

## SECTION 6



### BICENTENNIAL PARK FOUNTAIN

The Bicentennial Park Fountain attracts summertime crowds day and night.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

The Implementation and Action Plan creates a framework for the prioritizing and planning for improvements. Tactics for implementing strategies are introduced, leaders and partners are identified and order of magnitude operational and capital costs are quantified. This section concludes with recommended organizational changes to both streamline the department and aid in the implementation efforts.

# IMPLEMENTATION AND ACTION PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

The Implementation and Action Plan serves as a guide for the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department as it begins to consider the improvements and investments recommended by the Master Plan. This section catalogs all of the strategies and tactics introduced in the Needs Assessment and Strategies section of this report in an Action Plan Matrix. This matrix also provides additional detail in terms of who will lead and support implementation. These are listed as “lead” and “support” roles in the Action Plan Matrix.

Order of magnitude Operational and Capital costs are also highlighted where appropriate to give the department an idea of the budgetary implications of each strategy. By framing the existing and future needs of Columbus residents, this Master Plan makes the case for additional capital improvement dollars and operational dollars from the City’s budget. However, there are also opportunities for attaining additional funding. Diversifying funding sources and identifying sources of more stable funding will be necessary to absorb the increased operating and capital expenses that are associated with the improvements and investments required to meet the needs outlined in this Master Plan. Today, only the Golf Division is a stand-alone entity that is designed to be self-sustaining. Exploring other opportunities within the department to set up an enterprise fund could potentially allow for both the expansion of services and an increase in revenue. Potential opportunities could include sports complexes, concession agreements, facility rental and certain programs and activities. Endowments are another potential source of funding that should be examined, especially the creation of a maintenance endowment that could both stabilize funding and increase the level of maintenance provided in parks system-wide. Key to these discussions will be public/private partnerships that will aid in both funding and in the construction of needed facilities for the park system.

Departmental organization is also a critical piece of the Implementation and Action Plan. This section concludes with a recommended process for achieving a more streamlined and functional organization and suggests a new organizational structure. This effort will not only result in a more efficient department, but it will also create an organizational framework that is better able to implement the Master Plan. It will also provide opportunities for succession within the department and position the department to attract new talent. While this organization transition will undoubtedly take time to occur, it will result in a Recreation and Parks Department that is ready to build the system of 21st Century Parks that the City of Columbus needs to meet the growing and diverse needs of its citizens.

### 2014 Master Plan Strategies

The 2014 Master Plan identifies numerous areas for improvement and investment:

#### Parks and Facilities

- Update 5 Neighborhood Parks per year
- Update 1 Community Park per year
- Update and invest in revenue producing sports fields
- Improve maintenance standards city-wide
- Take a leadership role in establishing and meeting city-wide tree canopy coverage goals
- Continue to expand multi-use trail network and make connections to neighborhoods and parks

#### Community Centers and Programming

- Investigate public/private partnerships to meet facility and program needs
- Continue to update 1 community center per year
- Improve maintenance and security
- Establish a regional approach to program delivery
- Improve communication, outreach and social media presence
- Create partnership management protocols

#### Organizational

- Develop a more sustainable financial management model
- Explore organizational restructuring to achieve greater efficiency and functionality



# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.1 Action Plan Matrix for Parks and Facilities

Strategy		Tactic
<b>1.1 System-wide Strategies</b>		
1.1.1	Acquire enough land to meet recommended standards for all classifications of parkland	Develop strategic partnerships
		Work with other city departments to fold parks into aligning initiatives
		Reevaluate existing properties and facilities to determine if each meets the needs of CRPD
1.1.2	Continue to work with neighborhood groups to improve and maintain parks	Establish a stewardship plan for each park and determine which parks should have a “friends of” organization
		Institute a memorandum of understanding with such groups to ensure a continual commitment
		Continue to work with Area Commissions, Civic Associations and citizen groups to get feedback and gain input on park improvements and needs
		Use the city’s Web site to let the public view project designs and provide input
1.1.3	Remove access and circulation barriers to city parks	Continue developing multi-use trails throughout the city
		Coordinate with the Columbus Planning Division, and the Transportation and Public Service departments, to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections
		Make facilities within a park accessible to pedestrians
		Develop an updated and consistent signage and wayfinding system
1.1.4	Develop a checklist for minimum park and facility standards	Taking under account Master Plan recommendations, engage department staff in development of standards
<b>1.2 Strategies for Neighborhood Parks</b>		
1.2.1	Make acquiring land for neighborhood parks a high priority	Locate neighborhood parks within one-half mile of all neighborhoods
		Assess the amount of land needed for the next ten years, and determine where it is most in need
		Prioritize new parks in the Southwest, Central and Southeast Study Areas
		Identify existing City land holdings (for example: Parkland Reserve property or City Land Bank property) that could be converted into Neighborhood Parks in areas of need. Also consider working together with other City departments to identify other programs and initiatives (such as Blueprint Columbus) where Neighborhood Parks could be included.
1.2.2	Improve overall maintenance standards, safety and design	Require a consistent maintenance standard that is equal to or greater than the surrounding neighborhood
		Increase visibility of parks and park activity centers from the street edge
		Preserve a dedicated percentage of park area in a natural state to increase wildlife habitat and reduce maintenance costs
1.2.3	Update 5 neighborhood parks per year	Focus on park improvements that address community Health and Wellness
		Plan for a length of user experience of less than one hour
		Update design standards to provide at least 5 experiences
		Consider use of UIRF and other funding sources to update parks
<b>1.3 Strategies for Community Parks</b>		
1.3.1	Make acquiring land for Community Parks a high priority	Assess the amount of land needed for the next ten years, and determine where it is most in need
		Prioritize new parks in the Southwest and North Study Areas
1.3.2	Perform an overall assessment of productivity of space and amenities to guide improvements	

