COMMISSION FOR ACCREDITATION OF PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

- Fifth Edition -
Revised April 2014

Sponsored by
National Recreation and Park Association

Created by the

Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies

Revised April 2014

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Table of Contents

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Introduction 1-5

Accreditation Process 1

List of Fundamental Standards 1-2

Understanding Standards 2

History of CAPRA Standards for National Accreditation 2-3

About the Commission 3

Using this Publication 3

Writing Guidelines 4-5

Observable Standards 5

Resources 5

1.0 – Agency Authority, Role, and Responsibility 6-10

1.1 – Source of Authority ★ 6

1.1.1 – Approving Authority/Policy Body 6

1.1.2 – Citizen Advisory Boards/Committees 6

1.2 – Periodic Timetable for Review of Documents 7

1.2.1 – Document Approval Authority 8

1.3 – Jurisdiction 8

1.4 – Mission ★ 8

1.4.1 – Agency Goals and Objectives ★ 9

1.4.2 – Personnel Involvement 9

1.5 – Vision ★ 9

1.6 – Policies, Rules, Regulations, and Operational Procedures 9

1.6.1 – Administrative Policies and Procedures ★ 10

1.7 – Agency Relationship ★ 10

1.7.1 – Operational Coordination and Cooperation Agreements 10

2.0 – Planning 11-14

2.1 – Overall Planning Function within Agency 11

2.2 – Involvement in Local Planning ★ 11

2.3 – Planning with Regional, State, and Federal Agencies 12

2.3.1 – Community Comprehensive Plan with Park and Recreation Component 12
2.4 – Park and Recreation System Master Plan ★ 12
2.5 – Strategic Plan ★ 13
2.6 – Feasibility Studies 13
2.7 – Site Plans 13
2.8 – Historical and Cultural Resource Management Plans 13
2.9 – Community Involvement ★ 14
2.10 – ADA Transition Plan 14
3.0 – Organization and Administration 15-19
3.1 – Organizational Structure ★ 16
3.2 – Administrative Offices 16
3.2.1 – Support Services 16
3.3 – Internal Communication ★ 16
3.4 – Public Information Policy and Procedure ★ 17
3.4.1 – Public Information and Community Relations Responsibility 17
3.4.2 – Community Relations Plan 17
3.4.3 – Marketing Plan 18
3.4.3.1 – Marketing Responsibility 18
3.5 – Utilization of Technology 18
3.5.1 – Management Information Systems ★ 19
3.6 – Records Management Policy and Procedures 19
3.6.1 – Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and Procedures 19
4.0 – Human Resources 20-29
4.1 – Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual ★ 20
4.1.1 – Code of Ethics ★ 21
4.1.1.1 – Staff Acceptance of Gifts and Gratuities 21
4.1.2 – Recruitment Process 21
4.1.3 – Equal Opportunity Employment and Workforce Diversity ★ 21
4.1.4 – Selection Process 22
4.1.5 – Background Investigation ★ 22
4.1.6 – Employee Benefits 22
4.1.7 – Supervision 23
4.1.8 – Compensation Plan 23
4.1.9 – Performance Evaluation 23

4.1.10 – Promotion 24
4.1.11 – Disciplinary System 24
4.1.12 – Grievance Procedures 24
4.1.13 – Termination and End of Employment 25
4.2 – Staff Qualifications ★ 25
4.3 – Job Analyses for Job Descriptions ★ 25
4.4 – Chief Administrator ★ 26
4.4.1 – Leadership Succession Procedure 26
4.5 – Workforce Health and Wellness Program 26
4.6 – Orientation Program 26
4.6.1 – Employee Training and Development Program 27
4.6.2 – Professional Certification and Organization Membership 27
4.7 – Volunteer Management 27
4.7.1 – Use of Volunteers 27
4.7.2 – Volunteer Recruitment, Selection, Orientation, Training, and Retention 28
4.7.3 – Supervision and Evaluation of Volunteers 28
4.7.4 – Recognition of Volunteers 28
4.7.5 – Liability Coverage for Volunteers 28
4.8 – Consultants and Contract Employees 29
5.0 – Financial Management 30-34
5.1 – Fiscal Policy ★ 30
5.1.1 – Comprehensive Revenue Policy ★ 30
5.1.2 – Agency Acceptance of Gifts and Donations 30
5.1.3 – Grants Procedures 31
5.1.4 – Private, Corporate, and Non-Profit Support Procedures 31
5.2 – Fiscal Management Procedures ★ 31
5.2.1 – Authority and Responsibility for Fiscal Management 31
5.2.2 – Purchasing Procedures ★ 32
5.2.2.1 – Emergency Purchase Procedures 32
5.3 – Accounting System ★ 32
5.3.1 – Financial Status Reports 32
5.3.2 – Position Authorization Procedures 33
5.3.3 – Fiscal Control and Monitoring Procedures 33
5.3.4 – Independent Audit ★ 33

5.4 – Annual or Biennial Budget ★ 33
5.4.1 – Budget Development Guidelines 34
5.4.2 – Budget Recommendations 34
5.5 – Budget Control Procedures 34
5.5.1 – Supplemental/Emergency Appropriations Procedures 34
5.5.2 – Inventory and Fixed Assets Control 34
6.0 – Programs and Services Management 35-40
6.1 – Recreation Programming Plan ★ 36
6.1.1 – Program and Service Determinants 36
6.1.2 – Participant Involvement 37
6.1.3 – Self-Directed Programs and Services 37
6.1.4 – Leader-Directed Programs and Services 37
6.1.5 – Facilitated Programs and Services 38
6.1.6 – Cooperative Programming 38
6.2 – Program Objectives ★ 38
6.3 – Scope of Program Opportunities 39
6.3.1 – Outreach to Diverse Underserved Populations ★ 39
6.4 – Community Education for Leisure Process 39
6.4.1 – Community Health and Wellness Education and Promotion 40
6.5 – Participant and Spectator Code of Conduct 40
7.0 – Facility and Land Use Management 41-46
7.1 – Parkland Acquisition Procedures 41
7.2 – Areas and Facilities Development Policies and Procedures 42
7.2.1 – ADA Existing Facility and Site Access Audit 42
7.3 – Defense Against Encroachment Procedures 42
7.4 – Disposal of Lands Procedures 42
7.5 – Maintenance and Operations Management Standards ★ 43
7.5.1 – Facility Legal Requirements 43
7.5.2 – Preventative Maintenance Plan 43
7.6 – Fleet Management Plan 44
7.7 – Agency-Owned Equipment, Materials, Tools, and Supplies Policies and Procedures 44
7.7.1 – Building Plans and Specifications 44
7.7.2 – Land and Lease Records 45
7.8 – Environmental Sustainability Policy and Program 45

7.9 – Natural Resource Management Plans and Procedures 45
7.9.1 – Recycling and/or Zero Waste Plan 46
7.10 – Maintenance Personnel Assignment Procedures 46
7.11 – Capital Asset Depreciation and Replacement Schedule 46
8.0 – Public Safety, Law Enforcement, and Security 47-52
8.1 – Codes, Laws, and Ordinances ★ 47
8.1.1 – Staff Liaison to Law Enforcement Officers 48
8.2 – Authority to Enforce Laws by Law Enforcement Officers ★ 48
8.3 – Law Enforcement Officer Training 48
8.4 – Public Information on Laws, Ordinances, Rules, Regulations, and Policies 48
8.4.1 – In-Service Training for Staff on Public Safety and Law Enforcement 49
8.4.2 – Handling of Disruptive Behavior Procedures 49
8.4.3 – Traffic Control, Parking Plans, and Crowd Control 49
8.4.4 – Handling of Evidentiary Items Procedures 50
8.5 – General Security Plan ★ 50
8.6 – Emergency Management Planning 51
8.6.1 – In-Service Training for Staff on General Security and Emergency Management 51
8.6.2 – Emergency Risk Communications Plan 51
8.6.3 – Care and Shelter Procedures 42
9.0 – Risk Management 53-54
9.1 – Risk Management Policy 53
9.1.1 – Risk Management Plan and Procedures ★ 53
9.1.2 – Accident and Incident Report Procedures 54
9.1.3 – Personnel Involvement and Training 54
9.2 – Risk Manager 54
9.3 – ADA Compliance and Face-to-Face Resolution 54
10.0 – Evaluation, Assessment, and Research 55-58
10.1 – Systematic Evaluation Processes ★ 55
10.1.1 – Responsibility for Evaluation 55
10.1.2 – Staff Training on how to Evaluate Programs, Services, and Facilities 56
10.2 – Outcomes Assessment 56
10.3 – Performance Measurement 56
10.3.1 – Level of Service Standards 57
10.4 – Needs Assessment 57

10.5 – Program and Services Statistics 57
10.5.1 – Recreation and Leisure Trends Analysis 57
10.5.2 – Community Inventory 58
10.5.3 – PRORAGIS 58
10.6 – Research Investigation 58
10.6.1 – Quality Assurance 58

Introduction

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) Standards for National Accreditation provide an authoritative assessment tool for park and recreation agencies. Through compliance with these national standards of excellence, CAPRA accreditation assures policy makers, department staff, the general public and tax payers that an accredited park and recreation agency has been independently evaluated against established benchmarks as delivering a high level of quality.

Every park and recreation agency, whatever its focus or field of operation, is rightfully concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. With the importance of park and recreation programs and services to the quality of life, each agency has an essential role in the lives of the people it serves. CAPRA accreditation is a quality assurance and quality improvement process demonstrating an agency's commitment to its employees, volunteers, patrons and community.

Accreditation Process

Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with the 151standards for national accreditation. To achieve accreditation, an agency must comply with all 37 Fundamental Standards, which are indicated by the icon in this publication, and at least 85% of the remaining 114 standards (97).

List of Fundamental Standards

1.1 Source of Authority
1.4 Mission
1.4.1 Agency Goals and Objectives
1.5 Vision
1.6.1 Administrative Policies and Procedures
1.7 Agency Relationships
2.2 Involvement in Local Planning
2.4 Park and Recreation System Master Plan
2.5 Strategic Plan
2.9 Community Involvement
3.1 Organizational Structure
3.3 Internal Communication
3.4 Public Information Policy and Procedure
3.5.1 Management Information Systems
4.1 Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
4.1.1 Code of Ethics
4.1.3 Equal Opportunity Employment and Workforce Diversity
4.1.5 Background Investigation
4.2 Staff Qualifications
4.3 Job Analyses for Job Descriptions
4.4 Chief Administrator
5.1 Fiscal Policy
5.1.1 Comprehensive Revenue Policy
5.2 Fiscal Management Procedures
5.2.2 Purchasing Procedures
5.3 Accounting System
5.3.4 Independent Audit
5.4 Annual or Biennial Budget
6.1 Recreation Programming Plan
6.2 Program Objectives
6.3.1 Outreach to Diverse Underserved Populations

7.5 Maintenance and Operations Management Standards
8.1 Codes, Laws, and Ordinance
8.2 Authority to Enforce Laws by Law Enforcement Officers
8.5 General Security Plan
9.1.1 Risk Management Plan and Procedures
10.1 Systematic Evaluation Processes

CAPRA accreditation is a five-year cycle that includes three phases, development of the agency self-assessment report, the onsite visitation, and the Commission's review and decision. The onsite visitation follows the agency's development of its self-assessment report. If accreditation is granted by the Commission at its meeting following the onsite visit, the agency will develop a new self-assessment report and be revisited every five years. Within each of the four years between onsite visits, the agency will submit an annual report that addresses its continued compliance with the accreditation standards. The complementary publication, *CAPRA Accreditation Handbook,* sets forth in detail the accreditation process and procedures and can be found online at http://www.nrpa.org/CAPRA.

Understanding Standards
A standard is a statement of desirable practice as set forth by experienced professionals. In evaluating an agency for accreditation, the standards are a measure of effectiveness using the cause and effect ("if...then") approach. If one acts in a certain way, then it is expected that there will be a certain outcome. In practice, if an agency complies with a given standard, then it is expected that the agency's operations related to that standard will be positively affected. Viewed holistically, if an agency complies with the vast majority of the standards (i.e., all fundamental standards and at least 85% of the remaining), then it is understood that the agency is performing a quality operation. Standards enable evaluation by comparing what is found within an agency operation to what is accepted by professionals as desirable practices.

