



McMinnville Community Center
600 NE Evans Street, room 201
McMinnville, OR 97128

Mac Pac

Thursday, March 5, 2020

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Agenda

1. Welcome - Co-Chairs
2. Review ground rules - Full Committee and Staff
3. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Discussion
 - Panel introduction and presentation – Staff
 - Discussion - Full Committee
 - Action - Creation and adoption of guiding principle - Full Committee
4. Next Meeting
 - April 2, 2020
5. Adjourn

The McMinnville Community Center is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made a least 48 hours before the meeting to the Anne Lane at (503)474-4963.



City of McMinnville
(503) 434-7310
www.mcminnvilleoregon.gov

STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 27, 2020
TO: MacPac
FROM: Susan Muir & Jenny Berg
SUBJECT: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion agenda item

This memo will provide you with some background and information in preparation for your discussion regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The format of the meeting will be a panel representing voices in our community who are currently underrepresented, underserved, or without access to enrichment services. We have asked each panelist to speak for 5 minutes about who they serve and represent, what gaps in services they see currently, and what opportunities there may be going forward to bridge those gaps.

After their brief presentations, we would like MacPac members to engage in a Q & A session with the panelists.

The second half of the meeting will be spent discussing and brainstorming potential policies, principles or filters for your committee work moving forward to ensure we are serving all of our community members.

To get the creative juices flowing for you, we have attached models, examples and primers for the discussion. Some aspect of these may fit McMinnville well, some not at all. As you read through some of these examples and tools, please make note of words, concepts or phrases that you think are important to consider and be prepared to discuss them at the meeting. While MacTown 2032 has a goal of equity and inclusion, refinement of what that means and how we apply that valuable concept to decisions such as those in front of MacPac, has not played out yet in McMinnville. In addition, feel free to do some looking around online for other examples as well and bring them with you to the meeting.

Attachments:

- 1. Pages 1-3 - Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights***
- 2. Page 4 - Parks for Inclusion Vision Stand***
- 3. Page 5-9 - Inclusion Policy Template from the National Recreation and Park Association***
- 4. Pages 10 – 11 - Addressing Poverty, Economic Inequality, and the Responsibility of Libraries.***
- 5. Pages 12 – 13 - Equity Decision Tool (Pocket Guide) - McMinnville School District***
- 6. Pages 14 – 16 - Social Equity and Parks and Recreation***
- 7. Pages 17 – 44 - Park and Recreation Inclusion Report***

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that equity, diversity, and inclusion are central to the promotion and practice of intellectual freedom. Libraries are essential to democracy and self-government, to personal development and social progress, and to every individual's inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. To that end, libraries and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything that they do.

"Equity" takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and are, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. Equity, therefore, means increasing diversity by ameliorating conditions of disadvantaged groups.

"Diversity" can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. When we recognize, value, and embrace diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each individual.

"Inclusion" means an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success.

To ensure that every individual will feel truly welcomed and included, library staff and administrators should reflect the origins, age, background, and views of their community. Governing bodies should also reflect the community. Library spaces, programs, and collections should accommodate the needs of every user.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, age, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

Library collections, in a variety of material formats, should include a full range of viewpoints and experiences, serving the needs of all members of the community. Historically, diverse authors and viewpoints have not been equitably represented in the output of many mainstream publishers and other producers. It may require extra effort to locate, review, and acquire those materials.

Therefore, libraries should seek out alternative, small press, independent, and self-published content in a variety of formats. Libraries may benefit from cooperative arrangements and other partnerships to share in the work of locating and acquiring diverse materials. Interlibrary loan may complement but not substitute for the development of diverse local collections.

All materials, including databases and other electronic content, should be made accessible for people who use adaptive or assistive technology.

To provide equitable and inclusive access, libraries must work closely with diverse communities to understand their needs and aspirations, so that the library can respond appropriately with collections and services to meet those needs. All community members will feel truly welcomed and included when they see

themselves reflected in collections that speak to their cultures and life experiences.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Beyond merely avoiding the exclusion of materials representing unorthodox or unpopular ideas, libraries should proactively seek to include an abundance of resources and programming representing the greatest possible diversity of genres, ideas, and expressions. A full commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion requires that library collections and programming reflect the broad range of viewpoints and cultures that exist in our world. Socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people, not just the mainstream majority, should be able to see themselves reflected in the resources and programs that libraries offer.¹

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

By challenging censorship, libraries foster an inclusive environment where all voices have the opportunity to be heard. Inclusive materials, programs, and services may not be universally popular, but it is the library's responsibility to provide access to all points of view, not just prevailing opinions. Libraries should prepare themselves to deal with challenges by adopting appropriate policies and procedures. Libraries should respectfully consider community objections and complaints, but should not allow controversy alone to dictate policy.

Governing bodies, administrators, and library workers must discourage self-censorship. Fears and biases may suppress diverse voices in collections, programming, and all aspects of library services.² Libraries should counter censorship by practicing inclusion.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

American society has always encompassed people of diverse origin, age, background, and views. The constitutional principles of free expression and free access to ideas recognize and affirm this diversity. Any attempt to limit free expression or restrict access to ideas threatens the core American values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Libraries should establish and maintain strong ties to organizations that advocate for the rights of socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people. Libraries should act in solidarity with all groups or individuals resisting attempts to abridge the rights of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

In the Library Bill of Rights and all of its Interpretations and supporting documents, the principle of inclusion is clear and unambiguous.

“Origin” encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in the circumstances of their birth.

“Age” encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are inherent in their levels of development and maturity.

“Background” encompasses all of the characteristics of individuals that are a result of their life experiences.

“Views” encompass all of the opinions and beliefs held and expressed by individuals.

Libraries should regularly review their policies with the goal of advancing equity of access to the library’s collections and services. Identification requirements, overdue charges and fees, or deposits for service are examples of traditional approaches that may exclude some members of the community.³

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Libraries should not merely be neutral places for people to share information, but should actively encourage socially excluded, marginalized, and underrepresented people to fully participate in community debates and discussions.

Libraries should welcome diverse content in their exhibit spaces and diverse ideas, individuals, and groups in their meeting rooms, even if some members of the community may object or be offended.⁴

Conclusion

To uphold the Library Bill of Rights and serve the entire community, governing bodies, administrators, and library workers should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion.

¹ “Library-Initiated Programs and Displays as a Resource: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights* (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/programsdisplays>),” Adopted January 27, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 1990; July 12, 2000; June 26, 2018 *under previous name* “Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource”; and June 24, 2019.

² “Diverse Collections: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights* (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/diversecollections>),” Adopted July 14, 1982, by the ALA Council; amended January 10, 1990; July 2, 2008; July 1, 2014 *under previous name* “Diversity in Collection Development”; and June 25, 2019.

³ “Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation to the *Library Bill of Rights* (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/economicbarriers>),” Adopted June 30, 1993 by the ALA Council and amended June 25, 2019.

⁴ “Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the *Library Bill of Rights* (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/meetingrooms>),” Adopted July 2, 1991, by the ALA Council; amended June 26, 2018; amended version rescinded August 16, 2018; amended January 29, 2019.



PARKS FOR INCLUSION VISION STAND

We are _____ (organization name)



We bring strengths of _____ and _____

(list 3 of your organization's unique assets)

to the communities and families we serve.



We've made a commitment to inclusion because we envision a future in which our community

(share your organization's vision for community equity and inclusion).

This vision is especially important to our organization because

(share why this vision is important to your organization and how it supports your community).

In the coming months, we'll continue to move our inclusion efforts forward by:

(share a strong, clear and concrete commitment).



To accomplish this, we know we'll need resources and support from

(identify key stakeholders and community partners you'll need support from to move your efforts forward).



In the coming years, this work will be sustained by:

(how will your organization continue to make long-term impacts on your community).





PARKS FOR **INCLUSION**

Inclusion Policy Template

Use this template as a blueprint for creating your agency's inclusion policy. To use the template, replace yellow highlighted text with information specific to your agency. Make sure yellow highlight and brackets are removed from final document. You should delete this cover page before finalizing your policy. For help completing this template, please refer to the Parks for Inclusion Guidelines for Developing an Inclusion Policy at www.nrpa.org/parksforinclusion



NRPA National Recreation
and Park Association

Because everyone deserves a great park

[Policy Name]

Introduction

[AGENCY NAME] is committed to creating and promoting inclusion across all public spaces, places, facilities and programs that the department manages. Through the [POLICY NAME] and supporting practices, we aim to ensure that everyone has access to the benefits of quality parks and recreation, including [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCES--those who have been historically marginalized, including those with a physical or cognitive disability, the LGBTQ community, racial and ethnic minorities, and new Americans, or refugees and immigrants].

[AGENCY NAME] defines inclusion [INSERT DEFINITION OF INCLUSION--as the process of including all persons, regardless of their ethnic origin, socioeconomic level, color, language or abilities].

Policy Goals

[POLICY NAME] outlines [AGENCY NAME] approach to ensuring inclusive environments and equitable opportunities for all community members in local parks and recreation.

This policy ensures that:

- Community members utilizing our facilities, programs and services have equitable and appropriate access to programs and services, regardless of ability, race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or country of origin.
- Site staff, community partners and stakeholders engage in the support of all community members and promote inclusive behaviors in park and recreation facilities and in public spaces throughout the community.
- [AGENCY NAME] establishes and maintains an organizational infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication about and monitoring of the policy and its established goals and objectives.
- [AGENCY NAME] will continuously measure and improve inclusive practices.
- [INSERT OTHER GOALS]

This policy applies to all community members, staff, and sites in [AGENCY NAME].

Staff Training

[AGENCY NAME] staff will regularly participate in trainings grounded in effective training models using evidence-based content. Training will be comprehensive (covers multiple topics), based on credible research and delivered by qualified personnel. All new staff members will be quickly oriented to inclusive policies and practices.

[INSERT TRAINING PLAN AND TRAINING PARTNERS]

Organizational Support

[AGENCY NAME] and staff will put in place organizational supports that create a social environment (including positive relationships among staff, youth, families and community) that encourages all to be inclusive. This includes:

Staff

Demonstrating an attitude of inclusion, including nondiscriminatory language and actions

Determining and addressing any potential unintended outcomes of activities, programs or parks to ensure that they do not limit participation or cause worse outcomes based on ability, age, sexual orientation, identity, religion or country of origin

Providing educational materials about inclusion to all constituents at community events

Sharing and discussing practices during community meetings

Agency

Developing an advisory group and/or community network of groups that support inclusive behaviors in the community

Assessing agency hiring practices to ensure staff is representative of the diverse community and is an equal-opportunity employer

Communications

Providing positive messages about diversity and inclusion through written and verbal messaging, posters, pictures and books.