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
1.1.1	CRPD	Other City Departments	\$4,000 - \$8,000 per acre	\$50,000 - \$300,000 per acre (acquisition only)
1.1.2	CRPD	“Friends of” organizations Neighborhood groups Civic Associations Area Commissions	\$10,000 - \$30,000	
1.1.3	CRPD	Other City Departments MORPC Franklin County Metro Parks	\$10,000 - \$15,000 per trail mile	\$100,000 - \$200,000 per mile (acquisition only) \$1,000,000 per mile to design and construct trail in the city that is paved
1.1.4	CRPD			
1.2.1	CRPD	Other City Departments Public/Private Partnerships	Cost to increase maintenance standards from a level three to a level two is \$2,500 – \$3,000 a maintained acre	Included in 1.1
1.2.2	CRPD			
1.2.3	CRPD	Other City Departments	\$10,000 - \$25,000	\$200,000 - \$500,000 per park
1.3.5		Other City Departments Public/Private Partnerships	Cost to increase maintenance standards from a level three to a level two is \$2,500 – \$3,000 a maintained acre	Included in 1.1
1.3.1	CRPD			

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.1 Action Plan Matrix for Parks and Facilities

Strategy		Tactic
1.3.3	Expand revenue-producing amenities	Upgrade competitive elements of all parks (fields, courts, pools, etc.) to maximize unrealized revenue streams
		Upgrade and add more reservable shelters
1.3.4	Update 1 community park per year	Provide needed infrastructure (such as lighting, restrooms, trail systems)
		Adopt “Park Once” strategy to allow for park amenities to be access from a central point
		Wi-Fi in all community parks
		Provide and plan for a 3 hour user experience
		Promote year round use
		15 experiences in each park
1.3.5	Plan for programming that allows for Community Parks and their respective Community Centers to function as one space	Focus on health and wellness, community connectivity, special events and community pride
		Special event spaces
		Host a minimum of 3 events per year

## 1.4 Strategies for Regional Parks

1.4.1	Update sports-related parks to keep them in line with the revenue they bring in	Continue investment in all-weather fields
		Enhance and expand retail operations/concessions
1.4.2	Expand offerings and amenities to appeal to a more diversified audience and user groups	Provide and plan for an all-day experience
		Provide nature center / outdoor education
		Provide trails/open space
		Explore additional amenities (big shelters, ponds for fishing, adventure park, etc)
		Provide needed infrastructure (such as lighting, restrooms, trail systems)
		Adopt “Park Once” strategy to allow for park amenities to be accessed from a central point
		Wi-Fi in all community parks
Provide and plan for a 3 hour user experience		

## 1.5 Strategies for Natural Areas (Conservation/Natural Areas, Neighborhood Open Space, and Parkland Reserve)

1.5.1	Continue to hold and acquire open space and preserves	Perform assessment of existing land inventory to identify value and preservation quality to ensure that park development follows standards
		Continue to prioritize preservation of property that buffer stream corridors, provide wildlife habitat, and protect to the city’s tree canopy
		Work collaboratively and proactively with other city departments ensure that these essential natural areas are preserved and expanded city-wide
1.5.2	Consider potential of partial development to provide access for passive and educational uses	Prioritize areas of the city where nature programs and availability of appropriate properties and infrastructure align
1.5.3	Provide educational programs associated with natural areas	Prioritize areas of the city where there are program needs and the availability of appropriate properties and infrastructure align

## 1.6 Strategies for Special Use Parks

1.6.1	Continue existing maintenance standards	Partner with “friends of” organizations and corporate sponsors
		Develop revenue generating uses (rentals, concessions events)
1.6.2	Increase the geographic spread of Special Use Parks system-wide, as volunteer support allows	Convert existing parks or portions of parks to Special Use

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
1.3.2	CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships	Increase maintenance of sports fields and courts by \$2,000 an acre above current maintenance level 2	Included in 1.3.3
1.3.3	CRPD			\$300,000 - \$2,000,000 per park
1.3.4	CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships	\$50,000 - \$100,000	
1.4.1	CRPD	Public Private Partnerships	\$1,000 dollar a synthetic field to maintain a year	\$500,000 - \$1,500,000 per park
1.4.2	CRPD		\$25,000 - \$75,000	\$500,000 - 3,000,000 per park
1.5.1	CRPD	Other City Departments	\$300 an acre on average	
1.5.2	CRPD			
1.5.3	CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships	\$25,000 - \$75,000	
1.6.1	CRPD	"Friends of" Organizations Public/Private Partnerships		
1.6.2	CRPD			

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.1 Action Plan Matrix for Parks and Facilities

Strategy		Tactic
<b>1.7 Strategies for Acquisition</b>		
1.7.1	Be proactive in acquiring land	Establish objective criteria for evaluating parcels being considered for acquisition
		Acquire land that would link parks, community centers, local cultural facilities, and schools
		Continue to acquire land along streams, ravines, trails and blueway corridors, and prioritize protection and expansion of natural habitat and urban tree canopy
		Identify maintenance costs at time of acquisition
1.7.2	Use various techniques for acquiring land	Work with Development Department and Planning Division to target Land Bank and other vacant properties
		Work with other city departments and initiatives such as Project Blueprint to develop parkland
1.7.3	Consider a regional approach to spending parkland dedication funds to better enable future parks development	Convene city committee to evaluate changes to the current formula
<b>1.8 Strategies for Forestry</b>		
1.8.1	Take a leadership role in setting a tree canopy goal for the City of Columbus	Collaborate with the Mayor's Green Team and other City departments
		Set higher canopy goals for city parkland to offset expected shortfall in certain areas of the city
1.8.2	Management should shift from being reactive to proactive	Conduct a comprehensive tree survey/inventory
		Develop a preventative management plan
		Expand staff to include a park specific pruning crew and a forestry tech division that maintains tree inventory and coordinates proactive work
1.8.3	Establish a canopy replacement program to combat Emerald Ash Borer and achieve tree canopy goal	Develop a strategic plan to optimize staff effort and define a realistic capacity unit of measurement at current levels for a specific number of trees to be planted per year
		Expand tree nursery capacity and logistics capabilities, and make infrastructure improvements
<b>1.9 Strategies for Maintenance</b>		
1.9.1	Adopt maintenance standards that optimize resources by providing higher levels of care in high-visibility and high-use areas.	Enhance level of care for high-use neighborhood and community parks based on frequencies of mowing, cleaning restrooms, cleaning parking areas, maintaining sports fields, and maintaining playgrounds.
		Implement CPTED standards for park design and maintenance in consideration of safety-related issues
1.9.2	Revise maintenance standards assigned to each zone to increase level of care.	Develop a maintenance management plan
		Institute maintenance software system to track assets
		Revise maintenance standards assigned to each zone to increase level of care.
		Consider using contract maintenance services
<b>1.10 Strategies for Multi-Use Trails</b>		
1.10.1	Improve access to existing trails from surrounding neighborhoods, business districts and parks	Work with other city departments to continue to provide on-street bike facilities that lead to park facilities
		Prioritize connecting neighborhoods next to existing trail systems
		Prioritize connecting parks closest to existing trail systems
		Prioritize access in the Southwest, North and Central Study Areas
		Develop and install more consistent trail and wayfinding signage (both on and off-trail)

