

# REMARKABLE TIP SHEETS



## SOLUTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT AGENCIES & SPECIAL DISTRICTS

These **REMARKABLE MUNICIPAL SOLUTIONS** are designed specifically for Government Agencies, Municipalities, & Special Districts so they can be amazing at creating Thriving Communities.

This topic makes for great Staff Trainings and as an Educational Session at your annual Conference. Plus, we can assist you with: *Graphic Design, Staff Mentoring, Interim Leadership, Agency Check-Ups, Board Training & Strategic Planning.*<sup>1</sup>

## RECREATION PROFESSIONAL

# HISTORY of U.S. PARKS & REC

### APPRECIATING OUR HISTORY

It is important for us to appreciate our History as a Profession. Join us on this tour of the Parks and Recreation Profession in the US. This survey, through the years, will give us a glimpse of how we arrived at our current parks and recreation systems.

We will learn about each era, & see the progression from sheep fields to a community wide "Open Space Network". Note: this is not intended to be an exhaustive deep-dive into the history of recreation (*there are text books for that*).

This is one of many topics explored in the session, "**GET REC'D: Getting Recreation to our Communities**".

<sup>1</sup> *Let us handle it. We can help you Thrive!*

#### CONTACT MARK <sup>1</sup>

928-278-8035

mark@remarkablerecreation  
solutions.com

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RECREATION SOLUTIONS



#### PARKS & RECREATION: PRE-U.S. (3500 BCE TO 1600's)

#### SOLUTION 1



Although our focus on this Tip Sheet is on Parks and Recreation in the United States, it is worth a look at what came before.

**MESOPOTAMIA/PERSIA** - - The earliest parks, where gardens served both aesthetic and practical purposes.

**GREEKS/ROMANS** - - Established public spaces for leisure and social interaction, including gardens and amphitheaters.

**ISLAMIC AGE** - - Gardens were integral to the culture, featuring intricate designs and water features.

**RENAISSANCE IN EUROPE** - - Created formal gardens & parks, exemplified by the gardens of Versailles in France.

#### ORIGIN OF PARKS IN U.S. (1600's TO 1800's)

#### SOLUTION 2



**FIRST PARK IN U.S.** - - The *Boston Commons* (1634), became the "First Official Park" in the U.S. (1830). It started as a sheep pasture that was then used for civic gatherings.

**TOWN SQUARES** - - The open squares found in the middle of towns, evolved into parks and plazas usually in front of the County Courthouse or Town Hall.

#### PLEASURE GROUNDS (1840 TO 1900)

#### SOLUTION 3



**DESIGN ELEMENTS** - - These were Large Rural Country Parks, that featured: Groves of Trees, Rolling Meadows, Meandering Pathways, Lakes, Zoos, Gardens, Music Pavilions, & Museums.

**THE POSITIVES (PROS)** - - Designed to simulate Nature, but not be as wild or dangerous as "real" nature. These parks allowed for both Active & Passive (*or Contemplative*) recreation.

**THE NEGATIVES (CONS)** - - These parks were typically built on edge of Cities, due to the large acreage required. This resulted in Poor Access for the everyday person, the poorer folks who likely did not have the means of travel (car/train/bus) to get all the way out to the big pleasure grounds.

**ANDREW JACKSON DOWNING** - - He is the father of Landscape Architecture in the US, and the author of many influential works. His most famous work, "*A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening*" (1841), serves as a blueprint for landscape architects. In 1851, he helped design the grounds of the: U.S. Capital, White House, & Smithsonian.

**FREDERICK OLMSTED** - - Influenced heavily by Andrew Jackson Downing, Olmsted was the park planner and designer for many of our country's original Large Parks: Central Park (NYC, 1859), Prospect Park (Brooklyn, 1867), Washington Park (Chicago, 1870), & Jackson Park (Chicago, 1871).

#### U.S. NATIONAL PARKS (1872 TO CURRENT)

#### SOLUTION 4



Yosemite was the first "park" of its kind (1864), but congress had made it a State Park. Yellowstone then became the *First National Park* (1872). Soon, 3 more National Parks were created (1890): Yosemite, Sequoia, & General Grant. & Mount Rainier followed (1899). The National Park Service (1916) oversees a system now with more than 400 National Parks, and over 84 million Acres.

#### SMALL PARK MOVEMENT (1900 TO 1930)

#### SOLUTION 5



**DESIGN ELEMENTS** - - This was a reform towards Smaller Parks, located where more people live (*inside cities, near apartments*). The goal was: create a *Safe Place* for kids to play, off the streets, & a place for *People To Gather*. Only 4 blocks or less (typically only 1 block), they were Symmetrical in their site planning: **PROS** = Doing a lot in a little space; **CONS** = No room for creativity.

**THE FIELD HOUSE** - - This movement introduced us to the Indoor Sports Arena, bringing *outdoor* sports fields *into* buildings.

#### RECREATION FACILITY ERA (1930 TO 1965)

#### SOLUTION 6



**DESIGN ELEMENTS** - - Focused on *Facility*, not Grass or Land. It was all about *Recreation Activity*. A Stadium w/Parking = "Park". **PROS** = Extending "parks" into suburbs (*any place without a Field House or park*). **CONS** = Low Artistic Vision & Low Social Vision: these parks did not encourage person-to-person interactions.

**ROBERT MOSES** - - Urban Planner in NYC, Spearheaded this era.

#### "OPEN SPACE" NETWORK (1965 TO CURRENT)

#### SOLUTION 7



**DESIGN ELEMENTS** - - Take all of the good elements from prior park planning theories and integrate them into a *Network of Parks*. The idea is that "*Recreation is Potentially Everywhere*": Street, Rooftop, Waterfront, Abandoned Railway, Plaza, or Park. All "Open Space" has *Potential Recreational Value*, depending on what twist you give it. Now, we even have "Pocket Parks".

#### GET THE FULL SESSION <sup>1</sup> (GET REC'D)

#### SOLUTION 8



This piece of "Appreciating Your History" is one of many different topics that we explore during the Session: "**GET REC'D: Getting Recreation To Our Communities**". This session gives you the "**RECREATION ROADMAP**" that covers the five elements of: Affirm, Appreciate, Asses, Align, & Announce. You can dig deeper into how to "Get Rec'd" when you get the Full Session: (1) Bring session to your conference, (2) Attend the On-Demand Webinar: <https://remarkablewebinars.thinkific.com/courses/get-recd>

**REMARKABLE RECREATION SOLUTIONS.COM**  
Get the "Recreation Professional Boot Camp" - - Designed for New Recreation Professionals