



BALTIMORE CITY
RECREATION & PARKS

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Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Department

Services Assessment
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Executive Summary

In August of 2011, Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake’s Recreation Center Task Force Report recommended a comprehensive assessment of the Baltimore City Recreation & Parks Department’s (BCRP) programs and services. In the spring of 2014, BCRP began working with GreenPlay, LLC, to conduct a Services Assessment process on all programs and services to determine core and duplicate services, which services to advance or affirm in market position, and which services to consider collaborating with others to provide or to divest.

The overall goals of the Services Assessment process were to:

- a) Train and empower staff to learn and utilize the Services Assessment tools independently in the future.
- b) Incorporate a systematic methodology in determining whether a new program or service should be added and what the provision strategy should be.



A series of four staff training workshops, two community meetings, a Leadership Summit, meetings with the Mayor’s Office and City Council members, a Youth Summit, and staff interviews were conducted over the course of the Services Assessment process.

A. Services Assessment Components & Time Frame

The Services Assessment process took place over a seven month period, and involved several components:



Purpose of a Services Assessment

A **Services Assessment** is a systematic process to determine where an agency has the opportunity to aggressively pursue a market niche, divest interest or resources, or form partnerships. A **Services Assessment** is an intensive review of organizational services including activities, facilities, and public lands. The Assessment utilizes a series of filters to determine the organization's level of responsibility in the provision of the service. Results of the Assessment indicate whether the service is **"core to the organization's mission,"** or if there is significant duplication of community efforts to provide a particular service. The analysis of current resources, their allocation, and subsidy and cost recovery levels for all organizational services typically follows this process.

Methodology

The use of the Services Assessment tool to identify core services and potential provision strategies included a significant number of educational workshops and required extensive time and effort by many BCRP staff. The sessions introduced each component of the process and engaged internal stakeholder groups in interactive dialogue and exercises. The process is rooted in department values, vision, and mission statements identified and affirmed through staff and community meetings. The Services Assessment helps to identify data driven answers to the following questions:

- *Is the agency the best or most appropriate organization to provide the service?*
- *Is market competition good for the citizenry?*
- *Is the agency spreading its resources too thin without the capacity to sustain core services and the system in general?*
- *Are there opportunities to work with another organization to provide services in a more efficient and responsible manner?*



B. Summary of Key Findings

In coordination with the Service Portfolio Provision Strategies analyses, the following Key Findings, Strategies, and Actions have been identified for inclusion as a complement to the overall Services Assessment process:

- A culture of positive change and forward momentum is visible within the Department and the City.
- BCRP senior leadership supports and encourages positive changes.
- The Baltimore community wants BCRP to take a leadership role in safety, health, youth development, and community building.
- Department support services are limiting programming and facility efforts, i.e., lack of technology and public relations resources; purchasing limitations; maintenance staff shortages; and evolving integration of capital planning, maintenance, and programming efforts.

- City and Department leadership acknowledge that recreation and physical activity are connected with individual and community health and wellness and the prevention of chronic health issues such as heart disease, asthma, and obesity.
- Contract management approach needs to be evaluated for accountability; consistency with Department mission, vision, and values; and capacity of agency/individual to operate public facilities.

C. Strategies, Actions, and Implementation

In addition to the complete Service Portfolio (provided as an internal staff resource document), which outlines the recommended service provision strategies for the programs and services analyzed by BCRP staff and leadership, the following Strategies and Actions are recommended to facilitate the integration of the Services Assessment recommendations into BCRP operations. Key to implementation: Short-Term (Immediate), Mid-Term (1-2 years), and Long-Term (2-3 years).

Strategy	Actions	Implementation
QUALITY FOCUS	<i>a. Establish performance measures for staff, programs, and services.</i>	Short-Term
DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING	<i>a. Establish Services Assessment Tool in the organization.</i> <i>b. Consider establishing a combined marketing and research unit.</i> <i>c. Conduct cost recovery exercise to supplement Services Assessment data.</i>	Short-Term Long-Term Mid-Term
SUPERIOR LEADERSHIP	<i>a. Provide and foster high quality, professional leadership of park and recreation services in Baltimore City, both internally within the Department and externally within the community.</i>	Short-Term
PROMOTE POSITIVE CHANGE	<i>a. Institute formal multi-neighborhood outreach efforts and listening sessions to share programs, volunteer opportunities, community center/neighborhood center plans, etc.</i> <i>b. Enhance and coordinate social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, videos; i.e. match icons on website to social media sites, connect with NBC “Shine A Light” initiative.</i>	Short-Term Short-Term

I. Introduction

The Services Assessment process identified BCRP’s service areas, specific programs and services, and geographically based alternative service providers throughout the City. BCRP leadership and staff were trained in the use of the Public Sector Services Assessment Matrix (based on the **MacMillan Matrix for Competitive Analysis of Programs**¹) which produced completed matrices for each service area in MS Excel databases. The trainings helped BCRP staff understand each service area’s market segment and the strength or weakness of its position within that market. These databases produced a “Service Portfolio,” which forms a foundation for decision making regarding service provision strategies. This tool should be considered a best practices approach to determining the delivery of programs and services, and is intended to guide all future decision-making. It is designed to bring critical information to the forefront allowing data-driven decision-making. This first effort was a significant undertaking to account for and gather data for all programs and services. However, now that the foundation is laid and the process is understood, it will only be necessary to update existing programs and services and to consider new ones. Future Services Assessment work will be conducted in house by BCRP staff, acknowledging that recreation and parks services are continually changing and evolving. A full description of the Public Sector Services Assessment Tool is found in **Appendix A**.

A. Baltimore City Recreation & Parks Values, Vision, and Mission

The Services Assessment evaluated BCRP services relative to the Department’s defined Values (what is important); the Vision (future direction) of BCRP leadership, staff, and the community; and the existing BCRP Mission (reason for existence). Ideally, all BCRP services should draw a direct correlation between the Department’s values, vision, and mission. There should also be a clear alignment between BCRP and community defined values and vision and the following Mayoral city-wide goals:

- Better Schools
- Safer Streets
- Stronger Neighborhoods
- Growing Economy
- Cleaner, Healthier City
- Innovative Government



¹ Alliance for Nonprofit Management

B. Community Engagement

In order to determine a collective set of values and vision for BCRP, a number of community engagement meetings and trainings were held with different groups during the Services Assessment process. These meetings and trainings included:

- BCRP Internal Project Team: A committed group of 27 BCRP senior leaders and staff provided guidance throughout the Services Assessment process, participated in staff trainings and public forums, and provided insight into Departmental operations.
- City Council Invitational Meeting: On May 30th, 2014, several City Councilors and their staff attended a project briefing, participated in a visioning exercise, and provided suggestions for community collaborations.
- Public Forums (2): A total of 41 residents attended two public forums, providing input on BCRP's vision and values, community collaborations, and ideas for collaborative leadership. Public Forums were held at the Rowing Club, Middle Branch Park, in Cherry Hill on May 28th and at the Rita Church Recreation Center in Clifton Park on May 29th, 2014.
- Leadership Summit and Follow Up (2): Leaders from 28 non-profit, school, city, and business organizations participated in a visioning exercise, and helped shape a model for collaborative leadership to promote resource and information sharing. The Summit was held at the Vollmer Center on May 29th, 2014. A subsequent follow up meeting was held on June 26th, 2014.
- Youth Summit: Twenty-three youth and youth leaders convened to discuss their views on BCRP recreation programs and services, and participate in a mapping exercise to explore the places they visit for recreation and the modes of travel they use to access recreation opportunities. The meeting was held on June 26th, 2014.
- All-Staff Trainings & Workshops (4): The Services Assessment training was provided to all BCRP staff over the course of four training and work sessions with the intent of developing an agency-wide awareness of the value and methodology of the process and completing the Services Assessment analysis.



BCRP Mission

The BCRP mission articulates the Department's *"reason for existence,"* and encompasses selected values identified by the community:

"To improve the health and wellness of Baltimore through quality recreational programs, preserving our parks and natural resources, and promoting fun, active lifestyles for all ages."

- BCRP Mission Statement

Values

A summary of the discussion on community values and vision through the community engagement process yielded the following collective views on the value of parks and recreation services to the Baltimore community:



Community Values

What is the value of parks & recreation to the community?

