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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

In addition to this Master Plan, there are several technical reports that provide additional background information on demographics and trends, public input, and park site assessments. For more information and to review these reports, please visit the City’s [website](#).
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Located at the south end of Cayuga Lake, Ithaca is the governmental seat and lively urban center of Tompkins County in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York. The Ithaca area is also home to internationally-renowned educational institutions including Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College. These educational institutions draw people from around the world to the community and employ a significant portion of the local workforce. However, these institutions own a substantial amount of land, and this, combined with a strong not-for-profit sector, results in more than 60% of all property valued within the city being classified as tax-exempt. The remaining property owners must shoulder all of the tax burden, which results in funding pressure for the parks system.

It is anticipated that the city will continue to grow in the upcoming years. According to the Comprehensive Plan (Plan Ithaca: A Vision for Our Future), much of the land within the city is already developed, and redeveloping underutilized properties will be essential. As the population grows and demographics continue to change, it will be important for Ithaca to be resilient and foster increasingly compact and well-designed mixed-use development in suitable locations. By doing so, the City of Ithaca will help reduce the tax burden while continuing to demonstrate sustainability, conservation, and economic development. As this happens, the parks system will become increasingly important and will continue to provide cherished green spaces and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

The city’s existing parks system offers a variety of parks and amenities. The city is home to several regional destinations: Cass Park, Stewart Park, and the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. The success of the parks system is highlighted by these signature parks along Cayuga Lake. Both residents and non-residents take advantage of the shoreline and scenic vistas afforded to them by the waterfront parks. The city also provides recreation opportunities via its various neighborhood parks. Located throughout the city, the neighborhood parks provide residents with playgrounds, fields, and much needed greenspace close to home.

Currently, the parks system is not managed by one department alone. The City of Ithaca Public Works, specifically the Parks and Forestry Division, maintains most of the system, but there are other entities that manage different aspects of the system including the Ithaca Youth Bureau (Cass Park and recreational programming), Greater Ithaca Activities Center (recreational programming), various Friends Groups (capital planning and financing), Ithaca Children’s Garden (programming and facilities), and the Recreation Partnership (agreement with surrounding municipalities for recreation programming) – among others. These entities combine to protect and manage parkland, provide programming, and ensure their many benefits to the city.

The City of Ithaca’s parks and greenspace provide many benefits to its community and residents and recent national research has centered on the public health and economic benefits of parkland. With sustainability and a mind towards the future, attention is increasing for parkland’s ecological value. As urban density increases in Ithaca, greenspace preservation will need to be on the forefront of planning efforts. Specifically, attention will need to focus on how parkland contributes to:
1. **Reducing Carbon Footprints** – Parks can help slow global warming by making more energy efficient communities.

2. **Reducing stormwater runoff** – Impervious (hard) surfaces retain water but green infrastructure can collect water from these areas and hold it so it can slowly infiltrate back into the soil while plants, mulch, and soil naturally remove the pollutants from the runoff.

3. **Improving air quality** – Leaf cover and vegetation help filter airborne dust, gases, and soot.

4. **Maintaining biodiversity and habitat protection** – Without efforts to preserve lands critical to protecting biodiversity, the lands that have been preserved will start to lose their ecological value as invasive species and unchecked populations outcompete native plants and animals.

### Parks and Recreation Vision

The City of Ithaca Parks and Recreation System welcomes and captivates residents and visitors. The many neighborhood parks, waterfront parks, and facilities are part of daily life and shape the character of Ithaca. Natural, cultural, and recreational resources cultivate health, enjoyment, and learning experiences for all people. The park system strives to be sustainable, well-maintained, safe, and aims to meet the needs of individuals, families, and communities.

### 1.2 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

This Master Plan provides a system-wide approach to managing and operating the nearly 380 acres of parkland and more than three miles of publicly-accessible waterfront while taking into account the context provided in the previous section as a framework. This plan establishes recommendations for the City of Ithaca to achieve the vision the community has for the park and recreation system as well as to achieve greater financial sustainability without sacrificing the value of park assets, amenities, and open space or reducing the level of experiences and services available to users. This Master Plan strives to strengthen the existing inventory of parkland, pathways, and amenities:

- 378.52 acres of parkland
- 14.6 miles of trails
- 22 diamond ball fields
- 8 multi-purpose fields
- 8 tennis courts
- 7 playgrounds
- 1 children’s garden (3 acres)
- 4 picnic shelters
- 3 basketball courts
- 2 outdoor pools
- 1 skate park
- 1 splash pad
- 1 ice skating rink
- 5 boat storage racks
- 3 fixed boat docks
- 2 floating paddle docks
1.3 Planning Process

The City of Ithaca Parks and Recreation Master Plan followed an iterative process of data collection, public input, on-the-ground study, assessment of existing conditions, market research, and open dialogue with local leadership and key stakeholders, as illustrated by the following:

- Review of Related Planning Documents
- Demographic and Trends Analysis
- Stakeholder Engagement and Community Survey
- Parks & Facilities Assessment
- Recreation Program Assessment
- Financial, Governance, and CIP Analysis
- Action Plan

Figure 1-Master Plan Process

The community was involved throughout the development of the Master Plan, and the planning process sought public input to identify their visions and expectations for the future of the City of Ithaca parks system. Stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings were held early in the process and were followed by public forums. A statistically-valid community needs survey was distributed to a random sample of both City of Ithaca and Tompkins County residents, and an online survey was offered to help prioritize and identify the issues that need to be addressed in the plan and key recommendations that need to be implemented over the next five to ten years. The information gleaned from the community engagement process was combined with technical research to produce the final Master Plan.

The Master Plan is not an end product in itself. The plan is rather a means to guide the provision of parks and recreation and advance the overall mission and vision of the City of Ithaca. The goal is to guide in the delivery of excellent parks, trails, public facilities, activities, programs, and services that will contribute to community prosperity and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors to Ithaca.

The purpose of the Plan is three fold:

- **First**, it puts into place a systematic and ongoing inventory, analysis, and assessment process that help the municipality now and in the future.
- **Second**, this effort will determine the context of recreation facilities and programs system-wide.
- **Third**, it will provide guidance in determining the effectiveness of programs and services, marketing strategies, and land management.

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1 Additional information on the public outreach process, including the survey and stakeholder interviews, and the data collection phase of the planning effort is available in the accompanying technical reports on the City’s website.
This, ultimately, will guide the City of Ithaca in an appropriate direction for current and future programs and services, and provide specific means to meet the vision and mission for the municipality. This is essentially a process of answering, “Where are we? Where do we want to go? And, how do we get there?”

1.3.1 Master Plan Goals
The goals of this Master Plan include:

- Engage the community, leadership and stakeholders through innovative means of public input to build a shared vision for parks, recreation programs and facilities in Ithaca for the next five to ten years.
- Utilize a wide variety of data sources and best practices, including a statistically-valid survey, to predict trends and patterns of use and how to address unmet needs in the City of Ithaca.
- Determine unique Level of Service Standards to develop appropriate actions pertaining to parks, recreation programs and facilities that reflect the City of Ithaca’s strong commitment to providing high quality recreation for the community.
- Shape financial and operational preparedness through innovative and “next” practices to achieve the strategic objectives and recommended actions.
- Develop a dynamic and realistic strategic action plan that creates a road map to ensure long-term success and financial sustainability for the City of Ithaca’s parks, recreation programs and facilities, as well as action steps to support the family-oriented community and businesses that call Ithaca home.

1.4 Park and Recreation Master Plan Key Recommendations
The following sections summarize the high level strategies recommended in this Master Plan. Strategies are categorized into four topic areas:

- Governance and Operations
- Finance
- Recreation Programming
- Land and Facilities

Each topic area presents a “vision” followed by corresponding strategies. All strategies have specific tactics associated with implementation and can be found in Chapter 8.

1.4.1 Governance and Operations
The City of Ithaca will have a unified, formalized, and sustainable parks and recreation system that leverages existing and future collaborations and partnerships.

Strategies
- Develop and formalize a governance model.
- Prepare an organizational structure to meet future demand.
- Clarify partnership groups’ roles and responsibilities.
- Update policies and procedures on an annual basis. Ensure all staff have access to them and that they create maximum flexibility for staff in the field to do their work in a timely manner.
- Develop a stronger volunteer system that builds advocacy and support for the parks system.
- Promote financial sustainability through facility management practices.
1.4.2 Finance
The City of Ithaca parks and recreation system will be sustainably funded to continue providing enriched services to residents.

Strategies
- Develop a consistent per capita and/or per acre funding strategy.
- Develop an earned income strategy for facilities, programs, and operations.
- Develop a long term financial plan that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City of Ithaca and support the initiatives and strategies as reflected in the municipality’s adopted plans. The municipality’s goals and objectives, which affect operating funds, need to be consistent with fund availability and financial projections.

1.4.3 Recreation Programming
The City of Ithaca will continue to provide recreation programming commensurate with community need while advancing the breadth and scope of opportunity for residents.

Strategies
- Implement consistent management principles for all programs to ensure equitable, quality service delivery and long-term financial sustainability.
- Align program offerings with community needs and priorities.
- Enhance facility use partnership policies.
- Enhance marketing and promotion practices.
- Enhance special events capabilities pertaining to: infrastructure and staff support, partnership agreements (accountability and financially), and investing back into the space/facility.

1.4.4 Land and Facilities
The City of Ithaca will maintain and operate a diverse system of parkland and facilities that keep pace with the evolving needs of the community.

Strategies
- Ensure the growth of the parks and trails system keeps pace with the needs of the community, but does not outpace the financial or organizational resources of the City of Ithaca.
- Complete a network of open space corridors and trails that connect neighborhoods, schools, commercial areas, and local destinations to parks and facilities.
- Ensure the development of recreation facilities keeps pace with the needs of the community, but does not outpace the financial or organizational resources of the City of Ithaca.
- Establish consistent and comprehensive maintenance and design standards for parks, trails, and facilities to uphold the quality of the user experience and promote financial sustainability.
- Improve key facilities and amenities to address deficiencies and/or meet the changing needs of the community.
- Create a plan to review underutilized facilities and parkland.
CHAPTER TWO - COMMUNITY PROFILE

2.1 Parks & Recreation

There are currently 22 parks in the City of Ithaca system, including Newman golf course in Stewart Park. Additionally, the City of Ithaca owns three special use facilities (Ithaca Youth Bureau, the Greater Ithaca Activities Center, and the Southside Community Center building). Currently, the parks system is maintained by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB). The DPW has five full-time employees and six seasonal laborers that assist with the operations and maintenance of neighborhood parks, Stewart Park and the waterfront trail. Additionally, the IYB has 14.5 full-time positions that contribute to the parks system. IYB staff maintain Cass Park; however, the majority of full-time staff are for recreation services and not maintenance.

The parks system is overseen by the Board of Public Works (BPW) and the Common Council. The Common Council is responsible for adopting policy related to the parks system and allocating financial resources for parks, programming, and recreation facilities. The Board of Public Works oversees the use and maintenance of parks, open spaces, and the related facilities. It also reviews significant new projects or changes involving the use, design, construction, and management of parks. In addition, the Parks, Recreation, & Natural Resources Commission is an advisory board that assists both the BPW and Common Council by reviewing and providing recommendations on park-related topics that come before either group.²

2.1.1 Parks and Park Facilities

The City of Ithaca parks system contains natural areas (which are denoted in the following list) and they have been inventoried because of their value to the overall system; however, these areas are not analyzed or subject to this plan’s recommendations as the municipality’s natural areas will be the subject of their own future master plan.

**Auburn Park (Auburn Street/26.-4-1)**

Auburn Park (.28 acres) is a moderately used neighborhood park that is accessed by public road. The park has a playground, benches, and a backstop.

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² The Parks, Recreation, & Natural Resources Commission will begin meeting during the first quarter of 2018. The City of Ithaca’s Parks Commission fulfilled this role prior to January 1, 2018.
Baker Park (Elmira Road/105.-6-5)
Baker Park (1.03 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park with few site amenities (five benches and one park sign).

Brindley Park (West Buffalo Street/58.-1-1)
Brindley Park (.48 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park but it can be accessed by the waterfront trail system in addition to public road access. The park has a boat launch, water access, waterfront trailhead sign, and a bench.

Bryant Park (Ithaca Road/67.-10-1)
Bryant Park (.73 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park with few site amenities (one picnic table and two benches).

Cass Park (701 Taughannock Blvd/Multiple Parcels)
Cass Park (137.7 acres) is a regional park and is the second largest park in the system. The park is home to the majority of the municipality’s “active recreation” opportunities. The site is heavily used every season. Amenities found on-site include a covered ice rink, Olympic swimming pool, wading pool, tennis courts, picnic pavilion, multiple athletic fields (diamond and rectangular), docks, playgrounds, restrooms, drinking fountains, and water access with docks. The park is also home to the Ithaca Children’s Garden.

Columbia Street Park (Columbia Street/81.-7-18.2)
Columbia Street Park (.25 acres) is a rarely used neighborhood park that is situated on a steep slope. The site only contains two park benches and has only one pedestrian entrance via a concrete stairway.

Conley Park (First Street/25.-3-1.22)
Conley Park (.73 acres) is a moderately used neighborhood park. The park contains one of the “Planet Walk” markers (Neptune) and also contains permaculture gardens (which are maintained by Cornell Cooperative Extension staff and volunteers), informational signage, and multiple park benches.

Conway Park (Cascadilla Street/44.-7-1)
Conway Park (.57 acres) is a heavily used neighborhood park and contains a playground and basketball court.

DeWitt Park (North Cayuga Street/61.-2-11)
DeWitt Park (1.66 acres) is a heavily used neighborhood park located in the heart of downtown Ithaca. The park is home to a Farmer’s Market and contains a bike rack, war memorials, multiple benches, and a memorial garden. It should be noted that DeWitt Park is owned by the Presbyterian Church but is maintained by the City of Ithaca.

Dryden Park (Dryden Road/63.-5-7)
Dryden Park (.08 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park, but is one of the only green spaces near Cornell University that is not owned by the college. The site does not have any active recreation amenities but does include four benches for park visitors.

Hillview Park (Hillview Place/92.-5-9.1)
Hillview Park (.74 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park which experiences the most use during the summer and fall. Currently, there are no site amenities.

Ithaca Falls Natural Area (Lake Street/Multiple Parcels)
Ithaca Falls (11.31 acres) is a heavily used park and natural area that features a spectacular waterfall view. The portion of the property closest to Lake Street is designated as a park while the remainder is a designated natural area. Recent improvements have been made to the site and now the park includes a bike rack, walking trail to the falls, an accessible waterfall overlook area, garden beds, and benches.
McDaniels Park (Warren Place/75.-1-23.2)
McDaniels Park (3.07 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park and is the only public greenspace in the surrounding neighborhood. Currently, the site includes two picnic tables, a grill, and a bench. The site is a popular sledding location for West Hill residents.

Maple Grove Park (Dryden Road/66.-1-13)
Maple Grove Park (.47 acres) is a rarely used neighborhood park located behind adjacent houses. It is a quiet and secluded park with no amenities available on-site.

Six Mile Creek Natural Area (Giles Street/Multiple Parcels)
Six Mile Creek Natural Area (815 acres) is a heavily used natural area located along Six Mile Creek in both the City of Ithaca and the Town of Ithaca. The area is well-served by both formal and informal trails and includes the Mulholland Wildflower Reserve. Swimming is prohibited due to safety concerns but the area remains a popular location for those seeking a natural swimming area. Six Mile Creek is the source of the city’s water supply and protection of the watershed is a critical objective for the natural area. Several parcels within the natural area are designated parkland.

Southwest Natural Area/Negundo Woods (Elmira Road/127.-1-1)
Negundo Woods (59.98 acres) is a rarely used natural area. It serves as a wetland and there are no amenities available on-site. A portion of Negundo Woods is designated parkland.

Stewart Park (Stewart Park Road/2.-2-2)
Stewart Park (177.70 acres) is the municipality’s oldest park property and the largest site. Located at the south end of Cayuga Lake, it is a heavily used regional park with direct access to the water and the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. The park is also supported by the Friends of Stewart Park. The site contains picnic shelters, playgrounds, tennis courts, hard surface and earthen trails, grills, restrooms, a splash pad, bocce ball courts, Newman Golf Course, and a carousel. The park also offers numerous water amenities including fixed and floating docks, boat storage racks, and canoe/kayak/stand-up paddle board rentals. Additionally, Stewart Park is home to the Fuertes bird sanctuary, the swan pond, and the Cascadilla Boathouse.

Strawberry Fields (Cornell Street/85.-6-14.1)
Strawberry Fields (9.16 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park. Access to the site is limited; however, park visitors will find a large area of open green space and a backstop on-site.

Thompson Park (North Cayuga Street/45.-3-1)
Thompson Park (.56 acres) is a heavily used neighborhood park. The park contains one of the “Planet Walk” markers (Uranus), a pavilion, a fire bell monument, a picnic table, and access to a water/creek overlook area.

Titus Flats “Wood Street” Park (Wood Street/103.-3-12)
Titus Flats (4.25 acres) is a heavily used regional park. The site is home to the area’s only skate park which receives a lot of use and draws visitors from a wide area. Park visitors will also find a playground, basketball courts, a hand ball court, bike racks, and bleachers on-site.

Titus Triangle Park (Titus Avenue/94.-2-1)
Titus Triangle (.20 acres) is a lightly used neighborhood park. An active volunteer helps maintain the park and its garden beds. Site amenities include a creek overlook area, benches, and a water access/boat launch area.

Van Horn Park (Taughannock Blvd./73.-4-1)
Van Horn Park (.06 acres) is a rarely used neighborhood park that does not currently contain any site amenities. The park is predominantly a garden that is jointly maintained by the City of Ithaca and the Tompkins County Beautification Brigade.
Washington Park (Washington Street/59.-4-1)
Washington Park (1.85 acres) is a moderately used neighborhood park. As one of the system’s largest “small” parks, the park is used by foot travelers due to the thru-park walkways. The site also contains benches and trash cans.