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
1.7.1	CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships Other City Departments		Included in 1.1
1.7.2	CRPD	Other City Departments		
1.7.3	CRPD	Other City Departments		
1.8.1	CRPD	Other City Departments		
1.8.2	CRPD			
1.8.3	CRPD			
1.9.1	CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships	\$2,500 - \$3,000 per maintained acre cost	
1.9.2	CRPD		\$20,000-35,000	
1.10.1	CRPD	Other City Departments MORPC Franklin County Metro Parks		Included in 1.1

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.1 Action Plan Matrix for Parks and Facilities

Strategy		Tactic
1.10.2	Improve Multi-Use Trail Safety and Education	Consider trail widening and other methods for enhancing safety and the user experience along trail corridors for all trail users
		Install more educational signage
		Install pavement markings
1.10.3	Continue to improve east-west connectivity city-wide	Partner with bicycle advocacy groups educate riders on safe trail usage
		Work with other city departments to continue to provide on-street bike facilities that lead to park facilities
		Partner with other City departments, Franklin County, MORPC, Metro Parks, and adjacent jurisdictions to explore off-street facilities
1.10.4	Continue to expand bicycle infrastructure, facilities and accessibility	Prioritize connections in the Southwest, North and Central Study Areas
		With City support, continue to partner with COGO bike share and identify other potential bike rental vendors
		With City support, provide bike parking, bike maintenance facilities, and shelters at high traffic locations
		With City support, explore a bike hub (lockers, showers, bike shop) at a downtown or other high traffic location along trail system
		Explore opportunities to add pump courses or skills courses adjacent to the trail system

## 1.11 Strategies for Blueways

1.11.1	Provide access for different types of watercraft, depending on locations	Conduct assessment of existing boat ramps and explore new locations
		Continue to add access points for kayaks and canoes along river and stream corridors
		Prioritize access points in areas where there is existing infrastructure or adjacent park facilities
		Improve access to the lower Scioto River and Alum Creek
1.11.2	Legitimize access, improve ease of use and promote blueways	Pro-actively communicate with boating organizations to ensure efficient and effective permitting and access
		Improve on river and off river signage and maps
		Provide information on conditions, access and maps online
		Facilitate safe portages around low-head dams
1.11.3	Develop educational programming related to river health, sustainability and the river ecosystem	Promote safety through educational programming and signage
1.11.4	Provide access for fishing and other wildlife viewing	

## 1.12 Strategies for Aquatics

1.12.1	Continue to improve and maintain existing aquatic facilities	Continue to follow plan to renovate existing pools
		Monitor effectiveness of renovations
		Consider additional pool upgrades or expansions at pools with high use
1.12.2	Implement the long range plan to expand the system	Evaluate previous Master Plan that said to expand the system in the southeast and northeast with the construction of family aquatic centers against the survey results that indicated a priority for the Central, North and In-Town Study Areas
		Pursue public-private partnerships to create new facilities in underserved areas of the city
1.12.3	Install spraygrounds in areas where there are gaps in service in the northeast and northwest parts of the city	

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
1.10.2	CRPD	Bicycle Advocacy Groups		
1.10.3	CRPD	Other City Departments Franklin County MORPC Metro Parks	\$10,000-\$25,000	
1.10.4	CRPD	Other City Departments COGO Public/Private Partnerships	\$10,000-\$25,000	\$50,000-\$200,000
1.11.1	CRPD	MORPC ODNR River Advocacy Groups Public/Private Partnerships Outfitters		\$200,000-\$500,000
1.11.2	CRPD	MORPC ODNR River Advocacy Groups Public/Private Partnerships Outfitters	\$10,000-\$25,000	\$50,000-75,000
1.11.3	CRPD		\$25,000-50,000	
1.11.4	CRPD			\$50,000-200,000
1.12.1	CRPD			
1.12.2	CRPD	Other City Departments Public/Private Partnerships	\$100,000-200,000 per center	\$4,500,000 – 5,000,000 per center
1.12.3	CRPD		\$50,000-100,000 per sprayground	\$300,000 – 600,000 per sprayground

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.2 Action Plan Matrix for Recreation Facilities

Strategy		Tactic
<b>2.1 Overall Strategies</b>		
2.1.1	Strategically prioritize center improvements	Continue to update 1 community center per year
		Develop a cost benefit program for improvements made to community centers for the future
2.1.2	Develop and implement facility hygiene, safety, and cleanliness operational standards	Enhance supply chain and inventory control processes
		Improve security features to deter crime
		Require consistency in staff clothing and appearance
2.1.3	Develop pricing guidelines and standards	Create additional opportunities for earned income, particularly at larger centers
		Develop mini business plans for centers generating significant revenues to identify income/expense targets, track actuals, and outline marketing strategies
<b>2.2 Strategies for Small Community Centers</b>		
2.2.1	Enhance safety and security at centers with ongoing crime issues	Enhance security features to minimize crime
2.2.2	Empower center managers to optimize potential and improve service delivery	Continually track neighborhood demographics and trends
		Allow autonomy to adjust hours and staffing at center level
2.2.3	Improve consistency and quality of center offerings	Develop regional approach for better coordination and communication between centers
		Review/improve supply chain and inventory control procedures
<b>2.3 Strategies for Medium Community Centers</b>		
2.3.1	Empower center managers to optimize potential and improve service delivery	Introduce additional programming to attract the variety of age segments and cultures within each service area
		Improve marketing efforts to effectively promote centers
		Coordinate and communicate between centers to eliminate redundancy of programs and better satisfy needs of users
2.3.2	Implement strategic facility management plans	
<b>2.4 Strategies for Large Community Centers</b>		
2.4.1	Empower center managers to optimize potential and improve service delivery	Capitalize on available spaces to expand programming and bring in more adults and seniors
		Enable center managers to recruit volunteers and adjust staffing levels
		Provide a balance of programs for all ages, interests, and cultures
2.4.2	Build on revenue-generating capabilities of larger centers to leverage cost recovery for all centers	
2.4.3	Introduce maintenance standards and prioritize improvements	Enhance supply chain and inventory control processes
		Improve security features to deter crime
		Require consistency in staff clothing and appearance