- Creates a sense of community
- Promotes cultural understanding and sensitivity
- Positively impacts physical, social and emotional health, "soul soothing"
- Increases property values
- Provides equitable access to green space
- Protects the environmental health of the city
- Essential to repurposing of communities & rebuilding the city



Vision

There is clear alignment regarding the vision for parks and recreation in Baltimore between the existing BCRP vision and the vision articulated in the public forums. The existing BCRP vision effectively summarizes many of the viewpoints outlined in the public discussion, with the addition of *"providing safe and welcoming places for people to use," "growing the population of the city,"* and *"serving as an economic driver in the community."* While these components of the community vision are not specifically articulated in the BCRP vision, it is acknowledged by Department leadership that these values are important to maintain, and they align with the Mayor's goals of health, safety, economic vitality, and attracting 10,000 new families to Baltimore.

BCRP Vision

To build a stronger Baltimore one community at a time through:

Conservation: Parks are critical in the role of preserving natural resources that have real economic benefits for communities. We are the leaders (often the only voice in communities) for protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and providing education and programming that helps communities engage in conservation practices.



Health and Wellness: BCRP leads Baltimore in improving the overall health and wellness of communities. We are essential partners in combating some of the most complicated and expensive challenges faced by our city – poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, and physical inactivity.

Social Equity: Universal access to public parks and recreation is a right, not just a privilege. Every day, we are working hard to ensure that all members of our community have access to the resources and programming we offer.

Community Vision

Community Vision

What will the community “need” from Parks and Recreation in the future?

- Create productive citizens
- Support environmental health
- Promote physical and mental health
- Provide safe & welcoming places for people to use
- Grow the population of the city
- Serve as an economic driver in the community
- Create a stronger more vibrant community
- Be a leader in sustainable practices



City Wide Collaborative Vision For All Service Providers

The participants in the Leadership Summit outlined a collaborative vision, describing what a coordinated effort toward the provision of parks and recreation services by all providers in the City would look like. There was a clear expectation that BCRP is the logical convener of a working group to share resources and information and develop a more holistic approach to addressing community issues.

Collaborative Vision

- **Transparent, empathetic, informative**
- **Fairness among partners, break down silos**
- **Communication - all stakeholders are aware of what others are doing**
- **Working Group - made up of reps of all/several agencies; leadership from the BCRP with annual/quarterly meetings**
- **Technology - information hub; mapping of assets - bus and bike routes;**

BCRP continues to move toward an emphasis on health and wellness as identified in its mission, acknowledging the relationship between participation in recreation activities and improved health. This trend is evident nationally and regionally in Prince George's County.

- The U.S. Heart Association has clearly identified the issue of obesity in this country: "The U.S. is in the grips of a full-blown obesity epidemic. In 2011, adult obesity rates grew in 16 states; in more than two-thirds of states, obesity rates exceed 25% of all adults; and 12 states have obesity rates greater than 30%. In light of these dire statistics, it is critical to find ways to increase physical activity opportunities in the places where people live, work, learn and play, making the healthy choice the easy choice. However, nearly 50% of U.S. adults and 65% of adolescents do not currently get the recommended amount of physical activity each day."
- Regionally, the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and Washington, D.C. Recreation and Parks have made a commitment to design programs and services with a health focus in response to County health data related to overweight and obesity, as summarized in M-NCPPC's Formula 2040 report:
 - "Health and Wellness: Performance indicators could include percentage of adult obesity relative to national average, and percentage of program descriptions that include developmental asset benefits. Prince George's County ranks significantly higher than the Maryland average for many rates of mortality, morbidity, and prevalence of chronic diseases."

Sixty-nine percent (69%) of County residents are overweight or obese, with 48% of children being overweight or obese. Prince George's County has the second highest adjusted death rate from heart disease in Maryland (280.4 per 100,000), while the state average is 252.8. In the area of health and wellness, DPR will promote a wellness ethic. We want our facilities and programs to have wellness components that will contribute to the physical and mental health of our patrons and to the environmental health of communities. From a programmatic perspective, mental health relates to the level of social connectivity discussed above.

II. Trends in Recreation Programming and Facilities

As BCRP is evolving its community center approach from smaller, older, department-run facilities to fewer large, high quality facilities supplemented by renovated smaller centers and school based centers, information on national trends in programming and facility development is an important consideration. Evaluation criteria in planning, designing, siting, staffing, programming, and operating the new BCRP system of community centers is informed by national and regional trends. Programming drives effective and successful facility development. Relevant trend information is summarized below.



One of the most common concerns in the recreation industry is creating innovative programming to draw participants into facilities and services. Once in, participants recognize that the benefits are endless. According to *Recreation Management* magazine’s “2013 State of the Industry Report,”² a survey of more than 2,200 recreation, sports, and fitness professionals, the most popular programs offered by survey respondents are as follows (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Recreation Program Popularity

Program	Total
Holiday Events and Other Special Events	64.2%
Fitness Programs	61.4%
Educational Programs	58.9%
Day Camps and Summer Camps	55.2%
Youth Sports Teams	54.3%
Sports Tournaments and Races	49.2%
Mind-Body/Balance Programs	49.1%
Swimming Programming (Teams and Lessons)	48.5%
Adult Sports Teams	47.8%
Sports Training	44.1%
Arts and Crafts	42.7%
Programs for Active Older Adults	40.9%

² Emily Tipping, “2013 State of the Industry Report, Trends in Parks and Recreation,” *Recreation Management*, June 2013.

The report also suggested slightly more than three in ten (30.2%) respondents indicated that they are planning to add additional programs at their facilities over the next three years. The most common types of programming they are planning to add include:

- Educational programs (up from #5 on 2012 survey)
- Fitness programs (up from #3)
- Mind-body/balance programs – yoga, tai chi, Pilates, or martial arts (up from #6)
- Day camps and summer camps (up from #10)
- Holiday events and other special events (up from #7)
- Environmental education (down from #1)
- Teen programming (down from #2)
- Active older adults programming (down from #4)
- Sports tournaments or races (not on the 2012 survey)
- Sport training (not on the 2012 Survey)

In 2013, adult sports teams and performing arts dropped off the top 10 list for new programming.

In addition, the American Academy of Sports Medicine, (ACSM) released an article entitled, “ACSM Predicts Fitness Trends for 2011.”³ It ranks senior fitness programs first among the list of most popular fitness trends in 2011. Whether it’s Silver Sneakers, a freestyle low-impact cardio class, or water aerobics, more and more people are realizing the many benefits of staying active throughout life. According to the National Sporting Goods Association, popular senior programming trends include hiking, birding, and swimming.

Finally, the Outdoor Foundation compiled a report in 2010 which examined youth and young adult participation in the outdoors between the ages of 6 and 24 years. The findings showed that running, fishing, camping, hiking, and bicycling are the most popular outdoor activities among youth, but that youth participation in the outdoors has been declining.

³ ACSM Predicts Fitness Trends for 2011,” Examiner.com, <http://www.examiner.com/article/acsm-predicts-fitness-trends-for-2011>, Accessed November 24, 2012.

III. Identifying Core Services and Service Provision Strategies

Based on the MacMillan Matrix for Competitive Analysis of Programs, the Public Sector Services Assessment Matrix (**Figure 1**) is a valuable tool that is specifically adapted to help public agencies assess their services. The MacMillan Matrix realized significant success in the non-profit environment and has led to application in the public sector. The Matrix is based on the assumption that duplication of existing comparable services (unnecessary competition) among public and non-profit organizations can fragment limited resources available, such that no provider has sufficient resources to increase the quality and cost-effectiveness of customer services.

Figure 1: The Public Sector Services Assessment Matrix

Services Assessment Matrix ©2009 GreenPlay LLC and GP RED		Financial Capacity Economically Viable		Financial Capacity Not Economically Viable	
		Alternative Coverage High	Alternative Coverage Low	Alternative Coverage High	Alternative Coverage Low
Good Fit	Strong Market Position	Affirm Market Position 1	Advance Market Position 2	Complementary Development 5	"Core Service" 6
	Weak Market Position	Divest 3	Invest, Collaborate or Divest 4	Collaborate or Divest 7	Collaborate or Divest 8
Poor Fit	Divest				9

The Matrix assumes that trying to be all things to all people can result in mediocre or low-quality service. Instead, agencies should focus on delivering higher-quality service in a more focused (and perhaps limited) way. The Matrix helps organizations think about some very pragmatic questions.

