



Saratoga Springs *New York*

RECREATION MASTER PLAN

RECREATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING – 2/13/18
FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS PRESENTATION

MAJOR PROJECT COMPONENTS

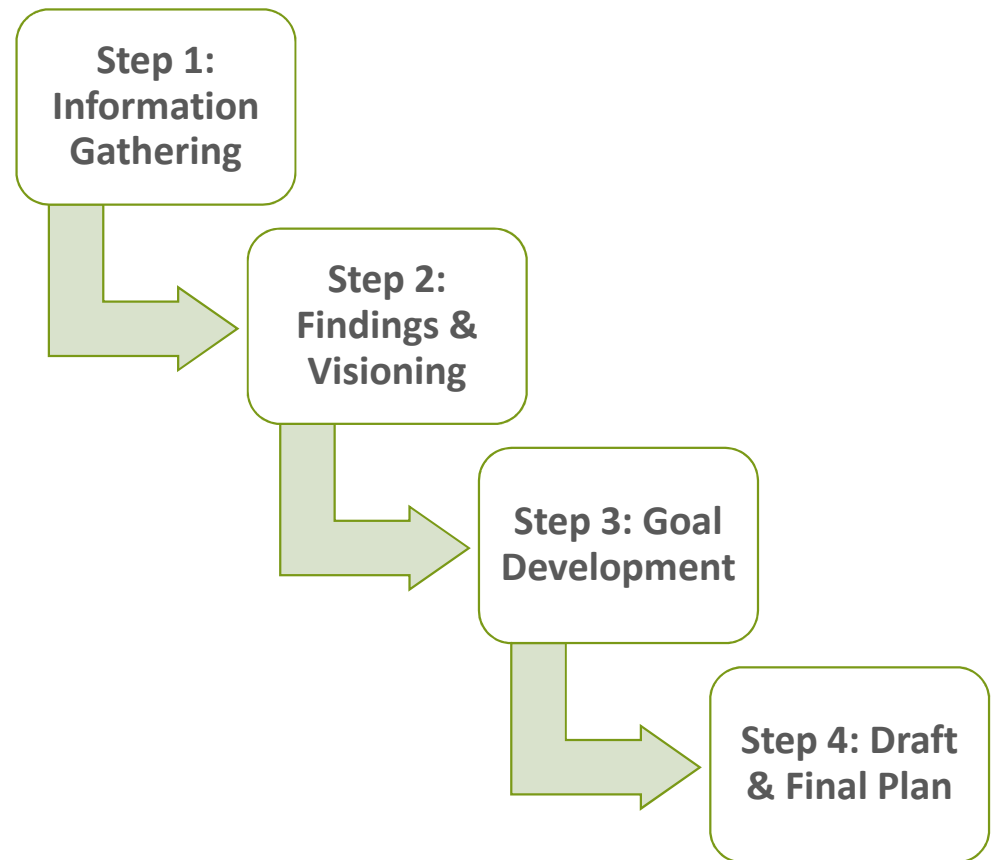
- **1. Information Gathering & Analysis**

- Review background data
- Stakeholder Focus Groups
- Interviews w/ Elected Officials
- Community Survey
- Inventory Update & Gap Analysis
- Analyze and Coalesce Data

- **2. Findings & Visioning**

- **3. Goals & Recommendations**

- **4. Draft and Final Plans**



KEY FINDINGS OF FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS

- 60+ PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTING DIVERSE COMMUNITY INTERESTS
- INTERVIEWS WITH MULTIPLE ELECTED OFFICIALS
- RECREATION STAFF FOCUS GROUP & SWOT ANALYSIS
- INTERVIEWS WITH PUBLIC WORKS STAFF
- PUBLIC PRESENTATION HOSTED BY THE RECREATION COMMISSION

The following slides summarize key findings of all feedback presented to the consultant team.

STRENGTHS OF EXISTING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

- DIVERSE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPORTS, FITNESS AND FUN
- “HHH” – HEALTH, HORSES, AND HISTORY; “CITY IN THE COUNTRY” – STRONG LOCAL PRIDE
- RECREATION DIRECTOR VERY HELPFUL AND SUPPORTIVE
- DPW DOES A GOOD JOB WITH RESOURCES AVAILABLE
- THE FLOWER CREWS – DOWNTOWN
- RECREATION CENTER
- SPA STATE PARK
- YMCA
- MANY STRONG AND ACTIVE LOCAL SPORTS GROUPS AND CIVIC GROUPS

