



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Planning Process

In 1996 Lose & Associates, Inc. was engaged to create a Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan for Lexington-Fayette County Urban Government (LFUCG). This document, which was published in 1998, was intended to serve as a guide for expansion, open space acquisition, facility and program planning. In early 2008 we were again engaged to update this document and provide the Division with a guide for parks and recreation development and land acquisition for the next ten years. The planning team has made an exhaustive effort to research existing documents including the *Urban Services Area Expansion Master Plan*, the county's *Greenway Master Plan*, the 1994 *Greenspace Plan*, the 2007 *Comprehensive Plan for Lexington-Fayette County* and the 2007 *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*.

In preparing this report, the planning team researched local demographics using data from the Kentucky State Data Center (KSDC) and the U. S. Census Bureau. Demographic evaluations, combined with information provided in the abovementioned resource documents, are detailed in Section 2. Demographic projections show steady growth for Fayette County over the next ten years with a projected population of 310,262 by the year 2020 (KSDC). During this period of growth, it is the 55+ age groups, or the baby boomers, that will experience the most growth.

Public input is the driving force of this document; extensive interviews with parks staff, LFUCG staff and elected officials, and with user groups were held over two three-day periods in July and August 2008. During these visits, the planning team also held five public meetings throughout the county. Over 200 citizens came out to express their opinions and recreation needs. In 2006, the Division, in partnership with Lose & Associates, distributed a mail survey to 10,000 randomly selected households throughout Fayette County. Then, in fall 2008, the Division of Parks and Recreation included an online survey on their website for a month. The results of both surveys provided insight into the citizens' desires and opinions of the parks system. Both surveys indicated that the top three facility requests are for renovated park restrooms, renovations to existing parks and the development of more walking trails. The need for more walking trails, or greenways, was expressed in all forms of public input. Summaries of these interviews, public meetings and the survey data are included in the Section 3 of the report.

The team conducted an in-depth assessment of the existing organizational structure of the Division of Parks and Recreation to understand how communication, direct reporting and each individual's daily duties were impacted, both negatively and positively, by the current organization of the Division. Subsequently, recommendations were made that will enable the Division to operate at a higher level of efficiency and with greater communication. The same intensive review of the current park programming was conducted, and the assessments and recommendations for both are found in Sections 4 and 5.

Section 7 of the report addresses the existing conditions found at 20 representative parks throughout the system including parks of all ages, conditions and sizes. The understanding is that recommendations applied to the studied facilities can be adapted throughout the park system. This same section includes recommendations for park development and renovations, needed facilities based on local and national recreation standards and project prioritization.

The following overview provides summaries of the planning team's recommendations for the LFUCG Division of Parks and Recreation.



Division Organization

The Division of Parks and Recreation is managed by a Director who oversees five superintendents and the administration of the entire Division. Currently, the Division has 177 authorized work force positions, 28 of which are vacant. This accounts for 16% of the Division's work force. The Parks Maintenance section, in particular, has been seriously impacted by the vacancies. While the parks are well-maintained, crews struggle to keep up with the maintenance demands on a weekly basis and the vacancies stretch them even further. The recent government-wide management audit also included several recommendations and changes for the Division. The planning team took the findings and recommendations from the management audit into consideration when developing our organizational recommendations. The recommendations are outlined in the following bulleted summaries.

Administration Recommendations:

- Reorganize the Division to have three distinct operational sections with each managed by a Deputy Director:
 - Recreation (formerly Recreation and Special Programs sections)
 - Enterprise
 - Planning and Support Services (formerly Planning and Design and Parks Maintenance sections)
- Realign the current Deputy Director position to become the Deputy Director of Planning and Support Services.
- Eliminate the current Recreation, Special Programs and Enterprise Superintendent positions.
- Create a new Deputy Director of Recreation position.
- Create a new Deputy Director of Enterprise position.
- Reclassify the Parks Maintenance Superintendent as the Parks Manager Sr.
- Reclassify the Planning and Design Superintendent as the Park Planning and Design Manager Sr.
- Reclassify the Program Supervisor as a Program Supervisor/IT Coordinator and realign the position under the Deputy Director of Enterprise.
- Realign the Administrative Specialist (Employment/Payroll) under the Deputy Director of Planning and Support Services.
- Create two new support staff positions: a Marketing/Volunteer Specialist Sr. (under the Deputy Director of Recreation) and a Grants/Fundraising Specialist Sr. (under the Director).
- Expand the fundraising efforts of the Division and develop annual fundraising goals and strategies
- Move all administrative staff to a single site: Picadome.
- Provide more training, continuing education and conference opportunities for staff.