- *Is the agency the best or most appropriate organization to provide the service?*
- *Is market competition good for the citizenry?*
- *Is the agency spreading its resources too thin without the capacity to sustain core services and the system in general?*
- *Are there opportunities to work with another organization to provide services in a more efficient and responsible manner?*

The BCRP Services Assessment process considers each service's position in the community relative to the market, the quantity and quality of other providers in the service area, and the economic viability of the service. The results indicate whether a service is core to the agency's values and vision, and recommends strategies for providing services that can include, but are not limited to:

- Investment in service
- Divestment of service
- Collaboration with other providers
- Complementary service provision
- Advancing or affirming market position

It is important to note that the Services Assessment tool is designed to be used sustainably by BCRP staff to provide a continual assessment of programs and services. As new opportunities for collaboration and service provision emerge, either from internal or external demands, the Services Assessment process can be used to determine the appropriate provision strategy.

A. BCRP Service Categories Defined

Service Categories and sub categories of service were identified in consultation with the BCRP leadership team for detailed evaluation using the Matrix to result in a **Services Portfolio**. Each service category can be considered its own business division within the agency, coordinated by a staffed BCRP **Service Area** which oversees programming, budget, maintenance, and internal and external collaborations. The Service Categories provide a holistic view of BCRP programs and services, and when evaluated with the Services Assessment process, duplication and potential opportunities for coordination and efficiencies are identified.

Staffed BCRP Service Areas Defined for the Services Assessment:

- Aquatics
- Carrie Murray Nature Center
- Community Centers
- Forestry
- Horticulture
- Maintenance
- Mimi DiPietro Skating Facility
- Mt. Pleasant Ice Arena
- Outdoor Programs
- Permits, Partnerships, and Special Events
- Seniors
- Therapeutic Recreation
- Volunteers
- Youth and Adult Sports

BCRP Service Categories Defined for the Service Assessment:

1. Fitness and Wellness
Group recreational and/or instructional programs, classes, workshops, and clinics that are fitness or wellness oriented in nature, for all ages together, such as family activities; for a specific age such as tots, youth, adults, or seniors; or those activities with no age specifications, including educational classes operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance.
2. Active Older Adults
Group recreational and/or instructional programs and activities for seniors including educational classes and athletics operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance. Seniors can be considered a target market (age) for many types of services that fit in other categories.
3. Arts and Culture
Group recreational and/or instructional programs, classes, workshops, and clinics that are arts-oriented or cultural in nature, for all ages together, such as family activities; for a specific age such as tots, youth, adults, or seniors; or those activities with no age specifications, including educational classes operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance.
4. Social Enrichment
Group recreational and/or instructional programs, classes, workshops, and clinics for all ages together that provide social enrichment, such as family activities, clubs, or groups; for a specific age such as tots, youth, adults, or seniors; or those activities with no age specifications, including educational classes operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance.
5. Youth and Adult Sports
Instructional classes, clinics, or leagues (scheduled series of games) or events/contests for participants of multi-skill-levels and various age groups that are organized and/or managed by BCRP, may or may not be officiated and/or judged, and may or may not be scored, providing an experience for participants with the intent to learn a skill, play a game/match-format, or to compete on a recreational level.
6. Outdoor
Group recreational and/or instructional programs, classes, clinics, and workshops that are outdoors in nature, with an emphasis on movement, for all ages together, such as family activities like fishing, which align with the Mayor's goal for a fishable Harbor by 2020; for a specific age such as tots, youth, adults, or seniors; or those activities with no age specifications, operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance.
7. Environmental Education/Nature Programs
Group recreational and/or instructional programs, classes, clinics, and workshops, with an emphasis on environmental stewardship, for all ages together, such as family activities; for a specific age such as tots, youth, adults, or seniors; or those activities with no age specifications, including educational classes, operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance.

8. Aquatics

Aquatic related group recreational and/or instructional programs and activities for all ages together, such as family activities; for a specific age such as tots, youth, or adults; or those activities with no age specifications, including educational classes, operated, taught, or managed by BCRP through contract or staff; no pre-requisite for attendance.

9. Out of School Time

Licensed and non-licensed recreational and child care camps, school break programs, and after school programs with a social, child care, and/or recreational focus which may include field trips, rather than specific instructional or skills programs (various activities focused on youth development). Programs include camps (aka CAMP BALTIMORE), Swimming, RecEco and Nature, RecSports, Games and Challenging activities, Arts and Crafts, Computer Skill; Exercise and Fitness; Dance and Performing Arts; and more, as well as The LEARNING ACADEMY (homework space, time, resources, and assistance for completion). Licensed programs and camps are regulated by the State of Maryland.

10. Trips/Outings (specific trip, not part of camp or after school)

Day, overnight, and extended trips that provide opportunities for participants to visit selected destinations.

11. Specialized Events Requiring Registration

Targeted annual, individualized activities and events requiring registration that are typically offered on a one-time or limited basis (examples: School Group Field Trips, Scouting Badge Programs, Dog Swims).

12. Community-wide Events

Community-wide events typically offered on an annual basis that do not require registration.

13. Organized Parties/Events

Includes a rental of space **as well as an organized and monitored activity by staff**; may or may not include food, cake, entertainment, and favors (examples: swim birthday parties, nature center birthday parties, receptions, etc.).

14. Equipment Rental (including bus rental, lights, etc.)

Various BCRP-owned equipment available to users which may or may not include supervision, instruction, driving, or other guidance by BCRP staff (examples: banquet chairs/tables, audio/video equipment, driving range balls, pedal boats, kayaks, rowboats, sports equipment, bleachers, stage, inflatables and festival packages, Retro Games, Climbing Tower, buses and other mobile recreation, Star Lab, lockers, portable toilets, etc.).

15. Facility Rentals/Exclusive Use Private/Non-Profit OR Partner

Rentals for exclusive use of spaces and facilities on a one-time or one season basis by an individual, group, or business (examples: room, sports field, tennis court permit, shelter permit, facility rental, community garden plot, pools, outside leagues, etc.).

Rentals – Private/Non-Profit – Rentals for exclusive use of spaces and facilities on a one-time or one-season basis by a private individual, group, or for-profit business, a 501 (c)(3) or (c)(4) non-profit agency.

Rentals – Partner – Exclusive use of spaces and facilities on a one-time or on-going basis to groups identified as having aligned interest with BCRP, fulfills a core service in lieu of the agency, and are of interest to the community at large (examples: Volunteer Association, 4-H, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, etc., or other government departments or groups - for city meetings/trainings, etc.). These groups have a formal written agreement with BCRP.

16. Long-Term Leases
Rentals for exclusive use of spaces and facilities for ongoing or multiple time-periods by a private individual, group, non-profit, or for-profit business (examples: agricultural leases, federally mandated communication leases and easements, surplus property leases, cell towers, concessionaires at venues for rentals of sporting equipment, riding stables, residential property leases, office space, oil, gas and mineral rights, etc.).
17. Concessions/Vending/Banquet/Merchandise for Resale
Food and beverage sold for individual use or consumption. Merchandise sold for individual or team use (examples: firewood, golf balls, apparel, logo clothing, memorial bricks and benches, bait and tackle, dog accessories and bones, ice, etc.). May be provided by BCRP or may be provided by long or short-term lease or rental agreement with a vendor.
18. Open Park/Facility Usage
Drop-in use of a park/facility/activity that is non-registered and non-instructed, and is unguided by BCRP staff/volunteer supervision (examples: trail use, playgrounds, fishing, geocaching, unmonitored lake access, disc golf, dog parks, garden, etc.). All costs associated with the operations, management, maintenance of assets, structures, historic and cultural amenities, developed and undeveloped natural environments, and stewardship activities done or managed by BCRP are captured here, including stewardship activities conducted by BCRP staff with citizen/volunteer participation which provide ecosystem benefits (examples: protecting water quality, conservation programs, nest box monitoring, extension services, wildlife management, invasive controls, etc.).
19. Staffed Park/Facility Usage
Restricted drop-in use of a park/facility/activity that is non-registered and non-instructed, and is monitored by BCRP staff/volunteer supervision (examples: lap swimming and open/family swim, nature center, BMX open riding, etc.). All costs associated with the operations, management, and maintenance of assets, structures, historic and cultural amenities, developed and undeveloped natural environments, and stewardship activities done or managed by BCRP are captured here.
20. Contracted Professional Services
Facility and program management, staffing, or scheduling services provided by BCRP through contract to outside groups or other agencies (examples: lifeguarding for others, scheduling or maintaining/operating others fields/properties, executive-on-loan, consultation services, support services to other agencies or departments, etc.).
21. Application/Permitted Services
Non-rental permitted services by BCRP for filming/photography rights, parking, concession/vending cart operations, food trucks, dead wood/tree removal, special events by others, geocaching, etc. These are not permits/apps that the city seeks and holds, they are permits/apps that the city grants to others.
22. Volunteer Programs
Management of opportunities for individuals or groups to donate their time and effort to a structured or scheduled experience (examples: adopt-a-natural area, adopt-a-field/park, adopt-a-garden, gatekeepers, trail maintenance, track maintenance, program volunteer, clean-up days, campground host, master gardener, special events, special projects, interpreter, docent, etc.).
23. Work Study/Internship/Community Service Programs
Services that support educational, service, repayment, and/or other requirements.

