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An analysis of an attempt to do a leisure time study for the City of Atlanta, Georgia

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AN ANALYSIS OF AN ATTEMPT TO DO A
LEISURE-TIME STUDY FOR THE
CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BY
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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

During an internship with the Administrative Operations Division of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation within the Department of Parks, Libraries and Cultural Affairs for the City of Atlanta, Georgia, the researcher was assigned the task of performing a Leisure-Time Study (LTS) for the City of Atlanta.¹

The assignment was made by then Deputy Director for Administrative Operations, Fred Morgan, in October, 1976. It was decided jointly by this researcher and the Deputy that completion of the study could be reasonably expected by the Fall of 1977. The study was to be under the direct supervision of the Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Director for Administrative Operations. There were also to be bi-weekly conferences of the Deputy, the Administrative Assistant, the Grants Officer, the Budget and Planning Officer, and the researcher to discuss the progress of the study. (See Appendix A for organizational chart.) In January, 1977, the Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Director for Administrative Operations was assigned to the Management Review Team of all operating units within City Government, as requested by the Chief Administrative Officer. This caused the reassignment of this researcher to the Budget and Planning Officer.

¹This was the second attempt to do a Leisure-Time Study. The first attempt was abandoned in October of 1975. The 1975 attempt to do the study had begun when the Atlanta City Council passed a resolution allocating
The degree of cooperation with the research effort by the staff within
the Division, Bureau and Department was optimal at that time and con-
tinued until the untimely death of the Deputy Director, April 30, 1977. In
accordance with departmental policy, the office remained vacant for
six weeks. On June 14, 1977, the Budget and Planning Officer was named
Acting Deputy, in addition to the duties as Budget and Planning Officer.
At the time of the appointment, the Budget and Planning Officer and her
staff were involved in the 1978 budget preparation process for all of the
divisions within the Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR), as well as for
the Office of the Commissioner of Parks, Libraries and Cultural Affairs
and for the Bureau of Libraries. The Acting Deputy remained in this posi-
tion until the naming of a new Deputy Director in November, 1977.

The LTS was to determine how the citizens of Atlanta use their
leisure time. This meant that in addition to a complete inventory of
available facilities, public and private, there also should be a

$70,000, and the setting up of a task force of 14 persons from the Bu-
reaus of Parks and Planning to act as liaison with private agencies for
inventory purposes and to do the general research on the 1975 attempt.
Co-chairmen were from the Parks and Planning Bureaus. Input was sought
from the Atlanta Housing Authority, Atlanta area churches, the Board of
Education, United Way of Atlanta and Junior Services of Atlanta.

From the reactions of persons encountered, when news of the re-
initiation of the Leisure-Time Study was announced, the assumption can
only be that they felt this new attempt was destined to fail as had the
first attempt.

When contact was finally made with the original co-chairmen, their
reaction was amusement and a prediction that the Leisure-Time Study would
never be completed. Yet, this researcher still believed that the Bureau
wanted the Study, and that it could be done.

2In retrospect, it was futile to try to do the Study after the
death of the Deputy. The obstacles to the completion of the Study began
to appear shortly thereafter.
measurement of attendance and participation at the facilities. There was also to be a survey of the citizens to determine how they felt their leisure was being used, and why. This researcher decided to make a comparison of Atlanta with other cities of comparable population size. It was also felt that it was necessary to make a determination of how well the City of Atlanta was meeting the needs of its citizens with its existing facilities and programs.

Based on the original goals of the Study, the following assumptions were made:

1. It was assumed that the LTS would be accepted by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation and would be incorporated into the Park Plan as a means to justify the setting of certain goals and objectives within the Park Plan;

2. It was assumed that sufficient data could be collected with which to do the LTS by the Fall of 1977; and

3. It was further assumed that the findings of the LTS would improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of the BPR.

In the course of the initial efforts to proceed with the LTS, certain problems emerged which prevented the completion of the Study. In a broad sense, these problems reflected organizational inefficiency and poor management. More specifically, they involved faulty data compilation and record keeping, lack of intradepartmental and interdepartmental cooperation, and poor planning. The evaluation of the problems identified forms the nucleus of this research paper. Parallel with the evaluation process, three questions were formulated to facilitate the evaluation:
1. Is the environment of the BPR receptive to a LTS?

2. Can sufficient data be obtained with which to perform a LTS, which is complete and comprehensive?

3. Following the analysis and evaluation of all obtainable data, will the findings be useful in increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the daily operations of the BPR?

On the basis of the assumptions given and the ensuing research questions which were formulated—as a result of the problems encountered while evaluating those problems—numerous interrelated factors that impact on the effort were revealed. This paper will deal with the identification and assessment of those problems which hampered the completion of the LTS within the original time frame. Therefore, this study will:

1. Show that bureaucratic interaction among the divisions within the BPR and between these units and other Bureaus, as well as the Mayor's Office and City Council, is a significant factor in the unofficial Bureau resistance to the completion of the LTS. This bureaucratic interaction can be deduced from the Bureau's general failure to take the research effort seriously. In turn, this led to the failure at various levels of management to assign staff personnel to assist in the Study and to insure cooperation of staff with the researcher.

2. Identify and evaluate the causative factors preventing completion of the LTS on time. Had official endorsement of the research effort continued past the death of the Deputy Director for Administrative Operations, who originated the Study, continued cooperation of the Bureau could have facilitated the completion of the LTS on time. Thus, failure on the part of the Bureau to provide continuity of supervision and leadership and concern for the research effort also served to negate the importance of the Study to Bureau personnel.
The delimitations of the study preclude examining the operations of the other divisions within the Bureau, i.e., Park Operations, Park Engineering, Revenue Operations and Recreation Operations, except as they impact upon data collection for the LTS. The degree of cooperation, or lack thereof, of the divisions will be included for analysis.

In performing this study, the writer will investigate the day-to-day operations of the Administrative Operations Division of the BPR, particularly its relationship with the three line divisions within the Bureau. The line divisions are Recreation Operations, Revenue Operations and Park Operations. The writer will also look at the degree of interaction between the Bureau and other departments and the problems encountered.

