CITY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

2009 CITYWIDE COMMUNITY
NEEDS ASSESSMENT

FINAL REPORT

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DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS

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Citywide Community Needs Assessment

Statement of Acceptance
By
Department of Recreation and Parks, Board of Commissioners

Hereby accepts the 2009 Citywide Community Needs Assessment subject to this statement of acceptance which shall be appended to and incorporated in this report.

In receiving this report, we note the constraints under which the report was created. These limitations are inherent in the opinion gathering process, in the nature of Los Angeles, and in the scope of the work assignment. They include:

- The needs assessment is only one step in the planning process. In addition to assessing needs, the Department will have to consider its financial and other resources and broader city planning in moving to an actionable master plan.

- In gathering community opinions on needs, the community expressed its preferences among the various services and facilities that the Department of Recreation and Parks does or could provide, but did not express its preferences among all services the community might want from city government. In many cases the desired Recreation and Parks service or facility must compete for funding with the services and facilities of other city departments to which the community might give a higher priority. A broader survey, beyond the scope of this report, might yield different results.

- By gathering opinions of the public on needs, the report could not assess the needs which might be just as critical but not known by the general public. One example that is obvious is the need to conserve water. This is among the Department's highest priorities, but it is not mentioned by the public. Other examples include toxics mitigation and regularization of partnership arrangements with third parties. These items and others must figure into the next stage of analysis before a strategic plan is done.

- The "checkerboard" nature of the map of Los Angeles County has many city residents living in close proximity to and using recreation and park facilities outside the city limits. The map at page 65 of the report and the chart at page 67 of the report give some sense of this issue. However, the scope of this study did not allow a more thorough exploration of how this fact might cause the calculations made in the report on the quantities of land and facilities available to city residents to be understated. (Of course, however much such calculations might be understated, this Commission and this Department are devoted to increasing substantially the services and facilities available to Los Angeles residents.)

- The use of guidelines based on other cities' services and facilities is in the nature of the scope of the assignment, but it unavoidably fails to take into account the unique nature of Los Angeles, its climate and its geography. As is mentioned at page 2 of the report, our weather gives the public more thorough access to the services and facilities that the city has than would be true in a wintry climate; and the city's vast distances and tradition of automobile mobility creates less public expectation of parks or anything else being in walking distance to home. Further, the beaches--a unique recreational asset of this big city--are intensely used by city residents; are largely outside city limits; and are almost entirely outside the jurisdiction of the city's Department of Recreation and Parks. Mostly, they do not enter into the figures for comparison with other cities. These facts, and Los Angeles' "checkerboard" pattern make comparisons to other cities a matter of apples and oranges. Nevertheless, we will consider the comparisons for the information they do provide.

Despite these constraints, we appreciate the work that this report entails. We believe it reflects high professional standards and we expect to find it to be a valuable tool in our work. Our goal is to provide more and better services and facilities to our residents and to do so as soon as possible.

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Appendices, additional Survey information and Executive Summary are available online at www.laparks.org

1.1 INTRODUCTION – PROJECT PURPOSE

1.1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks manages and maintains parks, playgrounds, recreation centers, pools, monuments, museums, cultural venues, wilderness areas, beaches, child care centers, meal programs, youth sports programs and golf courses. Along with these facilities and park land, the Department has substantial assets in equipment, programs and staff. The Department goes well beyond the operation of recreation facilities based on its role as a provider of after school and school vacation child care and youth camp programs, senior activities and meal programs.   The Department contributes to public health as the public agency outside of the school system with the greatest potential to impact children in establishing life-long fitness habits by providing opportunities for individual and organized sports and recreation programs. As the steward of over 15,000 acres of parklands spread throughout the City, the agency has the ability to act as a model of sustainable development.

The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks was founded in 1889 in a young city that would experience exponential growth through the late nineteenth century and through the 20th century. This growth has not stopped in the 21st century but the availability of land for open space and recreation is more limited and expensive to acquire and develop. The City grew from the historic Pueblo located in the downtown area and has further expanded into the adjacent San Fernando valley to the north, to the Pacific Ocean to the west, and to the San Gabriel Valley to the east and the Harbor area to the south. From its early beginnings the city was developed as a mobile civilization where trains, streetcars and later freeways would transport residents from denser urban neighborhoods to the vast open spaces along the coasts and in the nearby mountains. Unlike cities in the East and the Mid-West based on dense European models, Los Angeles was conceived and developed as a garden city where residents lived in houses and bungalows with ample private open space. Limited efforts were made to insure that the City would have sufficient land for parks and open spaces as its density increased. The most well known effort towards this end was the Olmsted Bartholomew Plan completed in 1930 that provided a vision for an integrated system of parks and infrastructure including parkways, parks and preservation areas throughout the City, with primary attention focused on lower income residents. With the worsening Depression and lack of civic support, the study was never realized or released to the public.[1] The study was brought back to life in the year 2000 when it was re-published in Eden By Design by historians Greg Hise and William Deverell, and has been used extensively as inspiration for new visions for urban parks in Los Angeles.

The City's first parks and open spaces included the Pueblo, Elysian Park, Griffith Park, Pershing Square, Lincoln Park, MacArthur Park, Echo Lake Park and Hollenbeck Park. Collectively these parks represent roughly one third of the total current park department acreage. At the time that they were initially developed in the early 20th Century they had no supervised recreation activities. City residents, especially children, had few choices and found recreation opportunities in the streets and empty lots in the City. During the Progressive Era civic leaders established the Los Angeles Playground Commission and Department for the "prevention and control of juvenile delinquency and to provide wholesome and constructive play and recreation for youth…"[2]   Playground facilities were modeled on indoor gymnasiums and offered opportunities for exercise and fitness.   Although the City was a leader in

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[1] Culver, Lawrence From Paradise to Parking Lot, 2005
[2] Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Website History 2008. www.laparks.org.

developing playground programs it did not acquire park lands in proportion to the growing population, or have a plan to accomplish this goal.

It is relevant to compare Los Angeles to other major cities in the United States to assess what the City has, and may be lacking. In terms of population and park acreage, a Trust for Public Lands 2006 study found that of the three largest cities in the country, Los Angeles with 4.0 acres of parks per 1,000 residents actually has more park acreage than either New York or Chicago who have 3.6 and 2.8 acres per 1,000 residents respectively. Interestingly the next largest city, Houston has 9.9 acres for every 1,000 residents. The issue for Los Angeles is only partially the amount of land dedicated to public open space. Although the published park acreage for City parks is 4.0 acres per 1,000 residents, when one includes other parks and open spaces such as Los Angeles County, State of California, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and the National Forest the average acreage increases to approximately 9.7 acres per 1,000 persons which provides a truer picture of available open space resources within a region where residents are accustomed to travelling for work, play and entertainment. When one looks beyond the limits of the City of Los Angeles to the County level the acreage dramatically increases to 84 acres per 1,000.

Even in our mobile society there still remain challenging issues of access and distribution within the City park system. With over 1/3 of the park space located in less than a half dozen large parks (Griffith, Elysian, Lincoln, Sepulveda Basin, O'Melveny) some areas of the city lack parklands altogether. Compared to cities like San Francisco and Chicago, access to these parks is more limited since they are not located within convenient distances from public transit systems or within comfortable walking distance from homes and places of work. Los Angeles has a notable lack of linear parks or greenways which may explain the very popular demand for trails and walking paths found in this Needs Assessment Study. A balanced system needs to have a variety of park types and sizes. A study of transportation to and access to the parks in the City should be undertaken to better understand how we can make the parks more easily accessible. This type of study could be included in the tasks for the Strategic Master Plan.

Another issue that affects park usage is the wonderful climate of Los Angeles. The same year-round warm weather that draws people to our City also causes the existing parks to be even further taxed because of heavy yearround usage. Cities such as Chicago and New York experience seasonal park usage which cuts down on maintenance costs and increases the life cycle of parks and facilities.

Because of the many challenges facing the City of Los Angeles, its Department of Recreation and Parks (Department) identified the need to develop a citywide park master/strategic plan and a five-year capital improvement plan. The first step in preparing these planning tools is to conduct a Community Needs Assessment (Needs Assessment) to help identify, quantify, and preliminarily prioritize the tremendous need for recreation and open space. A high level review was also performed of Recreation and Park Department facilities in an attempt to address the various facilities needing improvements to meet current and future needs, prevent future maintenance problems, and offer positive alternatives to an increasingly dense and urbanized population. A sampling of recreation program assessments was also conducted.   It is recommended that a more detailed assessment be performed in the master/strategic planning process. The last Recreation and Parks Needs Assessment was completed in 1999 and was dependent upon a limited number of public workshops and a random mailed survey as outreach tools. Advances in technology have vastly expanded the outreach and analysis tools available for this type of study. This Needs Assessment utilized email, interactive web pages, blog postings and other web based tools in addition to traditional methods of communication. Extensive GIS mapping based on US Census data was utilized to study demographics which was then combined with the Department's facilities inventory to create service area mapping.

The team of Mia Lehrer + Associates with PROS Consulting, LLC (MLA/PROS Team) was retained to work closely with the Department to conduct the Needs Assessment. The MLA/PROS Team was also joined by The Robert Group to assist in organizing and implementing the public participation program. The Needs Assessment was designed to gather and analyze information regarding what the current and future recreational needs are and establish a preliminary prioritization process to help direct subsequent physical planning and cost estimating. The entire document prepared by the MLA/PROS Team includes an Executive Summary and appendices which may be found online at www.laparks.org.

1.1.2 PURPOSE AND PROCESS

The City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks retained the team of Mia Lehrer + Associates and PROS Consulting to conduct the Community Needs Assessment. The objectives of the overall planning process are: to preliminarily prioritize and address the tremendous needs for additional recreation and park land, to identify existing facilities needing improvements to meet current and future community needs, to identify recreation program needs, to perform demographic analysis, to prevent future maintenance problems, and to offer positive alternatives to an increasingly dense and urbanized population.

The objective of this Needs Assessment and the subsequent master/strategic planning process is to develop strategies to help prioritize and address the challenges the Department faces, such as:

- Acquiring additional recreation and park land and finding opportunities for the reuse of land already in the public domain

- Updating existing recreation facilities requiring improvements

- Preventing future maintenance problems through effective asset management of public amenities

- Offer positive recreational alternatives to an increasingly dense and urbanized population

- Identify key issues for the Department

The Needs Assessment project is a critical step in the Department of Recreation and Parks development of a Citywide Recreation and Parks Master/Strategic Plan and a Five-year Capital Improvement Plan supporting a new vision for the City of Los Angeles' Recreation and Parks Department. The Needs Assessment will also serve as the foundation for other long range planning initiatives.

The Needs Assessment included a comprehensive community outreach and input process that engaged community leaders, stakeholders and the public across the City through a series of one-on-one interviews, focus groups and community forums followed by a statistically valid, citywide household survey. The overall Needs Assessment process included six data assessment phases targeted at gaining the critical input to identify and prioritize the various facilities, programming, operational and maintenance needs based on the principles and values of a very diverse community, resulting in the framework for a comprehensive and defensible Needs Assessment to serve as a "living document" and decision-making tool for the Department to follow. One of the mechanisms we put in place to receive ongoing input is via an Advisory Group made up of a cross section of key leaders in the City. This Advisory Group met various times throughout the process to offer input and guidance to the MLA/PROS Team.

A major element of the Needs Assessment is the development of the PROS Community Values Model framework. This model is used to synthesize and organize the community values and principles from the collected information. The Community Values Model framework can ultimately be translated into a

"balanced scorecard" that will serve as the detailed action plan and implementation tool with prioritized goals and objectives along with supporting strategies, actions, priorities and timelines, and implementation teams.

1.1.3 PROJECT PRECEDENTS – A SUMMARY OF RELEVANT STUDIES

As a part of the Community Needs Assessment process, the Project Team reviewed relevant studies of Master Plans, Strategic Plans, and Needs Assessments in comparable urban areas. This review provided a comparative analysis for understanding the extent of the scope and planning process implemented by other agencies as well as the key issues and challenges that were identified, and their ultimate outcomes and success. The agencies identified for comparative review included:

- Dallas Long Range Development Plan
- Denver Parks and Open Space Plan
- Fairmount Park Strategic Plan
- LA River Revitalization Master Plan Outreach
- Park Use in the City of Los Angeles by The RAND Corporation

The comparative review of the different agencies and their park and recreation planning process identified several consistent themes. These include:

- Most projects had extensive community and stakeholder input that served as the basis for recommendations. This process organized the input into various categories that included qualitative input in the form of leadership and focus group interviews and quantitative input in the form of statistically valid surveys of households, users and staff. The two processes formed a check and balance system where one confirmed the other allowing for confidence in the application of results.

- The stronger the support by a "champion" with clout, the stronger and quicker the implementation. The success of a strong and effective initial roll out of recommendations appears to be directly tied to having a strong leader helping to sell the plan.

- The more comprehensive the scope, the quicker the results were from each plan. In the case of Dallas, the ability to roll out a very detailed capital improvement plan that was tied to the vision, mission and goals identified in the Needs Assessment supported two record bond programs and significant partnership dollars.

- The plans that paid equal attention to the operational, policy and financial aspects in relation to the capital elements have a more balanced and strategic approach. This attention allows resources to be linked more closely with capital investment to help ensure successful implementation and long-term management.

- Each of the cities considered the historical significance of their parks and facilities and established strategies to insure their importance and long-term survival.

- Each of the plans defined the role and importance of parks and recreation in the economic viability of their respective cities. Economic outcomes were tied to specific facility and program recommendations.

- Several of the projects established a brand for the park plan in order to articulate their overall theme:
  - Dallas – A Renaissance Plan

- o Philadelphia – A Bridge to the Future

- o Denver – Game Plan

Overall, the comparison to the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks Community Needs Assessment shows strong consistencies with the above-mentioned plans. This has allowed lessons learned from the other plans to be integrated into this project. A complete review of each project is presented in Appendix B under a separate cover.

1.1.3(A) SUMMARY OF RELEVANT DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS

The Department of Recreation and Parks has many innovative planning and development projects and recreation programs. Four categories of planning and development projects are highlighted and summarized by the Department, including: Joint Use/Partnerships, Sustainability/Conservation, Project Development, and Park Development, as well as innovative recreation programs.

JOINT USE/PARTNERSHIPS

- With a long-standing joint use relationship with LAUSD, improved coordination is evident in the development of South Region High School #12 located adjacent to Green Meadows Recreation Center; by vacating a street between the existing park and the new school, the two facilities will be integrated and recreational open space will be available to the public

- The Department is working with a group of local business people and community members to raise funds for a new gymnasium building at Barrington Recreation Center

- The Department is working with Nike and the LA84 Foundation to complete approximately 30 small park development projects around the City

SUSTAINABILITY/CONSERVATION

- The Department has been working to upgrade outdated irrigation systems and install new weather smart irrigation controllers and water conserving irrigation systems in the City's parks

- New electrical equipment and energy conservation standards, including solar lighting, for all new or renovated park facilities have been adopted; these standards are designed to help improve the energy efficiency of the department's facilities and will reduce the cost of operation

- CAMPostables, a program developed by the department's Camping and Forestry Divisions promotes the use of plant-based biodegradable and compostable plates and utensils at the Department's camps and facilities

- The department participated in the 2007 International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration World Congress in Dublin and presented a paper on the City's efforts to develop and build environmentally friendly and sustainable parks

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- With skate parks/plazas being popular facilities for both youth and adults the Department has recently released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to skate park design-build firms to build a list of "as needed" contractors to help accelerate the development of these projects

- The Department is working to develop a RFQ to develop a list of "as needed" contractors to develop synthetic turf fields at existing parks

PARK DEVELOPMENT

- The Department has twelve Universally Accessible Playgrounds (UAP) with an additional eight (8) more in various stages of development

- The draft Open Space Plan, developed in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, proposes an initiative to provide public access to 35 new park sites over a 5 year time period; the Department is ahead of that schedule in meeting that goal having opened 15 new parks and added over 240 acres to the City's park system since the Mayor took office in 2005; the Department has identified approximately 40 new park sites which could be added to the City's park system over the next three years

GIS

- Investment made by Department of Recreation and Parks

- GIS facilitates the development of CIP, Quimby expenditures and project/program development, planning and implementation

- GIS provides accurate park measurement and facility inventory

CLASS PARKS

- Program for at risk youth begun in 2000

- Three program pillars: youth development, facility improvement, park safety

- CLASS Park programs include:

  o Youth Employment Internship Program (YEIP): catalyst for career opportunities with monthly training for middle and high school students

  o Collegiate Mentorship Program (CMP): provides teens with mentors enrolled in institutions of higher education

  o The Ecological Experience (Eco-X): a mobile learning lab providing hands-on exploration of the diverse ecological systems found in the Los Angeles area

  o Adventure Program (Quest): teens learn basic adventure sports, such as hiking, rock climbing, swimming, snowboarding, mountain biking, horseback riding, etc

  o Adventure Program Explorers (APEX): teens learn advanced adventure skills and applied conservationism

  o Teen Clubs: offer community involvement opportunities by way of service projects

MUNICIPAL SPORTS

- Sports programs for the adult citizens of Los Angeles

- Team competition organized for: Baseball, Basketball, Soccer, Flag Football, Softball, Volleyball and Tennis, Individual competition organized for Tennis

- Programs available for men and women

QUIMBY PROGRAM

- Quimby Quarterly Report: Provides information on Quimby collections and Quimby funded projects by Council District and is available to the public at www.laparks.org

- Quimby Tracking System (QTS): Financial management system tracking Quimby collections, allocations, and projects

- Expenditure Reports by Council District: Previous annual reports were for all CD's, now done by individual CD, with increased planning and community input

SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS (SNL)

- From July 4 – Labor Day, 8 Recreation Centers extended hours until midnight, 4 nights per week

- Communities around SNL parks experienced:

    o 17% drop in violent crime

    o 86% reduction in homicides

    o 23% decrease in aggravated assaults

CHIVAS: KICK IT AT THE PARK L.A.

- Partnership between RAP and Club Deportivo Chivas USA

- Outreach goal: work with over 20,000 youth in 2008

- 40 clinics scheduled throughout the year, average attendance of 400 participants

LA PARKS FOUNDATION

The Los Angeles Parks Foundation, established in the spring of 2008, is a not-for-profit organization that will support the objectives of the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. The mission of the Foundation is to enhance, preserve and expand the recreational opportunities and facilities of the over 400 city parks that serve the people of Los Angeles. In addition, the Foundation is seeking to enhance the departments' public visibility allowing residents to take full advantage of programs and facilities.

The Foundation provides aid where the City of Los Angeles cannot to raise funds to improve park facilities, and purchase property for future parkland. The Foundation is developing various support programs including Friend of the Parks, Adopt-A-Park, and Donate-A-Bench as well as corporate and foundation support. As of the spring of 2009, the Foundation has made over $200,000 in grants to the departments for Mounted Horse Patrol for Griffith Park, Bark for the Cure, swimsuits for children at the 109th Street Pool, major infrastructure improvements to Westwood Recreation Center and a series of Plug Into Your Park electronic recycling events. More information on the Foundation can be found at its website at www.laparksfoundation.org.

ADDITIONAL RECENT DEPARTMENT STUDIES INCLUDE:
- 2008 General Managers "Roadshow"

- 2003 and 2005 Infrastructure Reports

- City of Los Angeles Public Recreation Plan

- Quarterly Quimby Report

1.1.4 SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

The ability to adequately and effectively meet the needs and desires of the community is the ultimate goal of any parks and recreation system. Thus, the most integral part of any planning process should revolve around the community input process. The community input process of the Needs Assessment focused on qualitative and quantitative data information. The qualitative data centered on seeking information from the community from key leader interviews, focus group meetings and public forum workshops. The following are the main key issues brought forward from input components by the community. The issues listed are not in order of priority, nor are they the only issues mentioned throughout the process; however, these were the issues most often mentioned that need to be addressed.

Key land issues related to parks and recreation that were expressed as important elements for the Department are as follows:

PARKS AND FACILITIES NEEDS

- The City lacks the appropriate levels of neighborhood and community parks that are close to home and parks are not equitably distributed

- The amount of park land available in the City is low for the level of density in the City and people would like more land for mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks and downtown parks. More parks are needed in redevelopment areas and we should look to use brownfields that could be restored for public parks

- Concern that some parks are unsafe and controlled by gangs and lack significant security, keeping people from using the park in a productive manner

- Parks are in need of infrastructure improvements to restrooms, parking areas, playgrounds, picnic facilities, sports courts, security lighting, irrigation systems, sports fields and general site conditions which encourages vandalism and keeps the community from using the parks in a positive manner

- Sports fields are a needed amenity. This is a desire that the community felt the Department had not adequately addressed. The needs are great for sports facilities for both youth and adults

- Sustainable landscapes in parks are an important design element that the Department should incorporate into design standards

- Some existing parks are outdated in design. The Department needs to develop new design standards for parks in the future and customize the parks to the people living in the area that will be using the park

- Walkability of the City and the ability to walk in City parks. Loop and park perimeter trails are an amenity the community feels needs to be addressed by the Department in order to fight obesity and promote health and wellness. Recreation programs can be added to promote health and fitness, such as nutrition, cooking and physical activity classes

- The Department must create a balance of park types and manage by park and amenity standards that promote equal access

- Many citizens felt that parks were overused on weekends

- Los Angeles River improvements were brought forward as opportunity sites that could be developed and improved for parks and recreation purposes

DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION ISSUES

- The Department needs to improve maintenance standards for parks as it applies to cleaning, restroom care, graffiti removal, security lighting, trash removal, general painting, signage, and security in the parks

- Natural areas are not being maintained to the level the community expects to support conservation and wildlife in the City

- Park maintenance is an important issue that needs to be addressed. There is perceived to be a disparity in the level of care between how parks are maintained from poorer neighborhoods to wealthier neighborhoods. Lack of staff presence in parks during the day and rangers and police at night for security purposes was an important issue

FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Partnering with other agencies and the school district on use of public property for parks that can serve each other's users is an important issue that needs to be addressed as a priority for the Department

- Almost all citizens recognize that The Department of Recreation and Parks is an underfunded agency and the community would like to see the City implement a new funding strategy as the existing funding strategy for recreation and parks is not working

- Available funding is not adequate for sufficient park land, facilities and program operations. Innovative solutions, including fundraising, financing and partnerships, are options which should be explored to provide a better system to serve all residents both now and in the future

- Use of Quimby funds by the Department to acquire and upgrade parks is an issue the Department must address. The Department should address needs utilizing many options for funding, including bonds, joint use, additional fees, sales tax, etc. People are not clear on the Quimby decision making process

1.2 COMMUNITY INPUT PROCESS

A successful planning process must incorporate a comprehensive community input process, which will gauge the residents and users of the system desires and usage characteristics, and ultimately need, for park and recreation facilities and programs. This Needs Assessment was developed through a robust and varied community input process. This process ensured that recommendations and strategies developed in this process can be translated into an action plan developed in a future Recreation and Park Master/Strategic Plan.

