3

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

KEY CONCEPTS

1. **The Department Manages A Large And Diverse System** - Responsibilities that extend well beyond traditional park maintenance, placing significant demands on staff and resources.

2. **Staffing Levels Have Not Kept Pace With The System's Growth And Scope** - Benchmarking against peer agencies indicates the department is understaffed relative to what it manages, pointing to a clear need for investment in personnel.

3. **The Amenity Inventory Is Unbalanced** - Some facility types exceed what the city's population can reasonably support, while other high-demand amenities are absent entirely, suggesting a need to strategically reassess what is built and maintained.

4. **Aging Infrastructure And Outdated Systems Present A Growing Challenge** - From facilities nearing end-of-life to legacy technology, the department needs modernized tools and a proactive capital replacement strategy to stay ahead of deferred maintenance.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The operations and maintenance section of the master plan will focus on background information, trends in the industry, staffing, National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) benchmark data, financials and recommendations.

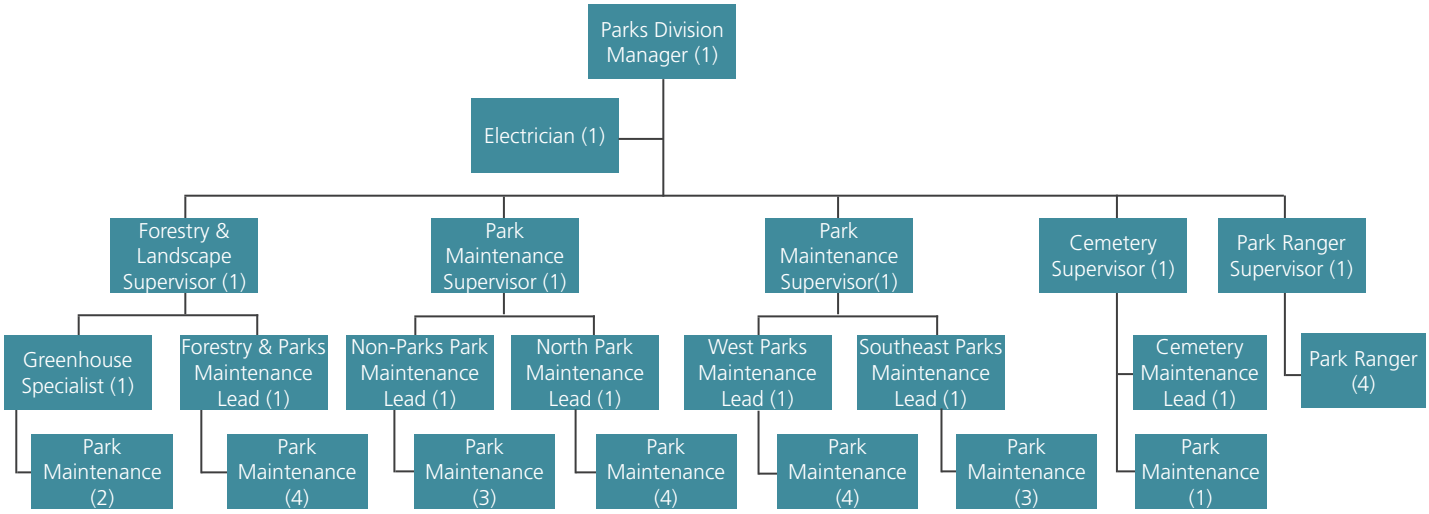
In terms of functional areas, this will cover parks, cemetery, rangers, and administration.

BACKGROUND

The City of Rapid City currently maintains the following:

- 32 Total Parks
- 1,422 Acres of Parkland[1]
  - *635 Acres of Parkland (outside the flood plain that is developable)*
  - *787 Acres of Parkland (inside the flood plain and flood way that presents challenges when considering development)*
- 42 Miles of Trails
- 2 Cemeteries (70 acres)

The 2026 Organizational Chart for Parks Maintenance, Cemeteries and Rangers:

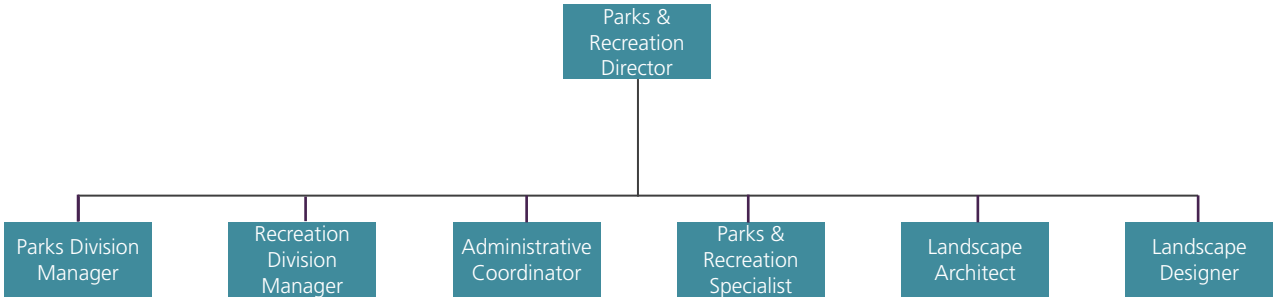


[1] General Note Regarding All References to Parkland Acreage: In addition, there are more than 100 acres of land along roadways, within stormwater management areas, and next to City facilities, etc. that are not classified as parks but are maintained by the Department.

It is important to note that prior to 2025 there were two additional positions in the organizational structure: Equipment Maintenance Chief and Equipment Maintenance Mechanic II. The City has implemented a new system whereby all equipment and vehicle maintenance is being centralized.

Like with many communities, there are challenges with hiring part-time and full-time seasonal staff. Those challenges include the recruiting, hiring, and training of prospective employees. The communities that are not experiencing some of these challenges have a defined method for recruiting and advertising positions. They have also found a way to streamline and expedite the hiring and onboarding process.

The 2026 Organizational Chart for Parks & Recreation Administration:



STAFF ENGAGEMENT & FEEDBACK:

Primary Responsibilities of the Operations & Maintenance Staff Include:

- Mowing – cemeteries and other manicured areas within the parks are a focus, but there are also non-irrigated areas that are only mowed a few times a year
  - *The Department has assumed mowing responsibilities at other City properties that had been maintained under a third-party contract until 2025: water division facilities, two police precincts, City Hall, RTS station, library*
- Burials – cemetery specific
- Trash Removal (litter pick up)
- Snow Removal – parking lots for the parks, facilities, sidewalks, and bike paths
  - *The Department has assumed snow plowing responsibilities at other City properties that had been maintained under a third-party contract until 2025: downtown parking garage, sidewalks around RTS station, library, City Hall*
- Playground Inspection & Maintenance
- Shelters & Restrooms – cleaning and regular maintenance
- Structural Maintenance within the Parks
- Outdoor Court – inspection and maintenance
- Maintain landscaped areas/garden beds
  - *Numerous Garden Beds within the Parks*
  - *Street Medians and some Public Right-of-Ways*
  - *Downtown Corners*
  - *Interstate Exits (Gore Areas)*
  - *Outside of other City facilities*
    - » *Grow and plant 21,000 annual and perennial flowers per year at the greenhouse*
- Forestry Crew
  - *Maintains approximately 29,000 trees*
  - *9,000 trees within the parks, excluding many of the trees along the banks of Rapid Creek and Lime Creek (riparian zone)*
  - *11,100 street trees – mainly hazard mitigation*
  - *9,000-10,000 additional trees in Skyline Wilderness Area and riparian zones – this figure is a best guess as these more densely covered areas have not been counted in an inventory as the park and street trees have.*
    - » *Plants approximately 200 new trees per year*
  - *Performs hazard tree identification, removals, pruning, etc.*

