

City of Philadelphia Commission on Parks and Recreation

# Safety in Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Centers

May 15, 2013



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## Executive Summary

In 2012, the Commission on Parks and Recreation selected public safety and quality of life as its top priority, directing significant resources to research and community engagement activities throughout the year. The Commission recognized, after a number of unrelated yet serious incidents that took place at Philadelphia Parks & Recreation's facilities in 2011, the need to address the issue of public safety with a coordinated approach designed to achieve meaningful results for users and staff of the parks and recreation facilities. The Commission's research and community engagement included the following:

- Surveying Parks & Recreation staff to determine the effect of serious incidents;
- Holding bimonthly public meetings at seven different recreation facilities throughout the City to enable the local residents to voice the concerns important to them and their neighborhood;
- Speaking with representatives from seven major urban park and recreation departments throughout the United States to identify best practices;
- Convening a two-day conference on October 23 and 24, 2012 that brought together senior public safety managers from New York and Los Angeles, Commission members, City officials, local park and recreation advocates, and Department of Parks & Recreation staff to exchange ideas.

### *Input sessions led to clearly defined need for action*

These activities elicited a comprehensive list of concerns, focused on physical issues such as lighting, security cameras and a general lack of maintenance that often gives rise to anti-social behavior and surfaces feelings of fear and unease. Poor maintenance can be a signal to potential offenders that nobody cares. Comments also concentrated on issues concerning insufficient programming and active staff involvement, which in turn can lead to a lack of community engagement and underutilized facilities. Parks and recreation facilities with adequate, attentive staff and more activity tend to experience less crime and higher levels of guardianship from community members. The Commission also heard comments focused on the need to invest in improving support networks and policing strategies that engage not only uniformed personnel but also community stakeholders and volunteers. A positive rapport between District captains, local police, public officials and community members helps build trust and confidence and can act as a motivating force for increasing the "eyes and ears" on our parks and recreation facilities.

### ***2013: A year for initiating significant improvements***

Philadelphia Parks & Recreation immediately began to implement significant improvements in FY 2013, including a comprehensive lighting survey, a preventive facility maintenance schedule, staff training improvements, extensive engagement with Advisory Councils and Friends groups, the development of a new website and the installation of additional security cameras. These improvements are commendable and should continue. City Council has also provided financial support to these efforts with a significant increase in funding, earmarked for improving ongoing maintenance and physical plant needs.

### ***PaRC recommendations and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation commitment***

We are encouraged by the resolve and dedication of diverse stakeholders to invest in reducing crime and disorder, and to ensuring that everyone has access to clean, safe places to play and learn with a sense of strong ownership in their community parks and recreation centers. We recognize it takes time, financial resources and a commitment of intervention to address many of these issues raised in this report. But we are confident that the department leadership will leverage all available resources, informed by insights in this report, to make the most of the opportunities to improve safety at all Parks & Recreation facilities.

In summary, the Parks and Recreation Commission and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation are committed to continuing improvements and also recognize the infusion of additional funds from City Council as evidence that the city is serious about making “Safety First” the priority for all Parks & Recreation facilities.

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# Safety in Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Centers

## Introduction

This report was written by the Commission on Parks and Recreation on behalf of, and with the support of, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation (PPR). In consultation with Commissioner Michael DiBerardinis, Deputy Mayor for Environmental and Community Resources and Commissioner of the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Commission selected public safety and quality of life as the top priority for its research and community engagement work in 2012.

## About the Commission on Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Commission (PaRC) consists of 15 members, nine of whom are appointed by the Mayor from nominations made by City Council and six of whom serve ex officio. Each highly qualified member, appointed at the beginning of each Mayoral term, has demonstrated skills and knowledge about park and recreation matters.

PaRC's charge is to develop and adopt written, enforceable standards related to the use of the city's park and recreational land and facilities, make recommendations to enhance revenue opportunities, and assist in promoting parks and recreational facilities and programs. Its goal is to increase the visibility and enormous opportunities that Philadelphia has to recapture its position as the nation's leader in the park and recreation field and sustain the legacy of William Penn's "greene countrie town."

## Members, Commission on Parks and Recreation

Nancy Goldenberg (Chair)

Andrew Denison

Debra Wolf Goldstein

Jeffrey Hackett

Leslie Anne Miller

Matthew Perks

Carol Rice

Sarah Clark Stuart

James Straw

## Ex-officio Members

Bridget Collins-Greenwald, Commissioner, Public Property

Michael DiBerardinis, Deputy Mayor for Environmental and Community Resources; Commissioner, Department of Parks and Recreation

Derrick Ford, Designee of Council President Darrell Clarke

Gary Jastrzab, Executive Director, Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Howard Neukrug, Commissioner, Philadelphia Water Department

David Perri, Commissioner of Streets

The Commission offers special thanks to former Commissioners, Alexander “Pete” Hoskins and Clarena Tolson, for their contributions to this report.

