



## **Dear Friends of CRC:**

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission's mission is to create exceptional recreational experiences through our programs and facilities. We embrace Cincinnati's spirit by creating a culture of lifelong personal growth.

2018 was an excellent year at CRC. Our goal was to provide programs that enhanced personal health and wellbeing while being recognized as a leader in recreation. Last October we launched our Business Plan to gain a new focus on programming and facilities that better meet the needs of our communities. This Program and Facilities Business Plan will serve as our road map for the next five years.

Our team spent countless hours with citizens, community partners, CRC staff, local government leaders, City Councilmembers, the City Manager and the Mayor, as a way to receive valuable input to inform our business plan.

It is an honor to share this Executive Summary. I ask that you take a moment to read our roadmap for the future. I also encourage you to visit [www.cincyrec.org](http://www.cincyrec.org) to read our full business plan.

I am excited to spend the next several months sharing our new business plan across this city with citizens. Working together, we will make Cincinnati a better place to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

**Daniel E. Betts**

Cincinnati Recreation Commission  
Director



# Welcome

The Cincinnati Recreation Commission (CRC) desired a Programs and Facilities Business Plan to serve as the CRC's road map for the next five years and will recommend program direction, facility operations, maintenance and capital improvements based on community needs. The plan provides an extensive overview of the system including historical context regarding CRC's rich history and national prominence; in addition to clearly stating its current condition, needs, cost for meeting needs, and future challenges.

This plan includes an inventory of current, as well as desired facilities and programs needed to serve the community. The plan also prioritizes direction for the future programming of CRC's park and recreational assets and services. The study includes a community-supported action plan that provides guidance for future development and redevelopment of programs, facilities and services.

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# Goals

## KEY GOALS FOR THE BUSINESS PLAN INCLUDE:



1

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engage the community, CRC leadership and stakeholders to build a shared vision for the Commission to further develop service improvement opportunities, as well as understand how to best serve current and projected recreation needs of the community in programs and facilities.

2

### DATA SOURCING

Utilize a wide variety of data sources and best practices to predict trends and patterns of use and how to support continuous improvement culture and efficiency, as well as assess current recreation needs for park programming and facilities.

3

### OPERATIONAL PREPAREDNESS

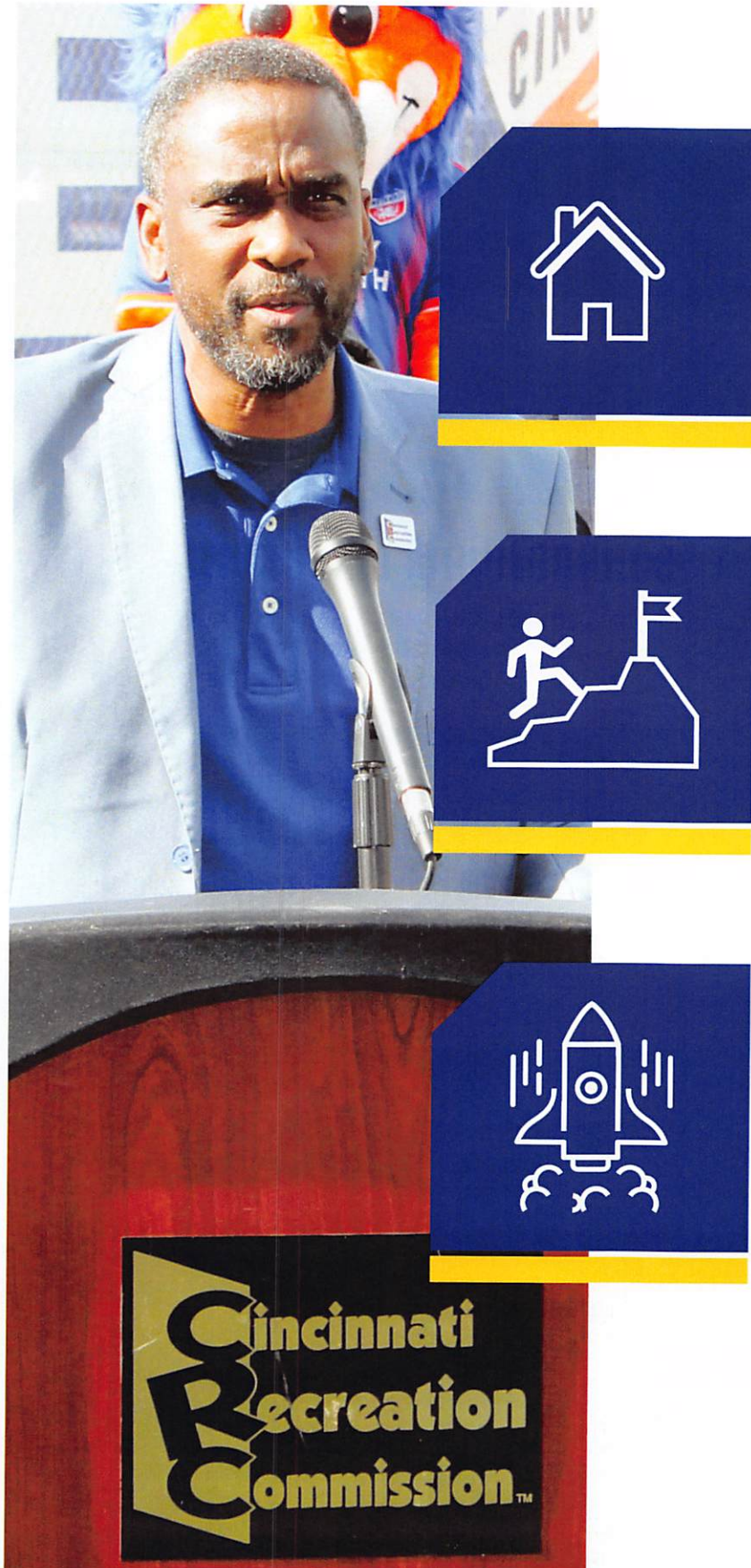
Shape financial and operational preparedness through innovative and “next” practices to achieve the strategic objectives and recommended actions for facility utilization, operational staffing, pricing and revenue and registration.

