

Additional Information

Agenda Item #	1
Meeting Date	July 30, 2008
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Approved By	

Discussion Item	Recreational Programming and Associated Council Policies
Background	<p>At the worksession on July 30, 2008, the City Council will have the opportunity to discuss and provide direction on policy matters related to recreational programming, including the desired cost recovery rate.</p> <p>As mentioned in the original cover sheet for this agenda item, a prior Council established a cost recovery policy that provided for a City subsidy of youth and senior recreational programs. This policy has served as the guideline for City staff since that time.</p> <p>Staff thought it might be helpful to delineate how this general policy has affected program pricing in most instances, as summarized below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The City generally doesn't charge for programs geared specifically to teens or seniors. 2) Pricing for programs that serve children in the community, especially afterschool care, are on the lower side of market rates. Scholarships are offered to qualifying City residents. 3) Classes geared towards adults (such as art, dance, fitness, etc). are priced to be affordable but to break even or make a surplus. <p>On occasion, exceptions may be made to these general guidelines to test pilot programs or as a marketing tool to draw in new customers. The cost of comparable or similar programs offered by the County or private entities also affects pricing decisions.</p> <p>In 2007, the City conducted a resident survey. Respondents had an opportunity to provide feedback on a variety of City services, including recreational programming and facilities. Relevant excerpts from the resident survey are included.</p>
Policy	The City Council is the policymaking making body for the City of Takoma Park.
Fiscal Impact	None
Attachments	Excerpts from 2007 Resident Survey
Recommendation	Consider the information provided by staff
Special Consideration	

Individual Services

Residents receiving the survey were presented a list of 31 services provided by the City to rate as either “excellent,” “good,” “fair” or “poor.” Overall, service quality was viewed favorably, and most services were rated as either “excellent” or “good” by a majority of those surveyed. Trash collection and recycling services were rated the highest; 42% and 37% (respectively) thought these services were “excellent.” Street lighting, property maintenance code enforcement, and street repairs and maintenance received the lowest marks (16%, 21% and 19%, respectively, rated them as “poor”).

Ratings were converted to the 100-point scale for ease of comparison; average ratings ranged from 76 to 45. Seven of the 31 services had average ratings of “good” or higher (67 on the 100-point scale). The remaining services were between “good” (67) and “fair” (33).

Comparisons to Communities Across the Country

Normative comparisons were available for 19 of the services: 12 were above the norm, four were similar to the norm and three were below the norm. This comparison provides a way to gauge average ratings. For example, street repairs and maintenance received the lowest average rating (45), but when comparing this rating to those from other communities, Takoma Park can see that this rating is similar all across the country. Additionally, while Takoma Park Library collections (58) was rated higher than street repairs, this rating was lower than the average reported for library collection in other jurisdictions.

Table 6: Quality of City Services

Please rate each of the following City services.	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Average rating (0 = poor, 100 = excellent)	Comparison of Takoma Park Rating to Norm
Trash collection	42%	46%	11%	1%	100%	76	Above the norm
Recycling services	37%	43%	14%	6%	100%	70	Above the norm
Takoma Park Library programs	27%	53%	17%	3%	100%	68	NA
→ Accessibility of parks, recreation centers and facilities*	27%	53%	16%	5%	100%	67	NA
Arts and cultural events*	26%	52%	19%	3%	100%	67	Above the norm
→ Recreational programs*	24%	53%	17%	6%	100%	65	Above the norm
Appearance of City buildings	22%	55%	20%	3%	100%	65	Above the norm
Leaf pick-up	27%	45%	23%	5%	100%	64	NA
→ The variety of recreational programs offered (classes with staff instruction or supervision)*	22%	54%	18%	7%	100%	64	Above the norm
Computer Learning Center*	25%	48%	24%	4%	100%	64	NA

