



Level of Service Analysis

Chapter 3



Level of Service Analysis

The purpose of a level of service (LOS) analysis is to determine how well the existing City of Manhattan Park and Recreation system is meeting the needs of City residents. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), the basic definition of LOS is expressed as an allocation mechanism for the delivery of park and recreation facilities throughout a community. By adopting LOS standards, a community in essence says that all residents, regardless if they pay taxes or use the park and recreation facilities, have equal opportunity to share in the basic services in the standards. The consulting team examined LOS standards from a two-tiered perspective: on a macro level, through a general overview of existing Manhattan Parks and Recreation facilities, and on a micro level that examined individual City facilities and programs.

Several strategies may be used to assess and measure need for park and recreation facilities and programs. One common method compares

supply of park and recreation facilities against demand. If demand is less than supply then there is a surplus or excess capacity and no immediate need for additional facilities. One technique that has proven to be effective and is relatively easy to understand is to develop a level of service standard. Park and recreation facility LOS illustrate the opportunities through the availability of park and recreation facilities in a community and is typically calculated in terms of facilities per 1,000 population. Currently, the City of Manhattan has no LOS standards for recreation and sport facilities.

For the tables that follow, the number of City facilities is compared against the NRPA guidelines for park and recreation facilities. Though informative, these are guidelines that were last revised in 1990 and consequently may not directly pertain to Manhattan. It should be noted that the NRPA standards do not contain guidelines for some facilities that communities tend to need including senior centers, teen centers, outdoor event space and indoor event space.





Table A is a summary of the Manhattan LOS calculations. The number of facilities needed in the City to meet NRPA standards was calculated by taking the population estimate and dividing it by the number of facilities in the City to arrive at the population served per facility. This

number is then subtracted from the number of facilities operated by the City to find the surplus or deficiency. As indicated in Chapter 2, City of Manhattan 2014 population estimate is 56,530 and 2019 population estimate is 60,897.

Table A - Level of Service Comparison

NRPA Population Standard per Facility	Population Served per Facility	Activity	Existing # of City Facilities	Surplus or Deficiency 2014	Surplus or Deficiency 2019
5,000	11,306	Baseball	5	-6	-7
30,000	11,306	Baseball Lighted	5	4	3
5,000	3,325	Softball	17	4	3
20,000	6,281	Swimming Pools	9	7	6
20,000	0	Football	0	-2	-3
10,000	4,348	Soccer	13	7	7
2,000	6,281	Tennis	9	-19	-21
5,000	8,697	Basketball	6.5	-4	-5
5,000	11,306	Volleyball	5	-6	-7

When the NRPA standards are compared against the City of Manhattan inventory of existing facilities in 2014 the City of Manhattan is currently deficient in:

- Football Fields
- Baseball Fields
- Tennis Courts
- Basketball courts
- Volleyball Courts

As demand for public recreation increases, public entities are increasingly considering new cost effect methods for financing capital and operating

costs. In the case of Manhattan, the City and School District share a common tax base and sharing resources not only represent sound public policy but is also viewed positively by the tax payers. As a result, the City of Manhattan and UDS 383 have a partnership in place that shares resources and facilities. This partnership helps reduce unnecessary duplication of facilities and programs, allowing tax dollars to be invested in a cost effective manner. Access to school facilities, when not being used for school curriculum and sports, needs to be considered as part of the LOS comparison. The following table overlays the School District facilities into the analysis.



Table B – Level of Service Comparison with USD 383 and Riley County Included

NRPA Population Standard per Facility	Activity	Existing # of City Facilities	Surplus or Deficiency 2014	Existing # of USD 383 and County Facilities	Surplus or Deficiency 2014
5,000	Baseball	5	-6	6	0
30,000	Baseball Lighted	5	4	0	4
5,000	Softball	17	4	6	10
20,000	Swimming Pools	3	1	0	0
20,000	Football	0	-2	5	3
10,000	Soccer	13	7	6	13
2,000	Tennis	9	-19	16	-3
5,000	Basketball	6	-4	24	20
5,000	Volleyball	5	-6	14	11

Although the USD 383 and Riley County facilities have been included in the LOS comparison above it should be noted that some of the school facilities are too small to accommodate Park and Recreation programs. Many of the elementary schools have small gyms with CVT tile floors that are not the size or quality to meet City program needs. Also the school curriculum and sport needs at the middle school and high school facilities are significant and consequently these spaces are largely unavailable to the public and recreation programming at these schools is limited.

