



CHAPTER 7 RECREATION PROGRAMS

This chapter reviews and analyzes Shoreline's recreation program in order to address citizens' current and future recreation and program needs. As part of this *PROS Plan*, information regarding Shoreline's existing recreation programs as well as comparable providers was collected. Community and staff input was gathered and evaluated in order to develop a recreation program philosophy.

As part of this analysis, the *PROS Plan* utilizes a recreation program pyramid, a tool that helps determine the community and individual benefits as well as the perceived obligation to the service area, the level of community support and willingness to pay, the stability of the program area, the cost per participant, the commitment level of the participants, and the environmental impact of the program. The pyramid assists in sorting Shoreline's recreation programs into one of five levels. Each level correlates to a decreasing level of tax subsidy and an increase of user fee support. A pricing philosophy will match up with each level of the recreation program pyramid. Under this philosophy a department wide pricing policy can be understood and utilized universally throughout the different program areas and staff.

The recreation program pyramid sorting system is an extremely important methodology within the *PROS Plan*. It formulates the future program offerings, philosophy, pricing, and cost recovery. Core program areas and ancillary program areas are identified. The public can be educated as to the philosophy and methodology of pricing and direct cost increases in the future. Based on all the information gathered through the program analysis, several opportunities for additional programming are identified that the Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department can explore.

These topics are covered in detail in the following sections:

- Existing recreation programs
- Alternative providers
- Public input on recreation programs
- Recreation program pyramid development
- Conclusions



EXISTING RECREATION PROGRAMS

Additional information on the Recreation Programs can be found in Appendices G: Alternative Providers and H: Recreation Inventory Matrix.

A review of programs offered by Shoreline as well as recreation providers in the nearby area was conducted as part of the planning process. As is typical of most community recreation programs, Shoreline offers a variety of activities to residents as well as those in nearby communities. A review of the current recreation program helps determine the viability and success level of each program area. The inventory of existing programs is categorized and analyzed as to the marketability, pricing, cost per participant, community support, and locations offered. It is important to identify the program areas and organize them into the recreation program and pricing pyramid to determine the benefit level of the program.

The City of Shoreline has been offering a variety of recreation programs to the community and nearby residents since incorporation. Indoor program locations include the Shoreline Pool, Richmond Highlands Recreation Center, Spartan Gym, community schools, Shoreline Center, and Shoreline Community College. City parks as well as community school properties are heavily utilized for outdoor activities.

The major program areas include:

- **General Recreation Programs** providing classes, developmentally disabled programs, and special interest workshops;
- **Aquatics Programs** providing a variety of classes and programs at the Shoreline swimming pool;
- **Facilities** providing oversight of athletic fields, picnic shelters and recreation center rentals;
- **Teen Programs** providing specialized programs and events for the area's teen population; and
- **Cultural and Community Services and Events** providing family programs and special events throughout the year, and financial support to the Shoreline Lake Forest Park Arts Council and the Shoreline Historical Museum.



Examples of programs available through the department include teen after-school activities, groups for girls, weekend events, trips, and many others for young adults. Aquatic activities range from youth and adult swim lessons to diving instruction, lifeguard and water safety instructor training, lap swim, recreational swim, and water aerobics.

Adult programs cover a wide variety of topics – fitness, cooking, art, dance, martial arts, athletics, special interest, and many others. Youth programs also cover a broad scope of day camps, sports camps, special interest, dance, art, and music as well as numerous preschool/toddler programs. One of the more unique markets Shoreline serves is adults with developmental disabilities and special needs. Activities include a daytime adult program, arts, trips, drop-in daytime, fitness, and many others.

Relative to youth athletics, the department focuses primarily on providing facilities to an assortment of nonprofit entities and supporting their efforts. In addition, various swim groups use the Shoreline Pool for practices and competition. Both the City of Shoreline and several nonprofit entities provide adult athletics.



ALTERNATIVE PROVIDERS

Additional information on the Recreation Programs can be found in Appendix G: Alternative Providers.

