



PLAY
IN PROGRESS

CITY OF ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Adopted October 2025



Submitted by:

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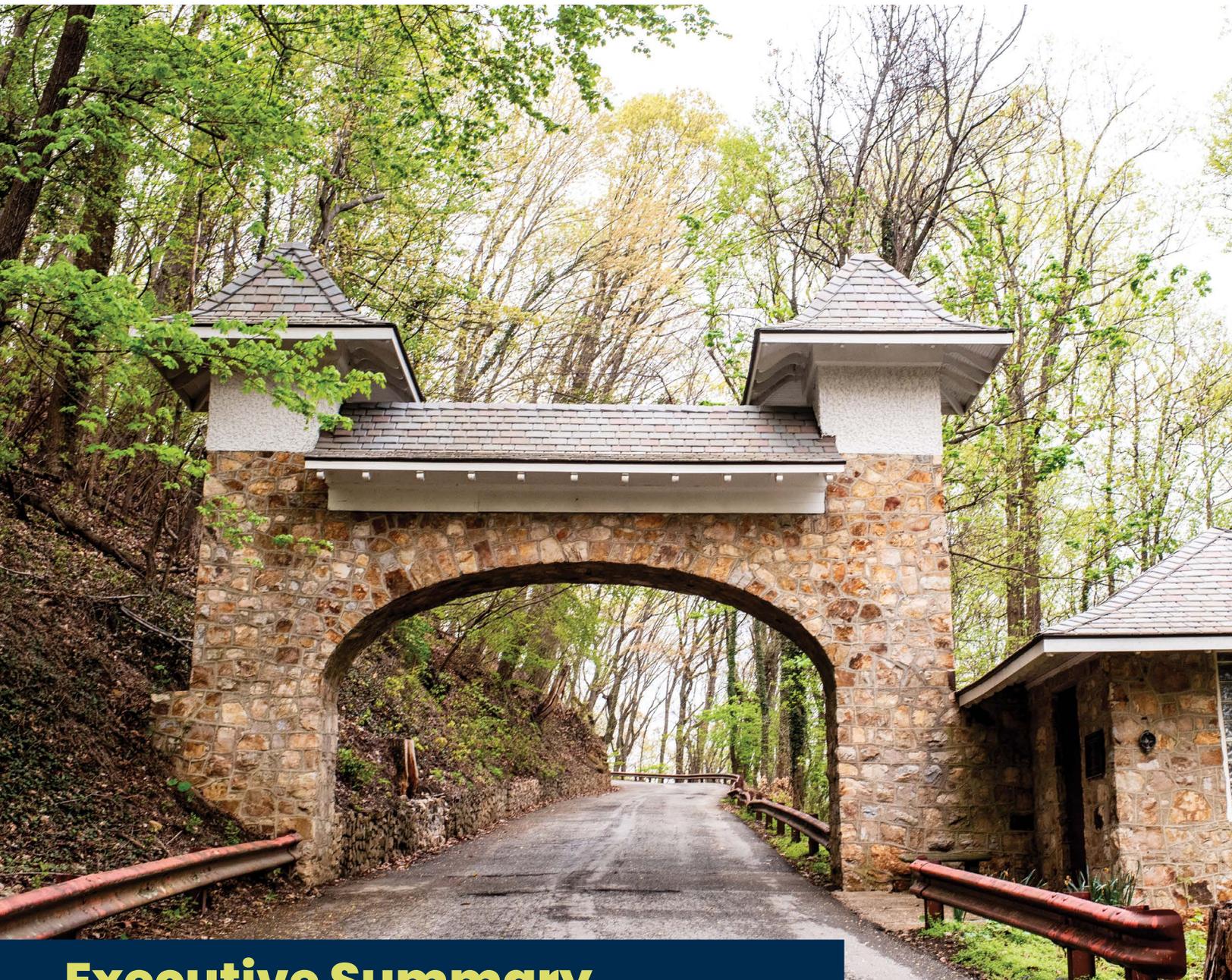
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Executive Summary

A. Purpose of this Plan

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an update of the Roanoke 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Development of this updated plan took place from October 2023 to July 2025 and included community engagement, leadership interviews, and a needs assessment survey; inventory and level of service (LOS) review; operational, program, and maintenance analysis; and financial review. The Master Plan Update provides the framework to respond to the evolving needs of the City of Roanoke's (the City's) growing community.

B. Planning Process Summary

This project has been guided by a Roanoke Parks and Recreation project team made up of the City's Department of Parks and Recreation (Department) staff. This team provided input to the BerryDunn consulting team throughout the planning process. This collaborative effort created a plan that draws upon the consultants' expertise while incorporating the local knowledge and institutional history that only staff and community members can provide. The project consisted of the following tasks:

Discovery

- Review of previous planning efforts and City historical information
- Review of accomplishments from the 2019 Master Plan

Community Engagement

- Extensive community involvement effort including focus groups, meetings with key stakeholders, and a community-wide public meetings
- Leadership interviews with City officials
- Social Pinpoint interactive project website
- Statistically valid community interest and opinion survey

Assessment and Analysis

- Review and assessment of relevant plans
- Benchmarking of current services compared to like-sized communities in the United States based on the 2024 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Park Matrix data
- Exploration of finance and funding mechanisms to support development and sustainability within the Parks and Recreation system

Needs Assessment

- Consideration of the profile of the community and demographics, including population growth
- Research of trends related to Roanoke and American lifestyles to help guide the Department's efforts over the next several years

Operational and Marketing Analysis

- Analysis of Parks and Recreation programming and service delivery
- Organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis
- In-depth assessment of overall parks operations and maintenance

Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

- Identification and categorization of recommendations into themes with goals, objectives, and an action plan for implementation
- Development of an action plan for operational and capital improvements, including time frame to support the implementation of the plan

Other Plan Elements

- Review of current staffing and recommendation for future growth potential

C. Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives are made based on the entirety of the Master Plan Update process, which was inclusive of community members. The public was given many opportunities to participate through focus groups, stakeholder meetings, public meetings and workshops, an invitation and open link survey, and an interactive website (Social Pinpoint). The operations and maintenance analysis and program assessment also provided feedback considerations for staff.

This section identifies goals and objectives to enhance the LOS and Roanoke's quality of life with improvements through updated parks, services, facilities, and amenities, a dedication to customer service, improved programming and service delivery, organizational efficiencies, and increased financial opportunities.

The following goals were identified for the City to focus on:

1. Invest in current infrastructure and address aging facilities.
2. Improve and enhance programming and service delivery.
3. Continue to improve organizational efficiencies.
4. Enhance and diversify funding sources.

Table 1: Master Plan Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Invest in current infrastructure and address aging facilities.	
Objective 1.1	Maintain and upgrade existing facilities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.
Objective 1.2.a	Add indoor recreation space.
Objective 1.2.b	Renovate and upgrade existing outdoor aquatic facilities.
Objective 1.3	Renovate and replace outdated or failing facilities, amenities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.
Objective 1.4	Upgrade comfort, convenience, and customer service amenities to existing facilities.
Objective 1.5	Expand open space and parks.
Objective 1.6	Explore opportunities to add trails for walking and bicycling.
Objective 1.7	Develop additional outdoor recreational facilities and amenities.
Objective 1.8	Develop new amenities at existing parks based on LOS analysis.
Objective 1.9	Address current and future needs for athletic fields.
Objective 1.10	Monitor Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to parks, trails, river access, and facilities.

Goal 2: Improve and enhance programming and service delivery.

Objective 2.1	Enhance special event programming.
Objective 2.2	Utilize technology to improve customer service and efficiencies.
Objective 2.3	Continue to grow programs and services accessible to citizens of all abilities.
Objective 2.4	Continue to address recreational programming and activity needs of the community.
Objective 2.5	Explore opportunities for non-traditional recreation and serve as the primary gateway for citizens and visitors to access.

Goal 3: Continue to improve organizational efficiencies.

Objective 3.1	Maintain existing LOS goals.
Objective 3.2	Maintain existing quality standards for facilities and amenities.
Objective 3.3	Continue to be good stewards of the natural environment.
Objective 3.4	Staff appropriately to meet demand and maintain established quality of service.
Objective 3.5	Maintain and keep current the Department Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Policies.
Objective 3.6	Increase potential partnerships within the community.

Goal 4: Enhance and diversify funding sources.

Objective 4.1	Explore additional funding through the pursuit of grants.
Objective 4.2	Continue current cost recovery and revenue generation practices.
Objective 4.3	Partner with other service providers, when possible, to develop programs, services, and facilities to meet demand and growing trends.
Objective 4.4	Increase City budget and staffing dedicated to parks and recreation, maintenance, and trails.



1.0 Introduction to the Planning Context

A. Purpose of This Plan

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is an update of Roanoke 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Development of this updated plan took place from October 2023 to July 2025 and included community engagement, leadership interviews, and a needs assessment survey; inventory and LOS review; operational, program, and maintenance analysis; and financial review. The Master Plan Update provides the framework to respond to the evolving needs of the City's growing community.

Additionally, this update is to affirm the current course of action and address any new park and recreation desires from residents. The update will assess current staffing numbers, facilities, programs, services, and projects and make any necessary recommendations and/or changes. The updated plan will continue to serve as the Department's guide as it seeks to both maintain its accredited status and become an NRPA Gold Medal Award winner.

B. Parks and Recreation Department Overview

The Department is a nationally accredited municipal parks and recreation agency through the Commission on Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and NRPA. Currently, the Department has 70 park properties, over 100 miles of natural surface and paved multi-use trails, eight recreation centers, and two outdoor aquatic facilities. The Department is redeveloping one recreation center (Eureka Center) and one aquatic facility (Washington Park Pool).

Throughout Roanoke's history, the City has cherished its rich natural environment and has been a champion of providing a wide variety of park and recreational services. City leadership began intentionally planning for leisure services in 1928, moving into a more modern methodology in 1981 and culminating in the most recent plan in 2019.

C. Department Mission, Vision, and Values

Figure 1: Department Mission, Vision, and Values



D. Phases of this Planning Process

This project has been guided by a City of Roanoke Parks and Recreation project team made up of City staff. This team provided input to the BerryDunn consulting team throughout the planning process. This collaborative effort created a plan that draws upon the consultants' expertise while incorporating the local knowledge and institutional history that only staff and community members can provide. The project consisted of the following phases:

Figure 2: Project Phases





E. Progress Since 2019

Over the last five-years, the Department has made significant progress to implement the recommendations from the Roanoke 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Many of the capital project identified for the first five-years, 2019-2024 have either been completed or are currently funded and in progress. The City has used a variety of funding sources to accomplish the implementation of these recommendations for a total of \$51,788,500. In addition to Capital Funding, the City has leveraged American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, additional federal grants and state grants, and private project-specific donations. The next chart will illustrate those projects from the first five years and the projects identified for the next five years, 2025-2030.

Accomplishments Since 2019

Additional 9+ miles of natural surface / multi-use trails built by staff

Reconstructed Washington Park Pool (\$3,995,413) - open Summer of 2025

Renovated/expanded Eureka Park Recreation Center (\$14,450,000) - opening Spring 2026

In-River Park Construction began Summer 2025 (\$6,494,490)

Bennington Trailhead Roanoke River Blueway ADA access point completed in 2023 (\$331,653)

10 Playground Equipment Replacements Completed 2022-2024 (\$1,340,000)

Bennett Springs Trailhead Lot Reconstruction at Cravins Cove, startine Winter 2026 (\$312,500)

Bridge the Gap completed July 2023 (\$7,210,000)

Phase 2A of Tinker Creek Greenway completed October 2024 (\$7,637,500)

River's Edge North inner park paved walking loop completed (\$117,500)

Eureka Park inner park paved loop under construction

Roanoke River Greenway East A/E design at 60% (\$835,000) (construction unfunded)

Deferred Maintenance Improvements (\$4,315,342): including court refurbishment and ADA updates 2021-2024 (\$2,975,000)

Riverland Rd / Garden City Greenway to Star Trailhead (Mill Mountain Trail) neighborhood connection, construction starting Fall 2025 (\$1,198,410)

Skatepark replacement began Spring 2025, construction still in progress (\$1,610,000)

Mountain View Vision Plan (\$95,000)

Mill Mountain Trail Construction in progress (\$345,000)

Capital Projects 2025-2030

Washington Park amenity improvements \$1,250,000 in FY 25-26

Deferred Maintenance Improvements \$1,200,000 FY27

Northeast Greenways ADA compliance improvements \$400,000 in FY28

Improve Neighborhood Walkability to Parks

Enhance Blueway System

Finish Phase 2 Tinker Creek Greenway Trail

Replace Antiquated Play Areas

Create Inner Park Paved Walking Trails

Improve Small Community Centers

Improve Mountain Bike Facilities

Improve Dog Parks

Redevelop Skate Park

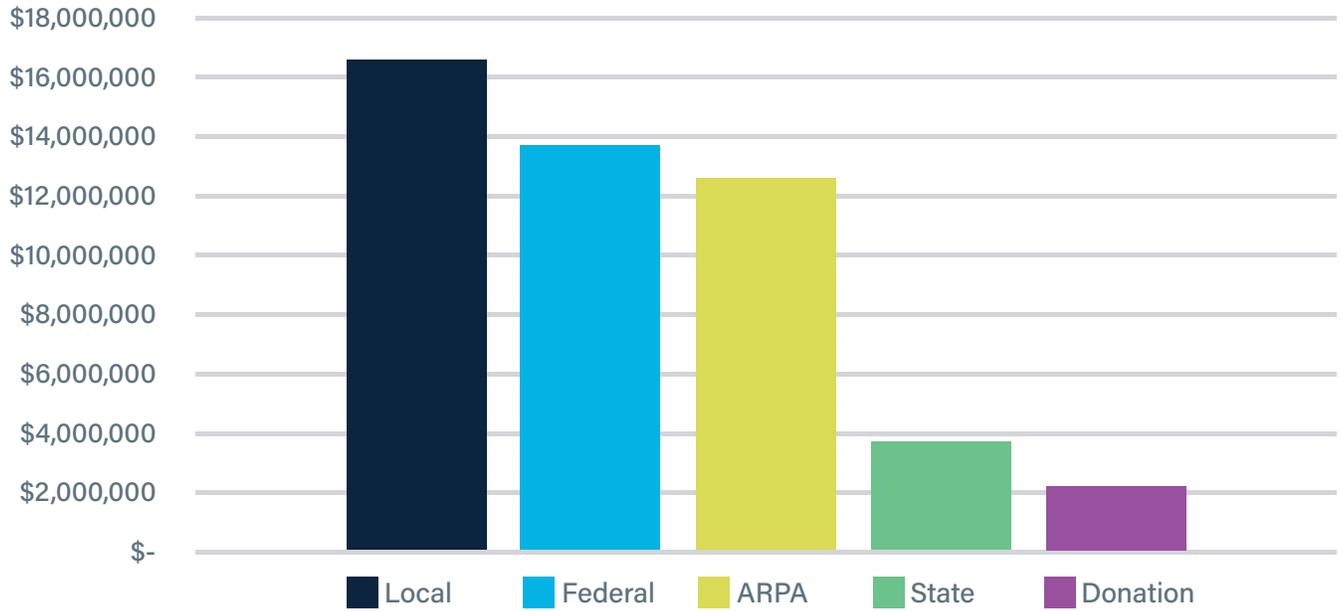
Vision Plan for Mountain View Recreation Center completed 2023 and \$1.5M in CIP Funding allocated for FY28

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE PLANNING CONTEXT

Since the adoption of the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City has invested \$48,655,702 in capital projects identified from the plan. This funding has come from a diverse variety of sources. Allocations from the City's General Funds have equaled \$16,472,059. Other funding sources include federal

funds (\$13,770,535), one-time American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds (\$12,579,397), state funds (\$3,587,911), and donations (\$2,245,800). Additionally, moving forward the City has designated another \$4,350,000 in capital funding for additional projects. Below is an illustration of the capital funding by source.

Diversified Capital Funding Sources





2.0 Next Steps – Goals, Objectives, Recommendations, and Action Table

Residents and community leaders are increasingly recognizing that parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services are essential to creating and maintaining communities where people want to live, work, play, socialize, recreate, learn, and visit. These amenities should be investments in the long-term vitality and economic sustainability of any active and desirable community. Roanoke is committed to providing comprehensive, high-quality parks, waterways, trails, programs, facilities, and services to the community. The following section outlines the complete list of recommendations and action plans that will position the City toward the future of maintaining and improving the quality of life for its residents and visitors.

A. Action Plan and Prioritization

The following goals, objectives, and action items for the recommendations are drawn from the public input, inventory, LOS analysis, findings feedback, and information gathered during the master update planning process. The primary focus is maintaining, sustaining, and improving Roanoke parks, waterways, trails, facilities, programs, and services. Funding availability, staff buy-in, and political and community support will play significant roles in future planning efforts.

