

YOUTH AND FAMILY RECREATION SERVICES

Service Description

Youth and Family Recreation Services (YFRS) includes recreational and educational programs for children, teens, adults and families via outdoor/environmental activities, preschool education, out-of-school programs, free summer playground sites, seasonal camp programs, challenge course facilitation, visual and performing arts, and peer-managed alternatives to the juvenile justice system.

YFRS provides diverse, neighborhood-based, city-wide and regional programs, events and services that are coordinated and supervised by staff at Amazon, Petersen Barn, River House and Sheldon Community Centers. The YFRS staff provides safe places and opportunities for growth and learning. The programs stimulate the development of positive attributes, resiliency, and social competencies. These essential prevention-based programs reflect values, skills and beliefs that youth and families need to fully engage with--and function in-- the world around them through healthy, fun and constructive use of time.

FY08 total expenditures for Youth and Family Services, all contained in the general fund, (including grants) are estimated to be \$3,913,324 (\$3,921,824 for all funds) with projected revenues of \$988,000 for a cost recovery rate of 25%. Total general fund authorized FTE for FY08 is 27.59.

Historic Perspective

- 1954 First preschool program began at Washington Center.
- 1967 Outdoor/Environmental program added to the Department.
- 1973 Youth Program Supervisors added to the Community Centers.
- 1982 First out-of-school recreational child care program started at Petersen Barn.
- 1989 Area's first challenge course opened at Emerald Valley Resort through public-private partnership.
- 1991 Entered into a partnership with Looking Glass Adolescent Recovery Program, providing recreation to Looking Glass clients.
- 1992 Significant increases in fee-recovery for services required by Ballot Measure 5.
- 1993 Entered into partnership with Lane County Housing Authority to provide recreation to teens in subsidized housing.
- 1994 Entered into an agreement with Eugene School District 4J to implement the School Enrichment Program (SEP).
- 1995 Spencer Butte Challenge Course opened.
- 1995 Council Goal adopted: Increase programs for youth and support for social services related to public safety and prevention.

- 1997 Bethel After School Happenings (BASH) program partnership established with School District 52 to provide out-of-school programs.
- 1998 Recreation Services made youth programs a top service priority per Council direction.
- 1999 Westmoreland Community Center leased to Boys and Girls Club.
- 2000 Development of a comprehensive youth program as one of the action priorities identified by Council as a "Safe Community" goal.
- 2000 Measure 20-37 passed, approving a \$3.5 million, two-year levy to meet identified out-of-school service gaps for youth, resulting in a 15-agency partnership.
- 2002 Four-year, local option levy 20-67 passed to support academic services in schools and fund out-of-school recreation services.
- 2003 YFRS fully adopts the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets.
- 2004 Measure 20-37 funding ends and 20-67 funding begins.
- 2005 YFRS in partnership with 4J receives a 3-year grant to improve the fitness of middle school youth.
- 2005 YFRS begins formal partnership to support NAACP's ACT-SO program.
- 2006 School District 4J partners with YFRS to provide recreation and enrichment services at 3 elementary schools as part of a 5-year 21st Century Learning Grant.
- 2006 Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Comprehensive Plan Project and Priority List adopted.
- 2007 Budget Committee reviews Youth and Family Services and affirms current programs and services approach.
- 2007 Measure 20-67 funding ends.
- 2007 YFRS places emphasis on "increasing our human connection to nature," through low-cost recreation and education for families and youth.
- 2007 YFRS joins larger community collaboration, the "Road to '08" in support of the Olympic Track & Field Trials to be hosted in 2008.

Citizen Involvement

- City Council provides policy direction, based on staff recommendations.
- Voters validate programs and funding through the election process, as in local option levies 20-37 (2000) and 20-67 (2004).
- Focus groups, volunteers, steering committees, youth patrons and community members provide formal and informal direction.
- Staff meets regularly with community partners and other service providers to identify gaps, address funding issues, encourage interagency collaboration, and eliminate barriers to service provision.

- The Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Comprehensive Plan provided significant public input that will shape services for 2 decades.