The Commission also wishes to thank the entire staff of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation for their support and participation in this initiative and in particular, Moria Miller for her steadfast assistance throughout the planning and execution of this report.



## Background

In the summer of 2011, several incidents at Philadelphia Parks & Recreation facilities elevated the issue of safety for its users, staff and nearby residents. At one extreme were shootings and robberies at recreation centers and muggings and attempted rapes in parks. Less severe but still disturbing were fist fights, after hours trespassing at pools and vandalism.

A survey of Department staff in July 2011 revealed the startling effect these incidents had on morale. Field employees reported that safety issues restricted their ability to perform primary programming responsibilities. To cope, staff had to be strategic about program offerings to reduce the potential of negative behavior with negative consequences, often at the cost of recreational programming. Frontline staff members were frustrated that they could not act more proactively because they were handling the demands of remedial tasks. They also reported feeling fearful, isolated and stressed in the workplace.

The most significant issues identified by employees at that time were:

- Working alone/short staffing
- Lack of police presence and response
- Trash
- ATVs and dirt bikes
- Drugs
- Physical assault on staff
- Gunplay; shootings
- Off-leash dogs
- Graffiti

In response to the summer 2011 incidents and staff survey, the Department took several actions:

- Moved to strengthen its partnership with the Police department
- Changed the registration and operation policy for Adult Basketball Leagues
- Began clustering activities at district recreation centers
- Made improvements to external grounds (fencing, gates) at 50 centers
- Began installing security cameras at 31 facilities
- Made requested changes in maintenance, landscaping and lighting at 10 recreation centers
- Began deploying part-time staff to high-risk areas
- Conducted outreach to advisory councils

Overall, summer 2012 had fewer incidents than the previous year. However, there were a few headline-grabbing events: a playground fire at Franklin D. Roosevelt Park, an alleged sexual assault at Francis J. Myers Recreation Center (charges were later dropped) and random shootings-- mostly after hours-- at several recreation facilities. Again, the Department took appropriate measures after each incident:

Installing lighting and security cameras and conducting a review along with Risk Management and the Police of larger and older facilities (approximately 20) to measure overall safety.

In addition, the Department:

- Secured media coverage on the issue of park and recreation center safety and risks (mainly ATVs)
  - "[In Tacony Creek Park, paths of disrepair remain after ATV destruction](#)," Philadelphia Daily News, August 7, 2012
  - "[Inquirer Editorial: Police ATV crackdown could save riders' lives](#)," Philadelphia Inquirer, August 14, 2012
  - "[Philly officials say they're keeping up the fight against rec-center violence](#)," Philadelphia Inquirer, August 16, 2012
  - "[Council Addresses Recreation Center Violence At Only Hearing Of Summer](#)," CBS Philly, August 16, 2012
- Testified on safety to City Council (August 16, 2012)
- Testified at a City Council hearing on ATV use in Philadelphia (October 3, 2012)

On October 25, 2012 City Council passed a bill restricting ATVs from operating, parking, stopping, placing or standing on sidewalks or public property, including parks and recreation centers, unless authorized by law. Beginning March 2013 violators of the ordinance risked having their vehicle confiscated by police or fined \$2,000. The bill also gives police the authority to dispose of confiscated ATVs.

## The Work of the Commission on Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Commission focused its attention during 2012 on the issue of public safety in Philadelphia parks and recreational facilities.

As a group, the Commission held its bimonthly meeting at various recreation centers across the city to gather and catalogue community concerns:

- Tacony Creek Park (September 2011)
- Cobbs Creek Recreation Center (November 2011)
- Simons Recreation Center (January 2012)
- Christy Recreation Center (March 2012)
- Hunting Park Recreation Center (May 2012)
- Lloyd Hall (September 2012)
- Hawthorne Cultural Center (November 2012)

In addition, a committee of the Commission surveyed seven urban park systems throughout the United States for best practices. These included:

- New York
- Los Angeles
- Chicago
- St. Louis
- Pittsburgh
- Baltimore
- Atlanta

On October 23 and 24, 2012, the Commission hosted the conference “Delivering Safe Parks & Recreation Centers: Best Practices and Next Steps.” This two-day event brought public safety experts from Los Angeles and New York City to Philadelphia to exchange safety and security best practices; gathered top City officials to discuss quality of life issues in parks and recreation centers; convened staff and advisory councils to hear their concerns and suggested solutions; and engaged park and recreation center users and partners in problem-solving workgroups.

## **Parks and Recreation Commission Findings**

### **Bimonthly Commission Meeting Results**

The most consistent concerns expressed by community members at bimonthly meetings of the Parks and Recreation Commission were insufficient general maintenance and a lack of adequate exterior lighting at facilities. Lighting was mentioned at five of the seven meetings between September 2011 and November 2012, and facility maintenance at all but one.