2.2 Other Natural and Cultural Resources

Allan H. Treman State Park – This state park is one of the largest inland marinas in New York. It boasts 370 seasonal, 30 transient, and 30 dry boat slips. Additionally, the park has an 8-lane boat launch ramp. The marina is an excellent port-of-call off the Barge Canal system at the south end of Cayuga Lake and within easy walking distance to the City of Ithaca along the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. The park is also home to the area’s only off-leash dog park, which has become a regional destination.

Buttermilk Falls State Park – This state park takes its name from the foaming cascade formed by Buttermilk Creek as it flows down the steep valley side toward Cayuga Lake. The upper park has a small lake, hiking trails through woodlands and along the gorge and rim, picnic areas, and playing fields. The lower park has a campground, natural pool, and playing fields.

Robert H. Treman State Park – This state park is an area of wild beauty, with the rugged gorge called Enfield Glen as its scenic highlight. Winding trails follow the gorge past 12 waterfalls, including the 115-foot Lucifer Falls, to where visitors can see a mile-and-a-half down the wooded gorge as it winds its way to the lower park. The park contains a campground and campers can choose from tents, RV sites, or cabins. Visitors can also enjoy nine miles of hiking trails, or swim in a stream-fed pool beneath a waterfall (swimming is allowed in the lifeguarded area only).

Taughannock Falls State Park – This state park’s namesake waterfall is one of the outstanding natural attractions of the Northeast. Taughannock Falls plunges 215 feet past rocky cliffs that tower nearly 400 feet above the gorge. Gorge and rim trails offer spectacular views from above the falls and from below at the end of the gorge trail. Campsites and cabins overlook Cayuga Lake, with marina, boat launch, and beach nearby. A multi-use trail winds past sledding slopes and natural skating ponds. The park offers organized activities including tours through the Taughannock Gorge and summer concerts along the lakefront.

Grandview Park (Town of Ithaca) – This 2.65 acre park contains picnic facilities, a playground, and a walking path. The park also has a large open field that provides plenty of space for activities. The walking path connects the park to Terrace View Drive for pedestrian access from the residential development.

Tutelo Park (Town of Ithaca) – Tutelo Park is an 8.1 acre community park located on Bostwick Road across from the Ithaca City School District bus garage. The park contains a playground, a large pavilion, picnic facilities, nature trails, a Tutelo interpretive sign, restrooms, and a regulation size Little League baseball field (Valentino Field) with bleachers and dugouts. The pavilion and baseball field can be rented for events.

Vincenzo Iacovelli Park (Town of Ithaca) – Vincenzo Iacovelli Park is a 5.4 acre neighborhood park which contains a small pavilion, picnic facilities, benches, a half-court basketball court, an open lawn area, and a large playground. The South Hill Recreation Way travels through the park and provides the primary access to the park.

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3 All descriptions were retrieved from the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation website (www.parks.ny.gov/parks) and from the Town of Ithaca website (www.town.ithaca.ny.us/parks-and-trails).
2.2.1 Trail System
Ithaca is well-served by an extensive trail system. Although the entire park system is not connected, there is good connectivity around the waterfront parks and surrounding area. The following list represents Ithaca and the surrounding area’s trail system:

- **Beebe Lake Trail**: man-made loop trail that runs through Cornell Botanic Gardens Beebe Lake Natural Area
- **Black Diamond Trail**: keystone of a major trail system in the Ithaca area, and has been planned since the 1970s
- **Cayuga Waterfront Trail**: connects Cass Park (western shore of Cayuga Lake) to Stewart Park (eastern shore)
- **Inlet Island Promenade**: runs along the western of Inlet Island between the Cayuga Waterfront Trail and Lookout Point
- **Cascadilla Gorge Trail**: commuter and recreation trail that connects the Fall Creek area to Collegetown
- **East Ithaca Recreation Way**: commuter and recreation trail on East Hill
- **Fall Creek Gorge Natural Area**: the trail system provides access to one of Cornell’s most iconic gorges
- **Mundy Wildflower Garden Trail**: trail highlights native plant landscaping and borders a scenic section of Fall Creek
- **South Hill Recreation Way**: runs parallel to (NE of) Coddington Road in the Town of Ithaca

Additionally, planned trail system enhancements include:

- **Black Diamond Trail**: connects Ithaca southward to Buttermilk Falls State Park (and to the Finger Lakes Trail System)
- **East Shore Trail**: extends along the hillside above the eastern shore of Cayuga Lake, connecting the City of Ithaca and Town of Ithaca with Lansing
- **East-South Trail**: connector trail extends from the terminus of South Hill Recreation Way
- **Gateway Trail**: connects the Black Diamond Trail to the East Hill Recreation Way
- **Winter Village Trail**: connects downtown Ithaca to the planned Gateway Trail to Buttermilk Falls State Park (and to the Finger Lakes Trail System)

2.2.2 Historic Buildings and Districts
The Cascadilla Boathouse in Stewart Park and the DeWitt Park Historic District, including DeWitt Park, are on the National and State Registers of Historic Places. The DeWitt Park Historic District is also locally designated, and proposed alterations to the park must be reviewed by the Ithaca Landmarks Preservation Commission.

2.2.3 Culture and Science
Culture and science play a big role in the fabric of the Ithaca community. There are several local museums and points of interest that cater to visitors and residents alike. The Ithaca Commons area is a downtown pedestrian mall that is home to many local shops, restaurants, and galleries and regularly hosts special events.

Local culture and science points of interest located in the Ithaca area include:

- Cayuga Nature Center
- Cornell Botanic Gardens
- Cornell Lab of Ornithology
- Hangar Theatre
- Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art
- Ithaca Children’s Garden
- Museum of Earth
- Sciencenter
- Wharton Studio Museum
2.3 Demographic Analysis

The Demographic Analysis provides an understanding of the population within and surrounding Ithaca. This analysis is reflective of the total population and its key characteristics such as population density, age distribution, households, gender, ethnicity, and household income.

It is important to note that future projections are all based on historical patterns. Unforeseen circumstances during or after the time of the projections or future policy changes related to land use, housing, or population could have a significant bearing on the validity of the final projections.

2.3.1 Demographic Overview

The total population of the city has recently experienced an increase of approximately 6.25%; from 30,014 in 2010 to 31,890 in 2016. The current estimated population is projected to continue its moderate growth, increasing to 33,168 individuals in 2021, and 36,100 by 2031.

According to U.S. Census reports, the total number of households in the target area has experienced a coinciding upward trend, increasing approximately 6.98%, from 10,408 in 2010 to 11,134 in 2016. The city’s total households are expected to continue to increase to 12,809 households by 2031.

Based on the 2010 Census, the population of the target area is well below the median age of the U.S. The city’s median age is 23.8 whereas the U.S. median age is 38.0 years old. This is due to the fact that college students make up a large portion of the city’s population. It is anticipated that this will remain relatively unchanged through 2031. The city is projected to have a slight decrease in the percentage of 18-24 year olds; while the 25-35 age segment is projected to experience a slight increase.

The estimated 2016 population of the target area is predominantly White Alone (67%), with the Asian population representing the largest minority (20%). Additionally, those of Hispanic/Latino origin represent just over 7% of the city’s total current population. Future projections estimate that by 2031 the overall composition of the population will become more diverse. Forecasts of the target area through 2031 expect a noticeable decrease in the White Alone population (a decrease to 57%); coinciding with a significant increase amongst the Asian population (an increase to 28%).

The city’s median household income ($31,169) and per capita income ($21,934) are both below the state and national averages. It should be noted that the City of Ithaca’s demographic overview is influenced by the presence of two higher educational institutions within close proximity: Cornell University and Ithaca College. The student populations have a strong influence on demographic categories, population age segments, and income levels.
2.3.2 Methodology
Demographic data used for the analysis was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau and from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in December 2016 and reflects actual numbers as reported in the 2010 Censuses, and estimates for 2016 and 2021 as obtained by ESRI. Straight line linear regression was utilized for the 2026 and 2031 projected demographics. The City of Ithaca’s boundaries that were utilized for the demographic analysis are shown in Figure 3.

2.3.3 Ithaca Populace
The following implications are derived from a detailed demographic analysis located in the Demographics and Trends Technical Report.

Population
The population is increasing and is projected to experience 13.2% population growth over the next 15 years. The number of households is projected to experience a 15.04% growth rate over the same timeframe. As the population grows, recreation services must grow commensurate to the population. Additionally, development will continue over the next 15 years to accommodate more people within the city. The municipality will need to strategically invest in the parks system and consider developing new facilities, particularly in areas where housing growth is anticipated. Parks, recreational facilities, and other open spaces will become increasingly important as the city continues to densify. As more development occurs, the parks and recreation system should be a key consideration in terms of the size, type, and specifications of both existing areas as well as any gained greenspace due to private development or municipal acquisition.
Age Segmentation

The service area’s aging trend is largely offset by the surrounding colleges. However, there is a component of the population that will be aging and facilities focused on active adults (55+ population) will assume an even greater importance as the population changes in the years to come. Age segments have different proclivities towards activities. For example, older adults may enjoy passive recreation activities more so than active. However, multi-generational facilities and services will be crucial to Ithaca because the 18-34 age segment will still represent 66% of the total population in 2031. Therefore, an emphasis on the millennial generation will be important over the next 15 years. Additionally, co-planning with Cornell University and Ithaca College will need to be an emphasis.

Diversity

Population projections indicate the community will continue to diversify over the next 15 years. It is important to be mindful of this trend and continue to plan for an inclusive park system, in terms of both programs and facilities. Research indicates that, nationally, equitable access to parks and the quality of green spaces is largely inconsistent across different demographic groups and poses a challenge to park system development. As the City reinvests in its parks, it must focus on equitable access to green spaces and providing high quality parkland for all. It will be vital for the City to create consistency within the system as it relates to maintenance, quality, acreage, proximity, and types of user experiences. A well-balanced system ensures a level of service and standard of care that are consistent throughout the community.

2.3.4 Ithaca Demographics Implications

After analyzing demographic projections for the City of Ithaca, the following key implications are highlighted:

- The population is expected to grow as are the number of households.
- While much of the population will remain of college-age, the non-student population will be aging and this should be considered in planning both park facilities and programming.
- The municipality needs to invest strategically in its parks system and recreation programming to provide opportunities for a larger population.
- Additional open space should be considered and any new space should be located near new housing development.
- The community’s demographic distribution should be considered when making investments in the system to ensure equitable access to high quality parks and recreation services across all segments of the population.

**Park Design Principles**

Understanding that the population is going to grow and continue to diversify, it is imperative for the City of Ithaca to adopt and implement design standards by park classification. Every park, regardless of type, needs to have an established set of outcomes. Park planners/designers design to those outcomes, including operational and maintenance costs associated with the design outcomes.

Each park classification category serves a specific purpose, and the features and facilities in the park must be designed for the age segments the park is intended to serve, the desired length of stay deemed appropriate, and the uses it has been assigned. Recreation needs and services require different design standards based on the age segments that make up the community that will be using the park.

The city’s parks system largely consists of neighborhood and regional parks. The following design standards are critical to implement as the community continues to grow and diversify.

**NEIGHBORHOOD PARK**

A neighborhood park is typically smaller than 10 acres and park use and facilities offered also contribute to a park being classified as a neighborhood park. The City of Ithaca parks system largely consists of neighborhood parks and they range in size from .06 to 9.16 acres. Neighborhood parks serve the recreational and social focus of the adjoining neighborhoods and contribute to a distinct neighborhood identity. The following list represents the full design standard list for neighborhood parks:

- **Size of park:** Typically smaller in size (less than 10 acres) and is based upon park use and available facilities.
- **Service radius:** 0.5 mile radius (or approximately six blocks).
- **Site Selection:** Typically on a local or collector street. If near an arterial street, provide natural or artificial barrier. Neighborhood Park locations should be based on equitable geographical distribution throughout the community. If the community experiences a growth trend in younger populations, it is beneficial to collaborate with the school system in the future for neighborhood park placement as well. Additionally, site selection should link subdivisions and be linked by trails to other parks.
- **Length of stay:** One hour experience or less.
- **Amenities:** One signature amenity (e.g., major playground, sport court, gazebo, etc.); no restrooms unless necessary for signature amenity; may include one non-programmed sports field; playgrounds for ages 2-5 and 5-12 with some shaded elements; no reservable shelters; loop trails; one type of sport court; benches, small picnic shelters next to play areas. Amenities should be ADA compliant.
- **Landscape Design:** Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience.
- **Revenue facilities:** N/A
- **Land usage:** 85 percent active/15 percent passive.
- **Programming:** Typically none, but a signature amenity may be included which is programmed.
- **Maintenance Standards:** Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding.
• **Signage:** Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance user experience.

• **Parking:** No designated parking is required because these parks usually contain pedestrian access; however, traffic calming devices are encouraged next to park.

• **Lighting:** Security or amenity only. Lighting on dual system with 50% of lights off at a set time and 50% on all night for security.

• **Naming:** Consistent with municipal ordinances for naming of parks, or may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark.

• **Other:** Customized to demographics of neighborhood; safety design meets established Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards; integrated color scheme throughout.

**REGIONAL PARKS**

A regional park serves a large area of several communities, residents within a town, city, or county (or across multiple counties). Depending on activities within a regional park, users may travel as many as 60 miles for a visit. Regional parks include recreational opportunities such as soccer, softball, golf, boating, canoeing, conservation-wildlife viewing, and fishing. Although regional parks usually have a combination of passive areas and active facilities, they are likely to be predominantly natural resource-based parks.

Park size varies for regional parks and is specific and relative to the parks system. A regional park focuses on activities and natural features not included in most types of parks and often based on a specific scenic or recreational opportunity. Facilities could include specialized amenities such as an art center, amphitheater, boating facility, golf course, or natural area with interpretive trails. Additionally, regional parks can and should promote tourism and economic development because regional parks can enhance the economic vitality and identity of the entire region. Cass Park and Stewart Park are examples of regional parks.

• **Size of park:** Typically the largest expanses of parkland relative to other parks within the parks system.

• **Service radius:** 3+ mile radius and serve as a user/visitor destination.

• **Site Selection:** Prefer location which can preserve natural resources on-site such as wetlands, streams, and other geographic features or sites with significant cultural or historic features. These parks are typically a significant parcel of land with public access facilitated by public roads capable of handling anticipated traffic.

• **Length of stay:** Multiple hour experience to an all-day experience.

• **Amenities:** 10-12 amenities to create a signature facility (e.g., golf course, tennis complex, sports complex, lake, regional playground, reservable picnic shelters, outdoor recreation/extreme sports, recreation center, pool, spray park, gardens, trails, water access, canoe storage, specialty facilities, etc.); public restrooms, concessions, restaurant, ample parking, and/or special event site. Sport fields and/or sport complexes are typical at this park.

• **Revenue facilities:** Typically more than two and the park is designed to produce revenue to offset operational costs.

• **Land usage:** Up to 50% active/50% passive.

• **Programming:** More than four recreation experiences per age segment with at least four core programs provided.

• **Maintenance Standards:** Provide the highest level maintenance with available funding.

• **Parking:** Sufficient for all amenities. Traffic calming devices encouraged within and next to park.
• **Lighting:** Amenity lighting includes sport field lighting standards. Security lighting on dual system with 50% of lights off at a set time and 50% on all night for security.

• **Signage:** Directional signage and facility/amenity regulations to enhance the user experience. Park signage may include kiosks in easily identified areas.

• **Landscape Design:** Appropriate design to enhance the park theme/use/experience. There should be enhanced landscaping at park entrances and throughout park.

• **Naming:** Consistent with municipal naming ordinances and may be named after a prominent or historic person, event, or natural landmark.

• **Other:** Safety design may meet CPTED safety standards; integrated color scheme throughout the park; linked to major trails systems; public transportation available; concessions, food, and retail sales available; and dedicated site managers on duty.
2.4 Recreation Trends Analysis

The following charts show sport and leisure market potential data from ESRI. A Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service in Ithaca. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident will participate in certain activities when compared to the US National average. The national average is 100; therefore, numbers below 100 would represent a lower than average participation rate, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rate.

The MPI for a product or service is calculated by the ratio of the local consumption rate for a product/service for the local area to the US consumption rate for the product/service, multiplied by 100. MPIs are derived from the information integrated from four consumer surveys.

The Ithaca area is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports, fitness, outdoor activity, and money spent on miscellaneous recreation. Overall, City of Ithaca residents demonstrate participation trends that have above average potential index numbers in all categories, meaning that there are a variety of recreational activities that are of potential interest to this specific demographic. Of particular interest are:

- Participation in sports such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, and softball;
- Fitness related programming in jogging/running, yoga, weight lifting, Pilates, and aerobics;
- Outdoor activities including backpacking, canoeing/kayaking, horseback riding, and hiking; and
- Money spent on painting/drawing, visiting art galleries, overnight camping, and going dancing.

