

Grants have also been received in support of Pierce County Parks recreation programs. Long-term relationships with numerous charitable foundations and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department (TPCHD) have led to scholarships and program improvements which make programming more accessible to all Pierce County residents.

REVENUE GENERATION & OPPORTUNITIES

Parks are a public good supported in large part by public monies. Some facilities or events are subject to user fees (e.g. ice-skating rink use, recreation programs, parking). Where programs provide mostly community benefits, fees are lower than the cost of the service to allow broad access. If programs mostly benefit individuals, or are competitive or exclusionary in nature, fees are set to more fully recover costs. Pierce County Parks utilizes the framework in Exhibit 7-4 to guide expectations for cost recovery and revenue generation. Revenues generated are driven back to the park system for improvements and usage.

Exhibit 7-4. Cost-Recovery Pyramid



Modified from GreenPlay, LLC, 2013.

Exhibit 7-5 addresses the level of individual or community benefit, provides example park and recreation facilities and programs that fit the definition, and scales the cost recovery accordingly.

Exhibit 7-5. Parks and Recreation Cost Recovery Matrix

| Levels | Parks | Facilities | Programs | Cost Recovery Range |
|---|---|---|--|---------------------|
| Highly Individual Benefit: A special interest that benefits one or a small group, often to the exclusion of others (enterprise or profit center) | Specialty Amenities / Private and Restricted Use on Public Property/ Non-Resident Usage | Private Party Rentals / Concessions / Retail | Private Lessons or Invitation Only Groups | 100%+ |
| Mostly Individual Benefit: Requires an advanced skill that limits access or restricts open public usage (potentially competitive with the marketplace) | Specialty Amenities that provide a Public /Resident Experiences / Picnic Rentals | Tournaments / Ongoing Community Group Rentals | Competitive Adult Sports Leagues / Advanced or Premier Class / Trips | 75-99% |
| Individual / Community Balanced Benefit: A program or service that is desirable for health, development, and human interest of the community, yet requires an individual commitment to participate | Non-profit partnership (BMX, Disc Golf, Sport Clubs) that serve residents | Classes, Lessons (fitness, dance, arts) | Youth Sport Leagues/General Enrichment Classes | 50-75% |
| Mostly Community Benefit: An experience offered to individuals that the community strongly supports providing for social justice reasons or access to a premier public asset | Water Access (Gate fees and boat launch) | Drop-in Center / Program Access | Programs for persons with disabilities | 25-50% |
| High Community Benefit: A public asset that is available and accessible to all for equitable benefit | Trails, Open Space & General Park Access | X | Special Events | 0-25% |

Source: Pierce County Parks, 2017.

Data Collection & Analysis

Implementing cost recovery policies is a data-driven, multistep process. As new programs are introduced, targets for cost recovery are set and monitored.

The following steps help Pierce County Parks gather sufficient information to assess it and to set a cost-recovery policy for each program:

1. Develop a data framework for understanding level of access and demand for each discrete facility, activity, and service and the direct and indirect costs of the activity.
2. Use the data framework to generate at least a two-year baseline measurement of trends in access, demand, and cost.