The outdoor sports facilities at Kansas State University have limited public access in the evenings and during the summer months when KSU students and programs are not using the facilities. These facilities are owned privately and

consequently were not included in the level of service comparison. For an activity like tennis the availability of courts to the public, although limited, is adequate to meet the NRPA standards for the number of tennis courts needed to support the tennis interest in the community.

The local Optimist Club, a not-for-profit organization, operates Optimist Park that contains five ball fields that are used to support the baseball and softball in the community. As with the KSU facilities the Optimist Park facilities were not included in the LOS comparison but it is recognized that Optimist Park plays a significant role in serving the community, including Manhattan Parks and Recreation Department programs.

Table C – Level of Service for Park Land

2014 Level of Service Analysis (LOS) Acreage	
2014 Population	56,530
NRPA Standards LOS (Acres/1000 population)	10
Acres Needed to Meet 2014 Population	565 acres
Park Acreage (City Owned)	607 acres
Actual Acres per 1000 people (City Owned)	10.73
Park Acreage (City, County, KSU Owned) ¹	912 acres
Actual Acres per 1000 people (City, County, USD, KSU Owned) ¹	16.20

2019 Level of Service Analysis (LOS) Acreage	
2019 Population	60,897
NRPA Standards LOS (Acres/1000 population)	10
Acres Needed to Meet 2019 Population	608 acres
Park Acreage (City Owned)	607 acres
Actual Acres per 1000 people (City Owned)	9.97
Park Acreage (City, County, KSU Owned) ¹	912 acres
Actual Acres per 1000 people (City, County, USD, KSU Owned) ¹	14.98

Acreage of parkland per 1,000 residents remains the most common technique of expressing equal opportunity, even though local conditions and needs vary greatly between communities. One of the underlying principles of LOS is that most communities believe that significant open space should be set aside for park and recreation facilities. There is no universal standard that defines minimally acceptable number of acres per 1,000 people. It is up to the Manhattan community to determine what is appropriate for its own needs. That being said, the NRPA LOS standard for park acres in a community is 10

acres per 1,000 people. With this in mind, Table C compares the existing park acreage to LOS standards.

Based on this information, it appears the City of Manhattan currently has adequate park land to slightly exceed the NRPA standard for park acreage. As the population of Manhattan continues to increase the level of service for park acreage will decrease based solely on City owned park land. However, when City owned park land is combined with publicly accessible park land owned by Riley County, USD 383 Schools, and

¹Includes all acres of publicly accessible park land owned by City of Manhattan, Riley County (CiCO Park, Fairmont Park), USD 383 Schools (CiCo Park), and KSU (Washington Marlatt Park).

KSU the Manhattan community is provided with 14.98 acres of park land per 1,000 people based on 2019 population projections - well above the NRPA standard of 10 acres per 1,000 people.

In addition to applying LOS standards to the existing inventory of Park and Recreation facilities in Manhattan, a comparison to other communities is possible. NRPA launched a benchmarking initiative in 2011 called PRORAGIS (Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and Geographic Information System) The City of Manhattan is not registered

with PRORAGIS at this time so four other communities were selected by the consulting team for benchmarking the inventory of space against the City of Manhattan. This comparison is not to imply that the City of Manhattan has excess or deficiencies with park and recreation facilities but rather just a comparison to the level of service in other communities.

For the purposes of this benchmark exercise two Midwest University Cities were selected along with two Kansas municipalities with similar population were selected for the comparison.