EXISTING CONDITIONS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

- PARK AND FACILITY MAINTENANCE IS NOT MEETING USER EXPECTATIONS – INADEQUATE AND INCONSISTENT
- AGING AND INADEQUATE FACILITIES
- PERCEIVED LACK OF “OWNERSHIP” BY CITY STAFF IN PARKS AND FACILITIES
- SPORTS FIELD AND FACILITY SPACE IS LIMITED – INDOOR SPORTS, BASEBALL, SOCCER, ICE SPORTS, LACROSSE, ETC.
- RELATIONSHIP IMPROVEMENT IS NEEDED – PUBLIC WORKS, RECREATION, SCHOOLS, KEY STAKEHOLDERS/COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS , RESIDENTS, ETC.
- CHALLENGES TO USE – PARKING, WARM-WEATHER ICE RINK CLOSURE, CAPACITY, CONDITION
- LACK OF TRAIL CONNECTIVITY –COMPLETE GREENBELT TRAIL
- LACK OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES – LIMITED ONLINE DATA, SIGNAGE, WAYFINDING, PARK MAPS, ETC.

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING FACILITIES

- CONSISTENT AND RELIABLE MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES
- TRAIL CONNECTIVITY
- EASTSIDE REC REHABILITATION
- EASIER ACCESS TO FACILITIES – PARKING, SAFE BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN ROUTES
- ADD ADDITIONAL WATER RECREATION AMENITIES AT WATERFRONT PARK
- IMPROVE BASIC SITE FEATURES - BATHROOMS, CONCESSIONS, SPORTS FIELDS, TRAILS, ETC.
- IMPROVE THE SKATEPARK

NEW RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES WANTED

- HOST SPORTS TOURNAMENTS / SPORTS TOURISM
- DESTINATION PLAYGROUNDS OR THEMATIC PARK ELEMENTS
- MORE WINTER ACTIVITIES – ICE SPORTS, CROSS COUNTRY SKIING, INDOOR SPORTS
- ROWING PROGRAMS
- YMCA BASEBALL / NON-COMPETITIVE LEAGUE
- MORE RECREATION PROGRAMS YOUNG CHILDREN
- MORE YOUNG ADULTS RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES
- ADULT ICE PROGRAMS
- MORE INFORMAL DROP- IN ACTIVITIES – INDOORS, SPORTS FIELDS, FREE PLAY

NEW FACILITIES WANTED

- INTERCONNECTED TRAIL SYSTEM – DOWNTOWN, NEIGHBORHOODS, PARKS, ETC.
- MORE SPORTS FIELDS AND MULTIPURPOSE FIELDS AND/OR SPORTS COMPLEX
- ADVENTURE SPORTS OPPORTUNITIES – ZIPLINE, “SPARTAN” RACE, BMX TRACK
- ADDITIONAL INDOOR RECREATION AND MULTIUSE SPACE – BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, OTHER SPORTS, FREE PLAY, AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

WHAT TO IMPROVE IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

- ENHANCE AND IMPROVE / BETTER MAINTAIN EXISTING FACILITIES
- LEVERAGE RELATIONSHIPS WITH USER GROUPS TO IMPROVE STEWARDSHIP OF FACILITIES AND PARKS
- IMPLEMENT BASIC, MEASURABLE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS AND SCHEDULE
- STRENGTHEN FUNDING FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT, OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE
- INCREASE FIELD, COURT AND RINK SPACE / CAPACITY FOR SPORTS PROGRAMS AND EVENTS
- IMPROVE BASIC PARK AND RECREATION SITE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMFORT FEATURES
- DEVELOP AND BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT A PRIORITIZED PLAN FOR CREATING AN INTERCONNECTED BIKE/PEDESTRIAN TRAIL SYSTEM

KEY PARTNERS IN CITY RECREATION

- BURLINGTON VT PENNIES FOR PARKS – POTENTIAL FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS HERE?
- YMCA
- SCHOOL DISTRICT
- EXISTING PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS
- HOSPITALS/HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS
- LOCAL BUSINESSES AND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- SPORTS GROUPS
- CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS
- SKIDMORE COLLEGE
- SPA STATE PARK
- LOCAL MUSEUMS AND ARTS COMMUNITY

KEY ISSUES OVERALL

- STRONG COMMUNITY PRIDE AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AND REGIONAL RECREATION
- DEDICATED USER BASE WILLING TO ASSIST IN STEWARDSHIP OF PARKS AND FACILITIES
- INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN DIVERSE RECREATION, SPORTS, AND FITNESS ACTIVITIES
- LOTS OF INTEREST IN CREATING AN INTERCONNECTED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PATH NETWORK
- POOR / INCONSISTENT MAINTENANCE OF MANY EXISTING FACILITIES IS A MAJOR CONCERN
- IMPROVED COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION IS NEEDED – CITY TO PUBLIC AND VICE VERSA