*For a complete list of concerns voiced by community members at PaRC's bimonthly meetings, please see Appendix A.*

## Peer Urban Park and Recreation Center Systems

Of the seven cities interviewed, the following themes emerged as best practices for safety and quality of life in parks and recreation centers. *(Please see Appendix B for a summary of each peer agency interview.)*

### **Strong relationships with the police department**

Six of the seven cities surveyed cited close relationships with the local police department as a major safety asset.

- In Atlanta and New York, police have substations on parks and recreation property.
- In Chicago, each of the 22 police districts has a designated “park car” whose main job is to patrol just the parks in that district.
- Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks holds monthly meetings with the office of Public Safety Police to review monthly safety reports and trends. There is both informal discussion between the staffs of the two departments and detailed dialogue on the strategic development of responses to specific challenges.

### **High coverage by rangers or an enforcement patrol**

Five of the seven cities surveyed supplement police department patrols with rangers or part-time enforcement staff.

- New York and Los Angeles have sizeable forces of unarmed officers (250 and 300, respectively) that patrol their systems.
- Atlanta, Chicago and Baltimore hire off-duty or retired police officers.
- St. Louis has armed rangers with a Central Monitoring Station and close ties to the police.

### **Safety as a staff-wide commitment**

Baltimore trains a percentage of staff members as safety officers so they can spot problems and act appropriately.

### **Strict enforcement of ATV ban**

New York City achieved success in its campaign against ATVs through confiscation, enforcement, hefty fines, and signage at point-of-sale dealerships. Additionally, the Police Department put plainclothes officers on ATVs who then stop and confiscate ATVs from users.

### **Use of programming to discourage misbehavior**

Los Angeles utilizes a strategic approach to solve problems in facilities or parks after an incident, often through increased programming.

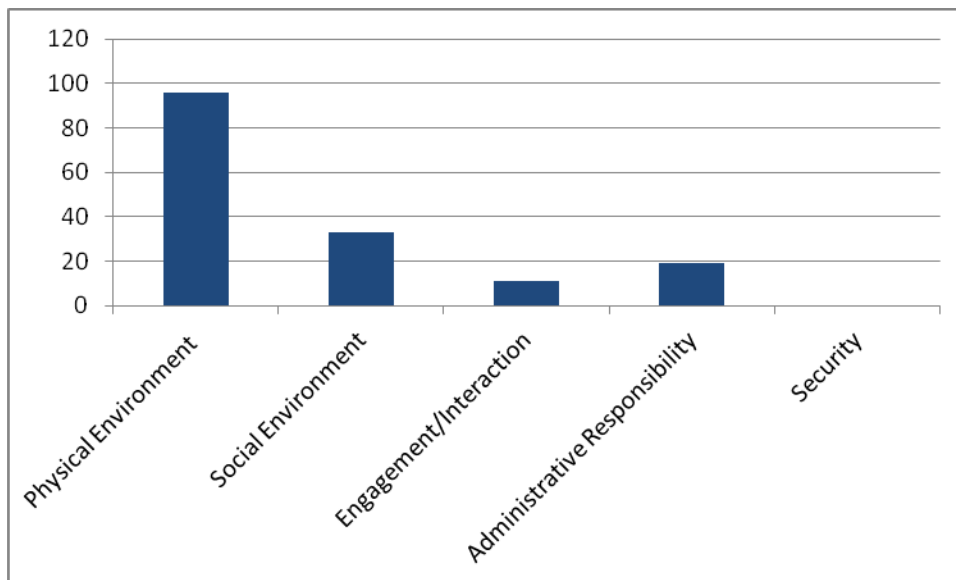
## October 2012 Safety Event

### Participant Feedback

Altogether approximately 170 unique guests attended five events on October 23 and 24, 2012, with many of them participating in more than one workshop or session. Participants in three facilitated workshops on October 24 were asked a series of three similar questions. As the following combined data from their responses indicates, major safety concerns included maintenance, lighting and disregard for rules. Event attendees proposed strong support networks and clear policies, procedures and protocols as ingredients for a safe facility.

### *Combined responses from Parks & Recreation staff, Friends groups and advisory councils, and organizational partners*

Question 1: What does “unsafe” look like to you?



Top two responses per category:

#### *Physical Environment*

Deficiencies in physical plant (repair issues, cleanliness): 75

Insufficient lighting: 21

#### *Social Environment*

Disregard for rules: 18

Lack of a welcoming/supportive environment: 18

*Engagement*

Lack of programs/activities: 9

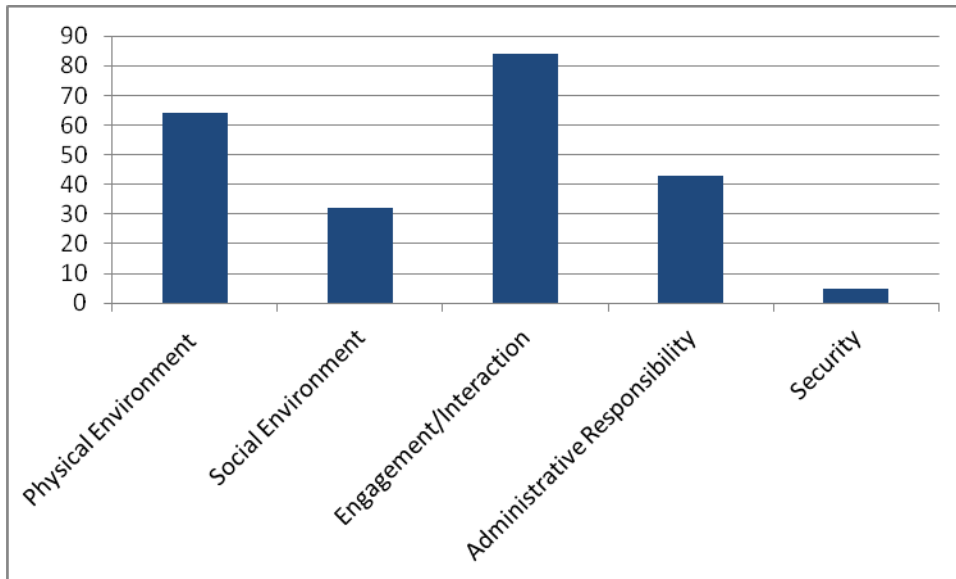
Weak support networks: 2

*Administrative Responsibility*

Insufficient staffing: 16

Unclear policies/procedures/protocols: 3

Question 2: What are the ingredients or features that create a safe environment?



Top two responses per category:

*Physical Environment*

Well maintained, clean physical plant: 37

Sufficient lighting: 27

*Social Environment*

Respect for the rules: 21

Welcoming and supportive environment: 11

*Engagement/Interaction*

Support networks: 66

Programs/activities: 18

*Administrative Responsibility*

Well-staffed: 17

Clear policies, procedures and protocols: 11

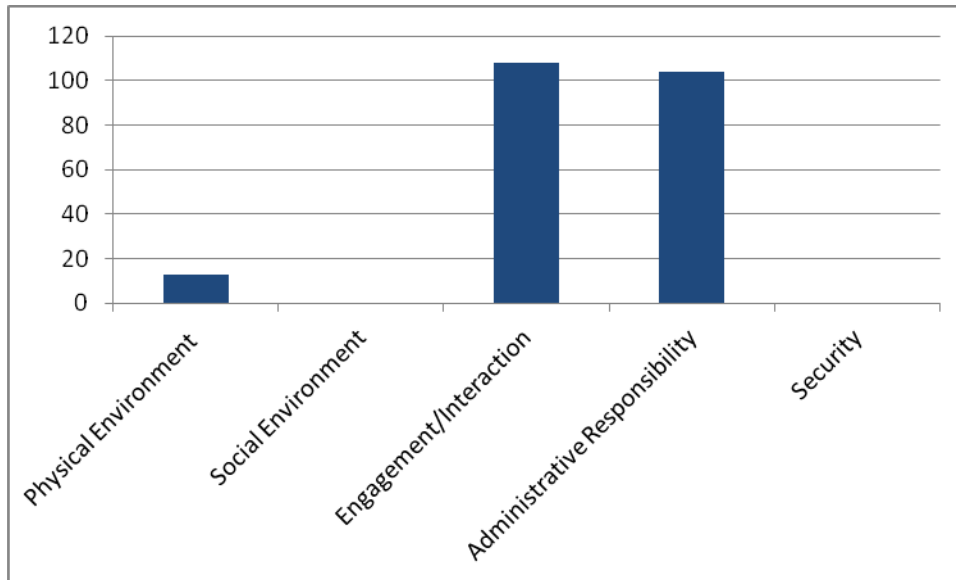
*Security*

Security measures: 3

Cameras: 2



Question 3: What do you do or could you do at your center or park to create a safe environment?



Top two responses per category:

*Engagement/Interaction*

Build support networks: 102

Intentionally engage people through programs/activities: 6

*Administrative Responsibility*

Enact policies/procedures/protocols: 45

Increase frequency and reach of communication: 20

*Physical Environment*

Improve cleanliness: 7

Address Ready to Use issues and maintenance: 6

*For a more detailed list of feedback grouped by workshop, please see Appendix C.*

## PaRC Recommendations

As a result of research, staff and community input, and discussion during the October 2012 event, the Commission on Parks and Recreation developed the following key recommendations for increasing safety and quality of life in our parks and recreation centers.

