

CHAPTER ONE - PRICING POLICY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Apex (“Town”) Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources (“Department”) provides and manages a diverse array of recreation and leisure services, programs, facilities and special events. ~~This Pricing Policy does not override the provisions outlined in the Community Special Events Policy, which shall take precedence in cases where the two policies differ.~~ In addition, the Department maintains and manages public park land, trails, open space, landscaping and trees. [This Pricing Policy does not override the provisions outlined in the Community Special Events Policy, which shall take precedence in cases where the two policies differ](#)

A combination of taxation, grants, donations, and user fees fund Department asset development and services. Taxation primarily involves the General Fund and funding for the development and maintenance of parks, trails and recreation facilities and the preservation and maintenance of open space.

1.2 PHILOSOPHY

The Department’s Mission is to provide exceptional public service that fosters opportunity for the individual and community to live, thrive, and reach their peak.

The Department Vision Statement is to create more opportunities for the community to grow emotionally, socially, and physically, while also expanding equitable access to recreational facilities and opportunities.

The Department establishes the following pricing policy guidelines for the development of pricing recreation and park-related services. Services are defined as a course/program/event, facility rental, and usership/membership/daily drop-in services. This does not refer to products or real property.

The Department attempts to balance the cost-to-benefit ratio by providing certain basic facilities and services for use or participation with minimal or no fee. Enhanced or specialized facilities and programs are provided through fees to the user and/or participant to recover all or an appropriate portion of the costs.

A sound and consistent pricing policy provides the framework for the operation and management of revenues and pricing to balance the demand for services with available resources. Pricing is necessary to complement tax revenues to provide and sustain quality parks and recreation experiences. The purpose of enhancing fees and charges is not about charging more; it is about pricing smarter.

1.3 PURPOSE

- To establish a basis of fees and rationale for the pricing structure.
- To ensure both the Apex citizens and Department staff are aware of all associated costs and how the pricing structure is set.
- To demonstrate consistency, structure, and uniformity throughout the parks system.
- To provide justification for potential future price increases.
- To demonstrate fiscal management, consistency, and responsibility with the use of Department funds and user fees.
- To implement a methodology to best serve the Department in meeting cost recovery goals for

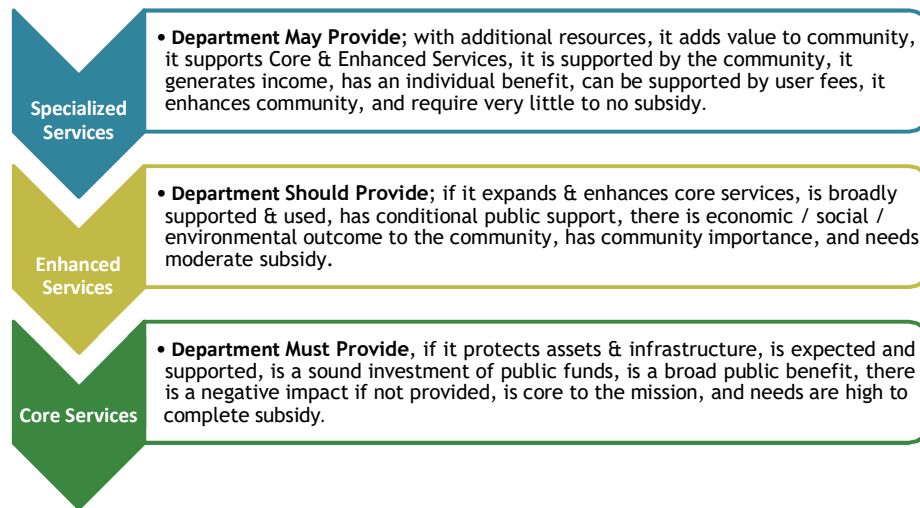
program services while remaining affordable.

1.4 SERVICE CLASSIFICATION & COST RECOVERY

Services provided by the Department may be broadly identified as Core, Enhanced, and Specialized programs and services. In this section, these categories are defined and identified with a listing of typical services in each classification. These classifications determine, in part, how much of each service's cost will be recovered through user fees and charges.