- Irrigation Maintenance
  - *Spring start up, repairs, modifications for projects, utility locates for projects, irrigation scheduling, winterization*
  - *The Department has assumed irrigation maintenance responsibilities at other City properties that had been maintained under a third-party contract or other department until 2025.*
- Assistance at Leased Facilities
- Garbage Collection at Parks.
  - *Every two days, a worker makes 165-168 stops with the garbage truck to empty 95-gallon trash toters.*
  - *Smaller trash cans located inside of parks are emptied differently, typically by the maintenance workers assigned to that park/district. They take those garbage bags to a roll-off dumpster back at the Parks Shop.*
- Two additional full-time employees (FTEs) came with these additions in 2025. In response to the additional duties, Parks also added another maintenance supervisor plus one lead and two maintenance workers (4 FTE total in 2026) to help cover these areas.
- Park Rangers[2]
  - *Rapid City's Park Ranger Program was developed to ensure the safety of park facilities, visitors, and personnel. The program consists of four full-time rangers and one supervisor who perform various duties to allow park users to safely enjoy Rapid City's green spaces. Rangers protect natural resources, support a safe and welcoming environment, and assist in the delivery of public safety services as needed.*

Maintenance Facilities:

- There is one main campus site for parks, the "Parks Yard."
  - *Mechanic Shop*
  - *Parks Maintenance Shop*
  - *Greenhouse*
  - *Offices*
- The Parks Department does have some satellite areas where they keep equipment, but for the most part they trailer equipment from location to location.
- Cemetery is separate in that they have their own location, and they have their own equipment.
- Leaseholders are responsible for facility maintenance including mowing and field prep. Parks staff handles irrigation system tasks like spring start up, winterization, and repairs.

Technology:

- At one time they had a program called Manager Plus (now called Eptura Asset) which was a fleet management program with modules for work orders. Fleet management tracking and maintenance for Parks and Recreation is now housed under the Public Works Department.
- Public Works currently has a license for Cityworks, and Parks is actively working towards implementing the software for maintenance tracking as well.
  - *Maintenance Technology – staff acknowledge that they are in need of something to help them manage the system more efficiently.*
- CentralSquare– a program that Cemeteries uses.
- Tree Plotter Program – currently used by Parks and allows them to track quantity, species, location, and condition of trees in the urban forest.
- Greenhouse – has a controller that uses current temperature and humidity inside the greenhouse to trigger automated adjustments to shading, cooling, and airflow. Interior conditions can be remotely monitored and adjusted but the system does not have remote watering capabilities.
- Some of the parks have security cameras.
- Irrigating – moving towards a Rain Bird web-based platform.
  - *Biggest challenge with irrigation is that they have close to 100 different systems, most of which are outdated.*
- Parks works with the GIS department for field maps, tree inventory, and snowplow routes.

[2] Description from Rapid City's Park Ranger Program Recap presentation.

Internal Customer Service:

- Parks & Recreation has only been a department for 23 years, prior to which Parks and Recreation were divisions of Public Works.
  - *The coordination between Parks and Public Works has improved over time. The divisions of Public Works that Parks interface with most often are the Water, Stormwater, and Engineering Divisions and Streets*
- Information Technology – relationship is described as good. They are responsible for purchasing computers and associated software as well as directing improvements to the City's network and security camera systems.
- GIS – strong working relationship.
- Human Resources – HR and Parks and Recreation supervisors work together to post, vet, interview and hire full-time and seasonal employees.
- Attorney's Office – meet with once a month.
- Police – have a good working relationship with the Police Department and the paramedics.
- Parks and Recreation Administrative Staff – handles a lot of the liaison work between their department and others within the City.
-

Conditions that Strain Department Resources:

- A significant number of facilities (i.e. restrooms, shelters, playgrounds, bridges) are aging. Since many are nearing the end of their life cycles simultaneously, this poses a challenge in terms of identifying funding for replacement, prioritization, and level of maintenance to provide in the meantime.
- New park development is a concern from a perspective of location and ensuring that operations and amenities are funded appropriately.
- The city continues to grow to the east which is increasing travel time to and from the existing shop location.
- Staff feels that resources are inadequate to maintain and grow the park system. There are a variety of miscellaneous tasks that have not been assigned to a particular department, and these tend to get passed on to Parks.
- Forestry and landscape crews acknowledged that their priority tends to be on day-to-day maintenance of the trees and landscape beds, but more time-intensive projects like large tree trimming/removal and landscape bed replanting can be a challenge to address.
- Landscape – some landscaping beds are overgrown or have reached the end of their lives, which then requires significant investment to replace or improve.

NATIONAL RECREATION & PARK ASSOCIATION (NRPA) COMPARISON DATA POINTS

When developing these comparisons the project team used the best data available at the time of the study. These comparison are being made with NRPA member agencies that are in the 50,000-99,999 population range.

Residents Per Park	50,000 - 99,999
Median	2,299
Lower Quartile	1,441
Upper Quartile	3,646
Rapid City	2,475

With a 2025 projected population of 86,404 and a total of 32 parks there are 2,475 residents for each park. This benchmark places the City above the median and below the upper quartile.

Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents:

Acres Outside Flood Plain (635)	50,000 - 99,999
Median	9.2
Lower Quartile	3.9
Upper Quartile	16.1
Rapid City	8.0

Combined Acres (1,422)	50,000 - 99,999
Median	9.2
Lower Quartile	3.9
Upper Quartile	16.1
Rapid City	18.0

If one only considers acreage outside of the flood plain and floodway, the City is almost equal to the median acres of parkland per 1,000 residents for agencies with a 50,000-99,999 population. However, if all acreage is used in the calculation, the City is above the upper quartile for acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. As part of the master planning process, the City needs to determine how the acreage inside the flood plain and floodway will be used and managed. Currently the expectations for care is the same for all acres.