Customer Input

Feedback to facilitate service delivery adjustments is received from individuals, schools, community partners and agencies through surveys, evaluations, meetings and informal customer interaction.

Mission

Creating opportunities that inspire lifelong passion to imagine, explore, learn, grow and contribute.

Outcomes

- Contribute to the promotion of Eugene's neighborhoods as an essential and safe place to recreate.
- Connect diverse and/or marginalized communities by offering culturally-supportive, accessible and responsive recreational opportunities.
- Increase public safety through prevention-based programs to reduce criminal activity and other risk behaviors as a cost-savings alternative to the juvenile justice system.
- Empower youth and families to promote asset development through safe places, structured activities, healthy-start programs and opportunities to serve within the community.
- Provide opportunities that promote an individual's ability to plan, make healthy choices and constructively use discretionary time.
- Facilitate programs to encourage personal growth, promote health and wellness and connect youth, families and the community.
- Practice sustainability, alternative transportation and service projects that mitigate environmental impact.
- Engage youth and families in the benefits of outdoor recreation in parks, open spaces and natural areas.
- Provide opportunities for youth empowerment and leadership through employment and training.
- Assess and respond to identified recreational service gaps.

Operating Principles

- Benefits of Recreation: Emphasize the benefits and value of recreation services to individuals, families and the community. Utilize the 40 Developmental Assets model, as well as other best practices, to design, implement and evaluate programs.
- Customer Service: Provide high quality customer service.
- Diversity: View diversity as an asset. Prioritize diversity in staff and programs in response to changing individual and community needs. Maintain anti-bias principles of inclusion and respect for all.

- Safety: Train staff and create environments and programs that are physically and emotionally safe.
- Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Comprehensive Plan: Design and implement services based on the Community Needs Assessment findings in the PROS Comprehensive Plan
- Teamwork: Work together to accomplish service goals by contributing ideas, participating in decision making, and being supportive of one another.
- Relationships and Partnerships: YFRS success depends on developing and retaining positive relationships. Strong emphasis is placed on initiating, developing and maintaining effective collaborations with community partners and other service providers.

Current Operating Environment

External Trends

Youth Development

The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets have become a widely-accepted model in the United States for outcome-based programming to help youth grow up to be healthy, caring, and responsible. The key building blocks of the system--Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, Constructive Use of Time, Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity--provide YFRS staff an effective framework for program design and evaluation. The overall goal is to build on the strengths of our youth, increase their resiliency, and use youth as resources through volunteerism and employment.

Community Partnerships

Partnerships have become an integral part of YFRS service delivery, allowing the sharing of expertise, funding, staff, resources and advocacy. This allows YFRS to leverage capabilities to provide increased diversity and a greater number of services. The Recreation Division, through community events, makes significant contact with citizen leaders and partner organizations. Recreation has experienced an increase in requests from outside organizations to participate in their special events.

Declining Physical Fitness

There is an increase in obesity and lack of physical fitness in the United States, resulting in a national health crisis. Recreation departments, schools and social service agencies are called upon to provide more physical activity opportunities and nutrition education programs to address this public health epidemic.

Declining Engagement in Outdoor Activities

National Forests, National Parks, and State Parks are reporting a decline in visitors to the outdoors. Global warming and sustainability are issues that are

becoming more prominent. Today's youth and families are spending more time in front of computer and television screens and less time in nature. There is a nationwide movement to determine the consequences of these behavior changes, and to find new methods to attract youth and families to the benefits of outdoor recreation.

Inclusion Services Increase

The number of youth participants in YFRS programs requiring special accommodations due to behavioral, mental or physical disabilities has been growing at a high rate. As a result, there are greater financial and training requirements than in the past.

