

FINAL REPORT

City of Racine, Wisconsin

**Performance Audit of the
Parks, Recreation, and Cultural
Services Department**



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May 16, 2006

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EXHIBIT A: SUMMARY OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS



**Virchow Krause
& company**

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

May 16, 2006

Mr. Steve Nenonen, Administrator
City of Racine
730 Washington Avenue
Racine, Wisconsin 53403

Dear Mr. Nenonen:

Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP (Virchow Krause) and its park and recreation specialist subcontractor, Raymond Maurer, are pleased to submit this final report of our findings and recommendations related to the performance evaluation of the City of Racine's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department.

Our ability to perform this analysis was greatly enhanced by the high level of cooperation provided by staff in the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department, and other City officials involved in this project. We would like to thank all of those involved for their assistance and feedback provided to the Virchow Krause project team during the course of our work.

We look forward to discussing this report with the Common Council and the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Board at a joint meeting in June. In the meantime, should you have any other questions regarding the study, or if Virchow Krause can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me at 312.819.7153, or project manager Rob Lefeber at 608.240.2544.

Sincerely,

VIRCHOW, KRAUSE & COMPANY, LLP

Mike Ley, Partner
State and Local Government Team

ML/DEV/kac

I. INTRODUCTION

The City of Racine has committed significant resources to performing operational reviews and audits of each of its major departments, both in the past and on an ongoing basis. In addition to ensuring that services are provided in an efficient and effective manner, this approach has also grown out of an environment where revenues have failed to keep pace with the cost of delivering those services. This commitment to conducting independent department operational reviews is one of the cornerstones allowing the City to balance the public's demand for services with stable or shrinking sources of revenue.

The City's investment of resources in the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department (PRCS) represents a significant commitment to providing services to its residents and visitors, and to enhancing the quality of life in the City. In light of this investment, the City retained Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP (Virchow Krause) to perform an independent review of PRCS. The overall objective of this study was to:

Assess the efficiency, cost effectiveness, service and quality of the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department's operation with recommendations and an action plan for increasing operating efficiencies and organizational effectiveness as they relate to the City's and Department's strategic goals.

The detailed report that follows presents the findings and recommendations developed by the Virchow Krause project team based on extensive site visits, interviews with Department staff and other interested parties, collection and review of information, and on-site observations.

A performance evaluation by its very nature focuses on areas that present opportunities for improvement. While we have tried to include information about some of the strengths of PRCS, and have noted specific areas where "best practices" are being followed, the bulk of this review identifies areas where additional improvement could occur to enhance organizational effectiveness and efficiency. The findings and recommendations in this report are in no way intended to reflect negatively on individual performance, but focus instead on broader organizational and operational needs and issues.

The report includes 25 recommendations addressing a range of functions in PRCS; some are specific to individual Divisions and others will affect PRCS overall. The primary recommendations included within the body of the report include:

- Alternative approach to services and programs (six recommendations);
- Budgeting and planning efforts (six recommendations);
- Enhanced use of technology (three recommendations);
- Community outreach (three recommendations);
- Capital planning (three recommendations);
- Management of employee leave time (two recommendations); and
- Staff training needs (two recommendations).

These recommendations are designed to assist PRCS in achieving increased management information and effectiveness, operational improvements, and budget reduction opportunities representing potential savings of approximately \$57,100 in estimated salary costs in 2007, not including fringe benefits or potential equipment-related savings. Identification of potential budget reductions and enhanced efficiencies for PRCS was a priority for the project team because of the significant budgetary pressure currently facing the Department.

It is important to note that a study of this size and complexity is impossible without the support and cooperation of those involved. The assistance from staff within and outside of PRCS provided to the project team during the course of our work was vital to our ability to conduct this study. The efforts of these individuals in providing data, participating in interviews, and providing feedback on initial findings and recommendations were keys to our successful project. We would like to express our appreciation to all individuals who participated in this project for the time and courtesy extended to us throughout the study effort and for their input.

II. PROJECT OVERVIEW

A. Summary of Project Objectives and Scope

With an approved 2006 budget of \$7,007,691, the City's investment of resources in the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department (PRCS) represents a significant investment in providing services to its residents and guests. City residents have come to expect a high level of services from PRCS, which operates five community centers offering a very wide selection of no- or low-cost programs and activities, a robust menu of athletic leagues for youth and adults, strong forestry and beach programs, and a growing amount of public recreational space including parks, fields, and trails. However, the Department is increasingly challenged to provide its current level of services given the State's implementation of strict levy limits, flat shared revenue payments, and increased costs for staff, utilities, and fuel.

The City retained Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP in January 2006 to conduct a performance evaluation of PRCS. The objective of this study is to assess the efficiency, cost effectiveness, service, and quality of the Department's operation with recommendations and an action plan for increasing operating efficiencies and organizational effectiveness as they relate to the City's and Department's strategic goals.

Specifically, the City required the project team to:

- Summarize the current service model, menu of activities, and method of delivery and assess potential demands for services through 2011 as well as evaluate which services are most efficiently and effectively performed internally and which services would be best provided externally or by a third party to reduce costs, enhance revenue, and retain or improve service;
- Review the current staffing by functional area to identify current skill sets, interrelationships between positions, and develop recommendations to address potential adjustments to staffing, competencies, training, and/or integration to meet expected demands through 2011;
- Assess the current organizational structure and develop recommendations in light of necessary adjustments to staffing, competencies, and service delivery models based on expected demands through 2011;
- Perform an overview analysis of the Department's current use of technology and identify gaps and potential needs based on expected service demands and service delivery models through 2011; and
- Conduct a survey of comparable organizations to identify best practices and provide benchmarks to help put in perspective recommended changes to staffing, organization, and service delivery models.

Based on discussions with the City shortly after the start of the project, the project team adopted a modified approach to the City's original request for a benchmarking survey. Our experience has shown us that these types of benchmarking surveys require significant effort and do not often yield meaningful results given the variances in priorities and practices within municipalities. Instead of collecting basic comparison information from other Wisconsin municipalities—that often are not directly comparable—we identified issues specific to Racine and PRCS, and reviewed best practices in communities both within and outside of Wisconsin relative to those issues.

B. Summary of Project Activities

To accomplish the goals and objectives of this review, the project team incorporated a variety of methods to obtain and verify data, conduct analysis, and develop recommendations:

- Interviewed 32 individuals including the Mayor, City Administrator, staff from PRCS, the management organization operating the City's golf courses, the Racine Zoological Society, the leadership of the entity operating the Wustum Museum, the Department of Public Works, the Police Department, the Finance Department, and the Department of Human Resources;
- Reviewed background reports, plans, data, and other materials collected from PRCS and other City Departments;
- Performed on-site visits, including visits to all five community centers, the Parks Service Center, the Johnson Park golf course, the Racine Zoo, and the Wustum Museum;
- Analyzed program participation data from PRCS and demographic projections for the City of Racine from the Wisconsin Departments of Administration and Revenue;
- Analyzed budget, expenditure, and payroll data;
- Performed research relative to Parks and Recreation best practices in Wisconsin and nationally;
- Surveyed members the Common Council and the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Board; and
- Reviewed a draft report with the City's project review committee and incorporated changes in this final report.

Our approach to this and similar projects is to develop findings and recommendations to address specific issues and problems that consistently appear as each element of project field work is completed. Thus, comments or concerns raised by a single individual—for example, during a staff interview or in an individual survey response from a Common Council member—would not be the sole basis of a finding and recommendation, unless that concern was identified and validated by fieldwork in other elements of the project.

Based on our experience with similar projects, as well as research conducted specifically with the requirements of this project in mind, the team identified best practices in the following areas pertaining to PRCS:

- Planning and strategic visioning;
- Use of technology, including websites and internal data management;
- Marketing efforts; and
- Department organization and processes.

Given that parks and recreation departments operate in different economic, demographic, and organizational climates, this report does not identify "best practice cities" whose approach PRCS should copy in whole. Rather, this report identifies tools or approaches from a range of local governments that offer alternative approaches to improving specific issues facing the Department.

III. CURRENT PROFILE

This section provides a brief description of the current organizational structure and staffing of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services (PRCS), including background information on budget and actual revenues and expenditures, an analysis of issues related to staffing, interdepartmental charges and operational expenditures.

A. Organizational Overview

The Department's organizational structure and breadth of services and operations makes it dissimilar to parks and recreation departments in other medium-sized Wisconsin cities. PRCS parks maintenance and recreation programming are broadly similar to other municipalities often compared to Racine. However, the Department also operates five community centers and has shared responsibility under a contract agreement with a non-profit group that operates the Racine Zoo, one of Wisconsin's two remaining free-admission zoological parks. Further, PRCS has maintenance and contractual agreements for groups operating the Graceland and Mound Cemeteries, the Wustum Museum, and the Johnson Park, Washington Park, and Shoop Park golf courses.

Division Responsibilities and Regular Full-time Staff

Like other Parks and Recreation Departments, PRCS has a core of regular full-time staff who work throughout the year and whose activities are supplemented by a much larger number of individuals working on a part-time basis with a wide range of work schedules, ranging from as little as three or four hours every week throughout the calendar year to others working more than 40 hours per week on a "long seasonal" schedule lasting from April through November. For example, in addition to the full-time positions described below, the Parks Division is supplemented by part-time long seasonal and student staff. In 2005, 28 part-time staff worked the equivalent of 11.6 FTE. This section of the report identifies the number of regular full-time staff assigned to each Division in PRCS, as well as the general responsibilities of each Division.

Administration:

- 1.0 FTE Director;
- 1.0 FTE Executive Secretary;
- 1.0 FTE Secretary I; and
- 1.0 FTE Data Entry Clerk/Typist II.
- Total: 4.0 FTE

The Director of PRCS is responsible for all department activities, facilities, and programs. This responsibility includes ensuring that PRCS achieves its mission through a range of management activities; managing all budgetary and fiscal matters; and managing partnerships with stakeholders within municipal government and in the community. Further, the Director is responsible for oversight and management of contracts with the entities operating the golf courses, Zoo and the Wustum Museum. Administration staff are responsible for providing clerical assistance to the Department as a whole, including staffing the customer service desk in the City's Annex Building, handling cash management, preparing reports and responding to data requests, and general clerical duties.

Parks:

- 1.0 FTE Assistant PRCS Director/Parks Manager;
- 1.0 FTE Cemetery Supervisor;
- 0.66 FTE Cemetery Program Assistant;
- 1.0 FTE Parks Superintendent;
- 3.0 FTE Parks Labor Supervisors;
- 1.0 FTE Parks & Facilities Specialist;
- 5.0 FTE Tree Trimer/Arborists;
- 2.0 FTE Equipment Mechanics; and
- 13.0 FTE Equipment Operators.
- Total: 25.66 FTE

The Parks Division maintains approximately 1,126.9 acres of parks, playgrounds, boulevards, street ends, and community centers, and provides services for special events. This Division is responsible for snow removal from 28 miles of alleys in residential neighborhoods and 30 miles of sidewalks adjacent to parks and City buildings, and plows all of the Department's parking facilities. The Division also has grounds and facilities maintenance responsibility for facilities where the Department contracts for operations, including the golf courses, the zoo, and the Wustum Museum. The Division is also responsible for maintenance at the City's two cemeteries, and for capital project management at all PRCS and contract facilities, including contract oversight duties.

Recreation:

- 1.0 FTE Recreation Manager;
- 1.0 FTE Youth Services Coordinator; and
- 1.0 FTE Recreation Program & Marketing Supervisor.
- Total: 3.0 FTE

The Recreation Division provides adult softball, basketball, volleyball, youth softball, basketball, youth swimming lessons, youth sports clinics, youth sport coaches' clinics, WPRA discount tickets, and training and supervision of sports officials. Examples of part-time staff that support full-time staff in the Recreation Division include umpires and referees, who are paid by the game or match, and lifeguards, pre-school teachers, and playground staff who are paid by the hour. The Division coordinates scheduling of various athletic facilities by private groups and civic groups and school activities, and manages partnerships with community organizations and the Racine Unified School District and local parochial schools.

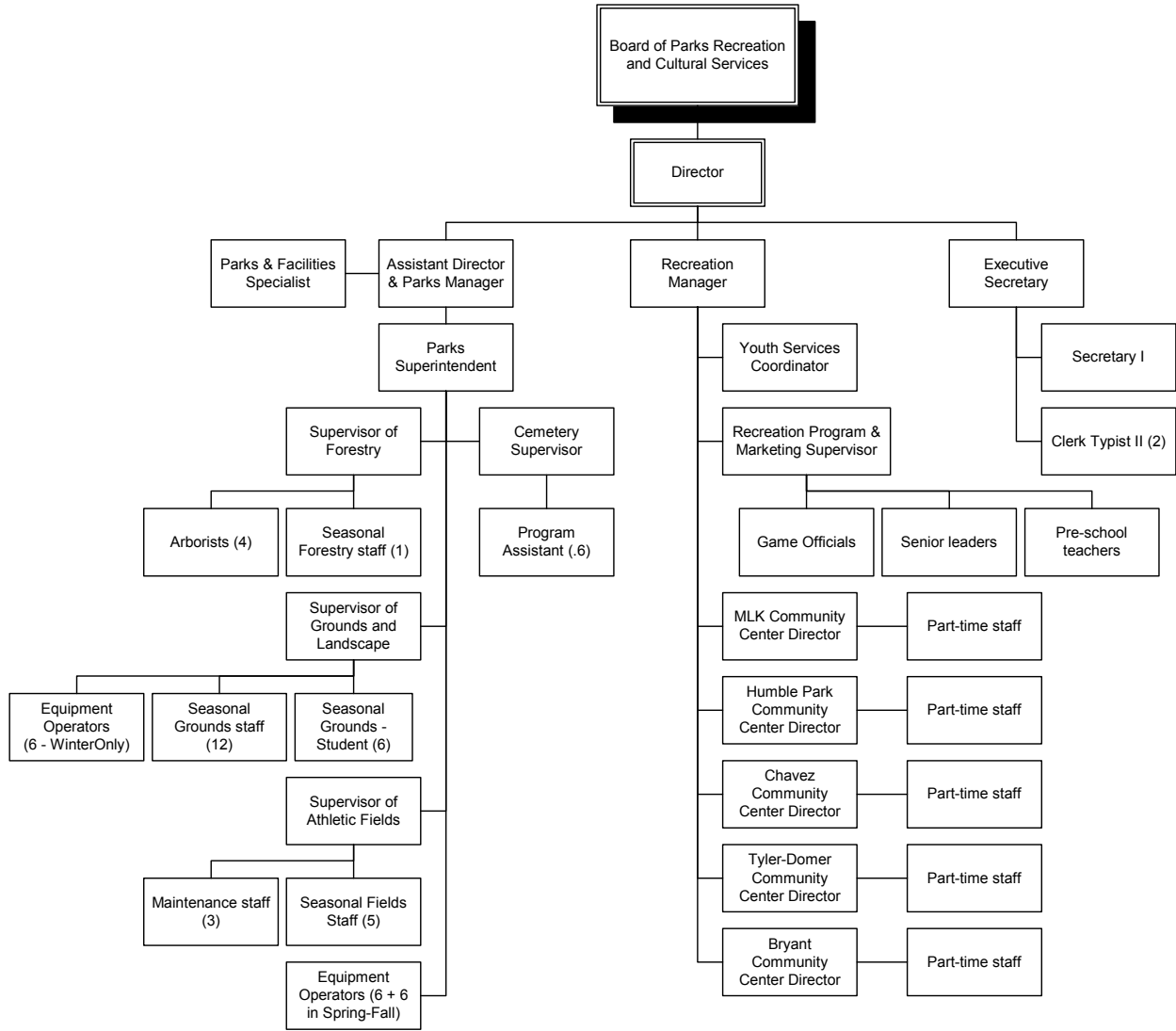
Community Centers:

- 5.0 FTE Center Directors

The five community centers operated by PRCS provide a wide range of programs for senior citizens, adults, and youth relative to physical, social, educational and recreational interests reflecting a culturally diverse community. Examples of part-time staff that support full-time staff in the Community Centers include senior citizen program staff, and gym supervisors.