A four ringed process for community input was utilized as the foundation for the Needs Assessment by the Department of Recreation and Parks and the MLA/PROS Team.   The Team conducted twenty-seven (27) Key Leadership Interviews, twenty-four (24) Focus Groups, twenty-three (23) Community Workshops/Public Forums, a city-wide, statistically valid survey, an on-line survey, infrastructure and recreation program analysis as well as demographic analysis.

1. Key Leadership Interviews
2. Focus Groups
3. Community Workshops
4. Mailed Survey
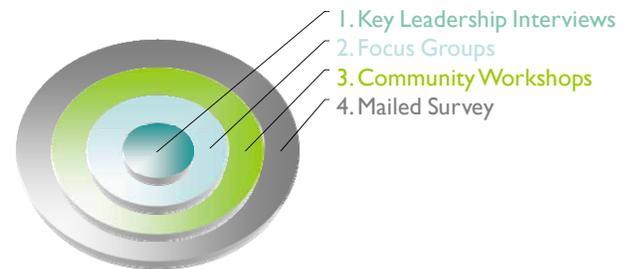
Key Leadership Interviews provided input from a broad cross-section of interest groups and individuals representing a wide range of social, economic, and environmental groups. The interviews solicited the opinions of local leaders who might otherwise not have been able to commit their time to this lengthy process.

Each of the twenty-four (24) Focus Groups were held to identify visions, values, and key issues relating to the Needs Assessment Study and to provide insight into facility and program needs. Focus Groups targeted the public by two distinct strategies in order to bring together similar groups to explore common goals. Groups were designed to reflect unique geographic locations and specific topics or interests; these included:

- Geographic location
  - Boyle Heights (2)
  - Pico Union/Westlake
  - Harbor/Harbor Gateway
  - Hollywood
  - Sylmar
- Specific topic or interest
  - Council District Key Staff
  - Higher Education
  - Neighboring Cities
  - At Risk
  - Seniors
  - Youth; (a day-long youth event in which more than 300 youth completed a questionnaire), as well as on-line surveys
  - Arts, Park Committee
  - Youth Outreach (2)
  - Health Related
  - Park Friends (2)
  - LAUSD

- o   Business/Professional
- o   Cultural/Philanthropic
- o   LA Chamber of Commerce
- o   Make-up Focus Group (for those who could not attend a previous group but expressed an interest in participating (3)

Community Workshops provided a forum for community wide input from concerned residents and an opportunity for the Project Team to present information on the Needs Assessment Study to the community. The workshops brought together individuals, groups, and organizations to help identify visions, values and key issues of each community.   These workshops provided insight into facility and program needs, operational issues, and opportunities in each community.

As with the Focus Groups, the Community Workshops were organized using two distinct approaches: by council district and by geographic location to insure that a majority of populated areas were canvassed, especially areas undergoing rapid growth and those areas perceived to have limited park and recreation facilities; these included:

- Council District
  - o   CD 1: Lincoln Park
  - o   CD 2: Studio City
  - o   CD 3: Woodland Hills
  - o   CD 4: Friendship Auditorium
  - o   CD 5: Westwood
  - o   CD 6: Sun Valley
  - o   CD 7: Ritchie Valens
  - o   CD 8: EPICC
  - o   CD 9: Ross Snyder
  - o   CD 10: Rancho Cienega
  - o   CD 11: Stoner RC
  - o   CD 12: Mason Park
  - o   CD 13: Glassell Park
  - o   CD 14: Ramona Hall
  - o   CD 15: Peck Park
- Geographic Location
  - o   Downtown
  - o   Mid-City
  - o   Koreatown
  - o   Watts
  - o   Wilmington
  - o   Westchester
  - o   Granada Hills
  - o   Sunland

While many of the key issues heard at the workshops were similar throughout the city, regional issues surfaced that reflected particular conditions and community desires. Within the seven planning areas of the City the most often cited specific issues included:

NORTH VALLEY

- More parks are needed

- Safety and security are key issues

- Need more cultural sensitivity by park staff

- Need better access to facilities

SOUTH VALLEY

- Valley does not feels like a part of the City's overall system

- Security and safety are key issues

- Lack of open space

WEST LOS ANGELES

- Parks are overused

- Gang and homeless problems

- Maintenance is an issue

CENTRAL AREA

- More parks are needed

- Safety and security are key issues

- Need more signature parks

EAST LOS ANGELES

- Inequitable distribution of parks

- Feel excluded from the system

- Programs do not reflect the local community

SOUTH LOS ANGELES

- More parks are needed

- Safety and security are key issues

- Access to existing parks difficult

- Need more diversity of programs

HARBOR

- Distribution of parks is unbalanced

- Safety and security are key issues

- Programs not well advertised and not well used

- Need more passive parks

Based on input from the key person interviews, focus groups, and community workshops, a written survey was developed by a nationally experienced survey company to provide quantitative data on park, asset, amenity, and program needs in Los Angeles. The survey was randomly mailed to households in Los Angeles in proportion to population within each of the seven (7) planning areas of the city. The survey was distributed in both English and Spanish. The results of the random sample of 2,925 households produced a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 1.8%.

The following is a summary of key public input findings from the qualitative information generated from residents in the focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and community public meetings.

1.2.1 GENERAL PERCEPTION OF THE RECREATION AND PARK SYSTEM

When asked what the general perception of the Recreation and Park system and department is, the following were the most frequent responses.

Stakeholder Interviews:

- Safety is a key issue

- A more creative approach to park planning should be implemented

- Field staff is engaging and helpful

- Management level is bogged down

- Outreach and communication is a problem. People do not know what is being offered

- Inequitable distribution of facilities and parks

- Insufficient funding to adequately manage the system

- Too many layers exist within the department

- Department needs restructuring – people are afraid to make decisions

- The Department is resistant to change

- Parks need updating

- The Department is being asked to provide more than they have funds to do

FOCUS GROUPS:

- Community is passionate about its parks

- More parks are needed

- There is a disconnect between upper management and staff within the Department

- Connectivity and access are not currently addressed but should be an important component of any plan

- Department is timid, and should strive to be bold and visionary

- There is a high level of programming within the department

- Safety is a concern

- The department does not have sufficient funding to manage what they have

- There seems to be a disparity in levels of maintenance and service throughout the City

- The department is difficult to partner with and does not seem open to working with other agencies

- There is an inequitable distribution of parks throughout the City

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS:

- The Department is underfunded

- Parks are "cookie cutter" – would like to see more creativity

- Communication and outreach are lacking

- The Department is internally focused

- There is a lack of park maintenance

- The Department needs to better manage the parks and facilities we currently have

- Parks are overused

- More parks and programs are needed

- The system is not balanced

- The Department does not communicate with community members; there is often no response or sense of responsibility

1.2.2 KEY FACILITY NEEDS

When asked what the key facility needs are, the following were the most frequent responses.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS:

- Create a joint use school/park classification for parks located near schools

- Think more creatively when designing park space – look at capping freeways, alleys, etc.

- Create corridor parks

- Utilize the Los Angeles River as a continuous green space/connection

- Utilize DWP transmission corridors

- Senior centers with intergenerational programs

- Dog Parks

- Neighborhood Parks

- Multi-benefit parks

- More and improved swimming pools

FOCUS GROUPS:

- More open space

- Skate parks

- Dog parks

- Transportation to and from parks

- Weight rooms

- Multi-benefit parks

- Neighborhood parks

- Innovative designs for parks

- Park connections – bikeways

- Seniors Centers

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS:

- Recreation Centers

- Small pocket parks

- Skate parks

- Greater security

- Greater accessibility

- Sports fields

- Dog parks

- Hiking and walking trails

- Pools

- Play structures

- Adult exercise facilities

- Bike paths

- Night lighting for security and activities

1.2.3 STRENGTHS OF THE RECREATION AND PARK SYSTEM

When asked what the strengths of the Recreation and Park system and department are, the following were the most frequent responses.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS:

- Strong staff at the parks and facilities

- Good programming

- Parks are well loved and neighborhood based

- Parks are well used and due to the weather here are used year round

FOCUS GROUPS:

- Staff is very committed

- There is a great diversity of programs offered

- Some parks are very well maintained

- Recreational activities offered are diverse

- The park system is a regional resource

- There is a good balance of parks and park types

- There is a great deal of cultural diversity. Festivals and events offered bring people together

- There are a few examples of excellent partnering such as Debs Park and partnering with the Audubon Society

- Large, geographically diverse system

- Parks are well used

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS:

- Good mix of programming

- Size of the systems is a positive

- Staff is energetic and engaging

- Festivals and special events are well liked

- The Department does a lot for the community

- There is a good diversity of facilities within the system

- Parks are well used and in high demand

- Weather allows for year round use of the parks

1.2.4 KEY PROGRAM SERVICE NEEDS

When asked what the key program needs are, the following were the most frequent responses.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

- Focus on core programs and allow others to focus on non-core programs

- Create a good diversity of programs and program types

- Concentrate on activities that do not require sports fields

- Create a good balance of program offerings in all neighborhoods

- Provide more programs for seniors

- Provide a wide variety of program choices for youth

FOCUS GROUPS:

- Would like to see more arts programs

- More soccer programs are needed

- Provide more innovative programs

- Intergenerational programs should be available

- Parks are an opportunity to offer environmental education

- Explore outsourcing of programs with other agencies/partners

- Provide more educational programs for both youth and adults

- More senior programs need to be offered

- Offer more computer programs/labs

- Childcare should be provided at more locations

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS:

- Offer more youth sports programs

- Multi-generational programs are needed

- Provide youth after school/tutoring programs

- Cultural and holiday events and programs

- Arts programs

- Better outreach is needed by the Department to promote their programs

At eleven of the 23 Community Workshops there were sufficient youth present to conduct dedicated youth breakout discussion tables. The same questions were asked at the youth tables as at the other groups. The results of the youth breakout tables, as well as surveys completed by over 300 youth at a day-long youth event were summarized in the following youth priorities:

When asked what their perceptions of the recreation and parks system was the following is, the most frequent responses from the youth:

- Good playgrounds

- No grass

- Too much gang activity/lack of security

- Need better maintenance

- The parks are a place to go after school and are an alternative to staying at home

When asked what the key facility needs are, the following were the most frequent responses from the youth:

- Skate parks

- Food service/cafes

- Swimming pools

- Better maintained facilities – things such as "more grass" and "even ground" were noted

- Better equipment

- Facilities for arts, homework, computer labs, mentoring

When asked what the key program needs are, the following were the most frequent responses from the youth:

- Dance and Art classes

- Exercise/weight training

- Drama

- Homework/computer areas and classes

- Cooking

1.3 COMMUNITY SURVEY FINDINGS

The City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during the summer of 2008 to establish priorities for the future improvement of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services within the community. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the City of Los Angeles. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone. The survey was administered throughout the seven planning commission areas of the City. The City of Los Angeles created the seven planning commission areas in 2000 to provide more localized decision making on local planning issues. Leisure Vision worked extensively with City of Los Angeles officials, as well as members of the MLA/PROS project team, in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance in order to effectively gauge the current community needs and plan for the future system.

Figure 1.3.0: Los Angeles Area Planning Commissions

Leisure Vision mailed surveys to a random sample of 14,000 households in the City of Los Angeles. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed, each household that received a survey also received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. In addition, approximately two weeks after the surveys were mailed, Leisure Vision began contacting households via telephone. Those who indicated they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing the questionnaire by phone.

The survey response goal was to obtain a minimum of 2,800 completed surveys. This goal was exceeded with a total of 2,925 completed and returned surveys. The results of the random sample of 2,925 households produce a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/- 1.8%. Eight significant survey findings are presented on the following pages; a full Household Executive Summary is presented in Appendix 1. The following pages summarize major survey findings.

1.3.1 VISITATION OF CITY PARKS DURING THE PAST YEAR

Respondents were asked if they or members of their household have visited any City of Los Angeles parks during the past year. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondent households have visited City of Los Angeles parks during the past year. This usage is similar to national benchmarks. At a district level, 70% or more of all households have reported visiting a park in every district except the South LA District.
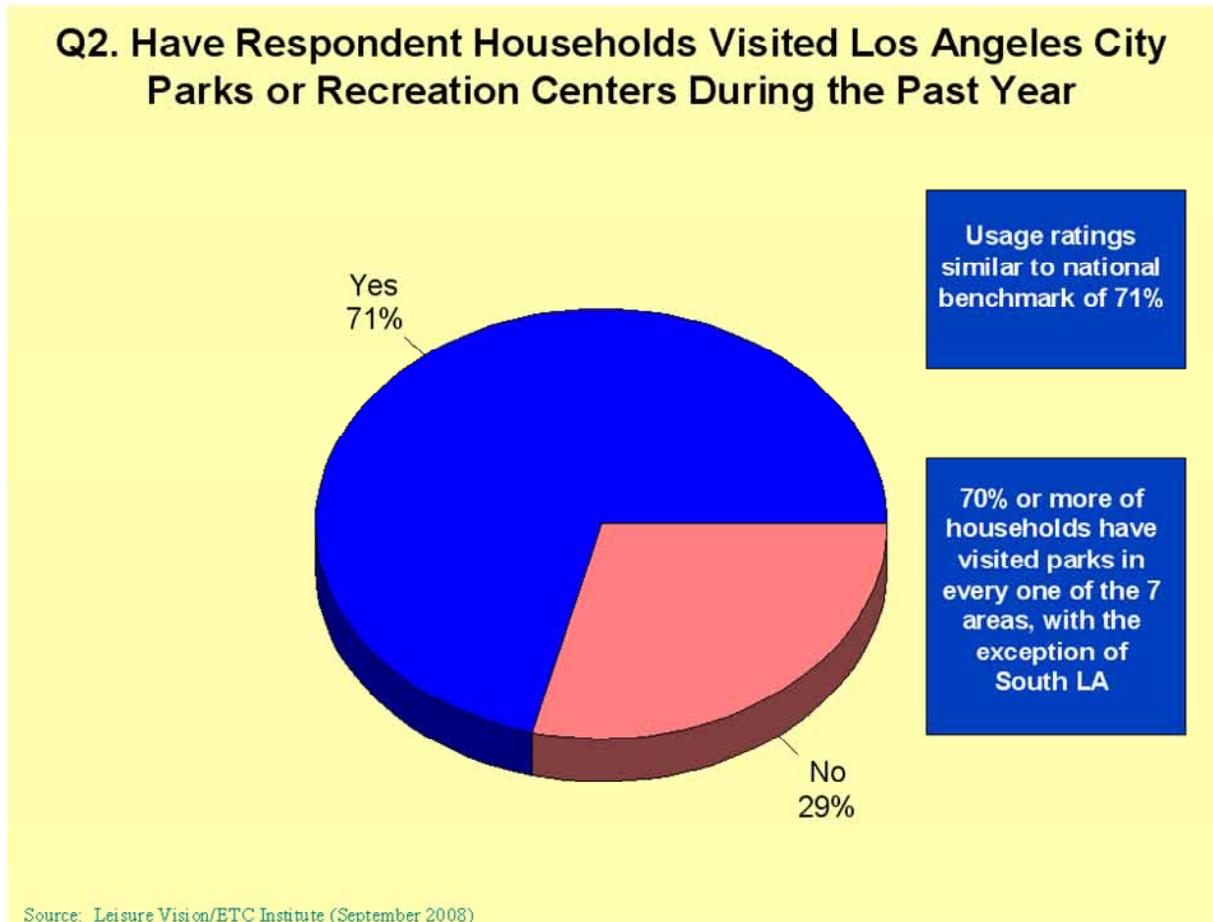
Figure 1.3.1

1.3.2 PARTICIPATION IN CITY RECREATION PROGRAMS

Respondents were asked to indicate if they or any members of their households have participated in any recreation program offered by the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department during the past 12 months. Eighteen percent (18%) of respondent households have participated in recreation programs offered by the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department during the past 12 months. Program usage is approximately half of the national benchmark of 30% program usage. As could be expected, the highest level of usage occurred in households with children under 10 years of age.

Of the 18% which has participated in programs in the past 12-months, 56% rated the quality as good; 23% rated the quality as excellent. Although 79% rated the quality of good or better, participants rating the quality as excellent is 10% below the national benchmark (33% of nationally benchmarked participants rate their program quality as excellent).

Q3. Have Respondent Households Participated in Any Recreation Programs Offered by the Los Angeles City Recreation and Parks Department During the Past 12 Months

by percentage of respondents

Participation in programs is lower than national benchmark of 30%

Yes
18%

No
82%

Participation in programs is lowest in households with adults 20-54 years of age and no children

Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (September 2008)

Figure 1.3.2

1.3.3 ORGANIZATIONS USED FOR RECREATION AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES DURING THE PAST YEAR

From a list of thirteen (13) options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the organizations their household has used for indoor and outdoor recreation and sports activities during the past year. The organizations with the highest percentage of respondent households have used for recreation and sports activities are: City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks (36%), State of California Parks (20%), private clubs (19%) and Los Angeles County Parks (19%).

The Recreation and Parks Department was the choice of program provider for all seven of the districts.
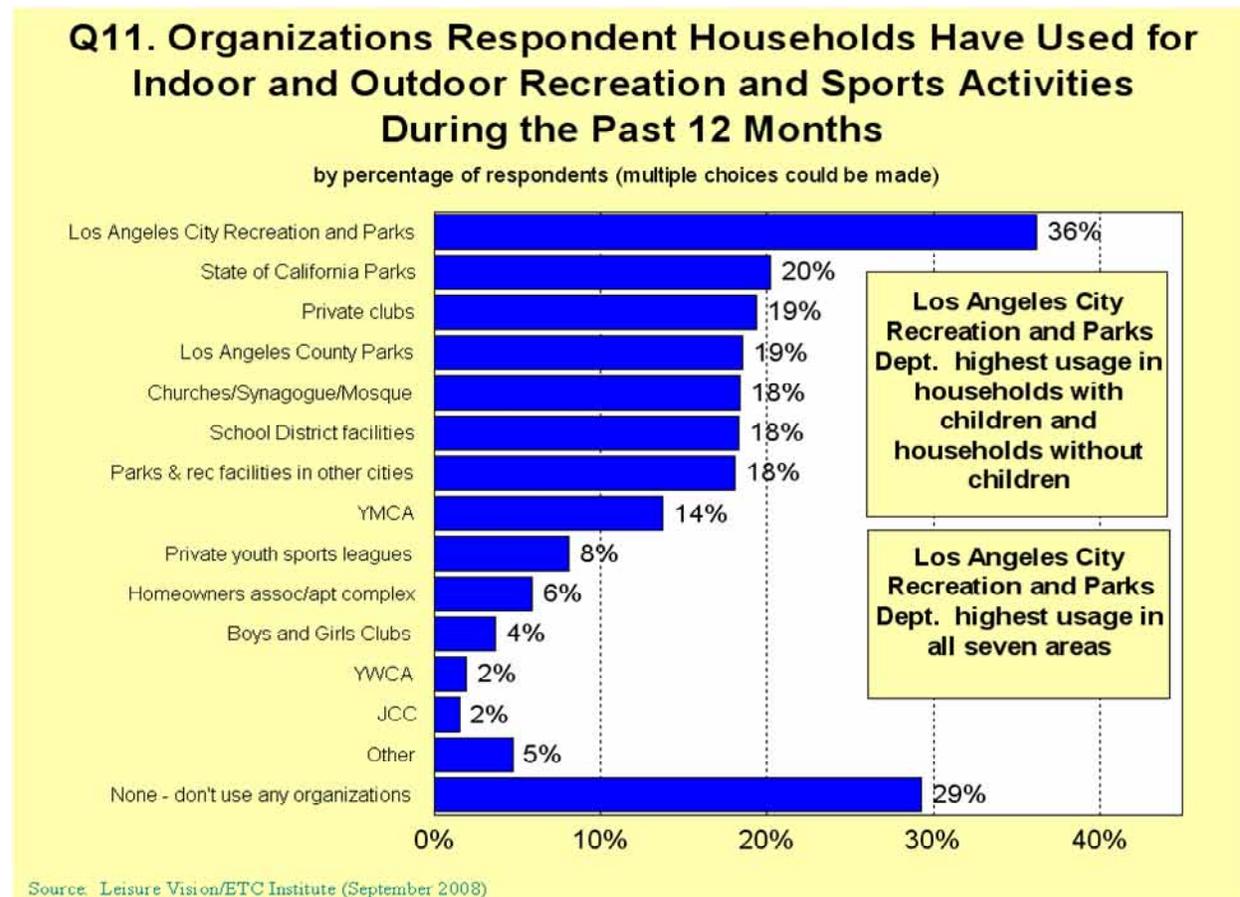
Figure 1.3.3

1.3.4 REASONS PREVENTING RESPONDENT HOUSEHOLDS FROM USING CITY PARKS, FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS MORE OFTEN

From a list of 18 options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the reasons that prevent them and members of their household from using parks, recreation and sports facilities or programs of the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department more often. The most frequently mentioned reasons that prevent respondent households from using City parks, recreation, and sports facilities or programs more often are: "I do not know what is being offered" (30%) and "security is insufficient" (20%). It should also be noted that 37% of respondents selected "other", with the most frequently mentioned reasons being: "too busy/don't have enough time", "old age" and "we're just not interested".

