RECREATION MASTER PLAN
PRESENTATION

Saratoga Springs
New York

AUGUST 6, 2019
PROJECT TEAM

City and School District Staff

John Hirliman- Recreation Department
Michael Veitch- Department of Public Works
Kate Maynard- Planning Department
Bob Manasier- Recreation Commission
John Thuener – Saratoga School District
Dave L’Hommedieu – Saratoga School District
Lisa Shields- Deputy Mayor
Mike Sharp – Deputy Commissioner of Finance

Recreation Department Staff

Wes Clark – Program Coordinator
Doug June – Recreation Account Specialist
Kathy Lanfear – Office Manager
Jill Ramos- Program Coordinator
Debbie Rehm- Recreation Account Specialist
PURPOSE OF THE RECREATION MASTER PLAN

- Road map for improving the City’s provision of parks and recreation facilities and services for residents and visitors
  - Inventories existing public parks and recreation assets
  - Reviews current conditions impacting recreation in Saratoga Springs
    - Demographics, community input, local and national recreation trends
  - Identifies residents’ wants, needs, and level of satisfaction with current recreation opportunities; as well as ideas for improvement
  - Provides goals and prioritized action plan for improving existing and future recreation opportunities

Making our space a better place for recreation!
1. Information Gathering & Analysis
   - Review City background data
   - Demographic assessment
   - Stakeholder focus groups and public meetings
   - Community-wide recreation and parks survey
   - Inventory update and gap analysis
   - Assessment of existing City parks and recreation assets
   - Analyze and interoperate data
   - Identification of key issues, challenges and opportunities

2. Findings & Visioning
   Public presentation; Recreation Commission, City Council, Leadership and City staff feedback; citizen input

3. Goals & Recommendations

4. Draft and Final Plans
## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – REOCCURRING THEMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strength</strong></th>
<th><strong>Challenge</strong></th>
<th><strong>Priorities for Improvement</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diverse recreation opportunities for sports, fitness and fun.</td>
<td>Existing recreation facilities and amenities are not meeting user expectations.</td>
<td>Connect and improve opportunities for walking and biking (trails, paths)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong interest and use of parks and facilities.</td>
<td>Space for field sports and indoor recreation activities is constrained.</td>
<td>Enhance existing parks and recreation infrastructure – capital improvement &amp; better maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong community pride and support for local and regional recreation.</td>
<td>Limited information available about City recreation opportunities online and on-site.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and local organizations all play roles in the provision of public recreation opportunities.</td>
<td>Access to some facilities is limited (not enough parking, no safe bike route, seasonal ice rink closures).</td>
<td>More sports fields and indoor recreation space; facilities for sports tournaments / sports tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More programs for young children and young adults</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# CITYWIDE SURVEY – FACTORS TO INCREASE USAGE

**Saratoga Springs Recreation Dept. Survey** | **Future Facilities, Amenities, and Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Invite</th>
<th>Open Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better awareness of programs (communications)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved connectivity (trails, public transportation, etc)</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved condition/maintenance of existing parks or facilities</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased activities/programming</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting of outdoor facilities to extend usable hours</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional/new types of facilities</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded parking</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More parks or recreation opportunities closer to where I live</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved WiFi connectivity</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved safety and security</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readjusted pricing/user fees</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better customer service/staff knowledge</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased handicapped/disabled accessibility</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*What are the most important areas that, if addressed by the City, would increase your utilization of Saratoga Springs parks and recreation facilities? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)*

*Strong consistency in importance of influencing factors overall.*

*Source: RRC Associates and GreenPlay*
Majority of all respondents prioritized improving trail and path connectivity.

Moderate consistency in priorities – Invite v. Open Link

1/3rd Open Link prioritized athletic field improvements.

**Saratoga Springs Recreation Dept. Survey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future Facilities, Amenities, and Services</th>
<th>Invite</th>
<th>Open Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trail and pathway connectivity (for walking, biking, hiking)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/neighborhood parks</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of existing facilities</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior programming</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic fields (soccer, baseball, lacrosse)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth programming</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural arts programming</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic facilities (swimming, splash pads)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic courts (basketball, volleyball, tennis, pickleball)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult programming</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice rinks</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness programming</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor facilities</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports programming</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other facilities</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to the Recreation Center</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp programming</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From the list in the previous question, please select the top three highest priority items for you and your household to be added, expanded, or improved in Saratoga Springs.*

*Source: RRC Associates and GreenPlay*
PROVIDING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SARATOGA SPRINGS

Community, Teams, Tournaments

REC DEPT: Program, Register, Schedule, Promote, Staff

DPW: Maintain, Repair, Improve

Clinics & Programs  Leagues  Summer Camps  Rentals  FUTURE

Drop-In  Sports  Fitness  Soccer  Basketball  Seniors  Arts

Athletic Fields  Courts  Playgrounds, Splash Pads  Track, Jogging Path  Vernon Ice Rink  Weibel Ice Rink  Rec Center  Trails

