

5

RECREATION PROGRAMS

City recreation programs are important to the livability of Carson City. Over and above merely providing facilities, the organization of the programs is a valuable structure for leisure diversion of all ages. Many would not participate if the programs were not organized. The programs also fill an important role in introducing youth, many for the first time, to skills of teamwork, effort, and training.

In doing all of the above, recreation programs fill another increasingly important role in any community, including Carson City. A study of recreation trends surveyed an array of national recreational practitioners and identified several “trends with great impact”:

- ⌘ Neglect of children
- ⌘ Greater cultural diversity (growing and more influential minority populations)
- ⌘ Greater difficulty in providing equal opportunity for leisure to all people
- ⌘ Declining quality of life and livability of urban areas
- ⌘ Greater division between “haves” and “have-nots”
- ⌘ Increased public demand for participation, accountability, and productivity in government



Some City recreation programs introduce youth to new experiences and learning. Others focus on teamwork, efforts and training.

To this, one could add the growing influence of drugs and gangs. Recreation programs offer a valuable antidote for many of these societal ills as well—they provide an opportunity for young and old alike to find common bonds with others of similar interests and ability levels. They are a forum for building camaraderie and friendships that create community ties.

5.1 EXISTING OFFERINGS

Carson City provides a broad spectrum of recreation programs, ranging from sports to before - and after-school activities for young children. Many of these programs are provided in partnership with other community individuals and organizations. Following is a partial list of programs provided by the Recreation Division:

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE RECREATION DIVISION

TO PROVIDE QUALITY RECREATIONAL SERVICES IN AN EFFORT TO CONTINUOUSLY ACCOMMODATE THE LEISURE NEEDS OF OUR GROWING COMMUNITY THROUGH A SPIRIT OF PARTNERSHIP, INNOVATION AND A COMMITMENT TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SERVICE.

YOUTH PROGRAMS	
PRESCHOOL	
KIDS KLUB	
LATCH KEY	
- Kinder	
- Morning	
- Afternoon	
FAMILY ACTIVITIES	
- Parents Nights Out	
- Parent/child arts & crafts	
- Family nights - movies/games	
SCHOOL BREAKS	
- Winter	
- Spring	
- Summer	
- Year-round school	
- Summer Camp	
- Specialty Camps	
SPORTS	
- Youth Volleyball	
- Basketball	
- Sports Tournaments	
- Skateboard Contest	
- Jr. Ski and Snowboard	

ADULT PROGRAMS	
SOFTBALL	
- Men's	
- Women's	
- Co-ed	
ADULT VOLLEYBALL	
- Women's	
- Co-ed	
ADULT BASKETBALL	
- Men's	
- Women's	
SPECIAL TOURNAMENTS	
OPEN GYM	
ADULT SOCCER	

THEATER	
SCHOOL DISTRICT	
- Band/Choral concerts	
- Dance competitions	
- Plays	
- Fundraisers	
- Media class presentations	
- Graduation ceremonies	
- Seminars	
RENTALS	
- Concerts	
- Dance recitals, competitions	
- Fundraisers	
- Musicals	
- Seminars	
CITY RECREATION SPONSORED PROGRAMS	
- Band camp	
- Sports public meetings	
- Summer camp movies	
- Talent show	
CITY GOVERNMENT	
- Public meetings	
- Seminars	
- Project meetings	



AQUATIC	
WATER WORKOUT	
- Lap/Open Swim	
- Wet Sweat	
- Aquacize	
SWIM LESSONS	
- Guppies	
- Learn-to-Swim	
- Pre-competition	
COMPETITIVE SWIM Team (Tigersharks)	
THERAPY POOL	
- Range of Motion	
- Adapted Aquatics	
- Special Events	
SPECIAL EVENT	
- Kid's Triathlon	

OTHER	
CONTRACT CLASSES	
- Karate	
- Yoga	
- Dog Obedience	
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	
- Adapted recreation (Movers & Doers)	
- Golf	



Programs provided in partnership with other organizations include (but are not limited to):

- Youth Sports Association (umbrella organization for youth sports)
- Flag football (Adult/Youth Flag Football Club)
- Soccer (American Youth Soccer Organization, High Desert, Toiyabe, Great Basin, Capital, Carson City Soccer League)
- Baseball (Little League, Babe Ruth)
- Football (American Pop Warner)
- Softball (National Softball Association)
- In-line hockey (Sierra In-line Hockey)
- Archery (Clear Creek Bowmen)
- Shotgun, rifle and pistol (Carson City Gun Club, Carson Rifle and Pistol Club)
- Radio controlled airplanes (High Sierra Radio Control Club)
- Youth activities (Boys and Girls Club, Children’s Museum)
- 4H (University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Service)
- Tennis Club
- Swim Team: Carson Tigersharks