The time frame to complete is designated as:

- Short-term (up to 3 years)
- Mid-term (4 – 6 years)
- Long-term (7 – 10 years)
- Ongoing (occurs on a continuous basis)

Table 10: Goals and Objectives Timelines

Goal 1: Invest in current infrastructure and address aging facilities.	
Objective 1.1 – Maintain and upgrade existing facilities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.1.a – Continue to monitor the condition of existing parks, trails, open spaces, water access, and facilities and compare to baseline established in the 2019 Master Plan’s Facilities Assessment. Priorities for future maintenance projects for these areas should be developed and reviewed regularly.	Ongoing
1.1.b – Prioritize allocation of staffing resources to help ensure that continuous maintenance of these areas is a priority. Add seasonal staff as needed to meet current and future demand for services.	Short-Term
1.1.c – All facility inspections should follow current SOPs.	Ongoing
1.1.d – Maintenance projects and annual maintenance needs should be funded on a regular schedule based on the Facilities Assessment from the 2019 Master Plan. Priorities for future maintenance projects for these areas should continue to be developed and reviewed regularly.	Short-Term Ongoing
Objective 1.2.a – Add indoor recreation space.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.2.a – Continue renovation planning schedule from the 2019 Master Plan for existing recreation centers.	Short-Term Ongoing
1.2.b – Based on feedback from focus group participants and the survey results, a top priority of the community is additional indoor recreation space. Continue to explore opportunities to add additional indoor multipurpose recreation space either through partnerships, purchase of an existing facility, or construction of a new facility.	Mid-Term Long-Term
Objective 1.2.b – Renovate and upgrade existing outdoor aquatic facilities.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.2.b – The community prioritized and identified the need and desire for updated aquatic facilities. Continue to renovate Fallon Pool as identified in the CIP based on the 2019 Master Plan and current community desires.	Short-Term Mid-Term

Objective 1.3 – Renovate and replace outdated or failing facilities, amenities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.3.a – Continue to use the 2019 Facilities Assessment and park ratings from the 2019 Master Plan to update and create a plan to replace outdated playgrounds, renovate outdated sports fields and sport court surfaces, upgrade or replace existing restroom facilities, and address the inconsistency and aging signage in parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.	Short-Term Ongoing

Objective 1.4 – Upgrade comfort, convenience, and customer service amenities to existing facilities.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.4.a – A top priority from public engagement and the community survey was the need to address ADA accessibility to parks, playgrounds, amenities, and facilities. As renovations and upgrades occur, continue to make accessibility a top priority and address non-compliant conditions identified in the 2019 Master Plan’s Facilities Assessment.	Short-Term Ongoing
1.4.b – As the Department makes upgrades to and improves existing facilities, it should explore opportunities to add restrooms, security lighting, storage, and other amenities at existing parks and facilities, as these value-add features were high priorities in community feedback.	Ongoing
1.4.c – As parks and facilities are upgraded and renovated, continue to look for opportunities to add public art.	Ongoing

Objective 1.5 – Expand open space and parks.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.5.a – Add passive open space tactically to meet stormwater mitigation and other sustainability goals, as well as 10-minute walk and equitable park access goals.	Long-Term

Objective 1.6 – Explore opportunities to add trails for walking and bicycling.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.6.a – Coordinate with the County and other surrounding municipalities to connect to existing, develop, or expand bicycle paths and walking trails to connect neighborhoods to parks and connect parks to parks.	Short-Term Ongoing
1.6.b – A priority list for improving and adding internal walking loops in existing parks should be developed and maintained.	Short-Term Ongoing
1.6.c – Strengthen coordination with internal departments to expand and connect bicycle paths and walking trails.	Short-Term Ongoing

2.0 NEXT STEPS – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND ACTION TABLE

Objective 1.7 – Develop additional outdoor recreational facilities and amenities.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.7.a – Continue to explore investment in development of existing facilities to meet demand and increase outdoor programming opportunities.	Ongoing
1.7.b – Develop facilities and amenities to help ensure all citizens have safe access to a recreation space within a 10-minute walk from their residence as outlined in the 2019 Master Plan.	Ongoing
1.7.c – Explore opportunities at existing parks to add adventure sports and outdoor activities such as all-wheels parks, pump tracks, skate bowls and parks, futsal, nature-based programs, and river sports to increase programming and attract new users.	Short-Term Ongoing
Objective 1.8 – Develop new amenities at existing parks based on LOS analysis.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.8.a – Using the 2019 Facilities Assessment and updates, the Department should seek opportunities to add new features to existing parks where the LOS falls below the desired threshold.	Short-Term Ongoing
1.8.b – Working with internal departments, look for opportunities to add parks and pathways in redevelopment areas.	Ongoing
Objective 1.9 – Address current and future needs for athletic fields.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.9.a – Invest in high level maintenance of existing (River’s Edge Sports Complex) and future athletic fields to maintain top class conditions.	Short-Term Mid-Term
1.9.b – As existing parks are renovated, explore opportunities to add rectangle and diamond fields to meet increases in need and demand.	Short-Term Mid-Term
1.9.c – Increase field time with the addition of sports field lighting to new facilities and improvements to the lighting at existing facilities where appropriate.	Mid-Term
Objective 1.10 – Monitor ADA access to parks, trails, river access, and facilities.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
1.10.a – Continue to work to make programs and services accessible to all people of all abilities. Continued self-evaluation of ADA standards must be a high priority for the Department, especially in terms of access.	Short-Term Ongoing

Goal 2: Improve and enhance programming and service delivery.**Objective 2.1 – Enhance special event programming.**

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
2.1.a – Expand opportunities and enhance existing special event programming based on demand and trends in community demographics.	Mid-Term
2.1.b – Continue to work with neighborhoods, cultural organizations, and other service providers to explore new community and cultural events.	Ongoing

Objective 2.2 – Utilize technology to improve customer service and efficiencies.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
2.2.a – Continue to use a mixed-method approach to communicating with the public about programs, services, and opportunities such as social media, the Department website, and mobile marketing.	Ongoing

Objective 2.3 – Continue to grow programs and services accessible to citizens of all abilities.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
2.3.a – Continue to evaluate current offerings for people with disabilities through partnership with Roanoke County. As opportunities arise and facilities become available, consider additional adaptive and accessible programs.	Short-Term Ongoing
2.3.b – Annually review the number of programs and distribution of programs for people with disabilities and look for opportunities to increase and/or more equitably distribute programs and services.	Ongoing

Objective 2.4 – Continue to address recreational programming and activity needs of the community.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
2.4.a – Continue to look for opportunities to expand indoor recreational programs and activities.	Ongoing
2.4.b – Look for opportunities to increase programs for tweens, teens, people with disabilities, and seniors.	Ongoing
2.4.c – Fitness and wellness programming and services were another top priority from the public engagement process; look for opportunities to install outdoor fitness equipment to help meet demand.	Short-Term
2.4.d – Continue to monitor participation and demand for family centered recreational programs and adjust to meet the needs of the community.	Ongoing
2.4.e – Continue to provide afterschool programming through PLAY Afterschool. As staffing and community demand allow, look to possibly expand to middle school programming.	Short-Term Ongoing

Objective 2.5 - Explore opportunities for non-traditional recreation and serve as the primary gateway for citizens and visitors to access.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
2.5.a - A top priority identified by the community was to increase and provide more adventure-based programming such as paddle boarding, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, and rock climbing.	Short-Term
2.5.b - Consider non-traditional recreation programming such as all-wheel events, pickleball, and disc golf for new and additional programming opportunities.	Mid-Term
2.5.c - Consideration should also be given to non-sports programming such as instructional programs, life skills, virtual programming, gaming, and STEM opportunities.	Short-Term
2.5.d - Consider becoming the innovator for new activities by offering introductory classes and clinics, along with rental equipment to allow citizens and visitors to try and explore new sports.	Mid-Term

Goal 3: Continue to improve organizational efficiencies.

Objective 3.1 - Maintain existing LOS goals.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
3.1.a - Continue the 2019 Master Plan overall planning goal of 12 acres of park land per 1,000 population (1.5 Neighborhood Parks, 5 Community Parks and 5.5 Regional Parks).	Ongoing
3.2.b - Continue the 2019 Master Plan overall planning goal of 2 square feet of indoor facility space per 1,000 population.	Ongoing

Objective 3.2 - Maintain existing quality standards for facilities and amenities.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
3.2.a - Continue to improve and upgrade existing facilities and amenities. The Department should develop and maintain a Deferred Maintenance and Life Cycle Replacement programs to track success.	Short-Term Ongoing

Objective 3.3 - Continue to be good stewards of the natural environment.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
3.3.a - Partner with Stormwater Management staff to develop and implement a plan to control runoff from athletic fields, parks, amenities and facilities to increase water quality and protect the Upper Roanoke River Watershed.	Short-Term Ongoing

2.0 NEXT STEPS – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND ACTION TABLE

3.3.b – As development and redevelopment continues to occur in the City, take steps to obtain and preserve open space for the future and to help maintain the City’s unique features.	Short-Term Ongoing
3.3.c – Continue to employ best practices to reduce environmental impacts and create a sustainable ecosystem. The City has been designated a Bee City; a top priority should be increasing the use of native plantings, no-mow areas in parks, and green infrastructure.	Short-Term
Objective 3.4 – Staff appropriately to meet demand and maintain established quality of service.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
3.4.a – As new facilities, amenities, and services are developed and existing parks, water access, trails, and facility upgrades are implemented, it is important to ensure that staffing levels are adequate to maintain current performance standards.	Ongoing
3.4.b – Continue to evaluate programming and maintenance priorities based on community demand. Include strategies to include contracting services, realigning existing staff and/or gradually increasing staffing to meet expectations.	Short-Term Ongoing
3.4.c – Review the current volunteer program and look for additional opportunities to engage volunteers. Continue to seek ways to collaborate and partner with outside agencies and organizations to meet current and future needs.	Ongoing
Objective 3.5 – Maintain and keep current the Department SOP and policies.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
3.5.a – Continue to review and update all departmental policies, procedures, and processes regularly.	Ongoing
3.5.b – As part of that review, the Department should engage staff in the review process.	Ongoing
3.5.c – Continue to review the City code chapter for parks and recreation every five years and recommend updates as needed.	Ongoing
Objective 3.6 – Increase potential partnerships within the community.	
Actions	Time Frame to Complete
3.6.a – Build on existing partnerships.	Ongoing
3.6.b – Continue to review partnership agreements and work with the School Division and other community partners to increase access to facilities, amenities, programs, and services.	Ongoing
3.6.c - Ensure all existing and future partnerships are accurately portrayed in a signed agreement and reviewed regularly.	Short-Term Ongoing

Goal 4: Enhance and diversify funding sources.

Objective 4.1 – Explore additional funding through the pursuit of grants.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
4.1.a – Continue to pursue grant opportunities at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. To be successful and timely, funding should be established in the CIP for “matching fund” requirements for most grants.	Ongoing
4.1.b – Look for opportunities to diversify current and future funding based on opportunities identified in the master plan.	Ongoing

Objective 4.2 – Continue current cost recovery and revenue generation practices.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
4.2.a – Review current cost recovery philosophy and policy regularly. Update as needed.	Ongoing

Objective 4.3 – Partner with other service providers, when possible, to develop programs, services, and facilities to meet demand and growing trends.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
4.3.a – Continue to look for opportunities to expand programs, services, and amenities while working with the School Division, the County and other municipalities, and other service providers within the community, and continue to formalize these agreements in writing.	Ongoing

Objective 4.4 – Increase City budget and staffing dedicated to parks and recreation, maintenance, and trails.

Actions	Time Frame to Complete
4.4.a – Additional staff are needed to meet current demand for maintenance and programming. Increase staffing as budget will allow.	Ongoing
4.4.b – Competition within the region is high for full-time and part-time employees. Use the outcome from the citywide salary survey to help ensure that Roanoke remains competitive in the market.	Short-Term

B. Recommendations

The following recommendations provide more detail to how the previous section was developed and were made based on the entirety of the Master Plan Update process, which was inclusive of members of the community. The public was given many opportunities to participate through focus groups, stakeholder meetings, public meetings and workshops, an invitation and open link survey, and an interactive website (Social Pinpoint). The operations and maintenance analysis, the Recreation Program Analysis, and the Benchmarking Report also provided feedback considerations for staff.

This section describes ways to enhance the LOS and Roanoke's quality of life with improvements through updated parks, services, facilities, amenities, a dedication to customer service, improved programming and service delivery, organizational efficiencies, and increased financial opportunities.

The following goals were identified for the City to focus on:

1. Invest in current infrastructure and address aging facilities.
2. Improve and enhance programming and service delivery.
3. Continue to improve organizational efficiencies.
4. Enhance and diversify funding sources.



Goal 1: Invest in current infrastructure and address aging facilities.

Objective 1.1: Maintain and upgrade existing facilities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.

Maintenance of facilities and amenities should remain a top priority. The Department should continue to monitor the condition of existing parks, trails and pathways, water access, and facilities, as residents have identified these resources as highly important to the quality of life in Roanoke. Consider adding staff and resources to provide continuous maintenance of these areas. Monitor maintenance staffing and add seasonal staff as needed to meet current demand for services. Continue regular inspections of all facilities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces. Inspect all facilities at a minimum of twice a year.

Maintenance projects and annual maintenance needs should be funded on a regular schedule based on the Facilities Assessment from the 2019 Master Plan. Priorities for future maintenance projects for these areas should continue to be developed and reviewed regularly.

Objective 1.2.a: Add indoor recreation space.

Based on feedback from survey and focus group participants, a top priority of the community is additional indoor recreation space. The Department should continue renovation planning from the 2019 Master Plan for existing recreation centers and explore opportunities to add indoor recreation space either through partnerships, purchase of an existing facility, or construction of a new facility. The community

has identified the need and desire for an indoor multipurpose recreation facility with gymnasiums, fitness and weight areas, indoor track, class and meeting spaces, and wellness/yoga spaces. The typical facility size to house these functions would be 40,000 – 60,000 square feet.

Objective 1.2.b: Renovate and upgrade outdoor aquatic facilities.

The community prioritized and identified the need and desire to renovate and upgrade existing aquatic facilities. The City should conduct a feasibility study to determine if Fallon Pool should be renovated and upgraded as identified in the 2019 Master Plan or if it should be completely replaced.

Objective 1.3: Renovate and replace outdated or failing facilities, amenities, parks, trails, water access, and open spaces.

Using the Parks Assessment and park ratings from the 2019 Master Plan, continue to plan to replace outdated playgrounds; renovate outdated sports fields and court surfaces; upgrade or replace existing restroom facilities; and address the inconsistency and aging signage in parks, trails, and open spaces. Restrooms were a top priority from both focus group participants and survey respondents. As part of any individual park master plan, permanent restroom facilities should be included for community and regional parks.

Objective 1.4: Upgrade comfort, convenience, and customer service amenities to existing facilities.

A top priority from public engagement and the community survey was the need to address ADA accessibility to parks, playgrounds, amenities, and facilities. As renovations and upgrades occur, continue to make accessibility a top priority and address non-compliant conditions identified in the 2019 Master Plan's Facilities Assessment. Additionally, as the Department upgrades and improves existing facilities, it should explore opportunities to add restrooms, security lighting, storage, and other amenities. Also continue to look for opportunities to add public art in parks and at facilities.

Objective 1.5: Expand open space and parks.

A top priority of leadership interviews, survey respondents, focus groups, and other public engagement respondents was the expansion of open spaces and parks in Roanoke. While there is a community perception that additional park land is needed, a more current need and effective use of available funding would be to use current dollars toward replacement/upkeep. Add passive open space tactically to meet stormwater mitigation and other sustainability goals, as well as 10-minute walk and equitable park access goals.

Objective 1.6: Explore opportunities to add trails for walking and bicycling.

Community members identified walking and biking connectivity as a high priority during the engagement process. Based on trends and demand, the City should coordinate with Roanoke County and other surrounding municipalities to develop, expand, and connect to existing bicycle paths and walking trails. The Department should develop and maintain a priority list for improving and adding internal walking loops in existing parks. Continue to work with and strengthen coordination with internal departments to expand and connect paths and walking trails.

Objective 1.7: Develop additional outdoor recreational facilities and amenities.

Continue to explore expansion of existing facilities to meet demand and increase outdoor programming opportunities: add outdoor fitness gyms, playgrounds, Ninja courses, splash pads, and all-wheels parks to meet the needs identified in the master planning process. Facilities and amenities should be developed to help ensure everyone has safe access to a recreation space within a 10-minute walk from their residence as identified in the 2019 Master Plan.