Of the two most reported reasons for not participating, "security is insufficient" is the response which deviates most from national benchmarks – nationally, "security is insufficient" garnishes only 7% of the response.
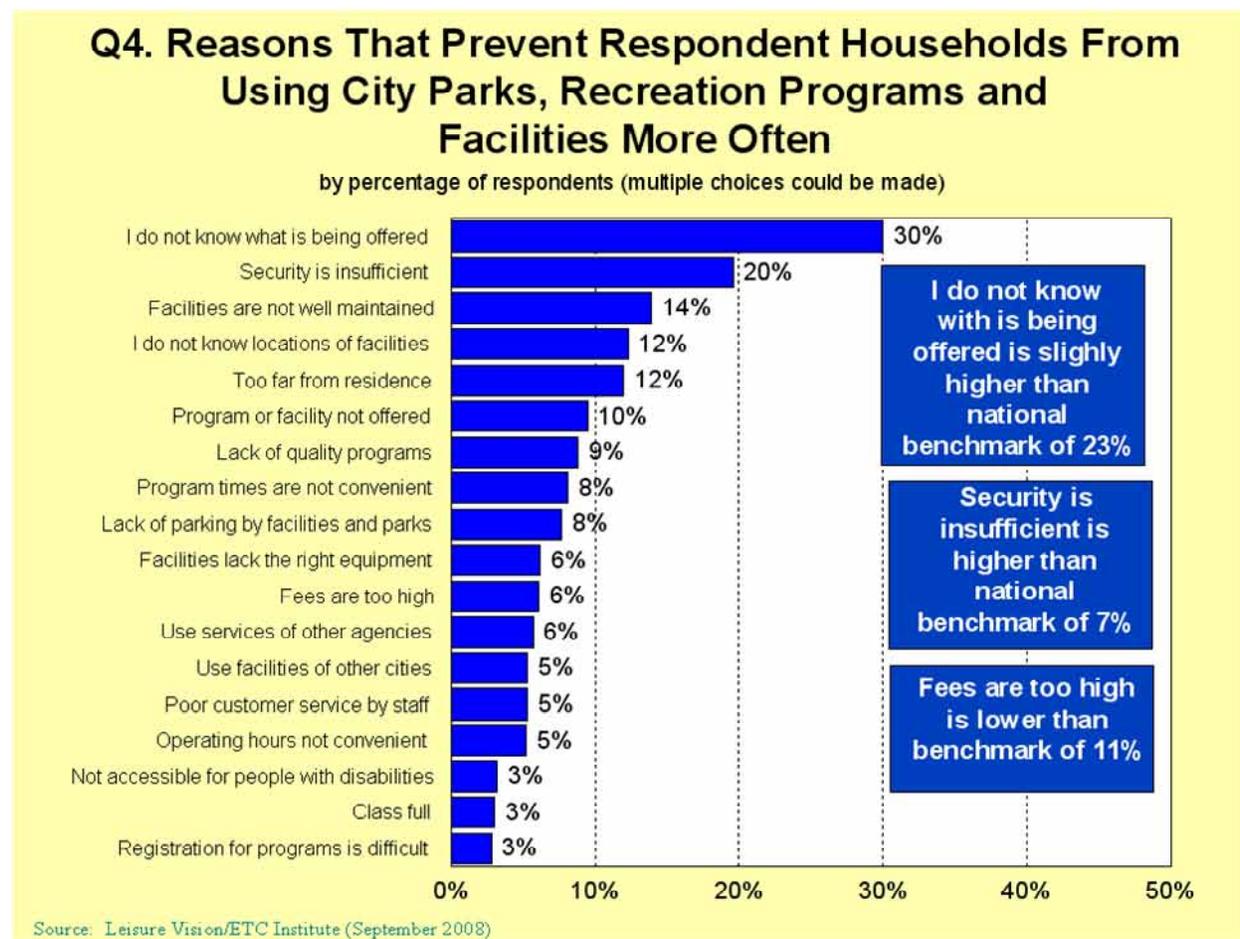
Figure 1.3.4

1.3.5 NEED FOR PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Unmet citizen needs exist for a wide range of parks, trails, outdoor and indoor facilities and programs. From a list of 30 various parks and recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate for which ones they and members of their household have a need. The parks and recreation <u>facilities</u> with the highest percentage of need from respondent households are: walking and biking trails (63%), small neighborhood parks (60%), large community and regional parks (53%), shelters and picnic areas (50%) and nature trails (46%). Programs were analyzed from a list of 23 potential recreation programs. Respondents were asked to indicate all of the programs for which they and members of their household have a need.

The parks and recreation <u>programs</u> with the highest percentage of need from respondent households are: adult fitness and wellness programs (40%), special events/festivals (38%), nature/environmental programs (36%) and family programs (34%).
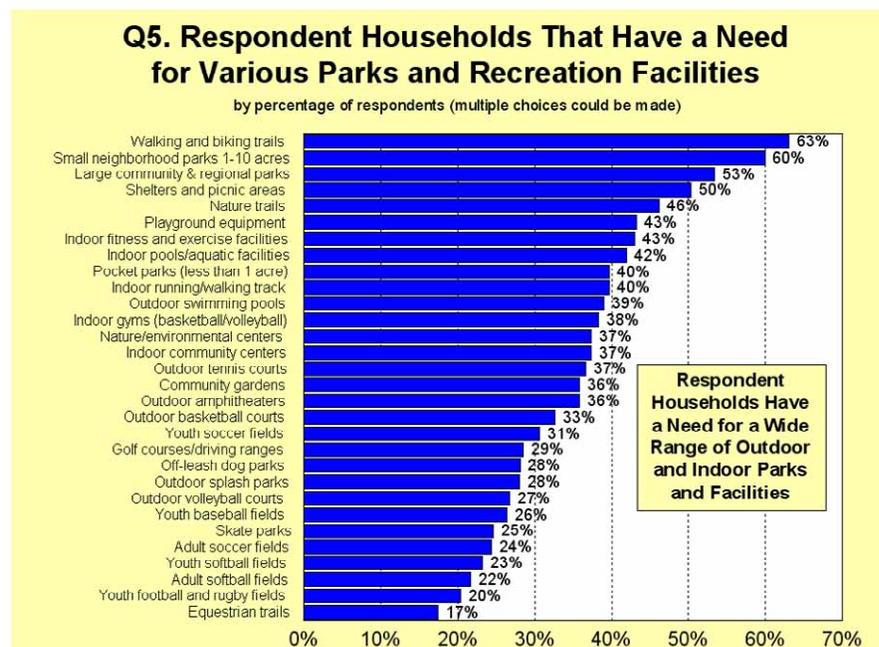
Figure 1.3.5.a

Figure 1.3.5.b

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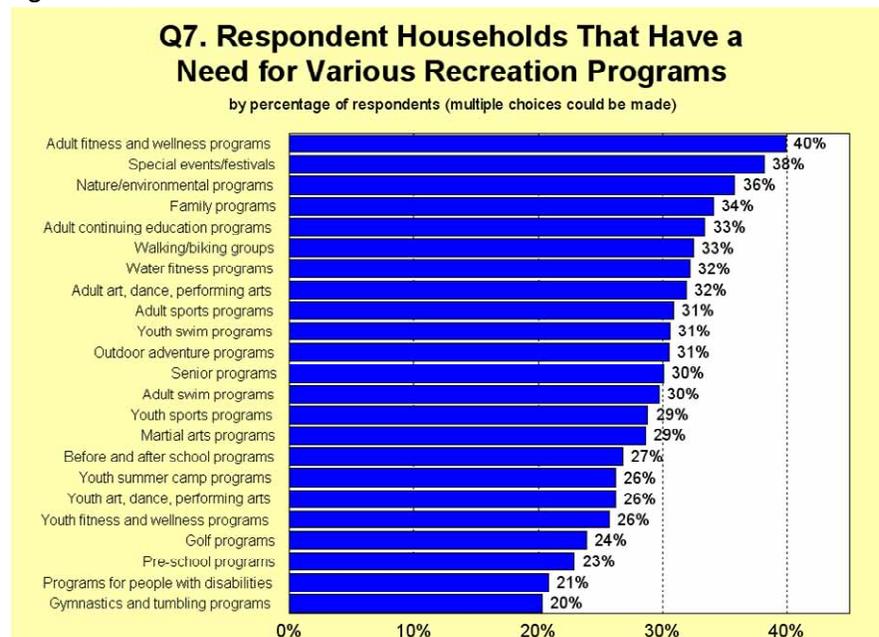
1.3.6 LOS ANGELES HOUSEHOLDS WITH THEIR PROGRAM NEEDS BEING 50% MET OR LESS

Opportunities exist to grow programs at parks and recreation facilities. From the list of 23 recreation programs presented to the community for the purpose of the survey, respondent households that have a need for programs were asked to indicate how well those programs meet their needs. The chart shows the estimated number of households in the City of Los Angeles whose needs for programs are only being 50% met or less, based on 1,273,880 households in the City.

Based on the sum of the respondents top four choices, programs that rated as the most important are: adult fitness and wellness programs (21%), special events/festivals (15%), youth swim programs (13%) and senior programs (13%). It should also be noted that adult fitness and wellness programs had the highest selection percentage as their first choice as the most important program.
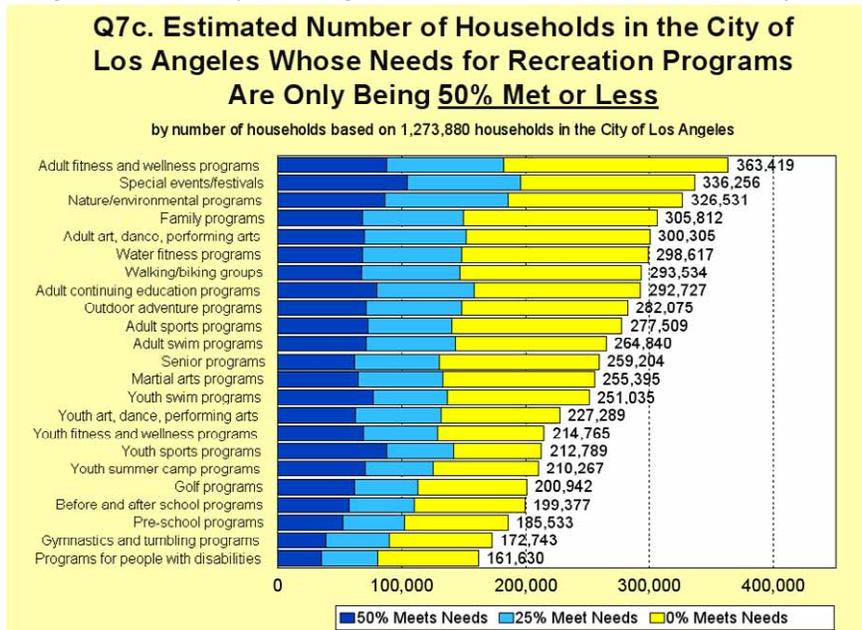
Figure 1.3.6.a
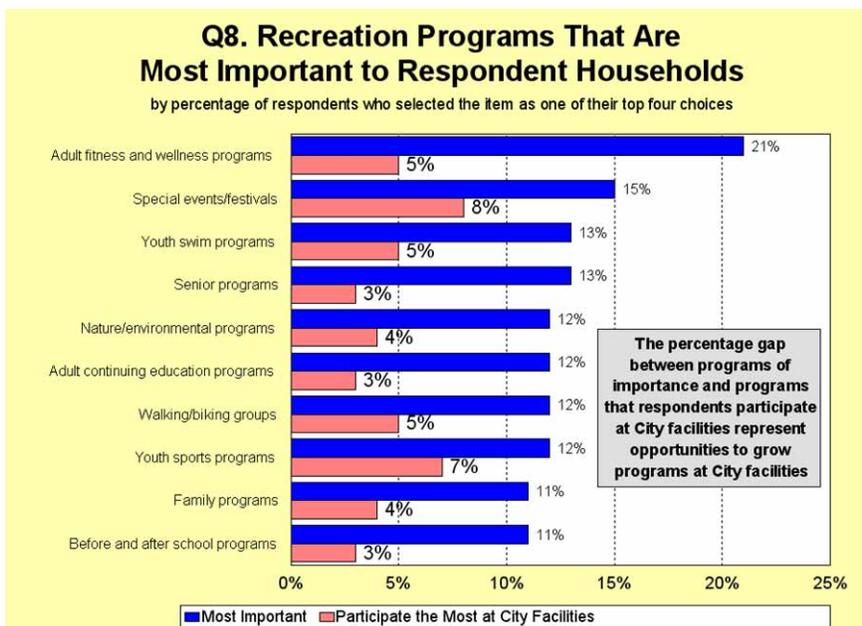
Figure 1.3.6.b

1.3.7 DISTANCE WILLING TO TRAVEL TO VISIT A NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS

From a list of four options, respondents were asked to indicate how far they would be willing to travel to visit a neighborhood park. Sixty-three percent (63%) of respondents would travel at least 1 mile to visit a _neighborhood_ park. Thirty-eight (38%) of respondents would travel at least 2 miles.

Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents would travel at least 2 miles to visit a _community_ park. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents would travel more than 3 miles to visit a community park.
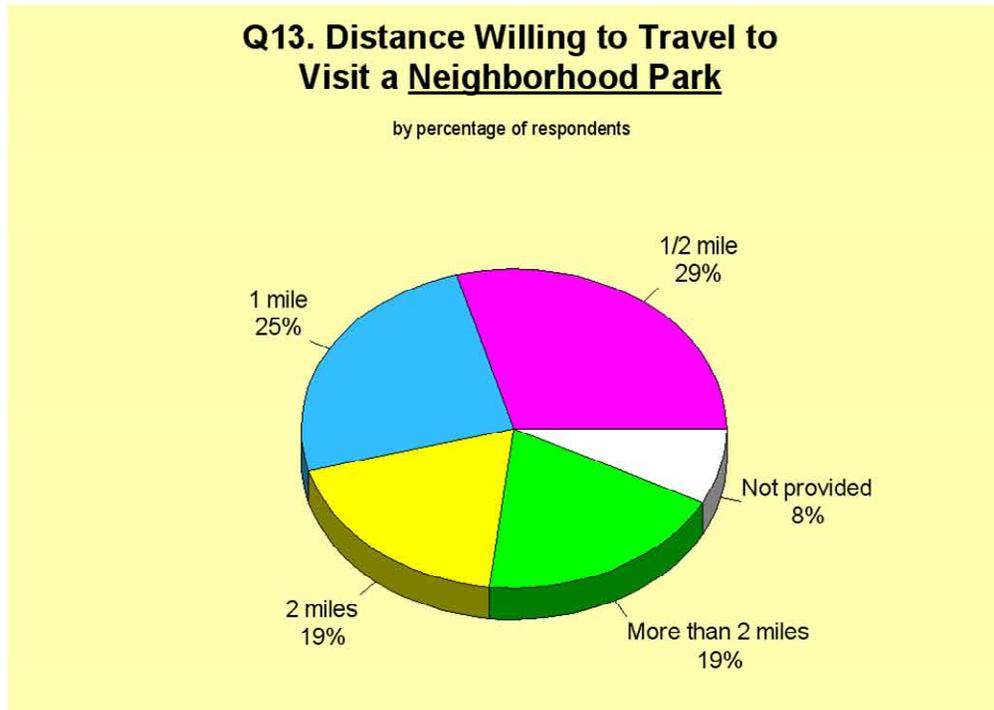
Figure 1.3.7.a

Figure 1.3.7.b

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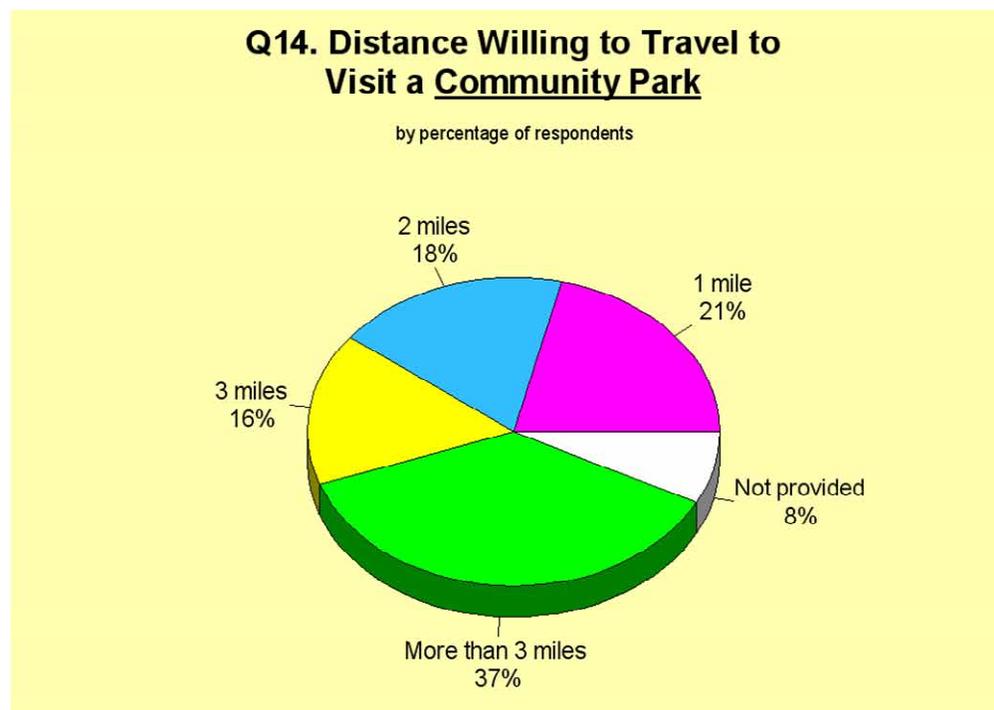
1.3.8 SUPPORT FOR ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE PARKS, RECREATION, & OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

From a list of 17 options, respondents were asked to indicate how supportive they are of various actions the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department could take to improve the parks, recreation, and open space system. More than 50% of respondents are very supportive of the City of Los Angeles taking steps to improve the parks, recreation, and open space system. Four responses were given by more than 50% of respondents: fix-up/repair existing park buildings/recreation centers (59%), upgrade existing neighborhood and community parks (58%), fix-up/repair existing swimming pools (54%), and upgrade existing youth/adult athletic fields (52%) were identified as the most important actions respondents would support with city tax dollars.
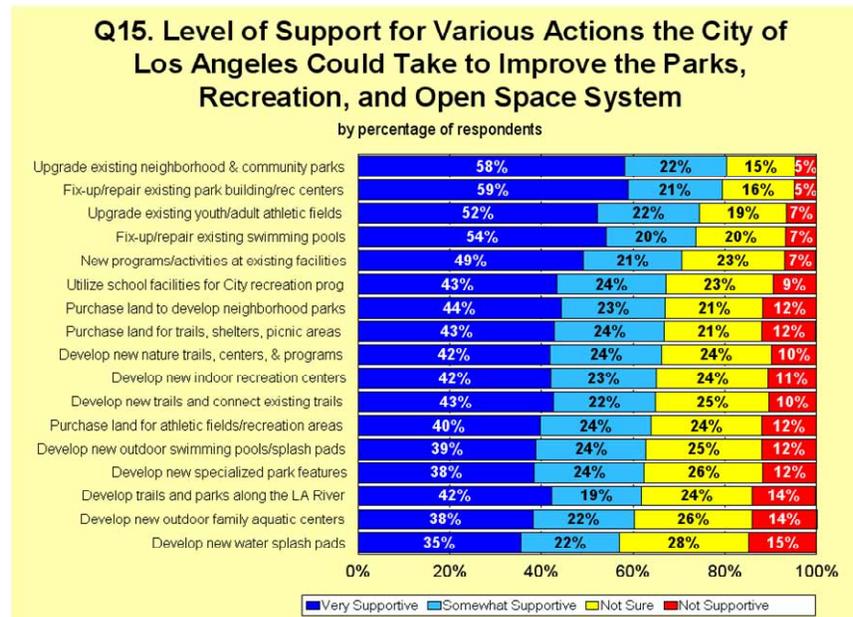
Figure 1.3.8.a

Figure 1.3.8.b

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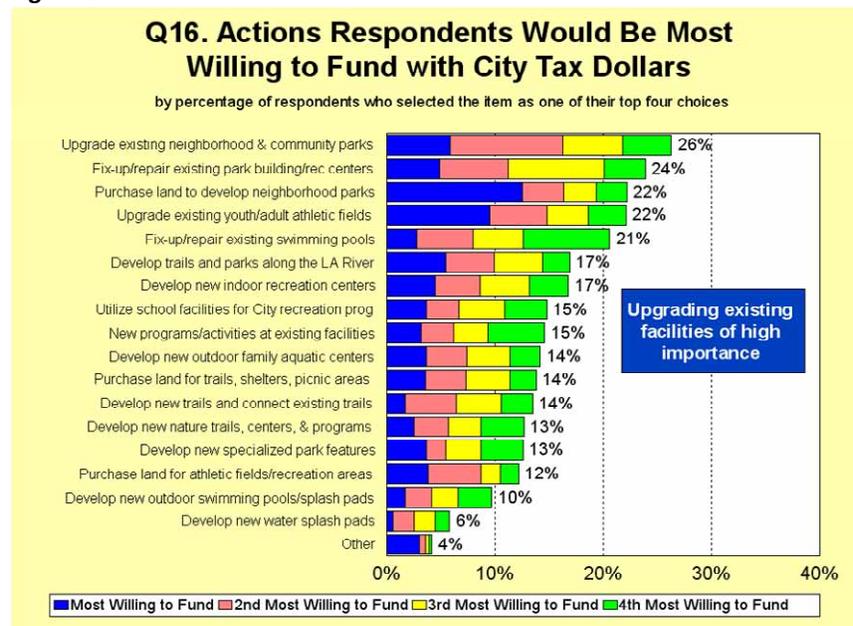
1.4 DEMOGRAPHIC AND TRENDS ANALYSIS

The Demographic Analysis provides an understanding of the population characteristics of the potential Los Angeles Recreation and Park participatory base. This analysis demonstrates the overall size of the total population by specific age segment, race and ethnicity, and economic status and spending power of the residents through household income statistics.