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
2.1.1	CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships		\$750,000-5,000,000 per center
2.1.2	CRPD			
2.1.3	CRPD		\$10,000-25,000	
2.2.1	CRPD			\$25,000-50,000
2.2.2	CRPD		\$10,000-20,000	
2.2.3	CRPD			
2.3.1	CRPD			
2.3.2	CRPD			
2.4.1	CRPD			
2.4.2	CRPD			
2.4.3	CRPD			

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.3 Action Plan Matrix for Recreation Programs

Strategy		Tactic
<b>3.1 Strategies for Recreation Programs</b>		
3.1.1	Develop standards to improve consistency in program design, delivery, and evaluation	Track demographic trends and adjust programming or operations to best serve each service area
		Avoid duplication in programming
3.1.2	Establish regional approach to service delivery to eliminate gaps and overlaps, and allow sharing of resources between various centers	Use a more strategic and coordinated approach to programming non-peak hours
		Enable larger centers to serve as true “community centers.” Expand select smaller centers to include underserved areas
3.1.3	Maximize the use of existing recreational facilities to enhance programming.	Expand outdoor programming to compensate for lack of indoor space, improve visibility of centers, and deter crime
		Consider theming centers and their programs to include a strong approach to arts, fitness, sports, dance, music, seniors, child care, people with disabilities, gymnastics, and teens
3.1.4	Use data in strategic decision-making.	Track the results of community surveys by location to determine programming needs of residents
		Track program participation, outcomes, and efficiency on a weekly, monthly and yearly basis
		Develop a true cost of service program that tracks both the direct and indirect costs to provide services
3.1.5	Adjust the programming mix to increase programs and services for underserved segments of the population.	Develop more programs for young adults. Centers are more geared to youth under 16 and/or seniors.

Table 6.4 Action Plan Matrix for Organizational Management

Strategy		Tactic
<b>4.1 Strategies for Communications</b>		
4.1.1	Ensure operating hours and center information on CRPD website is up-to-date and accurate	
4.1.2	Use survey data to inform operational decisions, (e.g., allow for operating hours to include weekends November through April)	
4.1.3	Improve CRPD brand by distributing templates for marketing, promotional, and informational material	
4.1.4	Update the brand for community centers. Use upbeat colors, pictures of people having fun in the centers, and customer messages that don’t start with the word “no.”	
4.1.5	Develop a social media strategy to better communicate with the public and monitor its effectiveness	
4.1.6	Allow autonomy in communicating with participants to inform them on program changes, facility closings, or other pertinent information	
4.1.7	Document the level of productivity each center operates and develop a stronger marketing effort in communities where there is excess capacity	
4.1.8	Post the daily schedule of activities in the building on TV monitors near the front desk or with electronic signage at larger centers in the system	

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
3.1.1	CRPD			
3.1.2	CRPD		\$50,000-75,000	
3.1.3	CRPD		\$10,000-25,000	
3.1.4	CRPD			
3.1.5	CRPD		\$50,000-100,000	

Strategy	Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
4.1.1	CRPD			
4.1.2	CRPD			
4.1.3	CRPD		\$100,000-200,000	
4.1.4	CRPD		\$10,000-20,000 per site	
4.1.5	CRPD			
4.1.6	CRPD			
4.1.7	CRPD			
4.1.8	CRPD			

# ACTION PLAN MATRIX

Table 6.5 Action Plan Matrix for Partnerships

Strategy		Tactic
<b>4.2 Partnership Management</b>		
4.2.1	Formalize existing partnerships to demonstrate success and promote growth	Execute a working agreement with measurable outcomes for all partnerships.
		Evaluate performance on measurable outcomes for each partnership annually
		Develop process to track costs and income associated with partnerships
4.2.2	Develop overall partnership philosophy and standard partnership protocols for the department.	Review and annually update measurable outcomes in conjunction with each partner
		Identify a liaison with each partnership for communication and planning purposes
		Meet with the liaison from each partnership on at least an annual basis to mutually assess progress towards measurable outcomes

Lead Role	Supporting Role	Annual Operational Cost	Total Capital Cost
CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships	\$13,000 - \$28,000	
CRPD	Public/Private Partnerships	\$11,000 - \$16,000	

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The long-term success of the Columbus Recreation and Park Department is critically dependent upon the wise use of limited financial resources. Because the Department can never be all things to all people, its employees and leadership must be prepared to continually make trade-off decisions with how to prioritize and reprioritize demands for various investments in maintenance, operations, capital, programming, and other needs.

In 2013, the Department's \$34.1 million budget was funded primarily (85.2%) by tax dollars. The remaining funding (14.8%) was generated through non-tax earned revenues such as program fees, memberships, and facility rentals. Balancing and diversifying this portfolio of funding sources will be key for CRPD in building a sustainable and robust financial model. In general, successful agencies in large cities similar to Columbus adjust their operations and funding structures to generate at least 20% of their income from non-tax sources, or at least \$15.00 of earned revenue per capita. Based upon Columbus' 2013 estimated population of 802,411, the Department generated \$6.29 of earned revenue per capita in 2013.

Increasing earned revenue and decreasing dependence upon government support requires a dedicated and strategic investment in revenue-generating facilities and services. The Department should view these as lines of business and develop business plans to optimize CRPD's investment in these areas. Business plans will help identify the full cost of providing the facility or service, including both direct and indirect costs, as well as establishing productivity, marketing, and evaluation goals. The Department can use national median cost recovery rates for programs, shown in Table 6.6, as a guide.