[INSERT OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORTS]

Environmental Support

[AGENCY NAME] will establish environmental supports and practices that promote inclusion for all community members. Examples of environmental supports include:

- Program adaptation for inclusion, depending on the individual needs and abilities of participants
- One-on-one trained staff support throughout the program
- Language interpretation, including but not limited to:
 - Sign language interpreters
 - Braille
 - Language translation services
 - Audio/visual support
 - Large-print signage
 - Accessible transportation
- Built environment enhancements, including modified equipment and ramps
- Gender-neutral restrooms and changing rooms
- Culturally sensitive program hours (i.e., women-only pool hours);
- Signage and additional facility enhancements (artwork, murals, etc.) that promote diversity and inclusion
- [INSERT OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORTS]

Continuous Measurement and Improvement

[AGENCY NAME] will work to continuously improve our equity and inclusion efforts, measuring the effectiveness of this policy through staff and community qualitative and quantitative feedback through meetings, community engagement events, public forums, surveys; and monitoring economic and health indicators. [AGENCY NAME] will establish a communications plan for reporting on progress [INSERT PLAN AND TIMELINE FOR PUBLIC REPORTING].

[AGENCY NAME] will monitor the following indicators to track progress of inclusive efforts:

- Does our agency communicate a vision that values the participation of all people as members of the community?
- Does our agency's improvement plan include inclusive practices with action steps to support implementation?
- Is there adequate, regularly scheduled, ongoing planning time for agency staff to collaborate on inclusive programs and events?
- Does our agency engage the whole community by providing multiple opportunities and modes for participating?
- Are there professional development opportunities for staff regarding inclusive strategies and supports?
- Are community members from targeted populations engaged in programming, utilizing facilities and taking part in future planning conversations?

Long-term indicators:

- Are there improvements in health (physical, social, mental) outcomes across targeted populations?
- [LIST OTHER INDICATORS]

Policy Development

[AGENCY NAME] developed this inclusive policy with the input, engagement and support of key community stakeholders and representatives, including:

- [LIST STAKEHOLDERS]

Resources

[AGENCY NAME] recognizes that this document is an ever-growing resource and aims to keep it updated on a [TIMELINE] basis. For more on inclusion and equity, we encourage staff and community members to visit [AGENCY WEBSITE] or the National Recreation and Park Association's Parks for Inclusion website, www.nrpa.org/ParksForInclusion.

Glossary

[AGENCY NAME] provides these definitions for historically marginalized audiences, including those with physical or cognitive disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, racial and ethnic minorities, and new Americans (refugees and immigrants).

Individuals with a disability include those with:

- Hearing difficulty (e.g., deaf or having serious difficulty hearing [DEAR])
- Vision difficulty (e.g., blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses [DEYE])
- Cognitive difficulty (e.g., because of a physical, mental or emotional problem, having difficulty remember, concentrating or making decisions [DREM])
- Ambulatory difficulty (e.g., having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs [DPHY])
- Self-care difficulty (e.g., having difficulty bathing or dressing [DDRS])
- Independent living difficulty (e.g., because of a physical, mental or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone, such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping [DOUT])
- New Americans include immigrants, refugees and/or noncitizens living in America

LGBTQ community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer), defined as:

- Lesbian: A woman who is attracted to other women.
- Gay: A man who is attracted to other men.
- Bisexual: An individual who is attracted to both genders.
- Trans: An umbrella term that seeks to incorporate individuals whose gender identities do not match their biological sex, for example, someone who is born male-bodied and identifies as a woman.
- Queer or Questioning: Individuals who experience fluidity in their experience of sexuality or gender and, therefore, do not identify strictly as LGB or T. The term 'Queer' can also include those who do not identify as either gender.

Racial/Ethnic communities, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, are composed of several different race categories — black, American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander, other, and two or more races. Hispanics are also considered a minority, although Hispanic or Latino, is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as an ethnicity rather than as a race. Other considerations include religious communities, such as Muslim, that practice cultural traditions based around gender.

and The Destruction of Public Information, 2004-2005 ALA CD #64

(<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/files/governance/policymanual/updatedpolicymanual/ocrpdfofprm/52-8disinformation.pdf>) - PDF, 6 pgs)

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B.8.10 Addressing Poverty, Economic Inequality, and the Responsibilities of Libraries (Old Number 61)

The American Library Association promotes equal access to information for all persons and recognizes the need to respond to people experiencing poverty, which include people experiencing homelessness, in the United States. Therefore, it is crucial that libraries recognize their role in supporting these communities, so they may participate fully in a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and strategies. Concrete programs of training and development are needed to prepare library staff to identify needs and deliver relevant services to people experiencing poverty. In addition, the American Library Association (divisions, offices, and units) should be strengthened to support low-income neighborhoods and people experiencing poverty through programs, services, and resources.

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B.8.10.1 Policy Objectives (Old Number 61.1)

The American Library Association shall implement these objectives by:

1. Promoting the removal of barriers to library and information services, particularly fees, and overdue charges.
2. Promoting the publication, production, purchase, and ready accessibility of print and non-print materials that focus directly on the issues of poverty, that engage people respectfully, and are practical and responsive to low income library users and their needs.
3. Promoting full, stable, and ongoing funding for existing legislative programs and services in support of people experiencing poverty and for pro-active library programs that reach beyond traditional service-sites.
4. Promoting training opportunities for librarians and library staff to learn effective funding techniques to improve accessibility for library users experiencing poverty.
5. Acknowledging economic equity in funding by promoting the incorporation of programs, services, and resources for people experiencing poverty into regular budgets in all types of libraries, regardless of the availability of "soft money" like private or federal grants to support these programs.
6. Promoting supplemental support for library resources for and about low-income populations by urging local, state, and federal governments, and the private sector to provide adequate funding.
7. Promoting increased public awareness through programs displays, bibliographies, and publicity related to libraries' responsibilities in addressing economic barriers to service.
8. Promoting the determination of service outcomes through the active support of community needs assessments that directly involve community members who are experiencing poverty.
9. Promoting direct representation and support of community members who are experiencing, have experienced, or advocate for people experiencing poverty on local boards and advisory committees.

The American Library Association recognizes that the future of libraries and of society itself depends upon the preparedness of youth to carry adult responsibilities for business, government, parenthood and other leadership. Children and young adults cannot fulfill their potential or that of society without high quality library opportunities through both public and school libraries. ALA is committed to the support and development of resources and services for children and young adults through both school and public libraries.

Equity Decision Tool (Pocket Version)

In every decision we make, it is important for us to consider equity and the impact on all students and families, especially those in underserved demographic groups and protected classes. Some key questions to ask about any proposed change:

Stakeholders: Who are the different groups of people this _____ would affect? How have they been meaningfully engaged? Who has been missed?

Purpose: What are we trying to achieve with _____? How would it reduce disparities and advance equity and inclusion? Are there better ways to do this?

Inequities: Would _____ affect different groups differently? If so, in what ways? If we don't know, how could we find out?

Negative Effects: How could _____ be bad for different groups? What could we do to prevent or reduce negative effects and unintended consequences?

Positive Effects: How would _____ be good for different groups? What could we change or add to increase positive effects on equity and inclusion?

Root Causes: Why would _____ affect some groups unequally? What could _____ do to address these root causes?

Sustainability: Is _____ realistic and adequately funded? Does it have what it needs to be successful?

Evaluation: How do we measure _____'s success? How can we share that information with people?

Definitions:

Equity: Equity in education is the notion that each and every learner will receive the necessary resources they need individually to thrive in Oregon's schools no matter what their national origin, race, gender, sexual orientation, differently abled, first language, or other distinguishing characteristic.

Underserved students: Students whom systems have placed at risk because the systems has operationalized deficit-based thinking. Deficit thinking is the practice of having lower expectations for certain groups of people based on demographics or characteristics that they share. In doing so, an 'at-risk' narrative is formed, in which students navigating poverty, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and/or historically underserved groups and their families are pathologized and marginalized. This includes students who are treated differently because of their gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, and geographic location. Many students are not served well in our education system because of the conscious and unconscious bias, stereotyping, and racism that is embedded within our current inequitable education system.

Race: Race is a social, and not a biological, construct. We understand the term 'race' to mean a racial or ethnic group that is generally recognized in society and often by government. When referring to those groups, we often use the terminology 'people of color' or 'communities of color,' (or the name of the specific racial and/or ethnic group) and 'white.' We also understand that racial and ethnic categories differ internationally, and that many of our local communities are international communities. In some societies, ethnic, religious, and caste groups are oppressed and racialized. These dynamics can occur even when the oppressed group is numerically in the majority.

White privilege: A term used to identify the privileges, opportunities, and gratuities offered by society to those who are white.

Embedded racial inequality: Embedded racial inequalities are also easily produced and reproduced, usually without the intention of doing so and without even a reference to race. These can be policies and practices that intentionally and unintentionally enable white privilege to be reinforced.


40-40-20: Senate Bill 253 - states that by 2025 all adult Oregonians will hold a high school diploma or equivalent, 40% of them will have an associate's degree or a meaningful postsecondary certificate, and 40% will hold a bachelor's degree or advanced degree. 40-40-20 means representation of every student in Oregon, including students of color.

Disproportionality: Over-representation of students of color in areas that impact their access to educational attainment. This term is a statistical concept that actualizes the disparities across student groups.

Opportunity Gap: The lack of opportunity that many social groups face in our common quest for educational attainment and the shift of attention from the current overwhelming emphasis on schools in discussions of the opportunity gap to more fundamental questions about social and educational opportunity.

Culturally Responsive: Recognize the diverse cultural characteristics of learners as assets. culturally responsive teaching empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Social Equity and Parks and Recreation

 nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/social-equity-and-parks-and-recreation/

Our nation's public parks and recreation services should be equally accessible and available to all people regardless of income level, ethnicity, gender, ability, or age. Public parks, recreation services and recreation programs including the maintenance, safety, and accessibility of parks and facilities, should be provided on an equitable basis to all citizens of communities served by public agencies. Social equity is a critical responsibility borne by every public park and recreation agency and the professionals that operate them. It is a right, not just a privilege, for people nationwide to have safe healthful access to parks and recreation.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) believes park and recreation agencies, through the provision of equal access to parks and recreation, should cultivate community ties through programs and services for all which produces public benefits by connecting people more deeply to the fabric of the community. This sense of connectedness makes communities livable and desirable.