This study is important in that it could serve as a tool for the identification of problems within the Bureau and, in particular, Administrative Operations. With the appointment of the new Deputy Director for Administrative Operations and the charge to improve work programs for Administrative Operations, it is assumed that a clear identification and assessment of the problems will enable the deputy to more expeditiously discharge the duties of his office.

Further, the study will demonstrate that without adequate high-level managerial support for a research effort such as the LTS, other such studies will be difficult, if not impossible, to perform. This should provide insight for future Atlanta University students seeking to do research in public agencies.

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3 City of Atlanta, Management Review, Bureau of Accounting and Budget Administration, July, 1977.
Participant observation was the basic methodology employed to accomplish the objectives of this study. General conversations and unstructured interviews were conducted to gain insight into the reasons for the factors which hampered the completion of the LTS. A set of questions used as a guide for the unstructured interviews is included in Appendix B.

The works of several authors provided valuable insight into the dynamics of complex organizations. The volume by Robert T. Golembiewski, Public Administration as a Developing Discipline, Part II, in which he used his work with the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) to demonstrate the laboratory approach to Organizational Development indicates that this same approach could be used on a public agency already established, such as the Bureau of Parks and Recreation of the City of Atlanta. The reader may have expected to find in this paper a discussion of classical organizational theory, but the classical management theory was criticized by James D. Thompson in Organizations in Action, when he argued that in considering the institutional and managerial levels of an organization, the basic criticism of the classic organizational theories is that those theories fail to take into account that they are dealing with human beings, not machines. Herbert Simon, in his Administrative Behavior, makes a clear distinction between the formal and informal systems of an organization. It was the latter (informal) system which contributed the bulk of the data for this research, not the former (formal) through which the data was initially requested. Golembiewski, while being much aware of the human side, in the organizational development process, tried to develop cooperation between and among different levels
of management in such a way as to overcome their resistance to full cooperation. Freemen, in *Political Process* through a short case study, elaborates the interdependence among the functional bureaus, the legislative committees, clientele and interest groups. This is paralleled, on a smaller scale, by the interdependence of the equivalent structures within the City Government of Atlanta. Norton Long, in *Power and Administration*, argues that bureaucrats must cultivate relationships with legislative committees in order to be assured of continued funding and other such support. As a result their allegiances will be to the legislative branch as much as to the executive branch. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that bureaucrats will acquiesce in all commands flowing down from the executive branch. The several propositions noted in the works of these authors guided the writer in analyzing the various stages through which the study proceeded.

Chapter II will cover the description of the activities of the Leisure-Time Study. In performing the study certain problems emerged which prevented the completion of the study. The preliminary analysis of these problems will lead to the enumeration of the constraints encountered. It will also provide reasons for the change in focus of the paper. In Chapter III, the writer attempts to apply theory to the constraints and to answer the research questions. Chapter IV gives the Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.
CHAPTER II

THE ATTEMPT TO DO THE LEISURE-TIME STUDY

Leisure-Time, for the purpose of this paper, is identified as any and all time not used by individuals in gainful employment. By definition the Leisure-Time Study (LTS) was set to look at facilities and activities, public and private, in which leisure time was spent. Since it had been decided that a comparison of Atlanta with other cities was needed, a request was mailed to seventeen cities chosen at random, requesting data on facilities and participation. Of the seventeen cities contacted, ten responded. While awaiting those responses, the researcher sought to identify and locate the data on facilities which had been compiled during the 1975 LTS attempt. Each of the agencies which had participated in the original attempt was contacted for an updated copy of the inventory it had prepared in the summer of 1975. Not one of the agencies had retained a copy of the inventory, but most offered to cooperate by preparing an updated inventory. Eventually, all of the original inventories were found (April, 1977), with the bulk of them located in a box beneath the desk of an administrative assistant in the Bureau of Parks and Recreation.\footnote{There was no data on the Leisure-Time Study located in the Central Administrative files. The file contained three relatively unimportant memos from Planning concerning the LTS.}

Copies of the inventories were sent to the respective agencies for
updating. While awaiting this data, the researcher attempted to obtain attendance and participation data from the various program areas within the Division of Recreation and Revenue Operations, and to secure corroborating data on facilities from Park Operations.

It was assumed to be a simple matter to obtain program data for 1976 and 1977, since this data is required for budget request justification on a yearly basis. It must show the previous year's data, the year to date and the projected use of facilities and participation for the new budget year. It was also assumed that maintenance activities within Park Operations would require an accurate, up-to-date inventory which could be tapped to corroborate parks' inventory data.

The data recovered on recreation centers and swimming pool attendance indicated changes in usage from 1976 to 1977. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct several user/non-user surveys by Neighborhood Planning Units (NPUs). Much care and thought went into the preparation of these survey tools and three questionnaires were developed: NPU-Resident User Survey, NPU-Resident Non-User Survey, and NPU-Leaders' Evaluation of Usage within their Neighborhood Planning Units. Since NPU personnel are, in fact, directly involved in the planning of recreation for the Units, it was appropriate to have an evaluation of usage by citizens of these Units within each Neighborhood Planning Unit. There was also to be User Enumeration and 'spot' Evaluation of Usage by recreation personnel and volunteers.

The NPU-Resident User Survey was designed to elicit responses from users of the facilities concerning adequacy of the facilities, programming, the general park setting, and recommended actions for improvement. The
NPU-Resident Non-User Survey was designed to get at the 'why' of non-use. It was hoped that from this set of responses, a determination could be made as to whether it is simply a case of inadequate publicity, poor location of facilities, inadequate facilities, inadequate amounts of leisure time, lack of public safety, no need, or a combination of any of these reasons.

The purpose of User Enumeration is self-explanatory; to count the number of people entering facilities, as well as the number of people participating in various activities. The purpose of the 'spot' Evaluation of Usage by recreation personnel and volunteers was to substantiate user enumeration, as well as to record observed informal recreation at facilities where there was no recreation center or other form of organized or formal recreation. While some recreation personnel agreed to assist with both the User Enumeration and 'spot' Evaluation, this researcher in fact did all of the spot evaluations.