The Department invested 56.3% of their 2013 budget in programs, 29.8% in park maintenance and warehousing, and 14.0% in administration. In order to drive earned revenue generation, CRPD should continue to invest in recreation programs and services that recover their costs and supplement funding for other services that are critical to provide but do not generate revenue, such as park maintenance. Creating new ways to fund park maintenance will be particularly important to the Department given the needs for additional parkland and amenities identified in the Master Plan. Unlike with revenues, however, there are no strong generalizable best practices that use percentage-based targets for different types of expenditures because each community has a different mix of park, facility, program, and administrative needs.

Comparable cities' parks departments that have improved their financial stability, or are moving in the right direction, include Charlotte (Mecklenburg County), Seattle, Denver, San Diego, Kansas City, and Milwaukee. Generally, these cities have made it a policy priority to invest in certain value-

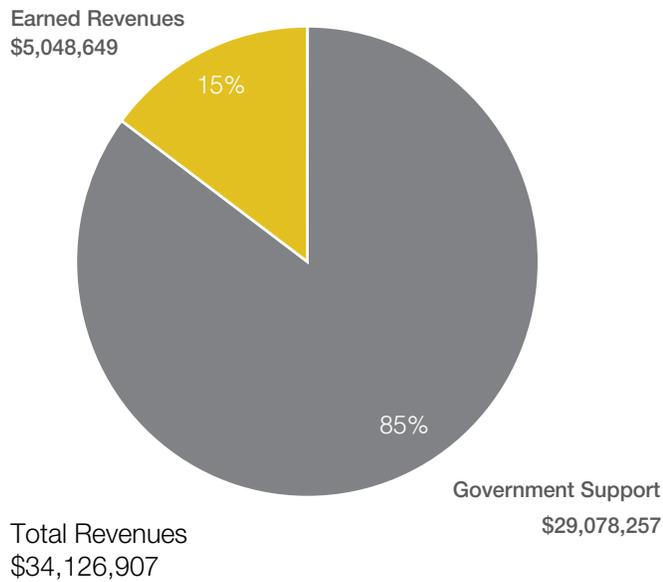
added (i.e., private benefit) recreation programs and services that recover their costs as well supplement funding for other core services. As well, these cities can provide the following lessons from their experiences:

- Partnerships have working agreements with measurable outcomes that are equitable operationally and financially (i.e., the department does not significantly subsidize the partnership)
- Facilities are designed to produce revenue when they are built or renovated
- The department has a business development office to help bring in new earned income through foundations, conservancies, friends groups, sponsorships, leases, partnerships, etc.
- The department uses a true cost of service model for revenue producing programs/facilities to determine if cost recovery rates are fair for the value received, and therefore services are priced based upon market rates and value received
- Programs/facilities are outsourced when the department does not provide them efficiently based on total costs of services, particularly when the private sector or a partner can provide it 20% more efficiently with the same productivity.
- The department challenges productivity and efficiency in their organization using measurable outcomes.

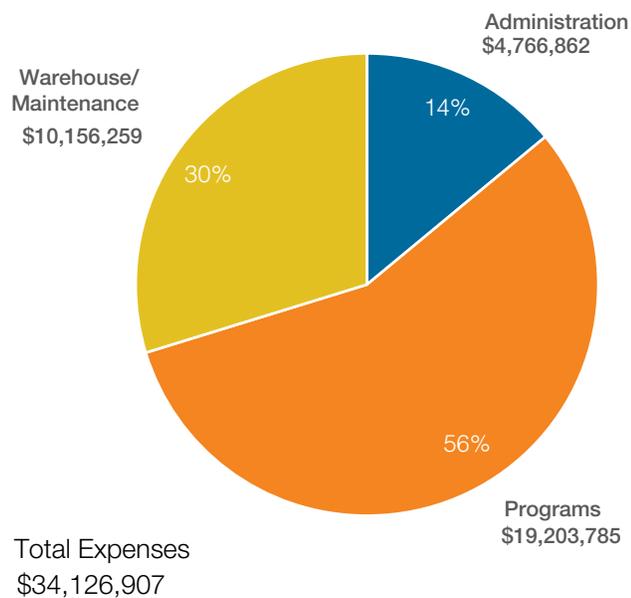
### Key Takeaways

- The commission should adopt policies to support a strategy of investing in programs and services that recover their costs and supplement funding for core services, giving permission to the staff to generate new revenue where appropriate.
- Increased priority should be given to the development or improvement of revenue-generating facilities in the capital improvement program.
- Every revenue-generating program or facility should have a business plan to identify the full cost of providing the service/facility, establish productivity goals, create marketing strategies, and list performance evaluation criteria.
- The recommended practice for Columbus based upon comparable communities is to generate at least 20% of their overall income from non-tax sources, or at least \$15 of earned revenue per capita. (Columbus is currently at 14.8% and \$6.29, respectively.)

**Figure 6.1 Revenues by Source**



**Figure 6.2 Expenses by Type**



**Table 6.6 National Median Cost Recovery Rates**

Program	Cost Recovery	Program	Cost Recovery
Adult Programs (Overall)	100%	Youth Sports (Overall)	76-99%
Swimming lessons	100%	Youth softball	76-99%
Tennis classes	100%	Youth baseball	76-99%
Arts and crafts classes	100%	Youth volleyball	76-99%
Trips	100%	Youth football	76-99%
Dance classes	100%	Youth lacrosse	76-99%
Aerobics/fitness classes	100%	Youth basketball	76-99%
Martial arts lessons	100%	Youth soccer	76-99%
Water aerobics classes	76-99%	Youth Camps (Overall)	76-99%
Adult Sports (Overall)	76-99%	Youth day camps	76-99%
Adult men's softball	76-99%	Evening camps	76-99%
Adult women's softball	76-99%	Performing arts camps	76-99%
Coed softball	76-99%	Sports camps	100%
Adult soccer	76-99%	Arts and crafts camps	76-99%
Men's basketball	100%	Programs for People with Disabilities (Overall)	76-99%
Women's basketball	76-99%	Preschool programs	76-99%
Coed basketball	100%	Tennis classes	76-99%
3 on 3 basketball	100%	Arts and crafts classes	76-99%
Adult lacrosse	100%	Performing arts classes	76-99%
Adult volleyball	100%	Fitness classes	76-99%
Adult baseball	76-99%	Basketball leagues	76-99%
Youth Programs (Overall)	76-99%	Dance classes	76-99%
Preschool programs	76-99%	Golf classes	76-99%
Youth tennis classes	100%	Swimming lessons	51-75%
Arts and crafts classes	76-99%	After school programs	76-99%
Performing arts classes	100%	Martial arts classes	76-99%
Fitness classes	76-99%	Baseball/softball leagues	76-99%
Golf classes	100%	Social clubs	51-75%
Swimming lessons	76-99%		
After school programs	76-99%		
Martial arts classes	76-99%		

**Notes:**

- Based upon Leisure Vision 2012 National Benchmarking Survey
- Cannot calculate averages, because cost recovery rates were not collected from participating agencies – only cost recovery ranges. The median range can be deduced, however.
- For this report and analysis, cost recovery = direct costs recovered through program fees.

# ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

Strategies and tactics alone will not be enough to guide the needed improvements and investments for the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department. To successfully accomplish the recommendations in this Master Plan, the organizational design of the Columbus Recreation and Parks Department needs to be reviewed and updated to support greater operational efficiency and functionality.

Based on comments from staff and stakeholders there is lack of awareness of what each division does for and in the system which creates problems in who does what, how and why. An organizational structure is needed that promotes the ability of Department divisions to cooperate and communicate more to maximize effectiveness. It will be critical to shift away from a reactive culture and towards a proactive one that rewards initiative and innovation in achieving higher standards within the limitations of available resources. Stakeholders and staff also recognized the need to develop and train future leaders throughout the organization and empower this next generation to engage in more strategic planning and partnership building to serve a wider population in a more effective way over the long term. To achieve these goals and successfully implement the Master Plan, the Department must actively pursue a more functional alignment between staffing structures and organizational objectives.

If the department chooses to become more functionally aligned the planning team suggests the following process be followed through a workshop format that:

- Introduces what good organizational design looks like and the benefits of doing so. This can be accomplished through a workshop with a training session on “Creating and Achieving Financial Sustainability and Functionality through Organizational Design.”
- Provides the staff with the core service criteria that has been developed working with City and County Managers across the United States. Make a presentation on what constitutes a core service and how it applies to financial and functionality sustainability. Breaking down core services into various classifications helps staff to manage each type of service from a specific financial and functional perspective.
- Breaks the staff into teams to review all services provided in the department and apply the criteria to those services based on the three levels of core classifications.
- Allows staff to report out to each other on what their team developed for each type of service provided within the department and then ask them to develop the process further down into all other areas of the department.
- Gets staff to write individual statements for each division

within the department that outlined for whom is the service they provide for, what purpose, what benefit, what cost, and to achieve what outcome?

- Develops the functional organizational chart based on aligning the organization to achieve the greatest level of efficiency that draws on each core service, how it is classified, is it a lead function or a support function and where the service falls in the organization to achieve the greatest success and efficiency.

From this work the department staff can populate the Functional Organizational Chart with full-time, part-time and seasonal staffing levels. This populating of staffing effort should be aligning with the organizational operational financing philosophy for each functional division through effective financial principles.

Functions should be outlined as core essential, important, and value added, as well as a lead or support element attached to each function. This will allow the staff in each function to understand the jobs they are to fulfill and that they focus on the organization first, division second and the person third. The department will need to populate the Functional Organizational chart with people based on set standards and outcomes each division is to support and achieve for the future.

This process may take a couple of years to complete based on people retiring and backfilling their jobs with the right people in the right positions to achieve the right outcomes. It is very important to update job descriptions of existing department heads in each of the core functional groups. The department must find outcome based managers who understand lead and support functions and can manage their respective divisions to a set of outcomes to move the department forward to achieve the overall goals desired. The planning team recommends that the department set up each functional group at one time and then populate that division entirely before starting on the next division which is why it will take some time to complete. The following are the planning team’s comments on each recommended Functional Division within Columbus Recreation and Parks and should be viewed as an opportunity. Each new Functional Division is outlined below and a proposed organizational chart on the following pages demonstrates how this new structure allows all divisions to work together.

### Administration Division

Administration’s functional division’s goal is to provide support functions to the Department as it applies to HR/ Payroll, Information Technology, Warehouse Management, Accounting Services, Contracts, and Legal Services. Their job is to make systems work and create the least bureaucracy as possible. The majority of the functions in this

division are Core Essential Services or Important Services. The key component of this Functional Division is to develop processes that involve developing flow charts for each system it manages to draw out bureaucracy and simplify the processes to move services as quickly as possible to the people who work in the other functional divisions. This division needs to teach staff how to be efficient, help create business plans and to focus on measureable outcomes that demonstrate efficiency and financial sustainability.

Cost of service development should be one of the primary elements this division and the staff should focus on in helping staff understand cost of service at the unit cost level. The lead functions within this functional division is usually responsible for includes Training and Strategic Development, Intra-Government Affairs, Accounts Payable, Procurement, Contracts, Budget Development, Business Planning, and Performance Management. All of the functions that fall under this division usually involves like kind of thinking and processing and is the reason these functions fall under this Functional Division called Administration Services.

### **Planning and Development Division**

All functions in this division are usually considered lead functions in driving core essential and important services forward. The functions that should fall under this functional division include: Planning and Research, Capital Programs, Design and Construction Management, Project Management, Strategic Planning, Park Property Management and Planning, Permitting Management, Construction Services, GIS and Community Image.

### **Marketing and Communication**

This Functional Division is usually an entirely lead function Division. For the Department to be successful these divisional functions must provide marketing and communication services that are cost effective, inspirational and targeted so that major attractions and core programs can be as successful as possible. The majority of the functions that are served by this Functional Division are important and Value Added and require very entrepreneurial thinking on all levels. The functions served under this division could include Agency/System Marketing and Branding, Public Information, Graphics, Customer Research, Customer Surveying, Intra-Communications, Social Networking, Publications, Advocacy Development, Visitor Services, Sales Office for Golf, Hospitality and Recreation Services, Reservations and Permitting and Online Registration.

### **Park Operations and Management**

This Functional Division is usually responsible for all maintenance of Parks and Natural Areas, Tree and Landscape Management, Aesthetics and Asset Management and Facility Management. This functional division can maximize the resources and talents of staff in one Functional Division. The majority of the functions are core essential functions with the exception of Tree and Landscape Management. As well as most of the functions are support functions with the exception of Natural Areas and Facility Management which are lead functions.

