod Dieser, and Chris Kowalski for their commitment and dedication to this project. They were very responsive in ensuring that the project was completed in a timely fashion. As is the case with most intellectual journeys, it was stimulating and involved countless discussions and interactions leading to new insights in the parks and recreation field. Their efforts were greatly appreciated, and I value each of them as colleagues.

Many of us are grateful for the family, friends, and colleagues who form our personal community of support. In particular, Sam Lankford would like to acknowledge his supportive partner, Jill, and two bright children, Jordan and Jesse, who help to keep him connected to the topics he teaches and the experience base of his students. He is fortunate to live in proximity to his mother, father, and sister, who help him stay connected to his past. In addition, he has a whole cast of professional relationships that he has had the opportunity to collaborate with toward the betterment of the profession. Sam would like to thank his colleagues, Dr. Rod Dieser, Dr. Chris Kowalski, and Dr. Oksana Grybovych for their friendship and sense of community. Thank you to Dr. Fred Brooks, Dr. David Povey, Dr. Larry Neal, Dr. Dan Wheeler, Dr. Al Williams, Dr. Don De Graaf, and all the other PhD graduates from the University of Oregon's Department of Leisure Studies and Services; Joyce Spoehr and Willy Ching from the Hawaii Recreation and Parks Association; Ian Legaree of the Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) of the Northwest Territories; and Manuel A. Mollinedo, the former Director of the City of Fresno Department of Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services (PARCS). Thanks also go to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services, Dr. Jody Hironaka-Juteau, faculty (Dr. L-Jay Fine, Dr. Nancy Nisbett, Dr. Michael Mahoney, and Dr. Jason Whiting) and staff of the Department of Recreation Administration at Fresno State, specifically Selena Winchell, Marlow Campos, and Simone Campos for their support, humor, and dedication. Thanks are also given to Sophie Karas, who provided important research materials for Sam's chapters. Appreciation is also given to Brandon Taylor, who is an instructor in recreation administration at CSU Fresno for discussing the need for this book and how the current books available do not treat community recreation in a comprehensive fashion. Finally, Sam would like to thank Dr. Christopher Edginton for his support, mentoring, inclusion in projects, and his friendship. He met Chris 30 years ago at the University of Oregon, where he was a graduate student in urban planning. Chris convinced him to pursue the PhD in recreation and leisure studies, and it has been an exciting journey. This is his community. Not all are so fortunate to experience the diversity in community he enjoys. This only underscores the need for us working in the field of leisure, parks, and recreation to embrace a community perspective. This book is focused on our need to build community, which moves us well beyond the provision of services.

Rod Dieser, who was raised in a poor, blue-color family with illiterate parents from “the old country,” would like to extend his deep gratitude to his wife, Ricki, who was the first person who convinced him to attend university, go on to graduate school, and held his hand the first day he walked on a university campus. She has been holding my hand for over 25 years. He is grateful to his parents, John and Helen Dieser, who despite not having educational and financial resources, raised him to be thoughtful toward others and to appreciate and see the wisdom in “old world” culture and value diversity. He would like to extend his appreciation to his three sons, Chayce, Jonas, and Zachary, who have taught him the importance of empathy and the significance of simple things in life. He is thankful to his dog, Louie, who has helped his health by walking anywhere from 1 to 5 miles a day and is a good friend.

Chris Kowalski would like to thank his wife, Crystal, and their children, Norah and Lukas, for their support and encouragement throughout his professional career. It is a wonderful feeling to come home to a beautiful family who smile each time he walks in the door. Crystal, Norah, and Lukas’s energy spur Chris on to be the best faculty member he can be at UNI. He would also like to recognize Kevin Roberts, Chris Guidry, and Dave Hirner for their friendship and camaraderie over the past 20 years; all three have remained true friends over the years. Finally, Chris would also like to acknowledge the lifelong support from his parents, Pat and Lana Kowalski.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge the efforts of Kristina Kofoot, Jennifer Stevens, Michelle Cook, and Joyce Levingston. In the preparation of any book, there is a great deal of clerical assistance, organization, and support that must be given to the effort. We would like to thank Kristina, Jennifer, Michelle, and Joyce for their commitment to this writing project. Without their help it would not have been possible.

We would also like to acknowledge the support that we have received from Sagamore–Venture for our writing efforts. Interestingly, we proposed this topic to Joe Bannon, and he indicated to us nearly simultaneously that Sagamore–Venture had such a title on their list of book acquisitions. Joe has always been supportive, encouraging, and has helped us with our writing efforts. We deeply appreciate his continued endorsement for our scholarly activities. We would also like to mention that his continued efforts of supporting the Academy of Leisure Sciences is noteworthy. Many individuals owe a great deal of gratitude to Joe for his continued efforts in supporting recreation, parks, leisure, and tourism higher education. We would also like to thank Peter Bannon at Sagamore–Venture. We enjoy greatly working with Peter and find him to be a valuable colleague. In addition, we would like to recognize the efforts of Susan Davis, Marissa Willison, Misti Gilles, and Kimberly Vecchio at Sagamore–Venture.

Christopher R. Edginton

Samuel V. Lankford

Rodney B. Deiser

Christopher L. Kowalski

Chapter One

Introduction to Community Parks & Recreation

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- To gain an understanding of the philosophical and foundational aspects of community parks and recreation
- To develop an appreciation of the role community parks and recreation professional as a public servant
- To understand the concept of community and the way in which public recreation services are organized and the strategies used to organize community resources
- To gain awareness of the ways in which public parks and recreation services are an asset to a community
- To understand the ways in which parks and recreation services contribute to community livability

INTRODUCTION

The soul of the community is reflected in the vitality of its public parks and recreation services. Community parks and recreation services impact very dramatically the quality of life, livability and health, and well-being of the members of any community. Community life and the activities engaged in by individuals and groups of people provide for a sense of belonging, meaningfulness, and relevance in the way people live their lives. Community parks and recreation programs, services, and facilities play a key role in creating opportunities for people to experience and enjoy life. They are often pivotal in assisting individuals in finding great value in their day-to-day living activities. As leisure has taken increased value in contemporary society, so have the services offered by community parks and recreation agencies.