These standards are not a quantitative measure of the local availability of funds, lands, personnel, etc. and should be distinguished from other types of standards which address specific elements, such as open space standards, which are population-based, and playground equipment standards, which are product-based. These qualitative standards for accreditation are comprehensive, dealing with all aspects of agency operations.

The standards provide an effective and credible means of evaluating a park and recreation agency's overall system. The standards apply to all park and recreation systems, inasmuch as they are considered to be the elements for effective and efficient operations. Most agencies administer both park and recreation functions; however, some agencies only administer recreation programs and services, not park systems, and others only administer park systems, not recreation programs and services. Additionally, the jurisdictional structure of agencies differs throughout the country, with many agencies operating under municipal authority, while others operate under county, park district, or other structures. Further, the standards apply to agencies of all sizes in terms of personnel, budget, and population served. It is recognized that each community is unique and may meet the standards in differing ways.

History of CAPRA Standards for National Accreditation
A forerunner of the CAPRA standards was a document titled, *Evaluation and Self-Study of Public Recreation and Park Agencies*, first issued in 1965. The standards in the document were initially determined by leading professionals in the Great Lakes District of the then National Recreation Association. Eight years later, in 1972, a statewide study in Pennsylvania encompassing thirty municipal park and recreation departments resulted in the document being updated and revised; and, after twenty years, it was replaced by the CAPRA standards.

The CAPRA standards were developed by a special committee initiated in 1989 by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The standards and accreditation process were field tested at park and recreation agencies of varying characteristics. In 1993, the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies was established to implement and administer the accreditation program. Since then, the CAPRA standards have been reviewed and revised several times, notably in 1996, 2001, and 2009.

In 1998 work was begun to adapt the accreditation program to military recreation. An Army version of the standards, developed by the Army, was approved in 1999 and a representative of military services was added to the Commission board. In 2007, the Department of Defense proposed a revised set of military standards that applies to all military services; and was approved by the Commission in 2008 for use by all military services. The military accreditation standards are available as a separate document.

About the Commission

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies is a thirteen-member board composed of representatives from:

- American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (4 representatives)
- National Recreation and Park Association (4 representatives)
- International City/Council Management Association (1 representative)
- Council of State Executive Directors (1 representative)
- American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (1 representative)
- National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials (1 representative)
- Armed Forces Recreation Society (1 representative)

The Commission is administratively sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association, but acts with independence and under its own authority in determining accreditation standards and conferring accreditation of applicant agencies.

Using this Publication

This publication includes all of the CAPRA standards for national accreditation. Standards are ordered numerically by section. Each section covers a specific component of, or within, an agency's operations. The numerical ordering of standards is hierarchical and the relationship of the standards is identified by the numerical order (i.e., 3.4.1.1 is a sub-standard of 3.4.1, which is a sub-standard of 3.4).

A Suggested Evidence of Compliance section is included for each standard in order to identify acceptable means of demonstrating compliance with a standard. Agencies may have different evidence for standards depending on the size, complexity and diversity of the agency. It is important to understand that these are only suggestions and that other evidence may be more appropriate for a given agency and standard. The burden of proof regarding compliance rests with the agency. Where appropriate, an agency is encouraged to provide more than one example of evidence of compliance for some standards.

For some standards, the Suggested Evidence of Compliance will include the visitation team being able to observe that the standard is being implemented by conducting site visits or tours and interviewing personnel.

After each standard, the chapter and page reference from the *Management of Parks and Recreation Agencies, 3rd Edition* is noted in blue text.

Writing Guidelines

Agency Self-Assessment

A well-developed and executed self-assessment document is essential for reviewers to both determine agency readiness to proceed and enable the visitation team to do a thorough verification. Lead and second reviewers, as well as the visitation team chair and team, will look for relevance to the standard, accuracy, specificity and completeness.

When the agency provides evidence of compliance (EOC) with the self-assessment, the EOC must be correctly identified, thoroughly organized and referenced, and consistently presented throughout the self-assessment to avoid ambiguity and vagueness. Without appropriate references, the EOC lacks credibility and significance.

Text Format

- Use the most current self-assessment template to help assure proper formatting and content.
- Include a narrative for each standard that provides a focused, concise and complete explanation of how the agency meets the standard.
- Correctly name and address references to electronic links and online documents.
- Number pages in either the header or footer.
- Place the full agency name at the top of each page, e.g. put in header.
- Use 1.5 inch margins.
- Use a simple font (e.g., Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial) in size 12-point font.

Evidence of Compliance (EOC) Format

- Present the narrative and documented EOC in a consistent format for each standard. Refer only to those documents for which there is evidence presented. Number and list each piece of EOC as it is mentioned in the narrative. Do not list documents if they are not referenced in the narrative.
- When the EOC is an entire plan or manual, include only the title, date of publication, table of contents and, where required, the adoption or approval by the appropriate governing authority.
- When the EOC is only part of a multi-page document, plan or manual provide the title, date of publication, and page or pages with the relevant passage marked or highlighted. The report narrative or embedded electronic link must direct the visitation team to the exact page, paragraph and line on which the evidence is referenced.
- List all evidence in the self-assessment in the same order in which it is listed in the narrative to facilitate easy retrieval and review. The narrative should be a brief explanation of how the agency meets the standard.
- Onsite files must be well organized to facilitate quick visitor access. Documents must be available in hard copy or electronic format.
- Electronic links and online documents must be named exactly as referenced in the corresponding narrative.
- Focus on providing only the required EOC; do not include extra materials that are not necessary.

Writing Guidelines

- Use proper grammar, syntax (sentence structure) and punctuation.
- Eliminate all spelling errors.
- Use abbreviations only after the abbreviation or acronym has been fully described, e.g. when the agency provides evidence of compliance (EOC) with the self-assessment, the EOC must be correctly identified.
- Use succinct and factual sentences to produce a tightly-scripted document.
- Refrain from using proper nouns when referencing individuals; use pronouns, where possible.
- Write the self-assessment in a consistent "voice." Identify and correct shifts in verb tense. Use the active voice and when appropriate eliminate passages written in the passive voice.
- Refrain from using overstatement and hyperbole.
- Include titles, dates and page numbers in EOC references.

- Include, revision, adoption and approval dates for tracking purposes, e.g. revision of the 1995 policy on encroachment was adopted on October 2, 2013.
- Never cut and paste or copy word-for-word from any agency report or website, unless properly cited.

Consequences for Failure to Follow Format and Writing Guidelines

- If a self-assessment does not meet the above requirements, it will be returned.
- The CAPRA Commission, at its discretion, may allow the report be resubmitted within a specific time period.

Observable Standards

A tour of the agencies parks and/or facilities must be granted to view the system to verify compliance with standards. This is required as part of the visit.

Resources

More information about CAPRA national accreditation, including how to apply for accreditation, the current CAPRA Handbook, and the list of currently accredited agencies, is available online at www.nrpa.org/CAPRA. An additional resource is the publication, *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies, 3rd Edition*. This publication is based in part on the CAPRA standards and covers in detail best management practices for managing a park and recreation agency. This publication is available through the NRPA store at http://ipv.nrpa.org/store/

For questions or concerns, please contact:

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1.0 - Agency Authority, Role, and Responsibility

NOTE: Standards marked with a star ( ) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Delineation of jurisdiction and authority are the foundation upon which the park and recreation agency is organized. Policy and rule-making functions and the development of procedures to implement policy create the organizational framework. The mission establishes the organizational purpose, and goals and objectives establish the strategic direction. Organization values affect how the agency through its leadership and staff relate to other governing bodies, agencies, organizations and how it incorporates input from citizens and staff.

1.1 - Source of Authority

Standard: **The source of agency authority or legal basis of operation and the extent of powers shall be identified in a legal document such as the state statute, local charter, city ordinance, or park district code.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide legal citation and, if appropriate, date of resolution by local governing entity or legal authority (i.e., enabling act, support documentation, ordinance; if permissive state authority, provide charter).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 - Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 41-42.

1.1.1 - Approving Authority/Policy Body

Standard: **The agency organizational structure shall provide for one public entity responsible for policy-making functions. This entity usually has taxing power and must approve the budget; it holds title to property. It also serves an important function in providing input to improve and expand park and recreation programs, services, and facilities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a chart or diagram and narrative description of the organizational structure, interrelationship of organizational components and powers of authority over policy-making; show the relationship of the agency to its approving authority and provide the approving authority bylaws or charter.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 - Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 38-52.

1.1.2 - Citizen Advisory Boards/Committees

Standard: **There shall be citizen boards/committees that are advisory to the agency and the approving authority that appoints them. Advisory boards engage the community and serve as advocates for the advancement of programs, facilities, and services.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide list of boards/committees with membership, authority, responsibilities and duties, terms of office, meeting minutes.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 - Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 53-54.

1.2 - Periodic Timetable for Review of Documents

***Standard*: All documents designated for periodic review shall be reviewed on a regular basis according to an established agency review schedule. For example, if the agency has determined that a document should be reviewed annually, the agency shall provide evidence that the document is reviewed annually and include a copy of the most recent annual review. Several standards in the accreditation process require that adopted plans, policies and procedures be reviewed and updated at various intervals. In those cases, the agency shall provide evidence that the document was reviewed and updates pursuant to the period specified in the standard.**

Standards with a review requirement are:

1.4.1 Agency Goals and Objectives
1.6.1 Administrative Policies and Procedures
2.4 Park and Recreation System Master Plan
2.5 Strategic Plan
3.4.2 Community Relations Plan
3.4.3 Marketing Plan
3.6 Records Management Policy and Procedures
3.6.1 Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and Procedures
4.1 Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual
4.1.2 Recruitment Process
4.1.8 Compensation Plan
4.3 Job Analyses for Job Descriptions
4.5 Workforce Health and Wellness Program
4.6.1 Employee Training and Development Program
5.1.1 Comprehensive Revenue Policy
6.1 Recreation Programming Plan
6.2 Program Objectives
6.4 Community Education for Leisure Process
7.1 Parkland Acquisition Procedures
7.2 Area and Facilities Development Policies and Procedures
7.5 Maintenance and Operations Management Standards
7.5.1 Facility Legal Requirements
7.9.1 Recycling and/or Zero Waste Plan
8.5 General Security Plan
8.6.2 Emergency Risk Communications Plan
9.1 Risk Management Policy
10.4 Needs Assessment
10.5.1 Recreation and Leisure Trends Analysis

Suggested evidence of compliance: Provide the agency review schedule for the document, program, policy or procedure referenced in the enumerated standards.

1.2.1 - Document Approval Authority

***Standard*: All documents designated for approval by the appropriate approving authority shall be approved or adopted in a manner consistent with the agency process and procedure for adoption of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures, except that the agency budget and park and recreation system master plan must be adopted or approved by the entity responsible for policy-making.**

Standards with an adoption or approval requirement are:

1.5	Vision
2.3.1	Community Comprehensive Plan with Park and Recreation Component
2.4	Park and Recreation System Master Plan
2.5	Strategic Plan
2.10	ADA Transition Plan
3.4	Public Information Policy and Procedure
4.4.1	Leadership Succession Procedure
5.4	Annual or Biennial Budget
8.1	Codes, Laws, and Ordinances
9.1	Risk Management Policy
9.1.1	Risk Management Plan and Procedures

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that the agency budget and park and recreation system master plan have been duly adopted or approved by the entity responsible for policy-making and that other documents designated for approval by the appropriate approving authority have been approved in a manner consistent with the agency process and procedure for approval of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures.

1.3 - Jurisdiction

***Standard:* The specific geographical boundaries of the agency's jurisdiction shall be set forth by geographical description and map.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a map with geographical boundaries of jurisdiction and service areas, including location of facilities identified.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 604-606.