Miles of Trails	50,000 - 99,999
Median	16.0
Lower Quartile	8.0
Upper Quartile	35.0
Rapid City	42.0

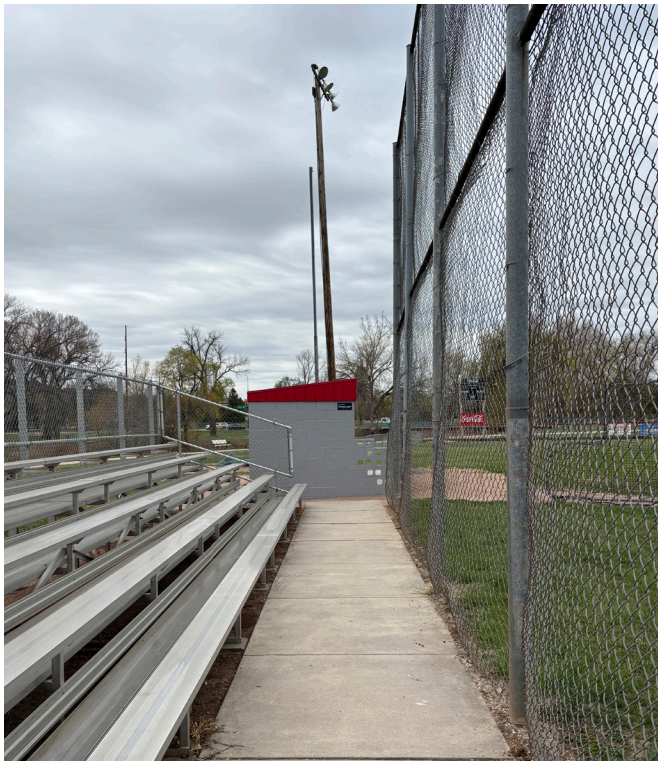
With 42.0 miles of trails, the City is above the upper quartile in miles of trails for agencies with a 50,000-99,999 population. An amenity like trails can have a regional draw, so it is reasonable to assume that the population being served by 42.0 miles of trails is larger than that of the City.

Staffing (Parks & Rec FTE)	50,000 - 99,999
Median	74.4
Lower Quartile	45.1
Upper Quartile	128.1
Rapid City	74.0

It is important when examining these figures to note that the 61.0 FTE is both parks and recreation. When combining Parks and Cemeteries there are 33 FTE, 3 of which are dedicated to cemeteries. It is the opinion of the project team that the amenities that Parks is responsible for well exceed the staffing levels that they have in place. The project team would recommend that the City look to expand the number of FTEs to be more in line with the median number of 74.4

Staffing per 10,000 Residents	50,000 - 99,999
Median	10.0
Lower Quartile	6.6
Upper Quartile	16.4
Rapid City	7.7

Evaluating Parks & Recreation staffing from this perspective is likely a better lens as it considers both sides of the operation. In this instance, the City is slightly above the lower quartile, but well below the median for FTE. For Parks & Recreation to continue to maintain the acres, facilities, and amenities they are currently responsible for, this likely points to the need for additional staffing.



The following charts illustrate the number of amenities the City could support based on NRPA data collection. It is important to note that this information is a guide and may point to where the department may have overbuilt in some areas, and may be underdeveloped in others.

Outdoor Amenities	% of Agencies that Provide	50,000 - 99,999 Population per Amenity	# of Amenities Rapid City Could Support	Amenities in Current Inventory
Playgrounds	94.0%	3,643	21.7	29.0[3]
Basketball Courts - Standalone	85.0%	8,447	9.4	10.0
Diamond fields	80.0%	4,560	17.4	45.0
Rectangular fields	77.0%	4,659	17.0	51.0
Tennis Courts - Standalone	74.0%	5,818	13.6	26.0
Dog Park	70.0%	55,250	1.4	0.0[4]
Community Garden Plots	54.0%	56,367	1.4	1.0
Swimming Pools	49.0%	48,064	1.6	4.0[5]
Skate Parks	47.0%	61,384	1.3	1.0
Pickleball Courts - Standalone	45.0%	8,592	9.2	8.0
Volleyball Courts - Standalone	51.0%	29,214	2.7	6.0
Fitness Zones	39.0%	32,500	2.4	1.0
Multiuse Courts	38.0%	25,512	3.1	1.0
Splash Pads	38.0%	51,000	1.6	0.0[6]
Multiuse Racquet Courts	38.0%	13,339	5.9	2.0
Walking/Running Tracks	36.0%	19,700	4.0	1.0
Disc Golf Courses	35.0%	56,150	1.4	3.0
Driving Range Stations	31.0%	7,774	10.2	1.0
18-Hole Golf Courses	31.0%	62,756	1.3	1.0
Synthetic Fields	17.0%	33,799	2.3	1.0
Ice Rinks	17.0%	28,500	2.8	2.0[7]
9-Hole Golf Courses	16.0%	64,937	1.2	1.0
Overlay Fields	15.0%	25,500	3.1	0.0
Waterparks	12.0%	64,304	1.2	0.0
Racquetball/Handball/Squash Courts	9.0%	70,796	1.1	8.0

[3] Does not account for any school district playgrounds.

[4] The City has 6 off-leash dog areas, but they have no dedicated dog parks.

[5] 1 of the outdoor pools is on the same site as the indoor aquatic center.

[6] There is a splash pad downtown, but it is not operated by the City.

[7] There are two areas that can be used as outdoor rinks, but only when weather allows.

Indoor Park & Recreation Facilities	% of Agencies that Provide	50,000 - 99,999 Population per Amenity	# of Amenities Rapid City Could Support	Amenities in Current Inventory
Multiuse Courts	29.0%	24,000	3.3	4.0
Competitive Swimming Pools	23.0%	64,000	1.2	1.0
Basketball Courts - Single Sport	21.0%	25,598	3.1	0.0
Leisure Pools	20.0%	63,418	1.2	1.0
Walking/Running Tracks	18.0%	63,671	1.2	0.0
Pickleball Courts - Single Sport	17.0%	14,818	5.3	0.0
Multiuse Racquet Courts	15.0%	15,015	5.3	0.0
Therapeutic Pools	13.0%	63,610	1.2	1.0[8]
Racquetball/ Handball / Squash Courts	10.0%	40,708	1.9	2.0
Tennis Courts - Single Sport	5.0%	10,428	7.6	0.0

- Multiuse Courts – While the City has funded the development of two community gyms that have a total of four (4) courts, the City shares use of these courts with the school district.
- Competitive Swimming Pools – The City currently has one (1) indoor swimming pool that the project team would classify as a competitive pool.
- Leisure Pools – The City currently has one (1) indoor swimming pool that the project team would classify as a leisure pool.

Indoor Park & Recreation Facilities & Amenities	% of Agencies that Provide	50,000 - 99,999 Population per Amenity	# of Amenities Rapid City Could Supportw	Amenities in Current Inventory
Recreation Centers (including gyms)	63.0%	31,805	2.5	0.0
Community Centers	60.0%	50,284	1.6	0.0
Permanent & Semipermanent Restrooms	52.0%	5,521	14.3	10 perm. 40 semi.
Performance Amphitheaters	43.0%	60,594	1.3	0.0
Senior Centers	41.0%	64,937	1.2	0.0
Nature Centers	35.0%	64,672	1.2	0.0
Aquatic Centers	30.0%	60,770	1.3	1.0
Facilities w/ Restrooms Available free to use to Public not Included Above	27.0%	14,282	5.5	Unknown
Stadiums	19.0%	62,575	1.3	0.0
Indoor Ice Rinks	12.0%	51,896	1.5	1.0
Teen Centers	11.0%	59,694	1.3	0.0
Arenas	9.0%	59,630	1.3	0.0

- Recreation Center & Community Center – The City does not currently have either of these amenities in their inventory. While the City does have community gyms that are attached to schools, they cannot be considered recreation centers or community centers because they do not house other amenities. This is a significant challenge in the expansion of programming opportunities.

[8] The indoor leisure pool or the hot tub could be considered therapeutic in nature.