### *Security*

- Encourage ongoing coordination between public safety stakeholders (City agencies, Police District Advisory Councils, Town Watch and Friends groups)
- Promote better communications between personnel at Parks & Recreation facilities and police personnel
- Consider alternative sources for security patrols (retired police officers and/or park rangers)

### *Physical Plant Improvements*

- Increase the number of security cameras at parks and recreation centers
- Increase the amount of security lighting at parks and recreation centers
- Put more seasonal workers in public parks for cleaning and maintenance

### *Programming*

- Explore additional sources of revenue (Federal, state, training grants, etc.)
- Identify, cultivate, secure, and maintain corporate and local institutional partnerships

## Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Commitment

### *Physical Environment*

Thanks to a mid-year transfer of \$1.3 million for PPR's FY2013 operating budget (and \$2.6 million in FY2014) with emphasis on improving its maintenance capacity, the Department has pledged to:

- Survey security lighting throughout the entire system and replace broken vandal lights.
- Increase Skilled Trades and Operations staffing, equipment and supplies to address physical plant needs.
- Establish a preventive maintenance program for the system.

### *Social Environment*

Over the first three months of 2013, 106 staff members in the Programs and Operations divisions completed customer service training in three online modules--"Introduction to Customer Service," "Diversity" and "The Guests Are Bothering Me." Five more training modules will be added throughout the year (next up: "When Things Go Wrong"). The Departmental goal is to train all staff.

### *Engagement/Interaction*

- PPR remains committed to citizen engagement and will continue working regularly with Advisory Councils and Park Friends groups. Recent meetings with Advisory Councils and Park Friends have produced collaborative action steps that will strengthen these partnerships.
- The Department will continue to fortify its partnership with Philadelphia Police Department through routine meetings and revised protocols for sharing information about ATVs, adult basketball leagues and park permits.

### *Administrative Responsibilities*

- The new Department website, launched December 17, 2012, along with a recent email migration that provided accounts to 165 additional PPR staff, will significantly improve communications among the Department, its partners and citizens.
- A branding process will be conducted in early 2013, after which PPR will increase signage at parks and recreation centers.

### *Security*

- PPR will complete installation of security cameras at 31 facilities, a \$375,000 capital investment.
- The Department is working with City Council to assess the feasibility of expanding security camera installation to recreation centers throughout the city.

## Appendix A

### Community Concerns Expressed at Bimonthly PaRC Meetings

#### Tacony (September 2011)

- Short dumping
- Trail maintenance and lighting
- Graffiti
- Flooding
- Dirt bikes and ATVs
- Illegal drug activity
- Alcohol consumption and loud music after hours

#### Cobbs Creek (November 2011)

- Auto accidents
- Fees to use recreation centers (diminished use)
- More staffing/oversight
- Trail conditions
- Loud music
- Deteriorating facilities
- Need for lighting
- Poor heating and air conditioning
- Policing needed at men's league basketball leagues

### **Simons Recreation Center (January 2012)**

- Lack of exterior lighting and video surveillance
- Dog walking
- Recreation field use fee
- Bench repair
- Unsafe drain

### **Christy Recreation Center (March 2012)**

- Video surveillance needed
- Lighting
- Tree removal
- Storage containers near ball fields
- Facility repair and air conditioning concerns
- Cleanliness of facility
- Sidewalk safety

### **Hunting Park Recreation Center (May 2012)**

- Lighting and video cameras
- More signage
- Rogue vendors
- ATVs
- Graffiti reporting

### **Lloyd Hall (September 2012)**

- Loud music
- Cars and trucks parked on grassy areas
- Drug use
- Poor maintenance of bike paths
- Tree and bush maintenance
- Overcrowded park trails
- Insufficient signage
- Additional evening programs needed

### **Hawthorne Cultural Center (November 2012)**

- Lack of trash pick-up
- Stealing of electrical panels
- Sidewalk and tree maintenance

## Appendix B

### Highlights of Interviews with Other Urban Parks and Recreation Systems

#### New York

- Parks Enforcement Patrol: The private sector funds 110 of the 250 unarmed officers.
- Close relationship with NYPD, including one precinct in Central Park.
- Uses volunteers in mounted auxiliary unit; 260 horseback riders in three locations; required to do three patrols a year.
- Tackled the ATV problem with confiscation, enforcement, hefty fines, and signage at dealers (message: it is illegal to ride in NYC Parks; summons will be issued). Put plainclothes officers on ATVs to blend in, then stop and confiscate ATV from user.

#### Los Angeles

- Has sworn but unarmed officers that patrol parks and service public buildings like City Hall, libraries, and other public buildings to augment the Police Department. The total composition of the force now under General Services, Office of Public Safety, is 113 Police Officers (armed) and 300 Security Officers (unarmed).
- Holds monthly meetings with the office of Public Safety Police to review the monthly report and trends. There is informal discussion and dialogue between the staffs and regular staff interaction to develop strategic responses to specific challenges.
- Utilizes a strategic approach to solve problems in facilities or parks after an incident, often through increased programming.