There are a number of recreation program providers in Shoreline and nearby communities. Various communities, nonprofit agencies, and private businesses provided information about their recreation programs. A detailed summary and program matrix are provided in the appendix and a brief overview follows.

An inventory of the other service providers within the Shoreline market area and the programs offered helps determine the service gaps as well as the recreational program duplication that exists. Identifying the different niche markets of the other service providers can be compared to the target market for the programs offered by the Recreation Division.

The Shoreline-Lake Forest Park Arts Council provides a variety of cultural service programs and events in the community. The Arts Council has also acquired a portable stage to provide a venue for community concerts in the parks. The Shoreline Historical Museum provides museum programs and services to the community. Both nonprofits receive significant financial support from the City to fund basic services. In addition, the Shoreline-Lake Forest Park Senior Center, another nonprofit organization, is located at the Shoreline Center and provides recreation programs, health and social services for elder citizens in the community. The Senior Center receives financial support from the City to provide these services.

The Shoreline/South County Family YMCA offers programs similar to those provided by the Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department, yet each filling unique niches. The nearby communities of Mountlake Terrace and Lynnwood have community centers with indoor aquatics, gymnasium, fitness area, meeting rooms, etc. The Frances Anderson Cultural and Leisure Center in Edmonds offers programs in fitness, art and special interests. The main King County programming facilities include swimming pools where the county offers recreational swimming, lap swim, fitness swimming and instructional programs. Shoreline Community College offers fitness programs as well as educational activities in the areas of cooking, visual arts, etc., with a major focus on continuing education. The Fircrest Pool offers public swim lessons and therapeutic swim opportunities.

Programs similar to those offered by Shoreline are also available through private organizations such as health and fitness clubs, dance and gymnastics clubs.



A Community Attitude and Interest Survey was conducted to determine the community support for different program areas. The results are very important as they can be utilized to validate the program offerings for the Recreation Division. Past and current program participants responded as well as non-users. This helps determine what patrons like and why some of the public does not participate in programs offered by the Recreation Division.

PUBLIC INPUT ON RECREATION PROGRAMS

Additional information on the public participation in recreation programs can be found in Chapter 5: Community Participation.

Citizens responding to the Community Attitude and Interest Survey provided input regarding participation in current programs and interest in potential future programs. Almost a quarter of respondents (23%), have participated in a program offered by the City during the past twelve months. Furthermore, a major portion of those participants rated programs as excellent (49%) or good (45%), which compares favorably to the national average where 30% rated programs as excellent and 55% rated them as good.

Survey respondents indicated the programs and activities they participate in most often, the mean number of household respondents participating, and activities they would participate in more often if programming were available. While the top two participatory activities as well as several others are only indirectly related to programs, quite a few programmable activities involved high levels of participation. Table 7.1 summarizes these survey responses.

Key program facilities rated first, second, third or fourth most important by survey respondents included indoor swimming pools (22%), cultural facilities (11%), outdoor swimming pools/water parks (10%), indoor exercise and fitness facilities (10%), museums (9%), soccer fields (9%), youth baseball and softball fields (7%), outdoor theater (6%), outdoor tennis courts (4%), indoor gymnasiums (4%), meeting space/conference center (3%), adult baseball and softball fields (3%), and teen center (3%).

Additionally, 91% of survey respondents indicated that providing programs for residents of all ages and families was a very important (72%) or somewhat important (19%) function of the Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department. When asked to identify the three most important functions, providing programs for residents of all ages



PUBLIC INPUT ON RECREATION PROGRAMS

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and families received the third highest number of important ratings behind preserving the environment and providing open space, and operating and maintaining city parks and facilities.