Table D – LOS Benchmark Comparison

2014 Level of Service Comparison					
	Manhattan	Lenexa	Lawrence	Columbia	Salina
Population Estimate	56,530	50,344	90,811	115,275	47,646
Pool	3	3	4	5	2
Gymnasium	1	1	14	7	1
Volleyball	5	5	5	17	3
Soccer	13	11	21	35	13
Baseball	5	6	17	24	20
Softball	17	6	8	10	9
Lighted Baseball	5	0	3	10	11
Basketball	6	10	16	26	5
Tennis	9	14	10	45	15
Football	0	11	8	9	3
Disc Golf	1.5	.5 ²	2	3 ³	2
Mini Parks	4	15	13	23	12
Neighborhood Parks	14	11	12	22	6
Community Parks	10	5	10	23	5

²Reflects a 9-hole Disc Golf Course

³Includes new course planned in Staum Road Park



As an extension of the Level of Service Analysis portion of the plan the following section outlines the various individual facilities evaluated as part of this project. It is important to note that the commentary and recommendations included in this section reflect industry trends across the country. It is also important to note that recommendations with regards to operations are made with industry standards and best practices in mind.

The following parks and facilities were toured by the consulting team:

Parks

- City Park
- Girl Scout Park
- Optimist Park
- Warner Park
- Frank Anneberg Park
- CiCo Park
- Eisenhower Baseball Complex
- Northview Park / Pool
- Northeast Park
- Fairmont Park
- Colorado Park
- Douglass Park
- Griffith Park
- Long's Park
- Sojourner Truth Park
- Possible Park on K-18

Indoor Facilities

- City Auditorium
- Community House
- Douglass Center
- Douglass Annex

Indoor Recreation Facility Trends

The hottest trend in aquatics is the leisure pool concept. This idea of incorporating slides, current channels, fountains, zero depth entry and other water features into a pool's design has proved to be extremely popular for the recreational user. The age of the conventional pool in most recreational settings has been greatly diminished. Leisure pools appeal to the younger children (who are the largest segment of the population that swim) and to families. These types of facilities are able to attract and draw larger crowds and people tend to come from a further distance and stay longer to utilize such pools. This all translates into the potential to sell more admissions and increase revenues. It is estimated conservatively that a leisure pool can generate up to 20% to 25% more revenue than a comparable conventional pool and the cost of operation, while being higher, has been offset through increased revenues. Of note is the fact that patrons seem willing to pay a higher user fee at a leisure pool than a conventional aquatics facility.

Another trend that is growing more popular in the aquatic's field is the development of a raised temperature therapy pool for rehabilitation programs. This has usually been done in association with a local health care organization or a physical therapy clinic. The medical organization either provides capital dollars for the construction of the pool or agrees to purchase so many hours of pool time on an annual basis. This form of partnership has proven to be appealing to both the medical side and the organization that operates the facility. The medical sector receives the benefit of a larger aquatic center, plus other amenities that are available for their use, without the capital cost of building the structure. In addition, they are able to develop a





much stronger community presence away from traditional medical settings. The facility operators have a stronger marketing position through an association with a medical organization and a user group that will provide a solid and consistent revenue stream for the center. This is enhanced by the fact that most therapy use times occur during the slower mid-morning or afternoon times in the pool and the center.

Despite the recent emphasis on recreational swimming and therapy, the more traditional aspects of aquatics (including swim teams, instruction and aqua fitness) remain as the foundation for many aquatic centers. The life safety issues associated with teaching children how to swim is a critical concern in most communities and competitive swim team programs through USA Swimming, high schools, and other community based organizations continue to be important. Aqua fitness, from aqua exercise to lap swimming, has enjoyed strong growth during the last ten years with the realization of the benefits of water-based exercise.

