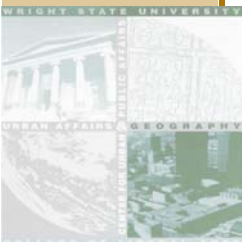




City of Kettering Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Assessment 2006

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Executive Summary

The City of Kettering Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department contracted with Wright State University's Center for Urban and Public Affairs (CUPA) to conduct an analysis of recreation services in the City of Kettering. The analysis consists of two phases:

1. A telephone survey with a randomly selected sample of 400 Kettering residents to ask their perceptions of recreation services in the City, as well as to address desires for future recreation services
2. A series of focus groups with stakeholder groups in the City, consisting of users of recreation facilities and advisory boards providing oversight to the City

Telephone Survey

A survey was conducted with a randomly selected sample of 400 Kettering residents. A quota sampling procedure was used to ensure that the sample was representative of all Kettering residents in regard to age and gender. A short summary of survey results is presented below.

Use of Kettering Facilities

Upon examination of all survey questions regarding use of Kettering's parks and recreation facilities, only 2 respondents indicated that they have not participated in any parks and recreation activities or used a parks and recreation facility, resulting in a user rate of 99.5 percent.

- ❖ 83.0 percent of residents have attended an event at the Frazee
- ❖ 77.0 percent of residents have attended a special event, such as Swamp Romp, Go Fourth, or the Mayor's Tree Lighting
- ❖ 32.0 percent of residents have visited Polen Farm in the past twelve months
- ❖ 30.3 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation fitness programs
- ❖ 21.8 percent of residents have participated in Kettering sports programs
- ❖ 19.5 percent of residents have visited the Rosewood Gallery
- ❖ 18.5 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation swim programs
- ❖ 16.6 percent of residents (22.3 percent of residents 65 and older) have participated in parks and recreation senior programs
- ❖ 11.8 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation cultural arts programs
- ❖ 11.5 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation ice skating programs
- ❖ 8.0 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation youth programs
- ❖ 7.5 percent of residents have visited the Rosewood Theater
- ❖ 6.5 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation preschool programs

- ❖ 6.0 percent of residents have participated in parks and recreation family programs

Future Growth in Recreation Programs

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their support for new recreation programs and amenities. Some programs discussed are already in place, and respondents were asked if they are interested in attending these programs. The following list presents programs that received the greatest degree of interest from Kettering residents.

- ❖ 45.1 percent of residents are interested in water exercise programs
- ❖ 56.6 percent of residents are interested in open swimming
- ❖ 47.4 percent of residents are interested in visual arts courses, such as photography or drawing
- ❖ 46.5 percent of residents are interested in performing arts courses, such as theatre or dance
- ❖ More than half of residents would like to see additional family programs offered in the summer and winter, with these classes held in the evenings and on weekends
- ❖ 56.0 percent of residents are interested in additional health screening opportunities, such as blood pressure, vision, and body fat
- ❖ 46.0 percent of seniors are interested in senior trips, such as day trips or safari lunches
- ❖ 49.2 percent of seniors are interested in senior education, such as Sinclair classes or computer courses
- ❖ 51.1 percent of residents would be likely to use a leisure pool, with slides and a lazy river if one were constructed

Additional Comments

The telephone survey also touched on a variety of other topics, from satisfaction with parks and recreation staff to how individuals receive information about the parks.

- ❖ 57.7 percent of residents use the Frazee schedule for summer planning
- ❖ The majority of respondents do not want to see changes made to Frazee Pavilion:
 - ❖ 39.6 percent of residents would attend more events if the audience were provided overhead shelter
 - ❖ 36.2 percent of residents would attend more events if there were more permanent seating
- ❖ 80.8 percent of residents believe that the water park meets the needs of all Kettering residents
- ❖ More than 99 percent of residents believe that parks and recreation staff are knowledgeable, courteous, friendly, and provide good customer service
- ❖ Just 18.8 percent of residents are aware that the Kettering Parks Foundation offers financial assistance to residents to participate in programs

- ❖ 26.8 percent of residents have visited the new skate park
- ❖ 87.8 percent of residents have read the Department Activities Guide that is mailed quarterly to households
 - ❖ 98.6 of those who have read the guide are satisfied with their ability to find what they are looking for
- ❖ 73.9 percent of residents who have registered for recreation programs have done so in person

Focus Groups

CUPA conducted nine focus groups with the following groups: Users of Parks and Recreation facilities, Non-Users of Parks and Recreation facilities (2 focus groups due to low turnout), Dayton Bombers Youth Hockey League, Kettering City Swim Team, South Dayton Figure Skating Club, Senior Advisory Board, Arts Advisory Council and the Parks Foundation Board.

