

VISION

Community Recreation Services is renowned as a world leader for facilitating quality, inclusive and innovative recreation and leisure opportunities; indoor and out. All of our programs and services are market driven and affordable and promote holistic and healthy lifestyles.

Our programs, services, and facilities are a reflection of our diverse, talented, and dedicated staff who value and respect the uniqueness and character of each HRM community and neighborhood. Our work impacts on the health of all HRM communities where parks, recreation, sport, fitness, art, and culture are essential to the personal, social, economic and environmental well being of all.

Successfully acting on recreation issues that affect communities, staff lead or champion results through partnering, active citizenship, and building on the strengths of our urban and rural communities and cultures. We are continuing to build caring, vibrant, and liveable communities throughout HRM.

MISSION

Community Recreation Services enriches the lives of HRM residents and communities by facilitating and/or providing quality inclusive leisure services, facilities, and programs.

VALUES

- < Customer satisfaction is our number one value. We nurture ongoing relationships with citizens and continually strive to exceed the expectation of our citizens;
- < We are driven by the needs of the unique communities across HRM and continually seek input into our planning and program delivery;
- < We support our staff by investing in their professional development and recognize their collective efforts;
- < We are committed to sustainability and fiscal responsibility;
- < We value open dialogue and team work and believe in a supportive, respectful, ethical and diverse work environment;
- < We believe in universal access to recreation services with measures in place to address barriers - geography, gender, race, income, ability and otherwise;
- < We value the contribution and support of partnerships.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- < Healthy citizens
- < Child and youth development
- < Support citizen involvement by creating volunteer opportunities and assisting volunteer groups
- < Enhance service delivery through the development of partnerships
- < Desirable and attractive places to play and live due to recreation programs and services

CLIENT BENEFITS

- < Appropriate programs that meet community needs
- < Affordable programs
- < Opportunities to access recreation programs and services
- < Opportunities to engage in life long learning and develop skills
- < Opportunities for enjoyment, relaxation, social interaction, and stress reduction

CORPORATE SCORECARD

In the Spring of 2001, HRM embarked upon a Performance Measurement Initiative of which a Corporate Scorecard was one component. The many outcomes and indicators that business units developed during the process of developing the scorecard have been grouped into four general themes:

- < Healthy, Sustainable, Vibrant Communities;
- < Safe Communities;
- < Excellence in Service Delivery;
- < Excellence in Governance.

These themes are meant to drive the structure and delivery of the municipality and help in assessing the performance of the HRM Corporation as a whole.

SERVICE LEVEL CRITERIA

Identification and Assessment of Need/Demand

Needs, emerging needs and trends are identified directly by staff or through staff interaction at the community level. Once a need has been identified by staff or by the public, staff assess its applicability to the CRS mandate, mission, vision, strategic outcomes / client benefits, and values to determine whether it is a potential “fit”.

Scan for Other Service Providers

Staff assess other similar service agencies in their area / community to determine if a similar program or service is being provided by another agency or if the specific program or service could be provided by another agency. If so, the agency should be consulted about the possibility.

Sole Service Providers

Similar to the above step, staff determine the level of service by assessing whether or not CRS is the sole service provider within any given area. If there is not an agency or partner available in a specific community to meet an identified need and CRS has the resources and the mandate to provide a program or service, then the program or service should be operated by CRS.

“Gap Filling”

CRS acts as a “gap filler”. If there is an identified lack of a certain type of recreation (i.e. cultural or sport programs) within any given community, staff should attempt to fill the void, if the resources are available and the identified gap fits the CRS mandate. Where this is the case, staff strive to ensure that the community is serviced with a basic level of programming especially in high need areas with a high density of children and youth.

Assess Partnership Opportunities

As part of a community development approach, staff assess the viability of offering a specific program through partnership. For example, the St. Margaret’s Bay Arena has a facility to house a fitness class. Instead of CRS offering the program directly, staff assist the arena group with the marketing of the program and the training of the instructor. The program “belongs” to the St. Margaret’s Bay Arena Association, thereby enhancing community ownership. CRS does not accrue the revenue but neither does it incur the expenditures associated with the program.

Another example of an evolving partnership is the former summer playground program. Where a need is identified for a playground program, staff work with a community group to operate the program and provide short term assistance to the group in the form of promotions, staff training and program evaluation. Staff do not operate these programs directly.

Urban, Suburban, and Rural Considerations

There are geographical variations between urban, suburban and rural areas with respect to recreation. Recreation is a community-based service and therefore these variations provide for differing levels and types of programs and services across HRM. Access to facilities is one factor that can influence level of service differently in different areas. For example, CRS often has to rely on renting schools, church halls, community halls, etc in rural areas because of limited access to HRM-owned recreation facilities. This access issue can influence decision-making on the development and delivery of potential programs and services.

Relationship to High Need Areas

Using available demographic information and trend analysis in their community, staff within each of the six geographies should identify high need areas. These areas should be examined for their recreation requirements as well as the potential of a recreation intervention addressing issues specific to the area. An example of a high need area could be a high density area with a high population of children and youth (i.e. mobile home parks or housing units). High need areas also include geographically isolated communities, areas with high vandalism or crime rates, or areas of modest means.

Priority Target Groups: Children and Youth

Needs are also determined based on priority target groups. Through trend analysis, needs identification, Council requests, and participation in several provincial and national initiatives, CRS has determined that children and youth are priority target groups. To ensure emphasis is placed on this target group, a Youth Engagement Process has been developed and is being implemented throughout the unit.

Other Priority Groups

CRS prioritizes programs and services for those persons who may be at risk, in need or have a special need or a disability and ensures access for these groups. Access is defined as the removal or reduction of barriers caused by distance, language, culture, age, gender, finances, lack of skill or knowledge, or physical obstacles.

Cost Recovery and Revenue Formulas

Similar to other municipalities throughout Canada, approximately one-third of the CRS budget is recovered through revenues from programs and rentals. The achievement of revenue greatly influences CRS's level of service but revenue is not always the sole consideration. Although CRS strives to recoup direct costs for direct programs, many programs, especially those for children and youth in high need areas, need to be subsidized. Adult and senior programs are generally full cost recovery on direct costs, unless social obligations override this formula. Most high cost/low return programs have been eliminated except where they can be justified as fulfilling a social obligation or where CRS is identified as the sole service provider.

In cases where money from another source (i.e. grant money) can be accessed to enhance new or existing programs and services, particular attention should be paid to the long term financial sustainability of any new initiative or pilot program.

Introductory Programs

CRS has determined that the program emphasis will be on offering introductory level programs. The philosophy is that citizens should have access to learn a variety of skills at an introductory level. If citizens then choose to invest in or pursue a particular skill in more depth, they could then register with a more specialized agency.