Responsibilities of Parks & Recreation Agencies	% of Agencies
Park Sites	98.0%
Recreation Programming & Services	93.0%
Indoor Facilities	93.0%
Trails, Greenways and / or Blueways	88.0%
Jurisdiction-Wide Special Events	82.0%
Racquet Sport Activities / Courts / Facilities	80.0%
Special Purpose Parks & Open Spaces	76.0%
Non-Park Sites	70.0%
Outdoor Swim Facilities / Water Parks	67.0%
Tournament / Event-Quality Outdoor Sports Complexes	56.0%
Community Gardens	50.0%
Tourism Attractions	40.0%
Golf Courses	38.0%
Large Performance Outdoor Amphitheaters	35.0%
Indoor Swim Facilities / Water Parks	32.0%
Beaches (all waterbody types)	27.0%
Farmers Markets	22.0%
Campgrounds	22.0%
Tournament / Event-Quality Indoor Sports Complexes	21.0%
Indoor Performing Arts Centers	19.0%
Marinas	13.0%
Professional or College-Type Stadium / Arena / Racetrack	10.0%
Fairgrounds	6.0%

Areas that are highlighted in green are facilities which Rapid City Parks and Recreation is responsible for operating and/or maintaining.

TRENDS: NATIONAL & REGIONAL

General

Public parks and recreation agencies have been tested in the last 10 to 20 years to alter their approach to providing parks and recreation services. This has been based on the following:

Increasing Demands – Ever increasing facility, program, and service demands from the public.

Inclusiveness – The requirement that agencies provide access to facilities, programs, and services to an ever more diverse population. This includes meeting the needs of different ethnic groups, economic status, age, and ability.

Cost Effectiveness – A demand that parks and recreation agencies be more cost effective in their development and operations of services and facilities.

Measurable Outcomes – A strong need to be able to quantify the results and benefits of the programs and facilities that are provided. Establishing well-defined levels of service (LOS) is critical.

As a result of these factors, the following general parks and recreation best practices have been assessed:

- Parks and recreation agencies have a clear vision statement regarding their roles and responsibilities in providing services to their constituents.
- The vision statement is backed up by several pointed goals. These goals are updated on an annual basis.
- Utilizing the vision and goals, a professional and updated master plan is in place to guide future development and operations of parks and recreation facilities and programs.
- There are on-going, long-range planning efforts to position the agency for success in the future.
- There are comprehensive diversity, equity, and inclusion policies in place to guide agency operations and management.
- There is a realization that an agency cannot effectively be all things to all people in the delivery of parks and recreation services and facilities. As a result, specific areas of focus are determined, and certain functions are left to other organizations and entities.
- Careful analysis is being done to determine which services should be provided in-house and which should be contracted to other providers.
- There is strong record keeping that allows for trends and directional analysis. This also results in the development of specific performance measures. For this to be effective there must be full computerization of all management records. This includes program registration, point of sale, rentals, facility scheduling, timecard management, maintenance, etc.
- There are well written and comprehensive policies and procedures in place that cover all aspects of an agency's management and operation. These are updated on a regular basis.
- Virtually every aspect of an agency's operation is evaluated, tracked, and measured on a regular basis

Facility Trends

Developing and managing a variety of recreation facilities is the main focus of public agencies in larger communities. The types of facilities that are now provided by parks and recreation departments have become more diverse, and expensive to acquire, develop and maintain. As a result, establishing a master plan is critical to determining facility development roles, timelines, and priorities.

Recreation/Community Centers – Recreation/Community centers are usually developed on three levels.

Clubhouse/Community Building – smaller buildings that are designed to serve as a community room(s) for individual neighborhoods. The size is usually less than 5,000 sq. ft. and requires less than 3 acres. These amenities are usually located next to a neighborhood pool or park.

Community Center – are larger community buildings with multiple, more passive use, spaces that serve an area of a community. These vary in size and amenities and can range from 5,000 to over 20,000 sq. ft. and require 3-5 acres. This level of center can also be combined with a comprehensive community recreation center or community aquatic center. These centers are usually part of a community park.

Comprehensive Community Recreation Center – this is a large center that contains both active (pool, gym, fitness, etc.) and passive use elements (community rooms) and is designed to serve a substantial geographic area (30,000 population or more). The facility is usually over 40,000 sq. ft. to as much as 80,000 sq. ft. and requires 8 acres or more. These are often developed through partnerships with other organizations or other groups (YMCA, etc.). These centers are normally part of a community or regional park.

Senior Center – A center that has a focus on senior services from recreation to education and social services. These centers can be as small as 10,000 sq. ft. to over 50,000 sq. ft. depending on the amenities that are included. More traditional centers have a strong passive use orientation with a large multi-purpose room and a commercial kitchen that supports a daily lunch program and larger events and programs. There are also usually smaller classrooms, card rooms, game rooms, small libraries and other amenities. More cutting-edge centers have cafés, multi-purpose rooms and active use spaces including fitness areas, gyms and even swimming pools. There is also a movement away from developing standalone senior centers and integrating these into community recreation centers to provide greater opportunities for the more active senior. Most senior centers are also standalone facilities and are not part of a larger community recreation center.

Specialized Facilities

This includes unique facilities such as aquatic centers, nature/interpretative center, amphitheater, tennis centers, and other amenities. The following is a breakdown of basic specialized facilities.

Aquatic Centers – Aquatic centers or swimming pools are usually developed on four levels.

Neighborhood – smaller pools that are designed to serve specific neighborhoods. The bather load is usually less than 500. These amenities are often built next to a neighborhood park.

Community – larger pools that serve a community. These vary in size and amenities (competitive to recreational) and can range from a bather load of 500 to over 1,000. They are developed as part of a community park.

Regional – these are large water parks or competitive pools that are designed to serve a significant geographic area. They usually contain an expansive recreational pool but can also have a strong competitive focus. Bather loads are 1,000 or more. These are often developed through a partnership with other organizations. They would be in a regional park or as a standalone facility.

Splash pad – many communities are either replacing existing neighborhood pools with splash pads or adding them to the inventory of aquatic facilities.

The vast majority of aquatic centers are in the community category and there are an increasing number of splash pads being built.

Performing Arts Center – A performing arts center is a regional indoor facility with a large theater. Seating can vary from 300 to over 1,000. The center can be 30,000 to 70,000 sq. ft. and requires 8 acres or more. This type of center is normally developed by several organizations or large communities. They can be located as part of a larger civic campus, in conjunction with a comprehensive recreation center, or as an amenity in a regional park.

Because of their sheer size and cost, these types of facilities are not built in significant numbers in most communities (or even nationally). Many communities do have smaller PAC's or utilize community center rooms (usually with flat floors) for these types of activities. Some communities that do have a PAC are at times managed and operated by other entities than parks and recreation.

Fieldhouse – Steadily gaining in popularity is an indoor sports facility that features hard court gym space and/or turf-based fields for sports such as soccer, lacrosse, football and even softball and baseball. These buildings support both youth and adult sports leagues, tournaments and camps. They tend to be most popular in colder climates but are also being built in very hot regions of the country. These facilities are either built as standalone amenities or may be included in recreation centers in a regional park.

Tennis/Pickleball Center – An 8-24 lighted court complex on 2-4 acres that has a stadium court, central restroom, concession, and pro-shop area. Many larger communities have a tennis center, and many are also now adding pickleball courts. The growth of pickleball varies by region of the country, but according to the National Sporting Goods Association it has grown (nationally) more than any other activity, by percentage, in the past 10 years.

