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Planning for Recreation

Lecture - 71

PLANNING CRITERIA AND OBJECTIVES OF RECREATION FACILITIES

INTRODUCTION

Recreation is an essential part of human life and finds many different forms which are shaped naturally not only by individual interests but also by the surrounding social construction, they may be communal or solitary, active or passive, outdoors or indoors, healthy or harmful and useful to the society or detrimental. Recreation-related business today is a huge business and forms a huge part of the economy. Tourism industries have recognized that many visitors are specifically attracted by recreational offerings.

Recreation planning is the application of analytical tools to a systematic and deliberate process of decision making about the future management of recreation opportunities. Recreation planning is a rational systematic decision making process, and as such it is a fundamental tool that deters our human tendencies to make decisions based on predisposition, bias, inadequate analysis, group-think, insular perspective, resistance to change and excessive self-confidence. It results in decisions that are more effective, efficient, fair, reasoned and defensible.

Recreation planning may also be referred to as organized recreation. In recreation planning or organized recreation many recreational activities are organized, typically by public institutions, voluntary group-work agencies, private groups supported by membership fees and commercial enterprises.

Planning Criteria

If we look at the dictionary meaning of the term criteria, it is clear that criteria is a principle or standard by which recreation planning may be judged or decided; or a defining characteristic of something; and in this case the standard for recreation. Different experts in the field may have their list of criteria for planning of recreation also known as 'Recreation Resource Planning' the headings may differ in different books however the essence derived from all would be the same. Without any further delay we will discuss the important planning criteria that should be considered while planning a recreation program.

1. **A Process:** While the specific terms and steps in a recreation planning process often vary across institutions, all recreation resource planning in some manner includes:
 - Identification of public issues, management concerns, opportunities, and threats through collaborative stakeholder involvement.
 - Establishment of planning and decision criteria for evaluating and selecting the preferred alternative.
 - Inventory of resources, the current situation, and the best available science and information.
 - Formulation of alternatives which address the significant issues and concerns.
 - Evaluation of the consequences, benefits, and effects of each proposed alternative.
 - Selection of a preferred alternative based upon a full and reasoned analysis.
 - Implementation and monitoring.
 - Plan adaptation or revision.
2. **Legally Sufficient:** Recreation resource planning is framed by various local, state, and federal laws and regulations, with the most significant and historic direction provided by the National Environmental Policy Act (1969) and its attendant Council on Environmental Quality regulations.
3. **Judicial Doctrine:** Good recreation planning is based upon the important judicial principles of being principled, reasoned, reasonable, sufficient, full, fair, and preponderance (the fact of being greater in importance) of the information.
4. **Planning Considerations:** An adequate recreation resource planning process and plan must address all of the significant public issues, management concerns, opportunities, and threats that are identified in the early stages of the planning process. Issues, concerns, opportunities and threats that are not deemed significant, do not need to be addressed in the plan.
5. **Planning Inputs:** Recreation resource planning requires the consideration of many inputs such as an inventory of existing plans and policies, current type and amount

of recreation use (supply and demand), recreation trends, public issues, management concerns, regional supply of recreation opportunities, visitor and stakeholder preferences, economic impact of recreation participation, best available science, environmental conditions, and available information from recreation and resource monitoring.

6. **Recreation Resource Publics:** Recreation resource planning must try to engage and hear from all the diverse publics who value the recreation resource. The easily recognizable publics are often labeled visitors, local business, land owners and communities, but there may also be equally important publics who vicariously (experience through the feelings or actions of another person) value the resource, some who have been displaced by past unacceptable conditions, some who do not have the ability to attend meetings, or some who live across the country but equally share the ownership of the public resource.
7. **Collaboration:** The meaningful engagement and exchange with the public is essential throughout the planning process. Collaboration results in a clearer definition of public values, more creative alternatives, more reasoned and reasonable decisions, and a constituency that becomes better informed and committed to the plan and its implementation.
8. **Science-Informed Planning:** It is both a legal requirement and professional imperative i.e. of vital importance to duly consider the best available science and expertise in the planning process and the plan's implementation.
9. **Comprehensive and Integrated:** Recreation planning should consider other significant natural and cultural resources, uses, demands, and values in an integrated and comprehensive fashion. Functional planning, whereby one resource is planned for in a vacuum from other resources, is not appropriate and contrary to comprehensive and integrated planning.
10. **Clear Management Alternatives:** Recreation alternatives must be clear, comprehensive, and provide a reasonable range of choices for public consideration. Each alternative can be contrasted by its proposed objectives, desired future conditions, desired recreation experiences, facilities, management strategies and actions, quality standards, visitor capacities, economic value, projected budget requirements, and monitoring program.
11. **Rigorous Analysis:** The analytical stage in a planning process is the evaluation of alternatives whereby the alternatives should be sharply contrasted, and the pros

and cons are rigorously evaluated so the reasons for and against each alternative become clear.