Planning and Design Recommendations:

- Create park planning districts: the Urban Core (1 district), Suburban Parks (4 districts) and Rural Parks (4 districts).
- Reclassify the current Parks Project Coordinator as the Construction Manager Sr. to monitor park construction projects and outside firms providing project management.
- Create a new Project Manager position that reports to the Construction Manager Sr. and assists with large-scale projects. Project Manager duties can be contracted out to a qualified firm.
- Reorganize current sections and work groups to include four direct reports to the Deputy Director of Planning and Support Services: Park Planning and Design Manager Sr., Construction Manager Sr., Parks Manager Sr. and Park Ranger Manager Sr.
- Create a Greenway Development Manager position and dedicated greenway work group for the County and centralize the County's greenway planning/development under one LFUCG division (to be determined by LFUCG administration).

- Have Park Planning and Design and Greenway Development Managers meet on a regular basis with administrative staff to discuss planning and funding needs and develop project priorities.
- Provide a quarterly project update presentation to Director, LFUCG administration and Council about project development and planning topics.
- Develop policies and procedures that determine which projects should be done in-house and which should be contracted to qualified firms.
- Develop an “on-call” list of qualified firms to expedite the delivery of projects.
- Obtain software that enables the Division to track time per project.
- Bundle purchases when appropriate.

Recreation Recommendations:

- Move ESP to Enterprise section.
- Reorganize current sections and work groups to include five direct reports to the Deputy Director of Recreation: Recreation Manager, Community Center Manager, Special Populations Manager, Natural Areas Manager, Special Events Manager.
- Merge the Athletics and Extreme Sports/Cultural Arts Recreation Manager positions into a new Recreation Manager position with five direct reports: Extreme Sports/Athletics Supervisors (3), Cultural Arts Supervisor and Equestrian Program Supervisor.
- Make Cultural Arts a stand-alone unit with the Cultural Arts Supervisor (formerly titled Recreation Supervisor – Cultural Arts) overseeing its functions.
- Reclassify the Recreation Supervisor - Athletic positions (3) as Athletics/Extreme Sports Supervisors. Group the athletics and extreme sports into relevant groups under each supervisor.
- Reclassify existing managers as: Community Center Manager, Special Populations Manager, Natural Areas Manager and Special Events Manager.
- Reclassify the Equestrian Park Program Supervisor as the Equestrian Program Supervisor position and move this position from the Natural Areas work group to the Recreation work group.
- Create a new Hisle Farm Program Supervisor position with seasonal support staff after Hisle Farm is developed.
- Create a new Hisle Farm Equestrian Program Supervisor (seasonal contract position) to oversee equestrian programs after Hisle Farm is developed.
- Special Events Manager should utilize the existing RecTrac software to manage and operate events in the parks system.
- Special event fee schedules should be amended after studying the Time and Motion Study data; direct costs for administering and facilitating special events should be covered.
- Have managers work with Planning and Support Services section to identify facilities that need to be redesigned/redeveloped or newly developed to support existing and new programs.
- Expand role of athletic staff in programming and managing all Division athletic resources.
- Add recreation center staff as recommended recreation centers are developed (see Section 7). Recreation Center Managers would report to Deputy Director of Recreation.
- Generate an aquatics feasibility study that would determine whether the proposed recreation centers, built and managed by LFUCG, should include aquatics elements.

Enterprise Recommendations:

- Assign the following work groups to the Enterprise section:
 - ESP
 - Golf Operations
 - Aquatics and Rentals
 - Concessions
- Elevate current ESP and Golf Managers to senior managers.