24. Inclusion Services
Provides for universal accommodation and programs to any agency activity, park, and/or facility providing leisure opportunities to people with disabilities. Inclusion services are intended to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA federal mandate). Integrates persons with disabilities into regular programs and services, through service to provide accommodations for that to be possible.
Inclusion/Disability Services and Activities – We welcome people with special needs. Centers that are ADA compliant are expected to incorporate special populations into each activity where there is a request and to make reasonable accommodations.
25. Therapeutic/Adaptive/Special Recreation Services
Specialized leisure opportunities for people with disabilities designed and managed to be specific to the physical, cognitive, social, and affective needs of these populations. These are not unified programs, nor are there reasonable accommodations required as inclusionary services (examples are: adaptive sports, adaptive events, adaptive socials, adaptive outreach, etc.).
26. Support Services
Services and facilities that are provided by the staff and volunteers that support administration and/or general operations that are not allocated as direct expenses (examples: park planning, information technology, finance and accounting services, human resources, department-wide marketing, internal trainings, county service allocations, risk management services, directors offices, etc.).

B. Services Assessment Preparation Exercise

In preparation for applying the Matrix questions to each service, BCRP staff completed a comprehensive Services Assessment exercise to understand the following information about each program or service, at each location within the Service Area:

- City Location (SE, W, E, NE, SW, NW)
- Catchment Service Area (e.g., 3/4 mile, 3 miles)
- Target Market by Age, Gender, Skill, Geography (e.g., 12-18 year old males, competitive, city-wide)
- Current Number Served
- Duplication of Service with Alternative Providers
- Wait List Counts, Cancellation Rate
- Number of Sessions Offered/Year
- What Sets The Agency Apart in Providing the Service
- Partner/Alternate Service Strategy

Following this exercise, the staff evaluated each service through the Matrix. For the purposes of the Matrix exercise, Community Center Area Managers collaborated on completing the Matrix questions, and the remaining service areas scored programs and services independently.

For future updates, it is recommended that every recreation center complete the Matrix to evaluate its individual programs and services to more fully respond to their individual locations in the city and reflect differing provision of recreation services by alternative providers. With the ability of RecPro software data collection and reporting, and with staff trained in implementing the Matrix questions, Area Managers and Center Directors can work together to assess their individual programs and services. One advantage of this approach is that the resulting information can be used as a management decision-making tool at the individual center level, as well as connecting it with the entire community center system data and findings.

C. Service Portfolio Development

The recommended policy regarding core services and service provision strategies is detailed in the electronic Service Portfolio developed through this process. The portfolio summarizes the cumulative results of this project and connects recommended provision strategies to BCRP identified values, vision, and mission. ***It is recommended that a cost recovery analysis be conducted in the future to align pricing strategies with the Service Portfolio outcomes.*** Conducting a cost recovery exercise has the dual outcome of optimizing revenue generation while balancing programs and services to facilitate participation by all residents. Special consideration in cost recovery goals may be given to demographic groups who have financial or cultural barriers to participation such as youth, low income populations, and people with disabilities.

A sample of the BCRP Service Portfolio is provided below in **Figure 2** to illustrate the Matrix process and outcomes for service provision.



Figure 2: BCRP Sample Service Portfolio & Service Provision Strategies

BCRP Master Service Portfolio											
Category of Service	Fit		Financial Capacity		Market Position		Alternative Coverage		Cell	Provision Strategy	Notes
	Good	Poor	High	Low	Strong	Weak	High	Low			
	x		x		x		x		1	Affirm Market Position	
	x		x		x		x		2	Advance Market Position	
	x		x			x	x		3	Divest	
	x		x		x		x		4	Invest, Collaborate, or Divest	
	x		x	x	x		x		5	Complementary Development	
	x		x	x			x		6	Core Service	
	x		x		x	x			7	Collaborate or Divest	
	x		x		x		x		8	Collaborate or Divest	
	x	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	9	Divest	
1. Fitness & Wellness											
Walking Programs	x		x		x		x		2	Advance Market Position	
nutrition	x		x		x		x		1	Affirm Market Position	
Line dancing/folk dancing	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	others offer but high demand
line dancing/folk dancing - Community Centers	x		x			x	x		3	Divest	
wheelchair fitness	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
aerobics/Jazzercise/fitness/Zumba/dance - TR	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
aerobics/Jazzercise/fitness/Zumba - Seniors	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	others offer but high demand
aerobics/Jazzercise/fitness/Zumba - Community Centers	x		x			x	x		3	Divest	
aerobics/Jazzercise/fitness/Zumba - Aquatics	x		x		x		x		1	Affirm Market Position	
Docs In The Park	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
yoga	x		x		x		x		7	Collaborate or Divest	
nutrition (edible plants)	x		x	x	x		x		5	Complementary Development	
4. Social Enrichment											
Clubs/groups	x		x		x		x		1	Affirm Market Position	
Summer reading program (intergenerational)	x		x			x		x	4	Invest, Collaborate, or Divest	
Specialists leading programs at golden age clubs	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
6. Outdoor											
bicycling	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
hiking - Carrie Murray Nature Center	x		x		x		x		1	Affirm Market Position	
hiking - Outdoor	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Canoe N Scoop	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Open Row	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Beginner Kayaking	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
7. Environmental Education/Nature Programs											
Network Coordination - Greater Baltimore Children/Nature Collab.	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Tree Baltimore - Students Restoring Urban Streams	x		x		x		x		1	Affirm Market Position	
Tree Baltimore - Weed Warriors	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Classes/Workshops - variety of topics - Carrie Murray Nature Center	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Exhibits / Shows - Horticulture	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Tours/Walks - guided - Seniors	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Tours/Walks - guided - Horticulture	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Tours/Walks - guided - Carrie Murray Nature Center	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Talks/Lectures/interest group meetings - Seniors	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Talks/Lectures/interest group meetings - Horticulture	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Talks/Lectures/interest group meetings - Carrie Murray Nature	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
11. Specialized Events Requiring Registration											
Greater Baltimore Children and Nature Collaborative Conference	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Trails Summit	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Tree Ups	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Host Webinars	x		x		x			x	1	Affirm Market Position	
12. Community-Wide Events											
Senior city-wide special events	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Department Special Events	x		x			x	x		3	Divest	
Events in Partnership with others	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Facilitating Community Events in parks	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Event Sponsorship	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Tree Baltimore - Partnership Planting Events	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Maryland Senior Olympics	x			x	x		x		5	Complementary Development	
Concerts in the park	x			x	x			x	5	Complementary Development	
Seasonal parties, crab feast, etc	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	not catering to seniors or on a city-wide basis
Pre New Year's Eve Party at Martin's West	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	no one else offers this service
Festivals	x		x		x			x	1	Affirm Market Position	
Violence and gang prevention events/weeks	x			x	x		x		5	Complementary Development	
19. Staffed Park/Facility Usage											
Volmer Center	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	
Indoor facilities open 7 days a week - Mimi DiPietro	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Indoor facilities open 7days a week - Mt Pleasant	x		x		x			x	2	Advance Market Position	
Public/open swim	x			x	x			x	6	Core Service	

D. Alternative Provider Coverage

It is vital to ascertain the degree of duplication of services within the community by asking these questions:

- Are similar services provided in the target service area?
- Is there a large provider, or are there several small providers, offering comparable services in the same region or service area?
- Where is the nearest competition?
- Are the services complementary?

BCRP staff prepared an extensive list of alternative providers for use in evaluation of future service provision strategies. Alternative providers are specific to BCRP service categories and community center service areas. Evaluation of the alternative providers needs to be aligned with the related service provision strategy. For example, more than 100 alternative service providers were identified in the Service Category of facility rentals. The recommended service provision strategy for facility rentals is to Collaborate or Divest for some department Service Areas, and to Affirm Market Position for others. ***As a result, an intentional discussion relative to fees, promotion, and potential partnerships is warranted using the data-driven decision making capability that the Services Assessment process provides.*** This systematic approach in evaluating the influence of alternative providers is ideally used across each of BCRP's 14 previously identified Service Areas.