Classifying services informs how each program serves the overall organization mission, the goals, and objectives of each Core Program Area. Additionally, it also assists with how programs should be funded regarding Department usership dollars and/or user fees and charges. How a program is classified can help to determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies.

Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides community (public) benefit versus an individual (private) benefit. Community benefit programs provide broad public value by fostering community connections, social interaction, recreation, education, or wellness, with benefits that are shared among participants and the community as a whole. Individual benefit programs provide a more individualized or personalized service, instruction, or experience where the primary benefit applies directly to the participant rather than the broader community. This plan proposes a classification method based on three indicators: Core, Enhanced, and Specialized. Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, cost recovery goals personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, and access by participants. The following infographic describes each of the three broader program classifications and cost recovery range.



1.4.1 COST RECOVERY GUIDELINES

The Department will use the following best practice cost recovery guidelines to set annual cost recovery goals. In some instances, there will be no change in cost recovery goals, unless economic impacts to the Department suggest that an increase in the goal is needed.

Cost Recovery Guidelines include:

Direct Costs: Will be defined as any expenditure related to the implementation of the service or program. Includes all contractors, part-time staffing costs, limited-service employees, and all supplies costs.

Indirect Costs: Will be defined as any ~~costs other than capital expenses not applied to direct costs. These may include utilities, maintenance, custodial, depreciation, transaction and administrative fees.~~ costs other than capital expenses that are not directly attributable to a specific program or service. These may include, but are not limited to, utilities, maintenance, custodial services, depreciation, transaction fees, and administrative fees.

DETERMINING DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS

To determine appropriate pricing, the Department calculates both direct costs—which include expenses such as contractors, part-time staff, limited-service employees (LSE), and program supplies—and an established percentage of indirect costs. Indirect costs represent shared departmental support and infrastructure and include administration staff support, technology systems, facility maintenance and utilities, and general management oversight. These are in addition to the direct costs.

By applying the following pricing classification framework, the Department ensures consistent, data-informed pricing decisions that promote accessibility, sustain high-quality services, and allocate tax dollars effectively based on the nature and benefit of each offering.

1.5 PRICING BY CLASSIFICATIONS

The Department will implement a structured pricing classification model to guide equitable and responsible cost recovery for all programs, facilities, and services. This model categorizes offerings based on the proportion of public (community) versus private (individual) benefit, with cost recovery goals increasing as the individual benefit becomes more predominant. Cost Recovery Goals are ~~set~~ set annually during the Town's budget process.

1.5.1 CLASSIFICATIONS AND COST RECOVERY GOALS FOR ALL PROGRAMS, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES:

CORE COMMUNITY (0-20% COST RECOVERY):

Mostly Community Benefit Programs. These programs and services listed are completely for Apex community benefit. These programs are targeted to recover at the most 20% (direct and indirect) of costs or less based on recommendations of the staff. 80% to 100% of direct costs and indirect costs within this tier may be subsidized.

Commented [JG1]: The current policy does not specifically reference administrative fees, although the Department currently applies a 10% administrative fee. We are proposing an increase to 15% and recommend that administrative fees be formally recognized within the policy. However, because the administrative fee may be adjusted over time based on operational costs and other factors, we do not recommend including a specific percentage in the policy itself. Instead, the policy would identify administrative fees as an allowable indirect cost, providing the flexibility to adjust the fee as needed without requiring a formal policy amendment each time the percentage changes.

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CORE INDIVIDUAL (20%-40% COST RECOVERY):

Core programs and classes. These programs have considerable Apex community benefit. These programs and services are targeted to recover 20% to 40% direct and indirect cost recovery based on the recommendation of the staff. 60% to 80% of the direct costs and indirect costs within this tier may be subsidized.