1.4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Population is a measurement of four unique components, each made up of two counteracting forces – births and deaths, and in-migration (movement of persons into the jurisdiction) and out-migration (movement of persons out of a jurisdiction). The population measurement most responsible for the swell in the City population is in-migration.

1.4.2 METHODOLOGY

Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in August 2008 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2000 Census and demographic projections for 2008 and 2013 as estimated by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for projected 2018 and 2023 demographics.

1.4.3 TOTAL POPULATION

The City of Los Angeles has grown at a relatively flat steady annual rate since 2000. Using the 2000 Census as the benchmark, when the City's population was slightly less than 3,695,000, Los Angeles has experienced a 0.9% annual increase in population. Currently, the City has an estimated population of 3,966,799 persons. This slight increase in total population signifies that the typical movement of

Figure 1.4.3

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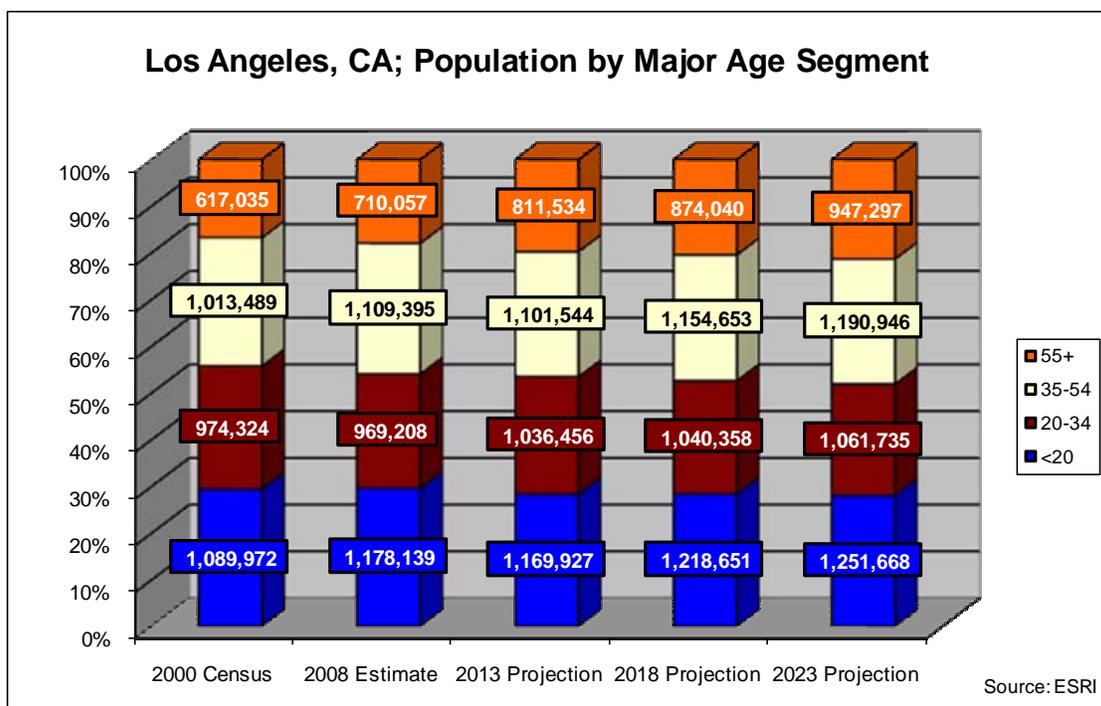
populations from the large urban core to suburban areas – a shift many large U.S. cities have experienced – was most likely offset by a migration of persons into the City. The population outflow and inflow is evident in a 2007 Census report, which conveys that the bordering metropolitan area of Riverside/San Bernardino absorbed the largest number of domestic migrants in the United States. Robert Bruegmann, a professor of architecture and urban planning at the University of Illinois, reports that larger, urban cities mask this out-migration pattern to a certain extent with immigration.

Los Angeles experiences growth patterns similar to the State of California. During much of this same period (2000 to 2007) the State's population growth was estimated to grow at a rate of 7.9% overall (1.1% annual rate) – an increase of 2,681,567 persons from 2000 (estimated population of 33,871,648) to 2007 (estimated population of 36,553,215).

Population categorization by major age segment illustrates a relatively even age distribution among persons under the age of 55. However, when compared to the national census findings population composition by age segment, Los Angeles' population of persons 55 and above are 5.1% less than the nation's benchmark. Currently, more than half of the population is under the age of 35 (2,147,317 persons 34 & under; 3,966,799 total persons – 54.1%) and the largest single age group in the City is persons aged less than 20 years (1,178,139 persons less than 20; 3,966,799 total persons – 29.7%). These age segment compositions result in the City having a median age of 32.4, 4 years less than the national benchmark.

1.4.4 POPULATION GROWTH

Population growth is projected to continue at a slightly lower annual rate over the next five years; Los Angeles is projected to grow at an annual growth rate of 0.77% between 2008 and 2013, resulting in a total projected population for the City of 4,119,462 persons in 2013.

While all but three of the age segments are expected to grow in number in the next five years, it is projected that the City's largest increases will be among the young adults and mature adult segments. The five age segments with the largest percentage growth from 2008 to 2013 are projected to be:

- 55 – 64 years of age; 19.5% five year increase (341,145 to 407,827 persons)
- 20 – 24 years of age; 19.2% five year increase (321,311 to 383,110 persons)
- 85+ years of age; 18.7% five year increase (55,535 to 65,911 persons)
- 65 – 74 years of age; 12.7% five year increase (186,440 to 210,093 persons)
- 45 – 54 years of age; 7.5% five year increase (509,099 to 547,064 persons)

Three of the top five ranked age segments in terms of percent growth from 2008 to 2013 (55-64, 85+ and 65-74) contribute to the 55+ age segment (orange block in Figure 1.4.3). This segment of mature adults is expected to experience the greatest real growth (total population) and percentage growth (14.3% growth; 101,477 total persons) in the short term. However, in terms of composition and percentage makeup of the total population, it is projected that 80.3% of the population will be under the age of 55 in 2013.

Los Angeles, CA; Population Growth Trends

2023 Projection	4,451,647
2018 Projection	4,287,704
2013 Projection	4,119,462
2008 Estimate	3,966,800
2000 Census	3,694,820

- 1,000,000 2,000,000 3,000,000 4,000,000 5,000,000

Source: ESRI
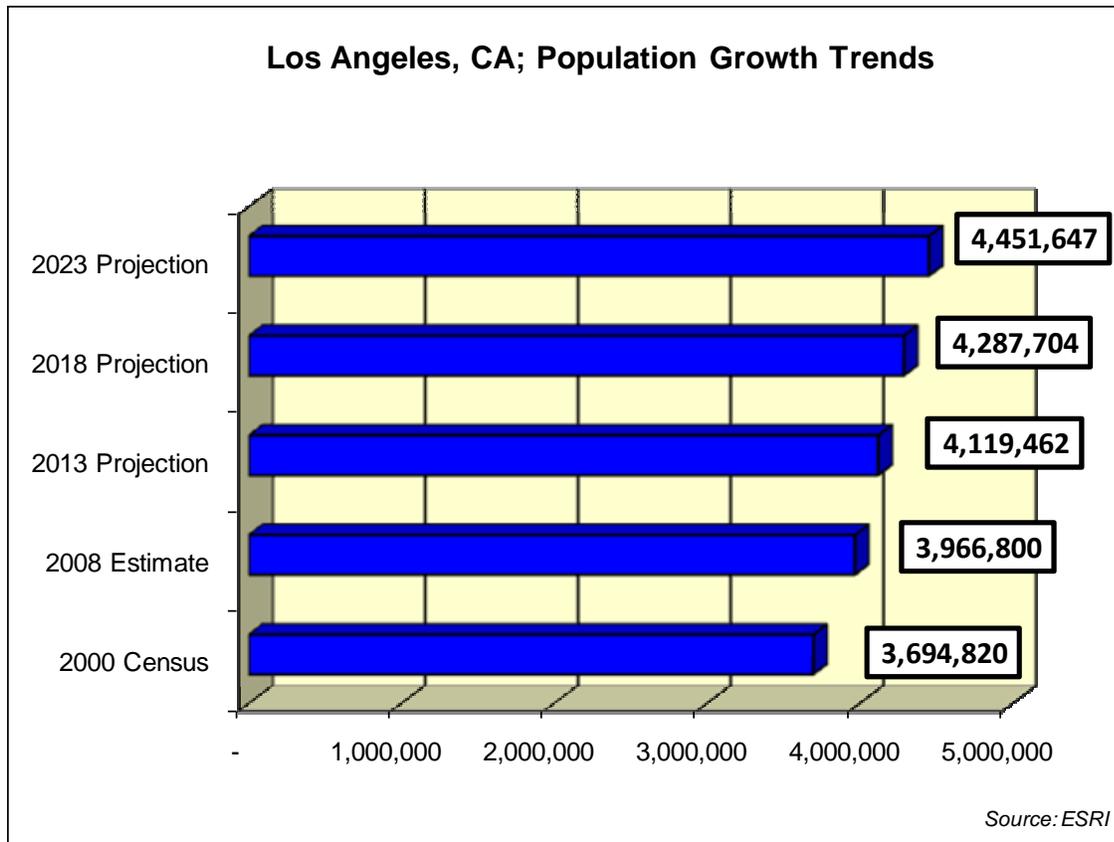
Figure 1.4.4

1.4.5 GENDER

Similar to the rest of the nation, gender distribution of the City's population is nearly equal. It is projected to remain constant throughout the next five, ten, and fifteen year study periods.

Typically, when analyzing the population by gender, trends reveal that as the population increases in age, the female share of the population increases. Analyzing this pattern indicates a potential market geared toward the mature females may exist.

Men continue to outnumber women with regard to gender participatory trends although the gap has begun to decrease – 63.7% of women participate in an activity at least once per year as compared to 64.2% of men.

While men and women share a desire for many of the same activities, men claim to participate in their favorite activities more often than women in any ninety-day span. With more women comprising a larger portion of the general populace during the mature stages of the lifecycle, but also participating in recreational activities further into adulthood, a relatively new market has appeared over the last two decades. This mature female demographic is opting for the less team oriented activities which dominate the female youth and much of the male recreational environment, and instead are shifting more towards a diverse selection of individual participant activities.

1.4.6 RACE AND ETHNICITY

The City of Los Angeles has a very diverse population. The majority, fifty-seven percent (56.9%), of the populace is classified as non-white (Figure 1.4.6.a). Each of the four major racial categories tracked by the U.S. government is represented by at least 10% of the total population. Since the 2000 Census, the percentage of persons classified as Asian, "Some Other Race" or "Two or More Races" increased exponentially as compared to all other races, experiencing gains of 16.3% 21.3% and 25.1%, respectively. The white, black, and American Indian races all declined over the same period. Increased population in each of the individual races except those classified as white and black are expected over the next five years (Figure 1.4.6.b).

Los Angeles, CA; Population By Race (2008)

Legend:
- White Alone
- Black/African American Alone
- American Indian Alone
- Asian or Pacific Islander Alone
- Some Other Race
- Two or More Races

43%, 6%, 29%, 11%, 1%, 10%

Source: ESRI

Figure 1.4.6.a

Los Angeles, CA; Population By Race (2013)

Legend:
- White Alone
- Black/African American Alone
- American Indian Alone
- Asian or Pacific Islander Alone
- Some Other Race
- Two or More Races

7%, 41%, 31%, 11%, 1%, 9%

Source: ESRI

Figure 1.4.6.b

The federal government considers race and Hispanic origin as two separate and distinct concepts. This process for capturing race and ethnicity began with Census 2000. To maintain data integrity and present demographic data in a standardized format for comparison purposes, PROS adheres to the federal standards for collecting and presenting data on race and Hispanic origin as established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in October 1997. The OMB defines Hispanic or Latino as "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. Origin can be defined as the heritage, nationality group, or lineage of an individual.

Persons of any race in combination with being classified as being of Hispanic or Latino origin account for more than 50% of the current population (52.4%; 2,076,620 persons). The Hispanic/Latino population grew by 21% from the 2000 Census – an annual rate of 2.6%. This growth is projected to continue, albeit at a slightly lower (2.0%) annual rate over the next five years (Figure 1.4.6.c).

Population by Race and Ethnicity/Origin; Los Angeles, California

	2000 Census	2008 Estimate	2013 Projection	2018 Projection	2023 Projection
White Alone	1,732,871	1,711,675	1,697,219	1,683,850	1,670,181
Black/African American Alone	413,820	396,680	383,110	372,110	360,401
American Indian Alone	29,559	27,768	28,836	27,937	27,581
Asian or Pacific Islander Alone	376,872	438,332	472,091	510,034	546,823
Some Other Race	949,569	1,151,959	1,263,440	1,388,421	1,509,677
Two or More Races	192,131	240,388	274,768	305,354	336,987
Total Population	**3,694,820**	**3,966,801**	**4,119,464**	**4,287,706**	**4,451,651**
Hispanic or Latino Origin	1,718,091	2,076,620	2,286,303	2,508,932	2,727,990
% of Population - Hispanic/Latino	46.5%	52.4%	55.5%	58.5%	61.3%

Figure 1.4.6.c

Historically ethnic groups in cities in the United States have been strongly regionalized and urbanized. According to the 2000 Census, although pockets of demographic uniformity persist, many areas within the City of Los Angeles since the 1940's have experienced increased levels of racial and ethnic diversity creating a more consistent racial and ethnic salad within the city. [i]Different ethnic groups have different needs when it comes to recreation facilities and programming. These needs must be addressed regionally and within multicultural communities.

1.4.7 HOUSEHOLDS AND INCOME

Currently, Los Angeles has an estimated 1,331,498 households, equating to an average household size of 2.92 persons. The 2000 Census of Population and Housing indicates that family households in the City account for 62.6% of all households, with 41.9% of family households made up of married-couple families. Non-family households account for 37.4% of households. This percentage of family versus non-family households is similar to U.S. averages for household characteristics.

The estimated 2008 median household income in Los Angeles is $47,852, up from $36,818 (a 30% increase) reported in the 2000 Census (see Figure 1.4.7.a). This represents the earnings of all persons age 16 years or older living together in a housing unit.

Los Angeles, CA; Income Characteristics
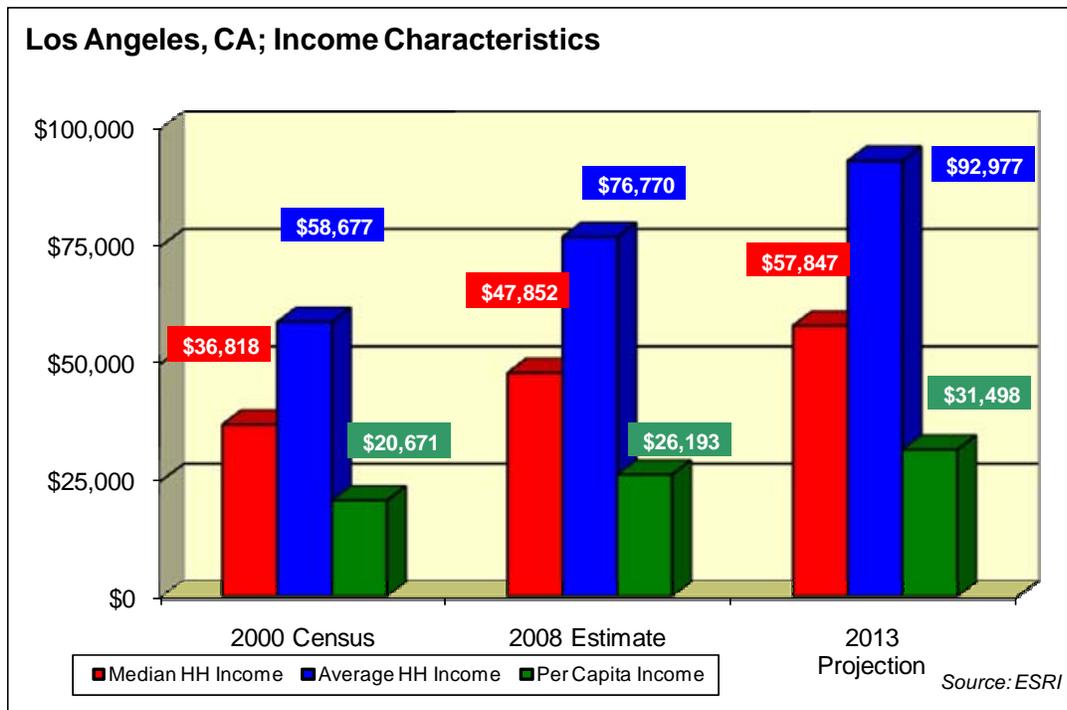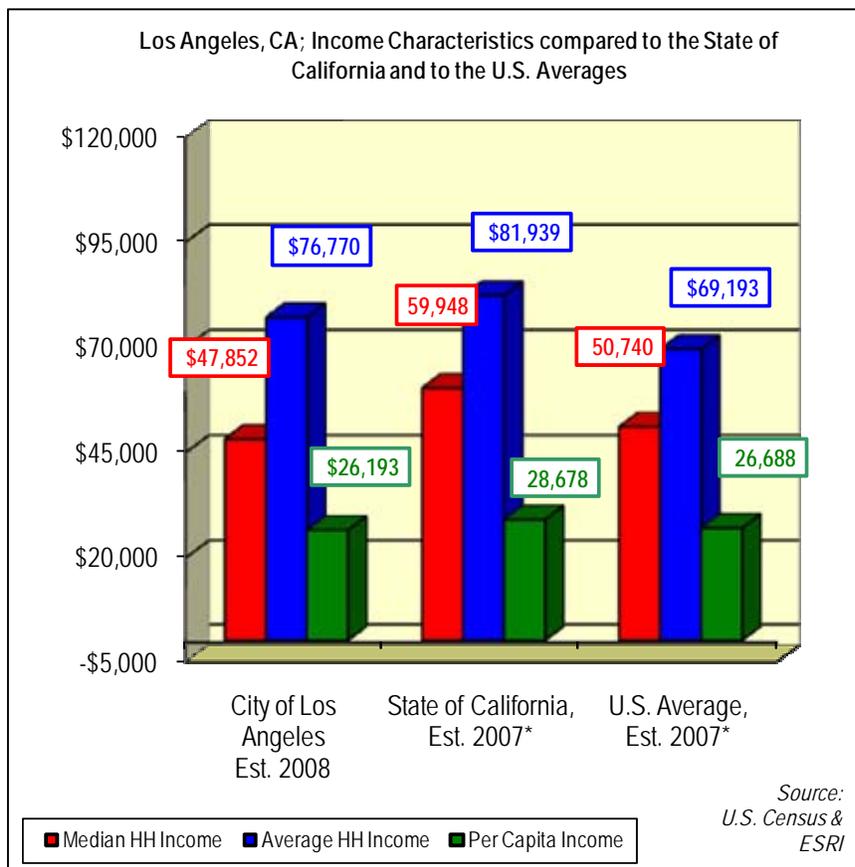
Figure 1.4.7.a

Figure 1.4.7.b

Although a healthy increase has been realized in both the median and average household income (31% increase in average household income; from $58,677 in 2000 to $76,770 in 2008), both figures, when compared to U.S. averages, would imply that the purchasing power of the average Los Angeles resident is lower than his or her counterpart elsewhere. This is especially true when comparing Los Angeles residents to counterparts outside of high cost of living states like California. It is assumed that higher cost of living negates much of the excess income gained over the reported 2000 Census totals, affectively reducing the purchasing power for discretionary goods.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in October 2008 that annual consumer prices increased by a total of 4.5% for the year ending September 30, 2008 in the Los Angeles region. When compared to the national average, the Los Angeles area Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased 0.4% less. The CPI represents changes in prices of all goods and services purchased for consumption by urban households. Regional Commissioner Richard Holden noted that the two sectors contributing the most to the annual gain were the transportation and housing sectors. The energy index experienced an annual increase of 21.5% while transportation prices jumped 9.3%. All other sectors, including housing, food and beverage, apparel, education and communication, recreation, and other goods and services also experienced annual increases.

At the end of 2008 the national financial turmoil compounded by budget deficits at the City and State levels have created an atmosphere where limited resources must be stretched even further and the securing of alternative funding sources will be even more critical. Unemployment is at its highest levels in decades, the City's tax base has decreased, many homeowners are facing foreclosure and long standing companies are facing failure. Traditional sources of corporate funding are much less likely than in the recent past based on the current economic situation.

Ultimately, the City Park System faces the same challenges of all parks and recreation providers nationwide – county, city, state, and even private providers – providing a consistent and quality experience for a constituency in an atmosphere of increasing costs and competition.