Table 7.1: Program Opportunities based on Survey Results

Programs and Activities	Currently Participate at Least Once/Month	Mean # of HH Respondents Participating	Would Participate in More Often
Running or walking	95%	2.03	38%
Visiting nature areas/spending time outdoors	88%	2.18	30%
Youth soccer	83%	1.10	5%
Youth baseball or softball	82%	1.10	4%
Adult fitness/aerobics classes & weight training	81%	1.37	13%
Bicycling	80%	1.62	16%
Using gyms for basketball or volleyball	74%	1.18	7%
Inline skating/rollerblading/skateboarding	74%	1.14	5%
Swimming for exercise/water fitness classes	72%	1.24	13%
Going to the beach/Puget Sound	72%	2.38	26%
Recreational swim/swim lessons	71%	1.56	14%
Adult softball or baseball	71%	1.07	3%
Boating/sailing/kayaking	66%	1.32	9%
Adult soccer	66%	1.01	2%
Fishing	64%	1.24	5%
Senior citizen programs	60%	1.06	7%
Youth classes	60%	1.05	3%
Competitive swimming	59%	0.96	1%
Summer camp programs	56%	1.06	3%
Tennis	54%	1.15	5%
Adult classes	53%	1.09	11%
Participating in theater, dance and visual arts	51%	1.15	7%
Ice skating/hockey	39%	1.15	3%
Attending live theater/concert performances	36%	1.67	17%
Attending community special events	29%	1.70	12%



The recreation program pyramid system was developed by GreenPlay, LLC and is utilized to assist recreation departments to determine the level of tax support and user fees appropriate for the different program areas offered. The pyramid is customized for the Shoreline Plan based on the consensus of the Recreation Department in terms of benefits to the community as well as individual participants. The sorting of programs and placement into the five different levels of the pyramid can be adjusted based on community values and perceptions. The recreation pricing pyramid is extremely important as it standardizes the pricing process and creates equity within each program area based on the individual gain from the program.

RECREATION PROGRAM PYRAMID DEVELOPMENT

Additional information on the Recreation Program Pyramid can be found in Appendix XX.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

As part of the *PROS* planning process, recreation staff participated in three workshops to develop a program philosophy with the key outcomes of:

- Understanding the structure of a program philosophy pyramid model,*
- Learning how the City of Shoreline's philosophy will be based on the agency's mission,*
- Determining the characteristics of the various levels of the program pyramid,*
- Discovering objective ways to determine if existing and new programs are aligned with the mission.*

DEPARTMENTAL MISSION

The Departmental mission statement provides the foundation for program planning:

To provide life-enhancing experiences and promote a healthy community.

This is achieved through:

- Stewardship of our parks, facilities and open spaces*
- Recreational programs for all ages and abilities*



BENEFITS FILTER

Beyond the mission, understanding who benefits from a program provides a critical starting point for developing a program philosophy. The benefits filter was discussed first as a continuum and then in the Program Philosophy Pyramid model shown in Figure 7.1.

It is often easier to integrate the values of the organization with its mission if they can be visualized. An ideal philosophical model for this purpose is the pyramid. Parks and recreation programs are built with a broad supporting base of core services, enhanced with more specialized services as resources allow.

Conceptually, the foundational level of the pyramid represents the mainstay of a public parks and recreation program. Programs appropriate to higher levels of the pyramid should only be offered when the preceding levels are full enough to provide a foundation for the next level. This foundation and upward progression is intended to represent the public parks and recreation core mission, while also reflecting the growth and maturity of an organization as it enhances its program and facility offerings.