ENHANCED COMMUNITY (40%-60% COST RECOVERY):

These programs and services provide a balance of community and individual benefit and are primarily supported by a combination of taxpayer dollars and user fees at 40% to 60% direct and indirect cost recovery level of true costs (both direct and indirect costs). 40% to 60% of the direct costs and indirect costs within this tier may be subsidized. ~~These programs have a combined public good and private good.~~

ENHANCED INDIVIDUAL (60%-80% COST RECOVERY):

~~These Programs are 60%-80% cost recovery level of true costs (both direct and indirect). These programs are expected to be provided by Department. 20% to 40% of the direct costs and indirect costs within this tier may be subsidized.~~ These programs and services provide a higher level of individual benefit relative to community benefit. They are primarily supported through user fees, with cost recovery levels between 60% and 80% of true program costs (direct and indirect).

SPECIALIZED COMMUNITY (80%-100% COST RECOVERY):

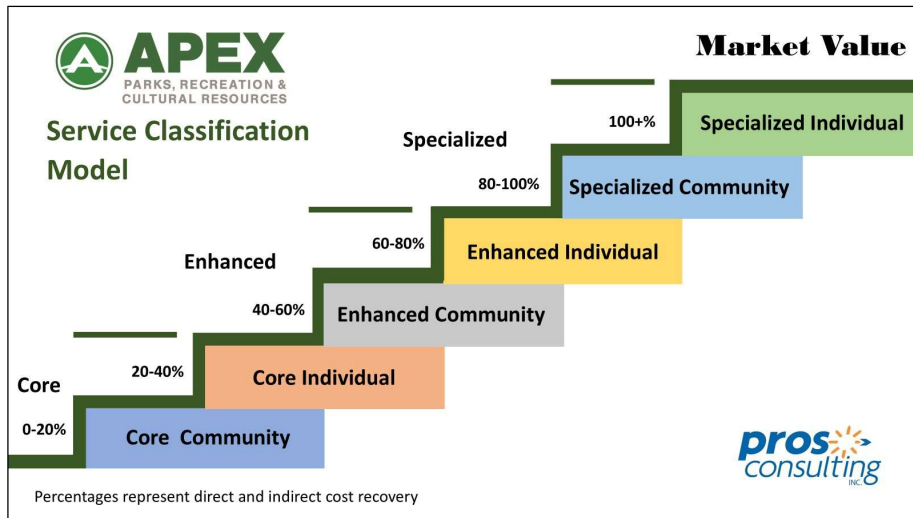
These programs have high individual benefit and should incur minimal subsidy from Department dollars and have a cost recovery goal of 80% to 100% (direct and indirect). ~~Programs that fall into this category include specialized programs, specialty camps, and fee-based special events.~~

SPECIALIZED INDIVIDUAL (100%+ COST RECOVERY):

These programs include activities with high individual only focus. ~~These would include specialized trips, competition for adult sports leagues, and specialized classes.~~ Cost recovery level should be 100%+ of direct and indirect costs.

1.5.2 TIERED SERVICE CLASSIFICATION MODEL

The Service Classification Model provides a structured framework for evaluating and categorizing the programs, services, and facilities offered by the Town of Apex Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department. This model is organized into three primary service categories—Core, Enhanced, and Specialized—and further distinguishes services based on the level of benefit received by the general community versus individual users. By analyzing each service along the spectrum of public good to private benefit, the model helps determine appropriate cost recovery expectations and resource allocation. Services that primarily benefit the broader community, ~~such as public parks and inclusive events,~~ are categorized differently from those offering high individual benefit, ~~such as specialized programming or exclusive rentals,~~ ensuring a fair, equitable, and fiscally responsible approach to delivering recreation services.



1.6 RESIDENTS FACING FINANCIAL LIMITATIONS

This section of the revenue and pricing policy recognizes and acknowledges the wealth and economic disparities of Town residents. Residents who face temporary or long-term financial limitations often face higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and limited access to necessities. Traditional pricing models often disproportionately burden these residents, further exacerbating existing inequalities and impacting their access to parks and recreation programs and municipal services. As part of its service delivery mission, the Town will ensure that recreation programs and services are available to all residents, including when residents face financial limitations. The Town is committed to ensuring equitable access to services and resources while also generating sufficient revenue to sustain operations.