Although data had been requested from the program areas of swimming; recreation centers; Golden Age, camping and therapeutics; tennis, golf, and adult and youth athletics, the only data which arrived in time to be included for analysis of service delivery and usage, was the data on swimming pools and recreation centers. (The reader will remember that the study was to be completed by the Fall of 1977; hence this was impossible in light of the late submission of most of the needed data.)

Preliminary analysis of the data revealed large changes in the use of recreation centers and swimming pools. In an effort to determine the reasons for these large changes during the period under study, it was decided that demographic changes in the Neighborhood Planning Units
might provide the answers. When the first NPU profiles were constructed
during 1975, by the Bureau of Planning (as mandated by the new City
Charter), documentation was made in each plan of the population of each
NPU by black/white, and homeowners/renters. Since the writer had been
informed that additional data on age, sex, education and employment (by
NPU) had been recorded by the Bureau of Planning, it was assumed that
such information would be available upon request. Accordingly, a request
was made to the Research Director in the Bureau of Planning for copies
of the data. After the third request in April, 1977, the Director of
Research suggested contacting another Planner who had participated in
the 1975 enumeration for the preparation of the first NPU profiles.
Contact with that Planner yielded the information that there had been no
attempt to keep the data up-to-date.

It was felt that if a direct relationship could be established
between the changes in use patterns of recreation centers and swimming
pools and the changes in the migratory patterns within the City, then
a justification could be made for the recommendation that Atlanta not
adhere to the standard of 10 acres per 1,000 population as established
by the National Parks and Recreation Administration (NPRA). It was also
felt that in light of the ever-decreasing availability of urban land,
skyrocketing costs of remaining available land and ever-shrinking munici-
pal budgets, if a relationship could be demonstrated between the change
in usage and the change in migratory trends, it would be possible to
justify departure from the NPRA standard.

Washington, D. C., Park Standards, National Parks and Recreation
In pursuing the investigatory strategy described above, forward progress was hampered by constraints which made completion of the study impossible. These constraints were:

1. Limited responses of the 17 cities contacted, ten responded. Of those ten, only Dayton, Ohio provided complete information. However, even Dayton's response came too late to be used in completing the study by November, 1977.

Of the local agencies participating in the 1975 attempt, only the Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) and the Atlanta School Board responded with an update of their inventories. The United Way of Atlanta responded that it had no Planner but would appreciate a copy of the completed study. The Junior Service League failed to respond to any of the three letters of inquiry and failed to return any phone calls. Within the Department of Parks, Libraries and Cultural Affairs (DPLCA), the Bureaus of Libraries and Cultural Affairs eventually responded after a memorandum to the Commissioner of DPLCA on the status of the LTS, which cited a number of inquiries made to the two Bureaus and their subsequent failure to respond.

The data finally submitted by the Bureau of Cultural Affairs was unusable since it was a dollar approximation of programming costs. There was no attendance or participation data (or inventory) with which to do an analysis of service delivery.

2. Tardy submission of data, poor quality of data, incomplete data, and failure to submit data indicated lack of cooperation—forcing the writer to obtain the data in a less direct way.

By cultivating informal relationships with some members of Recreation's swim staff, a summary of data on attendance for 1976 (and weekly for 1977) was obtained. Recreation center attendance and participation records were obtained from the Recreation Office files at the Georgia Hill Center for 1976 and 1977. For Arts and Crafts, data was available from the Program Office for 1977, but there was a gap of four months in the 1976 data.
Since the form on which this data was recorded indicated that a copy was to be filed with the Deputy Director for Revenue Operations and a copy filed in the Central files of Administrative Operations, it was assumed that copies of these reports could be obtained from either source. However, a search for the missing data proved fruitless. The data on Youth and Adult Athletics was submitted (in pencil) in January, 1978. There was no explanation of the figures accompanying the data. In March of 1978, Golf, Tennis, Atlanta Zoo, and Cyclorama data covering attendance for 1976 and 1977 was finally submitted, in spite of the fact that in 1974 year-end reports became an annual routine.

Such reports are due into the offices of Revenue and Administrative Operations on the fifth working day following the last working day of the year. A narrative on the Tennis Program, with no data on participation, was submitted in September, 1977. As of July, 1978, there had been no data submitted by the Program Manager for Golden Age, Camping and Therapeutics. It should be pointed out that this same information must be transcribed onto various budget forms and submitted by the end of July, each year, for final budget approval by the Bureau and the Department, yet it was not available for this research effort.

It was assumed that Park Operations had an accurate, up-to-date inventory of Park properties from which work schedules and maintenance activities were prepared. This data could be tapped as a source to update the inventory published yearly by Administrative Operations. Therefore, it is difficult to explain why this data requested in November, 1976, was not submitted until July, 1978.

6Attendance (free and paid) for Golf, Tennis, Zoo and Cyclorama is compiled by Revenue Operations. There is no input or control from Recreation Operations. Attendance, where there is no admission fee, is compiled by Recreation Operations. Data collection is difficult due to complexity and overlapping of administration within these programs.
3. Lack of cooperation in distributing surveys.

The three questionnaires, which made up the User-Survey package, were prepared to canvass Users/Non-Users of facilities by NPU, and to evaluate usage of facilities by NPU citizens active in their NPU operations and programs. (See Appendix C for survey sample). Initially, it had been planned for Parks and Recreation personnel to distribute the packages to appropriate NPU leaders during the Mayor's Peoples' Week, October, 1976.

It was decided that perhaps going outside the BPR would be more successful. Therefore, a request for assistance went to the Planning Bureau to have the Planners present the packages during NPU planning workshops. These are year-round activities of the Planning Bureau. The packages were not presented, however this was not known until September, 1977. At approximately the same time this fact was discovered, it was learned that there is an Urban Data Specialist within the Bureau of Planning who was also engaged in a study of migratory trends. The information that Planning's Research Director and an Urban Sociologist from Georgia State University--on loan to the Bureau of Planning for the Summer of 1977--had decided together that the surveys were too difficult to be administered to the citizens of Atlanta ("since the reading levels of the citizens are so low") was also discovered.

