

# Parks and Open Space FY 2011-12 Performance Plan

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## **I. MISSION STATEMENT**

Parks and Open Space is dedicated to educating, inspiring and engaging the people of Marin in the shared commitment of preserving, protecting and enriching the natural beauty of Marin's parks and open spaces, and providing recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of all generations.

## **II. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Department of Parks and Open Space consist of two divisions: the Parks and Landscape Division and the Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD).

The department is responsible for planning, acquiring, and managing the county's approximately 15,000 acres of open space and 160 miles of public trails, as well as the county's park system that includes five regional parks, eight neighborhood parks, six bike paths, and 16 landscaping areas.

### **Parks and Landscape Division**

The Parks and Landscape Division operates and maintains over 50 separate facilities for an estimated two million visitors per year. These areas include regional and local parks, bike paths, County Service Areas (CSAs), landscape medians, playgrounds, boat ramps, beaches, sport fields, and the Civic Center campus. Staff, volunteers and seasonal staff manage these areas while providing public education and other services. County parks also host numerous public and private groups providing educational and interpretive programming for participants.

The Parks and Landscape Division includes the following programs:

- Park Planning Administration
- Park Facilities
- Landscape Services

### **Marin County Open Space District Division (MCOSD)**

MCOSD manages over 15,000 acres of land contained within 34 Open Space preserves. Open Space preserves differ from County parks in that they are managed primarily for resource protection. District lands represent outstanding examples of Northern California environments including oak-bay woodland, oak savannah, fresh water wetlands, salt marsh, and grasslands. MCOSD's primary land stewardship activities include trail, fire road, and drain maintenance; vegetation management to reduce fire hazard; enforcement of the Open Space District Code; and reclamation and enhancement of native habitat. Visitors to district lands enjoy activities such as hiking, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, mountain bicycling, and nature study. MCOSD is a special district separate from the County of Marin and does not receive operating revenues from the County's General Fund.

Parks and Landscape Services include the following programs:

- Park Planning and Administration
- Parks Facilities
- Landscape Services

The Marin County Open Space District Division includes the following programs:

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- Planning and Acquisition
- Capital Improvement
- Maintenance and Operations
- Resource Management
- Environmental Education
- Volunteer Program

### III. ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR FY 2010-11

- Successfully completed the 680 Trail design, permitting, public outreach and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process; and began trail construction
- Created and launched the new Parks and Open Space website and updated the Parks Reservation System
- Completed phase I and II of the Crown to Coronet Wide Area Fuel Break in Kent Woodlands in partnership with Kentfield Fire Department; Phase I of the Hillside Wide Area fuel break in partnership with the Mill Valley Fire Department and implemented fire fuel reduction at over 346 sites throughout the preserves
- Completed the administrative draft of the Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan for the Open Space preserves, and initiated the CEQA analysis
- Completed Pueblo Park playground renovation, Santa Venetia residents played a vital role in planning and construction
- Offered over 120 free public naturalist led program interpretive walks, evening lectures and family oriented interpretive walks, which were attended by several thousand people
- Completed a feasibility study and began design for Stafford Lake progressive skills bike park, vitally important to this project is the participation of the Marin bike community
- Completed Hal Brown Park at Creekside Park renovation design and construction
- Completed the San Geronimo Creek Upland Habitat Restoration Project-Phase I at Candalero and Contour trails in the Gary Giacomini Preserve, and began Phase II, with grant funding from California Fish and Game
- Designed and implemented a new commercial dog walking program with the support of the commercial dog walking community
- Enriched Marin environmental education programs by offering staff trainings and workshops to a variety of organizations, including Audubon Canyon Ranch, Bay Institute, Slide Ranch, YMCA, Conservation Corps North Bay, and public school teachers
- Conducted over 40 Open Space District ranger led interpretive and outreach programs at organized events throughout Marin, including the Marin County Fair, Bay Area Environmental Education Resource (BAEER) Fair, and many other organized events throughout Marin
- Coordinated and completed an extensive volunteer patrol training academy for new recruits made up of hikers, bicyclists and equestrians
- Partnered with the Marin Humane Society to offer a popular evening lecture series on a variety of pets and environmental education topics
- Completed a settlement agreement and restoration on a major encroachment in Homestead Valley
- Participated in the planning and construction of the Cal Park Tunnel, and initiated a tracking and monitoring program to manage it