Community Expectations

- Local Option Levies 20-67 and 20-37 and grants created a recreation presence in schools, and generated additional expectations for the City to continue to provide out-of-school time and physical activity programs to youth.
- City of Eugene Budget Committee recognizes and praises the effort of YFRS in providing recreation for youth and families.
- The City's commitment to diversity and the changing demographics of our community has created an environment where YFRS staff prioritize issues of cross-cultural communication, cultural competency, diversity, and affordable services for all.
- Youth development is noted as a high priority to the community in the 2007 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive (PROS) Plan.
- More than 94% of Community Survey participants and 99% of Speaker Bureau participants in the PROS Comprehensive plan indicated that parks, recreation and natural areas are very important or important to Eugene's quality of life.
- Citizens recognize the value of partnerships and have increased expectations that the City will participate in inter-agency partnering and sharing of resources in order to provide efficient increases in service delivery.
- Recent community surveys indicate strong support for the following desired outcomes:
 - Youth Development
 - A Protected Environment
 - Cultural Diversity and Tolerance
 - A Sense of Community
 - Recreation Opportunities
 - The Arts

Key Demographics, Economic Statistics and Trends

- In 2006 Eugene had more than 30,400 youth under the age of 20.

- In 2006, an estimated 19% of Eugene's families with children under 18 years of age were below the U.S. poverty level.
- In 2006, Looking Glass (a YFRS community partner) served more than 1,100 homeless youth.
- In Lane County, more than 35% of school-age children are in child care.
- Eugene is increasing in diversity in all dimensions: ethnic, cultural, racial, socio-economic, and in the number of people with disabilities.
- Oregon has one of the highest levels of youth and adult obesity among the western states.
- Data from a 2006 "Oregon Healthy Teen Survey" indicates that a significant percentage of Lane County youth are frequent users of tobacco, marijuana and alcohol. Area 8th graders use alcohol at nearly twice the national average for their grade level.

Internal Conditions

2006 Comprehensive Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan

During 2006, significant public input was gathered regarding the provision of parks, recreation and open space opportunities. In addition, with the adoption of the project and priority list, the strategies and actions of the City's Library, Recreation and Cultural Services (LRCS) department can be designed to meet identified community priorities, goals and desired outcomes.

2008 Olympic Trials/Track Town, USA

The 2008 Olympic Trials are a great opportunity for YFRS to work with community partners and school districts to promote physical fitness, and track & field in its programs. Efforts to promote Eugene as Track Town, U.S.A. will continue to draw large events and create an environment where physical fitness and healthy lifestyles are a priority for our community.

Staff Development, Training and Retention

Highly qualified, trained and diverse leaders are fundamental to achieving program objectives. The increased expectation for significant program outcomes, combined with a temporary workforce, creates a greater need for staff training and improved compensation plans, which impact operating budgets. YFRS has 151 temporary employees and about a third of the group is under 21 years of age.

Facility Needs

The ability to expand program services in some neighborhoods is limited by available recreation facilities. The five aging Community Centers (Amazon, Petersen Barn, River House, Sheldon and Westmoreland) were established in the 60's and 70's when Eugene's population was less than half of the current level. The small number of facilities, locations, physical condition and inventory of amenities (gyms, classrooms, game rooms, fitness rooms, etc.) has not kept pace with Eugene's growth, increasing diversity and changing

recreational needs. In addition, central and southwest Eugene do not have full-functioning community centers serving their neighborhoods. Westmoreland Community Center has been leased to the Boys & Girls Club of Emerald Valley since 1999. Although it provides excellent service to youth club members, it does not provide recreation programs for other age groups.

Youth Program Focus

Based on City Council direction, for the past decade, Recreation Services has had a strong emphasis on providing youth programs. As a result, adults do not have the variety and range of City recreational services that are common in other, similar sized communities. Increased funding for adult and family participation would help YFRS achieve Youth Development objectives.

Performance Measures

Core Processes

Organize and manage before and after school recreational child care programs.

- Number of activities provided
- Number of registrants and attendees, by age
- Number of volunteer hours

Organize and manage enrichment activities and special events for youth, adults and families.

- Number of activities provided
- Number of registrants and attendees, by age
- Number of volunteer hours

Organize and manage outdoor/environmental recreational and educational activities.

- Number of activities provided
- Number of registrants and attendees, by age
- Number of volunteer hours

Organize and manage summer playground and camp programs.