The benefits of social equity and universal access to public parks and recreation are many, including:

- Public enjoyment and engagement. Where parks and open space are plentiful and recreation services strong, residents enjoy the closest attachment and engagement within their communities; and studies indicate higher levels of local gross domestic product and economic well-being;
- Quality recreation time with family and friends. Parks and recreation services provide a space and a reason to partake in enjoying quality time, relaxation, and fun among family members and friends, thus strengthening the social and familial bonds that provide balance and satisfaction in life;
- Improvement of mental and physical health. Parks and recreation can reduce the impacts of chronic diseases, especially in such vulnerable populations as children, seniors, and the under served; and
- Measurable decreases in rates of crime and other detrimental activities. Communities are safer as a result of a wholesome atmosphere created by well-managed parks and recreation services in communities through healthy activities and programming for all people.

NRPA encourages initiatives that increase social equity in state and local park and recreation agencies and their communities. NRPA works to achieve these outcomes through legislative and advocacy efforts, research and knowledge sharing, and providing practical tools to public park and recreation agencies across the country.

Upholding social equity is one of the core means of assuring the value of parks and recreation for future generations.

Supporting Points

The following demonstrate support for social equity as it relates to parks and recreation.

- Living close to parks and other recreation facilities is consistently related to higher physical activity levels for both adults and youth.
- Adolescents with easy access to multiple recreation facilities were more physically active and less likely to be overweight or obese than adolescents without access to such facilities.
- Organized park programs and supervision may increase use of parks and playgrounds and may also increase physical activity, particularly among youths.
- A study conducted on the Wilmington, Delaware, park and recreation system in 2009 revealed that approximately 15,498 Wilmingtonians actively participate enough in parks to have a positive impact on their health. Of that total, 13,996 were under the age of 65 while 1,502 were over the age of 65. Residents of Wilmington saved \$4.3 million in health care costs as a result of park use in 2008.
- People's perception of their community's performance in social offerings, openness and beauty, which includes the availability of parks and green spaces, has a greater impact on their emotional bonds to a place than their demographic characteristics, according to the three-year Soul of the Community study.
- A 2011 study from the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst highlighted that the construction of cycling infrastructure creates an average of 11.4 jobs per \$1 million spent, versus construction of road infrastructure which creates an average of 7.8 jobs per \$1 million spent.
- An economic study conducted in Long Island, New York, indicated the region's parks and open spaces generate an annual economic benefit of \$2.74 billion for local government and tax payers.
- The study also revealed that the development of a new residential area is eight times more costly to the public than conserving Long Island's parks and public space.
- In 2011, the Summer Night Lights program, an anti-gang initiative in Los Angeles that involves keeping parks open at night with extensive programming and free food, has led to a reduction in gang-related homicides in areas surrounding these particular parks by 57 percent. Furthermore, gun fire has decreased by 55 percent, and the number of victims shot has decreased by 45 percent.
- The Kansas City Police Department reported that in 2008 crime decreased by 74 percent in Kansas City's Kessler Park when 2.6 miles of Cliff Drive, a state scenic byway located in the park, was turned car-free on weekends.

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PARK AND RECREATION INCLUSION REPORT



NRPA National Recreation
and Park Association

Because everyone deserves a great park



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INTRODUCTION

BECAUSE EVERYONE DESERVES A GREAT PARK

That is not just a slogan. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) works to ensure that every member of every community has access to the many great benefits that parks and recreation offer. The very philosophy of public parks and recreation is that all people—regardless of race, ethnicity, age, income level, physical ability, sexual orientation, gender or religion—are able to take advantage of quality programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great.

Reinforcing this belief, NRPA's Social Equity pillar focuses on ensuring all people have safe access to quality park and recreation facilities and programming. NRPA is leading this effort by investing in park improvement projects for in-need communities, providing resources and tools to park and recreation professionals on developing equitable communities, and supporting programs and policies that protect our most vulnerable communities from environmental and health hazards.

To deliver on this promise, NRPA has launched **Parks for Inclusion**, an initiative to improve access to health and wellness activities in parks for over one million people over the next three years. **NRPA defines inclusion as removing barriers, both physical and theoretical, so that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits of parks and recreation.** The initiative emphasizes reaching the most vulnerable individuals and families—those who suffer from higher rates of health disparities and a diminished quality of life.

While park and recreation agencies strive for greater inclusion, they do face significant challenges in delivering on this promise. In some cases, agencies have limited financial and staffing resources that can make it difficult to serve those who may benefit the most from quality park and recreation services. In other cases, park and recreation agencies lack a clear understanding of the needs and desires of members of their city, town or county. As part of **Parks for Inclusion**, NRPA is supporting the creation of resources, professional development opportunities and technical assistance that will help park and recreation professionals serve every member of their communities.

To help achieve this goal, NRPA conducted a survey to gain greater insight into how agencies across the United States ensure that all members

of their communities can enjoy parks and recreation. In September 2017, the NRPA research team sent park and recreation professionals a 26-question survey that asked how park and recreation agencies currently meet the needs of all individuals and groups in their city, town, or county, and what tools they need to better support their communities. The survey generated 497 responses: 32 percent were from park and recreation professionals in metropolitan/urban agencies, 53 percent from those in suburban/county agencies and 15 percent from rural agency professionals. Those responses inform the findings presented in this report.

PARKS FOR INCLUSION

NRPA's **Parks for Inclusion** initiative supports built-environment enhancements, model policy development and best practices for program implementation to increase access to health opportunities for the following populations:

- Racial and ethnic minorities and new Americans
- Individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities
- Members of the LGBTQ community

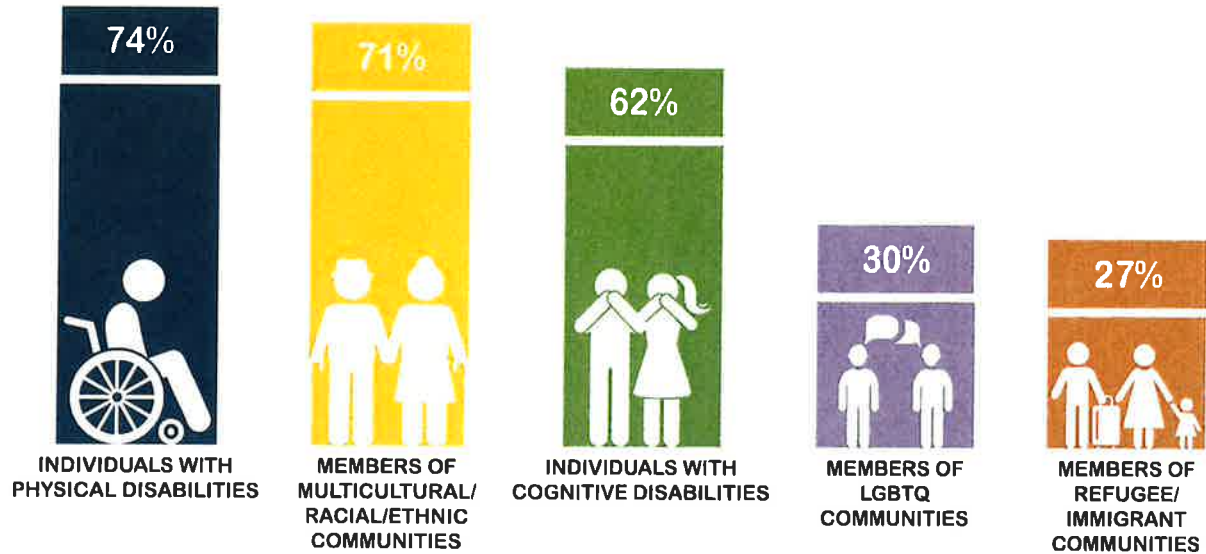
Our goal is that **Parks for Inclusion** will improve access to health opportunities in parks and recreation for one million people by September 30, 2020.



PARKS FOR INCLUSION

Removing barriers so that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits of parks and recreation.

Park and recreation agencies offer programming and activities for many community members, including:



2 in 5 PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES HAVE A **FORMAL INCLUSION POLICY** THAT ENSURE ALL MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY CAN ACCESS AND ENJOY ALL THAT PARKS AND RECREATION HAS TO OFFER

THE GREATEST CHALLENGES KEEPING PARKS AND RECREATION FROM BEING INCLUSIVE TO ALL MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY:





KEY FINDINGS

Park and recreation professionals often serve diverse populations with differing needs and desires. What they have in common is how they define “inclusion” for parks and recreation. Park and recreation leaders agree that park and recreation facilities, offerings and services should be accessible to people of all backgrounds, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic position or physical/cognitive ability. **Inclusion means removing barriers that can deprive some people of the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of parks and recreation.** Survey respondents also see inclusiveness at park and recreation facilities as a method to bring people together and celebrate the diversity of communities in which they live.

As they seek to serve all members of a community, park and recreation agencies design and market facilities, programming and activities targeted to specific populations that otherwise may be underserved. A majority of agencies targets programming to individuals with a physical or cognitive disability. Seventy-four percent of park and recreation agencies develop programming and activities that serve individuals in their communities who live with a physical disability while 62 percent do so to serve individuals with a cognitive disability.

Most park and recreation agencies also design and market programming and activities geared to community members of diverse backgrounds. Seven in ten agencies target programming and activities for members of their communities that are part of a multicultural, racial or ethnic group. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, approximately 36 percent of the U.S. population belongs to a racial or ethnic minority group. Data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reveal that chronic health conditions—including heart disease, cancer, diabetes and stroke—are more common and can be more severe among Americans who are members of a racial or ethnic minority group. Health and wellness opportunities provided by parks and recreation is one way to reduce these disparities.¹

Less common are park and recreation agencies that program specifically for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) community. Currently, only 30 percent of agencies deliver programs specifically to serve this population, yet the need for quality park and recreation opportunities can be great for these individuals. Research suggests LGBTQ individuals face physical and mental health disparities linked to social stigma, discrimination and denial of their civil and human rights.²

Another segment of the population facing a growing need for park and recreation programming is the refugee and immigrant community. Park and recreation facilities and programs have an opportunity to foster community relationships, create employment opportunities, deliver English-language education and serve as venues for physical activity opportunities respectful of cultural norms (e.g., gender-specific programs and hours). Currently, only 27 percent of agencies have programs targeted to these new Americans.

