



Vision 2030

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Vision 2030 and Strategic Plan

Teen Focus Group Notes

Wheaton High School, Sports Academy

March 24, 2010

Hadiyah Jordan from Justice and Sustainability Associates welcomed the participants and gave an overview of the Vision 2030 project and the purpose of the focus group. Following are the notes from the discussion held by the 12 high school focus group attendees.

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

- Sports Academy, we all love it!
- Snacks
- Homework center
- Pools – Summer pool party at night is great
- Parks
- Soccer - Tournaments

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?

- All of the programs like Sports Academy
- Give kids something constructive to do rather than teens on the streets, “selling drugs”, getting into trouble
- Help get people outdoors
- Some kids who haven’t been anywhere get a chance to go places that they wouldn’t have otherwise gone, or meet people they wouldn’t have met before

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

- By giving kids something constructive to do rather than being on the streets it will help keep kids out of trouble

4. How do you get to the various parks and community centers?

- Carpooling
- Metro
- Walking

Is transportation ever a reason for not participating?

- Yes – In the past there was a shuttle that took students from the high school and returned them after the event (this was a movie)
- If you identify another location for the bus pick up, kids will complain that they don't know where to go

Would biking be an option?

- Maybe, but the students expressed concerns about safety of their property

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

- Work with schools to increase the number of field trips – “I haven't been on a field trip my entire high school career.”
- Help increase the number of end of the year school trips – “We don't have any.”
 - Water Park
 - Museums
 - College tours/visits
 - Sight seeing (this area is great for sight seeing)
- Dances
- Job fair, career fair (summer jobs)
- More connections to available volunteer opportunities for SSL hours
- More large scale parties
- Block parties
- Bowling
- Gymnastics
- Any type of dance classes – salsa, hip-hop
- Classes that would make students prepared to play sports or activities that they don't already participate in (i.e. softball training, dance, etc.)
- Classes are expensive and too short
- Water aerobics
- Better marketing –Parks and Recreation should market their programs
- Tutoring
- More open space to get together for outdoor activities (tag, snowball fight)

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?

- Younger students do not have the same resources
- More afterschool programs with diverse activities
- More afterschool teams for younger students (i.e. soccer)
- There could be more connection between the students for afterschool/extracurricular activities

Additional Questions

7. What channels should Parks and Recreation use to get information to you?

- Through the school
- Facebook
- TV and radio (99.5, 93.0, 92.3, DC101)
- Bulletin
- Podcasts available on iTunes
- Pamphlets to county residents (mailing still works)

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

- More connections with local businesses – especially as sponsors (i.e. Baskin-Robbins, Rita's, and Chipotle)