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- Improved the transparency of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program and increased the number of participating sites from 34 to 129
- Resolved the Upton Beach dog waste problem by installing six dog waste bag disposal stations and enlisting the voluntary help of the local disposal company and Stinson residents to maintain them
- Organized and sponsored community volunteer restoration projects at the Contour and Candelero trails and Point Reyes restroom and parksite landscaping
- Created an Open Space District Patrol map book and distributed it to local emergency service providers

## **IV. GOALS AND KEY INITIATIVES FOR FY 2011-12**

Countywide Goals				
<b>I. Healthy Communities</b>	<b>II. Safe Communities</b>	<b>III. Sustainable Communities</b>	<b>IV. Environmental Preservation</b>	<b>V. Community Participation</b>
<b>VI. Excellent Customer Service</b>	<b>VII. Employer of Choice</b>	<b>VIII. Effective Communication</b>	<b>IX. Managing for Results</b>	<b>X. Financial Responsibility</b>

### **GOAL I**

#### **Protect and restore our lands**

##### **FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives**

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Complete environmental review for Vegetation and Biodiversity Management Plan	IV. Environmental Preservation
2. Complete restoration plan for the Kent Island Habitat Restoration Project	IV. Environmental Preservation
3. Implement third year of sediment reduction improvements associated with Woodacre Creek Upland Habitat Improvement Project	IV. Environmental Preservation
4. Continue implementation of encroachment resolution initiative	IV. Environmental Preservation
5. Expand Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices to County parks	IV. Environmental Preservation

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**GOAL II**

**Grow and link the County's system of parks, trails, and protected lands FY 2011-12**

Key Initiatives	
Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Conduct community workshops, and scientific studies and analysis on the Road and Trail Management Plan and Environmental Impact Report	IV. Environmental Preservation
2. Complete environmental review, design, construction and maintenance plan, and initiate construction for a progressive skills bicycle park at Stafford Lake	I. Healthy Communities
3. Complete 680 Trail construction	V. Community Participation
4. Acquire new bay front park facility	V. Community Participation

**GOAL III**

**Foster discovery, learning and stewardship**

FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives	
Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Develop a Trail Maintenance Team volunteer program by recruiting and training volunteers to assist with building and maintaining the Open Space trail system	V. Community Participation
2. Engage volunteers in construction and maintenance of a progressive skills bicycle park at Stafford Lake	V. Community Participation
3. Expand existing education program to include young audience and underserved communities not previously engaged in coordination with Parks and Open Space	V. Community Participation

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## FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

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### GOAL IV

#### Connect communities with the land for recreation and health

## FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Complete Phase II of Miller Boat Launch	V. Community Participation
2. Plan and build new playground at Paradise Beach Park	V. Community Participation
3. Explore creation of community park enhancements in West Marin	V. Community Participation
4. Partner with Department of Public Works to complete design of new Paradise Park Seawall and Overlook	III. Sustainable Communities

### GOAL V

#### Achieve sustainable long-term financial viability to satisfy operational needs, capital requirements, and desired programs and services

## FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

Initiatives	Countywide Goals
1. Explore mechanisms to increase departmental funding	X. Financial Responsibility
2. Implement fundraising plan for a progressive skills bicycle park at Stafford Lake	X. Financial Responsibility
3. Implement fundraising for acquiring of a bayfront county park	X. Financial Responsibility

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## FY 2011-12 Key Initiatives

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| 4. Invest in planning effort to increase competitiveness for grant funding | X. Financial Responsibility |
| 5. Continue to evaluate practices for greater efficiency                   | X. Financial Responsibility |

## V. KEY CHALLENGES AND OUTSTANDING ISSUES

- There is conflict among constituents, which requires working with various community interests to establish consensus on key issues
- The Marin community has ever increasing expectations for access to Open Space preserves for recreation, while the amount of land is static and the natural resources are vulnerable to too much use in certain areas, or to uses that are not sanctioned
- Grants for department projects are increasingly competitive for limited funding and reduces the department's ability to implement major projects
- Budget and staff reductions have resulted in increased workload for the remaining staff
- Elimination of Open Space District contract services for seasonal maintenance tasks has resulted in reduced capacity for annual fire fuel reduction work, and educational and enforcement contacts with open space visitors
- An increasingly rigorous regulatory environment requires increased staff time and money

## VI. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

### 1. PARK PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

The Park Planning Program is responsible for development of the county's regional park system as well as the county's multi-use paths and community and neighborhood parks throughout Marin. The staff team manages preparation of park master plans, plans for park facility renovations (including playgrounds, sports facilities, boat launches, walkways and landscape areas) and county landscape areas. Staff designs and prepares construction documents for many projects. It also administers grants, professional service and construction contracts, and directs planning-related work within County parks and County Service Areas.