It is recommended that the City of Ithaca examines the MPIs below to gain a sense of local consumption behavior based upon market research. The MPIs should be one component of an overall demand analysis including participation rates, market competition, community survey, and other resident input. The MPIs that equal or are above 100 are identified as being popular activities; however, programming should not solely center on high MPI activities because service providers often need to provide niche activities. It is important to examine MPI numbers and how they correspond to existing City of Ithaca Core Program Areas offered. This analysis will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

As seen below (Figures 7-10), there are numerous sport and leisure activities that exhibit a high MPI score for residents within the City of Ithaca. All figures are sorted by the estimated number of participants in descending order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Estimated Participants</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th>MPI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf</td>
<td>3,348</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soccer</td>
<td>2,039</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Football</td>
<td>1,974</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
<td>1,568</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volleyball</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis</td>
<td>1,417</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7-General Sports MPIs

---

For more information, please see the Demographics and Trends Technical Report.
### Local Participatory Trends - Fitness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Estimated</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th></th>
<th>MPI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Ithaca</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking for exercise</td>
<td>9,553</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jogging/running</td>
<td>8,365</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>6,584</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight lifting</td>
<td>4,856</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerobics</td>
<td>3,639</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>3,489</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilates</td>
<td>1,216</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8-Fitness MPIs

### Local Participatory Trends - Outdoor Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Estimated</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th></th>
<th>MPI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>Ithaca</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>4,127</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling (road)</td>
<td>3,831</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing (fresh water)</td>
<td>3,289</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing/kayaking</td>
<td>2,584</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backpacking</td>
<td>1,860</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling (mountain)</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating (power)</td>
<td>1,512</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback riding</td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing (salt water)</td>
<td>1,052</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9-Outdoor Activity MPIs

### Local Participatory Trends - Commercial Recreation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Estimated</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th></th>
<th>MPI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attended a movie in last 6 months</td>
<td>22,196</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended sports event</td>
<td>7,902</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went overnight camping in last 12 months</td>
<td>5,721</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited a theme park in last 12 months</td>
<td>5,471</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to museum in last 12 months</td>
<td>5,236</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited a zoo in last 12 months</td>
<td>4,234</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did photography in last 12 months</td>
<td>3,921</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danced/went dancing in last 12 months</td>
<td>3,736</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to art gallery in last 12 months</td>
<td>3,727</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did painting/drawing in last 12 months</td>
<td>3,208</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent $250+ on sports/rec equip</td>
<td>2,082</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent $1-99 on sports/rec equip</td>
<td>2,047</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent $100-249 on sports/rec equip</td>
<td>1,862</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited indoor water park in last 12 months</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10-Commercial Recreation MPIs
2.4.1 Integrating Local and National Trends
Based on the estimated number of participants, the most popular general sport activity for Ithaca is basketball. Other popular sport activities include soccer, volleyball, softball, football, and golf. All general sports categories exceed the average USA participation rates in terms of MPI. Fitness activities have high MPIs with jogging/running, yoga, weight lifting, and Pilates being the top four. All outdoor activities except for fishing (fresh water), fishing (salt water), and boating (power) and have an above average MPI. The most popular money spent on recreation activity is attending movies. Painting/drawing and going to an art gallery have the highest MPI scores for Ithaca. Of note, Ithaca residents are more apt to spend a lower amount (between $1 and $9) on recreation equipment.

Information released by Sports & Fitness Industry Association’s (SFIA) 2016 Study of Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report reveals that, nationally, the most popular sport and recreational activities include: fitness walking, treadmill, running/jogging, free weights, and road bicycling. Most of these activities appeal to both young and old alike, can be done in most environments, are enjoyed regardless of level of skill, and have minimal economic barriers to entry. These popular activities also have appeal because of their social application. For example, although fitness activities are mainly self-directed, people enjoy walking and biking with other individuals because it can offer a degree of camaraderie.

From a traditional team sport standpoint, basketball also ranks highest nationally among all sports, with approximately 23.4 million people reportedly participating in 2015. In general, nearly every sport with available data experienced an increase in participation, which is a reversal from a previous five-year trend of declining participation. Sports that have experienced significant participation growth are squash, boxing, lacrosse, rugby, roller hockey, and field hockey – all of which have experienced growth in excess of 30% over the last five years. More recently, roller hockey, racquetball, indoor soccer, boxing, and flag football were the activities with the most rapid growth during the last year.

2.5 Recreation Trends Implications
City of Ithaca residents exhibit a high interest in recreation activities, and according to local trends, there is not one recreation category (e.g., fitness, sports, outdoor recreation) that supersedes another. This is important for the City to understand because trends indicate a desire for a balanced, well-rounded scope of opportunity. Where this balance may be difficult is in relation to pricing services. Local trends indicate a lower desire to spend on recreation equipment (which is only one indicator of purchasing interest), but there is a strong desire to always have more provided. Additionally, there is a limited tax base for parks and recreation so generating earned income by identifying alternative streams of revenue will be paramount.

It is important for the City of Ithaca to match local recreational trends with park design standards. As existing programs are reviewed and new activities are implemented into the system, placing the right activity at the right park will provide the correct user experience and match it with the correct facility. Additionally, great park and recreation systems rely on recreational programming to energize the system and activate park facilities. Many systems rely on signature park programming to drive people into their facilities while also contributing to the social fabric of the community. New programming can be injected into the system to help solidify the City of Ithaca brand, increase participation rates in programs, and ensure relevancy of the parks for both existing and future system users.
CHAPTER THREE - COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

3.1 Process

A comprehensive public engagement process yielded community direction for the City of Ithaca parks system. Specific engagement opportunities consisted of:

- Stakeholder focus groups and interviews
- Public meetings
- Online survey
- Statistically-valid community survey

3.2 Key Themes

The public engagement process and technical research review indicates that there is a lot of “ownership” for the City of Ithaca parks system. There are many organizations that collaborate to make the parks system what it is today. It will be important for this Master Plan to identify all the existing and potential partnerships/collaborations and provide guidance as to a structure that will streamline the parks system’s care and guidance.

As evidenced by on-site observations and personal communication, the Ithaca parks system provides water access to residents that otherwise would be non-existent. Two parks in particular, Cass Park and Stewart Park, are community icons and should be treated as signature parks. With a diverse mix of parks (including many smaller neighborhood parks), it will be important to develop a strategy moving forward that will address underutilized spaces and the equitable distribution of community amenities.

Additionally, funding the system will require out-of-the-box thinking as there are large tax exempt entities within city limits that do not contribute to funding the system. In terms of ongoing operation, maintenance, and capital expenditures, it will be important to consider alternative approaches to make up for the limited tax base.

There are also several steps necessary for the municipality to take in order to provide the desired “future” parks system. The planning process provides insight into community barriers to participation, preferred communication methods, and desired recreation programs and facilities.

Parks systems around the country continue to wrestle with the principle of equity. In terms of the park system, equity refers to providing equal access to participation and engagement regardless of income, race, physical ability, or location of residence. An important first step is to identify what community members perceive as barriers that are preventing them from engaging more with the parks system.

City of Ithaca residents report the following five items as their top barrier:

1) I do not know what is offered
2) I do not know locations of facilities
3) Too far from our residence
4) Program or facility not offered
5) Facilities are not well maintained

The top five list highlights important factors for planning considerations. The top two relate to communication and the remaining three represent distinct challenges: geospatial distribution of programs and facilities; the right balance of recreation program and facility opportunities/availability; and facility maintenance or level of care.

For more information, please see the Public Engagement and Community Survey Technical Reports.
3.2.1 Geospatial Distribution
Willingness and ability to travel to a park facility to participate in a given program or to simply enjoy the park vary by community. Since this perceived barrier is high on the list, it is important to look at the distribution of park land types, program locations, and connectivity. The parks system has a wealth of neighborhood park acres; however, the distribution and quality of acreage in relation to population density will be an indicator of how well the City of Ithaca is serving its residents. For example, there is a neighborhood park acreage deficit in the northeast part of the city.

An important consideration is integrating the recent national movement to adopt a “10-minute walk to a neighborhood park” as the Trust for Public Land (TPL) and Urban Land Institute (ULI) have brought into mainstream park planning.

3.2.2 Finding the Balance Between The Existing And The Future
Community residents report not having their desired recreation program or facility available as a high barrier to their engagement with the parks system. As demographics shift, so do recreation priorities, and the parks system should evolve with its community. It is those systems that do not evolve that run the risk of losing touch with the future park user.

To help identify future need, the consultant team implemented a statistically-valid community survey that solicited feedback on a variety of issues related to parks and recreation within the City of Ithaca. Respondents were asked if they have a need for a program or facility and to what degree their need is currently being met. The results allowed the consultant team to synthesize needs and importance to understand community service provision.

Taking the analysis a step further, “Priority Rankings” were developed to provide a hierarchal representation of community interest. The City of Ithaca can use these rankings as a foundation for future service decisions. Priority Rankings combine community need and importance (as learned from the survey) with information gleaned from other public engagement processes and technical research.

Recreation Programs
As denoted by the Priority Rankings (Figure 11), the top tier program priorities (or focus areas) include:

- Special events
- Farmers’ market
- Adult fitness & wellness programs
- Nature programs/environmental education
- Adult continuing education programs
- Adult sports programs
- Adult art, dance, and performing arts
- Adult programs for 50 years & older
- Water fitness programs

Based on the priority rankings, it is recommended that the municipality continue to focus on supporting special events and bolstering the existing Farmers’ Market (both in DeWitt Park and at the stand-alone facility at Steamboat Landing). Additionally, the priority rankings show a desire to focus on additional adult programming within the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Overall Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special events</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers’ market</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult fitness &amp; wellness programs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature programs/environmental education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult continuing education programs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult sports programs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult art, dance, and performing arts</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult programs for 50 years &amp; older</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water fitness programs</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel programs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth summer camp programs</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs with your pets</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor challenge programs</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth learn to swim programs</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before &amp; after school programs</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for teens</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth art, dance, and performing arts</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult ice sports &amp; activities</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis lessons &amp; leagues</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth sports programs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs for people with disabilities</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool programs</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth fitness &amp; wellness programs</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth ice sports &amp; activities</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf lessons &amp; leagues</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring for youth</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthday parties</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11- Program Priority Rankings
Recreation Facilities/Amenities

As denoted by the Priority Rankings (Figure 12), the top tier facility priorities (or focus areas) include:

- Walking and biking trails
- Outdoor natural swimming areas
- Greenspace and natural areas
- Sports fields (soccer, football, lacrosse)
- Diamond fields (baseball, softball)
- Large community parks
- Picnic shelters
- Small neighborhood parks
- Indoor ice arena

Based on the priority rankings, it is recommended that the municipality continue to focus on connecting the parks system through a comprehensive network of walking and biking trails. Additionally, the priority rankings show a desire to bring back natural swimming opportunities within the system and also provide an increased focus on the system’s sports fields and facilities.

3.2.3 Communicating the Story

Creating park advocates (or “champions”) is a feat many parks systems take on. After identifying community needs, the mindset must shift to understanding how to best communicate to the public that their needs are not only identified, but action is being taken to satiate those needs. Community residents report that they rely on word of mouth from friends and neighbors as the most common way they learn about municipal parks, facilities, special events, and activities. It is encouraging that the parks system is creating a “buzz” throughout the city. However, additional communication methods should be enhanced to capitalize on changing demographics, technological improvements, and the fact the city is proximate to university populations.

Increasing social media and web capabilities will be paramount for the municipality’s efforts to establish and articulate its brand. The focus on these areas should not hinder word of mouth recognition; instead, these communication methods should work in concert to help bolster the parks system’s word of mouth reputation.

3.2.4 System Priorities

Community residents participated in a scenario in which they were told they had a budget of $100 to spend on services provided by the City of Ithaca. They were asked how they would allocate the funds among eight different categories of funding (Figure 13).

The public’s top five spending priorities are:

1. Waterfront parks
2. Walking/biking trails
3. Park land & open space
4. Neighborhood/community parks
5. Recreation facilities
The community indicated that the waterfront area, with its vast open space and trail system, is a priority area. However, they also indicated smaller park land and the municipality’s recreation facilities should be given a priority over more programs & events, golf courses, and sports fields.

### 3.2.5 Funding the System

Along with identifying system priorities, residents also indicated support for a different financial model for the parks system (Figure 14). Partnering with nonprofits & private entities was the top overall supported revenue source. This indicates the community’s willingness to see cross-sector collaboration for providing parks and recreation services. Additionally, *jointly contributing public funding to focus dollars* was the number one “most supported” revenue source and was a close second in terms of overall support. The community acknowledges that more than City of Ithaca residents utilize the parks system and the parks system should be enhanced by allocating additional funding. Joint funding in this scenario refers to the City of Ithaca, Town of Ithaca, and Tompkins County jointly contributing public funding (i.e., tax dollars) to focus on the greatest park and recreation needs in Greater Ithaca.

Moreover, the City of Ithaca’s parks and facilities are aging and will require more attention and dollars to keep them safe and appealing. However, parks are just one of the many priorities for the municipality. It is a positive sign that most respondents were in favor of a joint public funding effort, however there is mixed support for a “pay-to-play” option as well. Further information is needed to fully understand which option would be most feasible long-term. However there was good support for both public and private funding.

### 3.3 Conclusions

When analyzing the programs offered by the City of Ithaca the same item was the most important to respondents’ households and had the highest level of overall need – farmers’ markets. Focusing on adding farmers’ markets within the community would provide a great benefit for the largest number of residents within the City of Ithaca. Residents also indicated there was a need within the community for more special events as well as adult fitness and wellness programs. Focusing on the programs for which residents have an unmet need can improve overall satisfaction in the future.

It is clear the Ithaca community desires to see a joint effort to maintain and manage the City of Ithaca parks system. Realizing that the City of Ithaca parks system contains regional attractions, along with smaller local parks, there are people outside of the city limits that enjoy the parks system. The Ithaca community also realizes that the current parks system is need of infrastructure repair and improvements. Considering the financial resources afforded to the municipality, and the fact that the parks system serves a wider audience, the time has come to seek collaborative efforts to rebuild the City of Ithaca parks system.
CHAPTER FOUR - PARK AND FACILITY INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

4.1 Evaluating the Current System: Infrastructure

The consultant team met with municipal staff in March 2017 to go over the park assessment process. Staff assisted the consultant team by visiting each location and completing 22 site assessments. The site assessments establish a base-line understanding and “snapshot” of the system’s existing conditions, amenities, and implications for operations and maintenance. Full site assessment detail can be found in the Site Assessment Technical Report.

4.1.1 Methodology

The consultant team used a site assessment form to document each site visited. The form included:

- Design and usage
- Access and visibility
- Community attitudes toward site
- Site amenities (quantity and condition)
- General site condition
- Any identified corrective actions needed
- Any planned capital improvements
- Strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities

Site conditions were rated using a differential scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor. The table below provides the condition descriptions utilized in this analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale of Conditions</th>
<th>Assessment Finding</th>
<th>General Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Facilities/amenities are in excellent condition and feature little or no maintenance problems noted. Facilities do not feature any major design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Facilities/amenities are in good condition and feature only minor maintenance problems. Generally, most maintenance issues with these facilities appear to be the result of age and/or heavy use. Facilities may only feature minor design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e., drainage, structural, utilities, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Facilities/amenities are in fair condition and indicate ongoing maintenance problems. Generally, most maintenance issues with these facilities appear to be the result of age and heavy use. Some maintenance issues may be compounding over time due to being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities may only feature minor design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e., drainage, structural, utilities, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Facilities/amenities are in poor condition and clearly show ongoing maintenance problems that ultimately may result in suspended use for repair/ replacement. Maintenance issues with these facilities are the result of age and heavy use, and generally are compounding over time due to being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities may feature major design issues that contribute to diminished use or maintenance (i.e., drainage, structural, utilities, etc.).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15- Condition Assessment Grading Scale

6 For more information, please see the Site Assessment Technical Report.
The following established sites were assessed during the tour:

- Auburn Park
- Baker Park
- Brindley Park
- Bryant Park
- Cass Park
- Columbia Street Park
- Conley Park
- Conway Park
- Dewitt Park
- Dryden Road Park
- Hillview Park
- Ithaca Falls
- McDaniels
- Maple Grove Park
- Southwest Natural Area (Negundo Woods)
- Stewart Park
- Strawberry Fields
- Thompson Park
- Titus Park
- Van Horn Park
- Washington Park
- Wood Street Park

4.1.2 Site Assessment System Summary

After the in-person site assessments were completed, City of Ithaca staff (along with the Consultant Team) identified key strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for the system as found below. However, it should be noted that the recommendations listed represent the most salient opportunities for the City of Ithaca after reviewing the sites in-person. These recommendations are one part of the overall list of recommendations and priorities as found in this Master Plan’s Implementation Plan.

**Strengths**

- The municipality has done a great job with connectivity throughout the parks system (especially in the waterfront area)
- The waterfront parks provide amazing “signature” assets to the parks system
- There are many neighborhood green spaces
- Most maintenance operations are based out of a central shop
- There are Friends Groups that help support some of the parks

**Weaknesses**

- There is not a dedicated Parks Department that houses administration, operations, maintenance, and programming all in one place
- Many of the park facilities are “tired” or are in need of an update
- They system is in need of better quality outdoor sports fields
- Park signage needs to be updated and improved across the system including identification, rules, wayfinding, and interpretive
- The revenue generated in the parks is not able to be reinvested directly into the park it came from
- Many park facilities are nearing or are at the end of their lifecycle
Recommendations

- Develop design standards for all parks
- Establish written maintenance standards for all parks
- Unify the governance and management of the parks system
- Identify the waterfront area as a priority
- Create a brand for the parks system
- Create an equipment replacement schedule
- Create a 5-year CIP (acts as an amenity replacement schedule) with identified funding sources
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards need to continue to be incorporated into the existing parks
- Develop a project list specific for volunteer projects; additionally, post list(s) to the municipality’s website
CHAPTER FIVE - RECREATION PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

5.1 Evaluating the Current System: Programs

As part of the master planning process, the consulting team performed a Recreation Program Assessment of the programs and services offered by the Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB). The assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities regarding programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents.

The consulting team based these program findings and comments from a review of information provided by the municipality including program descriptions, financial data, website content, web survey feedback, demographic information, and discussions with staff. This report addresses the program offerings from a systems perspective for the entire portfolio of programs, as well as individual program information.

5.1.1 Framework

The mission of IYB is to provide quality inclusive programming for the changing recreation and leisure interests of the community. The focus is on opportunities for youth and families through expressive arts, sport programs, special events, lessons, and summer camps.