	Annual computer and electronics recycling drop-off*	26%	46%	20%	8%	100%	63	NA
→	Services for youth*	22%	49%	21%	8%	100%	62	Above the norm
→	Athletic fields and playgrounds*	17%	54%	22%	7%	100%	60	NA
	Safety of parks, recreation centers and facilities*	18%	49%	28%	5%	100%	60	NA
→	Services for seniors*	20%	48%	24%	8%	100%	60	Above the norm
→	Recreation centers*	17%	53%	22%	9%	100%	59	Similar to the norm
→	Range of activities available in parks, recreation centers and facilities*	16%	53%	24%	7%	100%	59	NA
	Enforcement of parking regulations*	14%	56%	22%	8%	100%	59	Above the norm
	Snow and ice removal	18%	46%	27%	9%	100%	58	Above the norm
	Street sign maintenance	13%	54%	25%	7%	100%	58	NA
	Takoma Park Library collections*	19%	45%	31%	6%	100%	58	Below the norm
	City's Web site (www.takomaparkmd.gov)*	13%	51%	30%	6%	100%	57	Similar to the norm
	Stormwater management*	13%	52%	24%	11%	100%	56	Above the norm
	Street sweeping	15%	45%	29%	11%	100%	55	Above the norm
	Landlord and tenant assistance*	16%	47%	22%	15%	100%	55	NA
	Enforcement of traffic laws	11%	53%	24%	12%	100%	54	Similar to the norm
	Tree maintenance*	16%	41%	31%	13%	100%	53	NA
	Quality of programming on the City's cable channel (City TV-13)*	12%	42%	32%	14%	100%	51	Below the norm
	Street lighting	10%	41%	33%	16%	100%	48	Below the norm
	Property maintenance code enforcement*	12%	39%	27%	21%	100%	48	NA
	Street repairs and maintenance	9%	36%	36%	19%	100%	45	Similar to the norm

*More than 20% of respondents reported "don't know."

Takoma Park Facilities and Events

The City provides various facilities and events for the public such as the library and the community center. Residents completing the survey were asked how often they, or a member of their household, had used or attended one of these facilities or events in the last 12 months. The highest number of respondents reported using the Takoma Park Library to read or to use Wi-Fi connections; 54% reported doing this at least once. Less than half reported doing any of the remaining activities in the last 12 months. The fewest respondents reported using the New Hampshire Avenue recreation center; just 14% reported using it in the last 12 months.

Table 16: Use of and Attendance at Takoma Park Facilities

In the last 12 months, about how many times have you or other household members done the following things:	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times	Total
Used the Takoma Park Library to read or to use Wi-Fi connections	46%	21%	17%	9%	7%	100%
→ Used the Takoma Park Community Center (Maple Avenue)	55%	23%	14%	5%	3%	100%
Attended a meeting at the Community Center	69%	20%	9%	2%	0%	100%
→ Participated in a Takoma Park Recreation program	72%	15%	8%	3%	2%	100%
Attended an event at the Takoma Park Library	74%	17%	7%	2%	1%	100%
Used a public computer at the Takoma Park Library or in the Computer Center	75%	12%	8%	3%	2%	100%
→ Used the New Hampshire Avenue recreation center	86%	9%	3%	1%	1%	100%

In order to measure what information residents are getting enough of, not enough of or too much of, the survey had residents rate the level of information they received about various government functions or activities. For the most part residents were pleased with the amount of information they were receiving, with half or more reporting they received the “right amount” of information. Less than 5% of survey respondents reported they received “too much” information on any of the functions or activities. Development and construction projects were the activities that the highest number of residents felt like they received “not enough” information about.

Table 19: Available Information for City Government Functions or Activities

Please indicate whether you think you receive enough information about each of the following City of Takoma Park government functions or activities:	Not enough information	About the right amount of information	Too much information	Total
→ Recreation Department activities	17%	80%	2%	100%
Special events	23%	75%	2%	100%
Leaf collection program	26%	72%	2%	100%
Holiday trash and recycling collections schedule	32%	67%	1%	100%
Landlord and tenant assistance	30%	66%	4%	100%
Board and Commission opportunities and activities	33%	64%	2%	100%
City Council actions	37%	62%	2%	100%
Tree removal and tree protection requirements	36%	62%	2%	100%
City of Takoma Park budget information	40%	58%	2%	100%
Affordable housing program	41%	55%	4%	100%
Development projects in your neighborhood and in the City	46%	52%	1%	100%
Construction projects	50%	48%	2%	100%