Public parks and recreation agencies have a central role to play in the crafting of community life. Such services may provide a respite for individuals as well as stimulation for dealing with day-to-day challenges. As Edginton, DeGraff, Dieser, and Edginton have noted (2006):

Leisure is freedom and contributes greatly to one's satisfaction in life....as a way of uplifting the spirit, improving our well-being, and enhancing our relationships with others' leisure...helps us shape out sense of self-worth, assist in the formulation and communication of values and norms, and aids us in improving the livability in our

lives and communities. Leisure is a way of energizing individuals to pursue those individual interests they value. While liberating individuals, leisure time affords opportunities to celebrate community living. It is a powerful medium that provides opportunities for us to enhance our social, cultural, and economic development. (p. xiii)

Specifically related to community parks and recreation, Butler (1976) defined recreation as “activities that lead to direct satisfaction on behalf of participants; recreation is the services that community parks and recreation agencies offer to community members.”

As one can determine, public parks and recreation are an important part of enhancing community life. Leisure, whether viewed as free time, activity, or as a state of mind, can be enhanced when there are numerous, diverse, and high-quality community parks and recreation services available.

Community parks and recreation can be defined as any combination of leisure experiences and amenities that contribute to individual or a community’s quality of life, health, and wellness, and sustainable environmental well-being. Parks and recreation services can be thought of as a developmental process that engages the community in positive, meaningful, and purposeful ways. In this book we use the terms *community* and *public* interchangeably. Community or public parks and recreation refers to government services and subdivisions of government that are offered closest to people. This includes municipal government, county government, and special districts.

In this chapter, a number of topics will be discussed. First, a discussion of philosophical foundations and perspectives related to community parks and recreation will be explored. This will be followed by a short discussion of mission statements from community parks and recreation departments. Key themes emerging from this analysis suggest that such agencies are committed to enhancing and improving quality of life, health and well-being, and stewardship of natural resources. Third, a discussion of the role of the parks and recreation professional as a public servant is included. Next, an explanation as to why parks and recreation services move people is explored. A discussion of the ways in which communities can be defined is next offered. This is followed by information regarding why community parks and recreation are an asset. In turn, useful information is presented on the ways in which the parks and recreation profession is involved in the building of the livability of communities. Also included is a discussion of strategies for organizing community resources, including social planning, community development, social marketing, and social action. Last, a presentation of the ways in which community parks and recreation services are organized is included.

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

“Parks are for people.” This concept has resonated throughout the last 150 years of American and Canadian history. As Dustin, McAvoy, and Schultz (2002) have indicated, “From Yosemite to the Boston Common, recreation resources represents the democratic resources of the public good” (p. 6). They symbolize the fact that public parks and recreation areas belong to all. As they suggest, “in a nation committed to equality of conditions, public parks and playgrounds serve as an equalizing function” (p. 6). Regardless of one’s socioeconomic status, all individuals have access to such public resources. Thus, public

parks and recreation are in fact an expression America's democratic ideal. The core ideals and values of this concept include life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, which are embedded in our Declaration of Independence.

Complementing the aforementioned statement is one drawn from Texas A&M University professor John Crompton (2013), wherein he has proclaimed that "there are no great cities that do not have a great park system." This statement suggests that the infrastructure of any given great city must include the provision for parks and recreation services. In order for people to achieve a quality of life, they must have affordable access to public resources such as parks and recreation. As a result, such services have been woven into the fabric of community life over the past several decades. Public parks and recreation services are perceived to be an important element in any community's offering of its community services and are viewed as a standard element.

What then, are the general themes that community parks and recreation departments pursue? Such themes are not universally accepted but nonetheless provide insight into the roles of parks and recreation agencies and the professionals within such organizations. Many such organizations view their work as building a sense of community and promoting community *esprit de corps*. Parks and recreation agencies help individuals and communities find joy, zest, and encourage spirit in community life. Further, such organizations engage in the development of their community by promoting community development, which encourages social bonding and bridging. Parks and recreation agencies are often involved in enhancing social connectivity, unity, solidarity, connectedness, relatedness, and partnership building. Central to the work of parks and recreation agencies have been the contributions they make to the beautification and the settings of the community and to promoting and enhancing community livability. Drawing from the World Leisure Organization, parks and recreation organizations have become integral to the social, cultural, economic, and sustainable environmental well-being.

An essential component of community function is that of nurturing the human spirit. As Edginton, Hudson, Scholl, and Lauzon (2011) have noted, parks and recreation professionals work to "create hope in the lives of individuals" (p. 125). Their work involves providing people with the hope as they come to participate in leisure experiences that good things will happen to them. Edginton and Chen (2014) have offered the following:

Creating hope is the central focus of the profession. We are the builders, creators, and developers of hope. An important element of the professional's vision and mission, hope motivates individuals in gaining the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that enrich their lives and those of others. Leisure provides opportunities for individuals to create shape and share their hope for increased well-being and a better quality of life. It is through creating hope that we build a confidence for fulfilling one's anticipated desires for the future. Hope builds confidence that [one's or a community's] needs and interest and desires can be fulfilled. (p. 173)

The many benefits that come from the provision of community parks and recreation programs and services are in fact endless, including assisting individuals and communities in finding joy, happiness, and fulfillment. Benefits often focus on assisting individuals and communities in the development of their social, cultural, physical, cognitive, economic, and spiritual attributes. Figure 1.1 provides an analysis of the economic benefits of parks for

cities. As one can see, not only do parks enhance environmental aesthetics and recreation benefits but also economic ones.