- Empower the Golf Manager Sr. with the authority to adjust fees with the approval of the Director.
- Reorganize staff structure at Tates Creek, Picadome and Lakeside Golf Courses using Kearney Hills Golf Links staff organization as a model.
- Eliminate public service worker positions (eight full-time positions) at Tates Creek, Picadome and Lakeside Golf Courses and replace with seasonal staff. Positions could be reassigned to Parks Maintenance work group to fill current vacancies.
- Enhance golf marketing, and utilize different media available in Lexington-Fayette County, including a stand-alone Golf website.
- Adjust fees at affected golf courses that will pay the debt service over time; Golf should explore the feasibility of floating a revenue bond to remedy deferred maintenance.
- Implement key upgrades and renovations golf course.
- First Tee of Lexington and LFUCG should explore a partnership that would allow First Tee to be based at Meadowbrook Golf Course and change the mission of the course to a teaching/training facility for all.
- Consolidate aquatics and rentals into a single work group that manages all pools and rentals. This work group will be overseen by an Aquatics/Rentals Manager (reclassification/new title).
- Aquatics/Rentals Manager shall utilize the existing RecTrac software to manage and operate rentals in the parks system.
- Create a stand-alone concessions workgroup overseen by a Concessions Manager Sr. (reclassification/new title) who will manage all Division food sales and purchases and will assist with the expansion of food service at the golf courses.
- Concessions should work to retain a naming sponsor that will support the Division for an extended period of time.
- Shift the fundraising, sponsorship and other relevant responsibilities from the existing Special Projects/Fundraising Manager position to the new Marketing/Volunteer Specialist Sr. and Grants/Fundraising Specialist Sr. positions, and other positions as determined by the Director and Deputy Director of Enterprise.
- Work with the LFUCG Department of Law on revising the opinion that limits serving alcohol through County-sponsored concessions to private concessionaires so that County-operated golf concessions will have the ability to serve alcohol.
- Fee schedules should be amended after studying the Time and Motion Study data; direct costs for administering and facilitating rentals should be covered.
- New seasonal rental attendants and/or new seasonal Park Rangers (as recommended in the *Parks Maintenance* discussion) will monitor and patrol rentals and special events to ensure that park policies and laws are being adhered to.

Parks Maintenance Recommendations:

- Conduct a Time and Motion Study to create a baseline for time allocated for routine parks maintenance and confirm time spent providing reactive maintenance.
- Purchase software that enables the Division to track time per project.
- After Time and Motion Study, create parks maintenance standards system-wide.
- Create a hub for urban park operations to house parks inventory as well as provide a base for large equipment.
- Create suburban and rural park district crews. Utilize findings from the Time and Motion Study to determine what parks should have site-based crews and which facilities should have roving crews or outsourced operations.
- Develop a staffing standard of 15 acres of parks maintained per person (actual field parks personnel) by 2015.
- Determine where outsourcing of services is in the best interest of the Division. Begin with the downtown landscaping and watering activities.

- Move leaf collection services to the Division of Waste Management.
- Work with LFUCG administration to determine whether greenway/trail maintenance will fall under Division of Parks and Recreation. If so, fill vacant maintenance positions and create greenway/trail maintenance crews.
- Larger special event set-up and take down should be contracted out to private providers. Existing special events crews will facilitate smaller special events (less than 500 people). Additional special event support will come from seasonal rental crews under Enterprise section's Aquatics/Rentals Manager.
- Match maintenance staff uniform allowances to those in other LFUCG divisions and adjust annually to meet cost of living rates.
- Work with the Division of Facilities and Fleet Management to create an equipment replacement schedule; evaluate rental vs. purchase.
- Create a park ranger program with a new Park Ranger Manager Sr. and seasonal Park Rangers. These new positions would be a work group under the Deputy Director of Planning and Support Services section.