4

### REALISTIC STRATEGY

Develop a dynamic and realistic strategic action plan that creates a road map to ensure long-term success and financial sustainability for CRC, as well as action steps to support cultural vibrancy, strong social connections among communities, and quality of life for the community and businesses that make Cincinnati a great place to live.

# Process



## Where are we today?

- Site and facility operational assessments
- Programs and services assessments
- Classification of services
- Level of service standards

## Where are we going tomorrow?

- Community needs analysis
- Demographics and trends analysis
- Benchmark and comparative analysis

## How do we get there?

- Needs prioritization
- Financial management and operations strategy
- Funding and revenue planning
- Strategic action plan

# About Us

We have...

**954  
Acres**



**24  
swimming  
pools and  
aquatics  
facilities**

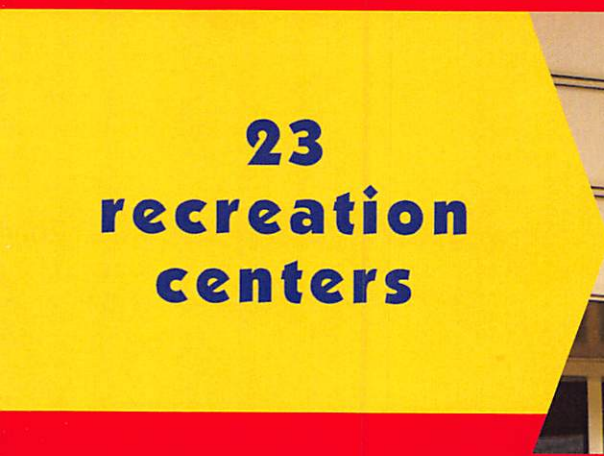


**1,500+  
programs  
offered**

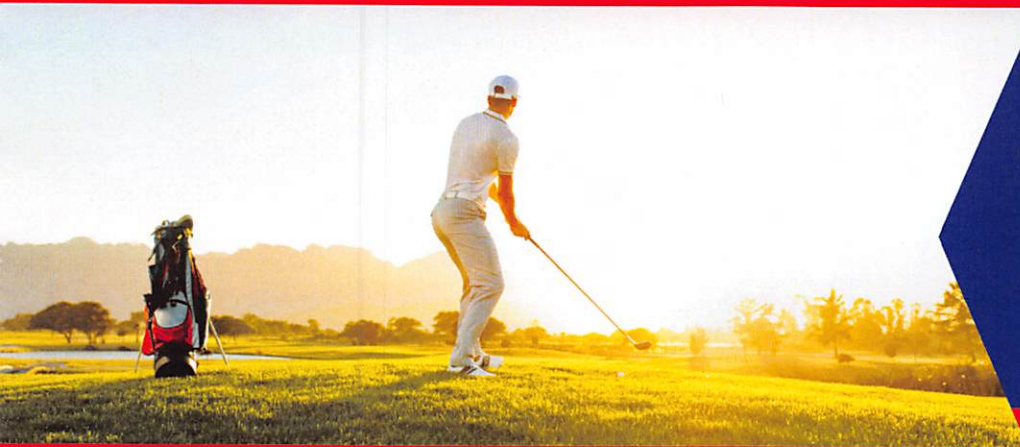




**85 tennis courts**



**23 recreation centers**



**6 golf courses**

# Community Engagement







**900+**  
**community**  
**members**  
**engaged in the**  
**planning**  
**process**

**507**  
**online**  
**survey**  
**respondents**

**4**  
**community**  
**workshops**

**30**  
**stakeholder**  
**interviews**



# Key Issues

## Organizational

The following are key issues that the Business Plan addressed based on an assessment of the three key areas. These include Organizational Issues, Facility Issues and Program Issues.

These issues were identified from interviews with key stakeholders, the community, staff, and consultant observations from all the pieces of work that were completed as part of developing this Business Plan for the CRC.

- CRCs role and priorities in the City of Cincinnati has not had a clear and focused vision.
- CRC is over-extended financially and will need to have partners help deliver services.
- Hours of operation not adequate (i.e. evenings, weekends).
- Better coordination/partnership between schools, the City, and CRC.
- There is a lack of corporate partners to help the system become more relevant.
- CRC lacks the appropriate level of dedicated funding to maintain the system to the community's expectations.
- The Department lacks a business development office to help them raise outside revenue to help maintain, and deliver recreation programs.

## Program

- The Department lacks an effective pricing policy based on what is a core essential, important and value-added program which focuses on the level of public good and private good.