Administration consists of the department's senior management team (i.e., a director and two deputy directors) and an administrative services team. The latter provides various financial and administrative services for the department, such as customer service, park reservations, program information, accounting, payroll, budget preparation, personnel and clerical services.

### 2. PARK FACILITIES

This program maintains and operates the County's four regional parks (McInnis Park, McNear's Beach Park, Paradise Beach Park, Stafford Lake Park), community parks in

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unincorporated areas, including beaches, bikeways, fishing piers, a swimming pool, boat launch facilities, group picnic areas, a marine reserve, playgrounds, soccer and softball fields, and other facilities. Additional program responsibilities include developing, evaluating and revising maintenance programs; planning, scheduling and supervising maintenance work; code enforcement including issuing citations; natural resource management; assisting the Probation Department with the Court Assignee Program; and providing technical assistance to other departments.

### **Maintenance and Operations**

Maintains the large variety of park facilities, buildings, trails and properties that requires various management approaches and tasks that change with each season. Resource protection is a key focus at our valuable habitat areas that include several endangered species. Turf maintenance, restroom upkeep, garbage removal, exotic plant removal and control are a routine part of this program. Protection of historic, cultural and archeological sites is provided where necessary and appropriate.

### **Recreation**

Visitor services provides a wide range of recreational opportunities for our diverse community including major events, mountain bike riding, swimming, hiking, picnicking, boating, fishing, and cycling.

### **Volunteerism**

Provides community outreach and offers four programs providing volunteer opportunities for people of all ages and physical abilities. The program also coordinates the Adult Offender Work Program, providing alternative manual labor in lieu of jail time; giving staff the chance to focus on higher level skilled tasks. Community volunteer days perform habitat restoration, trail maintenance, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) work and exotic plant removal. The Environmental Stewardship Program provides on-going volunteer support for a particular park, preserve, or specific habitat restoration area. Park Watch members inform staff of the day-to-day park and preserve conditions as well as provide outreach to visitors.

### **Education/Interpretation**

Park Rangers give nature walks, family hikes, and environmental education activities at County parks and preserves. The program partners with schools and other organizations, guests naturalists and docents to provide a wide range of programs, and environmental camps.

### **Public Safety**

Staff provides enforcement and education of Park Regulations (Marin County Code Title 10) to ensure the protection of our natural resources and park visitors. Park and Landscape are often first on the scene for various emergencies; CPR and first aid training is provided so that the Park Rangers can provide critical support during the first minutes of an emergency. Supervisors work closely with Risk Management to obtain the highest possible level of

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prevention and hazard reduction at all of our facilities. Fuel reduction work is performed and buffer zones are provided to reduce the risk fire.

### 3. LANDSCAPE SERVICES

Landscape Services operates and maintains the Civic Center and Lagoon Park, six local parks and approximately 15 landscaped areas, bike paths, County Service Areas (CSAs), landscape medians, and playgrounds. Permanent staff, volunteers and seasonal staff manage these areas while providing public education and other services.

#### **Park Facility, Landscape and Greenway Management**

Landscape maintenance and repairs are provided for several parks and medians throughout Marin to ensure healthy plant material and aesthetic value. Landscape staff supports the Marin Center for site preparation and recovery for such major events as the Marin County Fair, the Home Show and the Race for the Human Race. Landscape construction projects are completed to improve our plant variety and provide plant and tree replacement due storm damage and loss. Fire fuel reduction work is done to reduce risk and improve site use. Staff works closely with Risk Management to maintain safe access and reduce liability.

#### **County Service Area (CSAs) Facility Management**

There are several community services areas throughout Marin that collect funds to improve and enhance their local parks and landscapes. Management staff meets with the CSA Advisory Boards to prioritize project and to ensure a high level of maintenance for their parks and landscaped areas. Landscape staff also performs technical landscape maintenance and repair work and manages the landscape contract services for these sites.