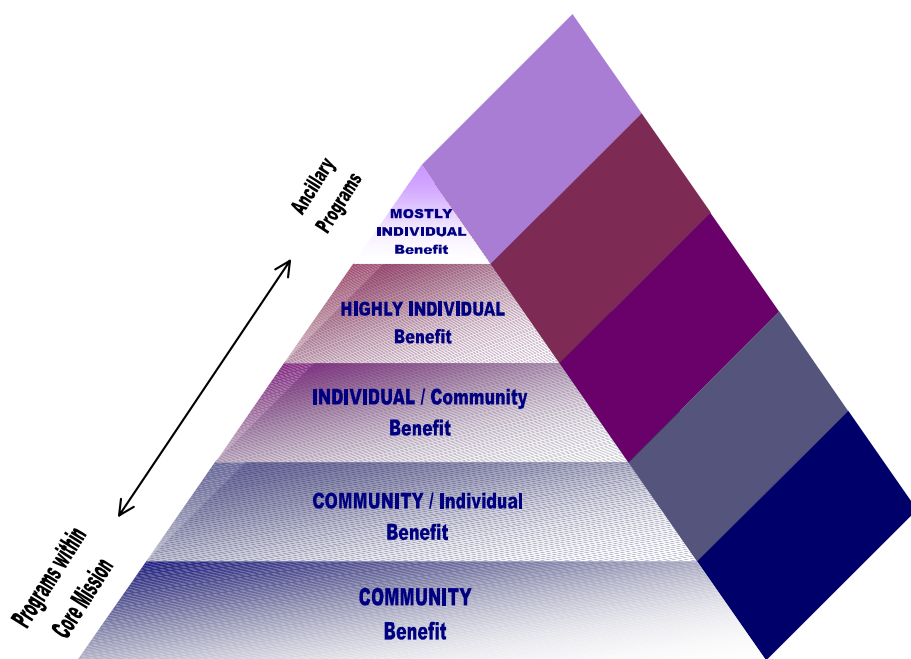
The pyramid is sectioned horizontally into five levels:

Level 1: Community Benefit

Based on the mission of the Department, the foundational level of the pyramid represents programs, facilities and services that have a high level of Shoreline community benefit with a much smaller degree of individual benefit. Examples of these services could include the ability of youth and seniors to attend a senior or teen center, low income or scholarship programs

Level 2: Community/Individual Benefit

The second and a smaller level of the pyramid represents programs, facilities and services that promote individual physical and mental well-being, and provide recreation skill development. They are generally the more traditionally expected services and beginner instructional levels. These programs, services and facilities are typically assigned fees based on a specified percentage of direct and indirect costs. These costs are partially offset by both a tax subsidy to account for the Shoreline community benefit and participant



fees to account for the individual benefit. Examples of these services could include the ability of youth to participate in beginning swim lessons as well as other beginning level instructional programs and classes.

Level 3: Individual/Community Benefit

The third and even smaller level of the pyramid represents services that are not as closely aligned with the Department Mission, promoting individual physical and mental well-being, and providing an intermediate level of recreational skill development. This level provides more individual benefit and less Shoreline community benefit and is typically priced to reflect this. The individual fee is higher than for programs and services that fall within the lower levels of the pyramid. Examples of these services could include summer recreational day camp and picnic shelter reservations.

Level 4: Mostly Individual Benefit

The fourth and even smaller level of the pyramid represents specialized services generally for specific groups, and may have a competitive focus. Here again, these programs have



a much higher level of individual benefit, and are not as closely aligned with the PRCS mission. Examples of these services could include specialty classes, adult outdoor adventure programs, and highly competitive youth athletic leagues.

Level 5: Highly Individual Benefit

Stretching to the top, the fifth and smallest level of the pyramid represents activities that have a profit center potential, and may even fall outside of the core mission. In this level, programs and services may be priced to recover full cost plus a designated profit percentage. Examples of these activities could include concert series, food concession, company picnic rentals and other facility rentals.

DISCUSSION OF OTHER FILTERS

Inherent in sorting programs into the pyramid model using the benefits filter is the realization that other filters come into play. Combining the additional filters with the benefits and mission filters provides a more in-depth understanding regarding where to place programs within the pyramid. These filters also follow a continuum form; however do not necessarily follow the five levels like the benefits filter. In other words, the continuum may fall totally within the first two levels of the pyramid. These filters can aid in determining core programs versus ancillary programs. These filters represent a layering effect and should be used to make adjustments to an initial placement in the pyramid.

Obligation Filter: Is it the role of Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department to provide service? Is it legally mandated?

Service Population Filter: Is Shoreline Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department targeting certain populations based on its obligation?

Marketing Filter: What is the effect of the program in attracting customers?