The organizational chart shown as **Figure 1** presents the reporting relationships of these core full-time employees together with the various part-time and "long seasonal" staff.

Figure 1
Department Organizational Chart
 2006



B. Department Mission and Strategic Planning Efforts

The mission of the Department is to:

Enhance the quality of life; provide citizens of all ages with wholesome recreational opportunities in clean, safe, and accessible facilities; protect Racine's natural beauty through a vibrant system of exceptional parks, recreation, open spaces, walkways and trails; program to achieve a healthy community through an integrated system of cultural and human services programs; and to preserve the environment for the future.

We surveyed the members of the Racine Common Council and the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Board—which provides advisory oversight for PRCS—to assess the perceptions of City leaders relative to the performance of the Department in a range of areas. We surveyed all 15 Council Members and 11 Board Members, and received 7 responses, or 26.9%. As shown in **Figure 2**, Council and Board Members who responded to the survey rated most highly the Department's athletic leagues and programs (4.2 out of 5), safety in the community centers (4.2 out of 5), and recreation programs (4.1 out of 5). The Council and Board members responding to the survey viewed, on average, other performance areas as being less strong, including identifying and addressing internal organizational issues (2.8 out of 5), maintaining a positive working relationship with the union (3.0 out of 5), and leveraging technology to enhance operations (3.2 out of 5). These results should be viewed in an appropriately cautious light due to the small number of Council and Board Members responding to the survey, and should not be construed as representing the viewpoints of all City leaders. On the other hand, these results corresponded very generally to findings resulting from our fieldwork.

Figure 2

Satisfaction Ratings for PRCS City Council Members and PRCS Board Members, n=7 Scale of 1 to 5; 5 is Best	
Success Measure	Average Score
Offering athletic programs residents want (and are well-attended)	4.2
Maintaining a safe environment in the community centers	4.2
Offering recreational and other programs residents want (and are well-attended)	4.1
Bringing positive attention to the City	3.9
Maintaining a safe environment in the parks	3.8
Keeping the City's park grounds looking clean and well-tended	3.7
Balancing budgeted resources and level of services (value for taxpayer money)	3.7
Performing snow removal in alleys and other assigned areas	3.7
Leveraging technology to improve management information about programs	3.6
Adapting to changing demands for new programs and meeting them	3.5
Communicating successes to internal and external stakeholders	3.5
Being responsive to customers at the service desk	3.4
Managing its staff assignments efficiently	3.3
Keeping parks facilities in clean and in good shape	3.3
Keeping the community centers clean and in good shape	3.3
Leveraging technology to enhance operations	3.2
Maintaining a positive and cooperative relationship with the union	3.0
Identifying internal organizational issues and addressing them	2.8

Written comments in the survey unanimously agreed that budget reductions during recent years have challenged PRCS to continue providing the same level of service with fewer staff. Specifically, when respondents were asked to identify the primary issue or challenge currently facing PRCS, the seven Council and Board members who completed the survey provided the following **edited** responses:

- *"Maintaining park lands with reduced staffing;"*
- *"Lack of manpower;"*
- *"Cuts in funding -- it is difficult to maintain services at the level they are with continued budget cuts;"*
- *"You have about 1700 acres to keep clean and safe. There is no way you're going to do this with 19 full-time people. You also have all the street trees. There aren't enough people to cover the snowplowing sidewalks, parking lots and alley routes for two shifts. Keep praying for good weather;"*
- *"Budget. I feel that [some decision makers] want to get rid of the Quality of Life Services our City provides. That makes the DPRCS's budget difficult to make improvements to our parks & community centers;"* and
- *"Continued budget cuts, which are leading to increased fees."*

In 2002, PRCS completed a strategic planning process that was facilitated by an outside consulting firm and that included members of the Common Council, the PRCS Board, and PRCS staff. Completing a strategic planning process is a best practice and the PRCS should be commended for this initiative. This process resulted in the identification of the Department's mission, its core values, and a concrete implementation plan with specific action steps to be completed during 2003 and 2004. These action steps included:

- Development and implementation of four process improvement projects for each Division;
- Investigation into the causes of and reduction of staff absenteeism;
- Development and implementation of four methods to strengthen intergovernmental cooperation with the Unified School District and with the County;
- Evaluation of all programs and services to determine whether each contributed to essential services;
- Development and implementation of four new procedures to improve customer service;
- Attendance by all staff of at least four professional development training sessions;
- Creation of one new activity or event by each Division to "reflect the fun/recreational spirit and soul of the City of Racine;"
- Review on a quarterly basis the financial expenditures for each Division; and
- Development of at least two new sources of revenue.

However, according to staff, not all elements of this strategic plan have been implemented. While it is true that PRCS has been operating under significant budget constraints that can limit the implementation of new programs, not all of the strategic plan action steps appear to require significant new funding. On the other hand, it should be noted that during this period, PRCS:

- Submitted quarterly reports to the mayor that include program activity summaries prepared for the PRCS Board;
- Performed an informal internal review of absenteeism levels in 2004;

- Enhanced customer service by gaining the ability to accept credit card payments at the customer service desk;
- Incorporated some elements of the strategic plan action goals as appropriate to the position into annual employee performance appraisals. In the examples shared with the project team, this involved requiring one process improvement initiative for a senior manager, and one customer service improvement and one staff training initiative for a clerical supervisor; and
- Implemented several new activities in recent years, including Tech Girls and Boys and the My Brother's Keeper youth group at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center, the Kick Start soccer camp, Kayak Demo Daze, and a beach volleyball program. However, the impetus for beach volleyball came from outside the Department.

Further, the strategic plan and associated implementation plan do not include a performance measurement component aligned with the vision expressed in the plans. While PRCS does maintain and report basic financial and attendance data, these measures are not currently prioritized, are not aligned with the strategic vision, nor managed efficiently enough to allow the Department to communicate success to internal and external stakeholders. Further, monthly activities reports reporting on program attendance are point-in-time and do not typically include a trend component to assess growth or decline in demand for individual programs and activities. It should be noted that each Division already prepares a monthly summary of activities for communication to the PRCS Board. However, these descriptive summaries are not tied to the strategic plan and cannot currently be used to easily determine whether PRCS is achieving its stated mission. Rather, they are primarily a comprehensive listing of events, activities, and programs that occurred that month in each Division.

In addition to the strategic plan that has not been implemented by PRCS, it also has a parks and open space plan, developed for them by the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. PRCS staff report that the parks and open space plan has also not been used in any significant way.

Recommendation #1: PRCS should identify key performance measures tied to its mission and core values, and develop more efficient reporting tools by:

- **Reducing the amount of staff time spent developing monthly reports by no longer listing all program activities performed, except for reports related to financial, capital, and contractual issues which should continue to be prepared at the current level of detail and changing the focus from point-in-time participation and attendance to time-series comparisons with previous years by program/activity;**
- **Holding staff focus group sessions to develop a new reporting approach that presents targeted performance measures aligned with the strategic vision. Specifically, consider using the framework laid out in the 2003 strategic plan;**
- **Presenting the revised reporting approach to the PRCS Board for review and comment; and**
- **Posting the revised targeted performance reports on the PRCS website after they are submitted.**

PRCS will not be able to efficiently implement this change unless it changes the current approach to collecting program attendance and participation data. See Recommendation #20 for further discussion.

Throughout the country and in Wisconsin, parks departments benefit from relationships with volunteer organizations known "Friends of the Park" to raise the community profile and visibility of the park system and to focus on improving individual parks' cleanliness, safety, landscaping, signage, and to develop additional revenue through fundraising.

Best practice: Friends of the Park

PRCS has developed several programs that are similar to "Friends of the Park" programs that operate in other Wisconsin communities and across the nation. Specifically, the Adopt-A-River program along the Root River has experienced growing participation over several years.

According to a 2003 study¹ published by the Trust for Public Land, parks and recreation departments leverage "Friends of the Park" groups to serve as supporters, watchdogs, and a source of donated time and financial resources. Well-known national examples include Philadelphia Green, the Central Park (NY) Conservancy, and the National Association for Olmsted Parks. A number of Wisconsin parks departments have developed relationships with Friends of the Park groups, including:

- Milwaukee County Parks and Lake Park Friends, Milwaukee;
- Madison Parks Department and Friends of Hoyt Park, Madison;
- Dane County Parks and Friends of Cam-Rock Park, Cambridge; and
- Mosinee Parks and Recreation Commission and Friends of River Park, Mosinee.

PRCS has a successful record in involving community volunteers in its parks, which suggests that expanding the role these groups play in providing advocacy and development assistance is feasible. For example, PRCS has worked with Sustainable Racine—a community group interested in local environmental and economic development issues—on the Root River pathway project in Colonial Park. Further, in recent years PRCS has coordinated Adopt-A-River Earth Day clean-up activities along the Root River with community groups, which staff report have been very successful, with participation ranging between 30 and 100 people in each of the 13 City parks along the river. Some of these groups are primarily school-based, with a focus on environmental education as well as clean-up activities. Further, Salmon Unlimited, a sport fishing group, is involved in clean-up activities at the DNR Root River spawning station located at Lincoln Park. Another positive example of volunteer cooperation efforts includes volunteer removal of garlic mustard and other invasive species in Colonial Park. Finally, the PRCS developed a Park Watch program during 2000 through 2002 that sought neighborhood participation in a crime prevention initiative focused on Humble Park/Pierce Woods, Lakeview, Hamilton, and Oak Park. These are all positive efforts to engage neighborhood participation in their parks, and should be expanded both in terms of identifying additional parks, and also in terms of the establishment of park-specific "Friends of the Park" groups that can serve as citizen advocates for the interests of the Parks System, raise the profile of individual parks, and enhance the level of donations received by PRCS. A key goal for the PRCS in developing Friends of the Parks groups is to achieve a sustained effort from these groups that allows them to provide advocacy and support for the PRCS over the long-term, rather than developing groups that disband after a specific objective—such as installing a new set of playground equipment—is achieved.

¹ Peter Harnik, "The Excellent City Park System; What Makes it Great and How to Get There," The Trust for Public Land, 2003.

Recommendation #2: PRCS should build on the success of the Adopt-A-River program to identify and develop opportunities to develop Friends of the Park groups to assist in raising the profile of the Racine park system and of individual parks. While this may not be feasible to implement for all Racine parks in the short term, PRCS should expand its efforts in this area and prioritize one or two parks that have special environmental resources, historical characteristics, or broader community significance that would represent opportunities for ongoing cooperation.

C. Financial Overview

As noted, the City of Racine and, therefore, PRCS, is currently facing a challenging fiscal environment with flat shared revenues, levy limits, and increasing costs for health care, utilities, and fuel. In terms of revenues and expenditures, the recent history of PRCS can be described as steady decreases in staffing levels and steady increases in expenditures for interdepartmental charges allocated to PRCS for centrally-provided administrative services from other City Departments. The net effect on PRCS has been very little change in the overall cost of the Department, but fewer staff to provide services and activities. As shown in **Figure 3**, total expenditures for PRCS increased by just 0.3% between 2003 and 2005. Due to increased revenues, the net cost of PRCS fell by 0.9%.

Figure 3

Summary of Department Expenditures and Revenues 2002-2005					
	2002	2003	2004	2005¹	Percent Change
Revenues					
<i>Recreation Revenues</i>	\$ 285,929	\$ 283,337	\$ 305,109	\$ 323,729	13.2%
<i>Parks Revenues</i>	36,709	56,178	32,451	74,301	102.4%
Total Revenues	322,638	339,515	337,560	398,030	23.4%
Expenditures					
<u>Salaries & fringe benefits²</u>					
Administration	503,076	504,744	433,022	317,152	-37.0%
Parks	1,882,574	2,000,788	1,927,293	1,921,105	2.0%
Recreation	863,561	833,691	771,852	828,855	-4.0%
Community Centers	738,178	722,884	569,395	604,918	-18.1%
<i>Salaries & fringe benefits subtotal</i>	3,987,389	4,062,107	3,701,562	3,672,030	-7.9%
<u>Operating Expenditures</u>					
Administration	26,387	26,423	25,895	26,364	-0.1%
Parks	211,356	270,686	271,948	322,095	52.4%
Recreation	109,395	112,191	112,907	93,928	-14.1%
Community Centers	315,642	344,387	353,837	334,651	6.0%
Zoo	560,405	557,754	556,276	556,997	-0.6%
Wustum ³	312,044	318,387	229,238	231,027	-26.0%
<i>Operating expenditures subtotal</i>	1,535,229	1,629,828	1,550,101	1,565,062	1.9%
<i>Interdepartmental charges</i>	782,276	776,922	872,102	1,128,552	44.3%
<i>Capital outlay</i>	256,427	187,091	85,032	214,389	-16.4%
Total Expenditures	\$ 6,561,321	\$ 6,655,948	\$ 6,208,797	\$ 6,580,033	0.3%
Net Cost	\$ 6,238,683	\$ 6,316,433	\$ 5,871,237	\$ 6,182,003	-0.9%
Golf Course Enterprise Fund					
Revenues	173,538	175,301	146,211	179,042	3.2%
Expenditures	121,624	136,437	152,333	126,957	4.4%
Net Profit/Loss	\$ 51,914	\$ 38,864	\$ (6,122)	\$ 52,085	0.3%
<u>Notes</u>					
¹ 2005 actual expenditures are unaudited.					
² Health insurance costs are reported under Interdepartmental charges.					
³ Includes expenditure of \$100,000 for Racine Art Museum in 2002 and 2003.					