The multi-function indoor aquatic center concept of delivering aquatics services continues to grow in acceptance with the idea of providing for a variety of aquatics activities and programs in an open design setting that features a lot of natural light, interactive play features and access to an outdoor sundeck. The placing of traditional instructional/competitive pools, with shallow depth/interactive leisure pools and therapy water, in the same facility has been well received in the market. This idea has proven to be financially successful by centralizing pool operations for recreation service providers and through increased generation of revenues from patrons willing to pay for an aquatics experience that is new and exciting. Indoor aquatic centers have been instrumental in developing a true family appeal

for community-based facilities. The keys to success for this type of center revolve around the concept of intergenerational use in a quality facility that has an exciting and vibrant feel in an outdoor like atmosphere.

Also changing is the orientation of aquatic centers from stand-alone facilities that only have aquatic features to more of a full-service recreation center that has fitness, sports and community based amenities. This change has allowed for a better rate of cost recovery and stronger rates of use of the aquatic portion of the facility as well as the other “dry side” amenities.

Due to the increasing recreational demands there has been a shortage in most communities of the following spaces:

- Gymnasiums
- Pools (especially leisure pools)
- Weight/cardiovascular equipment areas
- Indoor running/walking tracks
- Meeting/multipurpose (general program) space
- Senior’s program space
- Pre-school and youth space
- Teen use areas
- Fieldhouse

As a result, many communities have attempted to include these amenities in public community recreation facilities. With the growth in youth sports and the high demand for school gyms, most communities are experiencing an acute lack of gymnasium space. Weight/cardiovascular space is also in high demand and provides a facility with the potential to generate significant revenues.

The success of most recreation departments is dependent on meeting the recreational needs





of a variety of individuals. The fastest growing segment of society is the senior population and meeting the needs of this group is especially important now and will only grow more so in the coming years. Indoor walking tracks, exercise areas, pools and classroom spaces are important to this age group. Marketing to the younger more active senior (usually age 55-70) is paramount, as this age group has the free time available to participate in leisure activities, the desire to remain fit, and more importantly the disposable income to pay for such services.

Youth programming has always been a cornerstone for recreation services and will continue to be so with an increased emphasis on teen needs and providing a deterrent to juvenile crime. With a continuing increase in single parent households and two working parent families, the needs of school age children for before and after school child care continues to grow as does the need for preschool programming.

As more and more communities attempt to develop community recreation facilities the issues of competition with other providers in the market area have inevitably been raised. The loudest objections have come from the private health club market and their industry voice IHRSA. The private sector has vigorously contended that public facilities unfairly compete with them in the market and have spent considerable resources attempting to derail public projects. However, the reality is that in most markets where public community recreation centers have been built, the private sector has not been adversely affected and in fact in many cases has continued to grow. This is due in large part to the fact that public and private providers serve markedly different markets. One of the other issues of competition comes from the non-profit sector (primarily YMCA's but also JCC's, and others), where the market

is much closer to that of the public providers. While not as vociferous as the private providers, the non-profits have also often expressed concern over public community recreation centers. What has resulted from this is a strong growth in the number of partnerships that have occurred between the public and non-profit sector in an attempt to bring the best recreation amenities to a community.

Recreation Facilities Market Orientation:

Based on the demographic makeup of the service areas and the trends in indoor recreation amenities, there are specific market areas that need to be addressed with such community facilities. These include:

General:

- *Drop-in recreation activities:* Critical to the basic operation of any community center is the availability of the facility for drop-in use by the general public. This requires components that support drop-in use and the careful scheduling of programs and activities to ensure that they do not dominate the center and exclude the drop-in user. The sale of annual passes and daily admissions, potential strong revenue sources for a center, requires a priority for drop-in use.
- *Instructional programming:* The other major component of a community center's operation is a full slate of programs in a variety of disciplines. The center should provide instruction for a broad based group of users in a number of program areas. The primary emphasis should be on teaching basic skills with a secondary concern for specialized or advanced instruction.