Trends Filter: Is the program or service tried and true, or is it a fad?



Relative Cost to Provide Filter: What is the cost per participant?

Commitment Filter: What is the intensity of the program? What is the commitment of the participant?

Environmental Impact Filter: What is the impact to the resource or other visitors?

Political Filter: What is out of our control?

This filter does not operate on a continuum, but is a reality, and will dictate from time to time where certain programs fit in the pyramid.

PROGRAM SORTING

Shoreline's existing program areas are sorted and placed in the five different benefit categories based on the recreation program pyramid process. Each level is described below. Table 7.4 lists the program areas along with the number of current participants and the revenue produced by the program. It is important to determine the benefits for each program level to justify the price to the participant as well as the tax subsidy involved in each program area. The pricing trend is to educate the public as to what their tax-dollars support and what user fees support.

Level Five

Only one program, swim and dive teams, falls into the top tier of the pyramid, which is differentiated as having the highest individual benefit. The swim and dive team generated almost \$15,000 in 2003 with over 200 participants.

Level Four

Very few program categories were classified in the fourth level, which is generally characterized as having highly individual benefits. These program categories – adult dance, diving lessons, adult special interest, and youth special interest – involved slightly more than 350 participants, which generated almost \$12,000.



Level Three

The middle layer of the pyramid, generally characterized by more individual benefit and less community benefit, is where the majority of Department programs were grouped. These programs ranged from adult athletics, general instruction, and health and fitness classes to various youth instructional and general interest activities. Including team members, over 18,000 people participated in these programs, which generated over \$200,000 in revenue. At this level, these programs are moderately aligned with the core mission of the department.

Level Two

A larger number of program categories were sorted into level two of the pyramid – some community/some individual benefit:

- Swim lessons – preschool, youth and adult
- Youth summer playground
- Youth skills (babysitting, self-defense, etc.)
- Water safety/lifeguard course
- Special recreation drop-in
- Youth drop-in gym/weight room
- Special memories summer playground

Over 6,000 people participated in these programs, which generated over \$140,000 revenue in 2003.

Level One

Only two programs were placed in the foundational level of the pyramid – benefits community as a whole. Both the teen after school programs and teen late night programs generally benefit the community as a whole, and were considered to have the greatest alignment with the Departmental mission. In 2003, registrations in these teen programs exceeded 10,000 while the direct revenue generated was zero. In the case of these programs, the Department determined, in part, that the community should bear the cost of these programs through tax subsidy.



Table 7.2: Program Category Sorted by Level

Program Category	Pyramid Level	Number of Registrants	Revenue	
Swim & Dive Teams	5	213	\$ 14,987.83	
Adult Dance	4	194	\$ 8,730.00	
Diving Lessons		77	\$ 1,286.00	
Adult Special Interest		61	\$ 1,055.00	
Youth Special Interest		26	\$ 922.00	
Adult Athletic Leagues	3	103	\$ 47,295.00	
Adult Health & Fitness		633	\$ 20,037.23	
Dog Obedience		245	\$ 18,760.36	
Adult Drop-in Sports		6,566	\$ 13846.92	
Preschool Sports		303	\$ 13,061.50	
Youth Summer Camps		267	\$ 12,871.60	
Indoor Playground		6,912	\$ 11,365.00	
Youth Dance/Music		328	\$ 11,342.00	
Teen Trips		200	\$ 9,770.00	
Spec. Rec. - Adult Community Choices		80	\$ 8,585.00	
Preschool Dance/Music		219	\$ 7,862.50	
Youth Gymnastics		66	\$ 5,385.00	
Spec. Rec. Classes		109	\$ 4,112.00	
Youth Art		138	\$ 3,847.00	
Martial Arts/Self-defense		113	\$ 3,608.00	
Spec. Rec. - Creative Arts for Life		79	\$ 2,831.00	
Preschool Art		89	\$ 2,232.00	
Spec. Rec. - Trips		128	\$ 2,041.00	
Preschool Playground (Summer)		62	\$ 1,545.00	
Teen Classes		42	\$ 1,210.00	
Family Sports Lessons		16	\$ 325.00	
Special Olympics Teams		47	\$ -	
Teen Special Events		Many	0	
Swim Lessons - Youth		2	2,213	\$ 56,585.10
Swim Lessons - Preschool			1,490	\$ 42,356.29
Youth Summer Playground			525	\$ 22,010.00
Youth Skills Training (Babysitter's training, self-defense, etc.)	132		\$ 9,578.00	
Water Safety/Lifeguard Courses	40		\$ 4,637.00	
Swim Lessons - Adult	93		\$ 3,313.18	
Spec. Rec. Drop-in	613		\$ 2,877.20	
Youth Drop-in Gym/Weight Room	1,077		\$ 990.84	
Special Memories Summer Playground Prog.	12		\$ 435.00	
Teen After School Programs	1		989	0
Teen Late Night Programs (this includes the Rec after school)		9,153	0	
TOTALS		33,653	\$371,696*	