1.4 - Mission

***Standard:* There shall be an established mission statement that defines the direction and purpose of the agency. The agency mission is the purpose or reason for the existence of the agency and establishes the long-term direction for the agency services and activities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the established mission statement.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 71-72.

1.4.1 - Agency Goals and Objectives

Standard: **There shall be established, measurable goals and objectives for the agency and for each organizational component within the agency. Such goals and objectives shall be directed toward accomplishing the agency mission, be reviewed** periodically, **and distributed to all appropriate personnel**.

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the measurable goals and objectives for each organizational component, with evidence of periodic review and distribution.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 72-73; Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 220-224; Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, Customer Service, p. 360.

1.4.2 - Personnel Involvement

Standard: **The agency shall have an established process for acquiring and considering input from personnel at various levels of the organization in the development of goals and objectives.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of the methods utilized to obtain input from personnel at various levels of the organization (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.) and how the organization's goals and objectives are communicated to all personnel.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 72.

1.5 - Vision

Standard: **The agency shall provide an adopted Vision Statement that is aspirational, far reaching, and states where the agency is going. It should be available to the approving authority, staff, and participants.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence of adopted Vision statement that is available to the approving authority, staff, and participants.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 4 – Politics and Advocacy, p. 58; Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 72-73; Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 115-116.

1.6 - Policies, Rules, Regulations, and Operational Procedures

***Standard*:** **There shall be delegation of responsibilities for the policy-making functions of the approving authority and the administrative functions of the chief administrator and staff.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Show delegation of responsibilities among approving authority, chief administrator, and staff regarding development and implementation of policies, rules, regulations, and operational procedures.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 2 – Management and the Law, p. 20; Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 87.

1.6.1 - Administrative Policies and Procedures ★

Standard: **There shall be policies and procedures, encompassing administrative aspects of the organization that are kept up-to date, reviewed periodically, and made available to pertinent administrative and supervisory personnel.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide access to the agency policies and procedures, demonstrate how they are made available to personnel, and provide evidence of periodic review by the approving authority and administrators.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 3 – Legal Authority and Jurisdiction, pp. 43-44; Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 87-88.

1.7 - Agency Relationships ★

Standard: **There shall be ongoing liaison roles with complementary organizations, such as nearby park and recreation agencies, social service organizations, and other governmental units and regulatory bodies.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence of cooperative efforts, including a list of staff with liaison responsibility. This information may be evidenced through Memoranda of Agreement, Memoranda of Understanding, Cooperative Agreements, etc.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 2 – Management and the Law, p. 28; Chapter 4 – Politics and Advocacy, p. 66; Chapter 6 – Partnerships, pp. 95-110; Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 110-122.

1.7.1 - Operational Coordination and Cooperation Agreements

Standard: **There shall be established agreements with other agencies, organizations, or individuals that entail cooperative use and maintenance of facilities, programing, facility design, land development, finances, etc.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of cooperative agreements.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 6 – Partnerships, pp. 109-107.

2.0 - Planning

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Planning activities are essential to effective agency management. Frequently, they are the responsibility of a permanent component of the agency; however, they may be performed by staff from various units or contracted to an outside professional consultant. Complex demands for services and limited public resources require that the park and recreation agency carefully research operational alternatives and plan future programs. Precise guidelines should establish the parameters of planning tasks and responsibilities.

The strength of the planning unit's leadership is a major ingredient in a productive and effective planning effort. This competence may be reflected both in academic training and in prior professional experience. The chief administrator should be closely involved in the planning process. A direct relationship between planning personnel and the chief administrator enhances the ability for the planning personnel to collect data and make recommendations, and the chief administrator's ability to make informed decisions.

Strategic planning is vital to high performing organizations and involves organizational and community input to identify and come to agreement on vision, mission, and values that support and guide the systems, structures, and strategies as a framework for organizational progress to achieve results.

These standards examine the types of planning necessary for administrators to efficiently and effectively manage both day-to-day and long-term operations of a park and recreation agency.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 111-125.

2.1 - Overall Planning Function within Agency

Standard: **The agency shall have planning functions with established responsibilities, including at least one staff member or consultant with planning capability.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the responsibilities and functions of the planning entity. Provide resumes of training and experience for staff and/or consultants who have planning capabilities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 120-121.

2.2 - Involvement in Local Planning ★

Standard: **The agency shall be involved in local planning, e.g. comprehensive planning, strategic planning, and capital improvement planning by reviewing development proposals, monitoring the decisions of planning and zoning boards or commissions and participating on task forces and committees that will impact parks and recreation services within the jurisdiction.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Demonstrate the role of the agency in local planning through personnel assignments and documentation of involvement, e.g. minutes, agendas, and cooperative agreements.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 120.

2.3 - Planning with Regional, State, and Federal Agencies

Standard: **The agency shall have a working relationship with the regional, state, and federal agencies to ensure the coordination of planning efforts that affect the delivery of parks and recreation services within the jurisdiction.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Define the role of agency personnel and documentation of involvement (minutes, agendas, cooperative agreements) in regional, state, and federal agencies planning.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 120.

2.3.1 - Community Comprehensive Plan with Park and Recreation Component

Standard: **The jurisdiction with land use authority within which the agency operates shall have a comprehensive plan adopted by the governing authority that dictates public policy in terms of transportation, utilities, public facilities, land use, recreation, and housing. In some jurisdictions the comprehensive plan is called the general plan or the land use plan. Zoning for the jurisdiction is based upon the comprehensive plan. To meet this standard, the comprehensive plan shall have a park and/or recreation component that discusses how the jurisdiction intends to meet the needs for parkland and public recreation facilities in concert with other land use priorities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current plan, with date of official approval.

2.4 - Park and Recreation System Master Plan ★

Standard: **The agency shall have a comprehensive park and recreation system plan that provides recommendations for provision of facilities, programs and services; parkland acquisition and development; maintenance and operations; and administration and management. The plan shall be officially adopted by the policy-making body, updated periodically and linked with a capital improvement budget and a phased development program. The system master plan shall implement policies adopted in the comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction. Interested and affected agencies, organizations, and groups shall be engaged in the planning process.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current plan with documentation of official approval; describe update process; and describe a phased implementation program with linkage to the agency's capital improvement budget. The system master plan shall include:

a. Agency mission (1.4);
b. Agency objectives (1.4.1);
c. Recreation and leisure trends analysis (10.5.1);
d. Needs assessment (10.4);
e. Community inventory (10.5.2); and
f. Level of service standards (10.3.1).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 120.

2.5 - Strategic Plan ★

Standard: **An agency shall have a strategic plan, approved by the approving authority, stating how the agency will achieve its mission, goals, and objectives over an extended period of time, typically three to five years. The strategic plan shall be reviewed annually. The goals and objectives of the plan shall be measurable to demonstrate progress and results. The strategic plan shall support the priorities and initiatives of the whole organization. The strategic plan is a tool to implement the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's strategic plan, date of approval by approving authority, evidence of last review, and indicate progress being made in implementing the plan.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, pp. 114-120.

2.6 - Feasibility Studies

Standard: **Studies shall be conducted to determine the feasibility of proposed facilities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of recent feasibility studies such as market, cost benefit, site, transportation, environmental and economic analyses.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 215-215.

2.7 - Site Plans

Standard: **There shall be site plans to guide the use of existing and the development of future areas and facilities. A site plan is a depiction of a park site of that is drawn to scale and delineates features such as building and facility locations, roads and trails, use areas and utility easements.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a representative sampling of the agency's area and facility site plans.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 230-232.

2.8 - Historical and Cultural Resource Management Plans

Standard: **Historical and cultural plans include an inventory of historical, cultural resources and strategies for how they will be managed. These resources may be addressed as part of the jurisdiction's comprehensive plan or the agency's park and recreation system master plan.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the historical and cultural plan(s).

2.9 - Community Involvement

Standard: **The agency shall include community involvement in the planning process that includes ongoing and systematic outreach to include the entire community. It is critical that the diversity of individuals (i.e., all cultures, ages, and abilities) and local, regional, and national non-governmental community organizations, agencies, businesses, and service providers such as the Red Cross, Sierra Club, Trust for Public Land, YMCA/YWCA, Boys and Girls Club, and local foundations and employers are afforded opportunities for input.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe how the diverse interests (community organizations, businesses and individuals) of the community were involved in the planning process.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, p. 220

2.10 - ADA Transition Plan

Standard: **The agency shall develop and adopt a phased plan for the removal of barriers at existing recreation facilities, parks, and amenities owned or operated by the agency, pursuant to the requirements of the US Department of Justice Title II regulation issued September 14, 2010 and effective March 15, 2011.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Submit minutes of the approving authority meeting approving the transition plan, or a copy of the plan noting the dates and times when plan tasks were completed.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 188; Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, p. 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, p. 253; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 288 and 400.

3.0 – Organization and Administration

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

The organizational structure provides alignment of responsibility and delegation of authority to enable the agency to carry out its mission. The roles, responsibilities and structure should be clearly understood by staff and the public.

Administrative reporting systems provide management information on the activities of the agency. Properly designed administrative reports will reflect comparative data and trends on activities. An effective administrative reporting system ensures communications throughout the chain of command.

Public information, community relations, and marketing are complementary functions within the agency. The functions overlap because they all deal with an organization's relationships and employ similar communication tools. While they have the same ultimate purpose of helping assure an organization's success, the purpose of each differs and each approaches the task from a different perspective.

To operate effectively, a park and recreation agency must have the support of its community. An agency can obtain such support by informing the public and news media of events that affect the lives of citizens in the community. By providing the news media and the community with information on agency administration and operations, a relationship of mutual trust, cooperation, and respect can be maintained.

An agency should make use of the many community organizations that exist in its jurisdiction and establish relationships with them. The park and recreation agency should play an active role in organizing community groups where they do not exist. By establishing such links with the community, the park and recreation agency learns of issues, needs, and opportunities and responds to them before they become problems. A well-organized community relations effort can act as an effective means of eliciting public support and can serve to identify problems in the making.

Effective market research, planning, product and program development, strategies, and objectives for delivering demand-driven, high quality programs and services contribute to successful park and recreation operations. Marketing is a process for accomplishing agency mission and objectives by developing, pricing, making accessible, and providing accurate and timely information about recreational opportunities that satisfy the wants/desires of target markets.

All park and recreation agencies perform certain marketing functions; the scope of their work however, depends on their size and mandate. Among the functions are user inquiry, development of an agency marketing philosophy and marketing plan, and development of operational procedures and policy guidelines to implement that philosophy. The complexities of marketing and related research functions require that all agency staff be appropriately educated about marketing and its application across functions.

3.1 - Organizational Structure

Standard: **The agency shall establish a staff organizational structure that reflects its methods of operation, its relationship to the community, and the relationships among the different organization components.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a chart showing the agency's organizational structure, interrelationships among organizational components, and the function of each component. Organizational components are the major subdivisions of the organization, e.g. departments and divisions. Indicate how this information is made available to staff and the public.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 73-87.

3.2 - Administrative Offices

Standard: **The agency administrative offices shall be accessible to the public and staff. There shall be administrative, meeting and storage space, and equipment adequate to perform the agency's functions and responsibilities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that describes the types of office space and administrative equipment used by the agency and how access is provided to the staff and the public.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 90.

3.2.1 - Support Services

Standard: **Sufficient and appropriate equipment, technology, clerical and administrative staff shall be provided to enable the professional staff to perform their appropriate functions.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe the equipment, technology, and services used to support professional staff.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 90-91.

3.3 - Internal Communication

Standard: **A communication system shall be established to ensure the accurate and timely transfer of internal information among staff.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a communication matrix illustrating how internal communications are managed by the agency.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 – Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, pp. 86-87.

3.4 - Public Information Policy and Procedure

Standard: **The agency shall have approved policies that govern what information shall be released, when it should be released, and by whom it should be released and that demonstrate the agency's commitment to inform the community and news media of events involving the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the written statement of policy and procedure, indicating approval by the proper authority.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 375-377.