1.5 RECREATION AND SPORT TRENDS

Information released by American Sports Data, Inc.'s (ASD) *2008 Superstudy of Sports Participation* reveals that most of the popular sport and recreational activities include swimming, walking, jogging, bicycling, and weight training. Most of these activities appeal to both young and old alike, can be done in most environments, can be enjoyed regardless of level of skill, and have minimal economic barriers to entry. These popular activities also have appeal because of the social aspect: people enjoy walking and biking together, and although fitness activities are mainly self directed, many can offer a degree of camaraderie.

Swimming and walking have remained two of the most popular activities of the past decade. Participation rates in swimming have remained steady over the course of the study period in which it was tracked (1998 to 2007) and recorded by ASD. While there has been a slight decline of nearly ten percent (9.5%) in total participation since 1998, with over 87.2 million Americans swimming at least once during 2007, swimming remains the most popular recreational and sporting activity in the United States. Walking overtook swimming in participation over the last year – for 2007, a reported 87.3 million Americans walked at least once.

Among the innovative and fresh fitness activities, some experienced growth simply because they are "hot," a new activity which invigorated fitness and leisure time. However, as with most fads, participation is often relegated to a specific region or area. Wakeboarding, paintball, wall climbing, mountain biking, BMX biking, and snowboarding are all part of the "extreme sports" category which have shown growth trends; typically, these activities are targeted towards and participated in by the younger generation. Paintball in particular is getting increasingly popular as seen when over 15,000 participants from all over the country participated in the inaugural Paintball World Cup at Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando, Florida in 2006.

From a traditional team sport standpoint, basketball ranks highest among all sports in terms of participatory base with 32.3 million persons reportedly participating in 2007. Surprisingly, racquetball has experienced a resurgence in recent years reaching participatory numbers last seen in 1998. Following an all time high in participation reported in 2006, ice hockey saw a slight decline in popularity in 2007 but still outpaces all other study years in terms of total participatory base. Two sports experiencing participation and growth never before seen are lacrosse and tackle football – both have seen double digit growth; lacrosse has outright exploded.

Nationwide trends and the sheer number of events held demonstrate the high growth of endurance running events like the marathons, half-marathons, biathlons, triathlons and ironmen races. The annual National Duathlon Festival held in Richmond, VA in partnership with USA Triathlon is an example of the growing body of such hybrid events that are being organized successfully all over the country.

1.5.1 RECREATION AND SPORT TRENDS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

The white population as a whole participates in a wide range of activities, including both team and individual sports on land and water, however, participation data illustrates that the white populace has a stronger affinity for outdoor non-traditional sports.

Ethnic minority groups in the United States are strongly regionalized and urbanized, with the exception of Native Americans, and these trends are projected to continue. Different ethnic groups have different needs when it comes to recreational activities. Ethnic minority groups, along with Generations X and Y, are coming in ever-greater contact with white middle-class baby-boomers with different recreational habits and preferences.   This can be a sensitive subject since the generational gap and ethnic

preferences have the potential to magnify numerous differences between these groups and baby-boomers. This trend is projected to increase as more baby-boomers begin to retire and both the minority and youth populations continue to increase.

Hispanic and Latino Americans have strong cultural and community traditions with an emphasis placed on the extended family, often gathering in large recreational groups where multiple activities geared towards all age segments of the group may participate. Large group pavilions with picnicking amenities and multi-purpose fields often used for soccer games are integral in the communal pastime shared by many Hispanics.

The black population has historically participated in active team sports, most notably football, basketball, and baseball. This group exhibits a strong sense of neighborhood and local community identity through large special events and gatherings with extended family and friends including family reunions and cultural events. Outdoor and water based activities, such as, hiking, water skiing, rafting, and mountain biking, have not been popular recreational activities. This may be an issue of lack of access or proximity in addition to cultural characteristics. Where individual sports have long term organized programs in existing parks they can serve as regional resources. The Arthur Ashe Tennis Center and Venus and Serena Williams Tennis Camp located at Rancho Cienega park in mid-City Los Angeles is an example of a facility and program that does not conform to the general recreational characteristics of Black Americans.

The Asian American population is composed of sub groups from 27 different countries with differing cultural attitudes towards parks and recreation. Previous studies have found that Asian Americans prefer family activities and facilities that are recognized as being very safe for their children. This group is especially interested in children's programs that are oriented towards academic enrichment. [ii] As a group with higher income and academic achievement than other minorities this group has not participated in sports as a way to achieve economic advancement. There have been so few Asian American athletic role models that most youth did not identify with sports, which reduced their desire to participate. This trend is definitely changing with exceptionally successful professional athletes such as Michelle Kwan, Yao Ming and Tiger Woods illustrating potential success as athletes and businesspeople. [iii]Traditional team sports, outdoor and water based activities have not been popular with this group.

1.5.2 FITNESS AND SPORTS TRENDS

The American Sports Data, Inc.'s (ASD) *2008 Superstudy of Sports Participation* (Superstudy) was utilized to evaluate national sport and fitness participatory trends. ASD has been an unequaled leader in sports and fitness participation trends for over two decades; the Superstudy is based on a national consumer mail survey of 30,000 adults and children. The 2008 Superstudy of Sports Participation survey represents participatory data for the twelve consecutive months preceding December 31, 2007. Using the *2008 Superstudy of Sports Participation*, the following national participation trends were identified for core activities – both fitness and recreational. The Superstudy compares changes in participation during the past one (1), five (5), eight (8), and twenty (20) years. Although the one (1) year change may indicate a future trend or current fad, it is the 5, 8, and 20 year data that is representative of ongoing trends. This report includes analysis of short term and long term participation changes.

CARDIOVASCULAR AND GENERAL FITNESS ACTIVITIES

The popularity of fitness in the United States continues to grow. During this decade, Americans continue to devote around thirty billion activity days to physical fitness. Interest in "softer" forms of exercise is growing nationwide, especially with activities that integrate mind and body aspects into

exercise routines (see Figure 1.5.2.a). Pilates is coming off a strong one year increase in participation of 15.6%; even more impressive is the 530% increase in participation from 2000 through 2007. Fitness bicycling and stair climbing (machine) have both experienced considerable declines in both the short term (one year) as well as eight and ten year periods. Although not increasing by leaps and bounds, stalwarts in the fitness community such as stationary cycling, fitness walking, running/jogging and treadmill exercise each command participatory bases of more than 30 million persons.

Participation in traditional aerobics classes has witnessed a rebirth over the past four years; however, this participation remains considerably lower than what was seen in the 1990's. This downward trend has been attributed to multiple factors, including the aging of the fitness population and their need for less strenuous form of cardiovascular exercise and the sudden popularity and increase in Yoga and Pilates type of fitness activities.

Cardiovascular fitness activities which have never reported a decline in participation from one period to the next include: aquatic exercise, running/jogging, Pilates training, treadmill exercise, and elliptical motion trainer.

RESISTANCE TRAINING FITNESS ACTIVITIES

Resistance training appeals to a wide range of participants, from youth involved in sports, to fitness enthusiasts interested in overall conditioning, to older adults committed to maintaining independent lifestyles. Resistance training in its earliest forms has been around for centuries, but beginning in the 1960s, gradual introduction of exercise machines into the still-rare strength training gyms would begin to revolutionize the way Americans viewed resistance training. Since the late 1990's, an increasing number of women have taken up resistance training, leading to the latest industry phenomenon of women only and express workout facilities. Participation in free weight use and resistance machines (shown in Figure 1.5.2.a) demonstrates the nation's enthusiasm for resistance training fitness participation.

Free weight participation had never experienced a decline until the last five year study period. Free weight usage had grown from one period to the next (5, 8, 10, and 20 year periods) by no less than 22%. Currently, it is reported that more than 53.1 million Americans utilize free weights in their exercise routine at least once per year.

Weight resistance machines have remained popular for decades. After experiencing 19% (8 year), 33% (10 year), and 97% (20 year) growth, the one year trend from 2006 to 2007 depicts flat growth. However, resistance machines still generate a large number of participants – nearly 30 million reported in 2007.

National Participatory Trends; by Activity	1987	1998	2000	2003	2006	2007	% Change, '03-'07	% Change, '00-'07	% Change, '98-'07	% Change, '87-'07
Aerobic Dancing	21,225	21,017	17,326	16,451	16,061	17,373	5.6%	0.3%	-17.3%	-18.1%
Aquatic Exercise	n/a	6,685	6,367	7,141	6,629	7,209	1.0%	13.2%	7.8%	n/a
Fitness Bicycling	n/a	13,556	11,435	12,048	11,183	10,410	-13.6%	-9.0%	-23.2%	n/a
Fitness Walking	27,164	36,395	36,207	37,945	39,252	37,258	-1.8%	2.9%	2.4%	37.2%
Running/Jogging	37,136	34,962	33,680	36,152	40,464	39,563	9.4%	17.5%	13.2%	6.5%
Fitness Swimming	16,912	15,258	14,060	15,899	15,744	14,585	-8.3%	3.7%	-4.4%	-13.8%
Pilates Training	n/a	n/a	1,739	9,469	9,393	10,949	15.6%	529.6%	n/a	n/a
Yoga/Tai Chi	n/a	5,708	7,400	13,371	13,878	11,081	-17.1%	49.7%	94.1%	n/a
Free Weights	22,553	41,266	44,499	51,567	54,650	53,147	3.1%	19.4%	28.8%	135.7%
Weight Resistant Machines	15,261	22,519	25,182	29,996	31,291	29,986	0.0%	19.1%	33.2%	96.5%
Stationary Cycling	30,765	30,791	28,795	30,952	30,439	30,613	-1.1%	6.3%	-0.6%	-0.5%
Treadmill Exercise	4,396	37,073	40,816	45,572	49,124	49,967	9.6%	22.4%	34.8%	1036.6%
Stair Climbing, Machine Exercising	2,121	18,609	15,828	14,321	13,664	11,945	-16.6%	-24.5%	-35.8%	463.2%
Elliptical Motion Trainer	n/a	3,863	6,176	13,415	19,256	22,388	66.9%	262.5%	479.5%	n/a

NOTE: Participation listed in 000's of participants

Figure 1.5.2.a

The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks began developing outdoor resistance training equipment in existing parks in 2007. These facilities have enjoyed great popularity over a wide age span and provide opportunities for social interaction.

AQUATIC ACTIVITY

According the ASD survey findings, one-third (32.3%) of persons in the United States aged six and above swim at least once per year. Nationally, the average swimmer swam 32.5 days during 2007. Of all swimmers that swim at least once per year, 33.1% are under the age of eighteen. Not surprisingly, youth have the highest participation rates of all swimmers. Generally speaking, the older a person, the less likely he/she is to swim.

Participation rates in swimming (Figure 1.5.2.b) have remained steady over each of the study periods; although both recreational and fitness swimming have both lost a percentage of their respective participatory base, recreational swimming is the second most participated in activity (87.3 million persons), trailing only recreational walking. Although fitness swimming is a niche market, the participatory base is larger than some "hot" recreation trends including Pilates, yoga/Tai Chi, and aquatic exercise. Aquatic exercise (Figure 1.5.2.b), however, is the only one of the three aquatic activities highlighted in this report that has not experienced a decline during any one study period.

Aquatic exercise provides an opportunity for a less stressful form of physical activity, allowing similar gains and benefits to land based exercise, including aerobic fitness, resistance training, flexibility, and better balance. Doctors recommend aquatic exercise for injury rehabilitation, elderly patients, and patients with bone or joint problems due to the significant reduction of stress placed on weight-bearing joints, bones, and muscles, and the effect that water pressure provides in reducing swelling of injuries. More than 7.2 million persons participated in aquatic exercise in 2007 (Figure 1.5.2.b); the overwhelming majority of participants are female.

National Participatory Trends; by Activity	1987	1998	2000	2003	2006	2007	% Change, '03-'07	% Change, '00-'07	% Change, '98-'07	% Change, '87-'07
Aquatic Exercise	n/a	6,685	6,367	7,141	6,629	7,209	1.0%	13.2%	7.8%	n/a
Fitness Swimming	16,912	15,258	14,060	15,899	15,744	14,585	-8.3%	3.7%	-4.4%	-13.8%
Recreational Swimming	n/a	94,371	93,976	96,429	94,302	87,285	-9.5%	-7.1%	-7.5%	n/a

NOTE: Participation listed in 000's of participants

Figure 1.5.2.b

TRADITIONAL "BAT AND BALL" AND TEAM SPORTS

Traditional sports, often referred to as the social glue that bonds the country, play an important role in American society. By teaching important values of teamwork and discipline while stressing physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle, sports have been the building block for many Americans.

The sport that evokes more nostalgia among Americans than any other is baseball. So many people play the game as children and grow to become devout followers of the professional game that it has become known as "the national pastime"; however, based on participation, baseball has experienced a 25% decrease in participation between 2000 and 2007, and a 46% decrease over the 20-year study period (Figure 1.5.2.c). Currently it is estimated that slightly more than 8.1 million persons participate in baseball per year.

Basketball, a game originating in the U.S., is actually the most participated in sport among the traditional "bat and ball" sports with more than thirty-two million (32.3 million) estimated participants. This popularity can be attributed to the ability to compete with relatively small number of participants, the limited number of supplies needed to participate, and the limited space requirements necessary – the

last of which make basketball the only traditional sport that can be played at the majority of American dwellings. However, as is the case for most traditional sports, basketball has experienced declines in each of the study periods analyzed – 9% five year decline and a 24% 10-year decline (Figure 1.5.2.c).

Soccer (outdoor) has also been on a downward trend since 2003; nearly 11% of the participation base has eroded in the five year study period (Figure 1.5.2.c). Soccer is still a very popular youth sport with over 14 million participants nationwide. Its popularity grew swiftly through the 1980's and 1990's due to the limited requirements for facilities and equipment compared to other team sports. Sports that are experiencing marked growth in the United States include lacrosse, which has had the largest increase in popularity. Although a relatively modest 1.7 million American's participate, lacrosse increased by 51.1% over the 5-year study period, and an impressive 128% participatory increase over the 10-year period. Ice hockey (20.2% increase), tackle football (17.5% increase), racquetball (17% increase), fast-pitch softball (14% increase) all have seen 5 and 10-year participation increases. All activities except racquetball, a sport which has experienced resurgence, have never had a study period in which there was a decrease in participation.

National Participatory Trends; by Activity	1987	1998	2000	2003	2006	2007	% Change, '03-'07	% Change, '00-'07	% Change, '98-'07	% Change, '87-'07
Baseball	15,098	12,318	10,881	10,885	9,039	8,191	-24.7%	-24.7%	-33.5%	-45.7%
Basketball	35,737	42,417	37,552	35,439	30,971	32,301	-8.9%	-14.0%	-23.8%	-9.6%
Ice Hockey	2,393	2,915	2,761	2,789	3,680	3,353	20.2%	21.4%	15.0%	40.1%
Football, Touch	20,292	17,382	15,456	14,119	14,845	13,472	-4.6%	-12.8%	-22.5%	-33.6%
Football, Tackle	n/a	n/a	5,673	5,751	6,246	6,759	17.5%	19.1%	n/a	n/a
Gymnastics	n/a	6,224	6,689	5,189	6,708	4,983	-4.0%	-25.5%	-19.9%	n/a
Lacrosse	n/a	926	751	1,132	1,439	1,710	51.1%	127.7%	84.7%	n/a
Soccer, Outdoor	n/a	n/a	n/a	16,133	14,962	14,396	-10.8%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Softball, Fast Pitch	n/a	3,702	3,795	3,487	3,396	3,974	14.0%	4.7%	7.3%	n/a
Softball, Slow Pitch	n/a	19,407	17,585	14,410	12,220	13,150	-8.7%	-25.2%	-32.2%	n/a
Volleyball, Court	n/a	n/a	n/a	11,008	11,497	8,706	-20.9%	n/a	n/a	n/a
Volleyball, Sand/Beach	n/a	10,572	8,762	7,454	8,056	7,699	3.3%	-12.1%	-27.2%	n/a
Racquetball	10,395	5,853	5,155	4,875	5,109	5,705	17.0%	10.7%	-2.5%	-45.1%
Tennis	21,147	16,937	16,598	17,325	18,737	17,561	1.4%	5.8%	3.7%	-17.0%

Figure 1.5.2.c

EXTREME/NON-TRADITIONAL SPORTS

Extreme sports blasted onto the scene in 1995 with the first airing of the Extreme Games, now simply known as the X Games, by ESPN. The national broadcast of the summer and winter X Games have introduced these extreme sports to the general public – including freestyle BMX, freestyle motorcross, surfing, skiing, snowboarding, and, of course, skateboarding –instantly creating new markets. According to ESPN, the X Games remain the most watched sports show among males aged 12 to 34. Extreme sports have had the ability to maintain a user base well beyond the ages of most traditional sports, a trend made evident by the popularity of the 40-year old X Game star Tony Hawk of skateboarding and BMX fame.

Although most activities defined as extreme sports for this report have fewer than 9 million participants nationwide, more than half (6 of 11) have experienced 10-year growth. However, only two of the activities have been able to sustain some of the early gains and also post a 5-year growth percentage – kayaking (144% 10-year growth; 35% 5-year growth) and skateboarding (62% 10-year growth; 5% 5-year growth). The National Sporting Goods Association estimated that over 10 million people skateboarded at least once in 2007. The Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks as well as most neighboring cities have been developing skate parks throughout the region in an effort to address the demand for these facilities.

It could be expected that with the inclusion of BMX biking into the 2008 Olympic Games, this sport may increase its participation base. This is one of the few activities analyzed in this Category that spans in age segment participation from early childhood to early- to mid-adulthood.

Paintball experienced sizeable leaps in participation during the early parts of this decade, but has since shown a 1-year and 5-year decline. One factor that enabled the industry to grow is the increasing number of paintball courses in metropolitan areas that allows the user to participate in multiple courses with each featuring a different set-up or scenario. The considerable entry cost to the sport has also been abated with the availability of equipment rentals.

The outdoor extreme sports – mountain biking, climbing, canoeing, kayaking, and rafting – all have a more mature audience. As with most sports, the level of participatory risk determines the extreme element; canoeing and kayaking are two of the least extreme of the outdoor extreme sports due to the lack of favorable waterways needed for the element of risk. Given Los Angeles' lack of waterways it is unlikely that kayaking will become a significant activity. Artificial wall climbing, inspired by mountain/rock climbing, but geared more towards the non-extremist, is the only extreme "outdoor" sport with an average age of participant below twenty (artificial wall climbing's average age is roughly 17 years).

Because most outdoor sports require specialized equipment and non-urban settings to participate, most have lower average participation days than other extreme sports. Nationwide participatory numbers are presented in Figure 1.5.2.d.

National Participatory Trends; by Activity	1987	1998	2000	2003	2006	2007	% Change, '03-'07	% Change, '00-'07	% Change, '98-'07	% Change, '87-'07
Martial Arts	n/a	5,368	5,722	6,883	6,184	6,162	-10.5%	7.7%	14.8%	n/a
Roller Hockey	n/a	3,876	3,287	2,718	1,217	917	-66.3%	-72.1%	-76.3%	n/a
Roller Skating, In-Line	n/a	32,010	29,024	19,233	14,869	10,106	-47.5%	-65.2%	-68.4%	n/a
Skateboarding	10,888	7,190	11,649	11,090	11,413	11,616	4.7%	-0.3%	61.6%	6.7%
Bicycling, BMX	n/a	n/a	3,977	3,365	2,129	3,053	-9.3%	-23.2%	n/a	n/a
Artificial Wall Climbiong	n/a	4,696	6,117	8,634	7,993	7,820	-9.4%	27.8%	66.5%	n/a
Paintball	n/a	5,923	7,121	9,835	10,159	8,815	-10.4%	23.8%	48.8%	n/a
Mountain Biking	1,512	8,611	7,854	6,940	5,196	5,617	-19.1%	-28.5%	-34.8%	271.5%
Mountain/Rock Climbing	n/a	2,004	1,947	2,169	2,253	2,122	-2.2%	9.0%	5.9%	n/a
Trail Running	n/a	5,249	5,232	6,109	5,911	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Canoeing	n/a	13,615	13,134	11,632	12,545	11,147	-4.2%	-15.1%	-18.1%	n/a
Kayaking	n/a	3,501	4,137	6,324	8,377	8,547	35.2%	106.6%	144.1%	n/a
Hiking (Day)	n/a	38,629	39,015	39,096	38,569	37,295	-4.6%	-4.4%	-3.5%	n/a

NOTE: Participation listed in 000's of participants

Figure 1.5.2.d

1.6 PARK, FACILITY, AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

1.6.1 PARK AND FACILITY ASSESSMENT

A tour of representative parks throughout the City was performed by the team and City staff. During this tour general observations included:

- General state and condition of buildings and facilities

- Compatibility with user groups

- Aesthetics and design

- Safety and security

- Public access

- Connectivity

- Program balance

The following is a summary of key findings from the on-site assessments:

SUMMARY FINDINGS:

- In general all of the parks visited were very well used. While many of the parks and facilities were older and showed signs of age, the level of maintenance was good, especially considering how heavily the parks are used. Most of the facilities could be described as being in a mature to declining lifecycle stage as opposed to being in the introduction or growth stage. This is partly a reflection of the particular parks visited which included very few newly constructed parks.

- Although a variety of parks types were visited, most exhibited an overbearing similarity in the design of the facilities. It appears that during the most active period of park development a series of standard designs were utilized for buildings and site facilities. More recently developed parks diverged with a welcome sense of originality. Parks developed in earlier periods exhibited buildings designed with attention to detail, context and scale, intended to fit into their neighborhood. Some buildings contained significant architectural elements such as fireplaces, terrazzo floors and other detailing suffering from lack of upkeep. The need for 'bulletproof' buildings, athletic facilities and site furnishings has sapped most signs of personality from the parks. Reluctance or inability to invest in relatively expensive retaining walls and terracing of hillside sites has reduced the useable area in some parks. Efforts to reduce maintenance in landscaped areas has produced a monotonous vocabulary of canopy trees and grass which further reduces the personality of the parks and does little to provide any benefits from natural areas.