Our pricing policy aims to achieve the following objectives, [including addressing the needs of](#) residents facing financial limitations:

- Reduce the financial burden on residents when they face financial limitations.
- Promote equitable access to services and resources for all residents.

1.7 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USE OF TOWN PROPERTY:

1.7.1 WAIVER OF FEES AND CHARGES

The Town of Apex Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department is committed to promoting community engagement through public programs, special events, and facility access while maintaining fiscal responsibility and equitable practices. In recognition of occasional financial barriers for community-serving groups, a limited waiver policy has been established for facility rental fees. Fees may

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be waived or reduced by the Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources upon completion of the appropriate form—~~Waiver policy.~~

- One waiver per organization per ~~calendar~~12-month period year may be granted up to 100% of the fee.
- This waiver cap applies to all types of requests, including:
 - Non-profit organizations conducting community fundraisers on Town property
 - Civic groups or other mission-aligned organizations requesting reduced fees for non-revenue-generating community events

1.7.2 PROFIT MAKING

No person shall solicit, peddle, beg, or conduct private fundraising activities within any public park or on any public greenway, or sell, merchandise, wares, or distribute any product samples, informational literature of any type therein. This subsection shall not apply to:

- Any concession franchise granted by the Pparks, _and_ Rrecreation and Ccultural Rresources Ddepartment for a park; designated by Department Director.

1.7.3 NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Non-profit organizations are able to receive a 25% discount for facility rentals Monday through Thursday. Non-profit organizations that propose to use public recreation facilities for fundraising will only be allowed one fundraising event in a 12-month period. Non-profit proposals require approval by the Director of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources.

1.7.4 NON-RESIDENT SURCHARGE

To ensure equity and acknowledge the tax contributions made by residents of the Town of Apex, a non-resident fee structure is applied to individuals who reside outside the Town's corporate limits. This policy helps recover costs for services and facilities that are primarily supported by local tax revenue.

Program Registration Fees

- ~~A 35% \$25 non-resident fee will be added to the base registration cost for all programs.~~
- This policy applies uniformly across all program types, including but not limited to athletics, recreation classes, special events, and camps. Entertainment offerings, including but not limited to concerts, films, special events, and related programs, are excluded from additional non-resident charges.

1.7.5 FACILITY USE & RENTALS

DOG PARK USE

Non-residents will be charged a fee that is 100% higher than the standard resident rate for the use of any Apex dog parks.

Commented [JG2]: To create a more equitable fee structure across programs with varying price points, the current flat \$25 non-resident fee will be replaced with a non-resident fee equal to 35% of the base registration cost. This approach ensures that the non-resident fee is proportional to the cost of each program, rather than applying the same flat fee to both lower- and higher-cost programs.

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TOWN FACILITIES

The fees for facility rentals shall be established using the primetime/ non-primetime pricing strategy. Primetime is designated as weekends (Friday-Sunday) and will be a 35% higher fee than weekdays, for

the exclusive use of the facility and removing the ability for residents to have access. Non-primetime is designated as weekdays (Monday-Thursday).

Non-residents will be charged a rental rate that is 50% higher than the standard resident rate for the exclusive use of Town facilities.

- This surcharge applies to rentals of community rooms, shelters~~gymnasiums~~, and other reservable spaces. [Field and gymnasium rentals do not apply. \(See 1.7.6\)](#)
- During the annual budget process, a market analysis is completed to determine if the rental rates, passes, and permits are in line with market value.
- ~~The increased rate reflects the Town's commitment to maintaining high-quality facilities while ensuring fair use of taxpayer-supported resources.~~

1.7.6 FIELD/COURT RENTAL

During the annual budget process a market analysis is completed to determine if the field and court rental rates are in line with market value.