Parks  Facilities  FUTURE  FUTURE
Saratoga Springs Recreation Department

Overview:
- 8 Parks/Facilities
- 122 acres
- 104,000 sf of Indoor Recreation Space
- 21 Athletic Fields
- 13 Tennis Courts
- 9 Full and 2 Half Court Basketball Courts
- 5 Playgrounds

General Comments:
- Frequently Used by Multiple User Groups
- Strong Relationship and Connection to Community
- Collectively the Parks Offer a Wide Variety of Events
48 Recreation Department Programs:
• 37 by-registration programs with 2,700 participants
• 11 drop-in programs with 27,000+ participants
• 64 special events and tournaments hosted (fields, rinks and Recreation Center)

Great support from residents, local businesses and civic organizations:
• Sponsorships of sports teams and Camp Saradac
• Donated use of athletic fields for youth soccer for 14+ years (Saratoga Casino)
• Donated equipment, volunteer time, community service hours

2017 Annual Report
Connecting and expanding public trails, bike paths and associated infrastructure throughout the city is important to everyone.

Improving the quality and utility of existing city parks and recreation infrastructure is necessary; through both improved maintenance and capital investment.

Additional programmable indoor recreation space and outdoor sports fields to utilize for local recreation games, practices, programs and activities is needed.

Marketing, outreach and sharing of information about city recreation opportunities must become more effective.

Internal and external partnerships should be strengthened and leveraged to foster improvement of existing recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.
GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

THREE FOCUS AREAS
Based on the sum of all information and analysis

Organizational Enhancement
Programs and Service Delivery
Facilities and Amenities
Goal 1: Organizational Enhancement
   Improve the business processes for the Recreation and Public Works Departments.

Goal 2: Programs and Service Delivery
   Expand Programs and Service Delivery: Adults, Seniors, Special Events, Mobile.

Goal 3: Facilities and Amenities
   Improve quality of infrastructure and add to available indoor space.
1. Assemble a team to guide the implementation of this Recreation Master Plan.

2. Increase maintenance and customer service staffing and training to accommodate existing and future needs.

3. Better leverage existing relationships and create new connections between the Recreation Department and the community to improve communication and engagement with all segments of the population about local park and recreation opportunities.
1. Continue to **provide high-quality** recreation, fitness and sports programs for all ages and abilities citywide. Seek to **create more activities** for adults and seniors and all ages at various community parks.
1. Improve the **quality of existing infrastructure and amenities** at City parks and recreation sites to enhance the user experience.

2. Increase the **quantity of available indoor recreation space and athletic fields** that can be used for hosting City recreation programs and activities.

3. Improve **branding and marketing** of City parks and recreation opportunities to improve awareness and usage of amenities.

4. Continue to **expand and enhance Saratoga Springs’ pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure**.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>General Improvements</th>
<th>Estimated Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| East Side Recreation Park | 2      | - Upgrades to the skate park,  
- Replacing the varsity baseball scoreboard  
- Development and implementation of a field and turf maintenance programs                                                                                     | $90,000 - $110,000   |
| West Side Recreation Park | 2      | - Upgrades to the tee ball and bantam little league field dugouts  
- Develop internal walk system linking park amenities  
- Provide park identification and wayfinding signs  
- Replace old playground equipment  
- Development and implementation of a field and turf maintenance programs                                                                 | $200,000 - $240,000  |
| North Side Recreation Park | 2      | - Provide an accessible walk to the playground  
- Provide new park identification and rules signs  
- Repair damaged decorative fence  
- Development and implementation of turf maintenance programs  
- Address athletic field drainage  
- Install playground shade structure                                                                                                                   | $40,000 - $43,000    |
| Veterans Memorial Park   | 2      | - Provide directional and wayfinding signage  
- Seal pavement cracks at the tennis courts  
- Develop a maintenance resurfacing program for all outdoor courts  
- Install taller backstops for Softball Fields #1 and #2  
- Make major renovations at Ed Valentine Field  
- Provide spectator bleachers for Softball Fields #2, #3 and #4  
- The Concessions Stand building needs general maintenance and cosmetic repair  
- Replace the existing playground and swing sets                                                                                                         | $720,000 - $750,000  |
| Ice Rinks                | 1      | - Reconstruct the parking lots including new lighting  
- Provide a safer entry drive off Weibel Ave  
- Redesign of the rink entries to service both rinks  
- Provide additional storage  
- Potentially repurpose the underutilized music room  
- Replace lounge room flooring and provide bleacher heaters at the Weibel Rink.                                                                           | $1,000,000 - $1,100,000 |
| Recreation Center        | 2      | - Repurposing the locker rooms  
- Convert the game room into usable space  
- Provide additional storage  
- Redesign the concessions stand  
- Develop a general field maintenance program.                                                                                                           | Conduct Needs Assessment |
| Geyser Crest Courts      | 1      | - Add a playground and provide new site amenities (bike racks, benches, identification sign, trash receptacles, etc.)                                                                                               | $190,000 - $220,000  |
| Waterfront Park          | 2      | - Implement phase 2  
- Develop general landscape maintenance schedule and procedures.                                                                                                                                                | Waterfront Park Master Plan |

**Rating Scale:**

1: Below Expectation
2: Meets Expectation
3: Above Expectation
PROJECT CONTACTS

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