- Ball and soccer fields were the most heavily used year round with swimming pools being heavily used during the summer months. Many of the recreational fields observed were in poor condition due to heavy use. Fields in better condition had the benefit of scheduled rest periods where other facilities were available nearby.

- Most park offices had limited visibility of the park, making it difficult to observe goings on in the park and contributing to security issues. The hidden offices also make visual contact with park staff more infrequent, contributing to the sense that the parks are poorly staffed.

- Among the parks toured, some parks appeared to have insufficient on-site parking. Most of these parks did have adjacent on-street parking.

- Some parks had portions enclosed by chain link field fencing making pedestrian access difficult, and reducing the quality of the appearance.

- Entrances to the parks and the recreation centers were poorly identified. Little if any information about the park programs and facilities was posted outside the park buildings.

- Facility age and quality was variable within the system. All park buildings and facilities appeared to be heavily and efficiently used, in most cases every spare inch was utilized. This was most apparent during the summer months when summer camp adds full day programs and exponential growth to the daily schedule.

- Donated computer labs were available at some facilities. The supply of computers for afterschool programs, seniors or others who would like to do research is extremely inequitable throughout the system.

- Most of the parks observed had some picnic areas which are heavily used on the weekends. A number of the parks had extremely large picnic areas where reservations are required.

- Most parks had irrigation systems which needed repair which resulted in poor field conditions or other maintenance issues. The department has been working to upgrade outdated irrigation systems and install new weather smart irrigation controllers in order to reduce the amount of potable water used to irrigate the City's parks and facilities.

- The existing signage system is haphazard and should be expanded to include systematic directional, regulatory, information and interpretive signage.

- Infrastructure evaluations have been done by the department for each facility. As a whole the department's facilities are older, overused and in need of updating. The department is addressing these needs as funding and staffing permit.

1.6.2 PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

An assessment was performed of the City of Los Angeles Recreation and Parks Department's program offering of core programs. Utilizing a standard measurement tool, Recreation and Park management and staff collected the sampling of data for the assessment across all planning districts. The recreation program assessment offers an in-depth perspective of the recreation program offerings and helps to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, duplication of programs with other recreational service providers in the community, and determining future program offerings for residents.

The Consultant Team based these program findings and comments on program assessment forms. The Recreation and Park management and staff selected the core programs to be evaluated and entered the data into the program assessment matrix. This report addresses the program offerings from a systems perspective for the entire repertoire of programs, as well as individual program information. It identifies key issues and presents recommendations for these issues, while also offering recommendations to elevate the core programs to the next level.

The content of this section is organized as follows:

- Program assessment and overview

- Specific program information
- Pricing and cost recovery
- Strategic partnerships and volunteers

LIFECYCLE ANALYSIS

The program assessment included a lifecycle analysis by staff.   This assessment was not based on quantitative data, but based according to staff's knowledge of their program areas.   Most of the program areas have a good distribution of program lifecycles.   PROS recommends the majority of programs should occur within the introduction, take off, and growth stages.   Most of the programs offered by the Department are within those stages. Very few exist in mature or decline stages.

Specifically, all aquatics learn to swim programs are in the take off stage of their life cycle. Camps are 91% in the introduction, take off and growth stages. On the other hand, 80% of adult sports programs are in the saturated lifecycle.

CORE PROGRAMS

Based on PROS' extensive program management and program plan development, PROS believes in the importance of identifying core programs based on both current and future needs.   This assists in creating a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of striving to be all things to all people. The core program philosophy assists staff in focusing on the most potentially successful core programs.   Programs are categorized as core programs if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program has been provided for a long period of time
- Offered 3-4 sessions per year
- Wide demographic appeal
- Includes 5% or more of recreation budget
- Includes a tiered level of skill development
- Requires full time staff to manage the program area
- Has strong social value
- High level of customer interface exists
- High partnering capability
- Facilities are designed to support the program

According to the program assessment process, staff identified existing core program areas as:

- Adult Sports
- Youth Sports
- Aquatics Programming
- Seniors
- Youth Camps
- Child Care programs
- Performing Arts and Arts
- Preschool and After School Programs

PROGRAM GAPS

As part of the Needs Assessment process, a prioritized assessment of facilities and programs based on community survey data, community input, and consultant evaluation was performed. Based on this analysis, the top priority programs for the future include:

- Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs

- Special Events / Festivals
- Nature / Environmental Education Programs
- Walking / Biking Trails / Groups

Within the current program inventory, the Department has a very limited offering of nature related programs, environmental stewardship, or outdoor recreation programs. Given the stated community priorities, these program categories definitely need additional focus.

RECOMMENDED CORE PROGRAMS

The following list includes the current core programs as identified by staff; these core programs include:

- Adult Sports
- Youth Sports
- Aquatics Programming
- Seniors
- Youth Camps
- Child Care programs
- Performing Arts and Arts
- Preschool and After School Programs

Based on the prioritized needs, outdoor recreation programs for all age segments should be added to the core program offering. Currently, the Department offers the Class Parks Quest Program for youth; in an attempt to increase the service offering of the Department, this program should be expanded to include all age groups.

In addition to the new core programs, PROS recommends developing an additional age segment for active adult and senior programming. The designated age for seniors is a "floating" number for each of the various senior centers; one standard age should be consistently applied. This growing market should be differentiated into two age categories based on evolving trends – a 55-64 year age segment for active adults and 65+ age segment for mature or senior adults.

QUALITY APPROACHES TO RECREATION PROGRAMMING

The following is an inventory of best practices for recreation programming. Having all of these processes in place ensures a high quality and consistent experience for customers; processes to achieve "best practices" should include the development and implementation at a minimum of the following:

- Recreation program standards
- Annual review process of programs, including policy reviews, financial and registration performance, customer issues, and plans for the future
- Documented program development process in order to reduce service variation and assist in training new staff
- Customer requirements for core program areas
- A systematic approach to measuring customer satisfaction
- Training program for staff, customer service, in particular
- Trends research process to identify program opportunities for the future
- Benchmark with other agencies noted for best in class performance
- Employee orientation program
- On-going policy review
- Instructor toolkit that outlines information about the Department, including mission, vision, values, goals, organizational structure, etc.

- On-going process to connect part time programming staff with the Department through meetings, email, newsletter, staff recognition, and random visits by management
- Similar provider/competitor analysis
- Measuring performance

Currently, the organization operates with a limited number of program standards throughout all program areas. Many of these standards should apply consistently to all programs; standards need to be applied on a system wide basis. Standards reduce service variation and provide customers with reliable and consistent service throughout the system, regardless of geographic location. In addition, standards reinforce to part time and seasonal staff what is most important to customers. Standards include such items as:

- Facility cleanliness standards
- Safety standards
- Instructional quality standards, such as instructor toolkits
- Internal communication standards for part time and seasonal staff, such as instructors

- Class minimums and maximums
- Staff uniform requirements
- Tangible evidence, such as signage
- Registration process standards
- Customer service standards
- Telephone answering standards
- Service standards

Another method of ensuring quality programming is to develop an annual program review process, in which recreation staff present annual goals for program areas to other divisions and senior management of the Department. This helps to insure good communication and cooperation with supporting divisions.

In addition, another effective tool for diminishing the learning curve for new staff and reinforcing program development as a core competency is the creation of a program development process. This is essentially a flow chart illustrating steps in the process for program development including writing class descriptions, process steps, hiring staff, using contractual employees, and the list of standards.

Staff should also identify customer requirements for core program areas. Again, this is important to emphasize with staff that directly interface with customers. These customer requirements should be related to those service and product attributes that are most important to a customer. A core program area should include a listing of approximately five key customer requirements. For example, in a youth gymnastics program, key requirements could include: overall safety of the program, instructional quality, convenience and ease of registration, cost of the program, and skill development.

Key requirements should be identified by customers and can be included as part of an importance/performance matrix; asking what is most important and how the Department is performing in the most important areas. Key requirements should be reinforced in the training process. Additionally, when developing surveys or program evaluations, the survey questions should relate to the key requirements.

Another good practice includes a similar/like provider review. This includes identifying key competitors or similar providers of core program areas. At a minimum, staff should develop a matrix of information to compare services in areas that have the greatest importance to customers every two years. Benchmarking other nationally renowned agencies also can provide a process to continuously improve programming.

In reviewing the program assessment information, there are limited numbers of performance measures used throughout the system to gauge performance. Most program areas have minimum and maximum class numbers and participant to staff ratios; some program areas measure customer satisfaction,

however, many do not.   Recreation programming should have standard measures in place. Some examples include:

- Customer retention
- Customer satisfaction toward the registration system
- Specific cleanliness ratings
- Cost recovery rates
- Household percentage of program participation
- Percent of programs in introduction and growth stage
- Market penetration by age group
- Program distribution by age group

PROGRAM SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Senior Programming

There are twenty-nine (29) full-time centers specifically for seniors along with three (3) multi-purpose centers offering a wide variety of programs.   Program areas are themed at different locations in a variety of classes and activities such as physical fitness, social services, transportation, general recreation classes, and senior nutrition. Door-to-door service is offered at the Robert M. Wilkinson Center.

A majority of programs are in the introductory, take off, and growth stage of the lifecycle. The program area uses a multitude of partners and volunteers. Partners include the Department of Aging, the Los Angeles School District, various community colleges, universities, and colleges, and Jewish Family Services.

As mentioned earlier, there is an opportunity to designate multiple age segments for this growing population. Opportunities exist to offer sports programming, particularly for the active adult population of persons aged 55-64. Currently, some centers have 50+ programs, and some have 60+ programs. The program should be offered consistently for ages at all centers.

Adult Sports Programming

Most adult sports programs offered by Recreation and Parks are traditional sports such as softball, baseball, basketball, and soccer. Currently, many parts of the country are supplementing core programs with more non-traditional sports such as dodgeball, whiffle ball, and kickball, to name a few. In addition to the RAP programming mentioned, there is a women's league offered as well. Many opportunities for program growth exist. For example, due to the growing senior population, senior sports activities for those aged 55 and above could do well. In addition, offering non-traditional sports aimed at the diverse LA population composition, like cricket, should be considered.

Youth Sports Programming

Similar to the adult sports program, youth sports also focuses on traditional sports, with activities such as flag football, tennis, and baseball offered by the Department. However, there are unique programs as well, including performing arts and martial arts. Depending on regional demographics, opportunities may exist to add non-traditional programs such as cheerleading, dance, youth yoga and pilates.

Aquatics Programming

The department has forty-five (45) seasonal pools and fifteen (15) year-round pools. All age segments are considered within the primary market, aside from preschool. Opportunities may exist to offer more to this age group (preschool), particularly parent-and-tot classes. Seventy-six (76) similar providers exist but all are priced higher than the RAP program. As a result, the Department has a strong advantage in offering quality programs at a good value.

All aquatics programming is in the take off phase of the lifecycle. This is highly unusual for an established learn-to-swim program. As the program matures, it could be expected that the percentage distribution will shift to a more balanced distribution, including introduction and growth stages.

As for performance measures, class minimums and maximums exist, as do staff/participant ratios. The program assessments suggest a very popular program, as program cancellation rates were all zero. Not all aquatics centers track customer satisfaction. Those that do registered very high rates, mostly in the 90-100% range.

The program area follows the American Red Cross standards for staffing, training, policies, and procedures. No volunteers support the program, but there are two key partners: Kaiser Permanente and LA 84-96 program.

Youth Camps Programs

Youth camp programs are offered at many locations. These programs serve an important role in the community, as they offer financially feasible programs for parents. In addition, the programs offer positive social benefits, mainly as encouraging and influencing alternative activities for youth to stay away from gang activity. Most of the camps run in the summer, but there are a variety of camps offered throughout the school year as well. In addition, a sports camp for 7-12 year olds is available. Day camps generally serve 5-13 year olds, though specific age requirements are different for specific camps.

Many similar providers exist in the youth camp area; many are located within a 10-minute drive of the Department's offerings. Some of these other service providers do price their programs at a lower rate.

From a lifecycle approach, good distribution exists with the majority of the programs being in the early stages. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the programs are in the introduction, take off, and growth stages. Generally, there is a 1:10 staff to participant ratio. As for other performance measures, maximum and minimum numbers exist. There is a significant variation in the application of human resource standards. As highlighted prior in this section, the goal of the Department should be to have a more consistent approach.

Child Care Programs

This program area offers another important service for Los Angeles parents. The primary age segments for the program include preschool, kindergarten to grade five, and grades six through eight. The program area includes before and after school, and all day child-care, some of which are subsidized in order to make the program affordable for all. The goal of the program is to offer safe, quality child-care at an affordable cost.

Other similar providers offer day care services. Some of these agencies include the YMCA, STAR. Inc., Los Angeles School District, and Boys and Girls Clubs. Eighty-two percent (82%) are in the introduction, take off, and growth stages of the lifecycle, which is a good distribution.

Staff ratios exist in all of the centers. These range from a 1:6 staff-to-student ratio to 1:14 ratio. Some of the child care programs measure customer satisfaction, while many do not.

There are no volunteers for the programs due to the Department of Recreation and Parks not permitting volunteers at licensed child-care facilities.

Performing Arts and Arts Programming

This program area includes various locations offering ballet, piano, dance, drama, and ceramics. The primary age segments served include elementary and middle-aged youth. Some programs cater to high school students as well.

This program area is well positioned on its pricing, as all eight (8) similar providers benchmarked have higher prices. The limited number service providers allows for a much more focused market approach.

Of the twenty-seven (27) programs listed in the lifecycle analysis, 44% are in the take off stage, 7% are in the introduction stage, and 15% are in the growth stage, which is a good distribution.

The program areas have established minimum and maximum participation. Most do not measure customer satisfaction, but those individual programs that do measure participant satisfaction have high levels of customer satisfaction.

Two partners mentioned included funding sources from CDBG funds and a neighborhood council.

Preschool and After School Programs

Over 1,000 youth are enrolled in the after school programs; another important program area that provides a necessary service to parents within Los Angeles. Locations throughout the City offer these programs. Most programs run in conjunction with the school year, although a couple offer services either year-round or during summer months only. The age segments include preschool age children of 3-5 years of age and youth between kindergarten and eighth grade.

Similar providers exist, including the YMCA, Los Angeles school district, and private child-care centers. All of the programs have established standards for staff to participant ratios that vary according to the program. Most of the program areas have customer satisfaction rates of 90-100%. An absence of program cancelation suggests significant demand for the program area. Planning for program growth and/or expansion would be a good opportunity based on the demand conveyed for the programs.

PRICING AND COST RECOVERY

Based on the review of the program assessment, the Department has a need to develop more sophistication in its pricing approaches.

Some program areas use competitive pricing, discounts for particular age segments, pricing by location, and pricing based on the ability to pay while other program areas do not use any of these approaches. The Department should have a documented pricing process in place that establishes a base line of services and the associated price based on quality received.

Cost recovery rates need to be developed for core program areas in order to provide targets for recreation staff. This includes the need to determine the costs of services for major program areas.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND VOLUNTEERS

In reviewing the partner acknowledgments of the program assessments, a variety of partners are used to deliver services. These partners include the Los Angeles Unified School District, Kaiser Permanente, American Red Cross, colleges and universities, and The Home Depot. An annual review of partners should be completed to establish parameters and determine if any additional partnering opportunities were overlooked. In addition, the Department should complete a partner satisfaction process on a regular basis to determine satisfaction levels and opportunities for improvement. The expansion of partners, including additional concessions, and actively managing the relationships by key senior leaders of the organization is a critical component of strategic direction.

Currently, no system exists for corporate sponsorships. Efforts in this area occur on an individual staff member basis. At a minimum, one-half of one staff person's time, either mid- or senior-level, should go toward the development of corporate support. This area can include opportunities such as naming rights and garnering corporate dollars to help with the scholarship program.

Overall, the volunteer area can be strengthened. Many program areas secure their own volunteers. Successful volunteer programs have a system in place for volunteer recruitment, retention, and

recognition. One simple step in the elevation of volunteer coordination and opportunities is a more robust and visible presence for volunteers on the web site. Staff should also quantify the benefit that volunteers provide to the Department.

1.7 COMMUNITY VALUES MODEL FRAMEWORK

The Community Values Model$_{TM}$ synthesizes the value and merit expressed by the various mediums of community involvement. This model is adapted from the balanced scorecard concept; the accumulated information will provide the framework which can be translated into a Strategy Matrix that will ultimately serve as the detailed action plan and implementation tool in the eventual Master/Strategic Plan, including goals, objectives, strategies, actions, priorities/timelines, and stakeholders.

This framework of principles is categorized into six integral operational components, including:

- Community Mandates/Priorities – overarching principles of community and mandatory elements for facilities, programs, and services
- Standards – guidelines associated with land, open space, facilities, programs, and potential correlating maintenance requirements
- Levels of Service – levels of service delivery of core services/programs and role of Department in delivery versus other service providers
- Financial and Revenue – funding mechanisms to support operations and capital
- Partnerships – potential for public/public, public/not-for-profit, and public/private partnering for facility and program delivery
- Governance and Organizational – design/alignment of the organization to effectively and efficiently support vision and values of community

The bulleted framework is presented by category on the following pages of this report. Framework bullets are not presented in order of importance; each is randomly listed. It is the intent of the Project Team that the framework will be refined into a strategy matrix representative of the community values during the detail master/strategic planning process.

1.7.1 COMMUNITY VALUES – STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Variety of park types – additional neighborhood parks in particular
- Open space
- Indoor recreation opportunities
- Accessibility of facilities
- Affordability
- Increased network of trails for walking, bicycling, running
- Programming catered to all segments of the community
- Safe parks, recreation facilities and trails
- Maintenance standards consistent across the city
- Family oriented programs
- Ethnically diverse system of parks, recreation facilities and programs
- Good customer service; customer friendly
- Quality parks and facilities
- Equity of parks and facilities
- Partnerships that work
- Sustainable parks and system
- Multifunctional facilities and parks

1.7.2 COMMUNITY MANDATES

- Balanced offering of passive and active parks
- Equitable distribution of parks and recreation facilities customized to the demographics of the planning districts
- Promote benefits of parks and services
- Environmental stewardship and sustainability
- Well maintained parks and recreation facilities
- Safe parks and recreation facilities
- Elevate parks to an essential infrastructure system for health purposes as well as public safety
- Customized services
- Strong communication with the community
- Manage for the common good versus special interest
- Accessible parks and facilities
- Cultural sensitivity
- Protection of natural resources

1.7.3 MANAGE BY GUIDELINES

- Establish park and facilities guidelines to manage by for each planning zone in the City
- Establish consistent maintenance guidelines across the City
- Establish consistent program guidelines across the City
- Establish safety guidelines in parks and recreation facilities
- Establish communication guidelines with staff and the community

1.7.4 CORE SERVICES

- Establish customized core services across the City
- Establish a marketing and trend program to keep programs, facilities and amenities operating at the highest levels of productivity
- Wide age segment appeal for all core services
- Easy access to engage in core program services
- Affordable programs and services

1.7.5 FINANCIAL AND REVENUE

- Create a sustainable system that is efficient and productive
- Leverage every available resource to support parks, recreation facilities and programs
- Seek an appropriate level of tax support to earned income levels
  - City charter provides a small amount (approximately 0.0325%) of property tax revenues to the Recreation and Parks Department
  - Amending the charter would have to go before the voters
- Manage a social product and service from a business approach instead of a social approach to maximize efficiency and outcomes desired
- Create appropriate funding sources as allowed
- Align and appropriate available capital improvement funds to needs as depicted with guidelines and community values

- Determine feasibility of workshop innovative funding suggestions and implement any to the extent possible

1.7.6 PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT

- Establish written partnerships with all partners
- Create an equitable level of City investment and partner investment in programs and services
- Establish partnership policies for public/public, public/not-for-profit and public/private partnerships
- Establish measureable outcomes for the City and their partners to follow and be held accountable for commitments they make
- Seek private partners to help supplement City resources

1.7.7 GOVERNANCE

- Establish a governance operational structure to meet the needs of the community that is functional based versus personality based
- Establish a performance driven agency
- Establish work plans and business plans for each major attraction and core service
- Establish and enhance the role of Advisory Councils
- Establish strong advocacy for the Department to help achieve the needs of the community

1.8 PRIORITIZED NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the Draft Facility and Program Needs Assessment is to provide a prioritized list of facility/amenity needs and recreation program needs for the residents of the City of Los Angeles. The Needs Assessment evaluates both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data includes the statistically valid Community Survey, which asked 2925 Los Angeles residents to identify unmet needs and rank their importance. Qualitative data includes resident and stakeholder feedback obtained in Focus Group meetings, Key Leader Interviews, and Public Forums.

A weighted scoring system was utilized to determine the priorities for park and recreation facilities/amenities and recreation programs. This scoring system considers the following:

- Community survey – measurement of unmet needs and importance placed on assets and amenities by the community for facilities and recreation programs
    - Unmet need analysis
        - A factor from the total number of households mentioning their need for facilities and recreation programs
        - Survey participants were asked to identify the need for 30 different facilities and 23 recreation programs
        - Need was defined as being met on a scale of 100%, 75%, 50%, 25%, or 0%
        - Unmet need was given a weighted factor of four (4)
    - Importance ranking for facilities
        - Normalized factor, converted from the percent ranking of programs to a base number
        - Survey participants were asked to identify the top 4 facility needs and top 4 recreation program needs - in terms of importance to their households
        - Importance of asset/amenity was given a weighted factor of three (3)
- Consultant evaluation
    - Factor derived from the consultant's evaluation of program and facility importance based on demographics, trends, and the balance of the community input process
    - Professional evaluation was given a weighted factor of three (3)

These weighted scores were then summed to provide an overall score and priority ranking for the system as a whole. The results of the priority ranking were tabulated into three categories: High Priority, Medium Priority, and Low Priority.