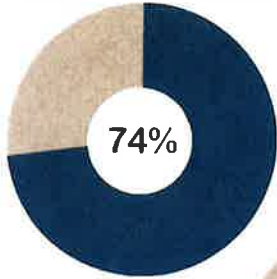
¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; “Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH)” Published 2016 <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/reach.htm>

²Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health” <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-health>

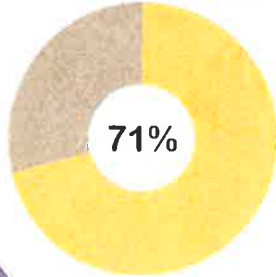
PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES SPECIFICALLY DESIGN AND MARKET PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

(Percent of Agencies)

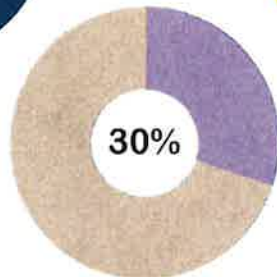
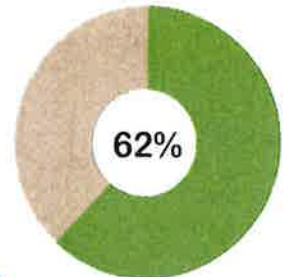
INDIVIDUALS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES



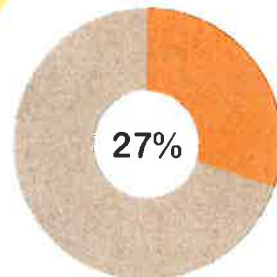
MEMBERS OF A MULTICULTURAL/ RACIAL/ETHNIC COMMUNITY



INDIVIDUALS WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES



MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY



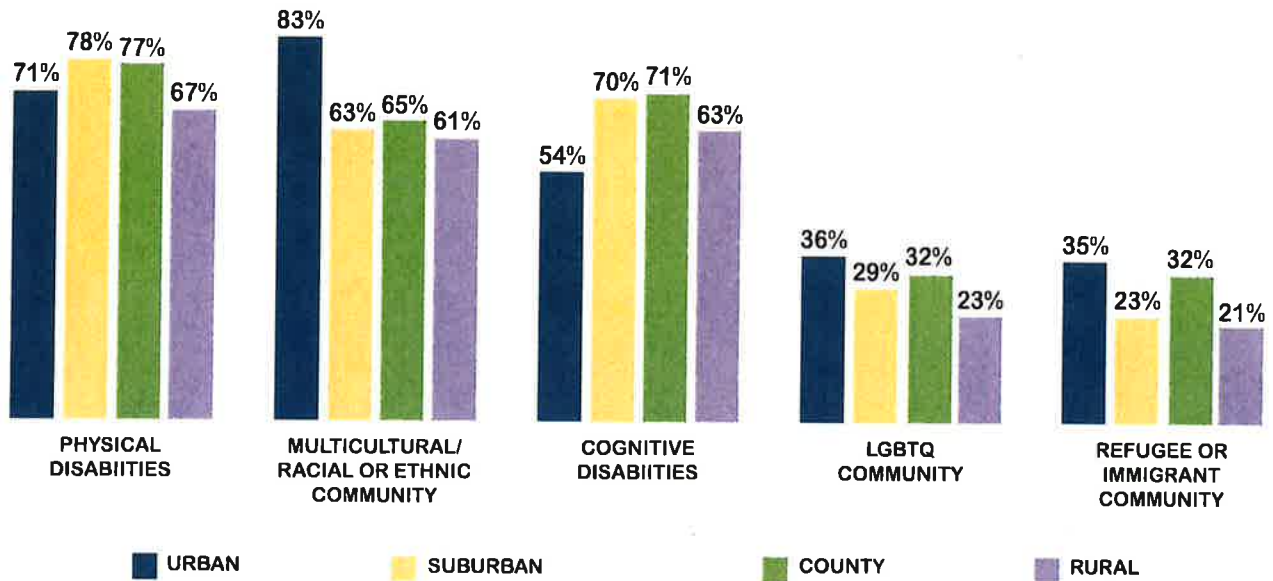
MEMBERS OF THE REFUGEE/ IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY

Some park and recreation agencies are more likely than others to offer inclusive programming and activities targeted to specific segments of their communities. For example, suburban agencies and those that are part of a county government are more likely than other agencies to offer specific programming for individuals with a physical or cognitive disability. Park and recreation agencies in an urban locale are more likely than agencies in other areas to offer programming and activities geared to multicultural, racial or ethnic communities, members of the LGBTQ community or refugee and immigrant communities.



PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES SPECIFICALLY DESIGN AND MARKET PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO DIFFERENT MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

(Percent of Agencies by Jurisdiction Type)



INCLUSION POLICIES

Inclusion policies can specify a list of rights to ensure staff is clear about what inclusion within the agency means. Below is a sample inclusion policy from an agency in Connecticut.

The Rights of All Persons to Recreation Services

- Individuals have the right to choose recreation and leisure activities that are personally satisfying and of interest to them.
- Individuals have the right to choose activities that occur in settings that are non-discriminatory in practice, policy and attitude.
- Individuals have the right to participate in a diverse choice of recreation and leisure activities with their peers that allows for, promotes and encourages full inclusion of all participants.
- Individuals have the right to be treated with respect and supported in age-appropriate programs and services in a manner consistent with how people without disabilities are treated. Individuals with disabilities have the right to request and receive support and accommodations in programs and services to the degree that it does not fundamentally alter the intent and nature of the program design as defined by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Program providers have the right to request that all participants, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, meet the minimal eligibility requirements of their program service and that the safety and wellbeing of all participants are insured in the delivery of recreation services and programs.

Many park and recreation agencies have developed formal policies that outline their goals, guidelines and procedures that help ensure all members of a community can access all that those facilities have to offer. Such policies may include an outline of the accommodations that improve accessibility to parks, recreation centers and other facilities along with a description of the process that a resident would follow to request a specific accommodation. The policies typically are available on the agency's website.

Creating and implementing a formal inclusion policy allows park and recreation agencies to maintain consistent guidelines and match their actions to those guidelines. While many agencies are already achieving a standard of inclusion, they frequently lack a formal policy that ensures consistent implementation of this standard across an agency. With a formal policy, an inclusion standard will thrive despite any staff turnover, leadership changes, shifts in agency priorities or funding shortages. Agencies should customize their inclusion policy to reflect an organization's strengths and strategic goals.

Forty percent of park and recreation agencies currently have a formal inclusion policy, with another 15 percent intending to develop such a policy within the next year. More than half (53 percent) of urban park and recreation agencies currently have an inclusion policy while 41 percent of county agencies and 37 percent of suburban agencies have formal inclusion policies.

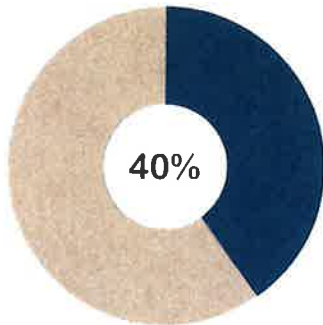
Only about one quarter (24 percent) of rural agencies currently have an inclusion policy. Rural agencies often face barriers of high poverty rates, lack of availability of fresh and healthy foods, and limited walkability to recreation opportunities and service providers. The combination of these challenges can lead to an increase in chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity. Creating an inclusion policy can be a critical step for rural-based agencies to help residents make decisions regarding healthy eating and physical activity.



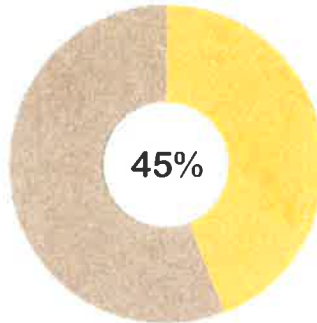
TWO IN FIVE PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES HAVE A FORMAL INCLUSION POLICY

(Percentage Distribution of Agencies)

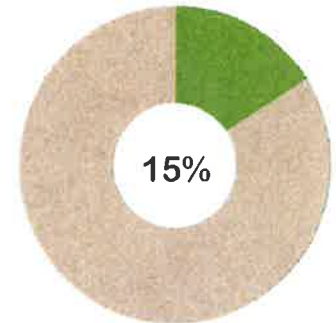
AGENCY HAS A FORMAL INCLUSION POLICY



AGENCY DOES NOT HAVE A FORMAL INCLUSION POLICY



AGENCY PLANS TO CREATE A FORMAL INCLUSION POLICY WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR



Working with third parties to provide resources, technical assistance and outreach support is one way park and recreation agencies ensure that their programming and activities are relevant and accessible to all members of a community. The majority of park and recreation agencies—93 percent—partners with other government agencies and external organizations so that their programming and activities are inclusive to all members of their communities.

Park and recreation agencies are most likely to partner with local schools (83 percent), nonprofit organizations (77 percent) and area-wide agencies on aging and disabilities (65 percent).