How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development

Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic, and recreation benefits to our cities. They are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees.

At the bottom line, parks are a good financial investment for a community. Understanding the economic impacts of parks can help decision makers better evaluate the creation and maintenance of urban parks.

Key points include:

- Real property values are positively affected.
- Municipal revenues are increased.
- Affluent retirees are attracted and retained.
- Knowledge workers and talent are attracted to live and work.
- Homebuyers are attracted to purchase homes.

Figure 1.1. How cities use parks for economic development. (Lewis, 2007)

Parks and recreation professionals often operate from a holistic, humanistic, and activist role to engage in policy decision-making within communities. The parks and recreation profession is rooted in human services, and our advocacy activities are often in collaboration with other social and human services. There is a strong emphasis placed on working with people to identify needs and in turn assist them in assessing resources to meet such needs. Parks and recreation professionals work to teach individuals process and problem-solving skills from a community development perspective. It is the public's involvement that makes public parks and recreation relevant and vibrant in community life. A part of the professional activities of the parks and recreation professional is to engage in critical inquiry. As Edginton and Chen (2014) have written, parks and recreation professionals work to "inquire critically as to the conditions of human kind... critical inquiry should promote new solutions to problems... [and]... seek to improve the quality of life of all human beings by critically examining the conditions of society that lead to poverty, hatred, violence, and anomie" (p. 137). In the crafting of new solutions, the parks and recreation professional often operates as a social entrepreneur, bringing social inventions to solve problems to their communities.

MISSION STATEMENTS AND COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION

What is the mission of community parks and recreation departments? A review of mission statements from multiple parks and recreation departments operating at municipal, county, and special districts levels reveal nearly 50 distinct philosophical perspectives that


are used to guide the action of these types of organizations. Some of the more common statements include “quality of life, stewardship and preservation of natural resources and heritage sites, provision of beautiful spaces, health and wellness, and affordable and accessible services.” Still other mission statements speak to the importance of the relationship between parks and recreation agencies and those whom they serve. Mission statements also reflect “the need to promote high-quality human services, treat people with courtesy and respect, and building partnerships with the community.” Still others, promoting benefits such as “happiness, fun, learning, growth and development, providing safe and inviting places for people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activity.” Other mission statements reflect the importance of “leadership, professionalism, providing quality services, and commitment and a responsiveness to the needs of people as a way of enriching their lives.” These themes parallel the National Recreation and Park Association’s focus on conservation, health and wellness, social equity, as well as quality of life and the enhancement of sustainable environments through community parks and recreation (NRPA, 2017).

Figure 1.2 presents a mission and core value statement from the Chicago Park District. As one can see when reviewing this statement, a strong commitment is made to three primary themes. First is the enhancement of the quality of life through the provision of recreation and leisure opportunities. The second involves providing safe, inviting, and beautifully maintained parks and facilities. Last is the creation of a customer-friendly system. These primary mission-driven statements are supported by four core values: children first, best deal in town, built to last, and extra effort. Figure 1.3 is the City of Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation vision, mission, and values statement. As one can see in this document, the program emphasizes excellence as well as environmental initiatives and protecting parks, greenways, and open spaces. In addition, the statement emphasizes the importance of providing facilities and programs. The mission statement emphasizes fun, safe, and sustainable parks that enhance quality of life for individuals, neighborhoods, and communities.

PARKS AND RECREATION PROFESSIONALS AS PUBLIC SERVANTS

Public servants are those individuals who are involved in a government position usually based on merit. To be a public servant implies that one holds the public’s welfare in trust. To be a public servant making the welfare of the community one’s life work is viewed as a noble calling. Serving others is the highest vocation; individuals holding such responsible positions are empowered to enforce the organization’s statutes, ordinances, codes, rules, and regulations. In more contemporary times, the parks and recreation professional as a public servant operates with integrity and excellence in a selfless, unselfish, generous, magnanimous, and self-effacing manner. He/she places concern for others above that of self.

The idea of government employees as merit-based public servants dates back to the Han dynasty in China. In the 18th century, the notion of civil service became an important element of the British Empire. Ultimately, a civil service system was established in the United States in 1871 for position in the government of the United States. In more contemporary times, the notion of the parks and recreation professional as a public servant has been adapted by Edginton, Hudson, Scholl, and Lauzon (2011) in discussing the works of Robert Greenleaf, who offers the idea of *servant leadership*. Greenleaf (1970) applies a theological perspective that to lead is to serve others first. Characteristics of servant leaders include the



Mission

The mission of the Chicago Park District is to:

- Enhance the quality of life in Chicago by becoming the leading provider of recreation and leisure opportunities
- Provide safe, inviting and beautifully maintained parks and facilities
- Create a customer-focused and responsive park system that prioritizes the needs of children and families

Core Values

Children First. Our most important task is to bring children and families into our parks and give them great reasons to stay and play for a lifetime.

Best Deal in Town. We prioritize quality in our programs and accountability in our fiscal management to provide excellent and affordable recreation that invites everyone to come out and play.

Built to Last. We use our capital to renew our aging infrastructure and leverage partnerships that produce new parks and facilities that are forward-thinking and world class.

Extra Effort. We support innovation and welcome new ideas. We believe that professionalism, communication, technology, and team work serve as the foundation for great customer service and a productive workplace.

