



SECTION II: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The provision of parks and recreation services in Ann Arbor is a collaborative effort between the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services Unit, the Field Operations Services Unit, and the Community Education and Recreation Department of the Ann Arbor Public Schools. This chapter outlines the structure of each unit as well as how these divisions fit into the City as a whole.

A. City Administration

The City of Ann Arbor administrative structure includes five service areas covering the broad range of services provided by the City. They include the City Administration Services Area, overseeing executive management of the City; the Community Services Area, which includes Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, and Community Development; the Financial and Administrative Service Area, overseeing the financial functions of the City; the Public Services Area, covering the infrastructure functions of the City, such as solid waste, and street maintenance; and Safety Services, which includes fire and police. Within each service area are a number of service units which carry out specific administrative and community duties. Parks is located within two service areas: Community Services Area, which houses the Recreation Facilities, Parks Customer Service, and Planning and Administration; and the Public Services Area, which houses Forestry, Park Operations, and Natural Area Preservation.

1. Parks and Recreation Service Unit

The Parks and Recreation Services Unit operates under provisions established in the Ann Arbor City Charter, amended and adopted by the electorate in April 1956. The Charter establishes a department as a General Tax Fund entity, administered by the Community Services Administrator reporting to the City Administrator and, ultimately, the City Council.

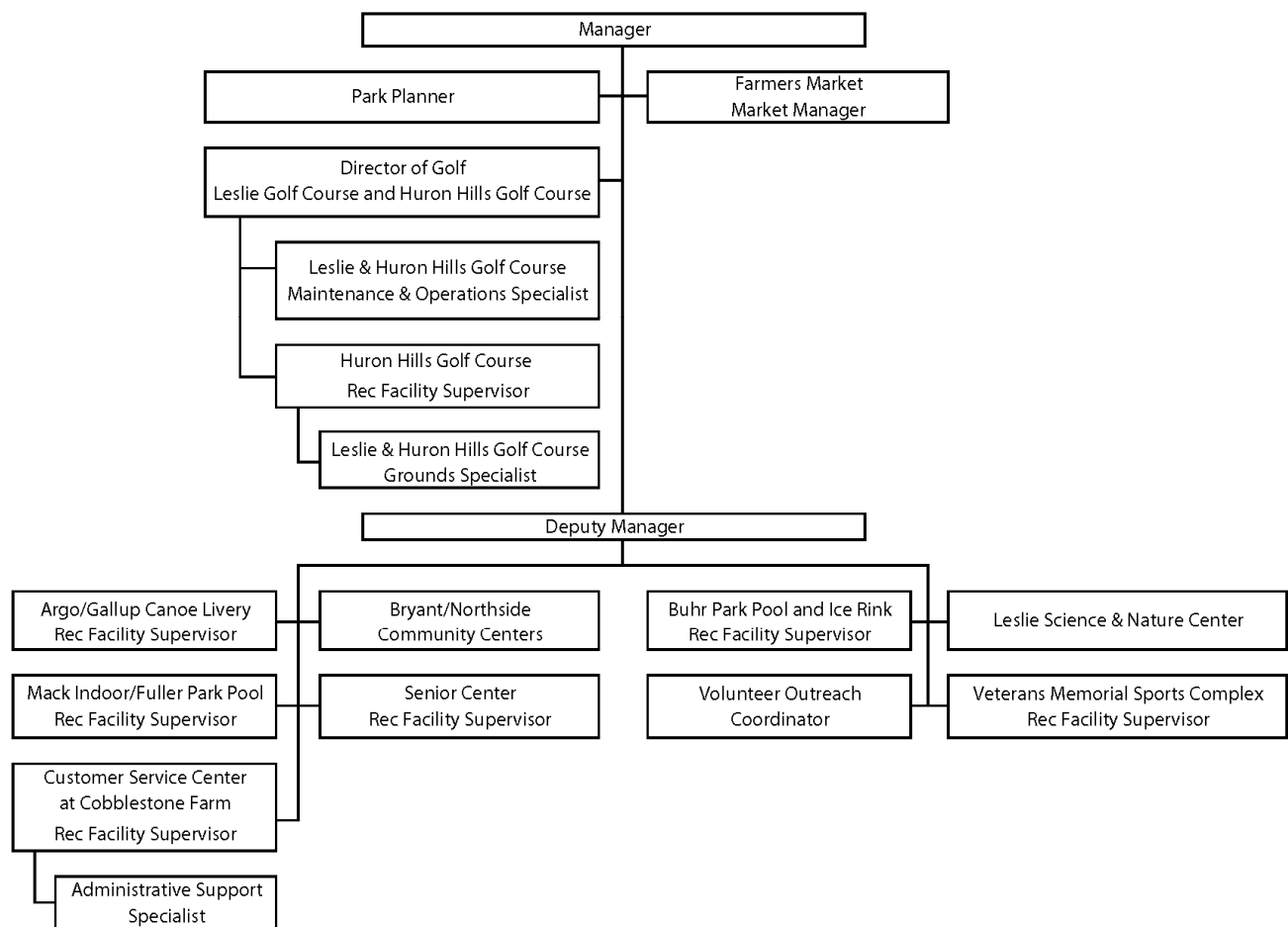
The mission of the Parks and Recreation Services Unit and the park-related units within the Field Operations Service Unit focuses on several key elements: quality, efficiency, stewardship of natural resources, accessibility and affordability of programming, customer service and cooperation with other City service units and public and private organizations, volunteers, and the general public. The Parks and Recreation Services Unit includes both