For most public sector agencies, staffing expenditures represent a significant percentage of total expenditures, and this is true for PRCS as well. Due to reductions in the number of authorized positions in the PRCS budget, staffing expenditures during this period decreased by -7.9%, declining from \$3.9 million in 2003 to \$3.7 million in 2005. Staffing costs have fallen significantly in the PRCS Administration and the Community Centers, although the Parks Division recorded a slight 2.0% increase in spite of a reduction in authorized positions. As shown in **Figure 4**, salary and fringe benefits account for significant proportions of the total expenditures for each of the four main PRCS Divisions. In particular, 2005 salary and fringe benefits for Administration and Recreation were 70.0% and 80.5%, respectively. **Significant future budget reductions in any of these four Divisions will likely result in reductions of programs or activities, because of the link between staff and the ability of PRCS to provide programs.**

Figure 4

Staffing Costs as a Percentage of Division Expenditures 2005						
Division	Salary & Fringe Benefits	Operating Expenditures	Inter-departmental	Capital	Total	Salary & Fringe as a % of Total
Administration	\$ 317,152	\$ 26,364	\$ 109,755	\$ -	\$ 453,271	70.0%
Parks	1,921,105	322,095	738,746	149,111	3,131,057	61.4%
Recreation	828,855	93,928	68,220	38,618	1,029,621	80.5%
Community Centers	604,918	334,651	211,831	-	1,151,400	52.5%
Zoo	-	556,997	-	-	556,997	0.0%
Wustum	-	231,027	-	26,660	257,687	0.0%
Total	\$ 3,672,030	\$ 1,565,062	\$ 1,128,552	\$ 214,389	\$ 6,580,033	55.8%

In addition to staffing expenditures, operating costs were significant expenditure items for both the Parks Division and the Community Centers. Operating expenditures for the Community Centers consisted almost entirely of utilities costs and for custodial services contracts, neither of which lend themselves to significant budget reductions.

Operating expenditures were stable between 2002 and 2005, increasing by 1.9%. However, it should be noted that operational expenditures for the Parks Division increased by 52.4% due to an increase of \$71,800 utilities in expenditures associated with electricity charges for lighting parks areas, an increase in the number of light fixtures along the recently established Lake Michigan Pathway bike path, and an increase in water charges for water fountains and bathrooms in park facilities. The increase in operating expenditures for PRCS as a whole would have been higher, except for the decrease in operational expenditures charged to the Wustum Museum accounts, which in 2002 and 2003 included an annual expenditure of \$100,000 for the Racine Art Museum.

The other significant factor in PRCS expenditures has been the increased interdepartmental charges paid by the Department for services provided by other City Departments. These charges include:

- Rent, utilities, and maintenance charges for PRCS office space in the Annex building;
- Health insurance costs, which includes a set rate per year by the number of active employees in PRCS receiving health insurance coverage;
- Telephone charges;
- Charges used by the City to fund the Information System Department; and
- Charges for the central maintenance garage operated by the Department of Public Works.

As shown in **Figure 5**, interdepartmental charges paid by PRCS increased by \$346,276, or 44.3%, between 2002 and 2005. Although all Divisions benefited from a City-wide reduction in telephone costs due to the implementation of a new telephone system, increased charges for the City's Information Systems Department and for health insurance accounted for most of the increase.

Figure 5

Change in Interdepartmental Charges							
2005 Interdepartmental Charges Compared to 2002							
Unit	Building Complex ¹	Health Insurance	Telephone	Information Systems	Garage Charges ²	Total Change	Percent Change
Administration	\$ 30,393	\$ (491)	\$ (4,691)	\$ 29,616	n.a.	\$ 54,827	99.8%
Parks	n.a.	74,775	96	26,188	34,062	135,121	22.4%
Recreation	n.a.	11,157	(1,506)	14,694	n.a.	24,345	55.5%
Chavez Center	n.a.	3,561	(191)	22,040	n.a.	25,410	243.7%
Humble Park Center	n.a.	3,561	(930)	11,020	n.a.	13,651	129.3%
Martin Luther King Center	n.a.	3,561	(1,007)	47,753	n.a.	50,307	434.1%
Tyler-Domer Center	n.a.	(2,573)	(1,885)	18,367	n.a.	13,909	80.5%
Dr. John Bryant Center	n.a.	(4,646)	(813)	44,080	n.a.	38,621	192.3%
Lakeview Center ²	n.a.	(8,207)	(1,708)	n.a.	n.a.	(9,915)	-100.0%
Total	\$ 30,393	\$ 80,698	\$ (12,635)	\$ 213,758	\$ 34,062	\$ 346,276	44.3%
Notes							
¹ Includes rent, utilities, and maintenance charges for office space in the Annex building.							
² Includes Fuel & Oil, Garage Labor, and maintenance materials.							
³ Lakeview Community Center was closed in 2004.							

Using interdepartmental charges to account for centrally-provided services is a commonly accepted practice and is necessary from a cost allocation perspective to recoup the full cost of municipal services. The use of interdepartmental charges does not, however, automatically result in reduced expenditures. Changes in accounting approaches or systems can also lead to better accounting of central costs, but can also mean higher expenditures charged to Departments receiving the services. For example, in 2002, the City changed the way it charged Departments for centralized vehicle maintenance at the garage operated by the Department of Public Works. Public Works had provided vehicle maintenance services to PRCS since 1990, and centralized fueling services since 1993. As shown in **Figure 6**, the accounting and charging change resulted in higher interdepartmental charges for these services paid by PRCS, and therefore, enhanced cost recovery and program revenue for Public Works. Although service levels did not change in any way, the amount PRCS was paying for this function increased by \$235,845 in a single year.

Figure 6

Parks Division Vehicle Costs			
Comparison of Actual Expenditures in 2001 and 2002			
<i>Direct costs</i>	2001	2002	Change
Fuel	\$ 40,372	\$ 194	\$ (40,178)
Repairs & Maintenance ¹	115,613	8,911	(106,702)
<i>Interdepartmental charges</i>			
Garage Labor		284,642	284,642
Garage maintenance materials		56,005	56,005
Garage fuel		42,078	42,078
Total Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 157,986	\$ 393,832	\$ 235,845
Notes			
¹ Includes labor and maintenance materials for vehicles and office equipment.			

PRCS has limited ability to control increases to its budget resulting from higher interdepartmental charges, utilities, and health insurance costs. When these fixed costs increase, and the Department is directed to meet budget reduction targets, it must necessarily look to make reductions in budget categories it has the ability to control. **The budget category that has been looked to by PRCS for savings in recent years is staffing, which directly affects services and programs.**

Some believe that PRCS has been over-staffed in recent years, and, therefore, it could readily absorb staffing cuts while maintaining an equivalent level of services and programs. Because PRCS currently does not measure the actual staff time spent on individual programs and services, it has been unable to effectively respond to this perception. Similarly, because of the lack of time reporting data, we were unable to assess the impact of staffing cuts on the level of services and programs offered by PRCS. Data did not exist, for example, on how many hours it takes the Parks Division to pick up trash and mow an acre of park grounds or how much time is spent clearing snow from alleys, sidewalks, and parking lots.

Further, the lack of adequate time reporting data means that PRCS is unable to provide City decision makers with a suitable level of detailed information that can be used to guide resource allocation decisions. Staff indicated that, in the past, PRCS used to track staff time relative to work activities. However, PRCS cannot currently quantify and present the impacts of proposed staffing and program reductions on the ability of the Department to achieve its missions.

Recommendation #3: PRCS should re-implement time reporting using defined labor distribution or work activity codes that will allow the Department to describe the net effect of each 1.0 FTE reduction by Division and on:

- **The frequency with which parks receive trash pick up and lawns are mowed;**
- **The number of hours available for preparing and maintaining athletic fields;**
- **The amount of potential overtime that will be required to perform snow removal duties during snow events;**
- **Specific recreation programs supported by each position that will no longer be provided; and**
- **Special programs and activities provided through the Community Centers.**

The City is currently implementing a new time reporting system called the Tyme System. The PRCS should work closely with the IS Department to explore system capabilities to accommodate labor distribution codes that identify specific programs and activities including, but not limited to, those shown above. To accomplish this, the PRCS should prepare a written assessment of its business needs requirements relative to a labor distribution coding scheme for use by IS during system implementation.

The purpose of improved time reporting is not to itemize the reasons why future budget reductions in staff or programs are impossible; rather, it is to provide an objective assessment of the resources required to deliver each service, in order to provide decision makers with the information they need to prioritize and allocate shrinking resources.

D. Staffing Analysis

Over the past three years, the number of hours worked by full- and part-time staff in PRCS declined by -11.9%, as shown in **Figure 7**. We reviewed available payroll data for each PRCS Division in order to determine the precise effect of budget reductions in staffing levels. Because of compensation increases during this period, the percentage reduction in actual expenditures was less than the reduction in the number of hours worked. Overall, the number of FTE, as measured by actual hours worked, fell for the Administration (-2.5 FTE, or -35.7%), Parks (-4.3 FTE, or -9.5%), and Recreation Divisions (-6.7, or -17.6%). A slight increase in the number of hours worked by part-time staff in the Community Centers offset a decrease in the number of full-time staff so that the total number of hours worked at the Community Centers increased slightly (0.2 FTE, or 0.9%). These FTE staff figures differ from the number of full-time positions listed in the City's annual budget for PRCS, because **Figure 7** includes part-time staff time not shown in the budget.

Figure 7

Trend in Actual FTE Staff Hours Worked 2003-2005												
Division	2003			2004			2005			Pct. Change		
	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total	Full time	Part time	Total
<i>Administration</i>	7.0	0.0	7.0	6.9	0.0	6.9	4.5	0.0	4.5	-35.7%	0.0%	-35.7%
<i>Parks</i>	31.2	14.2	45.4	30.4	13.5	43.9	29.5	11.6	41.1	-5.4%	-18.3%	-9.5%
<i>Recreation</i>	4.1	33.9	38.0	4.1	27.0	31.1	5.0	26.3	31.3	22.0%	-22.4%	-17.6%
<i>M L King Center</i>	1.0	4.5	5.5	1.0	4.6	5.6	1.0	4.9	5.9	0.0%	8.9%	7.3%
<i>John Bryant Center</i>	1.0	4.0	5.0	1.0	4.4	5.4	1.0	4.9	5.9	0.0%	22.5%	18.0%
<i>Tyler-Domer Center</i>	3.0	2.4	5.4	1.0	2.8	3.8	1.0	3.0	4.0	-66.7%	25.0%	-25.9%
<i>Cesar Chavez Center</i>	1.0	1.8	2.8	1.0	2.0	3.0	1.0	2.1	3.1	0.0%	16.7%	10.7%
<i>Humble Park Center</i>	1.0	1.9	2.9	1.0	1.8	2.8	1.0	1.9	2.9	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>Centers Subtotal</i>	7.0	14.6	21.6	5.0	15.6	20.6	5.0	16.8	21.8	-66.7%	73.1%	0.9%
Total	49.3	62.7	112.0	46.4	56.1	102.5	44.0	54.7	98.7	-10.8%	-12.8%	-11.9%

These payroll data suggest that staffing decisions made by PRCS over the past three years to comply with budget reduction targets have resulted in:

- Reduction of full-time positions in Administration, Parks, and the Community Centers;
- Reduction of part-time positions in Parks and in Recreation;
- Increase in the number of full-time positions in Recreation; and
- Increase in the number of part-time positions in the Community Centers.

As noted, during the 2002 strategic plan process, staff absenteeism was identified as an issue facing PRCS. Further, during our interviews with staff, some reported that absenteeism was a significant enough factor to create challenges in managing workload. Accordingly, we reviewed available payroll data to determine the level of sick leave usage among PRCS staff, as shown in **Figure 8**.

Figure 8

Department Sick Leave Usage Patterns 2003-2005 ¹			
	2003	2004	2005
Number of Eligible ² Employees	70	59	59
Number of Employees Using Sick Leave	43	42	36
Percent of Eligible Employees Using Sick Leave	61.4%	71.2%	61.0%
Total Sick Leave Hours Used			
Average Hours of Sick Leave Used (Employees Using Sick Leave)	3,313.0	2,615.3	3,949.1
	77.0	62.3	109.7
Notes			
¹ Includes Sick Leave and Industrial Accidents with Pay.			
² Includes Full-time and Regular Part-time employees in AFSCME Local 2239 working more than 24 hours per week.			

Sick leave is a benefit to employees, and should be used only in case of bona fide illness of the employee or a relative as governed by the terms of the collective bargaining agreement or City personnel policies. It should be noted that it is difficult to predict when an employee will need to take sick leave, and the collective bargaining agreement and City personnel policies allows the City to require documentation from an employee using three or more consecutive days of sick leave, and in some cases two consecutive days. Full-time employees accumulate sick leave at a rate of 8 hours per month, or 96 hours annually. There were 13 PRCS employees taking 80 or more hours of sick leave in 2003, 9 employees in 2004, and 15 employees in 2005. Of this group, five employees took 80 or more hours in all three years.

Sick leave usage can be affected by a number of factors, not the least of which are the types of job duties assigned to a given group of employees. Employees that perform their duties in more hazardous environments are more likely to be injured or become sick on the job, for example, as a consequence of industrial accidents. However, in our experience, other factors can also play a role, such as the ability of employees to bank sick leave, sick leave retirement cash-out provisions, and the ability of employees to have flexibility in choosing regularly scheduled vacation time. The collective bargaining agreement currently requires that employees must schedule their earned vacation time for a minimum of one-week increments, unless a shorter time is mutually agreed to by management and the employee, in order to reduce the complexity of scheduling coverage. While this provides management the ability to ensure staff coverage throughout the year, it may also have the unintended effect of encouraging employees to call in sick when they desire to take a short leave of less than a week. Therefore, if employees were provided an increased measure of flexibility in scheduling vacation leave, it could potentially reduce the amount of sick leave taken.

Managers in the Department of Public Works report that they recognize this is an issue, and have attempted to address it by granting shorter vacation leaves for employees who provide sufficient reason, such as a family reunion, or household emergencies such as a flooded basement. Nevertheless, both departments require vacation to be scheduled in one-week blocks in most instances, and also reserve the right to limit the number of employees that are out on any given day on vacation or floating holidays, per the terms of the contract. The PRCS Parks Division currently limits the number of employees that can be out on any given day to five.

At time we were preparing the final report, we learned that the City and AFSCME Local 67 had reached a tentative agreement in the new labor contract to implement a compensatory time program for employees. This provision will likely increase the complexity of ensuring consistent scheduling coverage, as employees will now be able to request additional time off based on their accumulated comp time. On the other hand, it could work to the advantage of PRCS because employees will be able to schedule time off for shorter periods, and therefore will not need to call in sick to receive a day off, given the current requirement for scheduling vacations in one week blocks. Nevertheless, the City should still consider allowing employees greater flexibility in order to reduce sick leave usage, particularly among employees that do not accumulate significant comp time.