- *Special events:* There should be a market for special events including kid's birthday parties, community organization functions, sports tournaments and other special activities. The development of this market will aid significantly in the generation of additional revenues and these events can often be planned for before or after regular operating hours or during slow use times of the year. Care should be taken to ensure that special events do not adversely impact the everyday operations of the center.
- *Community rentals:* Another aspect of a center's operation is providing space for rentals by civic groups or organizations as well as the general public. Gyms and multi-purpose rooms can be used as a large community gathering space and can host a variety of events from seminars, parties, receptions, arts and crafts sales and other events. It is important that a well-defined rental fee package is developed and the fee schedule followed closely. Rentals should not be done at the expense of drop-in use or programming in the center.
- *Social welfare programs* – An emerging area for many centers is the use of space for social service activities and programs. Special population activities, teen and senior assistance programs, childcare and other similar uses are now common in many facilities.

Specific market segments include:

- *Families:* Within most markets an orientation towards family activities is essential. The ability to have family members of different ages participate in a variety of activities together or individually, is the

challenge.

- *Pre-school children:* The needs of pre-school age children need to be met with a variety of activities and programs designed for their use. From drop-in childcare to specialized pre-school classes, a number of such programs can be developed. Interactive programming involving parents and toddlers can also be beneficial. It is significant that this market usually is active during the mid-morning time frame, providing an important clientele to the facility during an otherwise slow period of the day. For parents with small children who wish to participate in their own activities, babysitting services are often necessary during the morning and early evening time slots.
- *School age youth:* Recreation programming has tended to concentrate on this market segment and this age group should be emphasized at a center as well. This group requires a wide variety of programs and activities that are available after school, during the summer, or during weekend hours. Instructional programs and competitive sports programs are especially popular, as well as drop-in use of the facility.
- *Teens:* A major focus of many community center projects is on meeting the needs of teenagers in the community. There is a great debate among recreation providers throughout the country on how to best provide recreation programming for this age group. Some believe that dedicated teen space is required to meet their needs while others find that it is the activities and approach that is more important. Serving the needs of this age group will



often require the use of many areas of the center at certain “teen” times of use.

- *Seniors:* As the population of the United States and the service areas continue to age, continuing to meet the needs of an older senior population will be essential. As has been noted, a more active and physically oriented senior is now demanding services to ensure their continued health. Social programs as well as weight training and cardiovascular conditioning have proven to be popular with this age group. Again, the fact that this market segment will usually utilize a facility during the slower use times of early to mid-day also is appealing. Providing services for this age group should be more of a function of time than space.
- *Business/corporate:* This market has a variety of needs from fitness/wellness and instruction, to recreation and social. The more amenities and services that can be offered at one location the more appeal there is to this market segment. The business community should be surveyed to determine their specific needs and expectations.
- *Special needs population:* This is a secondary market, but with the A.D.A. requirements and the existence of a number of recreation components, the amenities will be present to develop programs for this population segment. Association with health care providers and/or other social service agencies will be necessary to fully reach this market.
- *Special interest groups:* This is a market that needs to be explored to determine the use potential from a variety of groups. These could include school functions, social

service organizations and adult and youth sports teams. While the needs of these groups can be great, their demands on a center can often be incompatible with the overall mission of the facility. Care must be taken to ensure that special interest groups are not allowed to dictate use patterns for the center.

- While no national metrics currently exist to quantitatively track participation rates of disc golf, the City of Manhattan has an increasing number of disc golf users. Anecdotal evidence and discussions with disc golf user groups suggest this as an emerging trend in Manhattan. Disc golf is a low impact, inexpensive facility investment that can be successfully integrated into natural areas and open green spaces within park lands.

Outdoor Facility Trends

Many communities are not only making investments in their indoor facility inventory, but investments in their outdoor facilities as well. The following outlines trends on a national level with various outdoor facility types and offerings.

Natural Areas:

Specific to parks, there is still the traditional idea and value to having open natural areas that members of the community can access. In many cases these nature parks are stand alone facilities that individuals can drive to. However, there is also a movement to incorporate natural spaces into active parks. Regardless of the method by which these spaces are preserved it is not uncommon for there to be an interconnected trail system that ties into the community or a regional system. These parks typically include directional



signage and identify various plant species. It is also common that throughout the park there is signage that identifies natural habitats of plants and/or animals. The maintenance requirements of these parks is relatively low outside of the trail systems and these are typically referred to as a community asset.