The combined total of the weighted scores for Community Unmet Needs, Community Priority and Consultant Evaluation is the total score based on which the Facility/Amenity and Program Priority is determined. The figures below present an overall picture for the City of Los Angeles as well as the prioritized rankings by Geographical Area, Age Segment and Race.   This detailed breakup by cross tabs helps the staff and key leaders better understand the individual needs of the various segments and customize the facility and program offerings to serve them better.

Figure 1.8.0.a shows that walking and biking trails, small neighborhood parks and indoor fitness/exercise facilities were the top three facilities/amenities.

Figure 1.8.0.b identifies Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs, Special Events/Festivals and Nature/environmental programs as the three core program areas that merited the highest priority.

Los Angeles Facility / Amenity Priority Rankings	Overall Ranking
Walking and biking trails	1
Small Neighborhood Parks	2
Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities	3
Indoor Pools / Aquatic Facilities	4
Nature Trails	5
Shelters and Picnic Areas	6
Indoor Running / Walking Tracks	7
Outdoor Swimming Pools	8
Indoor Gyms	9
Large community parks and regional parks	10
Playground Equipment	11
Community Gardens	12
Pocket Parks	13
Nature / Environmental Center	14
Indoor Community Centers	15
Off-leash dog park	16
Outdoor Tennis Courts	17
Outdoor Amphitheater	18
Outdoor Basketball courts	19
Youth Soccer Fields	20
Golf Courses / Driving Ranges	21
Outdoor Splash Parks	22
Skate Parks	23
Outdoor Volleyball courts	24
Adult Soccer Fields	25
Youth Baseball Fields	26
Youth softball fields	27
Adult Softball Fields	28
Youth Football and Rugby Fields	29
Equestrian Trails	30

Figure 1.8.0.a

Los Angeles Program Priority Rankings	Overall Ranking
Adult fitness & wellness programs	1
Special events/festivals	2
Nature/environmental programs	3
Walking/biking groups	4
Family programs	5
Adult continuing education programs	6
Adult art, dance, performing arts	7
Youth swim programs	8
Water fitness programs	9
Senior programs	10
Adult swim programs	11
Adult sports programs	12
Outdoor adventure programs	13
Youth sports programs	14
Youth fitness & wellness programs	15
Martial arts programs	16
Before & after school programs	17
Youth art, dance, performing arts	18
Youth summer camp programs	19
Pre-school programs	20
Golf programs	21
Programs for people with disabilities	22
Gymnastics & tumbling programs	23

Figure 1.8.0.b

1.8.1 PRIORITIZED ASSESSMENT BY CROSS TABS

Significant variation was found between different geographical areas in terms of the prioritized facility and program rankings. Typically, expressed need by geographical area is directly related to the equitable, or inequitable, distribution of assets and services since a particular area may not have adequate number of needed facilities and hence may express a higher unmet need than another geographical area. Additionally, socio-economic status and demographic profile of the residents in a geographic area could also influence the preferred facility or program requirement. Similarly, age segments or race also affect participation trends and preferences, all of which have the potential to affect priorities of residents for facilities or program desired.

These rankings by cross tabs help to understand the importance of specific facilities or programs to an individual group and thus enable the system to proactively plan and customize facility development and program offerings for each group – whether it be age, race/ethnicity, or geographic location. The following sections demonstrate the Prioritized Facility and Program Rankings by Geographical Areas, Age Segments, and Race/Ethnicity.

PRIORITIZED FACILITY AND PROGRAM NEEDS BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA

In terms of facility/amenity prioritized rankings by geographic areas, **Walking and Biking Trails** and **Small Neighborhood Parks** are the highest priorities across all seven planning areas. However, as Figure 1.8.1.a depicts, **Nature Trails** are a high priority for the majority of planning areas except in the East and South LA planning areas. These two planning areas reported **Nature Trails** as a low priority. Conversely, outdoor **Tennis Courts** are medium to low priority for the majority of planning areas, but are high priorities for South Valley and West LA. **Pocket Parks** emerged as high priorities for the Central LA and West LA planning areas.

Los Angeles Facility / Amenity Priority Rankings by Area	Overall Ranking	Ranking: South Valley	Ranking: Harbor	Ranking: East LA	Ranking: Central	Ranking: North Valley	Ranking: West LA	Ranking: South LA
Walking and biking trails	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Small Neighborhood Parks	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities	3	5	7	3	3	6	5	5
Indoor Pools / Aquatic Facilities	4	6	5	4	4	8	7	2
Nature Trails	5	4	3	14	5	5	3	15
Shelters and Picnic Areas	6	10	6	7	9	4	13	8
Indoor Running / Walking Tracks	7	3	10	8	11	3	15	7
Outdoor Swimming Pools	8	12	4	5	10	12	12	6
Indoor Gyms	9	8	15	6	7	7	17	9
Large community parks and regional parks	10	14	8	10	6	9	6	11
Playground Equipment	11	7	12	9	14	11	16	4
Community Gardens	12	11	11	15	13	13	8	16
Pocket Parks	13	16	18	16	8	20	4	12
Nature / Environmental Center	14	13	13	13	16	14	11	13
Indoor Community Centers	15	18	16	12	12	10	18	10
Off-leash dog park	16	22	14	19	19	17	14	25
Outdoor Tennis Courts	17	9	20	11	15	15	9	20
Outdoor Amphitheater	18	15	9	17	17	22	10	18
Outdoor Basketball courts	19	20	23	18	18	21	22	17
Youth Soccer Fields	20	21	19	20	20	16	20	14
Golf Courses / Driving Ranges	21	19	17	22	22	19	19	26
Outdoor Splash Parks	22	17	21	21	21	18	21	19
Skate Parks	23	26	22	24	25	23	23	22
Outdoor Volleyball courts	24	23	24	23	24	25	24	23
Adult Soccer Fields	25	25	29	25	23	24	25	24
Youth Baseball Fields	26	24	25	26	27	26	27	21
Youth softball fields	27	28	26	28	29	29	28	27
Adult Softball Fields	28	27	28	29	26	30	26	29
Youth Football and Rugby Fields	29	30	27	27	28	28	30	28
Equestrian Trails	30	29	30	30	30	27	29	30

Figure 1.8.1.a

The prioritized rank for an **Outdoor Amphitheater** varied significantly across the City; Harbor and West LA planning areas ranked as a high priority, a low priority in North Valley, and medium priority for the remaining planning areas. Sports fields had a low priority ranking across all areas with the exception of **Youth Soccer Fields** that were medium priority overall.

Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs and **Special Events** consistently rank in the high priority across all planning areas (Figure 1.8.1.b). **Nature/Environmental Programs** too are a high priority in all planning areas with the exception of South LA. **Adult Sports Programs** rank as a high priority in the Central LA planning area and medium priority for all other planning areas.

It is interesting to note the disparity in the priority ranking for **Senior Programs**. South Valley has Senior Programs as low priority with a ranking of 19 out of 23 available options. In contrast, Harbor, East LA, North Valley, and South LA planning areas all have Senior Programs in the top six highest priorities. This disparity could be attributed to the disproportional presence of certain age segments in those areas.

Los Angeles Program Priority Rankings by Area	Overall Ranking	Ranking: South Valley	Ranking: Harbour	Ranking: East LA	Ranking: Central	Ranking: North Valley	Ranking: West LA	Ranking: South LA
Adult fitness & wellness programs	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1
Special events/festivals	2	2	2	2	1	3	4	4
Nature/environmental programs	3	3	3	3	4	5	3	13
Walking/biking groups	4	8	5	9	5	9	2	8
Family programs	5	4	8	13	6	2	11	3
Adult continuing education programs	6	5	11	10	2	6	7	9
Adult art, dance, performing arts	7	7	7	4	11	11	5	15
Youth swim programs	8	6	9	8	8	7	10	2
Water fitness programs	9	15	6	7	15	8	8	6
Senior programs	10	19	4	6	10	4	13	5
Adult swim programs	11	12	13	5	9	15	6	7
Adult sports programs	12	9	10	12	7	10	9	10
Outdoor adventure programs	13	10	12	11	12	13	18	17
Youth sports programs	14	13	14	14	14	12	16	11
Youth fitness & wellness programs	15	14	16	18	16	20	19	18
Martial arts programs	16	17	18	16	13	21	12	19
Before & after school programs	17	11	20	15	21	14	20	12
Youth art, dance, performing arts	18	18	17	19	17	19	17	16
Youth summer camp programs	19	16	15	17	19	16	14	20
Pre-school programs	20	20	22	20	20	18	21	14
Golf programs	21	21	19	21	18	17	15	22
Programs for people with disabilities	22	23	21	22	23	22	23	21
Gymnastics & tumbling programs	23	22	23	23	22	23	22	23

Figure 1.8.1.b

PRIORITIZED FACILITY AND PROGRAM NEEDS BY AGE SEGMENT

In regards to the prioritized needs ranking by age segment, **Walking and Biking Trails**, **Small Neighborhood Parks** and **Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities** rank in the top four priorities for all age segments(Figure 1.8.1.c). As could be expected, **Nature Trails** are a high priority for all groups except the Under-35 age segment; the affinity for nature trails and corresponding activities (such as bird watching) grows with age. **Indoor Pools/Aquatic Facilities** rank high for all age segments except the 65+ group; again, recreational swimming is primarily a youth activity, while lap swimming is more geared towards middle aged participants. The senior group however has been participating in water based fitness activities at a higher rate over the last decade. **Community Gardens** and **Nature/Environmental Center** are facilities which are more desired by the older population (50-64 and 65+), while **Playgrounds** rank higher for the younger age segments (U-35 and 35-49). This is possibly due to the presence, or lack thereof in the case of gardens and nature/environmental centers, of younger children in their households.

Los Angeles Facility / Amenity Priority Rankings by Age	Overall Ranking	Ranking: U 35	Ranking: 35 - 49	Ranking: 50 - 64	Ranking: 65+
Walking and biking trails	1	1	1	1	1
Small Neighborhood Parks	2	2	2	2	2
Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities	3	4	4	3	3
Indoor Pools / Aquatic Facilities	4	6	3	5	12
Nature Trails	5	11	6	6	5
Shelters and Picnic Areas	6	9	8	4	4
Indoor Running / Walking Tracks	7	10	9	7	9
Outdoor Swimming Pools	8	7	5	11	15
Indoor Gyms	9	5	10	14	8
Large community parks and regional parks	10	8	11	9	11
Playground Equipment	11	3	7	17	18
Community Gardens	12	17	13	8	10
Pocket Parks	13	12	14	13	13
Nature / Environmental Center	14	16	16	10	6
Indoor Community Centers	15	13	12	16	7
Off-leash dog park	16	18	21	15	16
Outdoor Tennis Courts	17	14	20	19	19
Outdoor Amphitheater	18	20	15	12	17
Outdoor Basketball courts	19	15	19	20	22
Youth Soccer Fields	20	21	17	24	20
Golf Courses / Driving Ranges	21	23	24	18	14
Outdoor Splash Parks	22	19	18	22	25
Skate Parks	23	27	22	21	27
Outdoor Volleyball courts	24	24	23	23	26
Adult Soccer Fields	25	22	26	25	30
Youth Baseball Fields	26	25	25	27	23
Youth softball fields	27	28	27	30	24
Adult Softball Fields	28	26	29	28	29
Youth Football and Rugby Fields	29	29	28	29	28
Equestrian Trails	30	30	30	26	21

Figure 1.8.1.c

The program priority rankings by age demonstrate some clear disparities by age segments in regards to programs needed (Figure 1.8.1.d). **Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs** and **Nature/Environmental Programs** are high priorities (top six in rank) for all age segments. **Special Events/Festivals** are of high importance for all age segments but those aged 65+.

Understandably so, the most important programs for the 50+ age groups (50-64 and 65+) are **Adult Continuing Education Programs**, **Water Fitness Programs** and **Senior Programs**. **Adult Sports Programs** were high priority for the Under-35 age group, and surprisingly, ranked higher for the 65+ age group than the 50-64 age groups.

Youth programs, including **Youth Swim Programs** and **Youth Sports Programs**, were the highest priorities for the 35-49 age segments. This age segment's affinity for the youth programs is due most likely to the presence of young children in the household.

Los Angeles Program Priority Rankings by Age	Overall Ranking	Ranking: U 35	Ranking: 35 - 49	Ranking: 50 - 64	Ranking: 65+
Adult fitness & wellness programs	1	1	3	1	2
Special events/festivals	2	2	2	2	8
Nature/environmental programs	3	6	4	3	6
Walking/biking groups	4	13	6	7	4
Family programs	5	3	5	10	12
Adult continuing education programs	6	8	11	5	3
Adult art, dance, performing arts	7	7	9	8	10
Youth swim programs	8	4	1	14	17
Water fitness programs	9	12	15	6	5
Senior programs	10	21	22	4	1
Adult swim programs	11	15	8	9	9
Adult sports programs	12	5	19	11	7
Outdoor adventure programs	13	9	13	12	14
Youth sports programs	14	14	7	18	16
Youth fitness & wellness programs	15	16	14	21	19
Martial arts programs	16	18	17	15	15
Before & after school programs	17	10	16	19	18
Youth art, dance, performing arts	18	19	12	16	21
Youth summer camp programs	19	17	10	20	20
Pre-school programs	20	11	18	22	23
Golf programs	21	20	20	13	13
Programs for people with disabilities	22	23	23	17	11
Gymnastics & tumbling programs	23	22	21	23	22

Figure 1.8.1.d

PRIORITIZED FACILITY AND PROGRAM NEEDS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Prioritized rankings based on race and ethnicity reveals expressed needs that assist the Department in reaching out and targeting all segments of the community. **Walking and Biking Trails**, **Small Neighborhood Parks**, **Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities** and **Indoor Pools/Aquatic Facilities** are high priorities (top 8) across all race/ethnic categories. **Nature Trails** are very high priority for Asian and White populations, but low priority for Black and Hispanic groups. On the other hand, **Shelters and Picnic Areas** and **Playground Equipment** were high priority for Black and Hispanic groups. **Off-leash Parks** are medium priorities for all races except the White only population, while **Adult Soccer Fields** are medium priority for the Hispanic groups and low priority for all other race/ethnic categories.

Los Angeles Facility / Amenity Priority Rankings by Race	Overall Ranking	Ranking: Hispanic	Ranking: Black	Ranking: Asian	Ranking: White	Ranking: Other
Walking and biking trails	1	1	1	1	1	1
Small Neighborhood Parks	2	2	3	3	2	2
Indoor Fitness and Exercise Facilities	3	6	4	2	8	4
Indoor Pools / Aquatic Facilities	4	4	2	5	4	6
Nature Trails	5	13	13	4	3	14
Shelters and Picnic Areas	6	3	5	10	13	3
Indoor Running / Walking Tracks	7	8	9	7	14	8
Outdoor Swimming Pools	8	5	8	17	9	5
Indoor Gyms	9	9	11	6	15	9
Large community parks and regional parks	10	10	14	13	7	10
Playground Equipment	11	7	7	15	16	7
Community Gardens	12	15	12	9	6	15
Pocket Parks	13	16	15	14	5	13
Nature / Environmental Center	14	14	10	11	11	16
Indoor Community Centers	15	11	6	8	18	11
Outdoor Amphitheater	16	19	16	16	12	19
Off-leash dog park	17	21	20	20	10	22
Outdoor Tennis Courts	18	22	18	12	19	20
Outdoor Basketball courts	19	18	17	19	21	18
Youth Soccer Fields	20	12	23	23	22	12
Golf Courses / Driving Ranges	21	26	22	18	17	26
Outdoor Splash Parks	22	17	19	22	20	17
Skate Parks	23	23	21	24	23	23
Outdoor Volleyball courts	24	25	24	21	24	25
Adult Soccer Fields	25	20	29	25	27	21
Youth Baseball Fields	26	24	27	28	25	24
Youth softball fields	27	27	28	29	29	28
Adult Softball Fields	28	29	30	27	26	29
Youth Football and Rugby Fields	29	28	25	30	30	27
Equestrian Trails	30	30	26	26	28	30

Figure 1.8.1.e

Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs and **Special Events/Festivals** are the highest ranked priorities in terms of programs for the entire system (top 7). **Golf Programs** are medium priority for the White population and a low priority for all other race/ethnic groups. The Hispanic and Asian population tend to participate in group focused activities, as opposed to self directed activities. In many instances, both the Hispanic and Asian populace include extended family members in activities and this is reflected in their higher ranking for **Family Programs**. The Hispanic population also places a premium on **Before and After School Programs**, which are ranked as a medium priority for Hispanic populace and low priority for all other race/ethnic groups.

Los Angeles Program Priority Rankings by Race	Overall Ranking	Ranking: Hispanic	Ranking: Black	Ranking: Asian	Ranking: White	Ranking: Other
Adult fitness & wellness programs	1	1	1	1	1	1
Special events/festivals	2	3	7	4	2	5
Nature/environmental programs	3	7	8	2	3	10
Walking/biking groups	4	8	2	3	4	15
Family programs	5	2	10	7	13	3
Adult continuing education programs	6	5	11	6	7	6
Adult art, dance, performing arts	7	15	6	5	5	14
Youth swim programs	8	4	12	13	15	2
Water fitness programs	9	6	5	11	8	12
Senior programs	10	10	4	8	12	7
Adult swim programs	11	9	3	14	6	4
Adult sports programs	12	11	9	9	10	9
Outdoor adventure programs	13	16	17	10	9	16
Youth sports programs	14	12	13	12	16	11
Youth fitness & wellness programs	15	14	14	19	19	18
Martial arts programs	16	20	16	15	11	20
Before & after school programs	17	13	22	16	21	8
Youth art, dance, performing arts	18	19	18	18	17	19
Youth summer camp programs	19	17	15	20	18	13
Pre-school programs	20	18	21	21	22	17
Golf programs	21	21	20	17	14	22
Programs for people with disabilities	22	22	19	23	23	21
Gymnastics & tumbling programs	23	23	23	22	20	23

Figure 1.8.1.f

1.9 SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

The service area population of an asset represents the market size or pool of potential users that a specific asset can potentially support.   Graphically mapping service areas demonstrates the equity distribution of assets based on population density by census tract of the City.   Service area maps illustrate gaps or overlaps among like assets and amenities within the system as a whole.

Service area guidelines are utilized to accurately gauge the distribution and coverage of a park systems major assets and amenities devoid of any discriminatory actions.   This graphical depiction of asset distribution assists in identifying where assets may be needed or where an assemblage of assets saturates an area.   This preliminary analysis is a tool to use in planning for appropriate capital improvement needs to deliver the highest level of service in an equitable manner.   However, these service areas should only serve as a guide in decision making.   The factors utilized and corresponding maps must be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community.

A service area is defined as the area that encompasses a park, asset, or amenity whose radius encompasses the corresponding population associated with the guidelines established for an individual asset.   The standard approach in GIS equity/service area mapping is to take the centroid of the site (center of the park polygon) and define how far out from the centroid a circle or ring must "travel" to equal the service area population.   Preliminary service area guidelines are based on the population that an asset can serve, not on accessibility.   Accessibility is based on available transportation routes, local traffic patterns, willingness of local users to travel a certain distance to access amenities (this varies from community to community; Census average commute times can be used for a basis), willingness to travel to other communities, etc.

Population density also plays a role in the size of the service area. The more densely populated an area is surrounding a site the smaller the service ring will be. This is due to the service population theoretically being encompassed in a shorter radius from their homes – an example would be multi-family housing or large scale zero-lot-line neighborhood located next to a park, as opposed to a traditional lot-sized single family neighborhood – the multi-family and compacted neighborhood developments are assumed to be denser.   However, mobility factors may affect access options.   These factors need additional research and analysis during the strategic master planning process.

There are certain assets, for example, playgrounds and picnic areas, that meet the guidelines for current and projected populations.   In such cases, the City would be well served by focusing their efforts on planning and developing assets that have a higher deficit per the Facility/Amenity Guidelines matrix and rank high on the Prioritized Needs Assessment matrix.   However, a periodic assessment of the condition and maintenance levels for assets and amenities should be undertaken to ensure that lifecycles meet the required maintenance standards and are in a condition to be used by the community.

1.9.1 SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS IN COMPARISON TO THE QUIMBY ACT

The Quimby Act was passed by the California Legislature in 1975 to require developers to set aside land or pay fees for parks and recreational facilities. With the demand for new housing this law was designed to balance increased housing with the need for public parks in rapidly developing areas. Projects subject to the Quimby Code include subdivision such as condominium development projects.

The current Municipal Code states that the Quimby funds must be used within a reasonable distance of the development which pays the fees.   The Los Angeles City Controller has recommended that the Ordinance be revised to allow for the funds to be used where they are truly needed in the City as a

whole. The Controller's report also noted that the program has not been implemented effectively due to the fact that there is no comprehensive plan that outlines how to effectively use the fees, or the ability to use the collected fees for the administrative time required to develop planning or design.

In community workshop discussions, park patrons did note that they would walk or bike to neighborhood parks; this implies that the existing service radius, ½-mile to 1-mile, is acceptable for neighborhood park use.

Service area analysis allows for the planning and implementation of parks, recreation assets and amenities based on a universal standard or guideline with the only direct variable being that of population density. Other demographic factors such as age, income, etc, can be used to determine program and facility priorities. Results from the randomly mailed survey, supported by input from workshop participants, indicated patrons & potential park patrons are willing to travel three to five miles for community park features and specialized facilities.

 Densely populated areas increase the need for park land and recreation programs. Planning based on service area guidelines will encourage that resources be allocated with the goal of providing the same level of facilities and services to all citizens. Service Area Mapping clearly illustrates areas experiencing a need for park and recreation assets and amenities, as well as non-equitable distribution (a "lumping" of multiple assets in one concentrated area).

Quimby funding, as well as other funding mechanisms, need to be developed and used to develop parks and facilities in areas that are currently underserved. Innovative and non-traditional funding and partnership options need to be fully explored to achieve this goal.

