



DEPARTMENT OF METRO PARKS AND RECREATION  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
*2016 Strategic Plan*

Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation is a legacy agency entrusted with providing the greater Louisville area with the best in parks, recreation, and opportunities to partake of programs that bring together all ages and demographics to a setting that is truly inclusive and allows one to thrive.

In addition, Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation is a nationally accredited agency dating to 2007. As such, the adopted plans that guide the department are timeless pieces that were drawn up through a very high level of public involvement, staff engagement, and cooperation and collaboration with the other Metro agencies.

Mayor Fischer was elected in 2010 and embarked on creating a department in Metro government that encouraged data collection, analysis of such, and decisions based on the findings to spearhead change that moved Louisville forward. To that end we have streamlined our department Strategic Plan to align with the Mayor's goals. We have quarterly meetings with the Mayor's Leadership Team to discuss the department's challenges, and how we are overcoming them.

The Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan is thus a fluid document that undergoes updates regularly, with visits from various levels of staff. The document reflects the department's goals, objectives, initiatives, and performance measures, in close alignment with what is feasible, achievable, and what offer positive change for us.

The Strategic Plan that will eventually be adopted in 2016 comprises four main Objectives. They are:

1. Community Engagement—raise the level of community engagement to new heights through all forms and covering customer satisfaction, stronger partnerships, improved branding, and improved patron-focused programming.
2. Manage and Safeguard Assets—with the large list of deferred maintenance the goal is to identify clearly and chip away at this list so that we offer



A NATIONALLY ACCREDITED PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCY

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- continued improvement in managing the fixed assets, the natural assets, and institute a protocol for the safeguarding of all assets.
3. Operational Excellence—the goal here is to continue to raise the bar on institutional excellence by improving the staff competency and capacity, adopting and having on hand the latest in technology, and overall streamlining internal processes so that both the internal and external customers see a seamless flow to their high levels of service.
  4. Fiscal Integrity and Fiduciary Duty—budgets have been a challenge and the hiring process continues to be streamlined. To that end we have undertaken the goal to raise revenues through a cost recovery model and plan. The end goal is to show growth in revenues to help enhance other processes and opportunities within the department to realize further growth in monetary terms.

The staff group working on this plan has representatives from all layers and covers all the divisions in the department from parks, golf, natural resources, recreation, communications, amphitheatre, turf, special events, human resources, analytics, infrastructure and engineering, and staff from the Mayor's Office of Performance Improvement. The meetings began in November 2015 for the 2016 Strategic Plan and the final draft was created at a meeting with all present on 08 March 2016. This now gets prepared as a formal document in the coming weeks and adopted soon after this spring. In the coming days, the initiatives will be developed by various staff teams comprising employees from all strata of the department. These initiatives will be then included into the final document and serve as the performance measures through which we will be ranked as far as success rate for the implementation of the Strategic Plan and its objectives and goals.

Staff continue to work diligently and rigorously on achieving the goals and realizing the objectives. This valuable plan has also allowed us to receive additional funding through a mid-fiscal year budget adjustment to make headway in Community Engagement through the purchase and placement of thirty television sets at most of our facilities based on set criteria to offer rolling screens with messaging on department activities. This placement of televisions cover recreation centers, golf courses, staff areas, and the headquarters to offer the same message within our set standards, as depicted in our department-adopted Green Book on branding, marketing, and all communications.

In also improving customer satisfaction levels we are in the final stages of installing modern recreation software to allow for on-line program registration and facility bookings. This program too received mid-year funds and should be installed and ready to engage the patrons at a higher level by September 2016. In terms of Operational Excellence, also through a mid-year budget allocation, we are installing people counters at all our facilities to better track visitations so that a true cost for each site can be transcribed.

Our employees are professionals and an asset that goes begging for attention. To that end we have instituted new safety guidelines in the facilities and in the field for all

employees so that not only are they clearly identifiable but safety is paramount through the neon vest, hard hats in appropriate areas, and other items that are now required to do the daily jobs in a safe and productive manner. This investment should have an immediate impact with much in savings from reduced Worker's Compensation claims, lost sick days, and budgetary savings.

The current cost recovery for the General Fund budget is below ten percent, with the enterprise fund of golf having a 100% recovery. We have set a goal of 30% in three years cost recovery in the General Fund through quality programs, facilities, and amenities which will now generate monies that more than recover the true cost of offering them to the community.

The department is vast with close to four hundred full time employees and around a thousand seasonal and part-time employees going through the system annually. We have a large service area of close to four hundred square miles and in trying to engage the population of around 1.2 million we offer facilities, amenities, and programs that appeal to all ages, abilities, and financial ability in equal measure. We do an excellent job of engaging the vulnerable of the community, especially the youth and the older adult. We offer over 120,000 meals annually to this demographic, taking a bite out of hunger that persists in the community. Our seventeen community centers offer a place for respite, safety, and positive engagement through free wi-fi and advocating for them.

Having joined the Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation team only in September 2015, I have seen and realized very quickly the great scope and opportunity that our department has to offer to the community. This opportunity is there for the taking in Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation enhancing social equity, health and wellness of everyone in the community, and overall educating the populace on conservation and its various facets from naturalization to practices in the work place that reduce the carbon foot print and leave a lasting legacy for the generations to come. Future generations will have the ability and the opportunity to partake of the same largesse we have so enjoyed for many years.

It gives me great pleasure to see the professionalism and endearment of the employees on a daily basis in seeing this plan through. I have confidence that we will achieve a vast majority of the goals through the many initiatives we will adopt in the coming days and weeks. Our Strategic Plan is a living, breathing valuable document that will not sit on a shelf and rather be the torch that guides us daily work in keeping Louisville one of the best places to live in America. Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation plays a great role in the city receiving that recognition, and will continue to do so.

Louisville is proud to have in its inventory eighteen Frederick Law Olmsted-designed parks and six parkways that goes in line with a slogan once used for our city as the City of Parks.

Seve Ghose, CPRE/MOL  
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