

# Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Community Needs Assessment

## I. Introduction of the Planning Context

### A. Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this project is to provide an understanding of the City of Waukesha’s community needs, attitudes, interests, and priorities related to parks, recreation, and forestry. Previous needs and satisfaction surveys were conducted in 2006 and 2010, and as such, much of the information is no longer accurate. The City hired GreenPlay, LLC, a nationally renowned park and recreation management consulting firm who teamed with RRC Associates, a leading survey research firm, to lead this important planning process. The public was engaged through a series of focus group and stakeholder meetings which aided in the strategic development of questions for a comprehensive statistically-valid survey. The results of this project will support planning for policy making and management decision making. The overall goal of the study was to develop a set of areas of focus and action steps that will allow the City of Waukesha Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department (WPRF) to continue to improve how it provides park, recreation, and forestry services and programs to residents and visitors.

### B. Parks and Recreation Department Overview

The City of Waukesha is home to approximately 70,000 people. WPRF provides park, recreation, and forestry facilities, services, and programs for the residents of Waukesha. The Department has many diverse parks and recreation opportunities for its residents, including 49 parks encompassing 1,124 acres, three community centers, two outdoor pools, and a variety of facilities and programs. The Department takes great pride in its customer service and maintenance of facilities and parks.

The mission of the Department is “to be responsive and committed in providing essential park, recreation and urban forestry services making our community a desirable place to live, work and play.” The Vision Statement is “Gold Medal” services...exceptional quality of life!

The Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department has been designated a NRPA Gold Medal and CAPRA accredited agency.

### C. Methodology of this Planning Process

GreenPlay, along with RRC Associates, led the City of Waukesha Park, Recreation, and Forestry Department’s Community Needs Assessment. The process was inclusive of all members of the community, and the public was given many opportunities to participate through Focus Groups, Stakeholder Meetings, Public Meetings, an Invitation Survey, and an Open Link Survey. A detailed Market Assessment looking at Demographics and Trends was completed. The project provided an understanding of the community’s needs, attitudes, interests, and priorities, and the results will aid the City in planning for policy making and management decision making.

### **Project Coordination, Strategic Kick-Off, and Determination of Critical Success Factors**

- Strategic Kick Off
- Critical Success Factors identified

### **Public and Stakeholder Engagement**

- Staff Focus Group Meeting
- Public Focus Group and Stakeholder Meetings
- Park and Rec Board Meeting
- Open Public Forum

### **Statistically-Valid Communitywide Survey**

- Invitation Survey and Online Open Link Survey

### **Market Assessment**

- Demographics and Population Projections
- Trends Analysis
- Potential Program Analysis

### **Final Plan, Presentations, and Deliverables**

- Results of the Public Input Process
- Results of the Statistically-Valid Survey
- Presentation of the final plan