Amphitheater – An amphitheater can be either a community sized amenity (under 1,000 seats, some permanent and some lawn with a small stage and storage area) or a large regional facility (1,000 to 3,000 seats, some permanent and some lawn with a large, covered stage, restrooms and concessions). An amphitheater requires two to four acres of land with a community facility being in a community park or a regional facility in a regional park.

Nature Center/Interpretive Center – A small indoor and outdoor space (usually under 10,000 sq. ft.) for viewing and observing nature as well as for classroom space and exhibits. A nature center is usually located in conjunction with a preserve or open space area.

Health & Fitness Association (formerly IHRSA) – 2025 U.S. Health & Fitness Consumer Report. Based on annual online study conducted in 2024 by Sports Marketing Surveys USA, in collaboration with the Physical Activity Council. The study included 18,000 interviews aged 6 and older.

- 77 million members at US fitness facilities in 2024
  - *25% of US population*
  - *4.1% increase over 2023*
  - *Membership has increased 20% since 2019*
- Strong growth in all categories of fitness facilities
  - *Studios – 23.1 million members,*
  - *Fitness-only – 22.2 million members*
  - *Multipurpose centers – 15.2 million members*
  - *Other categories include Nonprofit facilities (YMCA), Corporate and Fitness as an amenity (colleges, hospitals, community centers, residential complexes)*
- Total number of users (members & non-members) reached 95.9 million
  - *31% of the US population*
  - *5.2% increase over 2023*
- Average member visited facility 78.5 visits in 2024
  - *81 times in 2023*
  - *78 visits in 2022*
  - *72 visits in 2021*
  - *119 visits in 2019*
  - *May indicate visits or use of outdoor facilities or at home.*

- Average monthly fitness facility dues increased to $69 in 2024 with the median monthly fee rising to $38.
  - *2023 to $65 per month.*
  - *67% of facility members paid less than $50 per month*
  - *Those charging $100 or more per month had a higher % membership growth (7.9%) than overall membership growth*
- Other key trends
  - *Despite growth in budget gyms, affordability continues to be top barrier*
  - *Demographics are evolving with more ethnically diverse members*
  - *While membership has grown, there continues to be considerable amount of inactivity with about three in four Americans failing to meet recommended activity levels*
  - *As noted in member visits, shifts in lifestyle have moved to mix fitness facility visits with digital workouts, outdoor activities and sports.*

Other Recreation Facility Trends

- Many communities are now developing an indoor facility level of service (LOS) standard that is between 1SF to 2SF per person.
- The development of capital replacement budgets for key facility amenities with an established funding source.
- Outsourcing operations and management to other organizations. This is particularly true for specialty facilities.
- Much stronger emphasis on generating revenues to offset the cost of operations.
- Moving away from smaller community buildings and neighborhood pools to more comprehensive facilities that serve a larger population base.
- Comprehensive tracking of operations, utilization, and budget metrics to justify facilities.
- For new facilities, it is common for the following to occur:
  - *The completion of a feasibility study to determine need, site, amenities, capital and operations costs.*
  - *Identification of specific funding sources for capital and operations*
  - *Integration of the public into planning and development.*

Organizational and Management Planning

To become more efficient and effective in the delivery of parks and recreation services, there is a greater emphasis on organizational and management planning.

Organizational Structure

- Organizational structures have become more streamlined with direct lines of responsibility established. There are now fewer mid-management positions.
- While most agencies still include both parks and recreation functions, there continues to be a trend of placing parks functions within public works. This is particularly true for smaller cities.
- A number of cities have preserves, open space and greenway divisions, some of which are separate departments within the organization.
- Facilities and recreation programming that can generate strong revenues are often placed outside the normal organizational structure as enterprise funds.
- Most organizational structures tend to be functionally based, but in larger communities there can also be a geographic structure as well. This can be based on areas or regions of a community where there are multiple facilities or parks that need to be managed or maintained.
- Hiring and retaining both full-time and part-time staff has become much more difficult and has resulted in significant increases in part-time pay rates as well as some increases in full-time salaries.
- There is a stronger focus on full-time staff to reduce the dependence on part-time staff. The level of movement to full-time staffing reflects the levels of service that have been established, any seasonal operations, and the budget requirements of the department.
- There is a formal communications protocol in place. Staff meetings for all segments of the organization are held on a regular basis and the minutes and actions are documented.

- There is greater emphasis on having strong leadership at the administrative level that is supported by an overall team concept. Mid-managers (or supervisors) have the primary responsibility for directly managing line staff and facilities.
- There are conduct standards in place for all staff as well as a strong DEI policy in place.
- There is a formal, annual, staff training program with adequate levels of funding.
- To minimize the reliance on paid staff, establishing a strong volunteer program is often in place. To effectively make use of volunteers, there must be a staff person who is responsible for managing and recruiting volunteers. If the program becomes large enough, then a full-time volunteer coordinator position is often necessary.

Staffing Philosophy

- Agencies have a well-defined staffing philosophy that clearly defines the role and responsibilities for all staff.
- A determination of key positions that need to be full-time and those that are appropriate for part-time status is made to ensure a strong staffing plan.
- Job descriptions for all full-time and part-time staff are in place that accurately describe the job requirements and skills that are necessary for the position.
- There are basic staffing standards for common facilities such as community and recreation centers as well as aquatic centers and other facilities (senior centers, etc.).
- The role of contract positions is growing, especially for program instructors and specialized services.
- Union issues often dictate staffing plans, schedules and management practices.
- Staff is empowered and expected to make important management and supervisory decisions but are also held accountable for the performance of their areas. Supervisory staff have budget responsibilities as well.
- Levels of service are established based on the number of FTEs per thousand of population, acreage maintained, and facilities operated.
- Full-time staff are cross trained to handle most operational or supervisory responsibilities for a variety of program areas and facilities.
- The staffing philosophy is backed up by a comprehensive staff manual that is updated regularly to guide staffing standards and regulations.
- Background checks are completed on all new hires, including volunteers, especially those that have direct contact with youth.
- Agencies have developed succession plans to ensure staffing knowledge is not compromised when they leave employment of retirement.

Performance Evaluation

- Full-time staff have an annual performance review completed that clearly indicates areas of excellence, areas of compliance and where improvements should be made. Detailed and specific annual work plans are developed for each full-time and major part-time staff member, and these are monitored by their direct supervisor on a regular basis. The work plans cover issues such as budget development, financial transactions, programming, marketing, community outreach and staff interaction and communication. It is important to have measurable benchmarks and outputs for each plan. Staff are then held accountable for meeting these goals.
- There is a strong staff training and education program in place to provide opportunities for staff growth and improvement. The staff training program focuses on financial transactions, customer service, program development, budgeting, revenue growth, and maintenance functions, emergency procedures, safety concerns, and facility operations. A specific training program for new hires, including part-time and seasonal staff, is also in place.

Maintenance of Parks and Recreation Facilities

Over the last 10 to 15 years, there have been significant changes in how maintenance of parks and recreation facilities is accomplished. Some of the more significant trends include:

- The responsibility for maintenance and custodial services now varies considerably by agency. As has been noted, many municipalities have moved parks maintenance functions to public works departments and recreation facilities maintenance and custodial services to a separate facilities maintenance department or a division within public works.