The IYB provides a broad range of recreation and leisure programming for youth of all ages. Recreational sports, lessons, day camps (not offered year round), theater classes, art classes, special events, and Tot Spot are offered year round to youth and families. Programs provide an opportunity for participants to have fun, learn new skills, and develop friendships and life-long leisure interests.

Recreation programs are supported in part by the Recreation Partnership - an inter-municipal collaboration between 10 municipalities in Tompkins County, including City of Ithaca, Town of Ithaca, Towns of Caroline, Danby, Dryden, Enfield, Groton, Newfield, Ulysses (including students who attend Trumansburg Schools) or the Village of Lansing. This unique alliance is one of the largest in the state. The Ithaca Youth Bureau is a major provider of programs. Tompkins County Youth Services provides planning and financial coordination. The contributions of the County and the participating municipalities help keep programs affordable and accessible.

The IYB and other providers often utilize municipal parkland and facilities. Within the City of Ithaca, city parks are maintained by the Public Works Department (with the exception of Cass Park which is maintained by the IYB). There are 18 full-time staff helping to manage the City of Ithaca recreation and facilities, and the full-time staff are supplemented by many seasonal and part-time staff.

The IYB and other providers communicate with the community through the City of Ithaca website, as well as through flyers and brochures, signage, and various social media accounts. A long-form program guide is published on-line and in hard copy each season, and includes a comprehensive list of programs and events.

5.2 Core Program Areas

To help achieve the mission, it is important to identify Core Program Areas to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. The philosophy of the Core Program Area assists staff, policy makers, and the public focus on what is most important. Program areas are considered Core if they meet a majority of the following categories:

- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.
• The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the organization’s overall budget.
• The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
• The program area has wide demographic appeal.
• There is a tiered level of skill development available within the programs area’s offerings.
• There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
• There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
• The organization controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

5.2.1 Existing Core Program Areas
In consultation with IYB staff, the planning team identified the following Core Program Areas currently being offered:

Sports
The Sports core program area includes traditional sport offerings for individual skill development and league/team play in basketball, lacrosse, tennis, track & cross country, skating, and outdoor recreation/adventure (among others). The goal is to provide an opportunity to learn and practice basic skills, be part of a team, make new friends, and learn about sportsmanship.

Aquatics
The Aquatics core program area includes public swimming opportunities, group swims, and lessons. The goal is to provide a safe, clean, healthy environment for youth, adults, families, and groups to enjoy the pool leisurely for fitness, and to provide progressive swim lessons for youth.

Rink
The Rink core program area includes public skating, lessons, and group skate, with opportunities for broomball rentals, and hockey practices, games, and tournaments. The goal is to provide a safe, clean, and fun ice skating experience to the public, and to provide lessons for youth and adults.

Arts
The Arts core program area provides opportunities for practicing the arts, from pottery and drawing to crafts and theatre classes. The goal is to provide an opportunity for young people to explore leisure interests outside of traditional sports, to learn basic skills in different artistic media, and to provide for more advanced opportunities to explore interests.

Camps & Summer Programs
The Camps & Summer Programs core program area provides opportunities for camps and specialty classes in the arts, sports, and outdoor recreation, from music lessons to sailing and Tae Kwon Do. The goal is to provide high quality care for children that offers a traditional camp experience, and to provide opportunities for youth to learn in-depth skills.

Special Events
The Special Events core program area provides opportunities for youth and families to experience new things, have fun, meet new friends, and to be a part of the community. Examples of Special Events programs include Junior Olympics, Festival Mile, Tot Spot, Screen Free Week, Fishing Funshop, and Ice Cream Bowl Event.

Recreation Support Services (RSS) - Adult
The Recreation Support Services for Adults core program area provides leisure opportunities to encourage active participation, friendship, independence and inclusion within the community for adults over the age of 18. Examples
of Recreation Support Services (Adult) programs include monthly dances, exercise workout groups, art classes, movie club, board games, and senior outings.

**Recreation Support Services (RSS) - Youth**
The Recreation Support Services for Youth core program area provides leisure opportunities to encourage active participation, friendship, independence and inclusion within the community for youth under the age of 18. Examples of Recreation Support Services (Youth) programs include Girls’ Club, Boys’ Club, teen movie program, nature program, outdoor adventure, and play groups.

**Youth Development**
The Youth Development core program area provides opportunities for young people to engage in new and different ways to interact with their community and build skills that will help them reach their full potential. The goal is to accomplish this by building strong relationships between youth and caring adults. This core program area allows youth to experience belonging, solve problems and meet goals, practice generosity, and take responsibility for determining their own future. Examples of Youth Development programs include Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Paul Schreurs Memorial Program, academic mentoring programs, college discovery program, youth council, outings program, and youth employment service.

### 5.3 Core Program Area Recommendations

#### 5.3.1 Evaluate Core Program Area Relevance Regularly
These existing core program areas provide a generally well-rounded and diverse array of programs that serve the community at present. Based upon the observations of the planning team and demographic and recreation trends information, City of Ithaca staff should evaluate core program areas and individual programs, ideally on an annual basis, to ensure offerings are relevant to evolving demographics and trends in the local community. Implementing additional surveys to program participants and the larger community is a good way to help differentiate between national vs. local trends and ensure the municipality’s programs are relevant to the local user.

### 5.4 Program Strategy Analysis

#### 5.4.1 Age Segment Analysis
The table below depicts each Core Program Area and the most prominent age segments they serve. Primary (noted with a ‘P’) and Secondary (noted with an ‘S’) markets are identified for each core program area. Looking at blank boxes help the City of Ithaca examine potentially “underserved” age segments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Program Area</th>
<th>Preschool (5 &amp; under)</th>
<th>Elementary (6-10)</th>
<th>Middle School (11-13)</th>
<th>High School (14-17)</th>
<th>Adult (18-64)</th>
<th>Senior (65+)</th>
<th>All Ages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aquatics</strong></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rink</strong></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Arts</strong></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Camps &amp; Summer Programs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Events</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RSS (Adult)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RSS (Youth)</strong></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Youth Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 16-Core Program Area Age Segment Analysis*
Based on the age demographics noted previously in this plan, current programs seem to be fairly well-aligned with the community’s age profile. While the national demographic shift to an older population is not forecast to be as evident within the City of Ithaca, there will still be a slight shift toward an older population. Municipal staff should continue to monitor demographic shifts and program offerings to ensure that the needs of the 65+ age group are being met.

Program coordinators/managers should include this information when creating or updating program plans for individual programs. An Age Segment Analysis can also be incorporated into Mini Business Plans for comprehensive program planning.

5.4.2 Program Lifecycle

A Program Lifecycle Analysis involves reviewing each program offered by the municipality to determine the stage of growth or decline for each. This provides a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall mix of programs managed by the IYB to ensure that an appropriate number of programs are “fresh” and that relatively few programs, if any, need to be discontinued. This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data but, rather, is based on staff members’ knowledge of their program areas. The following table shows the percentage distribution of the various life cycle categories of the IYB’s programs. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lifecycle Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Actual Program Distribution</th>
<th>Recommended Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>New program; modest participation</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>26% total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-Off</td>
<td>Rapid participation growth</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>50-60% total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth</td>
<td>Moderate, but consistent population growth</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>52% total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>Slow participation growth</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40% total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturation</td>
<td>Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>22% total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline</td>
<td>Declining participation</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0-10% total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total number of programs falling into the Introduction, Take-off, and Growth lifecycle stages is 26%, falling short of the recommended distribution of 50-60%. It is useful to have a strong percentage in these early stages to make sure there is innovation in programming and that the organization is responding to changes in community need.

Eventually, programs move into the Mature stage, so having an ample amount of programs in the first three stages helps to ensure there is a pipeline for fresh programs. Currently, 52% of programs are in the Mature stage. This is above the recommended level and over time may indicate a lack of responsive design and stagnation in programming.

About 22% of all programs are in the Decline and Saturation stage, while the recommended distribution is that no greater than 10% of programs fall into these two stages. This could indicate that underperforming programs are
sustained for too long. If a program is in Saturation stage, it may not necessarily need to be retired – it could be that it is a legacy program that is beloved by the community. However, it is useful to look at attendance trends – do you have fewer participants over the last few offerings? If so, the community may be looking for a different type of program. While there are exceptions, most programs in the Saturation and Decline stages are ready to retire.

Staff should complete a Program Lifecycle Analysis on an annual basis and ensure that the percentage distribution closely aligns with desired performance. Furthermore, the municipality could include annual performance measures for each core program area to track participation growth, customer retention, and percentage of new programs as an incentive for innovation and alignment with community trends.

### 5.4.3 Program Classification

Conducting a classification of services informs how each program serves the overall organization mission, the goals and objectives of each core program area, and how the program should be funded with regard to tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. How a program is classified can help to determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies.

Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides a public benefit versus a private benefit. Public benefit can be described as everyone receiving the same level of benefit with equal access, whereas private benefit can be described as the user receiving exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives.

PROS uses a classification method based on three indicators: Essential, Important, and Value-Added. Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, financial sustainability, personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, and access by participants. The following table describes each of the three PROS program classifications in these terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>ESSENTIAL Programs</strong></th>
<th><strong>IMPORTANT Programs</strong></th>
<th><strong>VALUE-ADDED Programs</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment</strong></td>
<td>• High public expectation</td>
<td>• High public expectation</td>
<td>• High individual and interest group expectation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Sustainability</strong></td>
<td>• Free, or nominal fee tailored to public needs</td>
<td>• Fees cover some direct costs</td>
<td>• Fees cover most direct and indirect costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Requires public funding</td>
<td>• Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target</td>
<td>• Some public funding as appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefits (i.e., health, safety, protection of assets)</strong></td>
<td>• Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)</td>
<td>• Public and individual benefit</td>
<td>• Primarily individual benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Competition in the Market</strong></td>
<td>• Limited or no alternative providers</td>
<td>• Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need</td>
<td>• Alternative providers readily available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td>• Open access by all</td>
<td>• Open access</td>
<td>• Limited access to specific users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Limited access to specific users** |

Figure 18-Program Classification Definitions
Another way to describe these three classifications is to analyze the degree to which the program provides a community versus an individual benefit. These categories can then be correlated to the Essential, Important, and Value-added classifications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Typical CR</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I PURE COMMUNITY</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
<td>Basic services intended to be accessible and of benefit to all; supported wholly or significantly by tax subsidies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II MOSTLY COMMUNITY</td>
<td>25-50%</td>
<td>Benefit accrued to both the general public and individual interests, but to a significant community advantage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III MIX</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
<td>Benefit accrued to both individual and general public interests, but to a significant individual advantage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV MOSTLY INDIVIDUAL</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
<td>Nearly all benefit received by individual(s), with benefit provided to the community only in a narrow sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V PURE INDIVIDUAL</td>
<td>100%+</td>
<td>Exclusive benefit received by individual(s) and not the general public; individual pays at least the full cost of service provision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table shows how the two classification systems correlate, and includes example programs that fall into each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I Essential</th>
<th>II Important</th>
<th>III Value-Added</th>
<th>IV Pure Individual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PURE COMMUNITY</td>
<td>MOSTLY COMMUNITY</td>
<td>MIX</td>
<td>MOSTLY INDIVIDUAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic services</td>
<td>Benefit accrued to</td>
<td>Benefit accrued to</td>
<td>Nearly all benefit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intended to be</td>
<td>both the general</td>
<td>both individual and</td>
<td>received by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accessible and of</td>
<td>public and</td>
<td>general public</td>
<td>individual(s), with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benefit to all;</td>
<td>individual</td>
<td>interests, but to a</td>
<td>benefit provided to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supported wholly</td>
<td>interests, but to</td>
<td>significant</td>
<td>the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or significantly by</td>
<td>a significant</td>
<td>individual advantage.</td>
<td>only in a narrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tax subsidies.</td>
<td>community</td>
<td></td>
<td>sense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass Park Day Camp</td>
<td>Public Swim</td>
<td>Youth Soccer</td>
<td>Beginner Tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Tennis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Cost Recovery        | 0%  | 25%   | 50%   | 75%  | 100% | 100%+ |

Figure 19-Program Cost Recovery by Classification Definitions

Figure 20-Program Cost Recovery by Classifications
With assistance from City of Ithaca staff, a classification of programs and services was conducted for all of the recreation programs offered by the municipality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Value-Added</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURE COMMUNITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>MOSTLY COMMUNITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>MIX</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cass Park Day Camp</td>
<td>• Public swim</td>
<td>• Pottery classes (school age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stewart Park Day Camp</td>
<td>• Swim Lessons</td>
<td>• Theatre classes (school age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Counselor in training program</td>
<td>• Ice Cream Bowl Event</td>
<td>• Art Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tin Can (Theatre Troupe)</td>
<td>• Youth Council</td>
<td>• Band &amp; Orchestra Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Festival Mile</td>
<td>• Public Skating</td>
<td>• Sailing Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Junior Olympics</td>
<td>• Skating Lessons</td>
<td>• Theatre Camp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pitch Hit and Run</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Theatre classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Punt Pass and Kick</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Play Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rollerskating</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Tot Spot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Screen Free Week</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Baseball/softball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21—Program Classification Distribution

5.4.4 Cost of Service & Cost Recovery

Cost recovery targets should be identified for each Core Program Area, at minimum, and for specific programs or events where possible. The previously identified Core Program Areas would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics, which would theoretically group programs with similar cost recovery and subsidy goals. Determining cost recovery performance and using it to inform pricing decisions involves a three-step process:

1. Classify all programs and services based on the public or private benefit they provide (as completed in the previous section).
2. Conduct a Cost of Service Analysis to calculate the full cost of each program.
3. Establish a cost recovery percentage, through municipal policy, for each program or program type based on the outcomes of the previous two steps, and adjust program prices accordingly.
The following provides more detail on steps 2 & 3.

**Understanding the Full Cost of Service**

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting needs to be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and program staff should be trained on this process.

A Cost of Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (i.e., program-specific) and indirect (i.e., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost of Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program, but provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs. The figure below illustrates the common types of costs that must be accounted for in a Cost of Service Analysis.

![Figure 22-Program Cost Recovery Model](image)

**Figure 22-Program Cost Recovery Model**

The methodology for determining the total Cost of Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants
- Number of tasks performed
- Number of consumable units
- Number of service calls
- Number of events
- Required time for offering program/service.
Agencies use Cost of Service Analyses to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by the municipality between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost of Service totals have been calculated.

**Current Cost Recovery**
With regard to City of Ithaca programs, services, and events, methods to measure and document cost recovery are tracked well in some areas, and not as well in others. For example, although staff track and price programs based on cost recovery goals for Arts programs, cost recovery goals are only sometimes used in pricing for Sports, Aquatics, and Rink core program areas. The below table shows current cost recovery goals for those core program areas that have a goal in place. The table also presents recommended cost recovery goals, based on best-practice, that are in line with parks and recreation systems of a similar size. Setting, tracking, and reaching cost recovery goals for every core program area will help the municipality justify program expense and make a case for additional offerings in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Program Area</th>
<th>Current Cost Recovery Goal (%)</th>
<th>Recommended Cost Recovery Goal (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatics</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rink</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>75-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp &amp; Summer</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Events</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>25-75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS (Adult)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS (Youth)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Development</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0-25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the previous table, cost recovery targets can vary based on the core program area, and even at the program level within a core program area. Several variables can influence the cost recovery target, including lifecycle stage, demographic served, and perhaps most important, program classification.

**Cost Recovery Best Practice**
Cost recovery targets should reflect the degree to which a program provides a public versus private good. Programs providing public benefits (i.e. Essential programs) should be subsidized more by the municipality; programs providing private benefits (i.e., Value-Added programs) should seek to recover costs and/or generate revenue for other services. To help plan and implement cost recovery policies, the consulting team has developed the following definitions to help classify specific programs within program areas.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>ESSENTIAL Programs</th>
<th>IMPORTANT Programs</th>
<th>VALUE-ADDED Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Part of the organizational mission</td>
<td>• Important to the community</td>
<td>• Enhanced community offerings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Serves a majority of the community</td>
<td>• Serves large portions of the community</td>
<td>• Serves niche groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• “We must offer this program”</td>
<td>• “We should offer this program”</td>
<td>• “It is nice to offer this program”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Cost Recovery</td>
<td>• None to Moderate</td>
<td>• Moderate</td>
<td>• High to Complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Subsidy</td>
<td>• High to Complete</td>
<td>• Moderate</td>
<td>• Little to None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 24-Cost Recovery Best Practices**

Programs in the Essential category are critical to achieving the organizational mission and providing community-wide benefits and, therefore, generally receive priority for tax-dollar subsidization. Programs falling into the Important or Value-Added classifications generally represent programs that receive lower priority for subsidization. Important programs contribute to the organizational mission but are not essential to it; therefore, cost recovery for these programs should be high (i.e., at least 80% overall). Value Added programs are not critical to the mission and should be prevented from drawing upon limited public funding, so overall cost recovery for these programs should be near or in excess of 100%.

**5.4.5 Pricing**

The pricing of programs should be established based on the Cost of Service Analysis, overlaid onto programs areas or specific events, and strategically adjusted according to market factors and/or policy goals.

Overall, the degree to which pricing strategies are used currently is fairly robust. Current pricing tactics include age, family/household status, resident/nonresident rates, group discounts, competitor benchmarks or market rates, cost recovery goals, and ability to pay.

The few pricing strategies not currently in use are weekday/weekend rates, prime/non-prime time rates, and different pricing for different locations. These strategies are useful to help stabilize usage patterns and help with cost recovery for higher quality amenities and services.

Additionally, some of pricing strategies used for one core program area may be useful in another area as well. For example, family/household pricing may be useful for Special Events or Camps & Summer Programs. Other example pricing strategies from peer agencies include military, emergency responder personnel and police, or teacher discounts. Finally, the consulting team recommends that all core program areas use cost recovery goals as a factor in determining pricing.