3.4.1 - Public Information and Community Relations Responsibility

Standard: **A specific position in the agency shall be designated to direct the public information and community relations functions. The position serves as a point of control for information dissemination to the community and the media. The intent of the standard is to establish the authority and responsibility for developing and coordinating the agency's community relations function in an identifiable position.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position description that reflects responsibilities for public information and community relations functions.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 375-377.

3.4.2 - Community Relations Plan

Standard: **The agency shall have an established community relations plan that identifies and addresses community needs for all segments of its service population, which is evaluated periodically for effectiveness.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the community relations plan and latest evaluation. The community relations plan shall address the following:

a. Community relations policies for the agency;
b. Process and procedure for establishing contact with community organizations and other community groups;
c. Training needs for staff and community.

The community relations plan and marketing plan is often included in a single document.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 375-377.

3.4.3 - Marketing Plan

Standard: **The agency shall have an established marketing plan, based on market research that is evaluated periodically for effectiveness. The fundamental principle of marketing is to gain an understanding of customer needs, wants, concerns and behaviors. The marketing plan addresses the appropriate mix of communications tools to promote agency programs, facilities, events and services and to provide accurate, timely and useful information to the various segments of the target audience.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the plan and latest evaluation. The plan shall include:

a. Marketing objectives;
b. Situation assessment, to include:
    1. Examination of demographic trends
    2. Economic climate
c. Market coverage by alternative providers;
d. Segmentation, targeting, and positioning;
e. Marketing mix;
f. Marketing methods
g. Evaluation criteria and methods.

Research is important to support segmentation, targeting, and positioning. Common evaluation methods include surveys, focus groups, customer comment cards, and mystery shopping.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 359-377.

3.4.3.1 - Marketing Responsibility

Standard: **A specific position shall be designated to direct the marketing function. Marketing functions shall be the responsibility of a permanent position of the agency that works closely with all agency units in developing, coordinating, and implementing the agency marketing plan.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position description that includes responsibility for marketing.

3.5 - Utilization of Technology

Standard: **Technology shall be used to enable the agency to operate more efficiently and effectively. The agency should research and apply such resources progressively.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of progressive adoption, upgrade, installation, and/or use of technology. Examples could include but are not limited to communications and security systems, energy and records management systems, data management and sharing systems, lighting and irrigation systems, work orders and work assignment applications, financial systems, and class registration systems.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 305-345.

3.5.1 - Management Information Systems

Standard: **The Agency shall have management information systems that can produce reliable statistical and data summaries of agency activities, such as daily, monthly, and annual reports for use in management decision-making. The reports shall provide comparative data and statistics.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of recent statistical and data summaries and describe their use in management decision-making.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 310-313.

3.6 - Records Management Policy and Procedures

Standard: **The agency shall have established policy and procedures for control, maintenance, and retention of records that are periodically reviewed. Records management policies and procedures address retention, disposal, access, disclosure and distribution of documents, including freedom of information requests, and they must be consistent with legal requirements.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide records management policy and procedures and a copy of the most recent review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 312-313.

3.6.1 - Records Disaster Mitigation and Recovery Plan and Procedures

Standard: **There shall be an established records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures that are periodically reviewed for protecting records, storing them and recovering critical information after a disaster.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the records disaster mitigation and recovery plan and procedures and a copy of the most recent review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 14 – Information Technology Management, pp 325-330.

4.0 - Human Resources

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

To produce the level of quality that customers have come to expect, organizations must employ qualified employees. Qualified personnel bring to the organization the knowledge, skills, and abilities in specialized areas that are needed to design and deliver the benefits that customers seek from recreation and park experiences. Organizations that employ quality individuals who are capable of packaging and delivering experiences can attract and retain a strong and satisfied customer base; organizations that compromise on hiring quality may face difficulties in remaining competitive.

Employing qualified individuals is not only one of the most important functions of recreation, park, and leisure services organizations; it is also one of the most expensive. Generally, more than half of the operational expenditures of recreation and park organizations are allocated to personnel salaries and benefits. Considering the vital importance of hiring quality employees and the associated expense, it is essential for management to have a working knowledge of the principles, practices, and procedures for employing personnel in the recreation, park, and leisure services field. A well-prepared personnel policies and procedures manual provide a consistent road map for human resources decision making as well as standardized procedures. The development of a personnel policies and procedures manual may include a systematic and comprehensive outline of how the organization administers the policies and procedures for both the professional and non-professional employees, fair employment practices, and how it communicates to all employees the specific expectations of employment and finally, how the organization deals with complaints, grievances, and morale problems.

4.1 - Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual ★

Standard: **There shall be established policies that are reviewed periodically and govern the administration of personnel procedures for both professional and nonprofessional employees. The personnel policies and procedures manual shall be available to each employee, as appropriate to the position.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the personnel policies and procedures manual and the date of latest review. The personnel practices shall include procedures for

a. Selection, hiring, and dismissal;
b. Benefits including retirement, insurance, leaves, and other benefits;
c. Salary schedule;
d. Incentive system; and
e. Staff development program.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 443-444; Compendium Section 17-7.

4.1.1 - Code of Ethics

Standard: **There must be an established statement of ethical principles for agency personnel that provide a clear understanding of ethical responsibility involving issues as related to the park and recreation system, business dealings with other entities, interrelationships with other organizations and agencies, and interactions with participants.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the code of ethics.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 422-423.

4.1.1.1 - Staff Acceptance of Gifts and Gratuities

Standard: **The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and gratuities by staff members.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and gratuities by staff members.

4.1.2 - Recruitment Process

Standard: **There shall be a comprehensive recruitment process to attract qualified personnel that is based upon established recruitment procedures with specific recruitment objectives that are reviewed periodically. It is understood that in certain cases an agency is required to handle its personnel through a state or local civil service merit system, and is, therefore, linked to that system in the recruitment of its park and recreation personnel. Agencies are obligated to comply with all applicable statutes and policy statements.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide recruitment procedures, recruitment objectives, and last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 404-406.

4.1.3 - Equal Opportunity Employment and Workforce Diversity

Standard: **There shall be an established policy regarding diversity with evidence of implementation that assures equal opportunities for employment, promotion, and equity in employment working conditions and that complies with the American Disabilities Act.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the equal opportunity and workforce diversity policy and show evidence of implementation.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 437-438.

4.1.4 - Selection Process

Standard: **There shall be comprehensive procedures for hiring personnel. The agency shall also have a role in determination of skills and the personal attributes required for positions.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide selection process procedures and evidence that procedures are being followed. The procedures shall include information about the purpose, development, validity, utility, fairness, adverse impact, administration, scoring, and interpretation of all elements used in the selection process.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 408-414.

4.1.5 - Background Investigation

Standard: **The agency process for hiring personnel shall include procedures for a national background investigation prior to appointment, including verification of a candidate's qualifying credentials, review of a candidate's civil and criminal record, particular attention to drug and child/adult-abuse records, and driving record for employees assigned to operate motor vehicles. Part of the process shall include criteria for disqualification which at a minimum is consistent with the "Criteria for Exclusion" guidelines adopted by the National Recreation and Parks Association.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the background investigation procedures and examples of background checks completed.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 412-413.

4.1.6 - Employee Benefits

Standard: **There shall be an established employee benefits plan. Each of the benefits provided to employees shall be described in terms of what is provided, under what conditions, and the extent of the benefit. Types of benefits often include administrative leave, holiday leave, sick leave, vacation leave, retirement program, health insurance program, disability and death benefits program, liability protection program, provision of clothing and equipment used by employees in performing park and recreation functions, employee education benefits, if any, and personnel support services to employees.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the employee benefits plan.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 416-422.

4.1.7 - Supervision

Standard: **There shall be constructive and effective supervision of all personnel to help them grow professionally and improve programs and services. Supervision is an on-going and systematic process that is helpful for the well-being of the individual and agency. Important characteristics of effective supervision are the ability to communicate expectations, delegate authority commensurate with the assigned tasks, provide feedback, and motivate. There should be supervisory processes, procedures, or tools that highlight staff orientation, staff coaching, mentoring and training, performance review, and human resource policies affecting supervision of staff such as those dealing with harassment and discipline.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of processes, procedures, or tools used to assure constructive and effective employee supervision.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 18 – Supervision of Personnel, pp 461-484.

4.1.8 - Compensation Plan

Standard: **There shall be an established compensation plan that establishes equity of compensation among units within the agency that is reviewed periodically. The compensation plan for an agency shall take into account agency employment standards, agency skill needs, and compensation levels offered by other local employers.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the compensation plan and a copy of its most recent review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 414-422.

4.1.9 - Performance Evaluation

Standard: **There shall be a fair and systematic procedure for annual or periodic appraisal of job performance. Personnel evaluation shall be utilized for the development and improved quality of the individual's performance on the job, as well as a basis for promotion, monetary increments, and dismissal. Although evaluation is a day-by-day process, there shall be periodic specific reviews with the employee. An employee's personnel file shall include a written annual evaluation.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures and a sample of completed performance evaluations without identifying personal information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 445-448.

4.1.10 - Promotion

Standard: **There shall be an established policy and procedures available to all employees defining the promotion process and the agency's role. The park and recreation agency may rely upon a state or local civil service commission, or other public or private external organization to administer one or more elements of the process in accordance with legal, professional, and administrative requirements.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy and procedures, and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp 445-448.

4.1.11 - Disciplinary System

Standard: **There shall be an established disciplinary system based on the code of conduct and performance. The system shall specify the conduct expected of employees. Prohibitions should be specific, whereas approved behavior may be stated in general terms (e.g., courtesy, punctuality).**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the code of conduct and performance and the policies and procedures that guide the disciplinary system and how this information is communicated and made accessible to employees. Include copies of disciplinary action steps included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable. This system shall address the following topics:

a. Compliance with agency statements;
b. Unbecoming conduct;
c. Appropriate appearance;
d. Use of alcohol and drugs;
e. Acceptance of gratuities, bribes, or rewards;
f. Abuse of authority; and
g. Proper care and maintenance of equipment.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 423-427.

4.1.12 - Grievance Procedures

Standard: **There shall be an established grievance procedure, available to all employees. The procedure shall identify matters that are grievable; establish time limitations for filing or presenting the grievance; establish steps and time limitations at each step in the grievance procedure; and establish criteria for employee representation. Formal grievance procedures shall be written in clear, concise terms.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the grievance procedures and indicate how the procedures have been communicated to the employees. Include grievance procedures included in collective bargaining agreements, if applicable.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, pp 427-430.

4.1.13 - Termination and End of Employment

Standard: **There shall be established policies and procedures for termination and end of employment.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the termination and end of employment policies and procedures, and indicate how they have been communicated to employees.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, p. 426.

4.2 - Staff Qualifications

Standard: **The agency shall employ staff qualified to develop and operate programs and services in furtherance of goals and objectives. Staff shall be qualified for the positions as provided in the job descriptions and possess specified licenses and certificates. Park and recreation personnel shall have certification and/or educational training appropriate to the position.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide job descriptions for a representative sample of key positions and resumes for the current incumbents.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 451.

4.3 - Job Analyses for Job Descriptions

Standard: **Established job descriptions for all positions shall be based on the job analysis and reviewed periodically.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a job description for a full-time, part-time, temporary and internship position, and, if applicable, an example of a job analysis with last review. The job descriptions shall include, at a minimum:

a. Duties of each position;
b. Responsibilities of each position;
c. Tasks of each position; and
d. Minimum level of proficiency necessary in the job-related skills, knowledge, abilities, and behaviors.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp.439-441.

4.4 - Chief Administrator

Standard: **The agency shall have a chief administrator responsible to the approving authority for the management, direction, and control of the operations and administration of the agency and with authority to perform such responsibilities. The chief administrator shall be employed full-time, year-round, and be qualified by experience, education, certification, and/or training in park, recreation, leisure services, tourism, or related disciplines. These qualifications shall be verified and demonstrated specifically as to how it is related to park and/or recreation management.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the chief administrator position description and the resume of the current incumbent. If she/he is from a related discipline, provide a summary of how the person's qualifications relate to park and/or recreation management.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 433-438.