Recommendation #4: The City should alter its approach to regularly scheduled vacations by allowing employees increased flexibility to schedule vacation time. This issue is subject to collective bargaining, and the City has a valid reason for the current practice. However, by increasing employee's ability to schedule some part of their annual allotted vacation time in less than one-week increments, the City may be able to reduce the amount of sick leave taken in lieu of vacation. It should be noted that represented employees will likely have the right to schedule time off using compensatory time under the new labor contract, and any further changes to time off provisions would require mutual agreement through the collective bargaining process. One potential approach to providing increased flexibility could be to allow the employee to schedule five days of vacation time available at the beginning of the year in blocks of less than one week, and eight days after 14 years of service, given reasonable notice. The remainder of the employee's available vacation would continue to be scheduled in week-long blocks, in order to ensure that management can efficiently schedule staffing resources. Implementation of this recommendation should also take into consideration current limits on the number of employees allowed to be out on vacation on any given day.

There are, of course, many possible variations that could be considered, but the ultimate goal should be to reduce the temptation for employees to call in sick in order to take a three- or four-day weekend, only because a vacation day currently can not be used for that purpose.

At the same time, however, there appears to be a small number of employees who, every year, take two or more weeks of sick leave, in addition to their vacation, holidays, and casual days. PRCS should address the issues surrounding these employees' need for sick leave by monitoring sick leave usage and taking appropriate measures as provided under the terms of the collective bargaining agreement. Staff indicate that they are currently attempting to address this issue; however, the total number of employees taking more than 80 hours of sick leave in 2005 has not decreased in the period between 2003 and 2005, and was higher in 2005 than in either 2003 or 2004.

Recommendation #5: Subject to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, PRCS should identify and monitor the sick leave usage of employees who are consistently heavy users to understand the issues surrounding these employees' higher need for sick leave. If it is determined that sick leave is being abused, appropriate remedies should be taken.

We also reviewed the level of overtime in PRCS. Overtime is often required of staff in parks and recreation departments because of the seasonal nature of many of its activities, and because of the need to complete emergency repairs or clean-up that simply cannot be predicted. As shown in **Figure 9**, total expenditures for overtime in 2005 were \$37,645, which was significantly higher than in the two previous years. Most of the overtime hours and expenditures were regular overtime and double-time (paid for time worked on holidays) generated by Parks Division line staff. According to staff, a significant increase in overtime hours occurred in 2005 because PRCS was required to use full-time Parks Division staff to provide weekend coverage as a result of a union grievance. These duties had previously been assigned to part-time staff. The resulting change in how parks facilities are maintained on weekends and holidays has increased overtime, because the seasonal staff had been scheduled with more flexibility. The third largest type of overtime expenditures involved on-call payments for four labor supervisors, three of whom were in the Parks Division and one in the Recreation Division. These non-represented staff receive four hours of on-call pay for each weekend and holiday that they are on-call. The on-call schedule is rotated evenly among the four labor supervisors.

Figure 9

Department Overtime Usage Trend 2003-2005						
	2003		2004		2005	
	Hours	Earnings	Hours	Earnings	Hours	Earnings
<i>Parks</i>						
Overtime	294.4	\$ 8,975.07	242.8	\$ 7,504.79	365.3	\$ 11,857.92
On-call Premium	332.0	7,893.64	332.0	8,354.72	348.0	9,541.60
Double Time	108.5	4,355.14	74.5	3,066.78	319.1	13,668.24
Shift Premium	0.0	29.50	0.0	-	0.0	-
Parks Subtotal	734.9	\$ 21,253.35	649.3	\$ 18,926.29	1032.4	\$ 35,067.76
<i>Recreation</i>						
Overtime	299.7	\$ 3,391.82	20.0	\$ 225.00	4.0	\$ 46.32
On-call Premium	120.0	2,616.80	124.0	2,818.36	108.0	2,530.44
Double Time	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	-
Shift Premium	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	-
Recreation Subtotal	419.7	\$ 6,008.62	144.0	\$ 3,043.36	112.0	\$ 2,576.76
<i>Community Centers</i>						
Overtime	46.8	\$ 1,241.80	4.5	\$ 51.19	0.0	\$ -
On-call Premium	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	-
Double Time	11.0	409.72	0.0	-	0.0	-
Shift Premium	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	-
Centers Subtotal	57.8	\$ 1,651.52	4.5	\$ 51.19	0.0	\$ -
Total	1,212.4	\$ 28,913.49	797.8	\$ 22,020.84	1,144.4	\$ 37,644.52

In our experience, reductions in staff level are a common factor in increased overtime hours and expenditures, but overtime does not appear to be a significant issue for PRCS. Overtime expenditures were 1.8% or less of regular salaries for PRCS in all three years. Accordingly, reducing overtime does not appear likely to provide PRCS with a significant opportunity to achieve budget reduction targets. However, the City's current practice of paying supervisory staff for time spent on-call is unusual when compared to other Wisconsin parks and recreation departments. Typically in public sector organizations, overtime pay is earned only by union employees covered under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement, and not by supervisory staff. However, in Racine, supervisors in both PRCS and in the Department of Public Works receive these payments. This practice is long-standing in the City, and was implemented in order to:

- Reduce competition and complaints among supervisory staff assigned to on-call shifts;
- Ensure supervisory staff were consistently available for on-call duties; and
- Reduce salary compression effects between senior represented staff and supervisory staff.

Given the severe fiscal constraints that PRCS is currently operating under, these reasons do not appear sufficient to warrant continuation of this practice. It should be noted that eliminating on-call premiums for PRCS supervisors raises an equity issue relative to supervisory staff in the Department of Public Works Department. However, by eliminating this practice, and by requiring that supervisors be on-call similar to their colleagues in other Wisconsin parks and recreation departments, the Department could achieve a maximum of \$12,072 in budget savings without reducing any services or programs.

Recommendation #6: After reviewing the effect of any potential change on salary compression between supervisors and line staff, PRCS should discontinue the practice of paying supervisors an on-call premium. Further, in order to preserve interdepartmental equity, the City should consider discontinuing this practice in the Department of Public Works as well.

IV. MENU OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

A. Parks Maintenance

As noted, a primary activity of PRCS is Parks Maintenance. As shown in **Figure 10**, the Parks Division is responsible for 1,126.9 acres of parks, trails, and green spaces, or 32.1 acres per FTE. In 2005, operating the Parks Division costs each resident of Racine an estimated \$38.83.

Figure 10

Parks Division Workload and Expenditure Data	
2005	
Parks Division Staff	
Full-time ¹	23.5
Long Seasonal and Student	11.6
Total	35.1
Total Parks Acreage	
Park Acres per FTE	1126.9
	32.1
Parks Division Expenditures²	
Racine Population	\$ 3,131,057
Parks Division Expenditures per capita	80,638
Park Acres per 1,000 residents	\$ 38.83
	14.0
Notes	
¹ Excludes Parks staff with administrative functions and skilled trades people. Includes Parks Superintendent and labor supervisors.	
² Includes wages and fringe benefits, operating expenditures, interdepartmental charges, and capital outlay.	

As noted, the Parks Division has a range of responsibilities related to urban forestry activities, inspecting parks grounds and removing litter and graffiti, snow and ice removal, playground equipment maintenance, and mowing lawns for parks, street medians, and certain City Buildings.

Our review of existing benchmark data relative to the number of Parks FTE staff indicate that other municipalities currently have a wide range of park acres per FTE. There is no single widely-accepted standard for this staffing ratio similar to the National Parks and Recreation Association's standard of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. For example, available benchmarking statistics² indicate that the number of park acres per FTE ranges from 10.6 acres per FTE (San Jose, California) to 82.6 acres per FTE (Overland Park, Kansas).

² David Ammons, "Municipal Benchmarks: Assessing Local Performance and Establishing Community Standards," Sage Publications, 2003, p.270.

B. Recreation and Community Center Programs

The Recreation Division offers a very wide range of programs and activities, as shown in **Figure 11**. As noted, the Recreation Division is responsible for Community Centers, athletic leagues, and other programs and activities held inside Community Centers, in Parks facilities, and elsewhere. The list presented in **Figure 11** was developed using 2005 monthly attendance reports from the five Community Centers, although some programs and activities were not located at a Community Center. For example, some of the Community Center Directors are responsible for operation of a program or activity throughout the system; examples of these are the Director of Humble Park who oversees the Optimist Youth Basketball League, and the Director of the Tyler-Domer Center oversees the playground program. The list presented in **Figure 11** is not a comprehensive list of all activities offered by the Recreation Division, but does present the most significant activities. As noted, PRCS currently has a cumbersome and heavily manual process to collect program participation data, and attendance data at the specific activity level does not exist on a consistent basis for all Centers for all months. Activity data were available for most months in 2005 and 2004, but not for prior years.

Figure 11

Recreation Programs - All Locations 2005		
Youth Activities	Adult Activities	Senior Activities
Open Rec	City League Basketball	Adult Lunch
Basketball	City League Volleyball	Art Group
Optimist League	Coaches Meetings	Arts & Crafts
Spring Break	Housing meetings	Blood Pressure
Church	Bat Inspection	Card Clubs
Free Throw Contest	Chavez Celebration	Computer Class
Fast Break	Hispanic Roundtable	Dart Ball
Preschool	Make a Difference Day	Foot Clinic
Kids Lunch	Lifeguard Meetings	Game Room
Kiddie Korner	Model Boat	Line Dancing
Magic Bus	Officials Meeting	Roosevelt Choir
Games Room	Open Gym	Scrabble
Soccer Camps	Peace & Justice	Walkers
Haunted House	Pleasure Club	Woodcarvers
Opportunity Club	Por La Gente	Nutrition Program
Supplies Give-Away	Rental	Ballroom Dancing
Roosevelt Choir	Sustainable Racine	Bingo
Sun-Spot	Voting	Ceramics
Snow Sharks	CPR Training	Computer Class I
Special Olympics	Mayor/Town Hall Mtg	Computer Class II
Volleyball	Stop the Violence Mtg	Computer Class III
Hershey Track/Field	Black History Program	Discussion Groups
Skills Clinic	Black Nurses	Internet I
BM-X Bike Clinic	Family Night	Internet II
Bike Jam/Skateboard	Game Room	Knitting Group
Outdoor Movies	H.S.E.D./G.E.D.	Liq. Embroidery Class
Lake F/X Games	Innecity Hoops	Lunch Bunch
Playgrounds	NA Group	Phone Service
Sports of all Sorts	Soccer	Scrabble
Sky's the Limit	Gangs & Drugs Act. Mtg	Sewing Class
Kayak Demo Daze	Community Impact	Tennis Table
Adopt-A-River	Weight Room	
Craft Programs	Computers	
Day Care	Quilters	
Drill Team	Christmas Potluck	
Girl Scouts		
Girls Club		
Homework Assist.		
Main Gallery		
Library		
Story Hour		

The Recreation Division spends a significant amount of staff time on manual procedures used to collect program attendance and participation data. However, the data were not in a format that allowed PRCS staff to easily summarize or provide to us in electronic format, and we were therefore unable to project participation rates.

While attendance data were not available for specific programs and activities prior to 2004, participation data were available for recreation programs between 2001 and 2005 by age category. Specifically, trend data were available for all youth programs, adult programs, and senior programs in Community Centers, Parks facilities, and elsewhere. As shown in **Figure 12**, the average daily attendance for all Recreation programs—in aggregate—increased 14.4% between 2001 and 2005. PRCS reports and maintains summary program participation data by Community Centers, because staff managing Recreation Division programs and activities are often assigned to the Centers, or because the program is actually held there. It should be noted that these attendance figures are both estimated and duplicated. In other words, a senior citizen could come to a Community Center for lunch and also participate in a card club the same day, and would be counted twice. While the average daily attendance numbers do not, therefore, indicate the unduplicated count of the number of people served, it does serve as a measurement of the change in utilization of programs and activities.