Other common partners include:

- Local law enforcement agencies (55 percent)
- Hospitals and healthcare providers (46 percent)
- Faith-based organizations (44 percent)
- Transit agencies (26 percent)

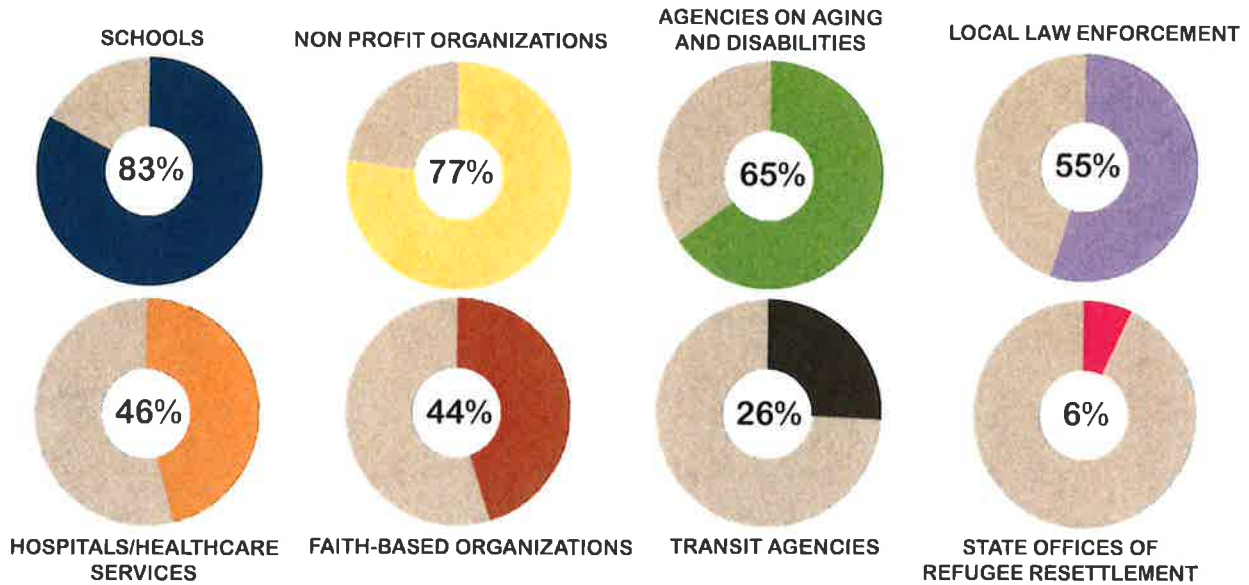
Urban park and recreation agencies are more likely than other agencies to partner with nonprofit organizations, local law enforcement agencies and faith-based organizations on inclusion-related programming and offerings. Conversely, suburban park and recreation agencies are more likely to partner with the local school system.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

In Grand Rapids, Michigan, park and recreation agencies are creating and strengthening partnerships with community resources such as Disability Advocates of Kent County, the Fair Housing Center of Western Michigan, Kent County Essential Needs Task Force, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, HUD Continuum of Care, and the West Michigan Hispanic Center.

PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES WORK CLOSELY WITH THIRD-PARTY ORGANIZATIONS TO ENSURE PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES ARE INCLUSIVE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

(Percent of Agencies Working with Government Agencies and External Organizations)



For all the progress park and recreation agencies have made ensuring that their facilities, programming and offerings serve all members of a community, there remain barriers that hamper agencies from fully succeeding in that mission. Nine in ten park and recreation agencies report they are confronting challenges that prevent their offerings from being more inclusive.

A number of these challenges result from a lack of resources: insufficient funding (57 percent), inadequate staffing (46 percent), a need for greater staff training (25 percent) or scarce supplies and equipment (9 percent). The lack of resources is due in part because few agencies are able to access federal funding to support their inclusion efforts. In fact, only 12 percent of park and recreation leaders indicate that their agencies are current recipients of federal government grants, program support or other resources (such as best practices, technical assistance or training) that support inclusive programming.

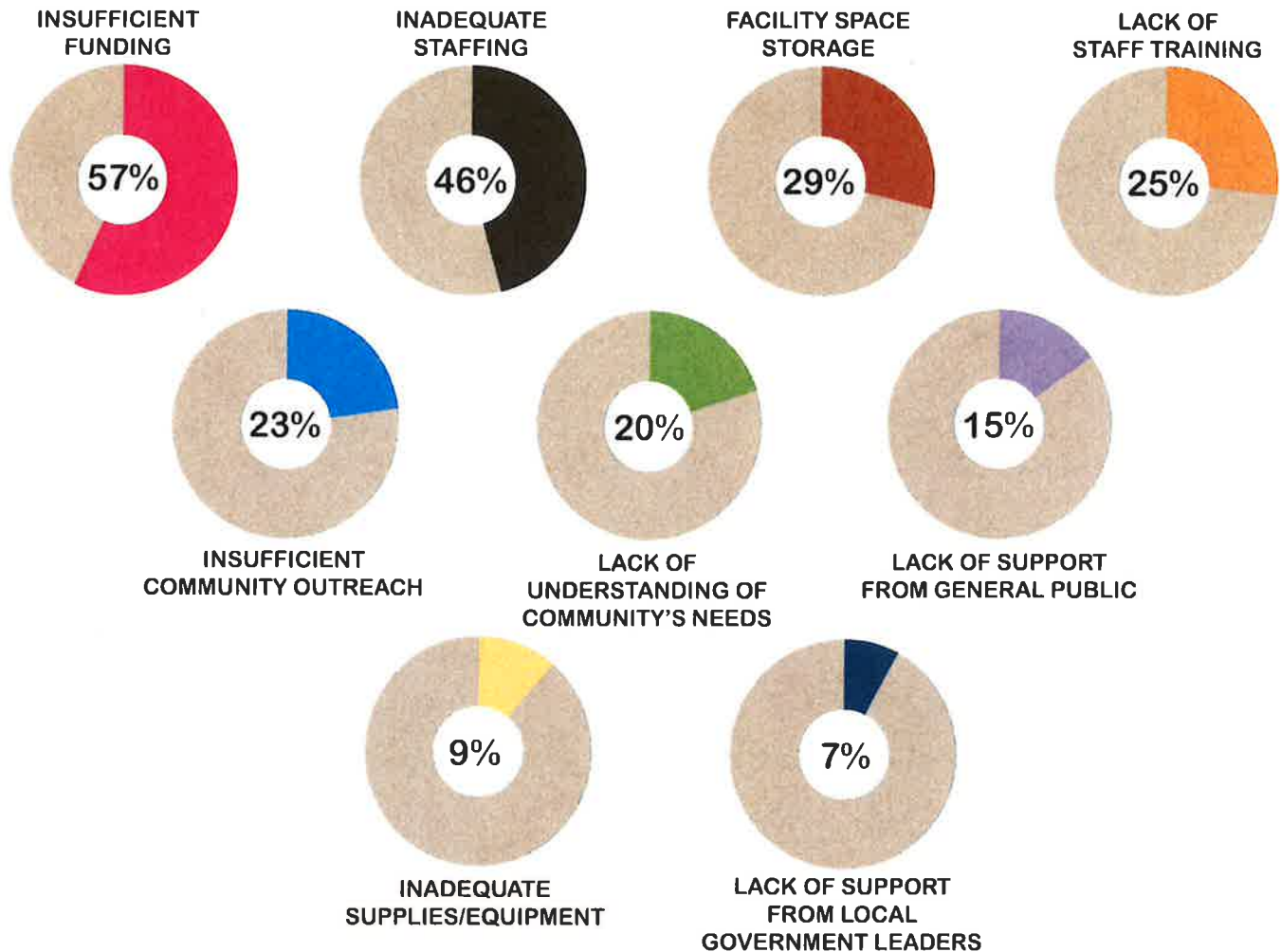
Other barriers impeding more robust inclusion activities focus on the challenges some park and recreation agencies have in fully understanding the needs of and reaching underserved members of a community.

Twenty-three percent of agencies indicate they do not currently have outreach activities that sufficiently reach these populations while 20 percent acknowledge that they do not fully understand the needs of these communities. By engaging in efforts to involve minority members of a community in planning and programming activities, offerings can begin to meet specific needs, allowing everyone to benefit from not only equal but equitable access to parks and recreation.

Fortunately, a lack of desire to make sure parks and recreation serves all people is not a significant barrier to efforts that promote greater inclusiveness. In fact, few park and recreation professionals report any apathy from either the general public or local government leaders as

INSUFFICIENT FUNDING AND STAFFING ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES KEEPING PARKS AND RECREATION FROM BEING INCLUSIVE TO ALL MEMBERS OF A COMMUNITY

(Percent of Agencies)



a factor hampering their agencies' efforts to be more inclusive. Only 15 percent of survey respondents indicate that a lack of support from the general public is holding back inclusion efforts; a mere six percent indicate a lack of support from local government leaders.

Leaders from urban park and recreation agencies are slightly more likely than others to indicate that their agencies suffer from deficient outreach

efforts. Respondents from rural agencies are more likely to report challenges associated with insufficient funding, staffing and facility space.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH A PHYSICAL OR COGNITIVE DISABILITY

Park and recreation agencies design and market a wide variety of program offerings targeted to members of their communities who live with either a physical or cognitive disability. These inclusion efforts can be especially meaningful, as adults with disabilities are three times more likely to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes or cancer than are adults without them. According to the CDC, nearly half of all adults with disabilities get no aerobic physical activity,³ an important behavior to reduce the onset of chronic diseases. Further, physical activity provides emotional benefits, including social support and gaining confidence.

The most prevalent program offering for individuals with a physical or cognitive disability focuses on physical activities and fitness training. Eighty percent of those park and recreation agencies that program specifically for individuals with a physical or cognitive disability deliver walking programs, yoga classes, personal training and sport leagues. Sixty-two percent of agencies deliver out-of-school time programs (e.g., summer camps, before/after-school programs) geared to children with physical or cognitive disabilities.

Other commonly offered programs designed for and marketed to individuals with a physical or cognitive disability include:

- Volunteer or employment activities, including opportunities to volunteer or work at park and recreation centers (57 percent)
- Health and wellness programs, including chronic disease prevention (e.g., arthritis, diabetes), treatment programs and cooking/nutrition classes (50 percent)
- Field trips, tours and vacations (44 percent)
- Special Olympics and/or Paralympics (44 percent)
- Therapy and mentoring services, including swimming/water therapy, art/music therapy and peer coaching (37 percent)
- Technology training, including computer skills and training (14 percent)

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Examples of programming for individuals with a physical or cognitive disability

- Physical activity programs, exercise classes and/or fitness training (e.g., walking programs, yoga classes, personal training, sports leagues)
- Volunteer or employment activities (e.g., opportunities to volunteer or work in parks and recreation centers)
- Health and wellness programs (e.g., chronic disease prevention [arthritis, diabetes] and treatment programs, cooking/nutrition classes)

Park and recreation agencies deliver specialized programming and offerings to individuals of all ages that live with a physical or cognitive disability, especially children. More than four in five agencies focus specifically on children aged between five and 12 years old with this type of specialized programming, while nearly three-quarters of agencies do the same for teenagers.