Green Space:

It is not uncommon to find green space within a natural area. Green spaces are areas that require more maintenance/mowing than previously referenced natural areas. They are mowed on a more frequent basis. These spaces typically move with the topography of the land so as to include changes in grade along with flat spaces. These green space areas are typically not graded so as to provide optimal flat, field-oriented playing spaces. When grading is done in these areas it is to accommodate trails or incorporate other outdoor spaces such as an amphitheater. Along with natural areas, green spaces are a community asset and used by both active and passive recreation participants.

Shelters:

It is common to find shelters within most parks regardless of their designation. Many agencies will identify a range of shelter sizes that they then distribute throughout their park system. Shelters typically have an area close by with either permanent BBQ facilities or flat pad where individuals can bring their own grill. It is more and more common that shelters are outfitted with electricity. It is also common to find permanent restroom facilities in close proximity to the shelter.

Diamonds & Rectangles:

Without a doubt diamonds (baseball, softball, etc.) and rectangles (football, lacrosse, soccer, etc.)

continue to grow in popularity and are common topics of discussion in developing parks, regardless of the level of park. It is important to note that the demand is increasing in particular in the area of practice fields. In addition to growing in popularity the level of expectations are growing as it relates to the level of care that is expected out of these facilities. The natural tendency is for agencies to try and make their diamonds and rectangles as multi-purpose as possible, but the demand is to have specific facilities for specific sports. This can become particularly challenging if an agency is land locked and has limited ability to acquire new property.

A common approach that agencies are taking to address the concept of multi-purpose and accommodating as many groups as possible is the incorporation of synthetic turf fields within the community inventory. It is also important to note that this approach is being done for both diamonds and rectangles. The benefits of the synthetic turf field is that it increases the “shoulder seasons” of sports that use these fields. Participants can get on the surface immediately after most weather conditions and not have to worry about damaging the playing surface for the remainder of the season, as is the case with a natural playing surface. While the shoulder seasons are increased and subsequently the demand is addressed there remains several challenges with a synthetic turf surface. The first challenge is the initial upfront cost of the surface. The second challenge is the longevity of the surface, which varies by manufacturer from 8-15 years, and the financial burden of replacement. There is still a significant amount of debate as to whether a synthetic surface is cheaper to operate than a natural grass surface. While the need for mowing is eliminated many professionals are recommending that the fields still be treated with chemicals so that weeds/plants do not grow in the



base of the playing surface. Additionally, because of the heat that is absorbed by the playing surfaces many professionals are actually watering the fields prior to use, simply to cool the surface.

In many instances when communities are completing a master plan process and diamonds and rectangles are inventoried an all-inclusive approach is taken. This all-inclusive approach means that not only are the fields that the local parks and recreation agency are responsible for are inventoried but so are the school district facilities, in particular if they are shared-use spaces. In comparison to natural areas and green space there is significantly more maintenance with diamonds and rectangles. In contrast to green space and natural areas, diamonds and rectangles can generate cash flow for the department in the form of rentals and tournaments. There is also the possibility with these spaces to generate a positive economic impact to the community.

It is common to find permanent restroom facilities that can serve a significant number of individuals along with permanent concessions in parks that house a significant number of diamonds and/or rectangles. It is also common with diamonds to see auxiliary facilities such as batting cages in close proximity.

Level of Care:

The level of care, or degree to which facilities, in particular diamonds and rectangles, are maintained is a typical topic of conversation. Many agencies have developed a standard to which they are willing to maintain these and other spaces. That standard may vary based upon whether a field is designated as a practice field or competition field, but the standard is adhered to. As the diamonds and rectangles are very often shared-used spaces between community

and school district, many communities take steps to align the standard between the two agencies. As this standard of care is developed, a newer trend emerges where some youth sports agencies are requesting a higher level. In many cases the agencies are taking the cost associated with higher level of care and re-charging the youth sports organization, or in some instances making the youth sports agency responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the facility they use while not relinquishing scheduling or ownership of the piece of property.