This important component of the Services Assessment provides knowledge of both the competitors and possible partners to consider when implementing service provision strategies. ***The Alternative Provider analysis is evolving as BCRP staff continues its research throughout the city to identify alternative providers.***

As a complement to the staff level Alternative Provider analysis, the Leadership Summit convened non-profit, school, and business leaders, many of whom completed an Alternative Provider Service Provision summary, identifying programs and services offered according to the BCRP Service Categories. This information will be combined with the staff list of alternative providers, and used as an internal management tool to address service provision strategies.

In addition, the role of BCRP in providing programs and services relative to the vision of the Baltimore City Public Schools 21st Century Schools plan merits careful evaluation. As the school district plan unfolds and school community spaces are developed, BCRP should take the lead in communicating with the school district leadership to coordinate an all-inclusive approach to program and service delivery between the two agencies.

IV. Service Provision Strategy Analysis

A key issue to be addressed in service provision is evaluating when more than one BCRP Service Area is providing the same or similar services – this observation provides opportunity for efficiencies and collaboration in service delivery. There are several areas worth noting that merit further evaluation through the lens of potential efficiencies and opportunities for program expansion.

Potential Efficiencies:

Arts and Crafts – most arts and crafts programs are part of a larger program such as a camp, senior, or out of school time program; this service area may benefit from a centralized effort for supply purchasing, curriculum development, training, public exhibits, and multi-age opportunities.

Art Exhibits – coordination among the service areas (Carrie Murray Nature Center, Horticulture, Seniors) offering public art exhibits provides the opportunity for consistent communication with artists, collaborative scheduling and marketing, and avoiding duplication in style and type of exhibits between service areas.

Camps – as a service delivery format, camps lend themselves well to standards development for safety, supervision, curriculum, pricing strategies, marketing, staff training, and collaborative purchasing activities. Accreditation for full day camps is available through the American Camping Association, with standards directly focusing on the youth experience, staff training, and operations.

Opportunities for Expansion:

Facility Rentals – Rentals need an equitable approach: how to rent, fee per type/size of space, what's included in the rental, i.e., set up, equipment, staffing, and contract management. Birthday parties are offered at several facilities, and could benefit from a coordinated marketing approach, which could have potential revenue generating opportunities. BCRP staff generally feels that rental fees are too low and do not cover the direct cost associated with use of the building. BCRP should develop a policy for facility rentals, while maintaining the current rental services offered at special facilities such as Cylburn and the Conservatory as well as small events and birthday parties at the Recreation Centers.

Outdoor and Environmental Education/Nature Programs – These programs were identified in the Advance and Affirm categories, and align with BCRP's Conservation component in its vision statement. BCRP has placed an emphasis on promoting outdoor and environmental education.

Work Study/Interns/Community Service – TR, Carrie Murray Nature Center, Seniors, Community Centers, and Horticulture all support the Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED) Youth Works program, and provide Community Service, Student Conservation Association volunteers, and internships among them. This broad youth development involvement provides an opportunity to explore coordinating and possibly expanding the program to other BCRP Service Areas. Youth development also emerged as strong community value, and aligns with BCRP's focus on, and strength in, youth programming.

Fitness – The fitness industry has evolved to a highly specialized and professionally certified industry. This service area has the potential to generate substantial revenues both within a community center setting, and as a component of the program service delivery model. BCRP needs to evaluate whether to commit resources to develop a professionally certified fitness staff that can meet the demand that is anticipated at existing community centers as equipment is upgraded, and at the new, larger centers being developed. Fitness activities serve as an economic engine relative to cost recovery potential at larger centers and warrant consideration if cost recovery is determined to be a significant goal. Trends in fitness activities are outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Top 10 Worldwide Fitness Trends for 2007 and 2013

2007	2013
1. Children and obesity	1. Educated and experienced fitness professionals
2. Special fitness programs for older adults	2. Strength training
3. Educated and experienced fitness professionals	3. Body weight training
4. Functional fitness	4. Children and obesity
5. Core training	5. Exercise and weight loss
6. Strength training	6. Fitness programs for older adults
7. Personal training	7. Personal training
8. Mind/Body Exercise	8. Functional fitness
9. Exercise and weight loss	9. Core training
10. Outcome measurements	10. Group personal training

Source: American College of Sport Medicine

A. Service Provision Strategy Highlights

The following analysis highlights selected outcomes from the Services Assessment process according to the various service provision strategies. **Note that the programs and services are representative of the service provision strategy and do not constitute the complete listing of programs and services scored in each strategy.** The complete Service Portfolio is provided separately as an internal staff resource document.

Core Services

Definition

These services fit with the agency’s mission and vision. There are few, if any, alternative providers, and the agency is in a strong market position to provide the service. However, the agency does not have the financial capacity to sustain the service outside of General Fund support, and the service is not deemed to be economically viable. These services are “core,” typically benefiting all community members, and are viewed as essential to quality of life for under-served populations. Any particular service on the full listing of services that scored as core services, and not already called out for further review, may warrant a more thorough review by the department leadership team to ensure that the initial analysis was completed accurately and consistently.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of programs and services scoring as Core Services.

Service Category	Program or Service
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialists leading programs at Golden Age Clubs
Outdoor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canoe ‘n Scoop
Specialized Events Requiring Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails Summit Tree Ups
Facility Rentals/Exclusive Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCRP Departmental Training Sessions – Horticulture/Carrie Murray Nature Center
Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreation Van Fleet w/Drivers Reserve Park Areas for Department Events Garden Maintenance Greenhouse production for various installations and groups Mowing, pruning, cleaning, general grounds maintenance Tree Maintenance – Storm/Disaster Clean-up, Stump Removals, Young Tree Care, Rigging/Crane Work, Wood Yard Recycling Volunteer data collection, orientation, and recognition events
Open Facility/Park Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park/Grounds (open 6-7 days a week from dawn until dusk) and Indoor Facilities (Recreation Centers, Vollmer Center, etc.) Outdoor & Specialty Gardens Trails, Playgrounds, built and natural
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer Management
Staffed Park Facility Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public/open swim, Movies in the pools Park comfort stations for public use
Contracted Professional Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mitigation Assessment and Coordination Arboricultural Consultation

Scored as Core Services But Warranting Further Discussion

Reviewing the definition of Core Services, i.e., those services without funding to sustain them outside of General Fund support, not deemed to be economically viable, “core” to satisfying BCRP’s values and vision, typically benefiting all community members, and/or essential to the lives of under-served populations, the following services warrant further evaluation to fully understand the goal of the programs, how they are currently funded, and whether they truly fit into the Core Services provision strategy category.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of programs and services scoring as Core Services and warranting further discussion.

Service Category	Program or Service
Youth & Adult Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rowing (adapted program at Middlebranch)
Aquatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swim Meets, Fluid Movement, Water Polo, Aquatic Camps
Community Wide Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitating community events in parks• Event Sponsorship
Arts & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arts and Crafts – Community Centers
Facility Rentals/Exclusive Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-Profit Organization Rentals – Permits, Partnerships, Special Events

Collaborate or Divest

Definitions

Collaborate: The service can be enhanced or improved through the development of a collaborative effort, as BCRP’s current market position is weak. Collaborations (e.g., partnerships) with other service providers (internal or external) that minimize or eliminate duplication of services while most responsibly using BCRP resources are recommended. Collaboration indicates working together with other entities to provide the service, because the market position is weak, and differs from Complementary Development with respect to market demand. Complementary Development indicates two or more entities offering the program or service independently, because demand exceeds capacity. BCRP has strong existing partnerships and collaborations, networks, and long standing relationships with numerous organizations which facilitates implementing the Collaborative service provision strategy.

Divest: The service does not fit with the agency values and vision, and/or it is in a weak market position with little or no opportunity to strengthen its position. Further, the agency deems the service to be contrary to its interest in the responsible use of resources, and consequently, is positioned to consider divestment of the service.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of programs and services scored indicating Collaboration or Divestment as a service provision strategy. In most cases, opportunities for collaboration with internal service areas that offer the same type of service are suggested rather than divestment.

Service Category	Program or Service
Facility Rentals/Exclusive Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facility Rentals – Training Programs – MDA, Tree Baltimore, Pest Management• Facility Rentals – Other City Agencies (nominal fee)• Facility Rentals – Office space
Open Facility/Park Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Art Installations – Permanent and Temporary – Carrie Murray Nature Center
Staffed Park Facility Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature Museum – Horticulture
Work Study/Interns/Community Service Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• College, HS, or Urban Resource Initiative Internships, Student Conservation Association – Horticulture• Community Service Hours – Community Centers

Invest, Collaborate, or Divest

Definitions

Invest: Investment of resources is BCRP's best course of action if the service is a good fit with values and vision, if an opportunity exists to strengthen BCRP's current weak position in the marketplace, and alternative coverage is low. Services scored in this category should also be evaluated for possible collaboration to advance market share for the benefit of all providers, or divestment if market position cannot be readily improved.