  Specialized facility maintenance (athletic fields, aquatic centers, etc.) still often remain the responsibility of parks and recreation departments or even the recreation division.

  On the other hand, functions such as right of way maintenance are now being moved from public works to parks operations.

- The development of a comprehensive maintenance management plan for parks, open space, trails and recreation facilities is now considered essential. This document must not only deal with an overall plan for the parks and recreation agency but also specific plans for each park or facility. This plan should include:
  - *Classification of outdoor parks, preserves, and open space into 6 levels of maintenance standards (see below).*
  - *A listing of specific maintenance tasks that need to be performed, their frequency and the quality level that is expected.*
  - *A schedule of daily or weekly documented inspections of parks, facilities, and equipment.*
  - *A determination of manpower, equipment and operating supplies that are required to complete the tasks.*
  - *Tracking of maintenance tasks, overall performance, and costs by location.*
  - *The establishment of a preventative maintenance plan.*

- The maintenance division develops specific levels of service for each facility that is under their responsibility utilizing the NRPA's maintenance standards (or other LOS standards that may have been developed) that divides outdoor park maintenance into 6 different levels. These include:
  - *Level 1 – High visibility areas that require the highest level of maintenance.*
  - *Level 2 – Is the normal standard and what an individual expects to see on a regular basis.*
  - *Level 3 & 4 – These two levels are just below the norm and include reductions in frequency of maintenance with a focus on safety. These levels are often utilized when there are budget and manpower reductions.*
  - *Level 5 – This level is one step above allowing the land to return to its original state.*
  - *Level 6 – This level allows the land to return to its original natural state or open space that is already in its natural condition.*

  Some agencies that use levels of service standards have reduced the levels from 5-6 to only 3-4 to make maintenance more streamlined and easier to understand.

- When assigning levels of maintenance to a park, it is acceptable to have varying levels within different areas of the same park. Highly developed areas often have a higher level assigned while less developed areas have a lower level.

  For indoor facilities there is usually a similar three-level classification for building maintenance functions. Each existing indoor facility would then be classified in the same manner as parks.

- More and more parks maintenance functions are now being contracted. As a result, agencies are developing specific guidelines to determine which maintenance functions or activities could possibly be considered for contract service. A primary aspect of this plan is a cost/benefit assessment of providing a function in-house vs. contracting for the service. General guidelines often include:
  - *Basic maintenance functions that occur on a regular basis usually are not contracted if they occur in highly visible locations or for facilities where there is a very strong level of public use. However, other basic functions such as trash removal and mowing are often contracted regardless of the location.*
  - *Specialized functions that require special training or equipment, are inherently dangerous, or do not occur on a regular basis could be considered for contract service. This could include functions such as tree trimming, fertilization, and chemical applications.*
  - *Basic maintenance functions that occur in remote or low use areas could be considered for contract.*
  - *Very small parks (under two acres) that require the allocation of a high level of time and resources are often considered for contract.*
  - *Remote locations that take significant travel time to maintain could also be considered for contract.*

- Many parks and recreation agencies are contracting for custodial services for indoor facilities as well as restrooms and other amenities in parks.

- Developing strong contracts that detail specific tasks to be completed, the frequency and expected quality of service is essential. Contracts must have specific performance standards to ensure that

recreation facilities are adequately cleaned. Contract maintenance also must be supervised, managed, and evaluated on a regular basis.

- Parks maintenance (and even facilities maintenance) either have their own maintenance centers or yards or share with public works. For larger communities which cover significant geographic areas, there is often the need to develop smaller satellite maintenance yards to reduce travel time and the trailering of equipment.
- A maintenance cost assignment system is developed that tracks costs by major parks or recreation facilities so that the true costs of maintaining these facilities is known. This system is also valuable in estimating future costs for any new or renovated parks or facilities. Cost assignment is also done by task (mowing, sweeping, fertilization, etc.) to develop costs per function or for determining a cost per acre or mile.
- Agencies are establishing life cycle cost estimates (capital replacement) for major capital assets associated with parks and recreation facilities and equipment. An asset inventory is established for all major equipment as well.
- For each new proposed park or recreation facility, a detailed projection of the cost of maintaining the amenity on an annual basis is completed. This usually includes not only additional manpower requirements but also equipment, operating supplies and necessary contractual services. An on-going system with specific procedures is often in place to accomplish such estimates in a consistent and organized fashion.
- Maintenance supervisors and administrative staff are becoming more actively involved in the design review process for all new planned facilities. The review process often focuses on materials and surfaces/finishes being specified, maintenance equipment required to maintain the amenity, access for maintenance equipment, and brand of materials for continuity.
- Many parks and recreation agencies develop an energy management plan for all buildings and structures, which attempts to not only control energy costs but promotes energy conservation and also attempts to utilize alternative forms of energy. Agencies in the western area of the country are also developing water management plans to reduce water usage in parks and facilities.
- Most agencies have a risk management plan that deals with safety, security, and an emergency action plan. This responsibility is usually in parks or agency administration.
- Agencies have multiple Certified Playground Safety Inspectors (CPSI) on staff. For aquatic centers, in addition to the aquatic staff, at least one maintenance person is a Certified Pool Operator (CPO).
- Maintenance tasks, schedules and costs are managed by a maintenance management software system. This includes work order management and preventative maintenance tracking.

BUDGET ANALYSIS

The following pages provide a budget analysis with a focus on Parks, Administration, Operations, and Maintenance. The Recreation Division Budgets are analyzed in Chapter 4: Programming and Recreation.

Functional Area	2023 (revised)	2024 (revised)	2025 (revised)	2026 Budget
Parks	$4,639,388	$5,111,630	$4,777,496	$5,340,961
Administrative	$976,602	$1,057,830	$883,984	$1,169182
Rangers	-	$356,794	$390,549	$431,760
Cemeteries	$584,204	$631,542	$582,801	$655,551
Totals	$6,200,194	$7,157,796	$6,634,830	$7,597,454

- These functional areas of the budget account for 52.8% of the total 2026 Parks & Recreation budget of $14,392,965.

Based on information from the NRPA the average percentage breakout amongst reporting agencies is as follows:

Functional Area	NRPA Average Percent	Rapid City Percent
Operations & Maintenance	46%	37.1% (Parks)
Programming	31%	47.2% (Recreation)
Administration	16%	8.1% (Admin.)
Other	4%	7.6% (Rangers & Cemeteries)
Capital Development	3%	

- The budget categories used by NRPA are broken out differently than the way Rapid City Parks and Recreation budgets are, so the national average and local percentages cannot be directly compared. Some assumptions must be made to draw conclusions from these comparisons. For example, the national "Operations & Maintenance" category may include those expenses for both Parks and Recreation divisions while Rapid City has parks O&M under the "Parks" budget and recreation O&M under the "Recreation" budget. The national "Programmers" category may only include recreation programming and perhaps program staff wages, while as stated above, Rapid City's "Recreation" budget includes those expenses as well as recreation facility O&M. These figures may point to the idea that the collective areas of Parks, Administration, Rangers, and Cemeteries are not funded at an adequate level, in comparison to their peers.
- Capital Development – the City does not reflect their current capital improvement budget within their operating budget, but they receive approximately $1 million per year. Based on the median number over 5-years, the project team would expect Rapid City to spend approximately $2.8 million annually.