* Represents approximately 50% of revenue generating programs offered.



COST RECOVERY/ TAX SUBSIDY

In utilizing the program pyramid as a foundation, it is crucial that this program sorting process be augmented by the creation of a pricing philosophy that guides fee policies. Shoreline has developed the following pricing generalities, and will be fine-tuning them as part of the *PROS* action plan.

- Programs at the foundational level (Level 1) with the greatest community benefit are typically those offered to residents at minimal or no fee. A large percentage of the tax support from the City of Shoreline should fund programs categorized in this level;
- Both Shoreline taxes and participant fees should generally support programs within the second level (some community and some individual benefit);
- Third level programs, with more individual benefit, should be priced by the Department to reflect the lower community benefit. In other words, the tax subsidy is lower with a corresponding increase in the participant fees;
- Programs that are categorized in the fourth level have an even higher degree of individual benefit and Shoreline pricing should reflect greater cost recovery if not additional revenue beyond direct costs and possibly even indirect costs; and
- Finally, programs that fall within the top of the pyramid have the highest individual benefit and lowest community benefit. Shoreline programs in this level should be priced to recover full costs (direct and indirect) plus additional profit.

FINAL OUTCOMES

The Action Plan and Implementation Strategies, in Chapter 8, outline the specific steps that Shoreline will take over the next several months. The development of a program philosophy and pricing philosophy will focus on the following general accomplishments for guiding recreation programming within the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Department.

- Complete sorting and filtering of remaining recreation programs and services;
- Develop a mission statement specific to recreation programming utilizing the Department mission and



findings from these program pyramid exercises as the foundation;

- Develop a program pricing philosophy and policy;
- Develop pricing policies associated with the major program categories and pyramid levels; and
- Evaluate and revise the implementation progress of the strategic plan and pricing pyramid.

Completing this process will help the Department establish board and council “buy-in” for program offerings, keep policies from straying or having unintended consequences, provide a foundation for program offerings, and help staff meet the agency mission.

RECREATION PROGRAM CONCLUSIONS

Based on the insight gathered through the community outreach, identification of comparable providers, review of recreation trends, and program pyramid exercise, Shoreline has opportunities in several areas, which were utilized in developing the PRCS Goals and Policies and are summarized below.

- Fitness for youth, adults and seniors particularly those targeting seniors such as Silver Sneakers, aqua fitness, weight training, etc.;
- Adult athletics particularly for activities not provided by nonprofits as well as supporting nonprofit entities;
- Environmental education;
- Walking for fitness especially for seniors;
- Swimming for exercise and water fitness classes;
- Swim lessons and recreational swim;
- Instructional classes in sailing and kayaking;
- Various adult classes based on current needs and trends;
- Theater and concert performances; and
- Programs for youth and families.

However, the environment within the City is such that the cost recovery for the department will likely be required to increase as programs expand. If this occurs, it will be imperative that the department focuses on the foundation it has developed through aligning programs.



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