SINGLE DAY FIELD RENTALS

When available, athletic fields and courts may be reserved on an hourly basis. Reserved hours of use must include set-up and clean-up time. ~~Users~~[Renters](#) may not access field prior to their documented rental time, and the field must be vacated at the time listed on the rental agreement. All rentals include the full field/court. It is not possible to reserve only a portion of a field/court.

If the field/court is available, the renter will be emailed an electronic rental agreement to sign. Upon receiving the signed agreement, town staff will set up the rental to take payment. Reservations will be temporarily held for 2 business days. If the agreement is not signed and payment received within that time period, the reservation will be released.

LONG-TERM (MULTIPLE DAY) FIELD RENTALS

Each fall and spring, the Town accepts requests from groups interested in renting fields for multiple dates during the approaching six months. All requests must be submitted by email. Requests for field rental between January-June are due by November 1st. Requests for field rental between July-December are due by May 1st.

- All requests from the same group should come from one designated person. For example, requests by different teams from the same school should all come from the athletic director, not each individual coach.
- Fields shall be assigned to rental groups as fairly as possible. All Town of Apex programs will have priority for field use. In allocating field space to rental groups and individuals, several factors will be considered, including the number of Apex residents in the organization, total hours requested, and previous compliance with rental policies.
- Once long-term field reservation requests are approved by the Town, the group will be given a due date for payment. An initial minimum ~~of~~ payment of \$1,000 will be required to secure the

reservation (or full amount if less than \$1,000). Subsequent monthly payments must take place no later than ~~30~~ days before all rental dates in the upcoming month.

1.7.7 ADDITIONAL INSURED

~~Any group or individual, at the sole discretion of the Town, may be required to submit to the Town of Apex an insurance policy, naming the Town of Apex as an additional insured, as part of the application process.~~ Any group or individual may be required to submit a Certificate of Insurance (COI) naming the Town of Apex as additional insured. This is at the sole discretion of the Town and could occur at any point in the rental agreement process.

1.7.8 ADMISSIONS INTO TOWN PARKS

No group or agency may charge an admission fee for entrance into a Town-owned parks & recreation facility unless such a charge is mandated by an organization the Town is affiliated with through its Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department. This rule does not apply to The Halle Cultural Arts Center. Approval of such activities shall be at the discretion of the Director of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources.

1.7.9 RENTAL TIME PERIOD

~~No park facility may be rented beyond 1/2 (30 minutes) hour prior to the park closing time except as provided for under rules governing the John M Brown Community Center and/or The Halle Cultural Arts Center.~~ Rentals must occur within their agreed upon timeframe as displayed on the rental agreement. All set up and clean up must be included in the rented times. The renter will be subject to fees (as outlined in the rental agreement) if contracted times are not adhered to. Rentals occurring outside of the facilities' regular operating hours are subject to After Hours Attendant Fees.

1.7.10 JURISDICTIONAL LAWS

~~User groups~~ Renters must abide by and enforce all local, state, and federal laws while utilizing town-owned and maintained parks and recreation facilities. ~~User~~ The renter also agrees to abide all Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department facility and equipment use regulations and guidelines. Failure to do so may result in immediate revocation of use privileges, forfeiture of damage deposits, and forfeiture of all fees paid.

1.7.11 LEAVE NO TRACE

The ~~user~~ renter must leave the area / facility clean upon completion of the activity and is financially responsible for any damage / misuse of the facility.

1.7.12 CODE OF CONDUCT

The ~~user~~ renter is responsible for the conduct of spectators, participants, and all parties associated with its use of the facility. Misconduct while on Town property and damage to Town facilities will result in the ~~user's~~ renter's privileges being revoked immediately and may result in compensatory damages.