The total Parks and Recreation budget for the City compares to collected NRPA data in the following way:

Annual Operating Budget	50,000-99,999
Median	$8,380,000
Lower Quartile	$5,829,000
Upper Quartile	$14,749,000
Rapid City	$14,392,965

These numbers would indicate that compared to other reporting agencies the City is well above the median but less than the Upper Quartile. Again, this points to a healthy operation for the City, but the inventory of acres and facilities the department is responsible for is significant. Within the existing budget there is likely not opportunity to add additional parks or other amenities with the existing funding structure.

The total Parks and Recreation budget for the City compares to collected NRPA data in the following way:

Operating Expenditure per Acre of Park and Non-Park sites	50,000-99,999
Median	$11,061
Lower Quartile	$6,047
Upper Quartile	$22,064
Rapid City	$10,122

When one looks at dollars spent per acre it illustrates the fact that the department is slightly below the median. Pointing to the need to examine funding and funding mechanisms, and also the standards that are being set for different types of property.

Typical funding mechanisms of parks and recreation departments as reported by NRPA member agencies are as follows:

Sources of Operating Expenditures	Percent
General Fund/Appropriations	63%
Earned Revenue	20%
Special Taxes/Levies (voter approved)	8%
Special Taxes/Levies (non-voter approved)	4%
Other	3%
Operating Grants from Public Agency	2%
Sponsorships, In-Kind Donations, Private Operating Grants/Donations	1%

The department generated approximately $3.6 million in 2025 which is approximately 28.8% of the total operating budget, putting them well above the average of other parks and recreation agencies.

Specific to the earned revenue category, specifically membership and fees, the department should:

- Evaluate fees on an annual basis.
- Recommend increases on a bi-annual basis.
- Include valuation of fees in a formal cost recovery study to ensure that what is being charged is consistent with the expected revenue generation.

GAPS & LEVEL OF SERVICE

The City currently breaks their maintenance into three (3) different areas: North District, West District, and Southeast District. Within each of the Districts, they highlight maintenance, operation, and standards for Parks Maintenance, Urban Forestry and Equipment Maintenance.

Note: At the time of writing, Parks was in the middle of reorganizing parks maintenance crews. The properties within each of the three districts is subject to change.

North District Responsibilities:

- College Park - 224 College Street
- Chuck Lien Park
- Dakota Fields - 3737 N. Elk Vale Road
- Denver St Soccer Field - East Boulevard North
- East Boulevard
- Founders Park - 1510 West Omaha St.
- Greenway Tract 4 - Abourezk to Mt. Rushmore Road
- Greenway Tract 5 - Mt. Rushmore Rd to Omaha Street
- Horace Mann Park - 818 Anamosa Street
- Horace Mann Ballfield - 730 Anamosa Street
- Journey Museum - 222 New York Street
- Legion Park - 900 Van Buren Street
- Memorial Park - 8th and Omaha Street
- Mountain View Soccer - 1601 W. Omaha Street
- Omaha Disc - 1601 W. Omaha Street
- Rapid City Youth Baseball - 131 E. New York Street
- Roosevelt Park - 300 E. Omaha Street
- Scott Mallow Park - 1100 Custer Street
- Skate Park - New York Street
- Thomson Park - 880 E. Meadowlark Dr.
- Vicki Powers Park - 940 Kathryn Avenue
- W. Memorial Park - Mt. Rushmore Road
- Willow Park - 155 Monroe Street

West District Responsibilities:

- Braeburn Park - 3350 Idlehurst Lane
- Boxing/Racquetball - 200 East Main Street North
- Canyon Lake Park - 4181 Jackson Blvd.
- Canyon Lake Little League - 1450 & 1610 32nd Street
- Cliffside Park - W. Hwy. 44 and Dark Canyon
- Floyd Fitzgerald Stadium - 2721 Canyon Lake Dr.
- Greenway Tract 1 - Abourezk to Sheridan Lake Road
- Greenway Tract 2 - Sheridan Lake Road to Park Drive
- Greenway Tract 3 - Park Drive to W. Hwy. 44
- Jackson Park - 3040 Jackson Boulevard
- Jamie Johnson Field - 1730 32nd Street
- Rushmore Lion's Park - Chapel Lane & Shore Dr.
- Quarry Park - City Springs Road
- Mary Hall Park - 3220 W. South Street
- McKeague Field - 2819 Canyon Lake Drive
- Old Storybook Island - 2911 Canyon Lake Dr.
- Pete Lien Field - 2601 Canyon Lake Drive
- Storybook Island - 1301 Sheridan Lake Rd.
- Rapid City Youth Baseball - 200 E. Main Street N. and 32nd St.
- Red Rocks Meadows - 6606 Sahalee Drive
- Sioux Park - 1000 Sheridan Lake Rd.
- Wilderness Park - 514 City Springs Rd.
- W. Chicago Street - (Boulevard Area)

Southeast District Responsibilities:

- Cambell St. Soccer - 1835 Cambell Street
- Centennial Park - 800 E. Centennial
- Dinosaur Park - 940 Skyline Drive
- Greenway Tract 6 - Omaha Street to Star of the West Complex
- Halley Park - 515 W. Boulevard
- Harney Baseball Complex - 610 E. Fairmont Boulevard
- Highland Park - East Boulevard
- Johnson Ranch - 2110 Provider Boulevard
- LaCroix Disc Golf - 3820 Odde Drive
- Market Park - 245 E. Omaha Street
- Minnesota St. Field - 678 E. Minnesota Street
- Mt. Rushmore Rd. Medians
- Orchard Meadows - Elderberry Boulevard & Jim Street
- Parkview Park - 4415 Parkview Drive
- Polo Field
- Robbinsdale Park - 631 E. Oakland
- Skyline Wilderness Area - 2215 Skyline Drive
- Oak Valley Park - 615 E. Catron Boulevard
- Star of the West Softball - 1615 Sedivy Lane
- Strider Bike Park - Fairmont Boulevard
- Wilson Park - 1701 Mt. Rushmore Road
- W. Blvd - (Boulevard Area)

For each of the Districts the Department outlines expectations in the following areas:

- General employee minimum park coverage. Differentiating between year around, summer v. school year weekends and holidays.
- Maintenance Elements and Performance Standards
  - *Athletic Court Inspection & Repair*
  - *Building Maintenance*
  - *Disease and Inspection Control-Prevention*
  - *Deer Management Program*
  - *Disc Golf Courses*
  - *Edging Curbs, Sidewalks, and Shelters*
  - *Electrical / Lighting Maintenance*
  - *Equipment Maintenance & Repair*
  - *Fencing – Chain Link, Composite, Wood, Metal*
  - *Flower & Landscape Bed Planting & Maintenance*
  - *Graffiti Removal*
  - *Irrigation System Management / Maintenance – Irrigation*
  - *Litter, Debris, and Trash Removal*
  - *Parking Lot Maintenance*
  - *Playground Inspection & Repair*
  - *Restroom Cleaning*
  - *Routine Maintenance*
  - *Sanitation*
  - *Shelters, Pavilion, Bandshell*
  - *Sidewalks, Bike Paths & Trails*
  - *Signage*
  - *Special Events*
  - *Tree Care*
  - *Turf Care*
  - *Vandalism Repair*
  - *Work Order Priority*
- Park Maintenance Schedule & Frequency (by park)