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7This is a comprehensive planning venture, held yearly for one week. Representatives from affected city agencies, citizens, Bureau of Planning personnel and representatives from the Mayor's Office meet to discuss progress and future plans (by NPU). One person from the BPR had been assigned to each session. A change in scheduling led to the administrative decision that it would be too much to ask those few who had to cover all meetings to explain and distribute the packages.

8The packages containing questionnaires and explanatory memos were sent to the Research Director of the Bureau of Planning in December, 1976, and did not reach the Planners until late Summer, 1977.

9The researcher was not directly informed of the status of the surveys, nor that a decision was made in that they were too difficult to administer. The "too difficult" label was assigned to the surveys without a pre-test of the instruments.

The researcher never intended for the citizens to have to 'read' the surveys. It was noted (in the package) that surveys would be administered and included procedural directions on response documentation.
After attempts to obtain information on migratory patterns were abandoned due to insufficient data, it was disclosed that within the Bureau of Planning there is a computerized PLAN file which contains the demographic data that was being sought. The existence of the PLAN file and its relevance to this research effort had been known to both the Research Director and the aforementioned Planner. The data is compiled by the use of neighborhood data collection areas and summarized and filed by NPU. In addition to complete Land Use data within each NPU, there is also housing data and a simple indication of owner-occupied housing. Comparative analysis of several successive years to the present could have given a pattern of migratory shifts rather quickly.

In addition to the patterns of non-cooperativeness documented earlier in this paper, the researcher was confronted by a more pervasive and subtle lack of cooperation—both within the Bureau and outside. For example, repeated appeals to the Acting Deputy Director for Administrative Operations for information and support between June and November, 1977, went unheeded. Since the budget process is a full-time commitment there was little help the Acting Deputy could provide. Appeals directly to the Director of BPR and the Commissioner of DPLCA caused no change in the degree of cooperation. When program managers were confronted with

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10 The PLAN file was set up in 1970, with the first report in 1971, as a cooperative effort between the Finance Department, the Bureau of Housing and the Bureau of Planning. The Research Director and the Planner were both instrumental in the first data compilation for programming into the system.

11 A memo to the Bureau Director, explaining the importance of the data and requesting a letter of authorization to the Atlanta-Fulton County Tax Board for release of the same information to this researcher, also failed to obtain results.
information that the data requested for the research effort was exactly the same as the data they used for budget-request justification, the program managers still insisted that the data was unavailable, (did not exist) and that budget preparation in City government was always done by using last year's budget paperwork and 'guessing' the rest.

In view of the problems which this researcher faced in trying to obtain minimal cooperation with the research effort, it can only be concluded that cooperation is not a priority item in the Department or the Bureau. This is further reinforced by the fact that, at the present time, there are three departmental inventories and one outside the Department in some degree of completion. Three of the four Bureaus in the Department have an inventory in progress: Recreation, Park Operations and Administrative Operations. There is also an inventory being prepared by the Parks Committee in the Bureau of Planning. In addition to the situations cited—as being evidence of 'lack of cooperation'—it is also an indictment, by implication, of the inadequacies in abilities of the BPR to plan, organize, direct and control a City government program. Perhaps these ordinary organizational functions are stifled due to the required political interaction of the Bureau's leadership with the Mayor's Office and certain City Council members.

In recognition of these factors and their impact on this study, it was concluded that the Leisure-Time Study could not proceed, progress nor be positively finalized.
CHAPTER III

AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRAINTS

In this Chapter, an attempt is made to determine why the performance of the Leisure-Time Study was unsuccessful.

The Study was conceived by the Deputy Director for Administrative Operations, based upon his research for a Master's Thesis. He concluded that the City was not falling short in providing recreation service to the poor, even though its per capita recreation space does not meet the national standard.\textsuperscript{12} This conclusion was not accepted by the Director of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR). This could explain why the writer was reassigned by the Director of the Bureau from a supervisor who was sympathetic to the views of the Deputy to one who was not sympathetic to his views. The Director is closely aligned with the Mayor politically; thus the deceased Deputy's efforts to have a Study conducted, which might prove again that the City was meeting its citizens' needs, were inconsistent with the viewpoint of the political leadership of the City with regard to the City's recreational needs. Moreover, the effort to cooperate with the Leisure-Time Study (LTS) was inconsistent with the three line divisions' own needs to maintain themselves and insure inordinate autonomy in their operation. Under these circumstances, it can be

\textsuperscript{12} Based on the application of NPRA standards of 10 acres per 1,000 population to Atlanta's park acreage and population, which showed Atlanta has 6.1 acres per 1,000 population, July, 1977.
understood why there was felt no need to support or cooperate in the re-
search effort after the demise of the Deputy Director for Administrative
Operations.

Since bureaucratic agencies, through time, develop fairly strong
notions about their roles within the organization--agency goals notwith-
standing--also develop techniques to insure that their special concerns
are met. The Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR) perceived as one of
its major responsibilities, the acquisition of park land. This is due
to the fact that Atlanta's park acreage does not meet the national stan-
dard set by NPRA.\textsuperscript{13} This acquisition orientation is consistent with the
views of the Mayor and the majority of the City Council. The Mayor seems
to have adopted an acquisition orientation to answer the perceived needs
of the citizens of Atlanta concerning parks and recreation. The Bureau's
orientation is also consistent with those members of the City Council
who are elected on a district basis. Increased allocation of recreation
space, within council districts, enables City Council members elected by
districts to display readily discernable proof that they are serving the
interest of their constituencies. A study which might threaten to dis-
rupt this relationship could be expected to be looked upon without en-
thusiasm by the BPR, the Mayor and the majority membership of the City
Council.

As those cities selected for comparison with Atlanta on recreation
participation and facilities began to respond to the request for data, it
became apparent that the majority of them were responding with totals,
rather than the various analytical processes they used to retrieve their
totals to indicate 'how' and 'if' they were meeting their citizens' needs.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid.
The final data received from these cities did allow for a comparison of facilities with Atlanta, but the anticipated information that may have been used on participation and need assessment was not obtained.