Staff should continue to monitor the effectiveness of the various pricing strategies they employ and make adjustments as necessary within the policy frameworks that guide the overall pricing philosophies. It is also important to continue monitoring for yearly competitor and other service providers benchmarking.
5.5 Program Strategy Recommendations

In general, the City of Ithaca’s program staff should begin a cycle of evaluating programs on both individual merit as well as the program mix as a whole. This can be completed at one time on an annual basis, or in batches at key seasonal points of the year, as long as each program is checked once per year. The following tools and strategies can help facilitate this evaluation process:

5.5.1 Mini Business Plans
The planning team recommends that Mini Business Plans (2-3 pages) for each Core Program Area be updated on a yearly basis. These plans should evaluate the Core Program Area based on meeting the outcomes desired for participants, cost recovery, percentage of the market and business controls, cost of service, pricing strategy for the next year, and marketing strategies that are to be implemented. If developed regularly and consistently, they can be effective tools for budget construction and justification processes in addition to marketing and communication tools.

5.5.2 Program Evaluation Cycle
Using the Age Segment and Lifecycle analysis, and other established criteria, program staff should evaluate programs on an annual basis to determine program mix. This can be incorporated into the Mini Business Plan process. A diagram of the program evaluation cycle can be found below:

5.5.3 Program Decision-making Matrix
When developing program plans and strategies, it is useful to consider all of the Core Program Area and individual program analyses discussed in this Program Assessment. Lifecycle, Age Segment, Classification, and Cost Recovery Goals should all be tracked, and this information along with the latest demographic trends and community input should be factors that lead to program decision-making. A simple, easy-to-use tool similar to the table below will help compare programs and prioritize resources using multiple data points, rather than relying solely on cost recovery. In addition, this analysis will help staff make an informed, objective case to the public when a program in decline, but beloved by a few, is retired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Core Area</th>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>Age Segment</th>
<th>Lifecycle</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Cost Recovery</th>
<th>Other Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Figure 25-Program Evaluation Cycle

Figure 26-Program Decision-Making Matrix
5.5.4 Program Standards and Performance Measurement

The relationship between meeting the needs of the community, achieving the organization mission, and executing service delivery is of critical importance. With an understanding of this important dynamic, the following section provides an analysis of the service system and includes building on the foundation that already exists within the municipality’s recreation programs and events. Based on the consulting team’s observations, and staff input, the municipality’s program offerings are solid for a system of its size, but enhancements to performance management practices would yield overall improvements to the services provided to the community. This section is intended to provide resources and insight to move the municipality to a higher level of sophistication in quality management.

The practice of using program standards is essential for agencies desiring to perform at high levels and that aspire to be community and industry leaders. One of the most significant issues in managing a recreation program system includes the challenges faced with the complexity associated with thousands of service transactions, in-person and online, from multiple staff members, within the organization and with outside partners, and dealing with a diverse audience at a variety of locations within the system.

Currently, the City of Ithaca measures participation numbers and participant to staff ratios, as well as customer retention rate. Additional metrics to consider include program cancellation rate and customer retention rate, which can be captured at registration or on the program survey.

Surveys can be very useful indicators of success if used in the right way – keeping the number of questions to a minimum and avoiding survey fatigue. The City of Ithaca currently conducts post-program surveys and in-park surveys. Additional ways to collect customer feedback include a pre-program survey (used with a post-program survey to measure change), recurring user surveys, lost customer surveys, non-customer surveys, and focus groups. Digital technology also provides for using crowdsourcing intelligence tools such as Peak Democracy, Chaordix, and Mind Mixer to collect customer feedback. While this information is useful in tracking satisfaction throughout the year, it is also a good idea to regularly conduct a statistically valid survey that will serve to substantiate the more informal surveys to use with leadership and key decision-makers.

Quality Management Methods

In addition to measuring satisfaction, it is useful to have procedures in place to ensure that core program standards are being met across the spectrum of program offerings. This is particularly important when managing part-time, contractor, seasonal, and, where applicable, partnership staff. While all staff should be trained to perform to a core set of standards, it is useful to have extra training and checks in place for staff who are not as regularly exposed to the standards as full-time staff are. For staff who are delivering programs that require an extra layer of health and safety knowledge or training, such as vehicle drivers, training and quality checks should be extra rigorous.

Currently, the City of Ithaca has systems in place to:

- Check on the quality of instructors
- Develop lesson plans (or, for some programs, curriculum plans)
- Train staff on customer service skills
- Train staff on basic and enhanced life safety
- Provide specialty skill training
- Encourage and support continuing education
- Provide diversity training
- Complete performance reviews for all full-time and part-time staff
The City of Ithaca has the following systems, but needs to do a better job of:

- Regularly and consistently updating policies and procedures
- Updating its performance evaluation system
- Updating qualifications of front office staff in basic life safety

The City of Ithaca needs or should consider implementing the following performance/quality standards:

- Marketing training
- Training on calculating total cost of facility operations and cost of service
- Performance reviews for all seasonal staff

5.5.5 Program Standards Recommendations

The planning team recommends the following regarding program standards:

Implement additional survey methods
Identify performance metrics and goals. Use additional survey methods to track performance against goals; incorporate this information into the Mini Business Plan process.

Provide greater consistency and breadth of quality management
Ensure that policies, procedures and performance evaluation processes are updated on a consistent basis and that all staff are trained in basic life safety. Implement performance reviews for seasonal staff. Provide marketing training to 1-2 staff members, and cost of facility/service training to all staff members. Assess training needs to help fulfill recommendations in the program assessment and master plan process and implement additional training of staff to meet those needs.
CHAPTER SIX - LEVEL OF SERVICE AND EQUITY MAPPING

6.1 Overview

Level of Service (LOS) standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population and support investment decisions related to parks, facilities, and amenities. LOS standards can and will change over time as industry trends change and demographics of a community shift.

The consulting team evaluated park facility standards using a combination of resources. These resources included market trends, demographic data, recreation activity participation rates, community and stakeholder input, NRPA PRORAGIS data, the statistically valid community survey, and general observations. This information allowed standards to be customized to the City of Ithaca.

It is important to note that these LOS standards should be viewed as a guide. The standards are to be coupled with conventional wisdom and judgment related to the particular situation and needs of the community. By applying these standards to the population of Ithaca, gaps or surpluses in park and facility types are revealed.

6.2 Per Capita “Gaps”

According to the LOS, there are multiple needs to be met in Ithaca to properly serve the community today and in the future. The existing level of service meets and exceeds best practices and recommended service levels for many items; however, there are a few areas that do not meet recommended standards. It is also important to take into consideration existing amenity condition and lifecycle stage. For example, although the City of Ithaca meets the standards for overall park acreage, several of the smaller neighborhood parks offer little to no amenities and/or are difficult to access. So, a focus on neighborhood park acreage development and enhancement will be important for the municipality.

For outdoor amenities, the City of Ithaca shows a shortage of adult baseball fields, sand volleyball, and splash pads (or interactive water play features). Additionally, with current population projections, there will be a LOS need in 2022 for softball fields and multi-purpose fields if the inventory remains the same. It should be noted that as of the writing of this document, there are many trails planned for the surrounding area that are yet to be developed which will increase the overall LOS. In terms of indoor space, the City of Ithaca has a small shortage currently and that figure will increase over time.

It is also important to note that many non-residents use City of Ithaca parks (especially Cass Park and Stewart Park). Since the large regional parks are destination facilities, the park serves people outside the city limits and sometimes outside of Tompkins County. Consideration for the increased demand on regional park acres should be kept in mind as the municipality continues to work toward meeting its LOS standards. Additionally, there are other park and recreation providers in and around the greater Ithaca area. The LOS chart (Figure 27) indicates the other providers that contribute to the greater Ithaca parks system. It is important for the City of Ithaca to understand its current contributions to the existing system as it can use the percentage it adds to overall park acreage, amenities, indoor square footage, etc. to help make future parks system enhancements/improvements.

The City of Ithaca standards are based upon population figures for 2017 and 2022, the latest estimates available at the time of analysis.
## City of Ithaca - Level of Service Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>City of Ithaca</th>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Colleges</th>
<th>State Parks</th>
<th>Other Municipalities</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total Inventory</th>
<th>Current Service Level based upon population</th>
<th>Recommended Service Level</th>
<th>Revised for Local Service Area</th>
<th>2017 Inventory - Developed Facilities</th>
<th>2017 Facility Standards</th>
<th>2022 Facility Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PARKS</td>
<td>Neighborhood Parks</td>
<td>26,42</td>
<td>3,10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36,00</td>
<td>11,10</td>
<td>41,20</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional Parks</td>
<td>261,10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>624.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,085.0</td>
<td>34,10</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Park Areas</td>
<td>602,00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,00</td>
<td>624.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,040.0</td>
<td>547,00</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undeveloped Areas</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>Forest Trails</td>
<td>11,69</td>
<td>3,10</td>
<td>30,00</td>
<td>1,646.6</td>
<td>36,00</td>
<td>13,60</td>
<td>2,919.6</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unpaved Trails</td>
<td>12,00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3,20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21,10</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Trails</td>
<td>23,69</td>
<td>15,40</td>
<td>36,22</td>
<td>12,40</td>
<td>3,40</td>
<td>65,10</td>
<td>21,10</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Needs Standard</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Outdoor Facilities

| Recreation/Gymnasium (Square Feet) | 42,000 | 11,125.0 | - | - | - | 2,25 | 1,00 | 1,00 | Needs Standard | - | Needed/Estimated | 100 | 2,656 | Square Feet |

### Notes:
- Population based on City of Ithaca population.
- Multi-purpose fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, and playgrounds are reduced based upon public availability.
- Recreational gymnasiu square footage is based on average of .5,600 square feet per gymnasium and is reduced to 25%.
6.3 Service Area Analysis/Equity Mapping

Service area maps and standards assist management staff and key leadership in assessing where services are offered, how equitable the service distribution is across the community, and how effective the service is as it compares to the demographic densities. In addition, looking at guidelines with reference to population enables the municipality to assess gaps in services, where facilities are needed, or where an area is over saturated. This allows the municipality to make appropriate capital improvement decisions based upon need for the system as a whole and the ramifications that may have on a specific area.

The maps contain several circles. The circles represent the recommended per capita LOS found on the previous page. The circles’ size varies dependent upon the quantity of a given amenity (or acre type) located at one site and the surrounding population density. The bigger the circle, the more people a given amenity or park acre serves and vice versa. Additionally, some circles are shaded a different color which represents the “owner” of that particular amenity or acre type. There is a legend in the bottom left-hand corner of each map depicting the various owners included in the equity mapping process. The areas of overlapping circles represents adequate service, or duplicated service, and the areas with no shading represents the areas not served by a given amenity or park acre type.

It should be noted that similar providers included the school system, Cornell University, Ithaca College, state parks, and other greenspace owned by the City of Ithaca. In some instances, facilities/amenities located at Cornell University were not considered in this mapping exercise given the private use nature of those facilities.

Figures 28-38 show select service area maps. In all, equity maps were developed for the following major categories:

6.3.1 Park Acres
- Neighborhood parks
- Paved trails
- Regional parks

6.3.2 Facilities/Amenities
- Adult Baseball Fields
- Basketball Courts
- Dog Parks
- Indoor Recreation Space/Gymnasiums
- Multi-Purpose Fields
- Outdoor Pools
- Picnic Shelters
- Playgrounds
- Skate Parks
- Softball Fields
- Splash Pads
- Tennis Courts
- Youth Baseball Fields

6.4 Equity Mapping “Gaps” and Conclusions

The City of Ithaca parks system is not equally distributed within the city limits. Many amenities are located on the northern half leaving several gap areas in the southern half and especially in the southeast part of the city. Since Cass Park is located on the north part of the city and contains the active sports field and diamonds, it may be necessary to expand partnerships with the school system and other providers to make additional fields available for public use. A similar concept can be applied for basketball courts, indoor recreation space, and playgrounds (among other recreation amenities as demonstrated by the maps). In terms of park land, the neighborhood parks have a gap in the eastern side of the city limits and in the northwest (even though the northwest is served by large regional parks). And as exhibited by the paved trails map, there are many trails within the system; however, connectivity throughout the system that connects the entire system is lacking.
6.4.1 Neighborhood Parks

Figure 28 - Neighborhood Parks Equity Map
6.4.2 Walking Distance from Parks Within City of Ithaca Boundaries

Figure 29-Walking Distance (in feet) From Parks within City of Ithaca Boundaries
6.4.3 Paved Trails

Figure 30-Paved Trails Equity Map
6.4.4 Adult Baseball Fields

Figure 31-Adult Baseball Fields Equity Map
6.4.5 Basketball Courts

Figure 32 - Basketball Courts Equity Map
6.4.6 Indoor Recreation Space/Gymnasiums

Figure 33-Indoor Recreation Space/Gymnasiums Equity Map
6.4.7 Multi-Purpose Fields

Figure 34-Multi-Purpose Fields Equity Map
6.4.8 Playgrounds

Figure 35 - Playgrounds Equity Map
6.4.9 Softball Fields

![Softball Fields Equity Map](image)

Figure 36-Softball Fields Equity Map
6.4.10 Splash Pads

Figure 37-Splash Pads Equity Map
6.4.11 Tennis Courts

Figure 38-Tennis Courts Equity Map
CHAPTER SEVEN - GOVERNANCE, FINANCING, AND FUNDING

As part of the Master Plan, the consultant team reviewed the existing governance within the system (with an increased focus on Stewart and Cass Parks). Specifically, the consultant team examined organizational structure, operational efficiencies, policy development, and overall process effectiveness. The waterfront parks are a great asset to the community and there is much interest as to how they are preserved for years to come. However, it should be noted that the City of Ithaca parks system does not consist of two parks; instead, there is a need to identify functional organization for the entire parks system including neighborhood parks and natural areas.

7.1 Governance

As mentioned previously in this Master Plan, the City of Ithaca parks and recreation system is managed by a network of entities in lieu of a dedicated parks and recreation department. For example, the Department of Public Works (DPW) maintains much of the parks system and the City of Ithaca Forester supervises most employees that maintain parks while the Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB) employs staff that maintains Cass Park.

Since there is not a dedicated parks department, communication and a common vision is imperative to the success of the future Ithaca parks and recreation system. The following sections provide a list of the organizations involved with some level of oversight/influence of the parks and recreation system while also discussing detailed recommendations regarding volunteer and partner management.

7.1.1 Recreation

The following entities represent recreation operations within the City of Ithaca.

- Recreation Partnership
  - City of Ithaca, Town of Ithaca, Towns of Caroline, Danby, Dryden, Enfield, Groton, Newfield, Ulysses (including students who attend Trumansburg Schools), or the Village of Lansing
- Ithaca Youth Bureau (IYB)/Cass Park
- Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC)
- Southside Community Center
- Recreation Support Services (RSS)
  - RSS is funded by the Tompkins County Youth Services, the City of Ithaca, the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities, the New York State Division for Youth, and Tompkins County Mental Health Services.

7.1.2 Facility Support

The following entities represent facility support within the City of Ithaca. Facility support refers to financial contributions but also refers to assistance with maintenance, stewardship, and planning for facilities.

- Cascadilla Boat Club
- Cass Park Sports Groups
- Cayuga Bird Club
- Department of Public Works (Streets and Facilities Division)
- Friends of Ithaca Youth Bureau
- Friends of Newman Golf Course
- Friends of Stewart Park
- Ithaca Children’s Garden
- Wharton Studio Museum
7.1.3 Volunteer and Partnership Management

Given today’s realities and the many organizations that are involved in the City of Ithaca parks system, it is required to seek productive and meaningful partnerships with both community organizations and individuals to deliver quality and seamless services to their residents. These relationships should be mutually beneficial to each party to better meet overall community needs and expand the positive impact of the organization’s mission. Effective partnerships and meaningful volunteerism are key strategy areas for the municipality to meet the needs of the community in the years to come.

Current Volunteer Management

When managed with respect and used strategically, volunteers can serve as the primary advocates for the parks and their offerings. In addition, engaging and rewarding volunteers will enhance community ownership and pride in the recreation programs and facilities the City of Ithaca provides. Tracking volunteer hours can be used in budget discussions showing how well the municipality is able to leverage limited resources. While the City occasionally tracks individual volunteers, it does not track volunteer hours nor does it have a formally adopted volunteer policy.

Best Practices in Volunteer Management

In developing the policy, some best practices that the City should be aware of in managing volunteers include:

- Cross-train volunteers to expose them to multiple organizational functions and increase their skills. This can also increase their utility, allowing for more flexibility in making work assignments, and can increase their municipal appreciation and understanding.

- Appoint a Volunteer Coordinator (a designated staff member with volunteer management responsibility) and associated staff stay fully informed about the strategic direction of the organization overall, including strategic initiatives for all divisions. Periodically identify, evaluate, or revise specific tactics the volunteer services program should undertake to support the larger organizational mission.

- Develop a good reward and recognition system. This is a key part of maintaining the desirability of volunteerism in the organization. The consultant team recommends using tactics similar to those found in frequent flier programs, wherein volunteers can use their volunteer hours to obtain early registration at programs, or discounted pricing at certain programs, rentals or events, or any other municipal function. Identify and summarize volunteer recognition policies in a Volunteer Policy document.

- Regularly update volunteer position descriptions. Include an overview of the onboarding process in the Volunteer Policy, including the procedure for creating a new position.

- Ensure there is a process for off-boarding volunteers in the Volunteer Policy to ensure that there is formal documentation of resignation or termination. Also include ways to monitor and track reasons for resignation/termination and perform exit interviews with outgoing volunteers when able.

- In addition to number of volunteers and volunteer hours, categorize and track volunteerism by type and extent of work, such as:

  - **Regular volunteers**: Those volunteers whose work is considered to be continuous, provided their work performance is satisfactory and there is a continuing need for their services.