A high priority for focus group participants, teens, and survey respondents was access to outdoor adventure sports. The Department should further explore

opportunities at existing parks for adventure sports and outdoor activities such as all-wheels parks, pump tracks, skate bowls and parks, small-sided soccer/futsal, Ninja courses, nature-based programs, and river sports to increase programming and attract new users.

When asked about new and additional facilities and amenities, focus group participants and survey respondents prioritized new and upgraded playgrounds, additional water access (specifically kayak and paddleboard launches), and dog parks.

Objective 1.8: Develop new amenities at existing parks based on LOS analysis.

Demand for usage of parks, waterways, trails, and athletic facilities continues to grow. Using the 2019 Facilities Assessment and updates, the Department should look for opportunities to add new amenities to enhance user experiences. Additionally, based on the Facilities Assessment, the Department should seek

opportunities to add new features to existing parks where the LOS falls below the desired threshold.

Objective 1.9: Address current and future needs for athletic fields.

As demand warrants, explore opportunities to add rectangle and diamond fields. To help increase field time, add sports field lighting to new facilities and improve the lighting at existing facilities where appropriate.

Objective 1.10: Monitor ADA access to parks, trails, waterways, and facilities.

The Department should continue to work with Roanoke County to make its programs and services accessible to all people of all abilities. Ongoing self-evaluation of ADA standards must be a high priority for the Department, especially in terms of access. Focus group participants and survey respondents indicated the need for accessible playgrounds.





Goal 2: Improve and enhance programming and service delivery.

Objective 2.1: Enhance special event programming.

Focus groups and survey respondents identified expanded opportunities and enhanced special event programming as a priority. The Department should continue to work with neighborhoods, cultural organizations, and other service providers to explore new community and cultural events, possibly themed by the community or season of the year. The Department should continue to look for opportunities to expand events and activities based on the demands and trends of the community demographics.

Objective 2.2: Utilize technology to improve customer service and efficiencies.

The Department should continue to use a mixed-method approach to communicating with the public about programs, services, and opportunities. This can include social media, the Department website, and mobile marketing.

Objective 2.3: Continue to grow programs and services accessible to citizens of all abilities.

The Department should continue to evaluate current offerings for people with disabilities. As opportunities arise and facilities become available, consider additional adaptive and accessible programs. Annually review the number of programs and distribution of programs for people with disabilities and look for opportunities to increase and/or more equitably distribute programs and services.

Objective 2.4: Continue to address recreational programming and activity needs of the community.

The Department should continue to look for opportunities to expand indoor recreational programs and activities. The community would like to see additional programs for tweens, teens, people with disabilities, and seniors. Fitness and wellness programming and services were another top priority from the public engagement process. Look for



opportunities to install outdoor fitness equipment to help meet demand.

As new programs are developed, continue to monitor recreational trends to stay current with programming and demand. As popularity in program offerings and activities increases, continue to look for opportunities to expand programs around working hours and commuting schedules. Continue to monitor participation and demand for family centered recreational programs and adjust to meet the needs of the community. Afterschool programming through PLAY Afterschool was very popular with community members; the Department should continue to provide this, and as staffing and community demand allow, look to possibly expand to middle school programming.

Objective 2.5: Explore opportunities for non-traditional recreation and serve as the primary gateway for citizens and visitors to access.

A top priority the community identified in the public engagement process was the desire to increase and provide more adventure-based programming such as paddleboarding, kayaking, mountain biking, hiking, and rock climbing. The City has an abundance of adventure opportunities with the diversity of the

natural environment. Additionally, the City should consider non-traditional recreation such as bike events, pickleball, and disc golf for new programming opportunities. Consideration should also be given to non-sports programming, such as instructional programs, life skills, virtual programming, gaming, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) opportunities.

As new programs and services are developed, continue to monitor recreational trends to stay current with programming and demand. Consider becoming the innovator and initiator for new activities by offering introductory classes, clinics, and rental equipment to allow citizens and visitors to try and explore new sports.





Goal 3: Continue to improve organizational efficiencies.

Objective 3.1: Maintain existing LOS goal.

Roanoke currently has an LOS that is 12 acres of active park land per 1,000 population (1.5 Neighborhood Parks, 5 Community Parks, and 5.5 Regional Parks) as defined in the 2019 Master Plan. The 2019 Master Plan further establishes a LOS for indoor facilities at 2 square feet per 1,000 population. The Department should continue to work to achieve those goals achieve those established goals.

Objective 3.2: Maintain existing quality standards for facilities and amenities.

The public strongly emphasized the need for Parks and Recreation to maintain and enhance existing facilities. The Department should continue to improve and upgrade existing facilities and amenities as identified in the 2019 Master Plan. Additionally, the Department should develop and maintain Deferred Maintenance and Life Cycle Replacement programs to track success.

Objective 3.3: Continue to be good stewards of the natural environment.

As development and redevelopment continues to occur in the City, take steps to obtain and preserve open space for the future and to help maintain the City's unique features. Continue to employ best practices to reduce environmental impacts and create a sustainable system of parks, trails, rivers, and facilities. The City has been designated a Bee City; to maintain that designation, a top priority should be increasing the use of native plantings, no-mow areas in parks, and green infrastructure.

Objective 3.4: Staff appropriately to meet current demand and maintain established quality of service.

As new facilities, amenities, and services are developed and existing parks, river access, trails, and facility upgrades are implemented, it is important to ensure



that staffing levels are adequate to maintain current performance standards. The intensity of maintenance practices required for upgraded facilities and amenities requires additional labor to be focused in this area. This would indicate the need for additional resources and most likely new maintenance positions within the Department.

In order to ensure high skill level and up-to-date competencies of current and future staff, update job descriptions, duties, and training curriculums to include advancements in the industry and to remain cutting-edge. Ensure that staff have adequate and appropriate tools to perform their jobs. Continue to assess the advantages and disadvantages of using contractual services for part-time, seasonal, and instructional positions. Review the current volunteer program and look for additional opportunities to engage volunteers. Ensure proper training accompanies all volunteer positions.

Objective 3.5: Maintain and keep current the Department SOP and policies.

The Department should regularly review and update all departmental policies, procedures, and processes. The Department should engage staff in the review process,

and where appropriate, include user and staff surveys and feedback.

Since the Parks and Recreation Department is governed by City code and internal standards of operations and policies, the Department should continue to review the City code chapter for parks and recreation every five years and recommend updates as needed.

Objective 3.6: Increase appropriate partnerships within the community.

The Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department currently partners with a number of agencies to provide programs and activities to the community. Continue to review partnership agreements and work with the School Division and other community partners to increase access to facilities, amenities, programs, and services.





Goal 4: Enhance and diversify funding sources.

Objective 4.1: Explore additional funding through the pursuit of grants and other means.

The Department currently takes advantage of grant opportunities available for programming and facility improvements. The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to pursue any and all grant opportunities at the federal, state, regional, and local levels.

The Department should consider new grant opportunities available for programming and parks, trails, river access, and facility improvements. One opportunity many communities are taking advantage of is combining recreation facilities with emergency shelter projects to be eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state emergency management funds.

To be successful and timely with grant opportunities, funding should be established in the CIP for “matching funds” requirements for most grants.

Objective 4.2: Continue current cost recovery and revenue generation practices.

The Department currently has a cost recovery policy and procedure in place. The Department should review the policy and percentage levels regularly to help ensure they are meeting the desired goals.

Many parks and recreation departments around the country have a mechanism to collect activity fees and use those fees to lower the subsidy from the General Fund and grow recreational opportunities for the community.

Objective 4.3: Partner with other service providers, when possible, to develop programs, services, and facilities to meet demand and growing trends.

The Department currently partners with many organizations to provide recreational opportunities for the community and visitors. As popularity of parks, trails, river access, program offerings, and activities increase, continue to look for opportunities to expand programs, services, and amenities while working with Roanoke County, other municipalities, and other service providers within the community and region. Continue to formalize these agreements in writing.

Objective 4.4: Increase City budget and staffing dedicated to parks and recreation, maintenance, river access, and trails.

Maintenance, upkeep, improvements to existing parks and facilities, and increased programming were all identified as priorities from the public engagement process. Based on the Operations and Maintenance Assessment and the Recreation Program Assessment, a major factor in addition to a backlog of deferred maintenance was lack of staffing.

Additional staff are needed to meet the current demand and increased need as facilities are upgraded and new amenities added. Additionally, competition within the region is high for full-time and part-time employees. The City is recently conducted a citywide salary survey that should be used to make Roanoke competitive in the market for skilled workers in the parks and recreation field.



C. Implementation Guidelines/Strategies

The following is a listing of suggestions for successful implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

These elements represent the commitment and discipline required to integrate the process into daily operations, now and in the future:

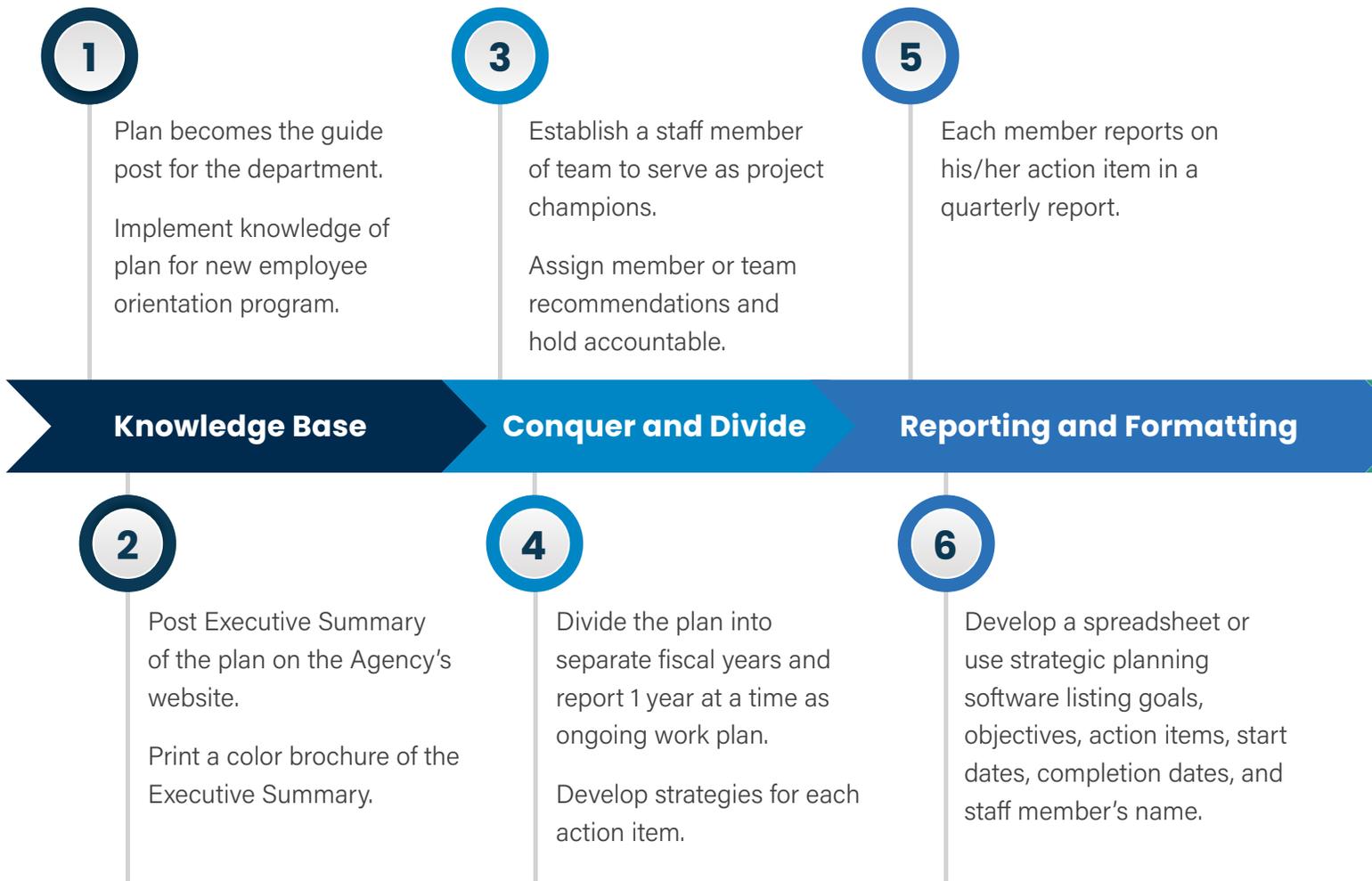
- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan becomes the road map for the Department. When decisions or responses to the community are needed, the plan becomes the reference point for decision-making and whether new issues or responses to the community are of higher importance than what has been established as existing direction.
- The Parks and Recreation Master Plan should be provided as part of the new employee orientation program.
- Post the Executive Summary of the plan on the Department website and track results on the site. This will assist in providing the community with information about the Department's strategic direction and its commitment to results. It may also be helpful to print a color brochure of the Executive Summary to distribute to interested partners and community members to provide a quick snapshot of the plan.
- A staff member or team should have responsibility of being the project manager or "champion" of the plan's implementation to help ensure success. This champion is responsible for monitoring the plan's progress and works with other staff, City management, and other departments to effectively integrate the plan within operations.
- A staff member or team should be assigned accountability for each recommendation. The project lead will have responsibility for tracking progress of the plan.
- The Department should regularly report on master plan progress. Divide the plan into separate fiscal years and report one year at a

time, as an ongoing annual work plan. Each action item for the year should include a list of strategies that support its completion. The strategies should be developed prior to each year for the upcoming list of action items and developed by the staff members involved in completing the action item. It is the project leader’s responsibility to report on their action items in a quarterly report. A suggestion is to enter each year’s data on a spreadsheet or strategic planning software that lists the goals, objectives, action items, start dates, completion

dates, and the name of the staff member responsible for the action item’s completion.

- At the end of the year, perform an annual review of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and document any changes to objectives and action items to reflect changes in priorities. This process can be included at an annual review meeting in which successive years’ objectives and action items are discussed as part of the annual budget process. Action items will tie into both the operating and capital budget process.

Figure 24: Implementation Guidelines: Strategies for Success



- Update major stakeholders on the plan’s implementation and results on an annual basis.
- Conduct staff meetings on a quarterly or semiannual basis to review progress on implementation of the plan.
- Post a chart of each year’s recommendations on office walls in administrative areas with a check-off column designating completion as part of a visual management program.
- If there are ideas for new strategies that arise throughout the year, include them on a written “parking lot” and review them as part of the annual just-in-time review to determine if they change or replace any existing strategies or action items.
- At the five-year mark of the plan, complete a shortened update, including repeating the statistically valid survey and demographic projections. Adjust existing recommendations as necessary.





3.0 What We Want – Our Community, Trends, and Identified Needs

A. Demographic Profile

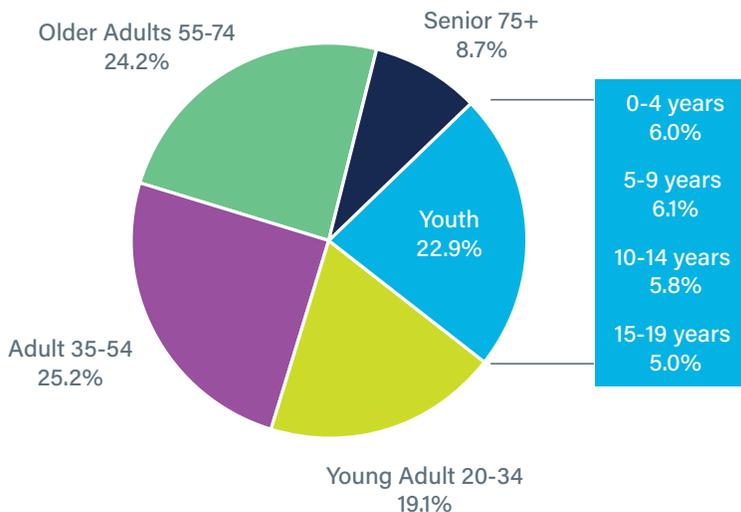
BerryDunn provided a demographic review of Roanoke, offering a detailed analysis of household and economic data as part of the Master Plan Update process.

This analysis offers insight into the potential market for community parks, trails, waterways, and recreation programs/services by highlighting where and how the community is projected to change.