1.9.2 FACILITY/AMENITY PRELIMINARY GUIDELINES OVERVIEW

Facility guidelines define service areas for assets and amenities based on population and the correlating densities. Guidelines support investment decisions related to parks, recreation facilities, core programs and amenities. It should be understood that these guidelines are dynamic and will change over time as the program, facility, and amenity lifecycles, as well as the demographics and trends of a community change.

The MLA/PROS Team evaluated park facility/amenity guidelines using a combination of resources, including:

- Department of Recreation and Parks Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Real Estate information
- National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines
- Best practices of other systems similar in size and characteristics to Los Angeles
- Recreation activity participation rates reported by American Sports Data as it applies to activities that occur in the United States and the Los Angeles area
- Community stakeholder and citizens survey input
- General observations made by the Project Team
- MLA/PROS Team did not incorporate private facilities into the standards based on the sheer magnitude of data collection required; it is recommended that this task be completed in the Master/Strategic Plan

The assimilation of these resources allows preliminary guidelines to be customized to Los Angeles to ensure equitable delivery of relevant assets and amenities. Preliminary guidelines were developed for each of the following major assets and amenities:

- Park Types
  - Mini/Pocket Parks
  - Neighborhood Parks
  - Community Parks
  - Regional and Large Urban Parks
- Major Assets and Amenities
  - Playgrounds
  - Swimming Pools and Splash-pads
  - Picnic Areas
  - Trails - All Surfaces
  - Baseball Fields/Softball Fields
  - Rectangular Multi-purpose Fields (Football, Soccer, Lacrosse, et al.)
  - Basketball Courts
  - Tennis Courts
  - Volleyball Courts
  - Dog Parks
  - Skateparks
  - Community/Cultural Center Space
  - Recreation/Fitness Center Spaces

- Other park classification which could assist RAP in delivering services but are not mapped
  - Corridor Parks(Greenway/Linear/Linkages)
  - Special Use (Golf/Other)
  - Natural Preservation/General Open Space

1.9.3 LOS ANGELES RECREATION AND PARK PRELIMINARY FACILITY/AMENITY GUIDELINES

Preliminary facility guidelines define the service areas based on market structure which support investment decisions related to facilities and amenities. Preliminary facility and amenity guidelines are the result of a static measurement of a very dynamic relationship. Preliminary guidelines can and will change over time as the program lifecycles change and demographics of a community change.

Detailed inventory data from which the guidelines were derived was approved and accepted by the Recreation and Parks Department.

PARK AND OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES

Park classifications utilized for the Community Needs Assessment are defined as follows:

- Mini parks – based on acreage totals for parks which are less than 1 acre in size
- Neighborhood parks – based on acreage totals for parks which are 1 – 10 acres in size
- Community parks – based on acreage totals for parks which are 10 – 50 acres in size
- Regional and large urban parks – based on acreage totals for parks which are 50+ acres in size; includes sport parks

Current inventories for all public parks and open space – general park land in terms of acreage totals – exceed 36,000 acres. These include Recreation and Park lands and county land within the city-limits. Private holdings providing a public, merit, or private good to the community were not inventoried for

this project due to the magnitude of such undertaking. It is recommended that these assets be inventoried prior to, or during, any master/strategic planning process.

Total acreages by category are:

- Mini parks – 50.46 total acres; 94.7% of total mini park acreage inventoried is City owned
- Neighborhood parks – 773.72 total acres; 94.0% of total neighborhood park acreage inventoried is City owned
- Community parks – 2,966.43 total acres; 87.3% of total community park acreage inventoried is City owned
- Regional and large urban parks – 32,288.98 total acres; 38.3% of total regional/large urban park acreage inventoried is City owned
  - Regional/large urban park land is the only category of which the City does not own the gross majority of total acreage; much of the non-City owned acreage is attributable to the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy, the Angeles National Forest, Topanga State Park, and Santa Anta Susana Pass State Historic Park
- Total park acreage studied - 36,079.58 total acres; 43.6% of total inventoried acreage is City owned

Based on these inventories, current service level for all park land is 9.231 acres per 1,000 persons; however, this number is drastically skewed by the large number of regional/large urban park land (89.5% of all acreage falls into the regional/large urban park classification). Current service levels for all four park classifications utilized for this study are:

- Mini parks – 0.013 acres per 1,000 persons
- Neighborhood parks – 0.198 acres per 1,000 persons
- Community parks – 0.759 acres per 1,000 persons
- Regional and large urban parks – 8.261 acres per 1,000 persons
- Total parks – 9.231 acres per 1,000 persons

Typically, legacy systems – park and/or recreation systems that have evolved with the market and population base over decades – face multiple challenges when addressing the need for additional development. Lack of available undeveloped land, cost of land acquisition, and the ramifications of removing private land from the tax base are some of the challenges. Preliminary recommended service levels considered these potential challenges associated with the acquisition of park land, including acquisition costs and/or opportunity costs, in developing realistic guidelines for the Department. Preliminary recommended service level guidelines are:

- Mini parks – 0.10 acres per 1,000 persons;
- Neighborhood parks – 1.50 acres per 1,000 persons;
- Community parks – 2.00 acres per 1,000 persons;
- Regional and large urban parks – 6.00 acres per 1,000 persons; current inventories meet and/or exceed the service level for the recommended guideline
- Total parks – 9.60 acres per 1,000 persons;

It is recommended that prior to any development considerations, a comprehensive master/strategic planning process should occur to ensure that capital and operational ramifications are properly understood. Any recommended guidelines are preliminary only, and need additional research and

analysis to determine final guidelines, goals and objectives. This comprehensive study should occur during the strategic master planning process.

A regional open space planning effort should be undertaken due to the overlap of other open space and recreation service providers adjacent to the project area. Figure 1.9.3.a shows the boundary of the City of Los Angeles as it relates to neighboring cities.

In addition to Los Angeles City park acreage there are many other service providers within the area. Figure 1.9.3.b shows the City of Los Angeles in white with the colored areas representing other cities who also provide parkland and services. The acreages used for calculating recommended service levels were Recreation and Park owned land as well as County land within the City limits.

Figure 1.9.3.a
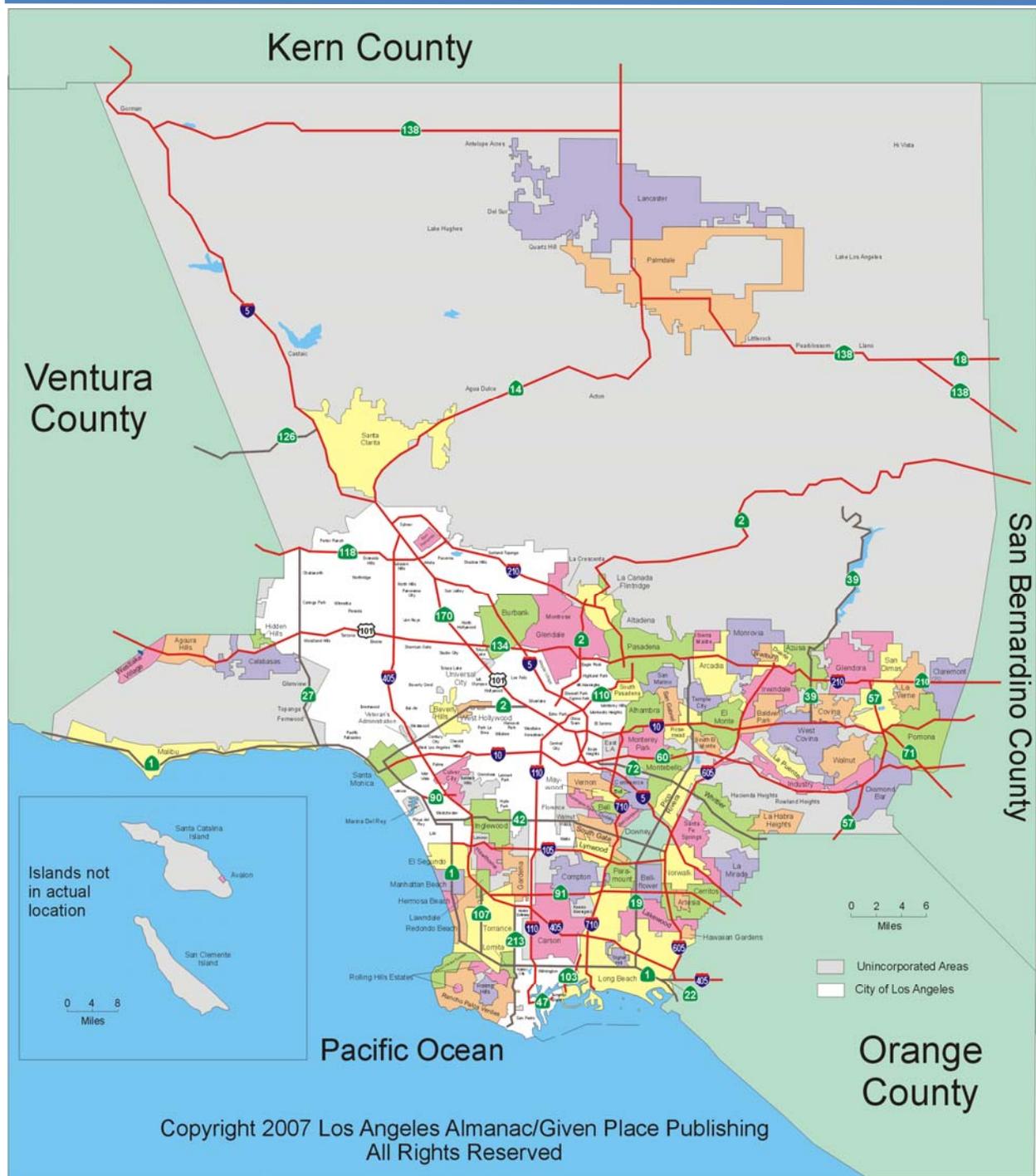
Figure 1.9.3.b: Los Angeles County (Map courtesy of Given Place Media and LAAlmanac.com)

Acres of Recreational Lands in Los Angeles County

Acres (Using 2008 Thomas Brothers Map)	Park	Open Space	Beach	Ecological Preserve / Estuary	Fairground	Historical Park	Historical Point of Interest	Recreation Area	Wilderness Area	Wildlife Refuge	Zoo	Forest	Golf Course	TOTAL ACRES
City of Los Angeles	11,906		166	518			46	1,123		177	103		1,523	15,562
Other Cities in Los Angeles County	15,991	2,822		214		18	1	2,274	1,177	137			5,123	27,757
Los Angeles County	6,233	58	2,000	134		1,361		1,106		2,019			1,093	14,441
State of California	33,833		707	37	470			24,150						58,727
Private	57		0	0				3,271					5,486	8,984
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	17,519	4,993		870		170								23,382
Federal Government	1,516							4,366	35,410			645,496		686,788
Unknown	225												116	341
TOTAL ACRES	87,280	7,873	2,873	1,773	640	1,346	47	36,290	36,587	2,333	103	645,496	13,341	

ACRES PER 1000 PEOPLE IN THE CITY (Using 2006 Census Est. 9,948,081)	Park	Open Space	Beach	Ecological Preserve / Estuary	Fairground	Historical Park	Historical Point of Interest	Recreation Area	Wilderness Area	Wildlife Refuge	Zoo	Forest	Golf Course	TOTAL ACRES
City of Los Angeles	1.197	0.000	0.017	0.052	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.113	0.000	0.018	0.010	0.000	0.153	1.564
Other Cities in Los Angeles County	1.607	0.284	0.000	0.022	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.229	0.118	0.014	0.000	0.000	0.515	2.790
Los Angeles County	0.627	0.006	0.201	0.013	0.047	0.133	0.000	0.111	0.000	0.203	0.000	0.000	0.110	1.452
State of California	3.401	0.000	0.071	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.428	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	5.903
Private	0.006	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.017	0.000	0.000	0.329	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.551	0.903
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	1.761	0.502	0.000	0.087	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.350
Federal Government	0.152	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.439	3.559	0.000	0.000	64.886	0.000	69.037
Unknown	0.023	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.012	0.034
TOTAL ACRES	8.774	0.791	0.289	0.178	0.064	0.135	0.005	3.648	3.678	0.235	0.010	64.886	1.341	84.034

Notes:

Population
2006 US Census estimate: 9,948,081(2000 census: 9,519,338)

Data Source
Thomas Brothers 2008 GIS map Layer TBM_LACO_OWNA

Processing
Data layer contained many types of areas. Areas NOT used: Airport, Museum Park, Cemetery, Civic Center, College/University, Hospital, Military, Miscalleneous, Movie Studio, Oil Refinery, Prison, Racetrack, Shopping Mall, Stadium/Arena. Data layer lacked juristriction. Data was compared to TBM's City Boundaries layer, LAEAP's own Parks layer, property names were inspecte; web sites were consulted. Best effort was made ot classify ownership of properties as shown in tables above.
Processed by Daniel Elroi, NorthSouth GIS, 9/10/08.

LARAP's Data
LARAP's own parks layers was NOT used, to help keep this analysis consistent, i.e. To use a single data source. However, the total acres derive from Thomas Brothers match LARAP's own total acres.
Acres per LARAP Parks layer: 15,565

Figure 1.9.3.c

Acres of Recreational Lands in Los Angeles City

Acres (Using 2008 Thomas Brothers Map)	Park	Open Space	Beach	Ecological Preserve / Estuary	Fairground	Historical Park	Historical Point of Interest	Recreation Area	Wilderness Area	Wildlife Refuge	Zoo	Forest	Golf Course	TOTAL ACRES
City of Los Angeles	11,852						46	1,122		177	103		1,523	15,507
Other Cities in Los Angeles County			166	518										0
Los Angeles County	203	58	84										217	562
State of California	9,031		369			918		88						10,406
Private	55												1,981	2,036
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	4,488	573		40										5,101
Federal Government								15				3,795		3,810
Unknown	55													55
TOTAL ACRES	**25,684**	**631**	**619**	**558**	**0**	**918**	**46**	**1,225**	**0**	**177**	**103**	**3,795**	**3,721**	**37,477**

ACRES PER 1000 PEOPLE IN THE CITY (Using 2006 Census Est. 3,849,378)	Park	Open Space	Beach	Ecological Preserve / Estuary	Fairground	Historical Park	Historical Point of Interest	Recreation Area	Wilderness Area	Wildlife Refuge	Zoo	Forest	Golf Course	TOTAL ACRES
City of Los Angeles	3.079	0.000	0.043	0.135	0.000	0.000	0.012	0.291	0.000	0.046	0.027	0.000	0.396	4.028
Other Cities in Los Angeles County	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Los Angeles County	0.053	0.015	0.022	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.056	0.146
State of California	2.346	0.000	0.096	0.000	0.000	0.238	0.000	0.023	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	2.703
Private	0.014	0.000	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.515	0.529
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy	1.166	0.149	0.000	0.010	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.325
Federal Government	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.986	0.000	0.990
Unknown	0.014	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.014
TOTAL ACRES	**6.672**	**0.164**	**0.161**	**0.145**	**0.000**	**0.238**	**0.012**	**0.318**	**0.000**	**0.046**	**0.027**	**0.986**	**0.967**	**9.736**

Figure 1.9.3.d

Notes:

Population
2006 US Census estimate: 3,849,378(2000 census: 3,684,820)

Data Source
Thomas Brothers 2008 GIS map Layer TBM_LACO_OWNA

Processing
Data layer contained many types of areas. Areas NOT used: Airport, Museum Park, Cemetery, Civic Center, College/University, Hospital, Military, Miscalleneous, Movie Studio, Oil Refinery, Prison, Racetrack, Shopping Mall, Stadium/Arena. Data was compared to TBM's City Boundaries layer, LAEAP's own Parks layer, property names were inspecte; web sites were consulted. Best effort was made ot classify ownership of properties as shown in tables above.

Processed by Daniel Elroi, NorthSouth GIS, 9/10/08.

LARAP's Data

LARAP's own parks layers was NOT used, to help keep this analysis consistent, i.e. To use a single data source. However, the total acres derive from Thomas Brothers match LARAP's own total acres.
Acres per LARAP Parks layer: 15,565

There are many other service providers within Los Angeles County whose parks and facilities are used by the residents of the City of Los Angeles. These acreages should be taken into consideration when looking at recommended guidelines. A regional open space plan would provide the ability to look at the entire region as a whole.

PRELIMINARY ASSET/AMENITY GUIDELINES

Major assets and amenities were also analyzed for the purpose of guideline development. Current service levels are based on inventories for all public recreational asses and amenities; as with the general park lands, inventories include only those assets/amenities owned by the Recreation and Park Department and the County. Private assets/amenities located within the community were not inventoried for this project due to the magnitude of such undertaking. Current inventories and service levels are:

- Playgrounds – 383 total; 1 structure per 10,205 persons
- Swimming Pools – 58 total; 1 site per 67,388 persons
- Splashpad – 9 total; 1 site per 434,280 persons
- Picnic Areas – 286 total; 1 site per 13,666 persons
- Baseball Fields/Softball Fields – 253 total; 1 field per 15,449 persons
- Rectangular Fields (Football, Soccer, Lacrosse, et al.) – 170 total; 1 field per 22,991 persons
- Basketball Courts – 212 total; 1 court per 18,436 persons
- Tennis Courts – 321 total; 1 court per 12,176 persons
- Volleyball Courts – 32 total; 1 court per 122,141 persons
- Dog Parks – 9 total; 1 site per 434,280 persons
- Skateparks – 9 total; 1 site per 434,280 persons
- Community/Cultural Center Space (Square Feet) – 1,502,000 square feet; 0.38 square feet per person
- Recreation/Fitness Center Space (Square Feet) – 2,101,000 square feet; 0.54 square feet per person

Assets/amenities in a legacy system generally have a direct relationship with park lands in terms of inventories and needs. As could be expected, if there is a shortage of park land, typically, assets and amenities are lacking as well. Although a need exists for all asset/amenities studied, unlike park land, acquisition and/or development of individual asset categories require less capital investment and most assets/amenities can be clustered. This allows asset/amenity service levels to be met much quicker and with modest planning and investment.

It is recommended that all acquisition be done from a comprehensive approach utilizing the guidelines as a decision making tool. The intent of planning and maintaining with guidelines is to avoid acquisition of non-planned assets/amenities that could lead to increased obligations of operations and maintenance of the Department's inventories as a whole. Any preliminary recommended guidelines need additional research and analysis during the strategic master planning process to determine final guidelines, goals and objectives.

1.10 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.10.1 KEY PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

As a result of the Needs Assessment process, key preliminary recommendations which the Team considers significant are presented in the following list. However, the strategies and actions required for implementation will require a detailed master/strategic planning process.   These comprehensive planning steps initiated by the Needs Assessment are just the beginning – the Project Team solicited the community's input to determine what was needed. Preliminary guidelines were developed to assist in determining how to meet those needs at a broad scale. The following strategies and recommendations will assist in bridging the Needs Assessment with the future Master/Strategic Plan:

DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION ISSUES
- Develop a Communications Plan to communicate the guidelines and priorities to the residents and within the Department

- Establish staff performance procedures to help staff meet the community desired standards recommended in this report

- Maintain and update the existing park inventory data on a yearly basis and account for the true asset value of the parks and recreation system. Invest a minimum of three to four percent of total system asset value in facilities identified to be in good condition to preserve what the Department already owns

- Revise maintenance standards for the parks and recreation facilities and fund them based on direct and indirect operational costs

PARKS AND FACILITIES PLANNING AND DESIGN
- Customize a strategy for each planning area to implement the preliminary guidelines recommended for parks, open space, recreation facilities and amenities based on the public's desired priorities outlined in this report

- Remove amenities that are not well used or are in disrepair and replace with amenities the community desires

- Design parks and recreation facilities to earn revenue to offset operational costs. Increase concession areas

- Develop land acquisition strategies to include:
    - Outright purchases
    - Partnerships with other agencies
    - Land leases from other government or not for profit agencies, or others
    - Developer impact agreements based on the standards for open space desired

FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS
- Develop an updated pricing and revenue plan for the Department to offset capital and operational costs

- Establish funding strategies to meet the needs assessment recommendations including:
    - Land acquisition

- o   Capital improvements for existing parks, facilities and amenities

- o   New parks, facilities and amenities

- o   Operations and maintenance to meet established standards and to meet community expectations

- o   Recreation Programs

- Promote a major bond issue to improve existing parks and recreation facilities and amenities and add new amenities in underserved areas of the city based on the needs assessment. Seek outside infrastructure dollars from state and federal grants

- Work with the Planning Department to modify the Quimby Code and update the Public Recreation Plan

- Develop integrated planning and design criteria and processes so that park planning becomes a highly valued and integral part of the City's General Plan and Community Plan updates. The job of managing City assets and coordinating between departments is a very complex task. It is important to insure that project planning is well integrated with other public agency initiatives and efforts including water quality, public safety, education, childcare, culture, job training and public health as parks provide a vital role in addressing these issues in addition to traditional benefits of recreation

- Partner with other open space districts, cities, and non-for-profit agencies to help in the delivery of open space needs, recreation facilities, and amenities to meet the standards and needs the community expects and desires

- Explore all possible ways to publicize the new Park Foundation and solicit support from Parks Friends Groups, Private Corporations, and other organizations

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[i] USC Race Contours Project 2001
http://www.usc.edu/schools/sppd/research/census2000/race_census/racecontours/about.htm

[ii] USDA **Recreation Visitor Research: Studies of Diversity** Outdoor Recreation and Nontraditional Users: Results of Focus Group Interviews With Racial and Ethnic Minorities *Robert C. Burns,1 Elizabeth Covelli,2 and Alan R. Graefe3 2008*
[iii] Asian Sports Stars and Atheletes, Richard E. Lapchick ESPN 2003

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