- There are many programs at the end of their lifecycle and need to be evaluated and/or replaced with new program offerings based on what the community desires for that part of the City.
- Staff training in program delivery is lacking across the system in all core program services and a standard skill set assessment is missing in evaluating staff capability in program delivery.
- There is not a marketing and branding plan in place to reposition CRC for the future as it applies to health and wellness, community development, economic development, keeping kids safe and making CRC the center of the neighborhoods they represent.
- Programs are competing against each other across the system and better coordination of what should be provided within the planning areas and at each center is needed.



## Facility

- Many underutilized facilities are taking resources away from the system with little return on investment and should be updated to meet the needs of the community or be eliminated.
- A disposal process is not in place for when and how to eliminate an underutilized recreation facility.
- Outside recreation facilities like sports fields, playgrounds, trails and pools need to be updated to match what the neighborhood recreation facility needs are for the community and how to partner with other service providers who are looking for facilities to help program areas that CRC cannot support.
- There is a desire for year-round state licensed childcare and after-school programs in recreation centers as part of the Preschool Promise program to receive government funding to help offset staffing and facility costs, but no plan is in place to address this issue in the system.
- CRC community center memberships are not competitively priced compared to other providers like the YMCA in the city with similar facilities and programs.
- The Department has a backlog of needed capital repairs for buildings, pools, parking lots, amenities and equipment replacement needs of more than \$97,041,000 dollars and growing with no source of dedicated funding for capital costs to slow down the fixed asset problem.
- Many facilities were designed for other purposes and have been repurposed into community recreation centers forcing staff to retrofit programs into poorly designed and inadequate program spaces which limits the user's experiences.
- Currently, most of the recreation centers lack the appropriate hours, staffing, program spaces, equipment and functionality to become destination recreation facilities.

# Implementation



## GOALS

Goal Statements specific to Operations & Maintenance, Recreation Facility, and Recreation Programs are provided to assist with prioritization and decision-making.