#### St. Louis

- Has 32 park rangers (one per every hundred acres), including supervisory staff. The rangers carry firearms, licensed through the police, and two-way radios. The two-way radios are monitored by a Ranger Central Monitoring Station, and the police. The rangers work closely with the police, and have moderately good to excellent relationships, depending upon the precinct. The Ranger Central Monitoring Station is operated by a ranger 24 hours a day 365 days a year, who calls other rangers or the police, depending on the incident.
- Eight rangers are assigned to 8-hour standing posts at each one of the recreation centers.
- There are two mounted rangers and four mounted police that patrol Forest Park. One ranger is assigned to an ATV, and the remaining rangers patrol the system in vehicles, on bike or on foot.
- The recreation facilities all have intrusion/fire alarms. These are monitored by an independent private-sector security company.

## Baltimore

- Undertaking operational changes at recreation centers for the sake of safety (everyone must sign in at entry; pilot program with swipe cards for children; video cameras for monitoring).
- Has a set number of staff members trained as safety officers.
- Small ranger corps is used mainly for educational purposes but can also issue tickets.
- Hires off-duty police officers during high-risk hours

## Atlanta

- Has more issues with staff safety (dog bites, slips and falls) than citizen safety within parks and recreation centers.
- Has a designated Safety Officer within the department who coordinates with the Assistant Police Chief Officer.
- Uses police in six police zones. Police Department has substations in four recreation centers with two recreation centers run by the PAL (Police Athletic League).
- Has ex-police officers, assigned to Police and paid by Parks & Rec grant. Sixteen are planned part-time. (No rangers.)

## Chicago

- Hires part-time, hourly employees, including off-duty police and retired employees from the sheriff's office, to monitor safety.
- Has 22 police districts and each district has a designated "park car" whose main job is to patrol just the parks in that district. The park car is branded as such.

## Pittsburgh

- Has not had major issues with safety in parks.
- Believes in the power of uniformed employees, as well as conservancies and private partnerships that fund development in parks.

## Independence National Historical Park

- Divides rangers into interpretive guides and law enforcement.
- Security cameras feed into a dispatch center.
- Trains all employees to become situational leaders for safety.
- Has safety committees and safety officers that receive training once a year and keep safety on staff agendas.



## Appendix C

### October 2012 Safety Event

#### Staff Workshop Data

##### *Question 1: What does “unsafe” look like to you?*

#### **Physical Environment**

##### *Lighting*

- Not well lit (1)
- Dark at night, no lights, blocked sight lines (4)

##### *Physical Plant*

- Broken/unsafe equipment (3)
- Trash everywhere (short dumping)
- Unmaintained (1)
- Graffiti (1)
- Drug stuff (1)
- Drug paraphernalia – needles, bags, pill bottles, broken beer/alcohol bottles (1)
- Vandalism: cut fences, broken equipment, broken trees (4)
- Unkempt spaces: broken concrete, overgrown fields or trees, broken benches, missing railings (3)

#### **Social Environment**

##### *Disregard for Rules*

- Bad behavior by users (1)
- Disregard of rules and regulation (1)

### *Welcoming/Supportive Environ*

- Homeless (1)
- Previous history of crime
- Perception of a place
- Car (people) idling in parking areas
- Dogs off leash (1)
- Graffiti: lack of cleanliness, visible crime, lack of oversight @ center (3)

### **Engagement – Interaction**

#### *Programs/Activities*

- Lack of programming (1)
- Underutilized facility (1)
- Lack of positive activity; unstructured/unsupervised time (4)

#### *Support Networks*

- Lack of community involvement
- Lack of police presence

### **Administration**

#### *Policies/Procedures/Protocols*

- Signage that is either missing completely or is vandalized or graffitied
- Posted rules needed as a foundation for order/safety

#### *Staffing*

- Lack of staff and/or low staff visibility (or just adult presence) (5)

### **Security**

- Open but unattended (unstaffed) facility (5)
- Unsecured rooms

## Staff Workshop Data

### *Question 2: What are the ingredients or features that create a safe environment?*

#### **Physical Environment**

##### *Lighting*

- Well lit (4)
- Light work orders

##### *Physical Plant*

- Cleanliness
- Maintained facilities (2)
- No graffiti
- Physical environment: safe physical features; playground equipment, trail widths, cleanliness factor
- Greening and good landscaping

#### **Engagement – Interaction**

##### *Programs/Activities*

- Foot traffic users
- Good programming
- “Active staff involvement” (1)
- Parks users and programs (usage)

##### *Support Networks*

- Partnerships (3)
- Stewards
- Community participation
- Police support (1)
- Parent participation
- Police involvement (frequent) and/or sense of uniformed presence

- Community involvement, stewardship involvement
- Collaboration between all stakeholders
- Utilize and train volunteers to patrols

## **Administration**

### *Policies /Procedures/Protocols*

- Good signage “Rules”
- “Log” sign in and out; collect names, numbers, and contact information. (3)
- Safety Policies and Procedures

### *Staffing*

- Staffing identifiable

### *Resource Development*

- Resources: staff materials, alternative support, budget (4)

### *Communication*

- Interdivision communication

## **Security**

## Staff Workshop Data

### *Question 3: What do you do at your center or park to create a safe environment?*

#### **Engagement – Interaction**

##### *Programs/Activities*

- Have structured programs (2)
- Programming increases usage (2)

##### *Support Networks*

- Establish good relations with police (5)
- Build rapport with users-children (4)
- Getting familiar with participants
- Communication with parents
- Education/awareness of neighborhood and community (2)
- Communication and partnership with police (DHS, etc.) and other agencies (1)
- Regular Advisory Council/community meetings

#### **Administration**

##### *Training/Capacity Building*

- Keep “floater” to monitor site
- Staff training (“verbal judo”)
- Proper equipment use
- Present training/inform of best practices (3)
- Up to date certifications (CPR, first aid, etc.)
- Stress reduction programming
- Staff training concerning gun shots, violence, etc. – What do you do?