4.4.1 - Leadership Succession Procedure

Standard: **The agency shall have an established procedure to ensure that leadership is available when the agency's chief administrator is incapacitated, off duty, out of town, or otherwise unable to act.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the written procedure, such as continuity plan, which indicates approval by the proper authority.

4.5 - Workforce Health and Wellness Program

Standard: **The agency shall have an employee health and wellness program showing periodic evaluation of the program status.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence of the agency's employee health and wellness program, level of participation and most recent evaluation.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 441-442.

4.6 - Orientation Program

Standard: **There shall be an orientation program for all personnel employed by the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide outline of the orientation program and a representative example of materials distributed at an orientation. The orientation program should include:

a. Philosophy, goals, and objectives;
b. The history and development of the agency;
c. Pertinent sociological and environmental factors of the community and specific neighborhoods in which the individual is to serve (environmental scan); and
d. Review of program/parks policies and procedures manuals, job duties, staff procedures, first aid and safety concerns and guidelines and forms review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 442-443.

4.6.1 - Employee Training and Development Program

Standard: **There shall be a program of employee development which is available to employees throughout the agency. It should be based on needs of individual employees, future organizational needs, and is evaluated and updated periodically. The program must notify personnel of available and/or required training, maintain training records, and assure that required training programs are attended. The program should incorporate in-service training and succession planning to ensure the continued effective performance of the organization after the departure of key staff.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe the scope and components of the employee development and training program, provide an outline of training offered (mandatory and discretionary), and provide lists of participants for the prior calendar year, and last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 448-451.

4.6.2 - Professional Certification and Organization Membership

Standard: **Professional staff shall be active members of their professional organization(s) and pursue professional certifications within their respective disciplines. "Active" means more than holding membership, including attendance at meetings, making presentations, participating in committee work, holding elected and appointed positions, and participation in educational opportunities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a list of staff with professional certifications and also provide a list of staff that have actively participated in a professional organization during the prior calendar year, indicating the nature of participation. The following are examples for park and recreation professionals e.g. Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP), Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE), Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) for park and recreation professionals.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 451.

4.7 - Volunteer Management

Standard: **There shall be a volunteer management function within the agency, including a comprehensive volunteer management manual that includes policies and procedures related to the management of volunteers.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the volunteer management manual.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 454-458.

4.7.1 - Use of Volunteers

Standard: **Volunteers shall be used by the agency in a variety of positions.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide list of functions in which agency volunteers are used, the extent of use, and examples of volunteer position descriptions.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 455-456.

4.7.2 - Volunteer Recruitment, Selection, Orientation, Training, and Retention

Standard: **There shall be an on-going function within the agency for the recruitment, selection, orientation, training and retention of volunteers, including procedures on background screening. Background investigations shall be made for all volunteers who work routinely with vulnerable populations, especially youth, senior adults, and persons with disabilities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's recruitment, selection, orientation, training, and retention procedures. Provide the agency's background investigation procedures for volunteers and evidence of implementation.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 456-457.

4.7.3 - Supervision and Evaluation of Volunteers

Standard: **Agency volunteers shall be monitored, shall receive supervisory visits, and be evaluated regarding performance. Supervision and evaluation of volunteers is important to ensure adequate training is provided and to verify satisfactory conduct and performance. The degree to which the agency supervises and evaluates volunteers may vary depending on the role of the volunteers.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide written description of the monitoring system including current practices for supervisory visits, and examples of evaluations.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 457.

4.7.4 - Recognition of Volunteers

Standard: **There agency shall recognize volunteers for their contributions. Recognition may take many forms, depending on the nature of volunteer roles.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a description of the recognition program and recognitions given over the past calendar year.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 457-458.

4.7.5 - Liability Coverage for Volunteers

Standard: **Agency volunteers shall be covered for negligence liability.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation indicating coverage of volunteers for negligence liability.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, p. 458.

4.8 - Consultants and Contract Employees

Standard: **The agency shall have policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's policies and procedures regarding the use of consultants and contract employees.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 17 – Human Resource Management, pp. 458-459.

5.0 - Financial Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Financial management is the process of planning for, acquiring, and using funds to achieve predetermined organizational goals and objectives. The increasing demand for more and better services, continuing upward spiral of costs, increasing emphasis on fiscal responsibility and accountability, and the unwillingness of taxpayers support higher taxes, are all forcing park and recreation organizations to become more effective and efficient in all aspects of their financial operations. Parks and recreation managers must possess the ability to secure, organize, and control the financial resources of the organization to assure the success and survival of their organizations.

Formal fiscal control and monitoring procedures enable an agency to establish accountability, to comply with funding authorizations and restrictions, to ensure that disbursements are for designated and approved proposes and to alert agency management to possible problems.

5.1 - Fiscal Policy ★

Standard: **Fiscal policies setting guidelines for management and control of revenues, expenditures, and investment of funds shall be set forth clearly in writing, and the legal authority must be clearly established.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide fiscal policies and legal authority.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 487-494.

5.1.1 - Comprehensive Revenue Policy ★

Standard: **There shall be an established revenue policy that is periodically updated regarding fees and charges for services and the strategies and methodologies for determining fees and charges and levels of cost recovery.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy on fees and charges, the current fee schedules or cost-recovery procedures, and the most recent review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 500-515.

5.1.2 - Agency Acceptance of Gifts and Donations

Standard: **The agency shall have an established policy for the acceptance of gifts and donations.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the policy on acceptance of gifts and donations.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 511-514.

5.1.3 - Grants Procedures

Standard: **Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall procure regional, state, federal and/or other applicable agency grants to supplement funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement grant opportunities. Prior to grant procurement, agencies shall evaluate how application, approval, implementation and management processes will be coordinated.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedure to procure grants along with a summary of grants received by the agency for the past five years, including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor, date awarded, grant amount and agency match.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 508-509.

5.1.4 - Private, Corporate, and Non-Profit Support Procedures

Standard: **Where feasible and appropriate, the agency shall solicit private, corporate, and non-profit support to supplement agency funding through an established procedure to research, coordinate and implement alternative funding options. Prior to acceptance of support the agency shall evaluate the terms of acceptance and how the implementation and management process will be coordinated.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedure to solicit private, corporate and non-profit support along with a summary of such support received by the agency for the past five years including identification of the following: project descriptions, grantor/sponsor, date awarded, and value of the contribution and method of recognition.

5.2 - Fiscal Management Procedures

Standard: **There shall be established procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for the fiscal management of the agency.

5.2.1 - Authority and Responsibility for Fiscal Management

Standard: **The agency's chief administrator shall be designated as having the authority and responsibility for the fiscal management of the agency. Although an agency's chief administrator is ultimately responsible for all agency fiscal matters, the size and complexity of the agency may dictate the need to delegate responsibility for fiscal management functions to an identifiable person or component within the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation demonstrating clear delegation of fiscal authority for the agency.

5.2.2 - Purchasing Procedures

Standard: **Agencies shall have established procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for the requisition and purchase of agency equipment, supplies, and services, including:

a. Bidding procedures;
b. Criteria for the selection of vendors and bidders; and
c. Procedures for disbursement of petty cash and issuance; and
d. Use of procurement cards, if applicable.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 515-517.

5.2.2.1 - Emergency Purchase Procedures

Standard: **There shall be established procedures for emergency purchases within the agency to secure equipment or services in a swift and efficient manner.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for emergency purchases.

5.3 - Accounting System

Standard: **The agency shall have a comprehensive accounting system to ensure an orderly, accurate, and complete documentation of the flow of funds. The accounting system shall facilitate rapid retrieval of information on the status of appropriations, expenditures and revenue any time the information is required.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a description of the accounting system.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 517-519.

5.3.1 - Financial Status Reports

Standard: **The agency shall periodically, monthly at a minimum, provide financial status reports. Each appropriation and expenditure shall be classified according to function, organizational component, activity, object, and program.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide financial status reports for the previous three months. Financial status reports shall include, at a minimum:

a. Initial appropriation for each account (or program);
b. Balances at the commencement of the regularly defined period;
c. Expenditures and encumbrances made during the period;
d. Unencumbered balances; and
e. Revenue status.

5.3.2 - Position Authorization Procedures

Standard: **The agency shall have established procedures for maintaining control over the number and type of authorized filled and vacant positions to ensure that persons on the payroll are legally employed and that positions are in accordance with budget authorizations.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position authorization procedures and budgeted positions.

5.3.3 - Fiscal Control and Monitoring Procedures

Standard: **The agency shall have established procedures used for collecting, safeguarding, and disbursing funds. The procedures shall enhance security and accountability of all monies received by the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the fiscal control and monitoring procedures. The fiscal control and monitoring procedures shall include:

a. Maintenance of an allotment system, if any, or records of appropriations among organizational components;
b. Preparation of financial statements;
c. Conduct of internal audits; and
d. Persons or positions authorized to accept or disburse funds.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 20 – Budgeting, pp. 572-576.

5.3.4 - Independent Audit ★

Standard: **There shall be an independent audit of the agency's fiscal activities conducted annually or at a time stipulated by applicable statute or regulation. The audit may be performed by the government's internal audit staff (external to the agency being audited) or by an outside certified public accounting firm.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the most recent independent audit and management letter, or most recent Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and provide the response to the audit recommendations.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 19 – Financial Management, pp. 520-523.

5.4 - Annual or Biennial Budget ★

Standard: **There shall be an annual or biennial operating and capital improvements budgets, including both revenues and expenditures. Operating budgets include both capital and operating expenses, cover a one-year or two-year period and capital improvements may extend five or six years with annual review. The nature of an agency's budgetary system may be determined by the kind of system in use by its governmental authority.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current and approved operating and capital improvements budgets.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 20 – Budgeting, pp. 527-576.

5.4.1 - Budget Development Guidelines

Standard: **The agency shall establish guidelines to inform the heads of organizational components of the essential tasks and procedures relating to the budget preparation process. The guidelines shall include instructions for preparing budget request documents and for providing adequate justification for major continuing expenditures or changes in continuing expenditures of budget items. Information should be included regarding operating impact.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the budget development guidelines.

5.4.2 - Budget Recommendations

Standard: **Major organizational components shall provide recommendations, based on operational and activity analysis, for use in the development of the agency's budget.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of agency component recommendations and evidence of their consideration in the budgeting process. Recommendations shall include:

a. Assessment of current and future personnel needs;
b. Costs per program element;
c. Line items.

5.5 - Budget Control Procedures

Standard: **The agency shall have procedures for budget control with periodic reporting of revenues and expenditures, and continuous management review.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for budget control within the agency and examples of periodic reports.

5.5.1 - Supplemental/Emergency Appropriations Procedures

Standard: **The agency shall have established procedures for requesting supplemental or emergency appropriations and fund transfers to meet circumstances that cannot be anticipated by prior fiscal planning efforts. Mechanisms of adjustment may include transferring funds from one account to another and/or requesting that additional funds be granted for agency needs.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the supplemental/emergency appropriations procedures.

5.5.2 - Inventory and Fixed Assets Control

Standard: **The agency shall have established procedures for inventory control of property, equipment, and other assets to prevent losses and unauthorized use, and to avoid both inventory excesses and shortages. There shall be a complete and current listing of agency assets.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide procedures for inventory and fixed asset control.

6.0 - Programs and Services Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

A program is a means to leisure and recreation as well as a vehicle to deliver benefits to participants. High-quality programming is a dynamic process that continues as the recreation experience unfolds. A systematic and well-researched analysis should be completed in determining what programs and services should be provided by the agency. The public park and recreation program should be coordinated with related programs of other governmental, for-profit and non-profit organizations in the community, such as schools, voluntary agencies, and churches, to provide maximum coverage with a minimum of duplication, as well as to reduce competition.