### Operations and Maintenance

Create a model recreation system for the state of Ohio that promotes a positive image of Cincinnati and the services provided



### Recreation Facility

Enhance existing recreation facilities to support the program needs of all residents increasing the use of facilities and programs while creating a sense of place for people of all ages to experience



## Recreation Program

Provide innovative professional developed recreation programs that are creative, fun, safe, and that promote healthy lifestyles and support a diversity of users for people of all ages



## Financials

Ensure the public trust through responsible management of public funds



## Parkland

Maximize the value of park lands, amenities and trails as community assets that residents will use and connect with for generations to come.

# Strategies

These strategies represent the major ideas or philosophies recommended by the consulting team that are required by the municipality to implement the Business Plan.

01

## Operations and Maintenance

- Develop maintenance and cleaning standards
- Establish appropriate staffing of full time, part-time, and seasonal staff based on increasing hours of recreation centers and pools
- Update all recreation centers and pools
- Eliminate some recreation centers and pools that are underutilized

02

## Recreation Facility

- Re-design recreation facilities to be multi-generational and multi-functional
- Update or convert sports fields to meet a diverse user base
- Eliminate all underutilized or playable facilities
- Consider development of three indoor field houses

03

## Recreation Program

- Recruit and retain quality recreation professionals and staff
- Develop effective partnerships
- Add five new core programs
- Programs need to drive design of all facilities
- Eliminate programs competing with each other

04

## Financials

- Develop mini business plans for all recreation centers, sports facilities, and pools
- Maintain fee schedules with current market conditions
- Develop a dedicated funding source
- Create permanent partnerships

05

## Parkland

- Establish a true partnership with Cincinnati parks
- Establish a working partnership with Great Parks
- Update existing parks that are underutilized with new park master plans
- Develop loop trails within the parks and connect to regional trails



# CRC Divisions & Services

## **RECREATION CENTERS**

CRC recreation centers are focal points for health and wellness, community involvement and social interaction. CRC's facilities are located throughout Cincinnati and are a vital component of Cincinnati neighborhoods by helping to maintain a high standard for quality of life.

## **AQUATICS & POOLS**

CRC's award-winning Aquatics Division operates a combination of outdoor and indoor, deep-water and shallow-water pools and spraygrounds to provide fun, safe and quality aquatic programs. In addition to providing water fun and open swimming, CRC pools and aquatic facilities double as water classrooms with swim lessons, and provide hundreds of summer employment opportunities.

## **ATHLETICS**

The Athletics Division provides Cincinnati residents with fun, safe and quality programs in community-based environments. CRC's hundreds of ballfields, sand volleyball, tennis and basketball courts offer hours of enjoyment.

## **GOLF**

CRC's six golf courses offer great golf at truly affordable prices. The courses are conveniently located and feature exceptional service in a friendly atmosphere. The courses offer a comprehensive adaptive golf program which caters to those with physical and cognitive disabilities.

## **SENIORS**

CRC senior programs offer something to fit every lifestyle for those 50 and older. CRC recreation centers offer activities for mature adults such as Pickleball, aerobics, crafts and dance. Annual events such as the Southwest Ohio Senior Olympics and the Senior Citizen Hall of Fame celebrate seniors across Cincinnati.

## **THERAPEUTICS**

Created in 1968, the CRC Therapeutic Recreation Division is nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in programs for individuals with mental, physical, learning and emotional disabilities. Adapted and inclusive activities include Miracle League baseball, aquatics, fitness, social gatherings, bowling leagues, instructional and team sports, and wheelchair sports. All individuals are invited to participate in any CRC program.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

The Financial Management Division provides comprehensive financial oversight to support CRC's goals and objectives. The division prepares and monitors the all-funds operating budget. It provides business and accounting services while assisting all programs in achieving their performance target.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

HR provides the support necessary to ensure delivery of Cincinnati Recreation Commission's services. HR provides employee training and works with personnel across all levels.

## **MAINTENANCE & TRADES**

The Maintenance and Trades Divisions maintain CRC's facilities and keep CRC operational on a daily basis by ensuring the safety and care of all CRC facilities. Maintenance performs indoor and outdoor grounds duties such as grass cutting, trash pick-up, playground equipment repair, and field upkeep. The Trades Division provides expertise in areas such as electrical, HVAC, roofing, carpentry, plumbing and painting.