PERMITTING AND REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

Certain events and activities may trigger the need for:

- Health inspections: Temporary food vendors/ food trucks
- ~~Alcohol licensing enforcement: time and oversight from police~~ [NC Alcoholic Beverage Control \(ABC\) Commission](#)
- Special use and occupancy permits: temporary structures like tents or inflatables
- [Noise permits: Especially for amplified live music](#)
- [Off-Duty Police: time and oversight](#)
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1.8 POLICY REVIEW

The Town of Apex Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources [Pricing Policy](#) is reviewed annually during preparation of the budget by Department staff.

APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS

- ~~Administrative Charges~~ - ~~Non-refundable fees are assessed for class or program registration refunds after grace periods, administrative tasks and ancillary program tasks.~~
- ~~Charges for Services (User Fees)~~ [User Fees](#) - Fees that Department charges users of park-related services, such as use of a community center, dog parks, and other facilities that includes admissions, or memberships, and facility permits.
- **Concessions** - Revenue generated through the sale of prepared or pre-packaged food, beverages or merchandise that was originally purchased with intent for resale.
- **Contract** - A formal agreement between two parties for the provision of a service, manufacture or production of an item, or construction of a facility. All contracts require: (1) a date that the agreement is made; (2) consideration, meaning each party receives something from the other party; and (3) signatures of both parties (Example: Vending Contract).
- **Cost Recovery** - Recovery of direct AND indirect (overhead) operational costs (not inclusive of capital improvement projects). Percentage of cost recovery may vary.
- **Direct Costs** - Costs that are directly and exclusively attributable to a program or service. Examples include staff salaries and fringe benefits (that portion of an employee's time solely dedicated to a program), transportation (vehicle rental, fuel), admission to entertainment venues (theater, entry fees, etc.), consumable materials and supplies, food and drink, contract costs (program not provided by staff), rent, and necessary utilities (water, etc.).
- ~~Distressed Areas~~ - ~~A geographic area that is designated as a distressed area by the Town, based on indicators of economic distress or dislocation, including but not limited to unemployment, poverty, crime, lacking access to quality of life facilities, below median household income, vacancies, and job loss.~~
- ~~Donation/Gift~~ - ~~Any form of cash or in-kind products or services given by an organization, individual or business without any specific goal or anticipated return. The donation may have a specific use designated by the donor or may be made with no specific use and be used for the general good of Department.~~
- ~~Expense or Cost vs Fee:~~ Expense or Cost is defined as the “~~expense~~[financial resources required](#) to offer the service” whereas the Fee is defined as the “price advertised to Department Users” for the service. Similarly, Expenses or Costs are the incurred expenses by Department and fees are what Department charge the users
- **Indirect Costs** - Costs that can be attributed to more than one program, service, or facility. Examples include shared administrative staff salaries and fringe benefits, depreciation for equipment used in more than one program, depreciation for buildings, marketing, and advertising, legal, technology, insurance and risk management, and general utilities.

- ~~Leases and Rentals~~ - Revenues received from the use of Department property or equipment through a formal agreement. These may be short term (Example: Baseball/softball field rental) or Indoor Meeting Space.)
- ~~Life Skills~~ - ~~The abilities that enable individuals to effectively cope with the demands and challenges known in everyday life (i.e., cooking, financials, gardening, nutrition, etc.).~~
- ~~Partnership~~ - A collaborative effort to achieve mutually agreed upon goals and objectives by matching Department community resources to the identified needs of the Department. These are not monetary in nature but have value.
- **Permit Fees** - The class of permits, fees and licenses which includes such levies as user permits to cover the costs of processing requests for a special event permit or reservation for a park facility.
- ~~Private Gains~~ - ~~Refers to financial benefits or advantages derived from personal or business activities. Essentially, it is any increase in wealth (monetary earnings) from the use of public property that an individual or organization receives over another.~~
- **Service:** Defined as an "individual facility rental, course/program/event, usership/pass/daily drop-in, This does not refer to products or property.
- ~~Sponsorship~~ - ~~A negotiated agreement with a business entity whereby the business pays a fee in cash, products, services, or a combination thereof, for the sole rights to the commercial and marketable assets associated with Department (Example: Sponsoring teams in sports leagues or special events).~~