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Parks Administration and Recreation Facilities and consists of 18 full-time employees and approximately 300 part-time and seasonal employees. Parks Administration is responsible for the development of park policy, park planning and improvements, park shelter reservations, special events, and the Parks and Recreation boards and commissions, including the Park Advisory Commission and Land Advisory Committee. The Administration staff coordinates and manages the service unit while overseeing short and long-term planning, capital projects, infrastructure improvements, and budget.

The recreation facilities, which include four pools, two ice rinks, two golf courses, two canoe liveries, two community centers, a farmers market, a senior center, an historic house, and a farm site, are managed by Parks and Recreation Services staff.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: PARKS AND RECREATION UNIT



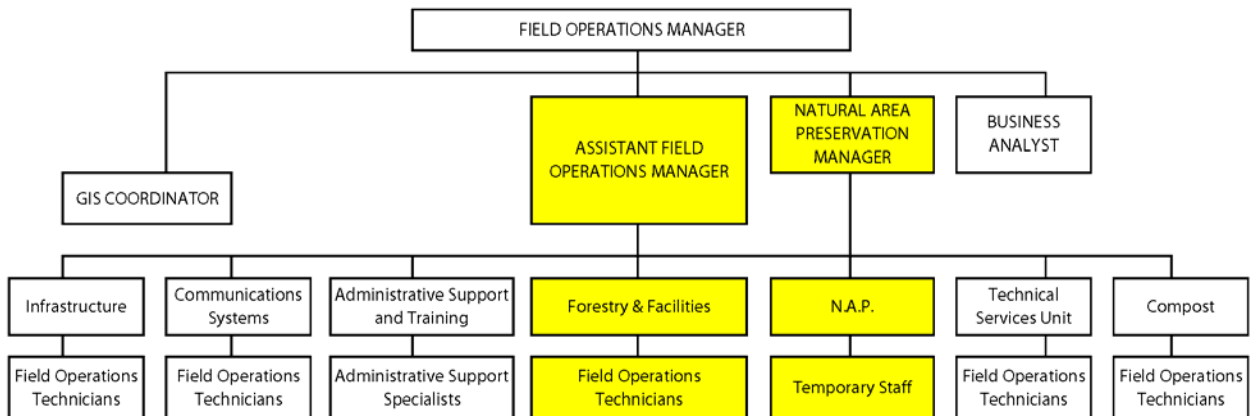
2. Field Operations Service Unit

Field Operations is the combination of maintenance and operational divisions from across the organization. Within the Public Services Area, two are directly involved with park maintenance: Forestry and Park Operations, and Natural Area Preservation (NAP). There are 27 full-time employees responsible for park maintenance, forestry and natural area preservation approximately 20-30 temporary staff.