Interdepartmental and Public Communication and Marketing

Recommendations:

- Establish communication as a distinct function within the Division and elevate it to management level, ideally as a primary function in the Administration section.
- Public Information personnel should report to the Director and/or a designee for relevant segments of their responsibilities. The Division must clearly communicate expectations and have input on their evaluations. The same is true for other support services, such as graphic design that is carried out by other LFUCG divisions for Parks and Recreation. All of these activities should be led by the new Marketing/Volunteer Specialist Sr. position.
- Designate communication as a component of all Division employees' job descriptions and hold them accountable for their roles. Regularly scheduled meetings should be held that highlight communication activities and provide good and bad communication examples.
- Institute a systematic research program to gather and maintain needed information on all publics over a period of several years. This should include primary and secondary and quantitative and qualitative studies with representative samples of the citizenry, Division of Parks and Recreation patrons, sponsors and partners, opinion leaders and other segments as appropriate.
- As soon as possible, contract an outside agency to conduct an internal communication audit to more fully identify communication roadblocks and opportunities to enhance employee communication.
- With external support, develop and execute a comprehensive strategic external communication plan that addresses all key audiences and outlines goals, objectives, roles, responsibilities, timelines, budgets and evaluation.
- Develop and execute an internal communication plan to be instituted within the next 6 - 12 months with update reviews to be done annually for the next 3 - 5 years.
- Develop an interdisciplinary team approach to assessing program success that includes communication factors as well as attendance, cost, and perceived community value. Develop strategies for programming based on team assessments.
- Create a renewed brand and identity package for the Division that will elevate citizen's perceptions, expectations and more accurately reflect the role the Division plays and aspires to play in citizen's lives. This branding effort should be in step with the overall LFUCG goal of branding the government as unified body but should also reflect on the unique qualities of the Division.
- Increase awareness of the Division's role, benefits and accomplishments by increasing communication regarding overall parks information through a well planned and integrated campaign.



- Incorporate customer management tools, such as databases, program evaluation, membership opportunities, and social networks, to build stronger relationships with more citizens.
- Update communication tools to include more interactive and “on demand” resources (i.e. website, email updates and newsletters, text, and phone) and personalized information delivered via preferred methods.
- Incorporate publicity and advertising to a greater extent, both of which are passive communication vehicles, to share information that people may not seek out, such as park improvements, the role of parks in communities, etc.
- Increase focus on communication with opinion leaders and auxiliary audiences such as university students and visitors.
- Seek opportunities to verify and reinforce the quality of the Division’s work through recertification, awards, professional speaking engagements, and other opportunities, which will build esteem and expectations.

Programming and Services Recommendations

Development of New Programs

- Increase the drop-in capacity by staffing community centers and providing equipment during the summer months to offer activities for those youth who do not wish to or cannot afford to participate in the Division’s summer camps. (High Priority)
- Increase the number and variety of extreme sports (rock climbing, mountain biking, BMX, Moto X, dodgeball, a ropes course) and outdoor activities (day trips for kayaking, caving, hiking, environmental education, and wildlife viewing). (High Priority)
- Increase the number and types of arts and culture programs for all ages. (High Priority)
- Increase the provision of health and wellness programs to inner city residents. (High Priority)
- Increase the number of playground programs, such as that provided at Valley Park. (High Priority)
- Develop programs and drop-in classes outside of the camps and other “bundled” programs to meet needs for all ages and interests. (High Priority)
- Increase partnerships with the schools and allied providers to provide additional and a wider variety of programming to the community when partnering opportunities are consistent with LFUCG goals. (Medium Priority)
- Increase the number and types of active adult programs. (Medium Priority)
- Expand the ESP program to five additional schools over the next five years. (Medium Priority)
- Expand and provide accessible equestrian programs to a larger number and wider representation of the community. Provide mobile equestrian programs in association with summer groups and after-school programs. (Medium Priority)
- Acquire more horses (through purchase, lease or donation) to allow for the expansion of the current equestrian program and the future Hisle Farm program. (Medium Priority)

