



Vision 2030

Montgomery County
RECREATION
DEPARTMENT

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Vision 2030 and Strategic Plan

Caribbean Focus Group

Negril Restaurant

May 22, 2010

This focus group was attended by four representatives from the Haitian and Jamaican community in Montgomery County. Following is a summary of the discussion.

1. What are the key strengths of the parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services in Montgomery County?

- Fields
- Parks
- Caribbean American Heritage Month
- Trails and open spaces
- World of Montgomery

2. What do you believe to be the most essential (of critical importance) public parks and recreation services in the community? Why do you see it/them as essential?

- Locations for people to come together to educate, entertain, and build community.
- Build bridges between Caribbean residents and county population as a whole, such as with festivals.
- Increased inclusion of Caribbean Americans as staff, vendors, and teachers.
- Inform the public about good behavior that protects the environment. Use signage, do public announcement commercials.

3. What community issues or problems can the services of parks and recreation address?

- Lack of community as a problem among Haitian immigrants.
- Skills training for women and youth with particular focus on at-risk youth.
- Youth need to be aware of programs and services provided by county. Network with them by connecting to web social networks, churches, and schools.

4. What improvements/ changes would you make to the parks and recreation facilities, programs and services in Montgomery County today?

- Improved collaborations with community organizations to engage residents.
- The largest representation of Caribbeans in the county are from Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad, Tobago, and Haiti.
- Use volunteers and liaisons from Caribbean communities to build outreach; such as database development, event planning, and press liaison.
- Outreach to Caribbean businesses. Businesses can serve as liaisons to Caribbean population.
- Build new business relationships through networking.
- Need fields that are cricket friendly.

5. How do you think the Departments can work to responsibly address these improvements/changes given its resources? What opportunities exist?

- An after-school program designed to teach entrepreneurship to young people, ages 13 to 19, to help them develop skills in economic and business literacy.
- Sewing classes to help the boys and girls to learn how to make or mend their own clothes.
- Provide forums for communities to dialogue and get to know each other.

6. Do you believe there are populations/geographic areas that do not have access or who have limited access to parks and recreation services? If yes, please explain. What are solutions to address?

- New residents to area, especially those without transportation.
- Seniors
- Youth, especially teens. Partner with schools to outreach to Caribbean youth.

7. Are there potential partners that the Department of Parks or Department of Recreation should consider working with in the future?

- Reid Temple
- Carnival Band Leaders Association
- Caribbean-American Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Institute of Caribbean Studies