In short, it did not show 'how' they determined need. In view of the fact that the letter of request (See Appendix D) was specific, it can only be assumed that the Parks and Recreation Departments of those cities had neither time nor personnel to provide all of the requested data. As stated in Chapter II, the only city (Dayton, Ohio) to provide complete data did so too late for the data to be included for analysis, if the study were to completed in the Fall of 1977. It is possible, but not highly probable, that the cities which did not send complete data failed to do so because personnel were not assigned to perform the task.

The local agencies which were requested to submit an inventory update gave little encouragement that the study would be completed. Only two responded with updated inventories. The others failed to respond or related that they had no staff to spare for the updating activities.

The lack of cooperation which was evidenced by the tardy submission of data, poor quality of data, incomplete data and failure to submit data, may be traced back to the attitudes developed by the line divisions within the BPR. The apparent attitudes held by these divisions developed as they (the divisions which had longevity) sought to maintain themselves, secure their autonomy and resist what they refused to accept as mandated cooperation with the newer, coordinative unit--Administrative Operations. Although Bureaus are usually specialized in their functions and are composed of several units whose work is directed at achieving specific objectives in concert, it is often the case that the divisions within
Bureaus have narrow concerns of their own. In short, rather than thinking about a Bureau as being composed of a number of divisions oriented toward achieving some common objectives, these divisions often operate as autonomous organizations with individualized goals. Hence, their concern would be to maintain themselves and to promote their own autonomy to the fullest extent possible. Under such circumstances, they can be expected to resist change that might reduce their individuality and autonomy. Within the BPR, the activities of the Administrative Operations Division can be conceptualized as seeking to coordinate the activities of the three line divisions: Recreation, Revenue and Park Operations. Since these line divisions tend to perceive their roles to be functionally autonomous and independent of the Administrative Operations Division, they do not yield easily to its coordinating efforts. In trying to do the Leisure-Time Study (LTS) the researcher, as an Administrative Assistant within the Division of Administrative Operations, sought the data needed for the study from the three line divisions. Although each had done an inventory, none submitted the data as requested. In this respect, the goals of maintaining the individual units seem to have displaced the goals of solving the problems for which the Bureau was created. Edwards and Sharkansky have pointed out that such units, in an effort to create and maintain their autonomy, will tend to resist options that would place control in the hands of a higher official or that would require close coordination with other organizations.14 The behavior of the Research

Director in the Bureau of Planning can be explained as indirectly maintaining a degree of control over an activity that is important to her and to the Bureau of Planning. This behavior differs from the behaviors of those in the divisions within the BPR only in that it involves inter-departmental efforts to maintain autonomy.

Organizations do not easily change their orientations and routines or operating procedures. Thus, even if the necessary data to perform the study could be acquired, we could not expect it to be automatically assimilated into the routine of the Bureau. Given the orientation of the Bureau's leadership, the convergence of this orientation with the policy commitment of the Mayor and the benefits of this commitment to individual council members, it can be argued that a study which seeks to change these orientations and relationships would have difficulty in being accepted.

Therefore, to answer the research questions briefly:

1. The environment is not receptive to a Leisure-Time Study (LTS);

2. Sufficient data cannot be collected with which to perform a complete and comprehensive LTS; and

3. Should the study have been completed, under the present circumstances, the findings very likely would not be taken into account or applied to the improvement of efficiency and effectiveness of the daily operations within the Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR).
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of the problems encountered in doing the Leisure-Time Study, it is still believed that some kind of park plan will be constructed based on a 'needs' assessment. A plan will satisfy the demand for accountability from Federal Auditors,\textsuperscript{15} the City Finance Department, the City Council, the Mayor and the citizens of Atlanta. This is most important in the face of growing expressions of concern by citizens over the rising cost of government.

When the "Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Act" becomes law in October, 1978, there will be a cabinet-level push for a careful study and analysis of recreation service delivery. A requirement, before funding commitment, is that there must be a "plan for recovery" approved by the Secretary of the Department of the Interior.\textsuperscript{16}

The conclusions to this research effort are as follows:

1. There is a need for leadership at the Bureau level. This is substantiated by the instability evident in the Bureau since April, 1977.

\textsuperscript{15}Community Development Funds and Land and Water Conservation Funds are major sources of funding for the Bureau of Parks and Recreation, and require annual Federal audit. In each instance, there must be a plan for each project—and the move is, to see how each plan fits into a 'comprehensive' plan.

2. Reorganization of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR) could provide a clear delineation of the responsibilities of the divisions. It would show the role of Administrative Operations as that of a coordinative, overseeing staff unit, and the Recreation, Revenue and Park Operations as line divisions.

3. Application of the laboratory approach to organizational development could do much to lower the intra-agency barriers to cooperation and lessen the degree of autonomy of each division.\footnote{As used by Golembiewski in his training of various groups within Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA). For more detail, see Public Administration As A Developing Discipline, Part II. Robert T. Golembiewski (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1977).}

4. There is a serious issue of redress when a staff member is assigned a task and the findings are not politically acceptable by the Chief Executive Officer—the Mayor. The situation inevitably leads to a conflict, a waste of manhours and lowering of morale.

Although an effective park plan must be based on an adequate study, it is unlikely that such a study will be possible unless there is a clear directive from the Mayor. Accordingly, the following recommendations are made:

1. Obtain a clear directive from the Mayor and sufficient funding (which must be obtained through approval from the City Council).

2. Hold the Commissioner of the Department of Parks, Libraries and Cultural Affairs (DPLCA) directly accountable for the completion of the project (as well as the Director of Bureau of Parks and Recreation (BPR)).