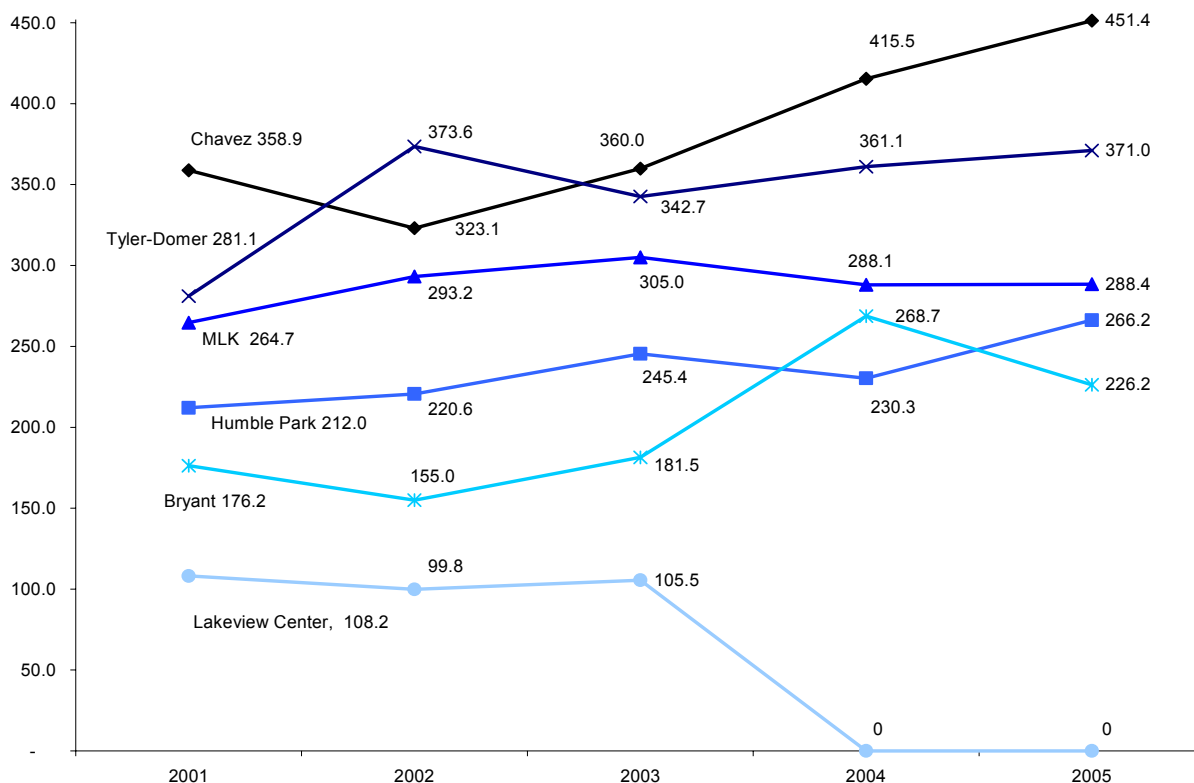
Figure 12

Recreation Division Average Daily Attendance ¹ 2001 through 2005						
	2001	2002	2003 ²	2004	2005	Percentage Change
Senior Activities						
Chavez Center	50.3	46.8	46.9	69.0	63.5	26.3%
Humble Park Center	20.0	19.1	16.4	15.4	15.9	-20.6%
Dr. M. L. King Center	28.9	30.1	30.7	35.9	37.0	28.2%
Tyler-Domer Center	8.6	3.8	-	-	-	-100.0%
Dr. Bryant Center	11.3	15.9	21.9	73.1	72.4	539.2%
Lakeview Center	30.1	30.9	32.0	-	-	-100.0%
<i>Senior Activities Subtotal</i>	149.2	146.5	147.8	193.3	188.8	26.6%
Adult Activities						
Chavez Center	59.8	71.7	69.2	96.4	68.6	14.7%
Humble Park Center	4.4	6.6	21.4	14.2	17.4	294.4%
Dr. M. L. King Center	81.8	101.1	125.3	147.9	132.3	61.7%
Tyler-Domer Center	66.5	62.8	67.5	85.0	114.6	72.3%
Dr. Bryant Center	74.3	57.2	59.1	83.9	57.9	-22.0%
Lakeview Center	36.8	23.3	20.5	-	-	-100.0%
<i>Adult Activities Subtotal</i>	323.6	322.6	363.0	427.3	390.8	20.8%
Youth Activities³						
Chavez Center	248.8	204.7	243.9	250.1	319.3	28.3%
Humble Park Center	187.6	195.0	207.6	200.8	232.9	24.2%
Dr. M. L. King Center	154.0	162.0	149.1	104.4	119.1	-22.7%
Tyler-Domer Center	206.0	307.1	275.2	276.1	256.5	24.5%
Dr. Bryant Center	90.6	81.9	100.5	111.7	95.9	5.8%
Lakeview Center	41.3	45.6	53.0	-	-	-100.0%
<i>Youth Activities Subtotal</i>	928.3	996.3	1,029.2	943.1	1,023.6	10.3%
Aggregate by Center						
Chavez Center	358.9	323.1	360.0	415.5	451.4	25.8%
Humble Park Center	212.0	220.6	245.4	230.3	266.2	25.5%
Dr. M. L. King Center	264.7	293.2	305.0	288.1	288.4	9.0%
Tyler-Domer Center	281.1	373.6	342.7	361.1	371.0	32.0%
Dr. Bryant Center	176.2	155.0	181.5	268.7	226.2	28.4%
Lakeview Center	108.2	99.8	105.5	-	-	-100.0%
<i>Total Average Daily Attendance</i>	1,401.1	1,465.4	1,540.1	1,563.7	1,603.3	14.4%
Notes						
¹ Average daily attendance is duplicated; residents may be counted in multiple activities within an age category.						
² Attendance data available through September for the Bryant Center, through November for the Tyler Domer Center, and through October for all other Centers.						
³ Youth activities for playground programs, athletic leagues, and other activities included in Center						

What these data suggest is that growth in utilization was strongest for seniors and adults, although utilization grew for all three age categories. This is striking because the Lakeview Center was no longer operated by PRCS after 2003. While senior citizens continue to visit the Lakeview Center, now under operation by a non-profit senior citizen group, their attendance is no longer counted by PRCS. Further, the Tyler-Domer center has offered no senior programming since 2002.

It was not possible to project Community Center attendance, because of the absence of trend data for individual programs or activities; it seems reasonable to assume that residents attend the Centers because of the programs and services available. However, **Figure 13** presents aggregate average daily attendance between 2001 and 2005, organized by the Center. All five current Centers had higher average daily attendance in 2005 when compared to 2001. While this may suggest increased utilization of the Centers, it could also reflect increased participation in youth athletic leagues and other activities.

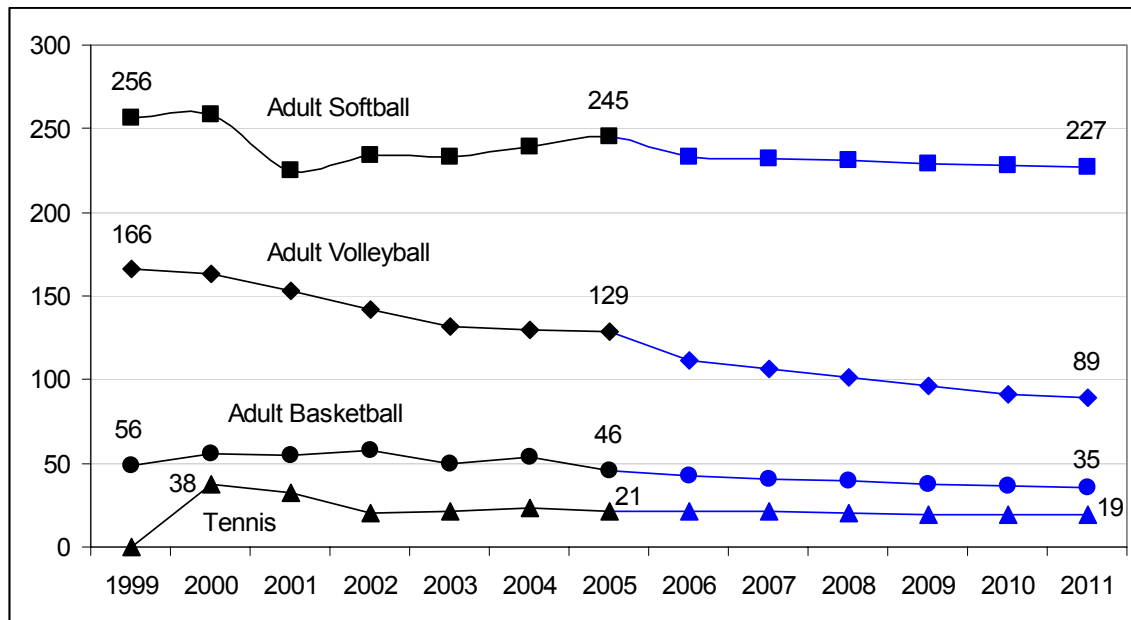
Figure 13
Aggregate Average Daily Attendance
Recreation Programs by Center
 2001-2005



As noted, PRCS closed the Lakeview Community Center in 2004. During 2001 through 2003, the Lakeview Center had the lowest aggregate average daily attendance of any of the six Centers. In 2004, the Bryant, Tyler-Domer, and Chavez Centers all experienced increased attendance, while Humble Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. registered slight decreases.

Participation data for most recreation programs were not available at the detailed program level earlier than 2005. However, data were available on the number of athletic teams for Adult Basketball, Softball, Volleyball, and Tennis leagues organized and run by PRCS. As shown in **Figure 14**, the number of teams registered in all of these leagues has declined since 2000 and 2001.

Figure 14
Past and Projected Number of Adult Athletic League Teams
 1999-2011



An analysis of the data between 1990 and 2005 suggested that the ratio of teams registered per population was relatively constant between 1999 and 2005. Assuming the participation ratio does not significantly change over the next six years, and the Department does not make any significant changes to the fees or operations of these leagues, it is reasonable to expect that the number of teams will vary primarily with population changes. By comparing the trend in the actual number of teams registered between 1999 and 2005 and factoring in population projections developed by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, we believe that the number of teams registered in these sports will continue to decline gradually, with the most significant decline likely to occur in volleyball. It should be noted that projections of future activity are—by their nature—uncertain; although based on recent trends, they should be viewed with caution.

Not only has the City's total population decreased since 1990 and is projected to decrease still further through 2011, the number of residents between the ages of 20 and 44 is also projected to decrease, as shown in **Figure 15**. This has resulted in a smaller pool of residents that are likely to participate in adult athletic leagues. If current trends continue, the amount of adults between the age of 20 and 44 will have decreased from 32,359 in 1990 to 25,618 in 2011, or by -21.3%.

Figure 15

City of Racine Population Trend 1990-2011					
	1990	2000	2005	2011²	Percentage Change
City of Racine Population	84,298	81,855	80,638	79,263	-6.0%
Proportion aged 20-44 ¹	38.6%	35.6%	33.7%	32.3%	-16.3%
Estimated population - athletic league age	32,539	29,140	27,175	25,618	-21.3%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Administration Demographic Services Center

Notes

¹DOA age proportion estimates available for Racine County as a whole.

²Year 2011 data estimated by Virchow Krause based on 1990 and 2000 census data and 2005 DOA estimate.

Taken together, what these projections suggest is that PRCS is not likely to need any additional capacity for adult league athletic fields during the near future, given current trends.

Recommendation #7: PRCS should not commit any resources to expanding the number of ball diamonds, volleyball courts, or tennis courts in the short- and medium-term for adult leagues. Given available resources, PRCS should focus on maintaining existing athletic fields. If additional funds are available for capital outlays for athletic fields, consider making needed repairs or investing in improvements to reduce maintenance or utility costs.

V. ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS

This section of the report will address issues and provide recommendations related to organization and operations for the main functional areas of PRCS.

A. Administration

The amount the City spends on Parks and Recreation is comparable to the average amount spent by other medium-sized Wisconsin cities, but the approach used by the Department to prepare its budget needs to be improved. When compared to other Wisconsin cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000 having a combined Parks and Recreation function (i.e., recreation as well as parks functions are provided through the City rather than through the school district), total parks and recreation expenditures—as reported to the Wisconsin Department of Revenue—average an estimated \$78.56 per resident, with a low of \$58.89 (Janesville) and a high of \$110.48 (La Crosse). As shown in **Figure 16**, PRCS spent an estimated \$79.76 per capita in 2003, which was slightly higher than, but still comparable to, the average amount.

Figure 16

Per-Capita Parks and Recreation Expenditures Medium-sized Wisconsin Cities, 2003			
City	Population	Parks & Rec Expenditures	Expenditures per capita
La Crosse	51,513	5,691,100	110.48
Green Bay	103,233	8,911,000	86.32
Racine	81,111	6,469,200	79.76
Eau Claire	63,882	4,888,300	76.52
Appleton	71,649	5,008,900	69.91
Waukesha	66,807	4,627,500	69.27
Janesville	61,110	3,598,900	58.89
Average	69,699	\$ 5,454,283	\$ 78.56

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue

Over the past several years, the budget process has begun with PRCS learning what the budget reduction target will be for the next year. The Director discusses potential opportunities with the Recreation and Parks Managers, who submit proposed budgets for their Divisions to the Director. The Director then uses these proposals to develop a budget for PRCS, which is submitted to the Mayor's Office. However, because the manual processes used by PRCS to track program data make even basic program and financial reporting a cumbersome task, the PRCS budget does not currently include:

- Performance outcome data tied to the strategic plan, mission, or vision;
- Basic output data relative to program participation rates;
- Comparative analysis of the impacts of potential reductions on programs and services; and
- Cost-based analyses of specific programs and activities that can be used to assess whether fee increase proposals are merited, given the City's policy goals.

Recommendation #8: Using the improved reporting approach discussed in Recommendation #1, PRCS should enhance the budget preparation process by including specific, quantifiable measures to provide decision makers with the information necessary to ensure that resource allocation decisions expressed in the annual budget are aligned with the PRCS mission.

The PRCS approach to budget preparation has, in the past, resulted in surprises that could have been avoided. For example, although the Parks Manager has primary responsibility for developing the capital budget for PRCS, previous budgets have included capital requests from the Recreation Manager that were not discussed with the Parks Manager, whose staff had responsibility for maintaining the capital improvement. Avoiding similar issues will be particularly important in the process used for preparing the 2007 budget, because of the retirement of the current Recreation Manager. While the City Finance Department provides PRCS with a general budget schedule, senior PRCS staff disagree whether the current approach used by PRCS to follow the budget schedule provided by Finance includes a final team review.

Recommendation #9: PRCS should prepare and follow a formal budget preparation schedule that allows sufficient time for development of Division proposals, creation of a final budget by the Director, and a final "management team review" by the Director and the Managers of the Parks and Recreation Divisions. Further, the internal PRCS budget preparation schedule should provide sufficient time for the final team review as well as review by the PRCS Board in their role as an advisory body. The PRCS Board should continue reviewing current policies having fiscal impacts as well as providing a prioritization of services and resources. The goal of the revised process will be to ensure that the budget submitted to the Mayor's Office adequately addresses resources and shared Divisional responsibilities.

A second primary area of responsibility for the PRCS Administration is to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of the Department by creating open communication flow, a positive work environment, and working to ensure good labor-management relations. Staff interviews suggested that communication between the operational staff and staff in the Administration offices has been disjointed and has contributed to poor labor-management relations.

Grievances are caused by a variety of factors, and internal communication challenges are only one potential source of difficulty in labor-management relations. In the past for example, the Parks Division experienced turn over at key supervisory positions and the new supervisory staff reportedly did not fully understand the terms of the labor contract, and had a confrontational approach to management created increased grievances. Between 2001 and 2005, City unions filed a total of 76 grievances against PRCS, which was the second highest total of any Department. As shown in **Figure 17**, only the Department of Public Works had more grievances for this period. When the size of the Departments are considered, PRCS had more grievances on a per-employee basis of any of the larger City Departments. On the other hand, it should be noted that, in 2005, the number of grievances in PRCS fell significantly.

Figure 17

Grievances by City Department¹ 2001 through 2005									
Department	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total	Percent of Total	Estimated 2005 Union FTE	Percent of Estimated FTE
Public Works ²	12	11	24	14	35	96	32.5%	105.80	18.8%
PRCS ³	8	21	15	26	6	76	25.8%	62.50	11.1%
Police, Traffic/Parking ⁴	8	4	11	5	5	33	11.2%	219.50	39.1%
Health ⁵	2	8	6	0	3	19	5.8%	22.90	4.1%
MIS ⁶	1	0	13	0	0	14	4.7%	6.00	1.1%
Human Resources ⁶	2	4	4	0	0	10	3.4%	4.00	0.7%
DPW Garage ⁷	3	0	2	0	5	10	3.4%	24.20	4.3%
Finance ⁸	0	1	1	2	5	9	3.1%	13.00	2.3%
Dispatch, 911 ⁹	4	1	4	0	0	9	3.1%	25.00	4.5%
Engineering ¹⁰	3	2	2	0	0	7	2.4%	11.23	2.0%
City Clerk ¹¹	1	1	1	0	1	4	1.4%	5.00	0.9%
Library ¹²	2	1	1	0	0	4	1.4%	49.70	8.9%
Assessor ¹³	0	0	0	0	2	2	0.7%	6.00	1.1%
City Development ¹⁴	0	1	0	1	0	2	0.7%	6.50	1.2%
Total	46	55	84	48	62	295	100.0%	561.33	100.0%

Notes:
¹Includes individual employee and policy grievances.
²Excludes Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Chief Building Inspector, Solid Waste Labor Supervisor, Streets Superintendent, Streets Maintenance Supervisor, Streets Labor Supervisor, Building Complex Maintenance Supervisor
³Excludes Director, Assistant Director, Cultural Manager, Rec Programs Supervisor, Maintenance Supervisor, Rec Supervisor (6), Park Superintendent, Labor Supervisor III, Labor Supervisor II (2)
⁴Excludes Chief, Assistant Chief, Inspector, Captain (3), Lieutenant (10), Administrative Service Manager, Records Supervisor
⁵Excludes Administrator, Director of Community Health, Director of Environmental Health, Lab Director, WIC Director
⁶Excludes Director, Assistant Director
⁷Excludes Fleet Supervisor, Fleet Facilities Manager
⁸Excludes Director, Assistant Director, Payroll Supervisor, Treasury Manager
⁹Excludes Director, Supervisor
¹⁰Excludes City Engineer, Assistant City Engineer
¹¹Excludes City Clerk, Aldermen
¹²Excludes City Librarian, Supervisors (4), Business Manager
¹³Excludes City Assessor
¹⁴Excludes Director, Assistant Director, Fair Housing Director

The effectiveness of labor-management cooperation has also been negatively influenced by pressure on PRCS to reduce its budget. It is during these periods that a positive labor-management working relationship is most beneficial. Grievances typically involve a disagreement related to the interpretation of the terms of the collective bargaining agreement; the reasonableness of disciplinary actions; and potential violations of local, state, or federal law. The company providing insurance to the City of Racine (Cities & Villages Mutual Insurance Company-CVMIC) offers free training to its members designed to help improve labor-management relations. In 2005, PRCS sent a significant number of managerial and supervisory employees to CVMIC training in coaching employees, employee discipline, FLSA rules, and other sessions. Staff report that a change in supervisory personnel has improved labor-management relations somewhat, which explains the decline in the number of grievances in 2005.