- Number of activities provided
- Number of registrants and attendees, by age
- Number of volunteer hours

Organize and manage a peer-staffed, Teen Court program measuring:

- Number of cases
- Percentage of youth offenders that complete their contracts
- Number of volunteer hours

Provide meeting and gathering places for other City work units, the public and community partners measuring:

- Number of rentals
- Number of hours of rentals
- Number of rental attendees, by age

Total System Measures

Effectiveness

- Number of activities that occur
- Number of rentals that occur
- Number of rental hours
- Number of attendees, by age
- Number of programs that feature physical activity, fitness or health education

Efficiency

- Total YFRS cost per patron served
- Net YFRS cost per patron served
- Number of community partners
- Number of volunteer hours

Financial

- Percent of total (direct and indirect) YFRS budget recovered through revenues
- Percent of services directed at low income youth

Customer Satisfaction

- Percent of customers that are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with services

Strategy 1: Develop and maintain collaborative community, regional and national partnerships to: provide a wider variety of programs and activities to youth and families, share resources and expertise, and address other YFRS strategies.

Objective: Maintain or increase the number of community partners as listed in FY07.

Work Activities:

- Refine what a partnership means in Recreation, and verify the list of organizations in the final quarter of each fiscal year.
- Maintain a cooperative relationship and communication with partners to re-evaluate service delivery and opportunities.
- Seek additional partnerships and diverse funding opportunities for programs.
- Provide links to partner sites on Recreation Services' webpage.

Strategy 2: Become a key agency in the effort to help Eugene residents improve their level of physical activity and fitness.

Objective: Maintain or increase the number of YFRS services and programs that feature physical activity, fitness or health

education, compared to the number noted in the FY07 issues of the "Recreation Guide."

Work Activities:

- Develop a public information campaign that highlights physical activity and fitness programs available through Recreation Services.
- Develop programs and services that support the Summer 2008 Olympic Track & Field Trials.
- Maintain an association with the national "We Can" (Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition) initiative, and the LCHAY (Lane Coalition for Healthy Active Youth) local initiative.
- Incorporate more opportunities in youth programs for walking, running, active game playing and nutrition education.
- Train recreation leaders in the basic principles and benefits of physical activity and good nutrition.
- Maintain or expand the variety and number of fitness, dance, sports and wellness activities

Strategy 3: Reconnect people to nature, educating them on the developmental benefits of outdoor recreation, and increase their opportunity to recreate outdoors.

Objective: Develop a strategy, curriculum and specific activities that incorporate the benefits of nature, and distribute activities to each age group that YFRS serves.

Work Activities:

- Develop educational literature targeting parents, which identifies the consequences of nature deficit disorder, and the benefits of outdoor play.
- Coordinate YFRS staff teams to create program curriculum, specific to various age groups, which incorporate outdoor/environmental activities.
- Train staff and develop curriculum, with the goal of providing programs to reduce the use of indoor electronic distractions by youth.
- Expand our collaboration with the Parks & Open Space Division on providing outdoor, environmental education and activities.

Strategy 4: Provide, maintain and evaluate inclusion services for individuals with disabilities.

Objective: Provide individual assessments, support and accommodations to 100% of qualified participants.

Work Activities:

- 100% of staff will be trained in the "KIT" inclusion model.
- Collect, evaluate and make recommendations based on survey data.
- Design methods to ensure procedural consistency throughout the recreation division.

Strategy 5: To create and maintain accessible arts experiences to youth and adults of all ages.

Objective: Develop a strategy to coordinate out-of-school arts experiences to youth of all ages. Fill specific service gaps identified in the following Cultural Policy Review goals:
Goal II. To provide comprehensive arts learning experiences for Eugene's children, youth and adults.
Goal IV. To strengthen the ability of cultural organizations and artists to serve the community.

Work Activities:

- Build the capacity of artists and cultural organizations to provide art education, art appreciation and art making experiences via classes, workshops and special events.
- Partner with existing community cultural organizations to provide culturally diverse arts experiences.
- Make the arts available to all segments of the community through education, exhibition and performance.
- Provide safe and supportive environments for people who are not professional artists to foster creative expression.
- Increase accessibility of the arts by integrating out-of-school arts programming to all regions and City of Eugene Recreation program sites.