Use of Takoma Park Facilities by Age, Gender and Race

In the last 12 months, about how many times have you or other household members done the following things:	Respondent's Age				Respondent's Gender			Respondent's Race			
	18 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55+ years	Overall	Female	Male	Overall	White	Black or African American	Other	Overall
→ Used the New Hampshire Avenue recreation center	10%	16%	13%	14%	12%	16%	14%	8%	23%	12%	13%
→ Used the Takoma Park Community Center (Maple Avenue)	38%	51%	42%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%	49%	45%
Attended a meeting at the Community Center	17%	34%	36%	32%	30%	34%	32%	31%	31%	35%	32%
→ Participated in a Takoma Park Recreation program	18%	32%	28%	28%	29%	26%	28%	26%	32%	29%	28%
Used the Takoma Park Library to read or to use Wi-Fi connections	54%	56%	51%	54%	55%	51%	54%	52%	56%	65%	54%
Attended an event at the Takoma Park Library	23%	34%	19%	26%	26%	26%	26%	27%	22%	34%	26%
Used a public computer at the Takoma Park Library or in the Computer Center	25%	26%	24%	25%	24%	27%	25%	18%	36%	37%	25%

Percent of respondents reporting using at least once

Use of Takoma Park Facilities by Tenure and Income

In the last 12 months, about how many times have you or other household members done the following things:	Respondent's Tenure			Respondent's Household Income				
	Rent	Own	Overall	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 or more	Overall
→ Used the New Hampshire Avenue recreation center	13%	14%	14%	12%	15%	15%	13%	14%
→ Used the Takoma Park Community Center (Maple Avenue)	42%	49%	45%	35%	48%	44%	49%	45%
Attended a meeting at the Community Center	22%	41%	31%	21%	28%	29%	43%	32%
→ Participated in a Takoma Park Recreation program	24%	32%	28%	20%	26%	33%	31%	28%
Used the Takoma Park Library to read or to use Wi-Fi connections	53%	55%	54%	50%	57%	51%	56%	54%
Attended an event at the Takoma Park Library	22%	31%	26%	20%	26%	24%	34%	27%
Used a public computer at the Takoma Park Library or in the Computer Center	32%	18%	25%	34%	32%	23%	17%	26%

Percent of respondents reporting using at least once

Effectiveness of Deterring Crime by Tenure and Income

How effective do you believe the City of Takoma Park's crime prevention programs and community-oriented policing programs are in deterring crime?	Respondent's Tenure			Respondent's Household Income				
	Rent	Own	Overall	Less than \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 or more	Overall
Very effective	26%	12%	19%	44%	25%	11%	6%	19%
Somewhat effective	61%	60%	61%	46%	56%	72%	63%	61%
Not very effective	10%	23%	17%	7%	17%	13%	25%	17%
Not at all effective	3%	5%	4%	3%	2%	4%	6%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Use of Takoma Park Facilities by Ward

In the last 12 months, about how many times have you or other household members done the following things:	Respondent's Ward						Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	
Used the New Hampshire Avenue recreation center	8%	13%	11%	11%	6%	34%	14%
Used the Takoma Park Community Center (Maple Avenue)	54%	47%	51%	54%	36%	30%	45%
Attended a meeting at the Community Center	40%	39%	30%	32%	23%	27%	32%
Participated in a Takoma Park Recreation program	28%	32%	37%	28%	22%	22%	28%
Used the Takoma Park Library to read or to use Wi-Fi connections	59%	56%	56%	58%	41%	53%	54%
Attended an event at the Takoma Park Library	31%	28%	33%	34%	13%	20%	27%
Used a public computer at the Takoma Park Library or in the Computer Center	21%	16%	23%	45%	21%	26%	25%

Percent of respondents reporting using at least once

Effectiveness of Deterring Crime by Ward

How effective do you believe the City of Takoma Park's crime prevention programs and community-oriented policing programs are in deterring crime?	Respondent's Ward						Overall
	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	
Very effective	17%	15%	15%	22%	18%	24%	19%
Somewhat effective	57%	66%	58%	64%	72%	51%	61%
Not very effective	20%	14%	23%	13%	6%	19%	16%
Not at all effective	6%	5%	3%	1%	4%	6%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%