Collaborate/Divest: See definitions above.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of programs and services scored indicating Investment, Collaboration, or Divestment as a service provision strategy. Considering industry trends regarding food and gift shop concessions as potential revenue generators, the recommended service provision is either investment or collaboration with internal service areas or alternative providers that offer the same type of service rather than divestment. Understanding local trends can inform a collaborative service provision strategy. For example, a Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission study for Prince George's County found that lacrosse had grown by 218% over the last decade, and by 37.7% from 2009-2010. Evaluating the service providers for lacrosse in Baltimore and the region may yield opportunities for further defining BCRP's service provision strategy to avoid duplication considering such factors as age groups, camps, skill level, and travel teams, versus in house leagues.

Service Category	Program or Service
Arts and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Exhibits – (Local Artist, photography) – Seniors
Social Enrichment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer reading program (intergenerational)
Youth and Adult Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soccer – Community Centers, Lacrosse
Concessions/Vending/Banquet/Merchandise for Sale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gift shop – Horticulture • Food concession – Aquatics • Snack bar operation at centers (self-operated)

Affirm Market Position

Definition

A number of (or one significant) alternative provider(s) exists, yet the service has financial capacity (ability to generate revenue outside of tax resources), and BCRP is in a strong market position to provide the service to customers or the community. Affirming market position includes efforts to capture more of the market and investigating the merits of competitive pricing strategies. This includes investment of resources to realize a financial return on investment. Typically, these services have the ability to generate excess revenue.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of services indicated for Affirming Market Position. Numerous services scored with a service strategy to Affirm Market Position. Affirming market position indicates expanding market reach, evaluating pricing strategies, and enhancing investment of resources to realize a return on investment.

Service Category	Program or Service
Arts and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native American Programs • Black History Month Classes – Carrie Murray Nature Center
Youth and Adult Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball – Youth and Adult Sports, Community Centers • Ice Hockey, Ice Skating
Aquatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Aerobics/Aquatic Zumba – Seniors
Out of School Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camps – all themes – Carrie Murray Nature Center • Community Centers
Specialized Events Requiring Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host Webinars
Facility Rentals/Exclusive Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private/Public/Individual Rentals (includes Birthday Parties)
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Car parking for outdoor events • Clean outdoor rented space for permitted activities

Advance Market Position

Definition

A smaller number of (or no) alternative providers exist to provide the service, the service has financial capacity, and BCRP is in a strong market position to provide the service. Primarily due to the fact that there are fewer, if any, alternative providers, advancing market position of the service is a logical operational strategy. This includes efforts to capture more of the market (promotion, outreach), and investigating the merits of market pricing. Also, this service could generate excess revenue by increasing volume.



Analysis

BCRP sample list of services that scored the Advance Market Position strategy. Similar to the programs and services scored in the Affirm Market Position strategy, numerous services scored in this service provision strategy.

Service Category	Program or Service
Fitness and Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking Programs, Line Dancing/Folk Dancing – Seniors • Aerobics/Jazzercise/fitness/Zumba/Dance
Arts and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and Crafts, Performing Arts • Cooking and Language Classes – Carrie Murray Nature Center
Youth and Adult Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive sports classes • Baseball, Broomball, Floor Hockey, Wheelchair Basketball
Outdoor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginner Kayaking, Inner Harbor Kayak Tours
Environmental Education/Nature Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibits/Shows – Horticulture and Carrie Murray Nature Center • Tours/Walks (guided) – Seniors
Community Wide Events Equipment Rental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Trips, City-wide Senior Special Events • Fun Wagon Mobile Recreation Unit
Facility Rentals/Exclusive Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pavilion rentals, Garden and facility rentals (Weddings)
Applications/Permitted Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility and Event Permitting

Complementary Development

Definition

The service is a good fit, a number of (or one significant) alternative providers exist, and the agency is in a strong market position to provide the service, yet it does not have financial capacity. Complementary Development encourages planning efforts that lead to complementary service development rather than duplication, broadening the reach of all providers. Although there may be perceived market saturation for the service due to the number of like services or alternative providers, demand and need exists justifying the service's continued place in the market.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of programs and services for Complementary Development. This service provision strategy inspires communication and resource sharing both internally with other Service Areas and externally with Alternative Providers to meet a high demand for the service. Complementary Development differs from Collaboration with respect to market demand. Collaboration indicates working together with other entities to provide the service because the market position is weak, and Complementary Development indicates two or more entities offering the program or service independently. An evaluation of the Alternative Providers in these areas on an ongoing basis is recommended.

Service Category	Program or Service
Fitness and Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Edible Plant Workshops
Arts and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arts and Crafts – Seniors• Concerts in the Park
Community Wide Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Violence and gang prevention events/weeks
Open Facility/Park Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public Art Installations – Permanent and Temporary – Horticulture
Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Special Olympics• Sports wheelchairs for UMB Rehab and Orthopedic Institute for Lacrosse

Divest

Definition

The service does not fit with the agency values and vision, and/or it is in a weak market position with little or no opportunity to strengthen its position. Further, the agency deems the service to be contrary to its interest in the responsible use of resources, and consequently, is positioned to consider divestment of the service. Alternative Provider coverage is high, indicating that other organizations may be better equipped to offer the program.

Analysis

BCRP sample list of services scored in the Divestment category. These programs should be carefully evaluated to ensure that Divestment is the appropriate provision strategy. Divestment may mean acknowledging that an alternative service provider or different internal service area is better suited to offer the service for reasons of market position, financial capacity, or unique skill set.

Service Category	Program or Service
Equipment Rental	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stage rental

V. Key Findings

In coordination with the Service Portfolio Provision Strategies analysis, the following Key Findings, Strategies, and Actions have been identified for inclusion as a complement to the overall Services Assessment process moving forward.

A. Key Findings

Culture of positive change and forward momentum is visible within the Department and the City

- Positive relationships with policy makers and community are growing.
- Council on Accreditation for Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) process is articulating and clarifying current and new policies.
- Department audit complete, implementation of recommendations in progress.
- Facility upgrades and openings; visible improvements demonstrated to the community.
- Desire to shift the BCRP story from “what we do” to “this is the difference we are making in the community.”
- Excellent social media presence.
- Commitment to rebuilding the Department’s credibility.

Senior leadership supports positive changes

- Division staff performing community outreach, surveys.
- In-house meetings, training, developing new leadership.

Community wants BCRP to take a leadership role in the following areas:

- Safety, health, youth development, and community building.
- Connections to parks and recreation services, collaboration with alternative providers.
- BCRP contributions to citizens’ wellbeing.
- Equitable access to programs and services across the City.

Support Services are limiting programming and facility efforts. Examples:

- **Information Technology (IT)**
 - Lack of computers and internet access to work efficiently, for timely communication, and effective data management.
 - Mode of operation appears to be “putting out fires;” lack of an IT master plan.
 - Internet access issues in places like Cylburn Arboretum, limiting revenue capacity of Vollmer Center.
- **Purchasing**
 - City purchasing staff holds power to set priorities for amount and timing of delivery.
 - Strong negotiating skills and relationship is key to getting what is needed from City purchasing, not necessarily program demands.
- **Building Maintenance**
 - Limited service outside of normal M-F working hours.
 - Fragmented service resource due to position openings, staff absences.

- **Human Resources**
 - Succession planning is needed to address retiring staff.
 - Job descriptions need updating.
- **Capital Planning**
 - Planning and design of new recreation facilities has to be more closely tied with programming, operations, and maintenance of those facilities.
 - Planning is currently taking place in both Capital and Recreation Divisions, and they are not the same plans.
 - Efforts are being made to coordinate, but Department culture is a barrier that must be broken down.
 - Roll out of community center plan has to include the plan for the entire system – large community centers, small stand-alone neighborhood centers, and school wing centers. Should also include indoor and outdoor pools.
- **Public Relations**
 - Marketing and research effort needs coordination and dedicated staffing.
 - Promotion is not getting done in some areas; inefficient marketing efforts from operations and programming staff.
 - Residents are largely unaware of current programming offerings and recent strides toward more professional and credible operation.
- **After School program is inconsistent and misunderstood**
 - “After school” holds many specific meanings for different people and providers.
 - Program needs to be branded. Focus has recently been reformulated, and standards have been put into place. The program is in transition from the school day (holistic recreation approach with dedicated homework assistance component) to an extension of the school day (education focus) or reprieve from the school day (no education). Community feedback strongly articulated that babysitting is not a function of recreation and parks.
- **Contract Management Evaluation**
 - Most contracts, MOUs, joint use agreements, leases, and licensing agreements for program and services need to be evaluated for accountability; consistency with department mission, vision, and values; and capacity of agency/individual to operate public facilities.