Figure 1.2. Chicago Park District Mission and Core Value Statement

willingness to listen, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and the building of community. As Greenleaf has written:

The servant-leader is servant first...it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... The difference manifest itself in the care take by the servant—first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test and the most difficult to administer, is, Do those served grow as people? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more like themselves to become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit or, at least not be further deprived? (1970, 1991, p. 7)

An important role of the community parks and recreation professional as a public servant is that of serving as an advocate. To be an advocate is to be a champion for others, advancing their interests and concerns. One can think of an advocate as an individual who works on behalf of a cause, in this case, the provision of high-quality parks and recreation services that are meaningful and relevant to those individuals to whom the programs areas

Our Vision

Indy Parks will be a national model of excellence and destination of facilities and programs, protecting parks, greenways, and open spaces and championing environmental initiatives.

Our Mission

Create, fun, safe, engaging, and sustainable parks that enhance the quality of life for individuals, neighborhoods, and communities.

Our Values

We are committed to public and employee safety. We strive to provide outstanding public service.



We support preservation of natural areas.

We encourage healthy living.

We cultivate and foster partnerships.

We are committed to professionalism, integrity, respect, and honesty.

We value stewardship and fiscal responsibility.

Figure 1.3. City of Indianapolis Parks and Recreation Department Vision, Mission, and Values Statement

and facilities are directed. At times, the parks and recreation professional as an advocate not only supports or promotes the interest of others, but also defends the same. Other roles of the community parks and recreation professional involve assisting individuals in solving their own problems; as such, they often act as an enabler, catalyst, coordinator, teacher, analyst, fact gatherer, and value clarifier (Edginton, Hudson, Dieser, & Edginton, 2004).

Community parks and recreation professionals often operate from a humanistic perspective. Such a philosophical perspective suggests that human nature is basically good. The focus of professionals employing this philosophical orientation would work to assist individuals and communities to focus on their strengths rather than their weaknesses. Further, a humanistic perspective advances the idea that human relations and interactions are of great value. This is central in many community parks and recreation programs as they provide opportunities for building civility, respect, graciousness, and reverence for others, and perhaps even for environmental resources. As choice is a central element in pursuing the leisure experience, humanists also understand and promote the idea that there are responsibilities that come from making decisions about one's leisure. Further, humanists advance the idea that there are differences in the way people may pursue their interests, but that it is important to respect and value the differences that exist in race, ethnicity, socioeconomic standing, beliefs, and culture. Such differences are to be celebrated and valued.

WHY PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES MOVE PEOPLE

Parks and recreation services provide a critical role in enhancing the well-being and quality of life of individuals. The type, number, and options of recreation programs and services as well as the accessibility of greenspaces enhance the community in a very dramatic fashion. Parks and recreation services, according to Edginton and Chen (2014), promote “leisure-oriented themes, influence the promotion of the sustainable environment, provide opportunities for civic engagement, and encourage the social and cultural life of individuals” (p. 85). Such livable communities are often “well organized, designed, and planned in such a way as to promote a higher standard of living and great quality of life” (p. 85). They promote a sense of belonging through the provision “amenities, resources, and opportunities to experience leisure” (p. 85).

Drawing on the work of a well-known theory of motivation offered by Fredrick Herzberg, Edginton has depicted in Figure 1.4 what types of community services motivate people. Herzberg, utilizing Maslow's hierarchy of needs, has suggested that human needs can be placed on a continuum in two categories: hygiene factors and motivators. *Hygiene factors* refer to one's need for security, safety, and status. When these are not present in the environment, it creates dissatisfaction for individuals and the community. However, the presence of hygiene factors does not guarantee satisfaction in one's life or well-being. On the other hand, *motivators* refer to such factors as recognition, engaging and worthwhile

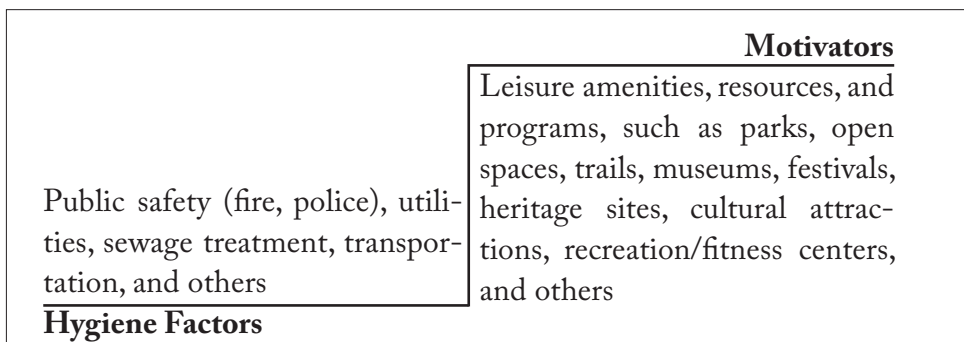


Figure 1.4. What Community Services Motivate People? *Source:* Edginton (2000) <http://www.sagamorepub.com/products/community-parks-and-recreation>

opportunities, and opportunities for self-actualization. These factors can create satisfaction in one's life.

Edginton (2000) and Edginton and Chen (2014) have applied the Herzberg Hygiene-Motivation Model to a variety of services that may be found in a given community. For example, services that can be viewed in Figure 1.4 that can be thought of as hygiene factors include police, fire, sewage treatment, and transportation. When such services are missing in a community, people are dissatisfied and the livability of the community is disrupted. They are not motivators that lead to greater satisfaction in one's life or community. On the other hand, leisure amenities, or parks and recreation services programs and resources, including parks, open spaces, trails, museums, festivals, heritage sights, cultural attractions, and fitness/recreation centers produce greater satisfaction with one's life and are highly motivating to individuals.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

To understand one's role as a parks and recreation professional operating within a local setting whether it be in a city, county, or within a special district, it is important to understand what constitutes a community. As a community-wide leader, the parks and recreation professional must be attuned to the needs, attitudes, and interest of those he/she serves. One must be knowledgeable of the characteristics or demographics of the community, its challenges and history. Further, it is important to gain a perspective of a community's culture—the ways in which people communicate, interact with one another, and build relationships between and among individuals and groups.