³ "Inactivity Related to Chronic Disease in Adults with Disabilities" <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/division-information/media-tools/dpk/vs-disability-activity/index.html>

INCLUSION MICROGRANT CHALLENGE

In the fall of 2017, NRPA—with help from the Lakeshore Foundation—hosted an innovative inclusion microgrant challenge. Four local park and recreation agencies each received \$1,000 awards to implement changes to their facilities to foster inclusion for those individuals with a physical or cognitive disability.

“Learn to Ride Adaptive” bike program in Austin, Texas, provides community members with an adaptive bike to participate in cycling programs alongside their peers.

“Prichard Pride: Growing a Garden Together” in Prichard, Alabama, added ramps and signage to an intergenerational garden, allowing all to garden together.

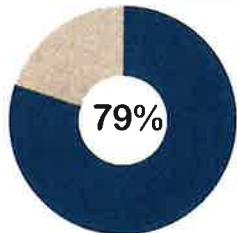
“Grow Up Green Club” in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, enables children on the autism spectrum and typically developing children to explore sun, water, wind, dirt, and backyard nature.

“Sense Tents” in Minneapolis, Minnesota, brings mobile tent units to events to provide the appropriate tools for people with disabilities to regulate their senses and calm their minds and bodies.

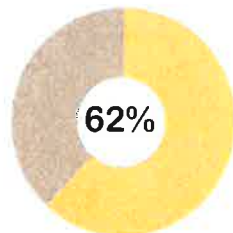
PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES DEVELOP ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH PHYSICAL AND/OR COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for Individuals Living with Physical and/or Cognitive Disabilities)

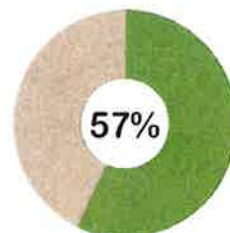
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS, EXERCISE CLASSES, AND/OR FITNESS TRAINING



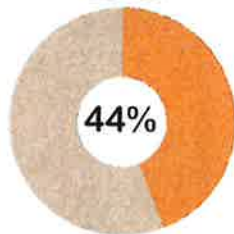
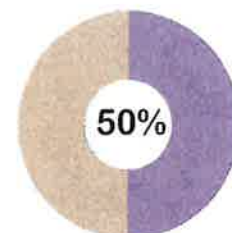
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS



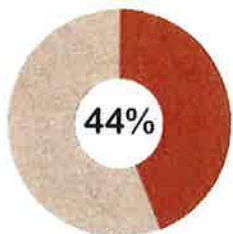
VOLUNTEER OR EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES



HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS



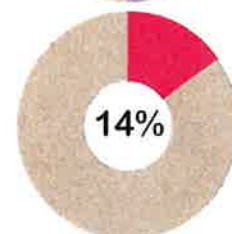
FIELD TRIPS, TOURS, VACATIONS



SPECIAL OLYMPICS AND/OR PARALYMPICS



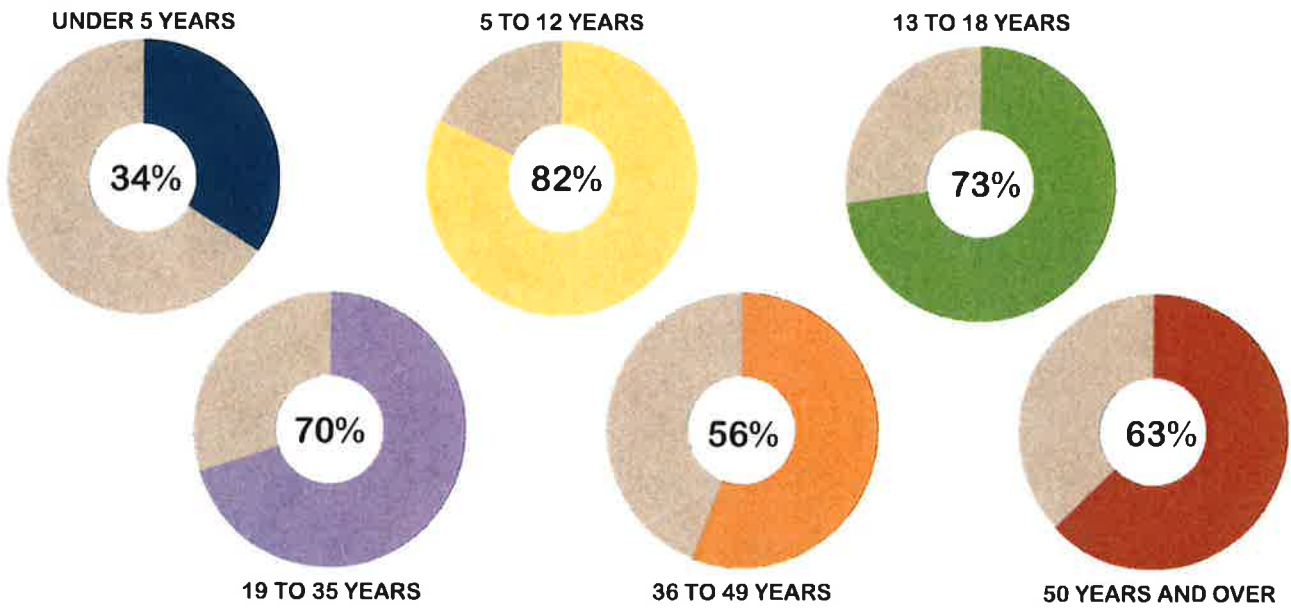
THERAPY/MENTOR SERVICES



TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES DESIGN PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH PHYSICAL AND/OR COGNITIVE DISABILITIES OF ALL AGES

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for Individuals Living with Physical and/or Cognitive Disabilities Based on Age)



OPPORTUNITIES FOR MULTICULTURAL/RACIAL/ ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Seven in ten local park and recreation agencies deliver programs and activities targeted to members of a multicultural, racial or ethnic community. Some of these programs are celebratory in form, bringing together people to rejoice in the diversity of their cities or towns. Other offerings are intended to mitigate any higher prevalence of chronic health issues or work to counter the detrimental impact of higher rates of crime, violence and gang activity that impede safe access to parks, recreation and educational opportunities.

Park and recreation agencies serve as beacons of support for disadvantaged individuals by creating opportunities for inclusion through volunteer positions, program involvement and social engagement. Inclusive practices can break down segregated social groups, encouraging all in the neighborhood to take advantage of the facility. Designing programming to meet the needs of multicultural, racial or ethnic communities can aid in reducing crime rates and supports the well-being of historically marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Many of these offerings are celebrations of the respective communities themselves, whether a holiday commemoration (65 percent) or a heritage festival (61 percent). These programs not only bring together members of a specific community, but they also serve as opportunities to unite people of diverse backgrounds in a positive, constructive manner.

Other programs and activities geared to members of multicultural, racial or ethnic communities include:

- Community gardens (54 percent)
- Health and wellness programs targeted to specific members of the community (e.g., "GirlTrek," "Summer Night Lights") (41 percent)
- Culturally sensitive program hours, including, women-only hours at swimming pools and gyms, female program leaders (26 percent)
- Budget and personal finance training (nine percent)

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Examples of programming for multicultural, racial or ethnic community members:

- Heritage and holiday celebrations
- Culturally sensitive program hours (e.g., women-only pool time, female program leaders for female students, etc.)
- Health and Wellness programs targeted to specific cultures, races and ethnicities (e.g., GirlTrek)

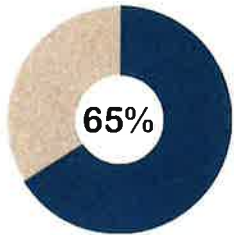
SUMMER NIGHT LIGHTS

In 2011, the "Summer Night Lights" program—an anti-gang initiative in Los Angeles that involves keeping parks open at night with extensive programming and free food—was credited with a 57 percent reduction in gang-related homicides in areas surrounding participating parks. Furthermore, gun fire decreased 55 percent and the number of shooting victims declined 45 percent.

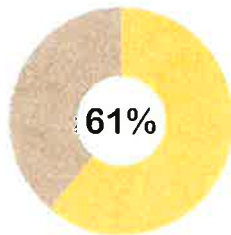
PARK AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO MEMBERS OF MULTICULTURAL, RACIAL OR ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for Members of Multicultural, Racial or Ethnic Communities)

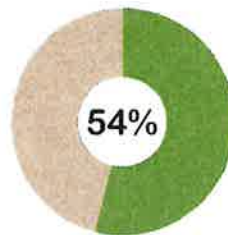
HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS



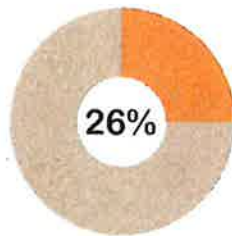
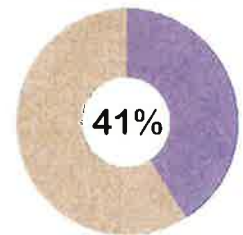
HERITAGE CELEBRATIONS



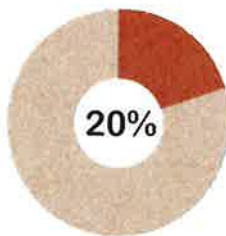
COMMUNITY GARDENS



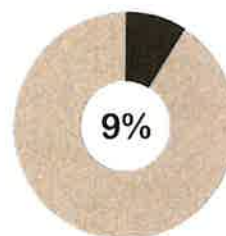
HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS



CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PROGRAM HOURS



JOB SKILLS TRAINING



BUDGET/FINANCE TRAINING



OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

Park and recreation agencies meet the needs of the local LGBTQ population through a variety of programs and offerings. Research shows that lack of physical and social activity opportunities may contribute to health disparities of LGBTQ members, including physical and mental health, as well as social issues. Discrimination against LGBTQ persons has also been associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, and even suicide,⁴ bolstering the need for programming through park and recreation agencies.

Just over half of the park and recreation agencies (52 percent) that design and market programs that specifically serve LGBTQ individuals offer community events and awareness campaigns, including Pride Months, parades and festivals. Similarly, 51 percent of agencies host social activities targeted to the LGBTQ community, such as adult sports leagues.

Other park and recreation programs and offerings targeted to the LGBTQ community include:

- Family programs, including, before/after-school out-of-school time programs, summer camps and early childhood programs (40 percent)
- LGBTQ youth groups and mentoring services (18 percent)
- Gay-straight alliances (11 percent)

Beyond programming, many park and recreation agencies have added features to their facilities (e.g., recreation centers, gyms) that aid in the comfort and increased perception of safety for the LGBTQ community. These features include gender neutral and/or unisex restrooms, private/family-style locker and changing rooms, and identifying safe spaces for LGBTQ youth.