In addition, the City and the School District work closely to share facilities. For example, the City uses elementary school multipurpose rooms for the Latch Key program. The middle schools are used for Adult Volleyball and Men’s and Women’s Basketball. The School District uses the Aquatic Facility for high school swimming, the Community Theater for musical and stage productions for the high school, middle schools and a few elementary school band and choral concerts. Under a 2001 Memorandum of Understanding, the City and the School District agreed to formulate specific policies regarding joint planning, use, and maintenance of facilities. These policies need to be formulated as soon as possible to take advantage of future facility development and to reduce duplications in service.

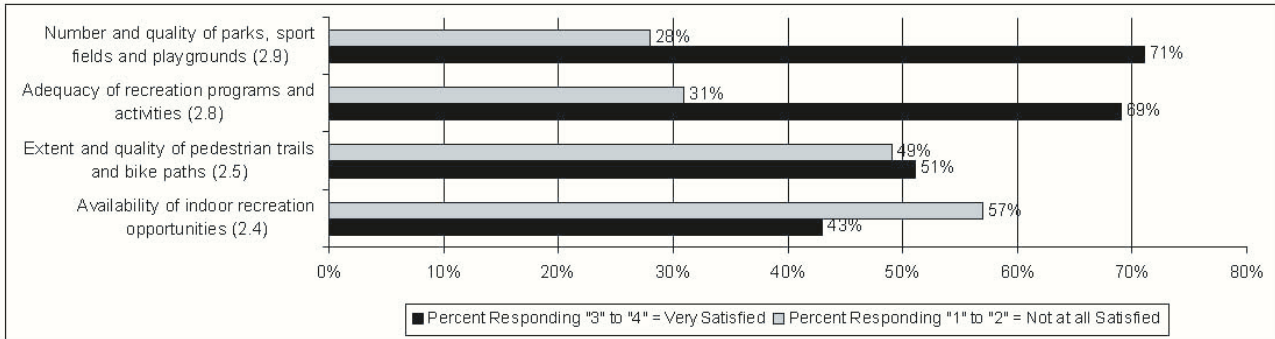
The City is currently providing recreation experiences at a highly efficient level—it partners with other organizations for many activities and facilities and provides activities primarily in areas not served by other organizations.



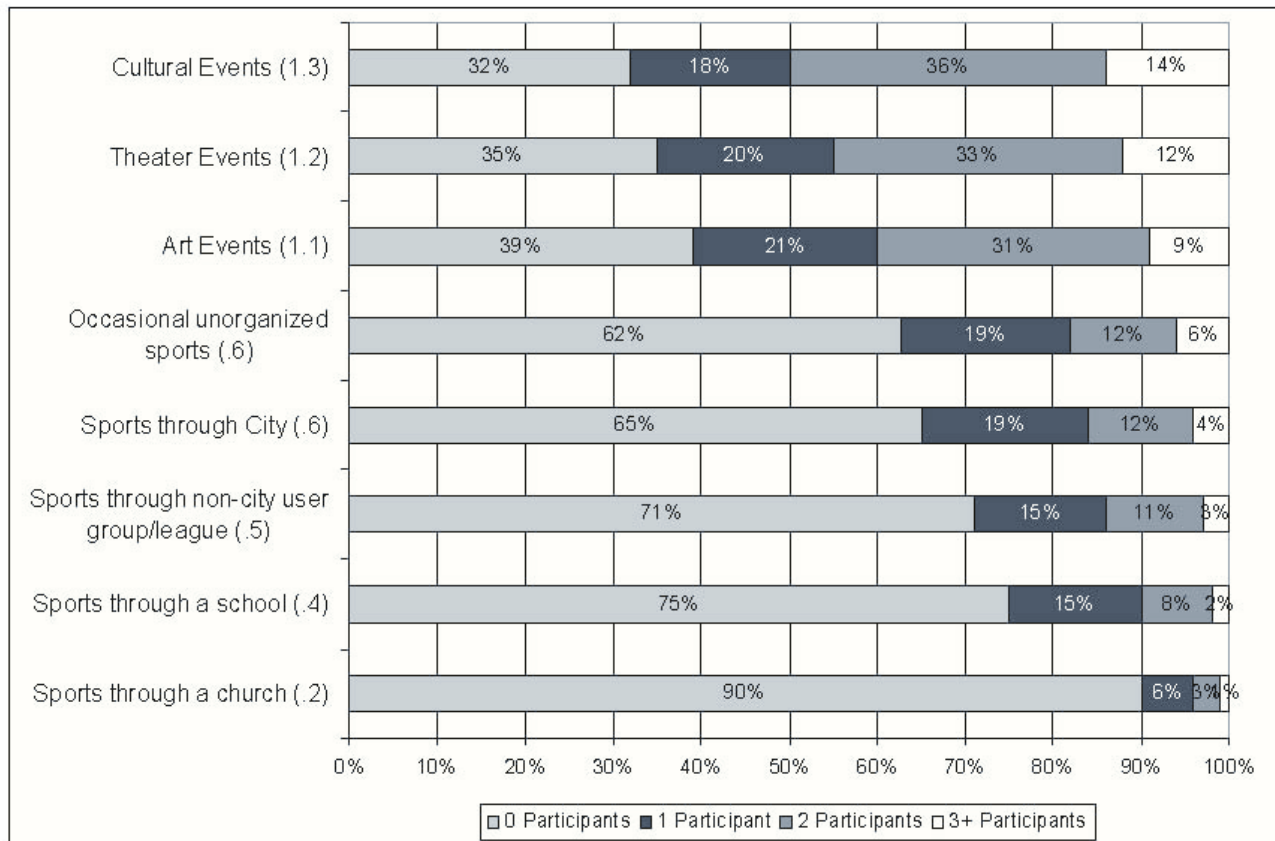
The public opinion survey confirmed that there is a high level of satisfaction with Carson City’s recreation programs and activities:

Question 7 of the survey revealed that about 37% of residents participate in sports through the City (vs. 28% in non-City organizations and 25% in school programs)

1. Please rate your household’s satisfaction with the following recreation services as they relate to Carson City as a whole. Use a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 means “Not At All Satisfied” and 4 means “Very Satisfied.”



7. How many members of your household participate in the following?



5.2 RECREATION NEEDS

Appendix 9.2 provides an overall synopsis of the existing programs, facilities, and needs of the City as derived from focus group interviews and observations of City staff.

The demographic projections indicate that growth will be slow but steady in most of the youth programs. There are; however, several areas of current needs that are not being met due to facility limitations—primarily the lack of gymnasium space.

The Latch Key program, over 38 weeks of the year, serves approximately 400 children. It uses facilities at six elementary schools as well as the Community Center’s ‘kinder’ room. During summer break (and school break for year-round Fremont Elementary) part or all of the Community gymnasium is used for Latch Key. This requires a fair amount of bussing, imposes a tight schedule and extensive furniture moving each day to accommodate the various programs, and at many times displaces other uses in the Community Center gymnasium.

The Latch Key program is one of the City’s most popular services and is more than self-supporting financially. It would be expanded but for the lack of space. Additional gymnasium space in Carson City would allow relocation of some Community Center programs, allowing the Latch Key program to endure less bussing and furniture moving, as well as to grow. Additional indoor meeting space could allow the Latch Key program to expand in other areas of the city.

Similarly, even with the usage of School District gymnasiums, the basketball and volleyball programs are hampered by lack of facilities. There is a significant unmet need for drop-in basketball and recreational basketball at the middle school and high school level for youth that are not able to participate in school programs. Other sports and activities that have a high potential for growth, such as indoor soccer, cannot currently be offered due to lack of indoor facilities.

Many of the current programs are only able to operate through generous volunteer efforts, the commitment of part-time staff, and a dedicated full time Parks and Recreation Department staff that currently operates at a high level of efficiency. The expansion of existing programs and the addition of new programs will necessitate additional staff—full and part-time—as well as volunteers.

Notwithstanding, the many other demands are the City’s fiscal resources. Recreation programs are services with a high degree of “participation, accountability, and productivity in government¹,” and are effective means to address important needs of the upcoming generations.



During spring break, part or all of the Community Center’s gymnasium is used for the Latch Key program.

¹ See trend statements in the introduction to this chapter.

5.2.1 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Use a community survey to test the market for expansion of the Latch Key and Summer Camp programs. Test general levels of interest as well as how the interest level is affected by schedule, location, and cost.
2. If supported by the 'market' test of the Latch Key and Summer Camp programs, pursue the addition of indoor recreation facilities, including gymnasium space, as well as meeting room space, to accommodate an expansion of the Latch Key and Summer Camp programs.
3. Use surveys to test the market (level of interest and potential financial limits) of providing other indoor sports such as youth and adult indoor soccer.
4. Take the initiative in working with the School District to formulate the policies envisioned in the 2001 MOU regarding joint planning, use, and maintenance of facilities.
5. Meet with WNCC to identify areas of joint interest (sports fields, intramural programs, amphitheater, expansion of Community Center Theater, etc.) and formulate policies for joint planning, use, and maintenance.