One can think of a community as a group of people who share a common interest, perspectives, and values. Community also implies a sense of place, a locality within which people live in proximity to one another, and/or are connected to one another in some fashion, even if it is an electronic one. Communities often emerge as individuals being connected socially, culturally, religiously, ethnically, or through some other characteristic. Communities often reflect the fact that harmonious bounds between people have emerged to define their interactions and behaviors. Smith (2001) has suggested that a community can be defined in three different ways as follows:

- **Place.** Territorial or place community can be seen as where people have something in common, and this shared element is understood geographically. Another way of naming this is as "locality."
- **Interest.** In interest of "elective" communities, people share a common characteristic other than place. They are linked together by factors such as religious belief, leisure interest, occupation, or ethnic origin.
- **Sense of Belonging.** Communities create a sense of belonging for individuals. They assist in helping individuals build their social capital (Putnam, 2000); that is, they serve as a form of communication and linking individuals together. They provide meaning to individuals in their lives.

All three of these ways of looking at community can be linked to one another. Certainly a place can provide a sense of belonging to an individual or facilitate their interest. It is interesting to note that community parks and recreation services all support the idea of

community and the above-mentioned ways of viewing this concept. Parks and recreation areas and facilities create opportunities for individuals to share common experiences. Shared leisure interest joins people together around common community experiences whether it is participation in a club or festival or other social or cultural activity. Last, community parks and recreation programs and services develop opportunities for developing a sense of belonging.

WHY ARE COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION AN ASSET?

An asset can be thought of as a community resource of social, cultural, economic, or environmental value. Communities across North America often advance their assets as a way of advertising the livability of their community, including its leisure amenities, such as green space and recreation programs and services for all ages. Community governmental parks and recreation departments, as well other nongovernmental organizations that provide similar types of programs, are often viewed as mainstays of government services and well in evidence among the nongovernment sector. Such programs and services are deemed to contribute to promoting higher quality of life and enriching and enhancing community well-being.

Too often, communities focus on their problems or deficits rather than building on their assets. Although every community has challenges, it is perhaps more important to find a way to build on the assets. Community parks and recreation services definitely can be viewed as an asset and often a viable and rich strength that may be employed to improve community life. Some of the ways in which community parks and recreation can be viewed as an asset are listed below.

Leadership

Community parks and recreation organizations include highly skilled professional individuals who can work to distill a focus or attention on a community concern, build partnerships, establish creative ways of addressing problems, building networks and engaging community resources to solve social, cultural, economic, and environmental challenges. In addition, parks and recreation departments assist in the organization of specialized groups of individuals or bodies to address particular areas of interest or concern. For example, it would not be unusual for a parks and recreation department to support the organization of an arts council, youth council or senior citizens group.

Areas and Facilities

Community parks and recreation organizations develop, build, and maintain a wide variety of leisure resources both physical structures and spaces. One can only think of the parks, open spaces, hiking and bike trails, pathways, greenways, wetlands, golf courses, playgrounds, gardens, botanical gardens, arboretums, grasslands, prairies, forest reserves, and common areas (such as plazas and squares). There are many recreation facilities associated with community parks and recreation organizations, including recreation centers, swimming pools, fitness centers, picnic shelters, nature centers, skateboard parks, boating facilities, fishing piers and platforms, museums, heritage/historical sights, shooting ranges, sport and playing fields, and many others.

Programs and Services

A wide array and scope of programs and services are offered by community parks and recreation services in a variety of different formats. Some of the program areas that are often associated with community parks and recreation departments include visual arts, graphic arts, and performing arts; literary activities; aquatics; sports, games, and athletics; outdoor recreation; social recreation; self-improvement/educational activities; wellness activities; hobbies; travel and tourism; volunteer services; and festivals and special events.

Targeted Community Services

Parks and recreation departments often target their programs and services in such a way as to address the needs of a specific population. For example, there are few parks and recreation departments that don't offer services for senior citizens, early childhood education programs, or to disadvantaged or disabled populations. Youth programs are also targeted services offered historically by parks and recreation departments. Further, community parks and recreation departments often address in partnership with other community agencies programs for recycling and reuse of environmental resources.

Leisure Education Programs

Community parks and recreation departments serve as a major vehicle for educating the public regarding leisure. As Edginton and O'Neill (2010) have noted, "helping individuals make choices about their parks and recreation experiences often involves providing them with the background for such decision-making"; they further offer that "people need appropriate skills, knowledge, and attitudes to enjoy a given parks and recreation experience at its fullest" (p. 172).

Parks and recreation departments and their professional staff work to develop these assists engaging in whatever is needed to support the vision, mission, and goals of the department. Often such work involves assisting in identifying community assets and involving individuals and groups in program provision, especially working as volunteers. It is important to view the entire community as an asset and recognize that as Hampton and Heaven (2015) note, "everyone in a community can be a force for community improvement," and further offered, "every single person has capacities, abilities, and gifts. Living a good life depends on whether those capacities can be used, abilities expressed, and gifts given."

BUILDING COMMUNITY LIVABILITY

Central to the work of the parks and recreation profession is the building of the livability of the community. In fact, it could be argued that we are losing our sense of community. As Putnam (2000) argues, the involvement in community activities, organizations, and events has declined dramatically over the last several decades. He calls this a loss of social capital. Such social capital builds relationships among community members and is important in advancing cohesion and social support for the vitality of the community. Social capital also enables community development in terms of understanding the collective need for individuals to come to together to contribute to the life of the community. This is an important element in understanding the notion of community livability and its relationship to parks and recreation services.