  - **Special event volunteers**: Volunteers who help out with a particular event with no expectation that they will return after the event is complete.

  - **Episodic volunteers**: Volunteers who help out with a particular project type on a recurring or irregular basis with no expectation that they will return for other duties.
Volunteer interns: Volunteers who have committed to work for the organization to fulfill a specific educational learning requirement.

Community service volunteers: Volunteers who are volunteering over a specified period of time to fulfill a community service requirement.

- Encourage employees to volunteer themselves in the community. Exposure of staff to the community in different roles (including those not related to parks and recreation) will raise awareness of the organization and its volunteer program. It also helps staff understand the role and expectations of a volunteer if they can experience it for themselves.

Recreation Program Partnerships
The City of Ithaca currently works closely with several different types of partners throughout the community. While a database is used to track partnerships at Cass Park, a complete municipal- or organization-wide database should be developed to track all partners and partnerships. As with tracking of volunteer hours, tracking partnerships helps show leadership making budget decisions how well the staff are able to leverage resources.

Many times partnerships are inequitable to the public organization and do not produce reasonable shared benefits between parties. To mitigate this, it is recommended that the municipality adopt a formal partnership policy, identifying a few major partnership types and ideal, measurable outcomes for each type of partnership.

The recommended policy would promote fairness and equity within the existing and future partnerships while helping staff to manage against potential internal and external conflicts. Certain partnership principles must be adopted by the municipality for existing and future partnerships to work effectively. These partnership principles are as follows:

- All partnerships require a working agreement with measurable outcomes and will be evaluated on a regular basis. This should include reports to the organization on the performance and outcomes of the partnership.
- All partnerships should track costs associated with the partnership investment to demonstrate the shared level of equity.
- All partnerships should maintain a culture that focuses on ongoing collaborative planning, regular communications, and scheduled reporting on performance and outcomes.

Additional partnerships can be pursued and developed with other public entities such as neighboring cities, colleges, state or federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations, as well as with private, for-profit entities. There are recommended standard policies and practices that will apply to any partnership and those that are unique to relationships with private, for-profit entities.

**POLICY BEST PRACTICE FOR ALL PARTNERSHIPS**

All partnerships developed and maintained by the City of Ithaca should adhere to common policy requirements. These include:

- Each partner will meet with or report to municipal staff on a regular basis to plan and share activity-based costs and equity invested.
- Partners will establish measurable outcomes and work through key issues to focus on for the coming year to meet the desired outcomes.
- Each partner will focus on meeting a balance of equity agreed to and track investment costs accordingly.
• Measurable outcomes will be reviewed quarterly and shared with each partner, with adjustments made as needed.
• A working partnership agreement will be developed and monitored together on a quarterly or as-needed basis.
• Each partner will assign a liaison to serve each partnership organization for communication and planning purposes.
• If conflicts arise between partners, the municipal-appointed lead, along with the other partner’s highest ranking officer assigned to the agreement, will meet to resolve the issue(s) in a timely manner. Any exchange of money or traded resources will be made based on the terms of the partnership agreement.
• Each partner will meet with the other partner’s respective board or managing representatives annually, to share updates and outcomes of the partnership agreement.

**Policy Recommendations for Public/Private Partnerships**

The recommended policies and practices for public/private partnerships that may include businesses, private groups, private associations, or individuals who desire to make a profit from use of municipal facilities or programs are detailed below. These can also apply to partnerships where a private party wishes to develop a facility on park property, to provide a service on publically-owned property, or who has a contract with the organization to provide a task or service on the organization’s behalf at public facilities. These unique partnership principles are as follows:

• Upon entering into an agreement with a private business, group, association or individual, municipal staff and political leadership must recognize that they must allow the private entity to meet their financial objectives within reasonable parameters that protect the municipality’s mission, goals, and integrity.
• As an outcome of the partnership, the City of Ithaca must receive a designated fee (such as a percentage of gross revenue dollars less sales tax on a regular basis), as outlined in the contract agreement.
• The working agreement of the partnership must establish a set of measurable outcomes to be achieved, as well as the tracking method of how those outcomes will be monitored by the City and the organization. The outcomes will include standards of quality; public access and equity; affordability; public benefits of the partnership; financial reports; customer satisfaction; payments to the City; and overall coordination with the City for the services rendered.
• Depending on the level of investment made by the private contractor, the partnership agreement can be limited to months, a year or multiple years.
• If applicable, the private contractor will provide a working management plan that they will follow to ensure the outcomes desired by the City of Ithaca. The management plan can and will be negotiated, if necessary. Monitoring of the management plan will be the responsibility of both partners. The organization must allow the contractor to operate freely in their best interest, as long as the outcomes are achieved and the terms of the partnership agreement are adhered to.
• The private contractor cannot lobby organization advisory or governing boards for renewal of a contract. Any such action will be cause for termination. All negotiations must be with the Mayor or his/her designee.
• The organization has the right to advertise for private contracted partnership services, or negotiate on an individual basis with a bid process based on the professional level of the service to be provided.
• If conflicts arise between both partners, the highest-ranking officers from both sides will try to resolve the issue before going to each partner’s legal counsels. If none can be achieved, the partnership shall be dissolved.

**Public/Not-for-Profit Partnership Policy**

The partnership policy for public/not-for-profit partnerships between the City of Ithaca and the not-for-profit community of service providers is provided below. This relationship relates to associations working together in the development and management of facilities and programs within the City of Ithaca parks system. These principles are as follows:

- The not-for-profit partner agency or group involved with the City of Ithaca must first recognize that they are in a partnership with the City to provide a public service or good; conversely, the City must manage the partnership in the best interest of the community as a whole, not in the best interest of the not-for-profit agency.
- The partnership working agreement will be year-to-year and evaluated based on the outcomes determined for the partnership agencies or groups during the planning process at the start of the partnership year. At the planning workshop, each partner will share their needs for the partnership and outcomes desired. Each partner will outline their level of investment in the partnership as it applies to money, people, time, equipment, and the amount of capital investment they will make in the partnership for the coming year.
- Each partner will focus on meeting a balance of 50% equity or as negotiated and agreed upon as established in the planning session with the City of Ithaca. Each partner will demonstrate to the other the method each will use to track costs, how it will be reported on a monthly basis, and any revenue earned.
- Each partner will appoint a liaison to serve each partnering agency for communication purposes.
- Measurable outcomes will be reviewed quarterly and shared with each partner with adjustments made as needed.
- Each partner will act as an agent for the other partner to think collectively as one, not two separate agencies. Items such as financial information will be shared if requested by either partner when requested to support a better understanding of the resources available to the partnership.
- Each partner will meet the other’s respective board on a yearly basis to share results of the partnership agreement.
- If conflicts arise between both partners, the highest-ranking officers from both sides will try to resolve the issue before going to each partner’s legal counsels. If none can be achieved, the partnership shall be dissolved.

**Partnership Opportunities**

The City of Ithaca currently utilizes a strong partnership network. These recommendations are both an overview of existing partnership opportunities available to the municipality, as well as a suggested approach to organizing partnership pursuits. This is not an exhaustive list of all potential partnerships that can be developed, but can be used as a tool of reference for the organization to develop its own priorities in partnership development. The following five areas of focus are recommended:

1. **Operational Partners**: Other entities and organizations that can support the efforts of the municipality to maintain facilities and assets, promote amenities and park use, support site needs, provide programs and events, and/or ensure the integrity of natural/cultural resources via in-kind labor, equipment, or materials.

2. **Vendor Partners**: Service providers and/or contractors that can gain brand association and awareness as a preferred vendor or supporter of the municipality, or IYB specifically, in exchange for reduced rates, services, or some other agreed upon benefit.
3. **Service Partners**: Nonprofit organizations and/or friends groups that support the efforts of the organization to provide programs and events, and/or serve specific constituents in the community collaboratively.

4. **Co-Branding Partners**: Private, for-profit organizations that can gain brand association and awareness as a supporter of the municipality in exchange for sponsorship or co-branded programs, events, marketing and promotional campaigns, and/or advertising opportunities.

5. **Resource Development Partners**: A private, nonprofit organization with the primary purpose to leverage private sector resources, grants, other public funding opportunities, and resources from individuals and groups within the community to support the goals and objectives of the organization on mutually agreed strategic initiatives.

**Volunteer and Partnership Recommendations**

The planning team recommends the following regarding volunteers and partnerships:

**TRACK VOLUNTEERS, VOLUNTEER HOURS, AND PARTNERS**

Establish a database that tracks all volunteers, volunteer hours, partners, and partner resources leveraged (dollar value of partnering, if possible). Assign volunteer and partner tracking responsibility to one staff person; include this in the job description.

**ESTABLISH FORMAL VOLUNTEER AND PARTNERSHIP POLICIES AND AGREEMENTS**

Following the best practice listed in the previous section, establish volunteer and partner policies and agreements that are tailored to the different types of volunteers and partnerships the municipality encounters. Assign management of the policies and agreements to one staff person and include this in his or her job description.

**7.1.4 Waterfront Park Governance Review**

Stemming from the discussion of who all has some part of operating and maintaining the existing parks system, the consultant team analyzed the existing parks system governance. Two workshops were held to discuss the direction for the waterfront parks (specifically) and how they should be managed within the municipality’s parks system. The visioning sessions included municipal staff and elected officials, Tompkins County staff and legislators, Town of Ithaca representatives, and supporting Friends Groups. Three main questions were posed during the workshops:

1. What role do you see Stewart and Cass Park playing within the system?
2. What is your vision for the waterfront in general?
3. What is your vision for organization, coordination, etc.?

As a result of an in-depth discussion around the future of Cass and Stewart Parks, the group began to converge on a vision for a future system that managed the waterfront parks as a whole. The connectivity throughout the waterfront area is a strong attribute and it is seen as a key component to the waterfront system. In addition, the waterfront area should be seen as an economic catalyst which should drive community planning.

In terms of management, a couple of models were discussed for the group to consider. After much discussion, it was determined that a conservancy or commission model may work well given the “players” already involved operating and managing parks and recreation services in and around the City of Ithaca. Conservancies are used all over the country and have proven to be effective governance models for managing large parks or a group of park sites. One negative aspect of conservancies is that they may take several years to fully operate at their potential. Given this and the current management set-up of parks and recreation services within the city, an inter-municipal commission model may be a good starting point, and it can evolve into a conservancy over time. The commission model can be
considered a more formal model of how the municipality is currently operating. There are key partners within the model and each are responsible for different aspects of the system.

7.1.5 Governance Recommendation
Given the number of entities currently supporting the City of Ithaca parks system, the following recommendation is provided for future governance.

Park Commission
It is recommended that the City of Ithaca move toward an inter-municipal Commission that would oversee the waterfront district. A Commission brings several entities together to form a unified form of governance. The number of Park Commissioners would be dependent upon the financial contribution breakdown between the involved entities. For example, if the Commission is comprised of City of Ithaca, Town of Ithaca, and Tompkins County, the number of Park Commissioners would be commensurate to the financial contribution provided by each entity. Commissions provide a degree of independence to all those involved and help to focus public funding, an idea supported by both the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County residents as identified via the statistically-valid community survey.

However, as the parks system evolves over time, it would be beneficial to transition into a Conservancy. A Conservancy is a non-profit organization that is hired to protect part of a public space or an entire park. Many parks systems across the country are utilizing Conservancies to manage different aspects of their system. In this model, parks remain under government ownership and the Commission would “hire” the conservancy (as a contractor, perhaps) to care for the parks. This magnifies money because the Commission would take care of the baseline operations and maintenance (O&M) expenditures while allowing the non-profit to provide a dedicated fundraising arm to the system. The Conservancy is a great way to supplement existing resources by providing funds and services above and beyond what currently exists.

7.2 Financing and Funding
Currently, the City of Ithaca operates the parks system with an operational budget of approximately $928,682 (not including Newman Golf Course). The budget is divided into the regional parks (waterfront area) and the neighborhood parks (smaller parks). In 2016, the City of Ithaca allocated $164,820 to neighborhood parks and approximately $763,862 to the regional parks. However, it should be noted that these budget numbers are estimates. Additionally, Cass Park typically recovers approximately 65% of its operating costs annually (2015 actuals; does not include fringe and debt service costs) and the remaining costs are covered by the City of Ithaca’s municipal share. That is, revenues are currently being attributed to offset operating costs. If some (if not all) revenues were able to be retained, or the municipal share was increased to accurately reflect operating costs, there could be money allocated to capital improvement expenses.

7.2.1 Per Capita and Acre Spending
The City of Ithaca currently spends approximately $29.12/capita (31,890 people) annually for the parks system. According to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) PRORAGIS report, the following annual per capita figures are considered benchmarks for New York agencies:

- Low end: $46
- Median: $54
- Upper: $111
When adding in the surrounding states (to increase the sample size), the following per capita figures are considered benchmarks:

- Low end: $20
- Median: $45
- Upper: $73

Additionally, the national average is $77/capita spent annually on parks and recreation.

Another way of looking at costs is in terms of cost/acre. Currently, the City of Ithaca spends approximately $2,453/acre (378.52 acres) of parkland each year. According to the NRPA PRORAGIS report, the following figures are considered benchmarks for NY agencies in terms of annual cost/acre:

- Low end: $2,485/acre
- Median: $4,586/acre
- Upper: $8,142/acre

When adding in the surrounding states, the following per acre figures are considered benchmarks:

- Low end: $2,034/acre
- Median: $4,424/acre
- Upper: $9,961/acre

Additionally, the national average is $6,476/acre spent annually on parkland.

**Financing and Funding Recommendations**

The following recommendations are provided for future parks system financing.

**ESTABLISH PER CAPITA AND ACRE UNIT COST PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

It is recommended that the City of Ithaca establish a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) that includes per capita and acre costs. By selecting a dollar figure goal, this will help the City of Ithaca understand why it is making financial decisions to increase the level of operational dollars allocated to parks and recreation services.

**ADDRESS UNDERPERFORMING PARKLAND**

All City parks should be reviewed and analyzed systematically according to established criteria, in keeping with the vision for the parks system. The purpose of such review is to promote the equitable distribution, siting, and use of the parks and the responsible allocation of public funds. Some factors to be included in a review should include:

1) Park location
   a. Ability of the park to serve neighborhood residents
   b. Feasibility to efficiently undertake operations and maintenance activities
2) Level of use
3) Availability of park amenities
4) Operations and maintenance challenges
5) Site conditions
6) Park’s role in reducing carbon footprints and stormwater runoff, improving air quality, and maintaining biodiversity and habitat protection.

At the conclusion of the park evaluation, the City will need to dedicate resources to investment and renewal or pursue park declassification and sale. In the case of alienation, revenues could be obtained to reinvest in existing park properties or purchase substitute parkland to provide facilities that would better serve the community. The
State of New York is very explicit in the procedure to alienate any municipal parkland. In fact, in order to convey parkland away, or to use parkland for another purpose, a municipality must receive prior authorization from the State in the form of legislation enacted by the New York State Legislature and approved by the Governor. The bill by which the Legislature grants its authorization is commonly referred to as a parkland alienation bill. However, if a municipality accepts State funding for the acquisition or improvement of parkland or recreational facilities, certain other restrictions must be considered when requesting alienation approval. Common examples of parkland use by a municipality for a non-park purpose include, but are not limited to:

- Laying out streets and highways;
- Museums;
- Landfills and composting centers;
- Public works facilities and storage space;
- Parking for municipal vehicles;
- Housing (public and private).

It should be noted, however, that the form municipalities complete and submit to the New York State Legislature specifically asks about existing site features, uses, and amenities along with if other parkland will be dedicated for park purposes to replace the land being alienated. As mentioned in Chapter 6, it is the intent of the equity maps and Level of Service (LOS) to provide the municipality with direction for acquiring and positioning parkland and amenities within the system. Any alienation of parkland will only occur if other identified land (of equal fair market value) is located and sought to provide recreational opportunities for City of Ithaca residents as required by law.

In order for parkland to be alienated, the following steps must occur:

1) Determine if State or Federal funding has been allocated to the park;
2) Complete the Parkland Alienation Municipal Information Form;
3) Contact your local State Legislative sponsors and draft legislation;
4) Conduct a review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act;
5) Pass a Municipal Home Rule Request

The environmental review process provides important opportunities for public participation, which may include public notice, comment periods, and hearings.

**PROMOTE THE ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM AND WORK WITH CITY RESIDENTS**

Although not a guaranteed alternative to park alienation, strengthening the existing Adopt-A-Park Program by working with residents surrounding the neighborhood parks could help activate those parks considered for alienation. With shrinking budgets, municipalities across the country are seeking assistance when it comes to operations and maintenance, and one way to do so is through Adopt-A-Park programs. Civic/service organizations, clubs, businesses, and neighborhoods can adopt a municipal park to keep it tidy and litter-free. The City of Ithaca has a “carry-in, carry-out” policy but it is not always adhered to by park users. Unsightly aesthetics are the first thing park users notice. In addition, adopters can also assist with mulching, weeding, painting, and any other general maintenance activity. The municipality supplements the adopting groups by providing supplies such as gloves, trash bags, and safety information. In addition, the municipality will also post signage identifying the adopting group.

All interested groups should contact the City of Ithaca Forester at (607) 272-1718 to request an information packet containing the complete program guidelines and volunteer agreement (all agreements are one-year terms that can be renewed). Once completed, the group will be contacted and instructed where to pick up supplies prior to their first volunteer session in the park. The Adopt-A-Park program is a good way to strengthen local neighborhood parks.
7.3 Land Acquisition Strategies

The following definitions are provided to the City of Ithaca in order to rank and prioritize potential land acquisitions. Criteria should be scored between 1-10 (1 being the most restrictive and 10 being the least) and weighted by municipal staff to prioritize land acquisitions.