OR:

1. Have all analyses and planning done by the Bureau of Planning, and

2. Hire a reputable firm to perform the Leisure-Time Study with a view to using the findings to construct a park plan.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: Note line and staff location of Divisions of Bureau of Parks and Recreation
APPENDIX B

UNSTRUCTURED INTERVIEWS
INTERVIEWS

Department of Parks, Libraries and Cultural Affairs (14)

Commissioner
Director - Bureau of Parks and Recreation
Deputy Director for Administrative Operations
Financial Analyst II
Administrative Assistant III
Administrative Assistant II
Administrative Assistant I (5)
Park Engineering (3)
Deputy Director Revenue Operations
Deputy Director Recreation Operations

Memos for Data In-House (11)

District Supervisors - Recreation (4)
Program Supervisors - Recreation (4)
Operations Manager - Recreation
Grants Officer - Administrative Operations

Department of Planning & Budget Administration

Director of Planning Research - Planning
Director of Neighborhood Planning - Planning
Urban Data Specialist - Planning
Planners (5) - Planning
Financial Analyst - Planning and Budget
City Environmentalist - Planning
Hello: My name is Joan McGuire and I'm interning with the City of Atlanta, Bureau of Parks and Recreation. I wonder if I might have an appointment to meet with you to discuss my assignment to the Leisure-Time Study for the City of Atlanta? I understand you (were connected with, knew of...) the first study in the Summer of 1975 and perhaps could help me in this assignment.

(Face-to-face interviews and phone calls):

1. Do you have any suggestions as to where I might look for data as to Leisure-Time Study of 1975?

2. Do you have any idea why it is so difficult to obtain data for the Leisure-Time Study?

3. Do you have any suggestions as to how I might facilitate this Study? An emerging answer to number two led to my asking the rest of the respondents:

4. Is there resistance to this Study to prevent accountability and does administration really prefer to operate "out-of-pocket"?
APPENDIX C
SURVEY SAMPLE
MEMORANDUM

TO: Fred Morgan, W, Y
Betty Yarbrough, M, X, Z, G, T
David Walker, F, N
Dorothy Yarbrough, H, I
Eddie McLemore, T, V
Benny Davis, O
John Culbreth, K, L
Joyce Figures, P, R, S
Roma Harper, B, E
Tim Murray, A, C, D

FROM: Joan McGuire

RE: Issuance of Leisure-Time Study Packets

While in the process of developing the Leisure-Time Study - 1977, it has become evident that specific information concerning the current usage of parks and related facilities can only be obtained via surveys. As result, I have compiled packets containing three (3) types of surveys with accompanying explanatory note. In attending your meeting with the respective N.P.U. committees, please deliver one packet to one representative from each N.P.U. in attendance.

Thanks for your cooperation in this request.

JM: mh
Currently, I am involved in conducting a Leisure-Time Study which has, as one of its goals, an in-depth evaluation of the present usage of Atlanta's parks and related facilities. The information gained in this study may prove quite valuable in the updating of Atlanta's Comprehensive Park Development Plan. It is with this effort in mind, that I am asking your assistance in the completion of the three types of surveys attached to this memo.

The three surveys are:

1. The Non-User Survey - This survey is to focus on those persons within your N.P.U. who are obviously non-users via the door-to-door procedure. Please keep a tally (on the survey sheets) of the number of times each particular answer (a, b, c, d, etc.) is chosen for each survey question or statement via the "|_|__|_" method.

2. The On-Site User Survey - This survey is to focus on those persons found utilizing parks, gyms, or recreation centers, etc. Please keep a tally (on the survey sheets) of the number of times each particular answer (a, b, c, d, etc.) is chosen for each survey question or statement via the "|_|__|_" method.

3. The Facility Usage Survey - This survey is to be answered only by N.P.U. personnel (planners, representatives, committee members, etc.). Please have all persons falling in these categories answer this survey because it focuses on your (the N.P.U. person's) evaluation of the current usage of your N.P.U.'s parks and related facilities by your fellow citizens. Again, please keep a tally of all answers via the same method mentioned above.
It is necessary that these surveys be completed, and back in my hands by June 30, 1977. Any questions you may have concerning these surveys, their application, or the Leisure-Time Study - 1977, please contact:

Ms. Joan McGuire
260 Central Avenue, S. E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Or call: 658-6776

JM: mh
NON-USER SURVEY

In our effort to formulate plans by which the Bureau of Parks and Recreation can better serve the citizenry of Atlanta, we have compiled this brief questionnaire.

Your cooperation is sincerely appreciated.

1. The majority of family dwellings within this NPU are:
   a. single family
   b. multi-family
   c. 50/50
   d. don't know

2. The police who normally patrol this NPU are:
   a. constantly seen
   b. seldom seen
   c. never seen
   d. don't know

3. The nearest park facility is:
   a. within easy walking distance
   b. beyond easy walking distance
   c. accessible only by auto
   d. don't know

4. The general appearance of this NPU is:
   a. well-maintained
   b. poorly maintained
   c. fairly maintained
   d. don't know

5. While walking, I:
   a. fear in-transit assault
   b. seldom think of assault
   c. never think of assault

6. On the average, the type of recreation I prefer is:
   a. group
   b. individual
   c. combination
   d. don't know
7. A large percentage of the NPU is:
   a. residential
   b. commercial
   c. institutional
   d. don't know

8. Recreation Centers and/or gyms within this NPU are maintained on a level which can best be described as:
   a. above average
   b. average
   c. below average
   d. don't know

9. The majority of families within this NPU have incomes which can best be described as:
   a. above average
   b. average
   c. below average
   d. don't know

10. When away from home, I:
    a. fear burglary
    b. feel my residence is safe
    c. no opinion

11. I travel to work via:
    a. personal auto
    b. commercial
    c. walk
    d. other means

12. The police within the NPU patrol the park area on a:
    a. regular basis
    b. sporadic basis
    c. don't know

13. In respect to Leisure-Time activities, I:
    a. participate enthusiastically
    b. occasionally participate
    c. do not participate

14. The population of this NPU can best be described as being:
    a. Transitory
    b. Stationary
    c. don't know
15. Traveling to the more convenient parks or recreation centers involves:
   a. crossing major thorofares
   b. crossing minor streets
   c. no crossings
   d. don't know