Community livability is challenging to define, and as Edginton (2000) has noted,

The idea of livability is more difficult to define and perhaps even understand. Livability is often views from an individual, subjective perspective. Livability can be thought of as ‘...life that can be lived.’ The term also refers to life that is fit or pleasant to live, habitable, or agreeable by nature. To live is to be alive, to have a joyful, pleasant, agreeable life. (p. 30)

The idea of livability is one of working to reenergize our sense of community and relationships with one another. “Community implies commonness—a life that is lived in association with others often with shared or compatible interest, values, and needs...a community is a place where people with common interest live, play, and work” (p. 31). In this sense, parks and recreation programs, services, and areas and facilities are important assets that contribute to building community life. Community livability at the turn of the century was also known as the “sociability” of community life. According to Rodgers, writing in *Atlantic Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (1998), the “Germans sought public leisure: the concert halls and outdoor musicals, the parks, the strange and alluring atmosphere of the open-air beer gardens; in effect, the Germans had created a culture of public enjoyment” (p. 88).

How do parks and recreation services contribute to community livability? A framework developed by the Nations in Bloom project (1999) suggests a number of components that are useful in promoting greater community liability. We refer to these as the *livability mix*. Components are discussed below.

Environmentally Sensitive Practices

We can think of such practices as ones in which sustainable environmental concerns are addressed. Not only is this reflected in the conservation and preservation of natural resources but also in the way in which we deal with other land, air, and water concerns. Parks and recreation departments have historically been champions of environmentally sensitive practices by providing greenspaces. Further, parks and recreation agencies have often led the charge to prevent degradation of the environment through the provision of educational programs and practices that protect environmental resources.

Enhancement of Community Attractiveness

The beautification of the community is another important role played by parks and recreation departments. Appealing landscapes, tree-lined streets, public street sculptures, art in public places, and other strategies for beautifying a community often are programs of community parks and recreation departments. Programs that emphasizes cleaning up a community are often ones that are organized and promoted by parks and recreation departments. Such activities often require the organization of volunteers to participate in such activities and the local parks and recreation department is a major vehicle for drawing together resources.

Opportunities for Leisure and Cultural Appreciation

Community parks and recreation departments are a major source creating opportunities for leisure and cultural appreciation. A wide array of programs, services, areas, and facilities that are accessible and affordable offer the foundation for opportunities. It is especially

<http://www.sagamorepub.com/products/community-parks-and-recreation>

important that programs serve all age groupings and categories of individuals spanning from children to seniors. It is important that individual interests and values be represented in the leisure and cultural leisure opportunity offerings by community parks and recreation departments. Further, it is important to offer programs that range on a continuum from casual, informal drop-in programs to ones that are highly structured.

Programs that Provide Opportunities for Involvement of People

Parks and recreation services provide a means for individuals to be involved in the decisions that influence their lives. When programs emphasize a community development orientation wherein programs are self-directed activities, there is a greater opportunity for individuals to be involved. Further, parks and recreation programs provide many volunteer opportunities. Serving as a coach, befriending/mentoring, serving as an instructor, teaching/tutoring, helping youth find their voice, supporting the planning, organization, and implementation of large scale community events and festivals, leading outdoor education/recreation programs, trips, tours, and others.

Heritage Management

Communities can profit by preserving historical buildings and other cultural resources. As Edginton (2000) has noted, heritage management “provides a foundation for the community and a sense of who we are as individuals and as a community” (p. 38). History draws us together into a common heritage that can be shared. Not only does the preservation of historic buildings and cultural resources serve to advance the concept of community, it also provides an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of a place. Often communities are made up of divergent racial and ethnic groupings and supporting the historical and cultural heritage of these groups helps preserve and enhance their value to the community.

STRATEGIES USED IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

In meeting social, cultural, and economic leisure needs, public parks and recreation agencies garner resources from society and provide leisure programs, services, areas, and facilities. Edginton, Hudson, Dieser, and Edginton (2004) have commented that there are four strategies that can be used by public parks and recreation departments in organizing community resources. These are *social planning*, *community development*, *social marketing*, and *social action*. Each of these strategies is built on a different set of assumptions in terms of goals, orientation to participants, professional roles, and basic strategies. The following is a brief summary of the aforementioned strategies.

Social Planning

Social planning is a rational and logical task-oriented strategy wherein the knowledge and expertise of the professional is used to plan and organize services. The basic strategy is one of fact finding to meet the community needs. The professional serves as a program planner and implementer. Participants are viewed as individuals who consume what professional diagnose for them to meet their needs and interest. Social planning is very similar to social marketing, which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Community Development

Community development is built on the assumption that participants can serve as partners in the process of determining their leisure interest and needs. Basically,

community development rests on the assumption that professionals can teach the processes that participants can utilize to plan, organize, and implement services. The professional serves as an enabler, catalyst, teacher, and value clarifier. The focus of the professional in dealing with community members is to assist them in thinking about the development of the community as well as developing their leadership skills and abilities. Commentary regarding community development is found in Chapters 1, 6, and 10.

Social Marketing

Social marketing is built on the assumption that the professional should work to satisfy participant needs. The goal of social marketing is to know and understand the participant's needs so well that services presell themselves. Much like social planning, the professional serves as an analyst, planner, promoter, and implementer. The professional works to adjust the traditional marketing mix of product, price, place, and promotion. We have added a fifth item to this mix—partnerships. Chapter 7 provides greater detail on the concept of social marketing.

Social Action

Social action is a strategy that addresses the needs of disadvantaged populations with an eye toward addressing issue of social inequality and injustice. The goal of social action is one of attempting to shift power through the distillation of issues. Professional roles include serving as an advocate, broker, agitator, negotiator, and/or organizer. Chapter 16 addresses some of the issues in dealing with disadvantaged populations.