### *Policies/Procedures/Protocols*

- Visual inspection of facility daily/regular park inspections (2)
- Report issues in the park as seen (2)
- Check work orders
- Constant monitoring of participants
- Daily inspection
- Clearly post rules and regulations
- Enforce rules and regulations (4)
- Sign in/sign out with participants
- Identification of participants (e.g. camp shirts)
- Proper controls at entrance/exits
- Registered program participants (name, phone, address, etc.)
- Shut room at end of program (1)
- Report vehicle issues ASAP (1)
- Educate users about rules

### *Staffing*

- Adequate staff relative to participants (2)

### *Communication*

- Stay in contact regularly (1)

## Advisory Councils and Friends Groups Workshop

### Question 1: What does “unsafe” look like to you?

#### Physical Environment

##### *Lighting*

- Lighting (3)
- Poorly lit (9)

##### *Physical Plant*

- Unclean facilities (4)
- Plumbing issues (2)
- Lack of attention to maintenance issues (not taken care of in a timely-fashion) (9)
- Maintenance problems (4)
- Broken glass
- RIP spray painted – graffiti in general
- Trash, graffiti (1)
- Dumping
- Unmaintained field (4)
- Drug paraphernalia (4)

#### Social Environment

##### *Disregard for Rules*

- Drinking/smoking (2)
- Dogs (unleashed) (5)
- Small group carrying a case of beer (1)
- Motor vehicles in recreation center (5)
- Cars illegally parked (2)
- Loud noise/disturbing others (1)

### *Welcoming/Supportive Environ*

- Large groups not in programming (8)
- Leaving alone/locking up at night(2)
- Overcrowding
- Little/no supervision
- Lack of trust or ability of supervisor to manage facility/problems (6)
- Large groups

### **Administration**

#### *Staffing*

- Working alone (understaffed) (7)
- Not enough staff (4)



## Advisory Councils and Friends Groups Workshop

### *Question 2: What are the ingredients or features that create a safe environment?*

#### **Physical Environment**

##### *Lighting*

- Better lighting (6)
- Lighting (6)

##### *Physical Plant*

- Well maintained (4)
- Clean working bathrooms (3)
- Handicap accessible
- Cleanliness (3)
- Beautifying not fortifying (4)

#### **Social Environment**

##### *Respect*

- People following rules
- Enforcement of rules and regulations (11)
- No animals
- No ATVs

##### *Welcoming/Supportive Environ*

- Diverse group of people

#### **Engagement – Interaction**

##### *Programs/Activities*

- Positive programming and consistency (1)
- Engaging activities (2)
- Park usage
- Support Networks

- More police (1)
- Community partnerships
- More police presence (12)

## **Administration**

### *Policies/Procedures/Protocols*

- Signage
- Proper communications – signage, set programming, rules to governing. (4)

### *Staffing*

- Adequately staffed (4)
- Staffing (10)

### *Resource Development*

Funding (4)

## **Security**

- Cameras (2)

## Advisory Councils and Friends Groups Workshop

### *Question 3: What are ways we can help each other create a safe environment?*

#### **Physical Environment**

- Keep it clean and well maintained (6)
- Make handicap accessible (3)
- Visibility (1)

#### **Engagement – Interaction**

##### *Support Networks*

- Citizen feedback (1)
- Share programming ideas (1)
- Work with community (1)
- Develop a great advisory council (1)
- Look at needs of all members of community (1)
- Make friends
- Leading by example (4)
- More police presence (signing logs) (9)
- Participation (1)
- Mandatory parental participation (community engagement) (3)
- Volunteering (3)
- Interacting with community (6)

#### **Administration**

##### *Resource Development*

- Funding (8)
- Staff/participant incentives (1)

### *Staffing*

- Adequate staff (8)

### *Communication*

- Share news, communicate (4)
- Communication (10)

### *Policies/Procedures/ Protocols*

- Reporting suspicious activities (4)
- Timely response (4)
- Adapt practices from other cities that work

## Organizational Partners Workshop

### *Question 1: What constitutes a safe environment?*

#### **Physical Environment**

##### *Lighting*

- Well lit at night (1)
- Adequate lighting, visibility
- Clean and well lit appearance (streetscape frontage) (1)