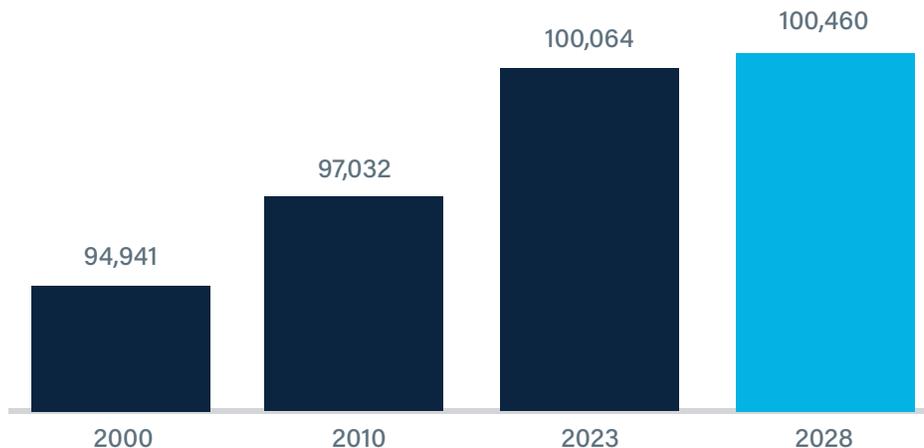
BerryDunn sourced population, age distribution, income, race/ethnicity, and other household characteristic data from ArcGIS Business Analyst using February 2024 U.S. Census estimates. Roanoke's boundaries were used as the geographic area for this review. BerryDunn also compared Virginia and U.S. data, where applicable, for additional context.

Figure 3: Roanoke Demographics

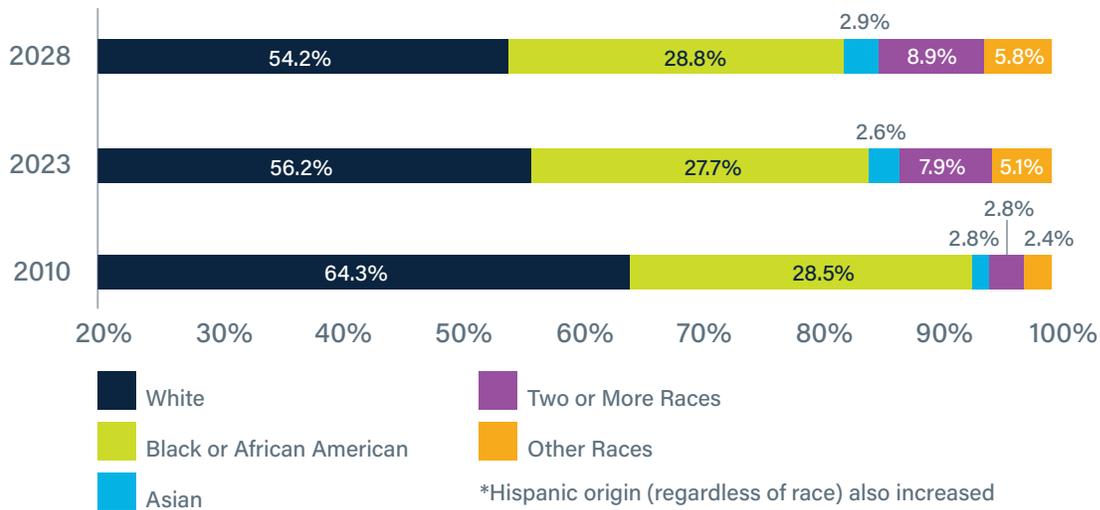
**Age Distribution
2023**



**Population Change
2000-2028**



**Racial Diversity
2010-2028**



Population Characteristics

In 2023, Roanoke’s population was an estimated 100,064 residents—a 5.3% increase from 2000 (94,941 residents). Future projections suggest minimal growth, with an anticipated population of 100,460 by 2028.

Age Distribution

The median age of residents is 40 years, which is similar to the median age (39) of both VA and the United States. The age groups composing the largest percentages of Roanoke’s population are adults (35 – 54 years) at 25.2%, older adults (55 – 74 years) at 24.2%, and youth (0 – 19 years) at 22.9%.

Racial Diversity

The City has become more diverse between 2010 and 2023, as indicated by the 8.1% decrease in the white population and the 5.1% increase in those who identify as two or more races. The number of residents who identify as being of Hispanic origin (regardless of race) also increased by 3.5%. Between 2023 and 2028, there will be minimal changes in racial diversity, with the largest difference being a 2.1% decrease in the white population.

B. Current Trends

Recreational trends and preferences evolve over time, and this report highlights current parks and recreation trends locally and across the United States. Local trends are analyzed using Esri ArcGIS Business Analyst, while national trends are drawn from sources such as the Sports and Fitness Industry Association (SFIA), the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), and NRPA. The report provides Roanoke with a high-level overview of trends in facilities, programming, policies and procedures, engagement, and participation. By exploring these trends, Roanoke can gain valuable insights into communities’ evolving recreational habits and preferences, helping identify areas for growth, opportunities, improvement, and inclusivity.

Park and Recreation Influencing Trends

The following pages summarize some of the key trends that could impact Roanoke over the next 5 – 10 years. The information contained in this report can be used by staff when planning new programs, considering additions to parks and new park amenities, and creating the annual budget and capital improvement plan. Understanding trends can also help an organization reach new audiences and help determine where to direct additional data collection efforts.

In addition, Esri Business Analyst provides estimates for activity participation and consumer behavior based on a specific methodology and survey data to make up what Esri terms “Market Potential Index.”

Local Trends

Figures 4 and 5 compare participation levels for fitness and outdoor recreation activities, respectively, for Roanoke and VA. Of all activities measured, the most popular for City residents were walking for exercise, swimming, hiking, and road biking. The trends among City residents mirror that of VA, with differences in participation being minimal (less than 2%).

Figure 4: Local Participation in Fitness Activities

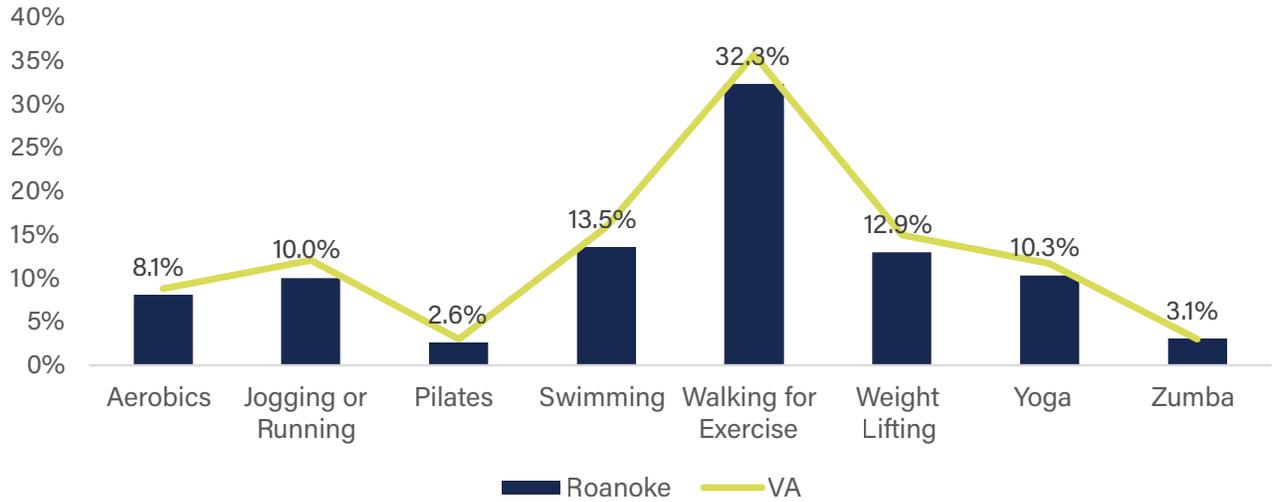
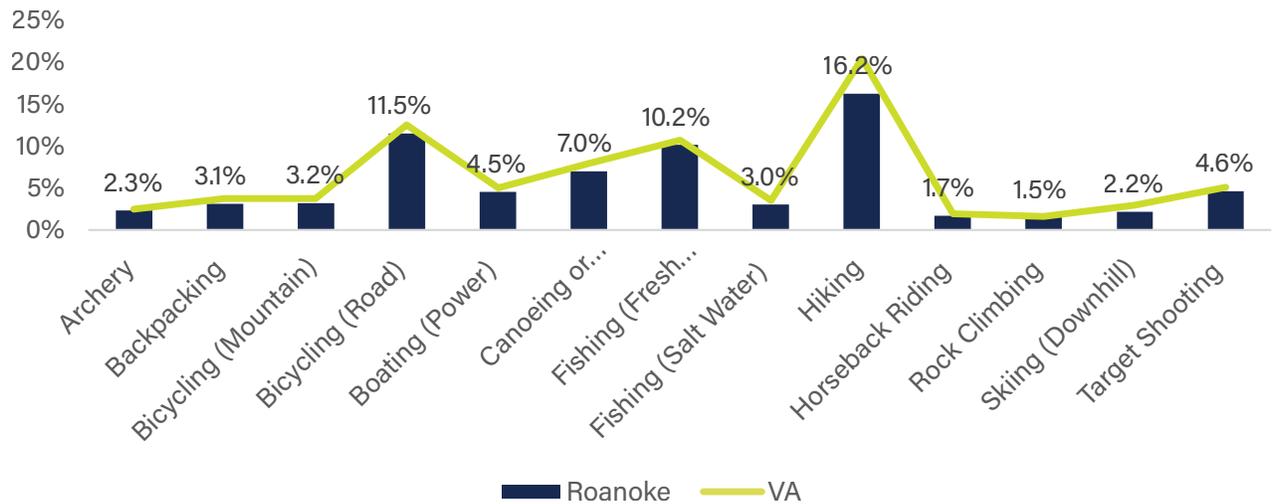


Figure 5: Local Participation in Outdoor Recreation



National Trends

Table 2 demonstrates the change in time over the past five years (2018 – 2023) for sports that are relevant to planning from the SFIA 2024 Topline Report.¹ This data was gathered from the U.S. population age six and over.

Table 2: National Top Sports by Activity

	2023 Participation (Millions)	Five-Year Growth (2018 – 2023)
TEAM SPORTS		
Basketball	29.7 M	+4.3%
Baseball	16.6 M	+1.0%
Football (Flag)	7.2 M	+2.0%
Lacrosse	1.9 M	-1.0%
Soccer (Outdoor)	14 M	+4.3%
Softball (Fast Pitch)	2.3 M	+0.9%
Swimming on a Team	3.3 M	+2.1%
Volleyball (Court)	6.9 M	+2.3%
RACQUET SPORTS		
Tennis	23.8 M	+6.3%
Pickleball	13.5 M	+35.7%
AEROBIC EXERCISE		
Running/Jogging	48.3 M	-0.5%
Walking	114 M	+0.5%
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES		
Bicycling (BMX)	4.4 M	+5.4%
Bicycling (Mountain/Non-Paved Surface)	9.2 M	+1.4%
Bicycling (Road/Paved Surface)	42.2 M	+1.8%
Camping	38.5 M	+7.5%
Camping (RV)	16.4 M	+1.0%
Hiking (Day)	61.4 M	+5.3%

¹ SFIA. February 27, 2024. "SFIA's Topline Participation Report Shows Strong Positive Trends Across All Sports And Fitness Categories." Sports & Fitness Industry Association. [SFIA's Topline Participation Report Shows Strong Positive Trends Across All Sports And Fitness Categories.](#)

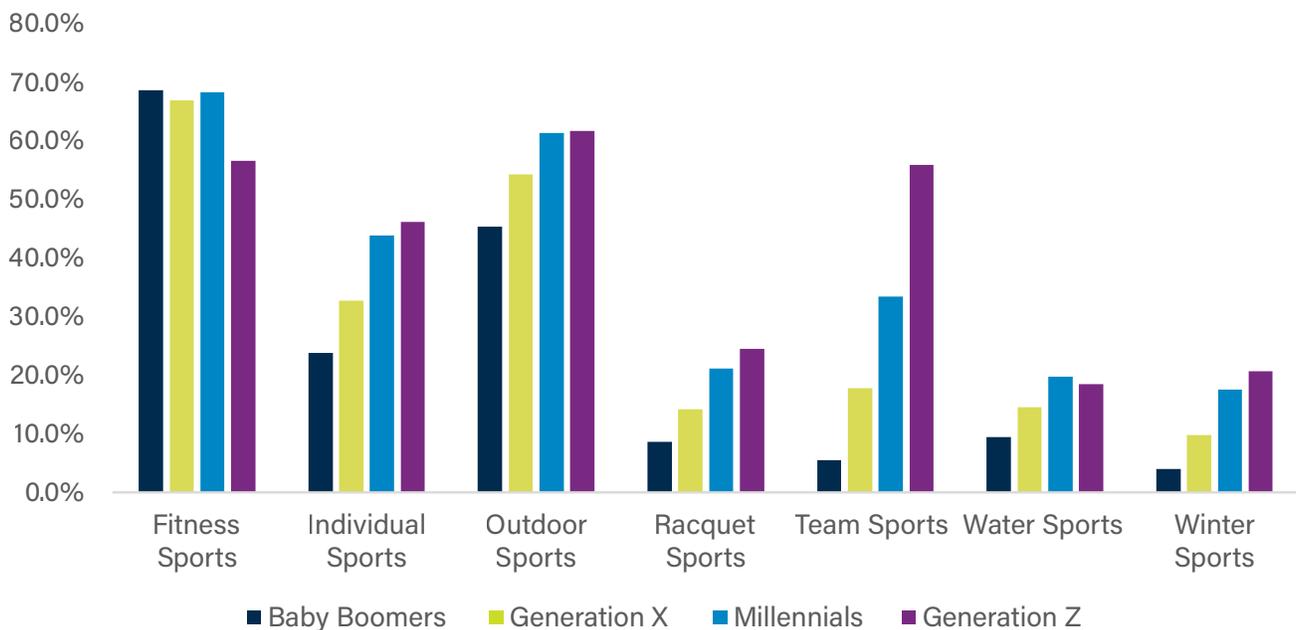
Age-Related and Generational Trends

Table 3: Generation Age Ranges

Generation	Age Range
Generation Alpha	Born 2010 – Present
Generation Z	Born 1997 – 2010
Millennials	Born 1981 – 1996
Generation X	Born 1965 – 1980
Baby Boomers	Born 1946 – 1964
Silent Generation	Born 1928 – 1945

Activity participation varies based on age, but it also varies based on generational preferences. The SFIA issues a yearly report on generational activity. In the 2024 SFIA report, inactivity declined in every age group in the last year; across each generation, the most participation was seen in fitness and outdoor activities. Figure 6 reflects SFIA participation data by generation.

Figure 6: Activity Participation by Generation (2024)



C. Community and Stakeholder Input

Introduction

Community engagement is a key element in local government planning and development, creating a two-way process between the residents of the community and the local agency. Effective community engagement offers a platform for people to voice their opinions and inform the agency of decisions that impact their quality of life.

Collaborative community engagement processes have the capacity to create a shared vision of the agency’s plan, and when successful, help to create an outcome that reflects the community’s values and likely increases their support.

The City worked closely with the BerryDunn team to hold community focus groups, two public workshops, and leadership meetings.

Community Engagement Goals

- Design an engagement process that captures the public’s perceptions and interests regarding the current and future needs for Roanoke’s parks, facilities, and programs.
- Engage stakeholders who represent multiple demographics and interests.

Desired Community Engagement Outcomes

- Achieve participation that represents Roanoke’s diverse residents and their varying recreational interests.
- Gather input for the final plan that provides clear guidance and priorities from Roanoke staff and residents.

Community Engagement Summary

A collaborative team of City staff and consultants conducted the information gathering process, which consisted of a series of four community focus groups, two public engagement workshops, and leadership interviews from September 25 to 27, 2025. In total, 164 individuals participated in the process.

City staff did an exceptional job reaching the community, engaging multiple populations and regions. They used a mixed-method approach from social media, email, website posts, and phone calls. This approach yielded great turnout.

The focus groups were open conversations with community members, key stakeholders, partners, and special interest user groups to understand key strengths, challenges, and areas for opportunity in Roanoke. During the public engagement workshop, attendees received a high-level overview of the Master Plan Update project and were given an interactive opportunity to prioritize activities, facilities, and programs they are most interested in.

Figure 7: Community Engagement Summary



Focus Group Feedback

This section summarizes comments from the focus group discussions.

Figure 8: Additional Programs/Activities to Pursue



Figure 9: Additional Facilities



Figure 10: Top Priorities



Community Workshop Feedback

This section summarizes feedback from the two community workshops.