Park and recreation agencies deliver specialized programming and offerings to all members of their local LGBTQ community, with a particular focus on younger adults. Eighty-five percent of agencies specifically focus their LGBTQ programs and offerings on adults between 19 and 35 years old, while 77 percent of agencies focus on programming for teenagers between 13 and 18 years old.

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Examples of programming for LGBTQ community members include

- Community events/awareness campaigns (e.g., Pride Month)
- Social activities/programs (e.g., adult sports leagues)
- LGBTQ youth groups and/or mentor services and gay-straight alliances

PRIDE OUTSIDE

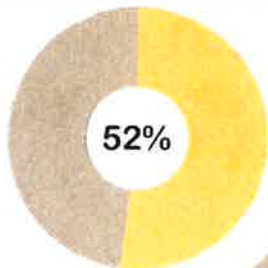
“Pride Outside” is a Washington, D.C. based group whose goal is getting members of the LGBTQ community outdoors and involved in recreation activities. This includes a partnership with a major outdoor goods retailer to offer backpacking and camping classes targeted to LGBTQ individuals who are new to those activities, as well as provide more advanced skills such as navigation. These programs help the LGBTQ community feel welcome in the recreation space, and confident and supported as they explore new opportunities.

⁴ “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health” <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-health>

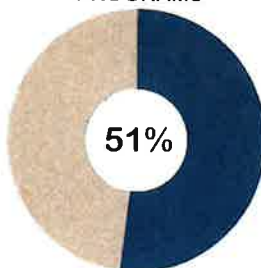
PARK AND RECREATION EVENTS AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for the LGBTQ Community)

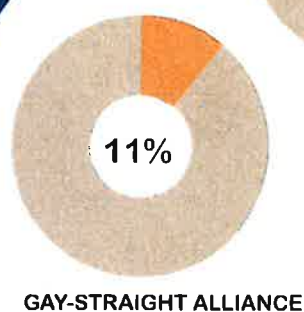
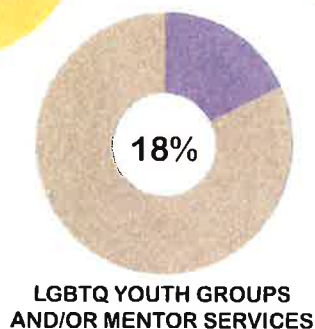
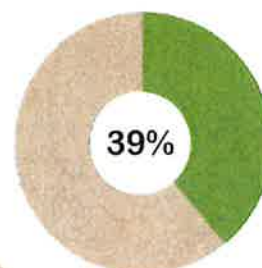
**COMMUNITY EVENTS/
AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS**



**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES/
PROGRAMS**



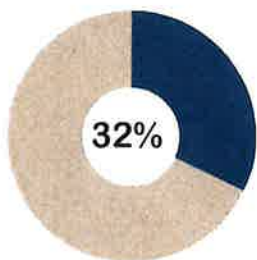
FAMILY PROGRAMS



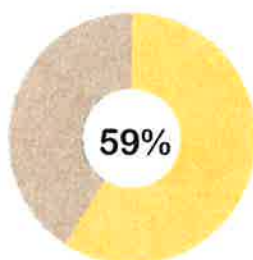
PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES DESIGN PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES FOR MEMBERS OF THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY OF ALL AGES

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for the LGBTQ Community by Age)

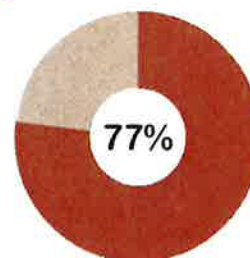
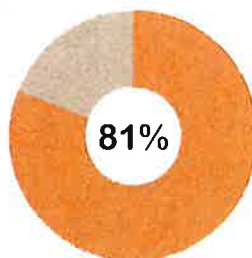
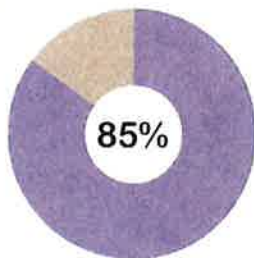
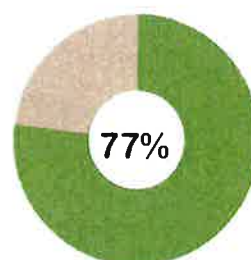
UNDER 5 YEARS



5 TO 12 YEARS



13 TO 18 YEARS



19 TO 35 YEARS

36 TO 49 YEARS

50 YEARS AND OVER

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

Just over a quarter of park and recreation agencies indicate they design programs and activities specifically for refugees and immigrants who reside in their communities. The offerings are as diverse as the populations the agencies serve. Delivering programming specific to new Americans aids in creating a sense of place in adopted communities, and also supports civic engagement.

The most common park and recreation offerings geared to refugees and immigrants are multicultural community programs and events. Eighty-five percent of park and recreation agencies that offer programming specifically for refugees and immigrants sponsor festivals and other celebrations that highlight these members of a community. Seventy-three percent of agencies also have special out-of-school time programs—summer camps, before/after school programs, youth sports programs and youth engagement programs—all of which are inclusive of the community's refugees and immigrants.

Two-thirds of agencies work to strengthen the relationship of their communities' newest residents and the outdoors with specific outdoor recreation programs targeted to this population. Nearly three in five agencies aim to improve the health and wellness of the refugee and immigrant population by offering a variety of wellness programs, including chronic disease prevention and treatment programs, cooking and nutrition programs.

Other programs and activities designed and marketed by park and recreation agencies to serve refugees and immigrants living in their communities include:

- Community gardens (55 percent)
- English as a Second Language (ESL) classes (32 percent)
- Job skills training, including computer skills (24 percent)

PROGRAM EXAMPLES

Examples of programming for new Americans

- Multicultural community programs/events (e.g. festivals, celebrations)
- English as a Second Language (ESL) program/classes
- Job skills training (e.g. computer skills training)

PARKS FOR NEW PORTLANDERS

"Parks for New Portlanders" (PNP) is a program initiated by Portland (Oregon) Parks & Recreation with goal of providing recreation opportunities for immigrant and refugee communities. PNP works with community partners and city leaders to design culturally relevant programs and makes sure services and spaces are welcoming and accessible to communities of color, new immigrants and refugees.

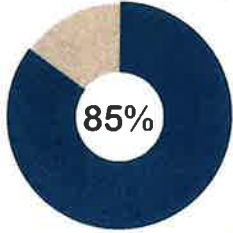
With one in five Portlanders foreign-born, addressing the needs of this new and diverse population is crucial as they transition to Portland's community. The PNP program hosts sporting events such as Portland World Cup Soccer in the summer and Intercultural Basketball Tournament in the fall, to assist new Portlanders in accessing Portland Parks & Recreation services to promote greater integration into Portland's community and create a sense of belonging.

"Parks for New Portlanders" brings together seven, foreign-born Community Youth Ambassadors who are local leaders, community experts, and who speak 12 different languages to assist with the transition to Portland.

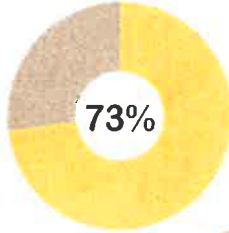
PARK AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES TARGETED TO REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for Refugees and Immigrants)

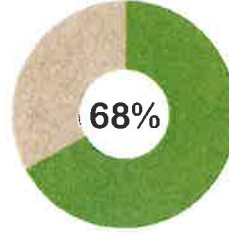
MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY PROGRAMS/EVENTS



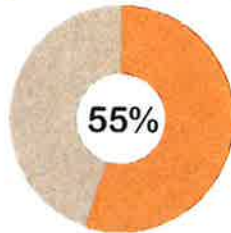
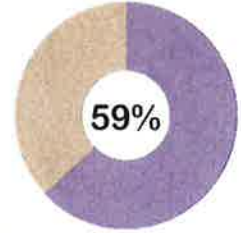
OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS



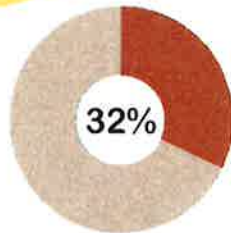
OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAMS



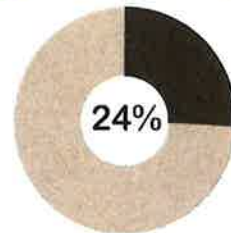
HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS



COMMUNITY GARDENS



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) PROGRAM/CLASSES



JOB SKILLS TRAINING

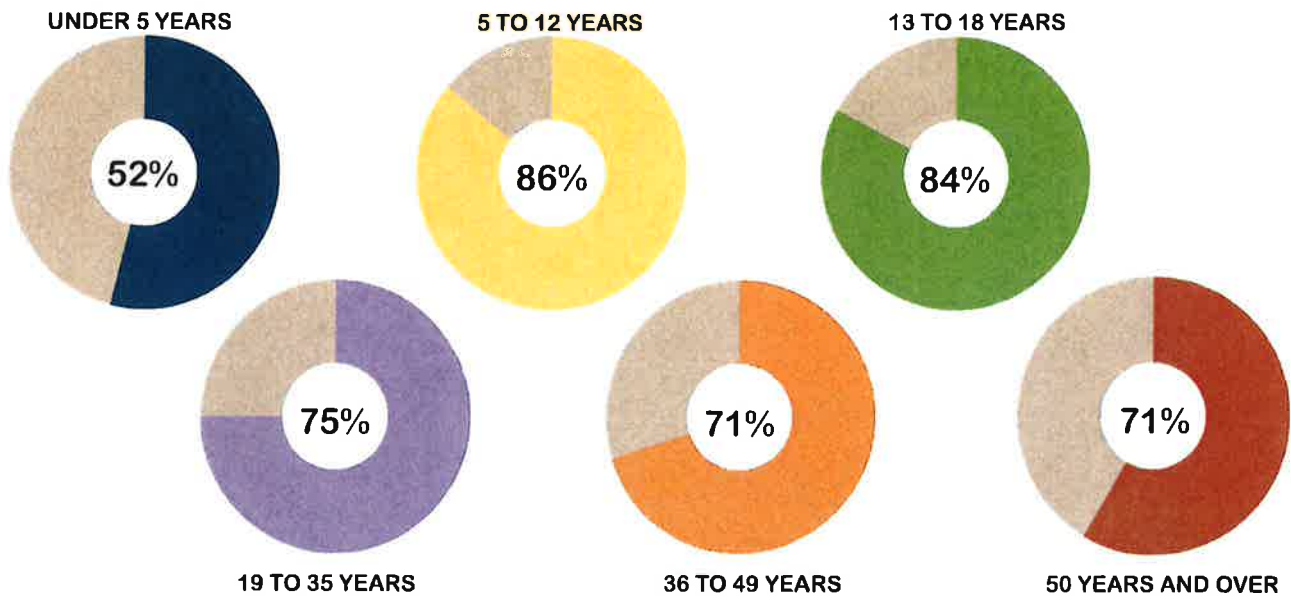
Park and recreation agencies deliver specialized programming and offerings to refugee and immigrant populations of all ages in their communities. Agencies, are, however, more apt to deliver programs targeted specifically to children within these communities. Eighty-six percent of agencies focus on children aged between five and 12 years with this type of specialized programming, with 83 percent of agencies doing the same for teenagers between the ages of 13 and 18 years old.