Social Policy

Social policy is a strategy that attends to the improvement of a community's social and environmental well-being and welfare. Often parks and recreation professionals work to prevent or remedy challenges, such as environmental degradation, including air, water, and land pollution; delinquency; crime; childhood and adult obesity; or in a positive light, the need to improve community livability, beautification, greening, and its quality of life. In this strategy, the parks and recreation professional works to gather information, facts, and resources that can be used to craft and shape social policy so that boards of directors that are policy driven may act to address community problems and concerns. Chapters 3, 4, 12, and 16 address how parks and recreation can increase the well-being of society.

In this book we have emphasized the community development strategies as a way of gaining insight into the leisure needs and interests of the participants as well as the way in which community resources are utilized.

THE ORGANIZATION OF COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION

There are three primary forms of government organization at the local level that enable the provision of public parks and recreation services. The most common form of organization is when parks and recreation services are a part of the municipal government of a city, town, or village. In the United States, there are over 10,000 cities, nearly 4,500 towns, and over 3,500 villages. Each one of these forms of municipal government may have some type of parks and recreation department or may provide related services. For example, public works departments may assume the responsibility for the maintenance of park areas, especially in smaller communities. The second form of organization for parks and recreation

services is that which finds a county assuming the responsibility. In the United States there are 3,000 counties. Last, there are special governmental districts—park districts, or park and recreation districts—that provide parks and recreation services exclusively within some geographic area of jurisdiction.

Recreation and Parks as Part of a Municipal Government

Municipal governments make up the most common form of government in the United States. It is the government at the local level that is closest to the people being served. Its authority is derived from state statutes or codes that outline its authority and powers. Municipal governments often assume the responsibility of providing parks and recreation services. Expenditures for parks and recreation account for slightly over 2.1% of total local government spending. This amount has not changed dramatically in the last 15 years or so (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).

Recreation and Parks as a Part of County Government

Counties are another form of local government. They represent attempts to bring government close to people. County functions include assessing and collecting property taxes, registering voters, offering law enforcement, and record keeping. Counties are increasingly engaged in providing social or human services, including those related to parks and recreation, libraries, museums, and stadiums. The Henderson County (North Carolina) parks and recreation department offers a full range of recreation activities, including the operation of the Henderson County Athletics and Activity Center (HCAAC).

Recreation and Parks Operating as a Special District

Special purpose districts are independent governmental units that operate separately from other municipal or county governments. Such special districts operate within a designated geographic area, are governed by an independent board of directors, and have their own taxing and fiscal powers. Special districts are focused on specifically designed service areas. What makes a special district unique is the fact that it can focus its energies and attention toward a specific type of service, such as parks and recreation. The Bloomington (California) Recreation and Park District was established in 1972 by an act of the San Bernardino Board of Supervisors. The district maintains two community parks, an equestrian arena, sports fields, and a community center. The District also offers a summer swim program. As Bollens (1957) offers, special districts are

...organized entities, possessing a structural form, an official name, perpetual succession, and the rights to sue and be sued, to make contracts, and to obtain and dispose of property. They have officers who are popularly elected or are chosen by other public officials. They have a high degree of public accountability. Moreover, they have considerable fiscal and administrative independence from other governments. The financial and administrative criteria distinguish special districts and other governments from all dependent or subordinate districts and from most authorities which, lacking one or both of these standards, are not governmental units. (p. 1)

Home Rule Legislation

In various states throughout the United States, local subdivisions of government are provided with opportunity to organize their governance structure within their own

administrative area. In other words, their administrative structure can be decentralized in such a way as to meet the particular needs of their community. Thus, various forms of organization and governance may emerge to provide parks and recreation services.

The basis for the authority to operate parks and recreation services as a part of a municipality, county, or as a special district is derived from state statutes and codes. Such statutes and codes are referred to as *enabling legislation*. This legislation gives appropriate officials the authority to implement services. The El Cerrito Park (California) and Recreation Commission draws its powers from municipal code section 2.04.240, which states that there shall be a parks and recreation commission, and its duties will include (1) to act in an advisory capacity to the council and the city manager on all matters pertaining to public recreation, including parks, playgrounds, landscaping within the boundaries of parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities, child care, educational courses, and entertainment; (2) to make recommendations regarding the annual budget, within its scope of concern, to the city manager and the council; (3) To make recommendations to the council annually concerning fees for city-sponsored programs; (4) To assist in planning recreation programs for the residents of the city, to promote public interest therein, and to solicit the cooperation of other public and private agencies; and (5) To make recommendations to the council regarding present and future needs for parks and recreation facilities. In this case, the commission is operating an advisory capacity, and its authority comes from powers derived from the city council.

In the state of Iowa, Chapter 350 provides legislation that authorizes the establishment of county conservation boards. The purposes of Chapter 350 are to create a county conservation board and to authorize counties to acquire, develop, maintain, and make available to the inhabitants of the county, public museums, parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreational centers, forests, wildlife, and other conservation areas, and to promote and preserve the health and general welfare of the people, to encourage the orderly development and conservation of natural resources, and to cultivate good citizenship by providing adequate programs of public recreation. For example, the Black Hawk County (Iowa) Conservation Board (BHCCB) was authorized by the people of the county at the general election in 1956 for the purpose of purchasing and developing land for parks, hunting, and fishing access, and other recreational use within the county. The Illinois Park District Code (70 ILCS 1205/) established by the Illinois General Assembly provides for a variety of powers including, but not limited to the following: (1) means for organizing; (2) the annexation of property; (3) election powers and duties of officers; (4) taxing powers; (5) general powers including those related to swimming pools, airports, tennis courts, zoos, recreation and facilities, and the operation and management of harbors.