Figure 11: Prioritize Recreation Center Space

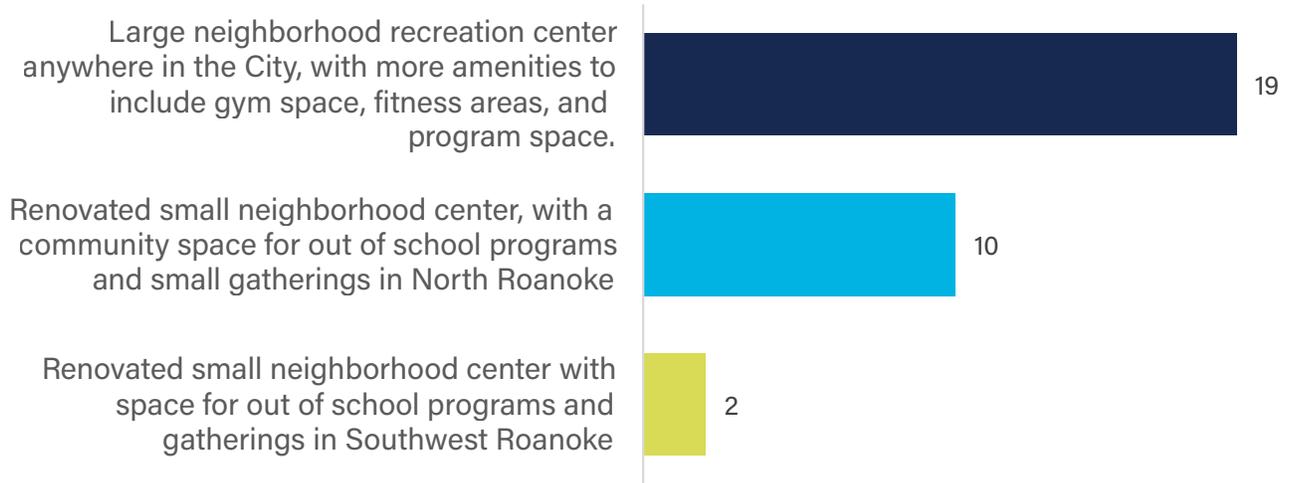
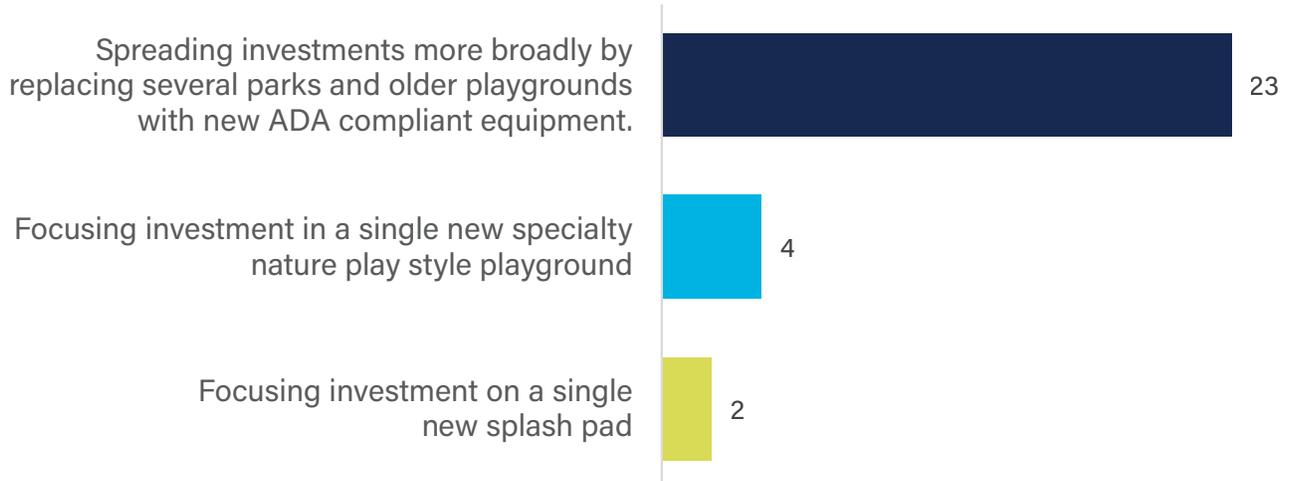


Figure 12: Prioritize City Investment for Youth Spaces



D. Random Invitation Community Needs Assessment Survey Executive Summary

Overview

ETC Institute administered a Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey for the City of Roanoke, VA during the fall of 2024. The purpose of the survey was to help determine parks and recreation priorities for the community.

Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households throughout Roanoke. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online.

The survey aimed to collect a minimum of 400 completed responses from residents, and this target was surpassed with 413 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 413 residents have a precision of at least +/-4.81% at the 95% level of confidence.

Additionally, ETC Institute administered the 2019 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Survey; this allowed for a comparison of the data across the two surveys (2019 and 2024). The following graphics show the changes between the two surveys.

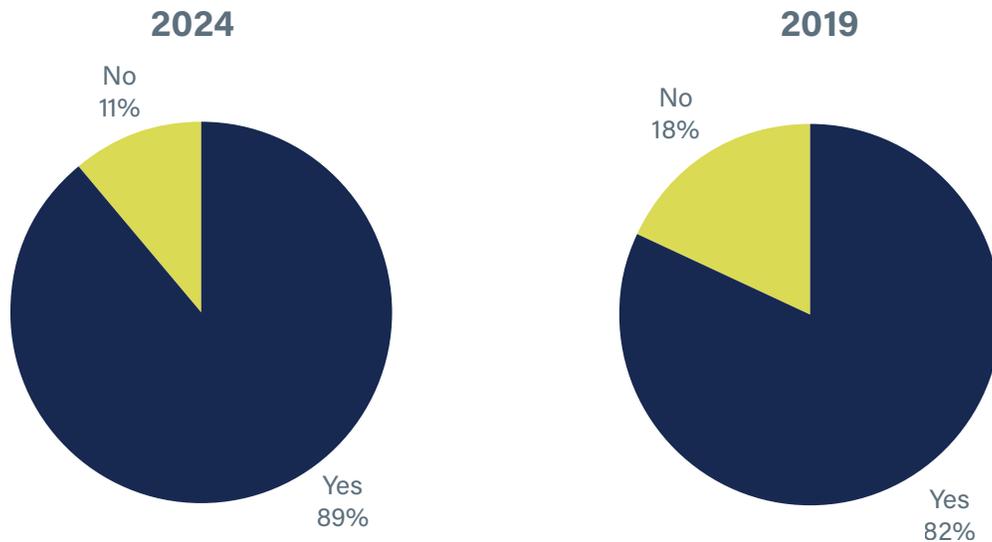
Parks and Facilities Use

Facility Use: Eighty-nine percent (89%) of respondents indicated that they have visited a department facility in the past year. They selected all the facilities they have used/visited in the past year. The most used/visited facilities were: paved trails/greenways (76%), regional parks (66%), and Elmwood amphitheater (62%). Based on the sum of top-three choices, the facilities that respondents visited the most were: paved trails/greenways (50%), neighborhood park (30%), and natural surface trails/greenways (27%). Respondents also rated the level of maintenance of the parks/facilities they visited: 20% rated excellent, 48% rated good, 24% rated fair, and 8% rated poor.

Program Use: Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents indicated that they have participated in programs in the past year. They selected the number of programs they participated in: 31% participated in 1 program, 50% participated in 2 – 3 programs, 16% participated in 4 – 6 programs, 3% participated in 7 – 10 programs, and 1% participated in 11+ programs. Respondents selected the primary reasons why they participated in these programs. The common reasons were location of program facility (44%), friends participate (43%), and quality of program content (30%). Lastly, respondents rated the overall quality of the programs they participated in, as 28% rated excellent, 55% rated good, 11% rated fair, and 5% rated poor.

Figure 13: ETC Survey Question 2**Q2. Have you/your household visited any of the City of Roanoke's Parks and Recreation facilities during the past year?**

by percentage of respondents

**Benefits, Importance, and Improvements to Parks and Recreation**

Importance: Respondents rated how important it is that Roanoke Parks and Recreation develops, designs, and maintains management standards that will help the City evaluate amenity/facility life cycles and better understand the true costs for routine maintenance and upkeep. Of total respondents, 65% rated this as very important, 15% rated somewhat important, 18% rated important, 1% rated not important, and 0% rated not at all important.

Support for Actions to Improve Parks and Recreation System: Respondents rated how supportive they would be of each of the actions (listed in the survey) that the City could take to improve the Parks and Recreation system. The actions that respondents supported the most were to upgrade existing neighborhood and community parks (78%), develop new and connect existing trail system (71%), and upgrade existing trails (71%). Based on the sum of top-four choices, the actions that respondents would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars were to upgrade existing neighborhood and community parks (35%), upgrade existing trails (29%), and develop additional trails and connectivity of trails throughout the community (29%).

Support for Developing Facilities/Amenities: Respondents rated how supportive they would be of the City developing each of the facilities/amenities (listed in the survey) to improve the Parks and Recreation system. The facilities/amenities that respondents supported the most were paved multi-use trails (77%), additional restrooms at existing parks (74%), and all-inclusive playgrounds for children (ADA compliant) (69%). Based on the sum of top-four choices, the facilities/amenities that respondents would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars were additional restrooms at existing parks (36%), paved multi-use trails (36%), and all-inclusive playgrounds for children (35%).

Figure 14: ETC Survey Question 15

Q15. Please indicate how supportive you would be of each of the following major actions that the city could take to improve the Parks and Recreation system.

by percentage of respondents

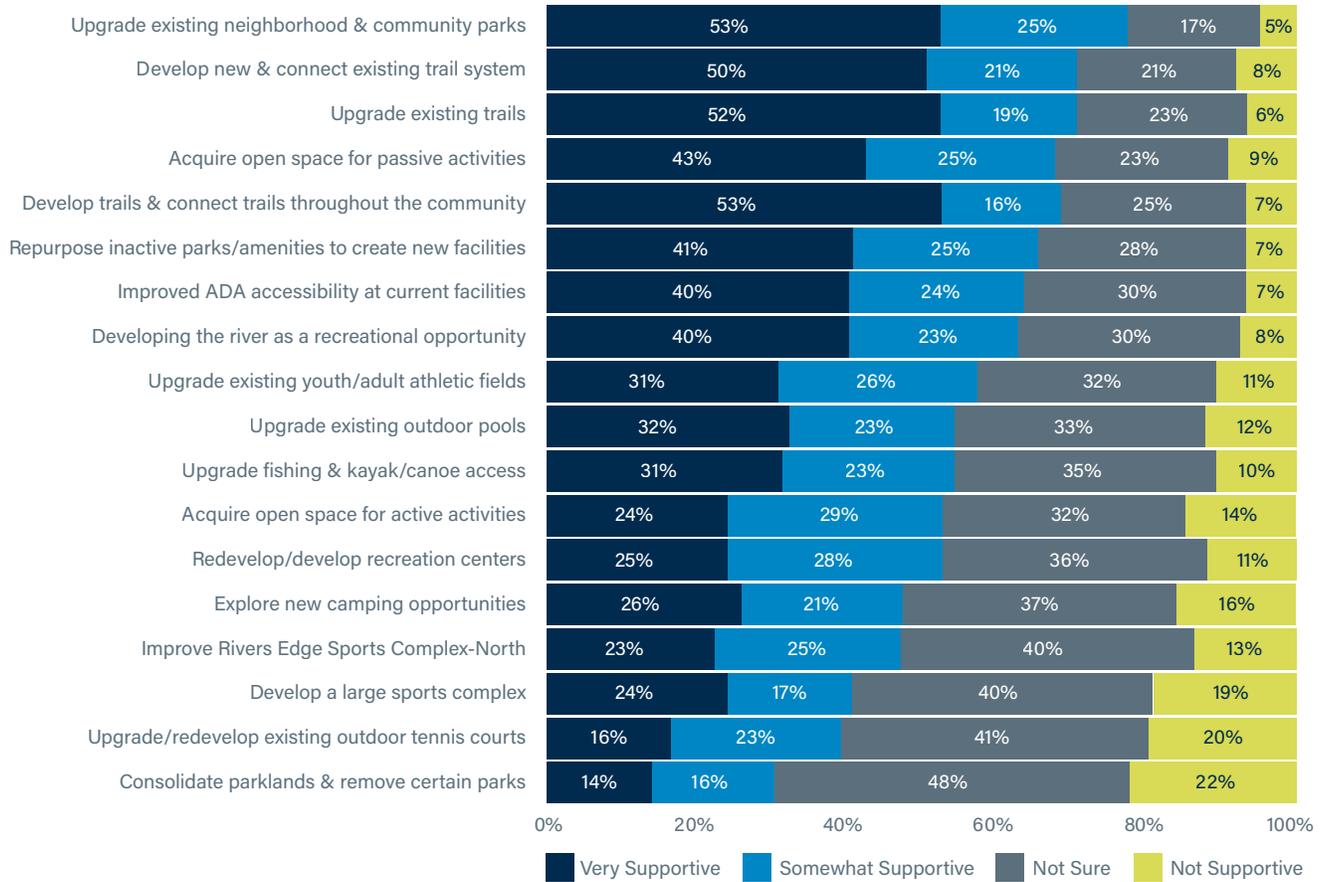
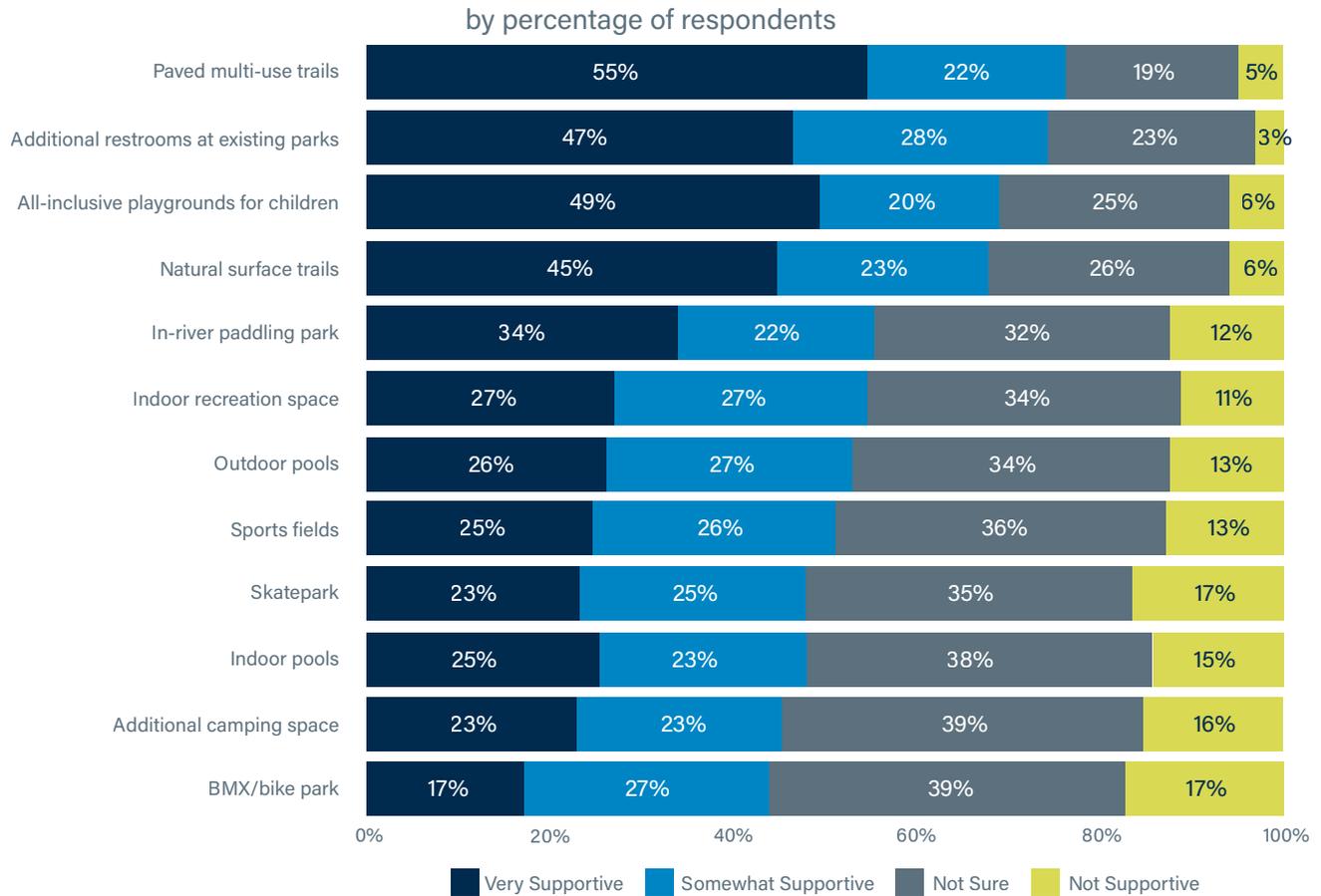


Figure 15: ETC Survey Question 20

Q20. Please indicate how supportive you would be of the City developing each of the following facilities/amenities to improve the Parks and Recreation system.



Priorities for Facility Investments

Priorities for Facility Investments: The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The PIR equally weighs the importance that residents place on facilities and how many residents have unmet needs for the facilities.

