

Program Evaluation Questions for a Pilot Program

Program: Contractor-provided youth summer camps

Year/Season: 2021 Summer

Key questions:

Is this the 1st, 2nd or 3rd pilot offering of this program?

This was the first time the City has partnered with contractors to design and deliver all of the summer camps that are hosted by the Recreation Division in City facilities. In previous years, summer camps that were contractor-led and City employee-led were offered. In addition, this was the first year the contracted camps took their own registrations.

Was the cost recovery target met?

Yes: The target (Tier 2) of 50% direct cost recovery was exceeded. This program's direct cost recovery was 244%.

Were target demographics well-served?

Yes. The target demographic was youth, ages 5 – 12 years old. Camp themes and activities were suitable for this age range. Camps varied in terms of the duration of hours offered, giving parents choices. Camps were conducted in six distinct locations, including indoor and outdoor facilities.

Was strong participation achieved?

Yes, most camps operated at capacity.

Many camps lowered their maximum attendance to comply with COVID-19 safety regulations and staffing limitations.

Examine:

Participant evaluation results

The City did not survey participants nor parents. A few contractors surveyed parents and shared that information with the City. In those cases, feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Word-of-mouth feedback received by City staff was also very good. In the future, Staff will pursue making it a requirement of the contract to collect and share participant satisfaction data or participant contact information so that the City can survey participants.

How the program delivered desired benefits for participants

This evaluation reflects the entire summer camp portfolio, as such the desired program benefits were diverse. They included:

- Provide a varied range of camp options (This summer's camps included indoor/outdoor, sports/nature/art themes, different age ranges.)
- Provide opportunities for youth to socialize and be active with each other
- Provide youth with fun, safe and well-run activities

How the program advances Division strategies and goals

This program (youth summer camps) advances the Division goal of providing social/public good and desirable programs (Tier 2) and of prioritizing the use of Recreation facilities for youth and school break programs.

Unique to this year, the Division also had a goal of offering programs that were less reliant on City staff, were not great expenses to the City, would augment Mercer Island parents' on-island school break options, and would serve as a "soft launch" for commencing City Recreation services.

Whether the program is a good fit for efficient and appropriate use of space; best use of limited resources

This question is not as relevant in a year when this program did not compete with any other potential programs. In future years, this question would be answered by reviewing the facility use policy(ies).

Whether the program does not compete with other City or on-Island offerings

This program did not compete with any other City programs. While there were other camps on the Island, they differed enough to not compete directly with any of our offerings.

Conclusion:

Are the cumulative results from this pilot program sufficient to warrant running the program again?

Yes, the results are wholly positive. Contractor-led summer camps performed well in terms of cost recovery, participant popularity and satisfaction, advancing Division goals, efficient use of City staff and appropriate use of City facilities.