User groups were asked to discuss their satisfaction with services, as well as any improvements that they believe could be made to recreation facilities in order to benefit their organization or the community as a whole. Non-users were asked what would increase their use of Kettering recreation facilities, while advisory boards were asked to respond to survey results as well as to discuss satisfaction and necessary improvements with recreation in the City of Kettering.

User Groups (Figure Skating, Swim Team, Hockey League)

- ❖ All user groups discussed a desire for capital improvement outlays that would benefit their specific organization, as well as all residents of Kettering
 - ❖ Swim Team focus group discussed the need for a second pool to allow for regional, state and national competitions to be held in Kettering
 - ❖ Hockey League and Figure Skating focus groups discussed the need for a second sheet of ice to allow for tournaments and major events to be held in Kettering
 - ❖ All groups indicated that these capital improvements would benefit all Kettering residents by freeing up ice and pool time for other activities.
- ❖ All user groups indicated that the quality of facilities was good, with many saying that Kettering's facilities were the best they had visited
- ❖ All user groups discussed wanting additional (or better) times for using Kettering facilities, though many individuals mentioned that the City works to make sure they have as much time as possible
- ❖ Emergency services provided by the City were highly regarded
- ❖ All respondents indicated that City staff are courteous and helpful when working with their organization

Users and Non-Users

A total of three focus groups were held with users and non-users of Kettering facilities. These focus group participants were recruited via the telephone survey where CUPA staff classified

them as users or non-users of Kettering facilities based on selected criteria. Since only 2 respondents indicated that they have not used any facilities, the non-user focus groups were held with individuals who have used 2 or fewer Kettering facilities. The second non-user focus group was held due to low turnout at the first focus group. Comments from users and non-users are summarized below:

- ❖ Users believe that the quality of the Recreation Center is excellent, and that the cost to participate in recreation programs is reasonable.
- ❖ Non-users discussed cost as a barrier, indicating that if families were to participate in programs together, the price could be very high
- ❖ Both groups believe that Kettering staff are friendly and responsive
- ❖ Both groups believe that Kettering parks are well maintained
- ❖ Both groups requested scheduling improvements because classes that they desired to attend were occasionally held at inconvenient times
- ❖ Groups discussed developing the relationship between the City and the schools to better utilize the Trent arena facility and the football stadium
- ❖ Both groups indicated that traffic is well maintained around the Frazee Pavilion during large events

Advisory Boards

The final series of focus groups were held with advisory board members, including the Senior Advisory Board, the Arts Advisory Council, and the Parks Foundation Board. These groups were asked questions similar to the other focus groups, but were also presented with a few results from the telephone survey for comment. A summary of the discussions is presented below:

- ❖ Advisory groups discussed a positive relationship between the City and community, as well as the City and the schools
- ❖ Advisory Groups discussed the need for additional parking at the recreation center, especially during large events or hours of peak use
- ❖ Advisory Groups discussed the need for a long range plan regarding the Rosewood facility, with individuals mentioning that the building is aging and is space limited, perhaps especially given the vision/community interest in an arts and culture center
- ❖ Advisory Groups indicated that while an additional sheet of ice or a second pool are good ideas, they are not necessarily feasible given the current budget situation and other more pressing priorities
- ❖ Advisory Groups (as well as the User groups) discussed the regional interest in Kettering programs, and indicated that the City should explore ways to build upon Kettering's regional reputation for parks and recreation
- ❖ Advisory groups discussed a climate in the City that is conducive to recreation programming, as many residents are trying live healthier lifestyles