#### **Integrated Pest Management (IPM)**

The County's IPM program uses the full range of landscape and garden maintenance techniques while minimizing the amount of toxic chemicals applied on County maintained lands. Pest control for any County owned properties or buildings is achieved through implementation of the County's IPM Ordinance and Policy. Because of the labor-intensive nature of IPM, approximately 50% of the labor is provided by volunteers. All pesticide treatments must be approved; the site posted with a notice to the public, and a record made of the location, chemical and rating, and date of application. The IPM Coordinator prepares quarterly and annual reports for review and approval by the Board of Supervisors. The IPM Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the Board and is made up of community members appointed by the Board, representing various community interests.

#### **Water Management**

Managing our valuable and expensive water resources (potable, reclaimed and raw water) to achieve healthy, safe and high quality landscapes while reducing waste and minimizing costs. Landscape plan development and irrigation design work is performed with a focus on native plant species and low water using plant material suitable to our climate zones. Irrigation design, repair and installation work is done on a routine basis.



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### 4. OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

The Marin County Open Space District (MCOSD) was created in 1972 as the local agency responsible for creating the county's own system of public open space. Since then, the MCOSD has acquired and manages nearly 16,000 acres of land contained within 34 open space preserves. It has also acquired conservation easements encumbering 3,134 acres. The MCOSD manages its lands primarily for resource protection and balances this with passive recreational, educational, and scientific uses of open space.

The Board of Supervisors serves as the district board. Below is a listing of the district's core programs and a summary of each program's main responsibilities:

#### **Planning and Acquisition**

Long-range open space preservation planning; land, trail, and conservation easement acquisition; planning related to the management of natural resources and public use; and reviewing planning and development proposals affecting the district's open space and trail interests.

#### **Capital Improvement**

Implementing the Parks and Open Space Department's long range Capital Improvement Plan detailed in the department's Strategic Plan; developing and coordinating implementation of the department's annual Capital Improvement Plan; managing certain capital projects through their design development, construction document and implementation phases.

#### **Maintenance and Operations**

Installing, building and maintaining facilities (including fuel breaks, drains, signs, trails and fences); managing public use of district lands by educating open space visitors and enforcing the Open Space District Code; and monitoring land conditions and natural resources.

#### **Resource Management**

Preparing inventories of non-native plants, special status species, and other resources as well as developing, assembling funding for, and implementing plans for vegetation management, erosion control, non-native plant control, habitat reclamation, habitat enhancement, and other resource management activities

#### **Environmental Education**

Providing educational outings by the district's interpretive naturalist, guest naturalists and docents; preparing educational outreach materials, responding to public inquiries; and assisting with the development of resource management projects

#### **Volunteer Program**

Managing a robust volunteer program to engage the community in stewardship projects in parks and open space lands; recruiting new volunteers and retaining existing volunteers; planning and overseeing volunteer training and recognition events; overseeing volunteer

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subprograms; coordinating the selection of volunteer projects; and preparing and distributing volunteer information.

## VII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### PARK PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

**Objective: Complete 20 capital projects between 2008 to 2013**

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
<b>Workload Measures</b>					
Number of parks capital project designs completed	3	4	5	3	2
➔ Number of parks capital projects completed	8	1	3	3	4
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>					
Number of parks capital projects completed per full time staff member	4.0	0.5	1.0	1.5	2.0
<b>Effectiveness Measures</b>					
➔ Percent of parks capital projects goal completed	55%	60%	75%	90%	110%

➔ Indicates Key Measure

#### **Story Behind Performance:**

Projects included Creekside Park renovation, Pueblo Park playground, Via la Cumbre entry monument and Alameda del Prado median landscape renovation. Park planning also initiated design of a bike park at Stafford Lake and participated in a number of repair and upgrade projects that were less than \$25,000, including work in CSA 14, CSA 16, Point Reyes Restroom and Paradise Beach Park. In addition, Park Planning worked closely with Department of Public Works to facilitate design of accessibility improvements at McNear's Beach and Stafford Lake parks.

### PLANNING AND ACQUISITION

**Objective: Complete two land and conservation easement acquisition projects between 2008 and 2013**

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
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MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
<b>Workload Measures</b>					
Number of acquisition projects completed (all methods, including fee and easement)	9	6	2	4	2
Acreage of acquisition or easement projects completed	175	213	330	333	50
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>					
Average cost per acre acquired	\$800	\$483	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
<b>Effectiveness Measures</b>					
Percent of total acreage targeted for preservation that has been preserved	52%	55%	59%	54%	55%

### Story Behind Performance:

The District's annual property tax revenues are sufficient to cover only operating expenses; it is not able to allocate funds for land acquisition at the current level of funding. Therefore the department continues to explore ways to increase funding and capacity.

## MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS

### Objective: Ensure resident satisfaction with Parks and Open Space

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
<b>Workload Measures</b>					
➔ Number of open space acres maintained	15,513	15,229	15,229	15,620	15,620
➔ Number of parks acres maintained	916	921	923	934	934
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>					
➔ Marin County Open Space District cost per resident served	\$17.19	\$17.73	\$19.15	\$23.73	\$23.73
➔ Parks cost per resident served	\$17.51	\$12.08	\$11.12	\$10.01	\$9.96
<b>Effectiveness Measures</b>					
➔ Percentage of community survey respondents indicating they were "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with acquiring, restoring, and maintaining additional open space	78%	77%	77%	77%	77%
➔ Percentage of community survey respondents indicating they were "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with maintaining facilities at County parks	86%	82%	82%	82%	82%

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→ Indicates Key Measure

### Story Behind Performance:

The FY 2011-12 increase in the number of parks acres maintained represents management and care of the Cal Park Tunnel multi-use pathway and right of way (9.7 acres) and the Bolinas - Olema multi-use pathway and shoulder area (1.4 acres). The change in the cost per resident is based on a departmentwide ten percent reduction in Net County Cost.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

### Objective: Reduce total acreage of target exotic and invasive species

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
<b>Workload Measures</b>					
Acres treated to control targeted non-native species (all treatment methods)	85	200	164	110	180
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>					
Cost per acre to control targeted non-native species	\$1,000	\$680	\$950	\$1,100	\$1,000
<b>Effectiveness Measures</b>					
Percentage of acres treated where targeted species were effectively controlled	5%	2%	6%	5%	10%

### Story Behind Performance:

Parks and Open Space (POS) has seen some success in the department's 2010 treatments of yellowstar thistle at Mount Burdell. However, POS will better be able to gauge its successes this spring. The department is optimistic that a large second year burn in 2011 and the finely tuned use of herbicide treatments established last year will create a significant reduction in goatgrass area over the next two seasons. Therefore the department predicts a larger percentage of acres will be effectively controlled. Additionally, the department assumes a slightly lower target costs over previous years due to increased efficiencies through the use of herbicides. Finally, the FY 2011-12 target for acres treated was increased due to additional funding for work at Ring Mountain.

## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

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**Objective: Maintain a high quality volunteer program that benefits the volunteer and Parks and Open Space facilities**

MEASURES	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
<b>Workload Measures</b>					
Number of volunteer hours worked in Parks and Open Space	22,000	29,356	19,923	21,000	22,000
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>					
Value of work performed by volunteers	\$447,920	\$669,023	\$464,007	\$478,590	\$512,380
<b>Effectiveness Measures</b>					
➔ Percent change in number of volunteer hours worked per year	42.4%	33.4%	-32.0%	5.4%	4.8%

➔ Indicates Key Measure

### Story Behind Performance:

The decrease in volunteer hours over the last two years is the result of a reduction in program staff and restructuring of the volunteer program. Parks and Open Space (POS) has been able to stabilize volunteer hours by shifting the program's focus from community volunteer events to programs that attract long-term volunteers. A slight increase is expected for FY 2011-12. While community events appeal to a larger portion of the Marin community, they require more volunteer program staff time and resources to generate the same number of hours produced by long-term volunteers. In addition, the Open Space District plans to hire one seasonal extra-hire to assist the Open Space volunteer program in FY 2011-12 and the Parks Division has allowed the Volunteer Coordinator Ranger to spend more than the 50 percent time currently allocated to the volunteer program.

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

**Objective: Increase educational outreach**

MEASURES	FY 2006-07 Actual	FY 2007-08 Actual	FY 2008-09 Actual	FY 2009-10 Actual	FY 2010-11 Target	FY 2011-12 Target
<b>Workload Measures</b>						
Number of programs provided annually	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	125	135
<b>Efficiency Measures</b>						
Number of participants	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,500	1,800	2,025
<b>Effectiveness Measures</b>						
Increase in participant numbers	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	300	225

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### **Story Behind Performance:**

By increasing the number of family programs, evening lectures and school outings we can increase our outreach and broaden our target audience.

Tracking the number of participants will give us a sense of which programs are in the greatest demand, we will also track demographic trends particularly with our youth focused programs so we can identify underserved audiences and target them for more educational opportunities.