Overview

Park and recreation agencies are appropriately positioned to improve public health through the built environment with a particular focus on safe and easily accessible places and spaces to engage in physical activity. While many factors such as diet and level of physical activity influence obesity, (P&R Agency) is partnering with the public health community and other service providers to promote a healthy, active lifestyle among residents.

Parks provide measurable health benefits, from encouraging direct contact with nature and a cleaner environment, to opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. Throughout the master planning process, the ___________ community has indicated a desire to focus on public health and wellness through parks, trails, facilities and programs. National trends indicate that rates of obesity and obesity-related diseases, especially among children and adults, are rising in Michigan, emphasizing the important role that parks and recreation services can continue to play in keeping ________________ a healthy and vibrant community.

Recommended Policies

• All department services will emphasize the important and unique mission of the department to enhance the public health and wellness of the community.
• The department shall provide for ____________ community members’ health and wellness through deliberate and thoughtful design of programs, facilities, parks and services.
• The department shall serve as a facilitator, collaborator and leader with local organizations in efforts to improve the community’s health and wellness.
• In collaboration with local health department(s) and other public health entities, the department shall use a community needs approach in recreation programming and facility asset management to ensure service provision remains aligned with community interests.
• Park and recreation services shall be available and accessible to all.
• The Department shall continue to promote health and wellness through programs in partnership with healthcare providers such as ______________ and ______________.
• The Department shall continue to invest in walking and biking trails that the community utilizes for exercise.
• The Department shall continue to offer programs that promote access to nature and improve physical, mental, and social wellbeing.
• The Department shall insert wellness categories into program reviews.
• The Department shall align with ____________ County Health Department efforts to improve community health.
• The Department shall continue to provide healthy food choices through programs such Healthy Food Service Guidelines in Parks and Recreation, Farmers’ Markets, and Community Gardens.
Parks, Trails and Public Spaces: Health & Wellness Goals
A Guide for Master Plans

- The Department shall continue to incorporate traditional and innovative marketing and branding strategies to promote health and wellness by encouraging participation in Department programs and use of Department facilities.

**Recommended Goals & Initiatives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long-term Goals</th>
<th>Initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park and recreation services remain aligned with the public interest in health and wellness.</td>
<td>1. Conduct park user satisfaction and use survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Conduct annual review and evaluation of existing park programs to ensure alignment with improving community health and wellness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Review new programs and innovations with various partners to improve health and wellness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and facilities will be provided to meet and/or exceed proximity standards.</td>
<td>1. Partner with the regional Transportation Division and Greenways Program to enhance connectivity and safe routes to parks and schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Review population data to determine distribution by age, gender, income and ethnicity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Partner with other agencies to ensure parks and playground facilities are within ½ mile of residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze, report and advocate the health impacts of department services.</td>
<td>1. Review Health Impact Assessment (HIA) best practices with service provider roundtable members and together develop health measurements and integrated program objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Communicate annual data findings to community members and partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Leverage data and impact to advocate for funding and support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use data to evaluate departments services in partnership with local health department and other public health agencies.</td>
<td>1. Annually review research on best practices, local and national health trends as they relate to parks and health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. In partnership with public health agencies, implement standardized measurement and evaluation processes based on shared measurable program objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Enact a best practice that requires partners to record and report information and data that is compatible with local health department evaluation frameworks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leverage partnerships with health providers and other public health agencies that contribute essential components to the overall health of community.</td>
<td>1. Organize regular roundtable discussions with key stakeholder agencies and organizations to coordinate provision of park services and activities as they pertain to community health and wellness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Best Practices & Resources

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

Making the Case: Parks and Health
http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/three-pillars/health-wellness/parksandhealth/
  o Active Transportation Parks and Public Health
  o Park Programming and Better Health
  o Parks and Chronic Disease Management
  o Parks and Healthy Kids
  o Parks and Improved Mental Health and Quality of Life

Safe Routes to Parks
http://www.nrpa.org/our-work/partnerships/initiatives/safe-routes-to-parks/

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Parks and Trails Health Impact Assessment Toolkit
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/parks_trails/

Healthy Places – Physical Activity
https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/physactivity.htm

National Park Service (NPS)

Parks, Trails, and Health Workbook
https://www.nps.gov/public_health/hp/hphp/resources.htm

The Trust for Public Land

The Health Benefits of Parks

Park Prescription

Park Rx
http://www.parkrx.org/

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)

Tobacco-Free Parks and Beaches Toolkit
http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71550_2955_2973-340373--,00.html

Active Living Research

Park Prescriptions in Practice