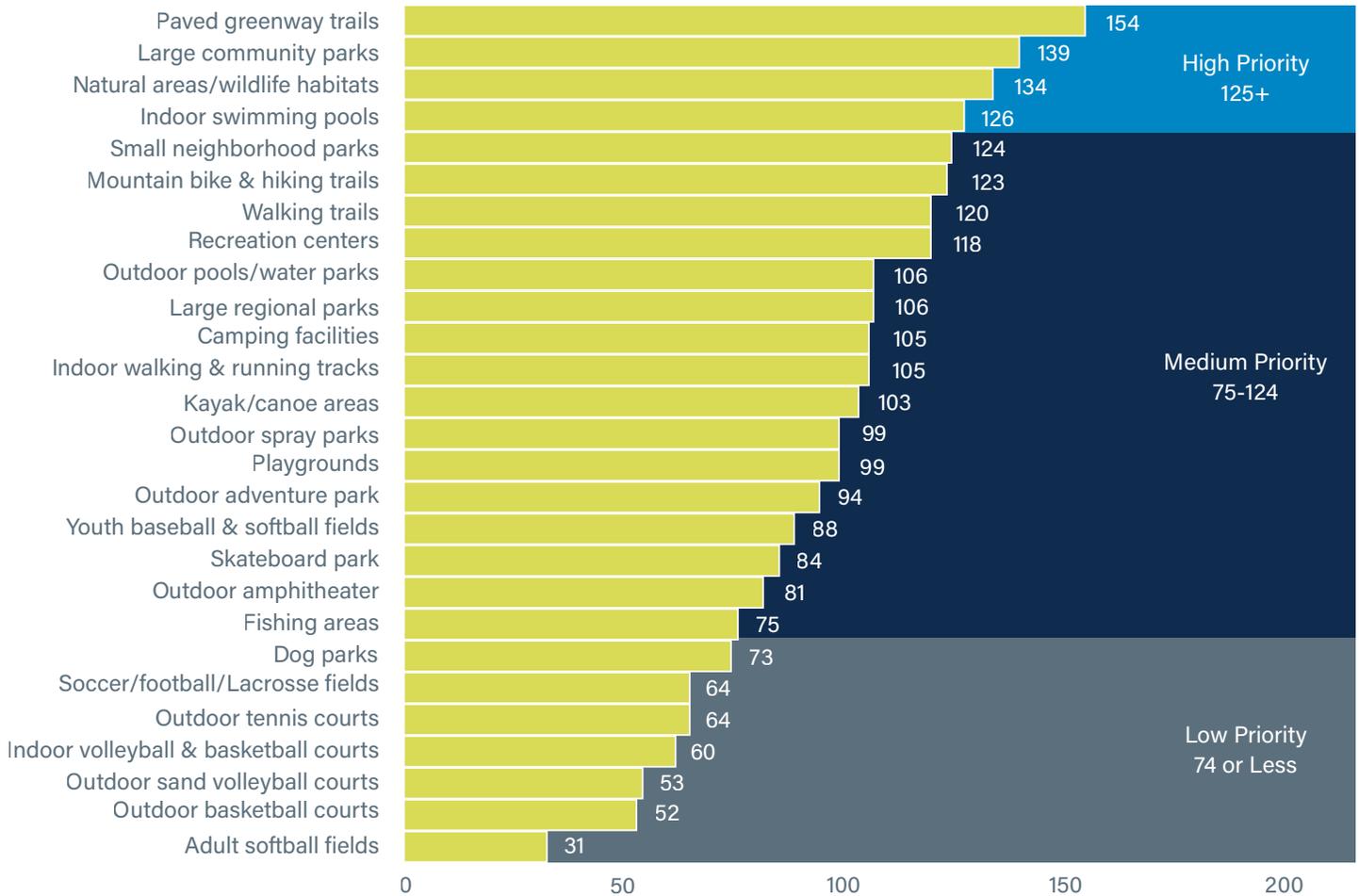
Based on the PIR, the following facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Paved greenway trails (PIR=154)
- Large community parks (PIR=139)
- Natural areas/wildlife habitats (PIR=134)
- Indoor swimming pools (PIR=126)

The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 29 facilities assessed in the survey.

Figure 16: ETC Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities/Amenities Based on PIR

Top Priorities for Investment for Facilities/Amenities Based on Priority Investment Rating



Priorities for Program Investments

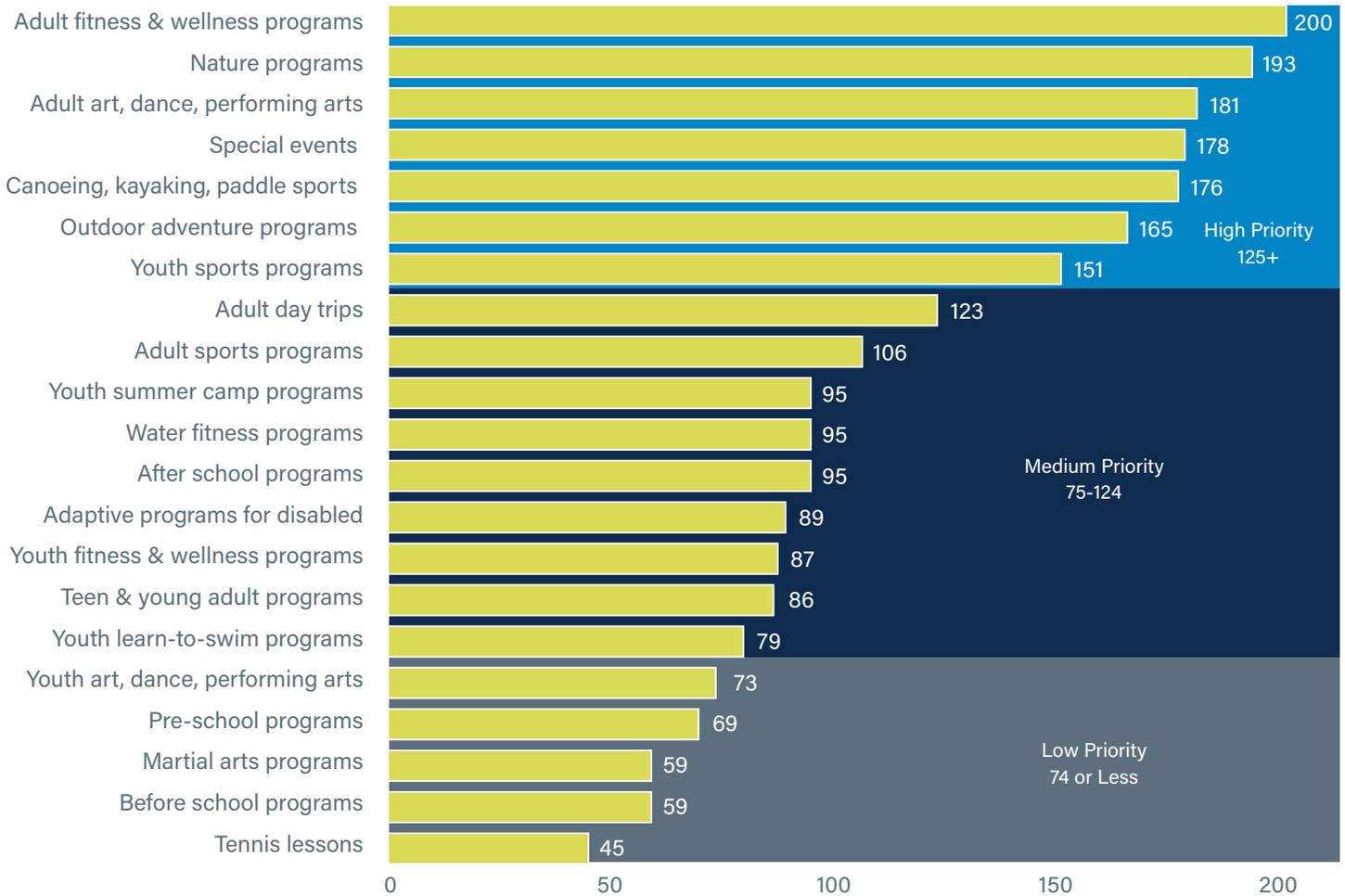
Based on the PIR, the following programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=200)
- Nature programs (PIR=193)
- Adult art, dance, performing arts (PIR=181)
- Special events (PIR=178)
- Canoeing, kayaking, paddle sports (PIR=176)
- Outdoor adventure programs (PIR=165)
- Youth sports programs (PIR=151)

The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 23 programs assessed in the survey.

Figure 17: ETC Top Priorities for Investment for Programs/Activities Based on PIR

Top Priorities for Investment for Programs/Amenities Based on Priority Investment Rating



E. Online Community Engagement: Social Pinpoint Summary

Introduction

Social Pinpoint is a powerful tool that helps agencies gather feedback and insights from community stakeholders. Utilizing the engagement features on Social Pinpoint allows agencies to easily collect and analyze feedback from a range of community stakeholders including residents, customers, businesses, and employees.

This analysis will provide the City with insights that can inform decision-making and help the City better understand and meet the community's needs and expectations. These insights can lead to recommendations that drive change and improve outcomes for all stakeholders. Roanoke's Social Pinpoint site included a survey, interactive mapping tool, and a budget prioritization tool.

The Social Pinpoint site for the City of Roanoke's Master Plan Update was active from July 26, 2024, to November 21, 2024, and the site received over 1,400 visits. During this time, the site generated 456 contributions from 204 community members, including 140 survey responses, 210 interactive mapping tool comments, and 105 budget prioritization tool responses.

Online Engagement by the Numbers

1,459 Site Visits

1,074 Visitors

456 Total Contributions

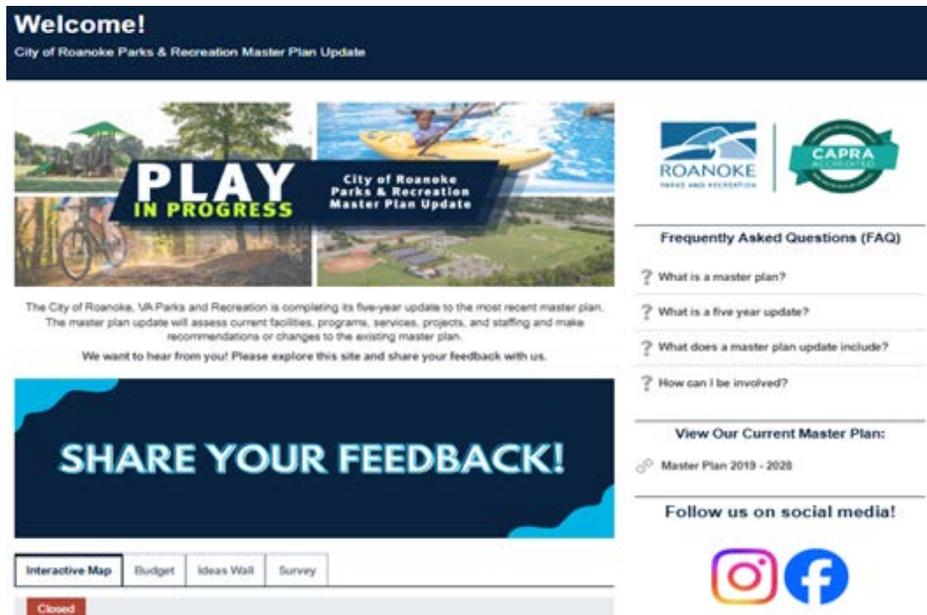
204 Total Contributors

140 Survey Responses

210 Interactive Mapping Tool Comments

105 Budget Prioritization Tool Responses

Figure 18: The City of Roanoke Social Pinpoint Landing Page

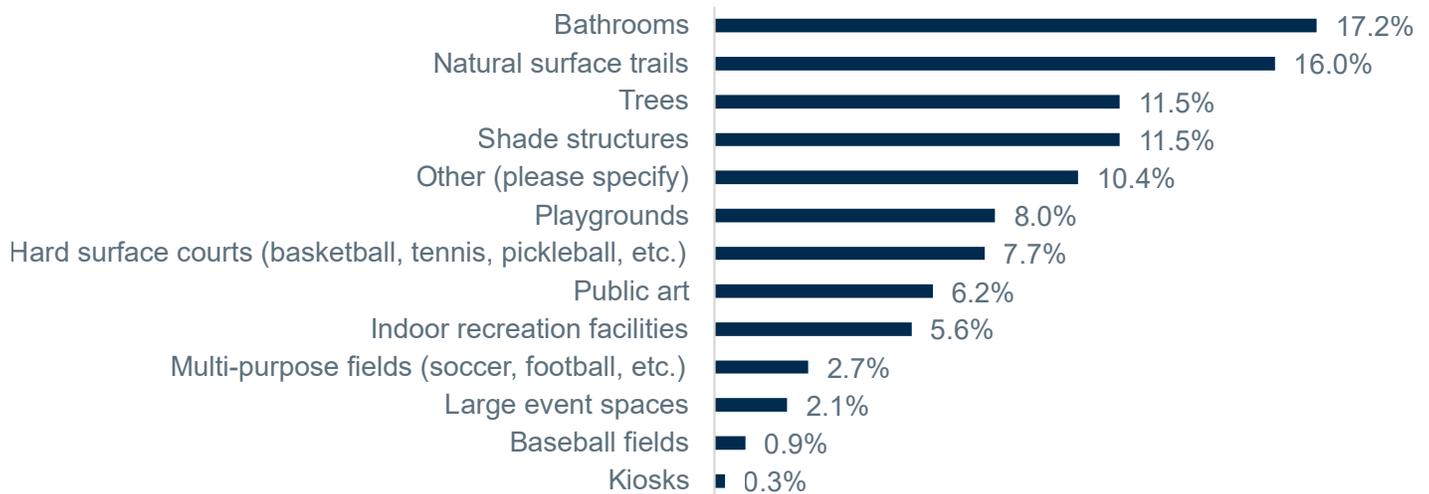


Survey

Respondents were asked to indicate how their engagement with City recreational facilities has evolved. A small percentage of respondents (4.5%) report visiting City recreation centers like the Discovery Center, Mountain View, or Eureka less frequently. In contrast, 14% of respondents are using natural surface trails more frequently, and 14.8% are visiting larger regional parks such as River's Edge, Mill Mountain, and Carvins Cove more often, indicating a growing preference for outdoor and regional recreational spaces. When it comes to recreation programming, about 10.2% of respondents have visited a City park they had never been to before due to a recreational program, while another 10.2% participate in more organized sports league programs. Additionally, 10.7% have tried a new sport, hobby, or activity inspired by a City recreational program, reflecting increased exploration and involvement in recreational opportunities.

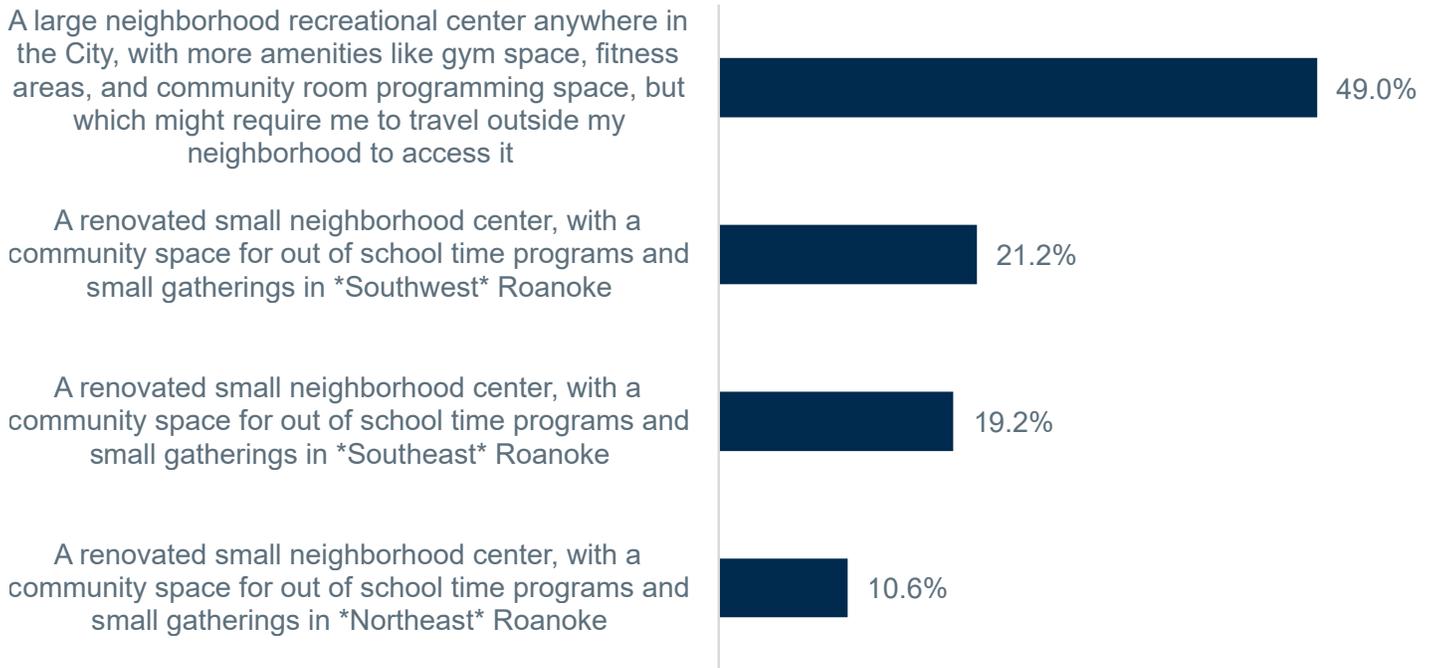
Next, respondents were asked to select the top three park amenity priorities they would like to see more of in City parks. The most desired amenities included bathrooms (17.2%), natural surface trails (16%), trees (11.5%), and shade structures (11.5%).