John D Winters Centennial Park is one of the facilities used for the City's successful sports tournaments.

5.3 RECREATION PROGRAM INNOVATION

It is important for Carson City's recreation programs to stay current with trends and to be responsive to the needs of the community. To identify unmet needs and potential new ideas, the Recreation Division currently surveys users annually for suggestions about new programs and improvements to existing programs. The survey asks for reactions to a list of possible activities as well as allowing for write-in responses. The outreach has been very effective. Recent examples include:

- An Equestrian Camp program that began as a result of survey requests. In spite of a \$375/week cost, the initial offering will be expanded to 4 weeks and a waiting list is still anticipated.
- The City is testing a new 'drop-in' sports program for high-school-aged youth.

Other City innovations currently being considered include: a mobile arts/crafts center (trailer) for use in neighborhoods and a ready-made 'block party' with games and barbeque.

5.3.1 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Maintain the current innovations outreach through user surveys, the annual City-wide survey, and staff observations.
2. Annually establish a budget for experimental programs.
3. Administratively establish criteria for selection of experimental programs (e.g. 100% cost recapture after 2 years, serves an unmet need, etc.)

5.4 THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF CARSON CITY'S SPORTS TOURNAMENTS

Carson City has been very successful in developing tournaments for soccer, swimming, and softball. These tournaments not only attract players, but also families of players. In addition to excellent sports facilities, the City's attractions (State Capitol, museums, gaming, etc.), shopping, and natural setting make it a desirable tournament venue. Currently, there are approximately five major softball tournaments held annually in Carson City. There are several smaller local softball tournaments held each year as well as swim meets and soccer tournaments.

Sports tournaments can generate substantial revenue to the city as a whole. According to a Parks and Recreation Department survey of tournament attendees (including their spending on lodging and food), a tournament such as the four day annual Comstock Shootout soccer tournament has the potential to generate over \$1 million. Table 5.1 lists the 2005 revenue generated by each of Carson City's existing tournaments.

TABLE 5.1: FISCAL IMPACTS OF CARSON CITY SPORTS TOURNAMENTS

TOURNAMENT	TOTAL SPENDING	TOTAL SALES TAX (7.5%)	TOTAL SALES TAX RETURN TO GENERAL FUND (2.18%)	Room Tax (10%) from Tournament
Comstock Shootout Soccer Tournament	\$1,171,737	\$87,880	\$25,544	\$18,618
Midnight Madness	\$729,200	\$54,690	\$15,897	\$17,029
Memorial Weekend Swim Meet	\$324,847	\$24,364	\$7,082	\$8,085
Senior Softball World Qualifier	\$401,673	\$30,126	\$8,756	\$12,868
High Desert Soccer	\$97,569	\$7,318	\$2,127	\$2,187
Total	\$2,725,026	\$274,386	\$59,406	\$57,787

Tournaments require additional full-time supervision as well as part-time staff and/or volunteers. While the cost of running a tournament is relatively low, the proceeds that they generate can be significant.

Carson City has the ability to attract an even larger number of tournaments. In addition to expanding the existing, swimming, and field-oriented sports tournaments, the City has other facilities that can be expanded:

- The City's shotgun, rifle/pistol, and archery facilities offer opportunities for a significant regional draw.
- Carson City has a significant equestrian group that could form the nucleus of equestrian-oriented activities (horse shows, extensive trail rides, etc.) that could draw from a relatively large regional interest.

An expanded effort toward tournaments and regional activities could bring significant additional sales tax revenues into the community.

If Carson City wishes to continue to grow as a center for sports tournaments, it will need to improve and expand its existing sports fields and provide tournament amenities such as parking and restrooms. Tournament use of sports facilities requires additional maintenance manpower. However, the financial benefit to the community, and the sales and room tax revenues generated by additional tournaments, have the potential to more than offset the cost of constructing and maintaining additional sports facilities.

In addition to its own recreation amenities, Carson City is a primary gateway to Lake Tahoe, a national recreation destination. Lake Tahoe is a powerful asset in promoting sports tournaments (as well as other City events) of which the City must take advantage².

² Eg. Lake Tahoe was another reason to come to Carson City and another activity during a tournament or event, as well as an invitation to visit Carson City along with a visit to Lake Tahoe.