- **Adequate Size.** Property is evaluated for its size to accommodate park uses.
- **Availability of Utilities.** Property is reviewed for proximity of existing municipal utilities to the sites (i.e. water, sanitary, and storm sewer).
- **Cost/Availability of Acquisitions.** Property is scored based upon the parkland cost and the ease of acquisition.
- **Impacts (soils, earthwork, etc.).** Property is scored based upon reviewed GIS information on soils, topography, drainage, and wetlands that may impact park development.
- **Pedestrian/Bike Access.** Property is scored based upon its general proximity to existing and proposed sidewalks and trails/pathways in Ithaca.
- **Population (5, 10, 15 minute walk time).** Property is evaluated based on its general proximity to existing population densities of the city.

7.4 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

This section of the plan reflects the capital improvement recommendations that are necessary to fulfill the facility needs of the community. In order to plan and prioritize capital investments, the consulting team recommends that the City of Ithaca applies specific guiding principles that balances the maintenance of current assets over the development of new facilities. The framework is also utilized to determine and plan CIP projects and make budget decisions that are sustainable over time. These criteria (e.g., safety compliance, commitment, efficiency, revenue) and priorities are also focused on maintaining the integrity of the current infrastructure and facilities before expanding and/or enhancing programs and facilities.

The community, through this planning process, has indicated strong support for this concept of prioritization. Even with the indications of a modest economic turnaround, funding is not sufficient to take care of all existing assets and build new facilities. The result is the recommendation to develop a three-tier plan that acknowledges a stark fiscal reality, leading to the continuous rebalancing of priorities and their associated expenditures. Each tier reflects different assumptions about available resources.

- **The Critical Alternative** has plans for prioritized spending within existing budget targets. The intention of this alternative is to refocus and make the most of existing resources with the primary goal being for the municipality to maintain services. The actions associated with these projects address deferred maintenance, accessibility issues, and other critical needs at existing facilities and is funded through existing tax dollars. These projects are typically prioritized for years 1-2; however, they are spread out over years 1-5 due to the expense. The subtotal for the Critical Alternative is $6,463,000.

- **The Sustainable Alternative** describes the extra services or capital improvement that should be undertaken when additional funding is available. This includes strategically enhancing existing programs, beginning new alternative programs, adding new positions, or making other strategic changes that would require additional operational or capital funding. In coordination with the Mayor’s Office, Common Council, and the Board of Public Works, the City of Ithaca would evaluate and analyze potential sources of additional revenue, including but not limited to capital bond funding, partnerships, program income, grants, and
existing or new taxes. These projects are typically prioritized for years 3-5. The subtotal for Sustainable Alternative is $6,917,250.

- The **Visionary Alternative** represents the complete set of services and facilities desired by the community. It is fiscally unconstrained but can help provide policy guidance by illustrating the ultimate goals of the community and by providing a long-range look to address future needs and deficiencies. In this Master Plan, the Vision Alternative addresses aging facilities to make improvements in operational effectiveness and the overall sustainability of the park and recreation system. Funding for visionary projects would be derived from partnerships, private investments, and new tax dollars or bonds. These projects are typically prioritized for year 5 and beyond. The subtotal for Visionary Alternative is $8,441,000.

The following pages detail the recommended capital improvement projects – developed in conjunction with staff - for the three-tier spending plan. It should be noted that the municipality should have leeway for addressing Sustainable or Visionary projects before completing Critical projects if project funding becomes suddenly available. The intent of the prioritized CIP is to provide a guide for the municipality, but they should also retain the latitude to be flexible as project dollars become available.

### 7.4.1 Critical Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Total Project Cost</th>
<th>Year in which to be completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Turf repair; playground mulch installation; fencing and park gate improvements; park signage</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Cement bench repairs; park signage</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brindley Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Tree maintenance; stone dust trail paving; garden maintenance; park signage</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryant Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Fencing repairs; park signage</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Tennis court resurfacing; wading pool replacement; field light replacement; athletic field renovation; topcoat of Phase 1 of CWT; maintenance storage space for equipment; park signage; park site plan</td>
<td>$3,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Street Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Sidewalk repairs; park signage</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conley Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Landscaping repairs, signage repairs and improvements</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conway Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Lighting replacement; new basketball nets; park signage</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeWitt Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Hardscaping repairs; park signage</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dryden Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Park signage</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillview Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Drainage improvements; park signage</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ithaca Falls</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Lead remediation; park signage; safety improvements</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDaniels Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Picnic table repair; tree maintenance; park signage</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Grove Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Park signage</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Natural Area (Negundo Woods)</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Control park access points</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Tennis court resurfacing/repurposing; concession stand removal; pavilion repairs; geese mitigation; turf maintenance; landscape maintenance</td>
<td>$1,750,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Fields</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Turf repair; park signage</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Lighting installation; monument upgrade; park signage</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus Flats (Wood Street)</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Drainage improvements; park signage</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus Triangle</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Retaining wall enhancements; lighting installation; park signage</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Horn Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Park signage</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Tree maintenance; sidewalk paver repair; bench repairs; park signage</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayuga Waterfront Trail</td>
<td>Upgrade</td>
<td>*See Sustainable Projects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 39-Critical CIP Projects**
7.4.2 Sustainable Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asset</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Total Project Cost</th>
<th>Year in which to be completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auburn Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Enhance park access</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Add site amenities</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brindley Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Lighting installation; trailhead enhancement</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bryant Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Add site amenities</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cass Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Large pool replacement; pavilion renovation; main building addition; splash pad addition</td>
<td>$4,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Street Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Bench enhancements; add site amenities</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conley Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Greenway connection development</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conway Park</td>
<td>Upgrade</td>
<td>Fencing and trash can enhancements</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeWitt Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Park entrances enhancements</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dryden Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Add site amenities</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillview Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>*See Critical Projects</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ithaca Falls</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>*See Critical Projects</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDaniels Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Playground installation; apple tree plantings</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Grove Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Add site amenities</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Natural Area (Negundo Woods)</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Crate Black Diamond Trail connection point(s)</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Trail kiosks; add nature swim element</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry Fields</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Easement improvements</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Enhance creek access</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus Flats (Wood Street)</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Restrooms and drinking fountain installation</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titus Triangle</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>*See Critical Projects</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Horn Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Add site amenities</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Park</td>
<td>Repair</td>
<td>Additional lighting</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayuga Waterfront Trail</td>
<td>Upgrade</td>
<td>Trail resurfacing (as needed)</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total w/ 15% Contingency: $6,917,250

Figure 40-Sustainable CIP Projects

7.4.3 Visionary Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Estimated Total Project Cost</th>
<th>Year in which to be completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Acquisition and Trail Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Trail mileage - 3 miles</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Stewart Park performance plaza</td>
<td>$3,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Adult baseball field</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Sand volleyball</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Splash pad</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Recreational indoor space/facility</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facility Development</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Rental boat facility</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADA Access</td>
<td>NEW</td>
<td>Accessibility and development</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total w/ 15% Contingency: $8,441,000

Figure 41-Visionary CIP Projects
7.4.4 Funding and Revenue Strategies

The following financial options outline opportunities for the City of Ithaca to consider in supporting the capital improvements outlined in this Master Plan as well as operational costs associated with managing the system for the future. Some of these funding sources may not be currently allowed by the municipality, or have never been used, but should be pursued through legislative means should the City of Ithaca agree with the value in pursuing these funding sources.

**General Obligation Bond:** A general obligation bond is a municipal bond secured by a taxing authority to improve public assets that benefits the municipality involved that oversee some of the parks and recreation facilities in the city. General Obligation Bonds are a tool used by local governments to borrow money. The bonds are guaranteed by the governing body's full faith and credit and backed by property tax revenues. The municipality can use revenue generated from the sale of general obligation bonds to fund a park project and repay the bonds and interest with future property tax revenue.

General Obligation Bonds should be considered for park and recreation facility projects; such as an update to Neighborhood and Regional Parks, trails, and new facilities such as indoor recreation spaces and sports complexes. Improvements to parks should also be covered by these funding sources because there are very little operational revenues associated with these parks to draw from and some of the municipal parks improvements are in need of upgrades and renovations limiting the uses of other revenue sources. These parks help frame the municipality's image and benefit to a wide age segment of users and updating these parks will benefit the community as a whole and stabilize neighborhoods and other areas of the city. This has to be viewed as an economic impact improvement to stabilize neighborhoods and invite people to live in these neighborhoods because of the quality of parks. If the parks are maintained to a higher level than the neighborhood it raises the value of property. If parks are maintained below the level of existing homes in the neighborhood it will bring the property values down.

**EDIT Funds:** These funds are used to support economic impact projects in parks in many cities.

**Enterprise Funding:** Park agencies are utilizing enterprise funds as a mechanism to retain program and facility revenues. This philosophical shift (and accounting shift) incentivizes facilities and programs to increase revenue. The intent of the fund is for that facility or program to operate without the benefit of tax revenues. Expenses, including capitals, directly attribute to the fund supported by the revenues generated by the fund. These funds are a creative way to inform the taxpayer that if he/she does not want to pay for specialized services through taxes, he/she would have to pay through user fees.

**Levy on Property Tax:** Public agencies around the country receive funding through property tax revenues. State laws vary on how these funds can be used- rather applied to operating cost or capital investments.

**Special Purpose Levies:** Public agencies, including parks can receive funding through a tax levy designated to a specific purpose and generally for a limited period of time. This could be a one time, special purpose levy implemented for a limited time period.

**Internal Park Improvement Fund:** This funding source is created from a percentage of the overall park admissions or fees to use the attractions such as sport complexes, golf courses, or special events in a park and would allow a percentage (usually 3-5% of gross revenues) to be dedicated to the park or recreation facility for existing and future capital improvements. This type of user fee does not require voter approval but is set up in a dedicated fund to support the existing park for future capital, maintenance, and improvements.

**Tax Increment Finance District:** Commonly used for financing redevelopment projects. A Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) involves the issuance of tax-exempt bonds to pay front-end infrastructure and eligible development costs in partnership with private developers that are considered Quality of Life improvements that capture increases...
in property tax revenue within a designated geographic area and allocates it for a specific public purpose. TIF revenue has been used towards park acquisition, maintenance, and improvements in certain cities. As redevelopment occurs in the city, the “tax increment” resulting from redevelopment projects is used to retire the debt issued to fund the eligible redevelopment costs. The public portion of the redevelopment project funds itself using the additional taxes generated by the project. TIFs can be used to fund park improvements and development as an essential infrastructure cost.

**Developer Cash-in-Lieu of meeting the Open Space Requirement:** Ordinances requiring the dedication of open space within developments to meet the park and recreation needs of the new residents often have provisions allowing cash contribution to substitute for the land requirement.

**Park Land Dedication Fee:** A park land dedication fee requires that a portion of any housing or commercial/industrial development be dedicated to public use, in the form of parks, recreation facilities, playgrounds, etc. Alternatively, the development may pay cash in lieu of a land dedication, which would be put in a special fund and used for future park acquisition.

**Business Improvement District:** The public private partnership collects additional taxes from business within a designated area. The fees are used for public projects, based on the notion that a well maintained public space will increase commerce for local businesses. Generally used in downtown areas, a Business Improvement District (BID) is a useful strategy for pooling revenue to support a common goal. BID funding is managed by a nonprofit corporation created through the municipality. This BID district can help support downtown park areas as well.

**Facility Authority:** A Facility Authority is sometimes used by park and recreation agencies to improve a specific park or develop a specific improvement such as a stadium, large recreation center, large aquatic center, or sports venue for competitive events. Repayment of bonds to fund the project usually comes from a sales tax in the form of food and beverage. A Facility Authority could oversee improvements for large facilities; such as an aquatic center, community center, and sports field complex. The City of Ithaca could seek out a private developer to build a future facility and, in turn, the municipality would pay back these costs over a 20-year period through the facility authority. The Facility Authority could include representation from the schools, the City of Ithaca, and private developers.

**Utility Lease Fee:** Utility lease fees have been used to support parks in the form of utility companies supporting a park from utility easements, storm water runoff and paying for development rights below the ground. This funding source is derived from fees on property owned by the municipality based on measures such as the amount of impervious surfacing as well as fees from utility companies having access through the park. It is used by many cities to acquire and develop greenways and other open space resources that provide improvements in the park or development of trails. Improvements can include trails, drainage areas, and retention ponds that serve multiple purposes such as recreation, environmental protection, and storm water management. This could be a source for the utilities to make a contribution to support the parks and trails in the future.

**Transient Occupancy Tax:** This funding source is used by many cities and counties to fund improvements to parks from hotels that benefit from the parks in the form of sporting events or entertainment where participants stay in hotels when they use municipal-owned sports complexes or competitive facilities. The Transient Occupancy Taxes are typically set at 3-5% on the value of a hotel room a 1% sales tax that can be dedicated for park and recreation improvement purposes as well. Because of the value that parks could provide in the way of events, sports, entertainment and cultural events, hotels in the area that benefit could be set up with a portion of their occupancy funds going to support park and recreation related improvements. This funding source has been implemented progressively by other communities as the municipality increases the number of events it sponsors or develops. Tracking the economic value back to the hotels is important to build trust with the hotel business community.
**Food and Beverage Tax:** A 1% sales tax on food and beverage is currently used by other cities on fast food and restaurants only. These dollars can come from the local community as well as visitors to the city to help pay for a bond to finance future park and recreation related improvements. Food and Beverage Taxes are very well accepted in most communities. Many park and recreation agencies have a 1% food and beverage tax to support land acquisition across the country.

**Capital Improvement Fee:** A capital improvement fee can be added to an admission fee to a recreation facility or park attraction to help pay back the cost of developing or updating the facility or attraction. This fee is usually applied to golf courses, aquatic facilities, recreation centers, amphitheaters, and special use facilities such as sports complexes. The funds generated can be used either to pay back the cost of the capital improvement on a revenue bond that was used to develop or redevelop the facility. Capital improvement fees normally are $5 per person for playing on the improved site or can be collected as a parking fee or admission fee.

**Capitalizing Maintenance Costs:** Levies and bonds for new projects do not always account for the ongoing maintenance and operations funding that will be needed by those projects. By capitalizing maintenance costs, cities include those anticipated costs into the specific levy or bond proposal and then set the funding aside in an endowment to cover the future costs.

**License Back:** License backs are a source of capital funding in which a private sector entity such as a development company buys the park land site or licenses the park land and develops a facility such as a park, recreation attraction, recreation center, pool, or sports complex; and leases the facility back to the municipality to pay off the capital costs over a 20 to 30-year period. This approach takes advantage of the efficiencies of private sector development while relieving the burden on the municipality to raise upfront capital funds. This funding source is typically used for recreation and aquatic type facilities, civic buildings, and fire stations.

**Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund:** Fees, donations, and revenue from vending machines established. Fees may be established and collected by the Park and Recreation Board for particular special events held on park property as the Board may deem necessary for that specific event. Private organizations who hold their event on park property and who charge admission for the event shall donate a portion of those charges to The Park and Recreation Capital Improvement Fund. Revenue from all vending machines placed on park property and accessible to the public shall be placed in the fund.

**Partnerships:** The City of Ithaca has many partnerships in place. Most do not have equitable agreements for how the partnership is financed. Establishing policies for public/public partnerships, public/not-for-private partnerships and public private partnerships needs to be established with measureable outcomes for each partner involved. The City of Ithaca can gain a lot of operational monies back to the system if they can manage their partnerships in a more equitable manner.

**Land Licenses/Concessions:** Land licenses and concessions are public/private partnerships in which the municipality provides land or space for private commercial operations that will enhance the park and recreational experience in exchange for payments to help reduce operating costs. They can range from food service restaurant operations to retail operations on municipal-owned property. Licenses usually pay back to the municipality a percentage of the value of the land each year in the 15% category and a percentage of gross from the restaurant or retail attraction. They also pay sales tax and employee income taxes to the municipality which supports the overall local government system.

**Admission to the Park:** The City of Ithaca currently does not charge a vehicle entrance fee to their regional parks and doing so can help support operational costs. This fee should continue to be studied and if deemed feasible, implemented.
Parking Fee: Many parks that do not charge an admission fee will charge a parking fee. Parking rates range from $3 to $4 dollars a day. This funding source could work for helping to support special events, festivals, and tournaments.

User Fees: User fees are fees paid by a user of recreational facilities or programs to offset the costs of services provided by the City of Ithaca in operating a park, a recreation facility, or in delivering programs and services. A perception of “value” has to be instilled in the community for what benefits the system is providing to the user. As the municipality continues to develop new programs, all future fees should be charged based on cost recovery goals developed in a future Pricing Policy. The fees for the parks and/or core recreation services are based on the level of exclusivity the user receives compared to the general taxpayer. It is recommended that user fees for programs be charged at market rate for services to create value and operational revenue for the City of Ithaca. For services where the municipality feels that they cannot move forward on adequate user fees to obtain the required cost recovery, consideration of contracting with a non-profit and/or private company to help offset service costs should be pursued. This would save the system dollars in their operational budgets while still ensuring the community receives the service to keep the quality of life at a high standard.

Corporate Naming Rights: In this arrangement, corporations invest in the right to name an event, facility, or product within a park in exchange for an annual fee, typically over a ten-year period. The cost of the naming right is based on the impression points the facility or event will receive from the newspapers, TV, websites, and visitors or users to the park. Naming rights for park and recreation facilities are typically attached to sports complexes, amphitheaters, recreation centers, aquatic facilities, and events. Naming rights are a good use of outside revenue for parks, recreation facilities or special attractions in the city.

Corporate Sponsorships: Corporations can also underwrite a portion or all of the cost of an event, program, or activity based on their name being associated with the service. Sponsorships typically are title sponsors, presenting sponsors, associate sponsors, product sponsors, or in-kind sponsors. Many agencies seek corporate support for these types of activities.