16. Undesirable elements within the NPU such as drugs, prostitution and homosexuality are:
   a. non-existant
   b. overt
   c. covert

17. The children in this NPU have play and recreation facilities which are:
   a. adequate
   b. inadequate
   c. don't know

18. I feel more secure while walking in:
   a. neighborhood streets
   b. area parks
   c. no preference

19. The parks within this NPU have pedestrian areas which are:
   a. adequately lighted
   b. inadequately lighted
   c. don't know

20. In regards to my leisure-time, I prefer to:
   a. get outside
   b. visit gym or recreation center
   c. lounge at home
   d. no preference
   e. no leisure time

21. The majority of local youth are:
   a. under 7
   b. 15-21
   c. over 21
   d. no opinion

22. The police within the NPU are:
   a. friendly
   b. distant
   c. arrogant
   d. inadequate
23. Security lighting is adequate in the:
   a. streets
   b. parks
   c. both
   d. neither

24. Public buildings and parks' facilities for handicapped are:
   a. adequate
   b. inadequate
   c. don't know

25. Of utilization of green spaces and open spaces, I would like to see:
   a. more
   b. less
   c. used differently
   d. no change
   e. no opinion

26. Undesirable characters within the NPU normally congregate:
   a. no particular place
   b. in parks
   c. near gyms or recreation centers
   d. on street corners
   e. no idea

27. City maintenance of streets and sidewalks is:
   a. good
   b. okay
   c. excellent
   d. poor

28. The programs offered at the NPU recreation facilities are:
   a. adequate
   b. insufficient
   c. lack imagination
   d. stimulating

29. The programs in number 28 are geared basically for:
   a. under 30
   b. 30 - 50
   c. over 50

30. Gyms and recreation centers in this NPU are normally:
   a. overcrowded
   b. under-utilized
   c. 50-50
   d. no opinion
31. Overall, the population of the NPU can best be described as:
   a. dense
   b. moderate
   c. sparse
   d. no opinion

32. If the design and use of park acreage were left up to me, I would develop recreation sites for participation that was:
   a. active
   b. passive
   c. no change
   d. no opinion

33. Most families in this NPU seem to prefer to cook:
   a. in kitchen
   b. in yard
   c. in park
   d. no opinion

34. In comparison with other areas of the city, the rate of serious crime (robbery, assault, rape, murder, etc.) in this NPU seems:
   a. lower
   b. higher
   c. average
   d. don't know

35. The overall economic trend of this NPU seems to be toward:
   a. growth
   b. depreciation
   c. stagnation
   d. no opinion

36. I utilize my NPU's recreation areas/facilities because they:
   a. meet my needs
   b. interest me
   c. are safe for me
   d. adequate
   e. maintained
   f. not applicable

37. I do not use the recreation areas/facilities within this NPU because I:
   a. have no desire
   b. lack the time
   c. have no interest
   d. have no information
   e. not applicable
38. Security within the NPU parks is such that children:

a. may play safely
b. are in danger
c. mine go
d. mine don't go
e. no opinion
FACILITY USAGE SURVEY: FOR N.P.U. PERSONNEL ONLY

Because of your extensive involvement with, and interest in the futures of your N.P.U. and Atlanta, we have compiled a brief survey centering on your assessment of the usage of recreation facilities within your particular N.P.U.

1. Recreation Centers and/or gyms are normally used:
   a. to capacity
   b. near capacity
   c. sparingly

2. Weekend family outings to parks or open spaces seemingly occur on:
   a. a regular basis
   b. a sporadic basis
   c. rare occasions
   d. holidays only

3. Aesthetic qualities (serenity, appearances, sanitation) of parks and/or open spaces are:
   a. conducive to utilization
   b. fair
   c. offensive

4. League competition is:
   a. progressive
   b. stationary
   c. digressive

5. Non-league activities are:
   a. increasing
   b. decreasing
   c. stable

6. Based on the extent of present utilization, there seems to be a need to:
   a. increase facets of active recreation
   b. increase facets of passive recreation
   c. increase both types of recreation

7. The age group(s) most seldom seen recreating is/are:
   a. 17 and under
   b. 18 to 40
   c. 41 to 65
   d. 66 and over
8. In reference to question #7, what would have to be accomplished in order to get the least active age group(s) involved in recreation?

   a. revamp present programs
   b. institute new programs (give examples)
   c. publicity (awareness) campaign
   d. modified operating hours of facilities (how modified?)

9. In making an overall critical evaluation of the recreation program in regards to programs readily identifiable to particular age groups.

   a. all age groups have a proportionant range of programs available to them.
   b. some age groups have a disproportionant range of programs available to them.

10. In reference to question #9, the group or groups which have a less than proportionate range of recreation programs is/are:

    a. youth
    b. young adults
    c. middle agers
    d. senior citizens
ON-SITE
USER SURVEY

In an effort to formulate plans by which the Bureau of Parks and Recreation

can better serve the citizenry of Atlanta, we have compiled this questionnaire.

1. The nearest park facility is:
   a. within easy walking distance
   b. beyond easy walking distance
   c. accessible only by auto
   d. don't know
   e. no opinion

2. In regards to special instructional programs such as golf, tennis, ballet,
   etc., I feel that:
   a. existing amount of instruction should be increased
   b. existing amount of instruction is adequate
   c. existing amount of instruction is immaterial
   d. existing amount of instruction should be decreased
   e. no opinion
   f. don't know

3. The majority of family dwellings within my N.P.U. are:
   a. single family
   b. multi-family
   c. 50/50
   d. don't know
   e. no opinion

4. In regards to league play (football, basketball, baseball, softball,
   etc.), I feel that:
   a. it is well organized
   b. it is quasi-organized
   c. no opinion
   d. no idea

5. In regards to question #4, I feel that:
   a. it interferes with "free-play" events (non-league competition)
   b. it should be curtailed
   c. no idea
   d. no opinion