Figure 19: Question 3 - Which park amenities are your top three priorities that you would like to see more of in City parks? (choose up to three)



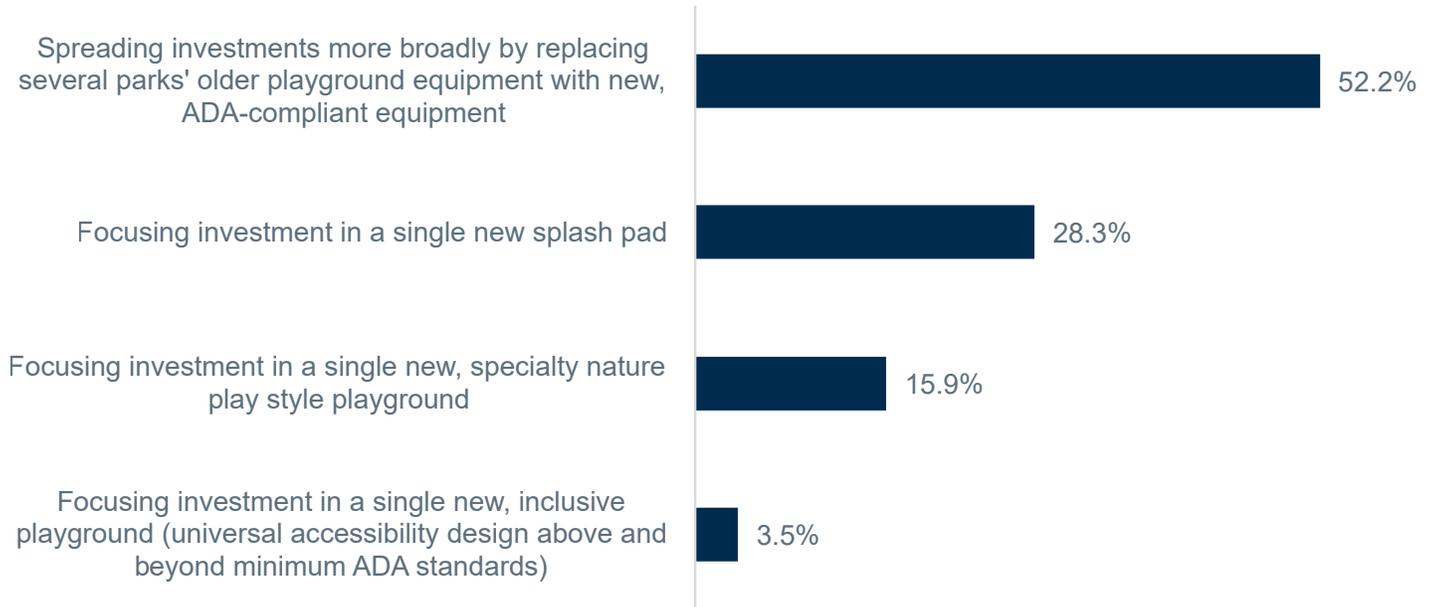
The majority of respondents, 49%, indicated they would use a large neighborhood recreational center anywhere in the City, with more amenities like gym space, fitness areas, and community room programming space, but that might require respondents to travel outside their neighborhoods to access it.

Figure 20: Question 9 - Which type of recreational center space do you think the City should prioritize funding for next, based on what you currently use or would use the most?



The majority of respondents, 52.2%, prioritized spreading investments more broadly by replacing several parks' older playground equipment with new, ADA-compliant equipment for children's play spaces.

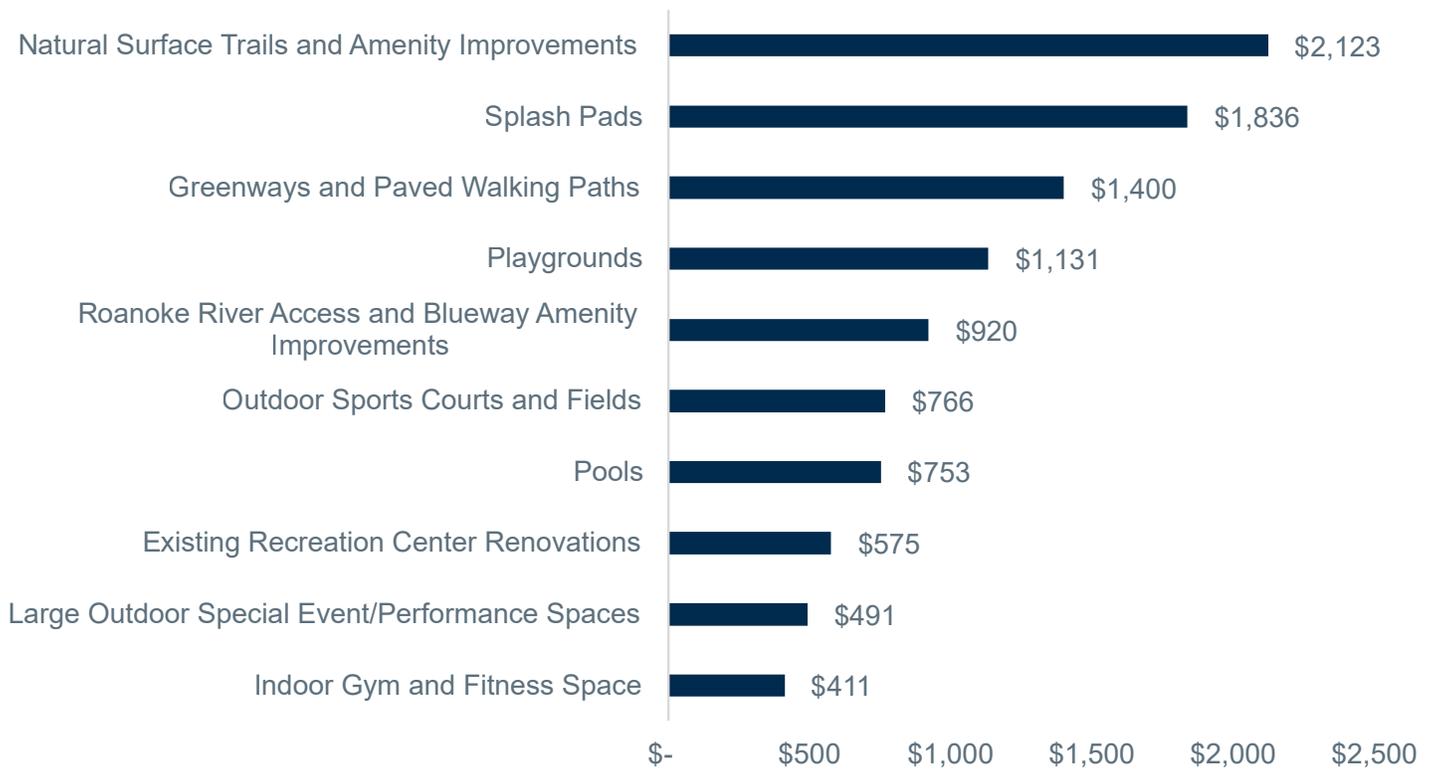
Figure 21: Question 10 - Which of these is your highest priority for the City's investments in play spaces for children?



Budget Responses

The budget feature gathered insights on how stakeholders would prioritize funding for key facilities, amenities, and programs. Participants were given a virtual budget of \$100 to allocate across various items. A total of 105 responses were received, resulting in a combined budget allocation of \$10,406. Among the priorities, natural surface trails and amenity improvements received the highest allocation at \$2,123, followed by splash pads at \$1,836 and greenways and paved walking paths at \$1,400 (Figure 22). Categories such as arts and culture, athletics, special programs and events, park and facility improvements, playgrounds, aquatics, and afterschool programs received no funding and are therefore not included in Figure 22.

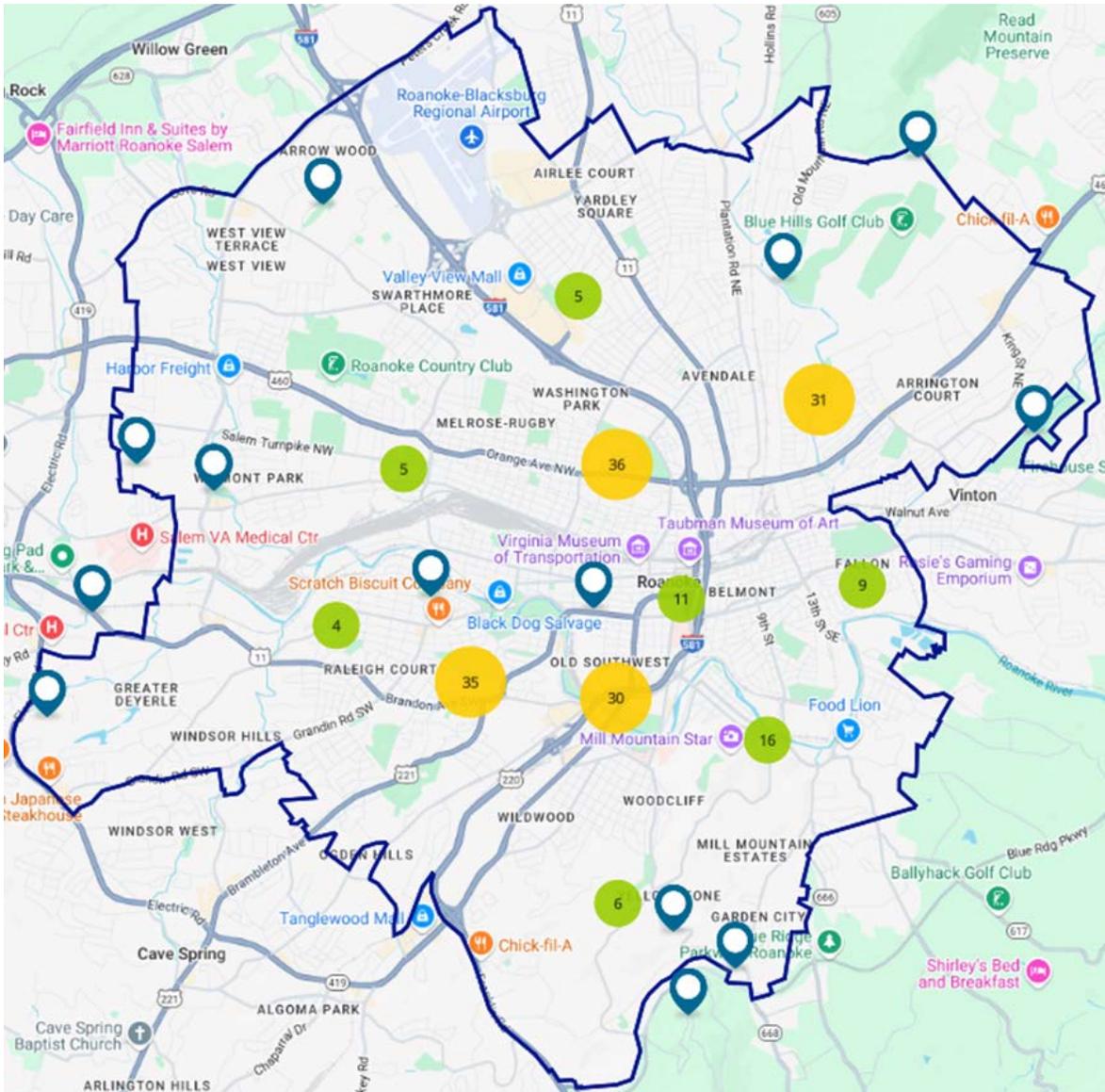
Figure 22: Budget Responses Summary



Mapping Tool

The interactive mapping tool allowed community members to share their feedback and suggestions regarding parks and recreation around the City. Respondents were able to pin their comments to their desired locations within City boundaries and view other submissions on the platform anonymously. A total of 210 comments were received, and the distribution of comments can be seen in Figure 23. The the most frequent themes were connectivity, dog parks, greenway safety, sports facilities, maintenance and accessibility, natural areas, and park improvements.

Figure 23: Map Comments Overview



Conclusion

The findings from the survey illustrate a community that values diverse and inclusive recreational opportunities while emphasizing the importance of maintenance, accessibility, and natural preservation. Key takeaways include a growing preference for outdoor and regional recreational spaces, with notable increases in the use of natural surface trails and regional parks. Community members expressed strong support for enhancements to park amenities, including bathrooms, shade structures, and ADA-compliant equipment, which reflects a commitment to making spaces more welcoming and functional for all.

Investment in connectivity, particularly in greenway systems, is a recurring theme, highlighting the need for safer bike lanes, improved pedestrian pathways, and expanded trails that link neighborhoods and parks. Safety concerns, especially around greenways and parks, underscore the need for lighting, security measures, and revitalization efforts to foster a sense of comfort and usability.

The community also expressed enthusiasm for new amenities, such as dog parks, splash pads, fitness parks, and disc golf courses, alongside increased opportunities for sports, hobbies, and organized activities. Maintenance and upkeep of existing facilities, such as tennis courts and playgrounds, emerged as critical priorities, with a focus on equitable distribution and ensuring long-term sustainability.

F. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is an effective tool that enables comparison with other agencies, allowing the City of Roanoke to understand areas of opportunity or saturation. Benchmarking fosters a deeper understanding of other service providers in the area, clarifying how other agencies manage their budget, generate revenue, offer programs, and run their facilities.

Benchmarking does not aim to make direct comparisons, as each jurisdiction has its own unique identity, ways of conducting business, and distinct community needs. The political, social, economic, and physical characteristics of each community make the policies and practices of each parks and recreation agency unique.

For this study, BerryDunn used 2023 NRPA Park Metrics data to compare the City of Roanoke's quartile data (lower, median, upper quartiles) to that of eight comparable agencies in Virginia. Those agencies include:

- Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities
- City of Chesapeake Parks and Recreation
- Lynchburg Parks and Recreation
- Newport News Parks and Recreation
- Norfolk Department of Recreation, Parks & Open Space
- Suffolk Parks and Recreation
- Virginia Beach Department of Parks and Recreation
- Winchester Parks and Recreation Department

The following study looks at several metrics:

- Population and jurisdiction size
- Acres of parks per 1,000 residents
- Full-time equivalent (FTE) employees per 10,000 population
- Operating expenditures
- Percentage of agency's total operating expenditures
- Operating expenditures per FTE
- Programming offered by parks and recreation agencies

It is important to contextualize all data in a benchmarking study. Although benchmarking can be a great comparative tool, it does not necessarily lend itself to being a decision-making tool.

Tables throughout this report highlight Roanoke in blue. Charts in this report, however, intend to provide a visual benchmarked comparison of where Roanoke ranks compared to the lower, median, and upper quartiles of the benchmarked agencies.

Employees in the Workforce

The following section analyzes the City's total number of FTEs. Roanoke had an estimated 169 FTEs, which lies between the lower and median quartiles. Roanoke has 8 FTEs per 10,000 population, which is slightly lower than the median.

Table 4: Total Number of FTEs and FTEs per 10,000 Population

	Lower	Roanoke	Median	Upper
Total Number of FTEs	75.2	169.0	173	238.4
FTEs per 10,000 Population	6.8	8.0	9.6	11.8

Operating Expenditures and Capital Budget Overview

The following section reviews operating expenditures and capital budgets. Data from the study indicates that operating expenditures were typically between \$6 million and \$27 million; capital budgets ranged from \$3 million to \$15 million. For both the expenditures and budget, Roanoke fell below the lower quartiles.