Strategy	Actions	Implementation
DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING (Cont'd.)	<p>d. Conduct cost recovery exercise to supplement Services Assessment data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate alternative funding opportunities to support targeted program areas such as environmental education and senior programs. • Determine current cost recovery based on a definitive definition of direct costs. • Establish a tracking system to provide cost recovery measurement data on a regular basis to use as a management decision making tool. 	Short-Term
SUPERIOR LEADERSHIP	<p>a. Provide and foster high quality, professional leadership of park and recreation services in Baltimore City.</p> <p>b. Internal Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect the Department internally, breaking down silos; in off seasons, bring work units/divisions together in an informal but intentional setting to learn what other units are doing, to determine where resource sharing, problem solving, collaboration, and cross promotion of efforts could be pursued (Breakfast Club); tour facilities to expose staff to all facets of the Department; all focused on rebuilding the Department's credibility. • Invest in multi-level facilitative leadership training for key staff. • Establish key work teams across divisions, i.e., capital/recreation/support services. • Keep current with program and operational trends. 	Short-Term Short-Term

Strategy	Actions	Implementation
<p>SUPERIOR LEADERSHIP (Cont'd.)</p>	<p>c. External Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon rebuilding credibility, consider Advisory Committee role in convening alternative providers in an intentional setting to share the “Best of BCRP”; learn what other agencies are doing; determine where resource sharing, problem solving, collaboration, and cross promotion of efforts could be pursued. • Facilitate identification of focus area for collaborative leadership – i.e., healthy living, youth development, environmental sustainability. • Establish BCRP’s role as a key contributor to Baltimore as a “livable city.” • Explore recognition programs after CAPRA Accreditation (Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development, Child Friendly City, Bikeable/Walkable City, Tree City, Healthy City). • Disaster response – position BCRP as a leader in child welfare services. • Evaluate MOUs, contracts, joint use agreements, leases, and licensing agreements for programs and services accountability; consistency with Department mission, vision, and values; and capacity of agency/individual to operate public facilities. • Develop and adopt a Partnership Philosophy and Policy. • Coordinate solicitation of donations for programs among leadership staff. 	<p>Mid-Term</p>
<p>PROMOTE POSITIVE CHANGE</p>	<p>a. Institute formal, multi-neighborhood and institutional outreach efforts and listening sessions to share programs, volunteer opportunities, community center/neighborhood center plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revive relationship with school district to implement state environmental education requirements. <p>b. Enhance and coordinate social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, videos; i.e. match icons on website to social media sites, connect with NBC “Shine A Light.”</p> <p>c. Celebrate alignment with the Mayor’s initiatives for health, safety, economic vitality, and innovation. Develop partnerships with academic institutions for media expertise.</p>	<p>Short-Term</p> <p>Short-Term</p> <p>Mid-Term</p>

Strategy	Actions	Implementation
	<p><i>d. Establish regular progress reporting system for public distribution to showcase improvements. Provide training for staff in social media and other promotional opportunities.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve consistent promotion of programs and services across community center operations. • Recoup costs of publishing Golden Gazette newsletter through sponsorships, ad sales, and collaborative underwriting. 	Short-Term

VI. Additional Observations

A. Relationship of Services Assessment to New Community Center Model

The Department is in the midst of a transition regarding how it delivers its programs and services through a city-wide system of recreation centers and pools. At the heart of the effort is the balance of maintaining local neighborhood services in such a large geographic area while responding to demands for higher quality and often more expensive offerings and the reality of aging and outdated facilities. This is a circumstance faced by many large urban communities across the country.

National Trends

According to author Emily Tipping in *Recreation Management* magazine's "2014 State of the Industry Report," published in June 2014, national trends show an increased user-base of recreation facilities (private and public). Additionally, parks and recreation providers responding to the survey indicated an average age of 23.8 years for their community recreation facilities. To meet that growing need, a majority of the parks and recreation survey respondents (69%) reported that they have plans to build new facilities or make additions or renovations to their existing facilities over the next three years. Nearly one-third (32.5 percent) of parks respondents stated that they have plans to build new facilities, and 28.9 percent said that they plan to add to their existing facilities. More than half (52.2%) are planning renovations to existing facilities. While these data reflect agencies who oversee three or fewer facilities, Baltimore City is on a similar path focusing on both new facilities and renovation of existing facilities. Urban community center system trends for cities similar in population to Baltimore (620,961, 2010 U.S. Census) are presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Urban Community Center Comparisons

Community	Population 2010 U.S. Census	Current # Centers & Definitions	Projected Centers & Square Footage	Service Area Notes	Siting Tools Used
Denver, CO	600,158	11 local 9 neighborhood 7 regional	1 regional 60K sq ft	10 NSRAs (Neighborhood Recreation Service Areas) determined with major geographic boundaries. LOS measured in 1/3 mile for walkability and 3 mile radius for regional centers	Service Equity Gap Analysis. Focused on combination of walkable (local), neighborhood, and regional LOS.
Prince George's County, MD	863,420	43 neighborhood 2 regional (to become multi-generational) Will repurpose and remodel – no closures	9 multi-generational 60-80K sq ft	9 service areas defined (non-political, based on population projections)	Market Study Cost Recovery Population Projections Travel Distance – 10 min by car Active access – building 200 miles of trails Equity – site regardless of income levels
Virginia Beach, VA	437,994	4 - 82K+ sq ft 1 - 22K sq ft 1 - 70K sq ft	1 renovation 67K sq ft;	7 service areas; not related to unserved populations	No reported data
Tulsa, OK	391,886	(2010) 21 Community Centers, 11 fully functional, the remainder partial or not functional; 5 pools in operation and approved for renovation	No reported data	No specific service areas	Service Equity and Gap Analysis based on composite values methodology of existing system; consideration of other providers, growing population
Baltimore	620,961	40 Recreation Centers, undesignated	11 Fitness and Wellness 5 Community 4 Outdoor Athletic, 22 School Based	6 Geographic Recreation Service Areas	GIS based level of service gap analysis; consideration of alternative providers; existing City plans for future housing, U.S. Census data; proximity to athletic fields, transit, and active transportation opportunities

Community	Population 2010 U.S. Census	Current # Centers & Definitions	Projected Centers & Square Footage	Service Area Notes	Siting Tools Used
Columbus, OH	787,033	29 Community Recreation Centers, varying size and facility condition	1 major renovation per year, replacing one center	Service areas determined by population and location	Analysis of alternative providers and underserved areas
Cleveland, OH	396,815	21 Recreation Centers, varying size and facility condition	No reported data	At least one center in each of the city's council wards	No reported data
Boston, MA	617,594	29 Community Centers, varying size and facility condition	No reported data	No specific service areas	No reported data
Atlanta, GA	420,003	33 Recreation Centers – facilities grouped into Class 2, Class 3 and Class 4 based on size and programming ('Class 2' are smallest facilities with least amenities, Class 4 are largest facilities with most amenities)	1 Class IV recreation facility and natatorium currently planned	10 centers designated as "Centers of Hope" with extended programming and hours; based on 2.5 mile radius	GIS, analysis of alternate providers, population data
Washington D.C.	601,723	67 Recreation or Community Centers, defined by size and programming	No reported data	No specific service areas	No reported data

The current national trend is toward “one-stop” indoor recreation facilities to serve all ages. Large, multi-purpose regional centers help increase cost recovery, promote retention, and encourage cross-use. Agencies across the U.S. are increasing revenue production and cost recovery. Multi-use facilities versus specialized space offers programming opportunities as well as free-play or drop-in opportunities. “One stop” facilities attract young families, teens, and adults of all ages.

However, in order to maintain service at the neighborhood level, these larger facilities must be reasonably accessible from larger distances and be supplemented by programs and services at the local level. In several cases, including the cities of Denver and Colorado Springs, Colorado, collaborative efforts have been put into place to rely partially or mostly on the efforts of one or more non-profit providers for these supplemental services.

Cost Recovery Considerations

In order to increase the quality of offerings through an acceptable tax investment, the cost must be shared with users of the facilities, services, and programs through an affordable system of fees and charges. In Baltimore City, this needs to be accomplished through an increase in service level, appealing to a broader spectrum of city residents who are willing and able to pay for higher quality service resulting in higher levels of cost recovery for those services offered.