5.4.1 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Continue to build on Carson City's reputation as a sports tournament destination.
2. Monitor the actual fiscal impact of sports tournaments each year through surveys of tournament participants, surveys of local merchants, and tracking tax receipts.
3. In constructing new sports fields, include tournament considerations in the design of appropriate facilities.
4. Foster a partnership with the Convention and Visitor's Bureau to increase the visibility and marketing of sports tournaments.
5. Develop a revenue-sharing plan or dedicated funding mechanism that will enable the City Parks and Recreation Department to directly benefit from revenues brought by tournaments and thereby help fund improvements to tournament facilities.
6. Seek local business merchant support and sponsorships for sport tournaments.
7. Incorporate Lake Tahoe associations in marketing sports tournaments and other events in Carson City.

5.5 STANDARDIZATION OF COST RECAPTURE

The City charges fees for recreation programs and for the use of facilities to assure that, at least to some degree, the cost of programs and facilities are born by those that use the facilities and participate in the programs. The percent of recapture varies, as set by policies of the Department and the Board of Supervisors.

5.5.1 COST RECOVERY FOR FACILITIES

For cost recovery purposes, facility costs are divided between Operating Costs and Capital Costs. Operating costs include the annual cost of keeping the facility in good condition for public use, including the cost of utilities, regular maintenance, and maintenance-related building repairs. Capital Costs include the original cost of construction and the cost of building expansions, major equipment replacements/upgrades and major building repairs. In general, cost recovery for facilities is based only on Operating Costs.

Operating Costs are typically paid for (recovered) by a combination of user fees and subsidies from public funds (the City's General Fund and/or other tax sources such as Question 18).

The Question 18 sales tax funding initiative (see Section 7.1) allocated 20% of the sales tax proceeds to help subsidize the operating costs of facilities constructed with Question 18 funds. For facilities constructed with funding from the General Fund, operating cost subsidies typically come from the General Fund. For hybrid facilities (such as the Aquatic Facilities) that were funded by both the Quality of Life Initiative and the General Fund, operating cost subsidies (in addition to user fees) may come from both the Quality of Life Initiative and the General Fund.

The percentage of operating costs to be recovered by user fees and/or non-General Fund sources is established by policy by the Board of Supervisors, with recommendations by the Parks and Recreation Commission, on a facility-by-facility basis.



The funds to operate Edmonds Sports Complex come from the General Fund, the Quality of Life Initiative maintenance fund, and fees charged to users.

5.5.2 COST RECOVERY FOR PROGRAMS

In the past, various programs have used different formulas to determine the amount of cost recapture. This leads to inconsistent measures and cost structures. This Master Plan has established a clear definition of direct and indirect costs, and a method for determining each.

The costs of Recreation Division programs can be divided between direct and indirect costs.

Direct costs are defined as:

“costs which, if the program or service were not offered, would not be expended.”

Examples of direct costs include: staff specifically hired for the program, special maintenance of grounds or facilities required by the program, equipment unique to the program, and program-related transportation.

Indirect costs are defined as:

“costs that support the general provision of programs or services but which cannot be directly attributed to a specific program or service.”

Examples of indirect costs include the department’s office, office support for registration, supervisory and or administrative staff time to plan, supervise and evaluate programs and general maintenance of parks and grounds, including utilities.

The purpose of defining direct and indirect costs is to provide a consistent basis for measuring costs and relative rates of recovery from the various divisions within the Parks and Recreation Department.

The Department’s policy is that cost recovery is based on the direct costs incurred by that program rather than the indirect costs.

In aggregate, all sports and youth programs are targeted to recapture 100% of the direct costs that they incur. However, the specific percentage of direct cost recovery for each program may vary and will be set by the Board of Supervisors, with recommendations provided by the Parks and Recreation Commission and Parks and Recreation Department staff. Fees will also be sensitive to ability to pay and fees charged for comparable services in other jurisdictions (the competition). A preliminary sample worksheet for calculating Direct and Indirect costs is included in the Appendix.



The City charges fees for recreation programs and for the use of facilities to assure that, at least to some degree, the cost of programs and facilities are born by those that use the facilities and participate in the programs.

5.5.3 RECREATION PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIPS

The City provides \$15,000 per year for youth scholarship programs to ensure that cost is not an obstacle for any one to participate in City recreation programs. The City contribution is not sufficient to cover the fees for the number of qualified applicants. The opinion survey indicates that about 50% of the community supports paying some amount of additional fee to supplement the scholarship program—approximately 38% support a fee increase of 5% to 15%, 8% support a fee increase of 15% to 25%, and 3% support an increase of over 25%.

13. WOULD YOU SUPPORT PAYING A HIGHER FEE FOR PARTICIPATING IN CITY RECREATION PROGRAMS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR PEOPLE LESS ABLE TO PAY?