As an alternative to CVMIC training, the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission (WERC) offers a variety of relatively low-cost training sessions for managers and union representatives to improve this relationship both during collective bargaining as well as during the post-bargaining period. These sessions can be held on-site, or at an outside facility.

Recommendation #10: PRCS should continue sending managerial and supervisory employees to CVMIC trainings and explore additional opportunities offered by the WERC for managers and key union staff that will enhance the ability of the Department to implement a consensus-based approach to dispute resolution.

The Administration is also responsible for setting Department priorities, guiding the development of new programs, and ensuring that the mission of PRCS is being achieved. While PRCS should be commended for going through a Strategic Development process in 2002, it has not completed any systematic effort to determine what the residents of the City actually want the Department to do. Currently, PRCS measures its success through attendance of existing programs, responding to complaints, and occasional ad-hoc efforts such as holding a "town hall" meeting for senior citizens organized by a recreation supervisor to gauge interest in changing activities; this meeting was attended by one senior citizen. In order to determine what types of programs and activities residents are interested in, it is not sufficient to only survey program participants and visitors to the Community Centers; PRCS is already providing the services and programs participants want. What is needed is a survey of those who do not use PRCS facilities, programs, and activities to help determine how the menu of services could be adjusted to increase participation. In addition, PRCS has not made any effort to measure residents' use of parks facilities independent of structured programs.

Parks Division staff have implemented a comprehensive, regular schedule of on-site visual inspections of all parks facilities. This is a commendable practice, as it helps ensure that maintenance and repair needs are identified in a systematic fashion. The practice of regular on-site inspections of all park facilities could be leveraged to develop measures of Park utilization by having Parks Division staff report how many individuals are using the parks when they are there, as well as having equipment operators report on park user head counts during ongoing mowing activities.

Recommendation #11: Depending on the specific outcome measures developed in Recommendation #1, PRCS should conduct a survey of Racine residents regarding its programs, activities, and facilities. Specifically, this survey should not be restricted to current users of facilities and program participants. If a methodologically rigorous survey is desired, PRCS currently does not have the necessary skill sets to complete such a survey, meaning it would have to contract for this service. While it would provide a baseline of customer satisfaction data, contracting for a one-time survey is not ideal, as it would not provide an ongoing measure of success.

In addition, PRCS should develop a systematic method to measure utilization of park facilities, such as including "head count" reporting in the parks during different days as well as times of day, during regular ongoing inspections of parks facilities and ongoing mowing activities by Parks Division staff. Some adjustments to the inspection and mowing schedule would have to be made, so that each park would be visited at different days and times, which would provide the basis for a reasonable estimate.

B. Parks Maintenance Operations

As noted, PRCS has been under significant pressure to reduce its budget, while fixed costs such as interdepartmental charges, health care, and utilities have increased. Concurrently, PRCS has been directed to increase the scope of its responsibilities relative to the Parks Division. As shown in **Figure 18**, the Parks Division assumed responsibilities for a number of new areas during 2003 and 2004. Data were not available to indicate the amount of hours required to perform these duties. Nevertheless, these represent additional responsibilities at the same time that the Parks Division staffing was declining and challenge the Parks Division to do more with less.

Figure 18

Changed Responsibilities for the Parks Division 2003 and 2004	
2003	
<i>Additions</i>	<i>Reductions</i>
North Beach Playground 21st Street Median DeKoven Avenue Median DeKoven Sidewalks Peter Bach Sidewalk Root River Bike Path North Beach Concession Hampden Service Center Festival Hall Parking Ramp City Hall Traffic Island 6th Street & Kinzie Traffic Island Zoo Rhino Building Zoo North Restrooms Zoo North Concession Stand Cheska Playground Howland Avenue Alley Park Place Irrigation	
2004	
<i>Additions</i>	<i>Reductions</i>
Park Place Fountain Maintenance Pershing Bike Path Median City Hall Irrigation Island Park Bike Path and Bridge Shoop Golf Course Lift Station Zoo Water Meter Building	Ice Rinks Rickman Metal Building Special Events City Hall Lawn Annuals Planting Old North Beach Playground

Mowing Activities

As noted, the Department does not have a time keeping system that would allow it to quantify the impact of these added responsibilities on its abilities to maintain the current level of service in other areas. During our interviews, however, several potential areas for reduced or alternative service delivery presented themselves. According to staff, none of the new activities represents a huge increase in workload over the course of a year; however, in aggregate, they represent a significant level of additional responsibilities that have been added during a period of decreased staffing in the Parks Division.

The Parks Division has responsibility to mow the grass on all street medians in the City. No data exist on the amount of staff time required to complete this responsibility. However, street medians are not Parks; they do not provide a recreational opportunity, and, therefore, represent a purely aesthetic function. Certainly, aesthetic considerations are very important to individual neighborhoods and ample research indicates that poorly-maintained neighborhoods experience decreased property values and may increase the amount of crime in the area. Nevertheless, mowing medians reduces the amount of staff time available for maintaining Parks. Therefore, this may represent an opportunity for PRCS to consider contracting for service.

Recommendation #12: The Parks Division should track the amount of time it takes to perform median mowing tasks over a three-month period in 2006, and use the resulting labor time data to estimate the cost of providing this service. For the 2007 season, PRCS should solicit bids for mowing street medians. If the bid cost is lower than the PRCS cost, PRCS should contract for this function.

Snow Removal

In our review, we learned that the Parks Division also has responsibility for plowing residential alleys. This is a long-standing practice. However, this practice is unusual compared to other Midwest municipalities. Clearly, the amount of staff time required to perform this function is dependent upon the number of snow events. However, according to Parks Division staff, a six-inch snowfall requires approximately 152 hours to plow the alley routes. Assuming a conservative hourly rate of \$21.19 (the amount paid to an equipment operator under the 2005 collective bargaining agreement), this represents \$3,221 in base salary costs per snow event. This cost will be almost certainly higher in actuality, because snow plowing often occurs after normal work hours and, therefore, would generate overtime, because not all staff who are assigned to this activity earn this basic rate, and because this figure does not include costs associated with operating and maintaining snow plowing equipment. Assuming four snow events occur, and that all work is performed during normal working hours, eliminating this service could result in salary savings of \$12,884. Actual savings could potentially be larger after fringe benefit savings are included, elimination of some associated equipment costs and, ultimately, the potential to reduce staff positions. Because PRCS is currently not able to quantify the staff time required to provide this service relative to other Parks Division responsibilities, the potential for additional staff savings is unknown.

In addition, PRCS is responsible for snow removal for parking facilities assigned to PRCS, which together represent just over 25 acres. No data were available for how long it currently takes PRCS to plow the assigned parking lots in addition to the alleys.

Recommendation #13: The City should cease snow removal operations in alleys. If the City wishes to continue providing this service, PRCS should identify actual staff costs for this activity during recent years to compare against solicited bids for contracted snow removal in alleys. This would provide a cost basis for potentially contracting for snow plowing in alleys.

Urban Forestry

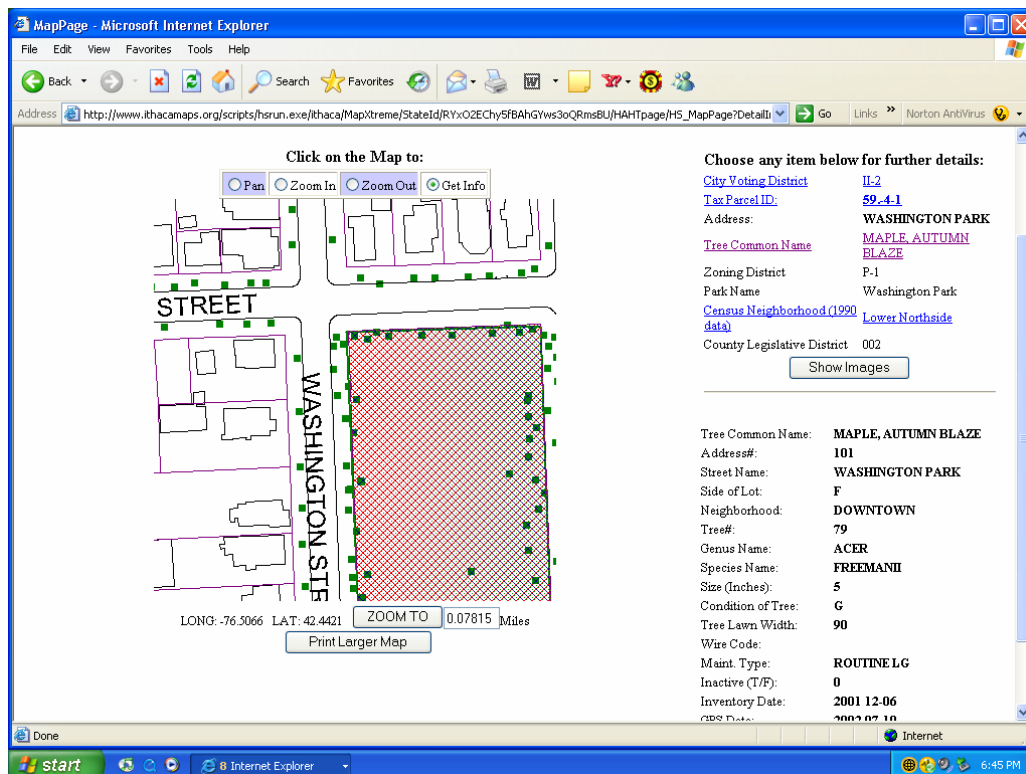
The urban forestry program operated by the Parks Division is one of the strengths of PRCS. Several elements of the PRCS program represent best practices, including a knowledgeable and experienced staff, an adequate level of resources—with general fund expenditures supplemented by federal CDBG funding—an outreach program to involve residents in identifying demand for planting in specific neighborhoods, and a tree ordinance in the Municipal Code. During staff interviews, the forestry program was frequently cited as being a strength of PRCS. There is strong support from the Mayor to further build the program, which is scheduled to plant approximately 300 trees in 2006; the Parks Division anticipates having to remove approximately 200 trees this year due to age and disease, for a net gain to the City. However, while this function is currently robust and growing, it remains primarily reactive in its approach, and was last recognized by the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council as a Tree City USA in 1990. There are several improvements that could benefit the program, including:

- Developing standards relative to the percentage of trees that are healthy; and
- Conducting regular surveys of tree health, and developing a GIS-based inventory of all City trees.

Best practice: GIS-based inventory of City tree stock

The City of Ithaca, NY (pop. 30,343) has developed a "tree" layer for its municipal GIS system. This system allows City staff to maintain a graphical inventory of all trees located on City streets, as well as to allow residents to access detailed records for any tree in the public right of way.

Figure 19
Example of GIS Tree Inventory Web Interface
City of Ithaca, NY



Source: www.ithacamaps.org

In 2006, Eau Claire received a \$25,000 Urban Forestry grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to complete a GIS street tree inventory. Other small- and medium-sized cities that have developed this capability include Onalaska, Wisconsin (pop. 15,622), Missoula, Montana (pop. 60,722), and Coeur d'Alene, Idaho (pop. 35,000).

Recommendation #14: Develop a GIS inventory of all City trees in the public right of way, and develop standards relative to the percentage of healthy trees. Pursue an urban forestry grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to fund development of this capability.

Capital Projects

PRCS currently has staff with capital project management experience, and has supplemented existing staff capability with specialized engineering and architectural firms under contract. Nevertheless, PRCS has allowed non-qualified staff to manage capital projects. As noted, the Parks Division has primary responsibility for development of the capital budget, in addition to project management responsibilities for new construction and renovation projects. In the past however, the Recreation Division—which does not have staff with any significant experience with construction project management—has initiated and overseen capital projects that have not had ideal outcomes, such as the tennis court replacement project at Lockwood.

The current Parks Manager has spent a significant amount of time on capital project management, but there is currently no one in PRCS with a comparable level of knowledge and expertise in this area. As the current incumbent has a significant number of years of service, and will eventually retire, this creates a succession planning challenge for PRCS.

In the future, PRCS could receive capital project management services from outside firms, or from other City Departments. As noted, PRCS has hired outside firms to manage capital projects, such as a recent roof replacement project at one of the City's cemeteries. In addition, the Department of Public Works has certified professional engineers on staff who have significant experience in construction project management ranging from simple projects such as sidewalk construction to parking garages. In the past, Public Works has provided technical consultation to PRCS on some construction projects.

Although development of the capital budget should remain a PRCS responsibility, the Department must consider how to assign responsibility for capital project management once the current Parks Manager retires. One potential option is to leverage existing technical expertise in Public Works to ensure that future construction projects have expert project management. Alternatively, PRCS could contract for project management services for all future capital projects. However, in no case should PRCS consider allowing non-qualified staff to initiate and manage capital projects as has happened on prior projects.

Recommendation #15: On future construction projects involving PRCS facilities, only qualified staff should be assigned responsibility for project management duties. Once the current Parks Manager retires, PRCS could consider several options, including:

- **The Department of Public Works could provide project management on behalf of PRCS;**
- **PRCS could contract for project management services by engineering and architectural firms; or**
- **Public Works could oversee some projects, and PRCS could contract for others.**

Related to the issue of planning for capital projects, we learned that PRCS currently does not adequately factor in the estimated ongoing costs to maintain new capital improvements. While PRCS has implemented an improved capital improvement project request form, which requires an estimate of fiscal impact, the improved form has not translated into improved estimates of ongoing costs. The issue has been for capital projects led by Public Works that the ongoing maintenance costs may not have been adequately identified.