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- a. FORESTRY is responsible for public tree care in Ann Arbor's 'Urban Forest' represented by more than 50,000 street trees and trees located in City parks. Forestry's work includes trimming and other care to maintain health of trees, removing hazardous trees, and planting street and park trees.
- b. PARK OPERATIONS cares for and maintains the City parks. Park Operations is responsible for play equipment, trails and pathways, park security, snow and litter removal, turf mowing, rest rooms and shelter care, athletic field maintenance, and facility maintenance.
- c. NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION works to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas and to foster an environmental ethic among its citizens through education, stewardship activities, and volunteer work days. Their mission involves conducting plant and animal inventories, ecological monitoring, and stewardship projects in Ann Arbor parks. These tasks are performed by full-time and seasonal staff, with over one-third of the work performed by volunteers.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: FIELD OPERATIONS



Yellow indicates staff who work directly with the park system

B. Boards and Commissions

Citizen participation occurs at many levels, ranging from individual to organized group participation. The Parks and Recreation Service Unit engages several advisory panels to assist in decision-making that is representative of all citizens. It seeks informal advice from the public through daily contact and meetings with individual citizens, neighborhood associations, service clubs, and special interest groups. Hundreds of other citizens are involved in volunteer activities throughout the system, including performing prairie burns, acting as docents for Cobblestone Farm, cleaning up debris from the Huron River, removing invasive species, and sprucing up the downtown parks.

Officially, four formal mechanisms exist for citizen input, including the Ann Arbor City Council, the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission, the Park Advisory Commission, and the Recreation Advisory Commission. Additionally, several boards and task forces provide guidance to Parks and Recreation for specific facilities and programs.

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1. **Ann Arbor City Council**

As the policy-setting authority for the Parks and Recreation Service Unit, the Ann Arbor City Council makes all operational, development, and financial decisions after providing opportunities for public comment and hearings.

2. **Ann Arbor City Planning Commission**

The City Planning Commission is a group of citizens appointed by the Mayor that reviews the Capital Improvements Plan, including improvements of the Parks and Recreation Service Unit, as well as proposed development projects that involve public parkland and private recreation facilities.

3. **Park Advisory Commission**

The Park Advisory Commission was created by a resolution of City Council on August 17, 1981. The purpose of the Park Advisory Commission is to provide a consistent and formal opportunity for public involvement and perspective regarding community park and recreation services. The commission makes advisory recommendations to the City Council and to the Parks and Recreation Service Unit regarding park administration and development.

The Park Advisory Commission is composed of nine members; eight members to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of City Council. The Commission is responsible directly to the Mayor and City Council. Members must be residents of the City of Ann Arbor. One member of the Recreation Advisory Commission serves on the Commission as an official member. Two members of City Council (to be appointed by the Mayor), the Manager of Parks and Recreation, and the Assistant Superintendent for Community Services of the Ann Arbor Public Schools or the Assistant Superintendent's designee, shall serve as ex-officio members without vote. The membership should consist of representative citizens who have demonstrated their interest in Ann Arbor's parks and recreation services and have a time commitment to serve.

The Park Advisory Commission provides advisory recommendations regarding the following issues:

- a. Park rules and regulations.
- b. Community park and recreation services philosophy.
- c. Park and recreation facility policies, including, but not limited to, fees and charges, hours of operation, and scheduling.
- d. Park maintenance and forestry standards.
- e. Annual operating budget.
- f. Annual capital improvement budget.
- g. Parkland acquisitions and parkland easements or controls. A separate Land Acquisition Committee, which is a subcommittee of the whole, advises on purchases within the City.
- h. Park development/rehabilitation projects.

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- i. Capital improvement and acquisition funding, including millages, bond issues, park foundation, or related programs.
- j. Major new development projects (residential, transportation, commercial, etc.) which significantly impact park and recreation services.
- k. Public information and interpretation of the total park and recreation program to the community.
- l. Any other item which may be referred to the Park Advisory Commission by City Council or the City Administrator, or any park policy matter of concern to a commission member or community citizen.

In 2009, the Park Advisory Commission revised its bylaws to include a standing Budget Committee to facilitate communications between staff and the commission on important aspects of the parks budget and financial accounting systems. The committee makes recommendations regarding the annual operating budget, the annual capital improvement budget, and special millages for capital improvements and acquisitions. The chair of the Budget and Finance Committee is to be nominated by the chair of PAC, and approved by a two-thirds majority of the full Commission.

