MAJOR PROJECT COMPONENTS

1. Information Gathering & Analysis
   - Review background data
   - Stakeholder Focus Groups
   - Interviews w/ Elected Officials
   - Community Survey
   - Inventory Update & Gap Analysis
   - Analyze and Coalesce Data

2. Findings & Visioning

3. Goals & Recommendations

4. Draft and Final Plans
KEY FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

- 60+ PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTING DIVERSE COMMUNITY INTERESTS
- INTERVIEWS WITH MULTIPLE ELECTED OFFICIALS
- RECREATION STAFF FOCUS GROUP & SWOT ANALYSIS
- INTERVIEWS WITH PUBLIC WORKS STAFF
- PUBLIC PRESENTATION HOSTED BY THE RECREATION COMMISSION

The following slides summarize key findings of all feedback presented to the consultant team.
STRENGTHS OF EXISTING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

- DIVERSE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPORTS, FITNESS AND FUN
- “HHH” – HEALTH, HORSES, AND HISTORY; “CITY IN THE COUNTRY” – STRONG LOCAL PRIDE
- RECREATION DIRECTOR VERY HELPFUL AND SUPPORTIVE
- DPW DOES A GOOD JOB WITH RESOURCES AVAILABLE
- THE FLOWER CREWS – DOWNTOWN
- RECREATION CENTER
- SPA STATE PARK
- YMCA
- MANY STRONG AND ACTIVE LOCAL SPORTS GROUPS AND CIVIC GROUPS
EXISTING CONDITIONS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

- PARK AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE IS NOT MEETING USER EXPECTATIONS – INADEQUATE AND INCONSISTENT
- AGING AND INADEQUATE FACILITIES
- PERCEIVED LACK OF “OWNERSHIP” BY CITY STAFF IN PARKS AND FACILITIES
- SPORTS FIELD AND FACILITY SPACE IS LIMITED – INDOOR SPORTS, BASEBALL, SOCCER, ICE SPORTS, LACROSSE, ETC.
- RELATIONSHIP IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED – PUBLIC WORKS, RECREATION, SCHOOLS, KEY STAKEHOLDERS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, RESIDENTS, ETC.
- CHALLENGES TO USE – PARKING, WARM-WEATHER ICE RINK CLOSURE, CAPACITY, CONDITION
- LACK OF TRAIL CONNECTIVITY –COMPLETE GREENBELT TRAIL
- LACK OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES – LIMITED ONLINE DATA, SIGNAGE, WAYFINDING, PARK MAPS, ETC.
DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES

- Consistent and reliable maintenance of existing parks and facilities
- Trail connectivity
- Eastside Rec rehabilitation
- Easier access to facilities – parking, safe bike and pedestrian routes
- Add additional water recreation amenities at waterfront park
- Improve basic site features - bathrooms, concessions, sports fields, trails, etc.
- Improve the skatepark
NEW RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES WANTED

- Host sports tournaments / sports tourism
- Destination playgrounds or thematic park elements
- More winter activities – ice sports, cross country skiing, indoor sports
- Rowing programs
- YMCA baseball / non-competitive league
- More recreation programs: young children
- More young adults recreation opportunities
- Adult ice programs
- More informal drop-in activities – indoors, sports fields, free play
NEW FACILITIES WANTED

- INTERCONNECTED TRAIL SYSTEM – DOWNTOWN, NEIGHBORHOODS, PARKS, ETC.
- MORE SPORTS FIELDS AND MULTIPURPOSE FIELDS AND/OR SPORTS COMPLEX
- ADVENTURE SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES – ZIP LINE, “SPARTAN” RACE, BMX TRACK
- ADDITIONAL INDOOR RECREATION AND MULTIUSE SPACE – BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, OTHER SPORTS, FREE PLAY, AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
WHAT TO IMPROVE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

- Enhance and improve / better maintain existing facilities
- Leverage relationships with user groups to improve stewardship of facilities and parks
- Implement basic, measurable maintenance standards and schedule
- Strengthen funding for capital improvement, operations and maintenance
- Increase field, court and rink space / capacity for sports programs and events
- Improve basic park and recreation site infrastructure and comfort features
- Develop and begin to implement a prioritized plan for creating an interconnected bike/peDESTrian trail system
KEY PARTNERS IN CITY RECREATION

- Burlington VT Pennies for Parks – Potential for something like this here?
- YMCA
- School District
- Existing Public/Private Partnerships
- Hospitals/Health Care Providers
- Local Businesses and Chamber of Commerce
- Sports Groups
- Civic Organizations and Volunteers
- Skidmore College
- Spa State Park
- Local Museums and Arts Community
KEY ISSUES OVERALL

- STRONG COMMUNITY PRIDE AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL RECREATION
- DEDICATED USER BASE WILLING TO ASSIST IN STEWARDSHIP OF PARKS AND FACILITIES
- INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN DIVERSE RECREATION, SPORTS, AND FITNESS ACTIVITIES
- LOTS OF INTEREST IN CREATING AN INTERCONNECTED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PATH NETWORK
- POOR / INCONSISTENT MAINTENANCE OF MANY EXISTING FACILITIES IS A MAJOR CONCERN
- IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION IS NEEDED – CITY TO PUBLIC AND VICE VERSA