Table 5: Agency Operating Expenditures and Capital Budgets (2023)

	Roanoke	Lower	Median	Upper
Operating Expenditures	\$6,404,772	\$6,480,000	\$17,037,606	\$27,029,930
Capital Budget	\$3,400,000	\$4,619,750	\$6,662,500	\$15,768,995

Expenditures and Revenue per Capita

This section compares the agency's overall operating expenditures and the total revenue to total operating expenditures as a percentage.

Table 6 illustrates the ratio of total revenue to total operating expenditures. This ratio can provide a basis for understanding the overall cost recovery for the agency; it does not, however, provide for a detailed comparative analysis. Roanoke is above the upper quartile at 34.8% (15.2% above the median). In this case, the higher the ratio, the better the agency is at minimizing expenses relative to revenue.

Table 6: Average Expenditures and Revenue per Capita (2023)

	Roanoke	Lower	Median	Upper
Operating Expenditures per Capita	\$63	\$69	\$107	\$156
Total Revenue to Total Operating Expenditures	34.8%	10.0%	19.6%	23.0%

Conclusion

This benchmarking analysis provides insights into the position of Roanoke’s Parks and Recreation relative to peer agencies and highlights potential areas for improvement or expansion.

Key Takeaways

- 1. Staffing:** Roanoke’s Parks and Recreation has slightly fewer FTEs than the median peer agency, with 8.0 staff per 10,000 residents compared to the median of 9.6 staff per 10,000 residents.
- 2. Capital Budget:** Roanoke’s Parks and Recreation has a lower capital budget and operating expenditures.
- 3. Operating Expenditures:** The City’s operating expenditures and capital budget are lower than the lowest quartile. Roanoke’s total revenue to total operating expenditures is higher than the upper quartile, meaning the City is doing an excellent job at minimizing expenses relative to revenue compared to the benchmarked agencies.
- 4. Opportunity for Additional Programs:** Roanoke offers a diverse range of programs and services, as do other benchmarked agencies, although opportunities for expansion exist. Programs and services that the majority (over 50%) of other agencies offer that Roanoke does not yet offer include racquet sports, martial arts, aquatics, performing arts, visual arts, natural and cultural history activities, and programs for people with disabilities.

As noted, although benchmarking is a valuable comparative tool, it should not be the sole basis for decision-making. Local needs, demands, and resources must also be considered in the master planning process.

4.0 Operations, Maintenance, and Program Assessments

A. Operations and Maintenance

Introduction

In the summer of 2024, BerryDunn conducted an analysis of the Roanoke park system maintenance operations. The Roanoke park system is primarily maintained by the City. The assessment included:

- SWOT staff discovery session
- On-site tours and inspections
- Individual staff interviews/discovery sessions
- Documentation review (of information applicable to operations)

The purpose of this analysis is to provide an outside perspective review to help improve the success of park maintenance operations. The maintenance assessment serves to understand current practices, identify strengths and weaknesses, and explore opportunities for potential efficiencies, including an analysis of current policies, procedures, processes, and business planning efforts. This assessment is considered a detailed review of the Roanoke park system.

Additionally, BerryDunn completed on-site operation inspections at a particular point in time during the 2024 summer season. This means variables that impact operations, such as weather, type of programming or service taking place, on-site staff experience, maintenance functions, and other factors may have influenced the findings in this report. However, BerryDunn also reviewed historic data and future planning considerations as part of this effort.

Roanoke Park Maintenance

BerryDunn analyzed the City's park maintenance based on discovery sessions with staff, observations of park maintenance staff, and detailed site inspections. This analysis focused on the maintenance of the parks and associated amenities that City park maintenance staff provide. BerryDunn developed the maintenance inventory and tasks required, frequency, and unit personnel hours with assistance from City staff. The analysis was specific to the entire parks system maintained by six specific groups:

- Trails and Greenways Operations (two crews)
- Parks Cleaning Operations
- Landscape Management Operations
- Urban Forestry Operations
- Parks Management Operations
- Athletic Fields Maintenance

The project team developed detailed maintenance task lists for each group, specific to their daily, weekly, monthly, and annual routines; these detailed task lists are part of the Park Maintenance Assessment Final Report that was provided as a staff document. Coordinators' tasks for each area were not included in the tables because the majority of their work is supervisory and administrative.

Based on the analysis and data, the Department is currently understaffed in several areas. Most notably Parks Cleaning Operations that currently have five staff and the workload would recommend 16 staff, a shortage of 11 FTEs. Trails and Greenways Operations follows with four staff and a recommended seven staff

4.0 OPERATIONS, MAINTENANCE, AND PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

to achieve the workload. The last two areas are Urban Forestry Operations (9 staff) and Landscape Management Operations (14 staff), which are understaffed by 3 and 2 staff, respectively.

Table 7: Roanoke Parks Maintenance Staffing Recommendations

Recommended Staffing Levels		
Section	Current Staffing Level (FTEs)	Recommended Staffing Levels (FTEs)
Trails and Greenways Operations	4	7.15
Parks Cleaning Operations	5	16.06
Landscape Management Operations	14	16.07
Urban Forestry Operations	9	11.99
Parks Management Operations	4	4.71
Athletic Fields Maintenance	6	6.17

Key Findings

Based on the maintenance analysis, the parks maintenance that City staff perform systemwide generally meets or exceeds the needs of services provided. BerryDunn identified the following key findings during discovery sessions and site visits.

Opportunities for improvement:

- Staffing:
 - Collect and document the institutional knowledge and experience of the City’s long-tenured employees, to prepare for staff turnover.
 - Improve compensation or incentive to advance.
 - Work to improve staff morale.
 - Provide additional cross-training opportunities.
 - Create additional opportunities for training to allow advancement. Provide compensation for certifications.
 - Improve communication up and down the organization.
 - Improve staff recruitment and retention practices.
 - Allow more time for training and cross-training of staff.
 - Add additional staff for tree care and maintenance.
 - Develop a succession plan for full- and part-time employees.
- Improve/upgrade irrigation systems.
- Address aging infrastructure.
- Increase Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budgets to upgrade and repair parks, amenities, and facilities. Consider contracting to rehabilitate parts of parks that staff cannot dedicate enough time to for proper renovation, then return maintenance to park staff.

- Consider investing in additional equipment:
 - New trimmers
 - Backpack blowers
 - Mowers
 - Inventory of routine parts
- Allow more staff involvement in special event pre-planning.

B. Recreation Program Analysis

Introduction

The Recreation Program Assessment was completed through an extensive staff and community engagement process facilitated by BerryDunn and Department staff. The process offered multiple opportunities for community engagement and aimed to learn from residents and stakeholders about how they recreate within the City today and how they hope to in the future. Residents have many opportunities to participate in recreational activities—from taking quiet walks along park trails to participating in fishing, fitness, special events, and competitive sports.

The assessment reviewed Department programs and service offerings through a series of analyses with a global perspective. It was essential to hear from a wide variety of residents, program providers, and staff to help ensure their experiences and insights were captured. The goal of the Recreation Program Assessment is to guide the delivery of programs and services that contribute to the local community with the opportunity to enhance regional programming.

The reports and data used to conduct this assessment included participation data, focus group and stakeholder interviews, an open online survey, and a statistically valid survey compiled by ETC Institute. Internal meetings were held with Department staff and key leadership to provide insight into existing programs for the analysis and service recommendations.

Essential Takeaways

The City ranks eighth in population density in Virginia, and its natural diversity provides residents and visitors with well-rounded recreation experiences. The City realizes the need to revisit recreation and parks programming areas to stay relevant with today's changing society.

Observed challenges include:

- Managing operations and maintenance of parks
- Helping ensure sustainable funding and pricing practices for services
- Addressing outdated and underutilized facilities
- Addressing health disparity outcomes through programming opportunities
- Providing more security in community facilities and at parks/recreation facilities
- Maintaining a cutting-edge philosophy for recreation trends and innovation

However, challenges also present opportunities that often serve as the guiding light for new growth.

Potential opportunities are:

- Developing a program vision on how to best serve residents and visitors
- Sustainably delivering programs and activities—alongside staff and partners—and evaluating current fee-based program services by way of reviewing privatization opportunities and challenges

- Empowering staff to continue implementing Equity Action Plans as referenced in the City Council 2024 – 2025 Strategic Plan
- Considering the restructure of existing programming to drive energy toward programming places and spaces; repurposing and re-envisioning underutilized spaces to maximize the potential of new programs

These opportunities provide a strong foundation in determining current or future programming services and management. The evaluation is aligned with the City's strategic plan and can serve as a guide for the Department over the next five years.

Program Assessment and Strategy

Recreation programs are core services of parks and recreation agencies. Program type varies across several factors, including facility space, staff/instructor availability and expertise, alternative service providers in the area, benefit to the community, and program demand.

Department-identified core program areas are captured in Table 8 and categorized by age group or market segments within the Department. Each program area's focus is categorized as either primary (noted with "P") in yellow or secondary (signifying a service gap or a service already offered by a nearby town or municipality) in gray. These areas may also be considered for new programming opportunities for staff.

Table 8: City Core Program Area Focus

Core Program Area	Preschool <5	Youth Ages 6-12	Teens Ages 13-17	Adults Ages 18+	Seniors Ages 55+	All Age Programs
Adult Athletics				P	P	
Arts and Culture						P
Environmental Education	P	P				
Events						P
Fitness and Wellness						P
Outdoor Recreation						P
Trips and Tours					P	
Youth Athletics		P	P			
Youth Development		P				

As evidenced in the core program analysis, a service gap exists for youth (ages 6 - 12), teens (ages 13 - 17), and adults (ages 18 - 54). The following opportunities to expand, enhance, or modify programming should be considered:

- **Expand Early Childhood Programs:** Introduce dedicated programs for children under five to engage in activities suited to their developmental stage with parental involvement.
- **Balance Offerings for Teens:** Work to ensure sufficient program opportunities for teens while maintaining a strong focus on outdoor social and challenge programs or events, including eGaming.
- **Promote Inclusive Events:** Increase the variety and accessibility of events for all age groups, working to ensure broad participation and engagement across different interests.
- **Evaluate Program Effectiveness:** Regularly assess program impact and participation to help ensure they meet the needs of the community and adjust as necessary.

Program Action Table

A programming action table is a strategic tool that helps organize and prioritize the planning, development, and execution of recommendations over a certain amount of time. By breaking down the actions into immediate, near-term (two years), mid-term (two to eight years), and long-term (eight or more years) the table provides a clear road map for creating impactful programs that foster engagement, economic growth, and a strong sense of place for the Department. Ensuring that both short-term needs and long-term visions are addressed positions the City for the opportunity to build momentum, sustain progress, and adapt to changing circumstances while achieving its broader objectives. Through a well-structured action plan, communities can effectively mobilize resources, measure success, and create positive and lasting outcomes for residents and visitors alike.

The action table for programming can be found on the next few pages.

Table 9: Program Action Table

Program Action Table			Immediate	Near-Term (2 Years)	Mid-Term (2 – 8 Years)	Long-Term (8+ Years)
1.0	Connect Locally and Regionally					
1.A Goal	Partner with other local or regional organizations to increase programming offerings for residents.					
A	A1.1	Roanoke County and other towns and municipalities	✓			
	A1.2	Library	✓			
	A1.3	Healthcare		✓		
	A1.4	School system	✓			
	A1.5	State of Virginia	✓			
	A1.6	YMCA		✓		
	A1.7	Local art and cultural organizations	✓			
	A1.8	Roanoke Outside	✓			

Program Action Table			Immediate	Near-Term (2 Years)	Mid-Term (2 – 8 Years)	Long-Term (8+ Years)
1.B Goal		Offer non-traditional sporting events and activities that diversify sports tourism.				
B	B1.1	Include non-traditional sporting events on trails, greenways, and blueways, such as the river for regional participation.	✓	✓		
	B1.2	Add kayaking/canoeing instruction and excursions along the river or nearby lakes for residents and visitors.		✓		
	B1.3	Develop disc golf courses for tournaments.		✓		
	B1.4	Create road races and other events such as triathlons.	✓	✓		
	B1.5	Add more rock climbing and tubing opportunities.	✓	✓		
	B1.6	Revisit adult fitness and wellness program opportunities for enhancements.	✓			
	B1.7	Offer accessible on-ramping programs for adventure sports.	✓	✓		
1.C Goal		Add diverse and enriching special events.				
C	C1.1	Review demographic breakdown and consider special event opportunities for those age groups most impacted.		✓		
2.0		Create Immersive, Nature-Based Adventure Experiences				
2.A Goal		Capitalize on the City's diverse natural resources by developing programs that provide immersive, adventure-based experiences in nature.				
A	A2.1	Add guided wilderness adventures such as backcountry hiking, rock climbing, and white-water rafting with guides.	✓	✓		
	A2.2	Provide survival skills workshops that focus on skills like foraging, shelter building, and navigation. Can be conducted in partnership with outdoor experts who can provide both educational and experiential value.		✓		

Program Action Table			Immediate	Near-Term (2 Years)	Mid-Term (2 – 8 Years)	Long-Term (8+ Years)
	A2.3	Add eco-challenge events that combine outdoor adventure with environmental stewardship, such as trail cleanups, orienteering, and scavenger hunts focused on local flora and fauna.		✓		
3.0		Develop Inclusive and Multigenerational Programming				
3.A Goal		Design programs that cater to a wide range of age groups and abilities, fostering community engagement and inclusivity.				
A	A3.1	Create family adventure days and offer activities for all ages, such as family friendly zip-lining, obstacle courses, and nature scavenger hunts. Include educational components about local ecology in a fun, interactive way.		✓		
	A3.2	Develop programs specifically designed for individuals with disabilities, such as modified adventure courses. Partner with organizations specializing in adaptive sports.	✓			
	A3.3	Offer gentle adventure activities suitable for older adults, such as guided nature walks, bird watching tours, and light kayaking. Focus on safety, enjoyment, physical activity, and social interaction.	✓			
	A3.4	Collaborate with local artists and cultural organizations to host exhibitions, performances, and cultural programs.	✓			
4.0 Goal		Leverage Technology for Enhanced Engagement				
4.A		Use technology to enhance the adventure experience, streamline access, and engage with participants in innovative ways.				
A	A4.1	Develop and enhance trail experiences where visitors can use augmented reality (AR) to access interactive content such as information on local wildlife, historical facts, and virtual challenges.			✓	

Program Action Table			Immediate	Near-Term (2 Years)	Mid-Term (2 – 8 Years)	Long-Term (8+ Years)
	A4.2	Create a mobile app that offers trail maps, real-time updates on trail and weather conditions, and features like geo-caching badges for completing certain activities.			✓	
	A4.3	Offer a variety of virtual reality (VR) experiences that simulate adventure activities, like rock climbing or white-water rafting, for those who might not be able to participate physically. This can also be used a tool for planning training and informational purposes before engaging in real-life adventures.			✓	
5.0 Goal		Enhance Wildlife Observation Opportunities				
5.A		Improve and expand wildlife observation opportunities by leveraging Roanoke’s diverse ecosystems and natural areas				
A	A5.1	Identify and develop new wildlife observation sites in key natural areas. Help ensure the sites have amenities like observation decks, informational signage, and safe viewing distances to maximize wildlife encounters.		✓		
	A5.2	Upgrade current observation facilities with features such as elevated platforms, better access to trails, and educational kiosks providing information about local wildlife species.	✓			
	A5.3	Promote seasonal events by hosting wildlife observation events or guided tours focusing on different species migration patterns, breeding seasons, or other notable behaviors. Partner with local wildlife experts and clubs to offer educational content and enhance visitors’ experience.		✓		
B	B5.1	Offer targeted educational and interpretive programs by developing a deeper understanding of local ecosystems.		✓	✓	
	B5.2	Implement youth-focused and family friendly educational programs that encourage early interest in wildlife and nature conservation. Suggested examples are junior ranger programs, wildlife day packing, and tracking.		✓		✓

Program Action Table			Immediate	Near-Term (2 Years)	Mid-Term (2 – 8 Years)	Long-Term (8+ Years)
	B5.3	Conduct regular surveys regarding wildlife observation experiences. Focus on accessibility, educational content, and overall satisfaction. Use the feedback to make data-driven improvements.	✓			
6.0 Goal		Enable Access to Water Opportunities				
6.A		Analyze the LOS throughout the City and consider investing in the development and upgrading of swimming facilities to offer diverse, equitable swimming experiences and programming for residents and visitors.				
A	A6.1	Expand access to water opportunities, including pools and splash pads, in key urban locations for equitable access.			✓	✓
	A6.2	Enhance access to the river by developing designated safe access points.			✓	
6.B		Organize community and recreational swimming events.				
B	B6.1	Host swim meets, competitions, and casual swim meetups to attract swimmers of varying skill levels and ages. Consider offering swim-a-thons, family swim days, and relay races.			✓	
	B6.2	Organize themed pool parties, summer festivals, movie nights, or fitness classes to create a fun and lively atmosphere.		✓		

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