6. In comparison with other sections of Atlanta, the serious crime rate (homicide,
   rape, assault, theft) in my N.P.U. appears:
   a. low
   b. average
   c. high
   d. no opinion
   e. no idea
7. Recreational programs geared toward senior citizen participation are:
   a. currently adequate
   b. in need of revitalization
   c. limited in scope and range
   d. inadequate
   e. in need of expansion
   f. no idea
   g. no opinion

8. Normally, I prefer recreation which is:
   a. structured
   b. group
   c. passive
   d. unstructured
   e. individual
   f. competitive
   g. no opinion
   h. no idea

9. Security on park lands and on gym/recreation center premises appears to be:
   a. satisfactory
   b. in need of improvement
   c. no idea
   d. no opinion

10. Programs such as Arts & Crafts, Golden Age, Therapeutics, etc. are:
    a. accomplishing their purposes
    b. in need of stimulation
    c. advantageously wide and varied in scope
    d. no opinion
    e. no idea

11. Of the utilization of green spaces and/or open spaces, I wish to see:
    a. more
    b. less
    c. utilized differently
    d. no idea
    e. no opinion

12. The majority of persons within my N.P.U. have incomes which are:
    a. above average
    b. average
    c. below average
    d. no opinion
    e. no idea
13. Recreational programs geared toward youths and/or young adults are:
   a. creative
   b. interesting
   c. average
   d. no idea
   e. no opinion

14. Undesirable characters within my N.P.U. normally congregate:
   a. any where
   b. in or near parks
   c. in or near gyms, recreation centers, etc.
   d. on street corners
   e. no opinion
   f. no idea

15. In making an overall critical evaluation of the recreation program in regard to programs readily identifiable to particular age groups, I would say that:
   a. all age groups have a proportionant range of programs available to them
   b. some age groups have a disproportionant range of programs available to them
   c. no idea
   d. no opinion

16. *In reference to question #15, the group or groups which have a less than proportionate range of recreational programs is/are:
   a. youth
   b. young adults
   c. middle-agers
   d. senior citizens

17. The overall socioeconomic trend of this N.P.U. seems to be toward:
   a. growth
   b. depreciation
   c. stagnation
   d. no opinion
   e. no idea

18. Typically, the gyms or recreation centers which I use are normally:
   a. over crowded
   b. under utilized
   c. 50/50
   d. no idea
   e. no opinion

19. Overall, in comparison with other areas of the city, the parks, and related facilities within my N.P.U. are:
   a. comparable
b. sub-par
c. superior
d. no opinion
e. no idea

20. The population of my N.P.U. can best be described as being:
   a. stationery
   b. transitory
   c. no idea
   d. no opinion

21. Considering the increasing trend across the nation towards providing public buildings and facilities with equipment, points of ingress and egress, etc., for the benefit of handicapped persons, do you feel that your N.P.U. parks and related facilities are:
   a. sufficiently equipped or designed
   b. insufficiently equipped or designed
   c. no opinion
   d. no idea

22. The aesthetic qualities (appearances, serenity, cleanliness, etc.) of my N.P.U. parks, when compared to other city parks:
   a. are about par
   b. suffer in comparison
   c. are above average
   d. no idea
   e. no opinion

23. Hypothetical Situation: If my residence were located at a point equidistant from all city parks, and related facilities, I would choose to:
   a. utilize those in my particular N.P.U.
   b. utilize those in certain other N.P.U.s
   c. utilize all parks and facilities indiscriminately.

24. Undesirable elements within my N.P.U. such as drugs, prostitution, homosexuality, etc., are:
   a. non-existent
   b. rampant
   c. covert
   d. no opinion
   e. no idea

25. I utilize local N.P.U. parks and associated facilities at a rate which I consider:
   a. less than I would prefer
   b. as much as I prefer
   c. no idea
   d. no opinion
26. I estimate that I utilize parks and/or gyms, etc.:
   a. once a week
   b. twice a week
   c. daily basis
   d. no opinion
   e. no idea

27. The normal operating hours of parks, recreation centers, gyms, etc.:
   a. are sufficient
   b. should be extended
   c. should be shortened
   d. no idea
   e. no opinion

28. Physical maintenance of recreation centers, gyms, park equipment, etc.
    can be described as:
   a. above average
   b. average
   c. below average
   d. no opinion
   e. no idea
APPENDIX D

DATA REQUEST LETTER
We are currently engaged in a Leisure-Time Study for the City of Atlanta, Bureau of Parks and Recreation.

Since a portion of our study will include a comparison with cities of comparable size, we would greatly appreciate your sharing of your master plan or comprehensive plan with us.

We would also like to see the demographic breakdown in relation to facility-service needs and in relation to neighborhoods or other geographic unit assignment.

It would be most helpful to us if you could also share any tool or yardstick used by you in your assessment of community needs as well as any vehicle of contact with the populace for its assessment of its needs.

We are open to any suggestion you might make to assist us in this endeavor.

We have also enclosed an outline (in chart form) of the criteria as we will apply them to Atlanta, considering population per neighborhood unit with delineation of existing, needed, and
The following explanations apply to the designations we have used:

1. **Decorative Park** - Passive or visual enjoyment, serving the entire city.

2. **Play Lot** - 2,500 feet to 1 acre, developed, playground equipment, multi-purpose court, informal play area, serves 500-2,500.

3. **Block Park** - One to 5 acres, facilities of play-lot, may include unstructured softball field or unstructured open space, serves 2,500-5,000.

4. **Neighborhood Park** - 5-20 acres, facilities of block park, tennis courts, picnic facilities, combination fields, serves 2,000 - 10,000.

5. **Community Park** - 15-125 acres, above listed facilities, plus gymnasium and recreation center, swimming pools, serves 10,000-50,000.

6. **Regional Park** - 130-300 acres serving entire city or major portion of city, containing all of above, may include golf course, amphitheater, zoo or other special facility that has city-wide attention.

7. **Athletic Field** - Large field with at least one separate baseball field, one separate softball field, if space allows, one separate junior league field. A major portion of field open for soccer, rugby or other games of similar nature.

8. **Tot Lot** - Small area with facilities specifically for pre-school children.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Joan McGuire, Intern
Bureau of Parks and Recreation
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