Advertising Sales: Typical amenities and facilities that lend well to advertising sales include sports complexes, scoreboards, gym floors, trash cans, playgrounds, locker rooms, dog parks, along trails, flower pots, and as part of special events held in the city. Advertising sales help support operational costs and have been an acceptable practice in parks and recreation systems for many years.

Maintenance Endowment Fund: This is a fund dedicated exclusively for a park’s maintenance, funded by a percentage of user fees from programs, events, and rentals and is dedicated to protect the asset where the activity is occurring.

Park and Recreation Revenue Revolving Fund: This is a dedicated fund to be used for park purposes only that is replenished on an ongoing basis from various funding sources such as grants, sponsorships, advertising, program user fees and rental fees within the parks system. The City of Ithaca could establish a revolving fund supported by all of the funding sources identified in this section and kept separate from the tax general fund.

Permit Fees: This fee is incorporated for exclusive reservations for picnic shelters, sports fields, and special events that are provided by the City of Ithaca and for competitive tournaments held in the city by other organizations (that utilize municipal-owned facilities). Permit fees include a base fee for all direct and indirect costs for the municipality to provide the space on an exclusive basis in addition to a percentage of the gross for major special events and tournaments held on park-owned permitted facilities. Alcohol permits should be explored and if determined worthwhile, added to these permits which would generate more income for the City of Ithaca for these special use areas. This money could be applied to a Recreation and Park Revolving Fund to help support park improvements and operations in the future.
Key Funding and Revenue Strategies
After reviewing the funding and revenue strategies above, the City of Ithaca and consulting team have identified the following funding and revenue strategies as key elements of implementing the recommendations in this Master Plan:

- Enterprise Funds
- Internal Park Improvement Funds
- Grants
- Facility Collaborations and Partnerships
- User Fees
- Alternative funding streams such as parking fees, licenses, and fiber optic sales
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Business Improvement District (BID)
CHAPTER EIGHT - ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan provides a summary of the key action items recommended throughout the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Items are organized into four major sections:

- Governance and Operations
- Finance
- Programming
- Land and Facilities

Vision Statements specific to Governance and Operations, Finance, Programming, and Land and Facilities are provided to assist with prioritization and decision-making.

Within each section, key Strategies for implementation are listed. These strategies represent the major ideas or philosophies recommended by the consulting team that are required by the municipality to implement the Master Plan. To help achieve each Strategy, Tactics are identified along with recommendations for the Group Responsible, Start Date (i.e., when to initiate the tactic, not necessarily complete it), and Performance Measures.

The Action Plan is intended to serve as a dynamic document, reviewed on a regular basis by the Common Council, the Board of Public Works, and City of Ithaca staff, to plan work tasks and support decision-making in order to carry out the Master Plan. By reviewing the Action Plan quarterly or annually, accomplishments can be noted, adjustments can be made, and new items can be added.

The following acronyms are used in the “Group Responsible” column:

- COI – City of Ithaca
- DIA – Downtown Ithaca Alliance
- FSP – Friends of Stewart Park
- IYB – Ithaca Youth Bureau
- TOI – Town of Ithaca
## 8.1 Governance and Operations

**Vision:** "The City of Ithaca will have a unified, formalized, and sustainable parks and recreation system that leverages existing and future collaborations and partnerships."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Group Responsible</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Formalize Cass, Stewart, Newman, and the waterfront trail as a cohesive waterfront district</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Written documentation with the intent to formalize a Waterfront District</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Form a short-term steering committee comprised of City, Town, and County individuals to fund and a Waterfront District Master Plan as Phase II of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.</td>
<td>COI Planning TOI Admin County Officials</td>
<td>*Steering committee formed *Waterfront District Plan study funded and Request for Proposal (RFP) created</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Move toward a formalizing a Park District to operate and maintain the City of Ithaca parks system. Additionally, use the results of the Waterfront District Plan to adjust as necessary/appropriate.</td>
<td>Common Council, Public Works</td>
<td>*New organizational structure adopted and implemented</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formalize operational standards by developing a maintenance management plan.</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>*Maintenance management plan completed</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and adopt design standards for park amenities and the system in general.</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>*Design standards identified and adopted</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase maintenance division Full Time Equivalent (FTE).</td>
<td>Common Council</td>
<td># of staff hired and trained</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Establish a partnership policy/statement for: public/public, public/non-profit, and public-private.</td>
<td>COI Planning, IFB, Common Council</td>
<td>*Statement/policies created and adopted</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hold semi-annual &quot;summit&quot; in which all existing Friends Groups and fundraising organizations come together to discuss collaborative planning.</td>
<td>COI Planning IFB</td>
<td>*Summit schedule created *Summits held</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop Friends Group policy that includes a mandatory threshold for operations and maintenance (O&amp;M) endowment/seed money for all approved capital projects.</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>*Policy created</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Tactics</td>
<td>Group Responsible</td>
<td>Performance Measure</td>
<td>Start Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.4 Update policies and procedures on an annual basis. Ensure all staff have access to them, and that they create maximum flexibility for staff in the field to do their work in a timely manner.</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Train staff on existing policies and procedures.</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB</td>
<td><strong>Training provided</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Policies provided as needed</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Policies distributed</em></td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Formalize lead and supporting roles (functions) as they currently exist to maintain the parks system and organize into one document.</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB</td>
<td><em>System document developed and implemented</em></td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teach staff how to effectively use marketing data to make informed decisions.</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB, Planning</td>
<td><strong>Training provided</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Evidence of data-driven decisions</em></td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review all planning documents annually for relevancy and direction. Hold collaborative review and discussion annually</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB, Planning</td>
<td><em>Staff meeting held</em>&lt;br&gt;<em>Plan(s) implementation completion percentage identified</em></td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Develop a stronger and more organized volunteer system that builds advocacy and support for the City of Ithaca parks system.</td>
<td>Mid-Term (now through 2023)</td>
<td>Create more exposure and enhance cross marketing for volunteer opportunities.</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB, Partners</td>
<td><strong>Increase of volunteer individuals and hours</strong></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure volunteer record keeping systems are coordinated so that it is easy to determine who is volunteering and where.</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB, Partners</td>
<td><em>Use of consistent system</em></td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Keep volunteers fully informed of park activities to gain support and advocacy from this important pool of park representatives.</td>
<td>Public Works, IYB, Partners</td>
<td><em>Number of volunteer communications</em></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increase volunteer use to augment staffing levels.</td>
<td>IYB Forestry</td>
<td><em>Volunteer use is approximately 30% of total park work force hours</em></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Promote financial sustainability through facility management practices.</td>
<td>Long-Term (now through 2027)</td>
<td>Consider purchasing a work order management system to assist with calculating and tracking operations and maintenance costs.</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td><em>Data manager selection and training</em></td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop policy-supported criteria for contracting operations and maintenance services. The policy should support the guidelines for what work should be done in-house and what can be outsourced. Criteria and key performance indicators (KPIs) should be developed to trigger an automatic review.</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td><strong>Development of criteria</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Adoption of policy</em></td>
<td>2021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 8.2 Finance

**Vision:** "The City of Ithaca parks and recreation system will be sustainably funded to continue providing enriched services to residents."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Group Responsible</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1</strong> Develop a consistent per capita and/or per acre funding strategy</td>
<td><strong>Short-Term</strong> (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Continue to benchmark local and regional agencies to identify per capita and/or per acre costs. Establish a per capita and/or per acre cost goal/policy for the City of Ithaca parkland.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td><em>Benchmark analysis report published</em></td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2</strong> Develop an earned income strategy for facilities, programs, and operations (e.g., land leases, Business Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Financing, etc.).</td>
<td><strong>Short-Term</strong> (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Designate one City of Ithaca planning staff to review grant research listing technical report and apply for at least 1 new grant each year for park system funding. This process should be done in consultation with the Ithaca Youth Bureau. Change earned income policy for revenue-generating facilities and programs and allow the revenue to be re-invested into the facility/program. This process usually involves creating an Enterprise Fund. Enterprise funds generally are segregated as to purpose and use from other funds and accounts of the governmental entity with the intent that revenues generated by the enterprise activity and deposited to the enterprise fund will be devoted principally to funding all operations of the enterprise activity. Incorporate at least two new dedicated funding sources into park system focusing on private land lease policy, waterfront TIF/BID district, general obligation bond, capital improvement fee for facility entrance, parking fee, sponsorships and naming rights, and maintenance endowment fund.</td>
<td>COI Planning, IYB</td>
<td><em>Grant(s) identified and application(s) submitted</em></td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.3</strong> Develop a long term financial plan that is consistent with the goals and objectives of the City of Ithaca and support the initiatives and strategies as reflected in City of Ithaca approved plans. Agency goals and objectives, which affect operating funds, need to be consistent with fund availability and financial projections.</td>
<td><strong>Mid-Term</strong> (now through 2023)</td>
<td>Ensure financial stability through short and long-range financial forecasting. Ensure the annual operating budget will project and produce a balanced budget for each fiscal year. Set and achieve an overall system cost recovery goal and reflect it in the budget. Commit to financial transparency by providing easy access to the organization’s financial data and reports.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca, Public Works</td>
<td><em>Monthly budget numbers are tracked</em></td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Balanced budget produced and adopted</em></td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Cost recovery goal identified</em></td>
<td>2020</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Cost recovery increase each year until goal is met</em></td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Standardized and accessible reports produced</em></td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 8.3 Programming

**Vision:** "The City of Ithaca will continue to provide recreation programming commensurate with community need while advancing the breadth and scope of opportunity for residents."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Group Responsible</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Implement consistent program management principles for all programs to ensure equitable service delivery, quality delivery, and long-term financial sustainability.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Cost Recovery Policy adopted</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Develop a Recreation Program Cost Recovery Policy for all programs to clarify and gain consensus on which programs should be subsidized by tax dollars versus user fees or a blend of both.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Pricing policy adopted</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Update the Recreation Program Pricing Policy to identify which forms of pricing strategies/tactics are appropriate for each type of program in order to achieve cost recovery goals.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Program evaluation protocol created and implemented</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance program evaluations to collect and track information needed to make data-driven decisions about programs. Recommended data includes Core Program Area, Lifecycle Stage, Classification (Essential, Important, or Value-Added), Target Cost Recovery, Actual Participation, Actual Revenue, and Actual Cost Recovery.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*User surveys created and implemented</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utilize additional methods of customer surveys to collect more diverse feedback.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Mini Business Plans created and adopted</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop Mini Business Plans for each Core Program Area that identifies goals, outcomes, financials, and marketing strategies.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Training completed</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide training for recreation staff to conduct Cost of Service analyses to understand the cost of providing each program.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Trend report created and revised/updated annually</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Track national and regional trends for programs and services and how they may apply to the community.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Annual comprehensive review of program inventory to adjust program mix</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Annually assess relevance of selected Core Program Areas and determine if changes need to be made based on current trends, demographics, and community surveys.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Annual revision of lifecycle analysis</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Track the lifecycle of all programs to ensure they match the distribution recommended in the Program Assessment.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Number of programs terminated</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Terminate programs that fall into the decline and or saturation phase.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Lifecycle distribution aligns with best practices</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institute a monitoring program to track the need to modify programs over time.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Annual review process established</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Through collaboration, partnership, or rental agreement, work with other service providers to bring programming to underutilized park sites.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Increase in park utilization</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to enhance adult programming within the City of Ithaca as denoted by Priority Rankings.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Increase in participation numbers</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to enhance nature programs and environmental education as denoted by Priority Rankings.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Increase in participation numbers</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue to enhance special events and Farmers’ Market programming as denoted by Priority Rankings.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td>*Increase in participation numbers</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision: “The City of Ithaca will continue to provide recreation programming commensurate with community need while advancing the breadth and scope of opportunity for residents.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.3</strong> Enhance facility use partnership policies.</td>
<td><strong>Short-Term</strong> (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Formalize all existing partnership agreements (i.e., transition verbal agreements to written) and include performance measures and partner responsibilities.</td>
<td>IYB</td>
<td><em>All agreements written and documented</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate the need for special park use permits for photography, weddings, receptions, and other special events/occasions.</td>
<td>IYB, Attorney’s Office, Partners</td>
<td><em>Special park use permit policy created and enforced</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4</strong> Enhance marketing and promotion practices.</td>
<td><strong>Mid-Term</strong> (now through 2023)</td>
<td>Develop a strategic marketing plan specifically for the City’s parks, recreation, and events.</td>
<td>IYB, Parks &amp; Forestry</td>
<td><em>Strategic marketing plan created and adopted</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Assign one staff member as a point person to coordinate marketing efforts.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td><em>Marketing coordinator duties assigned</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish priority segments to target in terms of new program/service development and communication tactics.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td><em>Priority programs/services targeted</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Build volunteerism to serve marketing and communication efforts. Recruit new volunteers with new skills as the marketing program grows.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td><em>Increased volunteer hours donated</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish and review regularly performance measures for marketing; performance measures can be tracked through increased use of customer surveys as well as some web-based metrics.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td><em>Marketing performance measures identified</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leverage relationships with partners to enhance marketing efforts through cross-promotion.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca, Partners, DIA, Visitors’ Bureau</td>
<td><em>Partners utilized for marketing</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.5</strong> Enhance special events capabilities pertaining to: infrastructure and staff support, partnership agreements (accountability and financially), and investing back into the space/facility</td>
<td><strong>Long-Term</strong> (now through 2027)</td>
<td>Determine the City of Ithaca’s role in providing special events and Farmers Markets.</td>
<td>Clerk’s Office</td>
<td><em>Summit meeting organized and held</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Convene a meeting of regional event providers to determine the types of events that satisfy a regional market demand and are appropriate for City of Ithaca facilities.</td>
<td>Clerk’s Office, Visitors’ Bureau, Strategic Tourism Planning Board</td>
<td><em>Summit meeting organized and held</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Track the economic impact of special events.</td>
<td>COI Planning, DIA, Visitor’s Bureau, Strategic Tourism Planning Board</td>
<td><em>Methodology to track identified</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Performance Measures are indicated as follows: *New*.
## 8.4 Land and Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Tactics</th>
<th>Group Responsible</th>
<th>Performance Measure</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2023)</td>
<td>Annually assess progress towards Level of Service (LOS) recommendations and update Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) accordingly.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td>*LOS spreadsheet revision *CIP updated</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaborate with Town of Ithaca, Tompkins County, and other partner groups to expand trail system.</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td>*Prioritized list of expansion projects jointly developed</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Improve field quality and safety at Cass Park.</td>
<td>IYB, Public Works</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Require present-day and projected operations and maintenance (O&amp;M) costs for any proposed new or improved amenities.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Policy established for adding amenities to the existing system</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Identify gaps in trail system and prioritize trail development that links parkland to trails that creates city and regional loop trails.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Prioritized list of trail corridors developed</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create a signature brand for the City of Ithaca Parks System and incorporate this into a comprehensive signing and wayfinding system.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*City of Ithaca color scheme, signage, and wayfinding developed and approved</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work with potential partners (e.g., New York State Park System, Town of Ithaca Park System) to conduct collaborative system planning.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Joint prioritized system planning conducted.</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Annually assess progress towards Level of Service (LOS) recommendations and update Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) accordingly.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*LOS spreadsheet revision *CIP updated</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct a site master plan for Cass Park.</td>
<td>COI, Town of Ithaca, Tompkins County, Partners</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct a site master plan for Stewart Park (including Newman Golf Course).</td>
<td>COI, Town of Ithaca, Tompkins County, Partners</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct a site plan for Strawberry Fields to see if it should be transitioned into a teaching preserve (and available partnerships), moved into a School Park classification, or sold/swapped for different parkland.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Implement the recommendations from the funded feasibility study for a nature swimming/outdoor pool area at Stewart Park.</td>
<td>COI Planning, FSP</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-Term (now through 2023)</td>
<td>Add an additional picnic shelter to the system.</td>
<td>COI</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add an additional baseball field to the system.</td>
<td>COI</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add 1 additional interactive water feature/play to the system.</td>
<td>COI</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add an additional 3,000 square feet of indoor recreation space to the system.</td>
<td>COI</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long-Term (now through 2027)</td>
<td>Add a paddle boat rental and community boating facility to the system.</td>
<td>COI</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Tactics</td>
<td>Group Responsible</td>
<td>Performance Measure</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Formalize (document) all existing maintenance standards and keep them in one place.</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>*Maintenance standards document published</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Adopt and implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards.</td>
<td>COI Planning, Forestry</td>
<td>*Maintenance standards document published</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establish utilization productivity goals for each facility (e.g., ratio of utilized hours to available hours).</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Goals established</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a maintenance management plan for the park system.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a business plan and pro forma to inform operations and use when developing a new facility or completing major improvements.</td>
<td>COI Planning, Public Works, IYB</td>
<td>*Policy established for new facilities</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Short-Term (now through 2020)</td>
<td>Identify and prioritize ADA accessibility concerns throughout the system.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*ADA project list identified and prioritization plan associated</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider enhancing and relocating the maintenance facility at Stewart Park.</td>
<td>COI Planning, Public Works, IYB</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Consider increasing the amount of covered outdoor storage for equipment at Cass Park, and IYB storage in Stewart Park, and carousel enclosure.</td>
<td>IYB, Public Works</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Add wayfinding signage from downtown to direct to Ithaca Falls.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Funded in CIP</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Mid-Term (now through 2023)</td>
<td>Conduct a utilization analysis to calculate all park facility annual use. Use this quantitative information to provide justification for de-classifying property as parkland.</td>
<td>COI Planning, Forestry</td>
<td>*Methodology identified and utilization calculated and published</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enhance and publicize the adopt-a-park program for underutilized park sites.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Adopt-a-park program enhanced</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create and adopt a policy to de-park underutilized park facilities.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*De-park process and criteria established</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Create and inventory of possible substitute park land.</td>
<td>COI Planning</td>
<td>*Inventory of substitute park land created</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>