

# Tulsa Parks and Recreation Marketing Plan

## Executive Summary

The purpose of the Department's marketing and communications effort is to provide transparent, accurate, and timely information to the Tulsa community through delivery of integrated marketing and public relations activities that promote high quality programs and services. As part of its marketing philosophy, the Parks and Recreation Department will implement key marketing strategies, with the help of the Communications Dept., which are designed to:

- Communicate the unique attributes and benefits of the Tulsa parks and recreation system
- Increase participation in programs and activities
- Facilitate revenue generation
- Provide consistent messaging and visual identity
- Engage community and stakeholders in planning and ongoing collaborative dialogue
- Educate citizens about the Tulsa Parks Master Plan and the guide for Tulsa Parks and Recreation activities for the future

## Marketing Philosophy and Structure

To enhance the Parks and Recreation Dept. marketing and communications efforts, the Communications Dept. will house a communications/marketing position that will help with parks activities. The Communications Dept. is comprised of a dedicated team of professionals responsible for establishing and assisting with implementing the Parks Dept. annual marketing goals. This requires Communications staff to serve in a variety of roles and functions – public information dissemination, marketing consultation, brand management, web and social media strategy and media training.

The Communications Dept. oversees, develops, collaborates, and/or coordinates all public information activities for the City of Tulsa. The Communications Dept. also provides technical support and consultation to the organization and the Tulsa Parks and Recreation Dept. on ensuring numerous marketing programs and activities adhere to brand standards, communication guidelines and corporate messaging from the City of Tulsa.

The Department employs a variety of communication vehicles to disseminate information in an accurate and timely manner. These vehicles provide excellent publicity opportunities to deliver information to a vast majority of Tulsa residents, and include:

- Broadcast Media: Radio, TV, pitch stories/videos to TGOV
- Print Media: Newspapers and magazines
- Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Linked In, YouTube
- Websites: Intranet/Internet
- Online Event Calendars
- Print Materials: Brochures, flyers, posters, etc.
- Videos
- Community Outreach / Forums / Public Engagement through parks staff, council aides and Working in Neighborhood liaisons
- Official presentations for the public, management team, Parks Board

A variety of marketing tools are enlisted in the marketing and public information process, including issuing news releases and fact sheets on major Department initiatives or policy changes; managing the

production of agency publications that feature programs, services, special events and park amenities; overseeing social media opportunities; coordinating press conferences, media interviews and public information campaigns; and managing emergency public communications and other progressive measures.

## Customer Target Markets

The Communications Department has identified three key customer segments essential to growing participation in programs and services:

1. **Current Customers:** Customers who already participate in the Department's programs are important to keep as repeat customers as it is six times more expensive to get a new customer than retain a past program participant.
2. **Emerging African American and Hispanic/Latino and Market:** According to the 2010 Census, people of African American and Hispanic/Latino origin make up 29.7 percent of the Tulsa population. These growing populations will greatly boost the Department's participation rates in programs and services now and in the future, if care and specialized marketing efforts are employed to reach them. Reaching this demographic now will help word-of-mouth referrals in the coming years as well.
3. **Age Group 25-44:** The age group of 25-44 represents the largest segment of Tulsans, with most having children or even serving as a single parent. With the median income for a family averaging at \$51,977, families need to be aware of the opportunities in the parks system, which are affordable and have self-directed activities in most instances.

## Goals and Objectives

1. Goal 1 Objective: Track customer data, Tulsa-area demographics, and recreation industry trends to effectively target customers to market and promote recreation and cultural opportunities.

Strategies:

- Implement new RecPro system for individuals to sign-up for park activities online
- Identify and select program with the greatest potential for higher customer use (e.g. waiting lists and under-used programs)
- Develop and implement a promotions calendar
- Collect monthly program usage data
- Develop one year marketing plan;
- Conduct online survey of parks programs and services
  - Evaluate and report on activities at close of fiscal year

2. Goal 2 Objective: Promote recreation opportunities through use of *social media and online communications*.

Strategies:

- Implement e-mail marketing of selected programs
- Compile list of all social media sites owned by the department and streamline for effectiveness and reach
- Increase the number of customers on Department social media pages (fans)

- Increase the number of postings on social media sites by 5 percent
  - Increase video postings that market programs and services
  - Promote registration opportunities on the web and Facebook
  - Ensure accurate and current information on internet and social media sites
3. Goal 3 Objective: Produce timely and accurate news releases, media advisories, fact sheets and public service announcements.

Strategies:

- Increase Tulsa Parks and Recreation listings on online and media calendars
- Oversee policies and procedures for ensuring compliance with public information guidelines
- Pitch news stories to print and electronic media on the new Improve Our Tulsa parks construction phases and parks capital program
- Promote activities and facilities with the Purely Parks newsletter and use social media campaign to ramp up readership
- Watch evolving issues and receive counsel from Communications Department on effective handling

### **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT Analysis)**

The Parks and Recreation Department is looking at new avenues to bridge the gap for programs, services and maintenance through collaborations, partnerships and community involvement. The following is a high-level overview of the Department's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths of the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Offers affordable programs and services
- Offers accessible and inclusive programs and facilities
- Developed Master Plan for long-term planning
- Many exceptional facilities / open spaces / natural resources

Weaknesses of the Parks and Recreation Department:

- The department is under-funded
- Programs and services need to be distinct and promoted separately from other private events occurring in recreation centers and facilities
- Marketing for programs and services is not funded, strictly rely on earned media
- Staffing issues, with positions cut over the years for budgetary needs within the City
- Outdated facilities

Opportunities of the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Strong community support
- Continuation of enhancing Department branding
- Increase private and public partnerships
  - Look to offer more cultural programming for the diverse Tulsa community – potential private/public partnerships
- Interdepartmental collaborations

- Look to offer more environmental programs and services – potential interdepartmental collaborations with Water & Sewer, Stormwater, Solid Waste
- Implement online RecPro system

Threats of the Parks and Recreation Department:

- Budget deficits
- Funding cuts
- Growth of the parks system without appropriate funding
- Private sector competition for recreation and leisure
- Rising costs of doing business (e.g. utility costs, personnel)
- Declining local schools and program cutbacks (e.g., afterschool, fine arts, physical education)
- No funding for marketing programs and services