As noted, PRCS has not been successful in articulating the impact of budget reductions on ongoing service delivery. As part of improving its approach to future budgets, the Parks Division should use data from an improved time reporting system, to provide more realistic ongoing maintenance cost estimates to decision makers relative to allocation of scarce PRCS resources. This approach should be taken both on projects currently managed internally as well on multi-department projects involving Public Works. Some capital projects, such as the 2006 replacement of the boiler at the Lakeview Community Center, do not represent a new PRCS responsibility, because the Center already had a boiler that PRCS was responsible for maintaining under the current agreement with the senior citizen organization that operates Lakeview. Others, however, such as the Lake Michigan Pathway bike path, represent new responsibilities for which ongoing maintenance costs were not fully accounted for in the PRCS budget.

In addition, PRCS occasionally receives donations from private citizens intended to build or expand new parks facilities. These privately-funded projects are also not currently subject to a suitable level of analysis and scrutiny relative to ongoing operational costs.

In the 2006 budget, Parks Division building maintenance staff were re-assigned to Public Works; they will likely provide a majority of ongoing maintenance staff time for many types of future PRCS capital projects. While these staff were considered part of the PRCS budget in 2006, in future years Public Works may choose to bill PRCS on an interdepartmental basis for these services. If so, Public Works should also develop adequate staffing and other cost estimates relative to the fiscal impact of new PRCS capital projects so that PRCS can budget accordingly.

Recommendation #16: Future capital budgets should include adequate estimates of ongoing operating and maintenance costs to provide a complete picture of the resources required for a new capital improvement. This includes estimates completed by both PRCS as well as Public Works, as necessary. Any projects planned or led by another Department such as Public Works should include involvement by PRCS staff to ensure adequate ongoing operational costs are identified.

C. Recreation and Community Center Programs

We found that PRCS offers a wide range of programs and activities in the Community Centers, parks facilities, and in other locations. In addition to serving Racine residents, some of these programs draw a significant number of non-resident participants, and, therefore, eate positive economic benefits to the City as well as enhancing the City's image. These activities include the:

- Spirit of Racine Triathlon;
- Jet Ski competition;
- Catamaran race; and
- Root River Salmon-A-Rama.

Data are not available to assess the overall economic benefit of these activities to the City; nevertheless, PRCS should be commended for encouraging and supporting these programs.

Another strength of PRCS is its athletic leagues, according to data from the leadership survey, and from our staff interviews. While available data suggest that participation in adult athletic leagues will decline gradually over the next few years, nevertheless they will remain a significant activity. Accordingly, PRCS has invested significant resources in improving the appearance and condition of its outdoor fields, such as the \$80,300 investment in new lights at the Horlick Field baseball diamond in 2002. In addition, PRCS installed lights at the Island Park softball fields in 1995. In addition, Parks Division staff maintain athletic fields more intensively than regular Parks areas; staff indicate that participants in the athletic leagues have high expectations for playing conditions. Intended as it is to meet the expectations of its athletic league participants, this level of effort is commendable. However, it comes at a cost in terms of staff and in terms of capital outlay.

PRCS currently does not have an explicit cost recovery policy for its recreation programs. Because of the absence of a time tracking system, data do not exist on how much it currently costs PRCS to operate the adult or youth softball leagues. However, PRCS needs to develop estimates for how much it costs to operate its athletic leagues and athletic fields, both to assist in identifying the extent to which current fees are defraying league costs, and also to inform a needed discussion of the City's cost recovery policy relative to fees. While fees are adjusted annually, these adjustments are based upon a cost-of-service study completed in the early 1990's. During the intervening period the cost structure for PRCS and for the City's overhead have changed, but it is unclear if these adjustments have adequately addressed these changes.

Best practice: Cost recovery policy

*Other Cities have developed a cost recovery to assist in setting fees for athletic programs offered by Parks and Recreation Departments. As shown in **Figure 20**, cost recovery goals vary by community; some set fees in excess of actual costs, in order to subsidize other programs and activities, some goals are designed to cover direct costs, while others seek only partial cost recovery. Regardless of the actual percentage target, it is important to make cost recovery an explicit goal.*

Figure 20

Athletic League Cost Recovery Goals		
Municipality	Population	Cost Recovery Goal
Lubbock, TX	207,842	125% of direct costs for softball leagues 180% of direct costs for volleyball leagues 100% of direct costs for basketball leagues
Overland Park, KS	149,080	127% for athletic programs and instructional classes
Charlottesville, VA	45,049	108% for adult softball
Ames, IA	50,731	84% for athletic programs
Tallahassee, FL	150,624	65.1% for major adult sports 36.0% for major youth sports
College Station, TX	67,890	60.4% for athletic programs
Eugene, OR	142,185	49% for athletic programs
Savannah, GA	127,573	49% for adult sports
High Point, NC	91,543	33% for athletic programs

Source: David Ammons, "Municipal Benchmarks," 2nd edition (2001)

Recommendation #17: PRCs should use cost data based on information as per Recommendation #3 to complete an analysis of the cost of operating each league. Once actual operating costs have been identified, compare these costs to fees collected and present this information for the review of the PRCs Board and the Common Council. The PRCs Board and Council should:

- **review the current level of cost recovery achieved by the current fee structure for each league;**
- **identify a specific cost recovery goal for each league; and**
- **use the cost recovery goal to guide whether to increase fees, decrease fees, or maintain fees at the current level.**

The robust athletic leagues offered by PRCs also provide an opportunity to generate additional revenue through the use of a targeted campaign to sell advertising signage at selected athletic fields. Selling advertising space in public parks can be controversial, and we do not recommend that advertising signage be made available at most parks facilities. However, given the resources spent by PRCs in providing a premium sport experience at its outdoor athletic fields, advertising signage may be suitable for some fields, particularly lighted softball and baseball fields.

Best practice: Sale of advertising signage at premier athletic fields

Similar to PRCS, the Parks and Recreation Department in Austin, Texas offers significant adult athletic leagues. The City sells advertising space at two premier softball facilities at rates of \$300 for an outfield sign and \$750 for a scoreboard sign.

The St Paul, Minnesota Parks and Recreation Department also sells advertising signage at select facilities, at the following rates:

- McMurray Ice Rink - \$300/\$250/\$1000 (multiple signs)*
- Dunning Baseball/Softball Complex - \$600/\$500/\$2000 (scoreboard)*
- Rice and Arlington Complex - \$600/\$500*

Recommendation #18: PRCS should identify its "premier" outdoor athletic field locations and sell advertising signage for them. The revenue from these signs should be segregated in a separate athletic field account, in order to ensure that the proceeds from advertising sales are used to support athletic league programming.

Operating Hours of Community Centers

As noted, PRCS is currently under pressure to reduce its annual budget, while maintaining core services. PRCS staff view the Community Centers as vital components of its overall mix of services and programs, both to provide recreational opportunities as well as to enhance the quality of life in neighborhoods. For example, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center is a designated "Weed and Seed" site, which is a crime prevention program designed to offer positive and safe alternatives for youth. A review of program offerings and 2005 attendance data at the Community Centers suggests some Centers have specialized in youth activities, senior activities, or adult activities. For example, the Tyler-Domer center offers no senior citizen programming, and the Humble Park Center is primarily used by youth and senior citizens.

During our interviews with PRCS staff, activities and programs designed for senior citizens and youth at the Community Centers were frequently emphasized as being core services, when compared to adult activities. For example, after-school activities such as youth open gym and homework assistance after school were cited by staff as being particularly important. One of the principal adult programs available through the Community Centers is "open gym" held in the evening. Therefore, it may be possible to continue to provide programs to youth and senior citizens while achieving some budget savings by reducing the number of hours that some centers are open in the evening. As shown in **Figure 21**, Centers close for the day at different times on different weekdays and also have different summer hours.

In order to achieve further budget reductions while protecting core services for youth and senior citizens, PRCS could reduce the amount of hours the Centers stayed open in order to provide open gym hours to adults. There are generally two options to pursue in this, including:

Option A:

- Close Bryant at 5:30 pm; open gym hours for High School and Middle School age youth would need to be changed to 3-5 pm on weekdays during fall through spring, resulting in an estimated annual reduction of 630 hours during 2007;
- Close Chavez at 5 pm; no changes would be required to youth open gym hours, resulting in an estimated annual reduction of 504 hours during 2007;

- Close Martin Luther King, Jr. at 6 pm; open gym hours for High School and Middle School age youth would need to be changed to 4-6 pm on weekdays during fall through spring, resulting in an estimated annual reduction of 504 hours during 2007; and
- Close Tyler-Domer at 6 pm; open gym hours for High School age youth would need to be changed to 4-6 pm on weekdays during fall through spring, resulting in an estimated annual reduction of 504 hours during 2007.

Option B:

- Keep the current adult open gym hours for the Centers, but close on one or more days.

Option C:

- Keep the current adult open gym hours for the Centers, but open later on one or more days.

**Figure 21
Community Center Operating
Hours**

Hours of Operation and Programs					
Center	Senior Hours	Adult Hours	High School Age Hours	Middle School Age Hours	Elementary School Age Hours
Bryant	8am-5pm (M-F)	5:30pm-8pm (M-F) 1pm-3pm (M-F, Fall-Spring)	5:30pm-8pm (M-F) 12pm-4pm (Sat, Fall-Spring)	12pm-4pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 5:30pm-8pm (M-F, Fall-Spring)	12pm-4pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 3pm-5pm (M-F, Fall-Spring)
Chavez	9am-3pm (M-F)	1pm-3pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 2pm-4pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 5:30pm-7:30pm (M-F, Summer)	3pm-5pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 2pm-4pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 1pm-5pm (M-F, Summer)	3pm-5pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 12pm-2pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 1pm-5pm (M-F, Summer)	3pm-5pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 12pm-2pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 1pm-5pm (M-F, Summer)
Humble Park	11am-3pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 9am-3pm (M-F, Summer)		6pm-8pm (M-Th, Fall-Spring) 1pm-3pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 6pm-8pm (M-Th, Summer)	3:15pm-6pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 11am-1pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 4pm-6pm (M-F, Summer)	3:15pm-6pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 11am-1pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 4pm-6pm (M-F, Summer)
MLK	8am-3pm (M-F) 11am-2pm (Sat)	1pm-3pm (M-F) 6pm-9pm (M-Th, Fall-Spring) 6pm-9pm (M-F, Summer) 11am-5pm (Sat, Fall-Spring)	6pm-9pm (M-Th) 11am-5pm (Sat, Fall-Spring)	5pm-7pm (M-Th, Fall-Spring) 11am-5pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 1pm-6pm (M-F, Summer)	3pm-5pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 11am-5pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 1pm-6pm (M-F, Summer)
Tyler-Domer		12pm-3pm (M-Th) 6pm-8pm (M-Th) 12pm-6pm (Fri)	6pm-8pm (M-Th) 3pm-6pm (Fri, Fall-Spring) 12pm-6pm (Fri, Summer) 12pm-3pm (Sat, Fall-Spring)	3pm-6pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 12pm-3pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 12pm-6pm (M-F, Summer)	3pm-6pm (M-F, Fall-Spring) 12pm-3pm (Sat, Fall-Spring) 12pm-6pm (M-F, Summer)

If the revised hours of operation are implemented as per Option A, assuming each Center has two part-time staff on duty during these times, this would result in a net reduction of 4,282 part-time staff hours. Using a conservative estimate of part-time pay rates in 2005 of \$7.50 per hour for Community Center recreation program staff, reducing the amount of adult open gym time would save PRCS a minimum of \$32,115 in salary costs, and could be higher depending on actual pay rates for individual part-time staff. If Options B or C are pursued, potential savings would depend on the number of days and Centers that adult open gym is not offered.

Recommendation #19: In order to achieve budget savings while protecting core services at the Community Centers for youth and for senior citizens, PRCS should reduce the operating hours of Community Centers, for example for evening adult open gym, or by opening some centers later.

Community Center Attendance Tracking

The current program attendance tracking system does not add value to the Department, and needs to be replaced as soon as possible. Recreation Division staff—specifically Community Center Directors and part-time program staff—spend time every week completing program attendance and participation forms, and submitting them to the Administrative office, where they are collected and entered by clerical staff. While tracking program attendance numbers is a commendable practice, and indeed is a basic task to proper management of the Department, these reports are currently not used by PRCS to report success, identify changing demands, or guide resource allocation decisions.

The reporting process used in each Community Center is slightly different from the others, but generally it involves part-time staff recording or submitting attendance numbers each day to the Community Center Director, who enters the data into an excel spreadsheet and forwards to the clerical person responsible for maintaining a monthly summary by Center. Center Directors are responsible for reporting attendance within their Center, as well as activities that they have responsibility for at other locations, such as the playground program or youth athletic leagues, and other programs. This represents an inefficient process because data are entered by the Center staff and by clerical staff. Further, there is currently no easy way to generate attendance trend reports, because data are kept in separate monthly files, and PRCS has not consistently saved all files for all centers. What is needed is a attendance reporting system that reduces the amount of data entry that ensures all data is consistently reported and saved, and that reporting is easy and efficient. The City's MIS Department recently completed a project to connect all five Centers with the City's network, creating the possibility for automated attendance reporting over the network, using currently available software.

Recommendation #20: PRCS should work with the City's MIS Department to develop an attendance reporting database with a standard data entry form, accessible via the City's network at the Community Centers. This system should eliminate the need for clerical staff to re-enter aggregate data. Further, the new reporting database should contain standardized reports that can be run at any time and that are aligned with identified performance outcomes discussed in Recommendation #1. The MIS Department should initially develop reports that allow PRCS staff to easily extract information for different calendar periods by program, age category, and Center.

Duplicative Programs

During our interviews, staff identified several programs that are duplicative of similar programs currently offered by other recreational organizations operating in the City. These duplicative programs include the:

- Pre-school program;
- Learn to Swim program; and
- Youth soccer camps.

Given the budget pressure currently experienced by PRCS, it should avoid providing duplicative programs or services offered by other local organizations. The PRCS pre-school program is a fee-based activity offered at the Chavez and Humble Park Centers. However, the Racine Unified School District also currently offers four-year-old kindergarten, with a 2005-06 school year enrollment of 331 children. The Learn to Swim program is a cooperative effort with the Racine Unified School District, and is held at two high school pools, including Park High School and Horlick High School. In 2005, the number of participants in the Learn to Swim was 232 children from kindergarten through 6th grade. Youth soccer leagues are currently offered by the Racine Area Soccer Association.

Recommendation #21: PRCS should eliminate these programs because they duplicate program offerings available through other community organizations.

D. Use of Technology

The PRCS website provides comprehensive information about current programs and services. The information is up-to-date, with current schedules for programs and Community Center available for view or download.