Trails:

As many communities move towards the concept of being more environmentally friendly the topic of a walkable or bikeable community comes to the forefront. As such trails continue to gain in popularity across the country. It is important to note that trails can take many forms; from single width walking trails in nature areas to 8 foot wide paved trails. And while the single width trails in nature areas are still popular and prevalent in communities; wider, paved or stone dust, multi-purpose trails are pushing the increase in popularity. When these trails are being developed they can form a loop within a specific park, following stream ways to interconnect multiple parks and in some cases connect into larger county, regional or state-wide park systems.

Along with the increase in popularity of trails there is an increase in the pursuit of partnerships with trail development. There are multiple granting agencies that can provide funds for the acquisition of land and the development of trails. As it relates to partnerships those are being realized between government agencies to create larger trails systems or assist in the development and ongoing maintenance of the trail. A good example of this takes place in Johnson County,





KS where the county looks to develop the trail system, sometimes on municipal land and subsequently the municipality assumes the maintenance of the trail.

Trails, depending upon their construction and material do take significantly more maintenance than natural areas or green space, but they have not risen to the level of diamonds and rectangles.

Court Space:

As parks are developed inclusion of court space within active parks remains a trend. That court space can vary and include, but not be limited to; tennis, basketball, hand ball, etc. Across the country many court spaces that are not being fully utilized are sometimes repurposed. A common repurpose of basketball or tennis courts is to develop them into a skate park. However, tennis is seeing a resurgence in popularity as the number of Baby Boomers move into retirement and participation in skateboarding continues a slow decline. These spaces typically require a level of maintenance similar to that of trails, mainly due to the surfaces that are employed and the need for resurfacing or patching.

Inside-Out:

A significant trend nation-wide is bringing traditional inside activities out into parks and open space. The movement of boot camp style of group exercise classes lends itself to using outdoor spaces; trails, green space and other. It is also common to see exercise groups forming and participating in activities like exercise walking and running. Some agencies have gone so far as to have morning Yoga classes in green space or nature areas. Clearly, the focus for the inside-out movement is on fitness, and that trend is going to continue and grow.

The following are impressions of the overall system specific to the City of Manhattan parks and facilities the consulting team had the opportunity to tour.

- The City has a significant collection of outdoor spaces, both active and passive. All of these spaces have curb appeal and appear to be fairly well maintained. From commentary provided by staff it also seems the facilities are well utilized by the public at large.
- There is a pre-existing relationship between the City / County and City / School District, as it relates to occupying and sharing spaces. That relationship appears to be healthy and at this time no parties want to see their respective relationship change. Based on national trends, the City will need to invest significant time and effort in maintaining the relationship with the school as the availability of those spaces for non-school programming appears to be dwindling.
- As it relates to indoor programming (in particular gymnasium space) the City is very dependent upon the School District. If the access to school district facilities went away the City's ability to program would be extremely limited.
- The only partnership that is evident with the University is the use of the University's indoor natatorium which houses 3 bodies of water; none are leisure oriented. The current natatorium is not located in close proximity to other student recreation services on campus. The consulting team learned that the University has a long term plan to relocate aquatics to be adjacent, and potentially incorporated into, their current facility. The School District



currently relies on the University facility for their swim programs, although the University does not have a swimming or diving team. There are no other indoor aquatics within the community.

- In contrast to the outdoor spaces, the indoor spaces are almost non-existent. Most communities this size and with the population present have a significant community center in addition to the offerings of the University.
- The facilities where full-time staff are located are meticulously cleaned, in contrast where full-time staff are not present, the level of cleanliness is significantly less.

- A topic of conversation between the City and consulting team was the concept of developing multiple, small in scale community centers within the boundaries of the City. This development of multiple, small community centers is a departure from industry trends in that most organizations are consolidating community center operations to one larger, consolidated facility that may create a regional draw to the community.
- See Chapter 4 – Parks and Facilities Assessment for more specific information and assessment of parks and facilities evaluated as part of this project.