Administrative

- Hold monthly meetings of the Recreation section to increase communications, visioning, program evaluation, and strategic planning. (High Priority)
- Hold staff accountable for the development of new programs, identify goals, and performance measures – management should approve and review on a quarterly or bi-annual basis. (High Priority)
- Renegotiate IGAs (Intergovernmental Agreements) with existing partners (schools, neighborhood associations, LYSA, etc.) – need to ensure an equitable relationship for the County. (High Priority)

- Enforce and adhere to the items within the IGAs. (High Priority)
- Diligently track program participation and cost recovery. (High Priority)
- Consistently use a program evaluation process to track participant satisfaction, facility quality, participation levels, and cost recovery. (High Priority)
- Update website regularly to include up-to-date program offerings, utilize email blasts to inform citizens of programs and include a comprehensive list of all program offerings in the *Fun Guide* and on website. (High Priority)
- Work with LFUCG administration to streamline budget amendment process for park-related activities and to retain some program revenues. (High Priority)
- Provide software training to empower staff to use RecTrac. (Medium Priority)
- Utilize RecTrac (addresses and emails) to increase marketing and communications with previous participants. (Medium Priority)

Organizational

- Follow recommendations for reorganization of Recreation and Special Programs sections as discussed in Section 4. (High Priority)
- Increase partnerships with the universities and community groups in the area to provide volunteers to supplement staff and provide supervision and run recreation programs during the spring and summer at the community centers. (High Priority)
- Create a Marketing/Volunteer Specialist Sr. position to centralize these efforts and communications. (High Priority)
- Work to ensure staff the resources needed to provide quality programs and high participation (materials, staff/volunteers, transportation, etc.). (High Priority)

Park Development Priorities

Tier One Priorities (projects that should be funded in the next 24 months)

1. Construct a new centralized Parks Administration office at or adjacent to the current Picadome offices.
2. Develop Cardinal Run Park North with suggested field modifications to the approved master plan to meet the need for field sports.
3. Develop Hisle Farm to meet the needs for expanded after-school, summer camp and general recreation programs.
4. Develop the renovation/redevelopment master plans for parks identified in this study to confirm redevelopment possibilities and refine cost estimates.
5. Increase the rate at which new greenways are developed throughout the system.
6. Do general park maintenance, and put a fresh coat of paint on as many items as you can in preparation of the 2010 World Equestrian Games.
7. Develop a youth football complex with a minimum of four fields. Location to be determined.
8. Stop building neighborhood association buildings.
9. Make golf course irrigation upgrades to Lakeside and Kearney; construct new cart barn at Picadome; make kitchen improvements at Tates Creek, Kearney and Lakeside; and continue toward goal of breaking even.
10. Implement staff and organization recommendations relating to park planning.
11. Implement park planning on a district basis.
12. Make necessary changes to purchasing procedures to allow more outsourcing of park planning and construction administration services.

13. Conduct an aquatics facility audit to determine a course of action to improve profitability of the pools.
14. Identify and review possible new permanent funding sources to meet both near-term and long-term operations and capital needs of the Division.
15. Have a large bond in place to fund a minimum of \$50 million in park projects over the next three years.

Tier Two Priorities (completed in months 25-60 after adoption of master plan)

1. Have the new funding system in place to provide a higher level of annual funding, and begin the implementation of parks that were master planned as Tier One projects.
2. Conduct a statically valid community-wide survey on facility and programming preferences.
3. Continue implementation of greenway routes throughout the county.
4. Begin the implementation of a horse trail system throughout the county's Rural Park districts.
5. Continue development of Hisle Farm and Cardinal Run Park North.
6. Begin implementation of aquatic facility upgrades.
7. Construct both new recreation centers (one in the Urban Core and one in a Suburban Park district).
8. Construct extreme sports complex.
9. Continue adding playgrounds.

Tier Three Priorities (completed in months 61-120 after adoption of master plan)

1. Renovations of community and neighborhood parks that had to remain in operation until Tier Two renovation projects were complete.
2. Continue with greenway development.
3. Continue with ongoing playground and court redevelopment and conversions to greenspace.
4. Begin replacements at Cardinal Run Park South as it approaches 15 years of service.