

SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives



SECTION VII: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The City of Ann Arbor parks, recreation and open space system exists to serve the needs and desires of the residents of the city and the Ann Arbor community by providing a full spectrum of recreational opportunities, preserving the natural environment, and enhancing the visual quality of neighborhoods and the city as a whole. The PROS survey showed that nearly 90 percent of respondents felt that Ann Arbor's parks, recreation and open space system is extremely important to their quality of life. A primary goal of the city is to maintain or improve upon this percentage, as it reflects how well the parks mission statement is being met.

CORE VALUES & MISSION STATEMENT

In 2012, parks and recreation staff developed a set of core values reflecting the desire to provide high quality, inclusive, and enjoyable recreational experiences for the entire community. These values should inform operations and focus staff's energy on areas of importance while striving to achieve the parks mission statement: Together we enrich life by cultivating exceptional experiences.

- a. **Stewardship:** Responsibly manage and care for natural, cultural, and physical resources for current and future generations.
- b. **Exceptional Customer Service:** Interact with all people in a professional, friendly, and respectful manner, while striving to exceed expectations.
- c. **Innovative Improvements:** Foster an environment that supports and encourages innovation and dynamic creative solutions.
- d. **Integrity:** Build trust and maintain accountability by doing the right thing.
- e. **Community:** Work collaboratively to include and engage the full diversity of our community.
- f. **Excellent Parks and Spaces:** Provide safe environments, beautiful spaces, and a welcoming atmosphere.
- g. **Fun:** Have fun!

SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives for the Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation system reflect the values of staff and the public, and provide direction for priorities to meet the expectations of the Ann Arbor community. The goals and objectives were developed from a number of sources, including the parks and recreation mission statement and core values, the Sustainability Framework Plan, the city's organizational strategic plan, the capital improvement plan rating criteria, the PROS survey, and public comment from various meetings, surveys, task forces, and focus groups.

GOAL 1: Provide Exceptional User Experience

Rationale: The core values developed by staff, the city's strategic plan, and the capital improvements plan criteria all contain as a goal to strive to provide the highest quality customer experience and exceed expectations for the greatest number of users.

Objectives

- a. Continuously assess and strive to improve the cleanliness and quality of parks and facility amenities.
- b. Support and encourage innovative and creative solutions that beautify and enhance the park system.
- c. Preserve the unique historic and cultural amenities within the park system by allocating sufficient resources for maintenance and restoration.
- d. Strive to improve the on-line registration system and web-based interactions.
- e. Annually evaluate and implement customer service and other training opportunities for staff to ensure that employees provide exceptional customer service.

GOAL 2: Ensure that the Park System is Comprehensive, Inclusive, and Engaging.

Rationale: Providing opportunities for all and engaging the full diversity of the community is a core value developed by staff, and a goal of the Sustainability Framework Plan and of the city's organizational strategic plan.

Objectives

- a. Assure that recreational opportunities are balanced throughout the park system, including passive and active, winter and summer, daytime and evening, structured and non-structured, natural areas, and developed parks.
- b. Renovate and maintain parks and facilities so that they comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, while striving for Universal Accessibility.
- c. Provide diverse cultural, recreational, and educational programming for all, regardless of age, socio-economic status, and physical ability by providing affordable and accessible programs.
- d. Increase diversity of employees in the hiring process, especially for entry-level positions, by reaching out to a variety of populations, attending job fairs, and working with the community centers.
- e. Utilize surveys, social media, public meetings, and other input forums to identify potential areas for improvement in how services are provided, diversity of program and amenity offerings, and maintenance of parks and facilities.

SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

- f. Foster development of volunteer opportunities to enhance appreciation of and connection to natural, historic, and cultural resources as well as to assist with park beautification, maintenance, and programs.

GOAL 3: Foster Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

Rationale: The Sustainability Framework Plan, the park staff core values, and the capital improvements plan all emphasize the importance of being environmental stewards and encouraging sustainable practices.

Objectives

- a. Conduct energy audits and implement energy-efficient designs for lighting, heating, and cooling when constructing new park structures or renovating existing ones.
- b. Use best practices for storm water management, including minimizing impervious surfacing, providing rain gardens, bioswales, filtration, and porous pavement where practical and fiscally responsible when renovating existing parks or building new structures or amenities.
- c. Promote the provision of local food by supporting the Ann Arbor Farmers Market, providing space for community gardens and edible plants, and offering economic incentives for lower income individuals to purchase produce at the market.
- d. Encourage recycling at parks and facilities by providing recycling containers and minimizing use of disposable products.
- e. Conduct plant and animal inventories, provide ecological monitoring, and maintain natural areas to increase biodiversity and restore damaged ecosystems.
- f. Continue the construction of non-motorized and pedestrian path systems to encourage use for commuting and exercise. Prioritize development of linear parks and greenways and links between parks throughout the city.

GOAL 4: Provide a Safe Park System

Rationale: Protecting the health and safety of park users is a capital improvements plan criteria and a goal of the city's strategic plan.

Objectives

- a. Promptly address safety concerns, eliminate hazards, and address code compliance issues.
- b. Perform preventative maintenance and renovations to maintain safe infrastructure at all parks.
- c. Regularly inspect and maintain playgrounds to ensure they meet current safety guidelines.
- d. Create a safety checklist for each facility, and regularly inspect all facilities for code compliance and safety regulations.
- e. Create a tool to evaluate, prioritize, and repair trails, paved paths, and game courts to provide a safe walking/riding/playing surface.
- f. Provide police/staff presence in non-staffed parks to provide a welcoming and safe environment, and encourage the Ann Arbor Police Department Community Liaison Team to regularly attend staff meetings, special events, and open hours at facilities.
- g. Train staff to increase safety and identify hazards, including certification for CPR and first aid, to identify issues with physical amenities such as playground safety inspections, and driving responsibly.

SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

GOAL 5: Ensure Financial Health and Stability

Rationale: Assuring a firm financial basis for the park, recreation, and open space system is a goal of the city strategic plan and a criterion of the capital improvements plan.

Objectives

- a. Achieve savings by researching innovative ways to reduce energy and increase maintenance efficiencies to maintain and operate park facilities, grounds, and amenities.
- b. Pursue opportunities such as grants and partnerships to leverage funding for capital improvements, land acquisition, programming, and scholarships.
- c. Create innovative programming opportunities and new recreation experiences that generate additional revenue.
- d. Pursue joint purchasing opportunities to create efficiencies and provide savings.
- e. Evaluate fees for programs and activities to ensure that Ann Arbor's programs are in line with regional/national trends, are competitive, and fair.
- f. Develop and implement preventative maintenance schedules for facilities, park amenities, and equipment to increase the lifespan of park assets, and decrease the frequency of major renovations.