SUMMARY

This chapter has included an exploration of the philosophical and foundational elements associated with community parks and recreation. A democratic notion related to the ideal of the public good, public parks and recreation has contributed over time to enhancing quality of life, livability of communities, and the health and well-being of individuals and groups. Public parks and recreation play a key role in assisting individuals in finding meaningfulness and relevance during their leisure. Without question, such organizations play a critical role in crafting community life through the provision of high-quality programs, services, and areas and facilities.

There are numerous benefits that come about as a result of the provision of community parks and recreation. Some of these include assisting individuals in finding joy and happiness in their lives, building a sense of social connectivity, unity, solidarity, connectedness, relatedness, and partnership building. Such programs nurture the human spirit. They provide hope for individuals; in fact as has been noted the profession is about building, creating, and developing hope. Further, public parks and recreation provide opportunities for beautification of the community and the preservation and conservation of open spaces.

A public servant's orientation is one wherein the public's welfare is the focus of one's work. Serving others, operating with integrity and excellence in a selfless, unselfish, generous, magnanimous, and self-effacing manner is the hallmark of a public servant's orientation. Also, parks and recreation professionals often operate from a humanistic perspective and serve as advocates. Their role is one of promoting critical inquiry. This suggests that the professional will find ways to address problems and concerns and in fact reconstruct social order to meet emerging needs. Over the last 150 years, parks and recreation professionals have engaged in a great deal of social entrepreneurship resulting in numerous social inventions such as parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers. Although such inventions may not be unique to the United States, they have been adapted to our society and culture.

A community is a place where people share a common interest, perspective, and values. Communities can be defined in different ways including (1) as a place, (2) as people sharing common interest, and (3) a form of communication and linkage that promotes a sense of belonging. Parks and recreation organizations provide many assets to a community. For example, they offer leadership, areas and facilities, programs and services, targeted community services, and leisure education programs. Central to a strong community orientation is that of building the livability of the community. In the United States, we are losing our sense of community, and parks and recreation services promotes the idea of building social capital through community development. There are a number of ways in which government organizations at the local level provide public parks and recreation services. Among these include (1) recreation and parks as part of a municipal government, (2) recreation and parks as a part of county government, and (3) recreation and parks operating as a special district.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is community life and how is the term "the soul of the community" related to that concept?
2. What is the relationship between community parks and recreation services and promoting life satisfaction, community livability, and one's health and well-being?
3. How do recreation resources reflect the democratic ideals of the public good?
4. What are some of the benefits of community parks and recreation services?
5. Why do parks and recreation services move people?
6. What is a community?
7. What assumptions must be considered when organizing community resources?
8. Compare and contrast social planning, community development, social marketing, and social action.
9. Why are parks and recreation are services an asset?
10. At the local level of government, how are parks and recreation services organized?

REFERENCES

- Boelens, L. (2009). *The urban connection: An actor-relational approach to urban planning*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: O10-Publishers.
- Butler, G. (1976). *Introduction to community recreation* (5th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Crompton, J. L. (2013). The economic benefits of state and local parks. Town hall meetings. Retrieved from [www. agrilifecd.n.tamu.edu/cromptonrpts/files/2011/06/state-and-local.ppt](http://www.agrilifecd.n.tamu.edu/cromptonrpts/files/2011/06/state-and-local.ppt)
- Dustin, D. L., McAvoy, L. H., Schultz, J. H. (2002). *Stewards of access/Custodians of choice: A philosophical foundation for the park and recreation profession* (3rd ed.). Urbana, IL: Sagamore.
- Edginton, C. R. (Ed.). (2000). Community livability: A model for Iowa. In C. R. Edginton (Ed.), *Enhancing the livability of Iowa communities: The role of recreation, natural resource development, and tourism*. Cedar Falls, IA: The University of Northern Iowa.
- Edginton, C. R., & Chen, P. (2014). *Leisure as transformation*. Urbana, IL: Sagamore.
- Edginton, C. R., DeGraaf, D. G., Dieser, R. B., & Edginton, S. R. (2006). *Leisure and life satisfaction foundation perspectives* (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Edginton, C. R., Hudson, S. D., Dieser, R.B., & Edginton, S. R. (2004). *Leisure programming: A service-centered and benefits approach* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: WCB/McGraw-Hill.
- Edginton, C. R., Hudson, S. D., Scholl, K. G., & Lauzon, L. (2011). *Leadership for recreation, parks, and leisure services* (4th ed.). Urbana, IL: Sagamore.
- Edginton, C. R., & O'Neill, J. (2010). Program and service management. In M. Moiseichik (Ed.), *Management of park and recreation agencies* (3rd ed.) Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Parks Association.
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1970, 1991). *The servant as leader*. Indianapolis, IN: Robert K Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership.
- Hampton, C., & Heaven, C. (2015). Understanding and describing the community. In *Assessing community needs and resources: Community tool box*. Retrieved from <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/describe-the-community/main>
- Lewis, M. (2007). How cities use parks for economic development. Washington, D.C. American Planning Association. Retrieved from <https://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/economicdevelopment.htm>
- National Recreation and Park Association. (2017). About NRPA. Retrieved from <http://www.nrpa.org/About-National-Recreation-and-Park-Association/>
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Rodgers, D. T. (1998). *Atlantic crossings: Social politics in a progressive age*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Rosen, M. S. (1999, September). Nations in bloom: An international challenge. *International Federation of Park and Recreation Administration*, 8, 9.
- Smith, M. K. (2001). 'Community' in the encyclopedia of informal education. Retrieved from <http://www.infed.org/community/community.htm>.
- U.S. Census Bureau. State and Local Government Finances. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/govs/www/estimate.html>.