### **Business Operations and Attractions**

This Division would be a new division for the Department as it combines all attractions the Department operates and its primary focus is that all these functions need to operate in a businesslike manner. This requires the staff to think and operate like a private business using business principles and thinking into the daily operations of staffing, pricing of services, use of earned income opportunities to maximize their operational revenue funds to offset tax dollars. The value of having these operations in one division is that staff can become inter-changeable and the philosophy will be similar in each functional attraction. Business Plans will need to be created for each attraction, with set operating pro-forma's, cost recovery goals, pricing strategies and targeted measurable outcomes. The Administrative and Support Division would need to work with this Functional Division to help them create business plans and performance measures. All functions are lead functions in the Division which requires an aggressive approach to achieve the financial sustainability desired.

### **Development, Fundraising and Advocacy**

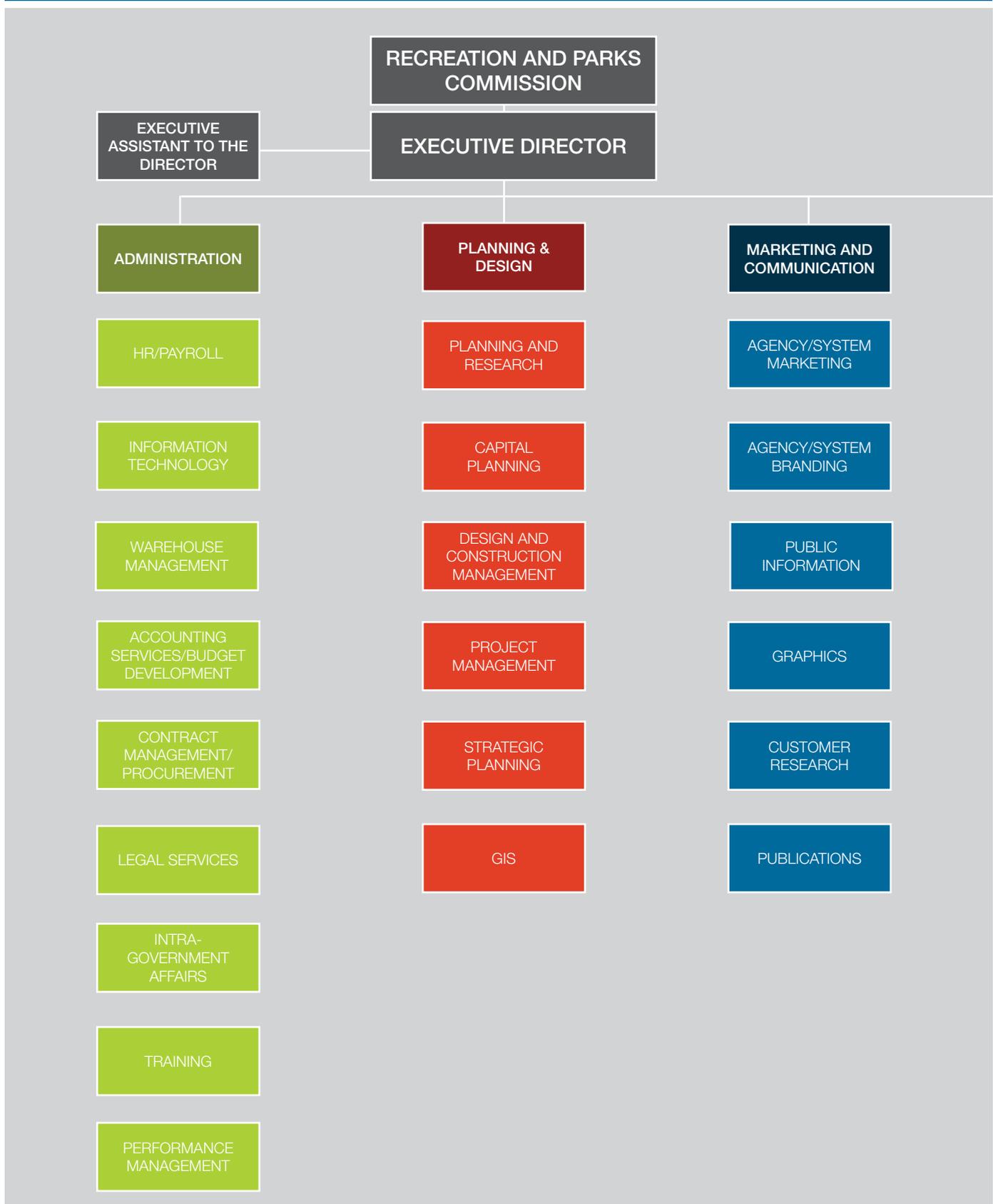
This Functional Division seeks outside funding for the Department in the way of a park foundation, fundraising, grants, partnership development, volunteer coordination and sponsorship development. All functions are lead functions and are a combination of core essential, important and value added services. This division needs to operate in an aggressive self-supportive manner. The majority of this functional division is policy driven with clear financial principles to guide its development and management.