4. Recreation Advisory Commission

The Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Education and Recreation (Rec & Ed) program is an integral component of recreation planning within the City. It is governed and administered by the Board of Education. The Rec & Ed program offers a number of recreational and educational opportunities to the Ann Arbor community, including team sports, camps, pre-school and childcare programs, and life-long learning and enrichment classes for youths and adults. Many of these programs take place in City parks and facilities.

The program serves community members who reside in the Ann Arbor Public School district. The Ann Arbor school district includes all of Ann Arbor Township, the City of Ann Arbor, the Village of Barton Hills, and portions of seven other townships including the Charter Townships of Pittsfield, Scio, and Superior, and the Townships of Lodi, Webster, Northfield, and Salem.

The Recreation Advisory Commission (RAC) was established and modified by City Council and Board of Education resolutions of 1957. Six members are appointed by the City Council and six by the Board of Education. The purpose of the RAC is to provide a consistent forum for citizen input regarding recreation services. The commission provides advisory recommendations and serves the following roles:

- a. Assume positive leadership in formulating a philosophy of recreation suitable to this community.
- b. Consider Ann Arbor's year-round recreation needs, both immediate and long term.
- c. Serve as an advisory body to the Parks and Recreation Service Unit, the Community Education and Recreation Department, and their staff in developing a program to meet such needs.

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- d. Implement the recreation plan by recommending a budget showing the amounts financed by the City, the School Board, and by the income from fee-based programs.
- e. Communicate the findings relative to needs, program, and implementation to the City Council and Board of Education.
- f. Inform the City Council and Board of Education of essential and desirable expansion of recreational facilities involving the expenditure of capital funds.
- g. Consult and cooperate with private agencies and local sports clubs in their development of recreational programs and activities.
- h. Interpret the entire recreation program to the citizens of Ann Arbor and the Ann Arbor School District.

5. Park and Facility Advisory Boards and Commissions

Several recreation facilities have boards and associations dedicated to overseeing the mission of each particular facility. These consist of the following:

- a. COBBLESTONE FARM ASSOCIATION was formed over 30 years ago and coordinates the programming and restoration efforts of the historic Cobblestone Farm property. The association integrates authentic artifacts, stories, and lives which capture the spirit of mid-nineteenth century living, and hosts educational historic programs for children and adults.
- b. DEAN FUND COMMITTEE was established in 1964 to oversee the donation from Elizabeth Dean, who willed nearly two million dollars to the City. The interest income from this bequest is used to repair, maintain, and replace trees on City property.
- c. FARMERS MARKET ADVISORY COMMISSION exists to cultivate relationships among vendors, the public, local and national governmental agencies, the Kerrytown area businesses and residential neighborhood. The Commission advises the Market Manager in advertising and promotion of the market, offers input on musical, educational, and other special events at the market, engages in strategic planning for the market, and reviews market policy.
- d. KEMPF HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the Bennett-Kempf house, its garden and collections. The 1853 Greek Revival house is a unique resource because of its national architectural significance, downtown location, and the contributions of the Kempf family to the musical culture of Ann Arbor. By making the house accessible to the public, the board seeks to promote understanding and appreciation of local history.

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C. Public Input Opportunities

Public input is considered an integral part of planning in Parks and Recreation Services. These forums are a standard part of the planning of projects involving changes to a park or facility.

1. Surveys are conducted intermittently to evaluate the entire park system, as well as specific facilities and issues. This tool has become much more widely used by Parks and Recreation Services with the availability and popularity of electronic media.
2. Public meetings are held for any capital improvement involving change of an existing facility or park. Meetings allow citizens to voice opinions and concerns directly to staff and provide an opportunity to have dialog with residents.
3. Social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and GoogleBuzz, are used to advertise meetings, share information, and survey users about particular issues. These sites allow real time updates for programs and activities and facilitate citizen interaction with staff, providing forums for comments and opinions about park projects and programs. An added advantage is that the tools are free of charge and they eliminate the use of paper.