



Vision 2030

Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Vision 2030 and Strategic Plan

People with Disabilities Focus Group Notes

Inwood House, 10921 Inwood Avenue

May 5, 2010

Hadiyah Jordan, a project team member, welcomed the participants and provided an overview of the Vision 2030 project and the purpose of the focus group. Following are the notes from the discussion held by the ten focus group participants.

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

- Once a week dance class
- Events – big ones like the 4th of July
- The cooking classes offered by Kiva. It was also cut.
- Brookside Gardens
- Sligo Creek Park
- Socializers

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?

- Transportation. I have a problem with transportation. There are good programs being offered but I can't get to them.
- Swim program. Access is essential. This type of activity is easy on joints. We used to go swimming twice a week at three pools and then transportation was cut.
- A beginner computer class; everything is computer now.
- Physical fitness/exercise classes.
- Special events, community activities (Labor Day Weekend, Memorial Day Weekend)
- At least one vehicle that has capacity for multiple persons with mobility issues.

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

- Improve physical fitness – classes to accommodate people in wheelchairs.
- Access would be increased if there was a blue *Open Door* button at main entrances of facilities. Curb cuts are needed too. Creating community with outings to sports events, dancing, holiday events.
- Creating and helping to foster relationships with non-disabled peers by increasing awareness and understanding among fellow community members.

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

- Fix the kiln at Inwood House to allow for ceramic classes.
- More handicapped access to the parks.
- Centers like the Silver Spring Drop-in Center and On Our Own.

- Fitness Centers accessible to people in wheelchairs. Weight machines accessible from a wheel chair.
- Computer lab that has up-to-date computers. Classes for beginners.
- Swimming facilities that better accommodate different disabilities.
- Nature Centers would have PVC All-Terrain Vehicle transfer resource, such as the Ocean City chairs.
- More handicapped accessible parks for youth. Example Hadley Park.
- Early afternoon programs.
- Sue's dance class is very popular, but they are not going to have it because there is not funding.
- The organization that in the past provided van transportation access lost all of its funding. Providing transportation is essential.
- Trip to Brookside Garden during Christmas time.
- Trips to sport events. Last year there was a trip to the Nats game and that was fun.
- Classes: drawing, creative writing, pottery, photography, arts and crafts, knitting and crochet.
- Camping trips.

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

- Managing the affordability of programs.
- Publicize the accessibility features. (If you click on "x" park there is "y" feature for people with accessibility issues.)
- Have information publicized in alternative formats (Braille, audio descriptions).
- Create short videos that describe what services are available in different parks.
- If there are going to be resources for accommodation then make people aware of them (handicapped outhouses for example – most potential users didn't know they existed).

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?

- Our access can be limited based upon transportation, physical access (curb cuts, accessible picnic tables, restroom facilities, etc.).
- Senior community members often don't have access to parks or awareness about facilities.

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

- Operation Civic Access
- Elks. They do Thanksgiving Dinner and St. Patrick's Day at Inwood House already.