The City has very well-defined Districts and areas of responsibility within those Districts. Additionally, there are very clear responsibilities on a location-by-location basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Facilities:

- Diamonds:
  - *The current inventory is 45 softball, baseball, and miracle fields.*
  - *This greatly exceeds the NRPA standards for comparable communities of 17.4.*
  - *The department faces multiple challenges in this area:*
    - » *Aging system*
    - » *User groups control the scheduling of the spaces and are responsible for MOST of the maintenance.*
    - » *There is a desire for higher quality facilities and amenities from user groups.*
    - » *The department does not have dedicated funding for fields.*
  - *Recommendations:*
    - » *Reduce the total inventory of diamonds fields.*
    - » *Increase the quality of the fields that are kept, to include the potential introduction of artificial turf.*
    - » *Scheduling of the field should be returned to the City.*
    - » *Develop a dedicated division within Parks and Recreation for active sports fields with appropriate funding and staffing.*
    - » *Existing groups become renters of space in partnership with the City.*
- Rectangles:
  - *The current inventory of 51 soccer and football fields.*
  - *This greatly exceeds the NRPA standards for comparable communities of 17.0.*
  - *The department faces similar challenges to that of diamonds:*
    - » *Aging system*
    - » *User groups control the scheduling of the spaces and are responsible for MOST of the maintenance.*
    - » *There is a desire for higher quality facilities and amenities from user groups.*
    - » *The department does not have dedicated funding for fields.*
  - *Recommendations:*
    - » *Reduce the total inventory of rectangles fields.*
    - » *Increase the quality of the fields that are kept, to include the potential of artificial turf.*
    - » *Scheduling of the field should be returned to the City.*
    - » *Develop a dedicated division within Parks and Recreation for active sports fields with appropriate funding and staffing.*
    - » *Existing groups become renters of space in partnership with the City.*
- Aquatics:
  - *The current inventory of 4 outdoor and 1 indoor location with 2 pools.*
  - *This greatly exceeds the NRPA standards for comparable communities of 1.6 outdoor pools.*
  - *The indoor amenities align with comparable communities.*
  - *The department faces multiple challenges in this area:*
    - » *Some pools are aging and near the end of their facility life cycle.*
    - » *There is a perceived distance to facilities by members of the public.*
    - » *The cost to maintain, operate, and complete capital improvements continues to increase. Many of the current capital improvement needs would not be visible to the public (i.e. equipment, concealed infrastructure, etc.).*
  - *Recommendations:*
    - » *Continue with the existing inventory for the near future.*
    - » *As facilities approach the end of the life cycle evaluate consolidation of facilities, with enhancements to overall facility offerings by location.*
    - » *The assessment that Waters Edge Aquatic Design completed as part of this process should be used as a guide for life cycle evaluation.*
- Gymnasium:
  - *The current inventory is 2 shared facilities with the school that were City funded. There are two (2) basketball courts at each of those locations for a total of four (4) basketball courts.*
  - *That would exceed the NRPA standards for comparable communities of 3.3 multi-use courts, 3.1 dedicated basketball courts.*
  - *While this does exceed the NRPA standards, the department faces multiple challenges in this area:*
    - » *These are shared use facilities which means they are not available to the City during school hours.*
    - » *Currently the City must balance the demand for the rental of these spaces, with their desire to expand program opportunities.*

- *Recommendations:*
  - » *The City should develop a 2-3 court indoor gymnasium facility, or broader facility that houses 2-3 courts minimum.*
  - » *Ideally, the 2-3 court space would be connected to other indoor spaces operated by the City.*
  - » *This would allow for increase diversity of programming and allow the City to continue renting to outside groups.*

· Ice:
- *The current inventory of 1 indoor ice rink.*
- *This does not exceed the NRPA standards for comparable communities of 1.5 ice rinks.*
- *The department face the challenge that most operators do, in that the rink is expensive to operate and expensive to maintain.*
- *It is also important to note that this specific facility can be defined as a regional draw to the community for usage.*
- *Recommendations:*
  - » *Continue to operate the ice rink as is.*

Operations & Maintenance:

· Staffing
- *There needs to be an increase in full-time staffing to operate and maintain the existing inventory.*
- *Work with HR to develop a formal recruitment and retention effort for full-time seasonal and part-time seasonal staff.*
- *As full-time positions become vacant the department should evaluate the position prior to posting and determine if changes should be made. This will ensure that the department has the appropriate positions and skill sets in place to address the system needs.*

· Maintenance Standards
- *The department has well defined maintenance standards.*
  - » *There needs to be an adjustment to the level of service and expectations for the acreage that is within the flood plain, and the acreage outside of the flood plain. Continuing to maintain the same standards for both is not sustainable with existing staffing levels or budget.*
- *The level of service should be adjusted on a park-by-park basis.*
- *The department should continue to maintain and update their maintenance standards on a regular basis.*

· Budgetary Practices – The Department currently breaks out Parks from the other functional areas of the Department. This practice should continue.
- *The Department should break out the budget by districts to align with the maintenance standards that they have in place.*
- *Staff should begin to more actively track their time. The benefit of this is twofold. First, it begins to define what areas of the system require the most amount of time, which begins to justify the need for additional staffing and resources. Second, it highlights areas that require significant investment to maintain and justify replacement need.*

· Annual Capital Budget Allocation – the annual need is currently outpacing infrastructure. As part of a separate study, the department needs to determine the quantity of deferred maintenance. From that, a plan should be developed to either replace or remove those deferred maintenance items. This may also require investigating an alternative funding strategy.

· The department needs to seek out additional, not alternative funding mechanisms. As an example, and specific to fields and courts that could impact tourism, a hotel/motel tax could be allocated to boost funding levels of those specific amenities.

· Technology – the department needs to incorporate more technology to assist with the day-to-day planning of staff tasks, and the long-range operations of the Department.
- *The Department should ensure that staff have technology that makes them most effective in the field.*
- *Parks Maintenance Management System – implementation of this system should be a high priority for the department. Such a system will assist with scheduling, tracking, resource allocation, etc. The Department of Public Works currently uses Cityworks. The project team would recommend that as a starting place to determine if there are park modules that could be added to the existing software license.*
- *Work Order System – implementing a work order system will allow the department to track resource needs and allocation throughout the Department.*

- Continue to track when new responsibilities, or amenities, are added to the inventory of the department. Equally important, as those things are added, highlight the need for additional resources to continue to maintain them to the existing level of expectation, or make recommendations on increase or reduction in the level of service.
- The Department should be using some contract services. Examples would include:
    - *Custodial services for restrooms in the park.*
    - *Mowing – specifically in areas that may require less frequent attention, or areas that are less public facing.*
    - *It is important to note that contract services will need to be formalized agreements and that there should be staff in place to manage said contracts.*
- The department should develop a satellite Parks Yard so that less time is being spent trailering equipment or going back to the shop for equipment or other necessary items.
- If the City continues to use partners for the delivery of youth sports and the maintenance of spaces they use, they should:
    - *Review lease agreements and update them, if needed, to ensure that they are reflective of the current operations. Most of the partnerships have been in place for a significant amount of time*
    - *Consider charging the leaseholder when Parks maintenance staff helps the groups because that work exceeds the group's capabilities.*