The factors involved in achieving higher cost recovery generally fall into two categories: design and programming. Design is important for several reasons. Trends across the country indicate that most people are willing to pay for value in recreation. For this reason, it is important to provide facilities that meet all of the key needs for recreation, and meet those needs in a first rate manner. Excellent design promotes usage, which leads to community satisfaction and generates revenue.

Facility programming is a key factor in cost recovery. It is important to provide a range of activities and schedule them in response to changes in demand. Flexibility of design is essential to meeting this objective. Along with facility user fees, other activities that generate significant revenue without large staff and other costs are recreation classes, birthday parties, events, sports team rentals, and community rentals. Other sources of income could include: equipment rentals and sales, training camps, sales of merchandise, and food concession sales. Evaluation of program and service offerings through the newly implemented Service Portfolio (the result of this study) will guide the Department in an appropriate programming mix for the future.

The “large center” model that can minimize (though rarely eliminate) tax support involves a dynamic relationship between activity spaces and most often revolves around the provision of four main activity spaces described below including: fitness, swimming (leisure and lap, not competitive), gymnasium, and multi-purpose rooms. The extent around which this can be minimized is a direct result of fee tolerance and ranges considerably around the country. A more urban area generally translates to a lower level of fee tolerance, and thus, a higher level of tax investment.

Community Center Components

Fitness Activity Space (cardio equipment, weight equipment, run/walk track, aerobic/yoga type room)
BCRP does not currently have high credibility for providing fitness, as it has only recently begun providing modest fitness facilities in centers. The community has not looked toward the BCRP to provide this kind of service. This could be changed through development of a high caliber program with appropriate trained and certified leadership and staffing. The fitness component of a large scale facility is the economic engine of the facility in attracting revenues through fees and charges from users. There is not currently a cry from the community to provide this level of service, but that is likely because the public does not know that it is possible. Other indicators of need (not demand) are current health status and focus on reducing obesity levels; success in other urban areas across the country (Kroc centers are also a good example); and the percentage of the population (in general) that is not taking advantage of these types of facilities, because they are not available, or they are available but not affordable (private sector model, sometimes YMCA model). To evolve this interest, a targeted marketing effort will be necessary.

Aquatic Activity Space

The aquatic space with the greatest potential of attracting revenue is a warm water leisure pool with some lap lanes. This space can be designed and sized to allow for a swim lesson program and activities such as water aerobics and water walking, which is popular with older adults. In contrast, spaces designed for swim team competition or deep water lap lanes, both intended to be operated at colder water temperature, are much more expensive to operate and have a much lower potential and track record to attract revenue, though demand is often voiced loudly. Aquatic space is usually in high demand and is expected from public recreation and park systems, although because the space is not financially self-supporting, these spaces are not appealing to those without a tax support source of revenue.

Gymnasium

Serves as both an area for drop-in and programmed activity. Although often thought of as multi-purpose for a variety of sports, it can also be used for other large gatherings. Programmed use provides for more of a steady source of revenue through use fees. Some drop-in use is also generally expected by the community for pick-up type activity. It can be a moderate revenue generator. A physical divider, such as a curtain, allows for simultaneous multiple uses.

Multi-Purpose Classroom Space

Space to accommodate many types of programs and rental opportunities can be a moderate revenue generator. Rentals should be priced accordingly to ensure that costs of use are covered. Rentals should be allowed and encouraged to fill otherwise underused building capacity while providing an additional revenue stream.

This model needs to be supplemented with a neighborhood level of service, especially in large urban areas with significant need, even if all of that service is not directly provided by the city (i.e. non-profit operators of small centers.) A very specific partnership approach is necessary to accomplish this successfully, and the approach needs to assess viability of a partner, ensure that city goals are met, and fill financial gaps. School capital planning efforts will result in several locations providing opportunity for community-based programming. The Department is exploring future programming at those sites that will not require further capital investment.

B. Other Trends for Delivery of Recreation and Park Services

Municipal parks and recreation structures and delivery systems have changed, and more alternative methods of delivering services are emerging. Certain services are being contracted out, and cooperative agreements with non-profit groups and other public institutions are being developed.

Newer partners include the health system, social services, the justice system, education providers, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. These partnerships reflect both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health agencies and physicians is vital in promoting wellness, particularly in the area of developing an evolving system of walking and bicycling trail facilities with amenities such as playgrounds, picnic areas, cultural arts installations, and public gardens to create destinations that draw users. The traditional relationship with education and the sharing of facilities through joint-use agreements is evolving into cooperative planning and programming aimed at addressing youth inactivity levels and community needs.

Additional Trends

- Level of government subsidy for programs is declining as a percentage of the whole. More “enterprise” activities are being developed (facilities or programs operate without the benefit of tax revenues with expenses, including ongoing capital, supported by the revenues generated by the activities), thereby allowing subsidy to be used where it is deemed appropriate.
- Information technology allows for better tracking and reporting.
- Pricing is often determined by peak, off-peak, and off-season rates.

Partnerships

A national trend in the delivery of parks and recreation systems reflects more partnerships and contractual agreements reaching out to the edges of the community to support specialized services.

- Agencies are developing close relationships with transportation agencies to connect on road bicycling facilities and sidewalks with natural surface/separated pathways to respond to public demand for a system of safe walking and bicycling facilities connecting community destinations, including parks and recreation facilities.
- Programming and promotional efforts are responding to multi-cultural populations, particularly Spanish speaking populations.
- Mobile marketing (i.e. social networking) is a growing trend. Web-based niche marketing tools are becoming more popular for agencies to use as a means of marketing programs and services.
- More agencies are creating and implementing cost recovery policies.
- The majority of Americans agree that preserving undeveloped land for outdoor recreation is important. A large percentage of outdoor participants also believe that developing local parks and hiking and walking trails is important and that there should be more outdoor education and activities during the school day.

Collectively, these trends have created profound implications for the way local governments conduct business. Some local governments are now accepting the role of providing preventative health care through parks and recreation services. The following concepts are from the International County/County Management Association:

- Parks and Recreation departments should take the lead in developing communities conducive to active living.
- There is growing support for recreation programs that encourage active living within their community.
- One of the highest priorities is a cohesive system of parks and trails and accessible neighborhood parks.

In summary, the United States of America, its states, and its communities share the enormous task of reducing the health and economic burden of obesity. While numerous programs, policies, and products have been designed to address the problem, there is no magic bullet to make it go away. The role of public parks and recreation as a health promotion and prevention agency has come of age. What matters is refocusing efforts to ensure the health, well-being, and economic prosperity of communities and citizens.

C. Measurements of Success in Program & Service Delivery

What does success look like for the BCRP Department programming effort? Currently, it is not clear, although there is an emphasis on increasing the numbers served, and supporting the Mayor’s goal of 10,000 new families moving to Baltimore. As the Department moves forward with a higher service level in

mind, it will be important to establish cost recovery expectations or targets as another measure of success. As a variety of different programs are offered for different target markets, cost recovery targets will vary. As this study moves toward conclusion, additional discussion will result in an identified approach to establishing performance measures and ensuring that tools and techniques are available to accurately measure the performance.

Candidates for measurement include:

- Increase in numbers served
- Retention rates
- Cancellation rates
- Outcome based measurement (decrease in obesity, weight loss, crime reduction)
- Cost recovery targets
- Attainment of prescribed service provision strategy such as Advance Market Position
- Consideration of inclusion services as part of the discussion for all program and facility planning

D. Agency Accreditation

Parks and Recreation agencies are affirming their competencies and value through accreditation. This is achieved by an agency's commitment to 144 standards. BCRP's commitment to becoming an accredited agency speaks to the culture of continuous improvement and commitment to excellence by the agency leadership team.

There are currently 119 agencies around the nation that have received the Commission for Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation.

Additional benefits of CAPRA accreditation include:

- Boosts staff morale
- Encourages collaboration
- Improves program outcomes
- Identifies agency and cost efficiencies
- Builds high level of trust with the public
- Demonstrates promise of quality
- Identifies best management practices

Conclusion

The Baltimore City Recreation and Parks Department is clearly evolving to a new position – a progressive agency dedicated to positively impacting the health and well-being of the entire city and its residents. This bold initiative supports Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake's goals of health, safety, economic vitality, and innovation. By fully integrating the data-driven Services Assessment into the program and service planning and evaluation process, and moving forward with a formal cost recovery analysis and strategic plan, the department is well positioned to realize its objectives.

Appendix A: Public Sector Agency Services Assessment