The primary responsibility of the park and recreation professional is to provide programs by which leisure and recreation experiences and environments enhance the well-being and quality of life for participants. Certain program and service determinants give direction to what is provided and assessed. These determinants are: conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure; agency philosophy, goals and objectives; constituent interests and desired needs; and community opportunities for the public. Program and service objectives must be benefits-focused. Many agencies put objectives in "SMART" format (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed) to assure that objectives are measurable and they use logic modeling to focus their objectives on outcomes and impacts.

The recreation programming plan includes all elements and services of the public park and recreation agency's programming functions, including activity selection, type and scope of programs and outreach initiatives. While related to a master or comprehensive plan, the recreation programming plan shall be an outgrowth of other strategic and program forecasting tools.

Park and recreation agencies should have a program that educates the public about the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits that leisure (time, activity, experience) and participation in self-directed and leader-directed recreation activities provide. It should include the three (3) behavior domains: psychomotor (manipulation and coordination of physical skills and abilities), affective (interests, appreciations, attitudes and values) and cognitive (intellectual skills and abilities).

A leisure education program consists of six (6) components:

1. Awareness of self in leisure;
2. Appreciation of leisure;
3. Understanding self-determination in leisure;
4. Making decisions regarding leisure participation;
5. Knowledge and use of resources for facilitating leisure; and
6. Promoting social interaction.

Examples include:

- Cooperative agreements with local schools to develop classes, workshops or events to inform children and adolescents of leisure benefits.
- Community presentations regarding leisure benefits at libraries, senior citizen centers, special recreation associations, and at business and industry meetings.
- Distributing a "benefits" CD or website hyperlink to educate, publicize, and inform of agency programs and services through various social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and public cable TV channels.
- Organizing and categorizing agency publications and photos according to the benefits associated with targeted programs and services, e.g., benefits of nature walks for senior populations and

benefits of outdoor play for children.

- Marketing and advertising the benefits message in agency telephone messages, employee newsletters, and policy manuals, on staff apparel, facility and vehicle signage.
- Including benefit statements in brochures and program descriptions so that prospective participants will see what they can gain from participating in programs.
- Including the question of "*How have you benefited from this program*?" in program evaluations, causing the participant to reflect on the benefits of the program.
- Including the benefits of programs and services on agency websites and in email/e-blasts, press releases and public service announcements.
- Conducting benefits-based program research studies.
- Conducting and reporting follow-up assessments and data analyses.

6.1 - Recreation Programming Plan

***Standard*: The agency shall have a recreation programming plan covering 3-5 years that is updated periodically and a current-year implementation plan. The plan shall address all programs and services of the agency's programming functions, including activity selection, type and scope of programs and outreach initiatives.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current recreation programming plan and describe the update process. This plan shall address how the agency delivers services to persons of all ages and abilities, how it develops program offerings and it shall include the following elements:

a. Program objectives (6.2);
b. Program and service statistics (10.5);
c. Program and service determinants (6.1.1);
d. Recreation and leisure trends analysis (10.5.1); and
e. Community inventory (10.5.2).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 137-138.

6.1.1 - Program and Service Determinants

***Standard*: A systematic and studied approach shall be taken in determining what programs and services shall be provided by the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation and examples demonstrating that the six (6) program and service determinants are used in providing programs and services. The programs and services provided by the agency shall be based on the

a. Conceptual foundations of play, recreation, and leisure;
b. Organizational agency philosophy, mission and vision, and goals and objectives;
c. Constituent interests and desired needs;
d. Creation of a constituent-centered culture;
e. Experiences desirable for clientele; and
f. Community opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 155-159.

6.1.2 - Participant Involvement

Standard: **The development of agency programs and services shall involve participants.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe the process and provide examples of how the agency obtains and utilizes participant input. Participants shall have involvement in:

a. Recommending policy;
b. Planning activities;
c. Conducting activities; and
d. Sponsoring activities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 176-177.

6.1.3 - Self-Directed Programs and Services

Standard: **The agency shall offer self-directed recreation opportunities for individuals and groups to participate without leadership, under only general supervision. Examples include picnic facilities, tennis courts, roadways in scenic areas, bridle trails, self-guiding nature trails, and open playgrounds.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how the agency provides self-directed recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 161.

6.1.4 - Leader-Directed Programs and Services

***Standard*:** **The agency shall offer leader-directed recreation opportunities that provide recreation opportunities where participant involvement is directed by a leader, including skills instruction classes. Examples include tennis, crafts, dance; synchronized swimming performance; creative dramatics for children.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how the agency provides leader-directed recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 161.

6.1.5 - Facilitated Programs and Services

Standard: **The agency shall facilitate assistance to individuals and groups of individuals that provide or want to provide recreation programs and leisure services independently from the agency. An example of facilitated programs and services is an individual or group that wishes to start a community theater organization; the agency may help initially by providing a meeting place, some administrative help in publicity, and "seed money" with the intent that the organization will become self-sustaining. Demonstration projects may be utilized for this purpose.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how the agency provides facilitated recreation opportunities, including a list of such opportunities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 161-162.

6.1.6 - Cooperative Programming

Standard: **The agency shall enter into cooperative agreements with public, commercial, and nonprofit entities to provide programming.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide current examples of cooperative programming with documentation, such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), Memoranda of Agreement (MOA), or partnership agreements.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 6 – Partnerships, pp. 98-102; Chapter 7 – Planning for Strategic Management, p. 159.

6.2 - Program Objectives

Standard: **There shall be specific objectives established for programs and services that are reviewed periodically. Objectives shall be specific and measurable as to the actual outcome or impact desired by the program or service so that progress on meeting objectives can be evaluated (see standard 10.2 Outcomes Assessment). Objectives shall be defined by program area, such as nature, dance, music, sports, fitness, special events and they can be further defined into levels such as beginner, intermediate and advanced.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide measurable objectives for each program and service area and the last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 165-172.

6.3 - Scope of Program Opportunities

Standard: **The content of agency programs shall be related directly to stated program objectives and shall provide for individual differences of interests, abilities (mental, social, physical), and backgrounds. Activities selected shall be suited to and contribute toward fulfillment of the basic physical, emotional, social, and intellectual requirements of individuals. The agency should take into consideration the total community offerings; some opportunities may be offered by other organizations, private, public, and non-profit.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a matrix or listing of programs by fields, demonstrating clearly how the agency provides opportunities for proficiency levels, socioeconomic levels, racial and ethnic backgrounds, ages, and genders.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 163-165, 174-179.

6.3.1 - Outreach to Diverse Underserved Populations

Standard: **The agency shall proactively extend programs and services to residents who may be underserved in the community. To encourage participation in parks and recreation programs and services, agencies shall identify and address barriers that may limit access including physical, social and mental abilities and financial, geographic and cultural barriers. Financial barriers may be addressed through reduced fees and scholarships. Agencies should offer inclusionary support services to ensure access to programs and services for people of all abilities and socioeconomic status.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Identify underserved populations (provide methodology and data used for this analysis), describe specific barriers within the community that limit participation and provide examples of outreach programs and services offered by the agency to meet the needs of these populations and overcome barriers to access.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, p. 139; Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, p. 177.

6.4 - Community Education for Leisure Process

***Standard*:** **The agency shall have a process to educate the general citizenry about the use of leisure time and the outcomes, benefits, values, and positive impacts of leisure and recreation services. The process shall be periodically evaluated for effectiveness. Educating the public about leisure and recreation shall be ongoing and systematic and should be done in cooperation with the community, e.g., schools, other leisure agencies, business, industry, and commercial recreation establishments.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of the methods utilized by the agency to educate the community on the benefits, values, and impacts of leisure and recreation services to a diverse range of participants and non-participants. Provide the last review of effectiveness.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 172-174.

6.4.1 - Community Health and Wellness Education and Promotion

Standard: **The agency shall have policies, procedures, or programs to educate and promote health and wellness in the community.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's policies, procedures, or programs to educate and promote health and wellness in the community such as:

a. Physical activity;
b. Healthy food and beverage offerings;
c. Nutrition education;
d. Substance abuse prevention.

Also provide examples of implementation.

6.5 - Participant and Spectator Code of Conduct

Standard: **The agency shall have "code of conduct" guidelines for appropriate participant and spectator conduct at programs and events, and the agency shall proactively inform and remind staff, coaches, participants and spectators about the code of conduct.**

Suggested Evident of Compliance: Provide the code of conduct for participants and spectators and describe how program participants, coaches, and spectators are informed of the code of conduct. The agency should collaborate with affiliate groups providing training for youth and coaches to inform and educate about the participant and spectator code of conduct.

7.0 - Facility and Land Use Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Physical resource planning is a process focusing on physical resources. The planning process conforms to the vision and mission statement of the controlling agency. Natural resources planning stretches across a continuum that has strict preservation at one end and complete modification at the other.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 207-238.

The planning, development and management of physical resources are functions of all park and recreation managers, whether they are in the public, nonprofit, or for-profit sectors. Physical resources include natural undeveloped lands and waters, and developed areas including urban parks, special complexes (such as sports and aquatics), and buildings of various functions (such as fitness centers, community centers and interpretive centers.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 239-266.

Ready access to accurate land and facility records is a basic requirement for program planning and facility management. Floor plans with square foot areas for each program space allow programmers and facility managers to determine how to most efficiently use program spaces. Building plans and specifications are invaluable for facilities management and capital programming because they provide insight into the design, materials, and equipment used in construction. Information from these documents is often used to determine the remaining useful life of building systems. Grants to purchase parkland and construct recreation facilities from such programs as the 1965 Land and Water Conservation Act (LAWCON) and the 1978 Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR) place restrictions on use and disposition.

High-performing maintenance operations organizations ensure quality experiences through well-managed spaces and places. Customized systems' approaches and solutions to operations management satisfy accreditation standards through the development, consistent use, and periodic review of management plans, policies, programs, and procedures as well as inspections and assessment schedules and records.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267-304.

7.1 - Parkland Acquisition Procedures

Standard: **The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the acquisition of lands for park, recreation, conservation, and historical-cultural purposes that are backed by legal authority and periodically reviewed. This authority usually originates in state enabling acts, is delegated to local governments and is implemented through local charters and ordinances.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide policy and procedures for land acquisition, the citation of legal authority to acquire lands, and last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 207-229.

7.2 - Areas and Facilities Development Policies and Procedures

***Standard*: The agency shall have established policies and procedures for the development of park and recreation land and facilities that are reviewed periodically. Policies and procedures should consider market projections, applicable open space and design standards and coordination with overall planning for the jurisdiction.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide land development policies and procedures, with the last review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 230-236.

7.2.1 - ADA Existing Facility and Site Access Audit

***Standard:* The agency shall complete an access audit of all existing sites and facilities. Pursuant to the US Department of Justice Title II regulation at 35.105, the agency must evaluate its existing facilities and sites against the most current final and enforceable Standard for Accessible Design.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Submit completed checklists, digital images and site reports as evidence of completion of the access audit.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 226 and 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 253 and 263; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, p. 288.

7.3 - Defense Against Encroachment Procedures

***Standard:* The agency shall have procedures for protecting park and recreation lands and facilities from encroachment. The procedures should include progressive steps to address escalated encroachment issues.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures regarding defense against encroachment.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208 and 224.

7.4 - Disposal of Lands Procedures

***Standard:* The agency shall have established procedures regarding the disposal of park and recreation lands to ensure that public recreational benefits are not diminished through the sale or transfer of parkland.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures for disposal of park and recreation land.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208, 210-213; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, p. 250; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 286 and 290.

7.5 - Maintenance and Operations Management Standards

Standard: **The agency shall have established maintenance and operations standards that are reviewed periodically for management of all park and recreation areas and facilities, including specialty facilities such as marinas, ice rinks, golf courses, zoological facilities, equestrian facilities, aquatic or athletic facilities, nature centers, where applicable. Parks, facilities and other recreational elements should be identified according to the intended use of the area, ranging from heavily used and high developed areas to those that are lightly used and less developed via a park classification or maintenance classification system. Each of these areas should be assigned an appropriate set of maintenance standards including both recommended frequency and acceptable quality.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the maintenance standards for all parks, facilities and specialty areas, including evidence of park maintenance classification according to the intended use of the area, ranging from heavily used and high developed areas to those that are lightly used and less developed. Provide the most recent review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 253 and 263; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 290-300.