##### *Physical Plant*

- Buildings and paths well-maintained and clean
- Picnic tables (in good condition) (1)
- Well-kept grounds and facilities (1)
- Amenities kept in state of good repair (1)
- Walkability (1)
- An area that is clean and healthy, and where children can play, learn, and grow up safely.
- Clean (1)
- Green space
- Amount of greenspace

#### **Social Environment**

##### *Respect*

- Respect of self and respect of others
- Respect of rules
- Respect (1)
- Following the rules

### *Welcoming/Supportive Environ*

- Family friendly
- Feeling ok to be alone in nature
- A place that feels secure by way of environment and mental stability
- Perception of 'safety'
- Minimum threats to my physical and mental well-being\*
- Drug free (1)
- Violence free (1)

### **Engagement – Interaction**

#### *Programs/Activities*

- Frequent events
- Other people using the park = less isolating
- Amount of activities

#### *Support Networks*

- Strong partnership with near neighbors, “friends” groups, community and faith-based organizations centered around your park.
- Know your patrons; develop point persons
- Partners who know each other on a first name basis and work together (1)
- Relationship building, fellowship together and networking

### **Administration**

#### *Policies/Procedures/Protocols*

- Rules posted for park use
- Informative signs

*Communication*

- Good communication (1)
- Communication (1)

**Security**

- Protection at all recreation centers

## Organizational Partners Workshop

### *Question 2: What do you do to create a safe environment?*

#### **Physical Environment**

##### *Lighting*

- Lighting
- Good well-maintained lighting

##### *Physical Plant*

- Maintenance
- Maintain a clean, safe, open campus in the community (non-profit org) (i.e. clean up days, open, lighting, volunteer opportunities)

#### **Social Environment**

- Create a situation where people invest themselves into the environment
- Don't litter, follow park rules

#### **Engagement – Interaction**

##### *Programs/Activities*

- Activate spaces with positive use
- People- programs/activities and families that are supportive of their children.
- Participate in positive activities
- Programs, rules, meeting with the public

##### *Support Networks*

- Engage people to make them feel welcome
- Volunteers
- Build community
- Organize community stakeholders (2)
  - “park watch”
- Donate time, money, and resources to the extent of your ability



- Interacts with people.
- Know or get to know your fellow park patrons (1)
- People that care (3)
- Support networks (cont.)
- Bring neighbors, churches, business and all types and kinds of people together to make things better.
- Stay active, involved and knowledgeable about your park.
- Encourage community use and frequent presence
- Good relationship with local police officers (1)
- Having strong relationships with District captain and the formal and informal leaders in the community and DA's Office (2)
- Show love by helping out one another and volunteer
- Get to know and build rapport with strong neighborhood figures (1)
- Practice good park stewardship

## **Administration**

### *Training/Capacity Building*

- Train staff to monitor facilities and surroundings.
- Require my students utilize proper safety equipment
- Set up meetings to get a universal understanding, have different trade specialists inspect the environment, and speak of how to improve the environment if it's already fine

### *Policies/Procedures/Protocols*

- Give letter/certificate to children and teens that are working with us to make our playgrounds safe and clean.
- Routine inspection and surveillance of interior facilities and exterior property and grounds, noting conditions for better or for worse. (1)
- Checklist for a safe park- self audits.
- Monitoring of a specific area

- Pay attention to surroundings. Be alert.
- More external monitoring

### *Staffing*

- People (more staff = more programs, more programs = more people, more people = safer facility)

## Organizational Partners Workshop

### *Question 3: What resources are you aware of to help us build a safe environment?*

#### **Engagement – Interaction**

##### *Municipal Partnerships*

- Make it safe for police to walk the street
- Local authorities (relationship with) (i.e. police, fire)
- Philly Safe Cam
- 311
- Philly Rising
- Mural Arts (murals, landscaping)
- Town watch
- Mounted police
- Block captains/political figures
- Philadelphia Parks and Recreation

##### *External Partnerships*

- Local domestic violence agencies and long standing community-based organizations
- Involve local churches, businesses, schools and neighborhood groups (2)
- Encourage people to regularly walk through the area (2)
- Community-based organizations as partners
- Social service agencies
- Users for other users/momentum (1)
- Friends groups
- PHS, vacant landcare programs, tree plantings, garden tenders
- Volunteers
- Welfare to work

- City Year
- Community Service workers
- Philadelphia Parks Alliance
- “Friends” groups, near neighbors
- Community and faith-based organizations (1)
- Town watch--create a “Park Watch”
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Philadelphia (1)
- Groups who serve multi-purposes (e.g. AA teaching respect, hard-work, team-work, etc.)

### **Administration**

#### *Training/Capacity Building*

- Technology- email, texting (1)
- PDFs of equipment manuals available online
- Knowledge of ethnic diversity of area
- Knowledge of neighborhood resources

#### *Resource Development*

- Federal dollars → Education funds/grants
- Penn grant money

#### *Communication*

Public relations (1)