

TOPIC: Performance Measures

TREND/ISSUE

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) has identified Parks and Recreation (and Library service) as two new areas to be introduced to the Municipal Performance Measures Program (MPMP) for the 2004 year, to be reported on the April 2005 Financial Information Return (FIR).

Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) has co-chaired a Working Group with MMAH for the last 18 months, working in cooperation with the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association (ORFA) and the Ontario Parks Association (OPA) to develop a set of measures for parks and recreation. The measures being recommended have been tested and reviewed during several stakeholder feedback opportunities.

BACKGROUND

PRO has been involved in monitoring this subject since 1998 when the MPMP project commenced. PRO has worked with the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) to develop a broad list of measures from a variety of sources using the Benefits of Recreation and Parks headings. These have been tested at previous PRO events, through our colleagues in other Provincial organizations, at the AQLM Conference in Montreal and the CPRA Conference in Winnipeg.

CURRENT STATUS

The list was further refined through pilot testing in Ontario with OPA and ORFA. Recently, PRO, OPA, OPFA, MMAH and MTR have reviewed the list and prepared Draft Definitions. The measures were presented to the MMAH Advisory Committee in late May 2004 and approved at the staff/Committee level in September.

It is anticipated that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will announce the measures in early December. The first year of data collection will be 2004, with reporting due as part of the annual Financial Information Return, in April 2005. Reporting to the public at a local level will be in September 2005.

All partners are working together on developing and offering training programs throughout Ontario. Training will commence in January 2005 and will include sessions to be held in all Regions of the Province.

The measures include:

1. Operating Costs for Parks per Person
2. Operating Costs for Recreation Programs per Person
3. Operating Costs for Recreation Facilities per Person
4. Operating Costs for Parks, Recreation Programs & Facilities per Person
5. Hectares of Open Space per 1,000 Persons
6. Total Kilometers of Trails per 1,000 Persons
7. Total Recreation Program Participant Hours per 1,000 Persons
8. Square Metres of Recreation Facility Space per 1,000 Persons

LINKS

Partners include: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, Ontario Recreation Facilities Association, Ontario Parks Association.

PRO continues to work with the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association, and will be connecting with the Ontario Centre for Best Practices.

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS

- The working group has identified further work required in this area and is pursuing funding support for research, refinement of measures and a continued focus on performance measurement and accountability within the sector.
- Municipalities should be preparing to gather the data for the 8 measures, working closely with their finance staff; existing guidelines within the FIR and definitions, have been reviewed and refined in cooperation with MMAH staff to provide for consistency in reporting within the MPMP program overall.

- The working group has provided 20 questions to be included on a Schedule to the FIR which will assist in explaining the results, identifying differences and similarities between municipalities regarding service delivery models, and other criteria which is relevant regardless of population (this will also be useful to the Ontario Centre for Best Practices upon review of the data following year 1 reporting).

POSSIBLE SECTOR POSITION

This reporting will become a statutory requirement of the Province of Ontario, when approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. It is critical to provide orientation, training and support to the sector. Continued efforts are required to assist in this area, and are being included in a broader framework of "Performance Measurement and Accountability Framework."

CONTACT

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