7.5.1 - Facility Legal Requirements

Standard: **There shall be a regular review of legal requirements related to facilities, such as licenses, sanitary regulations, fire laws, and safety measures, and inspections of adherence thereto. Special attention should be given aquatic facilities, child care facilities, concessions, kitchens, and zoos.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a matrix showing a representative sample of facilities and the types of regulatory permits, licenses or inspections that are required including copy of last review or update.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208-210, 214-216, 225-227, 231; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 251, 259, 263; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267, 269, 286, 291.

7.5.2 - Preventative Maintenance Plan

***Standard*: There shall be a comprehensive preventative maintenance plan to provide periodic, scheduled inspections, assessment and repair, and replacement of infrastructure, systems and assets. This includes certifying, checking or testing for optimum operation based on applicable industry standards, local guidelines, city requirements and/or manufacturer's recommendation for maintenance and replacement of parks, with the intent to ensure that park assets are maintained for optimum use and safety and have the ability to reach or extend its full life cycle and expected return on investment.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the preventative maintenance plan and examples of detailed preventative maintenance programs for identified parks, recreation areas and facilities with special attention given to playground equipment, aquatic facilities, pedestrian pathways, building infrastructure and other high impact assets, along with copies of completed, recent inspections and safety checks for a sampling of facilities/areas.

7.6 - Fleet Management Plan

Standard: **The agency shall have an established fleet management plan comprised of an inventory of all vehicles, rolling stock and other major equipment and inspection and replacement schedules.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the fleet management plan.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 296-297, 299-300.

7.7 - Agency-Owned Equipment, Materials, Tools, and Supplies Policies and Procedures

***Standard*:** **There shall be policies and procedures for the management of and accountability for agency-owned equipment, materials, tools, and supplies, including procedures for purchase and distribution to authorized persons, proper training of appropriate personnel in use of equipment, safe and secure storage of equipment, and maintenance of all equipment in operational readiness and working order. Such property includes supplies, materials, tools, expendable items, vehicles, installed and mobile equipment, and personal wear items used by agency personnel.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide policy and procedures regarding agency-owned equipment and property.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 213, 217, 229, 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 251, 253-255, 259-259, 261, 264; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267, 277-278, 282-284, 292-293, 295-300.

7.7.1 - Building Plans and Specifications

***Standard*:** **The agency shall have on file floor plans, specifications, and/or as-built drawings for major facilities constructed since 1965. These records contain information necessary for efficient programming, quality facility maintenance and effective capital project programming. Projects funded with funds from governmental grant programs such as LAWCON and UPARR place restrictions on use and disposition.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence that plans and specifications for facilities with greater than 10,000 square feet of indoor space constructed since 1965 are on file.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 139-141; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 239, 243, 250-256; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 267, 276-275, 278-288, 299.

7.7.2 – Land and Lease Records

***Standard*: The agency shall have records on file of all lands owned or property leased by or for the agency. Each record shall include ownership, leases, legal description, and easements and covenants that restrict use or disposition. The records shall also include date and manner of acquisition. The manner of acquisition can limit right to use and dispose of parkland, for example acquisitions funded with funds from governmental grant programs such as LAWCON and UPARR place restrictions. Gifts and bequests often contain restrictive covenants that reflect the desires of donors.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide evidence that land records for land acquired since 1965 are on file.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208-213, 216-217.

7.8 - Environmental Sustainability Policy and Program

***Standard*: The agency shall have an established policy on environmental sustainability that states the agency position on energy and resource conservation. The policy should address sustainable product purchasing; reduction and handling of waste; wise use and protection of land, air, water and wildlife; and sustainable design/construction of buildings and facilities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's environmental sustainability policy and examples of projects and initiatives that demonstrate the agency's commitment to implementation. Examples include ecosystem and green infrastructure plans/programs, capital improvements utilizing green/sustainable designs, carbon footprint analysis and reduction goals, internal/external communication and outreach programs.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 210, 215-216, 226, 232-233, 236; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 240, 247; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 286-295.

7.9 Natural Resource Management Plans and Procedures

***Standard*: There shall be natural resource management plans for environmentally unique or sensitive areas such as valuable wetlands, riverbanks and woodlands and there shall be environmental protection procedures, such as for erosion control, conduct of nature studies, wildlife and habitat preservation, and protection of water supply reservoirs and water recharge areas. Even if the agency does not own or control the natural resource, there shall be procedures to encourage and ensure environmental stewardship through volunteer steward programs and/or interpretive education and other learning opportunities. The agency should work with other agencies to meet and promote environmentally sound maintenance and land management standards.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the natural resource management plan(s) and procedures and examples of outreach and education.

7.9.1 - Recycling and/or Zero Waste Plan

***Standard*: There shall be a recycling and/or zero waste plan for park and recreation facilities and administrative offices that is systematically monitored and periodically reviewed. The plan shall also include an educational component for both users and employees. The recycling and/or zero waste plan should include all major products suitable for recycling in the given region with an emphasis on making the recycling process easy and convenient for park and recreation users.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a description of the recycling and/or zero waste plan for facilities and administrative offices and provide the last review with statistics on the amounts of materials recycled or the percent of total waste recycled for the most recent reporting period.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 290-292.

7.10 - Maintenance Personnel Assignment Procedures

***Standard:* The agency shall have procedures for the assignment of competent personnel with clearly defined duties for routine maintenance, repairs, and improvement of areas, facilities, and equipment, including responsibility for general cleanliness and overall attractiveness. Effective maintenance of grounds and facilities requires the selection, training, and supervision of workers in a wide variety of tasks ranging from seasonal laborers to skilled trades. Supervisory staff must be able to focus on maintenance management, such as workload control, as well as supervise the technical details of maintenance work.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of methods used by the agency to assign staff.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 254 and 259; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 284 and 295.

7.11 - Capital Asset Depreciation and Replacement Schedule

***Standard*: The agency shall have an established depreciation and replacement schedule for all park and recreation capital assets including buildings, facilities, and equipment that have predictable life cycles. Schedules should identify the useful life of each element and the associated costs of replacement. Capital asset depreciation and replacement schedules, including projected costs of replacement, should be reflected in the agency's financial plan.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the capital asset depreciation and replacement schedule.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 208, 213-215, 217-218, 220, 225-259, 231; Chapter 12 – Physical Resource Management, pp. 240 and 247; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, pp. 289 and 294.

8.0 - Public Safety, Law Enforcement, and Security

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Laws and ordinances provide the foundation for controlling activities and behavior within the jurisdiction of the agency. General municipal codes, laws and ordinances and state and federal laws are applicable to parks and recreation areas and facilities. However, these laws generally have broad application and lack specificity as they relate to the control and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. Special laws and ordinances may be enacted to specifically address and guide public use and behavior and may delegate authority to issue and enforce permits, licenses, rules and regulations applicable to parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Agency staff are first-in-line to gain compliance with ordinances, rules and regulations. Regardless of whether the agency employs law enforcement officers or contracts for law enforcement services, agency staff have responsibility to educate patrons on the proper use of parks, recreation areas and facilities. However, when patrons fail to comply, enforcement becomes the responsibility of sworn law enforcement officers.

For agencies relying on the services of law enforcement officers from other jurisdictions or departments, it is essential that formalized liaison relationships be established between agency staff and the official law enforcement organization.

Particular attention should be given to national, state and local emergency plans and procedures directed toward large-scale natural disasters, such as earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, forest fires, and floods. Plans should include evacuation procedures, inventories and locations of equipment and materials, displacement plans for facility residents and activities, and provision of psychological aid for staff affected by emergencies.

8.1 - Codes, Laws, and Ordinances ★

***Standard*: Public safety and law enforcement within parks and recreation areas and facilities shall be governed by codes, laws, and ordinances, some of which may be enacted specifically for the control and management of parks and recreation areas and facilities. The codes, laws and ordinances shall be posted or readily available to park patrons.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation of the codes, laws, and ordinances that pertain specifically to areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency and describe how they are posted or otherwise readily available to park patrons.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 2 – Management and the Law, pp. 19-22.

8.1.1 - Staff Liaison to Law Enforcement Officers

Standard: **There shall be established liaison assignments for agency staff to the official law enforcement officers providing public safety and law enforcement service to the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide current documentation of staff liaison assignment(s) with the law enforcement authority responsible for enforcement of laws and ordinances within the parks and recreation areas and facilities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, p. 604.

8.2 - Authority to Enforce Laws by Law Enforcement Officers

Standard: **The authority of law enforcement officers to enforce laws and ordinances pertaining specifically to activity within parks, recreation areas, and facilities shall be clearly established to ensure that enforcement actions are upheld. Authority to enforce laws and ordinances within parks and recreation areas and facilities must be established through assignment within the agency, by contract with another agency, or by policy of the government jurisdiction in which the agency operates.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that establishes the authority of law enforcement officers to enforce laws and ordinances within parks, recreation areas, and facilities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 606-612.

8.3 - Law Enforcement Officer Training

Standard: **Law enforcement officers with the authority to enforce laws within areas and facilities under the jurisdiction of the agency must have proper training in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a summary of the current training program for law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within the parks and recreation agency, including provision for refreshers and updates.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 612-616.

8.4 - Public Information on Laws, Ordinances, Rules, Regulations, and Policies

***Standard*:** **Agency staff shall participate in educating and informing the public on laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies that apply to parks and recreation areas and facilities. This role shall be established through policy directive.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation that defines the role of agency staff in providing public information and education on laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, and policies. Provide examples of education and provision of information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 616-617.

8.4.1 - In-Service Training for Staff on Public Safety and Law Enforcement

***Standard*: Agency staff shall understand their role in public safety and law enforcement and relationships with law enforcement officers having jurisdiction within parks and recreation areas and facilities. The purpose of this training to ensure that staff understand where their authority ends and when an incident should be referred to law enforcement. In-service training shall be extended to front line staff such as lifeguards and park attendants to assure they are fully prepared to respond to law-enforcement incidents.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation of most recent in-service training for agency staff, defining their role in public safety and law enforcement, including agendas and attendance rosters

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, p. 614.

8.4.2 - Handling of Disruptive Behavior Procedures

***Standard*: There shall be established procedures for agency staff on response to disruptive behavior at agency areas and facilities. Procedures shall identify the role of staff in intervention when an incident occurs, documentation of behavior and delineation of law enforcement roles in handling behavioral issues.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide current procedures regarding handling of disruptive behavior.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 620-624.

8.4.3 - Traffic Control, Parking Plans, and Crowd Control

***Standard*: The agency shall coordinate with the official law enforcement agency having jurisdiction on large-scale events hosted or facilitated by the agency that require planning and coordination of traffic, parking and crowd control. Plans shall specifically define the roles of the event sponsor, agency staff, and the law enforcement agency regarding traffic layouts at the venue, traffic routes and personnel assignments.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a recent example of coordination with law enforcement on traffic control, parking plans and crowd control for activities and events hosted or facilitated by the agency.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 624-637.

8.4.4 - Handling of Evidentiary Items Procedures

Standard: **Procedures shall be established that guide agency staff in the preservation and handling of evidence until transferred to the appropriate law enforcement authority. Procedures shall be established in coordination with the appropriate law enforcement agencies to define staff roles in ensuring that evidentiary items are preserved until the proper law enforcement agency assumes command of the scene.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the procedures defining the role and responsibility of agency staff in the discovery, preservation and handling of evidentiary items.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 622-623.