Best practice: On-line registration forms and program guides

PRCS publishes a range of forms, applications and FAQs on its website that individuals who are interested in participating in a specific program or service, can access. In addition to the PRCS program guide, the list of on-line registration forms includes:

- *Tree Program Request;*
- *Waste Wood Request;*
- *Wood Chips Request;*
- *Adult Computer Classes Registration;*
- *Games Postponement Agreement;*
- *Gateway Technical College Program Registration Form;*
- *Hershey Track & Field Registration;*
- *Ineligible Player Protest;*
- *Senior Computer Classes (Gateway College) Registration;*
- *Sports Team Registration (Basketball, Softball, Volleyball);*
- *Player Release Forms (Basketball, Softball, Volleyball);*
- *Spring Optimist Youth Hoops League Registration;*
- *Men's Doubles Tennis League Registration;*
- *Mixed Doubles Tennis League Registration; and*
- *Women's Doubles Tennis League Registration.*

With the exception of the Tree Program Request form, these forms are printed by the individual and faxed, mailed, or delivered to the PRCS offices in person. This approach is similar to that used by other Wisconsin Parks and Recreation Departments. For many of these application forms, an original signature is required; for example, player release forms. The Tree Program Request form allows the applicant to complete the file on line and submit electronically.

Similar to PRCS, the websites for the Madison Parks Department, West Bend Parks & Recreation Department, Appleton Parks & Recreation Department, and Madison School & Community Recreation all allow interested individuals to download registration, reservation, and other forms.

While on-line availability of registration and other program documentation represents a current best practice for PRCS, recreation Departments from other Wisconsin municipalities have taken registration a step further and provide on-line registration for programs.

Best practice: On-line recreation program registration

On line registration for recreation programs can offer several operational advantages, including:

- *Provide enhanced convenience for the customer;*
- *Allow the customer to view program availability;*
- *Reduce cash management tasks; and*
- *Reduce the amount of paper to process and store in the PRCS administrative office.*

The Parks & Recreation Departments of the Cities of Fitchburg and Greenfield, Wisconsin, and Madison School & Community Recreation all offer on-line registration of recreation programs. On-line registration websites can be viewed at the following addresses:

City of Fitchburg:

<http://fitchburg.recware.com/>

City of Greenfield:

http://www.active.com/search/org_browse.cfm?org=greenfield

Madison School & Community Recreation:

<https://ezreg.madison.k12.wi.us/ezreg/Start/Start.asp?LanguageId=1&LanguageIndex=1>

There are a number of competing vendors that offer on-line registration software, which provides municipalities with the ability to conduct a robust competitive bidding process to obtain a best-value solution. Costs for these systems vary according to the business requirements specified by the community, and by other factors such as whether the community will manage the software in-house or contract out web-hosting.

The Department could benefit from potential staff efficiencies offered by on-line registration, particularly given the staff reductions in the level of administrative staff available to process registrations. However, prior to implementing any system, PRCS must assess the business needs and potential benefits of the implementation of such a system.

Recommendation #22: PRCS should complete a targeted business needs assessment study for an on-line registration system.

Additional content could enhance the value of the website to the customer and improve communication about the strengths of PRCS to stakeholders. As noted, the PRCS website does provide an adequate amount of regularly-updated information about its programs, activities, and schedules. However, there are additional features that the Department should consider adding to the website that would improve its usefulness to Racine residents. Specifically, we learned during our staff interviews that marketing of the Department should be improved. One method other communities have used to increase visibility of the Department and improve communication with residents is to publish regular articles or columns related to specific programs or pertaining to seasonal issues falling under the purview of PRCS.

Best practice: Website posting of regular articles by Parks and Recreation Staff

The City of West Bend, WI publishes regular articles of seasonal or program interest as time allows, and publishes them on their website. Examples of articles posted to the website from the last three years include:

- *Regner Park Celebrates 75 Years*
- *Family Fun Day*
- *Spring and Summer Programs*
- *West Bend Park Buildings. A Little History*
- *Kickball League*
- *Neighborhood Parks: What and Where are They?*
- *Having a Party And Need A Place?*
- *Special Olympics*
- *Urban Forestry Accomplishments*
- *Invasive Species and Volunteering*

These articles need not be long, and could be assigned to a range of professional staff in the Parks, Recreation, Community Centers, and Administration divisions. The articles could be published on the website, submitted to local newspapers, and used to expand information sharing with local groups such as Sustainable Racine and neighborhood associations, which often are willing to include content from the City for their web sites or newsletters. It should be noted that the Department currently does work with Sustainable Racine to publicize information about some PRCS programs and services, but wider distribution of regular articles on timely topics would assist in raising the Department's profile.

Recommendation #23: Professional staff in all areas of PRCS should contribute regular articles of a seasonal nature or of program interest for posting on the Department website, and submitted to Racine media and local groups for publication.

One of the barriers to improved use of technology in PRCS is the general lack of staff expertise in using databases. While staff were generally proficient in the use of word processing and spreadsheets, staff have little to no experience with the City's most common database application, specifically Microsoft Access. If the Department successfully implements report recommendations relative to improving reporting and implementation of a Departmental intranet, some staff will be asked to use database applications on a regular basis. Specifically, the Executive Secretary in Administration, Division Managers, the Parks Facilities Specialist, and Community Center Supervisors may all have need of increased training in Access.

Recommendation #24: Once recommendations relative to improving automation of attendance reporting and PRCS should explore internal and external opportunities for Access database training for key staff.

Finally, we reviewed the functionality of the PRCS' current recreation program scheduling software. Staff felt that this software does not currently provide needed functionality and flexibility in preparing athletic league schedules. However, staff responsible for scheduling athletic leagues also indicated that they frequently handle rescheduling requests from athletic league team managers due to conflicts in the personal calendars of team members. This practice of "at-will" rescheduling, while commendable from a customer service perspective, is not a common feature of many other athletic leagues run by Parks and Recreation Departments.

Typically, when a team manager wishes to reschedule a game, it is the responsibility of the two team managers to agree on a rescheduled date and time, rather than Recreation Department staff. Rescheduling games due to personal schedule conflicts should not be the responsibility of City staff. In contrast, rescheduling games due to weather or problems with a facility are appropriate for City staff to manage on behalf of its leagues, because of the potential number of teams that can be affected. The current approach of allowing team managers flexibility in rescheduling games for any reason not only taxes the capabilities of the PRCS scheduling software, it also represents an inefficient use of PRCS staff time.

Recommendation #25: PRCS should no longer take responsibility for rescheduling athletic league games due to personal schedule conflicts of participants; instead, it should take responsibility for rescheduling games called due to weather or problems at parks facilities. Team managers should be responsible for rescheduling games and umpires/referees in case of "at-will" schedule changes.

To facilitate this change, PRCS should schedule a block of open field dates and times at the end of the season for team managers to reschedule games on a first-come first-served basis. Further, PRCS should provide contact information on its website for umpires and referees for use by team managers seeking to reschedule a game. Finally, team managers should sign an agreement at the time of registration that they will not use this change of PRCS policy to force a forfeit of the game, and that they will accommodate reasonable requests by other team managers to reschedule whenever possible.

EXHIBIT A

Summary of Report Recommendations

Page 10

Recommendation #1: PRCS should identify key performance measures tied to its mission and core values, and develop more efficient reporting tools by:

- Reducing the amount of staff time spent developing monthly reports by no longer listing all program activities performed, except for reports related to financial, capital, and contractual issues which should continue to be prepared at the current level of detail and changing the focus from point-in-time participation and attendance to time-series comparisons with previous years by program/activity;
- Holding staff focus group sessions to develop a new reporting approach that presents targeted performance measures aligned with the strategic vision. Specifically, consider using the framework laid out in the 2003 strategic plan;
- Presenting the revised reporting approach to the PRCS Board for review and comment; and
- Posting the revised targeted performance reports on the PRCS website after they are submitted.

PRCS will not be able to efficiently implement this change unless it changes the current approach to collecting program attendance and participation data. See Recommendation #20 for further discussion.

Page 11

Recommendation #2: PRCS should build on the success of the Adopt-A-River program to identify and develop opportunities to develop Friends of the Park groups to assist in raising the profile of the Racine park system and of individual parks. While this may not be feasible to implement for all Racine parks in the short term, PRCS should expand its efforts in this area and prioritize one or two parks that have special environmental resources, historical characteristics, or broader community significance that would represent opportunities for ongoing cooperation.

Pages 15-16

Recommendation #3: PRCS should re-implement time reporting using defined labor distribution or work activity codes that will allow the Department to describe the net effect of each 1.0 FTE reduction by Division and on:

- The frequency with which parks receive trash pick up and lawns are mowed;
- The number of hours available for preparing and maintaining athletic fields;
- The amount of potential overtime that will be required to perform snow removal duties during snow events;
- Specific recreation programs supported by each position that will no longer be provided; and
- Special programs and activities provided through the Community Centers.

The City is currently implementing a new time reporting system called the Tyme System. The PRCS should work closely with the IS Department to explore system capabilities to accommodate labor distribution codes that identify specific programs and activities including, but not limited to, those shown above. To accomplish this, the PRCS should prepare a written assessment of its business needs requirements relative to a labor distribution coding scheme for use by IS during system implementation.

The purpose of improved time reporting is not to itemize the reasons why future budget reductions in staff or programs are impossible; rather, it is to provide an objective assessment of the resources required to deliver each service, in order to provide decision makers with the information they need to prioritize and allocate shrinking resources.

Page 19

Recommendation #4: The City should alter its approach to regularly scheduled vacations by allowing employees increased flexibility to schedule vacation time. This issue is subject to collective bargaining, and the City has a valid reason for the current practice. However, by increasing employee's ability to schedule some part of their annual allotted vacation time in less than one-week increments, the City may be able to reduce the amount of sick leave taken in lieu of vacation. It should be noted that represented employees will have the right to schedule time off using comp time under the new labor contract, and any further changes to time off provisions would require mutual agreement through the collective bargaining process. One potential approach to providing increased flexibility could be to allow the employee to schedule five days of vacation time available at the beginning of the year in blocks of less than one week, and eight days after 14 years of service, given reasonable notice. The remainder of the employee's available vacation would continue to be scheduled in week-long blocks, in order to ensure that management can efficiently schedule staffing resources. Implementation of this recommendation should also take into consideration current limits on the number of employees allowed to be out on vacation on any given day.

There are, of course, many possible variations that could be considered, but the ultimate goal should be to reduce the temptation for employees to call in sick in order to take a four-day weekend, only because a vacation day currently can not be used for that purpose.

Page 19

Recommendation #5: Subject to the terms of the collective bargaining agreement, PRCS should identify and monitor the sick leave usage of employees who are consistently heavy users to understand the issues surrounding these employees' higher need for sick leave. If it is determined that sick leave is being abused, appropriate remedies should be taken.

Page 21

Recommendation #6: After reviewing the effect of any potential change on salary compression between supervisors and line staff, PRCS should discontinue the practice of paying supervisors an on-call premium. Further, in order to preserve interdepartmental equity, the City should consider discontinuing this practice in the Department of Public Works as well.

Page 27

Recommendation #7: The PRCS should not commit any resources to expanding the number of ball diamonds, volleyball courts, or tennis courts in the short- and medium-term for adult leagues. Given available resources, the PRCS should focus on maintaining existing athletic fields. If additional funds are available for capital outlays for athletic fields, consider making needed repairs or investing in improvements to reduce maintenance or utility costs.

Page 29

Recommendation #8: Using the improved reporting approach discussed in Recommendation #1, PRCS should enhance the budget preparation process by including specific, quantifiable measures to provide decision makers with the information necessary to ensure that resource allocation decisions expressed in the annual budget are aligned with the PRCS mission.

Page 29

Recommendation #9: PRCS should prepare and follow a formal budget preparation schedule that allows sufficient time for development of Division proposals, creation of a final budget by the Director, and a final "team review" by the Director and the Managers of the Parks and Recreation Divisions. Further, the internal PRCS budget preparation schedule should provide sufficient time for the final team review as well as review by the PRCS Board in their role as an advisory body. The PRCS Board should continue reviewing current policies having fiscal impacts as well as providing a prioritization of services and resources. The goal of the revised process will be to ensure that the budget submitted to the Mayor's Office adequately addresses resources and shared Divisional responsibilities.

Page 31

Recommendation #10: PRCS should continue sending managerial and supervisory employees to CVMIC trainings and explore additional opportunities offered by the WERC for managers and key union staff that will enhance the ability of the Department to implement a consensus-based approach to dispute resolution.

Page 31

Recommendation #11: Depending on the specific outcome measures developed in Recommendation #1, PRCS should conduct a survey of Racine residents regarding its programs, activities, and facilities. Specifically, this survey should not be restricted to current users of facilities and program participants. If a methodologically rigorous survey is desired, the PRCS currently does not have the necessary skill sets to complete such a survey, meaning the PRCS would have to contract for this service. While it would provide a baseline of customer satisfaction data, contracting for a one-time survey is not ideal, as it would not provide an ongoing measure of success.

In addition, PRCS should develop a systematic method to measure utilization of park facilities, such as including "head count" reporting in the parks during different days as well as times of day, during regular ongoing inspections of parks facilities and ongoing mowing activities by Parks Division staff. Some adjustments to the inspection and mowing schedule would have to be made, so that each park would be visited at different days and times, which would provide the basis for a reasonable estimate.

Page 33

Recommendation #12: The Parks Division should track the amount of time it takes to perform median mowing tasks over a three-month period in 2006, and use the resulting labor time data to estimate the cost of providing this service. For the 2007 season, PRCS should solicit bids for mowing street medians. If the bid cost is lower than the PRCS cost, PRCS should contract for this function.

Page 33

Recommendation #13: The City should cease snow removal operations in alleys. If the City wishes to continue providing this service, PRCS should identify actual staff costs for this activity during recent years to compare against solicited bids for contracted snow removal in alleys. This would provide a cost basis for potentially contracting for snow plowing in alleys.

Page 35

Recommendation #14: Develop a GIS inventory of all City trees in the public right of way, and develop standards relative to the percentage of healthy trees. Pursue an urban forestry grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to fund development of this capability.

Page 35

Recommendation #15: On future construction projects involving PRCS facilities, only qualified staff should be assigned responsibility for project management duties. Once the current Parks Division manager retires, the PRCS could consider several options, including:

- The Department of Public Works could provide project management on behalf of PRCS;
- The PRCS could contract for project management services by engineering and architectural firms; or
- Public Works could oversee some projects, and the PRCS could contract for others.

Page 36

Recommendation #16: Future capital budgets should include adequate estimates of ongoing operating and maintenance costs to provide a complete picture of the resources required for a new capital improvement. This includes estimates completed by both PRCS as well as Public Works, as necessary. Any projects planned or led by another Department such as Public Works should include involvement by PRCS staff to ensure adequate ongoing operational costs are identified.

Page 38

Recommendation #17: PRCS should use cost data based on information as per Recommendation #3 to complete an analysis of the cost of operating each league. Once actual operating costs have been identified, compare these costs to fees collected and present this information for the review of the PRCS Board and the Common Council. The PRCS Board and Council should:

- review the current level of cost recovery achieved by the current fee structure for each league;
- identify a specific cost recovery goal for each league; and
- use the cost recovery goal to guide whether to increase fees, decrease fees, or maintain fees at the current level.

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Recommendation #18: PRCS should identify its "premier" outdoor athletic field locations and sell advertising signage for them. The revenue from these signs should be segregated in a separate athletic field account, in order to ensure that the proceeds from advertising sales are used to support athletic league programming.

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