Even though recreation programs for refugee and immigrant communities are often children-focused, still a vast majority of agencies also crafts offerings for adult aged members of these populations. Three-quarters of agencies with targeted programming for their refugee and immigrant population design such activities for adults aged 19 to 35 years and 71 percent target programming to adults aged 36 years or older.



PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES DESIGN PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS OF ALL AGES

(Percent of Agencies that Program Specifically for Refugees and Immigrants Based on Age)





ENGAGEMENT THAT PROMOTES INCLUSION

Park and recreation professionals want their agencies to deliver the services, programming and offerings that their communities want and need. This goal can be difficult to achieve as agencies face tight budgetary constraints that require them to prioritize what facilities, services and offerings they should (and should not) offer.

One way park and recreation leaders make optimal decisions is by gaining a firm understanding of the residents who live near park and recreation facilities. Demographic information and market research data on local residents are available from a number of government and market research resources. One resource available to park and recreation professionals is the [NRPA Facility Market Report](#), which highlights key data and insights about the market served by an individual agency's facilities.

Beyond the "who" lives near such facilities, park and recreation agencies also need to understand "what" these residents need in terms of park and recreation offerings. Most agencies have a variety of methods to engage the public when they are planning and designing their inclusive program offerings.

Nine in ten agencies that design and market specific programming for either multicultural audiences or refugee and immigrant populations engage these populations when planning for new park and recreation programs, facilities and space. Similarly, 84 percent of agencies that target programs to individuals living with either a physical or cognitive disability conduct similar engagement strategies, while 68 percent of agencies with specific LGBTQ programming do the same.

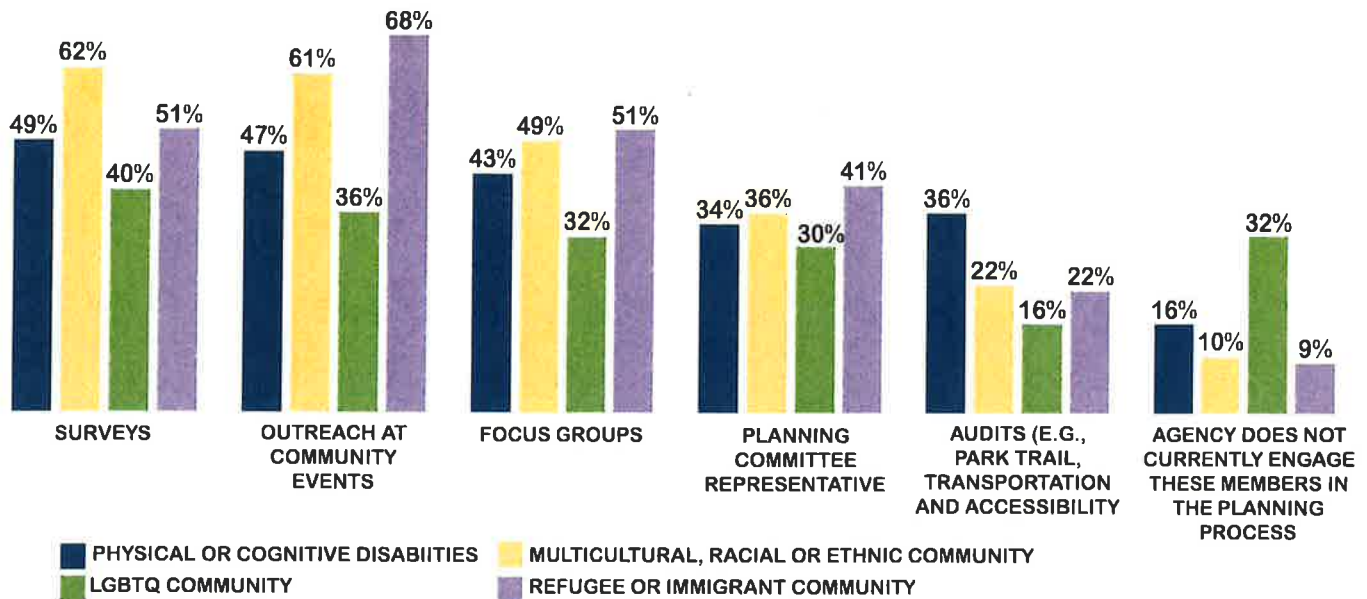
The most common form of engagement is via surveys of members of a specific community. This is especially true for agencies targeting programs to individuals living with a physical or cognitive disability, members of a multicultural, racial or ethnic community and the LGBTQ community. Agencies seeking to serve the refugee and/or immigrant community are most likely to use direct outreach at local community events for one-on-one conversations.

Other widely cited forms of parks and recreation engagement include:

- Focus groups
- Having members of the relevant community serve as planning committee representatives
- Conducting audits on parks, trails, transportation and/or accessibility

METHODS FOR ENGAGING MEMBERS OF THE DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES WHEN PLANNING FOR NEW PARK AND RECREATION PROGRAMS, FACILITIES AND SPACES

(Percent of Agencies with Type of Targeted Outreach)



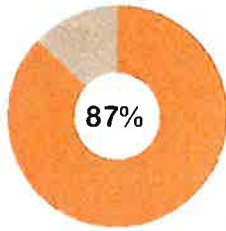
In addition to enhancing their engagement with a community, park and recreation leaders seek more resources and training to help in their agencies' efforts to make their offerings more inclusive to all members of their communities. Eighty-seven percent of park and recreation professionals are seeking best practice guides and success stories that highlight those peer agencies across the United States that have effectively broadened the impact of parks and recreation for these audiences. Other resources requested by park and recreation professionals include:

- Professional development opportunities, including webinars, education sessions and staff training and development resources (85 percent)
- Guidance on developing formal policies that promote parks and recreation inclusiveness (81 percent)
- Tools that help identify community partners and resources that could help secure funding for inclusive programs and facilities (81 percent)
- Guidance on various inclusive language, community strategies and effective engagement processes (79 percent)

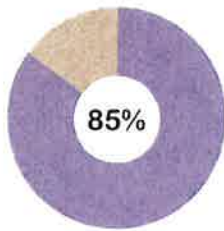
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES SOUGHT BY PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES LOOKING TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

(Percent of Respondents Indicating Resource Would be "Valuable")

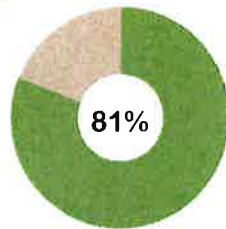
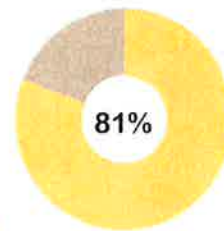
BEST PRACTICES GUIDES AND/OR SUCCESS STORIES/EXAMPLES FROM OTHER PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES



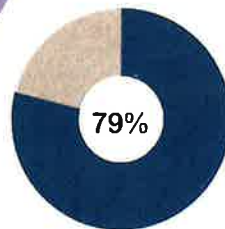
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES (E.G., WEBINARS, EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS, STAFF TRAINING/DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES)



TOOLS TO IDENTIFY COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND/OR RESOURCES ON SECURING FUNDING FOR INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES



POLICY GUIDANCE (E.G. GUIDANCE ON CREATING FORMAL POLICY)



GUIDANCE ON INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE, COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



CONCLUSION

Parks and recreation truly build communities—communities for all. They are the places and spaces where people from all walks of life come together to learn, to experience, to interact and to grow. A park should not only reflect the culture and spirit of its community; it should also serve all members of a community, especially individuals or groups who have endured historical injustices and communities that suffered from inadequate investment. While park and recreation agencies are leaders in creating these spaces and confronting these disparities head on, there remain significant opportunities for expanding such efforts further and ensuring that the needs of all are met.

With the **Parks for Inclusion** initiative, and with the support of local park and recreation agencies throughout the United States, NRPA is committed to ensuring that everyone—regardless of race, ethnicity, physical ability, gender, religion or sexual orientation—has equal access to the benefits of parks and recreation. NRPA is committed to accomplishing this goal through a number of activities:

- Supporting built-environment enhancements and park improvement projects in various underserved communities
- Hosting professional development opportunities such as webinars and conference sessions
- Aiding in model policy development to create sustainable, long-term changes
- Collecting and sharing the success stories of inclusive activities across the field
- Connecting agencies with community partners to support and enhance each other's work
- Creating best practices for program implementation to increase access to health opportunities

Learn more at www.nrpa.org/ParksForInclusion



ABOUT NRPA

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space.

NRPA brings strength to our message by partnering with like-minded organizations including those in the federal government, nonprofits and commercial enterprises. Funded through dues, grants, registrations and charitable contributions, NRPA produces research, education and policy initiatives for our members that ultimately enrich the communities they serve.

NRPA places immense importance on research and data to raise the status of parks and recreation and conducts research with two goals. First, NRPA creates data to help park and recreation agencies make optimal decisions on operations, programming and spending. Second, NRPA generates data and insights that support park and recreation professionals making the case for greater and more stable funding to policymakers, key stakeholders, the media and the general public. The NRPA research team works closely with internal subject matter experts, respected industry consultants and the academic community to develop its reports and data resources. Learn more at www.nrpa.org/Research





 **NRPA** National Recreation
and Park Association
Because everyone deserves a great park

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