8.5 - General Security Plan

***Standard*:** **The agency shall have a comprehensive general security plan addressing areas, buildings and facilities under its jurisdiction that is updated periodically. Plans for each major area, building or facility should be available at each site. The general security plan may be a compilation of security plans from each major area, building or facility. Hazardous or flammable materials storage areas should be clearly identified in plans and at each specific site. Signage at each site should be installed in accordance with the unified signage system. To be effective, the security plan should be updated when a new area, building or facility is added, security systems are modified or when legislation requires change.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the agency's general security plan or compilation of security plans from each major area, building or facility with the most recent review or update. At a minimum, these plans should include:

a. Locking key systems and associated assignments;
b. Alarm system and assignment of security codes;
c. Opening and closing procedures;
d. Fire alarm and fire suppression systems;
e. Emergency evacuation procedures; and
f. Critical incident response procedures.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 627-637.

8.6 - Emergency Management Planning

Standard: **The agency shall be aware of emergency operations planning within their jurisdiction and its role in emergency management systems. Roles may vary depending on the scope of services provided by the agency and the location of its facilities. Recreation agencies, having roles in emergency management systems within their local jurisdiction, shall be aware of the applicable operations plan. The agency's specialized staff, buildings and equipment may be integral to the plan and may be deployed in the event of a large-scale emergency. The U. S. Office of Homeland Security provides guidance and support for the preparation and maintenance of emergency management plans.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the applicable emergency management plan with the most recent date of approval. If, due to security concerns, the emergency management plan is not available for public review, provide the emergency management plan table of contents.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 634-637.

8.6.1 - In-Service Training for Staff on General Security and Emergency Management

***Standard*:** **Through in-service training, agency personnel shall understand their role in ongoing security and emergency management. In-service training should inform staff of their role in response to critical incidents and emergencies and provide specific procedures for routine operations.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide documentation of in-service training programs on general security and emergency management, including a dated outline of the presentation topics and a roster of participants.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, p. 636.

8.6.2 - Emergency Risk Communications Plan

Standard: **There shall be a communications plan that is reviewed and updated periodically, to accurately and effectively communicate with the public and experts during a catastrophic event that attracts significant media attention, such as a health emergency, terrorist attack, earthquake or storm. The crisis communication plan shall delineate individuals responsible for communicating with the press, chain of command on notifying proper people of the incident and communicating status updates.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a copy of the Emergency Risk Communications Plan and the most recent review.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 22 – Law Enforcement and Security, pp. 634-637.

8.6.3 - Care and Shelter Procedures

***Standard*: There shall be procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter to those in need during disasters or emergencies.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide procedures to coordinate with agencies designated to provide care and shelter during emergencies.

9.0 - Risk Management

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

A comprehensive risk management plan is essential to minimize legal liabilities and personal injuries. The agency shall implement approaches for identification and control of risks based on the specific needs of the agency. There is no prescriptive method for identification of all risks suitable for all entities; the method and tools used will vary. Risk management is an on-going process that must be systematically evaluated for effectiveness and adjustments made as appropriate. Responsibilities must be assigned and structure set in place to implement an effective plan. The analysis shall include the direct costs (staffing, insurance, prevention) and indirect costs (time lost from work by injured employees, damage to equipment and facilities, failure to provide services and loss of income).

In some cases, the risk management plan and function may occur outside the park and recreation agency by another government authority. Special cooperative arrangements should be in place with other public departments and agencies, private contractors, and community organizations.

9.1 - Risk Management Policy

Standard: **The agency shall have a policy for risk management that sets direction and gives appropriate authority for implementing operational practices and procedures that is approved by the proper authority.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the risk management policy including indication of approval by the proper authority.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 579-598.

9.1.1 - Risk Management Plan and Procedures ★

Standard: **The agency shall have an established risk management plan and operating procedures that are reviewed periodically, accessible to all agency personnel and approved by the proper authority that encompasses analysis of risk exposure, control approaches and financial and operational impact for the agency The plan shall analyze the programs/services offered and facilities/areas managed for personal injury and financial loss potential and identify approaches to manage such injury, loss, and business and operational impact.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current risk management plan with approval by the proper authority, the most recent review, and indication of how the plan and procedures are available to staff. The risk management plan shall reflect all three phases of risk management:

a. Identification and assessment;
b. Response strategies; and
c. Management planning.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 583-596.

9.1.2 - Accident and Incident Report Procedures

***Standard*: There shall be established procedures for accident and incident reporting and analysis of accident and incident reports. There shall be an accident/incident report form available to all employees. Data shall be obtained in an appropriate manner to support planned and coordinated accident prevention programs within the agency.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the accident/incident form(s) and the procedures for documenting and analyzing accidents and incidents. The accident/incident form(s) shall include identification information (who), specific location of accident (where), and description of accident in terms of sequence of activity (what).

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 583-589.

9.1.3 - Personnel Involvement and Training

***Standard*: The agency risk management function shall involve and train personnel at all levels on risk management procedures.**

Suggested Evidences of Compliance: Demonstrate how personnel at all levels are involved and trained regarding risk management.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 594-596.

9.2 - Risk Manager

***Standard*: A specific position within the agency shall be designated with risk management responsibility and authority to carry out the policies established for risk management.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the position description that includes responsibility for risk management.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 582-583.

9.3 - ADA Compliance and Face-to-Face Resolution

***Standard*: There shall be a policy or procedure available to all members of the public and staff which address issues pertaining to ADA compliance, either in a written or electronic format.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a written policy or procedure available to the public and staff that outlines the steps to resolve questions, concerns, or complaints of accessibility along with a reasonable timeline for completion and have a process for face-to-face meetings is in place.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 12 Physical Resource Management, p. 253; Chapter 13 – Management Operations, p. 287; Chapter 16 – Human Resource Employment, p. 400; Chapter 21 – Risk Management, pp. 584-588.

10.0 - Evaluation, Assessment, and Research

NOTE: Standards marked with a star (★) are fundamental standards, and are required of all agencies seeking accreditation.

Evaluation and research are systematic processes that park and recreation professionals use to better understand the impacts of their efforts on the communities they serve. What is learned through evaluation and research is used to demonstrate the value of what is provided and to learn how to make improvements. Analyses of reliable data and qualitative information are essential to track progress in implementing master plans and strategic initiatives. Products of evaluation, measurement, and research become important components to support planning, development and programming decisions.

Benchmarking is the process of making comparisons to the processes, programs, and services of other providers. Comparisons are most frequently made to other park and recreation agencies, but benchmarking can be done also with business and non-profit organizations. The National Recreation and Park association developed PRORAGIS, which is a tool to capture uniform data on park and recreation agencies across the nation. PRORAGIS is the only national benchmarking tool for the park and recreation profession. As such, it can be successful as a reliable research tool only with broad participation from park and recreation agencies.

10.1 - Systematic Evaluation Processes ★

***Standard*: The agency shall have systematic processes for evaluating programs, facilities and services and operational efficiency and effectiveness.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Describe what is evaluated and the methods and frequency of evaluation of programs facilities and services. Evaluation is the process of determining the effectiveness of current practice and procedures.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, pp. 641-647.

10.1.1 - Responsibility for Evaluation

***Standard*: The agency shall assign specific responsibility for managing elements of the evaluation program, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide job descriptions for the person(s) (staff or consultants) responsible for supporting and monitoring evaluation processes, including planning, training, evaluation, and analysis. If consultant services are used, provide the current contracts or service agreements. The documentation should also include the resumes of persons providing the service, including experience and training.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p 644.

10.1.2 - Staff Training on how to Evaluate Programs, Services, and Facilities

Standard: **The agency shall provide training on how to evaluate programs, services and facilities for personnel involved in managing facilities and delivering programs and services.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of recent evaluation trainings completed by the agency, including curriculum content, training dates and participant lists. Examples of training subjects could include but are not limited to qualitative and quantitative measurement, identification of applicable evaluation tools, data analysis and use of findings.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 644.

10.2 - Outcomes Assessment

***Standard*:** **The agency shall use evaluation results to assess the outcomes of park and recreation programs, services, and facilities and assess the operational effectiveness of the organization. Outcomes show the relationship between resource inputs and the resulting impacts and benefits of the outputs. Outcomes are measurable changes in behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, conditions or skills.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of how evaluation results are used to determine levels of performance and effectiveness in the organization and how evaluation are used to determine if specific programs, services or facilities are achieving planned or projected results.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, p. 151; Chapter 9 – Program Services and Event Management, pp. 167-171; Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 642.

10.3 - Performance Measurement

Standard: **The agency shall have a procedure for tracking and monitoring data trends and measuring performance against targets linked to achievement of goals and objectives.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide performance targets and measurement in use by the agency. Describe the process and frequency of performance measurement and cite examples for how the results have been used by the agency to affect decisions. The measures may include data gathered from the following qualitative and quantitative sources:

a. Recreation and demographic trends;
b. Needs assessment;
c. Community inventory;
d. Surveys;
e. Program and service statistics;
f. Inspections;
g. Customer feedback;
h. Program evaluation;
i. Risk management reports; and
j. Budget and financial reports.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 222-224; Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 656.

10.3.1 - Level of Service Standards

***Standard*: The agency shall have level of service (LOS) standards for provision of land, facilities and services within the jurisdiction. LOS standards are a type of performance measure associated with equitable provision service, such as the number of facilities per 1,000 residents in a service area or facilities available within a designated travel distance or travel time, e.g. percent of population that have a park within a 10 minute walk. LOS standard can also address other dimensions of equitable access, such as connectivity, maintenance and affordability, e.g. percent of parkland connected to the trail network.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the LOS standards and describe how LOS standards are used to establish facility and service priorities.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 223-224.

10.4 - Needs Assessment

***Standard:* The agency shall periodically conduct an assessment of assets and needs to identify existing and projected gaps in service and determine land, facility and service priorities. Need assessments are used to help determine priorities for developing services with the agency. Needs assessments can use a variety of methods to obtain input from the community, including focus groups, advisory boards, forums, and surveys.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide the current needs assessment, describe the procedural steps in conducting the assessment, describe the frequency of updates, and describe the use of the assessment in agency planning.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 5 - Organization Structure and Administrative Operations, p. 107; Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 133-134; Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, p. 228.

10.5 - Program and Service Statistics

***Standard:* The agency shall collect and analyze statistics on its programs and services for evaluation and future program and service development.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide examples of statistics collected, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of the information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 11 – Physical Resource Planning, pp. 226-227; Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 370-372; Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, pp. 660-663.

10.5.1 - Recreation and Leisure Trends Analysis

***Standard:* The agency shall assess periodically societal and local recreation and leisure trends and determine how those trends impact existing and projected user populations.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide trends analysis, describe frequency of updates, and describe linkage to agency goals and objectives.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, p. 644.

10.5.2 - Community Inventory

Standard: **The agency shall compile a complete and current inventory of parkland and recreation facilities, programs and services in the service area, including those provided by the agency and those offered by schools and other alternative public, private, non-profit providers.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a complete and current inventory of parkland, programs and services available in the community, describe the frequency of updates, and describe how the agency makes use of this information.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 8 – Recreation Program Planning, pp. 129-130.

10.5.3 - PRORAGIS

***Standard*:** **The agency shall create an online profile and enter operating data into PRORAGIS, the national park and recreation database.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a copy of the agency Custom Report from the PRORAGIS database.

10.6 - Research Investigation

Standard: **The agency shall conduct at least one experimental exploration or research investigation each year related to park and recreation operations. These are demonstration or pilot projects where performance data are collected before and after the test to determine effectiveness.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide a report on a current or recent experimental or demonstration research project designed to improve a product or to test a new process or procedure, including methods used and research findings; provide brief descriptions of other research investigations undertaken over the past five (5) years.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 23 – Evaluation and Action Research, pp. 658-659.

10.6.1 - Quality Assurance

Standard: **The agency shall monitor and evaluate the quality of its programs, services and facilities from the user perspective. Examples include but are not limited to customer comment cards, secret/mystery shopper surveys, user satisfaction surveys, program evaluations and focus groups.**

Suggested Evidence of Compliance: Provide recent examples of methods used to collect, monitor and evaluate quality assurance data from users.

Informational reference in the *Management of Park and Recreation Agencies*, (2010), 3rd Ed., Chapter 15 – Public Relations, Marketing, and Customer Service, pp. 370-372.