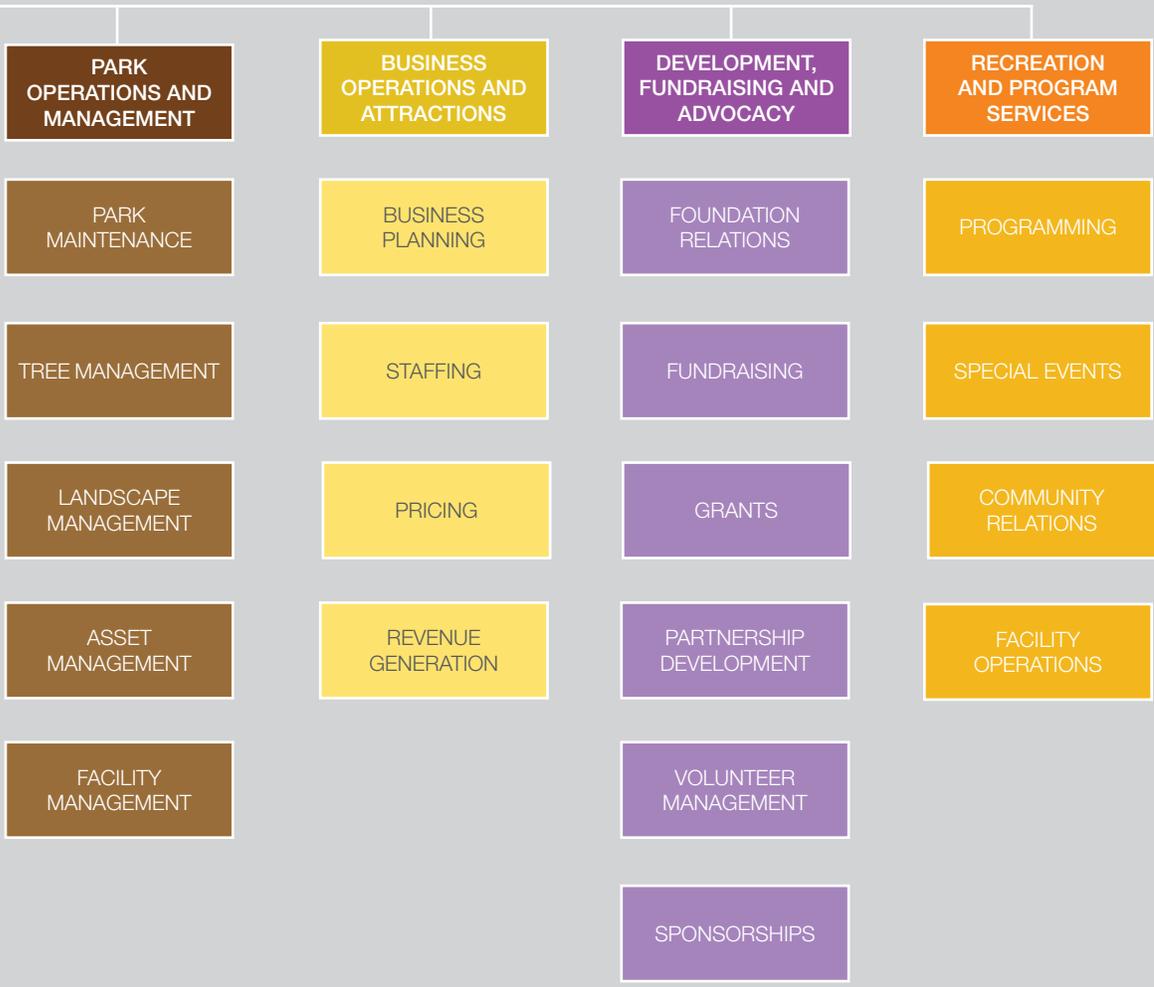
### **Recreation and Program Services**

This functional division should operate as one. One has to understand that programs drive energy into a Department and into facilities. It creates a life time customer and it will provide ongoing new customers if developed correctly. The majority of this Functional Division involves Lead Functions that are "important services" that will require a combination of tax and user fees to support its services.

# ORGANIZATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

Figure 6.3 Proposed Organizational Chart





# POTENTIAL 10 YEAR OUTCOMES

## POTENTIAL 10 YEAR OUTCOMES

The 2014 Master Plan sets the stage for an improved Recreation and Parks Department that better serves residents, strengthens neighborhoods and creates economic value. Parks play a vital role in the social, physical, environmental and economic success of the City of Columbus. Implementing the strategies laid out in this Master Plan will require diligent work by CRPD leadership to plan for improvements and investment, to restructure departmental organization and to create a more sustainable financial model. Successful implementation will also require collaborating with other City departments and developing stronger relationships with public and private partners to deliver better programs, services and facilities to the community.

Striving to meet the strategies and recommendations discussed in this Master Plan could yield impressive results, as outlined at right. In addition to serving current and future residents, new and updated parks city-wide will help solidify neighborhoods and lead to continued investment. The department can also play a leadership role in improving the environmental sustainability of Columbus by continuing to protect natural areas and expanding efforts to increase the city's tree canopy. Continued expansion of the Multi-Use Trail system throughout the city will increase access and connections between neighborhoods and parks and facilities. Updating and strategically adding Community Centers will create new opportunities for residents and enable access to programs and services that promote socially connected and active neighborhoods. Through better maintenance, stronger partnerships and improved marketing and communications, programs and services will be more effective and popular. Finally, a more balanced financial approach and an organizational restructuring will create a more effective and efficient department.

CRPD should use the potential outcomes at right, the strategies and tactics in this section, and the Level of Service analysis (Page 90) as the benchmark for the next 10-plus years of implementation. These results should be tracked over time and goals should be adjusted and refined as accomplishments are made. This Master Plan is the framework for the success of both the department and the City of Columbus. Successfully implemented, the City of Columbus will not only have world-class parks and facilities city-wide, but also a happier, healthier and more sustainable community.

### Potential 10 Year Outcomes

The following are potential 10 year outcomes for the Master Plan:

#### Parks and Facilities

**New parks and facilities** to address level of service issues and growth areas of the City

**50** Updated Neighborhood Parks

**10** Updated Community Parks

**Increased diversity** in revenue through partnerships, earned income and other funding sources

**Increased maintenance standards**, leading to safer, more user-friendly, and popular parks and facilities

**Increased tree canopy** city-wide, led by CRPD efforts to plant more trees and create an integrated approach to management and maintenance

**83 more miles of Multi-Use Trails** city-wide and connector trails to neighborhoods, parks and facilities

#### Community Centers and Programming

**Partnerships with public and private entities** to deliver better programs, services and facilities to Columbus residents

**New facilities** to address level of service issues and growth areas of the City

**10** Updated Community Centers

**Secure, well-maintained Community Centers** that improve the user experience and popularity of facilities

**More effective and efficient program delivery** that is responsive to the needs and desires of the community

**A more informed community** that is aware of programs and services and has higher rates of participation

#### Financial and Organizational

**A more business-oriented approach** to earned revenue, creating a more balanced and sustainable financial model for the department

**An organizational restructuring** that creates a more efficient and effective department that both retains and attracts talent

The 2014 Master Plan sets the stage for an improved Recreation and Parks Department that better **serves residents, strengthens neighborhoods** and **creates economic value.**