Objectives of Recreation Facilities

There are a wide variety of recreation facilities that are in the market and a lot more keep coming up each day with the technological advancements. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) contain provisions for various types of recreation facilities, including:

- Amusement Rides
- Recreational boating facilities
- Exercise machines and equipment
- Fishing piers and platforms
- Golf facilities
- Miniature golf facilities
- Play areas
- Swimming pools, wading pools and spas
- Shooting facilities and firing positions

The main objectives of every community recreation facilities should be:

1. To provide equality of opportunity for all. This democratic principle applies particularly in the field of recreation. Neighbourhood areas not only for a few should have adequate playground facilities and programs should be sufficiently broad and well distributed to enable all the people to be served.
2. To serve all age and provide opportunities and facilities without any age distinction.
3. To provide equally for all genders. Everyone is entitled to equal opportunities in the recreation program.
4. To provide opportunities for co-recreation. Many activities can be enjoyed fully when engaged in together irrespective of age or gender.
5. To encourage family recreation. Many forms of recreation tend to divide or separate the family. Opportunities should be provided for the family to play together either as a separate unit or with other family group in the home and outside areas and facilities.
6. To provide a wide range of choice in different types of activities. The program should not be devoted primarily to a single type or activities but it should include games and sports, drama, music, social recreation, etc.
7. To include relaxing as well as active form of recreation. There are times when people do not desire strenuous activities. Some people find their greatest satisfaction in quite or passive recreation.
8. To offer possibilities for varying degrees of skill and ability measure of success is necessary if the activity is to afford satisfaction and contribute to the individuals, personality development.

9. To provide activities of a progressive nature. Very few people keep a long continuing interest in activities unless they afford challenging goals of objectives. Organization of music, drama, craft, etc.
10. To carry over the leisure time, skills and interest developed in the schools. The recreation program should make it possible and easy for young people who in school played on athletic teams or taken part in other extra-curricular activities to join groups in which their interest and ability may continue to find a satisfactory expression.
11. To include activities that will persist in adult life that they should have an important part in community recreation program.
12. To continue throughout the years. People need recreation 12 months of the year and a responsibility rests upon the city to provide a year around program. Activities are especially needed during seasons when other recreation opportunities are limited.
13. To provide activities for different periods of free time. Noon hours after school periods, weeks and holidays, twilight hours, recess periods, vacations, all afford opportunities for recreation.
14. To represent co-operative planning. This is exceedingly important if recreation functions in democratic setting. Program participants and the public should share with the professional bodies in developing the program.
15. To encourage individuals and groups to provide their own activities. The recreation program should encourage people to take initiatives in developing their own program ideas, stimulating interest and developing self-leadership and the group to which they belong.
16. To be related to other local program. Co-operative planning with other organization providing recreation assures maximum use of availability and enriches the total opportunities in the community.
17. To furnish outlets for satisfying group activity. Through recreation program people should have the opportunities to achieve a sense of belonging to develop social qualities or experience, the fellowship which results from participating membership in a group.
18. To recognize the different tastes and interests of the individuals. Group activity is the need and personal development of the individual should receive primary consideration.
19. To provide outlets for creative expression. Although it is important that large numbers of people be served in activities in which the creative factor has little significance. The need of the individuals who desire outlet for their creative ability should not be neglected.
20. To provide for the ill and the differently abled. Special consideration should be given to the needs of the ill and the differently abled.
21. To serve the specific interest and needs of the people in different neighbourhood. The social, economic and cultural background of the people affects their recreation interests and needs.

22. To afford opportunities for developing good citizenship. Co-operation is trust rather than competition. All the activities are based upon the opportunities afforded for leadership and service. Through this the people should learn by experience, the values of co-operative effort in service to the community.
23. To utilize fully all existing facilities properly. This includes both indoor and outdoor facilities. The program should be planned so that facilities can yield the management returns in enjoyable activities for the largest number of people.
24. To make possible the wisest use of available resources. Unwise or extravagant expenses for special services for a limited number deprive the major city of essential greatly needed recreation opportunities.
25. To place recreation opportunities within the financial abilities of all. Facilities and activities can render maximum service only if they are frequently essential services which are easily accessible too.
26. To confirm to recognize program standards. Many national organizations have adopted standard sitting for the desirable procedures for the conduct of certain activities. Participants in various events for organizing competition and for personal conduct.
27. To assure safe and healthful condition for recreation activities.
28. To be subject to continuous evaluation.
29. To provide opportunity for contact with nature.
30. To utilize the potential volunteer service of individuals and groups. Persons who have skill in recreation activities, leadership ability and talents of various types should be encouraged to make them available recreation agencies.

CONCLUSION

Recreation is a part of our life but every recreation program requires enormous amount of planning. It is a systematic process in which all the characteristics of recreation are to be fulfilled, the participant satisfaction being the most important of among them. It is important that the program is made available to as many people as possible and that each individual's interest is met through them. There should be ample opportunities of participation through various organizations and a variety of activities to participate in. Opportunities for recreation are a must so as to promote the development of an individual to a fully integrated one who would be instrumental in the development of the nation and its economy.